

allude the existence of dissimilation process. Since dissimilation is usually caused by the surface sounds, both /r/ are likely to have same phonetic value. The second evidence comes from the fact that /r/ constitutes the natural class with /z/ and /j/ in MK period. /k, p/ were lenited to /h (ɣ), β/ respectively after /r, z, j/, for example, /ar-/ ‘to know’ + /-ko/ → /ar(h)o, /taj/ ‘big’ + /pəm/ ‘tiger’ → /tayβəm/, *kəzkuj ‘earthwarm’ > /kəz(h)uj/, etc. Both /z/ and /j/ involves very close approximation of two articulators in common, however, /r/ obviously has the brief constriction. But, as Lindau (1985) stated, in an acoustic point of view, a flap and a trill can be regarded as the same sort which involves frication. Thus, the fricative-like characteristic of the final /r/ made it possible group with /z/ and /j/, and that sound should be a flap. Lastly, the exact place of the articulation of /r/ can be thought of as coronal from the phonotactic constraint which bans /*rts/ and /*rt/ sequences.

From the discussion above, we can conclude that MK /r/ was flap everywhere. If the syllable final /r/ was a flap, the vowel-like behavior of /r/ final verbs can be accounted for by the acoustic perturbation of /r/ and listeners’ hypo-correction in the sense of Ohala (1993). The articulation of flaps typically involves transitory vowels preceding and the following the constriction (Blevins & Garret 2004). MK /r/ of the period seems to have the same acoustic feature. The listeners, at some point, failed to recognize this transitory vowel following the constriction as a part of /r/; they ended up with reinterpreting it as a full vowel /i/. This reinterpretation led the speakers to classify /r/ with vowels. Then, in the later period, although the phonetic value of syllable final /r/ was changed to liquid [l] which does not have transitory vowels to be confused, the morpho-phonemic behavior of /r/ final stem + /i/-initial suffix could not catch up with the sound change. It is the typical case of “time lag” between sound change and morphological leveling. This time lag makes /r/ final verbs seem to work irregularly. The fact that in some varieties of PDK, this lag has been remedied by the emergence of leveled form such as [al-imjən], [kal-ini], and so on supports the analysis.

The irregularity of /ri/ final verbs before /a/-initial suffixes can be explained in similar vein, albeit somewhat complex. /ri/ final verbs seem to have two origins: /Xri/ and *Xrki. The form with *k first underwent the assimilatory sound change *rk > *rhi > /rr/ when it combined with /a/-initial suffixes. The form without *k underwent analogical change of /r/ > /rr/ due to the identical phonological shape of base form. Their base forms, however, did not change yet. But, like /r/ final verbs, recently in some varieties of PDK, the leveling such as [kalli-ko], [p’alli-ko] has been occurring.

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