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ABLAUT AND NEO-ABLAUT IN BALTIC AND INDO-EUROPEAN

Abstract. It is often assumed that PIE ablaut, used as a sub-morpheme accompanying other morphemes, tends to recede over time in the history of the individual Indo-European languages. On the other hand, it has been argued by some scholars that ablaut is often productive enough to expand over categories that did not have it originally. Both positions were advocated in the literature, the former by Mańczak (1958), the latter by Kuryłowicz (1947). In this paper, dedicated to Prof. Wojciech Smoczyński, this debate is discussed and illustrated by Baltic examples.

Keywords: Baltic; Indo-European; Lithuanian; historical morphology; ablaut.

Dedykuję ten artykuł Profesorowi Wojciechowi Smoczyńskiemu, ku pamięci naszego pierwszego spotkania w Palūšė (Litwa) w 1997 roku.

Wojciech Smoczyński stworzył w dziedzinie studiów bałtystycznych trwałe dzieło, które całkowicie zmieniło nasze podejście do bałtystyki: wszyscy jesteśmy jego następcami i życzymy Profesorowi Smoczyńskiemu, by przez swoje przyszłe, liczne badania mógł wciąż wzbogacać naszą znajomość języków bałtyckich, które od wieków fascynują językoznawców.

Since its inaugural definition by Jacob Grimm in the first part of the nineteenth century (1822 1, 10), ablaut has received a lot of attention in Indo-European linguistics and is generally considered a major feature of the proto-language. Even if there can be a diversity of approaches to the phenomenon of ablaut, most scholars would probably agree with the following definition, given by Ségéral, Scheer (1998, 28): *Non-arbitrary vowel colour alternations known as Ablaut or Apophony that lack any contextual conditioning and are exploited for the purpose of grammatical opposition.* Two elements of this definition to keep in mind are, first, the absence of any contextual conditioning, which distinguishes ablaut from umlaut (e.g. Old High German

lamb ‘lamb’, pl. *lambir*, where the vowel alternation [a/e] is due to the plural ending *-ir*), and, second, the grammatical exploitation of ablaut (e.g. Old High German *werfan* ‘to throw’, pret. *warf* ‘he threw’, where *a*-vocalism is used as a past tense marker). The principal characteristic of PIE ablaut is that it does not present any phonological basis; all attempts to connect ablaut with accent in PIE are only partial and inconclusive. Even the grammatical function of ablaut is subject to serious restrictions. Kuryłowicz claimed that ablaut is usually only a sub-morpheme, accompanying other morphemes, not a self-sufficient morpheme able to convey grammatical informations without additional support (1956, 383): *l’apophonie n’est qu’un sous-morphème ou un morphème accessoire surajouté au morphème constitutif*. In view of this, one could expect ablaut to recede over time in the development of the Indo-European languages, considering that it is not supported by any phonological conditioning and does not reflect any morphological necessity. On this point, an active debate took place in the 1950s between two Polish scholars, Jerzy Kuryłowicz and Witold Mańczak. For Kuryłowicz, ablaut is likely to be preserved and even extended through the course of history, as being part of bipartite morphemes, in conformity with the first law of analogy defined by the same Kuryłowicz (1947):

Loi I. Un morphème bipartite tend à s’assimiler un morphème isofonctionnel consistant uniquement en un des deux éléments, c.-à-d. le morphème composé remplace le morphème simple.

On the other hand, Mańczak (1958) claimed that there is a clear trend, in the Indo-European languages, towards the elimination of ablaut:

Loi II. L’alternance du radical est plus souvent abolie qu’introduite.

This debate, closely linked to the opposition of two personalities, could be of only historical interest, but, surprisingly enough, it has enjoyed a revival of discussion most recently in the literature on ablaut¹. Of course, both positions can be regarded as somewhat excessive in that they lead to focus on those examples that fit best with a pre-defined option – Kuryłowicz on ablaut retention and/or extension, Mańczak on ablaut elimination and/or levelling.

¹ See, for example, Brandão de Carvalho, Russo 2006.

Examples speaking in favor of the former option are easily found in the Indo-European languages. In Old English, for example, the distribution of weak and strong verbs exhibits some variation, sometimes in favor of ablauting patterns. One may compare²:

(1) Old English

Infinitive	Preterite	Meaning	
<i>oferswīðan</i>	<i>oferswīððe</i>	'to overcome'	(no ablaut)
<i>snīðan</i>	<i>snáð</i>	'to cut'	(ablaut)

In Ælfric's works (10th century) the non-ablauting preterite *oferswīððe* is replaced by an ablauting form *oferswáð* by analogy to *snīðan* / *snáð*:

(2) Old English (Ælfric)

Infinitive	Preterite	Meaning	
<i>oferswīðan</i>	<i>oferswáð</i>	'to overcome'	(ablaut)
<i>snīðan</i>	<i>snáð</i> ↑	'to cut'	(ablaut)

Another example of ablaut extension is provided by the infinitives of some Serbo-Croatian dialects. In Old Church Slavic, there was a clear distinction between жещти *žešti* 'to burn' and братьи *brati* 'to take'. The former had no ablaut ([žeg-]); the latter had ablaut ([ber-/bьr-]):

(3) Old Church Slavic

Present	Infinitive	Meaning	
жерж <i>žegø</i>	жешти <i>žešti</i>	'to burn'	(no ablaut)
берж <i>berø</i>	брьати <i>brati</i>	'to take'	(ablaut)

As a rule, the distinction was preserved in Serbo-Croatian³:

(4) Serbo-Croatian

Present	Infinitive	Meaning	
<i>žèžēm</i>	<i>žèći</i>	'to burn'	(no ablaut)
<i>bèrēm</i>	<i>bràti</i>	'to take'	(ablaut)

² Cf. Sievers, Brunner ⁹1951, § 382, p. 321.

³ Meillet, Vaillant ²1980, 232.

but in some dialects the ablauting pattern was extended to the verb ‘to burn’:

(5) Serbo-Croatian (dialectal)

Present	Infinitive	Meaning	
<i>žžēm</i>	<i>žgāti</i>	‘to burn’	(ablaut)
<i>bērēm</i>	<i>brāti</i> ↑	‘to take’	(ablaut)

One could perhaps find an example of this type in Lithuanian, but its analysis is not without controversy. In Lithuanian, verbs with a structure [Car-] are sometimes accompanied by ablaut in the preterite; in the standard language, we find for example the following distinction:

(6) Lithuanian

Infinitive	Present	Preterite	Meaning	
<i>bārti</i>	<i>bāra</i>	<i>bārė</i>	‘to scold, blame’	(no ablaut)
<i>ārti</i>	<i>āria</i>	<i>ārė</i>	‘to plough’	(no ablaut)
<i>kārti</i>	<i>kāria</i>	<i>kórė</i>	‘to hang’	(ablaut)

The *bārti*-type includes other verbs such as *kālti* ‘to forge’ (pres. *kāla*, pret. *kālė*) and *mālti* ‘to grind’ (pres. *māla*, pret. *mālė*); the other types (*ārti* and *kārti*) are rare. Ablaut is virtually limited to *kārti* in the standard language. But in some Eastern Lithuanian dialects (e.g. Lazūnai, in Belorussia), the ablauting pattern seems to have been extended to verbs that did not present it originally⁴:

(7) Eastern Lithuanian

Infinitive	Present	Preterite	Meaning	
<i>bārti</i>	<i>bāra</i>	<i>bórė</i>	‘to scold, blame’	(ablaut)
<i>ārti</i>	<i>āria</i>	<i>órė</i>	‘to plough’	(ablaut)
<i>kārti</i>	<i>kāra</i>	<i>kórė</i> ↑	‘to hang’	(ablaut)

The direction of the change, however, is not entirely certain. It could be argued the other way round that the Eastern Lithuanian dialects preserve for the verb *bārti* and *ārti* an ablauting preterite (*bórė* and *órė* < **bār-* and **ār-*) which was lost in Standard Lithuanian. In Latvian, the preterite is ablauting for two of these verbs (compare *bārt*, present *baŗu*, preterite *bāru*

⁴ See Zinkevičius 1986, 75.

and *kārt*, present *kaŗu*, preterite *kāru*)⁵; *aŗt* ‘to plough’ has a non-ablauting preterite (*aru*). One may note, however, that the ablaut grade of the preterite is regulated in Latvian like that of the infinitive: whenever the infinitive has a long stem vowel, it is replicated in the preterite (*bāru* like *bārt*, *kāru* like *kārt*); when it has a short stem vowel, it also appears in the preterite (*aru* like *aŗt* ‘to plough’, cf. also *malu* like *maŗt* ‘to grind’, etc.). Now the quantitative distinction in the infinitive is not due to ablaut, but to a purely phonological process depending on the structure of the root: we have lengthening of **ar* > **ār* (except with **aŗ* which remains short), but no lengthening of **al*. As a result, the long vowel in the preterite has no historical value in terms of Baltic ablaut. Moreover, it is clear that *bārt* has adopted not only the ablaut type of *kārt*, but also its inflection in the present (*ia*-stem: *baŗu* < **barju* like *kaŗu* < **karju*), which seems to be an innovation in comparison to Lithuanian (*bāra*, vs. *kāria*)⁶; *aŗt* hesitates between the two types of presents (*aru* or *aŗu*, in the standard language only *aru*), partly for morphological reasons, partly because of a tendency towards the depalatalization of *-r-*. As a result, the Latvian data cannot be used as a piece of evidence in favor of the antiquity of one or the other ablaut configuration. More crucially, assuming that the non-ablauting preterites *bāre* and *āre* result in Lithuanian from a secondary levelling does not explain why the same levelling did not take place in the ablauting preterite *kóre* as well⁷. In addition, it is to be noted that some Lithuanian dialects have a different preterite *bāro* (< **bar-ā*), which might be old and, in any case, excludes any form of ablaut.

On the other hand, there are plenty of examples to support Mańczak’s idea that ablaut tends to disappear throughout the course of history. For example, Vedic Sanskrit still distinguishes athematic verbs of the type:

⁵ Schmalstieg 2000, 141.

⁶ This idea, however, seems to stand at odds with the Slavic parallel which displays **je/o*-inflection (Sl. **bōrti*, **borjō*, cf. Old Church Slavic *brati*, *borjō*). The prehistory of this formation is difficult (cf. also Old Norse *berja* ‘smite, beat’, Lat. *ferio* ‘strike’), partly depending on one’s position regarding Jasanoff’s *molō*-presents. See an original approach in Villanueva Svensson 2011, 314. In any case, it seems likely that *je/o*-inflection is here secondary (thus also Stang 1942, 106–107).

⁷ Discussion in Petit 2004, 306–307, 324 and Villanueva Svensson 2011, 314.

(8) Vedic Sanskrit

Present SG1	Present PL1	Meaning	
<i>brāvimi</i>	<i>brūmāḥ</i>	‘speak’	(ablaut)
<i>yāmi</i>	<i>yāmāḥ</i>	‘go’	(no ablaut)

But we find in Pāli (Middle Indic) a strong tendency towards the elimination of ablaut:

(9) Pāli

Present SG1	Present PL1	Meaning	
<i>brūmi</i>	← <i>brūmas</i>	‘speak’	(ablaut)
<i>yāmi</i>	<i>yāmas</i>	‘go’	(no ablaut)

In Baltic, examples of the same tendency can be found without too much difficulty. Old Prussian *genna* ‘woman’ could be such an example — if it is not a German loanword, as argued by Smoczyński (1989, 308; 2000, 38). In Indo-European, this was still an ablauting noun, as shown by Vedic Sanskrit, Old Irish and Classical Armenian:

(10) ‘Woman’ in Indo-European, Vedic Sanskrit, Old Irish and Classical Armenian

Nom. Sg.	Oblique stem	Language	
* <i>g^hén-h₂</i>	* <i>g^hn-éh₂-(e)s</i> (Gen. Sg.)	Indo-European	(ablaut)
<i>jāniḥ</i>	<i>gnāḥ</i> (Gen. Sg.)	Vedic Sanskrit ⁸	(ablaut)
<i>ben</i>	<i>mná</i> (Gen. Sg.)	Old Irish	(ablaut)
<i>kin</i>	<i>kanamb</i> (Instr. Sg.)	Classical Armenian	(ablaut)

In Old Prussian, the weak allomorph of the oblique cases was replaced by a full grade by analogy to the nominative; the same levelling took place in Slavic⁹:

(11) ‘Woman’ in Old Prussian and Old Church Slavic

Nom. Sg.	Oblique stem	Language	
<i>genno</i> (EV 188) →	<i>gennas</i> (Gen. Sg., III 87 ₂ , 103 ₂₂)	Old Prussian	(no ablaut)
жена <i>žena</i>	→ жены <i>ženy</i> (Gen. Sg.)	Old Church Slavic	(no ablaut)

These are elementary examples showing that ablaut is a receding device even in languages such as Baltic that are well known for their archaism.

⁸ Meaning: ‘goddess’.

⁹ Petit 2004, 56–58.

Taken at face value, this seems to corroborate Mańczak's intuitive idea that ablaut tends to recede over time in the Indo-European languages. Things are often more complicated than that. Sometimes, both tendencies (ablaut extension and ablaut recession) seem to operate within the same language with equal value, as two contradictory active forces. We have described above the extension of ablaut in Serbo-Croatian dialects in *žèžēm / žgàti* 'to burn' (instead of *žèći*) by analogy to *bèrēm / bràti*. A further step is the creation of a back-formed non-ablauting present *žgàm* to *žgàti*. A similar process has taken place in Slovenian: *žgáti* 'to burn' / present *žgèm*. Taking things in the long run, one has the impression that Serbo-Croatian and Slovenian first extended ablaut, then reduced it.

These examples show the instability of ablaut, certainly linked with its sensitivity to analogy: ablaut is never absolutely regular. In Lithuanian, for example, an archaic ablauting pattern of derivation is preserved in one case, lost in another one, for no apparent reason:

(12) Lithuanian

Verb	Derivative	
<i>klóti</i> 'to spread'	<i>klúonas</i> 'threshing floor'	< * <i>kleh₂</i> -, vs. * <i>kloh₂-no-</i> (ablaut)
<i>plóti</i> 'to flatten' →	<i>plónas</i> 'threshing floor'	< * <i>pleh₂</i> -, vs. * <i>pleh₂-no-</i> (no ablaut)

The ablauting *o*-grade in Lith. *klúonas* (< **kloh₂-no-*) is corroborated by Latv. *kluõns* 'threshing floor' (ME 2, 238)¹⁰, whereas the lack of ablaut in Lith. *plónas* finds a support in Latv. *plâns* 'threshing floor' and probably Old Pr. *plonis* 'id.' (EV 233). The reasons for this kind of discrepancy are generally described as twofold. Preservation or elimination of ablaut can depend on the degree of semantic proximity between the two items: the closer they are from a semantic point of view, the more powerful analogy will be in restructuring ablaut divergences and imposing a single form. A second decisive factor is the existence of other cognate forms with or without ablaut. Both explanations, however, leave the door open to far too many exceptions and, in the case under discussion, raise internal contradictions.

For *plóti* / *plónas*, it is possible that the non-ablauting form **plānas* (Lith. *plónas*) instead of **plōnas* (Lith. **plúonas*) was supported by the adjective *plónas* 'thin, fine' (< PIE **pleh₂-no-*, Lat. *pānus*); the same analogy

¹⁰ Cf. Smoczyński 2006, 142.

could have taken place in Latv. *plāns* as well (cf. Latv. *plāns* ‘thin’). But, semantically, there is no direct connection between ‘threshing floor’ and an adjective meaning ‘thin’; the analogy does not appear to be well founded. Alternatively, **plānas* could reflect a German borrowing (< Middle Low German *plān* ‘free place, surface’), integrated in a Baltic family, as argued by Smoczyński (2000, 65–66). This would nicely explain why the semantic distance between *plóti* and *plónas* was not an obstacle to the elimination of ablaut, whereas the close semantic relation between *klóti* and *klúonas* did not prevent its retention.

There is no easy explanation of the fact that ablaut is sometimes preserved, sometimes lost, and this contradicts an idea that is put forward in the literature from time to time, according to which ablaut is a system of regularities characterized by a high degree of predictability¹¹.

The close connection between ablaut and analogy provides insights into another feature of ablaut. Unlike phonological change, which replaces a form *x* by a form *y*, following which *x* is dropped out of the system, analogy operates with competitions, not necessarily with substitutions. In case of elimination of ablaut, the ancient ablauting form may make way for a non-ablauting form without disappearing completely. In Latin, for example, beside the masc. and fem. *māior* ‘greater’ (< **mag-iōs-*), the inherited ablauting neuter form *magis* (< **mag-is*) was replaced by a non-ablauting neuter form *māius* ‘greater’ (< **mag-iōs-*) in its primary function, but survived adverbially (*magis* ‘more’). This illustrates another ‘law of analogy’ defined by Kuryłowicz in his 1947 article:

Loi IV. Quand à la suite d'une transformation morphologique une forme subit la différenciation, la forme nouvelle correspond à sa fonction primaire (de fondation), la forme ancienne est réservée pour la fonction secondaire (fondée).

This kind of evolution can be formalized as follows:

FORM		FUNCTION
ancient (<i>magis</i>)	→	new (adverb)
new (<i>māius</i>)	→	ancient (comparative neuter)

¹¹ Ségéral, Scheer 1998, 29: *The vowel of the base-form being known, the vowel of the derived form is predictable.*

A similar example can be found in Lithuanian, illustrating the winding fate of ablaut in this language. As a rule, laryngeal roots tend to eliminate zero grade formations with laryngeal vocalization in Baltic: from PIE **d^heh₁-* ‘to put’ (> Baltic **dė-*, Lith. *dėti*) there is no trace of a vocalized zero grade **d^hh₁-* in Baltic (which would have yielded **dā-*). The reason for this evolution is straightforward: a zero grade ablaut form **dā-* would have been completely irregular in contrast to **dē-* ([dē-/dā-]). A zero grade vowel **ā* resulting from the vocalization of a laryngeal is more likely to have been preserved in roots with **h₂*, since the resulting ablaut fits well into the quantitative ablaut system of Baltic ([ā/ǎ] from [eh₂/h₂]). As a matter of fact, the Baltic root **stā-* ‘to stand’ (< PIE **steh₂-*) exhibits a reduced ablaut form **stā-*. We have in Lithuanian, first, an adjective *statūs* ‘steep’ and its doublet *stāčias* ‘upright, standing’; second, a substantive *stātas* (masc.) or *statà* (fem.) ‘bundling sheave’; third, a verb *statyti* ‘to put, to set, to place’; cognates are found in Latvian (*stats* ‘stake’, *statīt* ‘to posit’) and Old Prussian (*preistattinnimai* ‘we present’ III 111₁₅). These forms have received two different explanations. They are seen either as reflexes of a zero grade formation **sth₂-to-* (corresponding to Vedic *sthitá-*, Greek *στατός*, Latin *stātus* ‘standing’) or as deriving from a formation **sth₂-eto-* (which itself is not attested in any Indo-European language, but is supported by parallel formations such as Ved. *avratá-* ‘without promise’ < PIE **ṇ-urh₁-eto-* or Homeric Greek *ἄατος* ‘insatiate’ < PIE **ṇ-sh₂-eto-*). While the former opinion is traditional (cf. Trautmann 1923, 282), the latter has been advocated by Smoczyński on several occasions (e.g. 2005, 295; 2006, 108; 2007, 597). It is based on the assumption that there is no secure example of laryngeal vocalization in Baltic, which might be simply due to the fact that laryngeal vocalizations often created difficulties to the ablaut system, except precisely with roots in [ā/ǎ]. In any case, irrespective of whether Baltic **stā-ta-* is traced back to **sth₂-to-* or to **sth₂-eto-*, the fact is that **stā-* functions within Baltic as a weak allomorph of **stā-*. Now the Baltic formation **stātas* is opposed in Lithuanian to two other forms **stātas* (with long vowel and metatony in contrast to the infinitive **stāti* > Lith. *stóti*) and **stātas* (with long vowel and no metatony in comparison to **stāti*):

Infinitive <i>*stāti</i>	<i>*stātas</i>	<i>*stātas</i>	<i>*stātas</i>
• Lith. <i>stóti</i>	<i>stātas</i>	<i>stōtas</i>	<i>stótas</i>
‘to stand up’	‘bundling sheave’	‘growth, build, stature’	‘standing’ (participle)

Some of these forms have cognates in Latvian:

• Latv. <i>stāt</i>	<i>stats</i>	—	<i>stāts</i>
‘to stand up’	‘stake’	—	‘standing’ (participle)

The question is how to assess and explain this diversity of forms apparently based on the same formation. In a first approach, one can think at two explanations. First, it could be argued that the three forms *stātas*, *stōtas* and *stótas* belong to different chronological layers: some of them might be old, others recent. This chronological factor may actually have played a role in the history of the individual lexemes, but does not provide a reasonable explanation of their particular shape nor of the conditions of their emergence. A second explanation is that the East Baltic suffix *-tas* covers different things. It can be argued, for example, that substantives in *-tas* go back to ancient masculines (e.g. of the νόστος-type) or to ancient neuters (e.g. of the ποτόν-type). It is likely that *stātas* reflects an ancient neuter (Baltic **statan*), but the idea that *stōtas* reflects an ancient masculine of the νόστος-type cannot be adopted unreservedly¹². Here again, one can never be sure of anything, as long as the precise effects of this difference are not described in detail. It is clear that we will have to resort to these explanations to account for the different ablaut forms, but we cannot simply content ourselves with claiming that the three forms have different origins and chronologies; we still have to explain why these different sources are realized in the way they are, especially as far as their ablaut is concerned.

A generally accepted principle is the role of semantic proximity: the force of analogy is potentially greater between two words that are synchronically close from a semantic point of view than between two words that have diverged and whose cognacy can even have ceased to be perceptible. In terms of ablaut, this means that ablaut levelling is more likely to take place between semantically close lexical items than between words that have developed diverging meanings. The semantic relationship of Lith. *stātas* ‘bundling sheave’ to *stóti* ‘to stand up’ is not immediate, which can explain the preservation of ablaut in the former in contrast to the latter. On the contrary, the semantic relation of Lith. *stōtas* ‘growth, build, stature’ and *stótas* ‘standing’ to *stóti*

¹² There is no evidence for a form **stúotas* nor any plausible scenario to account for its replacement by *stōtas*. On the νόστος-type in Baltic see Skardžius 1943, 321.

‘to stand up’ is more directly sensible, and this can account for the fact that there is no ablaut between them. This can be interpreted as an illustration of Kuryłowicz’s fourth law of analogy referred to above: the ancient form *stātas* appears with a new function, and for the ancient function there is a new form *stōtas*.

Another active principle is the distinction between grammatical and lexical relations. The relation between *stóti* ‘to stand up’ and the participle *stótas* ‘standing’ is grammatical in that *stótas* is a form of the same paradigm as *stóti*: its structure is governed by paradigmatic laws which apply to the verbal system as a whole. In Lithuanian, participles in *-tas* are regularly built on the infinitive stem of which they reproduce both the vocalism and the tonal properties. Ablauting participles in *-tas* have been ousted from the verbal system; they survive exclusively in the lexicon, e.g. Lith. *girtas* ‘drunk’ (< PIE **gʰr̥h₃-to-*) which was replaced by a new full-grade participle *gértas* in harmony with the infinitive *gérti* ‘to drink’. It is therefore not surprising that *stótas* is completely congruent with *stóti*. On the other hand, *stātas* and *stōtas* are lexical, not grammatical derivatives, and this may explain why they differ on some points (ablaut or metatony) from the base verb *stóti*. The combination of the two factors (semantic proximity, paradigmatic proximity) shows the following distribution:

<i>stóti</i> ‘to stand up’	Semantic proximity	Paradigmatic proximity
<i>stātas</i> ‘bundling sheave’	–	–
<i>stōtas</i> ‘growth, build, stature’	+	–
<i>stótas</i> ‘standing’	+	+

This table shows that, both semantically and paradigmatically, *stātas* is distant from *stóti*, whereas *stōtas* is semantically close to, but paradigmatically distant from *stóti* and *stótas* is close to *stóti* both semantically and paradigmatically. In terms of ablaut and metatony, the most distant form is *stātas*, the closest form is *stótas*, whereas *stōtas* is in an intermediate position. It is interesting to note that, on this graduated scale, metatony is a stepping stone between ablaut and lack of ablaut: in a certain sense, metatony is an intermediate form of ablaut or, to put it on the other side, it is an intermediate step in the elimination of ablaut. Practically, while *stātas* represents an inherited ablaut (**sth₂-to-* or **sth₂-eto-*), preserved by

its isolation, and *stótas* a regular derivation of *stóti* (from **steh₂-*), due to its paradigmatic dependency, *stótas* shares a common feature with each of them. In diachronic terms, this can be understood as the result of a secondary evolution: it can be argued, for example, that *stótas* was originally ablauting, like *stātas*, and that the elimination of its ablaut was implemented by introducing a long vowel as in the base verb *stóti*, a long vowel which, due to its secondary origin, received the circumflex tone. An argument in favor of this scenario is provided by *dōtas* ‘gift, present’ in contrast to *dúoti* ‘to give’ (< PIE **deh₃-*). The secondary nature of the long vowel in *dōtas* is proved by the *Ablautsentgleisung* (*dōtas* < **dā́tas/-tan*). The best way to explain it is to reconstruct an original zero grade formation **dā́tas/-tan*, in which the zero grade was secondarily replaced by a new full grade (**dā́tas/-tan* → **dā́tas/-tan*); the short vowel *ǎ* was a *Scharnierform* between two ablaut series (**h₃* in contrast to **eh₃* and **h₂* in contrast to **eh₂*) and can therefore be judged responsible for the *Ablautsentgleisung*. Traditionally, the *stótas*-type is accounted for by assuming that stress retraction yielded circumflex metatony (cf. Stang 1966, 171); according to Derksen (1996, 98sq.), there is a limitation to ancient neuters. I do not see any contradiction between the scenario sketched out above and Stang’s, resp. Derksen’s theories, if one assumes a disconnection between stress retraction and the development of a new vocalism, which depends on the individual fate of ablaut in Baltic.

ABLAUTAS IR NEOABLAUTAS BALTŲ IR INDOEUROPIEČIŲ KALBOSE

Santrauka

Dažnai manoma, kad indoeuropiečių ablautas, vartojamas kaip submorfema kartu su kitomis morfemomis, laikui bėgant linksta išnykti atskirų indoeuropiečių kalbų istorijoje. Kita vertus, kai kurių mokslininkų manyta, kad ablautas dažnai būna toks produktyvus, kad skverbiasi į kategorijas, kurios pradžioje jo neturėjo. Literatūroje abi teorijos turi savo šalininkų, pirmoji – Mańczaką (1958), antroji – Kuryłowiczį (1947). Šiame straipsnyje, skiriamame prof. Wojciechui Smoczyńskui, minėtoji diskusija aptariama iliustruojant ją baltų kalbų pavyzdžiais.

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