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Colloquial Lithuanian

The Complete Course
for Beginners

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Ian Press



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Preface

We have had real pleasure in putting together this textbook of Lithuanian, the one of us in Vilnius and the other in London. Electronic mail – you'll be subjected to some of it in the exercises – the fax, and even snailmail, have rarely been more useful. We gratefully acknowledge the valuable help which we received from a number of individuals, namely Dr Aurelija Usonienė at an early stage, Dr Stefan Pugh for permission to use ideas from a few sections in *Colloquial Ukrainian*, and Routledge's ever-patient and encouraging team: Simon Bell, Louisa Semlyen and Sarah Foulkes. We are also grateful to the Embassy of Lithuania in London for much up-to-date information which they provided, some of which will be found at the end of the reference section. As for the book itself, Meilutė Ramonienė provided the draft of every lesson, as well as supplying the realia, the fundamental knowledge of Lithuanian, and the considerable experience of teaching Lithuanian. Ian Press provided the introduction, reference section, much of the key, the word lists and glossaries, and the index, and prepared the lessons for the final version. All of it was reviewed fully by each of us.

There are very few textbooks of Lithuanian which use English as the medium of instruction; Ian Press derived great benefit, over many years, from using that by Professors Dambriūnas, Klimas, and Schmalstieg (see the reference section), which combines great erudition with a solid, practical approach; he used it both for his own considerable enlightenment and in order to teach the language. More recently, that by Professor Tekorienė which was published in Lithuania has given us several ideas on how to get learners to use Lithuanian without overwhelming them with technicalities. We are only too aware that, whether we like it or not, the present textbook will serve as a starting point for subsequent courses. Our brief has been to provide a presentation from which the average learner can derive real practical benefit; we believe that this can only be achieved if we convey at the same time something,

though not too much, of the fascination which the complexity of Lithuanian has exercised on the minds of linguists and philologists over the last two centuries. We hope, therefore, to get you both talking Lithuanian and talking about Lithuanian, Lithuania, and Lithuanians, as well as actually going there. In the last few years some knowledge of Lithuanian for visitors has become essential; Russian can no longer be relied on as a reasonably acceptable *lingua franca*, and English and German, however useful, must still represent that 'alien' element which will close doors to you. So learn Lithuanian; it isn't as fiendishly difficult for the learner as its reputation suggests, and in any case we have done all we could to make it reasonably easy for you. Once you have worked through this textbook and the accompanying recordings, you should be ready for some really hard work. Good luck! *Sėkmės!* And see you in Lithuania! *Iki pasimatymo Lietuvoje!*

The Authors

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Meilutė Ramonienė and Ian Press
Vilnius and St Andrews, February 1996.

Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
act.	active
adj.	adjective/adjectival
adv.	adverb/adverbial
coll.	colloquial <i>or</i> collective
comp.	comparative
cond.	conditional (sometimes referred to as the <i>subjunctive</i>)
conj.	conjugation
dat.	dative
decl.	declension
def.	definite (in the case of the adjective, also known as <i>pronominal</i> and <i>long</i>)
dem.	demonstrative
e.o.	each other
fam.	familiar
fem.	feminine
form.	formal
fut.	future
gen.	genitive
ger.	gerund
imp.	imperative
imperf.	imperfect (also known as the <i>frequentative past</i>)
impers.	impersonal
indef.	indefinite
indecl.	indeclinable
inf.	infinitive
instr.	instrumental
interr.	interrogative
intrans.	intransitive
lit.	literally
loc.	locative

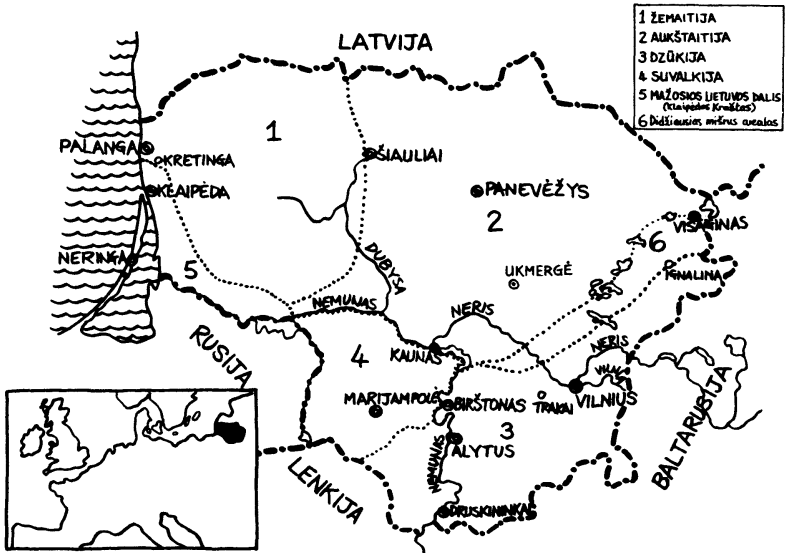
masc.	masculine
n.	noun
neg.	negative
neut.	neuter
nom.	nominative
num.	numeral
o.s.	oneself
p.	past <i>or</i> person (the context should make it clear which is intended)
part.	partitive
pass.	passive
pcple	participle
perf.	perfect (sometimes known as the <i>present perfect</i> , thus also the <i>future perfect</i> and the <i>past perfect</i> when formed with the appropriate auxiliary verb)
pl.	plural
pol.	polite
poss.	possessive
prep.	preposition
pres.	present
pron.	pronoun
refl.	reflexive
res.	resultative
rel.	relative
sg	something
sing.	singular
s.o.	someone
sup.	superlative
t.	tense
trans.	transitive
v.	verb
voc.	vocative
—	absence of a form

Introduction

The Lithuanian language

Lithuanian is the principal language of Lithuania, until recently one of the fifteen republics of the former Soviet Union. Standardized before the country's subjugation to the Soviet Union, and the consequent presence everywhere of Russian and its influence, the Lithuanian language managed to retain its orthography and independent grammatical standards. Perhaps part of the explanation of its survival lies in international recognition of its linguistic importance, but that would be to overemphasize the preoccupations of linguists and forget the real element in the retention of the language, the Lithuanians themselves. Other languages used in Lithuania include Russian, Belarusian, and Polish; until the Second World War Yiddish was a language of considerable social and cultural importance. For many years Poland and Lithuania shared the same political orbit, and as a result Lithuania retains an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic population, in contrast to the Lutheran allegiance of its geographical and linguistic neighbour, Latvia, and its other Baltic neighbour, Estonia. Lithuania is a small country of 25,170 sq m (65,200 sq km) and 3,740,000 inhabitants (1994), with a beautiful Baltic coastline, gentle landscape, and extraordinary language. If you ever wanted a challenge, here it is.

Lithuanian and Latvian are both East Baltic languages and are the only two which survive. Old Prussian, a West Baltic language, survived until the end of the seventeenth century, but evidence of its origins is difficult to interpret and possibly also unreliable. Together, the Baltic languages may well go back as a unit to Proto-Indo-European, the hypothesized common ancestor of many of the languages of Europe, of Iran, of Central Asia, and of Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. Arguably, they go back first of all to a common Balto-Slavonic language, but it might be more satisfactory to see Baltic and Slavonic, for geographical reasons, as having been in close, mutually influential, contact for many centuries. Lithuanian itself is traditionally described as 'archaic'; what is,



or ought to be, meant by this is that it retains a large number of features, particularly in declension, one might assume to have been present at an earlier stage in the history of the Indo-European languages. Putting it simply, Lithuanian might be placed alongside Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit in its linguistic importance. With the difference that it and its numerous dialects are still spoken.

For years Lithuanian has remained a very minority interest among non-Lithuanians, the proud acquisition of a few highly specialized Indo-Europeanists. Recent developments will allow more people to discover that Lithuanian like other languages has its difficulties and its complexities – seven cases, numerous tenses – and its simplicities – straightforward spelling and pronunciation, only two genders, relatively simplified conjugation. It is also highly differentiated dialectally, from all points of view: vocabulary, pronunciation, forms, and syntax. Here we concentrate on the standard language, as spoken in, say, Vilnius and Kaunas.

We strongly recommend you concentrate first on acquiring a reasonable level of pronunciation (here the accompanying recordings will be invaluable). There is no substitute for listening to a language and for saying words and phrases out loud, and it's even better if you feel you are saying them more or less correctly. Whatever you do, however, don't overdo this. After you have studied the section on the alphabet and pronunciation try to work slowly, deliberately, and regularly through the lessons. Everyone learns in their own way, and we have tried in this

course to let you feel free to learn in the way which suits you; your success will be defined in your own terms. Each lesson is full of useful language, words, terms, and expressions; there are sections on language points and on grammar, and here and there we have notes giving extra information. The Lithuanian–English glossary is designed to be a reasonably full list of many of the words in the lessons (with less information and excluding some of the thematic lists); the English–Lithuanian glossary is minimal and not aimed at helping you with English–Lithuanian translation, since you will find hardly any such exercises in this course. However, you will certainly have the impression that you are doing that sort of work and, if you would like to do that sort of exercise, once you have translated from Lithuanian to English, try translating back.

One of the authors of this book is an extremely impatient learner of languages, never following any of the sage advice which so many courses offer, and which he himself tends to offer. There are other things to do in life, and learning a language is often something we do ‘at the wrong time’, when it’s ‘too late’. As an adult it can seem as if you are marking time for ages, doing ‘elementary’ things when your mind wants to do other, far more sophisticated, things. The solution is to do just a little Lithuanian (and whichever other languages you’re learning!) every few days. Or, better still, try to go to Lithuania. It’s not far, and so close to us culturally. For more information on travel, etc., see the end of the reference section.

In the meantime, we have done all we can to make sure this course leads you in the right direction. It is imperfect, and we may have tried to appeal to too wide a range of interests and abilities. But it is also very much the first course of its kind: friendly, but serious. Bear with us.

A guide to the alphabet and pronunciation

It is important to see this very much as a section that you will work through and come back to repeatedly. Don't hesitate to leave it, but whatever you do, keep coming back to it. It is by no means complete, but it says enough for the moment. Learning a language is like reading a poem: there is always something you 'missed', something to discover.

Abécĕlè iĩ tartis

The alphabetical pronunciation

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Approximate English equivalent</i>	
A	a	father (longer)	
À	ą	'nasal' a	father (longer)
B	b	be	bath
C	c	ce	bits
Č	č	če	chat
D	d	de	deep
E	e	'broad' e	cat (longer; like e in bet when short)
Ē	ę	'nasal' e	cat (longer)
È	è	'narrow' e	hate
F	f	ef	fickle
G	g	ge	get
H	h	ha	house
I	i	'short' i	bit
Ī	ī	'nasal' i	machine (without the English tailing off)
Y	y	'long' i	machine (without the English tailing off)
J	j	jot	yacht
K	k	ka	keep
L	l	el	look

M	m	em	<i>mother</i>
N	n	en	<i>neat</i>
O	o	o	<i>so</i> (without the English tailing off)
P	p	pe	<i>pelt</i>
R	r	er	<i>reap</i> (trilled or tapped)
S	s	es	<i>sat</i>
Š	š	eš	<i>sheep</i>
T	t	te	<i>tall</i>
U	u	'short' u	<i>but</i> (northern England English)
U	u	'nasal' u	<i>hoot</i> (without the English tailing off)
Ū	ū	'long' u	<i>hoot</i> (without the English tailing off)
V	v	ve	<i>vat</i>
Z	z	ze	<i>zoo</i>
Ž	ž	že	<i>leisure</i>

The order of the letters of the alphabet

The order used in dictionaries is as given in the list above. However, do note that the following four groups of letters are treated as one letter in dictionaries – there is no hierarchy between them:

a, ą
e, e, é
i, i, y
u, u, ū

Digraphs

The following digraphs also occur in Lithuanian, none of which has any effect on the ordering of the letters of the alphabet:

	Approximate English equivalent
ch	as in <i>loch</i>
dz	as in <i>fads</i>
dž	<i>g</i> as in <i>age</i>

We might mention **ie** and **uo** too; these are not diphthongs (see below), since the two components are quite separately pronounced, though they blend from one to the other, the first through a *y*-sound, the second through a *w*-sound. So something like: *he yells, who wants. Needless to say, this is very approximate.*

The pronunciation of the vowels

The section on consonantal palatalization or 'softening' below will give you further information on vowels.

The simple vowels

The simple vowels may be long or short. In all but two cases, the actual letter tells you which. Thus:

<i>Long</i>	<i>Short</i>	<i>Long OR short</i>
ą		a
ę		e
ė		
o		
y, i	i	
ū, u	u	

The diphthongs

Diphthongs are sequences of two vowels which function as if they were one. For Lithuanian we might mention in particular:

	<i>Approximate English equivalent</i>
ai	<i>ei</i> as in <i>height</i>
au	<i>ow</i> as in <i>now</i>
ei	<i>ay</i> as in <i>may</i>
ui	<i>uey</i> as in <i>chop-suey</i>

The following diphthongs are straightforward in pronunciation: **al, el, il, ul, ar, er, ir, ur, am, em, im, um, an, en, in, un.**

'Accent'

In the lists of words and the glossaries you will notice that one of three accent marks is to be found on one of the vowels of Lithuanian words. First of all, the vowel so marked is the stressed, or most prominently pronounced, vowel in the word, whatever the accent mark. Secondly, the three accent marks convey some extra information, namely:

- 1 the *acute* accent (as in **výras** 'man') denotes a long vowel emphasized on its beginning and giving the impression of a sharp, sudden pronunciation (also referred to as a falling intonation);

-
- 2 the *tilde* (as in **gėras** ‘good’) denotes a long vowel emphasized towards its end, thus more drawn-out (also referred to as a rising intonation);
 - 3 the *grave* accent (as in **laikù** ‘on time’) refers to a short stressed vowel (it is also used to denote the initial *i* or *u* in diphthongs with an emphasized first component or ‘falling intonation’).

You will notice that in diphthongs the accent mark is placed above the more prominent member, thus the *tilde* over the second component and the *acute* (or *grave* in the case of *i* and *u*) over the first component.

For examples of the use of these accent marks, see the pronunciation list below.

Unless you are learning the Lithuanian language for linguistic reasons, you will *never* need to use the three accents described above, as they are simply not part of the everyday written language.

The consonants

The pronunciation of Lithuanian consonants is quite straightforward. The two features described below are the most important ones to be borne in mind. The second is particularly important.

Aspiration

The puff of air which often immediately follows English *p*, *t*, and *k* is less salient in Lithuanian. If you pronounce English *spot*, *stop*, and *skin* without the *s* (first pronounce them with it a few times, then take yourself by surprise and drop it), you will have a Lithuanian **p**, **t**, **k**.

Palatalization or ‘softening’

All Lithuanian consonants may occur palatalized, which means that they are accompanied, one might say ‘very closely followed’, by a slight *y*-sound. Such consonants only occur in the following positions:

- 1 before the vowels **i**, **y**, **į**, **e**, **ė**, and **ę**. Palatalization here tends to happen whatever the language; it is just that in Lithuanian it is more perceptible than in, say, English; it will be even more perceptible in **ę** and in long **e** because of their *a*-like pronunciation;
- 2 when followed by an **i** which precedes a vowel other than **i**, **y**, **į**, **e**, **ė**, and **ę**, thus **ia**, **iu**, **io**, **iau**, etc. Here the **i** is not to be pronounced as an

- i*; it simply indicates that the preceding consonant is palatalized;
 3 before other palatalized consonants (except for **k** and **g**, which are palatalized only before the front vowels, i.e. those mentioned under (1)).

The preceding notes, are, needless to say, rather approximate and far from exhaustive; what is really important is that you listen to Lithuanians speaking, and it is here that you will find the recordings accompanying this course indispensable. In what follows we give you lots of examples, which are also recorded (in each lesson several dialogues and texts, not to mention the occasional exercise and some additional material, will also be recorded).

Short vowels



alūs	gražūs	mūs	namù
linas	medinis	akis	manimù
māno	tàs	kasà	saldūs
bèt	manè	gerėsnis	Kaunè
Bonà	politika	òpera	tàvo

Long vowels



výras	arklÿs	brólj	įvadas
gėras	mėtas	kėpinti	ėžeras
ėglė	kėsti	dróbė	manėš
gilė	tėvas	senėlė	aikštė
māno	gābalas	gamýbą	są junga
sōdas	óda	nóras	kóks
sūnūs	są jūdis	lūžti	rūmas
pasiūsti	výrų	seserū	āčiū

Diphthongs



Lietuvà	vienas	skiėpyti	ieškóti
dúona	juodúoti	ąžuolas	obuolÿs
saūsas	siaūras	geriaū	pāskui
baigti	vėlaī	graziaī	automobiliū
pilnas	piřkti	seseřs	rudeņs
lángas	tařti	siuņčia	saldūs
kambarÿs	raņkos	sėmti	řirdj

Consonants

In the preceding list you will have heard palatalized consonants. Here are a few more examples, so you can concentrate on them because you know they're coming:

pėsčiomis	výre	gyvénti	siaurì
užėiti	širdžiū	čia	beširdis

And now for a few combinations (note that palatalized consonants never come at the end of a word):

žodžiu	baigiaū	kambaryjė	lietuvių
paklausti	rūdenį	Vilnius	Klaipėdoje

Now look at this list of names of cities and countries, most of which you will be able to recognize quite readily. Do note however, that Lithuanians tend to adapt foreign words to their own spelling system and, if possible, give them Lithuanian grammatical endings:

Parýžius	Romà	Rygà	Tālinas
Lòndonas	Maskvà	Niujòrkas	Monreālis
Berlýnas	Viena	Vāšingtonas	Tòkijas
Otavà	Óslas	Stokhòlmas	Hełsinkis
Kopenhagà	Tel Avivas	Kijevas	Briuselis
Sidnėjus	Madridas	Lisabonà	Frānkfurtas priė Máino
Mìnskas	Vilnius	Bėrnas	Ciūrīchas
Hagà	Ámsterdamas	Ženevà	Dùblinas
Škòtija	Austrālija	Naujòji Zelāndija	Olāndija
Itālija	Ispānija	Bėlgija	Prancūzija
Vokietija	Rūsija	Ukrainà	Baltarusija
Lātvija	Lietuvà	Švédija	Šveicārija
Dānija	Norvėgija	Ánglija	Portugālija
Bulgārija	Rumūnija	Čekija	Slovākija
Súomija	Éstija	Lėnkija	Veņgrija
Aīrija	Áustrija	Kanadà	Japònija
Izraelis	Amėrika	Jungtìnės Amėrikos Valstijos	

You will also find that the declension tables for the words **výras**, **kėlias**, **sūnūs**, **rankà**, **žinià**, **martì**, **širdis**, **akmuō**, **dìrbti**, **galėti**, and **matýti** in the reference section have been recorded, so you can familiarize yourself with the pronunciation of a good range of endings.

1 Naujas draugas

A new friend

By the end of this lesson you will have learnt:

- the verb **būti** 'to be'
- personal pronouns and genders
- accent
- saying 'Hello!' and 'Goodbye!'
- asking some basic questions
- asking people where they are from: **iš** 'from' + the genitive case
- present tense verb forms

During the first six or so lessons we suggest you concentrate on practising the pronunciation of Lithuanian. You will find the recordings extremely useful, since, particularly as regards the nuances of the vowels in Lithuanian, there really is little substitute for actually hearing the words pronounced. We use a standard Lithuanian pronunciation, which you will find extremely useful, a good and confidence-boosting basis on which to build once you hear the wider range of accents which you will meet in Lithuania itself. Keep referring back to the section on the alphabet and pronunciation in the introduction. For the moment, work through the alphabet and practise pronouncing the individual letters in isolation, in addition to repeating the dialogues in this lesson.

The vocabulary lists after the various parts of the lessons are there to give you immediate help. Words are very likely to be repeated in these lists throughout the course. All the words should also be in the *Lithuanian–English glossary* (the *English–Lithuanian glossary* is meant to be minimal, and to help with the exercises where appropriate).

Dialogue 1

Susitikimas

The meeting

Bill (Bilas in Lithuanian) is an English student visiting Lithuania for the first time, and upon arrival in the capital city, Vilnius, he meets a Lithuanian student named Aldona.

ALDONA: Laba diena!

BILL: Laba diena!

ALDONA: Aš esu Aldona, studentė. O jūs?

BILL: Aš esu Bilas, aš irgi esu studentas.

ALDONA: Labai malonu.

ALDONA: *Hello!*

BILL: *Hello!*

ALDONA: *I am Aldona, (I'm) a student. And (how about) you?*

BILL: *I am Bill, (I'm) also a student.*

ALDONA: *Very pleased (to meet you).*

Listen carefully to the recording. Try to imitate it as closely as possible, paying particular attention to the vowels.

Note that in the vocabulary lists, given at appropriate points in the lessons, in the reference section, and in the glossaries, accentual information is given. See the reference section for an explanation. Don't attempt to take in all this information at this stage; you might be overwhelmed by it. This is for when you come back and revise; there's nothing like having the information in front of you, once the foundation has been laid.

Vocabulary

naūj/as, -à (4)

draūg/as, -o (4)

susitikim/as, -o (2)

labà dienà!

àš

studeñt/ė, -ės (2)

new

friend (masc.; fem. draūg/ė, -ės (4))

meeting

Hello! (lit. 'good day'; dien/à, -ōs (4))

I

university student (fem.)

studeñt/as, -o (2)	university student (masc.)
õ	and, but; and how about...?
jūs	you (pl., pol.)
iŗgi	also
labāi	very
malonù	pleased (lit. 'it is pleasant')

In the vocabulary lists we give information which you will not immediately understand. In the case of nouns, the slash separates the ending of the nominative case and indicates where to add on the genitive case ending, which is given after the hyphen. In the case of adjectives, the slash separates out the nominative singular masculine, and after the hyphen we have the nominative singular feminine ending. In parentheses we give the number of the accent class (see the reference section). For the verbs we give three forms, respectively the infinitive, the third person present, and the third person simple past. These are the three basic forms, from which all other verbal forms can be created. Where the verb is rather long, for reasons of space we foreshorten it as necessary. Don't worry about learning these now, but once you have completed the first three lessons, come back and learn them.

Grammar

Articles

There are no definite and indefinite articles, that is, words corresponding to English 'the' and 'a, an', in Lithuanian. Lithuanian does have ways of conveying something equivalent, and we shall become familiar with these as we work through the lessons.

The verb **būti** 'to be'

The verb 'to be' may be omitted in the present tense, thus 'I *am* a student' may be simply **aš studentas**. However, it does have such forms, and these must be learnt. Thus:

Būti 'to be'

1 <i>p. sing.</i>	I am	aš esù	
2 <i>p. sing.</i>	you are	tù esi	<i>fam. sing.</i>
3 <i>p. sing.</i>	he/it is	jis yrà	<i>masc.</i>

3 p. sing.	she/it is	jì yrà	<i>fem.</i>
1 p. pl.	we are	mēs ēsame	
2 p. pl.	you are	jūs ēsate	<i>polite sing.; pol./fam. pl.</i>
3 p. pl.	they are	jiē yrà	<i>masc.; mixed</i>
3 p. pl.	they are	jōs yrà	<i>fem.</i>

This verb is irregular in many languages. It has certain irregularities in Lithuanian too, but we can note with relief that the endings of the first and second persons (**-u**, **-i**, **-ame**, **-ate**) are absolutely regular, and that the stress pattern of those persons (stress on the ending in the first and second persons singular, not on the ending in the other forms) is also regular. For the third person, **yra** is irregular in two ways: (i) it looks as if it belongs somewhere else, (ii) it is stressed on the ending. However, it is regular in having only *one* form for the third person singular and the third person plural; in other words, **jis**, **ji**, **jie**, and **jos** are all followed by **yra**. It also means 'there is, there are'. We can make the forms negative by putting **n-** in front of the first and second persons, e.g. **aš nesu** 'I'm not', and transforming **jis yra** into **jis nėra**, e.g., **jis nėra studentas** 'he isn't a student'.

The personal pronouns and genders

Personal pronouns are less frequently used in Lithuanian than they are in English. In general, they do not have to occur with the verb, because the verb form or the context in most cases tell us which person is speaking; they are used for emphasis or when necessary, notably with third-person subjects. They are also required when a verb is absent, e.g. **aš studentas!**

'You'

In the singular **jūs** is used when you are speaking to someone whom you do not know well, and is *obligatory* when addressing a person in a position of authority, teachers, elders, and the like. **Tu** is singular only (its plural is **jūs**) and used among friends, within the family, and when addressing children. Other languages make a similar distinction, for instance Spanish **tú/vosotros** and **usted(es)**, French **tu** and **vous**, German **du/ihr** and **Sie**.

'He/She/It'

Nouns are differentiated by grammatical *gender*, for example:

studentas is *masculine*

studentė and **Anglija** 'England' are *feminine*

The ending of the word indicates the gender, e.g. for masculines it is very often **-as**, **-us**, **-ys**, and for feminines it is very often **-a** or **-ė**. Nouns in **-is** may be masculine or feminine. When a noun in the singular is replaced by a pronoun, the gender of the two must agree: **studentas** > **jis**, **studentė** > **ji**. Note that masculine and feminine pronouns will be understood as English 'he/she' in reference to persons, but as 'it' in reference to things.

Accent

From the Introduction and from listening to Dialogue 1 you will have learned that Lithuanian vowels can be both long and short and that in a word where there are several vowels one will be more prominent than the others, i.e. will be stressed. You also know that the long vowels will, when stressed, be more prominent at their beginning or at their end. All this is important, and will be marked in the reference section, the glossaries, and the lessons in the vocabulary lists and where appropriate. Apart from this we follow everyday Lithuanian practice and do not mark the accent in any way. Just listen and repeat.

Language points

Saying 'Hello!' and 'Goodbye!'

You have already met **Laba diena!** in the first dialogue. This is a good, general greeting, which is fine from about 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At any time we can use **Lābas** on its own or, more informally, **Sveikas!**, literally 'Healthy!', to a male; (**Sveikà!** to a female, and **Sveiki!** to more than one person – **Sveikos!** if all feminine). Before 10 a.m. we may use **Lābas rytas!** literally 'Good morning!', and after 6 p.m. **Lābas vākaras!** literally 'Good evening'. The three expressions using **labas** with a following noun also commonly occur as **Lābą dieną!**, **Lābą rytą!**, and **Lābą vakarą!**, which you will learn as the accusative case.

Though we shall come across saying goodbye in Lesson 2, we might mention that three good general ways of doing this are **Sudiēu!** or **Sudiē!**, literally (though somewhat changed) 'With God!', **Ikì pasimātymo!** literally 'Until the seeing-each-other!', and **Višo gēro!** and **Višo lābo**, literally 'All good!' On parting at night one would use **Labānakt!** literally (though contracted) 'Good night!' We shall meet other expressions as we progress through the course.

Dialogue 2

Iš kur esate?

Where are you from?

ALDONA: Ar jūs esate iš Amerikos?

BILL: Ne, iš Anglijos. O jūs čia gyvenate?

ALDONA: Taip, čia. Aš esu lietuvis.

BILL: O aš esu anglas.

ALDONA: *(Are) you from America?*

BILL: *No, (I'm) from England; do you [emphasis] live here?*

ALDONA: *Yes, I do (lit. 'yes, here'); I am a Lithuanian.*

BILL: *And I (emphasis; contrast) am an Englishman.*

Vocabulary

aĩ	(question particle)
iš + gen.	from, out of (prepositions may lose their accent when, as is normally the case anyway, they govern a word)
Amėrik/a, -os (1)	America
nė	no
Ąnglij/a, -os (1)	England
gyvėnti, gyvėna, gyvėno	live
gyvėnate	you (pl., pol.) live
čia	here
taip	yes
lietuvis/ė, -ės (2)	Lithuanian (fem.)
ąnglis/as, -o (1)	Englishman

Grammar

Asking questions

Some questions seek ‘yes’ or ‘no’ in an answer, whereas others seek a different sort of information. In Dialogue 2 we come across the second type of questions, corresponding to English questions with question words such as ‘who, why, how, when, where’. In Dialogues 1 and 2 we encountered two ways of conveying ‘yes/no’ questions in Lithuanian. First, we add an interrogative intonation to a sentence, raising the pitch either at the end of the sentence or on the word we wish to question:

Jūs gyvenate čia.	You live here.
Jūs gyvenate čia?	Do you live here? (raise the pitch as appropriate)

Secondly, we place the interrogative particle **ar** at the beginning of the sentence (more precisely, at the beginning of the grammatical core of the main clause, in the sense that in the following example it could come after **jūs**):

Ar jūs gyvenate čia?	Do you live here?
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It can be tempting for an English speaker to imagine that **ar** is somehow a verb, and corresponds to ‘are’. It doesn’t!

A third, and often less abrupt, more polite, way of asking a ‘yes/no’ question is to introduce it with the word **gál** ‘perhaps’ in the place of **ar**. Thus:

Gal jūs gyvenate čia?	Do you live here?
------------------------------	-------------------

At this stage the easiest way to answer such questions is to use the words **taip** ‘yes’ and **ne** ‘no’. It is more usual to repeat, in an appropriate way, part of the question, with or without **taip** or **ne**. Thus, answers to the above question would include:

Taip, (gyvenù) čia.
Nè, ne(gyvenù) čia.

Note that in the last example, if **gyvenù** is expressed, **ne** would, in writing, be joined to it, namely: **negyvenù**.

Case and prepositions

The basic form of a noun, as listed in glossaries and dictionaries, is the

nominative ('naming') case, e.g. **studentas, Anglija**; this is the form of the *subject* of a sentence. In Lithuanian there are altogether seven cases, all of which may be used on their own, and all but three of which may be used together with prepositions, e.g. words corresponding to English 'for, with, near, out of'. The three exceptions are the nominative, the vocative (used when you call someone or attract their attention), and the locative (equivalent to English 'in' or 'at' a place).

In Dialogue 2 we saw the preposition **iš** 'from, out of': this preposition calls for the use of the *genitive* case. In that dialogue you came across the genitive forms of some feminine nouns. Feminine nouns form the genitive singular quite simply: the ending **-a** is changed into **-os**, and the ending **-ė** is changed into **-ės**, for example:

Amerika → **Amerikos**
studentė → **studentės**

As you can see, the case ending replaces the final vowel **-a** of the basic form, but adds **-s** on to the **-ė**.

Masculine nouns have the following genitive singular endings:

-as is changed into -o	e.g. Londonas	→	Londono
-is is changed into -io	e.g. Briuselis	→	Briuselio
-ys is changed into -io	e.g. Pasvalys	→	Pasvalio
-us is changed into -aus	e.g. Vilnius	→	Vilniaus

The genitive plural always has the ending **-ų**, e.g.:

Druskininkai → **Druskininkų** (a small spa resort about 135 km. SW of Vilnius)

In Lithuanian the genitive nearly always precedes the noun it modifies, just as in English 'Peter's house', for example, 'Lithuania's history', which, if 'Lithuania' is **Lietuva** and 'history' is **istorija**, will be **Lietuvos istorija**. In English we might prefer 'Lithuanian history' or 'history of Lithuania'. In Lithuanian this is an exceptionally common construction.

Exercise 1a

The following forms are, or are declined as, feminine nouns. Use each form in the genitive in a phrase together with **knyga** 'book', **kambarys** 'room', or **butas** 'apartment', e.g. **Marijos knyga**:

studentė university student

Marija	Maria	
motina	mother	(mótin/a, -os (1))
mergaitė	girl	(mergáit/ė, -ės (2))
anglė	Englishwoman	
lietuėė	Lithuanian woman	

Exercise 1b

Write out the words in parentheses in the appropriate form:

- (a) Ji (būti) _____ iš (Norvegija) _____.
 (b) Mes (būti) _____ iš (Paryžius) _____.
 (c) Jie gyvena čia, jie (būti) _____ iš (Kaunas) _____.
 (d) Ar tu (būti) _____ iš (Helsinkis) _____?
 (e) Aš (būti) _____ iš (Lenkija) _____.
 (f) Ar jūs (būti) _____ iš (Atėnai) _____?

Grammar

The present tense

We have already encountered the present tense of an irregular verb, **būti** 'to be', and noted that in certain ways it was quite typical of Lithuanian verbs. Now we can present the first conjugation of regular Lithuanian verbs – you will notice it is quite similar to **būti**. Do bear in mind that the Lithuanian present tense covers several English constructions, such as 'I live', 'I am living', 'I do live'. Don't try to translate 'am' and 'do', or '-ing'!

I	-u	we	-ame
you (sg)	-i	you (pl)	-ate
he/she	-a	they	-a

Now let us incorporate these endings into the verb **gyventi** 'to live' and a similar verb **ruošti** 'to prepare':

	<i>gyvénti</i>		<i>ruošti</i>
gyvenù	gyvėname	ruošù	ruošiamė
gyvenì	gyvėnate	ruošì	ruošiate
gyvėna	gyvėna	ruošia	ruošia

Note how **-ti** is removed and the endings added. We need to learn which verbs insert the extra **-i-**, and that when we might expect two **i**s together – as in the **tu** form – one is omitted. Beyond this, you can see, as already mentioned, that the ‘he, she, it’ and ‘they’ forms are identical. Both these verbs have the same stress pattern, namely the stress on the ending in the **aš** and **tu** forms, and on the stem in all the other forms. The only other pattern is where the stress is *never* on the ending, e.g. **dirbti** ‘to work’:

<i>dirbti</i>			
	dirbu		dirbame
	dirbi		dirbate
	dirba		dirba

We might note that in the spoken language, and even often in print, the final **-e** in the **mes** and **jūs** forms is dropped.

The second and third conjugations are very similar to the first conjugation, except that the second conjugation is characterized by an **-i-** and the third by an **-o-**. Thus:

<i>norėti</i> ‘to want’		<i>rašyti</i> ‘to write’	
nóriu	nórime	rašau	rāšome
nóri	nórite	rašai	rāšote
nóri	nóri	rāšo	rāšo

The negative of all verbs is formed by attaching **ne-** to them; thus:

aš noriu	aš nenoriu	aš rašau	aš nerašau
...

Create the remaining negative forms yourself.

Reading

Aldona yra Vilniaus universiteto studentė. Ji yra iš Kauno. Aldona mėgsta skaityti, sportuoti, keliauti. Dabar ji skaito. Aldonos naujas draugas Bilas yra anglas. Jis yra iš Londono. Bilas taip pat yra studentas. Jis irgi mėgsta skaityti, bet dabar nenori nei skaityti, nei rašyti. Jis nori pasivaikščioti.

Vocabulary

universitèt/as, -o (2)	university
mėgti, mėgsta, mėgo	like
skaityti, skaityti, skaityti	read
sportuoti, sportuoja, sportavo	go in for sport
keliuoti, keliuoja, keliavo	travel
ne- nėi..., nėi...	neither..., nor... (note the 'double negative')
rašyti, rašo, rašė	write
pasivaikščioti, -ščioja, -ščiojo	go walking, for a walk

Exercise 1c

Write out the present tense forms of the following verbs. The stem of the verb is supplied – remember that you will need to remove the final vowel in two forms:

(a) gyvėnti	stem (I):	gyvena-	'to live'
(b) turėti	stem (II):	turi-	'to have'
(c) skaityti	stem (III):	skaito-	'to read'
(d) mañyti	stem (III):	mano-	'to think, intend'
(e) žinoti	stem (III):	žino-	'to know'

Note that these verbs all have mobile stress.

Exercise 1d

Translate into Lithuanian:

- Hello! I am a student from England.
- There is a university there. (or: 'There there is ...')
- I am Aldona, from Lithuania.
- Carla is Italian. She is from Italy.
- Where are you from?
- Do you like travelling?
- No, I don't.
- Does she live here?
- Is he Aldona's friend?

2 Bičiulis atvyksta traukiniu

A friend arrives by train

By the end of this lesson you will have learnt:

- how to express where something is: the locative case
- how to address someone: the vocative case
- how to express commands and some wishes: the imperative
- the accusative case
- how to ask the way somewhere and to say where you are going
- how to express a result
- how to ask someone's name and get to know them
- how to ask someone what language they speak

Try to work on keeping short and long vowels separate, and on pronouncing the vowels clearly. Use the lists in the introduction, and listen to them on the recordings.

Dialogue 1

Kur tu gyveni?

Where do you live?

*As they get to know each other, Aldona and Bill discuss where they live; note that they are now using the familiar **tu** form*

ALDONA: Bilai, o kur tu gyveni? Vilniuje?

BILL: Taip, Vilniuje, 'Lietuvos' viešbutyje. O tu?

ALDONA: Aš taip pat Vilniuje, studentų bendrabutyje.

BILL: O tavo šeima?

ALDONA: Mano šeima gyvena Kaune. O tavo?

BILL: Mano šeima gyvena Anglijoje, Londone.

- ALDONA: *Where do you live, Bill? Vilnius?*
 BILL: *Yes, I do, in the hotel 'Lithuania'. How about you?*
 ALDONA: *I live in Vilnius too, in a students' hostel.*
 BILL: *What about your family?*
 ALDONA: *My family lives in Kaunas. What about yours?*
 BILL: *My family lives in England, in London.*

Vocabulary

bičiùl/is, -io (2)	friend
atvỹkti, atvỹksta, atvỹko	arrive, come (when you welcome a group of people, you may say: Sveikì atvỹkẽ!)
traúkiniu	by train (a special use of the instr., here of the n. traukin/ỹs, -io (3 ^a))
kuř	where
Viln/ius, -iaus (1)	Vilnius
Lietuv/à, -õs (3 ^a)	Lithuania
taĩp pàt	also, too
studeñtũ bendrãbut/is, -(ẽ)io (1)	students' hostel, hall of residence (studeñtũ is the gen. plural of studeñtas)
tãvo	your(s) (indecl.; fam.)
řeim/à, -õs (4)	family
Kaũn/as, -o (2)	Kaunas
mãno	my, mine (indecl.)
Lõndon/as, -o (1)	London

Grammar

'Place "where"': the locative case

In this lesson we encounter the third case, the *locative*, so called because it is most commonly used to indicate 'place where', or 'location'. This case is never accompanied by a preposition, but always occurs on its own. Several different locative endings exist, depending on the noun in question. They all share the final element **-e**. If the noun is in **-as**, you simply replace this with **-e**. Otherwise, as regards the nouns we have so far encountered, you form the locative as follows:

- 1 If the noun ends in **-as**, replace it with **-e**
- 2 If the noun ends in **-ė**, simply add **-je**
- 3 If the noun ends in **-a**, change the **-a-** into **-o-** and add **-je**
- 4 If the noun ends in **-us** or **-ys**, remove the **-s** and add **-je**
- 5 If the noun ends in **-is**, replace it with **-yje**

Here is a table to summarize all this:

	<i>Masculine</i>			<i>Feminine</i>		
<i>Nominative</i>	-as	-is	-ys	-us	-a	-ė
	miestas	viešbutis	kambarys	turgus	šeima	aikštė
<i>Locative</i>	-e	-yje	-yje	-uje	-oje	-ėje
	mieste	viešbutyje	kambaryje	turguje	šeimoje	aikštuje

A few examples:

Londonas → Londonė	London/in London
aikštė → aikštuje	square/in the square
šeima → šeimoje	family/in the family
Vilnius → Vilniuje	Vilnius/in Vilnius
kambarys → kambaryje	room/in the room
viešbutis → viešbutyje	hotel/in the hotel

Vocabulary

miest/as, -o (2)	town, city
viešbutis, -(ė)io (1)	hotel
kambar/ỹs, -io (3 ^b)	room
tuřg/us, -aus (2)	market
aikšt/ė, -ės (3)	square (in town)

In spoken Lithuanian the **-e** of the locative is often dropped when it follows **-j-**.

Very important! The locative place does not include any sense of motion; in other words, it never means 'into' or 'to'.

Exercise 2a

Compose Lithuanian sentences using the following sets of words and

the grammar seen so far, following the order in which the elements are given; prepositions and conjunctions have been omitted and should be supplied where appropriate.

- (a) Aš, gyventi, Kaunas.
- (b) Jūs, gyventi, butas.
- (c) Mes, būti, viešbutis.
- (d) Taip, šeima, gyventi, Vilnius.
- (e) Jis, studijuoti, institutas.
- (f) Aldona, kur, gyventi.
- (g) Tu, skaityti, biblioteka.
- (h) Jie, rašyti, kambarys.

institūt/as, -o (2)	institute
bibliotek/à, -(ėk)os (2)	library
studijuoti, studijuoja, studijavo	study (at university)

Grammar

Addressing someone: the vocative case

Lithuanian uses a special form when addressing someone. This is the vocative, which is used when you wish to address someone by their first name, family name, title or whatever.

Masculine nouns have many different vocative endings. It is the nouns in **-as** which are most varied. Thus:

If we address someone by their first name or family name, **-as** becomes **-ai**, e.g.

Petras → **Petrai!**
Paulauskas → **Paulauskai!**

If we use a common noun, then **-as** is simply changed into **-e**, e.g.

studentas → **studente!**
docentas → **docente!**

But if the word ends in **-tojas** or **-ėjas**, then **-as** is changed into **-au**, e.g.

mokytojas → **mokytojau!**
pardavėjas → **pardavėjau!**

Very often we address someone in a pleasant or affectionate way with a diminutive form, or we may be addressing a child, and using a word ending in **-ukas**; then we simply remove **-as** and are left with **-uk** as the vocative, thus for example:

berniukas → berniuk!

The vocative forms of masculine words with other endings are simpler, and there are no differences between proper and common nouns. We change the ending **-is** into **-i**, e.g. **brolis** and **Naglis** become **broli** and **Nagli**. The ending **-ys** becomes **-y**, e.g. **mokinys** and **Stasys** become **mokiny** and **Stasy**, whilst the ending **-us** becomes **-au**, e.g. **profesorius** and **Saulius** become **profesoriau** and **Sauliau**.

The feminine forms of the vocative are very straightforward. The endings of words in **-a** do not change, though the stress position may change, in that if in the nominative the stress is on the ending, in the vocative it moves to the beginning of the word, e.g. **mamà** – **māma**. Words in **-ė** change only slightly, replacing **-ė** with **-e**, e.g. **Eglė** – **Egle**.

Here are tables summarizing the vocative forms:

Masculine

<i>-as</i>	<i>-is</i>	<i>-ys</i>	<i>-us</i>
-e studente!	-i broli! Nagli!	-y mokiny! Stasy!	-au rektoriau! Sauliau!
-ai Jonai!			
-au pardavėjau! mokytojai!			
-uk berniuk! Jonuk!			

Feminine

<i>-a</i>	<i>-ė</i>
-a mama! Elena!	-e sese! Egle!

Vocabulary

bról/is, -io (1)

mokin/ỹs, -io (3^a)

brother

pupil, schoolboy (fem. **mokin/ė, -ės** (3^a))

doceñt/as, -o (2)	lecturer (fem. doceñt/ė, -ės (2))
rėktor/ius, -iaus (1)	rector, principal (fem. rėktor/ė -ės (1))
pardavėj/as, -o (1)	sales assistant (fem. pardavėj/a, -os (1))
mókytoj/as, -o (1)	teacher (fem. mókytoj/a, -os (1))
berniük/as, -o (2)	boy
sės/ė, -ės (2)	sis(ter)

Dialogue 2

Eikim į stotį

Let's go to the station!

- ALDONA: Lik sveikas, Bilai, aš turiu eiti.
 BILL: Kur tu dabar eini?
 ALDONA: Į stotį. Reikia pasitikti draugą iš Amerikos. Jis atvažiuoja mokytis lietuvių kalbos.
 BILL: Gal aš galiu tave palydėti? Man būtų įdomu su juo susipažinti.
 ALDONA: Gerai, eikim!
- ALDONA: *All the best, Bill, I have to go now!*
 BILL: *Where are you going?*
 ALDONA: *To the station. I have to meet a friend from America. He's coming to study Lithuanian.*
 BILL: *May I come with you? It would be pleasant for me to meet him.*
 ALDONA: *Fine, let's go!*

Do note any slight differences between the Lithuanian and its English translation. It is difficult to provide a literal translation which does not alter the nuances of what Aldona and Bill say to each other. They're both being perfectly polite, though you might read what you like into what they say!

Vocabulary

stot/ıs, -iės (4; fem.)	station (note this odd decl.)
lik sveikas	so long (to a man; lit. 'remain healthy!')

turėti, tūri, turėjo	have (here 'to have to, must')
ĩ + acc.	to
reikia	it is necessary (from reikėti, reikia, reikėjo)
pasitikti, pasitiñka, pasitiko	meet (+ acc.; refl. v., with the refl. particle -si 'infixed' because of the prefix pa-)
atvažiuoti, atvažiuoja, atvažiavo	come (some means of conveyance understood)
mókytis, mókosi, mókėsi	study, learn (+ gen. case of what is studied; another refl. v.)
lietuvių kalb/à, -òs (4)	Lithuanian language (the)
galėti, gáli, galėjo	be able, can (here 'May I...')
tavè	you (acc. of tù)
palydėti, palýdi, palydėjo	accompany
mán	me (dat. of àš)
būtu	it would be (3rd p. cond. of būti)
įdomù	interesting (genderless or 'it' form of įdom/ús, -ì (4))
susipažinti, -pažįsta, -pažinoi	make the acquaintance of (followed by sù 'with' + instr.)
juó	him (instr. of jis)
gerai	fine; well (adv. from the adj. gēr/as, -à (4))

Grammar

The imperative

When we want to encourage, command, or request someone to do something in Lithuanian, we use the imperative forms of the verb. These are derived from the infinitive of all verbs, discarding the ending **-ti** and affixing in its place **-k**, when we address one person, and **-kit(e)**, when we address not one but several, e.g., **eiti: eik, eikit(e)**. The imperative can even be used when we want to exhort everyone to do something together, as at the end of the dialogue. Then we have the form in **-kim(e)**, e.g., **eikim(e)**. Note that in spoken Lithuanian the final **-e** is often discarded.

The accusative case

In the dialogue you came across constructions with the preposition *į* followed by the accusative case, expressing the place towards which, or the direction in which someone was walking, moving, or driving. The accusative is a straightforward case to form. It is extremely important and occurs frequently, in combination with many other prepositions and also without prepositions, with meanings which will be explained in later lessons.

The accusative of feminine nouns is formed by replacing the endings **-a** and **-ė** respectively with **-ą** and **-ę**.

The same is done for masculine nouns by replacing **-as**, **-is**, **-ys**, and **-us** respectively with **-ą**, **-į**, **-į**, and **-ų**.

Here they are in a table:

	<i>Masculine</i>				<i>Feminine</i>	
<i>Nominative</i>	-as	-is	-ys	-us	-a	-ė
<i>Accusative</i>	-ą	-į	-į	-ų	-ą	-ę

The construction *į* + accusative is very often used alongside the construction *iš* + genitive, when one wishes to say to where and from where one is going.

Exercise 2b

Rewrite the following sentences, telling or requesting someone to do something, e.g.:

Jonas eina į bendrabutį. → Jonai, eik į bendrabutį!

- Berniukas ateina čia.
- Ponas skambina į policiją.
- Erikas gyvena Vilniuje.
- Gydytojas pasitinka draugę.
- Profesorius atvažiuoja į Lietuvą.
- Petras palydi Aldoną.
- Balys gyvena Petro bute.

Vocabulary

atėiti, atėina, atėjo	come (on foot)
põn/as, -o (2)	man, gentleman
skam̃binti, skam̃bina, skam̃bino	phone (note the prep., needed when phoning <i>to</i> a place)
połcij/a, -os (1)	police
gýdytoj/as, -o (1)	doctor (fem. gýdytoj/a, -os (1))
draũg/ė, -ės (4)	friend (fem.)
profėsor/ius, -iaus (1)	professor

Erikas, Petras, and Balys are men's names.

Dialogue 3

Ar jis kalba lietuviškai?

Does he speak Lithuanian?

Geležinkelio stotis. Aldonos draugas amerikietis atvažiuoja traukiniu iš Varšuvos. Stoties informacija:

Dėmesio! Traukinys iš Varšuvos atvyksta į antrą kelią. Iš pirmo kelio išvyksta traukinys į Kauną. Traukinys Maskva – Kaliningradas atvyksta į ketvirtą kelią.

ALDONA: Mūsų traukinys antrame kelyje. Paskubėkime!

BILL: Tavo draugas atvažiuoja iš Varšuvos?

ALDONA: Jis dabar dirba Lenkijoje, Varšuvos universitete dėsto anglų kalbą.

BILL: Ar jis kalba lietuviškai?

ALDONA: Taip, šiek tiek, bet gerai moka lenkiškai ir, žinoma, angliškai. O tu supranti lenkiškai?

BILL: Gaila, bet ne. Aš šiek tiek suprantu rusiškai ir moku prancūzų kalbą.

ALDONA: Žiūrėk, štai ir mano bičiulis!

ROBERT: Sveika, Aldona!

ALDONA: Labas, Robertai! Susipažink, čia mano draugas.

ROBERT: Mano vardas Robertas. O kuo jūs vardu?

BILL: Aš esu Bilas. Labai malonu susipažinti.

ROBERT: Man taip pat malonu.