

Strategic guide for companies that need teams to communicate confidently

AI + humans: the perfect combination for learning languages.



The invisible cost that is destroying your profitability

On a global scale, 64% of companies admit to having lost international agreements and business deals because they lacked a multilingual workforce capable of negotiating and executing the contracts.

Language anxiety causes severe behavioral shifts in high-stakes work moments; more than half (54.8%) of professionals dilute or simplify their messages to make them easier to express, while 25% stay entirely quiet even when they have something valuable to say.

57%
lack fluency

for speaking and writing in
multicultural teams

55%
have difficulties

understanding technical
documentation

53%
fear making mistakes

in important emails

The reality for companies

Implementing a formalised Language Management Strategy yields extraordinary financial returns, with three out of four European SMEs experiencing at least a **16% increase in sales turnover** directly attributable to their language strategy.





The questions your CFO isn't asking (but should be)

How many projects have been delayed at your company because someone couldn't communicate confidently?

How many suitable candidates have declined positions that required coordination with teams from other countries?

How many business opportunities in new markets have never materialised?

If you don't have clear answers, the cost is greater than you imagine.

Why this whitepaper exists

Studies on language training in companies show a common pattern: **programmes that combine technology and expert support generate more consistent improvements** than those based solely on AI or traditional methods.

This hybrid approach works because technology personalises and accelerates learning, while human intervention provides motivation, context, and practical application in real business situations.

Despite the heavy reliance on a multilingual workforce, the infrastructure to support these employees is absent, with **only 24% of global workplaces offering any formalised form of language training or linguistic support.**

This document is not a manifesto on "the future of AI". It is an **analysis of the solutions implemented by companies that no longer lose business opportunities** due to language barriers.

The cost that no one is measuring

What's happening within companies?

On a global scale, **64% of companies** admit to having lost international agreements and business deals because they lacked a multilingual workforce capable of negotiating and executing contracts.



1

Professionals who can't demonstrate their capabilities

When language skills are limited, professionals aren't always able to communicate their knowledge or express their value in international environments.

3

Limited international expansion

A lack of language skills hinders entry into new markets and slows down internationalisation. Language barriers are the **main obstacle** to the internationalisation of Spanish companies.

2

Lost business opportunities

Language barriers directly affect the ability to close deals and expand into new markets. Negotiations that fail due to invisible cultural misunderstandings. Markets where scaling is not possible due to a lack of prepared teams.

4

Communication with customers

When support is not provided in the customer's language, their experience suffers and the risk of losing sales and long-term relationships increases.

A hybrid programme combines AI to personalise learning and human support to provide context and motivation

Organisations that implement this model report:

- **88% of their employees improve their CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) level in just 3 months⁵.**
- **92% report feeling more confident** when communicating at work.
- A **40% reduction** in the adaptation times of international teams.
- A **67% improvement in vocabulary retention** through the use of AI.

These are not aspirational results. This is data from real companies, both Spanish and international, that have stopped losing opportunities due to communication barriers.

The strategic question

We shouldn't be asking: "Can we afford to invest in language training?"

We should be asking: **"Can we afford to continue losing 64% of companies admit to having lost international agreements, and 7% of potential revenue due to communication barriers?"**



Why current solutions don't work

The 3 models that are failing (and why)

MODEL 1: "Pure AI" (chatbots, apps without human support)

The problem:

- Very high dropout rates, especially in the first few months, when there is no human support.
- Employees who "complete lessons", but don't gain the confidence to communicate.
- Impersonal feedback that doesn't motivate.

Why it fails: Learning vocabulary isn't the same as negotiating a contract. Completing exercises isn't the same as leading a multicultural meeting. AI without humans optimises the process, but doesn't guarantee that anyone will end up speaking with confidence.

MODEL 2: Traditional face-to-face training

The problem:

- High cost per employee per year. Impossible to scale in companies with distributed teams.
- Rigid schedules that no one can meet.
- Low completion rate in large companies.

Why it fails: High quality, but zero flexibility. In a world of hybrid work and global teams, **the face-to-face model cannot scale without sacrificing quality or increasing the budget.**

MODEL 3: Passive e-learning (video platforms/recorded courses)

The problem:

- Very low completion rates (typically between 15% and 25%).
- No personalised feedback or real conversational practice.
- Employees who enrol, but don't progress.
- Hours consumed are measured instead of actual level improvement.

Why it fails: Watching grammar videos doesn't prepare someone to negotiate in German. Without interaction, adaptive feedback or human motivation, learning isn't consolidated.

The alternative: Hybrid model that works

	Pure AI	Face-to-face	Passive e-learning	HYBRID (Busuu)
Personalisation	High	Low	None	Very High
Scalability	High	Very Low	High	High
Human feedback	None	High	None	High (strategic)
Conversational practice	Limited	High	None	High (simulated + real)
Flexibility	Total	None	Total	Total
Sustained motivation	Low	Medium	Very Low	High
Demonstrable ROI	Doubtful	Difficult to measure	Low	Verifiable
Native community	No	No	No	120M registered users

Why the hybrid model generates superior results

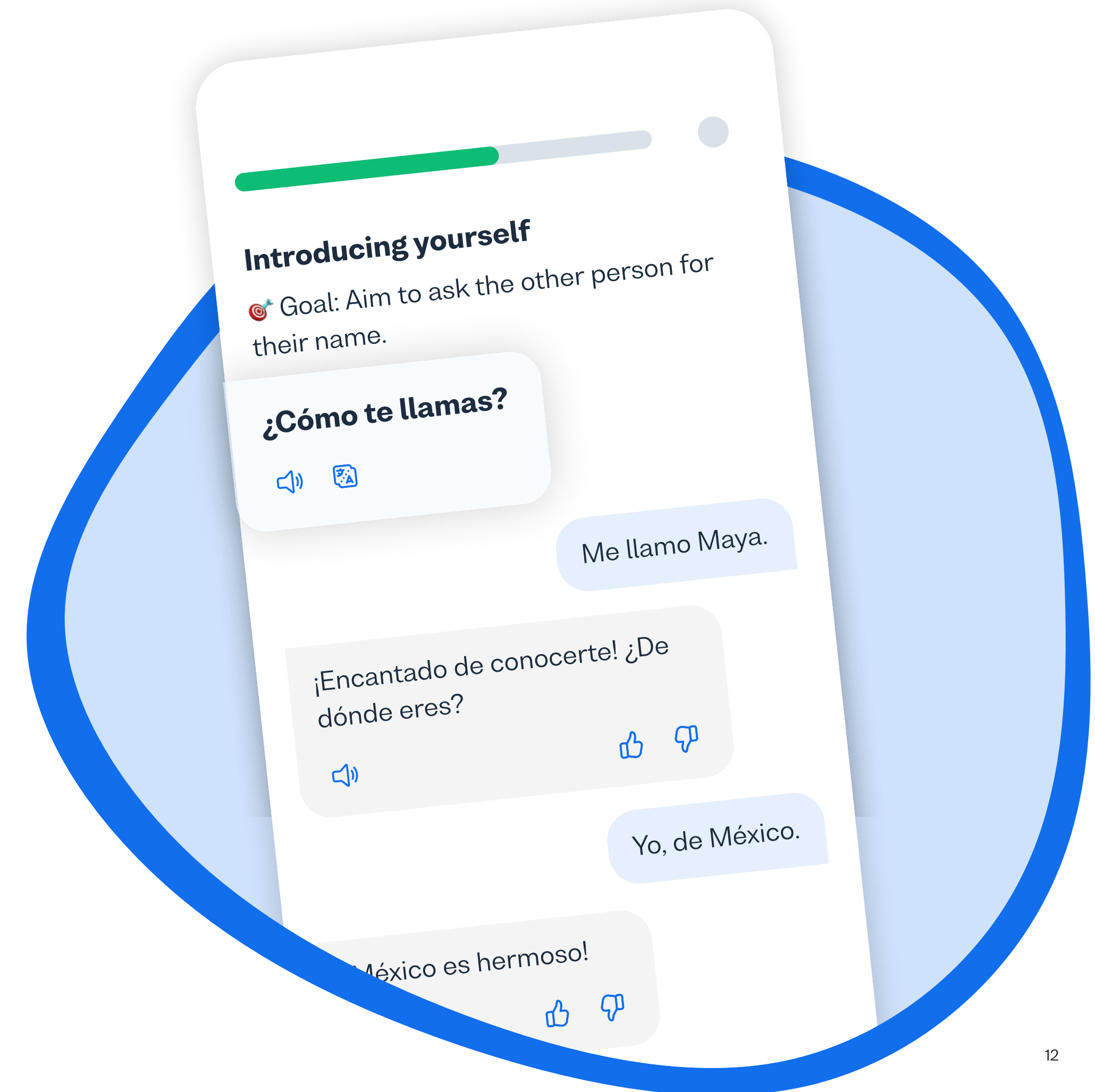
AI does what it does best:

- **Personalise the course in real time**, analysing individual error patterns.
- Provide **immediate feedback** on pronunciation and grammar.
- Optimise **retention through scientifically proven spaced repetition**.
- Analyse thousands of exercises from each learner to **identify trends**.

Humans do what no machine can:

- **Motivate** when frustration arises after failed attempts.
- Contextualise learning through real industry negotiations.
- Provide critical cultural nuances that prevent costly misunderstandings.
- Generate the necessary trust to communicate in key situations: meetings, customer service or internal coordination.

The result: fewer delayed projects, more closed deals, and less talent lost.



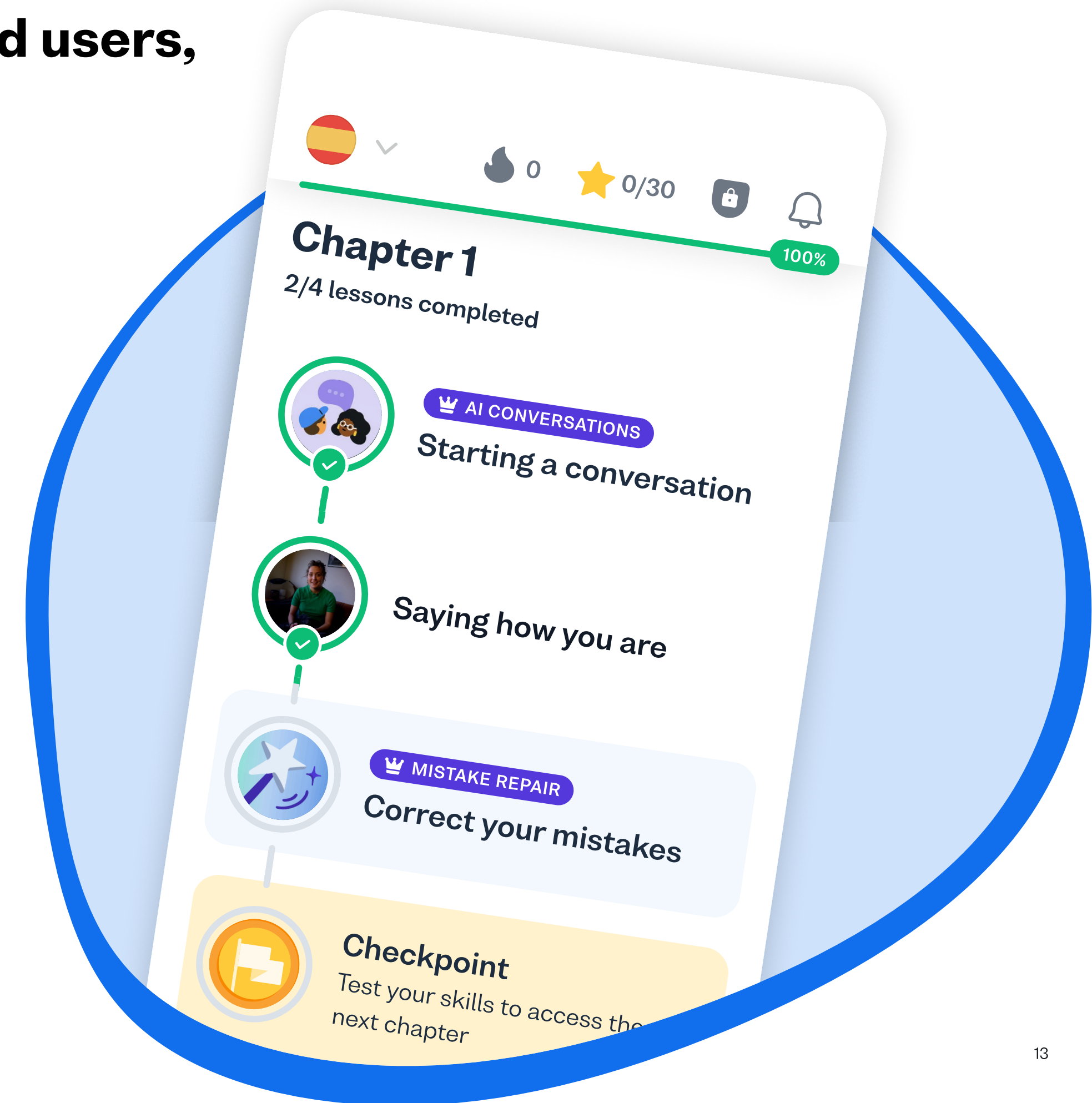
How the Busuu model works (and why 600+ companies choose it)

The only ecosystem that combines AI, 120 million registered users, and certified experts.

Busuu is not an AI platform but rather the most comprehensive ecosystem on the market.

1 Educational content designed by experts and aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

- 14 languages with content created by certified linguists.
- Exercises designed for real competencies, applicable to negotiations, presentations and team coordination.



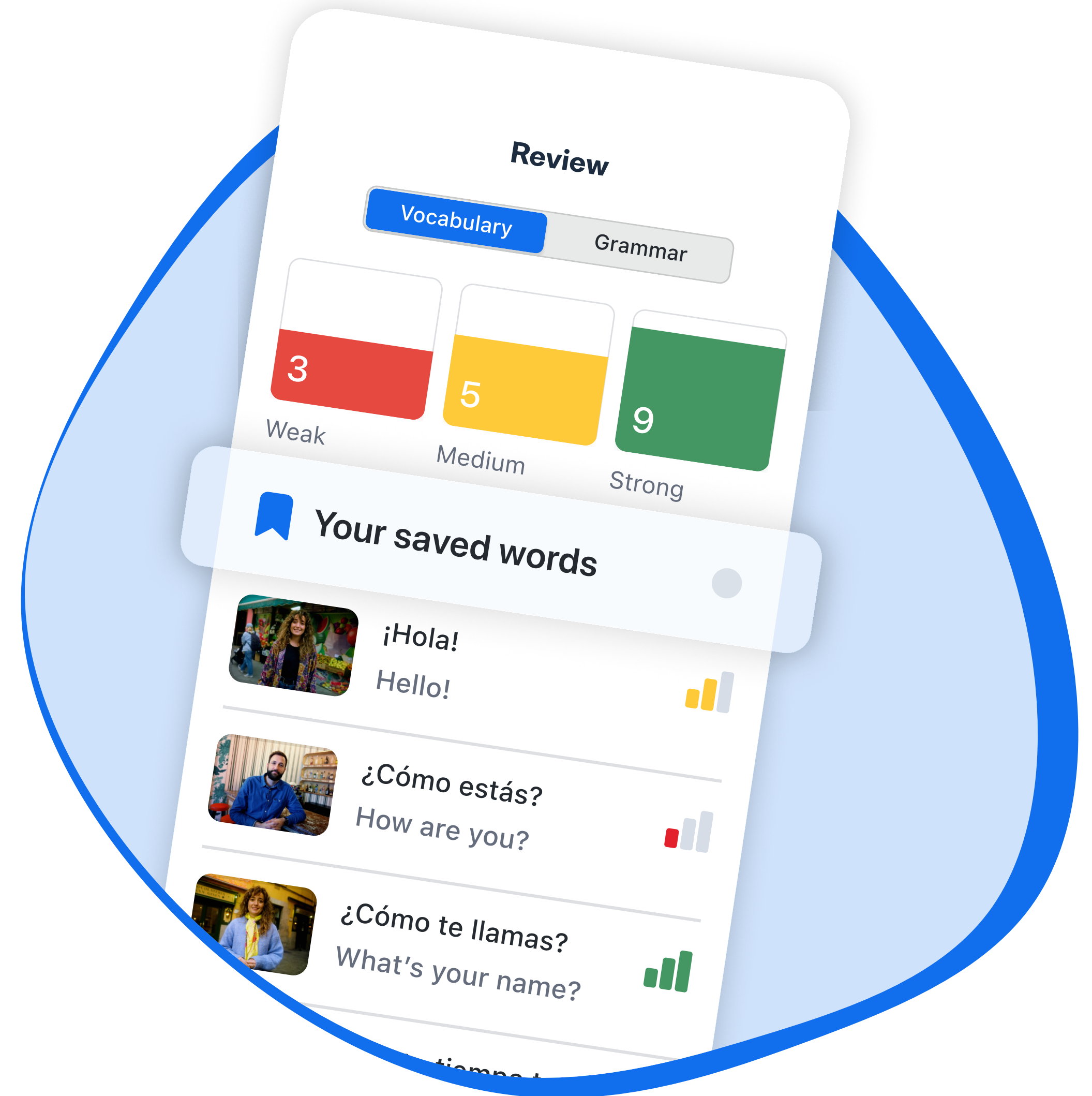
2 AI that personalises without improvisation

The distinguishing principle of Busuu is that its AI does not generate content from scratch, unlike ChatGPT. It analyses lessons created and reviewed by expert teachers and determines which suits each learner best according to their error patterns, learning pace and professional goals.

How it works:

- For example, it detects that a Spanish speaker may confuse "make" and "do".
- It programmes the reinforcement of that specific pattern.
- It adjusts the difficulty according to actual progress, not according to elapsed time or completed lessons.
- It can suggest relevant vocabulary for the learner's role or context when the course allows it.

Result: Highly personalised courses, without losing educational rigour.



3 AI-powered features that other platforms don't have

Speaking Practice

- Real-time personalised feedback from AI on pronunciation.
- Practise with real people via video (not avatars).
- An environment that allows for trial and error.
- Detailed analysis of errors with constructive recommendations.

Mistake Repair

- AI analyses thousands of exercises from each learner to provide corrections and personalised recommendations.
- It detects practically imperceptible errors.
- It generates ultra-personalised review plans.
- **Measured impact:** +67% vocabulary retention.



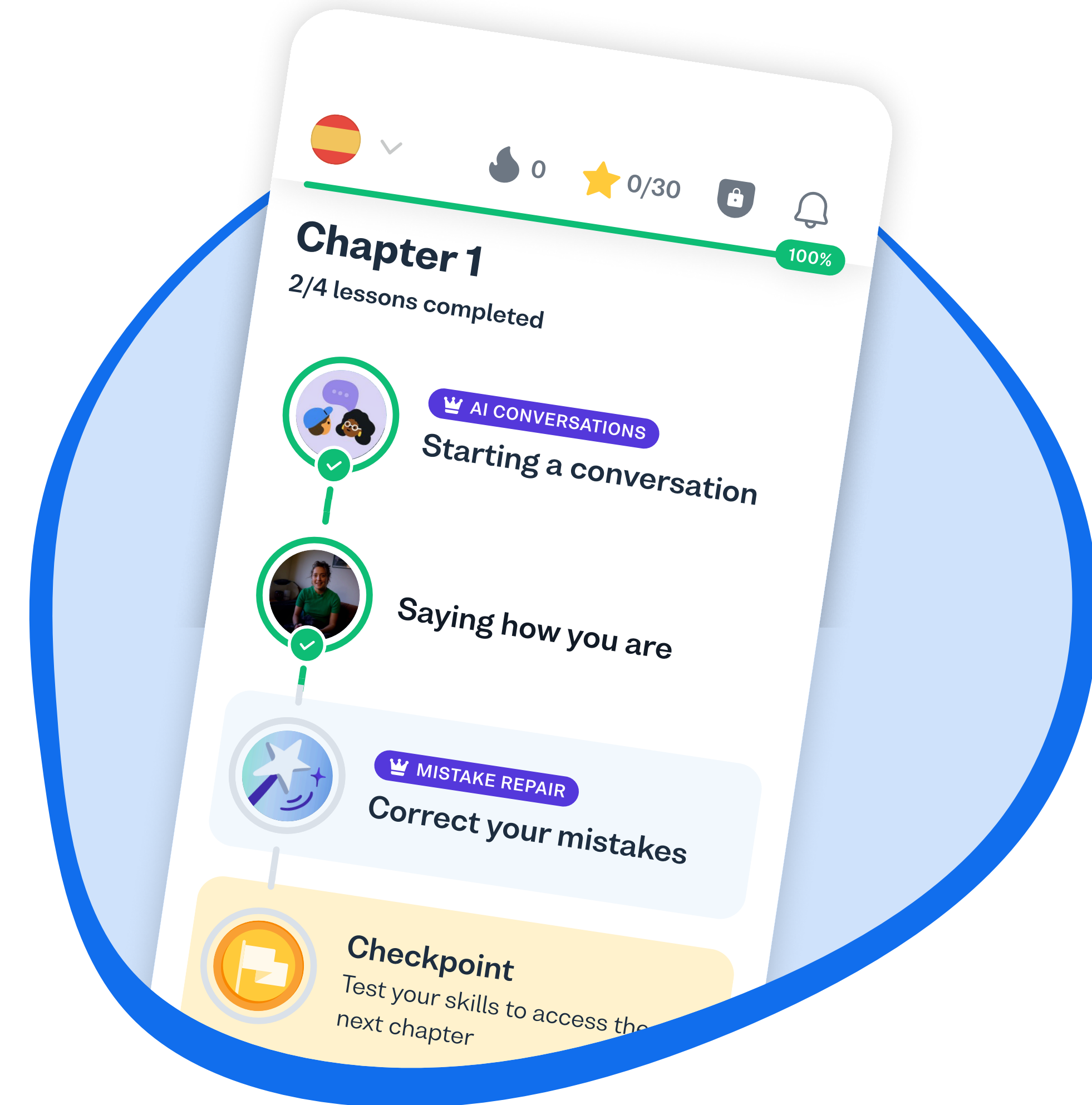
4 Corrections from the global community of users

Access to a network of 120 million registered users:

- Employees practise writing emails, reports and professional texts.
- Native speakers from the community correct and provide real feedback.
- Peer-to-peer cultural exchange among peers from around the world, which provides contexts, expressions and nuances that AI does not detect.
- Included on the platform at no additional cost..

5 Online lessons with certified teachers

- Individual or group sessions, as necessary.
- Expert teachers specialised by sector (Tech, Pharma, Logistics, Financial Services, etc.).
- Professional feedback on negotiations, technical presentations and team coordination.
- What AI can't offer: empathy and motivation when the learner is frustrated.
- Lessons taught by certified teachers and monitored for quality by our Teacher Operations team.



Principles of responsible AI at Busuu³

- 1. Human communication is the ultimate goal.** Each feature answers the question: "Does this prepare someone to communicate better with another person in a real business situation?"
- 2. Human experts create the experiences and AI enhances them.** Empowering educators and translators with AI to scale impact, not to replace them.
- 3. We guarantee the quality of the AI.** The AI is constantly tested to ensure that feedback is accurate, recommendations are relevant, and personalisation works correctly.
- 4. We actively combat biases in the training of our AI.** We include scenarios that may generate bias in testing and eliminate them.
- 5. Trust is earned through transparency.** Clear communication regarding the use of AI and user data.
- 6. Rapid adaptation.** We follow trends, address emerging risks, and ensure relevance.

Why companies choose Busuu over competitors

Key factor	Busuu	Typical platforms
Corrections by real natives:	Network of 120M users	Not available
Human feedback on writing	Included	No / Only with extra payment
Speaking practice with AI	Yes, with detailed feedback	Only basic feedback
Specialised teachers by sector	Yes (tech, pharma, logistics, etc.)	Generic teachers
Certified CEFR content	14 languages	Variable
Companies using it	600+	-

Impact on performance and communication: Real data from companies

Quantitative results: what can be measured

Indicator	Result	What it means in practice
Improvement in CEFR level	88 % in 3 months	Moving from "understanding emails" (A2) to "negotiating contracts with confidence" (B1/B2)
Communicative confidence	92 % of employees	Daring to speak in meetings where important decisions are made
Vocabulary retention	+67 % with Mistake Repair	Knowledge that is consolidated and can be used in a real context
Satisfaction	4.6/5	Employees who would actively recommend the programme
Reduction in onboarding	-40 %	International teams operate faster, with less friction
Increase in revenue	+7 % (ESP companies)	Spanish companies with a language learning strategy

Beyond the numbers: Qualitative impact

HR teams in companies that use the hybrid model report:

- **Fewer lost agreements internationally.** 64% of companies lose opportunities due to the lack of multilingual employees¹.
- **Greater motivation and autonomy of staff.** Employees who previously avoided international projects now seek them out.
- **Teams that communicate directly (without intermediaries)** generate more ideas and proposals from the employees themselves, something that was previously lost due to language barriers.
- **Improved customer retention.** 75% of consumers are more likely to repurchase if customer service is offered in their language².



Does your company need this?

Checklist: Are you losing opportunities like the companies in the study?

Answer **YES** or **NO**:

If you answered YES to 3 or more of these questions, you fit the profile of companies that lose 49% of their business opportunities due to language barriers.

Do you operate in more than 3 countries and coordinate international teams?

Do your international projects frequently experience delays due to misunderstandings?

Have you lost deals because your team couldn't negotiate confidently in another language?

Do senior candidates decline positions that require international coordination?

Do new teams with members in various countries take more than 6 months to work at a normal pace?

Do your employees avoid actively participating in meetings in other languages?

Have you tried e-learning with a dropout rate exceeding 60%?

Do you lack visibility into the ROI of your investment in language training?

About Busuu for Business

The platform chosen by over 600 global companies with a unique community of 120 million users.

Key differentiators:

- The only ecosystem that combines AI + 120M registered users + certified experts.
- 14 languages with audited CEFR compliance.
- Speaking Practice with AI feedback + Mistake Repair with AI.
- Specialised teachers by sector (Tech, Pharma, Logistics, Finance, etc.).
- Verifiable ROI: 88% improvement in CEFR in 3 months, 92% communicative confidence.

Our mission:

To ensure that no company loses business opportunities, deals or key talent due to avoidable communication barriers.



Cited and verifiable sources

- [1] Economist Intelligence Unit (cited by Learnship, 2024)
<https://learnship.com/the-hidden-costs-of-language-barriers-in-business/>
- [2] CSA Research & Foundever Studies, 2024
<https://prnoticias.com/2024/07/23/el-78-de-los-consumidores-abandonaria-una-marca-tras-una-mala-experiencia/>
- [3] Busuu Efficacy Study 2024 (internal data)
- [4] AI Product Principles at Busuu, 2025 (internal document)
- [5] Busuu B2B Learner Survey 2024 (internal data)



www.business.busuu.com