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LITHUANIAN IN THE 21st CENTURY: Linguistic Snippets and Tidbits

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To my *Native Village of Pelekonys, Lithuania*

Preface

It is common knowledge that Lithuanian is the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages. Of particular importance is the fact that these archaisms can be found at all levels—in the sound system, in morphology (declension, conjugation), syntax (word order and sentence structure), in vocabulary and word formation.

These rare archaic traits, observed in Modern Lithuanian, mostly go back to Proto-Indo-European, a common language spoken by our Indo-European ancestors around 3000 B.C. On the other hand, Lithuanian has never been an aged, clumsy dinosaur. It is a lively, vigorous and exciting language. In addition to the inherited forms, it has created many new ones of its own, found neither in the proto-language nor in any other related language (e.g., the past frequentative tense, adverbial participles, half-participles and new locatives).

In Modern Lithuanian there are thirteen participles—a richness not to be observed in any other Indo-European language, Nor has any other language had so many diminutive and/or hypocoristic (endearing) suffixes. These are traits peculiar to Lithuanian.

This article is devoted to the archaic and modern features that distinguish Lithuanian from other languages. These phenomena are not a novelty—they have been familiar to linguists for a long time. Here they are collected and illustrated by examples.

Some of the topics covered here have been dealt with by the author in the Lithuanian periodicals *Pasaulio lietuvis, Draugas, Tėviškės žiburiai, Darbininkas, Aidai, Laiškai lietuviams, Lituanus* etc. To sum up this introduction, it might be worthwhile to recall the counsel of Martynas Mažvydas, author of the first printed Lithuanian book: "Take me and read me".

I. THE ARCHAISM OF LITHUANIAN

Many people wonder why Lithuanian is the most archaic of all the living Indo-European languages. As a matter of fact, nobody can account for it, even the linguists cannot give a definite answer. There are several theories—hypotheses, the most widespread of which are the following:

1. *The Psychological Hypothesis*

Since the age of the Proto-Indo-European (ca. 3000 B.C.) the Lithuanians, to be more precise, their forebears, have been very old-fashioned, stubborn and conservative, shying away from any changes.

Thus, Lithuanian has experienced less change. For example, Lithuanian *sūnus* 'son' has survived without any change through five millennia, cf. Indo-European **sunus,* English *son,* German *Sohn* and Russian *syn.* (The asterisk denotes a hypothetical reconstructed linguistic form, unattested in written records.)

2. The Hypothesis of Language Mixture

In the course of 5,000 years, since Proto-Indo-European times, Lithuanian has not mixed with any other Indo-European or non-Indo-European language. Linguists have established long ago that one language can subdue another, and the resulting 'blend' leads to the rise of a language with a simplified grammatical structure and a mixed vocabulary. A typical example of such a development is Modern English. By its grammatical structure it is a essentially a Germanic language, but it contains many elements of the languages of the Celts, Normans (speaking a dialect of French), Romans, Greeks, Germans, Dutch, etc. That might be one of the reasons why English has become the most widespread language in the world.

3. *The Center Hypothesis*

A careful study of the map of the Baltic peoples shows that for the last several millennia Lithuanians (or their ancestors) have always lived in the center of the Baltic linguistic area. The Baltic tribes, surrounding the Lithuanians, were exterminated or occupied by their neighbors and lost their ethnic identity, while the Lithuanians, living in the center, were better protected from foreign influences.

It has been established by researchers that peripheral languages and dialects are less resistant to outward influences than central ones.

4. The Geographical Hypothesis

For centuries the Lithuanians lived in the depths of forests, in wooded areas on the shores of lakes and rivers and engaged in hunting and fishing. Afterwards, like all other Indo-Europeans, the Lithuanians took up agriculture and animal husbandry. Rivers and lakes served as communication routes, and land roads appeared much later. Thus, the Lithuanians led a rather isolated way of life, protected from foreign influences.

It is difficult to say which of the suggested hypotheses is more plausible, It is quite likely that there is a grain of truth in all of them: Lithuanian has remained the most archaic of all living Indo-European languages due to all these factors.

Linguists usually avoid the epithet 'old' in reference to Lithuanian, because in a sense all languages are old. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to say that Lithuanian is an archaic language.

Here are several examples, attesting to the archaic nature of Lithuanian:

Proto-Indo-European	Lithuanian	English
**sunus*	*sūnus*	son
**kwetweres*	k*eturi, ketveri*	four
ūpenkwe	*penke-tas*	five
**bheu-*	buv-o	(to) be
**es-*	es-ti	(it) is.

II. THE SOUNDS (PHONOLOGY)

Of all living Indo-European languages, Lithuanian has best preserved the old sounds. In all its detail the Proto-Indo-European phonological structure is a complicated subject. Therefore, only a simplified comparison of the sounds of the two languages is presented in the following table:

Indo-European	Lithuanian
Vowels	
a ā	*a ā*
e ē	*e ē*

i ī	*i ī*
o ō	*o ō*
u ū	*u ū*
Examples	
**es*	*es-i*('you, sg. are')
**dhē*	*dė-ti* 'to put'
**sunus*	*sūnus* 'son'
**sousos*	*sausas* 'dry'
**plnos*	*pilnas* 'full'
Diphthongs	
ai	*ai*
ei	*ei/ie*
oi	*ai*
au eu ou	*au*
Examples	
**sneighwos*	*sniegas* 'snow'
**loukos*	*laukas* 'field'
Consonants	
b g d	*b d g*
p t k	*p t k*
m n l r	*m n l r*
w j s z	*v/u j s z*
Examples	
**penkwe*	*penke-tas* 'five'
**treyes*	*trys, treje-tas* 'three'
**kel-*	*kel-ti* 'to lift'

However, there are exceptions. For example, the IE **n-* in **nizdos* corresponds to *l-* in Lithuanian *lizdas* 'nest' instead of the expected *n-*.

The Lithuanian fricatives and affricates š, ž, č and *dž* appeared much later, in the period of the so-called East Baltic protolanguage. Proto-Indo-European had only two sibilants s and z.

Despite the painstaking endeavors of some linguists, it has not been possible to prove the existence of laryngeal sounds (possibly similar to *h)* in the Baltic languages.

It should also be mentioned that the sound system of Proto-Indo-European is not treated unequivocally and reconstructed in the same manner. Thus, some researchers add the aspirated consonants *ph, th* and *kh* to the Indo-European consonant system. (For more on this topic, see the specialized literature or encyclopedias under Indo-European).

Lithuanian has preserved very well a patterned change, known as apophony, vowel gradation or *Ablaut,* which is observed in morphology and word-formation. Here are some examples of this ancient complicated phenomenon.

Proto-Indo-European	Lithuanian	English
e-grade	**kel-*	*kel-ti* 'to raise, lift'
o-grade	**kol-*	*kal-nas* 'mountain' kal-va 'hill'
zero grade	*kl-'	*kil-ti* 'to rise' *kul-nas* 'heel'.

Many such examples speak to the archaic character of modern Lithuanian.

III. ACCENTUATION

Lithuanian is characterized by an especially interesting and varied stress system. The principal stress can fall on any syllable of the word, including a prefix, a suffix or an ending. Again it is a feature to be found only in Lithuanian.

Examples:		
kelias	*'way'*	kē -
*keli*ù	*'(I) lift'*	- liù
pérkeliu	*'(I) transfer"*	*pér-* -
kėlìmas	"transfer'	- lì -
kėlimė	'transfer' (loc. sg.)	- - mė

The free word stress of Lithuanian can be demonstrated by the following paradigm, in which the stress is shifted from the first syllable to the last:

Singular		
Nom.	*pasiuntinys 'envoy'*	*- - - nys*
Gen.	*pãsiuntinio*	*pã - - ã*
Dat.	*pãsiuntiniui*	*pã - - -*
Acc.	*pvsiuntinį*	*pã - - -*
Instr.	*pãsiuntiniu*	*pã - - -*
Loc.	*pasiuntinyjė*	*- - - - jė*
Plural		
Nom.	*pasiuntiniaĩ*	*- - - niaĩ*
Gen.	*pasiuntunių*	*- - - nių*
Dat.	*pasiuntiniáms*	*- - - niáms*
Acc.	*pãsiuntinius*	*pã - - -*
Instr.	*pasiuntiniaĩs*	- - -niaĩs
loc.	*pasiuntiniuose*	*- - - - - sé*
Voc.	*pasiuntiniai!*	*- - - niaĩ.*

Another interesting feature is that the stressed short vowels are not lengthened—they remain short. For example, all the i's are short in *ištikimi* 'loyal' nom. pl. masc.

Correspondingly vowels, long by nature, are long in both stressed and unstressed positions. For example:

mó-ko-mo-jo	'instructive' masc.	gen.	sg.	ó-ó-ó-ó
vėgėlė	'burbot' (a fish)			ė-ė-ė

Such phenomena are rare in both Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages.

The same is true of long diphthongs—they can be long in all the syllables of a word:

vaikáičiai	'grandchildren'	*ai-ai-ai*
plaukúotaisiais	'hairy' instr. pl. masc.	*au-uo-ai-ai*
vairúojančiais	'driving' instr. pl. masc.	*ai-uo-an-ai.*

A very interesting feature of Lithuanian is the preservation of phonemes (syllable accents, intonations, German *Tone).* In Standard Lithuanian they occur only in long syllables, i.e., those containing a long vowel, a long diphthong or semi-diphthong. Currently, two types of phonemes are distinguished: the acute and the circumflex. The acute phoneme is characterized by greater emphasis of the first component; the circumflex phoneme gives more prominence to the second element of the diphthong or semidiphthong. Graphically, it could be illustrated in the following way:

acute	áu = aaau	áukštas 'high'
cicumflex	aũ = auuu	aũkštas "stor(e)y'

Examples:

áĩ : aĩ	káina 'price'	raĩko	'(he)	cuts

		(bread)
áu : aũ	láukia '(he) waits'	laũkas 'field'
éi : eì	kéikia '(he) curses'	peìlis 'knife'
ie : iẽ	vienas 'one'	piẽnė 'sonchus'
úo: uõ	úosti 'to smell'	uõstas 'port'
ùi : uì	ùiti 'to drive away'	púikiai 'perfectly'
àl : aĪ	kàltas 'chisel'	kaĪtas 'guilty'
él : eĪ	kélti 'to lift'	meĪsti 'to implore'
il : eĪ	pilti 'to pour''	peĪvas 'stomach'
ùl : uĪ	bùlvė 'potato'	puĪkas 'flock, crowd'
àm : am	àm '(for) whom'	pampti 'to swell'
ém : em	sémti 'to scoop'	kemša '(he) pokes'
im :im	imti 'to calm'	šimtas 'hundred'
ùm : um	bùmba '(he) grumbles'	dumblas 'silt'
án : an	kánda '(he) bites'	kandys 'moths'
èn : en	sènti 'to grow old'	kenčia '(he) suffers'
ìn : in	mìnti 'to tread'	minti 'to remember'
ùn : un	dùnda '(it) rimbles'	šunta '(it) stews'
àr : ar	dàr 'still, yet'	ar 'if, whether'
ér : er	gérvė 'crane'	per 'through'
ir : ir	tirti 'to research'	mirti 'to die'
ùr : ur	pùrtė '(it) shook'	purvas 'dirt'

On closer acquaintance with the sophisticated accentuation system of Lithuanian, a doctoral student of mine once put a question to me in a seminar: 'What would happen if, sometime in the future, Lithuanian acquired a fixed word stress?'

My answer was approximately as follows: 'Nobody can say for sure how and when that could happen. Though, in some languages we observe just that kind of situation: in Latvian the stress always falls on the first syllable, in French on the last and in Polish on the penultimate syllable of a word. Personally, I find a fixed stress hard to imagine in Lithuanian.'

Nonetheless, there are tendencies to simplify the Lithuanian stress system, e.g., the retraction of the stress in the northwestern dialects of Lithuanian. Some loan-words also have a fixed stress. Summing up, we must say that, at the present time, word stress is still free in Lithuanian.

IV. THE NOUN

Since Greek and Roman times, it has been customary to distinguish the following parts of speech: 1. The noun, 2. The adjective, 3. The verb, 4. The pronoun, 5. The numeral, 6. The adverb, 7. The preposition, 8. The conjunction, 9. The interjection.

This classification varies in different languages, and there are often disagreements between linguists and authors of the grammars of one and the same language.

Nobody knows for sure which of these (nine) parts of speech was the first to be 'distinguished.' Some linguists maintain that originally the first words were neither nouns, nor adjectives, nor verbs as we understand them today, rather they were specific sound symbols standing for particular things or phenomena.

Some believe that the first to be named were the parts of the human body and their actions and functions, followed by the closest surroundings of the people, the main phenomena of nature, etc.

This was the way language originated and developed. Sometimes it is thought that the noun—'the name of a person, place or thing'—could have been the first part of speech. There are linguists who hold that numerals must have been older than nouns, in particular the first four. There are indications that the Indo-Europeans counted by tapping/ticking the four fingers with the thumb: *one to four* of the one hand and *five* to *eight* of the other, while *nine,* starting again with the first hand,

meant a new level of the count. Therefore *nine* (Lithuanian *devyni)* could look in Proto-Indo-European something like **enwen-* 'anew, once again,' so to say, the count begins again—*nine* to *twelve.* Technically, such an option seems quite feasible.

In any case, up to the present day, Lithuanian has preserved about 3,000 particularly archaic words, mostly nouns, verbs and numerals—no other Indo-European language boasts anything like that amount. Among the nouns, inherited from Proto-Indo-European, are:

a) those denoting parts of the human body: Lith. *akis* 'eye/ *ausis* 'ear,' *nosis* 'nose/ *dantis* 'tooth/ *jeknos* 'liver/ *širdis* 'heart,' *pėda* 'foot,' and many others;

b) names of relationships: *moteris* 'woman,' *vyras* 'man,' *duktė* 'daughter,' *brolis* 'brother,' *šešuras* 'father-in-law,' etc.;

c) things and phenomena surrounding the primitive humans: *diena* 'day,' *naktis* 'night,' *medis* 'tree,' *laukas* 'field,' *vanduo* 'water,' *ugnis* 'fire,' *aušra* 'dawn,' *sniegas* 'snow,' etc.;

d) names of domesticated and wild animals: *avis* 'sheep,' *paršas* 'pig,' *ašva* 'mare,' *ašvienis* 'horse, nag,' *vilkas* 'wolf,' *lapė* 'fox,' etc.;

e) names of some cereal grasses: *rugys* 'rye,' *kvietys* 'wheat,' *žirnis* 'pea,' etc.

It should be added that, side by side with the old inherited words, Lithuanian formed new ones and, in many cases, both words exist in the language. The word *kepenys* 'liver,' derived from the verb *kepti* 'to bake, to roast,' is used alongside the old inherited word *jeknos.* And the word *plaučiai* 'lungs' is derived from the verb *plaukti* 'to float,'

Perhaps the most curious of all the names of the human body is the noun *pilvas,* 'stomach,' no doubt going back to the Indo-European root, the Lithuanian form of which is *pilti* 'to fill, to accumulate, to heap, etc.' We are not sure what the ancient Lithuanians filled their stomachs with—maybe water, ale, wine, or mead. By the way, the same root is the origin of *pilis* 'hill-fort, castle.'

Another interesting case is the word *ranka* 'hand,' which appeared in the common Baltic period and afterwards was adopted by the Slavonic languages as well. That the word was derived from a Proto-Indo-European root is attested by the ancient vowel-gradation:

I. - E	-en-		-on-	-n-	
Lith.	renka 'gathers'	'(it)	ranka 'hand'	rinko 'gathered'	'(it)

Thus, *ranka* was conceived by the Baits as 'a tool for gathering'—berries, roots, wood, etc.

The importance of thousands of words preserved from the Indo-European period is outweighed by another ancient feature—the Indo-European inflexions, more precisely formants, i.e., amalgamations of stem vowels and endings, surviving in Lithuanian. Compare:

Indo-European		Lithuanian				
(Declensions)		I	II	III	IV	V
Nom.	*-es-/os/-is/-*	*-as/-is/-ys*	*-ė/-a*	*-is*	*-us*	*-uo*
Gen.	*-eso/-oso*	*-(i)o*	*-ės/-os*	*-ies*	*-aus*	*-ens/-ers*
Dat.	*-oi/-ei*	*-ui*	*ai/-ei*	*-iai/-iui*	*-ui*	*-iui/-iai*
Acc.	*-om/-im*	*-ą/-į*	*-ą/-ę*	*-į*	*-ų*	*-į*
Instr.	*-oi/-ei*	*-(i)u*	*-(i)a*	*-imi*	*-umi*	*-imi*
Loc.	*-e(n)*	*-e/-yje*	*-oje/-ėje*	*-yje*	*-uje*	*-yje*
Voc.	*-e*	*-e/-au/-ai*	*-i/-a*	*-ie*	*-au*	*-ie.*

Hypothetical Indo-European endings are slightly generalized here. As a matter of fact, they are more sophisticated. Nevertheless, this comparison of the endings clearly demonstrates the archaism of the Modern Lithuanian declension. The differences between all five Lithuanian declensions are merely due to the different types of Indo-European stems.

Indo-European		Lithuanian
I.	**-es/-os*	*-as/-is/-ys*
II.	**-ē/-ā*	*-ė/-a*
III.	**-ei/-i*	*-is/-ies*

IV.	**-us*	*-us*
V.	**l/n/m/r*	*-en-er-.*

No other modern Indo-European language can compare with Lithuanian in respect to the number and fullness of endings. Therefore, the Lithuanian language is sometimes referred to as 'a living dinosaur' because of the archaism of its inflections.

One more unique feature of Lithuanian is the preservation of the dual form, to be more precise, remnants of dual forms. For example, *du vaiku* 'two children,' *dvi aki* 'two eyes,' *du vilku* 'two wolves,' etc., in contrast to the regular plural forms *du vaikai, dvi akys, du vilkai,* etc. In Standard Lithuanian dual forms are rather rare, while in some dialects they are quite common.

Finally, one more peculiarity of Lithuanian could be mentioned, i.e., the abundance of diminutive (endearing) suffixes: *brolis, brolelis, broliukas, brolužis, brolužėlis,* etc. (all the forms except the first one are diminutive forms of 'brother').

V. THE ADJECTIVE

Some scholars believe that adjectives developed from verbs, and are possibly a sort of participle, a type of word that shares characteristics of both verbs and adjectives.

Possibly, the Lithuanian adjectives *šaltas* 'cold' and *šiltas* 'warm' could be participles. They left the verbal system and became adjectives. Thus, an old adjective like *pilnas* 'full' could have been a participle of the verb *pilti* 'to fill.' In Lithuanian there are many adjectives inherited from Proto-Indo-European: *senas* 'old,' *lengvas* 'light,' *rudas* 'brown,'/ *raudonas* 'red,' *ilgas* 'long,' *plonas,* 'thin,' *aukštas,* 'high, tall,' and many others.

That adjectives are much 'younger' than nouns can be seen from the following facts:

1. In Lithuanian the declension of adjectives differs from that of the nouns, which are older. Some adjectives are declined by adding the pronominal endings *(jis, ji, jie jos).* Others have preserved the old noun endings *-a, -us, -aus,* e.g., *gera diena* 'a good day,' *geros dienos* (gen. sg./nom. pi.), *saldus midus* 'a sweet mead,' *saldaus midaus* (gen. sg.) etc. To put it differently, adjectival endings are taken partly from nouns and partly from pronouns.

2. In respect to stress patterns, all old Lithuanian adjectives coincide with the third and fourth paradigms of noun accentuation, which means that the adjectives are of later origin than the nouns.

3. Linguists often wonder why Lithuanian, being so archaic, has, nevertheless, completely eliminated suppletive comparison forms, so typical of other Indo-European languages, and made the comparison system fully uniform, e.g.,

English	*good*	*better*	*(the) best*
German	*gut*	*besser*	*(am) best(en)*
French	*bon*	*mieux*	*(le) meilleur*
Russian	*khoroshii*	*luchshe*	*nailuchshii,* but
Lithuanian	*geras*	*geresnis*	*geriausias*

4. Even with respect to word formation new compound adjectives are produced according to the noun models. For example:

koja 'foot'	+ *galas* 'end'	*kojūgalis* 'the foot of the bed' - noun
tvirtas "strong'	+ *galas* 'end'	*tvirtagalis* lit. 'strong-ended' - adjective.

One more peculiar trait of Lithuanian is the diminutive adjectival forms, e.g.,

mažas : mažiukas, mažiuliukas, mažiulėlis... (masc.) 'small, little..
maža : mažutė, mažytė, mažiukė... (fem.).

Some diminutive (endearing) adjectives turn into nouns, and sometimes it is hard to draw a boundary between a noun and an adjective. Some grammarians refer to such forms as 'adjectival nouns.'

V. THE NUMERAL

Numerals occupy a special place in the structure of all languages. They are a closed system, beginning with zero and ending with the infinite, which the human mind is capable of perceiving.

Many scholars of Indo-European believe that many centuries ago our forefathers started counting by using their fingers. Perhaps they did it like this: the four fingers of the hand were tapped one after the other by the thumb.

Nobody knows how the old names of the numbers appeared. Some maintain that 'four' could originally have been 'two times two,' and 'five' could have had something to do with the 'fist.' These are only guesses, however.

Nevertheless, even 5,000 years later, after the disintegration of Proto-Indo-European, Lithuanian numerals have not undergone any great changes:

1.	**einos/oinos*	vienas
2.	**dvey-/dwoy-*	*dveji; du, dvi*
3.	**treyes/trejes*	*treji, trejos; trys*
4.	**kwetuores*	*ketveri, ketverios; keturi*
5.	**penkwe*	*penki*
6.	**seis*	*šeši*
7.	**septem*	*septyni*
8.	**okto*	*aštuoni*
9.	**enewn*	*devyni*
10.	**dek(e)m*	*dešimt*

It is worth noting that Lithuanian numerals take certain cases of the noun:

vienas namas	(nom. sg.)	'one house'
du namai	(nom. pl.)	'two houses'
dešimt namų	(gen. pl.)	'ten houses'
dvidešimt/šimtas namų	(gen. pl.)	'twenty/hundred houses.'

VII. THE VERB

Many contemporary linguists maintain that in modern Indo-European languages the verb forms the center of the utterance or sentence.

Three features distinguish Lithuanian verbs from those of other languages:

1. the past frequentative tense,
2. two groups of the passive forms (continuous and perfective),
3. the great number of participles.

1. The past frequentative tense is formed by means of the formant *'-da-'* inserted between the infinitive root and the simple past tense endings. For instance,

aš bėg-da-v-au, tu bėg-ai, jis/ji bėg-o, etc. 'I ran, you ran, he/she/it ran' are the past simple forms of the verb *bėg-ti* 'to run.'
Aš *bėg-da-v-au* 'I used to run,'
tu bėg-da-v-ai 'you used to run,'
jis/ji beg-da-v-o 'he/she/it used to run,'
mes bėg-da-v-ome 'we used to run,'
jūs bėg-da-v-ote 'you used to run,'
jie/jos bėg-da-v-o 'they used to run' are the past frequentative forms of the same verb, bėgti.

The past frequentative tense holds one of the enigmas of Lithuanian—the obscure origin of the formant *-da-.* Many scholars have endeavored to solve it, but so far none have been successful.

2. As there are three passive participles in Lithuanian, it would be sensible to expect three (finite) passive forms:

present	*matomas*	'being seen'
past	*matytas*	'seen'
future	*matysimas*	going to be seen*'

but the third form is very rare, and only the first two are in current use.

Present Tense	
Ongoing action	Completed action
aš esu matomas/matoma	*esu matytas/matyta*
'I am being seen' masc./fem.)	'I have been seen'
tu esi matomas	*esi matytas*
jis/ji yra matomas	*yra matytas*
mes esame matomi/matomos	*esame matyti/matytos*
jūs esate matomi	*esate matyti*
jie/jos yra matyti	*yra matyti*
Past Simple Tense	
aš buvau matomas/matoma...	*buvau matytas/matyta...*
'I was being seen' (masc./fem.)	'I had been seen'
Past Frequentive Tense	
aš būdavau matomas/matoma...	*būdavau matytas/matyta.*
'I used to be seen' (masc./fem).	'I used to have been seen'
Future Tense	
a*š būsiu matomas/matoma...*	*būsiu matytas/matyta...*
'I shall be seen' (masc./fem.)	'I shall have been seen'.

VIII. THE PARTICIPLE

With respect to participles, their number and usage, Lithuanian is particularly wealthy. No other Indo-European language—including Sanskrit, Hittite, Greek or Latin—has ever had anything like them. This is because Lithuanian is both very archaic and very modern, constantly acquiring new elements in addition to the old ones.

Since classical antiquity participles have been treated as part of the verb system, although some researchers tend to consider at least some of them older than verbs proper and adjectives. Here is a full list of the thirteen participles in Modern Lithuanian. The example is the verb *skaityti* 'to read':

Active Participles (four)		
Present Tense	*skaitąs, skaitanti*	'reading' (masc., fem.)
Past Simple	*skaitęs, skaičiusi*	'having read'
Past Frequentative	*skaitydavęs, skaitydavusi*	'having often read'
Future	*skaitysiąs, skaitysianti*	'going to read'
Passive Participles (three)		
Present Tense	*skaitomas, skaitoma*	'being read'
Past Simple	*skaitytas, skaityta*	'read'
Future	*skaitysimas, skaitysima*	'going to be read*'
Debitive participle	*skaitytinas, skaitytina*	'being to be read*'
Half-Participle	*skaitydamas, skaitydama*	'(while) reading'
Gerunds (four)	*skaitant*	'(during) reading*'

skaičius	'(after) having read'
skaitydavus	'having often read'
skaitysiant	going to read in the future'.

All four active participles *(skaitąs, skaitęs, skaitydavęs* and *skaitysiąs)* and the debitive participle *(skaitytinas)* are declinable.

One of my doctoral students, an American from New York City, wondered whether an ordinary Lithuanian uses all thirteen participles. I explained to him that in some dialects one or another form is rarely met with, while in Standard Lithuanian all of them are in common use.

Another student, from the Lithuanian "February 16 High School" in Germany, wrote to me inquiring whether it would be possible to reduce the number of Lithuanian participles to two forms, as is common in many modern languages.

To answer such notions I published a study, *Lietuvių kalbos dalyvių vartosena* (Usage of Lithuanian Participles, 1993) in Vilnius. In it the reader can find more information on this issue.

Nobody knows why there are so many participles in Lithuanian, and opinions vary. There are indications that at least nine participles were inherited from Proto-Indo-European, and four formed independently later. The more recent ones—of Lithuanian origin—are these:

1} the past frequentative active participle	*skaitydavęs,*
2) the half-participle	*skaitydamas,*
3) the debitive participle	*skaitytinas,*
4) the past frequentative gerund	*skaitydavus.*

Some linguists believe that Proto-Indo-European did not have the passive voice, and there was no rigid boundary between active and passive participles.

Of interest are the reflexive forms of Lithuanian participles. For greater detail, see *Lietuvių kalbos dalyvių vartosena.*

More comprehensive information on participles can also be found in *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian* by Leonardas Dambriūnas, Antanas Klimas and William R. Schmalstieg. (Five editions between 1966 and 1993. Brooklyn, N.Y.)

IX. THE PREPOSITION

The number of prepositions is limited in all Indo-European languages. The Lithuanian prepositions are:

A. Prepositions followed by complements in the genitive case:

abipus 'on both sides/ *anapus* 'on the other side, beyond,' *anot* 'according to, *ant* 'on,' *anksčiau* 'before,' *arti* 'near,' *be* 'without,' *dėka* 'due to,' *dėl/dėlei* 'for,' *greta* 'next to,' *iki* 'up to, until,' *lig/ligi* 'until,' *iš* 'from,' *įstrižai* 'across,' *link/linkui* 'toward/,'*netoli* 'near,' *nuo* 'from,' *pasak* 'according to,' *pirma* 'before 'prior to,' *pusiau* 'in half,' *šalia* 'next to,' *šiapus* 'on this side,' tarp 'between,' *viduj* 'inside,' *virš/viršuj/viršum* 'above,' and *žemiau* 'below.'

B. Prepositions (ten in number) used with the accusative case:

apie 'about, around,' *aplink* 'around,' į in(to)/to,' *pagal, palei* 'along,' *pas* 'ant,' *paskui* 'after,' *per* 'through,' *prieš* 'in front of,' *pro* 'past, through,' (The phrase *per diem* shows that in Latin *per* is also used with the accusative case).

C. There are only two prepositions, requiring the instrumental case: *su* 'with' and *ties* 'on/at.'

D. Three prepositions—*po* "under, after,' *už* 'for, behind' and *skersai* 'across'—are used with complements in several cases:

po stalu 'under the table,' *po žeme* 'below ground'—with the instrumental case; *po karo* 'after the war,' *po valandos* 'after an hour, an hour later'—with the genitive case; *po dolerį (duoti)* ('to give) each a dollar'—with the accusative case;

už Lietuvą 'for Lithuania,' už *tėvynę* 'for the motherland'—with the accusative case; *už miško* 'behind/beyond the forest,' *už sodo* 'behind the garden'—with the genitive case;

skersai can be used with both the genitive and accusative cases with no difference in meaning whatsoever: *skersai lovos=skersai lovą* 'across the bed,' *skersai stalo=skersai stalą* 'across the table,'

Regarding their origin, the prepositions can be divided into several groups:

a) those inherited from Proto-Indo-European—*ant, be, iš, į, per, pro, su, po, pas;*
b) those derived from other parts of speech—*ankščiau, vietoj,* etc.; and
c) those derived from short phrases—*anapus<iš anos pusės* 'from the other side,' *anoje pusėje* 'on the other side.'

The oldest preposition is *per,* possibly followed by į.. The Twelve oldest prepositions served as the basis for the development of prefixes to verbs, sometimes radically affecting their primary meaning, e.g., *duoti* 'to give,' *išduoti* 'to betray,' *parduoti* 'to sell,' etc.

X. TWELVE VERBAL PREFIXES

All Indo-European languages, both living and dead, have quite a number of verbal prefixes, which being added to the old verb roots can variously modify their original meaning. Here is a tally of the meanings of the verb *sukti* 'to turn' and its prefixed derivatives—294 meanings altogether:

sukti	38 meanings
ap(si)sukti	23
at(si)sukti	17
į(si)sukti	21
iš(si)sukti	28
nu(si)sukti	20
pa(si)sukti	22
par(si)sukti	3
per(si)sukti	10
pra(si)sukti	16
pri(si)sukti	27
su(si)sukti	39
už(si)sukti	30.

The meanings, lavishly illustrated by examples, are recorded in *Lietuvių kalbos Žodynas* (A Dictionary of the Lithuanian Language), vol. XIV, p. 83-125. A question might arise: how many of these meanings can a person, born and bred in Lithuania, use in his or her lifetime? Certainly it would be difficult to give an answer, since it is hardly possible to test this.

Nevertheless, one thing is quite clear: such a person, no matter what his or her education, never has any doubts as to which preposition is to be used in which situation. To put it differently, this depends on what the linguists call 'deep structure' and what was previously called by German philologists *Sprachgefūhl* 'a feeling for the language.' No Lithuanian would have any doubts that *jam, matyt, galva susisuko* means 'He seems to have lost his head' or 'He seems to be dizzy/ *Arklelis tik sustojo, apsisuko ir krito* The poor horse just stopped, turned around and fell to the ground,' *Jis supyko ir nusisuko nuo mūsų* 'He got angry and turned his back on us,' *Aš nusuksiu tau sprandą 'I'll* wring your neck,' *Ar tau velnias protą susuko?* 'Has the devil driven you mad?'

On the other hand, my colleagues, non-Lithuanian linguists, who had studied Lithuanian, complained to me more than once that they found the correct use of prefixes one of the most difficult things. For instance, which of the following prefixed forms of *siųsti,* meaning 'to send,' is to be selected in a concrete context, taking into account only slight differences in their meaning: *nusiųsti, persiųsti, atsiųsti* or *išsiųsti?*

In Lithuanian, as in other Indo-European languages, there are verbs which 'accept' very few prefixes. They are mainly abstract intransitive verbs, e.g.,

	galėti (five)	*žinoti* (two)	*jausti* (five)	*vargti* (ten)
	'to be able'	'to know'	'to feel'	'to suffer'
ap-	*apgalėti* '			
	'to defeat'	———	———	———

at-	_____	_____	*atjausti* 'to sympathize'	*atvargti* ' 'to suffer'
į-	*įgalėti* 'to manage'	_____	_____	*įvargti* 'to tire out'
įš-	*išgalėti* 'to afford'	_____	_____	*išvargti* 'to exhaust oneself'
nu-	*nugalėti* 'to conquer'	_____	*nujausti* 'to anticipate'	*nuvargti* 'to get tired'
pa-	_____	*pažinoti* "to know'	*pajausti* to experience'	*pavargti* 'to get tired'
par-	_____	_____	_____	_____
per-	*pergalėti* 'to defeat'	_____	_____	*pervargti* 'to overwork'
pra-	_____	_____	_____	*pravargti* 'to struggle'
pri-	_____	_____	prijausti 'to sympathize'	privargti 'to get tired'
su-	_____	sužinoti 'to learn'	_____	suvargti 'to be tired out'
už-	_____	_____	užjausti 'to sympathize'	užvargti 'to be exhausted'

Although tests were not planned for this publication, I can not help offering one. Just take the verb *pirkti* (and *pirktis)* 'to buy (for oneself)' in all its prefixed forms and think of two sentences using each of them:

	Subjunctives
apipirkti 'to buy everything necessary for someone'	*apsipirkti* 'to buy everything necessary for oneself
atpirkti 'to buy back'	*išsipirkti* 'to ransom oneself, to atone for'
nupirkti 'to buy'	*nusipirkti* 'to buy (for oneself)'
papirkti 'to bribe'	*pasipirkti* 'to buy a little'
perpirkti 'to rebuy'	*persipirkti* 'to buy too much'
prapirkti 'to buy unsuccessfully'	*prasipirkti* 'to buy for oneself unsuccessfully'
pripirkti 'to buy a lot'	*prisipirkti* 'to buy a lot for oneself'
supirkti 'to buy everything'	*susipirkti* 'to buy everything for oneself'
užpirkti 'to buy in advance'	*užsipirkti* 'to buy in advance for oneself'/

Of course, it is another question whether any person, speaking or writing, would use all of these meanings throughout his or her life. However, it must be emphasized that here lies a huge linguistic hoard at the disposal of writers, journalists, teachers, anthropologists, sociologists and linguists, etc. Just have a look:

eiti	*bėgti*	*plaukti*	*nešti*
'to go, walk'	'to run'	'to swim'	'to carry'
apeiti	*apibėgti*	*apiplaukti*	*apnešti*
'to walk around'	'to run around'	'to swim around'	'to carry around'
ateiti	*atbėgti*	*atplaukti*	*atnešti*
'to come up'	'to run up'	'to swim up'	'to fetch'

įeiti	*įbėgti*	*įplaukti*	*įnešti*
'to enter'	'to run in(to)'	'to swim in'	'to bring in'
išeiti	*išbėgti*	*išplaukti*	*išnešti*
'to go out'	'to run out'	'to swim out'	'to bring out'
nueiti	*nubėgti*	*nuplaukti*	*nunešti*
'to go to'	'to run away'	to swim to'	'to bring to'
paeiti	*pabėgti*	*paplaukti*	*panešti*
'to walk a little'	'to run off'	'to swim a little'	'to carry a little'
pareiti	*parbėgti*	*parplaukti*	*parnešti*
'to come home'	'to run home'	'to swim home'	'to fetch'
pereiti	*perbėgti*	*perplaukti*	*pernešti*
'to come walk across'	'to run across'	'to swim across'	'to carry over'
praeiti	*prabėgti*	*praplaukti*	*parnešti*
'to pass by'	'to run past'	'to swim by'	'to fetch'
prieiti	*pribėgti*	*priplaukti*	*parnešti*
'to come up'	'to run up to'	'to swim up to'	'to bring home'
sueiti	*subėgti*	*suplaukti*	*sunešti*
'to come together'	'to run together'	'to swim together'	'to bring together'
užeiti	*užbėgti*	*užplaukti*	*užnešti*
'to come in'	'to drop in'	to stand'	'to carry up'

The variety of meanings of a single prefixed verb can be illustrated by the 38 meanings of the verb *su(si)sukti* 'to turn (about, around), to twist, to coil, to (sc)roll, to screw, to wind, etc:'

1) to turn in, to drive in by turning;
2) to fasten by screwing;
3) to fasten by winding, tightening;
4) to envelop into, to wrap;
5) to wrap into a roll;
6) to twist, to curl;
7) to bend, to turn up;
8) to twist together by turning;
9) to build (a nest);
10) to produce by beating;
11) to crush, to grind (grain);
12) to eat, to chew;
13) to distort, to distort by wrinkling;
14) to contort (one's face);
15) to shrink, to reduce, to contract, to cower, to huddle;
16) to tangle, to tumble, to mess, to dishevel, to rough up;
17) to tangle up, to confuse, to ravel, to enmesh, to muddle;
18) to make somebody dizzy by spinning round, to befuddle;
19) to chase, to walk someone off one's legs;

20) to daze, to stun, to knock;

21) to bring/ buy/ gain over, to swing;

22) to turn back;

23) to change direction;

24) to go there and back, to skip;

25) o get through/done, to perform something hurriedly;

26) to round up, to whip in;

27) to center around;

28) to dial;

29) to rise up, to soar by turning, to gyre;

30) to start doing something, to proceed to do, to get down to;

31) to catch a disease; to form;

32) to lay low, to double up;

33) to swell up (about a furuncle or boil);

34) to catch diarrhea;

35) to give less, to cheat, to do out of;

36) to confuse as to what is to be done;

37) to happen, to occur (something unexpected);

38) to influence, to win somebody's favor, to enlist.*

XI. THE SOUNDS OF NATURE

Like all languages, Lithuanian has many words that imitate the sound represented; i.e. onomatopoeic words. Indeed, some scholars consider sound imitation (onomatopoeia) to be at the root of language evolution. Listening to various sounds of nature (those of wind, water, forest, animals and birds, etc.), human beings imitated and repeated them, which, in the course of many generations, led to human language.

Certainly, this hypothesis cannot be rejected out of hand. Here are some examples:

Gegutė kukuoja 'the cuckoo cuckoos'—both words are doubtless derived from the call of the bird: *ku-kū, ku-kū, kukū.* The origin of *kukuoti,* 'to cuckoo/ is quite transparent. It is, however, more difficult to account for the substitution of *k* for *g* in the name of the bird, *gegutė,*

Some more onomatopoeic words in Lithuanian:

Karvutė mukia: mū-mū-mū. The cow moos'.
Avelė mekena: mė-mė-mė. The sheep bleats'.
Šunelis amsi: am-am-am. The doggie yaps'.
Šunelis urzgia: urr-urr-urr. The doggie growls'.
Varna kranksi: kra-kra-kra. The crow croaks'.
Vėjelis ošia pro lapus: š-š-š. 'A breeze rustles through the leaves'.

Some onomatopoeic words are the basis for new words:

ku-kū: kukuoti, gegutė, gegužiukas 'a small cuckoo/ *gegužė/gegužis* 'May,' *gegužinė* 'a dancing party in the open air,' etc.;

mū-mū: mukti: 'to moo/ mūkė 'a cow' (childish).

There are words that include sounds similar to those made by human beings: *aimanuoti* 'to wail,' *kosėti* 'to cough,' *čiaudėti* 'to sneeze,' *stenėti* 'to groan,' *dūsauti* 'to sigh,' *dejuoti* 'to moan,' *cypti* 'to squeal,' *kriokti* 'to rattle,' etc.

Such words are often used figuratively, particularly in relation to people:

> *Ko tu čia bliauni (verki) kaip mažas vaikas?* 'Why are you wailing (crying) like a small child?'
> *Atėjo į vidų dėdė Jurgis ir užbliovė: 'Kur mano batai?'* 'Uncle Jurgis came in and bellowed: "Where are my shoes?"'

Since Lithuanian existed and developed in the countryside until the early twentieth century, it accumulated comparatively many onomatopoeic words. At the beginning of the twenty-first century about 70 percent of Lithuanians are living in towns and cities, further from nature, and it is to be expected that the cases of onomatopoeia will be less frequent.

XII. WORD ORDER

One of the typical traits of Lithuanian, probably inherited from Proto-Indo-European, is the word order of the sentence, which is almost absolutely free. Examples:

A. A two-word sentence has two variants:

1. J*onas bėga.* 'John is running.'
2. *Bėga Jonas.* 'Is running John*.'

B. A three-word sentence has six variants:

1. *Jonas bėga namo.* 'John is running home.'
2. *Jonas namo bėga.* 'John home is running*.'
3. *Bėga Jonas namo.* 'Is running John home*.'
4. *Bėga namo Jonas.* 'Is running home John*.'
5. *Namo Jonas bėga.* 'Home John is running*.'
6. *Namo bėga Jonas.* 'Home is running John*."

C. A four-word sentence has 24 variants:

> *Jonas greitai bėga namo.* 'John is running home quickly.'

It is noteworthy that all these Lithuanian syntactical variants, in contrast to their word-for-word English counterparts, are perfectly normal sentences, the only difference between them being the emphasis on a particular word.

Mathematically, these possibilities of Lithuanian can be expressed in the following 'formula':

Number of words	Possible word-order versions
1	1 1 (1x1)
2	2 2(1x2)
3	3 6 (2x3)
4	4 24 (6x4)
5	5 120 (24x5)
6	6 720 (120x6)
7	7 5,040 (720x7)
8	8 40,320 (5,040x8)
9	9 362,880 (40,320x9)
10	10 3,628,800 (362,880x10)

Such syntactical freedom is not to be found in many modern Indo-European languages. The only question is if, in reality, all these theoretical cases can be used. A computer could produce this mass of sentences, but how could their 'correctness' be checked?

Certainly, in Lithuanian as in any other Indo-European language, there are syntactical limitations—phrases characterized by a fixed word order. Their most typical examples are the following:

A. The so-called *genitivus possessivus* almost always precedes the word it defines:

aukso žiedas	*'*gold ring'
lietuvių kalba	'the Lithuanian language'
pavasario džiaugsmai	'the joys of spring'
vasaros vaišės	'the treats of summer'
Sibiro tremtinių invalidų sąjunga	'the Society of Disabled Siberian Exiles/the Society of the Disabled Exiles of Siberia'.

B. Adjectives usually precede the nouns they modify:

šiltas pavasaris	'a warm spring'
liūdnos dienos	'sad days'
linksmas vaikas	'a merry child'
gera knyga	'a good book.'

C. The nomenclature of titles, posts, organizations and institutions begins with the highest and ends with the lowest grade:

Lietuvos Respublikos Seimo rinkimų apylinkės komiteto pirmininkas 'the Chairman of the Committee of the Constituency for the Election of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania';

Vilniaus miesto valdybos sekretoriaus pavaduotojas 'the Deputy Secretary of the Board of the City of Vilnius,' and

Lietuvos Švietimo ir mokslo ministerijos Aukštojo mokslo planavimo komiteto pirmininkas The Chairman of the Committee for Higher Education Planning at the Ministry of Education and Science.'

D. The word order of set phrases and idioms is fixed. For example,

Tyli kiaulė gilią šaknį knisa 'Still waters run deep'; lit. 'A quiet pig digs a deep root.'
Aklam kelio neparodysi 'You cannot show the way to a blind man,' and *Kvailį ir bažnyčoj muša* 'A fool is beaten even in church.'

Cf. *Lietuviif kalbos žodynas,* vol. XIV, pp. 83-125.