

LEARNING HUMAN GEOGRAPHY. CASE STUDY: THE GEOGRAPHY TEXTBOOK FOR THE 6TH GRADE

MARIANA-DOINA CÎINEANU

"Nicolae Bălcescu" National College, Brăila, Brăila County, Romania,
e-mail: officeroseromania@gmail.com

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Abstract

In this paper, we analyse the 6th grade Geography textbook published in 2018 at the Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House S.A., Bucharest. The textbook devised in accordance with the school curriculum approved in 2017 began to be used in schools in Romania starting with the school year 2018-2019. The structure of the book (thematic units and subunits) and lessons was briefly analysed. The lessons include activities grouped into five categories: Observe (images, maps, charts, drawings, photos); Discover (tasks); Learn (lesson text); Geo-info (case studies); Apply (tasks). The tasks related to Human Geography included in the first two thematic units were analysed: Knowledge of the world in which we live; Anthroposphere - humans and their activities. The tasks proposed to be solved by the students have diverse difficulty degrees and have been associated with visual materials (photographs, maps, charts, schematic drawings, etc.) or texts.

Keywords: *learning activity, tasks, skills, active learning, exercise, curriculum*

INTRODUCTION

School textbooks are curricular documents that are designed especially for students to facilitate and streamline their formal learning in class, but especially the non-formal learning process they perform outside the classroom and school (Cristea, 2018a). In 1997, in the "curriculum reform", the introduction of alternative textbooks in the pre-university education system in Romania was considered as an innovative solution (Cristea, 2018b). However, some Romanian scholars note the existence of problems with alternative school textbooks that: sometimes or often offer different

basic content or which are inconsistent with scientific data (Cristea, 2018a); there are too many (Cristea, 2018b); were mistaken in terms of pedagogy and learning ethics (Cristea, 2018b); have generated negative effects on final evaluations (Cristea, 2018b).

In the pre-university education system in Romania, the organization of the educational process in Geography is carried out in accordance with the *School Programme and Curriculum for Geography. Grades 5th to 8th*, approved by Order of the Minister of National Education no. 3393/28.02.2017, Bucharest 2017 (MEC, 2017). This school curriculum was applied in the grade 5th, starting with the school year 2017-2018, and in the 6th grade, from the school year 2018-2019. For the 5th grade, several school textbooks were produced on this programme, six of them being posted on the website of the Ministry of National Education. National Evaluation and Examination Centre (<https://www.manuale.edu.ro>).

On May 22 2018, the Senate of Romania voted the *Law of the Unique Textbook*. By this law, the Ministry of National Education is obliged to provide free textbooks in printed, virtual and electronic format and in Braille, for all subjects at the beginning of each school year (Tudorica, 2018). For evaluation, textbooks are presented: in manuscript format; in uneditable electronic format; in interactive digital version (Tudorica, 2018). The manuals are evaluated by groups of assessors made up of teachers in pre-university and higher education (Tudorica, 2018) whose identity is not made public.

The Constitutional Court ruled that the *Law of the Unique Textbook* is unconstitutional in its entirety (The Official Monitor, 2018). However, the publishing and printing of the "unique" school textbooks was attributed to some state institutions, the Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, the Official Monitor/ National Printing House (<http://www.ziare.com/scoala/manuale/pop-reinvie-editura-didactica-si-pedagogica-ca-sa-faca-manualele-scolare-legea-manualului-contribuie-la-securitatea-nationala-1483028>).

The aim of this research is to briefly present the structure of the 6th grade Geography textbook (Fiscutean et al., 2018) and to analyse the tasks proposed to the students regarding the study of Geography. The Geography Textbook for the 6th grade was published in 2018 at the Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House S.A., in Bucharest. It was done in accordance with the aforementioned school curriculum (MEC, 2017). The authors of this textbook are four teachers of Geography in pre-university education (Fiscutean, M.C., Mihai, C., Fiscutean, D. and Popa, I.) (Fiscutean et al., 2018). A co-author is an Associate Professor in Higher Education where he holds a course in Didactics of Geography. The second edition of the textbook was revised based on the observations of the Geography professor, Dr. Ioan Mărculeț, from "I. L. Caragiale" National College in Bucharest. This textbook is available on CD and on the MEN platform. National Evaluation and Examination Centre (<https://manuale.edu.ro/manuale/Clasa%20a%20VI-a/Geografie/EDP/>).

This textbook has been introduced and has begun to be used in schools in Romania since the 2018-2019 school year.

THEORETICAL BASES

In Romania, many studies covered the curriculum for primary education presented in official documents. Thus, the competences and content of the curriculum of *Mathematics and Environmental Exploration* (Dulamă & Magdaş, 2014) were analyzed, the design of the current Geography and environmental knowledge curriculum in thematic units and content learning activities (Dulamă, 2011b, 2012), the digital textbooks of *Mathematics and Environmental Exploration* for the 2nd grade (Buzilă et al., 2017; Dulamă et al., 2017; Magdaş et al., 2017; Ilovan et al., 2018).

The structure, contents and other aspects of the Geography textbooks in Romania have been studied since the first appearance and until the end of the communist period (Dulamă & Ilovan, 2015, 2017) and have found out the diversity of the textbooks before 1944 and the use of the unique textbook during communist times. The Romanian specialists in Didactics of Geography were especially concerned with the definition of the school textbook, with the presentation of some features, functions and how it was used (Dulamă, 1996; Dulamă & Roşcovanu, 2007; Mândruţ & Ardelean, 2015; Mândruţ & Dan, 2015; Dulamă & Ilovan, 2016), its evaluation (Dulamă, 2009), the typology of learning activities that can be designed based on textbooks (Dulamă, 2000). In the last decade, they have been concerned about the use of school textbooks and other sources in the process of pupil training and development (Mândruţ & Ardelean, 2015; Dulamă, 2010, 2011a). At the middle school and high school levels, teachers' opinions on the Geography secondary school curriculum (Dulamă et al., 2017) and of the Romanian Geography teachers' were studied on continuing education, which also investigated aspects related to the means of education and teaching methods used (Gale et al., 2017). Other studies of Romanian researchers have focused on the analysis of Geography textbooks in India in order to transfer models of good practice from other education systems to the educational space in Romania (Ciineanu, 2016, 2017).

In addition, scholars in the field of education have investigated the discourse in the school textbooks and have noted the existence of a hybrid discourse that includes all kinds of textual discourse (narrative, description, explanation, argumentation, predictive, dialogue and conversation, injunctive, figurative) (Domunco, 2017, pp. 1-2). The school textbook was also analysed according to the principle of differentiating and individualizing learning (Birnaz & Farima, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The research material consists of the content of the 6th grade Geography textbook. Therefore, we have analysed the contents of the book. The analysis focuses on microstructures (thematic units, lessons, learning activities), considered as text units among which there are links that ensure consistency and coherence of the contents of the book. We have analyzed the tasks related to Human Geography, included in the first two thematic units: 1. *Knowledge of the world we live in* (pp. 8-19); 2. *Anthroposphere - Humans and their activities* (pp. 20-39). These proposed tasks to be solved by the students were associated with visual materials (photographs, maps, charts, schematic drawings, etc.) or texts. In each lesson, in a table, we specified the task class, the means of learning used to solve the task, the task itself, and the cognitive processes that students perform during the solving process.

Methods of research. The content and texts selected from the Geography textbook were studied by analysis, textual content analysis and discourse analysis methods. We used visual methods to analyse Geography-related images (photographs, maps, schematic drawings, and charts). Since a Geography teacher who uses this textbook in the 6th grade as didactic activity conducted the study, the collection of the research data was done through the participatory observation method. We ordered the analytical approach to the content of the textbook based on the chronological criterion, and the information we selected concerning their relevance. The interpretation of data was done through the community diagnosis method, because it highlights certain ideas about the reality of geographic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a) Analysis of the structure of the textbook. *"Geography. Textbook for the 6th Grade. Terra - Elements of Human Geography. Europe"* (Fiscutean et al., 2018) has 96 pages. The textbook has several components. In the first part of the book, there is the *Romanian Anthem* (p. 3), the *Presentation of the Book* (p. 4), the *General Competences and the Specific Competences* to be formed by students (p. 5), and the *Table of Contents* (pp. 6-7). The textbook includes four thematic units: *Unit 1. Knowledge of the world we live in* (pp. 8-19); *Unit 2. Anthroposphere - humans and their activities* (pp. 20-39); *Unit 3. Europe - geographical identity* (pp. 40-81); *Unit 4. Europe in the Contemporary World* (pp. 82-89). At the end of each unit, there is a revision lesson and an evaluation lesson, and at the end of the textbook, there are *Final Revision* (p. 90), *Final Assessment* (p.91) and *Annexes* (pp. 92-95). The annexes include three maps: *Annex 1. Map of Europe - Countries, cities, rivers, lakes* (pp. 92-93); *Annex 2. Europe - Map of Energy and Mineral*

Resources (p. 94); *Annex 3. Agriculture of Europe* (p. 95). The first two maps are also available on page 63 and page 64. *The World Political Map* is introduced in unit I (pp. 14-15). These maps are not associated with working tasks.

b) Analysis of the structure of the thematic units. Each unit presents, at the beginning, the overview of the learning unit: the lesson headings included; review; evaluation; keywords; a schematic drawing; specific competences; a short text addressed to students. Unit I consists of three lessons, Unit II has six lessons, Unit III has 15 lessons, and Unit IV has two lessons. At the end of each unit, there is a review lesson and an assessment lesson. A lesson can include activities grouped into five categories: 1. *Observe* (images, maps, charts, drawings, photos); 2. *Discover* (tasks); 3. *Learn* (lesson text); 4. *Geo-info* (case studies); 5. *Apply* (tasks).

c) Analysis of the tasks proposed to the students in Unit I of the textbook: "Knowledge of the world in which we live in". Lesson 1 "Landmarks of Earth Knowledge" comprises four tasks in the *Discover* section and two tasks in the *Apply* section (Table 1). To help solve task 2 by the students, it would be necessary to add information about exploring the Earth (locations: cities, streets, buildings) in the *Geo-info* section, exploring the celestial vault and ocean depths with Google Earth. Increasing efficiency in solving task 3 could be accomplished by adding text with information about the conditions under which a GPS phone is being used in emergencies. In order to update the information in the section *Learn*, where the last landmark is from 1981 (Dumitru Prunariu's photograph), current teaching aids and methods of exploration should be mentioned. The textbook was devised for one hour per week. If the schedule would offer the possibility of two hours per week, a lesson with actualized information about Earth knowledge could be included.

Table 1. Tasks in *Lesson 1. Landmarks of Earth Knowledge*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Task	Cognitive processes
Observe, Discover	Schematic drawings: Old nautical map on the canvas; compass; GPS navigation phone; Google Earth	1. Identify / distinguish the tools that were used by explorers during the great geographic discoveries	Observation Identification Analysis
	Schematic drawing: Google Earth	2. Identify information provided by Google Earth	Identification Documentation
	Schematic drawing: GPS navigation phone	3. Identify the geographical coordinates made available by the GPS application of a mobile phone	Identification Problem solving
	Previous drawings	4. Identify useful tools for travelling in the city and on a mountain trail	Identification Comparison

Practise	Map, "Great explorers from the 15 th -16 th centuries"	5. Identify oceans, continents, hemispheres existing on Fernando Magellan's route	Localization Identification
	Map, "Great explorers from the 15 th -16 th centuries"	6. Describe in writing an imaginary journey alongside Christopher Columbus in the form of a logbook	Localization Creation of text

Lesson 2 "Continents and Countries - Cartographic Representations. The World Political Map" includes four tasks in the *Discovery* section, a task in the *Learning* section and a task in the *Apply* section (Table 2). Solving these tasks is useful in learning the location of continents and countries. Some changes would be useful for students to help solve tasks: to mention on the map the names and the grades of Equator and Zero Meridian; to add the information about dependent territories.

Table 2. Tasks in Lesson 2. *Continents and Countries - Cartographic Representations. The World Political Map*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Task	Cognitive processes
Observe Discover	World map by Abraham Ortelius (from the first modern Atlas: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum); Map of continents	1. Identify the continents	Identification
	Map of continents	2. Identify the largest continent by surface	Ranking
	Map of continents	3. Identify the continent they live in	Localization Spatial relationship
	Map of continents	4. Specify the hemisphere contexts	Localization Spatial relationship
Apply	Political map of South America	5. Classify countries according to certain criteria: area, territory shape, capitals, ocean exit	Localization Identification Classification
Find out	Political Map of Europe	6. Categorize countries according to certain criteria: location, area of territory	Localization Identification Classification

Lesson 3 "Practical Applications: Distance and Surface Assessment Exercises on Classical and/or Digital Cartographic Media" has three tasks in the *Observation* section and thirteen tasks in *Apply* section (Table 3). To solve them, students need to remember information learned in the 5th grade. The *Apply* section includes twelve tasks: to measure and calculate distances on drawings, plans and maps, to calculate the scale of plans and maps, to build cartographic representations using software. We consider that the tasks

have a too high degree of difficulty, which exceed the average level of knowledge and skills of 6th grade students, require a lot of time to solve and information and prescriptions from other sources.

Table 3. Tasks in Lesson 3. *Practical Applications: Exercises to Evaluate Distances and Surfaces on Classical and / or Digital Cartographic Media*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Task	Cognitive processes
Observe	Cassette with graphic scale Cassette with numeric scale	1. Define the scale of the map; classify the scales of the map	Updating information from memory
	Schematic drawings: 1. District plan; City plan; The Romanian map; World map; 2. Buildings; Infrastructure; Regions and counties; Continents and countries	2. Compare large-scale plans with small-scale maps	Analysis Comparison Ranking
		3. Specify how the scale of the map is calculated	Updating information from memory
Apply	Europe's silent map to scale 1: 60,000,000	4. Measure distances (an itinerary on the map); calculate distances (an itinerary) using the map scale	Measurement Mathematical calculation
		5. Identify the numeric scale of the map	Identification
		6. Calculate the distance travelled on a proposed itinerary	Mathematical calculation
		7. Measure the smallest distance between two cities; calculate the distance between two cities using the scale of the map	Measurement Mathematical calculation Comparison
	Silent map of Romania Iasi City Plan	8. Calculate the numerical scale of a map; build the graphic scale	Mathematical calculation Representation of the graphic scale
	Software: Google Earth, Google Maps, Bing Maps	9. Build the map of Romania using a software; calculate the numeric scale of the built map	Cartographic representation/software using Mathematical calculation
	Drawing with a bicycle route (the shape of the Romania's map) Iasi City Plan	10. Calculate the distance between two points using two maps with different scales	Mathematical calculation
The drawing/plan of a football field	11. Calculate the scale of the image/plan of a football field knowing	Measurement Mathematical calculation	

		its length	
		12. Calculate the distance between two points by turning meters into centimetres	Mathematical calculation
		13. Calculate distances between different points on the drawing/plan used	Mathematical calculation
		14. Measure the distance between two points on a given surface	Measurement
		15. Measure the distance between two points on a given surface, in different situations	Measurement
		16. Convert a drawing to a map/plan	Cartographic representation

c) Analysis of the tasks proposed to students in Unit II of the Textbook: “Anthroposphere – Humans and their Activities”. Lesson 1 “Population of the Earth: Numerical Evolution, Geographical Distribution, Human Diversity, Territorial Mobility” comprises four tasks in the *Discovery* section and one task in the *Apply* section (Table 4). In order to increase the efficiency of pupils’ learning and solving tasks, a box with specialised terminology would be very useful: birth rate, death rate, natural balance, population density, population aging, population growth rate, quality of life, territorial mobility, migration, migrant, immigrant, emigrant, atheism, Taoism and Confucianism, etc.

Table 4. Tasks in Lesson 1. *Population of the Earth: Numerical Evolution, Geographical Distribution, Human Diversity, Territorial Mobility*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Observe Discover	The world number of inhabitants evolution graph (between 1800 – 2024)	1. Identify two causes of number of inhabitants growth after 1960	Explanation
		2. Identify the shortest period of time for 1 billion population growth	Identification Comparison
	Map “ <i>Evolution on continents of number of inhabitants between 2100 and 2017</i> ” (map-chart) Text section <i>Find out</i>	3. Identify the continent which will record the highest increase of the inhabitants number; identify a cause which could foster the growing of inhabitants number	Identification Cause-effect relationship
		4. Identify the continent which will record the highest decrease of the inhabitants number; identify a cause of this decreasing	Identification Cause-effect relationship

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Apply	Text; Chart "Population on the Continents"	5. Identify the demographic characteristics of the continents	Identification of information in text and charts
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Lesson 2 "Human Settlements - Pattern of Habits and Territorial Differentiation" comprises five tasks in the *Discovery* section and two tasks in the *Apply* section (Table 5). Solving task 4 requires updating previous knowledge about pollution. For the construction of a specialized language, at task 5, it would be useful to replace the "occupation" word with a synonym used in Geography. Task 7 has a high degree of difficulty compared to the level of competence of the 6th grade students, requires a great deal of time to solve and documentation from other sources.

Table 5. Tasks in Lesson 2. Human settlements - Pattern of Habitats and Territorial Differentiation

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Observe Discover	Photos: cave, igloo, farm, villa, block of flats, skyscraper area	1. Identify the first form of inhabitation	Identification Localization
		2. Identify the urban environment	Identification Localization
		3. Identify the dwelling specific to the cold climate zone	Identification Localization Cause-effect relationship
		4. Identify the landscape most affected by pollution to explain the cause	Cause-effect relationship
		5. Specify two occupations of the people; associate these human activities with other photos	Identification
Apply	Schematic drawings	6. Differentiate between urban and rural settlements; associate a Court with an urban or rural human settlement	Identification Analysis Comparison Localization
	The map of the main megalopolis on the Earth Internet	7. Complete a table with geographic names (cities, countries, megalopolis) and correspondent information searched on the internet	Identification Localization Association

Lesson 3 "Natural resources and their exploitation" includes five tasks in the *Discover* section and a task in the *Apply* section (Table 6). To help students solve task 5, in the *Learn* section, it would be useful to provide information about the use of natural resources, detailed on wind, solar and running waters energy. To help solve task 6 by students, it would be necessary to add information about unconventional energy sources (solar, wind, sea, nuclear) within the *Learn* section. Sub-item 2 of task 6 could be solved as a homework task.

Table 6. Tasks in Lesson 3. *Natural resources and their exploitation*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Observe	Schematic drawing	1. Identify natural resources	Identification
		2. Identify inexhaustible resources	Analysis
	Schematic drawings: coal, oil	3. Identify resources: coal, oil	Identification
		4. Specify transport modes from the extraction zone to the processing area	Updating information in memory
		5. Specify ways of using the identified resources	Updating information in memory
Apply	Schematic drawings: thermo-central, hydro-electric plant, solar power station, wind, tidal, atomic-nuclear station	6. Specify: sources of raw material used in power plants; advantages and disadvantages of using them; conditions for the location of power plants. Identify the countries that have the largest share of solar, wind and sea-power use.	Updating information in memory Identification Documentation Selecting information

Lesson 4 “*Areas of Economic Activity on Earth: Agriculture, Industry, Services (General Features)*” comprises five tasks in the *Discover* section and a task in the *Apply* section (Table 7). To build a geographic reasoning, the order of tasks could be changed. In order to make the most accurate geographical representations, some schematic drawings (e.g. crane and blast furnaces, means of transportation, water accumulation and coniferous forest) could be replaced with photos of some places in reality. Increasing efficiency in solving task 3 could be achieved by adding a text with tourism information. To ensure the internal logic of Geography, the position of tasks could be changed: task 5 be the second, and task 2 be the last.

Table 7. Tasks in Lesson 4. *Fields of Economic Activity on Earth: Agriculture, Industry, Services (general characteristics)*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Observe Discover	Schematic drawings: grain harvesting; crane and blast furnaces; means of transportation; an accumulation of water and a coniferous forest	1. Identify the economic activities corresponding to the schematic drawings	Identification Upgrading your previous knowledge
		2. Specify the impact of each economic activity on the geographical environment	Cause-effect relationship
	The text of the lesson	3. Deduce / explain the purpose of tourism	Explanation
	The local horizon	4. Identify the predominant activity in the area where they live	Identification Analysis
	Previous schematic drawings	5. Specify the products obtained in the activities observed in the drawings: grain harvesting; crane and blast furnaces	Identification Upgrading your previous knowledge

Apply	Schematic drawings (ATM, robots, wheat and wheat flour, factory)	6. Associate the names of business sectors with appropriate drawings / representations	Identification Correlation Representation through drawing the name of the activity sector
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Lesson 5 "*Effects of Human Activities on the Environment and Quality of Life*" includes one task in the *Discover* section and two tasks in the *Apply* section (Table 8). Task 2 is difficult to solve because students have no solid knowledge of the anthropic environment and the natural environment. By solving task 3, it is intended to contextualize the theoretical knowledge about the human intervention on the environment in the locality where they live based on practical observations or based on their own experience. New notions are introduced (hazard, sustainable development, noxiousness, landscape, artificial environment, city profile) whose understanding requires the existence and the ability to use a large amount of knowledge by students.

Table 8. Tasks in Lesson 5. *Effects of Human Activities on the Environment and Quality of Life*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Observe Discover	Photos: deforestation; plant; waste discharge	1. To discover: negative effects on the environment; human activities that produce these effects; geo-spheres affected by these effects; measures to mitigate negative effects; forms of human intervention on the local environment	Upgrading your previous knowledge Identification
Apply	Schematic drawings: urban environment; natural/forest environment	2. To specify: activities that influence the quality of the environment; the landscape / environment in which conditions for a better quality of life are ensured; two measures to increase the quality of life in the two environments	Upgrading your previous knowledge Analyse Deduction Evaluation
	The text of the lesson	3. To analyse the quality of the environment in the locality in which they live; to propose measures to improve the effects of human activities on the local environment	Analyse Comparison Evaluation Deduction

Lesson 6 "*Practical Apps*" includes six tasks in the *Apply* section (Table 9) by solving which knowledge gained in previous lessons is reinforced. Tasks 1 and 2 are associated with the *Earth Population* lesson. Task 3 is based on capitalizing of information from *Natural resources and their exploitation* lesson. Tasks 4-6 require large time resources for solving and documenting from other sources, but it assures the development of the necessary living skills and the deepening of the tourism information referred to in lesson 4 on the *Fields of Economic Activity on Earth*.

Table 9. Tasks in Lesson 6. *Practical Apps*

Tasks category	Teaching aids	Tasks	Cognitive processes
Apply	Graph "Evolution of the number of inhabitants in Gloria village between 1960 and 2017"	1. Identify the range of years in which the number of inhabitants is increasing/ decreasing	Data analysis
		2. Identify causes that have influenced population dynamics since 1990	Updating previous knowledge Cause-effect relationship
	Internet, monographs, statistics, etc. Incomplete table	3. Search for demographics about your home town; draw a graph showing the evolution of the number of inhabitants in the locality where you live; explain the evolution of the number of inhabitants	Documentation Graphical representation Explanation
		4. Complete the identity card of the locality in which you live: characteristics of the settlement (name, surface, type, age), characteristics of the population (number, density, natural balance, migratory balance, ethnic structure, confessional structure, age structure, professional structure)	Documentation Analyse Selecting information Synthesizing
	Poster model	5. Create a poster to promote responsible resource management for the sustainable development of the home town; discuss with colleagues about the sustainable development of the home town	Documentation Observation Analyse Evaluation Plastic creation Debate
	World map with tourist destinations (New York, Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Beijing, Sydney)	6. Present a tourist destination based on a plan: 1. the country of destination, the capital city; 2. language; 3. climate characteristics; 4. two units of relief that you will explore; 5. two running waters, a sea/ ocean that you will sail on a cruise; 6. three anthropic objectives that you will visit; 7. other useful information (local currency, traditional food, etc.)	Documentation based on a plan Identification of information Selection of information
	Schematic drawings: stamps with flags	7. Identify the flags of some countries	Identification
	Photos Sphinx, Danube Delta, Voroneţ Monastery, Peleş Castle, Transfăgărăşanul, Bears Cave	8. Make a tourist route trail	Documentation based on a plan Identification of information Selection of information Sorting of information

Analysing the tasks proposed to the students from the perspective of the Bloom's taxonomy, referred to cognitive area, which includes six general objectives (I. The Knowledge / Knowledge Acquisition; II. Understanding; III. Applying; IV. Analysis; V. Synthesis; VI. Evaluation) (Jinga, 1983; Dulamă, 2013), we note that many of these involve the use of cognitive processes located in the first stage, such as the recognition or identification of aspects of various visual materials and the updating of knowledge previously learned or learned by pupils in various formal or non-formal contexts. Although in the tables, we mentioned the students' performance of analytical operations (step IV of the taxonomy), in solving the tasks, we note that the emphasis is on the brief analysis of some elements and the notification of some implicit aspects and, more rarely, on analysing relationships, identifying causal relationships, and analysing some principles of information organization.

Many tasks are included in the *Apply* section, which can be associated with the third step of the taxonomy (Application). However, many of these tasks have a small degree of difficulty, require the updating of previous knowledge, the identification of some aspects, and these cognitive processes are, in fact, located on stage I of the taxonomy. We assign fewer tasks to the cognitive stages of Understanding (II); Synthesis (V); Evaluation (VI).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The analysed school textbook has a unitary structure that respects the provisions of the current curriculum. The lessons include activities grouped in the following categories: Observe; Discover; Learn; Geo-info; Apply. The content of the textbook is illustrated with many schematic drawings, photographs, plans, maps, and charts. Texts have a lower weight and do not contain all the information needed to ensure a profound understanding of geographic processes and the full accomplishment of tasks.

To increase the efficiency of learning by solving the tasks included in the textbook, some additions are needed in texts and cartographic material. The clarity of some tasks could increase by detailing the steps that should be taken to solve them. Tasks with a high degree of difficulty, which take a lot of time to solve and additional information, could be marked with a symbol and proposed as homework. In order to form geographic representations as appropriate as possible, larger and more relevant photographs would be used rather than schematic drawings. Mentioning the title under all visual materials would also facilitate better understanding.

Expanding the research of this Geography textbook can be done in several directions: analysing the tasks proposed to the students within the thematic units of Regional Geography; investigating students' opinions about this textbook; investigating the views of Geography teachers about the book and about how to use it in class; analysing the results obtained by students after reading the contents of this textbook and after solving the tasks within it.

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