

## **Azari-Turkish/Persian Bilinguals’ Code-Switching based on Matrix Language Frame Model (MLF) and Null theory<sup>1</sup>**

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### **Abstract**

This paper attempts to explore Turkish/Persian intrasentential code-switching employing the matrix language frame model (MLF), due to its high explanatory power in intrasentential code-switching, and null theory, which focuses on the role of the head in determining the phrase structure configuration of its complements in code-switching. The data were collected from a primary school by tape-recording and note-taking of interaction taking place between the bilingual teachers (n = 12) and students (n = 100). The data analysis provided evidence to claim that Turkish and Persian were taken as matrix language (ML) and embedded language (EL), respectively because Turkish language constitutes

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the grammatical configuration of mixed sentences and all system morphemes in such sentences also belong to Turkish. But Persian quantifier phrases in Turkish morpho-syntactic frame were incompatible with MLF model prediction as EL islands. Examining the data according to null theory also challenges the role of the head in determining the phrase structure configuration of its complements in code-switching. As it became clear from the data collected, both the high frequency of words and their conceptual significance in the bilingual mind can be taken as determining factors in selecting one of the two different grammatical structures of the languages involved in code-switched phrases and dependent clauses.

**Keywords:** *code-switching, matrix language frame model, null theory, matrix language, embedded language*