



WELCOME TO OUR

# The Nordic-Baltic Region Newsletter



HEY, HOW ARE YOU?

## NBR President's Notes:

The importance of language and  
cultural skills in a changing world

### **Outi Vilkuna**

Chair  
NBR / Suomen kielenopettajien liitto  
SUKOL ry  
FIPLV-NBR & The Federation of Foreign  
Language Teachers in Finland

### **Dear colleagues,**

The new year brings with it new opportunities, challenges and important questions related to teaching languages and cultures and their role in a changing world. It's a good moment to stop and think about why language and cultural skills are more relevant than ever.

Globalization, digitalization and a diversifying society put language skills in focus. Language is not only a means of communication, but a bridge between people, communities and nations. Foreign language teachers not only give students the keys to the languages of different countries, but also the skills to understand and appreciate different cultures. This skill is necessary in a world where international cooperation and interaction are commonplace.



It has been said that understanding another's culture starts with learning its language. Learning a language opens a window to customs, ways of thinking and values that shape relationships between cultures. Cultural skills include the ability to openly and empathetically approach different points of view, which in turn strengthens dialogue and prevents conflicts.

In working life, language skills and cultural competence are significant competitive advantages. More and more jobs require the ability to work in multicultural environments, understand the business cultures of different countries and communicate fluently in different languages. Every language teacher sows seeds that can bear fruit in both personal and professional life.

At the same time, it is important to remember that the importance of language skills is not limited to financial aspects only. By learning languages, a person can have experiences, enrich his thinking and broaden his world view. Cultural competence gives a person the ability to function in a world where diversity is not a threat, but an asset.

### **Language education is an investment in the future**

The year 2025 also brings challenges in the field of language education. World political crises, migrations and technology-driven changes in teaching require flexibility and innovation. It is important that language teaching is valued and that resources are directed to its development. We must ensure that every student has the opportunity to learn languages and deepen their understanding of cultures.

Language and cultural skills are not only individual skills, but societal resources. That is why it is of primary importance that we continue our work to promote versatile language education and cultural awareness. Let's continue working together for a more multilingual and culturally aware society.

**I wish everyone  
an inspiring, rewarding and  
learning-filled year 2025!**



# Greetings from Iceland

STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)

The autumn term of 2024 has not been very eventful for STÍL – The Icelandic Association for Language Teachers. Events planned in October and November were postponed due to a teachers' strike in Iceland. However, the European Day of Languages was celebrated. In the week before the actual day, STÍL sent out a playlist with songs in different languages on Spotify to teachers. Teachers were encouraged to use accompanying fun music projects with it.

The main celebration of the European Day of Languages was held on the day itself, the 26th of September. Language teachers were invited to a special event held at Auðarsalur in Veröld – the House of Vigdís, from 17:00 to 18:00.

The European Day of Languages was marked this year under the theme **“Languages for Peace”**.

## European Day of Languages

Since its inception in 2001, the European Day of Languages has honoured the linguistic diversity of Europe. It aims to promote multilingualism and encourage skills in speaking other languages. Across Europe, countless events are organised to celebrate the day, and this year's theme emphasized the role of languages in fostering peace.

The Icelandic event featured engaging presentations from distinguished speakers.

# Greetings from Iceland



STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)

**Geir Sigurðsson**, Professor of Chinese Studies and Intercultural Philosophy at the Faculty of Languages and Cultures, University of Iceland, delivered a thought-provoking lecture titled “Can languages be peacemakers?”

**Ármann Halldórsson**, Project Manager for International Projects at the Commercial College of Iceland, shared insights into the school's international collaborations.



Additionally, **Sigríður Alma Guðmundsdóttir**, Chair of the Association of Danish Teachers, presented on the topic of school visits by Icelandic elementary school students to Denmark and the hosting of Danish students in Iceland.

# Greetings from Iceland



STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)



The photo of Sigridur's students is taken during the spring term in the old library in Herlufsholm Skole (which dates from 1565).

The event concluded with light refreshments, providing attendees with an opportunity to connect and discuss the themes of the day in an informal setting.

The European Day of Languages is organized annually at the initiative of the ECML (European Centre for Modern Languages). This year's event in Iceland was a collaboration between STÍL (The Icelandic Association of Language Teachers), The Vigdís International Centre, The University of Iceland Language Centre, The Erasmus+ National Agency in Iceland, Rannís, and The Ministry of Education and Children.



# Greetings from Iceland

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)



STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

Short extracts from the day's lectures follow.

## Can languages be peacemakers?

### Geir Sigurðsson

A European Council poster from the 1990s shows the slogan **“Many tongues, one voice”** but how realistic is this ideal? It also displays the famous painting by Pieter Bruegel of the Tower of Babel from the Book of Genesis, which may seem ironic, because the story is meant to illustrate how linguistic diversity initially led to misunderstanding and conflict. While the historical accuracy of the story is questionable, it still points to the inescapable circumstances into which we are all born: **A world full of diverse cultures and languages, an entirely Babelic world.**

There is no simple “solution” to the Babelic world. Despite all efforts, the world will never be a place with just one “culture” or one “language”. The only viable approach to it is that each generation tries to adopt knowledge and understanding of as many cultures and languages as possible. It is necessarily a continuous process that can never cease and must therefore always be encouraged and supported.

While technology, including translation apps and artificial intelligence, can facilitate communication, it is merely a tool and cannot replace the human element necessary for genuine cultural exchange.

Meaningful mutual understanding can only take place between people, not machines. We must also be wary of relying overly on English as a global lingua franca, as it can create unrealistic expectations of perfect understanding among non-native speakers.



# Greetings from **Iceland**

STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)

In conclusion, our societies must encourage everyone, especially young people, to learn as many languages as possible and immerse themselves in diverse cultures. Peace and mutual understanding hinge upon such continuous efforts. In “The Library of Babel,” a short story about an infinite library containing all possible books, Jorge Luis Borges underscores the endless quest for knowledge and understanding, emphasizing that there is no shortcut to mutual understanding and that the human value consists in the journey itself – the actual learning process.

## Languages and international cooperation between schools

### Ármann Halldórsson

The Commercial College of Iceland has been an active participant in international cooperation with European schools, primarily in connection with the Erasmus+ programme, but also the Nordplus programme. Languages feature prominently in this work and thus partners from Denmark, France, Spain and Germany are important as these countries represent the languages taught at the school, and of course English is at all times the main language of communication. The cooperation is a valued part of the school’s operations, as seen in the fact that a half time position is dedicated to the work. The results are of course direct in better language acquisition but maybe more importantly in fostering curiosity, tolerance and creating pan-European friendships.



# Greetings from **Iceland**

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)



STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

## **Nordic Collaboration – Successful School Visits and Cultural Exchange**

### **Sigríður Alma Guðmundsdóttir**

I want to share my experiences of a collaborative school project between Öldutúnsskóli in Hafnarfjörður, Iceland, and Herlufsholm Skole, a boarding school in Næstved, Denmark. The project involved 10th grade students from both schools and aimed to promote Nordic collaboration and cultural exchange.

The collaboration began in the winter of 2022 through a contact with a Danish and history teacher and an English teacher at Herlufsholm Skole. An Erasmus+ grant enabled them to bring their class to Iceland in February 2023, encouraging student interactions and project preparations.

The visit included educational presentations, cultural activities, exciting nature excursions and social events, such as a Denmark-themed ball in Iceland and a return visit by Icelandic students to Denmark a year later, supported by a grant from the Clara Lachmanns Fond, promoting Nordic collaboration.

Students gained hands-on experience in Danish and Icelandic culture, language, and lifestyle, enhancing their interest and broadening their horizons.





# Greetings from Iceland

Prepared by **Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir**  
the president of the Association of Language Teachers in  
Iceland (STÍL)



STÍL – SAMTÖK  
TUNGUMÁLAKENNARA  
Á ÍSLANDI

All of us three teachers involved in the project, stress the significance of communication and the need to understand and appreciate cultural differences while promoting a sense of unity of the Nordic countries and within the EU. We emphasize the goals of fostering a sense of diversity and understanding among students and we can all highlight some cultural differences, such as party culture, and the importance of learning to step out of one's comfort zone. For example, the Danish students were impressed by the Icelandic students' genuine and joyful entertainment and it was valuable for Danish students to see Icelandic students having fun without alcohol and to experience different ways of life.

It was a great project and we had an amazing time visiting each other. This is definitely a project that I feel like we could make grow and that other teachers and other classrooms would enjoy having the kind of exchange that we did. To have this shared responsibility of educators to illuminate our students' paths and to promote cultural awareness among them.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the importance and the transformative power of language learning and cultural exchanges for students' personal growth and future educational aspirations in the Nordic region. I encourage and hope for continued teacher collaboration and professional development to sustain and expand such projects, highlighting the role of language teachers as facilitators of international understanding and cooperation.



# Greetings from **Lithuania**

Prepared by **Almantė Meškauskienė**  
President of Language Teachers' Association  
of Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA



The Institute of Foreign Languages at Vytautas Magnus University (VMU IFL) and the Lithuanian Association of Language Teachers (LALT) invite you to the 8th International Scientific Conference **“Sustainable Multilingualism 2025”**, which will take place in Kaunas on May 29–31, 2025. Abstract submissions are accepted until February 17, 2025.

The aim of this conference is to bring together language policy makers, researchers of languages and multilingual competence, educators, students, and everyone interested in multilingualism to share experiences and insights.

The first two days of the conference will focus on topics such as multilingualism in society (implementation of language policies, language preservation, ensuring linguistic rights, etc.), language teaching and learning, development of multilingual and intercultural competencies, multilingualism in professional practice, enhancing educators' multilingual competencies, and research on modern Lithuanian, which forms the foundation of our multilingual competence. On the third day, participants will have the opportunity to explore Lithuania, its cultural heritage, and take a guided tour of the Dzūkija region.



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Almantė Meškauskienė**  
President of Language Teachers' Association  
of Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

The conference will feature keynote speakers—world-renowned scholars—who will present their latest research on the challenges of language teaching and translation as well as the future of a multilingual world. This year's program includes four plenary presentations by:

**Karina Firkavičiūtė** – Chair of the Lithuanian Karaim Culture Association, officer at the European Commission's Executive Agency for European Research, associate professor in the humanities, musicologist, member of the Lithuanian Composers' Union, and master of interdisciplinary European studies.

**Jūratė Ruzaitė** – Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages, Literature, and Translation Studies at VMU. She has extensive experience in international and national research projects, including the national project "Semantika-2" (2018–2019), during which a tool for automatic detection of offensive online comments was developed. Her research interests include sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, language and ideology, hate speech, propaganda, and disinformation.

**Johan Sandberg McGuinne** – A Southern Saami and Scottish Gaelic poet, traditional joik performer, writer, literary scholar, and language activist. He is the chair of the Swedish Saami Writers' Center "Tjállegoahte" and the regional representative of the Swedish Writers' Union for Sápmi.

**John W. Schwieter** – Professor of Psychology, Linguistics, and Spanish at Wilfrid Laurier University and Adjunct Professor of Linguistics at McMaster University in Canada. His research interests include cognitive and neuroscientific approaches to multilingualism and language learning, translation and interpreting, cognitive functions, and second language teaching and learning. He has published over 100 journal articles and book chapters and is the author or editor of 23 books.



# Greetings from **Lithuania**

Prepared by **Almantė Meškauskienė**  
President of Language Teachers' Association  
of Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

Abstract submissions and registration for the conference “Sustainable Multilingualism 2025” are open until February 17. Abstracts are accepted in English, Spanish, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, French, German, and Ukrainian. We warmly invite you to register, share your research, or simply attend to listen to the presentations and engage with conference guests in a foreign language, enhancing your multilingual competence. Abstract submission and registration take place on the [conference website](#).



From October 14 to 18, 2024, Vytautas Magnus University hosted German Language Days “Ö kaip vokiškai?”, organized by the Goethe-Institut Lithuania in collaboration with partners across the country. At the Institute of Foreign Languages, the demand for German is significant, and it continues to grow nationwide. This year, the Institute organized the contest “My German Saying” and lectures to commemorate German Language Days.

# Greetings from **Lithuania**

Prepared by **Almantė Meškauskienė**  
President of Language Teachers' Association  
of Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA



On December 6–7, 2024, Ms Marta Navarro Aguilera, the Education Counselor for the Baltic States at the Spanish Ministry of Education, visited Vytautas Magnus University. The main purpose of her visit was to discuss the training of Spanish language teachers. Ms Marta Navarro Aguilera met with VMU Vice-Rector for Communication, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vilma Bijeikienė, and the Chancellor of the Education Academy, Prof. Dr. Lina Kaminskienė. The meetings were also attended by Ms Vigilija Žiūraitė, a Spanish language lecturer at the Institute of Foreign Languages. Ms M. Navarro Aguilera explored the status of the Spanish language in Lithuania and invited collaboration in training new specialists in the field.



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Almantė Meškauskienė**  
President of Language Teachers' Association  
of Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA



During the autumn semester, various events were held at VMU's Institute of Foreign Languages (IFL). In November, everyone was invited to participate in four language tasting sessions featuring Taiwanese and Chinese, Ukish (a Canadian-Ukrainian dialect), Cornish, and Uzbek. These "tastings" were guided by former or current international students of VMU.

On December 10, a session titled "An Introduction to the Deaf Community: Language and Culture. Let's Break Existing Myths Together!" was organized for members of the Standing Committee on Human Rights and Peace (SCORP) of the Lithuanian Medical Students' Association. The session was conducted by Mr Kęstutis Vaišnora, a lecturer and doctoral student at VMU's Institute of Foreign Languages and the VMU Education Academy.



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Audronė Auškelienė**  
Director of Public Service Language Centre



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Empowering Educators amidst Global Challenges: Insights from an Erasmus+ Journey

From June 2023 to November 2024, the (PSLC) actively implemented the Erasmus+ project (Project Number: 2023-1-LT01-KA122-ADU-000128259). This initiative aimed to address the evolving role of educators who now face the dual challenge of imparting knowledge while supporting students from diverse cultural and social backgrounds.

As teachers increasingly educate multi-ethnic pupils, including immigrants and refugees, their role expands beyond traditional teaching. They act as cultural ambassadors, mediators in intercultural misunderstandings, and providers of psychological support, fostering a positive learning environment. However, fulfilling these roles often exposes educators to stress and conflict, emphasizing the need for targeted professional development. The PSLC team embraced this challenge by participating in several Erasmus+ mobility programs.

### Building Intercultural Skills in Malta

In October 2023, four PSLC staff members attended a week-long professional development course, focused on creating inclusive and intercultural learning environments. Through interactive discussions, reflective exercises, and collaborative group work, participants enhanced their understanding of managing cultural diversity in classrooms.





# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Audronė Auškelienė**  
Director of Public Service Language Centre



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Stress and Conflict Management in Tenerife



In March 2024, three PSLC lecturers – Daiva Stasiulionienė, Rita Samukienė, and Audronė Auškelienė – participated in the course organized by the Erasmus Learning Academy in Tenerife, Spain. This workshop blended theory with practice, offering participants tools to navigate stress and resolve conflicts effectively. These newly acquired strategies aim to help educators maintain resilience while fostering constructive learning environments.





# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Audronė Auškelienė**  
Director of Public Service Language Centre



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Exploring Cultural Diversity in Palermo

The journey continued in October 2024 when three PSLC staff members joined the training in Palermo, Sicily. This course brought together educators from across Europe—Lithuania, Austria, Germany, Greece, Slovenia, Finland, and the Netherlands—to exchange experiences and strategies for managing diverse classrooms.



### Key takeaways included:

- Addressing biases and stereotypes: Participants engaged in activities to identify and overcome personal prejudices.
- Developing intercultural competence: Through simulations and storytelling, attendees practiced viewing challenges from multiple perspectives.
- Exploring new teaching methods: The program highlighted practical approaches for fostering inclusivity and managing cultural diversity.

The course also emphasized the crucial role of teachers in integrating immigrant students, offering strategies to provide both academic and emotional support.



# Greetings from **Lithuania**

Prepared by **Audronė Auškelienė**  
Director of Public Service Language Centre



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Beyond the Classroom: Exploring Sicily's Rich Heritage



During the training course, participants also had the opportunity to explore the city's rich cultural and historical heritage. Visits to landmarks such as the Palermo Cathedral, with its Norman, Arabic, and Gothic architectural styles, and the Palazzo dei Normanni, a testament to Sicily's diverse history, deepened their understanding of intercultural exchange. The vibrant Capo Market further highlighted the richness of Sicilian life, aligning seamlessly with the course themes of cultural diversity and inclusion.

# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Audronė Auškelienė**  
Director of Public Service Language Centre



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Strengthening Educators for a Global Classroom

These experiences underscored the importance of continuous learning for educators navigating the complexities of today's classrooms. By combining theoretical insights, practical tools, and cultural exploration, the Erasmus+ mobilities empowered PSLC staff to create more inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environments for all students.

The Erasmus+ project serves as a reminder that the evolving challenges faced by educators also offer opportunities for growth, collaboration, and greater empathy in an increasingly interconnected world.





# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## LANGUAGE PURIFICATION – THE CASES OF LITHUANIAN AND HINDI – A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

A full presentation is [here](#)

**Summary:** This article explores the phenomenon of language purification efforts through a comparative analysis of the 'Lithuanization' of Lithuanian and the Sanskritization of Hindi. Both movements emerged from a desire to reclaim linguistic purity of respective languages by eliminating foreign borrowings—primarily Slavic influences in Lithuanian and Arabic and Persian influences in Hindi. The Lithuanian language underwent a systematic effort to replace these borrowings with native terms, often resulting in the coining of new words. Similarly, Hindi's Sanskritization sought to replace Arabic and Persian vocabulary, reflecting nationalist aspirations to revive cultural heritage. Despite these commonalities, the two cases diverge significantly in their historical contexts, societal impacts, and the extent to which they have been embraced by speakers. By drawing parallels between these two linguistic movements and the final outcomes of their efforts, the analysis underscores the complexities and implications of striving for linguistic purity in diverse sociolinguistic landscapes, ultimately questioning the feasibility and desirability of such endeavors in the complex cultural, historical and socio-linguistic contexts.

**Keywords:** language purism, language regulation, Lithuanian, Hindi.

### Introduction

Language purism is defined as an activity of 'cleansing the language of unwanted influences' (Busse, B./Möhlig-Falke, R./Vit, B., 2018). It can be internal, when a language is being purified of its own unwanted elements, e.g. colloquialisms, dialectisms, slang, etc., or external when attempts are made to purify a language from 'alien' elements, e.g. borrowings from other languages. (Fishman, J., 1972). History has seen many examples of such



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

attempts, the most notable being the attempts to preserve the purity of classical written languages (Sanskrit, Latin, Classical Arabic etc.). In the centuries leading to modern times, the general sociolinguistic tendency in many parts of the world used to be that of the co-existence in the same society of a 'high' language used by aristocracy (e.g. Polish in Lithuania or Persian in Mughal India) and a language of the masses, which often existed only in the form of numerous local vernacular dialects without any notable literary form. In those societies the two languages co-existed side by side for centuries, the 'low' languages often were not accorded a very high prestige and considered a sign of uneducated and lower-class sections of society (Fassold R.W.. 1990). However, the processes of national re-awakening, notably in the second half of the 19th century saw these local languages of the masses gaining prestige vis-a-vis the 'high' languages of the elites. However, one outcome of often centuries' long contact of these vernaculars with their regions' prestige languages was that of their enormous influence on the former, most notably in the realm of vocabulary. The subsequent efforts of the proponents of national and linguistic revivals to purify their languages of all foreign borrowings were seen as reaffirming and strengthening their national identity. The historic development of these purification campaigns and their final outcomes are discussed in the following comparative analysis of Lithuanian and Hindi cases.

## Lithuanian and Hindi – a comparison

The Lithuanian language belongs to the Baltic branch of Indo-European family, has about 3 million native speakers, is spoken as the majority's mother tongue in the area of about 65 000 square kilometers (most of modern-day Lithuania), about 85 percent of Lithuania's population speak it natively and it is the country's sole official language. Hindi, on the other hand, belongs to the Indo-Aryan branch of the same Indo-European family, has more than 500 million native speakers, is spoken as the first language in



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

the large part of Northern India (about 1 355 000 square kilometers), about 44 percent of India's population speak it natively and it is one of the two main official languages of the country (the other one being English). Despite these enormous differences between the two languages in terms of number of speakers and geographical distribution, one might trace certain parallels in their historical developments and sociolinguistic situations: as an example one might mention the fact that both are related to Sanskrit – Modern Hindi is a descendant from it (though not directly, but through the intermediate forms like Shauraseni Prakrit), while Lithuanian relates to Sanskrit through the common Proto-Indo-European ancestry of both languages. This fact, although having little bearing on the creation of Modern Literary Lithuanian, had an enormous impact on the romantic movement of national revival and attempts to raise the prestige of Lithuanian language.

However, the most important parallel that is considered in this analysis is the historical influence of foreign 'prestige' languages on both: Slavic languages (notably Polish) on Lithuanian and Muslim languages (mostly Persian and Arabic) on Hindi. Up to the 19th century for a long time Lithuanian, like many other 'small' languages which found themselves in a similar historical situation, was considered a 'low' language compared to the 'high' language of the country's elite – Polish. Moreover, after the final partition of Lithuania-Poland Republic at the end of the 18th century and its occupation by the Russian Empire, the Russian language rather than Polish became increasingly dominant in education and administration especially in the second half of the 19th century. The rise of national consciousness throughout the 19th century Europe inspired many Lithuanians to strive to preserve their language and culture. The Lithuanian language became the symbol of national identity, prompting efforts to develop it into a modern literary language. Heavy use of Polish and Russian in various spheres of public life and education not only marginalized the use of Lithuanian but also infused it with a very large number of Polonisms, especially in the limited written materials that existed in Lithuania at that time. As an



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

example, one might look at the Lithuanian prayer book, published in 1753, where most of the vocabulary is of Polish origin:

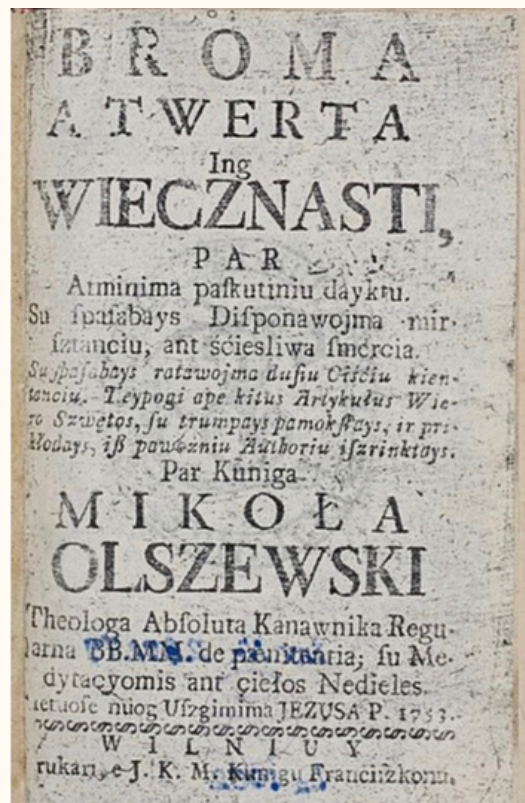


Figure 1. The cover of an 18th century Lithuanian prayer book 'Broma atwerta ing wiecznasti' (The Gate Opened to Eternity')

*Broma atwerta ing wiecznasti, par Atminima paskutiniu dayktu. Su spasabays disponavojma mirsztanciu ant sciesliwa smiercia. Su spasabais ratavojima dusiu cisciu kiencanciu. Teypogi apie kitus artykulus wiero szwentos, su trumpays pamokslays ir priklo days isz povaznu avtoriu isrinktays. Su medytacyomis ant cielos nedieles. Metuose nuog usz gimima JEZUSA P. 1753. WILNIUY drukarne J. K. M. Kunigu Kunigu Francizkonu.*

To see how the Lithuanian language has changed since then, not least because of subsequent extensive purification efforts, one can try to compare how this text would look like in Modern Standard Lithuanian:

*Vartai atverti į amžinybę, per prisiminimą svarbiausiųjų dalykų. Su būdais rūpintis mirštančiais laiminga mirtimi. Su būdais gelbėti sielas, skaistykloje kenčiančias. Taip pat apie kitas šventojo tikėjimo tiesas, su trumpais pamokymais ir pavyzdžiais iš žinomų autorių. Su meditacijomis kiekvienam sekmadieniui. Išleista 1753 metais nuo Jėzaus gimimo Vilniuje, J. K. M. Kunigų Pranciškonų.*



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

The Lithuanian press ban by the Russian authorities after the uprising of 1863, suppressed Lithuanian publications making linguistic preservation and purification even more urgent. The work of Lithuanian linguists like Jonas Jablonskis (1860 – 1930) and Kazimieras Būga (1879 – 1924) sought to remove foreign words and revive the indigenous Lithuanian vocabulary. Many new Lithuanian terms were coined instead of the old Slavic borrowings to modernize the language while maintaining its unique character. As a result of these efforts, the standardized Lithuanian literary language was developed at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Enhanced cultural and linguistic identity of Lithuanians was a deciding factor in their later resistance under the Soviet occupation (1940 – 1990) against the efforts of cultural Sovietization and linguistic Russification (albeit more subtle than in the 19th-century Russian Empire). In Modern Lithuanian the use of Polish and Russian borrowings is marginalized and restricted to low registers of colloquial speech, archaisms, dialects or slang.

Let us now turn to the Hindi language and see how similar or different its historic way and efforts of affirming its identity were. As was mentioned above, Hindi evolved from Sanskrit through intermediate languages: Prakrit and Apabhramsha (500 BCE – 1200 CE). Although by no definition a 'small' language, Hindi, like Lithuanian, underwent similar process of domination of other elite languages during the centuries when India was ruled by the Muslim dynasties. During the Delhi Sultanate (12th–16th centuries) and the Mughal Empire (16th–18th centuries), Persian became the official court language, introducing a substantial number of Arabic and Persian loanwords into the local vernacular. British colonial rule intensified debates about language identity. Hindi (written in Devanagari) and Urdu (written in Perso-Arabic script) became markers of religious and cultural identities. Urdu's heavy use of Persian and Arabic vocabulary became associated with Muslim identity, while efforts to promote Hindi leaned on Sanskrit to emphasize Hindu heritage. However, in its colloquial form Hindi and Urdu





# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

(also called by one name – Hindustani) hardly differed and were replete with Perso-Arabic borrowings to a similar extent as pre-revival Lithuanian of the 18th and 19th centuries was full of Slavic ones. The most important difference is that, contrary to Modern Lithuanian, this tendency continues to this day.

As an example, one might look at an excerpt of a popular song in Hindi from the Bollywood film 'Guide' (1965):

आज फिर जीने की तमन्ना है,  
आज फिर मरने का इरादा है।  
पहले से ज़्यादा, अब जीना है।  
आज फिर जीने की तमन्ना है।

Transliteration:

Aaj phir jeene ki **tamanna** hai, (desire/longing to live again, 'tamanna' ('desire, longing') – a Persian word)

Aaj phir marne ka **iraada** hai. (Desire/resolve to die again, 'iraada' ('reslove') – a Persian word)

Pehle se **zyaada**, ab jeena hai. (More than before, now to live, 'zyaada' (more) – a Persian word)

Aaj phir jeene ki **tamanna** hai. (Desire to live again, 'tamanna' ('desire, longing') – a Persian word).

Similar to Lithuania, as part of the Indian independence movement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, language reformers sought to unify the Hindi-speaking population under a standardized, "pure" form of Hindi as a national language. One can also see the parallel goals: to replace Arabic and Persian loanwords with Sanskrit-derived terms and strengthen cultural and national identity through linguistic revival and standardization. Also, similar to Lithuania's Jablonskis and Būga, India also had its key figures such



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

as Bharatendu Harishchanda and Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi who were at the forefront of reviving and purifying the Hindi language:

**Bharatendu Harishchandra** (1850–1885), often called the "Father of Modern Hindi Literature," championed the use of Hindi in Devanagari script and emphasized Sanskrit-based vocabulary.

**Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi** (1864–1938), editor of the influential Saraswati magazine, he promoted a refined Hindi by advocating for the removal of Persian influences.

The outcome of these campaigns was the creation of a standardized, Sanskritized Hindi in the 20th century, adopted as an official language of India in 1949. However, the debates are ongoing in India about the balance of Sanskritization and maintaining Hindi's inclusivity as people's language.

As an example of the current state of Modern Hindi, one might take a look at a translation of a simple text:

'In today's world, every person wants to be happy. But true happiness comes to them only when they help others and learn from their mistakes.'

In a common everyday Hindi, it translates as:

आज की दुनिया में हर इंसान खुश रहना चाहता है। लेकिन, सच्ची खुशी उसे तभी मिलती है जब वह दूसरों की मदद करे और अपनी गलतियों से सबक सीखे।

Transliteration: Aaj ki **duniya** mein har **insaan khush** rehna chahta hai. **Lekin**, sacchi **khushi** use tabhi milti hai jab woh doosron ki **madad** kare aur apni **galtiyon** se **sabak** sikhe.

In this text we can see abundant Perso Arabic vocabulary which stays in modern colloquial Hindi, despite the efforts to replace them with Sanskrit equivalents: duniya (Arabic for 'world'), vishva in Sanskrit; insaan (Arabic for 'man'), manushya in Sanskrit; khush (Persian for 'happy'), sukhi in Sanskrit; madad in (Arabic for 'help'), sahayata in Sanskrit, etc.

The equivalent Sanskritized version of the same text, even though acceptable in Modern Hindi as well, sounds much more formal and distant:



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

आज के विश्व में प्रत्येक मनुष्य सुखी रहना चाहता है। किन्तु, सच्चा आनंद उसे तभी प्राप्त होता है जब वह अन्य लोगों की सहायता करे और अपनी त्रुटियों से पाठ सीखे।

Transliteration: Aaj ke **vishva** mein pratyek **manushya sukhi** rehna chahta hai. **Kintu**, saccha **anand** use tabhi prapt hota hai jab woh anya logon ki **sahayata** kare aur apni **trutiyon** se **path** sikhe.

The fact that Perso-Arabic loanwords in Hindi were not fully replaced by Sanskrit-derived vocabulary, is part of a broader linguistic and cultural dynamics in India.

## Similarities and differences between the two cases

Despite many historic and sociolinguistic commonalities between the cases of Lithuanian and Hindi, the two diverge significantly in their historical contexts, societal impacts, and the extent to which they have been embraced by speakers:

- The main drive for the purification of the Lithuanian language at the end of the 19th century was a perceived threat to its survival. No such immediate danger existed for Hindi / Hindustani. It had an extensive literature throughout centuries in various vernacular forms: Avadhi, Braj Bhasha, Haryanvi and Khari Boli. The main driving force in purifying the Hindi language at the end of 19th century was to strengthen India's national identity based on its ancient Sanskrit culture. Lithuanian, although having its first works of literature since the 16th century, did not have such a solid literary tradition as vernacular Hindi nor a similar classic language like Sanskrit to base its identity on and therefore had to resort to coining new words from its own linguistic resources.
- Standardized ('Lithuanianized') Lithuanian can be seen as overall more successfully integrated and accepted in Lithuanian society than standardized (Sanskritized) Hindi is in India. As seen from previous examples, Muslim-origin vocabulary is still very much prevalent in Modern Spoken Hindi. In any case, much more so, than Slavic-origin vocabulary is in modern Lithuanian.



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

- Unlike Lithuanian, Hindi / Hindustani can be considered a pluricentric language with two standard varieties: Hindi and Urdu. Hindi – Urdu dichotomy and its complicated dynamics has no clear parallel in the history of Lithuanian.
- Both languages have experienced significant influence of English in the more recent times. However, in case of Hindi it happened during the British colonial period in the 19th century and was much more pervasive. To Lithuanian it only came much later, after independence from USSR in 1990 in a very different historical and geo-political context.
- Code-switching and language mixing is much more accepted in Hindi than in Lithuanian because of these historical dynamics and less restricted and regulated usage of language.

## Concluding remarks

One can conclude that in both cases crucial were the political motivations behind these language purification policies: national revival and establishing the language as a symbol of the new modern nation-state. Efforts to replace foreign borrowings were seen as symbolic of establishing the language and nation as independent and different from outside influences. However, it was met with varying degrees of success: much more so in Lithuania than in India. The potential pitfalls of one-sided language purism may include the risk of alienating speakers, fostering linguistic inequality and creating a disconnect between historic tradition and contemporary realities. By drawing parallels between these two linguistic movements in very different historical and cultural milieus, the analysis underscores the complexities and implications of striving for linguistic purity in diverse sociolinguistic landscapes, ultimately questioning the feasibility and desirability of such endeavors in a rapidly developing modern world.



# Greetings from Lithuania

Prepared by **Vytenis Končius**  
Vilniaus kolegija, Lithuania



Lietuvos kalbų pedagogų  
asociacija - LKPA

## Literature

Busse, B./Möhlig-Falke, R./Vit, B. (2018) Linguistic purism and language criticism in English <https://heiup.uni-heidelberg.de/journals/heso/article/view/23890/17647>

Easold, R. W. (1990) The sociolinguistics of Language. B. Blackwell

Fishman, J. (1972) Language and Nationalism; Two Integrative Essays. Rowley MA: Newbury house.

Olševskis, M. Broma atverta ing wicznasti. Vartai, atverti į amžinybę. Laetitia.

## Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas kalbos gryninimo fenomenas, atliekant lyginamąją lietuvių kalbos lituanizavimo ir hindi kalbos sanskritizavimo analizę. Abu judėjimai kilo iš siekio susigrąžinti kalbos grynumą, pašalinant svetimus skolinius – pirmiausia slavų kalbų įtaką lietuvių kalboje ir arabų bei persų kalbų įtaką hindi kalboje. Lietuvių kalboje buvo sistemingai stengiamasi šias slavizmus pakeisti vietiniais terminais, dėl to dažnai buvo kuriami nauji žodžiai. Panašiai ir hindi kalbos sanskritizacija siekė pakeisti arabų ir persų kalbų žodžius, atspindėdama nacionalistinius siekius atgaivinti kultūrinį paveldą. Nepaisant šių bendrumų, abu atvejai labai skiriasi savo istoriniu kontekstu, visuomeniniu poveikiu ir tuo, kiek juos priėmė kalbėtojai. Atliekant šių dviejų kalbinių judėjimų ir galutinių jų pastangų rezultatų paraleles, analizėje pabrėžiamas kalbinio grynumo siekio sudėtingumas ir pasekmės įvairiuose sociolingvistiniuose kraštovaizdžiuose, galiausiai kvestionuojant tokių pastangų įgyvendinamumą ir tikslingumą sudėtingame kultūriniame, istoriniame ir sociolingvistiniame kontekste.



# Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**

President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

## The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden



In November the board of our association met in Stockholm for a board meeting. Doing most of our work online, and using online meetings to facilitate communication, it was a joy to meet up in real life.

### Member webinars

Catering to members in a large country, webinars have become an important part of our operation. This autumn two webinars have taken place, one in English and one in Spanish.



In cooperation with [the Museum of World Culture](#), we were happy to share a webinar on digital resources about Mexico. Links to materials can be found [on this website](#), and our members can also watch the webinar online.

# Greetings from Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**  
President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

The English webinar focused on the development of English for new arrivals in Sweden. For this particular group of students, the acquisition of the Swedish language is in focus and English is not a second language, but rather a third, fourth, or even fifth language. Jenny Bergström shared her research on the topic, which is of interest to a great number of teachers.



**Engelska för alla?**

Webbinarium med Jenny Bergström från Umeå universitet, en föreläsning där hon, med avstamp i sin forskning, behandlar olika aspekter inom engelskundervisningen för nyanlända elever. Hör henne prata om svenskifiering av engelskämnet, det flerspråkiga klassrummet och spänningar mellan svenska och engelska. Anmälningstänk finns på hemsidan nu!

Onsdag  
13 november 2024

kl. 18.00

Anmälningstänk finns på hemsidan!

www.spraklararna.se

## German Book Club

Our representative for German has together with a colleague started an online book club for teachers, having two meetings online during the autumn. A short story and a novel have been the topic so far, and in February the book club will meet to discuss the poetry of Mascha Kaléko.



# Greetings from Sweden



The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

Prepared by **Mia Smith**  
President of the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden

## More Music



Our music contests have been very popular among our members, and materials for Torneo de música, Der Superhit, and La Coupe des chansons 2025 are now in the making. As a bonus, we had a Christmas version of Torneo de música as well this year.

Our music contests were presented in detail in the last issue of 2024 of our magazine *Lingua*, which is now also available for Finnish readers through the online Magazine service ePress.







## Greetings from Estonia



Prepared by **Gertrud Mets**,  
a member of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers,  
a teacher of French



## A LOOK BACK AT THE AUTUMN CONFERENCE “THE MANY FACES OF INTEGRATION”

On the 16th of November, the 10th autumn conference and training day of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers (EVÕL), titled **“The Many Faces of Integration,”** took place at Tallinn University.

This conference, established as a tradition in 2015 and now a highly anticipated annual event, brought together 120 enthusiastic language teachers eager to gain fresh insights and practical tools. What made this year’s conference noteworthy was its multifaceted approach to integration – covering content and language learning, formal and non-formal education as well as cultural integration. The program included an opening lecture, a plenary session, poster presentations of Master’s theses and three workshops, giving participants the chance to explore topics most relevant to their interests. Attendees could also browse a book sale and visit publishers’ information desks. The conference was supported by the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia.

The conference was opened by the organizers and moderators of the day, **Karola Velberg**, Teacher of Finnish at Tallinn University (TLU), and **Aleksandra Ljalikova**, Associate Professor of French Didactics at TLU. Following this, greetings were delivered by **Ene Peterson**, Chair of the EVÕL, and **Merilyn Meristo**, Associate Professor of French and the curator of the Master’s programme “Teacher of Foreign Languages” at TLU. Both Peterson and Meristo expressed their joy over the growing community of foreign language teachers and emphasized the importance of learning with and from each other – **together we are stronger**.



## Greetings from Estonia

**EVÕL**  
Eesti Väärkeeleõpetajate Liit

Prepared by **Gertrud Mets**,  
a member of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers,  
a teacher of French

The opening lecture was delivered by **Maija Yli-Jokipii**, a doctoral researcher at Tampere University and guest lecturer at Tallinn University. Her talk focused on cultural sensitivity in language pedagogy, encouraging teachers to view multilingualism and multiculturalism in their classrooms as assets. Yli-Jokipii reminded educators that **the first step toward understanding others lies first and foremost in critically analyzing oneself.**

The subsequent plenary session was delivered by **Marika Peekmann**, Chief Expert at the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia. She explored the integration of formal and non-formal education, inviting participants to share their ideas and experiences, which sparked lively discussions. The conversations could have continued for much longer had it not been time for lunch, during which the participants could visit publishers' information desks and purchase useful materials from the book sale.

The afternoon began with a poster session of Master's theses from alumni of Tallinn and Tartu Universities. Presenters **Greta Kuus, Elena Samsonova, Relika Maripuu, Diana Vardugina** and **Tea Vallimäe** shared their respective research on diverse topics related to integration. The presentations offered a snapshot of current research trends and provided an excellent platform for authors to connect with attendees interested in their work for further discussion.

Following the poster presentations, participants split into three workshops. **Tauri Einberg** from Tallinn French School shared knowledge and practical tips on the responsible implementation of artificial



# Greetings from Estonia



**EVÕL**  
Eesti Võõrkeeleõpetajate Liit

Prepared by **Gertrud Mets**,

a member of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers,  
a teacher of French

intelligence in content and language integrated learning (CLIL). **Kaia Norberg** (Education and Youth Board of Estonia) and **Luise Türkson** from Tallinn English College introduced the application of CLIL methods in the classroom, using English and natural sciences as examples – participants explored learning materials, completed tasks and created a learning activity. **Petros Georgiakakis** from the University of Nicosia and **Kati Bakradze-Pank** from Tallinn Co-education Gymnasium invited participants to experiment with various digital platforms that enable the use of artificial intelligence in language learning. The atmosphere was filled with enthusiasm for learning!

The conference concluded with a closing ceremony, where the EVÕL and European Language Label awards were granted. The day wrapped up on a warm and collegial note, as participants exchanged their insights, enjoyed cake and celebrated the end of an inspiring event.





# Greetings from Estonia

**EVÕL**  
Eesti Võõrkeeleõpetajate Liit

Prepared by **Gertrud Mets**,  
a member of the Board of the Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers,  
a teacher of French



A heartfelt thanks goes to the conference organizers for their dedication and hard work in bringing this event to life and to the Ministry of Education and Research for supporting the event. Special recognition is owed to all the speakers for sharing their expertise and to the TLU students whose contributions ensured the smooth running of the day.

This day was a reminder that great teachers never stop learning – **until we meet again, keep growing and inspiring!**



# Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Inga Linde**

the president of **Latvian Association of Teachers of English**



## **LATE project '21st Century Skills and Media Literacy' implemented with the support of the British Council in Latvia**

The Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE) has started work on a new project '21st Century Skills and Media Literacy', which is being implemented with the support of the British Council in Latvia. The project will last from October 2024 to March 2025 and the aim of the project is to develop teachers' competence in using 21st Century skills in their classrooms and raise the awareness of media literacy, so that it could be further developed in their students.

LATE is grateful to the British Council in Latvia for supporting the project and to all the participants, teachers of English as foreign language (EFL) in Latvia, who are committed to spending their free time on Saturday mornings in order to actively participate in the teacher professional development events and enhance their competence in the use of 21st century skills and media literacy.

In November and December, three 4-hour online workshops were conducted. On November 2, in the first session '**Practical Methods to Develop Media Literacy in the EFL Classroom**' Joe Horgan equipped the EFL teachers with specific methods on how to teach media literacy in the EFL classroom from grades 1-12 that are interactive, easy to use, and correspond with the state foreign language standards. The covered topics included media literacy, disinformation, manipulation, fact checking and content analysis. In the second session '**Using Authentic Text to Improve and Evaluate EFL Students' Media Literacy and Language Skills**', Joe Horgan modelled how to use podcasts in the EFL classroom as an engaging and authentic project to enrich and evaluate students' language and media literacy skills and showed how authentic English literature can be used to develop students' critical reading skills.



# Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Inga Linde**

the president of **Latvian Association of Teachers of English**



On November 23, in the session **'Cultivating Creativity by Turning EFL Students into Media Content Producers'**, Joe Horgan elaborated on how EFL teachers can ensure that their students are not only media content consumers but also producers as well and provided different ideas for creating authentic products such as advertisements, blog posts, podcasts, news articles, videos, etc that take into account the purpose, audience, format, conventions, etc of the specific genre. In the second session **'Human Intelligence + AI: A 21st Century Classroom Match Made in Heaven for Skill Building'** conducted by Nora Jurjāne the lecturer explained how having embraced AI assistance in teachers' professional practices, teachers should now focus on providing students with opportunities to use it responsibly and mindfully as by guiding its use, educators can foster controlled development of students' cognitive and language skills, ensuring AI serves as a tool for meaningful learning.

The last 2 sessions **'Mastering AI Tools for the Classroom'** were conducted by Ingūna Melne on 7th December, and the participants had the chance to explore the practical use of AI tools in the classroom, learning how to integrate them into daily teaching. Participants could discover how AI can enhance lesson planning and personalised learning. These were hands-on sessions, allowing teachers to try out AI tools (Gemini, Datorium, Twee etc.) themselves and gain confidence in applying them effectively in the teaching and learning process.

# Greetings from **Latvia**

Prepared by **Diana Bolgare and Jelena Miloša**  
LATE Members

## 'Poetry in My Heart' English Poetry Recitation Contest



In October and November, a **'Poetry in My Heart'** English poetry recitation contest was organised by a LATE member Diana Bolgare and was supported by LATE, British Council in Latvia and Oxford University Press. It celebrated English poetry with 62 participants and 16 finalists from 9 Latvian schools performing at the Theatre Museum in Riga.

The event showcased students' creativity and confidence, leaving a lasting cultural impact. This activity encouraged them to interact with language in an innovative and meaningful way, fostering both their creative expression and a deeper appreciation for literature.





# Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Outi Vilkuna**

Chair, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in  
Finland SUKOL

# SUKOL

Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

The Finnish Association of Language Teachers, known as SUKOL ry, is a pedagogical organization and collaborative network for language educators that has been in existence for over 65 years. Its mission focuses on enhancing the status of language teachers, promoting language instruction, and supporting internationalization. Currently, SUKOL has around 3,200 members from various educational levels.

In April 2025, Finland will conduct municipal elections. While the national curriculum provides outlines, frameworks, and objectives for primary and secondary education, the specifics of foreign language education are determined by individual municipalities. Each municipality is required to offer at least one A1 language starting in the first grade, which may default to English if there is a lack of understanding about the benefits of a wider range of language learning for students. Offering A2 languages, which begin in either the 3rd or 5th grade, is optional and depends on municipal decisions. Furthermore, B1 Swedish (or Finnish) is mandatory starting in the 6th grade, while B2 languages (beginning in the 7th or 8th grade) are optional and usually available only in larger cities, if offered at all. As a result, SUKOL aims to shape the future of language learning in municipalities and has set the following objectives for the upcoming municipal elections.

SUKOL's municipal election goals emphasize the role of municipalities as guardians of versatile language skills. The language teaching of a language-friendly municipality is also presented in a video made in cooperation with Kieliasiantuntijat ry and SUKOL's municipal election goals are also discussed on SUKOL's own homepage and facebook site as well as in a separate social media campaign and national magazine article.





# Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Outi Viikuna**  
Chair, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in  
Finland SUKOL

# SUKOL

Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

## Municipal Election Goals 2025

**1. Children and young people have the right to study foreign languages, regardless of where they live.** In Finland, versatile language skills are needed, which are cultivated from elementary school onwards. Equality is secured by municipalities offering more A1 language and A2 language teaching. A2 language teaching should start from the 3rd grade. Pupils must have a genuine opportunity to choose A1, A2 and B2 languages. Continuity of language learning must be secured. Municipalities should demand specific state funding for the implementation of A2 language teaching.

**2. Municipalities must create the conditions for it to be possible to study foreign languages from elementary school under the guidance of a language teacher.** In grades 1–6, the class teacher is qualified to teach another domestic language and foreign languages, but concern has been raised by the fact that language teaching in these grades has been transferred from subject teachers to class teachers who do not have language specialization studies or additional training to teach the language. Becoming proficient in a language requires a long and systematic language path guided by a pedagogically qualified language teacher.

**3. Municipalities should confirm in their strategy a language training program that meets the needs of the future.** Education organizers should cooperate to enable different language paths, and language teaching at all levels should be assigned to trained language teachers. Versatile language learning opportunities affect the availability of labor, the competitiveness of companies and, more broadly, the attractiveness of the municipality. The keys to the solution to increasing the versatility of language skills are specifically in the versatile choices of the starting phase.



# Greetings from Finland

Prepared by **Outi Viikuna**  
Chair, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in  
Finland SUKOL

# SUKOL

Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

**4. The supply and scope of upper secondary and vocational secondary language studies must be ensured.** Students must be guaranteed equal opportunities to complete the syllabus and receive quality teaching. This is important in terms of placement in postgraduate studies and working life. The attractiveness and retention power of municipalities is influenced by the wide-ranging educational offer and ensuring the continuity of language learning. In particular, the actual eligibility for further studies of those who have completed vocational education is currently at risk due to the reduction of language teaching. Language skills promote attachment to working life.

**5. The teacher should continue to have the pedagogical freedom to decide what kind of teaching methods and materials he uses.** In addition, the teacher must be guaranteed time and other resources to develop his own teaching. Teachers' participation in continuing education that strengthens their own teaching skills should be supported.

**6. The teaching of one's mother tongue should be guaranteed in municipalities, and group sizes should be kept moderate.** Mastering one's own mother tongue promotes the learning and integration of the school's language of instruction (Finnish or Swedish) and improves school and working life skills. Research shows that a strong knowledge of the mother tongue can have a positive effect on general learning results, because the student is able to transfer the thinking and learning skills he has learned through his mother tongue to other subjects. At the same time, social participation increases.

**7. Finland lacks a language strategy.** Research data and measures are needed to secure the continuum of versatile language learning. Good language skills and versatile training promote employment and longer



# Greetings from Finland

# SUKOL

Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto ry

Prepared by **Outi Viikuna**  
Chair, The Federation of Foreign Language Teachers in  
Finland SUKOL

working careers. Working life needs language-proficient workforce, and the EU and NATO, for example, need language-proficient civil servants. Versatile language skills are also a safety issue. Critical infrastructure requires that we have language-proficient professionals in all fields. High-quality language teaching requires sufficient funding.





## Online sources for learning languages

**NBR, Nordic Baltic Region of FIPLV**

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/677820838960243>**

**<https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/europeandayoflanguages>**

**[https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/translation/european-day-languages-events-2023\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/about-european-commission/departments-and-executive-agencies/translation/european-day-languages-events-2023_en)**

**<https://edl.ecml.at/>**

**<https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanDayofLanguages/>**

**<https://www.facebook.com/translationeuropa/>**

**<https://ihworld.com/news-blog/ih-blog/our-favourite-idioms-from-across-europe/>**

**<https://europeisnotdead.com/european-nationality-related-idioms/>**

**<https://www.omniglot.com/language/idioms/index.php>**

## Language teachers' associations in the Nordic-Baltic region

**FINLAND** Suomen kieltenopettajien liitto SUKOL RY (SUKOL)  
[www.sukol.fi](http://www.sukol.fi)

**ICELAND** Association of Foreign Language Teachers in Iceland  
(STIL) FIPLV <http://stil-is.weebly.com>

**SWEDEN** The Language Teachers' Organization of Sweden  
<https://spraklararna.se/>

**ESTONIA** Eesti Võõrkeeleõpetajate Liit (EVOL) (Estonian  
Association of Foreign Language Teachers) [www.voorkeelteliit.eu](http://www.voorkeelteliit.eu)

**LITHUANIA** Language Teachers Association of Lithuania/Lietuvos  
kalbų pedagogų asociacija (LTAL/LKPA) <https://lkpa.vdu.lt>

**LATVIA** The Latvian Association of Teachers of English (LATE)  
<https://late.lv/>

**NORWAY** Norwegian Association for Teachers of German



**The Newsletter #4 December 2024 is issued by:**  
**Outi Vilkuna, NBR President, Finland**  
**NBR Secretary Asterija Rudienė, Lithuania**

Photographs used are from the Associations' archives and free on-line resources.



and



on

