

## **Abstract**

Although geographical thinking is often regarded as one of the primary goals of geography education, it is associated with several ambiguities and challenges. The main aim of this dissertation thesis is to address selected deficiencies through three specific objectives, thereby contributing to the insufficient process of conceptualizing and recontextualizing geographical thinking in geography education. The objectives of this dissertation are to (1) systematize and conceptualize the current knowledge on the issue of geographical thinking in geographical education and its various aspects; (2) verify to what extent and how are pre-service geography teachers exposed to geographical thinking and its components; and (3) to deconstruct geographical thinking into its specific components, then identify and propose strategies and specific examples for its development.

Achieving these diverse objectives naturally requires the application of a wide range of research methods. The theoretical part of the dissertation thesis employs a detailed systematic review based on the PRISMA methodology. The empirical part utilizes both quantitative methods (questionnaire surveys – descriptive, explorative, and inferential statistics) and qualitative methods (semi-structured expert interviews – thematic analysis).

The findings of this dissertation thesis provide a unified framework and classification of the previously unclear array of definitions and conceptualizations of geographical thinking. In light of the identified concepts and their overall inconsistency, several recommendations for future research are proposed. The results empirically confirm the insufficient emphasis on developing the components of geographical thinking in geography education and offer recommendations for addressing this issue. Additionally, the findings present a detailed deconstruction of geographical thinking into its components and a discussion with examples and strategies for its development.

The individual research findings, recommendations, and conclusions are available across six peer-reviewed articles, which constitute this dissertation. A comprehensive description and presentation of these articles can be found after the theoretical and methodological framework (Chapters 2 and 3), in Chapter 4 – Portfolio of Submitted Articles.