

Complementation in the Northwest Caucasian Languages¹

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The Northwest Caucasian languages (NWCL) include the following languages: Abkhaz, Abaza, Ubykh, Adyghe and Kabardian. Abkhaz (Abkh) and Abaza (Abz) are closely related and may be considered dialects of one language. Adyghe (Adg) and Kabardian (Kbr) are also closely related and mutually intelligible. Adyghe and Kabardian are often referred to as West and East Circassian respectively. The differences between the two branches of the NWCL are considerable at all levels. Ubykh (Ubkh) takes an intermediate position between the two branches, but is closer to Adyghe and Kabardian in several respects. Writing systems based on the Cyrillic script exist for all the NWCL languages except Ubykh.

The NWCL are spoken in the Central and Northwestern part of the Caucasus in Russia: Kabardian (The Republics of Kabarda-Balkaria and Karachaevo-Cherkessia³), Adyghe (Adyghe Republic), Abaza (Karachaevo-Cherkessia). One NWCL is spoken on the Black Sea Coast in Georgia: Abkhaz (Abkhazia). The Ubykhs have all been assimilated in Turkey, where they were deported in 1864 from the Caucasian Black Sea Coast (the last speaker of the language died in Turkey in 1992). The NWCL are spoken by a total of 707,000 (1989) in the CIS. Large numbers of speakers are also found in Turkey, Jordan, Syria and USA (due to the Russian expansion and conquest of the Caucasus during the last century). The estimated number of speakers of the NWCL in emigration exceeds the numbers in the Caucasus several times over.

¹ This paper is based on research conducted during the years 1993-1994 and 1994-1995 with support from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the Wenner-Gren Foundation respectively.

² Prof. Mukhadin A. Kumakhov passed away in 2008. This article is published in the version that was prepared for publication in 1997 by Prof. M.A. Kumakhov and Prof. K. Vamling, with only minor technical changes.

³ The Kabardians and Besneys living in Karachaevo-Cherkessia figure as Cherkessian in Soviet terminology. The division between Kabardians, Adyghe and Cherkessians is thus a result of the division of the Circassian people between autonomous regions and republics in Soviet times.

For details, we refer to various descriptions of the NWCL: Adyghe (Kumakhov 1967, Paris 1969, Rogava & Kerasheva 1966, Smeets 1984, Kuipers 1960); Kabardian (GK, Jakovlev & Ashkhamaf 1941, Kumakhov 1989); Ubykh (Dumézil 1959, 1975, Kumakhov 1967, Vogt 1963); Abkhaz (Hewitt 1989, Lomtadze 1967) and Abaza (Allen 1956, Genko 1955, Lomtadze 1967). The syntax of the NWCL has been in focus in a smaller number of works, among them: Kerasheva 1984, Zekox 1987 (Adyghe), Kumakhov & Vamling 1993, in prep. (Kabardian), Gecadze 1979, Hewitt 1987 (Abkhaz), Özsoy 1988 (Ubykh).

Kabardian and Adyghe examples used in the paper have been supplied by Mukhadin Kumakhov and Zara Kumakhova. If not indicated otherwise, the Ubykh examples are cited from unpublished field work data on Ubykh collected by M. Kumakhov. Most Abkhaz and Abaza examples have kindly been checked or supplied by Saria Amichba.

1 General properties of Northwest Caucasian Languages

1.1 Morphological type

The dominating morphological type in the NWCL is the agglutinative. Verbal forms are particularly complex and may be characterized as polysynthetic, including up to four agreement markers. Flexional features also occur, in particular in the vowel alternation in verbal roots between transitive and intransitive forms: *də-n* ‘sew something’, *de-n* ‘be engaged in sewing’ (Adg).

The nominal inflection is rather simple, marking of number, definiteness, possession and coordination in all the languages.

The languages are predominantly head marking; the verb includes agreement marking of the subject and various objects. Case marking plays a less prominent role in the NWCL.

1.2 Nominal morphology

Number is marked by suffixes in all the languages, as *-χe* in *s'°əzə*, *s'°əz-χe-r* ‘woman, women’ (Adg). In Abkhaz and Abaza different markers are used for plural human and non-human nouns: *qa*, *qa-c°a* ‘man, men’, *c°la*, *c°la-k°a* ‘tree, trees’ (Abkh). Ubykh does not differentiate number in the absolutive – *č°ə* ‘horse(s)’ – but does express it in the ergative case *č°ə-n*, *č°ə-na* ‘horse, horses’, demonstrative *jə-č°ə*, *jəla-č°ə* ‘this horse, these horses’ and possessive *sə-č°ə*, *sö-č°ə* ‘my horse, my horses’ forms.

Definiteness is marked by prefixes in Abaza *mš°ə*, *a-mš°* ‘a bear, the bear’ and Ubykh *q°a*, *a-q°a* ‘a son, the son’ and suffixes in Adyghe *c°ə*, *c°ə-r* ‘an ox, the ox’ and Kabardian. The Abkhaz prefix *a-* expresses a general meaning and the suffix *-k*’ the indefinite meaning: *a-xac°a* ‘man (in general)’, *xac°a-k*’ ‘a man’.

Possessive is a category shared by all the NWCL. Abkhaz and Abaza distinguish feminine and masculine in the second person singular *wə-c°la* ‘your (masc.) tree’, *bə-c°la* ‘your (fem.) tree’, and masculine, feminine and neuter in the third person *yə-c°la* ‘his tree’, *l-c°la* ‘her tree’, *a-c°la* ‘its tree’. Alienable and unalienable possession is distinguished in Adyghe: *sə-g°* ‘my heart’, *si-wən* ‘my house’ but not in any of the other NWCL. In Ubykh the possessive makers show a singular and plural distinction whereas the noun itself does not, thereby serving the function of number distinction: *wa-lməq* ‘your (SG) bag’, *wäw-lməq* ‘your (PL) bag(s)’.

Coordination is marked by repeated suffixes: *sə-na-la sə-t°a-la* ‘my mother and my father’ (Ubkh).

The syntactic cases ergative and absolutive are found only in Adyghe, Kabardian (Absolutive: *-ə*, *-r*, Ergative: *-m*) and Ubykh (Absolutive *-ə*, Ergative: *-n* (pl. *-na*)). Not all nouns in the Circassian languages and Ubykh are marked for case. Personal pronouns in the first and second person lack case marking. The syntactic cases ergative-absolutive are lacking in Abkhaz and Abaza.

1.3 Verbal morphology

The verbal complex is built up by prefixation and suffixation to a minimal root, typically C, CV. Agreement markers, locational and directional markers, causative and other markers related to the valency of the verb (comitative, benefactive etc.) and non-finite negation, precede the root. Tense (present, perfect, imperfect, pluperfect, aorist and future) and modal (conditional, optative, imperative) markers, finite negation, coordinative, interrogative and assertive markers follow the root.

- (1) *a-ž°-by°a-w-m-ya-k°a-n*
 DO3SG-OBJ1PL-LOC-SBJ2SG-NEG-CAUS-go-PRS.SG
 ‘You do not allow him to defeat (go at) us’Ubkh

1.4 Grammatical relations, agreement and case marking

The most salient signal coding grammatical relations in the NWCL is the alignment of agreement markers in the verb. Two orderings exist, roughly corresponding to transitive and intransitive verbs. In the transitive verb the direct object marker is found

in initial position, whereas the rightmost agreement prefix marks the subject (2a). Any indirect or oblique object markers are placed between them (2b).

- (2) a. wə-z-bja-w
DO2SG-SBJ1SG-see-FUT1.SG
'I will see you' Ubkh
- b. a-wə-š'-t°-q'an
DO3SG-OBJ2SG-SBJ1PL-give-PF.PL
'we gave him to you' Ubkh

Intransitive verbs may be either monovalent or polyvalent. Here, in contrast to the transitive verb, the subject prefix is found in initial position and markers of any objects follow the subject marker.

- (3) sə-w-pla-n
SBJ1SG-OBJ2SG-look.at-PRS.SG
'I look at you' Ubkh

There is thus an ergative pattern in the alignment of agreement markers: the subject of intransitives and direct object of transitives are placed initially, whereas the subject of the transitive verb occupies the rightmost position among the agreement markers. The same principle of alignment is common to all the NWCL.

Features involved in agreement are person and number in Ubykh and the Circassian languages, and person, gender and number in Abkhaz and Abaza.

In Abkhaz and Abaza the markers occur in three sets of prefixes, corresponding to (I) subjects of intransitives and direct objects of transitives, i.e. the absolutive position, (II) other objects, (III) subjects of transitives; the ergative position. The three sets of prefixes are illustrated from Abkhaz. The differences emerge in the third person.

Table 1. Agreement markers in Abkhaz

		<i>Set I markers [S, P]</i>		<i>Set II</i>	<i>Set III markers [A]</i>
1SG		s(ə)-		s(ə)-	s(ə)-, z-
2SG	Masc.	w(ə)-		w(ə)-	w(ə)-
	Fem.	b(ə)-		b(ə)-	b(ə)-
3SG	Hum.	d(ə)-	Masc.	j(ə)-	j(ə)-
			Fem.	l(ə)-	l(ə)-
	Non hum.	j(ə)-	Non hum.	a-	a-, na-
1PL		h(ə)-		h(ə)-	h(ə)-
2PL		š°(ə)-		š°(ə)-	š°(ə)-
3PL		j(ə)-		r(ə)-	r(ə)-

Prefixes from the three series are illustrated in the transitive verb in (4a) and the intransitive in (4b).

- (4) a. jə-l-b-o-jt'
DO3SG.NHUM-SBJ3SG.FEM-see-DYN-PRS.FIN
'She (III) sees it (I)' Abkh
- b. w-a-š'ta-l-o-jt'
SBJ2SG.MASC-OBJ3SG.NHUM-run after-DYN-PRS.FIN
'You (I) run after it (II)' Abkh

Agreement markers in Adyghe, Kabardian and Ubykh are given in Table 2. The choice between the alternants is a complex interplay between phonological and morphological factors.

Table 2. Agreement markers in Adyghe, Kabardian and Ubykh

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

The agreement markers show transparent similarities to pronouns in all the NWCL. Compare, for instance, the system of personal pronouns in Abkhaz (Lomtadze 1967:111) with the agreement prefixes given in Table 1 above. Compare also the possessive prefixes (cf. section 1.2. Nominal morphology).

Table 3. Personal pronouns in Abkhaz

1SG	sara	1PL	hara
2SG	wara (Masc), bara (Fem.)	2PL	š'°ara
3SG	jara 'he', lara 'she', jara 'it'	3PL	dara

As expected, the absolutive case marks the subject of intransitive verbs (5a) and direct object of transitive verbs (5b). The ergative case is assigned to subjects of transitive verbs (5b). However, in both the Circassian languages and Ubykh the same marker

also has oblique functions (5a). It marks indirect and oblique objects. Furthermore, the same case also marks the possessor (5c).

- (5) a. S'ak°'e-r mezə-m ma-k°'e
 hunter-ABS forest-ERG SBJ3SG-go.PRS
 'The hunter goes to the forest' Kbr
- b. Tχak°'e-m tχələ-r ə-tχə-γ
 writer-ERG book-ABS SBJ3SG-write-PF
 'The writer wrote a book' Adg
- c. fəzə-m jə-psale
 woman-ERG POSS3SG-word
 'The woman's word' Kbr

As Abkhaz and Abaza lack the opposition between the absolutive and ergative cases, the ergative-absolutive pattern emerges only in the verbal morphology.

1.5 Main word order patterns

Basic word order in the NWCL is SOV (6a). An indirect object immediately follows the subject. Word order is grammatically distinctive in clauses where no case marking is present. This, of course, is particularly important in Abkhaz and Abaza, as the case opposition absolutive-ergative is lacking altogether (6b-c).

- (6) a. A-baz'°ə-n γa-q°a yə-bya-q'a
 DEF-old.man-ERG POSS3SG-son SBJ3SG-see-PF
 'The old man saw his son' Ubkh
- b. Yara a-x°əč'°ə də-j-aaz-o-jt'
 he ART-child DO3SG.HUM-SBJ3SG.MASC-foster-DYN-FIN
 'He raises the child' Abkh
- c. A-x°əč'°ə yara də-j-aaz-o-jt'
 ART-child he DO3SG.HUM-SBJ3SG.MASC-foster-DYN-FIN
 'The child raises him' Abkh

When the NPs are case marked, there is greater freedom of ordering. The orders VSO and SVO do occur but they are stylistically marked. When the subject and the object NPs are proper nouns or other nouns that do not differentiate ergative and absolutive cases (in Adyghe, Kabardian and Ubykh), the word order is fixed SO with bivalent verbs – transitive in (7a) and intransitive in (b). A change of the order SO, is accompanied by a change of the grammatical meaning in (7).

- (7) a. Inal Anzor je-h
Inal Anzor SBJ3SG-carry.PRS
'Inal carries Anzor.' Kbr
- b. Inal Anzor j-o-we
Inal Anzor OBJ3SG-DYN-hit.PRS
'Inal hits Anzor.' Kbr

When the subject is low on the animacy scale and the object denotes a human in clauses with verbs of the type 'kill, burn, suffocate...', the order OSV occurs along with SOV.

- (8) Č'ale-r psə-m ə-thala-γ
boy-ABS water (river)-ERG SBJ3SG-suffocate.TR-PF
'The water suffocated the boy (The boy drowned).' Adg

In the NP qualitative adjectives follow the head noun (9a) and relational adjectives precede it (9b).

- (9) a. čə q'ara
horse black
'black horse' (Abz)
- b. ayxa-t'ə k'arwat
iron-ADJ bed
'iron bed' (Abkh)

In a possessive NP, the possessor always precedes the head noun:

- (10) ax'ə ya-px'a
prince POSS3SG-daughter
'the prince's daughter' Ubkh

A more complex NP illustrates the placement of the possessive prefix initially and the number, case and coordination suffixes added to the final lexical element of the NP. Note that the possessive prefix does not attach to the head noun but to the first element of the NP.

- (11) si-px'e wəne yən daχe-χe-r-əy
POSS1SG-wood house big beautiful-PL-ABS-COORD
'and my big beautiful wooden houses' Adg

1.6 Pro-drop

Pronominal null subjects and objects are common in any position due to the richness of agreement marking including a full specification of person and number of subject and objects.

- (12) a. (Wəy°a) (səy°a) wə-sə-ya-n
 you I SBJ2SG-OBJ1SG-hit-PRS.SG
 'You hit me' Ubkh
- b. (Dara) (bara) bə-r-ga-t'
 they you DO2SG.FEM-SBJ3PL-carry-AOR.FIN
 'They carried you (fem.)' Abz

A third person pronoun may be dropped even if there is no corresponding third person agreement marker in the verb. In such cases the zero position in the verb is related to a marker that presupposes the presence of a direct or oblique object, such as causative, locative, version, comitative and other categories. The verb form in (13) includes a so-called version marker *fe-* (benefactive), which increases the valency with one argument slot.

- (13) (Sə) (wə) (a-š') wə-ø-fe-s-š'a-y
 I you he-ERG DO2SG-(OBJ3SG)-V-SBJ1SG-lead-PF Adg
 'I lead you to him (or for him)'

2 Types of complementation

The most characteristic feature of complementation in the NWCL is that it is predominantly non-finite. Complement clauses including complementizers and indicative verbs are very rare. A large number of various non-finite forms occur as complement predicates, including participles, gerunds, conditionals, verbal nouns (masdars) and infinitives. This terminology for the non-finite forms keeps the traditional labels used in descriptions of the NWCL⁴. However, it is important to note that such forms may differ in various respects from the corresponding forms in other European languages. For example, the form called the infinitive in the Circassian languages includes subject and, if transitive, also object agreement marking.

The use and distribution of the forms vary in the different languages. For instance, participles and gerunds occur in complementation in all the NWCL but with varying frequency. Masdar complements are common in Abkhaz and Abaza, less so in Adyghe and Kabardian and are lacking in Ubykh.

Note also that the distinction finite/non-finite differs from the traditional use of the terms. A finite form in the NWCL is able to form a complete sentence, whereas a non-finite form is not. A non-finite form is always dependent on the presence of

⁴ The terms participles and gerunds are here used in the tradition following Lomtadidze, Rogava & Kerasheva 1966 and others.

another (finite) form. A formal difference between them is that negation is marked differently in finite and non-finite forms (by a suffix in finite and a prefix in non-finite forms).

3 Internal structure

Like finite verbs, non-finite forms include agreement markers of subject, direct object, indirect object and various oblique relations. The markers are chosen from the same sets of agreement prefixes as for the finite verbs. An exception is the masdar, which takes a subject marker in the form of the possessive prefix. Among the non-finite forms, the participles and the gerunds distinguish temporal categories (although a reduced set compared to tense forms in finite verbs). The case of the subject and object(s) of the non-finite forms in the Circassian languages and Ubykh is assigned similarly to that of the finite forms. Among the complement predicates participles and masdars are case marked themselves.

3.1 Complementizers

There are very few elements in the NWCL that may be considered complementizers. As noted below (cf. section 3.3.), the particle $h^{\circ}a$ in Abkhaz seems to have such functions. It occurs mostly with non-finite complements but also in indicative complements. The particle $h^{\circ}a$ is found only in Abkhaz. Due to the presence of $ax'\partial$ the particle $h^{\circ}a$ is optional in (14a).

- (14) a. W-ax'ə-m-ca-wa pšʒa-m (h°a)
 SBJ2SG.MASC-PART-NEG-go-DYN.NFIN.PRS beautiful-NEG (that)
- jə-sə-px'aʒa-wa-jt'
 DO3SG.NHUM-SBJ1SG-consider-DYN.FIN.PRS
 'I think that it is not nice that you don't go' Abkh
- b. D-aa-r h°a s-š°a-wa-jt'
 SBJ3SG.HUM-come.here-COND that SBJ1SG-fear-DYN-FIN.PRS
 'I fear that he will come here' Abkh

3.2 Word-order in subordinate clauses

Word-order within the complement follows the neutral SOV arrangement (15a). Whereas considerable variation is allowed in the simple sentence, such as VSO and OVS, this is generally not acceptable in the subordinate clause (15b).

- (15) a. Nəwe-m [ps'as'e-m žane-r (ø)-zer-i-də-ye-r]
 old.woman-ERG girl-ERG shirt-ABS DO3SG-PART-SBJ3SG-sew-PF-ABS
 ə-tɛɣ°ə-ɣ
 SBJ3SG-see-PF
 'The old woman saw that the girl sewed a shirt' Adg
- b. *Nəwe-m [(ø)-zer-i-də-ye-r ps'as'e-m žane-r] ə-tɛɣ°ə-ɣ Adg

- (16) ə-də-y ps'as'e-m žane-r
SBJ3SG-sew-PF girl-ERG shirt-ABS
'The girl sewed a shirt'
- Adg

Indicative complement clauses are very rare in the NWCL, occurring only under certain stylistic, lexical and grammatical conditions and mainly in the present tense. Such forms are found in casual, oral style in Adyghe and Kabardian complements of a limited group of predicates of knowledge and immediate perception – *s'e-n* 'know', *g°arəɬ°e-n* 'understand', *lay°ə-n* 'see' (17a). Similar examples are found in Abkhaz (17b).

Note that the complements are marked by a third person marker in the matrix verb in the Abkhaz example (17b), thus formally being object clauses.

- (18) Wəj də-ca-wa-jt' h°a
 that.one SBJ3SG.HUM-go-DYN-FIN.PRS that
 (ø)-z-dər-wa-jt'
 DO3SG-SBJ1SG-know-DYN-FIN.PRS
 'I know that he is going' (Hewitt 1987:239) Abkh

Complement clauses with the particle *h°a*, may alternatively take participles as complement predicate. The particle *h°a* occurs in complements of different kinds of matrix predicates (see below).

3.4 Participial complement clauses

Participles used as complement predicates are distinguished by certain prefixes in the different languages: *š(ə)-* (Abkh, Abz), *dya-* (Ubkh) and *zer(ə)-* (Adg, Kbr). The prefixes have a meaning corresponding to the indicative complementizer 'that' (glossed as 'PART').

- (19) a. Wə-š-aa-wa z-dər-wa-jt'
 SBJ2SG.MASC-PART-come.here-DYN.PRS SBJ1SG-know-DYN
 'I know, that you come here' Abkh
- b. Jə-šə-z-ba-z wə-h°a-t'
 DO3SG.NHUM-PART-SBJ1SG-see-INFN SBJ2SG.MASC-say-FIN
 'You said that I saw (something)' Abz
- c. A-px'adək° dya-k°'a-q'a ə-z-bja-q'a
 DEF-girl.ABS PART-go-PF DO3SG-SBJ1SG-see-PF
 'I saw that the girl went' Ubkh
- d. (We) wə-qə-zerə-k°'a-ye-r se-s''e
 (you) SBJ2SG-OR⁵-PART-go-PF-ABS SBJ1SG-know.PRS
 'I know that you came (here)' Adg
- e. Adə-m jə-q°'e-m wəne zər-i-s''ə-r
 father-ERG POSS3SG-son-ERG house-ABS PART-SBJ3SG-do.PRS-ABS
 zəχ-i-χ-a-s'
 LOC-SBJ3SG-hear-PF-ASRT
 'Father heard that his son is building a house' Kbr

In Abkhaz and Abaza one finds, besides *š(ə)-* (Abkh, Abz), the prefixes *ax'(ə)-* (Abkh), *ʔa-/ax'aʔa-* (Abz). The prefixes are particularly often found in complements of commentative predicates (20b).

⁵ Orientation, usually marking direction of action towards the speaker.

- (20) a. S-a-c°-g°aa-wa-jt'
 SBJ1SG-OBJ3SG.NHUM-NVOL-be.offended-DYN-FIN.PRS
 w-ax'-c°až°a-wa
 SBJ2SG.MASC-PART-talk-DYN-NFIN.PRS
 'I'm offended that you are talking' Abkh
- b. W-ax'ə-m-ca-wa pšža-m
 SBJ2SG.MASC-PART-NEG-go-DYN.NFIN.PRS beautiful-NEG
 'It is not nice that you don't go.' Abkh

Participles in these languages are used in adjectival and relative (21) functions as well.

- (21) sabəj (ø)-p-hə-ye-r
 child.ABS DO3SG-SBJ2SG-carry-PF-ABS
 'the child that you carried' Adg

3.5 Gerundival complement clauses

Gerunds are one of the most productive complement types in the NWCL, here exemplified from the five languages:

- (22) a. Sara d-č°'ə-wa
 Sara SBJ3SG.HUM-cry-DYN.NFIN
 d-a-la-ga-t'
 SBJ3SG.HUM-OBJ3SG.NHUM-LOC-begin-AOR.FIN
 'Sara began to cry' Abz
- b. A-č°'k°'ən d-a-s-wa
 ART-boy SBJ3SG.HUM-OBJ3SG.NHUM-hit-DYN.GER
 d-a-laga-jt'
 SBJ3SG.HUM-OBJ3SG.NHUM-begin-FIN.AOR
 'The boy started hitting' Abkh
- c. Wə-k''a-w-n wə-g'ə-n wa-ł
 SBJ2SG-go-FIN-GER POSS2SG-heart-ERG LOC-lie.PRS
 'You intend to go' Ubkh
- d. (Te) tə-g°əš'ə?e-w tə-wəbla-γ
 (we) SBJ1PL-talk-GER SBJ1PL-begin-PF
 'We started talking' Adg
- e. (Fe) šə-r f-s'-a-we si-g°əγ-a-s'
 you horse-ABS SBJ2PL-sell-PF-GER POSS1SG-thought-PF-ASRT
 'I thought that you had sold the horse' Kbr

Gerunds have a rich morphology, including, for instance, comitative markers (a) and markers of orientation, reversed action and potentialis (b).

- (23) a. (Səy°a) sə-w-ž'a-k''a-w-n s-lak''a-w
 (I) SBJ1SG-OBJ2SG-COM-go-FUT-GER SBJ1SG-can-FUT
 'I can go together with you' Ubkh
- b. (We) w-a-q'ə-de-mə-k''e-žə-f-a-we
 (you) SBJ2SG-OBJ3PL-OR-COM-NEG-go-REV-POT-PF-GER
 s-o-bž
 SBJ1SG-DYN-consider.PRS
 'I think, that you couldn't come here together with them' Kbr

In other contexts gerunds have adverbial functions (24).

- (24) a. We tχələ-m w-je-ž-a-we wə-s'ə-s-s'
 you book-ERG SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read-PF-GER SBJ2SG-LOC-sit.PRS-ASRT
 'You are sitting having read the book' Kbr
- b. Se wəne-m s-je-mə-pl-a-we
 I house-ERG SBJ1SG-OBJ3SG-NEG-look.at-PF-GER
 s-o-k''e-ž
 SBJ1SG-DYN-go.PRS-REV
 'I leave without having looked at the house' Kbr

3.6 Infinitival complement clauses

The infinitive is a complement type that is limited to Kabardian and Adyghe among the NWCL. It is marked by the *-n* suffix, which coincides with the future tense marker. The infinitive lacks tense and case but takes, apart from that, a rich set up of markers – subject and object agreement, benefactive, malefactive, causative, comitative, reflexive, negation etc.

- (25) a. (we) wə-čəje-n wə-feja-γ
 (you) SBJ2SG-sleep-INF SBJ2SG-want-PF
 'You wanted to sleep' Adg
- b. (Sə) (we) (a-bə-χe-m)
 (I) (you) (he-ERG-PL-ERG)
 w-a-de-z-ye-k''e-n
 DO2SG-OBJ3PL-COM-SBJ1SG-CAUS-go-INF
 si-g°əye-t
 POSS1SG-thought-IMP
 'I intended to make you go together with them' Kbr

- c. S'əmaəχ°e-m zə-χ°e-d-ye-hezəə-n χ°ej-a-s'
 winter-ERG REFL-V-SBJ1PL-CAUS-prepare-INF have.to-PF-ASRT
 'We should have prepared ourselves for winter' Kbr

When infinitives occur in complements of phasal verbs, the subject marker is optional (26a). Compare this, for instance, to the infinitival complement of a modal matrix verb (26b), where the subject marker is obligatory.

- (26) a. Te wəne-r (t')-s'ə-n tə-wəble-š't
 we house-ABS (SBJ1PL)-do-INF SBJ1PL-begin-FUT
 'We will begin to build the house' Adg
- b. Te wəne-r *ø/t'-s'ə-n t-łeč'ə-š't
 we house-ABS SBJ1PL-do-INF SBJ1PL-can-FUT
 'We will be able to build the house' Adg

3.7 Masdar (verbal noun) complement clauses

The masdar shows both verbal and nominal features. It is case marked and assigned case by the matrix verb. Other categories are the possessive, coordinative and number.

- (27) a. A-ča-ra wa-lga-t'
 ART-eat-VN SBJ2SG.MASC-finish-FIN.AOR
 'You stopped eating' Abz
- b. A-ca-ra sa-q°c'ə-jt'
 ART-go-VN SBJ1SG-stop-FIN.AOR
 'I stopped going' Abkh
- c. (Te) txe-nə-r tə-wəble-ž'ə-š'təy
 (we) write-VN-ABS SBJ1PL-begin-REV-IMPF
 'We continued writing' Adg
- d. (Fe) fi-je-ye-žə-nə-r
 (you) POSS2PL-OBJ3SG-CAUS-study-VN-ABS
 s'ə-v-o-žə-ž
 LOC-SBJ2PL-DYN-begin-REV
 'You begin instructing someone (your instruction of someone)' Kbr

If all the other non-finite forms mark the grammatical relations in the same way as it is done in finite clauses, masdars constitute an exception. The subject is marked by a possessive prefix initially in the masdar phrase. The subject is identified as S+A, thus differently from the division in S [ABS] and A [ERG] in finite and other non-finite positions. The direct object is transformed into a noun in attributive position before

the masdar. As seen from the examples below, the possessive prefix attaches to this preposed noun (and not to the head noun, cf. also (11)). Both coreference (28a) and disjoint subject reference (28b) are possible here.

- (28) a. Se [si-lə šχə-nə-r] sə-wəχ-a-s'
 I POSS1SG-meat eat-VN-ABS SBJ1SG-finish-PF-ASRT
 'I finished eating the meat' Kbr
- b. We [si-žane də-nə-r] b-ye-wvə?-a-s'
 you POSS1SG-shirt sew-VN-ABS SBJ2SG-CAUS-stop. ITR-PF-ASRT
 'You stopped my sewing the shirt' Kbr

3.8 Interrogative complements

The 'alternative' form is used in interrogative complements with polar questions: I wonder *if he does it or not*. It is formed by repeated complement predicates, where the first one takes the interrogative suffix and the second one the negation prefix and the interrogative suffix. The alternative construction is particularly frequent in Adyghe and Kabardian.

- (29) a. (Se) s-s''e-r-ep s''ə-k''e-ra
 (I) SBJ1SG-know-DYN-NEG SBJ2SG-go.PRS-INT

 s''ə-mə-k''e-ra
 SBJ2SG-NEG-go.PRS-INT
 'I don't know if you go or not' Adg
- b. (We) wə-q'ə-ze-wəp's''ə-γat wə-s-ley°-a-re
 (you) SBJ2SG-OR-OBJ1SG-ask-PLUP2 DO2SG-SBJ1SG-see-PF-INT

 wə-z-mə-ley°-a-re
 DO2SG-SBJ1SG-NEG-see-PF-INT
 'You asked me whether I had seen you or not' Kbr

Another interrogative complement type is formed by the suffix *-məj* (Adg, Kbr), which roughly corresponds to 'if' (30).

- (30) (Sə) a-r k''e-məj qə-s-s''e-š't
 (I) he-ABS go.PRS-if OR-SBJ1SG-find.out-FUT
 'I will find out if he goes' Adg

Participles formed by prefixes marking location, time, direction and other relations are also found in complement clauses. These prefixes have several meanings, depending on the context: *zəš'*- (Adg), *s'*- (Kbr) 'where, when', *zde*- (Adg, Kbr)

‘where, to where’, *zerə-* ‘where, how’ (Adg, Kbr). The participle is marked by the absolutive case in the same way as an ordinary direct object (31).

- (31) a. A-r mezə-m s'ə-k''e-r we w-o-s''e
 he-ABS wood-ERG when-go-ABS you SBJ2SG-DYN-know.PRS
 ‘You know when he goes to the wood’ Kbr
- b. We wə-zere-k''e-re-r se s-s''e-r-ep
 you SBJ2SG-how-go-PART-ABS I SBJ1SG-know-PRS-NEG
 ‘I don’t know how you go.’ Adg
- c. Ps'as'e-r zde-š'əsə-r c''ale-m jə-leγ°ə-γ
 girl-ABS where-sit-ABS boy-ERG SBJ3SG-see-PF
 ‘The boy saw where the girl sits.’ Adg

The corresponding simple question (32a) is formed by *səts'əγ°e* ‘when’ and the participle including the prefix *s'-* ‘when’. If (31a) is turned into an interrogative clause with an embedded question, the *wh*-word *səts'əγ°e* ‘when’ is no longer allowed (32b). The interrogative suffix *-re* is added to the matrix verb.

- (32) a. A-r mezə-m səts'əγ°e s'ə-k''e-r?
 he-ABS wood-ERG when when-go.PRS-ABS
 ‘When does he go to the wood?’ Kbr
- b. A-r mezə-m s'ə-k''e-r we p'-s''e-re
 he-ABS wood-ERG when-go-ABS you SBJ2SG-know.PRS-INT
 ‘Do you know, when he goes to the wood?’ Kbr

3.9 Other types of complement clauses

In this section we look at some minor complement types and constructions occurring in different languages: the conditional, the non-finite form with arbitrary subject reference, the imperative and the obligative construction.

The conditional (33a) and the purposive-conditional (33b) are particularly frequent complement types in Abkhaz and Abaza, marked by the suffixes *-r* and *-rc* respectively.

- (33) a. Jə-s-fa-r s-tax'ə-w-p'
 DO3SG.NHUM-SBJ1SG-eat-COND SBJ1SG-want-FIN-PRS.STAT
 ‘I want to eat (it).’ Abkh
- b. S-ca-rc s-tax'ə-w-p'
 SBJ1SG-go-PCOND SBJ1SG-want-FIN-PRS.STAT
 ‘I want to go.’ Abkh

In Kabardian and Adyghe the conditional is much less frequent, but it does occur with volitional verbs (34).

- (34) (Se) (we) sə-q'e-p-š-a-mə s-f'e-f'-t
(I) (you) DO1SG-OR-SBJ2SG-lead-PF-COND SBJ1SG-V-want-IMP
'I wanted you to take me here.' Kbr

The non-finite form with arbitrary subject reference is a form of high frequency in Adyghe and Kabardian (for details, see Kumakhov & Vamling 1994). Formally, it is the second person singular prefix *w-* (*p-*) that serves the function of marking arbitrary reference of the subject. This prefix is obligatorily present in such forms. Note that object markers in the third person may be present, keeping their usual functions.

- (35) a. ʔ'eχ°əšχ°e-t tχələ-r p-tχə-n-č'e
important-IMPF book-ABS SUBJ2SG-write-INF-INSTR
'It was important to write the book.' Kbr
- b. Helemet-s' a-bə w-e-pl'ə-n-č'e
interesting-ASRT he/it-ERG SUBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-look.at-INF-INSTR
'It is interesting to look at him (at it)' Kbr

In this form the suffix *-n* occurs, as in infinitives. However, a marked difference from infinitives is that this form usually takes a frozen case suffix – the instrumental *-č'e* in most instances, but also the absolutive *-r* or the adverbial *-w* cases.

- (36) Dey°e-s' nobe zə-b-ɣepsč'ə-n (-ø, -r, -č'e, -w)
nice-ASRT today REFL-SUBJ2SG-bathe-INF (-ø,-ABS,-INSTR,-ADV)
'It's nice to take a swim today.' Kbr

The obligative construction is formed by the participle *χ°əj-a-r* 'have to' (37a) preceded by an infinitive, that exceptionally takes the participial prefix *zerə-* (Kumakhov and Vamling, 1997). Example (37b) illustrates the imperative that is used in certain complements in Abkhaz and Abaza.

- (37) a. (Se) s-s'əɣ°əps'-a-q'əm (fe) fə-zerə-s-ləɣ°ə-n
(I) SBJ1SG-forget-PF-NEG (you) DO2PL-PART-S1SG-see-INF

χ°ej-a-r (=fə-s-ləɣ°ə-n zərə-χ°ej-a-r)
have.to-PF-ABS (DO2PL-SBJ1SG-see-INF PART-have.to-PF-ABS)
'I didn't forget that I had to see you' Kbr
- b. Wə-na-gəl s-h°a-t'
SBJ2SG.MASC-OR-stand.up.IMP SBJ1SG-say-FIN.PRS
'I ordered you to stand up' Abz

- c. Se we a-bə w-je-z-ye-h-a-s'
 I you he-ABS DO2SG-OBJ3SG-SBJ1SG-CAUS-carry-PF-ASRT
 'I made him carry you.' Kbr

In some cases the prefix loses its primary causative meaning and functions as a transitivizing prefix. This results in double causative markers when such verbs combine with the causative prefix 'make, force', as in (42b).

- (42) a. ø-z-ye-z'°a-y
 DO3SG-SBJ1SG-CAUS-become.fried-PF
 'I fry it' Adg
- b. ø-sə-j-ye-ye-z'°a-y
 DO3SG-OBJ1SG-SBJ3SG-CAUS-CAUS-become.fried-PF
 'he made me fry it' Adg

3.11 Potentialis

Potentialis forms are found in all the NWCL. The predicate 'can, be able' is represented by an affix in the verb form.

- (43) a. sə-p-fe-hə-y
 OBJ1SG-SBJ2SG-POT-carry-PF
 'You could carry me' Adg
- b. wə-m-k'°a-fa-n
 SBJ2SG-NEG-go-POT-PRS.SG
 'You couldn't go' Ubkh
- c. s-šχə-s'°ə-š't
 SBJ1SG-eat-POT-FUT
 'I can eat' Adg
- d. də-s-zə-k'°ə-jt'
 OBJ3SG.HUM-SBJ1SG-POT-catch-FIN.PRS
 'I can catch him/her' Abz

Both the morphological causative and potentialis constructions correspond to matrix predicates with similar meanings, as shown by the manipulative matrix verb in (44a) and the modal in (44b).

- (44) a. Se a-r je-z-yez-a-s' a-bə nobe
 I he-ABS DO3SG-SBJ1SG-force-PF-ASRT he-ERG today
 lez'əye-r jə-wəχə-nu
 work-ABS SBJ3SG-finish-INF
 'I forced him to finish the work today' Kbr

- b. Se s-lečə-a-s' a wəne-r s-s''ə-n
 I SBJ1SG-can-PF-ASRT this house-ABS SBJ1SG-do-INF
 'I was able to build this house.' Kbr

4 External relations

Complement clauses are found both in subject and object position. Object clauses occur as direct objects as well as objects of intransitive (45) verbs.

- (45) L'ə-r lə-r jə-šə-n me-šəne
 man-ABS meat-ABS SBJ3SG-eat.TR-INF SBJ3SG-be.afraid.PRS
 'The man is afraid to eat the meat' Kbr

Clauses in subject position are found with various de-adjectival commentative predicates corresponding to 'easy', 'difficult', 'good', 'bad', 'important' etc. The subject clause is usually postposed, though not necessarily.

- (46) Heləmet-s' [tχələ-r p-tχə-nə-r]
 Interesting.PRS-ASRT book-ABS SBJ2SG-write-INF-ABS
 'It is interesting to write the book.' Kbr

Participial or masdar clauses are found in subject position with another small group of verbs – with the meanings 'worry', 'frighten', 'irritate'. The causative prefix in these verbs has a transitivizing function. The participle in subject position is marked by the ergative case, it is placed initially as other subjects and is reflected in the matrix verb by the third person subject marker.

- (47) S'awe-r zere-səmažə-m nə-r jə-ye-q'əməč''ə
 son-ABS PART-be.ill-ERG mother-ABS SBJ3SG-CAUS-worry.PRS
 'It worries mother that her son is ill' Adg

Clauses occurring as complements of postpositions constitute a marginal case, illustrated in (48).

- (48) Se s-o-šəne wə-q'ə-zərə-k''e-nu-m s'heč'e
 I SBJ1SG-DYN-be.afraid.PRS SBJ2SG-OR-PART-go-FUT-ERG for
 'I am afraid that you will come' Kbr

Clauses as complements of nouns are exemplified with the noun *murad* (Kbr) 'intention'. The complement takes the form of an infinitive that assigns the absolutive case to its object in the ordinary way. *Abə* 'he.ERG' is the possessor and is related to

the possessive marker in *jə-muradə-r* ‘intention’. The complement clause is thus embedded in the NP.

- (49) A-bə [maʃəne jə-dəy°ə-nəw] jə-muradə-r
 he-ERG car.ABS SBJ3SG-steal-INF POSS3SG-intention-ABS
 ‘His intention to steal the car...’ Kbr

4.1 Word order

As noted above, word order is rather free, allowing SOV, VSO and SVO. The most neutral order is SOV, in both simple and complex sentences. The object complement clause occurs in medial position, i.e. before the matrix verb.

- (50) a. A-px'adək° a-wax-g'ə my'aw-q'a
 DET-girl.ABS SBJ3SG-cry-PRS.GER begin-PF.SG
 ‘The girl started crying’ Ubkh
- b. Ya-k°abž'a-n [a-davrəšə-n a-məzə-n psa
 POSS3SG-husband-ERG [DET-dervish-ERG DET-child-ERG soul.ABS
 dya-wa-n-l-q'a] mə-c'a-najt'
 PART-LOC-SBJ3SG-put-PF.SG] NEG-know-IMPF.SG
 ‘Her husband didn't know that the dervish had planted his soul into the child’ (Dumézil 1975:207) Ubkh

When the matrix subject is dropped, the complement is usually preposed to the matrix predicate.

- (51) A-š°ah°a-ra wa-q°°əc°ə-jt'
 ART-sing-VN SBJ2SG-stop-FIN.AOR
 ‘You stopped singing’ Abkh

It is possible to move the subject out of the complement to the initial position in the sentence (52a). Again, this is only possible if the two NPs are differentiated by case. If proper nouns are used, this is no longer possible (52b).

- (52) a. L'ə-r s°əzə-m jə-s'e q'ə-zere-k°°a-ye-r
 man-ABS woman-ERG SBJ3SG-know.PRS OR-PART-go-PF-ABS
 ‘The woman knows that the man came’ Adg
- b. *Anzor Murat jə-s'e q'ə-zere-k°°a-ye-r
 Anzor Murat SBJ3SG-know.PRS OR-PART-go-PF-ABS
 ‘Anzor knows that Murat came’ Adg

(53) Se we p'-s'e-t sə-zero-laz'e-r
I you SBJ2SG-know-IMP F SBJ1SG-PART-work.PRS-ABS
'You knew that I am working' Kbr

Under certain conditions there are alternative assignments of subject case, ergative or absolutive, as in (54).

- The placement of the subject in relation to the complement and matrix predicate is also of importance in allowing ergative or absolutive case marking of the subject. In this case, the subject is typically placed before the complement predicate and thus separated from the matrix predicate (55).

- If the subject is placed before (56a) or after (adjacent to) the matrix predicate (56b), case may be assigned only by the matrix predicate.

- (56) a. (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r l'ə-m/*-r je-s''e-ž
 SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS man-ERG/*-ABS S3SG-know.PRS-REV
 'The man remembers that he is ill' Kbr
- b. (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r je-s''e-ž l'ə-m/*-r
 SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS SBJ3SG-know.PRS-REV man-ERG/*-ABS
 'The man remembers that he is ill' Kbr

A further condition that has to hold is coreference between the matrix and complement subjects. However, obligatory subject control is not necessary. In the set of examples below we find matrix verbs with both obligatory subject coreference (57a, b) and with subject coreference without control restrictions (57c). Example (57d) shows the contrast with different subjects, where case may be assigned only by the matrix verb.

- (57) a. L'ə-m/-r šxe-n s''-i-3-a-s'
 man-ERG/-ABS eat. ITR-INF LOC-SBJ3SG-begin. TR-PF-ASRT
 'The man began to eat' Kbr
- b. L'ə-m/-r q'ə-k''e-nu sə-q'-i-yeğ°əy-a-s'
 man-ERG/-ABS OR-go-INF DO1SG-OR-SBJ3SG-promise-PF-ASRT
 'The man promised me to come' Kbr
- c. L'ə-m/-r (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r je-s''e-ž
 man-ERG/-ABS SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS SBJ3SG-know.PRS-REV
 'The man_i remembers (knows) that he_j is ill' Kbr
- d. L'ə-m/*-r (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r je-s''e
 man-ERG/*-ABS SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS SBJ3SG-know.PRS
 'The man_i knows that he_j is ill' Kbr

It is not only the question of transitivity vs. intransitivity that determines the case marking. The two examples (58a) and (58b) differ in the presence of the suffix -ž of 'reversed action' in (b) but not in (a), which changes the meaning of the matrix verb. A verb that includes the reversed action marker is in a sense reflexive and presupposes coreference between the matrix and complement subjects.

- (58) a. L'ə-m/*-r (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r je-s''e
 man-ERG/-ABS SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS SBJ3SG-know.PRS
 'The man knows that he is ill' Kbr
- b. L'ə-m/-r (ø)-zerə-səmažə-r je-s''e-ž
 man-ERG/-ABS SBJ3SG-PART-be.ill.PRS-ABS SBJ3SG-know.PRS-REV
 'The man remembers that he is ill' Kbr

Finally, we note a case where ergative case marking occurs and absolutive is excluded, despite the intransitivity of the matrix verb (59). In this example the ergative case marking seems to be related to the presence of the possessive marker.

- (59) Je-l'ə-m (*-r) lə-r jə-šχə-n
 POSS3SG-husband-ERG/*ABS meat-ABS SBJ3SG-eat-INF
 me-šə-ne
 SBJ3SG-be.afraid-INF
 'Her husband is afraid to eat the meat' Kbr

Turning now to the problem of pro-drop. As noted above, all non-finite forms (except masdars) have the same slots for agreement marking as do finite verbs. Generally, it is possible to have an NP or overt personal pronoun corresponding to each argument position. However, this does not happen in spontaneous production, as personal pronouns are primarily used for emphatic purposes. Pro-drop is also more common in oral style than in written standard language.

In complementation the occurrence of overt pronouns is further restricted. Under coreference with the matrix subject, an overt complement subject is not allowed to appear (60a). At the same time, if the complement subject is overt, then the matrix subject has to be dropped under coreference (60b).

- (60) a. L'ə-m ø/*a-r šχe-n s''-i-3-a-s'
 man-ERG he-ABS eat.ITER-INF LOC-SBJ3SG-begin.TR-PF-ASRT
 'The man began to eat' Kbr
- b. ø/*Abə l'ə-r šχe-n s''-i-3-a-s'
 he-ERG man-ABS eat.ITER-INF LOC-SBJ3SG-begin.TR-PF-ASRT
 'The man began to eat' Kbr

In cases of object control, the complement subject is also usually deleted ((61) but cf. also (44a)).

- (61) Zine Anzor je-leʔ°ə-γ ø/*abə pismo
 Zina Anzor OBJ3SG-ask-PF he.ERG letter
 (ø)-q'ə-f-i-tχə-new
 DO3SG-OR-V-SBJ3SG-write-INF
 'Zina asked Anzor to write a letter' Adg

Under disjoint reference the complement subject pronoun is present in most cases.

- (62) A-bə je-lay° we wə-k°'e-n
 he-ERG SBJ3SG-see.PRS you SBJ2SG-go-INF
 wə-zerə-χ°ej-r
 SBJ2SG-PART-want-ABS
 'He sees that you want to go' Kbr

4.3 Selectional restrictions with respect to verb classes

4.3.1 Verbs of knowledge, saying and immediate perception

Matrix verbs of knowledge, saying and immediate perception take participial and gerundival complements in all the NWCL, as illustrated below. Such forms are the neutral choice for the complement predicate of matrix predicates in this group. Participles are found in the complements of (63a-c).

- (63) a. Te te-s'e we wə-zere-səmeʒa-ye-r
we SBJ1PL-know.PRS you SBJ2SG-PART-be.ill-PF-ABS
'We know that you were ill' Adg
- b. Sə-š-ca-z wə-h°a-jt'
SBJ1SG-PART-go-INF-PAST SBJ2SG-say-FIN.AOR
'You said that I went away' Abkh
- c. ya-px'a a-tət (ø)-da-dwa-q'a (ø)-bja-q'a
POSS3SG-daughter DEF-man.ABS SBJ3SG-PART-die-PF SBJ3SG-see-PF
'His/her daughter saw that this man died' Ubkh

Examples (64a-c) show complement clauses with gerund predicates.

- (64) a. Š°ə-ca-wa-nə h-dər-wa-jt'
SBJ2SG-go-DYN-GER SBJ1PL-know-DYN-FIN.PRS
'We know that you go' Abkh
- b. Ps'as'e-m we tχələ-r qe-p-š'efə-ye-w
girl-ERG you book-ABS OR-SBJ2SG-buy-PF-GER
qə-s-i-ʔ°a-γ
OR-OBJ1SG-SBJ3SG-say-PF
'The girl told me that you bought a book' Adg
- c. S°'ała s°'ə-j-k'°a-na-g'ə z-bja-q'a
you SBJ2PL-OR-go-PRS.PL-GER SBJ1PL-see-PF
'I have seen that you are coming' Ubkh

Compare also section 3.3., where it is pointed out that indicative complement forms occur with this group of matrix predicates under certain conditions.

A clause reflecting direct speech is given in the indicative, preceded by the matrix subject and followed by the verb ə-ʔ°a-γ 'said'. In indirect speech the complement predicate is changed into a participle or gerund, with appropriate changes of person (speaker first person to reported third person).

- (65) a. S-šəpχ°ə-m “ʔ°efs'ap'e-m se-k°'e” ə-ʔ°a-γ
 POSS1SG-sister-ERG work-ERG SBJ3SG-go.PRS SBJ3SG-say-PF
 ‘My sister said: “I am is going to work” ’ Adg
- b. S-šəpχ°ə-m ʔ°efs'ap'e-m (ø)-k°'e-w ə-ʔ°a-γ
 POSS1SG-sister-ERG work-ERG SBJ3SG-go.PRS-GER SBJ3SG-say-PF
 ‘My sister said that she is going to work’ Adg
- (66) a. S'ak°'e-m “Dəγ°əz'ə-r q'ə-z-wəč'-a-s' ”
 hunter-ERG wolf-ABS OR-SBJ1SG-kill-PF-ASRT
 ž-i-ʔ-a-s'
 LOC-S3SG-say-PF-ASRT
 ‘The hunter said: “I killed the wolf” ’ Kbr
- b. S'ak°'e-m dəγ°əz'ə-r q'ə-zər-i-wəč'-a-r
 hunter-ERG wolf-ABS OR-PART-SBJ3SG-kill-PF-ABS
 ž-i-ʔ-a-s'
 LOC-SBJ3SG-say-PF-ASRT
 ‘The hunter said that he killed the wolf’ Kbr
- (67) a. A-x'ac'a “Lara a-šəq'ə
 ART-man: she ART-book
 d-a-px'a-wa-jt' ”
 SBJ3SG.HUM-OBJ3SG.NHUM-read-DYN-FIN.PRS
 ø-jə-h°a-jt'
 DO3SG-SBJ3SG-say-FIN.AOR
 ‘The man said: “She is reading a book” ’ Abkh
- b. Lara a-šəq'ə
 She ART-book
 də-š-a-px'a-wa-z
 SBJ3SG.HUM-PART-OBJ3SG.NHUM-read-DYN-NFIN.IMPERF
 a-x'ac'a ø-jə-h°a-jt'
 ART-man DO3SG-SBJ3SG-say-FIN.AOR
 ‘The man said that she is reading a book’ Abkh

Among the immediate perception verbs, certain verbs may also function as predicates of knowledge, as in (68a). This is reflected in which temporal categories are allowed in the complement. As an immediate perception verb the time reference of the matrix and complement verb are required to overlap (68b), whereas the time reference of the complement is not determined by the knowledge matrix verb.

- (68) a. A-š' zeχ-je-χə w-je-že-w
 he-ERG LOC-SBJ3SG-hear.PRS SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read.PRS-GER
 (w-je-ža-ye-w, w-je-že-š'te-w)
 SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read-PF-GER, SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read-FUT-GER
 'He hears that you are reading/were reading/will be reading' Adg
- b. A-š' je-ley°ə w-je-že-w
 he-ERG SBJ3SG-see.PRS SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read.PRS-GER
 (*w-je-že-ya-w, *w-je-že-š'te-w)
 SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read-PF-GER, SBJ2SG-OBJ3SG-read-FUT-GER
 'He sees that you are reading (*were reading, *will be reading)' Adg

4.3.2 Commentative predicates

Commentative predicates and also verbs such as 'pretend', 'remember (that)', 'forget (that)' take participial (but not gerundival) complements (69a-e).

- (69) a. D-ax'ə-š'ta-z bzəja-wp'
 SBJ3SG.HUM-PART-lie-NFIN.PAST good-FIN.PRS.STAT
 'It is good that he was lying' Abkh
- b. Pež-t di-malxe-m mašəne-r
 truth-IMPF POSS3SG-brother.in.law-ERG car.ABS
 q'ə-zer-i-s'eχ°-a-r
 OR-PART-SBJ3SG-buy-PF-ABS
 'It was true that my bother-in-law bought a car' Kbr
- c. A-x'ə a-s'°abla-n (ø)-g'ə-mə-t
 DEF-prince.ABS DEF-country-ERG SBJ3SG-LOC-NEG-be-PART
 (ø)-y°a-najt'
 SBJ3SG-seem-IMPF
 'It seemed to her that the prince was not in that country' Ubkh
- d. We se q'ale-m wə-zerə-s-š-a-r
 you I town-ERG DO2SG-PART-SBJ1SG-take-PF-ABS
 p-s'əy°əps'e-ž-a-s'
 SBJ2SG-forget-REV-PF-ASRT
 'You have already forgotten that I took you to town' Kbr
- e. Də-šə-čmazay°ə-z w-za-jt'
 SBJ3SG.HUM-PART-be.ill-NFIN-PAST SBJ2SG.MASC-hide-FIN.AOR
 'You hid that he was ill' Abkh

4.3.3 Modal verbs

In all the NWCL, modal verbs in a broader sense, corresponding to verbs such as ‘can’, ‘want’, including phasal verbs, select gerundival forms for their complements (70) or nominalized forms (verbal nouns and infinitives) as in (71a-b). The gerund used in complements of this group of matrix predicates differs from gerundival complements of epistemic matrix verbs in that there is no tense marking. The morphologically unmarked gerund used here corresponds to the present form in the temporal paradigm.

- (70) A-məz a-wax-g'ə (ø)-my'a-w-q'a
DEF-child SBJ3SG-cry-GER SBJ3SG-LOC-begin-PF.SG
‘The child began to cry’ Ubkh
- (71) a. Fəzə-m jə-də-nə-r jə-wəχ-a-s'
woman-ERG POSS3SG-sew-VN-ABS SBJ3SG-finish-PF-ASRT
‘The woman finished (her) sewing’ Kbr
- b. A-ga-ra s-a-q'°əc'ə-jt'
ART-carry-VN SBJ1SG-OBJ3SG.NHUM-stop-FIN.AOR
‘I stopped carrying’ Abkh

4.3.4 Manipulative verbs

Verbs in this group select infinitive and masdar complements (72). Quite often the matrix verb itself includes the causative prefix, as in (72b). However, in such cases the causative prefix has lost its strong causative meaning and functions as a transitivizing prefix.

- (72) a. L'ə-m q'ə-z-ž-i-ʔ-a-s'
man-ERG OR-OBJ1SG-LOC-SBJ3SG-say-PF-ASRT
məbdejž sə-s'ə-tə-nəw
here SBJ1SG-LOC-stand-INF
‘The man told me to stand here’ Kbr
- b. De fe fə-q'e-d-ye-deʔ°-a-s'
we you DO2PL-OR-SBJ1PL-CAUS-hear-PF-ASRT
fi-lez'əye-r nobe fə-wəχə-nəw
POSS2PL-work-ABS today SBJ2PL-finish-INF
‘We persuaded you to finish your work today’ Kbr
- c. Se we sə-we-leʔ° psənč'ew pismo-r
I you SBJ1SG-OBJ2SG-ask.PRS quickly letter-ABS
p-tχə-new
SBJ2SG-write-INF
‘I ask you to write a letter’ Adg

4.3.5 Raising verbs

A small number of raising verbs are found in the Circassian languages: *ləten* (Kbr, Adg), *pčən* (Adg), *bzən* (Kbr) ‘consider’, *s’°es’ən* (Adg), *f’es’ən* (Kab) ‘seem’.

In (73a) *we* ‘you’ is the subject of the non-finite, stative complement predicate *wəs’ak°ew*, that includes the second person subject marker *wə-*. In (b) the status of *we* ‘you’ has changed; here it is case marked as the object of the matrix predicate, which also includes the corresponding object marker. At the same time, the complement predicate has lost its subject marker.

- (73) a. Fəzə-m we wə-s’ak°e-w jə-ləte-t
 woman-ERG you SBJ2SG-hunter.PRS-ADV SBJ3SG-consider-IMPF
 ‘The woman thinks (considers) that you are a hunter’ Kbr
- b. Fəzə-m we s’ak°e-w wə-j-ləte-t
 woman-ERG you hunter-ADV DO2SG-SBJ3SG-consider-IMPF
 ‘The woman considers you a hunter’ Kbr
- c. Zeč’°e-mə-j s’°e c’əf deγ°e-w s’°-a-ləte
 all-ERG-COORD you person good-ADV DO2PL-SBJ3PL-hear.PRS
 ‘And all consider you good people’ Adg

4.5 Complement types and finite/non-finite features

We have seen that there is a range of complement types in the NWCL with different verbal and nominal features. The forms occurring in complement clauses are predominantly of the dependent type, or non-finite type in traditional Caucasian terminology (i.e. they are always dependent on the presence of some other finite verb form).

To a varying degree, the dependent verb forms are marked for tense, subject and object agreement. Participles encode the same categories as finite verbs, but a smaller set of tense forms compared to the finite forms. Gerunds are split into two types, where one is marked for tense and the other is not. Infinitives do not distinguish tense. They are generally marked for subject person, but allow ‘subject marker’-drop with phasal verbs (see 26a). Finally, in the most nominal of the complement types, the masdar, the subject is marked as an NP possessor. Any direct object is marked as an attributive noun.

In Table 4 the complement types are arranged on a scale ranging from free (non-dependent) forms with full marking of tense, subject and object agreement to reduced specification of these categories. The distribution of the classes of matrix verbs given in the table represents the core cases common to all or a majority of the NWCL.

Table 4. Finite/non-finite features of the complement predicates

<i>Complement type</i>		<i>Classes of matrix verbs</i>
Finite	[+Free, +Tense, +SBJ, +OBJ]	Saying: direct quote
Participle	[-Free, +Tense, +SBJ, +OBJ]	Knowledge, Saying, Perception, Commentative
Gerund1	[-Free, +Tense, +SBJ, +OBJ]	Knowledge, Saying, Perception
Gerund2	[-Free, -Tense, +SBJ, +OBJ]	Modal
Infinitive1	[-Free, -Tense, +SBJ, +OBJ]	Manipulative, Modal
Infinitive2	[-Free, -Tense, -SBJ, +OBJ]	Phasal
Masdar	[-Free, -Tense, POSS.SBJ]	Phasal, Manipulative

Not surprisingly, the complement types which independently express both tense and subject reference in the upper part of the table correlate with matrix verbs used for the least tightly integrated types of situation where the matrix and complement clauses represent separate events (cf. Givon 1990). Towards the lower part of the table are found matrix predicates used in situations that are more tightly integrated, where the matrix and complement clauses represent two merging or overlapping events. Features of merging, i.e. coreference between the complement subject and matrix subject or object and determined time reference (cf. Noonan 1985) correlate here with complement types that lack marking of tense and subject reference.

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Glosses

ABS	Absolutive case
ADV	Adverbial case
AOR	Aorist
ART	Article
ASRT	Assertive
CAUS	Causative
COM	Comitative
COND	Conditional
COORD	Coodinative
DEF	Definite
DO	Direct object
DYN	Dynamic
ERG	Ergative case

FEM	Feminine
FIN	Finite
FUT	Future
GER	Gerund
HUM	Human
IMPF	Imperfect(ive)
INF	Infinitive
INSTR	Instrumental
INT	Interrogative
ITR	Intransitive
MASC	Masculine
NEG	Negating
NHUM	Non-human
NVOL	Nonvolitional
OBJ	Object
OR	Oriental
PART	Participial
PCOND	Purposive-conditional
PF	Perfect
PL	Plural
PLUP2	Pluperfect2
POSS	Possessive
POT	Potential
PRS	Present tense
REFL	Reflexive
REV	Reversed action
SBJ	Subject
SG	Singular
STAT	Stative
TR	Transitive
V	Version
VN	Verbal noun (Masdar)

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