

Morphological innovations shared by Germanic and other subgroups of IE.

1. Replacement of nonpast marker *-r in mediopassive endings by *-y (levelled in from active endings; e.g. active 3sg. *-t-i, mediopassive 3sg. *-t-o-r → active 3sg. *-t-i, mediopassive 3sg. *-t-o-y).

Sharing the innovation: Indo-Iranian, Greek, Germanic.

Not sharing the innovation: Anatolian, Tocharian, Celtic, Italic.

No clear evidence: Balto-Slavic (loss of mediopassive; but cf. Old Prussian *waisei* ‘you know’??), Armenian (syncretism of active and mediopassive in the nonpast [!]), Albanian (mediopassive replaced with new formation).

Some contrastive examples:

Hittite *kitta* ‘(s)he is lying down’ < **kéytor*, but Sanskrit *śéṭē*, Avestan *saēte*, Greek *kêitai* (Arkadian *kêitōi*) < **kéytoy*;

Tocharian B *partär* ‘it is being carried’, Latin *fertur* < **b^héretor*, but Skt. *bhāratē*, Gk. *p^héretai* (Ark. *p^héretoi*). Gothic *bairada* < **b^héretoy*;

Old Irish (conjunct) *·gainethar* ‘(s)he is being born’ < **ǵnh₁yétor*, but Skt. *jāyatē* < **ǵnh₁yétoy*.

2. Construction of an optative suffix *-o-y- for thematic stems (thematic vowel *-o-, zero-grade optative marker *-ih₁- with loss of tautosyllabic laryngeal in an o-grade syllable).

Sharing the innovation: Indo-Iranian, Greek, Germanic, Balto-Slavic (the Lithuanian “permissive” and the Slavic imperative).

Not sharing the innovation: Tocharian (optative marker with no thematic vowel), Italic (thematic optative in *-ā-), Celtic (probably like Italic, though there is no consensus).

No evidence: Anatolian (no optative), Armenian (clear reflex of the thematic optative not recognizable), Albanian (optative apparently lost).

Contrastive example (restricted to languages that still have an optative; note that in Italic and Germanic this has become the “subjunctive”, while in Celtic it has merged with the old subjunctive):

Skt. *b^hárēt* ‘may (s)he carry’, Av. *barōit*, Gk. *p^héroi*, Goth. *bairai* < **b^héroyd*; Lat. *ferat*, OIr. (conj.) *·bera* < **b^hérād*; Toch. B *pari*

< *b^hérih₁t (imperfect, because the Toch. optative is formed from the subjunctive stem, which is suppletive for this verb; for a synchronically optative example cf. Toch. B *pāṣṣi* ‘may (s)he keep’ with Lat. *pāscat* ‘may (s)he tend (flocks)’).

3. Construction of a superlative suffix *-is-to-.

Sharing the innovation: Indo-Iranian, Greek, Germanic.

Not sharing the innovation: Italic and Celtic (superlative in *-is-ṃo-).

No evidence: Anatolian and Tocharian (no comparative or superlative, probably reflecting the PIE state); Armenian and Albanian (comparative and superlative apparently lost); Balto-Slavic (superlative lost).

Contrastive example: Goth. *luggists*, OE *lengest* ‘longest’ vs. Lat. *longissimus*; cf. also Skt. *vásiṣṭhas* ‘best’, Av. *rəñjištō* ‘swiftest’, Gk. *mé:kistos* ‘longest’ on the one hand and Oir. *senam*, Welsh *henhaf* ‘oldest’ (*senisṃos) on the other.