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CSCI 490 Android App Development | Keith Briggs | Spring 2017 | May 2, 2017

YipYap Final Report

What is YipYap?
In class presentation link

YipYap is an Android game we came up with, similar to Cards Against Humanity, but with a different angle. It's a turn based word game where each player types in a word to add to the story. The idea comes from a modified icebreaker activity done during William's summer camps.

Why YipYap?

When we were brainstorming for ideas on what type of app we should make, our first idea was a **reader app** which allows user to pull out text from strings and maybe highlight stuff (which was Jade's idea). Lia Google searched for random app ideas and found the following:

Dating Forecast -- predicts a user's relationship after they answer a few questions (a joke app).

Midnight Doughnuts -- an app that tells the user what restaurants are still open around them at any time of the night since we all have our nightly cravings.
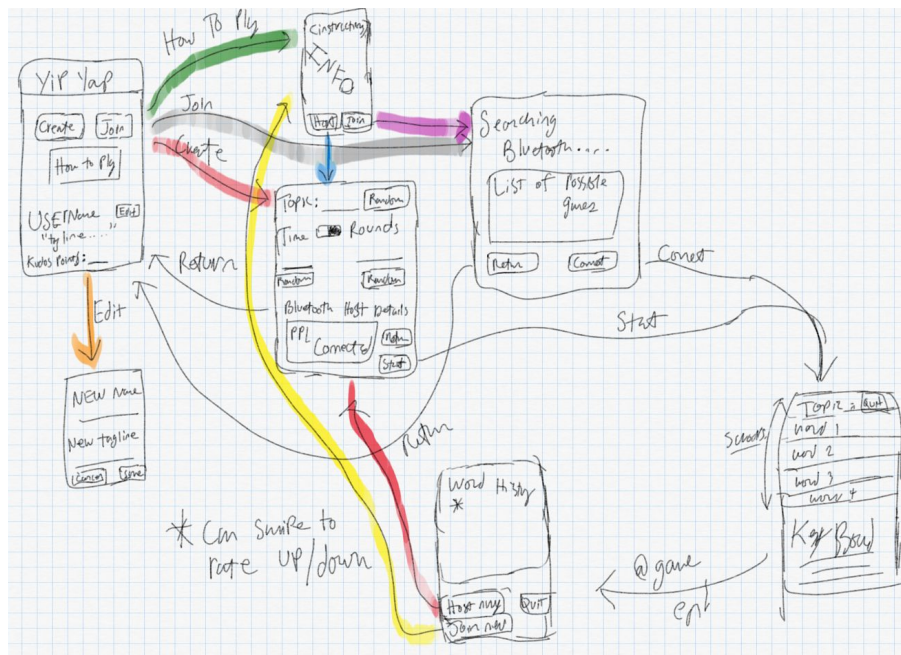
William said we should try to make "**something scalable**", something we could easily expand, or if the need arose, to cut back on..
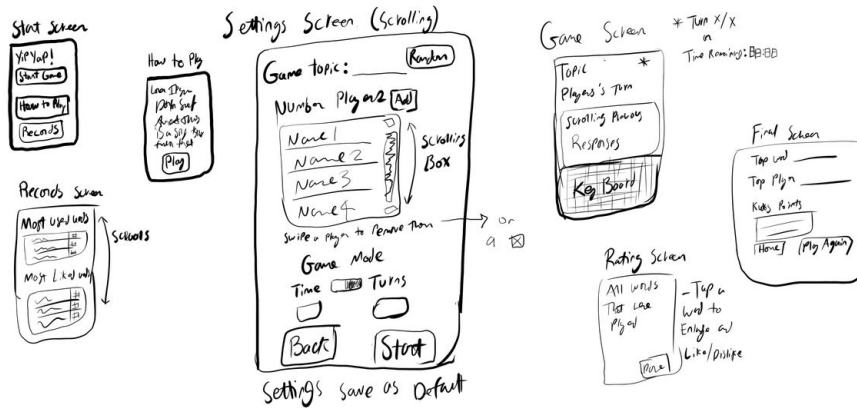
Luke contributed an idea of using the **Google Maps API** and applying it to ski resorts because he told us a story where he had to help his family when they got lost in a ski resort.

Finally we arrived at **Partylibs**. **Partylibs** was our initial working name for YipYap. The original idea was a group text message app where one plays a game to make a story where each player types one word each turn.
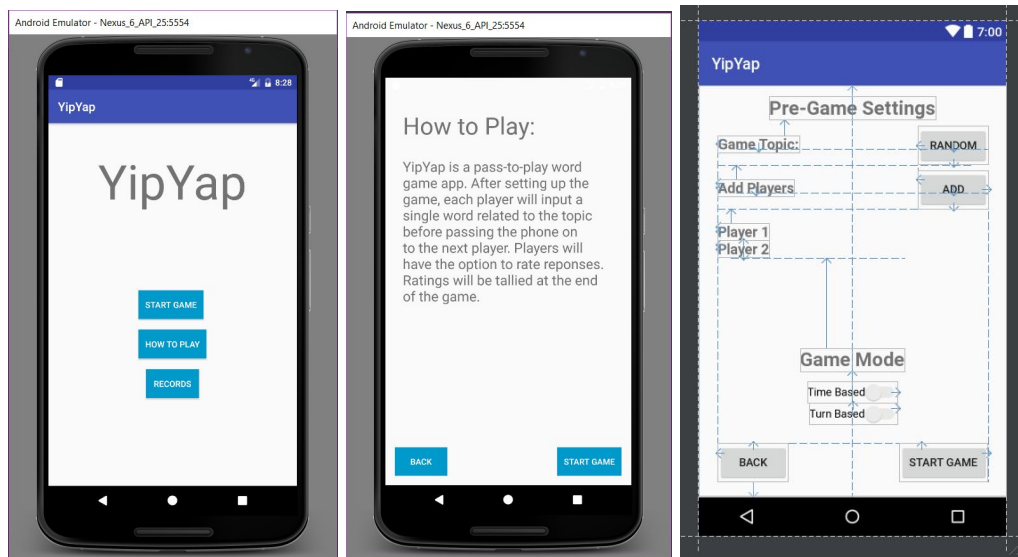
The name **YipYap** actually came from a different app idea; in which a text would be translated to animal sounds. While we didn't decide to go with the idea, we all liked the name, and it stuck.

Goal for YipYap?

Our main goal for YipYap is to have a fun environment for everyone and to be able to have a good time with friends during a party or just hanging out.

How did we test it if it works?

As we were brainstorming, we tested our idea in class to see how the game would flow. We picked out a topic and we went from there. For example:

Topic: Memes

Lia: "Memes"
Luke: "don't"
Jade: "have"
William: "sneks"

And after William, the game cycles back around to Lia.We were having so much fun with our idea that we tested it out with our instructor, Keith, and had a good time.

Prototypes (Low and High prototypes)

Paper prototypes

High fidelity prototypes

List actions experimentation gif: https://puu.sh/vvKxD/f85cc39638.gif

Tools used for this project

We used **Android Studio** (Windows and Mac) for code writing, **Android APIs** to create the app, **Google**, **Adobe Photoshop** for the Android icon, **Join.me** for screen sharing during brainstorming, and **ShareX** for creating gifs of app concepts.

Tools used for communication

One major tool that we used for communication is called **Discord**. Discord is a free online team chat (text channel) where you can share files (images, docxs, etc.). It's similar to Facebook Messenger, but uses a low bandwidth since it focuses more on being a tool for gamers to communicate (voice channels) while playing online games. We use Discord to communicate and keep each other updated about our YipYap project.

We also used **join.me** where William shared his screen when we were developing YipYap's screens during our early stages of our project. We used that application and Discord together to communicate our ideas.

What was effective?

With YipYap, there were some things that were easy to deal with because Google, Android APIs, and YouTube tutorials are available for us to us. Also communication is **KEY**. Constant communication between teammates on Discord, in class, or in the hallway helped so much to convey someone's idea when we need to change something in the app.

To handle the workload, we split off the app screens into different tasks and worked on them simultaneously, stepping in to help each other when needed.

What was not effective?

With YipYap, there were some things that weren't easy to deal with because it was not available on Google, Android APIs, and YouTube tutorials (At least, we couldn't find it). We had to do some trial and error until it works (basically we have to break our application in order to find a solution for something that is not working). ***Google help support wasn't effective either.***

Because we split off tasks, occasionally we'd be stuck waiting for someone else to finish their part before we could really start our own.

What features were meant to be implemented but didn't have a chance?

One of the key features that we originally planned was using Bluetooth. We wanted to use Bluetooth to pair with every single phone in the party app so everyone has the game (think of it as a connection between everybody instead of using Wi-F)i. However, using Bluetooth did not work out, and we decided to do a pass-along style of game instead.

Originally, we also planned to implement a ratings systems for the words used, making it more like Cards Against Humanity in that games would have winners. After much testing and consideration, we decided to focus more on collaboratively crafting a story and letting users

save it instead. Over Bluetooth, ratings seemed logical, but the rating system would take up too much time once we switched to a pass-play style.

A few features that we noticed would be nice included a submit word button, the ability to edit the default list of topics, allowing users to end a game early, using a database so more story information could be stored, and making text boxes able to better support long stories. Some of these ideas we never got to try (submit button), and some we discovered were relevant much too late into the project to make the deadline (databases).

Challenges that were not foreseen and how you dealt with them?

Most of the team members in YipYap are seniors trying to get their lives together due to their CITA capstone projects. William, on the other hand, also had weekly research with Dr. Manaris. These are the challenges that were not foreseen because we can't really predict the future on what's going to happen as professors tend to change timelines on our classes.

There were times where some of the team members had to miss class; for example, how Luke missed class because he had an upset stomach. Lia had to miss a few classes because she needed to bring her dog to the vet and her grandparent passed away. And Jade had to miss one class because of personal reasons.

But in the end we resolved our problems by contributing in the team as much as we could and when our Capstone presentations are done, that's how we were going to commit 100% in our project. We also resolved our problems by communicating by informing each member what's happening instead of them falling behind. ***No teammate left behind***.

Changes since the Class Presentation Version

- Updated indicators of game progress
- Fixed bug of game crashing if ended early
- Adapted buttons during the game to be visible while keyboard is active
- Implemented saving of the created stories
- Modified "How to Play" to reflect game changes
- Added app logos and icons
- Disabled spacebar during game to better facilitate using only one word per turn

Team Overall Experience

      Lia: My overall experience in this project was very helpful to an extent where I thoroughly enjoyed the class even more. The idea of being able to collaborate with your classmates and forming a bond as friends. I really like the idea how we helped each other out when someone needs help on some things during the construction of the app development for YipYap. I really loved it how my teammates are very knowledgeable in this field where I feel comfortable asking them questions without being looked down upon.

      There were somethings that I don't know and I had to consult Google first before consulting my teammates because I have this mentality to smart search first because out in the real work job, you had to be on your own 80% of the time and I've learned that from my internship before. I just wished that we learned more about bluetooth capabilities and some artistic aspect like animation to make the app more fancy and snazzy.

      But in the end, I guess it's safe to say I could put this in my resume where I collaborated in a team developing an app where we thoroughly enjoyed every single day spending time on it.

      Jade: As group projects go, this is easily the best I've been part of. I'm not a huge fan of group projects (who is, really?) but it depends heavily on the people you're working with, and working with Lia, Luke, and William was a lot of fun. I think my only regret is that I feel like there wasn't much I could help out with towards the middle and end - its been a pretty crazy semester all around. Regardless, I feel like I've learned a lot, and would definitely call this a positive experience!

      Luke: Overall, I feel pretty similarly to Jade; this group was about the best that I could have hoped for with a group project, and I very much enjoyed working with them. Having us designate tasks to one another and having everyone follow through is always a great feeling, and, like Jade, I wish I had more time than I did to dedicate to this project, having been in the middle of my busiest semester at CofC so far. Like Lia, this is definitely something that I could put on a resume, and it's something that, most of the time, could only really be done in a group setting, where each of us play to our strengths with coding and design.

      William: I loved working on this app with my group. I often found myself saying I'd only work on one feature, and then I suddenly realize that I've spent three hours working on everything I could possibly implement at the time. I enjoyed app development and figuring out how to make things work we wanted.I sometimes I worried I was somewhat taking over the project, but this was an amazing experience in collaborating with a group and learning to remember to ask for their input and opinions. Though this I've gotten to actually meet and talk to people I've wanted to know better (albeit it's bittersweet because most of them are graduating!)