On the homonymy of ‘put’ and ‘suck’ in Proto-Indo-European

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Abstract

PIE *dʰeh₁- ‘to put, make’ and *dʰeh₁-(i-) ‘to suck (mother’s milk)’ look like two separate verbal roots with a very different meaning, which happen to be homonymous. Yet recent investigations have shown that the morphological behaviour of both verbs is more similar than was previously thought. This article offers a re-evaluation of the evidence and explores the options to bridge the semantic gap between ‘put’ and ‘suck’.

Keywords

Proto-Indo-European – verbal system – syntax – put – suck – homonymy

1 Introduction

The communis opinio distinguishes two different PIE roots with an identical shape, viz. *dʰeh₁- ‘to put; to make’ and *dʰeh₁-(i-) ‘to suck, suckle (mother’s milk)’, e.g., Pokorny 1959: 235–242 dhē- vs. dḥē(i)-, EWAia 1: 777, 783 DHA vs. DHAYI, Mallory/Adams 1997: 472, 556 *dʰeh₁- vs. *dʰeh₁(i)-, LIV² 136–139 *dʰeh₁- vs. *dʰeh₁(j)-. According to Jasanoff (2003: 100), the two homophonous roots present “a completely different morphological profile”. From the existing literature it transpires that there are two main reasons to regard these verbs as two separate roots. Firstly, to many the meanings ‘put’ and ‘suck’ just seem to be too far removed from each other to warrant a common origin. Secondly, it is often understood that an i-suffix (more traditionally termed “root enlargement”) is mainly found in ‘to suck’ but hardly ever in ‘to put’. In the past, the frequent but poorly understood presence of radical or post-radical *i has led
to the reconstruction of a so-called long diphthong *ei* in the root for ‘to suck’. This was regarded as a different phonetic/phonemic sequence than simple */ē/ + */i/: the sequence *ei* could sometimes—under unclear conditions—lose its *i*, as first argued by Schulze 1885, and subsequently adopted, among others, by Brugmann 1897: 203, and Hirt 1921: 66–69. The acceptance of the laryngeal theory in the course of the twentieth century rendered this view obsolete, so that most scholars now assume that ‘to suck’ consists of a root in the form *dheh₁* plus a present stem suffix *-i-*. (Kuryłowicz 1935: 40 f., Benveniste 1936: 167–169, Jasanoff 1979: 89, Mayrhofer 1986: 173–175), even if no agreement has been reached yet on all the details (Lindeman 1997: 118–121).

Of course, the existence of two homonymous roots is quite conceivable. Since Pre-PIE sound changes may have merged sounds which were distinct at an earlier stage, it would only be natural if we found some degree of homonymy in PIE. Other PIE roots which have an identical form but which are regarded as two different etymological entities, e.g., by LIV², are *med- ‘to measure’ and ‘to get satiated’, *peuH- ‘to cleanse’ and ‘to rot’, and *teh₂- ‘to steal’ and ‘to melt’. Yet did ‘put’ and ‘suck’ really have a completely different morphological profile in PIE? Our handbooks admit that the roots coincide in two important formal aspects: they share a radical verb stem (root aorist *dheh₁- ‘put’ versus root present or aorist *dheh₁- ‘suck’) and reduplicated formations, viz. a reduplicated present for ‘put’ in all languages and a reduplicated present for ‘suck’ in Anatolian (Mallory/Adams 1997: 382). Recent investigations have furthermore proposed the reconstruction of an original *i* - present meaning ‘to put’ on the basis of evidence from several branches of Indo-European. It seems worthwhile, therefore, to reassess the evidence for both roots and to reconsider the semantic gap between them.

Beforehand we must settle a terminological matter, viz. the exact meaning of the terms used for ‘suck’. Depending on the different agents and experiencers of the action, a three-way semantic distinction can be made between (1) ‘to suck milk from a teat’, with a new-born mammal as the agent (German *saugen*, Dutch *zuigen*, French *sucer*), (2) ‘to nurse, suckle, make a young suck milk from a teat’, with the mother or wet-nurse as the agent and the new-born as experimenter (German *säugen*, Dutch *zogen*, French *allaiter*), and (3) ‘to lactate, have milk that can be sucked by a young’, with the mother as experiencer (cf. Gamkrelidze/Ivanov 1995: 487, Martirosyan 2010: 231). Since the English glosses ‘suck’ and ‘suckle’ are used promiscuously for both meanings depending on the author, and since ‘suckle’ is ambiguous as to its valency (transitive or intransitive), I will define the terms in the following way, which has no other goal but to provide clarity within the context of this paper: 1 = suck, 2 = make suck, 3 = lactate. Of course, the distinction is not always expressed in the lexicon of individual
languages. A fourth term that plays a linguistic role is (4) the milk-giving organ, the ‘udder’, ‘teat’ or ‘breast’, which can also be regarded as agentive. Finally, there is (5) the result of milking, basically ‘milk’.

Another preliminary clarification is in place regarding my position in the debate on the form and function of verbal i-stem derivatives and on the reconstruction of the PIE verbal system in general. I assume the existence in PIE of athematic i-presents with ablaut of the type *CC-éi- in the singular and *CC-i- in the plural. Some of the best known instances of roots with and without an i-suffix are *dheh₁- vs. *dheh₁-i- ‘to suck’ (as discussed in this paper), *kreh₁- vs. *kreh₁-i- ‘to sift’, *peh₂- vs. *peh₂-i- ‘to protect’, *peh₃- vs. *peh₃-i- ‘to drink’, and *seh₁- vs. *seh₁-i- ‘to let go’ (cf. Rasmussen 1989: 19–63). Following the work by Kloekhorst 2006 and Kloekhorst 2008, Lubotsky 2011, de Vaan 2011, and Kloekhorst & Lubotsky 2014, I furthermore acknowledge the existence of a verbal category with o/zero ablaut of the suffix *-i-, sg. *CC-ói-, pl. *CC-i-. It represents an Early PIE intransitive verbal stem with o/zero-ablaut (which one may call a “perfect” or a “prestage of the canonical PIE perfect”) derived from an earlier athematic i-present (Kortlandt 2010: 43, 373–382). The stems in *CC-ói-, *CC-i- surface either as a present, as in the Hittite present type dāi/tiāṇzi- (Kloekhorst 2006, 2008), or as a perfect, as in Indo-Iranian (Lubotsky 2011). There is no agreement on which meanings the i-suffix may have conveyed in Pre-PIE or Early PIE, though chances are that it added an imperfective or progressive aspectual meaning to the meaning of the root. Kortlandt (2010: 378) argues that *-(o)i- “apparently contributed a sense of directionality”, and surmises that it may in origin be identical with the verbal root for ‘to go’.

On the syntactic level, I assume that Pre-PIE had an ergative case system, in which the agent of a transitive clause was marked differently from the agent of an intransitive clause, the latter sharing the marking of a patient (Vaillant 1936; Kortlandt 2010, passim; Willi 2018: 504–540). This assumption explains, among other things, why the PIE nominative equals the accusative in the neuter gender: these were inanimate nouns which did not normally occur as an agent. This theory entails that the PIE nominative continues the Pre-PIE ending-less absolutive (the patient marker). The Pre-PIE genitive ending *-s was the ergative marker for animates, which became the animate nominative marker *-s in canonical PIE (Beekes 1985). The PIE instrumental ending *-t, which is preserved in Anatolian and became “ablative” *-d but also, by lenition before obstruents, “instrumental” *-h₁ (probably [ʔ]) elsewhere, served as the ergative of inanimate nouns (Kortlandt 2010: 40). The accusative marker *-m probably goes back to an earlier allative affix of Indo-Uralic.

As to the verbal conjugation, I adopt the view that (what became) the athematic present and aorist featured in transitive verbs (Kortlandt 2010: 391),
corresponding to what became the Hittite mi-inflexion, whereas the thematic present and the perfect were used for intransitive verbs, corresponding to the subsequent Hittite hi-inflexion. At this early stage, the subject of athematic verbs indicated the transitive agent. In the thematic present and the perfect, the subject referred to the experiencer or the patient of the action, whereas the agent was expressed by means of the dative (if animate) or the instrumental (if inanimate), cf. Kortlandt 2010: 102, 399, Barðdal et alii 2014.

In the following sections I will summarise the evidence for the meanings ‘put’ resp. ‘suck’ in reflexes of *dʰeh₁- in the main branches of Indo-European, before reaching a conclusion in the final paragraph. As far as this survey concerns undisputed reconstructions for *dʰeh₁- ‘to put’, I will remain brief and the evidence will not be treated exhaustively.

2 Anatolian

a. ‘put’. Hittite tē-zi ‘to speak, state’ continues the PIE root aorist *dʰéh₁-, *dʰh₁- (Kloekhorst 2008: 857–858), whereas the verb 3sg. dāi ‘puts, places’, 3pl. tīanjzi ‘they put’ continues a PIE i-present *dʰh₁-ōi-, *dʰh₁-i- (Kloekhorst 2006, 2008: 806–809). A reduplicated derivative of the latter is Hitt. tittta-/titti- ‘to install, assign’ (Kloekhorst 2008: 881–882, see also Melchert 2018). The transitive meaning of dāi, tīanjzi can be explained with Kortlandt 2010: 374–381 from an original intransitive meaning with directionality of the i-suffix, hence ‘there was putting (to him)’, with replacement of the dative experiencer by the nominative subject ‘he was putting’, ‘he put’. This also explains the use of reduplication to arrive at perfective tittta-.

b. ‘suck’. The noun Hitt. tēta(n)-, Luw. tītan- ‘breast, teat’ reflects *dʰéh₁-i-to- ‘that which is sucked’ according to Kloekhorst 2008: 875–877, whereas Cuneiform Luwian titaimma/i- adj. ‘suckling’ and Lycian tideime/i- ‘son, child’ presuppose, in his view, a Proto-Luwian stem *tidoi̯i- from a derived present *dʰeh₁i-to-e/o-. Melchert (2018: 28) regards the adjectives as possessive denominals to the noun ‘teat’. The use of tittta-/titti- ‘to install’ in the context of nursing in the passage KBo 14.98 i

(16) [x - x - x - x - x - h]u²-un GÜB-la-an ti-e-ta-a(n)=š-še-et
(17) [x - x - x - x - x - x - ]x DUMUMUNUS ti-it-ti-iš-ke-ez-zi

[She ...-s] her left breast [and] installs her daughter [to it]

Text and translation as per KLOEKHORST 2008: 876; similarly MELCHERT 2018: 28
can be interpreted in two ways: either it retains a trace of the earlier use of \( *d^h\text{é}h_1-(i-) \) in the context of nursing, or it just happens to be a trivial instance of the use of ‘install’.

3 Tokharian

a. ‘put’. Tokharian tās- ‘to put’ (Hackstein 1995: 56–63, Malzahn 2010: 641–644, 650) continues a PIE s-present \( *d^h\text{é}h_1-s- \), \( *d^h\text{h}_1-s- \), whereas ToA subj. tā-, ToB tātt-\(^a\) reflects a PIE reduplicated present.

b. ‘suck’. The stems \( *d^h\text{é}h_1- \) and \( *d^h\text{é}h_1-i- \) are not attested in Tokharian.

4 Indo-Iranian

a. ‘put’. We find an ablauting root aorist (Skt. āḍhāt, ādhor, Av. -dāt), a reduplicated present with e-reduplication, PIIr. \( *d^h\text{á}-d^h\text{a}H-, *d^h\text{á}d^h\text{H}-, \) and an s-present PIIr. \( *d^h\text{a}H-s-, \) as well as a (productive) reduplicated perfect.

The perfects Skt. dīḍhaya 1sg., Avestan ā-dīḍaiia ‘to consider, perceive’, with derived nouns such as Skt. dhi- f. ‘vision, poetry, praise’ and Av. daēnā- ‘view, creed’, are explained from an i-perfect \( *d^h\text{h}_1-\text{ó}-i-, *d^h\text{h}_1-i- \) to ‘put’ by Lubotsky (2011: 122) and explicitly regarded as cognate with Hittite dāi, ti̇ianzi ‘put’. He assumes secondary introduction of reduplication followed by metathesis of the zero-grade \( *d^h\text{h}_1-i- \) to \( *d^h\text{iH} \) yielding the forms in -i-. As stated by Lubotsky, the semantic change from ‘to put [a thought] into someone’ (e.g., by the gods) to ‘inspire, reveal’ is unproblematic, cf. German (jemandem etwas) eingeben ‘to inspire, induce (someone to do something)’. Hence, the 3sg. i-perfect \( *d^h\text{h}_1-\text{ó}-e *X_{[dat.]} \), ‘there has been putting to X’, came to mean ‘it has occurred to X’, with active semantics ‘X has perceived’.

b. ‘suck’. The full grade \( *d^h\text{é}h_1- \) is found in the infinitive Skt. dhāṭave ‘to drink’ (RV) and in the root compound payo-dhā́ ‘sucking milk’ (EWAia 1: 776, Scarlata 1999: 273), said of calves. The appurtenance of the perfect dadhūr RV 9.99.3 to ‘put’ (thus Kümmel 2000: 275) or ‘suck’ (Jamison/Brereton 2016: 1345) is disputed. Skt. dhāyati ‘to suck’ (trans./intrans., cf. Lubotsky 1989: 95), with its causative dhāpayati ‘to make suck’, and Ossetic dæjyn ‘to suck’ (Cheung 2007: 1

\(^{1}\) An alternative connection of the IIr. words for ‘to see’ and ‘thought’ is with Greek σῆμα ‘sign’ (if from \( *d^h\text{é}h_2-	ext{mn} \)) and ἰέα ‘sight, aspect’ < \( *\text{δ}άγα \) (if from \( *d^h\text{é}h_2-u- \)), cf. Beekes 2010 II: 1323 and Forte 2015. They would then derive from an otherwise unknown PIE root \( *d^h\text{é}h_2\).
47) may represent the e/zero-ablauting i-present *dʰʰ₁-é- / *dʰʰ₁-i-. The existence of an i-suffixed verb is also presupposed by the Skt. ptc. dhītā- ‘sucked’ (*dʰʰ₁-i-to-) and by Skt. dhenú- ‘milch cow’, Av. daēnu- ‘female animal, cow’, from *dʰʰ₁-oi-nú- or *dʰʰ₁-ei-nú-. The latter may or may not be a derivative of the causative-factitive nasal present *dʰʰ₁-(o)i-n- to which Skt. dhinoti (YV) ‘feeds, satiates’ could go back. The reconstruction of Skt. dhārū- (AV) ‘sucking’ as *dʰʰ₁-lu- is regarded as questionable by EWAia 1: 789 but Mayrhofer does classify the adjective as a derivative of DHAY.

A reduplicated noun PIE *dʰʰ₁-dʰ₁ ‘sucked out, milked out’, whence resultative ‘milk’ (Toporov 1975: 285; see Oettinger 2012 for deverbal reduplicated nouns in general), can be reconstructed for Skt. dádhi- n., obl. dadhán- ‘curdled milk, whey’ (EWAia 1: 692). Beekes 1987: 54–55 reconstructs nom.acc.sg. *dʰ₁-dʰ₁h₁, gen.sg. *dʰ₁-e-dʰ₁h₁-és, with vocalisation of the laryngeal yielding 1IR. nom.acc. *dádhi, gen. *dadhás. It has probable cognates in Old Prussian dadan ‘milk’ and Albanian djathë n. ‘cheese’, which may continue *dedom.

5 Greek

a. ‘put’. Ancient Greek continues the PIE root aorist in 3sg. (Boeotian) (αν)έθε ‘put’, pl. ἐθέμεν ‘to put’, Myc. med. -te-to, with additional -k- in Mycenaean 3sg. te-ke, Gr. ἔθηκε. The origin of the root-final *-k is still disputed, but the solution proposed by Kortlandt 2018, viz. a phonetic origin in monosyllabic forms of laryngeal-final roots, is the most likely option. The reduplicated present τίθημι has i-vocalism throughout. There is a productive s-formation in the future θήσω ‘I will put’.

b. ‘suck’. The s-aor. θήσατο ‘sucked’, also ‘made suck’ may well be built on an earlier root aorist *dʰ₁-lu-, cf. Frisk I 674, Beekes 2010 I: 548. For the dual valency, compare θήσατο μαζόν ‘he sucked the breast’ (II.), versus σῦδ’ ἄρ’ Ἀπόλλονα χρυσάορα θήσατο μήτηρ ‘Apollo of the golden sword was not breast-fed by his mother’ (Hymn to Apollo, 123; transl. West 2003: 81). The present infinitive θῆσθαι ‘to suck’ was secondarily built to the aorist stem θή- or might reflect a je/o-present *θήθησαί (LIV2 139, Beekes 2010 I: 548).

The root *dʰ₁-lu- is furthermore found in Greek θηλῆ ‘mother’s breast, nipple’, θήλυς ‘female’, θηλὼ ‘wet-nurse’ (Hsch.), all of which presuppose a nominal formation *dʰ₁h₁-l- ‘making suck’ or ‘lactating’. Gr. τιθηνή ‘nurse’ (here combined with reduplication), γαλαθηνός ‘sucking, young, tender’ (lit. ‘sucking milk’) and the Hesychius gloss θήνιον ‘milk’ show a nasal suffix *dʰ₁-n-.

An i-derivative of ‘to suck’ may be reflected in the noun θοίνη (Hes.), Dor. θοίνα, Hell. θοίνη ‘meal, feast, dinner’. This noun has long been compared with
Skt. dhénā- ‘milk stream, nourishing stream’ (Schmidt 1975, Lubotsky 1995). De Lamberterie (apud Dieu 2016: 192) and Janda (2018) have recently insisted on this correspondence, arguing for an inherited h₂-stem with o-grade of the root ‘to suck, nourish’. Possible reconstructions are PIE *dʰoh₁-i-n-éh₂- (as proposed by De Lamberterie) or *dʰh₁-óí-n-h₂-. Since the first option would imply an o-grade in the root which is otherwise only attested in the reduplicated but suffixless perfect, I prefer the second option, which directly connects with the i-perfect as seen above. The noun can then be interpreted as a collective to an earlier n-stem which was derived from the full grade *dʰh₁-óí-. The existence of nominal derivatives to i-perfects has been demonstrated by Lubotsky 2011.

6 Phrygian

a. ‘put’. The PIE root aorist is continued in the preterite 3sg. Old Phrygian edaes, New Phrygian εδαες, which reflect the addition of the 3sg. ending -es to a sigmatic aorist *dʰēh₁-s₂-; furthermore in Old Phrygian 3sg. daket, New Phrygian (aΔ)δαες, which means either ‘inflicts’ (Ligorio/Lubotsky 2018: 1827–1828) or ‘has inflicted’ (Kortlandt 2018: 138), in the 3sg. future OPhr. daψet /dakset/, and in the 3pl. perfect NPhr. δακαρεν, all with /dak-/ from *dʰēk-.

b. ‘suck’. diem ‘to suck, drink mother’s milk’ allows for several different reconstructions, among which are *dʰeh₁-, *dʰeh₁-i-, and *dʰih₁- (Martirosyan 2010: 239). For the two Classical Armenian variants dal and dayl ‘colostrum, beestings’, Martirosyan 2010: 229–231 argues that only dal represents an inherited formation, with vocalisation of the laryngeal in a zero grade *dʰh₁-l-.

7 Armenian

a. ‘put’. The PIE root aorist is continued in Armenian, 3sg. ed ‘put’, middle edaw ‘was put’.

b. ‘suck’. diem ‘to suck, drink mother’s milk’ allows for several different reconstructions, among which are *dʰeh₁-, *dʰeh₁-i-, and *dʰih₁- (Martirosyan 2010: 239). For the two Classical Armenian variants dal and dayl ‘colostrum, beestings’, Martirosyan 2010: 229–231 argues that only dal represents an inherited formation, with vocalisation of the laryngeal in a zero grade *dʰh₁-l-.

2 The exact path which led to the addition of -es is disputed. Gorbachov (2005: 209) proposes that -es arose as a conflation of the endings of the thematic aorist and the s-aorist and then spread to other verbs, whereas Kortlandt (2018: 138) thinks that -es represents an enclitic subject pronoun *es.
a. ‘put’. The reduplicated present is continued by Latin presents in -dō, -dere ‘to put’ (abdō ‘conceal’, condō ‘establish’, etc.), whereas a PIE reduplicated perfect is found in Latin and in the Sabellic languages (Oscan prūfəd ‘has erected’). Monosyllabic forms of the root aorist developed suffixal -k- (Kortlandt 2007, 2018) which spread to the remaining perfect forms of Italic (Latin fēcī, Venetic 3sg. preterite vhagsto ‘made’, Oscan 3sg. perfect xvaːfακετ ‘has erected’) and to the present (Latin faciō, O. fakiad), cf. de Vaan 2008: 198.

b. ‘suck’. Latin fēcundus ‘fertile’ shows the gerundival suffix -undus after a stem *fē-k-. None of the hitherto proposed etymologies for gerundival -cundus which regard its /k/ as a reflex of a PIE lexical root are convincing (Weiss 2009: 444, fn. 75, Jasanoff 2010, Brachet 2016; the other gerundives in -cundus are fācundus, iōcundus, irācundus, rubicundus, and verēcundus). In view of the probability that the k-affix arose in PIE roots in a final laryngeal (Kortlandt 2018), and since the root *fē- is the only one that also shows suffixal -k- in Latin in other morphological categories (pf. fēc-, pres. fak-), it seems likely that *fēkondos provided the starting point for -cundus, possibly together with fācundus from the root *bʰe₂h₂-. From these two forms, the suffix would then have spread to other gerundives meaning ‘having the property of’.

Latin fēmina ‘woman’ presupposes a middle participle *dʰe₁-mh₁n-h₂- ‘nursing, breastfeeding’. Risch (1984: 189–191) has shown that fētus ‘fertile’ originally meant ‘having given birth’, ‘breeding’ (of birds).

The root variant *fē- ‘suckle’ is attested in several other nominal forms. Latin fēlīx, -īcis ‘fruitful; fortunate’ presupposes a stem *dʰe₁-l- with a probable original meaning ‘making suck’, ‘with young’. A thematic derivative *dʰe₁-lo- ‘sucking’ is the likely basis for Latin fēlāre ‘to suck (milk)’ and fellāre ‘to suck (sexually)’. Another derivative *fēlio- is reflected in Umbrian acc.pl.m. felīuf ‘sucking’, said of piglets (de Vaan 2008: 208–217). The l-derivative also occurs after the root variant *fī- in Latin fīlius; 3 Faliscan fileo ‘son’, Venetic filia ‘daughter’, hence from Late PIE *dʰiH₁l- with laryngeal metathesis from earlier *dʰH₁-i-l- ‘sucking’.

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3 As one reviewer duly notes, it has been proposed by Meiser (1998: 69) that Latin fīlius might reflect *fēlios if its -ī- was raised from *ē before i in the next syllable. Such raising is shown by subtīlis ‘delicate’ to tēla ‘cloth’ and suspīciō ‘suspicion’ from *subspēkiō. Yet this raising was restricted to unstressed position, which would mean that *fēlios became *filīos in unstressed position and then replaced the stressed variant. Furthermore, this would still leave the (i) of Faliscan fileo and Venetic filia to be explained. Weiss (2009: 143) assumes that subtīlis may be explained by a development *-ešlī > *-ežlī > -ālī- in Latin.
9 Celtic

a. ‘put’. Old Irish creitid, MW credu ‘to believe’ < *kred-dī- might contain the root aorist of ‘to put’. The preterite 3sg. Lepontic tetu, Gaulish ḷeṣe ‘has erected’ could represent the reduplicated perfect with o-grade of the root, though Matasović (2009: 86), following earlier scholars, prefers to derive the forms from *deh₃- ‘to give’.

b. ‘suck’. The presents OIr. denaid ‘sucks’, MW dynu, and Middle Breton denaff continue Proto-Celtic *dina- which looks like an original nasal present *dʰi-n(ē)h₁- (thus LIV²) which would regularly have become *dini- but was reformed within Celtic to *dina- on the model of more frequently occurring nasal presents (Schumacher 2004: 273–275). It may go back to a PIE nasal formation together with Sanskrit dhinoti (see above), though it is also possible that we are looking at two independent nasal presents. The root form *di- with short vowel can be due to reanalysis of a form *dʰi₃-C- that arose after laryngeal metathesis in earlier *dʰh₁-i-C- (Matasović 2009: 99) or from vowel shortening in pretonic syllable before a resonant (Dybo’s Law, cf. Matasović 2009: 86). The Old Irish preterite did ‘sucked’ is explained from a PIE perfect *didoi-, *didi- by Schumacher. This seems to be a novel formation too, as no corresponding form exists in other Indo-European languages.

Middle Irish deil (> dela) ‘teat, udder’ and deil ‘young sow, sow aged two years’ (eDIL s.v. 1 dela and 3 deil, LEIA D-42) may reflect an ā-stem *dilā- which could go back to *dilā- < *dʰh₁i-lēh₂- (Matasović 2009: 99) or *dʰe₃h₁-lēh₂- (Zair 2012: 135).

10 Germanic

a. ‘put’. The PIE root aorist *dʰéh₁- is preserved in the endings of the weak preterite, PGmc. 3sg. *dēþ, 3pl. *dēþunþ << 3pl. *dunþ (Kortlandt 2011: 419). The reduplicated perfect, 3sg. *dedōa, 3pl. *dedunþ (OS deda, dedun ‘did’, OE 1du. deodan ‘we two did’), points to *dʰe₃-dʰoh₁-. The stem syllable *dō- of the perfect singular may have provided the basis for the derivation of the West Germanic present *dō(f)jan- ‘to do’.

b. ‘suck’. The root formation *dʰéh₁- ‘to suck’ is continued by Proto-Germanic *dēan-, whence OHG tāan, tāen ‘to make suck’ (Kroonen 2013: 92). The l-derivative PGm. *delō- ‘teat’, reconstructible on the basis of Old English delu and OHG tila ‘teat, udder’, shows pretonic shortening of *ē from PIE *dʰe₃h₁-lēh₂- (Kroonen 2013: 93)

PIE *dʰh₁-i-, which could be the zero grade of an i-present or an i-perfect, yielded PGm. *dīan- ‘to suck’ as reflected by Old Swedish diā, MHG tīen ‘to
suck’ (Kroonen 2013: 95). Gothic daddjan, Old Swedish dæggia, MoSwe. dägga ‘to make suck’ point to PGm. *dajjan- ‘to make suck’ (Kroonen 2013: 87) from an i-perfect *d₁h₁-oi-. Kroonen (2013: xxxviii–xl) reconstructs PIE *d₁h₁-oi-éie- because of the OCS cognate doiti, and with reference to his conclusion that fortition of intervocalic *w and *j in Germanic was conditioned by pretonic position.

11 Balto-Slavic

a. ‘put’. In Slavic, the root aorist of děti ‘to do, say’ was remade into an s-aorist, OCS 1sg. -děxъ, 2sg. -dě, 3sg. -dě (Ackermann 2014: 163–166). The reduplicated present *dideʔ-, *dédʔ- led to a new Balto-Slavic present stem *ded-, found for instance in Lith. děti, 1sg. dedu ‘to lay, put’, OLith. demi. Latvian dēt ‘to lay (an egg), breastfeed’, OCS děti ‘to do; say’, 1sg. deždǫ (*ded-je/o->) (Derksen 2015: 125, Smoczyński 2007: 104–106). An l-derivative is found in Slav. *dělo ‘thing’, OPrm. m. dīla– ‘work’ (Ench.), and in Lith. dēlioti ‘to put down, put away’.

b. ‘suck’. The Slavic present stem *dojìti ‘to give milk, to milk’ (OCS doiti ‘to suckle, nurse’, Ru. doit’, ‘to milk’, SCr. dòjiti ‘to breast-feed, suckle’) probably reflects *d₁h₁-oi-éie-, that is, a causative built to PIE *d₁h₁-oi-. The full grade *d₁he₁- is suffixed in the nominal forms OCS děti, Russian děti ‘children’ (*d₁he₁-t-), and OCS děva, SCr. djéva ‘girl, maiden’ (*d₁he₁-u-).

In Baltic, Latvian dēt, 1sg. dēju ‘to suck’ shows a je/o-present to the root *d₁he₁-, whence the noun dējals ‘mother’s milk’. The Latvian noun dēls ‘son’ could be projected back as PIE *d₁he₁-lo- (Derksen 2015: 531), but a more recent origin as an inner-Baltic derivative to dēt is also conceivable. A similar agitative meaning ‘sucking’ surfaces in Lithuanian délė, Latvian dēle ‘leech’ from *d₁he₁-lieh₂ (Smoczyński 2007: 99, Derksen 2015: 120–121). Lithuanian pir-madėlys ‘first-born’ (*-io-) also presupposes *d₁he₁-l(o)- ‘sucking’, whereas pir-madėlė ‘domestic animal that has given birth for the first time’ rather matches the meaning ‘giving milk, mother’. Finally, Latvian dīle ‘suckling calf’ and the derived verb Latv. dīlit ‘to suckle’ show the l-derivative from the i-root, *d₁h₁-i-l (Derksen 2015: 531).

An n-stem (cf. Skt. dhennu-, Av. daēnu-) is found in Lith. (Žem.) adj. nom.sg.f. dieni ‘with young’, variant dienė, and Latv. atdiëne ‘a cow that calves already in its second year’ (Derksen 2015: 12), which may be built on d₁h₁-ei-n- or *d₁h₁-oï-n- ‘who gives milk’. Note the formal and semantic similarity with Gr. θοίνη ‘meal’, Skt. dhénā ‘milk stream’.
Summary

The tables below compare and summarise the evidence for *\(d^h\)eh\(_1\)- meaning either ‘to put’ or ‘to suck’. Each table compares the direct and indirect evidence for one particular formation.

We find that the root aorist *\(d^h\)eh\(_1\)- and the i-perfect *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-(o)i- surface both as ‘to put’ and ‘to suck’ in Anatolian, Balto-Slavic, Italo-Celtic, Germanic, Greek, and Indo-Iranian. The k-extension is found for ‘to put’ in Greek and Phrygian, and both for ‘to put’ and ‘to suck’ in Latin. The e/zero i-present *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-(é)i- is specific to the meaning ‘to suck’. Reduplicated *\(d^h\)é-\(d^h\)h\(_1\)- is found as a verb only in ‘to put’, but the nominal derivative *\(d^h\)é-\(d^h\)h\(_1\)- presupposes ‘to suck’. The l-nominal is rare for the meaning ‘to put’ but common for ‘to suck’.

The i-perfect *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-oi-, *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-i- exists, on the one hand, as ‘to put’ in Hittite and as ‘to think’ in Indo-Iranian, and, on the other hand, as ‘to make suck, give to drink’ in Slavic and Germanic. If the latter two languages indeed contain the causative suffix *-eje- (it cannot strictly be proven), then unsuffixed *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-oi- meant anticausative ‘to suck’ or ‘to give milk’. The nominal derivatives in *\(d^h\)h\(_1\)-oi-n- mean ‘nourishing’, ‘giving milk’.

Altogether, then, the comparison yields two main results. Firstly, the earlier view that ‘to put’ and ‘to suck’ have very different morphological profiles must be dismissed. With the exception of the l-stems, which nearly only occur for ‘to suck’, all verbal formations can be found with both meanings. Secondly, within the type ‘to suck’, the semantic distinction between the subtypes ‘suck’, ‘make suck’ and ‘lactate’ cannot be meaningfully linked to the morphological make-up: especially in case of the root formation *\(d^h\)éh\(_1\)- and the l-stems derived from it, all main possibilities are represented.

| Table 1 | The root formation *\(d^h\)eh\(_1\)- |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| ‘put’   | ‘suck’                           |
| Hit. tê-zi ‘speaks’ | Skt. dhátave ‘to drink’ |
| IIr. aor. *\(d^h\)aH- | Skt. \(\ddot{\text{d}}\)h̄- ‘sucking’ |
| Gr. \(\ddot{\eta}\)rēzē | Gr. \(\ddot{\eta}\)σα το ‘sucked’, ‘made suck’ |
| Arm.aor. ed ‘he put’ | ?Arm. diem ‘suck’ |
| Lat. fēmina, fētus, fēcundus ‘lactate’ | Gmc. *dēan ‘make suck’ |
| Slav. děti ‘children’, děva ‘girl’ | Latv. dēt ‘suck’ |
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### Table 2  Reduplicated *dhē- dhēh₁-, *dhā- dhāh₁-

| ‘put’          | ‘suck’                                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Skt. dádhāti, OAv. dadāiti | Skt. dádhi- ‘curdled milk, whey’       |
| Gr. τιθήμι       | OPr. dadan ‘milk’                        |
| Lat. -dō, -dere, O. -fed   | Alb. djathē ‘cheese’                     |
| Lith. déti       | Gr. τιθήγη 'nurse'                       |
| OCS děti         |                                          |
| Toch. tā-        |                                          |

### Table 3  PIE *dh₁-ēi- or *dh₁-i- (without explicit o- ablaut)

| ‘put’          | ‘suck’                                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Hit. tēta(n)-, Luw. tītan- ‘breast, teat’ (*dh₁-i-to-) |
| Skt. dháyati ‘suck’, Oss. daejyn        |
| Skt. dhītā- ‘sucked’                     |
| ?Arm. diem ‘suck’                        |
| Celtic *dina- ‘suck’                      |
| Gmc. *dian ‘suck’                        |

### Table 4  *dh₁-ói-, *dh₁-i-

| ‘put’          | ‘suck’                                   |
|----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Hit. dāi, tijanzi ‘put’   | Gmc. *dajjan ‘make suck’                |
| (> titta-/titti- ‘install’) | Slav. *dojit ‘give milk’ (‘make suck’) |
| Skt. didhaya, Av. -dīsaiia ‘consider’ | Skt. dhēnā- ‘milk stream’, Gr. θοίνη ‘meal’ < *dh₁-ói-n-h₂- (‘lactating’) |
|                | Skt. dhenū-, Av. daēnu- ‘milch cow’, ?Lith. dienī ‘with young’ < *dh₁-ói-n- (‘lactating’) |
13 Conclusion

Under the traditional assumption that there were two homonymous roots of the shape \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- \), their homonymy probably reflects the merger of two different pre-PIE roots. Homonymy or polysemy is a normal linguistic phenomenon, and it would be unsurprising if Proto-Indo-European possessed a certain number of homonymous or polysemous roots and words. This was the explicit position taken, for instance, by Ernout/Meillet 1959: 223, but they based it on the argument that only ‘to suck’ would be accompanied by \( i^- \) suffixes. As we know now, \( i^- \) suffixes also feature with ‘to put’. In fact, both roots had a very similar morphological organisation, with a root aorist \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- \), an \( i^- \) perfect \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- \text{ôi}^- \), a reduplicated present, and an \( l^- \) noun \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- \text{l}^- \).

The morphological similarity between ‘put’ and ‘suck’ may, alternatively, strengthen the suspicion that one meaning was derived from the other. Since ‘to put’ is the more general meaning, it seems likely that ‘suck, nurse’ arose from semantic specialisation. A possible scenario for this development is the following. As we have seen above, we can reconstruct an imperfective meaning for the PIE verbal \( i^- \) stems, and the presence of an experiencer subject in the PIE perfect. The basic meanings of the continuative, directional \( i^- \) present 3sg. \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- \text{éi-t} \) \( X_\text{[nom.]} \) and the non-volitional \( i^- \) perfect 3sg. \( ^*d^h\text{é}h_1^- (\delta) i-e \) \( X_\text{[dative]} \) may then be circumscribed as ‘X is putting (toward)’ and ‘to X there has been putting (toward)’. 

| ‘put’ | ‘suck’ |
|-------|--------|
| Slav. *dělo ‘thing’ | Skt. \( \text{dhārū}^- \) ‘sucking’ |
| Gr. \( \text{θηλή} \) ‘breast, teat’, \( \text{θηλυς} \) ‘female’ | Gr. \( \text{θηλώ} \) ‘wet-nurse’ |
| Arm. dal ‘beestings’ | Lat. \( \text{filius} \) ‘son’ |
| Lat. \( \text{fēlāre} \) ‘suck’ | Lat. \( \text{fēlīx, Umb. feliuf} \) ‘sucking’ |
| Gmc. *\( \text{delō}^- \) ‘teat’ | Ir. \( \text{deil} \) ‘teat; sow’ |
| Latv. \( \text{dēls} \) ‘son’ | Lith. \( \text{dēlē} \), Latvian \( \text{dēle} \) ‘leech’ |
| Latv. \( \text{dīle} \) ‘calf’ | Latv. \( \text{dēle} \) ‘calf’ |
respectively. In the context of breastfeeding, the young have to be ‘put’ to the breast (cf. the Hittite passage cited above), but because of the realia, the agency can be viewed in different ways. Both the mother, who ‘puts’ the young to her breast (especially the first time after birth), and the new-born, who ‘put themselves to’ or ‘take to’ the teats (once they have learned to do so), can adopt the role of the agent. Hence, in non-volitional ‘to X there has been putting’, both the mother and the young may take the role of the experiencer, whence ‘to suck’ or ‘lactate’ (with the mother as the experiencer) or ‘to make suck’ (the infant being the experiencer). The same semantic polyvalence can be found in the root formations, with (1) Skt. dhátave ‘to drink’, °dhá- ‘sucking’, Latvian dēt ‘suck’, Slavic děti ‘children’, (2) Germanic *dēan ‘to make suck’, and (3) Latin fētus, fēcundus ‘lactating’. There is no evidence that these formations adopted their semantic ambiguity from the i-stem verbs; instead, the root formation, too, could apparently be used with the opposite perspectives of ‘put’ (‘make suck’) and ‘take to’ (‘suck’). As in the case of the PIE root *nem- ‘to assign, allot’, which probably got the opposite meaning ‘to take, receive’ in Germanic through usage in the middle voice (LIV 453), similar variation in voice/perspective may explain the multiple valency of *dēh₁- ‘suck, make suck’.

In active ‘X is putting’, the logical subject would be the mother, but in a transitive middle such as that of Greek ἰἱφαῖα ‘sucked’, it can also be the infant who is ‘putting himself’ to the breast. The fundamental polyvalence of the verbs expressing the notion of ‘suckling on the mother’s breast’ and their nominal derivatives would thus find a natural explanation: since the actancy in the triangle mother-breast-infant can be expressed from different perspectives, no one semantic expression has come to dominate. Gamkrelidze/Ivanov (1995: 487) cite an Ancient Egyptian parallel for this polyvalence of ‘milk’ and ‘give milk’, viz. Egypt. mhr, which can express ‘to milk (a cow)’, ‘to suckle’, ‘to give milk’ (of a cow), ‘to nurse (a baby)’, whence the terms for ‘infant’ and for dairy implements (Takács 2008: 464–465, TLA s.v. mhr).

Much of the preceding reasoning is of course tentative, and many details remain to be elucidated. Nonetheless, I hope to have shown that it is possible to think of pathways by which ‘to put’ could, in the specific usage of mammals and their new-born, and within the context of changes in PIE verbal inflexion and valency, give rise to the meanings ‘suck’, ‘make suck’ and ‘lactate’. Future etymological research may profit from these proposals.
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