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Botlikh[1,2]

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1 As the second author of this chapter I am very grateful to the editors of this volume for entrusting me with the task of editing M.E. Alexeyev's original manuscript. While the core of this sketch consists of M.E. Alexeyev's manuscript, the editing was done posthumously, so that I take sole responsibility for any and all inaccuracies or mistakes in this sketch. I would also like to thank Chiara Naccarato, who has been working with me on Botlikh since 2019, and whose work on the language and comments on an earlier version of this text greatly improved the end result. I would also like to thank George Moroz for his comments on phonological topics. Thanks are also in order to our wonderful hosts in Botlikh: Uma Magomedovna Gaidarbekova, Suaibat Mazhidova and Magomed Kadyrov, and everyone else in Botlikh whom I worked with.

2 In different publications, the surname of Mikhail Alexeyev is transliterated differently. A 2016 paper was published under Alekseyev, while the manuscript at the base of the present sketch was signed Alexeyev by the author. The scientific transcription of Russian, employed to refer to papers written in Russian, adds a third variant: Alekseev. Various references in the present sketch adhere to the spelling used in the corresponding source, so Alekseyev, Alexeyev, and Alekseev all refer to the same author. References to "Alexeyev" without an accompanying bibliographical reference refer to the unpublished manuscript.

1. Introduction

1.1. Area and speakers

Botlikh (*bujχałi mic':i* 'the language of Botlikh') is one of the Andic languages. Its closest relative on a family level is Godoberi, which is to some extent mutually intelligible. Gudava considered both languages part of a single dialect continuum (1959: 3). The language is spoken in the villages Botlikh (*bujχe*), Miarso (*kilu*) and Ashino (*Ɣašinu*) in the Botlikhsky District of the Republic of Dagestan (Russian Federation). The region is situated along the river Andi Koysu, in close proximity to the border with the Chechen Republic. The closest neighbours of the Botlikhs include Godoberi, Avar, Andi and Karata speaking villages. The village names Botlikh, Miarso and Ashino are adapted from Avar. The largest of the three settlements is Botlikh (with 12,159 inhabitants, according to the 2010 census (FSSS 2010a)). As it is the administrative centre of the eponymous Botlikhsky District, this includes a number of other ethnic groups besides Botlikhs (e.g. Avars, Russians and other Andic nations). Miarso is said to have sprung off from Botlikh as a *khutor* (Rus.): a small settlement founded by former inhabitants of Botlikh. It had 1,714 inhabitants in 2010 (Ibid.). Ashino in its turn is a *khutor* of Miarso. It had merely 79 inhabitants in 2010, according to the same census, and it is usually not mentioned in descriptions of Botlikh (with the exception of Azaev (2000)).[3]

Only 206 speakers of Botlikh were counted in the 2010 census (FSSS 2010b). There were 3508 ethnic Botlikhs, almost all of which lived in villages (FSSS 2010c). Authors of various relatively recent descriptions of Botlikh estimate the number of speakers to be somewhere within the range of 3000-5000 (cf. Magomedbekova (1999 (2001)), Azaev (2000), Saidova (2001) and finally Alekseyev (2016)). Ethnologue reports an ethnic population of 7000 for Botlikh and 210 speakers. The number of speakers is based on the 2010 census (Simons & Fennig 2018). These figures are notoriously unreliable for Botlikh, because it was common practice in the Soviet period to count Andic and Tsezic peoples as Avars (Alekseyev 2016: 3678). Estimations made by the authors of descriptive grammars are therefore more realistic.

1.2. Dialects

The Miarso dialect differs slightly from that of Botlikh, mainly in terms of phonetics. It also has some lexical peculiarities, and it lacks the mysterious first person pronoun form *iškur* (see Section 3.4.1). Because the difference is so small, Miarso is usually considered a subdialect of Botlikh (*govor* in Russian), rather than a dialect proper. The variety spoken in Ashino is unresearched, but speakers of Botlikh can identify inhabitants of all three villages by their speech. The present sketch is based on the Botlikh dialect. A summary of Miarso's most prominent distinctive features can be found in the grammar sketch appended to the Botlikh dictionary by Saidova & Abusov (2012: 565-566) and in Gudava (1967: 304-305).

1.3. Sociolinguistic situation

Botlikh, like the other Andic languages, is unwritten and mostly used at home. Avar functions as the language of literacy and as a lingua franca for communication with speakers of Avar and other Andic languages. Because many ethnic Avars reside in Botlikh, speakers of Botlikh use Avar on a more regular basis than speakers of other Andic languages who live in mono-ethnic settlements; it is used at the local market and between neighbors. At school, Avar is taught as "mother tongue", while education itself is in Russian. Russian serves to communicate with other ethnicities within

3 Another khutor-type settlement Ankho seems currently uninhabited, though it is listed as one of the settlements belonging to the Botlikhsky District as an administrative unit.

Dagestan. Botlikh is evaluated as "threatened" by Ethnologue (Simons & Fennig 2018), but despite heavy influence from Avar and Russian, the language is still actively used and passed on to younger generations. A small movement within the community advocates for the recognition and preservation of the language; in 2020 the first Botlikh dictation was organized.

1.4. State of research

Botlikh was first mentioned in the work of the German officer and ethnographer Roderich von Erckert, who wrote a very brief sketch of the grammar of Andic languages (von Erckert 1895: 197-203). In 1909, a description of Botlikh by Adolf Dirr was published in Russian, covering only the basics of Botlikh morphology and providing a few example sentences (Dirr 1909: 1-12). The same description appeared in German in 1928 (Dirr 1928: 196-199). The first full descriptive grammar of Botlikh, which remains the only one to date, was written by Togo Gudava (Gudava 1962). The grammar is written in Georgian, with a summary in Russian, and contains a fairly large collection of texts, two of which are accompanied by an interlinear translation in Georgian. Gudava also published a short chapter in Russian (1967). In the early 2000s, several brief descriptions appeared in encyclopedic publications like "Languages of the world" (*Jazyki mira* in Russian) and "Languages of Dagestan" (*Jazyki Dagestana*) (Magomedbekova 1999 (2001), Azaev 2000, Saidova 2001). Lexical topics in Botlikh have been dealt with in two dissertations (Azaev 1975; Sulejmanova 2013), and a chapter on word-formation by Alekseyev (2016). In 2012, a Botlikh-Russian dictionary was published as part of the series of Russian national dictionaries (Saidova & Abusov 2012). The dictionary contains over 8000 headwords and a short grammar sketch. Another dictionary appeared in 2019: Alekseev & Azaev (2019). This second dictionary was based on Azaev's card library for his 1975 dissertation. The data were systematized and supplemented by Alekseev, and finally edited and prepared for posthumous publication by Timur Maisak. The present sketch is largely based on an unpublished manuscript by Mikhail Alexeyev (1949–2014). It was edited and elaborated by the second author, based on the published sources listed above and firsthand data collected during fieldwork in 2017-2019. The examples in this sketch come from various sources, which are specified with an abbreviation.[4]

2. Phonology

2.1. Vowels and Consonants

Botlikh has ejective stops and affricates (including lateral affricates, which are typical of Avar-Andic languages). Voiceless affricates are opposed in terms of intensity (gemination). Labialization appears on velars and uvulars in the environment of an unrounded back vowel, cf. *hank^{w}a* 'nail', *berχ^{w}a* 'canal'. All vowels have nasalized counterparts.

2.1.1. Vowels

The vowels are *a, e, i, o, u* and nasals *ã, ẽ, ĩ, õ, ũ*. Nasal vowels mostly occur in verbs and are not very frequent overall. Especially *õ* is rare. Long vowels sometimes occur as free variants of stressed short vowels. They are not very frequent and especially *e:* often seems to result from contraction.

4 MA.MAN - Manuscript M.E. Alexeyev, SA2012:[page number] - the dictionary by Saidova & Abusov (2012), AA2019:[page number] - the dictionary by Alekseev & Azaev (2019) – SV.FW:[year] - fieldwork by Samira Verhees, GT1962:[text number] - texts recorded by Gudava in his grammar, AT1974:[text number] - texts recorded by Azaev in his dissertation.

2.1.2. Consonants

The aspirated voiceless affricates *ƛ, q* and the ejectives *ƛ', q'* are realized as geminates but they do not have a non-geminate counterpart. Both pharyngeals are rare and mostly limited to borrowings, such as *baħaraj* ('bride', Avar) or *ʕelmu* ('science', Arabic). The voiced affricate *ǯ* appears only in borrowings, like *ǯawab* ('answer', Arabic) or *χurǯal* ('saddlebag', from Persian *xurǯin*). The voiced spirant *ž* occurs as its free variant. An overview of consonant phonemes is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Consonants

	Stops			Affricates			Spirants		Sonorants
	voice			voice			voice		
	+	-		+	-		+	-	
		asp.	ej.		asp.	ej.			
	b	p							w, m
	d	t	t'						
					c	c'	ž	s	n
+gem					c:	c':		s:	
				ǯ	č	č'		š	r
+gem					č:	č':		š:	
								ɬ	l
+gem					ƛ	ƛ'		ɬ:	
									j
	g	k	k'					x	
+gem		k:	k':						
							ʁ	χ	
+gem					q	q'		χ:	
							ʕ	ħ	
			ʔ					h	

2.2. Script and transcription

In scientific literature Botlikh is written using either scientific transcription or the Cyrillic script for Standard Avar, extended with the symbol лI for the non-ejective lateral affricate.[5] Nasal vowels are indicated with a superscripted cyrillic letter н [n] or a tilde, e.g. aⁿ or ã. Long vowels are marked with a macron (ā) or with a length mark (:). For geminate consonants, the same grapheme is simply repeated, or a length mark is used. No other modifications are necessary. Although Botlikh is unwritten, modern communication technologies and social media have created a necessity for an ad hoc writing system for everyday use. Speakers of Botlikh learn Avar in school, and they use the Standard Avar orthography to write their own language. Ejective consonants are marked with the

5 Togo Gudava used Georgian orthography to transcribe Botlikh in his grammar (Gudava 1962), with additional symbols to mark gemination. Different laterals are indicated as ლ [l] with various diacritics. Nasalization is written with a superscript ნ [n]. Other sounds which are absent in Georgian include: /j/, which is written with the "hard" sign ъ, and the pharyngeals, which are represented by the obsolete grapheme ჰ (for /ʕ/), and ჱ [h] with a gemination sign for /ħ/. The glottal stop is written ღ, as in Svan and Mingrelian.

number one or an exclamation mark, since the I symbol (referred to as *paločka* 'stick' in Russian) is not part of standard keyboard layouts for Cyrillic. The ejective velar /k'/, for example, may be written к1 or к!. The phoneme /ƛ/ is not recognized as a distinct sound (following Standard Avar orthography) and consequently transcribed as either /ɬ/ (лъ) or the geminate /ɬ:/ (лълъ). Stress patterns, which play an important distinctive role in Botlikh, are sometimes simulated with capital letters. Nasalization is not marked.

2.3. Phonotactics

Syllable structure is CV or CVC. Seemingly vowel-initial syllables are preceded by a glottal stop: /*ʔima*/ 'father', /*b-eʔera*/ 'thin', etc. In case of CVC, the final consonant is usually a sonorant or *b*, cf. /*be-č'er*/ 'black', or /*be-k'on*/ 'corner'. Clusters with spirants in the initial position can occur in intervocalic position, e.g. /*azdaha*/ 'dragon'. The most frequent word structure is CVCV, less frequent are CVCVC, CVCCV and CVCVCV. Consonant clusters are not typical of Botlikh, though small clusters of two consecutive consonants may occur, e.g. /*dongi*/ 'pit'. Geminates are reduced when they are followed by another consonant, cf. /*b-es:u-χa*/ 'back' but /*b-es-qe*/ 'behind'. Both of these adverbs are lexicalized locative forms based on the same underlying root /*b-es:-*/.

2.4. Prosody

Gudava and Magomedbekova treat stress in Botlikh as "weak, dynamic and movable" (Gudava 1967: 294; Magomedbekova 2001 (1999): 229). Its distinctive function shows in minimal pairs like *béƛ'i* 'cattle-shed' vs. *beƛ'-í* [plough-INF] or *mas-á* [tell-IMP] and *más-a* [tell-AOR]. Some patterns are governed by morphological conditions: the plural suffixes *-dé* and *-é* are always stressed. In plural forms with the suffix *-bałi*, stress falls on the preceding vowel: *íma* 'father' *imá-bałi* 'fathers'. The same effect occurs when the interrogative particle *ma* is attached to a word. Many nouns carry stress on the first syllable in the absolutive. In oblique cases it shifts to the second syllable, cf. *ráša* 'word', *rašú-łi* [word-GEN]; *íma* 'father', *imú-di* [father-ERG].

Alexeyev noted that several minimal pairs demonstrate a tonal opposition in Botlikh. Unfortunately, he did not provide any examples. It also remains unclear whether he refers to tone in the conventional sense, or the type of quasi-tone described for Daghestanian languages by Kodzasov (1999). The feature described by Kodzasov is realized as "Stiffness/Slackness of the oral cavity (of cheeks and tongue) in the course of syllable production" (1999: 996). Additionally, he describes a modification of the Stiffness feature called Articulatory Accent, which consists of "a rising-falling impulse of articulatory tenseness inside the vocalic nucleus" (Ibid.: 997). Data from Godoberi, a close relative of Botlikh which features similar patterns of distinctive stress, plays a prominent role in Kodzasov's description of these Stiffness features. According to Kodzasov, Articulatory Accent is one of the underlying prosodic properties that governs the complex stress patterns of Godoberi (1996: 4-6). Segments with Articulatory Accent always bear stress, while the reverse is not the case: stressed syllables do not necessarily have this feature. According to Kodzasov, speakers described the feature intuitively as "strong" or "real" stress (1999: 1004; 1996: 4), as opposed to regular stress. However, Kodzasov pointed out that these features require further research (1999: 1004), and his analysis has not been revisited or verified since. For Botlikh, a mysterious phonetic feature of vowels was also observed by Azaev (2000: 348), who was a linguist and a native speaker. Azaev provides several minimal pairs, such as *káru* "thread, stitch" - *káru* "mulberry", but he does not describe the nature of the opposition. In any case, we can be sure that he was not referring to regular stress or nasalization. Possibly Azaev observed something akin to Kodzasov's Articulatory Accent, although the latter does not seem to distinguish minimal pairs in

Godoberi. So far I have failed to reproduce the pairs provided by Azaev, for example because the speakers I consulted remembered only one word of each pair.

2.5. Morphophonemics

Morphonological alternations include processes of assimilation, contraction, and truncation. Nasal assimilation occurs when the interrogative particle *ma* follows a word ending in *-b*. For example *в-i-k'a-b* [come-IS-FUT-N] 'will come' and *ma* becomes *в-ik'am=ma* [come-IS-FUT=Q] 'will it come?'. Progressive nasal assimilation occurs when the plural suffix *-bałi* attaches to a stem ending in *-n*, cf. *reqen* 'herd (usually of sheep or goats)' – *reqemałi* 'herds', as opposed to *gigina* 'flower' – *gigina-bałi* 'flowers'. Contrary to what is the case in Andi, the additive particle (*la* in Botlikh) does not assimilate with nasals. If it follows a final *-r*, the latter is assimilated, e.g. *w-uk'-i-r=la* [M-be-IS-MSD=ADD] becomes *w-uk'-i-l=la* [M-be-IS-MSD=ADD]. In verb stems with a nasalized vowel, the class markers for neuter (*b-*) and animate plural (*r-*) are realized as *m-* and *n-*, respectively. The vowel in this case undergoes denasalization, cf. *w-ãʔ-a* [M-go-AOR] '[he] went', but *poezd m-aʔ-a* [train N-go-AOR] 'the train left'.

As mentioned in Section 2.1.1, a long vowel *e:* can result from contraction, and in many cases the non-contracted variant is still in use, e.g. *reʔa // re:* 'hand', *heʔa // he:* 'on, above'.[6] Among attributive forms ending in *-a* and a class marker, the masculine noun class suffix *-w* contracts with the vowel and forms an ending *-o*. This concerns certain adjectives, such as *xuʔa-b* [good-N] - *xuʔa-w* [good-M] > *xuʔo*, but also a number of participle forms and the future tense, which has a suffix *-k'a-cm* that becomes *-k'o-(w)*. A similar process occurs in the environment *a-u,* resulting in a suffix *-o* for the causative aorist. The form *ih-o* [do-CAUS.AOR] can be reconstructed as **ih-a-u* [do-CAUS-AOR]. The infinitive suffix *-i* is reduced to *-j* for causatives, cf. *ih-i* [do-INF] - *ih-a-j* [do-CAUS-INF], and for verb stems ending in a labialized consonant: *ink*^{w}- 'eat' has an infinitive *inku-j* [eat-INF]. If a non-masculine noun is inflected for genitive 2 (*-łi*), the geminate *-ł:-* in the oblique stem formant is reduced to its non-geminate counterpart, cf. *ješi-ł:i-di* [girl-OBL-ERG], *ješi-łi-łi* [girl-OBL-GEN2].

The verb 'be' shows a vowel alternation *u* - *i* following the feminine noun class prefix: *b-uk'-i* [N-be-INF] - *j-ik'-i* [F-be-INF]. In Andi, the stem vowel *u* is considered an alternation of *i* that appears following the labial *w-* for masculine noun class (see this volume). In Botlikh, however, all forms except those agreeing with a feminine referent have a stem vowel *u*.[7]

The copula *ida*, which frequently occurs in periphrastic tenses, is undergoing morphologization. If it follows a form ending in *-i*, the result is a long vowel: *b-uk'-i ida* [N-be-INF COP], which forms the intentional future, becomes *b-uk'i:da* [N-be.FUT]. In case the final vowel of the lexical verb is different, the former can be dropped: the perfect *b-uk'-a ida* [N-be-CVB COP] becomes *b-uk'-ida* [N-be-PRF].

When a palatal sonorant (*j*) follows the vowel *i*, the former is dropped in contemporary Botlikh, for example in the dative case of the first person singular pronoun *di* (I.DAT) < *di-j* (I-DAT). According to Alexeyev, this is characteristic of contemporary Botlikh; Gudava did not record the shortened variant. Certain two-syllable verbs can drop the first syllable, resulting in two free variants, e.g. *i<b>χ-i // χ-i* 'take, *hiƛ'-i // ƛ'-i* 'say', etc.

6 It is unclear how pervasive this process is across speakers of contemporary Botlikh. Words with a stem *eʔa* (written without a glottal stop) in the dictionary by Saidova & Abusov (2012) often correspond to a lemma with a long *e* in the dictionary of Alekseev & Azaev (2019), while data from the latter are presumably a little bit older.

7 Interestingly, Dirr (1909/1928) describes a neuter stem *b-ik'-a* for the aorist (the animate plural with the prefix *r-* gives *r-uk'-*). This could suggest that *b-uk'-* is a relatively recent development in Botlikh, perhaps by analogy with Avar. Compare, for example, the paradigm of the verb *b-iʁi* 'stop, become': *w-uʁ-* [M], *b-iʁ-* [N], *j-iʁ-* [F], which shows the same pattern of vowel alternation in Botlikh and in Andi.

3. Morphology

3.1. Overview

Nominal stems are distinguished from verb stems by their inflectional paradigms. All word classes except nouns can have an agreement slot for noun class, but most stems do not have an agreement slot. Adverbial stems are mostly identical to either adjectives or postpositions. In some cases they are formally differentiated with a thematic vowel (see Section 3.7). Morphology is predominantly agglutinative, but fusion occurs in both the nominal and the verbal paradigm.

3.2. Nouns

Each noun belongs to a noun class (i.e. gender), which is mostly a covert category. Number is expressed by plural suffixes (or the absence thereof). Specific to Botlikh is the category of animacy. Case forms are based on oblique stems, which are derived from nominal roots with a variety of lexically determined thematic endings, e.g. *našar* > *našar-a-* 'rope', *pera* > *per-u-* 'bee', *anzi* > *anzi-la-* 'snow'. In some cases, the oblique form coincides with the absolutive, as in *gigina* 'flower' > *gigina-łi* [flower-GEN].

3.2.1. Noun class and animacy

The nominal lexicon of Botlikh is divided into the following agreement classes in the singular: masculine human (M), feminine human (F) and neuter (N – which includes animals and objects). In the plural, a distinction between animate (AN) vs. inanimate (INAN) is made.

Table 2. Noun class markers in Botlikh[8]

SG	M	F	N	
	w	j	b (m)	
PL	AN			INAN
	r / l (n)			b (m)

Noun class is not expressed overtly on the noun itself, with the exception of a few lexicalized forms, e.g. *w-aša* 'boy' vs. *j-eši* 'girl'. A relict of a fourth singular noun class for certain inanimate objects is attested in the formulaic expression 'once upon a time', where the gender agreement suffix *-r* (instead of the regular neuter suffix *-b*) is used with *ziu* 'day'.

(1) ce-r ziu-di...
one-IV day-ERG
'Once upon a time ...' (lit. one day) [MA.MAN]

Botlikh is the only language of the family that distinguishes animate from inanimate referents (instead of human and non-human) in the plural. The animate category covers humans, animals, and insects (2). It seems that animacy in Botlikh is not a mutable property: dead animates, such as corpses or animals prepared as food, agree with animate.

8 The animate plural marker is realized as *r* in prefixal and infixal position, and as *l* in suffixal position. Nasals (indicated between brackets) occur only in specific environments, as discussed in Section 2.5.

(2) qenu-łi k’:are asar r-uk’-a
summer-IN mosquito.PL few AN.PL-be-AOR
‘The were not a lot of mosquitos in summer.’ [SA2012: 259]

An additional set of markers exists to mark agreement with animacy independent of number. In contrast to the noun class markers, which occupy a distinct slot reserved for agreement marking, the animacy markers primarily fulfill some kind of morphosyntactic function, such as forming participles or interrogative sentences. Agreement is expressed by the choice for one of two allomorphs (see Table 3 below). The formal similarity of the markers associated with a particular value suggests that they originate from two distinct lexical sources. In Naccarato & Verhees (2019) it was argued that these sources could be verbal lexemes, but this requires further investigation.

Table 3. Animacy markers in Botlikh

Form		**Animate**	**Inanimate**
Negative copulas		łi-č'i	χu-č'i
Interrogative particles			
	Polar	=łi.ma	=χu.ma
	Content	=łi.la	=χu.la
Attributive clitics		=ła-cm	=χo-cm
Participles			
	Present	-ła-cm	-χa-cm
	Future	-ła-cm	-χo-cm
Ordinal numerals		-ła-cm	-χo-cm

The animacy markers do not form a coherent paradigm, and they are often not obligatory within their respective domains. It is unclear whether the two agreement systems (noun class and animacy) fully overlap with respect to their semantic range. Agreement patterns in both systems display variation. Speakers do not unanimously mark insects and more exotic animals as animates, and some nouns, such as abstract nouns referring to groups of individuals (e.g. ‘family’, ‘grade’, ‘nation’) are ambiguous.

3.2.2. Number

Plural forms are derived with a number of different suffixes. The most frequent suffix is *-bałi,* followed by *-de* and *-e*.[9] Infrequent suffixes include: *-dałi*, *-diłi, -bdałi, -bdiłi, -di, -rdi, -rde, -zabałi, -al, -l, -bala*.

The suffix *-zabałi* is used exclusively for borrowings denoting human(oid)s, e.g. *apicer - apicer-zabałi* (‘officers’, from Russian *oficer*); *malaik - malaik-zabałi* (‘angels’, from Arabic *malak* plural: *malā'ikah*); *baħara-j* ‘bride’, *baħara-w* ‘groom’ (from Avar) - *baħar-zabałi* ‘newlyweds’. This is also the case with *-al,* e.g. *adam* ‘man, human’ (from Arabic) *adam-al* ‘people’. Both

9 This and other observations regarding frequency are based on an intersection of data from the two Botlikh dictionaries, see Moroz, Naccarato & Verhees (2019).

suffixes occur with hosts from different languages. A suffix *-l* occurs with a few native nouns denoting humans (e.g. *mak'i* 'child' - *mak'i-l* 'children'). The plural of *hek'ʷa* 'man, person' is *bala,* which is also used to derive plurals of nouns like *c':e* 'guest' - *c':e-bala* 'guests'. The suffix *-di* derives plural forms of a limited number of nouns denoting origin from local place names, for example *bujχa-łi* 'person from Botlikh' [Botlikh-GEN] - *bujχa-di* 'people from Botlikh'.[10]

Stems ending in sonorants show a strong preference for the suffix *-de*. The *-e* plural mostly attaches to stems ending in a vowel, though vowel-final stems can also take the suffix *-bałi*. Obstruents are typically followed by the suffix *-bałi*. This suffix has a number of phonologically conditioned variants, including *-małi* following nasal consonants: *besun* 'knife' - *besu-małi*. In some cases, however, the nasal is omitted before *-bałi*, cf. *š:ajt'an* 'devil' - *š:ajt'a-bałi*. Final *-l* is always deleted, as in *rek'ul* - *rek'u-bałi* 'keys'. With stems ending in obstruents, an epenthetic vowel *-a* is inserted between the stem and the suffix: *alaχ* 'field' - *alaχ-a-bałi.* Vowels can be left intact or replaced with another vowel: *hala* 'branch' - *hali-bałi, qabaqi* 'pumpkin' - *qabaqa-bałi, salu* 'tooth' - *sala-bałi*. Any regularities governing these processes remain unclear. In the environment of the suffix *-e,* final vowels are truncated: *zini* 'cow' - *zin-e* 'cows'.

It is important to note that the tendencies described in this section are not absolute rules. Different plural suffixes do not occur exclusively in a particular phonological environment, which is also evidenced by the variety of attested morphophonological adaptations of stems and suffixes. The same applies to the semantic generalization that suffixes *-l*, *-al*, and *-zabałi* occur with nouns denoting humans: such nouns may also take a *-bałi* suffix, e.g. *ila* 'mother' - *ila-bałi*. Many nouns have multiple acceptable plural forms, e.g. *hingur* 'window' - *hingur-de // hingur-dałi*, *kurenža* 'leech' - *kurenž-e // kurenža-bałi.*

Plural nouns do not have an oblique stem. Case suffixes are attached directly to the absolutive plural form, with only two exceptions. First, the suffixes *-l* and *-al* add a vowel *-u-* between the plural stem and the case suffix, e.g. the ergative case of *adam-al* 'people' is *adam-al-u-di* (person-PL-OBL-ERG). Second, the plural suffix *-di* changes to *-da*, i.e.: *bujχa* 'Botlikh', *bujχa-di* 'people from Botlikh', but *bujχa-da-di* (Botlikh-OBL.PL-ERG).

3.2.3. Case

Botlikh has four grammatical cases and six series of complex spatial forms. The absolutive case is zero marked, while all other cases derive from the oblique stem with a suffix. The grammatical cases are:

1. Absolutive -∅
2. Ergative *-di*
3. Genitive 1 *-CM* / Genitive 2 *-łi*
4. Dative *-i(j)*

The Genitive 1 is used with nouns denoting male and plural human possessors. The noun class suffix (-CM) is controlled by the possessee, e.g. *χani-j ješi* [king-F(GEN) daughter] 'the king's daughter'. For all other nouns the Genitive 2 is used. The final *j* of the dative suffix is usually omitted. The functions of the cases are discussed in Section 4.2.2. on case alignment. See also Section 4.1.1. for different functions of the genitive.

Spatial forms combine a location marker with a directional suffix. The location marker designates the position of a figure (on, in, under), while the directional suffix specifies motion with respect to a landmark, including: absence of motion (ESSIVE), motion towards a landmark (LATIVE),

10 Similarly, 'Godoberians' are *hibdi-di* (one 'Godoberian' - *hibdi-łi*). The same strategy is applied to most immediate neighboring villages, with the exception of people from the village Gagatli, for example, which are called *ʁaʁadira-l* using the plural form of a substantivized adjective (see the list of local toponyms in Saidova & Abusov (2012: 432-433)).

motion away from it (ELATIVE), or motion traversing the landmark (translative). Botlikh distinguishes the locations SUPER (X is located on top of Y), CONT (X is close to / in contact with Y), APUD (X is located in the vicinity of Y), IN (X is located inside Y), and SUB (X is located under Y).[11]

Table 4. Locative cases

Location	Direction			
	ESSIVE	LATIVE -a	ELATIVE -ru	ELATIVE / TRANSLATIVE -ku
SUPER	-u / -e	-a	-u-ru / e-ru	-u-ku / e-ku
CONT	-ču	-ču	-ču-ru	-ču-ku
APUD	-χe // -χi	-χ-a	-χe-ru // -χi-ru	-χe-ku // -χi-ku
	-qi	-q-a	-qi-ru	-qi-ku
IN	-ƛi / -ɬ:u / -ɬi	-ƛ-a / -ɬ:-a / -ɬ-a	-ƛi-ru / -ɬ:i-ru / -ɬi-ru	-ƛi-ku / -ɬ:i-ku / -ɬi-ku
SUB	-ƛ'i	-ƛ'-a	-ƛ'i-ru	-ƛ'i-ku

Suffixes separated with // in the table are free variants. A single backslash indicates that their distribution is lexically or phonologically conditioned. The choice of a SUPER suffix is lexically determined, while the form of the IN suffix depends on the final consonant of the host: *-ƛ-* follows consonants, while *-ɬ:-* and *-ɬ-* appear after *i* and *u,* respectively (Saidova & Abusov 2012: 484).[12] A small set of nouns denoting body parts have a suppletive stem for locative forms, cf. *reʔa* 'hand', *kʷad-u* (hand-SUP)*, kʷad-a* (hand-SUP.ALL) 'in hand(s)' and *kʷad-u-ru* (hand-SUP-EL) 'from hand(s)'. Besides 'hand', this concerns 'mouth' *ʁeli* [ABS] vs. *χeʔ-* [LOC] and 'head' *ʁʷani* [ABS] vs. *miq'-* [LOC]. These locative forms function as adverbs.

The series with *-χ-* and *-q-* have lost their semantic distinction (compare the spatial paradigm of Godoberi, this volume). Botlikh features two elative case markers, of which *-ku* is the most frequent. Historically, *-ku* is a translative marker (Gudava 1967: 298; Saidova & Abusov 2012: 483), and it continues to fulfill this function in addition to elative. In contemporary Botlikh it has almost ousted the *-ru* elative. The latter is mostly limited to certain collocations and temporal expressions, such as *reš-e-ru reš-a* [year-SUP-EL year-LAT] 'every year, from year to year' *hena-ɬ:e-ru* [now-IN-EL] 'from now on' (Zadykyan, Naccarato & Verhees 2020).[13] In addition to their spatial meaning, locative cases can have non-locative functions. They occur in the argument structure of certain verbs (Section 4.2.2), and the contelative encodes the standard of comparison (Section 4.6). See also Section 4.1.2 on the use of (spatial) cases with postpositions.

3.2.5. Nominal derivation

Nominal derivation is realized by compounding, derivational suffixes and reduplication (Alekseyev 2016). Compound nouns can be determinative: *ješi* 'girl' + *hek'ʷa* 'person' = *ješik'ʷa* 'woman'; or copulative: *ila* 'mother' + *ima* 'father' = *ilima* 'parents'. Some productive derivational suffixes are: *-ɬi*, for the derivation of status nouns (*hudul* 'friend' > *hudul-ɬi* 'friendship'); *-qan* derives agent nouns and most frequently (though not necessarily) occurs with loans from Avar (e.g. *ħalt'u-qan*

11 Following the terminology proposed in Testelec (1980).

12 There seem to be some exceptions to these rules, but this requires further investigation.

13 The form *hena-ɬ:e-ru* contains a non-productive allomorph of the inlocative marker (*-ɬ:e*), which is attested only in the environment of *-ru*.

‘worker’, but also *č’ara* ‘heifer’ > *č’ara-qan* ‘obstetrician’. The complex suffix *-aru-qan* derives deverbal agent nouns (*χ:udi* ‘drink’ > *χ:ud-aruqan* ‘drunkard’). A suffix *-χ:an* is used to form collective family names in combination with a plural suffix (*Mirza-χ:an-dul* ‘the Mirzaevs / the family of Mirza’). Imprecise reduplication of nouns, where the first consonant of the second stem is changed to *m-* (or in some cases to *s-* or *q-*), form “representative plurals”, e.g. *quča* ‘book’ > *quča~muča* ‘all kinds of books’, *mak’ʷa* ‘chair’ > *mak’ʷa~sak’ʷa* ‘all kinds of chairs (Alekseyev 2016: 3684).

3.3. Adjectives

Adjectives precede their nominal heads in the sentence. Some adjectival stems have an agreement slot for noun class marking, which can be prefixal (*b-eχ:ila* ‘long’), suffixal (*sura-b* ‘bad’) or both (*b-eč’uχa-b* ‘big’). Most stems do not show agreement, and suffixes are sometimes dropped. According to Alexeyev, adjectives without a class agreement slot can show plural agreement on a rare occasion, e.g. *irχ:a* ‘red’ usually remains *irχ:a* in plural, but sometimes becomes *irχ:a-r* (animate plural) or *irχ:a-b* (inanimate plural).[14]

Adjectives can function as the heads of noun phrases, in which case they show number and case marking. Oblique stems are formed with *-š:u-* (in case of a male referent) and *-ɬ:i-* in all other cases. If the lexeme has a suffixal noun class slot, it is dropped in the oblique form. Pronouns, demonstratives and numerals use the same pattern of inflection.

Adjectives can be derived through compounding or with various attributivizing clitics. In compounds consisting of two adjectives, the element on the left modifies the element on the right: *kʷana* ‘light’ + *č:ak:u* ‘yellow’ = *kʷana-č:ak:u* ‘light-yellow’. When the left element is a noun, it is the other way around: *basa* ‘hair’ + *b-eč’er* ‘black’ > *basa-b-eč’er* ‘black-haired’. Reduplicated adjectival stems refer to multiple referents with a certain quality: *č’ik’ʷar* ‘beautiful’ > *č’ik’ʷa~č’ik’ʷar* ‘beautiful ones’. Imprecise reduplication relativizes the quality: *čara* ‘fat’ > *čara~χara* ‘more or less fat’. The suffix *-ɬ:i* is identical to the comitative suffix (Sections 3.8 and 4.7) and forms adjectives describing something as having a certain quality: *t’aʕan* ‘taste’ > *t’aʕan-ɬ:i* ‘tasteful’. Privative adjectives are formed with the past participle of the negative auxiliary *guč’i* (*guč’a-b*), for example: *miq’i-guč’a-b* ‘roadless’.

The attributive clitic *ʁa-CM* identifies a specific referent from a group, e.g. *irχ:a=ʁa-b* ‘the red one’ (among other objects), while the clitic *k’o-CM* is used to attributivize copular constructions.

(3) arsi=k’o-b musa
money-ATTR-N place
‘the place where the money is’ [MA.MAN]

A clitic *s:u-CM* can attributivize spatial adverbs, locative phrases and other constituents. This is the most frequent of the attributivizing clitics.

(4) χaƛ’us:u=s:u-b makʷa
in_the_morning=ATTR-N food
‘breakfast’ [SA2012: 269]

Two more attributive clitics *χo-cm* and *ɬa-cm*, which show agreement with animacy, are used to attributivize progressive converbs and a handful of other constituents. It is not quite clear what motivates the distribution of these clitics with respect to *s:u-cm*. The clitic *c:u-CM* is used to derive similative attributes (see Section 4.6).

14 Note that the form *irχ:a-r* goes against the general rule that the animate plural marker is realized as *-l* in suffixal position.

3.4. Pronouns

3.4.1. Personal and possessive pronouns

Botlikh has first and second person pronouns. In the plural there is a distinction between inclusive ('we including you') and exclusive ('we without you') first person pronouns. The ergative case is equal to the absolutive for all pronouns except first person singular *den*. In the ergative it takes the suppletive form *iškur*, which is of unknown origin. Plural pronouns do not have a distinct oblique stem.

Table 5. Personal pronouns

	1SG	2SG	1PL (INCL)	1PL (EXCL)	2PL
ABS	den	min	iƛi	iš:i	bišti
ERG	iškur	min	iƛi	iš:i	bišti
DAT	di-(j)	du-(j)	iƛi-(j)	iš:i-(j)	bišti-(j)
GEN	di-CM	di-CM	iƛi-CM	iš:i-CM	bišti-CM

In contrast with nouns, the case paradigm of personal pronouns has only one genitive. Demonstratives are used for third person reference. Possessive pronouns are genitives of personal pronouns (5). When they are substantivized, they follow the attributive declension, with the oblique stem formants *-š:u-* (for masculine referents) and *-ɬ:i-* (for all other referents). Note that in this case the noun class marker is preserved, unlike in the case of other attributes with a noun class slot, e.g. *di-w-š:u-di* [1SG-M(GEN)-M.OBL-ERG].

(5) iƛi-b hani
1PL.INCL-N(GEN) village
'our village' (Gudava 1962: 181)

3.4.2. Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns refer to a particular object or person and indicate different types of distance: distance in space (far and near with respect to the speaker and addressee, without an elevation contrast), temporal distance (recent and long(er) ago), and cognitive distance (more and less familiar). They also fulfill the role of third person pronouns, e.g. *hu-w* (DEM-M) 'he', *hu-j* (DEM-F) 'she'. Their inflection follows the same pattern as other attributes (cf. Section 3.3). Table 6 introduces the most commonly used demonstrative pronouns and their known functions.[15] Alexeyev mentioned two more forms: *hogo-CM* and *hada-CM.* Neither of them is attested in other sources, only *hogo-CM* occurs once in a text recorded by Gudava (1962). Saidova & Abusov (2012) additionally describe forms *goce-CM* and *hace-CM* as lexical entries. It is unclear how these forms differ from the basic stems *ho-CM* and *ha-CM* as described in Table 6.

Table 6. Demonstrative pronouns

Form	Deixis	Discourse
ha-CM	X is in the direct vicinity of the speaker.	Introducing a new referent.
ga-CM	X is in the vicinity of the speaker, a little to the side.	
hu-CM	X is close(r) to the addressee.	Referring to a known referent.

15 Since the semantics of the demonstratives require further investigation, all of the forms are glossed uniformly as DEM.

go-CM	X is not in the vicinity of the speaker or the addressee. In case of an event or time, it is equally familiar to both.	
do-CM	X is not in the vicinity of the speaker or the addressee. Relatively further away than referents designated with *go-CM*.	

The medial demonstrative *hu-CM* is most frequently used as a personal pronoun and to refer back to a known referent (6). According to a consultant, *go-CM* is often used, specifically, to talk about a person who is not present at the moment of conversation.

(6) **ha-w** ida di-w wac:i,
DEM-M COP 1SG-M(GEN) brother

hu-w ida gʷanzi mak'i
DEM-M COP good child
'**This** is my brother, **he** is a good child.' [MA.MAN]

The demonstrative stems also serve as base for adverbs meaning 'here, hither' and 'there, thither'. These adverbs are productively formed from any demonstrative stem by adding a suffix *-ɬ:a*. Historically, this could be the inlative suffix (see Section 3.2.3), but these particular forms lack the essive/lative contrast: *ha-ɬ:a,* with the proximal demonstrative stem, can mean both 'here' and 'hither'. The Botlikh-Russian dictionary (Saidova & Abusov 2012) features a number of other lexemes clearly derived from demonstratives, including *DEM-la* 'like this/that' (specifying manner), *DEM-štu-CM* 'like this/that one' (comparing one referent to another).

3.4.3. Reflexive and reciprocal pronouns

Reflexives consist of a personal pronoun and the clitic *da*, which functions as an intensifying particle in other contexts. It follows case marking, as demonstrated in (7).

(7) min du-qi=da qid-i
YOU.SG 2SG-APUD=INT look-IMP
'Look at yourself!' [SA2012: 549]

For third person reflexives, a stem *hi-* is combined with a class agreement suffix in the absolutive. The oblique stem is *in-š:u-* for masculine referents, and *in-ɬ:i-* for feminine and neuter. In addition to their regular use, reflexive pronouns also appear as logophoric pronouns in speech complements, see example (74) in Section 4.4.2. Reciprocal pronouns are formed by full reduplication of the numeral *ce-CM* 'one'.

(8) wac:u-di=la iškur=la sajʁat ik:-u **ce-lu-di~celu-j**
brother-ERG=ADD 1SG.ERG=ADD gift give-AOR one-PL-ERG~one.PL-DAT
'My brother and I have **each other** gifts.' [SV.FW:2019]

3.4.4. Interrogatives

In the absolutive, the interrogative pronoun stem is *e:-CM,* resulting in *ẽ-w* / *ẽ-j* 'who' (masculine / feminine) and *e-b* 'who (about animals)' / 'what'. The variants *ẽ // en* are used when the referent is an animate of unknown gender. The oblique stems distinguish between animates (*ɬ:e-*) vs. inanimates (*ɬ:un-*). A clitic *la* is attached to interrogative pronouns and questions words to form content questions. This clitic attaches after case marking if it is present. By default it attaches to the

interrogative form, but it can be moved to another focused constituent. An exception is *ištu-cm* 'which', where *la* is typically attached to the head in case it is expressed (9), though this is not obligatory.

(9) **ištu-w** adami-χa=**la** min kaʁat ik:-u
which-M person-APUD.LAT=Q 2SG.ERG letter give-AOR
'Which person did you give the letter to?' [SA2012: 212]

The question particle can optionally show agreement with animacy, i.e. *ɬ:i.la* for animates and *χu.la* for inanimates.

(10) **e-b=ɬila** beƛ-u?
who-N=AN.Q shed-SUP
'Who is in the shed?' (when talking about animals) [SA2012: 550]

Other question words include: *epi(la)* 'why', *in(la)* 'how', *čamu(la)* 'how much', *inda(la)* 'when', *inu(la)* 'where', etc.

3.4.5. Indefinite pronouns

Reduplicated third person reflexive pronouns are used to refer to each individual of a certain group (*hi-w~hi-w*, *hi-b~hi-b*, and so on). As opposed to the reflexive pronoun, they do not have a suppletive oblique stem. Instead, they attach the oblique stem formants *-š:u-* for masculine and *-ɬ:i-* for feminine and neuter. The pronoun *t'orgu* is used to refer to all individuals of a certain group. The oblique stem (which is plural by default), is *t'orgu-dalu-*. Unknown or random members of a certain group are referred to by attaching indefinite suffixes to indefinite interrogative pronominal stems (that is, to the variants without class marking: *en // ẽ // e*). The indefinite markers are *χʷala* 'some unknown X' and *k'ʷala* 'any X'.

(11) en=**k'ʷala** k'ʷat'-iw=ma darc:i-l:-a?
who=INDEF be_late-AOR=Q lesson-IN-ALL
'Was anyone late for the lesson?' [SA2012: 550]

In the function of negative pronouns, either indefinite pronouns with *k'ʷala* (12) or the numeral one (*ce-CM*) in combination with the intensifier (*da*) and the additive (*la*) (13) are used in negative clauses.

(12) ɬ:e-χe=**k'ʷala** belet **guč'i**
who-APUD-INDEF ticket NEG.COP
'Nobody has a ticket.' [SA2012: 551]

(13) **ce-w=da=la** adam **ʁ-ič'a**
one-M=INT=ADD person come-NEG.AOR
'No one came.' (lit. even one person did not come) [SA2012: 41]

3.5. Numerals

The numeral system is decimal and cardinal numerals obligatorily contain a suffix *-da,* with the exception of 'one' (*ce-CM*), which has a class marker slot instead. Tens from '20' to '90' are formed with the suffix *-c'ali* (followed by *-da*). Compound numerals attach the suffix *-ɬi* to the penultimate component: *hac'a-da* 'ten' > *hac'a-ɬi k'e-da* 'twelve'. The compound suffix *-c'ali-ɬi* is sometimes

contracted to *-c'aj* (see '1945' in Table 7). Numerals over 100 use the element *-č'uk'u* (i.e. the contelative case) to compound (e.g. *bešunu-č'uku habu-da* '103'). Cardinal numerals follow the attributive declension (see Section 3.3), with the oblique stem formants following the numeral suffix *-da*.

Table 7. Numerals

1	ce-CM	11	hac'a-łi ce-CM
2	k'e-da	50	ištu-c'ali-da
3	habu-da	51	ištu-c'ali-łi ce-CM
4	buʁu-da	100	bešunu-da
5	ištu-da	102	bešunu-č'uku k'e-da
6	inƛi-da	1000	azaru-da
7	haƛ'u-da	1001	azaru-č'uku ce-CM
8	biƛ'i-da	1945	azaru-č'uku hač'a-bešun-č'uku buʁu-c'aj ištu-da
9	hač'a-da	2018	ƛ'e-azaru-č'uku hac'a-łi biƛ'i-da
10	hac'a-da	10,000	hac'a-da azaru-da

Ordinals are formed with the suffixes *-χo-CM* for inanimate (14) and *-ła-CM* for animate referents (15). These suffixes are identical to the future participle suffixes (Section 3.6.3).

(14) k'e-ji-χo-b kalas
two-TH-INAN.ORD-N class
'the second grade' [SA2012: 552]

(15) k'e-ji-ła-b zini
two-TH-AN.ORD-N cow
'the second cow' [SA2012: 552]

The only exception is the ordinal 'first'.

(16) heč'i-s:eʔa=s:u-b
most-before=ATTR-N
'first' (lit. the one which is most before) [MA.MAN]

Multiplicative numerals are formed by adding the suffixes *-c'i* or *-rc'i* directly to the numeral stem, optionally followed by *-da*, with some variation: *hab-c'i* // *habu-rc'i* ('thrice'). An analytic multiplicative with the word 'road' *miq'i* is also available: *habu-da miq'i-di* 'thrice'. Numerals 'one' and 'two' form irregular multiplicatives, cf. *ce-CM* 'one' – *anš:i* 'once', *k'e-da* 'two' – *k'am-c'i(da)* 'twice'. Distributives are formed by full reduplication of the stem, e.g. *k'e~k'e-da* 'two for each' (17), or *hac'a~hac'a-da* 'ten for each'.

(17) t'orgu mak'i-lu-j ik:-a k'e~k'e-da inču
all child-PL-DAT give-IMP two~two-CARD apple
'Give all of the children two apples each.' [MA.MAN]

Collective numerals consist of a cardinal numeral and an additive particle (*la*): *ištu-da-la* ('the five of them'). The suffix *-rƛ'a* indicates the number of pieces, e.g. *k'e-rƛ'a* 'in two parts'.

3.6. Verbs

Verbal lexemes can be transitive, intransitive or labile. Aspect is mostly fused with tense, with the exception of multiplicative stem reduplication (see Section 3.6.8 on verbal derivation). Categories expressed on the verb include gender agreement, tense, mood, and polarity. Evidentiality appears as an additional meaning of certain tense forms.

3.6.1. Stems

Most verb forms are based on the bare stem (see Table 8). The future, the masdar, and the present and future participles are based on the infinitive. The latter is used throughout this sketch as the citation form for verbs. The majority of negative forms are also based on what seems to be the infinitive. A minority of verb stems in Botlikh carry a slot for noun class agreement. Number is fused with class and there is no person marking. The slot is almost always prefixal, as in *CM-iti* 'lose', *CM-uk'i* 'be', though a few stems have an infixal slot, e.g. *hi*<CM>*c'i* 'fill', *i*<CM>*či* 'bring', *i-*<CM>*-χi* 'take, buy'.

3.6.2. Tense

Table 8 shows the main synthetic forms. The aorist / general converb has three different allomorphs (*-a, -u, -iw*), which are lexically distributed. All other forms are regular.

Table 8. Synthetic tenses and basic converbs

	ih- 'make, do'		haʁ- 'see'	
	Affirmative	Negative	Affirmative	Negative
Infinitive	ih-i	-	haʁ-i	-
Habitual	ih-e	ih-e-wč'i	haʁ-e	haʁ-e-wč'i
Aorist / General converb	ih-u	ih-i-č'a	haʁ-a	haʁ-i-č'a
Progressive converb	ih-a(ta)	ih-i-č'ada	haʁ-a(ta)	haʁ-i-č'ada
Future	ih-i-k'a-CM	ih-i-(w)č'a-CM	haʁ-i-k'a-CM	haʁ-i-(w)č'a-CM

Periphrastic tenses consist of a converb or participle in combination with the copula *ida* or the aorist or perfect of *CM-uk'-i* 'be'. Negation is expressed with a negative auxiliary or a negative form of the lexical verb.

Table 9. Periphrastic tenses

	ih- 'make, do'		haʁ- 'see'	
	Lexical verb	Auxiliary	Lexical verb	Auxiliary
Progressive	ih-a(ta)	ida	haʁ-a(ta)	ida
	make-PROG	COP	see-PROG	COP
Perfect	ih-u	ida	haʁ-a	ida
	make-CVB	COP	see-CVB	COP
Pluperfect	ih-u	CM-uk'-a	haʁ-a	CM-uk'-a
	make-CVB	CM-be-AOR	see-CVB	CM-be-AOR
Imperfect	ih-i-χa/ła-CM	CM-uk'-a	haʁ-i-χa/ła-CM	CM-uk'-a
	make-IS-PRS.PTCP-CM	CM-be-AOR	make-IS-PRS.PTCP-CM	CM-be-AOR
Intentional	ih-i	ida	haʁ-i	ida
	make-INF	COP	see-INF	COP

The perfect has resultative uses (17) as well as a current relevance meaning (18). It is also used as an unwitnessed narrative tense (Section 3.6.7).

(18) w-eč'uχa ima re:-łi **hač'**:**aχi<w>uk'-a** **ida**
M-big father yard-IN sit_down<M>-CVB COP
'Grandfather **is sitting** in the yard.' (lit. is sat down) [SV.FW: 2019]

(19) den henala **inku-j-č'a** **ida**
1SG still eat-IS-NEG.CVB COP
'I **haven't eaten** yet.' [SV.FW: 2019]

3.6.3. Non-finite forms

Most non-finite forms are derived from the infinitive stem. Participles have a suffixal class agreement slot which agrees with the nominal head, and the present and future participle suffixes distinguish between animate and inanimate heads.

Table 10. Non-finite forms (verb 'make, do')

Form		Affirmative	Negative
Infinitive		ih-i	-
Masdar		ih-i-r	ih-i-č'-i-r do-IS-NEG-IS-MSD
Present participle	Animate	ih-i-ła-CM	ih-i-ł-i-č'a-CM DO-IS-AN-IS- NEG.PRS.PTCP-CM
	Inanimate	ih-i-χa-CM	ih-i-χ-i-č'a-CM DO-IS-INAN-IS- NEG.PRS.PTCP-CM
Future participle	Animate	ih-i-ła-CM	ih-i-ł-i-č'a-CM
	Inanimate	ih-i-χo-CM	ih-i-χ-i-č'o-CM
Past participle		ih-a-CM	ih-i-č'a-CM DO-IS-NEG.PST.PTCP-CM
General converb		ih-u	ih-i-č'a do-IS-NEG.CVB
Progressive converb		ih-a(ta)	ih-i-č'ada do-IS-NEG.PROG.CVB

Participles follow the attributive declension (i.e. oblique stems are formed with *-š:u-* for masculine and *-ł:i-* for feminine and neuter referents) and inflect for case in the same way as nouns. Masdars (abstract verbal nouns) do not have oblique stems and attach case suffixes directly to the absolutive form in *-r*.

3.6.4. Evidentiality

The perfect can be used as an unwitnessed narrative tense. The perfect form of the auxiliary (*b-uk'a ida*) is used to derive the unwitnessed counterparts of the pluperfect and the imperfect (see Table 9 in Section 3.6.2). Compare the following two consecutive sentences from a fairy tale, featuring the perfect of 'be' (20) and the unwitnessed imperfect of 'grow' (21).

(20) hu-š:u-b=da **b-uk'-a** **ida** hanq'u-č'u s:eʔa
DEM-OBL.M-N(GEN)=INT N-be-CVB COP house-cont in_front_of

inču-łi b-eč'uχa ruša.
apple-GEN N-big tree
'There **was** a big apple tree in front of his (=the king's) house.' [GT1962: 1]

(21) hu-b ruš-e=la **b-iž-i-χa-b** **b-uk'-a** **ida**
DEM-N tree-SUP=ADD N-grow-INF-INAN.PRS.PTCP-N N-be-CVB COP

ʁʷani~ʁʷani=ʁʷana inču
RDP~head=EQ apple
'And on this tree **grew** apples the size of a head.' [GT1962: 1]

Botlikh has a quotative particle *talu* to mark quoted speech (Section 4.4.2). The reportative particle, used to indicate that a statement is based on hearsay, is *χʷata*. It is typically suffixed to the verb, but can be moved to focalize another constituent, as in (22). The etymology of both particles remains unclear.

(22) zini=**χʷata** hiƛ'a b-uk:-u
cow=REP down N-fall-AOR
'[The/a] cow, **they say**, fell down.' [SV.FW:2018]

3.6.5. Mood and modality

3.6.5.1. Imperative

The imperative of transitive verbs is formed with a suffix *-a*, and intransitive verbs take a suffix *-i* / *-j*. Some examples of transitive imperatives are: *qward-a* 'write!', *m-as-a* 'tell!', *ik:-a* 'give!', *(hi)ƛ'-a* 'say!', *ʁamd-a* 'eat (something)!'. Some intransitive examples: *w-eƛ-i* 'go!'(M), *biʔ-i* 'die!', *č':ard-i* 'run!'. For some verbs the imperative coincides with the aorist / general converb in *-a* or with the infinitive. The forms are differentiated in context by their stress patterns (see Section 2.4). Three intransitive verbs have an irregular imperative with the suffix *-ba*: *hinʁ<w>-* [come<M>] becomes *ʁʷa-ba,* *CM-uk'-* [CM-be] gives *w-uk'u-ba* for masculine gender, *j-ik'u-ba* for feminine. The nasal stem *CM-ãʔ-* [CM-go] gives *wa-ma* (masculine) and *ja-ma* (feminine).

Labile verbs can take either suffix, depending on the intended meaning, cf. *b-it-a* 'lose (something)!' vs. *w-it-i* 'get lost!' (when addressing a male). Prohibitives are formed with the suffix *-abas:i* for both transitives and intransitives, for example *qʷard-abas:i* 'don't write!', *w-iʁ-abas:i 'don't stay!'* (addressing a male). The jussive or third person imperative ("Let X do Y") is expressed by attaching a particle *la* (meaning "let") to the imperative or prohibitive (23). This construction is distinct from the optative described in the following section.

(23) go-w hi-w=da araʁʷa-ba=la
DEM-M self-M=INT come-IMP=JUSS
'Let him come here himself.' [SA2012: 260]

3.6.5.2. Optative

The optative suffixes are *-ibe* and *-abu*, which are attached directly to the bare verb stem. It remains unclear what determines their distribution. Both form a construction of the type "may X happen", expressing the speaker's wish. Example (24) represents a common positive wish uttered when

saying goodbye; example (25) should be interpreted as a curse regarding a person who is annoying. There seems to be no correlation with the intransitive (*-i*) and transitive (*-a*) imperative forms: both suffixes occur with transitive and intransitive verbs, and the same verb stem can take either suffix (Saidova & Abusov 2012: 556).

(24) miq'i **b-it'-ibe**
road N-be_straight-OPT
'Safe travels!' (lit. may your path be straight) [SA2012: 281]

(25) waj min mučula-di **w-ãʔ-abu**
oh 2SG wind-ERG M-go-OPT
'Oh, may the wind take you away.' [SA2012: 98]

The optative suffix is not necessarily attached to the verb (26).

(26) **zarq'um-ibe** du-j ʁamd-a-b buʁa
poison-OPT you-DAT eat-PST.PTCP-N PTC
'May what you've eaten become poison to you.' [SA2012: 191-192]

Negative wishes (i.e. expressing a hope that something does not happen) are rendered with the prohibitive (27).

(27) pašman-i-r **haʁ-abas:i** du-j
be_sad-IS-MSD see-PROH you-DAT
'May you be free of sadness.' (lit. 'Do not see sadness!') [SA2012: 306]

3.6.5.3. Conditional and counterfactual

The conditional suffix *-ala* is attached to the bare stem and indicates a condition in the present or future (28). The temporal reference of the condition follows that of the apodosis – if the apodosis contains a future tense main verb, the construction refers to a potential condition in the future. Counterfactuals attach the suffix *-χʷala* (which is homophonous with one of the indefinite clitics discussed in Section 3.4.5) to the aorist in the protasis (29).

(28) ƛ'oniχi maroženi **ʁamd-ala** res:ilbikk-e
much ice_cream eat-COND become_hoarse-HAB
'If you eat a lot of ice cream, you become hoarse.' [SA2012: 306]

(29) den=la **w-ãʔ-i** **w-uk'-a**
1SG=ADD M-go-INF M-be-AOR

di-qi **hiƛ'-u** **b-uk'-a-χʷala**
1SG-APUD say-CVB N-be-AOR-INDEF
'I would have gone too, if they would have told me.' [SA2012: 103]

3.6.5.4. Concessive

The concessive suffix *-alala* is composed of the conditional (*-ala*) and the additive (*la*), and is suffixed to the bare stem.

(30) ƛ'eri **b-erš-alala** saru-di ʕamal b-erš-e-wč'i
color N-change-CONC fox-ERG character N-change-HAB-NEG
'**Even though** it **changes** its colors, the fox does not change its character.' [SA2012: 248]

3.6.5.5. Modal auxiliaries

Modal meanings are expressed with the verbs *CM-uk:i* ('fall, have to') for necessity (31), and *behi* ('fit, can') for possibility (32). They typically occur in the habitual and with an infinitival complement.

(31) den w-eraχ:-i **w-uk:-e**
1SG M-lie_down-INF M-have_to-HAB
'I **have to** lie down.' [SA2012: 75]

(32) aru paruz gand-i **beh-e**
here cigarette smoke-INF can-HAB
'You **can / may** smoke here.' [SA2012: 70]

The future tense of 'find' *CM-ĩs-i* is used to convey the meaning 'probably':

(33) min asar w-eč'uχa **w-ĩs-i-k'o** di-č'u-ku
2.SG a_little M-big M-find-INF-FUT.M 1SG-AD-EL
'You are **probably** a little bigger than I am.' [SA2012: 49]

3.6.6. Negation

Synthetic tenses are negated with suffixes sharing the negative element *-č'-*. To negate the habitual, a suffix *-(w)č'i* is attached to the affirmative form. The future, aorist / general converb and progressive converb take a portmanteau suffix that seems to attach to the infinitive stem. The infinitive itself cannot be directly negated. Negative infinitival clauses consist of a negated converb and an auxiliary in the infinitive, as is the case in Avar, cf. Rudnev (2015: 152). Copular clauses with *ida* are negated with one of three negative copulas: *gu-č'i* (any type of subject), *ɬi-č'i* (for animates) and *χu-č'i* (for inanimates). The exact distribution of the three auxiliaries remains a bit unclear, as the neutral variant *guč'i* can always be used to substitute one of the other two. Examples (34) and (35) are equally acceptable.

(34) hu-j učitel'nica **ɬi-č'i**
DEM-F teacher AN.COP-NEG
'She is not a teacher.' [SV.FW: 2018]

(35) hu-j učitel'nica **gu-č'i**
DEM-F teacher COP-NEG
'She is not a teacher.' [SV.FW: 2018]

Another negative auxiliary (*CM-aʁu*) is used only in a specific construction with the infinitive of a lexical verb. Remarkably, though the auxiliary is inflected for aorist, the whole structure has present tense reference. In addition, its polarity is negative, while it does not contain an overt negative element. This auxiliary is not attested in any other construction besides the negative present construction demonstrated in (32).

(36) ha-lu-di-ɬi=ma min **j-et-i** **j-aʁ-u**?
DEM-PL-ERG-AN=Q 2SG F-leave-INF F-NEG.AUX-AOR
'**Are** they **not leaving** you in peace?' [SA2012: 559]

3.6.7. Valence-changing derivations

Causativization is the only valency increasing process in Botlikh. It can be achieved in several different ways. The most productive means is the semi-synthetic causative derivation, which derives a causative infinitive from the bare verb stem with a suffix *-aj,* e.g. *qʷard-i* [write-INF] > *qʷard-a-j* [write-CAUS-INF].[16] Other forms build on the causative infinitive by adding different forms of the auxiliary *malih- / mal-* (37)-(38), which is of unknown origin. The causative aorist frequently has a synthetic form *-o* (39), presumably resulting from a contraction of the causative formant *-a* and the aorist suffix *-u,* as discussed in Section 2.5 Alternatively, it can take the auxiliary forms *malihu* or (rarely) *malo* (40). Additionally, Botlikh features two fully periphrastic causative constructions: one with the verb *t'am-i* 'put' and a lexical verb in the infinitive, and another with the causative of the verb 'become' *CM-iʁ-i,* which is *CM-iʁ-a-j* 'cause to become'.

If the original verb is intransitive, the causer is in the ergative case, while the direct object (if present) is in the absolutive, cf. (37)-(38)-(40). In case the original verb was transitive, the agent takes the contessive case, while the causer is in the ergative case (39).

(37) mihila-di ans:-a-j=**malih-e**
sun-ERG become_warm-CAUS-INF=AUX-HAB
'The sun warms.' [AA2019:31]

(38) ha-b k'ʷaħal-i-r-di boc:-a-j=**mal-e**
DEM-N be_sick-IS-MSD-ERG become_blind-CAUS-INF=AUX-HAB
'This disease causes blindness.' (lit. 'makes [someone] become blind') [SA2012:98]

(39) imu-di waša-š:u-č'u basa **q'ird-o**
father-ERG son-M.OBL-CONT hair cut-CAUS.AOR
'The father made the son cut [his] hair.' [SA2012:243]

(40) parakurora-di hu-š:u-b iše at-a-j=**mal-o**
prosecutor-ERG DEM-M.OBL-N(GEN) case.PL reveal-CAUS-INF=AUX-AOR
'The prosecutor revealed his cases.' [SA2012:50]

The biabsolutive construction demotes the agent to absolutive (41).

(41) ima χuri b-eƛ'-ata w-ah-u
father field N-plough-PROG.CVB M-become-AOR
'Father ploughed the field.' [MA.MAN]

When the short form of the progressive converb is used, the construction becomes intransitive and the direct object is deleted.

(42) ima w-eƛ'-a w-ah-u
father M-plough-PROG.CVB M-become-AOR
'Father ploughed.' [MA.MAN]

16 Derived verbs with the infinitive suffix *-ɬi* (Section 3.6.8) attach *-aj* after *-ɬ*, e.g. biha 'easy' - *biha-ɬ-i* [easy-VBZ-INF] 'become easy' - *biha-ɬ-a-j* [easy-VBZ-CAUS-INF] 'make easy'.

This pattern looks similar to the use of the progressive (*-ata*) and "antipassive" (*-a*) converbs in Godoberi (this volume), but the specifics of these constructions in Botlikh require further investigation.

3.6.8. Verbal derivation

Complex verbs can be derived from nouns with the light verb *ihi* 'do, make' in case of transitive verbs: *kumak* 'help' (noun, loan from Avar) > *kumak ihi* 'help' (verb). For intransitive verbs, *b-ahi* 'become' is used: *ƛ'amu* 'rust' (noun) > *ƛ'amu b-ahi* 'become rusty'. Many adjectival stems appear in non-complex verbs, e.g. *aču* 'green' (adjective), *aču-j* 'become green' (infinitive). Several lexically determined suffixes are employed to derive verbs from nouns or adjectives. Some of them have a regular inflectional paradigm, in which the infinitive suffix *-i* / *-j* is simply added to the derived stem. Others attach the suffix *-łi* to form the infinitive.

Table 11. Verbal derivation suffixes

Base	Derivational suffix	Infinitive	Example
Noun / Adjective	-χ:u	-j	tanc':a 'ant' > tanc':a-χ:u-j 'to become numb'
Noun / Adjective	-ku	-j	ans:a 'warm' > ans:a-ku-j 'to sweat'
Noun / Adjective	-sa	-łi	k'ak'u 'ball' > k'ak'u-sa-łi 'to play ball'
Noun / Adjective	-k'^{w}a	-łi	žimži 'grimace' > žimži-k'^{w}a-łi 'to grimace'
Adverb	-d	-i	ura 'thither' > ura-d-i 'move aside'
Verb	-ela	-łi	k'anc'-i 'jump' > k'anc'-ela-łi 'jump (many times)'

Verbs with a *-łi* infinitive do not have synthetic inflection. They form complex verbs with the auxiliaries *CM-ahi* ('become') or *CM-uk'i* ('be'), e.g.: *pikrusa-łi* 'think, ponder' (from the noun *pikru* 'thought, idea', borrowed from Arabic through Avar), *pikrusa w-uk'-a* [thought M-be-AOR] 'thought', *pikrusa w-ah-u* [thought M-become-AOR] 'started to think', etc. Partial reduplication of the verb root is sometimes used to create verbs with iterative meaning, cf. *χ:ud-i* 'drink' > *χ:u~χ:ud-i* 'drink (many times)', *CM-aʔ-i* 'read' > *CM-aʔ~aʔ-i* 'read (many times)'. The suffix *-ela* can also fulfill this function, see Table 11.

3.7. Adverbs and postpositions

Some adverbial stems carry a noun class agreement slot, which agrees with the absolutive subject of the verb they modify (e.g. *r-aƛ'us:e* 'sometimes' agrees with *c':ebala* 'guests' in (43)).

(43) r-aƛ'us:e c':ebala hi<r>ʁ-e iš:i-χ-a
AN.PL-sometimes guest.PL come<AN.PL>-HAB home-AD-ALL
'From time to time guests come to our house.' [SA2012: 60]

Adverbs usually look identical to adjectives with the same meaning, e.g. *boc:u* 'dark' can be used as an adjective or an adverb. Some adverbs are differentiated from the corresponding adjectives with a suffix *-o,* cf. *χ:eχ:i k'atu* 'fast horse' vs. *χ:eχ:o* in example (44).

(44) χ:eχ:-o mas-a
fast-ADV tell-IMP
'Tell [it] quickly!' [SA2012: 273]

Spatial and temporal adverbs can carry (spatial) case marking. A special suffix *-du* is attached to spatial adverbs to derive a degree of direction: *iš-qa* [home-APUD.ALL] 'homeward' > *išqa-du* 'nearer to home'. Some of the spatial adverbs can function as postpositions, cf. the examples with *s:eʔa* ('ahead, in front of, before') as an adverb (45) and as a postposition (46). Adverbs precede the corresponding verb, while postpositions follow the nominal.

(45) s:eʔa b-is-i
ahead N-move-INF
'move to the front' [SA2021: 91]

(46) di-č'u s:eʔa
1SG-CONT in_front_of
'in front of me' [SA2012: 557]

Postpositions may be postposed or cliticized to the noun phrase they modify. Among the purely postpositional lexemes are *χ:indu* 'to, towards', *dera* 'until' (both in the spatial and the temporal sense), *č'alala* 'besides' and *ʁalu* 'for, for the sake of'. The postposition *χ:indu* has a meaning similar to the adverbial modifier *-du* discussed above. It can attach to spatial adverbs (e.g. *hiƛ'a-χ:indu* [down-towards] 'downwards'), or modify noun phrases inflected for lative case (47). See also Section 4.1.2 on postpositional phrases.

(47) χarašu req'a-ɬ:a **χ:indu** w-ãʔ-a
shepherd hill-IN.ALL towards M-go-AOR
'The shepherd went in the direction of the hill.' [SA2012: 558]

3.8. Particles

Botlikh has a number of discursive particles, such as *da* (intensifier), which is also found on reflexives and numerals. There are several more particles with a meaning that seems similar, for example *χ:a* and *k'a:*, which are both translated with the emphatic particle *že* in Russian (see Saidova & Abusov (2012: 558)). Their exact function (as well as the inventory of discursive particles in general) requires further study. The particle *dala* conveys a meaning similar to 'even'.

(48) raša=**dala** ƛ'-ič'a
word=even say-NEG.AOR
'[He] didn't even say a word.' [SA2012: 558]

Other particles and clitics fulfill syntactic functions. The additive *la* and comitative *ɬ:i*, as well as the borrowed conjunctions *wa* 'and', *amma* 'but', and *ja(gi)* 'or', are used to coordinate various constituents (see Section 4.7). Quotations are marked with a particle *talu* at the rightmost edge of the quoted sentence (Section 4.4.2), and general hearsay is indicated with a particle *χʷata* (Section 3.6.4). The particles *ma* and *la*, which are optionally marked for agreement with animacy, form interrogative sentences (Section 4.3). Functive phrases are formed with a particle *ɬun* borrowed from Avar (Section 4.6).

4. Syntax

4.1. Noun phrase and postpositional phrase

4.1.1. Noun phrase

Nominal heads can be modified by demonstratives, quantifiers, adjectives and other attributivized forms, relative clauses, and two types of genitives: the possessive – *di-b ruša* (1SG-N(GEN) tree) ‘my tree’, and the descriptive, i.e. *inču-łi ruša* (apple-GEN tree) ‘apple-tree’.[17] The examples below demonstrate the relative order of constituents.

(48) possessive - demonstrative - head
du-b ha-b raša
2SG-N(GEN) DEM-N word
‘this word of yours’ [MA.MAN]

(49) demonstrative - genitive - head
ha-b inču-łi ruša
DEM-N apple-GEN tree
‘this apple-tree’ [MA.MAN]

(50) quanitifier - genitive - adjective - head
ce-j b-eč’er hadibałi-łi č’ikʷar ješi
one-F N-black eye.PL-GEN beautiful girl
‘one beautiful girl with black eyes’ [SV.FW2020]

The two types of genitives occupy a different position in the relative order of constituents, cf. examples (49)-(50)-(51).

(51) iš:i-b hanq’u-łi hinc’:abałi du-j
1PL.EXCL-N(GEN) house-GEN door.PL 2SG-DAT

inda=ʕalla χʷabd-a-b ida
when=INDF open-PST.PTCP-INAN.PL COP
‘The doors of our house are always open to you.’ [SA2012: 162]

With numerals higher than one, the head remains singular. Case is marked only on the last constituent of the noun phrase.

4.1.2. Postpositional phrase

Spatial postpositions most often take a noun inflected for the contessive *-č’u*. The locative marker indicates that X is close to / in contact with Y, while the postposition further specifies where exactly (‘under’, ‘on top of’, etc.). Some postpositions combine with other locatives, e.g. *hinu* ‘inside’ pairs with the inessive.

(52) buru-łi iš:i **zarala-č’u** **heʔa**
winter-IN 1pl.EXCL ice-CONT on_top_of

ƛuš:esa r-uk’-e

17 Note that the *-łi* genitive can also function as a possessive for some nominals.

skate AN.PL-be-HAB
'In winter we skate **on the ice**.' [SA2012: 391]

The postposition *sandu* 'together' behaves similar to the spatial postpositions: it pairs with a noun inflected for contessive ('together with').

(53) **di-č'u** **sandu** halmaʁ=la hi<n>ʁʷ-a
1SG-AD together friend=ADD come<AN.PL>-AOR
'My friend came **with me** as well.' [SA2012: 145]

The postposition *dera* 'until' is used with infinitives or nouns in the absolutive (54), while *ʁalu* 'for, for the sake of' is used with nouns inflected for dative.

(54) **boc:i=dera** r-eχ:-u iš:i maduχalzabałi-χe
dark=until AN.PL-stay-AOR 1PL.EXCL neighbor.PL-APUD
'We stayed at the neighbors' until dark.' [SA2012: 558]

4.2. Clause structure

4.2.1. Word order

The unmarked word order for clauses is SOV (55a), though alternative patterns OSV, SVO, OVS are also possible (55b-d). Example (55e) with VSO was judged to be impossible by speakers unless a broader context is provided, e.g. the sentence is a reply to a negative statement or expresses an unexpected result). The order VOS is considered awkward (55f).

(55a) sĩ-di hunc':i ʁamd-u
bear-ERG honey eat-AOR
'The bear ate the honey.' [MA.MAN]

(55b) hunc':i sĩ-di ʁamd-u
honey bear-ERG eat-AOR

(55c) sĩ-di ʁamd-u hunc':i
bear-ERG eat-AOR honey

(55d) hunc':i ʁamd-u sĩ-di
honey eat-AOR bear-ERG

(55e) ??ʁamd-u sĩ-di hunc':i
eat-AOR bear-ERG honey

(55f) ??ʁamd-u hunc':i sĩ-di
eat-AOR honey bear-ERG

4.2.2. Case alignment

As Botlikh has ergative alignment, the subject of transitive verbs is in the ergative case, while the direct object is in the absolutive. If the verb is intransitive, the subject is absolutive. The ergative also encodes instruments (56), and temporal adverbials (see Section 4.4.3).

(56) **ʁeru-di** kaš:ir b-iʁ-a-j
spoon-ERG porridge N-mix-CAUS-INF
'stir the porridge with a spoon' [SA2012: 134]

Experiencer subjects (with verbs like 'see', 'know', 'want', 'find') take dative case, since Botlikh lacks a dedicated affective case.

(57) **hu-š:u-j** m-is-a ce-b nik'isi hanq'u
DEM-M.OBL-DAT N-find-AOR one-N little house
'He found a little house.' [MA.MAN]

Indirect objects are usually encoded with dative (58) or a locative form (59).

(58) **di** midal ik:-u
1SG.DAT medal give-AOR
'[They] gave me a medal.' [SA2012: 280]

(59) iš-qa ʁʷa-ba=talu hiƛ'-u **hu-š:u-χi**
home-APUD.LAT come-IMP=QUOT say-AOR DEM-M-APUD
'They told him: "go home!"'

Locative forms are also part of the argument structure of certain verbs, such as 'be afraid' (60).

(60) ƛ'ank'arde hibd-e iƛi-č'u-ku
hare.PL be_afraid-HAB 1PL.INCL-CONT-EL
'Hares are afraid of us.' [SA2012: 201]

The original agent in causativized transitive constructions takes the contessive case (Section 3.6.7).

4.2.3. Gender agreement

Verbs show noun class agreement with their absolutive argument. Attributes with an agreement slot (including demonstratives, adjectives and numerals) agree with their heads, which need not be explicit. Adverbs agree with the absolutive argument of the verb they modify and postpositions similarly agree with the absolutive argument in the clause (61).

(61) huł:a hinc'u-č'u **w-esqe** kurt'a=ɬ:i wac:i ida
there door-CONT M-behind hammer=COMIT brother COP

min k':ʷand-i=talu w-aqaš:-u
2SG kill-INF=QUOT M-hide-CVB
'There behind the door is my brother with a hammer to kill you.' [GT1962: 3]

The agreement patterns of the dedicated animacy markers (described in Section 3.2.1) are less straightforward and require additional study. Overall they seem to adhere to the general rule that more unusual targets (e.g. question particles) agree with the absolutive argument in the clause (Haspelmath 1999: 133) (62a-b), while attributive forms agree with their heads (63a-b).

(62a) aχara=**χu.ma** beqi č'ird-i?
tomorrow=INAN.Q fruit pick-INF
'Will you pick the fruit tomorrow?' [SA2012: 365]

(62b) min aχara=**łi.ma** ʁ-i
2SG tomorrow=AN.Q come-INF
'Will you come tomorrow?' [SA2012: 559]

(63a) b-ič-i-**ła**-b unsa
N-sell-IS-AN.FUT.PTCP bull
'a bull that will be sold' [SA2012: 95][18]

(63b) b-ič-i-**χo**-b q'aj
N-sell-IS-INAN.FUT.PTCP-N thing
'a thing that will be sold' [SA2012: 95]

However, the animacy markers can be omitted (in case of the interrogative forms, see Section 3.4.4), or replaced with a neutral option (see Section 3.6.6 on the negative copulas). Participles and attributive clitics exhibit inconsistent behavior: while 'sell' (63a-b) agrees with animacy, the verb 'love' always takes an inanimate suffix. In example (64a), the inanimate suffix could perhaps show internal agreement with the argument of the relative clause, while example (64b) shows that this is not the case: even when every possible controller is animate, the "inanimate" suffix is used.

(64a) keč'i mas-i id-i-**χa**-j ješi
song tell-INF love-IS-INAN.PRS.PTCP-F girl
'a girl who likes to sing songs' [SA2012: 199]

(64b) ila id-i-**χo**-w waša
mother love-IS-INAN.PRS.PTCP-M son
'a son who loves his mother' [SA2012: 199]

4.3. Major sentence types

Affirmative declarative clauses lack any special marking. Interrogative mood is marked with the particle *ma* and its variants *χu.ma* (inanimate) and *łi.ma* (animate). In questions these forms do not behave as copulas: they attach to the affirmative copula *ida* (66), rather than replace it. The neutral position for interrogative particles is the verb in final position (65)-(66). In any other position they have a focalizing function (67).

(65) bajraq **k'ʷand-u=χuma**?
flag hoist-AOR=INAN.Q
'Was the flag hoisted?' [SA2012: 365]

(66) pat'imati aru **ida=łima**?
Patimat here COP=AN.Q
'Is Patimat here?' [MA.MAN]

(67) **min=ma** mašina m-iχ-o?
2SG=Q car N-stop-CAUS.AOR
'Did **you** stop the car?' [SA2012: 558]

18 The example was translated with the future tense, but note that the present and future tense participle suffixes for animates are not formally differentiated (Section 3.6.3).

Question words usually occupy the first place in the sentence. This word order is not fixed, but the question word can never occur postverbally.

(68) **inu=la** min w-uk'-a
where=Q 2SG M-be-AOR
'Where were you?' [SA2012: 207]

4.4. Complex sentences

Subordinate clauses can be headed by a variety of non-finite forms, and usually precede the main clause. Coordination is realized with particles or unmarked.

4.4.1. Relative clauses

Relative clauses are formed with participles, which usually precede the main verb, following the basic head-final word order.

(69) den **w-unč-a-b** ihur
1SG M-bathe-PST.PTCP-N pond
'The pond in which I have bathed.' [SA2012: 293]

(70) w-iʔ-i=de:ra **b-eč-i** **b-eχ:u-j-χi-č'a-b** raša
M-die-INF=UNTIL N-forget-INF N-stay-INF-PRS.PTCP-NEG-N word
'A word which [you] will not forget until [you] die.' [SA2012: 88]

4.4.2. Complementation

Complement clauses are usually headed by infinitives or masdars. Infinitives are used with verbs expressing the subject's ability or volition (e.g. 'can', 'want', 'like') (71), and as the complement of phasal verbs.

(71) go-šu-j id-e χ:unχ:ul **m-uč-i** s:aʔi ł:eni-di
DEM-M-DAT love-HAB face N-wash-INF cold water-ERG
'He likes **to wash** [his] face with cold water.' [MA.MAN]

When a full proposition forms the complement of a verb of knowledge or perception (i.e. 'think', 'see'), a masdar (72) or participle (73) is used.

(72) ƛ'ank'ara-ł**i** **k'anc'ela-r** haʁ-a=ma du-j
hare-GEN jump-MSD see-AOR=Q 2SG-DAT
'Have you seen how a hare jumps?' [SA2012: 252]

(73) di b-eʁ-e gʷanzi **b-uk'-i-χo-b**
1SG.DAT N-know-HAB good N-be-INF-INAN.FUT.PTCP-N
'I know that it will be good.' [SA2012: 104]

In clauses embedded under verbs of speech, regular finite forms are used. They are usually accompanied with the particle *talu*, though it can be omitted. Sentences marked with *talu* constitute a kind of semi-direct speech: verb tense is in accordance with the original utterance, while pronouns are substituted with reflexives which function as a kind of logophoric pronoun in this context, see *indu-j* [self.PL-DAT] in example (74).

(74) indu-j ʁ-i b-ac'-e-wč'i=talu hiƛ'-u
self.PL-DAT come-INF N-get-HAB-NEG=QUOT say-AOR
'They said that they are not be able to come.' [SA2012: 204]

4.4.3. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses can designate various taxis relations or indicate a cause or a purpose. The general converb (which is homophonous with the aorist) is used for preceding actions (75). An additive particle is often attached to the constituent immediately preceding the converb (see also Section 4.7 on coordination and chaining).

(75) nas:ir=la **b-uχ-u,** wac:u-di ins:a b-uq-u
shoes=ADD N-take_off-CVB brother river N-cut-AOR
'**Having taken off** his shoes, my brother crossed the river.' [SA2012: 564]

Specialized converb constructions give more precise indications, i.e. *-erχida* ('as soon as'),[19] *-dera* ('until'), *-b-eχut'u* ('after') and *-rudi* ('when'). Originally, *-dera* and *-b-eχut'u* are postpositions (Section 3.7). To form converbs they attach to the infinitive and the past participle, respectively. The suffix *-rudi* is a contracted form of *rihu-di* (time-ERG). Both the full and the contracted form attach to a verb form with a thematic suffix *-a*, which could be a past participle suffix with a truncated class marker (*-a-CM*), or a shortened progressive converb (*-a*).

(76) **w-unč-a-w-eχut'u** laga pap-iw
M-wash-PST.PTCP-M-after body become_light-AOR
'**After bathing**, the body becomes light (i.e. relaxes).' [SA2012: 303]

(77) iš:i rec:iχ:-u waša **w-ac'a-rudi**
we.EXCL rejoice-AOR son M-reach-TEMP
'We rejoiced **when** our son **arrived** (= was born).' [SA2012: 326]

Simultaneous actions are expressed with the progressive converb (78).

(78) ješil r-iʁ-i-č'ada χ:an~χ:ad-a r-uk'-a
girl.PL AN.PL-stop-INF-NEG.PROG RDP~comb-prog.CVB AN.PL-be-AOR
'The girls were combing **without stopping**.' [SA2012: 328]

Cause is indicated by a masdar inflected for ergative (79) and purpose clauses are headed by infinitives (80).

(79) den **k'ʷaħal-i-r-di** kʷač-iw
1SG be_ill-INF-MSD-ERG lose_weight
'I lost weight **because of my illness**.' [SA2012: 226]

19 According to Mallaeva & Xajbullaeva (2015), the suffix is *-χida*, but it attaches to a verb form in *-er*, which is not attested anywhere else in the paradigm, so we prefer to treat *-erχida* as one suffix that is attached directly to the stem.

(80) qabaqa-bałi gʷanzi **b-iža-j**
pumpkin-PL good INAN.PL-grow-CAUS-INF

χur-a kila b-ih-u
field-SUP.ALL manure N-put-AOR
'**To grow** good pumpkins, we put manure on the field.' [SA2012: 88]

The suffix *-erχi* forms a similative converb, comparing two actions (81).

(81) **b-uk'-erχi** mas-a
N-be-SIMIL tell-IMP
'Tell [it] **how [it] was**.' [SA2012: 103]

4.5. Negation

Negation is marked on the verb with a negative suffix or one of the negative auxiliaries. The copula *guč'i* can also be used independently to deny a statement.

(82) **gu-č'i**, hu-b hulla b-uk'-i-č'a
COP-NEG DEM-N so N-be-IS-NEG.AOR
'No, it was not like that.' [SA2012: 126]

The affirmative equivalents of *guč'i* are *ũ* and *unžu* 'yes'. The latter is also used with the question particle *ma* to form a type of tag questions (83).

(83) aχara n-aʔ-i-k'a-l, **unžu=ma**?
tomorrow AN.PL-go-IS-FUT-AN.PL yes=Q
'Tomorrow we will go, yes?' [SA2012: 360]

There is no negative quantifier (e.g. 'none'); instead, an indefinite quantifier is coupled with a negated verb (Section 3.4.5).

4.6. Comparative constructions

The comparative construction consists of a noun inflected for contelative (*-č'u-ku*) as the standard of comparison, and an adjective (84), see also example (29) in Section 3.6.5.3.

(84) azaru-da **ʁuruša-č'u-ku** c':ik':a
thousand-NUM rouble-CONT-EL a_lot
'More than thousand roubles.' [SA2012: 396]

Several clitics denote a relationship of similarity between two constitutents. The clitic *c:u-CM* can be attached to a noun phrase or an attribute to indicate a similarity between the marked constituent and the subject of the sentence (85)-(86) or its actions (87). Phrases with *c:u-CM* are attributive, so the suffix agrees in noun class with the nominal head.

(85) **muχa-ɬi=c:u-b** ʕumru
fairy_tale-IN=SIMIL-N life
'life as in a fairytale' [SA2012: 292]

(86) **piri=c**:**u-b** pirχ:id-u
lightning=SIMIL-N flare_up-AOR
'flare up like lightning' [SA2012: 308]

(87) imu-di **q'ajda-j-χa-b=c**:**u-b**
father-ERG repair-INF-INAN.PRS.PTCP-N=SIMIL-N

q'aid-a min=la nas:ir
repair-IMP 2SG=ADD shoes
'Repair the shoes like your father repairs [them].' [SA2012: 564]

The clitic also derives similative pronouns from demonstratives, e.g. *go-b=c:u-b* (DEM-N-SIMIL-N), 'such'. Another clitic *ʁu* renders similative adjectives and adverbs, e.g. *anzi=ʁu hac'iχ:a* (snow-SIMIL white) 'white as snow', but also:

(88) **go-š**:**u-b=ʁu** gʷanzo b-uƛ-i-č'a
DEM-M-N(GEN)=SIMIL good N-turn_out-INF-NEG.AOR
'It did not turn out as well **as his**.' [SA2012: 559]

The particle *ʁʷana* derives similative adjectives from nouns.

(89) kawu=**ʁʷana** heli
gate=SIMIL mouth
'a mouth like a gate' [SA2012: 218]

The particle *łun* is borrowed from Avar and marks a role of the subject (i.e. functive).[20]

(90) den muʕalim=**łun** ih-a ida
1SG teacher=FUNC do-PROG.CVB COP
'I work as a teacher.' [SA2012: 290]

In Botlikh, as in Avar, the particle has a transformative meaning (i.e. "X becomes Y") alongside its functive meaning. It is also used in equative constructions, for example with the verb 'consider'.

(91) hu-w **gʷanzi** **adam=łun** w-inc':-e
DEM-M good person=FUNC M-consider-HAB
'He is considered a **good person**.' [SA2012: 287]

4.7. Coordination and chaining

Noun phrases are conjoined by attaching an additive particle (*la*) to each concordand (92). The comitative particle *ł:i* 'with' introduces a secondary participant, e.g. *ʁani q'ʷačara=ł:i* (bread cheese=COM) 'bread with cheese'.

(92) riƛ'i=la š:ĩu=la
meat=ADD milk=ADD
'meat and milk' [MA.MAN]

20 According to Creissels (2014: 637), Avar *łun* and its cognates in Andic and Tsezic languages originate from a converb (*-un* in Avar) of an inchoative auxiliary with a root *-ł-*, see also Kaye (2020) on *ł*-forms in Andic.

The borrowed particles *ja* and *jagi* ‘or’ are used to form disjunctive constructions. With negative verbs they obtain a negative value ‘nor’. A disjunctive meaning can also be achieved by attaching an indefinite particle to each member (93).

(93) wac:i=**χʷala** jac:i=**χʷala** bed-a!
brother=INDF sister=INDF call-IMP
‘Call [your] brother or your sister!’ [MA.MAN]

The additive is also used to combine finite clauses and subordinate clauses with the general converb. In this case it is usually attached to the immediately preverbal constituent (cf. van den Berg (2004: 213-214) and Nichols & Peterson (2010) on this phenomenon in other East Caucasian languages).

(94) **c’aj=la** **m-iš:-u** ɬ:eni χ-i j-ã-a ga-j
fire=ADD N-extinguish-CVB water bring-INF F-go-AOR DEM-F
‘**Having put out** the fire, she went to bring water.’ [MA.MAN]

Simple clauses can be conjoined with no overt grammatical devices.

(95) ilu-di makʷa ih-e,
mother-ERG food make-HAB

imu-di χuri b-eƛ’-e
father-ERG field N-plough-HAB
‘Mother cooks [and] father ploughs.’ [MA.MAN]

4.8. Non-verbal predication

Non-verbal predication employs the copula *ida* or one its negative equivalents (96).

(96) aħmad, ha-b inču **χu-č’i** hurƛ’a **ida**
Ahmad, dem-N apple INAN.COP-NEG nut COP
‘Ahmad, this is not an apple, it’s a nut.’ [MA.MAN]

As is typical of Avar-Andic languages, *ida* has a defective paradigm (Gudava 1959: 57). In other tenses besides the present, it is replaced with a form of the existential verb *CM-uk’i* ‘be’ (97).

(97) ziw=la b-uk’-a, reha=la b-uk’-i-k’a-b
day=ADD N-be-AOR night=ADD N-be-IS-FUT-N
‘[It] was day and [it] will be night too.’ [SA2012: 193]

Only the neutral negative copula *guč’i* can appear in the form of a past participle (see Section 3.3) or a progressive converb (98).

(98) mak’il **gu-č’ada** hanq’u b-eč’ud-iw ida
child.PL COP-NEG.PROG.CVB house N-empty-CVB COP
‘Without children the house has become empty.’ [SA2012: 83]

4.9. Information structure

Varying word order and particles are used to focalize constituents (cf. 4.3.1 on interrogatives and 3.6.7 on the reportative particle). The additive is used to mark contrastive topics (99).

(99) adama-lu-j q'imat ik:-e
person-PL-DAT worth give-HAB

hu-lu-di mas-ata-χo-b-ɬ:i-χi hant'uk'a-r-ik:-i-č'ada
DEM-PL-ERG tell-PROG-FUT.PTCP-OBL-APUD ear-iv-hold-INF-NEG.PROG

hu-lu-di **ih-ata-χo-b-ɬ:i-χi=la** qid-u
DEM-PL-ERG do-PROG-FUT.PTCP-OBL-APUD=ADD see-CVB
'People are judged not by their words, but by their **deeds**.'

5. Lexicon

Besides native words, the Botlikh lexicon contains different layers of cultural borrowings originating from Arabic, Persian, Turkic, Russian, and Avar. Arabic contributed a lot of vocabulary relating to religion and science, while technological innovations from the 20th and 21st century were introduced by Russian. It is very likely that many of the borrowings originating from Arabic, Persian and Turkic have been mediated by Avar. Botlikh and other Andic languages share a lot of borrowings with Avar, and they often look very similar, cf. *alat* 'instrument' (Avar / Botlikh) from Arabic *ʿalʲat(un)* 'instrument' (Azaev 1974: 62), *kapura-CM* 'non-believer' (adjective) from *kāfir*.

Since Avar is a closely-related language, borrowings undergo very little adaptation. In case a noun ends in a consonant, epenthetic vowels are usually added in accordance with a general tendency towards open syllables, though not necessarily, cf. *kečʼi*, Avar: *kečʼ* 'song' vs. *nič* 'shame', which is identical in both languages. Verbs are borrowed as stems to which Botlikh inflectional morphemes are attached: *t'opa-j* [fulfill-INF] from *t'oba-ze* [fulfill-INF], *k'anc'-i* [jump-INF] from *k'anc'-eze* [jump-INF] (Ibid.: 51). Older Russian loans have undergone phonological adaptation, e.g. *ustur* 'table' from Russian *stol*, or *kampit* 'candy' from *konfeta*. More recent borrowings are adapted with little to no modifications, cf. *televizor* 'television'.

6. Sample text

This is a fragment of a text that was recorded by Togo Gudava. It was published in his grammar with an interlinear translation in Georgian (Gudava 1962: 171-174).[21]

(0) Денла диб кьетIирла

den=la	di-b	ƛ'et'ir=la
1SG=ADD	2SG-N(GEN)	lamb=ADD

'My lamb and I.'

(1) Ден ва^{н}ъа вукIа бугъуйхоб каласалъи.

den	w-ãʔ-a	w-uk'-a	buʁu-j-χo-b	kalasa-łi.
1SG	M-go-CVB	M-be-AOR	four-TH-INAN.ORD-N	grade-IN

'I was in the fourth grade.'

(2) Бугъуйхоб каласла булIо ден вукIа ишхъе игьи нала гуч1ада.

buʁu-j-χo-b		kalas=la	b-uƛ-o	
four-IS-INAN.ORD-N		grade=ADD	N-finish-CAUS.AOR	
den	w-uk'-a	iš-qe	ih-i	na=la guč'-ada.
1SG	M-be-AOR	home-APUD	do-INF	thing=ADD COP-NEG.PROG.CVB

'When I finished fourth grade, I was at home and had nothing to do.'

(3) Цер зиуди ила йа^{н}ъа йикIа базара.

ce-r	ziu-di	ila	j-ãʔ-a	j-ik'-a	bazar-a.
one-IV	day-ERG	mother	F-go-CVB	F-be-AOR	market-SUP.ALL

'One day, mother went to the market.'

(4) Базареку бай йессуха йишаб заманади галълъиди кьетIир гьибгъва санду.

bazar-e-ku	baj	j-es:uχa	j-iš-a-b	zamana-di
market-SUP-EL	edge	F-back	F-return-PST.PTCP-N	time-ERG

gał:i-di	ƛ'et'ir	hi<b>ʁ^{w}-a	sandu.
DEM-ERG	lamb	bring<N>-AOR	together

'She returned from the market (together) with a lamb.'

21 Transcribed (into Cyrillic and Latin) and glossed by Samira Verhees, who would like to thank Gusein Ramazanovich Suleimanov for translating this text from Botlikh to Russian, and for discussing its contents with me. According to Gusein Ramazanovich, this story was originally told by Khalil Azaev.

(5) ГьечIиссе дий кьетIир гьушта идо букIичIа.

heč'is:e	di-j	ƛ'et'ir	hušt-a	id-o	b-uk'-ič'a.
at_first	1SG-DAT	lamb	such-ADV	like-CVB	N-be-NEG.AOR

'At first I didn't really like the lamb.'

(6) Илуди гьуб кьетIир гьибгъва букIа дий чанчи.

ilu-di	hu-b	ƛ'et'ir	hi<b>в^{w}-a
mother-ERG	DEM-N	lamb	bring<N>-CVB

b-uk'-a	di-j	čanč-i.
N-be-AOR	1SG-DAT	care-INF

'Mother brought this lamb for me to take care of it.'

(7) Ишкур гьуб кьетIир гванзо чанчихаб букIа.

iškur	hu-b	ƛ'et'ir	g^{w}anz-o
1SG.ERG	DEM-N	lamb	good-ADV

čanč-i-χa-b	b-uk'-a.
care-IS-INAN.PRS.PTCP-N	N-be-AOR

'I took good care of the lamb.'

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