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A SHORT GRAMMAR OF KABARDIAN

Translated from Croatian by Tena Gnjatović



eighth version

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abkh. = Abkhaz
Adyg. = Adyghean
adm. = admirative
ADV = adverbial
advers. = adversative
af. = affirmative
ant. = anterior
assoc. = associative, associative plural
dir. = directional (directional prefix)
perm. = permissive
ERG = ergative
evid. = evidential
fut. = future
ger. = gerund
impf. = imperfect
inf. = infinitive
INST = instrumental
inter. = interrogative
invol. = involuntative
Kab. = Kabardian
caus. = causative
cond. = conditional
conj. = conjunctivity prefix
neg. = negation
intrans. = intransitive
NOM = nominative
opt. = optative
part. = participle
pl. = plural
poss. = possessive prefix
pot. = potential
quot.part. = quotative particle
refl. = reflexivity
pref. = prefix
pret. = preterite
trans. = transitive
rec. = reciprocal prefix
Rus. = Russian
sg. = singular
Ub. = Ubykh
ver. = version

PREFACE

This grammar should be used with some caution, not only because it was written by a linguist who is far from being a fluent speaker of Kabardian. It is largely compilatory in nature, and many examples were drawn from the existing works on Kabardian by M. L. Abitov, Mukhadin Kumakhov, and others. However, I have also excerpted and analyzed many sentences from the literature, especially from the Nart corpus (*Nārtxar*, 1951), and some examples were elicited from native speakers. Although I have relied heavily on the published scholarly works on Kabardian, my interpretations of the data are sometimes very different from those in the available literature. I have tried to approach the Kabardian language from a typological point of view, comparing its linguistic features, that may appear strange to speakers of Indo-European languages, to similar features found in other languages of the world. Although primarily designed for linguists, I hope that at least parts of this overview of Kabardian grammar may be of some use to laymen. If it succeeds in attracting at least a few people to the study of Kabardian, this grammar will have served its purpose.

Apart from John Colarusso's grammar (1992) and his recently published grammatical sketch (2006), and the largely outdated monograph by Aert Kuipers (1960), this is, to my knowledge, the only general overview of the structure of Kabardian available in English. In contrast to these three works, which were composed as a result of field work with native speakers from the Kabardian diaspora, this grammar attempts to describe the standard Kabardian language used in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic of the Russian Federation.

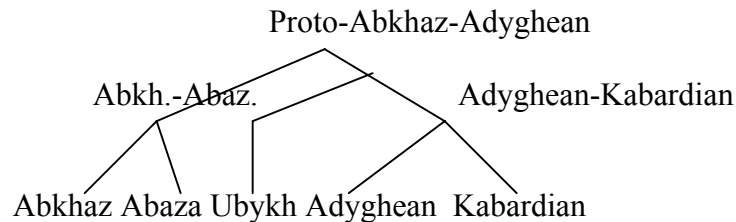
This grammar is a result of my long-standing endeavor to learn this exciting and fascinating, though incredibly difficult language. In a world in which a language dies out every fortnight, the linguist's task is at least to describe the small languages threatened by extinction. Although the statistics on the number of speakers of Kabardian does not lead one to think that Kabardian is in immediate danger of extinction, especially if compared with other small Caucasian languages in Russia, sociolinguistic data show that the number of native speakers is decreasing among the younger generations; it seems that it is especially in the diaspora that Kabardian is facing extinction. As R. M. W. Dixon wrote, anyone who calls themselves a linguist should assume the task of saving at least one endangered language from oblivion. This work is my response to this greatest challenge that linguists, as well as other people who care about the preservation of linguistic diversity, are facing today.

Finally, I would like to thank Lemma Maremukova and Alim Shomahua for their help and for the examples they provided as native speakers of Kabardian. Globalization, which is partly responsible for the mass extinction of languages, has, on the other hand, opened some, until recently unimaginable, possibilities for the investigation of languages over large distances, for "field work" via Internet. *F'əś'ašx^wa*.

Zagreb, 29 November 2008

INTRODUCTION

The Kabardian language is a member of the Abkhaz-Adyghean (Northwest Caucasian) language family.¹ Together with the closely related Adyghean language Kabardian constitutes the Adyghean branch of this family, while Abkhaz and Abaza constitute the other branch (these are also considered to be dialects of the same language by some linguists). The third, transitional branch was formed by the recently extinct Ubykh²:



The frequent common name for Adygheans and Kabardians is Circassians. The names Kabardian and Circassian are alloethnonyms³. The Adygheans and the Kabardians call themselves *ādəγa*, and their language *ādəγabzə*. Their languages are mutually quite intelligible, and most Adygheans and Kabardians consider themselves members of the same nation, with a common history and a common set of social institutions and customs (*ādəγa xābzə*)⁴.

The Kabardians are the easternmost Abkhaz-Adyghean people. Their country is bordered by Ossetia to the south, by Chechnia and Ingushetia to the east, and by the

¹ The NW Caucasian languages may be affiliated with the NE Caucasian (Nakh-Dagestanian) languages, but this hypothesis is still unproven *sensu stricto* (but see, e. g., Dumézil 1933, Abdokov 1981, 1983). Some linguists connect them to the extinct Hattic language of Anatolia (cp. Chirikba 1996, Braun 1994). In my opinion, the evidence suffices to show areal and typological, but not necessarily genetic links between Hattic and NW Caucasian.

² It seems that Ubykh was dialectally closer to the Adyghean languages than to the Abkhaz-Abaza languages (Kumaxov 1976). However, Chirikba (1996) rejects this, and proposes an Ubykh-Abkhazian node.

³ The ethnonym *Kabardians* (Rus. *kabardincy*) is of unknown origin (Kabardians derive it from the name of one ancient chief, Kabarda Tambiev), while the ethnonym *Circassians* (Rus. *čerkésy*, older *čerkasý*) has two etymologies; some relate it to the Greek name *Kerkétai* for one of the ancient peoples on the east coast of the Black Sea (e. g. *Der Kleine Pauly*, s. v.), and others derive it from the Ossetian *cārgās*, originating from a Scythian word *čarkas "nobleman" (e.g. M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s. v.). The name *kasogъ*, pl. *kasozī* "Circassians" is found from the 10th century in Old Russian, and most linguists relate it to the Ossetian *kāsāg* "Circassian" (according to Vasmer this name is also related to the Scythian word *čarkas "nobleman"). The resemblance with the ancient inhabitants of Northern Anatolia, *Kaskas*, is probably accidental. Finally, the name by which Circassians are called by the Abkhazians, *á-zəx*^w*a*, has been compared with Gr. *Zýgoi*, *Zikkhoi*, which designated a people on the NE Caucasus in the 1st century AD. This could, perhaps, be related to Kabardian *c'əx*^w "man" (Chirikba 1996: 3).

⁴ In the Soviet age, in accordance with the "divide and rule" principle, Circassians in the Karachay-Cherkess Autonomous Region of Russia were also set apart as a distinct ethnic group, but they consider themselves descendants of immigrant Kabardians. Their literary language is close to standard Kabardian, though it does have some characteristics which link it to Adyghean (cf. Kumaxova 1972: 22-23).

Abazinia region to the west. The Abkhaz-Adyghean languages used to be spoken along the entire eastern coast of the Black Sea, from the Kuban River (Kabardian *Psəž*) almost as far as the town of Batumi, and in the interior all the way to the Terek River⁵. The Kabardians became a distinct ethnic group in the Middle Ages. They were one of the dominant peoples to the north of the Caucasus, and they established diplomatic relations with the Muscovite kingdom as early as the 15th century. Emperor Ivan the Terrible married the Kabardian princess Goshenay, christened as Maria Temriukovna. In the course of the next couple of centuries a few important Russian noblemen and army leaders were of Kabardian origin. Slave trade in the Islamic world brought numerous Circassians into various countries of the Near East, and it is believed that the Mameluke dynasty, which ruled Egypt from 1379 to 1516, was of Circassian origin. Unlike the Adygheans and the West Circassians, whose society mostly remained organized into large families and clans/tribes, the Kabardians have developed a feudal social organization with princes (*warq*), noblemen (*psə*) and serfs/commoners (*wəna?ʷət*). Part of the nobility converted to Orthodoxy during the 16th century, and in the course of the 16th and 17th centuries Islam spread into Kabardia. The majority of the population, however, remained loyal to pagan traditions, still alive in the Kabardian folklore. Islam was not solidified until the 19th century wars with the Russians, and a part of the Kabardian people (speakers of the Mozdok dialect) remained true to Orthodoxy. After the Russian conquest of Caucasus in 1864 the Adygheans became isolated in the north (around the city of Maykop), and the area where all the other Abkhaz-Adyghean languages used to be spoken has decreased due to Russian immigration, and due to the exodus of almost all Ubykhs and of many Circassians into the Ottoman Empire⁶.

There are more than 400 000 speakers of Kabardian living in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic and the neighbouring areas. More than 90% of ethnic Kabardians use Kabardian as their mother-tongue, but almost all of them are bilingual and speak Russian as well. Kabardians are today an absolute majority in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic of the Russian Federation, with 55.3% of the population according to the 2002 census. Other important ethnic groups are Turkic Balkars, with around 11% of the population, and Russians, whose number is decreasing (according to the 2002 census they constituted around 25% of the population). The number of Kabardian speakers abroad is unknown, but it is believed that a significant number of them still live in Jordan, Turkey and Syria, where they emigrated after the Russian conquest of Caucasus in 1864. It is believed that around 400 000 Kabardians and Adygheans were then exiled, while their descendants went through a partial linguistic assimilation in their new countries. Today there are around 200 000 ethnic Kabardians in Turkey and around 30 000 in Syria⁷, but it is not known how many of them still speak Kabardian. Part of the Syrian Kabardians emigrated to the USA after the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights (1967), and settled as a relatively compact group in New Jersey. Most

⁵ The original homeland of the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages must have comprised the Black Sea coastal area as well, because common words for "sea" (Ubykh *sʷa*, Adyghean *xə*, Kabardian *xə*), for "big sea fish" (Abkhaz *a-psə*, Ubykh *psa*, Adyghean *pca*, Kabardian *bdza*), etc. can be reconstructed (see Klimov 1986: 52).

⁶ A part of Kabardians and other West Caucasian refugees ended up in Kosovo, where their language survived until recently in two villages, cf. Özbek 1986. It appears that all of the remaining Kosovo Circassians were resettled in Russia a few years ago.

⁷ Kabardian is also preserved in a few villages in Israel, and until recently there was a primary school in Kabardian in one of these villages.

speakers of Kabardian in Jordan are centered around Amman, where there is a private school with classes held in Kabardian. In central Turkey Kabardians and other Circassians live around the cities of Samsun, Amasya and Sivas. While the use of Kabardian (and other Circassian idioms) was persecuted under Atatürk, the situation has become a bit better recently. Today Circassian culture associations are being founded in Turkey as well, and their language is making a humble appearance in the media (especially the Internet). Turkish television recently started broadcasting shows in Kabardian and Adyghean.

From the typological point of view, Kabardian shares many common features with other Abkhaz-Adyghean languages: a complex system of consonants (though simpler than in Ubykh, for example), an extremely simple vowel system, a complex prefixation system and the S(ubject) O(bject) V(erb) order of syntactic constituents. There are, however, some typological differences between Abkhaz-Abaza and Kabardino-Adyghean. Unlike Abkhaz-Abaza, the Adyghean languages do not have grammatical gender, but they do have cases. Adpositional phrases are expressed as in the Indo-European languages, and not according to the HM (*head marking*) pattern⁸, as in Abkhaz-Abaza. This means that a Kabardian postpositional phrase consists of the postposition and the governed noun only, without any person/gender affixes on the postposition (as, for example, in Abkhaz). The verbal system, however, is in some respects even more complicated than in Abkhaz-Abaza.

Kabardian was a non-written language until the beginning of the twentieth century, though there were attempts to write it down using an adapted Arabic script. Up until the 20th century Classical Arabic was the language of literacy throughout the Caucasus. Special alphabets for Kabardian, based on Arabic and the Russian Cyrillic, were developed by the Kabardian scholar Shora Nogma (1801-1844), who is also the author of the first Kabardian-Russian dictionary (which was not published until 1956). However, these alphabets have not persisted, and neither have the Arabic and Latin alphabets developed by a Turkish doctor of Kabardian origin, Muhamed Pčegatluxov (1909-10)⁹. The Latin script was adapted for Kabardian in 1923 by M. Xuranov in Soviet Russia, and in 1924 the first Kabardian periodical began to be published in Latin script. Classes in primary schools have been held in Kabardian since 1923. In 1936 the Latin alphabet was replaced by an adapted Russian Cyrillic, still used as the Kabardian alphabet. The last reform of the Kabardian Cyrillic was in 1939. There are some attempts today to reintroduce the Latin script, especially with the Kabardian diaspora in Turkey, where the Latin alphabet is used. These attempts, however, have not taken hold in Kabardia. To abandon the Cyrillic script would mean to give up the literary tradition which has been developing for some seventy years now.

Standard Kabardian is based on the Baksan dialect, spoken in Great Kabardia, which today constitutes a significant part of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic in the Russian

⁸ For the term HM (*head marking*), introduced by Johanna Nichols, and for other commonplace terms of linguistic typology, see Matasović 2001.

⁹ On the beginnings of literacy in Kabardian see Kumaxova 1972: 18-21. The fate of the Latin alphabet adapted for Circassian by G. Kube Shaban is also interesting. Shaban was a Circassian scholar who was taken prisoner near Dravograd (on the Slovenian-Austrian border) as a soldier of the Wehrmacht, but he ran away from the British camp and settled in Syria, where he developed educational institutions for Circassians in the 50-ies (Özbek 1982). However, the regime of the *Baath* party abolished all cultural institutions of Circassians in Syria in the 1960-ies, so that Kube Shaban's alphabet was also abandoned.

Federation (west of the Terek River). There are also the Besleney dialect (also called Besney, spoken in the Karachay-Cherkess Republic of the Russian Federation and in the Krasnodar area), the Mozdok dialect (spoken in the north of North Ossetia, where some Kabardians are believed to have emigrated some time before the 16th century), and the Kuban dialect (spoken in the territory of the Republic of Adyghea in the Russian Federation)¹⁰. All dialects are mutually intelligible¹¹, and Besleney differs most from the other dialects, being, in a sense, transitional between Eastern Circassian (Kabardian proper) and Western Circassian (Adyghean, with its several dialects). Besleney is spoken in the region from which the majority of Kabardians are believed to have emigrated, probably in the 13-14th centuries, to Great Kabarda.

Along with Russian and Balkar, Kabardian is one of the official languages of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic of the Russian Federation. In the first four grades of primary school in the Kabardino-Balkar Republic classes are held in Kabardian, and there is a Kabardian Department at the University of Nalchik (the capital of Kabardia). Literature and the publishing industry in Kabardian are poorly developed, but there is a huge corpus of oral literature, with the mythological Nart Epic standing out (Colarusso 2002). There are a few weeklies and the daily *Mayak* ("Lighthouse") published in Kabardian. The official daily newspaper *Adəya psāla* ("Adyghean Word") is available on the Internet (<http://www.adyghepsale.ru>). Note also the monthly magazine *Psyna* "Source" (<http://www.psna.ru>). Radio Free Europe (<http://www.lrfe.org>) broadcasts news in Kabardian on the "listen on demand" principle.

¹⁰ Speakers of the Kuban dialect are trilingual, they speak Adyghean along with Russian and Kabardian (Kumaxova 1972). They are rather recent immigrants into the region.

¹¹ For an overview of Kabardian dialects, see Kumaxov (ed.) 1969.

PHONOLOGY

Kabardian has one of the most complex phonological systems of all the languages in the world. In native words there are only two vowels and around fifty consonants (depending on the dialect). The vowel *a* can be both short and long (ie. *a* and *ā*)¹².

VOWELS

ə	a	-short
	ā	-long

The vowel *o* appears in loan-words; the diphthong *aw* is pronounced as *ō* in some surroundings, the diphthong *yə* as *ī*, the diphthong *wə* as *ū* and the diphthong *ay* as *ē*. Alternative accounts of Kabardian phonology posit two short vowels (*ə* and *a*) and five long vowels (*ā*, *ē*, *ī*, *ō*, *ū*). Only the vowel *ā* can occur in the word-initial position in native words¹³.

CONSONANTS

	unvoiced	voiced	glottalized	resonants	glides
labial	p f	b v	p' f'	m	w
dental	t c s	d dz z	t' c' s' l l'	n r (l)	
palatal	č š ś	dž ž ź	č' ś'		y
velar	k ^w	g ^w	k ^{rw}		

¹² The difference between *a* and *ā* is not only in their length, but also in their quality, though phonetic descriptions differ. In the pronunciation of my informants, *ā* is a low open vowel, while *a* is a central open vowel (as in the phonological description by Kumaxov (ed.) 2006). Kuipers (1960) thinks that *ā* is not a distinct phoneme, but rather a phonological sequence of the short *a* and the consonant *h* in all positions except at the beginning of a word, where it can be analyzed as *ha*. Kuipers's analysis, though disputed, has the advantage of enabling us to formulate a simple rule according to which all Kabardian words start with a consonant, since *ə* and *a* can never occur word-initially. In the speech of many Kabardians the initial *ā* is, indeed, realized with a "prosthetic" *h*-.

¹³ Aert Kuipers (1960, 1968) tried to eliminate the phonological opposition between the vowels *a* and *ə* as well, claiming that it is actually a feature of "openness" which should be ascribed to consonants (like palatalization, glottalization and labialization). In Kuipers's analysis the opposition between *pa* and *pə* in Kabardian is not an opposition between two vowels, but rather between an "open" (*pa*) and a "closed" (*pə*) consonant (*p*). This would make Kabardian the only language in the world without the opposition between vowels and consonants, but most Caucasiologists do not accept this analysis by Kuipers (for a critical review see, e. g., Halle 1970, Kumaxov 1973, Anderson 1991).

	x	x ^w	γ	(γ ^w)	
uvular	q	q ^w			q' q ^w
	χ	χ ^w	ġ	ġ ^w	
laryngeal	ʔ	ʔ ^w			
	h				

According to some authors¹⁴ labiovelars (*k^w*, *g^w*, *k^w*) are actually labialized uvulars, while the point of articulation of uvulars is even deeper in the pharynx (they represent pharyngeal consonants¹⁵). The dialect described in J. Colarusso's grammar (1992) has pharyngeal fricatives as well; in the standard language described by this grammar they have, as far as I was able to determine from the examples, become velar fricatives. The voiceless laryngeal fricative *h* has its voiced pair in the standard speech of the older generation, which penetrated the language mostly through Arabic loanwords, e. g. *Hazāb* "torment"; the Kabardian Cyrillic does not have a distinct symbol for this segment, which becomes *h* in the speech of the younger generation and is written with the digraph *xʙ*.

In the speech of many Kabardians from the diaspora (especially from Turkey)¹⁶ some oppositions, still preserved in Kabardia, have been lost, such as the one between *ś* and *š* (Turkish Kabardian has got only *š*). The pronunciation of the stops which are described here as voiced and voiceless varies from speaker to speaker (apparently, this has nothing to do with the dialect, but rather with cross-linguistic interference). Some speakers pronounce voiceless stops as voiceless aspirated stops (*p^h*, *t^h*, *k^h*); these speakers sometimes unvoice voiced stops (i. e. instead of *b*, *d*, *g* they say *p*, *t*, *k*). Only the glottalized stops are consistently ejective with all speakers, regardless of the dialect.

Laterals *l*, *l̥*, and *l̥'* are actually lateral fricatives: *l* is voiced, *l̥* voiceless, and *l̥'* glottalized. The fact that it has lateral fricatives without having the lateral resonant [l] (except in loan-words) makes Kabardian typologically unique. The presence of glottalized fricatives *ś'*, *l̥'* and *f'* is also typologically rare. Besides Kabardian, segments such as these are found only in some American Indian languages (of the Salishan and the Na-Dene language families) and in some dialects of Abkhaz.

As in other Caucasian languages, the consonant *r* can never occur at the beginning of a word, except in recent borrowings; older borrowings receive an unetymological prosthesis, e. g. *wəɾəs* "Russian".

Among the velar stops, Kabardian does not have the segment *k* (except in loan-words); it has only the labiovelar *k^w*, *g^w* and *k^w*. The segments transcribed in this grammar as *č*, *dž* and *č'* are, according to some descriptions, palatalized velars (*k^y*, *g^y* and *k^y*)¹⁷. This would make Kabardian a typologically unique language, having

¹⁴ E. g. Kumaxova 1972.

¹⁵ E. g. according to Kumaxov (ed.) 2006: 51.

¹⁶ See Gordon & Applebaum 2006: 162.

¹⁷ According to Kumaxova (1972) in the contemporary standard pronunciation these segments are palatal affricates, but in the older and the dialectal pronunciation they are palatalized velars. Turkish

palatalized and labialized velars without having the "unmarked", regular velars. (This is exactly the kind of system that some linguists ascribe to the Proto-Indo-European language).

Voiceless stops are assimilated to the stops and fricatives that follow them with respect to the features of voice and glottalization:

sa z-lās "I painted" < **sa s-lās* (cf. *sa slaġ^wās* "I saw")

wa plaġ^wās "you saw" < **wa b-laġ^wās* (cf. *wa blās* "you decorated")

da t's'ās "we did" (in writing *muɬlau*) < **da d-sās* (cf. *da daws'a* "we do")

Two vowels cannot occur next to each other; at a morpheme boundary where the first morpheme ends and the second one begins with a vowel, the two vowels merge, whereby the lower vowel is always stronger (i. e. **ə*-*a* merge as *a*, **a*-*ā* as *ā*):

sək^wās "I went" < **sə-k^wa-ā-s*

shās "I carried it" < **sə-hə-ā-s*

Morpheme-final *ə* can be deleted in (underlyingly) polysyllabic words, but the exact rules are complex, and the deletion appears to be optional in some cases (for details see Colarusso 1992: 43ff.):

hən "carry" but *s-aw-h* "I carry" < **sawhə*

šə "horse" but *zə-š* "one horse" < **zəšə*

The vowel *ə* is preserved word-finally after *y* and *w*, when it merges with the glide and is pronounced as [i:] viz. [u:], e. g. *patmyə* "although" [patmi:], *džadwə* "cat" [g^yad(d)u:].

Unaccented vowels in open syllables are shortened (i. e. *ā* becomes *a*):

xāma "foreign" vs. *xamál'* "foreigner"

Likewise, accented vowels in open syllables are lengthened (*a* becomes *ā*):

dāxa "beautiful" vs. *daxāsa* "excessively beautiful"

APOPHONY (ABLAUT)

Like the Semitic, Kartvelian, and the older Indo-European languages, the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages have morphologically regular vowel alternations (apophony,

Kabardian most certainly has palatalized velars, which must be an archaism with regard to the innovative standard (in Kabardia), in which these segments have become affricates.

*Ablaut*¹⁸. Vowel alternations in Kabardian are most frequently used with verbs, especially to express the category of transitivity/intransitivity.

The most common vowel alternations are:

1. *a - ə*: this apophony pattern is used for the opposition between transitive and intransitive verbs, e. g. *dan* "to sew (intrans.)" - *dən* "to sew (trans.)", *txan* "to write (intrans.)" - *txən* "to write (trans.)", *xan* "mow (intrans.)" - *xən* "mow (trans.)"; in some verbs of movement, the root-final vowel *a* also characterizes movement towards the subject (the so called "illative verbs"), while the vowel *ə* characterizes movement away from the subject (the so-called "elative verbs"), cf. *bğadalatan* "fly towards" vs. *bğadalatən* "fly away from". Finally, this apophony pattern serves to distinguish cardinal from adverbial numbers, e. g. *śə* "three" - *śa* "thrice".

2. *ə - 0*: this pattern is used to distinguish the personal prefixes of intransitive verbs (with the "full-grade", *ə*) from the prefixes of transitive verbs (with the "zero-grade", *0*):

sə-b-d-aw-va "I plow together with you"

1sg.-2sg.-conj.-pres.-to plow

– intransitive verb with the prefix *sə-* for the 1st person sg.

b-də-z-aw-va "I plow (it) together with you"

2sg.-conj.-1sg.-pres.-to plow

– transitive verb with the prefix *z-* < **s-* for the 1st person sg.

3. *a - 0*. This apophony pattern is merely a special type of the alternation between *a* and *ə* (*ə* is usually dropped in the word-final position). It is used to distinguish between the forms of the illative and elative verbs, e. g. *yə-š* "take out!" *yə-ša* "bring in!", and it also appears in different forms of transitive and intransitive verbs, e. g. *mā-da* "he is sewing (intrans.)" - *ya-d* "he is sewing it (trans.)".

STRESS

In Kabardian the last syllable carries the stress, except for words ending in *a*, in which the second-to-last syllable is stressed. Grammatical suffixes are mostly unstressed. The following words are thus stressed in this way: *zátan* "give presents", *džáta* "sword", but *džátamč'a* "with the sword", *pśáśa* "girl", but *pśáśaxar* "girls". We can formulate the rule: the syllable before the last root consonant carries the stress.

However, some verbal suffixes attract the stress, e. g. the preterite suffix *-ā-* and the future suffix *-nwə-*, so these forms, although suffixed, are end-stressed, cp.

wə-s-lāġ'-ā-ś "I saw you"

2sg.-1sg.-see-pret.-af.

¹⁸ Apophony patterns in the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages are typologically particularly similar to those in Proto-Kartvelian (Kumaxov 1971: 202). For a general overview of apophony in the Adyghean languages see Kumaxov 1981: 228 ff.

sə-k^wa-nwə́-ś "I will go"
1sg.-go-fut.-af.

SYLLABLE

Unlike the neighbouring Kartvelian languages, the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages do not have complex consonant clusters in the onset of the syllable; the structure of most syllables is C(C)V(C), and most consonant clusters consist of a stop and a fricative, e.g.

t+h: *tha* "God"
b+ǵ^w: *bǵ^wə* "nine"
p+ś': *pś'ə* "ten", etc.

There are also consonant clusters consisting of two stops, e. g. in the word *pqaw* "pillar". Some rare clusters consist of three consonants, e. g. in the verb *pštən* "to boil", or in the noun *bzwə* "sparrow".

Consonant clusters in Kabardian are predominantly *regressive*, i.e. the point of articulation of the first element is closer to the lips than that of the second element. Consonant clusters in which the first element is a labial consonant are especially frequent, e. g. *pśə* "prince, nobleman", *psəsa* "story", *xābza* "custom", *blə* "seven", etc.

Roots are mainly monosyllabic, e. g. *fəz* "woman", *tə-* "give", *zə-* "one", *k^wa-* "go". Bisyllabic roots, which typically end in a vowel (?an earlier suffix), are less frequent, e. g. *pśāśa* "girl", *māza* "moon", etc.

Syllables are normally closed in the middle of a word. Many speakers have a geminate pronunciation of consonants preceded by an open syllable in the middle of a word, which results in the canonical syllable structure, i. e. instead of *psəsa* "story" they pronounce *psəssa*, instead of *dəda* "very" they say *dədda* (Colarusso 1992: 15); if the long vowel *-ā-* is phonologically analyzed as *-ah-*, as is the habit of some linguists, then the rule is that all syllables in the middle of a word are closed. This type of restriction on the syllable structure is typologically very rare in the world's languages.

ORTHOGRAPHY

The Russian Cyrillic alphabet, used as the Kabardian script since 1936, contains the following graphemes¹⁹:

I. consonants

stops			affricates			fricatives			resonants
voic.	unvoic.	glott.	voic.	unvoic.	glott.	voic.	unvoic.	glott.	
б	п	пІ							м
<i>b</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p'</i>							<i>m</i>
						в	ф	фІ	
						<i>v</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f'</i>	
д	т	тІ	дз	ц	цІ	з	с	сІ	н
<i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>t'</i>	<i>dz</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>z</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>s'</i>	<i>n</i>
						л	лъ	лІ	
						<i>l</i>	<i>l̥</i>	<i>l'</i>	
			дж	ч	кІ	ж жь	ш щ	щІ	р
			<i>dʒ</i>	<i>č</i>	<i>č'</i>	<i>ʒ ʒ'</i>	<i>ʃ š</i>	<i>ʃ'</i>	<i>r</i>
						г	х ху		
						<i>ɣ</i>	<i>x x^w</i>		
гу	ку	кІу							
<i>g^w</i>	<i>k^w</i>	<i>k^m</i>							
	кхъ	кху	къ	къу		гъ	гъу	хъ	хъу
	<i>q</i>	<i>q^w</i>	<i>q'</i>	<i>q^m</i>		<i>ǵ</i>	<i>ǵ^w</i>	<i>χ</i>	<i>χ^w</i>
		І Іу						хъ	
		<i>ʔ ʔ^w</i>						<i>h</i>	

The grapheme <ъ> denotes the uvular character of the consonants *q*, *q^w*, *q'*, *q^m*, *ǵ*, *ǵ^w*, *χ* and *χ^w*, and there is a special grapheme used to mark *voicelessness* of uvulars (hence

¹⁹ Rules for the transliteration of the Kabardian Cyrillic applied in this grammar are basically the same as the standard principles of transliteration for the Caucasian languages written in the Cyrillic script, proposed by J. Gippert in his work *Caucasian Alphabet Systems Based upon the Cyrillic Script* (<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/didact/caucasus/kaukaschr.pdf>). Some minor deviations from Gippert's system in this grammar should, however, be brought to the reader's attention: 1) glottalized consonants are written as C', and not as Ć; 2) labialized consonants are written as C^w, and not as C^o; 3) the Cyrillic *ũ* is transliterated as *y*, and not as *j*. 4) palatalized fricatives are written as *š*, *ž*, and not as *ṣ̌*, *ẓ̌*. 5) the Cyrillic letters *ѓз*, *ѓж* are transliterated as *dz*, *dž*, instead of *ʒ*, *ʒ'*.

<кхъ> = *q*, <кху> = *qʷ*). The notation of palatal consonants is inconsistent: <дж, ч> denote *dʒ* (*gʲ*), *č* (*kʲ*), but <кI> is *č'* (*kʰʲ*). Although the Kabardian orthography is phonological, the notation of some phonological changes is inconsistent²⁰, e. g. the shortening of the long *ā* which occurs in compounds, cf. *xāda* "garden" has a long *ā*, but the pronunciation in the compound is /*xada*č'/.).

Some authors (e. g. М. А. Кумахов) use шъ and жъ for the palatalized *ś* and *ź*, instead of the standard ш, ж, since that is how these consonants are denoted in the closely related Adyghean language. However, despite certain efforts to make them more alike (e. g. the 1970 proposition for a common orthography for all Adyghean languages), the Adyghean and the Kabardian orthographies are still quite different²¹.

II. semi-vowels: *ÿ* = *y*; *y* = *w*

III. vowels: *a* = *ā*; *ə* = *a*; *ы* = *ə*

The Kabardian Cyrillic has some other graphemes for vowels, but these graphemes always denote diphthongs and triphthongs:

я = *yā*
и = *yə*
о = *aw*, *wa*
у = *wə*
ю = *ywə*
е = *ay*, *ya*

The grapheme *y* thus has a double value: it can denote the semi-vowel *w* or the phonemic sequence (diphthong) *wə*.

²⁰ Cf. Kumaxova 1972: 46.

²¹ A few years ago a group of the most distinguished Adyghean and Kabardian linguists put forward a proposal for the creation of the common Adyghean-Kabardian orthography (see Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 40 ff.). Although this proposal received the support of the parliament of the Kabardino-Balkar Republic, at the moment I am writing this its future is still uncertain.

MORPHOLOGY

Kabardian is a polysynthetic language which has a very large number of morphemes compared to the number of words in a sentence. Nouns can take a relatively small number of different forms, but the verbal complex typically contains a large number of affixes for a host of grammatical categories.

In Kabardian the morphemes combine within a word according to the agglutinative principle: each grammatical morpheme expresses only one grammatical category. The exception is the category of person is always fused with the category of number in the case of verbs and pronouns: the form *da*, for example, denotes that a pronoun is in the first person and that it is plural, and it is not possible to divide this form into two morphemes (one for the first person and one for plural). Likewise, the category of definiteness is to a large extent fused with the category of case.

Most of Kabardian morphemes consist of only one segment and a vowel (i.e., the structure is CV)²²; this results in large number of homonyms; e.g. *šə* can mean "brother", "horse", "to milk" and "to take out", *c'a* means "name" and "louse", *dza* means "tooth" and "army", *xə* is "sea" as well as "six", etc. Bisyllabic and polysyllabic roots are mostly borrowings, e. g. *nāwəka* "science" (from Russian), *hawā* "air" (from Persian), *āləh* "god" (from Arabic), *šənāq* "glass" (from a Turkic language), etc.

NOMINAL INFLECTION

Nominal categories are: definiteness, number and case. Of all the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages only Abkhaz and Abaza have the category of gender; Kabardian shows no trace of this category. If we consider proclitic possessive pronouns to be possessive prefixes (see below), then possession should also be included in the morphological categories of nouns.

NUMBER

There are two numbers – singular and plural; the plural suffix is *-xa*: *š'āla* "young man": *š'ālar* "young men"; *wəna* "house": *wənar* "houses". The use of the suffix *-xa* is optional for many nouns, i. e. the suffix is used only when the speaker wants to emphasise that the noun is plural. This is why forms such as *sābəy* "child/children" *c'əx* "man/men" and *fəz* "woman/women" are inherently neutral with respect to the category of number. These nouns can be construed with both singular and plural forms of verbs:

fəzə-m žay?a "the woman is speaking": *fəzə-m žāy?a* "the women are speaking"
c'əx əm yaš' "the man is working": *c'əx əm yāš'* "the men are working"

²² Three quarters of all morphemes have this structure according to Kuipers (1960).

Similarly, nouns neutral with respect to number can be construed with singular and plural possessive pronouns:

c'əx^wəm yəpsawəč'a "a man's life": *c'əx^wəm yəpsawəč'a* "men's life"²³.

The postposition *səma* is used to pluralise personal names: *Dwədār səma* "Dudar and others". This is the so-called "associative plural", which exists, e. g., in Japanese and Hungarian:

<i>?^wāšhamāx^wa yə</i>	<i>šhag^wə-m</i>	<i>Mazətha,</i>	<i>āməs,</i>	<i>Thağaladž,</i>	<i>Sawzras,</i>	<i>Łaps səma</i>	<i>Psātha</i>
Elbrus	3sg.poss. top-ERG M.	A.	T.	S.	Ł.	assoc.	P.
<i>dayž šə-zax^wa-s-ā-xa-wə</i>		<i>Sāna-x^wāfa</i>	<i>yā-?a-t</i>				
at dir.-meet-sit-pret.-pl.-ger.		sana-drink	3pl.-have-impf.				

"On the top of Uesh'hemakhue (Elbrus) Mazatha, Amish, Thagoledzh, Sozrash, Hlapsh and others were meeting with Psatha (god of life) and having "the drinking of *sana*" (drink of the gods)".

Nouns which denote substance and collective nouns have no plural: *ś'ālag^wāla* "the youth", *ša* "milk".

CASE

Unlike Abkhaz and Abaza, the Adyghean languages (Kabardian and Adyghe) and Ubykh have cases marked by suffixes on nouns, adjectives and pronouns²⁴.

The cases are: nominative (*-r*), ergative (*-m*), instrumental (*-č'a*) and adverbial (*-wa*). Core cases, which express basic syntactic relations within a sentence, are nominative and ergative, and peripheral cases are instrumental and adverbial.

NOM *džātar*

ERG *džātam*

INST *džātamč'a* / *džātač'a*

ADV *džātawa*

The instrumental case has the definite (*džātamč'a*) and the indefinite form (*džātamč'a*). Definite forms consist of the ergative marker (*-m-*) and the suffix for the instrumental (*-č'a*).

The nominative is the case of the nominal predicate:

mə ś'āla-r-ś *čempion-ər*

²³ On this subject see Kumaxov 1971: 7 ff.

²⁴ By all accounts, the case system in the Adyghean-Ubykh languages is an innovation; the Proto-Abkhaz-Adyghean had no cases (Kumaxov 1976, 1989).

that young man-NOM-af. hero-NOM
 "that young man is the champion"

The nominative is the case of the intransitive subject and the transitive object, i. e. the case of the verb argument which is the lowest ranking macrorole (see below):

ś'āla-r *y-aw-dža* "the boy studies"
 boy-NOM 3sg.-pres.-study

sa txəl'ə-r *q'a-s-št-ā-ś* "I took the book"
 I book-NOM dir-1sg.-take-pret.-af.

The ergative is, basically, the general oblique case used for all other grammatical functions; it is the case of the transitive subject:

student-əm txələ-r *ya-dž-ā-ś* "the student studied the book"
 student-ERG book-NOM. 3sg.-study-pret.-af.

The ergative can also correspond to the dative case in the European languages:

l'əžə-m psalan-ər *f'af'-t*
 old man-ERG. speech-NOM. love-impf.
 "the old man loved to speak", cp. Croatian, for example, which has the dative case: *starcu se sviđalo govoriti* (lit. "to-the-man it pleased to speak")

ā-c'əx^wə-m txələ-r *mə-fəz-əm* *yə-r-ya-t*
 this-man-ERG book-NOM this-woman-ERG 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-give
 "this man gives the book to this woman"

The ergative is also the case which occurs with verbs of movement (like the Latin accusative of the goal):

wa-ryə wyə *šə-r* *šasə-m* *ša*
 you-and 2sg.poss. horse-NOM barn-ERG take to-impf.
 "and you take your horse to the barn"

The ergative can correspond to the locative case in those European languages which have it, indicating a spatial or temporal location:

dyə *xāda-m* *?^wəšha yət-ś*
 2pl. poss. garden-ERG poppy be located-af.
 "there is poppy in our garden (poppy grows in our garden)"
 Croatian: "u našem je vrtu mak (u našem vrtu raste mak)", with *vrt* in the locative sg.

Sa syə *nəbž-əm* *?adža s-lağ^w-ā-ś*
 I 1sg.poss. life-ERG a lot 1sg.-see-pret.-af.
 "I have seen a lot in my life"

Croatian: "Ja sam u svojem životu mnogo vidio", with *život* in the locative sg.

In some constructions, the ergative can correspond to the English possessive genitive or prepositional phrase:

Zə māza-m xaχ^wa-nwə-r zə māx^wa-m xaχ^war-t
 1 month-ERG grow-inf.-NOM 1 day-ERG grow-impf.

"He grew a one month's growth in one day" / "In one day he grew as much as is usually grown in one month"

Thus, ergative functions as both the case of the Agent and as a "general oblique case" covering all other functions of oblique and non-macrorole core arguments, but non-arguments (adjuncts) can also be in the ergative. The other two cases, as a rule, are reserved for non-arguments in the clause, i. e., for the adjuncts.

Nouns and adjectives in the adverbial case (Rus. *obstojatel'stvennyj padež*) usually correspond to adverbs in the European languages, i. e. they indicate the circumstances under which the action is performed:

žəγ-xa-r sātər-wə xas-ā-ś
 tree-pl.-NOM row-ADV to plant-pret.-af.
 "They planted the trees in rows"

The adverbial can correspond to the genitive in the European languages:

fawšəğ^w-wə zə kilogram-m q'a-s-śx^w-ā-ś
 sugar-ADV 1 kilogram-ERG dir.-1sg.-to be involved in shopping-pret.-af.
 "I bought 1 kg of sugar "

The adverbial can be the case of the nominal predicate, corresponding to the instrumental in Slavic:

Žāgəša Taymbawlayt pśə-m yə g^wəsa-wə ār-t
 Ž. T. prince-ERG 3sg.poss. servant-ADV it.be-ipf.
 "Žagəša Taymbawlt was the prince's servant"

Interestingly, in the language of the epic poetry, the adverbial can correspond to the vocative case²⁵, i. e. it is used for addressing individuals:

Sāwəsarəq^wa-wə syə-naf
 S.-ADV 1sg.poss.-light
 "O Sosruko, my light!"

The instrumental mostly corresponds to the Slavic instrumental, i. e. it expresses the instrument with which the action is performed, cf. *šə-m-č'a mā-k^wa* "he rides the horse", literally "he goes with the horse", or *k'arandās-č'a txən* "to write with a pen";

²⁵ Kumaxov (ed.) 2006: 369 calls this "the vocative case", but this is clearly just another use of the adverbial.

however, the Kabardian instrumental has other functions as well, e. g. it can express various circumstances of the action, as well as the path (but not direction) with verbs of movement:

ār *māx^wa-č'a mā-lāža* "he works by day"
 he (NOM) day-INST 3sg.-to work

maz-č'a *k^wa-n* "to go through the forest"
 forest-INST to go-inf.

Occasionally, the Instrumental can also express the actor (in some participial constructions):

?^w*ax^wə-r sar-č'a* *s'-ā* *χ^wən-k'əm*
 job-NOM I-INST do-pret.(part.) become-neg.
 "I cannot do this job" (lit. "This job does not become done by me")

Personal names normally do not differentiate cases (at least not NOM and ERG), but family names do²⁶; this is related to the fact that nominative and ergative endings express not only case, but also definiteness. Also, nouns (personal names) in the "associative plural" (see above) show no case differentiation:

Maryan səma mā-k^wa "Maryan and the others have come"
 M. assoc.pl. 3pl.-to come

Maryan səma s-aw-lāg^w "I see Maryan and the others"
 M. assoc.pl. 1sg.-pres.-to see

In addressing people, nouns referring to them show no case differentiation, i.e. the bare stem is used (similarly as the Indo-European "vocative"):

Nāna, sət mə p'-s'ə-r *zə-š'ə-s-ər* *āt'a yədžə?*
 mother what this 2sg.-do-pres. part.-dir.-sit-NOM now
 "Mother, what is it that you're doing now?"

Demonstrative pronouns differentiate cases, but personal pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person have only got the peripheral cases (adverbial and instrumental), and not the core cases (ergative and nominative). This agrees entirely with Michael Silverstein's hierarchy²⁷, according to which the most common case marking pattern in ergative languages is the one in which 1st and 2nd person pronouns do not differentiate core cases, while nominals and groups lower on the "animacy hierarchy" do (cf. the inverse pattern of case differentiation in the accusative languages, e. g. in English, where the nominative and the accusative are differentiated on the 1st person pronoun, but not on nouns).

²⁶ See Kumaxov *et alii* 1996. This feature excludes Kabardian from the typological universal according to which languages that distinguish cases on 3rd person pronouns always distinguish cases on personal names as well (but not vice versa).

²⁷ See e. g. Dixon 1994.

Since the category of case (especially of primary cases) is connected with the category of definiteness, and syntactical relations within a sentence are expressed by a system of personal prefixes on the verb (see below), there is some uncertainty over the rules of case assignment with some speakers, especially in the case of complex syntactic structures (just as there is often some uncertainty over the rules of the use of articles with speakers of languages which have the definite article).

DEFINITENESS

Definiteness is clearly differentiated only in the core cases, i.e. in the nominative and the ergative: the endings *-r* and *-m* are added only when the noun is definite; indefinite nouns receive no ending²⁸:

pśāśa-m mə-r ya-ś'a "the girl knows it"
girl-ERG it-Nom. 3sg.-know

pśāśa mə-r ya-ś'a "a girl knows it"
girl it-NOM 3sg.-know

With some nouns, whose meaning is inherently definite (e. g. *māza* "moon", *nāsəp* "happiness", personal names), the nominative/definiteness suffix is optional:

dəya-(r) s-aw-lāg "I see the sun".
sun-(NOM.) 1sg.-pres.-see

Other cases are not used to differentiate definite and indefinite forms of nouns, and the opposition definite/indefinite does not exist in the plural either (see Kumaxov *et alii* 1996). However, if a noun in the instrumental is definite, the ergative marker *-m-* is added before the instrumental ending *-č'a*:

sa mə-r sa-m-č'a s-aw-ś' "I do it with the knife"
I it-NOM knife-ERG.-INST. 1sg.-pres.-to do

The ergative marker *m-* probably developed from the demonstrative pronoun (cf. *maw* "this"), which had been "petrified" in the "definite instrumental" before the instrumental ending.

ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are divided into two categories in Kabardian: qualitative and relational adjectives. Qualitative adjectives typically follow the noun they modify: *wəna yən* "big house" (*wəna* "house"), *pśāśa dāxa* "beautiful girl" (*pśāśa* "girl"). Occasionally they may also precede the noun, e.g. *xāma wəna* "foreign house" (*wəna* "house").

²⁸ See Kumaxov 1972, where the grammaticalization of the definiteness marker *-r-* is discussed (from the ending for the formation of participles, it seems). On the category of definiteness in the Adyghean languages see also Kumaxov & Vamling 2006: 22-24.

Adjectives are declined like nouns, but they show no number and case agreement. If the noun is modified by a qualitative adjective, only the adjective receives the endings for case and number:

wəna x^wəž-xa-r "white houses"
house white-pl.-Nom.

If a qualitative adjective precedes the head noun, it is not declined:

dāxawə portfelər sa q'assax^wās "I bought a pretty wallet / a pretty wallet I bought".

Qualitative adjectives mostly have analytical comparison: *dāxa* "beautiful", *naχ dāxa* "more beautiful", *dəda dāxa* "the most beautiful" (or "very beautiful"). The morpheme *naχ* is sometimes merged with the adjective into a compound, cf. *naχ-ə-s'a* "the youngest" (*s'a* "young").

There are also suffixes which express the relative superlative: *-śa*, *-?^wa*, *-bza*, *-ps*, *-ay*, but this seems to belong to the domain of word formation rather than morphology, cf. *?afə-śa* "the sweetest" (*?af* "sweet"), *č'əhə?^wa* "the longest" (*č'əh* "long"), *pləžə-bza* "very red" (*pləž* "red"), etc.

Adding the suffix *-?^wa* to the comparative form gives the adjective a diminutive meaning, e. g. *naχ x^wāba-?^wa* "somewhat warmer" (cp. *x^wāba* "warm"), *naχ ?af ə-?^wa* "somewhat sweeter" (*?af* "sweet")²⁹.

Relational adjectives precede the head noun and they take no case and number endings; they are formed by adding the relative particle *-y* to nominal and adjectival stems:

nawbara-y māx^wa "today"
today's day

Some adjectival meanings are expressed by suffixes: the suffix *-šx^wa* means "great", cf. *dəwnay-šx^wa* "great world", the suffix *-nśa* means "being without, -less". It can often be translated as the English preposition *without*, but its adjectival status can be shown by the fact that nouns to which it is added can get the affirmative marker *-ś* to build a static verb (see below): *sa sə-āda-nśa āna-nśa-ś* (I 1sg.-father-without mother-without-af.) "I am without father and mother" = "I am fatherless and motherless".

PERSONAL AND DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

sg.	pl.
1. <i>sa</i>	<i>da</i>
2. <i>wa</i>	<i>fa</i>

²⁹ Abitov (ed). 1957: 64.

The stems which are used in the formation of demonstrative pronouns also serve to form pronominal prefixes, which are used instead of demonstrative pronouns:

mə- "this"
maw- "that"

maw-žəγ-xa-r "those trees"
 pref-tree-pl.-NOM

These prefixes can also be used as independent words, and they are declined like personal pronouns, e. g. NOM sg. *mə-r*, *maw-r*, ERG sg. *mə-bə*, *maw-bə*, etc.

In addition to the pronominal case ending, third person personal/demonstrative pronouns can get the ergative ending used for nouns as well, which then results in double case marking (Kumaxov *et alii* 1996):

ā-bə-m (*mə-bə-m*) *bdžəžəγ-r q'-yə-wəbəd-ā-ś*
 he-ERG-ERG (this-ERG-ERG) fish-NOM dir.-3sg.-to catch-pret.-af.
 "He (this one) caught the fish"

In a larger sense, the category of demonstrative pronouns would also include *āpx^wada* "such, such as this" (from *ā-* and *px^wada* "similar"), *māpx^wada* "such, such as that", *mawpx^wada* "such, such as that". As a rule, these words occur in the attributive position, in front of the noun they modify, cf. *āpx^wada c'əx^w* "such a man".

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Invariable possessive pronouns have only one form and they precede the noun they refer to:

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| 1. <i>syə</i> | <i>dyə</i> |
| 2. <i>wyə</i> | <i>fyə</i> |
| 3. <i>yə</i> | <i>yā</i> |

There is also the relative possessive pronoun *zyə* "whose", and the 3rd person attributive possessive pronouns *yay* "his", *yāy* "their". The attributive possessives must be preceded by a head nominal in the ergative: *āb ə yay* "his, that which belongs to him", *l'əžəm yay* "old man's, that which belongs to the old man".

Possessive pronouns are clitics, and they should perhaps be thought of as prefixes which express possession. Sometimes they are written as one word with the word they refer to (ie. with the *possessum*), cf. *syəž* "my cow". There seems to be a lot of uncertainty in the Kabardian orthography over whether possessive pronouns should be written separately or as one word with the *possessum*.

In addition to the basic (clitic) possessive pronouns there are also emphatic possessive pronouns, formed by reduplication: *səsay* "my", *wəway* "your", *dəday* "our", *fəfay* "your", *yəy* "their". Unlike the clitic possessive pronouns, these can be inflected for case (e. g. NOM *syəsayr*, ERG *syəsaym*, etc.).

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

xat "who" *sət* "what"

Interrogative pronouns are normally not inflected for case, though there is a growing tendency in the spoken language to use the case endings *-m* (ERG), *-r* (NOM), and *-wə* (ADV) with the pronoun *sət*³⁰: *sət-wə xāxā* "What was he elected for?"

The interrogative-possessive pronoun *zyə* "whose" always precedes the noun it refers to: *zyə šər* "whose horse". It is declined as the personal pronouns: NOM *zyə-r*, ERG *zyə-m*, INST *zyərč'a*, etc.

Other interrogative words are: *dana* "where", *sətwə* "why", *dawa* "how", *dāpśa* "how much", *dāpśas* "when", *datxana* "which".

THE EMPHATIC PRONOUN

The emphatic pronoun is *yazə* "personally, himself". It emphasises the verb's subject and stresses it as the topic of the sentence (*theme*). It is declined as a noun: NOM *yazə-r*, ERG *yazə-m*, etc.

yazə-r mā-g "he himself cries" ("It is he who cries")
personally-NOM 3sg.-to cry

yazə-m ś'ə-r yə-v-ā-ś
personally-ERG ground-NOM 3sg.-to plow-pret.-af.
"they personally plowed the ground"/"he personally plowed the ground"

In the following passage one can see how *yazə* is used to shift the topic back to the name *Džəlāχstan* which had already been introduced earlier in the discourse:

Džəlāχstan yə-pχwə Badax^w yə dāxāğa-r Nārt Xak^wə-m śə?^w-āt.
Dž. 3sg.poss.-daughter B 3sg.poss. beauty-NOM N land-ERG be.heard-ant.pret.

"Māx^w a-m dəğa-ś, žas-əm māza-ś" - ž-ā-?a-rt Badax^w šhač'a.
day-ERG sun-af. night-ERG moon-af. pref.-3pl.-say-ipf. B about

Yazə Džəlāχstan-yə yə pχ^wə-m yə dāxāğa-m
himself Dž.-and 3sg.poss. daughter-ERG 3sg.poss. beauty-ERG

yə-ryə-g^w əšx^wa-ž-ā-wa z-yə-ğapāya-rt

³⁰ Kumaxov *et alii* 1996.

3sg.-3sg.-rejoice-back-pret.-ger. refl.-3sg.-boast -impf.

"The beauty of Džilahstan's daughter Badah was heard in the Land of the Narts. 'She is the Sun by day, she is the Moon at night' -they used to say about Badah. Džilahstan himself, having rejoiced at his daughter's beauty, boasted (about it)".

QUANTIFIERS

Quantifiers differ from adjectives and pronouns in their morphological and syntactic features. For example, the quantifier *q'as* "every" is not inflected for case (this is what differentiates it from adjectives), and it follows the noun it modifies (this is what differentiates it from pronouns):

c'əx^w q'as mā-k^wa "every man walks"
man every 3sg.-to go

The quantifier *g^war* "some" syntactically behaves similarly as *q'as*; it can be used together with the number "one" (*zə*) which precedes the noun it modifies:

zə l'ə g^war "a man", "some man"

Aside from these, there is also the quantifier *psaw* "all, every"; its meaning is inherently plural, and it can be marked for case, cf. *l'ə psawr* "all men". Perhaps the words *zac'a* "whole" and *šhaž* "every" should also be thought of as quantifiers.

INVARIABLE WORDS

NUMERALS

Cardinal numbers:

<i>zə</i>	1	<i>xə</i>	6	
<i>t'wə</i>	2	<i>blə</i>	7	
<i>šə</i>	3	<i>yə</i>	8	
<i>pl'ə</i>	4	<i>bġ^wə</i>	9	
<i>tx^wə</i>	5	<i>ps'ə</i>	10	<i>ša</i> 100

Numerals sometimes merge with the noun which they precede, e. g. *zəš* "one horse", but *zə žam* "one cow". In the first example, the morpheme final *ə* of *šə* "horse" had been deleted, and the numeral received the stress; in the second example, the morpheme final *-a-* of *ža* "cow" was preserved, together with its stress. Numerals can also merge with the noun they follow using the relative conjunction *-yə-*. They can also take case endings:

māz-yə-bġ^wə-ra māx^w-yə-bġ^wə-č'a
 month-rel.-9-and day-rel.-9-INST
 "In nine days and nine months"

Kabardian has the decimal counting system; numerals above ten are formed with the stem *ps'ə-* "ten" and ones, e. g. *ps'ək^wəz* "eleven", *ps'ək^wət'* "twelve", etc. There are traces of the vigesimal system, manifested in the formation of tens as products of multiplication of the number twenty, *t'was'*: *t'was'-yə-t'* "forty", *t'was'-yə-š* "sixty", etc.

When counting above twenty, the counted noun (or noun phrase) is normally repeated before both constituent parts of the complex number:

c'əx^w šas'-ra c'əx^w-yə-š-ra "thirty three men"
 man thirty-and man-suf.-three-and

Ordinal numbers:

<i>yāpa</i>	1.	<i>yaxāna</i>	6.
<i>yat'wāna</i>	2.	<i>yablāna</i>	7.
<i>yašāna</i>	3.	<i>yayāna</i>	8.
<i>yapl'āna</i>	4.	<i>yabġ^wāna</i>	9.
<i>yatx^wāna</i>	5.	<i>yapšāna</i>	10.

Ordinal numbers behave like relational adjectives, so they can take the suffix *-ray* (used for the formation of adjectives): *yatx^wānaray* "fifth" etc. Adverbial numerals are formed from cardinal numbers by apophony, e. g. *za* "once", *ša* "thrice", but they can

also be formed by the prefix (or infix?)³¹ *-rə-* and reduplication of the root of a cardinal number: *zə-rə-z* "once", *pś'ə-rə-pś'* "ten times". Distributive numerals are formed from cardinal numbers with the suffix *-āna*: *t'wāna* "a half", *sāna* "a third", etc. Note also *yāzə* "one of two".

ADVERBS

Adverbs are formed from adjectives by adding the suffixes *-wə*, *-wa*, *-ra*:

?ay "bad" - *?aywə* "badly"; *x^wābž* "quick" - *x^wābžwə* "quickly", *fə* "good" - *fəwa* "well".

This suffix is identical to the suffix for the adverbial case (see above).

ba "many, plentitude" - *bara* "much, very"

The possessive prefix *yə-* can be added to nouns to form adverb-like expressions (or "relational nouns"?) with directional meaning:

śha "head" - *yəśha* "up, upwards"
lābža "hoof" - *yəlābža* "down, downwards"

Adverbs are formed from nouns by adding the suffix *-č'a* (this is presumably the same suffix as the instrumental ending):

māx^wa "day": *māx^wač'a* "by day"; *ža* "flight": *žač'a* "in flight"

Some adverbs are formed with both the possessive prefix *yə-* and the suffix *-č'a*:

śha "top, head": *yəśhač'a* "on top" (lit. "on his head").

There are also underived adverbs: *nawba* "today", *pśaday* "tomorrow", *dəg^wāsa* "yesterday", *dəda* "very, just", *wayblama* "very", *məbə* "here":

sət wa məbə (dayžəm) śə-p-ś'a-r "what are you doing here?"
 what you here dir.-2sg.-to do-particle

The category of adverbs might also include invariable expressions such as *qə?a* "please", *fəśāsx^wa* "thank you", *xat yəś'ara* "maybe" ("who knows?"), etc.

POSTPOSITIONS

Kabardian uses postpositions instead of prepositions. Postpositions are words which determine the grammatical relations of the nouns that precede them: *nawəž* "after",

³¹ The morpheme *-rə-* can be analysed as an infix which is inserted between the reduplicated root syllable and the root, if we think of reduplication as a kind of modification of the root (and not a special form of prefixation).

pś'awnda "until", (*yə*) *dayž* "at, in", *šhač'a* "because, after", *yəpam* "in front of", *yəč'am* "at the end, after", *naməs'* "except", *pāp's'a* "because, due to", *zax^wak^wa* "between", *yə g^wəg^wə* "about".

šadžāgwa nawžəm "after lunch"
šadžāgwa pś'awnda "until lunch, before lunch"
šəm yəpam(č'a) "in front of the horse"
wər šhač'a "because of you"
šālam yə g^wəg^wə "about the boy"

Muhamad yə q^m aš-əm dayž šə?-ā-ś
 M. poss.3sg. brother-ERG at be-pret.-af.
 "Muhamad was at his brother's"

sət wyə ?^w ax^w-əm šhač'a ž-ā-?-ā-r
 what poss.2sg. work.-ERG about dir.3pl.-say-pret.-inter.
 "What did they say about your work?"

The majority of postpositions are derived from nouns, especially nouns denoting body parts, cf. *šha* "head", *pa* "nose", *č'a* "tail". Some postpositions can be inflected, e. g. *dayž* has the full case paradigm (NOM *dayž*, ERG *dayžəm*, INSTR *dayžč'a*, ADV *dayžwa*), and some, but not all, can be construed with possessive prefixes (e. g. *yə g^wəg^wə* "about (it/him)"³²). This means that many Kabardian postpositions are quite like relational nouns in languages such as Tibetan.

Instead of local adpositions, Kabardian often uses directional (local) prefixes on the verb; the English sentence "the student is sitting on the chair" corresponds to the Kabardian sentence *wəčaynəkə-r šantə-m tay-s-ś* (student-NOM chair-ERG dir.-to sit-af.), where the equivalent of the English preposition *on* is the Kabardian verbal prefix *tay-* (on local prefixes see below).

PARTICLES, CONJUNCTIONS AND INTERJECTIONS

There are relatively few particles in Kabardian; these are the most frequently used ones:

hawa "no"; *nət'a* "yes"

myəs "here!"

məda "there!, look!"

p'ara (interrogative particle); it is always placed at the end of a sentence and expresses a slight doubt:

wa p-ś'a-wa p'ara "do you (really) know?"
 you 2sg.-know inter.particle

³² Cp. Abitov 1957: 153.

The other interrogative particle is *śa* (also placed at the end of a sentence):

ār q'ā-k^wa-ma śa "will he come?"
 he-NOM dir.come-cond. inter.particle

The particle *žayryə* is used as a quotation mark; it is usually best left untranslated:

Śha wə-naśχay, žayryə ya-wəpś-ā-ś Bādənanawq^wa
 why 2sg.-be.sad quot.part. 3sg.-ask-pret.-af. B
 "Why are you sad, asked Badinoko"

Conjunctions are clitics, so they are mostly written as one word with the words they conjoin, e. g. *-ra* "and", *-yə* "and", but there are also conjunctions which occur as separate words: *yəč'yə* "and", *āwa* "but", *āt'a* "but", *wayblama* "even, but", *ya...ya* "either...or", *hama* "or".

The copulative conjunction *-ra*, *-ryə* is repeated after each conjoined word within a noun phrase (NP):

Txəl-ra ?ana-ra "A book and a table"

The conjunction *-ryə* is placed after the verb in a sentence:

"Mə-r sət ġas'ag^wan" žyə?a-ryə Satanay yə thak^wəma-r məva-m ?^wəyəlħ-ā-ś
 this-ERG what wonder said-and S. poss.3sg. ear-NOM rock-ERG place-pret.-af.
 "What kind of wonder is this?" said Satanaya and placed her ear on the rock."

The most common interjections are *ānā* "oh", *wax^w* "ouch", *?^wa* "oh", *wa* "hey", *yārabyə* "hey!", *ma* "here!" (used while giving something away)

VERBS

Cette singularité (ergatif) tient, en gros, à ce que, là où nous pensons "je vois le livre", les Caucasiens pensent quelque chose comme "à-moi le-livre (il-m')est-en-vue" (G. Dumézil, cit. in Paris 1969: 159).

Kabardian verbal morphology is extremely complex. Prefixes and suffixes are used to express different verbal categories, and there is also apophony (regular root vowel alternation).

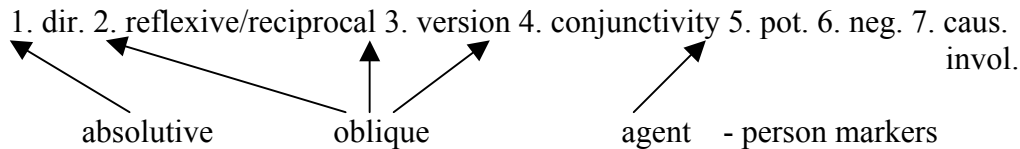
The verb does not have the category of voice (it does not distinguish active and passive),³³ but it does have the categories of transitivity, person, number, tense, mood, causative, two types of applicatives (version/benefactive (Rus. *versija*) and conjunctivity/comitative (Rus. *sojuznost'*)), reflexivity, reciprocity, involuntative, and evidentiality. Active and stative verbs are distinguished systematically, and many of the mentioned categories do not apply to stative verbs.

THE VERBAL COMPLEX

The verbal complex consists of a number of prefixes, the root, and a number of suffixes:

$P_1...P_n - R - S_1..S_n$

The prefix positions can be seen in the following matrix:



In the non-third persons, the dynamic present tense marker *-aw-* is added between the positions 5 and 6, cf., e.g., *q'ə-z-aw-ġā-k^ma* "I make him come".

As can be gathered from the scheme above, the personal prefixes can be inserted at several points in the prefix chain, but two fixed rules apply: firstly, the prefix for the absolutive argument (the "lowest ranking macrorole", see below) precedes all other prefixes, and secondly, the prefix referring to the agent (if there is one) is closest to the verbal root. The picture above is further complicated by the fact that certain local prefixes, e.g. *xa-* "in", *da-* "in", etc. (see below) can be inserted in the verbal complex between the prefix slots 4 and 5; moreover, the factitive prefix *wə-* can be inserted immediately before the root. However, we leave these prefixes out of the matrix scheme, because they belong to the domain of word formation more than to morphology.

³³ Cp. Gišev 1985: 41-57, where arguments to the contrary are disputed.

The suffix positions:

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------|------------|-----------------|
| 1. intransitivity | 2. tense | 3. mood | 4. negation |
| | | potential | interrogativity |
| | | evidential | |

We shall first deal with the prefixal verbal morphology, and then with the suffixal morphology.

VERBAL NEGATION

The negation of the verb is expressed with the suffix *-q'əm* (for finite forms) and the prefix *mə-* (for non-finite forms; this prefix immediately precedes the root, or the causative prefix):

sə-k^w a-r-q'əm "I am not going"
1sg.-go-pres.-af.-neg.

wə-mə-lāža-wə p-šxə-r haram-ś
2sg.-neg.work-ger. 2sg.-eat-NOM sin-af.
"It is a sin to eat not working" ("It is a sin if you eat, and not work")

The imperative is, according to this criterion, included in non-finite forms:

s-wə-mə-ğay "don't lament me"
1sg.-2sg.-neg.-lament

The prefixal negation can occur in some finite forms, but this usually happens in fixed expressions and proverbs:

tha, sə-mə-ś'a "by god, I don't know"
god 1sg.-neg.-know

The two verbal negations differ in scope: the prefixed *-mə-* is the narrow scope negation, with the scope just over the verbal nucleus, while the suffixed negation *-q'əm* negates the whole sentence (including the embedded participles, infinitives, and/or gerunds).

The other NW Caucasian languages also have prefixal negation with the infinite verbal forms, and suffixal negation with the finite forms.

PERSON

Kabardian distinguishes three persons singular and plural. Verbal person markers indicate the person of the subject of an intransitive verb / object of a transitive verb

(the person which is in the nominative in the case of nouns), the person of the subject of a transitive verb (the person which is in the ergative in the case of nouns), and of the indirect object (the person which, in the case of nouns, is in the ergative in its function of dative, or some other oblique case):

a) markers of the person which is in the nominative:

	sg.	pl.
1.	<i>sə-</i>	<i>də-</i>
2.	<i>wə-</i>	<i>fə-</i>
3.	<i>0- /ma-</i>	<i>0-/mā-</i>

The prefix *ma-* is typically used in the present tense, with intransitive verbs which have only one expressed argument (Rus. *odnoličnye neperexodnye glagoly*), while intransitive verbs with two expressed arguments take the prefix *0-* for the person in the nominative. Intransitive verbs with a preverb do not have the prefix *ma-* in the present tense, cp. *ma-da(r)* "(s)he is sewing", but *q'-aw-k''a* "(s)he is coming" (where *q'-* is a directional preverb, and *-aw-* is a present tense marker of dynamic verbs).

b) markers of the person which is in the ergative (person of the transitive subject and person of the indirect object):

1.	<i>-s-/-z-</i>	<i>-d-</i>
2.	<i>-w-/-b-</i>	<i>-f-</i>
3.	<i>-y(ə)-/-r(-ə)-</i>	<i>-y-xa- (> -yā-)</i>

In the 3rd person singular the prefix *-r-* denotes the indirect object (usually the Recipient)³⁴:

sə-r-yə-t

1sg.-3sg.-3sg.-give

"He gives me to him"

In the 3rd person plural the suffix *-xa* is usually only added if the verb's subject is not expressed, and if the subject is not placed immediately before the verb³⁵:

āxar yaydžā-ś = yaydžā-xa-ś "they studied"

The order of personal markers is always:

direct object / subject of intrans. verb – indirect object – subject of trans. verb
 S/O IO A

³⁴ The usual explanation is that the marker *-r-* is a result of dissimilation in a sequence of two semi-vowels *-y...-y- > -y...-r-*; this can be formulated as a synchronic phonological rule, so in most grammars it can be found that the marker for the 3rd person indirect object is *-yə-*, like for the direct object (see Hewitt 2005: 102).

³⁵ Forms with the plural suffix *-xa-* on the verb are characteristic for the contemporary literary language.

(*sa wa*) *ābə w-ay-s-t-ā-ś* "I gave you to him"
 I you he-ERG 2sg.-3sg.-1sg.-to give-pret.-af.

(*ābə sa*) *wa wə-q'ə-z-ay-t-ā-ś* "he gave you to me"
 (he-ERG I) you 2sg.-dir.-1sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-af.

This schema shows that the verbal agreement system in Kabardian is ergative just like the case system, since the subject of an intransitive verb is treated in the same way as the direct object (S/O), while there is a different set of personal prefixes used for the subject of a transitive verb. With intransitive verbs the third position (A) is, of course, not realized.

The suffix *-?a-* denotes the "indefinite person", i.e. that the verb's subject or object is indefinite (it is translated as "somebody"); this suffix is used only when the verb is in the third person:

q'a-k^m-ā-?a-ś "somebody came"
 dir.-go-pret.-suf.-af.

də-za-plə-nwə-?a "are we going to see somebody?"
 1pl.-part.-watch-fut.-suf.

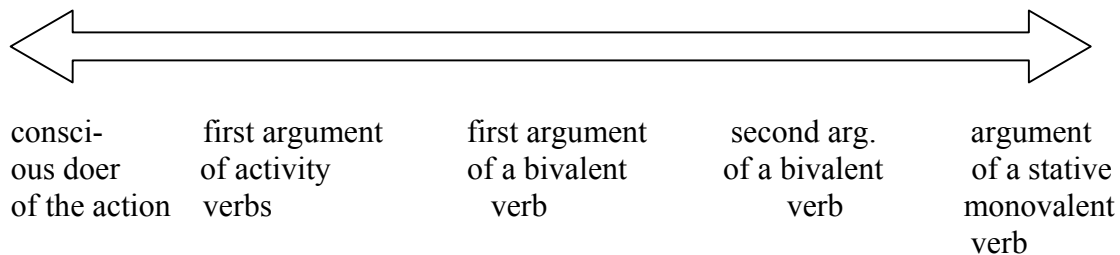
The above examples lead to the conclusion that the suffix *-?a-* indicates only the person of the nominative argument (i.e. of the intransitive subject or object).

TRANSITIVITY

Verb valency is the number of arguments needed to complete the meaning of the verb in question. Verbs can be aivalent (e. g. *it is raining* – this verb is in English syntactically monovalent, but semantically aivalent, since no thematic role is assigned to "it"), monovalent (e. g. *I am sitting*), bivalent (e. g. *I am hitting an enemy*), trivalent (e. g. *I am giving a book to a friend*), possibly also quadrivalent (e. g. *I am buying a book from a friend for twenty pounds*). Verb valency is a semantic concept, realized in syntax through the category of transitivity. In most languages, bi- and trivalent verbs are realized as *transitive* verbs, i. e. verbs which have a compulsory nominal complement (direct object), possibly two complements (direct and indirect object).

Arguments of bivalent verbs express different *thematic roles* according to the types of meaning they express. For example, verbs of giving (*to give, to donate*) always distinguish between the *sender* ("the person who is giving"), the *theme* ("the thing which is being given") and the *recipient* ("the person to whom something is being given"), and verbs of seeing distinguish between the thematic roles of the *stimulus* ("what is being seen") and the *experiencer* ("the person who is seeing"). Thematic roles can be grouped into macroroles with common semantic-syntactic features. We can distinguish between two macroroles: Actor and Undergoer. The Actor is always

the thematic role closer to the left edge of the following hierarchy, while the Undergoer is always close to the right edge of the hierarchy³⁶:



The conscious doer of the action (*agent*) is the traditional subject of verbs such as *to hit*, *to kill* and *to cut*; the first argument of activity verbs is the traditional subject of verbs such as *to eat* or *to run*, the first argument of a bivalent verb would be the subject of verbs such as *to see*, *to know*, and the second argument of a bivalent verb would be the traditional object of all bivalent verbs. Finally, the argument of a stative verb would be the traditional subject of verbs such as *to lie*, *to sit*, *to exist*, etc. The macroroles Actor and Undergoer of the action are, in a sense, the semantic correlates of the traditional syntactic-semantic concepts of "subject" and "object", which cannot be uniformly defined in all the languages of the world³⁷.

Some Kabardian bivalent verbs can appear in their transitive and intransitive form, and many bivalent verbs can only be construed as intransitive (Rus. *dvuxličnye neperexodnye glagoly*). The way in which transitive and intransitive verbs differ in Kabardian – in terms of the number of arguments, i. e. nominal complements to the verb meaning – is typologically very interesting. Some linguists, e. g. Georgij Klimov (1986: 51), claim that a large majority of verbs in the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages are intransitive, precisely because they can be used with only one argument as complement, without breaking any syntactical rules. According to this criterion verbs meaning "to hit", "to catch", "to eat", "to kiss", "to lick", "to wait", "to move", "to call", "to do", "to ask", "to want", "to hunt", etc. are also intransitive in the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages. Klimov uses the term "diffuse" or "labile" verbs for those verbs which can be used both in a transitive and an intransitive construction; this category comprises verbs meaning "to sow", "to graze", "to plow", "to knit", "to embroider", "to weave", etc.³⁸. These seem to be mostly verbs the first argument of which (the agent) is always a human being or a person, while the second argument (the patient) is inanimate.

Sometimes the only difference between transitive and intransitive verbs is in different root vocalism (Ablaut); transitive forms end in *ə*, and intransitive forms in *-a*: *də-n* "to sew (something)" - *da-n* "to be involved in sewing", *txə-n* "to write (something)", *txa-n* "to be involved in writing", *žə-n* "to avoid", *ža-n* "to run away", *tən* "to give, to give presents" and *tan* "to give, to give presents", *šxən* "to eat (something)" and *šxan* "to

³⁶ The hierarchy was adapted from Van Valin and LaPolla 1997. In informal terms, the actor is the most "active" of the arguments of a particular verb, while the undergoer is the least active argument.

³⁷ About this see e. g. Matasović 2005, Klimov (ed.) 1978: 59.

³⁸ According to Kumaxov (1971), in the closely related Adyghean language the number of "labile" verbs is significantly greater than in Kabardian.

eat", *thaśən* "to wash (something)" and *thaśan* "to wash", *xən* "to reap (something)" and *xan* "to reap", *śəpən* "to collect (something)" and *śəpan* "to collect", *ś'ən* "to do" and *ś'an* "to know", *l'ən* "to kill" and *l'an* "to die"³⁹. Transitive verbs can be derived from intransitive ones using some suffixes and prefixes, e.g. the suffix *-hə-*, cf. *q'afa-n* "to dance" (intransitive), *q'afə-hə-n* "to dance (a dance around something)" (transitive). Sometimes the difference is purely lexical, e.g. the verbs *hə-n* "to carry" and *ś'ə-n* "to do" are always transitive. If we assume that the basic form of the verb is the one with final stem morpheme *-a-*, while the form with the morpheme *-ə-* is derived, then a large majority of Kabardian languages are intransitive. With some exceptions, Kabardian is a language without (underived) transitive verbs.

Intransitive verbs with two arguments often express the fact that the Undergoer is not entirely affected by the action, i. e., the fact that the action is not being performed completely; in terms of Role and Reference Grammar, these verbs express activities, but not accomplishments (active accomplishments):

ha-m q'əpśxa-r yə-dzaq'a
 dog-ERG bone-NOM 3sg-bite
 "the dog is biting the bone (to the marrow, completely)"

ha-r q'əpśxa-m y-aw-dzaq'a
 dog-NOM bone-ERG 3sg.-pres.-bite
 "the dog is gnawing, nibbling at the bone"

ś'āla-r mā-dža "the boy is reading" – intransitive verb with 1 argument
 boy-NOM 3sg.-read

ś'āla-r txəl-əm y-aw-dža - intransitive verb with 2 arguments
 boy-NOM book-ERG 3sg.-pres.-read
 "the boy is reading the book"

ś'āla-m txəl-ər ya-dž
 boy-ERG book-NOM 3sg.-read- transitive verb
 "the boy is reading the book (to the end), young man reads through the book"⁴⁰

ār mātxa "he is writing" (intransitive) / *ābə txələm ya-tx(ə)* "he is writing a letter" (transitive)

pχāśa-r pχa-m yə-x^wa "the carpenter is arranging the boards " (intransitive) / *pχāśa-m pχa-r yə-x^wa* "the carpenter is arranging the boards" (transitive); in the second sentence it is implied that the action will be performed completely, i. e. that the verbal action will be finalized (there is no such implication in the first sentence).

³⁹ Kuipers (1960) considers the opposition between *a* and *ə* in verbs a part of the wider system of "introvert" forms (with *a*) and "extrovert" forms (with *ə*) in Kabardian, where *a* and *ə* are not morphemes for "introvertedness/extrovertedness", but the realization of the feature of "openness", which, according to Kuipers, is parallel to the phonological features such as palatalization, glottalization, etc.

⁴⁰ My informants tell me that this sentence can also mean "the young man is studying the book".

Some linguists (Catford 1975, Van Valin & LaPolla 1997: 124) refer to the intransitive construction as the antipassive. The antipassive is a category which exists in many ergative languages (Dyirbal, Chukchi, etc.). The verb becomes intransitive in the antipassive, and the only compulsory argument of such verbs is the doer of the action, which is marked for the same case as the subject of an intransitive verb and the object of a transitive verb in an active (ie. not antipassive) construction. This case is usually called the absolutive, but in Kabardian it is traditionally referred to as the nominative. The patient can either be left out in the antipassive construction, or it can appear in an oblique case.

Equating the Kabardian "bipersonal" intransitive construction with the antipassive is not correct⁴¹; the affix *-(a)w-* is not the antipassive marker, as Catford explains it, but the present prefix which is added in the 3rd person to intransitive verbs only, and in the 1st and 2nd person to all verbs. Monovalent intransitive verbs with a preverb have this prefix as well, and these verbs cannot appear in an antipassive construction, e. g. *n-aw-k^ma* "he goes (this way)" (dir.-pres.-to go). In works on Kabardian there is quite a lot of confusion regarding this problem (the conditions under which the prefix *-(a)w-* appears are not entirely transparent), but it is clear that some verbs are always either transitive or intransitive, i. e. that the difference is lexical with some verbs (which we wouldn't expect if the intransitive construction was actually the antipassive). The antipassive is usually characteristic for most transitive verbs, similarly as most transitive verbs can form the passive in the nominative-accusative languages. Aside from all this, the antipassive is always a derived, marked construction in the ergative languages, while the intransitive construction in the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages is just as unmarked (underived) as the transitive one.

A) Transitive verbs

Transitive verbs can take markers for all persons, except for the 3rd person direct object (this marker is the "zero-morpheme", the prefix 0-). The order of personal markers is: *direct object-(indirect object)-subject*:

wə-s-tx-ā-ś "I wrote you down"
you-I-write down-pret.-af.

sa wa wə-s-lāḡ^w-ā-ś "I saw you"
I you 2sg.-1sg.-to see-pret.-af.

w-ya-s-t-ā-ś "I gave you to him"
you-he-I-to give-pret.-af.

(0-)y-a-s-t-ā-ś "I gave it to him"
(0-)3sg.-I-to give-pret.-af.

With transitive verbs the subject takes the ergative case, and the object the nominative case. In RRG terms we would say that in constructions with transitive verbs the nominative case is assigned to the lowest ranking macrorole, while all other

⁴¹ About this see also Hewitt 1982 and Kumakhov & Vamling 2006: 13 ff.

arguments are assigned the ergative case. Also, the order of personal prefixes can be expressed like this⁴²:

I: lowest ranking macrorole; II: non-macrorole core argument; III: other macrorole (with transitive verbs this will always be the Actor).

B) Intransitive verbs

The order of personal markers with intransitive verbs is: *subject (of an intransitive verb) – indirect object*; the subject is always the semantic agent (Actor):

sə-w-aw-pl "I am watching you"
I-you-pres.-to watch

pšāśa-r *džāna-xa-m* *q'ə-y-xā-da*
girl-NOM shirt-pl.-ERG dir.-3-pl.-to sew (intrans.)
"The girl is involved in the sewing of shirts"

With intransitive verbs the subject is assigned the nominative case, and the object the ergative case (in its dative function):

studentə-r *txələ-m* *ya-w-dža* "the student is reading the book"
student-NOM book-ERG 3sg.-pres.to read

sa *kinom* *s-ya-pl-ā-ś* "I watched the cinema" (= "I was in the cinema")
I-NOM cinema-ERG 1sg.-3sg.-to watch-pret.-af.

In RRG terms, the case assignment rule is completely identical for transitive and intransitive verbs: the lowest ranking macrorole is assigned the nominative case, while all other verb arguments (in this case the indirect object) are assigned the ergative case. Also, the order of verbal prefixes is the same as with transitive verbs:

I: the lowest-ranking macrorole (with intransitive verbs this is also the only macrorole); II: non-macrorole core argument; III: other macrorole (this position is not realized with intransitive verbs, since they only have one macrorole).

Verbs with the inverse (dative) construction are also intransitive; these are verbs which express belonging or a mental state, the only macrorole of which is the patient (Undergoer), assigned the Nominative case:

l'əž-əm *āšxa-r* *yə-?a-ś* "the old man has money"
old man-ERG. money-NOM. 3sg.-hold-af.

l'əžəm *psalanər* *f'əf'-t* "the old man liked to speak"
old man-ERG to speak-inf.-NOM like-impf.

⁴² For the RRG terminology see Van Valin & LaPolla 1997; for the overview of verbal morphosyntax in Kabardian in RRG see Matasović 2006.

The inverse construction corresponds to Latin constructions of the type *mihi est* "it is to me", *mihi placet* "it is pleasing to me, I like". From the point of view of the above-mentioned case assignment rules these verbs present no problem, because their only (and thus also the lowest ranking) macrorole is marked for the Nominative case.

If a transitive verb has two complements (i.e. if it is a trivalent verb), only the lowest ranking macrorole (Undergoer) is in the Nominative:

g^wəp-əm l'əž-ər thamāda yā-š'-ā-ś
 group-ERG old man-NOM thamada 3pl.-make-pret.-af.
 "The group made the old man thamada (commander of the feast)" – in this sentence the noun *thamāda* cannot be marked for the Nominative (i.e. it cannot appear in the form **thamāda-r*)⁴³.

The object (i.e. the second argument, the Undergoer) of transitive verbs can be omitted; it is expressed by a personal prefix, which, in the case of a third person object, is the "zero-morpheme (0-):

0-sə-lāg^w-ā-ś "I saw (it)"
 3sg.-1sg.-see-pret.-af.

0-s-ta-ž-ā-ś "I gave (it) again"
 3sg.-1sg.-give-back-pret.-af.

Note that many, perhaps most bivalent verbs are intransitive in Kabardian:

l'ə-xa-r m-ā-plā-xa "people are watching"
 man-pl.-NOM 3sg.-pres.-watch-pl.

sa s-aw-plā "I am watching"
 1sg. 1sg.-pres.-watch

sa ābə sə-śə-p-x^waz-ā-ś "I met you there"
 I there 1sg.-dir.-2sg.-meet-pret.-af.

Some intransitive verbs have an "integrated" marker for the 3rd person object; they are "bipersonal" (Rus. *dvuxličnye*)⁴⁴, but their indirect object (oblique argument) is always in the 3rd person singular. The verb *sən* "to swim" is of this type:

s-ya-s-ā-ś "I swam", *w-ya-s-ā-ś*, "you swam", *ya-s-ā-ś* "he swam", *d-ya-s-ā-ś* "we swam", *f-ya-s-ā-ś* "you swam", *ya-s-ā-ś* "they swam". It seems that *yəwəč'an* "to kill" behaves in the same way (in opposition to the transitive *wəč'an*).

Finally, some verbal personal prefixes are different for transitive and intransitive verbs (see above):

⁴³ Kumaxov 1971: 68.

⁴⁴ With some of these verbs *ya-* has become part of the stem, i.e. only etymologically is it a personal prefix, cf. Kumaxov 1973a.

ya-k^wə "he goes (through something)" - transitive
mā-k^wa "he goes" -intransitive

LABILE (DIFFUSE) VERBS

Labile (or "diffuse") verbs are typically bivalent, but they can be used both transitively and intransitively:

ār mā-va "he plows" (intrans.) / *ābə š'ər ya-va* "he plows the ground" (transitive)

ār mā-?^wa "he threshes " (intrans.) / *ābə g^wadzə-r ya-?^wa* "he threshes wheat" (transitive)

These verbs are relatively rare in Kabardian, but their number is significantly greater in the closely related Adyghean language⁴⁵. From works on Kabardian (and based on my own questioning of native speakers) it is unclear whether two lexical units should be distinguished in the case diffuse verbs (two verbs differing with respect to transitivity), or whether it is just one lexical unit (one verb with two uses / constructions).

CAUSATIVE

Verbs receive an additional argument in the causative construction, i.e. their valence is increased by one. All Kabardian verbs can form the causative, including intransitives, transitives, and ditransitives. The causative prefix is *ḡa-*.

k^wa-n "to go": *mā-k^wa* "he goes": *ya-ḡā-k^wa* "he sends him" = "makes him go".

The causative prefix *ḡa-* / *ḡā-* turns intransitive verbs into transitive verbs:

š'āla-r *g^wəbg^wa-m* *mā-k^wa* "The boy goes into the field"
 boy-NOM. field-ERG 3sg.-goes

āna-m *š'āla-r* *g^wəbg^wa-m* *yə-ḡā-k^wa*
 mother-ERG boy-NOM field-ERG 3sg-caus.-to go
 "The mother sends the boy to the field"

sawpə-r (*q'a-*)*v-ā-š* "the soup was boiling (it was cooking)"
 soup-NOM (dir.)-to cook-pret.-af.

š'āla c'ək^wə-m *sawpə-r* *q'-yə-ḡā-v-ā-š* "the boy was cooking soup"
 boy little-ERG soup-NOM dir.-3sg.-caus.-to cook-pret.-af.

Causative can also be built from reflexive verb forms, e.g. *zagawan* "make someone hit himself".

⁴⁵ Kumaxov 1971: 206.

Like, e.g., Turkish, but unlike many languages, Kabardian allows "double causatives", i.e. the causative suffix can be added to a transitive verb that has already been derived by causativization: thus the causative *ġā-va-n* "make boil, cook" can be causativized to *ġa-ġā-van* "make someone cook", taking three arguments:

Nəbzəg^w ə-m q'āz-yət^w ə yə-?a-t-yə...
 friend-ERG goose-five 3sg.-have-impf.-and

yə āna-m yə-r-yə-ġa-ġā-va-r-yə
 his mother-ERG 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-caus.-boil-pres.-and

pśə-m x^w-yə-h-ā-ś
 lord-ERG ver.-3sg.-bring-pret.-af.

"(His) friend had five geese... and he made his mother cook them, and he brought them to the lord"

Cf. also *zan* "burn" (intransitive): *ġa-zan* "burn" (transitive): *ġa-ġa-zan* "make someone burn".

Case assignment with causative verbs is typologically very unusual⁴⁶. The case of the arguments in a causative construction is not determined by that verb, which is always transitive, but by the verb from which the causative verb is derived. If this verb is intransitive and has only one argument, its only argument will be marked for the nominative, while the causer will be marked for the ergative, as in the previous example. If, on the other hand, the original verb is intransitive and has an indirect object, the only macrorole ("subject") of the original verb will be marked for the nominative (*yadžāk^{nv} ar* "student" in the following example):

yagadžāk^{nv} a-m yadžāk^{nv} a-r wəsa-m q'-rə-y-ġa-dž-ā-ś
 teacher-ERG student-NOM poem-ERG dir.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-to read-pret.-af.
 "The teacher encouraged the student to read the poem"

Finally, if the causative verb is derived from a transitive verb, the lowest-ranking macrorole of this (original) verb will be in the nominative, and the other macrorole in the ergative; the causer is again in the ergative:

l'əžə-m ś'āla-m χadžabzə-r yə-r-yə-ġa-h-ā-ś
 old man-ERG boy-ERG girl-NOM 3sg.-3sg.-3.sg.-caus.-to carry-pret.-af.
 "The old man made the boy carry the girl"

l'əžə-m ś'āla-m pχa-r yə-r-yə-ġa-q^{nv} ət-ā-ś
 old man-ERG boy-ERG tree-NOM 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-to cut-pret.-af.
 "The old man made the boy cut the tree"

Of course, all of the nominal arguments can be left unexpressed, and proper nouns and indefinite NPs do not receive case marking:

⁴⁶ Information on this is given according to Kumaxov (ed.) 2006: 436 and according to the examples obtained from my informants.

Q'arašəway *yə* *has'a-m-ra* *yə šə-m-ra* *yə-ğa-šx-ā-s'*
 Q. 3sg.poss. guest-ERG-and 3sg.poss. horse-ERG-and 3sg.-caus.-eat-pret.-af.
 "Karašavey fed his guest and his horse"

(in this sentence the name *Q'arašəway* would be in the ergative as the causer, the undergoer of the underived verb, i. e. the food, which is unexpressed, would be in the nominative, and the only case-marked nouns (*has'a* and *šə*) are in the ergative as the indirect objects viz. non-macrorole core arguments).

These unusual rules on case assignment with causative verbs are related to the rules on case assignment in subordinate clauses (see below), where the case of the nouns in the main clause depends on the role of these nouns in the subordinate clause.

Since it is transitive, the causative verb receives a personal prefix for the causer which takes the position of the prefix for the subject of a transitive verb (immediately before the causative prefix), and the noun denoting the causer is in the ergative; the order of the arguments in a sentence is the following: *causer, agent, object, indirect object (recipient, patient)*. The causative verb can thus take up to four personal markers⁴⁷ (for the causer, the subject, the object and the indirect object):

l'ə-m fəzə-m txəl-xa-r psāša-m yə-rə-rəy-ğā-t-xa
 man woman books girl 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-to give-3pl.
 "the man makes the woman give the books to the girl"

sa wa ābə-xa-m sə-ra-w-z-ğa-t-ā-s'
 I you he-pl.-ERG 1sg.-3pl.-2sg-1sg.-caus.-to give-pret.-af.
 "I made you give me to them"

The order of personal prefixes is basically the same as with normal transitive verbs (see above), except for the fact that there is an extra position, the one for the causer immediately before the causative prefix⁴⁸.

According to Šagirov (1977: 124) and Kumaxov (1989: 218), the causative prefix *ğa-* (also Adyghe *ğə-*) is cognate with the Ubykh causative prefix *ğə-*, (for plural objects only) and with the Abkhaz causative prefix *r-* (the sound correspondence is regular). This would mean that the causative formation is inherited from Proto-NWC.

⁴⁷ My informants warn me that examples like these are slightly unnatural, fabricated.

⁴⁸ Dixon (2000: 49) includes Kabardian in his typology of causatives, claiming that it belongs to a small group of languages in which the causee in a causative derived from a transitive verb retains its A-marking (marking of agents of transitive verbs). As a similar case he adduces an isolate, Trumai (Brasil), in which both the causer and the causee take the ergative marking in a causative construction. However, what is special about Kabardian is that, in causatives built from intransitives, the same thing happens: the original "subject" retains its subject properties, getting the nominative case and not being indexed on the verb. There are other languages in which subjects retain some subject properties in causatives, e.g. Japanese (reflexive binding) and Qiang (case marking).

INVOLUNTATIVE

A verb in the category of involuntative indicates an action which is done unintentionally. The Russian term is *kategorija neproizvol'nosti*, cf. Klimov 1986: 45.

In the involuntative verbs take the prefix *ʔas'a-*:

ha-m bāža-r yə-thal-ā-s "the dog slaughtered the fox"
dog-ERG fox-NOM 3sg.-to slaughter-pret.-af.

ham bāžar ʔas'athaləhās "the dog slaughtered the fox (unintentionally)"

ha-r bāža-m ʔas'athaləhās "the fox (unintentionally) slaughtered the dog"

ś'āla-m dəg^wə-r yə-wəč'-ā-s
boy-ERG thief-NOM 3sg.-kill-pret.-af.
"The young man killed the thief"

ś'āla-m dəg^wə-r ʔas'a-wəč'ās
"The young man (unintentionally) killed the thief"

s-ʔas'a-k^wa-d-ā-s "this accidentally disappeared on me"
1sg.-invol.-go-neg.-pret.-af.
(Rus. *to u menja nevol'no propalo*)

wa wə-s-ʔas'a-wəč'-ā-s "I accidentally killed you"
2sg. 2sg.-1sg.-invol.-kill-pret.-af.

As can be seen from the previous example (the order of personal prefixes is patient-agent), a transitive verb does not become intransitive in the involuntative, i. e. the action of the verb still "affects" its object⁴⁹.

In Kabardian grammars I find no examples of the involuntative construction with causative verbs. Although causativity seems to presuppose that the first argument of the verb is a conscious instigator of the action (the agent), my informants say that the following sentence is possible:

ś'āla-m l'əž-əmə dəg^wə-r 'as'-yə-ğə-wəč'-ā-s
boy-ERG old.man-ERG thief-NOM invol.-3sg.-caus.-kill-pret.-af.
"The boy caused that the old man accidentally killed the thief"

I found the following example in the biography of *Žabagy Kazanoko* (Nal'čik 1984):

bzāχ^wyə-pl'ə-r zadyəl-ryə čəc' c'ək^wə-r
bee-keeper-4 together.rise-and he.goat small-NOM

⁴⁹ Pace Abitov (ed.) 1957: 93, Hewitt 2004: 183. Moreover, the case marking on the arguments remains as in the non-involuntative construction. Prefixes with the similar function to the Kabardian involuntative exist in Abkhaz, but also in Georgian (Hewitt 2004: 183).

dəḡ^wəžə-m q'ə-?aś'ā-ḡa-x^w-ā-ś
 wolf-ERG dir.-invol.3pl.-caus.-drop(?)-pret.-af.

"Four bee-keepers rose together and made the wolf (unintentionally) drop the little goat"

Note that the prefix *-?aśa-* modifies the action of the original actor (the wolf), which is the derived causee, rather than the action of the derived actor (the four bee-keepers).

It appears that the involuntative cannot be used with stative verbs, such as *taysən* "sit":

ś'āla-r śantə-m tay-s-ś "the boy sits on the chair"
 boy-NOM chair-ERG dir.-sit-af.

but:

**śālam śantəm ?aś'ataysś* "the boy accidentally sits on the chair"; rather, one must use the following construction with the negated verb *x^wayn* "want":

ś'āla-r śantə-m x^wa-ma-y-wa tay-s-ś
 boy-NOM chair-ERG want-neg.-ger. dir.-sit-af.

The origin of the involuntative prefix is an incorporated syntagm which includes the noun *?a* "hand" and the participle *ś'a* "doing" (to do something unintentionally is "to do something using the hand, and not the mind"). A similar, but etymologically unrelated, "involuntative" prefix exists in Abkhaz (*-amχa-*).

FACTITIVE

Adding the prefix *wə-* to a nominal stem forms verbs the meaning of which is "to make something become or have the quality of what the nominal stem expresses", e.g. *wəfayən* "to pollute, to make dirty" from *fay* "dirty", or *wəq'abzən* "to clean", from *q'ābzə* "clean":

sābyəy-m dźāna-r yə-wə-fay-ā-ś
 kid-ERG shirt-NOM 3sg.-fact.-dirty-pret.-af.
 "The kid made the shirt dirty"

The factitive prefix immediately precedes the verbal root. It can be freely combined with the causative prefix, which it follows, cf. e.g. *śābə* "soft", *wəśabən* "to make soft, soften", *yəḡawəśabən* "make someone soften (something)".

ACTIVE (DYNAMIC) AND STATIVE VERBS

The division into dynamic and stative verbs does not coincide with the division into transitive and intransitive verbs. Both transitive and intransitive verbs can be either dynamic or static. Dynamic intransitive verbs express action, activity; they are morphologically marked by the prefix *-aw-* in the present tense. Intransitive dynamic verbs have the prefix *ma-(mā-)* in the 3rd person singular present. Here are some examples of dynamic verbs:

s-aw-šxada-r "I mock", *wə-z-aw-h* "I carry you", *d-aw-p'ās'a-r* "we hurry", *f-aw-lāža-r* "you work", *mā-k''a-r* "he goes"

Stative verbs express a state, or the result of an action. They are often derived from nouns. They do not have the facultative suffix *-r* in the present, but the affirmative suffix *-ś* is compulsory; in the present they do not have the prefix *-aw-* like dynamic verbs:

sa sə-śət-ś "I am lying"
I 1sg.-lie-af.

ār śət-ś "he is standing"
he stand-af.

šəsə-ś "(he) is sitting (on a horse)", "he is riding", cf. *šə-* "horse", *śəsən* "to sit"

All stative verbs are intransitive, except for the verb *?əgən* "to hold".

It seems that every noun can be used as a stative verb, i.e. it can be turned into an intransitive verb by adding the suffix *-ś* (for affirmative forms):

sa sə-prawfayssawr-ś "I am a professor"
I 1sg.-professor-af.

Moreover, even adpositions can be turned into (stative) verbs by adding the affirmative suffix *-ś*:

zāwa nawəž-ś
war after-af.
"It was (the time) after the war"

APPLICATIVES

Kabardian has two sets of applicative prefixes. Applicatives are usually defined as constructions in which the number of object arguments selected by the predicate is increased by one with respect to the basic construction. The object of the original construction is usually demoted to the status of the oblique argument, and the applied argument takes at least some of the properties of the object, cf. the English opposition between *Jane baked a cake* and *Jane baked John a cake*, where *John* is put in the first

post-verbal position otherwise reserved for direct objects⁵⁰. However, in contradistinction to the applicative construction in most other languages, both Kabardian applicatives do not affect the choice of the object/undergoer.

According to Peterson (2007) the benefactive and the comitative functions of the applicative construction are the most common ones cross-linguistically. We have both of them in Kabardian.

I. VERSION (BENEFACTIVE/MALEFACTIVE)

The prefix $x^w a-/-x^w-$ indicates version, i.e. for whose benefit the action is performed; it could also be called a benefactive⁵¹:

$p-x^w a-s-tx-\bar{a}-\acute{s}$ "I wrote for you"
2sg.-ver.-1sg.-to write-pret.-af.

The prefix $-x^w-$ is placed immediately after the prefix for the person for whose benefit the action is performed:

$s\partial-p-x^w a-k^{nw}-\bar{a}-\acute{s}$ "I went for you (on your behalf)"
1sg.-2sg.-ver.-to go-pret.-af.

$wy\partial-\bar{a}na-r$ $g^w \acute{a}f'a-n-\acute{s}$, $py\acute{s}maw q'\partial-x^w a-p-tx-ma$
your-mother-NOM be glad-fut.-af. letter dir.-vers.-2sg.-to write-cond.
"Your mother will be glad if you write her a letter."

There is also the malefactive (adversative) prefix $f'\partial-$, which seems to be parallel to the version prefix $-x^w-$, but it indicates to whose cost (or against whose will) the action is performed⁵²:

$w-\bar{a}-f'\partial-da-k^{nw}-\bar{a}-\acute{s}$ "you went with them against their will"
2sg.-3pl.-advers.-conj.-go-pret.-af.

$w\partial-s-f'\partial-da-k^{nw}-\bar{a}-\acute{s}$ "you went with them against my will"
2sg.-1sg.-advers.-conj.-go-pret.-af.

The category of version in Kabardian should not be confused with the typologically similar applicative construction, which involves the adding of an argument to the core of the clause and increasing the transitivity of a verb. In Kabardian, adding the version prefix $-x^w-$ and the adversative prefix $-f'\partial-$ does not affect the transitivity of a verb.

The applicative can be freely combined with the causative:

⁵⁰ Note that English does not have any applicative morphology, and that the applied argument does not take all of the object properties, e.g. it cannot be passivized.

⁵¹ Applicatives (version prefixes) exist in the other NW Caucasian languages. Hewitt (2004: 134f.) calls the prefixes expressing version in NW Caucasian "relational particles" (cp. Abkhaz $-z(\partial)-$ which corresponds to Kab. $-x^w \partial-$) to distinguish them from version prefixes in Kartvelian, where a somewhat more complex system exists.

⁵² Kumaxov 1971: 276. Cf. the similar "adversative" prefix $ca-$ in Abkhaz.

tha-m ā c'ək^w ə-r q'ə-p-x^w -yə-ġa-χ^w ə
 god-ERG this little-NOM dir.-2sg.-ver.-3sg.-caus.-grow/become
 "May God raise this little one for you!"

II. CONJUNCTIVITY (COMITATIVE)

The prefix expressing conjunctivity (Rus. *sojuznost'*) *-da-/-də-* indicates that the subject is performing the action together with somebody else⁵³:

sə-da-k^w -ā-ś "I went with him" : *sə-k^w āś* "I went"
 1sg.-conj.-go-pret.-af.

da-s-h-ā-ś "I carried (it) with him" : *shās* "I carried (it)"
 conj.-1sg.-carry-pret.-af.

χədžabz-ər y-āna-m *d-aw-lāža*
 girl-NOM 3sg.poss.-mother-ERG conj.-pres.-work
 "The girl works with her mother"

l'əž-əm *has'a-xa-m* *šx^w ə* *yā-d-ya-f-ā-ś*
 old.man-ERG guest-pl.-ERG sour.milk 3pl.-conj.-3sg.-drink-pret.-af.
 "The old man drank sour milk with the guests"

Note that *has'axa* "guests" is in the Ergative in the preceding example, which shows that the applied argument has the status of the oblique, rather than direct object/undergoer. Compare also the Ergative case of the applied NP in the following example:

māx^w a g^w ar-əm *ā-r* *yə* *nəbžag^w ə cək^w ə* *g^w ar-əm*
 day some-ERG he-NOM 3sg.poss. friend small some-ERG

č'an da-džag^w ə-rt-yə
 č'an conj.-play-impf.-and

"And one day he played *č'an* (a game with sheep bones) with his little friend"

The conjunctivity prefix follows the person marker it refers to, and it also follows the person marker expressing the argument marked with the Nominative ("the lowest ranking macrorole"); stating this rule in terms of the traditional "Subject" would be confusing, since we would have to say that *-da-/-də-* precedes the subject of transitive verbs, and follows the subject of intransitives:

b-də-z-aw-šx "I am eating this with you" (transitive verb)
 2sg.-conj.-1sg.-pres.-eat

⁵³ A genetically cognate comitative/conjunctivity prefix exists in the other NW Caucasian languages, cf. Ubykh *də-*, Abkhaz and Abaza *c(ə)-*. Abkhaz has another applicative markers, *la-*, which has instrumental function (Hewitt 2004: 134).

sə-b-d-aw-lāža "I am working with you" (intransitive verb)
 1sg.-2sg.-conj.-pres.-work

With transitive verbs, adding a conjunctive prefix can refer not only to the conjunction of actors, but also of undergoers (Kumaxov et alii 2006: 250):

q^wyay-m ś'āq^wa da-šx
 cheese-ERG meat conj.-eat
 "Eat meat with cheese"

Hasan syə nārtəx^w qapə-r yazəm yay-xa-m d-yə-haž-ā-ś
 H. poss.1sg. corn bag-NOM himself his-pl.-ERG conj.-3sg.-grind-pret.-af.
 "Hasan ground my bag of corn together with his own"

Note that the added (applied) argument in the examples above is in the Ergative (in its oblique function). This shows that the added argument is not the object/undergoer, but oblique. According to my informants, the applied argument has to be in the Ergative even if it is indefinite:

ś'āla χədžabz l'əž-əm d-yə-lağ^w-ā-ś
 boy girl old.man-ERG conj.-3sg.-see-pret.-af.
 "A boy saw a girl with an old man"

Just as with the category of version (see above), the category of conjunctivity involves the adding of another person marker to the verb, so from a typological point of view this looks like the comitative applicatives found, e.g., in Haka-Lai, a Tibeto-Burman language (Peterson 200). However, the difference lies in the fact that the adding of the conjunctivity prefix does not affect the transitivity of a verb, as is clear from case marking and the shape of the person markers. A related conjunctivity (comitative) prefix exists in Abkhaz (-c(ə)-).

The conjunctivity/comitative applicative construction should be distinguished from the incorporation of the adverbial prefix *-zəda-* "together". In Russian, this is sometimes referred to as the category of "togetherness" (*sovmestnost'*). The adding of this stem to the verbal matrix does not involve adding any personal prefixes:

wara sara də-zad-aw-lāža
 I you 2pl.-together-pres.-work
 "You and I work together"

Zag^warəm Xəməs dayž nārt šwə g^wəp q'ə-dəh-ā-ś,
 Once H. to Nart rider group dir.-come-pret.-af.

zayk^ma zəd-ā-šan-wə
 raid together-3pl.-lead-ger.

"Once, a group of Nart riders came to Himish, to take him on a raid (together with them)"

RECIPROCALITY

The reciprocal prefix is *za-* (for intransitive verbs), and *zarə-* (for transitive verbs):

za-g^wəra^wa-n "to arrange between each other"

zarə-lāg^wə-n "to see each other"

də-zarə-g^wat-ā-ś "we met each other"
1pl.-rec.-to meet-pret.-af.

Fara dara k^wad mās'awə də-zarə-lāg^wə-n-ś
you we long not.doing 1pl.-rec.-see-fut.-af.
"We will see each other shortly"

REFLEXIVITY

Kabardian does not have reflexive pronouns; reflexivity is expressed by the verbal prefix *za-/zə-/z-*, which indicates that the subject of the action is the same as the object; from the historical point of view, this is the same prefix as the basic reciprocal prefix. Reciprocity and reflexivity are in many languages semantically and morphologically related, cf. the Croatian verbs *tući se* (= to hit oneself or to hit each other), *gledati se* (= to look at oneself or to look at each other).

The reflexive prefix follows the prefix for the subject of an intransitive verb (the lowest ranking macrorole, see above) and precedes the prefix for the subject of a transitive verb (the other macrorole):

sə-z-aw-wəps'ə-ž "I ask myself" (intransitive verb)
1sg.-refl.-pres.-ask-back

wə-z-aw-wəps'ə-ž "you ask yourself"
2sg.-refl.-pres.-ask-back

zə-z-aw-thas' "I wash myself" (transitive verb)
refl.-1sg.-pres.-wash

zə-b-aw-x^wāpa "you dress yourself" (transitive verb)
refl.-2sg.-pres.-dress

It is typologically somewhat unusual that, in the case of transitive verbs, the reflexive affix precedes the personal affix for the constituent which has to be coreferent with it.

The reflexive prefix can occur with the infinitive as well:

psə-m zə-q'ə-x^wə-xa-dza-n "to throw oneself into the water for him"
water-ERG refl.-dir.-ver.-dir.-throw-inf.

The reflexive prefix is often combined with the suffix *-ž(a)-*, meaning "back". The details of the reflexive construction are not clear from works on Kabardian, and the following examples are obtained from my informants:

š'āla c'ək^wə-m z-yə-l'ə-ž-ā-s "the little boy killed himself" (transitive verb)
boy little-ERG refl.-3sg.-kill-back-pret.-af.

š'āla c'ək^wə-r za-wa-ž-ā-s "the little boy hit himself" (intransitive verb)
boy little-NOM refl.-hit-back-pret.-af.

As can be seen from the examples, the reflexive construction of the verb does not change the valency of the verb (this can be seen by looking at the order of personal prefixes and the case assignment in the sentences above). Aside from this, it can be seen that, in a reflexive construction, the subject of an intransitive verb (to hit, *wan*) is treated in the same way as the subject of a transitive verb (to kill, *l'ən*), i.e. that Kabardian syntax is nominative-accusative according to this criterion.

The suffix *-ž(a)-* "again, back", which we could refer to as "repetitive", can also appear without the reflexive prefix; it can often be translated as "again":

Adəya lapq'ə-ž-ryə lapq' wārda χ^wə-žə-nwə-s
Adyghean people-old-and people strong become-back-fut.-af.
"And the old Adyghean people will become strong again".

DEONTIC MODALITY

The potential prefix *-x^wa-/x^wə-* (according to Kumaxov 1989: 242), and/or the suffix *-f(ə)-* (according to other sources), express deontic modality, i.e. whether the subject is capable of doing the action expressed by the verb or not:

wə-s-x^wə-hə-nwə-s "I will be able to carry you"
2sg.-1sg.-pot.-carry-fut.-af.

The prefix *-x^wə-* is placed immediately after the personal prefix for the agent, the potential doer of the action. It seems to be added only to transitive verbs, and in origin it is probably identical to the "version" marker (benefactive) *-x^wə-* (Hewitt 2004: 135; see above). The suffix *-f-* is added both to transitive and intransitive verbs. It is not entirely clear whether these are variants of the same morpheme (*-f-/x^w-*) which can be both a suffix and a prefix, or whether they are two different morphemes. Klimov (1986: 45) claims that this is only one morpheme which can be either a suffix or a prefix, and he cites it as *-x^wa-* in Kabardian, *-fa-* in Adyghean, which is in keeping with the rule according to which the Common Adyghean **x^w* results in *f* in Adyghean. However, the suffix *-f-* is found in Kabardian texts as well, cf. *ādəyabzač'a sawpsalaf* "I speak Kabardian" (i. e. "I can speak Kabardian"); the potential prefix occurs more often with negative and interrogative forms, while the suffix is tied to affirmative

forms of the verb. In any case, the potential should be distinguished from the so-called "hypothetical mood", which can be included in the category of evidentiality (see below). Potential differs from the proper verbal moods in that it is negated by the suffix *-q'əm*, rather than with the prefix *-mə-*, i.e. it is a finite verbal form:

Syə Džāta K^wabža-m q'əf'ač'ə-fə-n-q'əm
 1sg.poss. sword gate-ERG pass-pot.-fut.-neg.
 "He will not be able to pass my 'Sword-Gate'"

An interesting feature of the potential prefix is that it reduces the valency of the verb, i.e. it turns transitive verbs into intransitive. This is in keeping with the relation between transitivity and the "affectedness of the object", i.e. the patient: in the potential, the patient is not affected by the action, so the verb has to be intransitive, cf. the following two examples (Kumaxov, ed. 2006: 257)⁵⁴:

w-ya-s-tə-r-q'əm
 2sg.-3sg.-1sg.-to give-pres.-neg.
 "I don't give you to him" (the verb is transitive, so the prefix for the doer of the action, 1sg., is placed next to the verbal root)

wə-s-x^wə-ya-tə-r-q'əm
 2sg.-1sg.-pot.-3sg.-to give-pres.-neg.
 "I cannot give you to him" (the verb is intransitive, so the order of the prefixes for 1sg. and 3sg. is reversed)

However, the arguments of the verb in the potential form receive the same case endings as in the corresponding indicative⁵⁵:

səmadžə-m mə?arəsa-r ya-šx (note the 3sg. "transitive subject" prefix *ya-*)
 sick.man-ERG apple-NOM 3sg.-eat
 "The sick man is eating the apple"

səmadžə-m mə?arəsa-r x^w-aw-šx (note the lack of the 3sg. prefix)
 sick.man-ERG apple-NOM pot.-pres.-eat
 "The sick man can eat the apple"

This can be accounted for if the potential construction is actually of the "inverse-type" (see above), i.e. if the preceding example should be rendered as "it is possible to the sick man to eat the apple".

⁵⁴ This correlation between (at least some) potentials and intransitives seems to be an areal feature in the Caucasus. Cp. Hewitt 2004: 181ff. for similar examples from Mingrelian, Ingush, Khinalug, and Abkhaz.

⁵⁵ Abitov (ed.) 1957: 93.

PERSONAL AND DIRECTIONAL PREFIXES

The use of directional prefixes is compulsory with many verbs for certain persons and tenses; the use of these prefixes is quite idiomatic, and it seems that each verb has its own pattern⁵⁶, cf. the intransitive verb *žan* "to wait":

<i>sə-n-aw-w-ža</i> "I wait for you" 1sg.-dir.-pres.-2sg.-to wait	<i>sə-n-aw-ž-ā-ś</i> "I waited for you" 1sg-dir-2sg.-to wait-pret.-af.
<i>sə-v-aw-ža</i> "I wait for you (pl.)" 1sg.-2pl.-pres.-to wait	<i>sə-va-ž-ā-ś</i> "I waited for you (pl.)"
<i>s-aw-ža</i> "I wait for him/I wait for them"	<i>s-ya-ž-ā-ś</i> "I waited for him/for them"
<i>wə-q'ə-s-aw-ža</i> "you wait for me" 2sg.-dir.-1sg.-pres.-to wait	<i>wə-q'ə-za-ž-ā-ś</i> "you waited for me"
<i>wə-q'ə-d-aw-ža</i> "you wait for us" <i>w-aw-ža</i> "you wait for him/for them" <i>q'ə-z-aw-ža</i> "he waits for me"	<i>wə-q'ə-da-ž-ā-ś</i> "you waited for us" <i>wə-ya-ž-ā-ś</i> "you waited for him/them" <i>q'ə-za-ž-ā-ś</i> "he waited for me"
<i>də-n-aw-w-ža</i> "we wait for you" 1pl.-dir.-pres.-2sg.-to wait	<i>də-n-aw-ž-ā-ś</i> "we waited for you"
<i>d-aw-ža</i> "we wait for him/them" <i>q'ə-z-aw-ža</i> "they wait for me" etc.	<i>d-ya-ž-ā-ś</i> "we waited for him/them" <i>q'ə-za-ž-ā-ś</i> "they waited for me"

Some believe that the use of the directional prefix *q'ə-* with polyvalent intransitive verbs depends on the person hierarchy (see below).

TENSES

Kabardian has a complex system of verbal tenses. It distinguishes the basic dimensions of the present, future and past, and, within the past, two degrees of remoteness: the preterite and the imperfect denote an action which happened in the more recent past, while the pluperfect denotes an event in the distant past.

The category of tense is mostly expressed by suffixation (though there are also verbal prefixes in the present tense):

present: prefixes *ma-* (*mā-*), *-aw-* and the facultative suffix *-r* for dynamic verbs, without markers for stative verbs

preterite: suffix *-ā*

imperfect: suffix *-(r)t* for dynamic verbs and *-m* for stative verbs⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Kumaxov 1971: 267.

⁵⁷ The terminology for Kabardian verbal tenses differs greatly depending on the author; Kumaxov and Vamling (1996: 39 ff.) refer to the anterior preterite as the "perfect II", and to the preterite as the

anterior preterite: suffix *-ā-t*
pluperfect: suffix *-ġā*
anterior pluperfect: suffix *-ġāt*
categorical future: suffix *-n*
factual future: suffix *-nwə*
future II: suffix *-nwət*

In all verbal tenses there are special negative forms, expressed by the suffix *-q'əm*; in the present of dynamic verbs the prefixes *ma-*, *aw-* disappear in the negative form, and the suffix *-r* becomes compulsory, cp. the following examples:

1. Intransitive monovalent dynamic verb *k^{mw}an*:

<i>s-aw-k^{mw}a(r)</i>	: <i>ma-k^{mw}a(r)</i>	: <i>sə-k^{mw}a-r-k'əm</i>	: <i>k^{mw}a-r-q'əm</i>
1sg.-pres.-go	3sg.pres.-go	1sg.-go-pres.-neg.	go-pres.-neg.
"I go"	"He goes"	"I don't go"	"He doesn't go"

2. Intransitive stative verb *śātən* "stand"

<i>sə-śāt-ś</i>	: <i>śāt-ś</i>	: <i>sə-śāt-q'əm</i>	: <i>śāt-q'əm</i>
"I stand"	"He stands"	"I don't stand"	"He doesn't stand"

3. Intransitive bivalent (dynamic) verb *žan* "wait"

<i>s-aw-ža(r)</i>	<i>y-aw-ža(r)</i>	<i>sə-ža-r-q'əm</i>	<i>yə-ža-r-q'əm</i>
"I wait (for him)"	"He waits (for him)"	"I don't wait (for him)"	"He doesn't wait"

4. Transitive (bivalent dynamic) verb *dən* "sew"

<i>s-aw-də(r)</i>	<i>ya-də-r</i>	<i>sə-də-r-q'əm</i>	<i>ya-də-r-q'əm</i>
"I sew it"	"He sews it"	"I don't sew it"	"He doesn't sew it"

The meaning of anterior verbal tenses is not entirely clear. These are the anterior pluperfect and preterite, and, because of the way it is formed, the future II as well. According to reference books, anterior tenses indicate an action which lasted for some time in the past, and forms in anterior tenses are glossed by adding the adverb "then" (Rus. *togdá*), e. g. *k^{mw}ās* "he went" in contrast to *k^{mw}āt* "he went then". Based on examples and the interviews with my informants, I find it most likely that the suffix *-t-* used in anterior tenses expresses definiteness, i.e. that a verb in an anterior tense indicates an action which was performed at a definite time in the past. This can be seen in the following sentence:

<i>Nārt-xa-r</i>	<i>mə ś'əp'a-m</i>	<i>yə-s-āt,</i>	<i>Nārt Sawsrəq^{mw}a</i>	<i>yə-džātar</i>
N-pl.-NOM	that land-ERG	3sg.-sit-ant.pret.	N. S.	3sg.poss.-sword

<i>ā</i>	<i>zamān</i>	<i>žəža-m</i>	<i>śəbz-āt</i>
that time	far-ERG	perform.deeds-ant.pret.	

"perfect". The same authors mention also forms with the suffix *-ś*, which they call "aorist", but these forms seem to be quite rare in texts; cp. also Abitov 1957: 120f.

"The Narts lived in that land, (and) Sosruko's sword performed feats then, long time ago".

The use of the anterior preterite in the preceding example is consistent with the use of the adverbial expression *ā zamān žəžam* "at that time, long ago". Similarly, the use of the preterite is incompatible (or nearly so) with temporal adverbs such as *dəḡ^wāsa* "yesterday", which specify the exact time when the action was performed. With such adverbs the anterior preterite must be used:

*dəḡ^wāsa q'āla-m sə-k^w-āt / *sə-k^w-ā-ś* "I went to the city yesterday"
 yesterday city-ERG 1sg.-go-ant. pret. 1sg.-go-pret.-af.

The imperfect is, unlike the preterite, used for an action which lasted for some time or was repeated in the past. In narratives this tense alternates with the preterite, which in most cases indicates a one-off action, or an action which is not implied to have lasted for some time or to have been repeated in the past, e.g:

Sawsraq^wa žag^wə-m da-s-t. Satanay wəna-m q'ə-ś'əh-ā-ś
 S. fireplace-ERG dir.-sit-impf. S. house-ERG dir.-enter-pret.-af.
 "Sosruko was sitting (impf.) by the fireplace. Satanaya entered (pret.) the house"

Interestingly, the imperfect is compatible with temporal adverbs specifying the time when the action was performed:

dəḡ^wāsa q'āla-m sə-k^wa-rt "I was going to the city yesterday"
 yesterday city-ERG 1sg.-go-impf.

The opposition between the imperfect and the preterite can easily be seen in the following paragraph:

**Иуашхьэмахуэ и щхьэгум Мэзытхьэ¹, Амыш²,
 Тхьэгьэлэдж, Созрэщ³, Лъэпщ сымэ Псатхьэ деж
 щызэхуэсахуэ Санэхуафэ ялэт. Атлэ, ильэс къэсыху-
 клэ а тхьэпэлытэхэм Санэхуафэ ящт. Щы-
 льэм хэт нэхь лыгъэ илэу тетми, ари яшэрти
 зы санэхубжьэ ирагъафэрт, щыльэм щызеклуэ
 цыху цыклухэм я хьэтырклэ. Тхьэхэм ядефа цыхур
 нартхэ ягъэлаплэрт. Апхуэдэурэ ильэс лэджи еклуэ-
 клаш.**

**Тхьэпэлытэхэм я Сэнэхуафэм тхьэмадэу щысыр
 езы Псатхьэти къэтэджри жиаш:**

"On the top of Uašhamaxwa (Mt. Elbrus) Mazatha, Amish, Thagoledž, Sozrash, Hlapsh and others were sitting together with Psatha and marking (*yā?at*, impf.) the drinking of sana (drink of the gods). And so every year these gods organized (*yās't*, impf.) the drinking of sana. And the one who was (*taytmyə*, impf.) manliest on earth,

he was brought over (*yāšartyə*, impf.) and was given to drink (*yərāgāfart*, impf.) from a horn filled with sana, as a favour to the thirsty little men on earth. The Narts esteemed (*yāgalāp'art*, impf.) highly the man who drank with the gods. And many years passed (*yak^wač'ās*, pret.) in that way. At the celestial drinking of sana, Psatha, who personally sat as *thamada* (commander of the feast) got up and said (*žyə?ās*, pret.)."

In this paragraph we can see how a sequence of events repeated in the past and expressed by the imperfect was interrupted by the event referred to by the commencing story, which is expressed by the preterite.

In vivid narration the present tense can also be used to express a past action:

Bālyəg ma-χ^w swan-am yə məlx^wəq^wa-r. Zə-p'əž-ā-m-yə
adult 3sg.pres.-become S-ERG 3sg.poss. stepson-NOM part.-raise-pret.-ERG-and

yə-?-āt pχ^wə bālyəg-yə, z-aw-g^wāk^wa.
3sg.-have-ant.pret. daughter adult-and refl.-pres.-fall.in.love

"The Swan's stepson grows up; those who had raised him had a grown daughter, and they fall in love" (note that *Swan* here refers to a member of a Kartvelian people, the Swans)

The difference between the categorical and the factual future is not entirely clear to me. Some sources say that the categorical future expresses an intention to perform the action, while the factual future expresses the speaker's certainty that the action will be performed. According to my informant, the natural way to say "I shall go to the city" is *q'ālam sə-k^wa-nwə-ś* (city-ERG 1sg.-go-factual fut.-af.), whereas *q'ālam sə-k^wa-n-ś* (with the categorical future suffix *-n-*) would be used only if the subject will go to the city under a certain condition. However, from the passages such as the following one it would appear that the categorical future does not refer to any particular time when the action will be performed, while this specification is necessary with the factual future. If so, the opposition between the categorical and the factual future would correspond to the opposition between the preterite and the anterior preterite:

Nārtəž-xa-m xābza-wə y-ā-xal-t za-zawa-nwə byəy-m
nart-pl.-ERG custom-ADV 3sg.-3pl.-in.be-impf. rec.-fight-fut. enemy-ERG

p'ala yə-rā-t-wə, χəbār-yə yə-rā-gā-ś'a-wə: "də-va-zawa-nwə
date 3sg.3pl.give-ger. message-and 3sg.-3pl.-caus.know-ger. 1pl.-2pl.-fight-fut.

də-na-k^wa-nwə-ś mə-px^wada zamān-əm" - ž-ā-?ara. āršhač'a
1pl.-dir.-go-fut.-af. this-like time-ERG dir.-3pl.-say but

byəy-m xābza-r yə-q^wəta-ryə: "Nārtəžəpq' t-q^wəta-n-ś,
enemy-ERG custom-NOM 3sg.-break-and Nart.race 1pl.-break-fut.af.

nārt xak^w t-χ^wəns'a-n-ś" ž-ā-?a-ryə nārt xak^wə-m q'-yə-h-ā-ś
Nart land 1pl.-seize-fut.-af. dir.-3pl.-and Nart land-ERG dir.-3sg.-carry-pret.-af.

"The old Narts had the custom to give the enemy the date, to send him the message that they would come to fight: "We will come to fight at that time", they used to say. However, the enemy broke the custom: "We will come to fight the race of the Narts (eventually), we will seize the land of the Narts", they used to say when they came to the land of the Narts."

In the preceding passage, apparently, the Narts used the factual future to give the exact time when they would come to fight, while their enemies just indicated that they would come to fight, without stating exactly when. The opposition clearly seems to be in the definiteness of time reference.

Some authors refer to the future II as conditional. It is formed by adding the suffix *-t* to the factual future form. It seems that forms with the *-nt* suffix, which are sometimes set apart as a distinct verbal mood (the subjunctive), can also be included in this category, cf. *sə-k^wa-nt* "I would go" (see below).

Here are the selected paradigms of the verbal tenses:

PRESENT

(dynamic verb *k^wan* "to go")

s-aw-k^wa(r) "I go" *sə-k^wa-r-q'əm* "I don't go"

w-aw-k^wa(r) "you go"

mā-k^wa(r) "he goes"

d-a-k^wa(r) "we go"

f-a-k^wa(r) "you go"

mā-k^wa-xa-r "they go"

(dynamic intransitive verb *psalan* "to converse")

sawpsāla "I converse"

wawpsāla "you converse"

māpsāla "he converses"

dawpsāla "we converse"

fawpsāla "you converse"

māpsāla (mapsālar) "they converse"

transitive verb *hən* "to carry":

s-aw-h "I carry him"/"I carry them"

w-z-aw-h "I carry you"

fə-z-aw-h "I carry you (pl.)"

w-aw-h "you carry him" /"you carry them"

sə-b-aw-h "you carry me"

də-b-aw-h "you carry us"

ya-h "he carries him" / "he carries them"

s-ya-h "he carries me"

d-ya-h "he carries us"

w-ya-h "he carries you"

f-ya-h "he carries you (pl.)"

fə-d-aw-h "we carry you (pl.)"
f-aw-h "you carry him" / "you carry them"
sə-v-aw-h "you (pl.) carry me"
də-v-aw-h "you (pl.) carry us"
y-ā-h "they carry him" / "they carry them"
s-ā-h "they carry me"
d-ā-h "they carry us"
w-ā-h "they carry you"
f-ā-h "they carry you (pl.)"

PRETERITE

sə-k^ʷā-ś "I went"
wə- k^ʷā-ś "you went"
k^ʷā-ś "he went"

sa txələm syadzās "I read a book"
wa txələm wyadzās "you read a book"
ār txələm yadzās "he read a book"
da txələm dyadzās "we read a book"
fa txələm fyadzās "you read a book"
āxar txələm yadzās "they read a book"

shās "I carried him" / "I carried them"
wəshās "I carried you"
fəshās "I carried you (pl.)"
phās "you carried him" / "you carried them"
səphās "you carried me"
dəphās "you carried us"
yəhās "he carried him" / "he carried them"
səyəhās "he carried me"
dəyəhās "he carried us"
wəyəhās "he carried you"
fəyəhās "he carried you (pl.)"
thās "we carried him" / "we carried them"
wəthās "we carried you"
fəthās "we carried you (pl.)"
fhās "you (pl.) carried him" / you carried them"
səfhās "you (pl.) carried me"
dəfhās "you (pl.) carried us"
yāhās "they carried him" / "they carried them"
sāhās "they carried me"
dāhās "they carried us"
wāhās "they carried you"
fāhās "they carried you (pl.)"

IMPERFECT

sə- k^ʷa -(r)t "I was going"
wə-k^ʷa(r)t "you were going"
ya-k^ʷa(r)t "he was going"

ANTERIOR PRETERITE

sə- k^w-ā́t "(then) I went"

PLUPERFECT

sə-k^wa-ġā́-ś "I went a long time ago"

ANTERIOR PLUPERFECT

sə-k^wa-ġā́t "(then) I went a long time ago"

CATEGORICAL FUTURE

sə- k^wa-n-ś "I will go"

FACTUAL FUTURE

sə- k^wa-nwə-ś "I will go, I am about to go"
(*ś* is the affirmative suffix)

FUTURE II

sə- k^wa-nwət "I was about to go / I would go"

INTERROGATIVE

The interrogative is sometimes referred to as the question mood. It uses the same type of suffixal formation as verbal moods. Like verbal moods, the interrogative is a non-finite verbal form (it takes the prefixal negation *-mə-*) and it cannot be combined with the affirmative suffix *-ś*. However, considering the function of this category, it is better to think of it as a form of expressing the illocutionary force; the interrogative suffixes bring into question the content of the predicate, ie. the verb. The interrogative suffixes are *-ra*, *-q'a*, *-wyə*:

wə-txa-ra "Are you writing?" (interrogative)
2sg.-write-inter.

sə-f-?^wəś'a-n-q'a "Will I meet you?" (interrogative)⁵⁸
1sg.-2pl.-meet-fut.-inter.

The interrogative has no suffix in the preterite and in the future, but the affirmative suffix *-ś* is not used, and the intonation of the sentence serves as another indicator of interrogativity:

f-ā-ġā-tx-ā "They made you write?"
2pl.-3pl.-caus.-write-pret.

də-f-x^wa-k^wa-nwə "Are we going to go for you?"
1pl.-2pl.-ver.-go-fut.

⁵⁸ In the interrogative formed with the suffix *-q'a* it is assumed that the answer will be affirmative (Kumaxov & Vamling 1998: 53).

The suffix *-ra* can be used twice in disjunctive questions:

zə yəlas-č'a s-yə-ğa-has'a-fə-n-ra sə-y-mə-ğa-has'a-fə-n-ra?
 1 year-INST 1sg-3sg.-caus.-guest-pot.-fut.-*ra* 1sg.-3sg.-neg.-caus.-guest.-pot.-fut.-*ra*
 "Will he be able to receive me as a guest for a year or will he not?"

Interrogativity can also be expressed with interrogative particles, e. g. the particles *p'ara*, *šha* "why", etc. They can be freely combined with the interrogative suffixes:

šha ā wə-zə-tay-s-ā məva-r q'a-bğana-ra?
 why this(NOM) 2sg.-part.-dir.-sit-pret. rock-NOM dir.-leave-inter.
 "Why are you leaving this rock you were sitting on?"

MOODS

Kabardian verbal moods are: *indicative*, *imperative*, *admirative*, *optative*, *conditional* and *permissive*.

A) Indicative

The indicative is the unmarked verbal mood. It has the suffixes *-ś* (for affirmative) and *-q'əm* (for negation).

B) Imperative

The imperative is the bare stem (without any suffixes): *məda q'āk^wa* "come here!"
 here come

la! "paint!" (*lan* "to paint")
ša! "lead!" (*šan* "to lead")
txə! "write!" (*txən* "to write")

The third person singular imperative receives the personal prefix:

yə-wə-ğās'a taylayfawn-ər q'a-zə-g^wəpsəs-ā-m
 3sg.-factitive-life telephone-NOM dir.-part.-invent-pret.-ERG
 "May live the one who invented the telephone!"

The imperative is also used in the 2nd person plural:

fjə Satanyay g^wāśa f-ya-wəps'!
 poss.2pl. S. lady 2pl.-3sg.-ask
 "Ask (pl.) your (pl.) Lady Satanay!"

Instead of the 1st person plural imperative, the causative of the 2nd person singular or plural imperative is used, with the 1st person plural as the causer: *də-v-ğa-tx* (1pl.-2pl.-caus.-write) "let's write". This is typologically completely parallel to the English imperative construction (*let us write*).

The negation in the imperative is the prefix *-mə-*, as if it were a non-finite form:

wə-mə-k^wa "don't go"
2sg.-neg.-go

The imperative can be formed from verbal stems containing preffixes for version or conjunctivity:

ža! "run!" *s-x^wa-ža* "run for me" *s-x^wə-da-ža* "run for me with him!"

C) Admirative

The admirative mood is formed with the suffix the suffix *-yə*. It is used to express the speaker's admiration or the unexpectedness of the performing of the action expressed by the verb; few languages known to me have such a verbal mood, but it does exist, e. g., in Albanian:

sa nawba zə məśa s-lağ^w-ā-s-yə "Why, I saw a bear today!"
I today 1 bear 1sg.-see-pret.-af.-adm.

The admirative suffix *-yə* can also have an interrogative sense and imply that the speaker does not approve of the action expressed by the verb.

D) Optative

The optative is formed with the suffixes *-śara(t)*, *-rat* and *-č'at*, as well as the prefix *-r-ay-* (where *-ay-* is the petrified 3 sg. person marker) expresses a wish for an action to be performed. A morphologically formed optative as a verbal mood is very rare among the languages of Eurasia, but most Caucasian languages have this verbal mood⁵⁹.

ā-r q'a-səžā-śara(t) "Oh if he would come!"
he-ERG dir.-come-optative

wašx k'ayšx-č'at "Oh if it would rain!"
rain fall-optative

yə-ray-ś'ə-f "may he manage to do it"
3sg.-opt.-do-pot.

There is also an optative prefix *yə-*, apparently identical with the 2nd person prefix; however, the optative formed with this prefix does not distinguish between the 2nd and the 3rd person, cf. *wə-k^wa* "may he go", or "may you go" (Kumaxov 1989: 201).

⁵⁹ According to the data in WALS, a morphologically formed optative must be an areal feature of languages spoken in the Caucasus; this doesn't refer only to the indigenous ("Caucasian") languages, but also to languages belonging to other families (Turkic, Iranian) which are spoken there.

Besides that, a wish can also be expressed with the "optative particle" *āps̄yā(y)*, as in the greeting *wəpsaw āps̄yā* "may you be healthy".

E) Conditional

The conditional has the suffixes *-m(a)* and *-am(a)*. It expresses the fact that the action is performed under a certain condition. A Kabardian verb in the conditional can be equivalent to an entire conditional clause in English:

də-f-lāg^w-ā-ma "if you saw us"
1pl.-2pl.-see-pret.-cond.

fəwa w-yadža-ma, wacyanka-f' q'a-p-hə-n-s'
well 2sg.-study-cond. grade-good dir.-2sg.-get-fut.-af.
"If you study well (hard), you will get a good grade"

thwərəmba x^wəž q'-yə-s'-ma sə-q'-aw-k^{mw}a-ž,
foam white dir.-3sg.-appear-cond. 1sg.-dir.-pres.-go-back

thwərəmba x^wəž q'-yə-mə-s'-ma sə-q'a-k^{mw}a-ž-ər-q'əm
foam white dir.-3sg.-neg.-appear-cond. 1sg.-dir.-go-back-pres.-neg.
"If a white foam appears, I am coming back, if a white foam does not appear, I am not coming back"

The suffix *-ama* is apparently added to the imperfect *-t-*; the complex suffix *-tama-* is used in irreal conditional clauses:

ā-bə ləs-ā laq^{mw}a-m māf'a s'a-mə-nā-t-ama,
this-ERG alot-pret. leg-ERG fire dir.-neg.-catch.fire-impf.-cond.

bža-māta-xa-r yə-sə-nwəta-q'əm
bee-hive-pl.-NOM 3sg.-burn-fut.II-neg.
"If the leg allotted to him did not catch fire, the bee-hives would not have burned down" (in spite of its weirdness, the translation is correct; in the story from which this example is taken, "he" is the bee-keeper who was "alotted" one leg of a goat, and this leg caused the fire that burned down the beehives)

As can be seen from the preceding example, the future II is used in the main clause when there is an irreal (counterfactual) conditional in the dependent clause.

F) Permissive

The permissive mood has the suffix *-m(ə)*, *-myə*. It expresses that the action is performed in spite of some fact or circumstance. It is translated into European languages with permissive clauses containing conjunctions such as *although*.

fa-č'a s'alā-sa-myə g^wə-č'a l'ə-s'
skin-INST boy-suf.-perm. heart-INST man-af.
"Although by skin (=judging by the skin) he is a boy, by heart he is a man".

Some authors include the subjunctive in the list of verbal moods⁶⁰. The subjunctive is expressed by the suffix *-nt*; forms with this suffix seem to have a conditional meaning, i. e. they express that the action is performed under a condition, e. g. *sə-k^ma-nt* "I would go", but in some contexts they also appear to express the possibility that the action is performed, as in the following example:

sət yā-s'a-žə-nt *Nārt-xa-m?*
 what 3pl.-do-back-suf. N.-pl.-ERG
 "What could the Narts do?" (asked as a rhetorical question)

This is presumably the same form referred to as the future II in this grammar (see above).

EVIDENTIALITY

The basic evidentiality suffix is *-ğan-*. It is used to express that the action is probably happening (or that it has happened, or that it will happen), but that this was not evidenced by the speaker⁶¹:

ār q'a-k^ma-ž-ā-ğan-s "He probably came back" (but I did not see this)
 he dir.-go-back-pret.-evid.-af.

Instead of the category of evidentiality, Kabardian grammars talk about a special "hypothetical mood", Rus. *predpoložitel'noe naklonenie*. However, it can be shown that this is not a sub-category of mood; evidentiality is a category used to express the source of information on the basis of which the assertion is made. This category exists in many languages, and it is morphologically realized in Turkish, for example. The evidential suffix is actually an agglutination of the pluperfect suffix *-ğa-* and the future suffix *-n*. It often happens that affixes used as tense markers become grammaticalized as evidentiality markers and/or epistemic modality markers (cf. the English *will have been* in evidential expressions such as *It will have been him*, or Croatian future tense marker *bit će* in the evidential phrase *Bit će da je došao* "He must have come, I guess he came").

As a confirmation that the "hypothetical mood" does not belong to the same category as other verbal moods we can use the fact that, unlike the affixes for true verbal moods, the evidentiality affix can be combined with the indicative/affirmative suffix *-s*, cf.

k^m-ā-ğan-s "he probably went" in opposition to *k^m-ā-s* "he went".

The suffix *-č'a* "maybe" can also be used together with the evidential suffix *-ğan*, cf.

⁶⁰ E. g. Kumaxov (ed.) 2006.

⁶¹ It is not quite certain whether the source of information (evidentiality), or rather the uncertainty of the speaker (epistemic modality) is the primary function of this suffix. My informants tend to translate sentences with the suffix *-ğan-* using the Russian expression *skoree vsego* "most probably".

k^w-ā-ġan-č'a ma-χ^wə "maybe he went" (*ma-χ^wə* is the 3rd p. sg. present of the verb "to become").

DEVERBAL NOMINALS

Kabardian has three classes of deverbal nominal: the infinitive (a kind of verbal noun), the participle (a kind of verbal adjective), and the gerund (a verbal adverbial, with many features of participles in other languages).

I. INFINITIVE

The lexical form of verbs is the infinitive, which ends in *-n*. The infinitive is actually a verbal noun which can be inflected for case, e. g. *txan* "to write" has the forms *txanə* (NOM), *txanəm* (ERG), *txanəmč'a* (INST) and *txanwə* (ADV). Also, personal prefixes can be added to the infinitive form, cf. forms of the verb *lažan* "to work":

1sg. <i>sə-lažan</i>	1pl. <i>də-lažan</i>
2sg. <i>wə-lažan</i>	2pl. <i>fə-lažan</i>
3sg. <i>lažan</i>	3pl. <i>lažan</i>

The personal prefixes are sometimes optional, especially in obligatory control constructions, when one argument of the infinitive is obligatorily co-referent with one argument of the matrix verb:

<i>sa š'a-z-dz-ā-š</i>	<i>(sə)-k^wa-n</i>
I dir.-1sg.-begin-pret.-af.	1sg.-go-inf.
"I started to go"	

However, the personal prefixes cannot be omitted when there is no necessary co-reference between the arguments of the infinitive and of the matrix verb:

<i>sa syə-g^wəġ-ā-š</i>	<i>sə-k^wa-n</i>
I 1sg.poss.-think-pret.-af.	1sg.-go-inf.
"I intended to go, I thought about going".	

In the preceding example the personal prefix *sə-* cannot be omitted, because the verb *g^wəġan* does not have obligatory control.

Stative verbs can be formed from nouns and adjectives by adding the infinitive suffix: *lə* "man" : *lə-n* "to be a man"; *fəc'a* "black" : *fəc'a-n* "to be black".

In some constructions (especially in subordinate clauses), the infinitive takes the suffix *-wə* as well (identical to the adverbial suffix), and thus becomes formally identical to the future suffix (*-nwə*)⁶²:

sa ābə žay?-ā-š wənə-m š'a-mə-č'ə-nwə

⁶² This type of infinitive can also be called the supine.

I he-ERG tell-pret.-af. house-ERG dir.-neg.-go-inf.
 "I told him not to go out of the house"

For each infinitive construction (and each verb) it is necessary to learn whether the infinitive takes the suffix *-n* or *-nwə*. The rule is that, if there is no personal prefix on the infinitive, the only possible infinitive form is the one with the suffix *-n*.

Some authors distinguish verbal nouns or "masdar" from the infinitive. The verbal noun has the same ending as the infinitive (*-n*), but, unlike the infinitive, it can have possessive forms⁶³: *txanə-r* "reading", *syə-txanə-r* "my reading". Also, just as any other noun, the verbal noun can be modified by an adjective:

Wa wyə dən č'əhə-r b-wəx-ā-s "you have finished your long sewing"
 you your sewing long-NOM 2sg.-finish-pret.-af.

Due to lack of more detailed research we cannot be entirely certain whether it is legitimate to distinguish between infinitives and verbal nouns.

II. PARTICIPLES

According to grammar text-books participles have the *subject*, *object*, *instrumental* and *adverbial* form. These forms of the participle correspond to nominal cases, but the affixes for different forms/cases are not entirely equal to the ones in the nominal declension⁶⁴.

The subject form takes the prefix *z(ə)-* if it expresses a transitive action; if the action is intransitive, there is no prefix, and the participle is thus the same as the bare stem of the verb:

zə-txər "writing it" - *ya-zə-tār* "giving it to him" - *lāzar* "working" - *txər* "writing" (*-r* is the nominative ending).

The object form takes the prefix *za-*, *zə-* if the participle refers to the indirect object; if not, there is no prefix:

za-plər "who he is looking at", *zə-x^waq^war* "who he is going for", *s-txər* "which I am writing".

What this actually means is that the prefix *za-/zə-* is used when the participle refers to the noun phrase which is marked (or would be marked) by the ergative case, and not by the nominative⁶⁵. Participles referring to the nominative noun phrase do not have the prefix *zə-/za-*:

⁶³ Kumaxov 1989: 279. In Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 324 it is claimed that only the masdar (verbal noun) is inflected for case, while the infinitive has no case forms.

⁶⁴ The morphology and syntax of participles are the weakest point of Kabardian grammars; cf. Kumaxov 1989: 254 ff.

⁶⁵ Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 292.

ā-bə yə-ša-r "the one whom he is leading" : *ā-bə l'əžə-r ya-ša* "he leads the old man"
 he-ERG 3sg.-to lead-NOM he-ERG old man-NOM 3sg.-to lead

sa ā-r zə-x^wa-s-ša-r "the one who I am leading for"
 I he-NOM part.-ver.-1sg.-to lead-NOM

sa ā-r l'əžə-m x^wə-z-aw-ša "I lead him for the old man"
 I he-NOM old man-ERG ver.-1sg.-pres.-to lead

In accordance with our schema of case assignment in Kabardian (see above), we can say that the prefix *zə-/za-* indicates that the participle does not refer to the argument which is the lowest ranking macrorole (ie. that it refers to the argument which is not the lowest one in the Actor-Undergoer hierarchy). Since the lowest ranking macrorole in Kabardian, as an ergative language, is equivalent to the traditional notion of the subject, we can give a somewhat simplified statement saying that the prefix *zə-/za-* indicates that the participle does not refer to the "subject" of the sentence.

Participles can also contain personal markers of conjunctivity and version:

d-ya-ža-r
 conj.-3sg.-wait-NOM
 "who is waiting for him/her together with him/her"

x^wa-k^wa-r
 vers.-go-NOM
 "who is going for him/on his behalf"

Traditional grammars say that the subject participle form is conjugated according to the person of the object, and the object form according to the person of the subject; what this really means is that the personal prefix on the participle with the *zə-/za-* prefix expresses the argument which represents the lowest ranking macrorole in the verb's logical structure, while the personal prefix on the participle without the *zə-/za-* prefix expresses the argument which is not the lowest ranking macrorole (which is not the "subject", in the sense in which we talk about the subject in Kabardian):

sə-zə-txər "that is writing me down, writing me down"; *wə-zə-txər* "that is writing you down"; *s-txər* "which I am writing"; *p-txər* "which you are writing" (< *w-txər).

The so-called "instrumental" participle form is formed with the prefix *zar(ə)-*, *zara-* which contains the prefix *za-*: *zarə-lāžar* "with which you do"; *zar-ya-džar fəwas* "it is well the way he reads/studies" (Kumaxov 1984: 142). The instrumental form of the participle often behaves as a general-purpose complementizer/subordinator (see below). It can sometimes be translated as "when", "how", or "as", cp. the title *Sawsrək'wa yə džāta-r Łaps̄ zar-yə-s'-ā-r* (S. poss.3sg. sword-NOM L. part.-3sg.-do-pret.-NOM) "How/when Lapsh made Sosruko's sword". This form of the participle can also be added to nominal stems in order to make them suitable for complementation:

āwara sābyəy-r q'a-χ^wər-t zarə-ādəya-r yə-mə-s'a-wə

thus child-NOM dir.-grow-impf. part.-Adygh-NOM 3sg.-neg.-know-ger.
 "Thus the child was growing, without knowing that it was an Adygh (Circassian)"

Syntactically, participles behave as qualitative adjectives (they are inflected for case and they are placed after the noun they refer to):

sābyəy-r *zə-ġā-šxa-r* *yə* *āna-s*
 child-NOM part.pref.-caus.-feed-NOM poss.3sg. mother-af.
 "The one who feeds a baby is its mother" (proverb)

Participles are inflected for tense, but they do not have forms for all tenses. The verb *txa-n* "to write" has the forms for the active present participle *txar* "writing, that writes", the preterite participle *txār* and the future participle *txanwər*.

Negation of the participle is expressed by the prefix *mə-*: *mə-txa* "that isn't writing", *sə-z-mə-lāġ^w* "that isn't seeing me". Cf. the opposition between the finite negation (*-q'əm*) and the participial one⁶⁶:

wa wə-mə-k^wa-ma, *sa-ryə sə-k^wa-r-q'əm* "If you don't go, I won't go either"
 you 2sg.-neg.-go-cond. I-and 1sg.-go-pres.-af.-neg.

Participles can be construed with the auxiliary verb *χ^wən* "be, become":

?^w*ax^wə-r sar-č'a* *ś'-ā* *χ^wən-k'əm*
 job-NOM I-INST do-pret.(part.) become-neg.
 "I cannot do this job" (lit. "This job does not become done by me")

III. VERBAL ADVERBS (GERUNDS)

Verbal adverbs (or gerunds) are formed from verbal roots using the same suffixes (*-w(ə)*, *-wa*, *-wra*, *-č'ara*) as in the formation of regular adverbs from nouns and adjectives (see above). The particularity of Kabardian verbal adverbs is that they can be inflected for person, and they also distinguish tenses, mood and transitivity/intransitivity.

The transitive verbal adverb *yadž-awə* "reading", for example, is inflected in the following way:

sg.	pl.
<i>s-yadžawə</i>	<i>d-yadžawə</i>
<i>w-yadžawə</i>	<i>f-yadžawə</i>
<i>yadžawə</i>	<i>yadžaw, yadža-xa-wə</i>

⁶⁶ The difference between these two types of negation is used as the basis for the differentiation of finite and non-finite forms in Kabardian (Kumaxov & Vamling 1995: 6). Non-finite forms can only be used in sentences in which they are dependent on finite forms. The only exception to this thesis are imperatives and interrogative constructions, which do not depend on finite forms and they do have the prefixed negation *mə-* like non-finite forms.

In the preterite the suffix *-ā-* is added, so the forms are *syadžāwə*, *wyadžāwə*, etc.

These finite forms of verbal adverbs are equivalent to entire subordinate clauses, so *syadžāwə* would be translated as "when I was reading", *fyadžāwə* "when you were reading", etc.

Psə-r *št-ā-wa* *məl džāfa-ś*
 river-NOM freeze-pret.-ger. ice smooth-af.
 "Since the river froze, the ice is smooth"

Sa s-ś'-ā-q'am *ār* *q'a-k^ma-wa*
 I 1sg.-know-pret.-neg. he-NOM dir.-to go-ger.
 "I didn't know he had come"

DIRECTIONALS

The prefix *q'a-* can be roughly translated as "this way, hither", and the prefix *n(a)-* as "that way, thither", but their use is quite idiomatic. Their position in the verbal complex is immediately after the first personal prefix, or they come first if the personal prefix is 0- (in the 3 person):

0-q'a-k^ma "He is coming this way"
 3sg.-this way-pres.-go

ār wyə *dayž 0-na- k^m-ā-ś* "he came towards you (that way)"
 he 2sg.-poss. to 3-thither-go-pret.-af.

In some combinations of personal markers these prefixes do not occur, in others they are compulsory⁶⁷:

sə-na-w-ž-ā-ś "I waited for you", but **sə-w(ə)-ž-ā-ś*
 1sg.-thither-2sg.-wait-pret.-af.

sə-və-ž-ā-ś "I waited for you (pl.)", but **sə-n(ə)-və-ž-ā-ś*
 1sg.-2pl.-wait-pret.-af.

q'ə-d-aw-wa "he is hitting us", but **daw-wa*
 hither-1pl.-pres.-hit

Colarusso (1992: 92-94) calls these prefixes "horizon of interest", which doesn't mean much. It seems that they function in the same way as directional affixes, which exist in many languages (cf. German *hin-*, *her-*, *auf-*, etc.), indicating the direction in which the action is performed. Some of them are so frequent (e. g. the prefix *q'a-*) that they must belong to verbal morphology, while others modify only some verbal roots and should therefore be included in the chapter on word formation (see below). There is no clear borderline between these two groups of prefixes.

⁶⁷ Kumaxov 1971: 253. It seems that the use of directionals depends on the "person hierarchy" (see below).

According to Colarusso (1991), there are also preverbs which indicate the manner in which the action is performed, or the state (consistency) of the subject, e. g. *-xa-* "as mass", *-də-* "as liquid":

psə-r *0-q'ə-xa-ž-ā-ś*
 water-NOM 3sg.-hither-as.mass-flow-pret.-af.
 "the water flowed out" (if it was thrown out of the bucket, as mass)

psə-r *0-q'ə-də-ž-ā-ś*
 water-NOM 3sg.-hither-as.liquid-to flow-pret.-af.
 "the water flowed out" (if it leaked out through a hole or a pipe)

Neither texts nor my informants enabled me to ascertain the existence of these preverbs. The nearest equivalents in the standard language are the directional preverbs *da-* and *xa-*, which both denote that the action is performed in some container; it appears, however, that the difference between them lies in the nature of the container: for *da-*, the container must be empty, while *xa-* refers to a container that is represented as some kind of mass, or substance.

The prefix *da-* indicates that the action (or, more frequently, state) of the verb is being performed in a certain area, or (empty) container:

txələ-r *škaf-əm* *da-l-ś* "the book is lying in the vessel"
 book-NOM vessel-ERG *da*-lie-af.

pχa-r *pś'ānt'a-m da-dza-n*
 wood-NOM garden-ERG dir.-throw-inf.
 "to throw wood into the garden"

The prefix *xa-* (*xə-*) denotes the location in some container (conceived as substance), or the orientation of the action towards the interior:

psə-m *xa-dza-n*
 water-ERG dir.-throw-inf.
 "to throw into water"

The prefix *śə-* indicates the place of the action (usually the place from which the action is performed), e. g. *śə-dzən* "to throw off, to throw down from some surface" (cp. *dzən* "throw"), *śə-žən* "to descend from" (cp. *žən* "run"), *śə-lən* "lie on something", *śə-lāg'ən* "to see something somewhere":

Zamān-ər k^wa-rt, *Wazərməs-yə śāk^wa-wə maz-əm* *śə-psawə-rt*
 time-NOM go-impf. W-and hunt-ger. wood-ERG dir.-live-impf.
 "Time was passing, and Wazirmes was living in the wood (and) hunting"

The prefix *śə-* can also have temporal meaning; participles prefixed with *śə-* can be translated as temporal clauses introduced by "when", e.g. *śə-k^w-ā-m* "when he went/had gone".

The prefix *tay-* indicates movement onto, or away from some surface, e. g. *tay-dzən* "throw onto":

txəl-əʀ stawl-əʃm tay-dza-n "to throw the book on the table"
 book-NOM table-ERG dir.-throw-inf.

The prefix *ś'a-* indicates the location under something or inside something, e. g. *ś'a-dzən* "to throw something under something", *ś'a-žən* "to run under something", *ś'a-latən* "to fly away from under something":

wəna-m ś'a-ha-ryə t'əs-ā-ś
 room-ERG dir.-carry-and sit-pret.-af.
 "He came into the room and sat (down)"

The prefix *bla-* denotes an action by, or past a particular reference point, e. g. *bla-žən* "to run past":

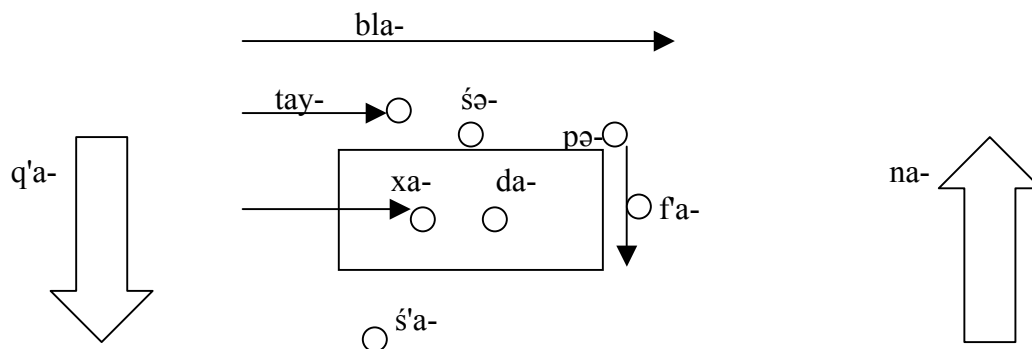
šwə-r k^wabža-m bla-ž-ryə q'a-wəvə?-ā-ś
 horseman-NOM gate-ERG dir.-run-and dir.-stop-pret.-af.
 "The horseman run past the gate and stopped"

The prefix *f'a-* denotes the falling movement from the surface of something, or the "hanging" position of some object, e. g. *f'a-žən* "jump, fall off":

šarχ-əʀ g^walaməž-əʃm f'a-ž-ā-ś
 wheel-NOM axle-ERG dir.-run-pret.-af.
 "The wheel fell off the axle"

The prefix *pə-* denotes action which is taking place at the end, or edge of something, e. g. *pə-sən* "sit at the edge", *pə-žən* "run off from the edge of something", *pədzən* "throw off from the edge", etc.

The functions of various directionals can be illustrated in the following manner:



Besides these basic directional and locative prefixes, there are also many secondary prefixes, mostly derived from nouns, often nouns denoting body parts:

1. *bgada-* "towards, away from" (cf. *bga* "breast"): *latan*: "fly" vs. *bğadalatan* "fly towards"
2. *ʔ^wə-* "near, next to, away from" (cf. *ʔ^wə* "mouth"): *latan* "fly" vs. *ʔ^wəlatən* "fly away from" (note that the verbal root also changes its vocalism in derivation)
3. *bğ^wərə-* "sideways" (cf. *bğ^wə* "hip"): *x^wan* "chase, drive" vs. *bğ^wərəx^wan* "drive sideways"
4. *č'arə-* "on(to) the edge of, on(to) the top of" (cf. *č'a* "tail, end"): *šan* "lead" vs. *č'arəšan* "lead to the top, or slope of"
5. *zaxa-* "in front of" (cf. *za* "mouth"): *x^wan* "drive" : *zaxax^wan* "drive towards, drive near to"

APPENDIX: VERBAL CLASSES AND PARADIGMS

The division into verbal classes A-H in the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages comes from G. Dumézil. In principle, the division is based on two different criteria: valence and transitivity. In the following exposition we adapted the verbal paradigms from Paris 1969.

NOTE. The prefix *-q'a-*, which appears in many of the forms in the following paradigms, is a directional prefix ("hither"); it is compulsory in many cases, but the exact conditions for its usage are not described. Some linguists believe that the use of this prefix depends on the verbal person hierarchy, i. e. on the person of the "subject" (or the lowest ranking macrorole), and the person of the indirect object (the non-macrorole core argument). If we assume that the personal hierarchy is $1 > 2 > 3$, then the use of the prefix *q'ə-* would be correct in those cases where the person which is lower on the hierarchy acts on the person which is higher on the hierarchy (e. g. the 3rd p. "subject" on the 2nd p. "indirect object", or the 2nd p. "subject" on the 1st p. "indirect object"). This assumption is possible (it is consistent with the examples I came across), but it needs to be investigated more thoroughly. Cf. the following two examples⁶⁸:

wa sa wə-q'ə-z-aw-za "You are waiting for me" ("subject" 2sg.<"indirect object" 1sg.)
1sg. 2sg. 2sg.-dir.-1sg.-pres.-wait

syə daɫx^wə-m sa txəɫ s-yə-t-ā-ś
1sg.poss. brother-ERG 1sg. book 1sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-af.

"My brother gave me a book" ("subject" 3 sg. = "indirect object 3sg."); in this example it would not be possible to add the prefix *q'ə-*:

**syə daɫx^wə-m sa txəɫ q'ə-s-yə-t-ā-ś*

CLASS A - intransitive monovalent verbs

Structure of the verbal complex: Subject-V (= the single macrorole - V)

a) *k^ma-n* "to go" (dynamic verb)

I. Present

1. sg. *s-aw-k^ma* "I go"
2. sg. *w-aw-k^ma* "you go"
3. sg. *mā-k^ma* "he/she/it goes"
1. pl. *d-aw-k^ma* "we go"
2. pl. *f-aw-k^ma* "you go"
3. pl. *mā-k^ma-(xa)* "they go"

Cp. *l'ə-r mā-k^ma* "a man goes" (nominative construction)

⁶⁸ I am grateful to Natalia Ivlieva for these examples.

II. Preterite

1. sg. *sək^ʷās* "I went"
2. sg. *wək^ʷās* "you went"
3. sg. *k^ʷās* "he/she/it went"
1. pl. *dək^ʷās* "we went"
2. pl. *fək^ʷās* "you went"
3. pl. *k^ʷās* "they went"

III. Future

1. sg. *sək^ʷanś* "I will go"
2. sg. *wək^ʷanś* "you will go"
3. sg. *k^ʷanś* "he/she/it will go"
1. pl. *dək^ʷanś* "we will go"
2. pl. *fək^ʷanś* "you will go"
3. pl. *k^ʷanś* "they will go"

b) *śasən* "sit" (static verb)

I. Present	II Preterite	III. Future
1. sg. <i>səsəsś</i>	<i>səsəsās</i>	<i>səsəsənś</i>
2. sg. <i>wəsəsś</i>	<i>wəsəsās</i>	<i>wəsəsənś</i>
3. sg. <i>śasś</i>	<i>śasās</i>	<i>śasənś</i>
1. pl. <i>dəsəsś</i>	<i>dəsəsās</i>	<i>dəsəsənś</i>
2. pl. <i>fəsəsś</i>	<i>fəsəsās</i>	<i>fəsəsənś</i>
3. pl. <i>śasś</i>	<i>śasās</i>	<i>śasənś</i>

CLASS B - intransitive bivalent verbs

Structure of the verbal complex: Subject-Object-V (= the single macrorole - non-macrorole core argument - V)

wa-n "to hit"; *zan* "to wait for"

I. Present

- sə-b-aw-wa* "I hit you (sg.)"
sə-f-aw-wa "I hit you (pl.)"
sə-yə-wa (sawwa) "I hit him/her"
sə-yā-wa "I hit them"
wə-q'a-sə-wa "you hit me"
q'a-s-aw-wa "he/she hits me"
q'a-s-aw-wa-xa "they hit me"
y-aw-wa "he/she hits him"

yā-wa "he/she hits them"
y-aw-wa-xa "they hit him"
yā-wa-xa "they hit them"

l'ə-r q'a-s-yə-wa "the man is hitting me"; *šə-m sə-yə-wa* "I am hitting a horse"
 (nominative construction)

II. Preterite

sə-n-aw-ž-ā-š "I waited for you (sg.)"
sə-va-ž-ā-š "I waited for you (pl.)"
s-ya-ž-ā-š "I waited for him"
s-ya-ž-ā-š "I waited for them"
wə-q'ə-za-ž-ā-š "You (sg.) waited for me"
wə-q'ə-da-ž-ā-š "You waited for us"
w-ya-ž-ā-š "You waited for him"
w-ya-ž-ā-š "You waited for them"
wə-q'ə-za-ž-ā-š "You waited for me"
wə-q'ə-da-ž-ā-š "You waited for us"
q'ə-za-ž-ā-š "He waited for me"
q'-wa-ž-ā-š "He waited for you (sg.)"
q'ə-va-ž-ā-š "He waited for you (pl.)"
ya-ž-ā-š "He waited for him"
ya-ž-ā-š "He waited for them"
də-n-wa-ž-ā-š "We waited for you (sg.)"
də-va-ž-ā-š "We waited for you (pl.)"
d-ya-ž-ā-š "We waited for him"
d-ya-ž-ā-š "We waited for them"
fə-q'ə-za-ž-ā-š "You (pl.) waited for me"
fə-q'ə-da-ž-ā-š "You (pl.) waited for us"
f-ya-ž-ā-š "You (pl.) waited for him"
f-ya-ž-ā-š "You (pl.) waited for them"
q'ə-za-ž-ā-š "They waited for me"
q'ə-da-ž-ā-š "They waited for us"
q'-wa-ž-ā-š "They waited for you (sg.)"
q'ə-va-ž-ā-š "They waited for you (pl.)"
ya-ž-ā-š "They waited for him"
ya-ž-ā-š "They waited for them"

CLASS C - transitive bivalent verbs

Structure of the verbal complex: Object-Subject -V (= the lowest ranking macrorole, Undergoer - the other macrorole, Actor - V)

lāḡ^wə-n "to see"

wə-z-aw-lāḡ^wə "I see you"
s-aw-lāḡ^wə "I see him"
s-aw-lāḡ^w-xa "I see them"
sə-b-aw-lāḡ^wə < **sə-w-aw-lāḡ^wə* "you (sg.) see me"

w-aw-lā lāḡ^wə "you (sg.) see him"
s-ya-lāḡ^wə "he/she sees me"
w-ya- lāḡ^wə "he/she sees you (sg.)"
wə-d-aw-lāḡ^wə "we see you (sg.)"
fə-d-aw-lāḡ^wə "we see you (pl.)"
d-ā- lāḡ^wə "we see them"
sə-v-aw-lāḡ^wə "you (pl.) see me"
sə-v-aw-lāḡ^wə "you (pl.) see me"
f-aw-lāḡ^wə "you (pl.) see him"
də-v-aw-lāḡ^wə "you (pl.) see us"
f-aw-lāḡ^wə-(xa) "you (pl.) see them"
ya-lāḡ^wə "he/she sees him"
ya-lāḡ^wə-(xa) "he/she sees them"
s-ā-lāḡ^wə "they see me"
w-ā- lāḡ^wə "they see you"
d-ā-lāḡ^wə "they see us"
f-ā-lāḡ^wə "they see you (pl.)"
y-ā-lāḡ^wə-(xa) "they see them"
y-ā-lāḡ^wə "they see him"

l'ə-m səyālāḡ^wə "the man sees me"
šə-r sawlāḡ^wə "I see a horse" (ergative construction)

According to C. Paris, verbs of this class don't take the prefix *-(a)w-* in the 3rd person (Actor) present tense, cf. *ya-w-wa* "he is hitting him" (B) in contrast with *ya-lāḡ^wə* "he sees him" (C).

CLASS D – transitive trivalent verbs

Structure of the verbal complex: Object-Indirect Object-Subject-V (= the lowest ranking macrorole, Undergoer - non-macrorole core argument - the other macrorole, Actor)

tə-n "to give"

w-yə-sə-tə (wəzot) "I give you to him"
w-yā-sə-tə (wəzot) "I give you to them"
q'a-wə-sə-tə (q'əzot) "I give him to you"
q'a-wə-sə-tə-xa "I give them to you"
wə-q'a-sə-yə-tə "he gives you to me"
wə-q'a-s-ā-tə "they give you to me"
s-ər-yə-tə (səreyt) "he gives me to him"
s-ār-yə-tə "he gives me to them"
yə-r-yə-tə (yəreyt) "he gives him to him"
ār-yə-tə (yəreyt) "he gives him to them"
r-yə-tə-xa "he gives them to him"
r-ā-tə (yərat) "they give him to him"

tx'ələ-r q'a-wə-sə-tə (*q'wəzot*) "I give you the letter"; *ā-c'əx^wə-m w-yə-sə-tə* (*wəzot*) "I give you to this man" (ergative construction)

CLASS E - causatives (valency increases by one in relation to the basic verb; transitive construction)

Structure of the verbal complex: (Object-Indirect Object)-Subject-Causer-V

tə-n "to give"; *k^wa-n* "to go"; the causative prefix is *ğə-*

yə-rə-tə "he gives it to him" :

yə-rə-sə-ğə-tə "I make him give it to him"

yə-r-yə-ğə-tə (*yərəreyğāt*) "he makes him give it to him"

yə-r-ā-ğə-tə (*yərərāğāt*) "they make him give it to him"

wə-sə-ğə-k^wa (*wəzōğāk^wa*) "I make you go"

sə-ğə-k^wa (*sōğāk^wa*) "I make him go"

sə-ğə-k^wa-xa (*sōğā-k^wəxa*) "I make them go"

CLASS F – verbs derived with some prefixes, e. g. *tay-* "on"; intransitive verbs

Structure of the verbal complex: Subject-Object-Pref.-V

fə-n "to fall"

sə-q'a-p-tay-fə (*p < w*) "I fall on you"

sə-tay-fə "I fall on him"

s-ā-tay-fə "I fall on them"

q'a-p-tay-fə "he falls on you"

q'a-p-tay-fə-x(a) "they fall on you"

tay-fə "he falls on him"

nənaw-r q'ə-tay-fə "the child falls on him" *l'ə-m sə-tay-fə* "I fall on the man"

CLASS G – verbs derived with some prefixes which are placed between two personal markers, e. g. *pə-* "all the way, completely"; transitive verbs.

Structure of the verbal complex: Object-Pref.-Subject-V

wəp'č'ə-n "to cut"

wə-pə-sə-wəp'č'ə "I cut you all the way"

pə-sə-wəp'č'ə "I cut him all the way"

pə-sə-wəp'č'-xa "I cut them all the way"

sə-p-ā-wəp'č'ə "they cut me all the way"

p-ā-qəp'č'-xa "they cut them all the way"

lə-r pə-sə-wəp'č'ə "I cut a man"; *lə-m sə-p-yə-wəp'č'ə* "a man cuts me" (ergative construction)

CLASS H – verbs derived with some directional/local prefixes, e. g. *tyə-* (*tay-*) "on"; transitive verbs.

Structure of the verbal complex: Object-Subject-Pref.-V

xə-n "to lift"

wə-q'a-t-tay-sə-xə(ž') (*wəq'əttezox'əž'*) "I lift you from us"

wə-q'a-tay-sə-xə "I lift you from him"

w-ā-q'a-tay-sə-xə "I lift you from them"

sə-p-tr-ay-xə "he lifts me from you"

ha-r q'a-p-tay-sə-xə "I lift a dog from you"

nəfə-m wə-q'ə-tay-sə-xə "I lift you from a rock" (ergative construction)

WORD FORMATION

In Kabardian words can be formed by derivation (adding suffixes and prefixes), but also by combining lexical morphemes into compounds.

COMPOUNDS

Like other Abkhaz-Adyghean languages, Kabardian forms words of a more complex, abstract meaning by joining two or more (usually monosyllabic) words of a simpler, concrete meaning. Compounds with nouns denoting body parts are especially common. Guessing the meaning of a compound quite frequently is not a simple task:

na-f "eye-rotten" = "blind"
pa-s-a "nose-sit-on" = "early"
na-p'c' "eye-lie" = "false"
na-ps "eye-water" = "tear"
na-f "eye-good" = "goodness"
bza-g^w "tongue-heart" = "tongue" (as an organ of speech)
māf'a-g^w "fire-heart" = "train"
da-lx^w "together-be born" = "brother (with respect to sister)"
?a-pa "hand-nose" = "finger (on the hand)"
ś'ā-la "new-meat" = "young man, boy"
dəḡ^wə-z "thief-old" = "wolf"
ha-dza "barley-tooth" = "grain"
āda-āna "father-mother" = "parents"
faw-šəḡ^w "honey-salt" = "sugar"
maz-džad "forest-hen" = "pheasant"
wəna-c'a "house-name" = "surname"
šxa-g^wa "eat-time" = "lunch"
śə-dāḡa "earth-grease" = "petroleum"

As can be seen from the examples, there are compounds in which both parts are nouns (*āda-āna* "parents"), compounds in which nouns are combined with adjectives (*na-f* "blind") and compounds in which nominal words or adpositions are combined with verbs (*pa-s-a* "early"). In most cases, the meaning of the compound can be both nominal and adjectival, which is a consequence of a poor syntactical differentiation between nouns and adjectives in Kabardian.

In the examples above only two words were joined into a compound, but many Kabardian compounds consist of more than two parts. Compounding is almost a recursive process in Kabardian; using the elements *l'ə* "man", *zə* "old", *fə* "good", *-šx^wa* "big" and *k^wa* "to go" the following compounds can be formed⁶⁹:

l'ə-z "old man"
l'ə-k^wa "messenger"

⁶⁹ According to Kuipers 1960: 34.

l'ə-f' "good man, good-natured man"
l'ə-žə-f' "good old man"
l'ə-k^{nv}a-f' "good messenger"
l'ə-k^{nv}a-žə-f' "good old messenger"
l'ə-žə-f'ə-šx^wa "big good old man"

When a noun is modified in a double possessive relation (according to the formula X of Y of Z), the first possessive relation is expressed with a compound, e. g.

Adəγa-l *yə k'ār wə-r*
 Adyghean-blood poss. power-NOM
 "The power of Adyghean blood"

NOMINAL SUFFIXES

-*ay* (suffix for the formation of tree names): *day* "walnut tree": *da* "walnut"; *žəγay* "oak": *žəγ* "tree"

-*ś* (suffix denoting place/dwelling): *haś* "dog house": *ha* "dog"; *šaś* "barn": *šə* "horse"

-*žay* (diminutive suffix): *džadžay* "chicken" : *džad* "hen"

-*ga* (suffix for abstract nouns): *l'əga* "manhood, manliness" : *l'ə* "man"

-*k^{nv}a* (suffix for names of professions): *txāk^{nv}a* "writer": *txan* "to write"

-*g^wə* (suffix for nouns denoting participants of an action or members of a group): *q^{nv}āžag^wə* "fellow-villager": *q^{nv}āža* "village", *lažag^wə* "co-worker, colleague": *lažan* "to work".

-*fa* (suffix meaning "a kind of"): *wəzfa* "a kind of disease": *wəz* "disease".

VERB FORMATION BY PREFIXING

Kabardian verbs are often formed with prefixes of nominal origin. Many such prefixes (preverbs) are derived from nouns denoting body parts, and they usually add spatial meaning to the verb's original meaning (see the section on directionality):

na-k^{nv}a-n "to go from there" (cf. *na* "eye", *k^{nv}an* "to go")
da-lə-n "to lie in something" (cf. *lən* "to lie")
śə-?an "to be in something": *ār qālam śə-?-ā-ś* "he was in town" (cf. *?an* "to be, to have")

In the case of Kabardian local prefixes it is difficult to decide whether they belong to word formation or to the verb morphology. They express meanings which are in English and other European languages usually expressed by local prepositions, cf. the following examples:

bzwə-r wəna-m bla-lat-ā-ś "the sparrow flew past the house"
 sparrow-NOM house-ERG by-fly-pret.-af.

(the prefix *bla-* denotes movement past or by something)

žəγə-m sətχ^w tray-ś'a "the hoar-frost covers the tree"
 tree-ERG hoar-frost on-do

(the prefix *tr(ay)-* denotes movement onto the surface of something)

However, some local prefixes can correspond to Croatian verbal prefixes:

q^mədāma-r žəγ-əmə ārg^warwə g^wa-č'a-ž-ā-ś
 branch-NOM tree-ERG again at-to go-back-pret.-af.
 "the branch adhered (in growing) to the tree again"
 Croatian: "grana je opet *prirasla* stablu"

(the prefix *g^wa-* denotes connecting with something, cf. *g^wə* "heart")

Byard šə-m zapaśwə tay-s-ś
 B. horse-ERG well on-sit-af.
 "Berd sits on the horse well (correctly)" (= "Berd rides well")

From the typological point of view, local prefixes of the Kabardian verb are not that unusual, since these kind of prefixes exist in European languages as well, cf. the almost synonymous expressions in Croatian *skočiti preko ograde* ("to jump over the fence", with a preposition) and *preskočiti ogradu* ("to jump the fence", with a local prefix on the verb). However, though both these strategies of expressing spatial relationships exist in Kabardian, verbal prefixes are much more frequent in this language than are local postpositions.

VERBAL SUFFIXES

The suffix *-č'a-* is used to turn intransitive monovalent verbs into intransitive bivalent verbs:

l'an "to die": *yə-l'ə-č'a-n* "to die of something"

Suffixes *-l'(a)* and *-x(ə)* also affect the valence of a verb, but not its transitivity:

k^man "to go": *ya-k^ma-l'a-n* "to approach something"

žan "to run": *ār ābə y-aw-ža-x* "he runs away from this" (intransitive)
 3sg.NOM 3sg.ERG 3sg.-pres.-run-suf.

The suffix *-x^wə(č'a)* is added to a participial form of the verb to express that the action of the verb is simultaneous with the action of the finite verb (Abitov (ed.) 1957: 99):

waś-ər p-'atə-x^wəč'a, pχa-m z-ya-ǵa-psax^w
axe-NOM 2sg.-lift-suff. wood-ERG refl.-3sg.-caus.-relax
"While you're lifting the axe, the wood is relaxing"

mə-psala-x^wə dayla-r-yə g^wəbzəǵa-ś
neg.-speak-suff. fool-NOM-and smart-af.
"A fool is also smart while he is not speaking"

The suffix *-č'a* is used to indicate that the action of the verb has been already completed; it can usually be translated as "already" (Abitov (ed.) 1957: 117):

dyə wəčyətayl-əm yənstyət-wət-ər q'ə-wəx-ā-č'a-ś
our teacher-ERG university-NOM dir.-finish-pret.-suff.-af.
"Our teacher has already finished university"

SYNTAX

NOUN PHRASES (NP)

Possessive constructions follow the HM (*head-marking*) pattern. "A man's house" is thus literally "A man his-house":

?ana-m *yə-taypχ^wa* "the cover of the table, tablecloth"
table-ERG 3sg.poss.-cover

ha-m yə-pa-r "dog's nose, dog nose"
dog-ERG poss.3sg.-nose-NOM

In the contemporary standard language the possession marker is sometimes written separately, as an independent word:

Nālšəč Q'abarday-Balq'arə-m yə *q'ālā-šha-ś*
Nalchik Kabardino-Balkaria-ERG poss.3sg. city-head-af.
"Nalchik is the capital city of Kabardino-Balkaria"

Kabardian, unlike Abkhaz and Adyghean, does not distinguish alienable and inalienable possession, but there are traces of this opposition in the Besleney dialect of Kabardian⁷⁰.

Demonstrative pronouns precede the noun they refer to, and sometimes they merge with it as prefixes (see above). They can be separated from the noun by a participle, which is the equivalent of a relative clause in English:

mə fa *q'a-f-h-ā* *šamadžə-r* *Dabač yazə* *Thağaladž x^w-yə-ś'-ā-wa*
this you dir.-2pl.-bring-pret. scythe-NOM D. personally T.ver.-3sg.-make-pret.-ger.
"This scythe you brought was made by Dabač personally for Thagoledž"

A possessive pronoun can occur between a demonstrative pronoun and a noun:

mə syə *sədž-əm* "this anvil of mine", lit. "this my anvil"
this 1st.poss. anvil-ERG

ADJECTIVE PHRASES

Adjectives can be heads of nominal complements, which regularly follow them:

pχa šənāq'ə-ž yəz šx^wə
wood glass-old full sour.milk
"A wooden glass full of sour milk"

⁷⁰ See Kumaxov 1984: 87-93, Balkarov 1959. It seems that Kabardian had the (Common Adyghean) opposition between alienable and inalienable possession, but it lost it.

I found no examples of the predicative use of adjective phrases.

SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF THE SENTENCE

Kabardian distinguishes three constructions⁷¹: *nominative*, *ergative* and *indefinite*.

In the *nominative* construction the subject is in the nominative and the verb is in the intransitive form. If there is an (indirect) object (ie. if the verb is semantically bivalent), the second argument is in the ergative:

Satanay dāxa-r *tadž-ā-ś* "Beautiful Satanaya got up"
S. beautiful-NOM get up-pret.-af.

wəčaynyəkə-r *txələ-m* *y-aw-dža* "the student is reading a book"
student-NOM book-ERG 3sg.-pres.-read

In the *ergative* construction the subject is in the ergative, and the verb is transitive. The direct object is in the nominative:

yənəž-xa-m nārt-xa-r *q'-ā-ğag^wz-ā-ś* "The Iniž (giants) crushed the Narts"
I.-pl.-ERG Nart-pl.-NOM dir.-3pl.-crush-pret.-af.

The causative verb is always transitive, so the ergative construction is used:

fəzə-m *l'ə-r* *yə-ğā-k^wa* "the woman sends a man"
woman-ERG man-NOM 3sg-caus.-go

In the *indefinite* construction the subject and the object have no case endings. This construction is common in proverbs, in the oral tradition; the verb's arguments are indefinite:

məsa dəg^wəž fa-balāca-ś
bear wolf dir.-hairy-af.
"To the bear the wolf is hairy" (proverb)

The verb is stative, and thus intransitive, in this construction.

NOMINAL SENTENCE

Kabardian has no copula, the nominal predicate is juxtaposed to the subject:

səyə *c'ə-r* *Alyəm* "My name is Alim"
1sg.-poss. name-NOM A.

⁷¹ The so-called "dative" or "inverse" construction (Kardanov 1957) is actually a nominative construction.

Adjectives and common nouns in a sentence with a nominal predicate take the affirmative suffix (thus becoming stative verbs):

Māza-r *yəz-ś* "The moon is full"
moon-NOM full-af.

Mə-r *maz-ś* "This is a forest"
this-NOM forest-af.

EQUI-NP DELETION

In a coordinated construction, when two verbs share the same argument, this argument can be omitted if the agent is the first argument (agent) of a transitive verb or the only argument of an intransitive verb (ie. the "subject" in the same sense as in English):

l'ə-m *fəz-ə-r* *q'a-yə-lāg^w-ā-ś* *yəč'əy* *q'a-ž-ā-ś*
man-ERG woman-NOM dir.-3sg.-see-pret.-af. and dir.-go-pret.-af.
"The man saw the woman and left"

ś'ālam *χədžabzə-r* *yəlāg^wə-ryə* *k^w až-ā-ś* "the young man saw the girl and left"
young man girl 3sg.-see-and leave-pret.-af.

ś'āla *c'ək^wə-r* *q'a-s-ryə*, *χədžabzə-r* *q'-yə-lāg^w-ā-ś* "the boy came and saw the girl"
boy little-NOM dir.-come-and girl-NOM dir.-3sg.-see-pret.-af.

ś'āla *c'ək^wə-m* *χədžabz* *c'ək^wə-m* *q'a-k^wa-nwə* *psāla* *yə-r-yə-t-ā-ś*
boy little-ERG girl little-ERG dir.-come-fut. word 3sg-3sg-3sg-give-pret-af.
"The boy promised the girl he would come" (lit. "gave the girl his word he would come").

This shows that Kabardian is not a syntactically ergative language, such as, e. g., Dyirbal or Chukchi.

As can be seen from the examples above, when two verbs differing in transitivity are coordinated, the shared subject is in the case assigned to it by the nearest verb (the ergative if this is the transitive verb, the nominative if this is the intransitive verb). However, there seem to be cases when the shared argument is in the ergative case, although the intransitive verb is closer to the shared argument⁷². This matter requires further research.

SUBORDINATION

Most structures, which are equivalent to subordinate sentences in the European languages, are in Kabardian and other West Caucasian expressed by special verbal forms. These are typically infinitives, participles and gerunds:

⁷² Cp. Gišev 1985: 83.

ār ābə q'ə-śə-x^wa-k^m-ā-m žyə?-ā-ś
 3sg.-NOM 3sg.-ERG dir.-dir.-ver.-go-pret.-ERG say-pret.-af.
 "When he approached her, he spoke"

ha-r zə-ś-ā-ğā-šxa-m ś-aw-bāna
 dog-NOM pref.-dir.-pl.-caus.-eat-ERG dir.-pres.-to bark
 "The dog barks where he is not fed (where they do not feed him)"

Yazə Yamənayž ś'ər ya-va Thayaladž yə žəlāpχa-wə
 himself Y. earth-NOM 3sg.-plow T. 3sg.poss. seed-ADV

tryə-sa-nwə
 dir.-sow-inf.

"Yaminež himself is plowing the ground (in order to) sow the seeds of Thagaledž"

A subordinate structure can also be expressed by a verbal noun (infinitive, or "masdar" according to some linguists) and a possessive pronoun (or prefix) denoting the subject:

da də-wəx-ā-ś dyə-txə-nə-r
 we 1pl.-finish-pret.-af. 1pl.poss.-write-inf.-NOM
 "We finished writing" or "We stopped writing"

Sawsraq'wa-r y-aw-ža, Badax^w dāxa-m ya-pla-nwə
 S. 3sg.-pres.-set.out B. beautiful-ERG 3sg.-see-inf.
 "Sosruko sets out to see beautiful Badah"

With many verbs the person of one argument in the subordinate clause is necessarily the same as the person of one argument in the main clause (the so-called *control constructions*):

χədžabzə-m džag^w k^ma-n pāsawə ś'yədz-ā-ś
 girl-ERG dance go-inf. early start-pret.-af.
 "The girl started going to dances early"

In the previous example, the verb in the subordinate clause *k^man* has got the same subject as the verb in the main clause *ś'adzən* ("to start").

Which form the linked verb will take depends mostly on the type of matrix verb it is associated with. As a rule, verbs having obligatory control (i. e. verbs with obligatory co-reference between one argument of the matrix verb and one argument of the linked verb) take the infinitive, while other verbs take either the participle or the gerund (most can take both of these forms).

In several subordinate structures⁷³ the subordinated verb can retain the personal prefixes:

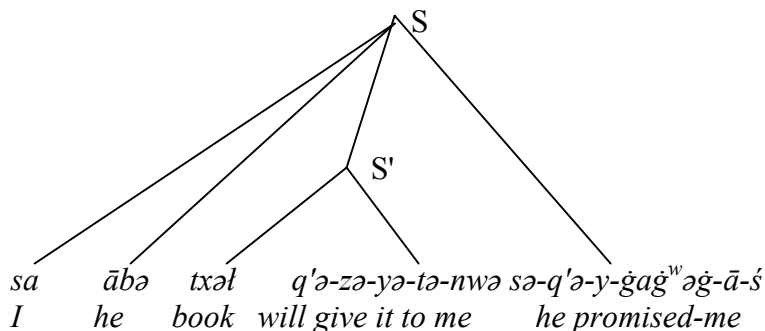
ś'āla-m txəłə-r yə-hə-nwə x^way-ā-ś
 boy-ERG book-NOM 3sg.-to carry-inf. want-pret.-af.
 "The boy wanted to carry the book"

ś'āla c'ək^wə-m χədžabz c'ək^wə-r za-wa-žə-nwə žəy?āś
 boy little-ERG girl little-NOM refl.-hit-back-inf. he said
 "The boy told the little girl to hit herself"

sa ābə txəl q'ə-zə-yə-tə-nwə sə-q'ə-y-ğəg^wəğ-ā-ś
 I he-ERG book dir.-1sg.-3sg.-give-fut. 1sg.-dir.-3sg.-promise-pret.-af.
 "He promised me he would give me the book."

The use of personal prefixes on infinitives and gerunds is sometimes optional.

As can be seen from the preceding examples, in subordinate structures the main verb comes after the subordinate verb; this is in keeping with the general principle of Kabardian syntax, according to which the head of a construction is placed after the dependent:



Constructions in which the subordinate clause is placed after the main clause are also possible, but they are marked:

ś'āla-m yə-ś'-āt χədžabzə-r q'ə-zarə-k^wa-n-ə
 boy-ERG 3sg.-know-ant.pret. girl-NOM dir.-refl.-go-inf.-NOM
 "The boy knew that the girl would come."

Many permutations of the word order are possible, but the subordinated structure cannot be "interrupted" by the main verb.

⁷³ The problem is that the difference between finite and non-finite forms in Kabardian cannot be easily defined and compared to the difference in Indo-European languages. Traditionally, some forms that can have personal endings (e. g. participles) are considered to be non-finite in Kabardian, and the form of the negation serves to distinguish finite from non-finite forms (Kumaxov & Vamling 1995); the negation *mə-* characterizes the non-finite forms, and the negation *-q'əm* the finite forms.

There are also structures with subordinators, but they are stylistically marked and they seem to be developing under the influence of Russian (Kumaxov 1989: 348). Sentences with the complex conjunction *sətwə žəp'am, sət šhač'a žəpp'ama*⁷⁴ "because, since" are of that type:

Yədžəpstwəč'a ār āpx^w adaw nam q'ə?wəryədzarq'əm, sətwə žəpama ā s'ālaxam yās'ā šāg^w a šə?aq'əm

"For now it is not that important, since these young men haven't done much yet".

Note also that the conditional sentences can be construed with the conjunction *śatma* "if", rather than with the conditional mood of the verb (see above); the conjunction *śatma* is originally the verb *śatən* "be, find oneself" in the conditional mood:

Maw Badənawq'wa yə bžəč'-ər s'ə-m q'ə-xačə-f,
 this B. 3sg.poss. spear-shaft-NOM ground-ERG dir.-pull out-pot.

Badax^w wə-ryə-psaləχ^w-wə śatma
 B. 2sg.-3sg.-woo-ger. if

"You can (surely) pull out Badinoqo's spear-shaft from the ground, if you are wooing Badah"

The subordinator *lāndara* "since" is combined with the instrumental form of the participle, e.g. *zarə-k^w a lāndara* "since (the time that) he went".

CASE ASSIGNMENT IN SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

In complex sentences in which the verb of the main clause shares one of the arguments with the subordinate verb, this argument can be omitted in the subordinate clause, in accordance with the rule that Kabardian is not syntactically ergative (see above):

ś'āla-m χədžabzə-r yə-lāg^w-nwə x^way-ā-ś
 boy-ERG girl-NOM 3sg.-see-fut. want.pret.-af.
 "The boy wanted to see the girl."

ś'āla-m txələ-r yə-hə-nwə x^way-ā-ś
 boy-ERG book-NOM 3sg.-carry-fut. want-pret.-af.
 "The boy wanted to carry the book."

In these examples the main verb is intransitive (*x^wayən* "to want"). However, nouns denoting the agent take the ergative suffix, and nouns denoting the patient of the action of the main verb are in the nominative. The reason for this is that case assignment in the main clause in Kabardian can be determined by the role which the argument of the verb of the main clause has in the subordinate clause; if the shared

⁷⁴ It seems that these conjunctions are calques of the Russian *potomu, potomu čto* (see Kumaxov 1984: 150).

argument of the main and the subordinate clause is the doer of the action (or the highest ranking macrorole) of a transitive verb⁷⁵ in the subordinate clause, then this argument is marked by the ergative case, even though the verb in the main sentence is intransitive. If, on the other hand, this argument is the patient or the only argument of an intransitive verb in the subordinate clause (e. g. *yawan* "to hit"), it will be marked by the nominative case:

ś'āla-r *χadžabzə-m* *yawa-nwə x^way-āt*
 boy-NOM girl-ERG hit-fut. want-ant.pret.
 "The boy wanted to hit the girl."

The actual rules for case assignment in subordinate control constructions are more complex and cannot be fully explained here, since they partly depend on the information structure of the sentence (i.e. on the relation between the topic and the focus), and on the word order in the sentence (see Kumaxov & Vamling 1996 and Matasović 2007). It seems that in the speech of younger speakers (perhaps under the influence of Russian?) constructions in which the verb of the subordinate clause assigns the case to the argument which it shares with the verb in the main clause are becoming increasingly rare.

MODAL VERBS

Modal verbs such as *lač'an*, *x^wəzaf'ač'an* "be able, can", *bawršan* "must" are used as matrix verbs taking linked clauses as complements; their complements can be infinitives or verbal nouns (masdar), but, as a rule, not gerunds or participles (Kumaxov & Vamling 1998. 265ff.):

sa s-lač'-ā-ś *ā* *wəna-r* *s-ś'an-n*
 I 1sg.-can-pret.-af. that house-NOM 1sg.-do-inf.
 "I can build that house"

da t-x^wəzaf'ač'an-nwə-q'am *wəna-m* *yə-ś'an-ər*
 we 1pl.-can-fut.-neg. house-ERG 3sg.poss.-making-NOM
 "We will not be able to build the house"

Note that the possessive prefix on *ś'an* shows that it is a (verbal) noun; the noun *wəna* "house" is in the ergative, which is the default case in the possessive noun phrase, and *ś'an* is in the nominative case because the matrix verb is transitive.

The "debitative modal" *x^wayn* is not inflected for person; it should be understood as meaning "it is necessary that X", taking whole clauses as complements. In this way it is differentiated from the verb *x^wayn* "want", which has the full set of personal prefixes, but also takes clausal complements (in obligatory control constructions):

yəlas-əm yə *k^mac'-č'a* *žas qasəx^wə-č'a* *syə*

⁷⁵ In the sentence *ś'āla-m tχələ-r yə-hə-nwə x^way-ā-ś* the verb *hən* "to carry" is transitive, which can be seen by the order of personal prefixes, cf. e. g. *wə-z-aw-hə-r* "I carry you" (2sg.-1sg.-pres.-to carry-af.).

year-ERG 3sg.poss. duration-INST night every-INST 1sg.poss.

šə-m zə maq^wə ?ata-ra
horse-ERG 1 hay stack-and

zə nārtəx^w pət-ra yə-šxə-n x^way-ś
1 corn measure-and 3sg.-eat-inf. must-af.

"During the year, my horse must eat one stack of hay and one measure of corn every night".

PHASAL VERBS

Like modal verbs, phasal verbs also take clausal complements, and require co-reference between the shared arguments (the actor of the matrix verb must be co-referent with the subject of the linked, embedded verb):

āwara, nāq'əga māza-r q'-yə-ha-ryə, wədz-ər q'a-č'ə-wə śə-x^wayza-m
but May month-NOM dir.-3sg.-come-and grass-NOM dir.-grow.-ger. dir.-begin-grow
"But the month of May came, and the grass began to grow"

sa sə-wəx-ā-ś syə-txəl-ər s-txə-n
I 1sg.-finish-pret.-af. poss.1sg.-book-NOM 1sg.-write-inf.
"I finished writing my book"

REPORTED SPEECH

Clauses containing reported speech are embedded in the main clause:

ā-bə "dāwa wə-śə-t" q'ə-z-ž-yə-?-ā-ś
he-ERG how 2sg.-dir.-stand dir.-1sg.-dir.-3sg.-say-pret.-af.
"He asked me 'how are you?'"

"džāta s-x^w-ya-ğ-a-ś', šə s-x^w-ya-ğ^w-at" q'ə-z-žay?a
sword 1sg.-ver.-3sg.-caus.-make horse 1sg.-ver.3sg.-find dir.-1sg.-say
"Have a sword made for me, find a horse for me – he tells me." / "He tells me to make him a sword, to find him a horse."

Reported speech can also be expressed by a subordinate construction with a participle or a gerund:

śāk^w-a-m ž-yə-?-ā-ś [maz zarə-k^w-a-r]
hunter-ERG pref.-3sg.-say-pret.-af. [forest part.-go-NOM]
"The hunter said he was going to the forest."

fəzə-m q'-yə-?ax^w-ā-ś [yə-pχ^wə-r lāza-wə]
woman-ERG dir.-3sg.-say-pret.-af. 3sg.poss.-daughter-NOM work-ger.

"The woman said her daughter was working."

The difference between subordinating reported speech by means of a participle and a gerund seems to lie in the level of commitment to the truthfulness of the speech. The use of gerund seems to imply less commitment by the speaker (Jakovlev 1948: 52f.):

ā-r q'a-k^mā-wa zarə-śətə-r wa q'ə-z-žə-p'-ā-ś
 he-NOM dir.-come-ger. part.-be-NOM you dir.-1sg.-pref.-2sg.-say-pret.-af.
 "You told me that he came"

ā-r q'a-k^mā-wa śət-wə wa q'ə-z-žə-p'-ā-ś
 he-NOM dir.-come-ger. be-ger. you dir-1sg.-pref.-2sg.-say-pret.-af.
 "You told me that he came (but this need not be so)"

AGREEMENT

There is no category of gender, and no number and definiteness agreement within the noun phrase (NP), as was shown in the chapter on nouns. Verbs agree in person with the subject, object, and indirect object (if we can talk about person agreement on the verb), and agreement in number is very limited. The verbal suffix for the plural of the subject can be left out if the subject is placed immediately before the verb:

l'ə-xa-r mā-k^ma-(xa) "people go"
 man-pl-NOM 3sg-go-(pl.)

According to C. Paris (1969: 161), the suffix for the plural of the subject is compulsory only if the subject is separated from the verb by other words. This is more or less confirmed by the examples I was able to elicit.

Transitive verbs agree in person and number with the subject, i. e. with the doer of the action (marked for the ergative):

Nārt-xa-m ya yašhayafar yā-wəx-āt "The Narts restored peace"
 N.-pl.-ERG. 3pl.poss. peace 3pl.restore-ant.pret.

NEGATIVE CONCORD

Kabardian is a language with negative concord. If there is a negated verb in the sentence, the negative (and not the indefinite) pronoun is used, as in Croatian, for example:

Sawsraq^ma zəryə ž-yə-mə-?a-wə mā-k^ma
 S. nothing dir.-3sg.-neg.-say-ger. 3sg.pres.-to go
 Croatian: *Sosruko ide ništa ne govoreći*

Note that there is no negative concord in (Standard) English:
*Sosruko goes without saying anything/*nothing.*

PRO-DROP

Since the information about the grammatical relations within a sentence is codified in the verbal complex, all other syntactical elements can be left out. So instead of *sa ār zġazaśās* "I filled it" one can say just *zġazaśās* (where 0- is the prefix for 3sg., z- the prefix for 1sg. (< s), and the verb is *ġazaśan* "to fill").

Compare also:

sa mawa s-aw-dz "I throw a rock" : *s-aw-dzə-r* "I throw it"
 I rock (3sg.)-1sg.-pres.-throw (3sg.)-1sg.-throw-af.

RELATIVE CLAUSES

In Kabardian, the translational equivalents of relative clauses are usually expressed by participial constructions (in square brackets):

(1) *ā-r [məžəžaw śət stawražə-m] źa-xala-nwə x^wayž-āt*
 he-NOM near-by stand(part.) guard-ERG dir.-throw oneself-inf. try-ant.pret.
 "He tried to throw himself on the guard who was standing near-by.";

(2) *[ā-r zə-ġa-ġyay-f nārt-ər] nārt xāsa-m x-ā-ša-rt,*
 it-NOM part.-caus-move-pot. Nart-NOM Nart council-ERG dir.-3pl.-lead-impf.

nārtə-l' χ^w-ā-wə yā-bžə-rt
 Nart-hero become-pret.-ger. 3pl.-consider-impf.

"The Nart who was able to move it (sc. Hlapsh's rock) they used to take to the Nart council (and) they considered him to have become Nart hero."

(3) *[Thaġaladž x^wə žəlāpχawə Nārt-xa q'-ā-r-yə-t-ā-r]*
 T millet seed N-pl. dir.-pl.-3sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-NOM

Yamənaž yā-f'-yə-h-ā-ś

Y. 3pl.-advers.-3sg.-carry-pret.-af.

"The millet seed, that Thagaladž gave the Narts, Yaminaž stole (it) from them."

The head of the relative clause usually follows it (exx. 1, 2), but it can also be inserted into it (3). There are no real relative pronouns; however, (under the influence of Russian?) interrogative pronouns can be used with a relative function:

xat mə-lāža-m-yə, ā-r šxa-r-q'əm "who doesn't work, doesn't eat"
 who no-work-ERG-and this-NOM eat-pres.-neg.

COORDINATION

Coordinated clauses are linked asyndetically by clitics/suffixes (e. g. *ryə* "and", see above):

ā-r žyə?a-ryə naχə-ś'a-r Łapś ya-wəps'-ā-ś
 that-NOM say-and the youngest-NOM Ł 3sg.-ask-pret.-af.
 "The youngest one said that and asked Hlapsh"

Most likely under the influence of Russian, conjunctions which are separate, independent words have also developed, e. g. *āwa* "but", *ya* "or", *śətmə* "if":

sa ār q'a-y-z-dž-āt āwa q'a-k^w-ā-q'əm
 I he-NOM dir.-3sg.-1sg.-invite-ant.pret. but dir.-come-pret.-neg.
 "I invited him, but he didn't come"

ya wə-l'ə-n ya wə-l'a-n "Either be a man, or die" (proverb)
 or 2sg.man-inf. or 2sg.-die-inf.

THE ORDER OF SYNTACTIC ELEMENTS

Like most Caucasian languages⁷⁶, Kabardian is basically an SOV language, though other (stylistically marked) word orders appear as well:

Sawsrəq^wa ġ^wag^wāna bzādžə-m tayww-ā-ś "Sosruko set off for his difficult journey "
 S. journey bad-ERG set off-pret.-af.

ġ^wag^wāna bzādžə-m taywwās Sawsrəq^wa

ābə sa ś'āla-xa-m sə-śə-yā-x^waz-ā-ś "I met the boys there"
 there 1sg. boy-pl.-ERG 1sg.-dir.-3pl.-meet-pret.-af.

If the object of this sentence is in focus (i.e. the stress is on *boys*), the word order changes:

sa ś'āla-xa-m ābə sə-y-xa-śə-x^waz-ā-ś "I met the boys there"
 (pay attention also to the change in the order of the deictic marker *śə* and the person marker *-y-xa-*).

Also, if the subject of a transitive verb denoting an action is inanimate, and the object animate, the unmarked word order is OSV:

ś'āla-r psə-m yə-txal-ā-ś
 boy-NOM water-ERG 3sg.-strangle-pret.-af.
 "the boy drowned" (literally: "the water strangled the young man")

⁷⁶ See e. g. Klimov (ed.) 1978: 50 ff.

The same OSV order obtains in embedded, subordinate clauses, with infinite verbal forms:

Džad džadəč'a yə-ğa-?ʷəśə-ž-wə f-lağʷ-ā-ś
 chicken egg 3sg.-caus.-smart-back-ger. 2pl.-see-pret.-af.
 "You saw how the egg makes the chicken smart"

Interrogative pronouns and other interrogative words stand in the place of the constituent which they substitute (i. e. Kabardian is a language of the *Wh-in-situ* type)⁷⁷:

xat-əm lə-r q'a-zə-šx-w-ā "who ate the meat?"
 who-ERG meat-NOM dir.-refl.-eat-inter.-pret.

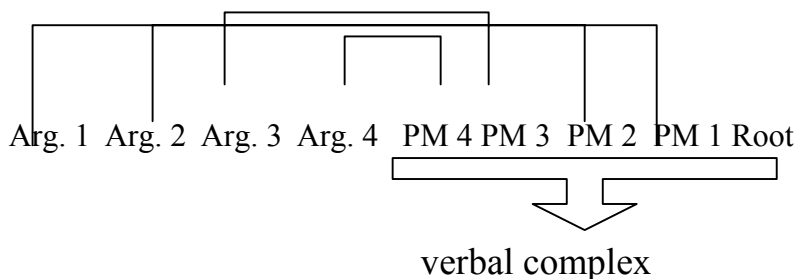
l'ə-m sət-ər q'a-y-šx-w-ā "what did the man eat?"
 man-ERG what-NOM dir.-3sg.-eat-inter.-pret.

The order of the arguments in front of the verb is the mirror image of the order of personal prefixes in the verbal complex in a transitive construction; in an intransitive construction the order of the arguments is the same as the order of personal prefixes:

wa sa wə-q'a-z-aw-wa "you hit me" (intransitive construction)
 you I 2sg.-dir.-1sg.-pres.-hit

sa wa wə-s-lāğʷ "I see you" (transitive construction)
 I you 2sg.-1sg.-see

The rule for the relation between verbal arguments and person markers with transitive verbs can be represented in this way:



TOPICALIZATION/FOCALIZATION

The relation between new and old information in the sentence is expressed syntactically in Kabardian, i.e. by the order of syntactic categories in the sentence. Focalization is a process by which the new, unexpected information in the sentence

⁷⁷ According to Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 496 the unmarked position of question words is at the beginning of the sentence, e. g. *Dāpśas wə-q'a-kʷa-žə-nwə* "When will you be back?".

(*rhema*, what is in focus) is emphasised. The focalized element usually comes at the beginning of the sentence:

xat yə-ś'-ā wəna-r
 who 3sg.-do-pret. house-NOM
 "Who built the house?"

pχās'a-m yə-ś'-ā-ś wəna-r
 carpenter-ERG 3sg.-do-pret.-af. house-NOM
 "The carpenter built the house."

In the previous example the word answering the question "who" is in focus, the noun *pχās'a*. The SVO order at the same time denotes that the topic of the sentence is at the end (the noun *wəna*)⁷⁸. If the question is "what did the carpenter do?", i.e. if *wəna* "house" is not the topic of the sentence, then the noun *wəna* will not be at the end of the sentence, but in front of the verb (i.e., we have the unmarked SOV order):

sət pχās'a-m yə-ś'-ā-r "what did the carpenter do?"
 what carpenter-ERG 3sg.-do-pret.-NOM

pχās'a-m wəna yə-ś'-ā-ś "the carpenter built a house."
 carpenter-ERG house 3sg.-do-pret.-af.

The general rule for topicalization/focalization seems to be the following:

The focalized element ("rhema") must be placed in front of the verb.

The focalized element may be sentence-final, but then it has to be marked by the copula/affirmative marker *-ś*:

ā-bə txələ-r zə-r-yə-t-ā-r Məwrāt-ś
 3sg.-ERG book-NOM part.-3sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-NOM Murat-af.
 "To Murat did he give the book", or "It was Murat that he gave the book to".

mə-r yazə-r q'ə-śālx^w-ā-r fyə xak^wə-r-ś
 this-NOM himself-NOM dir.-be.born-pret.-NOM your(pl.) country-NOM-af.
 "The place where he himself was born is your country"

Aside from the copula/affirmative marker *-ś*, the suffixes *-t* (for imperfect), *-q'a*, *-ra* (interrogative suffixes) can also occur as focus markers:

yağadžāk^w-q'a txələ-r fəzə-m ya-zə-t-ā-r
 teacher-focus(inter.) book-NOM woman-ERG 3sg.-part.-give-pret.-NOM
 "The teacher gave the book to the woman" ("It was the teacher that gave the book to the woman")

⁷⁸ See Kumaxov & Vamling 2006: 107 ff.

In all focalization constructions the main verb is replaced by the participle. These constructions are typologically similar to the Insular Celtic constructions in which the copula is used for focalization, or to French constructions of the type *c'est X qui...*

PRAGMATICS AND THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION

The patterns of communication among the Kabardians and other Adyghean peoples are defined by strict norms of "Adyghean customs" (*ādəγa xābza*, see above)⁷⁹. The Adyghean customs are based on a few seemingly simple principles: modesty and reticence, a strict sex role division with an accentuated manliness and audacity of men, respect for older people, a protective, chivalrous attitude toward women, and extreme hospitality. This world view and way of life has brought about some particularities in the manner of communication among different social, sex and age groups. Although distinct language varieties characteristic for men, on the one side, and women, on the other side, have not developed among the Kabardians and other Circassians (as e. g. among the Chukchi people in east Siberia), there are, nevertheless, some differences between the idioms used by men and women, and linguistic forms used by younger and older speakers are also different in mutual communication.

Expressions appropriate for older people when addressing younger people (but not the other way around) include:

Nasəpəf'a wəχ'ə "be happy"
wəpsaw "hello!"
T'āsa "my dear"

Also, it is considered inappropriate for a younger person to greet an older one with the Common Muslim greeting "*Salam alaykum*", and to address an older person by their name. Generally speaking, the use of personal names is almost tabooed among close relatives; for example, a woman never calls her mother-in-law by name, but by a descriptive expression such as *syə psa nax'* "my bright soul". Similarly, a wife has to come up with a special name for her husband, because it is inappropriate to call him by the name given to him by his parents. On the other hand, Kabardian doesn't have special pronouns used when addressing someone formally, i.e. there is no difference between the formal and the familiar "you" when addressing another person. However, under Russian influence, in the contemporary urban speech it is considered polite to use *fa* "you" (pl.) rather than *wa* "you" (sg.) when addressing older people and people that one does not know very well.

Expressions appropriate for women, but not for men⁸⁰:

ā-?ay, a-?ay g'əs'a (interjections of admiration, astonishment, verbal crutches)
Txa, səməs'a "by god, I don't know".
Allah "god, by god"

⁷⁹ See Bgažnokov 1978; most examples in this chapter are taken from this book. Cf. also Mafedzev 2000.

⁸⁰ My Kabardian informants tell me that in the speech of the younger generation the difference between "female" and "male" expressions is almost completely lost, but they do say that, for example, women usually use the name *Allah* to invoke God, while for men it is more common to address him using the word *Txa*.

Expressions appropriate for men, but not for women:

ʔaǵ^w, ʔaǵ, ʔaw, wa? (they have a similar function as verbal crutches in the language of women)

txa saw?^wa "I swear to god"; *txa yə c'əč'a saw?^wa* "I swear by god's name"

Wallahyə "god, by god".

Aside from the special characteristics of the idioms used by men and women, there are also special varieties of Kabardian used, for example, by hunters, or young people when conversing without the presence of older people. Some topics are considered inappropriate in the conversation between male speakers (e.g. talking about women and children). Due to a pronounced code of honour insults are not taken lightly, so that verbal communication outside of the family is conducted very cautiously, in order not to offend the person you are talking to; the order of speaking is strictly fixed (young people always speak after older people). On the whole, communication in Kabardian leaves an impression of laconic expression and restraint.

THE LEXICON

The core layer of the Kabardian lexicon was inherited from the Proto-Abkhaz-Adyghean language; words belonging to this layer are mostly included in the core lexicon. These are nouns denoting body parts (ie. *g^wə* "heart" = Abkhaz *a-g^w*, *na* "eye" = Abkh. *a-la*, *fa* "skin" = Abkh. *a-c^wa*), kin terms (*āna* "mother" = Abkh. *an*, *āda* "father" = Ubykh *t^wə*, *q^wa* "son" = Ubykh. *q^wa*), and some basic verbs (e. g. *s'an* "to know" = Abkh. *a-c'ara*) and adjectives (e. g. *žə* "old" = Abkh. *a-ž^w*), etc. Culturally and historically important are common nouns belonging to the sphere of flora and fauna, e. g. the nouns denoting bear, fox, dog, cow, pig, fish, bee, millet, nut, and plum, as well as the names of the metals copper, gold, and tin.

Words common to the Adyghean-Kabardian branch of the Abkhaz-Adyghean languages represent the next layer of the lexicon. Among them there is an especially large number of words belonging to the semantic spheres of agriculture⁸¹ (e. g. Adyghean and Kabardian *van* "to plow", Adyg. *c^wābza*, Kab. *vābdza* "plow", Adyg. and Kab. *ha* "barley", Adyg. *mašə*, Kab. *maš* "millet (*Panicum tiliaceum*)", Adyg. *kawcə*, Kab. *g^wadz* "wheat"). The terminology from the sphere of farm animal breeding is also common, especially for the breeding of horses (*šə*), cf. Kabardian and Adyghean *larəg* "stirrup", *xāk^wa* "foal", Adyghean *šək'a*, Kabardian *šə?a* "little foal", Adyg. *fāra*, Kab. *x^wāra* "a breed of thoroughbred Adyghean horses", etc.

Loan-words from Turkish and Turkic languages very frequently belong to the sphere of trade, economy and technology, cf. *sawm* "ruble", *myən* "a thousand", *sātwə* "shop", *tawp* "cannon", *šəwān* "kettle", *bābəš* "duck", *bwərs* "black pepper", *barāq'* "flag". Many Farsisms (words of Persian origin) have entered Kabardian through Turkic languages, e. g. *dəyn* "faith", *bazar* "market", *pāstəh* "emperor", *hawā* "air", etc. Aside from these recent borrowings, there are also old Iranian loan-words in Kabardian, which could have been borrowed from Scythian or Alanic (the ancestor language of the today's Ossetian) in the prehistoric period. Many such words were borrowed into other Caucasian languages; for example, Iranian **pasu* "sheep" (Cf. Skr. *pásu*, Lat. *pecu*) was borrowed into Abkhaz with the meaning "sheep" and into Georgian as *pasi* "price"; the same meaning is found in Kabardian *wāsa* "price"⁸². A typologically similar semantic development ("sheep" > "property" > "money") has been recorded in other languages, for example in Latin in the relation between *pecu* "sheep" and *pecūnia* "money". Some Kabardian words are most certainly (Indo-)Iranianisms, but because of the shortness of attested forms we cannot be entirely sure, e. g. *ša* "hundred" (Avestan *satəm*), *āža* "goat" (Vedic *aja-*); some words might be even older Indoeuropean loan-words, e. g. *k'rəw* "crane", (cf. Latin *grūs*, Armenian *krunk*, Lithuanian *gervė*, etc.).

A younger layer of loan-words are also Arabic loan-words, which penetrated Kabardian mostly through the language of the Kur'an. They belong to the religious and the ethical-philosophical sphere of the lexicon, e. g. *āləh* "god, Alah", *žanat* "heaven", *g^wanəh* "sin", *səhat* "hour", *sābər* "quiet, serene", *məhana* "meaning,

⁸¹ Kumaxova 1972: 180 ff.

⁸² Šagirov 1977, I: 16.

sense", *āq'al* "reason, mind", *χəbār* "news", *šac* "doubt", *tāzər* "punishment", *barəčət* "abundance", *nāsəp* "happiness", *nalāt* "curse, damnation", *zamān* "time", *sabap* "benefit", *dəwnyay* "world", etc. These words are quite numerous in Kabardian and most of them are not perceived as borrowings any longer. Arabic roots occur in some compounds containing native elements, cp. e.g. *swərat* "picture": *swəratayx* "photographer" (cp. Kab. *tayxən* "take off, take away"). The name of Kabardia's capital, *Nalchik* (Kab. *Nālšək*) contains the stem *nāl* "horse-shoe", which comes from Arabic (*na`l*).

Finally, the chronologically last layer or borrowings are Russian loan-words, which flooded the Kabardian language in the 20th century⁸³. Russian loan-words cut across all spheres of the lexicon except the core lexicon; an especially large number of them belong to the scientific-technological terminology and the administration terminology, e. g. *nāwəka* "science", *māšyənə* "automobile", *sāmawlayt* "aeroplane", *rayspwəblyəka* "republic", *raydaktawr* "editor". It is interesting, however, that the borrowing of suffixes for the formation of abstract nouns did not occur, for example the Russian suffix *-cija* (> Kabardian *-ca*); this suffix occurs in Kabardian in words such as *rayzawlyəwca* "resolution", *rayvawlyəwca* "revolution", *mayxanəyzaca* "mechanization", but it doesn't occur in any word with a Kabardian root. Unlike a few suffixes borrowed from Turkish (e. g. the suffixes *-ləy*, *-lə* < *-li*, cf. *wəg^wər-lə* "good, benevolent"), the Russian suffixes cannot be added to Kabardian roots, i.e. they haven't become productive in Kabardian⁸⁴.

Aside from direct borrowings, there are also many Russian calques in Kabardian, e. g. *txəlaydža* "reader" (Rus. *čitatel'*), *sābazəšāša* "hoover" (Rus. *pylesos*), *s'ə?āla* "refrigerator" (Rus. *xolodil'nik*), *bzašanəğa* "linguistics" (Rus. *jayzkoznanie*), etc.

Although Russianisms are in Kabardian often pronounced quite differently than in Russian, the official orthography (especially after World War II) in most cases prescribes an identical way of writing them as in Russian. In older Kabardian books the name "Russia" will be found as *ārāsay*, but today it is written *Rawssyəya* (in Cyrillic *Россуе*), and the noun "bank", which is pronounced with the glottalized *k'* (*bānk'*), is written, like in Russian, *bānk* (in Cyrillic *банк*). The noun meaning "newspaper" was written at first as *k'āzayt*, but today, under the influence of Russian (*gazeta*), it is written *gazet* (in Cyrillic *газет*).

Anglicisms, which have lately been penetrating all the languages of the world, enter the Kabardian standard language via Russian, e. g. *kawmpyawtayr* "computer", *yəntayrnat* "Internet", *bəyznays* "business", etc⁸⁵.

⁸³ It is interesting to note that Sh. Nogma's "Kabardian dictionary", compiled in the first half of the 19th century, contains only 2,5 % of words borrowed from Russian (Apažev 2000: 234).

⁸⁴ Kumaxova 1972.

⁸⁵ For a general survey of Kabardian lexicology and lexicography see Apažev 2000.

TEXTS

1. A Very Simple and Instructive Text about Rabbits
(Source: G^wəġ^wat, L. *et alii Adəyabza*, El'brus, Nal'čik 1984).

бза-кlyэ	гyа-кlyэ
да-кlyэ	къэ-фа-кlyэ
тхьэ-кly-мэ	джэ-гyа-кlyэ



Тхьэклумэлыхь.

Тхьэклумэлыхьыр мэзым щопсэу.
 Ар пклэурэ мажэ.
 Тхьэклумэлыхьым и шырхэр шэклэ
 егъашхэ. Тхьэклумэлыхьым удз
 ешх, жыгыр егъу. Абы пхьыр
 флыуэ елъагъу. Тхьэклумэлыхьыр
 гъэмахуэм щхьуэщ, щымахуэм
 хужьщ.

щы \

Thak^məmač' əh.

Rabbit (rabbits)

Thak^məmač' əh-ər mazə-m ś-aw-psaw.

rabbit-NOM forest-ERG dir.-pres.-to live

ār pč'awəra mā-ža.

he-NOM fast 3sg.pres.-run

Thak' əmač' əh-əm yə šər-xa-r śa-č'a

rabbit-ERG young-pl.-NOM milk-INSTR

ya-ġa-šxa. Thak^məmač' əh-əm wədz

3sg.-caus.-eat rabbit-ERG grass

ay-šx, žəy-ər ya-ġ^w ābə pχər

3sg.-to eat wood-NOM 3sg.-gnaw he-ERG hay-stack

f ə-wa ya-lāġ^w ə. Thəmač' əh-ər

well-ADV 3sg.-see rabbit-NOM

ġamāx^w am śχ^wa-ś, ś'amāx^w am

in the summer grey in the winter

x^wəž-ś.

white-af.

2. How Sosruko Stole Fire

(Source: G^wəG^wat, L. *et alii Adəgabza*, El'brus, Nal'čik 1984).

PART I

Нарт шу гуп зеклуэ клуэну ежъат. Гъуэгу здытетым, уае бзаджэ къатохъуэ. Нартхэр зэцлэщтхъауэ гъуэгуцхъэм тету, Сосрыкъуэ къаклэлъысащ.

— Мафлэ уилэ, Сосрыкъуэ? Щылэм дес!

— Сэ къэзгъэзэжыху, фыкъыспэплъэ,— желэри Сосрыкъуэ и Тхъуэжъейм зредз, Хьэрэмэ-луащхъэ дожейри зеплъыхъ, щы гъунэм зы чэщанэжъ къыщелъагъу, лугъуэ цхъэщыту.

Сосрыкъуэ чэщанэм нэсрэ дэплъэмэ, мафлэм къегъуэлъэклауэ Иныжъ нэ закъуэ къелъагъу. Сосрыкъуэ пцлантиэм шууэ дэпклэщ. Мафлэм бгъэдэлъ Иныжъым епклэри зы пхъэдзаклэ къыпхъуэтащ. Пхъэдзаклэм къыпыхуа дэпыр Иныжъым и нэжъгъым ихуащ.

Nārt šwə g^wəp zayk^wa k^wan-wə ya-ž-ā-t. Ġ^wag^w zdə-tay-t-əm, wāya bzādža q'-ā-t-aw-χ^wa. Nārt-xa-r za-s'ašth-ā-wa ġ^wag^w-šham tay-t-wə, Sawsrəq^wa q'-ā-č'aləs-ā-š. "Māf'a w-yə-?a, Sawsrəq'wa? Š'ə? a-m d-ya-s!" "Sa q'a-z-ġa-zažəx^wə, fə-q'ə-s-papla," ž-ya-?aryə Sawsrəq^wa yə Tχazyay-m z-r-ya-dz, Harama-?^wāsha d-aw-žyay-ryə z-ya-pləh, s'ə ġ^wəna-m zə časāna-ž q'ə-š-ya-lāġ^wə, ?^wəġ^wa šha-šə-t-wə. Sawsrəq^wa časāna-m nasra da-plama, māf'a-m q'-ya-ġ'alač'ā-wa Yənəž na zāq^wa q'-ya-lāġ^wə. Sawsrəq^wa p's'ant'-am šwə-wa da-pč'ās. Māf'a-m bġada-l Yənəžəm yapč'aryə zə pχadzāč'a q'-yə-pχ^wat-ā-š. Pχadzāč'a-m q'əpx^wa dapər Yənəžəm yə nažġəm yə-x^w-ā-š.

Vocabulary:

bġadalən "lie next to"

bzādža "bad"

časāna "tower"

dap "hot coals"

dapč'an "jump in"

daplan "look in"

dažən "run up the hill"

ġ^wag^w "road"

ġ^wəna "territory"

Harama name of a mythological mountain

k^wan "go"

māf'a "fire"

Nārt "Nart" (hero of old times)

na "eye"

nasən "come to"

nažġ "middle part of the face"

Pχadzāč'a "burning log"

p's'ant'a "gate"

q'aġazažən "return"

q'apχ^watan "catch, get"

q'əč'aləsən "follow, go after"

q'əpaplan "wait for"

q'ətayχ^wan "happen, occur"

šwə "horseman"

šə? a "coldness, cold"

šhasətən "stand above stg."

s'ə "land, earth"

taytən "find oneself, be"

Tχazyay name of Sosruko's horse

wāya "cold"

yapč'an "jump through, jump over"

Yənəz "giant"
yəsən "sit in"
yəx^{an} "push in"
yažan "start, set off"
yəʔan "have"
zāq^a "single"

zaš'ašthan "freeze"
zayk^a "raid"
zədzən "throw oneself"
zəpləhən "look around"
žəʔan "say"
žə "old"

ʔ^aāšha "top"
ʔ^aəğ^v "smoke"

PART II

Сосрыкъуэ махуицкӀэ къэкӀуауэ, Иныжьыр къэушри и мафӀэм зы пхъэдзакӀэ къызэрытыр къищӀащ. ГъумэтӀымэурэ Иныжьыр къызэфӀэ-тӀысхъэщ, къилэбэрэбыхьурэ Сосрыкъуэр къигъуэтри пхъэдзакӀэр трихыжащ.

Сосрыкъуэ, уае къигъэхьуф и хабзэти, Иныжьыр хым хигъэщтхьэну мурад ищӀащ. Абы Иныжьыр ІэмалкӀэ хым хигъэувэри уае ирищӀэкӀыжащ.

— Къелэт иджы! Мылыр иджыри зэрыубы-дакъым, — жиӀэурэ Иныжьыр хигъащтхьэри Сосрыкъуэ мафӀэр къихьри нартхэм къахы-хьэжащ.

3. Sosruko and Totresh
(Source: *Nārtxar*, Nal'chik 1951)

Сосрыкъуэрэ Тотрэшрэ

Уий, уий, пшыналъэщ — жи..
Сосрыкъуэ и фащэщ — жи!
Уей, зы махуэ гуэрти
Дыгъэри жьэражъэу
И Тхъуэжьейжъри
Уей, тхъэкIумэ лалэу,
Езы Сосрыкъуэри
И шым елэлэхыу
ПщIантIэм кыдохъэж.

Translitterated:

Wyəyy, Wyəyy, pšənālas - žyə
Sawsrəq^m a yə fāšas - žyə
dəğaryə žarāžawə
Wayy, zə māx^w a g^wartyə
Yə Tχ^w azyayžryə
Wayy, thak^m əma lālawə,
yazə Sawsrəq^m aryə
yə šəm yalalaxəwə
pš'ānt'am q'ədawhaž.

Vocabulary:

dəğa - day
fāša - 1. Kabardian national dress; 2. form, appearance
g^war - some
lāla - weak, shabby
māx^w a - day
pšənāla - ballad
pš'ānt'a - gate
q'ədahan - bring in(to), get in
šə - horse
thak^m əma -ear
Tχ^w azyay - name of Sosruko's horse
wyəyy - Hey!
yalalaxən - hang
yazə - himself
žyə - they say (particle)
žarāžan - burn, be hot
žə - old

4. Kabardian proverbs

(Source: *Adəyabza psālāla*, Nal'čik 1999).

1. *Ya wəl'an ya wəl'an.*
2. *Ł'awa tayl'am wyə warad yəğəšərq'am.*
3. *Fəz bzadža has'a məğəšxaś.*
4. *Fəz bəda yəl' halalś.*
5. *āq'əl zyə'am śan yə'aś.*
6. *L'əgar āžāləm śəstarq'am.*
7. *ādəyam yā naχ məğ^w amyə šəğ^w əra p'āstara wyəğəšxəns.*
8. *C'əx^w ər l'ama, yə c'ar q'awnaryə, vər l'ama, yə far q'awna.*
9. *Wyə q'āma t'aw q'əwəməx, wyə psāla t'aw žwəmə?a.*
10. *Šhar psawəma pə?a śəs'arq'am.*
11. *Ł'anəm l'əga xalś.*

Vocabulary:

1. *l'ə* "man"; *l'an* "die"
2. *warad* "song"; *ešən* "become weary, become tired"
3. *fəz* "woman"; *bzadža* "bad"; *has'a* "guest"; *šxan* "eat"
4. *bəda* "strong"; *halal* "what is desirable"
5. *āq'əl* "mind, wisdom"; *śan* "character"
6. *l'əga* "manliness"; *āžāl* "death"; *śəstan* "fear"
7. *ādəya* "Adygh; Circassian"; *məğ^w a* "poor"; *šəğ^w* "salt"; *p'āsta* "pasta (Circassian dish)"
8. *c'əx^w* "person"; *c'a* "name"; *və* "ox"; *fa* "skin"; *q'anən* "remain"
9. *q'āma* "dagger"; *q'axən* "cut"; *psāla* "word"; *žə'an* "say, utter"
10. *šha* "head"; *psawən* "live"; *pə?a* "hat"
11. *xalən* "lie (in something)"

5. How Karashawey got his bride

(Source: *Narty. Adygskij geroičeskij èpos*, Moscow 1974)

Къэрэшыуей гупышхуэ зэришэрт. Ежъэну и гупыр зэхуишэсыхукIи:
— Шу закъуэ фыхуээкIэ и закъуэщ жыфIэу фытемыгушхуэ, шу
гупышхуэ фахуээкIи, куэд мхэу жыфIэуи фашымышынэ, яжриIэрт.
Арати, зэгурэм, Къэрэшыуейр, и хабзэм тету, и шу гупыр и гъу-
сэу ежъащ. Ар мащIэрэ кIуа, куэдрэ кIуа, зы шу закъуэ ялэгуащ.
Шу закъуэр Къэрэшыуей и гупым щалъагъум, шууищI хуэдиз хъууэ
яужь закърагъэнащъ шу закъуэр яхъуищIэн мурад яIэу.
Къэрэшыуей и гупыр и гъусэу шу закъуэм фIэхъус ирахри зэблэкIа-
хэщ. Куэд ямыкIууи Къэрэшыуей и гупри зэхэпсыхаш.
ШууищI зыкыкIэрызыгъэхуам я деж шу закъуэр зэрынэсу яубы-
дащ яхъуищIэну.
— Фи гугъу сщIыркъым, си тугъу къэвмыщI. Сыныволъэлу, си
гъуэгу срывгъакIуэ,— жиIэри лъэIуащ шу закъуэр.

6. Žabagy Kazanoko playing alchiki
(Source: *Q'azanawq^ma Žabāgə*. Nālšək 1984)

Лэгъупэжым деж Къэзан Жэбагы шыIэурэ щIалэ тыктырыфI хъуаш. Махуэ гуэрым ар и ныбжэгъу цIыкIу гуэрым кIэн дэджэгурти, щIалэ цIыкIум кIэну иIэ псори Жэбагы кыхъэхуаш. ЩIалэ цIыкIум зы кIэни кыхуэнэжатэкъыми, Жэбагы кыжриIаш:

— Жэбагы, си кIэныр кызэтыж.

— Яхъэхур ятыжыркъым, — жиIаш Жэбагы.

АфIэкIа хэмылгу щIалэ цIыкIур къэгубжыаш:

— Уэ узинэкъуэщ, ади ани уиIэкъым, пщыIэжым уктыщагъуэташ, бацэ кыптепIауэ, лэгъупыжь кыптеIубауэ. Иджы узыпIри уи адэкъым...

— Ин жыIэ цIыкIу Iуатэ жыхуаIэраш, — жиIаш Жэбагы. — Уэ уктызэхъуэнми, а жыпIэр пэжу кышIэкIынщ. Пэж кызэрызжепIам щхъэкIэ мэ уи кIэныр, узотыж, си кIэнхэри ныдэкIуэу.

Alchiki (the Russian term for Kabardian *č'an*) is a traditional game played with sheep, or cattle bones. It is widespread among many peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and it occurs in many variants. The rules always involve trying to get as many alchikis (bones) as you can, at the expense of your opponent.

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For information on the history of Kabardians and other Adyghean peoples see <http://www.usacba.org>

About the customs, dances and culture of the Adyghean peoples see <http://adighastory.tripod.com>.

For the bibliography of works on Kabardian (in English) see

<http://www.geocities.com/Eureka/Enterprises/2493/bibkablant.htm>

A few texts about Kabardian and in this language are available at:

<http://www.circassianlibrary.org>

For the transliteration of the Kabardian Cyrillic see J. Gippert, *Alphabet Systems Based upon the Cyrillic Script* (<http://titus.uni-frankfurt.de/didact/caucasus/kaukaschr.pdf>)

The most extensive bibliography of Russian works on Kabardian can be found in the comparative grammar by M. A. Kumaxov (Kumaxov 1989) and the monograph on Kabardian, edited by the same author (Kumaxov (ed.) 2006).

APPENDIX I: KABARDIAN AND OTHER CAUCASIAN LANGUAGES TODAY

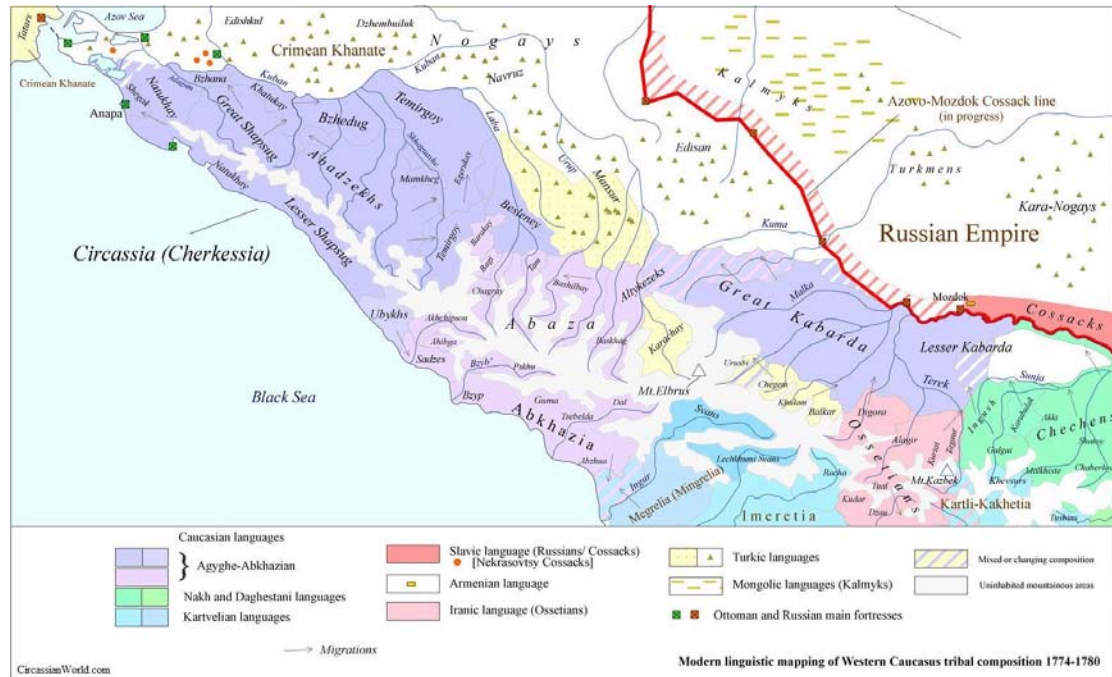


Note:

ALUANIAN = Dagestanian languages

NAKH = Chechen, Ingush and Bats (Batsbi)

APPENDIX II: ADYGH (CIRCASSIAN) TRIBES IN THE 18TH CENTURY



APPENDIX III

A table of phonological correspondences between Kabardian and Adyghean (according to Šagirov 1977: 25)

Kabardian	Adyghean
f	š ^w
f'	š' ^w
x ^w	f
b	p
d	t
dž	dž, č
č	č
dz	c
g ^w	k ^w
v	c ^w , ž ^w
ž	ž, k ^y , č, dž
š	ś, š
š'	č', k ^y
q'	q
q ^w	q ^w

Western Adyghean dialects (Shapsugh and Bzhedukh) are the most archaic Circassian dialects with respect to consonantism. They have a fourfold system of stops, distinguishing voiceless aspirated (p^h), voiced (b), ejective (p') and voiceless unaspirated, or "preruptive" (p). It seems that Kabardian had such a system still in the beginning of the 19th century, because traces of it can be found in Sh. Nogma's writings (Udžuxu 1976). In literary Kabardian, the voiceless unaspirated stops and affricates became voiced, merging with the original voiced series, and creating a number of homonyms, cp. Kab. *da* 1. "nut", 2. "we" vs. Bzhedukh *da* "nut", *ta* "we", or Kabardian *dza* 1. "army", 2. "tooth" vs. Bzhedukh *dza* "army", *ca* "tooth", etc.

APPENDIX IV

INDEX OF KABARDIAN GRAMMATICAL MORPHEMES

- aw-* present (for dynamic verbs)
- ā-* demonstrative pronoun ("this/that")
- ā* preterite
- āpśyə* optative particle
- āt* anterior preterite
- āwa* "but"
- bla-* directional ("by")
- bza* comparative suffix; "very"
- č'a* Instrumental
- č'a* "already" (verbal suffix)
- č'a* "maybe" (verbal suffix)
- č'ara* adverbializer; gerund
- č'at* optative
- č'ə* valency adding suffix (for intransitives)
- d-* 1st. person plural verbal prefix
- da-* conjunctivity (*sojuznost'*)
- da-* directional ("in")
- dana* "where"
- dayž* "towards"
- dāpśa* "how much, how many"
- dāwa* "how"
- dyə* 1st. person pl. possessive pronoun
- dəda* comparative and superlative particle; "very"
- f-* 2nd person pl. verbal prefix
- f* "potential"
- fa* "kind of" (nominal suffix)
- fjə* 2nd person pl. possessive pronoun
- f-* adversative
- g^wa-* directional ("together with")
- g^war* "some" (quantifier)
- ġa-* causative
- ġa* abstract noun formative
- ġan* evidential (probability)
- ġā* pluperfect
- ġāt* anterior pluperfect
- hawa* "no"
- hə* transitivity suffix
- lāndara* "since the time that"
- l'(a)* valency increasing suffix
- m* Ergative (Oblique) case
- m* imperfect of stative verbs
- m(a)* conditional
- m(y)ə* permissive; "although"
- ma-* (*mā-*) 3 sg. of intransitives
- maw-* demonstrative pronoun ("that")

mə- negation (for infinite forms)
mə, mə- demonstrative pronoun ("that")
-n Infinitive
-n categorical future
n(a)- directional ("thither")
nawəz "after"
naχ comparative particle
-nša "without"
nt subjunctive / future II (?)
-nwə Infinitive
-nwə factual future
-nwət future II (conditional)
nət'a "yes"
p'ara interrogative particle
psaw "every" (quantifier)
-q'a interrogative and focus marking suffix
q'as "every"
q'ə- directional ("hither")
-q'am negation (for finite forms)
-r Nominative (Absolutive) case
-r facultative present of dynamic verbs
-ra interrogative
-ra, -ryə conjunction (clitic); "and"
-(r)t imperfect of dynamic verbs
rya- optative
s-/z- 1st person sg. verbal prefix
syə 1sg. possessive pronoun
səma associative plural
sət "what"
-ś affirmative
-śa (relative) superlative
śa interrogative particle
śə- directional; "from the surface of"; "when"
śətma "if"
-śar(at) optative
śhač'a "after, because of"
śhaž "every"
-šx^wa "great"
ś'a- directional prefix; "under"
-t imperfect of dynamic verbs
-tam(a) irrealis conditional
tay- directional; "on"
w-/b- 2nd person sg. verbal prefix
wyə 2sg. possessive pronoun
wə- factitive
-wə Adverbial case; gerund; adverbializing suffix
xa-/xə- directional ("towards the interior")
-xa plural
xat "who"

- $\chi^w\partial$ transitivizing suffix
 $x^w a$ -/ $x^w\partial$ - version
 $x^w\partial$ - potential
 $-x^w\partial(\check{c}'a)$ suffix expressing simultaneity of the action
 $x^w ay$ - debitative modal
 y -/ r - 3rd. person sg. verbal prefix
 ya "or"
 yay attributive 3sg. possessive pronoun
 $yāy$ attributive 3pl. possessive pronoun
 $yazə$ emphatic pronoun; "personally", "himself"
 $yā$ 3pl. possessive pronoun
 $-yə$ admirative
 $yə$ 3sg. possessive pronoun
 $yə\check{c}'yə$ "and"
 za -/ $zə$ - participle forming prefix
 za -/ $zə$ -/ z - reflexive
 za -/ $zara$ - reciprocal
 $zara$ - "instrumental" participle prefix; subordinating prefix on participles
 $zyə$ relative possessive pronoun; "whose"
 $zəda$ - "together"
 $-ž(\partial)$ "back, again"; repetitive
 $žayryə$ "quotative particle"
 $-žay$ diminutive suffix
 $-ə$ transitivizing suffix
 $-?a$ indeterminate person marker, "somebody"
 $?aś'a$ - involuntative
 $-?^w a$ superlative (elative); "diminutive" comparative

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of abbreviations.....	2
PREFACE.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
PHONOLOGY.....	8
Vowels.....	8
Consonants.....	8
Apophony (Ablaut).....	10
Stress.....	11
Syllable.....	12
ORTHOGRAPHY.....	13
MORPHOLOGY.....	15
Nominal inflection.....	15
Number.....	15
Case.....	16
Definiteness.....	20
Adjectives.....	20
Personal and demonstrative pronouns.....	21
Possessive pronouns.....	23
Interrogative pronouns.....	24
The emphatic pronoun.....	24
Quantifiers.....	25
Invariable words.....	26
Numerals.....	26
Adverbs.....	27
Postpositions.....	27
Particles, conjunctions and interjections.....	28
Verbs.....	30
The verbal complex.....	30
Verbal negation.....	31
Person.....	31
Transitivity.....	33
Labile (diffuse) verbs.....	39
Causative.....	39
Involuntative.....	42
Factitive.....	43
Active (dynamic) and stative verbs.....	44

Applicatives.....	44
I. Version (Benefactive/Malefactive)	44
II. Conjunctivity (Comitative).....	46
Reciprocity.....	48
Reflexivity.....	48
Deontic modality.....	49
Personal and directional prefixes.....	50
Tenses.....	50
Interrogative.....	57
Moods.....	58
Evidentiality.....	61
Deverbal nominals.....	62
I. Infinitive.....	62
II. Participles.....	63
III. Verbal adverbs (gerunds).....	65
Directionals.....	66
 APPENDIX: VERBAL CLASSES AND PARADIGMS.....	 70
 WORD FORMATION.....	 76
Compounds.....	76
Nominal suffixes.....	77
Verb formation by prefixing.....	77
Verbal suffixes.....	78
 SYNTAX.....	 80
Noun phrases (NP).....	80
Adjective phrases.....	80
Syntactic structure of the sentence.....	81
Nominal sentence.....	81
Equi-NP deletion.....	82
Subordination.....	82
Case assignment in subordinate clauses.....	85
Modal verbs.....	86
Phasal verbs.....	87
Reported speech.....	87
Agreement.....	88
Negative concord.....	88
Pro-drop.....	89
Relative clauses.....	89
Coordination.....	90
The order of syntactic elements.....	90
Topicalization/focalization.....	91
 PRAGMATICS AND THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF COMMUNICATION	 94
 THE LEXICON.....	 96

TEXTS.....	98
REFERENCES.....	105
APPENDIX I: LANGUAGE MAP OF THE CAUCASUS.....	109
APPENDIX II: ADYGH (CIRCASSIAN) TRIBES IN THE 18TH CENTURY.....	110
APPENDIX III: Phonological correspondences between Kabardian and Adyghean.....	111
APPENDIX IV: Index of Kabardian grammatical morphemes.....	112