

Received: 25 June 2021

Revision received: 28 October 2021

Accepted: 27 January 2022

Copyright © 2022 JESTP

www.jestp.com

DOI 10.12738/jestp.2022.1.0013 ♦ January 2022 ♦ 22(1) ♦ 155-172

Article

Cultural Literacy Development of 10th, 11th, and 12th Graders in a Lithuanian Multicultural School

Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė

Education Academy, Vytautas Magnus University, Vilnius, Lithuania,

Email: daiva.jakavonyte-staskuviene@vdu.lt

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8080-8848>

Giorgi Kobakhidze

Education Academy, Vytautas Magnus University, Vilnius, Lithuania,

Email: giorgi.kobakhidze@stud.vdu.lt

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0018-4941>

Abstract

The study analyses the development of students' cultural literacy in a multicultural environment. The aim of this study was to uncover the cultural literacy development of students in grades 10, 11 and 12, the specificities of the educational process, and to test their validity in a school setting with students from 43 countries in one school. The objectives of the study were: 1) to investigate the cultural literacy skills of pupils in grades 10, 11 and 12 by means of a questionnaire. 2) To find out how subject teachers (Lithuanian language and literature, history, religion, ethics, English) develop these students' cultural literacy development. 75 pupils and 5 teachers took part in the study. A mixed-methods approach: qualitative and quantitative. The study validated a questionnaire to measure pupils' cultural literacy. Quantitative data were processed using SPSS version 20 software. Teachers answered semi-structured interview questions. Interview data were processed using a qualitative thematic content analysis strategy. Students were able to be open-minded and eager to learn about other cultures when learning with students from different cultures. Teachers take into account students' cultural backgrounds, adapting the content of the education to relate to learning about other cultures in specific situations.

Keywords

Cultural literacy development, multicultural school, Lithuania,

Correspondence to Daiva Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, Education Academy, Vytautas Magnus University, Vilnius, Lithuania. Email: daiva.jakavonyte-staskuviene@vdu.lt; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8080-8848>

Citation: Jakavonytė-Staškuvienė, D., Kobakhidze, G. (2022). Cultural Literacy Development of 10th, 11th, and 12th Graders in a Lithuanian Multicultural School. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, 22(1), 155 - 172. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12738/jestp.2022.1.0013>

The concept of cultural literacy has been the object of discussion in the research society since the 1980s. The concepts of cultural literacy and literacy used by the American scholar E. D. Hirsch (1983) skills have been moved from an integral level of reading, writing, and numeracy to a different level of value-based knowledge. While in underdeveloped countries, literacy in its traditional sense remains a challenge to education; in developed countries, due to multicultural traits and geopolitical phenomena such as European Union, the concept of cultural literacy is a response to the requirements of society's sustainable coexistence (Shliakhovchuk, 2021). UNESCO's (2020) international commitment to all children stresses that all children have an equal right to education that respects their cultural diversity.

A child's education must focus on building respect. The cultural identity, language and values of each child's parents and his or her culture should be preserved in whatever country in the world he or she lives. Equitable and quality education is only possible when such education reflects the multilingual and multicultural diversity of society. Children, young people and adults must have learning opportunities tailored to their needs, in their own languages. Without multilingual mother-tongue-based education, multiculturalism and diversity, the other sustainable development goals will remain unachievable (Cordis, 2018; Malone, 2016; UNESCO Bangkok Office, 2020). Students in multilingual and multicultural learning environments tend to develop better thinking skills than in monolingual environments (Beacco et al., 2016; Edelenbos et al., 2006; Riagáin & Lüdi, 2003).

Based on the abovementioned, this study aimed to examine how cultural literacy education is constructed through two main research questions: 1: How is cultural literacy education implemented in schools? 2: How do formal and non-formal educational environments and methods develop children's cultural literacy? The research locale chosen for this study was a Lithuanian multicultural school that offered an evident multicultural environment and where "the education of re-emigrated Lithuanian children was the goal of the school" (Ruškus, 2008). In the 2021/2022 school year, the school hosted students from 43 countries. The objective of the study was to examine the development of cultural literacy among the students of the 10th, 11th and 12th grades (upper secondary education), where the total of students was considered a subunit (embedded approach) (Yin, 2018) and their cultural literacy level was determined through a survey. It must be also noted that this school represented the multiculturalism of the country's society to a greater extent than other schools, where multicultural environment was present but less evident as the number of students represented other cultures was much lower.

Literature Review

Meaning of cultural literacy development

The concept of cultural literacy has been defined by many scholars, emphasizing one aspect or another (Cook, 2009; Johnson, 2014; Mullican, 1991; Schweizer, 2009). Scholars agree that cultural literacy is about knowing different cultures and knowing how to live in harmony, respect and work together in a friendly and cooperative way. Another important observation is that people are most culturally literate in their home culture because they learn and know their culture from childhood. However, when one is exposed to another culture or interacts with members of another culture, one needs to be open-minded and learn cultural literacy in a new context from scratch (Sule, 2021). It is important for students to learn about other cultures in order to avoid false preconceptions.

E. D. Hirsch (1983) defines the concept of cultural literacy as a trans-linguistic message based on linguistic knowledge and seen as the key tool for the country's presence in societal processes. It is also general knowledge that a 'common reader' should possess, he added. E. D. Hirsch (1983) came up with a cultural literacy dictionary, which included the most important concepts, names, phrases and events that, in his opinion, every student after graduation should know. Eric Donald Hirsch et al. (2002) equate the concept of cultural literacy to national culture as criticism and believe that the concept prioritizes national culture as a means of national society's unity: "national communities are brought together not only by political institutions and law but by common values, allusions and language" (p. 7); and point out that common meanings of things are key to internal communication of a nation. According to the authors, national culture encompasses patriotism based on shared knowledge, attitudes, loyalties and values, including values of inclusion, tolerance and respect for other religions and cultures. Meanwhile, B. Street (2003) argues that researchers should investigate the social practices of cultural literacy and relate them to the development of students' cultural literacy in school.

Salo-Lee (2007) uses the concept of cultural literacy as an intercultural competence, where education has an overarching global goal. It draws attention to global migration, which is at the heart of the creation of multicultural societies and requires intercultural competences and intercultural interaction from all participants; and understands cultural literacy as the ability to read, understand and find meaning in different cultures, and the ability to appreciate, compare and decode different cultures interwoven in a single space; to interact and collaborate with individuals from different parts of the world (Kay & Greenhill, 2011).

The concept of cultural literacy is introduced from an anthropological perspective by Saravia-Shore and Arvizu (1992). Cultural literacy includes not only the knowledge and understanding of one's own national culture, but also the understanding of the patterns of interaction, values, metaphors and symbols of other cultures as intercultural communication skills. For the authors, intercultural literacy in schools means that both teachers and pupils should learn to see people, problems, challenges and solutions in terms of different cultural orientations; to respect the human rights and lifestyles of individuals and groups; and to interact meaningfully with people of different cultures.

In the 21st century, it could be said that learning cultural literacy is the key to developing tolerant, empathetic and inclusive attitudes towards diversity (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022). Cultural literacy skills include behavioral flexibility, empathy, non-judgement, goal orientation, sociability, and meta-communication (Tucker et al., 2014). The pedagogy of cultural literacy education should be based on dialogic teaching, emphasizing the co-construction of meanings between students and teachers based on social interaction with others (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; B. V. Street & Street, 1984). It is recommended that teachers model discussions on cultural cognition and give students some guidelines for completing the tasks. It is important that pupils take part in discussions when analyzing cultural phenomena, that they express their opinions respectfully, and that they are able to hear and listen to those with different opinions. Pupils should be seen as active participants in socio-cultural life and as culturally aware individuals. Although children and young people – like all people – are affected by their socio-cultural context, they are not only passive recipients of culture, but also active creators of culture (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022). A recent participatory approach to children's culture emphasises that children are socially active individuals who are able to construct their own knowledge and understanding in a competent and active way, i.e. socio-culturally, children create culture and cultural heritage (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022).

The European Union provides the basis for the creation of a kind of multicultural society. This provides an opportunity to look at the specific features of cultural literacy education in schools. It should also be stressed that the updating of the content of general education in Lithuania identifies one of the general competences – cultural competence – as the development of cultural self-awareness based on knowledge, active cultural expression and cultural awareness (Cultural competence, 2021, 1). This competence is the basis for the development of cultural literacy skills. Culture, context and social interaction play an important role in understanding young people's literacy skills development and learning. The definition of cultural literacy for young people emphasizes the role of reading, writing, composing and communicating through different media (Moje, 2016). The development of cultural literacy skills is facilitated by activities in the educational process such as self-reflection, in which the learner consciously reflects on the activities he or she performs (Binder & Kühnen, 2021). Hence, to be culturally literate is to be prepared and competent to be sensitive to one's own and others' identity, heritage and culture (Sule, 2021).

Empirical research on cultural literacy development

Cultural literacy education from the perspective of a teacher of preschool children is explored by Halbert and Chigeza (2015). The authors argue that a teacher must constantly rethink his/her experience, reflect on his/her activities and, in a multicultural environment, clearly define the objectives and criteria for implementation. Culturally relevant practices from the point of view of pupils are explored by Byrd (2016). The author argues that educational practices that relate to students' real lives and interests, foster understanding of other cultures, and are associated with better academic performance. Lähdesmäki et al. (2022) link children's cultural literacy attitudes to the development of tolerance, empathy and inclusion. They also link attitudes towards diversity, equality and democracy to cultural literacy. Children can develop these attitudes not only by analyzing certain materials, such as texts or films, but also by helping each other and working in groups. It is important that they build on experiences and positive emotions during the activities. The research team links the development of cultural literacy skills to the development of creativity skills (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022).

Furthermore, raising students' awareness of their own culture and raising awareness of racism and discrimination integrally develops students' ethnic and racial identity. In order to do this smoothly, teachers need to know their pupils well. Knowing students' backgrounds and experiences is key to high impact, but often teachers are hesitant to delve into this area for fear of overstepping their teaching boundaries. However, this ignorance can be detrimental to the students and fail to meet their needs and expectations. Rapanta et al. (2021) link the development of cultural literacy skills to citizenship, and the activities should be practices based on dialogue and argumentation, where students learn to answer questions that require the active application of moral and social values. It is useful to build on pupils' previous experience of age-appropriate cultural texts in such activities. Picture books and cartoons related to cultural themes are also suitable, as content analysis opens up a space for constructive dialogue between pupils (Rapanta et al., 2021; Serafini, 2014). Segal (2015) argues that international cooperation activities contribute to the development of cultural literacy skills.

Theoretical framework and problem statement

The European Commission (2022) has although defined multicultural learning as the ability to understand, respect and respond effectively and respectfully to people from different cultures. Key competences for this intercultural competence are identified as being sensitive to different cultural backgrounds, using culturally appropriate body language, tolerance, and adapting to cultural differences. Lithuania has for many years been dominated by a single national culture, with only up to 15 % of all pupils in the country being treated as national minority pupils. However, in the last five years there has been an increased process of re-migration, with children returning to their own or their parents' homeland with a different cultural experience and with the arrival of new pupils from abroad. Lithuania is home to representatives of national minorities, who preserve and cherish their culture, but now the country is constantly undergoing re-migration, and economic migrants are arriving in Lithuania from neighboring third countries, and the European Union is increasingly intensifying internal migration.

The challenges faced by Lithuania is the development of cultural literacy, as a social purpose of consolidating the country's multicultural environment. Critical literacy is linked to the ability of a language to engage in public discourse in which the empowered individual is able to critically participate in the social, political and ethnic aspects of everyday life (McLaren, 1988). Becoming open (on the part of the pupils) - Schools should be guided in their educational content by those dimensions of cultural literacy that ensure that pupils are exposed to the values inherent in a country's society (developed over the centuries, passed on from one generation to the next), as well as to common human attitudes. They should be exposed to common human values in order not to be constrained by habits, customs, narratives, artefacts, etc., which have been shaped over time and space. In this case, education would be value-based, developing values rather than knowledge of specific cultures and their differences (Kobakhidze, 2021).

Moreover, knowing and recognizing cultures (on the part of teachers) is an important cross-cultural competence for teachers, encompassing not only the subject content taught by the teacher, but also knowledge of cultures in a broader sense, i.e. a broader generic competence that every teacher should develop throughout his/her life. Literacy development for students of diverse backgrounds gets enhanced when educators are culturally responsive in their interactions with students and in managing classrooms with students from different cultures (Au, 1998). Therefore, taking into account the above theoretical approaches, a cultural literacy scale needs to be developed to assess the cultural literacy of students. This scale should be based on the hypothesis that the development of cultural literacy must be made objectively, and only by analyzing students' and teachers' experiences. The tools to measure the cultural literacy should also be according to the educational process and data collection should set priorities for the analysis (Yin, 2018).

Research Methods

Research design

The study employed explanatory sequential mixed method research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), which included both quantitative and qualitative data. In this method, the first stage of quantitative study determined the level of cultural literacy of the sample under study through the scale designed for that purpose

(Appendix 1). The second stage of the qualitative study used semi-structured interviews with school teachers (of Lithuanian language and literature, history, religious studies, ethics studies and English). The purpose of this phase was to triangulate the findings of the quantitative phase. The case study method was used during the qualitative phase, which is appropriate for “how” and “why” questions in a study (Yin, 2018). A case study is also an empirical method that examines the current phenomenon (“case”) thoroughly and through its real-world context (Yin, 2018). Therefore, while in the quantitative phase, the process of cultural literacy development in a specific school was examined, the qualitative phase answered the questions about making the process of cultural literacy development smooth.

Research Instruments and procedure

For the quantitative phase, a questionnaire was designed as a survey to collect data relevant to the research objectives of the study (Appendix 1). The questionnaire comprised questions covering different contexts of cultural literacy, and its design was guided by the assumption that students' cultural literacy involves two different and intertwined realities: to become open (on the part of the students) by receiving value-based education from textbooks (history, literature, religion, ethics, foreign languages); and to know and recognize cultures, i.e. to be accepted (on the part of the teachers), which facilitates learning in a multicultural environment, taking into account the cultural context in the education process (Kobakhidze, 2021).

The questionnaire was broken down into three different dimensions based on the definition of cultural literacy: empathy (Tucker et al., 2014), tolerance (European Commission, 2022), and inclusion through interaction (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; B. V. Street & Street, 1984). There was a separate validated scale for each of these dimensions: Ethnocultural Empathy (Wang et al., 2003), Group Inclusion Scale (Jansen et al., 2014), and Disagreement Tolerance Scale (Teven et al., 1998). The survey took place in December 2019 in a live meeting in the school hall and was completed by 75 pupils in 20-25 minutes. This was 64.1% share of the total student population in the school at that time.

For the qualitative phase, the semi-structured interview (Freebody, 2003; Gillies & Boyle, 2010) consisted of a research problem question on how cultural literacy education was constructed, how cultural literacy education should be implemented in school; and how formal and informal educational settings and methods can develop students' cultural literacy. These questions were further narrowed down and decomposed. The rationale for each interview questions is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Rationale for interview questions

Study questions		Interview questions and rationale
Research question 1: How is cultural literacy education implemented in schools?	1.1. How do you incorporate cultural literacy issues into your lessons?	1.1.1. What values do you pay attention to? (Aims to identify the values being promoted (Tucker et al., 2014). 1.1.2. How do children (from different backgrounds) respond to values education? (To understand students' feelings/attitudes towards values education (Tucker et al., 2014). 1.1.3. How do you use your experience? (Aimed at revealing the teaching methods used by teachers in the context of value education (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Moje, 2016).
	1.2. How do you recognize children's cultural horizons?	1.2.1. How do children accept national education? (To understand how children react to national education (Eric Donald Hirsch et al., 2002; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; Sule, 2021; UNESCO Bangkok Office, 2020). 1.2.2. How do you encourage dialogue between children with different cultural backgrounds? (Aimed at revealing the particularities of teacher education in promoting cultural dialogues in the classroom (Kay & Greenhill, 2011; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; B. V. Street & Street, 1984).

Study questions	Interview questions and rationale
<p>Research question 2: How do formal and non-formal educational environments and methods develop children's cultural literacy?</p>	<p>1.2.3. How do you overcome language barriers in the education of children (returnees, migrants, national minorities)? (To understand the methods used by teachers to overcome language barriers (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; B. Street, 2003).</p> <p>1.2.4. How do you encourage people to learn about each other's cultures? (Aims to reveal the ways teachers use to help pupils learn more about each other's cultures (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; B. V. Street & Street, 1984; Tucker et al., 2014).</p> <p>2.1. How do you use your existing textbooks to teach cultural literacy?</p> <p>2.1.1. From the history/language/religion textbooks, identify the topics that are central to the development of the country's historical context and understanding of different cultures (the aim was to identify the central themes in the textbooks used in the development of the country's historical context and the promotion of intercultural understanding (Eric Donald Hirsch et al., 2002; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; Sule, 2021; UNESCO Bangkok Office, 2020).</p> <p>2.1.2. From literature/history/religion textbooks, identify the themes that are central to the socio-cultural context of the country (The aim was to identify the central themes in the textbooks used in the country's current socio-cultural specificities (Eric Donald Hirsch et al., 2002; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; Sule, 2021; UNESCO Bangkok Office, 2020).</p> <p>2.1.3. What materials or paraphernalia are missing from the education process? (To reveal teachers' attitudes towards the educational tools available (Binder & Kühnen, 2021; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022).</p> <p>2.2. How do non-formal learning environments promote children's engagement in the classroom?</p> <p>2.2.1. How do you participate in children's non-formal education related to learning about cultures? (Aimed at exposing activities outside the classroom that promote cultural exchange (Binder & Kühnen, 2021; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022).</p> <p>2.2.2. How are children affected by their non-formal learning environment during the lesson? (aimed to reveal how children respond to non-formal learning environments (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; B. V. Street & Street, 1984).</p> <p>2.2.3. How do you develop students' media literacy skills? Do you link it to cultural literacy? How? (aimed to reveal the teaching methods used by teachers to promote children's critical reading skills (Eric Donald Hirsch et al., 2002; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; Sule, 2021; UNESCO Bangkok Office, 2020).</p>

From the description of the interview questions in [Table 1](#), we can see that the qualitative study aimed to deepen the knowledge of how children are educated, the methods used to foster their culture and to learn about other cultures, the ways in which pupils are encouraged to live together in harmony, and the values they are taught.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with these teachers between December 2020 and February 2021. The interviews were conducted remotely using Zoom and lasted between 21 and 52 minutes in different cases

Sampling

The sample comprised 75 final year students of a multicultural secondary school (grades 10, 11, 12) in Vilnius, Lithuania. (see [Table 2](#)). This number constituted 64.1% share of the total student population in the school at that time. A convenience sampling method was used to select the students, considering variables like age, gender, nationality, country and religion. [Table 2](#) presents their information:

Table 2. *Distribution of students by age, gender, nationality, country and religion (N=75)*

Numbers of participants(N= 75)	Nationalities (14)	Countries (15)	Religions (4)
Male - 23	Lithuania (25), Poland (12),	Lithuania (34), Ukraine (9),	Catholicism (28), Orthodoxy (25), Islam (8),
Female - 52	Ukraine (9), Russia (8),	Russia (8), Belarus (5),	Atheism (2).
10 Grade - 30	Venezuela (2)	Poland (4),	
11 Grade - 21	Kazakhstan (1), Germany (1), China (1),	Kazakhstan (2), Germany (2), Venezuela (2),	
12 Grade - 24	mixed families where one of the parents is from Belarus (7), Uruguay (2), Palestine (2), Georgia (2), Switzerland (2), Tatar (1).	Cyprus (2), Palestine (2), Spain (1), Switzerland (1), Egypt (1), China (1), Ireland (1).	

The multicultural environment of the school was also confirmed by the countries of origin of the students who took part in the survey. They came from Egypt, Belarus, Spain, Russia, Kazakhstan, Ireland, Ukraine, Germany, Poland, Venezuela and mixed families where one of the parents is from Palestine, Sakartvelo, Switzerland, Uruguay. It was observed that despite mixed families and different places of residence, the nationality of the majority of the pupils was clear, except in four cases where the nationality of both parents was mentioned. It was noted that among those from mixed families (one parent being Lithuanian and living in other countries) almost 70% considered themselves Lithuanian. Multiculturalism is also reflected in the children's different faiths: Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Islam, atheism. All students were bilingual or more; although it was noted that there were some complex sentence constructions in Lithuanian. The time allotted was sufficient for all and only a few needed to clarify the point of the question.

Teachers interviewed for the study. The teachers who were interviewed were purposively selected (N=5) who had worked with the pupils in years 10, 11 and 12. These were teachers of Lithuanian language and literature, history, religion, ethics, and English, as their subject content analyses a wide range of texts with multicultural aspects. Table 3 provides information on the participants in the study according to seniority, qualification category, subject taught and length of interview:

Table 3. *Basic information about the interviewees*

Participant pseudonym	Gender	Work experience in years	Qualification category	Subject taught	Interview duration
A	Female	22	Expert teacher	Lithuanian language and literature	30 min.
B	Male	25	Expert teacher	History	52 min.
C	Female	18	Expert teacher	English language and literature	25 min.
D	Female	6	Senior-Teacher	Ethics	22 min.
E	Female	9	Senior-Teacher	Religion	24 min.

Teacher qualifications were held by persons who had completed higher education and teaching qualifications. This corresponds to the four qualification categories for teachers in Lithuania: teachers, senior teachers, teachers-methodologists, and expert teachers ([Teacher Attestation Regulations, 2007](#)). The senior-teacher qualification is awarded to a teacher who has completed higher education and has at least four years of experience and a subject teaching qualification, is able to organize and analyze the education, teaching, and learning process well, keeps his/her knowledge up-to-date, participates actively in methodological activities, and disseminates best practice in the school. The qualification of teacher-methodologist can be awarded to a teacher who not only has all the skills of a senior teacher, but also develops and initiates educational projects and shares experiences not only within the school, but also in the region.

Data analysis

The data was processed using 2 methods: quantitative and qualitative analysis. *Quantitative data* was processed using SPSS software version 20, which required interpretation based on expertise and creativity (Bryman, 2016). The SPSS program helped to distinguish between two groups of students in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades of the international school: students with Lithuanian parents having always lived in Lithuania and re-emigrated students, ethnical minorities and migrants. The repeated measures ANOVA allowed examining the difference between the average performance of these two groups (semester/trimester grades) in Lithuanian language and literature, history and English, before comparing and representing the respective results of each group.

Qualitative data was processed through qualitative thematic content analysis, which involved exploring the data (transcribed interviews) to extract key themes (Bryman, 2016; Freebody, 2003; Gillies & Boyle, 2010).

Ethics of research. The research (student survey and teacher interviews) followed basic ethical principles. All surveys were coordinated with school administrators. After obtaining the consent of the administration and the teachers, the questionnaire was shared with the pupils, who participated voluntarily. The purpose of the survey was communicated to school administrators, teachers and pupils. It was explained to the pupils that the answers were anonymous and that the answers of individual respondents would not be published in the results. Teachers who participated in the interviews were not identified in the text of the study. Teachers were additionally asked for permission to record interviews that took place remotely on the Zoom platform.

Results

Results of the student survey

As mentioned above, the questionnaire was designed to determine the level of cultural literacy of students in Years 10, 11 and 12 in terms of empathy, inclusion and tolerance. On the basis of the ranked responses, the majority of the pupils answered that they were identified with the class, felt part of the same class, were valued in the group, expressed their authenticity and were therefore respected, were empathetic towards other cultures and accepted cultural differences, were aware of, and consciously expressed their empathy and were tolerant of different points of view, and were active in discussing these. As already noted, the reliability analysis found the Cultural Literacy and Group Inclusion, Ethnocultural Empathy and Tolerance of Disagreement scales and subscales to be reliable.

In the questionnaire, the 3 scales were further broken down into subscales. These scales and subscales were transformed into separate new quantitative variables for further statistical analysis. This transformation allowed for a generalized comparison of the levels of Group Inclusion, Ethno-cultural Empathy and Disagreement Tolerance and the level of Cultural Literacy of all students participating in the survey.

The SPSS program generated a derived variable of cultural literacy and its constituent variables: group inclusion, ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance for disagreement. The internal compatibility of constituent variables in the scale and subscales was also assessed. Since in all cases Cronbach's alpha was more than 6, the whole scale/subscale can be assumed to be homogeneous and a reliable measuring instrument. A few variables were detected in the scale/subscales which if removed would increase the Cronbach's alpha rate but they were not eliminated. It must be noted that the scale had a relatively high general Cronbach's alpha rating for cultural literacy, therefore the scale can be considered a reliable measuring instrument. Table 4 shows the interpretation of the SPSS calculation variables.

Table 4. Cultural Literacy Subscales and SPSS Calculation Variables

Cultural literacy Subscales	Number of variables	Cronbach's Alpha rate	Cronbach's Alpha of the entire cultural literacy scale
Group inclusion	16	0.948 (acceptable)	0.871
Ethno-cultural empathy	16	0.673 (acceptable)	
Tolerance for disagreement	15	0.626 (acceptable)	

Further examination of the normality of the distribution of cultural literacy variable took into account the results of the Kolmogorov Smirnov criterion, as the sample of subjects (number of students interviewed) exceeded 50. According to the results obtained, Kolmogorov Smirnov's value (Sig. 0.200) was higher than α ($\alpha = 0,05$),

therefore the distribution was rated as normal. The condition of normality of group inclusion, ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance for disagreement variable distribution was also verified. The results showed the Kolmogorov Smirnov value higher than α ($\alpha=0.05$): group inclusion value (Sig. 0.054), ethno-cultural empathy value (Sig. 0.200) and tolerance for disagreement value (Sig. 0.200). Thus it is assumed that the above distributions are also normal.

Having verified (by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test) that cultural literacy is a normal variable (level of cultural literacy), the calculation of the independent samples t-test in the SPSS program was applied. It was also checked whether there is a statistically significant difference in the average level of cultural literacy between two groups in the researched school: students with Lithuanian parents having always lived in Lithuania and re-emigrated students, ethnic minorities and migrants. The results show a slight difference in the cultural literacy level between Lithuanian students (4.4483) and other students (4.3227), but the difference is not statistically significant ($t=1.045$, $df=73$, $p=0.283 > 0.05$).

It is to be noted that those responses of six rankings: *I totally agree, I agree, I agree more than disagree, I disagree more than agree, I disagree, I totally disagree*; show high results for both groups. It is necessary to note that 14 variable answers (questions: 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 48, 49, 51, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58) were transformed in the SPSS program because of their inversed assessment (Appendix 1). The summary of the cultural literacy level of all students showed that no students had a negative result and taking into consideration response rankings the selection was higher than 3. The pie chart (Figure 1) shows result distribution by percentage:

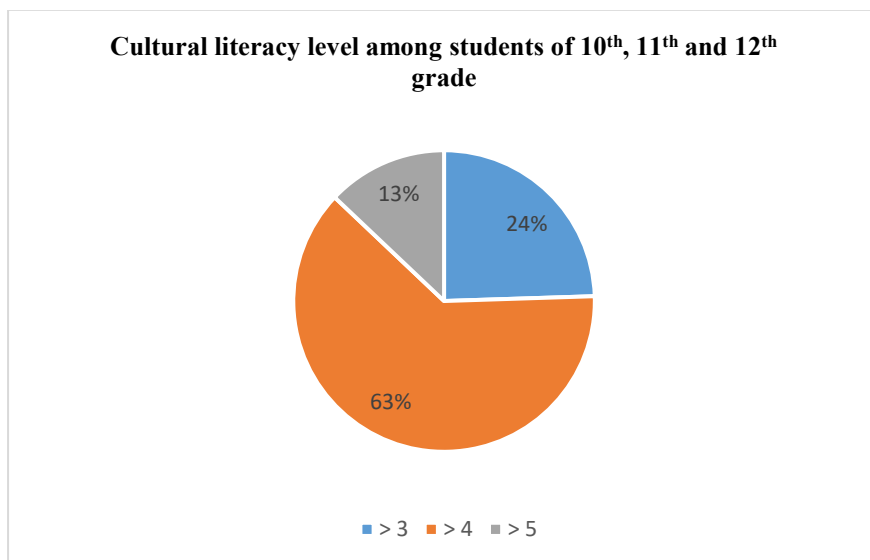


Figure 1: Cultural literacy level distribution among students of 10th, 11th and 12th grade

Figure 1 shows that the highest number of students in grades 10, 11 and 12 had reached cultural literacy level 4. This is a high score, which shows that the school environment and educational approach was appropriate for the development of students' cultural literacy.

As the distribution of variables of group inclusion, ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance for disagreement was tested by normal law (by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test), the calculation of the paired samples t-test in the SPSS program was applied. The differences between the average values of group inclusion, ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance for disagreement were checked for statistical significance and for appropriate comparison of sample averages. The results show that group inclusion level (4.6554) was slightly higher than that of ethno-cultural empathy (4.3491) and tolerance for disagreement (4.0762). Despite the small difference between variables, it can be argued that the group inclusion level is statistically significantly higher than that of ethno-cultural empathy ($p = 0.009 < 0.05$) and tolerance for disagreement ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

These findings of our study are very close to those of other researchers such as Saravia-Shore and Arvizu (1992) and Lähdesmäki et al. (2022), who argue that students can learn to be empathetic in a multicultural environment, they are exposed to the impact of their socio-cultural context and they are not only passive recipients of culture, but also active creators of culture.

The analysis of the average student performance in Lithuanian language and literature, history and English per semester/trimester shows statistically significant difference ($p=0.006 < 0.05$). The distribution of trimester averages for Lithuanian, English and History is shown in Table 5:

Table 5. *Distribution of the average performance of students permanently residing in Lithuania and re-emigrated to Lithuania in the subjects of Lithuanian language and literature, English and history*

Average result by trimester/semester	Students with Lithuanian parents who have always resided in Lithuania	Students from families of repatriated Lithuanians, ethnic minorities and migrants
Lithuanian language and literature	7.8636	6.9556
Foreign language (English)	8.3636	7.8667
History	7.5000	6.3111

The SPSS calculations proved no interaction between the average semester results and these two groups of students ($p=0.699 > 0.05$). Therefore, it can be claimed that student’s nationality or their former place of residence (elsewhere than Lithuania) had no impact on the semester grades. However, the results of Table 4 lead us to believe that for both student groups the average grade is the highest in foreign language (English) and the lowest in history. As regards English, the social environment in which pupils are currently actively involved, communicating mainly in English, may have an impact on the English language result. Meanwhile, history is a narrative of the past that emphasizes certain facts from the past, but these may be interpreted differently in different cultures (Bevir et al., 2003; Sule, 2021), depending on state policies, interests, values, ways of dealing with social problems, and the capacity to use evidence (Parkhurst, 2016).

For this reason, students who have emigrated or come from other countries may also score lower in history than students who were born and raised in Lithuania. It can be noticed that the average grades between the two groups differ the least in the subject of English. Whereas in Lithuanian language and literature and history the average grades of re-emigrated Lithuanian, ethnic minority and migrant students were noticeably lower than those of Lithuanian students. Comparing the average grades of the two groups in English and Lithuanian language and literature and history, a higher difference in the average grades is recorded in Lithuanian language and literature as well as history.

Results of interviews with school teachers

The content analysis of the interview transcripts resulted in a few themes that relate to the process of developing cultural literacy. The multicultural environment was the basis for self-directed value-based learning, the role of the teacher, critical reading in relation to multicultural content, analyzing subject matter, and values developed in a multicultural environment. The thematic groups for the analysis of the interviews were distinguished according to the interview questions (see Table 1). The educational contexts of the pupils in Lithuanian language and literature, foreign language, history, religion and ethics lessons were explored in interviews with the teachers working with these pupils. The teachers of those subjects were chosen for the interviews, whose educational content, in our opinion, in comparison with other subjects, can more clearly identify aspects of value education based on the concept of multicultural education. These were the same subjects that were also included in the written survey of students.

The comments of the respondents are summed up as under:

Multicultural environments as a basis for self-directed value-based learning.

The teachers' comments clearly indicated that the multicultural environment of the school naturally led to students becoming more open-minded. Pupils received, on the one hand, knowledge based on values specific to the country and, on the other, exposure to different cultures. Teachers also argue that values-based education happens naturally. The English Teacher commented:

“The process takes place, as I said, very naturally. The kids in our school are very tolerant and used to being in a multicultural environment with students from different cultures, with different character traits – some are more hot-tempered, others are quieter. Students are really very tolerant and dialogue and helping each other is constantly encouraged” The Ethics teacher too agreed to this view, and commented: *“As there are a lot of*

students from different nationalities in our school and they all have different traditions and customs, their approach to the development of values is very calm.

Another teacher of Lithuanian language and literature said, “*The historical context is very important, because it determines a lot of factors and in that context a person changes, what he creates, what he writes, what his values are.*” These observations of the teachers are similar to the insights of other researchers who argued that students who learn in multilingual and multicultural environments tend to acquire better thinking skills and a stronger value base in education, because children communicate naturally and are able to know and care for each other (Beacco et al., 2016; Edelenbos et al., 2006; Riagáin & Lüdi, 2003).

The role of the teacher.

Teachers understand the difficulties of including students from different cultures in the teaching process and use methods that have been proven in their experience. They also understand their role as teachers in the teaching process, making sure that teaching is not an isolated phenomenon, but is closely linked to students' lives and society. The Lithuanian language and literature teacher narrated:

“The school currently has children from forty countries around the world, and they all come with different cultural backgrounds. They also have different perspectives on both Lithuania and their home country. We have to individualize and differentiate this thing, in such a way that I can only shift the content through their homeland: I say to the Ukrainians what is your homeland, a Syrian girl writes about her homeland, not about Lithuania, but she writes in Lithuanian. So perhaps this is the point of convergence, that when we talk about us, about them and about ourselves, we are still talking in Lithuanian. And bear in mind that the common human values are the same. The same idea of freedom in Syria or in Ukraine or in Sakartvelo. The same problem of humanity, humanity is also the same and it is a unifying thing, nationality, language, traditions, customs, territory is an understanding that unites us all.”

Likewise, the English teacher commented: *Of course, as a teacher, you illustrate with examples, I show my own examples, <...> I show how I behave, I illustrate with real-life situations. After all, it's just as much integrated into the same subject matter.* The Ethics teacher said: *“I have to be like that myself, to set an example for them, to be tolerant, to accept them for who they are. Then they also learn to accept others around them as they are.”* Indeed, empathy, tolerance and example are very important when working with students from different cultures. This practice is also emphasized by other researchers (Binder & Kühnen, 2021; Sule, 2021), because to be culturally literate means to be prepared and competent to be sensitive to one's own and others' identity, heritage and culture, and to the various situations that can be brought to light in different contexts in the educational process.

Critical reading related to multicultural content, analyzing subject matter.

Teachers make clear the importance of developing reading skills, arguing that facts should be accompanied by deep knowledge and understanding. They also point to the methods by which children can and do learn to read texts carefully. The Ethics teacher commented:

“I always emphasize to the children that the main thing is critical thinking, we have to be critical about everything. On the same topic, analyze the information provided by several bloggers and compare them. It would be even better if it were information from several countries, say, say, Lithuania, and other European countries, and also from America or somewhere else, and compare them. In a word, I tell children that, first of all, when they read something, when they analyze it, when they do something like that, they should think critically, so that they don't accept the information without any analysis, without any evaluation.

The History teacher said: *“If I see and know that I can give them something extra on the subject I'm talking about, then <...> I say, by the way, well, we're studying World War I now, but if you want to get a glimpse of what it was really like for the people there, you can read Remarque books.* The English teacher added: *“We also read newspaper articles, in fact they are even in our textbook, for example about security cameras in cities <...> I say to the children, let's think about where the cameras are, is it a good thing, how much has crime gone down there, what are the statistics and so on.”* Duoblienė (2009), reviewing the peculiarities of the modern society, identifies its most important feature as the formation of a knowledge society, where the educational process uses information tools, media, and other life situations that people experience. There is a fundamental

overlap between the insights of this researcher and those of the teachers who took part in the study with regard to the development of students' critical reading. Critical reading is essential for a person to become a full member of society (Larking, 2017).

Values developed in a multicultural environment.

During the interviews, teachers in each subject identified the values they taught in their lessons. These included developing the ability to see events from different perspectives and through the experiences of different countries/cultures, self-knowledge within the cultural space of the country, honesty, respect, tolerance, understanding, listening, tactful expression, debate and analysis, acceptance, communication and cooperation. The History teacher said, *“Often there is an intersection, a very strong intersection, because one has one set of values and the other has another set of values. And they are both sitting together, in the same classroom, here and now. I have to more or less show them how to live with both values. And that doesn't stop us from communicating, even on difficult issues. A student says to me, teacher, you yourself say all the time, for example, the Germans see this as so and so, because it is so and so, the Russians see it as so and so, the Lithuanians see it as so and so... You tell us those attitudes. I am expressing different positions, because knowing one position does not lead to dialogue.*

The Lithuanian language and literature teacher added, *“We educate them first by teaching literature and integrating cultural experiences through literature, through history. The programs are more focused on cultural and self-knowledge, on culture, on developing one's identity as a citizen.* The Ethics teacher commented again,

“In our lessons, we talk about all the common human values. We usually single out, obviously, tolerance more than anything else. We talk about people who are different, who not only look different, but also think differently, imagine the world differently, understand the world differently. In that sense, it is about diversity. Then we are talking about understanding, about being able to listen, about being able to express our thoughts tactfully. We distinguish separately that dispute and conflict are two different things... We learn to listen to others, to debate, <...> as a teacher I also try to give examples from other cultures, we don't write off any culture.

The Religion teacher said,

“My subject is values education, so since I am a Catholic religion teacher, my subject is also, of course, common human values. Contents <...> from life, we take experience. Then we analyze and relate it to knowledge. In my classes there are not only Catholics, children who profess the Catholic faith, but there are also Orthodox, and there are even Muslim children sitting... I analyze first of all through their experience. They each have a story to tell and they want to tell it. My encouragement is experience. <...> You learn, you try to accept and know yourself, then the other as he is. And it doesn't matter if it's a person who has difficulty speaking, who has a disability. Just a classmate or a member of the school community or, in the end, a teacher who is stricter. You have to learn to accept.

Discussion

Based on the research carried out, i.e. the analysis of the survey data of the students in 10th, 11th and 12th grades and the analysis of the data from the interviews with the teachers, an attempt was made to describe the development of cultural literacy in a multicultural school in Vilnius, Lithuania. From the teachers' perspective towards value education revealed in the study, we can say that teachers' flexibility, openness, and choice of contextual tasks provided the basis for students to develop a high level of cultural literacy. In general, the teachers in the study expressed very similar common human values based on life situations, interaction, dialogue and practices based on tolerance, as highlighted by other researchers (European Commission, 2022; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; B. Street, 2003; B. V. Street & Street, 1984; Tucker et al., 2014).

It should be noted that according to SPSS calculations, the level of inclusiveness of the student group is slightly higher than the level of ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance of disagreement. On this basis, we can argue that there is still room for improvement in ethno-cultural empathy and tolerance of disagreement, which could be helped by teacher-led activities in the teaching process to encourage not only acceptance but also a deeper understanding of each other, and to do so without avoiding dialogue with classmates who have different

opinions or points of view (Rapanta et al., 2021; Serafini, 2014). The advantage of group inclusion could be based on the impact of a multicultural environment (as commented by, history teacher “*students are already used to being in an environment where there is multiculturalism*” and the Lithuanian language and literature teacher: “*Our class is as open as possible to any individual... multiculturalism has become one of the most important values.*”.

It can be said that contemporary notions of cultural literacy education are not linked to the political and ideological dimension as they were in the past (Christenbury, 1989; McLaren, 1988; Wilson, 1974). For this reason, in the 21st century, various theoretical definitions and approaches to cultural literacy can be found (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Maine & Čermáková, 2021; Rapanta et al., 2021; Saravia-Shore & Arvizu, 1992; Serafini, 2014). Eric Donald Hirsch et al. (2002) emphasize on the national context of a country at the forefront, but he also highlighted on the concept of cultural literacy that showed the relationship between different cultures. In defining the concept of cultural literacy, it is necessary to take into account the aspects listed by different authors who relate the concept of cultural literacy to intercultural competence (Cook, 2009; Johnson, 2014; Kay & Greenhill, 2011; Mullican, 1991; Salo-Lee, 2007; Schweizer, 2009; Sule, 2021). The expression of intercultural competence was observed through three main dimensions: inclusion, empathy and tolerance (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022). However, when it comes to cultural literacy, it is the social practice of cultural literacy that is most important (B. Street, 2003), which focuses on the process rather than on the study of the concept/phenomenon itself.

A study in a multicultural school in Lithuania shows that pupils are open-minded. The multicultural environment of the school (Beacco et al., 2016; Edelenbos et al., 2006; Riagáin & Lüdi, 2003) may be the reason for this openness, as it contributes to the development of a deeper understanding of other cultures. The role of teachers in a multicultural school is very important as the teacher has to interact with different cultures in the classroom at the same time, and therefore has to prepare the material in a culturally sensitive way. Therefore, the educational process organized in a multicultural school requires more responsibility and effort on the part of the educator to promote the knowledge of different cultures and harmonious living together (Duoblienė, 2009; Halbert & Chigeza, 2015; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022).

Conclusions, Implications and Limitations

From the sources of the study, i.e. student surveys, interviews with teachers, an attempt was made to describe the development of cultural literacy in the 10th, 11th and 12th grades of the Vilnius Multicultural School, Lithuania. It can be said that the concepts related to value education identified in the teacher interviews are reflected in the teachers' attitudes and implemented in the learning process, which provided a strong basis for the high level of cultural literacy of the students, which is what our study has shown. Interviews with teachers revealed that the multicultural environment of the school naturally led to pupils becoming more open, tolerant and able to get to know children from different cultures better. Learning in a multicultural environment gives pupils, on the one hand, the values-based knowledge of the country in which they are studying and, on the other hand, exposure to the different cultures presented by their classmates.

Teachers' attitudes towards different cultures and the corresponding behavior in the classroom lead to the elimination of differences between pupils, as all pupils in years 10, 11 and 12 are culturally literate. Teachers' attitudes enable the development of critical/attentive reading skills and the ability to view different texts through different prisms. Interviews with teachers showed that efforts are made to develop children's critical reading skills, relying not only on the analysis of literary works, but also on texts in the media, looking for primary sources. Teacher interviews show that the themes of each subject are narrated with historical and contemporary realities and help to understand the context of the country, so that knowledge is deep and not just factual. The study showed that the development of cultural literacy skills is facilitated by dialogue-based education, where the content being analyzed is discussed from the perspective of different cultures. Students can then gain a better understanding and appreciation of different cultures and develop a critical attitude. The scientific evidence presented in this paper contributes to the definition of the process of cultural literacy development. The study revealed two different realities, i.e. the students' cultural literacy skills and the teachers' ability to identify different cultures and to organize an educational process that fosters the knowledge of different cultures.

A limitation of this study is that it only examines the case of a multicultural school in Lithuania to uncover the process of cultural literacy education. In order to explore the concept of cultural literacy more broadly, the study could focus on Lithuanian national minority schools, where there is less cultural diversity and Polish or Russian culture dominates. Another limitation could be the exclusion of other important actors in education, such as university teacher education program developers, representatives of in-service teacher training courses, textbook authors and reviewers, and school administrators. However, for the sake of the reliability of the study, it should be noted that the teacher is a very important person for the pupils, who helps them to learn not only about the culture of the country in which the children live, but also about the cultures of other cultures (of the countries from which the children come), and who can do this by developing and analyzing issues of intercultural understanding in an integrated way with the content of the subject, or by analyzing the same issue from the perspective of different cultures.

References

- Au, K. H. (1998). Social constructivism and the school literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds. *Journal of literacy research*, 30(2), 297-319. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10862969809548000>
- Beacco, J.-C., Byram, M., Cavalli, M., Coste, D., Cuenat, M. E., Goullier, F., & Panthier, J. (2016). *Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education*. Council of Europe. <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12365/17798>
- Bevir, M., Rhodes, R. A., & Weller, P. (2003). Traditions of governance: interpreting the changing role of the public sector. *Public administration*, 81(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9299.00334>
- Binder, N., & Kühnen, U. (2021). Teaching cultural intelligence for a VUCA world. *European Journal of Cross-Cultural Competence and Management*, 5(3), 252-270. <https://doi.org/10.1504/EJCCM.2021.116892>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford University Press. <https://ktpu.kpi.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/social-research-methods-alan-bryman.pdf>
- Byrd, C. M. (2016). Does culturally relevant teaching work? An examination from student perspectives. *Sage Open*, 6(3). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244016660744>
- Christenbury, L. (1989). Cultural Literacy: A Terrible Idea Whose Time Has Come. *English Journal*, 78(1), 14-17. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ381839>
- Cook, P. G. (2009). The rhetoricity of cultural literacy. *Pedagogy*, 9(3), 487-500. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/361541/summary>
- Cordis. (2018). *Dialogue and Argumentation for cultural Literacy Learning in Schools*. Cordis EU Research Result. <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/770045>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/research-design/book255675>
- Duoblienė, L. (2009). ar pavyks išvengti hibridinio tapatumo formavimo (si) informacinėje visuomenėje? *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia*, 23, 79-91. <https://etalpykla.lituanistikadb.lt/object/LT-LDB-0001:J.04~2009~1367168993130/>
- Edelenbos, P., Johnstone, R., & Kubanek, A. (2006). *Les grands principes pédagogiques sur lesquels se fonde l'enseignement des langues aux très jeunes apprenants*. Les langues pour les enfants en Europe: Résultats de la recherche, bonne pratique et principes essentiels. <http://www.provalcare.com/pdf/commission-europeenne.pdf>
- European Commission. (2022). *Skills & Competences: demonstrate intercultural competence*. European Commission. <http://data.europa.eu/esco/skill/c10d5d87-36cf-42f5-8a12-e560fb5f4af8>
- Freebody, P. R. (2003). *Qualitative Research in Education: Interaction and Practice*. Sage Publications Ltd. <https://methods.sagepub.com/book/qualitative-research-in-education>
- Gillies, R. M., & Boyle, M. (2010). Teachers' reflections on cooperative learning: Issues of implementation. *Teaching and teacher Education*, 26(4), 933-940. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.10.034>
- Halbert, K., & Chigeza, P. (2015). Navigating discourses of cultural literacy in teacher education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(11), 155-168. <https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2015v40n11.9>
- Hirsch, E. D. (1983). Cultural Literacy. *The American Scholar*, 52(2), 159-169. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41211231>

- Hirsch, E. D., Kett, J. F., & Trefil, J. S. (2002). *The new dictionary of cultural literacy*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Jansen, W. S., Otten, S., van der Zee, K. I., & Jans, L. (2014). Inclusion: Conceptualization and measurement. *European journal of social psychology*, 44(4), 370-385. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2011>
- Johnson, P. C. (2014). Cultural literacy, cosmopolitanism and tourism research. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 44, 255-269. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2013.10.006>
- Kay, K., & Greenhill, V. (2011). Twenty-first century students need 21st century skills. In *Bringing schools into the 21st century* (pp. 41-65). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0268-4_3
- Kobakhidze, G. (2021). Theoretical Background for a Strategy of Development of Cultural Literacy in Schools. *Journal of Education Culture and Society*, 12(1), 45-58. <https://doi.org/10.15503/jecs2021.1.45.58>
- Lähdesmäki, T., Baranova, J., Ylönen, S. C., Koistinen, A.-K., Mäkinen, K., Juškiene, V., & Zaleskiene, I. (2022). Introduction: Cultural Literacy and Creativity. In *Learning Cultural Literacy through Creative Practices in Schools* (pp. 1-15). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-89236-4_1
- Larking, M. (2017). Critical reading strategies in the advanced English classroom. *APU journal of language research*, 2, 50-68. https://doi.org/10.34409/apujlr.2.0_50
- Maine, F., & Čermáková, A. (2021). Using linguistic ethnography as a tool to analyse dialogic teaching in upper primary classrooms. *Learning, Culture and Social Interaction*, 29, 100500. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lcsi.2021.100500>
- Malone, S. (2016). *MTB MLE resource kit, including the excluded: Promoting multilingual education*. Bangkok: UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000246278>
- McLaren, P. (1988). Culture or canon? Critical pedagogy and the politics of literacy. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58(2), 213-234. https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1150&context=education_articles
- Moje, E. B. (2016). Youth literacy and cultural theories: A review of the science and implications for policy. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 3(1), 70-76. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732215624709>
- Mullican, J. S. (1991). Cultural Literacy: Whose Culture? Whose Literacy? *English Education*, 23(4), 244-250. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40172768>
- Parkhurst, J. (2016). *The Politics of Evidence: From evidence-based policy to the good governance of evidence*. Routledge. <https://researchonline.lshtm.ac.uk/id/eprint/3298900>
- Rapanta, C., Vrikkki, M., & Evagorou, M. (2021). Preparing culturally literate citizens through dialogue and argumentation: rethinking citizenship education. *The Curriculum Journal*, 32(3), 475-494. <https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.95>
- Riagáin, P. Ó., & Lüdi, G. (2003). *Elements Pour Une Politique De L'education Bilingue*. Conseil de l'Europe: Strasbourg. <https://rm.coe.int/16806acca0>
- Ruškus, J. (2008). Į Lietuvą atvykusių lietuvių kilmės moksleivių patirtis: "Lietuvių namų" mokyklos atvejis. *Oikos: lietuvių migracijos ir diasporos studijos*, 81-96. <https://etalpykla.lituanistikadb.lt/object/LT-LDB-0001:J.04~2008~1367171710421/>
- Salo-Lee, L. (2007). Towards cultural literacy. In *Education for global responsibility—Finnish perspectives* (pp. 73-82). Publications of the Ministry of Education. <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79403/opm31.pdf?sequence=1>
- Saravia-Shore, M., & Arvizu, S. F. (1992). *Cross-Cultural Literacy: Ethnographies of Communication in Multiethnic Classrooms*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/p/book/9780815373582>
- Schweizer, B. (2009). Cultural Literacy: Is it time to revisit the debate? *Thought & Action*, 25, 51-56. <http://geekyartistlibrarian.pbworks.com/f/cultural+literacy.pdf>
- Segal, N. (2015). From literature to cultural literacy. *Humanities*, 4(1), 68-79. <https://doi.org/10.3390/h4010068>
- Serafini, F. (2014). Exploring wordless picture books. *The Reading Teacher*, 68(1), 24-26. <https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1294>
- Shliakhovchuk, E. (2021). After cultural literacy: new models of intercultural competency for life and work in a VUCA world. *Educational Review*, 73(2), 229-250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1566211>
- Street, B. (2003). What's "new" in New Literacy Studies? Critical approaches to literacy in theory and practice. *Current issues in comparative education*, 5(2), 77-91. https://www.tc.columbia.edu/cice/pdf/25734_5_2_street.pdf
- Street, B. V., & Street, B. B. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.cambridge.org/pk/academic/subjects/languages-linguistics/sociolinguistics/literacy-theory-and-practice>

- Sule, E. (2021). Adequacy of the Social Studies Curriculum in terms of Cultural Literacy Skills. *The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational and Social Sciences*, 23, 88-92. <https://doi.org/10.55549/epess.1071439>
- Teacher Attestation Regulations. (2007). *Regarding the approval of the teacher certification regulations*. Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.302497>
- Teven, J. J., McCroskey, J. C., & Richmond, V. P. (1998). Measurement of tolerance for disagreement. *Communication Research Reports*, 15(2), 209-217. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824099809362115>
- Tucker, M. F., Bonial, R., Vanhove, A., & Kedharnath, U. (2014). Leading across cultures in the human age: an empirical investigation of intercultural competency among global leaders. *SpringerPlus*, 3(1), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1186/2193-1801-3-127>
- UNESCO Bangkok Office. (2020). *Tools for Planning and Monitoring Programmes of Multilingual Education in Asia*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok. <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/tools-planning-and-monitoring-programmes-multilingual-education-asia>
- Wang, Y.-W., Davidson, M. M., Yakushko, O. F., Savoy, H. B., Tan, J. A., & Bleier, J. K. (2003). The scale of ethnocultural empathy: Development, validation, and reliability. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 50(2), 221–234. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.50.2.221>
- Wilson, H. B. (1974). Cultural literacy laboratory. *McGill Journal of Education/Revue des sciences de l'éducation de McGill*, 9(001), 86-95. <https://mje.mcgill.ca/article/view/6952>
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications*. Publications, Inc. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/case-study-research-and-applications/book250150>

Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE TO 10TH, 11TH AND 12TH YEAR STUDENTS ON CULTURAL LITERACY SKILLS

1. Sex: Male; Female.
2. Age:
3. Nationality of mother:
4. Nationality of father:
5. Nationality:
6. How many years have you been studying in Lithuania?
7. How many years did you study in another country?
8. Name the country where you lived:
9. Religion:
10. How many languages do you know?
11. Name these languages:
12. Do you spend your free time with friends of different racial or ethnic backgrounds: Yes; No.
13. Your semester mark (skip if you do not study or have not studied the subject)

Ethics	Religion	Lithuanian language and literature	Foreign language	History
--------	----------	------------------------------------	------------------	---------

The range of answers: Strongly Agree; Agree; Slightly Agree; Slightly Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree. Think about the class you are studying in and mark the answers.

This class	
14. ... gives me the feeling that I belong	22. ... allows me to be authentic
15. ... gives me the feeling that I am part of this group	23. ... allows me to be who I am
16. ... gives me the feeling that I fit in	24. ... allows me to express my authentic self
17. ... treats me as an inside	25. ... allows me to present myself the way I am
18. ... likes me	26. ... encourages me to be authentic
19. ... appreciates me	27. ... encourages me to be who I am
20. ... is pleased with me	28. ... encourages me to express my authentic self
21. ... cares about me	29. ... encourages me to present myself the way I am

Mark answers based on your life experiences.

30. I know what it feels like to be the only person of a certain race or ethnicity in a group of people.	38. I can see how other racial or ethnic groups are systematically oppressed in our society.
31. I can relate to the frustration that some people feel about having fewer opportunities due to their racial or ethnic backgrounds.	39. I am aware of how society differentially treats racial or ethnic groups other than my own.
32. It is difficult for me to put myself in the shoes of someone who is racially or ethnically different from me.	40. When I hear people make ethnically offensive jokes, I tell them I am offended even if I am not a member of that group.
33. It is difficult for me to relate to stories in which people talk about discrimination in their day-to-day life.	41. I seek opportunities to speak with individuals of other national, racial or ethnic backgrounds about their experiences.
34. I feel irritated when people of a different linguistic heritage speak their language around me.	42. When other people struggle with racial or ethnic oppression, I share their frustration.
35. I feel uncomfortable when I am around a significant number of people who are racially or ethnically different from me.	43. When I interact with people from other national, racial or ethnic backgrounds, I show appreciation of their cultural norms.

36. I don't understand how people of different national, racial or ethnic backgrounds enjoy wearing traditional clothing.	44. I am likely to participate in events that promote equal rights for people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.
37. I do not understand why people of different ethnic or racial backgrounds want to keep their old cultural traditions instead of trying to fit in.	45. When I know my friends are treated unfairly because of their racial or ethnic background, I speak up for them.

Mark the answers that best match your approach to communicating with others.

46. It is more fun to be involved in a discussion where there is a lot of disagreement.	54. I would prefer to work independently rather than to work with other people and have disagreements.
47. I enjoy talking to people with points of view different than mine.	55. I would prefer joining a group where no disagreements occur.
48. I don't like to be in situations where people are in disagreement.	56. I don't like to disagree with other people.
49. I prefer being in groups where everyone's beliefs are the same as mine.	57. Given a choice, I would leave a conversation rather than continue a disagreement.
50. Disagreements are generally helpful.	58. I avoid talking with people who I think will disagree with me.
51. I prefer to change the topic of discussion when disagreement occurs.	59. I enjoy disagreeing with others.
52. I tend to create disagreements in conversations because it serves a useful purpose.	60. Disagreement stimulates a conversation and causes me to communicate more.
53. I enjoy arguing with other people about things on which we disagree.	

Approval was obtained from Institutional Review Board (or Ethics Committee) of University X. The procedures used in this study adhere to the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki. Informed consent was also obtained from all participants and/or their legal guardians.