

A Grammar of Chechen

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1 Background Information and Introduction

1.1 Speakers and Official Status

Chechen is one of the co-official languages of the Republic of Chechnya, which is a federal subject of the Russian Federation. According to the most recent census data in 2010 there are approximately 1.4 million speakers of Chechen, making it one of the largest minority languages in the Russian Federation after Ukrainian and Tatar. Speakers of Chechen belong mostly to the Chechen ethnicity and are located primarily in Chechnya. Chechen is also spoken in countries with sizable Chechen minorities, namely Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Austria, Germany, Jordan, Turkey, Georgia, and urban centers in European Russia (particularly Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Rostov-na-Donu).

1.2 Distribution of Speakers

Chechnya is located on the northern slopes of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. The Republic of Chechnya is a subnational, semi-autonomous republic of the Russian Federation, and the independence of Chechnya has been at the center of the region's history for much of the 20th and early 21st century. It shares political borders with the Republic of Ingushetia to the east, the Republic of Dagestan to the west, Stavropol Krai to the north, and an international border with the Republic of Georgia to the south.

Outside of their ancestral homeland in the Caucasus, Chechen speakers are found in the Pankisi Gorge of neighboring Georgia and in the provinces of Tusheti and Kakheti. The Kisti and Chechen community in Georgia has grown dramatically in the recent decades due to the influx of refugees after the First and Second Chechen Wars as well as the replacement of the Ossetian community following the Georgian-Ossetian conflict in 2008.

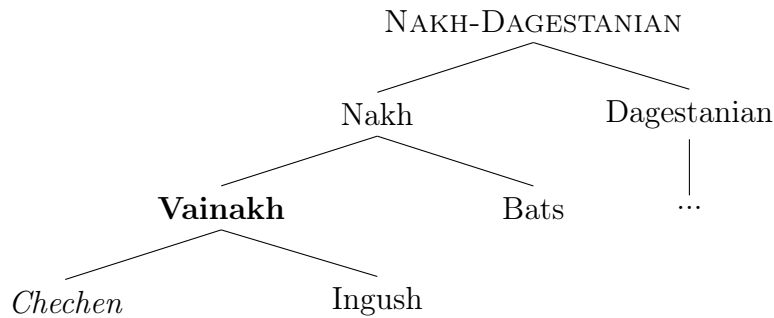
Chechen is spoken in many pockets of Kazakhstan, mostly in the Southern Kazakhstan province, due to the deportation of the Vainakh people (Chechen and Ingush) in 1944 by decree of Joseph Stalin. While many Chechens did return to Chechnya in the 1960s under the Krushchev government, a significant number of Chechens remain in Kazakhstan. The largest Chechen communities are found in Shymkent, Karaghandu, and Almaty, but speakers and Chechens can be found all over the country.

Chechens have lived in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan since the era of the Ottoman Empire in 1850s following the Caucasian Wars from 1817 - 1860. Further communities are found throughout the Republic of Turkey, concentrated in Adana, Yozgat, Sivas, Kayseri, and Kahramanmaraş provinces. Continuing this trend, modern communities of Chechen are found in Austria, Germany, and elsewhere in Western Europe due to refugees following the First and Second Chechen wars. Retention of language and language use among Chechens is particularly strong in communities descending from families in the former Soviet Union compared to that of communities in modern day Turkey, Jordan, and Western Europe.

1.3 Linguistic Profile and Genealogical Data

Chechen, *Noxchiin mott*, is a Vainakh language of the Nakh branch of the Northeastern Caucasian/Nakh-Dagestani language family. Chechen and its closest genealogical sister

language, Ingush, comprise the *Vainakh* languages within the Nakh branch of the family (*vainakh* meaning ‘our people’ in both Chechen and Ingush). Ingush (*Ghalghaj mott*) shares a considerable degree of mutual intelligibility with Chechen and numerous cultural and linguistic similarities. In addition to Chechen and Ingush, a third Nakh language exists: Bats (alternatively *Batsbi* or *Tsova-Tush*), which is spoken in the Zemno-Alvani province of Georgia and is mutually intelligible with neither Chechen nor Ingush.



As expected based on the genealogical classifications, Chechen is not mutually intelligible with any of the Dagestanian languages but does share a few common features with other North Caucasian languages: Chechen is an ergative-absolutive language, it displays noun-class agreement using 4 variables, and it has a large phonemic inventory with ejective consonants. Despite these trends, Chechen is a typological anomaly in the Caucasus region in terms of phonetic inventory due to its extremely large vowel inventory when compared to both other Northeast Caucasian languages as well as to the Kartvelian (South Caucasian) languages and the Abkhazo-Adyghean (Northwest Caucasian languages).

The history of the Chechen literary language is short, beginning in the 1920’s after Chechnya becoming a part of the Russian Federative Soviet Socialist Republic. As the Checheno-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Republic, the written Chechen language was first developed using a Latin alphabet in 1922 following the example of Tatar and other minority languages for Muslim ethnicities. In the 1930s, following legislation requiring minority languages to use Cyrillic, written Chechen switched to an adapted Cyrillic orthography. This literary standard is used in education, administration, and publications in Chechen within Chechnya. Despite the amount of time this literary standard as been used, the Chechen alphabet is remarkably poor at conveying the actual sounds of the Chechen language, in particular the vowels. The alphabet fails to capture the multitude of different vowel sounds, does not mark phonemic vowel length, retains the writing of word-final vowels that have most fallen out in the modern language, and, perhaps most significantly, the literary standard does not account for the huge variation in pronunciation across the many dialects of the language.

1.4 Dialects, Teips, and Tukkhums

There is a large number of dialects of Chechen. While most, if not all Chechen speakers are conversant or familiar with the nuance of standardized Chechen, speech communities in the Caucasus as well as in diaspora communities are often defined by very specific dialects to a given speech community. Diversification of Chechen dialects among speakers is driven

by the ancestral cultural unit of the *taipa* (Ch. тайпа), ‘clan’ or ‘tribe’. In pre-modern Chechnya, membership to a *taipa* was synonymous with participation in the political and social hierarchy in the region, as only *teips* could unify with other *taipash* to form *tukkhums* (Ch. тухум). *Tukkhums* were tasked with tackling larger political and social problems, for example stock-piling resources and crops, rallying defenses from invading armies, as well as mounting attacks during wartime. The *teip* system was particularly inclusive for its incorporation of non-Chechen, non-Muslim, and non-Caucasian ethnicities, providing a venue for early and sustained language contact in the Caucasus. In addition to Turkic and Mongolic-speaking ethnicities in the Caucasus (i.e. Kalmyks, Balkars, and Azeris), there were also *taipash* for Germans, Jews (*taipa Dzhugoj*, Russians and Ukrainian Cossacks, which would unify into *tukkhums* and participate in wider Chechen political and social life. In addition to ethnic identity, language and dialect remained a strong indicator of *teip* membership. Some influential and major *teips* in Chechnya include: Sharoj, Martanxoj, Narshoj, Shatoj, Chintoj, Benoj, Chinkhoj, Hwanlqmadaj, Nizhaloj, Itum-Qalle, Vedenxoj, Noxchimaxqalaj, and Himoj. The precise number of *teips* and *tukkhums* found in Chechnya and Chechen diaspora communities is difficult to ascertain, however, Makaev 1973 estimates that somewhere to 140-245 distinct clans exist, each with varying degrees of identity and many major clans having their own dialect of Chechen.

Despite the large number of clans and dialectical differences based on regions, most all Chechen dialects fall into either the Lowland *Oehwaroj mott* (lit. ‘lowlander’s speech’) or Highland *Laamaroj mott* (lit. ‘mountaineer’s speech’) groups. Lowland dialects, *Oehwaroj*, or ‘Plains Chechen’ is spoken in the northern flatlands of the country and the political and cultural capital of Chechnya, Grozny, is located in this dialect region. For this reason, Lowland/Plains/Oehwaroj Chechen dialects constitute the basis for the literary standard, referred to and described in this grammar as Standard Chechen. Major dialects of this group, that are not under the umbrella of Standard Chechen, include: the Nashxoj, Melxin, Terxoj, Vedjenxoj, Argun, Gudermes, and Khasavyurt varieties of Chechen. The Highland dialects of Chechen, referred also to as the *Laamaroj* dialects (derived from the Chechen word ‘laam’/лам for ‘mountain’), are concentrated in the south of the country in the peaks of the Greater Caucasus Mountains. Standard and Lowland Chechen dialects present a higher concentration of Turkic and Mongolic borrowings than the Highland dialects, most likely due to prolonged interaction with Balkar and Kalmyk tribes in the economic arenas located in the north. Standard Chechen and Lowland dialects, also, for this reason, display a large number of Russian loanwords, with a significant number of schools, universities, and businesses located in the capital conducting day to day activity in the Russian language during the Soviet Union.

Highland dialects are marked by their smaller vowel inventory and lack of these same borrowings. Highland dialect speakers claim that their version of Chechen is more pure, having remained relatively untouched by the Russian and Turkic/Mongolic loan words from the north.

2 Phonology

2.1 Orthographies and Writing System

Chechen is written currently using an adapted form of the Cyrillic alphabet. In addition to Cyrillic, there have also been orthographies for Chechen based on Arabic and Latin.

Below we present the modern Chechen Cyrillic alphabet with the Latin correspondences according to the 1925 version of the Chechen Latin alphabet as well as the most common Latin-based transcription system used for Chechen linguistics developed by Drs. Johanna Nichols and Arbi Vagapov in their seminal Chechen-English dictionary. IPA transcriptions and examples are additionally provided. For those interested in the pre-Soviet Chechen alphabets in Arabic, we have provided this in Appendix 1 of this grammar.

Examples in this grammar will be presented in Chechen Cyrillic, the Nichols-Vagapov Latin, interlinear gloss following the conventions of the Leipzig Glossing Rules, and, finally, an approximate English translation.

2.2 Consonants

Typologically, the Caucasus region is home to some of the largest consonant inventories in the world outside of Sub-Saharan Africa. Chechen, while less expansive than other Dagestaniaan and Abkhazo-Adyghean languages in terms of consonants, still boasts an impressively large consonant system with at least 40.

Таблица 1: Consonant System of Standard Chechen

	Noncontinuent Obstruents				Continuants		Resonants			
	- voice	+ voice	ejective	geminate	Obstruent		Nasal	Liquid		Glide
					- voice	+ voice		- voice	+ voice	
Labial	p	b	pʼ	p:	f	v	m			w
Dental	t	d	tʼ	t:						
Alveolar	t͡s	d͡z	t͡sʼ	t͡s:	s	z	n	ɾ	r	j
Palatal	t͡ʃ	d͡ʒ	t͡ʃʼ	t͡ʃ:	ʃ	ʒ				
Velar	k	g	kʼ	k:	x	ɣ				
Uvular	q		qʼ(q̤ʁʼ)	q:						
Pharyngeal		ʕ / ʔʕ			ħ					
Glottal		ʔ			h					

Chechen consonants have seven places of articulation: labial, alveolar, postalveolar, velar, uvular, epiglottal, and glottal, as well as 6 manners of articulation: nasal, plosive, affricate, fricative, rhotic, and approximate. Only fricatives are found in all places of articulation. Plosives and affricates often appear contrasting in four features of articulation: voiceless, voiced, ejective, and geminate. Only stops and affricates have a phonemic contrast in Chechen, unlike in other Caucasian languages. Similarly, labialization and pharyngealization is not a phonemically contrastive feature in Chechen; rather, it is a secondary point of articulation determined by adjacent vowels (in the case of labialized consonants) or consonants (in the case of pharyngealization).

2.2.1 Aspects of Consonant Realization in Chechen

Stops are not heavily aspirated in Chechen. In the case of word-initial ejective consonants, there is some slight aspiration.

- (1) Example of Aspiration for ejective consonants

/pʼɛlg/ > [p^hʼɛlk]

/tʼaj/ > [t^hʼaj]

/kʼɛzig/ > [k^xʼiezik]

/tsʼa/ > [ts^hʼa]

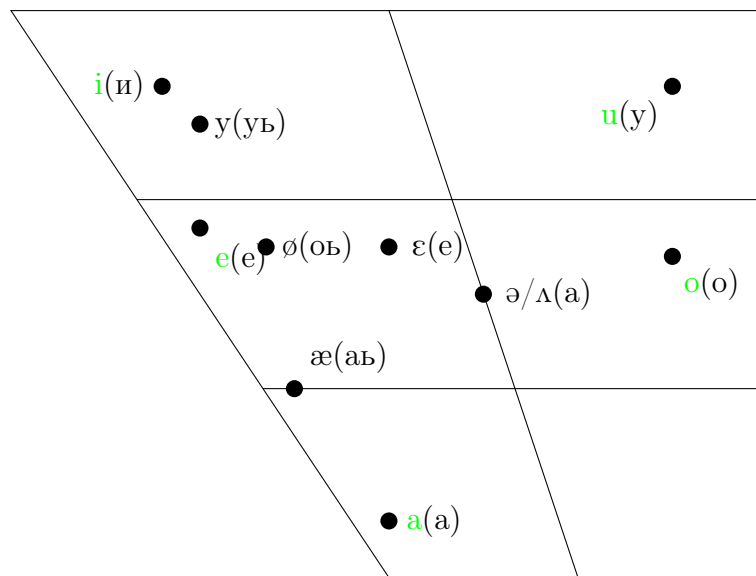
/t͡ʃʼa:.ra/ > [t͡ʃ^hʼa:.rə]

In the case of word-initial and word-final uvular ejectives /qʼ/, aspiration is quite strong to the point that the segment sounds more like an affricate. For this reason we transcribe these sounds as [q̤ʁ] in IPA.

- (2) Example of q' realized [qχ']
 /q'u/ > [qχ'u]

2.3 Vowels

Chechen is unique in the Caucasus region due to its large vowel inventory. Unlike Georgian (having only 5 vowels), Ubykh (having only 2), or many other languages in the area, Chechen has 26 contrastive vowel sounds. 8 vowel sounds form the core of the system: /i/, /u/, /o/, /e/, /a/, /æ/, /y/, and /ø/. Nichols 1997 (945) claims that that of these 8 vowels, 5 of them are the underlying most-crucial vowels, from which the many different contrastive vowel sounds in the Chechen language developed via an Umlaut-like process (we expand more on this in the section on morphophonemic alternations and historical/dialectical developments). These vowels, designated as ‘dialect diphthongs’ in Nichols 1997, consist of : /i/, /o/, /a/, /e/, and /u/, resembling the more typical 5-point contrast systems found in other Caucasian languages. Below we have provided the 8 core vowels of Chechen in a vowel space, and marked the seminal ‘dialect diphthong’ vowels in green the Cyrillic character is provided in parentheses.



All vowels of Chechen are able to be contrastively lengthened. A common frustration with the learning of the Chechen orthography, for both native and non-native speakers, is the lack of diacritics to indicate long vowels in the standard Cyrillic orthography. Later we provide examples that indicate the phonemic vowel length found in many of the core Chechen vowels.

2.3.1 Diphthongs

Chechen diphthongs are composed of a main vowel with the addition of a secondary palatal [j] or labial [w] segment.

- (3) Diphthongs with examples

- ie [iɛ]
эца - jec
'to buy'
- o - wo [ʷo]
found only in closed syllables or in monosyllables
тоха - tuoха [tʷox]
'to hit' or 'to strike'
ло - луo [lʷo]
'gives/give'
- оь - woe [ʉø]
long form of оь - oe, found in open syllables
чоь - choe [tʃʉø]
'interior' (cf чоьхь - choehw [tʃøħ] 'within (locative form)' with CVC syllable)
- ай - aj [aj]
occurs in both open and closed syllables
дайтa - dajta [dajt] (CVC syllable)
'to give (causative)'
даймохк - dajmoxk [daj.moxk] (CV syllable)
'homeland'
- ев - eu [ɛw]
occurs only in open and closed syllables
евла - eula [ɛwl] (VC syllable)
'village'
девина - deuna [dɛw.nə] (CV syllable)
'became acquainted'
- ов - ou [ow]
occurs in open and closed syllables
говр - gour [gowr] (CVC syllable)
'horse' or 'steed'
дов - dou [dow] (CV syllable)
'quarrel'

2.3.2 Nasalization

Nasal-oral vowels are contrastive in Chechen. In fact, for vowel-final words, the nasalization of a word-final vowel is the marker of the genitive case. Orthographically, this nasalization is represented with the character -н/-н.

- (4) сан - san
сã - 'my'

2.4 Phonotactics and Syllable Structure

The syllabic structure of Chechen allows for maximally CCVC, while CV and CVC syllables are quite common. Consonant clusters are numerous in Chechen in word-internal, as well as

in word-final positions, but consonant clusters as onsets are limited to a select few types. Most commonly sC- is found as a consonant cluster on the onset, t'C- is also regularly observed.

Таблица 2: Onset Phonotactics in Chechen

C* = 0	C* = 1	C* = 2
[.urs.]	[.bje.zam.]	[.t'q'ε.]
.VCC.	.CVV.CVC.	.CCV.
'knife'	'love'	'twenty'
[.o.ħa.roj.]	[.nox.tfi.tʃø.]	[.ʃha.va:l.]
.V.CV.CVC.	.CVC.CV.CV.	.CCV.CV:C.
'lowlander'	'Chechnya'	'come towards'
[.i.tum.]	[.mot:].	[.pxiʔ.]
.V.CVC.	CVC:.	.CCVC.
'fortress'	'language'	'person'

Таблица 3: Coda Phonotactics in Chechen

C* = 0	C* = 1	C* = 2
[æɾ.zu]	[kotʃ]	[.borz.]
.VC.CV.	.CVC.	.CVCC.
'eagle'	'shirt' or 'dress'	'wolf'
[bɒl.xar.xo:]	[.ya:l.]	[.moxk.]
.CVC.CVC.CV:.	.CV:C.	.CVCC.
'worker'	'city'	'earth' or 'land'
[.sa.mu.q'a.ni.]	[ʃε.far.]	[.bʲie.darf.]
.CV.CV.CV.CV.	.CV.CVC.	.CVV.CVCC.
'interesting'	'song' or 'poem'	'joking'

2.4.1 Vowel Realization in Open vs Closed Syllables

Chechen vowels are realized differently depending on the open or closed status of a syllable and the position of a vowel in a given word (namely word-final or elsewhere). Open syllables in Chechen include CV(:) and V type syllables. In this position, the following vowels and diphthongs are realized:

/i/, /æ/, /e/, /^wo/, /ø/, /u/, /y/, /iε/, /εw/, and /ow/

Closed syllables in Chechen include the CVC and CVCC types. In these syllables, the following vowels and diphthongs are attested:

/i/, /ε/, /o/, /u/, /y/, /ɥø/

2.5 Stress and Prosody

Chechen stress is primarily fixed on the first syllable of a phonological word. Stress in Chechen is also often realized by a raising of the tone on a stressed syllable rather than an increase in the intensity (cf English and Russian stress-timed systems).

2.5.1 Vowel Reduction

Word-final vowels in standard Chechen are completely reduced to the point of deletion. This is true for most all dialects, with the major exceptions being highland dialects, which also show post-tonic vowels surfacing as schwa or schwa-like reduced vowels. The exact nature of vowel reduction is covered later, as there is considerable variation with respect to both dialects as well as word-form.

2.6 Morphophonemic Alternations

2.6.1 Rounding Assimilation

The most common type of morphophonemic alternations in Chechen are found in the verbal system, principally in the derivation of the present tense forms from the infinitives. In general, these alternations can be classified as a type of anticipatory assimilation of the rounded feature of the historical -u vowel, that acts as the marker of the present tense. This coda vowel is not pronounced in speech in the standard dialect, however, it is still preserved in the orthography. The pattern applies to vowel groups regardless of vowel length and vowel stems with rounded vowels show no such alternation.

(5) Present-tense vowel alternations

- э/е - ie > оь - ое
эца - ieca [iɛc]
'to buy'
оьцу - оес-и - [øc]
'buy/buys'
- аь - ае > оь - ое
хьяьжа - hwaezha [ħaɛʒ] 'to see' or 'to look' хьоьжу - hwoezhu [ħøʒ]
'see/sees' or 'look/looks'
- а - а(а) > о - о(о)
ала - aala [a:l]
'to say'
олу - оол-и [o:l]
'say/says'
- и/ий - i(i) > уь/уьй - у(y)
дижа - diza [diʒ]
'to sleep'
дуьжу - dyzhu [dyʒ]
'sleep/sleeps'

- у - u > y -u
дула - dula [dul]
'to inflate'
дулу - dulu [dul]
'inflate/inflates' (identical pronunciations)

2.6.2 Vowel Epenthesis and Deletion

In uninflected forms, Chechen preserves word-final vowels, with the exception of the vowel [ə] (an allophone of post-tonic /a/).

- (6) къу - q'u
/q'u/ > [qɣ'u] 'thief'
- (7) к1а - k'a
/k'a/ > [k'a] 'wheat'
- (8) реза - rieza
/rieza/ > /'riɛ.zə/ > [.riɛz.] 'glory'

The word-final schwas are represented in the orthography with the grapheme 'a', however, they are generally not pronounced. This is seen most commonly with the word-final vowels /a/ and /u/, when the latter acts as a marker of the inflected form of the present tense. In this case of these vowels are deleted in word-final position, as they are preserved in other verb forms that are derived from the present tense (i.e present participles and future participles).

- (9) ала aala - to say, IPA: [a:l]
олу oolu - say.pres, IPA: [o:l]
олуш oolush - say.pres.part, IPA: [o:lʉ]

An exception to this pattern is the case of word-final -a in the past tenses. These vowels are pronounced as a schwa [ə].

- (10) хилла - xilla [xil.lə]
'was/happened/became'
- (11) диъна - di'na [di'.nə]
'ate/had eaten'

2.6.3 Nasal-Sonorant Gemination

In the past tense formation, /-n/, when next to an /-l/ or /-r/ sound in the root, is replaced with the same sound:

- (12) xila - 'to be'
/xil-na/ > xil-la [xil.lə]

2.6.4 Word-Final Devoicing

Standard Chechen dialects display word-final devoicing for voiced stops, when this voiced stop is a historically voiced stop (i.e there is no deleted [ə] in the inflected forms).

(13) /p'elg/ - [p^h'ɛlk]
'finger'

(14) /k'ɛ.zig/ - [k^x'ɛ.zik]
'few'

Word-final devoicing and syllable structure is highly irregular due to historical developments re: vowels. These issues are covered in a subsequent section.

3 Morphology

3.1 Overview

Chechen morphology can be categorized as a mostly agglutinative, suffix preferred/left-branching type. Chechen has agreement with 6 noun-classes and 4 variables for agreement, the nominal inflection system is complex, displaying at least 8 unique case forms, however, declensions are regular regardless of noun-class. The verbal system inflects for mood, tense, aspect, evidentiality, and pluriactionality, however there is no direct agreement with person/number (number is relevant when determining the noun class and this is discussed in our section on agreement and noun class). Much like in the case of the phonemic inventory vis-a-vis its size and its display of ejective consonants, Chechen is a typical Caucasian language in its ergative-absolutive morphosyntactic alignment. Unlike other Caucasian languages, however, Chechen is quite uniform with respect to ergativity, displaying only split-ergative behavior in a single tense, the present progressive, which gives rise to the bi-absolutive construction (discussed further afield). In this section we detail the nominal, verbal, and adjectival/modifier morphology of Chechen.

3.2 Nominal Morphology

3.2.1 Gender/Noun-class

All Chechen nouns belong to one of six 'noun-classes', wherein one of four possible phonetic exponents are used when agreement between certain 'classed' predicates is triggered. The status of a predicate (adjective or inflected verb) as 'classed' is lexically determined and hence idiosyncratic. The noun-class system for Chechen may be described as a *crossed system* per Kramer's (to appear) typology of gender/noun-class systems. Below, we provide examples of each noun-class with the copular verb д-у d-u¹².

¹Note on transcription conventions: In this grammar we adopt Nichols (1997, 2001) convention for marking classed verbs and their exponents, in which the onset exponent of agreement is off-set with a '-'. In standard Chechen orthography, both Latin and Cyrillic, this convention is not used, and the copular verb forms are *dy/du, ey/vu, by/bu, jo/ju*.

²This is the present tense form of the verb хила/xila when it is acting as a copular verb. There is another conjugation for хила/xila, in which the present tense is хуьлу/хулу, however, in this paradigm the meaning is 'to become' or 'to occur'.

Таблица 4: Noun Classes of Chechen

Class Name	Singular	Plural	Example Tokens	
v.class	v-	d-/b-	к1ант в-у k'ant v-u 'boy'	к1ентий д-у k'entii d-u 'boys'
j.class	j-	d-/b-	йол ю (й-у) jow j-u 'girl'	мехкарий б-у mexkarii b-u 'girls'
j.class II	j-	j-	пхьагал ю phwagal j-u 'rabbit'	пхьагалш ю phwagalsh j-u 'rabbits'
d.class	d-	d-	наж ду nazh d-u 'oak'	нежнаш ду niezhnash d-u 'oaks'
b.class	b-	b-	малх бу malx b-u 'sun'	мелхаш melxash b-u 'suns'
b.class II	b-	d-	1аж бу wazh b-u 'apple'	1ежаш д-у wezhash d-u 'apples'

The semantic correlation of biological gender and noun-class/gender does exist to a certain extent in Chechen. Masculine and feminine gender are present in the system, with *v-* being the exponent reserved exclusively for nouns pertaining to animate subjects that are of the biologically masculine gender. All biologically masculine nouns are *v.class*, and all *v.class* nouns are masculine. Biologically feminine, animate nouns belong to *j.class*, however, not all *j.class* nouns are biologically feminine, animate nouns. This is to say that all biologically feminine, animate nouns are *j.class* nouns, but not all *j.class* nouns are biologically feminine, animate nouns.

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- (15) Со Нохчийчоьхь вина
 suo noxchii-cho-hw v-i-na
 1SG.ABS.*v.class* Chechnya-AUG-INES *v*-birth-PST.PRF
 'I (a male speaker) was born in Chechnya.'

- (16) тхан да 1у вара
 txan da wu v-ara
 1PL.EXCL.GEN father.*v.class*.ABS.SG shepherd *v*-COP.PST

‘Our father was a shepherd.’

- (17) иза сан ваша ву
iza san vasha v-u
3SG.ABS 1SG.GEN brother.v-class.ABS.SG v-COP

‘He is my brother.’

- (18) АллахI воцург кхин Дела вац
Allah v-oc-ur-g qin Deela v-ac
Allah v-be.NEG-PTCP-SUBST other God.v-class.ABS.SG v-COP.NEG

‘There is no God but Allah. (Islamic declaration of *tahwid*)’

Biologically feminine, animate nouns belong to *j.class*, however, not all *j.class* nouns are biologically feminine, animate nouns. This is to say that all biologically feminine, animate nouns are *j.class* nouns, but not all *j.class* nouns are biologically feminine, animate nouns.

Many nouns that are loan words from Russian words fall into the category of *j.class*. In speech it is common to intermix Russian words, as the vast majority of Chechen speakers are bilingual, to some extent, with Russian.

- (19) Алма-Атахь чIогIа хаза **АВТОВОКЗАЛ** ю
Alma-Atahw chogha xaza **АВТОВОКЗАЛ** j-u
In Almaty very beautiful bus-station.j.ABS.SG

‘Almaty has a very beautiful bus-station.’

D.class nouns are the most common noun in the system and are used for the citation form of classed adjectives and classed verbs in Chechen dictionaries. Additionally, *d.class* is the default class for noun-agreement and is the citation form for classed predicates. Additionally, all masdar verb forms are *d.class*.

B.class, *J.classII*, and *B.classII* are idiosyncratic. There exists some lexical pattern for *b.class* stemming from historical Nakh words beginning in a labial sound (i.e. ‘*ʔo1 ю/ jow j-u*’, ‘*мехкарий бу/мехкарий b-u*’), which will discuss in a further section discussing historical developments in Chechen.

3.2.2 Absolutive and Augment Bases

Chechen is a highly inflected and mostly agglutinative type language with a robust case system in its nominal morphology. Nouns in Chechen often undergo morphophonological alternations and display the addition of additional phonological material when case suffixes are added. Typically, all cases forms use a base form that differs from the absolutive. We refer to this form of the noun as the *augment base* (glossed as AUG). An example of this is shown below:

Таблица 5: My caption

	<i>Class I - Ablaut</i>	<i>Class VI - 'chu' extension</i>
Absolutive	лом lom lion	нохчи noxchi Chechen
Genitive	лоьм-ан loem-an lion.AUG-GEN	нохчи-чу-н noxchi-chu-n Chechen-AUG-GEN
Dative	лоьм-ана loem-ana lion.AUG-DAT	нохчи-ч{ун}-на noxchi-chuun-na Chechen-AUG-DAT
Ergative	лоьм-о loeman-uo lion.AUG-ERG	нохчи-ч-о noxchi-ch-uo Chechen-AUG-ERG
Allative	лоьм-е loem-ie lion.AUG-ALL	нохчи-чуь-нга noxchi-chu-nga Chechen-AUG-ALL
Instrumental	лоьм-аца loem-aca lion.AUG-INST	нохчи-чуь-нца noxchi-chu-ncsa Chechen-AUG-ALL
Locative	лоьм-ехь loem-exw lion.AUG-LOC	нохчи-чу-х noxchi-chu-x Chechen-AUG-LOC
Comparative	лоьм-ал loem-al lion.AUG-COMP	нохчи-чу-л noxchi-chu-l Chechen-AUG-COMP

3.2.3 Number

Chechen displays two categories for grammatical number: **singular** and **plural**. The plural morphemes include $-(a)ш/-(a)sh$, $-(и)й/-(i)j$, as well as cases where the plural form is ideosyncratic/lexically determined. The plural form is attached to the augmented base of the noun:

- (20) кор к̄ораш
kor koor-ash
window window.AUG-PL
'window', 'windows'
- (21) маха м̄ехий
maaxa miexij
needle needle.AUG-PL

‘needle’, ‘needles’

Chechen also displays *pluralia tanta*:

- (22) аьшпаш
aeshp-ash
lie.AUG-PL
‘lies’

The ending ‘-ий/-ij’ is frequently used for nouns referring to animals, plants, insects, and groups of people or kinship terms:

- (23) хьаша хьеший
hwaasha hwiesh-ij
guest.ABS.SG guest.AUG-ABS.PL
‘guest’, ‘guests’
- (24) ч1ара ч1ерий
chaara cher-ii
fish.ABS.SG fish.AUG-ABS.PL
‘(a single) fish’, ‘(many) fish’
- (25) моз мозий
muoz muoz-ii
fly.ABS.SG fly.AUG-ABS.PL
‘fly’, ‘flies’ (i.e the insect)

An allomorph of the -ий/-ij ending, -й/-j, is always added to nouns ending in the substantivizing suffixes -ло/-lo, -чо/-cho, and -о/-o. These suffixes are always found on nouns referring to groups of people based on their origin, location, or professions.

- (26) ламаро ламарой
laam-aruo laam-aro-j
mountain-SUBSTAN-ABS.SG mountain-SUBSTAN.AUG-ABS.PL
‘mountainer (i.e from the highlands)’ ‘mountainers’
- (27) дехо дехой
dee-xo dee-xo-j
father.AUG-SUBSTAN-ABS.SG father.AUG-SUBSTANT-ABS.PL
‘father’s relative’ ‘father’s relatives’
- (28) белхало белхалой
belxaluo belxalo-j
labourer.ABS.SG labourer-ABS.PL
‘labourer’, ‘labourers’

Proper nouns may also be pluralized with the morpheme -г1ар/-ghar. This morpheme refers to a collective group of people or family. Both a family name or a family member may take this ending

- (29) Сатуев Сатуевг1ар
 Satujev Satujevghar-ghar
 Satujev.ABS.SG Satujev-ABS.PL
 Satujevs
- (30) гала галнаш
 gala gal-na-sh
 noodle.ABS.SG noodle-AUG-ABS.PL
 ‘noodle’, ‘noodles’
- (31) куьзга куьзганаш
 kyzga kyzga-na-sh
 glass.ABS.SG glass-AUG-ABS.PL
 ‘(a pane of) glass’, ‘(panes of) glass’

In the case of nouns ending in a historical -l or -r (represented in the orthography as a lack of a final, unpronounced -a), addition of the -ash suffix triggers gemination of the final -l or -r sound.

- (32) кол коьллаш
 kol koel-lash
 bush.ABS.SG bush.AUG-ABS.PL
 ‘bush’, ‘bushes’
- (33) тур тарраш
 tur tar-rash
 sword.ABS.SG sword.AUG-ABS.PL
 ‘sword’, ‘swords’

The -(a)ш/-(a)sh suffix is regularly added to most all nouns ending in -p/-r, to nouns whose augmented bases end in -p/-r, the substantivized adjectives using the -ap/-ar suffix, as well as to gerund verb forms (masdars). In the standard dialect, the vowel on the suffix -a/-a is generally reduced to the point of deletion.

- (34) патар патарш
 patar patar-sh
 leaf.ABS.SG leaf.AUG-ABS.PL
 ‘leaf’, ‘leaves’

In addition to regularly formed plurals, Chechen also has irregular plurals:

- (35) йо1 мехкарий
 jow mexkarij
 girl.ABS.SG girl.ABS.PL
 ‘girl’, ‘girls’
- (36) стаг нах
 stag naх
 person.ABS.SG person.ABS.PL
 ‘person’, ‘people’

3.2.4 Case

Chechen is an ergative-absolutive type system with at least 10 morphologically distinct cases. The precise number of Chechen cases differs depending on using a strictly morphological versus semantic criteria for determining the number of cases. Additionally, Chechen is a left-branching type language and has postpositions rather than prepositions. Postpositional adjuncts/modifiers, therefore, appear in the same position, relatively, to a case morpheme, as case is marked via the addition of suffixes to the oblique or augmented base (referred to in our glosses as AUG). Here we detail the typical case morphemes, their formation, and their semantic and syntactic role in a given sentence. The typical case endings in the singular and the plural around illustrated in the following table:

Таблица 6: Generalized Chechen Case Forms

Case	Gloss	Singular	Plural	Question Forms
<i>Absolutive</i>	{ABS}	-∅	-(а)ш/-(а)sh, -и/i, -ий/ij	мила/mila - ‘who(m)’ х1ун/hun - ‘what’
<i>Ergative</i>	{ERG}	-о/-оо, -(а)с/-ас	-(а)ш-а/-ash-a	хъан/hwan - ‘who’ стен/stien - ‘what’
<i>Genitive</i>	{GEN}	-н/-н	-ийн/-iin, -ин/-in	хъенан/hwienan - ‘whose’ стенан/stienan - ‘of what’
<i>Dative</i>	{DAT}	-на	(а)ша-на	хъанна/hwanna - ‘to whom’ стенна/stienna - ‘to what’
<i>Allative</i>	{ALL}	-е/-ие, -га/-га	-(а)ш-ка/-(а)sh-ka	хъаьнга/hwaenga - ‘to who(’s ho стенга/stienga - ‘(up) to what’
<i>Instrumental</i>	{INST}	-ца/-ца	-(а)ш-ца/-(а)sh-ца	хъанца/hwanca - ‘with whom’ стенца/stienca - ‘with what’
<i>Lative</i>	{LAT}	-х/-х	-ях/-iax, -их/-ix	хъаных/hwanax - ‘about whom’ стеных/stienax - ‘from/about wh
<i>Comparative</i>	{COMP}	-л/-л	-ял/-ial, -ил/-il	хъанал/hwanal - ‘than who’ стенал/stienal - ‘than what’
<i>Inessive</i>	{INES}	-ахь/-ahw	-(а)ш-ка-хь/-(а)sh-ka-hw	хъаьнгахь/hwangahw - ‘at whom’ стенгахь/stiengahw - ‘at what’
<i>Ablative</i>	{ABL}	-ара/-ара	-(а)ш-ка-ра/-(а)sh-ka-ra	хъангара/hwangara - ‘from whom’ стенгара/stiengara - ‘from what’

3.2.4.1 The Absolutive Case

The absolutive case (ABS) is the citation or uninflected form of the noun. Semantically, it is the form of a noun that denotes either 1) the subject of an intransitive/copular sentence, 2) the object of a transitive verb, 3) a noun being called in the vocative, or 4) the subject and object of a sentence wherein the verb is found in the present progressive tense (the ‘biabsolutive construction’).

- (37) сан ц1е Иван ю
san c'e Ivan j-u
 1SG.GEN *name.j-class.ABS.SG* Ivan.*v-class.ABS.SG* *j-COP*
 ‘My name is Ivan’

In the above example, we see the copular verb *ju* is marked with agreement to *j.class*, which is also marked as the noun-class/gender for the noun ‘ц1е/c’e’. The absolutive case is used for both arguments of the copular sentences in the form ‘X is Y’, however, only the noun-class on argument ‘X’ acts as the probe for agreement on classed predicates. In the case of the subject of an intransitive sentence, the absolutive argument, or ‘subject’/‘agent’ of the sentence, is also the probe for agreement.

- (38) со базара воьду
So bazar-a v-odu
 1SG.ABS.*v-class* bazar-ALL *v-go.PRES*
 ‘I(a man) go to the bazaar (habitually).’

Absolutive arguments always trigger agreement in Chechen sentences. This is true in most all cases, particularly in the case of transitive sentences or sentences where the verb demands a subject appear in a different case. There does exist a construction, however, in which both the subject and the object of a transitive verb appear in the absolutive case. In this case, the predicate verb is in the present progressive tense.

- (39) со бепиг деш ву
so bepig d-ie-sh v-u
 1SG.ABS.*v-class* bread.*d-class.ABS.SG* *d-do-PROG.PTCP* *v-COP*
 ‘I (a man) am making bread (right now).’

In (39), both the subject/agent and object/theme appear in the absolutive case with a type of split agreement, where the *v-class* features of the subject ‘*co/so*’ appears on the copular verb *vy/v-u* and the *d-class* feature of the object ‘*benuz/bepig*’ appear on the present progressive participial form of the verb ‘*дан/dan*’ (‘to do’ or ‘to make’). We discuss the specifics of this construction, named ‘the biabsolutive construction’ in the section regarding syntax and constituent order in sentences using participles.

3.2.4.2 The Ergative Case

The Ergative Case (ERG) is mainly used to mark the subject of a transitive verb. It corresponds to the thematic role of AGENT. The ergative case is formed with the suffixes *-aca/-asa*, *-ac/-as*, *-o/-uo*.³ Of these suffixes, *-o/-uo* is more productive than *-aca/-asa* and *-c/-s*. When *-o/-uo* is added to a noun that ends in a vowel, it generally appears with a buffer consonant *-н/-n-* in between the final vowel and the case ending. In the case of word-final *-a/-a* that is generally unpronounced, the case ending *-o/-uo* replaces this vowel in the written language.

³For many highland dialects, it is also possible to have null realization of the ergative. In these dialects, the only indicator of which noun is the subject and which one is the agent is agreement or context.

- (40) котамо хлуъа до
 kuot-am-uo hu'a d-o
 chicken-AUG-ERG.SG egg.*d-class*.ABS.SG *d*-do.PRES
 'A chicken lays an egg.'

The ergative case can not control agreement. In transitive sentences, the noun-class features of the object, rendered in the absolutive case, are found on the inflected verb, provided that the inflected verb belongs to the group of 'classed verbs'.

- (41) Ас бепиг дина
 as bepig d-ina
 1SG.ERG bread.*d.class*.ABS.SG *d*-do.PST.PERF
 'I made bread.'

- (42) Ахьмада машина эцна
 ahwmad-a mashina iec-na
 Ahwmad-ERG car.ABS.SG buy-PST.PERF
 'Ahwmad bought a car.'

In the above examples, we see that (41) displays agreement between the absolutive argument and the predicate *дина/d-ina*. This is due to 2 factors, 1) the noun-class of the absolutive argument (in (41) - the noun *бепиг/bepig*) is *d.class*, and 2) the predicate *дина/d-ina* is the past tense of the 'classed verb' *дан/dan* ('to do' or 'to make'). In the case of sentence (42), the predicate *эцна/ieсна* is the past tense form of the verb *эца/ieca*, which is not a 'classed verb' and, therefore, no agreement is shown. Despite the lack of overt agreement, (42) shows the object of the transitive verb in the absolutive and the agent/subject of the verb in the ergative.

In addition to the function mentioned above, the ergative case can also express obligation or necessity when used with the classed verb '*деза/dieza*'. In this use, it also retains agreement with the noun-class of the absolutive argument.

- (43) нанас бепиг дан деза
 naan-as bepig d-an d-ieza
 mother.AUG-ERG.SG bread.*d.class*.ABS.SG *d*-do.INF *d*-must.PRES
 'Mother has to make bread.'

3.2.4.3 The Genitive Case

The Genitive Case links two noun phrases together, with the modifying noun phrase preceding the head noun phrase. It is similar in function to the genitive cases found in Latin, German, Russian, and (particularly in the case of syntax) Turkic languages. The suffixes for the genitive case are:

- (44) Ахьмадан машина керла ю
 Ahwmad-an mashina kerla j-u
 Ahwmad.AUG-GEN.SG car.*j-class*.ABS.SG new *j*-COP
 'Ahwmad's car is new.'

The genitive case also acts as the case that governs most all post positions.

3.2.4.4 The Dative Case

The Dative Case takes a number of functions in Chechen. Principally, it marks the recipient of an action or indirect object. The dative case is formed with the suffix *-ана/-ana* added to the noun/augment base. The buffer vowel *-a-* is present when the noun/augment base ends in a consonant.

- (45) Ас Хъасанна буърка яьлла
 as Hasan-na burka j-ael-la
 1SG.ERG Hasan.AUG-DAT.SG ball.*j-class*.ABS.SG *j-give*.PST
 ‘I gave Hasan a ball.’

- (46) нанас шен берана хъехар дина
 nana-s шен ber-ana хъехар d-i-na
 mother.ERG.SG child.DAT.SG advice.*d*.ABS.SG *d-do*-PST.PERF
 ‘The mother gave her child an advice.’

Sentences (45) and (46) illustrate the indirect object being marked with the dative case.

Additionally, the dative case is used extensively in Chechen to mark the subject of a number of verbs that describe emotion, though, feeling, or physical sense. We group these verbs under the term ‘*psych-verbs*’. These verbs include verbs such as ‘*хаза/xa’a*’ (to know), ‘*деза/d-ieza*’ (to like, to love, to need), ‘*хазэхета/xazaxeta*’ (to like), ‘*хаза/xaza*’ (to hear), and ‘*ган/gan*’ (to see).

- (47) суна лаьмнаш хазэхета
 suna laem-na-sh хазэхет-а
 1SG.DAT mountain.*bII*-AUG-ABS.PL *d-like*.PRES
 ‘I like mountains.’

- (48) Асланна стигал го
 Aslan-na stigal go
 Aslan-DAT sky.ABS.SG see.PRES

‘Aslan sees the sky’

We may summarize this function of the dative case as marking the thematic EXPERIENCER of a given verb. It is important to note that in the case of (47) that the dative subject can not control for agreement. Like in examples for the ergative case, classed predicates adopt the noun class of the absolutive argument of the verb.

The dative case is also used with time expressions to indicate the extent or total frame of time that an action has or will take place.

- (49) Имран шина баттана Москох вахара
 Imran shi-na batt-ana Mosko-x v-axa-ra
 Imran.*v*.ABS two-DAT month.AUG-DAT Moscow-LAT *v-go*-RPST
 ‘Imran went to Moscow for two weeks’

- (50) со цига шина клирана бен ца яхара
 suo ci-ga shi-na k’ira-na bien ca j-axa-ra
 1SG.ABS.*j* there-ALL two-DAT week-DAT only NEG *j-go*-RPST

‘I (a woman) went there for only two weeks.’

Dative is also used to express the reason for certain predicates.

- (51) Баркалла кехат яздарна
barkalla kixat jaz-d-a-r-na
thank.you letter.*d*.ABS.SG write-*d*-do-MSDR-DAT
‘Thank you for writing the letter’

3.2.4.5 The Instrumental Case

The instrumental case (INST) marks the instrument of a given action and corresponds closely to prepositional phrases in English that use the preposition ‘with’. It is used to denote also the means by which a given action takes place. The case is formed by adding *-ца/-ca* to the noun/augment base, with a buffer vowel *-a-* for nouns/augment bases ending in a consonant.

- (52) Руслана бепиг уърсаца дохадо
Ruslan-a bepig ursa-ca d-ox-a-do
Ruslan.ERG.ABS bread.*d*.ABS.SG knife-INST.SG *d*-cut-PRES
‘Ruslan cuts bread with a knife.’

The case is also used to describe accompaniment, again, similar to the use of English ‘with’.

- (53) Аслан ресторане соьца глур ву
Aslan restoran-e soeca ghur v-u
Aslan.*v*.ABS.SG restaurant-ALL.SG 1SG.INST go.FUT.PTCP *v*-COP
‘Aslan will go to the restaurant with me.’

3.2.4.6 The Lative Case

The lative case (LAT) is used to denote the source or origin of actions and other nouns. It is formed by adding the suffix *-x* to the noun/augment base, and also may take a buffer vowel *-a-*. Specifically, it can be used to denote the partitive (a function that is handled in many European languages by the genitive).

- (54) ас шурах кърд бира
as shur-ax q’urd b-i-ra
1SG.ERG milk-LAT.SG sip.*b*.ABS.SG *b*-do-RPST
‘I took a sip of the milk (lit. I did a sip)’

The lative can also be used to show the source material of another noun.

- (55) цо дечигах лайг бира
cuo dechig-a-x waig b-i-ra
3SG.ERG wood-LAT.SG spoon.*b*.ABS.SG *b*-make-RPST
‘He made a spoon out of wood’

The lative case is therefore also used to describe the topic or themes of certain verbs. In this meaning it closely corresponds to the English preposition ‘about’ (i.e ‘talk about’, ‘write about’). The lative also governs the over postposition *лаьцна/лаесна*, which is a formal version of ‘about’.

- (56) Муса Заремах лoъ
 Musa Zarema-x loe
 Musa-ABS.SG Zarema-LAT.SG talk-PRES
 ‘Musa talks about Zarema’

The lative may also be used in this family of meaning to describe the cause or reason of an event.

- (57) Цунан нускал вончу лазарах кхаълхина
 Cunan nuskal von-chu lazar-ax khaelxi-na
 3SG.ERG bride.ABS.SG bad-OBL illness-LAT die-PST.PERF
 ‘His fiancée died of cancer.’

Finally, the lative case may also arbitrarily mark the arguments of certain verbs. The verb ‘*кхета/qieta*’ (‘to touch’/‘to understand’) is one such verb.

- (58) со ахъ боху(н)чох ца кхета
 suo ahw buoxu-(n)-ch-uox ca qieta
 1SG.ABS 2SG.ERG say-PRS.RCP-OBL-LAT NEG understand.PRES
 ‘I don’t understand what you have said.’

3.2.4.7 The Comparative Case

The comparative case (COM) is used exclusively to frame a comparative statement. In the construction ‘A is Xer than B’, the noun B is marked with the comparative case. The case is formed by adding -л/-l to a noun/augment base, and may also have a buffer vowel.

- (59) сан машина хъан машинал хазах ю
 san mashina hwan mashinal xaza-x j-u
 1SG.GEN car.j.ABS.SG 2SG.GEN car-COM.SG beautiful-COMP j-COP
 ‘My car is prettier than your car’

The comparative case may also be used with masdar-form verbs.

- (60) кехат яздар книга ешарал диках дац
 kiexat jaz-d-a-r kniga j-eshar dikax d-ac
 letter.d.ABS.SG write-d-do-MSDR.d book.j.ABS.SG j-read-MSDR.d good d-COP.NEG
 ‘Writing a letter is not better than reading a book’

3.2.4.8 The Allative Case

The allative case (ALL) is also referred to as a locative case by some grammarians. It is a case that describes the goal or destination of a given action. It is formed by adding *-za/-ga* to a noun/augment base, with the possibility of a buffer vowel. It also has the form *-e/ie*, mainly for Russian loan words, masdar verb forms, and some idiosyncratically determined nouns.

- (61) Аслан школе воьду
 Aslan shkol-ie v-oed-u
 Aslan.v.ABS.SG school-ALL v-go-PRES

‘Aslan goes to(wards) school’

The case is also used two important Chechen moods. In causative constructions, the allative marks the argument that is being made to perform the action. In other words, in the formula for transitive causative verbs, ‘X makes Y to Z’, X is marked in the ergative, Z in the absolutive, and Y in allative.

- (62) лумара Исламе кюзга оьхьадожадайтира
 Wumar-a Islam-e kyzga oehwa-dozha-dait-ira
 Wumar-ERG.SG Islam-ALL.SG mirror.ABS.SG PVERB-fall-CAUS-RPST
 ‘Wumar made Islam drop the mirror.’

The allative case also marks the subject of a verb in the potential mood.

- (63) лумаре нохчийн мотт бийцало
 Wumar-e noxchiin muott b-iica-lo
 Wumar-ALL.SG Chechen language.b.ABS.SG b-speak-POT.PRES
 ‘Wumar is able to speak Chechen’

There is significant variation with the allative case and dative case with respect to marking indirect objects.

3.2.4.9 The Inessive Case

The inessive case is a derivative of the allative case and, like the allative case, it also describes a location. Unlike the allative case, the inessive case describes static location. It is formed with the suffix *-хь/-hw*, which attaches to the noun/augment base, and also may take a buffer *-a-* when attaching to a form that ends in a consonant. The plural suffix for the inessive case is ‘*-ash-ka-hw*’, wherein the ending attaches to the allative plural ending of ‘*-ash-ka*’.

- (64) со универистете вьдуш ву
 suo universitet-e v-oed-u-sh v-u
 1SG.SG.v university-ALL v-go-PRES-PTCP v-COP
 ‘I am going to the university (right now)’
- (65) со университетехь доьшуш ву
 suo universitet-ehw d-oesh-u-sh v-u
 1SG.ABS.v university-INES d-read-PRES-PTCP v-COP
 ‘I am studying at the university’

3.2.4.10 The Ablative Case

The ablative case (ABL) is used to denote the physical source of an action. The function of the case is to express either the source or direction. The case defines the benchmark of an action in a certain place or time frame. It is formed by adding the suffix *-pa/-ra* to the noun/augment base and may also have a buffer vowel. In pronouns and in the plural, the ablative is layered with the allative case, much like the inessive case.

- (66) ас сайна машина ийцира базарапа
 as saina mashina ijc-ira baazar-ra
 1SG.ERG 1SG.REFLX.GEN car.ABS.SG take-RPST market.AUG-ABL
 ‘I bought my own car at the market.’
- (67) со цаьргара схъавеара
 suo carga-ra sxhwa-v-ea-ra
 1SG.ABS.v 3SG.ALL-ABL DEC.PREV-v-come-RPST
 ‘I came from their’s (their place).’

3.2.5 Articles

Chechen does not have overt definite articles like in English, Arabic or German. Indefinite articles may be represented using the numeral tshwa/цхъа

3.2.6 Pronouns

The pronominal system of Chechen expresses person and number with a 1st, 2nd, 3rd person and singular and plural number, typical of other European languages. In addition to these pronouns, Chechen also has a inclusive/exclusive distinction in 1st person plural.

Таблица 7: Chechen pronouns declined for case

	Absolutive	Genitive	Dative	Ergative	Lative	Comparative	Allative	Locative	Instrumental
I	со so	сан san	суна suna	ас as	сох sox	сол sol	соьга soeg	соьгахь soegahw	соьца soec
you	хьо hwo	хьан hwan	хьуна hwuna	ахь ahw	хьох hwox	хьол hwol	хьоьга hwoeg	хьоьгахь hwoegahw	хьоьца hwoec
he/she/it	иза iz	цуьнан cuna	цунна cunna	цо co	цунах cunax	цул cul	цуьнга cung	цуьнгахь cungahw	цуьнца cunc
we (exclusive)	вай vaj	вайн vajn	вайна vajna	вай vaj	вайх vajx	вайл vajl	вайга vajg	вайгахь vajgahw	вайца vajc
we (inclusive)	тхо txo	тхан txan	тхуна txuna	ох ooh	тхох txoh	тхол txol	тхоьга txoeg	тхоьгахь txoegahw	тхоьца txoec
you (pl)	шу shu	шун shun	шуна shuna	аш ash	шух shux	шул shul	шуьга shyg	шуьгахь shygahw	шуьца shyc
they	уьш ysh	церап ceeran	царна caarn	цара caar	царах carax	царал caral	цаьрга caerg	цаьрггахь caergahw	цаьрца caerc

3.2.7 Demonstrative Pronouns

Chechen demonstrative pronouns have a two way deictic distinction, near the speaker and near the listener. Additionally, demonstrative pronouns may act as either anaphors or as demonstrative adjectives. Much like in the case of question words and adjective, demonstratives in Chechen have both an absolutive and "oblique" form used for demonstratives modifying nouns in any other case form other than the absolutive. The deictic system of Chechen contrast distal ('that') and proxal ('this').

3.2.7.1 Distal demonstrative pronoun - ‘и/i’

3.2.7.2 Proximal demonstrative pronoun - ‘х1ара/hara’

4 Verbal Morphology

4.1 Tenses

Chechen has a rich system of tenses, complete with present, past, and future. In addition to tense, the Chechen verb is also sensitive to aspect and evidentiality. Here we detail the core tenses (present, past, and future), the progressive constructions (present progressive,

4.1.1 Present Tenses

4.1.1.1 The Present Indefinite/ Simple Present Tense

The simple present tense is used to describe an action that occurs on a regular basis in the present. Based on the semantics, these actions can also be interpreted to be habitual, repeated, or planned events that occur on a regular basis. Ergo, the simple present tense is also the form that communicates imperfective aspect. The present tense is formed in Chechen by means of vowel alternations stemming from the rounding assimilation from the marker -y/-u on to the vowel of the verbal root. In general, we see the following pattern with respect to these vowel alternations

Таблица 8: Simple present vowel alternations

Alternation	Example	Translation
а - о / а - о	дада/dada	‘to run’
	доду/dodu	‘run/runs’
	мала/mala	‘to drink’
	молу/molu	‘drink/drinks’
	кхарза/qarza	‘to fry’
	кхорзу/qorzu	‘fry/fries’
е - оь / ie - ое	зен/zien	‘to examine’
	зоь/zoe	‘examine/examine’
	лен/lien	‘to talk’
	лоь/loe	‘talk/talks’
о - у / (u)о - u(u)	тоса/tosa	‘to feel’
	тусу/tusu	‘feel/feels’
	дохка/duoxka	‘to sell’
	духку/duuxku	‘sell/sells’
и - уь / i(i) - у(y)	дижа/diizha	‘to sleep’
	дуьжу/duyzhu	‘sleep/sleeps’
	хила/xila	‘to happen’
	хуьлу/hyulu	‘happen/happens’

It is one of the most common Chechen verb forms and it is most commonly refer to when speaking about present events. Below we offer further examples:

(68) **деша - доьшу / diesha - doeshu** ‘read’

цо	газет	доьшу	массо	дийнахь
cuo	gaziet	d-oesh-u	massuo	dii-na-hw
3SG.ERG	newspaper.	<i>d-class</i>	<i>d-read-PRES</i>	each day-AUG-LOC

‘He reads the newspaper everyday’

(69) **хьеха - хьобьху / hwiexa - hwoexu** ‘teach’

Маликас	нохчийн мотт	хьобьху	школехь
Malik-as	noxchiin mott	hwoex-u	shkol-e-hw
Malika-ERG	Chechen language.	<i>b.ABS.SG</i>	teach-PRES school-AUG-INES

‘Malika teaches Chechen at school.’

(70) **дохка - духку / doxka - duxku** ‘sell’

Салмана	бежанаш	духку	базарехь	х1ора
Salman-a	bezha-n-ash	duxk-u	bazar-aehw	hora
Salman-ABS.SG	cattle.	<i>bII-AUG-ABS.PL</i>	<i>bII-sell-PRES</i>	market-LOC every
к1ирандийнахь				
k’irandii-n-ahw				
sunday-AUG-LOC				

‘Salman sells the cattle at the market every Sunday.’

4.1.1.2 Present Progressive Tense

The present progressive tense is formed by using a analytic construction with the present participle and the copular verb ‘*dy/d-u*’. The suffix *-u/-sh* is attached to the simple present form. As mentioned in the section regarding absolutive case, in the present progressive, both object and subject of the predicate verb are found in the absolutive case and the sources of agreement for the auxiliary and participle verbs are divided between subject (auxiliary) and object (participle). The present progressive tense differs from the simple present tense in that it denotes only actions occurring in the present, rather than habitual or continually planned events.

(71) **цициг** **шура** **молуш** **ду**
 cicig shura mol-ush d-u
 cat.*d-class*.ABS.SG milk.ABS.SG drink-PRES-PTCP *d-COP*

‘The cat is drinking milk.’

(72) **Салман** **бежанаш** **духкуш** **ву** **базарехь**
 Salman biezha-n-ash duxk-u-sh v-u bazar-e-hw
 Salman.*v*.ABS.SG cattle.*d*-AUG-ABS.PL *d-sell-PRES-PTCP* *v-COP* bazar-AUG-LOC

‘Salman is selling cattle at the bazar’

4.1.1.3 The Present Perfect Tense

This tense is mostly used to refer to actions completed in the past but without giving an idea about the time of its occurrence. It is formed by alternations of the stem vowel and the addition of the suffix *-на/-na*.

Таблица 9: Alternations for Present Perfect

Alternation	Example	Lemma
a - e	мала/mala	'drink'
	/mel-na/ мелла/mella	
a - ae	даккха/daqqa	'recieve'
	/daeqq-ina/ даъккхина/daeqqina	
ie - ie	деша/diesha	'read'
	/diesh-na/ дешна/dieshna	
e - ii	детта/detta	'hit'
	/dett-na/ деттина/dett-ina	
o - oe	дотта/dotta	'pour'
	/doett-na/ доъттина/doettina	
i - i	дига/diga	'lead'
	/dig-na/ дигна/digna	

Stems that already end in a geminate consonant have a buffer vowel *-и/-i* inserted between the alternated stem and the *-на/-na* suffix. Stems that end in *-л/-l*, *-т/-t* *-д/-d* *-ж/-zh*, *-х/-x* have geminated stems instead of the addition of *-на/-na*.

(73) Geminated Stems for Present Perfect

- хада/xada [a-ae] > /xaed-na/ > хаъда/xaedda 'break, stop'
- дата/data [a-ae] > /daet-na/ > даътта/daetta 'to show'
- дожа/dozha [o-oe] > /doezh-na/ > доъжжа/doezhzha 'to drop'
- лаха/laxa [a-e] > /lex-na/ > лехха/lexxa 'to find'

4.1.2 Past Tenses

Chechen has 5 past tenses: recent witnessed past, remote witnessed past, the past imperfective, the past perfective, and the past progressive. Here we detail the formation and example sentences of the past tenses, however, past witnessed vs past non-witnessed enters into the domain of mood with evidentiality. The more precise semantic nuances of these forms will be discussed that section, further afield.

4.1.2.1 Recent Past Tense - Witnessed

The recent past tense (PST) is a common Chechen past tense that requires 3 conditions to be used: 1) the action has occurred in the past, 2) the event has continued to the time of speaking, and 3) the speaker has directly witnessed the event. It is formed with the suffix *-u/-i* and, like many of the other tenses, this tense is also formed by a series of vowel alternations:

Таблица 10: Recent Past Tense - Witnessed

Alternation	Examples	Translation
a - e / aa - e	мала / mala мел-и / mel-i	‘drink’
a - аь / а - ае	даккха / daqqa даьккх-и / daeqq-i	‘get’
e - e / ie - ie	деша / diesha деш-и / dieshi	‘read’
e - ий / ie - ii	детта / dietta дийтт-и / diitt-i	‘throw’
o - уь / uo - уу	тоха / tuoxa туьхи / tyux-i	‘hit’
o - оь / o - ое	дотта / dotta доьтт-и / doett-i	‘pour’
i - и / i - i	дига / diga диг-и / dig-i	‘lead’

4.1.2.2 Remote Past Tense - Witnessed

The remote past tense (RPST) - witnessed fulfils all the requirements of the recent present tense witnessed on a semantic level. It is formed by the same alternations described above for the recent present tense witnessed, only this time the suffix added is *-upa/ira*. The below two sentences illustrate the semantic difference between the recent and remote past tense witnessed forms.

- (74) Заремас суна чай доьтти
 Zarema-s suna chaj d-oett-i
 Zarema-ERG.SG 1SG.DAT tea.d.-ABS.SG d-pour-PST
 ‘Zarema (just) poured me (some) tea.’

- (75) Заремас суна чай доьттира
 Zarema-s suna chaj d-oett-ira
 Zarema-ERG.SG 1SG.DAT tea.d.ABS.SG d-pour-RPST
 ‘Zarema pour me (some) tea (a while ago)’

4.1.2.3 The Past Imperfective Tense

The past imperfective tense (PST.IMPF) is used to describe an event that is in the past, however, it is not clear in this tense if the action has been completed. This tense is formed

by adding the suffix *-pa/-ra* to the simple present tense form. Therefore, we analyze this as another type of compounded tense, wherein the inflection for present tense indicates imperfective aspect, and the *-pa/-ra* carries past tense meaning.

Таблица 11: Past Imperfective Formation

Alternation	Simple Present	Past Imperfective	Lemma
a - o	дада/dada доду/dod-u	додура/dod-u-ra	‘run’
e - oe	деша/diesha доьшу/doesh-u	доьшура/doesh-u-ra	‘read’
o - u	тоса/tosa тусу/tus-u	тусура/tus-u-ra	‘sense’
i - y	дижа/dizha дуьжу/dyzh-u	дуьжура/dyzh-u-ra	‘sleep’
u - u	дула/dula дулу/dulu	дулура/dul-u-ra	‘inflate’

4.1.2.4 Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense (PST.PRF) denotes an action that has occurred in the past and is completed in the present, and this action was not witnessed by the speaker. It is formed by adding *-ra* to the present perfect (PRES.PERF) form, in which *-na-* becomes *-ne-*

Таблица 12: Past Perfect Tense Formation

Alternation	Present Perfect	Past Perfect	Lemma
a - e	мелла mella	мел-не+ра mel-ne-ra	‘drink’
a - ae	даьккхина daeqqina	даьккх-не+ра daeqq-ne-ra	‘get’
ie - ie	дешна dieshna	деш-не+ра diesh-ne-ra	‘read’
e - ii	деттина dettina	детти-не+ра detti-ne-ra	‘hit’
o - oe	доьттина doettina	доьтти-не+ра doetti-ne-ra	‘pour’
i - i	дигна digna	диг-не+ра dig-ne-ra	‘lead’

4.1.2.5 Past Progressive Tense

The past progressive tense (PST.PROG) is nearly identical to the present progressive in its formation - the major difference being the tense of the copular verb. The form of the copula

used in the past progressive tense is *дара/d-ara*, which is the same as the past tense of the copular verb in copular sentences. The past progressive tense is still a construction with a present participle verb form and also still displays biabsolutive arguments and split agreement.

(76) цициг шур молуш дара
 cicig shur mol-u-sh d-ara
 cat.*d*.ABS.SG milk.*d*.ABS.SG drink-PRES-PTCP *d*-COP.PST.IMPF
 ‘The cat was drinking milk.’

(77) Салман бежанаш духкуш вара
 Salman bezhana-sh d-ouxk-u-sh v-ara
 Salman.*v*.ABS.SG cattle.*jII*-AUG-ABS.PL *jII*-sell-PRES-PTCP *v*-COP.PST.IMPF
 ‘Salman was selling cattle.’

4.1.3 Future Tenses

Chechen has 3 different future tenses. These tenses describe events that will occur in the future

4.1.3.1 Potential Future

The potential future (POT.FUT) describes a possible future or speculation of events that will come to pass. It denotes an action that is bound to happen, and may have a shade of meaning of making a strong recommendation. It is formed by adding the suffix *-p/-r* to the simple present base.

Таблица 13: Potential Future Formation

Alternation	Present Simple	Potential Future	Lemma
a - o	дада >доду dada >dod-u	додур dodu-r	‘run’
e - oe	эца >оьцу ieca >oec-u	оьцур oecu-r	‘buy’
o - u	тоса >тусу tosa >tus-u	тусур tusu-r	‘feel’
i - y	дижа >дутьжу dizha >dyzh-u	дутьжур dyzhu-r	‘sleep’

4.1.3.2 Compound Future

The compound future is the widely used future tense in Chechen. It describes events that will occur in the future and, unlike the potential future, it is used without additional shades of meaning. It is formed by using the potential future form as a participle and the copular verb *ды/d-u*. Agreement with *ды/d-u* is taken by the absolutive argument when the sentence is transitive.

4.1.3.3 Future Continuous

Future continuous tense is structurally quite complicated, but transparent. It is derived using the progressive present participle for other progressive tenses, the potential future/future participle form of the verb $\partial y/d-u$, which is the form xup/xir , and then another iteration of the copular verb $\partial y/d-u$.

- (78) Ас бепиг оьцур
 as bepig oec-ur
 1SG.ERG bread.ABS.SG buy-POT.FUT
 ‘I will (most definitely) buy bread./I really should buy bread.’
- (79) Ас бепиг оьцур ду
 as bepig oec-ur d-u
 1SG.ERG bread.*d*.ABS.SG buy-FUT.PTCP *d*-COP
 ‘I will buy bread (it’s what I’m going to do tomorrow).’
- (80) со бепиг оьцуш хир ву
 suo bepig oec-u-sh xir v-u
 1SG.ABS.*v* bread.*d*.ABS.SG buy-PRES-PTCP be.FUT.PTCP *v*-COP
 ‘I will be buying bread (tomorrow, when you call)’

4.2 Negation

Negation in Chechen is realized in three main ways: 1) The use of the negative particle ца/са before a tensed verb, 2) the use of the proclitic ма/ма in negative commands, and 3) in unique negative forms of verbs (witnessed mainly with the copula). We discuss the proclitic ма in our section on mood regarding the imperative. In addition to negation with particles, Chechen also may use negative pronouns with varying layers, including double and also triple negation.

4.2.1 Negative particle ца/са

Ца/Ca (NEG) is placed before the verb that it negates.

- (81) Со школе ца воьду
 So shkol-e са v-oed-u
 1SG.ABS.*v* school-AUG-ALL NEG *v*-goPRES
 ‘I don’t go to school.’
- (82) Ахьмада бежанаш ца духку
 Ahwmad-a bezhana-sh са d-uxk-u
 Ahwmad.*v*-ERG.SG cattle.*jII*.AUG-ABS.PL NEG *jII*-sell-PRES
 ‘Ahwmad does not sell cattle.’

Most all negation of tensed verbs are handled with this pattern in Chechen. The major exception is the copular verb $\partial y/d-u$ and other verb forms (such as the progressive or compound future tenses) that make use of $\partial y/d-u$ as an auxiliary verb. The negative form of $\partial y/d-u$ is $\partial au/d-ac$ in the present, and $\partial au\text{apa}/d-acara$ in the past.

- (83) нанас дина бепиг мерза ду
 наана-s d-i-na bepig merza d-u
 mother-ERG.SG *d*-make-PST.RCP bread.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-COP
 ‘The bread that mother made is tasty.’
- (84) нанас дина бепиг мерза дац
 наана-s d-i-na bepig merza d-a-c
 mother-ERG.SG *d*-do-PST.RCP bread.*d*.ABS.SG tasty *d*-COP-NEG
 ‘The bread that mother made is not tasty.’

The same distribution of the negative copular forms can also be found in tenses that use *dy/d-u* as an auxiliary verb, i.e the compound future.

- (85) ас цуьнга кехат яздийр ду
 as cunga kiexat jaz-d-iir d-u
 1SG.ERG 3SG.ALL letter.*d*.ABS.SG write-*d*-do.FUT.PTCP *d*-COP
 ‘I will write him a letter.’
- (86) ас цуьнга кехат яздийр дац
 as cunga kiexat jaz-d-iir d-a-c
 1SG.ERG 3SG.ALL letter.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-COP-NEG
 ‘I will not write him a letter.’

4.2.2 Negative Imperatives

For negative imperatives or prohibition, the proclitic ‘*ма/ma*’ is used before the verb.

- (87) ма г1о школе кхана
 ма ghuo shkole qana
 NEG go.IMP school-ALL tomorrow
 ‘Do not go to school tomorrow.’

The polite negative form is built by adding the suffix -ахь(a)/ahw(a). This form is a grammaticalization of the 2nd person singular in the ergative case.

- (88) сих ма лолахь
 six ma luo-lahw
 fast NEG give-POL.IMP
 ‘Don’t rush’ (lit. ‘don’t give fast’)

The proclitic ‘*ма/ma*’ can intercede between a deictic prefix and the inflected verb root.

- (89) схъа-ма-эцалахь цуьнгара ахча
 shwa-ma-ies-al-ahw cunga ахча
 DEC.PREV-NEG-take-IMP-POL.IMP 3SG.ALL money.*j*.ABS.SG
 ‘(Please) don’t take money from him.’
- (90) схъа-ма-йелла неъ
 shwa-ma-j-el-la nie’
 DEC.PREV-NEG-*j*-give-PST.PRF door.*j*.ABS.SG
 ‘Don’t open the door!’

4.2.3 Double Negation

Like Russian, Chechen requires the negative particles ‘*ца/са*’ or ‘*ма/ма*’ when additional generalized pronouns or adverbs (NPIs) are used:

- (91) цхъа а стаг вацара клубехъ
 chwa’a stag v-a-ca-ra klub-ehw
 someone man. *v*.ABS.SG *v*-COP-NEG-PST club-INES.SG
 ‘No one (not a single person) was at the club’

This reading of the negative pronoun is dependent entirely on the presence of double negation. Compare:

- (92) цхъаммо аьлира соьга тахана ло догӀур
 chwa-m-uo ael-ira soega taxan lo d-o-ghur
 someone-AUG-ERG.SG say-RPST 1SG.ALL today snow. *d*.ABS.SG *d*-fall-FUT.PTCP
 ду
 d-u
d-COP
 ‘Someone told me that it is going to snow today.’

- (93) цхъаммо а ца аьлира соьга тахана
 chwa-m-uo а са ael-ira soega taxan
 someone-AUG-ERG.SG NEG say-RPST 1SG.ALL today snow. *d*.ABS.SG
 ло догӀур ду
 lo d-o-ghur d-u
d-fall-FUT.PTCP *d*-COP
 ‘Someone told me that it is going to snow today.’

4.2.4 Reduplication

Negated predicates in Chechen can also appear in a reduplicated form. Negated predicates that use reduplication are more emphatic than negated predicates that simply use *ца* or *ма*.

- (94) ас хӀинца а сайна книжка эца ца эцна
 as hinca а saina knizhka ieca са iec-na
 1SG.ERG always 1SG.DAT.RFLX EMPH book.ABS.SG buy.INF NEG buy-PST.PRF
 ‘I still haven’t (even) bought a book for myself.’
- (95) Гумсет яха ца яхара цига
 Gumset j-аха са j-аха-ра ciga
 Gumset. *j* *j*-go.INF COP *j*-go-RPST
 ‘Gumset didn’t go there (at all!)’

In the reduplication pattern, the lexical verb appears in the infinitive before the negative particle. The tensed form of the same verb appears after the negative particle.

4.3 Participles and Masdars

Two Chechen verb forms, the Masdar and participles that correspond to English gerunds and that form relative clauses. Masdars are verbs that act as nouns and, as such, may act as the arguments of other verbs. Participles are used to modify noun phrases with additional clauses, hence, they are referred to here are ‘relative clausal participles’ as these types of participles are different from other verb forms designated as participles in other tenses (i.e. the present participle used in the present progressive, or the future participle used in the compound future tense).

4.3.1 Masdar

Masdar (MSDR), or verbal denominal, is formed by adding the suffix *-(a)p/-(a)r* to the infinitive. Masdar as a verbal denominal declines in cases and can have arguments.

- (96) цунна ядар деза
 цуппа jiadar dieza
 3SG.DAT run-MSDR. *d.*ABS.SG *d-like.PRES*
 ‘S/he likes running.’

Masdars decline for case and number identically. Also, all masdars are of noun-class type *d-class*.

Таблица 14: Declension of Masdar form of the verb ‘лела/liela’ (‘behave’/‘wander’)

Case	Singular	Plural
Absolutive	лелар/ liela-r	лелараш/ liela-r-ash
Genitive	леларан/ liela-r-an	леларшан/ liela-r-shan
Dative	леларна/ liela-r-na	леларашана/ liela-r-ash-ana
Ergative	леларо/ liela-r-uo	леларша/ liela-r-sha
Instrumental	леларца/ liela-r-ca	леларшца/ liela-r-sh-ca
Allative	леларе/ liela-r-ie	леларийх/ liela-r-iix
Lative	леларах/ liela-r-ax	леларшка/ liela-r-sh-ka
Comparative	леларал/ liela-r-al	леларийл/ liela-r-iil
Inessive	леларехъ/ liela-r-ehw	леларшкахъ/ liela-r-sh-kahw
Ablative	леларера/ liela-r-era	леларшкара/ liela-r-sh-kara

4.3.2 Relative clausal participles

Clausal participles (RCP) are verb forms that are used to modify a noun, a noun phrase, or other verbs in similar ways to relative pronouns trigger a relative clause in other European languages (cf. Russian *который*, French *que/qui*, German *der/die/das*, etc.). It plays a role similar to an adjective. There are three types of relative clausal participles in Chechen: present (RCP.PRES), past (RCP.PST), and future. The present tense participle is formed by using *-ун/-un* and it is added to the simple present tense alternated base.

- (97) Етт оьцун стаг
Jett оес-ун stag
cow.j.ABS.SG buy-PRES.RCP
'the man who buys cows'

The past tense participle is formed by using the suffix *-на*. This form is identical to the perfect past tense, however, we gloss it here as 'RCP.PST' for clarity.

- (98) Етт эцна стаг
Jett иес-на stag
cow.j.ABS.SG buy-PST.RCP person
'the man who bought a cow'

In addition to other forms, the copular verb *ды/d-u* has the participial forms of '*долун/d-olun*' (present) and '*дина/d-ina*'. The future participle is therefore formed with this form of the auxiliary verb *ды/d-u*.

- (99) Етт оьцур болун стаг
Jett оес-ур b-olun stag
cow.b.ABS.SG buy-fut.ptcp b-COP-PRES.RCP man
'the man who will buy a/the cow'

4.4 Light Verbs and Auxiliary Verbs

A number of Chechen predicates can be characterized as 'light verb constructions' or 'complex predicates' due to surface similarities with other light verb constructions in languages such as Persian, Turkish, or Japanese. In Chechen, light verb constructions are used to 1) turn an adjective into a verb, 2) in noun-verb combinations to express a certain predicate, 3) express the causative, 4) express the potential mood.

4.5 General schema

The most common Chechen light verbs are: *дан/d-an*, *дала/d-ala*, and *даккха/d-aqqa*. The use of light verbs with nouns, adjectives, or even other verbs may coin a new transitive or intransitive predicate, convey mood, or render new nouns from participial verbs via substantivization.

- (100) Light verbs and lexicalization with *р1апа/ghara* 'noise/voice'

- г1ара ю
ghaara j-u
voice.j.ABS.SG j-COP
'voice/sound'
- г1ара ян
ghaara j-an
voice.j.ABS.SG j-do.INF
'to make noise'
- г1арадала
ghaar=dala
noise=give.INF
'to become popular, to become well known'
- г1арадаккха
ghaara=daqqa
voice=take.INF

'to make (someone/something) popular'
- г1арадаладала
- г1арадаккхадала
- г1ардаьлла
- г1ардаьлларг

(101) Америкахь уггара г1араялла эшархо Лэди Гага
 Amerika-hw uggar ghaara=j-al-la esharxo Ledi Gaga
 America-INES most voice=j-give-PST.PERF-RCP.PST singer.j.ABS.SG Lady Gaga
 ю
 j-u
 j-COP

'The most popular singer in America is Lady Gaga.' (lit. 'the singer who has *received* the most voice in America is Lady Gaga')

4.5.1 Adjective + дан/dan

Classed adjectives may be made into transitive predicates with 'дан/dan':

(102) хи довха ду
 xi dowxa d-u
 water.ABS.SG hot COP
 'The water is hot.'

(103) нанас хи довхдина
 naan-as xi dowxd-i-na
 mother.AUG-ERG water hot
 'Mother heated (up) the water.'

4.5.2 Даккха to take

даккха is used with many objects to convey new predicates. It is highly productive

(104) predicates made from даккха + noun

- ахча даккха = to make money
- дечиг даккха = to chop wood
- де даккха = to spend a day
- зезаг даккха = to pick a flower
- серладаккха = to brighten, to make clear

4.5.3 Noun + Verb

цигаърка оза = to smoke

4.5.4 Loan word + Verb

An extremely productive path for neologism in Chechen. отпуск эца - to take a vacation
яздан - to write (of Oghuz Turkic origin ‘jaz’ = ‘to write’
саламдала - to greet (Arabic ‘salaam’ = greeting)

4.6 Mood

Chechen has several moods in addition to tenses. These include the imperative mood, the causative mood, and evidentiality, which is already detailed in the verbal system.

4.6.1 Imperative

Chechen has 5 types of imperatives, each ranging with different degrees of politeness and intent. These forms include: the simple imperative, the interrogative imperative, the immediate imperative, the tasked-imperative, and the absolute imperative (categorical).

- Simple Imperative (IMP)- formed with slight nasalization added to the final vowel on the infinitive

(105) дийца(н)
diica-(n)
say.INF-IMP
‘speak’ or ‘tell’

- Polite Imperative (POL.IMP) - formed by adding the suffix ‘-(a)хъа/-(a)hwa’(for 2nd person singular) or ‘-(a)уа/-(a)sha’(for 2nd person plural) to the simple imperative.

(106) дийца(н)хъа
diica-(n)-hwa
speak-IMP-POL.IMP
‘Please, (you) speak’ or ‘Please, (you) tell’

(107) дийций(н)ша
 diic-ii(n)-sha
 speak-IMP-POL.IMP
 ‘Please, (you all) speak’ or ‘Please, (you all) tell’

- Immediate Imperative (IMD.IMP) - formed by adding the suffix ‘-л/-л’ to the infinitive. This form is used to emphasize immediate action requested on the part of the speaker.

(108) дийцал
 diica-l
 speak-INF-IMD.IMP
 ‘Speak, (now!)’

- Tasked-Imperative (TSK.IMP)- formed by adding the polite imperative suffix to the immediate imperative base. It is used to do something during your absence.

(109) дийцалахъ
 diica-lahw
 speak-TSK.IMP
 ‘Tell/Speak (in my absence/for me)’

(110) дийцалаш

- Absolutive/Categorical Imperative (CAT.IMP) - formed by adding the suffix ‘-уьйла/-ила’ to the simple present alternated base of the verb.

(111) дуьцийла
 dyc-iila
 speak.PRES-CAT.IMP
 ‘One must speak!’

4.6.2 Causative

The causative form (CAUS) in Chechen increases the valency of a transitive verb by one, with the new extra argument in the allative case. The causative in Chechen is formed by adding the verb дийта/d-iita to the verb, directly. In causative constructions, the lexical verb is left in the infinitive and the auxiliary/light verb *дуьма/d-iita* inflects for tense and noun-class agreement.

(112) жижиг даттийта цуьнга
 zhizhig datt-iita cynga
 meat grill-CAUS 3SG.ALL
 ‘Make him grill the meat’

Scholars tend to interpret the suffix ‘*уьм/ит*’ as being a phonetic infusion of the verb ‘*дума (уьма/вума)/ дита (жита/вита)*’ meaning ‘to leave’ or ‘to abandon’. In Highland/*Laamaroj*

dialects, *ḍaiḡma/d-iita* has the form *ḍaiḡma/d-aita* and behaves exactly the same, syntactically. Lexically, however, it may be related to the verb ‘*ḍan/d-an*’ which also is able to transitivize adjectivable predicates in both dialects.

- (113) *нанас* *кехат* *оьхьадийшийтира* *соьга*
 naana-s *kiexat* *oehwa-diish-iit-ira* *soega*
 mother.AUG.ERG.SG letter.*d*.ABS.SG DEC.PREV-read.INF-CAUS-RPST 1SG.ALL
 ‘Mother made me read the letter.’

4.7 Evidentiality

Evidentiality in Chechen is expressed by using the witnessed and unwitnessed past tense forms.

- The recent witnessed past tense - (PST) this tense is formed by adding the suffix ‘*-u/-i*’ and alternating the vowel of the verb stem to express an event that just recently occurred and was witnessed by the speaker.

- (114) *Ахьмада* *стоьл кечди*
 Ahwamd-a *stol kiech-d-i*
 Ahwmad-ERG.SG table read-d-do.PST
 ‘Ahmad set the table (I saw him do it)’

The time frame of the witnessed event can be specified further into the past with the remote witnessed past (RPST), using the suffix ‘*-pa/-ra*’

- (115) *Ахьмада* *стоьл кечдира*
 Ahwmad-a *stoel kiech-d-i-ra*
 Ahwmad-ERG.SG table read-d-do-RPST
 ‘Ahwmad set the table (a while ago, I saw him do it)’

- The unwitnessed past tense - (PST.PRF) is used to express an event which the speaker was not present to witness. This form clearly provides a sense that the speaker did not witness the event. The unwitnessed past tense is formed by using a combination of the past perfect tense and the auxiliary verb ‘*хилла/xila*’ (‘to happen’/‘to occur’).

- (116) *Ахьмада* *стоьл кечдина* *хилла*
 Ahwmad-a *stoel kiech-d-i-na* *xil-la*
 Ahwmad-ERG.SG table ready-d-do-PST.PRF happen-PST.PRF
 ‘Ahwmad set the table (allegedly, I didn’t see it)’

This form may be used when the outcome of a given action is witnessed by the speaker, but the physical action was not (i.e. the speaker sees a set table and heard that it was Ahwmad to set it, but the speaker did not see Ahwmad himself set the table).

- The unwitnessed remote tense - (UNW.REM) this form is used when referring to an event that has occurred a very long time ago. Furthermore, the speaker has not witnessed the event. It is formed by using, again, the past perfective form of the verb, plus the auxiliary verb ‘*xula/xila*’ in the perfective:

(117) Ахьмада стоьл кечдина хиллера
 Ahwmad-a stoel kiech-d-i-na xil-lera
 Ahwmad-ERG.SG table ready-*d*-do-PST.PRF happen-PERF
 ‘Ahwmad set the table (a long time ago).’

This form is found often in narrative texts and in storytelling.

- The unwitnessed past progressive - this form refers to events that occurred simultaneously and were not witnessed by the speaker.

(118) Ахьмад стоьл кечдеш хиллера
 Ahwmad stoel kiech-d-ies xil-lera
 Ahwmad.v.ABS.SG table.d.ABS.SG ready-*d*-do-PRES.PTCP happen-PERF
 ‘Ahwmad was setting the table (but I didn’t see)’

(119) Малика цла йоглучу хенахь
 Malika c’a j-oghu-chu hwien-ahw
 Malika.j.ABS.SG home.ADVb j-go.PRES.RCP-OBL-GEN time.AUG-INES
 Ахьмад стоьл кечдеш хиллера
 Ahwmad stoel kiech-d-iesh xil-lera
 Ahwmad.v.ABS.SG table.d.ABS.SG read-*d*-do-PRES.PTCP happen-PERF
 ‘When Malika came home, Ahwmad was setting the table (Malika told me he was setting the table, but I did not witness that he was setting the table)’

5 Adjective Morphology

5.1 Qualitative Adjectives

Adjectives in Chechen can be qualitative (standard), relative, or possessive. Adjectives have a distinct morphological structure. Standard (normal) adjectives, end in a short nasalized vowel. The nasal vowel can be heard, but it is not recorded orthographically.

(120) Adjectives with short nasal vowel

- дика(н)/dika(n) ‘good’
- хаза(н)/xaza(n) ‘beautiful’

The major exception to this rule is adjectives that end in a long nasalized vowel in the stem.

(121) Adjectives with long nasal vowel

- воӀ/vuon ‘bad’

- цлиэн/с'иен 'red'
- вайн/vain 'our (exclusive)'

Adjectives generally appear before the head noun that they modify.

- (122)
- дика клант/dika k'ant 'good boy'
 - хаза коч/хаза koch 'beautiful dress'
 - цлиэн машина/ts'iien mashina 'red car'

5.2 Possessive adjectives

Possessive adjectives have the same morphological form as nouns in the genitive case

5.3 Class adjectives

There is only a limited number of classed adjectives in Chechen. They agree in noun-class to the head noun they modify.

(123) **List of class adjectives**

- деза/d-eza 'heavy'
- довха/d-оуха 'hot'
- деха/d-iexa 'long'
- дуькъа/d-yq'a 'thick'
- дораха/d-ораха 'cheap'
- дерстана/d-erstana 'fat'
- дуьткъа/d-ytq'a 'thin'
- доца/d-оца 'short'
- дайн/d-айн 'light'
- дуьзна/d-yzna 'full'
- даьржана/d-aerzhana 'spread'
- доккха/d-оqqa 'large/big/old'

5.4 Degrees of Comparison

There are two ways of forming comparative forms in Chechen: (1) standard adjectives do not change their morphological structure; (2) adding suffixes -(a)x/(a)x or -xo/-xuo. The comparative is formed using the suffix -(a)x, with -a- acting as a buffer vowel to adjectives ending in a consonant. In addition to the comparative and superlative, Chechen has an additional layer of comparative, named here 'the extended comparative' (EXTCOMP), which corresponds to the construction of 'much more X' in English. The superlative degree of comparison is formed by using 'уьггар/uggar' ('the most'), 'кзасттана/q'aesttana' ('especially'), 'т1ex/т'ex' ('more'), or 'дукха/duqa' ('more').

Таблица 15: Chechen comparative, extended comparative, and superlative

Standard Adjective	Comparative	Extended Comparative	Superlative
хаза/xaza 'beautiful'	хаза-х/xaza-х 'more beautiful'	хаза-хо/xaza-хуо 'much more beautiful'	уггар хаза/uggar xaza 'the most beautiful'
дика/dika 'good'	дика-х/dika-х 'better'	дика-хо/dika-хуо 'much better'	уггар дика/uggar dika 'the best'
жима/zhima 'small'	жима-х/zhima-х 'smaller'	жима-хо/zhima-хуо 'much smaller'	уггар жима/uggar zhima 'the smallest'
даьрстан/daestan 'fat'	даьрстан-ах/daestan-ах 'fatter'	даьрстан-ахо/daestan-ахуо 'much fatter'	уггар даьрстан/uggar daestan 'the fattest'

5.5 Substantivized Adjectives

Chechen permits the use of substantivized adjectives. According to Zokayev's 1960 classification, the declension of both qualitative and relative substantivized adjectives are divided into two groups: independent and dependent. Independent substantivized adjectives decline in the same way and behave identical to nouns. They are able to take all case endings and they are formed by adding the suffix -ниг/-nig to an adjective in the absolute. For all other case forms, the augment base of this substantivized adjective is -чу/-chu. Some cases trigger vowel alternations.

(124) Declension of Independent Substantivized Adjective 'к1айн/k'ain'('white')

Case	Singular	Plural
Absolutive	клай-ниг k'ai-nig	клай-ниг-аш k'ai-nig-ash
Genitive	клай-чу-н k'ai-chu-n	клай-черан k'ai-charan
Dative	клай-чун-на k'ai-chun-na	клай-чар-на k'ai-char-na
Ergative	клай-ч-о k'ai-ch-uo	клай-чар-а k'ai-char-a
Instrumental	клай-чуьн-ца k'ai-chyn-ca	клай-чаьр-ца k'ai-char-ca
Lative	клай-чу-х k'ai-chu-x	клай-чар-ах k'ai-char-ax
Inessive	клай-чуьн-га-хь k'ai-chyn-ga-hw	клай-чаьрга-хь k'ai-charga-hw
Ablative	клай-чуьн-га-ра k'ai-cyn-ga-ra	клай-чаьрга-ра
Allative	клай-чуьн-га k'ai-chyn-ga	клай-чаьр-га
Comparative	клай-чу-л k'ai-chu-l	клай-чар-ал

The dependent declension of adjectives refers to adjectives that are modifying some other head noun. In this declension type, adjectives take a *-чу/-chu* suffix when modifying nouns that are in the *oblique cases*. The *oblique cases* are all cases other than the absolutive. For examples in this grammar, we gloss this suffix as 'OBL'.

(125) Sample declension with клайн котам/k'ain kotam 'white chicken'

Таблица 16: Dependent adjective declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Abosolutive	к1айн котам k'aiin kotam	к1айн котамаш k'aiin kuotam-ash
Genitive	к1айчу котаман k'ai-chu kuotam-an	к1айчу котамий k'ai-chu kuotam-ii
Dative	к1айчу котамна k'ai-chu kuotam-na	к1айчу котамашна k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-na
Ergative	к1айчу котамо k'ai-chu kuotam-uo	к1айчу котамаша k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-a
Instrumental	к1айчу котамаци k'ai-chu kuotam-aca	к1айчу котамашца k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-ca
Lative	к1айчу котамых k'ai-chu kuotam-ax	к1айчу котамийх k'ai-chu kuotam-iix
Locative	к1айчу котамехь k'ai-chu kuotam-e-hw	к1айчу котамашкаехь k'ai-chu kuotam-aesh-kae-hw
Allative	к1айчу котаме k'ai-chu kuotam-e	к1айчу котамашка k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-ka
Ablative	к1айчу котамар k'ai-chu kuotam-ae-ra	к1айчу котамашгара k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-ga-ra
Comparative	к1айчу котамал k'ai-chu kuotam-al	к1айчу котамашал k'ai-chu kuotam-ash-al

6 Syntax

6.1 Introduction

Chechen syntax can be characterized as left-branching with SOV style word order. Chechen word order is relatively free and allows pragmatically driven scrambling, where contrastive elements come after the tensed verb. Yes/no questions in Chechen are posed with a question particle, and wh-questions may remain either in-situ or front a sentence, due to focus scrambling. Coordination shows an interesting interaction with state of transitivity and case-marking for the first clause in a coordinated sentence. Modifiers, relative clauses, subordinate clauses, and quantification all precede the heads that are modified by these structures. In addition, the limitations on the Chechen position of objects suggests that a verb and its object, in particular absolutive arguments, are tightly bound and can not be scrambled away from one other by wh-extraction or sentence fronting. Finally, we briefly discuss the focus position in Chechen and the semantic effects of adposing an argument after the tensed verb.

6.2 Word Order

Unmarked Chechen sentences have subject-object-verb (SOV) type word order, with arguments preceding tensed verbs.

- (126) 1умара кехат яздо
 Wumar-a kiexat jaz=d-o
 Wumar.ERG letter.*d*.ABS.SG write=*d*-do.PRES
 ‘Wumar writes a letter.’

In ditransitive sentences, indirect objects most often precede direct objects.

- (127) 1умара шен доттаг1чуьнга кехат яздина
 Wumar-a shie-n dottagh-chun-ga kiexat jaz=d-i-na
 Wumar.ERG 3SG.REFL.GEN friend-AUG-ALL letter.*d*.ABS.SG write=*d*-do-PST.PRF
 ‘Wumar wrote a letter to his friend.’

Prepositional phrases also precede the object they modify in unmarked sentences.

- (128) 1умара шен доттаг1чуьнга хенан х1оттамах лаьцна
 Wumar-a shien dottagha-chu-nga [[hwien-an hottam-ax laecna]_{PP}
 Wumar-ERG 3SG.REFL.GEN friend-AUG-ALL air.AUG-GEN state-LAT.SG about
 кехат яздина
 kiexat]_{NP} jaz=d-i-na
 letter.*d*.ABS.SG write=*d*-do-PST.PRF
 ‘Wumar wrote his friend a letter about the weather (lit. ‘weather’ = ‘the state of the air’)’

Chechen maximally permits verbs with three verbal arguments when the tensed verb is found in the causative mood.

- (129) нанас 1умаре д1аялийтира шен
 nana-s Wumar-e dwa-j-al-iit-ira shien
 mother-ERG.SG Wumar-AUG-ALL DEIC.PVERB-*j*-give-CAUS-RPST 3SG.GEN.REFLX
 доттаг1ачух лаьцна кинижка Зейнаъана
 dottagha-chu-x laecna kinizhka Zejna-’ana
 friend-AUG-LAT about book.*j*-ABS.SG Zejna-DAT
 ‘Mother made Wumar give Zejna the book about his friend.’

Minimally, Chechen allows for subjectless constructions, with therefore one verbal argument.

- (130) арахь шелъелла
 ara-hw shel=j-el-la
 outside-INESS cold=*j*-give-
 ‘It became cold outside.’

6.3 Coordination

Coordination in Chechen is achieved with the coordinating conjunctions ‘*a/a*’ (‘and’)

6.3.1 Nominal Coordination

Nouns can be coordinated with a clitic ‘*a/a*’. The coordination particle is placed immediately after elements in a list of coordinated nouns.

- (131) Самантаc стол а, глант а, неларш а
 Samanta-s stol a, ghant a, newar-sh a
 Samantha-ERG.SG table COORD, chair COORD, door.AUG-ABS.PL COORD
 цланйина
 c’anii-na
 clean-PST.PRF
 ‘Samantha cleaned the table, and the chair, and the doors.’

Both nouns and infinitives in certain contexts can be coordinated with ‘*a/a*’.

- (132) Рамзан деша а, балха а, базара а,
 Ramzan diesha a balx-a a bazar-a a
 Ramzan.v.ABS.SG study.INF COORD, work.AUG-ALL COORD, market-ALL COORD
 вахара тахана
 v-ax-ara taxana
 vgo-RPST today
 ‘Ramzan managed to study (to go to school), (go) to work, and (go) to the market today.’

6.3.2 Sentential Coordination

Sentences can also be coordinated with ‘*a/a*’ when they share the same subject. The clitic ‘*a/a*’ only comes before the main verb of the sentence.

- (133) воккха стаг худар а диъна
 v-oqqa stag xudar a d-i’-na
 v-old man.v.ABS.SG porridge.d.ABS.SG COOR d-eat-PST.PRF
 длавижира
 dwa-v-izh-i
 DEIC.PREV-v-sleep-PST
 ‘The old man ate porridge and went to sleep.’

For adjectives that are coordinated, the clitic appears after each of the adjectives.

- (134) иза хаза а хъекхалехъ а ву
 iza xaza a hwaeqal-hw a v-u
 3SG.ABS beautiful COOR smart COOR v-COP
 ‘He is handsome and smart.’

In coordinated sentences, the subject of the sentence is found in the case that corresponds to the transitivity of the second clause. This is to say that if the coordinated sentence has a transitive clause as the second clause of the coordinate, then the subject is found in the ergative case. If the second clause of the coordination is intransitive, then it is in the absolutive case.

- (135) воккхачу стага дуга а эцна, худар дира
 (136) воккхачу стага ц1а а вахана, худар дира
 (137) *воккха стаг ц1а а вахана худар дира
 (138) воккха стаг худар а диъна, ц1а вахара
 (139) *воккхачу стага худар а диъна ц1а вахара

This type of case control for coordinated sentences does not extend to coordinated sentences where one clause is intransitive and the other is dative.

- (140) воккхачу стагана цхъа тата хезна
 (141) воккха стаг чехка араваълира
 (142) воккха стаг цхъа тата а хезна, чехка араваълира
 (143) !воккхачу стагана цхъа тата а хезна чехка араваълира
 (144) !воккхачу стагана чехка араваълира цхъа тата а хезна
 (145) воккха стаг чехка араваълира цхъа тата а хезна

6.3.3 Contrastive Coordination

Sentences and adjectives and nouns can be contranstively coordinated with *ама/ама* ‘but’

- (146) Дог1ано урамаш хих дуъзийнера, амма ас-сайн кога
 dogh-an-uo uram-ash xi-x d-yziin-iera, amma as-sain kog-a
 rain-AUG-ERG street-ABS.PL water-LAT *d*-fill-RPST, but 1SG.ERG boot-ABS.PL
 ши ийтиг юъхира
 shi ijtig j-yxi-ra
 on *j*-put-RPST
 ‘Rain filled the streets with water, but I wore boots.’

6.3.3.1 Contrastive Relative Clauses (‘However...’)

Contranstive relative clauses, similar in meaning to clauses headed by English ‘however’ or ‘although’ are also achieved using the ‘а/а’ coordination clitic. In these sentences, it occurs after a verb in the unreal conditional mood.

- (147) Дег1ана уггар жимаха валехъ а, хъакъалаца массарел
 Degha-n-a uggar zhima-xa v-el-iehwa a, hwaeq'alaca massar-el
 body-GEN.SG most small-COMP *v*-COP.COND COOR, mind-INST all-COMP
 тоълла вара Султан.
 toella v-ara Sultan
 win-PST.PERF *v*-COP.PST
 ‘Although he was the smallest, Sultan was the smartest of everyone’

6.4 Types of Argument Structure/ Case Valency

Case valency patterns in Chechen include the causative, which allows the increasing of verbal arguments by one. Chechen does not have a canonical applicative form and, instead, tends towards the use of light verbs with bound objects (i.e. OBJECT + ‘дан/*d-an*(*do*)’ = verbalized OBJECT)

6.4.1 Dat-Abs (Dative-Absolutive)

Dative-Absolutive verbs cluster around verbs that denote actions that are psychological, mental, or sensory in nature.

- (148) Тхан дена мохь тоьхна саскал ч'ог'ла йеза
txan die-na mohw toex-na saskal ch'ogha jeza
1PL.EXCL.GEN father.AUG-DAT lard.ABS.SG hit-PST.RCP saskal very like.PRES
‘Our father likes saskal (cornbread) with lard.’

Common dat-abs verbs include:

- хазакхета/*xazaxieta* - ‘to like (lit. ‘to seem beautiful’)’
- догадоха/*dogadoxa* - ‘to fall in love with, to crave’
- лаа/*la'a* - ‘to wish’, ‘would like’
- хеза/*xieza* - ‘to hear’
- ган/*gan* - ‘to see’
- н'лаб кхета/*nwab qieta* - ‘to fall asleep’
- деза/*d-ieza* - ‘to love, to adore’

Many verbs in Chechen can be classified as ‘labile verbs’, which take on different meanings when there are different case configurations. The verb ‘деза/*d-ieza*’ is one such verb:

- (149) суна бепиг дар дукха деза
suna bepig d-ar duqa d-ieza
1SG.DAT bread.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-do.MSDR much *d*-love.PRES
‘I really like to make bread.’

- (150) ас бепиг дан деза
as bepig d-an d-ieza
1SG.ERG bread.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-do.INF *d*-need.PRES
‘I need to make bread’

In both cases, the verb ‘деза/*d-ieza*’ is the predicate verb in the present tense. In addition to alternation with case configurations, several unaccusative verbs alternative between ergative-absolutive and absolutive argument structure with the addition of the light verb ‘дан/*d-an*’ in the variant where the verb is transitive:

- (151) Стака охьадужира
 Staka ohwa-d-yzh-ira
 glass.*d*.ABS.SG PVERB-*d*-fall-RPST
 ‘The glass fell’
- (152) Ас стака охьадожийна
 As staka ohwa-d-oozh-iina
 1SG.ERG glass.*d*.ABS.SG PVERB-*d*-fall.INF=*ddo*-PST.PERF
 ‘I dropped the glass.’

In such examples, both the infinitive and the light verb agree with the absolutive argument in noun class.

- (153) 1аж охьабужира
 wazh ohwa-b-yzh-ira
 apple.*b*.ABS.SG PVERB-*b*-fall-RPST
 ‘The apple fell’
- (154) ас 1аж охьабожабина
 as wazh ohwa-b-oozha=b-i-na
 1SG.ERG apple.*b*.ABS.SG PVERB*b*-fall=*b*-do-PST.PERF
 ‘I dropped the apple.’

6.5 Agreement

As previously mentioned in our section on nominal morphology, Chechen has 6 noun-classes that manifest in one of four phonemic exponents: *v-class*, *j-class*, *j-classII*, *d-class*, *b-class* and *b-classII*. The above categories are named ‘*j-classI*’ and ‘*b-classII*’ because they display the exponents for *j-class* or *b-class* in the singular, but in the plural, *j-classII* takes the exponent *b* and *b-classII* takes the exponent *d-class*.

Agreement in Chechen occurs in 2 places: classed-adjectives and classed-verbs. To recap: classed-adjectives and classed-verbs are a subset of adjectives and verbs that display agreement. This is to say that agreement can be observed with these specific verbs and adjectives, however, not all verbs and adjectives display agreement. In the majority of cases, Agreement obeys a simple rule: **classed-verbs, as predicates, agree in noun class with the absolutive argument of a sentence.**

- (155) Аслан школе вьоду
 Aslan shkol-e v-oed-u
 Aslan.*v-class*.ABS school-ALL.SG *v*-go-PRES
 ‘Aslan goes to school’

Where ‘Aslan’ is the subject of the intransitive verb ‘go’. Ergo ‘Aslan’ remains in the absolutive case and controls agreement on ‘go’, which is manifested by the ‘в-/v-’ prefix in the verb for ‘go’.

Syntactically, we consider this a typical example of Agreement, as neutral word-order in Chechen shows the control for agreement to the left of the classed-predicate, on which agreement exponents are found. Modifiers within the same noun-phrase also display agreement with the head of that phrase. This is seen primarily with classed-adjectives:

- (156) воккхачу стага худар доу
 [[voqqa-chu]_{AP} stag-a]_{DP} [[xudar]_{DP} d-ou]_{VP}
 old-OBL man. *v*-ERG.SG porridge. *d*.ABS.SG *d*-eat-PRES
 ‘The old man eats porridge.’

Above we see in (156) that the classed-adjective ‘*доккха/d-oqqa*’ (‘old’/‘elderly’) agrees in noun-class with the subject ‘*маз/стаг*’ (‘person’) which bears *v-class* since it refers to a biologically male person. The tensed verb ‘*доу/d-ou*’, the present tense form of the classed-verb ‘*даа/d-аа*’ (‘to eat’) bears *d-class* agreement with the absolutive argument ‘*худар/худар*’ (‘porridge’).

6.5.1 Masdar and Subjectless Agreement

In expressions where the argument is a Masdar verb, agreement is found with the implied absolutive argument.

- (157) цунна вадар деза
 cunna v-ad-ar d-ieza
 3SG.DAT *v*-run-MSDR. *d* *d*-like.PRES
 ‘He likes running.’
- (158) цунна ядар деза
 cunna j-ad-ar d-ieza
 3SG.DAT *j*-run-MSDR. *d* *d*-like.PRES
 ‘She likes running.’

Despite the canonical rule of agreement only occurring with the absolutive argument as the host for the noun-class variable, (157) and (158) show agreement for noun class with no such absolutive argument. In fact, the only absolutive argument in the sentence is the masdar itself, which acts as the probe for *d-class* on the verb ‘*деза/d-ieza*’.

6.6 Position of Objects in the Biabsolutive

Fronting and other types of A’-movement is permissible in Chechen on the condition that the theme argument and lexical verb be moved together. In the case of the biabsolutive construction, particularly, an extracted argument and the lexical verb marked for the progressive aspect and the internal argument must be moved *together*. No additional material may intervene between these two constituents.

6.6.1 Theme scrambling in Chechen

- (159) Али цIено деш ву
 Ali c’eno d-esh v-u
 Ali. *v*.ABS.SG house. *d*.ABS.SG *d*-do-PROG *v*-COP
 ‘Ali is building a house (neutral word order).’

- (160) Ц1ено деш Али t_i ву
 C'eno d-e-sh]_i Ali t_i v-u
 house.D.ABS D-do-PROG Ali.v.ABS.SG t_i v-COP
 ‘Ali is (in the process of) **building a house.**’ (‘emphasis is on the object.’)
- (161) Али ву ц1ено деш
 Ali v-u c'eno d-e-sh
 Ali.v.ABS.SG v-COP house.d.ABS.SG D-do-PROG
 ‘**Ali** is (in the process of) building a house.’ (‘emphasis is on Ali.’)
- (162) *Али деш ву ц1ено
 *Ali d-esh v-u c'eno
 Ali.v.ABS.SG d-do-PROG v-COP house.d.ABS.SG

6.6.2 Wh-Fronting of the theme in Chechen

- (163) Али ц1ено деш ву
 Ali c'eno d-e-sh v-u
 Ali house.d.ABS.SG d-do-PROG v-COP
 ‘Ali is building a house (baseline).’
- (164) Али х1ун деш ву?
 Ali [x1un d-e-sh]_i v-u?
 what.d.ABS d-do-PROG Ali.v.ABS.SG t_i
 ‘What is Ali (in the process of) building.’
- (165) Х1ун деш ву Али?
 x1un d-e-sh v-u Ali?
 what.d.ABS d-do-PROG v-COP Ali.V.ABS
 ‘What is Ali (in the process of) building.’
- (166) * х1ун Али деш ву
 * x1un Ali desh vu
 * what.d.ABS.SG Ali d-do-PROG v-COP

Accounts for this limitation are multiple in theoretical syntax. Several theories about similar constructions in other Dagestania languages and Basque exist, however, Chechen differs from these accounts in a number of structural properties, namely the lack of postpositions in progressive constructions as well as successive agreement values in other compound forms that take typical ergative-absolutive valency (i.e. complex future tense and other light-verb constructions). The role of noun-incorporation and the effect that this would have on the valuation of agreement as either a typical mechanism for agreement (as we have seen in other ergative-absolutive sentences) versus feature-concord remains an open question in Caucasian and Nakh linguistics.

6.7 Order of Modifiers

The general rule for modifiers is to place any given modifier before the head that they modify. This is true for adjectives, genitive constructions, demonstratives, and numbers, relative clauses, participial phrases. In the case of some modifiers, mainly adjectives, the order may be different due to pragmatic-driven word order/focus scrambling.

6.7.1 Adjectives

Adjectives generally precede the nouns that they modify.

- (167) *цлиэн книжка*
tsien kinizhka
red book.*j.ABS.SG*
the red book
- (168) *хьабкълехь долу бераш*
hwaeq'al-ehw d-olu bier-ash
mind.INESS *d-COP.RCP.PRES* child.*d-ABS.SG*
'the smart children'

In the case of nouns that are qualified with a demonstrative adjective, non-determiner adjectives precede the whole noun phrase (i.e come before non-demonstrative adjectives).

- (169) *хлара цлиэн книжка*
hara c'ien knizhka
this red book..*ABS.SG*
'this red book'
- (170) *и цлиэн книжка*
i c'ien knizhka
that red book.*j.ABS.SG*
'that red book'
- (171) *хлара хьекълехь долу бераш*
hara hwieq'al-ehw d-olu bier-ash
this mind-INESS *d-COP.RCP.PRES* child.*d-ABS.PL*
'these smart children'
- (172) *и хьекълехь долу бераш*
i hwieq'al-iehw d-olu bier-ash
that mind-INESS *d-COP.RCP.PRES* child.*d-ABS.PL*
'those smart children'

For noun phrases that are headed by a count noun that is quantified with a number, there are two possible sites. For the number one, 'цхьа/chwa', this is placed before the entire noun phrase.

- (173) *цхьа цлиэн книжка*
chwa c'ien knizhka
one red book.*j.ABS.SG*

‘1 red book’

- (174) кхо цIиэн книжка
qo c’ien knizhka
3 red book.*j*.ABS.SG
‘Three red books’

However, relative clause are placed before the number phrase. Note below that the number ‘*duʒ/d-i*’ also shows agreement in noun-class with the head of the noun phrase.

- (175) хьекъалехъ долу дийъ бер
hwieq’aliew d-olu d-i’ bier-ash
mind-INESS *d*-COP.RCP.PRES *d*-4 child.*d*-ABS.SG
‘Four children smart children / Four children, who are smart.’

6.7.2 Genitive modifiers

Genitive modifiers (the nouns that are possessors) are often placed before the possessed noun.

- (176) Зураан болх
Zura-n bolx
Zura-GEN work.ABS.SG
‘Zura’s work/job’
- (177) вайн нах
vain naх
1PL.GEN person.ABS.PL
‘Our people’⁴
- (178) школехъ доьшуш волучу клантан цIе
shkol-ehw d-oesh-ush v-olu-chu k’ant-an c’e
school-INESS study-PRES.PTCP *v*-COP.PRES.RCP-OBL boy-GEN.SG name.*j*.ABS.SG
Шамил ю
Shamil j-u
Shamil *j*-COP
‘The boy who studies at school’s name is Shamil.’

6.8 Reflexive Constructions

Chechen has both indicative and reflexive pronouns. Reflexive pronouns are not generalized like in other European languages (i.e German *sich*, Russian ‘*себя*’, French ‘*se*’), rather, each pronoun has its own reflexive counterpart. The use of a reflexive pronoun in the genitive binds the referent to the antecedent, whereas the indicative pronoun refers to an entity outside of the anaphora domain.

⁴This is the etymological meaning of *Vainakh* in the ‘*Nakh-Dagestanian*’ language family.’

- (179) цунна шен йиша йеза
 cunna shien jiisha j-ieza
 3SG.DAT 3SG.GEN.REFLX sister.j.ABS.SG j-love.PRES

‘He loves his (own) sister.’

- (180) цунна цуьнан йиша йеза
 cunna cunan jiisha j-ieza
 3SG.DAT 3SG.GEN sister.j.ABS.SG j-love.PRES

‘He loves his (i.e someone else’s) sister’

Reflexive pronouns are also used with indicative pronouns to draw emphasis. It is often found with the complex future tense.

- (181) ас-айса язйир ю х1ара книжка
 as-ajsa yaz=j-ii-r j-u hur knizhka
 1SG.ERG=1SG.ERG.REFLX write=j-do-FUT.PTCP COP this book.i.ABS.SG

‘I wrote this book all by myself.’

Below we provide a reference to both indicative and reflexive pronouns in Chechen:

Таблица 17: Chechen pronouns and their reflexive counterparts

Case		Abs	Erg	Gen	Dat	All	Iness	Abl	Inst	Comp	Lat
Singular											
1	<i>Indicative</i>	со	ас	сан	суна	соьга	соьгахь	соьгара	соьца	сол	сох
	<i>Reflexive</i>	суо	ас	сан	суна	соьга	соьгахь	соьгара	соьца	сол	сох
2	<i>Indicative</i>	хьо	ахь	хьан	хьуна	хьобга	хьобгахь	хьобгара	хьобца	хьол	хьох
	<i>Reflexive</i>	хьуо	ахь	хьан	хьуна	хьобга	хьобгахь	хьобгара	хьобца	хьол	хьох
3	<i>Indicative</i>	иза	цо	цуьнан	цунна	цуьнга	цуьнгахь	цуьнгара	цуьнца	цул	цуннах
	<i>Reflexive</i>	иза	цо	цуьнан	цунна	цуьнга	цуьнгахь	цуьнгара	цуьнца	цул	цуннах
Plural											
1.incl	<i>Indicative</i>	вай	вай	вайн	вайна	вайга	вайгахь	вайгара	вайца	вайл	вайх
	<i>Reflexive</i>	ваьш	ваьш	вешан	ваешна	ваьшка	ваьшкахь	ваьшкара	ваьшца	вайл	ваьшха
1.excl	<i>Indicative</i>	тхо	оха	тхан	тхуна	тхобга	тхобгахь	тхобгара	тхобца	тхол	тхох
	<i>Reflexive</i>	тхаьш	тхай	тхайн	тхаьшна	тхайга	тхайгахь	тхайгара	тхайца	тхайл	тхайх
2	<i>Indicative</i>	шу	аша	шун	шуна	шубга	шубгахь	шубгара	шубца	шул	шух
	<i>Reflexive</i>	шаьш	шай	шайн	шайна	шайга	шайгахь	шайгара	шайца	шайл	шайх
3	<i>Indicative</i>	уьш	цара	церап	царна	цаьрга	цаьргахь	цаьргара	цаьрца	царал	царах
	<i>Reflexive</i>	шаьш	шаьш	шайн	шайна	шайга	шайгахь	шайгара	шайца	шайл	шайх

Reflexive pronouns are also used to bind pronouns to their antecedents across clausal domains:

- (182) цо аьлира ахь шена г1о дийр ду
 цо aelira ahw shiena ghuo diir du
 3SG.ERG say-RPST 2SG.ERG 3SG.GEN.REFLX help *d*-do-FUT.PTCP *d*-COP
 ‘He_i said that you will help him_i.’ (The person who said this and the person who will be helped are the same person)

Compare to the below sentence using no reflexive pronoun:

- (183) цо аьлира ахь цунна г1о дийр ду
 цо aelira ahw cunna ghuo diir du
 3SG.ERG say-RPST 2SG.ERG 3SG.GEN help *d*-do-FUT.PTCP *d*-COP
 ‘He_i said that you will help him_j.’ (The person who said this and the person who will be helped are different people)

6.9 Relative, Subordinate, and Matrix Clauses

6.9.1 Matrix Clauses - Affirmative and Existential Sentences

Affirmative sentences in matrix clauses consist of a subject and a predicate:

- (184) тхан дас дукха къахыйгина
 тхан da-s duqa q’ahwiigi-na
 1PL.EXCL.GEN father-ERG.SG much endure-PST.PERF
 ‘Our father had many hardships.’
- (185) тхан дена ша хьалкхийна волу
 тхан de-na shien hwalqi’na volu
 1PL.EXCL.GEN father-DAT.SG 3SG.REFLX.GEN grow-up-PST.PRF COP.PRES.RCP
 юрт йиц ца ло
 jurt jic ca luo
 village.ABS.SG

‘Our father remembers the village he grew up.’

Existential sentences are expressed with the copula verb ‘*du/d-u*’.

- (186) кху чохь кхо клант ву
 qu cho-hw qo k’ant v-u
 this.OBL room-INESS.SG three boy.ABS.SG.v *v*-COP
 ‘There are 3 boys in this room.’

Existential sentences in the past and future use the perfective and compound future form of the verb ‘хилла/*xilla*’ (‘to exist/to occur’):

- (187) кху чохь кхо клант хилла
 qu cho-hw qo k’ant xil-la
 this.OBL room-INESS 3 boy.v.ABS.SG exist-PST.PERF
 ‘There were 3 boys in this room (and they’re not there now).’

- (188) кху чохь кхо к1ант хир ву
 qu cho-hw qo k'ant xir v-u
 this.OBL room-INNESS 3 boy.v.ABS.SG exist.fut.ptcp v-COP
 'There will be 3 boys in this room.'

6.9.2 Subordinate Clauses

Chechen subordinate clauses are usually connected by juxtaposition. For example, in quotative predicates or reported actions, the main clause and subordinate clause are juxtaposed. There is not a subordinating conjunction like 'that' in English.

- (189) Суна моьтту Зейна синкъераме йог1ур ю
 Suna moett-u Zejna sinq'ieram-e j-oghur j-u
 1SG.DAT think-PRES Zejna.j party-ALL j-come.FUT.PTCP j-COP
 'I think (that) Zejna will come to the party.'

6.9.3 Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are placed before the noun phrase that they modify, like other modifiers. Relative clauses are formed with the suffixes -y(н)/-u(n), -(н)а/-на, or -p/-r, which we have included under the term 'relative clausal participles' (RCP) in the section on morphology.

6.9.4 Additional Clauses

In addition to the canonical cases of relative clauses acting as a modifying unit to a noun phrase, we describe here instances where relative clauses may modify a sentence by providing additional information about the purpose, time, reason, type of action, or contrastiveness of an action.

6.9.4.1 Real Conditionals

Real conditionals are formed by adding the suffix -hw to the infinitive form of the verb. Real conditional sentences describe situations in which certain events may have come to pass, will come to pass, or do come to pass under specific circumstances. Past tense real conditions are rendered with the suffix '-ехь/iehw' added to the past-perfect base of the verb, and future real conditional is rendered with the complex future participle and the real conditional form of the copula *ды/d-u*, *делахь/d-ielahw*.

- (190) х1ара буьрка хьуна хазахетахь, ас иза
 hara byrka hwuna xaza=xiet-ahw, as iza
 this ball.j.ABS.SG 2SG.DAT beautiful=appear-REAL.COND, 1SG.ERG 3SG.ABS
 хьуна д1алур ю
 hwuna dwa-luur ju
 2SG.DAT DEIC.PREV-give.FUT.PTCP j-COP

'If you like this ball, I will give it to you.' (Event that will happen: 'I will give this ball', Conditional required: 'You like this ball.')

Syntactically, the conditional clauses may precede or follow the clause that describes the event that will happen.

- (191) ас х1ара буърка хьуна д1алур ю,
 as hara byrka hwuna dwa-luur ju,
 1SG.ERG this ball.j.ABS.SG 2SG.DAT DEIC.PVERB-give.FUT.PTCP *j*-COP,
 иза хьуна хазахетахь
 iza hwuna хаза=xieta-hw
 3SG.ABS 2SG.DAT beautiful-appear-REAL.COND
 ‘I will give you this ball, if you like it.’

The conditional form is always used on the auxiliary verb for complex verbal forms (compound future, potential voice, causative, etc.)

- (192) шай тхо долучу дог1ур делахь,
 shai txuo doluchu doghur dielahw,
 2PL.ABS 1PL.EXCL.ABS COP.RCP.OBL.ALL come.FUT.PTCP COP.REAL.COND,
 тхобга схьахайта
 twoega shwa-xa-ijt-a
 2PL.EXCL.ALL DEIC.PVERB-know-CAUS-IMP
 ‘If you are coming to our place, let us know!’ (lit. ‘If you are coming to the place that we are at, make it known to us’)

6.9.4.2 Unreal Conditionals

Unreal conditionals are formed with the suffix ‘-ехь/-iehw’ attached to the perfective aspect stem. They precede the clause that is modified and differ from real conditionals in that they describe situations that may possibly have happened should a certain set of event had come to past, but, alas, did not.

- (193) Джон хеннахь ц1авеанехь, оха дикка
 Dhzon xiennahw c’a=v-ean-iehw, ooha dikka
 John.ABS.SG earlier home=v-come-PST.REAL.COND, 1PL.EXCL.ERG better
 болх бина хир бара
 bolx b-i-na xir b-ara
 work b-do-PST.PRF be.FUT.PTCP b-COP.PST
 ‘If John had come home earlier, we would have worked more.’

Unreal conditionals occur commonly in the future tense to describe an outcome that will come to pass, should possible or necessary conditions apply.

- (194) ахь мер делахь, ас чай
 ahw mer delahw’, as chaj
 2SG.ERG drink.FUT.PTCP *d*-COP.COND, 1SG.ERG tea.*d*.ABS.SG
 кечдийр дара
 kech=diir d-ara
 ready=*d*-do-FUT.PTCP *d*-COP.PST
 ‘If you were to drink, I would make tea.’

6.9.4.3 Relative Clauses of Time

subordinate clauses relating to time are chained together using a strategy of present participles and relative clauses modifying a form of the noun ‘*xan/xan*’ (time). For subordinate clauses describing simultaneous actions, the present participle alone is used before the modified action:

- (195) ас балха сай дIавоьдуш,
 as balx-a sai dwa-v-oed-ush,
 1SG.ERG work.AUG-ALL 1SG.ERG.REFLEX DEIC-PVERB-*v*-go-PRES.PTCP,
 сайн цициг чохь дитира, хIунда-аьлча
 sain cicig choe-x d-iit-ira, hunda-aelcha
 1SG.GEN.REFLEX cat.*d*.ABS.SG inside.AUG-INESS *d*-keep-RPST, because
 соьга иза ара ца даккхаделира.
 soega iza ara ca daqqa=d-el-ira
 1SG.ALL 3SG.ABS.*d* DEIC.PVERB NEG put.out=*d*-POT-RPST
 ‘While I was leaving to work, I kept my cat inside, because I wasn’t able to put her out (lit. unable to put her outside the house)’

The Chechen equivalent of ‘before’ is the suffix -ле/-lie

- (196) хьехархочо урок чекхьялале, заданийш
 hwieharxo-ch-uo urok cheq=j-ala-lie, zadan-iish
 teacher-AUG-ERG.SG lesson finish=*j*-give-PST.PERF-before, assignment-ABS.PL
 дIаязыйтира тхобга
 dwa-yaz=jiit-ira txoega
 DEIC.PVERB-write=do.CAUS-RPST 1PL.EXCL.ALL
 ‘The teacher made us write down an assignment before class ended.’

- (197) ЦIенан да цIавале, кертара болх
 c’iena-n da c’a=v-a-lie, kertar-a bolx
 house-GEN.SG father.*v*.ABS.SG home=*v*-come-before, yard-ALL.SG work.*b*.ABS.SG
 чекх а беккхина, мерза даа хIума а дина,
 cheq a b-eqqi-na, merza da’a huma a d-i-na,
 finish COOR *b*-set-PST.PERF, tasty eat.INF thing.*d*.ABS.SG COOR *d*-do-PST.PERF,
 леш хилла хIусаман нана.
 wiesh xil-la husam-an nana
 wait.PROG.PTCP exist-PERF.PST domestic mother.*j*ABS.SG
 ‘Before her husband got home, the wife finished the yard work, cooked tasty and was waiting.’

For intransitive sentences:

- (198) малх дIабуьзале, бежнаш цIа дахкадан виц ма лолахь
 malx dwa-b-yza-lie, bezh-na-sh c’a daxka=dan v-ic ma lola-hw
 sun godown-beore, cattle home take=out forget neg give
 ‘Before the sun sets, please don’t forget to bring in the cattle.’

For relative clauses of time that subordinate an event that occurred after the main clause, the structure ‘-чул *mIaxw*/-*chul t’aehw*’ is used. The verbal suffix ‘-чул/-*chul*’ is added to the past perfect form of the verb.

- (199) урокaш чекхялчул тIаьхьа, тхo цIа
urok-ash cheq=j-a-l-chul t’aehw, txuo c’a
lesson-ABS.PL.*jII* finish=*jII*-give-PST.PERF-SUFFIX after, 2PL.EXCL home
дахара
d-ax-ara
d-go-RPST
‘After lessons were over, we went home.’

6.9.4.4 Relative Clauses of Purpose

Relative clauses of purpose are rendered using the coordinating conjunction ‘*xIyнда-аьлча/hwunda-aelcha*’ or ‘*бIахьана-долуш/bwahwana dolush*’ (because, having this reason/for this reason)

- (200) Иза шен цегг лазаьлла
iza shien cerg laza=j-al-la
3SG.ABS.*v* 3SG.GEN.REFLEX tooth.*j*.ABS.SG pain=*j*-come-PST.PERF
бахьана-долуш лорана тIе вахара.
bwahwana-dolush lor-a-na t’e v-ax-ara
because doctor-AUG-GEN.SG on *v-go-RPST*
‘It being the case that/Because that his tooth was hurting, he went to the doctor’s
(lit. he went onto the doctor)’

Sentences with *hunda-aelcha* or *delie* can occur to either the right or left of the matrix sentences. It is also possible to juxtapose two concepts and connect them as purpose sentences across the sentence boundary. Juxtaposed sentences of purpose are chained with the word ‘цундела/*cundela*’ meaning ‘because of this’. This is identical in meaning to English ‘therefore’ or Russian ‘поэтому’.

- (201) Революци хилале хьалха Нохчийн махкехь
Revoljuci xilalie hwalxa noxchin maxkewh-a
Revolution.*j*.ABS.SG be-PST.PERF-before time-ALL Chechen country-INNESS
дуккха ца хилла оьрсийн къам. Цундела
duqqa ca xi-lla oerchiin q’am. Cundela
very=many NEG exist.PST.PERF Russian tribe.*d*.ABS.SG. Therefore
нохчошна оьрсийн мотт бийца хууш
noxchoshna oerchiin mott b-ica xu-ush
Chechen=person-DAT.PL Russian tongue.*b*.ABS.SG *b*-speak.INF know-PRES.PROG
ца хилла.
ca xi-lla.
NEG EXIST.COP-PST
‘Before the revolution there were not many Russians who lived in Chechnya. Therefore Chechens did not know how to speak Russian.’

6.10 Raising and Control Sentences

6.10.1 Expletive/Raising Sentences

Chechen does not have an overt expletive pronoun like English ‘it’ in expressions like ‘it is likely’, ‘it seems’, or ‘it is possible’. Often, these constructions show a subjectless construction in the first clause and a fully-realized sentence in the lower clause.

- (202) Зейна синкъераме йог1ур ю
 Zejna sinq’ieram-ie j-ogh-ur j-u
 Zejna.*j*.ABS.SG party-ALL.SG *j*-come-*fut.ptcp j*-COP
 ‘Zejna will come to the party.’
- (203) Суна хетарехъ Зейна синкъераме йог1ур ю
 Suna xietariehw Zejna sinq’ieram-ie j-ogh-ur d-u
 1SG.DAT seem.PRES Zejna.*j*.ABS.SG party-ALL.SG *j*-come-*fut.ptcp j*-COP
 ‘It seems (to me) that Zejna will come to the party.’
- (204) Зейна синкъераме йог1ур йолучух тара
 Zejna sinq’ieram-ie j-ogh-ur j-olu-chu-x tara
 Zejna.*j*.ABS.SG party-ALL.SG *j*-come-*fut.ptcp j*-COP.RCP.PRES-OBL-LAT appearance
 ду
 j-u
 j-COP
 ‘It looks like Zejna will come to the party.’

6.10.2 Control Predicate

Control sentences are rendered in Chechen with contained subordinated clauses. The higher clause with the control predicate precedes the lower clause, which assigns case in the same clausal domain.

- (205) Жовхъара и проект чекхяьккхина
 Zhouhwar-a i projekt cheq=j-aeq-qina
 John-ERG.SG that project.*j*.ABS.SG finish=*j*-set-PST.PERF
 ‘John finished that project.’
- (206) Зураъана лаъа Жовхъара и проект чекхяьккха
 Zura-’ana la’a Zhouhwar-a i projekt cheq=j-aeq-a
 Zura-ERG wish.PRES Dzhoxar-ERG that project.*j*.ABS.SG finish=*j*-set.PST.PERF
 ‘Zura wants John to finish that project.’

Unlike in English, (206) shows the lower clause with a tensed verb for the past perfective. When the higher clause and embedded clause share the same subject, the lower clause subject is elided and the lexical verb is found in the infinitive.

- (207) Жовхъарана лаъа и проект чекхяьккха
 Zhouhwar-ana laea i projekt cheq=j-aqqa
 John-DAT.SG wish.PRES that project.*j*.ABS.SG finish=*j*-set.INF
 ‘John wants to finish that project.’

6.11 Yes/No Questions

Chechen Yes/No questions are formed by adding the question particle ‘-ǎ/-i’ to the tensed verb. In speech it is also accompanied by a rise in tone.

- (208) Хьо балха автобусаца воьдий?
 hwo balx-a avtobus-a-ca v-oed-ii
 2SG.ABS work.AUG-ALL bus-AUG-INST v-go.PRES-Q
 ‘Do you go to work by bus?’

- Х1а-хаъ, со балха машенаца воьду.
 - ha-ha’, suo balx-a mashien-a-ca v-oedu
 - no, 1SG.ABS.v work.AUG-ALL car-AUG-INST v-go.PRES

‘No. I go by car.’

- (209) Мурад школехъ доьшуш вуй?
 Murad shkol-e-hw doeshu-sh v-u-j
 Murad.v.ABS.SG study-PRES.PTCP v-COP-Q
 ‘Does Murad go to (study) school?’

- Х1аъ, иза школехъ доьшуш ву.
 - ha’, iza shkol-ie-hw doeshu-sh v-u
 - yes, 3SG.ABS.v study-PRES.PTCP v-COP

‘Yes, he studies at school.’

- (210) Ахь олий цуьнга дика деша?
 ahw olii cunga dika diesha
 2SG.ERG say-PRES-Q 3SG.ALL good study-INF
 ‘Did you tell him to study well?’

- Х1а-х1аъ, ас ца олу.
 - ha-ha’, as ca ol-u
 - no, 1SG.ERG NEG say-PRES

‘No, I don’t. (Exclamation)’

6.12 Wh-Questions

Wh-Question words license a question in Chechen. When using a wh-question word, you can not have the question particle -ii appear on the tensed verb

- (211) г1уллакхаш муха ду хъан ?
 ghullaq-ash muha du x’an
 affair.d-ABS.PL how d-cop 2SG.GEN.REFLX
 ‘How are you?’

- (212) * г1уллакхаш хъан муха дуи?
 * ghullaq-ash hwan muxa d-u-i
 * affair-ABS.PL 2SG.GEN.REFLX how d-COP-Q
 *UNGRAMMATICAL due to Q-word ‘муха/муха’ and Q-particle ‘uй/i’ in same sentence

A list of questions words and example sentences are provided below:

6.12.1 Question words and pronouns

Таблица 18: Wh-/Question Words

Question Word	Translation
x1ун/hun	what? (absolutive)
x1унда/hunda	why? for what reason?
мила/mila	who? (absolutive)
мича/micha	to where?
мичахъ/michahw	where? at what location?
мичахъара/michahwara	(from) where?
мичахъараг1ула/michahwaraghula	(via/through) where/what location?
муха/муха	how?
муълха/myлха	which?
маца/маса	when?
мел/miel	how much?
маса/masa	how many?
масазза/masazza	how many times?

- (213) хъехархочо хъоьху дешархошна
 hwiexarxo-ch-uo hwoex-u diesharxo-sh-na
 teacher-AUG-ERG.SG teach-PRES student.AUG-PL-DAT
 ‘The teacher teaches the students.’

- (214) **хъа** хъоьху дешархошна?
hwa hwoex-u diesharxo-sh-na
who.ERG teach-PRES student.AUG-PL-DAT
 ‘Who teaches students?’

- (215) хъанна хъоьху **хъехархочо**?
 hwanna hwoex-u **hwiexarxocho**
 who-DAT. teach **teacher**AUG-ERG.SG
 ‘Who(m) does the teacher teach?’

As seen in (214) and (215), interrogative pronouns appear in the same position as the words that they replace in sentences with unmarked word-order. Wh-words are not obligatorily moved to the front of the sentences as in English, however, due to the focus of the sentence, they often are found in this position.

The pronouns ‘*x1yn/hun*’ and ‘*мила/mila*’ decline for case using suppletive augmented forms. For ‘*x1yn/hun*’ this is ‘*стен-/sten-*’ and for *мила/mila* it is ‘*хъан-/hwan-*’.

- (216)
- атто 1алашдо эса
atto walash=d-o iesa
cow.ERG.SG care=*d*-do.PRES calf.*d*.ABS.SG
‘The cow cares for the calf.’
 - **стен** эса 1алашдо?
stien iesa walash=d-o
what.ERG.SG calf.*d*.ABS.SG care=*d*-do.PRES
‘What takes care of the calf?’
 - **x1yn** 1алашдо атто?
hun walash=d-o atto
what.ABS.SG care=*d*-do.PRES cow.ERG.SG
‘What does the cow take care of?’
- (217)
- дешархочо **муха** яздо?
diesharxo-ch-uo **муха** yaz=d-o
student-AUG-ERG.SG **how** write=*ddo*.PRES
‘How does the student write?’
 - дешархочо дика яздо
diesharxo-ch-uo dika yaz=d-o
student-AUG-ERG.SG good write=*d*-do.PRES
‘The student writes well.’
- (218)
- 1имранна хаа дика яздан
Wimran-na ха’а dika yaz=d-an
Wimran-DAT know.PRES good yaz=*d*-do.INF
‘Wimran knows how to write well/Wimran can write well.’
 - **муьлхачу** дешархочунна хаа дика яздан?
mylxa-chu diesharxo-chu-na хаа dika yaz=d-an
which-OBL student-AUG-DAT.SG good write=*d*-do.INF know.PRES
‘Which student knows how to write well?/Which student can write well?’
- (219)
- **маса** дешархо ву кху чохь?
masa diesharxo v-u qu choe-hw
how.many student.ABS.SG *v*-COP this.OBL room.INESS.SG
‘How many students are in this room?’
 - кху чохь итт дешархо ву
qu choe-hw itt diesharxo v-u
this.OBL room-INESS.SG student.ABS.SG *v* *v*-COP
‘In this room there are 10 students.’

- (220) • мел ахча ду дешархочуьнгахь?
mel axcha d-u diesharxo-cyn-gahw?
how.much money.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-COP student-AUG-INESS.SG
 ‘How much money does the student have (on him).’
- цуьнгахь дукха ахча ду
 cunghaw duqa axcha d-u
 3SG.INESS much money.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-COP
 ‘He has a lot of money (on him).’
- (221) • х1унда деза дешархошна дукха ахча?
hunda d-ieza diesharxo-sh-na duqa axcha
why *d*-need.PRES student-PL.AUG-DAT much money.*d*.ABS.SG
 ‘Why do students need a lot of money?’
- дешархошна дукха ахча деза книгаш
 diesharxo-sh-na duqa axcha d-ieza kniga-sh
 student-PL.AUG-DAT much money.*d*.ABS.SG *d*-need.PRES book-ABS.PL
 эца
 ieca
 take.INF
 ‘Students need a lot of money to buy books.’
- (222) • мича вьду дешархо х1ора дийнахь?
micha v-oedu diesharxo hora diinahw
where.to *v*-go.PRES student.*v*.ABS.SG every day
 ‘Where does the student do every day?’
- иза университете вьду
 iza universitet-e v-oedu
 3SG.ABS.*v* university-ALL.SG *v*-go.PRES
 ‘He is goes to the University.’
- (223) • мичахъара ву и дешархо?
michahwara v-u i diesharxo
where.from *v*-COP that student.*v*.ABS.SG
 ‘Where is that student from?’
- иза Казахстанера ву
 iza Kazaxstan-iera v-u
 3SG.ABS.*v* Kazakstan-ABL *v*-COP
 ‘He is from Kazakhstan.’