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Ablaut is a definite series of vowel grades, differentiated among themselves both as regards quantity and as regards quality.

As regards quantity

Very short grade      Normal grade      Reduced grade      Zero grade.

Qualitative ablaut. - a definite series of gradations of vowel quality.

Quantitative accent is regarded as resulting from changes of stress. Qualitative ablaut is not clearly understood as yet. One theory that is advanced is that it is due to changes of pitch accent. It is one of the most difficult problems in grammar, and perhaps is one of the most fascinating.