



BRIDGES IN THE BALTICS 2025

12th Baltic student conference

ABSTRACTS

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Andra Kalnača

University of Latvia

Database of Latvian Morphemes and Derivational Models: from ideas to results

Andra Kalnača is a tenured professor in Latvian linguistics at the Department of Latvian and Baltic Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia (Riga). Her research interests include morphology, morphosyntax, morphemics and morphophonology, functional grammar, modality, and evidentiality. Her main work focuses on the Latvian grammar and grammatical theory.

She is the author of several monographs and edited volumes, including “Morfēmika un morfonoloģija” (2004), “Morfoloģijas stilistika” (2011), “A Typological Perspective on Latvian Grammar” (2014), “Latvian Grammar” (2021; with Ilze Lokmane), and “Insights into the Baltic and Finnic Languages. Contacts, Comparisons and Changes” (2022; eds. Helle Metslang, Miina Norvik, Andra Kalnača). Andra Kalnača is the editor-in-chief of the journal “Valoda: nozīme un forma / Language: Meaning and Form”.



Vilius Dranseika

Jagiellonian University

In Defense of Forgetting

Vilius Dranseika is a philosopher at Jagiellonian University's Interdisciplinary Centre for Ethics in Kraków, Poland. His research focuses on the psychological underpinnings of philosophical concepts and theories. Recently, the main themes of his work have been personal identity, death, and memory. He is also interested in computational approaches – ranging from natural language processing to citation analysis – applied to philosophy, including its history.



Jayde Will

Writer and translator

Trends in Literary Translation in the Baltic Countries 2015-2025

Jayde Will is a literary agent working for the Latvian Literature Platform, which promotes authors from Latvia. In addition, he is a literary translator working from Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, and Latgalian, and has translated close to 30 books ranging from academic works on history to novels and poetry. He received the 2020 Silver Ink Translation Award for Best Translation from Latvian into a Foreign Language for his translation of Alberts Bels's novel *Insomnia* (Parthian Press, 2020), and the 2024 Ostana Prize for Translation for his work promoting Latgalian literature.



LINGUISTICS I

Dominyka Eidukevičiūtė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Saussure's Law and Its Inactivity in Disyllabic Adjectives in Modern Spoken Lithuanian

The study analyzes how Saussure's Law operates in contemporary spoken Lithuanian. The primary objective was to determine whether actual usage in contemporary language aligns with the codified norms of standard Lithuanian, which prescribe a stress shift to the word ending in certain forms—such as the instrumental singular or accusative plural—when the word has a non-acute root (e.g., *māžas* → instr. sg. *mažù*, acc. pl. *mažùs* 'small'). Although no stress shift is expected when the root is acute (e.g., *báltas* → instr. sg. *báltu*, acc. pl. *báltus* 'white'), final stress in such forms—especially in adjectives—is becoming increasingly widespread in colloquial speech (e.g., instr. sg. *baltù*, acc. pl. *baltùs*). For the study, 14 disyllabic adjectives with acute roots and diverse structures were selected—some in which the tonal distinction (acute vs. circumflex) is clearly audible, and others in which it is not. Findings are based on data from 48 informants. The research revealed several tendencies: the stress shift to the ending appears more frequently in the speech of urban speakers (e.g., those living in Vilnius or Kaunas), as well as among younger speakers, in adjectives with roots containing so-called “mixed” diphthongs *il* and *in*, and in instrumental singular forms rather than accusative plural.

(Presentation language: English)

Meda Žukaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

How Players Adapt and Recreate the Names of Characters from the Computer Game „League of Legends“

The names chosen by computer game players exhibit distinctive characteristics. Because of the dominance of English language in the computer games industry, players frequently encounter English names. When choosing names to identify themselves in the game, they often modify these names or replace them with alternatives from the Lithuanian language. This study aims to examine the diversity of graphically represented “League of Legends” character names used in the spoken language of Lithuanian players. “League of Legends” is an online multiplayer computer game. At the beginning of each match, a player must select one character from a roster of 171 to play for duration of that match. The characters differ in various aspects (such as gender, appearance, age, and special abilities) and each has a unique personal name rendered in English. The research found that Lithuanian players create names in several ways: by Lithuanianizing, modifying, or reworking English names, or by replacing them with entirely new names. In some cases, English names are adopted unchanged, for example, *Akali* (*Akali*), *Bard* (*Bard*), *Draven* (*Draven*). Lithuanianized names are adapted forms of English names, typically rendered using the Lithuanian alphabet, as in *Akšanas* (*Akshan*), *Afeliosas* (*Aphelios*). They may include added endings, such as *Blickrankas* (*Blitzcrank*), *Gvenė* (*Gwen*), as well as other features of the Lithuanian language, for example, *Irelia* (*Irelia*). When reworking names, the phonetic connection between the onyme and the appellative plays an important role. The English name may be replaced with a similar-sounding name that originated from the Lithuanian appellative, as in *Ašis* (*Ashe*), *Ašigalis* (*Ashe*), and *Šakotis* (*Shaco*). In some cases, an appellative is added to

the English name to create a hybrid form with similar sounds, for example, Alzheimerdingeris (Heimerdinger). Changing an English name to a common Lithuanian name also depends on the consonance between the names, as in Jurga (Urgot), Kaziuks (Kha'Zix), and Ramūnas (Rammus). Less commonly, names are transformed through reduplication, for example, Serapinpin (Seraphine), and Varvarikas (Warwick), acronymization, e.g., Džypi (Gangplank), GP (Gangplank), Ww (Warwick), and Tfas (Twisted Fate); or translation, as in Panelė Fortūna (Miss Fortune), Kapas (Graves). Other names are inspired by the character's traits, including his image, as in Pikta Močiutė (Ambessa), Šaltas Paukštis (Anivia), and Metras Dvam (Veigar), or his typical behavior, as in Valgytojas (Cho'Gath). Such names are, by nature, similar to nicknames.

(Presentation language: English)

Laura Sakalauskaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

The Formation of Lithuanian Surnames with -uit- and -uik- suffixes

The main focus of this presentation is the formation of Lithuanian surnames with -uit- and -uik- suffixes. While the formation of surnames with common Baltic patronymic suffixes such as -aitis, -onis, -ėnas and -ūnas has been well researched, surnames with -uit- and -uik- suffixes have received little attention from researchers. The data for this research were drawn from the electronic Lithuanian Surnames Dictionary database. The aim is to analyze the formation of these surnames, focusing on derivational bases, suffixal combinations and structural patterns. The study reveals that the -uit- and -uik- suffixes, often considered diminutive, function primarily as patronymic markers in surnames, with parallels to well-established patronymic suffixes. The -uit- suffix regularly attaches to Christian name bases, suggesting derivation from the father's name, and follows a consistent morphological pattern. In contrast, the suffix -uik- more often attaches to Baltic-origin anthroponymic bases and exhibits greater structural variety. Overall, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of Lithuanian surname formation by examining derivational patterns and structural variation within suffixes of the -uiC- type.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Karolína Gilarová

Masaryk University (Czech Republic)

Tariamoji nuosaka, conditionnel and subjonctif: A Comparative Analysis of their Grammatical Properties and Usage in Lithuanian and French

This paper presents a contrastive analysis of the Lithuanian conditional mood tariamoji nuosaka and the French conditionnel and subjonctif. The study is structured into three main parts. The first section discusses the systematic status of the examined moods, highlighting terminological and categorical inconsistencies in Lithuanian grammars and the relatively fixed classification in French. The second part focuses on morphological aspects, detailing both simple and compound forms and their distribution. The third and central section explores semantic functions based on a functional categorization of modality, including irreality, eventuality, desire, doubt, imagination, purpose, and concession. To test the theoretical assumptions, a small corpus study based on the InterCorp v16ud corpus was conducted, answering three questions regarding form frequency, syntactic position, and subordinating conjunctions. The thesis concludes by mapping these overlaps in a schematic appendix and proposing directions for future cross-linguistic mood research.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Grigory Baramov

University of Warsaw (Poland)

The origin of the language of Sirvydas and Jonas Jaknavičius

This presentation explores the dialectal background of two prominent figures in 17th-century Lithuanian literature—Konstantinas Sirvydas and Jonas Jaknavičius—by examining linguistic features in their texts. The aim is to determine which regional dialects influenced their language and what this reveals about their native speech and the sociolinguistic context of early Lithuanian writing. Through phonological, morphological, and lexical analysis, the study identifies consistent elements that point to eastern Aukštaitian dialectal origins, with nuanced differences between the two authors. Sirvydas' language shows traits commonly associated with the southeastern Aukštaitian variety, including the preservation of diphthongs and specific vowel shifts, suggesting roots near the isogloss lines am–un and an–on. Jaknavičius, in contrast, displays features more typical of southwestern Aukštaitian, possibly reflecting regional variation or deliberate stylistic choices aligned with Vilnius koine. These findings contribute to a more detailed understanding of regional language use in early Lithuanian printed texts and help trace how dialectal forms influenced the shaping of written standards. The study also reflects on the implications of dialectal diversity in the development of Lithuanian literary and ecclesiastical language, offering new perspectives on the linguistic identity of key cultural figures and the historical dynamics of language standardization.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Greta Leigaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Speech synthesis and speech recognition of non-standard Lithuanian vocabulary

This digital humanities project examines the way speech synthesis tools produce, and speech recognition tools transcribe non-standard Lithuanian vocabulary. This study aims to show how non-standard words can affect the precision of text-to-speech and speech recognition tools. As of now, there is little to no research done about speech tools processing non-standard Lithuanian vocabulary. Such research is needed because non-standard vocabulary is found in many spheres where speech synthesis and recognition tools are used: accessibility tools on computers and mobile phones, voicing of films, books, games, subtitles of social media content. Using real-life examples of non-standard vocabulary this research compares the results of Lithuanian speech synthesis and recognition tools processing non-standard and standard texts. The transcribed texts are compared using a digital humanities tool “Lexos”. The results show that standard speech was recognised better than non-standard speech. The tools did not try to recognise non-standard words as standard words, instead they synthesized and transcribed them as gibberish. Non-standard speech produced by a human was transcribed more accurately than that which was produced by a program. These findings suggest that including non-standard vocabulary in speech synthesis and speech recognition tool training might be beneficial to the overall convenience of speech tools in everyday life.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

LITERATURE, FOLKLORE & CULTURE I

Emilija Jūrelytė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

A Digital Humanities Approach to Lithuanian and Latvian Eurovision Songs (2000–2025)

This project analyzes Lithuanian and Latvian Eurovision songs from 2000 to 2025, focusing on changes in language choice, thematic content, and emotional tone. The work aims to reveal how the two countries have used “Eurovision” not only as a musical stage, but also as a platform to express cultural identity and respond to broader social contexts. A total of 50 song lyrics were collected and examined using digital humanities tools, including Voyant Tools (for thematic analysis), Orange Data Mining (for sentiment analysis), and RAWGraphs (for data visualization). The analysis covered both original lyrics and their official English translations. Results show that in the early 2000s, both countries predominantly used English and focused on universal themes such as love. In the 2020s, however, there was a clear shift toward the use of national languages and more socially and culturally grounded themes. Sentiment analysis indicates a general trend toward more serious or negative emotional tone over time, particularly in Lithuanian entries. The study also highlights the limitations of algorithm-based analysis when applied to translated lyrics, emphasizing the need to combine computational methods with human interpretation in the study of cultural texts.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Iveta Ivanauskaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

The principle of anti-genre in Lithuanian Avant-Garde literature

A text is typically assigned a genre based on various criteria, most commonly the genre indicated in its title or subtitle. This not only activates a certain literary tradition, but also shapes the reader's expectations: the designation of a genre leads the reader to expect that the text, in its form, style, and content, will correspond to the genre in which it is inscribed. One of the key goals of the Lithuanian avant-garde “Keturvėjininkai” movement was to liberate literature from stagnant conventions, making it particularly surprising that this group of avant-gardists often included explicit genre references, thereby placing their texts within conventional frameworks. However, closer analysis reveals that some texts of “Keturvėjininkai” do not conform to the genres they declare. A number of them stand in opposition to their inscribed genres, functioning as their antithesis – or anti-genre. This presentation explores the phenomenon of anti-genre in the “Keturvėjininkai” text corpus, aiming to investigate and describe the oppositional relationship between text and genre, as well as the text's interaction with the reader, whose genre-based expectations are activated and then subverted.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Gustavs Zālītis

Riga Technical university Liepāja Academy (Latvia)

Intersections of Hagiography, Autobiography, and Biography

The paper will highlight the points of contact between the hagiography genre and the autobiography and biography genres. In the field of Latvian literary research, the hagiography genre has been minimally examined, therefore its characteristics, features and structure have not been clearly defined.

For comparison, examples of hagiographies related to the Christian religion and autobiographies, biographies written in the relevant era will be used, so as not to create a contextual shift. Texts written as a hagiography genre are distinguished by a tendency to highlight or conceal certain historical facts, but the fundamental difference is formed in the goal that the author is trying to achieve. Therefore, the paper pays special attention to the narrative of hagiographies, how it is structured to create a suggestive effect. Hagiographies are not a widespread genre in the Latvian cultural space, however, such texts appear with sufficient regularity to make it worth understanding their literary function.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Konradas Pukinskas

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

The Critical Reception of Salomėja Nėris' poetry (1927–1938)

This paper analyzes the critical reception of Salomėja Nėris' first four poetry collections (Anksti rytą, Pėdos smėly, Per lūžtantį ledą, and Diemedžiu žydėsiu) in the interwar Lithuanian press (1927–1938). The study examines forty-six critical texts—thirty-eight reviews, six annotations, and two articles—through the lens of Hans Robert Jauss' reception theory. The aim is to reconstruct the horizon of expectations formed by contemporary critics and to assess how these expectations interacted with Nėris' poetic development. The findings show that critical discourse was shaped by gendered perceptions of lyricism, biographical interpretations of authorship, and ideological norms. These factors influenced not only how Nėris' early poetry was understood, but also how her shift toward politically engaged themes was evaluated. This case study contributes to the broader understanding of how literary reception both reflects and regulates cultural and ideological frameworks in national literary fields.

(Presentation language: English)

Gabija Kišonaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Parody and Pastiche in the Prose of Juozas Erlickas'

This presentation examines the expression of parody and pastiche, the relationship between them, and the nature of the relationship with the hypotexts in the prose of Juozas Erlickas'. In postmodernist works, intertextuality and its forms such as parody and pastiche can be considered one of the most eloquent principles. However, the tradition of pastiche is not well-established in Lithuania, and pastiche is often confused with its close counterpart, parody. For this reason, this presentation first attempts to rethink the specifics of these forms of intertextuality and to determine their mutual relationship. The principles of parody and pastiche are sought in the work of Juozas Erlickas', which, despite his status as one of the most prominent representatives of Lithuanian humorous literature, has not received consistent critical reflection. This presentation attempts to show how parody intertwines with pastiche in his work and to determine what relationship Erlickas' texts establish with the texts from the Soviet era and the Lithuanian national canon. This research may be of interest to those interested in comicism, intertextuality, parody, and pastiche, and is relevant as an effort to highlight the significance of J. Erlickas' works.

(Presentation language: English)

Maria Dreer

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Submission and Chaos: How Mise-en-Scène in Fight Club Reinforces and Subverts Gender Norms

This paper investigates how Fight Club (1999) simultaneously reinforces and subverts traditional gender roles through the characters of Tyler Durden and Marla Singer. Drawing from recent gender ideologies, specifically Sigma masculinity and postfeminist resilience, the analysis examines how both characters perform autonomy, emotional detachment, and resilience within interpersonal dynamics. The “medium-specificity” approach underscores how mise-en-scène elements, including lighting, spatial distribution, costume, and gesture, amplify meaning rather than distort it.

To provide a balanced analysis, the study focuses on six scenes: three focused on Tyler and three on Marla. Tyler’s scenes demonstrate his embodied nonconformity, strategic seduction, and confrontational masculinity across different social settings. Marla’s scenes reveal her self-styled endurance and emotional regulation, explored through her staged intimacy, domestic appearance, and confrontation. Collectively, these scenes illustrate how the film encodes gender ideologies through stylistic and narrative devices. The study addresses a gap in existing literature by analyzing Marla as a self-contained figure and situating Tyler’s masculinity within a visual ideological framework. Future research might benefit from a deeper focus on shared scenes to better understand how these gender ideologies coexist and collide within the film’s broader aesthetic and narrative structure.

(Presentation language: English)

HISTORY & CULTURAL HERITAGE I

Márk Sima

University of the National Education Commission (UKEN) (Hungary/Poland)

Polish and Lithuanian historical memory problems

This talk examines methodological approaches to studying Polish and Lithuanian historical memory conflicts. Focusing on contested narratives around the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, interwar Vilnius, and Soviet legacies, it explores how historians navigate national bias, selective remembrance, and politicized sources. Emphasis is placed on comparative analysis, interdisciplinary frameworks, and the use of memory studies to uncover underlying patterns of divergence. The presentation argues for a reflective methodology that acknowledges historiographical entanglements while promoting dialogue. By critically engaging with both archival material and public discourse, the talk outlines strategies for reconstructing a more integrated and balanced historical narrative.

(Presentation language: English)

Naglis Grasmanas

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Latvians in the Lithuanian Independence war 1919-1920

Although Latvians were quite widespread in northern Lithuania in XIX and early XX centuries and became as integral of a part to these lands as were the native Lithuanians. Between 1919-1920 every Latvian, which considered themselves as citizens of newly reinstated state of Lithuania, also joined the fight for its defence during the independence war. But the tale of sacrifice of this ethnic minority is quite unsung in terms of Lithuanian historiography. The main

goal of this thesis was to discuss Latvians that served in Lithuanian military during the years 1919-1920. Understandably the thesis object was said Latvians that served in the Lithuanian military. 4 objectives were made to help in achieving said goal. To determine and discuss the number of Latvians which served in Lithuanian military and discuss statistical data which was gathered alongside. To review and evaluate service in the military of soldiers of latvian origin and evaluate and review the biographies of most notable soldiers. Lastly to review and analyse the differences between Latvians and Lithuanians.

(Presentation language: English)

Anastasija Smirnova

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Heritage of the buildings of 19th–20th century social care institutions in Riga

Latvian social policy was developed from the welfare policy by municipal and rural laws of the Russian Empire in the modern 19th century. Secondly, the Russian Empire followed the German Elberfeld social system, where the social elite's Baltic German humanitarian voluntary organization pioneered the main modern ideas and played an important role. Therefore, the development of social care in Latvia, as elsewhere in Europe started from the cities. In this case social care in 19th century was ruled by the Riga city board, but financed by private organization. Thirdly, in multi-ethnic and multi-confessional Riga in the 19th century, orphans and disabled people were separated in different orphanages and asylums by nationality and confession, in interwar Latvia, this principle was still maintained. Finally, after WWI and since the Latvian Independence war, international humanitarian organization were important factors creating and supporting national social care institutions. A lot of institutions established in Riga are still continuing to realise social care or medicine functions. Therefore the AIM of the paper is to research the heritage of institutional social care in Riga. From the 64 institutions around 5% are destroyed, but at least 80% are renovated and reused as social care institutions.

(Presentation language: English)

Marika Kucina

Daugavpils University (Latvia)

Research on the scenic heritage of manors in south-eastern Latvia (1920–1990)

This study analyses the transformation of the scenic heritage of rural manor centres in Latgale, which was significantly influenced by the agrarian reform and collectivisation at the beginning of the 20th century. Manor complexes with parks and orchards are an important part of Latvia's cultural landscape. , these plantings began to be referred to as parks, and today their biological diversity value, recreational potential, use, and restoration approaches are being studied. Little research has been done on manor parks, the realities of orchard management after the 1920 agrarian reform, and the kolkhoz and sovkhos era in the second half of the 20th century. After World War I, a comprehensive agrarian reform took place in Latvia – the State Land Fund was established, which included 1,479 private and state manors. The landowners retained 50 hectares, and the rest was distributed among new farmers and state institutions. The study examines the dendrological heritage of rural manors in Latgale, which until the 1990s were managed in various ways: renovation, revitalisation or reconstruction. This depended on the progress of the reform and the institution located in the centre of the manor. Cases involving the transformation of historical landscape elements were studied. These include the dendrological planting with introduced tree species, created as an addition to the historical park. For comparison, the manor park with its adjacent orchard, which has become a notable tree nursery in the region, and the nursery created on the territory of the historical manor complex

were examined. The study also reveals personalities - gardeners who have been significant in their professional activities not only in the Latgale region. They have made a great contribution to the industry and improved the non-urban landscape.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Viktors Punculis

Daugavpils University (Latvia)

Development of the Daugavpils Tram Line (1945-1963)

This scientific work explores the historical development of the tram line system in Daugavpils, Latvia, from 1945 to 1963. Based on extensive archival research and analysis of period newspapers, it reconstructs the planning, construction, and expansion of tram lines I through V in the context of post-war Soviet industrialisation. The study examines the material and technical base of the Daugavpils Transport and Communication Trust, identifies socio-economic prerequisites for the tram system's emergence, and evaluates the tram's role in urban development. The research is structured into six chapters covering construction planning, execution phases of different lines, and broader city transport planning. Primary sources from the Daugavpils Zonal State Archives and contemporary press are critically assessed, revealing the interaction between political directives, public involvement (notably the tram's designation as a "people's construction project"), and technical limitations. The work highlights the tram's central place in Daugavpils' modern history and contributes to the underexplored field of Latvian urban transport history.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Isabelle DeSisto

Princeton University / University of Tartu (USA / Estonia)

From Soviet Repression to Solidarity with Ukraine: Survey Evidence from Estonia

This project explores how memories of Soviet-era repression continue to shape social and political life in Estonia and across the Baltic region. During and after World War II, tens of thousands of Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians were arrested, deported, or otherwise persecuted by Soviet authorities. These traumatic events left deep scars on families and communities, influencing how history is remembered and passed down across generations. Today, the question of how these legacies matter has gained renewed urgency in light of Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine, which has revived fears of repression and occupation. Drawing on new survey data from Estonia that documents family histories of repression, alongside an experiment that examines how reminders of these experiences shape attitudes, this study investigates whether descendants of repression victims are more likely to engage in civic or political life. By connecting individual memories to broader patterns of social resilience, the project highlights how historical trauma contributes to ongoing resistance in Estonia.

(Presentation language: English)

LINGUISTICS II

Sanita Placēna

University of Latvia (Latvia)

The phonetical peculiarities of the Latgalian subdialects of the highland Latvian dialect of Vidzeme in the earliest descriptions and now (Examples of the Vecgūbene subdialect)

This study examines the phonetic features of the Latgalian subdialects within the Vidzeme Highland dialect with a particular focus on the Vecgūbene subdialect as a representative case. It employs a comparative approach, juxtaposing historical data – primarily from the early 20th-century sources – with contemporary acoustic measurements obtained through experimental phonetic methods. The analysis centers on vowel and diphthong quality, using tools such as Praat to measure formant values (F1 and F2), pitch, and duration.

Findings reveal notable shifts in articulation patterns, including diphthong monophthongization and vowel centralization. The study not only provides evidence of the influence of the standard language but also underscores the value of experimental phonetics in objectively documenting nuanced dialectal change.

By contributing new empirical data from a previously under-researched phonetic area, this study advances the field of Latvian dialectology and lays the groundwork for a digital corpus to support future research.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Paula Mīkelsone

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Vocal Contraction in Latvian speech corpora

Vocal contraction or synaeresis is a phonetic-phonological process that alters the syllable structure and count within a word. It is the optional merging of two adjacent vowels from two different syllables into one, forming a new long syllable. While vocal contraction has been recognized in Latvian for over 70 years, there is a lack of research on its presence in standard (not dialect) spoken Latvian.

The study analyzes positional vowel changes acoustically and instrumentally, focusing on the prefix–root boundary. The material includes speech data from 3 Latvian corpora. The findings show that vowel contraction is irregular, even in frequently used word forms. Its realization is influenced by extralinguistic and lexical factors, but it is found more than previously recognized.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Oskars Otomers

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Names of land, water and air of transportation in colloquial Latvian, their lexicogrammatical features and typology of word formation

The doctoral thesis collects in one place the names of different types of transport in colloquial Latvian. It is a part of the language system that is not standardized and therefore not documented in writing. In the thesis, it is intended to examine both slang words and the change of word meanings from the lexical-grammatical aspect, i.e. see assigning new meanings to existing words (so-called semantic word formation), as well as relatively marginal types of word formation (shortening, merging, derivatives of abbreviations, back-formation) and their place in the Latvian language system. The study is based on the speech habits of modern Latvian

users in naming vehicles and their differences in different regions of Latvia. Important aspects are the reasons, meaning and use of vehicle colloquial names, as well as the fact that nowadays some names are international and can be found in several languages, which is facilitated by the globalization of trade and various social customs.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Monta Sintija Feldmane

University of Latvia (Latvia)

The use of exhortative utterances in the tv programme “Kas notiek Latvijā”? (What’s happening in Latvia?)

The given paper explores the use and function of exhortative utterances (rosinājuma izteikumi) in the Latvian political television programme “Kas notiek Latvijā?” (What’s happening in Latvia?). Based on speech act theory, the study specifically focuses on directive speech acts which include a wide range of imperative expressions - commands, requests, suggestions, and appeals. The research focuses on how such utterances contribute to political discourse by influencing the structure, flow, and persuasive nature of discussions. The empirical data were excerpted from five episodes of the show released in 2025 featuring diverse participants from politics and professional sectors. The paper explores both grammatical structures and pragmatic aspects that influence the interpretation of these utterances. The analysis reveals that exhortative utterances are essential tools for initiating dialogue, asserting opinions, and guiding conversations. They vary in grammatical form - from precise and formal to spontaneous and colloquial - and often depend on context, tone, and non-verbal cues for interpretation. Ultimately, the study concludes that these utterances not only structure discourse but also subtly shape political narratives and public perception.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Laura Anna Badūne

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Expressing temperature sensations in Latvian

In the Latvian language, the expression of temperature sensations encompasses a broad range of concepts that are used in various life situations and, based on certain thematic similarities and characteristics, serve to convey both literal and figurative meanings. The aim of the study is to examine the semantics of adjectives and adverbs used to express temperature sensations, as well as the syntactic constructions in which they are employed, using a corpus-based approach. In order to analyze the words according to nuances of meaning and their usage in relation to other sentence elements, four categories are distinguished: ambient, tactile and personal-feeling temperature, as well as secondary, derived meanings. Whereas words from syntactic perspective can function and be researched as the predicate, the main clause, an attribute, or an adverbial modifier.

The conducted study shows that in Latvian, certain usage tendencies of temperature sensation words can be observed, where specific words are either used or avoided in particular communicative contexts. Moreover, certain patterns can be identified between the semantic features of the chosen words and their usage in syntactic constructions.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Milan Hoplíček

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Comparison of the productivity of verb prefixes in Latvian and Czech: neologisms

The presented paper is author's master's thesis. Its aim is to compare the productivity of verb prefixes in Latvian and Czech neologisms using large corpus material and statistical methods. Based on web corpora data, namely Timeklis2020 (<https://korpuss.lv/id/T%C4%ABmeklis2020>) and NET v2 (<https://wiki.korpus.cz/doku.php/en:cnk:net>), potential neologisms were selected. From these potential neologisms, loanword pairs (without a prefix) were further selected to more effectively compare the productivity of prefixes in their derivatives. Loanword pairs were divided into three groups, namely internationalisms with the word constituent -iz-, other neoclassical derivatives, and anglicisms, which allows for a more detailed study of the degree of prefixation in different types of new derivatives. Lastly, the work examines the productivity of prefix meanings in new words, as well as grammatical aspect, especially perfectivity in new verbs with the prefix ie-. The presented paper shows that the general level of prefixation is higher in Latvian although there are less available verb prefixes in Latvian. Comparing theory behind Czech prefixation also helps more deeply understand high usage of the Latvian prefix ie- in neologisms.

(Presentation language: English)

LITERATURE, FOLKLORE & CULTURE II

Augustė Anisimova

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Easy-to-understand language and paratexts: a case study of Justina Bružaitė-Liseckienė's adaptation of "My Name is Marytė"

This semester paper analyzes paratextual elements in Alvydas Šlepikas novel "My Name – Marytė" and Justina Bružaitė-Liseckienė's adaptation in easy-to-understand language "My Name is Marytė". Based on Gérard Genette's theory of paratextuality, it is studied how paratexts – the title, chapters, headings, introductory word, author's final word and epitexts – affect the reader's experience and are chosen depending on the needs of the audience. The analysis shows that in the adaptation, paratextual elements are transformed purposefully – aiming for clarity, accessibility and ease of reading. The role of the reader as a participant in the creative process is also discussed, which becomes significant in the context of easy-to-understand language. The paper also draws attention to the impact of epitexts on the reception of the work in society. The study shows that paratexts are not just additional additions – they shape the interpretation of the text, its function and the valuable relationship with the reader.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Inese Pintāne

Charles University (Czech Republic)

Representation of the World in Latvian and Lithuanian Folktales

This paper explores the concept of 'world' as it is understood in Latvian and Lithuanian folktales. It goes beyond the physical realm to ask whether 'world' encompasses everything we experience – nature, objects, places – or extends to the entire planet or even the universe.

Folktales, with their lasting impact on childhood perceptions, provide a valuable lens through which to explore these questions. Far from being mere fantasy, they are a direct

reflection of a people's world, beliefs and aspirations, passed down through generations. This study reveals the unique worldviews embedded in these folktales. It serves as a window into how Latvians and Lithuanians have traditionally perceived the world and their place in it. In order to gain insights into these perceptions, the paper examines collocations and compound words containing Latvian and Lithuanian equivalents for the English word for 'world' in folktale collections published by Jonas Basanavičius and Pēteris Šmits during the first half of the 20th century.

(Presentation language: English)

Anete Saulīte-Stačkune

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Human-Environment Interrelation in Latvian Folk Beliefs

The environment – both physical surroundings and the processes and community – plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective belief systems. Folk beliefs, in particular, arise from the way the world is perceived and interacted with. It seems, in Latvian society, folk beliefs and ideas rooted in them have remained remarkably consistent over centuries. It proposes a question – what are the stable elements in both the human cognition and the environment, the relationship between them, that makes folk beliefs persistent throughout time?

This presentation aims to contextualise various types of Latvian folk belief texts, highlighting the ways of meaning in which the environment plays a significant part in the formation, transmission and endurance of folk beliefs, and the broader notions behind them. The folklore material used in the research is both from Latvian classical folklore corpus as well as from contemporary texts.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Paula Lāce

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Satire as a tool in the formation of national identity in the play by Baumanis Kārlis “From Darkness Through Smoke to Light” (1876)

The paper continues the theme started in the bachelor's thesis, paying in-depth attention to how Latvian composer and writer Baumanis Kārlis's play “From Darkness Through Smoke to Light” (1876) continues the ideas initiated by the young Latvians in the mid-19th century, when literature became one of the means for creating a Latvian national identity. Along with the satirical supplement to “Pēterburgas Avīzes” in the 1960s, satire became a popular form of expression to strengthen the understanding of who a “Latvian” is. The later satirical almanac “Dunduri” (1875–1878), in the creation of which Baumanis Kārlis was involved, also continues the themes started in “Pēterburgas Avīzes”, but the time of national awakening is satirically portrayed in a concentrated manner in Baumanis Kārlis's play, which has remained in manuscript. The paper provides insight into how Baumanis's play resonates with the ideas of the time of national awakening and how Baumanis continues to construct national identity through literature.

(Presentation language: English)

Ieva Cipruse

University of Latvia (Latvia)

The Woman and the Sea through Oral History: Voices from Kurzeme

This is the topic of my semester paper, which I intend to develop further within a narrower scope for my bachelor's thesis (and, I hope, also in future research). The work explores the female narrative within a specific geographical and folkloric context, and how such narratives contribute to the formation of national identity. This topic is particularly relevant in the current geopolitical and climate context, highlighting the importance of cultural memory and oral history.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

HISTORY & CULTURAL HERITAGE II

Diāna Hristenko

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Impact of the Sovietization towards Lithuanian Lutheran Church: Statistics, personas, tendencies 1944-1953-1968

In this paper, the author intends to reveal the impact of Sovietization (theories by Belakova-Mertelsmann and others) on the Lithuanian Lutheran Church; the first part is dedicated to the Stalinism period and overall tendencies during the Stalinism period from 1944-1953, CARC commissioners, leading Lithuanian clergy and main changes that were caused by religious and overall Soviet policy during this periods. The second part focuses mainly on Alkiškiai parish as a peculiar case of Lithuanian Latvians leading a religious life during the difficult times of anti-religious campaigns, repressions, and the decline of believers. Through archival and metric data analysis, the author identifies tendencies and statistics that reveal the problematic circumstances of the religious life of Lutherans in Lithuania during the Stalin and Brezhnev eras.

(Presentation language: English)

Vladislavs Matvejevs

Daugavpils University (Latvia)

Religion, Identity, and Parliamentary Democracy: The Case of Latvia (1920–1934)

This paper examines the relationship between religion, identity, and parliamentary democracy in interwar Latvia from 1920 to 1934. In this formative period, Latvia functioned as a fragile democratic state marked by political pluralism, ethnic diversity, and efforts to define national identity. Confessional parties representing Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, Old Believer, and Polish communities took part in elections, parliamentary debates, and coalitions. While defending religious education and minority rights, these parties also shaped broader discussions on cultural autonomy and moral values. Their activity illustrates the role of religion in a secularizing yet religiously plural society, where political participation served both faith-based and ethnic representation. Although often limited in size, religious parties provided platforms for marginalized voices and contributed to Latvia's democratic culture. This paper argues that their presence reveals how religion intersected with identity-building and democratic governance in post-imperial Eastern Europe. The 1934 authoritarian coup brought an end to their activity, but their legacy offers insight into the possibilities and limits of confessional politics in a multiethnic parliamentary system.

(Presentation language: Latvian) 15

Lāsma Aiga Lasmane
Daugavpils University (Latvia)

Preserving Selonian cultural heritage: the case of Liepavots outside stage and its surroundings (1936-1965)

The aim of the research is based on oral historical testimonies, local historian research materials, photo, video resources and periodicals to restore the history of existence and cultural heritage of the Liepavots outside stage from 1936 to 1965. The Liepavots stage, built in 1936 as a part of the Vīgante park's improvement project. It was a unique cultural monument; surrounded in a magnificent natural acoustic, that was created by the Daugava river and forest nearby. The outdoor stage gathered Latvians from around the country, especially during Solstice, that's why the tradition of local song and dance festival was born. The joy of the stage did not last long- it was flooded in 1965, due to the construction of Pļaviņu hydro-electrical station and the tradition of the song culture was lost for a long time. In the early 1980s, the idea was brought back to life and nowadays, together with Vīgante park, has been associated as one of the lost selonian cultural heritage locations.

(Presentation language: English)

Jūlija Tereščenko
Daugavpils University (Latvia)

Unknown Deportation Routes: Jewish Transports between Latvia and Lithuania during the Holocaust

This paper explores the little-known Jewish deportation routes between Latvia and Lithuania during the Holocaust. Although fragments of these cross-border movements appear in survivor testimonies, they have not been systematically studied within Latvian Holocaust historiography. The research draws on archival documents, survivor ego-documents, and mapping of transport routes to reconstruct these overlooked connections. The study aims to contribute to a better understanding of regional deportation dynamics and to draw attention to this neglected aspect of Holocaust history in the Baltics.

(Presentation language: English)

Marta Liepiņa
Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music (Latvia)

Ventspils People's Conservatory 1927–1941/1945: the Activities of the Educational Institution in the Testimonies of Archives, Press and Memories

Ventspils is one of the provincial towns in Latvia, commonly associated with its port by a significant part of the population in Baltic region. This research exemplifies how music education and concert life have evolved in a town with such a specific character, and it demonstrates that music has been held in high esteem in Ventspils for at least a century. Moreover, without the foundational role played by the People's Conservatory, the vibrant cultural life that characterizes present-day Ventspils most likely would not exist. The Ventspils People's Conservatory is the predecessor of today's Ventspils Secondary School of Music, established in 1927 with an opening concert in 1928. The idea behind the People's Conservatory was to provide individuals of all ages with preparatory training for higher education in music. The Conservatory's work was confirmed by high-quality performances during student and teacher recitals, and by promoting city concert life. This study provides insight into facts found in archives, periodicals, and memoirs covering the period from the founding of the Ventspils People's Conservatory up to 1941 and

from 1941 to 1945 when the institution was named Ventspils State Music School. Thus, traced the institution's activities under the conditions of different political regime changes in Latvia.

(Presentation language: English)

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION & POLICY

Marija Nordkvelle

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

The Attitudes of Latvians about the Lithuanian Language and Its Learning

This presentation introduces the findings of the semester paper “The Attitudes of Latvians about the Lithuanian Language and Its Learning.” The work aims to explore the motivations of Latvian students at Vilnius University for choosing to learn Lithuanian, their experiences in the learning process, and their attitudes towards the Lithuanian language, Lithuania, and its people. The theoretical framework addresses the concept of linguistic attitudes and previous research related to the Lithuanian language. The empirical part is based on six qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted with Latvian students from the Faculties of Philology and History. Through thematic analysis, the study found that although with certain reservations, the students have positive attitudes towards the Lithuanian language, its learning, Lithuania and Lithuanians. This assessment is due to the pleasant experience of learning the Lithuanian language, the people met in Lithuania, and the perceived importance of this country and its culture. A large proportion of the respondents expressed a willingness to connect their future with Lithuania. This work can benefit those interested and analysing linguistic attitudes and the motivation of foreigners to learn a foreign language.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Aušrinė Tverskytė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

What's Easy for One May Be Tricky for Another: Experimental Insights into Sentence Preferences of Native Speakers and Learners of Lithuanian

Accessible communication is becoming a bigger focus in Lithuanian language research, especially as more and more easy language texts are being produced for different audiences. The main guidelines for easy or plain language recommend using basic sentence patterns, which are often based on native speaker intuition or general recommendations (Bružaitė-Liseckienė et al., 2021; Hansen-Schirra & Maaß, 2020). However, research shows that native speaker perceptions of what is “easy” do not match the accessibility needs of second-language (L2) learners and other non-standard user groups (González-Sordé & Matamala, 2024). This experimental study aims to determine whether sentence types considered simple by native speakers are equally preferred by L2 learners of Lithuanian. Two participant groups (40 young neurotypical native speakers and 40 L2 learners) were presented with pairs of sentences differing in syntactic complexity (e.g., nonfinite vs. finite verb forms and passive vs. active constructions) but otherwise equal. The participants evaluated which sentence sounded better and provided short explanations about their selection. The research combines quantitative methods to analyze sentence preference data with qualitative methods to study participant explanations. The research investigates how these two groups of language users perceive sentence simplicity in order to determine if existing assumptions about what should be easy to understand apply to all readers or if different modifications are needed when creating accessible content for native speakers and L2 learners. The research findings will inform the development of evidence-based guidelines for accessible Lithuanian texts while contributing to the current international discussions about language simplification methods.

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(Presentation language: English)

Daina Munch

Aarhus University (Denmark)

Silence has a voice. Lived experiences of schooling in a second language for Russian-speaking pupils in Latvia

This thesis examines the significance of language of schooling in the context of a nation-state, focusing on the lived experiences of Russian-speaking pupils in Latvia. The case offers an example of how a small nation, with a significant portion of its population not speaking the state's language, engages in strategic language planning to preserve and promote its national language. Through three months of ethnographic fieldwork in a public school in Riga, this study explores how Russian-speaking pupils experience schooling in a bilingual environment. Drawing on theoretical fields from second language socialization (Duff, 2012) and language policy (Spolsky, 2021) the research analyses how emergent bilingual learner experiences schooling during silent period and how Russian-speaking pupils experience social silencing by schooling in Latvian. It reveals cognitive, emotional and social factors in second language acquisition for pupils to be silent, emphasizing role of the teachers and limited Latvian language exposure. The analysis of social silence indicates that silence can reflect both as a space for agency and a social constrain. The lived experience of Russian-speaking pupils is based on the contradiction between expectation to be an active agent of the language learning process and their silenced agency in the current societal context.

(Presentation language: English)

Adelīna Skerškāne

University of Greifswald (Germany)

The Instrumentalization of the Baltic Past – how a Slavic micro language attempted to create its history by creating a “Baltic myth”

The standardization of a language is a multilayered process that is also impacted by social and political factors. According to Rehder (Rehder 360), Historicity (German: Historizität) is an indispensable component of the standardization process, i.e., every language requires its own literary or general history to justify its existence and differentiate itself from other dominant languages. Latvian and Lithuanian also underwent this process. However, there is an interesting case of a Slavic micro language that tried to create its history by basing it on an alleged Baltic past. According to the myth, the speakers of the West Polesian variety in the southwestern Belarus and northwestern Ukraine originated from the Baltic folk of Jatvings, which were then assimilated by Slavs (Cadko 86f). At the end of the 1980s, there were attempts to standardize the West Polesian and create its linguistic and social Historicity, proclaiming their Baltic origin (Duličenko 585ff). This project tries to answer the following questions: By what means was this myth created? To what extent did the standardized model integrate Baltic elements, and how much “Baltic”

is this variety in reality? The case of the West Polesian variety presents interesting material for historical and sociolinguistic studies of the Baltic languages.

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(Presentation language: English)

LITERATURE, FOLKLORE & CULTURE III

Kateřina Běláková

Masaryk University (Czech Republic)

Czechia and Czechs through the eyes of Lithuanian personal essay

One of the most prominent characteristics of Lithuanian personal essay are intertextual and cultural references. The narrators of these texts, who are often writers themselves, refer to a range of literary works across history. They draw inspiration from texts ranging from the Bible to ancient authors and the great minds of Romantic literature to their Lithuanian contemporaries. But what does it look like when the stream of associations leads a Lithuanian essayist to Czech authors? And how does the narrator of a Lithuanian personal essay perceive Czechia? This conference paper by Kateřina Běláková, a PhD student of Narratology at Masaryk University in Brno, will focus on which Lithuanian personal essayists write about the Czech Republic or Czech literature, which methods they are using doing so and what image the narrators of these texts form.

(Presentation language: English)

Ian Gwin

University of Washington (USA)

The Finnish Bridge: Homeland and Migration

In this paper, "The Finnish Bridge: Homeland and Migration" I outline correspondences between the national literatures and development of statehood in Finland and Estonia. The "Finnish bridge" (Soome sild) is mentioned in both Finnish and Estonian folksongs. Yet as a concept for linguistic and cultural continuum, it can be also be traced to the poets of the early Estonian national awakening (Lydia Koidula, F. Kreutzwald), who used the model of Finnish folklore and folkloristics as means for advocating the nation. Focusing on the subsequent generation of writers, "Young Estonia" and the early Finnish Modernists, I treat the transitional period following the 1905 revolution, when the "Finnish Bridge" becomes actual for Baltic intellectuals (Friedebert Tuglas, Kārlis Skalbe, etc...) as political refugees. I map out the "bridge" through the use of ethnic difference to trace changes over time and space in the "method" of the Finnish school of folklorists, notably Kaarle Krohn and his *Folklore Methodology* [Die folkloristische Arbeitsmethode] (1926). Krohn uses the "Finnish Bridge" to illustrate the dissemination of a tale "type" in the chapter "Homeland and Migration." Yet the continuity of linguistic and legendary space becomes occurs in literary decadence in the region as well: Krohn's sister, the novelist Aino Kallas, uses the werewolf as such a "type" in an animal bridegroom tale of 1928's "The Wolf's Bride, (Sudenmorsian). Read together, I demonstrate how the historic-geographic approach repeats "romantic philology" —the idea that languages

“live” as the organism among the “folk”—but among modern state projects ethnically and linguistically “other” from the declining civilization of so-called “Indo-Europeans”.

(Presentation language: English)

Ignė Laurynaite

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Reflections on the War in Ukraine in Contemporary Lithuanian Poetry

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine, along with growing geopolitical tensions in Eastern Europe, has become a significant theme in contemporary Lithuanian culture, including poetry. This presentation offers a semiotic analysis of poems by three poets – Marius Burokas, Donatas Petrošius, and Jurgita Jasponytė. Burokas and Petrošius actively organize and regularly deliver support to Ukraine, and their social involvement is reflected in their poetry. Jasponytė, meanwhile, addresses the war more indirectly, offering a distinct poetic response. In this context, poetry becomes inseparable from civic responsibility, encouraging us to rethink the relationship between art and political engagement. Writing about war while living in a country not directly involved in the conflict also raises ethical questions – namely, how to speak about the violence and suffering of war when one does not experience them firsthand. Significantly, Russia’s aggression is understood not only as a tragedy affecting the Ukrainian nation but also as a much broader crisis. In this light, poetry becomes a powerful tool to express solidarity and resistance.

(Presentation language: English)

Alise Āboltiņa-Bula

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Representing Collective Historical Trauma in Contemporary Latvian Children’s Literature: The Case of Inese Zandere’s novel series “Puika ar suni”

This paper explores the representation of twentieth-century historical events in contemporary Latvian children’s literature. The war, the Holocaust, and the mass genocide committed during World War II under the German Nazi regime are examples of collective trauma carried across generations. Introducing these historical traumas to younger readers – those who have not directly experienced them – is crucial, and literature serves as a powerful tool for such mediation. The analysis focuses on Inese Zandere’s novel series *Puika ar suni*, in which children are the direct witnesses to acts of violence and their consequences. Through this type of literary prose, it becomes possible to address a young audience, enabling them to draw parallels with current global events, such as the wars in Ukraine and Palestine, and their own emerging understanding of collective trauma.

Although such historical themes have become increasingly relevant in recent years, Latvian children’s literary prose still rarely engages with these cultural traumas. As a result, younger readers are not sufficiently offered the opportunity to explore the most painful chapters of Baltic history through literature.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Ana Marić

University of Tartu (Estonia)

Motives of patriotism and portrayal of Estonia in the poetry of Juhan Liiv

Juhan Liiv (1864-1913) was the Estonian poet and one of the most iconic and influential representatives of Estonian literature in general.

He had a peculiar and somewhat different style of writing from the other poets of Estonian literature. He used the motives of darkness, misery, poverty, turmoil, coldness, shadows and death while creating his verses; possibly reflecting the hard life he had during his childhood and struggling with the mental illness. This style made him recognizable and celebrated in the written culture and tradition of Estonia. However, the motives of patriotism were used in his poems as well.

Main aim of this paper is to present and analyze the motives of patriotism and the image of Estonia in his poems from the poetry book "Ta lendab mesipuu poole" ("She flies towards the honey tree") and establish the meaning carriers of those motives and how Juhan Liiv perceived the values and national identity of Estonia and what they represented to him and his creating. The methods which will be used in the analysis are Juri Lotman's semiotics of poetics and the selfdescription method, also developed by Juri Lotman.

(Presentation language: Estonian)

MUSIC, ART & ARCHITECTURE

Zaiga Pleiko

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Reframing the Flâneur: Gendered Bodies and Urban Photography in Riga

This paper reframes the concept of the flâneur by introducing a gendered lens through the case of Riga street photographers – individuals who consciously engage in urban observation through photography. Traditionally seen as a masculine-coded figure, the flâneur is here reinterpreted through theories of embodiment and gender performativity to explore how street photography in Riga is both embodied and gendered. Based on semi-structured and photo-elicitation interviews alongside walk-alongs, masculine norms that dominate the genre, expressed through spatial orientation, gaze, and ethical considerations, are revealed.

Male participants often use hunting metaphors and perform assertive actions, such as "zooming with the legs" or entering restricted areas – signaling photographic "seriousness" and aligning with historical ideals of the flâneur. Photographers whose practices deviate from these norms face greater risks due to their perceived bodily vulnerability in public space. Yet rather than exiting the practice, they adopt embodied resistance strategies like adjusting routes, visibility, and tactics and thus challenging the genre's masculine dominance.

This research highlights how gendered socialisation persists in adult creative expression and argues for legitimising relational, ethical alternatives. It proposes that the flâneur, as an analytical tool, must be grounded in practitioners' real, bodily experiences, especially in gendered public spaces.

(Presentation language: English)

Lisa Trei

Tallinn University (Estonia)

Telling untold stories: “Free Winds,” an exhibition at Vabamu in Estonia, highlights the incredible journeys of Baltic refugees who fled from Sweden after World War II and sailed across the Atlantic to freedom

In 1944, tens of thousands of Baltic refugees fled to Sweden as the Red Army advanced across the region. They thought they were safe but soon the Soviet Union began pressuring the Swedish government to send them back to their occupied homelands. Having survived the 1940-41 Year of Terror when Soviets imprisoned, murdered, and deported thousands of Baltic citizens, the refugees had no illusions about what would happen if they were forced back.

After World War II, it was difficult for refugees to emigrate from Sweden legally and even harder for them to enter the United States and Canada. Preferring to control their own fates, refugees secretly pooled their savings, bought and repaired old boats, and sailed as far away as possible from the Soviet Union. Estonians and some Latvians organized most of the escapes.

“Free Winds” tells the stories of these brave people. At least 17 vessels made it to the United States, 11 reached Canada, 7 sailed to Argentina, 2 landed in Brazil, and 3 reached South Africa.

By making “Free Winds” available in English, Estonian, and Swedish, the exhibition seeks to advance knowledge of this under-researched period of Baltic history.

(Presentation language: English)

Rokas Linkevičius

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Expression of ideology in the spatial transformations of Žirmūnai district

This presentation employs a semiotic approach to examine how an urban space is produced under contemporary planning conditions. The research focuses on the Žirmūnai residential district in Vilnius, Lithuania – one of the first Soviet-era housing developments (initiated in 1962). Today, the district is experiencing substantial restructuring and redevelopment. Public discourse around such planning practices often emphasizes the need to “humanize” Soviet-era spaces, making them more appealing to the new generations of property buyers and businesses. This transformation positions contemporary Vilnius as an urban “growth machine” – actively pursuing investment and development in ways that further exploit already-built urban space and its fabric. A semiotic analysis of residential neighbourhood spaces, similar to the psychogeographic approach, helps to reveal spatial conditions where the ideological discourse becomes manifest, whilst exposing the underlying power structures embedded in urban transformation processes. The presentation aims to address how such contemporary development ideologies are reshaping the lived experience of Žirmūnai district.

(Presentation language: Lithuanian)

Eliška Tmejová

Masaryk University (Czech Republic)

Baltic Versailles: Rundāle Palace as a Reflection of the French Court in Eastern Europe

Rundāle Palace is one of the most significant Baroque residences in Latvia. Built in the first half of the 18th century for Ernst Johann von Biron, it represents the architectural and artistic culmination of a cultural transfer inspired by the French court. This presentation focuses on the

palace's most important artistic work—the ceiling painting in the Golden Hall—and the theme of Apotheosis, in which the glorification of sovereign power is intertwined with the political self-representation of its patron, Biron. The iconography of the work draws inspiration from both the Palace of Versailles and the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. The analysis demonstrates how Biron's Courland residence expresses political ambition through the lens of French pictorial rhetoric and examines why apotheosis became a central visual language of princely representation in 18th-century Eastern Europe. Rundāle thus stands as a unique example of the European Baroque symbol of power in the Baltic region.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION & TRANSLATION

Samanta Zambžickaitė

Vilnius University (Lithuania)

Problems in Translating Equine Terms

This thesis is a result of both personal passion for horses and academic investment in translation studies. The equine field in Lithuania has been established for a long time as it features a few native breeds, traditional horse-related festivities, solid basis in folklore and active participation of Lithuanians in international equine competitions. Despite that, it has not been documented very well with some books written in Lithuanian and some translations into it; all of which are now hardly accessible. This makes the translator's job much more problematic when this kind of language needs to be translated. Therefore, to see what these problems are, it was important to establish what terminology is and how terms come to be, the features of good terms and pick out an English equine terminology glossary, which was later used as a basis for looking up equivalents in Lithuanian. After completing the search (and translation of terms with no equivalents), it was established that a translator might face five main problems – all being the lack of informational material, consistency in usage, definitions, established terms and terms in data bases. Essentially, all of these problems arose from lack of information.

(Presentation language: English)

Ilze Jaunzeme

Ventspils University of Applied Sciences (Latvia)

Conceptual meaning, use and correspondences (EN-LV) of the terms “iekārta” and “aprīkojums” in journalistic and industry-specific legal texts

The study analyzes the Latvian engineering terms “iekārta” and “aprīkojums”, paying particular attention to terminological and semantic implications, usage, and translation peculiarities from English. The aim of the study is to analyse the semantic boundaries of these terms based on terminological sources, corpus data and examples from journalistic texts (LNTD; LVV, 1988; 2006). It is concluded that, although both terms are often used as synonyms, “iekārta” refers to functionally independent technical units, while “aprīkojums” refers to a set of tools or devices that support a specific activity (Karulis, 2001; CEC, 2012). The analysis also reveals aspects of conceptual overlap, homonymy and polysemy, as well as inconsistencies in translation, for example, “iekārta” can correspond to both device and machinery (Freimane, 1993). In journalistic texts and translations, the term “aprīkojums” often prevails, which can cause confusion (Urbanoviča, 2009). The study confirms that the precise use of terms is essential in both technical and public texts, especially in a digital and interlingual context.

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(Presentation language: Latvian)

Madara Vīre

University of Tartu (Estonia)

A Corpus-based Study of Amplifiers in Latvian EFL Learners' Writing

The aim of this study is to examine the use of amplifiers in the writing of Latvian learners of English. The investigation is based on data from the LEFL (Latvian EFL Learner) corpus and the GiG (Growth in Grammar) corpus, allowing for a comparison between foreign–language (L2) and first–language (L1) English usage. The focus on amplifiers was motivated by a preliminary analysis, which revealed that adverbs of degree, more specifically amplifiers, produced the highest number of occurrences in the corpus. The most frequent amplifiers – really, very, and more – aligned with findings from previous studies, confirming their status as common modifiers. While adjectives were the most frequently modified items across both corpora, the native speaker data displayed a greater variety of modified words, whereas the learner corpus exhibited a broader range of amplifier. Furthermore, the study explored potential first–language (L1) influence on foreign–language (L2) usage; however, it was concluded that the dataset was too limited in size to draw definitive conclusions regarding this aspect.

(Presentation language: English)

Agnese Cera

Riga Technical university Liepāja Academy (Latvia)

Learning Latvian at Home and in Educational Settings: a Case Study of Ukrainians in Latvia

Three years of Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine have considerably changed the lives of many Ukrainians and caused many families to seek refuge in other countries. In Latvia, there were ~48 thousand Ukrainian refugees (or 2.6% of the total population) in January 2025 according to the Central Statistical Office. The arrival of these refugee families has raised a number of social problems, including language acquisition issues at both individual and societal levels. In this vein, our paper discusses three main questions regarding the acquisition of Latvian in formal and informal settings: 1) How do Ukrainians reflect on Latvian language courses and language teaching/ learning strategies? 2) How do Latvian learning strategies enter the home environment and how are they used within the whole family? 3) How is learning Latvian embedded within cultural contexts and how do these contexts influence practices and values in language acquisition? Our research is based on 6 structured in-depth interviews with Ukrainian families. Data has been gathered in Latvia in spring 2025 as part of more extended research in a PhD project.

(Presentation language: English)

Language as a Marker of Identity: Linguistic Transformations among Ukrainian War Refugees

This study explores how language functions as a symbol of identity, resistance, and memory among Ukrainian war refugees in the diaspora. The research focuses on three teenage girls from Kharkiv, now residing in Lithuania, and examines their evolving linguistic identities in the aftermath of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Using semi-structured interviews the study investigates how Ukrainian and Russian languages are perceived, used, and emotionally experienced in a new sociocultural environment. Findings reveal that while Russian often remains the more pragmatic language due to familiarity, its symbolic status has declined sharply. Ukrainian, conversely, is increasingly adopted as an act of political stance, cultural continuity, and personal resilience (Warditz & Meir, 2024). The analysis is formed by historical insights (Plokhy, 2015) and diaspora overview (Trzszczyńska et al., 2024), which emphasize how language choice in exile becomes a conscious expression of belonging and otherness. In this context, language is not just a means of communication but a dynamic tool for negotiating identity.

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(Presentation language: English)

SOCIETY, ECONOMICS & POLITICS

Romāns Gagunovs

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Latvia's Party Landscape after the Restoration of Independence: The Architecture of Party and Party Association Formation

After regaining independence, Latvia experienced a rapid transformation from a Soviet-style authoritarian regime to a parliamentary democracy. This transition brought about the urgent need to develop new political institutions and party structures. The emerging party system became highly fragmented, with many parties formed hastily and without strong ideological grounding. Instead, they often served as temporary electoral vehicles, driven by elites or narrow interest groups, rather than by broad civic engagement. This paper identifies and analyses eight distinct models of political party and party association formation in Latvia during the post-independence period. These models reflect different strategic, ideological, and institutional approaches adopted by political actors in response to the new democratic environment. While a few parties evolved into relatively stable organizations, most remained short-lived or underwent frequent rebranding and mergers. Latvia's party system has remained fluid, leader-centric, and weakly institutionalized, which in turn has limited long-term policy consistency and undermined public trust in political institutions. The study contributes to understanding the structural challenges of party system development in new democracies and highlights how

historical context, elite strategies, and the absence of rooted political traditions have shaped Latvia's political landscape.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Stanislavs Šeiko

University of Latvia (Latvia)

Contested moral status: confronting volunteers' and veterinary professionals' perspectives on stray animals in Latvia

The study analyzes the perception of the moral status of stray animals, particularly cats and dogs, among Latvian animal help volunteers within the context of a wider social justice movement. The aim is to examine how the initiatives of volunteers advocating for social justice impact the discourse on animal rights in Latvia. The primary issue discussed is the systemic marginalization of stray animals by institutional authorities, which sharply contrasts with the ethical principles upheld by volunteers. The study's originality stems from its interdisciplinary methodology, integrating animal advocacy activism with modern social justice theories as articulated by Fraser, Sen, Rawls, and Nussbaum, enhanced by an empirical analysis derived from semi-structured interviews with volunteers in Latvia. The author examines how volunteer activists construct their moral standing based on social justice ideas, so serving as pivotal agents of social change.

(Presentation language: Latvian)

Stanisław Szeliga

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From the Nord Express to Rail Baltica – on the national and international rail transport systems in the Baltics

The Rail Baltica is one of the key European Union projects, aiming to connect the Baltic States to the rest of the Europe through a high-speed rail network. The ongoing project, as described by the largest Baltic-region infrastructure project in the last 100 years, not only raises a lot of positive emotions, but still remains a subject of a heated debate, especially regarding its range as well as its financial issues.

Despite the ongoing warm railway-related topic, it is true that for many visitors of the Baltics very little is known about the railway systems within the Baltic Countries. To add more, it can be easily stated, that it is not the train, which is considered first as the most comfortable way of transport to reach the Baltics. The question is – is it always used to be like that?

The aim of this presentation is to review the current railway situation within the Baltic States, thorough the general description of the railway system of each of three Baltic countries and to provide the historical background aiming from the very beginning of the railway system within the Baltic region.

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(Presentation language: English)

Anastasiia Puha & Tetiana Koroi
Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania)

Youth unemployment: comparison of influence and policy factors in the Baltic countries and East Asia on the example of Lithuania and South Korea

This study examines the factors that influence the youth unemployment market in the Baltic States and East Asia. The study identifies the main factors that influence youth unemployment in the two regions, such as urbanization, education, and average annual wages. The comparative analysis reveals the commonalities and unique similarities that are characteristic of the two regions. The aim of the study is to analyze the influencing factors and, using regression analysis, establish the relationship between the factors and youth unemployment. The results highlight the importance of understanding the factors that influence youth unemployment in Lithuania and South Korea and combating them.

Keywords: labor market, Lithuania, regression analysis, South Korea, youth unemployment
(Presentation language: English)

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The Invisible Line: Symbolic Boundaries of Trust in Latvian State Secrecy Practices

State secrecy and security clearance practices in Latvia shape symbolic boundaries between trust, authority, and democratic participation. Based on 19 semi-structured interviews with public administration employees, public officials and citizens, alongside an deeper analysis of 55 media articles, the study demonstrates how secrecy operates not only as a legal or national security mechanism, but also as a symbolic structure that influences perceptions of legitimacy and transparency.

In a context of persistently low public trust in government, security clearance emerges as more than a bureaucratic procedure—it becomes a marker of recognition, prestige, and institutional belonging. Clearance decisions are often interpreted as reflections of loyalty, credibility, or exclusion from political power.

The symbolic significance of secrecy becomes most apparent during moments of controversy, such as clearance refusals or political scandals. These situations draw public attention and expose underlying tensions between transparency, control, and democratic trust. By focusing on both institutional practices and how they are perceived by society, the study highlights how state secrecy influences public confidence and the legitimacy of governance in Latvia.

(Presentation language: English)

Joonas Veerme
University of Tartu (Estonia)

BATUN and the role of human rights in raising awareness of the Baltic Question at the UN, 1971-1991

State secrecy and security clearance practices in Latvia shape symbolic boundaries between trust, authority, and democratic participation. Based on 19 semi-structured interviews with public administration employees, public officials and citizens, alongside an deeper analysis of 55 media articles, the study demonstrates how secrecy operates not only as a legal or national security mechanism, but also as a symbolic structure that influences perceptions of legitimacy and transparency.

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(Presentation language: English)