



## THE GRAMMAR OF THE KABARDIAN LANGUAGE

by John Colarusso

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## *Morphology of the Noun, Adjective, and Pronoun*

### 3.1 The Noun

I shall discuss gender, number, case, articles and quantification, and postpositions, in that order.

3.1.1 **Gender** There is no grammatical gender, but limited distinctions with regard to sexual gender can be made. The forms in (77) provide a few examples of productive distinctions.

#### (77) Gender distinctions

- a. /c'əx̣ʷ-ə-x̣ʷ/  
people-ep v-male  
'men'
- b. /c'əx̣ʷ-ə-bz/  
people-ep v-female  
'women'
- c. /ʃə-x̣ʷ/  
horse-male  
'stallion'
- d. /ʃə-bz/  
horse-female  
'mare'

The forms in (78) show specialisations. Form (78a) shows the use of the word for 'mother' in a form that looks very much like an old taboo form, while (78c) shows the use of 'male' in a more metaphorical sense, as 'manly.'

#### (78) Specialised gender-like distinctions

- a. /dəɣʷə-ʒ-hana/  
thief-old, wicked-mother  
'female wolf'

- b. /dəγ<sup>w</sup>ə-ž/  
thief-old  
'wolf'
- c. /ʁ'ə-ʁ<sup>w</sup>/  
man-male  
'hero'

3.1.2 **Number** Two numbers are distinguished: singular (unmarked) and plural (usually marked) (79). Plurals that are marked are definite ('the X') or are indefinite but specific ('a certain X,' that is, known to the speaker but not yet to the hearer), and are cited in the specified absolutive case /-r/.

(79) Singular-plural

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
a.	/ʁ'ə/ man	/ʁ'ə-ha-r/ man-pl-abs 'the men,' 'certain men'
b.	/fəz/ woman	/fəz-ha-r/ woman-pl-abs 'the women,' 'certain women'
c.	/wəna/ house	/wəna-ha-r/ house-pl-abs 'the houses,' 'certain houses'

3.1.2.1 *Plural Groups* Occasionally the plural suffix can be used to denote social groups, such as families (80). In such a function the definite oblique ending is absent.

(80) Plural as a social collective

- a. /məwḥamad-ha y-ha-dayž/  
Muhammed-pl 3, poss-pl-near  
'to the Muhammeds'
- b. /naγ<sup>w</sup>ay-ha y-ha-wəna/  
Noghwey-pl 3, poss-pl-house  
'house of the Noghweys'

3.1.2.2 *Special Particle for Groups* Looser social groupings do not exhibit the plural, but use an odd particle (81).

- (81) Loose social grouping without plural (use of particle /səma/)  
 /dəwdahr-səma/  
 Dudar-bunch(?)  
 ‘Dudar and his cohorts, friends’

3.1.2.3 *Indefinite Quantities* When nouns are indefinite and unspecified, ‘an X of some sort,’ as opposed to indefinite and specific, ‘a certain X,’ or generic, no plural expression exists. Indefinite quantities of countable nouns are also unmarked for plurality, as in (82), and do not exhibit plural concord (82c).

- (82) Indefinite quantities unmarked for plurality
- a. /ʃə kʰad/  
 horse many  
 ‘many horses’
  - b. /ʔana qʰam ø-q-ø-ha-ʃ-a-aγ-ʃ/  
 serving table (= /ʔana/) many 3-hor-3-pl-bring-in-past-aff  
 ‘They brought in many tables.’
  - c. /ʔə zə-bʒaana/  
 man a-few  
 ‘several men’

3.1.2.4 *Counted Nouns* The expression of plurality on the noun itself is suppressed in counted nouns as well, even though these are marked as specified (83), but is maintained on the verb.

- (83) Suppression of plurality in counted nouns
- a. /ʔə-əy-ʃə-r ø-qa-a-kʰə+a-ha(-r)/  
 man-num-three-abs 3-hor-pres-move+intr-pl(-pres)  
 ‘Three men are coming.’
  - b. /pʃaaʃa-əy-pʔə-r ma-a-də+a-ha(-r)/  
 girl-num-four-abs 3-pres-sew+intr-pl(-pres)  
 ‘The four girls are sewing.’

In this regard the plural suffix /-ha/ appears to be in complementary distribution with the counting numerals and so to act as a default numeral.

3.1.2.5 *Possessed Nouns* The expression of plurality is suppressed in possessed nouns, even though they show plurality in verbal concord (84). (Henceforth, the

surface form of the verb is given within parentheses in a broad phonetic transcription when it might aid the reader with the complexities of verbal phonology.)

(84) Lack of plural on possessed plurals

/θ-yə-vaaq'a-r θ-q'a-y-ə-faχ'a-žə-hə-w/ ([q'ef'óχ'èžafi'u'])

3-poss-shoe(s)-abs 3-incept(ive)-3-non pres-don-again-pl-comp

'that he donned his shoes once more (and)...'

3.1.2.6 *Exceptions* A number of nouns fall outside the normal singular ~ plural contrast by nature of their semantics. Examples of these mass, collective, abstract, generic, and inherently plural nouns are given in (85). Only the inherently plural nouns show plural concord.

(85) Nouns that do not exhibit plurality

a. Mass nouns

(i) /ħažəya/

'flour'

(ii) /sa/

'milk'

(iii) /saaq'a/

'ink'

(iv) /χ'anš'ay/

'bran'

b. Collective nouns

(i) /s'aaλa-γ'aaλa/

youth-group (?) (/γ'aaλa/ a bound morpheme)

'youth (people),' 'young people'

(ii) /c'əχ'/

'people'

c. Abstract nouns

(i) /s'aaλa-a-γa/

youth-conn-ness

'youth (as an age)'

(ii) /bγ'a-a-γ/

broad-conn-ness

'breadth, width'

(iii) /χ'ə-ža-a-γ/

white-colour-conn-ness

'whiteness'

## d. Generic nouns (almost any noun can be used generically)

- (i) /ʎə/  
'meat' (as in 'eating meat')
- (ii) /wa-f/  
sky-good  
'good weather'
- (iii) /kʷəf/  
'(the) dark, darkness'

## e. Inherently plural nouns

- (i) /z-a-šx̣-a-γʷ/  
recip-dat-eat-intr-companion  
'school fellows' (lit., 'companions in eating together')
- (ii) /z-a-ʔʷə-pa-f-a-γʷ/  
recip-dat-lip-nose-good-conn-companion  
'comrades, confederates'  
(lit., 'those who "good face" one another, that is, speak well of one another')
- (iii) /z-a-psaλ-a-γʷ/  
recip-dat-word-conn-companion  
'company, people who are talking together'

3.1.3 Cases Specified (definite or indefinite) nouns in Kabardian can take four cases: absolutive, oblique, instrumental, and predicative. Two of these, however, the instrumental, and the predicative, might be considered to be other than cases. The instrumental is actually a suffix on the oblique, while the predicative has a multitude of roles but can generally be seen as an adverb suffix or a complementiser, a sign that the noun comes from an underlying absolutive or oblique which has been lost due to syntactical complexities.

3.1.3.1 *Declension of Specified Nouns* The declension of two specified (slightly definite) nouns is given in (86) (inst = instrumental).

## (86) Declension of specified nouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
a. Vowel final stem (/gʷaata/ 'sword')		
abs	gʷaata-r	gʷaata-ha-r
obl	gʷaata-m	gʷaata-ha-m
inst	gʷaata-m-kʷa	gʷaata-ha-m-kʷa
pred	gʷaata-w	gʷaata-ha-w

## b. Consonant final stem (/ʒəd/ 'donkey')

abs	ʒəd-ə-r	ʒəd-ha-r
obl	ʒəd-ə-m	ʒəd-ha-m
inst	ʒəd-ə-m-kʷa	ʒəd-ha-m-kʷa
pred	ʒəd-ə-w	ʒəd-ha-w

3.1.3.2 *Unspecified, Generic, and Possessed Nouns* For unspecified (highly indefinite) and generic nouns, only the instrumental case is marked, all the other cases collapsing into one unmarked form, as in (87). Strangely, possessed nouns often inflect like unspecified or generic nouns.

## (87) Declension of unspecified or generic nouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Possessed</u> (my-poss-)
a. Vowel final stem (/gʷaata/ 'sword')			
abs	gʷaata	–	s-yə-gʷaata
obl	gʷaata	–	s-yə-gʷaata
inst	gʷaata-kʷa	–	s-yə-gʷaata-kʷa
pred	gʷaata	–	s-yə-gʷaata
b. Consonantal final stem (/ʒəd/ 'donkey')			
abs	ʒəd	–	s-yə-ʒəd
obl	ʒəd	–	s-yə-ʒəd
inst	ʒəd-kʷa	–	s-yə-ʒəd-kʷa
pred	ʒəd	–	s-yə-ʒəd

One maintains the cases in the unspecified or generic declension only because of their existence in the specified. If one considers the instrumental to be a suffix, then the expression of all case is simply suppressed in unspecified or generic nouns.

3.1.3.3 *Case Function* Kabardian is ergative at a deep level. The function of the absolutive case is straightforward: the subject of intransitives and predicatives and the direct object of transitives. That of the oblique is more complex, covering all other grammatical roles, sometimes with the addition of the instrumental. Only when syntactical complexity has led to the loss of underlying structure (grammatical relationships) in the surface, does the predicative then emerge as a default case for a lost underlying absolutive or oblique. This is also the most likely source for those uses of the predicative in which it marks a predicate or adverb. Examples of the most important functions follow.

3.1.3.3.1 *Absolutive* The absolutive is the subject of a predicative in (88a) and an equational in (88b).

(88) The absolutive in copulas

- a. Subject of a predicate complement

/ʎ'ə-r yən-ø-ś/  
man-abs big-be-aff

'The man is big.'

- b. Subject of an equational sentence

/a ʎ'ə-r a-wək<sup>ʷ</sup>a-a-k<sup>ʷ</sup>a-ø-ś/  
that man-abs the-murder-conn-ag(ent)-be-aff

'That man is the murderer.'

In (89) the absolutive marks the subject of an intransitive.

(89) Subject of an intransitive

/ʎ'ə-r ma-a-k<sup>ʷ</sup>ə+a/  
man-abs 3-pres-move+intr

'The man is coming.'

3.1.3.3.2 *Oblique* In (90) examples are given of the uses of the oblique.

(90) Uses of the oblique

- a. Subject of a transitive

/ʎ'ə-m pśaasá-r ø-y-ə-ʎaaγ<sup>ʷ</sup>ə-aγ-ś/  
man-obl girl-abs 3(abs)-3(obl)-non pres-see-past-aff

'The man saw the girl.'

- b. Agent of a causative

/ʎ'ə-m sa a-r ø-s-a-y-ə-ya-ś'a-aγ-ś/ ([si'γèś'á'ś])  
man-obl me 3-abs 3(abs)-me-dat-3(obl)-non pres-caus(ative)-do-past-aff

'The man made me do it.'

- c. Indirect object of three-place verbs

/sa pśaasá-m ɥa-r ø-y-a-s-tə-aγ-ś/  
I girl-obl dog-abs 3-her-dat-I-give-past-aff

'I gave the dog to the girl.'

- d. Indirect object of benefactive

/sa ʎ'ə-m (pap's'a-k<sup>ʷ</sup>a) vaaq'a-ha-r ø-ø-ɣ<sup>ʷ</sup>a-s-ś'a-aγ-ś/  
I man-obl (for-inst) shoe-pl-abs 3(abs)-3(obl)-for-I-make-past-aff

'I made the shoes for the man.'

## e. General locative of a stative verb

/ʁ'ə-r q'aaža-m ø-ø-yə-s-ś/

man-abs village-obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-cont-be situated-aff

'The man lives in the village.'

## f. General goal of a dynamic verb

/ʁ'ə-r q'aaža-m ø-y-a-ža-aγ-ś/

man-abs village-obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-dat-go/set off-past-aff

'The man went to/set off for the village.'

## g. Locus of activity

/pśaaśa-r ʔana-m ø-ø-q'a-f-a-aγ-ś/

girl-abs serving table-obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-hor-dance-on-past-aff

'The girl danced on the table.'

## h. Restrictive locus of an "anti-passive"

/pśaaśa-r g'aana-m ø-y-a-də-a-aγ-ś/

girl-abs shirt-obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-dat-sew-intr-past-aff

'The girl was sewing at the shirt.' (action incompleting)

3.1.3.3.3 *Instrumental* The forms in (91) illustrate a few of the uses of the instrumental case (suffix).

## (91) Uses of the instrumental case (suffix)

## a. Definite instrument

/ʁ'ə-x'ə-m g'aata-m-k'a yənə-žə-r ø-y-ə-wək'ə-aγ-ś/

man-male-obl sword-obl-inst giant-evil-abs 3(abs)-3(obl)-non pres-kill-

past-aff

'The hero killed the giant with the sword.'

## b. Indefinite instrument

/ʁ'ə-x'ə-m g'aata-k'a yənə-žə-r ø-y-ə-wək'ə-aγ-ś/

man-male-obl sword-inst giant-evil-abs 3(abs)-3(obl)-non pres-kill-past-

aff

'The hero killed the giant with a sword.'

## c. Direction

/da ʁanəq'ə(-m)-k'a d-a-w-k'ə+a/

we side-obl-inst we-pres-prog-move+intr

'We are moving to the side.'

## d. Restrictive predicate

/ś'aaʎa-r wərəs-ə-bza-k'a tʃəʎ ø-y-a-w-g'a/

boy-abs Russian-ep v-tongue-inst book 3(abs)-3(obl)-dat-prog-call-to

'The boy reads Russian books.' or

'The boy is reading Russian books.'

3.1.3.3.4 *Predicative* In (92) some uses of the predicative are given. This case will be discussed further in the sections dealing with syntax.

(92) Some uses of the predicative

a. *Predicative*

/ʒəŋ ø-v-a-rə-y-ha-mə-ʃ'a-ʒə ø-ʃə-t-ʃ, ʒəŋ-w-y mə-ʒəŋ-w, c'əx̃'-  
 ,w-y mə-c'əx̃'-w/ (Hadaghat'la 1968, vol. 1: 263)  
 tree 3-you(pl)-dat-inst-3-pl-not-know-again 3-loc(ative)-stand-stat(ive  
 affirmative) tree-pred-and not-tree-pred person-pred-and not-person-  
 pred

'The tree that stood there would not have been recognisable to you—a tree  
 and yet not a tree, a person and yet not a person.'

b. *Interrogative adverbials*

(i) /x̃at-w/

who-pred

'by whom, to whom' (interrogative)

(ii) /sət-w/

what-pred

'by what, how, to what' (interrogative)

c. *Partitive*

/g'aʒ-w zə-ʔaməʃ'a ø-q'a-s-ʃax̃'-aγ-ʃ/  
 wheat-pred one-handful 3-hor-I-buy-past-aff  
 'I bought one handful of wheat.'

d. *Lost underlying case*

(i) *Underlying structure*

/[sa [sa γ\*əʃ'-r ø-s-yə-ʔa-ʃ] γ\*əʃ'-r ø-s-wəp'aʃ'ə-aγ-ʃ]/  
 [I [I iron-abs 3-me-poss-belong-stat] iron-abs 3-I-flatten-past-aff]  
 'I flattened (= pounded out) the iron which I had.'

(ii) *Derived structure*

/sa γ\*əʃ'-w ø-s-yə-ʔa-r ø-s-ə-wəp'aʃ'ə-aγ-ʃ/  
 I iron-pred it-I-poss-belong-abs it-I-ep v-flatten-past-aff  
 'I flattened (= pounded out) the iron which I had.'

As the negation /mə-/ and the verbal conjunction /-əy/ in (92a) indicate, the true predicative use of this case appears to come from an underlying verbal use of a noun. The predicative forms in (92a) may thus have had an underlying origin such as that in (93).

## (93) Underlying source for predicative use of /-w/ case

- a. / $\emptyset$ -(mə-)žəŋ- $\emptyset$ -s/ → / $\emptyset$ -(mə-)žəŋ-w/  
 3-(not-)tree-be-stat  
 'It is (not) a tree.'
- b. / $\emptyset$ -(mə-)c'əx̣"- $\emptyset$ -s/ → / $\emptyset$ -(mə-)c'əx̣"-w/  
 3-(not-)person-be-stat  
 'It is (not) a person.'

If the analysis in (93) is correct, then the predicative use of /-əw/ is in fact a subordinating complementiser to an underlying copular sentence. This would be in accord with the use of /-əw/ as a complementiser with predicative or adverbial force, as in (94) (see §§6.1.2, 6.5.3, 6.7.3–4 in syntax).

## (94) Complementiser character of /-w/

- /yə-šhə-cə-r pša-m  $\emptyset$ - $\emptyset$ -x̣"a-da-w wa-g"-m  $\emptyset$ - $\emptyset$ -yə-t-w  $\emptyset$ /  
 her-head-hair-abs cloud-obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-for-agree-pred sky-surf-  
 obl 3(abs)-3(obl)-cont-stand-pred be  
 'Her hair was like a cloud and reached to heaven.'

**3.1.4 Articles and Specificity** The expression of definiteness, indefiniteness, genericness, and such in Kabardian is complex. The chief distinction is between referential and non-referential nouns, rather than definite and indefinite as in English. This distinction is based upon one of specified referentiality (overt or implied) as opposed to unspecified referentiality (non-referential or uncertain referential status) (§3.1.2.3).

**3.1.4.1 Referential Nouns** Referential nouns are expressed by case endings (86). Such a noun may be either definite or indefinite in its English sense. Indefinite but referential nouns can be further specified by the use of a referential suffix, as in (95b). Plurals (95c) are weakly referential.

## (95) Referential nouns

- a. / $\lambda$ 'ə-r/  
 man-abs  
 'the man, a man, some man'
- b. /zə- $\lambda$ 'ə-g"ar/  
 one-man-certain  
 'a (certain/particular) man'
- c. / $\lambda$ 'ə-ha-r/  
 man-pl-abs  
 'men'

3.1.4.2 *Non-referential Forms and Quantifiers* Kabardian further makes the following non-referential contrasts (96). Some of these correspond to familiar English quantifiers.

(96) Non-referential contrasts in the noun

a. Generic noun

/χ'ə ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

man 3-3-pres-do-able

'A (any) man (men) can do it.' (any number of men)

b. Restricted generic noun

/zə-χ'ə ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

one-man it-3-pres-do-able

'A (one, any) man can do it.' (any one man)

c. Multiple generic noun

/χ'ə-zahwəλ (zə-bžaana) ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

man-several (a-few) it-3-pres-do-able

'Several men can do it.' (more than one)

d. Generic group noun

/χ'ə-g'əp ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

man-group it-3-pres-do-able

'Some men can do it.' (a group)

e. Exhaustive multiple generic noun

/χ'ə-q'as ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

man-each it-3-pres-do-able

'Each man can do it.' (general rule for any men)

f. Exhaustive generic group noun

/χ'ə-ps(t)aw ø-y-a-s'ə-f/

man-all it-3-pres-do-able

'All men can do it.' (general rule applied to the class of men)

In (96c) /zahwəλ/ is acceptable to my informant for /zə-bžaana/ a-few, 'several,' but in the literary standard it is restricted in sense to 'several times.' In (96f) my informant has /pstaw/ for the literary /psaw/.

3.1.4.3 'Any' One may note that the non-referential, indefinite quantifier equivalent to English 'any' is represented in Kabardian by the bare generic noun (96a), as in (97).

(97) Non-referential, indefinite quantifier (English ‘any’)

/ʎ'ə ø-ʂə-ʔ-ah/

man 3-deixis-exist-Q(uestion complementiser)

‘Is any man there?’

3.1.4.4 *Quantification by Rightward Pseudo-Clefting* The quantifiers in (96e, f) also appear in referential functions (98). The exhaustive multiple referential noun construction of (98a) appears in my informant’s speech, though I have been unable to find its counterpart in the literary dialect. These sentences are rightward pseudo-clefted forms that specify the argument of the predicate, precisely like the formalism of modern predicate calculus, for example ‘Fa,’ property ‘F’ exhibited by ‘a.’ The deletion of the final vowel of (98b) seems to be a phonological mark of this specificational function, and is paralleled by similar vowel deletion in the vocative (99), which may also be seen as a specification of topic.

(98) Referential quantifiers

a. Exhaustive multiple referential noun (intransitive predicate)

/sət (yə-)ʂx̂-a-n-ah ʎ'ə-r ø/

what who-eat-intr-fut-Q man-abs be

‘Each man will eat.’

(lit., ‘What (the one) who eats is is a man.’)

b. Exhaustive multiple referential noun (transitive predicate)

/sət ø-yə-ʂx̂ə-m-əy ʎ'ə-m λa ø-yə-ʂx̂ə ø/

([sɪt yɪʂx̂mɪː ʎ'ɛm λæ yɪʂx̂])

what which-3-eat-if-even man-obl meat 3-3-eat be

‘Each man will eat meat.’

(lit., ‘What it is if some one eats is a man eating meat.’)

c. Exhaustive referential group noun

/ʎ'ə-ps(t)aw-r-əy ø-y-a-ʂ'ə-f/

man-all-abs-even 3-3-pres-do-able

‘All the men can do it.’

Whatever the ultimate underlying sources of (98a, b), they, like (98c), make use of the referential case endings.

3.1.4.5 *Vocative* For nouns ending in a consonant the vocative has no special form, but for those ending in a vowel that vowel is deleted (99).

## (99) Vocative

/yə s'aaλ/ ← /yə s'aaλa/  
 'O, boy!'

**3.1.5 Postpositions** These are of two sorts.

**3.1.5.1 Postpositions with the Oblique Case** The first and most common shows a pattern of NP-obl postp(osition). These appear to be predominantly genuine postpositions, but include two nouns (100h, i), two verbs (100g, k), and one conjunction (100j).

## (100) Postpositions

- a. /ʎaanda-ra/ since-adv(erb) = 'since that time'
- b. /p's'awnda/ 'up until that time'
- c. /naməš'/ 'apart from, besides'
- d. /day/ 'at, by, near, to'
- e. /dayž/ variant of (d)
- f. /q'a/ 'on, along, to, up to'
- g. /na-s/ thither-be situated, reach = 'thither, up to, to'
- h. /šha-k"ya/ head-inst = 'after the start, after'
- i. /šha-a-ya/ head-conn-ness = 'above, over head'
- j. /paap's'a/ 'because of, for the sake of' (usually a clausal conjunction)
- k. /x"a-d-əy-z/ for-agree-num-one/all = 'like'
- l. /z-a-x"a-k"ə/ recip-dat-for-core = 'between'

**3.1.5.1.1 Syntax of Postpositions** Typical examples of their syntax are shown in (101). The pronoun takes an oblique /-r-/ followed by the postposition and then the instrumental /-k"ya/.

## (101) Syntax of true postpositions

- a. /sa wa-r-šha-k"ya sə-q'a-k"yə+a-aγ-š/  
 I you-inst-head-inst I-hor-move+intr-past-aff  
 'I came after you.'
- b. /sa wa-r-paap's'a-k"ya ø-(w-x"a-)-s-š'a-aγ-š/ ([p(x"r)sš'á's])  
 I you-obl-for(benefactive)-inst 3-(you-for-)I-do-past-aff  
 'I did it for your sake.'
- c. /q'aaλa-m na-s ma-a-k"yə-a/  
 town-obl thither-reach 3-pres-move-intr  
 'He is going to (as far as) the town.'



- c. /š'a-a-γə/  
ground-conn-ness  
'under, underneath'

3.1.5.2.1 *Syntax of Clitics* Typical patterns for (104) are shown in (105). I have marked the forms in (105) for stress to show that the resulting form in (105a) retains its long /a-a/ by means of a secondary stress.

(105) Cliticised postpositions

- a. /šag'à-a-γ'a-nawə́ž-əm ø-q'á-a-k''ə+a/  
dinner-conn-time-after-obl 3-hor-pres-move+intr  
'He is coming after dinner time.'
- b. /ø wəna-q''aaγə-m ø-q''á-a-w-ħa/  
he house-behind-obl 3-lee-pres-prog-enter  
'He is going behind the house (so as to take shelter in its lee).'

3.1.5.2.2 *Possessed Variants of the Clitics* The forms in (104) can also occur in simple possessed constructions, as in (106). This non-clitic formation appears to be obligatory for plural nouns (106c).

(106) Simple possessed construction

- a. /šag'a-a-γ'a-m ø-yə-nawə́ž-əm ø-q'á-a-k''ə+a/  
dinner-conn-time-obl 3-poss-after-obl 3-hor-pres-move+intr  
'He is coming after dinner time.'
- b. /ø wəna-m ø-yə-q''aaγə-m ø-ø-q''á-a-w-ħa/  
he house-obl 3-poss-lee-obl 3-3-lee-pres-prog-enter  
'He is going behind the house (so as to take shelter in its lee).'
- c. /ø wəna-ħa-m ø-y-ħa-q''aaγə-m ø-ø-ħa-q''a-a-w-ħa/  
he house-pl-obl 3-poss-pl-lee-obl 3-3-pl-lee-pres-prog-enter  
'He is going behind the houses (so as to seek shelter).'

The verb in (106c) also shows that these cliticisable postpositions are reflected in verbal morphology as nominal prefixes, /...-ø-ħa.../, in contrast with the behaviour of true postpositions in (102a) and (103a).

3.1.5.3 *Postpositions and Pre-verbs* Both types of postpositions are rare in use, their role being predominantly taken by geometric pre-verbs in verbal inflection. Some verbs, such as /-k''ə+a-/ move+intr, take virtually no spatial pre-verbs and require postpositions for geometric specification, as in (100a, c), (102b, c), (103b),

(105a), and (106a). Both types of postpositions, however, can occur with corresponding pre-verbs, as in (106b, c), though this is quite rare. It is only with benefactives, such as (101b), that a postposition precludes the occurrence of a pre-verb and conversely. This is because these non-geometric postpositions are cliticised to form such pre-verbs (§4.2.4.1).

### 3.2 Adjectives

The morphology of adjectives is surprisingly complex.

**3.2.1 Predicate Adjectives** Predicate adjectives make use of an equational copular sentence.

**3.2.1.1 Present Tense Forms** Kabardian makes use of the zero copula with the affirmative suffix /-s/, which, in non-dynamic verbs, has a stative force (107).

(107) Predicate adjectives

- a. /pśaaśa-r daaχa-ø-s/  
girl-abs beautiful-be-aff  
'The girl is beautiful.'
- b. /q'əp'c'a-ha-r fəc'a-ø-s/  
plum-pl-abs black-be-aff  
'The plums are black.'
- c. /q'əp'c'a-r fəc'ə-w-əy x̣"+aγ-ø-s/ ([x̣"+aγs])  
plum-abs black-pred-and become+ness-be-aff  
'The plum is black and ripe.'

**3.2.1.2 Past Tense Forms** In the past copular constructions, the predicate adjective takes the past tense.

(108) Past predicates

- a. /pśaaśa-r daaχa-ø-aγ-s/ ([dəχá's])  
girl-abs beautiful-be-past-aff  
'The girl was beautiful.'
- b. /q'əp'c'a-ha-r fəc'a-ø-aγ-ha-s/ ([f'ɪc'á'fiás])  
plum-pl-abs black-be-past-pl-aff  
'The plums were black.'
- c. /q'əp'c'a-r fəc'ə-w-əy x̣"+aγ-ø-aγ-ha-s/ ([x̣"+aγá'fiás])  
plum-abs black-pred-and become+ness-be-past-pl-aff  
'The plum was black and ripe.'

**3.2.2 Dependent Adjectives** Those adjectives dependent upon a noun are suffixed directly to that noun. All the inflection of a noun phrase appears suffixed to the adjective, as in (109).

(109) *Dependent adjectives*

- a. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa/ (→ [pʃeʃedáʃə])  
 girl-beautiful  
 ‘beautiful girl (generic sense)’
- b. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-r/ (→ [pʃeʃedáʃer])  
 girl-beautiful-abs  
 ‘the beautiful girl’
- c. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-ha-r/ (→ [pʃeʃedáʃaɦar])  
 girl-beautiful-pl-abs  
 ‘the beautiful girls’
- d. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-qʷaaɣə-m/ (→ [pʃeʃedáʃaqʷáɣem])  
 girl-beautiful-behind-obl  
 ‘behind the beautiful girl’
- e. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-dəda-ha-r/ (→ [pʃeʃedəʃedídaɦar])  
 girl-beautiful-very-pl-abs  
 ‘the very beautiful girls’
- f. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-cʷəkʷ-ər/ (→ [pʃeʃedəʃecʷúkʷer])  
 girl-beautiful-little-abs  
 ‘the small beautiful girl’
- g. /pʃaaʃa-daaʃa-cʷəkʷ-əy-pʃə-r/ (→ [pʃeʃedəʃecʷúkʷíʃəer])  
 girl-beautiful-little-num-four-abs  
 ‘the four small beautiful girls’

One should note the behaviour of the double vowels under regressive stress in (109).

**3.2.3 Possessive Adjectives** These adjectives, both attributive and predicative, will be treated along with the possessive pronouns.

**3.2.4 Demonstrative Adjectives** There are three degrees of deixis (110). The most distant, /a-/, can also be used for items not visible but perhaps close at hand. It is the most frequent deictic adjective in narrative discourse. Also, in such narrative or in conversation the deictic adjectives serve to rank referents, much as ‘this,’ ‘that,’ and ‘the other’ do in English, but in Kabardian the order is /a-/, /mə-/, /a-d-ray/ that-other-pro, that is to say ‘that,’ ‘this,’ and ‘the other’ (Mithun 1987; Colarusso 1979b).

(110) *Demonstrative adjectives*

- a. /mə-ʒəĝ-ər/  
 this-tree-abs  
 ‘this tree’ (not too far from the speaker)

- b. /maw-žəĝ-ha-r/  
that-tree-pl-abs  
'those trees' (at a distance from the speaker, but still visible)
- c. /a-žəĝ-ha-r/  
this/that-tree-pl-abs  
'these/those trees' (not visible to the speaker)
- d. /a-də-ray žəĝ-ər/  
that-other-pro tree-abs  
'that other tree' or 'the other tree'
- e. /mə-də-ray žəĝ-ər/  
this-other-pro tree-abs  
'this other tree'

Unlike other adjectives, demonstratives precede the noun. They can also serve as demonstrative pronouns, but this function will be covered below in §3.3.

**3.2.5 Gradations of Adjectives** There are three forms of gradation to an adjective: the comparative, a periphrastic superlative, and a periphrastic proximate.

**3.2.5.1 Comparatives** Comparatives are formed using /naĭ/, usually both as an independent word and as a prefix (111a, b), but sometimes as a word only (111c).

(111) Comparatives

- a. /pśaaśa-r ś'aala-m naĭ-ra naĭ-ə-yəna-ø-ś/  
girl-abs boy-obl more-adv more-ep v-big-be-aff  
'The girl is bigger than the boy.'
- b. /sa a-bə naĭ-ra naĭ-ə-fə-w s-a-w-g<sup>y</sup>-a/  
I 3-obl more-adv more-ep v-good-adv I-pres-prog-read-to  
'I read better than he does.'
- c. /d-əy-q<sup>m</sup>aaža-r maaĭ<sup>a</sup> ø-q'a-s naĭ daaĭa ma-ĭ<sup>m</sup>/  
our-poss-village-abs day 3-hor-reach more pretty 3-happen  
'Our village grows prettier with each day.'

**3.2.5.2 Superlatives** Superlatives are formed by using /dəda/ 'just, exactly, very' appended to the comparative (112).

(112) Superlatives

- a. /pśaaśa-r a-bə-ha-m-əy naĭ-ra naĭ-ə-daaĭa dəda-ø-ś/  
girl-abs 3-obl-pl-obl-even more-adv more-ep v-beautiful just-be-aff  
'The girl is the most beautiful of them all.'

- b. /sa fə dəda-ø-s/  
 I good just-be-aff  
 'I am the best.'

3.2.5.3 *Proximates* Forms such as 'nearly adj' are made by use of a special verb (113).

(113) Proximates

- a. /sa wa naχ-ra naχ-ə-yəna-w ø-q<sup>ʷ</sup>a-s/  
 I you more-adv more-ep v-big-adv 3-corner-reach  
 'I am nearly as big as you.'
- b. /sa fə dəda-w ø-q<sup>ʷ</sup>a-s/  
 I good just-adv it-corner-reach  
 'I am nearly the best.'

### 3.3 Pronouns

Kabardian shows a first and second person pronoun and a variety of third person pronouns built upon the demonstrative adjectives (§3.2.4).

3.3.1 *Personal Pronouns* The absolutive forms of the personal pronouns are given in (114). The third person pronoun in (114) is that unspecified for deixis (§3.2.4 (110c)).

(114) Personal pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1	sa	da
2	wa	fa
3	a-r	a-ha-r

3.3.1.1 *Case Inflection* These forms have the following case inflections.

(115) Inflection of first person pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	sa	da
obl	sa	da
inst	sa-r-k <sup>ʷ</sup> a	da-r-k <sup>ʷ</sup> a
pred	sa-r-əw	da-r-əw

## (116) Inflection of second person pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	wa	fa
obl	wa	fa
inst	wa-r-kʷa	fa-r-kʷa
pred	wa-r-əw	fa-r-əw

## (117) Inflection of third person pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	a-r	a-ha-r
obl	a-bə	a-bə-ha-m
inst	a-bə-kʷa	a-bə-ha-m-kʷa
pred	a-r-əw	a-ha-r-əw

The instrumental and predicative of the first and second persons seem to show an old instrumental suffix /-r-/ between the root and the case. This suffix is also seen in the third person predicative.

3.3.1.2 *Demonstrative Adjectives as Pronouns* The demonstrative adjectives (§3.2.4 (110)) can also serve as third person pronouns with their usual deictic sense added to a referential pronominal function. They are inflected like the unmarked deictic pronoun in (117).

## (118) Inflection of proximal pronoun

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	mə-r	mə-ha-r
obl	mə-bə	mə-bə-ha-m
inst	mə-bə-kʷa	mə-bə-ha-m-kʷa
pred	mə-r-əw	mə-ha-r-əw

## (119) Inflection of distal pronoun

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	maw-r	maw-ha-r
obl	maw-bə	maw-bə-ha-m
inst	maw-bə-kʷa	maw-bə-ha-m-kʷa
pred	maw-r-əw	maw-ha-r-əw

The third person pronouns or demonstrative adjectives may be suffixed by /-d-ray/ other-pro to produce a deictic pronoun (120). These forms do not seem to inflect.

## (120) Forms of 'other'

- a. /a-dray/  
this/that-other  
'the other one'
- b. /mə-dray/  
this-other  
'this other one'
- c. /maw-dray/  
that-other  
'that other one (visible)'

3.3.1.3 *Dependent Possessive Pronouns* The dependent possessive forms of the personal pronouns are written as separate words from the forms which they govern. I have ignored this practice because it is merely an orthographic convention. The stress patterns indicate that the possessive pronoun is a prefix.

## (121) Dependent possessive pronouns

	<b>Singular</b>	<b>Plural</b>
1	s-yə (→ /s-əy/)	d-yə (→ /d-əy/)
2	w-yə (→ /w-əy/)	f-yə (→ /f-əy/)
3	ø-yə	ø-y-ha (→ /y-ah/)

The possessive pronoun reflects the plurality of the possessor, not of the object possessed (122).

## (122) Plurality of possessor

- a. /ø-yə-y-a-ya-gʷ-a-a-kʷa-r/  
3-poss(essed)-dir-dat-caus-read-to-conn-ag-abs  
'his (her) teacher'
- b. /ø-yə-ya-ya-gʷ-aakʷa-ha-r/  
3-poss-teacher-pl-abs  
'his (her) teachers'
- c. /ø-y-ha-ya-ya-gʷ-aakʷa-r/  
3-poss-pl-teacher-abs  
'their teacher'

3.3.1.4 *Possessive Adjectives* Possessive adjectives (§3.2.3) make use of the third person possessive (123).

## (123) Possessive adjectives

- a. /ʎana-m ø-yə-taypʰa/  
table-obl 3-poss-cover  
'the table's cover,' 'tablecloth'
- b. /tʰəʎ-ə-m ø-yə-tʰəʎ-ə-m-p'a/  
book-obl 3-poss-book-obl-place  
'the book's dust jacket'

3.3.1.5 *Pronouns as Predicates* The independent possessive pronouns function as nouns or predicative adjectives ('mine,' 'yours,' etc.). In the first and second persons they have a reduplicated structure. All forms are built from the dependent possessives by use of the attributive suffix /-ya/ 'the one of, the one pertaining to' (46d).

## (124) Inflection of independent first person possessive pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	sə-s-ya(-r)	də-d-ya(-r)
obl	sə-s-ya-m	də-d-ya-m
inst	sə-s-ya(-m)-kʷa	də-d-ya(-m)-kʷa
pred	sə-s-ya-wa	də-d-ya-wa

## (125) Inflection of independent second person possessive pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	wə-w-ya(-r)	fə-f-ya(-r)
obl	wə-w-ya-m	fə-f-ya-m
inst	wə-w-ya(-m)-kʷa	fə-f-ya(-m)-kʷa
pred	wə-w-ya-wa	fə-f-ya-wa

## (126) Inflection of independent third person possessive pronouns

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	y-ya(-r) (→ [ye·(r)])	y-ha-ya(-r) (→ [ya·y(r)])
obl	y-ya-m	y-ha-ya-m (→ [ya·ym])
inst	y-ya(-m)-kʷa	y-ha-ya(-m)-kʷa
pred	y-ya-wa	y-ha-ya-wa

These forms can take the plural suffix, which comes before any of the case endings, to yield forms such as those in (127), with suitable vowel reduction before the predicative (127c) (see Kuipers (1960: 60–61) and §2.6.2.1 (22) above). As is

usually the case with plural nouns and in contrast with the verbs, the rule which deletes /y/ before a sonorant, R12 (61), does not apply in these forms.

(127) Some plural independent possessive pronouns

- a. /sə-s-ya-ha-r/ → [sɪsɛ'fiɛr]  
my-my-one of-pl-abs  
'my things'
- b. /fə-f-ya-ha-m-kʷa/ → [fɛfɛ'fiæmkʷɛ]  
your(pl)-your(pl)-one of-pl-obl-inst  
'with your(pl) things'
- c. /y-ha-ya-ha-wa/  
3-pl-one of-pl-pred  
'being their things' or 'as their things'  
/y-h-ya-ha-wa/ by R7 (54)  
/y-ahy-ha-wa/ by R10 (55) twice  
[yá'yfiuwo] by R14, R18, and reduction of /a/ before  
/-wa/, see (22)

3.3.2 Interrogative Pronouns There is a wealth of interrogative forms, many built upon the root /da-/ (128) (compare the Abaza rational question suffix /-da/ 'who').

(128) Interrogative pronouns

- a. /xat/ 'who'
- b. /xat y-ya/ who his-one of = 'whose'
- c. /z-ya/ who-one of = 'whose'
- d. /sət/ 'what'
- e. /datxana/ 'what (way),' 'how'
- f. /dahrah/ variant of (e)
- g. /dahpśa/ 'how much,' 'how many'
- h. /dahpɣʷada/ 'what sort'
- i. /sət śha-kʷa/ what head-inst = 'after what,' 'why'
- j. /dahpśa-ś/ how much-then = 'when'
- k. /dana/ 'where'

3.3.2.1 *Definite and Indefinite Interrogative Pronouns* The interrogative pronouns have both definite and indefinite declensions (129). A definite interrogative means that the inquirer has some definite instance in mind or expects an exact

referent as an answer, whereas an indefinite interrogative means that the inquirer has a more general context in mind or expects a whole class as an answer. For example, a definite question like “Who ate the meat?” might presume an expected answer such as “That man ate the meat.” An indefinite question, “Who goes to war?,” on the other hand, might presume an expected answer, “Men go to war.” All interrogative pronouns are singular.

3.3.2.2 **Declension** /dahrah/ ‘what (way), how’ does not decline. The declension of the other interrogative pronouns follows that of the nouns (§§3.1.3.1 (86), 3.1.3.2 (87)).

(129) Declensions of /xat/ ‘who’

	<u>Definite</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>
abs	xat-ər	xat
obl	xat-əm	xat
inst	xat-əm-kʷa	xat-kʷa
pred	xat-əw	xat-əw

3.3.3 **Indefinite Pronouns** Indefinite pronouns are a distinct set. They form restrictive forms by means of /zə-/ ‘one’ (130).

(130) Indefinite pronouns

- a. /gʷar/ ‘someone, anyone, something, anything’
- b. /zə-gʷar/ one-some = ‘a certain one (thing)’
- c. /qʷam/ ‘several’
- d. /zə-qʷam/ ‘a certain few’
- e. /taʎahy/ ‘sometime(s), anytime’
- f. /zə-taʎahy/ ‘sometimes, certain times’
- g. /zə-bʒaana/ ‘some (times), certain (times)’
- h. /zahwəʎ/ variant of (g)

3.3.4 **Relative Pronouns** Relative pronouns are of a highly restricted occurrence, their role almost always being taken by personal indices on the verb. Indefinite relatives, however, can occur independently, for example, as a possessive head (131a), as an indefinite subject head (131b), or as an indefinite direct object head (131c), the latter two usually with the emphatic suffixes /-əy/ ‘even’ or /-rəy/ ‘emphatic’ (← /-əy-əy/ -and-even, by R9 and R12).

## (131) Independent relative pronouns

- a. /zəy-ʃha θ-y-a-w-a-m-əy a-r θ-λ'a-n-ʃ/ ([λ'ɛnʃ])  
 who-poss-head 3-3-dat-strike-to-if-even 3-abs 3-die-fut-aff  
 'He whose head is struck will die.'
- b. /ʃat(-(r)əy) θ-mə-λaaʒa-m-əy a-r θ-ʃx-a-r-q'm/ ([ʃxérq'ɛm])  
 who(-(emph)ever) 3-not-work-obl-even 3-abs 3-eat-intr-pres-not  
 'Whoever does not work, he does not eat.'
- c. /sət(-(r)əy) θ-q'a-s-ʃ'a-m-əy sa wa θ-w-x'a-s-ʃ'a-əy-ʃ/ ([pʰɛsʃ'á'ʃ])  
 what(-(emph)ever) 3-hor-I-do-if-even I you 3-you-for-I-do-past-aff  
 'Whatever I did, I did for you.'

3.3.5 **Reflexive** The reflexive pronoun is /yazə/ 'self' (132). Occasionally /θ-ə-ʃha-kʷa/ his-poss-head-inst, 'by his head,' is used instead.

## (132) Declension of 'self'

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
abs	yazə-r	yazə-ha-r
obl	yazə-m	yazə-ha-m
inst	yazə-m-kʷa	yazə-ha-m-kʷa
pred	yazə-r-əw	yazə-ha-r-əw

3.3.6 **Negative Pronouns** A special class of negative pronoun, used with negative verbs, is built upon the root /zə-/ 'one,' a case ending, and the suffix /-əy/, which has an emphatic or concessive value ('even,' sometimes equated with 'and') and here emphasises the negative sense of the verb. When /-gʷar-/ is suffixed to the root, no case endings appear. The resulting form, /zə-gʷar-əy/, means 'no one,' 'nothing,' but carries a sense of totality, that is to say 'no one at all,' 'nothing at all.' The meanings of the declined forms are given in (133).

## (133) Sense of the declined forms of the negative pronoun

abs	/zə-r-əy/	'no one, nothing' (absolute role)
obl	/zə-m-əy/	'no one, nothing' (oblique role)
inst	/zə-kʷ-əy/	'with no one, with nothing, no amount'
pred	/zə-w-əy/	'by no means, in no way'

3.3.7 **Reciprocal** The reciprocal rarely exists as a word and does not have a distinct form, /zə/ 'one' being used. Rather, a distinctive verbal index is usually used.

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