TYPOLOGICAL SIMILARITIES OF PREPOSITIONS IN ARABIC AND PERSIAN

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This thesis is devoted to a comparative-typological analysis of primary (genuine) prepositions in Arabic, a member of the Semitic language family, and Persian, which belongs to the Indo-European family. The study investigates these functional words, which play a pivotal role in the grammatical systems of both languages, by examining their syntactic functions, structural typologies, and semantic classifications through representative linguistic examples.

Key words: prepositions, comparative analysis, Huruf al-jarr, Harfe ezofe, genitive case, Semitic languages, Persian.

For centuries, the Arabic and Persian languages played a major role as regional media of cultural, religious, and scientific communication in Central Asia. This historical-cultural factor determines that a systematic linguistic comparison of Arabic, a major representative of the Semitic language family, and Persian, a member of the Indo-European family, remains a highly relevant research area in Uzbek Oriental studies. The comparative-typological paradigm in linguistics serves as a key tool for uncovering both universal and language-specific structural properties across different language families.

This study focuses specifically on primary (genuine) prepositions, which model and construct syntactically subordinate relations between words. Primary prepositions are fundamental linguistic units that generally do not derive from content words and exist solely to express logical-syntactic relations. However, their structural governance manifests differently across both systems: while in Arabic, primary prepositions directly determine the morphological case status of the accompanying noun by triggering the genitive case, in Modern Persian—which has lost its classical case morphology—they function as analytical markers that establish rigid syntactic word order rather than morphological case transformation. Thus, the main purpose of this research is to analyze, ground in existing grammars, and typologically classify the usage systems and structural patterns of these prepositions in both languages.

In Arabic grammar, primary prepositions are traditionally classified as "Huruf al-jarr". As established by Ibrohimov et al., these particles strictly require the succeeding noun to be in the genitive case (majrur), marking it morphologically via kasra or its grammatical equivalents. The core inventory of primary prepositions in Arabic includes the following five central units:

1. مِنْ (min) – "from": indicates spatial or temporal origin.
2. إِلَى (ilā) – "to / towards": designates the destination or limit of an action.
3. عَلَى (’alā) – "on / upon": denotes superessive spatial relations or abstract obligation.
4. فِي (fī) – "in / inside": indicates inessive spatial or temporal containment.
5. بِ (bi) – "with / by means of": expresses instrumental or comitative relations and functions as a proclitic prefixed directly to the noun.

Similarly, Persian grammar features primary prepositions that carry no independent lexical meaning when isolated and are structurally distinct from secondary prepositions derived from nominal stems; these are termed "Harfe ezofe". As outlined by Qurbonbekov et al., the main primary inventory consists of the following foundational prepositions:

1. از (az) – "from": denotes origin, source, or starting point.
2. به (be) – "to": indicates direction, movement, or recipient.
3. بر (bar) – "on / upon": expresses superessive relations.
4. در (dar) – "in / inside / at": indicates spatial or temporal containment.
5. با (bā) – "with": signifies comitative or instrumental relations.

Beyond these core inventories, a comprehensive typological comparison reveals additional high-frequency primary and peripheral equivalents that serve identical structural roles within sentences, such as the temporal-spatial limit markers حَتَّى (ḥattā) and تا (tā).

According to our comparative-typological analysis, primary prepositions in Arabic and Persian demonstrate a remarkably high level of functional and distribution similarity, as they both strictly precede the nouns they modify. The table below presents these corresponding prepositions along with their semantic roles, incorporating the core items alongside common equivalents:

Arabic Preposition	Persian Equivalent	English Translation	Semantic Function
مِنْ (min)	از (az)	from	Ablative / point of origin
إِلَى (ila)	به (be)	to	Allative / destination
عَلَى (’ala)	بر (bar)	on / upon	Superessive spatial relations / obligation
فِي (fi)	در (dar)	in / inside	Inessive / spatial containment
بِ (bi)	با (bā)	with	Instrumental / comitative relations
حَتَّى (hatta)	تا (ta)	until / up to	Temporal or spatial limit
لِ (li)	برای (barāye)	for	Dative / purposive / possessive relations

In conclusion, despite belonging to different language families (Semitic and Indo-European), primary prepositions in Arabic and Persian display outstanding typological similarities in terms of their syntactic placement and semantic distribution. Studying these precise systemic correspondences and structural distinctions provides a valuable theoretical and methodological resource for refining foreign language pedagogy, academic lexicography, and translation studies in Uzbekistan.

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