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Educaching

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Abstract

Educational or didactic games, or school by play – known by teachers since the time of Comenius' work. With the advent of computers and especially multimedia applications, there are far greater possibilities of using computer games in teaching, which can perhaps motivate students more. Integrating entertainment and education gave rise to a new term: edutainment (educational entertainment).

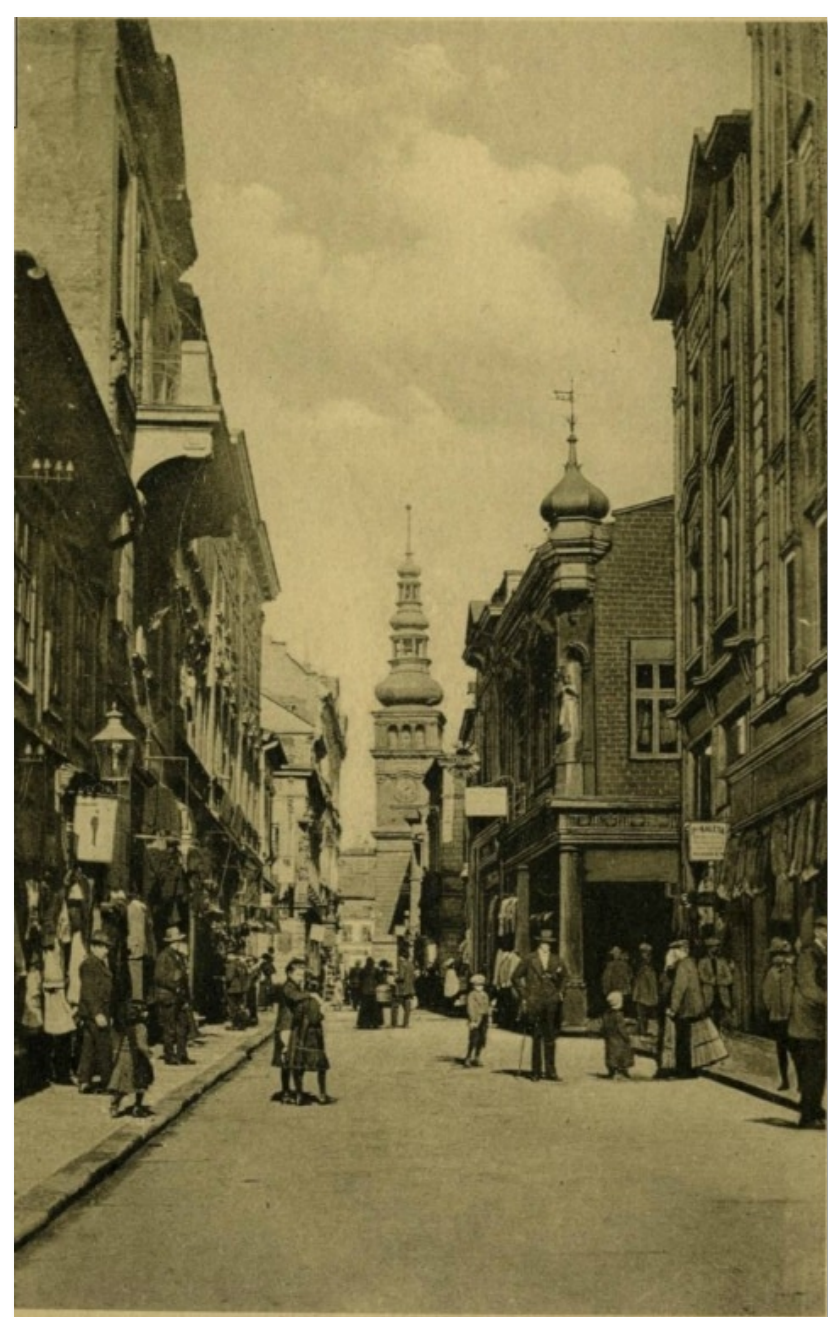
Technology is moving forward and multimedia applications have been extended to the Internet connection and social networks. Based on the principle of the popular game Geocaching, new educational activities appeared which enhance learning using GPS technology. Moreover, these new ways of teaching already have a name of their own – educaching.

What is educaching

Didactic game that brings the popular adventure sport of Geocaching into the classroom.

Educaching:

- takes the classroom out into the world;
- encourages teamwork and critical thinking;
- can be used in different subjects.



Selected sites:

- the former German House located on the Dr. E. Beneš Square,
<http://fraana.sweb.cz/geo/ndum.html>;
- Smetana Square with Antonín Dvořák Theatre,
<http://fraana.sweb.cz/geo/antonin.html>;
- Lauby (present parking lot between Muzejní and Velká streets),
<http://fraana.sweb.cz/geo/lauby.html>;
- Záměstí (area behind the Miloš Sýkora Bridge towards Silesian Ostrava),
<http://fraana.sweb.cz/geo/zamosti.html>.

Lauby, an extinct world of pubs, cafes, shops and cabarets in Ostrava

http://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC3XJCH_okno-do-minulosti

Example of use

Disappeared sites of Ostrava

The didactic game aims to educate game participants in an entertaining way about the history of architecturally interesting places in Ostrava city centre using GPS. Participants in the game consists of the students of an elementary school and any users of geolocation network Geocaching. Based on the location of the final cache, an educational trail in Ostrava city centre was laid out. The trail has four stops and a final point, where the incentive is hidden. At the specified coordinates, a player looks for a QR code using the GPS. After scanning the QR code into a smartphone, a player can display a web page with information about the history and historical photographs of the given place. That way he/she gains interesting information about places with historical significance and can at the same time visually compare the present with the past. The web page also provides the geographic coordinates of the next stop. The cache is registered on the official Geocaching website and so is available to all the users of this network.

Conclusion

Teaching using a geolocation game is an unconventional way of education. The results show, the students had fun but also gained new knowledge while participating in our small project of exploring interesting places of Ostrava city centre.

Geolocation game has its specific use. It is advisable to conduct it for smaller groups of students from about twelve years of age. The very core of Geocaching has an educational character because many caches are created as a quiz and only after doing research about the topic and solving the riddle can a player obtain the geographic coordinates. Similarly, as a didactic game, geolocation game should not be too long so that students will not grow tired from the long trail and be burdened by a great amount of boring information instead of enjoying the game.

The preparation of such a game is rather demanding on the teacher. However, once the game is prepared, it can be used repeatedly. We recommend using it on not-so-busy days, such as before the final reports are given, on the way back from the cinema, an exhibition or as a part of other extracurricular activities. It is only up to the fantasy and skills of a teacher to create an educational and entertaining game and incorporate it into the curriculum. Geolocation game is suitable for teachers who like to discover and try out new ways of teaching.