

« Iranian as Buffer Zone between the Universal Typologies of Turkic and Semitic », in : Éva Ágnes Csató ; Bo Isaksson and Carina Jahani, eds., *Linguistic Convergence and Areal Diffusion: Case Studies from Iranian, Semitic and Turkic*. London - New York, Routledge Curzon, 2005, pp. 35-63.

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- 1 This is one of the most informative papers in the field of the typology of the Iranian languages. Within the study of implicational syntactic universals, knowing the placement of the direct object and the adposition (OV/PO vs. VO/PR, where O, V, PR, and PO stand for direct object, verb, preposition and postposition respectively), is believed to be sufficient for predicting the other syntactic features of a language, and it can be agreed upon for at least 50% of the languages with those features. By restricting the discussion to the placement of direct objects, adpositions, adjectives, genitives, demonstratives, numerals, relative clauses and adverbs modifying adjectives in languages of the Middle East and Central Asia, Stilo proves that those Iranian languages which do not meet the expectations of implicational syntactic universals are those which are found between two language areas that are more or less opposite to each other, so a “mixed type” language of this kind serves as a buffer zone between a group of typical VO/PR languages and a group of typical OV/PO ones. The writer shows that

in such Iranian languages, the opposite patterns may alternate, merge into one circumposed pattern occurring both before and after the head, or may exhibit both the mentioned patterns. Discussing the percentage of OV/PO features in the areal context of Arabic, Turkish and Caucasian), he concludes that the “buffer zone” languages with unexpected word orders are not inconsistent with their areal distribution.

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Thèmes : 2.2. Langues vivantes et dialectes

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