

The Electronic Bank of Linguistic Consultations of the Language Commission – the Most Efficient Consulting Tool

The main institutions providing linguistic consultations in Lithuania are the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language and The Institute of the Lithuanian Language. Consultations are also provided by Lithuanistic departments of universities, by services of language management of municipalities and by private entities offering linguistic services. However, a separate structural unit to provide linguistic consultations is established only in the State Commission of the Lithuanian Language.

The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language has been providing linguistic consultations since its foundation in 1990.

During the ten years of independence, demand for linguistic consultations and the flow of questions have increased significantly; therefore, in 2003 the Language Commission formed the Group of Language Consultations, now the Group consists of four employees.

Consultants of the Group of Language Consultations provide oral (by telephone) and electronic consultations. Electronic consultations are being rendered by e-mail konsultacijos@vlkk.lt and via the Electronic Bank of Linguistic Consultations.

In the recent years a total number of consultations provided per year were 36–39 thousand.

In 2001 the Electronic Bank of Linguistic Consultations was started to create on the basis of the consultation material accumulated during 7 years. From 2003 the Bank of Linguistic Consultations is freely available to the public on the website of the Language Commission (www.vlkk.lt). Then it consisted of 2500 entries.

The Bank of Linguistic Consultations of the Language Commission is a bank of linguistic advice which is comprised of questions on lexis, morphology, word formation, syntax, accentuation, pronunciation, punctuation, spelling and other language issues crucial to the public. At present the Bank contains over 12000 entries.

In order to maximize the efficiency of the electronic dissemination of standard language norms, a dynamic bank was created; it may be constantly supplemented by new entries, it serves as a tool for communication with enquirers and for examining their needs.

A bank entry consists of three parts: a title word (or words), a question and an answer. Thus, 12000 bank entries equal the same number of title words.

Entries are divided into thematic groups: lexis, syntax, morphology, spelling, punctuation, and so forth.

The difference of the Bank from other electronic databases is that if there is no answer to your query, simultaneously there is a possibility to write your question in a special window. Consultants' answer is sent to the e-mail indicated by the enquirer.

The Bank also captures search data of the visitors; therefore, the material of what information and how many times it was searched for is managed. Every day the Bank is visited over 4000 times.

During the 13 years of operation, the Bank has been improved several times, new functions have been introduced. The last updates were carried out this spring – the search system has been improved.

The project of the Electronic Bank of Linguistic Consultations is very successful. The Bank of Linguistic Consultations has become one of the main tools to search and provide language consultations in Lithuania because of its functionality: a possibility to ask, great opportunities to learn and to explore the needs of enquirers and constantly supplement and edit the database.

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