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AND
LINGUISTIC THEORY
FROM DESCRIPTION TO EXPLANATION

FOR THE 60TH BIRTHDAY OF ALEKSANDR E. KIBRIK

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MAY HE PROSPER IN OFFSPRING
AND WEALTH
A few jubilee remarks on the typology of labile verbs
and Sanskrit púṣyati ‘prospers; makes prosper’

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(Leiden University)

Bei den Satzen mit Verben muß man <...> unterscheiden, ob das Verb allein steht oder noch eine Ergänzung, ein Objekt, fordert, ob es nach der gewöhnlichen Ausdrucksweise intransitiv oder transitiv ist. <...> Nun ist aber die Unterscheidung nicht so wesentlich, da intransitive Verben transitiv und transitive intransitiv werden können. Wäre sie von großer Bedeutung, so würden wir wohl eine Verschiedenheit der Form zwischen den beiden Kategorien antreffen.


0. Introductory remarks

The present article deals with labile verbs, i.e. verbs with unstable valence properties. In sections 1–3 I will survey this phenomenon from the general-typological perspective, focusing particularly on its diachronic aspects. Sections 4–5 contain a brief survey of labile forms in Vedic Sanskrit. In sections 6–7 I will concentrate on one particular Vedic verb, púṣyati ‘prospers; makes prosper’, discussing in detail its syntactic patterns, their possible origins and developments and the typological implications thereof.

1. Basic definitions and terminological remarks

The term ‘labile’ refers to verbs (or, to be more exact, verbal forms) which can show valence alternation with no formal change in the verb. Typical examples of labile patterning are (1)–(5):

I am much indebted to A. Lubotsky, N. Nicholas, I. Nikolaeva and Ja. Testelets for critical remarks and comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
(1) Russian
   a. Ivan čitaet knigu
      Ivan is reading a book.
   b. Ivan čitaet
      Ivan is reading.
(2) a. John ate the cake.
    b. John ate.
(3) a. Mary gave John an apple.
    b. Mary gave an apple to John.
(4) a. John opened the door.
    b. The door opened.
(5) Lezgian [Haspelmath 1993a: 289]
   a. Ajal.di get'e xa- na
      child (ERG) pot break-AOR
      The child broke the pot.
   b. Get'e xa- na
      pot break-AOR
      The pot broke.

Correspondingly, alternations like those between (a) and (b) in the above examples can be said to exemplify different kinds of labile patterns. Since members (a) and (b) of pairs like (1)–(2), (4)–(5) also differ in terms of the transitive/intransitive distinction, the phenomenon of lability can be qualified as ‘fluid transitivity’ (cf. [Dixon 1994: 6]).

Leaving out of consideration labile patterns like (1)–(2) (transitive vs. objectless transitive, often also referred to as absolute transitive), as well as valence alternations exemplified by (3), I will focus on pairs like (4)–(5). Unlike (1)–(3), sentences (a) and (b) in (4)–(5) do not share the subject, but the object of the transitive clause (a) corresponds to the subject of its intransitive equivalent (b) \(^1\), whereby the meaning of the verb in (a) can be roughly defined as ‘CAUSE’ + meaning of the verb in (b) (e.g. ‘cause to open; make open’ etc.). This type is generally termed ‘causative/inchoative’ (cf. e.g. [Haspelmath 1993]), ‘causative’ (cf. [Levin 1993; Levin, Rapoport 1994]) or ‘ergative’ alternation (for the latter term, see below).

It has long been noted that the causative type of lability is common in (and perfectly compatible with) the languages of the ergative syntactic type; cf. e.g. [Kibrik et al. 1977: 74–77; Dixon 1994: 218]. It is no accident that the term ‘labile’ was coined in the grammars of the Caucasian languages, in which the ergative type is fairly common. In particular, the causative labile patterning is a typical feature of the East Caucasian (Nakh-Daghestanian) languages (cf. (5)), to the syntactic study of which the addressee of the present Festschrift has contributed so much. The same type of lability is met in Polynesian (cf. e.g. [Tchekhoff 1973] on labile syntax in Avar and Tongan) and a variety of other languages.

\(^1\) Whence the terms ‘S = A type’ for the cases like (1)–(2) and ‘S = O type’ for the cases like (4)–(5) (cf. [Dixon 1994]).
However, as is well-known, we do not have to undertake a long field trip to Caucasus or somewhere at the end of the world to find examples of causative lability. The same phenomenon is well-attested in English, which clearly outranks many ergative languages in the number of verbs with labile patterning (like open in (4)) and, moreover, many newly-built or borrowed verbs, including numerous technical and scientific terms, follow the same pattern perfectly; cf. liberalize, oxidize, etc. Ironically enough, English linguistics has shown little interest in a convenient terminology for this phenomenon. There is no consensus on whether pairs like open (intr.) — open (tr.) should be treated as one lexical unit in two different syntactic uses or two units, and no generally accepted term for such pairs. The term ‘ergative’, which is quite common in the modern English studies (cf. e.g. [Keyser, Roeper 1984]), typically refers to the intransitive member of such pairs rather than to the whole pair (which is thus left without a special label) and is undoubtedly infelicitous and misleading. For the history of this terminological use (probably going back to Halliday [1967: 44ff.] and Anderson [1968: 12ff.]), and its severe criticism (with which one cannot help agreeing), see [Dixon 1994: 18–21]. Some other terms like ‘double-faced’, ‘amphibious’ (both in [Visser 1970: 99]), ‘ambitransitive’ (e.g. [Dixon 1994: 18, 54, 217f. et passim]) remain thus far associated with just one author. Finally, a variety of terms, such as ‘transitive-intransitive’ (cf. e.g. [Anderson 1968: 12, fn. 13]), ‘causative-decausative’ [Dolinhna 1989: 26f], ‘voice-neutral’ (cf. [Tchekhoff 1980]), ‘voiceless’ or ‘non-diathetic’ (both in [Schmalstieg 1982: 124]), ‘S = O verbs’ (e.g. [Dixon 1994]), ‘optionally transitive’ (cf. [Miller 1993: 179ff.]), albeit semantically more transparent, appear too heavy and, most likely, have no future. The term ‘labile’, used in this paper, is not yet widely accepted either; moreover, it was ostracized and condemned by Hewitt [1982] (incidentally, the only article in English contained in the MLA Bibliography database which has the term ‘labile’ in its title). Thus far this term occurs almost solely within the limits of the Caucasian linguistics, as well as in general and typological studies by Caucasianists par excellence or, at least, by scholars who did extensive research in Caucasian languages (the only exception I am aware of is [Drossard 1998]). Yet, the term ‘labile’ seems to have more chance to survive, and its appearance in a few recent monographs such as [Dixon 1994] (alongside ‘ambitransitive’) or [Song 1996: 26] (alongside ‘zero-derivation’) is symptomatic.

Incidentally, there is yet another, albeit indirect, consideration in favour of the term ‘labile’. As is well-known, a few key terms and scientific metaphors have been borrowed by syntacticians from chemistry; cf. ‘valence’, ‘n-valent’, syntactic trees (~ chemical formulae). The term ‘labile’ refers in chemistry to compounds amenable to chemical changes. Thus, using this term in syntax would be one more chemical meta-

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2 Cf. e.g. [Walton 1965] for a survey of different treatments of such pairs in standard English grammars and [Montemagni 1994] for lexicographic aspects of this problem.

3 One also has to mention the term ‘symétrique’, quite common in the French linguistic tradition, which is also infelicitous and hardly less confusing than ‘ergative’ (cf. e.g. [Bernard 1972: 227ff.]).

4 Cf. e.g. [Klimov, Alekseev 1980: 259–262; Šejxov 1987].

5 Cf. [Hewitt 1982; Haspelmath 1993a: 289–293; 1993b: 92, 109, note 7; Mel’čuk 1988: 213ff.; Nichols (e. g. 1984: 195)].
phor — entirely in the vein of the syntactic tradition of this century — resting upon the parallelism between unstable chemical compounds and syntactically «unstable» (transitive-intransitive) verbs.

2. Where labile verbs come from and how they disappear?

Lability and labile verbs are not among the most popular subjects in general linguistics, but quite a lot can be extracted from grammars of individual languages and especially from studies on North-Caucasian, Germanic (particularly English) and Romance languages. For Caucasian, see e. g. [Tchekhoff 1973; 1980; Šejxov 1987]. For English, one has to mention the classical grammar by Jespersen [1927: 332–337], where he draws attention to what he calls the ‘Move and Change-class’, i.e. one of the main semantic classes of verbs displaying causative lability (move, turn, boil, improve, etc.); cf. also [Smith 1978]. Among recent studies, see, for instance, [Keyser, Roeper 1984; Levin 1993; Levin, Rapoport 1994; Kitazume 1996]. For French, cf. e. g. [Blinkenberg 1960: 103ff.; Bernard 1972: 227ff.; Junker 1988].

As for the general theory and typology of labile verbs, little has been done till now. One has to mention Polinskaja’s PhD thesis [1986], where lability in ergative languages is thoroughly discussed. A short but informative excursion on Lezgian labile verbs by Haspelmath [1993a: 289–293] contains some useful criteria for distinguishing between labile patterning proper and transitive verbs with free omission of arguments. In his recent article, Drossard [1998] makes several important observations on the interplay between lability and orientation (Agent-oriented/Patient-oriented distinction) and discusses labile patterning in nominal constructions. This is just the beginning and, hopefully, the phenomenon in question will have better luck in linguistic studies than the corresponding terms have had thus far.

In what follows I will focus on some diachronic aspects of lability. There is no need to argue that languages differ in the number of labile verbs, ranking from just a few (as is, for instance, the case with Russian) to some hundreds (English). Nor is there any doubt that the degree of (causative) lability (which can be easily specified by the number of labile verbs in the dictionary) does not remain unchanged in the history of languages. There must be then a limited number of mechanisms and scenarios which lead to the rise or loss of labile patterning.

Surprisingly enough, this subject was not paid sufficient attention in general and typological linguistic studies. Some valuable generalisations can be extracted from studies on the history of individual languages or language families, however.

It is interesting to note that the same tendency is often shared by all or most of the members of a genetic group/family even after they have split apart. For instance, according to Sevortjan [1958], Turkic languages have been steadily losing labile patterning,6 the traces of which can be found both in modern Turkic languages and in old

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6 «Первообразные глаголы во многих (если не во всех) случаях исторически не имели постоянного значения переходности или непереходности. Один и тот же глагол был переходным и непереходным, в зависимости от состава предложения» [Sevortjan 1958: 26].
Turkic texts and dictionaries. One of the typical mechanisms of such «delabilisation» can be illustrated by Azerbaijani törän- ‘be born, arise’ / törät- ‘beget, create’. As Sevortjan [ibid.: 38] suggests, this pair goes back to the labile verb meaning ‘be born, arise; beget, create’. The underlying verb was retained in intransitive uses, for instance, in Turkish (türe-), Azerbaijani (töra-), Turkmen (döre-) and Khakas (töri- ‘be born’), while its reflex in Kirghiz, törö-, is transitive (‘beget’). Thus, by taking the transitivizing (causative) suffix -t- or the intransitivizing (anticausative) suffix -n-, the originally labile verb has split in Azerbaijani into two lexical units, losing lability. This strategy is quite common in languages which show causative lability. For instance, Hewitt [1980: 178ff.] noticed it in Daghestanian (ergative) languages like Lezgian, where a causative morpheme can be used «to form causatives from basically intransitive roots or to emphasize the transitive function of an otherwise neutral (= labile. — L. K.) root» [ibid.: 180]; cf. also [Kibrik A. A. 1999].

By contrast, Germanic languages (and, particularly, English) have considerably extended the range of labile verbs. The well-documented history of English and other Germanic languages provides us with rich evidence for this process. From naive speculations on this change as resulting from the general tendency towards clarity («Anschaulichkeit»), peculiar to the English language, history and philosophy, in the vein of Neophilologie [Perl 1931], syntacticians passed on to more serious accounts in terms of the features of the corresponding verbs and constructions.

On the one hand, there were some causes of a purely phonological nature. For instance, Old English intransitive meltan and transitive-causative mieltan, myltan have merged in modern English melt (cf. [Visser 1970: 131ff.]). On the other hand, several syntactic processes contributed much to the increase of lability. In particular, some (basically) transitive verbs can already be employed intransitively both with and without a reflexive pronoun (cf. hide / hide himself, etc.) in Old English, but in later periods the tendency to suppress the reflexive marker seems to become stronger [Hermodsson 1952: 65f.; Visser 1970: 145ff.].

One also has to mention an interesting attempt to arrange English labile verbs as a continuum according to whether transitive uses occur earlier, later or simultaneously with the intransitive ones [Kitazume 1996]. Correspondingly, labile verbs (‘ergatives’ in Kitazume’s terms) fall into ‘transitive-base’ (e.g. fasten: the earliest transitive and intransitive attestations in 900 and 1225, respectively, according to the Oxford English Dictionary), ‘intransitive-base’ (e.g. fly: 1607 and 1000, respectively) and ‘transitive-intransitive-base’, or ‘typically ergative’ (e.g. open: both transitive and intransitive around 1000). The same approach applied by Junker [1988] to the French de-adjectival labile verbs, like grandir (← grand ‘big, tall’) ‘grow, make taller’, embellir (← bel- ‘beautiful’) ‘become/make beautiful, embellish’, reveals an interesting morphological correlation: verbs with a derivational prefix (like em- in embellir) are initially transitive (i.e. their transitive uses are attested earlier, cf. embellir: transitive since 1100 and intransitive since 1671), while prefixless verbs are initially intransitive (cf. grandir: since 1460 and 1260, respectively).

In spite of the important findings mentioned above, quite a lot is still unclear about the evolution of the syntactic type and many cases of the rise of lability remain unaccounted.
3. Labile patterning and the ancient Indo-European syntactic type

While labile alternations in English, French and some other modern languages are well-studied, whichever terminology is used ('ergative', 'causative-inchoative', etc.), little has been done in the grammar of the ancient Indo-European languages. Without mentioning that the term 'labile' is unknown to most Indo-Europeanists, the corresponding phenomenon, albeit noticed in passing in a number of handbooks, was not paid due attention thus far. And yet, its importance and relevance for the ancient (or Proto-) Indo-European syntax can hardly be overestimated.

On the one hand, it has long been a commonplace that the Indo-European syntactic type changed considerably, and in some of the oldest Indo-European languages, like early Vedic (especially in the language of the most ancient Vedic text, the Rgveda, hereafter RV) and (Homeric) Greek, a number of verbal forms could be used both intransitively and transitively, while in later periods this phenomenon is less frequent or exceptional. To state it in terms of lability, the ancient Indo-European (and, presumably, Proto-Indo-European) syntactic type was much more labile than that attested in younger languages. One of the most explicit statements expressed on this issue by H. Hirt, which I have made the epigraph of the present article, clearly demonstrates the inadequacy of the traditional description of the ancient Indo-European syntax in terms of the transitive/intransitive distinction alone.

Thus far we have no full treatment of the lability phenomenon available, although several valuable observations and remarks are scattered throughout grammars and special studies on Vedic, Greek, etc. A comprehensive description of syntactic classes and types capturing the main correlations between transitivity and lability of verbal forms, on the one hand, and morphological categories and oppositions, such as diathesis (active/middle), tense (present/perfect/aorist), finite/non-finite distinction, on the other, still remains a desideratum for the grammars of individual Indo-European languages (in particular, Vedic) and, in my opinion, a prerequisite for studying (Proto-)Indo-European syntax.

I will of course make no attempt to present a full inventory of labile forms attested in Vedic; this task requires a monographic study. I will confine myself to some preliminary remarks, pinpointing several «spots» of the verbal paradigm where labile patterning seems to be especially common and outlining a few mechanisms which might have led to the rise of this phenomenon in Indo-European.

4. Labile patterning of the Vedic middle and perfect forms

4.1. Finite middle forms

Labile patterning in finite middle forms results from the polyfunctionality of the middle diathesis. Specifically, the middle inflection can express either the self-beneficiant meaning with no valence change (cf. the textbook example act. yājati ‘sacrifices’ — med. yājate ‘sacrifices for oneself’), or an intransitivizing derivation, like passive, reflexive, anticausative (decausative). Correspondingly, in the cases where the
middle diathesis can have both of these functions with a given verb, its middle forms can be employed either transitively with the self-beneficiant meaning \(^7\), or intransitively, and thus display labile patterning.

For the 'class I presents' (in the traditional notation), which is the largest and most productive present type in the Vedic verbal system, the full list of verbs with such a polysemy is compiled by Gotô [1987: 48ff.]. Here belong the following presents: *côdate* 'impels; rushes, hastens', *námate* 'bends', *bhárate* 'brings (for oneself); brings oneself', *vahate* 'carries; drives, goes', *sráyate* 'lays, fixes on, fastens; leans on', *svádate* 'makes/is sweet'. Cf.:

\[(6)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \text{ sváda-} & \text{sva-} & \text{indrāya} & \text{pavamāna} & \text{pītāye} & (\text{RV 9.74.9}) \\
& \text{be/make.sweet:PR-2SG.IMPV.MED} & & \text{Indra:DAT} & \text{Pavamāna:VOC} & \text{drink:INF} \\
& \text{Be sweet for Indra, O Pavamāna (= Soma sap), for drinking.} \\
\text{b.} & \text{sváda-} & \text{sva-} & \text{havyā} & & & (\text{RV 3.54.22}) \\
& \text{be/make.sweet:PR-2SG.IMPV.MED} & & \text{oblations:ACC} \\
& \text{Make the oblations sweet [for yourself].} \\
\text{7} & \end{align*}
\]

\[(7)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \text{ vrśā} & \text{coda-} & \text{sva} & \text{mahatē} & \text{dhānāya} & (\text{RV 1.104.7}) \\
& \text{bull:NOM} & \text{rush:PR-2SG.IMPV.MED} & \text{big:DAT} & \text{contest:DAT} \\
& \text{Rush [like] a bull for a big contest!} \\
\text{b.} & \text{vrśe} & \text{coda-} & \text{sva} & \text{su-} & \text{ṣṭutim} & (\text{RV 8.75.6}) \\
& \text{bull:DAT} & \text{impel:PR-2SG.IMPV.MED} & \text{beautiful-praise:ACC} \\
& \text{Send forth your beautiful praise for the bull.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Labile syntax is also attested for some other present formations with middle inflexion \(^8\), but full lists of such verbs, like that made by Gotô for class I presents, do not exist yet.

### 4.2. -āna-participles

Labile patterning is also very common for middle athematic participles built with the suffix -āna- \(^9\). A typical example is the participle *hinvānā-* (root *hi-*), which occurs 18 times in intransitive (passive) constructions, as in (8a), and 10 times in transitive constructions (as in (8b)) in the Rgveda \(^{10}\), cf.:

\[(8)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \text{sómo} & \text{hinv-} & \text{ānó} & \text{arṣati} & (\text{RV 9.12.8}) \\
& \text{Soma:NOM} & \text{impel:PR-PRTC:NOM.SG.M} & \text{flows} \\
& \text{Soma, being impelled, flows.} \\
\text{b.} & \text{dhiyo} & \text{hinv-} & \text{ānā} & \text{uṣijaḥ} & (\text{RV 2.21.5}) \\
& \text{thoughts:ACC} & \text{impel:PR-PRTC:NOM.PL.M} & \text{Uṣijas:NOM} \\
& \text{Uṣijas, impelling the (religious) thoughts...} \\
\end{align*}
\]

---

\(^{7}\) In other terms, in the transitive-affective use (cf. e.g. Gotô 1987: 27).

\(^{8}\) In particular, for thematic presents with nasal affixes, cf. e.g. *pinvate* 'swells' (intr.) (for instance, in RV 5.63.1, 8.12.5) / 'swells (tr.), makes swell' (for instance, in RV 1.125.5). For details, see [Kulikov 1995].

\(^{9}\) Cf. already [Delbrück 1888: 264].

\(^{10}\) For more details about -āna-participles derived from the nasal present stems, see [Kulikov 1995].
4.3. Labile perfects

Yet another part of the paradigm which is relevant for the discussion of lability is the perfect tense system. Unlike the formations discussed in the preceding sections, perfect forms of some verbs show labile syntax regardless of the diathesis. Typical examples are perfects of the verb vrddh- ‘grow, increase’: both active and middle forms can be employed either intransitively or transitively. For instance, the 3rd person plural active form vāvṛddhuh occurs 6 times in intransitive usages, as in (9a), and 14 times in transitive-causative usages, as in (9b):

(9) a. rudrā ṛtāsya sādāneṣu vāvṛddh- uḥ
    Rudras:NOM law:GEN residences:LOC grow:PFPL.ACT
    Rudras have grown in the residences of the truth.

    (RV 2.34.13)

b. indram ukthāni vāvṛddh- uḥ
    Indra:ACC hymns:NOM grow:PFPL.ACT
    The hymns have increased Indra.

    (RV 8.6.35)

The labile syntax of the early Vedic perfect (especially common in the RV) may originate in the predominant intransitivity of the Proto-Indo-European perfect, of which some traces can still be found in early Vedic and Homeric Greek. A detailed discussion of the syntactic development which the Proto-Indo-European perfect could have undergone goes beyond the scope of the present paper, but an approximate scenario can be outlined as follows. Originally, the active/middle opposition was irrelevant for perfect forms, most of which were employed intransitively. Later on, in some Indo-European languages (in particular, in Vedic and Ancient Greek), the active/middle distinction was introduced in the perfect paradigm, by analogy with the present system forms. Correspondingly, by analogy with the present pairs like med. vārdhate ‘grows’ (intransitive) ~ act. vārdhati ‘makes grow, increases’ (transitive-causative), the newly-built perfect middle forms have taken over the intransitive function, and the transitive-causative usages of active perfects became more frequent. However, this process was not finished yet by the time of the RV, and active perfects are still quite common in the (more archaic) intransitive usages. Thus, both usages co-occur, which implies the labile syntax of perfect forms.

5. Labile patterning of active forms and Vedic active -ya-presents

The lability of active forms is less common and therefore was paid still less attention in Indo-European studies. While the «fluid transitivity» of middle and perfect forms is generally accounted for by the semantics of these categories (which, incidentally, may be genetically related and go back to the same Proto-Indo-European source), the labile syntax of some active forms outside the perfect system is considered a rare and abnormal phenomenon.

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11 For Greek, see, for instance, [Chantreine 1927: 26ff.]; for Vedic, cf. [Renou 1924; 1925: 144–148]. For a general discussion, see [Kulikov, forthcoming].

12 The common origin of the Indo-European perfect and middle was suggested by Kuryłowicz and Stang in the '30s; see also [Kortlandt 1979: 66ff]. For a survey of the problem, see e. g. [Neu 1985; Di Giovine 1996: 235ff].
One of the few such forms mentioned in the literature is the thematic aorist aršat ‘harmed’. Finite aorist forms are employed intransitively, as in (10a), while all participial forms derived from the aorist stem (rīša- 6x, rīša- 1x) are transitive-causative, meaning ‘harmer’, cf. (10b):

(10) a. āgne sakhyē mā rīšā- mā vayām tāva (RV 1.94.1)

Agni:VOC friendship:LOC not harm:AOR.INJ-1.PL.ACT we your

O Agni, may we not be hurt in your friendship.

b. prāti śma rīša- t- o daha (RV 1.12.5)

against harm:AOR-PRTC-ACC.PL.M burn:PR-2SG.IMPV.ACT

Burn the harmers! (i.e. those who harm us)

Jamison [1983: 144, fn. 79a] takes the participle rīša- as resulting from the haplology of the reduplicated causative aorist (a)rīša-t, thus accounting for its transitive-causative syntax. This explanation is plausible but, in my opinion, unnecessary, since aršat is not the only thematic aorist which displays labile syntax in Vedic. Both intransitive and transitive-causative usages are attested, for instance, for the aorist in-junctive tamaṭ ‘is/makes exhausted’. One of the four Vedic attestations of this form is transitive (in the RV), while three others, in the Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa (a much younger text), are intransitive:

(11) a. nā mā taman nā śraman nā-utā tandrat

[This Soma-pressing (?)] should not make me exhausted, tired or languid 13.

b. mā tamo mā yajñās taman mā yājamanānas tamaṭ

Do not be exhausted, [o charcoal], let the sacrifice not be exhausted, let the sacrificer not be exhausted.

Bearing in mind transitive-causative uses of thematic aorists as exemplified by (10)–(11), as well as the labile syntax of some other derivatives of the root riṣ- and its Avestan cognate (cf. below on riṣyāti), I cannot rule out that the participle rīša- (or, at least, its short vowel variant rīsa-) belongs to the thematic aorist, so that ī results from the secondary lengthening of i in the open syllable before ī 14, which is hardly less probable than the spontaneous haplology rīrī- → rī-.

In what follows I will focus on the labile syntax of some active present forms — more specifically, on present formations derived with the suffix ‘-ya-’ (the ‘present class IV’).

The majority of the active -ya-presents are intransitives referring to inactive non-controllable events, most of which are emotional (cf. rānyati ‘rejoices, is/becomes glad’, krūḍhyati ‘is/becomes angry’ etc.) or physiological states and processes (cf. kṛṣyati ‘is/becomes lean’, médyati ‘is/becomes fat’, jūryati/jāryati ‘grows old, decays’ etc.). Some of them do not occur in Vedic with the middle inflexion, some others do so only rarely or exceptionally, so that, in fact, the term ‘active [-ya-presents]’ refers hereafter to actīva tantum or quasi-tantum. All these -ya-presents are intransitive, meaning

13 Thus [Geldner 1951: I, 314; Elizarenkova 1989: 271, 681]. Less likely is the syntactic analysis suggested by Delbrück [1900: 29f.] and hesitantly adopted by Renou [1967 (EVP XVI): 97]: the construction in question is intransitive, with the subject in the accusative, allegedly due to its inactive character.

14 Details of this process (briefly mentioned, for instance, by Wackernagel [1896: 92f.], Kuiper [1934: 224, fn. 4], Renou [1952: 43]) are unclear, but the same regularity may account for some other, at first glance, abnormal forms, such as caus. dūṣayati, opt. pūṣema AV, etc.
‘be/become Q’ (where Q stands for a state or quality), while the corresponding causative meaning (‘make Q’) is typically expressed by the productive causatives derived with the suffix -āya- (krodhayati ‘makes angry’, medāyati ‘makes fat’, etc.).

There are, however, two active -ya-presents attested both in intransitive and transitive-causative usages. One of them, risyati, is solidly embedded in the Rgveda and later texts in the intransitive usage (cf. (12a)), but occurs once in the causative sense\textsuperscript{15}, cf. (12b):

(12) a. sā ghā vīrō nā risyati
This man is not hurt. (RV 1.18.4)

b. rdūdāreṇa sākhyā saceṣṭya yō mā nā risyet
I wish to be in friendship with the companion of pleasant nature (sc. Indra), who should not harm me. (RV 8.48.10)

Nevertheless, the labile syntax of this -ya-present can be safely reconstructed for early Vedic (and, presumably, for Proto-Indo-Iranian), matching with the lability of the thematic aorist arīṣat discussed above, as well as the labile patterning of the Avestan cognate irīšiieiti\textsuperscript{16}. The transitive occurrence in (12b) may thus be a trace of this archaic syntactic feature.

The second labile -ya-present, pūṣyati ‘prospers, makes prosper’, is of particular interest. On the one hand, it is well-attested in the RV both in intransitive and transitive uses, for which see below. On the other hand, the lack of cognates in Avestan, as well as other Indo-European languages, proves its relatively young age, so that this -ya-present may provide valuable evidence for recent developments giving rise to the labile patterning\textsuperscript{17}.

Before I pass on to considering pūṣyati in detail, one has to emphasize that transitive occurrences of both pūṣyati and risyati are attested in the RV only (for transitive attestations of risyati in Āraṇyakas, see fn. 15). This is yet another piece of evidence for higher degree of lability of early Vedic compared to that attested in more recent texts.

6. Syntactic patterns of Vedic pūṣyati

6.0. Preliminary remarks

The active -ya-present pūṣyati is generally considered one of the (relatively few) formations which can be employed in both intransitive and transitive-causative usages, i.e. both in the sense ‘prosper, thrive’ and ‘make prosper, make thrive’; cf. Böhtlingk

\textsuperscript{15} Not counting three transitive occurrences of risyati (‘punishes, harms’) in one passage of the Śāfikāyana- and Āitareya-Āraṇyakas. Both of these late texts belong to the Rgvedic school and the occurrence in question may be a replica of the archaic transitive usage attested in the Rgveda.

\textsuperscript{16} Transitive (‘harm, make hurt’) e.g. in Vīdevdāt 15.11 (iriśiieiti), 7.38 (subj. iriśiīāt); intransitive (‘be hurt’) e.g. in V 13.37 (iriśiīāt), V 15.48 (iriśiīaqn ‘they will not be hurt’); cf. [Bartholomae 1904: Sp. 1485f.; Lühr 1994: 89].

\textsuperscript{17} I leave out of consideration two more active -ya-presents which might belong with pūṣyati and risyati, namely dusyati ‘spoils’ and sāmyati ‘becomes peaceful’. Both of these are generally employed intransitively, while proposed instances of the transitive usage (dusyati ‘spoils’ (tr.) in the AV-Paippalāda; śimyati (sāmyati, sāmyati) ‘makes peaceful’ (?) in the mantras of the Yajurveda) are suspect and unclear.
& Roth’s dictionary [1865: T. IV, Sp. 808] s. v. pusyati: a) ‘gedeihen’; b) ‘gedeihen machen, gedeihen lassen’. While intransitive usages (cf. (18)–(19) below) give rise to no questions, some occurrences constructed with accusatives are problematic. Beside clear instances of forms meaning ‘make prosper, increase’ (cf. (20)–(21)), we find a few difficult cases. Consider some examples together with traditional translations:

(13) eté ta indra jantávo viśvam pusya-nti
these your Indra:VOC people:NOM.PL all:ACC prosper:PR-3PL.ACT
váryam
desirable.good:ACC.SG
Diese Leute hier bringen für dich, Indra, allen begehrenswerten (Besitz) zur Blüte [Geldner 1951: I, 105].

Geldner’s translation, albeit syntactically impeccable, conforms badly to what we know about the Vedic mythology. It is typically the function of the deities, not of the men, to augment or bring to prosperity goods of all kinds (viśvam váryam) 18.

Still odder are the translations suggested for the following passage occurring in two Brähmaṇas, Śatapatha and Taittirīya:

(16) ná puṣṭáṃ pasú mínya- ta iti; tásmaḥ rájā
cattle:ACC.PL not prosper
[They say:] «It thinks not of the fat cattle», — whence the king does not rear cattle [Eggeling 1900: 326]
... Therefore ... the king does not feed cattle [Dumont 1948: 484]

One needs not argue how weird a cattle-breeding king (rajā) looks within the context of the traditional Indian culture.

To conclude this short selection of suspect transitive-causative translations, let me quote one more Rgvedic passage, with the translation proposed by Renou:

(17) tvāṃ <...> śrávo váso puṣṭáṃ ná puṣya- si
you glory:ACC Vasu:VOC prosperity:ACC as prosper:PR-2SG.ACT
toi, tu fais fleurir le renom (des hommes) comme une floraison (de richesses), ... ò Vasu. [Renou 1964 [EVP XIII]: 36]

Obviously, Renou tried to stick as close as possible to the original syntactic construction, but what can be meant by ‘tu fais fleurir ... une floraison’?

In order to answer this and similar questions, let us have a closer look at typical constructions attested with the present pusyati.

6.1. Intransitive: <X NOM + prospers>

pusyati occurs some 10 times in the intransitive usage in the RV. Typical examples are:

---

18 Cf., for instance:
(14) sárasvatī ... váryam dāt
May Sarasvati give [us] desired goods. (RV 10.17.7)
(15) śrād viśvā váryā kpṛdi
[O Agni], guarantee all desired goods! (RV 8.75.2)
6.2. Transitive: \(<X_{\text{nom}} + P_{\text{acc}} + \text{makes prosper, increases}>\)

The transitive-causative pattern can be exemplified by the following passages:

\[(20) \text{viśvā } \text{vidvāṁ } \text{ārvijyā } \text{dhīra } \text{puṣya-si} \quad (RV 1.94.6)\]

[You, O Agni], the wise one, knowing all the offices of a rtvij (priest), make them flourish.

\[(21) \text{sā mudā } \text{kāvyā } \text{purū } \text{viśvam } \text{bhūma-}\]

By [his] joy, he (sc. Agni) [makes thrive] many poetic inspirations, as the earth makes thrive everything.

It must be emphasized that this transitive pattern occurs in the RV only, practically disappearing in later texts \(^{19}\). This is yet another piece of evidence for the change of the syntactic type (high degree of lability \(\rightarrow\) low degree of lability) after the early Vedic period and, particularly, after the Rgveda.

6.3. Intransitive with content accusative

6.3.1. Intransitives with ‘etymological’ accusative \(<X_{\text{nom}} + P_{\text{puṣ}}_{\text{acc}} + \text{prosper}>\)

The symbol \(P_{\text{puṣ}}\) denotes an abstract nominal derived from the root \(puṣ\)-, meaning ‘prosperity, thriving’ or the like. This pattern occurs only once in the RV (6.2.1; cf. below for this attestation), but becomes common in late Vedic texts (Brāhmaṇas), cf.:

\[(22) \text{sahasra-poṣaṇ } \text{puṣya- } \text{ṛ- } \text{ity, } \text{esā } \text{hi} \quad (KS 24.6:95.17-18)\]

No doubt, to the same syntactic type belongs the expression \(puṣṭiṁ \ldots puṣya-\) met at RV 6.2.1 (example (17)), which thus must be translated (literally) as ‘you prosper prosperity’, i.e. ‘you are prosperous’.

\(^{19}\) Except for two occurrences in the Ṣatapatha-Brāhmaṇa.
Constructions like \textit{sā puṣṭim puṣyati} are fairly common with a number of verbs in ancient Indo-European languages and have been repeatedly discussed. The traditional term for the accusative nominal in this pattern is ‘content accusative’ (Inhaltsakkusativ), which implies that the nominal in question refers to a concept inherent to the meaning of the verb. In the simplest cases it is derived from the same root (cf. \textit{puṣṭim}, \textit{(sahasra-)poṣam}), which prompts another traditional term, \textit{figura etymologica}, or ‘etymologischer Akkusativ’. Examples of such kind can also be found, for instance, in Latin (cf. \textit{vivere vitam}, \textit{militare militiam}), English (cf. \textit{live a life}, \textit{fight a fight}) and other languages.

\textbf{6.3.2. Intransitive with accusative of parameter/scope: }〈\textit{X}_{\text{nom}} + \textit{P}_{\text{acc}} + \textit{PROSPERS}〉

Very similar to constructions with etymological accusative are patterns with the accusative referring to some aspect(s), parameter(s) or scope of prosperity. Examples are:

(24) \textit{sā vit su-vīrā marūdbhīr astu} \textit{<...>}
\textit{pūya-nt-i nṛṃnām} \textit{(RV 7.56.5)}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
this & tribe:NOM & good-men:NOM & Marut:INS.PL & be:PR-3SG.IMPV.ACT \\
prosper:PR-PRTC-NOM.SG.F & manliness:ACC
\end{tabular}
Let this tribe be full of valiant sons with [the help of] Maruts, ... prospering in manliness.

(25) \textit{prajām kṛṇ-ātāhām iḥā puṣya-taṁ}
\textit{rayim} \textit{(AV 14.2.37)}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
offspring:ACC & make:PR-2DU.IMPV.MED & here & prosper:PR-2DU.IMPV.ACT & wealth:ACC \\
[O you, two parents,] produce offspring, prosper here in wealth.
\end{tabular}

This pattern shares some features with those discussed under 6.2. and 6.3.1. Morphologically, it looks very much like the transitive pattern 〈\textit{X}_{\text{nom}} + \textit{P}_{\text{acc}} + \textit{makes prosper}, \textit{increases}〉, where the accusative \textit{P}_{\text{acc}} refers to a parameter or scope of prosperity. It is obviously for this reason that constructions like (13), (16), (17) were interpreted as transitive-causative by many translators. Syntactically, this pattern is most closely related to the intransitive type with content accusative, however. Like \textit{(sahasra-)poṣam, puṣṭim} etc., \textit{nṛṃnām} ‘manliness’ and \textit{rayim} ‘wealth’ in (24)–(25) refer to some aspects of prosperity, or, to state it in general terms, to the parameter or scope corresponding to the domain of prosperity.\textsuperscript{20} This semantic type is discussed in detail by Oertel \cite{1926: 31ff.1}, who rightly argues that the accusative in such constructions is to be regarded «as an accusative of content or reference 〈...〉 rather than as accusative of the direct object» [emphasis is mine. — \textit{L. K.}]\textsuperscript{21}. Another term commonly used in the literature to refer to such accusatives, ‘accusative of relation’ or

\textsuperscript{20} The parameter of prosperity can also be expressed by the instrumental case, as in (26):

(26) \textit{pūsyati prajāya- paśūbhiḥ} \textit{(TS 2.1.9.4 = 2.4.6.7)}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
prospers & offspring:INS & cattle:INS \\
He prospers (= abounds) in offspring and cattle.
\end{tabular}

This pattern (attested in the Samhitā and Brāhmaṇa of the Taittirīya school only) is irrelevant for our discussion and I leave it out of consideration.

\textsuperscript{21} Cf. also \cite{1880: 88ff.; 1888: 175f.; 1983: 29, fn. 9}. 
‘accusative of result’, appears somewhat misleading; I prefer to call this type ‘accusative of parameter/scope’. Just as nṛṇām ‘manliness’ and rayim ‘wealth’ denote scopes of prosperity, so too paśūn in the Brāhmaṇa passage (16) quoted above without doubt refers to yet another area of thriving, namely cattle, or, to say it more explicitly, abundance in cattle which is in possession of the person referred to by the subject (in our example, the king). Thus, (16) has to be translated as follows:

(16) ... rājā paśūn nā pusyati

... the king does not prosper in cattle.

No doubt, to the same usage also belong the RVic passages 1.81.9 and 6.2.1 quoted above (examples (13), (17)):

(13) ete ta indra jantávo viśvam pusyanti vāryam

These peoples of yours, o Indra, prosper in all desirable goods.

(17) tvām <...> śrávo vásō puṣṭim ná puṣyasi

You, o Vasu, prosper in glory [= you are glorious], as one [prospers] in prosperity [= as one is prosperous].

It is most instructive that ‘etymological’ and ‘non-etymological’ accusatives are coordinated within one sentence, which clearly points to their structural affinity.

In semantic terms, the difference between patterns with ‘etymological’ and ‘non-etymological’ accusatives can be characterized as that between semantically empty (= inherent to the meaning of the verb) and non-empty parameter/scope noun, respectively. Of course, this distinction is by no means clear-cut, and we are probably dealing with a continuum of «emptiness». In particular, puṣṭi- ‘prosperity’ seems to be more abstract (and thus more «empty») than pōsa- ‘abundance, prosperity’. Furthermore, when constructed with the genitive referring to the scope of prosperity, as e. g. in the case of paśūnām sahasra-pośam ‘thousandfold prosperity in cattle’ (example (22)), pōsa- becomes still more concrete, so that, semantically, paśūnām sahasra-pośam belongs with non-etymological accusatives.

Beside pusyati, there is a number of other intransitive verbs which can be constructed with the accusative of parameter. Here belong, for instance, pāvate ‘becomes clean, purifies (himself)’ (cf. gṛtām pavasva RV 9.49.3 ‘purify yourself [into] ghee’; see [Gotō 1987: 207]), dī- ‘shine’ (cf. rayim asmāsu dīdīhi RV 2.2.6 (lit.) ‘shine wealth for us’), arṣ- ‘flow’ (cf. abhī vástrā suvaśanāny arṣa RV 9.97.50 ‘flow (for) well-fitting (lit. well-clothing) clothes’), etc.²²; for a rich collection of examples, see [Gaedicke 1880: 88ff., 156ff]. However, unlike other verbs constructed with accusative of parameter/scope (many of which also refer to prosperity and well-being), pusyati can be employed in transitive-causative uses (discussed in section 6.2) as well. Obviously, the morphological similarity between these two accusative patterns has given rise to numerous misinterpretations and erroneous translations (some of which are mentioned above). The difference between these two uses of pusyati is by no means a recent discovery; it has been repeatedly noticed in Vedic studies, cf. [Delbrück 1888: 177f.; Henry 1891: 37f.²³].

²² For this type of construction, see e. g. [Renou 1957: 119 (= Choix d'études ... II, 757)].

²³ Henry [op. cit.], was in fact too categorical when claiming in his comment on AV 13.2.10 that pusyati can never be used transitively («Le verbe puṣ est intransitif ici comme partout: il n’est nulle part nécessaire de lui supposer un sens transitif»).
Oertel 1926: 31ff.; Haudry 1977: 195ff.; Jamison 1983: 142 and fn. 77]. So more surprising is the fact that again and again one encounters odd and forced translations, like those cited in examples (13), (16), (17)\textsuperscript{24}. Although in some two or three unclear cases syntactic ambiguity of constructions with pūṣyaṭi cannot be ruled out\textsuperscript{25}, most often, the type of construction can easily be identified by the type of subject. Specifically, only gods, but not adepts, can be said to increase, bring to prosperity wealth, cattle, offspring, etc., while the subject of prosperity is typically an adept (in particular, a sacrifice or a priest). In some rare cases when gods are said to prosper, the parameters of prosperity are quite specific (rūpā- ‘(divine) form’, kṣatrā- ‘superior power’, etc.) and can hardly relate to adepts.

7. pūṣyaṭi: from intransitive to transitive pattern

While the distinction between the etymological and non-etymological accusatives cannot conceal the semantic and syntactic affinity of the patterns $<X_{\text{NOM}} + P_{\text{ACC}} + \text{prospers}>$ and $<X_{\text{NOM}} + P_{\text{ACC}} + \text{prospers}>$, the opposition between both of them, on the one hand, and the transitive pattern discussed under 6.2, on the other, is far more crucial. Strictly speaking, the relation between patterns $<X_{\text{NOM}} + P_{\text{ACC}} + \text{prospers}>$ and $<X_{\text{NOM}} + P_{\text{ACC}} + \text{makes prosper, increases}>$ cannot be taken as truly causative. Although the present pūṣyaṭi is attested in constructions meaning, for instance, ‘the king prospers (in wealth)’ or ‘Indra makes the king’s wealth increase’ and the like, we do not find purely causative pairs like (i) ‘the king prospers’ ~ (ii) ‘Indra makes the king prosper’

\textsuperscript{24} In this paper I focus on the present forms only, but the same objection is valid for a good many forms outside the present system, above all for perfects (pupōṣa ‘has prospered’, etc.). Cf., for instance, Gonda’s translation of the perfect participle pupusvāṇ, which appears quite forced:

(27) pcām tvāḥ pōṣam āste pūpusvāṇ (RV 10.71.11)

One sits augmenting the abundance of holy stanzas. [Gonda 1957: 79 (= Selected studies I, 70)]

No doubt, this occurrence also belongs to the pattern ‘intransitive with accusative of parameter/scope’ and should be translated accordingly:

He sits, prospering in (= successful in the composition of) stanzas.

\textsuperscript{25} Here may belong, for instance, the following RVīc passage:

(28) pró tyē agnāyo 'gnīsu viśvam puṣya- nti váryam (RV 5.6.6)

before these fires:NOM fires:LOC all:ACC prosper:PR-3PL.ACT desirable.good:ACC

Geldner [1951: II, 9] prefers an intransitive interpretation:

Diese Feuer (haben) unter (allen) Feuern den Vorrang; sie haben alles Begehrenswerte in Fülle.

By contrast, Renou and Elizarenkova translate this form as transitive-causative:

Ces-fatneux feux sont en avant parmi les (autres) feux; ils font fleurir tout bien-d’élection. [Renou 1964 (EVP XIII): 22]

Since Agni (= fire) appears in the Vedas both as a subject (cf. RV 4.8.5; 6.2.1; TS 7.1.9.1) and a causer of thriving (cf. RV 1.94.6; 5.26.6; 8.39.7), both interpretations are at first glance semantically acceptable. However, viśvam puṣyaṇti váryam is a sacred formula meaning ‘they prosper in all desirable goods’, as in RV 1.81.9 (example (13)). The formulaic character of this expression practically rules out other (albeit syntactically and semantically possible) interpretations, in favour of Geldner’s translation.
or (iii) 'the king's wealth increases' ~ (iv) 'Indra makes the king's wealth increase'. To be more exact, puṣyati occurs in usages (i) and (iv), but not in (ii) and (iii) 26. Thus, although the syntactic behaviour of puṣyati can be qualified as labile (cf. the valence difference between patterns with and without accusative object), it cannot be treated as an instance of causative lability sensu stricto (type S = O), unlike riśyati and numerous middle and perfect forms discussed earlier. In order to express the causative meaning of type (ii), puṣ- takes the causative suffix -āya-, as in (30):

(30) tām no agne <...> rayim sahasva ā bhara
    this:ACC us Agni:VOC wealth:ACC powerful:VOC here bring:PR-2SG.IMPV.ACT
    sā kṣep-āya- t sā poṣ- aya- t (RV 5.9.7)
    he:NOM dwell-CAUS-3SG.INJ.ACT he:NOM prosper-CAUS-3SG.INJ.ACT

O powerful Agni, bring hither this wealth to us; he (sc. Agni) will make [us] dwell in peace and prosper.

One more feature which is relevant for the distinction between <X NOM + (PACC) + prosperous> and <X NOM + PACC + makes prosper, increases> can be formulated in terms of referential identity. While in the former case the subject of prosperity and the possessor of P (wealth, cattle, offspring, etc.), be it an adept or god, is obviously the same person, in transitive patterns the subject refers to a deity who increases goods, power etc. possessed by someone else, namely by the adept(s) of this deity.

The morphological similarity between the two accusative patterns attested with puṣyati, i.e. transitive proper and intransitive with accusative of parameter, suggests one more scenario of the rise of labile patterning, in addition to those mentioned and briefly discussed in section 2:

I. <X NOM + prosperous> : (e. g.) The sacrificer prospers

The intransitive verb takes a content accusative (a semantically empty 'etymological accusative').

II. <X NOM + Ppuṣ ACC + prosperous>: The sacrificer prospers (in prosperity)

---

26 Some two or three cases which can be interpreted as belonging to the causative type (ii) (and are thus translated by some Vedic scholars) are syntactically ambiguous. For the reasons of space I quote here only one such example:

(29) té syāma yé agnaye dadāś-ür havyādātibhiḥ
    those be:PR.OPT:1PL.ACT who Agni:DAT offer:PF-3PL.ACT sacrificial.gifts:INS
    yā im puṣya-nt- a indh-ātē (RV 4.8.5)
    who him prosper:PR-PRTC-NOM.PL.M kindle:PR-3PL.MED

Geldner's and Renou's translations obviously rely upon the assumption that the accusative īm is syntactically connected with both verbal forms, puṣyantah and indhate:

Wir möchten die sein, die den Agni mit Opfergaben beschenkt haben, die ihn entzünden und großziehen. [Geldner 1951: I, 429]

Puissions nous être ceux qui toujours-ont-satisfait Agni par les dons d’offrande, / qui l’allument en le faisant prospérer. [Renou 1964 (EVP XIII): 13]

However, Agni is never said to be brought to prosperity by adepts (sacrificers). Under a different syntactic analysis (which seems to me more attractive), īm is connected with indhate, while the participle puṣyantah has no object. Thus, the occurrence in question falls into the intransitive type:

Let us be those who have presented Agni with sacrificial gifts, who, prospering, kindle him.
Instead of an ‘etymological accusative’, the verb can be constructed with a semantically non-empty ‘non-etymological accusative’, referring to parameter or scope of prosperity.

III. \( <x^i_{\text{NOM}} + (x^i{'}s) \ p_{\text{ACC}} + \text{prospers}> \) : The sacrificer prospers in wealth

The parameter (property) expressed by the accusative is reinterpreted as possessed by someone non-identical with the subject.

IV. \( <x^i_{\text{NOM}} + (y^j{'}s) \ p_{\text{ACC}} + \text{makes} \ \text{prosper, increases}> \) : Agni makes wealth increase

Vedic pūṣyati probably stopped at this stage, but, theoretically, it might have made one step further, substituting a noun referring to the possessor of parameter (property) for \( p_{\text{ACC}} \) and thus developing the causative pattern proper.

The turning point in this scenario is the III \( \rightarrow \) IV transition, when the reference of the possessor of \( p_{\text{ACC}} \) is «switched» (i \( \rightarrow \) j). This process, which might be called ‘alienation of parameter’, seems to be one more possible way to arrive at causative lability. Example (23) is especially instructive as an illustration of the ease of the transition from an intransitive with a content accusative to a transitive. The intransitive interpretation of bhūma viśvam pūṣyati ‘the earth thrives in everything [what exists on it]’ is almost undistinguishable from the corresponding transitive, ‘the earth makes thrive everything [what exists on it]’. By analogy and, particularly, by means of similes like [agnih] kāvyā pūṣyati ‘Agni makes thrive poetic inspirations’ ~ bhūma viśvam pūṣyati ‘the earth makes thrive everything’, this transition could have expanded to other constructions, giving rise to the labile patterning of pūṣyati ‘prospers; makes prosper’.

To conclude, the scenario of the syntactic evolution of Vedic pūṣyati sketched above can be placed into a broader perspective. Although our discussion did not go beyond the scope of one particular verb, pūṣyati, its syntactic features are important evidence for a typological study of lability. An easy transfer from the content accusative constructions to the transitive-causative pattern may imply that languages where intransitive constructions with content accusative are common have at their disposal an additional «resource» for developing causative lability. Verification of this assumption requires both an extensive study of the old Indo-European syntax, particularly from the point of view of the transitive/intransitive distinction, and further typological evidence from non-related languages.

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Alongside purely linguistic matters, there is something else which, in my opinion, links the subject of this paper with the addressee of the present Festschrift. Aleksandr Evgen’evič exemplifies a rare (if not to say unique) integrity of the two processes which were in the spotlight of the last three sections, ‘prosper’ and ‘make increase, prosper’ (both rendered by Rgvedic pūṣyati). His own prosperity requires and implies, as a conditio sine qua non, the prosperity of people and things around him; and vice versa.
And since everything in our life is so intimately interconnected, it will be appropriate to conclude this article with the following verse, slightly modifying Vedic sacred formulae discussed above:

\[
ojaś ca viśvaṃ vāryaṃ ca \\
prajāṁ sarvāṇi karma ca \\
sakhīn uta śisyān puṣyet \\
\]

May he prosper in vigour and all kinds of wealth, in offspring and all kinds of works, in friends and students!

**ABBREVIATIONS OF TEXTS**

AV = Atharvaveda
KS = Kāthaka
PB = Pañcaviṃśa-Brāhmaṇa
RV = Rgveda
SB = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa
TB = Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa
TS = Taittirīya-Saṃhitā
V = Vīdēvdāt

**GRAMMATICAL ABBREVIATIONS**

ACC — accusative
ACT — active
AOR — aorist
CAUS — causative
DAT — dative
DU — dual
ERG — ergative
F — feminine
GEN — genitive
IMPF — imperfect
IMPV — imperative
INF — infinitive
INJ — injunctive
INS — instrumental
INTR — intransitive
LOC — locative
M — masculine
MED — middle
NOM — nominative
OPT — optative
PF — perfect
PL — plural
PR — present
PRTC — participle
SG — singular
TR — transitive
VOC — vocative

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