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*Haspelmath*  
A Grammar of Lezgian

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*Meinen Eltern  
und meinen Schwestern*



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## Abbreviations

Abbreviated category labels used in morpheme-by-morpheme glosses  
(see 1.3.5. for further notational conventions in glosses):

ABS	Absolutive case
ABST	Abstract noun
ADDR	Addirective case
ADEL	Adelative case
ADESS	Adessive case
ADV	adverbializer
AFUT	Archaic Future
AIMPP	Archaic Imperfective participle
ANTIC	anticausative
AOC	Aorist converb
AOP	Aorist participle
AOR	Aorist
APRET	Archaic Preterit
CAUS	Causal converb
CND	Conditional
CONT	Continuative
COP	copula
DAT	Dative case
EVID	Hearsay Evidential
FUT	Future
GEN	Genitive case
GRAD	Graduative converb
ERG	Ergative case
HORT	Hortative
IMC	Imperfective converb
IMMANT	Immediate-Anterior converb
IMPF	Imperfective
IMPV	Imperative
INDEF	indefiniteness marker (on indefinite pronouns)
INESS	Inessive case
INEL	Inelative case
INF	Infinitive
INTJ	Interjection
MAN	Purpose/Manner converb
MSD	Masdar
NEG	negation
OPT	Optative
ORD	marker of ordinal numerals
PER	Periphrasis form
PL	plural
PODIR	Postdirective case
POEL	Postelative case
POESS	Postessive case
POSTR	Posterior converb
PRED	predicative suffix

xx Abbreviations

PRF	Perfect
PROHIB	Prohibitive
PST	Past
PT	particle
PTP	participle
PURP	Purpose/Manner converb
Q	question marker
REPET	Repetitive
SBDIR	Subdirective case
SBEL	Subrelative case
SBESS	Subessive case
SBST	substantivizer
SRDIR	Superdirective case
SREL	Superrelative case
SRESS	Superessive case
TEMP	Temporal converb

Other abbreviations that are used occasionally:

A.	Arabic
Ch.	chapter
intr.	intransitive
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet
lit.	literally
N	noun
NP	noun phrase
obl.	oblique stem
P.	Persian
T.	Turkic
tr.	transitive
V	verb

*A* and *U* also represent archiphonemes:  
*A* stands for a low vowel, *U* stands for a high vowel.

Capital letters are sometimes used to represent NP arguments, sometimes with a subscript indicating case, e.g. A, T, E<sub>DAT</sub>, L<sub>POESS</sub>. Like mathematical variables, these letters are strictly speaking meaningless. However, as a mnemonic help for the reader, non-arbitrary letters were often chosen that can be thought of as standing for certain semantic roles:

A:	"agent"
T:	"theme"
E:	"experiencer"
S:	"stimulus"
L:	"location"
R:	"recipient"

See 1.3.4. for abbreviations of the sources of the example sentences.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. The Lezgian language and its genetic affiliation

Lezgian is spoken by about 400,000 people in southern Daghestan and northern Azerbaijan in the eastern Caucasus. (See 2.1. for details on Lezgian speakers.) Lezgian has been written since 1928, first in the Latin alphabet, from 1938 onward in the Cyrillic alphabet. This grammar describes the standard language, which is based on the lowland Güne dialect. (See 2.2. for more on Lezgian dialects, and 2.3. for more information on the status of Lezgian and the standard language.)

Lezgian is a member of the Lezgian branch of the Nakho-Daghestanian family of languages. The family tree of Nakho-Daghestanian is shown in (1) (following Hewitt 1981a:197).

(1) Nakho-Daghestanian languages

    Nakh languages

        Chechen, Ingush, Tsova-Tush (Bats)

    Daghestanian languages

        Avaric languages

            Avar

        Andic languages

            Andi, Botlikh, Godoberi, Karata, Akhvakh, Bagvalal,  
            Tindi, Chamalal

        Tsezic languages

            Tsez, Khvarshi, Hinukh, Bezhta, Hunzib

    Lakic languages

        Lak, Dargwa

    Lezgian languages

        Lezgian, Archi, Tabasaran, Agul, Rutul, Tsakhur,  
        Budukh, Kryz, Khinalug, Udi

Comparative studies on Nakho-Daghestanian languages include Bokarev (1961), Giginejšvili (1977), Kibrik & Kodzasov (1988), (1990). Comparative studies of the Lezgian languages include Alekseev (1980) and Schulze (1983).

The Nakho-Daghestanian family is also sometimes called "North-East Caucasian" or "East Caucasian". Such terms are avoided here because they could strengthen the still widespread misconception (see, e.g., Voegelin & Voegelin 1966, Ruhlen 1987) that the Nakho-Daghestanian family is part of a larger "Caucasian" family, comprising also the Kartvelian ("South Caucasian") family and the Abkhazo-Adyghean ("North-West Caucasian") family. However, the main feature that these families have in common, besides being spoken in the Caucasus region, is that they are not related to any

of the neighboring larger families (Indo-European, Turkic, Afro-Asiatic), although they also share a few typological features (ergativity, ejective consonants). Of course, it cannot be excluded that the Nakho-Daghestanian, Kartvelian, and Abkhazo-Adyghean languages will some day turn out to be related after all, but so far a genetic relationship has not been proved.

## 1.2. An overview of Lezgian grammar

This section is an introduction to the typologically most striking features of Lezgian. Detailed information on each topic can be found in later chapters.

### 1.2.1. Phonology and morphophonemics

Lezgian has six phonemic vowels which form an asymmetric system which is typologically rather unusual. Distinctive length of /a/ and /æ/ is marginal.

i	y	u
e		
æ		a

With its 54 members, the Lezgian consonant inventory is quite rich. There are 34 occlusives, in six places of articulation (labial, dental, dental sibilant, postalveolar sibilant, velar, uvular) and four series (voiced, voiceless unaspirated, voiceless aspirated, voiceless ejective). Dental, velar, and uvular obstruents have a labialized and a non-labialized variant.

b	d					g	g <sup>w</sup>		
p <sup>h</sup>	t <sup>h</sup>	t <sup>hw</sup>	ʈ <sup>h</sup>	ʈ <sup>hw</sup>	ʈ <sup>h</sup>	k <sup>h</sup>	k <sup>hw</sup>	q <sup>h</sup>	q <sup>hw</sup>
p	t	t <sup>w</sup>	ʈ	ʈ <sup>w</sup>	ʈ <sup>ʷ</sup>	k	k <sup>w</sup>	q	q <sup>w</sup>
pʷ	tʷ	t <sup>wʷ</sup>	ʈʷ	ʈ <sup>wʷ</sup>	ʈ <sup>ʷʷ</sup>	kʷ	k <sup>wʷ</sup>	qʷ	q <sup>wʷ</sup>
			z	z <sup>w</sup>	ʒ		ʁ		ʁ <sup>w</sup>
f			s	s <sup>w</sup>	ʃ	x		χ	χ <sup>w</sup>
m	n								
	l								
	r								
w					j			h	ʔ

Until recently, Lezgian had only syllables of the structure CV, CVC, and CVCC. The last type occurs only at the end of a morpheme (e.g. /wert<sup>h</sup>/ 'hen', /halt<sup>h</sup>-zawa/ 'meets'), and morpheme-internal consonant clusters (CVC-CV...) are restricted to a few types in native words.

Quite recently Lezgian has undergone a sound change of vowel syncope that eliminated high vowels in pretonic position between voiceless obstruents, e.g.

/ʈ <sup>h</sup> u'χun/	>	/ʈ <sup>h</sup> χun/	'comb'
/sy'pek <sup>h</sup> /	>	/spek <sup>h</sup> /	'mulberry'
/k <sup>h</sup> i'ʈ <sup>h</sup> ε/	>	/k <sup>h</sup> i'ʈ <sup>h</sup> ε/	'afraid'
/sit <sup>h</sup> χa/	>	/st <sup>h</sup> χa/	'brother'

As a result of this change, which lacks uniformity and is apparently still in progress, a large number of new morpheme-initial consonant clusters has arisen. In addition, the syncopated vowels often leave the preceding consonant labialized (in the case of syncopated /u/) or palatalized (in the case of /i/) or both (in the case of /y/), so that a whole new class of palatalized and labialized-palatalized voiceless obstruents has come into being. This change complicates the description of Lezgian phonology considerably.

Another prominent feature of Lezgian is the occurrence of various consonant alternations in nouns. The Absolutive Singular form, which ends in zero, often differs from the other forms, e.g.

#### Word-final Ejective Aspiration

/ne't'er/	'lice'	/net <sup>h</sup> /	'louse'
-----------	--------	---------------------	---------

#### Word-final Ejective Voicing

/t'a'p'uni/	'block (Erg.)'	/t'ab/	'block (Abs.)'
-------------	----------------	--------	----------------

#### Word-final Unaspirated Voicing

/tse'k <sup>w</sup> er/	'ants'	/tseg <sup>w</sup> /	'ant'
-------------------------	--------	----------------------	-------

#### Pre-obstruent Unaspirated Aspiration

/tsyk <sup>h</sup> /	'flower'	/ts <sup>h</sup> uk <sup>w</sup> er/	'flowers'
----------------------	----------	--------------------------------------	-----------

Lezgian also shows palatal (/e, i, y/ vs. /a, u/) and labial (/u, y/ vs. /i/) vowel harmony, but only in the first two syllables of a word. For instance, the oblique stem suffix *-Uni* has the alternants /-ini/, /-uni/, /-yni/:

<i>ric'</i>	<i>ric'-ini</i>	'bowstring'
<i>leq'</i>	<i>leq'-ini</i>	'liver'
<i>q'ük</i>	<i>q'ük-üni</i>	'pitchfork'
<i>zarb</i>	<i>zarb-uni</i>	'speed'
<i>tur</i>	<i>tur-uni</i>	'sword'

Word stress is generally on the second syllable of the root. Loanwords from Arabic may also be stressed on the third syllable.

<i>ak'ázarun</i>	'bow'
<i>čubáruk</i>	'swallow'
<i>hukumát</i>	'government' (< Arabic <i>hukuumat</i> )

Suffixes are of two types: stress-neutral and stress-attracting. Stress-neutral suffixes do not bear stress. Since roots are commonly monosyllabic and quite a few stress-neutral suffixes may follow a root, polysyllabic words stressed on the first syllable are not uncommon, e.g.

<i>šéš-zawa</i>	'is crying'
<i>hált-nawa-j-bur-u-kaj</i>	'about those who have met'

Most stress-attracting suffixes can follow only monosyllabic roots, resulting in words stressed on the second syllable.

<i>sir-ér</i>	'secrets'
<i>wirt'-édi</i>	'honey (Ergative case)'
<i>fe-jí</i>	'having gone'

### 1.2.2. Morphology

Lezgian morphology is overwhelmingly suffixing and agglutinating. Nouns, adjectives, and verbs can be easily distinguished by morphological criteria.

Nouns are inflected for number (Singular, Plural), case (Absolute, Ergative, Genitive, Dative, Essive, Elative, Directive), and localization (Ad, Sub, Post, Super, In). The locative cases Essive, Elative, and Directive occur in combination with the localizations (Ad-essive, Sub-elative, Super-directive, etc.). All cases other than the Absolute are based on a special oblique stem whose suffix is idiosyncratic for many nouns. An example (*hül* 'sea'):

	Singular	Plural
Absolute	<i>hül</i>	<i>hül-er</i>
Ergative	<i>hül-i</i>	<i>hül-er-i</i>
Genitive	<i>hül-i-n</i>	<i>hül-er-i-n</i>
Dative	<i>hül-i-z</i>	<i>hül-er-i-z</i>
Adessive	<i>hül-i-w</i>	<i>hül-er-i-w</i>
Adelative	<i>hül-i-waj</i>	<i>hül-er-i-waj</i>
Addirective	<i>hül-i-wdi</i>	<i>hül-er-i-wdi</i>
Subessive	<i>hül-i-k</i>	<i>hül-er-i-k</i>
Subelative	<i>hül-i-kaj</i>	<i>hül-er-i-kaj</i>
Subdirective	<i>hül-i-kdi</i>	<i>hül-er-i-kdi</i>
Postessive	<i>hül-i-q<sup>h</sup></i>	<i>hül-er-i-q<sup>h</sup></i>
Postelative	<i>hül-i-q<sup>h</sup>aj</i>	<i>hül-er-i-q<sup>h</sup>aj</i>
Postdirective	<i>hül-i-q<sup>h</sup>di</i>	<i>hül-er-i-q<sup>h</sup>di</i>
Supernessive	<i>hül-e-l</i>	<i>hül-er-a-l</i>
Superelative	<i>hül-e-laj</i>	<i>hül-er-i-laj</i>
Superdirective	<i>hül-e-ldi</i>	<i>hül-er-a-ldi</i>
Inessive	<i>hül-e</i>	<i>hül-er-a</i>
Inelative	<i>hül-äj</i>	<i>hül-er-aj</i>

The locative cases in combination with the localizations can express various local relations. However, local relations are more often expressed by postpositions, and noun inflections tend to express more abstract relations.

The only inflections of adjectives are the substantivizing suffix *-di* (e.g. *c'iji* 'new', *c'iji-di* 'new one') the adverbial suffixes *-(di)z / -dakaz* (e.g. *jawaš* 'slow', *jawaš-diz* 'slowly').

Verbs are inflected for tense-aspect, negation, several mood forms and various non-finite forms. There are no person-number agreement forms. The most important inflected verb forms are (from *gun* 'give'):

	non-negated	negated
Imperfective	<i>gu-zwa</i>	<i>gu-zwa-č</i>
Past Imperfective	<i>gu-zwa-j</i>	<i>gu-zwa-č-ir</i>
Future	<i>gu-da</i>	<i>gu-da-č</i>
Past Future	<i>gu-da-j</i>	<i>gu-da-č-ir</i>
Aorist	<i>ga-na</i>	<i>ga-na-č</i>
Past Aorist	<i>ga-na-j</i>	<i>ga-na-č-ir</i>
Perfect	<i>ga-nwa</i>	<i>ga-nwa-č</i>
Past Perfect	<i>ga-nwa-j</i>	<i>ga-nwa-č-ir</i>
Imperative	<i>ce /c<sup>h</sup>e/</i>	—
Prohibitive	—	<i>gu-mir</i>
Optative	<i>gu-raj</i>	<i>ta-gu-raj</i>
Hortative	<i>gu-n</i>	<i>ta-gu-n</i>
Masdar	<i>gu-n</i>	<i>ta-gu-n</i>
Infinitive	<i>gu-z</i>	<i>ta-gu-z</i>
Imperfective participle	<i>gu-zwa-j</i>	<i>ta-gu-zwa-j</i>
Future participle	<i>gu-da-j</i>	<i>ta-gu-da-j</i>
Perfect participle	<i>ga-nwa-j</i>	<i>ta-ga-nwa-j</i>
Aorist participle	<i>ga-ɟl</i>	<i>ta-ga-j</i>
Aorist converb	<i>ga-na</i>	<i>ta-ga-na</i>
Posterior converb	<i>gu-daldi</i>	—
Temporal converb	<i>ga-ji-la</i>	<i>ta-ga-j-la</i>

There is little derivational morphology in Lezgian. The most important nominal derivational suffix is the abstract suffix *-wal* (*c'iji-wal* 'new-ness'). Verbs can be derived from verbs by means of the causative suffix *-(a)r* (*ačwaz-un* 'stop (intr.)', *ačwaz-ar-un* 'stop (tr.)'). Some derivational affixes have been borrowed along with loanwords and are so common that they must be considered Lezgian affixes, e.g. nominal *-či* (e.g. *lawğa-či* 'proud person'), adjectival *-lu*, *-suz* (e.g. *mešreblu* 'pleasant', *mešrebsuz* 'unpleasant'), verbal *-lamišun* (e.g. *leke-lamišun* 'stain, soil').

### 1.2.3. Syntax

Word order patterns in Lezgian are overwhelmingly head-final. This order is obligatory in noun phrases (Genitive-noun, adjective-noun, numeral-noun, demonstrative-noun, etc.), adjective phrases, and postpositional phrases, and it is preferred for clauses. However, alongside SOV order other orders are also possible, especially in the spoken language.

The case-marking patterns in clauses is uniformly ergative, as shown in (2) (for notational conventions used in example sentences, see 1.3.4.-5.).

- (2) a. *Stxa k'wal.i-z xta-na.*  
 brother(ABS) house-DAT return-AOR

'The brother came back home.'

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- b. *Wax.a stxa k'wal.i-z raqur-na.*  
sister(ERG) brother(ABS) house-DAT send-AOR

'The sister sent the brother home.'

Dative subjects occur with some experiential verbs, e.g.

- (3) *Wax.a-z stxa aku-na.*  
sister-DAT brother(ABS) see-AOR

'The sister saw the brother.'

There is no agreement in Lezgian, neither in noun phrases nor on finite verbs. Personal pronouns are normally used if there are no full noun phrase arguments. (However, these may be omitted if they can be recovered from the context.)

- (4) *Ada abur k'wal.i-z raqur-na.*  
she(ERG) they(ABS) house-DAT send-AOR

'She sent them home.'

Lezgian has practically no rules that change grammatical relations. There is only a derivational suffix *-(a)r* (causative) which turns intransitive verbs into transitive verbs.

Subordinate clauses are normally non-finite, i.e. marked by special subordinating verb forms, and they generally precede the superordinate clause.

Relative clauses make use of the participles, which have no inherent orientation and can therefore be used to relativize almost any constituent.

- (5) a. *gada k'wal.i-z raqur-aj ruš*  
[boy house-DAT send-AOP] girl

'the girl who sent the boy home.'

- b. *ruš.a k'wal.i-z raqur-aj gada*  
[girl(ERG) house-DAT send-AOP] boy

'the boy whom the girl sent home'

- c. *ruš.a gada raqur-aj k'wal*  
[girl(ERG) boy send-AOP] house

'the house to which the girl sent the boy'

Complement clauses are of three major types: Masdar (verbal noun) complements (6), Infinitival complements (7), and participial complements (8).

- (6) *Ča-z tamaša student-r.i-z qalur-un teklif-na.* (S88:155)  
we-DAT [play student-PL-DAT show-MSD] propose-AOR

'They proposed to us to perform the play in front of the students.'

- (7) *Abur.u-z cl.a-n gazet.di-z sa ġweč'i maqala kxi-z*  
 they-DAT [wall-GEN paper-DAT one little article write-INF]  
*k'an-zawa.* (M83:55)  
 want-IMPF  
 'They want to write a little article for the wall newspaper.'
- (8) *Škola.di č'exi rol' quġwa-zwa-j-di za inkar iji-zwa-č.*  
 [school(ERG) big role play-IMPF-PTP-SBST] I:ERG denial do-IMPF-NEG  
 'I don't deny that the school plays an important role.' (DD77,6:15)

Although it is possible to conjoin clauses with the conjunction *wa* 'and', this is avoided in favor of constructions using converbs (non-finite verb forms used for adverbial subordination), e.g.

- (9) a. *Ruš elqwe-na q'uluq<sup>h</sup>di kilig-na.* (S88:35)  
 girl [turn-AOC] back look-AOR  
 'The girl turned around and looked back.'  
 (Lit. 'The girl, having turned around, looked back.')
- b. *Sual-r.i-z sa fikir-ni ta-gu-z, muhman-r.i anžax*  
 [question-PL-DAT one thought-even NEG-give-INF] guest-PL(ERG) only  
*žawab-ar tkrar-zawa-j.* (Q81:112)  
 answer-PL repeat-IMPF-PST  
 'The guests did not pay attention to the questions and only repeated the answer.' (Or: 'Not paying attention to the questions,...')

Specialized converbs are used for adverbial clauses, e.g.

- (10) *Sabir xkwe-daldi čaj hazur že-da.* (Š83:61)  
 [Sabir return-POSTR] tea ready be-FUT  
 'The tea will be ready before Sabir comes back.'
- (11) *Mäden ačux q<sup>h</sup>uwu-r-la, ča-z wiri-d.a-z*  
 [mine open(PER) REPET-AOP-TEMP] we-DAT all-SBST.SG-DAT  
*xür-e k'walax že-da.* (HQ89:8)  
 village-INESS work be-FUT  
 'When the mine is reopened, there will be work in the village for all of us.'
- (12) *Zun k'wal-äj fe-ji-waldi, Ahmed ata-na.* (G63:13)  
 [I:ABS house-INEL go-AOP-IMMANT] Ahmed come-AOR  
 'As soon as I left the house, Ahmed came.'

Polar questions are marked by the interrogative verb suffix *-ni*, as in (13).

- (13) *Farid ata-na-ni?*  
 Farid come-AOR-Q  
 'Has Farid come?'

In parametric questions, the interrogative pronoun is normally in situ and no interrogative verb suffix is used.

- (14) *Farid mus ata-na?*  
 Farid when come-AOR  
 'When did Farid come?'

Comparison of inequality is expressed by marking the standard of comparison in the Superlative case. The adjective is not specifically marked.

- (15) *Avar č'al lezgi č'al.a-laj četin ja.*  
 Avar language Lezgian language-SREL difficult COP  
 'Avar is more difficult than Lezgian.'

### 1.3. A user's guide to this grammar

This book is intended as a reference grammar of Lezgian for linguists who wish to learn more about Lezgian grammar as a whole or about particular aspects of it.

Since it was written for linguists, the grammar presupposes familiarity with a large number of fundamental grammatical notions which greatly facilitate the concise formulation of grammatical regularities. However, it contains no framework-specific jargon, idiosyncratic formalisms, or other unnecessary obstacles.

#### 1.3.1. User-friendly features

An attempt has been made to make this grammar maximally user-friendly even for readers who need a particular piece of information (e.g. for a cross-linguistic investigation) and have no time to wade through the whole grammar. This grammar has the following features that make it easy to use as a reference work:

(A) Morpheme-by-morpheme glosses with brackets marking subordinate clauses for better readability (cf. 1.3.5.).

(B) A detailed subject index which, in addition to normal entries referring to places in the book, contains entries that do not occur elsewhere in the book. Such entries are names of grammatical phenomena that do not occur in the language. Thus, looking up the subject index suffices to find out that Lezgian has no passive, no dual, no tones. There are of course no negative statements about these categories in the grammar, and since the mere absence of a category in the index proves nothing, the negative information in the index might be useful.

(C) An index to the example sentences. Since the examples (most of which were taken from original Lezgian texts) usually show other interesting phenomena in addition to the point which they illustrate in the particular place in the text, such an index makes a lot of additional information available. By looking up the number of an example in the index, the reader

can find up to twenty more examples elsewhere in the grammar that illustrate the same point.

(D) A more or less complete bibliography of scholarly works on Lezgian. Most of these are not mentioned in the text, but a reader who is interested in further information or different points of view is given the chance to look them up. The subject index simultaneously serves as an index to the bibliography. This step was taken so as not to clutter the text with references that few readers will find useful because most of the publications are difficult to get outside of Daghestan.

(E) An index to the grammatical morphemes of Lezgian.

### 1.3.2. Structure of the grammar

The structure of this grammar follows the well-established traditional order: phonology — morphology — syntax — texts. This ensures that the amount of information that is presupposed in a given section but comes later in the book is minimized.

The morphological chapters deal with the form and the meaning of the grammatical items of the language. For inflectional categories, the inflection as a whole is first described, followed by a description of the meanings of the individual inflectional categories. For derivational categories, form and meaning are treated together.

While the morphology takes the analytical perspective (from form to function), the syntax takes the synthetic perspective (from function to form), with chapter topics such as coordination, relative clauses, complement clauses, adverbial clauses, coreference, questions, and comparison. All these are taken as functional notions. For example, participial relative clauses and correlative relative clauses show no formal similarities, but they are treated together in Ch. 19 because of their similar function.

Thus, this grammar to some extent fulfills the theoretical requirement to present the grammatical information both from an analytical and from a synthetic perspective (von der Gabelentz 1901, Lehmann 1980). For example, the functions of the Dative case are described twice: First from an analytical perspective in the chapter on nominal inflection (7.2.2.4.); and then from a synthetic perspective in the sections on verbal valence (15.3.2., 15.4.1.), on adjectival valence (14.5.1.1.), and on spatial and temporal adverbials (16.3.1.1., 16.3.2.1.). Similarly, the functions of the Aorist converb are described twice: First in the chapter on verbal inflection (9.9.4.), and then in the sections on adverbial clauses (21.1.) and on complement clauses (20.6.1.-2.). Sometimes only cross-references are made to avoid unnecessary repetitions.

However, this grammar, too, has an analytical bias. Not everything is described from a synthetic point of view. For example, there is no function-to-form treatment of tense meanings, or of number meanings. For such phenomena, the form-to-function description must suffice.

### 1.3.3. Grammatical terminology

Another feature that contributes to the user-friendliness of this grammar is the avoidance of opaque grammatical category labels such as "5th Elative case" or "3rd Past tense". Instead, grammatical labels with some mnemonic descriptive content have been chosen, such as "Superrelative case" and "Past Perfect". This meant that traditional Lezgian terminology had to be abandoned in several cases. However, the traditional terminology itself is by no means uniform. For example, Gajdarov's (1987a) textbook differs substantially from the earlier standard accounts of Talibov & Gadžiev (1966) and Mejlanova (1967). Other works such as Žirkov (1941) and Moor (1985) use still different terms.

The following table is a comparative list of the most important terms that are most widespread in Russian-language studies of Lezgian and of the terminology used in this grammar (my terminology is closest to Mel'čuk's 1988a).

**Table 1.** *Comparative list of terminology*

Terminology as in Talibov & Gadžiev (1966) and Mejlanova (1967)	Terminology in this grammar
	<b>cases</b>
imenitel'nyj	Absolutive
èrgativnyj	Ergative
roditel'nyj	Genitive
datel'nyj	Dative
mestnyj I	Adessive
isxoditel'nyj I	Adelative
napravitel'nyj I	Addirective
mestnyj II	Postessive
isxoditel'nyj II	Postelative
napravitel'nyj II	Postdirective
mestnyj III	Subessive
isxoditel'nyj III	Subelative
napravitel'nyj III	Subdirective
mestnyj IV	Inessive
isxoditel'nyj IV	Inelative
mestnyj V	Supersessive
isxoditel'nyj V	Superrelative
napravitel'nyj V	Superdirective

**verbal categories**

nastoljašče I		Imperfective
nastoljašče II		Continuative Imperfective
budušče		Future
prošedše nesoveršennoe I		Past Imperfective
prošedše nesoveršennoe II		Continuative Past Imperfective
prošedše nesoveršennoe III		Past Future
budušče predpoložitel'noe I		Archaic Future
budušče predpoložitel'noe II		Archaic Past Future
prošedše I		Aorist
prošedše II		Archaic Preterit
prošedše III		Perfect
davnoprošedše I		Past Aorist
davnoprošedše II		Past Perfect
celevaja forma		Infinitive/Imperfective converb
povelitel'noe nakl.	1st person	Hortative
	2nd person	Imperative
	3rd person	Optative
masdar		Masdar

Note that I follow Comrie's (1976) convention of capitalizing language-particular morphological categories such as Ergative case or Past Future tense, whereas universal or purely semantic categories are not capitalized.

**1.3.4. Example sentences**

This grammar provides rich exemplification of the covered material. The purpose of this is to make as many data as possible available to the reader. The reader may not agree with the proposed analyses and some of the descriptions may turn out to be incorrect, but the example sentences will not lose their usefulness.

Each example that has a number of its own illustrates a point in the description. When several examples illustrate the same point, they are distinguished by the letters (a), (b), (c), etc.

The overwhelming majority of example sentences were taken from original Lezgian texts and thus represent "real language". The source of each text example is indicated in parentheses following the example. (The number following the colon is the page number.) Example sentences where no source is indicated were elicited from native speakers (see the acknowledgments).

The following abbreviations of the sources of the examples have been used:

## Books:

- A55: Ağaev, Ahd. 1955. *St'al Sulejman*. Maxačkala: Dagknigoizdat. [Sulejman Stal'skij]
- A76: Iskenderov, Abdullah. 1976. *Samur*. 3-ktab. C'iji ümür. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Samur. Vol. 3. New life]
- A90: Ahmedov, Ibrahim. 1990. *K'ewi dustar*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Close friends]
- AM87: Akimov, Q.X. & Musanabieva, B.S. (ed.) 1987. *Literaturadin xrestomatija*. 5-klass. 11-izdanie. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Chrestomathy of literature. 5th grade. 11th edition]
- D57: Gor'kij, Maksim. 1957. *Dide*. Maxačqala: Dağustandin ktabin izdatel'stvo. [The mother. Translated from Russian by Magomed M. Gadžiev]
- E56: Efendiev, Zijaudin. 1956. *Jark'izuwan ruš*. Maxačkala: Dagknigoizdat. [The Jark'i girl]
- G54: Gadžiev (1954) (see bibliography)
- G57: Gadžiev, Magomed M. 1957. *Lezgi čalan grammatika*. 2 lahaj paj. Sintaksis. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Grammar of the Lezgian language. Part 2. Syntax]
- G63: Gadžiev (1963) (see bibliography)
- G82: Gjul'magomedov (1982) (see bibliography)
- H63: Hajdarov (1963) (see bibliography)
- H77: Haži, Rasim. 1977. *Zi irid stxa*. Povest'. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [My seven brothers. Short novel]
- H82: Hajdarov (1982) (see bibliography)
- HQ89: Qurban, Hakim. 1989. *Jaru mäden*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [The red mine]
- J84: Isaev, Šamsudin. 1984. *Rexi qwan*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [The grey stone]
- J89: Jaraliev, Jaq'ub. 1989. *Alamatdin Uruž*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Marvelous Uruž]
- K57: Kononov, A. 1957. *Leninakaj rasskazar*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Stories about Lenin]
- M79: Minhažev, Serker. 1979. *Laxta tařaj iwi*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Uncurled blood]
- M83: Mežidov, Qijas. 1983. *Qeni qunšijar*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Good neighbors]
- M90: Mahmudov, Abdulbari. 1990. *C'iji q'ilelej bašlamiša*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Begin anew]
- N88: Šixnabiev, Naxmudin. 1988. *Meq<sup>h</sup>er*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [The wedding]
- Q81: Qurban, Hakim. 1989. *Quj hamiša` rağ xuraj*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Let there always be sun]
- R66: Rizvanov, Zabit. 1966. *Garčülda žeda*. Baky: Azerbajžandin gosudarstvodin izdatel'stvo.
- S88: Salimov, Bajram. 1988. *Zaman buba*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Father Zaman]
- Š77: Šixverdiev, Muradxan. 1977. *Ekv jarğaj akwada*. Maxačkala: Dagestanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [The light is seen from far]

- Š83: Šixverdiev, Muradxan. 1983. *Pakaman jarar*. Maxačkala: Dages-tanskoe knižnoe izdatel'stvo. [Dawn]  
 TG66: Talibov & Gadžiev (1966) (see bibliography)  
 X89: Gašarov, G.G. & Ganieva, M.B. (eds.) *Lezgi xalq'din maxar*. Maxačkala: Dagučpedgiz. [Lezgian folktales]

**Journals:**

(first number after the abbreviation = year, second number = issue)

- Du: *Dustwal*. Maxačkala. [Friendship]  
 DD: *Dağustandin dišehli*. Maxačkala. [Daghestanian woman]  
 K: *Kard*. Maxačkala. [The Falcon]  
 L: *Literaturadin Dağustan*. Maxačkala. [Literary Daghestan]

**Newspapers:**

(first number = year, second number = month, third number = day)

- Ko: *Kommunist*. (KPSS-din obkomdin, DASSR-din verxovnyj sovetdin wa ministrrin sovetdin organ) Maxačkala. [Communist]  
 Q: *Gyzyl Gusar/Qizil Qusar*. (Organ kusarskogo rajonnogo komiteta KP Azerbajdžana i rajonnogo soveta narodnyx deputatov) Qusar/Kusary. [Golden Qusar (Kusary, Gusar)]

**1.3.5. Notational conventions for morpheme-by-morpheme glosses**

**1.3.5.1. General rules.** In example sentences, all inflectional affixes are separated by hyphens from their adjacent affix(es) or the stem. Derivational affixes are separated only in the relevant sections of the morphology. Each morpheme separated by a hyphen in the Lezgian text corresponds to an element in the morphemic gloss. Stems are translated by English words, affixes by abbreviated category labels.

(i) When one Lezgian morpheme must be translated by two gloss elements (English words or category labels), these are separated by a period, e.g.

<i>eqeč'-un</i>	<i>jaru-bur</i>
go.out-MSD	red-SBST.PL

(ii) When a category is expressed, but is not expressed by a separable morpheme, it is separated in the gloss by a colon.

<i>wuna</i>	( <i>w-una?</i> <i>wu-na?</i> <i>wun-a?</i> )
you:ERG	

<i>zi</i>	( <i>z-i?</i> <i>zi-Ø?</i> )
I:GEN	

(iii) When a category is expressed by zero, its category label is put in parentheses.

*kilig!* instead of: *kilig-Ø*  
look(IMPV) look-IMPV

**1.3.5.2. Zero.** Categories that are always expressed by zero are not shown in the morphemic glosses for economy, e.g.

*ktab-ar* instead of: *ktab-ar* or: *ktab-ar-Ø*  
book-PL book-PL(ABS) book-PL-ABS

*k'el-zawa* instead of: *k'el-zawa* or: *k'el-zawa-Ø*  
read-IMPFF read-IMPFF(NONPAST) read-IMPFF-NONPAST

**1.3.5.3. Oblique stem suffix.** A period in nouns separates the stem from the (semantically empty) oblique stem suffix. Thus,

*dide.di-z* instead of: *dide-di-z*  
mother-DAT mother-OBL-DAT

*tar-ar.i-kaj* instead of: *tar-ar-i-kaj*  
tree-PL-SBEL tree-PL-OBL-SBEL

The Ergative case is marked by zero (like the Absolutive), but since the Ergative case is formed from the oblique stem, it is always clearly distinct from the Absolutive. It is therefore also shown in the morphemic glosses, as an exception to 1.3.5.2. above.

*dide.di* instead of: *dide.di* or: *dide-di-Ø*  
mother(ERG) mother mother-OBL-ERG  
(by 1.3.5.2.) (by 1.3.5.1.)

(4) In personal pronouns (including reflexive pronouns), the oblique stem suffix is not even shown by a period, again for reasons of economy.

*za-waj* instead of: *z.a-waj* or: *z-a-waj*  
I-ADEL I-ADEL I-OBL-ADEL  
(by 1.3.5.3.) (by 1.3.5.1.)

*čpi-n* instead of: *čp.i-n* or: *čp-i-n*  
selves-GEN selves-GEN selves-OBL-GEN

In third person pronouns (which are based on demonstratives), also the substantivizer and the plural affixes are ignored by the gloss. The same rules apply to the demonstrative pronoun *im* 'this (one)'.  
(The same rules apply to the demonstrative pronoun *im* 'this (one)'.)

*ada* instead of: *ad.a* or: *a-d.a*  
s/he(ERG) s/he(ERG) that-SBST.SG(ERG)  
or: *a-d-a*  
that-SBST.SG-OBL(ERG)

*abur.u* instead of: *a-bur.u*  
 they(ERG) that-SBST.PL(ERG)

or: *a-bur-u*  
 that-SBST.PL-OBL(ERG)

The Ergative and Absolutive cases of personal pronouns are treated as unanalyzable.

*zun* instead of: *z-un*  
 I:ABS I-ABS

*am* instead of: *a-m*  
 s/he:ABS that-SBST.SG.ABS

**1.3.5.5. Subordinate clauses.** The boundaries of subordinate clauses are shown in the gloss by brackets ([...]) to facilitate the understanding of more complex examples.

**1.3.5.6. Hyphen.** When the Lezgian text contains a hyphen (e.g. in compounds), this is rendered by an equals sign (=) so as to avoid confusion with the hyphens that separate morphemes:

эвер-гъарай  
*ewer=haraj*  
 call=shout

# Chapter 2

## Lezgian and its speakers

### 2.1. The Lezgians

The Lezgians live in an area of about 5000 km<sup>2</sup> in southern Daghestan and northern Azerbaijan, in the high mountain area of the eastern Caucasus and in the plains between the mountains and the Caspian sea. In addition, there is a sizable Lezgian diaspora in many major cities of the former Soviet Union.

According to the 1989 census, there were 466 000 Lezgians in the Soviet Union. Since the rate of language retention for the Lezgians is around 90 percent, the number of speakers of Lezgian must be well over 400 000.

Most Lezgians live in villages where they make a living out of agriculture (especially in the plains) and stockbreeding (especially in the mountains). The Lezgians have traditionally been Sunni Muslims, and until the incorporation of Daghestan and Azerbaijan into the Russian empire in the 19th century, their further cultural contacts were mainly with the Ottoman empire and with Persia. Both the older contacts with the Oriental world and the more recent contacts with Russia are reflected by large numbers of loans in the Lezgian language.

#### 2.1.1. Population figures

The population figures from various censuses are as follows:

	number of Lezgians in the Russian empire/the USSR	number of Lezgian speakers
1907	159 000	
1926	134 536	
1959	220 000	
1970	323 829	304 087 (93.9%)
1979	382 611	347 556 (90.8%)
1989	466 006	

The language retention rate is 100 % in the Lezgian villages of Daghestan, but in the Daghestanian cities (especially Maxačkala) and in the diaspora the language tends to be lost in favor of the dominating Russian by younger people.

The main potential inaccuracy in the census data concerns the Lezgians in Azerbaijan. They have been undergoing a process of (apparently sometimes forced) assimilation to the Azerbaijanis, and since identification as Lezgian can be disadvantageous in Azerbaijan, it is possible that many Lezgians were counted as Azerbaijanis. The number of Daghestanian Lezgians is somewhat higher than the number of Lezgians in Azerbaijan:

	Daghestan	Azerbaijan
1979	188 804 (49.3%)	158 057 (41.3%)
1989	204 400 (43.8%)	171 395 (36.7%)

According to the 1989 census, 52 900 Lezgians (11.4%) live in the Russian Federation outside of Daghestan, 13 905 (3.0%) live in Kazakhstan, and 10 425 Lezgians (2.2%) live in Turkmenia.

More detailed figures are available for the 1979 census (CSU 1984). In 1979, 347 556 Lezgians (90.8%) gave Lezgian as their native language, 18 069 (4.7%) gave Russian as their native language, and 16 986 (4.4%) gave some other native language (mainly Azerbaijani, cf. below). 3 452 Lezgians said they speak Lezgian in addition to their (non-Lezgian) native language (9.8% of those whose native language is not Lezgian). 181 969 Lezgians (47.6%) said they know Russian.

Within Daghestan, 185 563 of the 188 804 Lezgians (98.3%) gave Lezgian as their native language, 1922 (1.0%) gave Russian, and 1190 (0.6%) gave another Daghestanian language as their native language. 121 486 Daghestanian Lezgians (64.3%) know Russian, and 489 Daghestanian Lezgians (0.3%) know another Daghestanian language.

Within Azerbaijan, 134 873 of the 158 057 Lezgians (85.3%) gave Lezgian as their native language, 14 426 (9.1%) gave Azerbaijani, and 8571 (5.4%) gave Russian. 73 613 Azerbaijanian Lezgians (46.6%) know Azerbaijani, and 37 184 (23.5%) know Russian.

### 2.1.2. Geographical location

Lezgian is spoken in an area of about 5 000 km<sup>2</sup> in southern Daghestan and in northern Azerbaijan ("Lezgistan").

In Daghestan, the Kuraxskij, Sulejman-Stal'skij (formerly Kasumkentskij), Magaramkentskij, and Axtynskij rayons are completely occupied by Lezgians. Some Lezgians also live in the adjacent Rutul'skij and Xivskij rayons. In Azerbaijan, the Lezgians live in the Kusarskij, Kubinskij, Xudatskij, Kutkašenskij and Kunaxkentskij rayons.

Further geographical details can be found on the map on the following page (adapted from Mejlanova 1964).

### 2.1.3. Some remarks on Lezgian history

References to a Daghestanian people *Legoi*, *Lekoi* or *Geloi* can be found in several ancient writers (Herodotus, Strabo, Pliny the Elder). This probably refers to the Daghestanian peoples in general. Arab authors of the 9th and 10th centuries mention a kingdom *Lakz* in southern Daghestan.

In the 7th and 8th centuries Daghestan was conquered by the Arabs. As a consequence of this, the Daghestanian population was converted to Islam in the following centuries.

In the 18th century, feudal relations replaced the older free peasant communities in many places. Lezgians became part of the Quba khanate in the southeast, of the Derbent khanate in the northeast, and of the Kazikumux khanate in the northwest. In 1812 the Küre khanate was founded in the



valley of the Q'urah-čaj (Kurax-čaj) river and the lower reaches of the Samur river (with the administrative center in Q'urah/Kurax). The southeastern areas (along the valley of the middle Samur river) did not belong to a feudal territory, but consisted of associations of independent peasant communities (vol'nye obščestva, 'free communities') such as Axy-para, Alty-para, Doquz-para, and Rutul.

The incorporation of Daghestan into the Russian empire began in the early 19th century. Because of the fierce resistance of part of the population, it was not until the 1860s that all of Daghestan was under Russian control. After the defeat of the Daghestanian resistance, many Lezgians were forced to emigrate and settled in Turkey (cf. Moor 1985 on Lezgian villages in Turkey).

The Küre khanate was transformed into the Kjurinskij okrug of the Daghestanian oblast' (center in Q'asumxür/Kasumkent). The free communities along the middle Samur became the Samurskij okrug. The Quba khanate became the Kubinskij uezd of the Baku gubernija.

The economy of the Lezgians has traditionally been based on agriculture and stockbreeding. Agriculture is most widespread in the eastern plains region, whereas the western mountain region supports practically only sheepbreeding (cf. Agaširinova (1978: Ch. 1) on the traditional Lezgian economy).

In the late 1920s, a standard written language was introduced, and teaching of Lezgian in schools and regular publication activities in Lezgian began (cf. 2.3.).

After 1929 agriculture in Daghestan was collectivized. By the 1960s, electricity was brought to most of the villages. Several mountain villages were resettled in more accessible places, some of them quite distant from their original location (e.g. the village Kuruš in the Axtynskij rayon was resettled in the Xasavjurtovskij rayon, 300 km from the original location).

The liberalization of the Gorbachev years led to a revival of Lezgian national self-awareness. The Lezgian national movement *Sadwal* ("Unity") was founded in 1990. Lezgians living far from Lezgistan are increasingly interested in preserving their national heritage. The territorial division of Lezgistan between Daghestan and Azerbaijan is seen as a big problem by many Lezgians.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991/92, the Lezgians found themselves in two different countries: Russia (of which Daghestan is a part) and Azerbaijan.

#### 2.1.4. The ethnonym *Lezgian*

The word *Lezgian* corresponds to the Lezgian self-designation *lezgi* 'Lezgian' (Russian *lezginskij*, *lezgin*). This term has been used in the present sense since the 1920s. Before that, the term *Lezgian* had been used to refer to all non-Turkic mountain peoples of Daghestan, while the term *Küre* (or *Küri*, Russian *kjurinskij*) was used for the people and the language that are now called Lezgian (cf. Uslar 1896). (*Küre* is more properly the name of the Lezgian dialect spoken in the eastern plains, the region most accessible to outsiders.)

Various spelling variants of *Lezgian* have been used in English (*Lezghian*, *Lezgi*, *Lesghian*, *Lezgin*, etc.). The variant *Lezgian* is chosen

here because it is close to Lezgian *lezgi* and because it has been used by other linguists working on Lezgian (Mel'čuk 1988a, Moor 1984, Job 1985).

## 2.2. Lezgian dialects

In contrast to some of the other major Daghestanian languages (especially Dargwa and Avar), Lezgian shows relatively little internal dialectal variation. Divergences from the standard language (which is described in this grammar) are relatively minor, and all dialects are mutually intelligible. This section gives a brief overview of the dialect division of Lezgian and some of the more salient divergences from the standard language.

### 2.2.1. Dialect division

Although some details are disputed, there is broad agreement among Lezgian dialectologists that the main subdivision of dialects is threefold: the Küre dialect group, the Axceh dialect group, and the Quba dialect group (cf. Gajdarov 1963, Mejlanova 1964).

The Küre dialect group is located in what used to be the Kjurinskij okrug with its capital Kasumkent/Q'asumxür (and before that the Küre khanate with its capital Kurax/Q'urah), i.e. the present Magaramkentskij, Sulejman-Stal'skij (Kasumkentskij), Kuraxskij, and Xivskij rayons. According to Mejlanova (1964), the Küre dialect group is subdivided into the Güne, Q'urah and Jark'i dialects. The Jark'i dialect is spoken in what used to be the Jarkinskij učastok in the northeast of the former Kjurinskij okrug, now the southern part of the Xivskij rayon and the northern part of the Sulejman-Stal'skij (Kasumkentskij) rayon. A variety belonging to the Jark'i dialect was described by Petr K. Uslar in his ground-breaking Lezgian grammar (1896).

The Q'urah dialect is spoken in what used to be the Kuraxskij učastok of the Kjurinskij okrug, now the Kuraxskij rayon.

The Güne dialect is spoken in what used to be the Gjunejskij učastok of the Kjurinskij okrug, now the southern part of the Sulejman-Stal'skij (Kasumkentskij) rayon and the Magaramkentskij rayon. The Güne dialect served as the basis for the standard language (cf. Mejlanova 1957, 1959, 1970).

The Axceh dialect group is located in what used to be the Samurskij okrug with its capital Axy/Axceh, now the Axtynskij rayon. Mejlanova (1964) calls it the Samur dialect group and subdivides it into the Axceh dialect and the Doquzpara dialect. The Axceh dialect is spoken in the western part of the Axtynskij rayon and in adjacent parts of the Rutul'skij rayon (cf. Genko 1926, Gajdarov 1961). The Doquzpara dialect is spoken in the former Dokuzparinskij učastok of the Samurskij okrug; now the eastern part of the Axtynskij rayon.

The Quba dialect group is located in what used to be the Kubinskij uezd of the Baku gubernija (province), now several rayons in northern Azerbaijan. See Genko (1929), Gadžiev (1957a), Saadiev (1961), Gjul'magomedov (1966), (1967), (1968), Mejlanova (1981) for several studies of the Quba dialects.

Furthermore, several authors set up various smaller "mixed" dialects that have a special status and do not strictly belong to one of the major di-

lects, e. g. the Fij dialect (Mejlanova 1964:386-394, Abdulžamalov 1965), the Čeper (Džaba) dialect (Ganieva 1972a, b, 1981, 1983, 1985), the Quruš dialect (Mejlanova 1964:395-399), the Gilig dialect (Mejlanova 1964:353-358), and the Gelxen dialect (Mejlanova 1964:358-365).

## 2.2.2. Some salient divergent features of the dialects

### 2.2.2.1. Phonology. The vowel inventory:

Besides the vowels of the standard language, several dialects (especially of the Axceh dialect group) have the high back unrounded vowel /ɨ/. In these dialects, the relation between /ɨ/ and /u/ is similar to the relation between /i/ and /y/ in the standard language (cf. 4.5.). E.g.

Axceh dialect	standard	(Gajdarov 1961:15)
q'in	q'un	(q'un) 'he-goat'
ts'id	ts'ud	(c'ud) 'ten'
tsiri	tsuru	(curu) 'sour'
tsiwın	ʃ'ugun	(č'ugun) 'pull'
hinbir	ibur	(ibur) 'these'

Furthermore, pharyngealization of vowels is widespread in several dialects, especially in the environment of uvular obstruents and pharyngeal consonants. According to Ganieva (1972a:209), The Čeper (Džaba) dialect has the front rounded vowel /ø/, e.g. /mørtʰ/ 'barberry', /søɫ/ 'downpour'.

The consonant inventory:

Several dialects have the pharyngeal fricatives /ħ/ (voiceless) and /ʕ/ (voiced). They mostly occur in Arabic loanwords, but sometimes also in native words, e.g.

Quba dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1981)
ʃymyr	ymyr	(ümür) 'life'
ʃajib	ajib	(ajib) 'shame'
saʃatʰ	sætʰ	(sät) 'hour'

Čeper (Džaba) dialect	standard	(Ganieva 1972a:212)
hazirwal	hazurwal	(hazurwal) 'readiness'
wahji	wahʃi	(wahši) 'wild'
tʰemäh	tʰemäh	(temäh) 'desire'

Q'urah dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1964:135)
ʃyr	ɰyr	(ğür) 'flour'
ʃaʃ'i	ɰweʃ'i	(ğweč'i) 'small'
q'yʃyr	q'yɰyr	(q'üğür) 'hedgehog'

Several dialects have the postalveolar labialized obstruents /ʃʷ/, /ʃʰʷ/, /ʃʷʰ/, e.g.

Axceh dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1964:270)
ʃ <sup>w</sup> al	ts <sup>w</sup> al ( <i>cwal</i> )	'seam'
ʒ <sup>w</sup> al	z <sup>w</sup> al ( <i>zwal</i> )	'boiling'
ʃ <sup>w</sup> eh	ts <sup>w</sup> eh ( <i>c'weh</i> )	'whey'

According to Mejlanova (1964:387-389), the Fij dialect also has a series of special dento-labialized obstruents (of the type that is found in Tabasaran and Abkhaz).

The voiced velar fricative /ɣ/ occurs in the Jark'i dialect, and the uvular voiced stop /g/ occurs in the Güne dialect.

Jark'i dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1964:68)
ɣam	gam ( <i>gam</i> )	'carpet'
ɣ <sup>w</sup> al	z <sup>w</sup> al ( <i>zwal</i> )	'boiling'
ɣæl	gel ( <i>gel</i> )	'trace'

Güne dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1970:38)
gaɣ <sup>h</sup> un	qaɣ <sup>h</sup> un ( <i>q̄a čun</i> )	'take'
guts <sup>h</sup> ar	ɤuts <sup>h</sup> ar ( <i>ğucar</i> )	'god'

Some of the consonantal alternations (cf. 5.1.-5.4, 5.9-5.10.) are different in some dialects. For example, instead of the alternation ejective/aspirated (5.9.), the Axceh dialect has the alternation unaspirated/aspirated.

Axceh dialect	standard	(Talibov 1980:71-72)
neker / nek <sup>h</sup>	nek'er / nek <sup>h</sup>	'milk'
metar / met <sup>h</sup>	met'er / met <sup>h</sup>	'knee'
reger / req <sup>h</sup>	req'er / req <sup>h</sup>	'way'

**2.2.2.2. Morphology.** The most striking morphological feature of the Axceh dialect is the affix /-zi/-za/ instead of standard /-di/-da/ in various functions: Directive case, oblique stem, substantivizer, Future tense.

Axceh dialect	standard	(Gajdarov 1961)
tsew-e-l-zi	tsaw-a-l-di ( <i>cawaldi</i> )	'with the sky'
zaman-zi	zaman-di ( <i>zamandi</i> )	'time (Erg.)'
ts'iji-zi	ts'iji-di ( <i>c'ijidi</i> )	'new one'
gi-za	gu-da ( <i>guda</i> )	'will give'
gaji-walzi	gaji-waldi ( <i>gajiwaldi</i> )	'as soon as ... gave'

The suffix of the Elative cases is /-aɤ/ in the Quba dialect group.

Quba dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1964:405)
sik'-ra-k <sup>h</sup> -aɤ	sik'-re-k <sup>h</sup> -aj ( <i>sik'rekaj</i> )	'about the fox'
xyræɤ	xyræj ( <i>xüräj</i> )	'from the village'

The negative suffix is /-f/ (rather than /-fʰ/) in several dialects.

Axceh dialect	standard	(Mejlanova 1964:305)
fi-za-f	fi-da-fʰ ( <i>fidač</i> )	'will not go'
amuq'-nawa-f	amuq'-nawa-fʰ ( <i>amuq'nawač</i> )	'has not remained'

The prohibitive is often formed by means of a prefix /m-/ and a suffix /-r/, rather than a suffix /-mir/:

Axceh dialect	standard	(Gajdarov 1961:96)
me-qʷa-r	qʷe-mir ( <i>qʷemir</i> )	'don't come'
ma-gu-r	gu-mir ( <i>gumir</i> )	'don't give'

The Migrağ subdialect of the Doquzpara dialect has a special Comparative case in /-ad/:

Migrağ subdialect	(standard equivalent)	(Mejlanova 1964:241)
sik'-ad	( <i>sik' xiz</i> )	'like a fox'
čganawir-ad	( <i>žanawur xiz</i> )	'like a wolf'
fik'-ad	( <i>hik'</i> )	'how?'

### 2.3. The status of Lezgian and the standard language

Until the second half of the 19th century, Lezgian was only used in speech and oral literature. The language of religion, bureaucracy, jurisdiction (shariah), and inscriptions (especially on houses and gravestones) was Arabic, as in all of Daghestan. When Daghestan and Azerbaijan became part of the Russian empire, Russian replaced Arabic as the language of government.

In the second half of the 19th century, poets such as Jetim Emin (a classic whose poetry is still widely read), Jetim Melik, Said Kočürskij began to write down their poetry, using the Arabic script.

In the 1860s and 1870s, the Russian general staff officer Baron Petr Karlovič Uslar, in what is perhaps the greatest military achievement in history, laid the foundations of Nakho-Daghestanian and Abkhazo-Adyghean linguistics by producing excellent descriptions of seven languages of the northern Caucasus, among them Lezgian (Uslar 1896). Uslar created an alphabet for Lezgian on the basis of the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. His Lezgian informant, Kazanfar-beg, tried to spread the knowledge of this alphabet among the Lezgians. A textbook was produced (Kazanfar-Beg 1871, reedited by A. Mamedov 1911), but these attempts at establishing a written language were not successful.

After the Bolsheviks took power in the early 1920s, the official language policy at first favored the use of Turkic (Azerbaijani) in Daghestan. But in the second half of the 1920s, it was decided to provide several Daghestanian languages with written standards, among them Lezgian. The Lezgian alphabet, which was officially introduced in 1928, was based on the Latin alphabet,

like the alphabets of the other newly written languages of the Soviet Union. Particularly active in this early phase of the standard language were Gadžibek Gadžibekov (or Hežibegen Hežibeg; cf. Gadžibekov 1932, hažibegov 1928, Hažibegov 1934, hežibegen 1931, hežibegov 1931; the spelling variants of Gadžibekov's name show the lack of standardization at that time) and Abdulkadir Alkadarskij (cf. Alq'adarskij 1934, 1939-41, Alkadarskij 1932).

The new standard language was based on the Küre dialect (or, more specifically, on the Güne dialect of the Küre dialect group). According to Gajdarov (1962), there were three reasons for choosing this dialect: First, this dialect is spoken by the largest number of speakers; second, it was well-known through the work of the famous poets Jetim Emin and St'al Sulejman (Sulejman Stal'skij), who were speakers of that dialect; and third, the only linguistic description of Lezgian available at that time, Uslar's (1896) grammar, was based on a dialect of the Küre dialect group. One might add that the Küre dialect is spoken in the geographically more accessible lowlands and was therefore more likely to be known by speakers from the high-mountain areas than vice versa.

In 1938, the official alphabet was replaced by a new alphabet based on the Cyrillic alphabet, in line with a decision taken in Moscow for all the new written languages of the Soviet Union. Rules for Lezgian spelling were published for the first time in 1938 (Gadžiev & Alkadarskij 1938), and the first orthographic dictionary was published in 1941 (Gadžiev 1941). Magomed Gadžiev's comprehensive Russian-Lezgian dictionary (Gadžiev 1950) had an enormous influence on the development of the written language.

Since the Lezgian standard language was officially introduced, Lezgian has been taught at several levels of education, including higher education (at the Chair of Daghestanian Languages of the Daghestanian State University in Maxačkala). Publications in Lezgian include textbooks on Lezgian grammar and literature, children's literature, poetry, fiction, several journals and newspapers. There is also some radio broadcasting in Lezgian, and there is a Lezgian-language theater in Derbent.

Despite these relatively favorable conditions, there are clear signs of the decline of Lezgian (cf. also the retention figures in 2.1.1.). Where parents have the possibility to choose between Lezgian-language instruction in school and Russian-language instruction, many have been choosing Russian as the language that opens up greater possibilities for their children. The medium of instruction in the city schools is exclusively Russian, and the Daghestanian languages are not even taught as a subject. In Maxačkala, Russian is the dominating language outside of the home, and it is increasingly used even at home by the younger generation, not only in families with linguistically mixed marriages.

The resurgence of national self-awareness in the wake of the liberation from the totalitarian regime in the late 1980s has recently created some new interest in the native languages (as well as Arabic), but it remains to be seen whether it will lead to a reversal of the pattern of slow decline of Lezgian. However, there is no threat whatever in the rural areas of Lezgistan, where until today quite a few speakers (mainly women) are monolingual. As long as the Lezgians remain in their traditional settlement areas, Lezgian is not an endangered language.

## 2.4. The effect of language contact on Lezgian

The most important contact languages in the historical period have been Turkic (in particular, Azerbaijani), Arabic, Persian, and Russian. Only Russian and Azerbaijani contacts are still in effect today. Contact with Arabic and Persian came to a halt in the 1920s with the Sovietization of Daghestan and Azerbaijan.

As in many languages of traditionally Muslim populations, Arabic loanwords play an eminent role in the Lezgian vocabulary. Not only most religious terms, but also many abstract and intellectual words are of Arabic origin, e.g.

(16) <i>Allah</i>	'God'	< <i>ʔallaah</i>
<i>düa</i>	'prayer'	< <i>duʔaaʔ</i>
<i>rehmet</i>	'forgiveness'	< <i>rahmat</i>
<i>šejt'an</i>	'shaytan, devil'	< <i>šaytaan</i>
<i>žennet</i>	'paradise'	< <i>jannat</i>
<i>zizarat</i>	'pilgrimage'	< <i>ziyaarat</i>
(17) <i>mašhur</i>	'well-known'	< <i>mašhuur</i>
<i>tažub</i>	'amazing'	< <i>taʔajjub</i>
<i>länet</i>	'curse'	< <i>laʔnat</i>
<i>namus</i>	'honor'	< <i>naamuus</i>
<i>hukumat</i>	'government'	< <i>hukuumat</i>
<i>ilim</i>	'science'	< <i>ʔilm</i>
<i>ištirak</i>	'participation'	< <i>ʔištiraak</i>
<i>žürʔet</i>	'boldness'	< <i>jurʔat</i>

Some Arabic loanwords have become part of the everyday vocabulary, e.g.

(18) <i>lazim</i>	'necessary'	< <i>laazim</i>
<i>mumkin</i>	'possible'	< <i>mumkin</i>
<i>sät</i>	'hour; clock'	< <i>saʔat</i>
<i>waxt</i>	'time'	< <i>waqt</i>
<i>insan</i>	'human being'	< <i>ʔinsaʔan</i>
<i>q'adar</i>	'amount, quantity'	< <i>qadr</i>
<i>žawab</i>	'answer'	< <i>jawaab</i>
<i>hajwan</i>	'animal'	< <i>ʔayawaʔan</i>
<i>xabar</i>	'news'	< <i>xabar</i>

The conjunction *wa* (18.1.3.) is also ultimately from Arabic.

Since the other main Oriental contact language, Turkic, is also full of Arabic loans, it is often difficult or impossible to establish whether a loanword of ultimate Arabic origin was borrowed directly from Arabic by the few Lezgians who knew Arabic or via Turkic. Since the knowledge of Turkic has always been significantly more widespread among the Lezgians than the knowledge of Arabic, and Arabic was only used as a written and ceremonial language, everyday words such as those in (18) are more likely to have been borrowed via Turkic.

Persian loanwords belong to the same semantic types, but are much less numerous than Arabic loanwords. Since Turkic also has many Persian loanwords, again the immediate source is not always easy to establish. E.g.

(19) <i>pejgambar</i>	'prophet'	< <i>peyyambær</i>
<i>baxt</i>	'happiness, luck'	< <i>bæxt</i>
<i>fend</i>	'trick'	< <i>fænd</i>
<i>šeher</i>	'city'	< <i>šæhr</i>
<i>tamašun</i>	'look'	< <i>tæmaša</i>
<i>rang</i>	'color'	< <i>ræng</i>
<i>zur</i>	'violence'	< <i>zur</i>

The particle *xi*, or at least its use as a quasi-complementizer (20.7.), and the conditional particle *eger* (21.7.1.) are also ultimately from Persian.

The classical poetry of poets such as Jetim Emin is full of Persian and Arabic loanwords. Many words such as the following are exclusively poetic today:

(20) Arabic loanwords		
<i>žasad</i>	'body'	< <i>jasad</i>
<i>muʔmin</i>	'pious'	< <i>muʔmiin</i>
<i>riwajat</i>	'story'	< <i>riwaayat</i>
(21) Persian loanwords		
<i>bed</i>	'bad'	< <i>bæd</i>
<i>bejadalat</i>	'unjust'	< <i>bi-ædalæt</i>

The strongest influence on Lezgian over the past couple of centuries has been Turkic. The Turkic influence on Daghestanian languages has two sources. On the one hand, the Turkic language Kumyk is spoken in some key areas of Daghestan, including the area of the old Daghestanian capital Temir-Xan-Šura (later renamed Bujnaks) and the present capital Maxačkala (formerly Port-Petrovsk), and it used to serve as a language of interethnic communication in most of Daghestan (cf. Džidalæv 1990). On the other hand, and even more importantly, the Lezgians have long been living in immediate contact with the Azerbaijani population to the south of the Lezgian-speaking areas. Several villages even have a mixed Lezgian-Azerbaijani population.

The influence of Turkic on Lezgian is stronger than on most other Daghestanian languages to the north. Only languages like Tsakhur, Kryz, Budukh, and Khinalug, which are in part or totally spoken in Azerbaijan, show a comparable degree of Turkic influence. In addition to the many Turkic loanwords, one might attribute phonological characteristics such as vowel harmony (4.4.) and stress (Ch. 6; contrasting with the tonal systems found in many other Daghestanian languages) to the influence of Turkic.

Turkic loanwords come from all areas of the vocabulary, including concrete words like names of animals and plants, e.g.

(22) <i>baluḡ</i>	'fish'
<i>čaḡal</i>	'jackal'
<i>ḡarpuz</i>	'water melon'
<i>üzüm</i>	'grapes'
<i>texil</i>	'grain'

In the last couple of decades, the influence from Russian has been stronger than from any other language. This is quite natural because of the overwhelming significance of Russian in Soviet society. It is quite difficult to establish the extent to which Russian loanwords have entered Lezgian because a large number of Lezgian speakers (especially in Daghestan) also know Russian and ad hoc borrowings are very common.

In several cases, Oriental loanwords that were formerly in use have been replaced by Russian loanwords that are now standard (cf. Gjul'magomedov 1982b:114-115). Such cases can perhaps be taken as evidence for deliberate Russification of Lezgian.

(23) Oriental loanword	Russian loanword	
<i>edebijat</i>	<i>literatura</i>	'literature'
<i>sijasat</i>	<i>politika</i>	'politics'
<i>tarżuma</i>	<i>perevod</i>	'translation'
<i>inḡilab</i>	<i>revoljucija</i>	'revolution'
<i>sinif</i>	<i>klass</i>	'class'

The influence of Russian syntax on Lezgian is probably more significant in the written language (especially, of course, in translations from Russian) than in the spoken language. Syntactic constructions that are apparently due to Russian influence are noted at several points in this grammar.

## Chapter 3 Segmental phonological units

### 3.1. Orthography and transliteration

Lezgian is written in a version of the Cyrillic alphabet. The Lezgian alphabet includes all the letters used in Russian, plus the additional letter I and twelve digraphs. The additional letter <I> is used only in digraphs to indicate the ejective nature of stop consonants.

The four columns of Table 2 show the Lezgian Cyrillic alphabet, the transliteration in this grammar, the phonetic value, and the corresponding letters of the Latin alphabet which was used between 1928 and 1938.

**Table 2. Lezgian alphabets, transliteration and pronunciation (IPA)**

modern alphabet	transliteration	IPA	Latin alphabet 1928-38	modern alphabet	transliteration	IPA	Latin alphabet 1928-38
а	a	a	a	р	r	r	r
б	b	b	b	с	s	s	s
в	w	w	v	т	t	t, t <sup>h</sup>	t
г	g	g	g	тI	t	t'	t̚
гъ	ǰ	ɣ	q	у	u	u	u
гь	h	h	h	уь	ü	y	y
д	d	d	d	ф	f	f	f
е	e, je	e, je	e, je	х	x	χ	x
ё	(R.)	-	-	хь	q <sup>h</sup>	q <sup>h</sup>	ʁ
ж	ž	ʒ	z	хь	ʒ	x	χ
з	z	z	z	ц	c	ts	ʂ
и	i	i	i	цI	c'	ts'	z
й	j	j	j	ч	č	tʃ	c
к	k	k, k <sup>h</sup>	k	чI	č'	tʃ'	ç
къ	q̄	q	q	ш	š	ʃ	ʂ
къ	q'	q'	q	щ	(R.)	-	-
кI	k'	k'	k̚	ь	ʔ	ʔ	ʔ
л	l	l	l	ы	(R.)	-	-
м	m	m	m	ь	(R.)	-	-
н	n	n	n	э	ʔe, e	ʔe, e	e, 'e
о	(R.)	-	-	ю	ju	ju	ju
п	p	p, p <sup>h</sup>	p	я	ä, ja	æ, ja	e', ja
пI	p'	p'	p̚				

## 3.1.1. Comments on Table 2

3.1.1.1. <e> is transliterated as *je* at the beginning of a word and after a vowel (e.g. <етим> *jetim* 'orphan'; <иеси> *ijesi* 'owner'), and as *e* after a consonant (e.g. <сес> *ses* 'sound').

3.1.1.2. <э> is transliterated as *e* at the beginning of a word (e.g. <экв> *ekw* 'light'), and as *ʒe* after a consonant (e.g. <шейэр> *s'ejʒer* 'things', <месэла> *mesʒela* 'question').

3.1.1.3. <я> is transliterated as *ja* at the beginning of a word and after a vowel (e.g. <яд> *jad* 'water', <стхаяр> *stxajar* 'brothers') and as *ä* after a consonant. There is only one Lezgian word where /ja/ occurs after a consonant: <дунья> *dünja* 'world' (this word is also unique in that it is the only non-Russian word where <ь> is used, omitted in the transliteration here).

3.1.1.4. Of the 45 Lezgian letters, five (<ё, о, щ, ы, ь>) are only used in unassimilated Russian loanwords, which are always spelled as in Russian. In this grammar, such loanwords are transliterated according to the standard linguistic transliteration of Russian, which differs from the Lezgian transliteration adopted here in several minor points:

	transcription of Russian	transcription of Lezgian
<в>	<i>v</i>	<i>w</i>
<ь>	'	—
<ъ>	"	—
<э>	<i>è</i>	<i>e, ʒe</i>
<е>	<i>e</i> (always)	<i>je, e</i>
<я>	<i>ja</i> (always)	<i>ja, ä</i>

E.g. Lezgian <Махачкъаладин вокзал> <i>Махачқалadin vokzal</i> 'Махачкала's railroad station'	<художественный эсер> <i>xudožestvennyj eser</i> 'work of art'
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3.1.1.5. The present orthographic rules have been in force since 1962. In 1962 the four digraphs <кк>, <пп>, <тт>, <чч> were abolished and replaced with the corresponding single letter. They had been used in some cases to represent non-aspirated voiceless stops, especially when near-homonyms with aspirated stops exist, e.g.

<ччил> /tʃil/ 'earth'	vs.	<чил> /tʰil/ 'net'
<ттар> /tar/ 'tree'	vs.	<тар> /tʰar/ 'tara (musical instrument)'

(Gadžiev & Alkadarskij (1938:13, 50) list 19 such words.) As a result of the 1962 change of the orthography, such minimal pairs are now homographs.

### 3.1.2. Deviations from phonemic spelling

The Lezgian orthography (and its transliteration used in this grammar) comes reasonably close to a representation of the phonemic value of the Lezgian words. It deviates only in the following points:

**3.1.2.1.** The labialization in the phonemes /g<sup>w</sup>, ɣ<sup>w</sup>, z<sup>w</sup>, k<sup>w</sup>, k<sup>hw</sup>, k<sup>w</sup>, q<sup>w</sup>, q<sup>hw</sup>, q<sup>w</sup>, t<sup>w</sup>, t<sup>hw</sup>, t<sup>w</sup>, s, ʃ<sup>w</sup>, ts<sup>w</sup>, ts<sup>hw</sup>, ts<sup>w</sup>/ is represented in the orthography by the additional letter <в> *w*, e.g.

<ГВ>	<i>gw</i>
<ГЪВВ>	<i>ǰw</i>
<ЗВ>	<i>zw</i>
<КВ>	<i>kw</i> , etc.

This is not a serious shortcoming of the spelling because contrast between monophonemic /C<sup>w</sup>/ and biphonemic /Cw/ is very rare within a morpheme. An example of the latter is <жизви> /ʒizwi/. But even here no ambiguity arises, because \*/ʒizwi/ is not possible (an /i/ must be rounded in the vicinity of a labialized consonant, cf. 4.5.). Since suffixes beginning with /w/ are not uncommon, /Cw/ does occur at morpheme boundaries, e.g. *pis-wal* /p<sup>h</sup>iswal/ 'badness', *gata-z-wa* /ga<sup>t</sup>hazwa/ 'beats'.

**3.1.2.2.** The contrast aspirated vs. non-aspirated in the following phonemes is not reflected in the spelling:

/t/ : /t <sup>h</sup> /	/t <sup>w</sup> / : /t <sup>hw</sup> /	/ts/ : /ts <sup>h</sup> /	/ts <sup>w</sup> / : /ts <sup>hw</sup> /
/k/ : /k <sup>h</sup> /	/k <sup>w</sup> / : /k <sup>hw</sup> /	/tʃ/ : /tʃ <sup>h</sup> /	/p/ : /p <sup>h</sup> /

This contrast is reflected in the spelling only in two cases:

/q/ : /q <sup>h</sup> /	<КЪ> : <ХЪ>
/q <sup>w</sup> / : /q <sup>hw</sup> /	<КЪВВ> : <ХЪВВ>

**3.1.2.3.** The effect of the recent sound change of vowel syncope is only very inconsistently reflected in the spelling. Most high vowels that were lost by vowel syncope are still written in the orthography. For details, see 4.1.

Since the spelling comes close to being phonemic, it is also widely used throughout the phonological and morphological chapters of this grammar. Whenever distinctions that are not made by the spelling are relevant, the IPA transcription is of course added.

## 3.2. Vowels

### 3.2.1. Vowel inventory

	front		back	
	non-rounded	rounded	non-rounded	rounded
high	/a/	/y/ (ü)		/u/
mid	/e/			
low	/æ/, /æ:/ (ä)		/ɑ/, /ɑ:/	

In addition, several dialects have the high back non-rounded vowel /ɨ/.

Only /æ/, /æ:/, and /ɑ/ require additional comments.

**3.2.1.1. The status of the phoneme /æ/.** In the standard language /æ/ is comparatively rare in stems and occurs only in one suffix (-äj, the Inelative of front-vowel stems). In many dialects it is more frequent and is pharyngealized to a greater or lesser degree (Kodzasov 1986:33-34, Mejlanova 1964). Most roots in which it occurs are loans of Arabic origin with an Arabic pharyngeal consonant (ʕ or ħ)), e.g.:

(24)	<i>sät</i>	'hour; clock'	Arabic:	<i>saʕʕat</i>
	<i>t'äm</i>	'taste'		<i>taʕʕm</i>
	<i>mähle</i>	'street'		<i>maħalla(t)</i>
	<i>länet</i>	'curse, damnation'		<i>laʕnat</i>
	<i>däwe</i>	'war'		<i>daʕwat</i>
	<i>bäzi</i>	'some'		<i>baʕdu</i>
	<i>menfät</i>	'profit'		<i>manfaʕat</i>

/æ/ does not occur at the beginning of words in the standard language. This may be due to the spelling system (/æ/ is represented by the Cyrillic letter <я>, which at the beginning of a word has the value /ja/, see 3.1.1.3.). All words that begin with /æ/ in the Güne dialect begin with /e/ in the standard language (Mejlanova 1970:22), e.g.:

(25)	<i>elqün</i>	/el'qyn/	'turn'	Güne dialect:	/æ'l'qyn/
	<i>exun</i>	/eχun/	'suffer'		/æχun/

However, even in the standard language /æ/ occurs in a couple of words that seem to be native, e.g.:

(26)	<i>näni</i>	/næni/	'evening'
	<i>härq'ü</i>	/hæ'r'q'y/	'wide'

/æ/ also occurs in a group of verbs ending in *-äg'un* (combinations of different preverbs with the verb *jağun* 'hit', cf. 10.3.):

- |      |                 |                       |                 |
|------|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| (27) | <i>käg'un</i>   | /k <sup>h</sup> ækun/ | 'touch'         |
|      | <i>eläg'un</i>  | /e'lækun/             | 'take off'      |
|      | <i>geläg'un</i> | /ge'lækun/            | 'take off, hit' |
|      | <i>xkäg'un</i>  | /ʎkækun/              | 'choose; elect' |
|      | <i>ek'äg'un</i> | /e'k'ækun/            | 'pour'          |

**3.2.1.2. The long vowels /æ:/ and /a:/.** These two phonemes have a rather marginal status. They occur in those forms of the verbs *jağun* 'hit' and the verbs in *-äg'un* in (27) which lose the /k/ before suffixes beginning with a consonant (see below 5.12.). The long vowels are thus the result of compensatory lengthening.

- |      |                 |            |               |                 |
|------|-----------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| (28) | <i>jağun</i>    | /jakun/    | 'hit'         |                 |
|      | <i>ja-zawa</i>  | /ja:zawa/  | 'is hitting'  | (< */jakzawa/)  |
|      | <i>ja-nawa</i>  | /janawa/   | 'has hit'     | (< */jannawa/)  |
|      | <i>xkäg'un</i>  | /ʎkækun/   | 'choose'      |                 |
|      | <i>xkä-zawa</i> | /ʎkæ:zawa/ | 'is choosing' | (< */ʎkæzawa/)  |
|      | <i>xkä-nawa</i> | /ʎkænawa/  | 'has chosen'  | (< */ʎkænnawa/) |

Furthermore, *-aj* and *-äj* in suffixes are often pronounced as /a:/ and /æ:/ respectively (Gajdarov 1960:249, Mejlanova 1964), e.g.

- |      |                 |  |                    |
|------|-----------------|--|--------------------|
| (29) | <i>fizwaj</i>   | /fizwa:/                               | 'was going'        |
|      | <i>kardikaj</i> | /k <sup>h</sup> ardik <sup>h</sup> a:/ | 'about the matter' |
|      | <i>atajla</i>   | /a'ta:la/                              | 'when...came'      |
|      | <i>rik'äj</i>   | /ri'k'æ:/                              | 'out of the heart' |

However, this pronunciation is not obligatory, and a pronunciation closer to the spelling is also possible, especially in careful speech.

### 3.2.2. Allophonic variation

**3.2.2.1. /a/** has two main allophones which are perceived as rather different by the speakers: the mid [ʌ] and the low [a]. The low [a] occurs before uvulars and /t/ in closed syllables, and [ʌ] occurs elsewhere (Kodzasov 1990:341). However, the precise phonological conditions for [a] are more complex and have not been completely determined yet; thus, [a] also appears in many cases before non-uvular voiceless stops, e.g. *lap* 'very' [lap<sup>h</sup>], *zak* [zak<sup>h</sup>] 'under me'. After labialized consonants /a/ is very often rounded, e.g. *k'wač* 'foot' [k'wɔʃ<sup>h</sup>] or [k'ɔʃ<sup>h</sup>].

**3.2.2.2. /e/** is pronounced as [ɛ] in stressed syllables and as [e] or [ɪ] in pre-stress syllables, especially when followed by /i/ in the next syllable. This variation is the cause of some variation in the spelling: *ixtibár* ~ *extibár* 'confidence'; *ecıgun* ~ *icıgun* 'put; build'; etc. In the environment of labialized consonants /e/ is often pronounced as [ø, œ], e.g. *ekw* 'light' [œk<sup>h</sup>].

### 3.3. Consonants

#### 3.3.1. Consonant inventory

See Table 3 on the next page.

In addition to the consonants of the standard language (as given in Table 3), many dialects have some of the following consonants:

- the voiced alveolar and postalveolar affricates /d͡z/, /d͡zʷ/, and /d͡ʒ/;
- the postalveolar labialized obstruents /t͡ʃʷ/, /t͡ʃʰʷ/, /t͡ʃʷ/, /ʃʷ/, /ʒʷ/, /d͡ʒʷ/. These are characteristic of the Samur dialect group. There is even one word in the standard language with such a consonant: *maʒw* /ma͡d͡ʒʷ/, plural *macʒwar* /maʃʷar/ 'astragal', as well as the sound-symbolic words *č'wäq'räq'* 'click' (Mejlanova 1964:387);
- the voiced uvular stop /g/;
- the voiced velar fricative /ɣ/;
- the epiglottal fricatives /ʕ/ and /ħ/.

The aspirated labialized alveolar affricate /t͡ʃʰʷ/ is part of the system but is extremely rare (Mejlanova 1970:40). It occurs at least in the Güne dialect form /ryt͡ʃʰʷer/ 'grass snakes' (standard *rücer* /ryt͡ʃʰer/).

The alveolar affricates /d͡z/ and /d͡ʒ/ occur in the Küre dialect group, but in the other dialects they mostly fell together with /z/ and /ʒ/, respectively. According to Mejlanova (1970:38) /z, d͡z/ and /ʒ, d͡ʒ/ are not distinguished in the standard pronunciation. Here it is not quite clear what the orthoepic norm is. As in the case of /æ/ above, the orthography, which only uses <ж> ž and <з> z, apparently has an effect on what is considered the standard pronunciation. In those dialects where /z/ and /d͡z/ are distinguished, there are rather few words containing /d͡z/ (Mejlanova 1970:37), e.g.

(30)	/lad͡z/	'white clay'	standard:	<i>laz</i>	/laz/
	/qad͡z/	'underwood'		<i>qaz</i>	/qaz/
	/ward͡z/	'month; moon'		<i>warz</i>	/warz/
	/med͡z/	'tongue'		<i>mez</i>	/mez/
	/murd͡z/	'flame; edge'		<i>murz</i>	/murz/
	/d͡zakam/	'shrub'		<i>zağam</i>	/zakam/

In contrast, /d͡ʒ/ is quite frequent as it occurs in numerous Arabic and Turkic loanwords.

The recent phonological change of Pretonic High Vowel Syncope has led to the emergence of quite a few obstruents that are distinctively palatalized (cf. 4.1.1.). They are not included in the consonant inventory here because the change is quite recent and all its implications have yet to be worked out—this is a fruitful area for further research.

Table 3. *Inventory of consonants*

	labial	dental		dental		post-alveolar		velar		uvular	
		non-labialized	labialized	non-labialized	labialized	non-labialized	labialized	non-labialized	labialized	non-labialized	labialized
occlusive	voiced	/d/							/g/		
	aspirated	/b/	/t/	/t <sup>hw</sup> /	/t <sup>hw</sup> /	/t <sup>hw</sup> /	/t <sup>hw</sup> /	/k <sup>h</sup> /	/k <sup>hw</sup> /	/q <sup>h</sup> /	/q <sup>hw</sup> /
		(p)	(t)	(tuw)	(k)	(kw)	(kw)	(kw)	(q <sup>h</sup> )	(q <sup>hw</sup> )	
	unaspirated	/p/	/t <sup>w</sup> /					/k/	/k <sup>w</sup> /	/q/	/q <sup>w</sup> /
ejective	/pʼ/	/tʼ/	/t <sup>w</sup> /	/t <sup>w</sup> /	/tʼ/	/tʼ/	/tʼ/	/kʼ/	/k <sup>w</sup> /	/qʼ/	/q <sup>w</sup> /
fricative	voiced		/z/			/s/	/z/			/ʃ/	/ʒ/
	voiceless	/f/	/s/			/sʷ/	/ʃ/	/x/		/x/	

nasals	/m/	/n/
liquids	/l/	/r/
glides	/j/	/w/
laryngeals	/h/	/l/

### 3.3.2. Allophonic variation

3.3.2.1. The labialized consonants may lose their labialization if the following vowel is rounded under their influence, e.g. *k'wač* [k'ɔʃ<sup>h</sup>] (cf. 3.2.2.1.). In many dialects the labialization has been completely lost (Gjul'magomedov 1974).

3.3.2.2. The phoneme /l/ is back (velarized) after a back vowel at the end of a syllable, and "clear" at the beginning of a syllable and at the end of a syllable after a front vowel.

3.3.2.3. The phoneme /w/ is often pronounced as a bilabial [β] or a labiodental [v] fricative.

3.3.2.4. In the sequence /Vn/ (i.e. vowel plus /n/), if it is not followed by a vowel, the [n] is often deleted with accompanying nasalization of the vowel, e.g. *zun* 'T': [zun] ~ [zũ] *žins* 'kind; gender': [ʒins] ~ [ʒĩs] (Gajdarov 1960:248).

3.3.2.5. In a sequence /nC/ where C is a velar or uvular obstruent, the phoneme /n/ (if not deleted, cf. 3.3.2.4.) has the same point of articulation as C, e.g. *rang* [raŋg] 'color'; *lanq<sup>h</sup>un* [laŋq<sup>h</sup>un] 'slam'. Note that the phonemes /m/ and /n/ are kept apart before labials, e.g. *šənp'i* 'kitten' vs. *hambar* 'heap'.

3.3.2.6. The phoneme *r* is voiceless between two voiceless obstruents, e.g. *krčar* 'horns' [k<sup>h</sup>rʃar].

## Chapter 4 Phonotactics

### 4.1. Vowel syncope

#### 4.1.1. Pretonic High Vowel Syncope

Apparently quite recently a phonological change has taken place in many dialects (including the dialect on which the standard language is based) which radically altered the phonotactics of the language: Loss of pretonic high vowels after voiceless obstruents. This vowel syncope is largely ignored by the standard orthography (thus presumably facilitating its use by speakers of non-syncope dialects). I will sometimes use the term "pre-syncope" here to refer to the state of the language before the loss of the pretonic high vowels.

In quite a few cases the spelling vacillates — sometimes the high vowel is written and sometimes it is omitted. In the following examples, the non-standard (but occurring) spelling is marked by an asterisk (\*).

(31) syncope reflected in the spelling	syncope not reflected in the spelling		
<i>kligun*</i>	<i>kiligun</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> ligun/	'look'
<i>šmud*</i>	<i>šumud</i>	/ʃmud/	'how many'
<i>xkwezwa</i>	<i>xükwezwa*</i>	/xk <sup>w</sup> ezwa/	'is returning'
<i>kk'lam</i>	<i>kik'lam*</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> k'lam/	'tick, mite'
<i>xzan</i>	<i>xizan*</i>	/xzan/	'family'
<i>tfeng</i>	<i>tüfeng*</i>	/t <sup>h</sup> feng/	'rifle'
<i>kfir</i>	<i>kifir*</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> fir/	'dirty, slovenly'
<i>kxin</i>	<i>kixin*</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> xin/	'write'
<i>šq'ünt</i>	<i>šüq'ünt*</i>	/ʃq'ynt <sup>h</sup> /	'snail'
<i>spek</i>	<i>süpek*</i>	/spek <sup>h</sup> /	'mulberry'
<i>kxunun*</i>	<i>kuxunun</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> xunun/	'tremble'

In other cases the pre-syncope forms are only found in the early description of Uslar (1896), e.g.:

(32) modern spelling		Uslar (1896)	
<i>xper</i>	/xper/	<i>xiper</i>	'sheep (pl.)'
<i>čka</i>	/t <sup>h</sup> ka/	<i>č<sup>h</sup>ika</i>	'place'
<i>stxa</i>	/st <sup>h</sup> xa/	<i>sit<sup>h</sup>xa</i>	'brother'
<i>ktab</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> tab/	<i>k<sup>h</sup>itab</i>	'book'
<i>q<sup>h</sup>san</i>	/q <sup>h</sup> san/	<i>q<sup>h</sup>isen</i>	'good'

As can be seen from the above examples, the resulting complicated word-initial consonant clusters have not prevented the syncope. Here are more examples of resulting CC- and CCC- clusters that do appear in the spelling:

- (33) *CC-*
- |             |                      |              |
|-------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <i>kpul</i> | /k <sup>h</sup> pul/ | 'rheumatism' |
| <i>ptul</i> | /p <sup>h</sup> tul/ | 'grandchild' |
| <i>psi</i>  | /p <sup>h</sup> si/  | 'pussy'      |
- (34) *CCC-*
- |                 |                                      |                   |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>čxra</i>     | /t <sup>h</sup> χra/                 | 'spinning wheel'  |
| <i>kstax</i>    | /k <sup>h</sup> stax/                | 'spoiled (child)' |
| <i>ktkana</i>   | /k <sup>h</sup> t <sup>h</sup> kana/ | 'got used'        |
| <i>št kana</i>  | /ʃt <sup>h</sup> kana/               | 'swept'           |
| <i>krčargan</i> | /k <sup>h</sup> rčargan/             | 'rein'            |

In the pronunciation, the syncope occurs much more often than in the spelling. It occurs regularly when the high vowel is in a position between two obstruents, even in the structure *CVrC*, i.e. when an *r* intervenes between the high vowel and the second obstruent. A number of examples are given in (35).

- (35)
- |                  |   |               |
|------------------|---|---------------|
| <i>šikil</i>     | /ʃkil/  | 'picture'     |
| <i>šutq'únun</i> | /ʃw <sup>t</sup> h <sup>q</sup> 'unun/            | 'press out'   |
| <i>šük'ü</i>     | /ʃk'y/  | 'thin'        |
| <i>sik'er</i>    | /sɪk'er/  | 'foxes'       |
| <i>cifer</i>     | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪfer/                             | 'clouds'      |
| <i>cic'ib</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪts'ib/                           | 'chicken'     |
| <i>cükwer</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪkw <sup>er</sup> /               | 'flowers'     |
| <i>čirkin</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪrkin/                            | 'dirty'       |
| <i>čič'ek</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪt <sup>h</sup> ek <sup>h</sup> / | 'onion'       |
| <i>čuk'ul</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪwk'ul/                           | 'knife'       |
| <i>čüq'wézwa</i> | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪw <sup>q</sup> 'wezwa/           | 'is pressing' |
| <i>čüxwer</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪw <sup>χ</sup> wer/              | 'pear'        |
| <i>kise</i>      | /k <sup>h</sup> ɪse/                              | 'purse'       |
| <i>kifer</i>     | /k <sup>h</sup> ɪfer/                             | 'plaits'      |
| <i>kic'er</i>    | /k <sup>h</sup> ɪts'er/                           | 'dogs'        |
| <i>tükwen</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> ɪkw <sup>en</sup> /               | 'store'       |
| <i>tuxúzwa</i>   | /t <sup>h</sup> w <sup>χ</sup> uzwa/              | 'is carrying' |
| <i>tup'al</i>    | /t <sup>h</sup> w <sup>p</sup> 'al/               | 'ring'        |
| <i>pirpil</i>    | /p <sup>h</sup> ɪrpil/                            | 'catkins'     |

The fact that syncopated /i/, /y/, and /u/ are often preserved in the spelling may be due to the fact that in many cases the relevant contrasts do not disappear together with the vowels, being preserved as secondary articulations of the preceding obstruent. For instance, the word *kifer* 'plaits' is pronounced /k<sup>h</sup>ɪfer/, without the /i/, but with a palatalized preceding consonant (indicated here by superscript *ɟ*). Likewise, syncopated /u/ is still reflected in the labialization of the preceding consonant, e.g. *tup'al* 'ring': /t<sup>h</sup>w<sup>p</sup>'al/; and syncopated /y/ is still reflected in simultaneous palatalization and labialization of the preceding consonant (indicated here by superscript *ɟ*), e.g. *küče* 'street': /k<sup>h</sup>ɪt<sup>h</sup>ɟe/ (this description is due to Kodzasov 1990:341-42). However, retention of residual secondary articulations is not very regular, or its conditions are obscure.

The preservation of palatalization and labialization after vowel syncope means that theoretically one would have to add more than a dozen palatalized and labialized-palatalized obstruent phonemes to the consonant inventory. This is not done here because the change of vowel syncope is very recent and more research is needed to determine precisely all its implications.

However, this preservation of the high vowel contrasts is not possible in all environments. Distinctive labialization is possible only on consonants which can be phonemically labialized (see 3.3.1.), and distinctive palatalization is impossible on postalveolar consonants.

The hypothesis that *i*, *u*, and *ü* in the spelling can reflect these residual secondary articulations (Sandro Kodzasov, p.c.) could also explain a curious paradox in Uslar (1896), involving the interaction of syncope and Pre-obstruent Unaspirated Aspiration (see 5.4.).

But clearly another factor involved is analogy: Pretonic high vowels are preserved in the pronunciation and in the spelling much more regularly in words having a non-syncopeated alternant (i.e. in monosyllabic nouns) than in non-alternating environments. Thus, *kic'er* 'dogs' and *tup'ar* 'fingers' regularly have palatalization/labialization and are spelled with the vowels because of their singulars (*kic'* and *t'ub*) without syncope. Words with syncope in a non-alternating syllable, like *ktab* 'book', *tüfeng/tfeng* 'rifle', *sufra* 'tablecloth', tend to lose the palatalization/labialization in the pronunciation and the vowel letters in the spelling even when the phonological environment would favor their retention.

Between two fricatives, high vowels are not in general syncopeated:

(36)	<i>šüşe</i>	/ʃyʃe/	'glass; bottle'
	<i>sühür</i>	/sy'hyr/	'magic'
	<i>sifte</i>	/sift'e/	'first'

When the high vowel comes between an obstruent and a sonorant (followed by a stressed vowel), the vowel may or may not be syncopeated.

(37)	<i>čimi</i>	/tʃ <sup>h</sup> imi/ ~ /tʃ <sup>h</sup> mi/	'warm'
	<i>činéba</i>	/tʃ <sup>h</sup> i'neba/ ~ /tʃ <sup>h</sup> neba/	'secretly'
	<i>küleg</i>	/ky'leg/ ~ /k <sup>h</sup> leg/	'key'
	<i>kümek</i>	/k <sup>h</sup> y'mek <sup>h</sup> / ~ /k <sup>h</sup> mek <sup>h</sup> /	'help'
	<i>t'imil</i>	/t'i'mil/ ~ /t'jmil/	'(a) little'

Thus, it appears that the change is still going on and has not yet worked its way through all environments and lexical items. The rather recent date of this change seems to justify the strategy (adopted in sections 4.2.1.-2., 6.1.-2.) of ignoring it for certain purposes.

#### 4.1.2. Post-tonic Vowel Syncope

There is also a tendency for post-tonic vowels in non-final syllables to be syncopeated if they are followed by only one consonant. However, the precise phonological conditions for this syncope are even more difficult to identify than for pretonic syncope. Again, the high vowels seem to be most prone to

syncope, but syncope of /a/ occurs as well. Post-tonic Vowel Syncope seems to be restricted to inflectional suffixes (but cf. 4.1.2.4.).

In this section I will mention mainly the cases that result in alternations and the cases that showed spelling vacillations before the definitive standardization of the spelling in the 1960s.

4.1.2.1. Post-tonic Vowel Syncope resulted in the alternation between the Imperfective suffixes *-zawa* and *-zwa* (9.3.2.2.), and the Perfect suffixes *-nawa* and *-nwa* (9.3.3.3.) (as well as the corresponding Continuative suffixes *-zama/-zma*, *-nama/-nma*). The Imperfective and the Perfect go back to periphrastic constructions with the auxiliary verb *awa* (locative copula, cf. 17.6.1.), which are still described as periphrastic constructions in Uslar (1896).

The Imperfective converb plus *awa* yielded the Imperfective, and the Aorist converb plus *awa* yielded the Perfect (the Continuative tenses are due to combination with *ama* 'is still'):

(38) Imperfective	<i>raxá-z awa</i>	>	<i>raxá-zwa</i>	'is speaking'
	<i>šéx-iz awa</i>	>	<i>šéx-zawa</i>	'is crying'
Perfect	<i>raxá-na awa</i>	>	<i>raxá-nwa</i>	'has spoken'
	<i>šéx-na awa</i>	>	<i>šéx-nawa</i>	'has cried'

In these cases, the conditions for syncope are clear: /a/ drops in a medial post-tonic syllable if preceded by no more than one consonant (*raxázwa*), otherwise it is preserved (*šéxnawa*). If there are two medial vowels in succession (/i/ - /a/ in *šéxiz awa*), the first vowel is dropped, even if this results in a three-consonant cluster, as in (39).

(39) <i>hált-iz awa</i>	>	<i>hált-zawa</i>	'is meeting'
-------------------------	---	------------------	--------------

However, in some varieties of the language, the /a/ has been syncopated in this environment. Forms like (40) are sometimes found in writing (especially in older texts).

(40) <i>šéx-izwa</i>	'is crying'
----------------------	-------------

4.1.2.2. Another alternation resulting from Post-tonic Vowel Syncope is that between *-ar* and *-r* in the plural (cf. 7.1.1.). In Uslar (1896), the /a/ is still present in these cases.

(41) Absolute	Ergative		(Uslar)
<i>balk'án-ar</i>	<i>balk'án-r-i</i>	<	<i>balk'án-ar-i</i> 'horses'
<i>didé-jar</i>	<i>didé-jr-i</i>	<	<i>didé-jar-i</i> 'mothers'

The /u/ of the plural substantivizer *-bur* is preserved in the spelling but not generally in the pronunciation, which leads to spelling variations, especially in older texts.

(42) Absolute	Ergative		
<i>qácú-bur</i>	<i>qácú-bur-u</i>	also:	<i>qácúbru</i> 'green ones'