

# The best mental gymnastics for the spring semester: Lithuanian

Regina Sabonytė

# *Survival Lithuanian*

LKB0304 **SURVIVAL LITHUANIAN online** (in English) ! **ONLY ONE WEEK.**  
**2 ECTS!**

Two possible times: 9:15 - 11:00 AM (Lithuanian time)

15:15 - 17:00 PM (Lithuanian time)

**25, 26, 27, 28, 29 January! Exam on the last day (29 January).**

If you have any questions regarding the course, please contact  
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Lecturers:

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**Vijolė Višomerskytė**



# Short course description

The aim of the course is to introduce students to a very basic knowledge of Lithuanian that would help them to “survive” in Lithuania. In this intensive course students will learn to introduce themselves, to provide basic biographical information, to ask for the prices while shopping, to ask for directions, basic information at the university, to order food, as well as other useful everyday phrases in Lithuanian. This intensive course is structured around the sociocultural knowledge of the Lithuanian Language.

# Course content

- Introducing ourselves (name, last name, address, telephone, ethnicity, country, city of origin);
- Telling the time, arranging the meeting;
- Getting around the city;
- Ordering food in a cafe and restaurant;
- Asking for prices (handling basic conversation in grocery store).

# Some *Survival* phrases 😊

- Labas!
- Aš esu ...
- Labas rytas! Laba diena! Labas vakaras!
- Aš nekalbu lietuviškai.
- Atsiprašau.
- Skanaus!
- Ačiū!
- Viso gero!
- Iki!

Now a little bit more about Lithuanian language and Lithuanian history...



# What do learners say about Lithuanian language?

- *Lithuanian language is the most difficult language in whole wide world. If you don't believe me try to learn it yourself.:))*
- *Lithuanian <...> is an extremely difficult language with many inflections, difficult grammar and pretty strange vocabulary.*

***The hardest language to master  
is the one you are currently  
trying to learn.***

**(Anonymous)**



# What's unique about Lithuania(n)? It survived!

- In 1989, the National Geographic Institute of France, led by Jean-George Affholder, made its official finding: the center of Europe was the village of Purnuškės, just north of Vilnius, Lithuania.

# What's unique about Lithuania(n)?

## It survived!



# What's unique about Lithuania(n)?

## It survived!

- The Lithuanian state emerged in the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> c.
- From the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> c. it stretched over large areas inhabited not only by Balts but also by Slavs.





# What's unique about Lithuania(n)?

## It survived!

- From the mid-16<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. it was in a union with Poland.
- From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> c. to the early 20<sup>th</sup> c. it was occupied by the Russian Empire.

[The Book Smuggler](#)





**Lithuanian School (1864-1904)**

# What's unique about Lithuania(n)?

## It survived!

- Lithuania's independence was declared on February 16, 1918.





# What's unique about Lithuania(n)?

## It survived!

- From 1944 to 1990 it was occupied by the Soviet Union.
- Since 1990, Lithuania has again been a democratic independent republic, like Latvia and Estonia.





# Lithuanian now

- Lithuanians make up to about 80% of the population of Lithuania.
- More than 3 million people (perhaps 3.5 million) consider Lithuanian to be their mother tongue.
- It is spoken by the Lithuanian populations in some border areas of Latvia, Poland and Belarus, and by numerous Lithuanian émigrés in the other countries.
- The largest émigré groups are to be found in the United States. Numerous groups also in the UK, Ireland and Spain.



# Lithuanian now

- Lithuanian and Latvian are ***the only living Baltic languages***.
- Lithuanian belongs to the Indo-European group and is nearest to **Sanskrit** (the ancient language in Hinduism).
- Some people say that Lithuanian and Latvian are very similar.
- A Lithuanian (without previous learning, except those who live close to the border) and a Latvian can recognise a few words in each other's speech, but this is not enough to hold a conversation.

# Lithuanian ethnographic regions and dialects



Often users of different Lithuanian dialects (such as Samogitians and Aukstaitians) cannot understand each other unless they communicate in standard Lithuanian, which they have to learn.

# Alphabet

- Latin based under the influence of Polish, German and Czech.
- 32 letters.
- Consonants with diacritics  
 $c \rightarrow \check{c}$ ,  $s \rightarrow \check{s}$ ,  $z \rightarrow \check{z}$ .
- Vowels:  $a$ ,  $e$ ,  $\acute{e}$ ,  $u$ ,  $\bar{u}$ ,  $y$ ,  $j$ .



# Reading and spelling

- Pronunciation is almost entirely **consistent with the spelling**: i. e., words are pronounced exactly as they are spelt.
- One letter usually corresponds to one sound.
- In this respect, Lithuanian is more modern than French or English, where the same letters do not always represent the same sound.
- It is also easier to find a Lithuanian word in a dictionary when you hear it pronounced than it is to find an English one.
- **Free word stress.**



# Morphology

- Lithuanian is an **inflectional** language; majority of word forms are made with affixes (prefixes, endings).
- Prefixes → new word: *eiti-aeiti*, *nueiti*, *pareiti*, *jeiti*, *pereiti*.



- Endings → new word form: *namas*-*namo*-*namui*.
- The endings are the principal means of marking the relations between words in a sentence.

# Noun

- 2 genders:
  - masculine (*namas*), feminine (*Lietuva*)
- 2 numbers:
  - singular (*namas*), plural (*namai*)
- 7 cases





# Cases in Lithuanian

**Nominative.** Geras draugas eina į kiną.

**Genitive.** Čia gero draugo knyga.

**Dative.** Čia dovana geram draugui.

**Accusative.** Matau gerą draugą.

**Instrumental.** Einu į kiną su geru draugu.

**Locative.** Gerame drauge.

**Vocative.** Geras drauge, padėk man.



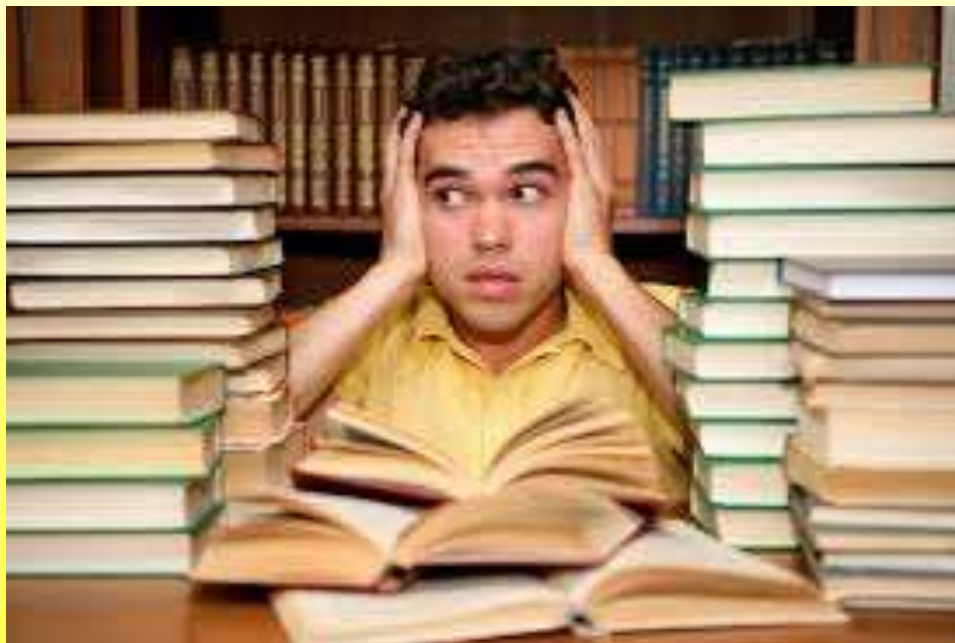
# Frequency of case forms

The frequency of distribution of case forms (%) in Spoken Lithuanian (adult directed speech).

Case	Nom.	Gen.	Acc.	Dat.	Ins.	Loc.
%	32%	8%	18%	9%	5%	3%



- Not only nouns, but also adjectives, numerals, pronouns, and participles have cases. 😊



- Lithuanian versions of well-known names like: *Džordžas Bušas, Bilas Geitsas, Eltonas Džonas, Stingas*, etc.
- *Prezidentas, internetas, kompiuteris, žurnalas, ambasadorius, džinsai*, etc.

# Examples

- elektra
- traktorius
- fotografija
- kolekcija
- politika
- popierius
- lempa
- šortai



# Verb

- **4 tenses:** present, past simple, past iterative, future.
- **3 types** of verbs *in the present*:

## **A type**

*gyventi – gyvena, gyveno* ‘live’

## **O type**

*valgyti – valgo, valgė* ‘eat’

## **I type**

*mylėti – myli, mylėjo* ‘love’



# Verb

- **2 types** of verbs in the past:

## **Ė type**

*valgyti – valgo, valgė* ‘eat’

## **O type**

*gyventi – gyvena, gyveno* ‘live’



# Word order

- Of secondary importance as a means of expressing grammatical relationships in Lithuanian.
- S – subject, V – verb/predicate, O – object.

SVO ***Mama skaito knygą***

‘mother reads a book’

SOV ***Mama knygą skaito***

VSO ***Skaito mama knygą***

OSV ***Knygą mama skaito***

OVS ***Knygą skaito mama***





**When in Lithuania: try to learn and speak Lithuanian! First *Survival Lithuanian* and then *Lithuanian A1* ?**



***AČIŪ!!!***  
***THANK YOU!!!***

