

The present bachelor thesis deals with word-formation by ablaut vs. word-formation by suffixation in diachrony, namely in Old and Middle English. The reason for choosing this theme lied in its general marginalization in grammar books, in which the reader finds detailed descriptions of the grammatical function of ablaut in Old and, to a lesser extent, also in Middle English. The aim of the thesis was to describe ablaut formations during these two stages of the language in a typological perspective. The analyses focus on inflectional features of the roots of the formations and show the decrease in various combinations of the individual realizations of the roots that display ablaut with inflectional (-a, -e, -o/-u; -) and purely derivational, agglutinative, suffixes (-lic; -full; -scip; -had; -d, -t, -). The thesis further focuses on whether the various realizations of the roots are connected with the selected suffixes also semantically, i.e. whether there exist formal and/or semantic correspondences in the combinations. The analyses themselves were preceded by determining morphologically related families on the basis of the Dictionary of Old English: A-F, the most recent and detailed dictionary of Old English, which covered entries under the letters A-F when our analyses were carried out. The same was done on the basis of the Middle English Compendium. As follows from the general typological development of the language and as the analyses of the materials prove directly and indirectly, the functional clarity, i.e. motivation, of ablaut formations is gradually obscured. This process is as a result of the typological and phonological changes, and these formations start yielding to the agglutinative means of derivation, which thus prove to be productive. They further yield to derivationally unmotivated means, such as lexical enrichment of the language, in the first place owing to the language contact with French, with which the present thesis does not deal for limitations of space.