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). Aret Pashai is an example of the former, as can be seen in ‎(1), and Prasun is an example of the latter, as can be seen in (2).

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

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| --- | --- | --- |
| a. | oj bəw | ‘parents’ (AEEat-Kin-HH:003) |
| b. | oj | ‘mother’ (AEEat-Kin-HH:002) |
| c. | bəw | ‘father’ (AEEat-Kin-HH:001) |

1. Prasun [prn] (Nuristani)

|  |  |  |
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| a. | jeːnan | ‘parents’ (PRN-Kin-SM:003) |
| b. | nan | ‘mother’ (PRN-Kin-SM:002) |
| c. | jej | ‘father’ (PRN-Kin-SM: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 |