

**A SHORT GRAMMAR OF LITHUANIAN**  
**BY TERJE MATHIASSEN (Slavica Publishers, 1996, 256 p.)**

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In spite of its title, Prof. Mathiasen's book can be characterized as a rather complete reference grammar of Lithuanian. Being undoubtedly very useful for students of this language, it contains many topics and theses that could be of interest to serious scholars as well. The description is based on modern grammatical theory and this explains several deviations from traditional way of presenting and treating of the material. At times, parallels with descriptive grammars of Latvian can be observed. Such cases, although not always expressed explicitly, are really valuable, as far as there exists no special contrastive grammar of Lithuanian and Latvian. The author does his best trying to emphasize those facts that are peculiar to Lithuanian and can be difficult for a student. When necessary, comparisons with English, German, Scandinavian or Russian languages and certain diachronic commentaries are provided.

The volume which exceeds 250 pages consists of the following parts: a detailed Table of Contents, Foreword explaining the aims and giving general characteristics of the book, short Introduction (Chapter 0) where condensed information about the Lithuanian language, its history and its place among other Indo-European languages as well as remarks on the history of Lithuania are presented, fourteen Chapters (of somewhat unequal size) dealing with phonology, morphology and syntax of Lithuanian, Bibliography and Index of grammatical topics and Lithuanian words.

Chapter 1 is devoted to phonology. Systems of Lithuanian consonants and vowels together with their positional and historical alternations are presented here. The last part of the chapter contains description of suprasegmentals. To indicate the pronunciation of Lithuanian words the International Phonetic Alphabet (not the traditional Lithuanian transcription) is used<sup>1</sup>. In concrete cases trans-

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<sup>1</sup> One can notice, however, some deviations from the IPA instruction of 1989 (Kiel Convention) in the usage of some symbols. Thus, for voiced velar fricative [ɣ] and voiced velar plosive [g] the symbols [g̃] and [g] are written respectively (p. 21). It is a pity that as a rule pitch accent is not indicated in the transcription.

cription misprints appear very often, which surely complicates the usage of this section by students. Thus, for example, the situation with palatalization in consonant clusters seems not clear. The general rule «if the last consonant in a cluster is palatalized then the immediately preceding consonant is also palatalized», e.g. [spræ:ʃtʲ] (p. 25) could be questioned on the basis of some other examples, where the first consonant in a cluster is not marked as palatalized (cf. [vɛʃtʲ] p. 25, [kap'ʃtʲtʲ] p. 28, [tapʲtʲ] p. 29 etc.). In fact, there are different degrees of palatalization depending both on the concrete vowel and palatalized consonant itself as well as on morpheme and syllable boundary, but in the book the absence of the palatalization mark in this case seems to be due to misprint rather than to a certain principle. It would be useful to supply the description of diphthongs with a phonological comment on their mono- or biphoneme status.

In the section on suprasegmentals three prosodemes are considered: stress, pitch accent (called «tone» by Prof. Mathiassen) and quantity. The last one, however seems to contradict the earlier presented division of vowel phonemes into short and long, thus being not a suprasegmental element, but a distinctive feature of a phoneme. One could doubt also if «the longest semi-diphthongs are those containing low *a*, *e* and the nasal sonorants *m*, *n* under acute intonation» (p. 32, underlined — A.A.), as usually circumflexed syllables are longer in Lithuanian than the acute ones (cf. p. 33: «Observe that circumflexed monophthongs are longer than acuted ones»). In the description of accent marks used in Lithuanian no attention is paid to such cases as e.g. *tiltas*, *fôrma*, where the grave mark indicates acute intonation (a corresponding remark is made on p. 104, but it certainly should appear earlier, otherwise it even seems to be in contradiction with the rule (p. 33) that the grave «does not denote tone, only stress»). In the end of the section an up-to-date description of general principles of stress movements and the system of designating accent classes are presented. Here one imprecise formulation should be mentioned. Symbols like 3<sup>a</sup>, 3<sup>4a</sup> etc. indicate that the accent shift takes place between the corresponding syllables of a word, rather than that the word is trisyllabic or quadrisyllabic respectively (p. 36). This assertion can apply to nouns, but not to all declinable words and forms, cf. *paláukdamas*, -à (3<sup>a</sup>), *nenùgalimas*, -à (3<sup>4b</sup>). Similarly careless is the next statement that «accent class 4 is impossible with tri- and quadrisyllabic nouns» (ibid.), cf. nouns *negarbė*, *negarbę* (4), *ropuonis*, *ropuõnį* (4), *vakardienà*,

*vakardiėnų* (4) and other parts of speech *ketviřtas*, *-à* (4), *nuoširdùs*, *nuoširdų* (4).

Chapter 2 describes the Lithuanian noun, its grammatical categories, declensional types and word-formation. In the representation of declensional types traditional classification is preserved, not that suggested in the latest grammars of Lithuanian (Cf. *Grammatika litovskogo jazyka*, Vilnius, 1985; *Dabartinės lietuvių kalbos gramatika* (= DLKG), Vilnius, 1994). For each declension (but not for each subtype) examples of nouns of every accent class are given where possible. Much attention is paid to consonant alternation in the end of the stem (this item will be constantly taken into account in the description of inflection throughout the book). Heteroclititic *žmogùs* (Sg.): *žmónės* (Pl.) and indeclinable words are analysed separately. A short review of singularia and pluralia tantum words (the latter being widespread in Lithuanian) is given as well. No concrete rules of reduction of case endings in speech can be found here. Speaking about this chapter, the following small remarks could be made. The statement (p. 41) that in combinations of the word *põnas* and the proper name the former is in the nominative (*põnas Strāzdai!*) seems strange. Later the author insists on this opinion in an even more categorical way (p. 197): «Note that the noun *ponas* 'Mr., Sir' is not used in the vocative». However, a norm of the literary language is considered to be vocative here<sup>2</sup>. The Pluralia tantum word *dùrys* is traditionally (and in Prof. Mathiassen's description) placed in the 3rd declension (*i*-stems). In fact it seems more reasonable to regard it as a noun of the 5th declension (*C*-stems) since the paradigms of the plural of these declensions do not differ. In this case the hard stem consonant in Gen. Pl. form (*dùrų*) would not be irregular. Certainly one cannot demand from a short grammar exhaustive lists of exceptions, but it seems to have been possible to provide such lists for two series of exceptions in the 3rd declension, viz. the masculine nouns and nouns having hard stem consonant in Gen. Pl.

The presentation of word formation is based on the division of suffixal and prefixal derivatives and compound words. The material in these sections is further organized according to the semantics of derivatives. No attention is paid to such characteristic Lithuanian derivatives as the so-called «*galūnių vediniai*» — words resulted from conversion (change of paradigm), cf. *stālas* : *stālius*, *greĩtas* : *greĩtis*, *mókytojas* : *mókytoja* etc. The paragraph on com-

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. Šukys, «Kaip geriau: *ponas direktoriau* ar *pone direktoriau?*», "Gimtoji kalba", 1985, 8-9, p. 13.

pounds contains a somewhat careless assertion that «connecting vowel always carries the main stress» (p. 57), cf. however, the unstressed connecting vowel *-a-* in *pūsiasalis* (colloquial *pusiāsalis*), *bendradaŗbis* etc.<sup>3</sup>

The next Chapter 3 is devoted to the adjective. It should be mentioned that adjectives are divided into three declensions but this division here is a bit uncommon although it can be found in some other grammars, namely: adjectives in *-is*, *-ē* are separated into two classes according to the difference of endings of Nom. Pl. masc. (*-i* : *-iai*) and Dat. Pl. masc. (*-iems* : *-iams*), respectively. The former are treated together with adjectives in *-(i)as*, *-(i)a* whereas the latter form the 3rd declension. Thus the 3rd declension contains all relational adjectives. This approach allows to determine the possibility of formation of the degrees of comparison, definite forms and the so-called «neuter» forms in terms of declensions: for the adjectives of the 1st (*-(i)as*, *-(i)a*; and small part of *-is* (*-ys*), *-ē*) and the 2nd (*-us*, *-i*) declensions these forms are normal, but for those of the 3rd declension — impossible. Then it seems necessary to approve the idea of an alternative term for the so-called «neuter» form of the adjective (*bevaŗdēs giminēs fōrma*) which seems to be somewhat out of place in a synchronic description. The term «indeclinable form» (*nekaŗtomoŗi fōrma*) is suggested in the book (p. 62). From the point of view of its syntactic peculiarity the term «non-concordant form» (*nedērinamoŗi fōrma*) could be taken into consideration (as contrary to other «concordant» forms). Unfortunately, no concrete rules on accentuation of these forms are given. In fact, a very simple practical advice would be of use here: they can be formed on the basis of the Nom. Sg. masc. form by omitting the last *-s*.

One can notice that the declension of adjectives and the formation of degrees of comparison are described on a contradictory basis. While speaking about declension, the elements *-as* etc. are regarded as case endings whereas comparative and superlative forms are declared to be constructed by adding correspondent suffixes «to the positive stem after removal of the stem vowel (*-a*, *-u* respectively)» (p. 63), thus presupposing another morphological segmentation. A mistake is made in the description of the accentuation of comparatives: at first it is pointed out that the stress is «always on the comparative suffix, except in the forms which trigger de Saussure's Law» (i.e. accent class 2), but later it is summarized that «the

<sup>3</sup> The rule on the correspondence of the stem vowel and the interfix (p. 57) is known to be not absolute either, cf. *dirvaŗžolē* (: *dirvā*), *ŗandikaulis* (: *ŗāndas*) etc.

accentuation of the comparative follows the 4th accent class» (p. 63). The latter is more correct but in Nom. Sg. fem. a systematic deviation of this accent pattern takes place, cf. *gerėsnė* and *eilė* (4)<sup>4</sup>. In the description of the accentuation of definite forms the common error shared by many Lithuanian grammars (cf. DLKG, p. 190) is repeated. Thus, the mobile stress pattern is characterized through «shifts of stress between the second (penultimate) and the third (antepenultimate) syllable from the end» (p. 67). This rule does not suit the case with adjectives of the 3<sup>a</sup>, 3<sup>b</sup> etc. accent classes, cf.: *ařtĩmas* (3<sup>b</sup>) — *artĩmāsis, ařtĩmajĩ*.

Apart from the descriptions of declension and word formation of adjectives several pages in this chapter are devoted to the syntax of adjectives. Here three syntactic functions of adjectives are separated and exemplified, namely, attributive, appositive and predicative. Separate paragraphs deal with the usage of the «neuter» form and the definite form. This part is a good example of a correct and laconic description of a complicated topic.

Chapter 4 gives an account on Lithuanian pronouns which are classified rather traditionally on the semantical basis. Mention should be made of the division between personal pronouns of the 3rd person and anaphoric pronouns of the 3rd person established on the basis of their function (p. 74) in spite of their formal identity (*jĩs, jĩ, jĩė, jĩs*). Much attention is devoted to the usage of pronouns of different groups, especially reflexive and demonstrative pronouns<sup>5</sup>. Perhaps one could expect more detailed comment on the rules of usage of indefinite pronouns (the difference between the series with *nĩrs* (*kās nĩrs*) and with *kař-* (*kařkās*) often cause difficulties for students). The declension of pronouns is represented both through examples of complete paradigms (for personal pronouns paradigms of dual are given as well) and through comparison with that of the adjectives and nouns. Nothing is said about such a peculiarity of three pronouns (*anās, katrās, kurĩs*) as constant final stress in all forms. Such pronouns have no special symbol in the dictionaries, being traditionally characterized as those of the accent class 4. Still it seems useful to label such cases, for example, as accent class 4\*. Very few words are said about the declension (which is peculiar in itself) and the usage of the pronoun *pāts* (p. 78). One cannot agree

4 The same anomaly is encountered in the word *didelis*, *-ė* (3<sup>b</sup>).

5 It should be mentioned that the restriction of the usage of the reflexive possessive pronoun *savo* («can never be part of the subject syntagm» — p. 75) is not so absolute, cf. *savo marřkiniai arřiau kũno*.

with the restriction of the paradigm of the pronoun *vienas* to the singular only (p. 82), cf. *Himalajai yra vieni aukščiausių kalnų pasaulyje; Nepalikit mažų vaikų vienu*. Such a restriction would be relevant concerning the forms of the pronoun *kàs*, which is declared to be declined like *tàs* (p. 79), but in fact its paradigm is parallel to that of Sg. masc. only. A dubious form *jiėjie* is found on p. 73 (Nom. Pl. masc., definite form) — cf. DLKG, p. 281: *jėji*.

Numerals are examined in Chapter 5. It contains information on the declension and syntactical usage of cardinal and ordinal numerals as well as the rules how to denote fractional numbers. Some annoying mistakes were found therein. Thus, the word *dešimtis* is declared to have «a 'hard' ending in the genitive plural» (p. 85), which is not true: *dešimčių*. Cardinal numbers as *vienúolika*, being declinable and requiring genitive, are not comprised by the rule that «all *indeclinable* cardinal numbers together with *šimtas, tūkstantis, milijonas, milijárdas...* require the *genitive plural* of an accompanying noun» (p. 85). The declension of the special «plurative» numerals «is identical with that of the plural adjectives of the 1st declension» but the continuation of the thesis is not true: «in other words, with the declension of the plain cardinal numbers 4-9» (p. 86), as the latter is peculiar in respect to Acc. Pl. masc., cf. *penkerius* and *penkis*.

Chapter 6 is the largest one in the book and is devoted to the description of the verbal system of Lithuanian. In a short introduction general remarks on grammatical categories and groups of verbs are made, the system of verbal forms is presented and some relevant morphophonemic rules are discussed<sup>6</sup>. Some kind of ambiguity in the description of verbal stems can be found (cf. the situation with the formation of degrees of comparison above). According to the rules of obtaining present and preterit verb stems (p. 94) the stem vowel is excluded from the stem but in description of the inflection (p. 96-97) it is not regarded as a part of the ending either. The analysis of the finite and non-finite forms of the verb is divided respectively into two expanded sections. An essay on word formation of the verb ends the chapter.

The section on finite verb begins with the presentation of conjugational types. Here some recommendations on how to predict a conjugational type on the basis of the infinitive are provided. The next section on formation of simple tenses does not seem to be the

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<sup>6</sup> One can notice that some forms are absent in the presentation on p. 93 (cf. future participle passive, frequentative past participle active and gerund) but further described.

best in the book. The suggested presentation of the endings of the finite forms (p. 96-97) is not traditional in respect to reflexive verbs. Two series of endings are separated: *-uosi* : *-usi* for the 1 Sg., *-iesi* : *-isi* for the 2 Sg. Prof. Mathiassen regards verbs of the 2nd and the 3rd conjugation (together with past tense forms) as both making use of the latter set of endings and opposes them to those of the 1st conjugation. Obviously there must be a different division: verbs of the 1st and 2nd conjugation on the one hand (with a short stem vowel *-a* or *-i* respectively) and verbs of the 3rd conjugation together with past tense forms on the other (with a long stem vowel *-o* or *-ė*). Also general rules of determining the stem vowel of the past tense (p. 104) do not look clear. Due to some occasion not a single secondary verb is mentioned on pp. 97ff., 106f. among the examples of the verbs of the 1st conjugation (e.g. *gyvėnti* - *gyvėna* - *gyvėno* etc.). Thus the following thesis is not complete: «The *-a* can be added directly to the root (as for example, in *dirb-a* : *dirbti* 'works') or its extended form whereby the following three concomitant praesentia affixes: *-j*, *-n* and *-st* should be especially observed» (p. 98). It is in Latvian, where the first conjugation includes only primary verbs, but not in Lithuanian. Very few words are said about the formation of reflexive forms, namely about the rules of determining the choice of the allomorph of the reflexive affix (p. 97). The description of the accentuation of the prefixed finite verb forms, although lacking concrete information on the verbs of the 2nd conjugation (*i*-stems), is rather complete<sup>7</sup>. Attention should be paid to the alternative presentation of tense system in Lithuanian when there are three tenses separated with the Past having two variants: the non frequentative and frequentative (p. 92, 102-103).

The section on the formation of simple tenses is followed by analysis of the structural interrelation between the three main verbal stems. Here one would like to mention that the type 1 ( $\bar{V} : V : \bar{V}$ ) and type 2 ( $VR : V : \bar{V}$ ) are in principle variants of the same pattern, explained by shortening of superlong diphthongs (p. 114; cf. p. 31). The section on compound tense forms contains the description of such formations as so-called thwarted inceptive (*jis būvo berašąs*) and progressive (*jis teberà rašąs*). For some unclear reason only compound forms of the latter are mentioned, but not simple ones (cf. *jis teberàšo*). Observe a misleading formulation here: «The *progressive*

<sup>7</sup> The same traditional rules, however, can be completed and presented in a more condensed way, see A. Andronovas, «Priešdėlinių veiksmazodžių kirčiavimas morfologinės akcentologijos požiūriu», "Baltistica", 1995, XXX (1).

has the same appearance as the inceptive, only with a double prefix: *tebe-* (= *te+be*)» (p. 117). In fact there is a difference, as in progressive the prefix is connected to the copula verb, whereas in thwarted inceptive — to the main verb.

Parallel to the description of inflection, a thorough study of usage and functions of the forms is provided and meanings of grammatical categories are explained. Much attention is paid to the peculiarity of the category of aspect (together with *Aktionsarten*); it is constantly taken into account while speaking about tense forms. A question can arise concerning the description of the basic meanings of compound future (future perfect) forms. The categories of action and state resulting from this action are not used in it, however they seem just as relevant as in the present perfect and past perfect forms.

In the section on mood, the Lithuanian participle of necessity (*skaitytinas*) is very rightly compared with Latvian debitive form (*jālasa*) and a question of the possibility to establish a debitive mood in Lithuanian is put forward (p. 128). More correct in this case, however, seems the abolishing of debitive mood in Latvian. It looks abnormal in the paradigm of mood, being in fact not a finite verb form but a syntactic combination of copula-verb and somewhat like gerundive in Latin. Apart from the very fact that its marker can be combined with the markers of other moods, there are some other considerations that witness against traditional interpretation but this could be commented on in some other place.

The next interesting point is a doubt about the independent status of the relative mood in Lithuanian expressed by Prof. Mathiassen (p. 134-135). Still this case seems to be a parallel to the indicative series of mood forms which belong to the semantical sphere of uncertainty or non-evidentiality. Further, one should perhaps observe more closely the following comment: «The relative mood is claimed to be in decline in to-day's Lithuanian. That may well be the case in colloquial speech, but in the language of the press it is flourishing» (p. 136).

Concerning the subjunctive<sup>8</sup>, there is a question if the category of tense is characteristic of this mood, or there exists only an opposition of simple and compound (perfect) forms, in other words, whether forms like *būčiau pirkęs* should be named «past subjunctive» (and *pirkčiau* — «present subjunctive») or «perfect subjunctive» (cf.

<sup>8</sup> The commonly used term «subjunctive mood» on p. 224 is replaced by «conjunctive».



other compound forms) with the tense category in this mood denied. Further, one could say that 2 Pl. forms in *-tumèt(e)* are much more usual than those in *-tute*, hence the former would be expected in the pattern of conjugation (p. 130).

Detailed study of Lithuanian equivalents of English modal verbs given separately in the end of the section on mood would be of great use for students.

In the thorough description of the system of passive forms some of them seem rare (if used at all) or doubtful, cf. (p. 141) *esąs buvęs statomas / pastatytas* and, as it seems, not correctly constructed *esąs būsiąs statomas / pastatytas* (instead of *būsiąs buvęs statomas / pastatytas*).

In the end of the section on the finite verb, problems of reflexivity and transitivity are commented.

The section on non-finite verb forms consists of three main parts: 1) infinitive, 2) gerunds and participles and 3) verbal noun. A careful reader may object to such a disposition provoking treatment of verbal nouns in *-imas (-ymas)* as verb forms. The same remark can be made in relation to the treatment of the so-called *būdinỹs* or Infinitive II (p. 151) which seems to be an adverb rather than verbal form (cf. DLKG, p. 423). Lithuanian participles are classified on the same basis as it is usually done for Latvian. Thus, participles are divided (p. 152) into declinable (true participles), partly declinable (so-called *pūsdalyviai* — half-participles)<sup>9</sup> and indeclinable (*pādalyviai* — quasi-participles). The following critical remarks can be made on the description of the formation of participial forms. The rule of formation of the past active participle is not complete in respect to the distribution of the soft and hard consonant in the stem, cf. *rāšius* (< *rašyti*) : *nėšus* (< *nėsti*)<sup>10</sup>. On p. 159 some dubious forms of oblique cases of reflexive participles are found, cf. *dōmintiemsis* (present part. act. Dat. Pl. masc.), *domėjusiėmsis* (past part. act. Dat. Pl. masc.). Such forms for reflexive declinable words

<sup>9</sup> Basing on functional approach Prof. Mathiassen introduces partly declinable participle of the past tense (*-ęš/-us*-formation) apart from that of the present (*-dam*-formation). Thus all participial forms are presented as a symmetric system: those denoting simultaneity (*rāšantis : rašydamas : rāšant*) and those denoting anteriority (*rāšęs : rāšęs : rāšius*).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. further the rule about the alternation of *-t/-č-* and *-d/-dž-* «in the case of verbs in *-tyti* and *-dyti*» (p. 158) which should be restricted only to the so-called mixed verbs (those without suffix in Present), cf. *išvařdyti, išvařdijo > išvařdijus* (not *\*išvařdzius*).

in general seem to be non-existent — cf. the restriction of the plural forms of reflexive nouns to Nom. and Gen. (p. 42). In other cases forms with prefix *be-* are used usually, cf. *besidōmintiems*, *besidomėjusiems* (so one cannot completely agree with the opinion that in the similar example given on p. 172, «*be-* seems to be used for exclusively stylistical and rhythmical purposes»). Present passive participles are said to be formed «on the basis of the 1st pl. present tense by replacing *-e* with *-as* for the nom. sg. masculine, *-a* for feminine» (p. 161). This is a good practical rule, but it contradicts formally the earlier statement, that this participle is formed from the present stem (p. 94). As for the accentuation of participial forms, which is really a difficult matter, no attention is paid to the stress in prefixal forms<sup>11</sup>. The only improvement to be added to the description of the syntax of participles is the rule that only contracted forms of the Nom. masc. of present and future active participles (in *-ąs*, *-ą*, *-įs*, *-į*) and not the full forms (in *-antis*, *-antys*, *-intis*, *-intys*) can be used as a part of verbal predicates. The rule of accentuation of verbal nouns is not correct (suffixial verbs stress the vowel «immediately before the suffix», p. 166), cf. *pavadin-imas* (< *pavadiñti*) and *svėikin-imas* (*svėikiñti*). In the section on word formation of the verb, main suffixes and prefixes are listed together with the analysis of the semantics of derivatives.

Chapter 7 is devoted to the adverb. Here the main formal groups of adverbs are presented with attention to the rules of their accentuation. A separate paragraph describes the syntax and semantics of adverbs. Problems of negation and negative constructions are treated in this chapter as well.

In the last chapters of the book the focus is on the questions of Lithuanian syntax. This description, surprisingly comprehensive for a «short» grammar, is presented in a clear and systematic way. One can find here rich information on usage of cases (with division of adnominal, adverbial and adverbial functions), on ways of expressing syntactic subordination (with special stress on difficult cases of agreement), on prepositions and conjunctions classified according to their meanings and functions. A detailed description of sentence

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<sup>11</sup> On p. 159 an odd thesis can be found: short forms of the Nom.masc. of the present active participles (those in *-ąs*, *-ą*, *-įs*, *-į*) «are end stressed in simple forms and regularly accented on the prefix in the prefixed forms», cf. however, *išgąsdinąs*, *nuperkąs* etc.

types and characteristics of the sentence-constituents<sup>12</sup> is presented. Such practical material as time expressions is dealt with in a separate section. Some small slips, however, were found here, cf. e.g. an acceptance of an accusative form in the expression *dabar pusė* (not *pusė* — cf. p. 203) *devintos*; the translation for 'before 3 o'clock' should be *prieš trečią valandą* as it is not ambiguous in contrast to the suggested *prieš tris valandas* (p. 205), which is more usual with the meaning '3 hours ago'. Maybe a more detailed commentary on the difference of case in such expressions as *vakarė* (Loc.) : *añtrą diėną* (Acc.) : *antraĩs(iais) mėtais* (Instr.) with time meaning would be desirable. Little attention is paid to such constructions, characteristic of Lithuanian language, as *šepetys batams valyti* (p. 195). No comment is given on the difference in the usage and meaning of *iš* and *nuo* (p. 200, 202), cf. *laiskas iš / nuo draugo*.

Really precious is Chapter 14 dealing with word order problems in Lithuanian. As the author himself acknowledges, this area in Lithuanian grammar has not yet been well studied. The chapter in question can undoubtedly be considered as an important work in this field. Apart from a short introduction where the methodology of the description and basic terms are presented, it contains the following three parts: 1) the position of the «members of the sentence», 2) the position of the «members of the nounphrase» and 3) the position of clitics<sup>13</sup>. Much attention is paid to the communicative structure of the sentence (theme and rheme opposition).

Speaking of the whole book in general one must admit that it perfectly combines features of an academic grammar and a student's reference manual. The author skilfully describes in a clear and understandable way topics that can hardly be structured (the problems of aspect, use of reflexives, definite forms of adjectives etc.). In fact, the book is written in such away that even if a reader is not professionally interested in a concrete topic he would enjoy reading appropriate pages. On the other hand, the approach is very moderate without efforts to give answers to all the questions; anyway, there is a bibliography in the end of the book containing references to the best works on Lithuanian language. The book is well organised methodologically: every chapter begins with a paragraph explaining

12 Prof. Mathiassen uses a term «members of the sentence» (p. 210), borrowed from Slavic grammatical tradition.

13 Observe a strange and incorrect rule that *ne-* is located «after an ordinary prefix (type *ap-*, *už-* etc.), but before *be-*, *-si-*» — cf., *ne-be-at-si-sakyti* etc. (p. 246).

the logic of presentation of the material. Numerous cross-references can be found (sometimes, however, not indicating the exact page). Not all but many grammatical terms appearing for the first time are translated into Lithuanian (in such cases, together with marked accent one would like to have the accent class also given). The principle to accentuate single Lithuanian words declared on p. 17 (not sentences and word groups) is not always consistently followed and some single words lack the accent mark. In fact, it would be useful to mark accent in all Lithuanian words and phrases in the book; that would be a big advantage especially for students.

In the Introduction, the author modestly expresses his hope that there is «a considerable need for a grammar of Lithuanian of this size in English» (p. 17). It must be stressed, however, that the book is necessary and useful not because of the fact that it is written in English. It is an original study of the modern Lithuanian language interesting and valuable in itself. It could be doubted, however, that the object of description can be strictly considered as Contemporary Standard Lithuanian (p. 17). The recommendations of the author do not always correspond with those of normativists of Lithuanian. Sometimes colloquial expressions are introduced and some obsolete or dialectal words or forms can be found. Unfortunately, the book contains many minor errors and misprints, so one should wait for the revised edition where they will be corrected.

**Terje Mathiassens A short Grammar of Lithuanian**

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Anmelderen kommenterer flere deler av T. Mathiassens nylig utgitte litauiske grammatik på engelsk. I anmeldelsen blir det analysert i detalj og diskutert enkelte punkter som kunne være annerledes enn slik de er presentert i grammatikken. Bokens vellykkethet og viktighet blir understreket.