

## THE PAST AND PRESENT OF THE SAMOGITIAN LANGUAGE

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### 1. Historical overview

An essential question has been repeatedly raised since olden times: is Samogitian *a language* or *a dialect*? Before the appearance of standard Lithuanian, the concept of the Samogitian language prevailed. Quite a few Samogitians wrote their works in Samogitian. The 19<sup>th</sup> c. boasts a particularly large number of such works. In that period the concern and efforts to create standard Lithuanian on the basis of the Samogitian dialect were particularly obvious. The language and the spelling of Dionizas Poška, Silvestras Valiūnas and Simonas Stanevičius, all of them originally being South Samogitians, were oriented towards their native *Dūnininkai* dialect. Three of the most prominent Samogitians of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. — Jurgis Ambraziejus Pabrėža, Simonas Daukantas and Motiejus Valančius — employed the North Samogitian *Dounininkai* dialect in their writings.

The creator of the standard Samogitian language J. A. Pabrėža wrote: “A Samogitian will never agree about the language either with a Lithuanian, a Prussian or a Latvian.” (Subačius 1996: 54)

Juozas Čiulda, the author of the most solid grammar of the Samogitian language of the time, written in Polish in 1854 (*Trumpi samprotavimai apie žemaičių kalbos gramatikos taisykles* — “Brief Reasoning about the Rules of the Samogitian Language”) consistently used the concept of the Samogitian language, and at the end of his book affirms this by stating the following: “These are my speculations about the Samogitian language. How I wish somebody knew more about this language! He would be able to formulate and provide more precise rules.” (Čiulda 1993: 357)

The importance of the works of the above-mentioned Samogitians of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. was so evident that the Samogitian language almost became the basis for standard Lithuanian; that would have allowed the Samogitian language to become the national language of the whole of Lithuania.

After standard Lithuanian had been formed on the basis of the South-West Aukštaitian subdialect, other linguistic systems usually were referred to as dialects. Most Lithuanian dialectologists now tend to regard the Samogitian linguistic system as a dialect of Lithuanian. Antanas Salys (1933: 22–26) has tried to establish the time of diverging of Lithuanian dialects. On the basis of the development of the combination of *\*tj*, *\*dj*, he arrives at a conclusion that our main dialects diverged around the 15<sup>th</sup> c. This view is supported by

a number of linguists. Zigmās Zinkevičius, while admitting that Samogitian is the dialect that has moved furthest from the model of old Lithuanian, tends to associate it with a Curonian substratum and treats the Samogitian dialect, especially its North-West variety, as a Lithuanian dialect “in Curonian lips” (Zinkevičius 1981: 12–18; 2006: 65, 207–226).

The first linguist who cautiously tried to oppose such late divergence of dialects and such origins of Samogitian dialect, was Aleksas Girdenis. First of all, he proved that the date, identified by A. Salys, was established without a deeper analysis. A. Girdenis (1971: 81–86) moves this date further into the past and argues that our dialects must have diverged already by the 13<sup>th</sup> c., i.e. before the emerging of the Lithuanian state.

Later A. Girdenis made a more courageous step. He started supporting archaeologist Adolfas Tautavičius, who claims that already in the 4–5<sup>th</sup> c. there was a union of Samogitian tribes, with their own customs of burying their dead, original culture, their own territory and probably their own language (Tautavičius 1981: 27–33). A major influence of the Curonian language on Samogitian dialect also started to seem doubtful, because a number of specific Samogitian linguistic features (e.g., stress retraction, reduction of endings) could be more easily and more convincingly explained not by linguistic contacts but by internal causes (Girdenis 1981: 19–26; Pabrėža 1986: 53–59). Mostly on the basis of the development of the end of the word, A. Girdenis rightfully believes that the Samogitians had to start diverging in terms of their language not later than in the 7<sup>th</sup> c., while the first phonetic features of the Samogitian language could have appeared even earlier — probably even in the 5<sup>th</sup> c., which is most often mentioned by archaeologists. Most probably, there was no such thing as a common Lithuanian proto-language: the Samogitians, just as Semigallians, Selonians, maybe also Curonians and Lithuanians, were speaking one of the tribal East-Baltic languages. That means that languages and dialects had not diverged but converged with each other, because linguistic differences before the formation of the Lithuanian state had to be much greater than in later and present times (Girdenis 1994: 5–20).

Aleksas Girdenis and Juozas Pabrėža have discussed the relationship between the Samogitian language and dialect more than once. In their book *Žemaičių rašyba* (“Samogitian Spelling”) they state: “On the basis of the tradition which is still alive until now, one can rightfully use the term the *Samogitian language*, while the term *Samogitian dialect* should be left for the “pure” linguistic science. While writing or speaking Samogitian, *dialect* is not a suitable word, because in speech it means “pronunciation, an accent” (e.g.: *ons šnek gerā žemaitėškā, tik anuo ta tarmie tuoki kap latvėška* — ‘He speaks

Samogitian well, but his *dialect* (i.e. pronunciation) is the same as Latvian’).” (Girdenis, Pabrėža 1998: 11)<sup>1</sup>

This is how Viktorija Daujotė (Daujotyė) precisely and vividly describes the relationship between the language and the dialect: “With Samogitian words, sentences, hopefully also with intonations, I dive into the world which doesn’t and can’t exist without that language. For the science of linguistics it is a dialect, while for those who used to speak and are speaking it — it is a language. There is no contradiction here. I spoke a language, not a dialect. <...> That means, that language is our mother tongue; a particular, native one. None of us would dare to “distort the language” while talking to our mother, to talk differently from the way we were used to talking at home.” (Daujotė 2015: 9–10)

Thus the answer to the question whether Samogitian is a *language* or a *dialect* could be like this: both terms are good and can be used. If several linguistic systems are being compared, the term *dialect* suits perfectly, e. g., North Samogitian dialect, South Samogitian dialect, South Aukštaitian (Dzūkian) dialect, etc. However, if we talk or write about one linguistic system, we can definitely use the term the *Samogitian language*. On the whole, the terms *language* and *dialect* are very close concepts. Because the native dialect is one’s native language, inherited from parents, from the place where you were born and grew up, where your true roots are. It is only later that you learn another, second language, i. e. standard national language. Ultimately, all languages are derived from certain dialects; that is why it is quite understandable that a dialect can be granted the status of a language (Aliūkaitė 2013: 9).

This paper argues that there is the Samogitian language with three distinct dialects (North Samogitian or *Dounininkai*, South Samogitian or *Dūnininkai*, west Samogitian or *Donininkai*), North Samogitian *Telšiškiai* and *Kretingiškiai*, South Samogitian *Varniškiai* and *Raseiniškiai* subdialects and a lot of smaller speeches and sub-speeches (see Figure 1).

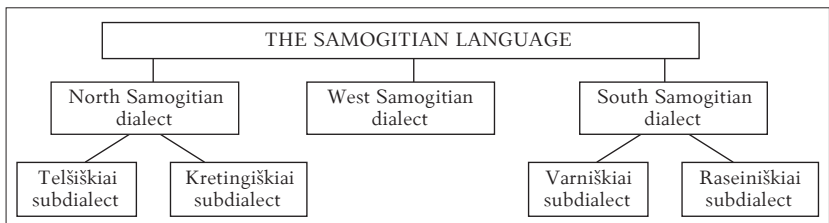


Figure 1. Dialects and subdialects of the Samogitian language

<sup>1</sup> For more about the relationship between the Samogitian language and Samogitian dialect see Pabrėža 2012a: 48–49; 2017: 43–48. On the inaccuracy of terming the Samogitian language a dialect also see Bukantis 2002: 12.

## 2. Salient features of Samogitian

Today it is universally recognised that the most important element of traditional Samogitian culture, that sets Samogitians apart from the rest and defines, identifies and represents Samogitian identity is the Samogitian language, its dialects and speeches<sup>2</sup>. The most salient signs of identity of the Samogitian language and proofs of its status of a language are as follows:

The Samogitian language differs a lot from both the standard Lithuanian language and other dialects of Lithuanian. In terms of the language, Samogitian differs from Aukštaitian more than East Slavonic Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian, South Slavonic Serbian and Croatian, West Slavonic Czech and Slovak, Estonian and Finnish, North German and Dutch. The fact that the Samogitians are more exceptional in terms of their language is supported by a universal agreement among the linguists and dialectologists that all Lithuanian dialects are first of all divided into two major segments: the Samogitian and the Aukštaitian<sup>3</sup>.

Another extremely important aspect of the identity of the Samogitian language is that it has at all language levels (i.e. phonetics, morphology, syntax and lexis) quite a number of unique, archaic, older qualities, sounds, forms and constructions, which cannot be found in today's standard Lithuanian or other dialects, are preserved<sup>4</sup>. Here are some such examples.

A substantial group of South-East Samogitians instead of nasal vowels *q*, *ę*, *ų*, *į* in the standard language has preserved the older pronunciation of these vowels together with a consonant *n*, e. g., *kánsnis/kônsnis* — Stand Lith *kąsnis* 'bite', *drāņsus/drônsôs* — *drąsus* 'brave', *skēņsti/skēnstę* — *skęsti* 'to sink', *švėņsti/švėnstę* — *švęsti* 'to celebrate', *sūnstę* — *siųsti* 'to send', *gėrūn* — *gerų* (gen. pl.) 'good', *līnstę* — *lijsti* 'to crawl, creep', *grīnštę* — *grįžti* 'to return'.

The Samogitians use affricates *č̣*, *dẓ̌* much more rarely than standard Lithuanian or other dialects. On the whole, ancient Lithuanians didn't have the sounds *č̣*, *dẓ̌* at all. Instead, they were pronounced *\*tj*, *\*dj* (Zinkevičius 1994: 88). Today the Samogitians instead of *č̣*, *dẓ̌* in some forms of the words pronounce consonants *t̃*, *d̃* quite close to the old combinations: *jaut̃* — Stand Lith *jaučiai* 'oxen' *jaut̃ems* — *jaučiams* 'for oxen', *žált̃* — *žalčiais* 'grass-snakes', *žált̃s* — *žalčiais* 'with grass-snakes', *kēit̃* — *keičiu* 'I am changing', *kēit̃am* — *keičiame* 'we are changing', *ár̃t̃au* — *arčiau* 'I would plough', *mèd̃* — *medžiai*

<sup>2</sup> On the linguistic self-awareness of the Samogitians see Kalnius 2012: 296–337.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting that Antanas Baranauskas, who was one of the first to divide Lithuanian dialects quite precisely, instead of the term the *Aukštaitians* used the term *Lithuanians*. Thus, according to A. Baranauskas — there are the Samogitians and the Lithuanians (Baranovskij 1898: 49–78).

<sup>4</sup> On archaic qualities of the Samogitian language see Pabrėža 2012b: 9–10; 2015: 86–89, 2018.

'trees', *mėdėms* — *medžiams* 'for trees', *gaidė* — *gaidžiai* 'roosters', *gaidės* — *gaidžiais* 'with roosters', *audo* — *audžiu* 'I am weaving', *audam* — *audžiamė* 'we are weaving', *skaudė* — *skaudžiai* 'painfully'.

The Samogitians stand out also by the variety of stress and vivid pitch. A lot of Samogitian words, different from standard Lithuanian and other dialects, have two, three or even four stresses, e.g.: *vėštà* — Stand Lith *višta* 'hen', *bàsė* — *basi* 'barefoot', *sėrgò* — *sergu* 'I am ill', *bluogã* — *blogai* 'badly', *vėlnė* — *velniai* 'devils', *šėlòmà* — *šiluma* 'warmth', *sėptĩnė* — *septyni* 'seven', *pàvãrkstò* — *pavargstu* 'I get tired', *pãrsimãlavũojusi* — *persidažiusi* 'wearing too much makeup', *nàbãprigĩrdĩ* — *nebeprigirdi* 'is hard of hearing'. The so-called *laužtinė priegaidė* (^), a variant of the acute accent, a broken tone, typical of North Samogitians, is exceptional. The sounds with this pitch are pronounced clearly and strongly, i.e., the voice, after a sudden high rise, stops with a kind of explosion and is further pronounced as the same but a weaker, lower sound. Most often this broken pitch is used instead of the standard language acute accent or in syllables after the main old stress, e.g., *dãkts* — Stand Lith *dãktas* 'thing', *kãrvė* — *kãrvė* 'cow', *kũoks* — *kóks* 'what', *sĩed* — *sėdi* 'is sitting', *trũkst* — *trũksta* 'lacks', *kãrkłã* — *kaĩklai* 'willows', *brėidėm* — *briedžiams* 'for moose', *sprũokstãm* — *sprogstamė* 'we are exploding'. The abundance of stress and emphatic pitches gives the Samogitian language extra dynamism, expression and vivacity. These stresses and pitches very clearly single out the word in the sentence, which means that they perform another important role — that of marking the boundaries between the words.

The Samogitians also have some unique archaic morphological and syntactic features. They have preserved older Dative sg. inflections *-uo*, *-ie* of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> declinations of nouns (cf. standard language *-ui*, *-iai*, *-iui*), which, depending on the territory, are pronounced *-ou*, *-ei* (in the North), *-u*, *-i* (in the South), *-o*, *-e* (in the West), e.g.: *mėškòu* — Stand Lith *miškui* 'for the forest', *tėvòu* — *tėvui* 'to/for father', *nãktėi* — *nakčiai* 'for the night', *vãgėi* — *vagiui* (North) 'to the thief', *mėškũ*, *tėvũ*, *nãktĩ*, *vãgĩ* (South), *mėškò*, *tėvò*, *nãktė*, *vãgė* (West).

Next to usual forms of the verb, the Samogitians also use older athematic ones, e.g. *lėikt* / *lĩkt* — Stand Lith *lieka* 'remains', *mėikt* / *mĩkt* — *miega* 'sleeps', *gėĩst* / *gĩst* — *gieda* 'sings', *ėit* / *ėt* — *eina* 'goes', *skãust* — *skauda* 'pains', *bĩrsma* — *bĩsime* 'we will be', *dėrpsma* — *dirbsime* 'we will work', *šũokste* — *šoksite* 'you will dance'.

The Samogitians have largely preserved the dual number, especially in the North and the West. The dual number is very much used not only with verbs, but also with pronouns, nouns, adjectives and even participles. Instead of the pronouns *mudu*, *mudvi* 'the two of us' the Samogitians have older forms *vėdu*, *vėdvi*, e.g., *vėdo*, *vėdoę* *dėrbãu*, *sĩedãu* — Stand Lith *mudu*, *mudvi* *dirbame*,

*sédime* ‘the two of us are working, sitting’, *jò.dò, jò.dvè dèrbatâu, sídatâu* — *judu, judvi dirbate, sèdite* ‘the two of you are working, sitting’. Other examples: *dò geròjuo vāķò* — *du gerieji vaikai* ‘the two good children’, *dvè pòikè mèrgè* — *dvi gražios mergaitės* ‘two beautiful girls’, *vėdò abò.dò esâu tèn bò.vòšò* — *muđu abudu esame ten buvę* ‘the two of us/both of us have been there’.

With respect to word derivation, some suffixes used in a particular way and preferred by the Samogitians can be mentioned. Family name suffixes are of great variety and have different meanings. The Suffix *-alė* is preferred to describe girls and unmarried women, especially in Northern and Western Samogitian speeches: *Petkālė* — Stand Lith *Petkutė*, *Vaitkārė* — *Vaitkutė*, *Šakārė* — *Šakytė*, *Gėdgaudārė* — *Gėdgaudaitė*. In more Southern parts of Samogitia, the suffix *-ikė* is more used in the family names of girls, e.g., *Petkėkė* — *Petkutė*, *Botkėkė* — *Butkutė*, *Norvaišikė* — *Norvaišaitė*, the Suffixes *-ūtis, -uitis* are used in Samogitia in the family names of teenage boys: *Petkūtis* — *Petkus*, *Valožūtis* — *Valužis*, *Kazragūtis* — *Kazragis*, *Pabrėžūtis* — *Pabrėža*.

Today in Samogitia they still very often use an original intermediary aspect of the verb, which is formed by adding adverbs with faded meaning and reinforcing words *žėmėn, laūk, šaliñ, lýgiai, kietai*, etc. to the verbs without a prefix. Sentences with such aspect forms show that the action has not happened yet, but is approaching its unavoidable finish: *nu bāda pradiejau slabnietę žėmėn* — Stand Lith *nuo bado pradėjau visai silpnėti* ‘because of hunger started getting completely weak’, *tievālis mēršt žėmėn* — *tėvelis miršta ir greitai numirs* ‘dad is dying and soon will be dead’, *vuò karštībė būs, arkis sprūokst iš kaktuos laūk* — *o karštybė bus — akys sprogs ta iš kaktos (tiesiog veržte veržiasi)* ‘and the heat will be — the eyes are popping out of the forehead, simply pushing out’, *plieš drabužius šalėn* — *plėšia drabužius* — *veikiausiai liks nuogas* ‘is tearing his clothes — probably will remain naked’, *važų mama i tōrgo, jėmė muni lėgė* — *važiuoja mama į turgų — būtinaį pasiima ir mane* ‘mother goes to the market — surely takes me together’, *darėk taz dōris kėitā* — *uždaryk duris visai* ‘close the door completely’.

The Samogitian vocabulary is rich. There are some words that are not used in the standard language at all and are hardly understood by the speakers of other dialects. Here are a few examples of such words: *krāmė* — Standard Lith *galva* ‘head’, *plònymas* — *smilkinys* ‘temple’, *stáibis* — *blauzda* ‘calf’, *krūpis* or *kriūpis* — *rupūžė* ‘toad; a small child’, *lėdspira* — *baltoji kielė* ‘kind of bird’, *ašóklis* ar *vašóklis* — *raudonasis serbentas* ‘red currant’, *lėdžinga* — *pačiūža* ‘skate’, *žiógspira* — *pjuvena* ‘sawdust’, *kušinti* — *liesti, judinti* ‘to touch, to move’, *liuřkšti* — *plepėti* ‘to chat’, *sliřkas* — *tingus* ‘idle’, *drúktas* — *storas* ‘thick, fat’, *apént, apéntais* — *vėl, iš naujo* ‘again’, *nógniai* — *labai, smarkiai* ‘very, strongly’, *vėikiai* — *greitai* ‘very quickly’.

### 3. The current development of Samogitian

The rebirth and development of Samogitian writing helps a lot in strengthening and consolidating the Samogitian language. Today quite a few newspaper articles and fiction works have been published on the basis of Samogitian spelling standardised by Aleksas Girdenis and Juozas Pabrėža (Pabrėža 1991: 1–43; Girdenis, Pabrėža 1998: 1–80). They are particularly numerous in the journal *Žemaičių žemė* ('Samogitian Land') and other periodicals published in various regions of Samogitia between 1993 and 2016. More than one book in Samogitian has been published and enjoyed by readers. Edvardas Rudys and Teklė Džervienė are among the best, who write prose in their native North Samogitian language. In 1996, E. Rudys' collection of memoir stories *Kuotrė* was published, followed by a collection of short stories *Sėmuona malūnā* in 2011. T. Džervienė's short story *Akmou so velnė piedo* (2000) is considered to be the first work of erotic prose in Samogitian. In 2011, a solid collection of works of this author *Žali žuolelė* appeared. The largest in volume (514 pages) is Donatas Butkus' book *Kā žemē bova brongesnē ož douna*, a collection of 9 stories, written in his native Samogitian of the Plunge region and published in 2016. Poems written and published in Samogitian are especially numerous. In 1998, the first anthology of Samogitian poetry *Savo muotinu kalbo...* was compiled and published. There are even 41 past and present poets who write in Samogitian. The Samogitian poet Apolinaras Petras Bagdonas, who was born and brought up in Užventis, South Samogitian region, and who after the war was living and writing in the USA, has to be singled out. A lot of his poems, written in the native Samogitian *Dūnininkai* language, can be found in the books *Pruo gintara longa* (1978), *Medviegalė pasaka* (1979), *Gīvenims—naujūkā* (1982), *Lėkėma laiptās* (1991). Viktorija Daujotė (Daujotyte), the famous literary science specialist and the author of numerous books, pleasantly surprised by producing four poetry books written in her native South Samogitian *Varniškieiai* language: *Balsā ūkūs* (2010), *Gīvenu vīna* (2012), *Tatā pariejau* (2015), *Žīmėni vobelie* (2016). A lot of beautiful verse has been written in Samogitian and published in various newspapers, journals and other sources by Stasys Anglickis, Juozas Elekšis, Aleksas Girdenis, Birutė Lengvenienė, Vaclovas Pocius, Eugenijus Zabitis, Justinas Kubilius, Edmundas Untulis, Irena Daubarienė, Dalia Zabitiene and many others. All writings in Samogitian have been crowned by the newest and most comprehensive anthology of Samogitian fictional literature *Žemaitė / Žemaičiai* (2018), which contains 48 prose, poetry and drama authors<sup>5</sup>. The words of a famous Samogitian poet in his introductory

<sup>5</sup> For more on the reborn Samogitian writing and publications in Samogitian see. Pabrėža 2018a: 119–139.

article to the anthology *Žemaičių pasisakymas* are especially meaningful and worth remembering: “It is necessary to revive all those riches of the Samogitian language, which, with the introduction of the standard written language, were pushed aside; it is necessary to make use of all those jewels of the language, which are still possessed by the Samogitian folks. There is only one language, in which all the writers in the world write best of all, and it is their mother tongue. The Samogitians first of all have to use their tongue to the limit and only then use someone else’s, but not vice versa.” (Anglickis 1938: 13)

#### 4. The Samogitian identity

Another exceptional aspect of Samogitian identity related to their language has to be emphasised. Today identification and self-identification via the native Samogitian language is very important and pronounced in Samogitia. Most Samogitians see dialectal speech as their true native language. Participating in the project “Modern Geolinguistic Research in Lithuania: Optimisation of the Network of Locations and Interactive Dissemination of Information”, implemented by the Institute of the Lithuanian Language between 2011 and 2013, the author of the present paper and his students interviewed 247 people of various generations in 25 North Samogitian *Telšiškieiai* localities (Skuodas, Mažeikiai, Akmenė regions). All 247 respondents taking part in the research indicated Lithuanian as their native language; however, even 233 additionally also singled out the Samogitian language, in which part of them can read (142) and write (20).

The Samogitian language is a great value for most Samogitians. A person, speaking Samogitian, is likely to be described and judged positively. The above-mentioned research shows that out of the 317 answers, the majority (113) described a person speaking Samogitian as somebody who respects the native language or is patriotically minded (68). Other positive judgements of the Samogitian speaker are connected with childhood, the native land, relatives, Samogitian features and Samogitian identity proofs: “I was born this way, I was brought up this way, I am used to it” (35) “a true Samogitian” (22), “this is how one should speak” (10), “a Samogitian” (10), “a solid, true-born Samogitian”, (6), “I haven’t turned my coat” (3), “a stubborn Samogitian”, “a true Samogitian”, “a thoroughbred Samogitian”, “not a hypocrite” (1) etc. Only a few respondents associated dialectal speech with an image of a countryman (9), with older people (6) or with uneducated people (2) (Mikulėnienė, Meiliūnaitė 2014: 136–137).

On the whole the prestige of the Samogitian language is strong and still growing. It is interesting that in many places in Samogitia the prestige of the Samogitian language is stronger among the younger generation than among



middle-aged people. Here are some impressions experienced in North Samogitia, in the Skuodas region, during the implementation of the above-mentioned project by the author of the present paper. Donatas Valančiauskas, born in 1961, the elderman of Aleksandrija, said the following: *Vākā ģ r dēdesnē žemāitē nēgō tievā* ‘Children are bigger Samogitians than their parents’. Dovydas Baublys, born in 1992, a very popular chairman of Bugieniai community, Mažeikiai region (2012), defined as one of his most important tasks and obligations to speak only Samogitian in all community meetings and other events (Pabrėža 2018b: 190–191).

The words of A. Girdenis, a true lover and researcher of the Samogitian language, shouldn't be forgotten: “One's homeland starts from the native yard, while the native speech is the one you get from your mother...<...> until now I feel that I am thinking, day-dreaming and even dreaming not in the language that I learned from books and teachers... And I firmly believe: our true native tongue is our dialect. <...> Language and dialect are not simply systems of signs, it is a particular model of the world, unique windows, through which we look at the world. The more such windows, the more unique looks, the bigger the guaranty that both the nation and the whole of humankind will find out more about the world and itself.” (Girdenis 1990: 2–3)

## 5. Conclusions

Today it is universally recognised that the most important and exceptional element of traditional Samogitian culture, most vividly defining, identifying and representing Samogitian identity is the Samogitian language, its dialects, subdialects and speeches. The most important signs of identity of the Samogitian language and proofs of its status as a language are as follows:

- 1) Samogitian dialectal speech clearly differs both from standard Lithuanian and other Lithuanian dialects; this oneness of the Samogitian language is demonstrated by a unanimous agreement among linguists to divide all Lithuanian dialects first of all into two big groups: the Samogitians and Aukštaitian (and earlier into the Samogitians and Lithuanians).
- 2) The Samogitian language has all the most important levels of any language (phonetics, morphology, syntax and lexis), and at all these levels the Samogitian has preserved a lot of unique, archaic features, sounds, forms, constructions, which do not exist in standard Lithuanian or in other dialects.
- 3) The Samogitians have standardised spelling with definite rules, according to which a lot of articles are published in their own press and in books of fiction.

- 4) Today identification and self-identification via the native Samogitian language is very pronounced and important in Samogitia, most Samogitians view dialectal speech as their native language, while a person speaking Samogitian is most often seen and defined positively as the one respecting the native language, patriotically minded, etc. On the whole, the prestige of the Samogitian language is strong and still growing.

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## KOPSAVILKUMS

### Žemaišu valoda pagātnē un mūsdienās

Juozas PABRĒŽA

Kopš seniem laikiem atkārtoti ir ticis izvirzīts būtisks jautājums: vai žemaišu runātā idioma ir *valoda* vai *dialekts*? Pirms mūsdienu lietuvišu rakstu valodas izveidošanās dominēja žemaišu valodas jēdziens. Līdz ar lietuvišu valodas standarta rašanos citas valodu sistēmas sāka parasti saukt par dialektiem vai izloksnēm. Šajā rakstā tiek apgalvots, ka pastāv žemaišu valoda ar trim galvenajiem atšķirīgiem dialektiem — ziemeļžemaišu jeb *dounininku*, dienvidžemaišu jeb *dūnininku*, rietumžemaišu jeb *donininku*, kas tālāk dalās ziemeļžemaišu Telšu (*telšiškiai*) un Kretingas (*kretingišķiai*), dienvidžemaišu Varņu (*varniškiai*) un Raseiņu (*raseiniškiai*) izloksnēs, kā arī daudzās sīkākās apakšizloksnēs.

Svarīgākās pazīmes, kas raksturo žemaišu valodas identitāti ir šādas:

- 1) žemaišu dialektālā runa būtiski atšķiras gan no lietuvišu rakstu valodas, gan no citiem lietuvišu valodas dialektiem, valodas īpašo stāvokli balsta valodnieku un dialektologu

- uzskats, ka visi lietuvišku dialekti vispirms ir dalāmi divos galvenajos segmentos — žemaišu un aukštaišu (agrāk — žemaišu un lietuvišku);
- 2) visos žemaišu valodas līmeņos ir diezgan daudz unikālu un arhaisku īpatnību (skaņu, formu un konstrukciju), kas nav atrodamas lietuvišku rakstu valodā vai citos dialektos;
  - 3) žemaišu valodai ir standartizēta rakstība ar skaidriem noteikumiem, saskaņā ar kuriem tiek publicēti daudzi raksti presē, kā arī daiļliteratūra;
  - 4) mūsdienās identifikācija un pašidentifikācija ar dzimto žemaišu valodu Žemaitijā ir ļoti izteikta un nozīmīga, lielākā daļa žemaišu dialektālo runu uzskata par savu dzimto valodu, savukārt cilvēks, kurš runā žemaitiski, visbiežāk tiek uzvertts un pozitīvi definēts kā tas, kurš respektē dzimto valodu. Kopumā žemaišu valodas prestižs ir spēcīgs un joprojām aug.

## SANTRAUKA

### Žemaitiu kalbus praitešs ēr dabartēšs

PABRIEŽA Jūzaps

Nu seniausiu laikū karts nu karta bova kelams klausēms: a īr *žemaitiu kalba*, a *žemaitiu tarmie*? Ligi lietuviu bēndrēnēš kalbus atsēradēma *žemaitiu kalbus* sāvuoka bova vartuojama dēdlē tonkē. Didēlis būrīs riktingū žemaitiu (D. Puoška, S. Stanevičios, J. A. Pabrieža, M. Valončios, S. Daukonts ēr kētē) sava darbus rašē žemaitēškā. Ka sosēformava lietuviu bēndrēnē kalba, kētas kalbēnēš sistēmas paprastā vadēnamas tarmiems. Aple žemaitiu kalbus ēr žemaitiu tarmies santiki na vēina karta īr ožsēmēnē, rašē A. Gērdēnis, J. Pabrieža. Gal sakītē, ka abodo termēnā — *žemaitiu kalba* ēr *žemaitiu tarmie* — īr gerē ēr vartuotēnē. Šiamē straipsnie prisēlaikuoma nuostatas, ka īr žemaitiu kalba, katra tor tris rīškēs tarmēs (šiaurēs žemaitē *dounininkā*, pēitū žemaitē *dūnininkā*, vakarū žemaitē *domininkā*), šiaurēs žemaitiu telšiškiu ēr kretingiškiu, pēitū žemaitiu varniškiu ēr raseiniškiu patarmēs ēr daugi bē smolkiesniu šnektū ēr šnektielu.

Svarbiausē žemaitiu kalbus tapatībēs ženklā ēr tuos kalbus bovēma īruodīmā būtom tuokēi: 1) žemaitiu tarmēnē kalba rīškē skērās ēr nu lietuviu bēndrēnēš kalbus, ēr nu kētū lietuviu kalbus tarmiū; tou žemaitiu kalbus ēšskērtēnoma ruoda kalbininku vēinings sotarēms vēsas lietuviu kalbus tarmēs pērmiausē skērstītē i do stombius gabalus: žemaitius ir aukštaitius (dar seniau žemaitius ēr lietuvius); 2) žemaitiu kalba tor vēsus svarbiausius kuožnuos kalbus līgmenīs (fuonetēka, muorfuoologējē, sintaksē ēr leksēka), ēr vēsus tūs līgmenīs īr ēšlaikīta nemažā unēkalīū, senuovēšku īpatībiū, garsū, fuormu, kuonstrukcēju, kuo nabier lietuviu bēndrēnie kalbo ar kētuos tarmies; 3) žemaitē tor sotvarkīta rašība, tuos rašības taisīklēs, pagal katras žemaitiu kalbo īr spausdēnoma nemažā publicistēkas straipsniu, gruožēnēs literatūras kūrēniū, īr leidamē laikraštē, žornalā, ēštēsas kningas; 4) šēndēin Žemaitėjuo savēs sotapatēnēms, ēšreiškēms par gimtuojē žemaitiu kalba īr dēdlē rīškos ēr nuognē svarbos, daug žemaitiu tarmēška kalbiesēna sopront ēr sovuok kāp tēkrōjē gimtōjē kalba, vuo žemaitēškā basērokuojēntis žmuogos dažniausē īr vertēnamas ēr apēbūdēnamas palonkē, kāp gerbōšs gimtōjē kalba, patrējuotēškā nusēteikēs ēr panašē Žemaitiu kalbus prestižos īr sostēpriējēs ēr augontis.