Abstract. This paper addresses the relationship of the Lith. nom. pl. endings -ai (-aĩ) and -i, -ie (-i, -ie) to each other and to their common source, the PIE pronominal nom. pl. in *-oi. It is argued that the Proto-BSl. preform was *-ai, with acuteness analogically taken from the corresponding nominal ending *-ōs. Proto-BSl. *-ai, which developed regularly to -i in Slavic and to -ai in Old Prussian, had two reflexes in Lithuanian. The phonologically regular treatment is seen in the pronominal and adjectival ending -i(e), which developed from *-ai to *-ẽ via the presumed intermediate stage *-ɛi. The nominal ending -ai is a morphological treatment of the same sequence, with a) *-ɛi remade to *-ai under the influence of paradigmatically related forms in *-a-, and b) acuteness subsequently lost in a final syllable. The second step runs counter to standard opinion, which holds that underlying acute diphthongs in final syllables trigger Saussure’s Law and retain their acuteness in Žemaitian, as in the ā-present forms 1 sg. sakaũ, 2 sg. sakai (Žem. sakâu, sakâ). It is maintained here, however, that the verbal endings that appear as -au and -aĩ in standard Lithuanian are not historically diphthongs at all, but contracted sequences that arose after the “de-acuting” of the inherited nom. pl. in *-ai to -ai and before Saussure’s Law. A byproduct of this explanation is that other descriptively non-acute diphthongs in final syllables, notably the dat. sg. in -ui (< PIE *-ōi) and the instr. pl. in -ais (< PIE *-ōis), can also be assumed to have been originally acute, as their etymologies require.

Keywords: Lithuanian; Balto-Slavic; Indo-European; historical morphology; historical phonology; accent; Saussure’s Law; acute; circumflex.

§1. Let us begin with a few definitions and assumptions. Saussure’s Law was the well-known pre-Lithuanian sound change by which the accent (/ˈ/) was drawn from a non-acute syllable to an immediately following acute syllable. Acuteness was an accent-independent property
of long vowels and diphthongs, here denoted by underlining. Ex.: *prašīti > *prašīti (> prašýti), *rânkâ > *rankâ > rankâ); but *rådîtì > ródyti, *vârñā > várña.

Acuteness was a Balto-Slavic feature, probably originally realized as a stød or broken tone. As argued in Jasanoff 2004, 249, it was historically proper to all “normal” long vowels, including a) inherent long vowels not in absolute final position (e.g., núoma < *nōm-; Villanueva Svensson 2011, 30); b) long vowels by laryngeal lengthening (e.g., móteris < *meh₂-t-); c) long vowels by Winter’s Law (e.g., núogas < *nōgʷ-o-); and d) long vowels by inner-IE contraction (e.g., o-stem loc. sg. ratè < *-ēn < endingless loc. *-e + en).¹ The only long vowels that did not become acute, under this theory of acuteness, were those that were hyperlong, i.e., equipped with an extra component of length. Hyperlong vowels were of two types: a) long vowels arising from contraction across a laryngeal hiatus (e.g., ā-stem nom. pl. raîkos < *-ās (NB: not *-ās) < *-eh₂-es); and b) inherent long vowels in absolute final position, which were prolonged by an early phonetic rule that Balto-Slavic shared with Germanic (e.g., akmuō; cf. Go. namo ‘name’ < PGmc. “trimoric” *-ō < PIE *-o).

§2. Against this background, we may turn to the special problem of the formation of the nom. pl. of o-stems in Balto-Slavic, and in Lithuanian in particular. The IE starting point is well known: PIE o-stem nouns formed their nom. pl. in *-ōs (< pre-PIE *-o-es), while the nom. pl. of what might be called o-stem pronouns ended in *-oi. The inherited distribution is preserved in Indo-Iranian (Ved. té vṛkāh ‘those wolves’) and Germanic (Go. þai wulfos ‘id.’); Greek and Latin generalized the pronominal ending (cf. Gk. hoi lúkoi, Lat. illī lupī). Balto-Slavic took the same course as Greek and Latin. Slavic has -i in both nouns and pronouns (cf. OCS ti vĺcei); for the treatment -i (< “*-i₂”) rather than -e (< “*-ē₂”) see below. On the Baltic side, Old Prussian likewise has -ai < *-oi in both categories (stai wijrai ‘the men’). Only in Lithuanian (Latvian is ambiguous here) are there two endings, both apparently going back to BSl. *-ai < PIE *-ōi:

¹ Not a standard etymology, but the only one that accounts for both the form and intonation of the ending. The underlying thematic endingless locative is probably preserved in Gk. tēle ‘far off’ (A. Nussbaum, p.c.). A contraction of the same type may underlie the BSl. instr. pl. in *-mīs, if this is from *-mi + the older instr. pl. in *-is (Jasanoff 2009b, 141–143). There is no basis for a laryngeal sequence *-miHs.
1) **-*ė** in pronouns and adjectives, whence -i, -i in absolute final position (turtìngi, gerì), -ie, -ie in protected position (gerie-ji), and -iẽ (with circumflex metatony) in monosyllables (tiẽ, jiẽ; contrast Latv. tiẽ, with acute). Distinctive properties of pre-Lith. **-*ė** are that it is acute, triggers Saussure’s Law (cf. gerèsnìs, pl. geresni; archaic, dialectal aĩtràs, pl. antrì), and is “dominant,” i.e., receives the accent in mobile paradigms (e.g., àukštas, plókščias, pl. aukštì, plokštì (3)).

2) **-*ai** in nouns, surfacing unchanged as -ai, -ai (púodai, vilkaĩ, etc.). Unlike the pronominal ending, this ending is non-acute (“circumf lex”) and does not trigger Saussure’s Law (cf. rãtai (2). Like **-*ė**, however, it takes the accent in mobile paradigms (cf. langaĩ (3)).

§3. Of **-*ė** and **-*ai**, the former is by far the more straightforward. Monophthongization to **-*ie** (> ie, etc.) is the normal Lithuanian treatment of Proto-Baltic/Balto-Slavic **-*ai** of any origin, both acute and non-acute, in final syllables. Well-known examples include the loc. sg. adverb namiẽ < PIE **-*o-ï** (cf. Gk. oíkoi ‘at home’, Isthmoĩ ‘on the Isthmus’), the 3 p. permissive te-vediẽ < PIE optative **-*o-ïh** (cf. Gk. -oi; Jasănoft 2009a, 53), the ā-stem nom.-acc. du. dvi rankì < **-*ė** < PIE **-*eh2-ih**, and the athematic 1 sg. esmi < **-*mäi** (cf. OPr. asmai) < PIE **-*mi × *-h2e + i**. The surprising property of the ending **-*ė** is not its segmental shape, but its acuteness. That this feature is old is confirmed by the Slavic treatment **-*i2**. As most recently argued by Gorbacov (2015), building on Jagić (1906) and later writers, Proto-BSl. acute **-*ai** gave **-*i2** in final syllables in Slavic, while non-acute **-*ai** gave **-*e2**. The acute treatment appears in the nom. pl. in **-*i2** and the 2-3 sg. impv. in **-*i2 < *-ais, *-ait** (OCS vedi); the non-acute treatment is seen in the **-*e2** of the o-stem loc. sg. (OCS vlbčê) and (contrasting with Lithuanian) in the ā-stem nom.-acc. du. (OCS röčê). For Proto-Balto-Slavic we have no choice but to set up an acute nom. pl. in **-*ai**.

The acuteness of Proto-BSl. **-*ai**, however, cannot have been phonologically regular. The supposed equation

BSl. acute nom. pl. **-*ai** = Gk. “acute” nom. pl. -oi, -oǐ (oikoi, agathoi ‘good’)  
BSl. non-acute loc. sg. **-*ai** = Gk. “circumflex” loc. sg. -oi, -oǐ (oikoi, Isthmoĩ)

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2 Disyllabic **-*oǐ**, pace Jasănoft 2009a, 55–57.
3 With analogical acuteness in Lithuanian here and in the next example; see below.
4 The optative suffix is non-acute in Lithuanian (cf. permissive -iẽ), but acute in Slavic (2 pl. **-*eťe**).
is spurious. The Balto-Slavic and Greek acutes are unrelated: acuteness in Balto-Slavic – marked – is a reflex of former length; acuteness in Greek – unmarked – means only that the relevant vowel or diphthong was not the result of a contraction. The acuteness of Proto-BSl. *-ai must therefore have been analogical. The most likely “donor” of the acuteness feature was the lost nominal ending PIE *-ōs, which contained a long vowel. A possible scenario would have been the following:

1) PIE
2) pre-BSl., with long vowels marked as acute
3) analogical spread of acuteness
4) analogical spread of pronominal ending

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pronouns</th>
<th>nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*-oi</td>
<td>*-ōs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-ai</td>
<td>*-ōs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*-ai</td>
<td>*-ās</td>
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</table>

The phenomenon of analogical acuteness is well known. We have already seen the Lithuanian ė-stem nom.-acc. du. dvì rankì < PIE *-eh₂-ih₁, with acuteness taken from the other nom.-acc. du. endings (*-ō < *-oh₁, *-ī < *-ih₁, *-ū < *-uh₁), and Lith. athematic 1 sg. -mi(e), -mi(e) < *-mai, with acuteness taken from thematic -u(o), -ū(o) < *-ō < *-oh₂.

§4. If PIE *-oi gave BSl. *-ai, with analogical acuteness, where did non-acute -ai, -aĩ come from? In Stang’s words (1966, 66), “Hier stehen wir vielleicht dem am meisten diskutierten Problem der lit. historischen Formenlehre gegenüber.” One possibility would be that the just-discussed analogical change of *-ai to *-a̱ affected only pronouns and adjectives, leaving nouns untouched:

PIE *-oi > pre-BSl. *-ai > Proto-BSl. *-ai (nouns; cf. Lith. vilkaĩ)⁵

→ Proto-BSl. *-ai (pronouns and adjectives; geri, tiě)

But this is hardly likely, since (inter alia) the locus of acuteness was precisely in the ending *-ōs, which was proper to nouns. Kortlandt (1993) takes Lith. -ai to be the regular reflex of Proto-BSl. unaccented *-ai, and Lith. *-e̱ > -i(e) to be the reflex of an etymologically distinct *-aHi, formed by adding *-i to the inherited o-stem nom.-acc. neuter ending *-eh₂. There is almost no support, however, for the idea that only accented *ai was monophthongized to *e̱ in East Baltic (cf. Stang 1966, 67); the fact that -ai is specifically ac-

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⁵ Slavic would then have to have extended the acute treatment (*-i₂) from pronouns to nouns secondarily.
cented in mobile paradigms speaks strongly against it. The claim that one or
the other of the Lithuanian endings goes back to a neuter plural in “*-āi” (vel
sim.) has a long and unedifying history in Baltic studies. In the last analysis,
it flies in the face of common sense to think that -ai and *-ē go back to com-
pletely independent preforms.

§5. The difference between -ai in nouns and *-ē in pronouns and adjectives, being confined to Lithuanian, is probably relatively recent. The East
Baltic sound change of *ai to *ē, when it took place, must have begun with a
fronting of the first element of the diphthong to some variety of [e] or [ɛ]; the
two components of the new diphthong *ēi then underwent mutual assimila-
tion, giving *ē. Suppose now that the nom. pl. of both nouns and pronouns
originally ended in *-ai, and that this *-ai was at first regularly fronted to *-ēi
in both categories. Putting aside considerations of accent and acuteness, the
pre-East Baltic plural paradigms would then have been

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>pronouns</th>
<th>nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nom.</td>
<td>*tēi</td>
<td>*vilkei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gen.</td>
<td>*tōn or *tēsōn⁸</td>
<td>*vilkōn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dat.</td>
<td>*tēimus⁹</td>
<td>*vilkamus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acc.</td>
<td>*tō(n)s</td>
<td>*vilkō(n)s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instr.</td>
<td>*tais¹⁰</td>
<td>*vilkais¹⁰</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loc.</td>
<td>*tō(n)su</td>
<td>*vilkō(n)su</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We can now pose the problem of the nominal ending -ai as a question:
why did nom. pl. *vilkei, with regularly fronted *-ēi < *-ai, apparently get
remade to *vilkai, undoing the fronting rule? The answer must once again be
analogy. Consider:

1) Nouns of the type E. Balt. *vilkas were descriptively a-stems, with
*-a- in key positions in the paradigm (*-amus, *-ais; also nom. sg.

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⁶ Kortlandt argues (1993, 46) that the final accent of Lith. vilkai is secondary,
citing BCS nom. pl. vūci, with root accent. It is more likely Slavic, however, with uniform
initial accent in the nom. pl. in all stem classes that has innovated vis-à-vis the more
complicated situation in Baltic.
⁷ For older theories see Nieminen 1922.
⁸ Cf. OPr. stēison, OCS tēxv vs. Lith. tū, Latv. tūo. The pronominal ending (< PIE
*-oisoHom) may still have been present in early East Baltic.
⁹ Cf. Lith. tiems, Latv. tiem.
¹⁰ With unfronted -ai– < *-ōi–, perhaps via an intermediate stage *-ōi–. See note 16.
*-as, acc. sg. *-an, dat.-instr. du. *-amV). There would thus have been pressure to substitute *-ai for *-ei in the nom. pl.

2) The pronouns also had *-a- in many forms. But in pronouns these were concentrated in the singular (cf. Lith. tās, tām(u)ī, tā, tamė), while the fronted diphthong *-ei- was found in the nom. pl., the dat. pl. (*teimus), perhaps the gen. pl. (*teisōn), and the dat.-instr. du. (cf. Lith. tiemdviem).

I suggest, therefore, that *-ei was replaced by *-ai in nouns (*vilkēi → vilkai) but not in pronouns, where it was “supported” by the *-ei- of other plural and dual forms in the pronominal paradigm.

§6. Apparently standing in the way of the proposed identification of -ai and *-ē is the fact that the two endings differ in intonation. At the surface level this is not surprising, since acute vowels and diphthongs are not tolerated in final syllables in standard Lithuanian. Except in monosyllables, acute monophthongs in final syllables are shortened (e.g., galvā < *galvā; Leskien’s Law), and acute diphthongs are de-acuted or “circumflexed” (e.g., 1 sg. sakau, 2 sg. sakai < *-au, *-ai). But two facts stand in the way of trying to take vilkaĩ from *vilkái (i.e., *-ai) by low-level metatony:

1) Genuine underlying acute diphthongs in final syllables seem to have triggered Saussure’s Law before losing their acuteness, as in sakau, -ai above (< *sakau, *-ai). The nom. pl. in -ai did not have this effect (cf. rātai (2)).

2) A contrast between acute and non-acute diphthongs still exists in final syllables in Žemaitian. In Žemaitian the 1, 2 sg. verbal endings are audibly acute (sakau, sakā, with broken tone), while the nom. pl. ending is circumflex (vākā = standard Lith. vaikāi).

The case against taking vilkaĩ from *vilkái thus looks very strong. But the forms sakau and sakai (i.e., the 1-2 sg. of the presents and preterites in *-ā-) are unique; no other diphthongal endings in Lithuanian, so far as I am aware, trigger Saussure’s Law and surface as acute in Žemaitian.11 Given the complex history of the Baltic inflection in *-ā- (see below), the testimony of these two verbal endings needs to be looked at in more detail.

§7. The Baltic ā-presents, which have lent their inflection to the ā-preterites, are cognate with the Hittite factitive presents of the type newaḫḫ- ‘make new’ (: newa- ‘new’; cf. Lat. renouāre). The original nucleus of the Bal-

11 Other than the parallel -iaũ, -ei of the ē-preterite.
tic forms must have consisted of verbs like *sth₂té-h₂ ‘make to be’ *sth₂té/ó-’ i.e., ‘set up’ (= Lith. stataũ, stăto- ‘build’). Hittite verbs of this type inflect according to the ḫi-conjugation (3 sg. newah₂-i), implying a PIE “h₂e-conjugation” paradigm *neu₂h₂ei, *neu₂h₂-th₂ei, *neu₂h₂-e, etc. (cf. Jasanoff 2003, 139–141). Such presents were typically thematicized in the IE daughter languages. In Balto-Slavic the result was a present type in *eh₂e/o-; the sequence *eh₂e/o- gave the non-acute *-ā- of Lith. 3 p. sāko, 1 pl. sākome, etc. The 1 sg. and 2 sg., however, are less straightforward. In the 1 sg. the phonologically regular treatment of the thematic 1 sg. in *eh₂oh₂ would have been non-acute *-ā (Lith. *-o) or non-acute *-ō (Lith. *-uo), not acute *-au. In the 2 sg., *eh₂esi would presumably have become *eh₂ei (vel sim.), with the same replacement of *-esi by *-ei (or *-ai) as in other thematic presents; *eh₂ei in turn would probably have given non-acute *-ai, as in the ā-stem dat. sg. (raṅkai < *eh₂ei). This means that the quasi-attested 1 sg. in *-au (sakaũ, Žem. sakāu) is wholly analogous, and the quasi-attested 2 sg. in *-ai (sakaĩ, Žem. sakâ) at least partly so.

§8. The simplest way to explain sakaũ, -ai is to take these forms from reconstituted (trisyllabic) *sâkāo and *sâkâo, respectively, with the productive endings *-ō and *-̯ō added to the synchronic stem in *-ā-.12 Starting from such preforms, it is easy to construct a scenario such that acuteness would have been lost in old acute diphthongs (specifically, in nom. pl. -ai < *-ai) without triggering Saussure’s Law, while new acute diphthongs would have been produced that did trigger, or appear to trigger, the rule. One possibility would have been the following:

1) starting point (acute nom. pl. *-ai; disyllabic 1 sg. *-āo)
2) loss of acuteness in diphthongs in final syllables: *-ai > *-ai
3) contraction of *-āo to a new acute diphthong: *-ō > (*-au >) *-au

12 For a typological parallel to the addition of a syllable in this way, compare Latin gen. sg. filiae < OLat. filiāī, with the o-stem ending -ī added as an extra syllable to the ā-stem filia ‘daughter’.

13 With spreading of the acuteness of the *-ō to the non-acute *-ā- when the two merged into a single syllable.
4) Saussure’s Law: movement of the accent to a following acute syllable (*sakau > *sakâu)
5) retention of acuteness in Žemaitian and (re-)loss of acuteness in standard Lithuanian

It is easy to think of variations on this theme. The key point is that since the supposed acute diphthongs in sakaũ, -aũ were “spurious,” i.e., produced by late contraction, they have nothing tell us about whether Saussure’s Law would have been triggered by a real acute diphthong like the nom. pl. in *-ai. The claim of this paper is that old acute diphthongs in final syllables lost their acuteness too early to constitute an environment for Saussure’s Law. Under the scenario above, the conditioning agents for Saussure’s Law in final syllables would have been a) ordinary acute long vowels, b) acute monophthongs that went back to earlier diphthongs (notably *e < *ei < *ai), and c) secondary acute diphthongs that arose by contraction (*au < *āo; *ai < *āe). Primary acute diphthongs (*ai, *au) lost their acuteness before the rule applied.

§9. If the Lithuanian nom. pl. in -ai, -aũ was really the reflex of a Balto-Slavic acute diphthong *-ai, then a similar history can be assumed for other diphthongal endings with a superficially “circumflex” profile. Here belong two important cases:

1) the o-stem (= synchronic a-stem) dat. sg. in -ui < PIE *-oi < pre-PIE *-o-ei. Since the contraction to *-oi was a fait accompli in the proto-language, the long vowel – and hence the long diphthong – should have come out as acute *-oi in Balto-Slavic. Nothing prevents us now from actually assuming pre-Lith. acute *-oi, with the same pre-Sau-

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14 It might seem an undesirable feature of this account that acuteness is stipulated to have been lost twice, once in step 2 and again in step 5. But the re-loss in step 5 would have been a trivial event, triggered by the fact that the two verbal endings would have been virtually the only acute final vowels in the language.

15 A major alternative would be to date step 2 — the elimination of acuteness in inherited final diphthongs — after Saussure’s Law, but to limit Saussure’s Law to monophthongs. We might then have 1) *rātai : *sakāo > 2) *rātai : *sakāo (spreading of acuteness from *-o to *-ā in *sakāo) > 3) *rātai : *sakāo (Saussure’s Law, confined to monophthongs) > 4) *rātai : *sakāo (loss of acuteness in final diphthongs) > 5) *rātai : *sakau (contraction). Arguing against this, as pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, is the operation of Saussure’s Law in the word-internal suffix of the superlative (cf. OLith. geriáusias ‘best’, brángiausias ‘most expensive’ < *geriausias, *brangiausias).
ssure’s Law “de-acuting” to *-ōi (> -ui, -uī) as in nom. pl. *ràtaii > *ràtaii (> ràtai)

2) the o-stem instr. pl. in -ais, -aĩs < PIE *-ōīs. As in the dat. sg., the long diphthong can be assumed to have given a Balto-Slavic acute, which was de-acuted to Lith. -ais via the possible intermediate stage *-ōiis. ¹⁶

The significance of these endings is that they represent the most serious remaining exceptions to the position that inherent long vowels – long vowels of non-laryngeal, non-Winter’s Law origin – came out [+acute] in Balto-Slavic. The claim here is that they were acute until this feature was secondarily lost by the de-acuting of diphthongs.

§10. Let us summarize:

1) The Proto-BSl. nom. pl. of o-stems and o-stem pronouns ended in *-āi, with acuteness borrowed from the nominal ending *-ōīs.

2) Proto-BSL. *-āi gave Slavic *-īz. In pre-Lithuanian, *-āi split secondarily into a phonologically regular reflex *-ēi > *-ē (in pronouns and adjectives) and a “morphological” (= analogical) reflex *-āi (in nouns).

3) After the monophthongization of *-ēi > *-ē, but before the contraction of *-āō to *-au and *-āê to *-āi in ā-presents, acute diphthongs in endings, including the nom. pl. in *-āi, the dat. sg. in *-ōī, and the instr. pl. in *-ōiis(?), lost their acuteness by regular sound change.

4) Saussure’s Law was triggered by the “new” acute diphthongs *-au and *-āi in ā-presents, but not by the de-acuted endings that surface as -ai (nom. pl.), -ui (dat. sg.), and -ais (instr. pl.).

¹⁶ Cf. note 10. The Osthoff’s Law shortening of *-ōīs was evidently distinct from normal *-aĩs, which would eventually have given *-ēs (rather than -ais) in Lithuanian and *-īz (rather than -y) in Slavic.
SAUSSURE’O DĖSNIS, NOM. PL. SU –ai IR LIETUVIŲ
KALBOS AKŪTINIŲ DVIBALSIŲ GALINIUOSE
SKIEMENYSE LIKIMAS

Santrauka

Straipsnyje nagrinėjamas lietuvių kalbos nom. pl. galūnių -ai (-aǐ) ir -i, -ie, (-i, -ie) tarpusavio santykis, taip pat jų santykis su bendru šaltiniu – ide. Įvardžių nom. pl. galūne *-oi. Teigiama, kad pirminė bl.-sl. forma buvusi *-aǐ su akūtu, perimtu pagal analogiją iš atitinkamos daiktavardžių galūnės *-oš. Bl.-sl. *-aǐ, dėsningai virtusi slavų -i ir prūsų -ai, turi dvejopus refleksus lietuvių kalboje. Fonetiškai dėsningas rezultatas matomas tarpusavio santykinės *-ai ir daiktavardžių galūnėje -i(e), atsiradusioje pirminei *-aǐ virtus *ę per spėjamą tarpinę stadiją *-ęi. Daiktavardžių galūnė -ai – morfologinio proceso rezultatas, kur a) *-ęi pakeista į *-ai dėl kitų paradigmos formų su *-a- įtakos ir b) akūtas vėliau išnykęs galiniame skiemenyje. Antrasis žingsnis prieštarauja vyraujančiai nuomonei, pasak kurios, akūtiniai dvigarsiai galiniuose skiemenyse sukelia Saussure’o dėsnį ir išlaiko savo akūtą žemaičių tarmėje, pvz., šamieno es. l. formose 1 sg. sakai, 2 sg. sakait (žem. sakai, sakâ). Tuo tarpu straipsnyje teigiama, kad bendrinės kalbos veiksmažodžių galūnės -aui, -ai įtoriškai yra visai ne dvibalsios, o kontrahuoti garsų junginiai, atsiradę po paveldėtosios nom. pl. galūnės *-ai „deakūtizacijos“ į -ai, vykusios prieš Saussure’o dėsnį. Šis aiškinimas, be to, leidžia teigti, kad ir kitų galinių skiemų neakūtiniai dvigarsiai, visų pirma dat. sg. -ui (< ide. *-oį) ir instr. pl. -ais (< ide. *-ois), anksčiau galėjų būti akūtiniai, kaip reikalauja jų etimologijos.

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