The book, modelled on Charles Gribble’s *Russian Root List* (1981), is intended for both linguists and students of Lithuanian and addresses problems encountered by non-native speakers when attempting to determine the structure of a longer Lithuanian word and identify the morphemes it consists of. Vakareliyska suggests a solution in the form of a list of the most common modern Lithuanian roots and affixes together with variants and a list of rules responsible for the most regular variants.

The main part of the book is the root list itself. It is preceded by an introduction explaining the purpose of the book and also comprising a rather short section on relevant phonological and morphophonemic rules and a longer section, called “Methodology”, on the principles that underlie the presentation of roots in the list. The root list is followed by two other lists consisting of common derivational suffixes and prefixes respectively. (The suffix list also contains interfixes.) The last two parts are an appendix giving linguistics terms and their definitions, and references.

As mentioned by the author, the list of roots is derived from Rimkutė *et al.* (2011), Centre of Computational Linguistics (2013), and Karosienė (2004), whereas the information about affixes is extracted from Ambrazas (1997a, 1997b) and Mathiassen (1996), as well as Paulauskienė (1994) and Ulydas *et al.* (1965). The root list does not include later borrowings, which is justified by the fact that such roots, shared by many European languages, are easily identifiable and therefore do not present a problem for a student. It must be noted, however, that at least one relatively recently borrowed morpheme found its way into the list of suffixes: ‘diminutive, used primarily with loanwords’ *-etė* as in *vagonėtė* ‘little car’ (train).

The book has a clear synchronic emphasis. The author writes on p. 3–4 that “<...> root forms are not necessarily the etymological roots, which can be reconstructed by stripping away historical rules, but the basic forms of the roots as they appear in the modern language”. “For example, the etymological combinations *bai-*l-, *bai-*m-, *bai-*s- ‘fear’, which consist of the historical root *bai-* followed by one of various old unproductive suf-
fixes whose meaning are now lost, are all treated here as synchronic roots
beim-, bail-, bais-.” The variants of the same root are either given in the
same entry in alphabetical order, e. g., telp-, tlip- ‘fit in, find room’ plus
an additional entry for tilp- with a reference to telp-, or in separate entries
with cross-references, e. g. pil-, pyl- ‘pour, fill; castle; see also piln-’.

Since the root list does not include full words, it offers a clearer per-
spective on homonymous roots, not obscured by typical nominal and ver-
bal affixes: cf. bad-1 ‘hunger, starve’, as in badas, and bad-2 ‘butt, gore,
poke, prod’, as in badyt. Suffixes, on the contrary, are given together
with their respective endings, differentiating between -aĩn-ė ‘place de-
voted to a kind of item’ in cukrainė ‘confectionary shop’ and -aĩn-is ‘main
ingredient from which the food or other object denoted by the noun is
made’ in saldainis ‘candy’, to give just one example. Moreover, both suf-
fixes and prefixes are listed in sections according to their parts of speech:
thus the two homonymous -aĩn- above, associated with nouns, are given
in a separate list from -aĩn-is, -ė ‘relational adj. derived from a concrete
noun’ as in ketvirtainis ‘quadrangular’. Another manifestation of the dif-
ferent approach to roots and affixes is that only affixes are marked for
stress. This helps to distinguish such cases as -ė-lis ‘diminutive’ in raudon-
ė-lis ‘oregano’ and -el-is ‘personal noun derived from a prefixed verb’ in
atsiskyrėlis ‘hermit’. (On the other hand, it creates an impression that af-
fixes in Lithuanian are always either stressed or unstressed, which is not
quite true, even if it reflects a certain tendency.)

Although it is beyond doubt that Vakareliyska’s book can be of great
help to beginner students of Lithuanian, I am less sure about its usefulness
for professional linguists. It is striking and disappointing that the book
devoted to morpheme variation pays little attention to the mechanisms
behind it. Part 2 of the Introduction, entitled “Relevant Phonological and
Morphophonemic Rules”, fills less than two pages on which the author
describes the opposition between short and long vowels and introduces
some instances of ablaut; further, she briefly deals with palatalization,
touches on the alternation between t, d and č, đ as well as the change
of t, d into s, points out the peculiarities in the declension of such nouns
as akmuo ‘stone’ and duktė ‘daughter’, explains the alternation between
the second component of diphthongs and the consonant v, as in auti (Inf)
v. avė (Past3) ‘put on (footwear)’ while also mentioning the nasal infix,
discusses the metathesis involving the consonant clusters sk, šk, zg, žg,
and, finally, gives an outline of the Lithuanian accentual and tonal system
(p. 2–3). Under the title “Methodology”, part 3 also provides some additional information on nasal infixes, the present formant -st and ablaut (p. 3–6).

This highly eclectic and sketchy text (by the way, forming a stark contrast to a couple of detailed footnotes commenting on some of the above-mentioned issues) cannot really serve as an adequate representation of Lithuanian morphophonology. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the References only contain general sources on the morphology of Lithuanian (in English as well as in Lithuanian and Polish) and lack studies with a special emphasis on phonological and morphophonological rules and alternations, such as Kenstowicz (1972), Girdenis (2003, 2014) and the literature listed in Arkadiev & Itkin (2014).

The root list itself is also not entirely consistent. Many roots either lack regular variants found in other entries or are given a different representation in identical cases. I will name just a few examples. There is no kerp- for kirp- ‘cut’ (but there is a reference to karp-) and no velk- for vilk-2 ‘pull; drag (on), dress; delay, drag on; procrastinate’, while kirt- ‘cut, chop; strike; fell’ is given a reference to a separate entry on kerr- (and kirv-). At the same time perk-, pirk- ‘buy’ and renk-, rinck- ‘gather; choose, elect’ are introduced in the same entries. (There seems to be a confusion between roots meaning ‘sick, ill’ and ‘guard, watch’, as sirg- is only present in the same entry with sarg-, serg-1 ‘guard, watch’.) Similarly, there is no sēm- in the entry for sem- ‘scoop, ladle; draw, derive’ and no lem- for lem- ‘decide, determine, fate’ (but there is a reference to laim- ‘happy; fortune; win’), even though rēm- is rightly placed beside rem- ‘frame; support’. The book has a separate entry for kaun- ‘fight, battle’ but makes no mention of kau- while kov- ‘struggle, fight, battle’ is presented as a separate entry. One would expect that kau-, kov- must form an entry like those for rau-, rov- ‘pull up’, krau-, krov-1 ‘pile, stack; accumulate; build (nest)’, plau-, plov- ‘wash’ etc. Although the author cross-references the entries for mezn-, megs- ‘knot, knit’ and mazg- ‘knot; junction’ and lists kait-, keit-, kint- ‘change; inflection’ (without mentioning kit-), she shows no connection between garb-2 ‘honor, worship; glory, fame’ and gerb- ‘respect, honor, worship’, laip- ‘climb, board; stairs; step, degree’ and lip-1 ‘climb, ascend’ and many other cognate roots that are clearly perceived as such in the modern language.

Some passages in the book do not seem very helpful for a beginner student. Although it is true that the verbs rašyti ‘write’ and žinoti ‘know’
belong to the same conjugation type in the present tense, their infinitive forms alone are not enough to clarify the notion of conjugation, as on p. 88. The mentioning of the fifth noun declension on p. 2 ignores that the Lithuanian declension patterns can be classified in more than one way. The book also contains incorrect statements. Contrary to what Vakareliyska writes on p. 4, č in ginčas ‘argue, quarrel, dispute’ does not originate from *tj (cf. p. 66). The author probably does not know that the Lithuanian ie and uo, not only listed among diphthongs on p. 2, but also given as examples of diphthongs on p. 88, are not viewed as diphthongs by Lithuanian phonologists. Also, I am not sure that the pronunciation of the Lithuanian long ə is adequately rendered by the symbol [ɔ] on p. 2. There are misprints in Lithuanian roots including bręž- ‘draw, sketch, plot’ instead of brėž-, būrb- ‘bubble’ and dūmbl- ‘silt, sludge’ instead of būrb-, dūmbl-, and skus- ‘complain’ beside skund- instead of skus-.

In sum, Vakareliyska’s book may be of assistance to those struggling through the beginner’s level of Lithuanian, although it must be used with caution. Let us hope that its inconsistencies will inspire students to look for answers in more specialized works, including ones in Lithuanian, rather than abandon their pursuit of the language.

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REFERENCES


