

Caucasus Studies 1

CIRCASSIAN CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Mukhadin Kumakhov & Karina Vamling



MALMÖ UNIVERSITY

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Culture and Society

Department of International Migration
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Foreword

This volume is the result of joint research conducted in Russia and Sweden over a number of years, involving the Department of Comparative Linguistics of the Institute of Linguistics at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, the Department of Linguistics at Lund University and the Department of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) at Malmö University.

The framework for this research collaboration has been the projects *Ergativity in the Circassian languages* and *The syntax and morphology of subordinate clauses in Kabardian*. We express our gratitude to The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences for financial support for both projects. We would also like to thank the above mentioned institutions for support and encouragement over the years, and in particular the Department of International Migration and Ethnic Relations for making it possible to publish this volume.

This collaboration has resulted in two monographs in Russian (Kumakhov & Vamling 1998, 2006) aimed at caucasologists and other interested readers in the North Caucasus and Russia. The present publication in English is based on these monographs and is intended for a wider range of readers, both linguists and Circassians with no knowledge of Russian.

During the course of this work, both in the preparation of the Russian version and the English one, professor Zara Kumakhova at the Institute of Linguistics at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow has offered most valuable help and comments, and we would like to take the opportunity to thank her. We would also like to thank Dr. Revaz Tchantouria at the Department of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER), Malmö University, who has assisted us throughout these projects and in the preparation of the publications.

Mukhadin Kumakhov and Karina Vamling
Moscow, February 2008

It is with great sadness and regret that I must extend this foreword. In June 2008, in the very final stages of our preparing the monograph for publication, professor Mukhadin Kumakhov died, unexpectedly. All subsequent amendments to the text are purely editorial.

Karina Vamling
Malmö, December 2008

Abbreviations

1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
A	Adyghe
A	Agent
ABS	Absolutive case
ABU	Abundance
ADV	Adverbial case
AOR	Aorist
ASS	Assumptive
ASSRT	Assertive
C	Circumstantial
CAUS	Causative
COM	Comitative
COND	Conditional
CONJ	Conjunctive
CRD	Coordinative
DEF	Definiteness
DS	Derivational suffix
DYN	Dynamic
ERG	Ergative case
F	Factitive
FOC	Focus marker
FUT	Future
GER	Gerund
IMP	Imperative
IMPF	Imperfect
INDEF	Indefiniteness
INF	Infinitive
INSTR	Instrumental case
INT	Interrogative
INTENS	Intensiveness
INTR	Intransitive
IO	Indirect object marker
IO	indirect object
ITER	Iterativity
JOINTACT	Joint action
K	Kabardian
LOC	Locative
MSD	Masdar
NEG	Negation
NSPEC	Nonspecific reference

O	Direct object
OERG	Oblique ergative
OPT	Optative
OR	Orientation
PART	Participle
PF	Perfective
PERF	Perfect
PL	Plural
PLUP	Pluperfect
POSS	Possessive
POSTP	Postposition
POT	Potentialis
PRES	Present
R	Recipient
RECIP	Reciprocal
REFL	Reflexive
REL	Relative prefix
REV	Reversed action
S	Subject
SG	Singular
ST	Stative
T	Theme
TRANS	Transitive
V	Verb
VS	Version

Transcription

Consonants

b	б	p	п	p'	пІ	v	в	f	ф	f'	фІ	w	у	m
d	д	t	т	t'	тІ							n	н	р
з	дз	c	ц	c'	цІ	z	з	s	с					
ж	дж	č	цy	č'	кІ	ž	ж	š	ш					
						ž'	жъ	š'	шь					
						z'	жъ	s'	шь	s'	шІ			
						z'°	жъу	s'°	шьу	s'°°	шІу			
г	гу	k°	ку	k'°	кІу	ɣ	г	χ	х			j	й	
								χ°	ху					
							гъ	х	хъ					
							гъу	х°	хъу					
		q	кхъ	q'	къ			h	хъ					
		ʔ	І											
		ʔ°	Іу											
						l	л	l̥	лъ	l'	лІ			

Vowels

а, а	і, и
е, э	о, о
ә, ы	у, у
je, е	

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Outline of the book

This is a study of clause structure in the Circassian languages of the Northwest Caucasian group. The Circassian languages are the closely related varieties Adyghe (West Circassian) and Kabardian (East Circassian). The most prominent feature of the clause structure of these languages is that they exhibit ergative patterns in highly polysynthetic verbal structures. The book is primarily descriptive and provides extensive data from both Adyghe and Kabardian. It explores ergativity in a wide context, studying its relation to morphology and clause structure. The general aim of this book is to contribute to a broader understanding of clause structure in languages with ergative systems.

The Circassian languages are among the lesser known and studied languages in the world. The book thus sets out to provide the reader with an introduction to the *Circassians and their language*, briefly outlining their history and present sociolinguistic conditions. The following introductory chapter offers a *Circassian grammar sketch*, focusing on an overview of Circassian nominal and verbal morphology. As ergativity manifests itself in both the nominal as well as the verbal morphology of the Circassian languages, the following chapters deal extensively with *Ergativity in nominals* and *Ergativity in verbs*, including a discussion of the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs. As the Circassian languages exhibit in the verb a rich marking of person and number distinctions of not only the subject but also the direct and other objects, it is to be expected that this richness combines with flexible word order. However, as many nominals are unmarked for case and verbal paradigms frequently show $\emptyset$ -marking in the third person, these features restrict the freedom of word order. Basic word order and word order variation relating to different types of nominals and constructions are explored in the chapter *Word order*. The following three chapters deal with different types of structures that differ from the canonical model of ergative patterns outlined in the initial chapters of the book. The first issue to be addressed in the chapter *Labile constructions* concerns the so-called labile verbs that have been discussed in the literature in relation to anti-passives. Both the Circassian languages have verbal roots that have identical phonetic and morphological shapes when they appear in absolutive and ergative constructions, as in the Adyghe examples $L'\partial-r\ ma-\underline{z}^{\circ}e$ 'The man (absolutive) is engaged in digging' and $L'\partial-m\ \check{c}'\partial g^{\circ}\partial-r\ \emptyset-je-\underline{z}^{\circ}e$ 'The man (ergative) is digging the soil (absolutive)'. In the following chapter it is noted that the Circassian languages have a number of verbs that occur in diachronically ergative constructions and have been syntactically reduced and reinterpreted. For instance, it includes structures where, from a synchronic point of view, the direct object is under-

od as the logical subject in the absolutive case and the transitive verb is understood as an intransitive verb, even if it has all the morphological features of a transitive verb. This and other similar cases of reduced and reinterpreted constructions are discussed in the chapter *Reduced (semiergative) constructions*. A limited number of verbs fall under the heading of *Inversive constructions*. These are non-agentive (affective) verbs such as *jəʔe-n* ‘have’, A. *faje-n*, K. *χ^oejə-n* ‘want’, A. *s''^oe-s'ə-n*, K. *f'e-s''-n* ‘appear’. The logical subject of these verbs is marked by the oblique ergative case and an object personal marker, and the logical object is marked by the absolutive case and the subject personal marker. The last chapter in the book, *Ergativity in complex constructions*, deals with the combination of clauses, either in coordination or subordination. In combining verb phrases with intransitive and transitive verbs and hereby with different case marking properties, the interpretation of deleted elements and possible case marking and word order variation show great complexity. Finally, the book is provided with a concluding brief summary.

1 The Circassians and their language

The Circassians are a divided people with a complex and dramatic history. They call themselves *adyghe* and their language *adygha-bza*. The Circassians live in the Northern Caucasus and in large diaspora groups in Turkey and neighbouring countries – Jordan, Syria, Israel – and in the USA.

Who are the Circassians? The purpose of this introduction is to provide a background and to clarify the notions ‘Circassian’ and related terms. As will be shown below, it is possible to distinguish uses of ‘Circassians’ that are based on linguistic and historic criteria.

1.1 Circassians in the Russian Federation

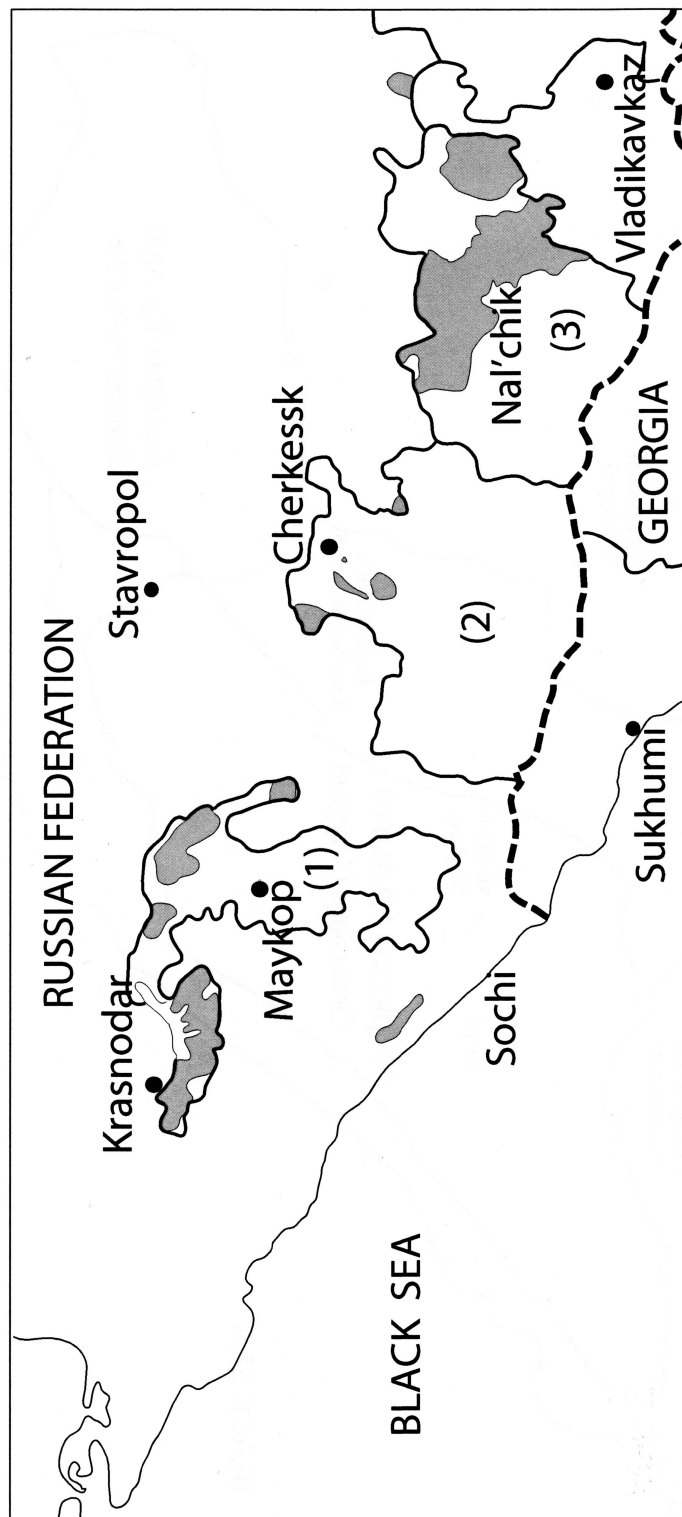
The Circassians have their historical homeland in the south of what is today the Russian Federation, in an area reaching from the Great Caucasus to the river Kuban and, in the north-west to the Black Sea. In Soviet times the Circassian population was split into different political-administrative units together with Russians and the Turkic-speaking Karachai and Balkars: Adygheya [1], Karachai-Cherkessia [2] and Kabardino-Balkaria [3] (cf. below, Map 1: Circassians in the Northwest Caucasian republics, based on the map ‘The peoples of the USSR’, GUGK SSSR 1990)¹.

The Circassians are called differently in the three republics: Cherkess in Karachai-Cherkessia, Kabardians in Kabardino-Balkaria and Adyghe in the republic of Adygheya. The Circassians have their strongest position in Kabardino-Balkaria, where they number about 473,400 and constitute half of the population. In Adygheya only 104,000 or a fourth of the population are Circassian, and in Karachai-Cherkessia the figure is even less; approximately 50,000 or 11%. Cf. the table below (based on AE:35-36).

Table 1.1 *Circassians in the three North-Caucasian republics*

	Circassians	Balkars	Karachai
Kabardino-Balkaria	52.5%	10.7%	
Adygheya	25.2%		
Karachai-Cherkessia	11.2%		38.5%

¹ The names of these units have changed several times. The ones given here represent the present forms. The fourth autonomous region for the Shapsugs was abolished in 1945 (AE:294-295).



Map 1. *The Circassian languages in the Northwest Caucasian republics:*
1. Adygheya, 2. Karachai-Cherkessia, 3. Kabardino-Balkaria.

Outside these three republics Circassians also live in the Stavropol district, in Mozdok in Northossetia and in a small area to the north of Sochi.

1.2 Circassian among the Northwest Caucasian languages

The Caucasus is well-known for its multitude of languages. Over 50 languages have their main area of distribution here. The languages of the Caucasus belong to several different groups: Caucasian, Indo-European, Turkic and Semitic. The Caucasian languages – thus not synonymous with the languages of the Caucasus² – are divided into: Northwest Caucasian, Northeast Caucasian and South Caucasian (Kartvelian) languages. There are several similarities between these groups, but they have not been established as a genetically related language family on the basis of reconstruction. One grammatical feature that is found in languages of all three groups of Caucasian languages is ergativity³, which is the topic of the present investigation.

The mutually intelligible Circassian languages form one of the branches of the Northwest Caucasian languages (cf. Fig. 1.1). The other branch is formed by the closely related Abkhaz and Abaza. The languages of the two branches are not mutually intelligible. The extinct language Ubykh also belongs to the Northwest Caucasian languages.

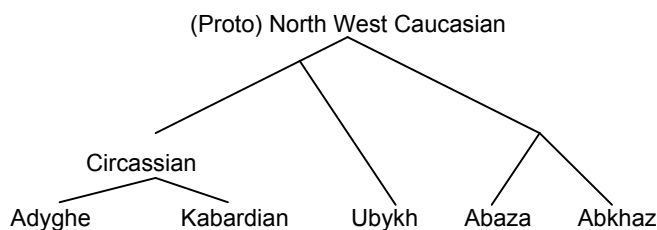


Figure 1.1 *The Northwest Caucasian languages*

As the Adyghe live in the western areas and the Kabardians more to the east, the two Circassian varieties are sometimes called West Circassian (Adyghe) and East Circassian (Kabardian), respectively. East Circassian, spoken in Kabardino-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia, has sometimes been called Kabardino-Cherkess, cf. for example in Abitov et.al. *Grammar for Kabardino-Cherkess* (1957).

The common origin of the Northwest Caucasian languages is well established (Kumakhov 1981, 1989, Chirikba 1996). However, there are no other languages

² The term Ibero-Caucasian languages was coined by the Georgian scholar Chikobava to mark the distinction between the languages of the Caucasus and Caucasian languages, where 'Ibero-' is related to the old Georgian kingdom Iberia (Chikobava 1965).

³ For a critical review of ergativity in the Caucasian languages, see Tuite (1999).

that are in all certainty genetically related to this handful of languages. As mentioned above, an attempted reconstruction of a common proto-language has been unable to establish the Caucasian languages as a language family.

There are differences between the East and West Circassian varieties at the lexical, morphological and syntactic levels. The differences are not so great that they could not be considered dialectal differences, as the two varieties are mutually intelligible. However, West Circassian (Adyghe) in particular shows inner dialectal variation (Paris 1974:25): Abadzex, Bzhedug, Temirgoi, Shapsug and other dialects. Differences between the dialects of East Circassian (Kabardian) are lesser (Baksan, Kuban, Malka, Terek and Beslan).

1.3 Literary standards for the Circassian languages

Like many other minority languages in the former Soviet Union, the Circassian languages have used several writing systems – the Arabic, Cyrillic and Latin scripts (Kumakhova 1972, Isaev 1979). Separate standards have been developed for Adyghe and Kabardian. The first Adyghe orthography in the Soviet period used the Arabic script until 1927, when it was replaced by a Latin-based orthography. Ten years later a new Cyrillic-based standard was introduced, and is still in use. The development for Kabardian was similar: orthographies based on the Arabic and Cyrillic scripts were used until 1923, when a Latin-based script was introduced. It was subsequently replaced by a Cyrillic-based standard that is still in use.

The Northwest Caucasian languages have very rich consonantal systems. Kabardian has 46 consonant phonemes and Adyghe 54, which means that the orthography becomes very complex. As an illustration, in Adyghe three different *ts* affricates are found: *c*, *c'*, *c°* (written *ц*, *цI*, *цy* in the Cyrillic-based script) and three different *l*-sounds: *l*, *l'*, *l'* (*л*, *лЪ*, *лI*). In representing some Circassian sounds, sequences of three-four Cyrillic letters are used, as in *кхЪ*, *кхЪy*, *пIy*, *кIy* (*y* marks labialisation and *I* glottalisation).

The orthographies for Adyghe and Kabardian have been developed without attention to similarities between the two varieties, which has made mutual intelligibility of the written form of the languages more difficult. Identical sounds in the two varieties are represented differently in writing (Kumakhova 1972:34), cf. Table 1.2.

Table 1.2 *Examples of differences in the orthographies*

<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>
жЪ z'	жЪ z'
шЪ s'	ш s'
шI s''	шI s''

1.4 The Circassian diaspora

Most Circassians (or people of Circassian descent) live in countries outside the Caucasus. Particularly large groups are found in Turkey, but also in Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and the US.

The reason for the large Circassian diaspora was Russian belligerence and the conquest of the Caucasus in the 19th century. The advance of Tsarist Russia into the Circassian lands started in the second part of 18th century (Henze 1992). The Circassians offered fierce resistance, and were not finally defeated by the Russians until 1864. They were given the ultimatum of surrendering and resettling in new areas or emigrating. Most Circassians, especially in the Western part of the Circassian lands, were forced to emigrate and found refuge in countries in the Ottoman empire. The remaining, severely diminished Circassian population was divided into settlements in four areas, isolated from one another. Between them, cossacks moved in and settled in the depopulated Circassian lands. Thus, the prior linguistic and cultural contacts within the former continuous Circassian area were broken.

It is clear that the numbers of Circassians that left the Caucasus were very high, but estimations vary. According to McCarthy (1995:36) the numbers of Caucasians (thus including other groups such as Chechens and Abkhaz⁴) leaving the Russian-conquered lands were likely to be as high as 1.2 million during the 1860s and 1870s. Akgunduz (1998) notes that there was a further emigration of approx. 500,000 Circassians from the Caucasus in the following decades (1881-1914). Adding to the tragedy of forced migration were the appalling conditions with large numbers of the emigrants perishing from diseases and hardships even before they reached their destinations (for further details, see Shenfield (1999)).

1.5 The present situation of the Circassians

Thanks to the fact that the Circassians often formed compact settlements, most of them were able to maintain their mother tongue, at least up to the mid 20th century. However, the pressure from surrounding majority languages is evident and language shift is not uncommon. This is even felt in the Caucasus, and in particular in the Adyghe republic. Hoehlig (1999) reports on Russian influence on the Adyghe language and lower numbers of Circassians using the language in the urban setting of the capital Maykop, whereas the position of the language is stronger in rural areas of more compact Circassian settlements.

⁴ Other North Caucasian peoples shared the fate of the Circassians. As a result of the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, large groups of the Abkhaz population were forced to emigrate. The whole Ubykh tribe, who lived in the area of Sochi – nowadays a popular Russian tourist resort on the Black Sea coast – left the Caucasus and have been assimilated among the Turkish population and have lost their language.

Since the *perestroyka* years in the late 1980s and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 the situation has changed, opening up for contacts between diaspora groups and Circassians in the Caucasus, contacts which had been virtually nonexistent until then. The new openness and greater freedom have had a vitalizing effect on Circassian institutions and cultural development. An important factor has also been the interest from Circassians abroad in visiting and settling in the Caucasus.

One example of repatriation that might be mentioned involves a small group of Circassians who lived in Kosovo in what was then Yugoslavia. This group of 200 people was described by Bersirov in 1981. At that time the whole group had managed to maintain their language and were bilingual in Adyghe (Abadzekh) and Albanian. In 1998 the group appealed to the Russian and Adyghe authorities for permission to settle in the Caucasus, and two years later they started building the village of Mafakhabl in the Adyghe republic (Karataban 2004).

However, the number of Circassian descendents resettling in the Caucasus has been rather low. Several factors contribute to this situation. Some part of the Circassian diaspora has been culturally and linguistically assimilated in the new countries of residence. Besides this, economic hardship and political unrest in parts of Northern Caucasus have made it less attractive to resettle in the Caucasus. A further important factor that reduces Circassian repatriation is a recent decision by the Russian Duma that knowledge of the Russian language is required from Circassians wishing to settle in the Circassian homelands.

1.6 ‘Circassian’ and related terms

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, it is possible to distinguish different uses of the term ‘Circassian’ that are based on historic or linguistic criteria. The historic use of the term is based on the common history, shared by the Adyghe, Kabardians and Abkhaz, of forced emigration from the Caucasus in the 19th century. Thus, the historic use of the term includes the Abkhaz. Contrary to this, in the present book our use of the term ‘Circassian’ (*черкесский* or *адыгский*) is linguistically defined, embracing the different mutually intelligible Circassian varieties spoken in the North-Caucasian republics: Adyghe and Kabardian.

2 Circassian grammar sketch

This chapter offers a short overview over central morphological and syntactic issues in the Circassian languages. It is intended as an introduction and source of reference on Circassian grammar for readers with no prior knowledge of the languages.¹

2.1 Nouns

2.1.1 Definiteness

Definiteness is a category marked in nouns by the suffixes *-r* and *-m*, that at the same time function as case markers (cf. below 2.1.2). Indefiniteness is unmarked, i.e. the absence of the markers *-r/-m* indicates indefiniteness (in nouns that distinguish this category).

- (1) a. L'ə-r ma-že
man-DEF.ABS S3SG-run.PRES
'The man (definite) runs' K.
- b. L'ə-∅ ma-že
man-INDEF.ABS S3SG-run.PRES
'A man (indefinite) runs' K.
- (2) a. Fəzə-r q'°aže-m ∅-k'°-a-s'
woman-DEF.ABS village-DEF.OERG S3SG-go-PERF-ASSRT
'The woman went to the village' K.
- b. Fəz-∅ q'°aže-∅ ∅-k'°-a-s'
woman-INDEF.ABS village-(INDEF.OERG) S3SG-go-PERF-ASSRT
'A woman went to a village' K.

The opposition definite-indefinite is not characteristic of nouns denoting entities that are generally understood as individuated or unique for instance proper names, *dəye* 'the sun', *maze* 'the moon', abstract nouns such as *l'əye* 'courage', *zešəy°e* 'boredom'. The markers *-r/-m* may occur with these words (3-4), but it is important to note that in such instances *-r/-m* do not mark definiteness.

¹ Based on Kumakhov & Vamling (1993, 1995, 1998).

- (3) Dəʔe-(r) ø-s-o-lay°-ø
 Sun-(ABS) O3SG-S1SG-DYN-see-PRES
 ‘I see the sun’ K.

- (4) Jənalə-(r) ma-laž'e-(ø)
 Inal-(ABS) S3SG-work-PRES
 ‘Inal is working’ K.

2.1.2 Case

The Circassian languages distinguish four cases: the absolutive, ergative, instrumental and adverbial cases. As noted above, case is closely related to the marking of definiteness: the markers of definiteness also function as the markers of the absolutive (-*r*) and ergative (-*m*) cases. Absolutive case marks the subject in intransitive clauses (5) and the direct object (6) in transitive clauses. The ergative case appears as the case of subject in transitive clauses (7).

- (5) Fəzə-r ma-že
 woman-ABS S3SG-run.PRES
 ‘The woman runs’ K.
- (6) Sə fəzə-r ø-s-o-lay°
 I woman-ABS O3SG-S1SG-DYN-see.PRES
 ‘I see the woman’ K.
- (7) Fəzə-m tχələ-r ø-jə-tχ-a-s'
 woman-ERG book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman wrote the book’ K.

The marker *-m* occurs in a number of other positions: indirect object of a ditransitive verb *jetə-n* ‘give smth. to somebody’ (8), locative relations (9), the owner in possessive constructions (10), postpositional complement (11). For further details on the functions of *-m*, cf. Kumakhov (1971: 116-129). In this study we use *ergative case* for the *-m* case marker on transitive subjects, whereas the label *oblique ergative* is used for other functions (traditionally this distinction is not made; the term ergative case is used to cover all functions. Cf. for instance, the most recent Kabardian grammar, Kumakhov 2006:96).

- (8) Ps'as'e-m tχələ-r č'ale-m ø-r-i-tə-γ
 girl-ERG book-ABS boy-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF
 ‘The girl gave the book to the boy’ A.
- (9) Ps'as'e-r qalə-m ma-ø-k'°e-ø
 girl-ABS town-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-go-PRES
 ‘The girl is going to town’ A.

- (10) Ps'as'e-m ja-te-(r) me-laž'e-ø
 girl-OERG POSS3SG-father-(ABS) S3SG-work-PRES
 'The girl's father works' A.
- (11) Ps'as'e-m paje q°až'e-m se-ø-k'°e-ø
 girl-OERG for village-OERG S1SG-IO3SG-go-PRES
 'I go to the village for the girl (for her sake)' A.

Third person personal pronouns (demonstrative pronouns) take the special marker *-bə*, which occurs both in subject position and with other functions.

- (12) A-bə tχəłə-r ø-jə-tχ-a-s'
 he-ERG book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 'He wrote the book' K.
- (13) Se a-bə s-ø-o-we
 I he-OERG S1SG-IO3SG-DYN-hit.PRES 'I hit him' K.

Not all lexical groups distinguish the absolutive and ergative cases. The distinction is lacking in proper nouns, many geographic names and personal pronouns in the first and second person.

- (14) a. We w-o-k'°e b. Anzor ma-k'°e
 you S2SG-DYN-go.PRES Anzor S3SG-go.PRES
 'You go' K. Anzor goes' K.
- c. We tχəłə-r ø-w-o-tχ
 you book-ABS O3SG-S2SG-DYN-write.PRES
 'You write the book' K.
- d. Anzor tχəłə-r ø-jə-tχ-a-s'
 Anzor book-ABS OSG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 'Anzor wrote the book' K.
- e. Mezk°əw j-o-z'e ø-je-tχ
 Moscow S3SG-DYN-wait.INTR O3SG-S3SG-write.TRANS.PRES
 'Moscow waits, writes' K.

The instrumental case is marked by *-č'e* (15). It occurs on nouns and pronouns in different oblique functions. The definite marker is inserted before the instrumental marker (15b-c).

- (15) a. Se a-r se-č'e ø-s-s'°-a-s'
 I it-ABS knife-INSTR O3SG-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'I did it with a knife' K.

- (15) b. Se a-r se-m-č'e ø-s-s''-a-s'
 I it-ABS knife-DEF.INSTR O3SG-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'I did it with the knife' (a specific, known knife) K.
- c. We šə-m-č'e w-k''-a-s'
 you horse-DEF.INSTR S2SG-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'You went on the horse' K.

The fourth case, the adverbial, is marked by the suffix *-w(ə)* (with the variant *-wə* in monosyllabic nouns ending in vowels and *-w*, *-wə* in other contexts). This case is rather similar to the adverbial case in Georgian *-ad*, *-d*: *dan-ad* 'as a knife'.

- (16) Aslen mezx^oəme-w me-laz'e
 Aslan forester-ADV S3SG-work.PRES
 'Aslan works as forester' K.
- (17) A-r sələt-əw ø-q'ə-k''ə-ž-a-s'
 he-ABS soldat-ADV S3SG-OR-go-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'He returned as a soldier' K.

Table 2.1 *Case endings*

Absolutive	-r
Ergative (/Oblique ergative)	-m
Instrumental	-č'e
Adverbial	-w(ə)

The relative ordering of affixes following the nominal root is: plural suffix *-χe*, definite suffix *-m*, case suffix.

- (18) Se a-r se-χe-m-č'e ø-s-s''-a-s'
 I it-ABS knife-PL-DEF-INSTR O3SG-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'I did it with the knives' K.

As we have seen above, case marking does not occur on all NPs. This is in contrast to personal prefixes, which are obligatorily present in all verbs (cf. the related Northwest Caucasian language Abkhaz, where there is so case marking on subject/object).

2.1.3 Number

The Circassian languages distinguish singular and plural, where singular is unmarked and plural is marked by the suffix *-χe*, which co-occurs with case

markers: *ps'as'e* 'girl' and *ps'as'e-χe-r* 'girls (ABS)'. The plural marker does not occur without an accompanying case marker.

Nouns without the plural suffix may be used in the ergative case in both singular and plural meaning when agreeing with a plural possessive (19b) or plural personal marker (19d).

- (19) a. *Fəzə-m* *jə-wəne-r*
 woman-OERG POSS3SG-house-ABS
 'the woman's house' K.
- b. *Fəzə-m* *ja-wəne-r*
 woman-OERG POSS3PL-house-ABS
 'the women's house' K.
- c. *Fəzə-m* *je-tχ*
 woman-ERG S3SG-write.PRES
 'the woman writes' K.
- d. *Fəzə-m* *ja-tχ*
 woman-ERG S3PL-write.PRES
 'the women write' K.

2.1.4 Possessive

Possessive is marked by a set of prefixes (Table 2.2) on the head noun (the possessed). The prefix agrees in person and number with the modifier (the possessor).

Table 2.2 *Possessive prefixes*

1 SG	<i>si</i>	'my'	1 PL	<i>di</i>	'our'
2 SG	<i>wi</i>	'your (SG)'	2 PL	<i>fi</i>	'your (PL)'
3 SG	<i>jə</i>	'his, her, its'	3 PL	<i>ja</i>	'their (PL)'

- (20) *Si-q'°eš* *ø-q'e-k'°-a-s'*
 POSS1SG-brother S3SG-OR-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'My brother came' K.

- (21) *Se wi-q'°eš* *ø-s-leγ°-a-q'əm*
 I POSS2SG-brother O3SG-S1SG-see-PERF-NEG
 'I did not see your brother' K.

The possessive prefix is added to preposed adjectival modifiers of the possessed noun, as in (22a-b):

- (22) a. *si-adəye* *tχələ-r* b. *zi-pxe* *wəne-r*
 POSS1SG-Cherkess book-ABS REL.POSS-tree house-ABS
 ‘my Circassian book’ K. ‘whose wooden house’ K.

Relative possession is expressed by the prefix *zi-*. This prefix does not change for number but combines with the plural suffix: *zi-q’əš-χe-r* [REL.POSS-brother-PL-ABS] ‘whose brothers’.

In some instances a possessive occurs in both singular and plural with nouns in the (oblique) ergative case. Here, the noun is interpreted as a plural when the possessive is in the plural form. For instance, collective nouns (unmarked) combine with the plural of the possessive (23).

- (23) *g’əpə-m* *ja-paše*
 group.OERG POSS3PL-leader
 ‘leader of the group’ K.

The same pattern applies to nouns denoting ethnic groups (24a-b):

- (24) a. *adəye-m* *ja-χabze* b. *sone-m* *ja-wəne*
 cherkess.OERG POSS3PL-law svan-OERG POSS3PL-house
 ‘law of the Circassians’ K. ‘house of the Svans’ K.

2.1.5 Coordinative

Nouns are coordinated by the use of suffixes. A single suffix is used *-i: fəz-i* ‘and the woman’ as well as repeated suffixes: *-i...-i: fəzi ps’as’i* ‘and the girl and the woman’. Alternatively *-re...-re* is used: *fəz-re ps’as’e-re* ‘and the girl and the woman’. The repeated *-i...-i...* in contrast to *-re...-re* is used for coordinating similar conjuncts.

The coordinative suffix occurs in the final slot, following number, case, definiteness: *fəz-χe-r-i* [woman-PL-ABS-CRD] ‘and the women’.

- (25) a. *Fəz-r-i* *ps’as’e-r-i* *ma-k’ə*
 woman-DEF-CRD girl-DEF-CRD S3PL-go.PRES
 ‘Both the woman and the girl are going’ K.
- b. *Fəz-m-i* *ps’as’e-m-i* *ja-tχ-a-s’*
 woman-ERG-CRD girl-ERG-CRD S3PL-write-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman and the girl are writing’ K.

2.2 Pronouns

Pronouns are subdivided into personal, possessive, demonstrative, interrogative, determinative and indefinite pronouns.

Personal pronouns are distinguished only in the 1st and 2nd persons: *se* ‘I’ and *de* ‘we’, *we* ‘you’ and *fe* ‘you PL’. In the third person demonstrative pronouns are used. Possessive pronouns are usually used in predicative position: *səsej* ‘my’, *dədej* ‘our’, *wəwej* ‘your’, ‘your PL’, *jej* ‘his/her’ and *jaj* ‘their’.

- (26) a. A wəne-r səsej-s'
that house-ABS mine-ASSRT
‘that house is mine’ K.
- b. Mo tχələ-r fəfej-s'
that book-ABS your.PL-ASSRT
‘that book is yours’ K.

Demonstrative pronouns distinguish two degrees; close–distant: *mə* ‘this’ and *mo* ‘that’. Depending on the context the pronoun *a* has the meaning ‘this, that’. The interrogative pronouns: *χet* ‘who’ (humans), ‘what’ *sət* (non-humans)’, *dara*, *detχene*, *detχenera* ‘which’.

Determinative pronouns include *χeti* ‘any, every’ (humans), *səti* ‘any, every’ (non-humans). Indefinite pronouns are *g°ər*, *zəg°ər* ‘someone, something’. The pronoun *g°er* is always used attributively, in postposition to its head noun (27a), whereas *zəg°er* is used as a free form (27b).

- (27) a. Ps'as'e g°erə-m mə pismo-r ø-jə-tχ-a-s'
girl some-ERG this letter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
‘Some girl wrote you this letter’ K.
- b. Zəg°erə-m mo wəne-r ø-jə-s'-a-s'
someone-ERG that house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
‘Someone built that house’ K.

Personal and interrogative pronouns are not differentiated for the absolutive and ergative cases. They are thus unmarked in subject position of intransitives and transitives:

- (28) a. Se s-o-k°e I S1SG-DYN-go.PRES
‘I am going’ K.
- b. Se wə-z-o-h I O2SG-S1SG-DYN-carry.PRES
‘I carry you’ K.

The bivalent verbs in (29-30) represent one transitive (29) and one intransitive (30) verb, but as these examples show, only the alignment of personal prefixes and not case marking patterns differ between the two.

- (29) Se we wə-s-hə-γ
I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-PERF
'I carried you' A.

- (30) Se we sə-we-žə-γ
I you S1SG-IO2SG-wait-PERF
'I waited for you' A.

The absence of case distinctions in first and second personal pronouns has parallels in many other ergative languages, for instance, the Northeast Caucasian languages (Topuria 1995) and the Kartvelian languages.

Demonstrative pronouns, however, are distinguished by the special ergative marker *-bə* (31):

- (31) A-bə (mə-bə, mo-bə) a-r ø-jə-ləγ°ə-nu-s'
he-ERG (this-ERG, that-ERG) he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-FUT-ASSRT
'He (this one, that one) will see him' K.

2.3 Adjectives

Adjectives distinguish the categories number, case and coordinative, that are marked by suffixes: *daxe-χe-r-i* [beautiful-PL-ABS-CRD] 'beautiful'; *γ°ez'-χe-m-i* [yellow-PL-ERG-CRD] 'yellow'. The declension of adjectives coincides with the declension of nouns.

Preposed nouns function as adjectival attributes, as in *γ°əs'' k°ebže* [iron gate] 'iron gate', *wes wəne* [snow house] 'house of snow'.

2.4 NP structure

Noun phrase structure is rather simple in the Circassian languages. The nominal suffixes (number, case, coordinative) attach only to the last member in the NP – and the possessive prefix to the initial member.

- (32) Si- [pxe wəne jən] -χe-r-i
POSS1SG- tree house big -PL-ABS-CRD
'my big wooden houses' K.

The possessive marker is placed in initial position of the possessed NP (33):

- (33) a. *lez'ak'°e-m jə-pxe wəne jənəʃχ°-i-s'ə-r*
 that farmer-OERG POSS3SG-tree house big-CRD-three-Abs
 'three big wooden houses of that farmer' K.

If the final constituent of an NP has simple syllable structure (CV or CCV), then it merges with the preceding syllable (34a-b).

- (34) a. *wəne-s'°e*
 house-new
 'new house' K.
 b. *c'əχ°ə-pse*
 person-soul
 'human soul' K.

If the final part of the NP ends in the vowel -ə, then it is reduced to zero.

- (35) a. *wəne-z' (< wəne z'ə)*
 house-old
 'old house' K.
 b. *c'əχ°ə-bg (< c'əχ°ə bgə)*
 person-back
 'human spine' K.

The same regularity is found in more complex NPs, providing the final syllable structure is CV or CCV (36).

- (36) *və-s'he-z' (< və-s'he-z'ə)*
 bull-head-old
 'old bull's head' K.

Example (37) illustrates NPs with numeral attributes, which shows that 1-10 and 100 combine with the conjunctive element -i- (whereby the final -e, -ə is deleted in the preceding noun or adjective).

- (37) a. *wən-i-s'e (< wəne-i-s'e)*
 house-CRD-hundred
 '(one) hundred houses' K.
 b. *wən-i-s' (< wəne-i-s'ə)*
 house-CRD-three
 'three houses' K.
 c. *wəne daχ-i-s' (< wəne daχe-i-s'ə)*
 house beautiful-CRD-three
 'three beautiful houses' K.

Word order in NPs is fixed and grammatically distinctive. Relative adjectives precede the head noun (38a), whereas qualitative adjectives are postposed (38b).

- (38) a. *pxe wəne*
 tree house
 'wooden house' K.
 b. *wəne daχe*
 house beautiful
 'beautiful house' K.

- (38) c. pxe wəne daχe
 tree house beautiful
 'beautiful wooden house' K.

The genitive attribute is preposed and the possessive prefix is placed initially in the modifying NP denoting the possessed.

- (39) a lez'ak'°e-m jə-pxe wəne jənəšχ°-i-t'ə-r
 that farmer-OERG POSS3SG-tree house big-CRD-three-ABS
 'the three big wooden houses of that farmer' K.

2.5 Verbal morphology

Verb forms in Circassian are highly complex with a number of prefixes and suffixes surrounding often simple verbal roots. As a point of departure we may look at example (40) that illustrates this: the simple root -šə- 'leads' combines with eight prefixes and five suffixes.

- (40) w- a- q'ə- də- d- je- z- yə- šə-
 O2SG IO3PL OR COM LOC IO3SG S1SG CAUS- *lead*
 -žə -f -a -te -q'əm
 REV POT PERF IMPF NEG
 I could not then make him lead you back out from that place together
 with them' K.

As well as simple verb roots, compound stems are common in the Circassian languages (41).

- (41) wə-g°ə-f'e-n-s'
 S2SG-*heart-good*-FUT-ASSRT
 'you will be happy' K.

Many complex verb stems are formed following the model 'prefix+root+root' (42), where the prefix marks location or spatial orientation.

- (42) a. sə-de-plə-č'-at
 S1SG-LOC-look-go-PERF2
 'I looked out of' (for instance a window) K.
- b. ø-χe-f-s'°ə-h-a-s'
 O3SG-LOC-S2PL-do-carry-PERF-ASSRT
 'you built inside something' K.

- (42) c. sə-ne-p-še-sə-n-s'
O1SG-OR-S2SG-lead-go.to-FUT-ASSRT
'you will take me to the end' K.

Among derivational prefixes may be mentioned the causative *ye-* (43a), comitative *de-* (43b), joint action of different subjects *zde-* (43c), version, expressing a benefactive *χ°e-* (43d) or malfactive relation *f'e-* (43e) and prefixes expressing the location *t-* (43f) or spatial orientation of the action *q'e-* (43g).

- (43) a. də-v-ye-k'°e-ya-s'
O1PL-S2PL-CAUS-go-PLUP-ASSRT
'you made us go' K.
- b. ø-v-de-s-tχə-nu-s'
O3SG-IO2PL-COM-S1SG-write-FUT-ASSRT
'I will write it together with you' K.
- c. fə-zde-žeg°ə-ya-s'
S2PL-JOINTACT-play-PLUP-ASSRT
'you played together then' K.
- d. ø-p-χ°e-s-hə-nu-s'
O3SG-IO2SG-VS-S1SG-carry-FUT-ASSRT
'I will carry it for you (for your sake)' K.
- e. ø-p-f'e-s-s'°-a-s'
O3SG-O2SG-VS-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
'I did it against your will' K.
- f. də-t-je-t-s'
S1PL-LOC-IO3SG-stand.PRES-ASSRT
'we are standing on something' K.
- g. sə-q'e-f-š-a-s'
O1SG-OR-S2PL-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'you lead me here' K.

In the section below we will start with the division into transitive and intransitive verbs, which plays such a central role in issues relating to the ergative structure. We will also outline transitivising vs. intransitivising morphological processes, and then turn to an overview of verbal inflection.

2.5.1 Transitive and intransitive verbs

The division into transitive and intransitive verbs is an important distinction. It involves both morphological and syntactic characteristics. Transitive and

intransitive verbs are formally distinguished on the basis of their alignment of personal markers. A transitive verb has the direct object marker initially and the subject prefix close to the root. In an intransitive verb the initial slot is occupied by the subject marker.

Table 2.3 *Examples of transitive verbs*

<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>	
wəč'ə-n	wəč'ə-n	'kill'
thale-n	thele-n	'strangle'
wəbətə-n	wəbədə-n	'catch'
š'te-n	s'te-n	'take'
wət'°əpsə-n	wət'əps'ə-n	'let go, set free'
tep'e-n	tep'e-n	'cover'
tjexə-n	tjexə-n	'remove'
s'ə-n	s'ə-n	'do'
s'e-n	s'e-n	'know'
lay°ə-n	lay°ə-n	'see'
zexexə-n	zexexə-n	'hear'
jetə-n	jetə-n	'give'
hə-n	hə-n	'carry'
š'e-n	še-n	'lead'

Among intransitives verbs the following are found:

Table 2.4 *Examples of intransitive verbs (a)*

<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>	
k'°e-n	k'°e-n	'go'
če-n	že-n	'run'
le-n	le-n	'jump'
bəbə-n	lete-n	'fly'
š'əsə-n	s'əsə-n	'sit'
š'ələ-n	s'ələ-n	'lie'
š'ətə-n	s'ətə-n	'stand'
səmežə-n	səmežə-n	'be ill'
čəje-n	žejə-n	'sleep'
haq°ə-n	bəne-n	'bark'
š'χə-n	dəhešχə-n	'laugh'
g°əmeč'ə-n	g°əzeve-n	'worry'

Compared to corresponding verbs in Indo-European, Turkic and other languages, the division into transitive/intransitive verbs exhibits several peculiarities from a semantic point of view. The class of intransitive verb includes a number of verbs with transitive semantics but morphological features and syntactic behaviour according to the intransitive pattern. Examples of such verbs are:

Table 2.5 *Examples of intransitive verbs (b)*

<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>	
	jeq°'ə-n	'drag'
we-n	we-n	'hit'
jeʔ°ənč'ə-n	jeʔ°əns'ə-n	'push'
jepx°e-n	jepx°e-n	'take, grip'
jeceqe-n	jezeq'e-n	'bite'
jepəžə-n	jepəžə-n	'split'
ježe-n	je-z'e-n	'wait'
ježe-n	ježe-n	'read'
jebewə-n		'kiss'

It is important to note that the common definition of intransitives as verbs taking one argument is problematic in the Circassian languages. Intransitives may take up to four arguments. In addition to that, some intransitives (Table 2.5 (b)) are from a semantic point of view closer to the transitive type. In chapter 4 we will return to this issue in greater detail.

2.5.1.1 Labile verbs

A small number of roots appear in identical shapes in transitive and intransitive verbs. Such roots are called labile and are illustrated in (44a-b). The same root *z°e-* 'plough' occurs in both transitive (44a) and intransitive clauses (44b).

- (44) a. L'ə-m č'əg°ə-r ø-je-z°e-ø
 man-ERG soil-ABS O3SG-S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man ploughs the soil' A.
- b. L'ə-r ma-z°e-ø
 man-ABS S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man is engaged in ploughing' A.

The inflected forms are not identical, as they differ in the range and use of personal prefixes. Furthermore, the transitive and intransitive uses of this root are related to different syntactic patterns. In (44a) the verb governs its subject in

the ergative case and its direct object in the absolutive case. The verb in (44b) is intransitive and monovalent, and may not take any direct object.

There has been a discussion in the linguistic literature about clauses with labile verbs being interpreted as antipassive constructions. This issue is discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

2.5.1.2 Stative and dynamic forms

All transitive verbs (with the exception of *ʔəʔə-n* ‘hold’) are dynamic. Intransitive verbs like ‘lie’, ‘sit’, ‘stand’, ‘have’, ‘want’, ‘like’ are stative, whereas other intransitives are dynamic. Stative and dynamic verbs differ in a number of morphological features, for instance in the presence of the dynamic prefix in 1st and 2nd person. The dynamic prefix is characteristic of Kabardian.

- (45) Se s-o-k’°-ø
 I S1SG-DYN-go-PRES
 ‘I am going’ K.

The form of the 3rd person marker differs between dynamic and stative forms in the present (46a-b).

- (46) a. He-r ma-če-ø
 dog-ABS S3SG-run-PRES
 ‘The dog is running’ A.
- b. He-r ø-š’ə-lə-ø
 dog-ABS S3SG-LOC-lie-PRES
 ‘The dog is lying’ K.

The same root may function in different paradigms – the stative (47a) and the dynamic (47b).

- (47) a. Hes’°e-r ø-s’ə-t-ø-s’
 guest-ABS S3SG-LOC-stand.ST-PRES-ASSRT
 ‘The guest is standing’ K.
- b. Hes’°e-r ø-s’-o-t-ø
 guest-ABS S3SG-LOC-DYN-stand-PRES
 ‘The guest is standing (during a period of time)’

2.5.1.3 Transitivity processes

Certain verbs indicate the intransitive/transitive opposition by the alternation -ə/-e of the root vowel (48a-b).

- (48) a. Ps'as'e-m pismo-r ø-je-tχə-ø
 girl-ERG letter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PRES
 'The girl is writing the letter' A.
- b. Ps'as'e-r ma-tχe-ø
 girl-ABS 3SG-write.INTR-PRES
 'The girl is writing' A.

It is interesting to note that the alternation *-ə/-e* marking the intransitive/transitive opposition also correlates with the opposition between centrifugal and perifugal verbs, where the root final vowel *-ə* marks a perifugal transitive and the vowel *-e* marks centrifugal transitives (49):

- (49) L'ə-m šə-r ø-d-je-š'e-ø
 man-ERG horse-ABS O3SG-LOC-S3SG-lead-PRES
 (ø-d-je-š'ə-ø)
 (O3SG-LOC-S3SG-lead-PRES)
 'The man leads the horse into something (out from something)' A.

The verb may include different valency changing prefixes. A highly productive process is the causative formation, where intransitive verbs become transitive by the addition of the causative prefix *ye-* immediately preceding the root (cf. Table 2.6).

Table 2.6 *Causative verb formation*

Intransitive

A. K. k'°e-n 'go'
 A. K. sə-n 'burn' (intr.)
 t'k'°ə-n 'dissolve, melt' (intr.)
 A. š'te-n, K. s'te-n 'be scared'
 A. K. daxe 'beautiful'
 A. jənə, K. jən 'big, large'
 A. c'ək'°ə, K. c'ək'° 'small'

Transitive (Causative)

A. K. ye-k'°e-n 'send'
 A. K. ye-sə-n 'burn' (trans.)
 ye-t'k'°ə-n 'dissolve, melt' (trans.)
 A. ye-š'te-n, K. ye-s'te-n 'scare, frighten'
 ye-dexe-n 'make beautiful'
 ye-jənə-n 'enlarge, make big'
 ye-c'ək'°ə-n 'diminish, make small'

Transitivizing processes include the causative (50b-c) and the co-called factitive ('make...'), which is formed from nominal and adjectival roots and the prefix *wə-* (51a-b). Double causative markers do occur (50c), as well as the combination of both a causative and factitive marker (51b).

- (50) a. Lə-r ma-ve-ø
meat-ABS S3SG-boil-PRES
'The meat is boiling' K.
- b. Fəzə-m lə-r ø-je-γa-ve-ø
woman-ERG meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-boil-PRES
'The woman boils the meat' K.
- c. L'ə-m lə-r fəzə-m
man-ERG meat-ABS woman-OERG
ø-jə-rəj-γe-γe-v-a-s'
O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-CAUS-CAUS-boil-PERF-ASSRT
'The man made the woman boil the meat' K.
- (51) a. Č'ale-m g°ə-r ø-ə-wə-neč'ə-γ
young.man-ERG carriage-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-empty-PERF
'The young man unloaded the carriage' A.
- b. Se šəγ°ə-r a-bə ø-je-z-γe-wə-s'eb-a-s'
I salt-ABS he-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S1SG-CAUS-F-soft-PERF-ASSRT
'I made him grind the salt' K.

The factitive (but not the causative) prefix forms labile verbs from adjectival roots. These verbs may be used both in intransitive (52a) and transitive (52b) clauses.

- (52) a. S'ʔaq°e-r me-wə-s'əq°ej-ø
bread-ABS S3SG-F-crumb-PRES
'The bread crumbles' K.
- b. A-bə s'ʔaq°e-r ø-je-wə-s'əq°ej-ø
he-ERG bread-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-crumb-PRES
'He crumbles the bread' K.

2.5.1.4 Intransitivizing processes

Markers that participate in the inverse process, i.e. intransitivization, are the involitional, potential and reciprocal. The reciprocal prefix *zəre-* 'each other' is shown in (53b). The subject is required to be in the plural.

- (53) a. A-χe-m a-r ø-a-leγ°ə-γ
he-PL-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3PL-see-PERF
'They saw him' A.

- (53) b. A- χ e-r $\emptyset$ -zəre-le γ ə- γ e- χ
 he-PL-ABS S3PL-RECIP-see-PERF-PL
 ‘They saw each other’ (‘They met’) A.

Note that the reflexive proper is marked by the prefix *z(e)-* and does not affect the transitivity (54a-c).

- (54) a. A-š' a-r $\emptyset$ -ə-fepa- γ
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-dress-PERF
 ‘He dressed him’ A.
- b. A-š' z-i-fepa- γ
 he-ERG REFL-S3SG-dress-PERF
 ‘He dressed himself’ A.
- c. A-š' žane-r $\emptyset$ -zə-š-i- λ a- γ
 he-ERG shirt-ABS O3SG-REFL-LOC-S3SG-put.on-PERF
 ‘He put on a shirt’ (Lit. ‘He dressed himself in a shirt’) A.

2.5.2 Verbal inflectional morphology

As noted above, the alignment of personal markers in the verb is the salient characteristic in the division into transitives and intransitives.

2.5.2.1 Person and number

A verb form may include a number of personal prefixes: the subject or the subject and one or several object(s). The examples show a monovalent (55a), bivalent (55b) and polyvalent verbs (55c-d).

- (55) a. sə-ž-a-s' b. w-s-hə-nu-s'
 S1SG-run-PERF-ASSRT O2SG-S1SG-carry-FUT-ASSRT
 ‘I ran’ ‘I will carry you’ K.
- c. d-je-f-tə- γ a-s'
 O1PL-IO3SG-S2PL-give-PLUP-ASSRT
 ‘You gave us to him’ K.
- d. w-a- χ °ə-z-i- γ ə-š-a-s'
 O2SG-IO3PL-VS-IO1SG-S3SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘He made me (he ordered me) to lead you for them’ K.

The personal prefixes distinguish person and number. As an innovation the suffix *- χ e* is used as a marker of plurality: *ma-k°e- χ e-r* [S3-walk-PL-DYN.PRES] ‘they walk’.

The maximum of participants in the polyvalent verb is five. However, not all participants are always overtly marked in the verb form. The presence of a marker depends on a number of factors – transitivity, the dynamic/stative category, tense/mood, derivation.

First and second person subjects and objects are always marked overtly in the verb. Apart from cases of $\emptyset$ -marking pointed out below, third persons are also overtly marked in the verb.

- (56) a. d-a- χ° -je-b- γ e- $\check{z}$ -a-s'
 O1PL-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-S2SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘you made him lead us for them’ K.
- b. $\emptyset$ - $\emptyset$ - χ° - $\emptyset$ -b-o- γ a- $\check{s}$ e
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-IO3SG-S2SG-DYN-CAUS-lead.PRES
 ‘you make him lead her for him’ K

In (56a) all participants are overtly marked, including the direct object and two indirect objects in the third person. In (56b) three objects in the third person are $\emptyset$ -marked.

The subject and object markers occur in different variants, depending on both the phonetic context and morphological factors. In subject position in intransitive verbs (57) the first and second person prefixes appear in full form (CV): (*sə*-, *wə*-, *də*-, *fə*-) but without the vocal element (*s*-, *p*-, *t*-, *f*-) in (58).

- | | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------|-----------|------|----------|-----------------------|
| (57) | sə- $\check{z}$ -a-s' | ‘I run’ | (58) | s-h-a-s' | ‘I carried away...’ |
| | wə- $\check{z}$ -a-s' | ‘you run’ | | p-h-a-s' | ‘you carried away...’ |
| | də- $\check{z}$ -a-s' | ‘we run’ | | t-h-a-s' | ‘we carried away...’ |
| | fə- $\check{z}$ -a-s' | ‘you run’ | | f-h-a-s' | ‘you carried away...’ |

The markers in the transitive verb may undergo assimilatory changes before a consonantal root or derivational prefix. The first person singular prefix (*s*-) becomes voiced preceding voiced elements (59a), the first person plural prefix (*d*-) becomes voiceless before a voiceless consonant (59b) or glottalized before an ejective consonant (59c). A similar pattern is observed when the second person plural marker (*f*-) precedes a voiced consonant (59d) or ejective (59e).

- | | | | | |
|------|----|----------------------------|----|---|
| (59) | a. | z-d-a-s' (< s-d-a-s') | b. | t-h-a-s' (< d-h-a-s') |
| | | S1SG-sew-PERF-ASSRT | | S1PL-carry-PERF-ASSRT |
| | | ‘I sewed’ K. | | ‘we carried’ K. |
| | c. | t'-s''-a-s' (< d-s''-a-s') | d. | v- $\check{z}$ -a-s' (< f- $\check{z}$ -a-s') |
| | | S1PL-do-PERF-ASSRT | | S2PL-strain-PERF-ASSRT |
| | | ‘we did’ K. | | ‘you strained’ K. |

- (59) e. f'-t'-a-s' (< f-t'-a-s')
 S2PL-dig-PERF-ASSRT
 'you dug' K.

The picture is somewhat more complicated with the subject marker of second person singular. The initial form (*w-*) changes into (*b-*) before voiced consonants (60a), *p-* preceding voiceless consonants (60b) and *p'-* in the context before ejectives (60c).

- (60) a. b-l-a-s' (< wə-l-a-s')
 S2SG-colour-PERF-ASSRT
 'you coloured' K.
- b. p-l-a-s' (< wə-l-a-s')
 S2SG-sharpen-PERF-ASSRT
 'you sharpened' K.
- c. p'-l'-a-s' (< w-l'-a-s')
 S2SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 'you killed' K.

These processes apply in all tenses, except the present. In the context before the dynamic marker *-o* in the transitive verb, the second person singular subject marker occurs in two equal forms: *w-*, *b-*: *w-a-tχ* / *b-o-tχ* [S2SG-DYN-write.PRES] 'you write'.

In intervocal position the first and second person singular prefixes become voiced (61a-b), as does the second person plural prefix (61c).

- (61) a. fə-z-o-lay° (< fə-s-o-lay°)
 O2PL-S1SG-DYN-see.PRES
 'I see you' K.
- b. sə-b-o-h (< sə-w-o-h)
 O1SG-S2SG-DYN-carry.PRES
 'you carry me' K.
- c. də-v-o-z'e (< də-f-o-z'e)
 S1PL-IO2PL-DYN-wait.PRES
 'we wait for you' K.

In polyvalent verbs the object markers appear in different forms. The direct object marker has the final-ə in the bivalent transitive (62a), but appears without this vocal element in (62b).

- (62) a. sə-v-o-še
 O1SG-S2PL-DYN-lead.PRES
 'you lead me' K.
- b. f-je-s-t-a-s'
 O2PL-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'I gave you to him' K.

Prefixes of the same type in the same verb may appear in different shapes depending on person. This is illustrated in the causative verb in (63). The first person singular and plural prefixes include the final vowel -ə, whereas the second person singular and plural have the vowel -e (63c-d).

- (63) a. ø-sə-b-ye-š-a-s'
O3SG-IO1SG-S2SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'you made me lead him' K.
- b. ø-də-b-ye-š-a-s'
O3SG-O1PL-S2SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'you made us lead him' K.
- c. ø-we-z-ye-š-a-s'
O3SG-IO2SG-S1SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'I made you lead him' K.
- d. ø-fe-z-ye-š-a-s'
O3SG-IO2PL-S1SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'I made you (all) lead him' K.

The variation and distribution of personal prefixes in the Circassian languages is a complex and not fully investigated issue. Here, we have only touched upon some general aspects. Table 2.7 summarizes the patterns.

Table 2.7 *Agreement markers in Adyghe and Kabardian*

	<i>Adyghe</i>
1SG	se-, s(ə)-, z-
2SG	we-, w(ə)-, p-
3SG	je-, j(ə)-
1PL	te-, t(ə)-, t'-, d-
2PL	s'°e-, s'°(ə)-, z'°-
3PL	ja-, a-, me-, ma-
	<i>Kabardian</i>
1SG	s(ə)-, s(e)-, z(e)-
2SG	w(ə)-, w(e)-, b-, p-, p'-
3SG	ma-, me-, jə-, je-, ø
1PL	d(ə)-, t-, t'-, de-
2PL	f(ə)-, f', v-, fe-
3PL	ma-, me-, ja-, a-, ø

Third person – zero versus overt marking

Static monovalent verbs in the present tense are zero marked $\emptyset$ -s'-t-s' [S3SG-LOC-stand.PRES-ASSRT] 'he stands', in contrast to monovalent dynamic verbs ma -k°'e [S3SG-walk.PRES] 'he walks'. The prefix ma - does not distinguish number; the form mak °'e may be interpreted as 'he walks' or 'they walk'. In all other tenses (i.e. apart from the present) the third person is $\emptyset$ -marked, both in static and dynamic verbs.

- (64) a. $\emptyset$ -s'-t-a-s' b. $\emptyset$ -s'-tə-nu-s'
 S3SG-LOC-stand-PERF-ASSRT S3SG-LOC-stand-FUT-ASSRT
 'he stood' K. 'he will stand'
- (65) a. $\emptyset$ -k°'-a-s' b. $\emptyset$ -k°'-e-nu-s'
 S3SG-go-PERF-ASSRT S3SG-go-FUT-ASSRT
 'he went' 'he will go' K.

In combination with prefixes of orientation or location the difference between static and dynamic verbs disappears even in the present tense. Here, in monovalent dynamic verbs in the present tense, the expected marker ma - is lacking (cf. 66a-b).

- (66) a. $\emptyset$ -q'-o-k°'e
 S3SG-OR-DYN-go.PRES
 'he comes' / 'they come' K.
- b. $\emptyset$ -χ-o-he
 S3SG-LOC-DYN-enter.PRES
 'he enters' / 'they enter' K.

The third person subject is $\emptyset$ -marked in monovalent infinite forms as well – cf. the participle (67a) and gerund (67b):

- (67) a. $\emptyset$ -k°'-e-r b. $\emptyset$ -k°'-e-we
 S3SG-go.PART.PRES-ABS S3SG-go.PRES-GER
 '(him) going' (participle) 'going (he)' (gerund) K.

The third person subject is $\emptyset$ -marked in the bivalent intransitive verb in (68a) and the third person direct object in (68b):

- (68) a. $\emptyset$ -je-plə-n-s'
 S3SG-IO3SG-look-FUT-ASSRT
 'he will look at him' K.
- b. $\emptyset$ -je-s-tə-nu-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-FUT-ASSRT
 'I will give him to her' K.

In prefixal bivalent intransitives an indirect object is $\emptyset$ -marked in the third person singular, but marked by the prefix *a-* in the plural (69a-b):

- (69) a. $s\emptyset\emptyset\text{-de-laz'}\text{-a-s'}$
 S1SG-IO3SG-COM-work-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I worked together with him’ K.
- b. $s\text{-a-de-la-z'}\text{-a-s'}$
 S1SG-IO3PL-COM-work-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I worked together with them’ K.

In a trivalent intransitive verb, the first (leftmost) third person (benefactive) object is $\emptyset$ -marked in the singular, but marked by the prefix *-a* in the plural.

- (70) a. $d\emptyset\emptyset\text{-}\chi^{\circ}\text{-je-pl-a-s'}$
 S1PL-IO3SG-VS-IO3SG-look-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘we looked at something (someone) for him’ K.
- b. $d\text{-a-}\chi^{\circ}\text{-je-pl-a-s'}$
 S1PL-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-look-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘we looked at something (someone) for them’ K.

In a tetravalent transitive verb, the third person direct object as well as third person singular indirect object are $\emptyset$ -marked (*ja*-marked in the plural) (71b).

- (71) a. $\emptyset\emptyset\text{-d-je-s-t-a-s'}$
 O3SG-IO3SG-COM-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I gave him together with her to him’ K.
- b. $\emptyset\text{-ja-d-je-s-t-a-s'}$
 O3SG-IO3PL-COM-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I gave him together with them to him’ K.

Non-specific reference

Non-specific reference of a subject or object (direct or indirect) is marked by the suffix *-ʔe* (72a-b). The corresponding subject and object slots are $\emptyset$ -marked.

- (72) a. $\emptyset\text{-q'e-k'}^{\circ}\text{-a-ʔe-s'}$
 S3SG-OR-go-PERF-NSPEC-ASSRT
 ‘someone came’ K.
- b. $\emptyset\text{-q'ə-p-}\chi^{\circ}\text{e-z-}\gamma^{\circ}\text{et-a-ʔe-s'}$
 O3SG-OR-IO2SG-VS-S1SG-find-PERF-NSPEC-ASSRT
 ‘I found something for you’ K.

As the suffix *-ʔe* is unmarked for number, example (72a) may also be interpreted as ‘some people came’. This ambiguity stems from the fact that both singular and plural third person subjects are *ø*-marked. However, there is a tendency to introduce number distinction by the use of the plural suffix; cf. the marking of plurality in (73b).

- (73) a. *ø-q'ə-s-χ°e-f-s'°e-nu-ʔe ?*
 O3SG-OR-IO1SG-VS-S2PL-lead-FUT-NSPEC
 ‘Will you bring someone for me?’ K
- b. *ø-q'ə-s-χ°e-f-še-nu-ʔe-χe*
 O3PL-OR-IO1SG-VS-S2PL-lead-FUT-NSPEC-PL
 ‘Will you bring some (people) for me? K.

An indirect object is generally overtly marked (74a). In non-specific forms of the indirect object this prefix is replaced by the prefix *ze-* (74b, d) and the verb form also includes the suffix *-ʔe*.

- (74) a. *w-je-s-t-a-s'*
 O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I gave you to him’ K.
- b. *wə-ze-s-t-a-ʔe-s'*
 O2SG-REL-S1SG-give-PERF-NSPEC-ASSRT
 ‘I gave you to someone (to a non-specific person)’ K.
- c. *d-je-plə-nu?*
 S1PL-IO3SG-look-FUT
 ‘Will we look at him?’ K.
- d. *də-ze-plə-nu-ʔe ?*
 S1PL-REL-look-FUT-NSPEC
 ‘Will we look at someone?’ (non-specific person) K.

2.5.2.2 Tense

The Circassian languages have a rather rich system of tenses. Kabardian distinguishes the following forms: present, future1, future2, perfect1, perfect2, pluperfect1, pluperfect2, aorist1, aorist2, imperfect.

The present tense is differentiated in dynamic and stative forms. The dynamic marker *o-* is only characteristic of the present tense and shows up only in the 1st and 2nd person (75a) and in all three persons in intransitive verbs with reflexive or orientational markers (75c) and with potential, version, comitative, locational prefixes (75). Dynamic verbs in the present do not take the assertive suffix *-s'*, but may take the optional suffix *(-r)*. Another difference between dynamic and stative verbs concerns the vowel element of the personal prefixes; compare the

dynamic verb in (75a) and the stative in (75b). Negative and interrogative do not exhibit the dynamic marker.

- (75) a. s-o-že-(r)
S1SG-DYN-run-(DYN.PRES)
'I run' K.
- b. sə-s'ə-l-s'
S1SG-LOC-lie.PRES-ASSRT
'I lie' K.
- c. ø-q'-o-k''e-(r)
S3SG-OR-DYN-go-(DYN.PRES)
'he is coming here' K.
- d. ø-χe-s-s'
S3SG-LOC-sit-PRES-ASSRT
'he is sitting inside something' K.
- e. ø-χ-o-he-(r)
S3SG-LOC-DYN-enter-(DYN.PRES)
'he enters' K.

Future1 (categorical or compulsory future) is marked by *-n* (76a) and future2 (factive future) takes the suffix *-nu* (76b).

- (76) a. wə-s-lay°ə-n-s'
O2SG-S1SG-see-FUT-ASSRT
'I will see you' K.
- b. də-f-še-nu-s'
O1PL-S2PL-lead-FUT-ASSRT
'you will lead us' K.

The perfect1 and perfect2 are marked by the suffixes *-a* (77a) and *-at* (77b), respectively.

- (77) a. fə-s-h-a-s'
O2PL-S1SG-carry-PERF-ASSRT
'I carried you' K.
- b. d-je-f-t-at
O1PL-IO3SG-S2PL-give-PERF2
'you gave us to him (then)' K.

The pluperfect1 (distant past 1) is characterized by the suffix *-ya* (78a) and pluperfect2 (distant past 2) by the marker *-yat* (78b).

- (78) a. f-χ°e-s-tχə-ya-s'
IO2PL-VS-S1SG-write-PLUP-ASSRT
'I wrote for you' K.
- b. də-nə-f-χ°-k''-yat
S1PL-OR-IO2PL-VS-go-PLUP2
'we came to you (then)'

As illustrated in the examples above, the assertive marker appears in stative verbs in the present tense, in future1 and 2 as well as perfect1 and perfect2.

Imperfect (recent/present past) is marked by the suffix *-t*: sə-tχe-t 'I wrote'. The reoccurring element *-t* in the past tense forms carries the meaning 'then'.

The two forms aorist1 *-s'* (79a) and the ø-marked aorist2 (appearing with the coordinative marker *-ri*) are generally considered to be nonfinite.

- (79) a. w-q'e-t-pχ°atə-s'
O2SG-OR-S1PL-catch-AOR
'we caught you' K.
- b. fə-s'ʔə-he-ri
S2PL-LOC-enter-AOR.CRD
'you entered and...' K.

However, aorist1 may appear in finite positions in traditional oral poetry and proverbs, as in the Kabardian example in (80):

- (80) χamə-he-r q'ʔ-i-he-ri wənə-hə-r jə-ri-χ°-s'
'Somebody else's dog came and chased away the domestic dog'

The Circassian tense system is illustrated in Table 2.8 below:

Table 2.8 *Tenses in Kabardian*

Present	-ø (-r)
Future 1	-n
Future 2	-nu
Perfect 1	-a
Perfect 2	-at
Pluperfect 1	-ya
Pluperfect 2	-yat
Imperfect	-t
Aorist 1	-s'
Aorist 2	-ø

2.5.2.3 Mood

Kabardian distinguishes seven mood forms: the indicative, optative, imperative, conjunctive, conditional, assumptive and "surprise" mood. The indicative does not correspond to a special marker, but is characterized by the presence of the assertive marker -s' in the future, perfect1 and pluperfect1, and the suffix -r in the present. In combination with other forms, such as the negative, interrogative and coordinative, the simple indicative exhibits further morphological features.

The optative is formed in two synonymous ways by either a prefix *rje-* (81a), or suffixes *-ret*, *-s'eret* (81b).

- (81) a. jə-rje-k'°e
S3SG-OPT-go
'let him go' K.
- b. sə-k'°-a-ret (= sə-k'°-a-s'eret)
S1SG-go-PERF-OPT
'if only I would go' K.

Imperative is formed from the simple stem. This is particularly evident in the second person singular, which lacks any personal marker: *ø-hə* [S2SG-carry] 'Carry!'

The assumptive mood also allows an analytic form expressed by the auxiliary ‘be’ -χ° and the instrumental case marker -č’e. The mood system is summarized in Table 2.9 below:

Table 2.9 *Mood forms in Kabardian*

Indicative		Assumptive	a. - γ en(u)
Optative	a. rje- b. -ret, -šeret	b. instr. case and χ° ə-n ‘be’ ”Surprise”	-i
Imperative	simple stem		
Conjunctive	-t (added to future)		
Conditional	a. -m, -mə b. Aux χ° ə-n ‘be’		

2.5.2.4 Assertive forms

Indicative forms of both stative (87a) and dynamic (87b-c) verbs take the assertive marker -s', with the exception of dynamic verbs in the present tense and the assumptive mood (87d). The assertive marker is added after the tense suffix. Negated forms do not combine with the assertive marker.

- (87) a. sə-s'əɬ-s'
S1SG-LOC-lie-ASSRT
‘I am lying’ K.
- b. sə-p-še-nu-s'
O1SG-S2SG-lead-FUT-ASSRT
‘you will lead me’ K.
- c. wə-s-ɬeɣ^o-a-s'
O2SG-S1SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
‘I saw you’
- d. də-k'^oe- γ en-s'
S1PL-go-ASS-ASSRT
‘we probably walked’ K.

In the present tense dynamic verbs optionally substitute the assertive marker with the suffix -r: *ma- γ ə(r)* [S3SG-cry-(PRES.DYN)] ‘he is crying’.

The suffix -m also marks assertive forms, but with a more limited distribution. It occurs in predicates taking commentative complements with arbitrary subject reference (88), cf. (Kumakhov & Vamling 1994).

- (88) G^oəɣ^oə-m w-je-plə-nə-r
difficult.PRES-ASSRT S2SG-IO3SG-look-INF-ABS
‘It is difficult to look at him’ K.

The *m*- suffix is also used in the imperfect and perfect2, where the -s' marker is not used (89).

- (89) yes''eɣ^oen-te-m wə-laz'e-nə-r
interesting-IMPF-ASSRT S2SG-work-INF-ABS
‘It was interesting to work’ K.

The *m*- suffix is furthermore used on nouns in participle constructions, as in (90a-b):

- (90) a. K'°-a-r Jənalə-m
 go.PART-PERF-ABS Inal-ASSRT
 ‘(Namely) Inal went’ K.
- b. Tχe-nu-r Tamare-m
 write-PART-FUT-ABS Tamara-ASSRT
 ‘(Namely) Tamara will write’ K.

2.5.2.5 Nonfinite forms

The nonfinite deverbal forms include participles, gerunds, infinitives and masdars. These forms are nonfinite and are found in different types of complement clause. It should be pointed out that nonfinite forms are understood as forms being dependent in the sense that they occur in positions where they are dependent on a finite form. The following forms are traditionally classified as non-finite in Circassian grammar: (1) participles, (2) gerunds, (3) masdars, (4) infinitives, (5) mood forms (except the indicative), (6) forms with the coordination suffix, (7) interrogative forms, (8) some verb forms with adverbial functions, (9) the alternative (‘whether... or not’).

Participles

A wide range of participle forms are found in Kabardian:

- p-tχə* (S2SGwrite.PRES) ‘that which you write’
wə-zə-tχ (2SG-REL-write.PRES) ‘he who writes to you’
zə-tχ (REL-write.PRES) ‘he who writes’
sə-zerə-k’°e-r (S1SGhow-go-ABS) ‘how I go’
sə-s’ə-k’°e-nu-r (S1SG-when-go-FUT-ABS) ‘when I will go’
sə-s’°e-k’°e-ya-r (S1SG-why-go-PLUP-ABS) ‘why I went then’
səzde-k’°-a-r (S1SG-where.to-go-PERF-ABS) ‘to where I went’.

Gerunds

Gerunds form another group of non-finite verb forms:

- (91) a. w-je-ž-a-we b. w-je-mə-pl-a-we
 S2SG-IO3SG-read-PERF-GER S2SG-IO3SG-NEG-look.at-PERF-GER
 ‘your having read it’ K. ‘your not having looked at it’ K.
- c. wə-s-χ°e-mə-k’°e-ya-we
 S2SG-O1SG-VS-NEG-go-PLUP-GER
 ‘your not having gone for me then’ K.

Masdars and infinitives

The so-called masdar forms, or verbal noun forms, also belong to the group of non-finite forms: *wi-tχe-n* (POSS2SG-write-MSD) ‘your writing’, *wi-s'-mə-ʔe-n* (POSS2SG-here-NEG-have-MSD) ‘your being absent (lit. your not being here)’.

The non-finite forms also include infinitives, marked by the suffix *-n*: *s'ʔə-n* ‘to do’, *hə-n* ‘to carry’, *le-n* ‘to run’.

2.5.2.6 Negation

Negation is morphological in the Circassian languages. Two types of negation marking occur in the verb: the prefix *mə-* and the suffix *-q'əm*. The choice between the two is determined by the finiteness of the verb form. The prefix is used in nonfinite forms and is placed in preradical position (92a), or before a causative prefix (92b).

- (92) a. *də-zerə-f-χ°e-mə-k'°-a-r*
 S1PL-REL-IO2PL-VS-NEG-go.PART-PERF-ABS
 ‘that we didn’t go for you’ K.
- b. *wə-z-mə-ye-k'°e-nu-me*
 O2SG-S1SG-NEG-CAUS-go-FUT-COND
 ‘if I don’t make you go’ K.

The negating suffix is found in finite forms and placed after the tense marker (93a) or following the suffix *-r* in the present tense.

- (93) a. *fə-šχe-s'-a-q'əm*
 S2PL-eat-ABU-PERF-NEG
 ‘you didn’t eat too much’ K.
- b. *sə-p-ɬay°ə-žə-fə-r-q'əm*
 O1SG-S2SG-see-back-POT-DYN.PRES-NEG
 ‘you can’t see me again’

Following the negating suffix, in the rightmost position, only the coordinative suffix may appear (94):

- (94) *fə-s-c'əχ°ə-r-q'əm-i* *sə-ve-psaɬə-nu-q'əm*
 O2PL-S1SG-know-DYN.PRES-NEG-CRD S1SG-IO2PL-talk-FUT-NEG
 ‘I don’t know you and therefore I will not talk to you’ K.

In complex verb phrases the negating prefix *mə-* remains in the main (first) verb (95a), whereas the negating suffix *-q'əm* appears in the auxiliary (95b).

- (95) a. sə-w-mə-ləy°-a-we q'ə s'e-č'ə-n-s'
 O1SG-S2SG-NEG-see-PERF-GER appear-FUT-ASSRT
 'you apparently didn't see me'
- b. wə-səmaže χ°ə-n-q'əm
 S2SG-sick.PRES be-FUT-NEG
 'you are probably not sick' K.

2.5.2.7 Interrogativity

The category interrogativity is marked in several different ways, depending on tense and the stative/dynamic type of the verb. In the present (96a) and imperfect of dynamic verbs interrogativity is marked by the suffix *-re*, preceding the tense marker (96b). In the present tense of stative verbs the interrogative suffix is optional (96c).

- (96) a. w-a-de-laz'e-re ?
 S2SG-IO3PL-COM-work.PRES-INT
 'Do you work together with them?' K.
- b. də-f-χ°e-žə-re-t? c. fə-s'ə-l-(re) ?
 S1PL-IO2PL-VS-run-INT-IMPF S2PL-LOC-lie.PRES-(INT)
 'Did we run for you?' K. 'Are you lying?' K.

The interrogative suffix is added to the auxiliary in analytic forms:

- (97) sə-k'°e χ°ə-re?
 S1SG-go.PRES be-INT ?
 'Can I go?' K.

In the perfect, future and pluperfect interrogativity is not overtly marked (98).

- (98) a. f-a-ye-tχ-a? b. sə-f-ləy°-at?
 O2PL-S3PL-CAUS-write-PERF O1SG-S2PL-see-PERF2
 'Did they make you write?' 'Did you see me?' K.
- c. də-f-χ°e-k'°e-nu? d. wə-žele-ya?
 S1PL-IO2PL-VS-go-FUT S2SG-fall-PLUP
 'Shall we go for you?' K. 'Did you fall then?' K.

Another productive type of interrogative construction is the interrogative particle *p'ere*, which combines with a gerund form of the verb (both dynamic and stative) (99a-b).

- (99) a. də-f-χ°e-k°e-w p'ere ?
 S1PL-IO2PL-VS-go.PRES-GER INT
 'Are we going for you?' K.
- b. wə-s'°e-h-a-we p'ere ?
 S2SG-LOC-go-PERF-GER INT
 'Did you enter?' K.

2.5.2.8 Iterativity

The iterative suffix *-re* – etymologically related to the coordinative suffix – marks repeated actions.

- (100) F'ə-s' wə-k'°ə-n-č'e-re
 good-ASSRT S2SG-go-INF-INSTR-ITER
 'It's good to go (repeatedly)' K.

When used in complex nonfinite constructions (101), the suffix marks iterativity but also at the same time retains the coordinative function.

- (101) sə-q'a-k'°e-re sə-k'°e-ž-w
 S1SG-OR-go-ITER.CRD S1SG-go-REV-GER
 'I come (repeatedly) and leave' K.

2.5.2.9 Coordinative forms

The markers *-ri*, *-re*, *-i* are used in marking coordination. These suffixes are found in combination with different tenses: the aorist: *-ri* (102a), future2: *-re* (102b), and present, perfect1, future1 and imperfect: *-i* (102c).

- (102) a. wə-q'a-že-ri də-p-ləy°-a-s'
 S2SG-OR-run-AOR.CRD O1PL-S2SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'You came running here and caught sight of us' K.
- b. sə-ne-k'°e-nu-re sə-b-de-ləz'e-nu-s'
 S1SG-OR-go-FUT-CRD S1SG-IO2SG-COM-work-FUT-ASSRT
 'I will come there and work together with you' K.
- c. fə-t'əsə-n-s'-i fə-šχe-n-s'
 S2PL-sit-FUT-ASSRT-CRD S2PL-eat-FUT-ASSRT
 'You will sit down and eat' K.

2.5.3 Order of verbal morphemes

After this overview of derivational and inflectional categories the order of morphemes in the verb is summarized below. Table 2.10 is based on Kumakhov

Table 2.10 *Morphological structure of the transitive finite verb and nonfinite forms (Kabardian)*

	Finite V	Participle	Gerund	Infinitive	Masdar
Possessive	-	-	-	-	+
Reflexive	+	+	+	+	+
Direct object	+	+	+	+	-
Indirect object	+	+	+	+	-
Direction	+	+	+	+	+
Version	+	+	+	+	-
Comitative	+	+	+	+	-
Location	+	+	+	+	+
Indirect object	+	+	+	+	-
Subject	+	+	+	+	-
Negation	-	+	+	+	+
Dynamic prefix	+	-	-	-	-
Causative	+	+	+	+	+
Factitive	+	+	+	+	+
ROOT:					
Movement upwards	+	+	+	+	+
Movement towards	+	+	+	+	+
Movement back	+	+	+	+	+
Potentiality	+	+	+	+	-
Intensitivity	+	+	+	+	-
Abundance	+	+	+	+	-
Completion	+	+	+	+	+
Evidentiality	+	+	+	+	-
Tense	+	+	+	-	-
Modal suffix	+	-	-	-	-
Negation	+	-	-	-	-
Assertiveness	+	-	-	-	-
Case	-	+	-	+	+
Coordinative	+	+	+	+	+

& Vamling (1998:106) and shows the alignment of prefixes and suffixes in finite verb and nonfinite Kabardian forms.

2.6 Clause structure and construction types

Ergativity is a central feature of Circassian grammar. In this section we will briefly touch upon ergativity and clause structure from a more general point of view, before returning to the issue in the Circassian languages.

2.6.1 The ergative construction

The most widespread marking type in simple sentences in the world's languages is the nominative-accusative pattern, where subjects in intransitive and transitive clauses are marked in the same way (the nominative case), whereas the direct object is singled out by the accusative case marker. An example from Russian illustrates the nominative-accusative pattern:

- (103) a. Babušk-a spit
 grandmother-NOM sleep.PRES
 ‘Grandmother is asleep’
- b. Vnučk-a razbudila babušk-u
 grand-daughter-NOM wake.up.PF grandmother-ACC
 ‘The grand-daughter woke grandmother up’

This is in contrast to the ergative-absolutive pattern where the agent or subject in the transitive clause is marked by the ergative case, leaving the subject in an intransitive clause and the direct object either unmarked or assigned the same case (absolutive case). The ergative-absolutive pattern is illustrated by two examples from Adyghe. The transitive subject is marked by the suffix *-m* (glossed as ergative case), the intransitive subject and the direct object by *-r* (here glossed as absolutive case).

- (104) S'°əzə-m sabəj-r ø-je-hə-ø
 woman-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-carry-PRES
 ‘The woman carries the child’ A.
- (105) Sabəj-r me-ye-ø
 child-ABS S3SG-cry-PRES
 ‘The child is crying’ A.

The general definition of ergativity given by Dixon (1994:1) is that it is “used to describe a grammatical pattern in which the subject of an intransitive clause is treated in the same way as the object of a transitive clause, and differently from

transitive subject”. In approximately a quarter of the world’s languages ergative marking pattern occurs (Dixon 1994). Ergative alignment is found in languages all over the world, for instance in Australia, and among American Indian languages and Paleo-Siberian languages. The most well-known ergative language in Europe is Basque.

The two types of marking pattern, the nominative-accusative and the ergative, are schematically represented below. The core relations in the simple clause are represented by the three arguments: S, A and P, where S is the single argument of an intransitive verb, and A and P the arguments of the transitive verb.

Table 2.11 *Nominative-Accusative alignment (I) vs. Ergative alignment (II)*

(I)		
Subject [<i>Nominative</i>] (S)		– V _{intr}
Subject [<i>Nominative</i>] (A)	Direct object [<i>Accusative</i>] (P)	– V _{trans}

(II)		
Subject [<i>Absolutive</i>] (S)		– V _{intr}
Subject [<i>Ergative</i>] (A)	Direct object [<i>Absolutive</i>] (P)	– V _{trans}

Corresponding Circassian clauses (II) are shown in:

- (106) a. A-r (S) $\emptyset$ -če-š't
 he-ABS S3SG-run-FUT
 ‘He will run’ A.
- b. A-š' (A) a-r (P) $\emptyset$ -ə-š'a-γ
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PERF
 ‘He led him’ A.

It is common to distinguish two types of ergativity: syntactically and morphologically based. Syntactically manifested ergativity may, for instance, appear in the interpretation of conjunct deletion in the coordination of VPs. In a coordinated structure including a VP with an intransitive verb and one with a transitive verb – as in *The man came and $\emptyset$ saw the woman* – the interpretation of the $\emptyset$ element in the second VP may follow either a nominative or an ergative pattern. If the deleted element is interpreted as the subject of the second VP it follows the nominative pattern (*The man_i came and $\emptyset$ (he_i) saw the woman*) and associates the intransitive subject and the transitive subject. In an ergative pattern the intransitive subject and the direct object would be interpreted as coreferent: *The man_i came and $\emptyset$ (him_i) the woman saw*. Syntactic ergativity is a

rare phenomenon and has been observed for the Australian language Dyirbal (Dixon 1972).

It is far more common for ergative patterns to show up in the morphological marking of grammatical relations. Marking patterns of a different kind may exhibit ergative alignment: the use of case marking, particles and cross-referencing of person, number or class/gender of subject and object in the verb. In the Circassian languages, ergative patterns occur in two of these grammatical domains – in case marking and cross-reference marking.

In a Circassian verb the relative positions of the person markers (person and number) differ in transitive and intransitive verbs. In a transitive verb, the subject marker occupies the position closest to the root and the direct object marker the initial position (107). In an intransitive verb, the subject marker is found in the initial position, followed by any other person markers (108). Thus, a direct object and an intransitive subject pattern similarly, in contrast to the marker of the transitive subject.

- (107) Ps'as'e-m tχəłə-r č'ale-m
 girl-ERG book-ABS boy-OERG
 ø-r-i-tə-y
 O3SG_(P).O3SG-S3SG_(A)-give-PERF
 'The girl gave the book to the boy' A.
- (108) Ps'as'e-r qalə-m ma-ø-k'°e-ø
 girl-ABS town-OERG S3SG_(S)-IO3SG-go-PRES
 'The girl is going to town' A.

The ergative and accusative systems are two different organizing principles for basic grammatical relations and therefore involve different choices of unmarked forms. It was noted by Greenberg (1963:95) in his early formulation of universals that "Where there is a case system, the only case which ever has only zero allomorphs is the one which includes among its meanings that of the subject of the intransitive verb". In the ergative system ø-marking would be expected to occur in the absolutive.

It is common for ergative marking to be restricted to sentences whose subject is of a particular type (e.g., inanimate nouns or non-pronominal), to particular tenses or aspects (usually, past tense or perfective aspect). As formulated by Frawley (1992:94) "the more inherently animate, the more likely a potent doer, and the less likely it is to be marked for such status by ergative morphology". Split ergativity is in fact quite common; the great majority of ergative languages appear to exhibit a split of one type or another. Split-ergativity is a phenomenon that is also found in the Circassian languages. Case marking – including ergative case marking – does not occur on all nominals, only the personal prefixes are obligatorily present in all verbs.

Dryer (2007) discusses possible marking types for clauses including ditransitive verbs that involve A, T (theme) and R, a third “recipient-like” argument. From among the three suggested types, (a) distinct marking of R and common marking of S+P+T, (b) distinct marking of T and common marking of S+P+R, and (c) common marking of S+P+T+R, the Circassian languages choose alternative (a).

In Adyghe and Kabardian, R is marked by the oblique ergative case, whereas S, P and T are all marked by the absolutive case and associated with the initial verbal prefix position.

- (109) We a-r a-s' ø-je-p-tə-š't
 you he_i-ABS he_k-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-FUT
 ‘You will give him_i to him_k’ A.

The valency of Circassian verbs may be increased by applicative and other derivational formations, reflected in personal prefixes in the verb. Polinsky (2008) describes the applicative construction as a situation where “the number of object arguments selected by the predicate is increased by one with respect to the basic construction”. As common semantic roles of occurring applicatives she mentions benefactive/malfactive, location, instrument, comitative etc. An analysis of applicative constructions in the related Northwest Caucasian language Abaza has been proposed by O’Herin (2001).

In the Circassian languages applicative formations may be included into the verb as single (110a-c) or combined instances, for example as a combination of benefactive and comitative. This process applies to intransitive (110d), transitive and ditransitive (110e) verbs.

- (110) a. ø-v-de-s-tχə-nu-s'
 O3SG-IO2PL-COM-S1SG-write-FUT-ASSRT
 ‘I will write it together with you’ K.
- b. ø-p-χ°e-s-hə-nu-s'
 O3SG-IO2SG-VS-S1SG-carry-FUT-ASSRT
 ‘I will carry it for you (for your sake)’ K.
- c. ø-p-f’e-s-s’-a-s'
 O3SG-IO2SG-VS-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I did against your will’ K.

- d. A-r we ps'as'e-χe-m
 he-ABS you girl-PL-OERG
 ø-q'-a-p'-f'ə-de-k°'-a-s'
 S3SG-OR-IO3PL-IO2SG-VS-COM-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'He came here together with the girls against your will' K.
- e. Se we a-š' a-χe-m
 I you he-OERG he-PL-OERG
 w-a-f-je-s-tə-γ
 O2SG-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave you to him for their sake' A.

The applicative arguments may be viewed as broadly circumstantial and we suggest the label C for this type. In order to accomodate the applicative arguments into Dryer's (2007) schema we suggest a further expansion, as shown below. A corresponding NP is case marked as an indirect object and associated with a medial prefixal slot in the verb. Note that a derived applicative verb (transitive or intransitive) may include more than one C.

Table 2.12. *Applicative verbs*

Intransitive		S	C
Transitive	A	P	C
Ditransitive	A	T	R C
Case marking	ERG	ABS	OERG

It should be noted that the Circassian languages include a number of nonderived bivalent intransitives (such as A., K. *we-n* 'hit', A., K. *jeʔ°əns'*ə-*n* 'push' A, K. *ježə-n* 'read'). Thus, there are verbs that follow the intransitive model but include a second argument even outside the domain of applicative verbs. Such bivalent intransitives may also be expanded to include applicative arguments. Below the bivalent *we-n* 'hit' is shown in (111a) and the trivalent applicative form in (111b), including the comitative prefix *d-*.

- (111) a. Te a-χe-m t-ja-we-ø
 we he-PL-OERG S1PL-IO3PL-hit-PRES
 'We are hitting them' A.
- b. We l'ə-m a-š' wə-ø-d-je-wa-γ
 you man-OERG he-OERG S2SG-IO3SG-COM-IO3SG-hit-PERF
 'You hit him together with the man' A.

The applicative markers are summarized below:

Table 2.13 *Applicative prefixes*

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Associated meaning</i>	<i>Gloss</i>
1 də-, de-	Comitative	COM
2 f(ə)-, χ ^o (ə)-	Benefactive	VS
3 f'e-	Malffective	VS
4 χe-	Spatial	LOC

As will be shown below, the maximum number of objects in the verb represented by overt prefixes is four. Together with the subject this amounts to five participants being marked in the verb (cf. compared to a maximum of four noted by (Croft 2003)).

2.6.2 Word order

The basic word order in the Circassian languages is SOV, with SVO as a common variation. This basic order applies to subjects and objects of both transitive and intransitive verbs, and does thus not reflect any ergative alignment.

- (112) S'ak^oe-m dəy^oəz'-χe-r ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
 hunter-ERG wolf-PL-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter killed the wolves' K.

- (113) Se fe sə-v-o-we-ø
 I you S1SG-IO2PL-DYN-hit-PRES
 'I hit you' K.

2.6.3 Inversion (affective) construction

It is possible to distinguish inversion clauses as a minor construction type in the Circassian languages. Morphologically they resemble intransitive clauses in having the subject in the absolutive case and any object in the oblique ergative, as well as in the distribution of personal prefixes according to the pattern found in polyvalent intransitive verbs. The specific feature of the inversion construction is semantically based: it maps the logical subject onto the grammatical indirect object, and the logical object onto the grammatical subject. This feature is illustrated with the inersive verb 'have' in (114), where the logical subject (the owner) is morphologically expressed as an indirect object and the logical object (the possessed) is expressed as the grammatical subject. Note that the neutral word order is the logical subject – logical object – verb.

- (114) A-š' wəne-r ø-jə-ʔ-ø
 he-OERG house-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-have-PRES
 'He has the house' ('The house is by him') A.

Inversion constructions are also found with two other types of verb, nonvolitionals and potentials. (115) illustrates a potential form (note the potential prefix in the verb), where the logical subject 'they' is marked as an indirect object and the logical object 'the house' appears as the grammatical subject. Inversion constructions are further dealt with in chapter 7.

- (115) A-χe-m wəne-r ø-ja-χ°e-s''-a-q'əm
 he-PL-OERG house-ABS S3SG-IO3PL-POT-do-PERF-NEG
 'They could not build the house'
 (approx. 'The house could not be built by them') K.

2.7 Complex constructions

2.7.1 Coordination

The marking of coordination is performed by affixes, conjunctions and juxtaposition. The coordination suffixes are used both as single markers and repeated on each member of the coordination. The suffix *-i* follows the markers of number and definiteness/case, tense/mood and assertive. In the coordination of VPs, the suffix *-i* is added either to the verb (116a) or the (postposed) object (116b), in both cases keeping the two-sided coordination.

- (116) a. S'ale-r tχələ-m ø-je-že-r-i ø-k°e-ž-a-s'
 boy-ABS book-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-read-CRD S3SG-leave-PERF-ASSRT
 'The boy read the book and left' K.
- b. S'ale-r ø-je-že-s' tχələ-m-i ø-k°e-ž-a-s'
 boy-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-read-AOR book-ERG-CRD S3SG-leave-PERF-ASSRT
 'The boy read the book and left' K.

The suffix *-re*, like *-i*, occurs as a single marker and repeated. The suffix *-re* occurs with a wide range of categories, for instance: participles (117a), gerunds, masdars and infinitives (117b).

- (117) a. De də-s'ə-laz'e-re də-s''e-laz'e-re a-bə
 we S1PL-where-work-CRD S1PL-why-work-CRD he-ERG
 jə-s''e-r-q'əm
 S3SG-know-PRES-NEG
 'He doesn't know where (when) we work and why we work' K.

- (117) b. Tχəłə-r ø-p-tχə-n-re ø-te-b-3e-n-re
 book-ABS O3-S2SG-write-INF-CRD O3-LOC-S2SG-throw-INF-CRD
 χ°ej-s'
 have.to-ASSRT
 'You have to write and publish the book' K.

When the coordinated conjuncts are in the same form, the coordinative suffixes *-ri* (118a), *-re* (b), *-i* (c) are repeated.

- (118) a. wə-s-h-ri w-je-s-t-ri
 O2SG-S1SG-carry-AOR.CRD O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-AOR.CRD
 q'e-z-yezež-a-s'
 OR-S1SG-go.back-PERF-ASSRT
 'I carried you, returned you to him and went back' K.
- b. sə-p-še-re sə-b-ye-łay°-re
 O1SG-S2SG-take.to.PRES-CRD O1SG-S2SG-CAUS-see.PRES-CRD
 sə-q'e-p-še-ž-me
 O1SG-OR-S2SG-lead-back-COND K.
 'if you take me (there), show me and bring me back'
- c. wə-q'e-k°-n-s'-i p-łay°ə-n-s'-i
 S2SG-OR-go-FUT-ASSRT-CRD S2SG-see-FUT-ASSRT-CRD
 wə-tek°-e-n-s'
 S2SG-win-FUT-ASSRT
 'you will come, see and win' K.

As well as the morphological coordinative the conjunction *abi* 'and' is commonly found in coordination:

- (119) A-r ø-t'əs-s' abi lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 he-ABS S3SG-sit-ASSRT and meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sat down and ate the meat' K.

Coordination is also marked analytically with coordinative forms in combination with finite and nonfinite forms. A productive type – aorist1 + coordinative form + perfect – is illustrated in (120).

- (120) sə-s'e-he-s' wəne-m-i sə-t'əs-a-s'
 S1SG-LOC-go-AOR house-OERG-CRD S1SG-sit-PERF-ASSRT
 'I entered the house and sat down' K.

A second synonymous model is given in (121): noun + aorist with the coordinative suffix *-ri* + perfect.

- (121) wəne-m sə-s'ʰe-he-ri sət'əs-a-s'
 house-ORERG S1SG-LOC-go-CRD S1SG-sit-PERF-ASSRT
 'I entered the house and sat down' K.

Other analytic models are shown below: (122a) gerund with coord. suff. *-ri* + imperfect, and (122b) participle with coord. suff. *-re* + gerund + indicative.

- (122) a. də-q'a-k'ʰe-w-re fət-tɬay°-t
 S1PL-OR-go.PRES-GER-CRD O2PL-S1PL-see-IMPF
 'we came here and saw you' K.
- b. wət-xe-re w-je-že-w
 S2SG-write.PRES.PART-CRD S2SG-IO3SG-read.PRES-GER
 wət-t'ə-s-s'
 S2SG-LOC-sit.PRES-ASSRT
 'you are sitting writing and reading' K.

2.7.2 Subordination

Non-finite forms of different types play an important role in subordination. The participle forms express various adverbial relations: condition, location, reason, goal, possibility, concession. Participle forms marking location are formed by the prefixes *s'*-, *zde*-, *zerə*-. These prefixes have several meanings, depending on the context: *s'*- 'where' (123a), 'when' (b); *zde*- 'where' (124), 'to where' (b); *zerə*- 'where' (125), 'how' (b).

- (123) a. ɬə-m wəne-r ø-s'-i-s'ʰə-r we q'a-s'ʰe
 man-ERG house-ABS O3SG-where-S3SG-do-ABS you OR-know
 'Find out where the man builds the house' K.
- b. A-r mezə-m s'ə-k'ʰe-r we w-o-s'ʰe
 he-ABS wood-ERG when-go-ABS you S2SG-DYN-know
 'You know when he goes to the wood' K.
- (124) a. Ps'as'e-r zde-s'əsə-r s'ʰale-m jə-tɬey°-a-s'
 girl-ABS where-sit-ABS boy-ERG S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'The boy saw where the girl sits' K.
- b. Ps'as'e-r zde-k'ʰe-r s'ʰale-m jə-tɬey°-a-s'
 girl-ABS where-go-ABS boy-ERG S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'The boy saw, where to the girl went to' K.

- (125) a. we wə-zerə-mə-tə-m wədz q'-o-č'e
 you S2SG-where-NEG-stand-OERG grass OR-DYN-grow
 'The grass grows where you don't stand' K.

- b. we wə-zerə-k'°e-r se s-s'°e-r-q'əm
 you S2SG-how-go-ABS I S1SG-know-PRES-NEG
 'I don't know how you go' K.

Participle forms including the meaning 'the reason for' are formed by the prefix *s''(e)-* (126a) and the suffix *-ti* (b).

- (126) a. Se a-bə sə-s''e-k'°e-r fe f-s'°e-r-q'əm
 I it-OERG S1SG-why-go-ABS you S2PL-know-PRES-NEG
 'You don't know why I go there' K.

- b. we a-bə wə-k'°-a-ti q'e-p-h-a-s'
 you it-OERG S2SG-go-PERF-as OR-S2SG-bring-PERF-ASSRT
 'Since you went there, you brought something'

The suffixes *-mi* (127a) and *-č'e* (b) are used as markers of participle forms of concession:

- (127) a. wepismo p-tχ-a-mi a-bə ʔerəh-a-q'əm
 you letter S2SG-write-PERF.PART-even he-ERG receive-PERF-NEG
 'Even if you wrote a letter, he wouldn't get it' K.

- b. we wə-k'°-a-č'e zəri q'-i-č'ə-nu-q'əm
 you S2SG-go-PERF.PART-even nothing OR-S3SG-go out-FUT-NEG
 'Even if you went, nothing would come of it' K.

The conditional forms are divided into proper conditional (128), temporal-conditional (129), subjunctive-conditional (130) and permissive-conditional (131).

- (128) Se sə-ve-z'-a-me fe fə-q'ə-ze-z'e-ž
 I S1SG-IO2PL-wait-PERF-if you S2PL-OR-IO1SG-wait-REV
 'If I waited for you, you will wait for me'

- (129) Se a-r s'ə-s-ɬay°-č'e s-je-k'°e-ɬ'e-n-s'
 I he-ABS LOC-S1SG-see-if S1SG-IO3SG-go-up.to-FUT-ASSRT
 'If (when) I see him, I will walk up to him'

- (130) Fe pismo-r dəy°ase f-tχə-ya-me
 you letter-ABS yesterday S2PL-write-PLUP-COND
 se a-r nobe q'ə-s-ʔerəhe-at
 I it-ABS today OR-S1SG-receive-PERF2
 'If you had written the letter yesterday, I would have received it today'

- (131) A-r jə-rje-že abi q'ə-rje-h
 he-ABS S3SG-OPT-run and here-OPT-fetch
 'Let him run and fetch it'

2.7.2.1 Complementation

A specific feature of the Circassian languages is that predicates of complement clauses are non-finite forms, with no accompanying free complementisers. The main complement types are participles, gerunds *-w(e)*, infinitives *-n(u)*, verbal nouns, the alternative form *-re... -re* ('whether or not') and the conditional *-m* (cf. Kumakhov & Vamling 1993, 1998). It is important to bear in mind the understanding of the distinction finite/non-finite used here. Finite forms are independent, whereas non-finite forms in some sense are dependent on a finite verb. Most of the non-finite forms in the Circassian languages include both tense and full agreement marking, as seen in Table 2.13.

Table 2.13 *Features of non-finite forms*

	Participle	Gerund	Altern.	Cond.	Infinitive	Verbal N
Tense	+	+	+	+	-	-
Subject agreement	+	+	+	+	+	+*
Object agreement	+	+	+	+	+	-
Case marking	+	-	-	-	+	+

*Cf. (133d) and (135) in the following section.

As an example, the complement predicate (gerund) in (132) shows a full range of tenses as well as subject marking.

- (132) A-bə ž-je-ʔe fe fə-k'°e-w
 he-ERG LOC-S3SG-say.PRES you S2PL-go.PRES-GER
 (fə-k'°-a-we, fə-k'°e-nu, fə-k'°e-ya-we)
 (S2PL-go-PERF-GER, S2PL-go-FUT S2PL-go-PLUP-GER)
 'He says that you are leaving (have left, will leave, left)' K.

2.7.2.2 The subject of the complement clause

All types of non-finite forms include subject cross-reference markers. This is illustrated below with respect to the main types of complement predicates: (133a) participle, (b) gerund, (c) infinitive, (d) verbal noun.

- (133) a. (Se) s-o-s'e (wə) (se)
 I S1SG-DYN-know.PRES you me
 sə-q'ə-zerə-p-š-a-r
 O1SG-OR-PART-S2SG-lead-PERF-ABS
 'I know that you brought me here' K.
- b. (wə) wi-g'əye-s' (de) də-k'°-a-we
 you.SG S2SG-think.PRES-ASSRT we S1PL-go-PERF-GER
 'You think that we left' K.
- c. (Fe) tχəl (fe) f-tχə-n(ə-r)
 you.PL book (you) S2PL-write-INF-(ABS)
 fi-murad-s'
 POSS2PL-intention.PRES-ASSRT
 'You intend to write a book' K.
- d. De də-wəχ-a-s' (de) di-tχə-nə-r
 we S1PL-finish-PERF-ASSRT we POSS1PL-write-MSD-ABS
 'We finished writing' K.

The cross-reference markers occurring in the non-finite forms are identical to those used in the corresponding finite forms. This is shown in participles, gerunds and infinitives (133a-c) and the corresponding markers of the finite forms in (134a-c).

- (134) a. (Wə) (se) sə-q'ə-p-š-a-s'
 you I O1SG-here-S2SG-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 'You brought me here'
- b. (De) də-k'°-a-s'
 we S1PL-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'We left'
- c. (Fe) tχəl ø-f-tχə-nu-s'
 you.PL book O3SG-S2PL-write-FUT-ASSRT
 'You will write a book'

So, as can be seen, finite and non-finite forms employ the same sets of cross-reference markers, although there is one exception. In (133d), where the

complement predicate is a verbal noun, the subject marker takes the form of a possessive prefix. A corresponding finite form is given in (135).

- (135) De də-tχ-a-s'
 we S1PL-write-PERF-ASSRT
 'We wrote' K.

The general rule is that cross-reference markers are obligatorily present when motivated. An exception to this is the infinitive, where the subject marker is optional under certain circumstances (cf. Kumakhov & Vamling 1993:123).

- (136) Se s'e-z-dz-a-s' sə-k'e-n / k'e-n
 I LOC-S1SG-begin-PERF-ASSRT S1SG-go-INF / go-INF
 'I began to walk'

In contrast to the presence of the cross-reference markers in the verb, non-emphatic personal pronouns are usually dropped, both in matrix and subordinate clauses. As shown in many examples, both subjects and various objects are dropped.

Only in one case is the presence of a personal subject pronoun blocked. This occurs when a second person singular subject marker in the complement predicate is used in marking arbitrary reference of the subject (Kumakhov & Vamling 1994). If a second person pronoun is inserted, it is no longer possible to get the arbitrary reference reading (137b-c).

- (137) a. ʔ°eχ°əšχ°e-s' a tχəłə-r p-tχə-nə-r
 important.(PRES)-ASSRT this book-ABS S2SG-write-INF-ABS
 'It is important to write this book'
- b. ʔ°eχ°əšχ°e-s' a tχəłə-r (*we) p-tχə-nə-r
 important.(PRES)-ASSRT this book-ABS you S2SG-write-INF-ABS
 'It is important to write this book'
- c. ʔ°eχ°əšχ°e-s' a tχəłə-r we p-tχə-nə-r
 important.(PRES)-ASSRT this book-ABS you S2SG-write-INF-ABS
 'It is important for you to write this book'

The case assignment to the arguments of the non-finite complement predicates is in principle identical to that with the finite verbs.

2.7.2.3 Adverb or adjective modification?

A common verbal feature of three non-finite forms is that they are modified by adverbs. The adverb *psəns''ew* 'quickly' has been inserted in the sentences below with subordinate predicates (138a) participle, (b) gerund and (c) infinitive. In (138d), the verbal noun is modified by an adjective in postposition.

- (138) a. A-bə tχəl psəns''ew ø-zer-i-tχə-nu-r
 he-ERG book quickly O3SG-PART-S3SG-write-FUT-ABS
 ž-i-ʔ-a-s'
 PreV-S3SG-say-PERF-ASSRT
 'He said that he will write the book quickly' K.
- b. Se sə-s'-o-g əγ a-bə tχəl psəns''ew
 I S1SG-LOC-DYN-hope he-ERG book quickly
 ø-jə-tχ-a-we
 O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-GER
 'I hope that he wrote the book quickly' K.
- c. Se tχəl psəns''ew s-tχə-nu sə-χ°ej-s'
 I book quickly S1SG-write-INF S1SG-want.PRES-ASSRT
 'I want to write the book quickly' K.
- d. Se si-tχə-n psəns''e-r sə-wəbl-a-s'
 I POSS1SG-write-MSD quick-ABS S1SG-begin-PERF-ASSRT
 'I began my quick writing' K.

2.7.2.4 Matrix predicates and selection of complement predicates

Generalizing the picture somewhat, one might say that matrix predicates that require their complement to appear as an infinitive make up one group and matrix predicates that choose participles and gerunds for their complement form another group. Roughly speaking, the two groups seem to correspond to matrix predicates in more familiar European languages that take infinitives and finite complements respectively.

In the first group we find such matrix predicates as manipulative (139a), achievement (b), modal (c) and phasal predicates (136).

- (139) a. Se a-bə ø-ø-že-s-ʔ-a-s' a-r
 I he-ERG O3-IO3SG-LOC-S1SG-say-PERF-ASSRT he-ABS
 wəne-m s''e-mə-č'ə-nu
 room-OERG LOC-NEG-leave-INF
 'I told him not to leave the room' K.

- (139) b. De t-s'əγ°əps'-a-s' fe fə-q'-je-d-yebleye-n
 we S1PL-forget-PERF-ASSRT you O2PL-DIR-S1PL-invite-INF
 'We forgot to invite you' K.
- c. Se s-leč'-a-s' a wəne-r s-s'ə-n
 I S1SG-can-PERF-ASSRT that house-ABS S1SG-make-INF
 'I could build that house' K.

The second group includes predicates of knowledge (140a) and propositional attitude, pretence and utterance (b) predicates. This group of matrix predicates does not impose restrictions on the time reference of the complement. Here we find the tensed complement types.

- (140) a. Ane-m je-s''ə jə-q°e-r q'ə-zerə-k'°e-žə-r
 mother-ERG S3SG-know.PRES POSS3SG-son-ABS OR-PART-go-back-ABS
 'Mother knows that her son returns home' K.
- b. S'aŋe-m xəbar s-i-ye-s''a-s' zerə-səmaž-a-r
 boy-ERG news O1SG-S3SG-CAUS-know-ASSRT PART-sick-PERF-ABS
 'The boy told me that he was ill' K.

The utterance and knowledge predicates also select the 'alternative' type ('whether... or not'), as shown in (141).

- (141) Fe de fə-q'ə-de-wəp's''-a-s' də-txe-n-re
 you us S2PL-OR-IO1PL-ask-PERF-ASSRT S1PL-write-FUT-CRD
 də-mə-txe-n-re
 S1PL-NEG-write-FUT-CRD
 'You ask us whether we will write or not' K.

Complements of commentative predicates show up either as participles (142a) or infinitives (b). They differ in character in so far as the infinitival complement in (b) has arbitrary subject reference and the participial complement in (a) has specific subject and time reference.

- (142) a. yes''eγ°en-s' Bibe wəne-m zer-i-mə-s-a-r
 surprising-ASSRT Biba home-OERG PART-S3SG-NEG-be-PERF-ABS
 'It is surprising that Biba wasn't at home'

- (142) b. ɽ°eχ°əʃχ°e-s' a tχəɫə-r ø-p-tχə-nə-r
 important.PRES-ASSRT this book-ABS O3SG-S2SG-write-INF-ABS
 ‘It is important to write this book’

Table 2.14 summarizes restrictions imposed on complement predicates with respect to selection of different classes of matrix predicates.

Table 2.14 *Matrix predicates* and complement types*

	Participle	Gerund	Altern.	Infinitive	Verbal N
Utterance predicates	+	+	+		
Predicates of knowledge	+	+	+		
Pretence predicates	+	+			
Propositional attitude predicates	+	+			
Commentative predicates	+			+	
Predicates of intention				+	
Modal predicates				+	
Achievement predicates				+	
Manipulative predicates				+	
Phasal predicates				+	+

*Classification of types of matrix predicates is based on Noonan (1985).

- (6) a. Ps'as'e-m pismo-r ø-ə-tχə-γ
 girl-ERG letter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF
 'The girl wrote a letter' A.
- b. S'ak'°e-m dəγ°əz'ə-r ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
 hunter-ERG wolf-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter killed the wolf' A.

Kabardian marks the plural by the suffix *-χe*, which itself precedes the case marker (7).

- (7) Fəz-χe-m bostej-χe-r ø-ja-də-r
 woman-PL-ERG dress-PL-ABS O3-S3PL-sew-PRES
 'The women sewed the dresses' K.

In Adyghe, plural may be expressed by different markers: *-me*, *-χe-m*, *-χe-me*, as illustrated in (8).

- (8) Hač'e-m-e (-χe-m / -χe-m-e) lə-r ø-a-šχə-γ
 guest-ERG-PL (-PL-ERG / -PL-ERG-PL) meat-ABS O3SG-S3PL-eat-PERF
 'The guests ate the meat' A.

In the sequence *-χe-m-e* two plural markers are found: the ordinary plural marker *-χe* and the specific ergative plural marker *-e*. The variant *-m-e*, consisting of the ergative singular *-m* and the ergative plural *-e*, is older than the variants *-χe-m*, *-χe-m-e*.

3.1.2 The ergative case: demonstrative pronouns

The ergative case of demonstrative pronouns¹ (used in the function of third person personal pronouns as well) is marked by the suffix *-š'* in Adyghe and *-bə* in Kabardian (9a-b).

- (9) a. A-š' č'əg°ə-r ø-je-z'°e-ø
 he-ERG ground-ABS O3SG-S3SG-plough-PRES
 'He ploughs the ground' A.
- b. A-bə wəne-r ø-je-s''-ø
 he-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES
 'He builds the house' K.

¹When the demonstrative pronoun is used attributively, the case marker is not attached to it but is found in the final position of the NP, as is the usual position of case and number markers.

Two markers of ergative case may appear together in demonstrative pronouns, thus resulting in double marking. In (10) the ergative suffix used for nouns *-m* has been added to the ergative suffix of the demonstrative pronoun *-bə*.

- (10) A-bə-m (mə-bə-m, mo-bə-m) b3ez'ej-r
 he-ERG-ERG (this-ERG-ERG, that-ERG-ERG) fish-ABS
 ø-q'-i-wbəd-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-S3SG-catch-PERF-ASSRT
 'He (this one, that one) caught the fish' K.

It does occur that the ergative case of demonstrative pronouns is formed by *-m* in analogy with the ergative case of nouns, cf. example (11a) from Kuasheva (1969).

- (11) a. A-m, ø-s-lay°ə-ø-w-re, Terk
 he-ERG O3SG-S1SG-see-PRES-GER-CRD Terek
 ø-q'ə-zə-ri-nek'-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-REFL-S3SG-leave-PERF-ASSRT
 'He, I saw, left Terek behind him' K.

The plural of the ergative case is formed in different ways in Kabardian: by adding *-χe-m* [-PL-ERG] directly to the stem or to the ergative case *-bə*.

- (11) b. A-χe-m (=a-bə-χe-m) a-r ø-ja-h-ø
 he-PL-ERG (=he-ERG-PL-ERG) he-ABS O3SG-S3PL-carry-PRES
 'They carry him' K.

In Adyghe, the formation of the ergative case of demonstrative pronouns is even more complex. Among the four alternatives given in (12) *-χe-m* and *-χe-m-e* are found in standard Adyghe, whereas the others are local (dialectal) forms (Kerasheva 1957).

- (12) A-χe-m (=a-χe-m-e, a-r-χe-m-e, a-š'-χe-m-e,
 he-PL-ERG (=he-PL-ERG-PL he-ABS-PL-ERG-PL he-ERG-PL-ERG-PL,
 a-š'-m-e) čəg-χe-r ø-a-ye-t'əsə-ye-χ
 he-ERG-ERG-PL) tree-PL-ABS O3PL-S3PL-CAUS-plant-PERF-PL
 'They planted trees' A.

3.1.3 Neutralisation: no opposition in number in the ergative case

The ergative case *-m* may be neutral with respect to opposition in number. As shown in (13) the subject marker of third person singular *-jə* and third person plural *-ja* may both agree with a subject marked by the ergative suffix *-m*. Such undifferentiated use of the ergative case suffix is characteristic of nouns and pronouns having a collective meaning.

- (13) Dəy°əz'ə-m a-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 wolf-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 ø-ja-šχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3PL-eat-PERF-ASSRT K.

- a. 'The wolf ate him'
 b. 'The wolves ate him' K.

The transitive subject *zeč'e-m* 'all, everybody' in the ergative case in (14) belongs to pluralia tantum with respect to meaning and form, as it is represented by the third person plural subject agreement. It is not possible to use the ergative plural on the nominal in (14), as is found in (15).

- (14) Zeč'e-m a-r f'əwe ø-ja-ɬay°-ø
 all-ERG he-ABS well O3SG-S3PL-see-PRES
 'Everybody loves him' K.

- (15) Dəy°əz'-χe-m a-r ø-ja-šχ-a-s'
 wolf-PL-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3PL-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'The wolves ate him' K.

Adyghe differs from Kabardian in marking the plural of the ergative *zeč'e-m-e* [all-ERG-PL] 'everybody', as shown in example (16).

- (16) Zeč'e-m-e maš'əne-χe-r ø-a-š'efə-ye-χ
 all-ERG-PL car-PL-ABS O3PL-S3PL-buy-PERF-PL
 'Everybody bought cars' A.

3.2 Ergative and absolutive, definite and indefinite form

The ergative-absolutive is closely related to the opposition definite-indefinite. The suffixes used for marking the ergative and absolutive cases also have the definite function. The ergative and absolutive suffixes may alternate with zero marking when an indefinite NP is found as A (17), S (18) or P (19).

- (17) Ps'as'e-m (ø) mə-r ø-ə-š'e-ne-p
 girl-ERG.DEF (INDEF) it/that.one-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-FUT-NEG
 'The/a girl will not do it' A.

- (18) Ps'as'e-r (ø) ma-k'°e-ø
 girl-ABS.DEF (ABS.INDEF) O3SG-go-PRES
 'The/a girl is walking' A.

- (19) We ps'as'e-r (ø) ø-we-ɬey°ə-ø
 you girl-ABS.DEF (ABS.INDEF) O3SG-S2SG-see-PRES
 'You see the/a girl' A.

An important difference between Adyghe and Kabardian is that the alternation between definite-indefinite in A (17) is not characteristic of Kabardian. In this language, the suffix *-m* marks ergative case and only very rarely alternates with zero (i.e. marking indefiniteness). In oblique functions, the alternation between overt marking and zero is found in both languages.

The relation between the ergative-absolutive cases and the marking of definite-indefinite is asymmetrical. This is particularly clear in the plural, where no alternation with zero (i.e. marking indefiniteness) is allowed.

- (20) Ps'as'e-χe-m (*-ø) mə-r ø-a-š'ə-ne-p
 girl-PL-ERG it/that-ABS O3SG-S3PL-do-FUT-NEG
 'The girls will not do it' A.
- (21) We ps'as'e-χe-r (*-ø) ø-we-ɬey°ə-ø-χ
 you girl-PL-ABS O3PL-S2SG-see-PRES-PL
 'You see the girls' A.
- (22) Ps'as'e-χe-r (*-ø) ma-k'°e-ø-χ
 girl-PL-DEF.ABS (-INDEF) S3PL-go-PRES-PL
 'The girls are walking' A.

Not all nouns and pronouns that may be marked for ergative-absolutive case differentiate definite and indefinite forms. Examples are A. *təye*, K. *dəye* 'sun', A., K. *maze* 'moon', *ɣatχe* 'spring', A. *č'əmaf*, K. *s'əmaχ°e* 'winter'. Abstract nouns like A., K. *nasəp* 'happiness', *l'əye* 'courage, braveness' can be used in S (23) or P (24) function either with the marker *-r* or without it, with no difference in meaning.

- (23) S'əmaχ°e (-r) ø-q'e-k'°-a-s'
 winter (-ABS) S3SG-OR-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'Winter has come' K.
- (24) Dəye (-r) ø-s-o-ɬay°-ø
 sun (-ABS) O3SG-S1SG-DYN-see-PRES
 'I see the sun' K.

However, these nouns may not be used in A function without the ergative marker *-m* (25).

- (25) Dəye-m (*dəye-ø) wəne-r ø-je-ye-neχ°-ø
 sun-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-light-PRES
 'The sun lights the house' K.

When combining with the instrumental case, the suffix *-m* also marks definiteness.

- (26) Se mər se-m-č'e ø-s-o-s'-ø
 I it/that-ABS knife-DEF-INSTR O3SG-S1SG-DYN-do-PRES
 'I did it with the knife' K.

When the suffix *-m* occurs together with the instrumental marker, it may freely alternate with zero (27), expressing indefiniteness (but only in the singular).

- (27) Se mər se-ø-č'e (se-χe-m-č'e,
 I it/that-ABS knife-INDEF-INSTR knife-PL-DEF-INSTR
 *se-χe-ø-č'e) ø-s-o-s'-ø
 *knife-PL-INDEF-INSTR) O3SG-S1SG-DYN-do-PRES
 'I do it with a knife / the knives' K.

In the coordinative form the suffix *-m* occurs also on S and P. Here, *-m* marks definiteness (cf. below 'The coordinative form').

3.3 The oblique ergative

The ergative case in the Circassian language is, as in some other Caucasian languages (Topuria 1995), also found in oblique functions. The suffix *-m* marks not only A but is also found in dative (R) (28), locative (29), directional (30) and other circumstantial functions (it is glossed OERG: oblique ergative).

- (28) L'ə-m tχələr fəzə-m
 man-ERG book-ABS woman-OERG
 ø-jə-ri-t-a-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'The man gave the book to the woman' K.
- (29) We χame-χe-m w-a-χe-s-ø-s'
 you stranger-PL-OERG S2SG-IO3PL-LOC-sit-PRES-ASSRT
 'You are living among strangers' K.
- (30) Se wəne-m s-ø-i-ha-γ
 I house-OERG S1SG-IO3SG-LOC-enter-PERF
 'I entered the house' A.

This may also be shown for the personal/demonstrative pronouns with the markers *-bə* K., *-š'* A. (31a-b).

- (31) a. We a-r a-š' ø-je-p-tə-γ
 you he-ABS it/he-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-PERF
 'You gave it to him' A.
- b. Fe a-bə fə-ø-te-s-ø-s'
 you he-OERG S2PL-IO3SG-LOC-sit-PRES-ASSRT
 'You are sitting on it' K.

3.4 Split ergative marking

The ergative and absolutive cases are not realized on all nominals. Below we examine nominals that do not show the ergative-absolutive opposition: personal, interrogative and determinative pronouns and proper nouns.

3.4.1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns in the first and second persons (singular and plural) do not differentiate the ergative and absolutive cases. Both as A, P (32a) and S (32b) they appear in the same zero form.

- (32) a. Se we we-se-hə-ø
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-PRES
 ‘I carry you’ A.
- b. Se se-čə-ø
 I S1SG-run-PRES
 ‘I run’ A.

If the personal pronoun is used with the determinative pronoun *dəde* ‘self’ a marker shows up on this element. However, there is no ergative-absolutive opposition on the personal pronoun itself as the suffix *-r* is used in all three functions: A (33a), P (33b) and S (33c).

- (33) a. Fe-r dəde-m žane-r ø-v-d-a-s'
 you-(ABS) self-ERG shirt-ABS O3SG-S2PL-sew-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘You made the shirt yourself’ K.
- b. We-r dəde-r ø-s-łey°-a-s'
 you-(ABS) self-ABS O3SG-S1SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I saw you (yourselves)’ K.
- c. De-r dəde-r d-o-łaz'e-ø
 we-(ABS) self-ABS S1PL-DYN-work-PRES
 ‘We (ourselves) are working’ K.

3.4.2 Interrogative pronouns

The interrogative pronoun *χet* ‘who’ appears in the same form in A (34a), P (34b) and S (34c).

- (34) a. χet ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a mə tχəłə-r?
 who O3SG-OR-S3SG-buy-PERF this book-ABS
 ‘Who bought this book?’ K.

- (34) b. hes'e-m χet ø-jə-ley°-a?
 guest-ERG who O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'Whom did the guest see?' K.
- c. χet ø-q'a-k°e-ø-r?
 who S3SG-OR-go-PRES-ABS
 'Who is coming (this way)?' K.

The interrogative pronoun A. *səd*, K. *sət* 'what' differs from *χet* 'who' in that case marking may (35a) or may not appear (35b-d).

- (35) a. Sədə-m wə-qə-ø-hə-γ?
 what-ERG O2SG-OR-S3SG-bring-PERF
 'What has brought you here?' A.
- b. Səd wə-zə-γa-γ-re-r?
 what O2SG-REFL-CAUS-weep-PART.PRES-ABS
 'What is making you weep?' A.
- c. Səd ø-qə-we-x°əl'a-γe-r?
 what S3SG-OR-IO2SG-happen-PERF.PART-ABS
 'What has happened to you?' A.
- d. Səd ø-p'-s''e-š't
 what O3SG-S2SG-do-FUT2
 'What will you do?' A.

The appearance of the ergative marker *-m* on A. *səd*, K. *sət* 'what' is often connected to the use of an inanimate A and the causative form of the verb, as in (36).

- (36) Sətə-m ø-q'-i-γe-nəχ°-ø-re
 what-ERG O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-light-PRES-INT
 (ø-q'-i-γe-χ°abe-ø-re,
 (O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-warm-PRES-INT
 ø-q'-i-γe-s'ʔ'-ø-re) mə wəne-r?
 O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-cold-PRES-INT) this room-ABS
 'What lights (warms) this room up (makes it cold)?' K.

The interrogative pronoun *χet* 'who' in the same position and with the same causative verbs may not be marked for the ergative case (37).

- (37) χet (*-m) ø-q'-i-γe-nəχ°-ø-re (ø-q'-i-γe-χ°abe-ø-re,
 who (*-ERG)
 ø-q'-i-γe-s'ʔ'-re) mə wəne-r
 'Who lights (warms) this room up (makes cold)?' K.

3.4.3 Determinative pronouns

The determinative pronoun *χeti* ‘any, everybody’ (for humans) does not differentiate ergative-absolutive (38a-c).

- (38) a. *χeti* a-r *ø-je-s''e-ø*
 everybody he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES
 ‘Everybody knows him’ A.
- b. *χeti* me-g°*əpšəse-ø*
 everybody S3SG-think-PRES
 ‘Everybody is thinking’ A.
- c. A-š' *χeti* *ø-je-ley°ə-ø*
 he-ERG everybody O3SG-S3SG-see-PRES
 ‘He sees everybody’ A.

Being a nominal modifier *q'es* ‘every, any’ follows its head noun, but despite its final position it is not marked by the case suffixes in S (39a), A (39b) and P (39c).

- (39) a. C'əχ° *q'es* *tχəl-χe-r* *ø-q'-i-s'əχ°-a-s'*
 person every book-PL-ABS O3PL-OR-S3SG-buy-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘Every person bought books’ K.
- b. C'əχ° *q'es* ma-k''*e-ø*
 person every S3SG-go-PRES
 ‘Every person is walking’ K.
- c. C'əχ° *q'es* *ø-w-o-ləte-ø*
 person every O3SG-S2SG-DYN-count-PRES
 ‘You are counting every person’ K.

There is no case marking on the pronoun *jəs'heč'e* ‘he himself’ in any of the functions A (40a), S (40b) or P (40c).

- (40) a. *Jəs'heč'e* a-r *ø-jə-š-a-s'*
 himself he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-bring-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘He himself brought him’ K.
- b. *Jəs'heč'e* ma-ž*e-ø*
 himself S3SG-run-PRES
 ‘He himself runs’ K.
- c. *Jəs'heč'e* *ø-s-ley°-a-s'*
 himself O3SG-S1SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I saw *him*’ K.

The ergative and absolutive are not differentiated in the singular of *jež'* 'self' (41). In the plural they are differentiated, as shown in (42).

- (41) a. Jež' lə-r ø-ə-šχə-γ
 self meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF
 'He (himself) ate the meat' A.
- b. Jež' me-laž'e-ø
 self S3SG-work-PRES
 'He (himself) is working' A.
- c. Jež' ø-w-e-s'e-ø
 self O3SG-S2SG-DYN-know-PRES
 'You know *him*' A.
- (42) a. Jež'-χe-m təγ°əz'ə-r ø-a-wəč'ə-γ
 self-PL-ERG wolf-ABS O3SG-S3PL-kill-PERF
 'They (themselves) killed the wolf' A.
- b. Jež'-χe-r me-žeg°ə-ø-χ
 self-PL-ABS S3PL-play-PRES-PL
 'They (themselves) are playing' A.
- c. Jež'-χe-r ø-s-e-s'e-ø
 self-PL-ABS O3PL-S1SG-DYN-know-PRES
 'I know *them*' A.

The differentiation of the ergative and absolutive cases in the pronoun *jež'* 'self' is in a process of development. In certain dialects of Adyghe the ergative-absolutive opposition is found also in the singular. Cf. the following examples from the Temirgoi dialect:

- (43) Jež'ə-m pismo-r ø-ə-tχə-γ
 he/(himself)-ERG letter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF
 'He (himself) wrote the letter' A. (Temirgoi dialect)
- (44) Jež'-ø me-k'°e-ž'ə
 he/(himself)-(ABS) S3SG-go.PRES-REV
 'He (himself) returns' A. (Temirgoi dialect)

Turning to Kabardian, we note that the process has gone further. Case differentiation is found in both the singular and plural of the corresponding pronoun *jezə* 'self' (45a-d).

- (45) a. Jezə-m (*ø) s'ə-r ø-jə-v-a-s'
 self-ERG field-ABS O3SG-S3SG-plough-PERF-ASSRT
 'He (himself) ploughed the field' K.

- (45) b. Jezə-χe-m g°e3ə-r ø-χ-a-s-a-s'
 self-PL-ERG wheat-ABS O3SG-LOC-S3PL-sow-PERF-ASSRT
 'They (themselves) sowed wheat' K.
- c. Jezə-r (*ø) ma-γ-ø
 self-ERG S3SG-cry-PRES
 'He (himself) is crying' K.
- d. Fəzə-m jezə-r (*ø) ø-q'-i-šə-n-s'
 woman-ERG self-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-lead-FUT-ASSRT
 'The woman will bring *him*' K.

As shown by these examples, the presence of the suffixes *-m* (45a) and *-r* (45c-d) is obligatory. In this respect the pronoun *jezə* 'self' differs from the declension of nouns, where alternation with zero is allowed. The ergative case of the pronoun *jezə* 'self' may also be formed by double ergative suffixes (46), whereby the ergative marker of demonstrative pronouns *-bə* followed by the second ergative suffix *-m* are added to the root (the reverse order of the suffixes is not possible).

- (46) Jez-bə-m (*jezə-m-bə) tχələ-r ø-q'-i-h-a-s'
 self-ERG-ERG book-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-carry-PERF-ASSRT
 'He (himself) brought the book' K.

3.4.4.1 Proper nouns

It is common for proper nouns in the Circassian language not to distinguish the ergative and absolutive cases. This is particularly characteristic of given names (47a-c).

- (47) a. Murat Aslan ø-ə-š'e-š't
 Murat Aslan O3SG-S3SG-bring-FUT2
 'Murat will bring Aslan' A.
- b. Murat me-čəje-ø
 Murat S3SG-sleep-PRES
 'Murat is sleeping' A.
- c. Murat ø-w-e-s'-e-ø
 Murat O3SG-S2SG-DYN-know-PRES
 'You know Murat' A.

In (47a) subject-object word order determines the grammatical status of *Murat* and *Aslan*. Moving *Aslan* to initial position *Aslan Murat ø-ə-š'e-š't* 'Aslan will bring Murat' changes the grammatical status of the NPs.

It is possible to mark proper nouns by *-m/-r*. However, in contrast to common nouns (17-19), the suffixes *-r/-m* on proper nouns are not related to the marking of definiteness. The suffixes *-r/-m* alternate freely with zero and

have no impact on the meaning, as illustrated for proper nouns as A, S and P in (48a-c).

- (48) a. Fatime-(m) žane-r ø-jə-d-a-s'
 Fatima-(ERG) shirt-ABS O3SG-S3SG-sew-PERF-ASSRT
 'Fatima sewed the shirt' K.
- b. Fatime-(r) me-laz'e-ø
 Fatima-(ABS) S3SG-work-PRES
 'Fatima is working' K.
- c. Fatime-(r) s-o-c'əχ°-ø
 Fatima-(ABS) S1SG-DYN-know-PRES
 'I know Fatima' K.

The free alternation between zero and *-r/-m* may be interpreted as a first step towards establishing the opposition of absolutive-ergative marking on given names. In some Circassian dialects one may observe a more consistent ergative-absolutive opposition in given names. In the Bzhedug and Shapsug dialects of Adyghe given names ending in a consonant are marked by the suffix *-ə* in the ergative (Zekokh 1969). In this way there is an opposition between the ergative and absolutive of given names (49a-b).

- (49) a. Ahmed-ə γ°əč'ə-r ø-jə-fəte-ø
 Akhmed-ERG iron-ABS O3SG-S3SG-forge-PRES
 'Akhmed is forging the iron' A.
- b. Ahmed-ø me-pxas''-ø
 Akhmed-(ABS) S3SG-do.carpentry-PRES
 'Akhmed is doing carpentry' A.

3.4.4.2 Circassian surnames

In contrast to given names, Circassian surnames consistently distinguish the ergative and absolutive cases (50a-b).

- (50) a. Q'ardenə-m As'ənə-r ø-jə-h-ø
 Kardan-ERG Ashin-ABS O3SG-S3SG-carry-PRES
 'Kardan is carrying Ashin' K.
- b. Q'ardenə-r ma-že-ø
 Kardan-ABS S3SG-run-PRES
 'Kardan is running' K.

In a combination of given name and surname, the surname always precedes the given name. They are declined as a unit and follow the rules of the final element (51a-b). The first member is not marked for case and the following given name is declined in the same way as it is without the surname (47-49). The ergative and absolutive markers in (51a-b) are not obligatory.

- (51) a. Q'arden Zaurə-(m) As'ən Anzorə-(r) ø-jə-h-ø
 Kardan Zaur-(ERG) Ashin Anzor-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-carry-PRES
 'Zaur Kardan is carrying Anzor Ashin' K.
- b. Q'arden Zaurə-(r) ma-že-ø
 Kardan Zaur-(ABS) S3SG-run-PRES
 'Zaur Kardan is running' K.

As noted above (50a-b), surnames (without following given names) consistently distinguish the ergative-absolutive cases. However, in the plural the opposition is not obligatory anymore (52a-b), as with given names. Word order determines the grammatical relations in absence of case marking in (52a).

- (52) a. Q'arden-χe-(m) As'ən-χe-(r) ø-ja-še-ø
 Kardan-PL-(ERG) Ashin-PL-(ABS) O3PL-S3PL-lead-PRES
 'The Kardans are leading the Ashins' K.
- b. Q'arden-χe-(r) ma-že-ø
 Kardan-PL-(ABS) S3PL-run-PRES
 'The Kardans are running' K.

3.4.4.3 Borrowed surnames

Borrowed surnames, for instance Russian names are declined in the same way as Circassian given names. In contrast to proper Circassian surnames the ergative (53a) and absolutive cases (53b-c) are not obligatorily distinguished.

- (53) a. Ivanov tχələ-r ø-je-tχ-ø
 Ivanov book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PRES
 'Ivanov is writing the book' K.
- b. Ivanov me-laz'e-ø
 Ivanov S3SG-work-PRES
 'Ivanov is working' K.
- c. Ivanov ø-s-łey°-a-s'
 Ivanov O3SG-S1SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'I saw Ivanov' K.

Phonetic and prosodic features of the borrowed surnames have a great impact on the marking or non-differentiation of the ergative and absolutive cases (as in (53a-c)). Cf., for instance, the consistent marking of the ergative-absolutive on the surname *Ljenske* (54a-c).

- (54) a. Ljenske-m tχələ-r ø-je-tχ-ø
 Lensky-ERG book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PRES
 'Lensky is writing the book' K.

- (54) b. Ljenske-r me-laz'e-ø
 Lensky-ABS S3SG-work-PRES
 'Lensky is working' K.
- c. Ljenske-r ø-s-ɬeɣ°-a-s'
 Lensky-ABS O3SG-S1SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'I saw Lensky' K.

3.4.5 Associative (representative) plural

The use of the so-called associative plural 'X... and the others' is characteristic of the Circassian languages. In Kabardian, there is no differentiation of ergative-absolutive (55a-c).

- (55) a. Marjan-səme χade-r ø-ja-t'-ø
 Marjan-and.others kitchen.garden-ABS O3-S3PL-dig-PRES
 'Marjan and the others are digging in the kitchen garden' K.
- b. Marjan-səme ma-k'°e-ø
 Marjan-and.others S3PL-go-PRES
 'Marjan and the others are walking' K.
- c. Marjan-səme ø-s-o-ɬaɣ°-ø
 Marjan-and.others O3PL-S1SG-DYN-see-PRES
 'I see Marjan and the others' K.

In Adyghe the particle *dəχe* 'and others' expresses the associative plural and distinguishes ergative-absolutive (56a-c).

- (56) a. Jəshaq dəχe-m wəne-r ø-a-s'°ə-ɣ
 Iskhak and.others-ERG house-ABS O3PL-S3PL-do-PERF
 'Iskhak and the others built the house' A.
- b. Jəshaq dəχe-r ø-qe-k'°a-ɣe-χ
 Iskhak and.others-ABS S3PL-OR-go-PERF-PL
 'Iskhak and the others came here' A.
- c. Jəshaq dəχe-r ø-s-e-š'e-ø-χ
 Iskhak and.others-ABS O3PL-S1SG-DYN-lead-PRES-PL
 'I lead Iskhak and the others' A.

3.4.6 Possessive forms

There is no differentiation between the ergative and absolutive cases of possessive forms in Adyghe (57a-c).

- (57) a. Ti-s'awe a-r ø-je-s'°e-ø
 POSS1PL-son he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES
 'Our son knows him' A.

- (57) b. Si-s'awe $\emptyset$ -qe-k'°-ž'ə-γ
 POSS1SG-son S3SG-OR-go-REV-PERF
 'My son returned' A.
- c. Wi-s'awe $\emptyset$ -s-e-s'°e- $\emptyset$
 POSS2PL-son O3SG-S1SG-DYN-know-PRES
 'I know your son' A.

Possessive forms in Kabardian are not consistent in marking the opposition ergative-absolutive (58a-b). In Standard Kabardian possessive forms of nouns usually take overt marking of the ergative and absolutive cases.

- (58) a. Fi-ade-(m) sə-q'-i-ye-k'°-a-s'
 POSS2PL-father-(ERG) O1SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'Your father sent me here' K.
- b. Wi-ade-(r) me-žej- $\emptyset$
 POSS2SG-father-(ABS) S3SG-sleep-PRES
 'Your father is sleeping' K.

3.4.7 The coordinative form

Demonstrative pronouns in the coordinative form (with repeated coordinative suffixes *-re*) coincide in the ergative and absolutive. Both in the function of A (59) and S/P (60a-b) the demonstrative pronouns in the coordinative form are marked by the suffix *-bə* (formally ergative).

- (59) Mə-bə-re mo-bə-re mas'e-r $\emptyset$ -ja-t'- $\emptyset$
 he/this-ERG-CRD he/that-ERG-CRD hole-ABS O3SG-S3PL-dig-PRES
 'This one and that one are digging a hole' K.
- (60) a. Mə-bə-re mo-bə-re ma-γ- $\emptyset$
 he/this-ERG-CRD he/that-ERG-CRD S3PL-cry-PRES
 'This one and that one are crying' K.
- b. Mə-bə-re mo-bə-re $\emptyset$ -s-o-h- $\emptyset$
 he/this-ERG-CRD he/that-ERG-CRD O3PL-S1SG-DYN-carry-PRES
 'I am carrying this one and that one' K.

Such coalescence of the ergative and absolutive is possible in forms with repeated coordinative suffixes *-re*. Nouns in this coordinative form are marked by *-m*, also in the S/P positions instead of the expected absolutive *-r*. As a result of this, the marking of A (61), S (62a) and P (62b) coincide.

- (61) L'ə-m-re fəzə-m-re a-r $\emptyset$ -ja-še- $\emptyset$
 man-ERG-CRD woman-ERG-CRD he-ABS O3SG-S3PL-lead-PRES
 'The man and the woman are leading him' K.

- (62) a. L'ə-m-re fəzə-m-re ma-k'°e-ø
 man-ERG-CRD woman-ERG-CRD S3PL-go-PRES
 'The man and the woman are walking' K.
- b. L'ə-m-re fəzə-m-re ø-s-o-še-ø
 man-ERG-CRD woman-ERG-CRD O3PL-S1SG-DYN-lead-PRES
 'I am leading the man and the woman' K.

In (62a-b) the suffix *-m* – in contrast to the (formally) ergative suffix *-bə* in demonstrative pronouns (60a) – may alternate with zero, expressing indefiniteness of S (63a) and P (63b).

- (63) a. L'ə-ø-re fəz-ø-re ma-k'°e-r
 man-ABS.INDEF-CRD woman-ABS.INDEF-CRD S3PL-go-PRES
 'A man and a woman are walking' K.
- b. L'ə-ø-re fəz-ø-re
 man-ABS.INDEF-CRD woman-ABS.INDEF-CRD
 ø-s-o-ø-še-ø
 O3PL-S1SG-DYN-lead-PRES
 'I am leading a man and a woman' K.

The appearance of the (formally) ergative marker *-bə* of personal-demonstrative pronouns in S and P functions (60a-b) and the ergative suffix *-m* on nouns (62a-b) instead of the expected absolutive *-r* may be explained phonetically: avoidance of a combination of two sonorant consonants in the absolutive *-r* and coordinative *-re*. An indication of this is the appearance of the expected absolutive *-r* in the coordinative form on *-i* for S in (64a) and P in (64b).

- (64) a. L'ə-r-i fəz-r-i ma-k'°e-ø
 man-ABS.DEF-CRD woman-ABS.DEF-CRD S3PL-go-PRES
 'The man and the woman are walking' K.
- b. L'ə-r-i fəz-r-i
 man-ABS.DEF-CRD woman-ABS.DEF-CRD
 ø-s-o-še-ø
 O3PL-S1SG-DYN-lead-PRES
 'I am leading the man and the woman' K.

3.5 Split-ergativity and the Nominal Hierarchy

Split-ergativity conditioned by the semantics of nominal types has been viewed in relation to proposed nominal hierarchies. The prediction is that if there is a split in the case marking of nominals, it will be accounted for by noting a breaking point along the hierarchy. Nominals in the leftmost positions – first and second person pronouns – are more likely to occur in A function and are therefore less in need of being marked as agents. Inanimate nouns are the least

likely to occur in A function, marking them as agents is thus an important signal. The Nominal Hierarchy is shown in Figure 3.1 (based on Dixon 1994).

		Demonstratives		
1st person	2nd person	3rd person	Proper	C o m m o n n o u n s
pronouns	pronouns	pronouns	nouns	Human Anim. Inanim.
< more likely to be in A than in O function				

Figure 3.1 *The Nominal Hierarchy*

Data from the Circassian languages is interesting in relation to the Nominal hierarchy, as ergative case marking in these language departs in some respects from the expected distribution. Figure 3.2 summarizes the main patterns of ergative marking in the Circassian languages.

		Demonstratives		
1st person	2nd person	3rd person	Proper	C o m m o n n o u n s (SG)
pronouns	pronouns	pronouns	nouns	Human Anim. Inanim.
Ø	Ø	ERG	Ø	ERG ERG

Marking of the ergative case in the Circassian languages

Figure 3.2 *The Nominal Hierarchy (the Circassian languages)*

First and second person pronouns in the Circassian languages do not differentiate the ergative and absolutive cases, as predicted by the Nominal Hierarchy.

The Nominal Hierarchy predicts that ergative case will be marked in the following positions to the right. Third person (by origin demonstrative) pronouns are marked for the ergative case, as discussed in section 3.1.2.

Proper nouns (given names) are generally not marked for the ergative case (cf. sections 3.4.4.1-3). It is interesting to note that there is a tendency for an increased use of the ergative case also on proper nouns.

Common nouns in the rightmost position are marked for the ergative case, as expected. The distinction Human-Animate vs. Inanimate does not play a role in the marking on common nouns, but it seems to be of some relevance for the ergative marking of the interrogative pronouns. As pointed out in section 3.4.2., A. *səd*, K. *sət* 'what' referring to an inanimate agent/force is marked by the ergative case whereas *χet* 'who' in the same position is not.

The key problem in accounting for case marking in the Circassian languages seems to be the relation between the marking of case and definiteness. The major difference between the distribution of ergative and absolutive case is that ergative case has established itself as a case that primarily marks A, ignoring definiteness (section 3.2). In the S and P positions the opposition indefiniteness-definiteness is still available as well as in oblique functions (section

3.3). This applies in particular to common nouns: the suffix *-m* marks A obligatorily, whereas the suffix *-r* is found on definite NPs in S and P functions and is lacking on indefinite NPs in S and P functions. The opposition indefiniteness-definiteness is found in the singular; in the plural *-m/-r* mark only case (cf. examples (20-22)).

New information is most often introduced in S and P functions, the availability of indefinite marking is therefore important here. Old information is most often given in the A function. These patterns tie well in with observations made by Du Bois (1987). The motivation for the grammaticalisation of definite marking in A into the ergative case in the Circassian languages may therefore be sought in discourse structure.

The behavior of the *m-/r-* suffixes on proper nouns should also be seen in relation to the marking of definiteness. As proper nouns are definite on semantic grounds, there is no need for marking of definiteness.

4 Ergative patterns in the verb

Personal markers of the absolutive series are found in initial position in the verb: the marker of the direct object (1) and the marker of an intransitive subject (2). The ergative series marker, i.e. that corresponding to the transitive subject or indirect objects, is found to the right of the absolutive marker.

- (1) Se we wə-s-hə-š't
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-FUT2
 'I will carry you' A.

- (2) Se we sə-wə-žə-š't
 I you S1SG-IO2SG-wait-FUT2
 'I will wait for you' A.

A large number of derivational and inflectional prefixes complicate the verbal structure, in particular in polyvalent verbs. Such prefixes mark reflexive, reciprocal, comitative, benefactive/malfactive, causative, spatio-locational and other relations. In the polyvalent verbal complex, the markers of the absolutive and ergative series occupy strictly fixed positions.

4.1 Markers of the ergative and absolutive series

The ergative series of markers is identified contrasting it to the absolutive system, thus the two series of markers are treated together below. The close connection between the two series of personal markers is particularly evident in transitive forms where both series are present. Due to the polyvalency of the Circassian verbs, an intransitive verb may include markers of up to three indirect objects, as well as of the subject. A transitive verb may also include markers of three indirect objects, as well as the markers of the subject and the direct object. It is thus important to consider various types of both transitive verbs and intransitive verbs when studying ergative patterns in the verbal complex.

4.2 Valency

4.2.1 Simple monovalent verbs

Simple monovalent verbs are always intransitive (i). Examples are (A., K.) *šxen* 'eat', *tχen* 'write, be engaged in writing', *den* 'sew, be engaged in sewing', *t'en* 'dig, be engaged in digging'. Simple monovalent verbs of this type have

corresponding bivalent transitive forms. The radical vowel of the intransitive root is *-e-*, whereas transitive roots are marked by the vowel *-ə-*.

Apart from this type, other simple monovalent intransitives (not having corresponding transitive forms) are found as well (ii): *səsə-n* (A., K.) ‘dig’, *g°əmeč’ə-n* (A.), *g°əzeve-n* (K.) ‘worry’, *lež’e-n* (A.), *lez’e-n* (K.) ‘work’.

Intransitive verbs like *k’°e-n* (A.) ‘go, walk’, *če-n* (A.), *že-n* (K.) ‘run’, considered to be monovalent intransitive verbs in traditional Circassain grammar (iii), have corresponding transitive forms of the type *k’°ə-n* (A., K.) ‘pass something’, *čə-n* (A.), *žə-n* (K.) ‘run past something’. As intransitives, they occur in both monovalent and bivalent forms; i.e. they govern their subject in the absolutive case (3) and also an indirect object in the oblique ergative case (4). *g°əmeč’ə-n*

- (3) A-r ma-k’°e-ø
 he-ABS S3SG-go-PRES
 ‘He walks’ K.

- (4) A-r q’ale-m ma-ø-k’°e-ø
 he-ABS town-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-go-PRES
 ‘He goes to town’ K.

The marker of the intransitive subject in (3) immediately precedes the root (R): S-R. In a bivalent intransitive verb, an indirect object marker intervenes between the subject marker and the root (it is *ø*-marked in (4)) – S-IO-R.

The subject marker *ma-/ (me-)* marks the third person (not differentiated for number) in the present indicative. In other tenses and in indicative forms the third person (singular/plural) intransitive subject is *ø*-marked (5-6).

- (5) A-r ø-če-š’t (ø-ča-γ)
 he-ABS S3SG-run-FUT2 (S3SG-run-PERF)
 ‘He will run (he ran)’ A.
- (6) A-χe-r ø-če-š’tə-χ (ø-ča-γe-χ)
 he-PL-ABS S3PL-run-FUT2-PL (S3PL-run-PERF-PL)
 ‘They will run (they ran)’ A.

The plural suffix in (6) is not obligatory. The use of the suffix is an innovation related to the absence of an overt marker (prefix) of the third person intransitive subject. As will be shown below, the nonobligatory third person plural marker *-χ* (A.), *-χe* (K.) may also mark direct and indirect objects.

Table 4.1. *Types of simple monovalent verbs*

(i)	S-ROOT have corresponding bivalent transitive forms	<i>šxe-n</i> ‘eat’ <i>txe-n</i> ‘write, be engaged in writing’ <i>de-n</i> ‘sew, be engaged in sewing’ <i>t’e-n</i> ‘dig, be engaged in digging’
(ii)	S-ROOT have no corresponding transitive forms	<i>səsə-n</i> (A., K.) ‘dig’ <i>g°ameč’ə-n</i> (A.) <i>g°əzeve-n</i> (K.) ‘worry’ <i>lež’e-n</i> (A.), <i>lez’e-n</i> (K.) ‘work’
(iii)	S-ROOT have corresponding bivalent transitive forms; as intrans. occur in both mono- and bivalent uses	<i>k’°e-n</i> (A.) ‘go, walk’ <i>če-n</i> (A.), <i>že-n</i> (K.) ‘run’

4.2.2 Prefixal monovalent verbs

Monovalent transitive verbs are always derived, in contrast to intransitive monovalent verbs, which may be either simple (3-5) or derived (prefixal).

Both transitive and intransitive reflexives are derived with the help of the reflexive prefix *zə-* (*z-*). By adding the reflexive prefix to a bivalent transitive verb (7a) it becomes a monovalent transitive verb (i), as in (7b). A bivalent intransitive verb (8a) is reduced in valency to monovalent one (8b). Reflexive intransitives (ii) usually include the suffix *-žə* (*-ž*) as well.

- (7) a. A-š' a-r ø-ə-thač'ə-y
he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-wash-PERF
‘He washed him’ A.

- b. A-š' z-i-thač'ə-y
he-ERG REFL-S3SG-wash-PERF
‘He washed himself’ A.

- (8) a. A-r a-š' ø-je-plə-y
he-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-look-PERF
‘He looked at him’ A.

- b. A-r ø-ze-plə-žə-y
he-ABS S3SG-REFL-look-REV-PERF
‘He looked at himself’ A.

In contrast to the monovalent transitive (7b), where the ergative third person subject is marked by *i-*, in the monovalent intransitive (8b) the absolutive third person subject is *ø*-marked.

In the third person of the ergative subject the singular and plural are differentiated, whereas the third person (singular and plural) of the absolutive subject is $\emptyset$ -marked. Compare examples (7b) and (9) on the one hand, and (8b) and (10) on the other.

- (9) A- χ e-m z-a-thač'ə-y
 he-PL-ERG REFL-S3PL-wash-PERF
 'They washed themselves' A.
- (10) A- χ e-r $\emptyset$ -ze-plə-ž'ə-yə- χ
 he-PL-ABS S3-REFL-look-REV-PERF-PL
 'They looked at themselves' A.

Differences in the distribution of the transitive and intransitive subjects also show up in the alignment of the prefixes. The prefix of the ergative subject follows the reflexive marker, whereas the prefix of the absolutive subject precedes it. This is particularly clearly shown in the first and second persons, where the markers are overt. cf. (11a-b) and (12a-b).

- (11) a. Se zə-s- χ° ep-a-s'
 I REFL-S1SG-dress-PERF-ASSRT
 'I dressed (myself)' K.
- b. We zə-p- χ° ep-a-s'
 you REFL-S2SG-dress-PERF-ASSRT
 'You dressed (yourself)' K.
- (12) a. Se sə-ze-plə-ž-a-s'
 I S1SG-REFL-look-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'I looked at myself' K.
- b. We wə-ze-plə-ž-a-s'
 you S2SG-REFL-look-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'You looked at yourself' K.

Monovalent reflexive transitive verbs do not follow the normal ergative model, as no direct object in the absolutive case is allowed. As shown in (7) and (9), the subject is marked by the ergative case, in contrast to the intransitive verbs governing their subject in the absolutive case (8).

The personal prefix of the ergative series follows the reflexive marker, which occupies the position of the direct object. In the reflexive intransitive, on the contrary, the personal prefix precedes the reflexive marker.

Reflexive verbs based on three- and four-valent transitive verbs are discussed in the sections 'Bivalent verbs' and 'Trivalent verbs'. None of these allow direct objects in the absolutive case, as this position is occupied by the reflexive. Reflexive transitives thus form defective ergative constructions.

Monovalent intransitive verbs are derived by the reciprocal prefix (iii). This prefix also forms intransitive structures from transitive ones, as illustrated below. The simple transitive clause in (13a) is intransitivized by adding the reciprocal prefix (13b).

- (13) a. A-š' a-r ø-jə-ləy°ə-y
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'He saw him' A.
- b. A-χe-r ø-zəre-ləy°ə-yə-χ
 he-PL-ABS S3PL-RECIP-see-PERF-PL
 'They saw each other' A.

The subject of the reciprocal intransitive form is required to be in the plural. The personal marker is found in the position before the reciprocal prefix:

- (14) De də-zər-o-s'e-ø
 we S1PL-RECIP-DYN-know-PRES
 'We know each other' K.
- (15) Fe fə-zər-o-thele-ø
 you.PL S2PL-RECIP-DYN-strangle-PRES
 'You strangle each other' K.
- (16) C'əχ°-χe-r ø-zər-o-wəč'-ø
 man-PL-ABS S3PL-RECIP-DYN-kill-PRES
 'People kill each other' K.

The subject marker is *ø-* in the third person (13b, 16). Cf. collective nouns like 'people', 'family' and 'group' (17):

- (17) ləp'q'ə-r ø-zərə-y°etə-ž-a-s'
 people-ABS S3SG-RECIP-find-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'The people found each other' K.

Another group of monovalent intransitive verbs are stative verbs like *š'ə-sə-n* (A.), *š'ə-tə-n* (K.) 'stand', *š'ə-lə-n* (A.), *s'ə-lə-n* (K.) 'lie', including the locative prefix (iv). As well as subject, the verb may also take an indirect object (19).

- (18) Wəne-r ø-s'ə-t-ø-s'
 house-ABS S3SG-LOC-stand-PRES-ASSRT
 'The house is standing' K.
- (19) We s'ə-m wə-s'ə-l-ø-s'
 you ground-OERG S2SG-LOC-lie-PRES-ASSRT
 'You are lying on the ground' K.

In these intransitive verbs, unlike simple dynamic verbs (for instance *k'°e-n* (A., K.) 'go, walk', *če-n* (A.), *že-n* (K.) 'run'), the third person subject marker in the present and other tenses is characterized by $\emptyset$ -marking in both the singular and plural (20a-b). The plural suffix *-χe* in the verb (20b) is nonobligatory.

- (20) a. A-r $\emptyset$ -s'ə-s- $\emptyset$ -s' ($\emptyset$ -s'ə-sə-n-s',
 he-ABS S3SG-LOC-sit-PRES-ASSRT S3SG-LOC-sit-FUT-ASSRT
 $\emptyset$ -s'ə-s-a-s')
 S3SG-LOC-sit-PERF-ASSRT
 'He is sitting (will sit, sat)'
- b. A-χe-r $\emptyset$ -s'ə-s- $\emptyset$ -χe-s'
 he-PL-ABS S3PL-LOC-sit-PRES-PL-ASSRT
 ($\emptyset$ -s'ə-sə-n-χe-s', $\emptyset$ -s'ə-s-a-χe-s')
 S3PL-LOC-sit-FUT-PL-ASSRT S3PL-LOC-sit-PERF-PL-ASSRT
 'They are sitting (will sit, sat)' K.

The prefixes marking comitative, causative and local relations are valency-changing (cf. the section 'Bivalent verbs'). However, monovalent verbs may include other prefixes that do not effect the valency (v), for instance marking orientation and potentiality. They are found in different positions in relation to the subject marker in the intransitive and transitive verbs. The structure of the transitive verb is: REFL-OR-JOINTACT-S-ROOT (21-22). In monovalent transitive verbs the orientation prefix *q'(ə)-* is desemantized.

- (21) A-bə zə-q'-i-χ°ep-a-s'
 he-ERG REFL-OR-S3SG-dress-PERF-ASSRT
 'He dressed' K.
- (22) A-bə-re we-re zə-q'ə-zde-f4es'-a-s'
 he-ERG-CRD you-CRD REFL-OR-JOINTACT-S2PL-dry-PERF-ASSRT
 'He and you dried yourselves together' K.

The coordinated subject NPs in (22) *a-bə-re* 'he' and *we-re* 'you' trigger plural subject agreement *f-* 'you (PL)'. The positions of the orientation and joint action prefixes change in relation to the intransitive subject prefix. These prefixes are not characteristic of monovalent reflexive intransitives. In simple monovalent intransitives, for instance *k'°e-n* (A., K.) 'go, walk', the following order of prefixes and root is found: S-OR-JOINTACT-R (23).

- (23) De də-q'ə-zde-k'°a-s'
 we S1PL-OR-JOINTACT-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'We arrived here together' A.

Stative verbs like *š'ə-sə-n* (A.), *s'ə-sə-n* (K.) 'sit' usually include only one of these prefixes, occurring between the subject marker and the local prefix:

- (24) Se sə-qə-s'ə-sə-y
I S1SG-OR-LOC-sit-PERF
'I sat closeby (here)' A.
- (25) Fe fə-zde-s'ə-sə-n-s'
you S2PL-JOINTACT-LOC-sit-FUT1-ASSRT
'You will sit together' K.

Table 4.2. *Types of prefixal monovalent verbs*

(i)	REFL-S-ROOT reflexive verbs derived from trans. vbs by reflexive prefix <i>zə</i> (z-)	<i>z-ə-thač'ə-n</i> 'wash himself'
(ii)	S-REFL-ROOT-(REV) reflexive verbs derived from intrans. vbs by reflexive prefix <i>zə</i> (z-); usually includes suffix -žə	<i>ze-plə-žə-n</i> 'look at himself'
(iii)	S-RECIP- ROOT Intransitive reciprocal verbs	<i>zəre-ləy'ə-n</i> 'see each other'
(iv)	S-LOC-ROOT stative verbs with locative prefix	<i>š'ə-sə-n</i> (A.), 'stand' <i>š'ə-tə-n</i> (K.) 'stand' <i>š'ə-lə-n</i> (A.), <i>s'ə-lə-n</i> (K.) 'lie'
(v)	S-OR-LOC-ROOT monovalent verbs with orient. and locational prefixes	<i>sə-qə-s'ə-sə-n</i> 'sit close by'

The third person singular and plural are $\emptyset$ -marked in monovalent intransitive verbs, both stative and dynamic (26a-b).

- (26) a. A-r $\emptyset$ -q'-o-k'°e- $\emptyset$
he-ABS S3SG-OR-DYN-go-PRES
'He comes here' K.
- b. A-χe-r $\emptyset$ -q'ə-zd-o-k'°e- $\emptyset$
he-PL-ABS S3PL-OR-JOINTACT-DYN-go-PRES
'They are coming here together' K.

Reflexive monovalent intransitives in the first and second person including the version marker follow the model: S-REFL-VS-R (27).

- (27) Wə wə-zə-χ°-o-psele-ž-ø
 you(.ABS) S2SG-REFL-VS-DYN-talk-REV-PRES
 ‘You are talking to yourself’ K.

The third person singular and plural subject markers of monovalent intransitive verbs follow the models of (26a-b). In (27) the subject is directing the action towards himself.

4.2.3 Simple bivalent verbs

Among simple bivalent verbs are such verbs as šχə-n ‘eat’ (A., K.), tχə-n ‘write’, də-n ‘sew’, t’ə-n ‘dig’ (i), that have corresponding simple intransitive forms: šχe-n ‘eat, be engaged in eating’, tχe-n ‘write, be engaged in writing’, de-n ‘sew, be engaged in sewing’, t’e-n ‘dig, be engaged in digging’.

Along with such simple bivalent transitive verbs, there are other transitive verbs that have no intransitive counterparts (ii), as: s’e-n ‘do’ (A., K.), hə-n (A.) ‘carry’, še-n (K.) ‘lead’.

In all simple bivalent transitive verbs the prefixes of the ergative subject and the direct object in the first and second person singular and plural follow the model O-S-R, as in (28), repeated here:

- (28) Se we wə-s-hə-š’t
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-FUT2
 ‘I will carry you’ A.

A specific feature of the Circassian languages is that the third person direct object in the singular and plural is ø-marked (29-30).

- (29) A-š’ a-r ø-ə-š’a-γ
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PERF
 ‘He led him’ A.
- (30) S’ak°e-m dəγ°əz’-χe-r ø-jə-wəč’-a-s’
 hunter-ERG wolf-PL-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The hunter killed the wolves’ K.

In Adyghe there is a new tendency to distinguish the singular and plural of third person direct objects by using the suffix -χ (31).

- (31) A-š’ a-χe-r ø-ə-š’a-γe-χ
 he-ERG he-PL-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PERF-PL
 ‘He led them’ A.

A comparison of (29) and (31) shows that the third person singular direct object is $\emptyset$ -marked in (29), whereas the plural is marked by the suffix in (31).

Among simple bivalent intransitive verbs (iii) are found verbs like *ješe-n*, (A.), *jes'e-n* (K.) 'hunt', *ježe-n* (A., K.) 'read', that have an intransitive subject and an indirect object.

Personal affixes of the first and second person subject and object follow the model S-IO-R, as shown in example (2) (repeated here).

- (32) Se we sə-wə-že-š't
 I you S1SG-IO2SG-wait-FUT2
 'I will wait for you' A.

Other bivalent intransitive verbs (iv) have monovalent and also trivalent counterparts. In this group are found *we-n* (A., K.) 'hit', *le-n* (A., K.) 'jump', *wəp'č'e-n* (A.) *wəp's'e-n* (K.) 'ask':

- (33) a. A-r ma-we- $\emptyset$
 he-ABS S3SG-hit-PRES
 'He hits' K.
- b. A-r a-bə $\emptyset$ -j-o-we- $\emptyset$
 he-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-DYN-hit-PRES
 'He hits him' K.
- c. Se fe sə-v-o-we- $\emptyset$
 I you S1SG-IO2PL-DYN-hit-PRES
 'I hit you' K.

There is a difference between these intransitives (33a-c) and the ones in the first group (*ježe-n* (A.), *jes'e-n* (K.) 'wait', *ješe-n* (A.), *es'e-n* (K.) 'hunt') in that they do not occur in monovalent forms (34).

- (34) *A-r ma-z'e- $\emptyset$
 he-ABS S3SG-wait-PRES
 'He waits' K.

Only sentences like (35a-b) are possible:

- (35) a. A-r a-bə $\emptyset$ -j-o-z'e- $\emptyset$
 he-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PRES
 'He is waiting for him' K.
- b. Se fe sə-v-o-z'e- $\emptyset$
 I you.PL S1SG-IO2PL-DYN-wait-PRES
 'I am waiting for you' K.

Personal prefixes of the absolutive series in the third singular and plural are not overtly marked.

- (36) a. A-r a-bə ø-je-z'-a-s'
 he-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘He waited for him’ K.
- b. A-χe-r a-bə ø-je-z'-a-s'
 he-PL-ABS he-OERG S3-IO3SG-wait-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘They waited for him’ K.

The ø-marking of the third person of the absolutive series is compensated for by the suffix -χ in Adyghe. The suffix -χ marks the plurality of the subject, whereas there is no overt marker in the singular (37a-b).

- (37) a. A-r a-š' ø-je-ža-γ
 he-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PERF
 ‘He waited for him’ A.
- b. A-χe-r a-š' ø-je-ža-γe-χ
 he-PL-ABS he-OERG S3-IO3SG-wait-PERF-PL
 ‘They waited for him’ A.

The occurrence of the plural subject suffix in (37b) is an innovation that is characteristic of the written style.

In Kabardian the contrast between the singular and plural indirect objects is neutralized in various ways, as in shown when comparing the Adyghe and Kabardian examples (38).

- (38) a. Te a-š' t-je-we-ø (t-je-wa-γ)
 we he-OERG S1PL-IO3SG-hit-PRES (S1PL-IO3-hit-PERF)
 ‘We are hitting (we hit) him’ A.
- b. De a-bə d-ø-o we-ø
 we he-OERG S1PL-IO3-DYN-hit-PRES
 (d-je-w-a-s')
 (S1PL-IO3-hit-PERF-ASSRT)
 ‘We are hitting (we hit) him’ K.
- c. Te a-χe-m t-ja-we-ø (t-je-wa-γ)
 we he-PL-OERG S1PL-IO3PL-hit-PRES S1PL-IO3-hit-PERF
 ‘We are hitting (we hit) them’ A.
- d. De a-χe-m d-ø-o-we-ø (d-je-w-a-s')
 we he-PL-OERG S1PL-IO3-DYN-hit-PRES S1PL-IO3-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘We are hitting (we hit) them’ K.

In Adyghe the third person indirect object is marked by the prefix *je-* in the singular (38a) and *ja-* in the plural (38c). In present tense forms Kabardian indirect objects lack overt marking in both the singular and plural. In other tenses the third person marker is *je-*, and is not differentiated for number (38b, d). Cf. the table below.

Table 4.3. *Markers of third person indirect object*

	<i>Adyghe</i>		<i>Kabardian</i>	
	Oblique object		Oblique object	
	PRES	Other tenses	PRES	Other tenses
3SG	<i>je</i>	<i>je</i>	∅	<i>je</i>
3PL	<i>ja</i>	<i>je</i>	∅	<i>je</i>

The lack of any overt marker of the third person indirect object in the present tense in Kabardian (38) is an innovation that may be explained on phonetic grounds. The prefixes *je-* and *ja-* have been assimilated and lost in the position before the dynamic prefix *o-* (*we-*). In other tenses that lack the dynamic prefix, the third person indirect object is marked by the prefix *je-* in both the singular and the plural. Forms like *d-je-w-a-s'* [S1PL-IO3SG-hit-PERF-ASSRT], 'we hit him', *d-ja-w-a-s'* [S1PL-IO3PL-hit-PERF-ASSRT], 'we hit them', where third person indirect objects are contrasted as in Adyghe (38), are in principle also possible in Kabardian, though they are not so frequent. This means that omonymical paradigms have occurred, that do not distinguish the singular and plural of the subject and indirect object in the third person. For instance, the bivalent Kabardian verb may be interpreted as: (a) 'he looked at him', (b) 'he looked at them', (c) 'they looked at him' and (d) 'they looked at them'. Adyghe has retained earlier (more archaic) forms marking number in the third person of both the subject and the indirect object: *je-plə-γ* 'he looked at him' and *ja-plə-γ* 'he looked at them'. Furthermore, in this case Adyghe also uses the suffix *-χ* in the plural, which is a later innovation: *je-plə-γe-χ* 'they looked at him' and *ja-plə-γe-χ* 'they looked at them'.

Regarding the fact that present tense forms in Adyghe retain the prefixes marking the number of the indirect third person object (38), we note that this clearly was influenced by the absence of the dynamic prefix *o-* in this language.

Table 4.4 *Simple bivalent verbs*

(i)	O-S-ROOT simple bivalent transitive verbs (with corresponding monovalent intrans. vbs)	<i>šχə-n</i> ‘eat’ (A., K.) <i>tχə-n</i> ‘write’, <i>də-n</i> ‘sew’ <i>t’ə-n</i> ‘dig’
(ii)	O-S-ROOT simple bivalent transitive verbs (with no corresponding monovalent intrans. vbs)	<i>s’e-n</i> ‘do’ (A., K.) <i>hə-n</i> (A.) ‘carry’ <i>še-n</i> (K.) ‘lead’
(iii)	S-IO-ROOT simple bivalent intransitive verbs (no monovalent and also trivalent counterparts)	<i>ješe-n</i> (A.), <i>jes’e-n</i> (K.) ‘hunt’ <i>ježe-n</i> (A., K.) ‘read’
(iv)	S-IO-ROOT simple bivalent intransitive verbs (have monovalent and also trivalent counterparts)	<i>we-n</i> (A., K.) ‘hit’ <i>le-n</i> (A., K.) ‘jump’ <i>wəp’č’e-n</i> (A.), <i>wəp’s’e-n</i> (K.) ‘ask’

4.2.4 Prefixal bivalent verbs

Bivalent transitives are formed from monovalent intransitives by adding the causative prefix *ye-*, placed between the subject personal marker and the root (i). In the first and second person of bivalent causative verbs the personal prefixes of the ergative subject, the absolutive direct object, the causative prefix and the root follow the pattern: O-S-CAUS-ROOT (39a-b).

- (39) a. *Se we wə-z-ye-k’°e-š’t*
 I you O2SG-S1SG-CAUS-go-FUT2
 ‘I will force/cause you to go’ A.
- b. *L’ə-m a-r ø-jə-ye-k’°a-γ*
 man-ERG he-Abs O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF
 ‘The man forced/caused him to go’ A.

The alignment of the transitive subject and the direct object in a bivalent verb formed on the basis of nominal and adjectival roots by adding the factitive prefix *wə-* coincides with bivalent causatives: O-S-F-ROOT (ii). The dynamic prefix is placed between the markers of the subject and the factitive (40):

- (40) a. *We se sə-b-o-wə-f’ə-c’-ø*
 you I O1SG-S2SG-DYN-F-black-PRES
 (s-b-o-wə-s’x’ent’-ø)
 (O1SG-S2SG-DYN-F-dark.blue-PRES
 ‘You make me black (dark blue)’ K.

Bivalent transitives of this type may also include a causative marker. In such a case the causative marker precedes the factitive marker: O-S-CAUS-F-ROOT (40b).

- (40) b. Fe de də-v-o-ye-wə-f'ej-ø
 you we O1PL-S2PL-DYN-CAUS-F-filthy-PRES
 'You make us filthy', ('You slander/accuse us undeservedly') K.

Bivalent transitives are formed from simple trivalent transitives as a result of reflexivisation (iii). The reflexive marker is placed between the two personal markers: O-REFL-S-ROOT (41):

- (41) a. We se sə-ze-p-tə-n-s'
 you I O1SG-REFL-S2SG-give-FUT1-ASSRT
 'You will give me to yourself' K.
- b. Se we wə-ze-s-t-a-s'
 I you O2SG-REFL-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'I gave myself to you' K.

By reflexivisation, prefixal trivalent transitives may become bivalent transitives. If such a verb includes a locative preverb the morphological alignment will be: O-REFL-LOC-S-ROOT (42).

- (42) We a-bə-χe-m wə-zə-χ-a-š-a-s'
 you he-ERG-PL-ERG O2SG-REFL-LOC-S3PL-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 'They lead you to themselves' K.

Table 4.5 *Prefixal bivalent verbs*

(i)	O-S-CAUS-ROOT from monovalent intransitives + the causative prefix ye-	ye-k'°e-n 'send'
(ii)	O-S-F-(CAUS)-ROOT from monovalent intransitives + the factitive prefix wə-	də-v-ye-wə-f'ej-n 'make filthy' (cf. (40b))
(iii)	O-REFL-(LOC)-S-ROOT reflexivisation of simple trivalent transitives	sə-ze-p-tə-n-s' 'give something to oneself' (cf. translation (41a))

If the reflexive bivalent transitive has been derived from a trivalent verb with a marker for version or reversed action, then the verb follows this pattern of morphological alignment, as in (43).

- (43) We a-bə-χe-m wə-zə-χ°-a-še-ž-a-s'
 you he-ERG-PL-ERG O2SG-REFL-VS-S3PL-lead-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'They led you again for themselves' K.

4.2.5 Simple trivalent verbs

Simple trivalent verbs are found only among transitives (i). Among them are such verbs as A., K. *jetə-n* 'give', A. *ješ'e-n*, K. *jes'e-n* 'sell'. They include personal markers of the ergative subject, the direct object and an indirect object; O-IO-S-ROOT (44a-b).

- (44) a. Se we a-š' w-je-s-tə-γ
 I you he-OERG O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave you to him' A.
- b. We se a-χe-m s-ja-p-tə-γ
 'You gave me to them' A.

A dynamic prefix is placed before the root: O-IO-S-DYN-ROOT (45):

- (45) Fe de fəze-χe-m d-a-v-o-t-ø
 you we woman-PL-OERG O1PL-IO3PL-S2PL-DYN-give-PERS
 'You give us to the women' K.

Kabardian and Adyghe differ in the respect that an indirect object in the 3rd person singular in the present tense is zero marked, as is shown by comparing examples (45) and (46).

- (46) Fe de fəzə-m də-ø-v-o-t-ø
 you we woman-OERG O1PL-IO3SG-S2PL-DYN-give- PRES
 'You give us to the woman' K.

In Adyghe it is the direct object that is zero marked, and this occurs also in bivalent transitives.

- (47) We a-r a-š' ø-je-p-tə-š't
 you he-ABS he-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-FUT2
 'You will give him to him' A.

Plural number of 3rd person direct objects are marked by the final suffix -χ in Adyghe (48).

- (48) We a-χe-r a-š' ø-je-p-tə-š'tə-χ
 you he-PL-ABS he-OERG O3PL-IO3SG-S2SG-give-FUT2-PL
 'You will give them to him' A.

As is shown in (49), a third person indirect object is zero marked in both the singular and plural.

- (49) Fe a-r (/a-χe-r) fəzə-m
 you he-ABS he-PL-ABS woman-OERG
 ø-je-f-t-a-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-S2PL-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'You gave him (them) to the woman' K.

In Kabardian, the difference in marking between the singular and plural of an indirect object may be neutralized (50).

- (50) We a-r (a-χe-r) fəzə-m (fəz-χe-m)
 you he-ABS (he-PL-ABS) woman-OERG (woman-PL-OERG)
 ø-je-p-t-a-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'You gave him (them) to the woman (women)' K.

However, compare (50) and (51).

- (51) *A-bə a-r (a-χe-r) fəzə-m (fəz-χe-m)
 he-ERG he-ABS (he-PL-ABS) woman-OERG (woman-PL-OERG)
 ø-jə-ri-t-a-s'
 O3-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'He gave him (them) to the woman (women)' K.

Example (51) is acceptable only when the indirect object is in the 3rd person singular. Cf. (51) and (52).

- (52) A-bə a-r (a-χe-r) fəzə-m
 he-ERG he-ABS (he-PL-ABS) woman-OERG
 ø-je-ri-t-a-s' (fəz-χe-m
 O3-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT (woman-PL-OERG
 ø-ja-ri-t-a-s')
 O3-IO3PL-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'He gave him (them) to the woman (women)' K.

In (52), a 3rd person direct object is zero marked both in the singular and the plural, whereas number is distinguished in the 3rd person indirect object by the markers *je-*, *ja-*. Such a differentiation is in principle possible in (50) as well, but less so when the transitive subject is a 1st or 2nd person.

Table 4.6 *Simple trivalent verbs*

(i)	O-IO-S-ROOT only transitive verbs	<i>jetə-n</i> 'give' A., K., <i>ješ'e-n</i> A., K. <i>jes'e-n</i> 'sell'
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4.2.6 Prefixal trivalent verbs

Trivalent verbs may include a number of different derivational prefixes. Some of them change the valency of the verb, some do not. Thus, trivalent verbs are formed with prefixes from bivalent verbs as well as tetravalent ones. In trivalent verbs formed with the orientational prefix (i), this prefix is preceded by the direct object and followed by the indirect object: O-OR-IO-S-ROOT (53).

- (53) a. We se a-š' sə-q-je-p-tə-γ
O1SG-OR-IO3SG-S2SG-give-PERF
'You gave me to him' A.
- b. Se s'°e a-χe-m s'°-q-ja-s-tə-γ
you.PL O2PL-OR-IO3PL-S1SG-give-PERF
'I gave you to them' A.

The model used with an indirect object of a transitive verb including a version, comitative or local prefix is the following (ii): O-IO-VS/(COM/LOC)-S-ROOT (54a-c).

- (54) a. Te we a-χe-m w-a-fe-t-š'e-š't
we you he-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-VS-S1PL-lead-FUT2
'We will lead you away for them' A.
- b. Se fe sabəj-χe-m f-a-de-s-še-n-s'
I you.PL child-PL-OERG O2PL-IO3PL-COM-S1SG-carry-FUT-ASSRT
'I will carry you away together with the children' K.
- c. We se a-χe-m s-a-χe-p-š'ə-y
O1SG-IO3PL-LOC-S2SG-lead-PERF
'You lead me out/away from them' A.

This model may be expanded by adding a prefix of orientation and a dynamic prefix: O-IO-OR-VS/(COM/LOC)-S-DYN-ROOT (55).

- (55) Se we ps'as'e-χe-m w-a-qəχ°ə-z-o-še-ø
 I you girl-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-OR-VS-S1SG-DYN-carry-PRES
 'I carry you for the girls' K.

The following model has been expanded by causativation (iii). The causative prefix *ye-* has been inserted immediately before the root: O-OR-IO-VS/(COM)-S-CAUS-ROOT (56).

- (56) A-š' s'°e a-χe-m s'°ə-q-a-f-i-ye-k'°a-y
 he-ERG you.PL he-PL-OERG O2PL-OR-IO3PL-VS-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF
 'He forced you to go for them' A.

A trivalent transitive verb containing reflexive, version/comitative and causative markers is given in the following model (iv): REFL-IO-VS(COM)-IO-S-CAUS-ROOT (57).

- (57) We a-bə a-χe-m
 you he-OERG he-PL-OERG
 z-a-d-je-b-ye-š-a-s'
 REFL-IO3PL-COM-IO3SG-S2SG-CAUS-carry-PERF-ASSRT
 'You forced him to carry yourself together with them' K.

The transitive verb in (57) does not take a direct object (the reflexive); both objects are indirect and marked by the oblique ergative, whereas the transitive subject is in the ergative position. This may be illustrated by substituting the personal pronoun *we* 'you' (which does not distinguish case) for a noun (58).

- (58) Ps'as'e-m l'ə-m fəz-χe-m
 girl-ERG man-OERG woman-PL-OERG
 z-a-də-r-i-ye-š-a-s'
 REFL-IO3PL-COM-IO3SG-S3SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT K.
 'The girl forced the man to lead herself together with women'

A 3rd person direct object of a tivalent transitive verb is marked in the same way as a direct object of a bivalent transitive verb. A 3rd person indirect object is marked differently in basic and prefixal trivalent transitives.

In Adyghe, 3rd person indirect objects of simple trivalent transitives are differentiated in number by the prefixes *je-* (44a) and *ja-* (44b), but in Kabardian *je-* this differentiation may be neutralized and used in both numbers. In prefixal trivalent transitives, zero marking is used in the singular and *a-* in the plural (59a-b).

- (59) a. A-š' we č'alə-m wə-ø-d-i-hə-y
 he-ERG you boy-OERG O2SG-IO3SG-COM-S3SG-carry-PERF
 'He carried you together with the young man' A.
 b. A-š' we č'alə-χe-m w-a-d-i-hə-y
 he-ERG you boy-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-COM-S3SG-carry-PERF
 'He carried you together with the young men' A.

In the position of indirect object, the 3rd person plural marker has an impact on the orientational prefix (cf. section 4.3).

Turning to intransitives, one may note that they only occur as derived, prefixal forms, where the valency has been increased by the addition of markers of local, versional, comitative or other relations (v): S-IO-VS(/COM/LOC)-IO-ROOT (60-61).

- (60) Se we šak'°e-m sə-b-d-je-ža-γ
 I you hunter-OERG S1SG-IO2SG-COM-IO3SG-wait-PERF
 'I waited for the hunter together with you' A.
- (61) De fe wəne-m də-f-χ°-je-pl-a-s'
 we you.PL house-OERG S1PL-IO2PL-VS-IO3SG-look-PERF-ASSRT
 'We looked at the house for you' K.

A trivalent intransitive including two such markers follows the structure: S-OR-IO-VS-IO-ROOT (62).

- (62) Se fe a-bə sə-q'ə-f-χ°-je-plə-n-s'
 I you.PL he-OERG S1SG-OR-IO2PL-VS-IO3SG-look.at-FUT-ASSRT
 'I looked at him for you' K.

The 3rd person of the version (benefactive) or comitative is zero marked in the singular but overtly marked in the plural (63a-b).

- (63) a. We l'ə-m a-š' wə-ø-d-je-wa-γ
 you man-OERG he-OERG S2SG-IO3SG-COM-IO3SG-beat-PERF
 'You beat him together with the man' A.
- b. We l'ə-χe-m a-š' w-a-d-je-wa-γ
 you man-PL-OERG he-OERG S2SG-IO3PL-COM-IO3SG-beat-PERF
 'You beat him together with the men' A.

Table 4.7 *Prefixal trivalent verbs*

(i)	O-OR-IO-S-ROOT transitive verbs formed with the orientational prefix	sə-q-je-p-tə-γ translation cf. (53a)
(ii)	O-IO-VS/(COM/LOC)-S-ROOT transitive verbs including a version, comitative or local prefix	w-a-fe-t-š'e-š't translation cf. (54a)
(iii)	O-OR-IO-VS/(COM)-S-CAUS-ROOT transitive verbs expanded by causativation	s'°ə-q-a-f-i-ye-k'°a-γ translation cf. (56)
(iv)	REFL-IO-VS(COM)-IO-S-CAUS-ROOT transitive verbs containing reflexive, version /comitative and causative markers	z-a-d-je-b-ye-š-a-s' translation cf. (57)
(v)	S-IO-VS(/COM/LOC)-IO-ROOT intransitive verbs expanded by local, version, comitative or other markers	sə-b-d-je-ža-γ translation cf. (60)

In Kabardian (but not in Adyghe) there is no opposition in number in a 3rd person indirect object, as in (49). Such cases of number neutralization in prefixal intransitives are stable compared to simple trivalent transitives.

- (64) Se a-χe-m sabəj-m (sabəj-χe-m)
 I he-PL-OERG child-OERG (child-PL-OERG)
 s-a-χ^o-je-pl-a-s'
 S1SG- IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-look.at-PERF-ASSRT
 'I looked at the child (children) for them (for their sake)' K.

4.2.7 Tetravalent verbs

Transitives and intransitives may be tetravalent only in combination with prefixes that increase the valency of mono-, bi- or trivalent verbs (65).

- (65) A-bə we se a-χe-m
 he-ERG you I he-PL-OERG
 w-a-q'ə-s-χ^o-d-i-ye-k'^o-a-s'
 O2SG-IO3PL-OR-IO1SG-VS-COM-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sent (lit. made go) you together with them for me' K.

The tetravalent transitive verb (i) in (65) is based on the monovalent intransitive *k'e-n* 'go'. By adding the causative prefix to this root you get the transitive *ye-k'e-n* 'make someone go'. The comitative and version prefixes make up trivalent transitive forms *de-ye-k'e-n* 'make him go together with someone' and tetravalent ones (as in (65)). The structure in (65) may be represented as: O-IO-OR-IO-VS-COM-S-CAUS-ROOT.

Example (66) illustrates a tetravalent transitive (ii) based on a bivalent transitive.

- (66) A-š' we se a-χe-m
 he-ERG you I he-PL-OERG
 w-a-fə-z-i-ye-š'a-γ
 O2SG-IO3PL-VS-IO1SG-S3SG-CAUS-lead-PERF
 'He forced me to lead you for them' A.

A tetravalent transitive like the one in (66) marks four persons: the subject, direct object and two indirect objects: O-IO-VS-IO-S-CAUS-ROOT. A tetravalent verb formed on the basis of a trivalent transitive (iii) is shown in (67), corresponding to the simpler pattern O-IO-VS-IO-S-ROOT.

- (67) Se we a-š' a-χe-m
 I you he-OERG he-PL-OERG
 w-a-f-je-s-tə-γ
 O2SG-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave you to him for their sake' A.

The same slot as the version marker in (66-67) may be occupied by the comitative or locative prefix. A locative or an orientational prefix in a tetravalent transitive such as (66-67) does not increase the valency, it only brings about a change in the alignment of morphemes.

In examples (65-67) all four persons are overtly marked – the ergative subject, the direct object and the indirect objects. However, not always are all four persons overtly marked, as shown in (68).

- (68) Se l'ə-m sabəj-r fəzə-χe-m
 I man-OERG child-ABS woman-PL-OERG
 Ø-ja-χ°ə-Ø-Z-O-γa-še-Ø
 O3SG-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-S1SG-DYN-CAUS-lead-PRES
 'I make the man lead the child for the women' K.

In (68) the direct object *sabəj-r* 'child' (in the absolutive) and the indirect object *l'ə-m* 'man' (in the oblique ergative) are zero marked. The zero marking in (68) increases if the 3rd person plural indirect object *fəzə-χe-m* 'woman' is turned into the singular (69).

- (69) Se l'ə-m sabəj-r fəzə-m
 I man-OERG child-ABS woman-OERG
 Ø-Ø-χ°ə-Ø-Z-O-γa-še-Ø
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-IO3SG-S1SG-DYN-CAUS-lead-PRES
 'I make the man lead the child for the woman' K.

Only one of the four persons, the subject, is overtly marked in the tetravalent transitive (69). Zero marking in a tetravalent transitive of the causee (68-69) is characteristic of the present tense in Kabardian. This object (causee) has an overt marker in other tenses in the past and future. As seen from (70), there is no number distinction of the causee in the 3rd person.

- (70) Se l'ə-m (l'ə-χe-m) sabəj-r fəzə-χe-m
 I man-ERG (man-PL-ERG) child-ABS woman-PL-OERG
 Ø-Ø-χ°-je-z-γe-š-a-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-IO3SG-S1SG-CAUS-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 'I make the man/men lead the child for the woman's sake' K.

Tetravalent intransitives (iv) are seen to have four overt person markers less often than transitives do, although in principle, it is possible (and occurs more often in Adyghe than in Kabardian). In (71) markers of the intransitive subject and the three indirect objects combine with orientational, comitative, locative and version prefixes and a root morpheme: S-IO-OR-COM-LOC-IO-VS-IO-ROOT.

- (71) W-a-qə-də-š'ə-s-f-je-ža-γ
 S2SG-IO3PL-OR-COM-LOC-IO1SG-VS-IO3SG-wait-PERF
 'Together with them you waited there for him for my sake' A.

Tetravalent intransitives, in particular those formed on the basis of bivalent intransitives such as *jewe-n* 'hit', *jeplə-n* 'look' etc. are common. However, such verbs do not always have four overt person markers and it is also often the case that the corresponding noun phrases are present in the sentence to give contextual support to the interpretation of the personal markers in the verb (72).

- (72) We (se) abə lə-χe-m ja-γ°əse-w
 you (I) he-OERG man-PL-OERG POSS3PL-companion-ADV
 'Together with the men you hit him for my sake'
 w-a-s-χ°ə-d-je-w-a-s'
 S2SG-IO3PL-IO1SG-VS-COM-IO3SG-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 'Together with the men you hit him for my sake' K.

The comitative indirect object is syntactically related to the adverbial form *ja-γ°əse-w* [POSS3PL-companion-ADV] 'together with them'. This form supports the interpretation of the verb form, but in principle, the sentence in (72) would be acceptable without this adverbial form and with the pronoun *se* 'I' left out. The order of the subject and indirect objects in (72) is motivated by the fact that the subject and the version object are realized as personal pronouns, and the comitative object is in the plural (*lə-χe-m* 'men' in the oblique ergative). Note the change in word order in (73), where the comitative object is in the singular, and also the different morphological pattern: S-IO(comitative obj. marker)-IO(version obj. marker)-VS-COM-IO-ROOT.

- (73) A-r a-bə lə-m ja-γ°əse-w a-bə
 he-ABS he-OERG man-OERG POSS3SG-companion-ADV he-OERG
 ø-ø-ø-χ°ə-d-je-w-a-s'
 S3SG-IO3SG-IO3SG-VS-COM-IO3SG-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 'Together with the man he hit him for his sake' A.

The only overt personal marker in this form is *je-* in the sixth slot, corresponding to the object of the simple verb. A marker of orientation would be inserted between the versional and comitative objects: ø-ø-OR-ø-VS-COM-... (74). The orientational prefix in such constructions does not express its full etymological meaning.

- (74) A-r a-bə lə-m ja-γ°əse-w a-bə
 he-ABS he-OERG man-OERG POSS3SG-companion-ADV he-OERG
 ø-ø-q°ə-ø-χ°ə-d-je-w-a-s'
 S3SG-IO3SG-OR-IO3SG-VS-COM-IO3SG-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 'Together with the man he hit him for his sake' A.

Tetravalent intransitives are characterized by irregularity. (Further discussion of this is found in Kumakhov 1971.)

Table 4.8 *Tetravalent verbs*

(i)	O-IO-OR-IO-VS-COM-S-CAUS-ROOT transitive verb based on monovalent intransitive	w-a-q'ə-s-χ°ə-d-i-ye-k''-a-s' translation cf. (65)
(ii)	O-IO-VS-IO-S-CAUS-ROOT transitive verb based on a bivalent transitive, here including the causative marker	w-a-fə-z-i-ye-š'a-γ translation cf. (66)
(iii)	O-IO-VS-IO-S-ROOT transitive verbs formed on the basis of a trivalent transitive, here including version	w-a-f-je-s-tə-γ translation cf. (67)
(iv)	S-IO-OR-COM-LOC-IO-VS-IO-ROOT intransitive verb including orientational, comitative, locative and version prefixes	w-a-qə-də-š'ə-s-f-je-ža-γ translation cf. (71)

4.2.8 Pentavalent verbs

Pentavalent verbs are usually transitive. They are formed on the basis of tetravalent verbs by adding prefixes that increase the valency of the verb. For instance, in (75) a causative prefix has been added to a simple trivalent transitive ('give') with a version marker ('give' for someone's sake or benefit').

- (75) a. W-a-χ°ə-r-je-z-ye-t-a-s'
O2SG-IO3PL-VS-IO3SG-IO3SG-S1SG-CAUS-give-PERF-ASSRT
'I made him give you to him for their sake' A.

By causativisation an indirect object is added, marked in the last object position. The initial slot in the verbal complex is occupied by the direct object followed by version object and the version marker. Personal pronouns with corresponding personal markers in the verb may be deleted.

- b. w- a- χ°ə- r- je- z- ye- t- ...
O2SG- IO3PL- VS- IO3SG- IO3SG- S1SG- CAUS- give- ...
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Dir.O Vers.O Addr. Causee Subj. ROOT-...
'I made him give you to him for their sake' A.

Pentavalent verbs do not occur as often as other polyvalent verbs. As in other such verbs, the direct object in the 3rd person singular and plural is zero marked. This also applies to version objects and other indirect objects in the 3rd person plural (75-76). Both the Causee and the Addressee in (75-76) are not differentiated for number.

- (76) $\emptyset\text{-}\emptyset\text{-}\chi^{\circ}\text{-r-je-z-}\gamma\text{-t-a-s'}$
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-IO3SG-IO3SG-S1SG-CAUS-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'I made him give you to him for his sake' A.

4.3 Orientational markers

The occurrence of an orientational marker influences the distribution of personal markers in both intransitive and transitive polyvalent verbs. The standard model for a trivalent transitive verb with an orientational marker is: O-OR-IO-S-ROOT (53a-b). When the indirect object occurs in the 3rd person plural a rearrangement of the prefixes takes place (77b).

- (77) a. A-bə se we
 he-ERG I you
 $s\text{-}q'\text{-}\text{ə-b-d-i-}\gamma\text{-k'}^{\circ}\text{-a-s'}$
 O1SG-OR-IO2SG-COM-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'he made me come here together with you' K.
- b. A-bə se a- $\chi\text{-e-m}$
 he-ERG I he-PL-OERG
 $s\text{-}a\text{-}q'\text{-}\text{ə-d-i-}\gamma\text{-k'}^{\circ}\text{-a-s'}$
 O1SG-IO3PL-OR-COM-S3SG-CAUS-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'he made me come here together with them' K.

In the standard model O-OR-IO-S-CAUS-ROOT (77a), the marker of the indirect object IO has moved to the left of the orientational marker in (77b) O-IO-OR-S-CAUS-ROOT. This model has become the norm in such (causative) sentences in Kabardian. Along with this new model, the old standard model is found in other verb types (78).

- (78) A-bə we a- $\chi\text{-e-m}$ w-a- $q'\text{-}\text{ə-ri-t-a-s'}$
 he-ERG you he-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-OR-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 (=wə-q-a-ri-t-a-s')
 (=O2SG-OR-IO3PL-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT)
 'He gave you to them' K.

The co-existence of the old and the new model is characteristic also of tetravalent transitives (79). Both models are in use, but the new model is more productive.

- (79) L'ə-m fe a- $\chi\text{-e-m}$
 man-ERG you.PL he-PL-OERG
 $f\text{-}a\text{-}q'\text{-}\text{ə-s-}\chi^{\circ}\text{-}\text{ə-ri-t-a-s'}$
 O2PL-IO3PL-OR-IO1SG-VS-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 (=fə-q'-a-s- $\chi^{\circ}\text{-}\text{ə-ri-t-a-s'}$)
 (=O2PL-OR-IO3PL-IO1SG-VS-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT)
 'The man gave you (all) to them for my sake' K.

Moving the orientational prefix to the right also has another effect on the set-up of markers in the verb, as shown in (80a-b).

- (80) a. Se we a-bə wə-q'-je-s-t-a-s'
 I you he-OERG O2SG-OR-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'I gave you to him' K.
- b. Se we a-χe-m wə-q'-je-s-t-a-s'
 he-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-OR-(IO3SG)-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
 'I gave you to them' K.

(80a) shows the old and (80b) the new model, where the orientational prefix has been moved to the right. In (80a) the direct object marker immediately precedes the orientational marker and in (80b) it immediately precedes the marker of the indirect object. What is special about example (80b) is that it includes both the marker of the 3rd person indirect object *je-* and the 3rd person plural marker *a-*. From a semantic point of view the prefix *je-* is empty. Its presence in this model may be explained on phonetic principles: it fulfills the function of a linking morpheme between two prefixes, the orientational marker *q'-* and the subject marker *s-*.

The movement of the orientational marker to the right, which leads to a redistribution of morphemes, also takes place in polyvalent intransitives (81-82).

- (81) We s'°əzə-χe-m wə-q-a-de-ča-γ (=w-a-qə-de-ča-γ)
 you woman-PL-OERG S2SG-OR-IO3PL-COM-run-PERF
 'You ran here together with the women' K.
- (82) De we ps'as'e-χe-m
 we you girl-PL-OERG
 de-q'-a-p'-f'ə-de-k'°-a-s' >
 S1PL-OR-IO3PL-IO2SG-VS-COM-go-PERF-ASSRT
 > d-a-q'ə-p'-f'ə-de-k'°-a-s'
 S1PL-IO3PL-OR-IO2SG-VS-COM-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'We came here together with the girls against your will' K.

In these verbs the old model is represented as S-OR-IO-COM-ROOT. After moving the orientational prefix to the right, the markers of the subject and the indirect object appear immediately adjacent to each other: S-IO-OR-COM-ROOT. In Adyghe these two models are functionally equivalent.

In the trivalent verb in (82) the old model S-OR-IO-IO-VS-COM-ROOT is changed into S-IO-OR-IO-VS-COM-ROOT, where the orientational marker has occupied the position between the subject marker and one of the indirect object markers (corresponding to the second indirect object in the old model). In Kabardian the new model has established itself in verbs of this type, at the expense of the old one.

What has been said above in relation to the redistribution of subject and object markers in combination with the orientational marker in examples (77-82) applies when the direct object is in the 1st or 2nd person (77-79) or the intransitive subject (80-82). In the 3rd person the direct object and the intransitive subject are zero marked, which means that the old model is retained (83-84).

- (83) A-r s'°əzə-χe-m ø-q-a-de-ča-γ
 he-ABS woman-PL-OERG S3SG-OR-IO3PL-COM-run-PERF
 (*ø-a-qə-de-ča-γ)
 (*S3SG-IO3PL-OR-COM-run-PERF
 'He ran here together with the women' A.

- (84) A-r we ps'as'e-χe-m
 he-ABS you girl-PL-OERG
 ø-q'-a-p'-f'ə-de-k'°-a-s'
 S3SG-OR-IO3PL-IO2SG-VS-COM-go-PERF-ASSRT
 (*ø-a-q'ə-p'-f'ə-de-k'°-a-s')
 (*S3SG-IO3PL-OR -IO2SG-VS-COM-go-PERF-ASSRT)
 'He came here together with the girls against you will' K.

Oriental prefixes are used in polyvalent verbal paradigms. The orientational marker may partly or completely use its original semantics of orientation. In this process it gains a new meaning related to the functioning of polyvalent verbs, both transitive and intransitive ones.

In all examples discussed above (77-82), the polyvalent verb forms may be used with or without the orientational marker. The picture is somewhat different with polyvalent verbs that are not used without orientational markers. This question has been touched upon in the literature (Kumakhov 1971), but has not been dealt with in depth in Circassian grammar. The specific function of the orientational prefixes is that they turn out to be important components of the subject-object marking paradigm of some polyvalent verbs, influencing the distribution of subject-object markers.

5 Word Order

Basic word order in the Circassian languages is SOV. When different constituents are questioned, the word order changes according to changes in the informational structure. When the subject is questioned (1) the most common word order in the answer is SVO (2), whereas SOV is more marked (3).

- (1) χet $t\chi\acute{a}l\acute{a}-r$ $\emptyset-z\acute{a}-t\chi-a-r?$
 who book-ABS O3SG-REL-write-PERF-ABS
 ‘Who wrote the book?’ K.
- (2) $F\acute{a}z\acute{a}-m$ $\emptyset-j\acute{a}-t\chi-a-s'$ $t\chi\acute{a}l\acute{a}-r$
 woman-ERG O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT book-ABS
 ‘The woman wrote the book’ K.
- (3) $F\acute{a}z\acute{a}-m$ $t\chi\acute{a}l\acute{a}-r$ $\emptyset-j\acute{a}-t\chi-a-s'$
 woman-ERG book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman wrote the book’ K.

In an answer to the general question in (4), where no given information is assumed, the two word orders SOV (5) or OSV (6) are usually found.

- (4) $S\acute{a}t$ $\emptyset-q'\acute{a}-\chi^{\circ}-a-r?$
 what S3SG-OR-be-PERF.PART-ABS
 ‘What happened?’ K.
- (5) $S'ak''e-m$ $d\acute{a}y^{\circ} \acute{a}z'-\emptyset$ $\emptyset-q'-i-w\acute{a}\check{c}'-a-s'$
 hunter-ERG wolf-(ABS) O3SG-OR-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The hunter killed a wolf’ K.
- (6) $F\acute{a}z-\emptyset$ $ps\acute{a}-m$ $\emptyset-j\acute{a}-thel-a-s'$
 woman-ABS river-ERG O3SG-S3SG-strangle-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman drowned in the river’ K.
 (Lit. ‘The river strangled the woman’)

The ergative clause (7) has three unmarked word order variants: OVS (7a), OSV (7b) and SOV (7c).

- (7) a. Sət ø-jə-s''ə-ø-r pxas''e-m?
 what O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES.PART-ABS carpenter-ERG
 ‘What is the carpenter doing?’ K.
- b. Sət pxas''e-m ø-jə-s''ə-ø-r?
 c. Pxas''e-m sət ø-jə-s''ə-ø-r

As shown above, depending on the contrasting relation between S and O, the word order SOV may be marked or one of the neutral word order variants.

5.1 Basic word order SOV

The basic word order in affirmative transitive clauses is SOV. Both animate and inanimate nouns may occur in subject and object position (8-10).

- (8) L'ə-m s''əzə-r ø-je-š'e-ø
 man-ERG woman-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘The man leads the woman’ A.
- (9) S''əzə-m l'ə-r ø-je-š'e-ø
 ‘The woman leads the man’ A.
- (10) Z'ə-m žəgə-r ø-je-ye-w-a-s'
 wind-ERG tree-ABS O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The wind brought down the tree’ K.

In a transitive clause where the S and O are first or second personal pronouns, variation in word order is found. As well as the neutral SOV order, OSV is frequently found as another neutral word order. Moreover, the first and second person pronouns may be deleted, as they are represented by markers in the verb form (11a-b).

- (11) a. (Se) (we) wə-se-hə-ø
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-PRES
 ‘I carry you’ A.
- b. (We) (se) wə-se-hə-ø
 ‘I carry you’ A.

In an ergative clause where S and O are third person personal pronouns, the basic word order coincides with the basic word order SOV with nouns in subject and object position (12a-b).

- (12) a. A-š' a-r ø-ə-ɬeγ°ə-γ
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 ‘He saw him’ A.
- b. A-bə-χe-m a-χe-r ø-q'-a-ɬəx°e-r
 he-ERG-PL-ERG he-PL-ABS O3PL-OR-S3PL-look.for-PRES
 ‘They are looking for them’ K.

Personal/demonstrative third person pronouns are syntactically free in subject and object position, as S (noun or pronouns) is represented in the verb form by an overt marker. O is only zero marked in the verb.

In a sentence with a ditransitive verb and in which S, O, IO are nouns, the preferred word order is S O IO V, as in (13):

- (13) Č'ale-m tχəɬə-r ps'as'e-m ø-ø-ri-tə-γ
 boy-ERG book-ABS girl-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF
 ‘The boy gave the book to the girl’ A.

If S is a personal pronoun in (13), then the alternative neutral word order is found, S IO O V (14):

- (14) Se ps'as'e-m tχəɬə-r ø-je-s-tə-γ
 I girl-OERG book-ABS O3SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 ‘I gave a book to the girl’ A.

Compare also (15), in which S, O or IO are free personal first and second person pronouns.

- (15) a. Se we ps'as'e-m w-je-s-tə-γ
 I you girl-OERG O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 ‘I gave you to the girl’ A.
- b. Se ps'as'e-m we w-je-s-tə-γ
- c. Se we tχəɬə-r ø-we-s-tə-γ
 I you book-ABS O3SG-IO2SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 ‘I gave a book to you’ A.

- (15) d. Se tɣələ-r we ø-we-s-tə-ɣ
 I book-ABS you O3SG-IO2SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave the book to you' A.

Whether personal pronouns are included or deleted in S, O and IO position in clauses with ditransitive verbs depends on the informational structure. For instance, the pronoun in O position in (15c) and IO in (15d) is strongly emphasized. The most marked O and IO position is immediately before the verb. As the personal markers of O and IO are included in the verb, the position immediately preceding or following the verb confers the highest emphasis.

5.1.1 Word order and morpheme order

The neutral constituent order SOV in ergative clauses does not coincide with the alignment of subject and object markers in the transitive verb. As noted in chapter 3, the order of the S and O markers is O-S-V in a transitive verb, whereas the word order in a transitive clause is S, O, V:

- (16) a. We- se- hə- ø
 O2SG- S1SG- carry- PRES
 'I carry you' A.
- b. Se- we- hə- ø
 O1SG- S2SG- carry-PRES
 'You carry me' A.

The morpheme order is rigid; no variation occurs as is sometimes the case at clause level. Thus, the basic word order SOV corresponds to the rigid morpheme order OSV. The neutral word orders in ditransitive clauses are S-O-IO-V, S-IO-O-V (13-14), which occur with O-IO-S-V as the morpheme alignment. Cf. (17a) and (17b).

- (17) a. We-je-s-tə-ɣ
 O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave you to him' A.
- b. S-je-p-tə-ɣ
 O1SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-PERF
 'You gave me to him' A.

We note that other combinations of word order and morpheme alignment occur in intransitive clauses, as shown in (18a-b).

- (18) a. Ps'as'e-r ma-če-ø
 girl-ABS S3SG-run-PRES
 'The girl runs' A.
- b. We ps'as'e-m w-je-že-ø
 you girl-OERG S2SG-IO3SG-wait-PRES
 'You wait for the girl' A.

The basic word order SV in (18a) corresponds to the morpheme alignment SV. The same asymmetry holds in (18b), where the word order is S-IO-V and the morpheme alignment S-IO-V. The subject of (18b) is a personal pronoun and may be deleted. Furthermore, when the subject of a bivalent intransitive is a third person – a noun (19a) or a pronoun (19b) – there is no subject marker in the verb, i.e. it is zero marked.

- (19) a. Ps'as'e-r a-š' ø-je-že-ø
 girl-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PRES
 'The girl waits for him' A.
- b. A-r ps'as'e-m ø-je-že-ø
 he-ABS girl-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PRES
 'He waits for the girl' A.

Thus, the asymmetric relation between the word order and morpheme alignment in transitive clauses corresponds to a symmetric relation in intransitive clauses.

5.1.3 Changes of the word order

Changes of the basic word order may result in frequently used, possible – but – infrequent, and impossible variants. The word order SOV has the variants: SVO, OSV, OVS, VSO, VOS (20).

- (20) a. S'ak'°e-m dəy°əz'ə-r ø-je-wəč'-a-s'
 hunter-ERG wolf-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter killed the wolf' K.
- b. S'ak'°e-m (S) ø-je-wəč'-a-s' (V) dəy°əz'ə-r (O)
 c. Dəy°əz'ə-r (O) s'ak'°e-m (S) ø-je-wəč'-a-s' (V)
 d. Dəy°əz'ə-r (O) ø-je-wəč'-a-s' (V) s'ak'°e-m (S)
 e. ø-je-wəč'-a-s' (V) s'ak'°e-m (S) dəy°əz'ə-r (O)
 f. ø-je-wəč'-a-s' (V) dəy°əz'ə-r (O) s'ak'°e-m (S)

In sentences where personal pronouns in the first or second person occur as the S (21) or O (22), all the word order variants represented in (20) are again possible.

- (21) a. (We) ps'as'e-r ø-p-ɬey°ə-y
 you girl-ABS O3SG-S2SG-see-PERF
 'You saw the girl' A.
- b. (We) (S) ø-p-ɬey°ə-y (V) ø-ps'as'e-r (O)
 c. Ps'as'e-r (O) (we) (S) ø-p-ɬey°ə-y (V)
 d. Ps'as'e-r (O) ø-p-ɬey°ə-y (V) (we) (S)
 e. ø-p-ɬey°ə-y (V) (we) (S) ø-ps'as'e-r (O)
 f. ø-p-ɬey°ə-y (V) ps'as'e-r (O) (we) (S)
- (22) a. Ps'as'e-m (we) w-i-ɬey°ə-y
 girl-ERG you O2SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'The girl saw you' A.
- b. Ps'as'e-m (S) w-i-ɬey°ə-y (V) (we) (O)
 c. (We) (O) ps'as'e-m (S) w-i-ɬey°ə-y (V)
 d. W-i-ɬey°ə-y (V) ps'as'e-m (S) (we) (O)
 e. W-i-ɬey°ə-y (V) (we) (O) ps'as'e-m (S)

The variants SOV, SVO, OSV, OVS, VSO, VOS in (21a) may be reduced to OV and VO, as S in each of the six possible variants is optional. The six variants in (22) may also be reduced to SV, VS, as the O may be deleted in each of the clauses without any changes to the syntactic status, as shown in (23a-d).

- (23) a. Ps'as'e-r ø-p-ɬey°ə-y
 girl-ABS O3SG-S2SG-see-PERF
 'You saw the girl' A.
- b. ø-p-ɬey°ə-y ps'as'e-r
- c. Ps'as'e-m w-i-ɬey°ə-y
 girl-ERG O2SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'The girl saw you'
- d. W-i-ɬey°ə-y ps'as'e-m

There are different views on the syntactic position of heavy subjects or objects. The position of Hawkins (1990) concerning Early Immediate Constituents (EIC) has

both its supporters and opponents. Data from the Circassian languages show that the syntactic weight of S and O varies considerably. This is connected to the polysynthesis of the Circassian verb including subject and object markers and also to the synthesis of words into one due to many monosyllabic roots. Heavy subjects or objects are found both at the beginning of the sentence and at the end.

- (24) a. [Dəy°ase mezə-m ø-q'-i-č'ə-ž-a
yesterday forest-OERG S3SG-OR-LOC-go-REV-PERF.PART
s'ak'°e-šχ°e-m] dəy°əz'ə-r ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
hunter-big-ERG wolf-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
'The big hunter who came back yesterday from the forest killed the wolf'
K.
- b. Dəy°əz'ə-r [dəy°ase mezə-m ø-q'-i-č'ə-ž-a s'ak'°e-šχ°e-m]
ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
- c. ø-jə-wəč'-a-s' dəy°əz'ə-r [dəy°ase mezə-m
ø-q'-i-č'ə-ž-a s'ak'°e-šχ°e-m]

Compare also (25a-c) with a heavy object:

- (25) a. S'ak'°e-m [məzə-m ø-q'-i-č'ə-ø-w
hunter-ERG forest-OERG S3SG-OR-LOC-go-PRES-GER
di-žem zaq'°e-r ø-zə-šχ-a
POSS1PL-cow.(ABS) only-ABS O3SG-REFL-eat-PERF
dəy°əz'ə-r ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
wolf-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF-ASSRT
'The hunter killed the wolf which came from the forest and devoured our
only cow' K.
- b. [Mezə-m ø-q'-i-č'ə-ø-w di-žem zaq'°e-r
ø-zə-šχ-a-ø dəy°əz'ə-r] s'ak'°e-m ø-jə-wəč'-a-s'
- c. ø-jə-wəč'-a-s' s'ak'°e-m [məzə-m ø-q'-i-č'ə-ø-w
di-žem zaq'°e-r ø-zə-šχ-a-ø dəy°əz'ə-r]

Among the clauses with heavy S or O there are more preferable and less preferable variants. For instance, in (24-25) examples (24a-b) and (25a-b) are the most preferable.

5.2 Proper nouns as subject or object

As proper nouns are not marked for absolutive or ergative case, ergative clauses with such a subject or object present a special case. Rigid word order is characteristic of such clauses. If the basic word order is changed (26a-b), there is also a change in meaning:

- (26) a. Roze- $\emptyset$ Line- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 Roza-(ERG) Lina-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘Rosa leads Lina’ K.
- b. Line- $\emptyset$ Roze- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 Lina-(ERG) Roza-(ABS) O3SSG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘Lina leads Rosa’ K.

The rigid word order in (26a-b) applies only to S, O. The transitive verb may appear initially or between S and O. In either position, moving the V towards the beginning of the clause implies greater contrast to the S and O, as is shown in (27a-b).

- (27) a. Roze- $\emptyset$ (S) $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$ (V) Line- $\emptyset$ (O)
- b. $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$ (V) Roze- $\emptyset$ (S) Line- $\emptyset$ (O) ‘Rosa leads Lina’

In (27a) V occurs between S and O, and in (27b) initially. The important factor in determining the grammatical relations is the SO order; the position of the V has no impact.

In the West Circassian dialects Bzhedukh and Shapsug, exceptions are found from the norm of zero marking for the absolutive/ergative opposition in proper nouns. In these dialects it is possible to change the basic SOV order in ergative clauses like (26) and (27). Compare, for instance, the Bhedukh dialect, where proper nouns ending in consonants are marked by - $\emptyset$ in the ergative case (28).

- (28) Jəshaq- $\emptyset$ Hazəret- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -je-š'e- $\emptyset$
 Iskhak-(ABS) Hazret-ERG O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘Hazret leads Iskhak’ A.

5.2.1 Ergative and absolutive markers and change in the SOV order

In proper nouns the ergative marker -*m* and the absolutive marker -*r* (29a-b) are facultative (Kumakhov 1971) both on S and O.

- (29) a. Roze-(m) Line-(r) $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 Roza-ERG Lina-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘Rosa leads Lina’ K.
- b. Line-(m) Roze-(r) $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 Lina-ERG Roza-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 ‘Lina leads Rosa’ K.

When the basic and neutral word order SOV is changed for communicative purposes (30a-b) the markers *-m* and *-r* are used.

- (30) a. Line-(r) Roze-m $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 ‘Roza leads Lina’ K.
- b. Roze-r Line-(m) $\emptyset$ -je-še- $\emptyset$
 ‘Lina leads Roza’ K.

Such a use of the markers *-m*, *-r* does not show local and regional restrictions as does the use of the ergative marker *-ə* in the Western Circassian dialects. Compare the following examples where the proper nouns represent different phonetic structures (31-33).

- (31) Mose-r Hise-m $\emptyset$ -ə-š'a-γ
 Mosa-ABS Gisa-ERG O3SG-S3SG-lead-PERF
 ‘Gisa lead Musa’ A.
- (32) Werzemežə-r Sawserəq°e-m $\emptyset$ -ə-l'əγ°ə-γ
 Orzemej-ABS Sasruko-ERG O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 ‘Sasruko saw Orzemej’ A.
- (33) Muratə-r Həmidə-m $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t
 Murat-ABS Hemid-ERG O3SG-S3SG-know-IMPF
 ‘Hemid knew Murat’ K.

As the examples show, the markers *-m*, *-r*, which are used facultatively in the basic word order, take on a distinctive (relevant) function when the word order is changed from SOV to OSV. It is even sufficient that one of the case markers is present when the basic SOV order is changed. In the presence of the ergative marker *-m* the SOV order shows all possible variants:

- (34) a. Hemid- $\emptyset$ Murat- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t
O3SG-S3SG-know-IMPF
- b. Həmid- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t Murat- $\emptyset$
- c. $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t Hemid- $\emptyset$ Murat- $\emptyset$
- d. Murat- $\emptyset$ Hemidə-m $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əy°-t
- e. Murat- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t Hemidə-m
- f. $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ°-t Murat- $\emptyset$ Hemidə-m
'Hemid knew Murat' K.

Due to the fact that S precedes O in (34a-c), the grammatical functions are identified without any additional case marking. The orders found in the three following examples (34d-f) differ from the former and call for ergative marking on the subject in order to maintain the same grammatical functions. The absence of the ergative marker *-m* in these variants is not possible without a change in their grammatical status; cf. (35a-c) instead of (34d-f):

- (35) a. Murat- $\emptyset$ Hemid- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ^o-t
 b. Murat- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jəc'əχ^o-t Hemid- $\emptyset$
 c. $\emptyset$ -jə-c'əχ^o-t Murat- $\emptyset$ Hemid- $\emptyset$
 'Murat knew Hemid' K.

The variants (35a-c) differ from (34d-e) in the absence of the ergative marker. That appears to be sufficient for the S and O to change their grammatical functions in the clause.

The absolutive case marker plays a similiar role, as seen in examples (36a-c) and (37a-c):

- (36) a. Muratə-r Hemid-ø ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t
 b. Muratə-r ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t Hemid-ø
 c. ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t Muratə-r Hemid-ø
 'Hemid knew Murat'
- (37) a. Murat-ø Hemid-ø ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t
 b. Murat-ø ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t Hemid-ø
 c. ø-jə-c'əχ^o-t Murat-ø Hemid-ø
 'Murat knew Hemid'

The contrast between (36a-c) and (37a-c) depends only on the absence versus presence of the marker *-r* in the direct object position (O).

In cases where the syntactic relations between the constituents remain in different word order variants due to the ergative (*-m*) or absolutive (*-r*) marking, these suffixes carry syntactically distinctive functions, although there are differences of a more contrastive kind between them. This is why the ergative marker *-m* in (34d-f) – in allowing the direct object to appear before the subject (which is impossible in the absence of the ergative marker) – could also be considered a contrastive marker. This is illustrated by comparing the basic word order SOV in (34a) to OSV in (34d), OVS in (34e) and VOS in (34f), i.e. the variants where the ergative subjects are marked with the *-m* suffix. The same could be said about the variants OSV (36a), OVS (36b), VOS (36c), where the absolutive marker *-r* allows the direct object to appear before the ergative subject (which also is impossible in the absence of the absolutive marker). In other words, there is an interplay between the ergative marker *-m* and absolutive *-r* that allows for different S and O positions, maintaining the syntactic relations of the constituents corresponding to the basic word order SOV. Finally, it should be noted that marking of the definite/indefinite contrast is not relevant for proper nouns due to their semantic character.

5.2.2 Family names as subject or object in the ergative clause

In clauses with family names as subject and object one factor that has to be taken into account is number. The following examples show such clauses with singular and plural family names. In (39), where S and O occur in the plural, changes in the SO order determines the syntactic status in the clause.

- (38) S'oženə-m Daurə-r
 Shogen-ERG Daur-ABS
 ø-q'-i-ye-deʔ°-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-listen-PERF-ASSRT
 'Shogen persuaded Daur'

- (39) S'ožen-χe-ø Daur-χe-ø
 Shogen-PL-(ERG) Daur-PL-(ABS)
 ø-q'-a-ye-deʔ°-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-S3PL-CAUS-listen-PERF-ASSRT
 'Shogen's family persuaded Daur's family' K.

In (40) it would be possible for V to occur initially or between S and O, without changing the basic grammatical relations in the clause.

- (40) Daur- χ e- $\emptyset$ S'ožen- χ e- $\emptyset$
 Daur-PL-(ERG) Shogen-PL-(ABS)
 $\emptyset$ -q'-a- χ e-deʔ°-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-S3PL-CAUS-listen-PERF-ASSRT
 'Daur's family persuaded Shogen's family'

However, it is only with the help of the case markers that it is possible to move the subject and object to other positions, maintaining their syntactic functions. Example (41), a variant of (40) with its rigid word order, allows the variants SOV and OSV due to the overt absolutive marker.

- (41) S'ožen- χ e-r Daur- χ e-(m) $\emptyset$ -q'-a- χ e-deʔ°-a-s'
 'Daur's family persuaded Shogen's family'

Such word order is possible in (42), where the family name in S and O positions occur in the singular. In contrast to (41), the ergative marker on S in (42) is not optional.

- (42) Daurə-r S'oženə-m $\emptyset$ -q'-i- χ e-deʔ°-a-s'
 'Shogen persuaded Daur'

Either the ergative or the absolutive marker has to be present to uniquely determine the grammatical function of the two NPs. In (41), the ergative marker on S is optional, and at the same time the absolutive marker on O is obligatory. Conversely, if the absolutive marker on O is optional, then the ergative marker on S is obligatory (43).

- (43) S'ožen- χ e-(r) Daur- χ e-m $\emptyset$ -q'-a- χ e-deʔ°-a-s'
 'Daur's family persuaded Shogen's family' K.

When the full name is used (44), composed of both given name and family name, the word order model of proper nouns is used. Note the order of the given name and the family name; it is the family name that occurs initially, followed by the given name.

- (44) S'ožen- $\emptyset$ Hesən- $\emptyset$ Daur- $\emptyset$ Rašid- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -q'-i- χ e-deʔ°-a-s' (SOV)
 'Hesen Shogen persuaded Rashid Daur' K.

O may occur in the rightmost position (SVO), and V in the leftmost (VSO). It is not possible for O to be placed before S. Cf. (45a-e) corresponding to (44):

- (45) a. S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s' Dawər-ø Rašid-ø (SVO)
 'Hesen Shogen persuaded Rashid Daur' K.
- b. ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s' S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø Dawər-ø Rašid-ø (VSO)
- c. *Dawər-ø Rašid-ø S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s'
- d. *Dawər-ø Rašid-ø ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s' S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø
- e. *ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s' Dawər-ø Rašid-ø S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø

If S or O are supplied with case markers then (45c-d) will be acceptable, as shown in (46a-b). It is enough that either the ergative marker *-m* (46a) or the absolutive marker *-r* (46b) is present.

- (46) a. Dawər-ø Rašid-ø S'ožen-ø Hesēnə-m ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s'
 'Hesen Shogen persuaded Rashid Daur'
- b. Dawər-ø Rašidə-r ø-q'-i-ye-deŋ°-a-s' S'ožen-ø Hesēn-ø

Word order in clauses with a borrowed family name differs from word order with Circassian family names.

- (47) a. Ivanov-ø Petrov-ø ø-jə-ŋeŋ°-a-s'
 Ivanov-(ERG) Petrov-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'Ivanon saw Petrov'
- b. Mirske-m Sosnovske-r ø-jə-ŋeŋ°-a-s'
 Mirsky-ERG Sosnovsky-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'Mirsky saw Sosnovsky' K.

In (47a) the borrowed family names follow the same word order as Circassian surnames. Names such as Ivanov and Petrov may take the case markers in S and O positions. This is particularly characteristic of Adyghe. Cf. (48) instead of (47a).

- (48) Ivanovə-(m) Petrovə-r ø-jə-ŋeŋ°-a-s'
 'Ivanov saw Petrov' A.

The case markers of S and O are optional in (48). However, if the word order diverges from the basic word order (49a-b), the markers *-r* and *-m* take on distinctive functions for S and O.

- (49) a. Petrovə-r Ivanovə-m ø-ə-leγ°ə-γ
 Petrov-ABS Ivanov-ERG O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'Ivanov saw Petrov' A.
- b. Petrov-ø Ivanov-ø ø-ə-leγ°ə-γ
 'Petrov saw Ivanov' A.

In this respect borrowed family names in Adyghe are similar to given names, as they do not take case markers in clauses with basic SOV word order.

The differences in word order in (47a) and (47b) are related to the phonetic structure of these borrowed family names. The last syllable is stressed in these names (Ivanov, Petrov). In family names such as Mirsky and Sosnovsky, where the first or second syllable is stressed, the last syllable undergoes considerable phonetic changes in S and O positions: the last syllable *-y* (*-ij*) changes into the vowel *-e*, which in turn has consequences for case marking. It should be noted that case marking of non-Circassian family names shows considerable variation, which is reflected in possible word order variation (for more details, see Kumakhov 1971).

Some other types of borrowed proper names follow the same model as borrowed family names; cf. for instance, names of sport teams, as in (50).

- (50) Spartak-ø Dinamo-ø ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø
 'Spartak invites Dynamo' K.

Example (50) is used with *ø*-marking on O in the basic word order, even if stress falls on the last syllable. The presence of a case marker on S and O does not change their syntactic status (51a-c).

- (51) a. Spartakə-m Diname-r ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø
 b. Spartakə-m Dinamo-ø ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø
 c. Spartak-ø Diname-r ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø
 'Spartak invites Dynamo' K.

Word order variants of SOV requires case markers on both of S and O, or on one of them. The case marking is thus distinctive: the OSV variant in (52a-b) corresponds to (50-51).

- (52) a. Diname-r Spartak-ø ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø
 b. Dinamo-ø Spartakə-m ø-q'ə-re-γe-blaγe-ø K.

5.3 The OSV word order in the ergative clause

Along with the basic word order SOV, the order OSV also occurs as a neutral, but semantically restricted, word order. It is connected both to the agent and to the transitive verb (53-56):

- (53) Sabəj-r psə-m ø-ə-thala-γ
 child-ABS water(river)-ERG O3SG-S3SG-choke-PERF
 ‘The child drowned’, Lit. ‘The water/river choked the child’ A.
- (54) S'°əzə-r šəble-m ø-ə-wəč'ə-γ
 woman-ABS lightning-ERG O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF
 ‘The lightning killed the woman’ A.
- (55) γave-r dəγe-m ø-jə-səž-a-s'
 harvest-ABS sun-ERG O3SG-S3SG-burn-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The sun burned (destroyed) the harvest’ K.
- (56) ʔes'ə-r wəzə-m ø-jə-h-a-s'
 cattle-ABS illness-ERG O3SG-S3SG-carry-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The illness took away (destroyed) the cattle’ K.

The word order OSV is found in ergative clauses with transitive verbs of a certain semantic type: *thele-n* ‘choke’, *γel'e-n* ‘kill’, *wəč'ə-n* ‘kill’, *jəsə-n*, *jə-səžə-n* ‘burn, kill’ *hə-n* ‘take away’, among others. Subjects of transitives with such semantics may be characterized as agentive forces: *šəble*, *s'əble* ‘lightening’ < God of thunder and lightening, *təγe*, *dəγe* ‘sun’, *psə* ‘water, river’, *wəzə*, *wəz* ‘sickness’ etc.

It is important to note that this OSV word order is just as neutral as the more common SOV, but it is semantically restricted. In contrast to SOV, the OSV order corresponds to the morpheme order in the transitive verb (as noted above, the SOV order is the reverse of the transitive morpheme order, cf. (16a-b)).

5.4 Word order changes in ditransitive clauses

The basic word order in ditransitive clauses is S-O-IO-V. However, the lexical choice of subject and objects may effect this order. When 1st and 2nd personal pronouns are found in the subject and indirect object position (57), they precede the direct object in the most neutral order: S-IO-O-V.

- (57) Se we tχəɫə-r ø-we-s-tə-γ
 I you book-ABS O3SG-IO2SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave to you a book' A.

A change from S-IO-O-V (57) to S-O-IO-V (58) has a contrastive effect, in that the order S-O-IO-V is more marked.

- (58) Se tχəɫə-r we ø-we-s-tə-γ
 I book-ABS you O3SG-IO2SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave to you the book' A.

This should be compared with (59) where the direct object is 2nd person. Here the basic word order S-O-IO-V.

- (59) Se we ps'as'e-m w-je-s-tə-γ
 I you girl-OERG O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF
 'I gave you to the girl' A.

Compare this to the more marked order in (60), where the indirect object precedes the direct object.

- (60) Se ps'as'e-m we w-je-s-tə-γ
 'I gave you to the girl' A.

There is great word order variation in ditransitive clauses. At the same time, in some instances there are important restrictions (61).

- (61) L'ə-m tχəɫə-r s'əzə-m ø-ø-ri-tə-γ
 man-ERG book-ABS woman-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF
 'The man gave the book to the woman' A.

A change from the basic word order S-O-IO-V (61) to another order is connected with a change of the communicative meaning of the constituents (but not their grammatical function). For instance, the direct object may be moved either to the beginning or to the end of the clause: O-S-IO-V, S-IO-V-O. The verb may also be placed at the beginning of the clause V-S-O-IO or between the subject or either of the two objects: S-V-O-IO, S-V-IO-O.

However, both the objects or the indirect object may not occur initially:

- (62) a. IO-S-O-V: *s'əzə-m l'ə-m tχəɫə-r ø-ø-ri-tə-γ
 b. IO-O-S-V: *s'əzə-m tχəɫə-r l'ə-m ø-ø-ri-tə-γ

- (62) c. O-IO-S-V: *tχəɬə-r s'əzə-m l'ə-m ø-ø-ri-tə-γ
 'The man gave the book to woman' A.

As seen from these orders, the verb and the direct object have greater freedom of placement, but there is a restriction on the order of the subject immediately preceding IO.

Different factors influence the possible word order variation. In (61) the fixed positions of S and IO are determined by the fact that their case markings coincide phonetically: *-m* marks both the ergative subject and the indirect object. Due to the unambiguous marking (*-r*) of the direct object it has more freedom of movement. The same observations apply to the personal pronouns in subject, direct and indirect object position in (63).

- (63) A-š' a-r mo-š' ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 he-ERG he-ABS that-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-FUT2
 'He will give him to that one' A.

The positions of S and IO are fixed as the marker *-š'* appears both on the ergative subject and the indirect object. The direct object may occur at the beginning or end of the clause without any influence on the grammatical relations in the clause (64).

- (64) a. A-r a-š' mo-š' ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 b. A-š' mo-š' a-r ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 'He will give him to that one' A.

However, the variants in (65) are not possible with the same meaning as in (63).

- (65) a. *A-r (O) mo-š' (IO) a-š' (S) ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 b. *mo-š' (IO) a-š' (S) a-r (O) ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 c. *mo-š' (IO) a-r (O) a-š' (S) ø-ø-ri-tə-š't
 'He will give him to that one' A.

The word order restrictions on S and IO disappear when they are morphologically differentiated. The variants IO-S-O-V, IO-O-S-V, O-IO-S-V are possible, if S or IO are used in the plural (66-67), and thus being differentiated.

- (66) a. IO-S-O-V:
 S'əzəχe-m l'ə-m tχəɬə-r ø-a-ri-tə-γ
 woman-PL-OERG man-ERG book-ABS O3SG-IO3PL-S3SG-give-PERF
 'The man gave the book to the women' A.

- (66) b. IO-O-S-V: $s^{\circ}əzə-χe-m$ $tχələ-r$ $l'ə-m$ $ø-a-ri-tə-γ$
 c. O-IO-S-V: $Tχələ-r$ $s^{\circ}əzə-χe-m$ $l'ə-m$ $ø-a-ri-tə-γ$
- (67) a. IO-S-O-V:
 $s^{\circ}əzə-m$ $l'ə-χe-m$ $tχələ-r$ $ø-ø-ra-tə-γ$
 woman-OERG man-PL-ERG book-ABS O3SG-IO3SG-S3PL-give-PERF
 'The men gave the book to the woman'
- b. IO-O-S-V: $s^{\circ}əzə-m$ $tχələ-r$ $l'ə-χe-m$ $ø-ø-ra-tə-γ$
 c. O-IO-S-V: $Tχələ-r$ $s^{\circ}əzə-m$ $l'ə-χe-m$ $ø-ø-ra-tə-γ$ A.

The variants IO-S-O-V, IO-O-S-V, O-IO-S-V are allowed as the plural marking is shown in the verbal marking as well. (68) supplies a parallel example with personal pronouns instead of nouns. The plurality of the indirect object is marked not only on the noun but also in the verbal prefix.

- (68) a. A-r $mo-χe-m$ $a-š'$ $ø-a-ri-tə-š't$
 he-ABS that-PL-OERG he-ERG O3SG-IO3PL-S3SG-give-FUT2
 'He will give him to them' A.
 b. $Mo-χe-m$ $a-š'$ a-r $ø-a-ri-tə-š't$
 c. $Mo-χe-m$ a-r $a-š'$ $ø-a-ri-tə-š't$ A.

Word order is severely restricted in ditransitive clauses with nouns that do not differentiate case in subject and object positions – S-O-IO-V.

- (69) Murat- $ø$ Nazir- $ø$ Aslen- $ø$ $ø-ø-χ^{\circ}-i-še-nu-s'$
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-S3SG-lead-FUT-ASSRT
 'Murat will lead Nazir to Aslan' K.

The basic word order S-O-IO-V allows only for the verb to move into positions other than the final one, resulting in the variants S-O-V-IO, S-V-O-IO, V-S-O-IO:

- (70) a. Murat Nazir- $ø$ $ø-ø-χ^{\circ}-i-še-nu-s'$ Aslen- $ø$
 O3SG-IO3SG-VS-S3SG-do-FUT-ASSRT
 'Murat will lead Nazir to Aslan' K.
 b. Murat $ø-ø-χ^{\circ}-i-še-nu-s'$ Nazir- $ø$ Aslen- $ø$
 c. $ø-ø-χ^{\circ}-i-še-nu-s'$ Murat- $ø$ Nazir- $ø$ Aslen- $ø$ K.

As has been shown earlier with other types of noun, the word order becomes less strict when ergative (*-m*) and absolutive (*-r*) marking is introduced (71).

- (71) a. Nazirə-r Murat-ø Aslen-ø ø-ø-χ°-i-še-nu-s'
O3SG-IO3SG-VS-S3SG-do-FUT-ASSRT
b. Muratə-m Aslenə-m Nazir-ø ø-ø-χ°-i-še-nu-s'
'Murat will lead Nazir to Aslan' K.

In (71) both the case marking and the word order play a role in maintaining the same grammatical relations as in (70). The direct object is marked with the absolutive case in (71a). The subject in (71b) is case marked, and the *-m* marker on *Aslenə-m* signals that this is the indirect object, even if it precedes the other object. If this case marker is removed (72) *Aslenə-ø* is interpreted as the direct object, i.e. the grammatical relations would be assigned differently.

- (72) Muratə-m Aslen-ø Nazir-ø ø-ø-χ°-i-še-nu-s'
O3SG-IO3SG-VS-S3SG-do-FUT-ASSRT
'Murat will lead Aslan to Nazir' K.

When heavy NPs occur in subject and direct object position with ditransitive verbs the same applies as with transitive ones (cf. 24-25). A heavy indirect object, on the other hand, may be placed in the beginning, middle or end of the clause. Example (73) illustrates the model S-O-IO-V, but may allow as well S-IO-O-V, IO-S-O-V, S-O-V-IO.

- (73) Murat-ø tχələ-r [dəy°ase di-wəne-m
Murat-(ERG) book-ABS yesterday POSS1PL-home-OERG
ø-q'a-k°e-ø-w k°edre
S3SG-OR-go-PRES-GER long.time
ø-q'ə-ve-psale-ø-w ø-s'əs-a ps'as'e-m]
S3SG-OR-IO2PL-tell-PRES-GER S3SG-sit-PERF girl-OERG
ø-jə-ri-t-a-s'
O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
'Murat gave the book to the girl who came yesterday to our home and sat and talked for a long time to you' K.

5.5 Word order and *jež'*, *jezə* '(s/he) herself/himself'

The syntactic position of the pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* '(s/he) herself/himself' differs according to different factors, as shown below.

- (74) a. jež' pxas'e-m wəne-r ø-je-s'ə-ø
himself carpenter-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES
'The carpenter himself builds the house' A.

- (74) b. A-š' jež'ə-m pxas''e-r ø-ə-ɬey°ə-γ
 he-ERG himself-ERG carpenter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'He himself saw the carpenter' A.

The word order in (74) follows the basic model SOV. The variants SVO, OSV, OVS, VSO, VOS are possible without any changes in the grammatical relations. In (74a) the pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* '(he) himself' occupies the preposition in relation to the noun, and in (74b) it is postposed.

The case marker *-m* on the pronoun in (74b) shows dialectal variation: the Bzhedukh dialect has *ø*-marking instead of the *-m*. Cf. the Bzhedukh example (75) corresponding to (74b).

- (75) A-š' jež'-ø pxas''e-r ø-ə-ɬey°ə-γ
 he-ERG himself carpenter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'He himself saw the carpenter' A.

However, (75) may also be interpreted with the same meaning as (76). Here, the pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* '(he) himself' aligns with the object, i.e. with the noun *pxas''e-r* 'carpenter' in object position.

- (76) A-š' jež'-ø pxas''e-r ø-jə-ɬey°ə-γ
 'He saw the carpenter himself' A.

Kabardian does not allow two interpretations of the clause corresponding to (75), as the pronoun in this position is used only with the ergative case marker *-m* (77).

- (77) a. A-bə jezə-m pxas''e-r ø-jə-ɬey°-a-s'
 he-ERG himself-ERG carpenter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'He himself saw the carpenter' K.

- b. *'He saw the carpenter himself'

In the subject position the preposed pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* is closely tied to the head noun (74a), i.e. neither O nor V may intervene. In contrast to this, a postposed *jež'*, *jezə* may be in a disjunct position with respect to its head nominal: compare (78a-b) in the same meaning as (77a).

- (78) a. A-bə px'as''e-r jezə-m ø-jə-ɬey°-a-s'
 b. A-bə px'as''e-r ø-jə-ɬey°-a-s' jezə-m
 'He himself saw the carpenter'

- (78) c. *Jezə pxas''e-r a-bə ø-jə-ley°-a-s'
 d. *Jezə pxas''e-r ø-jə-ley°-a-s' a-bə K.
 'He himself saw the carpenter'

The variants (78c-d) are acceptable when interpreted as 'He saw the carpenter himself'. However, in the object position the pronoun *jež*, *jezə* appears in a fixed position with relation to the head noun, as shown in (79a-b).

- (79) a. Jezə px'as''e-r a-bə ø-jə-ley°-a-s'
 'He saw the carpenter himself' K.
 b. *px'as''e-r jezə-r a-bə ø-jə-ley°-a-s'

As noted above, the 1st and 2nd personal pronouns are usually left out in subject and object position as person and number is clearly marked on the verb. When the personal pronouns in 1st and 2nd person are modified by *jež*, *jezə* they may not be freely left out in subject and object position. Word order restrictions are also placed on the combinations of *jež'*, *jezə* and the 1st and second personal pronouns – compare orders in (80) and (81).

- (80) a. Se jezə-m wəne-r ø-s-s''-a-s'
 I myself-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S1SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'I myself built the house' K.
 b. *jezə-m sə wəne-r ø-s-s''-a-s'
- (81) a. S'ak''e-m se jezə-r s-i-ley°-a-s'
 hunter-ERG I myself-ABS O1SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 b. *S'ak''e-m jezə-r se s-i-ley°-a-s'
 'The hunter saw me' K.

The preposed *jež'*, *jezə* are not acceptable in (80b) and (81b). This changes when the first and second personal pronouns are replaced with nouns (82a-b) or personal-demonstrative pronouns in the third person (83).

- (82) a. Jezə l'ə-m wəne-r ø-jə-s''-a-s'
 himself man-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'The man himself built the house'
 b. S'ak''e-m l'ə-r jezə-r ø-jə-ley°-a-s' (jezə l'ə-r)
 hunter-ERG man-ABS himself-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter saw the man himself' K.

Compare also the personal-demonstrative pronoun in the third person in the S and O position.

- (83) a. A-bə jezə-m (jezə-m a-bə) wəne-r ø-jə-s''-a-s'
 he-ERG himself-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'He himself built the house'
- b. S'ak''e-m a-r jezə-r (jezər ar) ø-jə-ley''-a-s'
 'The hunter saw him (himself)' K.

The pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* 'self' occurs in attributive position in both subject and object position. However, *jež'*, *jezə* are also used as free pronouns in subject and object position. When *jež'*, *jezə* are case marked there is much word order variation. In some dialects the pronoun *jež'*, *jezə* is used without case marking, and consequently there are heavy word order restrictions. In Bzhedukh, for instance, examples (84) and (85) may be interpreted in different ways due to the absence of the case marker.

- (84) Jež' pxas''e-r ø-ə-ley''ə-γ
 himself-ERG carpenter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 a. 'He himself saw the carpenter'
 b. 'He saw the carpenter himself' A. (Bzhedukh)
- (85) Pxas''e-m jež' ø-ə-ley''ə-γ
 a. 'The carpenter saw him himself'
 b. 'The carpenter himself saw him' A. (Bzhedukh)

This kind of ambiguity is excluded in most Circassian dialects that regularly make case distinctions in the pronoun *jež'*, *jezə*. Cf. for instance, the Temirgoi examples (86-87) to the Bzhedukh ones above (84-85).

- (86) Jež'ə-m pxas''e-r ø-ə-ley''ə-γ
 himself-ERG carpenter-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 a. 'He himself saw the carpenter'
 b. *'He saw the carpenter himself' A. (Temirgoi)
- (87) Pxas''e-m jež'ə-r ø-ə-ley''ə-γ
 a. 'The carpenter saw him'
 b. 'The carpenter saw him himself'
 c. 'The carpenter himself saw him' A. (Temirgoi)

5.6 Word order in clauses with question words (*wh*-words)

Ergative clauses with question words are characterized by considerable peculiarities. The first set of examples concerns *wh*-words in subject position. A clause with the question word *χet* ‘who’ in subject position does not allow much variation in word order (88a-f).

- (88) a. *χet-ø wəne-(r) ø-jə-s''-ø-re ?*
 who-(ERG) house-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-make-PRES-INT
 ‘Who builds the house’ K.
 b. *χet-ø ø-jə-s''-ø-re wəne-(r)*
 c. *wəne-(r) χet-ø ø-jə-s''-ø-re*
 d. **wəne-(r) ø-jə-s''-ø-re χet-ø*
 e. **ø-jə-s''-ø-re χet-ø wəne-(r)*
 f. **ø-jə-s''-ø-re wəne-(r) χet-ø*

The same applies to the question word *sət* ‘what’ in subject position (89a-f).

- (89) a. *Sətə-m ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re žəgə-r ?*
 what-ERG O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-hit-PRES-INT tree-ABS
 ‘What throws down the tree’ K.
 b. *Sətə-m žəgə-r ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re ?*
 c. *žəgə-r sətə-m ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re ?*
 d. **žəgə-r ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re sətə-m ?*
 e. **ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re sətə-m žəgə-r ?*
 f. **ø-jə-ya-we-ø-re žəgə-r sətə-m ?*

Note that in both sets (88-89) orders (a-c) are allowed, whereas (d-f) are not. In both types V may not occur initially (e-f), and nor may OVS.

Despite similarities, there are differences between (88) and (89) with respect to the morphology of S and O. In (88) the ergative subject *χet* ‘who’ is *ø*-marked, but in (89) *sət* ‘what’ is marked by *-m*. The direct object in (88) has the absolutive marker *-r*, which freely alternates with *ø* (the absence or presence of the *-r* marker does not influence the grammatical relations in the clause). The absolutive marked direct object in (89) does not alternate with *ø* as in (88).

It should be noted that there are some West Circassian dialects that show exceptions to these marking models of question words as transitive subjects, e.g. Bzhedug (90):

- (90) $\chi et-\emptyset \ \emptyset-\emptyset-z'^{\circ}e-\emptyset-re \ \check{c}'ag^{\circ}\emptyset-r?$
 'Who ploughs the earth?' A. Zekokh (1969:106)

The question words χet 'who' and $s\emptyset t$ 'what' in direct object position have a greater syntactic freedom in comparison to the subject position in (88-89): they occur in the OVS order, i.e. initial position, as well as in SOV and SVO orders.

- (91) a. $A-b\emptyset \ \chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) \ \emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a?$
 he-(ERG) who-(ABS) (what-(ABS)) O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 'Whom (what) did he see?' K.
 b. $A-b\emptyset \ \emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a \ \chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) ?$
 c. $\chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) \ a-b\emptyset \ \emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a?$
 d. $\chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) \ \emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a \ a-b\emptyset ?$
 e. $*\emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a \ ab\emptyset \ \chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) ?$
 f. $*\emptyset-j\emptyset-\text{ley}^{\circ}-a \ \chi et-\emptyset (s\emptyset t-\emptyset) \ a-b\emptyset ?$

We note that χet 'who' and $s\emptyset t$ 'what' in direct object position are used with $\emptyset$ -marking of the absolutive case, although it occurs that $s\emptyset t$ 'what' takes the overt marker for emphatic reasons.

The word order is rigid when both the subject and object are question words (92). Only the SOV order is allowed in this case; even the common variant SVO is not acceptable.

- (92) a. $\chi et-\emptyset \ \ s\emptyset t-\emptyset \ \ \emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re?$
 who-(ERG) what-(ABS) O3SG-OR-S3SG-buy-PRES-INT
 'Who buys what?' K.
 b. $*\chi et-\emptyset \ \emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re \ \ s\emptyset t-\emptyset ?$
 c. $*S\emptyset t-\emptyset \ \chi et-\emptyset \ \emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re ?$
 d. $*S\emptyset t-\emptyset \ \emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re \ \chi et-\emptyset ?$
 e. $*\emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re \ \chi et-\emptyset \ \ s\emptyset t-\emptyset ?$
 f. $*\emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-\emptyset-re \ \ s\emptyset t-\emptyset \ \chi et-\emptyset ?$

If the question word $s\emptyset t$ 'what' in (92) is substituted for a noun, both SVO and OSV are allowed. The emphatic marker $-r$ was allowed in (91), but not in (92). Compare (93) and (94):

- (93) $\chi et-\emptyset \ \ s\emptyset t\emptyset-(*)-r \ \ \emptyset-q'-i-s'e\chi^{\circ}-a ?$
 who-(ERG) what-(*ABS) O3SG-OR-S3SG-buy-PERF
 'Who bought what?' K.

- (94) A-bə sətə-r ø-jə-ley°-a?
 ‘What did he see?’ K.

Word order in clauses with question words corresponding to ‘which (of)’ in subject and object position differs from the types discussed above.

- (95) A-š' sədfedə(r) ø-ə-š'efə-ya ?
 he-ERG which-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-buy-PERF
 ‘Which did he buy?’ A.

In contrast to (91a), where *χet* ‘who’ and *sət* ‘what’ are found in object position, example (95) has the variants SVO, OSV, OVS, VSO, VOS. This shows that substituting one question word for another may change the range of word order variation.

The interrogative pronoun in object position in (95) is used with the case marker *-r*, but allows *ø*-marking. In (96) the interrogative pronoun in this position is used only with the absolutive marker *-r*.

- (96) A-bə dətχene-r ø-jə-še-ø-re
 he-ERG which-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES-INT
 ‘Whom (which, how, what) does he lead?’ K.

Another type is represented by the question word *dara* ‘who(m)’ and illustrated in (97). Example (97) is similar to (91) with respect to word order variation, in that the *wh*-words *χet* ‘who’ and *sət* ‘what’ are in direct object position.

- (97) A-bə dara-(*r) ø-jə-še-ø-re ?
 he-ERG which-(*ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES-INT
 ‘Whom (what) does he lead’ K.

The question word with the meaning ‘which’ is widely used attributively in subject and object positions (98-99).

- (98) [Dətχene fəzə-m] sabəj-r ø-jə-p'-ø-re?
 which woman-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-bring.up-PRES-INT
 ‘Which woman raises the child?’ K.

- (99) A-š' [sətfede wəne-ø] ø-ə-s'-ə-ya?
 he-ERG which house-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF
 ‘Which house did he build?’ A.

The degree of word order variation in clauses of the type shown in (98-99) depends both on the grammatical function (subject or object) of the question word and on other grammatical factors. For instance, (98) does not allow the variant OVS.

- (100) *Sabəj-r ø-jə-p'-ø-re [detχene fəzə-m] ?
 'Which woman raises the child?' K.

The example is acceptable if the question word aligns with the object:

- (101) [Detχene sabəj-r] ø-jə-p'-ø-re fəzə-m ?
 'Which child does the woman raise?' K.

Word order where a question word in the sense 'whose' is in subject and object position also exhibits syntactic and grammatical peculiarities.

- (102) [χet jə-ade-(m)] wəne(-r) ø-jə-s''-ø-re ?
 who POSS3SG-father-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES-INT
 'Whose father builds the house?' K.

(102) has the variants SVO and OSV. OVS is possible, but not productive and frequent (103).

- (103) Wəne(-r) ø-jə-s''-ø-re [χet jə-ade-(m)] ?

The variants VSO and VOS are not acceptable, as shown in (104a-b):

- (104) a. *ø-jə-s''-ø-re [χet jə-ade-(m)] wəne-ø ?
 b. *ø-jə-s''-ø-re wəne-ø [χet jə-ade-(m)]? K.

Compare this to (105a), where the interrogative possessive construction is found in object position. The variant shown in (105b) is much less frequent.

- (105) a. Ade-m(*-ø) [χet jə-wəne(-r)] ø-jə-s''-ø-re ?
 father-ERG who POSS3SG-house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES-INT
 'Whose house is the father building?' K.
 b. [χet jə-wəne(-r)] ø-jə-s''-ø-re ade-m(*-ø)? K.

The optionality/non-optionality of the markers *-r/m* in the interrogative possessive use shows some complexities, as summarized in Table 5.1. In (105a-b), but not in (102-103), the marker *-m* of the ergative subject (the interrogative possessive

construction) is obligatory. The fact that the marker *-r* is optional in object position (102-103) is connected to the marking of definiteness: the presence of *-r* marks definiteness and the absence of the marker is related to indefiniteness of the direct object. In contrast to this, the absolutive marker in (105a-b) is not related to definiteness/indefiniteness of the object, as the possessive construction presupposes definiteness (*χet jə-wəne-(r)* ‘whose house’) and makes the suffix *-r* redundant.

Table 5.1 *Functions of -r/-m with interrogative possessives*

	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Object</i>
(102-103)	Interrogative poss. -ø/-m	NP -ø/-r
(105a-b)	NP -m(*-ø)	Interrogative poss. -ø/-r

In (106) and (107) the noun in the interrogative possessive construction is inanimate, and the subject and object positions exhibit some differences. In (106), where the interrogative possessive construction occurs in subject position, three variants are possible: SOV, SVO and OSV. The ergative marker as well as the oblique ergative marker *-m* is optional.

- (106) a. Sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-(m) a-r
 what-OERG POSS3SG-voice-ERG he-ABS
 ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re ?
 O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-frighten-PRES-INT
 ‘Whose voice (sound) frightens him?’
- b. Sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-(m) ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re a-r ?
 c. A-r sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-(m) ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re?
 d. *A-r ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-m ?
 e. *ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-m a-r ?
 f. *ø-jə-ya-s'te-ø-re a-r sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-m ? K.

The optionality of the case marker in the interrogative possessive construction remains in object position as well (107), but it allows other word order variants.

- (107) a. A-bə sətə-(m) jə-maq'ə-(r)
 he-ERG what-OERG POSS3SG-voice-ABS
 ø-ze-χ-i-χ-ø-re?
 O3SG-REF-LOC-S3SG-hear-PRES-INT
 ‘Whose voice (sound) does he hear?’ K.

- (107) b. *A-bə ø-ze-χ-i-χ-ø-re sətə(m) jə-maq'ə(r)?
 c. Sətə(m) jə-maq'ə(r) a-bə ø-ze-χ-i-χ-ø-re?
 d. Sətə(m) jə-maq'ə(r) ø-ze-χ-i-χ-ø-re a-bə ?

5.7 Word order in clauses with participles as main verb

Interrogative constructions made up of *wh*-words and finite verbs have been discussed above. These are accompanied by interrogative intonation and, in the present tense the particle *-re (-ra)* (89). Along with this model we also find another common type of *wh*-question. Here, the *wh*-word combines with a participle as main verb (108).

- (108) χet ps'as'e-r ø-zə-š'a-ye-r?
 Who girl-ABS O3SG-REL-lead-PERF-ABS
 'Who led the girl?' A.

In clauses like (108) there is a great freedom of word order. It is acceptable, but more marked, to place the verb (participle) initially. This is not a typical ergative clause in the sense that a participle is used instead of the finite verb. In the same way as nouns, the participle takes a case marker; in this clause the absolutive case marker *-r*. These nominal features combine with verbal features such as: markers of tense, location, and causation, etc. In addition, the participle governs the ergative and absolutive case of subject and object in the same way as a transitive verb does.

When the *wh*-word occurs in subject position the participle includes the relative prefix *ze-* (108). In object position the participle lacks this prefix:

- (109) Ps'as'e-m χet-ø ø-ə-š'a-ye-r ?
 girl-ERG who-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PERF-ABS
 'Whom did the girl lead?' A.

The *wh*-word shows some peculiarities with respect to case marking, and in particular when *səd* 'what' (non-humans) is chosen.

- (110) Səd a-r ø-zə-ye-š'əna-ye-r
 what he-ABS O3SG-REL-CAUS-afraid-PERF-ABS
 'What frightened him?' A.
- (111) Sədə-m wəne-r ø-qə-ø-ye-nefə-ø-re
 what-ERG house-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-light-PRES-INT
 'What lightened the house (room)?' A.

In (110), where V appears as a participle the *wh*-word is $\emptyset$ -marked (in this position *sədə-m* is not acceptable). In (111), where a verb in the interrogative form (*-re*) appears instead of the participle, the ergative subject takes the *-m* suffix.

The freedom of word order is restricted in clauses with participles and *wh*-words in subject and object position.

- (112) χ et- $\emptyset$ sət- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-še- $\emptyset$ -r ?
 who-(ERG) what-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES.PART-ABS
 ‘Who leads what?’ K.

The word order is SOV both in (111) and (112). The subject and object do not take any overt case marking.

- (113) a. Tara- $\emptyset$ (*-m) s'°əzə-r $\emptyset$ -zə-š'e-re-r ?
 which (*-ERG) woman-ABS O3SG-REL-lead-PRES.PART-ABS
 ‘Who (which one) leads (carries) the woman?’ A.
- b. S'°əzə-m tara- $\emptyset$ (*-r) $\emptyset$ -jə-š'e-re-r ?
 woman-ERG which (*-ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES.PART-ABS
 ‘Which one (whom) does the woman lead?’ A.
- c. Detχene-ra sabəj-r $\emptyset$ -zə-hə- $\emptyset$ -r ?
 which-INT child-ABS O3SG-REL-carry-PRES.PART-ABS
 ‘Which one carries the child?’ K.

In (113) the *wh*-word is used without a head noun and in (114-115) the *wh*-words are used in attributive function in subject and object position.

- (114) [Detχene fəzə-ra] sabəj-r $\emptyset$ -zə-hə- $\emptyset$ -r ?
 which woman-INT child-ABS O3SG-REL-lead-PRES.PART-ABS
 ‘Which woman carries the child?’ K.

The interrogative marker (*-ra*) is added to the question word in (113c) but to the noun in (114). In both clauses *-ra* occurs in the same slot as the subject marker *-m*. Alternatively, it is possible for the ergative case marker to appear on the NP (on the *wh*-word or on the head noun) with a verb in the interrogative form. Compare (115a-b) to (113c-114):

- (115) a. Detχene-m sabəj-r $\emptyset$ -jə-h- $\emptyset$ -re ?
 which-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES-INT
 ‘Which one carries the child?’ K.

- (115) b. Detχene fəzə-m sabəj-r ø-jə-h-ø-re ?
 which woman-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES-INT
 ‘Which woman carries the child?’ K.

The questions in (113-114), where the subject and object are differentiated in their marking, show a great freedom of word order, with SOV, SVO, OSV as the most common orders.

Yes/no-questions with the verb in a participle form (116a-b) do not include question words. The subject in (116) has the interrogative marker. This type of question will be discussed further below.

- (116) a. We-ra tχəłə-r ø-zə-tχ-a-r ?
 you-INT book-ABS O3SG-REL-write-PERF.PART-ABS
 ‘Did you write the book?’ K.
- b. L’ə-(*m) wəne-r ø-zə-s’-a-r
 man-(*ERG) house-ABS O3SG-REL-do-PERF.PART-ABS
 ‘Did the man build the house?’ K.

5.8 Word order in answers

The basic, neutral word order in answers depends on the focus position of constituents in the questions, as will be shown in (117-131). The SVO examples in (118a-b) are answers to the question in (117).

- (117) χet ø-jə-s’-a wəne-r?
 Who O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF house-ABS
 ‘Who built the house?’ K.
- (118) a. Pxas’e-m ø-jə-s’-a-s’ wəne-r
 carpenter-ERG O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT house-ABS
 ‘The carpenter built the house’ K.
- b. Pxas’e-m jə-q°e-m ø-jə-s’-a-s’
 carpenter-OERG POSS3SG-son-ERG O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 wəne-r
 house-ABS
 ‘The carpenter’s son built the house’ K.

The question in (117) ‘Who built the house?’ is followed by replies in the SVO order (118a-b). The order SOV instead of SVO would have been marked in this situation – compare (119a-b) to (118a-b):

- (119) a. P_{xas}'e-m wəne-r ø-jə-s''-a-s'
 'The carpenter built the house' K.
- b. P_{xas}'e-m jə-q°e-m wəne-r ø-jə-s''-a-s'
 'The carpenter's son built the house' K.

The SOV order in the answer (120b) corresponds to the appropriate question in (120a) – the SVO order would in this case be more marked (120c):

- (120) a. Sət p_{xas}'e-m ø-jə-s''-a-r?
 what carpenter-ERG O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ABS
 'What did the carpenter make (build)?' K.
- b. P_{xas}'e-m wəne-ø ø-jə-s''-a-s'
 carpenter-ERG house-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT
 'The carpenter built a house'
- c. P_{xas}'e-m ø-jə-s''-a-s' wəne-r
 carpenter-ERG O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF-ASSRT house-ABS
 'The carpenter built the house' K.

It is interesting to note that the semantically conditioned basic word order OSV (discussed above in connection with examples (53-56)) changes in the answers. The OSV question in (121a) corresponds to replies in the OSV or SOV orders (121b-c), which are both neutral.

- (121) a. χet psə-m ø-jə-thel-a-r ?
 whom river-ERG O3SG-S3SG-smother-PERF-ABS
 'Whom did the river (water) choke? Who drowned?' K.
- b. Fəz-ø psə-m ø-jə-thel-a-s'
 woman-(ABS) river-ERG O3SG-S3SG-smother-PERF-ASSRT
- c. Psə-m fəz-ø ø-jə-thel-a-s'
 'The river smothered a woman (A woman drowned)' K.

An answer in the SVO order is definitely more marked (122).

- (122) Psə-m ø-jə-thel-a-s' fəz-ø
 'The river choked a woman (A woman drowned)' K.

The word order in replies to questions with ditransitive verbs also show specific features. The question (123a) is followed by an answer with the neutral order S-V-O-IO (123b).

- (123) a. χet $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-z}\text{-t}\text{-}\emptyset\text{-r}$ $t\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m?}$
 who O3SG-IO3SG-REL-give-PRES-ABS book-ABS girl-OERG
 ‘Who gives the book to the girl?’ K.
- b. Murat- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-rej-t-}\emptyset$ $t\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$
 Murat-(ERG) O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES book-ABS girl-OERG
 ‘Murat gives the book to the girl’ K.

Answers with the orders S-O-IO-V, S-O-V-IO would be more marked (124a-b).

- (124) a. Murat $t\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-rej-t-}\emptyset$
 b. Murat $t\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-rej-t-}\emptyset$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$
 ‘Murat will give the book to the girl’ K.

The basic word order S-O-IO-V occurs again in the reply (125a) to the question in (125).

- (125) a. $\text{S}\text{ət}$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-s}'\text{e-}\emptyset\text{-re}$ Murat ?
 what O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES-INT Murat
 ‘What does Murat do?’ K.
- b. Murat- $\emptyset$ $t\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-rej-t-}\emptyset$
 ‘Murat gives the book to the girl’ K.

In reply to the question in (126a) the order in (126b) is neutral.

- (126) a. $\text{S}\text{ət-}\emptyset$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-ri-t-}\emptyset\text{-re}$ Murat- $\emptyset$ $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$
 what-(ABS) O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES-INT Murat-(ERG) girl-OERG
 ‘What does Murat give to the girl?’ K.
- b. $T\chi\text{əl}\text{-r}$ $\emptyset\text{-j}\text{-rej-t-}\emptyset$ Murat $\text{ps}'\text{as}'\text{e-m}$
 book-ABS O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES Murat-ERG girl-OERG
 ‘Murat gives the book to the girl’ K.

Alternatively, an answer to (126a) with a neutral word order could also be (127) – S-O-V-IO:

(127) Murat- $\emptyset$ t χ ələ-r $\emptyset$ -jə-rej-t- $\emptyset$ ps'as'e-m

The answer in (126b) is preferred over the example in (127). An even less preferable variant is shown below S-O-IO-V, which is actually the basic ditransitive word order outside the interrogative context. Compare (128b) in reply to (126a=128a).

(128) a. Sət- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-ri-t- $\emptyset$ -re Murat- $\emptyset$ ps'as'e-m
 what-(ABS) O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES-INT Murat-(ERG) girl-OERG
 'What does Murat give to the girl?' K.

b. Murat- $\emptyset$ t χ ələ-r ps'as'e-m $\emptyset$ -jə-ri-t- $\emptyset$ -re
 'Murat gives the book to the girl'

A neutral reply to the question in (129a) is the order S-IO-V-O (129b), or alternatively, the order IO-V-S-O found in example (129c).

(129) a. Murat- $\emptyset$ χ et- $\emptyset$ $\emptyset$ -jə-ri-t- $\emptyset$ -re t χ ələ-r
 Murat-(ERG) who-(OERG) O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES-INT book-ABS
 'To whom does Murat give the book?' K.

b. Murat- $\emptyset$ ps'as'e-m $\emptyset$ -jə-rej-t- $\emptyset$ t χ ələ-r
 Murat-(ERG) girl-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES book-ABS
 'To the girl gives Murat the book' K.

c. Ps'as'e-m $\emptyset$ -jə-rej-t- $\emptyset$ Murat- $\emptyset$ t χ ələ-r
 girl-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES Murat-(ERG) book-ABS
 'To the girl Murat gives the book' K.

The order IO-V-S-O (130) is possible only in a clause where the indirect object is focused. Outside the interrogative context (129c) would be interpreted as a clause with the word order S-V-IO-O (130).

(130) Ps'as'e-m $\emptyset$ -jə-rej-t- $\emptyset$ Murat- $\emptyset$ t χ ələ-r
 'The girl gives the book to Murat' K.

The interpretation of (130) as the basic word order and *ps'as'e-m* as the subject in the initial position is supported by the fact that Murat is $\emptyset$ -marked and not differentiated for case. (130) is to be interpreted as a marked variant of the neutral word order S-O-IO-V, as in (131):

- (131) Ps'as'e-m tɣələ-r Murat-ø ø-jə-rej-t-ø
 'The girl gives the book to Murat' K.

When S, O and IO are questioned and occur as focused constituents in answers, the clauses are frequently reduced. For instance, in reply to the question posed in (117=132a), (132b-c) could be given instead of (118).

- (132) a. ɣet ø-jə-s'-a wəne-r?
 Who O3SG-S3SG-do-PERF house-ABS
 'Who built the house?' K.
- b. Pxas''e-m ø-jə-s'-a-s'
 carpenter-ERG O3SG-S3SG-make-PERF-ASSRT
 'The carpenter did'
- c. Pxas''e-m
 carpenter-ERG
 'The carpenter' K.

As another example, (133a-b) could have been given in reply to the question posed in (123).

- (133) a. Murat-ø ø-jə-rej-t-ø
 Murat-(ERG) O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PRES
 'Murat does' K.
- b. Murat
 'Murat'

5.9 Focus constructions

Focused phrases have already been shown in several examples above. Word order in these clauses differs from the basic word order in non-focused clauses.

In addition to these types where word order is conditioned by which part has been questioned in the preceding question, there are other constructions that are characterized by the presence of focus markers. These markers occur in the same slot as the case markers. Another feature of these constructions is that the verb appears in participial forms. Different resources are used in the marking of focus – intonational, morphological and lexical features. The focus marked constituent is found in predicative position – in (134a) the S is focused and in (134b) the O.

- (134) a. A-š' tχələ-r ø-zə-ri-tə-ye-r Murat-ø
 he-ERG book-ABS O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF-ABS Murat-is.FOC
 'Is it Murat that he gave the book to?' A.
- b. A-š' ø-ə-ləy°ə-ye-r Murat-ø
 he-ERG O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF-ABS Murat-is.FOC
 'It was Murat that he saw' A.

The focused constituent is placed in clause-final position in (134). This is the preferred position of the focused constituent, but it is not obligatory. The focused constituent in (134) appears in a predicative form that also functions as a focus marker. In Kabardian there is yet another way of marking focus using personal-demonstrative pronouns in the predicative form, which phonetically merge with the focused noun. Compare (134) and (135).

- (135) a. A-š' tχələ-r ø-zə-ri-tə-ye-r Murat ar-ə
 Murat he-is
 'It is Murat to whom he gave the book' A.
- b. A-š' ø-ə-ləy°ə-ye-r Murat-ø ar-ə
 'It is Murat that he saw' A.

Different suffixes function as focus markers in Kabardian. A rather clear tendency is to find the focused constituent towards the beginning of the clause – initially in (136b) and in medial position. (136a) is the neutral, non-focused clause.

- (136) a. L'ə-m lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 man-ERG meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'The man ate the meat' K.
- b. L'ə-s' lə-r ø-zə-šχ-a-r
 man-FOC meat-ABS O3SG-REL-eat-PERF.PART-ABS
 'This is a man (who) ate a meat'
 ('It is the man that ate the meat') K.

Focused constituents of this type resemble so-called cleft sentences. Productive suffixes are *-s'*, *-t*, *-ra*. When the subject or objects are focused, the verb appears in a participial form that governs the NP arguments in the ordinary way. For instance, when the subject is focused a focus marker occurs instead of the ergative case marker (136b), and the direct object is assigned the absolutive case by the transitive participle. If the direct object is focused it will take the focus marker, whereas the

subject is assigned the ergative case by the transitive participle. An indirect object may also be focused – while the subject is assigned ergative and the direct object absolutive case.

Among the suffixes *-s'*, *-t*, *-q'e*, *-ra* functioning as focus markers, *-s'*, *-t* correlate with the tense opposition 'present–perfect'. The *-s'* in the present tense corresponds to a *-t* focus marker on the indirect object with the predicate in the perfect form (137).

- (137) L'ə-m tχələ-r fəz-t ø-zə-rəj-t-a-r
 man-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF-ABS
 'This was the woman (to whom) the man gave the book' K.

The suffix *-t*, and the corresponding form in clauses in the present tense *-s'*, may also mark the subject and direct object: in (138) S is focused and in (139) the direct object.

- (138) L'ə-t lə-r ø-zə-šχ-a-r
 man-FOC meat-ABS O3SG-REL-meat-PERF-ASSRT
 'This was the man (who) ate the meat' K.

- (139) L'ə-m lə-t ø-jə-šχ-a-r
 man-ERG meat-FOC O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ABS
 'This was the meat (that) the man ate' K.

The suffix *-s'* originates from the assertive particle, that occurs in the present, perfect, future and other verbal forms. Examples of this are *a-r ø-jət-ø-s'* (*ø-jə-t-a-s'*, *ø-jə-tə-nu-s'*) 'he stands (stood, will stand) inside'. The origin of the focus marker *-t* is connected to the imperfect suffix *a-r ø-k'e-t* 'he walked'. When functioning as a focus marker, *-t* has obtained a general perfect meaning. It is characteristic that other tense markers, such as the perfect *-a*, *-at*, the future *-n*, *-nu*, and pluperfect *-ye*, *-ya*, do not take on focus marking functions in subject and objects positions. At the same time, it has to be noted that the subject and objects with the focus markers *-s'*, *-t* also carry the predicate function.

The other focus markers *-q'a*, *-ra* are also found in clauses where the verb occurs in the participial form (140).

- (140) a. Jeŋežak'°e-q'e tχələ-r fəzə-m
 teacher-FOC book-ABS woman-OERG
 ø-je-zə-t-a-r
 O3SG-IO3SG-REL-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'The teacher (FOC) gave a book to the woman' K.

- (140) b. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tχələ-q'e fəzə-m ø-je-rəj-t-a-r
 teacher-ERG book-FOC woman-OERG
 'The teacher gave a book (FOC) to the woman' A.

- c. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tχələ-r fəz-q'e ø-zə-rej-t-a-r
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC
 'The teacher gave a book to the woman (FOC)' K.

The focus marker *-q'e* occurs in the slot of the ergative case (140a), the absolutive case (140b) and the oblique ergative (140c). The focus marker *-q'e* is used in combinations such as *-ra-q'e* in order to strengthen the focus meaning. The strong focus marking is shown in subject and object positions in (141).

- (141) a. Jeʏeʒak'°e-ra-q'e tχələ-r fəzə-m
 teacher-FOC book-ABS woman-OERG
 ø-je-zə-t-a-r
 O3SG-IO3SG-REL-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'The teacher (and not anybody else) gave the book to the woman'

- b. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tχələ-ra-q'e fəzə-m
 teacher-ERG book-FOC-FOC woman-OERG
 ø-jə-rej-t-a-r
 O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'The teacher gave a book (and not anything else) to the woman'

- c. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tχələ-r fəzə-ra-q'e
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC-FOC
 ø-zə-rəj-t-a-r
 O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'The teacher gave the book to the woman (and not to anybody else)' K.

Other combinations of focus markers also occur: *-ra-s'*, *-ra-t*, *-ra-tə-q'e*. In (142), for instance, the indirect object is focused.

- (142) a. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tχələ-r fəzə-ra-s'
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC-FOC
 ø-zə-ri-t-a-r
 O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'It was the woman to whom the teacher gave the book' A.

- (142) b. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tɕəɬə-r fəzə-ra-te-q'e
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC-FOC-FOC
 ø-Zə-ri-t-a-r
 O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'It was the woman to whom the teacher gave a book' K.

The combined focus markers in (142) may also occur in the slot of the ergative case (-*m*) and the absolutive case (-*r*). The focused constituent may take the negative form (143).

- (143) a. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tɕəɬə-r fəzə-ra-q'əm
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC-NEG
 ø-Zə-ri-t-a-r
 O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'It wasn't the woman to whom the teacher gave a book'
- b. Jeʏeʒak'°e-m tɕəɬə-r fəz-te-q'em
 teacher-ERG book-ABS woman-FOC-NEG
 ø-Zə-ri-t-a-r
 O3SG-REL-S3SG-give-PERF.PART-ABS
 'It wasn't the woman to whom the teacher gave a book' K.

As shown, when the subject and object are not found in focused position they retain the ergative model – the ergative marker on the subject and the absolutive case on the direct object. Here, they are both governed by the transitive participle.

5.10 Position of adverbials

Adverbials are characterized by a rather high degree of freedom of placement in ergative clauses. They may be found in initial (144a), medial (144b) and final (144c) positions. Among these, the initial position is the preferred one and the final position the least so. Thus the clause initial position of adverbials is to be considered the most basic one.

- (144) a. Təʏ°ase ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-ə-tɕə-ʏ
 yesterday girl-ERG letter-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF
 'Yesterday the girl wrote a letter' A.
- b. Ps'as'e-m təʏ°ase pismo-ø ø-ə-tɕə-ʏ
 girl-ERG yesterday letter-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF

- (144) c. Ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-ə-tχə-γ təγ°ase
 girl-ERG letter-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF yesterday

However, for other temporal adverbials, as in (145a), the medial position between S and O may be the preferred one. Here, the adverbial expresses frequency and repetition.

- (145) a. Ps'as'e-m zaγ°ere pismo-ø ø-je-tχə-ø
 girl-ERG often letter-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-write-PRES
 'The girl often writes letters' A.
- b. Zaγ°ere ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-je-tχə-ø
 often girl-ERG letter-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-write-PRES
 'The girl often writes letters' A.

Of course, it is possible to place these adverbial in initial position as well for purposes of emphasis or contrast, as in (145b).

The same could be said with respect to adverbials of place, reason and some other types, i.e. (146a-d).

- (146) a. Ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ježap'e-m ø-š'-i-tχə-γ
 school-OERG O3SG-LOC-S3SG-write-PRES
 'The girl wrote a letter in the school' A.
- b. Ps'as'e-m ježap'e-m pismo-ø ø-š'-i-tχə-γ
 school-OERG letter-(ABS) O3SG-LOC-S3SG-write-PERF
- c. Ježap'e-m ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-š'-i-tχə-γ
 school-OERG O3SG-LOC-S3SG-write-PERF
- d. Ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-š'-i-tχə-γ ježap'e-m
 letter-(ABS) O3SG-LOC-S3SG-write-PERF school-OERG A.

Among the four variants shown in (146), the positions in (a) and (b) are the preferred ones for place adverbials. The initial (c) and (d) placement are clearly marked. Adverbials of manner, characteristic of transitive verbs, are placed immediately before the verb (147a), but could be placed between S and O (147b) or in initial position for purposes of emphasis or contrast (147c).

- (147) a. Ps'as'e-m pismo-ø psənč'ew ø-ə-tχə-γ
 rapidly O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF
 'The girl rapidly wrote a letter' A.

- (147) b. Ps'as'e-m psənč'ew pismo-ø ø-š'-i-tχə-γ
 rapidly letter-(ABS) O3SG-LOC-S3SG-write-PERF
 'The girl rapidly wrote a letter'

- c. Psənč'ew ps'as'e-m pismo-ø ø-ə-tχə-γ
 rapidly O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF
 'The girl rapidly wrote a letter' A.

The initial position is characteristic of some attitudinal adverbials, which may be illustrated by the complex adverbial in (148).

- (148) Di-žay°e zerəx°əns'i, a-bə wəne-ø ø-jə-s''ə-f-a-q'əm
 unfortunately he-ERG house-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-do-POT-PERF-NEG
 'Unfortunately he could not build a house' K.

The syntactical position of adverbials in the clause is dynamic, which is frequently utilized for emphasis and contrast. As shown above, adverbials may occur in initial, medial and final positions. There are no adverbials in the Circassian languages that have a fixed syntactic position.

6 Labile constructions

Along with the clearly marked absolutive and ergative constructions there are labile verb roots in the Circassian languages that are neutral with respect to the absolutive/ergative alignment. Such neutral verb roots have identical phonetic and morphological shapes when they appear in either absolutive or ergative constructions. As illustrated below, the subject and object may be marked as they would in a transitive clause (1a) or an intransitive clause (1b) by same verb root.

- (1) a. L'ə-m č'əg°ə-r ø-je-z°e-ø
 man-ERG field-ABS O3SG-S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man is ploughing the field' A.
- b. L'ə-r ma-z°e-ø
 man-ABS S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man is ploughing (engaged in ploughing)' A.

The verb root *z°e-* in (1a) occurs in a typical ergative construction with the subject in the ergative case (*l'ə-m* 'man') and the direct object in the absolutive case (*č'əg°ə-r* 'field'). The same root appears with the subject in the absolutive case (*l'ə-r* 'man'). No direct object is required, corresponding to the general sense of 'being engaged in an activity'. Compare also the Kabardian examples:

- (2) a. Fəzə-m blənə-r ø-je-le-ø
 woman-ERG wall-ABS O3SG-S3SG-paint-PRES
 'The woman is painting the wall' K.
- b. Fəzə-r ma-le-ø
 woman-ABS S3SG-paint-PRES
 'The woman is painting (engaged in painting)' K.

The verbal roots in *z°e-*, *le-* (1-2) are identical in the ergative (1a, 2a) and the absolutive constructions (1b, 2b). However, there is a difference in cross-reference marking: (1a, 2a) follow the marking of transitive verbs whereas (1b, 2b) follow the intransitive model.

Below, clauses with the labile roots (1-2) are compared with clauses with stable verb roots (3-4). The personal markers in (1a) and (2a) coincide with the markers in (3a) and (4a), whereas the markers in (1b) and (2b) coincide with the markers in (3b) and (4b). It thus follows that the verb roots in (1-2) show a labile patterning and the roots in (3-4) are stable in their choice of construction.

- (3) a. L'ə-m wəne-r ø-je-s'ə-ø
 man-ERG house-ABS O3SG-S3SG-do-PRES
 'The man is building a house' A.
- b. L'ə-r ma-k'°e-ø
 man-ABS S3SG-go-PRES
 'The man is going' A.
- (4) a. Fəzə-m sabəj-r ø-je-h-ø
 woman-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-carry-PRES
 'The woman is carrying the child' A.
- b. Fəzə-r ma-že-ø
 woman-ABS S3SG-run-PRES
 'The woman is running' A.

The labile verb roots are labile in the sense that they occur in either the ergative or the absolutive construction, with a contrast in the patterning of personal markers in the verb. However, this applies to (1-2) only for third person singular and plural subjects. If the third person subject is changed into a first or second person subject, there is no contrast between the patterning of person markers. Compare (1-2) with (5-6). The transitive verbs in (5a) and (6a) seem to coincide with the intransitive verbs in (5b) and (6b).

- (5) a. Se č'əg°ə-r ø-s-e-z°e-ø
 I field-ABS O3SG-S1SG-DYN-plough-PRES
 'I am ploughing the field' A.
- b. Se s-e-z°e-ø
 I S1SG-DYN-plough-PRES
 'I am ploughing (engaged in ploughing)' A.
- (6) a. We blənə-r ø-w-o-le-ø
 you wall-ABS O3SG-S2SG-DYN-paint-PRES
 'You are painting the wall' K.
- b. We w-o-le-ø
 you S2SG-DYN-paint-PRES
 'You are painting (engaged in painting)' K.

Such a neutralization of the contrast in person marking in the first and second person of transitive and intransitive verbs occurs only in the present tense. In other tenses the contrast between transitive and intransitive verbs in (5-6) is realized by voicing, vowel reduction or loss of the vowel, as shown in (7-8).

- (7) a. Se č'əg°ə-r ø-z-z°a-ye
 I field-ABS O3SG-S1SG-plough-PERF
 (ø-z-z°e-š't)
 (O3SG-S1SG-plough-FUT2)
 'I ploughed (will plough) the field' A.
- b. Se sə-z°a-ye (sə-z°e-š't)
 I S1SG-plough-PERF S1SG-plough-FUT2
 'I was ploughing (was engaged in ploughing)' A.
- (8) a. We blənə-r ø-b-l-a-s'
 you wall-ABS O3SG-S2SG-paint-PERF-ASSRT
 (ø-b-le-nu-s')
 O3SG-S2SG-paint-FUT2-ASSRT
 'You painted (will paint) the wall' K.
- b. We wə-l-a-s'
 you S2SG-paint-PERF-ASSRT
 (wə-le-nu-s')
 S2SG-paint-FUT2-ASSRT
 'You were painting, will be painting (were engaged in painting, will be engaged in painting)' K.

In the ergative construction (7a, 8a) the following sound changes occurred: the vowel reduction resulted in sə > z in Adyghe (7a) and wə > b in Kabardian. In the absolutive construction (7b, 8b) the person markers occur with the vowel -ə sə- in Adyghe (7b) and wə- in Kabardian (8b). In Adyghe, in the perfect changes occur in the root: z°e > z°a, corresponding to z'e > z' in Kabardian.

However, the way of differentiating between the transitive and intransitive uses discussed above (7-8), does not apply to all labile roots (9). Here, the person markers do not differ in the transitive and intransitive uses.

- (9) a. De χade-r ø-d-o-p's'e-ø
 we kitchen garden-ABS O3SG-S1PL-DYN-weed-PRES
 ø-də-p's'a-s' ø-də-p's'e-nu-s'
 O3SG-S1PL-weed-PERF-ASSRT, O3SG-S1PL-weed-FUT-ASSRT K.
 'We are weeding, we weeded, we will weed the kitchen garden'
- b. De d-o-p's'e-ø, də-p's'-a-s'
 we S1PL-DYN-weed-PRES S1PL-weed-PERF-ASSRT
 də-p's'e-nu-s'
 S1PL-weed-FUT2-ASSRT
 'We are weeding, we weeded, we will weed' K.

Both in the ergative example (9a) and the absolutive one (9b), the subject marker includes no vowel in the present tense (*d-*), but does in the perfect and future (*də-*).

The contrast between the verb roots based on the presence/absence of the vowel in the person markers depends on the phonological structure of the root (C, CV, CC, CCV). Looking at verbal roots in the labile construction occurring with local prefixes, we note that they have their own system of contrasting the personal markers. Generally, the means of contrasting the verbs of the labile construction are very complex and diverse, as will be further discussed below.

6.1 On the history of the labile construction

In the grammatical literature on the Circassian languages, the idea that transitive verbs in the proto-Circassian language were labile has been widespread (Kerasheva 1957, Rogava & Kerasheva 1966, Gishev 1968). Furthermore, these authors assume that the labile character of the transitive verbs are even older than the proto-Circassian language. As Gishev (1968:30) remarked: "These verbs are remainders from the most ancient transitive verb. The transitive verbs had a labile construction, which is found in almost all Ibero-Caucasian languages."

We do not share this view on the matter. Without going into the question of genetic relationship between the West-Caucasian languages and other Caucasian languages, we limit ourselves to some remarks on the historical development of verbal stems in labile constructions in the West Caucasian languages, which are beyond doubt genetically related.

It is true that some labile stems show genetic similarity in Abkhaz and the Circassian languages. Among different stems in labile constructions in Abkhaz studied by Aristava (1959) only a few stems show genetic relationship to labile stems in the Circassian languages, for instance, Abkh. *s-*, A. *s'-* 'weave' (trans., intrans.), Abkh. *x-*, A. *xə-* 'sow' (trans., intrans.). However, even on the basis of these rather few Abkhaz-Circassian stems, one may conclude that verbs stems in labile constructions were characteristic of the West Caucasian stage.

Most Abkhaz labile stems appeared during the Abkhaz or proto-Abkhaz period, including *lac'a-* 'sow', *t'at*, *a-* 'grind', *t'aa-* 'gather', *w-* 'write', *xəc-* 'think', *pšaa-* 'search' and many others that do not have corresponding forms in the Circassian languages.

Turning to the Circassian languages, the analysis below shows that the labile stems developed during different periods. A small number belongs to the common West Caucasian language, others to the proto-Circassian period and to other chronologically later stages, i.e. the proto-Adyghe, proto-Kabardian and to late dialectal innovations.

The following forms are examples of labile stems from the proto-Circassian language: A. *z'e-n*, K. *ve-n* 'plough' (trans., intrans.), A., *p'č'e-n*, K. *p's'e-n* 'weed' (trans., intrans.), A., K. *le-n* 'paint, dye' (trans., intrans.), A., K. *c'ele-n* 'spread' (trans., intrans.), A., K. *p'ət'ə-n* 'press' (trans., intrans.), A., K. *ʔ'e-n* 'thresh' (trans., intrans.).

Other proto-Circassian stems are labile in Adyghe, but have become stable in Kabardian: A. *xe-n* ‘tie, knit’ (trans., intrans.), *g°ə-n* ‘pound’ (trans., intrans.), *pš'e-n* ‘knead’ (trans., intrans.), *šχe-n* ‘glue’ (trans., intrans.), *fəzə-n* ‘squeeze’ (trans., intrans.), *pce-n* ‘hollow out’ (trans., intrans.), *stə-n* ‘burn’ (trans., intrans.).

A number of stable stems in the modern languages that use root vowel alternation to mark transitive and intransitive forms originate from proto-Circassian labile stems, such as: *də-n* ‘sew’ (trans.), *de-n* ‘sew’ (intrans.), *bzən* ‘cut out’ (trans.), *bze-n* ‘cut out’ (intrans.), *tχə-n* ‘write’ (trans.), *tχe-n* ‘write’ (intrans.), *šχə-n* ‘eat’ (trans.), *šχe-n* ‘eat’ (intrans.).

Labile stems formed by the factitive prefix *wə-* also originate from different periods. Some of these stems – for instance, A. *wə-zenč'ə-n*, K. *wə-zenč''ə-n* ‘straighten, draw oneself up’, A. K. *wə-pep'c'ə-n* ‘sharpen, to become more pointed’, *wə-lent'ə-n* ‘make flexible, become flexible’ – are to be considered proto-Circassian, as these forms are labile in all contemporary Circassian dialects. Other stems of this group are Adyghe or Kabardian innovations. The same may be said in connection with labile stems formed from local and comitative prefixes. These stems originate in different periods; from the proto-Circassian period and from the time following the split of the proto-Circassian language.

There are also late dialectal innovations, i.e. labile stems formed in different local dialects. An example of this is the stem *dəce-n* ‘draw, extend’ in the Shapsug dialect.

The Circassian data show that there is no ground for considering labile stems a remainder from the earliest period of the West-Caucasian languages. The formation of labile stems is a productive process, found in the Circassian languages and their dialects.

If we may assume that the labile stem *s'e-* ‘weave’ (trans., intrans.) originates in the common West-Caucasian language on the basis of its relation to the Abkhaz form *s-* ‘weave’ (trans., intrans.), many other labile forms in the Circassian languages do not go further back than to the proto-Circassian or even to the division of the common Circassian language and late dialectal innovations.

Furthermore, we do not agree with the assumption that all Circassian transitive verbs once were labile. There is no evidence, either from comparison or from internal reconstruction that transitive verbs such as *s''ə-n* ‘do’ or *hə-n* ‘carry’ should originate from labile stems in the proto-Circassian languages. On the contrary, these stems were stable, i.e. transitive in the proto-Circassian language and remained transitive in the modern Circassian languages. The transitive stem *k''ə-n* ‘go through (a state)’ originates in the intransitive stem *k''e-n* ‘go’, which is evident not only from internal reconstruction (compare, for instance, A. *čə-n*, K. *žə-n* ‘run a certain distance’ < * *če-n* ‘run’), but also from external reconstruction, in particular from Ubykh data: the intransitive (stable) root *k'a* ‘go’ has the same origin as the A., K. (and proto-Circassian) *k''e* root of the same meaning.

There is also no confirmation in the data of the widespread assumption in the literature that labile forms with the final root vowel *-e* were the basis for the stabilisation of prior labile stems. Arguments supporting this assumption are based on stems like *d-je-tχe* ‘he writes, adds’ (trans.), *č’e-re-de* ‘he sews on’ (trans.), where the final vowel *-e* is assumed to have emerged in transitive forms. However, the final vowel *-e* in such verbs with preverbs is a new, secondary development, having to do with the combination of the local prefix and a root with the vowel *-ə*. This view is supported with data from internal reconstruction. The change *ə > e* took place not only in transitive roots, but also in intransitive ones if they combine with local prefixes. Thus, there is no doubt that the stable intransitive root *γə-n* ‘cry’ was inherited by the Circassian languages and dialects from the proto-Circassian stage. However, the final vowel in the proto-Circassian root *γə-n* ‘cry’ changes into the vowel *-e* in combination with the local prefix: *t-je-γe-n* ‘mourn (over)’ (Lit. ‘bemoan’) (intrans.).

Data of this kind from internal reconstruction confirm that the change *ə > e* both in transitive and intransitive roots when combining with local prefixes, is widespread in the Circassian languages.

6.2 Groups of labile roots

6.2.1 Simple roots

N.F. Jakovlev and D.A. Ashkhamaf were the first to pay attention to the existence of labile verbal roots in Adyghe. Analysing them as diathetic contrasts, the authors note the following six root meanings in Adyghe: ‘plough’, ‘weed’, ‘chop’, ‘count’, ‘pound’, ‘mow’ (Jakovlev & Ashkhamaf 1941:324). Further investigations (Kumakhov 1964, 1971, 1989 and Gishev 1968) showed that the roots that occur in the labile construction were more numerous and more diverse, both morphologically and semantically.

A closed group of morphologically simple labile verb roots may be distinguished. The roots may not be further segmented. They are given in the so-called infinitive form in the table below.

As seen from the table, labile verb roots are more frequent in Adyghe than in Kabadian, where many such roots have turned into stable (ergative or absolutive) ones.

Table 6.1 *Simple labile verb roots*

<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>		<i>Adyghe</i>	<i>Kabardian</i>	
z°e-n	ve-n	plough	šxe-n		glue
χe-n		reap	c°ele-n	c°ele-n	grease, spread
žə-n		spin	q°əte-n	q°əte-n	break
s'e-n		weave	stə-n		burn
xe-n		bind	šət'e-n	šət'e-n	press
ʔ°e-n	ʔ°e-n	thresh	fəzə-n		squeeze
z'e-n		fry	p'ət'ə-n	p'ət'ə-n	squeeze
g°e-n		pound	c°əc'ə-n		rumple
le-n	le-n	paint, dye	ʔ°ent'e-n	ʔ°ent'e-n	bend
lə-n		burn	g°eš'ə-n		split
x°e-n		rub	ʔ°etə-n	ʔ°etə-n	soften
x°ə-n		graze	t'ete-n	t'ete-n	untie
š'e-n	s'e-n	sell	cede-n		soil, dirty
bɣe-n		cover (roof)	psəhe-n		temper
pχe-n		comb	ləɣ°e-n		tar
pš'e-n		knead (dough)	ɣ°əč''e-n		dry
p'č'e-n	p's'e-n	weed	lež'e-n	lez'e-n	wear out
pce-n		hollow out	k°əde-n		clog

The examples (10-11) show how the change into stable constructions may take different forms.

- (10) a. A-r me-χə-ø
 he-ABS S3SG-reap-PRES
 ‘He is reaping (is engaged in reaping)’ A.

- b. A-r ma-χe-ø
 he-ABS S3SG-reap-PRES
 ‘He is reaping (is engaged in reaping)’ K.

- (11) a. A-š' k°ecə-r ø-je-χə-ø
 he-ERG wheat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-reap-PRES
 ‘He is reaping the wheat’ A.

- b. A-bə g°eʒə-r ø-je-χ-ø
 ‘He is reaping (mowing) the wheat’ K.

A comparison of the Adyghe and Kabardian examples (10-11) shows that the root -χə- ‘reap’ is present in Adyghe in both the absolutive (10a) and the ergative (11a). In Kabardian the root -χe- ‘reap, mow’ is found in the absolutive construction (10b) and the root -χ- in the ergative. Here, the labile root

used in Adyghe - $\chi\partial$ -, has changed in Kabardian into - χe - in the absolutive and - χ - in the ergative construction. The subject person marker has undergone phonetic changes: *me*- (10a) has changed into *ma*- in (10b) in Kabardian.

Labile roots in Adyghe correspond to stable roots in Kabardian not in all tenses and moods. In the forms Perfect1 (-*a*) and Perfect2 (-*at*) they remain in the same form (12).

- (12) a. Se sə-χ-a-s' (-at)
I S1SG-reap-PERF (PERF2)
'I was engaged in reaping' K.
- b. Se g°əʒə-r ø-s-χ-a-s' (-at)
I wheat-ABS O3SG-S1SG-reap-PERF-ASSRT (-PERF2)
'I reaped wheat' K.
- c. A-r ø-χ-a-s' (-at)
he-ABS S3SG-reap-PERF-ASSRT (PERF2)
'He was reaping' K.
- d. A-bə g°əʒə-r ø-jə-χ-a-s' (-at)
he-ERG wheat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-reap-PERF-ASSRT (-PERF2)
'He reaped wheat' K.

The fact that the roots are identical in the absolutive and ergative constructions in Kabardian is due to an innovation, whereby the root vowel has dropped before the suffix *-a*: *səχe-a-s'* > *səχ-a-s'* 'I mowed'.

In Adyghe the root $-\chi e-$ undergoes a change in the absolute construction (13). The contrast between $-\chi a-$ and $-\chi e-$ in Perfect1 in Adyghe is an innovation: the stable intransitive root $-\chi e-$ (that is retained in other tenses) is changed into $-\chi a-$ before the perfect suffix $-\gamma$: $s\partial-\chi e-\gamma e > s\partial-\chi a-\gamma$ 'I was engaged in reaping'.

- (13) a. Se sə-χa-y I S1SG-reap-PERF 'I mowed' A.
b. Se k°ecə-r s-χə-yə I wheat-ABS S1SG-reap-PERF 'I mowed wheat' A.

Without going into a detailed analysis of the morphological changes that take place in the process of stabilisation of labile roots into stable ones, we note that in Kabardian stable roots (intransitive and transitive) that are diachronically related to labile roots in Adyghe, the final vowel appears in the future, imperfect, perfect² as well as in the infinitive and imperative. Thus, in these forms the intransitive roots ends in *-e* and the transitive root has a final *-ə* (14-15).

- (14) a. Se sə-χe-n-s' (sə-χe-t, sə-χe-ya-s')
 'I was reaping at that time' K.
- b. Se g°e3ə-r ø-s-χə-t (s-χə-ya-s')
 I was reaping (mowing at that time) wheat' K.
- (15) a. We ø-χe-ø
 you (S2SG)-reap-IMP
 'Reap, mow!' K.
- b. We g°e3ə-r ø-ø-χə-ø
 You wheat-ABS O3SG-(S2SG)-reap-IMP
 'Reap (mow) wheat!' K.

This rule applies to stable roots (differentiated by final vowels) of the types CV and CCV, as in χe-n 'reap, be engaged in reaping' K., χə-n 'reap, reap something' K., b3e-n 'hollow, be engaged in hollowing', b3ə-n 'hollow something out'. Other types of stable root in Kabardian, for instance CVC and CVCV, pattern differently (16).

- (16) a. We ø-g°aše-ø
 you (S2SG)-divide-IMP
 'Divide (be engaged in dividing)!' K.
- b. We s'°aq°e-r ø-ø-g°eš-ø
 you bread-ABS O3SG-(S2SG)-divide-IMP
 'Divide (divide into parts) the bread!' K.

Compare the Kabardian stable roots (16) and the labile roots in the Adyghe construction (17).

- (17) a. We ø-g°eš'ə-ø
 you (S2SG)-divide-IMP
 'Divide!' A.
- b. We haləy°ə-r ø-ø-g°eš'ə-ø
 you bread-ABS O3SG-(S2SG)-divide-IMP
 'Divide (divide into parts) the bread!' A.

Instead of the Adyghe labile root g°eš'ə-n 'part something', Kabardian has an intransitive root (16a), where the root final -ə of the labile construction has changed into an -e (and the medial -e to an -a), and a transitive root (16b), where the final -ə of the labile construction is dropped. Thus, the differences between the Adyghe labile roots and stable Kabardian roots are quite substantial.

The morphology of Circassian labile verb roots inherited from proto-Circassian differs in different morphological environments. As an example, in both Circassian languages the root of the labile verb ‘press, crush’ (trans., intrans.) is *p’ət’ə-n*. In the future it is identical in the two languages, but differs in the present and perfect:

- (18) a. Čerezə-r ø-p’ət’ə-š’t (me-p’ət’ə-ø)
 cherry-ABS S3SG-press-FUT (S3SG-press-PRES)
 (ø-p’ət’ə-γ)
 (S3SG-press-PERF)
 ‘Cherries will be pressed (is in press, was pressed)’ A.
- b. Baləj-r ø-p’ət’ə-nu-s’ (me-p’ət’-ø)
 cherry-ABS S3SG-press-FUT-ASSRT (S3SG-press-PRES)
 (ø-p’ət’-a-s’)
 (S3SG-press-PERF-ASSRT)
 ‘Cherries will be pressed (is in press, was pressed)’ K.
- (19) a. A-š’ čerezə-r ø-ə-p’ət’ə-š’t
 he-ERG cherry-ABS O3SG-S3SG-press-FUT
 (ø-je-p’ət’ə-ø)
 (O3SG-S3SG-press-PRES)
 ‘He will press (presses) cherries’ A.
- b. A-bə baləj-r ø-jə-p’ət’-nu-s’
 he-ERG cherry-ABS O3SG-S3SG-press-FUT-ASSRT
 (ø-je-p’ət’-ø) (ø-jə-p’ət’-a-s’)
 O3SG-S3SG-press-PRES (O3SG-S3SG-press-PERF-ASSRT)
 ‘He will press (presses, pressed) cherries’ K.

As seen above, Adyghe keeps the labile root with the final -ə in both the ergative and absolutive. In Kabardian, the root final -ə is dropped in the present and perfect. The fact that the final vowel -ə is dropped in (18-19) is not a morphological means of making the root stable, as the reduced root -*p’ət’*- has intransitive semantics in the absolutive construction (18b) and transitive semantics in the ergative construction (19b). At the same time, the reduction of the root vowel does not represent a purely phonetic process, as the reduction of the final -ə takes place only in the present and the perfect.

The material shows that simple verb roots in the labile construction were more common in earlier stages of the Circassian languages than in the modern languages. As noted above, the number of labile verbal roots is considerably higher in Adyghe than in Kabardian. The modern Adyghe language maintains in many cases the proto-Circassian situation, keeping the verb roots of the labile construction, whereas they are transformed into stable roots in Kabardian.

We note that the presence of labile roots differs even in dialects of Adyghe. For instance, the root *dəce-n* ‘stretch’ is used in absolutive and ergative constructions only in the Shapsug dialect (20).

- (20) a. *S'°e-r me-dəce-ø*
 leather-ABS S3SG-stretch-PRES
 ‘The leather is stretching’ (Shapsug)
- b. *S'°as'e-m s'°e-r ø-je-dəce-ø*
 tanner-ERG leather-ABS O3-S3SG-stretch-PRES
 ‘The tanner stretches the leather on (smth.)’ (Gishev 1968:45) A.

Adyghe shows a number of peculiarities in the process of stabilisation of labile roots. The proto-Circassian root **t'ə-n* ‘dig’ developed into stable forms in both the Circassian languages by morphological means (21).

- (21) a. *A-š' č'əg°ə-r ø-je-t'ə-ø*
 he-ERG earth-ABS O3SG-S3SG-dig-PRES
 ‘He digs (digs out) earth’ A.
- b. *A-bə s'°ə-r ø-je-t'°-ø*
 he-ERG earth-ABS O3SG-S3SG-dig-PRES
 ‘He digs (digs out) earth’ K.
- c. *A-r ma-t'e-ø*
 he-ABS S3SG-dig-PRES
 ‘He is digging’ A., K.

The proto-Circassian root of the labile construction **t'ə* has taken on the stable patterns in Adyghe by final vowels alternations *-ə/-e*, whereas in Kabardian the alternation is between the vowel *-ə* and zero marking. The form *-t'e-* is the intransitive root in both languages. In Adyghe the transitive root is *-t'ə-* and in Kabardian *-t'e-*.

Note that the Adyghe intransitive root *t'e*, in contrast to the Kabardian form *t'e*, functions as the root in two-place verbs (22):

- (22) a. *S'°əzə-r č'əg°ə-m ø-je-t'e-ø*
 woman-ABS earth-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-dig-PRES
 ‘The woman is digging in the mud’ A.
- b. **Fəzə-r s'°ə-m ø-j-o-t'e-ø* .
 woman-ABS earth-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-dig-PRES
 ‘The woman is digging in the earth’ K.

Such intransitive monovalent (21c) and bivalent (22a) roots in Adyghe that have become stable, correspond to monovalent roots of intransitive verbs in Kabardian.

In this case there is reason to believe that the three-way differentiation of the labile root – into monovalent and bivalent intransitive and bivalent transitive roots – is a late Adyghe innovation. The two-way differentiation of the same roots into monovalent intransitive and bivalent transitive roots, characteristic of Kabardian, probably represents an older stage. This assumption is based on the fact that there are no traces in any Kabardian dialects of a three-way differentiation of simple labile roots.

Even if the process of stabilisation of labile roots is more exhaustive in Kabardian, it has already affected a great number of simple roots in both languages. By the use of morphological means (vowel alternations) former simple labile roots have turned into (stable) transitive and intransitive roots in both Adyghe and Kabardian (Table 6.2):

Table 6.2 *Stabilization of labile roots marked by vowel alternation*

<i>Transitive</i>	<i>Intransitive</i>
də-n ‘sew’	de-n ‘sew’
bzə-n ‘cut out’	bze-n ‘cut out’
šxə-n ‘eat’	šxe-n ‘eat’
tχə-n ‘write’	tχe-n ‘write’
tə-n ‘give’	te-n ‘give’
pxə-n ‘sow’	pxe-n ‘sow’
thač’ə-n A. ‘clean’	thač’ə-n A. ‘be engaged in cleaning’
thes’ə-n K. ‘clean’	thes’ə-n K. ‘be engaged in cleaning’
gəč’ə-n A. ‘wash’	gəč’e-n A. ‘be engaged in washing’
z’əs’ə-n K. ‘wash’	z’əs’e-n K. ‘be engaged in washing’
pxenč’ə-n ‘sweep’	pxenč’e-n ‘sweep’
lež’ə-n A. ‘work (up)’	leže-n A. ‘work’
lež’ə-n K. ‘work (up)’	lez’e-n K. ‘work’
k’ə-n ‘walk, pass (some distance)’	k’e-n ‘walk’
čə-n A. ‘run (some distance)’	če-n A. ‘run’
žə-n K. ‘run’	že-n K. ‘run’

6.2.2 Stems with the prefix wə-

Included into this group are labile roots that have been derived from simple forms by the addition of the factitive prefix wə- to nominal forms. The verbal labile roots in this group differ morphologically. In some cases the forms are transparent; i.e. they are easily segmented into the factitive prefix and the nominal root and have the meaning ‘do/make something according to the

motivating nominal root'. There are comparatively few such roots in the Circassian languages (cf. Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 *Stems with the prefix wə-*

1. *wə-zenč'ə-n* A., *wə-zens''ə-n* K. 'straighten' — from *zanč'e* A. 'straight', *zans'e* K.
2. *wə-pep'c'ə-n* A., K. 'sharpen' — from *pap'c'e* A, K. 'sharp'
3. *wə-lənt'ə-n* A., K. 'make flexible, become flexible' — from *lant'e* A., K. 'flexible'
4. *wə-qəbzə-n* A., *wə-q'əbzə-n*, K. 'to clean' — from *qabze* A., *q'abze* K. 'clean'
5. *wə-s''əjə-n* A., *wə-f'ejə-n* K. 'make dirty, get dirty' — from *s''əj* A., *f'ej* K. 'dirty'
6. *wə-cek'ə-n* A., *wə-3eg'ə-n* K. 'blunt, become blunt' — from *cak'e* A., *3ag'e* K. 'blunt'
7. *wə-perēcə-n* A., *wə-belecə-n* K. 'tousle, ruffle' — from *perac* A., *elace* K. 'tousled'
8. *wə-s'ebə-n* A., K. 'soften, get soft' — from *s'abe* A., K. 'soft'

In verbs of this type of labile construction the prefix *wə-* always appears immediately before the nominal root (23).

- (23) a. *Ps'as'ə-m pel'tew-r ø-je-wə-qəbzə-ø*
 girl-ERG coat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-clean-PRES
 'The girl is cleaning the coat' A.
- b. *Pel'tew-r me-wə-qəbzə-ø*
 coat-ABS S3SG-F-clean-PRES
 'The coat is being cleaned' A.
- (24) a. *A-bə se-r ø-je-wə-3eg'-ø*
 he-ERG knife-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-blunt-PRES
 'He blunts (makes blunt) the knife' K.
- b. *Se-r je-wə-3eg'-ø*
 knife-ABS S3SG-F-blunt-PRES
 'The knife is becoming blunt' K.

6.2.2.1 Denominal roots

Among the labile verbs that include the factitive prefix *wə-* a subgroup may be identified, where the element *wə-* synchronically has become part of the root and may be recognized only on the basis of an etymological analysis. This subgroup of labile verbs is larger than the group of labile verbs where the

factitive is morphologically transparent (Kumakhov 1964:1958-162). The element *wə-* is not identified as an independent morpheme (25).

- (25) a. *Fəzə-m žane-r ø-je-wəp'əs'k'°-ø*
 girl-ERG shirt-ABS O3SG-S3SG-crumple-PRES
 'The woman crumples the shirt' K.
- b. *žane-r me-wəp'əs'k'°-ø*
 shirt-ABS S3SG-crumple-PRES
 'The shirt crumples' K.

The verbs in this subgroup make up a closed list (Table 6.4):

Table 6.4 *Denominal roots (wə-)*

<i>wəte-n</i>	A., K. 'knead, trample down'
<i>wəp'x°e-n</i>	A. 'cut'
<i>wəbəč'ə-n</i>	A. 'crumble', <i>wəq°e-n</i> A. 'break, be broken'
<i>wətənə-n</i>	A. <i>wədənə-n</i> , K. 'husk'
<i>wəʔe-n</i>	A. 'injure, wound, wound oneself'
<i>wəč'ə-n</i>	A., <i>wəs'ə-n</i> K. 'open, open one's mouth agape', 'stretch out'
<i>wəč'ə-n</i>	A. 'kill; tire, get tired'
<i>wələbə-n</i>	A. 'moisten, become moist'
<i>wələjə-n</i>	A., K. 'rust, become rusty'
<i>wətχe-n</i>	A. 'splash,'
<i>wəp'x°e-n</i>	A. 'cut, clip'
<i>wəterečž'e-n</i>	A. 'become dumb'
<i>wətezə-n</i>	A. 'incline, stoop'
<i>wəp'ešk'°ə-n</i>	A., <i>wəp'es'k'°ə-n</i> K. 'rumple, be crumpled'
<i>wəs'e-n</i>	A. 'stuff, become crowded'
<i>wətx°e-n</i>	A., K. 'stir up, make dull'
<i>wət'ereχə-n</i>	A. 'wind, reel'
<i>wəby°ə-n</i>	A., K. 'spread (out)'
<i>wələwə-n</i>	A. 'tire, get tired'
<i>wəx°ens'ə-n</i>	K. 'clean, clean oneself'
<i>wəχ°ens'°ə-n</i>	K. 'sift, screen'
<i>wəq'°edəjə-n</i>	K. 'draw out, stretch'
<i>wəp'č'etə-n</i>	A., <i>wəp's'ete-n</i> K. 'cut, slice'

The semantics of the verbs in Table 6.4 is more diverse than in Table 6.3, where the factitive prefix *wə-* and the nominal root keep their meaning. However, there is reason to assume that some roots of the labile construction

even in subgroup (6.4) have their origin in a combination of the factitive prefix and nominal roots. For instance, it is plausible that the Adyghe labile verb *wəč'ə-n* 'kill, tire, get tired' is derived from the factitive prefix and the nominal root *č'e* 'end, final'. The element *bɣ°ə* in the form *wəbɣ°ə-n* 'spread something (a carpet)' is phonetically and semantically close to the nominal *bɣ°e* 'broad'.

Verbal roots of subgroup (6.4) quite often undergo semantic changes, as illustrated in (26).

- (26) a. A-š' a-r ø-je-wəč'ə-ø
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-PRES
 'He kills him' A.
- b. A-r me-wəč'ə-ø
 he-ABS S3SG-hurt.oneself-PRES
 'He gets tired' A.

In (26) there is a difference in meaning between the transitive and intransitive uses of the labile root in 'he kills him' (26a) and 'he wears himself out' (26b). However, in the transitive paradigm this root is also used metaphorically 'tire', whereas the intransitive forms are mostly used with the meaning 'get tired'.

Different semantic changes have occurred in the two Circassian languages, as noted in the use of labile verbal roots (27).

- (27) a. A-š' ə-ʔe-r ø-je-wəq'ə-ø
 he-ERG POSS3SG-hand-ABS O3SG-S3SG-stretch-PRES
 'He stretches out his hand' A.
- b. A-bə jə-z'e-r (*jə-ʔe-r)
 he-ERG POSS3SG-mouth-ABS (*POSS3SG-hand-ABS)
 ø-je-wəq'-ø K.
 O3SG-S3SG-open-PRES
 'He opens his mouth' K.
- c. ə-ʔe-r me-wəq'ə-ø
 POSS3SG-hand-ABS S3SG-stretch-PRES
 'His hand stretches out' A.
- d. jə-z'e-r (*jə-ʔe-r)
 POSS3SG-mouth-ABS (*POSS3SG-hand-ABS)
 me-wəq'-ø
 S3SG-open-PRES
 'His mouth opens' K.

The labile verbs of this group are most common in Adyghe. The list given above shows that not all roots in Adyghe have parallel forms in Kabardian, for

instance, *wəlebə-n* A. ‘moisten, become moist’, *wətəzə-n* A. ‘incline, stoop’. Other Adyghe labile forms of type (6.4) have assumed stable patterns in Kabardian.

6.2.2.2 Verbal roots

The mechanisms occurring in the process of stabilisation of the labile roots are more or less the same in the two groups with nominal and verbal roots. Some special features of 6.2.2.2 are caused by phonetic changes in the nominal roots when they combine with the factitive prefix *wə-*. For instance, the first vowel of the nominal roots *lant'e* A., K. ‘flexible’ and *pap'c'e* ‘sharp’ undergoes changes when preceded by the factitive prefix.

- (28) a. *L'ə-m pčey'ə-r ø-je-wə-pəp'c'ə-ø*
 man-ERG stake-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-sharp-PRES
 ‘The man sharpens a stake’ A.
- b. *Pčey'ə-r me-wə-pəp'c'ə-ø*
 stake-ABS S3SG-F-sharp-PRES
 ‘The stake becomes sharp’ A.

In Kabardian, the modification of the root vowel in combination with the factitive prefix is more diverse (29). In the present, perfect, future, imperfect and pluperfect the first *-a-* (between consonants) changes into *-e-*, and the final vowel of such roots is lost in the present, perfect and imperfect and changed from *-e* into *-ə* in the future and pluperfect.

- (29) a. *Fəzə-m šəy'ə-r ø-je-wə-s'eb-ø*
 woman-ERG salt-ABS O3SG-S3SG-F-soft-PRES
 (*ø-je-wə-s'eb-a-s'* *ø-jə-wə-s'eb-t*
 PERF-ASSRT IMPF
ø-je-wə-s'ebə-nu-s' *ø-jə-wə-s'ebə-ya-s')*
 FUT-ASSRT PLUP-ASSRT
 ‘The woman atomizes the salt (makes soft, made soft, will make soft, made soft a long time ago)’ K.
- b. *Šəy'ə-r me-wə-s'eb-ø (ø-wə-s'eb-a-s' ø-wə-s'eb-t*
ø-wə-s'ebə-nu-s', ø-wə-s'ebə-ya-s') K.
 ‘The salt becomes soft (became soft, will become soft, has been soft)’

Some labile roots in Adyghe occur either in the absolutive or ergative constructions. For instance, the Adyghe labile root *wəterebže-n* ‘become / make dumb, numb’ is used only in the intransitive construction in Kabardian, whereas the transitive counterpart includes the causative prefix *ye-* (30):

- (30) a. $\text{ɭaq}^{\circ}\text{e-r}$ $\text{me-waderabz'e-}\emptyset$
 foot-ABS S3SG-become .numb-PRES
 ‘The foot becomes numb’ K.
- b. $\text{K}^{\circ}\text{adre}$ s'əsə-nə-m $\text{ɭaq}^{\circ}\text{e-r}$
 much sit.long-MSD-ERG foot-ABS
 $\emptyset\text{-je-ye-waderabz'e-}\emptyset$
 O3SG-S3SG-CAUS-become.numb-PRES
 ‘The foot becomes numb from sitting for a very long time’ (Lit.
 ‘long sit makes foot to become numb’) K.

6.2.3 Verbal stems with local prefixes

The group (6.2.3) is formed from bound roots in combination with local prefixes. Such roots are rather limited in number and are not used as free roots without the local prefixes. The following bound roots belong to this type:

Table 6.5 *Verbal stems with local prefixes*

A. -čə, -txə,	K. -č(ə)e, -tx(ə) ‘tear, rend’
A. -wətə,	K. -wəd(ə) ‘break, get broken’, ‘tear’
	K. $\text{-y}^{\circ}(ə)$ ‘run after, start in pursuit’
A. $\text{-teq}^{\circ}\text{ə}$ ‘pour’	
	K. -χ(ə) ‘open’
	K. -s'əč'(ə) ‘break, get broken’

Some examples:

- (31) a. Sabəj-m bže-r $\emptyset\text{-r}^{\circ}\text{-je-χ-}\emptyset$
 child-ERG door-ABS O3SG-LOC-S3SG-open-PRES
 ‘The child opens the door’ K.
- b. Bže-r $\emptyset\text{-r}^{\circ}\text{-o-χ-}\emptyset$
 door-ABS S3SG-LOC-DYN-open-PRES
 ‘The door opens’ K.
- (32) a. Č'ale-m məʔerəse-r $\emptyset\text{-p-je-wətə-}\emptyset$
 boy-ERG apple-ABS O3SG-LOC-S3SG-tear.away-PRES
 ‘The boy picks an apple’ K.
- b. Məʔerəse-r $\emptyset\text{-p-e-wətə-}\emptyset$
 apple-ABS S3SG-LOC-DYN-tear.away-PRES
 ‘The apple is being picked’ A.

Even though the roots in Table 6.5 are few in number, each of them occurs with different local prefixes and in this way a rather large group of labile verbs with local prefixes is formed. For instance, the root A. -čə, K. -č(ə) ‘tear, burst’ occurs in combination with such local prefixes as *p(ə)-*, *g°(e)-*, *χ(e)-*, *d(e)-*, *t(ə)-*. In combination with the different local prefixes, each prefixed form attains a concrete local meaning, as in K. *pə-čə-n* ‘tear from the front’, ‘fall from the front (for instance, from a tree)’, K. *g°e-čə-n* ‘tear from the side’, ‘fall from the side’, K. *χečə-n* ‘tear out from (i.e. the earth)’, ‘tear oneself away from’, K. *s’e-čə-n* ‘tear off from below’, ‘come off from below’.

The prefixed form is a trivalent transitive construction and bivalent in intransitive constructions. In the transitive form the initial slot is occupied by the direct object, the second slot by the indirect object, followed by the local prefix and the subject marker before the root (33).

- (33) Se we a-χe-m w-a-pə-s-χ°-a-s'
 I you he-PL-OERG O2SG-IO3PL-LOC-S1SG-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I drove you away from them from the front’ K.

The initial slot in the intransitive form is occupied by the subject, followed by the indirect object and the local prefix before the root:

- (34) Se a-χə-m s-a-pə-χ°-a-s'
 I he-PL-OERG S1SG-IO3PL-LOC-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I drove them away from the front’ K.

All the personal affixes are overtly marked in (33) and (34). If the singular form had been chosen for the indirect objects (as in (35-36)), the corresponding slots are ø-marked.

- (35) a. Se we a-bə wə-ø-pə-s-χ°-a-s'
 I you he-OERG O2SG-IO3SG-LOC-S1SG-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I drove you away from him at the front’ K.
- b. Se a-bə sə-ø-pə-χ°-a-s'
 I he-OERG S1SG-IO3SG-LOC-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I drew away from him from the front’

The third person singular and plural are ø-marked in the transitive construction (36a). The subject of the intransitive construction (36b) is also marked in the same way.

- (36) a. Se a-r a-bə ø-ø-pə-s-χ°-a-s'
 I he-ABS he-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S1SG-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘I drove him away from him at the front’ K.

- (36) b. A-r a-bə ø-ø-pə-χ°-a-s'
 I he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-LOC-drive.away-PERF-ASSRT
 'He drove away from him at the front' K.

6.2.4 Stems with the reciprocal prefix *ze-*

The stems described in 6.2.4 form labile stems in combination with the prefix *ze-*. Here, as with the local prefix, the reciprocal meaning of *ze-* is weakened: A., K. *pə-čə-n* 'drive/draw away at the front', *ze-pə-čə-n* 'tear (i.e. rope)' A. *g°e-wətə-n*, K. 'beat back, beat off' *g°e-wədə-n*, A. *ze-g°e-wətə-n*, K. *ze-g°e-wədə-n* 'chop, break, cleave'.

- (37) a. Ps'as'e-m tχələp'e-r ø-ze-ʔ-je-txə-ø
 girl-ERG paper-ABS O3SG-RECIP-LOC-S3SG-tear-PRES
 'The girl tears the paper' A.
- b. Tχələp'e-r ø-ze-ʔ-e-txə-γ
 paper-ABS S3SG-RECIP-LOC-tear-PERF
 'The paper was torn' A.
- (38) a. Pxas''e-m pxeby°ə-r ø-ze-g°-je-wəd-ø
 carpenter-ERG plank-ABS O3SG-RECIP-LOC-S3SG-beat-PRES
 'The carpenter chops the plank (take to pieces)' K.
- b. Pxeby°ə-r ø-ze-g°-o-wəd-ø
 plank-ABS S3SG-RECIP-LOC-DYN-beat-PRES
 'The plank chops (takes to pieces)' K.

In addition to the labile verb stems 'reciprocal prefix + local prefix + dependent root' found in (37-38), other labile verb stems occur: 'reciprocal prefix + local prefix + free root': A. *ze-χe-q°əte-n* 'break, pull down, get broken', from *q°əte-n* 'break, get broken', A., K. *ze-χe-p'ət'e-n* 'press, crush' from *p'ət'ə-n* 'press'.

- (39) a. L'ə-m wəne-r ø-ze-χ-i-q°əta-γ
 man-ERG house-ABS O3SG-RECIP-LOC-S3SG-demolish-PERF
 'The man demolished the house' K.
- b. Wəne-r ø-ze-χe-q°əta-γ
 house-ABS S3SG-RECIP-LOC-demolish-PERF
 'The house collapsed' K.
- (40) a. A-bə tχələ-r ø-ze-χ-je-c'ale-ø
 he-ERG book-ABS O3SG-RECIP-LOC-S3SG-soil-PRES
 'He soils (makes dirty) the book' K.

- (40) b. Tχəłə-r ø-ze-χ-o-c'ale-ø
 book-ABS S3SG-RECIP-LOC-DYN-soil-PRES
 'The book is being soiled' K.

In (39-40) the transitive verbs are trivalent and the intransitive ones bivalent. The reciprocal prefix occupies the position usually occupied by the indirect object marker: in transitives it is placed between the direct object and the local prefix, and in intransitives between the subject marker and the local prefix.

Labile stems formed according to the model 'Reciprocal prefix + local prefix + Root + Intensive suffix (- *h(ə) <*)' are productive (41).

- (41) a. Fəzə-m merak'°e-r
 woman-ERG berry-ABS
 ø-ze-χ-i-p'ət'ə-h-a-s'
 O3SG-RECIP-LOC-S3SG-press-INTENS-PERF-ASSRT
 'The woman crushed the berry' K.
- b. Merak'°e-r ø-ze-χe-p'ət'ə-h-a-s'
 berry-ABS S3SG-RECIP-LOC-press-INTENS-PERF-ASSRT
 'The berry was crushed' K.

6.2.5 Stems with the orientational prefix

This group includes both bound and free roots, which form labile stems with the orientational prefix *q'*-. These stems are more frequent in Kabardian than in Adyghe. Examples of such verbs are *q'e-γə-n* 'sob out' (Trans.), 'have a good cry, burst into tears' (Intrans.), *q'e-g°əpsəsə-n* 'invent, make up' (Trans.), 'think' (Intrans.), *q'e-χ°əte-n* 'find, seek' (Trans.), 'be found, appear' (Intrans.), *q'e-z'ə-n* 'vomit, throw up; sick (he feels sick)' (Trans., Intrans.).

- (42) a. Tχak'°e-m tawrəxə-r ø-q'-i-g°əpsəs-a-s'
 writer-ERG tale-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-make.up-PERF-ASSRT
 'The writer made up the tale' K.
- b. Tχak'°e-r k°edə-m ø-q'-ø-o-g°əpsəs-ø
 writer-ABS many-OERG S3SG-OR-IO3SG-DYN-think-PRES
 'The writer is thinking about many things' K.

Some stems used intransitively occur also without the orientational prefix. In such cases, the third person marker changes as well as the root vowel, cf. (42b) and (43).

- (43) Tχak'°e-r me-g°əpsəse-ø
 writer-ABS S3SG-think-PRES
 'The writer is thinking' K.

Sometimes transitive and intransitive stems differ only with respect to the orientational marker, which is present in the transitive form (44):

- (44) a. A-r me-ləx°e-ø
 he-ABS S3SG-look.for-PRES
 ‘He is seeking’ K.
- b. A-bə a-r ø-q’-je-ləx°e-ø
 he-ERG he-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-look.for-PRES
 ‘He looks for him’

The intransitive stem in (42b) is bivalent: the orientational marker presupposes an indirect object. The indirect object in (42b) is zero marked. Compare also (45):

- (45) a. A-bə zəg°e-r ø-q’-je-x°əte-ø
 he-ERG something-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-look.for-PRES
 ‘He finds something’ K.
- b. A-r abdjež ø-q’-ø-o-x°ətə-ø
 he-ABS there S3SG-OR-IO3SG-DYN-be.found-PRES
 ‘He appears there’

7 Reduced (semiergative) constructions

Along with the classical (prototypical) type of ergative construction in the Circassian languages we find reduced (semiergative) constructions. These have rather diverse structures, but all have it in common that they include a transitive verb. Different types of reduced construction are distinguished on the basis of what type of transitive verb is used. In reduced constructions one of the parts of the ergative construction is lacking – the ergative marked subject or the direct object in the absolutive marked position. In more rare cases we find reduced constructions with a transitive verb but without an ergative subject and with a direct object in the absolutive case. Reduced constructions originate from a semantic reanalysis of one of the components of the ergative construction: the ergative subject, the direct object or the transitive verb. In addition to this, each of the members of the ergative construction, as a part of the reduced construction quite often belongs to a particular semantic class. The diachronic meaning of parts of the reduced ergative construction differs from how it is perceived synchronically, by presentday speakers of the language. Below, we will discuss different types of reduced (semiergative) construction, all characterized by the fact that they include a transitive verb.

7.1 Direct object + bivalent transitive verb (I)

Semiergative constructions of the type *direct object* + *bivalent transitive verb* are characterized by the absence of an ergative subject. From a synchronic point of view, the direct object is understood as a real subject in the absolutive case and the transitive verb is understood as an intransitive verb, even if it has all the morphological features of a transitive verb. Some of these constructions originate from constructions of the SOV type:

- (1) a. Jəlesə-r ø-jə-wəχ-a-s'
year-ABS O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF-ASSRT
‘The year finished’ < ‘s/he, it finished the year’ K.
- b. Dəyə-r ø-jə-wbəd-a-s'
sun-ABS O3SG-S3SG-take-PERF-ASSRT
‘The sun stopped’ < ‘s/he, it took the sun’ K.
- c. yave-r ø-jə-səž-ø
harvest-ABS O3SG-S3SG-burn-PRES
‘The harvest burns’ (‘perishes because of the hard drought’) K.

The direct object in (1a-c) appears in the absolutive case with a transitive verb, as is required in a typical ergative construction. In this construction the ergative marked subject is missing. In some cases it is possible to insert the missing ergative marked subject, in other cases this is not possible. For instance, in (1c), the subject position may be occupied by nouns such as A. *mas'°e*, K. *maf'e* 'fire', A. *təye*, K. *dəye* 'sun', A. *fabe*, K. *χ°abə* 'heat'.

- (2) Maf'e-m (dəye-m, χ°abe-m) yave-r ø-jə-səž-ø
 fire-ERG (sun-ERG, heat-ERG) harvest-ABS O3SG-S3SG-burn-PRES
 'The fire (sun, heat) burns the harvest' K.

The change in such cases from an ergative SOV construction to a reduced OV construction can be explained in terms of a syntactic ellipsis of the subject. However, in (1c) it is not necessary to insert a subject in the ergative marked position. The normal functioning of (1c) without the subject is explained by the fact that the initial direct object is understood as the logical subject and the verb as an intransitive verb, even if it keeps its morphological characteristics. As in any bivalent transitive verb the 3rd person singular direct object is ø-marked whereas the 3rd person singular direct object is marked by the prefix *je-*. It is thus clear that the initial noun phrase in (1c) historically (and grammatically) is the direct object of a transitive verb, even if (1c) is perceived by modern speakers as an absolutive construction. In comparison with (1c), examples (1a-b) are even more desemantized. Construction (1a) does not allow the insertion of an ergative subject, despite its transitive structure.

Example (3) is possible as a typical ergative construction. In contrast to (1a) it does not undergo any semantic change and maintains its original syntactic status.

- (3) A-bə jəlesə-r ø-jə-wəχ-a-s'
 he-ERG year-ABS O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF-ASSRT
 'He finished the year' K.

Example (1b) does not need subject NP in the ergative position, despite the fact that the verb maintains the transitive type morphology: ø-marker of the third person direct object and the marker *jə-* for the third person singular subject. There is no doubt that this construction historically originates from an ergative SOV clause, where the agent (the subject in the ergative position) was understood to be some external force. Example (1b) is interpreted as 'A solar eclipse took place', originating from the clause 'Something took the sun'. In this clause there is no subject governed by the transitive verb. It could be that the absence of the subject could be connected with the taboo status of naming the sun. However, it is the case that the transitive verb and its direct object function without the transitive subject. It could be noted that only a few nouns may be used here instead of the noun *dəye* 'sun'. These nouns include 'moon' and *bze* 'language' (4).

- (4) a. Mazə-r ø-jə-wbəd-a-s'
 Moon-ABS O3SG-S3SG-take-PERF-ASSRT
 'The moon stopped', Lit. 'He (she, it) took the moon'
- b. Jə-bze-r ø-jə-wbəd-a-s'
 POSS3SG-tongue-ABS O3SG-S3SG-take-PERF-ASSRT
 'He was deprived of speech', < Lit. 'He (she, it) took his tongue'

Despite the heavy constraints on the nouns in the subject position in this type of construction, these cases involve a subject (often omitted) that affects the object represented by nouns such as *dəye* 'sun', *maze* 'moon', *bze* 'language, speech'. The semantics of the verb 'take, grab' also relates to the high agentivity of the understood (but not mentioned) subject. The range of verbs that occur in such reduced constructions is lexically constrained. In (1b and 5) it is only possible to use the verb *wəbədən* 'take, grab'; in (5), in parallel to *wəbədən*, the verb *pəčə-n* 'tear off, remove'.

- (5) Jə-bze-r ø-p-i-č-a-s'
 POSS3SG-tongue-ABS O3SG-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF-ASSRT
 'His speech stopped', < Lit. 'He (she, it) tore off his tongue' K.

Lexical and semantic constraints are found also with other constructions. As the direct object in (1a), nouns denoting time are used: A., K. *zəman* 'time', *jəles* 'year', *maze*, A. *mafe*, K. *maχ^oe* 'day', A. *səhat*, K. *səhet* 'hour', A. *taqiq*, K. *daq'iq'e* 'minute' etc.

- (6) Zəmanə-r (maze-r, maχ^oe-r, səhetə-r, daq'iq'e-r)
 time-ABS (month-ABS, day-ABS, hour-ABS, minute-ABS)
 ø-jə-wəχ-a-s'
 S3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF-ASSRT
 'Time (month, day, hour, minute) finished', K.
 < Lit. 'He (she, it) finished the time (month, day, hour, minute)'

The noun *zawe* 'war' may also function as the direct object (as shown in (1a)) in the sense 'a certain period'.

- (7) Zawe-r ø-jə-wəχ-a-s'
 war-ABS O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF-ASSRT
 'The war finished', < Lit. 'He (she, it) finished the war'

The most common transitive verb used in cases such as (1a) is the phasal verb *wəχə-n* 'finish'. Another phasal verb *wəble-n* 'begin' may also occur here (8).

- (8) Zawe-r ø-jə-wəbl-a-s'
 war-ABS O3SG-S3SG-begin-PERF-ASSRT K.
 ‘The war began’

However, the use illustrated in (9) is not possible.

- (9) *Maχ°e-r (*səhetə-r, *daq'iq'ə-r) ø-jə-wəbl-a-s'
 *day-ABS (hour-ABS, minute-ABS) O3SG-S3SG-begin-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The day (hour, minute) began’

The transitive phasal verb *wəblə-n* ‘begin’ has, in contrast to *wəχə-n* ‘finish’, a small range of nouns that may occur in this construction. As the direct object in (1c) nouns denoting plants, grass, vegetables etc. are used. Thus, the lexical constraints in (1c) are not so heavy as was noted with respect to (1a-b). Compare (10) with (1c).

- (10) G°e3ə-r (he-r, mešə-r, nartəχ°ə-r, bz'ənə-r)
 wheat-ABS (barley-, millet-, maize-, onion-ABS)
 ø-je-səž-ø
 O3SG-S3SG-burn-PRES
 ‘The wheat (barley, millet, maize, onion) burns’, < Lit. ‘He (she, it) burns the wheat (barley, millet, maize, onion)’

The constructions above in (1-10) are characterized by one grammatical feature that distinguishes them from ordinary ergative constructions. In (1-10) the direct object of the transitive verb has to be marked by the absolutive marker *-r*. Thus, (11) instead of (10) is not possible.

- (11) *G°e3-ø (*he-ø, *meš-ø, *nartəχ°-ø, *bz'ən-ø)
 *wheat-ABS (barley, millet, mazie, onion)
 ø-je-səž-ø
 O3SG-S3SG-burn-PRES
 ‘The wheat (barley, millet, maize, onion) burns’

In contrast to the reduced construction in (11), it is possible to omit the direct object marker *-r* in (12) (an ordinary ergative construction).

- (12) Maf'e-m g°e3-ø (he-ø, meš-ø, nartəχ°-ø, bz'ən-ø)
 fire-ERG wheat-(ABS) (barley-, millet-, maize-, onion-(ABS))
 ø-je-s-ø
 O3SG-S3SG-burn-PRES
 ‘The fire burns (destroys) wheat (barley, millet, maize, onion)’

As shown in the examples, the grammatical opposition definite–indefinite is not available in semiergative constructions, as the marker *-r* is obligatory in direct object position (i.e. ø-marking and the indefinite form is not available). As

pointed out above, such nouns as A. *təye*, K. *dəye* ‘sun’, A., K. *maze* ‘moon’ do not differentiate the category definite–indefinite. However, in ordinary ergative constructions these nouns allow the alternation $\emptyset$ /*-r*, which does not influence their case function (13).

- (13) A-š təye-(r) $\emptyset$ -je-łəy°ə- $\emptyset$
 he-ERG sun-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-see-PRES
 ‘He sees the sun’

The presence or absence of the marker *-r* on the noun in (13) may alternate freely, i.e. it does not change the case function or definiteness of the direct object *dəye-(r)* ‘sun’. Such nouns as the ones above denoting plants (‘wheat, barley, millet, maize, etc.’) or time (‘year, month, day, hour, minute’) differentiate the category definite–indefinite in the ordinary ergative construction, but as direct objects in semiergative constructions (6, 10) only *r*-marking is possible.

7.2 Indirect object + trivalent transitive verb (II)

An ordinary ergative construction with a trivalent transitive verb (14) includes a transitive subject in the ergative case, a direct object in the absolutive case and an indirect object.

- (14) A-bə de- $\emptyset$ a-χe-m
 he-ERG we-(ABS) he-PL-OERG
 d-a-č’ə-ri-č-a-s’
 O1PL-IO3PL-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘He tore us off (separated) from them’ K.

In the semiergative construction under consideration in this section two main NPs are missing: the subject and the direct object. The trivalent transitive verbs in this construction type are derived with the help of prefixes. They include locative prefixes that indicate the location of the indirect object of the semiergative construction (15).

- (15) a. Mafe-m $\emptyset$ - $\emptyset$ -qə-č’-i-č’ə-y
 day-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-OR-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF
 ‘Day was shortened (got smaller)’, Lit. < he (she, it) tore off
 something from the day’ A.
- b. Šə-m $\emptyset$ - $\emptyset$ -č’ə-ri-č-a-s’
 milk-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The milk was lessened (became less)’, Lit. < ‘He (she, it) tore off
 something from the milk’ K.

It might seem difficult to explain the absence of the subject and direct object NP of the trivalent transitive verb meaning ‘remove, tear off smth. from smth.’ Even though there is no lexical subject or direct object in this clause, the verb includes an overt subject marker (the prefix *i-* in (15a) and *ri-* in (15b) – compare the subject marker in the ordinary ergative construction in (14)).

There are not many constructions of this type in the Circassian languages, but their special features become evident when compared with ordinary ergative and other semiergative constructions.

Semiergative (reduced) constructions are perceived as absolutive constructions. This reanalysis is emphasized not only by the fact that it is not possible to include a subject NP, but also by the word order used. The initial NP is associated with the logical subject and the verb is understood as an intransitive verb.

The initial NP in (15a-b) is perceived as the transitive subject. From the grammatical point of view, however, there is no doubt that this NP is an indirect object of a trivalent transitive verb and that is connected to the locative prefix in the transitive verb.

A grammatical feature that is shared by the construction types (II) and (III) is that they do not distinguish the category definite-indefinite. In construction (II) the case marker *-r* does not alternate with *-ø* and in construction type (III) the case marker *-m* does not alternate with *-ø*. As illustrated in (16a-b), construction (15a-b) does not allow *ø*-marking of the NP.

- (16) a. *Mafe-*ø* *ø-ø-qə-č’-je-čə-γ*
 *day-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-OR-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF
 ‘A day was shortened (became shorter)’ A.
- b. *Šə-*ø* *ø-ø-č’ə-ri-č-a-s’*
 *milk-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S3SG-tear.off-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘Milk was lessened (became less)’ K.

In ordinary ergative constructions this differentiation is available in indirect objects (Kumakhov 1971).

7.3 Direct obj. + indirect obj. + trivalent transitive verb (III)

Both in construction type (II) and (III) the trivalent transitive verb includes a locative prefix which requires the presence of an indirect object. In contrast to type (II), a direct object NP is governed by the verb in type (III). A transitive subject is lacking in type (III), cf. (17a-b).

- (17) a. $\text{ʔ}^\circ\text{ə}\gamma^\circ\text{e-r}$ wəne-m
 smoke-ABS room-OERG
 $\text{ø-ø-qə-s''-i-χ}^\circ\text{-a-s'}$
 O3SG-IO3SG-OR-LOC-S3SG-hunt/press-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The smoke penetrated (came in) into the room, Lit. < ‘He (she, it)
 turned the smoke into the room’ K.
- b. Sabe-r ʔene-m ø-ø-tə-ri-h-a-s'
 dust-ABS table-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S3SG-carry-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The dust lay on the table’ (=‘The table was covered by dust’),
 Lit. ‘He (she, it) brought (laid) dust on the table’ K.

In (17a-b) the grammatical direct object in the absolutive case ($\text{ʔ}^\circ\text{ə}\gamma^\circ\text{e-r}$ ‘smoke’, sabe-r ‘dust’) is understood as the logical intransitive subject. The whole construction is perceived as being similar to a bivalent intransitive one.

- (18) $\text{ʔ}^\circ\text{ə}\gamma^\circ\text{e-r}$ wəne-m ø-ø-s''-i-h-a-s'
 smoke-ABS room-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S3SG-go-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The smoke came in (penetrated) into the room’

The position of the logical subject (grammatical direct object) is usually occupied by nouns denoting different processes in nature: $\text{ʔ}^\circ\text{ə}\gamma^\circ\text{e}$ ‘smoke’ sabe ‘dust’, z'ə ‘wind’, psə ‘water’, wešχ ‘rain’, wes ‘snow’, $\text{pšə}\gamma^\circ\text{e}$ ‘cloud’ etc.

In contrast to construction type (II), type (III) allows a differentiation of indefinite and indefinite forms: the grammatical direct object may occur in the ø- or r- marked form. When the ø- marked form is chosen, the preferred word order is IO-O-V.

The indirect object in construction type (III) – as in type (II) – is always connected to the locative prefix and marked by the oblique ergative case (-m).

7.4 Ergative subject + transitive verb (IV)

In construction type (IV) the direct object NP, present in the ordinary ergative construction, is missing.

- (19) a. Fəzə-m ø-s''-i-ʔ-a-s'
 woman-ERG O3SG-LOC-S3SG-move-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman rushed away’ K.
- b. Sabəj-m $\text{ø-q'-je-k}^\circ\text{ə-h-ø}$.
 child-ERG O3SG-OR-S3SG-go-DS-PRES
 ‘The child is walking’ K

A difference between (19a) and (19b) is that the first example is not conceivable with a direct object, whereas the second example has a

corresponding ergative construction with a direct object (20), which also is accompanied by a change in the meaning of the verb.

- (20) Sabəj-m wənə-r ø-q-je-k'°ə-h-ø
 child-ERG house-ABS O3SG-OR-S3SG-go.around-DS-PRES
 'The child is going around the house' K.

Example (19b) is understood as lacking a direct object (even if it has a corresponding ordinary ergative construction). The transitive verb in (19b) has a specific morphological structure: it includes the orientational prefix *q'*- (more rarely *n*-) and the derivational suffix *-h*. The transitive verb root is formed with vowel alternation *e* (intransitive) > *ə* (transitive). This is a well-known and common model for transitivity in the Circassian languages, cf. *k'°e-n* 'go' (intrans.), *k'°ə-n* 'pass' (trans.); *že-n* 'run' (intrans.), *žə-n* 'run past' etc. Verbs of the type *q'e-k'°ə-hə-n* 'go round', *qe-žə-hə-n* 'run round' do not take direct objects, even if they have a characteristic morphological structure of a transitive verb. For this reason, such verbs are classified both as transitive and intransitive in different dictionaries. For instance, the verb *q'e-k'°ə-hə-n*, that does not take a direct object in (19b), and the same verb with a direct object (illustrated in (20)), is given in the sense 'go' (intr.) and in the sense 'go around' (trans.) in the Kabardino-Russian Dictionary (1957:179). Other verbs are treated in a similar way, for instance: *q'e-žə-hə-n* 'run' (intr.) and 'run round' (trans.) and other.

Moreover, the primary transitive semantics of some verbs of this type is weakened and the verbs are used only or mostly as intransitive verbs. The transitive verb *q'e-žedə-hə-n*, in this group, is treated only as an intransitive verb in the Kabardino-Russian Dictionary (1957:177). This is not a mistake; in the modern language the verb is primarily used as an intransitive verb in the sense 'wander, stagger, shake'.

- (21) L'ə-m ø-q'-je-žedə-h-ø
 man-ERG O3SG-OR-S3SG-go-DS-PRES
 'The man wanders (staggers)' K.

These verbs occur not only as bivalent, but also as tri- and tetravalent forms when they combine with version, comitative, locative and other valency changing categories.

- (22) S°əzə'-m sabəj-m ø-ø-qə-d-i-k'°ə-hə-γ
 woman-ERG child-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-OR-COM-S3SG-go-DS-PERF
 'The woman was going with the child' A.

- (23) Šəw-m γ°eg°ə-m ø-ø-d-i-3əχ-a-s'
 rider-ERG road-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-LOC-S3SG-throw.down-PERF-ASSRT
 'The rider made a turn off (from) the road' K.

A similar construction is shown in (24). The verb is grammatically transitive, but does not include any direct object. The indirect object that is connected to the locative marker in the verb appears in the instrumental case:

- (24) Šəw-m jəps'e-č'e ø-q'ə-də-ri-ɽ'ent'ej-a-s'
 rider-ERG south-INSTR O3SG-OR-LOC-S3SG-turn.to-PERF-ASSRT
 'The rider made his way towards the south' K.

The NP marked by the instrumental case acquires adverbial meaning.

- (25) a. A-bə jəs'xere-č'e ø-jə-ri-ye-zə-χ-a-s'
 he-ERG north-INSTR O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-CAUS-turn.to-PERF-ASSRT
 'He made his way towards the north' K.
- b. S'ak'°e-m ø-q'-i-ye-z-a-s'
 hunter-ERG O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS-turn-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter turned here (in this direction)' K.

Both verbs in (25a-b) include the causative prefix *ye-*, which is a sign of transitivity. These causative verbs require direct objects, but they are missing despite the fact that the verb form include direct object slots. Note that the causative verbs form an ordinary ergative construction in another use (26a-b).

- (26) a. A-bə jə-ɽe-r
 he-ERG POSS3SG-hand-ABS
 ø-jə-ri-ye-zə-χ-a-s'
 O3SG-IO3SG-S3SG-CAUS-turn.down-PERF-ASSRT
 'He lowered his hand' K.
- b. S'ak'°e-m jə-s'he-r
 hunter-ERG POSS3SG-head-ABS
 ø-q'-i-ye-z-a-s'
 O3SG-OR-S3SG-CAUS- turn-PERF-ASSRT
 'The hunter turned his head here (in this direction)' K.

A study of the material shows that the absence of a direct object in construction type (IV) has to do with a reanalysis of the transitive verb, i.e. its use as an intransitive verb – with an ergative marked subject and transitive verbal morphology.

7.5 Reflexive and semiergative constructions

Reflexive constructions have some similarities to the reduced constructions of type (IV), i.e. the ones including an ergative subject and a transitive verb. None of them includes a direct object NP in the absolutive case. An important

difference between them is that the reflexive construction is neither reduced nor semantically reanalyzed.

- (27) a. Ps'as'e-m z-i-fepa-γ
 girl-ERG REFL-S3SG-dress-PERF
 'The girl dressed' (Lit. 'The girl dressed herself') A.
- b. A-š' z-je-ye-psč'ə-ø
 he-ERG REFL-S3SG-CAUS-wash-PRES
 'He washes' (Lit. 'He washes himself') A.

The transitivity of the verb is expressed both morphologically and syntactically. In (27a) the verb includes the transitive marker – the subject marker *i-* in the third person singular (perfect). The syntactic feature that manifests transitivity is the ergative (*-m*) marked subject. Example (27b) includes two markers that are associated with transitivity, the subject marker *je-* in the third person singular (present) and the causative prefix *ye-*. The ergative subject in (27b) is marked by the ergative case *-š'*, which is characteristic of demonstrative pronouns. The reflexive constructions in (27a-b) follow the model 'ergative subject + transitive verb'. The function of a direct object is filled by the reflexive prefix *z-*. This prefix occupies the direct object slot of the transitive verb. Compare the transitive verb in (28a) and its reflexive counterpart (28b).

- (28) a. w-i-fəpa-γ
 O2SG-S3SG-dress-PERF
 'He dressed you' A.
- b. z-i-fəpa-γ
 REFL-S3SG-dress-PERF
 'He dressed' (Lit. 'He dressed himself') A.

Reflexive verb forms may be polyvalent. (28c) includes an indirect object:

- (28) c. Ps'as'e-m s'°əz-χe-m
 girl-ERG woman-PL-OERG
 z-a-d-i-fəpa-γ
 REFL-IO3PL-COM-S3SG-dress-PERF A.
 'The girl dressed (Lit. 'dressed herself') together with the women'

In reflexive causatives the causee appears not as the direct but as an indirect object (in the oblique ergative case) (29a). Example (29b) shows a causative verb based on an intransitive verb. Here the causee is marked in the direct object slot and takes the absolutive case.

- (29) a. A-š' l'ə-χe-m z-a-ri-ye-fəpa-ye-χ
 he-ERG man-PL-OERG REFL-IO3PL-S3SG-CAUS-dress-PERF-PL
 'He forced the men to dress (to dress themselves)' A.
- b. A-š' l'ə-χe-r ø-ə-ye-lež'a-ye-χ
 he-ERG man-PL-ABS O3PL-S3SG-CAUS-work-PERF-PL
 'He forced the men to work' A.

7.6 Summary of construction types

In Table 7.1 the construction types are summarized. All semiergative constructions include a transitive verb that follows the ergative model with respect to personal markers and case. These constructions are defective in the sense that they lack one or two of the arguments that are required on the basis of the verbal structure. The verbs have been reanalyzed and are perceived by modern speakers as intransitives.

Table 7.1 *Reduced (semiergative) constructions: Construction types*

	A	O	IO	V [trans.]
	ERG	ABS	OERG	
I O+bivalent (7.1)	ø			ø-jə-wəχ-a-s' 'it finished'
II IO+trivalent (7.2)	ø	ø		ø-ø-č'ə-ri-č-a-s' 'it tore off'
III O+IO+trivalent (7.3)	ø			ø-ø-qə-s'-i-χ°-a-s' 'it pressed'
IV A + bivalent (7.4)		ø		ø-s'-i-ʔ-a-s' 's/he rushed away'

8 Inversion (affective) constructions

The inversion (affective) construction did not receive much attention in the early period of Circassian linguistics. In the grammatical works by Lopatinskij (1891), Borukaev (1932), Jakovlev & Ashkhamaf (1941), Nogma (1959), inversion is not singled out as a separate construction. Its first mention as a separate construction is found in the Kabardino-Cherkess grammar (1957:198), where it is characterized as having an intransitive verb with its subject in the ergative case and a direct object formally present, but not affected by the action:

Инверсивная конструкция простого предложения имеет следующие особенности: сказуемое в ней выражается непереходным глаголом, а подлежащее стоит в эргативном падеже. В предложении такой конструкции формально наличествует прямой объект, но на него действие не распространяется, а остается при самом субъекте: *L'əz'əm pselen f'ef't* 'Старик любил говорить' ... [The inversion construction of the simple clause has the following characteristics: its predicate is expressed by an intransitive verb, while the subject is in the ergative. In this construction there is formally a direct object present, but it is not affected by the action, which remains by the subject itself: *L'əz'əm pselen f'ef't* 'The old man liked to talk'. *Transl. KV*] Kabardino-Cherkess grammar (Abitov et.al. 1957:198)

It is not quite clear what is meant by the statement 'a direct object formally present'. This could be interpreted as a grammatical requirement for the presence of a direct object, thus concerning ergativity rather than inversion.

The Adyghe grammar of 1966 states that the inversive construction is possible only in the presence of inversion verbs and that logical subjects of inversion (intransitive) verbs appear in the ergative case (with dative meaning), whereas the logical object takes the nominative case: *Č'ale-m tχəχe-r jəɽeχ* 'The boy has the book' (Rogava & Kerasheva 1966: 371). It should be noted that the formulation 'ergative case (with dative meaning)' corresponds to what is called the oblique ergative in the present study.

As noted in, for instance, the collective monograph *Strukturnye obščnosti kavkazskix jazykov* (Klimov 1978:37-45), inversive or affective constructions are found in all three Caucasian groups: *ttu-n* (Dat.) *ta kkavkkunni* 'I saw him' Lak, *so-na* (Dat.) *ford bainab* 'I saw the sea' Ingush, *i-sə-moun* 'it I have' Abkhaz, *cicw-s* (Dat.) *žeyd xaq'luni* 'The cat is afraid of the dog' Svan.

Inversion in the Circassian languages is less common than in the Kartvelian languages and limited to a number of affective inversion verbs and derived forms such as non-volitional and potential forms. However, it is interesting to note that the types of inversion found in the Circassian languages also are represented in the Kartvelian languages. Megrelian may be used to illustrate

this. Common inversion verbs are *mok'o* 'I want', *miyu/mp'uns* 'I have', *gomoč'q'ordu* 'I forgot', *mop'c'ons* 'I like'. A Megrelian nonvolitional form (*me-* -ə) is shown in *para-k memdinə* 'I lost the money (unintentionally)' and a potential inersive form (*ma-* -e) is *midmaʔoninek* 'I can take you there'.¹ As pointed out by J. Nichols (p.c.), Ingush and Chechen have dative experiencer subjects that share properties of both the Georgian experiencers and the Circassian inverse constructions.

Furthermore, we note different subject features of the grammatical object in inversion with respect to word order and coreference/control properties.

8.1 Inversive verbs

Examples of grammatically intransitive verbs that appear in inversion constructions are *jəʔe-n* 'have', A. *faje-n*, K. *χ^oejə-n* 'want'. The logical subject is marked by the oblique ergative case and an object personal marker. The logical object is marked by the absolutive case and the subject personal marker. The three schemas for transitive, intransitive and inersive marking are summarized in the table below.

Table 8.1. Grammatical marking patterns

	<i>Case</i>	<i>Agr in V</i>	<i>Word order</i>
Transitive			
Subj. (A)	ERG	O- <u>S</u> -	<u>S</u> OV
Dir.Obj.	ABS	<u>O</u> -S-	S <u>O</u> V
Intransitive			
Subj. (S)	ABS	<u>S</u> -IO-	<u>S</u> IOV
Ind. Obj.	OERG	S- <u>IO</u> -	S <u>IO</u> V
Inversion			
Gr. Subj. / Log. Obj.	ABS	<u>S</u> -O-	<u>S</u> <u>O</u> V
Gr. Obj. / Log. Subj.	OERG	S- <u>O</u> -	S <u>O</u> V

The two examples in (1) show the morphological patterns found in inversion (the glossing represents the marking in terms of grammatical subject and grammatical object) – case marking is overt in (1a) and personal marking in (1b).

¹ Megrelian examples provided by Revaz Tchantouria.

- (1) a. A-χe-m a-r ø-ja-ʔe-ø-s'
 he-PL-OERG he-ABS S3SG-IO3PL-have-PRES-ASSRT
 ‘They have him’ K.
- b. Fe se sə-və-jʔe-ø-s'
 you I S1SG-IO2PL-have-PRES-ASSRT
 ‘You have me’ K.

It is interesting to note that there are two subject properties that the logical subject/grammatical object share with subjects in non-inversion contexts. One property is rather evident from these examples, and that is word order. Unmarked word order in the Circassian languages is SOV, and as seen in many instances, it is the logical, not the grammatical subject, that appears in initial position.

The other property concerns the bifunctionality of the markers of case/definiteness. In the S and P positions as well as in oblique functions the opposition indefiniteness-definiteness and case are both available. In the A position, *-m* has established itself as a suffix that primarily marks ergative case, ignoring definiteness (see above). This is also the case when *-m* is used as an oblique ergative marker of the logical subject in inversion. In inversion, the logical subject marked by the oblique ergative case thus behaves similarly to the ergative case with respect to the marking of definiteness.

- (2) a. Šak'°e-m wəne-ø ø-ø-jəʔ-ø
 hunter-OERG house-(ABS) S3SG-IO3SG-have-PRES
 ‘The hunter has a house’ A.
- b. Ade-m q°e-ø ø-ø-jəʔe-ø-s'
 father-OERG son-(ABS) S3SG-IO3SG-have-PRES-ASSRT
 ‘The father has a son’ K.

When examining number agreement with the logical object/grammatical subject another semantically motivated process shows up. An innovation that occurs in Adyghe is that the plurality of a third person object in a transitive clause is marked by a final suffix. (3) shows this in an ordinary transitive clause.

- (3) a. We a-r a-š' ø-je-p-tə-š't
 you he-ABS he-OERG O3SG-IO3SG-S2SG-give-FUT2
 ‘You will give *it* to him’ A.
- b. We a-χe-r a-š' ø-je-p-tə-š'tə-χ
 you he-PL-ABS he-OERG O3-IO3SG-S2SG-give-FUT2-PL
 ‘You will give *them* to him’ A.

The same situation is found in inversion, where the final plural marker² is triggered by a logical object in the third person.

- (4) a. A-š' a-r ø-ø-jəŋ-ø
 he-OERG he-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-have-PRES
 'He has him/it' A.
- b. A-š' a-χe-r ø-ø-jəŋe-ø-χ
 he-OERG he-PL-ABS S3-IO3SG- have-PRES-PL
 'He has them' A.

Below, we turn to some other types of inersive construction, which according to their derivation fall into the following types: (1) potential forms, (2) non-volitional and (3) version forms.

8.2 Potential forms

Potential forms are formed both from intransitive and transitive forms by adding the prefixes *fe-*, *χ°e-* or suffixes *-s'°ə*, *-fə* (5-6). The type using prefixes is the most productive one; it is also the type that is used in forming negated potential forms.

- (5) a. Se we wə-s-fe-hə-š't
 I you S2SG-IO1SG-POT-carry-FUT
 'I will be able to carry you' A.
- b. Se we wə-s-hə-s'°ə-š't
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-POT-FUT
 'I will be able to carry you' A.
- (6) Se sə-k'°e-fə-n-s'
 I S1SG-go-POT-FUT-ASSRT
 'I will be able to go' K.

It is not the case that all potential forms are inersive. The clauses in (5) have the same semantics, but different grammatical structures: inersive in (a) and ergative in (b). In particular this is evident in the order of prefixes. The prefix

²In this we may see a parallel with inversion in Georgian, where semantically motivated plural agreement occurs in the third tense/aspect-series in third person subject, using a final suffix.

k'ac-s tevz-i dauč'eria 'The man caught a fish'
 k'ac-eb-s tevz-i dauč'eria-t 'The men caught a fish'

order in a transitive verb is O-IO-S-ROOT and if the verb includes a derivational prefix (locative, version, comitative) it is placed before the subject marker, immediately before the root: O-IO-LOC (VS, COM)-S-ROOT.

- (7) a. s-a-χe-b-3-a-s'
O1SG-IO3PL-LOC-S2SG-throw-PERF-ASSRT
'You threw me at them' K.

An (inversive) potential form of the same complexity has the following structure:

- b. w-a-s-χ°ə-χe-3-a-q'əm
S2SG-IO3PL-IO1SG-POT-LOC-throw-PERF-NEG
'I could not throw you to them', Lit. 'you could not be thrown to them by me' K.

Bivalent transitive and corresponding inversive forms are shown in (8-9):

- (8) a. wə-s-hə-γ
O2SG-S1SG-carry-PERF
'I carried you' A.
b. wə-s-fe-hə-š'te-p
S2SG-IO1SG-POT-carry-FUT-NEG
'I will not be able to carry you' A.
- (9) a. sə-p-š-a-s'
O1SG-S2SG-lead-PERF-ASSRT
'You led me' K.
b. wə-s-χ°e-š-a-q'əm
S2SG-IO1SG-POT-lead-PERF-NEG
'I could not lead you', Lit. 'you could not be led by me' K.

The trivalent transitive and its corresponding potential form is shown in (10a-b).

- (10) a. w-je-s-t-a-s'
O2SG-IO3SG-S1SG-give-PERF-ASSRT
'I gave you to him' K.
b. wə-s-χ°-je-t-a-q'əm
S2SG-IO1SG-POT-IO3SG-give-PERF-NEG
'I could not give you to him' K.

The indirect object marker in the transitive (10a) is placed between the O and S. In (10b) it occurs immediately before the root. This means that the ordering of prefixes in the inversive potential form in (10b) is the same as in an intransitive verb form (11).

- (11) wə-s-χ°-je-w-a-s'
 S2SG-IO1SG-VS-IO3SG-hit-PERF-ASSRT
 'You hit (on) him for my sake' K.

The translation in (10b) 'I could not give you to him' does not reflect the grammatical subject-object relations in the verb. A more correct translation would be: 'you could not be given to him by me'. This is thus along the lines of that was suggested by Rogava (1977), that verbs of type (10b) may be called pseudo-transitive. However, these verbs are pseudo-transitive only from a grammatical point of view as it is the indirect object that functions as the logical subject. It is also the indirect object that occupies the initial position in the clause, i.e. occurring in the subject position of the basic word order.

- (12) a. A-š' wəne-r ø-ø-fe-s'ə-rə-p
 he-OERG house-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-POT-do-PRES-NEG
 'He is not able to build the house' A.
- b. Ps'as'e-m pismo-r ø-ø-fe-tχə-rə-p
 girl-OERG letter-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-POT-write-PRES-NEG
 'The girl is not able to write the letter' A.

(13) shows that different potential forms may be used even within the same sentence. The first clause is inversive and includes a prefigated potential (negated) verb and the second clause is non-inverted with a suffigated potential verb.

- (13) Se we wəne-m wə-s-χ°ə-s'e-še-nu-q'əm
 I you house-OERG S2SG-IO1SG-POT-LOC-lead-FUT-NEG
 awe a-bə wə-s''-i-še-fə-nu-s'
 but he-ERG O2SG-LOC-S3SG-lead-POT-FUT-ASSRT
 'I will not be able to take you into the house, but he will be able to take you there' K.

The prefigated potential forms are more common with negation:

- (14) a. sə-p-š-a-s'
 O1SG-S2SG-lead-PERF-ASSRT
 'You led me' K.
- b. wə-s-χ°e-š-a-q'əm
 S2SG-IO1SG-POT-lead-PERF-NEG
 'You could not lead me' K.

It is even possible to find cases with double potential markers, one prefix and one suffix. The potential form in this case is inersive.

- (15) We tχələ-r ø-q'ə-p-χ°e-s'eχ°ə-f-a-q'əm
 you book-ABS S3SG-OR-IO2SG-POT-buy-POT-PERF-NEG
 'You could not buy the book' K.

There is also an alternative where potentiality is expressed by a lexical verb (16). Grammatically this verb is intransitive and inersive. The Adyghe counterpart to this lexical verb appears in an ergative construction (17).

- (16) Fəzə-m a-r ø-ø-łeč'ə-nu-q'əm
 woman-OERG it-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-can-FUT-NEG
 'The woman will not be able to (do) it' K.

- (17) A-š' a-r ø-je-łəč'ə-ø
 he-ERG it-ABS O3SG-S3SG-can-PRES
 'He is able to (do) it' A.

However, in both languages, even the negated verb 'can' combines with the potential prefix and becomes inersive.

- (18) a. Se a-r ø-s-χ°e-łeč'ə-nu-q'əm
 I it-ABS S3SG-IO1SG-POT-can-FUT-NEG
 'I will not be able to do that' K.
 b. A-š' a-r ø-ø-fe-łeč'ə-š't-ep
 he-OERG it-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-POT-can-FUT-NEG
 'He will not be able to do that' A.

8.3 Non-volitional forms

The second group is comprised of the non-volitional forms, recognized by the prefix *ʔeč'e-* A., *ʔes''e-* K.

- (19) a. Šak'°e-m məs'e-r ø-ø-ʔeč'e-wəč'a-γ
 hunter-OERG bear-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-NVOL-kill-PERF
 'The hunter killed the bear (non-volitionally)' A.
 b. S'°əzə-m tχələ-r ø-ø-ʔeč'e-k'°eda-γ
 woman-OERG book-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-NVOL-disappear-PERF
 'The woman (unintentionally) lost the book' A.

This prefix originates from a locative prefix expressing ‘an action or state being done by hand’. (20) shows this locative use.

- (20) We se a-bə-χe-m s-a-ʔes'e-p-χ-a-s'
 you I he-OERG-PL-OERG O1SG-IO3PL-LOC-S2SG-take-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘You took me from them’ (Lit. ‘from their hands’) K.

When non-volitional intransitive forms are derived, one argument is added to the verb.

- (21) a. A-r ø-k'°ədə-š't
 he-ABS S3SG-disappear-FUT
 ‘He/it will disappear’ A.
- b. Sə a-r ø-s-ʔeč'e-k'°ede-š't
 I it-ABS S3SG-IO1SG-NVOL-disappear-FUT
 ‘(By me) it will get lost unintentionally’ A.

8.4 Version forms

Ordinary version verbs do not occur in inversive constructions. Some researchers, such as Rogava & Kerasheva (1966:168), included three verbs among the inversion verbs: *s'°es'°ə-n* ‘appear’, *s'°ejəγ°e-n* ‘want’, *š'əγ°əpše-n* ‘forget’. However, such inversion verbs turn out to be more numerous (cf. Table 8.2). They are formed from nominal/adjectival roots combining with the version markers *s'°e-* and *f'e-* ‘for (when these version prefixes are used in other forms, they have the opposite, malfactive meaning of ‘against somebody’s will’).

Table 8.2 *Inversion verbs formed from version forms*

<i>s'°es'°ə-n</i> A.	‘appear’
<i>f'e-s'°ə-n</i> K.	‘appear’
<i>s'°ejəγ°e-n</i> A.	‘want’
<i>š'əγ°əpše-n</i> A.	‘forget’
<i>s'°e-γes'°eγ°enə-n</i> A.	‘appear interesting’
<i>f'e-γes'°eγ°enə-n</i> K.	‘appear interesting’
<i>f'e-dele-n</i>	‘appear foolish’

Table 8.2 *Inversion verbs formed from version forms (continued)*

f'e-hele-n K.	'appear difficult'
f'e-jə-γ°e-n K.	'appear right, suitable'
f'e-f'ə-n	'like'
s'°e-tere-zə-n A.	'appear correct'
f'e-heləmetə-n K.	'appear surprising'

Examples (22) and (23) illustrate the two types, with nominal and adjectival roots respectively:

- (22) S'°əzə-m a-r ø-ø-s'°e-jə-γ°-ø
 woman-OERG it-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-VS-POSS3SG-time-PRES
 'The woman wants it' A.
- (23) C'əχ°-χe-m a-r ø-ja-f'e-f'-t
 man-PL-OERG it-ABS S3SG-IO3PL-VS-good-IMPF
 'People liked it' K.

This type of inversion verb frequently occurs as a commentative matrix predicate in complementation (for more details, cf. Kumakhov & Vamling 1998: 248-265).

- (24) a. we we-f'e-hele-s' k°edre we-s'əsə-n
 you IO2SG-VS-difficult.PRES-ASSRT for.a.long.time S2SG-sit-INF
 'You found it difficult to sit for a long time' K.
- b. ps'as'e-m/(-r) ø-k'°e-we ø-f'e-q'abəl-t
 girl-OERG/(-ABS) S3SG-go.PRES-GER IO3SG-VS-correct-IMPF
 'The girl found it right to leave' K.

As seen in (24a), it is possible for the grammatical object in inversion to be coreferent with the complement subject.

The version object of the matrix clause (marked by the oblique ergative case) and the complement subject (assigned the absolutive case by the complement predicate) are coreferent in (24b) as well. Here again we see subject properties of the grammatical object in inversion.

9 Ergativity in complex constructions

9.1 Coordination

Coordination involving one transitive and one intransitive clause exhibits interesting features in the Circassian languages. The coreferential relations are of importance not only with respect to the subjects, but also direct and indirect objects.

In many ergative languages a transitive subject in coordination may not be realized as a zero anaphora and dropped under coreference with an absolutive marked, i.e. intransitive subject. Thus, in a sentence like *The man came and saw the woman* an ergative subject may not be realized as a zero anaphora (cf. Dixon, 1994; Foley and Van Valin, 1985). In such cases the Circassian languages exhibit quite specific features.

The verb being transitive or intransitive is of major importance in accounting for the contrast between the two cases ergative and absolutive, as was shown in detail in chapters 3 and 4. However, although the transitivity of the verb is the main factor determining the choice of the subject case, there are also other factors that may have an impact on the subject case.

In this section we will examine coordinative constructions, including both transitive and intransitive verbs. Such clauses may have either a strict subject case choice or allow variation in case marking patterns.

9.1.1 Word order

The impact of word order on the subject case of ergative constructions was investigated in chapter 5. The word order appears to be one of the most important factors determining subject choice also in constructions including at the same time transitive and intransitive verbs.

While the three-part constructions allow six orders of S, O, V (SOV, SVO, VSO, VOS, OVS, OSV), the constructions under investigation in this chapter present an even more complex picture. As illustrated in Table 9.1, we have a combination of two clauses that combine verbs with different case marking patterns.

For instance, there are 24 possible word order variations in a coordination of two clauses corresponding to the verbs in Table 9.1 below. In 18 of these word orders ergative subject case is chosen and in six word order patterns either the ergative (transitive) subject case or the absolutive (intransitive) subject case may be chosen.

Table 9.1 *Case of subject and object in coordination of a monovalent intransitive and bivalent transitive*

	<i>Intransitive verb</i> <i>q'ak''eri</i> 'came (and)'	<i>Transitive verb</i> <i>jətxas'</i> 'wrote'
Subject (S)	ABS <i>fəzə-r</i> 'woman'	
Subject (A)		ERG <i>fəzə-m</i> 'woman'
Object (P)		ABS <i>tχələ-r</i> 'book'

- (1) a. *Fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *tχələ-r*
 S/(A) Intr P
 woman-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-OR-go-AOR.CRD book-ABS
ø-jə-tχ-a-s'
 Trans
 O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 'The woman arrived and wrote a book' K.
- b. *Fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *tχələ-r*
 c. *Tχələ-r* *fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'*
 d. *Tχələ-r* *fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'*
 e. *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *tχələ-r*
 f. *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *tχələ-r* *fəzə-r(-m)* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri*

As can be seen from these examples, the variation in case marking occurs if the subject immediately precedes the intransitive verb (underlined). In these as in other examples (cf. below) there is no absolute freedom in the choice of subject, as either the intransitive or the transitive subject may be the preferred choice according to the communicative goal of the sentence. It is important to note that a variation in subject choice and case marking in principle is possible with each word order type (1a-f).

In all the other 18 variants the transitive verb selects the subject, whereas the intransitive subject is dropped under coreference. In these sentences the subject is thus marked by the ergative case. Some such sentences where ergative marking of the (transitive) subject is the only permitted case are given in (2). In these sentences the transitive verb takes precedence over the intransitive.

- (2) a. *Fəzə-m(*-r)* *tχələ-r* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri*
 b. *Fəzə-m(*-r)* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *tχələ-r* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri*
 c. *Fəzə-m(*-r)* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *tχələ-r*
 d. *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *fəzə-m(*-r)* *tχələ-r* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'*
 e. *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *fəzə-m(*-r)* *tχələ-r*
 f. *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *tχələ-r* *fəzə-m(*-r)*
 g. *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *fəzə-m(*-r)* *tχələ-r* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri*
 h. *ø-jə-tχ-a-s'* *ø-q'a-k''e-ri* *tχələ-r* *fəzə-m(*-r)*

In (1a-f) it was shown that either the transitive verb or the intransitive verb may select the subject of the sentence. (2a-h) illustrates the fact that it is the transitive verb that selects the subject, whereas the intransitive verb may not influence the subject marking.

9.1.1.1 Word order and the categories Aorist and Perfect

The relations between the constituents change in accordance to different factors. Note that in all 24 variations of sentence (1) the intransitive verb appears in the aorist and the transitive verb in the perfect. The aorist of the intransitive verb embodies the meaning of coordination, as the aorist suffix *-ri* at the same time marks coordination. In all types of this sentence with the intransitive in the aorist and the transitive in the perfect, the meaning corresponds to *The woman came and wrote the book*, irrespective of the position of the S and O. However, when the marking is the reverse – the transitive in the aorist and the intransitive in the perfect – the number of possible word order variants decreases, and the syntactic relations between the constituents, coreference mechanisms and case marking change (3). In this case not 24, but only 14 word order variants are possible.

In (1) the basic word order is (1a), where the subject is placed before the intransitive in the aorist and the direct object precedes the transitive in the perfect: S–Vintr/[*Aorist*]-O–Vtrans/[*Perfect*]. When the transitive instead of the intransitive is marked by the Aorist as in (3), the basic word order is S–O–Vtrans/[*Aorist*]-Vintrans/[*Perfect*].

- (3) Fəzə-m tχəɬə-r ø-jə-tχə-ri
 woman-ERG book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-AOR.CRD
 ø-q'e-k'°-a-s'
 S3SG-OR-go-PERF-ASSRT
 'The woman wrote the book and came here' K.

The number of word order types in (3) is reduced compared to the ones found in (1), as the following are not acceptable as variations of (3) but are typical of (1):

S–Vtrans–Vintr–O
 S–O–Vintr–Vtrans
 Vtrans –S–Vintr–O
 Vtrans–S–Vintr–O

Compare the variations in (4) corresponding to the meaning of (3). In (4) there is no free subject choice, i.e. no choice between deleting either the transitive or the intransitive subject under coreference, as in (1a-f). There is no strict subject selection by the intransitive or transitive verb as in (2a-h).

- (4) *Fəzə-m(-r) ø-jə-tχə-ri ø-q'e-k''-a-s' tχələ-r
 *Fəzə-m(-r) tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s' ø-jə-tχə-ri
 *ø-jə-tχə-ri fəzə-m(r) ø-q'e-k''-a-s' tχələ-r
 *Tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s' fəzə-m(-r) tχələ-r
 *Tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s' ø-jə-tχə-ri fəzə-m(-r)
 'The woman wrote a book and came here' K.

Among 14 possible word order types of (3), only one allows free subject choice as found in (2a-h). Accordingly, the word order where the intransitive in the perfect is found in the initial position, and the transitive in the aorist the final position with the subject and the direct object between them represents such a type:

- (5) ø-q'e-k''-a-s' fəzə-m(-r) tχələ-r ø-jə-tχə-ri
 'The women wrote the book and came here' K.

At the same time, the transitive verb in (3) does not play such a prominent role as in example (1), where an intransitive subject is not possible as the only variant in the sentence. An intransitive subject as the only variant is possible in (3) in five types of word order (6):

- (6) a. Fəzə-r(*-m) ø-q'e-k''-a-s' tχələ-r ø-jə-tχə-ri
 'The woman wrote the book and came here'
 b. Fəzə-r(*-m) ø-q'e-k''-a-s' ø-jə-tχə-ri tχələ-r
 c. ø-jə-tχə-ri tχələ-r fəzə-r(*-m) ø-q'e-k''-a-s'
 d. ø-jə-tχə-ri tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s' fəzə-r(*-m)
 e. Tχələ-r ø-jə-tχə-ri ø-q'e-k''-a-s' fəzə-r(*-m)

The other eight types of word order have a transitive subject, which implies that the intransitive subject has been dropped under coreference, cf. for instance (7) corresponding in its meaning to (3):

- (7) a. Fəzə-m(*-r) ø-jə-tχə-ri tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s'
 b. ø-jə-tχə-ri fəzə-m(*-r) tχələ-r ø-q'e-k''-a-s'
 c. ø-q'e-k''-a-s' tχələ-r fəzə-m(*-r) ø-jə-tχə-ri

Thus, changing the intransitive in the aorist for the transitive in the aorist gives rise to considerable changes in the syntactic relations between the parts of the sentence and also to word order restrictions. At the same time, this change increases the syntactic range of the intransitive verb governing its subject in the absolutive case.

A comparison of the constructions in (1) and (3) shows the difference in the syntactic range of the aorist and perfect of one and the same verb; cf. (8a-b). The orders in (8a-b) are identical; Vintr–O–Vtrans–S. The difference between them is that the intransitive is in the aorist (and coordinative) in (8a) and in

(8b) it is the transitive that is marked by the aorist (and coordinative). This also results in a difference in meaning.

- (8) a. $\emptyset$ -q'a-k''e-ri tχəłə-r
 S3SG-OR-go-AOR.CRD book-ABS
 $\emptyset$ -jə-tχ-a-s' fəzə-m
 O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT woman-ERG
 'The woman came here and wrote the book' K.
- b. $\emptyset$ -q'a-k''-a-s' tχəłə-r $\emptyset$ -jə-tχə-ri
 S3SG-OR-go-PERF-ASSRT book-ABS O3SG-S3SG-write-AOR.CRD
 fəzə-r
 woman-ABS
 'The woman wrote the book and came here' K.

In both constructions the position before the subject is occupied by the transitive verb. In (8a) the subject is governed by the transitive and in (8b) by the intransitive verb. Thus, the subject is marked by the ergative in (8a) and the absolutive in (8b). Accordingly, it emerges that the perfect and the aorist differ in their behavior with respect to transitivity. A transitive verb in the perfect has a wider syntactic range of governing the subject of the sentence (8a) compared to a transitive verb in the aorist, which does not affect the subject choice (8b).

9.1.2 Type of marking of coordination

The subject choice is furthermore affected by the type of coordination of the transitive and intransitive verb. In examples (1-8) the coordination of the verbs – the intransitive and transitive – is formed by aorist1, which includes the suffix *-ri*. This suffix is the marker of the aorist coordination. The coordination of two (or more) clauses may also be marked by other means, in particular by the conjunction *jəč'i* 'and'. In this case there is less flexibility in the syntactic relations between the constituents of the sentence, fewer word order types and a stricter subject choice; cf. (1) and (9).

- (9) Fəzə-r(*-m) $\emptyset$ -q'e-k''-a-s' jəč'i tχəłə-r
 woman-ABS(*-ERG) S3SG-OR-go-PERF-ASSRT and book-ABS
 $\emptyset$ -jə-tχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 'The woman came here and wrote the book' K.

(9) in contrast to (1) does not allow variants of subject choice: the intransitive verb governs the subject, whereas the transitive subject is deleted under coreference. The type of coordination shown in (9) is associated with fewer word order types and heavier restrictions. The basic meaning of (9) is maintained only when the intransitive is preposed with respect to the transitive verb (although not necessarily immediately precedes it), cf example (10) corresponding to the meaning of (9).

- (10) $\emptyset$ -q'e-k'°-a-s' fəzə-r(*-m) jəč'i tχələ-r $\emptyset$ -jə-tχ-a-s'

This does not mean that coordination with *jəč'i* blocks any movement of the intransitive verb to the right. Such a movement is possible only with a change of the meaning. If the intransitive verb in (9) is moved to the right the resulting sentence is (11), which differs from (9) in meaning.

- (11) fəzə-m tχələ-r $\emptyset$ -jə-tχ-a-s' jəč'i $\emptyset$ -q'e-k'°-a-s'
 'The woman wrote the book and came here repeatedly' K.

The meaning of (11) does not coincide with (3), where the coordination is marked by the Aorist suffix *-ri* that expresses a succession of the actions performed by the subject.

9.1.3 Number

Another factor that may have an impact on the subject choice is grammatical number. A subject in the plural imposes restrictions on the freedom of subject case marking (12). In (12a) the subject may appear either in the absolutive or in the ergative case. In the first case the transitive subject is deleted under coreference, in the latter case the intransitive subject.

- (12) a. A-r(-bə) $\emptyset$ -t'əs-ri lə-r
 he-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-sit-AOR.CRD meat-ABS
 $\emptyset$ -jə-šχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sat down and ate the meat' K.
- b. A-χe-r(*m) $\emptyset$ -t'əs-(χe)-ri lə-r
 he-PL-ABS(*ERG) S3-sit-(PL)-AOR.CRD meat-ABS
 $\emptyset$ -ja-šχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3PL-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'They sat down and ate the meat' K.

The word order in (12b) is the same as in (12a). In (12b), but not in (12a), there is no variation in subject marking: the subject is marked by the intransitive verb and the transitive verb does not play a role in the subject marking.

9.1.4 Aorist1 and Aorist2

Coordinations including a transitive and an intransitive verb may differ syntactically, although they may appear to be the same. Examples (12a) and (13) are semantically interchangeable. In both examples the intransitive marked by the aorist immediately follows the subject, while the transitive in the perfect is found in the final position. Still there are syntactic differences between these

examples: in (13) only intransitive subject marking is possible, whereas (12a) allows a variation.

- (13) A-r(*bə) ø-t'əs-s' abi lə-r
 he-ABS(*ERG) S3SG-sit-AOR2 and meat-ABS
 ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sat down and ate the meat' K

This difference is due to grammatical factors. Coordination is marked by aorist1 in (12a) and aorist2 in (13). The two aorist forms are both infinite and found in the same position. The fact that no variation in subject marking is allowed in (13) is related to the use of aorist2, which in contrast to aorist1 is formed by the aorist marker -s' and the conjunction *abi* 'and' (which is morphologically bound to the aorist and strictly follows -s').

9.1.5 Adverbs

One may note other factors that influence marking patterns. In (14) but not in (12a) the intransitive aorist verb form is modified by an adverb. This factor has turned out to be vital in determining the subject case.

- (14) A-r(*-bə) psəns''ew ø-t'əs-ri lə-r
 he-ABS(*-ERG) rapidly S3SG-sit-AOR.CRD meat-ABS
 ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sat down rapidly and ate the meat' K.

This influence varies in different positions. If the adverb is moved to the final position, as in (15), either the absolutive or the ergative may be chosen in subject case marking.

- (15) A-r(-bə) ø-t'əs-ri lə-r
 he-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-sit-AOR.CRD meat-ABS
 ø-jə-šχ-a-s' psəns''ew
 O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT rapidly
 'He sat down rapidly and ate the meat' K.

Compare (16) in the meaning of (15):

- (16) a. A-r(*bə) ø-t'əs-ri psəns''ew lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 b. A-r(*bə) ø-t'əs-ri lə-r psəns''ew ø-jə-šχ-a-s' K.

(16) shows that adjacency of the adverb to the transitive verb is not a sufficient requirement for this verb to control subject case marking.

9.1.6 Indirect objects and valency

Another factor that may play a role in determining the subject case marking is the presence of oblique phrases. For instance, if the adverb *psəns''ew* 'quickly' is replaced by a noun in an oblique case, this will also effect choice of marking pattern (17):

- (17) A-r(*bə) šentə-m ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri
 he-ABS (*ERG) chair-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-LOC-sit-AOR.CRD
 lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'He sat down on the chair and ate the meat' K.

In examples (13-16) the intransitive is monovalent. In (17) the intransitive is bivalent (including the locative prefix *te-*). Such bivalent intransitives often follow this strict subject case assignment. In three other word orders the same picture emerges (18a-c):

- (18) a. A-r(*bə) ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri šentə-m lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 'He sat down on the chair and ate the meat' K.
 b. šəntə-ma-r(*bə) ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 c. ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri a-r(*bə) šentə-m lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 'He sat down on the chair and ate the meat' K.

Compare this with the examples in (19), where alternative subject case marking is possible. In the presence of an indirect object marked by the oblique ergative, either the absolutive or the ergative of the subject pronoun may occur.

- (19) a. šentə-m ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri a-r(-bə) lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 b. ø-ø-te-t'əshe-ri šentə-m a-r(-bə) lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 'He sat down on the chair and ate the meat' K.

As examples (14-19) show, in coordinations including a transitive and an intransitive verb (where the transitive follows the intransitive in the aorist), the influence of the transitive on the choice of the subject case is related to word order factors: the position of the intransitive verb, the indirect object and the transitive verb. In the examples below where alternative subject choice is possible, the intransitive occurs in monovalent uses (20a, 21a). Compare (20-21):

- (20) a. l'ə-r(-m) ø-k''e-žə-j wəne-χe-r
 man-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-go-REV-AOR.CRD house-PL-ABS
 ø-jə-s''ə-γe-χ
 O3PL-S3SG-do-PERF-PL
 'The man went away and built the houses' A.

- (20) b. l'ə-r(*-m) jə-χek°ə-m
 man-ABS(*-ERG) POSS3SG-country-OERG
 ø-ø-k'°e-žə-j wənə-χe-r
 S3SG-IO3SG-go-REV-AOR.CRD house-PL-ABS
 ø-ə-s'°ə-ye-χ
 O3-S3SG-do-PERF-PL
 'The man returned to his country and built houses' A.
- (21) a. Ps'as'e-r(-m) ø-že-n-s'-i a-r
 girl-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-run-FUT-ASSRT-CRD he-ABS
 ø-jə-lay°ə-n-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-see-FUT-ASSRT
 'The girl will run and see him' K.
- b. Ps'as'e-r(*-m) psəns'ew wənə-m
 girl-ABS(-ERG) quickly house-OERG
 ø-že-n-s'-i a-r ø-jə-lay°ə-n-s'
 S3SG-run-FUT-ASSRT-CRD he-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-FUT-ASSRT
 'The girl will quickly run into the house and see him' K.

The blocking of subject case variation remains even if the intransitives occur in monovalent uses, as shown in (22-23).

- (22) a. ø-k'°e-žə-j wənə-χe-r l'ə-m(*-r) ø-ə-s'°ə-ye-χ
 b. wənə-χe-r l'ə-m(*-r) ø-s'°ə-ye-χ ø-k'°e-žə-j
 'The man went away and built the houses' A.
- (23) l'ə-m(*-r) wənə-χe-r ø-ə-s'°ə-j-χ ø-k'°e-žə-γ
 O3-S3SG-do-AOR.CRD-PL
 'The man built the houses and went away' A.

The blocking of subject case variation is related to word order factors as well; even when the intransitive is used in the monovalent form, subject case variation is not possible.

9.1.7 Gerunds and case variation

Note that subject case variation is found in other types of sentences as well. (24) includes a gerund form of the intransitive verb *šəsə* 'sit' and the transitive verb *dən* 'sew'.

- (24) Fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w žane-r
 woman-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-sit-PRES-GER shirt-ABS
 ø-jə-də-r
 O3SG-S3SG-sew-DYN.PRES
 'The woman is sitting and sews the shirt' K.

The intransitive gerund selects the absolutive case, whereas the ergative case is motivated by the transitive finite verb in the perfect. Example (24) allows 24 possible word orders (as example (1) above). The subject case variation is possible only when the gerund immediately follows the subject. Cf. (25) with the same meaning as (24).

- (25) a. fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w ø-je-də-r žane-r
 b. žane-r fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w ø-je-də-r
 c. žane-r ø-je-də-r fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w
 d. ø-je-də-r fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w žane-r
 e. ø-je-də-r žane-r fəzə-r(-m) ø-s'əsə-ø-w
 'The woman is sitting and sews a shirt' K.

When the position of the gerund is changed, alternative subject case assignment is no longer possible. The subject is marked in the ergative by the transitive verb, cf. (26).

- (26) a. fəzə-m(*r) ø-je-də-r žane-r ø-s'əsə-ø-w
 b. ø-s'əsə-ø-w fəzə-m(*r) ø-je-də-r žane-r
 c. ø-je-də-r fəzə-m(-*r) žane-r ø-s'əsə-ø-w

The valency of the intransitive gerund determines the coreference relations of the absolutive and ergative subjects (27).

- (27) č'alə-r(*-m) tχələ-m ø-je-že-ø-ze
 boy-ABS(*-ERG) book-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-read-PRES-GER
 məʔerəse-r ø-jə-šχə-ø
 apple-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PRES
 'The boy is reading the book and eating an apple' A.

A comparison between (27) and (24) shows that the position of the intransitive gerund influences the subject case marking in different ways and is related to the valency of the gerund. In (24), where the monovalent gerund follows the subject, variation in case marking is possible (i.e. a marking of the subject may occur in either the absolutive or the ergative cases). This is not applicable to (27), where the bivalent intransitive gerund determines the subject. However, the bivalent intransitive gerund does not determine the subject case in all positions. Cf. (28) used with the same meaning as (27).

- (28) ø-je-šχə-ø č'alə-r(-m) tχələ-m ø-je-že-ø-ze məʔerəse-r A.

The subject in (28) in the position between the initial transitive and the indirect object of the intransitive gerund may be marked with either the absolutive or the ergative, i.e. either of the subjects (of the transitive or the intransitive) may be deleted under coreference.

9.1.8 Coreference relations

The examples above show that in the Circassian languages the ergative may be realized as a zero anaphora. In such cases, the factors that determine the coreferential relations of the transitive and intransitive subjects concern both morphology and syntax.

The same may be said with respect to the coreferential relations of the subject and objects (direct and indirect) in example (29):

- (29) a. S'°əzə-r ø-qa-k'°ə-j l'ə-r
 woman-ABS S3SG-OR-go-AOR.CRD man-ABS
 S Intr P
 ø-ə-ləy°ə-y
 O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 Trans
 'The woman came here and caught sight of the man' A.
- b. S'°əzə-r (*-m) ø-qa-k'°ə-j l'ə-m (*-r)
 woman-ABS (*ERG) S3SG-OR-go-AOR.CRD man-ERG (*-ABS)
 S(*A) Intr A(*P)
 ø-ə-ləy°ə-y
 O3SG-S3SG-see-PERF
 Trans
 'The woman came here and the man saw her' A.

In (29a) the ergative subject may be realized as a zero anaphora, whereas the direct object is marked only by the absolutive. In (29b) the syntactic relations between the subject and the direct object are different: the intransitive firmly selects the subject in the absolutive, the transitive allows only the ergative for its subject and the direct object is realized as a zero anaphora.

The realisation of the direct object as a zero anaphora is determined by word order:

- (30) a. S'alə-m ps'as'e-r ø-jə-lay°-ri
 boy-ERG girl-ABS O3SG-S3SG-see-AOR.CRD
 ø-s'ec'əve-ž-a-s'
 S3SG-run-REV-PERF-ASSRT
 'The boy saw the girl and ran' K.
- b. S'alə-m ø-jə-lay°-ri ps'a'se-r ø-s'ec'əve-ž-a-s'
 'The boy saw (her) and the girl ran away' K.

In (30a) the absolutive subject has been deleted under coreference with the ergative subject. The change in word order in (30b) makes it possible to have the direct object realized as a zero anaphora, whereas the non-coreferent absolutive subject of the intransitive verb is overt. We note that an

interpretation of (30b) as (30a) is also possible with the intransitive subject deleted under coreference with the ergative subject.

Word order plays an important role in coordination in sentences where one of the verbs is a polyvalent intransitive (31). The case marking pattern is shown schematically in Table 9.2.

- (31) a. S'ak'e-r fočə-m ø-jəplə-ri
S Intr
hunter-ABS gun-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-look-AOR.CRD
ø ø ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s'
A P Trans
O3SG-OR-S3SG-buy-PERF-ASSRT
'The hunter looked at the gun and bought it' K.
- b. ø ø ø-jəplə-ri s'ak'e-m fočə-r
 Intr A P
 S3SG-IO3SG-look-AOR.CRD hunter-ERG gun-ABS
 Trans
ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s'
O3SG-OR-S3SG-buy-PERF-ASSRT
'The hunter looked at (the gun) and bought the gun' K.

Table 9.2 *Case of subject and object in coordination of a bivalent intransitive and bivalent transitive*

	<i>Intransitive verb</i>	<i>Transitive verb</i>
	<i>jəpləri</i> ‘looked (and)’	<i>q’is’eχ°as’</i> ‘bought’
Subject (S)	ABS <i>s’ak’°e-r</i> ‘hunter’	
Ind.Object	OERG <i>fočə-m</i> ‘gun’	
Subject (A)		ERG <i>s’ak’°e-m</i> ‘hunter’
Object (P)		ABS <i>fočə-r</i> ‘gun’

The direct object in (31a) has been deleted under coreference with the indirect object of the intransitive. In (31b) the picture is the reverse; the indirect object is realized as a zero anaphora under coreference with the direct object. The word order in (31a), where the direct object is deleted, is basic and neutral compared to (31b) with an overt direct object and a deleted indirect object. In other words, the basic word order in (31a) requires the presence of the indirect object of the intransitive but not the direct object.

In (31a) not only the direct object but also the transitive subject has been deleted, i.e. this word order requires the arguments to be realized as zero anaphoras. Similar relations to those in (31a) between the transitive and intransitive verbs are possible also in (32a-b):

- (32) a. fočə-m s'ak'°e-r ø-jə-plə-ri ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s'
 b. ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' s'ak'°e-r fočə-m ø-jə-plə-ri
 c. *fočə-m s'a'k'°e-r ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' ø-jə-plə-ri
 d. *ø-jə-plə-ri fočə-m s'ak'°e-r ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s'

An example with changed word order of (31a) allows different relations between the transitive and intransitive verbs, i.e. the intransitive subject may be realized as a zero anaphora:

- (33) Fočə-m ø-jə-plə-ri s'ak'°e-m ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s'

In (33), as in (31a), the direct object has been deleted under coreference but the subject (A) is present.

An alternative choice of subject is possible when the direct object is deleted; cf. (34) corresponding to (31a):

- (34) ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' s'ak'°e-m(-r) fočə-m ø-jə-plə-ri

Compare (35) corresponding to (31a), where (35) differs from (34) in that the subject (of the transitive or intransitive) has been moved to the final position.

- (35) *ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' fočə-m ø-jə-plə-ri s'ak'°e-m(-r)

(36) differs from (31a) not only in the alternative object choice, but in the deletion of the intransitive subject under coreference; cf. (37):

- (36) S'ak'°e-m ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' fočə-r(-m) ø-jə-plə-ri
 'The hunter looked at the gun and bought it' K.

- (37) ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' fočə-r(-m) ø-jə-plə-ris'ak'°e-r
 'The hunter looked at the gun and bought (it)' K.

Both in (37) and in (31a), the word order allows an overt intransitive subject whereas the transitive subject has been deleted. The word order in (37) with a final subject following the intransitive verb allows (as in (36)) an alternative object choice.

As shown in (38), the syntactic weight also influences the choice of the – direct or indirect – object.

- (38) S'ak'°e-m ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' [psəns'°e-w fočə-m(*-r) ø-jə-plə-ri]
 'The hunter quickly looked at the gun and bought (it)' K.

(38) differs from (36) in the presence of an adverb preceding the intransitive verb. This factor has an impact on the choice of object. The direct object has obligatorily to be deleted under coreference with the indirect object. If the adverb is moved away from the intransitive to the transitive (as in (39)), the alternative object choice appears again (as in (36)).

- (39) S'ak'°e-m psəns'°ew ø-q'-i-s'eχ°-a-s' fočə-m(-r) ø-jə-plə-ri
 1. The hunter looked at the gun and bought (it) quickly.
 2. The hunter looked (at it) and bought the gun quickly. K.

9.1.9 Further notes on gerunds and infinitives in coordination

Constructions with gerunds and infinitives exhibit interesting features. In contrast to coordinations with aorist forms, they have reduced paradigms of morphological categories, for instance with respect to tense forms (40).

In (40a) the subject and the direct object of the transitive verb ('kill') have been deleted: the subject is coreferent with the subject of the intransitive gerund ('hit'), and the direct object coreferent with the indirect object of the same gerund.

- (40) a. L'ə-r blay°e-m ø-je-we-ø-w
 man-ABS dragon-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-hit-PRES-GER
 ø-jə-wəč'ə-nu-s'
 O3SG-S3SG-kill-FUT-ASSRT
 'The man will fire a gun at the dragon and kill him' K.

In (40b) the subject and the indirect object of the gerund have been deleted under coreference with the subject and the direct object of the transitive.

- (40) b. L'ə-m blay°e-r ø-jə-wəč'ə-nu-s'
 man-ERG dragon-ABS O3SG-S3SG-kill-FUT-ASSRT
 ø-je-we-ø-w
 S3SG-IO3SG-hit-PRES-GER
 'The man will fire a gun at him and kill the dragon' K.

Finally, in (40c), either the intransitive gerund or the transitive verb may mark the subject, whereas the indirect object is realized as a zero anaphora.

- (40) c. L'ə-r(-m) ø-je-we-ø-w
 man-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-IO3SG-hit-PRES-GER
 ø-jə-wəč'ə-nu-s' blay°e-r
 O3SG-S3SG-kill-FUT-ASSRT dragon-ABS
 'The man will fire a gun at him and kill the dragon' K.

9.1.10 Summary of general tendencies

In the preceding sections we have looked at instances where the two verbs in coordination differ with respect to their case marking properties, i.e. coordination of intransitives and transitives. As we have seen, subject selection and case marking in coordination are influenced by a number of different factors, in particular word order and type of marking of coordination. The ergative case is usually chosen for the overt subject, but variation in case marking occurs if the subject immediately precedes the intransitive verb (in the

Aorist1/Coordinative) and the direct object precedes the transitive in the perfect.

In a more expanded clause, where the intransitive verb is modified by an adverb or an indirect object is added, this variation in case marking is more restricted.

When coordination of two clauses with an intransitive and a transitive verb is marked by the conjunction *jəč'i* 'and', case marking of the subject does not allow variation (9). The subject of the intransitive verb is marked by the absolutive case and the coreferent subject of the following transitive verb is deleted.

In the Circassian languages the following two alternatives are available (cf. (29)): 'The woman (ABS) came here and the man (ERG) saw her (ø)' or 'The woman (ABS) came here and she (ø) saw the man (ABS)'.

9.2 Complementation

The study of subject and object clauses (complementation) in the Circassian languages reveals some interesting features with respect to ergative marking. Example (41) follows the ergative model: the subject of the transitive verb is marked by the ergative case, and the direct object position is occupied by a participle in the absolutive case.

- (41) A-bə ø-je-s'e-ø wə-zerə-k'°e-ø-r
 he-ERG O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES S2SG-that-go-PRES.PART-ABS
 'He knows that you are going' K.

Along with these features of the ergative construction, example (41) also exhibits other characteristics that differ from the typical ergative construction. This absolutive marked participle in the direct object position have some verbal features: it includes personal prefixes and tense as well as the subordinating marker *zerə-*. Other verbal markers could also be included, such as the causative, version, reflexive, evidential, etc. These verbal categories enable the participle to function as a subordinate predicate, as the head of an object clause. The subordinate subject pronoun *we* 'you' may easily be introduced, as is shown in (42):

- (42) Abə jes'e we wəzerək'°e-r

In the following example the intransitive participle in (42) has been replaced by a transitive participle. As in (42) it is marked by the absolutive case *-r* as it appears in the direct object position.

- (43) A-bə ø-je-s'e-ø ø-zerə-p-tχə-ø-r
 he-ERG O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES O3SG-that-S2SG-write-PRES.PART-ABS
 'He knows that you are writing it'

Example (43) has the grammatical ergative features: the ergative marked subject, a transitive verb, a participle in the absolutive case in the direct object position. As the participle is transitive it controls its subject and object. In (44) the object of the subordinate participle is marked by the absolutive case:

- (44) A-bə ø-je-s'e-ø tχəłə-r
 he-ERG O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES book-ABS
 ø-zerə-p-tχə-ø-r
 O3SG-that-S2SG-write-PRES.PART-ABS
 'He knows that you are writing the book'

In most respects this also applies to masdars occurring as subordinate predicates (45). Here, the intransitive masdar in the direct object position is marked by the absolutive case.

- (45) š'°əzə-m de-nə-r ø-ə-wəχə-γ
 woman-ERG sew-MSD-ABS O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF
 'The woman finished sewing' A.

The intransitive masdar in (45) has both nominal and verbal characteristics, compare (46a-b).

- (46) a. š'°əzə-m žane-m jə-də-nə-r
 woman-ERG shirt-OERG POSS3SG-sew.TR-MSD-ABS
 ø-ə-wəχə-γ
 O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF
 'The woman finished sewing the shirt' A.
- b. š'°əzə-m *žane-m jə-de-nə-r
 woman-ERG shirt-OERG POSS3SG-sew.INTR-MSD-ABS
 ø-ə-wəχə-γ
 O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF A.

The examples (46a-b) show that the two forms of the masdar (formed from the roots *-də-* and *-de-*) are differentiated with respect to transitivity. The Circassian masdar is also characterized by action semantics and may function as the subordinate predicate in complement structures. In this respect the Circassian masdar shows clear typological similarities with the masdar in other languages, for instance, with the Kartvelian languages. This construction is similar to what are usually referred to as *nominalisations* and *action nominal constructions* (for more details on the use of masdars in complementation in Kabardian, Kumakhov & Vamling 1998).

A somewhat different situation is found with other types of complement construction, where the subordinate predicate is realized as a gerund (47), infinitive or as an obligative or alternative construction.

- (47) Ps'as'e-m ø-je-s''e-r-q'əm ø-k''e-ø-we
 girl-ERG O3SG-S3SG-know-PRES-NEG S3SG-go-PRES-GER
 'The girl doesn't know that she is going' K.

The subordinate subject of the intransitive gerund has been deleted (47), and the ergative subject is controlled by the transitive matrix verb. The gerund that occupies the direct object position does not share the nominal features of the participle and masdar (it is not case marked), although it functions as an argument of the transitive matrix predicate. This also applies to other nonfinite predicates, such as the infinitive, alternative, obligative and other forms.

In complementation, as in coordination, an ergative subject may be coreferential with an intransitive subject in the same complex construction. In this situation the two coreferential subject positions are assigned different cases due to the difference in transitivity of the two predicates involved. The choice of subject case marking may be obligatory, with no variation, or there may be a free choice between the ergative and absolutive. As this issue is dealt with extensively in Kumakhov & Vamling (1998) we will not go into details here, but only supply a few illustrative examples that show the importance of word order for ergative marking. In (48a) it is the transitive verb that assigns the subject case (ergative), but in (48b) it is the intransitive complement predicate, i.e. the participle. Consequently, the intransitive coreferential subject is deleted in (48a) and the transitive (ergative) subject in (48b).

- (48) a. A-bə ø-je-lay°ə-žə-r ø
 he-ERG O3SG-S3SG-see-REV-PRES (he-ABS)
 ø-zerə-səmažə-r
 S3SG-that-sick-PRES.PART
 'He sees that (he) is sick...' K.
- b. A-r ø-zerə-səmažə-r ø
 he-ABS S3SG-that-sick-PRES.PART (he-ERG)
 ø-je-lay°ə-žə-r
 O3SG-S3SG-see-REV-PRES
 'He sees that (he) is sick...' K.

In (48b) it is possible to choose between the ergative and the absolutive. Compare (49) with (48):

- (49) A-r (-bə) ø-zerə-səmažə-r ø-je-lay°ə-žə-r
 he-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-that-sick-PRES.PART O3SG-S3SG-see-REV-PRES
 'He sees that (he) is sick...' K.

As discussed above in relation to coordination, the variation in case marking allowing either absolutive or ergative marking of the subject, typically occurs when the subject immediately precedes the intransitive verb.

10 Summary

Ergativity in the Circassian languages is based on an opposition between two verbal classes: transitives and intransitives. This division is grammatically motivated. Both transitive and intransitive verbs may be morphologically monovalent or polyvalent, which means that valency is not a distinctive feature in differentiating transitive and intransitive verbs. It should be noted that certain verbs such as ‘push’, ‘hit’, ‘grab’ are classified as intransitives in the Circassian languages. Verbs in this subgroup differ from transitives morphologically, but are similar to prototypical transitives in having transitive semantics.

Of the two types of ergative marking found in the Circassian languages, ergative-absolutive case marking is assumed to be secondary and to have developed later than the ergative alignment of verbal cross-reference marking. This assumption is based on the multitude of types of ergative marking found on nouns and pronouns, as well as on data from internal reconstruction. It is also supported by material from the related Abkhaz and Abaza languages that lack ergative case but show ergative patterns in the verbal morphology.

10.1 Circassian grammar sketch

Chapter 2 introduces the basic derivational and inflectional morphology and basic patterns of clause structure in the Circassian languages. (1) is an example of a transitive clause and (2) shows an intransitive one. The subject of the transitive verb (A) is marked by the suffix *-m* (glossed as ergative case), whereas the direct object (P) and the subject of the intransitive verb (S) by *-r* (glossed as the absolutive case).

- (1) S'°əzə-m sabəj-r ø-je-hə-ø
 woman-ERG child-ABS O3SG-S3SG-carry-PRES
 ‘The woman carries the child’ A.
- (2) Sabəj-r me-ye-ø
 child-ABS S3SG-cry-PRES
 ‘The child cries’ A.

A verb may include up to four (and in rare cases five) person markers. The relative positions of the person markers (person and number) are as follows: in a transitive verb the A marker occupies the position closest to the root and the P marker the initial position (3). In an intransitive verb, S is found in the initial position, followed by any other person markers (4).

- (3) Ps'as'e-m tχəɫə-r č'ale-m ø-r-i-tə-γ
 girl-ERG_A book-ABS_P boy-OERG O3SG_P-IO3SG-S3SG_A-give-PERF
 'The girl gave the book to the boy' A.
- (4) Ps'as'e-r qalə-m ma-ø-k'°e-ø
 girl-ABS_S town-OERG S3SG_S-IO3SG-go-PRES
 'The girl is going to town' A.

The division into intransitive and transitive verbs is thus a central distinction in the Circassian languages. The intransitive verbs include a number of verbs with transitive semantics but morphological features and syntactic behaviour according to the intransitive pattern. Examples of such verbs are A., K. *jepx°e-n* 'take, grip', A. *jeceqe-n*, K. *jezeq'e-n* 'bite'.

A limited number of verb roots appear in identical shapes in transitive and intransitive verbs and form so-called labile verbs (cf. verb lists in chapter 6), illustrated in (5-6).

- (5) L'ə-m č'əg°ə-r ø-je-z°e-ø
 man-ERG soil-ABS O3SG-S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man is ploughing the field' A.
- (6) L'ə-r ma-z°e-ø
 man-ABS S3SG-plough-PRES
 'The man is ploughing' A.

The Circassian derivational morphology includes a number of valency changing processes, where causative, factitive, comitative and versional verbs involve additional arguments and involitional, potential and reciprocal forms involve intransitivization.

10.2 Ergative marking in nominals

Chapter 3 deals with ergative marking of nominal elements. The key issue in accounting for case marking in the Circassian languages is the relation between the marking of case and definiteness (where definiteness is the diachronically primary function). An important difference between the ergative and absolutive cases is that ergative case has established itself as a case that primarily marks A, ignoring definiteness. In the S and P positions the opposition indefiniteness-definiteness is still available, as it is in oblique functions.

Different types of nouns behave differently with respect to ergative case marking. Common nouns as well as third person (by origin demonstrative) pronouns are marked for the ergative case. Proper nouns are generally not marked for the ergative case. First and second person pronouns do not distinguish the ergative/absolutive case.

10.3 Ergative patterns in the verb

In chapter 4 the complex patterns of alignment of personal markers (subject-object markers) in the verb are outlined. While case-marking may not always be present in a clause depending on the type of nominal, the ergative-absolutive marking of grammatical relations in the verb by the use of two series of personal markers is obligatory.

Personal markers of the absolutive series are found in initial position in the verb: as the marker of the direct object *wə* ‘you’ (7) and the marker of an intransitive subject *sə* ‘I’ (8). The ergative series marker, i.e. corresponding to the transitive subject or indirect objects, is found to the right of the absolutive personal marker.

- (7) *Se we wə-s-hə-š't*
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-FUT
 ‘I will carry you’ A.

- (8) *Se we sə-we-že-š't*
 I you S1SG-IO2SG-wait-FUT
 ‘I will wait for you’ A.

A large number of derivational and inflectional prefixes complicate the verbal structure, in particular in polyvalent verbs. Such prefixes mark reflexive, reciprocal, comitative, benefactive/malfactive, causative, spatio-locational and other relations. In the polyvalent verbal complex, the markers of the absolutive and ergative series occupy strictly fixed positions.

10.4 Word order

In chapter 5 word order and word order variation are investigated, including word order in clauses with different types of NP (thus with different types of case marking) and in intransitive and ditransitive clauses.

The basic word order in the Circassian languages is SOV. First and second person pronouns may be deleted or rearranged as they are represented by overt unambiguous markers in the verb form.

The basic word order SOV corresponds to the rigid morpheme order O-S-ROOT (9). The asymmetric relation between the word order and morpheme alignment in transitive clauses corresponds to a symmetric relation in intransitive clauses S-O-ROOT (10).

- (9) *Se we wə-se-hə-ø*
 I you O2SG-S1SG-carry-PRES
 ‘I carry you’ A.

- (10) Ps'as'e-r a-š' ø-je-že-ø
 girl-ABS he-OERG S3SG-IO3SG-wait-PRES
 'The girl waits for him' A.

Rigid SOV word order is characteristic of clauses with non-case marked proper nouns as subject and object.

- (11) Roze-ø Line-ø ø-je-še-ø
 Roza-(ERG) Lina-(ABS) O3SG-S3SG-lead-PRES
 'Rosa leads Lina' K.

The basic word order is OSV in clauses with a restricted number of transitive verbs with inanimate agents, as in (12).

- (12) S'°əzə-r šəble-m ø-ə-wəč'ə-γ
 woman-ABS lightening-ERG O3SG-S3SG-kill-PERF
 'The lightning killed the woman'

Separate subsections of this chapter are devoted to word order in *wh*-questions and answers, clauses with participle predicates (that are themselves case marked) and word order and case marking in focused constructions (where focus markers replace case markers (13)).

- (13) a. L'ə-m lə-r ø-jə-šχ-a-s'
 man-ERG meat-ABS O3SG-S3SG-eat-PERF-ASSRT
 'The man ate the meat' K.
- b. L'ə-s' lə-r ø-zə-šχ-a-r
 man-FOC meat-ABS O3SG-REL-eat-PERF-ABS
 'It is the man who ate the meat' K.

10.5 Labile constructions

Along with clearly marked absolutive and ergative constructions, there are labile verb roots in the Circassian languages that are neutral with respect to the absolutive/ergative alignment (Chapter 6). Such neutral verb roots have identical phonetic and morphological shapes when they appear in either absolutive or ergative constructions.

- (14) a. Fəzə-m blənə-r ø-je-le-ø
 woman-ERG wall-ABS O3SG-S3SG-paint-PRES
 'The woman is painting the wall' K.

- (14) b. Fəzə-r ma-le-ø
 woman-ABS S3SG-paint-PRES
 ‘The woman is painting (engaged in painting)’ K.

The formation of labile verbs as well as processes of neutralization (labile verbs acquiring ergative/absolutive alignment) are considered and compared in Adyghe and Kabardian. The historical development of labile verbs in the West Caucasian languages and their proposed proto-Circassian origin is also discussed in this chapter.

10.6 Reduced (semiergative) constructions

Reduced (semiergative) constructions are investigated in chapter 7. The construction types included under this heading exhibit quite diverse features, but always include a transitive verb. In reduced ergative constructions one of the constituents is missing – the subject in the ergative case or the direct object in the absolutive case. The appearance of reduced constructions is motivated by a semantic reanalysis of one of the components of the ergative construction: the ergative subject, the absolutive direct object or the transitive verb.

The example below includes a verb with ergative alignment (the subject marker follows the direct object marker). The noun in the absolutive case is understood as the subject, although formally it originates from a direct object.

- (15) Jəlesə-r ø-jə-wəχ-a-s'
 year-ABS O3SG-S3SG-finish-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The year finished’ < ‘s/he, it finished the year’ K.

10.7 Inversion (affective) constructions

Grammatically intransitive verbs (affective, potential, nonvolitional) that appear in inersive constructions are the topic of chapter (8). Examples of such verbs are *jəʔe-n* ‘have’ (16), A. *faje-n*, K. *χ^oejə-n* ‘want’, A. *s''e-s''ə-n*, K. *f'e-s''-n* ‘appear’. They may occur either as simple or derived forms, including potential or nonvolitional (17) marking.

- (16) Šak'°e-m wəne-ø ø-ø-jəʔ-ø
 hunter-OERG house-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-have-PRES
 ‘The hunter has a house’ (Lit. ‘by the hunter is a house’) A.
- (17) Šak'°e-m məs'e-r ø-ø-ʔeč'e-wəč'a-γ
 hunter-OERG bear-ABS S3SG-IO3SG-NVOL-kill-PERF
 ‘The hunter killed the bear (nonvolitionally)’ A.

The logical subject is marked by the oblique ergative *-m* and the logical object by the absolutive case *-r/-ø*. The neutral word order in such sentences is that the logical subject marked by the oblique ergative *-m* occupies the initial position in the clause.

10.8 Ergativity in complex constructions

Chapter 9 approaches ergative marking in complex constructions, i.e. in complementation and coordinated clauses. As such complex clauses may include at the same time both transitive and intransitive verbs, conflicting case marking patterns occur. Generally, word order and adjacency appear to be the most important factors determining the choice of subject case marking in such constructions. This is illustrated in (18) where clauses with the intransitive ‘go’ and transitive verb ‘write’ are coordinated. As can be seen from these examples, under appropriate communicative conditions, either the intransitive or the transitive verb may assign case (18a-c), if the subject immediately precedes the (underlined) intransitive verb *q’ak’°e-ri* ‘arrived and’

- (18) a. Fəzə-r(-m) ø-q’a-k’°e-ri tχəłə-r
 woman-ABS(-ERG) S3SG-OR-go-AOR.CRD book-ABS
 ø-jə-tχ-a-s’
 O3SG-S3SG-write-PERF-ASSRT
 ‘The woman arrived and wrote a book’ K.
- b. Fəzə-r(-m) q’ak’°eri jətχas’ tχəłə-r
 c. Tχəłə-r fəzə-r(-m) q’ak’°eri jətχas’
 d. Fəzə-m(*-r) jətχas’ q’ak’°eri tχəłə-r
 e. Q’ak’°eri fəzə-m(*-r) tχəłə-r jətχas’

Coordination is marked by the suffix *-ri* in (18). The chapter further investigates case marking in coordination with the conjunction *jəč’i* ‘and’. In this case there are fewer word order types and a stricter subject choice.

The concluding section of the chapter is devoted to case marking and complementation, where word order again is shown to be an important factor in accounting for the choice of case marking.

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Caucasus Studies 1

CIRCASSIAN CLAUSE STRUCTURE

Mukhadin Kumakhov & Karina Vamling

This monograph is a study of clause structure in the closely related Circassian languages, Adyghe and Kabardian, two minority languages spoken in Northern Caucasus. The Circassian languages exhibit ergative patterns in both case marking and the alignment of personal prefixes in the verb. Both these domains of grammar are studied extensively in the book, as are issues relating to ergative/absolutive marking in clauses with different types of verb (intransitive, transitive, labile, inersive). Another topic is ergative marking in complex constructions, including coordination and subordination. The monograph is the result of joint research conducted in Russia and Sweden. The basis for this research has been the project 'Ergativity in the Circassian languages' (with support from The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences). The institutions involved are: the Institute of Linguistics at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Lund University and the Department of International Migration and Ethnic Relations (IMER) at Malmö University.

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