

## Code-Switching in the Contemporary Dialects; a Case Study on Raji Dialect Regarding to Different Generations

---

Vahid Asghari & Hamid Reza Najafi  
*Islamic Azad University /Arak, Iran*

**Key words:** code switching, language loss, dialect, language shift, morphosyntactic

### ABSTRACT

In the language shift situation, a dominant language is acquired perfectly. While the minority language is used less and less and is gradually forgotten. Its vocabulary decreases, and the speakers have to insert into their speech words and phrases from the dominant language. This is the situation with the Raji dialect. Only the oldest speakers preserve the language to full extent. Very few people under 40 know their parents' language or they can understand it, but do not speak it. During the interviews conducted in Persian, all informants can speak Persian without switching to Raji. But when speaking Raji, even the oldest speakers don't use numerous Persian words, but the middle generation switch to Persian rather often, inserting Persian phrases and words that show no phonological or morphosyntactic integration into the Raji dialect. In the speech of the oldest speakers, no code switching pattern was found when they were speaking by Raji dialect while the code-switching pattern was more typical for representatives of the middle generation. They switch to Persian mainly to compensate the insufficiency of their Raji vocabulary. In their casual speech they often insert Persian words that are not integrated into the Raji dialect structure. On the other hand, the attempts of the middle generation to use "as much Raji as possible" during the interview with a researcher confirm that they are conscious of the insufficiency of their language competence. During the interviews they prefer to adapt Persian words to the Raji dialect phonologically and morphologically, sometimes they even try to use Raji numerals that are not used by older people. Such unpredictability of code-switching, together with weakening of sociolinguistic motivation and insertion of Persian words and phrases as a result of the vocabulary reducing, seems to be one of the symptoms of the gradual language loss.