Praktikum Software Engineering - Experience Report
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As part of the PSE module in the summer semester of 2025, our task was to implement the board game Splendor as a digital version in Java. Our team consisted of six members: Lukas Ott, Leon Kürsch, Leonardo Melodia, Enrico Naumann, Jan Walter, and myself. Lukas acted as Scrum Master, while Leon took the role of Product Owner. My main responsibility was the design and implementation of the user interface and the overall user experience.

At the beginning of the project, I worked closely with Jan, who created the initial mockups. Together we used those as a foundation for the UI implementation. Later on, I independently implemented most of the screens using JavaFX after eventually carrying out a major UI overhaul. For this, I integrated custom-made visual assets to bring the game's look and feel as close as possible to the original board game. From a technical perspective, the Game Screen was the most challenging component. It had to support a lot of interactive behavior and needed a smooth connection to the game logic, which Leon was responsible for. I handled the communication layer to ensure everything worked together seamlessly.
Furthermore, my personal goal was to make the interface extremely intuitive, ideally to the point where someone could play without really needing to read the rules beforehand. To support this, I implemented interactive tooltips that appear when hovering over a card, showing its cost and what primary and secondary actions are available. Lastly, I added full audio integration to the game (background music and interaction sounds) something that was not required by the project but felt essential to me to make the gameplay more immersive and enjoyable.

Team collaboration went very well overall. Especially during the early stages, I was in daily contact with Jan to align on UI decisions and progress. We communicated regularly via phone, and the rest of the team stayed in touch through WhatsApp, Discord, and in-person meetings. Most planning sessions and coordination took place on Discord, which also worked great for remote pair programming.

From a personal point of view, I didn't face any major technical blockers. Instead, my biggest challenge was knowing when to stop adding improvements to the UI. I had many ideas to make it even better, but at some point, I had to focus on making sure the integration with the other components went smoothly. That final integration phase was demanding, mostly due to the increased need for communication and alignment with the rest of the team.

Looking back, I really enjoyed the project. I discovered how passionate I am about UI/UX and how much I enjoy taking initiative and contributing ideas beyond what's expected. At the same time, I learned a lot about team dynamics. Even though we worked quite independently on our respective parts, everything came together into a solid final product. I not only gained technical skills but also valuable insights into team organization, requirement analysis, and how to approach the development of a real software product.