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L. CEPLĪTIS, A. MIKĒLSONE, T. PORĪTE, S. RAĢE: **Latviešu valodas pareizrakstības un pareizrūnas vārdnīca**. Rīga: Avots, 1995, 946 pp.

As the title indicates, this dictionary covers two aspects of correct Latvian usage: orthography and orthoepy. In this review we will only be concerned with the latter aspect, as for linguists interested in the Baltic languages the dictionary will be, first of all, a source of information on the phonetics of Latvian. The information one expects to find in an orthoepic dictionary comprises phenomena of two kinds: certain features of pronunciation can easily be deduced from the orthographic shape of the word (e.g. automatic assimilatory voicing and unvoicing of consonants, which can be described by means of simple general rules), whereas others are less predictable and should be indicated for each case separately (e.g. syllable accents). Linguists will be particularly interested in the features belonging to the latter group, but, inasmuch as the new *Latviešu valodas pareizrakstības un pareizrūnas vārdnīca* (henceforth: LVPPV) is not intended for specialists only, features of the first group are consistently dealt with as well.

As one would expect, the information on correct pronunciation contained in the LVPPV is split into two parts: general guidelines for pronunciation are given in the Introduction, whereas the main part lists lexical items provided with transcriptions. The dictionary obviously claims to be the most reliable and exhaustive source of information on the spelling and pronunciation of Latvian words, as well as on their inflection (the corpus comprises about 80 000 lexemes). The LVPPV concentrates on the following features (p. 10–13):

- stress (if not on the first syllable),
- syllable accent (traditionally called ‘syllable intonation’),
- syllable boundaries (in the case of ⟨ie⟩ and ⟨dz⟩),
- the phonetic value of the graphemes ⟨e⟩, ⟨ē⟩ (open or closed sounds), ⟨o⟩ (monophthong (short or long) or diphthong), ⟨n⟩ (dental or velar),

- lengthening of voiceless obstruents between short vowels in disyllabic words (as in [up:ε]; nothing is said about lengthening in polysyllables, as in [tsæp:ure] — p. 12, 36),
- vocalisation of consonants (no degrees of vocalisation are distinguished, cf. [taʊs] : [tæ:ʊs] — p. 12, 36),
- certain assimilation processes in consonant clusters.

The treatment of some orthoepic problems appears to be rather superficial. Thus, the authors shrink from providing strict recommendations on consonant assimilation on the morpheme boundary and on vowel contraction while “marking alternative modes of pronunciation with an asterisk” (p. 12), so that it is up to the reader to choose the appropriate pronunciation. However, the transcriptions [puz'dienas] and [puz'diēna] ‘half a day’ on the one hand and [mūs'dienas] and [pus'divi] on the other seem to be contradictory. Assimilation with respect to place of articulation is recognised only for the change of /s/, /z/ to /ʃ/, /ʒ/ as in [aiʃ:aut] *aizšaut*. The word *astorņnieks* is transcribed [astuõņniēks], although the sequence [ɲn] is probably hard to pronounce and some kind of assimilation and simplification of the cluster is bound to occur here.

The scope of simplification of consonant clusters is practically reduced to a few words such as *svē(t)diena*. Judging by the transcriptions, correct Latvian usage requires [j] to be pronounced in *rupjmaize*, *slapjdrankis*; but as the authors of the LVPPV generally tend to ignore phonotactic features, no evidence may be drawn from the lack of information concerning alternative pronunciations without [j]. No mention is made of an interesting pronunciation feature of many Latvians consisting in the loss of [r] in the position between a long vowel and a dental stop, which then acquires alveolar articulation ([va:di] *vārdi*), though this feature seems to call for some evaluation. Nor is any comment given on the reduction of vowels in word-final position so characteristic of the vernacular of Riga.

Many questions which might rise in the mind of the foreign user are left unanswered. A student or learner of Latvian might, for instance, be curious to know how a word like *taisns*, for which the rather uninformative transcription [tāisns] is given, should actually be pronounced. Three possibilities suggest themselves: syllabic pronunciation of the sonorant, rendering the word disyllabic ([taisn̩s]); monosyllabic pronunciation with unvoicing of the sonorant ([taisn̩s]); and, finally, vowel insertion ([taisnis]), which Endzelin described as the usual pronunciation in the early twenties (cf. e.g., Endzelīns 1922, 5). Evidently the authors do not see this as a problem, at least from the point of view of correct pronunciation, and consequently they say nothing about it. Are we to assume, then, that all three pronunciations are correct? (cf. Laua 1997, 134).

The fact that the LVPPV is the first publication since Mühlenbach and Endzelin's dictionary to indicate the syllable accents of Latvian words, as well as the open or closed pronunciation of ⟨e⟩, will probably constitute its chief quality for most students and learners of the Baltic languages. The user, however, will no doubt be somewhat disappointed to find a number of striking contradictions and gaps in the treatment of several questions.

First of all, it should be noted that the syllable accents recommended in the LVPPV are often at variance with those given in ME. Thus, among words beginning with *A*, 83 instances of divergence were found, excluding obvious misprints and complicated indirect correspondences.¹ The authors claim ME and Lgr to be the main sources for regulating syllable accents in the literary language (p. 25). They add, however, that special inquiries were made into actual usage in order to establish the pronunciation of some problematic items (cf. Raģe, 1975, 107). Unfortunately, the results of these inquiries are not accessible to a broad circle of linguists, and numerous doubts arise as to the sources of the above-mentioned divergences. So, for instance, the pronunciations [kāzas], [sālt], [sveikt] seem problematic when compared to [kāzas], [sālt], [svēikt] attested in ME (s.v.) and Lgr (p. 37, 759, 777). As not the slightest comment is made on such cases, the user is really at a loss here: should he give credit to these unexplained ‘new’ accents in LVPPV or should he continue to rely upon the authority of ME? Of course we should

¹ We wish to thank Justyna Pawela (Poznań) for her invaluable help in collating both dictionaries.

bear in mind that ME has also been criticised on this account: "The syllable accents indicated in the entry-word usually correspond to their accent in related languages, but there is often no justification for these deductively established accents in actual modern Latvian usage" (Bendiks 1965, 16).

One of the most interesting features of the LVPPV is that it gives syllable accents for the whole of the modern Latvian vocabulary, including recent borrowings. This should give us an idea of the mechanisms involved in the assimilation of these borrowings to the Latvian accent system, which is, of course, relevant to the synchronic description of the Latvian syllable accents. We might *a priori* expect neutralisation of the oppositions between the accents, their distribution being determined by the phonetic and prosodic environment. In the case of sequences with tautosyllabic sonorants (especially /r/), the picture we get from LVPPV is highly perplexing in this respect. We find foreign /er/ with even accent in [verbēna], [geřbera], [deřbijs], but with falling accent in [bērbērs], [cērbērs], [hērbārijs]. The phonetic environment is more or less identical in all these cases, and they all belong to the same chronological layer of borrowings, so that we might expect a uniform pattern. Instead, the distribution of accents seems to be completely erratic. Does this mean that the accent prescribed for the words cited here is based on established usage? This does not seem likely, as all of these words are probably too low in frequency for the accent pattern to be established empirically. The accent prescribed in the dictionary must therefore be based on certain *a priori* considerations, but what these are is not clear.

In Latvian linguistics, syllable accents are traditionally ascribed to both stressed and unstressed syllables. From Endzelin's descriptions of the Latvian accent system it appears, however, that only the broken accent remains distinct in unstressed position, mainly on account of the glottalisation by which it is characterised; as to the even and falling accents, Endzelin posited a (potential) distinction in syllables with secondary stress only, e.g., *apsēja* as against *apsēja* (Lgr, 35). LVPPV distinguishes falling from even accent for unstressed sequences with tautosyllabic sonorants, cf. [kořstāņc], [kořceņns] as against [kořcērc], [galērc]. What is here described in terms of accent distinctions probably consists in differences in the quantity of the sonorants. This is obviously a redundant feature, partly determined by the phonetic environment ([kořceņns], [enerģija] as against [kořcērc], [inērc] point to the influence of a following voiced consonant). On the whole, however, the pattern appears to be highly erratic here as well, and one wonders what kind of criteria have been used in establishing the 'accent' of such unstressed sequences.

It is a well-known fact that the tautosyllabic diphthongoid sequences which alternate with heterosyllabic sequences in word inflection and derivation automatically acquire falling accent in Latvian, as in *kārš* (*kara*), *zēmju* (*zeme*), *dāřskāitlis* (*dařa*), etc. (p. 26). This redundant prosodic feature is regularly marked in the dictionary (except for grammatical forms which are not provided with transcriptions if the falling accent is the only feature to be indicated — p. 10–11). One wonders, however, why a transcription is supplied only if an even accent is replaced by a falling one, whereas a transcription is lacking if a broken accent undergoes this process. Both cases seem to reflect a similar process of resyllabification and the distinction made between them is difficult to understand.

The comprehensive description of Latvian syllable accents given in the Introduction is incomplete with regard to a certain type of verb forms. In accordance with the rule just mentioned, the falling accent in the 2Sg an 3rd person Present *kūl*, *kūļ* as against 1Sg *kuļu* (from *kuļt*) causes no difficulties. What is more problematic is the Present of such verbs as *stūmt* — *stumj* — *stūma*. No transcription is given and the reader is left to solve the problem himself. The tautosyllabic sequence *um* is not decomposed here because the syllable remains closed due to the stem suffix *-j-*. This presupposes preservation of the even accent: *stumj*. The 2Sg *stum*, in its turn, does not fundamentally differ from *kūl*, which suggests a falling accent here. We have not been able to find out whether these considerations are correct, but Endzelin does not write an accent sign over *stumj*, which suggests that he assumed a falling accent here as well.

The extent to which unstressed syllables are assumed by the authors of the LVPPV to be capable of accent distinctions is astounding. The reader will probably be astonished to find *hierarhija* transcribed as [hi-èrârhiĵa], as against *hieroglifs* [hi-erogĻifs]. It is true that, from the etymological point of view, the morpheme boundary is between *hier-* and *-arhija*. But is this really reflected in syllabification? We may doubt whether even a trained classical philologist will insert a pause or a glottal stop between both components. But even if this is the case, then why only in *hierarhija*, and not in *geriatriĵa*, which is transcribed [geriatriĵa]? By analogy with [hièr-arhija] we would expect [gèr-iatriĵa]. Alongside [pàrodontōze] we would expect [pàrōdija], but what we find is [parōdija], although the Greek word is to be analysed *παρ-ῶδία*. The nature of the enigmatic phonetic or prosodic factor imposing the syllabification *hier-arhija*, *par-odontoze*, and thereby rendering the sequences /er/, /ar/ capable of distinguishing syllable accent, is nowhere explained.

The information provided in LVPPV on the occurrence of the phonemes [ɛ] and [æ] is fairly complete, but not exhaustive, and a few inconsistencies may be observed. The distribution of [ɛ] and [æ] is partly determined by a kind of vowel harmony. If the following syllable contains the vowel [æ], then the effect is the same as when it contains a back vowel; thus we have [pældæ:tu] <peldētu> as against [peldɛ:t] <peldēt>. If this rule is overridden by the rule imposing [ɛ] before palatal or formerly palatalised consonants, including /c/, /j/, (<ç>, <ġ>), as stated on p. 28, then the forms *smēķētava*, *smēķētājs* on p. 746 are not correct, for they imply the inverse hierarchy of rules; if they are correct, then either they should be explicitly mentioned as exceptions, or the rules should be reformulated. One also wonders how the Conditional of *smēķēt* should be pronounced. Endzelin cites these forms with open [æ] from the Valmiera region: *smēķētāji*, *smēķētu*, *mērķētu* (Endzelins DI, III, 504; cf. Lgr, 98), and the form *smēķētājs* is also mentioned in the Academy Grammar (MLLVG, 47). This suggests that such forms should be recognised as belonging to standard usage. The LVPPV, however, says nothing about it. In the absence of an explicit comment, the occurrence of [ɛ] / [æ] in the Conditional is evidently expected to be deducible from the phonological position. The Conditional is given only for some of the 1st conjugation verbs, e.g. *nest*, *vest*, but not for 2nd and 3rd conjugation verbs, and the user would be completely at a loss if, for example, he wanted to know how the Conditional of *lēģēt* 'to bequeath' is to be pronounced. By analogy with *smēķēt* he would be inclined to construct a form [læjæ:tu], but as *lēģēt* belongs to the category of recent borrowings, he might also expect [ɛ] to be retained in all conjugational forms. In this respect, no information at all can be drawn from the forms listed under *lēģēt*, as this is a 2nd conjugation verb and therefore not subject to vowel alternation in the Present (whereas for a 3rd conjugation verb like *peldēt* the form [pældæ:tu] can be predicted from the 3rd person Present [pæld], cf. also pp. 29–30 with the sample of the conjugational paradigm of this word). If no algorithm can be given for Conditionals like *smēķētu* and agent nouns like *smēķētājs*, then these forms should be listed. One may, however, doubt the existence of *smēķētājs* and *smēķētu* in the modern language, and the necessity of retaining this kind of exceptions in standard usage.²

As minor sins of omission the following items could be mentioned. No information is given anywhere on the accent of the vowel -ī- of the Future stem of certain verbs, cf. Lgr, 854. In the distribution rules for [ɛ] and [æ], no mention is made of the closed [ɛ] in such nouns as *akmens*. Although noted in the general description (p. 29), open [æ] is not indicated for the Gen.Pl. in the entry *dzelzs*. Somewhat surprisingly, only the word *piecarpus* has stress variants ([ˈpiecarpus] and [piecarˈpus]), whereas for other items of the same class (*divarpus*, *trīsarpus*, *četrarpus*) only initial stress is given. In the list of geographical names, the forms *Pēterburga* and *Petrograda* occur with a reference to *Sanktpēterburga*, though this form is lacking.

² This case is reminiscent of the situation of the word *doktorands*, which is consistently written with *d* in the dictionaries. Though this is in accordance with the Latin source form, it hardly reflects actual usage and should probably be rejected.

The grammatical information in the dictionary could have been optimised in several respects. So, for instance, the authors' somewhat impenetrable desire to supply personal forms for nearly every verb item results, in the case of impersonal verbs, in slightly comical forms such as 1Sg *kutu*, 2Sg *kuti*, Imperative 2Pl *kutiet!*, etc. (from *kutēt* 'to itch'). In fact, the unproblematic 3rd person forms would have sufficed. The rule for the 2Sg Present ending *-i* in 1st conjugation verbs as formulated on p. 19 can be misleading in that it could produce forms like *cērpī* instead of *cērp* (inf. *cirpt*). For more details on the grammatical aspect of the LVPPV cf. Tenhagen 1997 and Andronov 1998.

In spite of these critical remarks, we must emphasise that the LVPPV marks an important step in the history of Latvian linguistics, and obviously reflects the present state of its achievements. Apart from its intrinsic value, it is also useful in that it brings to light many unsolved problems in various domains of the study of the Latvian language, both from a descriptive and from a prescriptive point of view. This will undoubtedly lead to further discussions and investigations. Of course, the results of more than 30 years' work cannot be compressed into one single volume, and Baltic scholars will therefore eagerly look forward to detailed comments on the most problematic issues as well as to the publication of the relevant materials (cf. Raģe, 1975, 112).

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