Sketch of the Grammar of Kubachi
The simple sentence

Karina Vamling and Revaz Tchantouria

In this paper we present a sketch of Kubachi, a language spoken in the mountainous Dagestan in the Eastern part of the Caucasus. We focus on the major nominal and verbal categories and the structure of the simple sentence. A specific feature of Kubachi is its mixed system of noun class and person marking, which is shown to correlate with a split ergative-absolutive and nominative-accusative alignment of the marking of grammatical relations. Kubachi has also a rich system of non-finite verb forms, including participles, gerunds, verbal nouns and infinitives.

1. Introduction
In this paper we describe major nominal and verbal categories in Kubachi and give a characterisation of the marking of grammatical relations in the simple sentence. A substantial part of the paper is also devoted to non-finite verb forms and the marking of grammatical relations in non-finite clauses. Our goal is to provide a grammar of the simple sentence, which may serve as the necessary background to a forthcoming paper on the complement structures of Kubachi.

We are most grateful to professor Aleksandr Magometov of the Georgian Academy of Sciences for helping us with material about Kubachi and acting as our informant. His monograph about the grammar of Kubachi (Magometov 1963 (=M.)) has been our main source about the language. Where not otherwise noted, the examples given in the paper have been elicited during field work.

The representation of the Kubachi examples is given in IPA symbols, but otherwise follows the system used in Magometov 1963 (see Appendix).

1.1. Dargwa and Kubachi
Kubachi is spoken in a village to the west of Derbent in the Dagestan republic. The number of speakers of Kubachi is approximately five thousand. The Kubachi call themselves suzbug. The name Kubachi is of Turkish origin and connected with the word for 'coat of mail', which indicates the traditional occupation of the Kubachi in metal work.
Kubachi is closely related to Dargwa, one of the bigger Dagestani languages in the East Caucasian group. The number of speakers of Dargwa is 320,000. There is disagreement as to whether Kubachi should be considered a dialect of Dargwa (an opinion represented for instance by Abdullaev 1971:522) or a separate language, following Magometov 1963.

There is no standard writing system for Kubachi. The present literary form of Dargwa was created in 1938 and is based on the Cyrillic script. It replaced a Latin-based script, which in turn had replaced the Arabic writing a decade before.

2. Nominal categories
The nominal categories included in this section are noun and personal pronouns.

2.1. Nouns
Nouns distinguish number and case. The cases are usually divided into two groups, one including the ergative, absolutive, dative and genitive cases, and the other forming a group of so-called local or postpositional cases (M. 95-96).

Table 1. Cases: nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Ergative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutive</td>
<td>bits' 'wolf'</td>
<td>bits'-le // bic'(l)i-di-l</td>
<td>bits'-li-j</td>
<td>bits'-la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>adami-l</td>
<td>adami-li-j</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Absolutive is the case of subjects of intransitive verbs and direct objects of transitive verbs. Ergative, as expected, marks the subject of transitive verbs. The main functions of these cases will be further illustrated below. The genitive case marks the dependent of a common noun.

Table 2. Cases: personal pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ergative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Local, or postpositional, cases is a feature commonly found in the Dagestan languages. The forms are arranged in series, creating complex spatial and directional meanings. The series take as their basis the affixes -3e 'on', -6u 'under', -ta 'to the front', -ts6 'in', and -su 'towards' and combine with markers of location and direction. (2) illustrates one of the series, based on -6u 'under' (M. 122).

(2)   

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allative</td>
<td>laq'uji-gu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locative</td>
<td>laq'uji-gu-b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elative</td>
<td>laq'uji-gu-l</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2. Personal pronouns
Personal pronouns also distinguish case and number. The case distinctions are as rich in the personal pronouns as in the common nouns and also follow the absolutive-ergative alignment. Proper personal pronouns are found only in first and second person; in the third person demonstrative pronouns are used (M. 139).

Table 2. Cases: personal pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutive</td>
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<td>Ergative</td>
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<td>Genitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2.3. Noun classes
A common feature of the East Caucasian languages is the existence of noun classes. Kubachi distinguishes only three classes, whereas other Dagestani languages such as Chamali and Archi have four classes (Xajdakov 1980:77, 122). Even more classes are found in the Nakh languages; Chechen has six
classes (Dešeriev 1967a:194) and Tsova-tush has eight (Dešeriev 1967b:230).

The three classes in Kubachi are: I. Male (gal, ‘boy, son’, adame ‘man’), II. Female (xunul ‘woman’, jutse ‘sister’) and III. Other (us ‘bull’, gal ‘house’, bik ‘head’). The markers are more differentiated in the singular (I. -w, II. -j, III. -b) than in the plural (I. and II. share one marker -b, and III. -d). The noun classes are illustrated here by a noun and adjective attribute, where the adjective includes the marker as a final suffix:

Table 3. Noun classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Male</td>
<td>ara3u-b adame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Female</td>
<td>ara3u-b xunun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Other</td>
<td>ara3u-b hanwan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The class markers do not generally show up in the nouns themselves but occur as cross-reference markers in all verbal categories: the finite verb as well as non-finite verb forms (particiles, infinitives, gerunds, verbal nouns), adjectives and also in nouns in the locative postpositional case and locative postpositions.

3. Verbal categories
In this section we will look at some central aspects of the morphology of finite and non-finite verb forms.

3.1. Finite verbs
The finite verb distinguishes a number of categories, such as tense, aspect, mood, causation, negation, question, person, number and noun class. Here we will consider some of the major categories.

A common feature of Kubachi verb forms is compounding, both as a grammatical and lexical device. Kubachi has only two organic tense forms, the so-called general present and the past. Apart from these forms, there are a number of analytic tenses (present, imperfect, aorist, past resultative, pluperfect, future). The analytic tenses are made up of gerunds (in the present or past) and the auxiliary saw ‘be’ (in present or past forms). Such analytic forms are illustrated by the present (consisting of a present gerund + ‘is’) and the resultative (formed by the past gerund + ‘is’). The forms of the verb saw ‘is’ are given for comparison. One of the organic tenses, the past, is also included in the table.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
& \text{Present} & \text{Past resultative} \\
\hline
\text{I. Male} & \text{I do it}, etc. & \text{I have done it}, etc. \\
\text{II. Female} & \text{I do it, etc.} & \text{I am}, etc. \\
\text{III. Other} & \text{I do it, etc.} & \text{I did it}, etc. \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
1 & b iq’ul-da & b iq’ul-da & \text{I do it, etc.} \\
2 & b iq’ul-de & b iq’ul-de & \text{I am}, etc. \\
3 & b iq’ul-sa-w & b iq’ul-sa-w & \text{I did it}, etc. \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

3.1.1. Cross-reference. A characteristic feature of Kubachi is that the system of agreement markers is based both on noun class and person. The finite verb may include two noun class affixes, a prefix and a suffix, marking cross-reference with subject and object. In a transitive verb, the prefix position is related to the object and the suffix to the subject (a). In an intransitive verb (b), the subject is marked both in the prefix and the suffix position.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{(4) a. abadil w-alyiun-ni-sa-j gal} & \text{mother.ERG I-feed-GER-AUX.PRES-II son.ABS} & \text{‘(The) mother feeds (her) son.’} \\
\hline
\text{b. at:a w-axul-sa-w} & \text{father.ABS I-leave-3.AUX.PRES-I} & \text{‘Father is leaving.’} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

Noun class markers are found in both prefix and suffix position, as shown above, whereas person markers are restricted to the suffix position. In this suffix position, as in the personal pronouns, there is a division between the first/second and third person: person is marked in first/second person and noun class in the third person. Note that the presence of noun class markers in the third person is related to the auxiliary saw. For instance, in the past (cf. (3)), there is no noun class suffix in the third person.

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
\text{(5) I} & \text{dudil fatje b-iq’ul-da} & \text{‘I (male/female) do work’} \\
\text{II} & \text{udil fatje b-iq’ul-de} & \text{‘You (male/female) do work’} \\
\text{III} & \text{iddil fatje b-iq’ul-sa-w} & \text{‘He does work’} \\
\text{iddil fatje b-iq’ul-sa-j} & \text{‘She does work’} \\
\text{iddil fatje b-iq’ul-sa-b} & \text{‘It does work’ (M. 152)} \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]
This might be compared to the intransitive paradigm below. From these two paradigms we can see that the first/second person subject is marked both for noun class and person in an intransitive construction, but only for person in the transitive.

(6)  
1  du w-i:q'ul-da  'I (male) work'  
   du j-i:q'ul-da  'I (female) work'  
2  u w-i:q'ul-de  'You (male) work'  
   u j'-i:q'ul-de  'You (female) work'  
3  id w-i:q'ul-sa-w  'He works'  
   id j'-i:q'ul-sa-j  'She works'  
   id f>i:q'ul-sa-b  'It works'

The following categories presented below – causation, negation and interrogativity – occur in both finite and non-finite forms, but are only described in this section.

3.1.2. Causative forms. Causative verb forms are formed by adding aqij 'exceed, overcome' to the non-causative verb stem, resulting in a compound verb form: baq'-ij 'do' and baq'-aq-ij 'cause to do'. In clauses with causative verbs, a double assignment of the ergative case occurs. Both the causer and the causee are assigned the ergative case.

(7) atsadil galdil k'a kabigijqulsaw  
   father.ERG son.ERG letter.ABS III.CAUS.write.PRES.I  
   'The father makes the son write a letter.' (M. 216)

3.1.3. Marking of negation. A number of different ways of marking negation are found in Kubachi. The verbs saw 'is' and lib 'have' take negating affixes: a- and -akwa respectively: du a-da 'I am not' and dila aba lij-akwa 'I do not have a mother' (M. 224).

Reduplication or partial reduplication of the stem is another type of negation marking (M. 227): baq'ij 'do' and baq'aq'ij 'not do', batij 'leave' and batatij 'not leave'.

3.1.4. Interrogative markers. Three different question markers correspond to different types of questions. In simple yes/no questions the marker -(ij) is added to the verb form: u usunniide vs. u usunniidi-j 'You sleep.' vs. 'Do you sleep?'. In wh-questions, the interrogative form of the verb is formed by the marker -nu.

(8) a. id tfa saw-nu  
   he who is-Q  
   'Who is he?'

   b. kiniʃ'ka t'ij bikatii-n(u)  
   book.ABS to.whom gave-Q  
   'To whom did he give the book?' (M. 236)

The third marker of interrogativity occurs in indirect questions: -il. A direct question is given in (a) and the indirect in (b).

(9) a. dudil xaaj-b-aqa-d  
   'iddil k'a  
   LERG III-ask-1.AOR  
   ka-b-g-aj-i'j
   'he.ERG letter.ABS PRV-III-write-3.AOR-Q'

   j-uk'ul  
   Il-say-GER  
   'I (fem.) asked: Did he write a/the letter?'

   b. dudil xaaj-b-aqa-d  
   ka-b-g-aj-il  
   iddil k'a  
   LERG III-ask-1AOR  
   PRV-III-write-3AOR-Q  
   he.ERG letter.ABS  
   'I asked if he wrote a/the letter.'

3.1.5. Adverbial forms. The final verb form included in this section is adverbial forms (adverbs also occur as a separate word class, but are not considered here). In sentences corresponding to adverbial subordinate clauses in, for instance, English, Kubachi has various finite forms that include the meaning of temporal adverbs. We illustrate these verb forms with two types (M: 239): The suffixes -maa-le create forms with the meaning 'as soon as': biaq'un-mmaa-le, 'as soon as he did it'. The adverb mut 'when' and the suffix -il may be added to past, present and future forms of the verb, resulting in forms such as:

(10) biaq'un-mmut-il  
    'when he does it'

   baq'ib-mut-il  
   'when he did it'

   baq'il-a-mut-il  
   'when he will do it'

3.2. Non-finite forms
Kubachi has a rather rich system of non-finite verb forms: verbal nouns, infinitives, gerunds and participles.

3.2.1. Verbal noun. The verbal noun (traditional term: masdar) is a category which shows both nominal and verbal features. It is formed by
adding the suffix -ne to the verb root. Similar to the noun, the masdar follows the usual nominal declension (M. 185)

\[(11)\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Masdar Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absolutive</td>
<td>wax-ne</td>
<td>‘walking’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergative</td>
<td>wax-ni-l-di-l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>wax-ni-li-j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive</td>
<td>wax-ni-lla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cases</td>
<td>wax-ni-l-3e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wax-ne-l-3i-b</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wax-ne-l-3i-j</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other morphological categories are noun class and number. As the noun class markers distinguish singular and plural, so does the verbal noun:

\[(12)\]

a. k’a ka-b-iltj’ne  
letter.ABS PRV-III-wriung.VN
‘writing of a letter’

b. k’ame ka-t-iltj’ne  
letter.ABS.PL PRV-IIIPL.wriung.VN
‘writing of letters’ (M. 185)

3.2.2. Infinitive. The infinitive is distinguished by the suffix -j. It does not decline, as do the noun and verbal noun. The infinitive includes noun class markers, an object marker in the transitive infinitive (a) and a subject marker in the intransitive infinitive (b). Including a subject marker thus distinguishes the Kubachi infinitive from a prototypical infinitive.

\[(13)\]

a. kiinjka ka-b-iltj’i-j  
book.ABS PRV-III-read-INF
‘read a book’

b. ixwle w-a3i-j butsiara baq’a  
quickly l-leave.INF try.to
‘Try to leave quickly!’ (M. 184)

3.2.3. Gerunds and participles. The gerunds distinguish present and past forms (M. 217), marked respectively by -1(e) and -ib or -un: baq’-a-l ‘do, present gerund’ and baq’-ib ‘do, past gerund’.

Participles are formed from various forms: gerunds, infinitives and finite verbs. They distinguish past, present and future forms as well as a neutral form, which does not express any temporal categories (M. 220) but merely the ability of someone or utility for something.

\[(14)\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Masdar Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>baq’ilbiwiw</td>
<td>‘having done’ etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>baq’uziwiw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>baq’ilaiziwiw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral form</td>
<td>baq’ijziwiw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The transitive participle includes two noun class markers: one prefix and one suffix. The prefix is always related to the object, whereas the suffix may be related to the subject (a) or to the object (b), corresponding to a difference between active and passive participles.

\[(15)\]

a. Satje b-i:q’uzi-w usta  
work.ABS III-doing.PRES.PART-I craftsman.ABS
‘the craftsman doing work’

b. b-i:q’uzi-b Satje  
III-doing.PRES.PART-III work.ABS
‘the work being done’ (M. 221)

4. Clause syntax

As seen from many examples above, the marking of grammatical relations in Kubachi is based on noun-class and person markers on verbal categories and case on nouns.

4.1. Finite clauses

In this section we will look at case assignment and noun class marking in finite clauses. Both case assignment and noun class marking is shown to follow an ergative pattern. The core grammatical relations in focus here are the subject (S) of intransitive verbs and the subject (A) and direct object (P) of transitive verbs.

4.1.1. Case assignment. We may begin with the absolutive case, as shown in the examples below, which is assigned to S and P: du ‘I’ in (a) and qala ‘fortress’ in (b).

\[(16)\]

a. du j-ida3i-d  
LABS II-leave-1.AOR
‘I (fem.) left.’

b. du’fitman-ne qala Sat’-a3i-aj  
enemy-ERG fortress.ABS destroy-3.AOR
‘The enemy destroyed the fortress.’
The ergative case marks A, the subject of transitive verbs:

(17) dudil ka-lutj’un-ni-da k’a
    I.ERG PRV-read-GER-1.PRES letter.ABS
    ‘I (fem.) read (pres) a letter.’

Marking the subject of a transitive verb is not the only function of this case. Another function is to mark the instrument:

(18) dudil istikan jinne bits’ad
    I.ERG glass.ABS water.ERG III.filled
    ‘I filled the glass with water.’ (M. 107)

Indirect objects are marked by the dative (a-b) or the directive (c) case (the difference in case appears to be related to the fact that the direct object is inanimate in (a-b) and human in (c)).

(19) a. du-dil b-ik:a-d kiinijkja utsii-lij
    I.ERG III-give-lAOR book.ABS brother-DAT
    ‘I (fern.) gave the book to (my) brother.’

b. dudil b-at-b-idana-d fcinijkia utsiilij
    I.ERG Ill-send-1AOR book.ABS brother.DAT
    ‘I (fem) sent a book to (my) brother.’

c. dudil w-at-w-idasa-d gal abalaba-ju
    I.ERG I-send-lAOR son.ABS grandmother-DIR
    ‘I (fem.) sent (my) son to (his) grandmother.’

A separate group of bivalent verbs that do not follow the ergative-absolutive marking is composed of some emotion and perception verbs: wik’ulsaw ‘he likes him’, bik’ulsaw ‘he wants it’, tebidilguimaisaw ‘he does not see it’, bak’wlsaw ‘he knows it’, ax’.a:lsaw ‘he does not know it’, paktakajits:u:lsaw ‘he became fond of her’. (M. 107) Here, the subject (experiencer) is marked by the dative case/suffix and the object (the source of the emotion) by the absolutive case.

(20) a. aba-j sinna gal wikulsaj
    mother-DAT her son.ABS I.like.PRES.I
    ‘The mother likes her son.’

b. gal-ij bak’ulsaw dars
    boy-DAT III.know.PRES.I lesson.ABS
    ‘The boy knows the lesson.’ (M. 107)

4.1.2. Noun class. The ergative pattern in the distribution of the noun class markers is realized in the following way. Class markers are triggered by the subject in sentences with intransitive predicates. The marker of the first class (male) is w- and the second class (female) is j-.

(21) a. du w-axul-da
    LABS I-leave-1.PRES
    ‘I (masc.) leave.’

b. du j-axul-da
    LABS II-leave-1.PRES
    ‘I (fem.) leave.’

Class markers are also triggered by direct objects. As in intransitive verbs, the marker is placed initially in the transitive verb complex.

(22) a. abadil w-alynun-ni-de gal
    mother.ERG I-feed-GER-IMP son.ABS
    ‘(The) mother fed (her) son.’

b. dudil j-alynun-ni-de jusse
    I.ERG II-feed-GER-IMP daughter.ABS
    ‘I (masc.) fed (my) daughter.’

We thus have an ergative pattern in the initial class markers triggered by S and P. A, subjects of transitive verbs, do not trigger any initial noun class markers.

However, in the third person, a class marker may show up as a suffix in final position in the verb complex, as in (b) below. The marker is added to the auxiliary part of the verb complex. The verb form in (b) is finite, but is formally made up of a gerund and the auxiliary ‘is’. This class marker is triggered by the subject.

(23) a. abadil w-alynun-ni-sa-j
    mother.ERG I-feed-GER-AUX.PRES-II son.ABS
    ‘(The) mother feeds (her) son.’

b. id w-iq’ul-sa-w
    he.ABS I-work-AUX-I
    ‘He works.’

Noun class markers also show up in predicative adjectives (here the class marker comes between the adjective marker and person marker). In (b) one marker occurs in the adjective and one in the auxiliary sa-w ‘is’.

(24) a. du 3ahil-zl-i-da
    LABS young-ADJ-1.PRES
    ‘I (fem.) am young.’

b. id 3ahil-zl-w-sa-w
    he.ABS young-ADJ-1-AUX.PRES-I
    ‘He is young.’
Before turning to cross-reference by person marking, we briefly note the rather unusual case of cross-reference in clauses with nouns in locative postpositional cases. As expected, a noun class marker is triggered in the suffix position in the verb, but it also appears in the noun in the postpositional case.

(25) a. laq’ujli-3i-b k:at’e tJibti-6
    cradle-on-III shawl.ABS lie.PRES-III
    ‘A shawl lies on the cradle.’

b. laq’ujli-fu-w gal xi-w
    cradle-towards-I boy.ABS stands.PRES-I
    ‘A boy stands by the cradle.’ (M. 122)

A similar situation is found in locative postpositions. The postposition assigns the genitive case to its complement noun (location) and takes a suffix noun class marker triggered by the noun (being located).

(26) qalla tala-b t:u:t:a ti-b
    house.GEN front-Ill tree.ABS is-III
    ‘There is a tree in front of the house.’ (M. 245)

It seems obvious to relate this cross-reference marking in the postpositional constructions to the relation between verbs such as ‘lie’, ‘stand’ and ‘be’ and their subcategorized locative complements. However, this is not a sufficient explanation, as the directional postpositional cases and postpositions do not take any noun class markers.

4.1.3. Person marking. Finite verb forms are differentiated with respect to the marking of the first and second person subject. The alternation below is related to person. (27) shows the person markers in an intransitive verb.

(27) a. du w-iq’ul-da
    LABS I-work-1.PRES
    ‘I (masc.) work.’

b. u w-iq’ul-de
    you.ABS I.work-2.PRES
    ‘You (masc.) work.’ (M. 151)

The same marking occurs in a transitive verb:

(28) a. dudil t’ult’e d-uts’ul-da
    I.ERG bread.ABS III-bake-1.PRES
    ‘I bake bread.’

b. udil t’ult’e d-uts’ul-de
    you.ERG bread.ABS III-bake-2.PRES
    ‘You bake bread.’ (M. 152)

Magometov (1976:213) points out that the marking of the subject in the suffix position is the usual practice in Kubachi, but mentions that parallel forms do occur in the third person of analytic present forms, where the object may be marked in this suffix position:

(29) iddil musa gap d-iq’ul-da /-sa-w
    he.ERG us.ABS praise I/II.PL-do-2.PRES /-3.AUX.PRES-I
    ‘He praises us.’

4.1.4. Summary of case, noun class and person marking. The Kubachi system may thus be analyzed as split ergative in a somewhat unusual way. The noun class prefix position of the verb is related to NP:s in the absolutive case, i.e. S and P. The ergative NP is singled out only by its case-marking and is not reflected in the prefix position.

The suffix position of the verb is related to the subject, irrespective of the transitivity of the verb. This latter marking thus follows a nominative-accusative alignment. A further complicating feature of the system is that the marking in the suffix position is split between noun class and person.

Figure 1. Marking of grammatical relations

As pointed out by Anderson 1988:35, finite verbal agreement in Kubachi is special in that it refers, in simultaneous ways, to both absolutes and subjects; i.e. to both the level of morphology and syntax.

4.2. Non-finite clauses

Above, we have studied the finite clause. In the remaining part of this section we will look at the structure of non-finite clauses. As noted above, the case assignment and noun class marking of finite and non-finite forms show great similarities.
4.2.1. Verbal noun clauses. The sentences below compare a finite clause to a non-finite clause with verbal noun as its predicate. In the verbal noun clause (b) corresponding to a finite clause with an intransitive verb (a), the subject is marked by the absolutive case and the noun class prefix of the second class is triggered.

(30) a. xunul j-axulsa-j woman.ABS II.leave.PRES-II
     b. xunul j-ax-ne woman.ABS II.leaving-VN
     ‘The woman leaves.’ (M. 185) ‘the woman’s leaving’

In the transitive case, both the subject and the object NP may occur in the corresponding verbal noun clause and are assigned the ergative and absolutive cases.

(31) a. dufman-ne qala $ut'tas-aq'-aj enemy-ERG fortress.ABS III-destroy-3.AOR
     ‘The enemy destroyed the fortress.’
     b. dufman-ne qala t'ut'ubaq'-ne enemy-ERG fortress.ABS destruction-VN
     ‘the destruction of the fortress by the enemy’

Another verbal feature of the verbal noun is that, similar to the finite verb, it may be modified by an adverb.

(32) a. dufman-ne ixwle qala t'ut'u-b-ax'q'-aj quickly fortress.ABS III-destroy-3.AOR
     ‘The enemy destroyed the fortress quickly.’
     b. dufman-ne ixwle qala t'ut'u-b-ax'q'-ne enemy-ERG quickly fortress ABS destruction-VN
     ‘the quick destruction of the fortress by the enemy’

4.2.2. Infinitive clauses. The infinitive is similar to the verbal noun in that it assigns case to its object in the same way as a finite verb, but differs in that it is not casemarked itself. In (33) we may also note that the infinitive is modified by an adverb: $af$le ‘well’.

(33) $af$le ka-b-gi-j bikulsa b k'a well PRV-III-write-INF necessary letter.ABS
     ‘It is necessary to write the letter well.’ (M. 184)

4.2.3. Participle and gerund clauses. As pointed out above, participles may include noun class markers of both a subject (suffix) and an object (prefix): $b$-issuzi-j ‘she buying’.

In gerund clauses, as in other non-finite clauses, the absolutive case is assigned to the object, being related to the noun class prefix.

(35) dudil [k'a ka-b-ig-ul] katili$g$-d I.ERG letter.ABS PRV-III-write.GER.PRES remain-AOR
     ‘I (fern.) continued to write the letter.’

5. Summary

In the table below are summarized some of the categories that distinguish the various verbal and nominal forms. Here the adjective and the participle are taken to be in modifying position. ‘Abs.C’ stands for ‘assigns absolutive case’, i.e. assigns case to its object in the same way as the finite verb. The category number has not been included in the table, as it may be present in all forms, either as an inherent category or as a category accompanying the relational noun class marker.

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The grammatical relations in Kubachi are marked by case, and by noun class markers on verbal categories. The system has been shown to represent a split system of ergative-absolutive alignment in casemarking and noun class marking (prefix) and nominative-accusative alignment of person and noun class marking in the suffix position.
References

Appendix
The Kubachi vowel system consists of the vowels [a, e, i, u] and the corresponding long vowels [a:, e:, i:, u:]. The consonant system is given below, based on Magometov 1963:46 (the representation has been changed to include IPA-symbols):

\[
\begin{align*}
p & \quad t & \quad k & \quad q \\
b & \quad d & \quad g & \quad q' \\
p' & \quad t' & \quad k' & \quad q' \\
ts & \quad t' & \quad k' & \quad q' \\
ts' & \quad t' & \quad k' & \quad q' \\
s & \quad f & \quad x & \quad \chi \quad h; \quad h \\
z & \quad \tilde{s} & \quad x; \quad \chi; \\
m & \quad n & \quad l & \quad r \\
w & \quad j \\
\end{align*}
\]

Ejective consonants are marked by ';
Geminated consonants are marked by I;
Note also the following correspondences between the present transcription and Magometov 1963: [J - S, U - S, Z - X, X - X, S - Y, S - E, ? - ?].