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Bare noun in Modern Armenian: perspectives for areal typology.

Although Armenian is an Indo-European language, modern Armenian has highly congruent typological properties that are clearly related in some way to the Caucasus-Iran-Anatolia areal, even if, as shown by Meillet (see also Dum-tragut 2002), these properties are already detectable from the very origines of written Armenian.

The scope of this paper will be to show parallels among:

1. a set of congruent properties, well known in typology (constituent order, morphological type, noun classification) ;
2. the grammar of bare noun in Armenian .

It appears that:

1. on a scale of typological congruence, this configuration will occupy very high position;
2. in such a typological configuration, the grammar of the bare noun is highly predictable;
3. languages combining these properties are very numerous (dominant) in the Anatolia-Iran-Caucasus area, they represent close but slightly different configurations. Comparison of their systems and the distinction between central vs peripheric properties can help to explain how this convergence is grounded from a *general linguistic* point of view.

Examples will be given in Modern Western Armenian, the presentation will be done in Russian, with an English powerpoint and a French detailed handout.

Summary:
1. Typological properties of Modern Armenian:
1.1. Constituent order: centripetal (Tesnière), or dependent-head (Vennemann), or left-branching(Dryer). Congruence is so strong [except relative clauses], that choosing one or other of these frames will not affect the validity of the description. Such congruence oword order properties allows us to present almost all of them as correlational pairs (no non-correlation pairs).
1.2. Morphological type: Armenian acquired at the Middle Armenian stage agglutinative noun morphology (even more stongly for Western Armenian). Agglutination also partially concerns the verb (valency: passivization, causativation, but not TAM or person).
1.3. Noun categorization: Armenian has no gender or noun classes even at the oldest attested stage.
1.4. NP syntax: there is no agreement inside the NP. The adjective is pre-posed and invariable in Modern Armenian (not in Classical Armenian). This property is facilitated by rigid word order inside the NP, and by lack of grammatical gender.
2. Bare noun in Modern Armenian:
2.1. Bare noun *stricto sensu*: facilitating conditions in the system ;
2.1.1. Bare case: lack of difference between subect case and object case;
2.1.2. Bare determination: indefinite article *mə* (originally numeral 'one') alernates with bare article when noun is plural;
2.1.3. With the bare article, lack of plural marking does not mean that the noun is singular (but concerning this property, discussion may arise: is it a cause or a consequence of noun status in Armenian?).
2.2. Bare noun grammar in Armenian:
2.2.1. Determining a Noun (adjectival);
2.2.2. Bare object: some degree of incorporation?;
2.2.2. Bare subject: are they subjects? objects (unaccusative hypothesis)? subjects of impersonal clauses?
2.3. Underlying properties for such a convergence:
2.3.1. The question of the boundary between word classes (noun/adjective) and hierarchies of nounness in Armenian. This implies the status of the noun considering referentiality and actancy status: the bare noun is qualitative (notional), the marked noun is quantitative (utterance, reference).

2.3.2. What is grammatical agreement? 1) agreement *stricto sensu* (one-level grammatical marks occurs in two different places in the unit) is not compatible with this configuration; 2) coreference (person 'agreement' between subject and verb or between possessive adjective and possessive article).

3. Areal hypothesis:

The convergence between these congruent properties tends to become stronger and stronger. The properties considered above are highly borrowable by languages sharing their main typological characteristics. This can explain their massive areal diffusion.

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