

CITY GAME AS A GIANT BOARD GAME

CREATED BY STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS
UNDER A TEACHER'S GUIDANCE

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What is a city (urban) game?

**A game using a city as a giant board
with humans as counters**

Examples from Wrocław:

Wrocław City Game

Dwarf Hunting

The City of 4 Cultures

Murder in Breslau

The University of Minnesota Urban Game in Minneapolis 2003

the most literal urban game metaphor of the board game
possible (Hjorth: 2011)



Why are city games like board games?

- A **make-believe location**, for example a room, a building, a mine, a dungeon, a village or town, an island.
- Board games – **counters** symbolically represent characters
City game - **players** appear in person (character, costume)
- Sharing **mechanics**. City games – less luck, more cooperation
- Both - **immersion** in fantastic universe, forgetting reality, possible “**flow**” – total immersion in the game reality (Marco Arnaudo 2017).

Inspiration for our game

- **Marek Krawiec's** projects ***Agent*** (Krawiec 2011)
- Creating **city games** for secondary school students (Krawiec and colleagues)
- **Location of the games:** several towns of Greater Poland and Lower Silesia – Wrocław, Poznań, Koźmin, Toruń, Krotoszyn, and Jarocin
- **Base** for some WSF M.A. **theses.**

Our project: *From Wratislavia to Wrocław*

A game created **by students**:

- a small tutorial class
- two MA students: **Patrycja Król and Paulina Szybista**
- specialisation: teacher education
- lecturer sharing work on the game

Our project: *From Wratislavia to Wrocław*

A game created **for students**:

FIRST TWO GAME SESSIONS (WITH MANY TO FOLLOW)

- A game session for **secondary school students**
 - 20 students from Wąsosz (Lower Silesia)
- A game session for **Erasmus+ students**
 - 6 female students from Spain, Austria, France, Greece, Turkey

Erasmus+ students resting between tasks



From Wratislavia to Wrocław – project objectives

- to show students **how educational urban games are designed, planned and carried out step by step**
- to help students **discover information** about the **multi-cultural status** of the city of Wrocław in the past,
- to raise students' **cultural awareness** and promote open attitudes towards other cultures,
- to give students multiple opportunities of **practising the English language**
- to boost students' **initiative and creativity**,
- to teach **cooperation and communication skills** and **map reading**,
- to promote **outdoor educational activities**.

The game preparation procedure

The game preparation procedure may be divided into the following phases:

- preliminary steps (decisions)
- making a prototype, testing the prototype
- making the final version of the game,
- carrying out the game,
- concluding the game.

PHASE ONE: DECISION TIME

- **Form** of the game: a **competitive-cooperative** adventure game
- **Physical goal and mechanics**: walking across the city to reach a definite destination through a series of **stops = tasks**
- **Adventure goal** – „Mediaeval” story – recovering a lost recipe of baker Florian in love with Mayor’s daughter
- **Location**: the Old Town Market Square > **research**

PHASE TWO: MAKING A PROTOTYPE

- the first visit to the **Old Market Place** (photos, notes)
- creating a **map** of the route,
- creating a **story** – “legend” about baker Florian’s recipe,
- creating a variety of **tasks for the prototype** of the game with instructions,
- the second visit to the Market Place – **testing the prototype** (route, map, tasks, timing).

PHASE THREE: MAKING THE FINAL VERSION OF THE GAME

- **verifying some of the stops and tasks** and perfecting the map of the route,
- allocating **points** to individual tasks,
- creating the **teacher's version** (answers) and the **student's version** of the game (envelopes)
- deciding on **two modes** of the game (simple mode and competition mode)
- preparing **costumes and gadgets** for game leaders (cook and mayor)
- preparing **diplomas** for the participants.

PHASE FOUR: CARRYING OUT THE GAME

- **meeting the students** in the appointed place (Plac Solny),
- telling **the story** and giving **instructions**,
- **walking along the route** and doing the tasks (documenting: photos, films),
- reaching the finish line, **the closing ceremony** (inner court of Ossolineum, **accolade of a Mediaeval knight**)
- **Refreshments** (doughnuts).

And thou becomest *Amicus Wratislaviae*!
The accolade 😊



PHASE FIVE: CONCLUDING THE GAME

- the **leaders' feedback** on the game (objectives fulfilled, fun, valuable experience),
- **writing a report** about the game for the WSF webpage,
- reading **the players' opinions**,
- **formal evaluation** of the project team's work (very good grades).

SELECTED OPINIONS OF THE PLAYERS

- “What a great way of spending time in a new city! Although it is our third week in Poland, we had not seen much of the city before the game. And **today we have seen and learned more than for the past three weeks**. And in a very entertaining way too! Thank you, Leaders!”
- “I liked the fact that **the phones were forbidden, no GPS**, just maps. **It was fun!** Also, the game was very **creative**. I created most of the story connected with the gold emblems on a building and everybody in my team liked it.”
- “We don’t have such games in our town and we will ask our teacher if we could have one. **It is such fun!** And **I liked the way our group worked together** – everybody was able to contribute to some task, according to his or her talents. Sometimes we argued but we always came to a good solution. This game is for everybody, really.”

The closing ceremony of the game

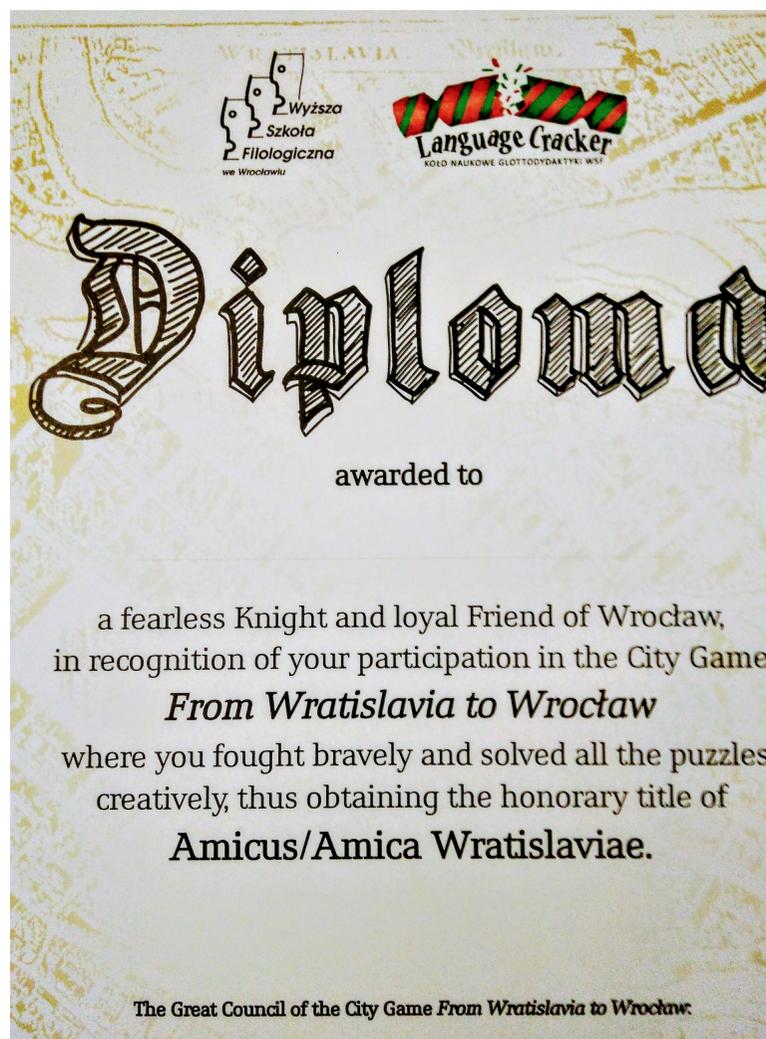
Participants with diplomas, leaders in costumes



Practical advice for game creators

- A lot of **freedom of choice** for students
- An interesting **location**, easily accessible (preferably on foot)
- The **season** of the year and a **calendar** of public events
- The **story** is important (coherence, tasks justified).
- Good, varied **tasks**, local **culture/history**
- Lower level groups: pre-teaching **vocabulary**
- **Costumes, gadgets, diplomas, refreshments** add excitement.

The diploma for the participants of the game



Two modes of the game

The simple mode

- **1 team**

The competitive mode

- **2 teams.** The teams **move along the same route**, naturally spreading along the route because of different tempos of solving tasks.
- **2-3 teams.** The teams start the game **at two or more different ends** of the route and go towards **the meeting point in the centre.**

Examples of tasks

- **TASK 2:** The Dwarf Division of a bank. **Create a slogan advertising The Dwarf Bank**

(The best answer: Small bank, big money!)

- **TASK 14:** The Houses of Hanzel and Gretel – a dwarf with a house. **Finish the story with a few sentences:**

Once upon a time, Hanzel and Gretel ate a magic biscuit by mistake and they shrunk to the size of dwarfs. Looking for a place to live, they saw a tiny ginger house. They knocked at the door and suddenly...

- **TASK 23:** Go to the inner courtyard and find the ancient Greek style relief with dancing maidens. **Dance a Greek dance.**

TASK 5: What do the symbols on the crest represent?

(Silesian Eagle, Czech lion, Wratislavia (W), Saint John Evangelist, the head of Saint John the Baptist.)



Conclusion

- The aim of this chapter:
 - to share practical knowledge of **producing an urban game as an academic project**
- Target: **Language teachers, lecturers in glottodidactics, students in education departments**
- Other fields – **modifications**, e.g.
 - more difficult tasks
 - more specialist knowledge (e.g. more historical, art, cultural references)
- **A source of inspiration, a useful methodology**, not a recipe.



THANK YOU 😊

