

The Approximantization of Alveolar Plosives in Hawrami (Paveh Variety)

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Abstract

A significant part of the Iranian dialectology literature consists of older researches which are still referred to and utilized; such as Oranski (1960), Mackenzie (1966), Blau (1989a & 1989b). Nonetheless, their achievements need to be re-examined through detailed documentations, within modern theoretical frameworks and methodologies as well. The older studies on Hawrami by western linguists should also be placed in this collection. The speculations about the status of Hawrami within the Iranian languages family have always been needed to be scrutinized and accredited. There is adequate evidence that reveals historical relationship between Hawrami and different Iranian Languages, which in turn furnishes us with new speculations on the status of Hawrami within the Iranian languages. For instance, we can refer to similar behavior of Hawrami and Baluchi in retaining the historical “labialized voiceless uvular fricative” [χ^w] in the form of a “labio-velar approximant” [w]; compare: [wæʃ] ‘good’ and [wón+i] ‘blood’ in Hawrami with [wæʃ] or [wæʃʃ+i] ‘sweet’ and [wón] ‘blood’ in Baluchi.

Another observation discussed in the present article refers to the geographical area of Zagros, and the similar behavior of Hawrami and some south western varieties of Iranian languages. In the mentioned southwestern varieties, underlying alveolar plosives /d/ and /t/ in certain contexts appear as different variants of a voiced dental fricative [ð]. This segment has been called ‘Zagros [d]’ and shown by [ð] symbol (Windfhr & Arbor, 1989: 251-262). It is the same segment referred to as ‘Zal/Dal Mu’jam’ in older

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Persian texts (see Natel Khanlari, 1988:50-52). In the present article, compelling evidence is presented to extend the domain of Zagros [d] in order to include Hawrami as well. But, it should be noted that Zagros [d] or 'Zal/Dal Mu'jam' in Hawrami has some differences with the southwestern variants that are explained in detail.

In order to maintain validity and reliability, the research is limited to the city of Paveh, which is the largest speech community of Hawrami speakers. The present research, in a descriptive-analytic way, utilizes the theory and methodology of the 'Rule based Generative phonology' to explain the regularities under discussion (see Kenstowicz, 1994 and McCarthy, 2007). The problem first discussed in Naghshbandi (1997); nevertheless, its description is not precise and complete. For this reason, in the present article, a new phonetic description of Zagros [d] in Hawrami, its underlying representations, the phonetic context, and an updated analysis and explanation of this phonetic segment are presented. Hence, the following questions are answered here: a) what is the relationship between Hawrami and other varieties of Iranian Languages and what is the status of Hawrami in this regard? b) What is the status of 'velarized alveolar approximant' [ɹʏ] within the sound system of Hawrami?

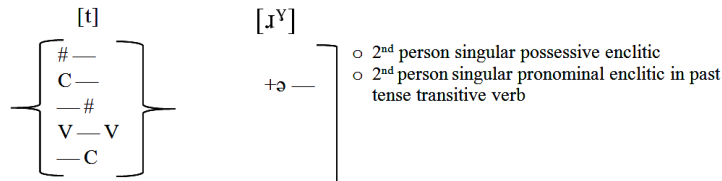
One of the exclusivities of Hawrami sound system is retaining Zagros [d], manifested as 'velarized alveolar approximant' [ɹʏ]. This segment has some relation with /d/ and /t/ in this language variety. This finding can be as evidence for the close relationship of Hawrami with some southwestern varieties; a relationship has not already been paid attention. The relation of 'velarized alveolar approximant' [ɹʏ] with [d] and [t], within the sound system of Hawrami is also explained based on 'Rule based Generative phonology'. By investigating the corpus, we can find that [ɹʏ] alternates with [d] and [t].

[ɹʏ] and [d] appear in the following contexts:



For example in words: [dwáɹd+i] 'scissors', [ʔaɹʏá] 'mother', and [nawíɹʏ] 'Navid (proper noun)'

[ɹʏ] and [t] appear in the following contexts:



For example in words: [go:t] 'meat', [t^hut^há] 'dog', [p^hatɹʏá] 'wheat meal', [gó:ʃ+ɹʏ] 'your ear', and [di+ɹʏ] 'you saw him'.

Based on 'corpus internal and external evidence'; and the criteria of 'frequency of occurrence', 'phonetic plausibility', 'phonological naturalness', and 'universal tendencies' /d/ and /t/ are conclusively underlying the different realization of [ɹʏ].

In conclusion, [ɹʏ] in Hawrami is considered as a contextual variant of /d/ and /t/, and it is a remnant of Zagros [d] or 'Zal/Dal Mu'jam'. This finding proposes new aspects in the relationship between Hawrami and other Iranian languages. It also challenges the claims on the relationship between Hawrami and Caspian border languages or Central varieties.

Key Words: Hawrami; Velarized alveolar approximant; Zagros [d]. Zal/Dal Mu'jam; Generative phonology.