

Abstract

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This thesis springs from a problem of the increasing distance between research in human geography and education in geography, and from the need for methods facilitating the study of relations, context and overall view. The aim is to illustrate how geographical research approaches can be combined, developed and concretised into a method, *the process method*, which facilitates such studies, and to analyse if and how this method can be transformed didactically into didactic material and in practical education in geography. The thesis thereby comprises a wide area, including method development with empirical regional studies and didactisation through development of didactic material and trials in education. We have delimited our work to two research approaches; *regional geography* and *time-geography*. The perspective on knowledge and learning in the didactisation of the process method is *deep-orientation* and *experience-based learning*.

In developing the process method we depart from key concepts in geography, such as landscape, place, space, reach, region, network, process landscape, individuals, actors, 'genre de vie', projects and pocket of local order. The *process method* includes five tools; 1) series of maps, 2) profile cuts, 3) timegeographic notation, 4) a comprehensive model for studies of the process landscape and 5) a model over levels of analysis. By combining these tools the process landscape can be studied from different perspectives and one can reflect upon the relations between processes on micro- and macrolevel as well as the context in which different elements in the landscape are parts. In the didactisation of the *process method* our aim is to support deep-orientated and experience-based learning. The didactical material, Geographical perspectives (Geografiska perspektiv), is programmed in HTML and presented on the annexed CD. It is also accessible at the Internet (<http://hem.passagen.se/geografiskaperspektiv>). It consists of three main parts: an Introduction programme, Regional examples – a database, and Your database (a database that the students can construct). We have applied and tried the *process method* in two classes of a course in human geography, on introductory level for teacher students. This is an existing university course in human geography with a predefined curriculum and course literature. We organised the course in four parts: Introduction, Individual – population, Product – economic activities and Process landscape. The framework of the course was our 'comprehensive model'. The course followed a successive structure encouraging the students to depart from their own experiences and relate them to structural changes in society as a whole. In all the three parts the students worked with the introduction programme, digitalised laboratory work, exercises and teamwork.

We conclude that the *process method*, in combining regional geography and timegeography, has resulted in a structuring tool that stretches between parts and entirety, micro- and macrolevel, the unique and generality. Its constituent tools have, through the students' activities, been integrated in their reflection and have not stopped at an instrumental and formal level. The students' evaluations in the two trials points at their satisfaction of seeing relations between different parts of the course, putting it into a geographical context. The students' examinations also indicate that they have been able to use the tools of the *process method* to relate the different elements in their studies together.

Keywords: human geography method, geography education, regional geography, time-geography, geography didactics, vertical exemplarity, functional legitimacy, IT-aided education, interactive studies, process landscape, process method.

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