



Generations Thru Learning

Team 1: Aaron Cho, Katie Liu, Eleanor Peng, Emma Su

Our Team



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Katie Liu
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Eleanor Peng
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Emma Su
'25
[SymSys - Neuro]



01.


Problem Domain

Unlocking Generations through
Learning.



* The Generation [] Gap

Generation gaps are common, especially in families. 

 Slang, media, technology, pop culture, etc. change with time;
Inter-generational differences challenging to understand or adopt.

Results in communication barriers and disconnects. 





02.

Methodology & Analysis

Gathering observations and
insights via 3 interviews.



Participants



BF

Professional musician,
teacher at Julliard and Rutgers



KC

CS cotermin at Stanford '24,
originally from Taipei



TG

PGM Intern at Tesla,
M.S. Seattle University '24

What we asked

Could you walk me through a time you interacted with someone from a different generation?

Tell me about a time you felt connected between you and someone from another generation or culture?

Tell me about a time you felt a disconnect between you and a younger/older generation?

What aspects of your culture/heritage are you curious about?

Tell me about a time when you felt that a person from a different generation could not understand where you were coming from.

✱

“Wish younger students could spend time to understand past references.”



BF

Zoom Interview by Eleanor Peng & Emma Su

✱

Says

"Older students have more curiosity and interest to look back in time."

"Evident increase in anxiety across the studio in the past 10 years."

"Wish younger students could spend time to understand past references."

"Story and music can connect people across generations."

"Name-drops specific musicians from his generation."

"When students don't get musician reference, they would just nod and smile."

"Want to communicate in a supportive way to provide artistic freedom to young students."

"I asked what 'my bad' means because I've never heard of it."

"A lot of lightbulb moments come from in-person interactions."

"Student won't admit when they don't understand my reference."

Thinks

Students should know more past references and understand his references

Current generation has changed so much and so fast that it's a bit difficult to adapt

Learning about generations is a two-way street.

It would be helpful to learn how to talk in more accessible ways for younger generations to comprehend.

If you haven't been alive for as many years, your perspective and mindset will be hard to change

Third POV is helpful for providing context to unfamiliar references

Students would learn more if they were more self-inclined to learn about the past.

Think it's a good idea for different age cohorts to reach beyond their own cohorts

Fostering connection between generation isn't something that can be done online

People should leave an encounter of disconnect free of judgment -- keep light/neutral atmosphere



Didn't cut down the time-based references even after knowing that his students might not understand

Directly asked what 'my bad' means to his students

Treats his students as whole person, not just someone behind a musical instrument.

Asks "what did you just say" when a generational slang doesn't make sense.

Unsettling when students don't know the reference they use

Relief when a third party points out that the students didn't get the reference

Surprised by how the same word can evoke different emotions from an individual. (ex. the misunderstanding of 'flexible')

A need to take a moment to digest new terms.

Interacts with two age cohorts on a daily basis (age 14-17 and 22-30)

Encourages students to do more research about the past to learn the 'larger story'

Serve as an advising figure/mentor to his younger students.

Attempts to gain younger perspectives through immediate relatives (i.e. niece who is an undergraduate)

He's going through a period of adjustment where the 'teacher' and a student's lesson time is just another ordinary task younger students are juggling with.

Grateful for all the 'young energy' he gets to have

Connected when students trusts him beyond musical expertise.

Confused when students say something he doesn't get

It's easier to connect with younger generations in-person than virtually.

Uses humor in lessons to convey a more approachable atmosphere.

Tries to build trust with his students to be more relatable.

Does

Feels

Appreciated when students come and ask for help

Says

Thinks

Fostering connection between generations isn't something that can be done

People should leave an encounter of disconnect free

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Think it's a good idea for different age cohorts to reach beyond their own cohorts

"A lot of lightbulb moments come from in-person interactions."

"Student won't admit when they don't understand my reference."

Artistic freedom to young students."

"Name specific musicians from his generation."

"Story and music can connect people gener"

"I asked what 'my bad' means because I've never heard of it."

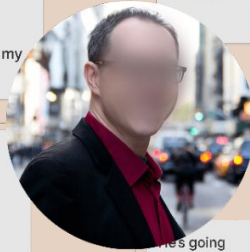
"When students don't get musician reference, they don't nod"

Communicate in a way that provides

"Older students have more curiosity and interest to look back in time."

"Evident increase in anxiety across the studio in the past 10 years."

"Wish younger students could spend time to understand past references."



A need to take a moment to digest new terms.

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Relief when a third party points out that the students didn't get the reference

It's easier to connect with younger generations in-person than virtually.

Unsettling when students don't know the reference they use

Grateful for all the 'young energy' he gets to have

Appreciated when students come and ask for help

It's going through a period of adjustment where the 'teacher' and a student's lesson time is just another ordinary task younger students are juggling with.

Asks "what did you just say" when a generational slang doesn't make sense.

Attempts to gain younger perspectives through immediate relatives (i.e. niece who is an undergraduate)

Directly asked what "my bad" means to his students

Didn't cut down the time-based references even after knowing that his students might not understand

Encouraged students to learn more about the story

Interacts with two age cohorts on a daily basis (age 14-17 and 22-30)

Treats his students as whole person, not just someone behind a musical

Uses humor in lessons to convey a more approachable atmosphere.

Tries to build trust with his students to be more relatable.

Does

Feels

Intergenerational learning is a two-way street that stems from authentic interest.

✱

INSIGHT



NEED

People need engaging methods to learn about the past and present.

✱

“I wish I could understand more of what [my grandpa’s] environment was like when he was growing up.”



KC

In-person interview at Lathrop by Emma Su & Aaron Cho

✱

Says

"Requires more complex vocabulary to explain what I'm up to these days. So that's a huge reason I feel disconnected from them these days"

"I'd want to learn more about my grandparents' language, history, family tree, takes/ opinions on the world, past careers"

"Would be cool to have a technology to live a day of my grandpa's life in 1944 or something, and for him to live one day in my life in 2023"

"It would be cool if I could talk to my grandparents just as I would talk to my friends"

"A lot of the disconnect results from me not understanding his past. For example, wars are something [our generation] can never really relate to because we never experienced it."

"During a moment of awkward silence, my grandpa pulled out his phone and showed me old photos of him. It was a nice bonding activity"

"I'm really bad at one-on-one conversations with my grandparents, but if just one more person is added to the conversations, it really alleviates the awkwardness"

"I wish I could understand more of what his environment was like when he was growing up"

"If I was more immersed in their culture, I would have been able to engage with them more"

"One of my earliest, fondest memories was my grandpa walking me to preschool. On the way, he would teach me nursery rhymes in Japanese, and I would teach him English"

Thinks

One-sidedness in conversations with grandpa stems from not knowing enough about where him and where he comes from

Language can be a barrier to connecting with those older/ younger than us, but understanding of their history and understanding

When both sides are eager to learn – more opportunity for connection

If there's a tool that can help connect us more, I would love to try it out, but there will always be this age gap that is there

Being able to live a day in the other's shoes would be extremely helpful for both sides

A lot of our connection is about culture and language, rather than history

Easier to connect with grandparents back when I was younger

Our generation is so consumed by tech, it's hard to imagine what older generations had/ didn't have

Would be easier to use the same language and tone with everyone regardless of their generation, but not sure if I would prefer that

Physical presence is important when trying to connect with others



Does

I always come up with the same questions. I never really know what else to ask

Because grandpa knows more about her than she knows about him, he usually asks the questions and she usually just answers

Speaks in a mix of Taiwanese, Chinese, and Japanese (languages that the grandparents are comfortable with)

Goes on walks and enjoys good food to connect with her grandparents

Took classes in Japanese and Chinese to be able to better communicate with grandparents

When she was little, she could bond with grandparents simply by playing hide-and-seek. Felt connected with them at the time

Unable to talk to grandparents about complex topics because of lack of knowledge in complex Taiwanese/Japanese vocabulary

Tries to stay connected with her grandpa these days by texting

Taught English to students at aboriginal Taiwanese elementary schools. Felt disconnected not because of the age gap, because of the difference in cultures

When talking to her parents/ grandparents, she intentionally tries to use words they'll understand

Desires connection with grandparents

Awkward around grandparents in one-on-one conversations

Feels

Duty to learn more about grandparents' history and language

Misses the old days back when connecting was easier (ex. hide-and-seek)

Parents/ grandparents tend to have a more conservative, stereotypical outlook on life (ex. relationships, career, etc.)

Can easily address the language barrier by practicing/learning on her own. Other aspects such as understanding their history is more difficult of a barrier to overcome

Guilty for not putting in more effort to connect with grandparents

There will always be an inevitable age gap between generations

Sad to see her grandmother age and become less healthy and able to connect

Interested in a technology/tool that could help bridge the gap within generations, perhaps through an immersive experience

Says Thinks

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A lot of our connection about culture, language, than history

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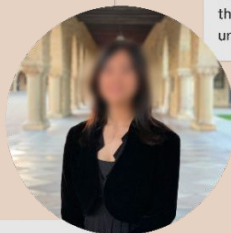
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Does Feels

Generational disconnection arises from a deficiency in historical awareness.

INSIGHT



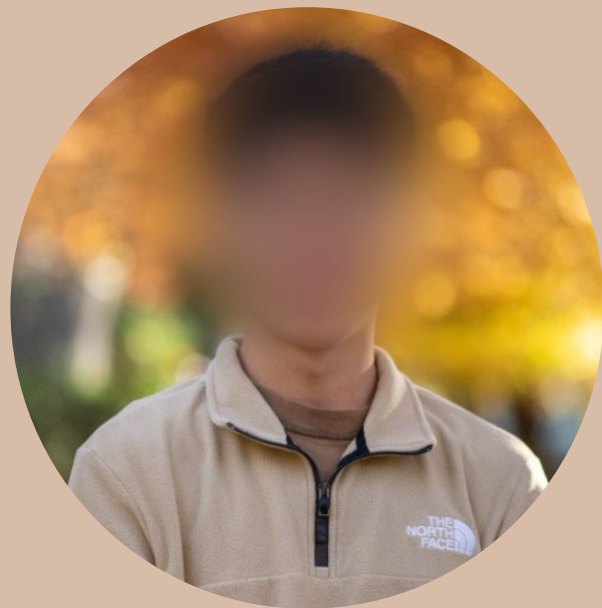
NEED

Individuals require a deeper grasp of the historical and cultural background of their predecessors.



✱

“When [my grandma] became Christian, it became a lot easier to talk to her about things like Bible studies and fellowships.”



TG

In-person interview at Wilbur by Aaron Cho & Katie Liu

✱

Says

"Now that I'm older, it's harder to connect with them due to limited time and the language barrier."

"It was easier to connect when I was younger; I had more free time and less things on my mind."

"My grandma would appreciate it if I texted her more regularly."

"My grandma would use social media if there wasn't a steep learning curve."

"When I text my grandma, it's usually just a quick update on life or a holiday greeting."

"Despite being from different generations, we are pretty connected and share similar values."

"When [my grandma] became Christian, it became a lot easier to talk to her about things like Bible studies and fellowships."

"It's easier to connect with those younger than me than with older people because there's nothing to lose. When you talk with the older generation, there's a level of mutual respect that's required."

"It would be helpful if I received a reminder to text my grandma regularly."

"It would be cool if I could live a day in the life of my grandma in Hong Kong."

"My grandma is pretty tech-savvy for her age because she works at it."

Thinks

Life can get in the way of connecting with family, especially as we grow older

He should text his grandma more often

Younger generation is becoming more liberal and has access to technology too early

Sharing a common religion as someone else makes it easy to form strong connection

His grandma is super happy whenever he texts her.

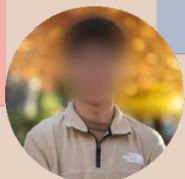
His grandma would like it if he texted her more often

Reminders can be useful to help remember to message grandma

Images are easier to connect over than verbal descriptions

His grandma views him as a "tech genius"

Talking to people in older generations requires formality and respect



Does

Spends a lot of time with others who also feel well connected to their parents and grandparents

Texts his grandma typically only on holiday occasions

Texts nuclear family groupchat often and regularly.

Shares pictures in camera roll when he visits his grandma

Concerned for younger generation's access to internet and technology at such a young age

Secure in his relationships with his younger and older siblings and his parents

Nostalgic when reminiscing about fond memories with grandparents when he was younger

Constantly preoccupied by school and career

Spent a lot more time with grandparents when he was little.

Connects with younger individuals easily

Does not think much about generational/ cultural gaps in his own personal life

Unsure if he even experiences generational disconnect with his own family

Connected to his family, across generations, by a common religion

Curious to hear more about his parents' background

Guilty for not communicating with his grandma more often

Satisfied with current relationships with his parents and grandma

Headspace gets easily occupied by school and career

Converses in basic Cantonese with his grandma

Shares similar values with parents and grandparents

Happy to make his parents and grandma happy

Feels

Says

Thinks

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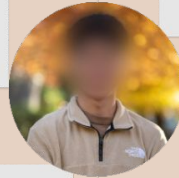
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His grandma is super happy whenever he texts her.

He should text his grandma more often

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Younger generation is becoming more liberal and has

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Interacts with younger individuals

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Connected to his family, across generations, by a common religion

Happy to make his parents and grandma happy

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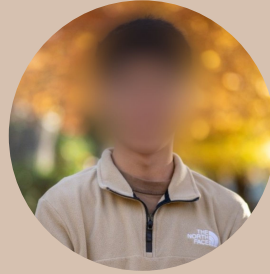
Constantly preoccupied by school and career

Satisfied with current relationships with his parents and grandma

Mutual understanding of religion, values, and/or culture can strengthen intergenerational connection, despite age gaps.

✱

INSIGHT



NEED

N/A. TG can be considered as a “non-user”.



03.

Summary





Key Learnings

Storytelling through **visual mediums** feel more meaningful than oral/written storytelling.

A shared **spark** (i.e. music, religion, etc) fuels genuine curiosity and desire for mutual learning.

Immersive learning experiences (i.e. 'day in the life') has the potential to bridge generations.



Next Steps

Expand
interviewee
demographics

Continue to
narrow problem
domain

Craft POVs and
HMWs

Brainstorm
preliminary
solutions

Experience
prototyping

S O C I A L



THANK
YOU!

We hope you
enjoyed our presentation!

S O C I A L

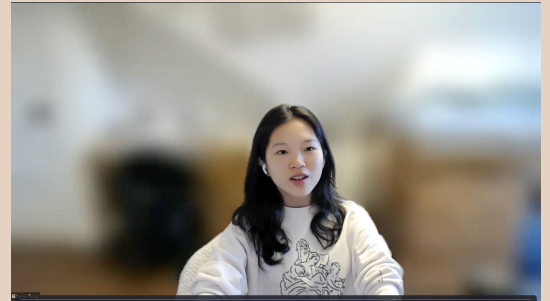




Appendix



Interviewing with BF feat. Emma and Eleanor





Interviewing
with KC

feat. Emma and Aaron

...THE END!!

POV Template

We met...

BF, who is a 60-year-old teacher who interacts with multiple generations regularly.

We were surprised to realize...

He continues to make time-based references even when his students don't understand them.

We wonder if this means...

He thinks time-based references can help with sparking curiosity to learn more about the past and interact with meaningful elements of earlier generations.

It would be game-changing to...

Have immersive ways to make learning/story-telling about the past more interesting, accessible, and dynamic.