Living with ‘the language of Hafez’: A sociolinguistic glimpse of Iranians’ view of their great poet

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Hafez is known as probably the greatest poet in the eyes of nearly every Iranian and is also one of the greatest literary figures on earth. Surprisingly however, in school education and the media of our country, there is hardly considerable depiction of Hafez and his masterpieces. Concerned with this issue, this study attempts to investigate how familiar Iranians are with the language and the worldview of their great poet. More specifically, the research problem we addressed focused on peoples’ familiarity with and knowledge of the language and worldview of Hafez in different parts of the country. Two data collection instruments were applied to gather related information. The main instrument was an interview for an in-depth probing of respondents’ general, factual, and literary information about Hafez. A questionnaire, addressing similar questions, was also used to widen the scope of the study in terms of the diversity of participants. Overall, 120 participants (60 interviewees and 60 questionnaire respondents) from Shiraz, Bojnourd, and Ardebil participated in this research. Qualitative exploration of the data reveals that almost every participant knows Hafez in terms of general information. They also somehow know the factual information about him. However, from a sociolinguistic perspective, what remains noticeably less-known and considered to most participants is the particular worldview of Hafez reflected in his peculiar language. This is, ironically, the most important characteristic feature that creates the unique person that he is known to be. On this basis, we