

# POSSIBILITIES OF ETHNIC CULTURE INTEGRATION INTO LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE LESSONS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL: TEACHERS' ATTITUDE

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**Abstract.** Ethnic culture education is an integral part of general education, which helps to achieve the educational goals of cultural awareness, form personal competencies that are manifested in the ability to know, respect, protect cultural diversity, and participate in socially valuable cultural expression (*Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture Education*, 2012). The integration of ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons is very important in developing harmony between man and nature, as well as in passing on customs, traditions and values from generation to generation. It is an integral link between the cultures of past and present generations. General Curriculum for Education (2008) indicates respect for one's mother tongue, the culture and traditions of the nation. One of the main tasks of general education is to expand the understanding and education of pupils' ethnic culture, to develop and uphold students' moral values. The relations between ethnic culture and the Lithuanian language are inseparable. The article presents the attitude of teachers about the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes. The semi-structured interview with pedagogues applied in the qualitative research revealed that primary school teachers very often integrate ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons and use various educational methods and forms. During the interview, teachers shared not only the successes of ethnic culture integration, which in their opinion depend on the training of the teacher and one's personal development, but also the failures. They stated that the goal of ethnic culture education is to help pupils develop national identity and ethnocultural literacy, know and appreciate the traditional culture of their nation and Lithuania, understand its vitality and constant renewal, connections and differences with other cultures, perceive themselves as cultivators of that culture, develop pride in it and respect for other cultures.

**Keywords:** ethnic culture, integration, pedagogue, mother tongue

## Introduction

Ethnic culture education is currently one of the most relevant topics. It is an integral link between the cultures of past and present generations. The fundamental

part of this culture is ethnic culture, which must be nurtured at an early age. The continuity of ethnic culture education in primary classes is very important. Ethnocultural education is an integral part of general education (*Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (hereinafter: MESS), General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture in Basic Education*, 2012).<sup>1</sup>

Ethnic culture is directly related to the knowledge of Lithuanian language, because the knowledge of one's mother tongue begins with folklore at an early age. The *General Curriculum Frameworks* (2008) indicate respect for the mother tongue, for the culture and traditions of the nation. It is sought to make pupils perceive themselves as responsible members of their own nation, and to develop tolerance for other nations. School is the source of knowledge and skills that help a child to develop and grow spiritually. One of the main tasks of educational institutions should be: to expand the understanding and development of pupils' ethnic culture, to cultivate and nurture pupils' moral values. The relationship between ethnic culture and Lithuanian language is inseparable. Ethnic culture is inseparable from the mother tongue, which helps to develop pupils' creativity, awareness of the importance of national heritage, and the growth of moral values. The most important role in the educational process in primary classes is played by the mother tongue, which the child first of all learns in the family. At school, the child learns to read and write, while the spoken language is already developed. The importance of ethnic culture in the general education of pupils is emphasized in educational documents (*Law on the Principles of State Protection of Ethnic Culture of the Republic of Lithuania*, 1999; *Strategy for the Development of Lithuanian Ethnic Culture in General Education Schools*, 2009; *MESS General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture in Basic Education*, 2012; *The National Education Strategy for 2013-2022*), which analyse the fostering and importance of ethnic culture in the educational process<sup>2</sup>. During the Lithuanian language lessons, primary school pupils

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<sup>1</sup> Pagrindinio ugdymo etninės kultūros bendroji programa [General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture in Basic Education]. (2012). Available at: <https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/etnine-kultura/EK%20programa%20Pagrindinis%20ug%20zin120412.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos etninės kultūros valstybinės globos pagrindų įstatymas [Law on the Principles of State Protection of Ethnic Culture of the Republic of Lithuania]. (1999) (valid amendment 01-10-2019). Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.86929?jfwid=rivwzvpyg>

Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo ir mokslo ministro įsakymas „Etninės kultūros plėtros švietimo įstaigose strategija [Law of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania “Strategy for the Development of Ethnic Culture in Educational Institutions” (2009). Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.358689?jfwid=pflfenc6>

Lietuvos Respublikos Švietimo ir mokslo ministerija. Valstybinė švietimo strategija 2013–2022 m. [Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. The National Education Strategy for 2013-2022]. Available at: [https://www.sac.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Valstybine-svietimo-strategija-2013-2020\\_svietstrat.pdf](https://www.sac.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Valstybine-svietimo-strategija-2013-2020_svietstrat.pdf)

discover an interesting and quite creative path to the ethnic culture and its knowledge. The most important thing is the proper and constant integration of ethnic culture into the educational process.

*Research object* is the attitude of primary school teachers of the Vilnius city X and Klaipėda city Y pre-gymnasiums towards the possibilities of the ethnic culture education integration into Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes.

*Research aim*: to reveal the attitude of teachers to the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes.

### **Features of ethnic culture integration into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes**

Ethnic culture is defined as “the sum total of cultural properties, created by the entire nation (ethnos), passed from generation to generation and constantly renewed, which makes it possible to preserve the national identity and consciousness and uniqueness of ethnographic regions” (*Law on the Principles of State Protection of Ethnic Culture of the Republic of Lithuania*, 1999 (valid amendment 01-10-2019, Article 2). Another definition of ethnic culture is found in the Strategy for the Development of Ethnic Culture, 2009: “Ethnic culture is the essence of the nation’s existence, survival and strength, the basis of national culture, which helps to support the civic maturity of its members, maintain dignity, independence and distinctiveness necessary for international cooperation, through ethnic culture the way to civil society is paved—tolerance for other nations is developed” (*Law of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania “Strategy for the Development of Ethnic Culture in Educational Institutions”*, 19-11-2009 No. ISAK-2365).

D. Urbanavičienė (2018) notes that ethnic culture is dynamic<sup>3</sup>. It changes over time and adapts to the realities of the period. The author claims that humanity is not obliged to reject modernity while nurturing ethnic culture. Mother tongue plays a very important role in the development of ethnic culture. According to L. Jovaiša (2012), mother tongue is an essential teacher of human nationality. The spirit of the nation has created language and it is through it that human nationality is revealed, whereas language has a reversible effect on nationality, as it is one of the most important means of developing nationality.<sup>4</sup>

*The General Curriculum Framework for Primary Education* (2016) claims that a distinctive feature of the content of primary education is its integrity (completeness, coherence). “Primary education is organized as a unified system, which as far as possible does not divide the areas of education <...>.” (*The General*

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<sup>3</sup> Urbanavičienė, D., et al. (2018). Etninės kultūros ugdymo metodinės rekomendacijos pradinio ugdymo pedagogams [Methodological recommendations for ethnic culture education for primary education teachers]. Available at: [http://www.old.ekgt.lt/www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5\\_showe44a.html?p\\_r=8749&p\\_k=1](http://www.old.ekgt.lt/www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_showe44a.html?p_r=8749&p_k=1)

<sup>4</sup> Jovaiša, L. (2012). Edukologija. II tomas. Hodegetika. Apie tikėjimo ugdymą. Apie mūsų būtį. Vilnius: Agora.

*Curriculum Framework for Primary Education*, 2016, p. 16). The child, according to the *General Curriculum Framework for Primary Education Content*, is the axis of integration. Therefore, the following document aims to ensure that the content of education is as integrated and corresponds to the peculiarities of the child's developmental stage. Another relevant "<...> aspect of integration is the links with real life <...>. Learning what is important, significant and meaningful to the pupil." (*The General Curriculum Framework for Primary Education*, 2016, p. 16). The mentioned document also defines interdisciplinary integration, which provides an opportunity to develop various subject-specific skills when dealing with a certain topic or issues. With the help of this integration, it is very convenient to integrally develop the thinking powers of a pupil, one's linguistic, visual, acting expression, aesthetic intelligence, skills for healthy living, culture of movement" (*The General Curriculum Framework for Primary Education*, 2016).<sup>5</sup>

Integration in the educational process is one of the main priorities of the educational process, which is also reflected in *The National Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"*. The following document particularly emphasizes that modern Lithuania is created by people, who are open, creative, confident, enterprising, collaborative, responsible and eager to pursue lifelong-learning<sup>6</sup>. It is integrated teaching that develops such a personality already at school. The pedagogue has an important role in the organization of the integrated teaching process. The pedagogue, using various models of integration during the lesson, has to "feel" the children, be able to properly assess their possibilities and responsibly decide which teaching methods are most appropriate. *Methodological material for the professional development of teachers "Links between Subjects and Integration"* (2011) very clearly defines the importance of participants in the integration of the pedagogue in the educational process.<sup>7</sup> "The pedagogue <...> must realize that he is determined to form a new relationship between himself and the pupils. First of all, the pedagogue must be altruistic and aware of his responsibility for educating a person. Theorists of the active method emphasize that together with the teacher the pupil participates

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<sup>5</sup> Pradinio ugdymo bendroji programa [General Curriculum Framework for Primary Education]. (2016). Available at: [https://www.sac.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ugdpr\\_1priedas\\_pradinio-ugdymo-bendroji-programa.pdf](https://www.sac.smm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/ugdpr_1priedas_pradinio-ugdymo-bendroji-programa.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Lietuvos pažangos strategija „Lietuva 2030“ [The National Progress Strategy "Lithuania 2030"]. (2012). Available at: <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.425517>

<sup>7</sup> Mokytojų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo metodinė medžiaga. Dalykų ryšiai ir integracija. (2011). Projektas "Pedagogų kvalifikacijos tobulinimo ir perkvalifikavimo sistemos plėtra" [Methodological material for the professional development of teachers. Links between Subjects and Integration. (2011). Project "Expansion of the Teachers' Professional Development and Professional Retraining System"]. – No. VPI-2.2 – ŠMM-02-V-01-006. Available at: [http://www.narbuto.salcininkai.lm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Dalyku\\_ryšiai\\_ir\\_integracija\\_mokomoji\\_medžiaga-full.pdf](http://www.narbuto.salcininkai.lm.lt/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Dalyku_ryšiai_ir_integracija_mokomoji_medžiaga-full.pdf)

in the construction of an educational project, and parents and society also cooperate during the educational process” (cit. *Makuc*, 2007).<sup>8</sup>

Ethnic culture nurtures traditions of communication and harmonious community life, develops a positive and national worldview of the individual, harmony between man and nature, and customs, values and respect for life and good passed from generation to generation. “Ethnic culture develops general competencies of a pupil; creativity, traditional moral norms, national and civic self-awareness, respect for the living environment and Lithuania, family, community and national traditions, cultural values of one’s own and other nations are based on the nation’s cultural experience<...>.” (*General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture in Basic Education* (2012)).<sup>9</sup>

Ethnic culture in the educational process can be integrated into various areas of children’s teaching/learning: environmental, nature and world cognition, moral education, mother tongue, musical, acting, dance, art, physical education, health promotion, etc. The integration of ethnic culture into the educational process of the primary class pupils enlivens various activities of children, helps to relax, gives joy, activates children, has a positive effect on their feelings, helps to concentrate and develops values (*Methodological recommendations for the development of ethnic culture for primary education teachers*, 2018, hereinafter MRDEC).<sup>10</sup>

Ethnic culture integration into the lessons of the native language (Lithuanian language) takes place through folk art. General Regulations of the MRDEC for primary school teachers recommends to integrate folk tales, fables, sagas, counting-out rhymes, games, imitations of bird and animal sounds, proverbs, riddles, tongue twisters, and other folklore into the lessons of mother tongue education. It is also important to keep in mind the knowledge of dialects of ethnographic regions and enhancement of one’s own dialect. It is believed that the following cultivates love for the mother tongue, its beauty, richness and imagery. Integration of folk art into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes expands the child’s vocabulary, helps to feel intonations. Counting-out rhymes, stimuli, imitations, tongue twisters, etc. help to develop clear diction and articulation of the child (*MRDEC for primary education teachers*, 2018).

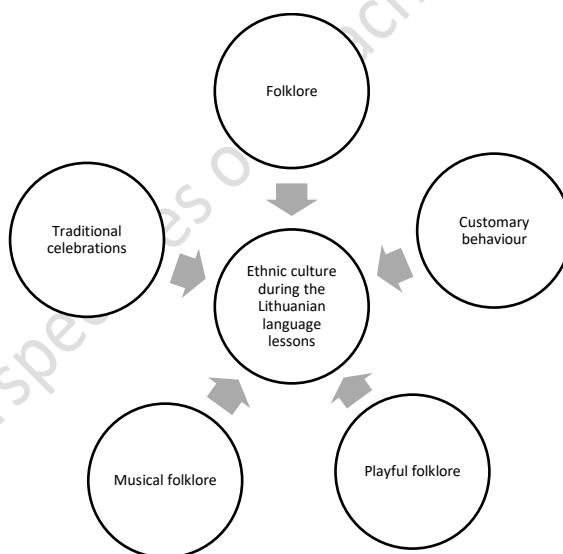
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<sup>8</sup> Makuc, G. (2007). Technologijų ir bendrojo lavinimo dalykų integravimo galimybės taikant projektų metodą [Possibilities of integrating technologies and general education subjects by applying the project method]. Master’s Thesis. Available at: <https://vb.vdu.lt/object/elaba:1729974/1729974.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Pagrindinio ugdymo etninės kultūros bendroji programa [General Curriculum Framework for Ethnic Culture in Basic Education]. (2012). Available at: <https://www.smm.lt/uploads/documents/svietimas/ugdymo-programos/etnine-kultura/EK%20programa%20Pagrindinis%20ug%20zin120412.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Etninės kultūros ugdymo metodinės rekomendacijos pradinio ugdymo pedagogams [Methodological recommendations for the ethnic culture education for primary education teachers]. (2018). Available at: [http://www.old.ekgt.lt/www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5\\_showe44a.html?p\\_r=8749&p\\_k=1](http://www.old.ekgt.lt/www3.lrs.lt/pls/inter/w5_showe44a.html?p_r=8749&p_k=1)

D. Urbanavičienė (2009) set the objectives of the integration of ethnic culture in the cycle of primary education: a) to acquaint pupils with the basics of their own ethnoculture, the beginnings of which have been already acquired through one's upbringing in the family, home environment, or kindergarten; b) to develop love and respect for one's homeland, fatherland and its culture, traditions, interest in one's relatives. During this cycle, the child's relationship with the people around – parents, relatives, neighbours, friends – is especially important; c) to develop children's moral behaviour, attachment to the fatherland, respect for nature by means of folklore (fairy tales, games, circle dances, songs, etc.); d) to encourage pupils to take an interest in old customs (especially calendar ones), crafts, to like folk songs, dance, music (*Ethnic culture education: concept, goals and basic guidelines*, 2009).<sup>11</sup> Therefore, folklore, musical and playful folklore, customary behaviour and traditional celebrations are especially important in integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes (Pic. 1).



Pic. 1. Scheme of ethnic culture areas integrated into the Lithuanian language lessons (Urvikienė, 2020)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Urbanavičienė, D. (2009). Etninės kultūros ugdymas: samprata, siekiniai ir pagrindinės gairės [Ethnic culture education: concept, goals and basic guidelines]. Available at: [https://www.upc.smm.lt/tobulinimas/renginiai/medziaga/etnine/failai/Dr\\_Dalia\\_Urbanaviciene.pdf](https://www.upc.smm.lt/tobulinimas/renginiai/medziaga/etnine/failai/Dr_Dalia_Urbanaviciene.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Urvikienė, V. (2020). Etninės kultūros ugdymo integracija į lietuvių kalbos pamokas pradinėse klasėse [Integration of ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes]. Final thesis of the pre-school and primary education Master's study programme. Klaipėda University.

Folklore, which is one of the main parts of folk art, is the most relevant and constantly used. Oral and written folklore can be used to meet various requirements provided in the general curriculum framework for primary education. Folk art creates favourable conditions for the spread of creative skills of a pupil and development of one's self-expression. When integrating folk expressions (proverbs, wishes, gratitude, congratulations, requests and their responses), tongue twisters, proverbs, forewords into the Lithuanian language lessons, it is appropriate to involve elements of acting. Ethnic culture is inseparable from nature, thus the integration of ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons can promote pupils' interest in nature and its phenomena, as well as mythology related to it. Ethnic culture integration expands the understanding of customs and calendar celebrations, traditions. One of the favourite activities of primary school pupils during the Lithuanian language lessons is drawing, which develops imagination and aesthetic perception of primary school pupils, carries out a cognitive function and enhances social adaptation and cooperation. The integration of ethnic culture education into the educational process of primary school pupils is inseparable from educations outside the school, out-of-school lessons, participation in projects, etc.

### **Organization of the research**

According to V. Žydžiūnaitė, S. Sabaliauskas (2017), qualitative research helps to understand and interpret the social world, while human behaviour is perceived as dynamic, situational, helping to investigate cases without seeking representativeness.<sup>13</sup>

*Participants of the research.* The sample of informants when performing qualitative research depends on the aim of the research (Bitinas, 2013)<sup>14</sup>. Since the research sought to reveal the attitudes of teachers to the opportunities of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes, the sample units selected for the qualitative research from the general sets have been chosen by applying the targeted sampling method. Targeted sampling is such sampling, when the researcher selects elements into the sample depending on the aims of the research (Bitinas, Rupšienė, 2008). The implementation of targeted sampling includes individuals, who can provide the researcher with meaningful information about the research subject.<sup>15</sup> In this case, it is teachers of I-IV classes, who integrate ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons. There were 6 teachers of primary classes from the Vilnius city X and Klaipėda city Y pre-gymnasiums (hereinafter: T) who participated in the research, age range from 40 to 58 years. The following sample is sufficient, because when applying the individual interview, the recommended sample size is from 5 to 30 people (Bitinas, Rupšienė,

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<sup>13</sup> Žydžiūnaitė, V., Sabaliauskas, S. (2017). Kokybiniai tyrimai: principai ir metodai: vadovėlis socialinių mokslų studijų programų studentams. Vilnius: Vaga.

<sup>14</sup> Bitinas, B. (2013). Rinktiniai edukologiniai raštai. II tomas. Edukologinis tyrimas: sistema ir procesas. p. 109, 276. Vilnius.

<sup>15</sup> Bitinas, B., Rupšienė, L., Žydžiūnaitė, V. (2008). Kokybinių tyrimų metodologija.

2008). The research was conducted in November 2019. The semi-structured interview method was chosen for the implementation of the research being one of the most convenient survey methods during which it is possible to obtain as much unstructured information about the research issue as possible. Semi-structured interview provides the researcher with an opportunity, depending on the course of the interview, to steer the questions in the right direction. The obtained interview data were analysed by the method of *content analysis*: on the basis of the theoretical analysis the categories of the researched phenomenon were identified and the obtained data were assigned to them, the obtained results were interpreted and analysed, examples and category illustrations have been provided. This is a valid method that allows conclusions to be drawn on the basis of the analysed text (Bitinas, 2013). The following ethical principles have been followed during the implementation of the qualitative research (interview): goodwill, respect for the dignity of a person, justice, right to obtain accurate information.

## Results

The qualitative research concerning the attitudes of teachers, first of all, sought to reveal the opinions of informants *whether T often integrate ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes*. The obtained data are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of integrating ethnic culture education by T into the Lithuanian language lessons

Category	Illustrative statements	Number of recurring statements
Frequency of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes.	Every day (T1, T3). I can't imagine lessons without integration. This is a daily routine (T2). I try to do it every day, and especially during Lithuanian language lessons (T6).	T1, T2, T3, T6 (4)
	Often (T4). Very often (T5).	T4, T5. (2)

The summary of data provided in Table 1 allows to claim that all informants, who participated in the research *daily* or *very often* integrate ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons. Informant T2 emphasized that *one could not image the Lithuanian language lessons without the integration of ethnic culture*.

During the research, it was relevant to find out the attitude of T *to the importance of integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons*. Results are presented in Table 2.



Table 2. The attitude of T to the importance of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons

Category	Statements
The importance of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons.	Very important for the enrichment of vocabulary, knowledge of dialects, learning folklore and approaching one's customs and traditions. (T1)
	Very important, because only by knowing one's roots, origin, a child can become a person who loves one's fatherland, while the great variety of materials (fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, songs, games, etc.) perfectly supports the achievement of this aim. (T2)
	Important, because it provides my lessons with special vitality and warmth. (T3)
	Very important in order to nurture customs and traditions of the Lithuanian nation. (T4)
	Important, because the integration of ethnic culture makes it easier to develop children's language skills. (T5)
	Very important, because the integration of ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons provides an opportunity to develop children's creativity more effectively, and I also note that pupils in my class are more likely to perform various written assignments, when I use folklore texts. (T6)

The summary of attitudes of T provided in Table 2 revealed that *the integration of ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes are important* for all participants

During the research, it was sought to find out *what determines successes and failures of T in integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons*. The data obtained are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Factors that determine success and failure of T in integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons

Category	Subcategory	Statements	recurr statem
		Knowledge and preparation of the teacher (T1).	T4, T5

<p>Successes and failures experiences by T when integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons.</p>	<p>Factors that determine success.</p>	<p>Simplicity, comprehensibility and interest &lt;...&gt; (T2)</p> <p>Close cooperation between the teacher and parents.&lt;..various celebrations, classroom events..&gt; (T3).</p> <p>My efforts to convey ethnic culture to my pupils through the modern prism &lt;...&gt; (T4).</p> <p>The adaptation and emphasis of ethnocultural texts are especially relevant in Lithuanian language. &lt;...&gt;It is important to link them with practice (invitation of various narrators to the classroom, trips, education) (T5).</p> <p>I think success is determined by the teacher's attitude and desire to help the pupil to fall in love with folk art, encouragement to become interested in folklore (T6).</p>	
	<p>Factors leading to failure.</p>	<p>It is not always possible to make children come in contact with the ethnic culture by themselves (especially when it comes to crafts, household tools). &lt;..&gt; the child, who feels, tries, and sees by oneself, will remember and learn best (T2).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt; a lot of preparation is needed on one's own, there is a lack of information in textbooks, more seminars are also needed on this topic (T4).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt; relatively small amount of folklore in textbooks, to little emphasis on it in teaching aids (T6).</p>	<p>(3).</p>

The analysis of data provided in Table 3 allows to claim that the highest guarantee of success of integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons is *the attitude of the teacher and one's desire to help the pupil to fall in love with the folk art, encouragement to become interested in folklore*. T identified the following factors that lead to failure: *unpopularity of folklore in the Lithuanian language textbooks and not always available opportunities to attend workshops with children, where they could come into contact with the folk heritage by themselves and thus get to know the ethnic culture more actively*.

During the interview, it was relevant to find out the *forms of ethnic culture education used by T while integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons*. T have also specified *the most commonly used types of folk art while*

*integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes.*  
The analysed data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Forms of ethnic culture education and types of folk art most commonly used by T

Category	Subcategory	Statements	Results of statistical analysis
Forms of ethnic culture education used by T while integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons.	Forms, methods of education.	<p>Games, stories, trips, project works, events&lt;..&gt; (T1).</p> <p>Project works, presentations, essays, creation of fairy tales, quizzes, competitions, educations&lt;..&gt; (T2).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt; trips, quizzes, gatherings (T3).</p> <p>Acting situations (children read and perform fairy tales), riddle and proverb competitions in the classroom, trips&lt;...&gt; (T4).</p> <p>I try to make children be in the ethnocultural environment as much as possible (educations, trips), &lt;...&gt; we often deliver performances on ethnic themes, essays and other creative works (T5).</p> <p>Written works, creative works, work in pairs and in groups &lt;...&gt; trips, invitation of guests to the classroom (T6).</p>	T3, T4, T5, T6 (6).
	Types of folk culture.	<p>Folklore (fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, fables, songs, etc.) (T1).</p> <p>Mainly fairy tales, sagas, fables, legends, as well as small folklore forms (riddles, proverbs, imitations, etc.)&lt;..&gt; (T2).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt; fairy tales, games and small folklore forms&lt;..&gt; (T3).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt; fairy tales, fables and small folklore forms&lt;..&gt; (T4).</p> <p>&lt;..&gt;I integrate all types of folk art bit by bit into the Lithuanian language lessons (T5).</p> <p>I especially use fairy tales and jokes, as well as riddles and proverbs.</p>	T3, T4, T5, T6 (6).

		<..> children are very fond of riddle and proverb competitions on various topics<..> (T6).	
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The summary of data provided in Table 4 allows to claim that T use various forms of education while integrating ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons. All forms of education specified by T: not only do *games, stories, trips, project works, events, quizzes, competitions, educations* acquaint the pupils with ethnic culture, but also promote their creativity, self-expressions, the improvement of oral and written language. T who participated in the research use various types of folk art, but the most commonly used are *fairy tales, small folklore forms (riddles, proverbs, jokes)*.

Participants of the research submitted proposals *in order to improve the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes*. Proposals are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Proposals submitted by T for improving the possibilities of ethnic culture integration into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes

Category	Statements
Proposals submitted by T for improving the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes.	<..>it would be very appropriate to have ethnic culture exercises during the Lithuanian language lessons, or systematized ethnic culture topics on the Internet (T1).
	<..>I simply encourage teachers to integrate ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons as often as possible, as well as increase the baggage of knowledge, improve and not fall asleep on the laurels (T2).
	<..>ethnic culture education should be systematic and consistent: from kindergarten to high school. <..>in order to improve the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture education into the primary classes, at least one lesson of ethnoculture a week is required (T3).
	<..>a more abundant use of fairy tales, sagas and other types of folk art during the Lithuanian language lessons would provide better conditions for the ethnic culture education and its integration (T4).
	<..> creation of a platform in the online space, where various materials necessary for the education of ethnic culture can be shared, created and used<..> it would be a modern and accessible tool for the education of ethnic culture (T5).

	<..> the teacher oneself must and can find necessary materials and methods needed for the ethnic culture education (T6).
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The analysis of data presented in Table 5 allows to claim that all T submitted some proposals concerning the integration of ethnic culture: *in order to improve the possibilities of integrating ethnic culture education into the primary classes, at least one lesson of ethnoculture a week is required, the creation of platform in the online space, where various materials necessary for the education of ethnic culture can be shared, created and used, a more abundant use of fairy tales, sagas and other types of folk art during the Lithuanian language lessons would provide better conditions for the ethnic culture education and its integration, etc.*

### Conclusions

The integration of ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes is an integral part of the Lithuanian education system and is regulated in the strategic documents of the Republic of Lithuania. Ethnic culture is an inseparable whole of cultural values formed over the centuries, which shows the identity and uniqueness of society and nation; its education fosters the traditions of harmonious communication in society, develop a positive and national worldview of the individual. The integration of ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons is very important in developing harmony between man and nature, as well as in passing on customs, traditions and values from generation to generation.

The experiences and attitudes of the participants of the qualitative research allowed to examine the possibilities of ethnic culture integration into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes. It was revealed that teachers of primary classes who participated in the research very often integrate ethnic culture into the Lithuanian language lessons and use various educational methods and forms. During the interviews teachers shared not only the successes of ethnic culture integration, which in their opinion mostly depend on the training of the teacher and one's personal development, but also the failures. In their opinion, possibilities of integrating ethnic culture would be greater if there were more ethnocultural works in textbooks and other educational tools, if there were publications dedicated to the education of ethnic culture. The conclusions of the following research allow to claim that the integration of ethnic culture education into the Lithuanian language lessons in primary classes and its research are relevant and require this research to be continued.

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