Kinship: M-F Compound

Terms referring to one’s parents were investigated. In some languages, this is expressed through a compound involving the lexemes ‘mother’ and ‘father’ (see Kinship: Parent Compound). These compounds are sequentially structured, either as ‘mother’ followed by ‘father’ (the positive value here) or as ‘father’ followed by ‘mother’ (the negative value). Indo-Aryan Aret Pashai is an example of the former, as can be seen in ‎(1), and Nuristani Prasun is an example of the latter, as can be seen in (2).

1. Aret Pashai [aee(at)] (Indo-Aryan)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | oːj bəːw | ‘parents’ (AEEat-KinHH:003) |
| b. | oːj | ‘mother’ (AEEat-KinHH:002) |
| c. | bəːw | ‘father’ (AEEat-KinHH:001) |

1. Prasun [prn] (Nuristani)

|  |  |  |
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| a. | jenan | ‘parents’ (PRN-KinSM:003) |
| b. | nan | ‘mother’ (PRN-KinSM:002) |
| c. | jej | ‘father’ (PRN-KinSM:001) |

The feature value M+F is a majority pattern in the region. However, while the M+F pattern is restricted to the three Indo-Iranian phyla, the F+M pattern occurs in languages belonging to all six phylogenetic groupings. There is a clearly geographical distribution, with the M+F pattern in the south and west, and the F+M pattern in the north and east.

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| Feature value | # of varieties displaying it | % |
| Present | 34 | 58 |
| Absent | 24 | 41 |
| Indeterminate | 1 | 1 |