

Experimenting an Alternative Method of Representation in School Cartography

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In 2005 Argentine and Hungarian specialists on School Cartography organized a survey to collect information about the use and understanding of thematic maps by pupils in their respective countries. After the analysis of the results, one of the proposals was the study of alternative methods of thematic representation to increase the pupils' interest in the use of thematic maps, making easier and clearer the reading of data represented on these maps.

During the next years (2007-2008) a new research project was begun on Chernoff faces, a method to represent multivariate data created in 1973. First theoretical research was developed about this method, its use in thematic cartography and how it can be used in School Cartography, presenting some general proposals about this theme. To test the theoretical results, participating researchers made two questionnaires that were filled by Argentine and Hungarian pupils. After the analysis of the results, some questions still remained without a clear answer. This situation motivated us to organize a new project with the participation of Austria and Hungary in 2010 and 2011. The results of the Austrian survey were compared with the results previously obtained by Argentine and Hungarian pupils, while the new Hungarian questionnaire was applied in grades 4 and 5 of an Elementary School in Budapest.

Based on these experiences, specialists worked out final recommendations for the use of Chernoff faces (and the adaptation of its principle to map symbols) in School Cartography, specifically in School Atlases made for the early grades of Elementary Schools.

The project is supported by the European Union and co-financed by the European Social Fund (grant agreement no. TAMOP 4.2.1/B-09/1/KMR-2010-0003)