# The best mental gymnastics before the spring semester: Lithuanian

Regina Sabonytė, Viktorija Kavaliauskaitė-Vilkinienė

#### Survival Lithuanian

LKB0304 SURVIVAL LITHUANIAN (in English)! ONLY ONE WEEK.

**2** ECTS! (Exchange students have to include this course in their Learning Agreement if they want to go to this class). Registration till 11 of August 2025.

**Two groups:** 9:00–11:00 AM (Lithuanian time) ONLINE (Lec. Viktorija Kavaliauskaitė-Vilkinienė). 9:00–11:00 AM (Lithuanian time) IN THE CLASSROOM (Lec. Vijolė Višomirskytė). VMU, Putvinskio st. 23, room 106.

Lessons will be only on August 25, 26, 27, 28. Final exam will be on August 29. If you have any questions regarding the course, please contact greta.garnyte@vdu.lt

#### **Lecturers:**

Viktorija Kavaliauskaitė-Vilkinienė



Vijolė Višomirskytė



## **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**



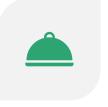
INTRODUCING
OURSELVES (NAME, LAST
NAME, ADDRESS,
TELEPHONE, ETHNICITY,
COUNTRY, CITY OF
ORIGIN)



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

Aš esu
Labas rytas! Laba diena! Labas vakaras!
Aš nekalbu lietuviškai.
Atsiprašau.
Skanaus!
Ačiū!

Labas!

Viso gero!

Iki!

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



What do learners say about Lithuanian language?

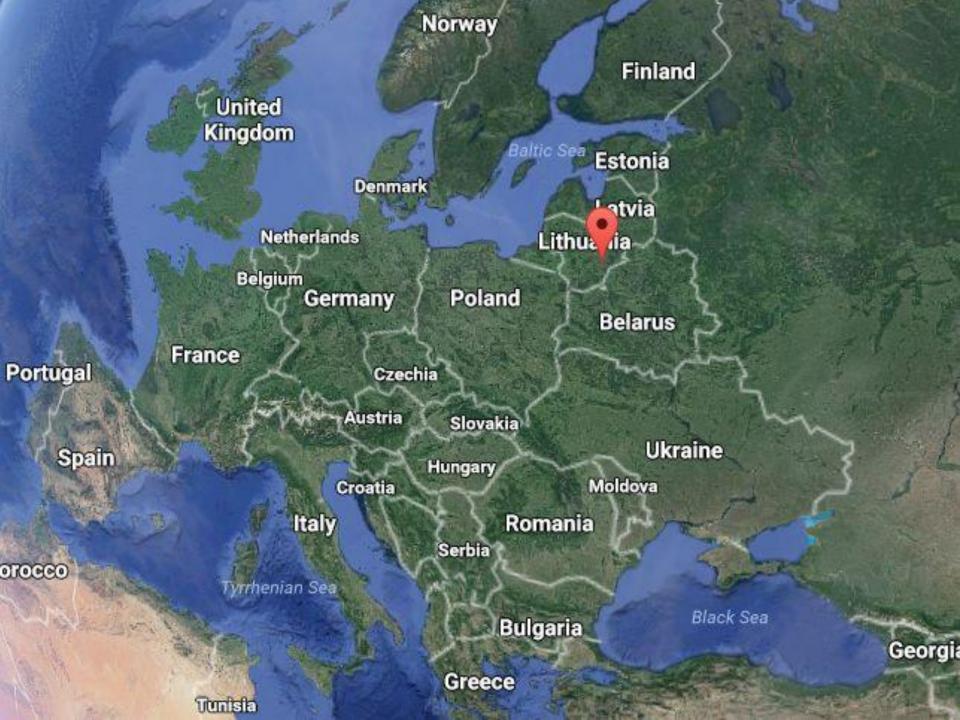
Lithuanian language is the most difficult language in whole wide world. If you don't believe me try to learn it yourself.:))

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)

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.





- 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.

- 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

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





- 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.

## The Lithuanian language

- Lithuanian and Latvian languages 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.

## The Lithuanian language

**RELATED TO SANSKRIT** 

#### **RELATED TO LATIN**

#### **SIMILAR TO LATVIAN**

Lithuanian	Sanskrit	English	Lithuanian	Latin	English	Lithuanian	Latvian	English
sūnus	sūnus	son	du	duo	two	naktis	nakts	night
avis	avis	sheep	septyni	septem	seven	varna	vārna	crow
vilkas	vrkas	wolf	mėnesis	mensis	month	alus	alus	beer
antras	antaras	second	dantys	dentes	teeth	medus	medus	honey

# 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→č, s→š, z→ž.
- Vowels: a, e, e, u, ū, y, į.
- A monument dedicated to unique letter  $\dot{e} \rightarrow$

You can find this monument in Kaunas, in Studentų skveras (S. Daukanto str. 28). On the monument, you can see Lithuanian words that include the letter  $\dot{e}$ . What words can you find? What do they mean?

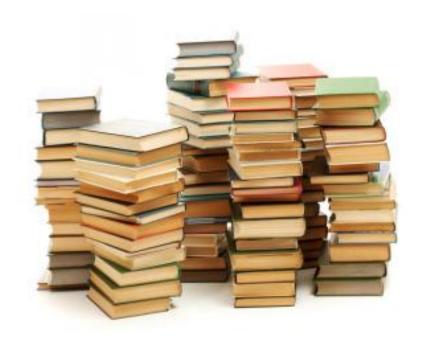
Have fun exploring the meanings!





## 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 (to go) – <u>at</u>eiti (to come), <u>iš</u>eiti (to leave), <u>par</u>eiti (to come back), <u>i</u>eiti (to enter), <u>per</u>eiti (to pass through)...



- Endings→ new word form: Lietuv<u>a</u>-Lietuv<u>os</u>-Lietuv<u>ai</u>-Lietuv<u>a</u>...
- The endings are the principal means of marking the relations between words in a sentence.

## Morpholog. Nouns, adjectives, pronouns and numerals have 7 cases.

For example, the noun *Lietuva* (Lithuania) is declined like that:

Vardininkas. Kas? (Nominative. What/Who?). Lietuva Kilmininkas. Ko? (Genitive. Of what / what?). Lietuvos Naudininkas. Kam? (Dative. To / for whom?). Lietuvai

Galininkas. Ka? (Accusative. What?). Lietuva

**Inagininkas.** Kuo? (Instrumental. With what?). Lietuva

Vietininkas. Kur? (Locative. Where?). Lietuvoje

Šauksminkas (address form). Lietuva

#### Let's compare:

Čia yra <u>Lietuva</u>. (This is <u>Lithuania</u>)

Aš esu iš <u>Lietuvos</u>. (I am from <u>Lithuania</u>)

Aš gyvenu <u>Lietuvoje</u>. (I live in <u>Lithuania</u>)

Aš myliu <u>Lietuva</u>. (I love <u>Lithuania</u>)

What case to choose often depends on the verb or preposition!



### Frequency of case forms

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

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

## Other important grammatical categories

#### Gender

- Speaking about people and certain animals, grammatical gender specification usually is meaningful and logical (there is a semantic motivation):
  - Male people/animals have masculine grammatical gender, e.g. studentas (student\_ms.).

Jis yra studentas (He is a student).

• Female people/animals have feminine grammatical gender, e.g. studentė (student\_fm.).

Ji yra studentė (She is a student).

• Inanimate objects and specific animals have semantically irrelevant grammatical gender: E.g. *vakaras* (evening\_ms.), *diena* (day\_fm.).

#### Number

- Singular to refer to one object or person, e.g. *studentas* (student\_ms.sg.).
- Plural to refer to more than one object or person, e.g. *studentai* (students\_ms.pl.).

There are **no articles** in the Lithuanian language.

#### Verb

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

#### A type

gyventi – gyven<u>a</u>, gyveno live'

#### O type

valgyti – valg**o**, valgė 'eat'

#### I type

mylėti – mylį, mylėjo 'love'



### Verb

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

**Ė type**valgyti – valgo, valg**ė** 'eat'

**O type**gyventi – gyvena, gyveno o 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!!!

