1. Introduction

Batsbi (ISO 639-3: bbl) is a Northeast Caucasian language of the Nakh subgroup. It has been known by several names: Batsbi, Bats, Tsowa-Tush, and variations thereof. The first two names are derived from the endonym of the Batsbi people: bacav in the singular and bacbi in the plural. The other language names derive from the toponym of the speakers’ ancestral homelands: the Tusheti region of Georgia, specifically the Tsova valley (Tsovata).

1.1. Area and speakers

Today Batsbi is spoken almost exclusively in the village of Zemo Alvani in the Kakheti region of Georgia, which has become the year-round residence of the Batsbi community. Some Batsbi speakers have moved instead to urban centers or abroad for employment or education.

![Map of Zemo Alvani, Georgia](image)

Figure 1 The location of Zemo Alvani, Georgia, where Batsbi is spoken. Map tiles by Stamen Design (CC-BY-3.0). Data by OpenStreetMap (ODbL).

Neither the total population of the Batsbi minority group nor the number of speakers is known. Most publications reporting population or speaker data for Batsbi give a number in the range of 2,500-3,200 (e.g., Holisky & Gagua 1994; Simons & Fennig 2017, citing Salminen 2007; Comrie 2008). This estimate appears to be a result of an expedition

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1 We are grateful to Bela Shavkhelashvili and especially to our consultants, Naira Tsiskarishvili, Revaz Orbetishvili, Nisa Bakhtarishvili, Dantes Echishvili, and many other generous, patient Batsbi speakers in Zemo Alvani.
conducted in the 1960s (Kolga 2001); the present-day population is certainly much smaller. An apparent sociolinguistic survey by Gigašvili (2014) reports 160 speakers under the age of 40 whose fluency in Batsbi is at least "good"; Gigašvili does not estimate the number of speakers of the older age group, which comprises the majority of Batsbi speakers today.

1.2. Dialects

As Batsbi today is spoken in a single village, it cannot be divided into dialects. Variation is most likely associated with a speaker's gender, generation, and degree of language exposure.

1.3. Sociolinguistic situation

There are no monolingual speakers of Batsbi; all speakers are also fluent in Georgian. As estimated above, less than half of people of Batsbi heritage speak the language, with a smaller portion of speakers in each new generation. Even among fluent Batsbi speakers, Georgian is nevertheless the main language of communication, and speakers often report feeling more competent in Georgian or finding Georgian easier to use. Many Batsbi speakers are competent in Russian as well.

No sociolinguistic studies have been conducted in the Batsbi community, aside from Gigašvili's survey of bilingualism (2014). Although the full details of the study are not provided, Gigašvili states that "only the generation of grandparents and elders speak" Batsbi, that the parent generation understands but does not use the language with children, and children do not learn Batsbi as their mother tongue (Gigašvili 2014: 25).

1.4. State of research

The major grammars of Batsbi are, in order of publication, Schiefner 1856 (German), Dešeriev 1953 (Russian), Holisky and Gagua 1994 (English, a grammatical sketch), Sanik’iże 2010 (Georgian). Schiefner’s Batsbi grammar was one of the first grammars of a Caucasian language.

A Batsbi-Georgian-Russian dictionary with 7,088 entries remains one of the most important descriptive works on Batsbi (Kadagiže & Kadagiże 1984). Although published in 1984, the materials for the dictionary were collected half a century earlier.

Batsbi was one of the subjects of the documentation project ECLinG sponsored by DoBeS (the Volkswagen Foundation) from 2002-2006 (Gippert et. al 2006). Materials from that project are archived at The Language Archive.

Recently, materials on Batsbi have been published by scholars at Telavi State University. These materials include several volumes of Batsbi texts with Georgian translation and an update of the 1984 dictionary in three volumes (Bertlani et al. 2013, 2012; Bertlani et al. 2018).

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2 Both authors learned much of what they know about Batsbi from Holisky and Gagua (1994) and Kadagiže and Kadagižė (1984). Therefore, it is impossible to cite every use we have made of these two works, but we have specifically cited only the most substantial items, such as sentence examples.
In spite of this long history of description, many aspects of Batsbi grammar remain sorely understudied.

1.5. Language history

The first historical records that apparently mention the Batsbi people date to the 6th or 7th centuries (Dešeriev 1953), or perhaps even earlier (Topchishvili 2009), although their distinct language was not mentioned in historical accounts until the eighteenth century (Bertlani et al. 2012). From the earliest historical records until the early 19th century, the Batsbi people already lived in the mountains of Tusheti and practiced transhumance, whereby some of the population migrated with their livestock, chiefly sheep, to lowland pastures around the Alazani river basin during the winter (Šavxelišvili 2001). The Batsbis’ mountain territory fell in the region of Tsovata, which comprised eight Batsbi villages located in close proximity to one another (Šavxelišvili 2001; Dešeriev 1953). The neighboring peoples of Tusheti belonged to Georgian-speaking groups.

Even during this period, when Batsbi speakers still lived primarily in the mountains, there was sufficient contact with Georgian to introduce large numbers of loanwords into Batsbi (Dešeriev 1953; Schiefner’s 1856 grammar already mentions extensive Georgian borrowing. A period of stable bilingualism most likely presided for several centuries before the current trend toward Georgian monolingualism began. This shift began at least as early as the 18th century (Šaniže 1970), but was sped along by natural disaster in the 19th century: in 1830, the Batsbi village of Sagirta was destroyed by a flood and ensuing landslide, at the same time that an outbreak of the black plague decimated the population of four other villages (Topchishvili 2009). Following these disasters, Batsbis began to resettle in the lowlands, with fewer and fewer people returning to Tusheti in the summers. This led to the present situation, in which the entire population of Batsbi speakers live in a single village in the Alazani river basin, Zemo Alvani.

2. Phonology

2.1. Vowels and consonants

2.1.1. Consonants

Batsbi has 41 consonant phonemes, as shown in Table 1. Note the following correspondences to the IPA: c = tʃ, c’ = tʃ’, ʒ = dʒ, č = tʃ, ǧ = tʃ’, ǯ = dʒ, š = ʃ, ž = ʒ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manner</th>
<th>Airstream</th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labio-dental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Post-alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Uvular</th>
<th>Radical</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>aspirated</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t tː</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>q qː</td>
<td>[ʔ]</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ejective</td>
<td>p’</td>
<td>t’ tː’</td>
<td>k’</td>
<td>q’ q’ː</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
<td>aspirated</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>č</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>č’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Batsbi sketch grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>voiced</th>
<th>ʒ</th>
<th>ʒ̩</th>
<th>ɣ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>voiceless</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>sː</td>
<td>xː</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>ź</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retroflex</td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral fricative</td>
<td>voiceless</td>
<td>ň</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral liquid</td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>lː</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glide</td>
<td>voiced</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Batsbi consonant phonemes

With the exception of the epiglottal /ʔ/ and glottal /ʔ/, stops and affricates can be aspirated, ejective, or voiced. Aspirated stops are produced with a period of aspiration noise after the release, while ejectives are produced with a much shorter voice onset time. Voiced consonants are fully voiced throughout their duration.

There are two bilabial stop phonemes, /p'/ and /p/, although demonstrating their phonemehood is challenging due to their relatively low frequency. There are no minimal pairs contrasting the ejective with the aspirated /p/, but there are a few near minimal pairs for this contrast: pal ‘fairy tale’ vs. p'alw ‘5th day from today’. Speakers easily distinguish these two sounds; however, it remains possible that this contrast is only phonemic due to close contact with Georgian.

There are seven geminate or long consonants (four stops, two fricatives, and one lateral), which are contrastive word-medially and word-finally, but never appear word initially. Hauk (2018) found the chief difference between geminate and singleton stops to be in closure duration, rather than in intensity of the burst or the quality of the voice source. Closure duration of geminate stops was found to be roughly 1.9 times longer than that of singletons. The long fricatives and lateral have not been investigated acoustically. Previous works noting this contrast have traditionally called the long consonants “intensive” or “strong”.

Some minimal pairs for the long consonants are qetar ‘to get up’ vs. qetːar ‘to know’; it’ ‘run’ vs. it: ‘ten’; eqar ‘these (erg.)’ vs. eqːar ‘to jump’; d-aq:-d-ar ‘to dry’ vs. d-aq:ː-d-ar ‘to examine, check’; is ‘that’ vs. isː ‘nine’; d-axar ‘to live’ vs. d-axːar ‘to drown’; qali” ‘triplet, threesome’ vs. qalːi” ‘ate (perfective)’. The long lateral /lː/ appears in several perfective verb roots where the corresponding imperfective contains -bl:- e.g., qeblar ‘to put on, cover (imperfective)’ vs. qolːar ‘to put on, cover (perfective)’.

An eighth long or “intensive” consonant, a postalveolar fricative [šː], is reported in some works (e.g., Holisky & Gagua 1994; Bertlani et al. 2013, 2012), only appearing in one word, ešːinʷ ‘crazy’.

The fricatives listed as velar, /x, ſ/, are generally post-velar. The phoneme /v/ is produced as a labiodental fricative [v] in word-initial position before a vowel, while in some other positions, it is pronounced [w]. The distribution of these two variants has not been studied.
The voiceless lateral fricative /ɬ/ is sometimes realized as [l] before a voiced consonant: cf. ǝɬiⁿ [aɬiⁿ] ‘said’, but ǝlناس [alnas, elnas] ‘I said’. Some minimal pairs contrasting /ɬ/ and /l/ are ǝmeləⁿ ‘to drink’ vs. ǝmeləⁿ ‘ink’, d-alar ‘to die’ vs. d-alar ‘to be born; to appear’.

The voiceless pharyngeal fricative /ħ/ has a wide distribution, appearing in all environments except in a syllable onset following a voiced or ejective consonant. There are minimal pairs contrasting /ħ/ with ∅ and the glottal fricative /h/: pe ‘side’ vs. phe ‘village’, ax ‘half’ vs. hax ‘West Caucasian tur (Capra caucasica);’ hercʷ ‘pot’ vs. hercʷ ‘spin.PRS’.

In addition to /ħ/, some accounts have differentiated two other “pharyngeal” segments: one variant is realized as a voiced pharyngeal fricative [ʕ] or as pharyngealization on a subsequent vowel; the second is a stop, most likely an epiglottal [ʡ]. The stop pronunciation occurs only in word-initial position, and there are minimal pairs contrasting this segment with /ħ/ (see Table 2). The fricative variant [ʕ] only occurs in the onset of a syllable after a voiced or ejective consonant, meaning that this realization is in complementary distribution with both the voiceless pharyngeal phoneme /ħ/ and the epiglottal stop. The distribution of radical segments is given in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>environment</th>
<th>[ɬ]</th>
<th>[ʕ]</th>
<th>[ʡ]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>word-initial</td>
<td>[ham] ‘all, everyone’</td>
<td></td>
<td>[ʔam] ‘study’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in onset after voiced</td>
<td>[bʃok] ‘billy goat’</td>
<td>[nʃap] ‘sleep’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in onset after ejective</td>
<td>[tʃak] ‘mud’</td>
<td></td>
<td>[kʃok] ‘pit, hole’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in onset after aspirated</td>
<td>[p hu] ‘dog’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[khekiŋ] ‘ready’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intervocalic</td>
<td>[e hat] ‘then, at that time’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word-finally</td>
<td>[da h] ‘away’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Distribution of radical consonants in Batsbi. Shaded cells indicate that the segment has not been observed in the given position.

2.1.2. Vowels
Batsbi has the five cardinal vowels, /i, e, a, o, u/, which have nasalized counterparts as a result of the processes described in §2.4. The phonemic status of long vowels /iː, eː, aː, oː, uː/ has not yet been determined conclusively. In most previous works, vowel length is not marked (as in Dešeriev 1953) or is marked sporadically (as in Kadagiʒe & Kadagiʒe 1984, Črelašvili 2007). In this chapter, we do not mark vowel length.

2.2. Phonotactics
Words beginning with a vowel are pronounced with an initial glottal stop. Most consonants can occur at the beginning of words, except /ɬ/ and the long consonants.

Consonant clusters are permitted in all positions. In word-initial position, a frequent cluster type is composed of an aspirated stop or affricate followed by a voiceless fricative,
or an ejective or voiced stop, nasal, or affricate followed by a voiced fricative. The voicing of fricatives is not contrastive in this position.

Occasionally, clusters of three consonants occur word-initially in inherited words (pst'u "wife"), but most of the clusters of more than two consonants in word-initial position are borrowed from Georgian, such as mt'k'icbaddar 'assert' and brʒaneb 'command'.

2.3. Prosody

Holisky & Gagua (1994: 155) note that stress typically falls on the first syllable of a word, except in oblique forms of some lexical items. In these cases, the stress shifts from the root to the suffix to indicate plural number: žágnoⁿ "book.gen.sg (with stress on the root) vs. žagnóⁿ "book.gen.pl". Črelašvili (2002: 201-202) states that when a verb has person-number agreement with its object, stress falls on the first syllable, whereas when it has person-number agreement with its subject, the final syllable is stressed; e.g. xérc-o-s'w 'changes me', xerc-ó-s 'I change s.t'.

2.4. Morphophonemics

Resolution of hiatus. Vowels may come into hiatus at a morpheme boundary, and one or another may be deleted. For example, the /a/ of the ergative person-number agreement markers (§3.6.2) is deleted after the /o/ marking the present tense, e.g. let'dos /let'-d-o-as/ 'I add'.

Syncope and metathesis. Syncope in Batsbi is regular deletion of a vowel when followed by a CV sequence; the first vowel in a word is never deleted. For example, we find sak'er 'neck.abs' ~ sak'rev /sa'k'er-ev/ 'neck-ins', jeʔen 'she came' ~ jeʔnas /j-eʔ-en-as/ 'I (f) came'. We follow the analysis of Mikeladze (1977). When the vowel preceding the syncopated vowel is not affected, as in the previous examples, we have simple syncope. Under certain circumstances, the remaining vowel is affected. We refer to this as metathesis of the vowel (over the intervening consonant).

Whether syncope or metathesis occurs is determined by the relative openness of the first vowel of the word and that of the deleted vowel. In the following hierarchy openness increases as we go right: i < u < a, e, o.

If the first vowel is more open than the second, we get metathesis; but when the reverse is true, or the openness of the vowels is equal, we find syncope. Since syncope is cross-linguistically common, we concentrate here on examples that involve metathesis. In the speech of most younger speakers, /ai/ is now pronounced [e].

When /i/ is in the second syllable of the stem, /a/ > [ai], /e/ > [ei] > [ii] > [i], /o/ > [oi] > [ui], /u/ > [ui]; e.g. ?abik' 'spoon' ~ ?abīk'ev 'spoon.inst' /?abik'-ev/, [u + i] + V → [ui] + V dust'ir 's/he was measuring it' ~ duist'ri 'was s/he measuring it?' /d-ust'-i-r=i/. When /u/is in the second syllable of the stem, /a/ > [au] > [ai/ou], /e/ > [eu] > [ei] > [ii] > [i], and /o/ > [ou] > [oi] > [ui]; e.g. heč'ur 's/he used to watch' ~ hič'ri 'did s/he used to watch?' /heč'-u-r=i/, doxur 'it was wearing out' ~ duixri 'was it wearing out?' /d-ox-u-r=i/. Examples and intermediate stages are from Mikelâže (1977).

Loss of word-final vowels. Word-final /u/ and /o/ become lip-rounding on the preceding consonant (written here with a raised <w>) or are lost. Word-final front vowels...
are lost. All of these follow the patterns described above for syncope and metathesis; for example mʕair(i) or mʕer /mʕari/ ‘fingernail’ ~ mʕari /mʕari=e/, the form used with the conjunction =e; mauqʷ ‘razor’ ~ maqu /maqu=e/, the form with a conjunction; vot’uicî /v-ot’-u-ci/ ‘he really goes’ ~ vuit’ă /v-ot’-u/ ‘he goes’ (Gagua 1956: 473).

**Loss of word-final pharyngeals.** In polysyllabic words, the voiceless pharyngeal /ħ/ is often deleted word-finally. Thus psareh ‘yesterday’ and tegdinaħ ‘you did it’ can be pronounced [psare] and [tegdina], but the final pharyngeal never drops in joh ‘girl’ and moh ‘how’.

**Nasalization and nasal assimilation.** Word-final /n/ is realized as nasalization of the preceding vowel, e.g. doⁿ /don/ ‘horse’. Following the custom for Batsbi, the nasalized vowels resulting from this process are written here <iⁿ, eⁿ, aⁿ, oⁿ, uⁿ>. The dative case marker, -n, is a systematic exception to this (see §3.2.2). As discussed below (§3.4), pronouns are also partial exceptions. For some (typically younger) speakers, word-final /n/ is deleted altogether.

### 3. Morphology

#### 3.1. Overview

The chief morphological strategy in Batsbi is suffixation. Prefixation is limited to gender agreement markers (CM, for class marker, separated by a hyphen throughout the text of this chapter) on some verbs, although these markers do not always precede the root. No infixes (in the sense of an affix inserted stem-internally) nor circumfixes have been identified.

In addition to affixation, inflection can take the form of stem-internal changes. Ablaut occurs in the oblique stem of some nouns (joh ‘girlABS’ vs. jah-ov ‘girl-ERG’) and in the alternation between imperfective and perfective stems of some verbs (tag-d-ar ‘make.PFV’ vs. teg-d-ar ‘make.MPFV’). Reduplication is used to intensify or extend meaning: e.g., k’ac’k’ac’k’oⁿ ‘very small’, from k’ac’k’oⁿ ‘small’; c’q’arc’q’aren ‘in buckets’ (i.e., a great deal of water), from c’q’ar ‘spring (water source)’. Partial reduplication is also used to form distributive numerals: ši-š ‘two to each’, qo-q ‘three to each’, etc. (Holisky & Gagua 1994: 189). Compounding is both a historic and productive strategy of deriving new lexical items. For example, the verb stem dak’liv ‘think’ most likely originates from a compound of dok’ ‘heart’ and liv ‘say’ (although synchronically speakers do not necessarily analyze it this way).

#### 3.2. Nouns

#### 3.2.1. Gender

Batsbi nouns have an inherent grammatical gender, which is identified by the agreement markers that the noun, in both singular and plural, triggers on an agreement target. The most common agreement targets are those verbs and adjectives that incorporate a class marker (see 3.3 for adjectives 3.6.2 for verbs). Additionally, the preverb
**d-ux** ‘back’, several auxiliaries (**d-ali** ‘be about to, on the verge of’, **d-ec** ‘should, must’, **d-olo** ‘probably, possibly’, and the copula **d-a** ‘be’, which can be used as an auxiliary), and numerals formed with ‘4’ (**d-tiv** ‘four’, **d-fevlet** ‘fourteen’) reflect gender agreement. The eight genders are listed with their singular and plural markers that affix to agreement targets (class markers, CM) in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>v</td>
<td>b</td>
<td><em>mar</em> ‘husband’, <em>dad</em> ‘father’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>pst’u</em> ‘wife’, <em>ag</em> ‘grandmother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>j</td>
<td><em>q’ar</em> ‘rain’, <em>gaga’n</em> ‘egg’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>bader</em> ‘child’, <em>c’a</em> ‘house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>j</td>
<td><em>lark</em> ‘ear’, <em>t’ot</em> ‘hand; paw; branch’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td><em>borag</em> ‘knit slipper’, <em>k’aloš</em> ‘galosh’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td><em>ča</em> ‘bear’, <em>p’ʕa’n</em> ‘wing’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>j</td>
<td><em>t’ark</em> ‘finger’, <em>bak</em> ‘mouth’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3 Major noun classes (genders) in Batsbi*

Generally, all male humans are in the **v/b** class, traditionally class 1, and all nouns in this class are male humans. Similarly, female humans are in the **j/d** class, class 2, and all nouns in this class refer to female humans. Words that can refer to males or females, such as ‘friend’, ‘neighbor’, or ‘child’, generally fall into the **d/d** class, class 4. Example (1) illustrates the use of **d-** in the verb, ‘know’, showing agreement with the word *naq’bist* ‘friend’ (although this noun can also condition male or female agreement, if the speaker knows the gender of the referent).

(1) **ħe’n** naq’bist’ co **d-abc’** so’n
your friend(d/d).ABS NEG CM-know 1SG.DAT
‘I don’t know your friend’.

Many nouns that do not fall into this semantic category also belong to the **d/d** class, such as *doš* ‘word’, *t’iv* ‘bridge’, *lav* ‘snow’. Three of the classes in Table 3 are very small. Kadagiže & Kadagiže (1984) list five words in class **b/b**, four of them meaning some kind of shoe; but not all shoes are in this class. Class **d/j** contains 9 words, all of them body parts. Class **b/j** contains 21 nouns, most representing body parts, but not all body parts are in these two classes.

Among the three remaining classes (**j/j, d/d, b/d**), there are some semantic generalizations. For example, small animals, including cats and immature animals, are in the **d/d** class; while medium-sized to large animals are in the **b/d** class, including dogs, bears, pigs, horses, goats, and buffalo. In some cases, we can find generalizations based on morphology. For example, masdars (deverbal nouns), including those borrowed from Georgian, are in gender **d/d**.

The default gender marker, **d-** is used when one does not know the gender, for example with question words.
Batsbi sketch grammar

3.2.2. Number and case

Batsbi nouns decline in terms of number (singular and plural) and case. The citation form of a noun is absolutive (nominative) case, which has no distinguishing affixes. The plural is formed most commonly with the suffix -i. However, other plural suffixes exist: -iš, -bi, -mi, -arč, -erč, -ar, and -er. These plural strategies are apparently lexically conditioned and must be memorized on a lexeme-by-lexeme basis. One generalization is that the -bi suffix is often used with demonyms (bacbi ‘Batsbis’, kaxlobi ‘Kakhetians’), although it forms the plural of other lexical items as well. Another suffix, -ši, is used for nominalized forms only. Some nouns with their plural forms are illustrated in Table 4.

Some nominal bases undergo ablaut or vowel syncope in the plural and in oblique cases; the oblique/plural stem is the same for all nouns we have observed, except those with suppletive bases in the plural. In the plural of nouns beginning with j- in the singular, the initial j- is typically dropped, accompanied by a change in the now-initial vowel. A few nouns form plurals by suppletion: st’ak’ ‘man’ → vaser ‘men’, joh ‘girl’ (jah- oblique stem) → maxk’ar ‘girls’. Some nouns denoting collectives or abstract concepts have singular forms only: maq’ ‘freedom’, ʡep ‘shame’. A few nouns are always plural: sani ‘doors’, kaircxi ‘clothes’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pl suffix</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Gloss (for sg)</th>
<th>Morphophonemic processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>sag</td>
<td>sag-i</td>
<td>deer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bader</td>
<td>baddr-i</td>
<td>child</td>
<td>syncope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ḫac’uk’</td>
<td>ḫec’k’-i</td>
<td>birds</td>
<td>ablaut, syncope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iš</td>
<td>niq’</td>
<td>naq’-iš</td>
<td>road</td>
<td>ablaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jol</td>
<td>al-iš</td>
<td>hay</td>
<td>ablaut, j-deletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi</td>
<td>xeⁿ</td>
<td>xen-bi</td>
<td>tree</td>
<td>nasal reduction (singular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qer</td>
<td>qer-bi</td>
<td>rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi</td>
<td>dok’</td>
<td>dak’-mi</td>
<td>heart</td>
<td>ablaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kortʷ</td>
<td>kort-mi</td>
<td>head</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arč</td>
<td>pḥu</td>
<td>pḥ-arč</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>erč</td>
<td>k’uit’</td>
<td>k’ot’-erč</td>
<td>cat</td>
<td>diphthongization (singular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t’fir</td>
<td>t’fir-elč</td>
<td>star</td>
<td>l/r dissimilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ar</td>
<td>k’eč’</td>
<td>k’ač’-ar</td>
<td>(bundle of) wool</td>
<td>ablaut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>er</td>
<td>jop’q’</td>
<td>ap’q’-er</td>
<td>ash</td>
<td>ablaut, j-deletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ši</td>
<td>qaiⁿ</td>
<td>qain-ši</td>
<td>old (one)</td>
<td>nasal reduction (singular)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k’erbaduin</td>
<td>k’erbaduin-ši</td>
<td>composing (one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Batsbi plurals by suffix
The associative plural, -ɣar, is used for proper names and nouns referring to people to denote that person and associated people: dadvaš-ɣar 'uncle and his family', sabed-ɣar 'Sabed and her friends'. Case suffixes can be added to these forms, as with other plural suffixes: k’ok’oš-ɣar-i ‘to the Kokso’s’ (directional case).

We count 11 simple cases in Batsbi: absolutive, ergative, genitive, dative, instrumental, contact, allative, adverbial, illative, directional, and locative; as well as two compound cases: locative-of-allative and locative-of-illative. The two compound cases involve the stacking of the locative case -ħ onto another case suffix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutive</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>suffixed in the plural (Table 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergative</td>
<td>-s, -v</td>
<td>-s in singular for humans;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-v for all plurals and other singulars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>-ⁿ</td>
<td>nasalization on linking vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>does not undergo nasalization (most speakers);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in plural preceded by linking vowel -a-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allative</td>
<td>-gʷ</td>
<td>/go/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>-x</td>
<td>in plural preceded by linking vowel -a-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>-v</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial</td>
<td>-ɣ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illative</td>
<td>-lʷ</td>
<td>/lo/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>-ħ</td>
<td>often dropped due to word-final /h/ deletion rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative-of-allative</td>
<td>-go(h)</td>
<td>due to word-final /h/ deletion rule, often pronounced -go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative-of-illative</td>
<td>-lo(h)</td>
<td>due to word-final /h/ deletion rule, often pronounced -lo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 Case suffixes, which attach to the singular or plural oblique stem

The case endings used in noun declension are shown in Table 5. In singular, the case ending is suffixed to a singular oblique stem of the noun. The oblique stem of lexical nouns is formed with a linking vowel (called a ‘thematic vowel’ by Holisky & Gagua 1994): -e-, -a-, -o-, or -i. The linking vowel is not predictable phonologically, nor on any semantic basis, so these should be treated as declension classes. The e-class accounts for the greatest number of nouns. In plural, the case ending is directly to the plural-suffixed form, except in dative and contact cases, which use the linking vowel -a- in plural. Paradigms for noun declensions are given in Table 6 and Table 7.
For nominalized forms, the linking morpheme -čo- is used before the case suffix in the singular; in the plural, the case suffix is appended directly to the plural suffix -ši. Nominalizations are discussed as a group in §3.2.3; morphologically speaking, they differ from lexical nouns only by the presence of the link -čo- in singular oblique forms and -ši in plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEN</th>
<th>badreⁿ</th>
<th>badraⁿ</th>
<th>mariⁿ</th>
<th>maraⁿ</th>
<th>dak’iⁿ</th>
<th>dak’biⁿ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>badren</td>
<td>badrin</td>
<td>maran</td>
<td>marin</td>
<td>dak’an</td>
<td>dak’bin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>badregnʷ</td>
<td>badrignʷ</td>
<td>maragʷ</td>
<td>marignʷ</td>
<td>dak’ognʷ</td>
<td>dak’bigʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON</td>
<td>badrex</td>
<td>badrax</td>
<td>marax</td>
<td>marax</td>
<td>dak’ox</td>
<td>dak’bax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTR</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>dak’av</td>
<td>dak’bav</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>badrey</td>
<td>badriy</td>
<td>maray</td>
<td>mariy</td>
<td>dak’oy</td>
<td>dak’biy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>badrelʷ</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>dak’olʷ</td>
<td>dak’bīlʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIR</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL/LOC</td>
<td>badrego(h)</td>
<td>badrigo(h)</td>
<td>margo(h)</td>
<td>marigo(h)</td>
<td>dak’go(h)</td>
<td>dak’bigo(h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC/ILL</td>
<td>badrelo(h)</td>
<td>badrilo(h)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>dak’lo(h)</td>
<td>dak’bilo(h)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 Noun declensions for e-class, a-class, and o-class nouns. The root dok ‘heart’ undergoes ablaut in all oblique forms. Em dashes represent forms that we were unable to confirm with speakers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i-class: kortʷ ‘head’</th>
<th>nominalized adjective: k’ac’k’oⁿ ‘small (one)’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG</td>
<td>PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>kortʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>kortiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>kortiⁿ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>kortin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>kortigʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON</td>
<td>kortix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTR</td>
<td>kortiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td>kortiɣ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILL</td>
<td>kortiƚʷ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIR</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>korti(h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL/LOC</td>
<td>kortigo(h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC/ILL</td>
<td>kortilo(h)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 Noun declensions for i-class nouns and a nominalized adjective.
Absolutive case is used for direct objects of transitive and dative-subject verbs (described in §4.2), as well as for all subjects of many intransitives. See §4.2.2 for more on the use of absolutive, ergative, dative, allative, and contact cases.

Ergative case is used for the subject of transitive verbs. The -s suffix is used only in the singular for nouns belonging to the v/b (male human) and j/d (female human) genders, including proper names: erist’o-s ‘Eristo-ERG’ (a male given name); nan ‘mother’ → nan-a-s ‘mother-OBL-ERG’. However, not all nouns fitting this description take the -s suffix in ergative case, such as mar-a-v ‘husband-OBL-ERG’ (v/b gender). The -v suffix is used for all other singular nouns and all plurals in ergative case: bader ‘child’ (class d/d) → badr-e-v ‘child-OBL-ERG’; haš-i ‘guest-PL’ → haš-i-v ‘guest-PL-ERG’.

The genitive case is used chiefly to express possession, part-whole relationships, and materials. It is formed from the oblique stem by adding the suffix -n, which is realized as nasalization on the linking vowel. Genitives typically precede another noun: phar-a-n muy ‘dog’s tail’, k’ec-e-n sindri ‘woolen socks’. Genitive nouns can also serve as the predicate of a copula.

Dative case is used for the indirect object of a verb and for the dative subjects of experiential verbs, as described in §4.2.2. Dative case is also governed by most postpositions (see §3.8). It is formed similarly to the genitive: by suffixing -n onto the oblique stem. In dative case, however, this final -n does not undergo nasal lenition.

Allative case, is formed with the suffix -gʷ, underlyingly /-go/, where the labialization results from a reduced final -o. As an oblique complement of verbs, allative has a function similar to dative case. For instance, the addressee of verbs of speech is in allative case: ašin sogʷ ‘said to me’. It generally denotes motion or attention toward something, such as with the verb heč-ar ‘look at (ALL object)’, or going somewhere for the purpose of getting something. Allative is also used for the causee argument in causatives.

Contact case, formed with the suffix -x, is used as an oblique complement of some verbs, such xat’ar ‘to ask (CON someone)’. Generally, it specifies the point-of-contact relevant to the action, as with axk’ar ‘to tie (ABS something) to (CON something)’ or d-iš-d-ar ‘hit’ (see example (79)). Contact case is also used for the object of comparison (see §4.6). Masdars in contact case are used to build adverbial clauses denoting a reason or purpose (see example (114)).

The instrumental case is used for instruments: šer dik’-e-v ‘with one’s own ax’, xi-v šlang-e-v ‘with the water via the hose’. Instrumental can be difficult to distinguish from ergative case, since the form is typically morphologically identical.

Another use of instrumental case is for the means of transit: don-e-v ‘by horse’, mankan-e-v ‘by car’. Other uses of instrumental case are harder to generalize: eq max-e-v ‘for that price’, dëvuzt’q’a šin šar-e-v ‘for 82 years’.

Adverbial case is used for nouns whose identity has changed or is highlighted by the action of the sentence. That is, arguments of verbs such as d-erc’ar ‘to turn into’, tag-d-ar ‘to make (ABS something) into (ADV something else)’ as in (3), and d-isar ‘to remain’ are in adverbial case.
The illative case, formed with -lʷ, denoting motion into something, is restricted to nouns denoting collectives, masses, and liquids (Holisky & Gagua 1994). The cases on the target in (9) (xɨ-lʷ ‘into the water’, ħun-lʷ ‘into the forest’ k’alt-i ‘to the basket’) illustrate the semantic variations in this context.

Directional case, formed with -i, denotes motion toward something, much like allative case. The distinction seems to be that directional case is restricted to nouns denoting places: c’en-i (house.OBL-DIR) ‘to the house’, abnu-i (bath-DIR) ‘to the bath’. Locative case, formed with -h, denotes location at such a place. In the locative case, irregularities stem from the fact the suffix -h often deletes under the word-final h-deletion rule discussed in §2.1.1. Thus, locative case is typically identified by a bare linking vowel that has not undergone any sort of reduction: sk’ola ‘school’ in locative case is /sk’ol-e-/ [sk’ole].

Finally, the two complex cases, locative-of-allative and locative-of-illative, are formed from the locative case -h suffixed to allative and illative case nouns, respectively. Due to the word-final h-deletion rule, these forms are only distinguished by their unreduced final vowels. Since the two complex cases involve the addition of a separate syllable to the base, syncope sometimes occurs: e.g., mar-a-go-h (husband-OBL-ALL-LOC) can be realized as [margoh].

The basic meaning of both complex cases is a stationary version of the case from which they were formed. Additionally, locative-of-allative is used in forming the basic construction expressing ownership (in English, ‘to have’), and illustrated below in example (5).

(5) o jah-go-h=a t’at’en kok’-i j-a
    that girl.OBL-ALL-LOC =& wet foot(b/j)-PL CM-be
    ‘And that girl has wet feet’. (BH2-044 00:04:40)

These are the cases we identify as part of the Batsbi noun declension system. Previous analysts have considered some additional elements to be case suffixes as well: e.g., comitive case,-ciⁿ, caritive case -c’iⁿ, and numerous simple and complex directional cases. We treat -ciⁿ ‘with’, -ful’ and -c’iⁿ’-less’ as derivational suffixes (see §3.3) and directionals as postpositions (see §3.8).

3.2.3. Nominalization

Participles, adjectives, possessives, numerals, or genitive-case nouns can be suffixed with a linking morpheme -ćo- and used as a nominal head. This is a remarkably
unrestricted process in Batsbi. Example (6) shows an absolutive-case nominalization from a genitive noun, where the only difference between the attributive use of *vašeⁿ* ‘brother’s’ and its nominal use is the presence or absence of the head nominal *doⁿ* ‘horse’. Of course, it could be that the head noun is simply elided in this construction, as in the English translation ‘My brother’s is here;’ indeed, the agreement marker on the verb still reflects the gender of the missing nominal. The examples in (7) and (8) show the morphological differences in oblique cases of the derived nominals, reflecting the change in syntactic structure. In (7)(a) and (8)(a), the head nouns are in ergative case, *donev* ‘horse’ and *st’ak’ov*, which are modified by a genitive noun and a participle, respectively. In (7)(b) and (8)(b), where the nominals are no longer expressed, the ergative case suffix instead appears on the modifiers after the linking morpheme -čo-. Any constituent modifying a noun can apparently be nominalized via this process; i.e., by affixing oblique case markers to the -čo- form of the modifier.

(6) seⁿ vaš-e-n (doⁿ) ese b-a³
my brother-OBL-GEN (horse(b/d)) here CM-be
‘My brother’s horse is here’. (‘My brother’s is here’.)

(7) (a) seⁿ vaš-e-n don-e-v qor (hal) qalː-iⁿ
my brother-OBL-GEN horse-OBL-ERG apple (PV) eat-AOR
‘My brother’s horse ate an apple’.

(b) seⁿ vaš-e-čo-v qor qalː-iⁿ
my brother-OBL-OBL-ERG apple eat-AOR
‘My brother’s ate an apple’.

(8) (a) doⁿ lex-vi-č st’ak’-o-v sakm ḡal tag-j-eⁿ
horse search.for- PPL-OBL man-OBL-ERG business(j/j) PV do-CM-AOR
‘The man searching for a horse did business’.

(b) doⁿ lex-vi-čo-v sakm ḡal tag-j-eⁿ
horse search.for- PPL-OBL-ERG business(j/j) PV do-CM-AOR
‘The (one) searching for a horse did business’.

3.2.4. Derivation of nouns

All verbs, except the copula *d-a*, can be nominalized with the suffix -ar. This form is traditionally called the masdar (although the term ‘gerund’ could apply as well). Masdars are always of gender /d/ and decline as expected for nouns. Because of their regularity, masdars are typically given as the citation form of the verb: *tešar* ‘to believe’.

The suffix -lov derives nouns denoting people: *doⁿ* ‘horse’ → *donlov* ‘horseman’; *top* ‘gun’ → *toplov* ‘gunman’.

---

3 Examples not otherwise identified are from Harris’s fieldnotes.
The suffix -ol derives abstract nouns, typically of gender j/j. The base can be a verb root, as in at’ar ‘to be quiet’ → at’ol ‘quiet (n.)’; an adjectival root, as in zora’n ‘brave’ → zorol ‘bravery’; or a noun, as in bad ‘orphan’ → badol ‘orphanhood’. The suffix -na also derives abstract nouns, which belong to gender d/d: tiši’n ‘old’ → tišna ‘the past, antiquity’; d-apxe’n ‘warm’ → dapxna ‘warmth’. Some nouns have both abstract forms in the dictionary: k’ap’ršna and k’apršol both mean ‘yellowness’, from k’ap’raš ‘yellow (adj.)’.

The deverbal suffix -ila/-uila derives nouns denoting ‘a time and place’ where the action happens: d-aq’ar ‘to eat’ → daq’uila ‘conditions where one can eat’; axk’ar ‘to tie’ → axk’uila ‘place for tying an animal’; tivar ‘to rest’ → tivuila ‘time and place to rest’. The form -ila vs. -uila does not appear to be not phonologically conditioned.

3.3. Adjectives

Most adjectives have the ending -Vⁿ (e.g. k’ac’k’oⁿ ‘small’) in absolutive case, ending in a nasalized vowel like the genitive of nouns (e.g. t’atbuⁿ ʔaibk’i ‘silver spoons’, cf. t’ateb ‘silver, money’); lamzur ‘beautiful’ is one adjective that does not have this ending. A few adjectives agree for gender-number, as in (9), using a prefix (glossed CM) following the patterns described in §3.2.

(9) b-aq:o-n³ mar+, … j-aq:o-n³ bʕark’i
    CM-big-ADJ nose(b/d) CM-big-ADJ eye(b/j)-PL
    ‘big nose, … big eyes’ (from a folktale)

Adjectives may optionally distinguish an absolutive form (the stem) from the oblique form, which is used with all cases other than absolutive. In (10), the adjectives lamzur ‘pretty’ and q’onuⁿ (also q’onoⁿ) are in their stem form. The oblique formant, -č, in (10) is not obligatory in adnominal adjectives, but it can only occur with oblique cases.

(10) (a) lamzur-č q’onu-č jaḥ-o-g
    pretty-OBL young-OBL girl.OBL-OBL-ADV
    ‘(to the) pretty young girl’

(b) lamzur q’onuⁿ joḥ

Adjectives can be derived from the oblique stem of nouns, pronouns, adverbs, adjectives, and verbs. Using the suffix -luⁿ, adjectives denoting time are derived from adverbs; e.g. lamo ‘day-after-tomorrow’ ~ lam-luⁿ ‘dating from day-after-tomorrow’. The suffix -(a)reⁿ /-liⁿ /-(a)leⁿ can be used to form proprietive adjectives from nouns; e.g. bʕagal ‘wart’ ~ bʕaglareⁿ ‘warty, having warts’, but: ‘moon, month’ ~ baityl’n ‘having moonlight, with a moon’. The adjective gerbaleⁿ ‘rocky’ seems to be formed from the plural of the noun; cf. qer ‘rock’, qerbi ‘rocks’. This affix can also derive adjectives from adverbs; e.g. d-ux ‘back, behind’ ~ d-ux-liⁿ ‘stubborn’. The suffix -reⁿ can form noun modifiers from adverbs; e.g. nʕaiʔ ‘out’ ~ nʕaiʔ-reⁿ ‘outer, outside’. The suffix -yeⁿ forms adjectives meaning ‘like, similar to’ from nouns and pronouns; e.g. k’nat ‘boy’ ~ k’nat-yeⁿ ‘boyish’, vai ‘we INCL’ ~ vai-yeⁿ ‘like us, ours’. From adjectives, one can form adjectives meaning ‘slightly’; e.g. k’uin
Batsbi sketch grammar

‘white’ ~ *kui-k’a ‘whitish’ (Črelašvili 2002: 135). With -c‘i‘, privatives are formed from nouns; e.g. *bos ‘color’ ~ *bas-c‘i‘ ‘colorless’. The same suffix can be used with verbal bases; e.g. *d-it:ar ‘wash’ ~ *d-it-c‘i‘ ‘unwashed’. Affirmative adjectives can also be derived from verbs; e.g. *d-epš-ar ‘crumble’ ~ *d-epš-rik’ ‘easily crumbled’. Particiles are discussed in §3.6.7.

Comparatives are derived with the suffix -V(v)x(w); e.g. *yaze”‘good’ ~ *yazeivx”, *yazivx” ‘better’. Superlatives are formed by adding -č to the comparative, e.g. *yazexuč ‘best’. It is not clear that this superlative form can be used with all adjectives. A more common strategy for forming superlative is to use the basic form of the adjective plus *hamaxe? ‘most’, e.g., *hamaxe? bapxe” but: ‘the hottest month’.

3.4. Pronouns and related forms

Several pronouns have the vowel [e], which may be pronounced instead with the diphthong [ai]. Some pronoun forms end in /n/, which can be realized as [n], nasalization of the vowel, or zero. We have written expected forms here.

**Personal pronouns**, except the inclusive, have full declensions on the model of the noun, though only four cases are shown in our tables. Demonstrative pronouns are used for third persons; see Table 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>1st singular</th>
<th>2nd singular</th>
<th>1st inclusive</th>
<th>1st exclusive</th>
<th>2nd plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abs</td>
<td>so</td>
<td>ho</td>
<td>txo</td>
<td>ve/vai</td>
<td>šu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erg</td>
<td>as</td>
<td>ah</td>
<td>atx</td>
<td>ve</td>
<td>eš</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dat</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>hon</td>
<td>txon</td>
<td>ven</td>
<td>šun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen</td>
<td>seⁿ</td>
<td>heⁿ</td>
<td>txeⁿ</td>
<td>vaiⁿ</td>
<td>šunⁿ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 Personal pronouns, first and second person

**Possessive personal pronouns** are nominalized genitive personal pronouns, and in the absolutive case are the same as the genitive case of the personal pronoun: seⁿ ‘my’, heⁿ ‘your (SG)’, etc. Their oblique stems are formed regularly with -čo. Example (11)(a) illustrates a possessive adjective, while (11)(b) illustrates a possessive pronoun.

(11) (a) se don-e-v qor qal:⁻iⁿ
     my horse-OBL-ERG apple eat-AOR
     ‘My horse ate an apple’.

(b) se-čo-v qor qal:⁻iⁿ
     my-OBL-ERG apple eat-AOR
     ‘Mine ate an apple’.

**Possessive personal adjectives** are used only with a head noun. The form in the absolutive case is the same as the genitive of the personal pronoun. In all oblique cases the form is se ‘my’, he ‘your (SG)’, txe ‘our (EXCL), ve’our (INCL)’, šu ‘your (PL)’.
Demonstrative pronouns make a three-way distinction, with the third here translated as ‘yon’. Table 9 shows the declension of demonstratives as independent pronouns. These are also used as third person pronouns, as shown in examples (12)-(13).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘this one’</th>
<th>‘that one’</th>
<th>‘yon one’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>i, is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>equus</td>
<td>icxus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>equin</td>
<td>icxuin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>equin</td>
<td>icxuin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>ebi</td>
<td>ibi, isbi, isbi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>eqar</td>
<td>icxar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OBL stem</td>
<td>eqar-</td>
<td>icxar-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 Demonstrative pronouns

(12) equus oquin doⁿ b-aṭ-iⁿ
this.one.ERG that.one.DAT horse(b/d) CM-give-AOR
‘This one gave a horse to that one’. (‘S/he gave a horse to him/her’.)

(13) gela-s-a manane-s-a daḥ d-oxk’-iⁿ oqriⁿ c’a
Gela-ERG-& manana-ERG-& PV CM-sell-AOR their.GEN house(d/d)
‘Gela; and Manana; sold their house’.

Demonstrative adjectives, given in Table 10, are used adnominally. Other demonstrative adjectives include ešt’(r)uⁿ ‘this kind of’, išt’(r)uⁿ ‘this kind of’, ošt’(r)uⁿ ‘that kind of’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘this’</th>
<th>‘that’</th>
<th>‘yon’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBL</td>
<td>eq</td>
<td>icx</td>
<td>oq</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Demonstrative adjectives

The reflexive pronoun šar is declined as in Table 11. In our data, this formerly third-person form seems to have taken over as the reflexive pronoun regardless of person, where the former pronouns are apparently only retained in dative case: suinen ‘(for) myself’, huinen ‘(for) yourself’, txuinen ‘(for) ourselves (EXCL), venen ‘(for) ourselves (INCL), šuinen ‘(for) yourselves; for themselves’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ABS</th>
<th>šariⁿ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>šarvan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>šarn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>šariⁿ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 Reflexive pronouns

Forms of the possessive reflexive are given in Table 12. In some cases, the oblique stems in first and second person do not differ from the non-reflexive form. Like the
reflexive pronoun, this paradigm appears to be collapsing, and the third-person forms may used for other persons (šariⁿ as a general singular and šuiⁿ as a general plural).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Absolute</th>
<th>Oblique stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>saiⁿ</td>
<td>sai-, se-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>haiⁿ</td>
<td>hai-, he-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>šariⁿ</td>
<td>šer-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1INCL</td>
<td>vaiⁿ</td>
<td>ve-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1EXCL</td>
<td>txaiⁿ</td>
<td>txe-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>šuiⁿ</td>
<td>šui-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>šuiⁿ</td>
<td>šui-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 12 Possessive reflexives*

(14) manana-s šer naq′bist′-en kor-ui čukba-d-ieⁿ
    Manana-ERG self friend-DAT glove(d/d)-PL give-CM-AOR
    ‘Manana gave gloves to her friend’.

(15) gela-s-a manane-s-a daḥ d-oxk′-iⁿ šuiⁿ c′a
    Gela-ERG-& manana-ERG-& PV CM-sell-AOR self.GEN house(d/d)
    ‘Gela and Manana sold their house’.

**Reciprocal pronouns** have the form vaš(b)aqⁿ in the absolutive and genitive case, and vašbin or vašban in the dative.

**Interrogative pronouns** include meⁿ ‘who’ (oblique stem han-), vux ‘what’ (oblique stem st′e(n)-), menux ‘which one’ (oblique stem menxuičo-), moluⁿ ‘what kind of’ (oblique stem molučo-), meł ‘how much, how many’ (oblique stem mełe-), macluⁿ ‘from when’ (oblique stem maclučo-), mičreⁿ ‘from where’ (oblique stem mičrečo-). Some of these, such as menux ‘which (one)’, can be used as an independent pronoun or as an adnominal adjective. Interrogative adverbs: mič, miča ‘where’, macaⁿ ‘when’, maclomciⁿ ‘until when’, vuⁿ ‘why’, moh ‘how’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘who’</th>
<th>‘what’</th>
<th>‘which one’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>meⁿ</td>
<td>vux</td>
<td>menux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>haⁿ</td>
<td>st′ev</td>
<td>menxuičov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>ħann</td>
<td>st′en, s′tenn</td>
<td>menxuičon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>heⁿ, hain</td>
<td>st′in</td>
<td>menxuičoⁿ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 13 Interrogative pronouns*

(16) o st′ak′-o-v menux v-ik′-eⁿ?
    that man-OBL-ERG which.one(v/b) CM-take-AOR
    ‘Which one (who) did that man take (away)’?

(17) macaⁿ d-etʷ
    when CM-be.born-PRS
    ‘When will it be born?’
**Possessive interrogatives** are nominalized genitive interrogative pronouns. They are declined regularly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>whose</th>
<th>what’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>heⁿ</td>
<td>st’in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>ħenčov</td>
<td>st’inčov</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>ħenčon</td>
<td>st’inčon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>ħenčoⁿ</td>
<td>st’inčoⁿ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 14 Possessive interrogatives*

**Indefinite pronouns** are derived from interrogative pronouns: *memli, memni* ‘someone (specific)’ (oblique stem *ham-*), *menax* ‘someone (non-specific)’ (oblique stem *hanax, hanaxčo*, plural *menax(ʃ)i*), *vum* ‘something (specific)’, *vunax* ‘something (non-specific)’ (oblique stem *st’enaxčo*). Indefinite adverbs include *macax* ‘sometime (non-specific)’, *mičhe-mičhe* ‘somewhere (specific)’, *mičax* ‘somewhere (non-specific).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘someone (specific)’</th>
<th>‘someone (non-specific)’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>memli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>hamas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>hamen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hanax, hanaxčov</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 15 Indefinite pronouns*

(18) jet:  
    ebc’-ʷ=i  ħam-as  ħon-en?  
    cow  milk-PRS=Q  someone-ERG 2SG.DAT-for  
    ‘Does someone milk the cow for you?’

(19) ...c’ʕairkoⁿ  išt’ainʷ  ese  dapartx-na-d-al-in  vunax....  
    suddenly  this.way  here  flutter-NMLZ-CM-INTR-AOR  something(d/d)  
    ‘Suddenly, suddenly something fluttered this way...’. (Kadagize 2009: 58)

**Quantifier pronouns** are derived from interrogative pronouns with -aʔ, which follows case markers. This suffix also serves as a general intensifier (see §3.8). The general *vuma*? ‘all, everyone, everything’ uses the oblique stem *hami*-. The word *dani*? ‘everything, everyone, all’, is used occasionally. Quantifying adjectives include the adnominals *ħamaʔ* ‘every, all’, *duq* ‘much, many’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘all, everyone, everything’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>vuma?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>ħamaʔ, hamiva?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>hamina?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 16 Quantifier pronouns*

(20) e  pst’uin-čo-v  ħamin-aʔ  qor-i  d-aŋ-iⁿ  
    this woman-OBL-ERG  all.DAT-INTS  apple(b/d)-PL  CM-give-AOR  
    ‘This woman gave apples to everyone’. 

19
Negative pronouns are derived from interrogative pronouns with the prefixation of *co-* for general negation, or *ma-* for prohibitives: *comena* ‘no one, anyone’ (oblique stem *coħan-*), *com* ‘nothing, anything’ (oblique stem *cost’en-*), *mamena* ‘no one, anyone’ (oblique stem *mahan-*), *mam* ‘nothing, anything’. Negative adverbs include *comacne* ‘never’, *comiče* ‘nowhere’, *mamiče* ‘nowhere’.

(21) co-m=i xeʔ=šu oquin mak?
no-thing=Q know=2PL.DAT 3SG.DAT about
‘Don’t you know anything about it?’

Relative pronouns are derived from interrogative pronouns with *=e/=a* ‘and’, which is attached after any case marker. For example, *mena*, *mene* ‘who(ever)’ (oblique stem *ħana*, *ħane*), *vune* ‘what(ever)’, *moħe* ‘as, which kind’, *me* ‘how much, how many’, *menuxa* ‘which’ (oblique stem *menxuičo*), *mičhe* ‘where(ever)’, *mičrena* ‘from which (place)’, *macme* ‘when’. Some of these have plurals; for example *menxučuišvai* is ergative plural of *menuxa* ‘which’. See §4.4.1 for examples.

3.5. Numerals

Numerals are listed in Table 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>cha (chain)</td>
<td>it’:</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ši (šin)</td>
<td>chait’:</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>qo (qa)</td>
<td>qoit’:</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>d-ʕivʔ</td>
<td>d-ʕevʔet’:</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>pxi</td>
<td>pxiit’:</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ietx</td>
<td>ietxet’:</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>vorɬ</td>
<td>vorɬet’:</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>barɬ</td>
<td>barɬet’:</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>is:</td>
<td>t’q’exc’</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 17 Batsbi numerals

The first three numbers have oblique stems (in parentheses) used when they modify a head in any case other than absolutive. Numbers without heads decline regularly; e.g. *it’:-en ‘ten-DAT’*.

The number ‘4’ and numerals formed from it agree with the head noun; e.g. *v-ʕivʔ vaš ‘four brothers’. In this example, vaš ‘brother’ is gender *v/b*, and the prefix agrees in the singular because nouns are regularly in the singular with numbers.

The suffix -k’ forms words meaning ‘only’; e.g. *šik’ ‘only two’. The suffix -eʔ ‘all’ (a general intensifier) is used with numbers; e.g. *qo-k’-eʔ ‘all three’. The suffix -li”, also listed in §3.3, forms proprietarys; e.g. *pxi* ‘five ~ pxili” ‘characterized by 5’ (a school grade). Ordinals
are derived with -\( l(o)ye^n \); e.g. \( d-$\text{li}$v-\( i $ye^n \) ‘fourth’. The suffix -\( c' \) forms words meaning number of times \( pxac' \) ‘five times’.

Reduplicated or partially reduplicated numbers indicate distribution; e.g. \( pxi-px qor \) ‘five apples each’.

### 3.6. Verbs

#### 3.6.1. Stem formation

Simplex verbs are formed from a root of the form (C)V(C)C; e.g. \textit{metar}, where -\( ar \) forms the masdar (verbal noun). Compound and complex verbs are discussed in §3.6.6 and §3.6.9.

Many verbs distinguish imperfective from perfective stems, using a number of means. Some verbs employ vowel ablaut, where the patterns are

\[
\begin{align*}
a & \sim e \\
o & \sim e \\
i & \sim e
\end{align*}
\]

as illustrated in (22)(a,b,c) respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) lat-d-ar</td>
<td>lel-d-ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tak'tars-ar</td>
<td>tek'ters-ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) otː-ar</td>
<td>etː-ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d-ops-ar</td>
<td>d-eps-ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) xit'-d-ar</td>
<td>xet'-d-ar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tit'-ar</td>
<td>tet'-ar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘carry, bear’

‘patch up’

‘stand’

‘blow’

‘annihilate, break (off)’

‘cut’

Notice that the second example in (22)(a), with an unusual disyllabic stem, has ablaut in both stem vowels. As shown here, ablaut can apply in verbs of all types.

A second means of distinguishing imperfective from perfective is the use of a labial stop in the imperfective to supplement the vowel ablaut, with the same vowel alternation patterns. Examples are provided in (23).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) qasar</td>
<td>qepsar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) oːlːar</td>
<td>eblar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d-ožar</td>
<td>d-ebžar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) d-ilːar</td>
<td>d-eblar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiɬar</td>
<td>teplar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘spread on, over’

‘arrange, place; bail, carry water’

‘keep; yoke’

‘put, lay (e.g. on s.t., chicken an egg)’

‘miss’

To form an imperfective, a bilabial stop (/\( b, p, p' \)/) is inserted before a lateral (/\( l, lː, ɬ \)/) or before a fricative or affricate (/\( s, ź, x, c' \)/). Any lateral is then realized as /\( l \)/. Insertion does not always occur when the conditions are met, for example \( d-oxar \sim d-exar \) ‘be destroyed’.

A third device for distinguishing an imperfective stem from a perfective is the addition of a CM in the perfective. This is illustrated in (24).
Batsbi sketch grammar

(24) **Perfective**      **Imperfective**  
    d-ek’-d-ar            ak’-d-ar        ‘shake, shiver’
    d-ʃevar               ʃavar          ‘kill, slaughter’

Note that the ablaut pattern, in these and most other examples of this phenomenon, is the **opposite** of that illustrated above in (22)(a).

There are four perfective/imperfective pairs in which a CM in the perfective replaces a stem consonant in the imperfective.

(25) **Perfective**      **Imperfective**  
    d-erc’ar             ʃerc’ar         ‘turn’
    d-ekar               qekar           ‘call to s.o., invite, yell to s.o’.

Quite a few perfective/imperfective pairs are suppletive or irregular.

(26) **Perfective**      **Imperfective**  
    d-a ɬar             ixar            ‘appear, break out, walk around’
    d-aħar              d-ot’-d-ar    ‘take’

Finally, in verbs borrowed from Georgian, the prefix (“preverb”) that forms the perfective in Georgian occurs also in Batsbi with the same function.

(27) **Perfective**      **Imperfective**  
    dabec’dad-d-ar       beč’dad-d-ar   ‘print’ (Georgian dabec’dva, beč’dva)
    dalocad-d-ar         locad-d-ar     ‘pray’ (Georgian dalocva, locva)

Some verbs have both singular and plural stems. The plural is commonly formed by replacing stem consonants of the singular with ʃk’. A few verbs form the plural by replacing the stem consonant of the singular with bž.

(28) **Perfective**      **Imperfective**  
    Singular          Plural  Singular          Plural  
    qol:-d-ar          qoxk’-d-ar     qebl-d-ar        qexk’-d-ar    ‘hang TR’
    til:ar             tixk’ar        teblar           texk’ar    ‘name’
    xaʔar              xabžar         xeʔar            xebžar     ‘sit (down)’
    xoʔ-d-ar           xobž-d-ar      xeʔ-d-ar         xebž-d-ar  ‘squeeze in, find room for’

Some verbs (not illustrated) form plural stems suppletively.

3.6.2. Agreement and cross-reference

Some verbs in Batsbi have prefixal marking for gender and number (“class marker,” CM), e.g. d-eq’ar ‘divide’. Only verbs that begin with a vowel or /ʕ/ have prefixal gender-number marking, but not all with this characteristic have the prefixal marking. As shown in
(29), we cannot predict on the basis of phonology which verbs require a gender-number marker. Markers of gender-number agreement are shown in Table 3 above.

(29) d-aɭar ‘give; appear’ aɭar ‘say’
    d-et:ar ‘fling; milk; pour’ et:ar ‘stand, stay’
    d-oc’ar ‘tie; enclose’ oc’ar ‘pull, move; weigh’

It is the absolutive nominal that conditions the gender-number marker, as illustrated in (30), where the verb agrees with the subject in the absolutive, st’ak’ ‘man’. The gender-number markers governed by a noun is shown in parentheses as part of its gloss, with singular to the left of the slash, and plural to the right.

(30) o   st’ak’ aħ v-eʔ-eⁿ kalk-i-ɾeⁿ
    that man(v/b).ABS here CM-come-AOR city-DIR-from
    ‘That man came here from the city’.

The gender-number markers in Table 3 are also used later in the verb in derived transitives and derived intransitives, discussed in §3.6.6.

All verbs show person-number-case agreement when they have an absolutive or ergative case subject in the first or second person singular, first person exclusive, or second person plural. First person inclusive and third persons do not indicate person-number-case agreement. The markers used are given in Table 18, and their use is illustrated in §4.2.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person-number-case agreement markers on verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Absolutive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1EXCL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both /h/ and /ʷ/ are optionally dropped when word-final (this includes loss of both sounds in the sequence /hʷ/ or of only the lip-rounding in this context).

(31) borg-i       b-in-a(h)
    shoe(b/b)-PL.ABS CM-AOR-2SG.ERG
    ‘You made shoes’.

While the inclusive does not participate in person-number-case agreement, it can mark plurality (many) on the verb in the form of a -t suffix, as in (32).

(32) tišiⁿ c’a daḥ d-ox-d-o-t ve
    old house.ABS PV CM-destroy.PFV-CM.TR-PRS-PL 1INCL
    ‘We (many) will tear down the old house’.

Dative subjects do not condition agreement of either type, as shown in (33).
In (33), the pronoun soⁿ ‘1SG.DAT’ can alternatively encliticize to the verb. The first person inclusive pronoun, vai/ve, also often encliticizes to the verb.

The verb ‘make, do’ in (31) has a zero root, but it nicely illustrates the fact that the suffix may show agreement with one nominal, while the prefix shows agreement with another. The prefix agrees with the object, ‘shoes’, while the suffix agrees with the subject, ‘you’. In other examples, both may agree with the same argument. When the subject is third person or first person inclusive and the direct object is one of the agreeing person-number-case combinations, the verb agrees with the direct object, as in (34) and (35).

(34) mak xaʔ-v-ijen-esʷ, dah v-ik’-eⁿ-sʷ elder on sit-CM-AOR.TR-1SG.ABS PV CM-take-AOR.TR-1SG.ABS Eldir.DIR
‘He seated me on [the motorcycle and] took me to Eldir’. (Kadagiże 2009: 60: 26)

(35) dada-s kalik j-ik’-e-sʷ father-ERG city CM-take-PRS-1SG.ABS
‘Father takes me (f) to the city’.

Additional aspects of verbal agreement are discussed in §4.2. Both types of agreement are illustrated in the paradigms in the next section. The plural marker -t is discussed in §3.6.5.

3.6.3. Tense and aspect / actionality

Different sources analyze the varieties of verb forms differently. Our analysis coincides mostly with that of Holisky and Gagua (1994) and differs from those of Dešeriev (1953) and Č’relašvili (2002).

Tense, aspect, actionality, and evidentiality (see next subsection) forms fall into three groups: the present, future, and aorist groups. The first is based on the imperfective stem the second on the perfective stem, and the last on both stems. (See Holisky 1985 for more on the relationship between number and actionality.)

Present set: Present, Imperfect
Future set: Future, Future imperfect
Aorist set: Aorist perfective, Aorist imperfective, Perfect perfective, Perfect imperfective

For verbs that do not distinguish perfective from imperfective stems, the future group is not distinct from the present group. In the Present and Future Groups, transitive verbs form the basic tense (present or future) with /-o/, while intransitives form the basic tense with /-i, -e, -u, -o, -a/, but these vowels often fail to show up in the surface form. The imperfect and future imperfect (not illustrated here) are formed with -ra, and in the third person and inclusive forms the vowel of the basic tense is usually preserved. (In the
paradigms below, this is -\(o\). The perfective stem of 'bring', -\(o\)-, is the transitive (causative) of 'come' (see §3.6.6) and therefore requires a suffixal CM. In the present and future (but not in the imperfect and future imperfect), the CM metathesizes with the vocalic present/future marker (Harris 2013, to appear). In the Aorist Group, the basic tense is marked with /-in/ or /-en/, lexically determined. The vowel is syncopated by the regular processes described above and may influence the vowel of the stem. In the perfect, as in the imperfect and future imperfect, the ending -\(ra\) is added (with /a/ dropped when it is word-final).

Some of these are illustrated below with the verb 'bring (for animate object)', which distinguishes the perfective stem -\(o\)- from the imperfective -\(al\)-. This verb also has a distinct stem for perfective plural/pluractional. We show this here in the future, where the verb is conjugated for the person and number of the object, as well as that of the subject. Elsewhere the verb is conjugated for a singular female j- and male, v-object.

I. Present Group

Present

jalos, valos  'I bring her, him'
jaloh, valoh  'you bring her, him'
(oqus) jal\(^w\), val\(^w\)  's/he brings her, him'
jalotx, valotx  'we (EXCL) bring her, him'
(ve) jal\(^w\), val\(^w\)  'we (INCL) bring her, him'
jalūš, valūš  'you (PL) bring her, him'
(oqar) jal\(^w\), val\(^w\)  'they bring her, him'

Imperfect

jalras, valras  'I used to bring her, him'
jalrah, valrah  'you used to bring her, him'
(oqus) jalor, valor  's/he used to bring her, him'
jalratx, valratx  'we (EXCL) used to bring her, him'
(ve) jalor, valor  'we (INCL) used to bring her, him'
jalreš, valreš  'you (PL) used to bring her, him'
(oqar) jalor, valor  'they used to bring her, him'

II. Future Group

Future

joʔjos, voʔvos  'I will bring her, him'
joʔjoħ, voʔvoħ  'you will bring her, him'
(oqus) joʔoj, voʔov  's/he will bring her, him'
joʔjoτx, voʔvoτx  'we (EXCL) will bring her, him'
(ve) joʔoj, voʔov  'we (INCL) will bring her, him'
joʔjūš, voʔvūš  'you (PL) will bring her, him'
(oqar) joʔoj, voʔov  'they will bring her, him'
Future (varying the person and number of the absolutive object)

- joʔjosʷ, voʔvosʷ ‘s/he will bring me (F/M)’
- joʔjohʷ, voʔvohʷ ‘s/he will bring you (F/M)’
- joʔoj, voʔov ‘s/he will bring her/him’
- daxk’dotxʷ, baxk’botxʷ ‘s/he will bring us (EXCL, F/M)’
- daxk’dwišʷ, baxk’bwišʷ ‘s/he will bring you (PL) (F/M)’
- daxk’od, baxk’ob ‘s/he will bring them (F/M)’

III. Aorist Group

Aorist

- joʔjinas, voʔvinas ‘I brought her, him’
- joʔjinah, voʔvinah ‘you brought her, him’
- joʔjieⁿ, voʔvieⁿ ‘s/he brought her, him’
- joʔjinatex, voʔvinatex ‘we brought her, him’
- joʔjineš, voʔvineš ‘you (PL) brought her, him’
- joʔjieⁿ, voʔvieⁿ ‘they brought her, him’

While verbs of all types generally conjugate in the same way, with the exceptions noted above, intransitives derived with -d-al are different from other verbs in the present tense and the imperfect formed from it. The form that is expected on the basis of other tenses and the present of other verbs is -CM-al-V-PM. Instead, the CM is omitted, and we find -l-a-PM, e.g. j-aq-l-aš ‘I grow’. For younger speakers there is typically metathesis in the third person, e.g. j-aq-o-l ‘she grows’. There is a periphrastic tense-aspect, a present or imperfect continuous, formed from the imperfective converb (in -š) and the verb ‘be’. This construction is discussed further in §4.4.3.

(36) joʔ meždar b-aq’o-š j-a-r
    girl(j/d) cornbread(b/) CM-eat-PRS-CV CM-be.PRS-IMPF
    ‘The girl was eating cornbread’.

The affirmative marker -(u)ic can occur with a variety of tenses, coming just after the tense markers; e.g. veʔnuičah ‘you (really) arrived (AOR)’ (cf. veʔnah ‘you arrived’).

3.6.4. Evidentiality

Forms of the evidential occur in each tense-aspect group. In the present and future groups, -lo is suffixed to the imperfect to form the imperfect evidential and future imperfect evidential; in the aorist group, -no attaches to the aorist stem (with loss of one of the juxtaposed n’s) to form the aorist evidential, and -ra may be added to this to form the perfect evidential.
(37) j-opx-j-el-no-sʷ
   Aorist Evidential
   CM-dress-CM-INTR-AOR.EVID-1SG
   ‘evidently I dressed’

(38) j-opx-j-el-no-ra-sʷ
   Perfect Evidential
   CM-dress-CM-INTR-AOR.EVID-1SG
   ‘evidently I have dressed’

In an alternative evidential, -CM-ano is suffixed to the verb (where the final /o/ labializes or turns into a glide in the appropriate morphophonemic environments).

(39) j-ox-j-o-j-anʷ
   k’ab
   CM-rip-CM.TR-PRS-CM-EVID dress(j/j)
   ‘Evidently she was ripping the dress’.

(40) d-uit’-d-anw-iš=e
   CM-go-CM-EVID-2PL.ERG=&
   ‘You (PL, F) are evidently going, and…’.

The portion glossed as EVID is etymologically the verb ‘be’ with the aorist evidential formant, -no.

3.6.5. Mood and modality
Some imperatives are formed with -a, and others with -Vb. In either case, to this can be added -Vl to make a polite request. The suffix -Vt makes any of these plural. (‘Bring’ requires different stems for animate and inanimate objects.)

(41) Imperative           Polite imperative
    d-aḥ            ‘bring it!’              d-aḥ-al    ‘bring it!’
    d-aḥ-at        ‘you (PL) bring it!’    d-aḥ-l-et   ‘you (PL) bring it!’
    j-oʔ-j-eb      ‘bring her!’            j-oʔ-j-eb-al ‘bring her!’
    j-oʔ-j-eb-at   ‘you (PL) bring her!’   j-oʔ-j-eb-l-et ‘you (PL) bring her!’

Some verbs have suppletive bases in the imperative: d-ax-ar → d-olix ‘go’; d-ag-ar → gib ‘see’; d-at-ar → lib ‘give’. The imperative form of the suffix -d-al, which derives intransitive verbs, is also -lib.

The subjunctive is formed with -Vl, as in (42) and (43). Some modality is expressed with auxiliaries. See examples in 4.3.3 and Holisky (1994).

(42) saiⁿ bader so-ciⁿ xi⁻al
    my child 1SG-with be.PFV-SUBJ
    ‘My child should be with me’. (Bertlani et al. 2013)
3.6.6. Valence-changing derivations

Transitives can be derived, usually from inherently intransitive verbs, with the suffix -i, reduced to zero in most contexts. This suffix also requires a class marker, which is not reduced. Examples can be found in (44).

(44) Intransitive base Derived transitive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive base</th>
<th>Derived transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>d-iš-ar ‘lie down’</td>
<td>d-iš-d-ar ‘lay down, put to bed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d-ek’-ar ‘fall down’</td>
<td>d-ek’-d-ar ‘throw down’ (both perfective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ak’-ar ‘light (INTR)’</td>
<td>ak’-d-ar ‘light (TR)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intransitives can be derived, usually from inherently transitive verbs, with the suffix -al, which is always preceded by a class marker, thus -d-al. Some examples are given in (45).

(45) Transitive base Derived intransitive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive base</th>
<th>Derived intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>q’eg-ar ‘break (TR)’</td>
<td>q’eg-d-al-ar ‘break (INTR)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aɬ-ar ‘say’</td>
<td>aɬ-d-al-ar ‘be said’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d-etː-ar ‘knock down’</td>
<td>d-etː-d-al-ar ‘flounder’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is also an unproductive suffix, -is, that derives intransitives. An example is uyl:-d-is-ar ‘stick’ (where the person stuck is in the contact case), derived from the transitive ol:-d-ar ‘catch (fish on a fishing pole), put (meat on skewer)’, itself derived from ol:-ar ‘string, thread’, also transitive.

Causatives are formed with -it. Usually -it forms causatives from transitives, but in the second example in (46) the bases are intransitive verbs.

(46) Intransitive Transitive Causative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Causative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>teg-ar ‘be good for s.o.’</td>
<td>teg-d-ar ‘make, build’</td>
<td>teg-d-it-ar ‘make s.o. build’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d-ax-ar ‘go’</td>
<td></td>
<td>d-ax-it-ar ‘let go’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(47) ĉu j-aʔ-it-a-s
PV CM-come-CAUS-PRS-1SG.ABS
‘Let me come in!’ (from a folktale)

3.6.7. Non-finite forms

Except in example sentences, verbs in this grammatical sketch are cited in the masdar form (verbal noun), with the suffix -ar; e.g. d-ik’-ar ‘take (ANIM OBJ)’. Masdars decline as regular nouns, with the plural formant -i.

(48) xen-bi d-ebž-d-ar d-ol-d-i-eⁿ
.tree(b/d)-PL CM-fall.PL-CM-MAS CM-begin-CM-TR-AOR
‘The trees began to fall over’.
Infinitives are formed with the suffix -\(a^n\), shown in example (49).

(49) eli \(\dot{\chi}\)xindur \(d-a^n\) j-ol-j-al-i\(^n\)
Eli\((j/d)\) stocking\((d/d)\) CM-make-INF CM-begin-CM-INTR-AOR
‘Eli began to make a stocking’.

Imperfective converbs are deverbal adverbs formed by adding -\(\tilde{s}\) to the present or future stem, while perfective converbs are formed by adding -\(\tilde{c}eh(h)\) to a perfective stem. The perfective converb can be inflected, as in example (50).

(50) e\(\tilde{s}\) d-exk’-\(\tilde{c}eh\)-e\(\tilde{s}\), k’ino-x y-o-t=ve
2PL.ERG CM-come.PFV.PL-CV-2PL.ERG cinema-CON go-FUT=PL=1INCL
‘When you (PL) come, we’ll go to the movies’.

For each of the tense-aspect sets in Batsbi, there is a participle. Participles are essentially formed by adding adjective morphology to verb bases. More precisely, for the absolutive case form, present and future participles add -\(ni\) to the present or future stem, while aorist participles add -\(no\) to the aorist stem, with one of the adjacent \(n\)’s lost. Just as for adjectives, oblique forms of participles add -\(\tilde{c}o\) to the stem.

Complex participles can be formed from complex verbs or from the negator co and a participle, e.g. coelllain ‘inaccessible’, from lelllain ‘accessible’, ultimately from lelar ‘stroll, walk’.

Participles have the familiar deverbal adjective use, but in addition they express something that needs to be done, and they express an agent.

(51) a\(\tilde{h}\)-in-\(w\) du-i
steal-AOR-PPL horse-PL
‘stolen horses’ (Kadagi\(\in\)e & Kadagi\(\in\)e 1984: 71b)

(52) duq botx b-a teg-b-ui-n
much business\((b/d)\) CM-be do-CM-PRS-PPL
‘…there is a lot of business to be done’. (Kadagi\(\in\)e & Kadagi\(\in\)e 1984: 276a)

(53) c’e-nbui teg-d-ui-n \(\hat{h}\)atxe? ra\(\tilde{c}\)’o-bi b-a-r...
house\((d/d)\)-PL build-CM-PRS-PPL earlier Rachveli\((v/b)\)-PL CM-be.PRS-IMPF
‘The house builders earlier used to be Rachvelis…’. (Kadagi\(\in\)e & Kadagi\(\in\)e 1984: 276a)

Participles also express the verb of a relative clause (see §4.4.1).

3.6.8. Locative preverbs
There are a number of locative or directional preverbs, and most are homophonous with adverbs (see §3.7). In some contexts preverbs retain their locative or directional meaning, though they may also function to emphasize or perfectivize the verb. The most common three are dah ‘away from speaker, away’, \(\tilde{c}u\) ‘in, into’ (see example (108)), and hal ‘upward’.

29
Batsbi sketch grammar

(54) mak-e-go   jašʷ  (dah)  j-al-iⁿ
  Maka-OBL-ALL  sister(j/d) (PV)  CM-die-AOR
  ‘Maka’s sister died on her’, ‘Maka was affected by her sister dying’

Preverbs do not have the characteristics shown by other affixes of the verb. For example, the particle co ‘not’, and sometimes other words, can intervene between the preverb and the verb, as illustrated in (56).

(55) aħ   ag-en   ħal   kot’r-i   ħ-ob=en...
  2SG.ERG  grandmother-DAT  PV  kotri-PL  take-IMP=QUOT
  ‘You take kot’ri (cheesebreads) to grandmother...’. (from a folktale)

(56) vir   ħal   co   qetː-en   manam   sanam   musik’a   co   tox-iⁿ   vir-e-n
  donkey  PV  NEG  get.up-AOR  until  while  music  NEG  play-AOR  donkey-OBL-DAT
  ‘The donkey didn’t get up until he [the man] played music for the donkey.’ (BH2-063 00:01:02)

Preverbs in Batsbi, though closely associated with the verb, are clitics or independent words (Harris 2009).

One preverb, d-ux ‘back, in reverse’, has a class marker, which agrees with the absolutive argument or with the only argument of an intransitive verb.

(57) ...b-ux-aʔ   last’-b-ien   o   kortʷ....
  CM-again-INTS  raise-CM-AOR  that  head(b/d)
  ‘...yet again it [a snake] raised that head...’. (Kadagidze 2009: 58-59)

3.6.9. Verbal derivation

Both the suffix sequence -d-al (intransitivizer) and -d-i / -d (transitivizer) discussed in §3.6.6 can also derive verbs from nouns or adjectives.

(58) Base          Derived
  pšel   ‘cold (n)’  pšel-d-al-ar   ‘become cold’  pšel-d-ar   ‘make cold’
  q’aḥeⁿ   ‘bitter’   q’aḥ-d-al-ar   ‘become bitter’  q’aḥ-d-ar   ‘make bitter’
  d-ut’q’iⁿ   ‘narrow, thin’  d-ut’q’-d-ar   ‘make narrow, thin’

Compound verbs can be formed.

(59) eq   t’ot’-ev   co   j-iš-j-o-mak’-in-g   soⁿ
  this.OBL  hand-INS  NEG  CM-beat-CM-TV-can-AOR-INTS  1SG.DAT
  ‘...with this hand I could not beat it [the snake that had bitten him] at all’

In (59), the compound verb is composed of j-iš-j-o, the verb ‘beat’ with both of its required gender-number markers and with its thematic vowel, o, and the verb mak’ ‘can, be able’, which requires the dative subject, here soⁿ ‘I, me’.

30
3.7. Adverbs

Many adverbs can be used as postpositions or as preverbs, and some of those are listed in the appropriate sections. To distinguish between these, we use the diagnostic that postpositions determine the case of their host nouns, while adverbs and preverbs do not. Further, postpositions occur after NPs, preverbs occur proclitic to verbs, while adverbs occur in a variety of positions.

Adverbs can be compounded with other elements; e.g. k’ik’el-dah-ren ‘from underneath’, k’ik’l-i-mak ‘from below to above; [turn] around’, t’qui-h-ren-da(h) ‘from behind’.


Adverbs of degree include zoreš ‘very’. Attenuating adverbs include ču-k’aʔ ‘a little (more) inside’, bede’ ‘except for, only’.

Manner adverbs include these: kast’e’ ‘fast, quickly’, vʕalaʔ ‘entirely, completely’.

Negative adverbs include: comič(ħ)e, comiča, mamiče ‘nowhere’; comičrenda(ħ) ‘from nowhere’; comacne ‘never’.

Batsbi distinguishes three deictic distances, with the distal translated here with ‘yon’. In fact, according to Kadagiže and Kadagiže (1984) only two sets of words distinguish three distances, as shown in Table 19. It seems that words that formerly had medial meaning are changing to acquire a proximal meaning, leaving only a two-way distinction for most words. Forms with proximal meaning now can be based on the base with e ‘here’ or with i ‘that’. The o/ui variation in forms with distal meaning reflects a regular phonological alternation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximal meaning</th>
<th>Medial meaning</th>
<th>Distal meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ese(h), ise(h)</td>
<td>is(h) is ‘there’</td>
<td>osi(h), os, uis ‘yon’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>esivh, esev, iseivh, isev ‘hither’</td>
<td>isivh ‘thither’</td>
<td>osivh, uis ‘in yon direction’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eseva, iseva ‘state of being here’</td>
<td>raivh ‘state of being yon’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>išt’ ‘in this way’</td>
<td>uišt’ ‘in yon way’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>išt’(r)u’ ‘this kind of’</td>
<td>ošt’(r)u’ ‘yon kind of’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>išna ‘a place like this’</td>
<td>uis(t’)na ‘a place like yon’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19 Deictic distances (Kadagiže and Kadagiže 1984: 229, 309-312, 492, 496, 571-572)

The suffix -iš derives adverbs from adjective bases; e.g. laqe’n ‘tall’ ~ laq-iš. The suffix -eš can be added to the adverbial case of nouns and pronouns to create adverbs meaning ‘in the way of’; e.g vai ‘we (INCL) ~ vai-y-eš ‘in our (INCL) way, like us’. The suffix -eʔ/-aʔ can be used as an intensifier with adverbs, and other bases; e.g. ehat ‘then’ ~ ehat-eʔ ‘immediately’,
iseh 'there' ~ iseh?e-'right there'. The suffix -(a)č, often added to the locative case form, can also intensify an adverb, e.g. juq?-mat: 'in the center' ~ juq?-mat:-eh-ač 'right to the center'.

3.8. Postpositions

Many postpositions, such as k’ik’el ‘under’ and mak ‘on’, can also be used as adverbs. Some other postpositions, such as dah ‘from’, are also preverbs. The list below includes the case or other form that is governed by the postposition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Postposition</th>
<th>Case or Other Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ain/en</td>
<td>‘for’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ċu</td>
<td>‘in’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ċuih</td>
<td>‘inside’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dal:a</td>
<td>‘because of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>da(h)</td>
<td>‘from’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doli</td>
<td>‘after’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gomci’n</td>
<td>‘until, as far as’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guih</td>
<td>‘towards’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hatx</td>
<td>‘in front of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juq’</td>
<td>‘between’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>or ADV</td>
<td>juxe(h)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘beside, at the base of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td></td>
<td>k’ik’el</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CON</td>
<td></td>
<td>mak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>mciⁿ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td></td>
<td>mpleⁿ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADV</td>
<td></td>
<td>penix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>pex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>reⁿ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>t’q’uih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td></td>
<td>xiⁿ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also many compounded postpositions, and some of those listed above are historically compounds. One established combination is mak-reⁿ ‘from on’.

(60) meq j-il:-eⁿ supr-e=mak
    bread(j/j) CM-put-AOR table-DAT=on
    ‘S/he put the bread on the table’.

(61) c’en-i guiḥ [house-OBL towards] ‘towards the house’
    c’en-i-gʷ [house-OBL-ALL] ‘close to the house’
    c’en-i-n penix [house-OBL-DAT beside] ‘close to the house, beside the house’
    c’en-i-n ʒiř [house-OBL-DAT base] ‘at the base of the house’ (ʒiř ‘root’, a noun)
    c’en-i-n t’q’uih-reⁿ [house-OBL-DAT behind-from] ‘from behind the house’
    xenen k’ik’lereⁿ/k’ik’elre ‘from the base of the tree’ (also k’ik’eldaḥreⁿ)

3.9. Minor classes

Conjunctions include =e ‘and’ (a general conjunction), =a ‘and, too’, le ‘or’, and ma ‘but’. (See §4.7.)

The conjunction =a ‘and, too’ sometimes occurs on both conjuncts, as here. Conjunctions may occur in either order; there is no preference. Gagua (1956: 471) suggests that =a is not used on verbs. The word me ‘that’ is a subordinating conjunction with a wide range of uses. The question particle =i can occur on constituents of various types.

32
Questions can be answered with *daħ(a)* 'yes' or *co* 'no'. The latter is also a sentence and word negator (see §4.5).

Interjections include *ba*, *va*, *eh* 'oh' (Kadagidze 2009), *xatabala* 'woe' (borrowed from Georgian), and *j*evʷ 'man!'.

General intensifiers *(a)*ʔ, *(e)*ʔ are probably actually clitics; e.g. *isiʔ-e* 'right there’, *ošt'i*ʔ ‘again’ (*ošt'i* ‘in yon way’). Also -g is a general intensifier; it combines with the previous intensifier to form the complex -*geʔ*.

The quotative particle =ain(ʷ)/=en may attach to the full form of any word. (See §4.4.2.) A different quotative, -*a*Hiʷ, is homophonous with the regular aorist form of 'say'.

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4. Syntax

4.1. Noun phrase

In basic order, numbers, deictics, adjectives, and possessors precede the noun head, as illustrated below.

As detailed in subsections of §3, modifiers do not agree with the head in case, except that many distinguish an absolutive form from an oblique, where that form agrees with the case of the head. A few modifiers agree in gender and number via prefixal class markers (§3.3, §3.5).
4.2. Clause structure

4.2.1. Word order

The basic word order is SOV, but variation from this is common and flexible.

(67) manana-\textit{s} qor leh-o-b
Manana-\textit{ERG} apple(b/d) pick-\textit{PRS-CM}
‘Manana picks apples’.

(It is usual to put the object and its agreement in the singular in such a sentence.) Pronominal arguments are often omitted; if present, they may be enclitic to the verb (see §3.6.2 for examples). Non-canonical subjects generally follow the same order. Indirect objects usually occur between the subject and the direct object, but a wide variety of positions are available for them.

(68) alis-e-n koǯ b-e-t-n-as
Alis-\textit{OBL-DAT} broom(b/d) CM-give.PFV-AOR-1SG.\textit{ERG}
‘I gave the broom to Alice’.

The auxiliary may precede or follow the verb, whether the latter is expressed as an infinitive or a finite verb, whether or not the embedded clause is complex.

(69) badre-n d-ax-aⁿ le?
child-\textit{DAT} CM-drink-INF want.\textit{PRS}
‘The child wants to drink’.

(70) son le? ħal khek-j-al-aⁿ
1SG.\textit{DAT} want.\textit{PRS} PV ready-CM-INTR-INF
‘I (F) want to get ready’.

Question words and negatives must immediately precede the verb. There is some variation in whether the auxiliary or its complement is treated as the verb for this purpose, as shown by the contrast between (72) and (59) above.

(71) son co le? j-ot:-j-al-aⁿ
1SG.\textit{DAT} NEG want CM-agitate-CM-INTR-INF
‘I don’t want to become agitated’.

4.2.2. Case alignment and agreement

Clauses feature a finite verb with one or more arguments; no avelant verbs have been observed. In intransitive clauses, the case of the sole nominal argument varies based on person: a third person or first person inclusive intransitive subject is always in absolutive case; a first or second person subject can be in either ergative or absolutive case, depending on the verb’s intrinsic properties or, in some cases, depending on the speaker’s interpretation of the volition of the first or second person subject. Example (73) has two
Batsbi sketch grammar

clauses, each with a verb of motion (d-ax-ar ‘go’ and d-ay-ar ‘come’), a class of intransitives that invariably take ergative for first and second person subjects. Other intransitives may permit a choice between ergative and absolutive marking based on whether the subject acts deliberately. See Holisky (1987) for further details.

(72) atx šuin d-ex-r-atx sanam aḥ v-ay-ra
1EXCL.ERG home CM-go-IMPF-1EXCL.ERG while 2SG.ERG CM-come-IMPF
‘We went home before you arrived’. (BH2-037 00:21:37)

(73) (a) so j-arst’-e-sʷ
1SG.ABS CM-gain.weight-PRS-1SG.ABS
‘I (F) am putting on weight [I don’t mean to].’

(b) as j-erst’-n-as
1SG.ERG CM-gain.weight-AOR-1SG.ERG
‘I (F) put on weight [on purpose]’

Both ergative and absolutive subjects of intransitives condition the gender-number markers described in §3.6.2, and both condition person-number-case suffixes described in the same section. Example (120) illustrates both.

In transitive clauses, case marking shows ergative-absolutive alignment. That is, the ergative argument is the agent, and the absolutive argument is typically a patient or theme, as in (75). One or both of these arguments can be dropped when understood from context, as in (76).

(74) equs dah b-itːʷ e phu
3SG.ERG PV CM-wash-PRS this dog(b/d)
‘She is washing this dog’. (BH2-044 00:05:15)

(75) ise dah qexk’-o-d
here PV hang.PL-PRS-CM
‘Here (she) is hanging (them) up’. (BH2-044 00:09:11)

Ergative case subjects condition ergative person-number agreement. Direct objects, like subjects of intransitives, condition gender-number agreement in verbs that take this.

(76) ...oquiⁿ düīpx mak d-opx-in....
that.one.GEN clothing(d/d).ABS PV CM-wear-AOR
‘He [the wolf] put on her [grandmother’s] clothing’. (from a folktale)

A different case pattern is exhibited by a class of transitive verbs where the subject is an experiencer rather than an agent: e.g., qet-ar ‘know how’, xac’-ar ‘hear’, d-ag-ar ‘see’, d-ec’-ar ‘love; want’, eš-ar ‘lack’, etc. With such verbs, the subject is in dative case, and the object is in absolutive case. The dative argument of these verbs, as shown in (78), is the syntactic subject, as it serves as the antecedent for an anaphor in absolutive case, in this case the
Batsbi sketch grammar

reciprocal \textit{vaš(b)a}”‘each other’, even in an alternate word order that places the anaphor to the left of its antecedent. The opposite arrangement, where the reciprocal would be expressed in dative case, is ungrammatical, regardless of word order. Dative arguments trigger neither gender-number agreement nor person-number agreement.

(77) oqəm  d-abc’  vašəⁿ
3PL.DAT  CM-know  each.other.ABS
‘They (f) know each other’. (BH2-036 00:21:24)

For verbs involving physical contact (e.g., \textit{leḥ-ar} ‘touch’ and \textit{d-iš-d-ar} ‘hit’), the instrument is the absolutive argument, while the patient is marked with dative case and an optional point-of-contact can be expressed in contact case, as in example (79).

(78) peškʻr-e-v  atː-a-n  šin-e-x  yoč’  j-iš-j-ieⁿ
child(d/d)-OBL-ERG  cow(b/d)-OBL-DAT  udder(b/d)-OBL-CON  stick(j/j)  CM-hit-CM-AOR
‘The child hit the cow in the udder with a stick’. (BH2-018 00:25:17)

In clauses that include a recipient or beneficiary in addition to the regular transitive construction (i.e., ditransitives), the indirect object is typically expressed in dative case. Some verbs with ditransitive uses include \textit{d-at-ar} ‘give (to)’; \textit{tag-d-ar} ‘make, do (for)’; \textit{d-eš-ar} ‘promise’, \textit{kheк-d-ar} ‘cook, prepare (for)’, and \textit{ec-ar} ‘buy (for)’, shown in example (80).

(79) oqus  jaḥ-oⁿ  ec-iⁿ  mankaⁿ
3SG.ERG  daughter-OBL-DAT  buy-AOR  car
‘(S)he bought (his/her) daughter a car’. (BH2-029-b 00:10:25)

With causatives formed via the suffix \textit{-it}, the causee is expressed in allative case, as in (81).

(80) oqus  alubal  leḥ-b-it  sog
3SG.ERG  cherry(b/d)  pick.IMPV-CM-CAUS  1SG.ALL
‘He makes me pick cherries’.

(81) nan-a-s  šur  maka  j-a-it-ieⁿ
mother-OBL-ERG  milk(j/j)  on  CM-be-CAUS-AOR
‘Mother made the milk boil over [on purpose]’.

(82) nan-e-go/sogo  šur  maka  j-eʔ-eⁿ
mother-OBL-ALL/1SG.ALL  milk(j/j)  on  CM-come-AOR
‘Mother/I made the milk boil over [unintentionally]’.

Example (82) is a causative, and comparable sentence indicating unintentional action can be formed with an intransitive verb, with the (unwilling) agent in the allative, regardless of person, as in (83). See §4.8 on the clausal expression of possession, relations, and part-whole.
The construction of continuous action with the imperfective converb is noteworthy in that it uses two absolutes.

(83) nanešʷ datxur teg-b-oš j-a-r
    aunt(j/d).ABS datxur(b/d).ABS make-CM-CV CM-be-IMPF
    ‘Aunt was making datxur [a dish made from eggs and cheese]’.

In (84), nanešʷ’aunt’ is in the absolutive case and conditions j- agreement on the verb ‘be’, while datxur is also in the absolutive case and conditions b-agreement on ‘make’. Similar distributions can be seen in other examples of the converbs above in (36). See Holisky (1994) for additional information on valence patterns.

4.2.3. Reflexives and reciprocals

In Batsbi, reflexives and reciprocals are treated as ordinary arguments, taking the case and agreement that a noun argument would take.

(84) tek’u-igo-(ħ) šara-x j-aq:-ux jaš j-a
    Tek’o-ALL-LOC self-CON CM-old-COMP sister(j/d) CM-is
    ‘Tek’o has a sister older than her[Self].’

(85) c’in-č šar-e-x sačukr-i čukba-d-uš vašbaⁿ?
    new-OBL year.OBL-OBL-CON gift-PL give-CM-2PL.ERG each.other.DAT
    ‘At New Year’s do you give each other gifts?’

An alternative reflexive uses the head noun kort($) ‘head’ with a possessive (often unexpressed) of the same person and number as the antecedent, first person singular in (87).

(86) (seⁿ) kort keba(d)-b-o-s.
    (my) head(b/d) praise-CM-PRS-1SG.ERG
    ‘I praise myself’.

4.3. Major sentence types

All sentence types discussed in this section can be affirmative or negative. Negative clauses are discussed separately in §4.5.

4.3.1. Declarative clauses

Declarative clauses are discussed throughout this chapter, most thoroughly in §4.2 regarding clause structure.

4.3.2. Interrogative clauses

In yes-no questions, the clitic =i is added to the constituent that is the target of inquiry. The question particle typically appears as the final morpheme in a morphologically complex word; however, it appears to the left of person agreement in a verbal complex, as in (88) (Harris 2011). The particle can attach to nearly any part of speech; it is shown here
with a verb (88), noun (89), and pronoun (89). When the question particle attaches to a word other than the verb, this word must be ordered before the verb (Holisky & Gagua 1994).

(87) aħ am-d-u=i-a(h) e maq-iš
 2SG.ERG study-CM-PRS=Q-2SG.ERG this verse(b/d)-PL
‘Are you learning these verses?’ (BH2-029-a 00:08:14)

(88) bader=i d-itː w isi daḥ
child(d/d)=Q CM-wash-PRS here away
‘Is she washing a child here?’ (BH2-044 00:09:06)

(89) aħ=i bʕuig-n-a(h) ko$jw
2SG.ERG=Q CM-break-AOR-2SG.ERG broom(b/d)
‘Did you break the broom?’ (BH2-029-a 00:11:42)

In content questions, the wh-phrase is positioned immediately before the verb phrase, while other elements are not subject to any new restrictions on ordering. In example (91), the ergative subject, which is not being questioned, can appear as indicated with parentheses: either before or after the constituent containing the question word and verb. Multiple wh-questions are possible, and question words can serve as the antecedent for a reflexive, as shown in (93). The preferred order of multiple question words appears to depend on case: (ergative) (absolutive) (oblique) verb.

(90) (oqus) men d-il-o-d (oqus)
(3SG.ERG) who CM-wash-PRS-CM (3SG.ERG)
‘Whom is s/he bathing?’ (BH2-029-b 00:03:10)

(91) meɟ šar-e v-ex-n-a(h) ʔalni
how.many year.OBL-LOC CM-live-AOR-2SG alvani.LOC
‘How many years have you (M) lived in Alvani?’ (BH2-039 00:00:40)

(92) ʔa$n han-gw d-ag-it-ie$n šari$n c’a
who.ERG who-ALL CM-see-CAUS-AOR self.GEN house(d/d)
‘Who showed whomk his/her owni,k house?’ (BH2-048 00:07:33)

4.3.3. Imperative clauses and the expression of mood

Imperative clauses are formed with an imperative verb (§3.6.5). Negative imperatives are formed with the prohibition particle ma together with the present tense of the verb, as in (95).

(93) daḥ d-il-d-eb=a txo$n daq’ar d-ot’-a-d txon=en
PV CM-wash-CM-IMP= & 1EXCL.DAT food(d/d) CM-carry-IMP-CM 1EXCL.DAT=QUOT
‘ “Wash it for us and bring us food!” ’ (BH2-044 00:09:50)
Batsbi sketch grammar

(94) t’ark’ ma laħ d-apxe-č daq’r-e-x
finger PROHIB touch CM-hot-OBL food(d/d)-OBL-CON
‘Don’t touch hot food!’ (BH2-018 00:17:27)

A suffix of the form –(V)(o) (generally with the final vowel reduced) is used in a number of forms, including the “polite” imperatives described in §3.6.5, “indirect” imperatives, and subjunctives. The subtle formal differences between these require further study; we have glossed the suffix -l as a subjunctive whenever it occurs below.

(95) ilui-n le? me dad xiɬ-u-l
ilo-DAT want that father be.PFV-PRS-SUBJ
‘Ilo wants to be a father’. (BH2-037 00:04:20)

(96) qaⁿ aɬ-a-t oquig me khekiⁿ xiɬ-a-l
tomorrow say-IMP-PL 3SG.ALL COMP ready be.PFV-IMP-SUBJ
‘Tell him/her to be ready tomorrow’. (BH2-037 00:06:28)

Some moods are expressed with modal verbs (see Holisky 1994). For example, the auxiliary d-ec’ar expresses ‘should’ or ‘must’.

(97) moħ d-ec’ aɬ-aⁿ?
how CM-shall say-INF
‘How should one say it?’ (BH2-046 00:13:42)

(98) lam-ni daħ d-ec’-e-r oqar d-aħ-aⁿ
mountain-PL PV CM-must-PRS-IMPF 3PL.ERG CM-take-INF
‘They had to cross the mountains’. (Kadagiże 2009: 52: 4)

4.4. Complex sentences

4.4.1. Relative clauses

Batsbi has two strategies for relativization: a gap with a participial verb, and a relative pronoun with a finite verb.

The gap strategy of relativization is illustrated in examples (100)-(102). In (100), the verb in the relative clause is expressed as a participle modifying the head noun, which is coreferential with the deleted nominal. The deleted nominal would have been in absolutive case. In example (101), the relativized nominals in the embedded relative clauses would have been in ergative case. Example (102) is an example of a headless relative clause using the gap strategy. The relativized noun would have been in ergative case, and because the would-be genitive head noun is deleted, the participle undergoes nominalization via the -čo suffix (as described in §3.2.3) and takes on the genitive case of the deleted head noun. The latter two examples further show that ergatives can be relativized.
Batsbi sketch grammar

(99) [ as _ dac’unba-d-ui ] daq’ar ŷer co xi+d-en-d-a
   [1SG.ERG _ABS refuse-CM- PPL ] food(d/d) while NEG be-PPL-CM-be
   ‘Food [ I would refuse ] doesn’t exist’. (BH2-039 00:01:44)

(100) [ _ _ ma+t-un zet ] ma+t-en-čʷ ] st’ak’-go(h)
   marl-bak-i ḡap’č’q’ap’-eⁿ
   nose-mouth-(DIR/PL) grimace-AOR
   ‘The man [ who drank [ potable oil ]] grimaced with his nose and mouth’. (Kadagiže & Kadagiže 1984: 909b)

(101) [ _ doⁿ lex-čo-n ] manka ese j-a
   [ _ERG horse(b/d) search-OBL-GEN ] car(j/j) here CM-be
   ‘[The one searching for a horse]’s car is here’.

In the relative pronoun strategy, a content question word (e.g., ħan ‘who’, mičeh ‘where’, etc.) is suffixed with a relativization particle, either =e or =a. This particle is identical to the connective conjunction (‘and’). This strategy is fairly unrestricted in terms of what can be relativized, as shown in the following examples with a relativized object of a postposition (103) and relativized genitive (104). We have not observed relativization of objects of comparison.

(102) pst’uin [ menxuičo-n mak=a maq-erč gonba-d-or bato-s ]
   woman(j/d) [ which-DAT on=REL verse(b/d)-PL make.up-CM-IMPF bato-ERG ]
   j-ax-er kalki
   CM-live-IMPF city.LOC
   ‘The woman [ for whom Bato composed verses ] lives in the city’. (BH2-046 00:24:21)

(103) mayazi-e d-eʔ-e o admien [ ḱen-e c’e co store-DIR CM-come-AOR that person(d/d) [ whose-REL name(j/j) NEG
   dak’ j-oʔ-j-o-mak’-is soⁿ ]
   heart.OBL CM-bring-CM-PRS-can-INTR 1SG.DAT ]
   ‘The man [ whose name I can’t remember ] came to the store’. (BH2-046 00:22:41)

Relative clauses of this type typically follow the head noun, but may precede it, as shown in (105).
A subtype of this relative pronoun strategy involves the invariable relative pronoun (v)une ‘what’, which can be pronounced with or without the initial labial. Relative clauses of this type can also be headless (see (116)).

(105) (v)une t’ateb d-a-r, dani? daplango-d-i-r-aiš!
what money(d/d) CM-be-IMPF all waste-CM-PRS-IMPF-2PL
‘You wasted all the money there was!’ (Kadagiže & Kadagiže 1984: 154b)

4.4.2. Complementation

In complement clauses, one of the arguments of the verb is itself a clause. In such cases, if the matrix verb has a class marker, the marker will be d-, reflecting the default agreement pattern, as with d-a ‘is’ in (107). In non-finite complement clauses, the subordinate verb can be either in the masdar (-ar) form (107), or the infinitival form (-aⁿ) (108). Non-finite verbs reflect gender-number agreement with arguments within the complement clause (gender j/j agreement with sup ‘soup’ in (107), gender b/d agreement with a dropped argument phu ‘dog’ in (108)).

Finite complement clauses can be introduced with the complementizer me ‘that’. In complements of attitude verbs such as aɬar ‘to say’, dak’liv ‘to think’, the quotative clitic =ainʷ=en is often used, as in (109). Example (110) shows an embedded question, which does not take the complementizer me.

4.4.3. Adverbial clauses

There are two main strategies for the formation of adverbial clauses in Batsbi: with a complementizer, or with a specialized verb form, such as a conditional or a converb.
Adverbial clauses with a complementizer can appear before or after the matrix clause. The complementizer is derived from a question word with the relativizing suffix -e, as in the locative clause in (111) with mič-e 'where', and the manner clause in (112) with moh-e 'how'.

(110) as bʃar-v-o-s ḥox osi mič-e ven ča b-ag-i-r
1SG.ERG meet-CM-PRS-1SG 2SG.CON there where-REL 1INCL.DAT bear(b/d) CM-see-PRS-IMPF
‘I will meet you (M) where we saw the bear’. (BH2-037 00:22:43)

(111) ħal ħarč xink’al uišt’ moh-e nan-a-s tec’-d-ie-r ḥog
PV wrap khinkali in.that.way how-REL mother-OBL-ERG teach-CM-PRS-IMPF 2SG.ALL
‘Wrap the khinkali the way mother taught you’. (BH2-037 00:23:46)

Clauses denoting reason or purpose are shown in (113), where the clauses are connected by a complementizer, and (114), where the purpose is expressed by a masdar in contact case.

(112) atx latː-r-atx (oquin dalːa) me γaz-iš
1EXCL.ERG stand-IMPF-1EXCL.ERG (3SG.DAT because.of) COMP good-ADVZ

d-ag-ra-l txo^n
CM-see-IMPF-SUBJ 1EXCL.DAT
‘We stood (in order) to see better’. (BH2-037 00:26:09 00:26:24)

(113) o albat vir γosxet-r-e-x ix-o-r letx-aⁿ
3SG perhaps donkey delight-MAS-OBL-CON go-PRS-IMPF dance-INF
‘He danced perhaps to delight the donkey’. (BH2-062 00:01:36)

The other adverbial clause strategy involves special verb formations. A subtype of this strategy is conditionals, which are formed by suffixing -ħe ‘if’ onto the finite verb, as in j-ax-ħe ‘if [female] goes’ in example (115). Conditional clauses can appear before or after the non-conditional matrix clause.

(114) aʃ-n-as co xiʃ-eⁿ j-ax-ħe ħal j-ik’-o-s ho lomen
say-AOR-1SG.ERG NEG be-AOR CM-go-COND PV CM-take-FUT-1SG 2SG to.mountains
‘I said, if you (F) haven’t been, I will take you up to the mountains’. (BH2-049 00:00:33)

(115) duq t’ateb xiʃ-no-ħe-r sogo badr-i-n vune
much money be-EVID-COND-IMPF 1SG.ALL child-PL-DAT what

d-ec’ o so ec-in-d-a-ra-s
CM-want that PV buy- PPL-CM-be-IMPF-1SG
‘If I had a lot of money, I would buy whatever my children want’. (BH2-039 00:03:15)
The other special verb formation in adverbial clauses involves converbs. Converbs are non-finite verbs fulfilling an adverbial purpose, which in Batsbi are of two types: the present converb, formed with the suffix -š, which expresses simultaneous action, and the past converb, formed with -če(h), which expresses a completed action as background information for the finite verb. Converbs are used extensively in narratives.

(116) ošt’iʔ çu ʔe~j>ay-e-r nʕaiʔ co ix-mak’-e-š
again PV <CM>sit-PRS-IMPF outside NEG go-can-PRS-CV
‘Again she sat inside, unable to go out. (BH2-079 00:01:40)

(117) edgil-i b-exk’-če chaʔ com co d-ag-ier
place-DIR CM-come.PFV.PL-CV one nothing NEG CM-see-IMPF
‘When they (M) arrived at the place, not a single thing was there (lit. was seen).’ (BH2-075 00:01:25)

The converb clause can precede or follow the main clause. The two clauses can have the same subject, as in example (117), or different subjects, as in (118). When the subject is the same, it is usually stated only in the main clause.

4.5. Negation

In declarative clauses, negation is denoted by the particle co ‘not’, which appears directly before the verb. Often the negated predicate appears clause-initially, such that elements that would have preceded the predicate in more discursively neutral contexts (obi ħal in (119)) instead follow the predicate. In negated yes-no questions, the question particle =i typically cliticizes to the negative co, resulting in cui ‘no?’, as in (119).

(118) cu=i dac’era-d-al-in? cu=i tag-d-al-iʔ obi ħal?
NEG=Q record-CM-INTR-AOR NEG=Q make-CM-INTR-AOR 3PL up
‘Did it not record? Did they not get made?’ (BH2-044 00:00:04)

(119) oqar mezobl-i-n mak k’i co j-o ambui,
3PL neighbor-PL-DAT on PRT NEG CM-PRS conversation(j/)

j-o šui-n mak
CM-PRS self.PL-DAT on

‘They are talking not about the neighbors, but about themselves’. (BH2-032-a 00:03:39)

The same particle co is used for constituent negation, where it again precedes the verb, even if the negated constituent is some other element. On the prohibitive ma, see §4.3.3.

4.6. Comparative constructions

Three types of comparative constructions are discussed here: standard comparatives, superlatives, and correlative comparatives (‘the more... the more’).
In standard comparative constructions, the standard of comparison is in contact case. The gradable adjective may be inflected in its comparative form (-i(v)x) or appear without any special morphological marking, as in (121). If the standard of comparison is otherwise marked with an oblique case for syntactic reasons, the conjunction minam (or manam) ‘while; for now; than’ is used. In adverbial comparison, the adverb receives no special marking.

(120) as moħ-e dak’lev-il oqu-x ɣazeⁿ j-a-r k’ño
1SG.ERG how-REL think-SUBJ that-CON good CM-be-IMPF movie(j/j)
‘The movie was better than I thought’. (BH2-024 00:03:25)

Superlatives may be formed by adding hamaxeʔ ‘most’ in front of the adjective with no special comparative marking, as in (122).

(121) mit’ʷ hamaxeʔ laqeⁿ pešk’ar  d-a sk’ol-e(-h)
Mito most tall boy(d/d) CM-be school-OBL(-LOC)
‘Mito is the tallest boy in school’. (BH2-024 00:15:42)

Correlative comparatives (‘the more… the more…’) are formed with (v)une ‘what’ in the subordinate clause and oqumpleⁿ”‘that much’ in the matrix clause. The compared adjective is not inflected. Occasionally, the negative co ‘not’ is used with the yes-no question marker =i in such constructions, as in (123), although pragmatically-speaking the clause is neither negated nor a question.

(122) une ɣazen kaniz cu=i j-a oqumpleⁿ čamlîⁿ ix mač’ar
the.more good grape(j/j) NEG=Q CM-be that.much tasty go new.wine
‘The better the grape, the tastier the wine’. (BH2-024 00:17:14)

4.7. Co-ordination and chaining

Coordinated constituents are each marked with the particle =a/=e. The conditioning of these two variants is unclear; Holisky and Gagua note that it seems to be phonological (1994: 212). The coordination particle follows any inflection on the coordinated elements: nan-as=a vaš-as=a (mother-ERG=& brother-ERG=&) ‘mother and brother’. Apparently any constituent can be coordinated this way: e.g., c’enin hatx=a c’enin t’q’uih=a ‘in front of the house and behind the house’, with the particle cliticizing to the postpositions; lamzur=a q’onlun=a pst’u’in ‘young and beautiful wife’, where the adjectives are coordinated; ese=a osi=a ‘here and there’, with coordinated adverbs, etc. Example (124) shows coordination of two nouns.

(123) pħu=a k’uit’=a t’q’o?= equi-g ħips
dog=& cat=& still this.one-ALL look.at.PL
‘The dog and cat are still looking at her’. (BH2-044 00:00:16)
There are several strategies for clausal coordination. The most common strategy when the participants in the two clauses differ involves simple juxtaposition with no special conjunction marker (i.e., asyndetic coordination). In example (125), there is a prosodic break between the clauses (between *jeg* 'beer' and *opus* 'he/she'). Elision of the second verb is possible, but not obligatory in this example.

Explicitly marked coordination is also possible for conjoined clauses. The clitic *=a/=e* can be used, typically affixed to verbs; example (126) shows clausal coordination with the clitic attached to nouns. Alternately, the conjunction word *(j)j*e can be used.

(124) atx me-t-o-tx jeg opus (me=t) šur
1EXCL.ERG drink-PRS-1EXCL.ERG beer 3SG.ERG (drink) milk
‘We are drinking beer; he (is drinking) milk’. (BH2-033 00:22:53)

(125) phar-a-n=a ħal te-w k’ot’-i-n=a ħal te-w šuiš=a ħal qal:
dog-OBL-DAT=& PV give-PRS cat-OBL-DAT=& PV give-PRS themselves=& PV eat
‘(They) give (some) to the dog, and give (some) to the cat, and themselves will eat’. (BH2-044 00:10:31)

When the conjoined clauses are contrastive, contrast may be signaled by the adverb *t’q’oʔ* 'still; again' or with the conjunction *magram* 'but' (from Georgian). Disjunction is expressed with *le* 'or' between the disjoint elements (*txa le qa’n’* 'today or tomorrow), or before both elements for the meaning ‘either… or’. The same structure can be used in a negative context with *co* 'not' as well (i.e., 'neither... nor'), as in (127).

(126) opus le ditx co d-aq’ le načx
3SG.ERG or meat(d/d) NEG CM-eat or cheese(j/j)
‘(S)he eats neither meat nor cheese’. (BH2-033 00:06:10)

A final strategy for clause chaining involves converbs, discussed in §4.4.3.

### 4.8. Non-verbal predication

The copular verb in Batsbi takes the form *d-a* 'be' in the present tense and the imperfective past and the form *xil-ar* 'be' in perfective formations (future, perfective past, imperative, optative, conditional). Copular sentences have a nominal subject in absolutive case, which can stand alone without a complement, as in (128). The complement of a copula can be a noun phrase, an adjective, as in (129); an adverb, as in (130); or a postpositional phrase.

(127) yaze’n amind b-a-r
good weather(b/d) CM-be-IMPF
‘There was good weather’. (BH2-049 00:00:51)
Batsbi sketch grammar

(128) batʷ xi-ʷ zoraⁿ
    bato  be.PFV-PRS brave
    ‘Bato will be brave’. (BH2-023 00:16:18)

(129) yazi-š xi
    good-ADVZ  be.PFV
    ‘Be well!’ (i.e., ‘farewell’, upon parting)

Examples (131) and (132) show the copula equating two absolutive-case nouns of different classes. In such cases, where there are two potential triggers for agreement, the verb apparently agrees with the topic.

(130) e doⁿ sačukar b-a
    this  horse(b/d)  gift(d/d)  CM-be
    ‘This horse is a gift’. (BH2-023 00:09:25)

(131) beⁿ ħec’k’-e-ⁿ c’a d-a
    nest(b/d)  bird(d/d)-OBL-GEN   house(d/d)  CM-be
    ‘A nest is a bird’s house’. (BH2-023 00:10:08)

A common copular formation is the construction expressing ownership, as in (133). The possessed item, body part, or person in close with relationship with the possessor is expressed in absolutive case and triggers the agreement marker on d-a; the possessor is marked with locative-of-allative case.

(132) eq sag-e-go-(ḥ) j-aq’aⁿ mʕaʔu-i j-a
    this.OBL deer-OBL-ALL-(LOC) CM-big.PL horn(j/j)-PL CM-be
    ‘This deer has big antlers’. (BH2-021 00:01:15)

Predicate locatives are typically not expressed with the copula, but require a more specific verb depending on the position and shape of the argument whose location is indicated: e.g., ṭe-d-ay-ar ‘sit; stand’ (example (117)), latː-ɑr ‘stand’ (example (117)) lepč-ɑr ‘lie’, qetː-ɑr ‘be attached, on the side of’, herč-ɑr ‘be wrapped/coiled around; surround’, elː-ɑr ‘be threaded on’.

4.9. Clefts

In Batsbi, a focus cleft is constructed with the verb ‘be’ in the main clause and a participle expressing the verb of the embedded sentence. Recall that participles can express relative clauses in Batsbi (§4.4.1). Participles in Batsbi may mean ‘doing’ or ‘doer’; that is, they may have an agentive meaning.

(133) nanvašʷ / *nanvaš-as c’od  b-at-ui-nv-a
    uncle(v/b).ABS  *uncle-ERG  shishkabob(b/d).ABS  CM-grill-PRS-PPL CM-be.PRS
    ‘Uncle is the one (who is) grilling shishkabob’, ‘…the griller of the shishkabob.’
While the agent is in the ergative case with ‘grill’ in simple sentences, in (134) ‘uncle’ can only be in the absolutive, not in the ergative. It conditions agreement, _v_-, on the verb ‘be’ and is its subject. The object of ‘grill’ is likewise in the absolutive case and conditions agreement on the participle ‘grilling, griller’.

Information on other aspects of information structure is not available.

5. Sample text

The following text is an excerpt from a story about a trip to Tusheti, recorded in summer 2017. The full text of the story, with audio and video, is available via the Batsbi collection in the Kaipuleohone Language Archive under the identifier BH2-049. This excerpt runs from 00:01:00 until 00:01:25 in the audio file.

‘It was 8:20pm when we left Dartlo. There were two of us in the car. Outside of Dartlo, on the mountain pass, it got dark on us. When we got to this side of the summit, there was lightning on this side down in the valley. Thunder cracked. I thought, “We’ll go quickly, so that it won’t rain on us on the road”’.

(134) psarluin isː-en t’q’a c’ut jar dartlo=lna nʃaiʔa delnatx. ši daratx mankanev. dartlo nʃaiʔ dale^n, cer mak uk’ve, dah učna xiten txo^n. cer mak so dexk’če eq penix bare laxuiš t’ap leqor, č’ax kux dor. dak’livnas me kast’e ḣotx me naq’a q’ar co ja ɣol txonene.

(135) dartlo nʃaiʔ d-al-e^n cer=mak uk’ve dah dartlo outside CM-go- PPL summit=on already PV

učna xɨ̊-en txo^n darkness be.PFV-AOR 1EXCL.DAT

‘When we had gone out of Dartlo, already on the mountain pass, it got dark on us’.

(136) cer=mak so d-exk’-čeq penix summit=on PV CM-come.PL-CV this.OBL on.side

bar-e laxuiš t’ap.leq-o-r č’ax.kux d-o-r valley-LOC down lightning-PRS-IMPF thunder.crack(d/d) CM-make.PRS-IMPF
‘When we had arrived at the summit, on this side down in the valley, lightning flashed and thunder cracked’.

(137) dak’liv-n-as me kast’e γ-o-tx me naq’-a
think-AOR-1S.ERG COMP quickly go.PFV-PRS-1EXCL.ERG COMP road-LOC

q’ar co j-a γ-o-l txon=en=e
rain(j/j) NEG CM-be go.PFV-PRS-SUBJ 1EXCL.DAT=QUOT=&

‘I thought, “we’ll go quickly, so that on the road it won’t rain on us”.’

6. References
Gippert, Jost, Manana Tandašvili, Maia Mačavariani & Bela Šavxelišvili. 2006. Endangered Caucasian languages in Georgia (ECLinG). Online: https://archive.mpi.nl/islandora/object/lat%3A1839_00_0000_0000_0008_24AD_F.


7. List of abbreviations

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<td>(d/d)</td>
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### Batsbi sketch grammar

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