

Mariusz Olczyk (2018)

Labels on coloured tactile maps (typhlomap) - the Polish experiences

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The author presents the problems associated with geographical name conventions and labels on coloured tactile maps in atlas-type publications for the blind and visually impaired, based on the author's many years of experience. The detailed description of the 'keys' system and Braille 'abbreviations' which Polish cartography uses in this type of works shows the benefits of using the system in the editing of map series. A framework of logical and intuitive 'abbreviations' presents many possibilities and makes maps easier to read. The system for connecting names of a particular 'family' of terms by using a two-letter abbreviation preceded by a unique 'key' should be a fundamental principle for creating sets of Braille 'abbreviations' for use in a given work. The author also highlights the need to use exonyms, since Braille's basic alphabet has none of the diacritic characters which typify various languages, which hinders the correct transcription of certain names.

The proposed system for constructing 'abbreviations' and 'keys' may also be used effectively in individual town plans and maps to improve the communication of information. The comprehensive structure of this system also makes it easier to search through indexes of 'abbreviations' and their explanations.

All the described elements have an impact in raising the practical value of tactile maps.

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