

## **Intensive doubt:**

### **On the validity of a reconstructed PIE category**

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In Indo-European linguistics, a stem formation called the “intensive” is normally reconstructed for the proto-language. It is, however, a marginal formation and is usually not treated independently. The intensive belongs to the group of “secondary conjugations” or “*Aktionsart*-stems” within (or parallel to) the aspect stem system, being imperfective primary stem formations with specialized semantic functions.

But whereas some of the “secondary conjugations” can be securely reconstructed for PIE, the intensive is only reconstructed for a mere 14 roots in the LIV. Of these, the LIV regards only five intensive stems as secure. Furthermore, the bases for the reconstruction for these 14 stems are heavily skewed: 12 stems are reconstructed on the basis of Indo-Iranian (only three with cognates from other branches), and two on the basis of a single other branch each (Greek and Armenian, respectively).

This alone is reason enough to take a serious look at the validity of the reconstruction of this category in the proto-language.

In this talk, I will seek to investigate the traditional evidence for the intensive as a PIE category, firstly by consolidating a tentative PIE reconstruction of the intensive on the basis of Indo-Iranian alone, and subsequently by examining possible and suggested relics in other branches against this reconstruction. In the end, the position of the intensive as a PIE verbal category will be assessed.