Languages of the Caucasus: Language and branch names

These names are based on self-designations (e.g. Lezgi), place names as in the language (e.g. Mehweb), Avar place names or ethnonyms where those are more widely current (e.g. Bagwalal), and long-established English and international terms (e.g. Georgian).

(Note that some scholars, while using the self-designation-based terms for languages, use transliterated Russian forms for the place names when used as place names: e.g. the Mehweb language but town name Megeb. This is to make it easier to find places in maps and atlases, which often spell place names in the national language (so, Russian for the North Caucasus). LC leaves this choice up to authors.)

In the following list, names of languages are italicized and names of families and branches are Roman. Different terms that have sometimes been used in the literature are in parentheses. Branch names are commonly used terms of convenience; some details of subclassification are still unsettled. Within and between branches languages are listed going approximately clockwise from the west.

West Caucasian
Abkhaz-Abaza branch
  Abkh
  Abaza (Tapanta)
Ubykh
Circassian branch
  Adyghe (West Circassian)
  Kabardian (East Circassian)

Nakh-Daghestanian (East Caucasian)
Nakh branch
  Batsbi, Bats (Tsvoa Tush)¹
Vainakh (Veinakh) branch
  Ingush
  Chechen (including divergent Cheberloi and Kisti varieties)
Daghestanian branch
Avar-Andic-Tsezic branch
  Avar standard language and dialect groups
  Andic branch
    Andi
    Karata
    Botlikh
    Godoberi
    Chamalal

¹ Tsvoa Tush is the ethnonym preferred by some members of the speech community now that it has made the decision to shift to Georgian. But the unambiguous designation of the Nakh language is Bats(bi). (-bi here is the Batsbi plural suffix for the traditional ethnonym; the singular is bacaw. The root is ba:c:-.)
Bagvalal
Tindi
Akhvak

Tsezic branch (Dido)
West Tsezic
Khwarshi
Inkhokwari
Tsez (Dido)
Hinuq

East Tsezic
Bezhta
Hunzib

Lak
Dargwa (Dargic) branch
Standard Dargwa (Dargi)
Aqusha (Akusha)
Uraqi (Urakhi)
Gubden-Murego dialect group
Muhi
Tsudakhar
Mehweb (Megeb)
Gapshima
Usisha
Kadar
Urqaraq
Sirha dialect group
Amuq (Amukh)
Qunqi (Kunki)
Kubachi-Ashty dialect group
Sanzhi
Icari
Kaitag
Chirag

Lezgian branch
Samur branch
East Lezgian branch
Tabasaran (Tabassaran) dialect group
Northern Tabasaran
Southern Tabasaran
Aghul
Lezgi

West Lezgian branch
Rutul
Tsakhur

South Lezgian branch
Kryz
Budukh (Budugh)
Archi isolate branch of Lezgian
Udi isolate branch of Lezgian (or early Samur offshoot)
Caucasian Albanian (Alwan) (= early Udi)
Khinaliq (Khinalug) isolate branch of Daghestanian

Kartvelian
Svan
Georgian-Zan
Georgian
Zan
Mingrelian, Megrelian
Laz

Indo-European
Armenian branch
Armenian (used generically)
Eastern Armenian
Western Armenian
Classical Armenian
(Other varieties go by geographical terms: Erzurum, Cilicia, Karabakh, Artvin, etc.)
Iranian branch (of Indo-Iranian)
Ossetic
Tat
Talysh

Turkic
Karachay-Balkar
Noghai
Kumyk
Azeri
Turkish

Further notes on language names:
• "kh" is used (rather than "x") for any velar or uvular fricative since this is a non-technical spelling list rather than academic transliteration or transcription.

• Names ending in vowels (e.g. Abaza, Kisti, Archi, Akusha, Kubachi) are sometimes rendered with the Russian suffix -in-. This is not part of the language name or ethnonym, but a suffix required in Russian to make it possible to add the adjective-forming suffix -sk- and inflect the word as an adjective: abazinskij, kistinskij, archinskij, akushinskij, kubachinskij. Standard English and other international usage removes this suffix.