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### Oraib Mango CD Summer 2014

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**DATE SUBMITTED:** 12/18/ 2014

**Title of Grant Award:** Enhancing Language Proficiency using Mobile Games (Summer, 2014)

**Project Goal:** The project aimed at redesigning an Arabic language course, Advanced Arabic II, to integrate mobile gaming through the ARIS (Augmented Reality and Interactive Storytelling) platform to enhance students' communicative skills in Arabic using the very devices that have become prevalent in their everyday lives.

Gaming through ARIS provides students with a hands-on experience that allows them to use the language meaningfully to complete tasks while practicing all communicative skills; speaking, reading, writing and listening. Students work collaboratively to produce work that not only enhances their language skills but also their problem-solving and social skills.

**The ARIS mobile game was designed and the project is to be implemented** in class in Winter 2015

#### **Brief Description of the Project:**

ARIS mobile game activities are integrated within the curriculum for ARABIC 302 which is designed in accordance with the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) 2012 guidelines. Students work collaboratively in groups in order to fulfill game tasks that are designed to enhance their language skills through an ARIS game that utilizes Arabic podcasts and audiovisual material embedded in the game to allow students to find information that helps them move forward in the game and complete tasks. Students respond to tasks in a variety of ways that include audio recordings, written texts and physical actions like finding places on campus, conducting interviews and taking "selfies". The game revolves around descriptions of places around campus coupled with brief Arabic narratives about the campus and its history, as well as news stories or events occurring on campus.

#### **How the project was implemented:**

After signing up for a free account in ARIS, students can play the game that I specifically designed to complement their Arabic learning in this class (students at this level are required to develop their skills in making descriptions and narrations in different time frames). The game consists of a series of tasks that require students to interpret written and audio texts and then produce their own written and oral texts in Arabic to move forward and satisfy the requirements of the game. The project allows students to use any ios device including iPhones, iPods and iPads in the Arabic

language classroom to work collaboratively on completing the tasks of a mobile game called "Daring Coyote".

The students play the game on a weekly basis to earn the prestigious title of a CSUSB Ambassador at a University in the Arab world. Students are required to go around campus according to the clues and descriptions that they find on the virtual map of the campus--accessed on their ios devices-- and respond to the audiovisual/ visual messages and virtual conversations that pop up on the map as they reach their intended destinations. Each time students finish a task and leave their own productions, a new task pops up. On their way, students get rewards in the form of coins and/or collected attributes.

**Results of the Project:** I designed the game "Daring Coyote" on the ARIS platform to enhance students' learning of Arabic at the advanced level providing them with an engaging way of practicing their language skills in ways that allow them to interpret different types of texts as well as to provide their own input in Arabic in form of audio, text and video. The game tasks complement the students' learning at this level which involves making descriptions and narrating in different time frames. At the same time, the game allows students to learn more about their campus and the resources offered there (e.g.; one of the tasks requires students to go to the library and find a specific Arabic book and answer questions about it).

An ancillary result of this grant is a conference presentation of the ARIS game that I designed at a prestigious teaching conference in November 2014.

### **Additional Comments (Lessons Learned, Insights, Future Plans, etc.)**

I learnt that while designing mobile games is very time consuming, it is a highly rewarding experience. It is liberating to develop the ability to create games and control their settings and design according to learners' needs instead of having to follow what someone else designed for lack of expertise and knowledge; ARIS is a platform that can empower educators and students instead of corporations. I also learnt how unpredictable this field is, you could work for hours on a certain design feature and then discover that the feature is still under development; the developers of ARIS 2.0 warn users to proceed "at their own risk"!

I wish to continue developing this game as new features of ARIS 2.0 continue to unravel.

My future plan for gaming is to develop another virtual ARIS game that takes place in Anaheim, CA where early Arab immigrants have settled in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The game would take students through different historical events and familiarize them with the life styles of the early immigrants starting from the late 1800s.