

A Pre-Coptic Dialectal Feature in Roman Demotic Texts from Fayoum: Evidence for Lambdacism

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Abstract

This article examines one of the dialectal features of Roman Demotic texts (30 BC- 500 AD) from the Fayoum known as 'lambdacism' (the substitution of the letter "R" with the letter "L"). This feature is considered one of the most important characteristics of the Fayoum Coptic dialect. Undoubtedly, the use of a spelling system in Demotic writing, along with the expansion of the alphabet, especially during the Roman period compared to earlier periods, contributed to bringing Demotic closer to the spoken language. This phenomenon was observed through the study and analysis of over a thousand Demotic texts (documentary and literary). This study reveals that this phenomenon exists in some literary Demotic texts. The linguistic significance of this study lies in the fact that it provides phonetic evidence demonstrating the use of spoken language by some scribes in writing.

Keywords

Pre-Coptic;
Demotic;
Dialect;
Lambdacism;
Fayoum.

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Author 1. **Rania Soliman**: Transcription, codicology, and drafting.

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1. Introduction

The term "dialect" is associated among scholars of ancient Egyptian with the Coptic language, but, Baillet's study of the decrees of Canopus and Memphis led scholars in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to accept the idea of the existence of dialects in Pre-Coptic Egypt (Baillet, 1905, pp.77-91; Winand, 2015, p. 237). In addition to it, some researchers considered the existence of dialects in ancient Egypt to be self-evident, and Griffith stated that Egypt's extension of more than a thousand kilometers was in itself evidence of the existence of dialects, additionally, the development of the ancient Egyptian language was not a straight line from ancient Egyptian to Coptic; rather, dialects played an important role, as Coptic dialects are an extension of the dialects of the ancient Egyptian language (Winand, 2015, p. 233.; Eissa, 2015, p. 89).

1.1 Definition of dialect

Dialect is a set of linguistic characteristics specific to a particular geographical and environmental region or a specific ethnic group; this difference distinguishes it from the main language, keeping in mind that dialectal characteristics are limited so as not to make the dialect strange and difficult to understand among speakers of the same language (Eissa, 2015, p. 87).

1.2 Factors in the emergence of dialect

There are three factors that influence the emergence of the dialect. The first and most important is the geographical factor, the second is the environmental factor, and the third is the factor of population mixing (migration - trade) (Eissa, 2015, p. 88).

There is no doubt that the distinctive geographical location of Fayoum, which is a depression located west of the Nile Valley, 100 kilometers southwest of Cairo, in the Libyan Desert, and which consists horizontally of three terraces (Derda, 2006, p. 8-9), led to the diversity of its topography and consequently the diversity of its environments, including cultivated land, lakes, and deserts. Regarding population mixing, it cannot be ignored that Libya borders Fayoum across the Western Desert, and this mixing through trade may have had an impact on the language, all these factors had an impact on the emergence of the dialect.

Evidence of the difference in dialect was found in a letter dating back to 1200 BC, in which a person from Upper Egypt complained about the lack of clarity in the language of a letter sender from Lower Egypt. The vastness of Egypt led to dialect differences, both in spoken and written language (Eissa, 2015, p. 89), [*nꜣy.k sꜣdd šꜣw.t ꜥꜣꜣ ns.t.j mn ꜥꜣꜣ-tp sp.t.j jw.w ꜥꜣꜣ m sꜣꜣꜣ bn ꜣꜣꜣ ꜥꜣꜣ.f st st mj md.t n s jꜣꜥꜣ ꜥꜣꜣꜣ s n ꜣꜣꜣw*] = "Your words are regrouped on my tongue and remained fixed on my lips. They are so confused when heard that there is no interpreter who can explain them. They are like a conversation between a man of the Delta and a man of Elephantine" (P. Anastasi I, 28, 5-6) (Winand, 2015, p.241).

Dialects have left traces in writing since the Old Kingdom in all aspects of the language, but the evidence proving this, for several reasons mentioned by Winand in one of his articles, presents a significant challenge. He pointed out that manifestations of dialectal diversity are limited (Winand, 2015, p.256; Winand, 2018, pp.494-495; Winand, 2022, p.14).

2. The selected corpus of texts

This study relied on the examination of more than a thousand published Roman Demotic texts (30 BC – 500 AD), which were written in Fayoum, and through the chart below **fig. 1**, the texts were classified according to their type into documentary texts and literary texts, taking into consideration the place where the text was written (as in the Trismegistus database). It is clear from the diagram below that the selected collection of texts is concentrated in three main areas

located on the edge of Fayoum, Dimeh, Tebtynis, and Madinat Madi. In addition to one text from Hawara, another text from Kom Ushim and a few texts are unknown where they are written.

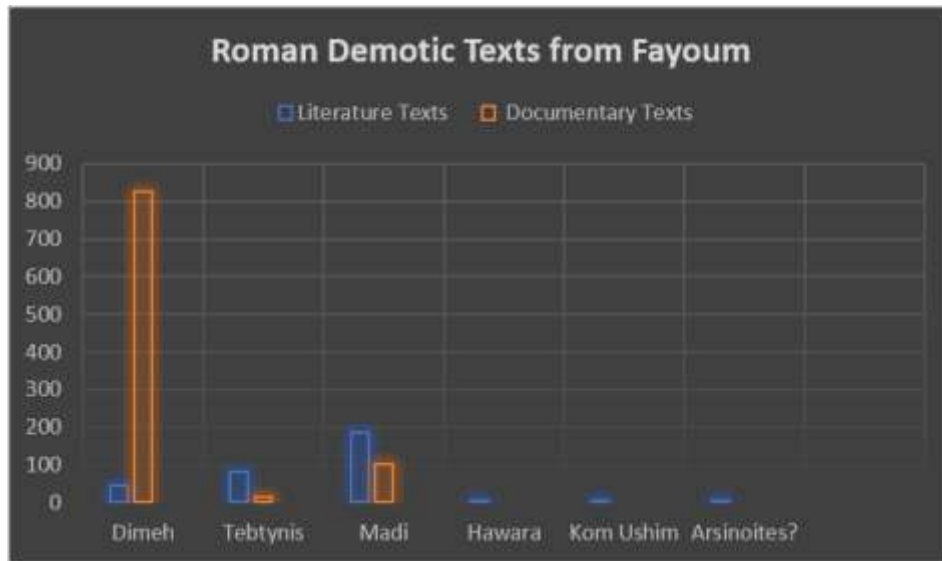


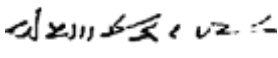
Figure 1. A Chart for Roman Demotic texts from Fayoum, by Rania Soliman

3. Orthography and Phonology in Roman Demotic

The use of the orthographic style in writing Demotic, the “phonetic style” as opposed to the previously used style called the "spelling style," made it closer to the spoken language (Eissa, 2015, p. 29), bearing in mind that no written text can accurately reflect spoken language (Ray, 1994, p. 252). Additionally, Demotic is a late stage of the ancient Egyptian language, situated between Late Egyptian and Coptic, making it a pivotal stage between them, and Late Demotic has characteristics related to the Coptic language (Brugsch, 1855, p.9; Quack, 2006, pp.191-216), where Ostraca of Madi to be linguistically closer to Coptic than to Demotic (Quack, 2017, pp. 27-96). But there are those who believe that systematic research into the characteristics of dialects in the Demotic language is essentially absent (Frank, 2022, p.447).

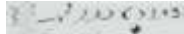
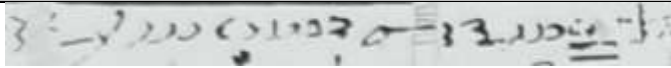
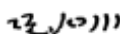
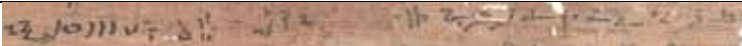
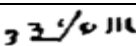
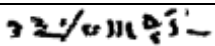
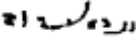
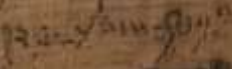
4. Investigative subject

This paper aims to identify a dialectal feature in Demotic texts from Fayoum during the Roman era (30 BC – 500 AD). Based on the principle that phonetics is a fundamental criterion for studying dialects, and that Coptic dialects reflect an older dialect from which they descended, this study focuses on the phenomenon of Lambdacism in Roman Demotic texts from Fayoum. This phenomenon represents one of the most important characteristics of the Fayoum Coptic dialect, where the letter (L) replaces the letter (R). This phonetic change may have resulted from linguistic contact between the native and immigrants.

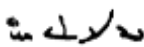
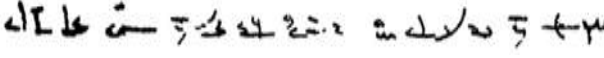
It is worth noting that this phenomenon has been observed in Ptolemaic texts, but only in a few texts, such as ( *Hwt- wly* = Hawara, P.BM 10604, L.4), ( *Sbk L-hnt* = Sobek of Ilahun, P.Vogl.demot. Inv.177,178,B, L.19), both the previous examples from Tebtynis.

The table below shows a set of examples, including nouns, adjectives, and verbs, which represent phonetic evidence of the use of spoken language in writing before Coptic in general and in Demotic texts in particular. By comparing this set with its counterparts in the Fayoum Coptic dialect to prove the existence of this phenomenon under investigation.

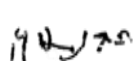
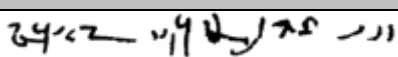
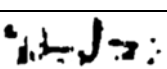
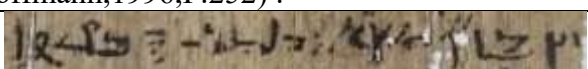
■ y^r = River, Canal (Erichsen, 1954, p.150) $\rightarrow y^l$ $\rightarrow$ $\iota \alpha \alpha \lambda_F$ (Crum,1939, p 82a)

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Examples	Pl.
$y^r y^l$		 <i>In hny.k n3 y^r ly</i> = Have you rowed overs the river? (B04, col.6, L.15).	Dimeh
y^l		 <i>hpr.f r^ mn t-bl^ hr^ t3^ ml3^ n-hr r n3 p3 y^l.</i> = Monthbaal was with the fleet at the river., P. Inaros, col.22, L.4 (Hoffmann, 1996, p. 363).	Dimeh
		 <i>3s^ t^ nb. t^ y^l</i> = Isis, lady of the river. P.Berl.6750, col.6,L.4 (Widmer, 2015, p.104).	Dimeh
		 <i>In hny.k n3 y^l . w^ ?</i> = Have you rowed over the rivers. P.L01.5/10/15 (Richard & Zauzich,2005, P.296 -297).	Dimeh
		 <i>šwv n p3 y^l</i> =Merchant of the river.P. Carls.594,frag1,L.22 (Quack,2019 ,P.398-399).	Teb.
		 <i>m-ir pt r -iri dy -y^l</i> = Don't run to cross the river. P.Carls.143vo , L.1(Quack.2019,P.304).	Teb.
		 <i>hf y^l</i> = snake of the river .P.Carls.649,Frag.1 col.2,Y+L.4 (Quack & Ryholt, 2019, p.196).	Teb
		 <i>p3 y^l</i> = El –Fayoum. OMM 661,L.4. (Gallo ,1997, P.23)	Madi

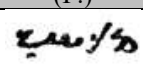
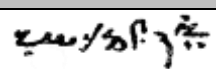
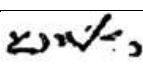
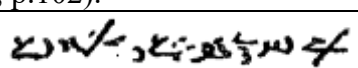
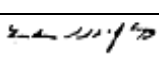
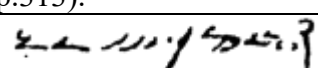
■ r^b = Pledge (Erichsen,1954, p.7; Johnson,2001, p.44) $\rightarrow 3lb$ $\rightarrow$ λHB (Crum,1939, p.15a)

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
$3lb$		 <i>Iw.w di.t n.f 3lb iw s nti nb st dd n.f iw.k wd3</i> = If you give him something as Pledge, you tell him: "You are well". P.Carls.13, bII, L.3. (Volten, 1942, p. 84)	Teb.

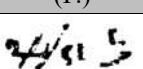
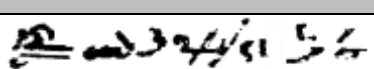
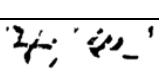
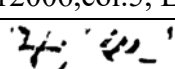
■ r^d = Encourage, firm (Johnson, 2001, p.107) $\rightarrow 3ld$

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>ʒld</i>		 <i>ʾiwʾ. i ʒld pʒ mšʿ</i> =I will encourage the army. P.Inaros,col.11, L.19 (Hoffmann,1996,P.252) .	Dimeh
		 <i>Tw.w ʿb n.im.w r ʒld n nʒ šwt.w</i> =they brand them in order to be firm with the whips. P.Carls.421, frag.1, col.1, L.2 (Ryholt, 2019, pp.104-115).	Teb

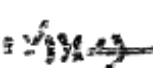
■ *Wr* = great (Johnson, 2001, p. 107) → *wly* → $\omega\gamma\eta\lambda_F$ (Crum, 1939, p.488b).

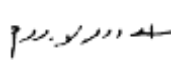
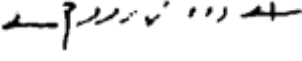
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>wly</i>		 <i>Gʿ wly</i> = The great chapel. P.Berl.6750, col.5,L.17 (Widmer, 2015, p.102).	Dimeh
		 <i>Hw.t-tz-Hr wly</i> = Hathor the great. P.Berl. 8750, col.2,L.24 (Widmer, 2015, p.313).	Dimeh
		 <i>mʒʿ.t wly.t</i> = Maat the great.P.Berl.8043, col.2,L.6 (Stadler, 2022, p.100).	Dimeh
		 <i>ʾst wly.t</i> = <i>ʾst</i> the great. P. Carls.652, frag.1, L.4 (Quack, 2019, pp.38 – 50).	Teb.

■ *Wsr* = Strong (Erichsen ,1954, p. 100) → *wsl*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>wsl</i>		 <i>ʾTw.k wsl m-sʒ t.t.k</i> = You will be strong after being seized. P.Wien D 12006,col.5, L.7 (Stadler ,2004, p. 69).	Dimeh
		 P.Berl.8043vo,col.5,L.1	Dimeh

■ *Br* = Ship (Erichsen,1954, pp. 119, 122) → *byl* / *byly*

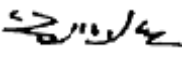
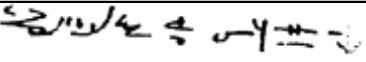
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>byl</i>		 <i>[tʒ] byl hn pʒ yʿmʾ</i> =The shipon the sea. P. Wien D 12006,col.1,L.24 (Stadler,2004,P.50) .	Dimeh

<i>byly</i>		 <i>Byly 40 = 40 ships. P.Inaros,col.14,L.8 (Hoffmann,1996, p.293-294).</i>	Dimeh
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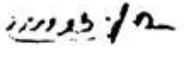
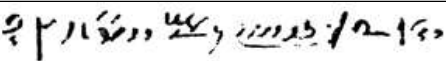
■ *Byr* = basket (Erichsen .1954, p.112) → *bly* → β ι λ_F (Crum, 1939, 41b).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>bly</i>		 OMM 579,L.3 (Gallo, 1997, p.52).	Madi

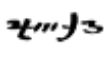
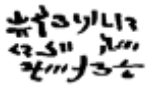
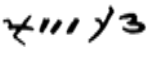
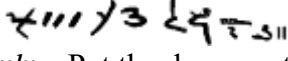
■ *p^cr* = quail (Johnson, 2001, p.45) → *ply*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>ply</i>		 <i>In sn.k t3 ply.t = Have you honored the quail. P.L01, col.4,L.19 (Richard & Zauzich, 2005, pp.355- 356).</i>	Dimeh

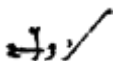
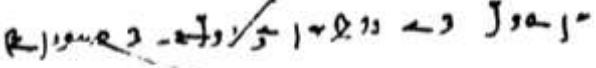
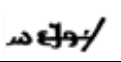
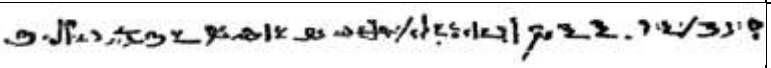
■ *prty* = Honor (Johnson, 2001, p.138-139) → *pltj*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>pltj</i>		 <i>Mtw .w pltj.f dr.w rmt nb= They will all honor him, every single person. P.Berl.8345,col.3,L.5 (Hughes, 1983, pp.53-69).</i>	Dimeh

■ *mr* = bind (Johnson,2001, pp.140,160). → *mly* → ΜΕΛΛΙ_F (Crum, 1939, p.180a-b)

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>mly</i>		 <i>n3w d^cm isj iw ir st t3 mlj = These old documents and bind them. OMM 350 ,L.4.(Gallo, 1997, p.35-36).</i>	Madi
		 <i>Tw ir n3 d^cm w^c.t mly = Put the documents in one package. OMM 1199, L.9 (Gallo, 1997, p.86).</i>	Madi

■ *Ry* = Room / side (Erichsen,1954, p.241; Johnson, 2001, p.11) → *lz* → λι_F (Crum,1939, pp. 287b-288a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
		 <i>p3 ip n [tbh].w (n) t3 lz.t (n) n3 m3y.w = The registry of equipment of the side /cell of the lionesses. Berlin 6848, col.3, L.6 (Dousa, 2004, pp. 139-122).</i>	Dimeh
			Dimeh

l3		<i>nb(.t) 'lšl –mmmn Hs.t w^c.t-l3(.t) hr-s(.t) Hr 3st m Tše m</i> = P. Berlin 6750,col.6,L.6 (Widmer, 2015, p. 104).	
		 <i>l3.t šbi iwt.w</i> = switch side between them .P.CG. 50142, L.5 (Spiegelberg, 1932, pp.103-105).	Teb
		 P.Carls.4,col.2,L.26	Teb
		 = side .P.Carls.448,frag.10,L.1	Teb.
		 <i>Mj šm iwt t3 l3 t3 kt.t</i> = go to cow's room. OMM 67, L.1,2 (Gallo,1997, p.48).	Madi
		 <i>tms tzy.k ššt hn w^c l3 iwt.s hp</i> = bury your debt document in a secret room. OMM 179, L.4 (Sara & Chiara, 2006, p.126).	Madi

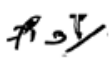
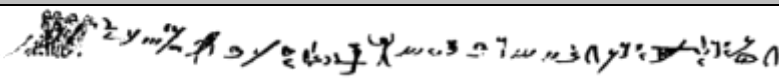
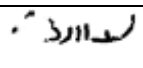
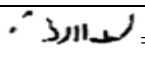
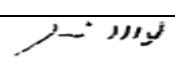
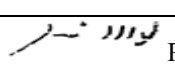
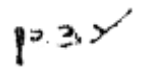
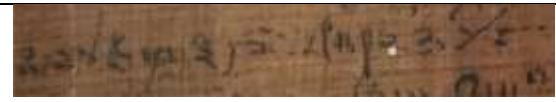
■ *rwš* = care (Erichsen, 1954, p.243) ➡ *lwš* ➡ λΛΟΥΩ_F (Crum, 1939, p. 307a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>lwš</i>		 P.Carls.13bII,L.16 (Volten, 1942, p. 84).	Teb.
		 OMM 1,L.5 (Giannotti & Gorini, 2006, p.107).	Madi
		 <i>lwš iwt nḥ g3</i> = be concerned with the bunch of flowers. OMM 2, L.13 (Gallo, 1997, pp. 32-34).	Madi

■ *rwṯ* = fresh / diligent (Erichsen, 1954, p.247) ➡ *lwṯ* ➡ λΟΥΑΤ_F (Crum,1939,490a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>lwt</i>		 <i>nti nḥb' d3w' 'n tw n .w iwt.w lwt 'iwt.w' ršy</i> = which in turn breathe the air. They rose, being fresh and rejoiced. P.Carls.416, frag.1, L.11 (Quack, 2019, pp.1-3).	Teb.
<i>lwṯ</i>		 <i>iwt ir.k lwṯ</i> = Be diligent. OMM 252,L.5 (Gallo, 1997, p.50).	Madi

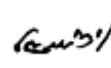
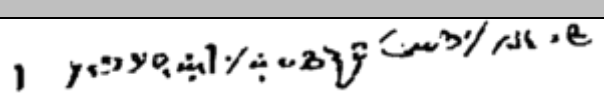
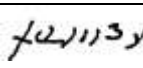
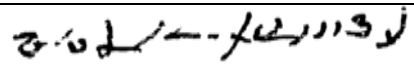
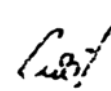
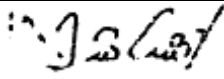
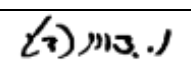
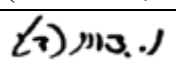
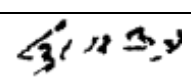
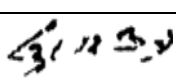
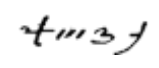
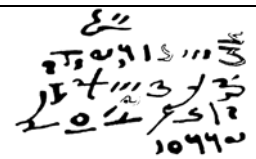
■ *rm*= fish → *lm* / *lym* / *lm3* → $\lambda\iota\mu\iota^F$ (Crum,1939,294a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>lm</i>		 <i>di.(t) šb nb mr.f di.(t) wsj m Vʿj h3ti nb lm ʿš3j ipt</i> = He who gives any food to whomever he wills, who gives strength at the level of the heart, lord of fish, numerous in birds. P.Wien D 10100C, L.18 (Vittmann, 2003, pp.106-136).	Dimeh
<i>lym</i>		 = Fish (V.) P.L.01.5,col.10,L.3(Richard J. & Zauzich, K-Th., 2005, P.295).	Dimeh
		 P.Inaros col.18,L.4	Dimeh
<i>lm3</i>		 <i>Ky lm3 iw.w r in t3y.f h3</i> = other kinds of fish: they will bring his provisions. P.Carls.649,frag.1,col.2,L.3 (Quack, 2019, pp.196-216).	Teb

*rm*y = cry/ tear (Erichsen, 1954, p.246)

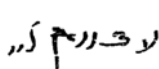
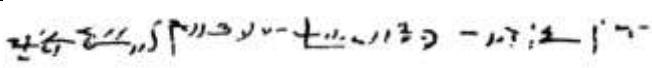
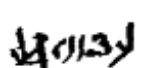
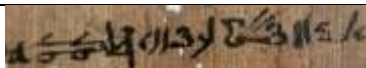
lmy

$\lambda\iota\mu\iota^F$ (Crum, 1939, p.294a).

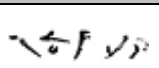
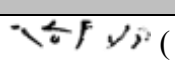
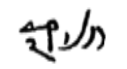
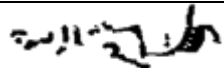
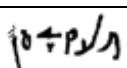
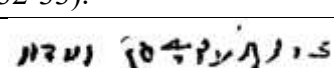
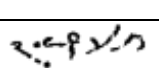
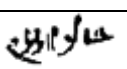
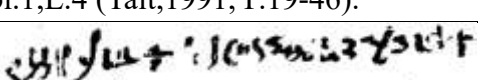
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>lmy</i>		 <i>hnt. ʿimnt lmy n.f šnʿ.w lw.w im(y). ʿiirʿ.w</i> = who presides over the West, the circuit (of the heaven) and all the districts that are in it will weep for him. P. Berlin 6750,col.1,L.9 (Widmer, 2015, p.87).	Dimeh
		 <i>lmy t-nfr</i> = Tainnefer wept. P. Inaros col.12, L.12 (Hoffmann,1996, Pp 267).	Dimeh
		 <i>lmy pr- Hʿpy</i> = Let Nilopolis weep. P. Wien D 10000,2, L.15 (Chauveau, 2017, p.41).	Dimeh
		 P.Carls.6,C1,III,L.18	Teb
		 P.Carls.448,frag.3,L)	Teb.
			Madi

		<i>Tw.ir.k ir šjv p3 t3 šc lmj r n3.w ir.f p3 t3j h3t-sp 8</i> = when you became very angry o the point of crying, for what he had done from the eighth year,..... OMM 1300, L.4 .(Menchetti ,2005, p.105).	
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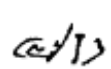
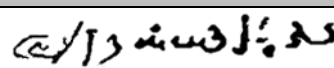
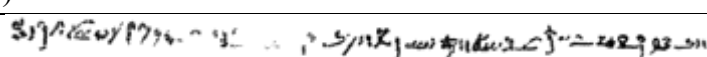
■ *rms* = ship (Erichsen,1954, p.247) ➡ *lms*

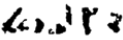
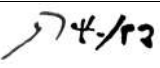
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>lms</i>		 <i>'ti' .w 'wj m'n'j n p3 lms</i> = landing place was given to the ship. P.Inaros,col.17,L.30. (Hoffmann, 2015, p. 328).	Dimeh
		 <i>r bn iw mtw.k lms tktk</i> = if you do not have a raft, harry. P.Carls.143vo. ,L.3 (Quack, 2019, pp. 304-305).	Teb.

■ *Hrwt* = feast (Erichsen, 1954, p.279) ➡ *Hlwt*

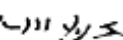
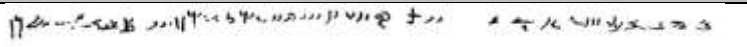
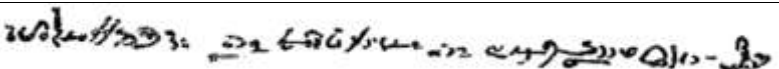
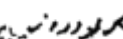
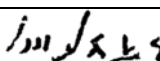
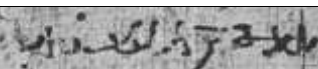
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>Hlwt</i>		 (P.Inaros ,col.2,L.31)	Dimeh
		 <i>[ir.w] hlwt irm.s</i> = [made] feast with her. P.Carls.6,C1,II,L.12 (Ryholt, 2006. pp. 32-33).	Teb.
		 <i>'Ir.y hlwt irm n3y.j</i> = I made feast with myP.Carls.6,C1,III, L.10.(Ryholt, 2006, pp. 47- 48).	Teb.
		 <i>[Bn-pw.k] hmsy r hlwt</i> = [you have not] sat down at the feast. P.Carls.207,col.1,L.4 (Tait,1991, P.19-46).	Teb.
<i>Hlwt</i>		 <i>t3hm st pr-3 r t3 hlwt</i> = Pharaoh invited them to the feast. P.CtYBR 442, L.3 (Quack, 2019, p. 162).	Teb.

■ *hwr* = rob (Johnson, 2001, p.75) ➡ *hwl* / *hwl* ➡ εαλεε_F (Crum, 1939, P.737b):

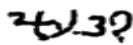
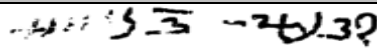
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hwl</i>		 <i>Ir.s nb nkt hwl</i> = She will become the mistress of stolen property. P.Berl.15680,col.2,L.32 (Zauzich , 2012, pp.358-361).	Dimeh
			Dimeh

<i>hwl</i>		<i>i. ir Hr s3 ist t p3 t3 dr.f [n] p3y sn iw.f ir 'hry p3y wn ' n3.w</i> <i>'t n im.f '[n] hwl [n] dr.t.f. = She will become the mistress</i> <i>of stolen property. P.Wien 1, 2006, col.5, L.24 (Stadler, 2004,</i> <i>p.71).</i>	
		 P.Carls.399,frag.a,L.5 (Quack, 2002, pp. 253-274).	Teb.
<i>hwl</i>		 <i>hwl.f = He stole. OMM 21, L.13 (Bresciani,1983, pp.19-20).</i>	Madi

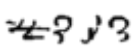
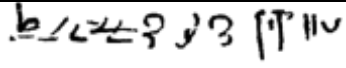
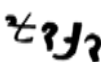
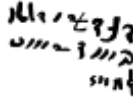
■ *hrr* = Delay; To hurry (Johnson,2001,236) ➡ *hllj / hljl / hrlj*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hllj</i>		 <i>dd m-ir ir hllj t t3 ' d'ny ' tb3 hyny mt iw.j wh3. 'k' n.im.w =</i> <i>....., saying: hasten to Tanis about things concerning you!</i> <i>P.Inaros,col.8,L.32 (Hoffmann,1996,P.210).</i>	Dimeh
		 <i>m3' n 'nh bw ir.k 'h' b hn p3 tbl nt iw.k in-n'k n-im.s wn</i> <i>hllj n-im.s = Do not leave your habitat lest you grieve in the</i> <i>sheepfold. That into which you have come, there is delay in it.</i> <i>P.Wien D 12006,col.4,L.11 (Stadler, 2004, p.64)</i>	Dimeh
		 <i>p3y.s pky izbi iw.s ir m3' 's3y r mn hw n-im.w hrlj m-</i> <i>s3'.w'. = [If she (the gecko)] falls on her right side, she will</i> <i>undertake many things that are not worth rushing into(?).</i> <i>P.Berl.15680,col.2,L.14 (Zauzich, 2012, p.360) .</i>	Dimeh
<i>hljl</i>		 <i>[p3 mr] -m3' [p3] rmt N3-t3-hw.t m-ir hljl r t3 s.t swnw =</i> <i>The general, the man of Natho-Nut! Do not delay to go to the</i> <i>physician's place. P.Carls.442,frag.2,L.8.(Sérida, 2016, pp.9-</i> <i>10)</i>	Teb
		 P.Petese Teb A,col.1,L.24 (Ryholt, 1999, pp.13,147).	Teb.
		 <i>di hpr hljl = Cause delay. P.Petese II, frag.C1,col.3,L.6</i> <i>(Ryholt, 2000, pp.47- 48).</i>	Teb.
<i>hrlj</i>		 <i>[bn.p.f] h3' n.f hllj = He did not delay.P.Carls.207,col.1,</i> <i>L.24 (Quack, 2000, p.141-163).</i>	Teb.

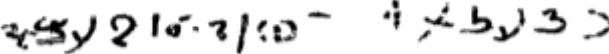
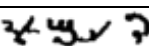
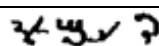
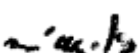
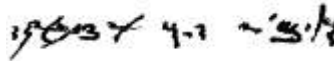
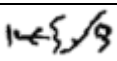
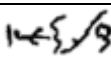
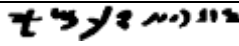
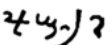
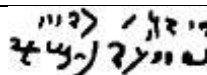
■ *hmr* = armful (Johnson,2001,143) ➡ *hml* ➡ εαμΗΛ F(Crum, 1939, p.679a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hml</i>		 <i>hml n nmt</i> = powerful of embrace. P.Inaros,col.23,L.7 (Hoffmann, 1996, P.372).	Dimeh

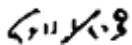
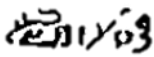
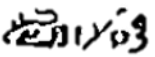
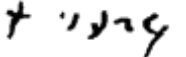
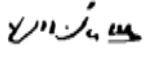
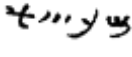
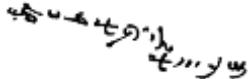
■ *hrh* = guard / beware (Erichsen, 1954, p.326) ➡ *hlh* ➡ ⲭⲁⲗⲉⲣ (Crum, 1939, 707b-708b).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hlh</i>		 <i>pzy.i hry hlh r hr.k</i> = My Lord! Beware. P.Inaros, col.12, L.13 (Hoffmann, 1996, p.267.)	Dimeh
		 <i>hlh r nzw bnj hn pz hq</i> = keep these dates in the storage room. OMM 252,L.1 (Gallo, 1997, p.50).	Madi
		 OMM 555,L.4 (Menchetti, 2000, p.146)	Madi

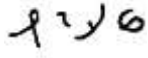
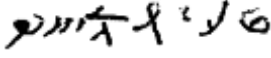
■ *hrs* = strong / heavy (Erichsen, 1954, p.327) ➡ *hlš* / *hlV*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hlš</i> / <i>hlV</i>		 <i>Nty mlh [irm] n3 k3.w hlš</i> = who fights with heavy (strong) bulls .P.Inaros,col.17,L.6 (Hoffmann, 1996, p.320).	Dimeh
		 P.L01,col.4,L7 ((Richard & Zauzich,2005, P.)	Dimeh
		 <i>hlš .f s n s tī mh.f.s</i> = It was heavy to throw. P.CG. 50142, L.25 (Spiegelberg, 1932, pp.103-105) .	Teb.
		 P.Carls.421,col.2,frag.2,L.3 (Ryholt, 2012, pp.103-130).	Teb
		 P.CG.50137,L.8 (Spiegelberg, 1932, pp.97-98)	Teb.
		 <i>Bn iw.y hlš</i> = I will not be slow in [serving]. OMM 804cc (Sara & Chaira, 2006, p.123).	Madi
		 <i>G3 r tb pzy.f hlš</i> = be silent because of his oppression. OMM 893, L.4 (Bresciani, 1983, p.13).	Madi

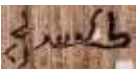
■ *hr* = angry (Erichsen, 1954, p.351) ➡ *h3ly* / *h4ly* / *š4ly* / *šly* ➡ ⲭⲁⲗⲁⲓ F (Crum, 1939, p. 583b).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>h3ly / V3ly</i>		 <i>n3y.s ntr.w h3ly r.r.s</i> = her gods will be angry with her. P.Berl.15680,col.2,L.5 (Zauzich, 2012, pp. 357-358).	Dimeh
		 P.Wien D 12006,col1,L21(Stadler, 2004, p.49).	Dimeh
		 <i>h3ly.f. ..[m] kty p3 y</i> = He became angry [like the sea]. P.Inaros, col.16,L.13(Hoffmann,1996,P.313) .	Dimeh
<i>33ly/ 33ly</i>		<i>33ly.f m kty p3 ym</i> = He raged like the sea. Petese II,C1,col.1, L.2 (Ryholt ,2006, pp. 31-32).	Teb.
		 <i>w3h.f di ir p3 sm 33ly</i> =He has made my father-in-law furious. OMM 1345,L.13(Menchetti, 2005, p.112).	Madi

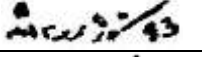
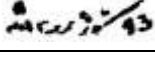
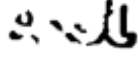
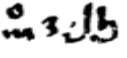
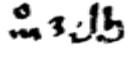
■ *h3r* = leather (Erichsen 1954, P.352) → *hl3* → ^F (Crum, 1939, p.582a-b)

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hl3</i>		 <i>hl3 t3y</i> = Red leather .P.Inaros ,col.13,L.5 (Hoffmann, 1996, p. 280).	Dimeh

■ *hr.t* = widow (Erichsen, 1954, p.390) → *hly.t*

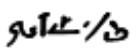
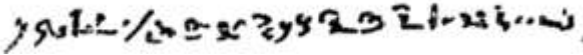
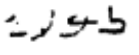
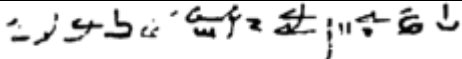
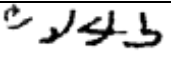
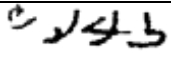
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hly.t</i>		 P. Carlsberg 448,frag.12,L.9 (Serida, 2016, p.25).	Teb.

■ *hr.t* = food (Erichsen, 1954, p.389) → *hl3*

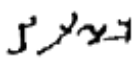
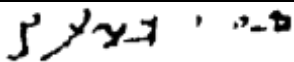
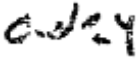
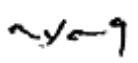
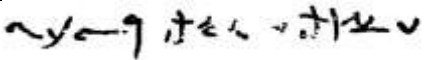
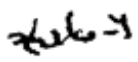
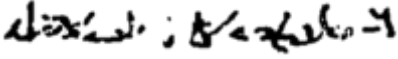
Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>hl3</i>		 P.Wien 12006,col.4,L.19. (Stadler,2004,P.312.)	Dimeh
		 P.Petese .Teb.B.,L.15.	Teb.
		 P.Carls.649,frag.1,col.2,L.3(Quack,2019, P.196).	Teb.
		 P.Psi D 88,L.3	Teb.
		 P. Teb Tait 15,L.12	Teb

■ *hrb* = Form → *hlb / hbl*

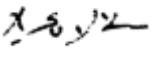
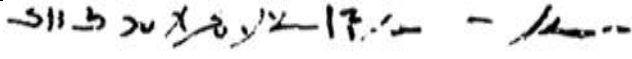
Transliteration	Demotic Form	Ex	Pl.
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(F.)	(F.)		
<i>hbl / hbl</i>		 <i>wtne Hr-p3-šr (n) 3s.t m rn.f nb Hr m hbl.f</i> = offerings (to) Horus son of Isis in all his names, Horus in each of his forms. P.Berl.6750, col.6,L.7 (Widmer, 2015, p.105).	Dimeh
		 <i>Th t3y.w btw n3y.w hbl.w</i> = what is their nature and their forms?. P.L01.5,10,15 (Richard & Zauzich, 2005, pp. 296- 297).	Dimeh
		 L01,3/20 (Richard & Zauzich, 2005, P. 224).	Dimeh

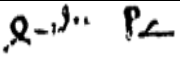
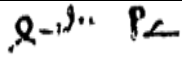
■ *sgl* = to sail / sailing (Erichsen, 1954, p.470) → *sgl / skl*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex	Pl.
<i>sgl / skl</i>		 <i>ir .f sgl</i> = I have made sailing .P.B04,col.6,L.12 (Richard & Zauzich, 2005, p.312).	Dimeh
		 <i>Iw.f sgl grh 'm-kty' mtly</i> = Sailing by night and by day. P.Wien D 6920-6922 (Hoffmann, 1996, p.176).	Dimeh
		 <i>p3 Imn.t p3 izb.t skl</i> = The people of the west and east sailed. P.Inaros,col.8,L.11(Hoffmann,1996, p.199).	Dimeh
		 <i>[Ir.f] skl r rsy lbt</i> = He set sail southward to Abydos. P.Carls.207,col.2 ,L.10 (Quack, 2000, p.149) .	Teb.

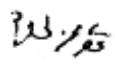
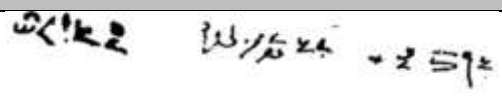
■ *Krf* = Cunning (Johnson ,2001, p.60) → *krf* → κλαϕ F (Crum, 1939, p.118b).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>Krf</i>		 <i>n-t-n-t n3.w krf p3 nty hpr i.ir</i> = From the point where cunning is needed. P.Inaros, col.11, L.32 (Hoffmann, 1996, pp.259-260)	Dimeh

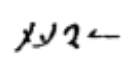
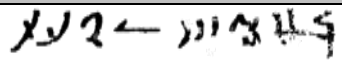
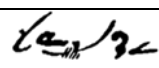
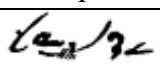
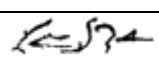
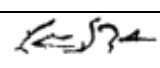
■ *vrp* = sew (Johnson, 2001, p.259) → *twpl* → Τ ω π λ F (Crum, 1939, p.431a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>twpl</i>		 P.Carls.421,frag.2,L.6 (Ryholt, 2013, p.111).	Teb.

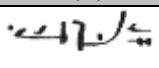
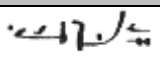
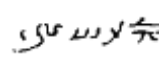
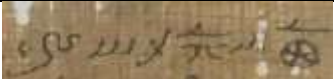
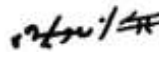
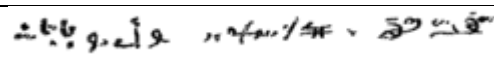
■ *trt* = Staircase (Erichsen, 1954, p.649) → *tl̥t* → T ω λ T ε λ^F (Crum, 1939, p.432a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>tl̥t</i>		 [ts sd] n ʒs.t ḥn ^c nb.t ḥ.t ^r (r) tl̥t nb s.t [wr.t] = Arise, Isis and Nephthys, at the stairway of the Lord of the Great Throne. (P.Berl.8043vo,col.6, L.14	Dimeh

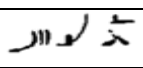
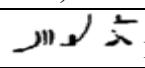
■ *dhr* = sad (Johnson, 2001, p.73) → *thl* → τϥΟ (Crum, 1939, p.432a).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>thl</i>		 <i>ḥʒty.i thl</i> = My heart is sad. P.Inaros.col.22, L.8 (Hoffmann, 1996, p.364-365).	Dimeh
		 P.Carls.4,col.2, L.25	Teb.
		 P.Carls.6,C1,III,,L.20	Teb.
		 P.Carls.448,fra.12,L.8 (Serida, 2016, p.25).	Teb.

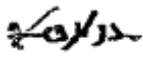
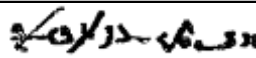
■ *d̥sr/tsr* = Sacred (Erichsen, 1954, p.656) → *tsly*

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>tsly</i>		 P.B05.,L.7 (Richard & Zauzich, 2005, p.536).	Teb.
		 <i>twʒ.t tsly</i> = Holy Land .P.Berl.15652,col.3,L.1 (Stadler, 2022, p.417).	Dimeh
		 [twʒ] ḥt ḥwʒ(.t).k m ḥwʒ(.t) ḥtsly.t ḥm Ḥr ḥk ḥidb.w'. P.Berl.6750 , col.1,L.4 (Widmer, 2015, p.87).	Dimeh

■ *dšry* = Red crown → *tšly*

Transliteration	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>tšly</i>		 <i>ḥnmw.t.k tʒ tšly.t</i> = you will the red crown. P.Berl.6750, col.9, L.2 (Widmer, 2015, P.117).	Dimeh
		 P.L01,col.1,L.8	Dimeh

■ *drm* = move / touch (Erichsen, 1954, p.684) → *dlm* → ⲁⲓⲟⲗⲙ F (Crum, 1939, p.785b).

Transliteration (F.)	Demotic Form (F.)	Ex.	Pl.
<i>dlm</i>		 <i>i.ir nzy.w dlm</i> = Who make their movements .P.Wien 12006,col.4, L.7 (Stadler, 2004, p.63) .	Dimeh

5. Analysis and Commentary

It is worth noting that this phenomenon has appeared in Demotic literary texts. Undoubtedly, Demotic stories are linked to the traditions and practices of oral storytelling. By the early Roman period, Egyptian literature was the preserve of the priests of the Egyptian temples. Furthermore, this phenomenon was found in texts from sites located on the edge of the Fayoum, such as Dimeh, Tebtynis, and Madi. It is important to consider what Quake pointed out: that most literary texts from the Roman era are reformulations of earlier texts, so new linguistic structures are rarely found in them, and thus the use of Classical Demotic remained prevalent.

This phenomenon was used in writing the petition (OMM 1300,1345) and both are documentary texts from Madi, and perhaps the writer's use of spoken language in writing a documentary text indicates a low level of his education.

It is clear from the examples above that writing the letter L instead of R in most Demotic literary texts is consistent with one of the most important features of the Fayoum Coptic dialect ,which is Lambdacism.

<i>zlb</i> ➤ λ η β = pledge ➤	<i>lwš</i> ➤ λ α ο υ ϣ = Care	<i>hlz</i> ➤ ϣ α α λ = leather
<i>y^cl</i> ι α α λ = River	<i>lmy</i> ➤ λ ι μ ι = Cry	<i>š^cly</i> ➤ ϣ η η λ ι = Angry
<i>wly</i> ➤ ο γ η λ = Great	<i>lm/ lym/ lmz</i> ➤ λ ι μ ι = Fish	<i>Klf</i> ➤ K α λ ϣ = Cunning
<i>byl</i> ➤ β ι λ = Basket	<i>Hwl / Hwl^c</i> ➤ Ϸ α λ ε Ϸ = Rob	<i>twpl</i> ➤ T ω π λ = Sew
<i>mly</i> ➤ μ ε λ λ ι = Bind	<i>hml</i> ➤ Ϸ α μ η λ = Armful	<i>tl_z</i> ➤ T ω λ T ε λ = Staircase
<i>lz</i> ➤ λ ι = Room	<i>hlh</i> ➤ Ϸ α λ ε Ϸ = Guard	<i>dlm</i> ⲁⲓⲟⲗⲙ = Move
<i>lw_z</i> ➤ λ ο γ α τ = Fresh		

This phenomenon does not correspond to a number of words in the Fayoum Coptic dialect, and this is due to several reasons: -

- There are a number of words that were not used in Coptic due to their association with the ancient Egyptian religion, for example [*ply* = honor], [*hlwt* = feast] and [*tsly* = Sacred]. Moreover, there are other words specific to the ancient Egyptian civilization that also disappeared in Coptic, as [*tšly.t* = Red crown].
- In the case of the word “*drh*”, which is written here with the letter “L” (*dlh*), and in comparison with Coptic, it is clear that the letter “R” was omitted in Coptic and the word became written *Ṭ ɛ o* , and this characteristic was used in some words in Coptic such as the word “*ntr*”, which became “*Novtε*” in Coptic.
- It should be noted that there are some words written with the letter “L” instead of "R", but in Fayoumic Coptic it was written with the letter “r” (*wsl*, *ply*, *lms*, *hlš*, *hlɔ*, *hbl*, *hly.t*, *Skl*).
- Words not found in Coptic with the same meaning, such as (*hlly* = delay).

The previous examples show that this phenomenon is used in writing nouns, adjectives, and verbs as follows:

Noun	Adjective	Verb
<i>ɜlb</i>	<i>wly</i>	<i>ɜld</i>
<i>Yɿl</i>	<i>wsl</i>	<i>mly</i>
<i>Byll/ byly</i>	<i>lwɿ</i>	<i>lwš</i>
<i>bly</i>	<i>hlš</i>	<i>lmy</i>
<i>ply</i>	<i>hlš</i>	<i>hlh</i>
<i>mlɔ</i>	<i>hɜly / hɿly / šɿly / šly</i>	<i>hwl / hwɿ</i>
<i>lɔ</i>	<i>thl</i>	<i>hllj / hljl / hrlj</i>
<i>lm/ lym / lmɔ</i>	<i>tsly</i>	<i>Sgl / Skl</i>
<i>hml</i>		<i>Twpl</i>
<i>hbl</i>		<i>dlm</i>
<i>hlɔ</i>		
<i>hly.t</i>		
<i>klf</i>		
<i>tlv</i>		
<i>tšly.t</i>		

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