

## THREE MODELS OF STANDARD WRITTEN LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE IN THE 19th CENTURY:

J. A. PABRĖŽA, J. ČIULDA,  
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Before beginning to discuss three different models of standard written Lithuanian (swl) of the 19th century, I would like to present briefly the general political, cultural and social conditions of the Lithuania of that time.

Geopolitically the Lithuanian ethnic area never belonged to just one state. Part of it belonged to Prussia (called Lithuania Minor); the rest of the area (called Lithuania Major) had been an independent state, but from the middle of the 16th century it formed a union with Poland. From the very end of the 18th century nearly all of Lithuania Major was occupied by Russia. Hence in the period I am concerned with Lithuania Major belonged to Russia and Lithuania Minor – to Prussia.

Culturally also Lithuania Major and Minor were different of old. In the 16th century Lutheranism came into force in Lithuania Minor. In Lithuania Major at that time and later Roman Catholicism prevailed. From the standpoint of written language in Lithuania Minor, a compact area, quite stable

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<sup>1</sup> These three models were investigated separately by me: Simono Daukanto požiūris į bendrinę kalbą, in: "Lietuvių atgimimo istorijos studijos" (LAIS), vol. 5: *Simonas Daukantas* (Vilnius, 1993), p. 63-68; "Juozas Čiulda ir jo gramatika", in: LAIS, vol. 6: *Juozas Čiulda, Trumpi samprotavimai apie žemaičių kalbos gramatikos taisykles* (Vilnius, 1993), p. 7-54; "Jurgio Ambraziejaus Pabrėžos žemaičių kalba", in: LAIS, vol. 8: "Asmuo: tarp tautos ir valstybės", p. 10-113.

norms of the language had already been formed in the 17th century and had kept their shape up to the end of the 19th century and even longer. Lithuania Major was not so monolithic. First of all there were (and are at present) two great groups of dialects, Lowland and Highland; these dialects differed so much, that the user of one dialect could not always understand that of another. Secondly, one concrete dialect as a basis for sw Lithuanian had not yet been established, but at the beginning of the 19th century the dominance of Lowlanders' writings could be seen. On the other hand, in Lithuania Major at that time the dominating cultural language was still Polish, which was used from the times of the union with Poland.

**Socially** the societies were also different. In Prussia the peasants became free at the very beginning of the century, while in the Lithuania Major the Russian tsar revoked serfdom only in 1861. However, the liberation of the common social layers (primarily the peasants), the spread of literacy, the growing mobility of society had begun in Lithuania Major much earlier. Although the ideas of freedom coming from the French revolution had not begun to change social structures yet, still they began to move the consciousness of people. Only in a society that was beginning to become a society of equal citizens could a modern concept of swl and the written language itself be formed. (One can only call swl a uniform language that is used by all layers of society, to satisfy all their cultural needs.)

The three models of Lithuanian swl of the 19th century that I would like to present were created by authors originating in Lowland; i. e. in Lithuania Major governed by Russia. In Lithuania Minor written language was sufficiently stable at that time and nobody modeled it anew. The three models presented here were never coherently described by their authors. (There were no professional linguists in Lithuania at that time.) I try to reconstruct these models from manuscripts of various nature (i. e. not just linguistic ones), and in the case of Daukantas also from his publications.

In reconstructing models of standard Lithuanian of that time I would tend to consider the following four aspects of most relevance:

1. *Spheres of usage of swl*: a) the social layers, to which swl is applied, b) the kinds of literature and genres in which swl is used. Actually, a written language can only be called a *standard* one in the case that it is intended for all social layers and in all kinds of literature.

2. *The territory of usage of swl*. That is, is swl intended to satisfy the needs of all ethnic Lithuanians or only of some part(s) of them.

3. *The relation between swl and spoken language*.

4. *The basis of swl* – what principle is primary to the codifier: to write the way people speak or the way the rules, i. e. the system of language, require?

Other aspects of swl codification could also be taken into account, e. g. attitude to borrowings, neologisms, to the principles of orthography etc. but I will not concentrate upon them here.

I. JURGIS AMBRAZIEJUS PABRĖŽA was born in 1771 in northern Lowland. In the history of Lithuanian culture he is best known as a Franciscan priest, a famous preacher and the first creator of botanical and medical Lithuanian terminology. At the beginning of the 20th century there were even some efforts in Lithuania to proclaim Pabrėža a saint or at least blessed by the Pope. Pabrėža left no linguistic texts, but we can find his thoughts about language in his letters and in the introductions to his works.

Pabrėža's way of thinking had been formed still in the 18th century, in surroundings where ideas of freedom and equality were still little known (Pabrėža met the modern 19th century at the age 29). A society that included on the one hand free and usually literate people, and on the other hand – dependent peasants, mostly illiterate folk was the natural, "normal" society for Pabrėža. From 1798 on Pabrėža wrote thousands of pages of Lithuanian sermons. However, up to about 1828 to 1831 we still cannot speak about his standard written language. Although Pabrėža used to record the texts of his sermons, he had no intention of codifying their language. These sermons were to be read for illiterate folk, so the texts were only the auxiliary means of an oral kind of expression. And it was only around 1828 to 1831 that Pabrėža decided to create Lithuanian swl; of course, he was under the

influence of the mood in society, one of gradually becoming free. At that time he was about 60 years old.

The decision of Pabrėža is fixed documentarily. The end of a long period of hesitation may be illustrated by a sentence from his letter of 1829: "As for Lowland orthography I am *not* inclined to change my attitude"<sup>2</sup>. At that time or maybe a little bit later Pabrėža invents some absolutely new characters and begins to use them: double vowels for a long or prolonged sound (i. e. he begins to write *bajooraa* 'noblemen', *taapaas* '[with] leaves') and he begins to express palatalized [š'], [č'] as *šž*, *čž* (e. g.: *šžerdys* 'heart of the tree', *augmyničžyynis* 'botanical').

1. a)-b) These characters help us to recognize what kinds of texts Pabrėža applied his swl to. These are primarily his numerous works on botany and medicine. According to all available data, it is obvious he also applied the forms of his swl to school manuals, fiction texts, folklore, even to some of his letters. I could even generalize that Pabrėža applied the norms of his swl to all spheres of secular cultural life.

However, what could seem strange and even unbelievable today is that Pabrėža did not keep to these norms in his numerous religious texts. It seems that Pabrėža still applied the scale of the 18th century to his spiritual texts; however, at the same time he began to create secular swl in quite a modern way. Pabrėža may be understood as representative of a transitional period. He had already understood that the layer of people which needed standard language was growing; however, he had not yet realized that sooner or later such a process would lead to a society where all the people would need swl (i. e. a society without serfdom and with every member of it free and literate). The fact that religious texts intended for the folk were not written in swl shows that it was quite a normal thing for Pabrėža to consider that the folk would remain just folk. Only a part of society, more or less educated people needed the new swl. Saulius Žukas has analyzed the poetry of Pabrėža and concluded that "this analysis permits us to sense the epistemic turning point, a situation of

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<sup>2</sup> J. A. Pabrėža, "The letter of 1829 (the 13th of April) to prof. J. F. Wolfgang"; the manuscript is held in the Library of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Vilnius, sign. f. 7-309.

transition from one set of values to another"<sup>3</sup>. In creating a modern swl, Pabrėža nevertheless partially kept the old concept of written language. I would call his model "defective", but nevertheless already a model of standard written language.

2. Besides, Pabrėža did not apply the model of his swl to the whole ethnic Lithuanian territory, but only to the Lowland. To put it in his words: "I write the names of plants in the way they are pronounced in our seashore land 15 miles from the sea deep in the country"<sup>4</sup>. Changing the miles of the 19th century Lithuania into current measure would make about 128 km; this is the exact area of the Lowland dialect. Hence, Pabrėža created swl for the Lowland and he acknowledged that there may really exist two more Lithuanian written languages: that of Lithuania Minor, the other that of the Highlanders of Lithuania Major. For example, when making lists of names of plants in different languages in his *System of Plants*, Pabrėža included Lowlands' separately, Lithuania Minor's names separately and in one of his letters he complained, that "it would be necessary to put down Lithuanian ones also [i. e. the Highlanders names of Lithuania Major], but so far I have not been able to get them anywhere"<sup>5</sup>. The opinion of Pabrėža is categorical: "a Lowlander will never agree with a Lithuanian [from Lithuania Major] or [a Lithuanian from] Prussia as far as language is concerned"<sup>6</sup>. Thus Pabrėža's model of swl even in its territorial aspect demonstrates the author's orientation to a more closed society, perhaps even to the possibility of forming a separate Lowland nation.

3. Pabrėža's relationship between swl and spoken language can be described in his own words: "best of all is to

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<sup>3</sup> S. Žukas, "Apie pypkininkus (du J. A. Pabrėžos eilėraščiai)", in: *LAIS*, vol. 4: *Liaudis virsta tauta* (Vilnius, 1993), p. 117-118.

<sup>4</sup> J. A. Pabrėža, The letter of 1828 (the 20th of September) to prof. J. F. Wolfgang; manuscript is held in the Library of Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Vilnius, sign. f. 7-309.

<sup>5</sup> J. A. Pabrėža, "The letter of 1834 (the 19th of December) to J. Ch. Gintila", in: *Mūsų senovė* (Kaunas, 1938), vol. 2, Nb. 3(8), p. 491.

<sup>6</sup> J. A. Pabrėža, "The letter of 1835 (the 20th of March) to J. Ch. Gintila", in: *Mūsų senovė* (Kaunas, 1938), vol. 2, Nb. 3(8), p. 495.

write the way we speak"<sup>7</sup> or "you will find the words written down in the manner all Lowlanders speak in those parts"<sup>8</sup>. Pabrėža still felt no need to regulate standard *spoken* language. He thought the Lowlanders spoke well, only they wrote incorrectly. Hence, the dialect itself was understood as if it was an oral version of swl and he saw no need to codify it.

4. From what has been said it is quite obvious that Pabrėža considered usage and the spoken language to be the main criteria for the codification of swl.

II. JUOZAS ČIULDA was born later than Pabrėža, in 1796, also in the north of Lowland (near Plungė, this means closer to the center of Lowland). He was also a priest, worked in a Kaunas school as chaplain: he later worked in parishes in different places of Lithuania Major. His most important contribution to Lithuanian culture is his grammar book of Lithuanian written in 1854. Čiulda was a representative of a different generation, a younger one, and matured in surroundings filled with a need for freedom, with a clear orientation toward a free society.

1. a) In contrast to Pabrėža, Čiulda already modeled a society which included only free people, for him peasants were also a part of nation, not only the nobles as it had been before. The terms *folk* and *nation* had the same meaning in Čiulda's writings (this could not be said of Pabrėža), e. g. Čiulda wrote: "The verses of Lowlanders consist of *folk* songs, i. e. songs of common people [...]. In a certain sense it can be said that this *nation* [...]". It is apparent that Čiulda created the norms of his swl for a society he understood as a monolith – to all layers the same. This was already an "undefective" concept of swl.

b) Although Čiulda did not expressly say to what kinds of literature he applied his model of swl, it is possible to think that he had in mind all available ones. Even so Čiulda wrote his grammar, his letters and his other writings in

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 493.

<sup>8</sup> J. A. Pabrėža, *Uwogas nekórios apėy Smerti*, 1828, p. IV; manuscript is held in the Lithuanian National Library, Vilnius, sign. f. 124-3.

Polish; he did not dare to use Lithuanian yet. Therefore, it is possible to speak only about theoretically modeled norms, but norms which were not yet put into practice.

2. As a basis for the norms of his swl Čiulda like Pabrėža chose his native north Lowland dialect. But the territory to whose inhabitants Čiulda applied his model was much larger. Explaining why he had based his swl upon the Lowland dialect, Čiulda said that "the west Lowland subdialect is better formed"<sup>9</sup> (than Highland), that the Highland dialect "is not so soft and pleasant to the ear as Lowland"<sup>10</sup>, that in one part of the Highland dialect "there is almost no grammaticality, there is only an amalgam of distorted, broken Polish and Lithuanian"<sup>11</sup>, that in another part firm and uniform rules do not exist at all. Such depreciation of the Highland dialects by Čiulda unambiguously shows that he was oriented not only to Lowland, but also to Highland readers suggesting to them "the better formed" Lowland norms of swl. Hence, Čiulda's model of swl was aimed at all the territory of Lithuania Major.

However, like Pabrėža, Čiulda did not want to force his model on the Lithuanians from Prussia. Although Čiulda considered them also representatives of the same nation, but he recognized their unique and different tradition of written language. One example of this attitude could be the excerpts of the famous 18th century poem *The Seasons* by Kristijonas Donelaitis, a Lithuanian from Prussia, which were quoted by Čiulda in the original orthography and "translated" alongside into Čiulda's version of standard Lowland language.

3. A quite new and relevant aspect of Čiulda's codification is the idea to codify spoken language as well. This is a very clear and firm conviction for Čiulda. For instance, he wrote that "the speech and writings of men of science have to be the language and writing of the nation"<sup>12</sup>. *Grammar* itself was described by Čiulda as a set "of well arranged rules of

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<sup>9</sup> J. Čiulda, *Trumpi samprotavimai apie žemaičių kalbos gramatikos taisykles*, in: *LAIS*, vol. 6 (Vilnius, 1993), p. 89.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

language, both spoken and written"<sup>13</sup>. This I would call a concept of mature standard language, modern for that time. After all, when the formation of a standard written language begins, inevitably standard spoken language gains a shape similar to that of written form as well (dialects, however, can be very different).

4. Differently from Pabrėža, Čiulda emphasized, that when codifying one has to base one's opinion on rules of language, grammaticality, that is on the language system, but not on language usage. Čiulda said that "if the Lowland [i. e. Lithuanian] language has to develop according to the example of other European languages, then we need to accept a language for the writing of books which will be more lucid, more regular and more in accordance with the rules of grammar"<sup>14</sup>. Čiulda tried to keep to the language system, i. e. to reject exceptions to the rules as he understood them even if these exemptions were used in the living language. For instance, in order to keep to the system Čiulda suggested writing (and speaking!) the dative singular of the personal pronoun (*tu* 'you') *taw* [tav], not *tau*, because the stem of the word in other cases ended in [v] (compare gen. sg. *tavęs*, acc. sg. *tave* etc.), though both at that time and today all Lithuanians pronounce it as [u] – *tau*. In Čiulda's grammar there are quite a few examples where he rejected usage in favor of system.

III. SIMONAS DAUKANTAS was born in 1793 and was from the same generation as Čiulda. In Lithuanian culture he is known as a historian, folklorist, philologist and on the whole as the initiator of the concept of a new modern Lithuanian nation, even as the symbolical creator of it. Having studied in Lithuania, Daukantas left the country to work in Riga, then in Saint Petersburg for 25 years. Afterwards he returned to Lithuania again.

1. a) There is no doubt, that Daukantas was a democrat in his style of thinking. His consciousness already modeled a society consisting only of free citizens. Thus Daukantas' texts

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 361.

and standard language was also oriented to the lowest layers of society (peasants) (this implies, that he imagined everybody in those social layers having to become literate). For instance, in the preface of one of his historical books (*Works of the Old Lithuanians and Lowlanders*) he said: "I write not for learned people and sages, but for those mothers, who are capable of telling their children the deeds of their ancient ancestors, but without having written texts they often make mistakes"<sup>15</sup>. Another fact that was very new at that time in Lithuania – Daukantas, a layman, wrote a Catholic prayer-book. As Roma Bončkutė stresses, Daukantas tried to instill his orthography in religious texts as well<sup>16</sup>. It is absolutely evident that it was namely the peasants who needed this prayer-book the most. Thus Daukantas began to break the stereotype that religious texts had to be written in the traditional simplified orthography of Lithuanian religious writings.

1. b) Daukantas' prayer-book already shows that the range of literary genres to be written in swl is wider than that of Pabrėža. Also in practice Daukantas was more resolute in his use of swl than Čiulda – he was not afraid writing his little grammar book and other writings in Lithuanian, though Čiulda (and many others as well) did not dare to do so (Čiulda's grammar book and other scholarly writings are written in Polish).

2. At the beginning of his work Daukantas had quite obviously oriented his texts to a reader from the Lowland, his language of the period was very Lowlandish; however, in the latest period of his work he changed his opinion and used elements both of the Lowland and Highland dialects. Once more Daukantas uttered this opinion: "I don't think it is good to write only in Lowland or only in Highland dialect, one has to account for their gentleness, harmony and economy"<sup>17</sup> – this means that in writing one must harmonize the dialects, combine the elements of these dialects. For example,

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<sup>15</sup> S. Daukantas, *Raštai* (prepared by B. Vanagienė and V. Merkys), (Vilnius, 1976), vol. 1, p. 39.

<sup>16</sup> R. Bončkutė "Nespausdinto rankraščio istorija", in: *Literatūra ir menas*, 1993, October 21, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> S. Daukantas, *Raštai* (Vilnius), 1976, vol. 2, p. 788.

in his great Polish-Lithuanian dictionary Daukantas presented parallel forms of two dialects: *medioti* 'to hunt' (Lowl.) and *medzioti* (Highl.); *kwiestas* 'invited' (Highl.) and *kwijstas* (Lowl.). On the other hand he took elements of orthography (e. g. the letters *i*, *ė*, *ô*, *û*; the meanings of the letters *i* and *y*, etc.) from the writings of Lithuania Minor and tried to introduce them to texts of Lithuania Major. Neither Pabrėža nor Čiulda used such means of creating swl (Čiulda with some minor exceptions). It is obvious that Daukantas' approach is the broadest of all three models here presented – he wanted his swl to be used by all ethnic Lithuanians. I will not exaggerate in saying that it was the first such broad conception of the swl during the entire history of codifying the Lithuanian language.

3. However, the fact that Daukantas tried to model his swl for a large territory, for all ethnic Lithuanians who spoke very different, remote dialects raised a problem in codifying spoken language; i. e. the oral version of standard language. This quotation would be characteristic of Daukantas' attitude: "Where one needs to write *uo* it is good to write *û*, because in this case everybody can be satisfied: those who say *uo* [Highl.] and those who say *ou* [Lowl.], since Highlanders say *duoti* and Lowlanders – *douti*". This permission to read the polyphonic letter *û* to each reader according to his own dialect does not imply a uniform standard spoken language at all. This statement can be illustrated once more by a quotation from the preface of one of Daukantas' books: "I pray you, dear Lithuanian reader, not to feel annoyed with me for not using the language of your parish. After you have read once, you will be able to read again pronouncing the words in the manner that people in your parish speak. Thus when you find written *kantri ir narsi kareiviai* [patient and brave soldiers] (Lowl.) read *kantrūs ir narsūs kareiviai* (Highl.)."<sup>18</sup>

Thus Daukantas like Pabrėža did not try to model standard spoken language. But Pabrėža did not do this because in the comparatively small territory of Lowland spoken language itself appeared uniform enough, and Daukantas did not model it because standard language was understood by

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

him primarily as written rather than as spoken language. At the very least he did not care too much about the standard spoken version.

4. Daukantas' decision to combine dialects has already been mentioned. As a historian he formulated things very democratically, but how to put this into practice Daukantas did not clearly know himself. It is easy to combine lexis, but how to combine the different phenomena of phonetics? Quite often he made no attempt to set rules: "what concerns the fourth case of the pronoun *asz* 'I', time will show whether one should write *mani* or *manę*"; "it is difficult to guess how to write *tabokis* 'tobacco' or *tabokas*"<sup>19</sup>, etc. There are no such expressions as "time will show", neither in Pabrėža's nor in Čiulda's standardization texts. It becomes evident that Daukantas, who in the latest period of his creative activity had decided to combine different dialects, i. e. had composed a rule for standardization, did not go further, in every specific case it was as if he left it to history to decide in what way to combine these dialects. Daukantas inability to decide is symbolized by the changes in his own orthography. Perhaps more often than any other Lithuanian author of the 19th century Daukantas is irregular in his practice. The conclusion is clear – although Daukantas refused to base his swl only on usage, on the forms of any specific dialect, at the same time practice of specific rules in his writings is quite shallow.

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In conclusion, I would like to summarize the three different models. As we can see, the model of Pabrėža, a representative of an older generation, is different from the younger Čiulda's and Daukantas' one in almost all parameters. True, it coincides with that of Daukantas in the aspect of spoken language, both Pabrėža and Daukantas did not model the standard version of it; however, their reasons were different as has been mentioned earlier. Thus Pabrėža's standard language is a standard written Lowland language modeled on the spoken Lowland dialect for more or less educated layers of society, to create all kinds of secular texts.

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 790, 791.

# THREE MODELS OF STANDARD WRITTEN LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE IN THE 19th CENTURY: PABRĖŽA, ČIULDA, DAUKANTAS

## 1. SPHERES OF USAGE OF SWL

### a) social layers

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| ALL                 | NOT ALL |
| Čiulda<br>Daukantas | Pabrėža |

### b) kinds of literature

|                     |         |
|---------------------|---------|
| ALL                 | NOT ALL |
| Čiulda<br>Daukantas | Pabrėža |

## 2. THE TERRITORY OF USAGE OF SWL

|           |                                                 |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------|
| ALL       | NOT ALL                                         |
| Daukantas | Low+Highl      Highl<br>Čiulda          Pabrėža |

## 3. THE RELATION BETWEEN SWL AND SPOKEN LANGUAGE

|                                |                                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ST. SPOKEN LANG.<br>IS MODELED | ST. SPOKEN LANG.<br>IS NOT MODELED |
| Čiulda                         | Pabrėža<br>Daukantas               |

## 4. THE BASIS OF SWL

|                             |                                                   |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| TO WRITE AS<br>PEOPLE SPEAK | TO WRITE AS RULES<br>(THE LANG. SYST.)<br>REQUIRE |
| Pabrėža                     | Čiulda<br>Daukantas (?)                           |

Čiulda and Daukantas, representatives of the younger generation, differ from Pabrėža in their newer, more modern attitude to swl – practically, it is modeled for all layers of society, to write all kinds of literature (clearly, Daukantas is much braver than Čiulda in practice). One of the most essential differences between their models is that Čiulda applies his language to Lithuania Major, while Daukantas applies his both to Lithuania Major and Minor. This could be conditioned by the historian Daukantas' attitude to the historical community of all ethnic Lithuanians. Daukantas modeled a common nation and common language for the future.

On the other hand, Čiulda is more modern than Daukantas as a creator of the standard language, because Čiulda also modeled standard spoken language; in addition, he especially stressed the rules and the system of language in his grammar book, he always codified the forms corresponding better to the rules (i. e. to the language system). Daukantas did not express this clearly. Therefore, I could call Čiulda a coherent and modern theorist of his time, who modeled standard written and spoken language to all social layers and all genres of literature and, most importantly, one who based his model upon the criterion of language as a system. Next to Čiulda, Daukantas seems to be a practical person with a broad outlook. He implies that one has to create language for all people and for all literature to be used by all Lithuanians. The great number of Daukantas' manuscripts written in Lithuanian attest to his practical efforts. However, theoretically Daukantas could not decide how to ground himself on the rules and on the system of language. Therefore, with regard to his attitude toward swl Čiulda is more similar to a theoretical linguist and Daukantas – to a remarkable public figure with a broad general outlook, who is not really a linguist.

Lithuania still had to wait for the final version of its swl.