

THE PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACQUIRING THEME FOOD WITHIN SUBJECT HOME ECONOMICS AND TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract: The article studies the nature of sustainable development of education and tasks for student's education, as well as implementation possibilities of relevant content in subject *Home economics and technologies*. Theoretically justified relevance between sustainable development and nutrition (food acquisition, consumption and people's eating habits) set up recommendations on subject acquisition. There are studied students and their parents eating habits and compliance to Latvian traditional cuisine. Purpose-researched and involve the fundamental principles of sustainable development in the content of topic *Food*.

Keywords: Home *economics* and technologies, principles of sustainable development, theme Food.

Introduction

21st century education is focused on sustainable development. Education for sustainable development is a world where everybody can benefit from qualitative education, introduce with values, to act and choose the lifestyle that provides the sustainable future and positive transformation of the society (Izglītība pārmaiņām..., 2012). Above mentioned issues are updated in the perspective of Lifelong learning in Latvia school and other educational institutions at all levels of education, in all programs and content of learning subject (Noteikumi par valsts standartu pamatizglītībā..., 2006), both in formal and informal education.

Education for sustainable development is required for young people to be able to make deliberate choice in favour of the creation and maintenance of the world, that both they and the next generation will be considered to be suitable for life and work. This means to give students the knowledge, build skills, responsibility and action competence of life for the long period of time. (Bonn Declaration, 2009). To search and understand the deeper roots of sustainability and non-sustainability, it is possible to identify and accept sustainable development idea as personal assurance (Salīte, 2009,8.,12).

Sustainability can be interpreted in many ways. It appears in all fields of human life and activities. Latvia's strategy of sustainable development as (Latvijas ilgtspējīgas..., 2010) one of essential priorities is mentioned promotion of sustainable lifestyles and human health. The better educated population greater will be the public health and welfare (Ilgtspējīga nākotne ir mūsu rokās, 2008)

The second priority is groomed and available cultural environment and cultural heritage (Kučinskis, 2006). This means to educate the society, by exploring protecting and training heritage today and passing it on to future generations. (Konvencija par nemateriālā..., 2003), (UNESCO Asociēto skolu..., 2011), (Vides kultūras mantojums..., 2006).

Both above mentioned priorities are attributable to the subject „Home economics and technologies” (Mājturība un tehnoloģijas..., 2006), because the learning aim and content is focused to develop students understanding about sustainable development, with an emphasis on safety and health issues and material importance of cultural heritage in multicultural society.

Despite the fact that standard of living in Europe and Latvia increase, the human health problems increase too. To a large extent this is contributing to the rapid pace of life, the wrong lifestyle, wrong food and eating habits. There are several reasons for that.

1. In the past people had less available product range, the processing and storage of the products were less effective and simpler, which also established the traditional menu. The attitude to food and eating habits developed with human lifestyle change. If before people had to work hard it was necessary also nourishing food. Nowadays young people's sedentary life and weight gain trend makes also requires choosing food with reduced number of calories.

2. At the beginning the family develops eating habits. They are mostly influenced by parents' views, material abilities, and lifestyle. They not always correspond to healthy eating conditions. As a result young people lose the understanding about importance of a meal, increases unhealthy food consumption.
3. Globalization has dramatically reduced presence of native and traditional cuisine in everyday meals. Sometimes the choice of products is ordered by fashion items. Those facts also correspond to young generation.
4. Food is mostly purchased in supermarkets, rather than grow by themselves. It can cause difficulties to determine the origin and the quality of food.

These problems points to the need to pay particular attention to the issue of the healthy eating habits and the importance of quality food in nutritional education.

These questions are discussed by *SlowFood* movement that becomes more popular in the world. The action and aims of movement corresponds to the conception of sustainable development and are focused to popularizing healthy eating habits (Slow Food, 2013), (Laba, tīra..., 2011), (Eiropas skolas..., 2012), (Mājturības un tehnoloģiju..., 2011) (The Principles ..., 2011).

In order to popularize healthy eating habits the consumption of food, many significant documents and action programs have been accepted in Latvia and in the world, international projects are carried out. Students are involved in them as well (Tunte, 2011).

Theoretical research allowed to define many sustainable development principles that should be included content of subject Home economics and technologies.

1. We have to choose in everyday meal flora products, reduce the consumption of meat and industrially processed food that contain much carbohydrates and saturated fat (Eiropas pārtikas deklarācija, 2011), (Seven principles..., 2012).
2. To develop the skills to choose safe food and combine the food stuffs in menu (Nachhaltige entwicklung..., 1999, 17).
3. To think about the usefulness of food stuffs- ecological sustainability (considering the criteria of biological farming). as much as possible use native and self-grown products, to grow spice in front garden and in pots as well as to freeze the grown vegetables and fruits on winter.
4. To choose minimally packed and food stuff without packing (Mācības patērētājinībās..., 2007, 74.)
5. Remember that the quality of food is influenced by everything beginning from growing till serving. Therefore it is necessary to make food at home, take home made food to school and to work in boxes.
6. The healthiest products are those that are produced from ingredients acquired close to their living place (Graudiņš, 2012) and seasonal products.
7. Not to accumulate the rubbish but if they have appeared then to compost them or to do make other eco recycling (Eat well..., 2012).

Food scientists and specialists on the discussion about popularizing healthy eating habits besides the questions about choice of qualitative food and healthy food suggest to follow regional eating habits cultural traditions, because national food is usually prepared from native seasonal products (Eiropas pārtikas deklarācija, 2011). These questions are included in State guidelines of cultural policy 2006 – 2015 (Valsts kultūrpolitikas vadlīnijas..., 2006). Between the numbers of significant cultural heritage saving areas traditional preparation of food and meal is mentioned. It means not only to research and to re explore the national dishes, family recipes but also evaluate the viability of traditions nowadays (Anspoka., Siliņa- Jasjukeviča, 2010). Catering specialists have also focused on this actuality. No wonder traditional cuisine nowadays has become a fashion and tourism product.

It must be considered it is difficult to talk about real traditional Latvian cuisine because it was influenced by traditions of cuisines of other countries. This tendency continues to develop. As a result in order to use traditional products and Latvian foods there are used early unknown products and food instead, unknown food preparation traditions are taken over, forgetting about Latvian once. Nowadays Latvian traditional meals are served rather, mostly in special festival occasions, when presenting our

national traditions. in order to do that special knowledge and skills are needed. it must be related specially to young generation. Indisputably family plays significant role in developing social life culture (Schweitzer, 1991, 331), But nowadays knowledge and skills acquired at school plays determinate meaning.

The aim of article is to investigate and include fundamental principles of sustainable development in theme Food.

Methodology

Theoretical and empirical methods were used in the research. The studies of documents of literature and education allowed defining the fundamental principles of sustainable development that must be included in learning content of topic *Food* within study subject Home economics and technologies.

The general notion about the eating habits of students and their families its correspondence to Latvian traditional menu and contemporary features in traditional kitchen was acquired with the help of empirical research.

The questionnaire method was used for the research. The girls were involved in research from Jelgava secondary school N 4. forms 8.and 9; they were totally 27 students from those who acquire the subject *Home economics and technologies* with choice in textile technologies. In order to acquire the data the questionnaire with closed and free questions was prepared. All acquired data were analysed and summarized. Part of obtained results is provided for developing the subject content, the other part-for the further extended research.

Results and discussion

Questionnaire was made in two parts. Three questions were included in the first part where students tell what they know about Latvian traditional food:

- 1) which of traditional food girls have tried (Figure 1);
- 2) which of food the girls have heard for the first time (Figure 2);
- 3) which of the food is prepared in family (Figure 3).

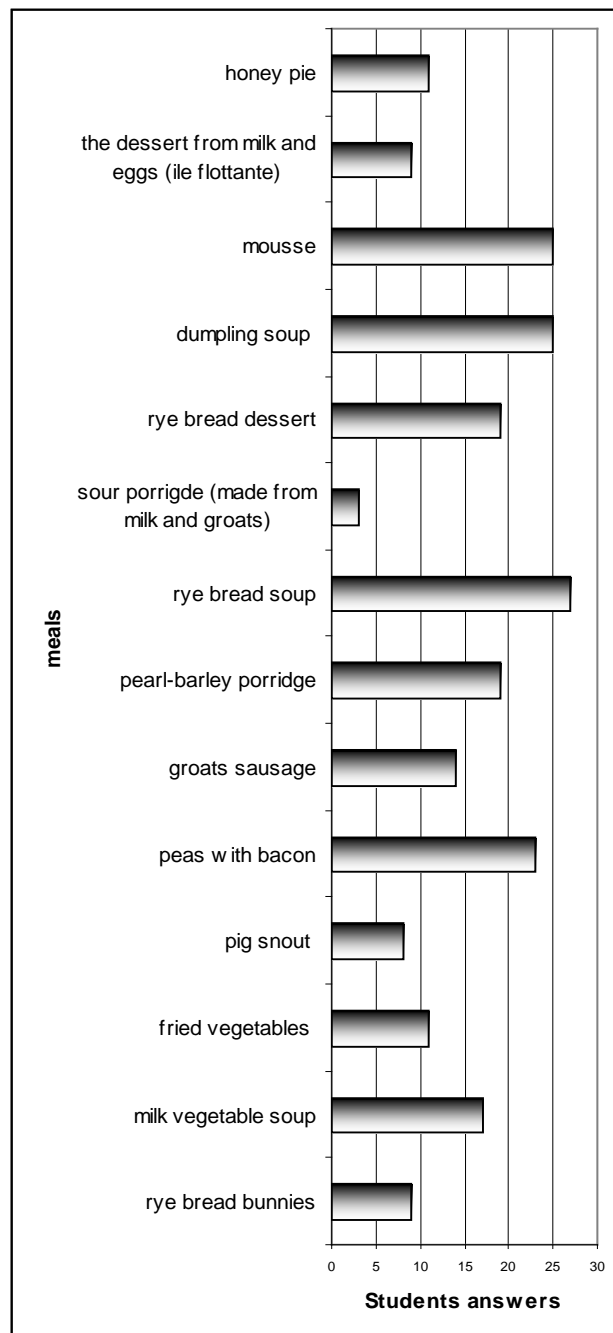


Figure 1. Students' answers to the question-which of the mentioned traditional food have you tried.

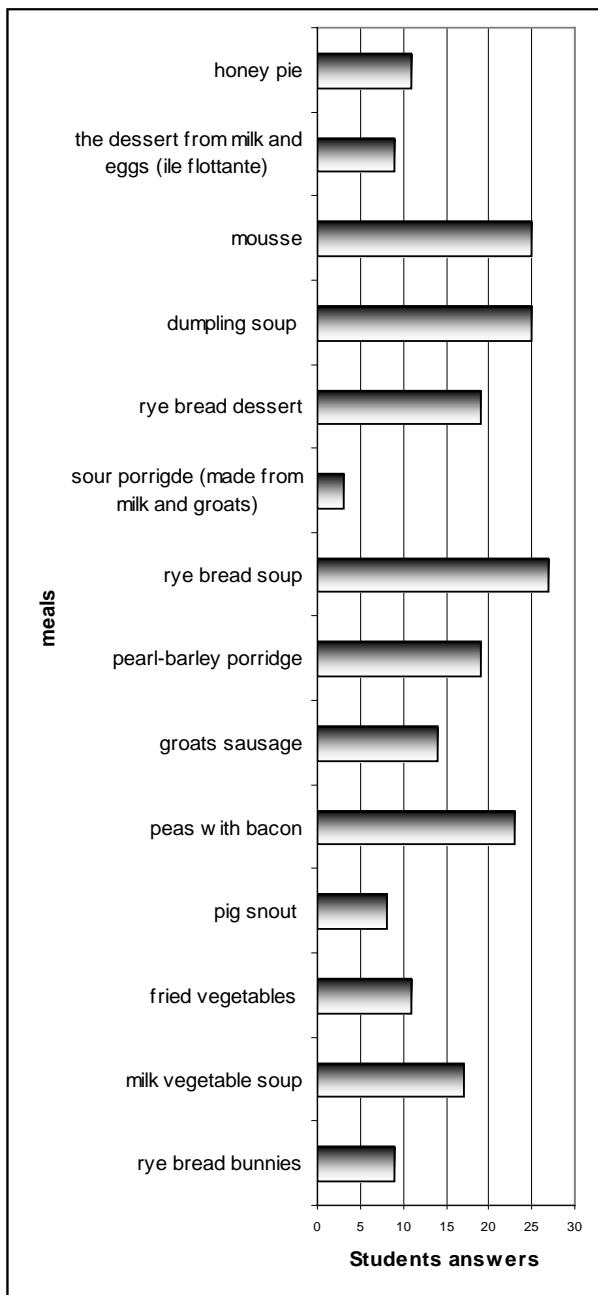


Figure 2.

Students' answers to the question- which of the food mentioned above have you heard first time?

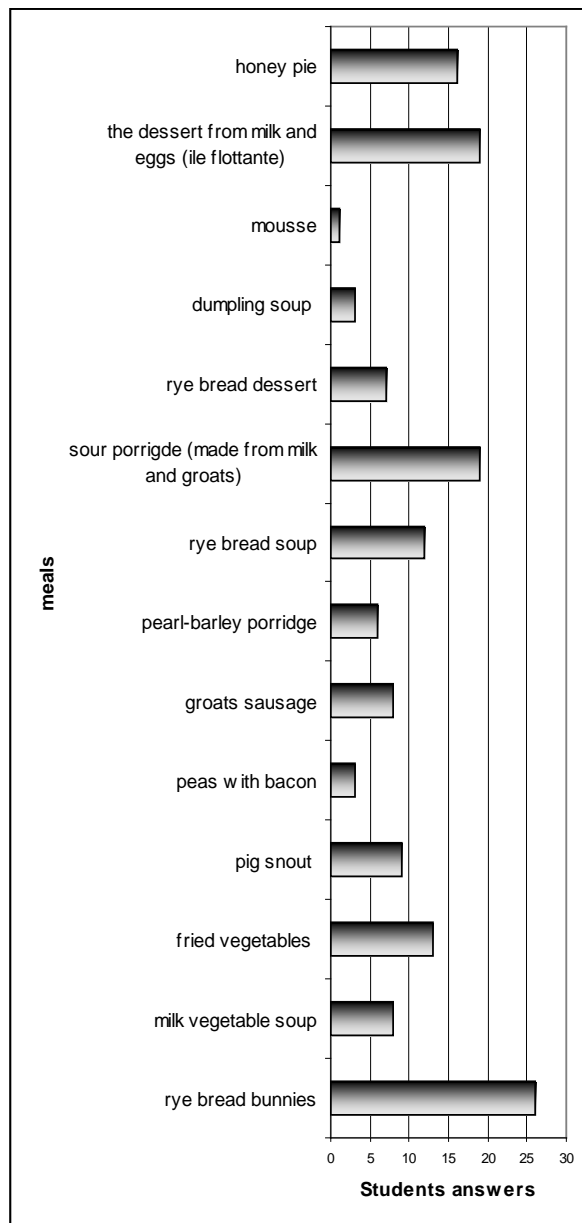


Figure 3.

Student's answers to the question- Which food is made in your family?

The names of 14 traditional Latvian foods which are especially characteristic in Zemgale region and prepared from typical food stuffs acquired in Latvia were mentioned in questionnaire.

Analysing the acquired answers to the first two questions (Figure 1, 2) I can draw a conclusions that students recognize and have tried the most part of previously mentioned foods. It is natural, because this food is discussed in theme Latvian national menu and part of them are prepared in cookery lessons. The least know meals are gruel, pig snout, fritters of coarse rye bread, floating islands and honey pie.

The answers to the third question (Figure 3) shows that the part of Latvian traditional food has hold a stable position in current menu. They are: mousse, dumpling soup, bread soup and milk vegetable soup, as well as peas with bacon and fried vegetables. Students' answers to all three questions confirm that the least known and rarely made national foods in families are: rough rye bread pie, floating islands, honey pie and sour porridge.

In the second part of the questionnaire were included free answer questions which gave an insight in eating habits of contemporary families- about preparing various groups of meals in students families such as: soups, hot main course, dessert, porridges, confectionery (Figure 4- 8).

It is delights that soups are made in families, (Figure 4). Students most often mention beet soup, cabbage soup, sorrel soup and quenelle soup, which has been in Latvian cuisine for ages. As the second most often made soup was mentioned *solanka*. It means that our Latvian cuisine becomes more international.

As hot main course (Figure 5) most often was mentioned Italian snack- pizza and potatoes, in particular

case pork chop and stewed cabbage too. It is possible that less and less hot main dishes are prepared at home in the traditional sense. Instead of that folks eat more fast food and junk food.

The results acquired in the questionnaire shows that porridges are still included in contemporary menu (Figure 6). The most popular are oat, manna and potatoes porridge. Only some families have esteemed valuable buckwheat porridge, grouts porridge and rice porridge.

One of Latvian traditional cuisine characteristic features is various desserts. Students in the questionnaire mentioned only: mousse and jelly (Figure 7). The conclusions made from answers are those that girls unwillingly prepare food at home, or parents do not allow them to, because desserts are prepared in every practical lessons at school and girls admit that they are tasty.

As well confectionary is prepared less and less at home (Figure 8). It means that one significant features of Latvian national cuisine begun to

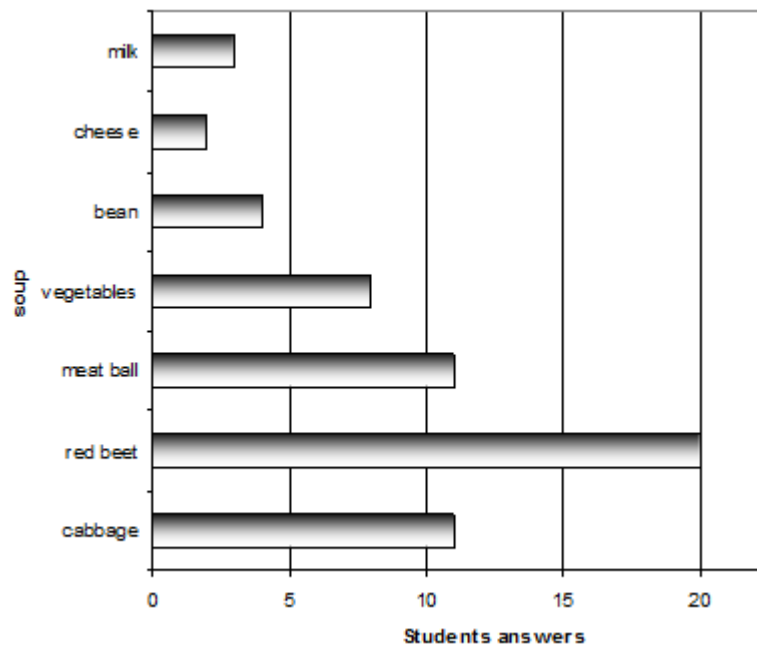


Figure 4. Student’s answers to the question- Which soups are most often made in family?

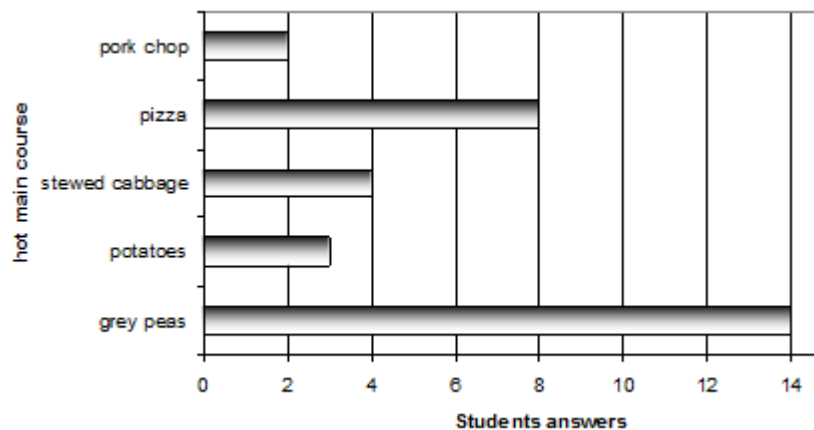


Figure 5. Student’s answers to the question- Which hot main course meals are most often prepared in your family?

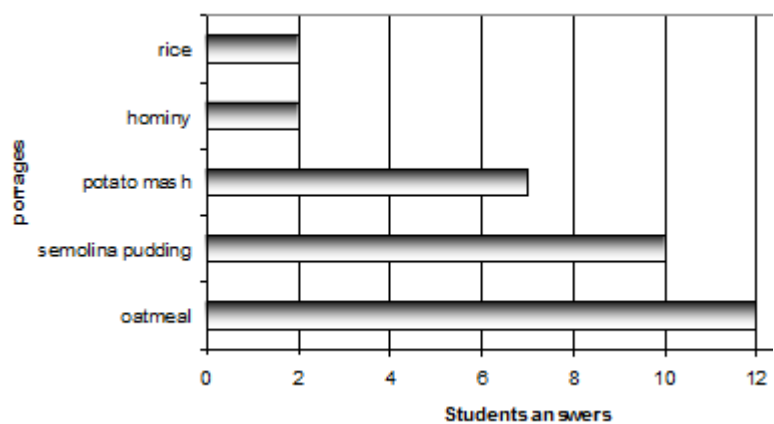


Figure 6. Student’s answers to the question- Which porridges are most often made in your family?

disappear. Bunnies with meat, pancakes and bunnies are prepared very seldom. It is possible because the offer in catering is very various and to preparing food takes a lot of time.

According to the programme worked out by the author of article Pridāne A. (2009), in the syllabus of forms 8., and 9 the questions about Latvian traditional cuisine are included. Features of Latvian traditional cuisine and often used products and typical dishes are taught in form 8. Students in form 9 acquaint with the seasonal custom celebration and eating traditions and appropriate table laying. Each of the festivals had own celebration rituals, typical course and drinks to appropriate table laying. At the same time students in practical lessons prepare and try traditional Latvian food.

Experience has shown that students initially has shown negative attitude to the food which they do not know- they do not want to prepare them and try them. Nevertheless common preparation and degustation during the lessons is the discovery. It is the most effective way how to convince students for the food good taste and encourage them to prepare it for their families as well.

Teachers together with students have possibility to make historical dishes contemporary with the help of creative attitude to learning. The examples are seen in mass media, cookery shows, the ideas and recipes for food is possible to acquire from typical Latvian products. At the same time students get the understanding about possibilities of usage, acquisition and choice of qualitative native food, learn to evaluate their own eating habits and in case of emergency to change them.

Conclusions

1. The acquisition aim of subject *Home economics and technologies* is pointed to sustainable development education. Acquiring topic *Food* it is possible view in relationship with proposed priorities in state and education documents:
 - people's lifestyle and health,
 - maintaining of the cultural heritage and passing it to the next generations.
2. In the context of sustainable development more basic principles that corresponds to the topic *Food* can be proposed and included in the learning content:
 - to choose native and seasonal dishes, as much as possible grow themselves
 - prepare food at home and take it to school,
 - to make research on the history of regional cuisine and importance nowadays,
 - to evaluate the food and its preparation traditions vitality nowadays, to search for contemporary solutions of hereditary traditions.

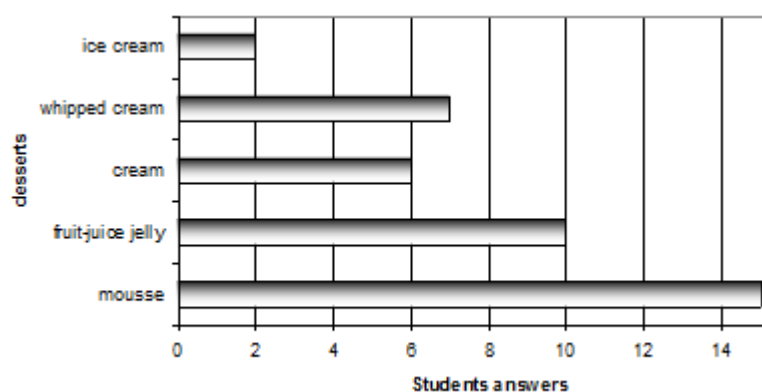


Figure 7. Student's answers to the question- Which desserts are made most often in your family?

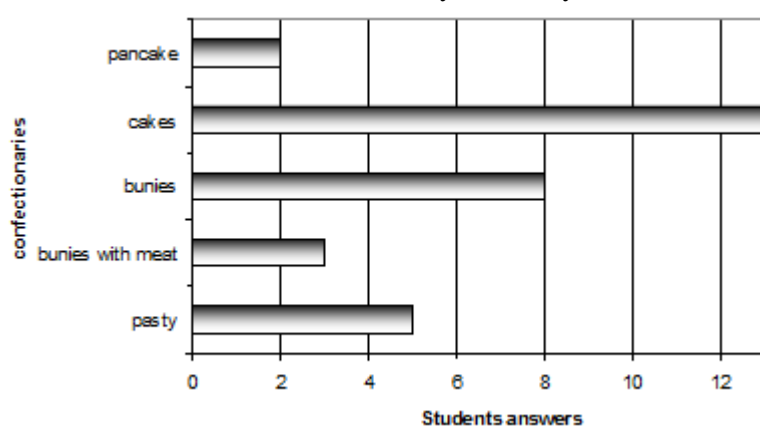


Figure 8. Student's answers to the question- Which confectionaries are made most often in your family?

3. Analysing the answers acquired in questionnaire there are conclusions that;
 - students have understanding about Latvian traditional food, because most part of the food students recognize and have tried;
 - the part of Latvian traditional dishes such as: mousse, dumpling soup, bread soup and milk vegetable soup, as well as peas with ham and fried vegetables, is the part of contemporary menu as well;
 - approximately one fifth part of mentioned meals: sour porridge, pig snout, rye bread pies, floating islands and honey pie are prepared seldom or not prepared at all, that makes think that these dishes are disappearing from contemporary menu.
4. At the result of acquired questionnaire there is tendency for new research about features of Latvian traditional cuisine and eating habits of the families.

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