

Language immersion and socialization of Ukrainian newcomer students in the example of school X of Narva city in Estonia

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the issues of language immersion and socialization of Ukrainian schoolchildren – new immigrants studying in one of the comprehensive schools in the city of Narva, in Estonia. The aim of the work is to identify factors influencing the success of the adaptation of immigrant children including learning Estonian language, intercultural interaction and forms of support provided by the school and families. Particular attention is paid to the language immersion strategies used by teachers, as well as the role of parents in the educational and social processes. It has been established that the motivation of students, teaching methods and availability of psychological and academic support have a significant impact on the dynamics of adaptation. The article also discusses the difficulties that students face at the initial stage and ways to overcome them with the participation of the school community. The research is based on semi-structured individual interviews.

Keywords: language socialization, educational integration, intercultural interaction Ukrainian students, Estonian-language educational environment, Russian-language educational environment, motivation for language learning, native language

Introduction

According to statistics, over the past ten years, the number of children of new immigrants aged 0 to 14 in Estonia has almost quadrupled – from 434 in 2012 to 1,601 in 2021 (Vanahans et al., 2023). The term new immigrant in Estonia means a person who has lived in the country for less than five years and has received a temporary residence permit (Kultuuriministeerium, 2023). In terms of students, these are usually children who have arrived from the European Union or third countries and have been in Estonia for less than three years (EHIS, 2016). Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine in February 2022 and the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive (2001/55/EC), more than 7,200 Ukrainian children have been enrolled in Estonian schools (Politsei-ja Piirivalveamet, 2022).

Newcomer schoolchildren face many difficulties related to linguistic, social and cultural adaptation. Researches show that the first months in a new country are accompanied by a feeling of insecurity, difficulties in interacting with teachers and peers, and limited participation in the learning process (Picchio & Mayer, 2015). Researchers emphasize the need for comprehensive support, including language skill development, individual approaches, interaction with families and cultural sensitivity in teaching (Järv & Kirss, 2019, Horgan et al., 2022).

Among the measures aimed at integrating immigrants into the educational system, a special place is occupied by language immersion programs, which have proven their effectiveness in a multilingual and multicultural environment (Heo, 2022). *Language immersion* is an integrated method of implementing subject and language learning, where teaching takes place in two or more languages (Mehisto, 2009). In the context of this article, it means learning in Estonian as the target language based on the Estonian national curricula (at least 60% of subject lessons are conducted in Estonian) (ibid.). At the same time, despite the prevalence of such programs in Estonia, empirical studies focusing on the specific mechanisms of adaptation of Ukrainian students in individual schools are still insufficient.

This article is a qualitative case study of the process of linguistic and social adaptation of Ukrainian schoolchildren in one of the schools in the city of Narva in Estonia. The theoretical basis of the work includes the concepts of language immersion, school integration and intercultural socialization. The role of school and family as key agents of adaptation is also considered, as well as the influence of motivation, age, previous educational experience and language environment on the process of mastering Estonian language.

The aim of the research is to examine the features of language immersion and socialization of Ukrainian students at Narva School X, as well as to identify factors that facilitate or hinder the adaptation process.

In this regard, the following research questions were formulated:

- What difficulties do Ukrainian students face when adapting in School X, and how do they overcome them?
- What pedagogical and supportive practices do teachers and school staff use?
- How does language immersion occur, and how do students cope with the transition to using Estonian language?
- What role do parents play in the educational and social integration of their children?
- How do Ukrainian students socialize in the school environment?

The article first examines theoretical approaches related to the adaptation of immigrants in the educational environment. This is followed by a description of the empirical study, including semi-structured interviews with participants in the educational process. The work is summarized with a discussion of the results and conclusions relevant for pedagogical practical use and further research.

Theoretical background

On February 24, 2022, Russia began war against Ukraine causing the largest migration wave to Estonia in decades. In 2022, the migration increase amounted to 49,414 people and two-thirds of them were Ukrainian citizens. Since the beginning of the war, more than 122,000 Ukrainians have arrived in Estonia, of whom about 67,000 have stayed long-term (Sotsiaalkindlustusamet, 2024). Since the majority of new immigrants in recent years have come from Ukraine, thus country has become an important partner for Estonia in migration processes, and therefore plays a significant role in integration and cultural diversity policy (Jauhiainen & Erbsen, 2023).

This situation requires effective integration solutions from the state and the education system. Fast and sustainable mastering of Estonian language is considered a key factor for successful adaptation (Stelmakova & Zabrodskaja, 2024). Although knowledge of Russian is common among Ukrainian immigrants and facilitates initial interactions (Bilaniuk, 2010; Kaldur et al., 2019), it is the Estonian language that determines opportunities for education, employment and participation in social life (Jauhiainen & Erbsen, 2023).

As estimated for 2022, only 1% of Ukrainian adults had an intermediate level of Estonian, and a significant proportion of children continued their education in Estonian schools (Haridussilm, 2024). This is due to the choice of parents focused on the future of their children and the possibility of integration (Lauri et al., 2016). At the same time, schools have become multilingual, which requires cultural flexibility and appropriate training from teachers (Rüütmaa et al., 2023).

Linguistic adjustment

New immigrant students face adaptation in three dimensions: linguistic, social and cultural (Soll & Palginõmm, 2011). State programs include language courses, cultural orientation and educational support (Kultuuriministeerium, 2023). Although schools have no formal obligation to organize teaching Estonian as a second language, many do so on their own initiative (Kaldur et al., 2021).

Preparatory classes and language immersion programs have become an important direction. However, the research shows that the isolation in such classes can hinder socialization (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). An

alternative is bilateral immersion programs, in which study is conducted in two languages, which contributes to the development of sustainable bilingualism (Kallas & Kün, 2019).

Motivation is a decisive factor in successful language mastering. Dörnyei (2001) distinguishes integrative and instrumental motivation as complementary. Game methods, reliance on students' experiences and group work are important (Soll & Palginõmm, 2011). An atmosphere of trust and confidence, including parental involvement and innovative approaches, such as involving the child as an assistant to younger children, are also important (Haridus-ja Noorteamet, 2021).

Social adaptation

Cultural transition has a significant impact on the social connections and emotional state of the child (Hamilton, 2013). The adaptation period, which covers the first five years after migration, includes gradual involvement in the personal, educational and social spheres of life (Soll & Palginõmm, 2011, Kultuuriministeerium, 2023). However, integration requires a long-term support (Kaldur et al., 2019).

The migration experience is associated with multi-level stress, from traumatic events to the difficulties of the post-migration stage (Foo et al., 2018). Key factors influencing adaptation are the language barrier, the breakdown of social ties and cultural differences (Ting-Toomey & Dorjee, 2019). At the same time, a sense of security and belonging plays a decisive role in successful socialization (Foo et al., 2018).

Breach of discipline, withdrawnness and "silent periods" may be reactions to stress and culture shock, rather than signs of developmental gap (Soll & Palginõmm, 2011). Students with a different native language are more likely to experience bullying and feel isolated (Eurydice, 2019).

Effective engagement strategies include pair and group work, dialogue forms and visual materials (Horgan et al., 2022). It is important to create an environment in which the child feels like a full member of the school community.

According to the concept of holistic education, attention should be paid not only to academic achievements, but also to emotional and social well-being (Okeke, 2014). At the same time, consistent support is possible only with the active participation of the family, which is an important source of social capital (Turney & Kao, 2009).

Cultural adaptation

Cultural adaptation requires a willingness to change behavior patterns in accordance with the norms of the new environment (Pajupuu, 2000; Soll & Palginõmm, 2011). According to Berry's model (Berry et al., 1992), the best-case scenario is integration, in which the individual retains his or her native culture while learning the language and norms of the host society. Successful integration requires efforts from both sides: the migrant and the host society (Muldma & Nõmm, 2011).

Education in Estonia is aimed at development of citizens who respect the laws and culture of the country and are ready to interact in a democratic society (Muldma & Nõmm, 2011). In this context, culturally sensitive teaching is becoming increasingly important – an approach that takes into account the cultural background of students when selecting methods and content (Hammond, 2015). Visual materials and methodological recommendations are effective (ibid.), as well as the analysis of cultural differences through Hofstede's model (see Hofstede, 2017).

Leirman (2003) describes education as a dialogue and a process of mutual understanding. The teacher plays a key role in breaking down stereotypes and building tolerance (Tseng, 2020). Stereotypes change with increasing cultural awareness, as well as through the recognition of diversity within ethnic groups (Mitchell, 2016).

A teacher working in a multicultural environment should be a mediator between cultures, avoid ethnocentrism and broadcast the values of openness (Slomp et al., 2017). A successful practice is the inclusion of intercultural content in subject teaching, which positively affects academic achievements (Aronson & Laughter, 2016).

An example is the Netherlands, which have implemented a multicultural education program integrated into the curriculum since 1990s. It helps to develop empathy and dialogue without focusing on ethnicity (Muldma & Nõmm, 2011). Some schools in Estonia, including Tallinna Lilleküla Gümnaasium, have adopted a similar approach (Küün, 2019).

Definitely, parents play an important role in the socialization of children: they explain them their origin, reasons for migration and form an emotional connection with their native culture (Apitzsch et al., 2015). At the same time, children often adapt faster than their parents – through school and peers (ibid.). It is important to provide children with the opportunity to keep their cultural identity, while simultaneously developing civic consciousness and interest in other cultures (Vetik et al., 2017, Kalmus et al., 2022).

Methodology

A qualitative case study approach was used as a methodological basis, allowing for an in-depth analysis of the individual experiences of new immigrants in a specific educational environment.

A semi-structured interview method was used to collect data, which provides a combination of pre-determined logic and flexibility to reveal the individual opinions and feelings of the participants (Laherand, 2008). The questions covered topics such as adaptation difficulties, teaching approaches, mastering of Estonian language, parental involvement and student motivation.

Eight respondents were included in the study: three students from grades 1, 4 and 8, three Estonian language teachers, one physical education teacher and a deputy principal. The sample was purposefully formed based on relevant experience of interaction with Ukrainian students (Õunapuu, 2014). The sample size was considered sufficient to achieve the goals of the qualitative analysis (Laherand, 2008).

Interviews were conducted in 2025 on the territory of School X in Narva city. Before interviewing, written consents were obtained from the parents of minor participants, as well as voluntary consents from the students and adult respondents.

All interviews were voice recorded, transcribed manually and translated into Estonian. In order to ensure confidentiality, all personal data were anonymized, and the participants were given pseudonyms (EÕ1 – Estonian language teacher no. 1, EÕ2 – Estonian language teacher no. 2, EÕ3 – Estonian language teacher no. 3, KKÕ – physical education teacher, ÕA – principal deputy. Three students from Ukraine were also interviewed. All ethical standards were taken into account in this study.

The collected data were analyzed using the method of qualitative thematic content analysis, aimed at identifying recurring semantic units and grouping them into thematic categories (Laherand, 2008). The following key categories were identified during the analysis: “adaptation difficulties”, “teaching methods”, “Estonian language”, “parents”, “socialization” and “motivation”.

The working language of the interviews was Russian, as the most comfortable for all participants. This contributed to openness and reduced the psychological barrier. Despite the fact that the study was conducted outside the Ukrainian diaspora, the issues of integration of Ukrainian students into the educational space of Estonia are considered relevant and require further study.

Results

Adaptation difficulties

Adaptation of students from Ukraine to an Estonian school is associated with a number of challenges: language barrier, cultural differences and emotional difficulties. The process is especially difficult for high school students who are starting to learn Estonian practically from scratch. Communication is also complicated by poor knowledge of Russian and English, which makes studying and interaction difficult (based on information received from the EÕ1, EÕ2 and ÕA). In some cases, students do not have sufficient knowledge of either Estonian or Russian, which requires a special pedagogical approach. For example, one sixth-grade student began his studies with a language level corresponding to a preschool level and needed

constant support (EÕ1). It happens that children are afraid to speak Estonian fearing mistakes or being misunderstood (EÕ2).

Significant stress is also created by the double academic load: according to ÕA many Ukrainian schoolchildren simultaneously continue their studies in a Ukrainian online school. This means not only a longer school day, but also the need to complete assignments in two educational systems, which often leads to fatigue, decreased motivation for learning, and emotional burnout.

Cultural differences affect both learning practices and everyday norms. They manifest themselves in the perception of discipline, role expectations, and forms of communication. One of the teachers (EÕ2) noted that some parents did not consider it necessary to monitor homework, as they assumed that their stay in Estonia would be temporary. Such attitude was transferred to the children and adversely affected their motivation to study.

Social barriers are especially acute in the first months – it is difficult for students to establish contacts, which is aggravated by the stress of moving and the uncertainty of the future. However, participation in group activities – such as physical education lessons, clubs, and school events – has a prominent positive effect on socialization. KKÕ gives an inspiring example of successful integration through sport:

“One boy from Ukraine is a kickboxing champion. But he started playing volleyball because his friends were there. Now he is the Estonian volleyball champion. He represents the school in all competitions” (KKÕ).

This case shows how an informal environment and peer support can be key factors in successful adaptation to a new educational and cultural context.

Learning methodologies and support

In order to overcome the difficulties, School X uses customized educational strategies: adapted teaching materials, visual and digital resources, language immersion methods, and additional classes. Each student has an individual program with the participation of a social worker and a school psychologist (ÕA). The primary school uses accelerated curricula that span several school years (EÕ2). However, excessive attention to one student can distract from the others, reducing the effectiveness of the overall learning process.

Flexible assessment is used: for example, in some cases the minimum passing score has been reduced to 30% (EÕ1). This allows students to experience less stress and focus on learning the material.

Teachers use multilingual materials, visual aids, game tasks and exercises in pairs. The immersion method is the principle of “one teacher – one language” (May, 2017), supplemented by study trips to an Estonian-speaking environment and the “speaking walls” method – placing key words and diagrams on the walls of the classroom, in the design of which the students themselves participate (Rannut, 2005). However, the use of “speaking walls” is limited by the lack of space, movements between classrooms and the need to pre-train children in the use of visual materials based on information received from teachers.

During lessons, teachers use digital platforms such as Wordwall and Opiq, which help to practice vocabulary and grammar in a form of a game increasing student engagement (Horgan et al., 2022). After lessons, students were offered additional Estonian language classes, as well as a Ukrainian language and literature club organized by a visiting teacher from Ukraine. However, these forms of support faced limitations: additional Estonian lessons were discontinued already in the second half of the year due to the high workload of teachers, and the Ukrainian language club was only available to younger students (grades 1-6). Psychological support is also available, but according to respondents, only a small number of students use it.

Linguistic development among students

Efficient mastering of Estonian is the key to integration. Despite the initial zero level, students show progress due to motivation and support. Lessons are taught entirely in the target language and include

reading, writing, listening and speaking tasks. Various forms are used – individual, work in pairs and group work.

According to teachers' observations, the greatest difficulties are caused by grammar – declensions, prepositions as well as pronunciation of Estonian language specific sounds such as *ü, ö and ä* (according to EÕ1, EÕ3). Homework is adjusted to the students' level and is aimed at consolidating the material covered. Teachers recommend using online vocabulary resources. However, the completion of assignments varies greatly: motivated students complete them regularly, while others avoid them especially in the absence of parental support (EÕ2).

Progress is especially noticeable among those students who receive support from their families and are actively involved in school life. There are cases where students with a zero level achieved a confident understanding of the language in a few months and participated in discussions in class. Despite the differences in the pace of language learning, according to the principal deputy (ÕA), all students from Ukraine were certified in Estonian with positive grades at the end of the school year.

Role of parents in adaptation

Parents play a decisive role in shaping motivation. Their attitude towards their stay in Estonia and importance of Estonian language is passed on to their children. When parents show indifference or ignore the need to learn the language, their children lose interest in learning and their results deteriorate (EÕ2).

"Parents should also guide their children: "You have to study. We live here /in Estonia/, you have to learn this /Estonian/ language"–. And not like this: "We'll leave in two years, and everything will somehow work out on its own."" (EÕ2)

Support can be expressed in basic monitoring of homework, assistance in completing it, as well as in using eKool systems and online translators to communicate with school. Some parents initiate the organization of events: for example, a Ukrainian mother suggested opening a Ukrainian language and literature club (ÕA).

Active participation of parents in school life – as accompanying person at events, organizers of holidays, participants in meetings and developmental discussions – strengthens the cooperation between the family and the school. This creates, according to the respondents, an atmosphere of trust and support that facilitates the successful integration of students.

Socialization of students

In the early stages of adaptation, in X School of Narva (which is a border city and is located right next to Russia), conflicts and misunderstandings were observed due to cultural differences and emotional stress, according to the ÕA. For example, there were cases when local students provoked newcomers with statements like "Glory to Putin", which caused conflicts and required the intervention of the school administration (ÕA, EÕ1). In addition, teachers noted episodes of making fun of the pronunciation of Ukrainian students in Estonian lessons, as well as conflicts caused by misunderstandings of certain statements.

Over time, the situation stabilized, based on an interview with ÕA. The school implemented preventive measures: conversations with students, the participation of social workers, informing parents. The language of communication between students is mostly Russian, which helps students from Ukraine to quickly find contact with classmates and get involved in school life.

Most students said that they have made friends with whom they spend time both at school and outside of it. Trusting relationships with teachers have been established. Some students have become active participants in school events, and in some cases even class leaders (KKÕ).

"They have adapted so quickly that they have even become class leaders. They participate in all our competitions. /.../ One boy studied with us in the ninth grade for only six months. When he left, it was a

real loss for us – we still remember him. /.../ He joined the team from the first day, he was very friendly.” (KKÕ)

Motivation and individual accomplishments of students

It can be assumed that high learning motivation is a key factor in successful integration. Some students are independent and persistent, ask for extra lessons, and look for opportunities to improve their knowledge. One example is a tenth-grade student who independently managed to return to extra lessons after the teacher went on maternity leave, because “it was important for her to continue her studies” (ÕA).

Teachers emphasize the importance of treating newcomers fairly: they should not be seen as a weak link, and their support as the school’s responsibility. At the same time, the emphasis is on a two-way process: success is possible with an active position of the students themselves and conscious support from the family (Järv & Kirss, 2019).

Thus, the results of the research show that with comprehensive support – from teachers, parents and the school community – newcomer students from Ukraine can successfully overcome cultural and language barriers. They are capable fully integrate into Estonian school environment demonstrating confident academic and social results even under stress and uncertainty.

Discussion

The results of the conducted research confirm that the main aspects of adaptation of students who arrived from Ukraine to Estonia are linguistic, cultural and social integration (Soll & Palginõmm, 2011). The data obtained show that the main obstacles on this path are limited knowledge of Estonian language, insufficient proficiency in Russian and English, as well as psychological stress caused by the military situation and a sudden change in environment. These factors contribute to increased anxiety and make it difficult to study and socialize. In addition, some students have decreased motivation, which, as the analysis showed, can be associated not only with emotional overload, but also with parents’ attitudes.

As experience of School X has shown, the school is able to play a key role in reducing these barriers. The use of individual educational programs, flexible assessment, visual and multilingual materials, language immersion methods and additional psychological support help to ensure conditions for the progressive development and inclusion of students in the educational environment. Experience shows that a particularly important element is the opportunity for students to interact with native speakers in a natural environment, which, given the limited Estonian-speaking area in Narva, is compensated for by study trips to other regions of Estonia.

Despite the existing risks, such as the excessive role of the teacher in communication or excessive use of the intermediary language (Russian), the approach with flexible integration of language support and cultural sensitivity yields positive results. For example, short summaries in Russian at the end of lessons help to master new material without disrupting the overall structure of language immersion. As became clear from the research on which this article is based, the use of visual materials and game methods, also pair and group work, especially at the initial stages of learning, helps to reduce anxiety and consolidate the material. This partially coincides with the research findings of Horgan and his colleagues mentioned above (see Horgan et al., 2022).

The effectiveness of involving teachers with native Ukrainian language has also been proven. Holding Ukrainian language and culture clubs has a double effect: on the one hand, it supports the identity and emotional well-being of students, and on the other hand, it strengthens the trust of families in the school. This is consistent with research showing that culturally responsive education promotes better academic outcomes (see e.g. Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

At the level of parental involvement, there is a strong relationship between family involvement in the educational process and the child’s academic success. Parents who actively use electronic platforms and

participate in meetings and dialogues with teachers contribute to more successful adaptation of their children. This is in line with broader observations that partnership between school and family is a key factor in the success of migrant children (cf. Kaldur et al., 2021).

In terms of students' social adaptation, the current data show a wide range of individual experiences: from conflicts in the initial period to full integration and achievement of class leadership positions. This indicates the importance of the interpersonal environment, peer support, as well as the communication skills and personal characteristics of the students themselves. At the same time, teachers' constructive response to arising difficulties – through dialogue, attention and prevention – also plays an important role. These results completely coincide with what was mentioned in the theoretical part of this article (see Järv & Kirss, 2019).

In relation to the first research question – what difficulties do students from Ukraine experience and how do they overcome them – it was found that the main challenges are the language barrier, cultural differences, and social and emotional difficulties. The language barrier is most acute in senior classes, where knowledge of academic vocabulary in Estonian is required. Some students are afraid to speak Estonian or do not speak Russian at all, which complicates communication. The psycho-emotional state is also complicated by the double academic load and stress associated with moving from Ukraine. However, School X uses a comprehensive approach to overcome these difficulties: individual curricula, adapted materials, psychological support, cooperation with parents, and a flexible assessment system.

The second research question – what support methods do teachers use to help with adaptation and mastering the Estonian language – is revealed through the experience of School X. Here, the language immersion method, the “one teacher – one language” principle, the “speaking walls” method, and visual teaching materials are used, which has also been suggested by other researchers (see Rannut, 2005, May, 2017). Teachers actively use game-based approaches and digital platforms (e.g. Opiq and Wordwall). Individual consultations and additional Estonian language classes are held. Accelerated curricula are being introduced in elementary grades. The importance of short explanations in Russian for consolidation of key concepts was also during current study noted.

The third research question – how does the language integration of students proceed – showed that motivation is the main factor in successful mastering of Estonian. Those students who receive parental support, complete assignments and actively participate in lessons demonstrate high progress. At the same time, less motivated students stagnate. The teachers who participated in the study on which this article is based noted that difficulties associated quite often with pronunciation of sounds and mastering Estonian grammatical structures. Nevertheless, all research participants finished the school year with positive results in Estonian.

As to the fourth research question – what is the role of parents in the adaptation process – it was found that family involvement directly affects academic performance. Active parents use electronic systems, attend meetings and interact with teachers. They help with homework, use translators to communicate with the school and support children in the educational process. With insufficient involvement, a decrease in academic motivation is observed. It can be assumed that parental support is indeed a very important aspect of new immigrant students' adaptation to a new language, culture and school environment. This has also been pointed out, for example, by Kaldur, along with his co-researches, already mentioned in the theoretical part of this article (see Kaldur et al., 2021).

The fifth research issue – how is the socialization of Ukrainian students going – shows that most students have successfully integrated into school community. Although initially conflicts and misunderstandings were recorded, over time the students find friends, become active participants in school life and even take leading positions in the class. Conflicts are mainly resolved through dialogue with the participation of teachers and administration.

Thus, it can be concluded that effective integration of students from Ukraine into Estonian educational system is possible provided that there is a consistent approach on the part of the school, motivation of

students and support from parents. School X shows an example of relatively successful experience combining flexibility, an individual approach and cultural sensitivity.

The limitations of this research are related to its local nature – it was conducted only in one school. In the future, it is recommended to conduct larger-scale and longitudinal studies that will allow us to track the long-term dynamics of student adaptation and develop universal strategies for educational policy in the context of migration pressure.

Conclusion

This study allowed us to analyze the processes of linguistic and social adaptation of students who arrived from Ukraine to Estonia using one specific school as an example. Using qualitative analysis methods and relying on interviews with students, teachers and administration, the work showed that successful integration into the school environment depends on a set of interrelated factors: students' motivation, pedagogical support, family involvement and conditions created by the educational institution.

The data show that the main challenges for Ukrainian students are the language barrier, cultural differences and emotional difficulties, especially in the initial period after arrival. However, with an individual approach, a flexible curriculum, language support, visual and game methods, school counseling and psychological assistance, as well as a favorable social atmosphere, most students demonstrate positive dynamics and achieve positive results.

The study revealed that family support is of particular importance in the adaptation process. The role of parents is manifested not only in motivating the child, but also in participating in the educational process, which strengthens the connection between school and home and contributes to the formation of sustainable learning behavior. The availability of clubs related to the native language and culture also has a positive effect, which helps to maintain the identity of students and strengthen their emotional well-being.

Despite individual differences in the speed and nature of adaptation, almost all students who participated in the research were able to find their place in the new educational environment. Some students were active and even took leadership positions in the class, which indicates a high integration potential in the presence of the necessary conditions.

Thus, the research goals were achieved, and all questions were answered reasonably. The conclusions drawn from the analysis of a specific case have significant practical value. They can be used in further development of integration strategies, as well as in the work of teachers, school administrators and migration policy specialists. In the future, it seems relevant to conduct longitudinal research to assess the sustainability of the achieved results and identify key factors of long-term integration in the conditions of the multilingual educational space of Estonia.

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