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Lithuanian Grammar,

Vytautas Ambrazas, ed., (Institute of the Lithuanian Language, Vilnius), 1997.

Should anyone claim that 1997 was an uneventful year, we may cheer that person up with the reminder that in 1997 the Institute of the Lithuanian Language presented us with its *Lithuanian Grammar*, edited by Vytautas Ambrazas. This 800 page tome is the first of its kind. It is the first comprehensive description of the grammatical structure of Lithuanian, including phonology, morphonology, morphology, and syntax to be published in English.

Participating linguists from the Institute and Vilnius University are as follows: Phonology and Morphonology written by Aleksas Girdenis, translated by Lionginas Pažūsis; Morphology and Syntax written by Vytautas Ambrazas, Nijolė Sližienė, Adelė Valeckienė and Elena Valiutytė in collaboration with Emma Geniušienė and Dalija Tekorienė.

Before going into particulars, I note that this book's dominant descriptive tone is traditional. We find none of the fancy newer terms like, for example, "equi" in the exposition of syntax.

The book's larger segments are Morphology (ca. 350 pp.) and Syntax (ca. 250 pp.) while its smaller ones are Phonology (ca. 50 pp.) and Morphonology (ca. 20 pp.). I, personally, am grateful that questions of morphonology (known more familiarly to me as "morphophonemics") are dealt with at all, especially since these have a distinct reference to Lithuanian historical linguistics which is of particular interest to me. Otherwise, let us move on to more detailed descriptions and discussions of the book's four major sections, I. Phonology, II. Morphonology, III. Morphology, and IV. Syntax, noting the book's closing segments, Selected bibliography (pp. 783-786) and Subject index (pp. 787-802) and hoping for an eventual Vocabulary index and even a comprehensive one in one of this book's future editions.

In the Preface we read that "Lithuanian is the most conservative of the Indo-European languages". The book, we are told, describes the grammatical system of Standard Lithuanian based on southerly West High Lithuanian. Thus, *é* is regularly interpreted as long *e*.; never as Žemaitian style *ie*. In all sections except Phonology and Morphonology, present-day Standard Lithuanian spelling is used.

Since the Phonology section rigorously uses IPA transcription, the general reader is advised to refer immediately to standard presentations of items where provided. Especially since IPA renderings are narrowly phonetic and take some getting used to as, for example, [pouse:] 'half p. 45 with ^indicating accent, palatalization indicated by a comma under letters standing for consonants, and *ou* indicating not *o*, but short *u*. Though the term from Halle and Jakobson (1956) *distinctive features* is mentioned, the equally useful term *redundant features* seems to have been forgotten. Remembering it would have simplified the discussion on p. 38 (4.5) to determine what is phonemic, palatalized consonants or (redundantly) fronted back vowels following them. Sticking to Halle and Jakobson (1956) would have better clarified the section's attempts to distinguish between what Halle and Jakobson call *inherent* feature and *prosodic* features which in Lithuanian are *equally* phonemic. Though the section mentions *acoustic* distinctive features (p. 21), it seriously describes items articulatorily with terms like *(non)backlingual*.

I expect average readers familiar with Lithuanian to get pleasure out of the Morphonology section, especially its apophony examples on pp. 68-69 smacking of etymological dictionaries. I repeat the following related contrasts: *seka / pasaka*, *vieši/vaišės*, *keisti/ kaita*, *žiedas/žydėti*, *laužti/lūžti*, *plyšti / pleišėti*, *malti/miltai*, *klaikti/kluika*, *sédėti/sodinti*, *brėžti/bruožas*, *smogti/smūgis*, *šokti/suokti*, *loti/suluiti*, *srebia/sriuba*, *platus/plotis*, *neša/naščiai*. Otherwise, these readers will find clarification in this section about the symbols *ą*, *į*, *ė*, *ų* whether it involves morphonemes with alternations of vowels plus nasals versus long vowels represented by *ą*, *ę*, *į*, *ų* as in *lindo/lįsti* (i.e. *li:sti*) (p. 65), or merely graphic representation of a morphological function: *smėlj* (ACC. SG)/*smėly* (LOG. SG) (both pronounced sme:li:).

The book's Morphology section meets expectations for Lithuanian linguists to do a thorough job in that area, especially in declension. Morphology, after all, is what primarily comes to mind when one thinks of grammar. And this area is one which receives special attention in Lithuanian schools. Thus, we find the noun, adjective, numeral, and pronoun described in all their intricacy with complete declensional paradigms given.

We find an equally thorough treatment given the verb. I merely wish to mention two points of possible contention. One involves forms of the second person plural of the subjunctive mood. On p. 313 we find only *-tumė-te* echoed in *būtumėte* on p. 318 while in Dambriūnas, Klimas, and Schmalstieg (1966:242), a work mentioned in the book, we find *-tumėt(e)* and *-tute*. The other involves a discrepancy with Klimas (1996) over use of the future with past tense meaning.

The book tells us that "The simple future tense can be used to indicate repetitive (frequentative) action in the past" (p. 242) and gives the following example: *Senis Lapinas klausė ir juokėsi sau po ūsais. Klausys, klausys ir pridės savo žodelį.* 'Old Lapinas listened and smiled to himself under his mustache. He would listen and listen and add a word of his own.' Klimas (1996) cites use of futures with past tense meaning under different circumstances - with the purpose of indicating a sudden, unexpected action as shown in the following one of his examples. *Mesėjome šaligatviu, ir jis man kad spirs į koją.* 'We were walking on the sidewalk and he just kicked me in the leg'. Perhaps in a future edition the book will mention the point made by Klimas (1996).

Otherwise, the book's Morphology section includes the adverb, particles, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections, and onomatopoeic words.

The book's Syntax section gives standard treatment to the sentence and its structure, word groups, simple sentence, expanded sentences, word order, communicative types of sentences, and composite sentence. All this includes discussion of the parts of a sentence, predicate, subject, object, verbal groups, nominal groups, prepositional phrases, adjective groups, numeral groups, pronominal groups, adverbial groups, syndetic and asyndetic coordination, and clauses of time, condition, concession, purpose, and place.

I recommend this book to scholars needing a complete grammar of Lithuanian in English. It is an important achievement.

REFERENCES

- Dambriūnas, L., Klimas, A., Schmalstieg, W.R. *Introduction to Modern Lithuanian*, (Franciscan Fathers, Brooklyn, New York), 1996, 2nd ed. 1972.
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