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A SHORT GRAMMAR OF EAST CIRCASSIAN (KABARDIAN)

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ninth version

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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

sg. = singular
trans. = transitive
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, *Nārtxar,* 2001), 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Apart from John Colarusso's grammar (1992) and his recently published grammatical sketch (2006), and the largely outdated monograph by Aert Kuipers (1960), this is, to my knowledge, the only general overview of the structure of Kabardian available in English.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'ašxʷa.*

Zagreb, 29 November 2008

INTRODUCTION

The Kabardian language is a member of the Abhkaz-Adyghean (Northwest Caucasian) language family.[1] Together with the closely related Adyghean language Kabardian constitutes the Adyghean branch of this family, while Abhkaz 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 Ubykh[2]:

Proto-Abkhaz-Adyghean

Abkh.-Abaz.   Adyghean-Kabardian

Abkhaz Abaza Ubykh Adyghean Kabardian
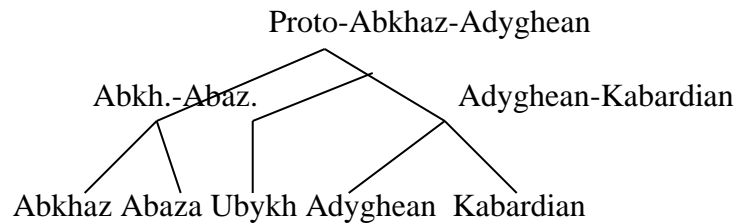
The frequent common name for Adygheans and Kabardians is Circassians. The names Kabardian and Circassian are alloethnonyms[3]. The Adygheans and the Kabardians call themselves *ādəγa*, and their language *ādəγabzə*. Their languages are mutually quite intelligible, and most Adygheans and Kabardians consider themselves members of the same nation, with a common history and a common set of social institutions and customs (*ādəγa xābza*)[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

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[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. *kabardíncy*) is of unknown origin (Kabardians derive it from the name of one ancient chief, Kabarda Tambiev), while the ethnonym *Circassians* (Rus. *čerkésy*, older *čerkasy*) 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 *cärgäs*, originating from a Scythian word *čarkas "nobleman" (e.g. M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, s. v.). The name *kasogъ*, pl. *kasozi* "Circassians" is found from the 10th century in Old Russian, and most linguists relate it to the Ossetian *käsäg* "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-zəxʷa*, has been compared with Gr. *Zýgoi, Zikkhoí*, which designated a people on the NE Caucasus in the 1st century AD. This could, perhaps, be related to Kabardian *c'əxʷ* "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 *Psəź*) almost as far as the town of Batumi, and in the interior all the way to the Terek River[5]. 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 (*pśə*) 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 Empire[6].

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 Syria[7], 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

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[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 *šʷa*, 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*) pattern[8], 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

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[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 intelligibile[11], and Besleney differs most from the other dialects, being, in a sense, transitional between Eastern Circassian (Kabardian proper) and Western Circassian (Adyghean, or Adyghe, divided into Bzhedhugh, Temirgoy, Abadzekh, and Shapsugh 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 *Adəɣa psāła* ("Adyghean Word") is available on the Internet (http: 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.

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[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 words[13].

CONSONANTS

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

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[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	? ?^{w}	
	h	

According to some authors[14] 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 consonants[15]). 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 Cyrilic 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 *хь*.

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 pronounce *p, t, k*). Only the glottalized stops are consistently ejective with all speakers, regardless of the dialect.

Laterals *l, ł,* and *l'* are actually lateral fricatives: *l* is voiced, *ł* voiceless, and *l'* 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', l'* 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. *wərəs* "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

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[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-lāṡ "I painted" < *sa s-lāś (cf. *sa słaġ*ʷ*āś* "I saw")

*wa płaġ*ʷ*āś* "you saw" < *wa b-łaġʷāś (cf. *wa blāś* "you painted")

da t'ś'āś "we did" (in writing *muʲIauʲ*) < *da d-ś'āś (cf. *da dawś'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):

səkʰʷāś "I went" < *sə-kʷa-ā-ś
shāś "I carried it" < *sə-hə-ā-ś

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" [gʸad(d)u:].

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

xā́ma "foreign" vs. *xamáł'* "foreigner"

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

dā́xa "beautiful" vs. *daxā́śa* "excessively beautiful"

APOPHONY (ABLAUT)

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

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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. *bġadałatan* "fly towards" vs. *bġadałatən* "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 cross-referencing lowest ranking macrorole arguments (Undergoers, with the "full-grade", ə) from the prefixes cross-referencing Actors and Obliques (with the "zero-grade", 0):

сыбдовэ
sə-b-d-aw-va
1sg.-2sg.-conj.-pres.-to plow
"I plow together with you"
– intransitive verb with the prefix *sə-* for the 1st person sg. as the single core macrorole argument.

бдызовэ
b-də-z-aw-va
2sg-conj.-1sg.-pres.-to plow
"I plow (it) together with you"
– transitive verb with the prefix *z-* < *s- for the 1st person sg. Actor

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.)". It is also used to distinguish personal prefixes indexing Obliques (non-macrorole core arguments, including the causees of causative verbs) from those indexing Actors and Undergoers, cf. *yā-xʷə-va-z-ġa-š-ā-ś* "I made you carry him for them", where *-va-* indexes the 2pl. causee argument, and *yā-xʷa-zə-v-ġa-š-ā-ś* "you (pl.) made me carry him for them".

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.

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[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.

The following words are thus stressed in this way: *zátan* "give presents", *džãta* "sword", but *džãtamč'a* "with the sword", *pśãśa* "girl", but *pśãśaxar* "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.

услъагъуащ
wə-s-łāġʷ-ā́-ś
2sg.-1sg.-see-pret.-af.
"I saw you"

сыкIуэнйищ
sə-kʷa-nwə́-ś
1sg.-go-fut.-af.
"I will go"

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+ġʷ: *bġʷə* "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 *pśtən* "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", *kʷa-* "go". Bisyllabic roots, which typically end in a vowel (?an earlier suffix), are less frequent, e. g. *pśāśa* "girl", *māza* "moon", etc. Many bisyllabic roots are found in borrowings from other languages.

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 graphemes[19]:

I. consonants

stops			affricates			fricatives			resonants
voic.	unvoic.	glott.	voic.	unvoic.	glott.	voic.	unvoic.	glott.	
б	п	пӀ							м
b	*p*	*p'*							*m*
						в	ф	фӀ	
						v	*f*	*f'*	
д	т	тӀ	дз	ц	цӀ	з	с		н
d	*t*	*t'*	*dz*	*c*	*c'*	*z*	*s*		*n*
						л	лъ	лӀ	
						l	*ł*	*ł'*	
			дж	ч	кӀ	ж жь	ш щ	щӀ	р
			dž	*č*	*č'*	*ž ź*	*š ś*	*ś'*	*r*
						г	х ху		
						γ	*x* *xʷ*		
гу	ку	кӀу							
gʷ	*kʷ*	*k'ʷ*							
кхъ кху къ къу						гъ гъу хъ хъу			
q *qʷ* *q'* *q'ʷ*						*ġ* *ġʷ* *χ* *χʷ*			
Ӏ Ӏу						хь			
ʔ *ʔʷ*						*h*			

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

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[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 C̦; 2) labialized consonants are written as Cʷ, and not as Cº; 3) the Cyrillic *ŭ* is transliterated as *y*, and not as *j*. 4) palatalized fricatives are written as *ś, ź*, and not as *ŝ, zˆ*. 5) the Cyrillic letters *дз, дж* are transliterated as *dz, dž*, instead of *ʒ, ǯ*.

<кхъ> = *q*, < кху> = *q^w*). The notation of palatal consonants is inconsistent: < дж, ч> denote *dž (g^y), č (k^y)*, but <кӀ> is *č' (k^'y)*. Although the Kabardian orthography is phonological, the notation of some phonological changes is inconsistent[20], e. g. the shortening of the long *ā* which occurs in compounds, cf. *xādaxač'* "fruit" (the first part of the compound *xāda* "garden" has a long *ā*, but the pronunciation in the compound is */xadaxač'/*).

Some authors (e. g. M. A. Kumaxov) use шъ and жъ for the palatalized *ś* and *ź*, instead of the standard щ, жь, 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 different[21].

II. semi-vowels: *ŭ = y; y = w*

III. vowels: а = *ā*; э = *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*.

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[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, which 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 inherited 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 found in borrowings, e. g. *nāwəka* "science" (from Russian), *hawā* "air" (from Persian), *āləh* "god" (from Arabic), *šənāq* "glass" (from a Turkic language), etc. Grammatical affixes are generally monosyllabic.

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*: *ś'āla* "young man": *ś'ālaxar* "young men"; *wəna* "house": *wənaxar* "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'əxʷ* "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'əxʷəm yaš' "the man is working": *c'əxʷəm yāš'* "the men are working"

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[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'əxʷəm yəpsawəč'a "a man's life": *c'əxʷəm yāpsawəč'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:

Іуащхьэмахуэ и щхьэгуым Мэзытхьэ, Амыщ, Тхьэгъэлэдж, Созращ, ЛЪэпщ сымэ Псатхьэ дэж щызэхуэсэхау Санэхуафэ яІэт

ʔʷāśhamāxʷa yə śhagʷə-m Mazətha, āməś, Thaġaladž, Sawzraś, Łapś səma Psātha
Elbrus   3sg.poss. top-ERG M.   A. T.   S.   Ł.   assoc. P.
dayž śə-zaxʷa-s-ā-xa-wə   Sāna-xʷāfa yā-ʔa-t
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'ālaġʷāla* "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 pronouns[24].

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 **джатэр** *džātar* 'sword'

ERG **джатэм** *džātam*

INST **джатэмкІэ / джатэкІэ** *džātamč'a / džātač'a*

ADV **джатэуэ** *džātawa*

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

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[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).

The nominative is the case of the nominal predicate:

мы щIалэрщ   чемпйоныр
mə   ś'āla-r-ś   čyampyawn-ər
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):

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

сэ тхылъыр   къэсщтащ
sa txəɫə-r   q'a-s-śt-ā-ś
I book-NOM   dir-1sg.-take-pret.-af.
"I took the book"

The nominative ending *–r* marks not only the case, but also definiteness. Indefinite NPs generally do not get case marking (see below).

In coordinate constructions marked with the suffix *–ra*, the nominative case ending *–r* is replaced by the ending *–m* (if the subject is definite). This is the same ending that otherwise marks definite obliques and transitive subjects (the ending of the ergative):

щIаламрэ   пщащэмрэ   макIуа
ś'āla-m-ra   pśāśa-m-ra   mā-kʷa
boy-NOM-conj. girl-NOM-conj. 3.pres.-go
"The girl and the boy are going"

The ergative is, basically, the general oblique case used for all other grammatical functions; when it marks the actor, the ergative ending is generally obligatory, whereas its use as the oblique case ending is restricted to definite NPs (see below).

The ergative is the case of the transitive subject (the Actor):

студентым тхылъыр   еджащ
stwədyant-əm txəɫə-r   ya-dž-ā-ś
student-ERG book-NOM. 3sg.-study-pret.-af.
"The student studied the book"

The ergative can also correspond to the dative case in the European languages; it marks the recipient of the verbs of giving, and other oblique arguments:

а   цIыхуым   тхылъыр   мы фызым   ирет
ā   c'əxʷə-m   txəɫə-r   mə fəz-əm   yə-r-ya-t
that man-ERG book-NOM   this woman-ERG 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-give

"That man gave the book to this woman"

лIыжьым   псэлъэныр   фIэфIт
ł'əźə-m   psałan-ər   f'af'-t
old man-ERG. speech-NOM.   like-impf.
"The old man liked to speak", cp. Croatian, for example, which has the dative
case: *starcu se sviđalo govoriti* (lit. "to-the-man it pleased to speak")

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

уэри   уи   шыр   шащым   шэ
wa-ryə wyə   šə-r   šaśə-m   ša
you-and 2sg.poss. horse-NOM   barn-ERG   take to-imp.
"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:

ди   хадэм   Iуыщхьэ итщ
dyə   xāda-m   ʔʷəśha yət-ś
1pl. 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.

Сэ си   ныбжьым Iэджэ слъагъуащ
Sa syə   nəbź-əm ʔadža   s-łāġʷ-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:

Зы мазэм   хэхъуэнур   зы махуэм   хэхъуэрт
Zə māza-m   xaχʷa-nwə-r   zə māxʷa-m xaχʷa-rt
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 Actor 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.[25] 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:

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[25] For the ergative case in reciprocals see below.

жыгхэр	**сэтыру**	**хэсащ**
žəɣ-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:

фошыгъуу зы килогрэмм	**къэсщхуащ**
fawšəġʷ-wə zə kyəlawgram-m	*q'a-s-śxʷ-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:

Жагъыщэ Темболет пщым	**и**	**гъуысау**	**арт**
Žāġəśa Taymbawlayt pśə-m	*yə*	*ġʷəsa-wə*	*ār-t*
Ž. T. prince-ERG	3sg.poss.	servant-ADV	it.be-ipf.

"Žagəśa Taymbawlayt was the prince's servant"

Interestingly, in the language of the epic poetry, the adverbial can correspond to the vocative case[26], i. e. it is used for addressing individuals:

Сосрыкъуэу	**синэф**
Sawsrəqʰʷa-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 (including means of locomotion), cf. *šə-m-č'a mā-kʰʷa* "he rides the horse", literally "he goes with the horse", or *q'arandāś-č'a txən* "to write with a pen"; 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, and the duration of an action:

ар	**махуэкIэ малажьэ**
ār	*māxʷa-č'a mā-lāźa*
he (NOM)	day-INST 3sg.-to work

"He works by day"

мэзкIэ	**кIуэн**
maz-č'a	*kʰʷa-n*
forest-INST	to go-inf.

"to go through the forest"

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

Жэщищ махуищкIэ укъесшэкIри
си хьэщIэщ укъисшащ

žaś-yə-ś   māxʷ-yə-ś-č'a   wə-q'-ya-s-šač'-ryə
night-rel.-3 day-rel.-3-INST 2sg.-dir.-3sg.-1sg.-lead.through-and

syə haś'aś   wə-q'-yə-s-š-ā-ś
my guest.house   2sg.-dir.-3sg.-1sg.-lead-pret.-af.
"I was leading you three days and nights, and I led you into my guest-house"

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

IуэхуыР сэркIэ   щIа   хъуынкъым
ʔʷaxʷə-r sar-č'a   ś'-ā   χʷən-q'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 do[27]; 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 differentiaton:

Мэрен сымэ макIуэ
Maryan səma mā-kʷa
M.   assoc.pl. 3pl.-go
"Maryan and the others are going"

Мэрен сымэ солъагъу
Maryan səma s-aw-łāġʷ
M.   assoc.pl. 1sg.-pres.-to see
"I see Maryan and the others"

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

Нанэ, сыт мы пIщIыр   зышIысыр   атIэ иджи
Nāna, sət mə p'-ś'ə-r   zə-š'ə-s-ər   āt'a yədžyə?
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 hierarchy[28], according to which the most common case marking pattern in ergative

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[27] 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).
[28] See e. g. Dixon 1994.

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).

Since the category of case (especially of grammatical cases Nominative and Ergative) 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 generally added only when the noun is definite; indefinite nouns receive no ending[29]:

пщащэр   макӀуэ
Pśāśa-r   mā- kʷa
girl-NOM 3sg.pres.-go
"The girl is going"

пщащэ   макӀуэ
Pśāśa   mā- kʷa
girl-   3sg.pres.-go
"A girl is going"

пщащэр унэм щӀохьэ
pśāśa-r   wəna-m   ś'-aw-ha
girl.-NOM house-ERG dir.-pres.-enter
"The girl is entering the house"

пщащэ унэ щӀохьэ
pśāśa   wəna ś'-aw-ha
girl.-NOM house-ERG dir.-pres.-enter
"A girl is entering a house"

The transitive subjects marked with the ergative ending –m generally do not distinguish definite and indefinite forms, as this case marking is (almost) obligatory. However, we do find examples such as the following sentences, where it appears that –m marks both the case of the transitive subject (or Actor) and definiteness:

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[29] 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.

пщащэм мыр ещIэ
pśāśa-m mə-r ya-ś'a
girl-ERG it-NOM 3sg.-know
"the girl knows it"

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

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

дыгэ(р) солъагъу
dəγa-(r) s-aw-łāġʷ
sun-(NOM.) 1sg.-pres.-see
"I see the sun"

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*:

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

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"). Occasionaly they may also precede the noun, e.g. *xāma wəna* "foreign house" (*wəna* "house"). 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:

унэ хужьхэр
wəna xʷəź-xa-r
house white-pl.-Nom.
"white houses"

If a qualitative adjective precedes the head noun, it is not declined; it may be modified by the adverbial suffix *-wə* (e.g. *məva-wə* "made of stone", *fa-wə* "made of leather"):

дахэу портфелыр сэ къэсщэхуащ
dāxa-wə pawrtfaylər sa q'a-s-śax^w-ā-ś
pretty-ADV wallet I dir.-1sg.-buy-pret.-af.
"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-ś'a* "the youngest" (*ś'a* "young").

There are also suffixes which express the elative superlative: *-śa, -ʔ^{w}a, -bza, -ps, -ay*, but this seems to belong to the domain of word-formation rather than morphology, cf. *ʔaf'ə-śa* "the sweetest" (*ʔaf'* "sweet"), *č'əhəʔ^{w}a* "the longest" (*č'əh* "long"), *płəźə-bza* "very red" (*płəź* "red"), etc.

Adding the suffix *-ʔ^{w}a* to the comparative form gives the adjective a diminutive meaning, e. g. *naχ x^{w}āba-ʔ^{w}a* "somewhat warmer" (cp. *x^{w}āba* "warm"), *naχ ʔaf' ə-ʔ^{w}a* "somewhat sweeter" (*ʔaf'* "sweet")[30]. The circumfix *x^{w}a-...-fa* has a similar function, e.g. *x^{w}a-daylā-fa* "somewhat foolish".

Adjectives can be reduplicated, whereby the first stem receives the suffix *-ra* "and", and the second the adverbial suffix *-w(a)*. Such reduplicated adjectives have intensive meaning, e.g. *bəχ^w-ra bəχ^w-wə* "extremely broad", *płəź-ra-płəźwə* "extremely red", *f'yay-ra-f'yay-wa* "extremely dirty".

Relational adjectives precede the head noun and they take no case and number endings; they can be formed by adding the relative particle *-y* to nominal and adjectival stems, e.g. *mawdryay* "other", *dəġ^{w}apšəhəryay* "evening":

нобэре махуэ
nawbara-y māx^{w}a
today's   day
"today"

Some nouns, ordinal numbers and Russian loans (nouns) can also function as relative adjectives, e.g. *nawəčna* "scientific", *śha* "head", *yāpa* "first".

Some adjectival meanings are expressed by suffixes: the suffix *-šx^{w}a* means "great", cf. *dəwnay-šx^{w}a* "great world". The suffix *-nša* 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-nša āna-nša-ś* (I 1sg.-father-without mother-without-af.) "I am without father and mother" = "I am fatherless and motherless".

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[30] Abitov (ed). 1957: 64.

PERSONAL AND DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Kabardian personal pronouns are indeclinable. The personal pronouns of the first and second person are similar to, and presumably represent the origin of, the person markers on the verb. There is no trace of the inclusive/exclusive opposition in pronouns, which exists in some NE Caucasian languages.

sg.   pl.

1. **сэ** *sa*   **дэ**   *da*

2. **уэ** *wa*   **фэ**   *fa*

3. **ар** *ār*   **ахэр**   *āxar*

The pronouns of the 1st and 2nd person also have longer forms *sara, wara, dara, fara*, which are used as stems to which verbal suffixes can be added:

къэрэшыуер сэракъым
q'arašəway-r sarā-q'əm
K.-NOM   I-neg.
"I am not Karashawey (a Nart hero)"

Third person pronouns are also used as demonstrative pronouns; Kabardian does not distinguish between "he" and "this, that". The pronominal declension is somewhat different from the nominal one:

	1sg.	1pl.	3sg.	3pl.
Nom.	**сэ** *sa*	**дэ** *da*	**ар** *ār*	**ахэр** *āxar*
Erg.	**сэ** *sa*	**дэ** *da*	**абы** *ābə*	**абыхэм** *ābəxam*
Inst.	**сэркIэ** *sarč'a*	**дэркIэ** *darč'a*	**абыкIэ** *ābəč'a*	**абыхэмкIэ** *ābəxamč'a*
Adv.	**сэру** *sarwə*	**дэру** *darwə*	**ару** *ārwə*	**ахэру** *āxarwə*

In the first and second person singular the nominative form is always the same as the ergative form, which means that pronouns do not have the ergative alignment, as, for example, in Dyirbal. Unlike in Dyirbal, however, the clause alignment of personal pronouns in Kabardian is neutral, rather than accusative. The third person pronoun is formed with the stems *ā-, mə-* and *maw-*. It can appear without the nominative *-r* (which also expresses definiteness of personal pronouns):

сэ а рассказым   **седжащ**
sa ā rāsskazə-m   *s-ya-dž-ā-ś*
I that story-ERG   1sg.-3sg.-read-pret.-af.
"I read that story"

The difference in the usage of pronominal stems *ā-*, *mə-* and *maw-* is not entirely clear, but *ā-* is the basic pronoun used in anaphora (reference to what has already been mentioned in the discourse), while *mə-* and *maw-* are in opposition with respect to the degree of distance from the speaker: *mə-* refers to a closer object (or person), and *maw-* to a more distant one.

In the 3rd person plural Ergative, two different sets of forms exist: the basic stem can be extended with the pronominal Ergative ending, but it also occurs without it:

ахэм *āxam* = **абыхэм** *ābəxam*
мыхэм *məxam* = **мыбыхэм** *məbəxam*
мохэм *mawxam* = **мобыхэм** *mawbəxam*

There appears to be no difference in meaning, but the longer forms are somewhat more common in the texts.

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"

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

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):

абым (мыбым)   **бджэжьер   къиубыдащ**
ā-bə-m (mə-bə-m)   *bdžaźay-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 *āpxʷada* "such, such as this" (from *ā-* and *pxʷada* "similar"), *məpxʷada* "such, such as that", *mawpxʷada* "such, such as that". As a rule, these words occur in the attributive position, in front of the noun they modify, cf. *āpxʷada c'əxʷ* "such a man".

POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

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

1. **cu** *sɜ*   **∂u**   *dɜ*

2. **yu** *wɜ*   **фu**   *fɜ*

3. **u** *yɜ*   **я**   *yā*

There is also the relative possessive pronoun *zɜ* "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: *ābɜ yay* "his, that which belongs to him", *ł'ɜźɜm 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. *sɜž* "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.

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

In addition to the basic (clitic) possessive pronouns there are also emphatic possessive pronouns, formed by reduplication: *sɜsay* "my", *wɜway* "your", *dɜday* "our", *fɜfay* "your", *yāy* "their". Unlike the clitic possessive pronouns, these can be inflected for case (e. g. NOM *sɜsayr*, ERG *sɜsaym*, etc.).

INTERROGATIVE PRONOUNS

Although it does not distinguish animacy in other pronouns, Kabardian, like most of the world's languages, distinguishes the animate and inanimate forms of interrogative pronouns:

хэт *xat*   "who"   **сыт** *sɜt* "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 *-wɜ* (ADV) with the pronoun *sɜt*[31]: *sɜt-wɜ xāxā* "What was he elected for?"

The interrogative possessive pronouns do not exist, but are rather replaced by the interrogative *xat* "who" and the possessive pronoun 3sg. *yɜ*, e.g.

хэт   и   адэм   унэр   ии̇Iрэ?
xat   yɜ   āda-m   wɜna-r   yɜ-ś'-ra?
who   3sg.poss. father-ERG house-NOM   3sg.-do-inter.

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[31] Kumaxov *et alii* 1996.

"Whose father is building the house?"

Other interrogative words are: *dana* "where", *sətwə* "why", *dawa* "how", *dāpśa* "how much", *dāpśaś* "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.

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

езым щIыр иващ
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:

Джылахъстэн ипхъуу Бэдэху и   дахагъэр   Нарт   Хэкуым щыIуат.
"Махуэм дыгъащ, жащым мазэщ"   жаIэрт Бэдэху щхьэкIэ.
Езы Джылахъстэни и пхъум и дахагъэм
иригушхуэжауэ   зигъэпагэрт

Džəlāχstan yə-pχwə   *Badax^w yə*   *dāxāġa-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^wa-m dəga-ś, žaś-əm māza-ś" -   *ž-ā-?a-rt*   *Badax^w śhač'a.*
day-ERG sun-af. night-ERG moon-af. pref.-3pl.-say-ipf. B   about

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

yə-ryə-g^wəšx^wa-ž-ā-wa   *z-yə-ġapāγa-rt*
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):

цӀыху къэс макӀуэ
c'əxʷ q'as mā-kʷ'a
man every 3sg.-go
"every man walks"

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

зы лӀы гуэр *zə ł'ə gʷar* "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. *ł'ə psawr* "all men". Perhaps the words *zač'a* "whole" and *śhaž* "every" should also be thought of as quantifiers.

INVARIABLE WORDS

NUMERALS

Cardinal numbers:

зы *zə*	1	**хы** *xə*	6		
тІу *t'wə*	2	**блы** *blə*	7		
щы *śə*	3	**и** *yə*	8		
плІы *pł'ə*	4	**бгъу** *bġʷə*	9		
тху *txʷə*	5	**пщІы** *pś'ə*	10	**щэ** *śa*	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/particle *-yə-*. They can also take case endings:

> **мазибгъуырэ махуибгъуыкІэ**
> *māz-yə-bġʷə-ra māxʷ-yə-bġʷə-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 *pś'ə-* "ten", the suffix *-kʷ-* (probably the root of the verb *kʷən* "to go over (a distance), to transverse") and ones, e. g. *pś'əkʷəz* "eleven", *pś'əkʷət'* "twelve", *pśəkʷəś* "thirteen", etc.

The tens are formed on a decimal base, with the numeral "ten" reduced to *-ś'*: *t'waś'* "twenty", *śaś'* "thirty", *pł'əś'* "forty", *txʷəś'* "fifty", *xəś'* "sixty", etc.

There are traces of the vigesimal system, manifested in the formation of tens as products of multiplication of the number twenty, *t'waś'*: *t'waś'-yə-t'* "forty", *t'waś-yə-ś* "sixty", etc. In the standard language, these vigesimal formations are notably archaic, but they are alive in some dialects (e.g. Besleney) and in Adyghe.

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

> **цІыху щащІрэ цІыхуищрэ**
> *c'əxʷ śaś'-ra c'əxʷ-yə-ś-ra*
> man thirty-and man-poss.-three-and
> "thirty three men"

The ordinal numbers (with the exception of *yāpa* "first") are formed with the prefix *ya-* and the suffix *-āna*:

япэ	*yāpa*	1.	**еханэ**	*yaxāna*	6.	
етІуанэ	*yat'wāna*	2.	**ебланэ**	*yablāna*	7.	
ещанэ	*yaśāna*	3.	**еянэ**	*yayāna*	8.	
еплІанэ	*yapl'āna*	4.	**ебгъуана**	*yabġʷāna*	9.	
етхуана	*yatxʷāna*	5.	**епщана**	*yapśāna*	10.	

Ordinal numbers behave like relational adjectives, so they can take the suffix *-ray* (used for the formation of adjectives): *yatxʷānaray* "fifth" etc. Adverbial numerals are formed from cardinal numbers by apophony, e. g. *za* "once", *śa* "thrice", but they can also be formed by the prefix (or infix?)[32] *-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", *śāna* "a third", etc. Note also *yāzə* "one of two" and *zətxʷəx* (one-five-six) "about five or six".

ADVERBS

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

Іей *?ay* "bad" - **Іейу** *?aywə* "badly"; **хуабжь** *xʷābź* "quick" - **хуабжьу** *xʷābźwə* "quickly", **фІы** *f'ə* "good" - **фІуэ** *f'əwa* "well".

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

The suffix *-wa* is identical to the suffix for the adverbial case (see above).

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

щхьэ *śha* "head" - **ищхьэ** *yəśha* "up, upwards"
лъабжьэ *łābźa* "hoof" - **илъабжьэ** *yəłābźa* "down, downwards"

Nouns in the instrumental case (in *-č'a*) can also function as adverbs:

махуэ *māxʷa* "day": **махуэкІэ** *māxʷač'a* "by day"; **жэ** *ža* "flight": **жэкІэ** *žač'a* "in flight"

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

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

There are also underived adverbs: *nawba* "today", *pśaday* "tomorrow", *dəġʷāsa* "yesterday", *nəžaba* "tonight", *dəda* "very much, just", *wayblama* "very much", *məbə* "here":

сыт уэ мыбы (дежым)   щыпщІэр

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[32] 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).

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

The category of adverbs might also include invariable expressions such as *qə?a* "please", *f'əśašxʷa* "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: *nawəź* "after", *pś'awnda* "until", *(yə) dayž* "at, in", *śhač'a* "because, after", *yəpam* "in front of", *yəč'am* "at the end, after", *naməś* "except", *f'ač'(ā)* "except", *xʷada* "like", *pāp'ś'a* "because, due to", *zaxʷakʷa* "between", *yə gʷəǵʷə* "about", *nas* "to, up to, until", *śəś* "from", *łāndara* "since", *yəp'ač'a* "instead of", *ādač'a* "behind".

шэджагъуэ ножым *šadžāǵʷa nawźəm* "after lunch"
шэджагъуэ пщIондэ *šadžāǵʷa pś'awnda* "until lunch, before lunch"
пщадей пщIондэ *pśadyay pś'awnda* "until tomorrow"
шым ипам(кIэ) *šəm yəpam(č'a)* "in front of the horse"
уэр щхьэкIэ *war śhač'a* "because of you"
щIалэм и гугъу *ś'ālam yə gʷəǵʷə* "about the boy"
и шым хуэдэ *yə šəm xʷada* "like his horse"
Емынежь фIэкIэ *Yamənyaź f'ač'a* "except Yaminezh"
къалэм нэс *q'ālam nas* "to the city"

Мухьэмэд и къуэшым деж щыIащ
Mwəhamad yə q'ʷaš-əm dayž śə?-ā-ś
M. poss.3sg. brother-ERG at be-pret.-af.
"Muhamad was at his brother's"

сыт уи Iуэхуым щхьэкIэ жаIар
sət wyə ?ʷaxʷ-əm śhač'a ž-ā-?-ā-r
what poss.2sg. work.-ERG about dir.3pl.-say-pret.-inter.
"What did they say about your work?"

As the preceding examples illustrate, postpositions govern the ergative case of nouns. Some of them govern the possessive pronouns, rather than personal pronouns, e.g. *syə wəź* "after me", *wyə dayž* "to you", *(wa) wyəp'ač'a* "instead of you", etc. Others govern the personal pronouns (cf. *war śhač'a* "because of you", *sar f'ač'a* "except myself").

The majority of postpositions are derived from nouns, especially nouns denoting body parts, cf. *śha* "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*

gʷəġʷə "about (it/him)"[33]. 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:

хьэуэ *hawa* "no"; **нытIэ** *nət'a* "yes"

мис *myəs* "here!"

мыдэ *məda* "there!, look!"

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

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

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

ар   къакIуэмэ   щэ
ā-r   q'ā-kʼʷa-ma   śa
he-NOM dir.-go-cond. inter.particle
"Will he come?"

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

Щхьэ унэщхъе,   жери   еупщащ Бадынокъуэ
Śha wə-naśχay,   žayryə   ya-wəpś-ā-ś Bādənawqʷa
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".

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[33] Cp. Abitov 1957: 153.

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

Тхылърэ Iэнэрэ *Txəł-ra ?ana-ra* "A book and a table"

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

"Мыр   сыт гъэщIэгъуэн" жиIэри Сэтэней и тхьэкIумэр мывэм   Iуилъхьащ
"Mə-r   sət ġaś'aġ^wan" žyə?a-ryə Satanyay yə thak^{ʰw}əma-r məva-m   ?^wəyəłh-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).
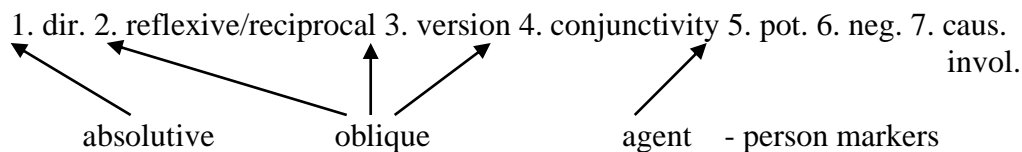
The verb does not have the category of voice (it does not distinguish active and passive),[34] but it does have the categories of transitivity, person, number, tense, mood, causative, two types of applicatives (version/benefactive (Rus. *versija*) and conjunctivity/comitative (Rus. *sojuznost'*)), reflexivity, 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:

$$P_{1...}P_n \text{-}R\text{-}S_1..S_n$$

The prefix positions can be seen in the following matrix:

1. dir. 2. reflexive/reciprocal 3. version 4. conjunctivity 5. pot. 6. neg. 7. caus.
                                                                                  invol.

absolutive   oblique   agent   - person markers

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-kʷa* "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.

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[34] 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):

> **сыкӏуэркъым**
> *sə-kʷa-r-q'əm*
> 1sg.-go-pres.-af.-neg.
> "I am not going"

> **умылажьау   пихыр   хьэрэмщ**
> *wə-mə-lāźa-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:

> **сумыгъе**
> *s-wə-mə-ġay*
> 1sg.-2sg.-neg.-lament
> "don't lament me"

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

> **тхьэ, сымыщӏэ**
> *tha, sə-mə-ś'a*
> god 1sg.-neg.-know
> "by god, I don't 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.	*сы*	*sə-*	*ды*	*də-*
2.	*у*	*wə-*	*фы*	*fə-*
3.	*0/мэ/ма*	0- /*ma*-/*mā*-	*0/мэ/ма*	0-/*ma*-/*mā*-

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. If the verb has a monosyllabic root that ends in *-a*, the vowel of the 3rd person prefix is lengthened, hence *māk^{ʰw}a* "he goes" (from *kwa-n*), but *ma-džag^w* "he is playing" (from *džag^w-ən*). This is in accordance with the phonological rule of lengthening of accented vowels in open syllables (see above). Intransitive verbs with a preverb do not have the prefix *ma-* in the present tense, cp. *mā-da(r)* "(s)he is sewing", but *q'-aw-k^{ʰw}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.	*с/з*	*-s-/-z-*	*д*	*-d-*
2.	*у/б*	*-w-/-b-*	*ф*	*-f-*
3.	*и/р*	*-y(ə)-/ -r(-ə)-*	*я*	*-y-xa- (> -yā-)*

In the 3rd person singular the prefix *-r-* denotes the indirect object (usually the Recipient)[35]:

сырит
sə-r-yə-t
1sg.-3sg.-3sg.-give
"He gives me to him"

Personal prefixes indexing Obliques (non-macrorole core arguments, including the causees of causative verbs) are also distinguished from those indexing Actors and

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[35] 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).

Undergoers by ablaut; they regularly have the same form as the markers of the transitive subject, but the vowel is *-a-* rather than *-ə-*:

яхувэзгъэшащ
yā-xʷə-va-z-ġa-š-ā-ś
3pl.-ver.-2pl.-1sg.-caus.-carry-pret.-af.
"I made you (pl.) carry him for them"

In the preceding example *-va-* indexes the 2pl. causee argument. Note that it differs from the form of the prefix for the causer (*-v-*) in the following example:

яхуэзывгъэшащ
yā-xʷa-zə-v-ġa-š-ā-ś
3pl.-ver.-1sg.-2pl.-caus.-carry-pret.-af.
"You (pl.) made me carry him for them".

The prefix indexing the recipient also has the form marked by *a*-vocalism:

Си шыр   къызэфтыж
Syə šə-r   qʼə-za-f-tə-ž
my horse-NOM   dir.-1sg.-2pl.-give-back
"Give me back my horse!"

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 verb[36]:

> **ахэр еджащ   еджахэщ**
> *āxar yaydžā-ś = yaydžā-xa-ś* "they studied"

The order of personal markers is always (in terms of traditional grammatical relations):

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

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

(абы   сэ)   уэ укъызетащ
(ābə   sa)   wa wə-qʼə-z-ya-t-ā-ś
(he-ERG I)   you   2sg.-dir.-1sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-af.
"He gave you to me"

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

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

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.

Many verbs contain a „dummy" 3rd person singular prefix *ya-*, e.g. *ya-śan* "sell" (cf. *śan* 'sell'), *ya-wan* 'hit' (cf. *wan* "hit"), *ya-kʷan* "attack" (cf. *kʷan* 'go'), *ya-tən* "give" (cf. *tən* "give"). Such verbs can be derived from both transitive and intransitive bases, and adding the prefix *ya-* does not affect the transitivity of the verb, though it may give a different shade of meaning to the verb. In some cases, these verbs contain incorporated objects, e.g. *ya-gʷa-kʷa-n* (3sg.-heart-go-inf.) "fall in love with", *ya-śha-fa-wa-n* (3sg.-head-skin-hit-inf.) "hit on the head", *ya-gʷa-wa-n* (3sg.-heart-hit-inf.) "insult". Such verbs are generally intransitive and they represent a closed class (object incorporation is no longer productive).

INDEFINITE PERSON

The suffix *-ʔa-* 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:

къэкIуаIэщ
q'a-kʷ-ā-ʔa-ś
dir.-go-pret.-suf.-af.
"Somebody came"

дызэплъынуIэ
də-za-płə-nwə-ʔa
1pl.-part.-watch-fut.-suf.
"Are we going to see somebody?"

The above examples lead to the conclusion that the suffix *-ʔa-* indicates only the person of the nominative argument (i.e. of the intransitive subject or object, the lowest ranking macrorole). It appears to be possible to use it with other arguments as well in participial constructions (Kumaxov & Vamling 1998: 68-69).

A different way of expressing the "indefinite person" is to use the second person subject prefix, which is interpreted as referring to indefinite prson. This is possible in proverbs and statements of general truth:

тынщ   уеплъын
tən-ś   w-ya-płə-n
easy-af. 2sg.-3sg.-see-inf.
"It is easy to see him", lit. "It is easy for you to see him"

The second person prefix with indefinite reference is added to the infinitive (or "masdar") and the predicate must be an adjective such as *gʷəġʷ* "difficult", *tən* "easy", *daġʷa* "good", *haləmat* "interesting", etc.

TRANSITIVITY

Verb valency is the number of arguments needed to complete the meaning of the verb in question. Verbs can be avalent (e. g. *it is raining* – this verb is in English syntactically monovalent, but semantically avalent, 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 hierarchy[37]:
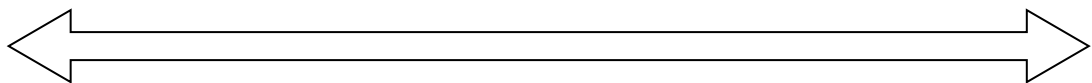
consci-ous doer of the action	first argument of activity verbs	first argument of a bivalent verb	second arg. of a bivalent verb	argument of a stative monovalent verb

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 world[38].

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

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[37] 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.

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

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.[39]. 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 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", *ł'ən* "to kill" and *ł'an* "to die"[40]. 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):

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

хьэр   къуыпшихэм   йодзэкъэ
ha-r   q'ʷəpšxa-m   y-aw-dzaq'a
dog-NOM bone-ERG   3sg.-pres.-bite

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

[40] 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.

"the dog is gnawing, nibbling at the bone"

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

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

щIалэм   тхылъыр едж
ś'āla-m   txəł-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"[41]

ар матхэ *ār mātxa* "he is writing" (intransitive) / **абы тхылъм етх** *ābə txəłəm ya-tx(ə)* "he is writing a letter" (transitive)

пхъащэр пхъэм ихуэ *pχāś'a-r pχa-m yə-xʷa* "the carpenter is arranging the boards " (intransitive) / **пхъащэм пхъэр ихуэ** *pχāś'a-m pχa-r yə-xʷa* "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).

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 correct[42]; 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-kʲʷa* "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

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[41] My informants tell me that this sentence can also mean "the young man is studying the book".
[42] About this see also Hewitt 1982 and Kumakhov & Vamling 2006: 13 ff.

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 prefiks 0-). The order of personal markers is: *direct object-(indirect object)-subject*:

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

сэ уэ услъагъуащ
sa wa wə-s-łāǵ^w-ā-ś
I you 2sg.-1sg.-see-pret.-af.
"I saw you"

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

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

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 arguments are assigned the ergative case. Also, the order of personal prefixes can be expressed like this[43]:

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):

сыуоплъ
sə-w-aw-pł

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

I-you-pres.-watch
"I am watching you"

пщащэр   джанэхэм   къядэ
pśāśa-r   džāna-xa-m   q'-yā-da
girl-NOM   shirt-pl.-ERG   dir.-3-pl.-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):

студентыр   тхылъым   йоджэ
stwədyantə-r   txəłə-m   y-aw-dža
student-NOM   book-ERG   3sg.-pres.-read
"The student is reading the book"

сэ   ки-ном   сеплъащ
sa   kyənaw-m   s-ya-pł-ā-ś
I   cinema-ERG   1sg.-3sg.-to watch-pret.-af.
"I watched the cinema" (= "I was in the cinema")

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:

лӀыжьым   ашхъэр   иӀэщ
ł'əź-əm   āšχa-r   yə-?a-ś
old man-ERG. money-NOM. 3sg.-hold-af.
"The old man has money"

лӀыжьым   псэлъэныр   фӀыфӀт
ł'əź-əm   psałan-ər   f'əf'-t
old man-ERG to speak-inf.-NOM   like-impf.
"The old man liked to speak"

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:

гуыпым   лӀыжьыр   тхьэмадэ   яшӀащ
gʷəp-əm   ɫ'əź-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*)[44].

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-):

сылъагъуащ
0-sə-ɫāġʷ-ā-ś
3sg.-1sg.-see-pret.-af.
"I saw (it)"

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

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

лӀыхэр   маплъахэ
ɫ'ə-xa-r   mā-pɫā-xa
man-pl.-NOM   3sg.pres.-watch-pl.
"People are watching"

сэ   соплъа
sa   s-aw-pɫā
1sg. 1sg.-pres.-watch
"I am watching"

сэ абы сыщыпхуэзащ
sa ābə sə-ś'ə-p-xʷaz-ā-ś
I there 1sg.-dir.-2sg.-meet-pret.-af.
"I met you there"

Some intransitive verbs have an "integrated" marker for the 3rd person object; they are "bipersonal" (Rus. *dvuxličnye*)[45], but their indirect object (oblique argument) is always in the 3rd person singular. The verb *sən* "to swim" is of this type:

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[44] Kumaxov 1971: 68.
[45] With some of these verbs *ya-* has become part of the stem, ie. only etymologically is it a personal prefix, cf. Kumaxov 1973a.

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'ən* "to kill" behaves in the same way (in opposition to the transitive *wəč'ən*).

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

екӀу *ya-kʷə* "he goes (through something), he transverses" - transitive
макӀуэ *mā-kʷa* "he goes" -intransitive

LABILE (DIFFUSE) VERBS

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

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

ар маӀуэ *ār mā-ʔʷa* "he threshes " (intrans.) / **абы гуэдзыр еӀуэ** *ābə gʷadzə-r ya-ʔʷa* "he threshes wheat" (transitive)

These verbs are relatively rare in Kabardian, but their number is significantly greater in the closely related Adyghean language[46]. 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 *ġa-*.

кӀуэн   макӀуэ   егъакӀуэ
kʷa-n "to go": *mā-kʷa* "he goes": *ya-ġā-kʷa* "he sends him" = "makes him go".

The causative prefix *ġa- / ġā-* turns intransitive verbs into transitive verbs:

щӀалэр   губгъуэм   макӀуэ
ś'āla-r   gʷəbġʷa-m   mā-kʷa
boy-NOM.   field-ERG   3sg.-go
"The boy goes into the field"

анэм   щӀалэр   губгъуэм игъакӀуэ
āna-m   ś'āla-r   gʷəbġʷa-m yə-ġā-kʷa

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46 Kumaxov 1971: 206.

mother-ERG boy-NOM field-ERG 3sg-caus.-go
"The mother sends the boy to the field"

супыр   (къэ)вац
swəpə-r   (q'a-)v-ā-ś
soup-NOM (dir.)-to cook-pret.-af.
"The soup was boiling (it was cooking)"

щIалэ цIыкIуым супыр   къигъавац
ś'āla c'ək^ʷə-m   swəpə-r   q'-yə-ġā-v-ā-ś
boy little-ERG   soup-NOM dir.-3sg.-caus.-to cook-pret.-af.
"The boy was cooking soup"

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

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:

Ныбжьэгъуым къазитху иIэти...
 и анэм иригъэгъавэри пщым хуихьац

Nəbźaġ^ʷə-m q'āz-yətx^ʷə 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 *źan* "burn" (intransitive): *ġa-źan* "burn" (transitive): *ġa-ġa-źan* "make someone burn".

Case assignment with causative verbs is typologically rather unusual[47]. The case of the arguments in a causative construction is not determined by the causative verb, but by the verb from which the causative verb is derived. If that 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 the oblique argument), as in the example above, where the original verb, *k^ʷan* "go" is a monovalent intransitive verb: *āna-m ś'āla-r   g^ʷəbġ^ʷa-m yə-ġā-k^ʷa* "The mother (ERG) sends the boy (NOM) to the field (ERG)". If, on the other hand, the original verb is intransitive and has an indirect

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[47] Information on this is given according to Kumaxov (ed.) 2006: 436 and according to the examples obtained from my informants. Cf. also Matasović 2010.

object (oblique argument), the only macrorole ("subject") of the original verb will be marked for the nominative (so *yadžāk^war* "student" is NOM and the indirect object, and "poem", and *wəsam* is ERG, in the following example):

егъэджакIуэм   еджакIуэр   усэм   къригъэджащ
yaġadžāk^wa-m   yadžāk^wa-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:

лIыжьым   щIалэм   хъыджэбзыр   иригъэхьащ
ľəźə-m   ś'āla-m   χədžabzə-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"

лIыжьым   щIалэм   пхъэр   иригъэкъутащ
ľəźə-m   ś'āla-m   pχa-r   yə-r-yə-ġa-q^wət-ā-ś
old man-ERG boy-ERG tree-NOM   3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-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:

КЪэрэшыуей и   хьащIэмрэ   и шым   игъэшихащ
Q'arašəwyay yə   haś'a-m-ra   yə šə-m-ra   yə-ġa-šx-ā-ś
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'arašəwyay* 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 (*haś'a* and *šə*) are in the ergative as the indirect objects viz. non-macrorole core arguments).

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

Since causers are agents, the causative verb receives a personal prefix for the causer which takes the position of the prefix for the agent / subject of a transitive verb (immediately before the causative prefix), and the noun denoting the causer is in the ergative; the agent of the underived verb is reduced to the status of oblique argument / indirect object. The causative verb can thus take up to four personal markers[48] (for the causer, the subject, the object and the indirect object):

лIым фызым тхылъхэр пщащэм ирыригъатхэ
ľə-m fəzə-m txəł-xa-r pśāś'a-m yə-rə-rəy-ġā-t-xa

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[48] My informants warn me that examples like these are slightly unnatural, fabricated.

man woman books girl 3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-give-3pl.
"The man makes the woman give the books to the girl"

сэ уэ абыхэм сырэузгъэтащ
sa wa ābə-xa-m   sə-ra-w-z-ġa-t-ā-ś
I you   he-pl.-ERG   1sg.-3pl.-2sg-1sg.-caus.-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 prefix[49].

According to Šagirov (1977: 124) and Kumaxov (1989: 218), the causative prefix *ġa-* (also Adyghe *ġa-*) is cognate with the Ubykh causative prefix *ġa-* (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.

INVOLUNTATIVE

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

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

хьэм   бажэр   итхьэлащ
ha-m   bāža-r   yə-thal-ā-ś
dog-ERG fox-NOM 3sg.-kill-pret.-af.
"The dog killed the fox"

хьэм бажэр Iэщlэтхьэлыхьащ
ham bāžar ʔaś'athaləhāś
"The dog slaughtered the fox (unintentionally)"

хьэр бажэм Iэщlэтхьэлыхьащ
ha-r bāža-m ʔaś'athaləhāś
"The fox (unintentionally) slaughtered the dog"

щlэлэм дыгъур   иуклащ
ś'āla-m dəġʷə-r   yə-wəč'-ā-ś
boy-ERG thief-NOM 3sg.-kill-pret.-af.
"The young man killed the thief"

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[49] 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).

щӀалэм дыгъур ӀэщӀэукӀащ

ś'āla-m dəġʷə-r ʔaś'a-wəč'āś

"The young man (unintentionally) killed the thief"

уэ усӀэщӀэукӀащ

wa   wə-s-ʔaś'a-wəč'-ā-ś

2sg. 2sg.-1sg.-invol.-kill-pret.-af.

"I accidentally killed you"

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 object[50].

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:

щӀалэм лӀыжьым дыгъур ӀэщӀигъэукӀащ

ś'āla-m   ł'əź-əm   dəġʷə-r   ʔaś'-yə-ġa-wəč'-ā-ś

boy-ERG old.man-ERG thief-NOM invol.-3sg.-caus.-kill-pret.-af.

"The boy made the old man accidentally kill the thief"

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

**бжьахъуиплӀыр   зэдилъри   чыцӀ цӀыкӀуыр
дыгъужьым къыӀэщӀагъэхуащ**

bźāχʷyə-pł'ə-r   zadyəł-ryə   čəc' c'əkʷə-r

bee-keeper-4   together.rise-and   he.goat small-NOM

dəġʷəźə-m q'ə-ʔaś'ā-ġa-xʷ-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 *-ʔaś'a-* 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":

щӀалэр   шэнтым тесщ

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[50] *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).

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

but:

*śālam šantəm ?aś'atayss "the boy accidentally sits on the chair"; rather, one must use the following construction with the negated verb *xʷyayn* "want":

щӀалэр шэнтым   мыхуеуэ   тесщ
ś'āla-r   šantə-m   mə-xʷay-wa tay-s-ś
boy-NOM chair-ERG   neg.-want-ger. dir.-sit-af.

The verb containing the involuntative prefix can be used in polite questions, and the prefix is best rendered as "perhaps, by chance":

Шы къыфӀэщӀэмылъэгъуауэ   пӀэрэ?
Šə   q'ə-f-?aś'a-mə-łaġʷ-ā-wa   p'ara?
horse dir.-2pl.-invol.-neg.-see-pret.-ger.   inter.
"Haven't you seen a horse, by chance?"

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. *wəf'ayən* "to pollute, to make dirty" from *f'ay* "dirty", or *wəq'abzən* "to clean", from *q'ābza* "clean":

сэбийм джанэр   уфӀейащ
sābyəy-m džāna-r   yə-wə-f'yay-ā-ś
kid-ERG   shirt-NOM   3sg.-fact.-dirty-pret.-af.
"The kid made the shirt dirty"

As the case marking on argument shows, the verbs containing the factitive prefix are transitive, just like the causative verbs. In a sense, the factitive is just a special type of denominative causative.

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", *yaġawəśabən* "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:

сошхыдэр *s-aw-šxəda-r* "I mock", **узохь** *wə-z-aw-h* "I carry you", **допIащIэр** *d-aw-p'āś'a-r* "we hurry", **фолажьэр** *f-aw-lāźa-r* "you work", **макIуэр** *mā-k^wa-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:

сэ сыщылъщ
sa sə-śəɫ-ś
I 1sg.-lie-af.
"I am lying"

ар щытщ
ā-r śət-ś
he-NOM stand-af.
"He is standing"

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 *?əġən* "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):

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

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

зауэ нэужьщ
zāwa nawəź-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 objects[51]. 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 benefactive[52]:

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

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

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

уианэр   гуфӀэнщ,   писмо къыхуэптхмэ
wy$ə$-$\bar{a}$na-r $g^w ə f'$a-n-$\acute{s}$,   py$ə$smaw q'$ə$-x^wa-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 $f'ə$-/$f'a$-, which seems to be parallel to the version prefix -x^w-, but it indicates to whose detriment (or against whose will) the action is performed[53]:

уафӀыдэкӀуащ

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[51] 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.
[52] 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 -$z(ə)$- which corresponds to Kab. -x^w $ə$-) to distinguish them from version prefixes in Kartvelian, where a somewhat more complex system exists.
[53] Kumaxov 1971: 276. Cf. the similar "adversative" prefix ca- in Abkhaz.

w-ā-f'ə-da-kʷ-ā-ś
2sg.-3pl.-advers.-conj.-go-pret.-af.
"You went with them against their will"

усфӀыдэкӀуащ
wə-s-f'ə-da-kʷ-ā-ś
2sg.-1sg.-advers.-conj.-go-pret.-af.
"You went with them against my will"

хэзгъэпщӀшыхэр   мэзым
сфӀыхэлъэдэжащи   къысхуыщэхужыркъым
сфӀыхэлъэдэжащи   къысхущэхужыркъым

xa-z-ġa-pś' šə-xa-r   *maz-əm*
dir.-1sg.-caus.-graze.at.night-pl.-NOM wood-ERG

s-f'ə-xa-łada-ž-ā-ś-yə   *q'ə-s-xʷəśaxʷə-žə-r-q'əm*
1sg.-advers.-dir.-run-back.-pret.-af.-and   dir.-1sg.-drive.out-back-pres.-neg.
"The horses that I herded at night ran away on me into the wood and I can't drive them out again".

Шыр   гъуэгуым   щысфӀэкӀуэдащ
Šə-r   ġʷagʷə-m   śə-s-f'a-kʷad-ā-ś
horse-NOM road-ERG   dir.-1sg.-advers.-disappear-pret.-af.
"The horse disappeared to me on the road, I lost my horse along the road"

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 *-xʷ-* and the adversative prefix *-f'ə-* does not affect the transitivity of a verb.

The applicative can be freely combined with the causative:

тхьэм ā цӀыкӀур къыпхуигъэхъу
tha-m   ā   c'ək'ʷə-r   q'ə-p-xʷ-yə-ġa-χʷə
god-ERG this little-NOM dir.-2sg.-ver.-3sg.-caus.-grow/become
"May God raise this little one for you!"

си дыщэр   къыпхогъанэ
syə dəśa-r   q'ə-p-xʷ-aw-ġā-na
my gold-NOM dir.-2sg.-ver.-pres.-caus.-remain
"I am leaving you my gold" (= "I am making my gold remain for you")

II. CONJUNCTIVITY (COMITATIVE)

The prefix expressing conjunctivity (Rus. *sojuznost'*) *-da-/-də-* indicates that the subject is performing the action together with somebody else[54]:

sə-da-kʷ-ā-ś "I went with him"   : *sə-kʷāś* "I went"
1sg.-conj.-go-pret.-af.

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

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

лӀыжьым   хьащӀэхэм   шху   ядефащ
ł'əź-əm   haś'a-xa-m   šxʷə   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 *haś'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:

**махуэ гуэрым   ар   и   ныбжьэгъу цӀыкӀу   гуэрым
кӀэн дэджэгурти**

māxʷa gʷar-əm   ā-r   yə   nəbźaġʷə c'ək'ʷə gʷar-əm
day   some-ERG   he-NOM 3sg.poss. friend   small   some-ERG

č'an da-džagʷə-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:

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

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

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

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):

кхуейм   щIакхуэ дэшх
qʷyay-m   ś'āqʷa da-šx
cheese-ERG meat   conj.-eat
"Eat meat with cheese"

ХЬэсэн си нартыху кхъэпыр езым ейхэм дихьэжащ
Hasan syə nārtəxʷ 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:

щIалэ хъыджэбз лIыжьым   дилъагъуащ
ś'āla χədžabz ł'əź-əm   d-yə-łāġʷ-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 2007). 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-, -zada-* "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:

уэрэ сэрэ дызэдолажьэ
wara sara də-zad-aw-lāźa
I   you   2pl.-together-pres.-work
"You and I work together"

Зэгуэрым ХЪымыщ деж нарт шу гуп къыдыхьащ,
зекIуэ зыдашэну

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

zayk'^wa zəd-ā-ša-nwə
raid   together-3pl.-lead-inf.

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

RECIPROCITY

The verb in the reciprocal form expresses that its two core arguments (the Actor and the Undergoer) act on each other simultaneously. The reciprocal prefix is *za-* (for intransitive verbs), and *zarə-* (for transitive verbs):

зэгурыІуэн *za-g^wərə?^wa-n* "to arrange between each other"

зэрылъагъун *zarə-ɫāġ^wə-n* "to see each other"

дызэрыгъуэтащ
də-zarə-ġ^wat-ā-ś
1pl.-rec.-meet-pret.-af.
"We met each other"

The core arguments of the verb in the reciprocal form must be in the ergative case, to which the conjunctive suffix *-ra* "and" is attached:

лІыжьымрэ   и   къуэмрэ   куэд щІауэ зэрылъэгъуакъым
ɫ'əźə-m-ra   yə   q'^wa-m-ra   k^wad ś'āwa zarə-ɫaġ^w-ā-q'əm
old.man-ERG-and   3sg.poss.   son-ERG-and long doing rec.-see-pret.-neg.
"The old man and his son have not seen each other for a long time"

Of course, personal pronouns in the 1st and 2nd person are not case marked, but they also receive the conjunctive *-ra*:

Фэрэ дэрэ куэд мыщІэу   дызэрылъагъуниц
Fara dara k^wad məś'awə   də-zarə-ɫāġ^wə-n-ś
you we   long   not.doing 1pl.-rec.-see-fut.-af.
"We will see each other shortly"

Perhaps under the influence of the Russian reciprocal construction (*drug-druga*), Kabardian has also developed the construction with the "reciprocal pronouns" *zə-ādryay* ("one-other"):

Зым   адрейм   зыщигъэпщкІуурэ,
Іуащхьэм зэрыхьащ   зэшищыр

Zə-m   ādryay-m   zə-ś-yə-ġa-pśk'^w-wə-ra,

one-ERG other-ERG refl.-dir-3sg.-caus.-avoid-ger.-and

ʔʷāśha-m zarəh-ā-ś   zaš-yə-śə-r
hill-ERG meet-pret.-af. brother-suff.-3-NOM

"And, after avoiding one another, the three brothers met on the hill"

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):

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

узопцIыж
wə-z-aw-wəpś'ə-ž
2sg.-refl.-pres.-ask-back
"You ask yourself"

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

зыбохуапэ
zə-b-aw-xʷāpa
 refl.-2sg.-pres.-dress
"You dress yourself" (transitive verb)

The reflexive marker on the subordinated verb must be controlled by the subject of that verb, not the subject of the verb in the main clause:

дэ уэ узэуэну дыхуейщ
da   wa   wə-za-wa-nwə   də-xʷyay-ś
we   you(SG)   2SG-REFL-CAUS-hit-INF   1PL-want-AFF
"We want you to hit yourself"

The preceding example cannot be taken to mean "*We want you to hit us", with the subject of the main clause (*da*) as the controller. This means that there is no "long-distance" binding in Kabardian, no binding across the clause boundary. If the object of the verb of the subordinate clause is coreferent with the subject of the verb of the main clause, the reflexive cannot be used:

Согугъэр абы силъагъуну
s-aw-g^wǝġa-r   *ā-bǝ*   *s-yǝ-ɫāġ^wǝ-nwǝ*
1sg.-pres.-hope-pres.   3sg.-ERG   1sg.-3sg.-see-fut.
"I hope that he will see me"

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:

псым   зыкъыхухэдзэн
psǝ-m   *zǝ-q'ǝ-x^wǝ-xa-dza-n*
water-ERG   refl.-dir.-ver.-dir.-throw-inf.
"to throw oneself into the water for him"

The reflexive prefix is often combined with the suffix -*ž(a)*-, meaning "back". The details of the use of this suffix should be further examined, since it appears to be obligatory with intransitive bivalent verbs. The following examples are obtained from my informants:

щIалэ цIыкIум зилIыжащ
ś'āla c'ǝk'^wǝ-m z-yǝ-ɫ'ǝ-ž-ā-ś
boy little-ERG refl.-3sg.-kill-back-pret.-af.
"The little boy killed himself" (transitive verb)

щIалэ цIыкIур   зэуэжащ
ś'āla   c'ǝk'^wǝ-r   za-wa-ž-ā-ś
boy little-NOM refl.-hit-back-pret.-af.
"The little boy hit himself" (intransitive verb)

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, *ɫ'ǝn*), i.e. that Kabardian syntax is nominative-accusative according to this criterion.

Note the following pair of sentences with causative verbs, which point to the rules governing the use of -*ž*-:

пщащэм щIалэр   зригъэуащ
pśāśa-m ś'āla-r   z-r-yǝ-ġa-w-ā-ś
girl-ERG boy-NOM   refl.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-hit-pret.-af.

"The girl made the boy hit her" (litterally "herself", i.e. the girl)

пщащэм щӀалэр   зригъэуэжащ
pśāśa-m ś'āla-r   z-r-yə-ġa-wa-ž-ā-ś
girl-ERG boy-NOM   refl.-3sg.-3sg.-caus.-hit-back.-pret.-af.
"The girl made the boy hit himself"

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

адыгэ   лъэпкъыжьри лъэпкъ уардэ   хъужынущ
Adəγa   łapq'ə-ź-ryə   łapq' wārda   χʷə-žə-nwə-ś
Adyghean people-old-and   people strong   become-back-fut.-af.
"And the old Adyghean people will become strong again".

Besides temporal, the suffix *-ž-* also has directional (spatial) meaning, signifying the reverse direction of the action. Thus, while *kʷan* means "to go", *kʷ̣ažən* means "to return", while *tən* is "to give", *təžən* is "to give back", etc. When added to adjectival stems, it can also mean "even", e.g. *ba* is "a lot, many", *naχəba* is "more", and *naχəbaž* is "even more". In some cases, the suffix *–ž-* can indicate that the action is performed again, but not by the same subject; in a Kabardian folk-story about the hero Ashamaz, we find a sentence in which his friend asks him to avenge his father:

Уи адэр   къазыукӀар укӀыж
Wyə   āda-r   q'a-zə-wəč'-ā-r   wəč'ə-ž
your father-NOM   dir-part-kill-pret-NOM   kill-back
„Kill the one who had killed your father!"

From the descriptive point of view, it can be said that the suffix *–ž-* indicates that the lowest Macrorole argument of the verb (in traditional terms its „intransitive subject or direct object") is doubly affected by the action: with non-reflexives, this may mean either that the action is performed twice („again") on (or by) that argument, or that the action is directed „back" at it. With reflexive intransitives, it also means that the lowest macrorole argument is doubly affected: once as the instigator of the action, and again as its undergoer.

There is no special possessive reflexive. Rather, the usual possessive pronouns are used:

си мэл зытхухыр мэз лъапэм къытезнати,
бэгъуауэ нэху къекӀащ

syə   mal zəpxʷəxər maz łāpa-m   q'ə-tay-z-n-āt
1sg.poss. sheep 5-6   woodmeadow-ERG dir.-dir.-1sg.-leave-plup.
"I had left my five or six sheep on a meadow in the wood"

DEONTIC MODALITY

The potential prefix *-xʷa-/xʷə-* and/or the suffix *-f(ə)-* express deontic modality, i.e. whether the subject is capable of doing the action expressed by the verb or not:

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

The prefix *-xʷə-* 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) *-xʷə-* (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-/-xʷ-*) 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 *-xʷa-* in Kabardian, *-fa-* in Adyghean, which is in keeping with the rule according to which the Common Adyghean *xʷ results in *f* in Adyghean. However, the suffix *-f-* is found in Kabardian texts as well, cf. *ādəɣabzač'a sawpsałaf* "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:

си   джатэ куэбжэм   къыфIэкIыфынкъым
syə   Džāta Kʷabža-m   q'ə-f'ač'ə-fə-n-q'əm
1sg.poss. sword gate-ERG dir.-pass-pot.-fut.-neg.
"He will not be able to pass my 'Sword-Gate'"

Уэзырмэдж ди мыгъусэмэ, кътхуэхьынкъым
Wazərmadž dyə   mə-ġʷəsa-ma,   q'ə-t-xʷa-hə-n-q'əm
W.   1pl.poss. neg.-companion-cond. dir.-1pl.-pot.-carry.away-fut.-neg.
"If Wazirmadž is not our companion, we will not be able to kidnap her (sc. Satanay)"

An interesting feature of the potential prefix is that it reduces the transitivity 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)[55]:

уестыркъым
w-ya-s-tə-r-q'əm
2sg.-3sg.-1sg.-to give-pres.-neg.

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[55] 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.

"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)

усхуетыркъым
wə-s-xʷə-ya-tə-r-qʼəm
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 indicative[56]:

сымэджэм   мыӀэрысэр ешх
səmadža-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"

сымэджэм   мыӀэрысэр   хуошх
səmadža-m   mə?arəsa-r   xʷ-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".

Unlike the potential prefix *-xʷə-*, the potential suffix *-fə-* is freely combined with the version prefix *-xʷa-*:

Сыт пхуэсщӀэфын иджыри?
Sət   p-xʷa-s-śʼa-fə-n   yədžəryə?
what 2sg.-ver.-1sg.-do-pot.-inf. more
"What more can I do for you?"

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 pattern[57], cf. the intransitive verb *źan* "to wait":

сыножьэ
sə-n-aw-w-źa "I wait for you"
1sg.-dir.-pres.-2sg.-to wait

сыножьащ
sə-n-aw-ź-ā-ś "I waited for you"
1sg-dir-2sg.-to wait-pret.-af.

сывожьэ
sə-v-aw-źa "I wait for you (pl.)"

сывэжьащ
sə-va-ź-ā-ś   "I waited for you (pl.)"

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[56] Abitov (ed.) 1957: 93.
[57] Kumaxov 1971: 267.

1sg.-2pl.-pres.-to wait

сожьэ
s-aw-źa "I wait for him/I wait for them"

сежьащ
s-ya-ź-ā-ś "I waited for him/for them"

укъысожьэ
wə-q'ə-s-aw-źa "you wait for me"
2sg.-dir.-1sg.-pres.-to wait

укъзэжьащ
wə-q'ə-za-ź-ā-ś "you waited for me"

укъыдожьэ
wə-q'ə-d-aw-źa "you wait for us"

укъдэжьащ
wə-q'ə-da-ź-ā-ś "you waited for us"

уожьэ
w-aw-źa "you wait for him/for them"

уежьащ
w-ya-ź-ā-ś "you waited for him/them"

къзожьэ
q'ə-z-aw-źa "he waits for me"

къзэжьащ
q'ə-za-ź-ā-ś "he waited for me"

дыножьэ
də-n-aw-w-źa "we wait for you"
1pl.-dir.-pres.-2sg.-to wait

дыножьащ
də-n-aw-ź-ā-ś "we waited for you"

дожьэ
d-aw-źa "we wait for him/them"

дижьащ
d-yə-ź-ā-ś "we waited for him/them"

къызожьэ
q'ə-z-aw-źa "they wait for me"
etc.

къызэжьащ
q'ə-za-ź-ā-ś "they waited for me"

Some linguists 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 verbs[58]

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[58] 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 *kʷan*:

сокӀуэ(р) : *мэкӀуэ(р)* : *сыкӀуэркъым* : *кӀуэркъым*
s-aw-kʷa(r) : *ma-kʷa(r)* : *sə-kʷa-r-k'əm* : *kʷa-r-q'əm*
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 *śətən* "stand"

сыщытщ : *щытщ* : *сыщыткъым* : *щыткъым*
sə-śət-ś : *śət-ś* :   *sə-śət-q'əm* :   *śət-q'əm*
"I stand"   "He stands"   "I don't stand"   "He doesn't stand"

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

сожьэ(р)   *йожьэ(р)*   *сыжьэркъым*   *ижьэркъым*
s-aw-źa(r)   *y-aw-źa(r)*   *sə-źa-r-q'əm*   *yə-źa-r-q'əm*
"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"

соды(р)   *едыр*   *сыдыркъым*   *едыркъым*
s-aw-də(r)   *ya-də-r*   *sə-də-r-q'əm*   *ya-də-r-q'əm*
"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. *kʷāś* "he went" in contrast to *kʷāt* "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[59]. This can be seen in the following sentence:

"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.
[59] There do not seem to be any clear parallels to this kind of tense system in Comrie's cross-linguistic survey (Comrie 1985).

Нартхэр   мы щӀыпӀэм   исат, Нарт Сосрыкъуэ иджатэр
а   зэман жыжьэм   щыбзат

Nārt-xa-r   mə ś'əp'a-m   yə-s-āt,   Nārt Sawsrəq'ʷa yə-džāta-r
N-pl.-NOM that land-ERG   3sg.-sit-ant.pret.   N.   S.   3sg.poss.-sword-NOM

ā   zamān žəźa-m   śəbz-āt
that time   far-ERG   perform.deeds-ant.pret.

"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 žəźam* "at that time, long ago". Similarly, the use of the preterite is incompatible (or nearly so) with temporal adverbs such as *dəġʷāsa* "yesterday", which specify the exact time when the action was performed. With such adverbs the anterior preterite must be used:

дыгъуасэ къалэм   сыкӀуат /   *сыкӀуащ
dəġʷāsa q'āla-m   sə-k'ʷ-āt /   *sə-k'ʷ-ā-ś
yesterday city-ERG   1sg.-go-ant. pret.   1sg.-go-pret.-af.
"I went to the city yesterday"

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:

Сосрыкъуэ жьэгуым   дэст.   Сэтэней унэм   къыщӀыхьащ
Sawsrəq'ʷa źagʷə-m   da-s-t.   Satanyay 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:

дыгъуасэ   къалэм   сыкӀуэрт
dəġʷāsa   q'āla-m   sə-k'ʷa-rt
yesterday   city-ERG   1sg.-go-impf.
"I was going to the city yesterday"

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

Іуащхьэмахуэ и щхьэгум Мэзытхьэ ¹, Амыщ ²,
Тхьэгъэлэдж, Созрэщ ³, Лъэпщ сымэ Псатхьэ деж
щызэхуэсахэу Санэхуафэ яІэт. АтІэ, илъэс къэсыху-
кІэ а тхьэпэлъытэхэм Санэхуафэ ящІт. ЩІы-
лъэм хэт нэхъ лІыгъэ иІэу тетми, ари яшэрти
зы санэхубжьэ ирагъафэрт, щІылъэм щызекІуэ
цІыху цІыкІухэм я хьэтыркІэ. Тхьэхэм ядефа цІыхур
нартхэ ягъэлъапІэрт. Апхуэдэурэ илъэс Іэджи екІуэ-
кІащ.

Тхьэпэлъытэхэм я Сэнэхуафэм тхьэмадэу щысыр
езы Псатхьэти къэтэджри жиІащ:

"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 (*yāś'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 (*yərāġāfart*, impf.) from a horn filled with sana, as a favour to the thirsty little men on earth. The Narts esteemed (*yāġaĺāp'art*, impf.) highly the man who drank with the gods. And many years passed (*yakʷač'āś*, 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?āś*, 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.

The pluperfect generally expresses an action performed a long time ago, in the distant past:

ди ужь къихъуэнйр зэрыукІыжынйщ
къыджаІэгъащ ди адэжьхэм

dyə   wəź q'-yə-χʷa-nwə-r   zarə-wəč'ə-žə-nwə-ś
1pl.poss. after dir.-3sg.-become-inf.-ABS recip.-kill-back-fut.-aff.

q'ə-d-ž-ā-?a-ġā-ś   dyə āda-ź-xa-m
dir.-1pl.-pref.-3pl.-say-plup.-aff.   1pl. father-old-pl.-ERG

"Our forefathers said to us long time ago that the ones who will exist after us would kill each other"

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

Балигъ мэхъу суэнэм и мылъхукъуэр. ЗыпІыжами
иІат пхъу балигъи, зогуакІуэ.

Bālyəġ ma-χʷ   swan-am yə   məłxʷəqʼʷa-r.   Zə-pʼəž-ā-m-yə
adult   3sg.pres.-become S-ERG 3sg.poss. stepson-NOM part.-raise-pret.-ERG-and

yə-?-āt   pχʷə   bālyəġ-yə, z-aw-gʷākʷʷa.
3sg.-have-ant.pret. daughter   adult-and   refl.-pres.-fall.in.love

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

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-kʷʷa-nwə-ś* (city-ERG 1sg.-go-factual fut.-af.), whereas *q'ālam sə-kʷʷa-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:

Нартыжьхэм хабзэу   йахэлът   зэзэуэну бийм пӀэлъэ ирату,   хъыбари   ирагъащӀэу: "дывэзэуэну дынэкӀуэнущ   мыпхуэдэ зэмэным"   жэӀэрэ. эрищхьэкӀэ бийм хабзэр   икъутэри: "Нартыжьыпкъ ткъутэнщ, нарт хэку тхъунщӀэнщ"   жаӀэри   нарт хэкуым къихьащ

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

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

də-na-kʷʷa-nwə-ś   mə-pxʷada zamān-əm" - ž-ā-?ara. ārśhač'a
1pl.-dir.-go-fut.-af. this-like   time-ERG   dir.-3pl.-say but

byəy-m xābza-r   yə-qʷʷəta-ryə: "Nārtəźəpqʼ t-qʷʷəta-n-ś,
enemy-ERG custom-NOM 3sg.-break-and Nart.race 1pl.-break-fut.af.

nārt xakʷ t-χʷʷənśʼa-n-ś"   ž-ā-?a-ryə   nārt xakʷʷə-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-kʷʼa-nt* "I would go" (see below).

И тІасхъапlэ къамыхутэмэ, пэлъэщынутэкъым.

yə   t'āsχāp'a   q'-ā-mə-xʷəta-ma,   pałaśə-nwəta-q'əm
3sg.poss. weak.spot dir.-3pl.-neg.-discover-cond. overcome.-fut.II-neg.
"If they would not find his weak spot, they would not overcome him"

Here are the selected paradigms of the verbal tenses:

PRESENT

A) dynamic intransitive verb *kʷʼan* "to go"
1. *s-aw-kʷʼa(r)* "I go" *sə-kʷʼa-r-q'əm* "I don't go"
2. *w-aw-kʷʼa(r)* "you go"
3. *mā-kʷʼa(r)* "he goes"
1. *d-a-kʷʼa(r)* "we go"
2. *f-a-kʷʼa(r)* "you go"
3. *mā-kʷʼa-xa-r* "they go"

B) static intransitive verb *śə-sən* "to sit"
1. *sə-śə-s-ś* "I sit"
2. *wə-śə-s-ś* "you sit"
3. *śə-s-ś* "he sits"
1. *də-śə-s-ś* "we sit"
2. *fə-śə-s-ś* "you sit"
3. *śə-s-ś* "they sit"

C) dynamic intransitive verb *psałan* "to converse"
sawpsāła "I converse"
wawpsāła "you converse"
māpsāła "he converses"
dawpsāła "we converse"
fawpsāła "you converse"
māpsāła (*mapsāłaxar*) "they converse"

D) 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-kʰʷā-ś "I went"
wə- kʰʷā-ś "you went"
kʰʷā-ś "he went"

səśəsāś "I was sitting"
wəśəsāś "you were sitting"
śəsāś "they were sitting"
dəśəsāś "we were sitting"
fəśəsāś "you were sitting"
śəsāś "they were sitting"

sa txələm syadžāś "I read a book"
wa txələm wyadžāś "you read a book"
ār txələm yadžāś "he read a book"
da txələm dyadžāś "we read a book"
fa txələm fyadžāś "you read a book"
āxar txələm yadžāś "they read a book"

shāś "I carried him" / "I carried them"
wəshāś "I carried you"
fəshāś "I carried you (pl.)"
phāś "you carried him" / "you carried them"
səphāś "you carried me"
dəphāś "you carried us"
yəhāś "he carried him" / "he carried them"
syəhāś "he carried me"
dyəhāś "he carried us"
wyəhāś "he carried you"
fyəhāś "he carried you (pl.)"
thāś "we carried him" / "we carried them"

wəthāś "we carried you"
fəthāś "we carried you (pl.)"
fhāś "you (pl.) carried him" / "you carried them"
səfhāś "you (pl.) carried me"
dəfhāś "you (pl.) carried us"
yāhāś "they carried him" / "they carried them"
sāhāś "they carried me"
dāhāś "they carried us"
wāhāś "they carried you"
fãhāś "they carried you (pl.)"

IMPERFECT
sə- kʷa -(r)t "I was going"
wə-kʷa(r)t "you were going"
ya-kʷa(r)t "he was going"

ANTERIOR PRETERITE
sə- kʷ-āt "(then) I went"

PLUPERFECT
sə-kʷa-ġā-ś "I went a long time ago"

ANTERIOR PLUPERFECT
sə-kʷa-ġāt "(then) I went a long time ago"

CATEGORICAL FUTURE
sə- kʷa-n-ś "I will go"

FACTUAL FUTURE
sə- kʷa-nwə-ś "I will go, I am about to go"
(*ś* is the affirmative suffix)

FUTURE II
sə- kʷa-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*:

утхэрэ
wə-txa-ra
2sg.-write-inter.

"Are you writing?" (interrogative)

сыф1ущ1энкъэ
sə-f-ʔʷəś'a-n-q'a
1sg.-2pl.-meet-fut.-inter.
"Will I meet you?" (interrogative)[60]

The suffix *-q'a* can also be used in exclamations:

гывващ1эхами, зэ   укъик1ынкъэ   гъуэм!
gʷəvā-ś'axāmyə, za   wə-q'-yəč'ə-n-q'a   ġʷa-m!
soon-late   once   2sg.-dir.-exit-fut.-inter. hole-ERG
"Sooner or later, you will exit that hole!"

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:

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

дыфхуэк1уэну
də-f-xʷa-kʷ'a-nwə
1pl.-2pl.-ver.-go-fut.
"Are we going to go for you?"

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

зы илъэск1э   сигъэхьэщ1эфынрэ   сыумыгъэхьэщ1эфынрэ1
zə yəłas-č'a   s-yə-ġa-haś'a-fə-n-ra   sə-y-mə-ġa-haś'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*, *śha* "why", etc. They can be freely combined with the interrogative suffixes:

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

---

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

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):

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

If the lexical verb contains directional prefixes, these remain in the imperative:

мыдэ къакӀуэ
məda q'ā-k'ʷa "come here!"
here dir.-go

The third person singular imperative receives the personal prefix:

иугъащӀэ   **телефоныр**   **къэзыгупсысэм**
yə-wə-ġāś'a   *taylayfawn-ər*   *q'a-zə-gʷəpsəs-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, with the regular person prefix:

фи   **Сэтэней гуащэ феупщӀ!**
fyə   *Satanyay gʷāśa f-ya-wəpś'!*
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-ġa-tx* (1pl.-2pl.-caus.-write) "let's write". This is typologically completely parallel to the English imperative construction (*let us write*):

Уэзырмэдж гъусэ дывгъэщӀ
Wazərmadž ġʷəsa də-v-ġa-ś'
W.   companion 1pl.-2pl.-caus.-do
"Let us make Wazirmadž our companion!"

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

умыкӏуэ
 wə-mə-kʷ'a
 2sg.-neg.-go
"don't go"

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

жэ žа! "run!"
схуэжэ s-xʷa-ža "run for me"
схудэжэ s-xʷə-da-ža "run for me with him!"

The imperative can be reinforced by adding the suffix -*t*: *šxa* "eat!" vs. *šxa-t* "come on, eat!"

Хым фыхэплъэт!
xə-m   fə-xa-pła-t
sea-ERG   2pl.-dir.-look-imp.
"Come on, look into the sea!"

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:

сэ нобэ зы мыщэ слъэгъуащи
sa nawba zə məśa s-łaġʷ⁻ā-ś-yə
I today 1 bear 1sg.-see-pret.-af.-adm.
"Why, I saw a bear today!"

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 mood[61].

ар къэсыжащэрэ(т)
ā-r   q'a-səžā-śara(t)

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[61] 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.

he-NOM dir.-come-opt.
"Oh if he would come!"

мыр зи шхужьыр къэхъужауэ слъэгъущэрэт
mə-r   zyə   šxʷəź-ər q'a-χʷə-ž-ā-wa   s-łaġʷə-śarat
he-NOM whose thigh-bone dir.-become-back-pret.-ger. 1sg.-see-opt.
"May I see resurrected the one whose thigh-bone this is"

уэих къешхкIэт
wašx q'yašx-č'at
rain   fall-optative
"Oh if it would rain!"

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

There is also an optative prefix *wə-*, 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-kʷa* "may he go", or "may you go" (Kumaxov 1989: 201).

Besides that, a wish can also be expressed with the "optative particle" *āpśyə(y)*, as in the greeting **йпсо эпщи** *wəpsaw āpśyə* "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:

дыфлъагъуамэ
də-f-lāġʷ-ā-ma
1pl.-2pl.-see-pret.-cond.
"If you saw us"

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

тхьурымбэ хуыжь къищIмэ сыкъокIуэж,
тхьурымбэ хуыжь къимыщIмэ сыкъэкIуэжыркъым

thwərəmba xʷəź q'-yə-ś'-ma   sə-q'-aw-kʷa-ž,
foam   white dir.-3sg.-appear-cond.   1sg.-dir.-pres.-go-back

thwərəmba xʷəź q'-yə-mə-ś'-ma   sə-q'a-kʷa-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"

зыш уэттынт къыхуэбгъэтыжмэ
zə-š wa-t-tə-nt,   *q'ə-t-xʷa-b-ġʷatə-ž-ma*
1-horse-2sg.-1pl.-give-fut.II dir.-2pl.-ver.-2sg.-find-again-cond.
"We would give you a horse if you found it for us"

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

абы лъысэ лъэкъуэм мафІэ щІэмынатэмэ, бжьэматэхэр исынутэкъым

ā-bə   łəs-ā łaqʷa-m māf'a ś'a-mə-nā-t-ama,
this-ERG alot-pret. leg-ERG fire dir.-neg.-catch.fire-impf.-cond.

bźa-māta-xa-r yə-sə-nwəta-q'əm
bee-hive-pl.-NOM 3sg.-burn-fut.II-neg.
"If the leg alloted 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 expreses 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*.

фэкІэ щІэлащэми гукІэ лІыщ
fa-č'a ś'alā-śa-myə gʷə-č'a ł'ə-ś
skin-INST boy-af.-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 moods[62]. 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-kʷa-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:

сыт я щІэжынт Нартхэм?
sət yā-ś'a-žə-nt   Nārt-xa-m?
what 3pl.-do-back-fut. II N.-pl.-ERG
"What could the Narts do?" (asked as a rhetorical question)

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[62] E. g. Kumaxov (ed.) 2006.

гъусэ сыпшӀтэмэ, сынэкӀуэнт

ġʷəsa   sə-p-ś'-ta-ma,   sə-na-kʷa-nt
companion 1sg.-2sg.-make-impf.-cond.   1sg.-dir.-go-fut. II
"If you would make me your companion, I would go".

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

EVIDENTIALITY

The basic evidentiality suffix is *-ġan-*. 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 speaker[63]:

ар къэкӀуэжагъэнщ

ā-r   q'a-kʷa-ž-ā-ġan-ś
he-NOM dir.-go-back-pret.-evid.-af.
"He probably came back" (but I did not see this)

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, e.g., in Turkish. The Kabardian evidential suffix is actually an agglutination of the pluperfect suffix *-ġa-* 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 *-ś*, cf.

кӀуагъэнщ *kʷ-ā-ġan-ś* "he probably went" in opposition to *kʷ-ā-ś* "he went".

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

кӀуагъэнкӀэ мэхъу *kʷ-ā-ġan-č'a ma-χʷə* "maybe he went" (*ma-χʷə* is the 3rd p. sg. present of the verb "to become").

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[63] 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 *-ġan-* using the Russian expression *skoree vsego* "most probably".

Besides the synthetic evidential construction, there is the analytic construction with the auxiliary verb *χʷən* (used in the future) and the (participial) verbal base:

фыкӀуа   хъунщ
fə-kʷ-ā   χʷə-n-ś
2pl.-go-pret. be-fut.af.
"You probably went"

лъыжэ дагу хъунщ
ł'əź   dagʷ χʷə-n-ś
old.man deaf   be-fut.af.
"The old man is probably deaf"

DEVERBAL NOMINALS

Kabardian has three classes of deverbal nominals: 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; some linguists would call it a converb).

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 *txanər* (NOM), *txanəm* (ERG), *txanəmč'a* (INST) and *txanwə* (ADV). Also, personal prefixes can be added to the infinitive form, cf. forms of the verb *laźan* "to work":

1sg. **сылэжьэн** *sə-laźan*   1pl. **дылэжьэн** *də-laźan*
2sg. **улэжьэн** *wə-laźan*   2pl. **фылэжьэн** *fə-laźan*
3sg. **лэжьэн** *laźan*   3pl. **лэжьэн** *laźan*

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:

сэ щӀэздзащ   (сы)кӀуэн
sa ś'a-z-dz-ā-ś   (sə)-kʷa-n
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:

сэ сигугъащ   сыкӀуэн
sa syə-gʷəġ-ā-ś   sə-kʷa-n
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 *gʷəġan* does not have obligatory control.

Stative verbs can be formed from nouns and adjectives by adding the infinitive suffix: *łə* "man" : *łə-n* "to be a man"; *fʼəcʼa* "black" : *fʼəcʼa-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*)[64]:

> **сэ абы жеӏащ   унэм   щӏэмыкӏыну**
> *sa   ā-bə žayʔ-ā-ś   wəna-m   śʼa-mə-čʼə-nwə*
> 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 forms[65]: *txanə-r* "reading", *syə-txanə-r* "my reading". Also, just as any other noun, the verbal noun can be modified by an adjective:

> **Уэ уи дын   кӏыхьыр   бухащ**
> *Wa   wyə dən   čʼəhə-r   b-wəx-ā-ś*
> you your sewing long-NOM 2sg.-finish-pret.-af.
> "You have finished your long sewing"

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 declension[66].

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:

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[64] This type of infinitive can also be called the supine.

[65] 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.

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

зытхыр *zə-txər* "writing it" – **езытар** *ya-zə-tār* "giving it to him" – **лажьэр** *lāźar* "working" – **тхэр** *txar* "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:

зэплъыр *za-płər* "who he is looking at", **зыхуэкъуэр** *zə-xʷa-qʷ'ar* "who he is going for", *s-txər* **стхыр** "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 nominative[67]. Participles referring to the nominative noun phrase do not have the prefix *zə-/za-*:

абы   ишэр   абы лIыжьыр ешэ
ā-bə   yə-ša-r "the one whom he is leading" : *ā-bə ł'əźə-r ya-ša* "he leads the old man"
he-ERG   3sg.-to lead-NOM   he-ERG old man-NOM   3sg.-to lead

сэ ар   зыхуэсшэр
sa ā-r   zə-xʷa-s-ša-r
I he-NOM   part.-ver.-1sg.-to lead-NOM
"The one who I am leading (him) for"

сэ ар   лIыжьым   хузошэ
sa ā-r   ł'əźə-m   xʷə-z-aw-ša
I he-NOM old man-ERG ver.-1sg.-pres.-to lead
"I lead him for the old man"

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.

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):

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

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[67] Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 292.

The participle can be inflected for all persons except for the person of the lowest ranking macrorole (the Undergoer) and for the person indexed by the participial prefix *zə-*.

Participles can also contain personal markers of conjunctivity and version:

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

хуэкӀуэр
xʷa-kʷ'a-r
vers.-go-NOM
"who is going for him/on his behalf"

The participle prefix has the form *za-* rather than *zə-* when the participle refers to the oblique argument (non-macrorole core argument) of an intransitive verb, e.g. *za-dža-r* "who he/she is calling" (from *yadžan* "call").

The so-called "instrumental" participle form is formed with the prefix *zar(ə)-*, *zara-* which contains the prefix *za-*: *zarə-lāźar* "with which you do"; *zar-ya-džar f'əwaś* "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 Łapś zar-yə-ś'-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:

ауэрэ сабийр   къэхъурт   зэрыадыгэр   имыщӀэуэ
āwara sābyəy-r   q'a-χʷər-t   zarə-ādəya-r   yə-mə-ś'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):

сабийр   зыгъашхэр   и   анащ
sābyəy-r   zə-ġā-šxa-r   yə   āna-ś
child-NOM   part.pref.-caus.-feed-NOM poss.3sg.   mother-af.
"The one who feeds a baby is its mother" (a 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*.

Participles may receive case affixes, but this is often optional:

Зыгъуэт(ыр)   ***мэгуфIэри,***   ***зыфIэкIуэд(ыр)***   ***магъ***
Zə-ġʷat(-ər)   *ma-gʷəf'a-ryə,*   *zə-f'a-kʷ'ad(-ər)*   *mā-ġ*
part.-find-(NOM)   3sg.-rejoice-and part.-advers.-lose-(NOM) 3sg.-cry
"He who finds (it), rejoices, he who loses (it) - cries" (a proverb)

Уи адэр зыукIар уи анам къегъэIуатэ
Wyə āda-r zə-wəč'-ā-r wyə āna-m q'-ya-ġa-ʔʷāta
your father-NOM part.-kill-pret.-NOM your mother-ERG dir.-3sg.-caus.-say
"Make your mother say who had killed your father"

In the examples above, the participles are formed from transitive verbs ("feed", "find", "kill"), and they refer to their subjects ("the one who feeds, finds, kills"). However, the participles are in the nominative case, because, in the respective sentences, the participles have the syntactic role of intransitive subject (the first two examples), or transitive object (the third example). The syntactic role of the argument referred to by the participle is indicated only by the presence or absence of the prefix *zə-* (above), or by directional prefixes *z(ə)da-* (with telic meaning) and *(zə-)śə-* (with locative/temporal meaning). Take, for example, the following participles:

зыдэкIуэр
zəda-kʷ'a-r
part.-dir.-go-NOM
"where he is going to"

щылажьэр
śə-lāźa-r
dir.-work-NOM
"where he is working"

щыжэIэм
śə-žāʔa-m
dir.-talk-ERG
"where (people) talk"

Здежьар   ***и***   ***ныбжьэгъу дежьти,***
щынэсым   ***и***   ***хьэщIэщым***   ***ихьащ***

Zd-yaź-ā-r   *yə*   *nəbźaġʷə dyaź-t-yə,*
dir.-set.out-pret.-NOM 3sg.poss.   friend   to-impf.-and

śə-nas-əm   *yə*   *haś'aś-əm*   *yə-h-ā-ś*
dir.-reach-ERG   3sg.poss. guest.house-ERG   3sg.-enter-pret.-af.

"It is to his friend that he set out, and when he got there, he entered the guest-house"

The presence of the case endings *-r, -m* may indicate definiteness of the argument referred to by the participle. The exact conditions on their use are unknown.

Negation of the participle is expressed by the prefix *mə-*: *mə-txa* "that isn't writing", *sə-z-mə-ɫāġʷ* "that isn't seeing me". Cf. the opposition between the finite negation (*-q'əm*) and the participial one[68]:

уэ умыкӀуэмэ,   сэри сыкӀуэркъым
wa wə-mə-kʷa-ma,   sa-ryə sə-kʷa-r-q'əm
you 2sg.-neg.-go-cond. I-and   1sg.-go-pres.-af.-neg.
"If you don't go, I won't go either"

Participles can be construed with the auxiliary verb *χʷən* "be, become":

Ӏуэхур сэркӀэ   щӀа   хъункъым
ʔʷaxʷə-r sar-č'a   ś'-ā   χʷən-q'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*, *-wəra*, *-ra*, *-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.

седжэу   **деджэу**
уеджэу   **феджэу**
еджэу   **еджэу, еджэхэуэ**

s-yadžawə   *d-yadžawə*
w-yadžawə   *f-yadžawə*
yadžawə   *yadžaw, yadža-xa-wə*

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.

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[68] 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.

Псыр   щтауэ   мыл джафэщ

Psə-r   śt-ā-wa   məl džāfa-ś

river-NOM   freeze-pret.-ger.   ice smooth-af.

"Since the river froze, the ice is smooth"

Сэ сщIакъым ар   къэкIуэуэ

Sa s-ś'-ā-q'əm   ār   q'a-kʰʷa-wa

I 1sg.-know-pret.-neg. he-NOM   dir.-to go-ger.

"I didn't know he had come"

**ТIури мафIэм бгъэдэсурэ,   зы дэп   кIэлъейри
испым и   джанэ куэщIыр   пхисыкIащ**

T'wə-ryə māf'a-m bġada-s-wəra,   zə dap   č'aɫyay-ryə

two-and fire-ERG dir.-sit-ger.   one burning.coal   fly.off-and

yəspə-m   yə   džāna kʷaś'-ər   pxyəsəč'-ā-ś

dwarf-ERG his   shirt   lap-NOM   burn.through-pret.-af.

"As the two (riders) were sitting by the fire, a burning coal flew off (it) and burned through the dwarf's shirt in his lap"

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):

къэкIуэ

0-q'a-kʰʷa

3sg.-this way-pres.-go

"He is coming this way"

ар уи   деж   нэкIуащ

ā-r   wyə   dayž   0-na-kʰʷ-ā-ś

he-NOM 2sg.-poss. to 3-thither-go-pret.-af.

"He came towards you (that way)"

In some combinations of personal markers these prefixes do not occur, in others they are compulsory[69]:

сыножьащ

sə-na-w-ź-ā-ś

1sg.-thither-2sg.-wait-pret.-af.

"I waited for you",

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

but *sə-w(ə)-ź-ā-ś

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

къыдоуэ
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.

According to Colarusso (1992), 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":

псыр   къыхэжащ
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)

псыр   къыдыжащ
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:

тхылъыр   шкэфым   дэлъщ
txəłə-r   škaf-əm   da-ł-ś
book-NOM vessel-ERG *da*-lie-af.
"The book is lying in the vessel"

пхъэр   пыцIантIэм дэдзэн

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:

псым   хэдзэн
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-łən* "lie on something", *śə-łāġʷən* "to see something somewhere":

Зэманыр кIуэрт,   Уэзырмэси щакIуэу мэзым   щыпсэурт
Zamān-ər kʷa-rt,   Wazərmas-yə śākʷa-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-kʷ-ā-m* "when he went/had gone".

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

тхылъыр   столым   тедзэн
txəł-ər   stawl-əm   tay-dza-n
book-NOM table-ERG   dir.-throw-inf.
"to throw the book on the table"

The prefix *ś'a-* indicates the location under something or inside something (conceptualized as being under some cover), e. g. *ś'a-dzən* "to throw something under something", *ś'a-žən* "to run under something", *ś'a-łatən* "to fly away from under something":

унэм   щIэхьэри тIысащ
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)"

шыр бгъуанщагъым щытщ
šə-r   bġʷanś'aġ-əm ś'a-t-ś
horse-NOM cave-ERG   in-sit-af.
"The horse is in the cave"

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

шур	куэбжэм	блэжри	къэувыІащ
šwə-r	*kʷabža-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":

шэрхъыр	гулъэмыжьым фІэжащ
šarχ-ər	*gʷəłaməž-əm 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:
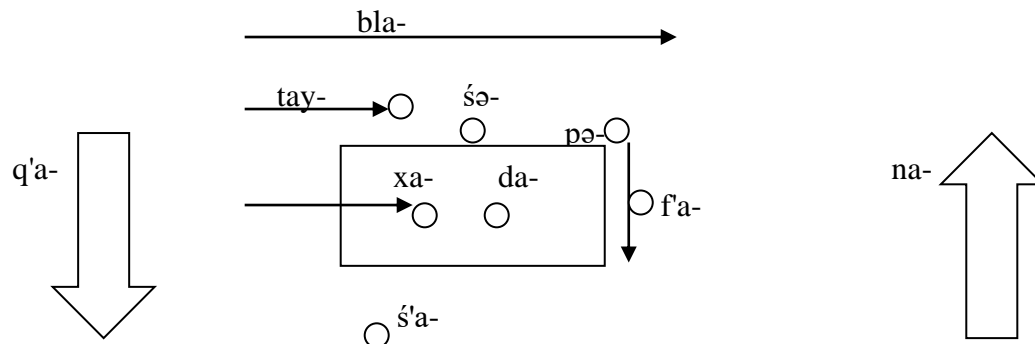
Besides these basic directional and locative prefixes, there are also many secondary prefixes, mostly derived from nouns, often nouns denoting body parts:

1. *bġada-* "towards, away from" (cf. *bġa* "breast"): *łatan*: "fly" vs. *bġadałatan* "fly towards"
2. *?ʷə-* "near, next to, away from" (cf. *?ʷə* "mouth"): *łatan* "fly" vs. *?ʷəlatən* "fly away from" (note that the verbal root also changes its vocalism in derivation)
3. *bġʷərə-* "sideways" (cf. *bġʷə* "hip"): *xʷan* "chase, drive" vs. *bġʷərəxʷan* "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. *źaxa-* "in front of, near" (cf. *źa* "mouth"): *xʷan* "drive" : *źaxaxʷan* "drive towards, drive near to"
6. *paś'a-* "in front of" (cf. *pa* "nose"): *žan* "run": *paś'ažən* "run in front of someone"
These prefixes generally follow the basic prefixes and mostly represent old incorporated nouns (see below).

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-/-qə-*, 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 well understood. 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 obligatory 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 examples[70]:

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

си   дэлъхум   сэ тхылъ   ситащ
syə   dałxʷə-m   sa txəł   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   dałxʷə-m   sa txəł   q'ə-s-yə-t-ā-ś

CLASS A - intransitive monovalent verbs

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

a) *kʷʰa-n* "to go" (dynamic verb)

I. Present
1. sg. *s-aw-kʷʰa* "I go"
2. sg. *w-aw-kʷʰa* "you go"
3. sg. *mā-kʷʰa* "he/she/it goes"
1. pl. *d-aw-kʷʰa* "we go"

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[70] I am grateful to Natalia Ivlieva for these examples.

2. pl. *f-aw-kʷa* "you go"
3. pl. *mā-kʷa-(xa)* "they go"

Cp. *ł'ə-r mā-kʷa* "the man goes"

II. Preterite

1. sg. *səkʷāś* "I went"
2. sg. *wəkʷāś* "you went"
3. sg. *kʷāś* "he/she/it went"
1. pl. *dəkʷāś* "we went"
2. pl. *fəkʷāś* "you went"
3. pl. *kʷāś* "they went"

III. Future

1. sg. *səkʷanś* "I will go"
2. sg. *wəkʷanś* "you will go"
3. sg. *kʷanś* "he/she/it will go"
1. pl. *dəkʷanś* "we will go"
2. pl. *fəkʷanś* "you will go"
3. pl. *kʷanś* "they will go"

b) *śəsən* "sit" (static verb)

I. Present	II Preterite	III. Future
1. sg. *səśəsś*	*səśəsāś*	*səśəsənś*
2. sg. *wəśəsś*	*wəśəsāś*	*wəśəsənś*
3. sg. *śəsś*	*śəsāś*	*śəsənś*
1. pl. *dəśəsś*	*dəśəsāś*	*dəśəsənś*
2. pl. *fəśəsś*	*fəśəsāś*	*fəśəsənś*
3. pl. *śəsś*	*śəsāś*	*śəsənś*

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"; *źan* "to wait for"

I. Present

sə-b-aw-wa "I hit you (sg.)"
sə-f-aw-wa "I hit you (pl.)"
s-aw-wa (*sawwa*) "I hit him/her"
s-yā-wa "I hit them"
wə-q'a-s-aw-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"

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

II. Preterite

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

łāġʷə-n "to see"

wə-z-aw-łāġʷə "I see you"

s-aw-łāġ^wə "I see him"

s-aw-łāġ^w-xa "I see them"

sə-b-aw-łāġ^wə < *sə-w-aw-łāġ^wə "you (sg.) see me"

w-aw-łāġ^wə "you (sg.) see him"

s-ya-łāġ^wə "he/she sees me"

w-ya- łāġ^wə "he/she sees you (sg.)"

wə-d-aw-łāġ^wə "we see you (sg.)"

fə-d-aw-łāġ^wə "we see you (pl.)"

d-ā-łāġ^wə "we see them"

sə-v-aw-łāġ^wə "you (pl.) see me"

sə-v-aw-łāġ^wə "you (pl.) see me"

f-aw-łāġ^wə "you (pl.) see him"

də-v-aw-łāġ^wə "you (pl.) see us"

f-aw-łāġ^wə-(xa) "you (pl.) see them"

ya-łāġ^wə "he/she sees him"

ya-łāġ^wə-(xa) "he/she sees them"

s-ā-łāġ^wə "they see me"

w-ā-łāġ^wə "they see you"

d-ā-łāġ^wə "they see us"

f-ā-łāġ^wə "they see you (pl.)"

y-ā-łāġ^w-(xa) "they see them"

y-ā-łāġ^wə "they see him"

ł'ə-m səyəłāġ^wə "the man sees me"

šə-r sawłāġ^wə "I see the horse"

According to C. Paris, verbs of this class do not 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-łāġ^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-t [*wəzot*] "I give you to him"

w-yā-sə-t [*wazot*] "I give you to them"

q'ə-wə-sə-t [*q'əzot*] "I give him to you"

q'ə-wə-sə-t-xa "I give them to you"

wə-q'a-sə-yə-t "he gives you to me"

wə-q'a-s-ā-t "they give you to me"

sə-r-yə-t [*sareyt*] "he gives me to him"

s-ā-ryə-t "he gives me to them"

yə-r-yə-t [*ireyt*] "he gives him to him"

y-ā-ryə-tə [*yareyt*] "he gives him to them"

yə-r-yə-tə-xa "he gives them to him"
yə-r-ā-t (yərat) "they give him to him"

tx'əłə-r q'a-wə-sə-tə (q'wəzot) "I give you the letter"; *ā-c'əxʷə-m w-yə-sə-t* (wəzot) "I give you to this man"

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"; *kʷa-n* "to go"; the causative prefix is *ġa-*

yə-rə-t "he gives it to him" :

yə-rə-sə-ġa-t "I make him give it to him"
yə-r-yə-ġa-t [*irəreyġāt*] "he makes him give it to him"
yə-r-ā-ġa-t [*irərāġāt*] "they make him give it to him"

wə-sə-ġa-kʷ'a [*wəzoġākʷ'a*] "I make you go" = "I send them"
sə-ġa-kʷ'a [*soġākʷ'a*] "I make him go"
sə-ġa-kʷ'a-xa [*soġā-kʷ'axa*] "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

fa-n "to fall"

sə-q'a-p-tay-fa (p < w) "I fall on you"
sə-tay-fa "I fall on him"
s-ā-tay-fa "I fall on them"
q'a-p-tay-fa "he falls on you"
q'a-p-tay-fa-x(a) "they fall on you"
tay-fa "he falls on him"

nənaw-r q'ə-tay-fa "the child falls on him" *ł'ə-m sə-tay-fa* "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"

łə-r pə-sə-wəp'č'ə "I cut the man"; *łə-m sə-p-yə-wəp'č'ə* "the man cuts me"

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-x "I lift you from him"
w-ā-q'a-tay-sə-x "I lift you from them"
sə-p-tr-ay-xə "he lifts me from you"

ha-r q'a-p-tay-sə-x "I lift the dog from you"
nəfə-m wə-q'ə-tay-sə-x "I lift you from the rock"

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 and organs such as "heart" are especially common. Guessing the meaning of a compound is quite frequently 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-gʷ "tongue-heart" = "tongue" (as an organ of speech)
māf'a-gʷ "fire-cart" = "train"
ʔa-pa "hand-nose" = "finger"
ha-dza "barley-tooth" = "grain"
thakʷəma-č'əh "ear-long" = "rabbit"
ś'ā-la "new-meat" = "young man, boy"
da-łxʷ "together-be born" = "brother (with respect to sister)"
dəġʷə-ź "thief-old" = "wolf"
āda-āna "father-mother" = "parents"
ł'əź-fəzəź "man-old-woman-old" = "grandparents"
faw-šəġʷ "honey-salt" = "sugar"
maz-džad "forest-hen" = "pheasant"
xə-qa "sea-pig" = "dolphin"
wəna-c'a "house-name" = "surname"
šxa-ġʷa "eat-time" = "lunch"
ś'ə-dāġa "earth-grease" = "petroleum"
žaśə-bγ "night-summit" = "deep night"
ša-ps "milk-water" = "sap (of plants)"
hada-ma "corpse-smell" = "smell of a corpse"
šə-dəġʷə "horse-thief" = "horse-thief"
dəġʷə-ź "thief-old" = "wolf"
ł'ə-kʷa "man-go" = "messenger"
džašə-dz "bean-throw" = "fortune-teller"

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 *ł'ə* "man", *ź́ə* "old", *f'ə* "good", -*šxʷa* "big" and *kʷa* "to go" the following compounds can be formed[71]:

ł'ə-ź́ "old man"
ł'ə-kʷa "messenger"
ł'ə-f' "good man, good-natured man"
ł'ə-ź́ə-f' "good old man"
ł'ə-kʷa-f' "good messenger"
ł'ə-kʷa-ź́ə-f' "good old messenger"
ł'ə-ź́ə-f'ə-šxʷa "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.

Адыгэлъ   и   къарур
Adəɣa-ł   yə   q'ārwə-r
Adyghean-blood poss. power-NOM
"The power of Adyghean blood"

Some compounds retain two accents. They are often built with rhyming morphemes (German *Reimbildungen*), or they contain fully reduplicated morphemes. Such compounds usually have intensive or copulative meaning (the Sanskrit *dvandva*-type):

yašxa-yafa "eating-drinking" = "a feast"
pq'əna-pq'ənawə "in little pieces"
natx-patx "beautiful" (of a girl)
q'aǵaš-naǵaš "here and there, in a zigzag manner"
ława-pč'awa "jumping, bouncing"

NOMINAL SUFFIXES

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

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

-*ź́yay* (diminutive suffix): *džadź́yay* "chicken" : *džad* "hen"

-*ǵa* (suffix for abstract nouns): *ł'əǵa* "manhood, manliness" : *ł'ə* "man"

-*kʷa* (suffix for names of professions): *txākʷa* "writer": *txan* "to write"

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[71] According to Kuipers 1960: 34.

-*ġʷə* (suffix for nouns denoting participants of an action or members of a group): *qʷāžaġʷə* "fellow-villager": *qʷāža* "village", *laźaġʷə* "co-worker, colleague": *laźan* "to work".

-*fa* (suffix meaning "a kind of"): *wəzfa* "a kind of disease": *wəz* "disease". Nouns with this suffix are probably originally nominal compounds with the noun *fa* "skin".

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-kʷa-n "to go from there" (cf. *na* "eye", *kʷan* "to go")
da-łə-n "to lie in something" (cf. *łən* "to lie")
śə-ʔan "to be in something": *ār qālam śə-ʔ-ā-ś* "he was in town" (cf. *ʔan* "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:

бзур   унэм   блэлъэтащ
bzwə-r   wəna-m   bla-łat-ā-ś
sparrow-NOM house-ERG   by-fly-pret.-af.
"The sparrow flew past the house"

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

жыгым   сытхъу трещIэ
žəɣə-m   sətχʷ tray-ś'a
tree-ERG   hoar-frost on-do
"The hoar-frost covers the tree"

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

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

къудэмэр   жыгым   аргуэра гуэкIэжащ
qʷədāma-r   žəɣ-əm   ārgʷarwə gʷa-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 *pri*rasla stablu"

(the prefix *gʷa-* denotes connecting with something, cf. *gʷə* "heart")

Берд шым   зэпащу тесщ

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/directional 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

A) Several suffixes affect the valence of verbs:

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

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

Suffixes *-ł'(a)* and *-x(ə)* also affect the valence of a verb, but not its transitivity. Both of them additionally seem to have directional meaning: *-ł* means approximately "near to", and *–x-* means "away from": *yaža-n* "run" : *yaža-ł'a-n* "run towards (someone or something)"; *hən* "carry": *ya-ha-xə-n* "carry down to", *kʷan* "to go" : *ya-kʷa-ł'a-n*: "to approach something", *žan* "to run": "to run away from":

ар   абы   йожэх
ā-r   ā-bə   y-aw-ža-x
3sg.-NOM   3sg.-ERG   3sg.-pres.-run-suff.
"he runs away from this" (intransitive)

Шур мафIэм екIуалъащ
ауэ бгъэдыхьэн ирикуакъым

Šwə-r māf'a-m   ya-kʷa-ł'-ā-ś,
rider-NOM fire-ERG   3sg.-go-suff.-pret.-af.

āwa bġadə-ha-n   yə-r-yə-kʷ-ā-q'əm
but dir.-carry-inf.   3sg.-3sg.-3sg.-dare-pret.-neg.
"The rider went towards the fire, but he did not dare to approach it"

The fact that the verb derived with the suffixes *–x-* and *-ł'-* does not change its transitivity is shown by the form of the 3rd person sg. present (*y-aw-ža-x*, which is the intransitive bivalent form) and by the case marking pattern in the sentence (*šwər* is in

the nominative of the intransitive subject, *māf'am* in the ergative of the oblique argument).

B) Other suffixes have adverbial meaning, and can perhaps be treated as incorporated adverbs:

The suffix *-xʷə(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):

уэщыр   пӀэтыхукӀэ, пхъэм   зегъэпсэху
waś-ər   p-'atə-xʷəč'a, pχa-m   z-ya-ġa-psaxʷ
axe-NOM 2sg.-lift-suff. wood-ERG   refl.-3sg.-caus.-relax
″While you're lifting the axe, the wood is relaxing" (a proverb)

мыпсэлъэху   делэри   губзыгъэщ
mə-psała-xʷ   dayla-r-yə   gʷəbzəġa-ś
neg.-speak-suff. fool-NOM-and   smart-af.
"A fool is also smart while he is not speaking" (a proverb)

сыщхьэукъуэху, си шыр   къуэдащ
sə-śhawəqʷ'a-xʷ, syə šə-r   q'ʷad-ā-ś
1sg.-sleep-suff.   my horse-NOM disappear-pret.-af.
"While I was sleeping, my horse disappeared"

НтӀэ, танэмрэ мэлымрэ къэвгъуэтыжьыху,
сэри Ӏуэхуншэу сыщысынкъым

Nt'a, tāna-m-ra mal-əm-ra   q'a-v-ġʷatə-žə-xʷ
yes calf-ERG-and sheep-ERG-and   dir.-2pl.-find-back-until

sa-ryə ?ʷaxʷə-nša-wə   sə-śə-sə-n-q'əm
I-and work-without-ADV   1sg.-dir.-sit-fut.-neg.
"Yes, and until you find the calf and the sheep again, we will not sit idly"

As the last two examples show, the action of both the finite verb and the participle can be be either punctual or durative. Accordingly, the suffix of simultaneity can sometimes be translated as "while", and sometimes as "until".

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):

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

The suffix *-pa-* has perfectivizing meaning; it seems to indicate that the action has been fully accomplished:

лэжьэн *laźa-n* "work" : *лэжьэпэн* *laźa-pa-n* "accomplish"; *шхэн* *šxa-n* "eat" : *шхэпэн* *šxa-pa-n* "eat up"

The suffixes *-ś(a)-* and *-qʷa* mean something like "too much, excessively":

шхэн *šxa-n* "eat": *шхэщэн* *šxa-ś-an* "eat too much, eat excessively"

псэлъэн *psała-n* "talk": *псэлъэкӀуэн* *psała-qʷa-n* "talk too much"

The suffix *-xxa-* is best translated as "at all"; it reinforces the negation:

сыкӀуэнкъым *sə-kʷa-n-q'əm* "I will not go": *сыкӀуэххэнкъым* *sə-kʷa-xxa-n-q'əm* "I will absolutely not go, "I will not go at all"

The suffix *-x(a)-* means "already":

сыхьэзырщ *sə-hazər-ś* "I am ready, I am prepared": *сыхьэзырыхэщ* *sə-hazərə-xa-ś* "I am already prepared"

INCORPORATION

Object incorporation is no longer a productive word-formation process, but some verbs with incorporated objects have become lexicalized, e.g. *ya-pa-wa-n* (3sg.-nose-hit-inf.) "hit on the nose (and stop)", *ya-šə-bġarə-kʷa-n* (3sg.-horse-breast-go-inf.) "press (someone) while riding a horse, attack". Such verbs with incorporated objects usually contain the dummy 3sg. personal prefix *ya-* (see above).

Incorporated nouns are usually body-part terms. They can be incorporated also as locational adverbs, functioning almost like directional/locational pre-verbs;[72] they are usually combined with other directional prefixes, e.g. *źa-da-pła-n* (mouth-dir.-look-inf.) "look into one's mouth", *śha-śə-dzə-n* (head-dir.-throw-inf.) "throw off the top part of something", *ʔa-pə-wədə-n* (hand-dir.-beat-inf.) "get something out of someone's hands". It is unclear to what extent this pattern of incorporation is productive.

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[72] See Colarusso (1992: 104-5).

SYNTAX

NOUN PHRASES (NP)

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

Ӏэнэм итепхъуэ
ʔana-m   yə-taypχʷa
table-ERG   3sg.poss.-cover
"the cover of the table, tablecloth"

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

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

Налшыч КЪэбэрдей-Бэлъкъэрым и   къалащхьащ
Nālšəč Q'abardyay-Bałq'arə-m yə   q'ālā-śha-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 Kabardian[73].

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:

мы фэ   къэфхьа   шэмэджыр   Дэбэч езы Тхьэгъэлэдж хуищӀауэ
mə fa   q'a-f-h-ā   šamadžə-r   Dabač yazə Thaġaladž xʷ-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:

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

---

[73] 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.

Qualitative adjectives (which can be used as stative verbs) follow the head noun, while relational adjectives (usually nouns used attributively) precede it:

пщащэ дахэ : **пхъэ унэ**
pśāśa dāxa : *pχa wəna*
girl beautiful   wood house
"beautiful girl"   "wooden house"

Cardinal numerals (with the exception of *zə* "one") follow the head noun, while the ordinal numerals precede it:

мазэ хэ, мазэх **еханэ мазэр**
māza xə, māzax   *yaxāna māza-r*
month 6   6th   month-NOM
"six months"   "the sixth month"

ADJECTIVE PHRASES

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

пхъэ шынакъыжь из шху
pχa šənāq'ə-ź yəz šxʷə
wood glass-old full sour.milk
"A wooden glass full of sour milk"

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

SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE OF THE SENTENCE

Kabardian distinguishes three constructions[74]: *nominative, ergative* and *indefinite*.

In the *nominative* construction the subject (the only macrorole argument) 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:

Сэтэней дахэр **тэджащ**
Satanyay dāxa-r   *tadž-ā-ś*
S.   beautiful-NOM   get up-pret.-af.
"Beautiful Satanaya got up"

ученикыр **тхылъым** **йоджэ**
wəčaynyəkə-r   *txəłə-m*   *y-aw-dža*
student-NOM   book-ERG   3sg.-pres.-read
"The student is reading a book"

---

[74] The so-called "dative" or "inverse" construction (Kardanov 1957) is actually a nominative construction.

In the *ergative* construction the subject (the highest ranking macrorole argument) is in the ergative, and the verb is transitive. The direct object is in the nominative:

иныжьхэм нартхэр   къагъэгъузащ
yənəź-xa-m nārt-xa-r   q'-ā-ġaġʷz-ā-ś
I.-pl.-ERG   Nart-pl.-NOM   dir.-3pl.-crush-pret.-af.
"The Iniž (giants) crushed the Narts"

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

фызым   лIыр   игъакIуэ
fəzə-m   ł'ə-r   yə-ġā-kʷa
woman-ERG man-NOM   3sg-caus.-go
"The woman sends a man"

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:

мыщэ дыгъужь фIэбэлацэщ
məśa dəġʷəź f'a-balāca-ś
bear wolf   advers.-hairy-af.
"To the bear the wolf is hairy" (a 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:

си   цIыр   Алим
syə   c'ə-r   Alyəm
1sg.-poss. name-NOM   A.
"My name is Alim"

Adjectives and common nouns in a sentence with a nominal predicate take the affirmative suffix (thus becoming stative verbs):

мазэр изщ
Māza-r   yəz-ś
moon-NOM   full-af.
"The moon is full"

Мыр   мэзщ
Mə-r   maz-ś
this-NOM forest-af.
"This is a forest"

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):

лӀым   фызыр   къелъагъуащ   икӀи къэжащ
ł'ə-m   fəz-ər   q'-ya-łāġʷ-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"

щӀалэм хъыджэбзыр илъэгъури кӀуэжащ
ś'āla-m χədžabzə-r   yə-łāġʷə-ryə   kʰʷaž-ā-ś
young.man-ERG girl-NOM 3sg.-see-and leave-pret.-af.
"The young man saw the girl and left"

щӀалэ цӀыкӀур къэсри,   хъыджэбзыр къилъэгъуащ
ś'āla c'ək'ʷə-r q'a-s-ryə,   χədžabzə-r q'-yə-łāġʷ-ā-ś
boy little-NOM dir.-come-and girl-NOM dir.-3sg.-see-pret.-af.
"The boy came and saw the girl"

щӀалэ цӀыкӀуым хъыджэбз цӀыкӀуым   къэкӀуэну псалъэ иритащ
ś'āla c'ək'ʷə-m χədžabz c'ək'ʷə-m   q'a-k'ʷa-nwə psāła 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 argument[75]. 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:

ар   абы   къыщыхуэкӀуэм   жиӀащ

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[75] Cp. Gišev 1985: 83.

ā-r   *ā-bə*   *q'ə-śə-xʷa-kʰʷ-ā-m*   *žyə?-ā-ś*
3sg.-NOM   3sg.-ERG dir.-dir.-ver.-go-pret.-ERG say-pret.-af.
"When he approached her, he spoke"

хьэр   **зыщагъашхэм**   **щобанэ**
ha-r   *zə-ś-ā-ġā-šxa-m*   *ś-aw-bāna*
dog-NOM   pref.-dir.-3pl.-caus.-eat-ERG   dir.-pres.-to bark
"The dog barks where he is not fed (where they do not feed him)" (a proverb)

Езы Емынежь щІыр евэ Тхэголэдж и жылапхъэу трисэну

Yazə Yamənayź ś'ə-r   *ya-va*   *Thaɣaladž 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"

сызэрытхьэкІумэ жьажьэри дэнэ къыщыфщІа?
sə-zarə-thakʰʷəma źāźa-ryə dana q'ə-śə-f-ś'-ā
1sg.-part.-ear   slow-and how dir.-dir.-2pl.-know-pret.
"But how did you know my hearing was bad (lit. that I had slow ear)?"

Infinite verbal forms may be modified by adverbial suffixes (see above) with spatial or temporal meaning:

Сэ къэгъэзэжьыху, мыбдей щыт
Sa q'a-z-ġazažə-xʷ,   *məbdyay śə-t*
I dir.-1sg.-return-until   here   dir.-sit
"Sit here until I return!"

An infinitive may be marked with instrumental case in the subordinate clause:

Уэ Іыхьэншэ   **ухъункІэ**   **сошынэ(р)**
Wa ?əha-nša   *wə-χʷə-n-č'a*   *s-aw-šəna(r)*
you lot-without   2sg.-become-inf.-instr. 1sg.-pres.-be.afraid
"I am afraid that you will be without a lot (inheritance)"

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:

дэ дыухащ   **дитхыныр**
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"

Сосрыкъуэр йожьэ,   **Бэдэху дахэм**   **еплъэну**

Sawsrəq'wa-r y-aw-źa,   *Badaxʷ dāxa-m*   *ya-pła-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*):

хъыджэбзым джэгу кӀуэн пасэу щӀидзащ
χədžabzə-m džagʷ kʷa-n   pāsawə ś'-yə-dz-ā-ś
girl-ERG   dance   go-inf. early   dir.-3sg.-throw-pret.-af.
"The girl started going to dances early"

In the previous example, the verb in the subordinate clause *kʷan* has got the same subject as the verb in the main clause *ś'adzan* ("to start"). Co-referent argument in control constructions may be indexed on the subordinate verb:

щӀалэр пщащэм елъэӀуащ тхылъыр къритыну
ś'āla-r pśāśa-m ya-ła?ʷ-ā-ś   txəł-ər   q'-r-yə-tə-nwə
girl-NOM boy-ERG 3sg.-ask-pret.-af. book-NOM dir.-3sg.-3sg.-give-inf.
"The boy asked the girl to give him the book"

сэ уэ сынолъэӀуащ тхылъыр къызэптыну
sa wa sə-n-wa-ła?ʷ-ā-ś   txəłə-r   q'ə-za-p-tə-nwə
I you 1sg.-dir.-2sg.-ask-pret.-af. book-NOM dir.-1sg.-2sg.-give-inf.
"I asked you to give me the book"

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 subordinate structures[76] the subordinated verb can carry the personal prefixes and the reflexive prefix:

щӀалэм   **тхылъыр**   **ихьыну**   **хуеащ**
ś'āla-m   *txəłə-r*   *yə-hə-nwə*   *xʷay-ā-ś*
boy-ERG book-NOM   3sg.-to carry-inf.   want-pret.-af.
"The boy wanted to carry the book"

щӀалэ цӀыкӀуым   **хъыджэбз цӀыкӀур**   **зэуэжыну**   **жыӀащ**
ś'āla c'əkʷə-m   *χədžabz c'əkʷə-r*   *za-wa-žə-nwə*   *žə-y-?-ā-ś*
boy little-ERG   girl little-NOM   refl.-hit-back-inf.   dir.-3sg.-say-pret.af.

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[76] 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.

"The boy told the little girl to hit herself"

сэ абы   тхылъ   къызитыну   сыкъигъэгъугъащ
sa ā-bə   txəł   q'ə-z-yə-tə-nwə   sə-q'-yə-ġa-ġ^wəġ-ā-ś
I he-ERG   book   dir.-1sg.-3sg.-give-fut.   1sg.-dir.-3sg.-caus.-hope-pret.-af.
"He promised me he would give me the book."

Уэ   слъагъум   фIы дыдэу сыкъуолъагъу
Wa   s-łāġ^wə-m   f'ə dədawə sə-q'-w-aw-łāġ^w
2sg. 1sg.-see-ERG   good much 1sg.-dir.-2sg.-pres.-see"
"I see that you love me very much" (lit. "I see that you are the one who sees me well very much")

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:

sa   ābə   txəł   q'ə-zə-yə-tə-nwə sə-q'ə-y-ġaġ^wəġ-ā-ś
I   he   book   will give it to me   he promised-me
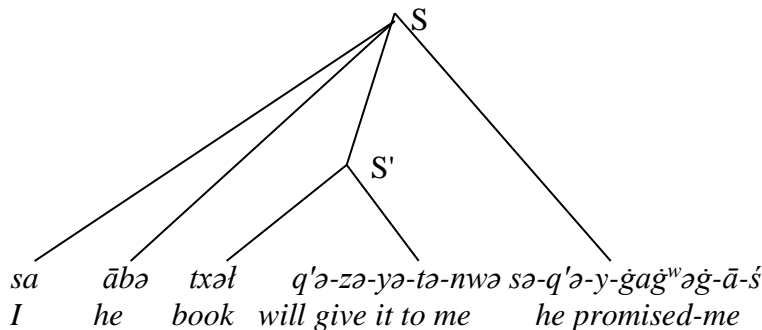
Constructions in which the subordinate clause is placed after the main clause are also possible, but they are marked:

щIалэм   ищIат   хъыджэбзыр   къызэрыкIуэныр
ś'āla-m   yə-ś'-āt   χədžabzə-r   q'ə-zarə-k^{'w}a-n-ər
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.

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 śhač'a žəpp'ama*[77] "because, since" are of that type:

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[77] It seems that these conjunctions are calques of the Russian *poetomu, potomu čto* (see Kumaxov 1984: 150).

ИджыпстукӀэ ар апхуэдэу нэм къыӀуридзэркъым, сытуэ жыпэмэ а щӀалэхэм ящӀа щагъуэ щыӀэкъым.

Yədžəpstwəč'a ār āpxʷadaw nam q'ə?wəryədzarq'əm, sətwa žəpama ā ś'ālaxam yāś'ā śāġʷa śə?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 *śətma* "if", rather than with the conditional mood of the verb (see above); the conjunction *śətma* is originally the verb *śətən* "be, find oneself" in the conditional mood:

**Мо Бэдынокъуэ и   бжыкӀыр   щӀым къыхэчыф,
Бэдэху урипсэлъыхъуу щытмэ**

Maw Badənawq'wa yə	*bžəč'-ər*	*ś'ə-m q'ə-xačə-f,*
this B.	3sg.poss. spear-shaft-NOM	ground-ERG dir.-pull out-pot.

Badaxʷ wə-ryə-psałəχʷ-wə śətma
B.   2sg.-3sg.-woo-ger. if

"You can (surely) pull out Badinoqo's spear-shaft from the ground, if you are wooing Badah"

There are a few subordinators that developed from postpositions governing participles or infinitives. The subordinator *łāndara* "since" is combined with the instrumental form of the participle, e.g. *zarə-kʷa łāndara* "since (the time that) he went".

The temporal subordinator *yə pa* "before" is actually composed of *yə* "its" and *pa* "nose, front part"; the same syntagm can be used as a spatial postposition ("in front of").

**Чы пыдупщӀынщи, псым хэддзэн
и пэ дубэрэжьынщ**

Čə	*pə-d-wəpś'ə-n-ś-yə,*	*psə-m*	*xa-d-dza-n*
stick	dir.-1pl.-cut.off--fut-af.-and	water-ERG	dir.-1pl.-throw-inf.

yə pa d-wəbaráźə-n-ś
its front 1pl.-beat-fut.-af.

"We'll cut off a stick and beat him before we throw him into water"

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):

щӀалэм	хъыджэбзыр	илъэгъуну	хуеащ
ś'āla-m	*χǝdžabzǝ-r*	*yǝ-łāġʷ-nwǝ*	*xʷay-ā-ś*
boy-ERG	girl-NOM	3sg.-see-fut.	want.pret.-af.

"The boy wanted to see the girl."

щӀалэм	тхылъыр	ихьыну	хуеащ
ś'āla-m	*txǝłǝ-r*	*yǝ-hǝ-nwǝ*	*xʷay-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 (*xʷayǝn* "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 argument of the main and the subordinate clause is the doer of the action (or the highest ranking macrorole) of a transitive verb[78] 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:

щӀалэр	хъыджэбзым	еуэну	хуеат
ś'āla-r	*χǝdžabzǝ-m*	*ya-wa-nwǝ*	*xʷay-āt*
boy-NOM	girl-ERG	3.sg.-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 *łač'ǝn, xʷǝzaf'ač'ǝn* "be able, can", *bawršǝn* "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.):

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[78] In the sentence *ś'āla-m txǝłǝ-r yǝ-hǝ-nwǝ xʷay-ā-ś* the verb *hǝn* "to carry" is transitive, which can be seen by the order of personal prefixes, cf. e. g. *wǝ-z-aw-hǝ-r* "I carry you" (2sg.-1sg.-pres.-to carry-af.).

сэ слъэкIащ   а   унэр   сщIын
sa s-łač'-ā-ś   ā   wəna-r   s-ś'ə-n
I 1sg.-can-pret.-af. that house-NOM   1sg.-do-inf.
"I was able to build that house"

дэ тхузэфIэкIынукъым унэм   ищIыныр
da t-xʷəzaf'ač'ə-nwə-q'əm wəna-m   yə-ś'ən-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'ən* 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'ən* is in the nominative case because the matrix verb is transitive.

The "debitative modal" *xʷyayn* 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 *xʷyayn* "want", which has the full set of personal prefixes, but also takes clausal complements (in obligatory control constructions):

илъэсым и   кIуэцIкIэ   жэщ кхъэсыхукIэ   си
шым   зы мэкъу Iэтэрэ
зы нартыху пытрэ   ишхын   хуейщ

yəłas-əm yə   k'ʷac'-č'a   žaś qasəxʷə-č'a syə
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 nārtəxʷ pət-ra   yə-šxə-n   xʷyay-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".

ДяпэкIэ   фэращ жылэм   я хеящIэ хъун   хуейр
Dyāpač'a   farā-ś žəla-m   yā xayyāś'a χʷə-n   xʷyay-r
from.now.on   2pl.-af. village-ERG their judge become-inf.   must-NOM
"From now on, it is you who must become judges of the village"

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):

ауэрэ, накъыгъэ мазэр   къихьэри,   удзыр   къэкIыу щыхуежьэм

сэ сыухащ   **ситхылъыр**   **стхын**

āwara, nāq'əġa māza-r   q'-yə-ha-ryə,   wədz-ər   q'a-č'ə-wə śə-xʷayźa-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-txəł-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:

абы   **"дэуэ ущыт"**   **къызжиiащ**
"джатэ   схуегъащi,   **шы   схуегъуэт"**   **къызжеiэ**

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-xʷ-ya-ġa-ś',   šə   s-xʷ-ya-ġʷat"   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, infinitive, or a gerund:

щакiуэм   **жиiащ**   **мэз зэрыкiуэр**
śāk'ʷa-m   ž-yə-?-ā-ś   [maz zarə-k'ʷa-r]
hunter-ERG   pref.-3sg.-say-pret.-af. [forest part.-go-NOM]
"The hunter said he was going to the forest."

фызым   **къиiуэхуащ**   **ипхъур**   **лажьэу**
fəzə-m   q'-yə-?ʷaxʷ-ā-ś   [yə-pχʷə-r   lāźa-wə]
woman-ERG dir.-3sg.-say-pret.-af. 3sg.poss.-daughter-NOM   work-ger.
"The woman said her daughter was working."

анэм и къуэм зитхьэщiыну жриiащ
āna-m   yə   q'ʷa-m   z-yə-thaś'ə-nwə   ž-r-yə-ā-ś
mother-ERG 3sg.poss. son-ERG   refl.-3sg.-wash-inf.   pref.-3sg.-3sg.-pret.-af.
"The mother told her son to wash himself"

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.):

ар   къэкIуауэ зэрыщытыр   уэ къызжэпIащ
ā-r   q'a-kᵂā-wa zarə-śətə-r   wa q'ə-z-ža-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"

ар   къэкIуауэ   щыту уэ къызжэпIащ
ā-r   q'a-kᵂā-wa   śət-wə wa q'ə-z-ža-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:

лIыхэр макIуэ(хэ)
ł'ə-xa-r mā-kᵂa-(xa)
man-pl-NOM 3sg-go-(pl.)
"People go"

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):

Нартхэм   я   ешхьэефэр яухэт
Nārt-xa-m   yā   yašhayafar yā-wəx-āt
N.-pl.-ERG. 3pl.poss. peace   3pl.begin-ant.pret.
"The Narts restored peace"

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:

Сосрыкъуэ зыри   жимыIэу   макIуэ
Sawsrəq'ᵂa zərə   ž-yə-mə-?a-wə   mā-kᵂa
S.   nothing dir.-3sg.-neg.-say-ger. 3sg.pres.-to go
"Sosruko goes without saying anything"
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 zġazaśāś* "I filled it" one can say just *zġazaśāś* (where 0- is the prefix for 3sg., *z-* the prefix for 1sg. (< *s*), and the verb is *ġazaśan* "to fill").

Compare also:

сэ мывэ содз   содзыр
sa məva 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):

ар   мыжыжьэу   щыт   сторэжым   жьэхэлъэну   хуежьат
  ā-r   [məžəźawə   śət   stawražə-m]   źa-xała-nwə   xʷayź-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.";

**ар   зыгъэхъейф   нартыр   нарт хэсэм   хэшэрт ,
нартылI   хъуау   ябжырт**

  [ā-r   zə-ġa-χyay-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-ł'   χʷ-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."

**Тхьэгъэлэдж ху жылэпхъэу Нартхэ къаритар
Емынэжь яфIихьащ**

[Thaġaladž xʷə žəlāpχawə Nārt-xa q'-ā-r-yə-t-ā-r]
  T   millet seed   N-pl.   dir.-pl.-3sg.-3sg.-give-pret.-NOM

Yamənaź 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:

хэт мылъажьэми,   ар   ихэркъым
xat mə-ł̄āź́a-m-yə,   ā-r   šxa-r-q'əm
who no-work-ERG-and   this-NOM eat-pres.-neg.
"Who doesn't work, doesn't eat" (a proverb)

COORDINATION

Coordinated clauses are linked asyndetically by clitics/suffixes (e. g. *ryə* "and", see above):

ар   жиIэри нэхъыщIэр   ЛЪэпщ   еупщIащ
ā-r   žyə?a-ryə naχə-ś'a-r   Łapś́   ya-wəpś́'-ā-ś́
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", *ś́ətma* "if":

сэ ар   къезджат   ауэ къэкIуакъым
sa ā-r   q'-ya-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"

е улIын   е улIэн
ya wə-l'ə-n   ya wə-l'a-n
or 2sg.man-inf. or 2sg.-die-inf.
"Either be a man, or die" (a proverb)

THE ORDER OF SYNTACTIC ELEMENTS

Like most Caucasian languages[79], Kabardian is basically an SOV language, though other (stylistically marked) word orders appear as well:

Сосрыкъуэ гъуэгуанэ бзаджэм теууащ
Sawsrəq'ʷa ġʷagʷāna bzādža-m tayww-ā-ś́
S.   journey   bad-ERG set off-pret.-af.
"Sosruko set off for his difficult journey "

ġʷagʷāna bzādžam tayywwāś́ Sawsrəq'ʷa

абы   сэ   щIалэхэм   сыщяхуэзащ

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[79] See e. g. Klimov (ed.) 1978: 50 ff.

ābə   sa   ś'āla-xa-m   sə-ś-yā-xʷaz-ā-ś
there 1sg. boy-pl.-ERG 1sg.-dir.-3pl.-meet-pret.-af.
"I met the boys there"

If the object of this sentence is in focus (i.e. the stress is on *boys*), the word order changes:

сэ   щIалэхэм   абы   сихэщыхуэзащ
sa   ś'āla-xa-m   ābə   s-yə-xa-śə-xʷaz-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:

щIалэр   псым   итхэлащ
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")

The same OSV order obtains in embedded, subordinate clauses, with infinite verbal forms:

Джэд джэдыкIэ игъэIущыжу   флъэгъуащ
Džad džadəč'a yə-ġa-ʔʷəśə-ž-wə   f-łaġʷ-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)[80]:

хэтым лъыр   къэзышхуа
xat-əm   łə-r   q'a-zə-šx-w-ā
who-ERG meat-NOM   dir.-refl.-eat-inter.-pret.
"Who ate the meat?"

лIым   сытыр   къешхуа
ł'ə-m   sət-ər   q'a-y-šx-w-ā
man-ERG what-NOM dir.-3sg.-eat-inter.-pret.
"What did the man eat?"

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:

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[80] According to Kumaxov (ed.) 2006, I: 496 the unmarked position of question words is at the beginning of the sentence, e. g. *Dāpśaś wə-q'a-kʷa-žə-nwə* "When will you be back?".

уэ сэ укъэзоуэ
wa sa wə-q'a-z-aw-wa
you I   2sg.-dir.-1sg.-pres.-hit
"You hit me" (intransitive construction)

сэ уэ услъагъу
sa wa wə-s-łāǵ^w
I you 2sg.-1sg.-see
"I see you" (transitive construction)

The rule for the relation between verbal arguments and person markers with transitive verbs can be represented in this way:

Arg. 1 Arg. 2 Arg. 3 Arg. 4 PM 4 PM 3 PM 2 PM 1 Root

verbal complex
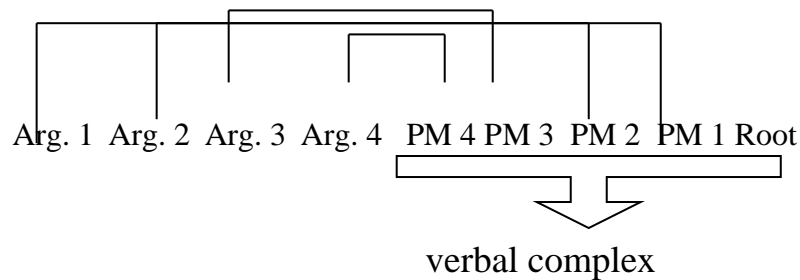
TOPICALIZATION/FOCALIZATION

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 (*rhema*, what is in focus) is emphasised. The focalized element usually comes at the beginning of the sentence:

хэт ищӀа   уэнэр
xat yə-ś'-ā   wəna-r
who 3sg.-do-pret. house-NOM
"Who built the house?"

пхъащӀэм   ищӀащ   унэр
pχāś'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 *pχāś'a*. The SVO order at the same time denotes that the topic of the sentence is at the end (the noun *wəna*)[81]. If the question is "what did the carpenter do?", i.e. if *wəna*

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[81] See Kumaxov & Vamling 2006: 107 ff.

"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):

сыт   пхъащIэм   ищIэр
sət   pχāś'a-m   yə-ś'-ā-r
what carpenter-ERG 3sg.-do-pret.-NOM
"What did the carpenter do?"

пхъащIэм   унэ ищIащ
pχāś'a-m   wəna yə-ś'-ā-ś
carpenter-ERG house 3sg.-do-pret.-af.
"The carpenter built a house."

Embedded subordinated clauses, when in focus, also precede the main verb:

хэт фылъежьа? Ди адэр зыукIам дылъежьащ
xat   fə-łyaź-ā? Dyə āda-r   zə-wəč'-ā-m   də-łyāź-ā-ś
who 2pl.seek-pret. our father-NOM   part.-kill-pret.-NOM   1pl.-seek-pret.-af.
"Who were you looking for? We were looking for the one who had killed our father"

Wh-words, which are focal as a rule, must be placed before the verb:[82]

хэт   ищIрэ   унэр
xat   yə-ś'-ra   wəna-r?
who 3sg.-do-inter. house-NOM
"Who is building the house?"
*wənar xat yəś'ra?
*wənar yəś'ra xat?
*yəś'ra xat wənar?
*yəś'ra wənar xat?

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*:

абы   тхылъыр зыритэр   Муратщ
ā-bə   txəłə-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".

мыр   езыр   къыщалъхуар   фи   хэкурищ
mə-r   yazə-r   q'ə-śāłxʷ-ā-r   fyə   xakʷə-r-ś
this-NOM himself-NOM dir.-be.born-pret.-NOM your(pl.) country-NOM-af.

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[82] See Kumaxov & Vamling 2006: 89.

"The place where he himself was born is your country"

и псэр   зыхэлъыр и   шырщ
yə psa-r   zə-xa-łə-r   yə   šə-r-ś
3sg. soul-NOM   part.-dir.-lie-NOM 3sg.poss. horse-NOM-af.
"That in which his soul lies is his horse"

Aside from the copula/affirmative marker *–ś,* the suffixes *-t* (for imperfect), *-q'a, -ra* (interrogative suffixes) can also occur as focus markers:

егъэджакIуэкъэ   тхылъыр   фызэм   езытэр
yaġadžākʷa-q'a   txəłə-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")

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)[83]. 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 adressing younger people (but not the other way around) include:

Нэсыпыфӏэ ухъу *Nasəpəf'a wəχʷə* "be happy"
упсэу *wəpsawə* "hello!"
Ӏэсэ *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 **си псэ нэху** *syə psa naxʷ* "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 adressing 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.

Here are some expressions appropriate for women, but not for men[84]:

аӏе, аӏе гущэ *ā-ʔay, a-ʔay gʷəśa* (interjections of admiration, astonishment, verbal crutches)
Тхэ, сымыщӏэ *Txa, səməś'a* "by god, I don't know".
Аллэхь *Allah* "god, by god"

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[83] See Bgažnokov 1978; most examples in this chapter are taken from this book. Cf. also Mafedzev 2000.

[84] 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*.

These are expressions appropriate for men, but not for women:

Iэгъу, Iэгъ, Iо, уэI *ʔaġ^w, ʔaġ, ʔaw, waʔ* (these have a similar function as verbal crutches in the language of women)
тхэ соIуэ *txa sawʔ^wa* "I swear to god"; *txa yə c'əč'a sawʔa* "I swear by god's name"
Уэллэхьи *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. *gʷə* "heart" = Abkhaz *a-gʷ*, *na* "eye" = Abkh. *a-la*, *fa* "skin" = Abkh. *a-cʷa*), kin terms (*āna* "mother" = Abkh. *an*, *āda* "father" = Ubykh *tʷə*, *qʷa* "son" = Ubykh. *qʷa*), and some basic verbs (e. g. *śʼan* "to know" = Abkh. *a-cʼara*) and adjectives (e. g. *źə* "old" = Abkh. *a-žʷ*), 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 agriculture[85] (e. g. Adyghean and Kabardian *van* "to plow", Adyg. *cʷābza*, Kab. *vābdza* "plow", Adyg. and Kab. *ha* "barley", Adyg. *maśə*, Kab. *maš* "millet (*Panicum tiliaceum*)", Adyg. *kawcə*, Kab. *gʷadz* "wheat"). The terminology from the sphere of farm animal breeding is also common, especially for the breeding of horses (*šə*), cf. Kabardian and Adyghean *łarəġ* "stirrup", *xākʷʼa* "foal", Adyghean *šəkʼa*, Kabardian *šəʔa* "little foal", Adyg. *fāra*, Kab. *xʷāra* "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", *bābəś* "duck", *bwərš* "black pepper", *barāqʼ* "flag".Many Farsisms (words of Persian origin) have entered Kabardian through Turkic languages, e. g. *dəyn* "faith", *bazar* "market", *pāśtəh* "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. *páśu*, 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"[86]. 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 almost certainly (Indo-)Iranianisms, but because of the shortness of attested forms we cannot be entirely sure, e. g. *śa* "hundred" (Avestan *satəm*), *āža* "goat" (Vedic *aja-*); some words might be even older Indo-European loan-words, e. g. *kʼrəw* "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", *gʷanəh* "sin", *səhat* "hour", *sābər* "quiet, serene", *məhana* "meaning,

[85] Kumaxova 1972: 180 ff.
[86] Šagirov 1977, I: 16.

sense", *āq'əl* "reason, mind", *χəbār* "news", *šač* "doubt", *tāzər* "punishment", *barəčat* "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": *swərattayx* "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 century[87]. 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", *māšyəna* "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. *wəġʷər-lə* "good, benevolent"), the Russian suffixes cannot be added to Kabardian roots, i.e. they haven't become productive in Kabardian[88].

Aside from direct borrowings, there are also many Russian calques in Kabardian, e. g. *txəłaydža* "reader" (Rus. *čitatel'*), *sābazəśāša* "hoover" (Rus. *pylesos*), *ś'ə?āła* "refrigerator" (Rus. *xolodil'nik*), *bzaśanəġa* "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 *Россие*), 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", *yəntayrnayt* "Internet", *byəznays* "business", etc[89].

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[87] 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).
[88] Kumaxova 1972.
[89] For a general survey of Kabardian lexicology and lexicography see Apažev 2000.

TEXTS

1. A Very Simple and Instructive Text about Rabbits
(Source: Gʷəġʷat, L. *et alii Adəɣabza*, El'brus, Nal'čik 1984).

бза-кӀуэ   гуа-кӀуэ
да-кӀуэ   къэ-фа-кӀуэ
тхьэ-кӀу-мэ   джэ-гуа-кӀуэ

ТхьэкӀумэкӀыхь.

ТхьэкӀумэкӀыхьыр мэзым щопсэу.
Ар пкӀэурэ мажэ.
ТхьэкӀумэкӀыхьым и шырхэр шэкӀэ
егъашхэ. ТхьэкӀумэкӀыхьым удз
ешх, жыгыр егъу. Абы пхъыр
фӀыуэ елъагъу. ТхьэкӀумэкӀыхьыр
гъэмахуэм щхъуэщ, щӀымахуэм
хужьщ.   щӀы↘

Thakʷʷəmačʼ əh.
Rabbit (rabbits)
Thakʷʷəmačʼ əh-ər   mazə-m   ś-aw-psaw.
rabbit-NOM   forest-ERG   dir.-pres.-to live
ār   pčʼawəra mā-ža.
he-NOM   fast   3sg.pres.-run
Thakʷʷəmačʼəh-əm yə šər-xa-r   ša-čʼa
rabbit-ERG   young-pl.-NOM milk-INSTR
ya-ġa-šxa.   Thakʷʷəmačʼ əh-əm wədz
3sg.-caus.-eat   rabbit-ERG   grass
ay-šx,   žəγ-ər   ya-ġʷ   ābə   pχər
3sg.-to eat   wood-NOM 3sg.-gnaw   he-ERG   hay-stack
fʼ ə-wa   ya-ɫāġʷ ə.   Thəmačʼəh-ər
well-ADV   3sg.-see   rabbit-NOM
ġamāxʷam   śχʷa-ś, śʼəmāxʷam
in the summer   grey   in the winter
xʷəź-ś.
white-af.

2. How Sosruko Stole Fire
(Source: GʷəGʷat, L. *et alii Adəgabza*, El'brus, Nal'čik 1984).

PART I

Нарт шу гуп зекӏуэ кӏуэну ежьат. Гъуэгу
здытетым, уае бзаджэ къатохъуэ. Нартхэр
зэщӏэщтхьауэ гъуэгущхьэм тету, Сосрыкъуэ
къакӏэлъысащ.
— Мафӏэ уиӏэ, Сосрыкъуэ? Щӏылэм дес!
— Сэ къэзгъэзэжыху, фыкъыспэплъэ,— желэ-
ри Сосрыкъуэ и Тхъуэжьейм зредз, Хьэрэмэ-
ӏуащхьэ дожейри зеплъыхь, щӏы гъунэм зы
чэщанэжь къыщелъагъу, ӏугъуэ щхьэщыту.
Сосрыкъуэ чэщанэм нэсрэ дэплъэмэ, мафӏэм
къегъуэлъэкӏауэ Иныжь нэ закъуэ къелъагъу.
Сосрыкъуэ пщӏантӏэм шууэ дэпкӏащ. Мафӏэм
бгъэдэлъ Иныжьым епкӏэри зы пхъэдзакӏэ
къипхъуэтащ. Пхъэдзакӏэм къыпыхуа дэпыр
Иныжьым и нэжьгъым ихуащ.

Nārt šwə gʷəp zaykʷa kʷan-wə ya-ź-ā-t. Ġʷagʷ zdə-tay-t-əm, wāya bzādža q'-ā-t-aw-χʷa. Nārt-xa-r za-śʼaśth-ā-wa ġʷagʷ-śham tay-t-wə, Sawsrəqʷa q'-ā-čʼaɬəs-ā-ś. "Māfʼa w-yə-ʔa, Sawsrəq'wa? Śʼəʔa-m d-ya-s!" "Sa q'a-z-ġa-zažəxʷə, fə-q'ə-s-papɬa," ž-ya-ʔaryə Sawsrəqʷa yə Tχaźyay-m z-r-ya-dz, Harama-ʔʷāśha d-aw-žyay-ryə z-ya-pɬəh, śʼə ġʷəna-m zə čaśāna-ź q'-ə-śʼ-ya-ɬāġʷə, ʔʷəġʷa śha-śə-t-wə. Sawsrəqʷa čaśāna-m nasra da-pɬama, māfʼa-m q'-ya-ġʷaɬačʼā-wa Yənəź na zāqʷa q'-ya-ɬāġʷə. Sawsrəqʷa pśʼānt'-am šwə-wa da-pčʼāś. Māfʼa-m bġada-ɬ Yənəźəm yapčʼaryə zə pχadzāčʼa q'-yə-pχʷat-ā-ś. Pχadzāčʼa-m q'əpxʷa dapər Yənəźəm yə naźġəm yə-xʷ-ā-ś.

Vocabulary:

bġadaɬən "lie next to"
bzādža "bad"
čaśāna "tower"
dap "hot coals"
dapčʼan "jump in"
dapɬan "look in"
dažən "run up the hill"
ġʷagʷ "road"
ġʷəna "territory"
Harama name of a mythological mountain
kʷan "go"
māfʼa "fire"

Nārt "Nart" (hero of old times)
na "eye"
nasən "come to"
naźġ "middle part of the face"
Pχadzāčʼa "burning log"
pśʼānt'a "gate"
q'aġazažən "return"
q'apχʷatan "catch, get"
q'əčʼaɬəsən "follow, go after"

q'əpapɬan "wait for"
q'ətayχʷan "happen, occur"
šwə "horseman"
śəʔa "coldness, cold"
śhaśətən "stand above stg."
śʼə "land, earth"
taytən "find oneself, be"
Tχaźyay name of Sosruko's horse
wāya "cold"
yapčʼan "jump through, jump over"

Yǝnǝź "giant"
yǝsǝn "sit in"
yǝxʷan "push in"
yaźan "start, set off"
yǝʔan "have"
zāqʷa "single"

zaś'aśthan "freeze"
zaykʷa "raid"
zǝdzǝn "throw oneself"
zǝpłǝhǝn "look around"
žǝʔan "say"
źǝ "old"

ʔʷāśha "top"
ʔʷǝġʷ "smoke"

PART II

Сосрыкъуэ махуищкlэ къэкlуауэ, Иныжьыр къэушри и мафlэм зы пхъэдзакlэ къызэрытыр къищlащ. Гъумэтlымэурэ Иныжьыр къызэфlэтlысхьэщ, къиlэбэрэбыхьурэ Сосрыкъуэр къигъуэтри пхъэдзакlэр трихыжащ.

Сосрыкъуэ, уае къигъэхъуф и хабзэти, Иныжьыр хым хигъэщтхьэну мурад ищlащ. Абы Иныжьыр lэмалкlэ хым хигъэувэри уае ирищlэкlыжащ.

— Къеlэт иджы! Мылыр иджыри зэрыубыдакъым, — жиlэурэ Иныжьыр хигъащтхьэри Сосрыкъуэ мафlэр къихьри нартхэм къахыхьэжащ.

3. Sosruko and Totresh
(Source: *Nārtxar*, Nal'chik 1951)

Сосрыкъуэрэ Тотрэшрэ

Уий, уий, пшыналъэщ — жи⹃
Сосрыкъуэ и фащэщ — жиˡ
Уей, зы махуэ гуэрти
Дыгъэри жьэражьэу
И Тхъуэжьеижьри
Уей, тхьэкӀумэ лалэу,
Езы Сосрыкъуэри
И шым елэлэхыу
ПщӀантӀэм къыдохьэж.

Translitterated:

Wyəyy, Wyəyy, pšənāɬaś - žyə
Sawsrəqʷ a yə fāśaś - žyə
dəġaryə źarāźawə
Wayy, zə māxʷ a gʷ artyə
Yə Tχʷ aźyayźryə
Wayy, thakʷ əma lālawə,
yazə Sawsrəqʷ aryə
yə šəm yalalaxəwə
pś'ānt'am q'ədawhaž.

Vocabulary:
dəġa - day
fāśa - 1. Kabardian national dress; 2. form, appearance
gʷ ar - some
lāla - weak, shabby
māxʷ a - day
pšənāɬa - ballad
pś'ānt'a - gate
q'ədahan - bring in(to), get in
šə - horse
thakʷ əma -ear
Tχʷ aźyay - name of Sosruko's horse
wyəyy - Hey!
yalalaxən - hang
yazə - himself
žyə - they say (particle)
źaraźan - burn, be hot
źə - old

4. Kabardian proverbs
(Source: *Adǝɣabza psāłāła*, Nal'čik 1999).

1. *Ya wǝł'ǝn ya wǝł'an.*

2. *Ł'awa taył'ǝm wyǝ warad yǝġašǝrq'ǝm.*

3. *Fǝz bzadža haś'a mǝġašxaś.*

4. *Fǝz bǝda yǝl' halalś.*

5. *āq'ǝl zyǝʔam śan yǝʔaś.*

6. *L'ǝġar āžālǝm śǝśtarq'ǝm.*

7. *ādǝɣam yā naχ mǝġʷamyǝ šǝġʷǝra p'āstara wyǝġašxǝnś.*

8. *C'ǝxʷǝr l'ama, yǝ c'ar q'awnaryǝ, vǝr l'ama, yǝ far q'awna.*

9. *Wyǝ q'āma t'aw q'ǝwǝmǝx, wyǝ psāła t'aw žwǝmǝʔa.*

10. *Śhar psawǝma pǝʔa śǝś'arq'ǝm.*

11. *Ł'anǝm ł'ǝġa xałś.*

Vocabulary:

1. *ł'ǝ* "man"; *ł'an* "die"
2. *warad* "song"; *ešǝn* "become weary, become tired"
3. *fǝz* "woman"; *bzadža* "bad"; *haś'a* "guest"; *šxan* "eat"
4. *bǝda* "strong"; *halal* "what is desirable"
5. *āq'ǝl* "mind, wisdom"; *śan* "character"
6. *ł'ǝġa* "manliness"; *āžāl* "death"; *śǝśtan* "fear"
7. *ādǝɣa* "Adygh; Circassian"; *mǝġʷa* "poor"; *šǝġʷ* "salt"; *p'āsta* "pasta (Circassian dish)
8. *c'ǝxʷ* "person"; *c'a* "name"; *vǝ* "ox"; *fa* "skin"; *q'anan* "remain"
9. *q'āma* "dagger"; *q'axǝn* "cut"; *psāła* "word"; *žǝʔan* "say, utter"
10. *śha* "head"; *psawǝn* "live"; *pǝʔa* "hat"
11. *xałǝn* "lie (in something)"

5. How Karashawey got his bride
(Source: *Narty. Adygskij geroičeskij èpos*, Moscow 1974)

Къэрэшыуей гупышхуэ зэришэрт. Ежьэну и гупыр зэхуишэсыхукӀи:
— Шу закъуэ фыхуэззэкӀэ и закъуэщ жыфӀэу фытемыгушхуэ, шу гупышхуэ фахуэззэкӀи, куэд мхэъу жыфӀэуи фащымышынэ, яжриӀэрт.

Арати, зэгуэрым, Къэрэшыуейр, и хабзэм тету, и шу гупыр и гъусэу ежьащ. Ар мащӀэрэ кӀуа, куэдрэ кӀуа, зы шу закъуэ ялъэгъуащ. Шу закъуэр Къэрэшыуей и гупым щалъагъум, шууипщӀ хуэдиз хъууэ яужь закърагъэнащъ шу закъуэр яхъунщӀэн мурад яӀэу.

Къэрэшыуей и гупыр и гъусэу шу закъуэм фӀэхъус ирахри зэблэкӀахэщ. Куэд ямыкӀууи Къэрэшыуей и гупри зэхэпсыхащ.

ШууипщӀ зыкъыкӀэрызыгъэхуам я деж шу закъуэр зэрынэсу яубыдащ яхъунщӀэну.

— Фи гугъу сщӀыркъым, си гугъу къэвмыщӀ. СыныволъэӀу, си гъуэгу сривгъакӀуэ,— жиӀэри лъэӀуащ шу закъуэр.

6. Žabagy Kazanoko playing alchiki

(Source: *Q'azanawqʷa Žabāǧə*. Nālšək 1984)

Лэгъупэжьым деж Къэзан Жэбагъы щыIэурэ щIалэ тыкъырыфI хъуащ. Махуэ гуэрым ар и ныбжьэгъу цIыкIу гуэрым кIэн дэджэгурти, щIалэ цIыкIум кIэну иIэ псори Жэбагъы къихьэхуащ. ЩIалэ цIыкIум зы кIэни къыхуэнэжатэкъыми, Жэбагъы къыжриIащ:

— Жэбагъы, си кIэныр къызэтыж.

— Яхьэхур ятыжыркъым, — жиIащ Жэбагъы.

АфIэкIа хэмылъу щIалэ цIыкIур къэгубжьащ:

— Уэ узинэкъуэщ, ади ани уиIэкъым, пщыIэжьым укъыщагъуэтащ, бацэ къыптепIауэ, лэгъупыжь къыптеIубауэ. Иджы узыпIри уи адэкъым...

— Ин жыIэ цIыкIу Iуатэ жыхуаIэращ, — жиIащ Жэбагъы. — Уэ укъызэхъуэнми, а жыпIэр пэжу къыщIэкIынщ. Пэж къызэрызжепIам щхьэкIэ 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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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	ź, 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)
fyə 2nd person pl. possessive pronoun
f'- adversative
f'əč'(a) "except"
gʷa- directional ("together with")
gʷar "some" (quantifier)
ġa- causative
-ġa abstract noun formative
-ġan evidential (probability)
-ġā pluperfect
-ġāt anterior pluperfect
hawa "no"
-hə transitivizing suffix
* łāndara* "since the time that"
-l'(a) valency increasing suffix; adds directional meaning ("towards")
-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")

nawəź "after"

naχ comparative particle

-nša "without"

-nt subjunctive / future II (?)

-nwə Infinitive

-nwə factual future

-nwət future II (conditional)

nət'a "yes"

-pa perfectivizing suffix (indicates accomplished action)

p'ara interrogative particle

psaw "every" (quantifier)

-q'a interrogative, exclamatory, and focus marking suffix

q'as "every"

q'ə- directional ("hither")

-q'əm negation (for finite forms)

-q'ʷa suffix indicating excessive action; "too much"

-r Nominative (Absolutive) case

-r facultative present of dynamic verbs

-ra interrogative

-ra gerund

-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

-ś- suffix indicating excessive action; "too much"

-śa (elative) superlative

śa interrogative particle

śə- directional; "from the surface of"; "when"

śətma "if"

-śar(at) optative

śhač'a "after, because of"

śhaž "every"

-šxʷa "great"

ś'a- directional prefix; "under"

-t imperfect of dynamic verbs

-t suffix used in reinforcing the imperative

-tam(a) irrealis conditional

tay- directional; "on"

w-/b- 2nd person sg. verbal prefix

w*yə* 2sg. possessive pronoun

wə- factitive

-wə Adverbial case; gerund; adverbializing suffix

xa-/xə- directional ("towards the interior")

-xa plural

-x(a)- "already"

xat "who"

-xxa- "reinforced negation"

-χʷə transitivizing suffix

xʷa-/xʷə- version

xʷada "like"

xʷa-....-fa "somewhat" (circumfix modifying adjectives)

xʷə- potential

-xʷə(č'a) suffix expressing simultaneity of the action, "while"

xʷay- 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

yəč'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(ə) "back, again"; repetitive

žayryə "quotative particle"

-źay diminutive suffix

-ə transitivizing suffix

-ʔa indefinite person marker, "somebody"

ʔaś'a- involuntative

-ʔʷa superlative (elative); "diminutive" comparative

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