A Reference Grammar of Ersu, a Tibeto-Burman Language of China

by

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A thesis submitted to

The School of Arts and Social Sciences/The Cairns Institute

James Cook University

in fulfillment of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the discipline of Linguistics

December 2013

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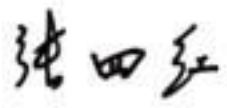

ZHANG, Sihong

December 27, 2013

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those people who have helped me at every stage of my PhD research. It would be impossible for me to finish this thesis if there were not various kinds of substantial supports from different people behind me.

First of all, deep thanks go to my three great supervisors: Prof. Alexandra Aikhenvald, Prof. R. M. W. Dixon and Dr. Mark W. Post. I am especially indebted to Prof. Alexandra Aikhenvald. Her sense of "super-responsibility" has undoubtedly demonstrated that she is the best teacher that I have met so far. Though she was quite busy, she insisted on a weekly meeting with me during the whole process of my PhD candidature. She has read every piece of my writing, correcting stylistic errors, offering instructive comments and providing useful reference materials. I have enormously benefitted from her patience, efficiency, kindness, dedication to supervision and understanding of linguistics. I am sure that every aspect of her character and achievements will be the model for me to follow in my whole life. I am also very grateful to Prof. R. M. W. Dixon, for his insightful comments after reading my chapters, for his continuous encouragements and for widening my eyesight through his great knowledge of basic linguistic theory. I am very lucky to have had Dr. Mark W. Post, a Tibeto-Burmanist, as my external supervisor. He has not only spent much time in reading my chapters and providing me with thought-provoking comments, but also taught me how to analyze the data, how to formulate my writing and how to think from the perspective of Tibeto-Burman languages.

I would also like to acknowledge my Ersu friends for their hospitality, generosity, kindness and assistance in the field. In particular, I must thank Prof. Wang Dehe (王德和), a native Ersu speaker and also an expert on Ersu culture. It is he who has introduced me to the Ersu communities and the Ersu friends, who has kept teaching

me Ersu language online and offline. I am especially grateful to Mr. Wang Amu (王阿木), whose firm support, long-time companionship and excellent translation skills between Ersu and Mandarin Chinese have made this thesis possible. Many thanks go to my Ersu family in Lajigu: my brother Wang Zhongquan (王忠权) and my sister Huang Aguo (黄阿果), who always tried their best to offer me the most comfortable living conditions and the most delicious food when I was staying there. Besides these logistic assistances, they have managed to provide me with invaluable data not only through their own great narrating skills but also through persuading many other Ersu friends to participate in the process of my data collection. The other Ersu friends that I must express my deep gratitude to include Huang Shibu (黄世部), Huang Jianming (黄箭鸣), Huang Zhifu (黄志富), Huang Zhanyun (黄占云), Huang Erha (黄尔哈), Huang Azhi (黄阿枝), Huang Ayi (黄阿衣), Huang Baokang (黄保康), Huang Baohong (黄保红), Huang Jianying (黄建英), Wang Buha (王布哈), Wang Ayi (王阿衣), Wang Munai (王木乃), Wang Hailong (王海龙), Wang Li (王莉), Wang Min (王敏), Zhang Muji (张木基), Zhang Baocai (张保才), Zhang Amu (张阿木), Zhang Baoqing (张保清), and many, many other Ersu friends whose names are not listed here. It is these lovely and kind Ersu friends who have made me at home in the Ersu communities. The "group" smoking, drinking, chatting and discussing Ersu language around the "fireplace" on almost every night during my fieldwork with those Ersu friends have not only enhanced my understanding of Ersu language and guaranteed the accuracy of my translation and transcription, but also provided me with lifelong warm memories of those cold winter nights.

Those days, when I started my PhD candidature and sought a Tibeto-Burman language as my research topic are still fresh and vivid in my memories. Through this experience, I have known Prof. Sun Hongkai (孙宏开), Prof. Jackson T.-S. Sun (孙天心), Prof. Wu Da (巫达), Prof. Hu Suhua (胡素华), Prof. Huang Chenglong (黄成龙), Prof. Carol Genetti, Dr. Yu Defen (余德芬), Dr. Dominic Yu (余平祥), Dr. Katia Chirkova (齐卡佳), Dr. Alexis Michaud (米可), Dr. Guillaume Jacques (向柏霖), Dr. Lidz Liberty (李丽) and many other Tibeto-Burmanists. I have to say that this is really

a helpful and lovely circle. Though I was asking quite simple questions, every person who was consulted has given me useful, friendly and warm suggestions. This has finally made me determined to work on Ersu, which will most likely be the cause of my whole life. I am deeply grateful to all of them and in particular, I would like to thank Prof. Hu Suhua (胡素华), Prof. Huang Chenglong (黄成龙) and Dr. Katia Chirkova (齐卡佳), for their invaluable encouragements, comments and suggestions on my journal paper preparations and submissions.

Deep thanks must also go to all the colleagues of the Cairns Institute, James Cook University. I must thank Ms. Elena Rhind, Ms. Amanda Parsonage, Ms. Anna Wasterval and all the other professional staff for their administrative support. I must also thank Dr. Mark David Chong, Dr. Anne Swhinbourne and all the other staff members in charge of research projects for their information about project applications. I am tremendously grateful to Dr. Brigitta Flick for her efficient, professional and high-quality proofreading. I would also like to thank all the visiting scholars and post-doctoral fellows and PhD students of the Language and Culture Research Centre within the Cairns Institute, James Cook University for their insightful comments and inspiring discussions. They are: Dr. Yongxian Luo (罗永现), Dr. Lu Tianqiao (陆天桥), Dr. Pan Chiajung (潘家荣), Prof. Ton Otto, Prof. Borut Telban, Dr. Mike Wood, Prof. Andrew Butcher, Prof. Anna Storch, Prof. Lourens De Vries, Dr. William Steed, Dr. Nerida Jarkey, Dr. Gwendolyn Hyslop, Dr. Anne Schwarz, Dr. Azab Amha, Dr. Simon Overall, Dr. Elena Mihas, Dr. Angeliki Alvanoudi, Dr. Valérie Guérin, Dr René van den Berg, Dineke Schokkin, Yankee Modi, Daniela Vavrova, Hannah Sarvasy, Mikko Salminen, Juliane Boettger, Grant Aiton, John Kerby, Kasia Wojtylak and many other “LCRC-ers”.

Heartfelt thanks go to the two anonymous external examiners for their careful reading, thought-provoking comments and constructive suggestions. It is their hard work that makes this final version possible. I am sure that I will continue to benefit from their work in my future research.

I really appreciated James Cook University for granting me JCU-IPRS scholarships that coverered my tuition fees and living costs here in Australia. Otherwise, I would not have been able to focus all my energy on my research. I must also thank Prof. Alexandra Aikhenvald and the Minimum Research Resources scheme, the FAESS GRS scheme from the School of Arts and Social Sciences of James Cook University for funding me to conduct my fieldwork and to present my papers at international conferences. I am very grateful to The Firebird Foundation for Anthropological Research of the U. S. A to fund my project: "The Collection of Ersu Traditional Songs". I must express my deeply felt thanks to my home university in China, Anhui University of Chinese Medicine, for promising to welcome me back to my previous position after my graduation. I especially thank Prof. Wang Jian (王键), a famous Chinese physician and also president of the University, who has advised that I should familiarize myself with the history, culture and environment to which a language belongs if I want to have a deeper understanding of the language. Whenever I went back to China, he has always managed to arrange a meeting with me no matter how busy he was.

At last, but most important of all, I must express the deepest thanks to my wife Yuan Jianbing (袁建兵). She bravely married me despite the fact that I was a poor boy from a small village and that my mother was seriously ill then. After our marriage, she has sacrificed herself to our family, doing housework, caring for my daughter and confronting with all the difficulties alone when I was not at home. I must also thank my lovely daughter Zhang Shyu (张疏雨), who is always the source of my inspirations and also my biggest drive to finish this thesis as scheduled. When I left home and came to Cairns studying for my PhD, she was still a child. But now, she is a young adult. During the process of her growing up, it is a shame that I, her father was not with her. I owe my family too much because of my several years' overseas studies both for my previous M. A. in Sweden and for my current PhD in Australia.

Abstract

This thesis is a reference grammar of Ersu, a Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the southwest of Sichuan Province, China. Data supporting this work were collected through my immersion fieldwork conducted in Lajigu (腊吉沽), an Ersu village in Bao'an Township, Yuexi County, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province (四川省凉山彝族自治州越西县保安乡). Theoretical framework is mainly based on *Basic Linguistic Theory*.

Ersu is a head-marking, verb-final, tonal and agglutinative language with an isolating tendency. The language has a fairly complex phonology including 37 simple consonants, 22 clusters, seven basic vowels, three rhotic vowels, six diphthongs, one triphthong and two tones. Reduplication, compounding, affixation and cliticization are attested in word formation. Kinship terms, directional nouns, verbs and adjectives may contain a prefix. Suffixes include gender class, causative markers, nominalizers, etc. Ersu has a rich set of enclitics, including evidentials, aspectual markers, genitive markers, agentive markers, locative markers, etc. Nouns, verbs and adjectives constitute open word classes. Classifiers and adverbs form "semi-open" word classes. Closed word classes include pronouns, relator nouns, quantifiers, demonstratives, numerals, modal verbs, negators, onomatopoeias, coordinators, clause linkers and clausal- or sentential-final particles. In an NP, the head noun precedes modifiers such as numerals, classifiers, adjectives but follows genitive phrases and denominal adjectives. Demonstratives may precede or follow a head noun. The nucleus of a VP is a verb that may be followed by a causative, an evidential and an aspectual marker but always follows a verbal action classifier. The canonical constituent order of a simple clause is AOV/SV. However, any one of the constituents can be ellipsed in discourse. The syntactic constituent order may also vary due to pragmatic motivations. Like many other Tibeto-Burman languages in the southwest of China, discourse organization in Ersu is mainly driven by semantic and pragmatic principles rather than

syntactic functions. “Tail-head” linkage strategy is frequently used in discourse, especially in narratives. Ellipses occur quite often in speaking and a speech act participant is seldom mentioned. “Topic-comment” constructions occur with high frequency in the language.

The thesis consists of 14 chapters. §1 provides background information for this work, including the people and their environment, traditions and customs, linguistic profile and how this thesis is written and organized. §2 introduces Ersu phonological systems, including segmental phonology, syllables, tones, phonological words, morphophological process and the phonology of loanwords. §3 discusses word classes with a focus on adjectival class, including the criteria to differentiate the three open word classes: nouns, verbs and adjectives, “semi-open” classes and closed word classes. §4 presents nouns and nominal morphology, including noun structure, semantic subtypes, pronouns, nominal case markers, relator nouns and nominal quantification. §5 involves noun phrases, including their subtypes, constituent order and structure, possession construction, coordination and apposition. §6 deals with numeral systems, including cardinal numerals, ordinal numerals, fractions and times, approximate numeration and current status of numerals used in Ersu. §7 describes Ersu nominal and verbal action classification systems, including gender differentiation devices, noun classifiers, numeral classifiers, repeaters, semantic subtypes of verbal action classifiers. §8 addresses verbs and verb phrases, including verb morphology, semantic subtypes, copula, existential/locative verbs, verbal transitivity, causative, light verb, serial verb construction, VP structure and VP coordination. §9 discusses the Ersu aspect system, including the presentation of 11 aspectual markers, their co-occurrence, and their correlation with other grammatical categories. §10 describes mood and modality, including declarative mood, imperative mood, interrogative mood, deontic modality and dynamic modality. §11 discusses the expression of knowledge, including evidential system, evidential strategies, epistemic strategy, information source conveyed through demonstratives and directional terms, parentheticals and some lexical verbs. §12 demonstrates clause types and clause

combining, including simple clauses, coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses. §13 presents discourse analysis and discourse organization, including discourse genres, pragmatic variation of syntactic constituent order, ellipsis, sentence linking and supersentential constituents, quoted speech, anaphora and predicate repetition. §14 discusses language change and language endangerment, including phonological change, lexical change, syntactic constituent order change, the change of the native speakers' multilingual ability and the attitudes toward their mother tongue, and the factors resulting in those changes. §14 also discusses the limits of this work and suggests future research directions on Ersu.

The appendix includes six selected experts from narratives of various genres, and an example of a long conversation in Ersu.

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List of Glossing Abbreviations

*	wrong or unacceptable examples
?	semantically unknown or uncertain morphemes or words
:	1) lexical meaning. For example: *ŋo-ma* 'day-SFX.FEM:sun'
	2) used after a vowel indicating that the vowel is lengthened
<	lexical meaning that derives from affixation, cliticization or compounding
+	compound boundary
-	1) affix boundary;
	2) boundary between a numeral or a noun and a bound classifier or a bound quantifier
<>	infix boundary
=	clitic boundary and relator noun boundary
Ø	ellipsed constituent of a clause
¶	sentence or clause boundary
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
A	transitive subject
ABL	ablative
ACC	accusative
AFFM	affirmative
AGT	agentive
ANAP	anaphoric pronouns
APFX	adjective prefix
AUTO	autonomous pronoun
AUX	auxiliary
CAUS	causative
CC	complement clause

CL	numeral classifier
CLTC	clitic
COMI	comitative
COMP	comparative
CONT	continuative
COP	copula
COPS	copula subject
COPC	copula complement
CPZ	complementizer
CS	complementation strategy
CSM	change-of-state
CTP	complement-taking predicate
DEFT	definite
DEM	demonstrative
DES	descriptive
DIM	diminutive
DIR	directional
dl	dual
EMAS	emasculated
EMPH	emphatic
ENUM	enumeration
EVID	evidential
Ex.	example
EXP	experiential
EXT	existential verb
FEM	feminine
GEN	genitive
HABT	habitual aspect
IMMI	imminent
INDEFT	indefinite

INTS	intensifier
ITRG	interrogative
KPFX	kinship prefix
Lit	literal translation
LINK	linker
LOC	locative
LPFX	locative prefix
MAS	masculine
MC	Mandarin Chinese
MCL	main clause
MNOM	modifying nominals
MOD	modal
NCL	noun classifier
Nh	head noun
NOM	nominalizer
NP	noun phrase
NPFV	non-perfective
NPRT	non-present speaker
NPT	non-past
O	transitive object
OTR	other speaker
P	predicate
PARE	parenthetical
PAUS	pause
Pe	possessee
PFT	perfect
PFV	perfective
PFX	prefix
PHTV	prohibitive
pl	plural

PN	proper noun
Pr	possessor
PRT	present speaker
PROS	prospective
QUAT	quantifier
R	referent
RDUP	reduplication
REFL	reflexive pronoun
RLN	relator noun
RN	round number
RPT	repeater
RPTV	repetitive
RQT	requestive
S	intransitive subject
SCL	subordinate clause
SFX	suffix
sg	single
ST	Sino-Tibetan
TB	Tibeto-Burman
TOP	topic marker
V	verbal predicate
Vh	head verb
VCC	verbless clause complement
VCL	verbal action classifier
VCS	verbless clause subject
Vh	head verb
VOC	vocative
Yi	Yi loanword

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter gives some ethnographical, cultural and social information on Ersu. §1. 1 presents the background of this study. §1. 2 addresses the Ersu people and their culture. §1. 3 discusses linguistics profile of the Ersu language and §1. 4 provides some information concerning this grammar, including fieldwork conditions, language consultants, theoretical framework, etc.

1. 1 Background

This study is a reference grammar of Ersu, which is one of the diverse languages spoken in "Tibetan-Yi Corridor" (藏彝走廊), a historical and ethnic term coined by Fei (1980, 1982, 1983: 90-91) and then widely accepted by Chinese scholars (e.g. Liu 1993; Shen 1999; Li 2003; Shi 2005, etc.). The term refers to the area formed by deep river valleys among high mountains that are located in today's Sichuan (四川), Yunnan (云南) and Tibet (西藏) in China. There are six rivers flowing by from north to south, that is, the Min River (岷江), the Dadu River (大渡河), the Yalong River (雅砻江), the Jinsha River (金沙江), the Lancang River (澜沧江) and the Nu River (怒江) as shown in Map 1. 1.

Map 1. 1 Map of Tibetan-Yi Corridor[1] (The highlighted lines indicate the six rivers from right to left: the Min River (岷江), the Dadu River (大渡河), the Yalong River (雅砻江), the Jinsha River (金沙江), the Lancang River (澜沧江) and the Nu River (怒江).)

[1] The map is adapted from http://www.china.cpm.cn/.

The environment of the area has made it an ideal region for people from different origins to trade, to migrate and/or to escape from ethnic conflicts. Consequently, the Tibetan-Yi Corridor, both in antiquity and at present, has had a diverse and intricate ethnic composition (Yuan 2008). According to Li and Liu (2007: 2), currently, the Tibetan-Yi Corridor has a population of more than 10 million, among which 5.3 million are minorities from various ethnic groups, such as the Tibetan, the Yi, the Qiang, the Lisu, the Bai, the Naxi, the Pumi, the Dulong, the Nu, the Hani, the Jingpo, the Lahu and other much smaller or barely known groups for example, the Ersu.

Fei (1980) states that the Corridor, which is located between Tibetan- and Yi-speaking communities, is undoubtedly a treasury for historical and linguistic studies because there are so many ancient remains found in the area. Though scholars from different academic fields including historians, anthropologists, linguists and archaeologists have begun to actively participate in studies in this particular area in recent years, there are still a considerable number of facts and mysteries to be revealed. The Ersu language is a case in point. The language, with Ersu (尔苏), Lizu (吕苏 or 栗苏) and Tosu (多续)[2] as its provisionally assumed dialects, is currently categorized as a member of the southern subgroup of the Qiangic branch within the Sino-Tibetan language family (e.g. Sun 1982a, 1983a; Liu 1983; Bradley 1997; Thurgood 2003; etc.). However, Chirkova's most recent empirical and comparative study implies that "the Qiangic hypothesis remains problematic" (Chirkova 2012: 140). Moreover, "little information on the three varieties [dialects] is currently available… [and] the precise criteria underlying this [sub]grouping have never been made explicit" (Chirkova 2008: 3). This study, based on my "immersion fieldwork" (Dixon 2007) in an Ersu-speaking community for about one year, aims to first record and document Ersu language, and second to produce a reference grammar of the language. The documentary component of this thesis will contribute to the

[2] There are different transliterations of the three dialects (see §1. 3. 2. 2). They will be respectively referenced as *Ersu*, *Lizu* and *Tosu* in this grammar hereafter. Note that the dialect Lizu, or Lìsū (栗苏) or Lǔsū (吕苏) is not the Lisu (Lìsù傈僳), a central Loloish language spoken in Yunnan province.

preservation of Ersu language, and also provide materials for further research on Ersu. The grammar will contribute to our understanding of the synchrony and diachrony of Tibeto-Burman languages, and of the nature of human linguistic diversity as a whole.

1. 2 Ersu People and their Culture

This section presents a concise ethnographic and cultural description of the Ersu for the purpose of giving some sociocultural context to the grammar. It starts with a description of the Ersu people and their living environment (§1. 2. 1), and then continues with a description of their traditions and customs (§1. 2. 2), including their religion (§1. 2. 2. 1), festivals (§1. 2. 2. 2), marriage practices (§1. 2. 2. 3), funeral rituals (§1. 2. 2. 4) and lifestyle (§1. 2. 2. 5). §1. 2. 3 gives a brief illustration of the written pictographic script used by Ersu Shaba[3] for religious practices. §1. 2. 4 summaries previous studies on the Ersu people and their culture.

1. 2. 1 The people and their environment

Few studies on the history of the Ersu people can be found because there are no written records available in Ersu. According to their literature review of the local historical books comprised by regional administrations[4], He (1988: 89-93), Long (1991a, 1991b) and Tang (2010: 16-21) hypothesize that the first group of Ersu people were in fact some Tibetans who moved into those mountainous areas and river valleys of the Tibetan-Yi Corridor (§1. 1). However, none of the previous studies have expounded why the Ersu demonstrate a quite different language, religion, culture and tradition from the Tibetan, or other neighbouring ethnic groups such as the Yi. Some Chinese scholars like Fang (1982: 397), and Li and Liu (2007) found that the early Yi people always referred to the Ersu as "the aboriginals" in their investigations into the history of the Yi ethnic group which migrated to the Ersu people's neighboring areas during the Tang Dynasty. Thus, they argue that Ersu people's first migration and

[3] Shaba is a native religious practitioner in the Ersu communities.

[4] In China, it is a tradition that a regional government has an Office of Local History (Chinese name: 地方志办公室) to comprise local history books which are called 地方志 in Mandarin Chinese. It is often regarded as an effective way to know about the people, language, culture and all other things relevant to the region.

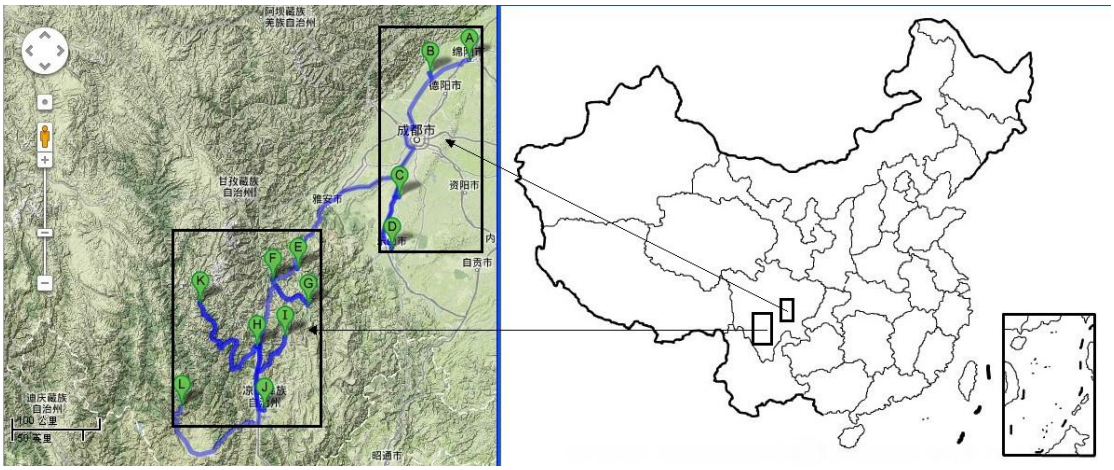
settlement in current areas must be no later than the start of Tang Dynasty. That was about 1,200 years ago.

The majority of the Ersu are traditionally residing along the riverside of the lower Dadu River (大渡河) and the upper Anning River (安宁河, a branch of the Yalong River 雅砻江) and the Yalong River (雅砻江) in the Tibetan-Yi Corridor (see §1.1 and Map 1. 2). The lowest place in this area is usually over 1,000 meters above sea level, and the highest mountain peak is over 4,000 meters (see Picture 1. 1). Consequently, the Ersu were almost completely isolated from the outside world. This was especially true a decade ago, when there were no paved roads and power plants. Transportation has improved considerably. In 2006, China launched the project of "村村通", that is, each village connected with a paved road. However, the Ersu's living environment is still amazingly tough because roads are often destroyed by frequent floods, debris flows and mud avalanches.

Picture 1. 1 An Ersu village in Ganluo County (original picture provided by Dehe Wang.)

The population of Ersu is in total around 25,000 according to Wang's (2010a: 6) most recent data. This number is comparatively very small in China, a country with approximately 1.3 billion people. However, the environmental hardships mentioned

above have forced the Ersu people with such a small population to live in a surprisingly dispersed way. Their villages are distributed along the riverside and among high mountains in seven counties in the southwest part of Sichuan Province (四川省), China. They are: Yuexi (越西), Ganluo (甘洛), Hanyuan (汉源), Shimian (石棉), Mianning (冕宁), Jiulong (九龙) and Muli (木里). With the fast development of China's economy and society, recent years have seen more and more comparatively well-off Ersu families moving from the mountainous areas to the plains. Some new Ersu communities have been established as a result, mainly in the districts of Leshan (乐山), Meishan (眉山), Mianyang (绵阳) and Mianzhu (绵竹), also in Sichuan Province (四川省), China. There are also some families that have moved "downhill" (in the local Ersu's words) to the suburbs of county seats such as Ganluo (甘洛) and Yuexi (越西). Though the number of the new Ersu migrants has not been accurately counted, it should not be small according to Wang (2010a: 6) as well as my language consultants Huang Baokang (黄保康), Wang Zhongquan (王忠权) and Huang Zhifu (黄志富). For example: in the suburbs of Yuexi county seat alone, there could be more than 400 Ersu people living in Qinglong Township (青龙乡) and Jiuchang (酒厂), a disused site of a former rice wine brewery. Map 1. 2 shows the distribution and the location of Ersu communities.



Map 1. 2 The distribution and location of the Ersu communities. The right hand map shows the approximate location of the Ersu communities in China. The left hand map gives detailed information of their traditional living areas (the lower left rectangle) and also the newly built Ersu

communities (the upper right rectangle). A=Mianyang, B=Mianzhu, C=Meishan, D=Leshan, E=Hanyuan, F=Shimian, G=Ganluo, H=Mianning, I=Yuexi, J=Xichang (the capital city of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, in which some Ersu people also live), K=Jiulong, L=Muli. The left hand map is an edited extraction from Google Maps. This map also indicates the kind of terrain where the Ersu reside.

The vastly-scattered distribution resulted in the correspondingly complex ethnic identification and linguistic variation (§ 1. 3. 2. 2). As an entirety, the Ersu people were named Xifan (西番) by the local Han which literally means "western barbarians", and as Opzzup ("the aboriginals") by the local Yi (Wu 2006). Currently, they are called either Ersu, or Ersu Tibetans, or Tibetans. However, the Ersu people who live in different districts refer to one another using different names (Sun 1982a; Wu 2006; Wang 2010a: 6) as shown in Table 1. 1.

County	**Township**	**Autodenomination**
Ganluo (3,914)	Xinshiba(新市坝1,200), Liaoping (蓼坪854), Zela (则拉960), Yutian (玉田110), Tuanjie (团结295), Haitang (海棠50), Xincha (新茶105), Pingba (平坝340)	Ersu (Ersu) (8,774)
Yuexi (2,550)	Meihua(梅花200), Xinmin(新民150), Yuecheng(月城240), Xishan(西山180), Banqiao(板桥100), Wayan(瓦岩80), Bao'an(保安1,600)	
Hanyuan (2,310)	County Seat(县城280), Xiaopu(小堡1100), Henan(河南1,000), Qingfu(青富490), Shaijing(晒经220), Dashu(大树210)	
Mianning (3,683)	Chengxiang(城厢1,014), He'ai(和爱663), Qingna(青纳219), Shaba(沙巴300), Hui'an(惠安433), Haha(哈哈314), Fuxing(复兴310), Houshan(后山359), Linli(林里71)	Duōxù (Tosu) (3,683)
Muli (2,900)	Kala(卡拉1,000), Luobo(倮波400), Maidilong(麦地龙900), Bowa(博凹360), Sanjueya(三桠桠60), Tangyang(唐央180)	Lǔsū/Lìsū (Lizu/Lyuzu) (7,151)
Jiulong (4,251)	Ga'er(呷尔2,100), Naiqu(乃渠500), Xieka(斜卡701), Xiatuan(下团150), Wanba(湾坝100), Wulaxi(乌拉溪200), Yandai(烟袋100), Taka(踏卡300), Duoluo(朵洛100)	
Shimian (3,500)	Xieluo(蟹螺1,400), Xinmian(新棉200), Yingzheng(迎政600), Zaiyang(宰羊200), Anshunchang(安顺场200), Yonghe(永和400), Huilong(回龙200), Meiluo(美罗100), Caluo(擦罗200)	Lǔsū (Lusu)/ Ersu (3,500)

Table 1. 1 Distribution of the Ersu people and their autodenominations (Numerals in the table indicate the number of the Ersu)

In addition, there are about 300 families that have migrated to the plain areas such as Mianyang (绵阳), Mianzhu (绵竹), Meishan (眉山) and Leshan (乐山) as shown in Map 1. 1. The total number of Ersu migrants would be no less than 2,000 (Wang 2010a: 6).

According to Sun (1982a, 1983a), the different autodenominations listed in Table 1. 1 all share the same meaning as "White People", but no precise reasons were given[5]. Later, this explanation has been widely cited by almost all of the Chinese scholars whose publications are relevant to the Ersu. However, it is interesting that the Ersu themselves never think that they are so-called "White People" and they think that this interpretation is quite funny and odd. In fact, no one clearly knows why they were called *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu'. Some of my consultants who are old told me that they were called *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu' because there are a tremendous number of words in the language sharing the morpheme *ɚ˧*, for example, *ɚ˧* 'age', *ɚ˧-pʰa* 'road-SFX.MAS:road', *ɚ˧ -kʰua* 'stone-big:stone', *ɚ˧dzə* 'dragon', *ɚ˧lia* 'touch', *də-ɚ˧* 'upward-white', *də-ɚ˧* 'upward-bark', *bɛɚ˧* 'snake', and many others. They hypothesize that since the neighboring people could frequently hear the *ɚ˧* in their speech but could not understand the language, they called them *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu', literally meaning "*ɚ˧* people" or "people always making the sound of *ɚ˧*". According to my understanding of the language, *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu' cannot possibly mean "White People". The reason is that although *ɚ˧* has the meaning of "white" in Ersu, it should follow rather than precede the morpheme *su* 'person' when it is used to modify *su* 'person' according to the syntactic rules of Ersu. In Ersu, when an adjective is used to modify the head noun of an NP, it always follows the head noun. Consequently, "white people" should be *su*+*ɚ˧* 'person+white' rather than *ɚ˧*+*su* 'white+person'.

In terms of the Ersu's ethnic identification, there are also some controversial opinions. Wu (2006) described a dispute among the Ersu people over their ethnic

[5] In terms of the Ersu, Sun (1982a, 1983a) hypothesized that they were called "White People" because the term *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu' consists of an adjective *ɚ˧* 'white' and a noun *su* 'person'. Consequently, *ɚ˧su* 'Ersu' means "White People".

identification in the 1980s. Some accepted the fact that the Chinese government classified them into the Tibetan ethnic groups, while others strongly insisted that they should be an independent ethnic group, and some people did not care about which group they belonged to. It also seems difficult for the Chinese government to resolve the issue of the Ersu people's ethnic identity. Consider the case of Ersu people in Ganluo County (甘洛县) as an example. They were marked as "Fan" (that is, Xifan 西番) people on their ID Card and Household Register Booklet[6] until 1990 when they were politically and administratively recognized as Tibetans, though some Ersu people wrote to the government several times before 1990 to request a clearer ethnic recognition (Wu 2006). The reasons for this ethnic grouping are fairly complex. During his field investigations, Wu (2006) discovered that early in 1954, the Ersu people in Ganluo (甘洛) submitted a proposal for their ethnic recognition to the First Session of The First People's Congress of former Xikang Province (西康省), but the recognition work was halted because Xikang Province (西康省) was merged into today's Sichuan Province (四川省) later. Then, in 1962, the same proposal was made to the newly-established Sichuan (四川) governmental authorities, but it was stopped again during the "Cultural Revolution", a government-initiated period of violence which has swept China from 1966 to 1976. Finally, in 1983, thirty Ersu people co-signed a letter to the government requesting that their ethnic identity be re-assessed. In response to their requests, several investigation teams were dispatched to Ersu communities. This time, they were finally grouped as Tibetans, though in fact, the team members did not base their investigations on each of the Ersu communities, but on some selected representative areas and Ersu people (Wu 2006). However, the dispute over their ethnic identification still exists among the Ersu people. When I was in the field, I found that the local people sometimes quarreled with each other about this issue.

To summarize, much research work still needs to be conducted on the Ersu people from the different perspectives of ethnology, archaeology, sociology and

[6] These are the two most important documents to verify an individual's identity in China.

anthropology. This work does not attempt to solve all the issues, but to focus on Ersu, the language that the Ersu speak.

1. 2. 2 Traditions and customs

The Ersu who live in different areas tend to show some variation in traditions, customs and also dialects due to the dispersed distribution of the Ersu communities (§1. 2. 1). A popular poetic doggerel among the Ersu well describes this situation:

(1. 1) *dʑiwɪ=pà* *la* *tsʰɑ=tɑ=pà*
very high place=LOC CO:and hot=NOM=LOC
bzi *tsu* *bzi* *ka* *mɑ-ʒuʒu*
wasteland punch wasteland hit NEG-harmonious
kuɑ=pà *la* *ŋuɑ=pà*
north=LOC CO:and south=LOC
ndza *tsu* *ɬa* *ɳpʰa* *mɑ-ʒuʒu*
drum punch horn blow NEG-harmonious
'People from higher places and people from lower places are different in farming; people from the north and people from the south are different in customs.' Lit: High place and hot place punch wasteland and hit wasteland not harmonious; north and south drum-punching and horn-blowing not harmonious.

Consequently, the traditions and customs described in this section may not completely reflect all the situations in the Ersu communities.

1. 2. 2. 1 Religion

Compared with other ethnic groups in China who either believe in Buddhism, Islam, or Christianity, the majority of the Ersu people have their own particular beliefs in religion. Wang, Gu & Jing (2008) state that the Ersu people do not worship any specific images of gods or divinities, but do worship nature, including natural

phenomena and substances. They believe that the sky is the most judicial spirit who governs and oversees everybody and everything in the earthly world. People should work hard, help others, behave well and resist temptations. Otherwise, they are doomed to be punished by the celestial spirit. When they hear the first thunder in the sky, they immediately bow and pat their knees and clasp two hands to pray. They also view cuckoos as a kind of divine birds and never forget to show respect to cuckoos because they think cuckoos are incarnations of their ancestors. Every year, whenever they hear cuckoos singing at the beginning of the third Chinese lunar month, they will not hold any celebrations including wedding ceremonies so as not to disturb the cuckoos' living environment. Only when the Torch Festival comes in the sixth Chinese lunar month (see § 1. 2. 2. 2) will the Ersu begin to hold celebrative activities because cuckoos are believed to have left for non-Ersu communities in this month. If they encounter a tree that is bigger than any they have ever seen before in their memory, they will first bow in worship, then weed and clear away dead branches or fallen leaves, and finally hang a small gift, like a button or a piece of thread torn from their clothes, on the tree. However, the extensive nature worship described by Wang, Gu & Jing (2008) is not seen any more in Lajigu, my field village (see § 1. 4. 1) except that the Lajigu Ersu still view cuckoos as a kind of divine bird as the Ersu proverb says:

(1. 2) *su+yi* *vɯ=tc^{h}o=nɛ̀*
person+house:human being head=RLN.LOC: above=TOP
xəmo *ya-k^{h}ua*
mother's brother ADJ.PFX-big
xuɑ=yi *vɯ=tc^{h}o=nɛ̀* *kəpo* *ya-k^{h}ua*
bird=DIM head=RLN.LOC: above=TOP cuckoo ADJ.PFX-big
'Among human beings, mother's brothers are the most respected; among birds, cuckoos are the most respected.' Lit: Above human being's head, mother's brother big; above bird's head, cuckoo big.

According to Wang, Gu & Jing (2008), the most special of all Ersu reverence is their spiritual characteristics for white stones, that is, *ndʑo* in Ersu. My language consultants report that this is shared by all the Ersu people in the different communities. They regard *ndʑo* as divine things. In their mind, the *ndʑo* can communicate with spirits in nature, distinguish the evil from the good, lead everything to develop better and better, protect Ersu people from dangers and bring them good luck and happiness. Consequently, each Ersu house has a bar-shape white stone on their wall (see Picture 1. 2). Some of the houses have several stones on the roof, the number of which is often either five, or seven, or nine for unknown reasons. When festivals come, Ersu people usually take *ndʑo* off from the wall and sacrifice some meat such as chicken, pork or mutton to it. They also burn incenses and pray before *ndʑo* (see Picture 1. 3). Ersu people's worships for white stones make some scholars in China hypothesize that Ersu people were a branch of the ancient Qiang ethnic group because the latter has quite similar attitudes towards white stones (Sun 1986; Shi & Liu 2007).

Picture 1. 2 *ndʑo* (a white stone) was placed on the wall of my host family in the field

Picture 1. 3 An old Shaba is praying before the *ndʑo* that is shared by all the Lajigu families

In terms of the Lajigu Ersu, they hold three important religious rituals: *lalamu*, *zats^{h}onbà* and *ɲo-ma də-dzɳ*. Each family in Lajigu should hold *lalamu* once per year. *lalamu* literally means "call souls back". This is to pray for safety for the family members especially for those who are making a living outside the Ersu communities. The literal meaning of the *zats^{h}onpà* ritual is unknown now. This is held by a family in which there is a patient who is dying. It may last for several days and a Shaba is invited to pray for the patient. Friends, relatives and neighbors will come and visit her/him as soon as they have received the news. It is said that many patients may recover from their disease after the *zats^{h}onpà* ritual. The ritual *ɲo-ma də-dzɳ* 'day-SFX.FEM:sun upward-bear→the birth of the sun' is held on the nineteenth of the eleventh Chinese lunar month every year. The Ersu in Lajigu believe that this is the day when the sun was born. Consequently, this religious ritual literally means 'the birth of the sun' in English. It is interesting that only the Ersu in Lajigu hold this ritual among the Ersu communities though its origin is unknown. This ritual is in fact to celebrate the harvests of the whole year because after this day, people will seldom do agricultural work and they will only wait for the coming of the Chinese New Year. When I was in the field, I observed some of the Ersu from other villages specially coming to Lajigu for the celebration of "the birth of the sun". A black pig should be

killed to sacrifice to the sun and then people will drink, dance and sing together.

1. 2. 2. 2 Festivals

The Ersu people's festivals are closely connected with either their frequent contacts with neighboring ethnic groups or their worship of various things in nature that they regard as divine. The most famous traditional Ersu festivals are *lakanbi* (还山鸡节 §1. 2. 2. 2. 1) and *tʂʰonəŋu* (射箭节 §1. 2. 2. 2. 2), the latter being also celebrated by the broader Tibetan community. The two festivals are still celebrated in the Ersu communities in Ganluo (甘洛) and Shimian (石棉) counties, but not in Yuexi (越西) County and other counties. Nowadays, all the Ersu celebrate *tsi*, the Torch Festival (火把节 §1. 2. 2. 2. 3) that is shared by the local Yi ethnic groups, and two traditional Chinese festivals (§1. 2. 2. 2. 4): *ndzàzo*, the Chinese Spring Festival (春节) and *ɬaba*, the Chinese Lantern Festival (元宵节).

1. 2. 2. 2. 1 *lakanbi*

lakanbi is the Ersu's traditional New Year Festival which is celebrated, in turn, on one of the four days（from the 9th to the 12th of the eighth Chinese lunar month） in a four-yearly basis[7]. The Ersu people are the only group of people who celebrate "New Year" in autumn in China (Wang 2007). Besides the celebration of their New Year, the theme of *lakanbi* is also to give thanks to the spirit of mountain for his blessing and protection, and to the ancestors of the Ersu people for leaving their offspring the precious and fertile land (Wang & Gu 2010). Wang and Gu (2010) describe that the Ersu celebrate the festival in the following ways: People should do a thorough cleaning and prepare all necessary materials such as incense, home-made rice wine, cooked eggs and a white rooster one day prior to the coming of *lakanbi*. When the day itself comes, celebratory activities always begin in the morning. First, people burn branches of mulberry trees to produce thick and white smoke, and have

[7] The Ersu people in Ganluo County celebrate their *lakanbi* on a fixed date, that is, the 1st date of the ninth lunar month (Wang & Gu 2010).

all ritual materials smoked in front of their house. Then, all male villagers[8] (including small boys) take the smoked stuff and walk in a queue to the worshiping spot, which is often a bare ground in the mountain behind their village. When they arrive at the destination, each person will bow in all directions, holding his white rooster higher than his head and saying words of thanksgiving to the spirit of the mountain and the ancestors of his family. After this procedure, all white roosters are killed and incense sticks are lit. They often place rice wine, eggs and the blood, beak, feet and wing tips of the killed roosters on white stones, that is, the *ndʑo* (§1. 2. 2. 1), to express their thanks to mountain spirits and their ancestors. When this important group activity is finished, people go back to their own house to celebrate *lakanbi* with their family members and to give thanks to their ancestors again together with family members. The way to continue to celebrate the *lakanbi* festival on this occasion is often to drink home-made wine and to eat all the best food that they have kept for a whole year. *lakanbi* is viewed as the most important festival by the Ersu people, and it is still popular nowadays among the Ersu villages and families in Ganluo (甘洛) and Shimian (石棉) counties. Since *lakanbi* is celebrated only by the Ersu people, it must play a significant role in their ethnic identification (Tang 2010b).

1. 2. 2. 2. 2 *tʂʰonəŋu*

The *tʂʰonəŋu* festival is shared with other Tibetans, but the legends about its origin are quite different in the Tibetan and the Ersu communities. Other Tibetans celebrate the festival to honor their folk hero King Gesar (Liu 1996), while the Ersu people think it is to thank the ancient hero *tʂʰəmoanɛ* who not only invented the bow and arrow, but also taught the Ersu hunting skills (Wang 2010b). Wang (2010b) points out that its main activity is an archery competition held in the Ersu villages on the first day of the third Chinese lunar month. Conventionally, all Ersu males, from newly-born babies to old people in their seventies, should participate in the competition. Those people who are disabled, or too young, or too old should have others shoot arrows on behalf of them (Wang 2010b). Therefore, the significance of

[8] Females are not allowed to go to the worshiping spot, and they often wait for their family's males halfway.

participation is to a large extent more meaningful than the results. Furthermore, there is no competition between two individuals. Competitors are divided into two teams by the most respected and most of the time also the oldest villager. The targets are often 50 steps away and the team with the most hits will win the competition. When evening comes, married or unmarried young ladies wearing traditional clothes will bring wine and food to toast the competitors on the archery field where bonfires are burning. All people drink, sing and dance together to celebrate the festival until the early morning of the next day (Wang 2010b).

1. 2. 2. 2. 3 *tsi*

The *tsi* festival, that is, the Torch Festival, which is originated from the neighboring Yi ethnic group, is also celebrated in many Ersu villages. The origin of the festival is said to correlate with the worship of fire created by the human ancestors. Both the Yi and the Ersu believe that the fire had the power to repel insects, drive away evils and hence protect crop growth. The torch of fire thus symbolizes happiness and can bring good luck to human beings. The Ersu people's *tsi* festival lasts three days from the 16th to the 18th of the sixth Chinese lunar month, and Yi people's Torch Festival begins on the 24th of the same month, also lasting for three days. Though both groups have different dates for the festival, its activities are nearly the same. The festival is full of different events and activities. The main events of the first day are worshiping ancestors, and visiting relatives and friends to convey their best wishes. Activities include bull and sheep fighting, horse racing, rooster fighting, singing competition, beauty contest, wrestling, etc. These activities are held on the second day allowing everyone to compete and play only if they like to. The climax comes in the evening of the third day, large bonfires are lit while people sit, sing, and dance around them throughout the whole night. The Torch Festival is also celebrated by many other minorities living in the southwest of China, such as the Bai, the Naxi, the Jinuo and the Lahu. It is called "the Carnival of the Orient" (Bai 2013) and has become a big attraction to tourists in the Yi communities, but only a few people know that the Ersu also celebrate the festival at present.

1. 2. 2. 2. 4 Chinese festivals celebrated by the Ersu

The most popular and traditional festivals that the Han Chinese celebrate are the Spring Festival, the Dragon-boat Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Lantern Festival and the Tomb-sweeping Festival. The Ersu in the different communities celebrate the Spring Festival and the Lantern Festival. They rename the two festivals respectively as *ndzàzo*, the Spring Festival and *ɬaba*, the Lantern Festival in Ersu. *ndzàzo* literally means 'foodstuff-piling' and *ɬaba* literally means 'full moon'. Though the Ersu celebrate *ndzàzo* and *ɬaba* at the same time as the Han Chinese, they combine the festivals with their particular religious notions and rituals (Wang 2010a: 40-52). It should be noted that the festival of *ndzàzo* has replaced Ersu traditional New Year festival *lakanbi* in the majority of the Ersu communities in recent years. This demonstrates that the traditional Ersu culture has lost certain ground to the Han Chinese culture.

1. 2. 2. 3 Marriage

Cross-cousin marriages are actively encouraged and considered as a first choice in the Ersu communities. Liu (2006), based on his fieldwork in Shimian County (石棉县), states that a marriage is only allowed between a brother's daughter and a sister's son, while a brother's son is not allowed to marry a sister's daughter. However, my fieldwork in Yuexi County (越西县), indicates that the most preferable marriage among the Ersu is that of a sister's child married to a brother's child. There is no restriction that only allows the marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son. In fact, a brother's son can also marry a sister's daughter in Yuexi County (越西县). In addition, when an elder brother dies, it will be his unmarried younger brother's obligation to marry his widow. However, an elder brother should not marry his younger brother's widow (Liu 2006). This is also not applicable to the Ersu in Yuexi County (越西县). There is a family in Lajigu, in which the eldest brother married his youngest brother's widow after the death of his youngest brother.

The marriage of a male and a female who are not from sister-brother families is also possible on some particular occasions, for example, when a sister has several sons but a brother has only one daughter. Afterwards, the next generation begins a new circle of cross-cousin marriage as mentioned above. Consequently, almost all of the Ersu are either close or distant "blood relatives". Parallel-cousin marriages are strictly prohibited. For example, brother's son and brother's daughter, or sister's son and sister's daughter should not get married. Exogamy, that is, a cross-ethnic marriage was strictly forbidden before the establishment of the People's Republic of China with a Minyak Tibetan as the sole exception (Liu 2006). Even nowadays, the first option of a marriage is still endogamy (Wang 2010c), though an Ersu-Han marriage is allowed. My participant observation in the field shows that currently, some of the Ersu have begun to admire those who got married to a Han person. However, some families still strongly object to an Ersu-Yi marriage. Many Ersu have traditionally held an antagonistic relationship with the more populous Yi, and have strongly discouraged exogamous marriage as a consequence. Historically, exogamous marriages with a Yi person have even led to banishment from the clan. I hypothesize that this ethnic antagonism results from the fact that the population of Yi is the largest in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture where most of the Ersu people reside. The Yi are comparatively strong in nearly every aspect in this area. Note that this situation does not apply to the urban Ersu. The Ersu who live in cities are heard to have married people from any other ethnic group despite their parents' strong objection sometimes.

The ideal age for a marriage in the Ersu communities was historically thirteen, fifteen, seventeen or nineteen[9]. Though China's Marriage Law regulates that it is illegal to get married younger than 22 (male) and 20 (female), many of the Ersu actually get married younger than 20 nowadays. Take one wedding ceremony that I attended in the field as an example. The bride was only 11 and the bridegroom 13. It is quite normal for parents to sit together and discuss their children's marriage in a

[9] Most of Chinese people think even numbers are lucky numbers except for "4". For example, the favorite number to the Han Chinese is "8". However, the Ersu people prefer odd numbers as their lucky numbers. This deserves further studies in the future from the perspective of anthropology.

straightforward way. The procedures of marriage often involve three steps: marriage proposal, marriage engagement and wedding ceremony. The first step is to propose a marriage. This may happen as soon as a brother's daughter is born in a cross-cousin marriage. The person who undertakes the task to propose a marriage is often the male's father or someone else from his family clan. The second step is the engagement. At this step, the male's family should send a team of seven men to the female's home. There are three rituals which should not be neglected, that is, water-splashing (splashing water at the engagement team), antiphonal song-singing (an informal singing contest between the male's and the female's sides), and welcoming-meals (receiving the team sent by the male's side with food prepared by the marriage engagement team themselves). The date of the wedding ceremony is often decided at the time of marriage engagement. The third step is the wedding ceremony. When the date for the wedding comes, a new team of five or seven people is dispatched to the bride's home by the bridegroom's family. This time, the task of the team is to welcome the bride to the bridegroom's family. When the bride enters the bridegroom's home, a wedding ceremony will be held. A Shaba is often invited to come and pray for fortune, luck and happiness for the new couple. After the ceremony, the wedding banquet will begin, and it often lasts several days. All people in the bridegroom's village are welcome to attend the grand banquet. People eat, drink, sing and dance as if they were celebrating a group festival.

During the three steps of a marriage, the male's family should send gifts to the female's family such as wine, cigarettes, rice, meat, sugar and cloth. There is no regulated standard, but the overall principle is the more, the better (Liu 2006). In recent years, there is an arbitrary custom that the bridegroom's family has to send no less than 30,000 RMB as a part of the betrothal gifts to the bride's family at the time of engagement (see Picture 1. 4). If the bridegroom breaks the marriage engagement, the money will not be returned. However, if the bride breaks the engagement, a larger sum of the money will be returned to the bridegroom's family. This has become a big burden to many of the bridegrooms' families nowadays.

Picture 1. 4 Cash being counted for a marriage engagement

The Chinese government strictly prohibits that a husband has more than one wife. However, polygyny is customarily acceptable in the Ersu communities. In Lajigu, there are two families where the husband has two wives.

1. 2. 2. 4 Funerals

When an Ersu person is dying, he or she can choose either a burial or a cremation. The majority of the Ersu people prefer to be cremated rather than be buried (Liu 2006). A burial in an Ersu community is the same as that in other ethnic communities. However, it was discovered from Liu's description (2006) that their custom of cremation is quite peculiar in the following way. As soon as a person dies, people will bind his/her corpse with ropes (or white stripped cloth) as fast as possible, namely, before the corpse turns cold and stiff. The corpse should be in a sitting position with arms crossed over chest, hands on the shoulders, and head down covered with cloth. The sitting corpse is then placed on a mat against a wall in the sitting room, facing the gate of the house. What Liu (2006) described might be the case in Shimian County (石棉县). However, in Yuexi County (越西县), a corpse is never prepared into a sitting position.

A Shaba will be invited to chant Shaba scriptures (§1. 2. 3) and release the dead's souls from suffering at a funeral. The duration of the funeral rites depends on the family's economic situation, lasting either one day, or three days or seven days, but no less than one whole day. When the corpse can be sent to a burning spot on the mountain should be calculated by the Shaba according to his Shaba script. The layers of firewood for burning the corpse are different for male and female. If the dead is a male, there should be nine layers, and seven layers are for a female. When the corpse is burnt up, all the people who attend the funeral should hop around the burning spot for three circles in a counter-clock direction. At the same time, they should sing a funeral song led by the seniors of the village. Finally, the dead's family members will use a pot to pick some ashes or bones and bury it into a deep pit, covered with a slabstone, which is also the last procedure of a funeral.

1. 2. 2. 5 Lifestyle

The Ersu people used to be skillful hunters. Various kinds of hunting tools could be found in the Ersu communities then, such as nooses, crossbows, guns and self-made bombs. Hunting dogs were of great use in their hunting culture. Since the Chinese government regulated that it is illegal to hunt wild animals, the Ersu people have been forced to stop hunting. Consequently, their hunting culture has become largely extinct (Wang 2010a: 29-38). Currently, some of the Ersu secretly go hunting at night. In addition, the Ersu have inherited the tradition of keeping dogs. Almost each family in Lajigu has a dog. Though dogs in the Ersu communities function to guard houses, now, there are some families also keeping pet dogs.

Farming and herding co-exist in the living areas of the Ersu nowadays. The main agricultural products are potatoes, oats, buckwheat, corn and beans. They also grow Chinese medicinal herbs like Chinese cordyceps (虫草), fritillaria (贝母) and rhizome gastrodiae (天麻). Fruit produced in the area are walnuts, Chinese chestnuts, pears, apples and kiwifruit. Most of the Ersu families also feed goats, sheep, horses, mules,

yaks, pigs, oxen and poultry including chickens, geese and ducks.

The Ersu people's architecture style depends on the family's income, the environment where they live, and also the influences from their neighboring ethnic groups. Generally, the main building materials are either woods, or bamboos, or unwrought stones. A few of the well-off families have a three-storey house. The bottom floor is for animals, compost and farming tools. Living quarters are on the second floor. The third floor is for storing grain, and also contains a large open space used for threshing grain and large meetings. Most of the families in Lajigu have a one-storey main house with a yard, in which there are several small sheds where the livestock and poultry live. However, no matter what differences lie in their architecture style, all the Ersu people's main houses have a sitting room combined with a kitchen that is called "Sanguozhuang" in Mandarin Chinese. Strictly speaking, the kitchen is not a real kitchen. It only consists of a *mɛ+dʑi* 'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace', actually a round pitch with three stone racks to hold a wok and a cabinet which contains all the cooking utensils and ingredients in the sitting room. However, *mɛ+dʑi* 'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace' is very important. It is not only a place for the Ersu to cook, to receive guests or to keep warm in the cold winter, but is also a symbol of an Ersu family. To a linguist, it is also important because the interior directional or locational terms are closely associated with the location of a *mɛdʑi* 'fireplace' *mɛ+dʑi* 'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace' in a family (§4. 1. 3. 1. 8. 1).

Picture 1. 5 Father and daughter are cooking a chicken in the *mɛ+dʑi* 'fireplace'

Singing and dancing are the Ersu's most favored and important spare-time entertainment. They are said to be gifted singers and dancers by their neighbouring ethnic groups. Their songs can be divided into sanko (literally, mountain songs), love songs, marriage songs, funeral songs, toast songs, antiphonal songs, and so on. Their dances are believed to derive from worshiping dances, and nowadays, have absorbed dancing styles from other ethnic groups.

The Ersu people do not wear their traditional costumes in the daily life except that people who are sixty or over still wear a turban. However, whenever a festival comes, or whenever a big event such as a wedding ceremony is held, nearly all the Ersu people in the villages wear traditional costumes. In fact, the Ersu women are experts in embroidery and needlework. Their hand-made clothes are amazingly beautiful as shown in Picutre 1. 6. One particular thing is that it is common for people to wear a turban with different colors to indicate ages. Young people's turbans are white, while black is for the old. At a wedding ceremony, the bride's turban should be black for unknown reasons.

Picture 1. 6 Traditional Ersu costume

Unlike the Han Chinese in rural areas who have three meals per day, the Ersu do not have regular meals every day. Generally, they have a meal when they feel hungry or when they are free. During the busy farming seasons, some of them only have one meal, normally a dinner per day. Their main food is rice. People in Lajigu buy rice either from the county seat of Yuexi (越西) or from the nearest town, Xinmin (新民) because Lajigu is located halfway up a mountain where rice cannot be grown. Though they grow vegetables, they seldom cook and eat them. Vegetables are grown for livestock or poultry. They eat rice with smoked pork (hung above the *mɛ+dʑi* 'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace' for several months and even for several years (Picture 1. 7)). Fresh mutton, beef, pork and chicken are eaten only on special occasions such as festivals, get-togethers, parties and welcoming guests.

Picture 1. 7 Smoked pork

Beer and rice wine drinking is viewed as not only a necessary etiquette but also an important social intercourse in the Ersu communities. Wine is a kind of necessity for all important occasions such as weddings, funerals and parties. An Ersu family may have no money but should keep some wine. The wine is in fact a type of strong alcohol which is no lower than 50% alcohol. When a visitor visits an Ersu family, it is necessary for her/him to buy some wine as a gift for the host family. As soon as a visitor enters an Ersu house, the hostess or the host will toast her/him with a cup of wine. If a person refuses to toast, s/he will be viewed as being rather rude or unfriendly. The Ersu like drinking so much that on rainy days when people cannot go farming outside, almost a quarter of the villagers are drunk in Lajigu. There is one lady in Lajigu who is said to keep drinking unless she is asleep. In the field, I either saw her drinking or found her drunk whenever I encountered her.

Smoking is also popular with the Ersu, male and female. The younger buy rolled cigarettes produced by tobacco companies while the older are not accustomed to these produced cigarettes. They choose to use a pipe and to smoke homegrown tobaccos.

1. 2. 3 Shaba and Shaba pictographic script

Nearly all the early Ersu people could not read and write since there are no written scripts to document their vernacular language. Those who were literate were religious practitioners called "Shaba" in the Ersu areas. The Ersu people have a kind of special feelings for a Shaba, who is said to know everything in the sky above and in the earth underneath. When I was in the field, I heard many legends about some skillful and experienced Shabas' magic arts. They are believed to have the abilities to chant their scriptures to call for rain or sunlight, and to curse Ersu people's enemies to death. Shabas are still very active in the Ersu communities at present. Whenever there are important events happening in the Ersu communities such as a festival, a wedding or a funeral, a Shaba is absolutely necessary on the scene.

Shabas are important in the Ersu communities possibly because they are the only

group of people who can read the only kind of written script found in the Ersu history. It is now called Shaba pictographic script (see Picture 1. 8). The origin of the script is unknown, but it is known that it could only be taught from father to son (not daughter) in a Shaba family in previous time. At present, there are less than 10 people who can read the script and much fewer who can understand it in the whole Ersu areas. There are about 200 independent Shaba characters (Sun 1983b; Wang 1990; Zheng 2002), which are not directly linked to the Ersu people's conversational language (Wu 2005). One character may correspond to one syllable or several syllables. Sometimes it may need several lines of words to explain one character. Images of an animal or a tool are often used in collaboration with characters and colors in a "picture". Different animals often indicate different months or dates. Colors convey particular meanings as well. For example, color often matches five elements in the earth in some context: metal is dark; wood is green; water is dark grey; fire is red and earth is yellow (Liu, et al. 1981). Shaba written script is undoubtedly of great significance not only to studies on Ersu history and culture, but also to research on the development of ideographic written languages.

Picture 1. 8 A sample of Shaba script (Photographer: Wang Dehe)

1. 2. 4 Previous studies on the Ersu: people, religion, tradition, culture and others

Previous literature on the Ersu can date back to the 1980s and more and more

publications have come out since 2005. After retrieving China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database (中国知网), the biggest digital database of academic publications in China, I found that there are 52 monographs, theses and journal and/or conference papers relevant to the Ersu from January 1, 2005 to June 1, 2013. However, there are no publications in English about the Ersu (apart from the linguistic publications and Wu Da's (巫达 2004) PhD thesis) found via Google Scholar.

In the academic field of anthropology or ethnology, Wu Da's work is the most eye-catching. Wu Da (巫达), a former PhD student of the Chinese University of Hong Kong and now a professor at Shanghai University, stayed in the Ersu communities for about one year and finished his PhD thesis, *Choosing Identities: The Construction of Ethnic Identities among the Ersu of Sichuan* in 2004 (Wu 2004). This is the first monograph that deeply and systematically discusses issues relevant to the Ersu's ethnic identity. Since then, he has published a series of papers: *The Ersu language and the Ersu speaker's ethnic identity* (Wu 2005), *Historical factors in the Sichuan Ersu ethnic identity disputes* (Wu 2006a), *Rational Choice and Primordialism: A case study of ethnic identities among the Ersu of Sichuan, China* (Wu 2006b). His series of publications enable readers to know the background of the Ersu ethnic identification and the entire process of their ethnic recognition, not only from the outside world, but from themselves: for example, from their initial reluctance to be classified into the Tibetans to later willingness to be autodenominated as Tibetans.

Wang Dehe (王德和), an Ersu native-speaker and also one of my language consultants, is focusing his studies on the Ersu culture and customs and has had several papers and one monograph published in different academic journals. For example: *Nature worship of Ersu Tibetans* (Wang, et.al. 2008), *Ersu Tibetan's divination in the north part of Liangshan area* (Wang, et al. 2009), *A Study on The Inter-ethnic marriages of Ersu Tibetans in Xinshiba Township, Ganluo County, Sichuan Province* (Wang 2010c), *A Study on Ersu Tibetan's Laganbi Festival in Xinshiba Township, Ganluo County, Sichuan Province* (Wang & Gu 2010). Based on his

previous papers and his own understanding of the Ersu, the monograph *A Study on the Ersu Tibetan Culture* written by Wang Dehe was published in 2010 (Wang 2010a). Wang Dehe's publications involve almost every aspect of the Ersu people including the population, the distribution, the language, the festivals, the religion, the traditional culture, etc. His extensive and concise work makes the Ersu known to the outside world from an academic perspective.

The particular traditional Ersu New Year Festival, *lakanbi* (§1. 2. 2. 2. 1) has drawn some scholarly attention. There are several papers about this besides Wang & Gu's (2010) paper, that is, *A Study on Ersu Tibetan's Laganbi Festival in Xinshiba Township, Ganluo County, Sichuan Province*. For example: *Ersu People: Who celebrate New Year in August* (Wang 2007), *Ersu Tibetan and Huanshanji Festival: an interpretation on cultural memory theory* (Tang 2010b). Jiao Husan (焦虎三 2010), a journalist, wrote a reading-leisure book *August's New Year Festival: the living rituals in an indigenous village* based on his fieldwork in Xieluo Village (蟹螺) of Shimian County (石棉). His book describes how the Ersu in Xieluo celebrate their *lakanbi* festival and also displays the lifestyle of the Ersu in the village.

Shaba pictographic script is another point of interest among scholarly circles in China. Liu, et al.'s *A rare ideographic calendar—Ersu people's primitive script* (Liu et al. 1981) is commonly viewed as the first introduction to the script. Papers on this topic also include: *Ersu Shaba pictographic script* (Sun 1983b), *The characteristics of Ersu Shaba script and its values in a comparative linguistics study* (Wang 1990) and *A study on the morphemes of Shaba script* (Zheng 2002). Those papers focusing on Shaba script contribute a lot to the knowledge of the history, religion and ancient culture of the Ersu.

Other topics about the Ersu are also found in earlier literature. There is one paper written by Liu Junbo (刘俊波 2006) about the Ersu people's marriage and funeral customs, *An investigation into the marriage and funeral custom of Ersu Tibetans in*

Ganluo County, Sichuan Province. Liu's paper (2006) not only unveils the traditional marriage and funeral custom of Ersu people, but analyzes the current changing tendency from traditional to modern, and she then proposes to document the Ersu traditions. Li Xingxing (李星星 2002) discusses the cultural phenomenon in Ersu communities in his paper *The Ersu cultural circles in Tibetan-Yi Corridor.* Yuan Xiaowen (袁晓文 2008) summarizes previous studies on the Ersu in the paper, *A summary of researches into Ersu Tibetans along the Tibetan-Yi Corridor.* Yuan Xiaowen (袁晓文) and Chen Dong (陈东 2011)'s paper *A study on the Ersu Tibetan and the Duoxu Tibetan and their genetic relations* states that the relationship between the Ersu and the Duoxu should be closer than that between the Ersu or the Duoxu and other sub-branches of the Tibetans such as Namuyi and Minyak. However, they do not agree with Sun (1982a, 1983a) in using "Ersu" as a cover term for the two other dialects, Tosu and Lizu. *Research on the characteristics of Ersu Tibetan folk songs in Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture*, a paper written by Yuan Yan (袁艳 2012) concisely describes the major features of the Ersu traditional songs.

In addition, there are also three M.A or PhD theses relevant to the Ersu submitted in recent years. Liu Junbo (刘俊波 2007) submitted *A Study on Ersu Tibetan Ethnic Group in the Han and Tibetan's Boundary—a case study of Xieluo in Shimian* as her M.A thesis. Her thesis, based on her own fieldwork and also previous literature review, aims to describe the history and culture of the Xieluo (蟹螺) Ersu and also to trace the origin of this ethnic group. Tang Jia (唐佳 2010a)'s PhD thesis focuses on the religious culture of the Ersu mainly through the religious rituals held on the Ersu's *lakanbi* festival. Cao Xinyu (曹新渝 2012)'s M.A thesis *A Study on the Culture of Sichuan Ersu Tibetan Traditional Clothing* gives a detailed description of the Ersu's traditional costumes and the traditional culture that their costumes convey. All three graduates mainly based their fieldwork in Xieluo (蟹螺) village of Shimian County (石棉县)[10].

[10] Studies on the Ersu are mainly based on this village in recent years because the local government propagates and promotes it as a tourism spot to the outside world. Consequently, many people who know little about the Ersu

Finally, *Studies on Ersu Tibetans* edited by Li and Liu (2007) is a collection of previous investigative reports and academic articles before 2007. However, it collects only some of the papers mentioned above and no papers written in English are covered.

1. 3 Linguistic Profile

This section presents a preliminary linguistic review of the Ersu language. At first, it deals with a brief discussion on its genetic relationship with the Tibeto-Burman language family and the family's branch, Qiangic languages (§1. 3. 1). Then, it concentrates on the previous research findings of Ersu language which include an introduction to its distribution, dialects and typological features (§1. 3. 2).

1. 3. 1 Genetic relationship

§1. 3. 1 first introduces the Sino-Tibetan language family with a focus on the Tibeto-Burman language subfamily (§1. 3. 1. 1), then briefly describes the previous studies on the Qiangic branch because Ersu is traditionally classified as one of the Southern Qiangic languages in the Tibeto-Burman language subfamily (§1. 3. 1. 2).

1. 3. 1. 1 Sino-Tibetan languages: a focus on Tibeto-Burman languages

The term "Sino-Tibetan" (ST, hereafter) was first introduced by Jean Przyluski in 1924 and it was adopted by scholars at the University of California, Berkeley (van Driem 2001: 343-44). Thurgood (2003: 3) believes that the ST language family is a part of "the Neolithic Yang-shao culture which originated in the Yellow River valley in the central plains of Northern China". The number of the ST language speakers is the second largest among all the language families in the world (Thurgood 2003; LaPolla 2005). The ST language family involves the vast areas "from Northeast India, Burma, Bangladesh and northern Thailand in the southeast, throughout the Tibetan plateau to the north, across most of China and up to the Korean border in the northeast,

will think of the village when talking about the "Ersu".

and down to Taiwan and Hainan Island in the southeast" (LaPolla 2005: 393). The subgroupings of ST languages have been very controversial from the start of their introduction. For example, Shafer (1955) states that the ST family consists of Chinese, Tibeto-Burman (TB, hereafter) and Tai while according to Benedict (1942), Shafer's colleague, the ST language family excludes Tai. In addition, there are some Chinese scholars, previously and currently, who hold the view that the ST language family must more broadly include Tai-Kadai and Hmong-Mien languages of southern China and Southeast Asia besides Chinese, the Tibeto-Burman and Tai language subfamilies (Matisoff 2003a: 1; LaPolla 2005).

This section will not go further into the subgroupings of the ST language family but will focus on recent studies of the TB subfamily since previous studies on Ersu, though very limited, have established the language as a member of the TB languages.

The term, "Tibeto-Burman" occurs earlier than "Sino-Tibetan" in the academic circle. It was first used by Logan (1856) early in the 19th century. Bradley (1997) holds the view that there are a lot of languages to be identified among the TB languages. According to Bradley (1997: 1), the TB languages are "the principal languages of the Himalayan region, spoken from Kashmir in the west, across the Himalayan and sub-Himalayan regions of India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Tibet, and into southeast Asia across Burma, Laos and Vietnam." There are at least 250 languages among the TB subfamily (Matisoff 2003a: 3).

Matisoff (2003a: 6-8) describes the main features of the TB languages as follows:

> *...the TB family is characterized by great typological diversity, comprising languages that range from the highly tonal, monosyllabic, analytic type with practically no affixational morphology, to marginally tonal or atonal languages with complex systems of verbal agreement morphology. Most TB languages are verb-final except for the Karenic and Baic branches are A/SVO, like Chinese…. the diversity is partly to be explained in terms of areal influence from Chinese on the one hand, and Indo-Aryan*

languages on the other hand… Some are strongly influenced by Indo-Aryan languages such as the TB of Nepal, while others, by Chinese, such as the Loloish branch of TB. Furthermore, hundreds of words have crossed over genetic boundaries in the course of millennia of intense language contact, so that it is often exceedingly difficult to distinguish ancient loans from genuine cognates in the TB languages…

Due to its typological diversity, the genetic subgroupings of the TB language subfamily are also controversial, which is similar to the subgroupings of the ST language family. For example, Matisoff (2003a: 5) prefers a "Family Tree" schema while van Driem (2011) advocates a "Fallen Leaves" model, as is respectively shown in Figure 1. 1 and Figure 1. 2. The controversial opinions on both the ST language family and the TB language subfamily imply that more data and further studies on languages in this area are needed in the future.

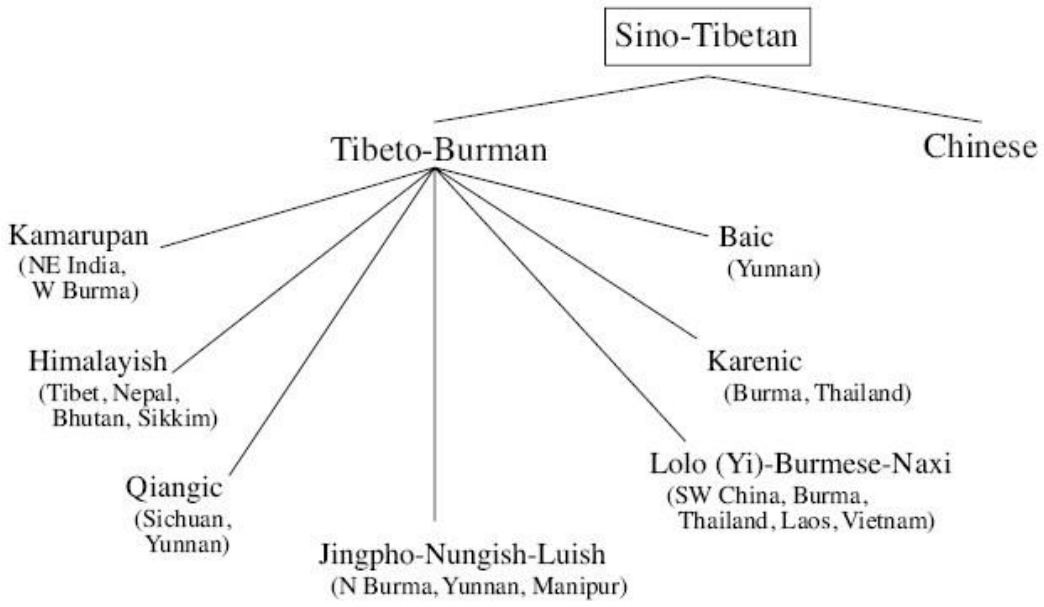


Figure 1. 1 Family Tree schema of the subgroupings of Tibeto-Burman languages (Matisoff 2003a: 5)

Figure 1. 2 Fallen Leaves mode of the subgroupings of Tibeto-Burman languages (van Driem 2011: 37)

1. 3. 1. 2 A brief description of the Qiangic languages

Chinese scholars began their work on Qiangic languages early in the 1930s, and Sun Hongkai (孙宏开), based on previous philological studies and his extensive fieldwork, first proposed to establish the Qiangic languages as a branch of the TB language subfamily in his paper *An Overview of Qiangic Languages* published in *Chinese Languages* (Sun 1962). From then on, the work on the establishment of Qiangic as a separate branch of the TB language family has been gradually, but widely conducted by Chinese linguists after their active and successive investigations into Qiangic communities, especially in the 1980s (e.g. Sun 1982b, 1983a; Liu 1988: 21-22; Huang 1991; etc.). Many historians and ethnologists have also been engaged in work on Qiangic issues during the later phase of last century (Sun 2001).

Outside China, Nishida Tatsuo, a Japanese linguist, has described Qiangic languages in his book *Studies on Western Barbarian Languages* in 1970 (Nishida 1970: 279). Matisoff (1984) views Qiangic as an important branch of the TB language

subfamily in his paper *Sino-Tibetan numerals and the play of prefixes*. In his published paper, *Dayang Pumi phonology and adumbrations of comparative Qiangic*, Matisoff (1998: 171) continues to express his support of Qiangic as an independent branch of the TB language subfamily:

> *The Qiangic group of languages, formerly vaguely known to Western linguists under the pejorative name of Xifan ("Western Barbarian") or Dzorgaic (Robert Shafer), and regarded as a "residual type of Loloish", have only come into sharp focus within last 15 years or so, thanks to the work of Chinese linguists like Sun Hongkai, Dai Qingxia, and Huang Bufan, who have demonstrated that they constitute an independent branch of Tibeto-Burman, with a dozen members, …*

Sun (2001) holds the opinion that Qiangic should be classified as an independent branch of the TB language subfamily because of its particular linguistic characteristics: Phonologically, they typically have complex systems of initial consonants and vowels, but rather rudimentary tone systems. Lexically, some of the characteristics of the Qiangic branch include a cognate set of directional marking prefixes and quite depleted, though clearly cognate person marking paradigms. Syntactically, they have systems of markers in the verb phrases which agree with the subject and/or object of the clause. In addition, he also accounts for the reasons why the group of languages should be classified into one Qiangic branch from the perspectives of culture, history and architecture.

The Qiangic subgroup is further subdivided, mainly on geographical grounds, into a Northern and a Southern group, as shown in Figure 1. 3.

Figure 1. 3 Subgrouping of Qiangic Languages (adapted by Chirkova (2008 from Sun 2001)

Figure 1. 3 demonstrates that the Qiangic branch with 13 languages in total can be further geographically divided into Northern Qiangic and Southern Qiangic. However, the figure lacks a clear division of languages among the Ersu subgroup and the Guiqiong subgroup. It implies that more research work is needed on Ersu, Namuyi, Shixing, Guiqiong and Queyu. This is the case, and Matisoff (1998) states that more comparative studies about Qiangic languages are necessary since the Qiangic is a branch newly established in the TB language subfamily. Lin (1999: 71) also advocates "continuing language surveys to clarify what the languages should be". In addition, Sun (2001) points out that whether rGyalrong and Namuyi languages belong to the Qiangic branch needs further investigations, and that there is more about Qiangic for linguists to clarify in future work. More recently and specifically, Chirkova (2010) states that previous studies on the Qiangic are not balanced, with more data on the Northern Qiangic languages including rGyalrong, Qiang and Prinmi and with comparatively much less data on the Southern Qiangic languages such as Ersu, Namuyi and Queyu. She questions the establishment of the Qiangic branch as follows:

...the Qiangic subgroup has been controversial since it was first proposed, for these

four reasons: (1) The restricted nature of the supporting evidence…(2) The small percentage of shared common vocabulary… (3)The absence of common innovations… (4) The historical, ethnic and linguistic complexity of the geographical area occupied by Qiangic languages…All in all, the Qiangic hypothesis remains problematic. The two major challenges are: (1) establishing an objective foundation for subgrouping in an area that is historically, ethnically, and linguistically complex, and whose languages have not been previsouly documented; and (2)gathering sufficient evidence to generate and evaluate hypothesis related to the genetic affiliation of those local languages (currently held as Qiangic)that cannot be straightforwardly integrated into the neighboring genetic subgroups. (Chirkova 2010: 114-116).

Based on the project "What defines Qiang-ness? A look from Southern Qiangic languages" coordinated by Katia Chirkova, the project team members Katia Chirkova, Alexis Michaud and Guillaume Jacques have conducted extensive fieldwork in the Qiangic-speaking areas. Jacques & Michaud (2011) have proposed a novel Na-Qiangic branch instead of the established Qiangic branch through their comparative studies on Naxi, Na, Laze and some other Qiangic languages. In their opinions, the Na-Qiangic branch forms a Burmo-Qiangic branch together with Lolo-Burmese. The Na-Qiangic branch comprises three primary subgroups, which are Ersuic, Naic, and Qiangic (as a core subgroup). Chirkova (2012) has not argued for a new branch to replace the Qiangic branch, but she holds the opinion that the hypothesis of the Qiangic is problematic and needs readjustment. In addition, Bradley (2012b) has suggested an Eastern Tibeto-Burman subgroup that consists of Lolo-Burmese and "Qiangic".

As described above, our understanding of the Qiangic branch is still in its infancy. The controversial opinions on the Qiangic branch as well as those on the ST and the TB can only be resolved with richer first-hand data collected and more synchronic underdocumented languages described. This is one of the major reasons why Ersu, a previously assumed Qiangic language was chosen as the topic of this

research.

1. 3. 2 Ersu language: previous studies and typological overview

This section contains three subsections: §1. 3. 2. 1 presents previous studies on Ersu including its dialects. §1. 3. 2. 2 discusses the dialects of Ersu that are proposed by Sun (1982a, 1983b). §1. 3. 2. 3 gives a typological overview about Ersu including the early findings of Sun (1982a, 1983a) and Liu (1983) and also my own understanding of the languages.

1. 3. 2. 1 A summary of previous studies on Ersu and its dialects

In comparison with the recent upsurge of interest in the Ersu people and their culture (§1. 2. 4), early studies on the Ersu language are much fewer. Ersu is still an underdocumented language. Sun Hongkai (1982a)'s *A sketch of Ersu (Duoxu)* is the first seminal paper that introduced Ersu with three dialects as a subgroup of the Qiangic branch of the TB language subfamily among the ST family. Sun (1982a) thought that there were 20, 000 speakers of the three dialects living in the southwestern part of Sichuan Province (四川省), China. As mentioned in §1. 1 and §1. 2. 1, the three dialects are Ersu, Tosu and Lizu, which are respectively consistent with the local people's autodenominations (§1. 3. 2. 2). Sun's (1982a) findings are commonly accepted by the scholars of Sino-Tibetan linguistics (Chirkova 2008), especially in China. Nearly all the authors in China quote the information from Sun (1982a) in their writings about the Ersu language, people, culture and/or history (e.g. Liu 1983; Wu 2005, 2006; Liu 2006; Wang, Gu and Jing 2008; Wang 2010a, etc.).

However, there are no data collected through immersion fieldwork and no comprehensive descriptions found till now. Table 1. 2 summarizes previous studies from the 1970s to the present.

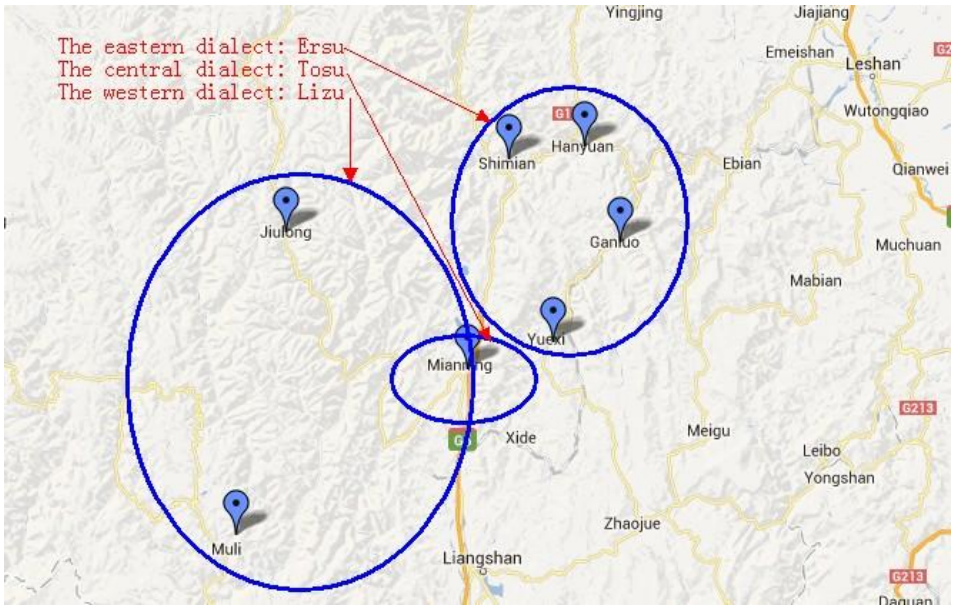
Year	Author	Reference	Summary
1973	Nishida Tatsuo	Nishida (1973)	A study on the central dialect Tosu based on the Chinese and Tibetan transcriptions of Tosu vocabularies recorded in Hua-Yi Yiyu (华夷译语) from the Qianlong (乾隆) period of Qing Dynasty (1736-1796).
1982	Sun Hongkai	Sun (1982a)	A short grammatical sketch of the eastern dialect Ersu based on the author's own fieldwork in Zela Township (则拉) of Ganluo County (甘洛县) in 1981.
1983	Sun Hongkai	Sun (1983a)	A reproduction of Sun (1982a).
1983	Liu Huiqiang	Liu (1983)	A short grammatical sketch of the eastern dialect Ersu based on the author's own fieldwork in Liaoping Township (蓼坪) of Ganluo County (甘洛县).
1991	Sun et al.	Sun et al. (1991)	A 1,000 word list of the eastern dialect Ersu based on the first author's fieldwork in 1981 (Sun 1982a).
	Huang Bufan and Renzeng Wangmu	Huang and Renzeng (1991)	A short grammatical sketch of the western dialect Lizu based on the authors' own fieldwork in Kala Township (卡拉) of Muli County (木里县)。
1992	Huang Bufan et al.	Huang, et al. (1992)	A 1,800 word list of the western dialect Lizu as described above.
2006	Song Lingli	Song (2006)	A discussion on the directional prefixes and aspectual markers of the eastern dialect Ersu mainly based on Sun (1982a) though supplemented by more data from the author's short-time field investigation in Ganluo County (甘洛县).
2008	Katia Chirkova	Chirkova (2008)	A description of the major characteristics of the western dialect Lizu based on the author's own fieldwork in Muli County (木里县).
2012	Dominic Yu	Yu (2012)	A PhD thesis aiming to reconstruct the ancestor language of the three dialects of Ersu with data sources from the author's own fieldwork on the western dialect Lizu in He'ai Township (和爱) of Mianning County (冕宁县) and previous studies such as Sun (1982a), Liu (1983), Huang and Renzeng (1991) and Chirkova (2008).
2013	Katia Chirkova	Chirkova (2013a)	A description of the phonological system of the western dialect Lizu based on the author's own fieldwork in Muli County (木里县) as described above.

Table 1. 2 Previous studies on Ersu and its dialects

Table 1. 2 shows that previous studies involve all the three dialects of Ersu from the 1970s to the 1990s including grammatical sketches and word lists. Recent studies mainly involve the western dialect Lizu rather than the central dialect Tosu and the eastern dialect Ersu. In addition, there are also some other linguistic publications that mention Ersu and its dialects, but they are mainly based on the previous studies listed in Table 1. 2, such as Lin (1999), Wu (2005) and Chirkova (2012). Consequently, field investigations and a thorough description of Ersu and its dialects are necessary.

1. 3. 2. 2 Dialects, speakers and distribution[11]

As mentioned above, the language Ersu has three dialects as an entirety. They are: Ersu, Lizu and Tosu, which are consistent with the local people's autodenominations as shown in Table 1. 1. The distribution of the three dialects is shown in Map 1. 3 below.



Map 1. 3 The distribution of the dialects of Ersu (adapted from Google Map)

The eastern dialect, Ersu, is spoken in Ganluo (甘洛), Yuexi (越西) counties of

[11] The distribution of the dialects and the speakers of Ersu discussed in this section only involves the traditional Ersu living areas excluding the newly built Ersu communities (see Map 1. 2) because no early studies and no fieldwork have been conducted in these new areas. These areas should be ideal locations to observe language contact and change from the perspective of sociolinguistics.

Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州) and Hanyuan (汉源), Shimian (石棉) counties of Ya'an Municipality (雅安市). The number of speakers was 13,000 in the 1980s (Sun 1982a, 1983a; Liu 1983) and 12, 274 in 2010 (Wang 2010a: 6). Note that the autodenomination of the Ersu in Shimian County could also be Lusu (鲁苏) according to Sun (1982a, 1983a) and Liu (1983). Yu (2012: 2) refers to it as another dialect of Ersu. However, my major language consultants Wang Dehe (王德和) and Wang Amu (王阿木), who travelled to the Lusu speaking communities in Shimian (石棉), report that they can communicate with the Lusu speakers without any difficulty. In addition, after watching the movie *ndʑoli ma-mo* (觉里曼姆) that was videoed in Xieluo (蟹螺) village of Shimian County (石棉县), I can understand what the characters are saying in their native language, Lusu. Consequently, I do not classify Lusu as another dialect of Ersu here[12].

The central dialect, Tosu, is spoken in Mianning County (冕宁县) of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州). According to Yu (2012: 2), the term Tosu originates from the Tibetan-script transcription "tog-su"[13]. In Mandarin, it is called Duoxu (多续). Tosu has a population of 3, 000 in the 1980s (Sun 1982a, 1983a, Liu 1983) and the number was 3, 683 in 2010 (Wang 2010a: 6).

The western dialect, Lizu, is spoken in Mianning (冕宁), Muli (木里) counties of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州) and also in the county of Jiulong (九龙) of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (甘孜藏族自治州). Lizu has several different names in previous literature such as Lisu (栗苏, Sun 1982a), Lvsu (吕苏, Huang and Renzeng 1991), Lyuzu (Ikeda 2006) and Lizu (Chirkova 2008, 2013a). According to Chirkova (p. c.), the name Lvsu or Lyuzu (Chinese name:吕苏) is more widely spread. I choose to use Lizu in this work because Chirkova (2008, 2012, 2013a) has used it in international publications in English. This makes it easier for English readers to refer to it. The speakers of Lizu were 4,000 in the 1980s (Sun 1982a, 1983a;

[12] Thanks go to one of the anonymous examiners. He/She has pointed out that Lusu could still be another dialect and be mutually intelligible to Ersu. This needs further immersion field investigation in the future.
[13] The meaning of "tog-su" is not mentioned by Yu (2012: 2).

Liu 1983) and 7,151 in 2010 (Wang 2010a: 6).

The three dialects are not mutually intelligible and share only 50% cognates in their lexicon (Nishida and Sun 1990: 15). Furthermore, Nishida and Sun (1990: 15) stress that salient structural similarities between them in all linguistic sub-systems leave no doubt that the three should belong to one language, that is, Ersu. A comparison of the Ersu data based on Sun (1982a, 1983a) and her own fieldwork of the Lizu data collected in Muli County (木里), Chirkova (2008) suggests that the two are indeed similar in the lexical and grammatical organization. Based on a comparison of the data collected by myself in the field and Chirkova's publications on Lizu (2008, 2013a), I suggest that she is possibly right in this judgment. However, there is only a little first-hand information of the three dialects available. For example, studies on the central dialect, Tosu, are almost nonexistent till now. In addition, no solid field investigations were conducted in the counties of Hanyuan (汉源), Shimian (石棉) and Jiulong (九龙), not to mention the dispersed villages of these counties. Scholars (including myself) still follow Sun's (1982a) descriptions of the dialects in these counties. I am the first person who performed linguistic immersion fieldwork in Yuexi County (越西县). My field experience informed me that the Ersu may even show a village-based variation in their tradition, customs (§1. 2. 2) and also pronunciation. Consequently, this grammar can only unveil the tip of the iceberg. Further studies on Ersu remain urgently needed.

The distribution of Ersu dialects and speakers is given in Table 1. 3:

Language	Dialect	Population		County
		the 1980s	2010	
Ersu	Ersu (eastern)	13,000	12, 274	Ganluo (甘洛)
				Yuexi (越西)
				Hanyan (汉源)
				Shimian (石棉)
	Tosu (central)	3,000	3, 683	Mianning (冕宁)
	Lizu (western)	4,000	7, 151	Muli (木里)
				Jiulong (九龙)

Table 1. 3 Ersu language, its dialects, the distribution and the population

Note that the number of "speakers" does not completely match that of the persons who can really speak the language. The statistical data originate from the information of the local people's ID Cards and Household Register Booklets which mark a person's ethnic identity in China (see Note 6). However, this does not reflect a person's language-speaking ability. Firstly, this is so because there are many supportive policies in China that benefit the minority ethnic groups such as less strict family-control plans, extra points given on Gaokao (China's College Entrance Examinations) and better social allowances. For example, a couple can only have one child if both are Han Chinese. However, they can have three children if both are from minority ethnic groups. A Han-minority cross-ethnic family can have two children. Consequently, there are always some Han people who illegally register as a "minority" so as to enjoy the supportive policies from the government. Also for this reason, the children of a Han-minority cross-ethnic family prefer to register as a "minority" following their parent who is a "minority" rather than the one who is a "Han". These people including those children from a Han-Ersu family cannot speak Ersu at all. Furthermore, when I was in the field, I observed that few of the next-generations of the Ersu families that have migrated to urban areas and Han and Yi communities can still speak good Ersu. An example is that of an Ersu couple in their seventies who are from Hanyuan County (汉源), but cannot speak Ersu any more although they can understand a bit when others are speaking Ersu (see §14. 2. 2). Finally, the central

dialect Tosu is almost dying now, though there are 3,683 (Wang 2010: 6) Tosu people. With the project "Ersu and Xumi: comparative and cross-varietal documentation of highly endangered languages of Southwest China" funded by The Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project, Katia Chirkova and Wang Dehe (王德和) conducted a pilot fieldwork in the Tosu speaking areas in April 2013. They found that there are only eight old people who can still speak Tosu, and they do not communicate with each other in Tosu, but in Mandarin in daily life. Consequently, the number of the "real speakers" of the language should be much less than that of the "registered speakers" of 25,000 (Wang 2010a: 6). I hypothesize that there are at most 15,000 fluent speakers of the three dialects of Ersu though the exact number needs thorough investigation among the whole Ersu community.

1. 3. 2. 3 Ersu: a typological overview

Ersu with three dialects as an entirety is so far scarcely documented as discussed in §1. 3. 2. 1. Similar to the Ersu's traditions and cultures (§1. 2. 2), the same one dialect might also take on some sort of subdialectal variations due to geographic isolation. Therefore, what is described in this study only correlates with the eastern dialect of Ersu rather than the language as an entirety. *More narrowly speaking, this study will only focus on the Lajigu variety of Ersu rather than any one of the other village-based subdialects.*

The data collected in Lajigu by me indicate that there are some variations at phonological level between Lajigu (腊吉沽) subdialects in Yuexi County (越西县) and the subdialects of Zela (则拉 1982a, 1983a) and Liaoping (蓼坪 Liu 1983) in Ganluo County (甘洛县). However, they are almost the same in other aspects such as word formation and syntactic constituent order.

In general, Ersu is a head-marking, verb-final, tonal and agglutinative language with an isolating tendency. Words can be formed through reduplication, compounding, affixation and cliticization. Prefixes are mainly found in kin and directional nouns,

verbs and adjectives. Suffixes include gender class, causative markers, nominalizers, etc. Clitics are fairly rich including quantifiers, evidentials, aspectual markers, genitive markers, agentive markers, locative markers, etc. The major open word classes are nouns, verbs and adjectives. Classifiers form a "semi-open" word class. Closed word classes include pronouns, relator nouns, quantifiers, demonstratives, numerals, auxiliary verbs, negators, conjunctives, onomatopoeias, interjections and clausal- or sentential-final particles.

Ersu has a fairly large inventory of both consonants and vowels. Sun (1982a, 1983a) reports that there are 42 simple consonant initials, 32 cluster initials, nine basic vowels, two rhotic vowels, 20 diphthongs and three triphthongs in the Zela subdialect. According to Liu (1983), the Liaoping subdialect (Liu 1983) has 42 simple consonant initials, 40 cluster initials, nine basic vowels, five rhotic vowels, 15 diphthongs and two triphthongs[14]. My data demonstrate that there are 37 simple consonant initials, 22 cluster initials, seven basic vowels, three rhotic vowels, six diphthongs and one triphthong in the Lajigu subdialect. My data agree with Sun (1982a, 1983a) on the number of tones, that is, two tones. However, Liu (1983) reports that there are five tones in the Liaoping subdialect. The segmental phonological variations described above are given in Table 1. 4. §2 of this grammar further discusses the differences between the three subdialects at phonological level.

Phonological Segment	**Zela**	**Liaoping**	**Lajigu**
simple initials	42	42	37
cluster initials	32	40	22
basic vowels	9	9	7
rhotic vowels	2	5	3
diphthongs	20	15	6
triphthongs	3	2	1
tones	2	5	2

Table 1. 4 Different number of phonological segments in Zela, Liaoping and Lajigu

[14] Sun (1982a, 1983a) and Liu (1983) also report that there are nasalized vowels in their subdialects (6 in Zela and 1 in Liaoping). However, the examples that they give are loanwords from Mandarin Chinese. Consequently, I do not list them here. In addition, the number of diphthongs and triphthongs varies a lot in the three subdialects because in my opinion, they list some of the sequence of vowels as diphthongs and triphthongs (§2).

The basic structure of an Ersu syllable is CV^T. Here, C stands for a simple consonant or a consonant cluster. V stands for a simple vowel, a diphthong or a triphthong. T stands for a tone. All syllables in Ersu are open and no closed syllables are found in my data. Each syllable should have a nucleus, which, most of the time, is either a vowel, or a diphthong or a triphthong, but very rarely, may be a syllabic nasal.

The canonical constituent order is SV or AOV. However, any one of the constituents can be ellipsed whenever it can be recovered from the context. Topic-comment information structure is characteristic of an Ersu clause. Verbless clauses are thus often found in the data. The constituent order in an NP involves the head noun preceding modifiers such as numerals, classifiers, adjectives but following genitives and denominal adjectives. Demonstratives may precede or follow a head noun. The nucleus of a VP is a verb that may be followed by a causative, an evidential and an aspectual marker but always follows a verbal action classifier.

The mood system (§10. 1) consists of three major types of moods, that is, declarative mood, imperative mood and interrogative mood. Each mood can be further divided into some sort of subtypes. The moods, except for affirmative declarative mood, are all morphosyntactically marked. The modal system (§10. 2) consists of two 'deontic modals' and several 'dynamic modals' that function as grammaticalized auxiliary modal verbs following a lexical verb.

There are three major clause types (§12): simple clauses, coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses. Types of simple clauses include: verbal clauses and verbless clauses. Coordinate clauses include conjunctive coordination, correlative coordination, sequential coordination, adversative coordination and disjunctive coordination. Subordinate clauses include relative clauses, adverbial clauses and complement clauses.

The syntactic constituent order may vary due to pragmatic motivations in discourse. The "tail-head" linkage strategy is frequently deployed especially in narratives. Ellipses occur quite often in speaking and a speech act participant seldom occurs in a quoted speech (§13).

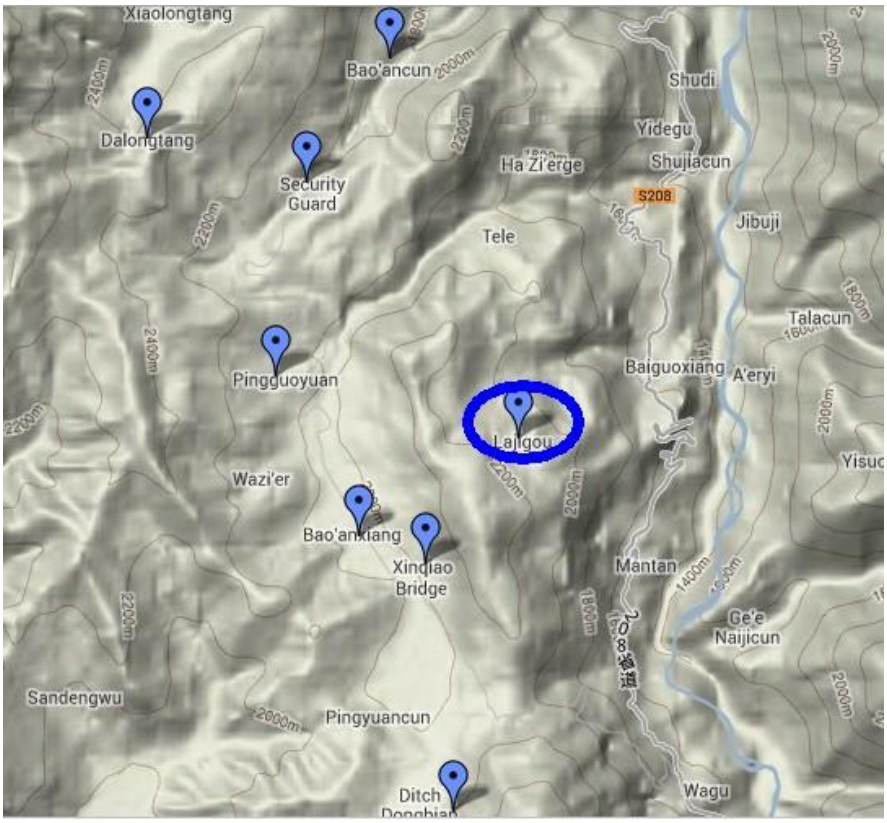
Though Ersu is a living language still actively spoken in the Ersu communities, it is a highly endangered language (§14). Under the influx of Mandarin, Ersu is changing both at phonological level and at lexical level. The Ersu speakers' multilingual ability and their attitudes towards their mother tongue are also changing. The major factors that lead to the endangerment include economic stimuli, migration, technological development, education, inter-ethnic marriage, trading and governmental policies on ethnic identification, etc.

1. 4 About this Grammar

This section gives information about the fieldwork (§1. 4. 1), language consultants (§1. 4. 2), data collection, explanation and translation (§1. 4. 3), theoretical framework (§1. 4. 4), transcription format and example structure (§1. 4. 5) and the organization (§1. 4. 6) of this grammar.

1. 4. 1 Fieldwork

The present study is based on the fieldwork that was undertaken in two trips, the first from the start of November 2010 to the end of June 2011 and the second from the start of October 2012 to the end of February 2013. The bulk of the time was spent in Lajigu Village (腊吉沽), also named as Xianfeng Village (先锋), one of the remaining monolingual Ersu-speaking communities in Bao'an Tibetan Township (保安藏族乡), Yuexi County (越西县), Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture (凉山彝族自治州), Sichuan Province (四川省), China as shown in Map 1. 4.



Map 1. 4 The distribution of the Ersu villages in Bao'an Tibetan Township and the location of Lajigu Village which is highlighted with a circle (adapted from Google Map)

The villages marked in Map 1. 4 are the Ersu communities in Bao'an Tibetan Township[15]. The "Tibetans" in this township are in fact the Ersu people. The majority of the Ersu in Yuexi County, about 1, 600, are registered as "Tibetan" residents of this township (see Table 1. 1). Lajigu (28°79′77″N, 102°57′85″E) is one of the villages administered by Bao'an Tibetan Township, which is located halfway up a mountain called Shengze Mountain (圣则山). The village is 2,200m above sea level as shown in Map 1. 4. Population census in 2011 indicates that there are 77 families with 365 permanent residents in the village and all of them are of Ersu origin. However, in fact, younger and stronger adults who speak good Mandarin have moved out and undertaken casual laboring jobs in cities. Some well-off families have also migrated to the non-Ersu communities. Only older people and children numbering about 150

[15] The *pinyin* names of the villages marked by Google are not completely correct. In Map 1. 4, Lajigou should be Lajigu; Bao'ancun should be Laobao'an; Security Guard should be Lianshanying; Pingguoyuan should be Pingyuan; Xinqiao Bridge should be Xinqiao; Ditch Dongbian should be Goudong; Bao'anxiang and Dalongtong are correct.

during my first field trip and about 100 during my second field trip still remained in the village (§14. 1. 4). The majority of them are Ersu-Mandarin bilingual and a few of the older people are either Ersu monolingual or Ersu-Yi bilingual or Ersu-Mandarin-Yi trilingual. Among those who are Ersu-Mandarin bilingual, their Ersu is much better than their Mandarin. Consequently, when they communicate with each other, the dominant language is Ersu, not Mandarin.

I closely follow the principle of immersion fieldwork. When I was in the field, I managed to be a member of the villagers, living in an Ersu family, participating in the local events, eating their food, respecting and practicing their customs, trying to communicate with the locals in their mother tongue. Occasionally, I also participated in some farming work.

1. 4. 2 Language consultants

In order to gain a sufficiently diverse perspective on this underdescribed language, I did not rely on one or two consultants in the field. Language consultants who provided data had a wide representation as shown in Table 1. 5. They ranged in education from the lowest level, being illiterate to the highest level, junior middle school. I did not select those Ersu who were well educated and who were taking casual laboring work in cities because I observed that the language that they spoke was not "genuine" and under much influence of Mandarin Chinese (§14). The age of my language consultants also varied widely, from less than 20 to more than 70 years old. By choosing consultants of different ages, I was attempting to observe whether the language demonstrated an age-based difference. This is the case because the older Ersu and the younger ones tend to use the language in some different way, basically at the phonological level (§2 and §14). *Note that this grammar primarily focuses on the speech of the language consultants of about 50 years of age. The documentation of Ersu consonant inventory and vowel system is based on their way of speaking rather than that of people of other age groups (§2. 1).* I chose to do so because their speech represents the majority of the Lajigu villagers' accent. They are less conservative than

the older ones. Meanwhile, their language is also "pure" because few loanwords were used in their speech. This is unlike the younger Lajigu villagers' accent, in which there are more and more Mandarin loanwords. All the language consultants except for Mr. ZHANG Muji were living in Lajigu when I was taking the recordings. The personal factors of all the language consultants who provided recordings are given in Table 1. 5.

Name	Personal Profile
WANG, Azhi	Female, born in Dalongtang (大龙塘), an Ersu village less than 5kms from Lajigu in 1935 and moved to Lajigu in 1950 because of marriage, illiterate, peasant.
ZHANG, Muji	Male, born in Goudong (沟东) in 1938, an Ersu village less than 5kms from Lajigu, primary school education, worked as a soldier, town head in the Ersu communities, etc.
HUANG, Erha	Male, born in Lajigu in 1942, illiterate, peasant.
HUANG, Zhifu	Male, born in Lajigu in 1945, primary school education, travelled extensively and took different jobs when younger.
HUANG, Ayi	Female, born in Lajigu in 1957, illiterate, peasant.
WANG, Buha	Male, born in Lajigu in 1959, primary school education, peasant.
WANG, Zhongquan	Male, born in 1963, primary education, peasant, born in Zela (则拉), an Ersu village in Ganluo County (甘洛县) and moved to Lajigu because of marriage.
ZHANG, Baocai	Male, born in Lajigu in 1963, junior middle school leaver, peasant and Shaba.
HUANG, Aguo	Female, born in Lajigu in 1966, junior middle school leaver, peasant.
WANG, Ayi	Mmale, born in Lajigu in 1978, primary school education, peasant.
YANG, Aga	Female, born in Lajigu in 1979, primary school education, peasant.
WANG, Amu	Male, born in Lajigu in 1986, junior college education, primary school teacher.
WANG, Hailong	Male, born in Lajigu in 1992, primary school education, peasant.

Table 1. 5 Language consultants and their personal factors

1. 4. 3 Data collection, explanation and translation

The language data were collected by three major methods: natural narration and long conversation, participant observation, and elicitation. Recording of narratives and long conversations were made in a natural way. I never employed any texts of stories written in Chinese and then asked the native speakers to translate them into Ersu though this is one of the methods that some Chinese linguistic scholars or students use to collect data. When I was in the field, I managed to immerse myself

into the local community. This offered me valuable chances to collect language data through participant observation. Elicitation was also used sometimes. However, this "elicitation" is inspired by similar examples previously found in the language, none of them based on "prescriptive frameworks" as mentioned by Aikhenvald (forthcoming).

The language data mainly consist of a five-hour recording of different genres including narratives, songs and conversations. Narratives as a whole can be divided into four broad categories: procedural, historical, mythical and biographical. As mentioned in §1. 2. 2. 5, Ersu people are gifted singers and some songs are also recorded. Conversations include daily conversation and also some much longer discussions between the native speakers (§13. 1. 2).

Data explanation, translation and transcription were mainly done by me and Mr. Wang Amu (王阿木). Mr. Wang is a junior college graduate and also a village primary school teacher. He is a fluent native Ersu-speaker, who was born and grew up in Lajigu. He has a strong enthusiasm about protecting his mother tongue and has some basic knowledge of linguistics. In addition, there were always one or two old villagers sitting in my room and observing what Mr. Wang Amu and I were doing out of curiosity mostly. Though they might occasionally disturb our work, they were very helpful because they often helped with or corrected Mr. Wang's explanation of the data. This has greatly enhanced my understanding of Ersu. Another good point is that when I was in the field, it was cold and it was not farming season. On most of the nights, there were some visitors gathering at the home of my host family. We sat around the fireplace in the house, drinking, smoking and chatting. This has offered valuable opportunities for my participant observations. In addition, if there were some issues unsure or doubted, I always put forward the issues and sought answers on the occasions of the "fireplace gatherings" as described above. I also had frequent telephone or personal interviews with Prof. Wang Dehe (王德和), who is said to be one of the most knowledgeable persons in the Ersu community. Consequently, the analysis of the data is not the result of one or two persons' work, but of group work.

This guarantees the correctness of my data analysis to a large degree.

1. 4. 4 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that this study adopts is mainly based on the three volumes of *Basic Linguistic Theory* (Dixon 2010a, 2010b, 2012) and the cross-linguistic typological theories personally taught by my principal supervisor, Alexandra Aikhenvald, at the Language and Culture Centre of James Cook University. This grammar has covered a number of grammatical topics discussed by Dixon (Dixon 2010a, 2010b, 2012). While writing the chapters on nominal and verbal action classification system (§7) and the expression of knowledge (§11), I respectively refer to the two monographs written by Alexandra Aikhenvald: *Classifiers: a typology of noun categorization devices* (Aikhenvald 2000) and *Evidentiality* (Aikhenvald 2004).

In addition, I have also consulted a number of previous studies on Tibeto-Burman languages produced by the Tibeto-Burmanists such as James Matisoff, David Bradley, Sun Hongkai (孙宏开) and Jackson T.-S. Sun (孙天心). Extensive reading of previous reference grammars of Tibeto-Burman languages such as Qiang (Huang 2004), Galo (Post 2007) and Mosuo (Lidz 2010) has undoubtedly given me much inspiration in writing this grammar.

Last but the most important of all, I think that the "best theories" are what the language data have revealed on their own. Consequently, though I do adopt the theories mentioned above, I always stick to the principle that I should endeavor to be guided by what the language data demonstrate.

1. 4. 5 Transcription format and example structure

The transcription format of this grammar principally follows the set of IPA symbols that are often used to document Chinese languages by those linguists who are working on the languages in China (Sun & Jiang 2004). One of the exceptions is that I

follow *pinyin* Romanization[16] to use /y/ representing IPA /j/ and I add it to monosyllabic vowel "i", e.g. *yi* (in this paper) =*i* (in IPA format). I adopt this strategy because both my language consultants and I myself are more accustomed to this way of transcription. Otherwise, they would mistake the IPA /j/ for *pinyin* Romanization "j" (/tɕ/ in IPA). This should be friendlier to Chinese readers than the IPA /j/ or the monosyllabic vowel "i". Tone transcriptions in this grammar are based on tone values in isolation without considering that tonal variations often occur in realization. High level is formally unmarked. Other tones are marked with diacritical signs as follows: mid level: ˋ middle rising: ˊ and falling-rising: ˇ[17]. In addition, all the examples in this grammar are also transcribed in isolation without considering morphophonological process (§2. 5) in speaking apart from vowel harmony (§2. 5. 1).

Standard *pinyin* Romanization is, as normal, used for Mandarin loanwords in this grammar and tonal marking for Mandarin Chinese follows the tradition of *pinyin* Romanization without considering the phonological variations of loanwords (§2. 6).

Examples are presented in numbered three-line aligned sequences. The first line is the citation of indigenous language data which is in italic IPA format as described above. The second line labels the indigenous data of the first line with abbreviations and symbols that indicate grammatical words, bound morphemes, affixes and clitics, etc. Grammatical morphemes are glossed using normal CAPs. The third line presents the English translation. When no English equivalent is readily available, a *pinyin* word is used. A reader is advised to read this grammar with reference to *List of Abbreviations* placed before this chapter. An example is shown below:

(1. 3) *tʂʰo* *tə* *ɚ˥=gə*
dog INDEF:one bark=PROG
'A dog is barking.'

[16] Refer to http://www.pinyin.info/ for more information about pinyin Romanization.
[17] In general, Ersu has two tones, that is, high level and mid level. However, some clause-final enclitics take a mid-rising or a falling-rising tone. Details are given in §2. 3.

In this grammar, each chapter not only presents the facts of the language but also argues for their analysis within a typological and/or theoretical framework as described in §1. 4. 4. Exemplification goes as detailed as possible with every generalized grammatical point. Examples, tables and figures are numbered separately within each chapter. Footnotes and pages are automatically numbered in a running sequence from the first chapter to the last chapter by WORD processor.

1. 4. 6 Grammar organization

This study contains an analysis of the Ersu language, starting from a brief introduction to the language and its speakers (§1), then going on to phonology (§2), word classes (§3), nouns and nominal morphology (§4), noun phrases (§5), numeral system (§6), nominal and verbal action classification system (§7), verbs and verb phrases (§8), aspect system (§9), mood and modality (§10), the expression of information source (§12), clause types and clause combining (§13), and language change and language endangerment (§14).

Chapter 2 Phonology

Similar to other Tibeto-Burman languages in Southwest China, such as Qiang (Huang 2004: 19-38), Yongning Na (Lidz 2010: 21-47), Lisu (Yu 2007: 27-80), and Anong (Sun & Liu, 2009: 19-30), Ersu has a fairly complex phonology. §2 presents an overview of this system. §2. 1 describes segmental phonology. §2. 2 shows Ersu syllable structure and types. §2. 3 analyzes tones. §2. 4 discusses phonological words and their relation with grammatical words. §2. 5 presents the phonological process of Ersu with a focus on morphophonological process, and intonation patterns. §2. 6 briefly discusses loanword phonology.

2. 1 Segmental Phonology

Ersu has 37 simple initial consonants and 22 cluster initials. There are no syllablic final consonants except for those found in Mandarin loanwords. §2. 1. 1 shows the inventory of consonants. §2. 1. 2 describes the vowel system which includes seven basic vowels, three rhotic vowels, six diphthongs and one triphthong. §2. 1. 3 discusses allophones and dialectal variations in phonetics and phonology. A full inventory which indicates phonological differences between subdialects, and between older and younger generations will be summarized in §2. 1. 4. Considering the age-based variation of pronunciation, §2. 1. 1 and §2. 1. 2 document the speech of people who are roughly around 50 years old. This is so because the pronunciation of this age group not only has a wide representation but also reflects a relatively more traditional Ersu language (§1. 4. 2). In all the above subsections, minimal pairs or near minimal pairs are provided to illustrate the contrastive distribution of Ersu consonants and vowels. The restricted distributions of consonants to vowels are also given in each subsection.

2. 1. 1 Consonant inventory

The Ersu consonant phonemes are shown in Table 2. 1.

active ariculator		labio-		apico-				dorso-	glottal
passive articulator		bilabial	dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	alveo-palatal	retroflex	velar	
voiceless unaspirated	stop	p		t				k	ʔ
voiceless aspirated		p^h		t^h				k^h	
voiced		b		d				g	
voiceless unaspirated	affricate			ts		tɕ	tʂ		
voiceless aspirated				ts^h		$tɕ^h$	$tʂ^h$		
voiced				dz		dʑ	dʐ		
voiceless	fricative		f	s		ɕ	ʂ	x	
voiced			v	z	ʒ	ʑ	ʐ		
nasal		m		n		ȵ		ŋ	
lateral fricative				ɬ					
lateral approximant				l					
approximant		w				y[18]			

Table 2. 1 Ersu consonant inventory (speakers around 50 years of age or younger)

Table 2. 1 reflects the phonological system of speakers about 50 years of age or younger[19]. All the consonants listed here are initials except the nasals, which can not only function as initials, but also can be occasionally used as an independent syllable (§2. 2). As shown in Table 2. 1, the 37 simple initials belong respectively to three active articulators and to seven passive articulators. The consonant inventory includes three voicing types: voiceless aspirated, voiceless unaspirated and voiced. There are three places of articulation for stops and affricates. Both the stop series and the affricate series have distinctive differences among all the three voicing types. There are six places of articulation for fricatives. Among the ten fricatives, there are four pairs of counterparts that distinguish voiceless and voiced voicing types. Nasals have

[18] I use /y/ to replace the IPA /j/ in this study. Reasons are given in §1. 4. 5.

[19] The full consonant inventory that reflects the phonology of all age groups is given in Table 2. 5. While reading §2. 1. 3, please refer to Table 2. 5 because some phonemes described in §2. 1. 3 are given in Table 2. 5 rather than in Table 2. 1.

four places of articulation. There are three approximants, one lateral fricative and one glottal stop.

2. 1. 1. 1 Stops

2. 1. 1. 1. 1 Bilabial stops

There are three bilabial stops in Ersu: the voiceless unaspirated bilabial stop /p/, the voiceless aspirated bilabial stop /p^h/, and the voiced bilabial stop /b/. /p/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /u/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /p^h/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /b/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /ə/, /ɛ/ and /i/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 1):

(2. 1)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/p/	*-pa*	'-CL: small, roundish and ball-like'
	/p^h/	*-p^ha*	'-SFX.MAS'
	/b/	*ba*	'carry something on one's back'

2. 1. 1. 1. 2 Alveolar stops

Ersu has three apico-alveolar stops which are distinguished by their respective voicing types. They are: voiceless unaspirated apico-alveolar stop /t/, voiceless aspirated apico-alveolar stop /t^h/ and voiced apico-alveolar stop /d/. /t/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/ and /əᴵ/. /t^h/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/, /əᴵ/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /d/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/ and/ə/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 2):

(2. 2)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/t/	*ta*	'one'
	/t^h/	*t^ha*	'this'
	/d/	*dɑ-*	'upward-'

2. 1. 1. 1. 3 Velar stops

The voiceless unaspirated dorso-velar stop /k/, the voiceless aspirated dorso-velar stop /k^h/ and the voiced dorso-velar stop /g/ constitute one set of dorso-velar stops.

Like bilabial stops and alveolar stops, they also have three distinctive voicing types, that is, voiceless unaspirated, voiceless aspirated and voiced. /k/ precedes the vowels such as /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /kʰ/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /o/, /u/ and /ə/. /g/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/ and /i/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 3):

(2. 3)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/k/	*ka*	'hit'
	/kʰ/	*kʰɑ-*	'inward-'
	/g/	*ga*	'love'

2. 1. 1. 1. 4 Glottal stop[20]

The glottal stop /ʔ/ occurs as an onset to otherwise vowel-initial syllables, for example: *ɑ* '1sg.SLF'. In addition, it is used as an initial in the following four words. They are: *ʔizɑ* 'son', *ʔitsʰu* 'spoon' and two loan words, *ʔwaŋ* 'goose' and *ʔyɑ̃* 'duck'.

2. 1. 1. 2 Affricates

2. 1. 1. 2. 1 Apico-alveolar affricates

Apico-alveolar affricates have three voicing distinctions: voiceless unaspirated /ts/, voiceless aspirated /tsʰ/ and voiced /dz/. The three may precede the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/, /ɛ/, /i/ and /ɳ/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 4):

(2. 4)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/ts/	*tsɑ*	'hang'
	/tsʰ/	*tsʰɑ*	'leaf'
	/dz/	*dzɑ*	'rice'

2. 1. 1. 2. 2 Apico-alveo-palatal affricates

There are three apico-alveo-palatal affricates found in Ersu. They distinguish

[20] One of the anonymous examiners states that the status of the glottal stop as a consonantal phoneme is questionable for Ersu. However, it does occur in the data. Take *ʔizɑ* 'son' as an example. If the initial /ʔ/ is not used and when 'son' is pronounced as **yizɑ*, a native speaker Ersu will not accept the pronunciation.

voicing types in three manners: voiceless unaspirated /tɕ/, voiceless aspirated /tɕ^{h}/ and voiced /dʑ/. All the three can precede the vowels /ɑ/, /o/ and /i/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 5):

(2. 5)

Phoneme	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
/*tɕ*/	*tɕa*	'light'
/*tɕ^{h}*/	*tɕ^{h}a*	'3sg.GEN'
/*dʑ*/	*dʑadʑa*	'elder sister'

2. 1. 1. 2. 3 Retroflex affricates

Ersu has a set of three retroflex affricates which are divided in accordance with their voicing distinctions. They are: voiceless unaspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ/, voiceless aspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ^{h}/ and voiced /dʐ/. All the three can precede the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑ^{ɪ}/, /o/, /u/, /ə/, /ə^{ɪ}/ and /ɿ/. Minimal pairs with the vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 6):

(2. 6)

Phoneme	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
/*tʂ*/	*tʂa*	'search'
/*tʂ^{h}*/	*tʂ^{h}a*	'city or town'
/*dʐ*/	*dʐa*	'EXT'

2. 1. 1. 3 Fricatives

There are two labio-dental fricatives, /f/ and /v/, two apico-alveolar fricatives, /s/ and /z/, two apico-alveo-palatal fricatives, /ɕ/ and /ʑ/, two retroflex fricatives /ʂ/ and /ʐ/, one apico-post-alveolar fricative /ʒ/ and one dorso-velar fricative /x/. Fricatives occur in voiceless and voiced pairs. They are: /f/ and /v/, /s/ and /z/, /ɕ/ and /ʑ/, /ʂ/ and /ʐ/. The apico-post-alveolar fricative has only the voiced counterpart and the dorso-velar fricative has only the voiceless counterpart.

2. 1. 1. 3. 1 Labio-dental fricatives

Labio-dental fricatives /f/ and /v/ are distinguished by voicing. Similar to Yongning Na (Lidz 2010: 30), /f/ and /v/ in Ersu have a limited distribution. /f/ is only

seen to precede the vowels /ʉ/, /ɑ/ (or /ɑᴵ/) and /i/. /v/ precedes the vowels /ʉ/, /ɑ/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /f/ is sometimes interchangeable with dorso-velar fricative /x/. This will be further discussed in §2. 1. 3. 2. 1. Examples are given in (2. 7):

(2. 7)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/f/	*fʉ*	'village'	*/v/*	*vʉ*	alcohol
		fɑ	'bear'		*=và*	'=ACC'
		nə-fi	'downward-grow mouldy'		*də-vi*	'upward-blossom'

2. 1. 1. 3. 2 Apico-alveolar fricatives

There are two paired apico-alveolar fricatives in Ersu: voiceless fricative /s/ and voiced fricative /z/. Both may precede the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /ʉ/, /ɛ/, /i/ and /ɳ/. Examples are given in (2. 8):

(2. 8)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/s/	*sɑ*	'umbrella'	*/z/*	*zɑ*	'hundred'
		sò	'blood'		*zò*	'3sg.NPRT'
		sʉ	'person'		*zʉ̀*	'fish'
		sɛ	'breath'		*zɛ*	'wife'
		si	'three'		*ziyì*	'daughter'
		-sɳ̀	'-QUAT:bit'		*zɳ*	'COP'

2. 1. 1. 3. 3 Apico-alveo-palatal fricatives /ɕ/ and /ʑ/

The voiceless */ɕ/* and the voiced */ʑ/* constitute the pair of apico-alveo- palatal fricatives. Both */ɕ/* and */ʑ/* have very limited distribution. They only precede the vowel /o/. Examples are given in (2. 9):

(2. 9)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/ɕ/	*ɕo*	'sweep'
	/ʑ/	*ʑo*	'(snow or rain) fall'

2. 1. 1. 3. 4 Retroflex fricatives

The two retroflex fricatives have voicing distinctions. /ʂ/ is voiceless and /ʐ/ is voiced. /ʂ/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /ʉ/, /ə/ and /ɳ/. /ʐ/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ə/,

/ɛ/ and /ɳ/. Examples are given in (2. 10):

(2. 10)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/ʂ/	*ʂɑ*	'wheat'	/ʐ/	*ʐɑ*	'collect'
		ʂu	'marry'		*ʐu*	'foster'
		ʂɿ̀	'meat'		*ʐɳ*	'buy'

2. 1. 1. 3. 5 Apico-post-alveolar fricative /ʒ/ and dorso-velar fricative /x/

The voiced apico-post-alveolar fricative /ʒ/ has not been found to have a corresponding voiceless aspirated counterpart /ʃ/ in Lajigu. Seemingly, /ʃ/ has been replaced by /ʂ/. I hypothesize that this is due to the influence of Mandarin Chinese because in Mandarin Chinese, there exists the phoneme /ʂ/, but /ʃ/ is absent[21]. This is further discussed in §2. 1. 3. 3. The dorso-velar /x/ has replaced the glottal freicative /*h*/ in Lajigu. §2. 1. 3. 3. 1 gives more details about this. /ʒ/ has limited distribution and is only seen to occur before the vowels /u/ and /ɳ/. /x/ may occur before the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /ə/, /ɛ/ and /i/. Examples are given in (2. 11):

(2. 11)	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	/ʒ/	*ʒu*	'hitch'	/x/	*xɑ*	'EXT'
		ʒɳ	'eight'		*xo*	'MOD:need'
					xə	'mushroom'
					=xɛ	'=LOC:side'
					xi-mɑ	'woman-SFX.FEM:woman'

2. 1. 1. 4 Nasals

There are four voiced nasals in Ersu, pronounced at four different places of articulation. They are: bilabial /m/, apico-alveolar /n/, apico-alveo-palatal /ɲ/ and dorso-velar /ŋ/. /m/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /n/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /o/, /ə/, /ɛ/ and /i/. /ɲ/ precedes the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑ˦/, /o/ and /i/. /ŋ/ has a limited distribution and is only seen to co-occur with /ɑ/ and /u/. Minimal pairs with the

[21] The reason why the voiced /ʒ/ is still kept in Lajigu Ersu's speech is unknown. In addition, though /ʐ/ only occurs before the vowel /o/ and /ʒ/ only precedes /u/ and /ɳ/, the two cannot be collapsed because they show different places of articulation as shown in Table 2.1. When I was in the field, I intended to mix the two, but the native speakers of Ersu always pointed out that my pronunciation was incorrect.

vowel /ɑ/ are given in (2. 12):

(2. 12)

Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss
/ɱ/	*ɱa*	‘arrow shot’
/n/	*na*	‘2sg.ACC’
/ɲ/	*ɲa*	‘child’
/ŋ/	*ŋɑ-*	‘outward-’

2. 1. 1. 5 Laterals

Ersu distinguishes the voiceless lateral fricative /ɬ/ and the voiced lateral approximant /l/. /ɬ/ only occurs before the vowels /ɑ/ and /i/. /l/ may precede the vowels /ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /o/, /ə/ and /i/. /l/ has replaced the trill /r/ in Lajigu though /r/ is still actively used by a few of the older villagers and in other villages. §2. 1. 3. 4 further discusses this. Minimal pairs are given in (2. 13):

(2. 13)

Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss	Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss
/ɬ/	*ɬa*	‘moon’	/l/	*la*	‘chicken’
				laᴵ	‘centipede’
				lo	‘rock’
				lə	‘liquid’
	ɬi	‘lightening’		*li*	‘good’

2. 1. 1. 6 Approximants

Ersu has two approximants, the bilabial approximant /w/ and the apico-alveo-palatal /y/. As mentioned in §1. 4. 5, /y/ is the symbol of /j/ in IPA. In addition, I add /y/ to the monosyllabic *i* throughout this grammar. Therefore, the monosyllabic *yi* corresponds to *i* in conventional IPA (§1. 4. 5). Both /w/ and /y/ have a limited distribution. /w/ only occurs before /ɑ/ and /o/. /y/ only occurs before /ɑ/, /o/ and /i/. Examples are given in (2. 14):

(2. 14)

Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss	Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss
/w/	*wa*	full	/y/	*yɑ-*	‘ADJ.PFX-’
	wo	‘CL: generic, non-sticklike’		*yo*	‘sheep’
				yi	‘house’

2. 1. 1. 7 Cluster initials

There are twenty-two cluster initials in Ersu. Eighteen of them are composed of two consonants and four of them are composed of three consonants. Table 2. 2 lists them in accordance with the place and manner of articulation of the last consonant in the cluster. For example, the cluster */npʰʂ/* is aligned with the retroflex fricative /ʂ/ because it ends with the consonant /ʂ/.

active articulator		labio-	apico-			dorso-
passive articulator		bilabial	alveolar	alveo-palatal	retroflex	velar
voiceless aspirated	stop	npʰ	ntʰ			nkʰ
voiced		nb	nd			ng
voiceless aspirated	affricate		ntsʰ	ntɕʰ	ntʂʰ	
voiced			ndz	ndʑ	ndʐ	
voiceless aspirated	fricative		ps, pʰs, npʰs		pʂ, pʰʂ, npʰʂ	
voiced			bz, nbz		bʐ, nbʐ	

Table 2. 2 Ersu cluster initials

Table 2. 2 shows that Ersu clusters can be classified into two groups according to their initial consonants. The first group has a /n/ initial and the second group begins with bilabial stops, /p/, /pʰ/ and /b/. Furthermore, the number of /n/ initialized clusters is sixteen and the other six have /p/, /pʰ/ and /b/ initials. The structure of the /n/ initialized clusters could be: 1) /n/+/stop/; 2) /n/+/affricate/; 3) /n/+/fricative/; 4) /n/+/stop/+/fricative/.

Table 2. 2 also indicates that the affricates in these clusters are either voiceless aspirated or voiced. None of the voiceless unaspirated affricates occurs in clusters. Bilabial stops of the three voicing types can be used to form the clusters, but voiceless unaspirated apico-alveolar stops and dorso-velar stops are not found for the clusters. In realization, the manner and place of articulation of the stops and affricates do not undergo any changes in the /n/ initialized clusters. /n/ assimilates to the following consonant in voicing and articulation place. In addition, the /n/ initial is always resyllabified as a preceding syllable coda (see §2. 4. 1). /s/ and /ʂ/ in /ps/, /pʂ/ tend to

sound like their respective voiced counterparts, that is, /z/ and /ʐ/, but it is not quite obvious. Furthermore, when the two fricatives follow the voiceless aspirated stop /p^h/, their manner and place of articulation do not change.

The cluster initials may precede the vowels that the last simple consonant often precede as described above. However, this is not necessarily the case. In general, the distribution of cluster initials is more limited than that of simple consonant initials. Some of them may only occur before one or two vowels. The possible co-occurrence of cluster initials and vowels is given in Table 2. 3:

Cluster initial	**Vowel**
/np^h/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ɛ/, /i/
/nb/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ɛ/, /i/
/nt^h/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /uɑ/
/nd/	/ɑ/, /o/, /ə/, /i/
/nts^h/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ɛ/, /ɿ/
/ndz/	/ɑ/, /ɑᴵ/, /u/, /ə/, /ɛ/, /i/, /ʅ/
/nt$ɕ^h$/	/ɑ/, /o/, /i/
/nd$ʑ$/	/o/, /i/
/nk^h/	/ɑ/, /ə/, /u/
/ng/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ə/
/nt$ʂ^h$/	/ɑ/, /u/, /ə/, /ʅ/
/nd$ʐ$/	/ɑ/, /o/, /u/, /ʅ/
/ps/, /p^hs/, /np^hs/, /bz/, /nbz/, /p$ʂ$/, /$p^h ʂ$/, /n$p^h ʂ$/, /b$ʐ$/, /nb$ʐ$/	/ʅ/

Table 2. 3 Co-occurrence of cluster initials and vowels

Minimal pairs or near minimal pairs are given in (2. 15):

(2. 15)

Phoneme	Ex.	Gloss
/p^h/	$p^h o$	'CL: suit'
/np^h/	$np^h o$	'steal'
/b/	bo	'wide and deep pitch'
/nb/	nbò	'horse'
/t^h/	$t^h ua$	'mule'
/nt^h/	$nt^h ua$	'sharp'
/d/	dɑ-	'PFX: upward-'
/nd/	ndava	'guest'
/$k^h a$/	$k^h ɑ$-	'PFX: inward-'
/nk^h/	$nk^h a$	'sell'
/g/	ga	'love'
/ng/	nga	'door'
/ts^h/	$ts^h a$	'leaf'
/nts^h/	$nts^h a$	'liver'
/dz/	dza	'rice'
/ndz/	ndza	'Han people'
/$tɕ^h$/	$tɕ^h i$	'give'
/$ntɕ^h$/	$ntɕ^h i$	'bite'
/dʑ/	dʑi	'a big pot'
/ndʑ/	ɜˡndʑi	'leg'
$tʂ^h$	$tʂ^h u$	'sweat'
/$ntʂ^h$/	$ntʂ^h u$	'steaming'
/dẓ/	dẓa	'fall off'
/ndẓ/	ndẓa	'dread'
/ps/	psʅ	'flat'
/$p^h s$/	$p^h sʅ$	'throw'
/$np^h s$/	$np^h sʅ$	'spit'
/bz/	bzʅ	'bee'
/nbz/	nbzʅ	'step across'
/pʂ/	pʂʅ	'rope'
/$p^h ʂ$/	$p^h ʂʅ$	'Tibetan'
/$np^h ʂ$/	$np^h ʂʅ$	'lightly seasoned (soup or alcohol)'
/bẓ/	bẓʅ	'aureole'
/nbẓ/	nbẓʅ	'visit'

2. 1. 2 Vowels

Compared with the consonant system, the number of Ersu vowels is fairly small. As is mentioned in §2. 1, there are seven basic vowels (monophthongs), three rhotic vowels (monophthongs), six diphthongs and one triphthong documented in the speech of the Lajigu villagers aged around 50. A full inventory which indicates phonological

differences between subdialects, between the old people and the young people will be summarized in §2. 1. 3. No nasalized vowels are seen in the indigenous Ersu data; however, some nasalized vowels are found in Chinese loans (§2. 6). No long vowels are found. The seven basic vowels are: close vowels /i/, /ɿ/ and /u/, mid vowels /ɛ/, /ə/and /o/, and the open vowel /ɑ/ and the three rhotic vowels are: /ɑᴵ/, /əᴵ/ and /oᴵ/ as shown in Figure 2. 1.

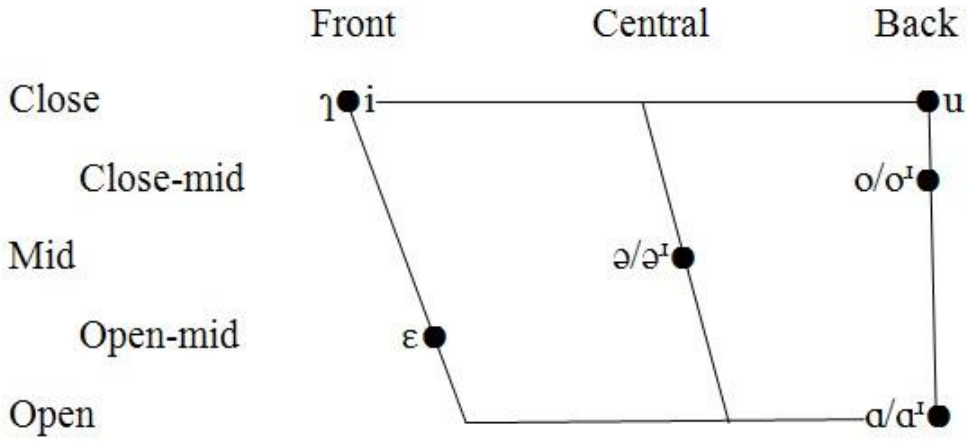


Figure 2. 1 Basic and rhotic Ersu vowels (speakers of 50 years of age or younger)[22]

2. 1. 2. 1 Monophthongs

2. 1. 2. 1. 1 Close

There are three close vowels in Ersu: the close front unrounded vowel /i/ and /ɿ/ and the close back rounded vowel /u/. Among the three close vowels, /i/ and /u/ are found to follow most of the simple initial consonants and clusters. /ɿ/ is only seen to follow apico-alveolar affricates /ts/, /tsʰ/ and /dz/, retroflexes /tʂ/, /tʂʰ/, /dʐ/, /ʂ/ and /ʐ/, apico-alveolar fricatives /s/ and /z/, and the post-alveolar /ʒ/. In addition, it always assimilates to the preceding affricates and fricatives in realization. The examples in

[22] /ɿ/ in Figure 2. 1 is an apical vowel that is described in Sun and Jiang (2004)'s paper: *IPA and extra symbols used to document Chinese languages*. It is now widely used in describing languages in China, such as Lisu (Yu 2007), Anong (Sun & Liu 2009) and "Ersuic" (Yu 2012). However, it is not recognized by IPA, as is pointed out by one of the anonymous examiners. Since /ɿ/ only follows affricates and fricatives and assimilates to these consonant initials (§2. 1. 2. 1. 1. 1), it would be better to view it as a symbol of syllabic affricates and fricatives. This will be revised when I submit this work for publication in the future. In addition, Figure 2. 3 illustrates full basic and rhotic Ersu vowels. While reading §2. 1. 3, please refer to Table 2. 5 because some vowels described in §2. 1. 3 are given in Figure 2. 3 rather than in Figure 2. 1.

(2.16) show the three close vowels following apico-alveolar affricates and fricatives.

(2. 16)	/i/		/ɿ/		/u/	
	Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	tsi	'pull'	*tsɿ*	'feed'	*tsu*	'tamp'
	ts^{h}i	'thin'	*ts^{h}ɿ*	'goat'	*ts^{h}u*	'such'
	dzi	'hair'	*dzɿ*	'eat'	*dzu*	'awl'
	si	'three'	*-sɿ̀*	'-QUAT: bit'	*su*	'person'
	ziyì	'daughter'	*zɿ*	'sit down'	*zu*	'fish'

2. 1. 2. 1. 2 Mid

Three mid vowels are found in Ersu: the mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/, the mid central unrounded vowel /ə/, and the mid back rounded vowel /o/. /ə/ and /o/ have a matching rhotic vowel /ə^{ɪ}/ and /o^{ɪ}/, respectively. /o^{ɪ}/ only occur in the the plural personal pronoun *yo^{ɪ}* '1pl.OTR' (§4. 4. 1). Examples are given in (2. 17).

(2. 17)	/ɛ/		/ə/		/ə^{ɪ}/		/o/	
	Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	pɛ	'sufficient'	*tə*	'one'	*ə^{ɪ}k^{h}ua*	'stone'	*po*	'CL:package'
	p^{h}ɛ	'half'	*t^{h}ə*	'3sg.PRT'	*t^{h}ə^{ɪ}*	'3pl.PRT'	*p^{h}o*	'CL:set'
	-bɛ̀	'-QUAT: some'	*də-*	'upward-'	*ə^{ɪ}ʂa*	'policy'	*bo*	'EXT'

2. 1. 2. 1. 3 Open

/ɑ/ is the only one open back unrounded vowel found in Ersu. /ɑ/ has a rhotic counterpart /ɑ^{ɪ}/. Compared with /ɑ/, /ɑ^{ɪ}/ is less frequent in Ersu and is only found in a few words. Note that in realization, the pronunciation of /ɑ/ and /ɑ^{ɪ}/ is respectively a bit closer to /ʌ/ and /ʌ^{ɪ}/ in some speakers' pronunciation. Examples are given in (2. 18).

(2. 18)

/ɑ/		/ɑᴵ/	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
a	'1sg.SLF'	*aᴵ*	'1pl.SLF'
xa	'time'	*xaᴵ*	'sway'
fa	'needle'	*faᴵ*	'bear'
tʂa	'search'	*tʂaᴵ*	'CL:time (frequency)'
tʰa	'DEM:this'	*tʰaᴵ*	'PART:pause in speech'
ka	'CL: generic, stick-like'	*kaᴵ*	'CL:a bit of stick-like things'
kʰa-	'inward-'	*kʰaᴵ*	'CL:a bit of powder-like things'
pa	'CL:pearl-like things'	*paᴵ*	'CL:a bit of pearl-like things'

2. 1. 2. 2 Diphthongs

Ersu has six diphthongs: three rising and three falling.

Two of the rising diphthongs begin with a less prominent close front vowel /i/, and then respectively end with a more prominent open-mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/, that is, /iɛ/, and an open back vowel /ɑ/, that is, /iɑ/. The third one starts with a less prominent close back vowel /u/ and then also ends with /ɑ/, that is, /uɑ/.

The three falling diphthongs end with a less prominent front vowel /i/, but each of them begins with a more prominent vowel. They are: /ui/ starting with a close back rounded vowel /u/; /ɛi/ starting with an open-mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/ and /ɑi/ starting with an open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/. See Figure 2. 2 which illustrates the combination of two basic vowels to form a diphthong.

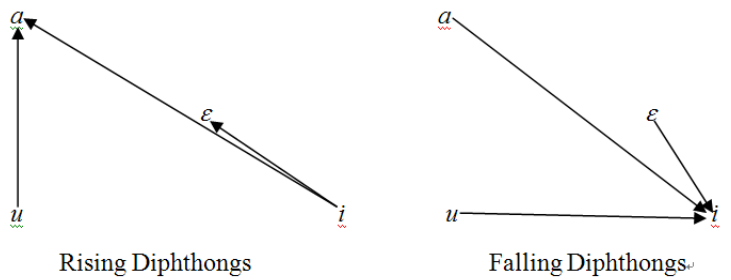


Figure 2. 2 The formation of Ersu diphthongs

The combination of the above vowels is respectively viewed as diphthongs for the following reasons: Firstly, when the two vowels are in a complex vowel nucleus of a syllable, the sound of the vowels /u/ and /i/ becomes very weak and short. It sounds like a basic simple vowel nucleus in a syllable. Secondly, they are not vowel sequences which occur frequently in Ersu due to vowel harmony (§2. 5. 2) and syllable contraction (2. 5. 6). When two vowels occur with each other to form a diphthong, they could not be separated from each other. Take /iɑ/ in the word *lia* 'be sticky' as an example. If they were separated from each other like *li-a*, then *li-a* would mean nothing. Another example is /ɑi/. When it is used as a diphthong, the sound of /i/ in /ɑi/ is weak and short, forming a vowel nucleus as shown in (2. 19). However, /ɑi/ could also be separated from each other and /i/ is pronounced clearly in speech. In this situation, ɑ=i [23] may form a vowel sequence with the meaning of '1sg.SLF=GEN'. Therefore, though it is reported (Table 1. 5) that there are respectively 20 diphthongs in Zela (则拉) subdialect of Ersu (Sun 1982a, 1983a) and 15 diphthongs in Liaoping (蓼坪) subdialect of Ersu (Liu 1983), I hypothesize that many of the "diphthongs" that they state are in fact vowel sequences[24].

All diphthongs except /uɑ/ are not frequently found in Ersu and they only exist in some individual words. However, /uɑ/ is seen to follow a large number of consonant initials, such as /k^h/, /k/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /ts^h/, /ʂ/ and /x/. Examples for diphthongs are given in (2. 19).

[23] Here, I use IPA transcription. In my work, it is transcribed as *ɑ=yi*.
[24] In fact, the "diphthongs" /iɛ/, /iɑ/, /uɑ/ and /ui/ described here might be also analyzed as glide+vowel sequences. This needs further studies with the help of audio-measuring software like PRAAT in the future.

(2. 19)

Rising Diphthongs			Falling Diphthongs		
	Ex.	**Gloss**		**Ex.**	**Gloss**
/iɛ/	*$k^hots^hiɛ$*	'tired'	/ui/	*gui*	'very'
	vùliè	'head'		*yisui*	'bat'
/ia/	*lia*	'sticky'	/ɛi/	*yotsɛi*	'oneself'
	xiamɛ	'fly'		*$ts^hɛixi$*	'this year'
/ua/	*lua*	'cut'	/ai/	*yibai*	'armpit'
	-nt^hua	'CL: a drop of (liquid)'		*tsai*	'real'

2. 1. 2. 3 Triphthong

/uɑo/ is the only one triphthong found in Ersu. It is only seen to exist in the word, *zuɑo* 'bowl'.

2. 1. 3 Allophones and dialectal variation in phonetics and phonology

As mentioned is §1. 1 and §1. 2. 1, the Ersu communities are historically dispersed in isolated deep valleys among high mountains. I observed that although people comprehend one another when speaking, there are at the same time dialectal or subdialectal differences according to a speaker's village (§1. 3. 2. 2). It is common to hear that people from different villages tend to proudly state their own way of speaking is "standard", but that of others' is not.

What is more, it is observed that people over 50 years and those younger vary in their speech despite living in the same village: Lajigu. Though the age line is not exactly clear and there might be specific exceptions among individual persons of the same age group, it is commonly believed among the villagers that the old people and the young people speak Ersu in a slightly different way. Generally speaking, it can be suggested that the younger a person is, the more his/her pronunciations might be simplified as further discussed in the subsections below.

The reasons for the sound change described above have a lot in common with other language changes due to some non-linguistic parameters, such as the development of economy, transportation and communications (§14. 2). There is a

particular reason why people over 50 years and those younger in a small village have experienced a sudden sound change. Most of the Lajigu villagers told me that this is due to the "language campaign", the promotion of Mandarin Chinese *(pǔtōnghuà)* launched by the newly established government of The People's Republic of China. This "campaign" started in 1956 throughout China and it was stipulated by China's constitution (Wang 2001). It is said that the government sent two Han teachers to Lajigu in the 1960s. They were competent teachers and they influenced many children in the village, who are now around 50 years old, in many respects, including their opinions on whether to use their mother tongue, and how to use their mother tongue[25]. This is evident in the difference of the local villagers' language proficiency. People who received elementary education in the 1960s can speak Mandarin Chinese much better than those older than them or those of the same age who have never received formal education (§14. 2. 4).

However, based on my observation and investigation, I find that the village-based subdialectal variations and the sound variations among different age groups are still at the phonological level. More specifically, the differences result from four different situations, and vice versa. Firstly, there are some allophones in free variation (§2. 1. 3. 4). Secondly, there are some allophones in complementary distribution (§ 2. 1. 3. 2). Thirdly, younger people never distinguish some phonemes which sound similar to each other when the phonemes are absent from Mandarin Chinese (§2. 1. 3. 3). Finally, some phonemes are not used in Lajigu any longer and have been replaced by other phonemes[26] (§2. 1. 3. 4).

[25] The two teachers, HONG Jin'an and CAO Qingbing, are household names in the village. Under their instructions, a group of about ten people moved to cities and found jobs through attending different kinds of examinations. It is a pity that after those "glorious years" (in local people's words), no Han teachers would like to stay in the village for more than one year. It continues to be like this. Now, the village school has only nine students and their schooling is received in some informal way. When I was in the field, I found that people in Lajigu do not attach much importance to their children's school education at present.

[26] I base my discussions about phonological variations on the comparisons between my data and the data collected by SUN Hongkai in Zela Township, Ganluo County (Sun 1982a, 1983a). There are two reasons for me to do so: First, after nearly thirty years, the people who he has previously consulted are now more than sixty years old. I observed that the accents of the old people in Lajigu are a bit closer to his descriptions. Second, though I have not managed to go and investigate in his field area, a village that is about three hours' horse ride from Lajigu, I often discuss the phonological differences with one of my language consultants, Prof. WANG Dehe, who was born and grew up in the village. His accent is still quite close to what SUN has written in his papers (Sun 1982a, 1983a). WANG holds the idea that people in that village still keep their accents well because the village is much more

2. 1. 3. 1 Allophones in free variation

Some of the Ersu phonemes tend to be freely interchangeable with some others when they are close in place and manner of articulation. Phonemes of this type still exist in the phonemic inventory of Lajigu and people, regardless of their ages, still actively use all of them though different people might use them in different ways. I view these phonemes as "allophones in free variation". People may choose to employ either of the allophones in pair as discussed in the following subsections, and doing so will not cause any misunderstandings in speaking.

2. 1. 3. 1. 1 Allophones of /tʂ/, /tʂ^{h}/, and /dʐ/

While occurring before the close back rounded vowel /u/ and the mid back unrounded vowel /o/, the voiceless unaspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ/ tends to have no distinction from the voiceless unaspirated apico-alveolar affricate /ts/; the voiceless aspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ^{h}/ tend to have no distinction from the voiceless aspirated apico-alveolar affricate /ts^{h}/; the voiced retroflex affricate /dʐ/ tends to have no distinction from the voiced apico-alveolar affricate /dz/. The reason for this might be due to the influx of the Yuexi variety of Southwest Mandarin. I observed in the field that many Yuexi residents do not distinguish between /tʂ/ and /ts/, /tʂ^{h}/ and /ts^{h}/ though standard Mandarin clearly distinguishes them. In addition, though the voiced /dʐ/ and /dz/ do not exist in Mandarin, some of the Ersu also do not distinguish them for unknown reasons.

Thus, in this situation, /tʂ/ has two allophones, [tʂ] and [ts]; /tʂ^{h}/ has two allophones, [tʂ^{h}] and [ts^{h}]; /dʐ/ has two allophones, [dʐ] and [dz]. Examples are given in (2. 20).

isolated from the outside communities than Lajigu. I planned to base my fieldwork on the village in 2010, but the only road connected to it was cut off by floods then. Consequently, I conducted my fieldwork in Lajigu rather than in the village in Zela township, where SUN Hongkai stayed in the 1980s.

(2. 20)

Allophones	Ex.	Gloss
[ʈʂ]&[ts]	*ʈʂutʂu ~ tsutsu*	'straight'
	ʈʂo ~ tso	'excrement'
[ʈʂʰ]&[tsʰ]	*ʈʂʰu ~ tsʰu*	'six'
	ʈʂʰo ~ tsʰo	'dog'
[dʐ] & [dz]	*dʐu ~ dzu*	'waist'
	dʐo ~ dzo	'water'

2. 1. 3. 1. 2 Allophones of /ʂ/ and /ʐ/

While occurring before the close back rounded vowel /u/, the voiceless retroflex fricative /ʂ/ tends to have no distinction from the apico-alveolar fricative /s/; the voiced retroflex fricative /ʐ/ tends to have no distinction from the voiced apico-alveolar fricative /z/. Consequently, /s/ has two allophones [ʂ] and [s]; /z/ has two allophones [ʐ] and [z]. Examples are given in (2. 21).

(2. 21)

Allophones	Ex.	Gloss
[ʂ] & [s]	*ʂu ~ su*	'marry'
[ʐ]&[z]	*ʐu ~ zu*	'fish'

2. 1. 3. 1. 3 Allophones of /ə/ and /ɛ/

While following all the apico-alveolar stops, affricates, fricatives and the nasal /n/, and following all the retroflex affricates and fricatives, /ə/ and /ɛ/ are freely interchangeable. Some people would like to choose /ə/, and some others would like to choose /ɛ/. Occasionally, even one person might not keep consistency while using /ə/ or /ɛ/ in his/her speaking. Consequently, /ə/ and /ɛ/ form a pair of allophones in this situation. Examples are given in (2. 22).

(2. 22)

Allophones	Ex.	Gloss
[ə]& [ɛ]	*tə ~ tɛ*	'one'
	tʰə ~ tʰɛ	'3sg.PRT'
	də ~ dɛ	'upward-'
	nə ~ nɛ	'2sg'
	tsə ~ tsɛ	'throw'
	dzə ~ dzɛ	'dig'

2. 1. 3. 2 Allophones in complementary distribution

There are different allophones in Ersu whose choice depends on the environment they are in. I view these as allophones in complementary distribution.

2. 1. 3. 2. 1 Allophones of /x/

While occurring before the close front vowel /i/, the voiceless dorso-velar fricative /x/ tends to have no distinction from the apico-alveo-palatal /ɕ/. While occurring before /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/, /x/ tends to have no distinction from the voiceless labio-dental fricative /f/ in some particular syllables or words. However, this is not applicable to all the situations where /x/ occurs before /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/. Consequently, /x/ has two allophones, [x] and [ɕ] before /i/, and it has another two allophones, [x] and [f] before /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/. Examples are given in (2. 23).

(2. 23)

Allophones	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
[x] & [ɕ]	*xi ~ɕi*	'bamboo'
[x] & *[f]*	*xɑ ~fɑ*	'needle'
	xɑᴵ~fɑᴵ	'bear'

However, not all [x] that precedes /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/ can be replaced by [f]. In (2. 24), examples are given to show that [x] and [f] cannot replace each other before /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/. Additionally, there are no minimal pairs showing the semantic differences between [x] and [f] that are used before /ɑ/ and /ɑᴵ/.

(2. 24)

Allophones	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
[x] & [f]	*xɑxɑ*	'teach'
	**fɑfɑ*	
	xɑsɛ	'understand'
	**fɑsɛ*	
	xɑ	'time'
	**fɑ*	
	xɑᴵ	'sway'
	**fɑᴵ*	

2. 1. 3. 2. 2 Allophones of /u/

While following the bilabial stops /p/, /p^h/ and /b/, and the apico-alveolar stops /t/, /t^h/ and /d/, the close back rounded /u/ tends to have a trilled allophone for some Ersu speakers. This is not only acceptable, but also sounds normal to the Ersu addressees. In this situation, /u/ has two allophones, [u] and [⊙]. Examples are given in (2. 25).

(2. 25)

Allophones	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
[u] & [⊙]	*pu ~ p⊙*	'potato'
	tu ~ t⊙	'hold against'

While following the voiceless unaspirated apico-alveolar affricate /ts/, the voiceless aspirated apico-alveolar affricate /ts^h/, the voiced apico-alveolar affricate /dz/, the voiceless apico-alveolar fricative /s/, the voiced apico-alveolar fricative /z/, the voiceless unaspirated apico-alveo-palatal /tɕ/, the voiced apico-alveo-palatal /dʑ/, the voiceless unaspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ/, the voiced retroflex affricate /dʐ/, the voiceless aspirated retroflex fricative /ʂ/, and all the cluster initials ending with these phonemes, the close back rounded /u/ tends to have no distinction from /ɯ/. It is observed that most people who choose to use /ɯ/ in this context. Consequently, /u/ has two allophones, [u] and [ɯ] in this situation. Examples are given in (2. 26).

(2. 26)

Allophones	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
[u] & [ɯ]	*tsu ~ tsɯ*	'tamp'
	dzu ~ dzɯ	'awl'
	zu ~ zɯ	'fish'
	tɕu ~ tɕɯ	'complete'
	tʂu ~ tʂɯ	'sweat'
	dʐu ~ dʐɯ	'waist'
	ʂu ~ ʂɯ	'marry'

2. 1. 3. 3 Phonological differences between age groups

There exist some phonemes that are still being used by (some of) the older people, but not by the younger speakers in Lajigu. The younger speakers have the tendency to use some other phonemes to replace them. There are two phonemes found: One is the

voiceless aspirated glottal fricative /x/, and the other is the open back rounded vowel /ɑ/ and its rhotic counterpart /ɑᴵ/.

2. 1. 3. 3. 1 /h/ and /x/

Some older speakers in Lajigu still distinguish between the voiceless aspirated dorso-velar fricative /x/ and the voiceless glottal fricative /h/. However, none of the younger speakers distinguish them any longer. They use the voiceless aspirated dorso-velar fricative /x/ to replace the voiceless glottal fricative /h/. Examples are given in (2. 27).

(2. 27)

Allophones	Ex.	Age Group	Gloss
[h] & *[x]*	*hi*	Old	'bamboo'
	xi	Young	
	hə	Old	'agaric'
	xə	Young	
	hidzɿgù	Old	'a kind of four-footed animal that feeds itself on the roots of bamboos'
	xidzɿgù	Young	

2. 1. 3. 3. 2 /ɑ/ and /æ/; /ɑᴵ/ and /æᴵ/

/ɑ/ vs. /æ/, and /ɑᴵ/ vs. /æᴵ/ are contrastive in the speech of the older Ersu, but have merged in the speech of the younger speakers. In other words, some older speakers in Lajigu still distinguish between the open front unrounded vowel /æ/ and the open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/. However, almost none of the younger speakers distinguish them any longer. They use the open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/ to replace the open front unrounded /æ/. This is also the case with their respective rhotic counterpart, /æᴵ/ and /ɑᴵ/. Examples are given in (2. 28).

(2. 28)

Allophones	Ex.	People	Gloss
[a] & *[æ]*	*ba*	Young	'carry something on one's back'
	bæ	Old	
	xa	Young	'EXT'
	xæ	Old	
[aˈ] & *[æˈ]*	*xaˈ*	Young	'sway'
	xæˈ	Old	
	faˈ	Young	'bear'
	fæˈ	Old	

2. 1. 3. 4 Loss of some phonemes in the variety of Lajigu

It is found that some consonant initials documented by SUN Hongkai (Sun 1982a, 1983a) in Zela Township are not used in Lajigu any longer. They have been replaced by other phonemes. More specifically, the voiced apico-alveolar trill /r/ has been replaced by the apico-alveolar approximant /l/; the voiceless unaspirated post-alveolar affricate /tʃ/ has been replaced by the voiceless unaspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ/; the voiceless aspirated post-alveolar affricate /tʃ^{h}/ has been replaced by the voiceless unaspirated retroflex affricate /tʂ^{h}/; the voiced post-alveolar affricate /dʒ/ has been replaced by the voiced retroflex affricate /dz̧/; the voiceless aspirated post-alveolar fricative /ʃ/ has been replaced by the voiceless aspirated retroflex fricative /ʂ/. This difference is summarized in Table 2. 4:

Phonemes used in Zela	Phonemes used in Lajigu
/r/	/l/
/tʃ/	/tʂ/
/tʃ^{h}/	/tʂ^{h}/
/dʒ/	/dz̧/
/ʃ/	/ʂ/

Table 2. 4 Phonemic differences between Zela and Lajigu

Examples are given in (2. 29). Sample words are extracted from Sun's (1982a) description of the subdialect of Zela. Based on his data, I checked the pronunciation of these words of the subdialect of Lajigu when I was in the field. Example (2. 29) demonstrates that the Ersu people in Zela still distinguish between /r/ and /l/, /tʃ/ and

/tʂ/, /tʃʰ/ and /tʂʰ/, /dz̧/ and /dʒ/, /ʃ/ and /ʂ/. However, the Ersu people in Lajigu do not distinguish them any longer, which leads to numerous homophones in their utterance.

(2. 29)

Zela			Lajigu		
Phoneme	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Phoneme**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
/ɾ/	*ɾa*	'chicken'	/l/	*la*	'chicken'
/l/	*la*	'fertilizer'			'fertilizer'
/tʃ/	*tʃu*	'dye'	/tʂ/	*tʂu*	'dye'
/tʂ/	*tʂu*	'sweat'			'sweat'
/tʃʰ/	*tʃʰa*	'town'	/tʂ/	*tʂʰa*	'town'
/tʂ/	*tʂʰa*	'devil'			'devil'
/dʒ/	*dʒa*	'tea'	/dz̧/	*dz̧a*	'tea'
/dz̧/	*dz̧a*	'fall off'			'fall off'
/ʃ/	*ʃu*	'yellow'	/ʂ/	*ʂu*	'yellow'
/ʂ/	*ʂu*	'marry'			'marry'

2. 1. 4 Full phonemic inventory

Based on the above described segmental phonology and Sun (1982a, 1983a), a summary of the full phonemic inventory is given in this section.

2. 1. 4. 1 Full consonant inventory

The full consonant inventory is listed in Table 2. 5. Phonemes in ***italic and bold*** are not used in Lajigu any more as discussed in §2. 1. 3. 4. The phoneme /h/ is put into brackets to indicate that the older speakers in Lajigu still use it, while the younger ones do not use it. Allophones are marked with parenthesis and put on the right side of their respective matching phonemes.

active articulator		labio-		apico-				dorso-	glottal
passive articulator		bilabial	dental	alveolar	post-alveolar	alveo-palatal	retroflex	velar	
voiceless unaspirated	stop	p		t				k	ʔ
voiceless aspirated		p^h		t^h				k^h	
voiced		b		d				g	
voiceless unaspirated	affricate			ts	ʧ	tɕ	tʂ (ts)		
voiceless aspirated				ts^h	$ʧ^h$	$tɕ^h$	$tʂ^h$ (ts^h)		
voiced				dz	ʤ	dʑ	dʐ (dz)		
voiceless	fricative		f	s	ʃ	ɕ	ʂ (s)	x(f; ɕ)	[h]
voiced			v	z	ʒ	ʑ	ʐ (z)		
nasal		m		n		ɲ		ŋ	
trill				r					
lateral fricative				ɬ					
lateral approximant				l					
approximant		w				y			

Table 2. 5 Full consonant inventory

2. 1. 4. 2 Full basic vowels

The full list of Ersu basic vowels are listed in Figure 2. 3. Allophones are put in parenthesis. The vowels /æ/ and /æᴵ/ are put in brackets to indicate that they are still used by the old people in Lajigu, but the young do not use them now.

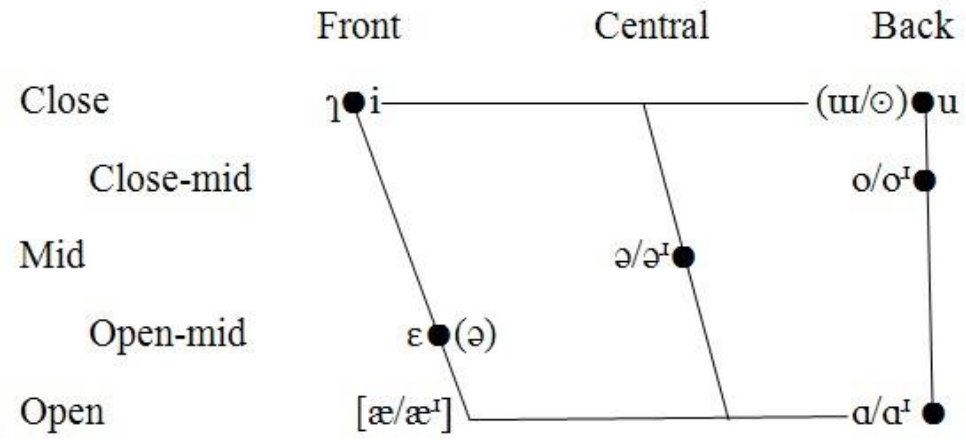


Figure 2. 3 Full basic and rhotic vowels

2. 2 Syllables

This section presents Ersu syllables. §2. 2. 1 gives a brief discussion of the basic syllable structure. §2. 2. 2 presents the three different types of syllables in Ersu.

2. 2. 1 Basic syllable structure

The basic syllable pattern in Ersu is CV^T. C stands for a simple consonant or a consonant cluster. V stands for a vowel that might be a simple vowel, a diphthong or a triphthong. T stands for a tone. No consonants are found in the coda position in native Ersu words. Consequently, all syllables in Ersu are open syllables. Each syllable should have a nucleus, which, most of the time, is either a vowel, or a diphthong or a triphthong, but very rarely, is a syllabic nasal.

The simplest Ersu syllable is either V^T or C^T. Examples are given in (2. 30). The open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/, its rhotic counterpart /ɑ˞/, and the mid central rhotic vowel /ə˞/ can often function as a syllable V^T. However, the close back rounded vowel /u/ and the mid front unrounded vowel /ɛ/ never form a simplest syllable. In other words, syllables like u^T or $ɛ^T$ are not attested in the data. The nasals /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ can also function as an independent syllable (and also the nucleus of the syllable, that is, C^T). However, syllables of C^T are much rarer than those of V^T.

2. 2. 2 Syllable types

As mentioned in §2. 2, three types of syllables are found in Ersu. This classification is based on the structure of syllables. The three types of syllables are:

1) $(C)(V)^T$, in which either a nasal or a vowel taking a tone forms a syllable by itself.

2) CV^T, in which the consonant initial and the vowel must co-occur with each other taking a tone to form a syllable. C is either a simple consonant initial or a cluster initial. V is either a basic vowel, or a diphthong, or a triphthong.

3) NCV^T, which refers to nasalized syllables. In an NCV^T syllable, N stands for a nasal /n/ or /m/. CV^T has the same structure of that describe in 2) above.

Examples are given in (2. 30). Note that in (2. 30), a simple consonant initial is further documented as C_1. A cluster like /p^hs/ is further documented in the form of C_1C_2. A basic vowel is documented as V_1. A diphthong is further documented in the form of V_1V_2 and a triphthong, $V_1V_2V_3$. A syllabic nasal is marked with ˌ in the transcription of Ersu words. For example: /n̩/ indicates that it is a syllabic nasal.

(2. 30)[27]	**Syllable Types**		**Ex.**	**Gloss**
1.	$(C)(V)^T$	C_1^T	*m̩dzŋ*	'cat'
			ŋ̩	'(birds) sing'
			ʂŋ̩ŋ̩	'seven'
		V_1^T	*a*	'1sg. SLF'
			aˈ	'1pl. SLF'
			əˈ	'age'
2.	CV^T	$C_1V_1^T$	*mɛ*	'sky'
		$C_1C_2V_1^T$	*p^hsŋ*	'throw'
		$C_1V_1V_2^T$	*t^hua*	'mule'
		$C_1V_1V_2V_3^T$	*zuao*	'bowl'
3.	NCV^T	$NC_1V_1^T$	*nt^ho*	'drip'
		$NC_1V_1V_2^T$	*nt^hua*	'sharp'
		$NC_1C_2V_1^T$	*np^hsŋ*	'spit'

2. 3 Tones

In Ersu, the tone-bearing unit is a syllable. Tones are closely associated with syllables and each syllable must bear a tone. There are two tones with contrastive minimal pairs found in Ersu: high level (formally unmarked in this grammar) and mid level (marked with ` in this grammar). Similar to the tones of Dayang dialect of Pumi with a basic opposition between high (H) and low (L) (Matisoff 1998), most of the Ersu syllables must bear either a high level tone or a mid level tone[28]. The

[27] In (2. 30), *m̩dzŋ* 'cat' and *ʂŋ̩ŋ̩* 'seven' are disyllabic, in which both /m/ and /n/ form an independent syllable, that is, C^T.

[28] Since Ersu has a register-type tone system with just two tone heights, tones in Ersu can also be viewed as a high vs. low system, as one of the anonymous examiners has pointed out. In this grammar, the low tone is treated as

assignment of the two tones to a particular morpheme or word is unpredictable. However, the data demonstrate that the syllables taking a high level tone are much more frequent than those taking a mid level tone.

The pitch contour of Ersu tones is much less stable compared with Mandarin Chinese, and tones are frequently seen to have contextual variation (§2. 4). All the contrastive mini pairs of high level and mid level tones found to date are given in (2. 31).

mid level tone because it is just relatively lower than the high level tone.

(2. 31)

Tone	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Tone**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
high level	*ɲo*	‘day’	mid level	*ɲò*	‘bronze’
	nbo	‘deaf’		*nbò*	‘horse’
	ŋua	‘silver’		*ŋuà*	‘ox’
	si	‘three’		*sì*	‘only’
	sɛ	‘who’		*sèbè*	‘plum’
	yo	‘sheep’		*yò*	‘1sg.OTR’
	zo	‘targeted’		*zò*	‘four’
	ʂʅ	‘taste’		*ʂʅ̀*	‘meat’
	tʂu	‘bean’		*tʂù*	‘take out’
	da-ba	‘be full’		*dà-bà*	‘carry … on one’s back’
	ta	‘shut (door)’		*tà*	‘emasculated sheep’
	tu	‘hold against’		*tù*	‘mortar’
	du	‘wild cat’		*dù*	‘plow’
	tsʰɛ	‘wash’		*tsʰè*	‘drink’
	gu	‘kick’		*gù*	‘boat’
	ka	‘CL:generic’		*kàtsʰʅ̀*	‘idiot’
	tsə	‘cloud’		*tsə̀*	‘hemp’
	dzo	‘water’		*dzò*	‘wok’
	fu	‘village’		*fù*	‘garlic’
	so	‘die’		*sò*	‘blood’
	ʂə	‘iron’		*ʂə̀*	‘louse’
	ʂʅʂʅ	‘weasel’		*ʂʅ̀ʂʅ̀*	‘walk’
	ma	‘delicious’		*mà*	‘blow’
	mo	‘corpse’		*mò*	‘(animals) bark’
	mɛ	‘troop’		*mè*	‘fire’
	nbu	‘hay’		*nbù*	‘hat’
	ndzo	‘leopard’		*ndzò*	‘MOD: knowing how to’
	ŋgə	‘seed’		*ŋgə̀*	‘nine’
	vu	alcohol		*vù*	‘head’
	ɲi	‘gold’		*ɲì*	‘sickness’
	la	‘chick’		*là*	‘deer’
	ntʂʰə	‘quick’		*ntɕʰə̀*	‘pull’
	ndza	‘drum’		*ndzà*	‘Han people’

In addition, there are another two tones, mid rising (marked with ˊ in this grammar) and falling-rising (marked with ˇ in this grammar) mainly found in the Ersu clause-final enclitics. They are not listed as lexical tones in this grammar because firstly, they are very marginal and are only seen in particular types of morphemes and secondly, there are no contrastive minimal pairs found in the data. All the syllables, apart from *mó* ‘again’, always occur at sentence- or clause-final slot.

The tones assigned to these syllables are very stable and variations of sound pitch are not found in any context. They are given in (2. 32).

(2. 32)

Tone	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
mid rising	*mó*	'again'
	=á	'=PFV: aspectual marker'
	=ts^{h}á	'=IMMI: aspectual marker'
falling-rising	*=mǎ*	'=RQT: requestive marker'
	=dʑɛ̌	'=EVID: evidential marker'
	=dǒ	'=PART:affirmative'

2. 4 Phonological Word

It is interesting that Ersu, a language without an indigenous written tradition, has a disyllabic word *ndzondzɿ* 'word, book'. However, the word actually refers to Chinese or Yi written words because when Ersu people receive school education, their textbooks are either written in Yi or in Chinese. For example, people often say:

(2. 33)

ndzondzɿ	*soso*
word	learn.RDUP

'go to school' Lit: learn words

(2. 34)

t^{h}ə	*yadzʲə-wo*	*ndzondzɿ*	*k^{h}ə-lo*
DEM: this	child-CL:generic, non-sticklike	word	inward-write

ya-li=tə

APFX-good=DES

'This child writes beautiful words.'

However, Ersu people take it for granted that a sentence is the minimal unit of a speech. When they find someone who speaks in an unsuitable way, they might point out that the *dzʲɿ* 'a line of words, a sentence', not *dzondzɿ* 'word' is not in good use. Consequently, the Ersu are actively aware of "sentence" rather than "word" in their daily speech. In addition, reduplication, compounding, affixation and cliticization are

frequently seen in Ersu. It is then really a challenge for both the native speakers and the linguists to delimit the boundaries of a phonological word.

The data demonstrate that the identification of a phonological word in Ersu is in fact consistent with Dixon's view (2010a: 7-12) that a close interaction between "segmental features, prosodic features and phonological rules" may help define a phonological word. This section will first describe the general properties to identify a phonological word (§2. 4. 1) in Ersu. Morphemic prosodic classes are discussed in §2. 4. 2 which includes affixation (§2. 4. 2. 1) and cliticization (§2. 4. 2. 2). §2. 4. 3 presents reduplication. §2. 4. 4 shows compounding and §2. 4. 5 discusses the relationship between phonological words and grammatical words. §2. 5 discusses morphophonological process, including vowel harmony and vowel fusion because in Ersu, both apply not only to boundaries within a phonological word, but also to cross-word boundaries.

2. 4. 1 General properties of phonological words

Firstly, syllabic combination can function to delimit a phonological word. Monosyllabic words are frequently found in Ersu, such as *dzi* 'hair' and *dzo* 'water'. However, similar to Lizu (Chirkova 2008a), Ersu also has a strong tendency towards disyllabicity in its lexicon through affixation, compounding and reduplication. A large number of words are disyllabic, for example, *ȵoȵo* 'breast' and *də̀-ȵì* 'be sick'. Trisyllabic and polysyllabic words are much fewer and most of them are formed through compounding, affixation and/or cliticization, for example, *ŋə-ʂʅtɕi* 'outward-lost: lost', *mɛ̀+ʂʅ̀+ma-xa* 'earth+flesh+NEG-EXT:infertile, Lit: earth does not have flesh' and *da-ʂua=su* 'upward-turn=NOM:driver'.

Secondly, tone sandhi is another criterion to sort out a phonological word in speech. Though the assignment of a tone to a syllable is unpredictable (§2. 3. 1), the combination of tones in a phonological word is predictable. The data show that the tone sandhi of a disyllabic word could be:

1) high level+high level→ high level+high level: This means that if a disyllabic word consists of two high level syllables, the tones of the two syllables of the word remain unchanged. For example:

(2. 35)	**Syllable 1**	**Syllable 2**	**Word**	**Gloss**
	ɲi	*dzo*	*ɲidzo*	'the Gold river'
	na	*nbo*	*nanbo*	'deaf'
	ə́	*tsʰi*	*ə́tsʰi*	'sand'
	tʂʰo	*-ma*	*tʂʰo-ma*	'dog-SFX.FEM:female dog'
	dzo	*tsʰa*	*dzotsʰa*	'boiled water'

2) mid level+mid level→mid level+mid level: This means that similar to a disyllabic word consisting of two high level syllables, the tone of two mid level syllables of the word remain unchanged. For example:

(2. 36)	**Syllable 1**	**Syllable 2**	**Word**	**Gloss**
	vù	*tɕò*	*vùtɕò*	'turban'
	nbò	*ə́*	*nbòə́*	'horse food'
	mè	*ʂù*	*mèʂù*	'torch'
	ŋuà	*ʂʅ̀*	*ŋuàʂʅ̀*	'beef'
	bù	*tʂʰə̀*	*bùtʂʰə̀*	'year'

3) mid level+high level→high level+high level, or high level+mid level→high level+high level: This means that if a disyllabic word consists of one high level syllable and a mid level syllable, the mid level tone always switches to a high level one no matter whether the mid level tone precedes or follows the high level one. For example:

(2. 37)	**Syllable 1**	**Syllable 2**	**Word**	**Gloss**
	ŋuà	*=yi*	*ŋua=yi*	'baby ox'
	nbò	*-ma*	*nbo-ma*	'mother horse'
	mè	*ba*	*mɛba*	'flame'
	dzo	*ŋuà*	*dzoŋua*	'water buffalo'
	do	*=tà*	*do=ta*	'sunny place'
	vɛ	*ʂʅ̀*	*vɛʂʅ*	'pork'

The final syllable of a trisyllabic or polysyllabic word often takes a mid level tone. This is quite effective in identifying a phonological word. For example: *latɕikù* 'Lajigu', *vɛmatɕʰodzi̱ù* 'the name of a cannibal' and *n̩i+dʑi+vù* 'grass+jar+wine: jarred herbal wine'. The compound *n̩idʑivù* 'jarred herbal wine' demonstrates that the tone of the final syllable of a multi-syllabic word often takes a mid level tone. *vu* 'wine' takes a high level tone in isolation as shown in Example (2. 31). However, when it occurs with *n̩i* 'grass' and *dʑi* 'jar', forming the compound *n̩i+dʑi+vù* 'jarred herbal wine', its tone has changed into mid level *vù* 'wine', which in fact means 'head' in isolation as shown in (2. 31).

In addition, if the final syllable of a phonological word has a high level tone, it, as a word boundary, will sound much higher in context than in isolation. For example, a speaker tends to have the final syllable *tsɿ* of the word *xitsɿ* 'rabbit' stressed with a much higher pitch in speaking. On the other hand, if the final syllable of a phonological word has a mid level tone, it will sound much lower in realization than in isolation. Consequently, a speaker tends to have the final syllable *tʂʰə* of the word *bùtʂʰə* 'year' lowered in pitch in speaking. In addition, if the onset syllable of a word has a high level tone, it will most often slightly descend from high to low, sounding like a high falling tone.

Finally, pauses of speech flow may also be used to identify a phonological word. Pauses are seldom allowed inside a phonological word. Nearly all my language consultants have the tendency to self-repair what they were talking about whenever they are aware that they had an "unsuitable" pause in their speaking. Take *xaxa=su* 'teach.RDUP=NOM:teacher' as an example. If a speaker pauses between the syllables *xa* and *xa,* or between *xa* and=*su* and causes *xaxa=su* 'teach.RDUP=NOM:teacher' to sound like: *xa, xa=sù* or *xaxa,=sù,* s/he might spontaneously have speech repairs and make it sound as a continuum of *xaxa=su* 'teach.RDUP=NOM:teacher'.

Furthermore, another striking phenomenon is that all the /n/- cluster initial syllables are closely connected with the (final) vowel of their preceding syllables, making the vowel sound like a nasalized vowel. In other words, the /n/-initial is resyllabified as a preceding syllable coda. This can be viewed as an obvious boundary marker for a phonological word. Examples are given in (2. 38).

(2. 38)[29]

Isolation	**Realization**	**Gloss**
ȵi+ntɕʰi+ŋu	*ȵin+tɕʰi+ŋu*	'farming'
nɑ-ntsʰa	*nan-tsʰa*	'downward-repair: repair'
ɑ-ntɕo	*an-tɕo*	'KPFX-friend: friend
pʰɑ+ntsʰi	*pʰan+tsʰi*	'clan'
tʰuɑ+ndzə	*tʰuan+dzə*	'pot'

2. 4. 2 Prosodic classes of morphemes

There are a large number of phonological words in Ersu that are formed through affixation and cliticization. Aikhenvald (2002) sets 15 parameters for the distinction between affixes and clitics cross-linguistically. In Ersu, the following three criteria can contribute to the differentiation of affixes and clitics:

1) The tone of the affixes is closely associated with roots, but the tone of the clitics is fairly stable and often unchangeable. In other words, affixes take the tone of an associated root through spreading, and do not manifest an independent tone whereas clitics do.

2) The clitics are much freer than affixes in terms of their co-occurrence with different word class such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and so on to form a new phonological word.

3) The clitics have a much freer position than affixes. For example, some clitics can function as an independent phonological word on their own, but affixes cannot.

[29] In (2. 35), the symbol "+" indicates syllabic boundary rather than compounding boundary.

2. 4. 2. 1 Affixation

Affixes in Ersu include prefixes and suffixes. Prefixes are more productive than suffixes.

Noun class suffixes are the only one type of suffixes with the number of eight for masculine and one for feminine (§7. 1). They mainly follow animate nouns. Their tones are rather stable not only in isolation but also in realization.

Prefixes can be classified into four types:

1) Kinship prefix *ɑ-* 'KPFX-': It attaches to most of the monosyllabic kinship terms (§4. 2. 2). Its tone varies in accordance with the tone of the root. For example, *ɑ-* in the kinship term *ɑ-ɲɑ* 'aunt' takes a high level tone because the tone of the root is high level. It takes a mid level tone in the kinship term *ɑ̀-ndʑò* 'friend' because the tone of the root '*ndʑò*' is mid level.

2) The homophonous **locative prefix** *ɑ-* attaches to the demonstrative *tʰə* 'DEM: this' (§4. 4. 3) and some directionals (§4. 3. 1. 9). When the directionals and the demonstratives indicate a more distant place, the sound and the tone of *ɑ-* should respectively become longer and higher (§2. 5). This is just as Haiman (1983: 783) claims: "The linguistic distance between expressions corresponds to the conceptual distance between them." In Ersu, the correlation between vowel length and distance in this context reflects what he defines as "iconic motivation" (Haiman 1983: 783).

3) Adjective prefix *yɑ-*: It is used for most of the adjectives. The tone of *yɑ-* varies in accordance with the tone of the adjectival root. For example, *yɑ-*'APFX-'in the adjective *yɑ-ɱɑ* 'APFX-delicious' takes a high level tone because the tone of the root is high level. It takes a mid level tone in the adjective *yɑ̀-ndə̀* 'APFX-fat' because the tone of the root '*ndə*' is mid level. In addition, if the root has a /n/-cluster initial,

the pronunciation of /ɑ/ in the prefix *yɑ-* should be nasalized as described in §2. 4. 1. Meanwhile, the tone of *yɑ-* also changes to a falling-rising tone. Consequently, the above mentioned *yà-ndə̀* 'fat' should be actually pronounced as *yɑ̌n-də̀* in realization.

4) Directional verb prefixes: Verbs have a rich array of prefixes. There are nine directional verbal prefixes in Ersu. They may attach to monosyllabic and disyllabic roots and also verbal phrases. Every verb (except for existential, possessive and auxiliary verbs) must bear a directional prefix in its imperative form. More details about directional verbal prefixes are given in §8. 1. 1. Here, just some examples are given.

(2. 39)

PFX	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
də-	*də-tsə*	'upward-throw:throw upward'
nə-	*nə-tsə*	'downward-throw:throw downward'
ŋə-	*ŋə-yi*	'outward-go:go out'
kʰə-	*kʰə- yi*	'inward-go:go in'
tʰə-	*tʰə-tɕʰi*	'away-give:give'
kʰuɑ-	*kʰuɑ-ndzo*	'left-grasp:grasp to the left'
ŋuɑ-	*ŋuɑ- ndzo*	'right-grasp:grasp to the right'
dʑi-	*dʑi-yi*	'upward (descriptive)-go: go upward'
ɳi-	*ɳi-yi*	'downward (descriptive)-go: go downward'

Tone spreading from the stem to the prefixes is frequently observed. In other words, when these verbal prefixes with the high level tone attach to a root, their tone in realization is often changed to keep consistency with the tone of the root. Examples are given in (2. 40).

(2. 40)

Ex.			
PFX	**Root**	**Word**	**Gloss**
də-	*xo*	*də-xo*	'call'
	ɳì	*də̀-ɳì*	'pain'
nə-	*pʰo*	*nə-pʰo*	'escape'
	nbɛ̀	*nə̀-nbɛ̀*	'cry'

In addition, all the /ə/ final prefixes will experience sound variation from /ə/ to /ɑ/

provided that the onset syllable of the root is /ɑ/ final due to vowel harmony. This is further discussed in §2. 5.

2. 4. 2. 2 Cliticization

There are four proclitics that denote directions attested in the data and enclitics are quite rich in Ersu. No endoclitics are found.

The four **proclitics** are *ɑ-kuɑ=* 'north/downstream direction=', *ɑ-ŋuɑ=* 'north/upstream direction=', *ɑ-gɑ=* 'upward/uphill direction=', *ɑ-ɳɑ=* 'downward/downhill direction=', each with a distal and remote distinction. They are bound morphemes and always co-occur with locational terms (§4. 3. 1. 9. 1).

Most of the Ersu **enclitics** cannot form a phonological word on their own, but the enclitics like the agentive marker *=su* and the genitive marker *=zɿ̀* can be a phonological word. They respectively mean 'person' and 'family'. Enclitics should always attach to a main word (host). For example, when *=su* and *=zɿ̀* are used as enclitics, they are not free words and always follow a host. Almost all the enclitics are monosyllabic except for the agentive *=yikə* (§4. 5. 1) and some clausal enclitics, for example, evidentials (§11. 1). The enclitics found in Ersu include: *=sù* '=AGT.NOM', *=yikə* 'AGT', *=và* '=ACC', *=tà* '=RLN.LOC', *=ʂə̀* 'RLN.LOC', *=pʰɛ* '=COMI', *=yi* '=DIM' and so on. In addition, these markers are enclitics rather than suffixes because they have a loose relationship with the host. Other elements can be inserted between them and the host while nothing can be inserted between suffixes and the root (§4. 5. 1). For example: Other elements can be inserted between the host *baɳi* 'listen' and the enclitic *=sù* '=NOM'. That is, *baɳi=sù* 'listen=NOM:obedient person. Lit: listen person' can take *mɑ-li* 'NEG-good' to form a phonological word *baɳi mɑ-li=sù* 'listen NEG-good=NOM:not obedient person. Lit: listen not good person'.

The enclitics often follow verbs, verbal phrases (§3 & §8), nouns, noun phrases

and pronouns (§3 & §4. 5). Unlike the above-mentioned affixes, the tone of an enclitic is stable and seldom under the influence of the root that they follow.

Clausal enclitics include topic marker =*ɲɛ̀*, evidential markers (§11. 1) =*ʤɛ̌* and =*ʤà*, interrogative marker =*ɛ̀* and =*dà*, aspectual markers (§10) =*á* 'perfective', =*gɔ* 'prospective/progressive' and so on. What deserves attention is that some of them take neither a high level tone nor a mid level tone (§2. 3. 2).

=*ɲɛ̀* is also seen to be independently used at the start of a sentence or a clause, which signalizes that the speaker is going to talk about something. Its tone is the most unstable one in Ersu. It may bear a high level tone in this context, or a mid level tone in that context, and this is quite unpredictable (§13. 5. 1).

The enclitic =*sù* often follows a verbal phrase to indicate a person or a device that undertakes the action. When it is used as an agentive nominalizer (§4. 2. 3. 1), it bears a mid level tone. However, when it is used as an independent word, *su* 'person', it bears a high level tone.

2. 4. 3 Reduplication

Reduplication is an important method to construct Ersu words and phrases that include adjectives, verbs, adjectival phrases, and verbal phrases. Reduplication seldom involves nouns apart from some onomatopoeia. The details will be respectively discussed in the coming chapters (§3, §4. 4. 2, §4. 4. 5. 2, & §8. 1. 2) of this grammar. Here, reduplication is only discussed from the perspective of phonology. Reduplicated words are disyllabic, and the tones of the two syllables are always the same. Examples are given in (2. 41).

(2. 41)

Ex.	Gloss
dʐodʐo	'short'
tʂʰatʂʰa	'magpie'
soso	'learn'
ɲɨ̀mɨ̀	'a few; a little'

Reduplicated phrases are rather complex both in syllables and tend to have more complex structure. The reduplicated phrase could lead to phonological variation of a phonological word as a whole (§2. 5. 7).

2. 4. 4 Compounding

There are a large number of Ersu words formed through compounding and compounds in Ersu form one phonological word. Ways of compounding seem to be complex (§3), and the phonology of compounds is consistent with the tone sandhi of disyllabic, trisyllabic and polysyllabic phonological words as describe in §2. 4. 1. More examples are given in Table 2. 6.

Ex. of components	Gloss	Ex. of compounds	Gloss
ʐɿ	'buy'	*ʐɿ+nkʰa*	'trade'
nkʰa	'sell'		
dzà	'food (for livestock or poultry)'	*dzà+ɚˈ*	'grass food'
ɚˈ	'grass (for livestock or poultry)'		
dzo	'water'	*dzo+ŋua*	'water buffalo'
ŋuà	'ox'		

Table 2. 6 Examples for the phonology of compounds

2. 4. 5 Phonological word and grammatical word

In Ersu, the majority of phonological words and grammatical words coincide with each other. This includes all the monosyllabic words and some of the disyllabic words, in which only when two syllables working together can realize semantic properties. For example: *kʰali* 'walnut'. If the two syllables are separated from each other in this

word, neither of them will possess any meanings associated with “walnut”.

However, there also exist the situations where phonological words and grammatical words do not coincide with each other. Firstly, one grammatical word can be formed through two or more phonological words. This can be found in many compounds and reduplicated words. For example: The compound *ŋuà+ʂʅ̀* ‘ox+meat: beef’ consists of two phonological words: *ŋuà* ‘ox’ and *ʂʅ̀* ‘meat’. The reduplicated word *ndzɻondzɻo* ‘pick up’ contains two phonological words: *ndzɻo* ‘grasp’. Secondly, one phonological word can be formed through two or more grammatical words. The cliticized phonological words well exemplify this. For example: *ʂə+tsu=sù* ‘iron+hammer=NOM:blacksmith’; *xaxa=sù* ‘teach=NOM:teacher); *latɕikù=pà* ‘Lajigu=LOC:the place of Lajigu, or the resident of Lajigu’.

2. 5 Morphophonological Processes

Morphophonological process in Ersu includes tone sandhi (§2. 5. 1), vowel harmony (§2. 5. 2), vowel lengthening (§2. 5. 3), vowel fusion (§2. 5. 4), syllable reduction (§2. 5. 5), syllable contraction (§2. 5. 6) and consonant devoicing (§2. 5. 7). Intonation patterns are presented in §2. 5. 8.

2. 5. 1 Tone sandhi

Tonal sandhi is not seen to happen across word boundaries except for reduplicated phrases (§2. 5. 7). However, this often occurs within a phonological word. The high level tone of the onset syllable of a word often changes into a high falling tone in speech (§2. 4. 1). The tone of an adjectival prefix and a verbal prefix often varies in accordance with the tone of the root (§2. 4. 2. 1). In addition, some of the clause-final enclitics take either a rising tone or a falling-rising tone (§2. 3. 2 & §2. 4. 2. 2).

2. 5. 2 Vowel harmony

Progressive vowel harmony occurs quite often in Ersu. Vowel harmony occurs

not only within a word but also between two adjacent words. As a consequence of vowel harmony, the mid central vowel /ə/ is assimilated either to the open back unrounded /ɑ/ (§2. 5. 2. 1) or to the close front unrounded /i/ (§2. 5. 2. 2).

2. 5. 2. 1 From /ə/ to /ɑ/

This assimilation is compulsory and the most frequently seen in Ersu. It is so frequent that the native speakers often mistake the harmonized pair of counterparts for synonyms. I had this experience: When I began my fieldwork in Lajigu, some people were proud to tell me that Ersu has two sets of words for the numerals "one": *tə* and *tɑ* ; "two": *nə* and *nɑ* ; and so on. Later on, I found that these alleged "synonyms" are in fact, different forms of one word under vowel harmony.

If this assimilation occurs within a phonological word, it often involves the affix and the root, the enclitic and the root. The target is often the prefix and the trigger is the root, the negative prefix *mɑ-*, the prohibitive prefix *tʰɑ-* or some of the enclitics. When this occurs across word boundaries, it often involves a classifier (trigger) and a numeral, or a demonstrative (target). The target always contains the final vowel /ə/ and the nucleus of the trigger's first syllable is either /ɑ/ or /uɑ/ or /ɑᴵ/. Examples are given in (2. 42).

(2. 42)

Type	Non-vowel Harmony		Vowel Harmony	
	Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
PFX-root	*kʰə-mi*	'catch'	*kʰɑ-mɑ*	'sleep'
	də-tɕi	'hold'	*dɑ-guɑ*	'get up'
PFX-PFX-root	*tʰə-bu*	'become'	*tʰɑ-mɑ-bu*	'not become'
	ŋə-dzŋ	'eat'	*ŋɑ-tʰɑ-dzŋ*	'must not eat'
NUM-CL	*tə - wo*	'one-CL'	*tɑ-kɑ*	'one-CL'
DEM-CL	*tʰə-wo*	'this-CL'	*tʰɑ-kɑ*	'this-CL'
root=CLTC	*nə=yikə*	'2sg=AGT'	*nɑ=và*	'2sg =ACC'

2. 5. 2. 2 from /ə/ to /i/

This assimilation is optional. Some people may speak in this way, while some others may not. Even the same person may employ it in this context, but may not in

that context. This occurs between a numeral or a pronoun ending with the vowel /ə/ and an enclitic or a lexical word that contains the phoneme /i/ including =*yi* '=GEN', =*yikə* '=AGT' and *yi* 'house'. In this context, the target is the numeral or the pronoun while the enclitic or free lexical word functions as a trigger. Examples are given in (2. 43).

(2. 43)[30]

Non-vowel Harmony		**Vowel Harmony**	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
tə yi	'one house'	*ti yi*	'one house'
nə yi	'two houses'	*ni yi*	'two houses'
tʰə=yikə	'3sg.PRT=AGT'	*tʰi=yikə*	'3sg.PRT=AGT'
tʰə=yi	'3sg.PRT=GEN'	*tʰi=yi*	'3sg.PRT=GEN'
nə=yi	'2sg =GEN'	*ni=yi*	'2sg=GEN'

2. 5. 3 Vowel lengthening

The locative prefix of a demonstrative or a directional noun (§2. 4. 2. 1), that is, *ɑ-*, may be phonetically lengthened and stressed to indicate that someone or something is quite far away (often out of a person's eyesight) in speech. For example:

(2. 44)

Ex.	**Gloss**
tʰə	'DEM:this'
ɑ-tʰə	'LPFX-DEM:this<that'
ɑ:-tʰə	'LPFX-DEM:this< that (very far away)'
kʰuɑ	'DIR:north'[31]
ɑ-kʰuɑ	'LPFX-DIR:north<far in north'
ɑ:-kʰuɑ	'LPFX-DIR:north<very far in north'

In addition, when =*và*, the accusative marker follows the objective of a clause which ends with the vowel /ɑ/, not only the onset /v/ of =*và* is often reduced to zero (§2. 2. 3. 1), but also the nucleus /ɑ/ of =*và* is merged into the /ɑ/ of the objective and the two forms are pronounced as one unit. In realization, when the /ɑ/ of the objective

[30] In realization, *ni=yi* '2sg=GEN' and *tʰi=yi* '3sg.PRT=GEN' of (2. 41) not only involve vowel harmony, but also vowel fusion (§2. 5. 4). They are respectively pronounced as *ni* '2sg.GEN' and *tʰi* '3sg.PRT.GEN'.

[31] In the Ersu community, the meaning of directionals often changes with the location of the speaker. In Lajigu, *kʰuɑ* matches the direction of north. However, I found *kʰuɑ* is an opposite direction in a neighboring village which is reached by climbing over just a mountain (§4. 3. 1. 9).

is lengthened and stressed, it covers the meaning of = *và* as shown in (2. 45)[32].

(2. 45) a. *vu* *tə-mi* *tʰɑ= và* *tʰə-ku*
wine one-QUAT:bit 3sg.PRT=ACC away-toast
'Toast him with some wine.'

b. *vu* *tə-mi* *tʰɑ:* *tʰə-ku*
wine one-QUAT:bit 3sg.PRT.ACC away-toast
'Toast him with some wine.'

2. 5. 4 Vowel fusion

The interrogative marker *-ɑ-…=ɛ̀* often causes sound change in the host that it is attached to. In this context, if the final vowel of the host is /ə/, /ɑ/, /ɛ/ or /ɳ/, the vowel is then reduced to zero and fused with the interrogative marker *=ɛ̀*. In addition, if *-ɑ-* is attached to a host that ends with a final vowel /ɑ/ by chance, this /ɑ/ is then reduced to zero and fused with the interrogative *-ɑ-*. Examples are given in (2. 44-47).

(2. 46) a. *nə* *kʰa* *ʒɳ= gə= ɛ̀*?
2sg ITRG:where go=PROS=ITRG
'Where are you going?'

b. *nə* *kʰa* *ʒɳ= gɛ̀*?
2sg ITRG:where go=PROS.ITRG
'Where are you going?'

(2. 47) a. *ɑ-kʰatʂɑ= ɛ̀*?
ITRG-healthy=ITRG
'How are you?' Lit: (Are you) healthy?

[32] From (2. 45) to (2. 52), minimal pairs are given. Example a encodes pronunciation in isolation while Example b encodes pronunciation in realization in normal speech.

b. *ɑ-kʰatʂɛ̀?*

ITRG-healthy.ITRG

'How are you?' Lit: (Are you) healthy?

(2. 48) a. *dʐa* *ŋə-ɑ-tsʰɛ=ɛ̀?*

breakfast outward-ITRG-drink=ITRG

'Have you had breakfast?' Lit: breakfast drink?

b. *dʐa* *ŋɑ-tsʰɛ̀?*

breakfast outward.ITRG-drink.ITRG

'Have you had breakfast?' Lit: breakfast drink?

(2. 49) a. *ɑ-zŋ=ɛ̀?*

ITRG-COP=ITRG

'Is it (right)?'

b. *ɑ-zɛ̀?*

ITRG-COP=ITRG

'Is it (right)?'

Another form of vowel fusion is that if the perfective aspectual marker *=ɑ́* is attached to the host that ends with the final vowel /ɑ/, /ə/ or /ɿ/, /ɑ/, /ə/ or /ɿ/ is then reduced to zero and fused with the aspectual marker. Tone sandhi also occurs in this context. More specifically, the tone of /ɑ/ or /ɿ/ changes to a rising tone as *=ɑ́*. Examples are given in (2. 50-51).

(2. 50) a. *ɑ=zŋ* *ŋuà ŋua* *yɑ+ɲo* *nɑ-nkɑ*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family ox RPT:ox ?+day:yesterday downward-sell

=á

=PFV

'My ox was sold yesterday.'

b. *ɑ=zŋ* *ŋuà ŋua* *yɑ+ɲo* *nɑ-*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family ox RPT:ox ?+day:yesterday downward-

nká

sell.PFV

'My ox was sold yesterday.'

(2. 51) a. *ɑ* *ŋə-dzŋ=á*

1sg.SLF outward-eat=PFV

'I have eaten.'

b. *ɑ* *ŋə-dzá*

1sg.SLF outward-eat.PFV

'I have eaten.'

2. 5. 5 Syllable reduction

Syllable reduction occurs in the follow context:

1) If /u/ follows the dorso-velar nasal /ŋ/, /u/ is often reduced to zero.

2) If /i/ follows the apico-alveo-palatal nasal /ɲ/, /i/ is often reduced to zero.

3) If the accusative marker *=và* follows an objective ending with the vowel /ɑ/, /v/ is often reduced to zero (§2. 5. 3).

Note that whether to keep the sound of /u/, /i/ and /v/or not to keep it is in a free variation. That is, it depends on a speaker's individual habits, likes or dislikes and it is not associated with such factors as speech speed. Examples are given in (2. 52).

(2. 52)

Ex.		Gloss
Isolation	**Realization**	
ɲi+ntɕʰi+ŋu	*ɲi+ntɕʰi+ŋ*	'grass+pull+do:farming'
tʂəŋu	*tʂəŋ*	'VCL:together'
ɲio	*ɲo*	'day'
ɲia	*ɲa*	'go'

2. 5. 6 Syllable contraction

Syllable contraction occurs within a phonological word. This phonologically conditioned assimilation involves a host and its enclitic. If the final vowel of the main word is the close back unrounded vowel /o/ and the open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/, meanwhile if the enclitic is *=yi* (diminutive marker; genitive marker; CSM aspectual marker) and *=á* (perfective aspectual marker), then syllable contraction happens between the above-mentioned vowels and the enclitics. Specifically speaking, the sound of /o/ changes into /u/ when it co-occurs with *=yi* or *=á*. The sound of /ɑ/ changes into /ɛ/ when it co-occurs with *=yi*. The process of syllable contraction is shown in Figure 2. 4.

o = á → uá

o = yi → ui

ɑ = yi → ɛi

Figure 2. 4 Process of syllable contraction

Examples for syllable contraction are given in (2. 53).

(2. 53)

Ex.		Gloss
Isolation	**Realization**	
kʰə-tso=á	*kʰə-tsuá*	'inward-cook=PFV:cooked'
nə-pʰo=á	*nə-pʰuá*	'downward-escape=PFV:escaped'
dzo=yi	*dzui*	'EXT =CSM:had'
ɑ=yi	*ɛi*[33]	'1sg.SLF=GEN:my'

[33] This syllable contraction is optional. Some people are found to pronounce it as /ɑi/.

Note that the syllable contraction described above not only looks the same as a diphthong in IPA symbols, but also sound similar to a diphthong in a fast speech flow. However, if they are in a slow speech, a pause can be caught. For example: *kʰə-tsuá* could sound like *kʰə-tsu, á*. Consequently, they should be viewed as vowel sequences rather than diphthongs. This also demonstrates that diphthongs and vowel sequences could be the same on surface but they are quite different in essence. It is then hypothesized that syllable contraction entails creation of phonetic diphthongs (§2. 1. 2. 2).

2. 5. 6 Consonant devoicing

Consonants are comparatively stable in most morphophonological context. However, there are three pairs of consonants in verbs found to be devoiced in Ersu. They share the same properties: a causative can be realized through changing the voiced consonant initial of an active into a voiceless one. This must be a vestigial transitivity-changing alternation pattern inherited from Proto-Sino-Tibetan languages (Handel 2012). Note that this does not mean that there is no other techniques to express causatives in Ersu. In fact, there is an enclitic *=su* '=CAUS' in Ersu which is widely used (§8. 6). The three pairs of verbs are given in (2. 54).

(2. 54)

Active		**Causative**	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
dzɿ	'eat'	*tsɿ*	'cause… to eat'
zɿ́	'put on'	*sɿ*	'cause…to put on'
gua	'take off'	*kua*	'cause… to take off'

2. 5. 7 Intonation Patterns[34]

Ersu intonation patterns are to a large extent dependent on the tone of the ending syllable of a sentence. Since there are four types of pitch patterns (high-level,

[34] This section is just my first impression of Ersu intonation patterns. Questions like how intonation interacts with lexical tones, and how intonation patterns function to cohere discourse and indicate contrastive focus need further studies in the future, ideally with the assistance of audio analysis software.

mid-level, rising and falling-rising) at a sentence- or clause-final slot in Ersu (§2. 3), accordingly there exist four types of intonation patterns. Examples are given in (2. 55-58).

(2. 55) *nə də dzɿ=li dʑì ma-bo, tsʰɛ=li*

2sg family eat=NOM:function CO NEG-EXT drink=NOM:function

dʑì ma=bo, su tsʰɿ ma=to.

CO NEG-EXT person invite NEG-AUX:can

'Your home has no eating, no drinking, (so you) cannot invite a person.'

(2. 56) *sɛ tə- wo=ɛ̀?*

ITRG:who one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ITRG

'Who (is that)?'

(2. 57) *tʰəʳ ȵòkuà tʰə-mo=á.*

3pl.PRT all away-die=PFV

'All of them died.'

(2. 58) *nə=nɛ̀, yò=yi yadʐə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀, kʰa-tʰa-dzolo=mǎ.*

2sg=TOP 1sg.OTR=GEN child-QUAT.pl=TOP inward=PHT-look=RQT

'You, please, do not look at my children. OK?'

2. 6 Phonology of Loanwords

Sun (1982a, 1983a) assumes that loanwords are rather rare in Ersu: Mandarin Chinese account for about 10%, Tibetan and Yi respectively accounts for about 2% in the Ersu vocabulary list. However, he does not provide any statistic data such as the types of text corpora and the number of words that he has obtained.

Some local people report that Tibetan and Yi words have been borrowed into Ersu without any adaptation. They base this opinion on the fact that some of the Ersu

words have exactly the same pronunciation as the Tibetan or the Yi words. Words directly borrowed from Tibetan are often employed as evidence that Ersu are a subgroup of the Tibetans by those people who think that the Ersu should belong to the Tibetan nationality (§1. 2. 1). Since I myself know little about Tibetan and Yi, I will not discuss the Tibetan and Yi loanwords in Ersu at the present stage, but focus on Mandarin loanwords here. Tibetan and Yi loanwords in Ersu are yet to be identified in future studies.

Mandarin loanwords that come into Ersu belong to the dialect of Southwestern Mandarin Chinese. I use "Mandarin" to stand for the dialect in this section though the tone systems of Southwestern Mandarin varieties (e.g. the Entering Tone category) are not the same as standard Mandarin tone system. Through analyzing the corpora that I have collected, I find that Mandarin loanwords seldom occur in the texts pertaining to earlier times such as mythological, folkloric and historical narratives. However, they frequently occur in the texts relevant to modern times such as long conversations, and procedural and autobiographical narratives. I thus hypothesize that it is true that loanwords were not frequently found in Ersu in the 1980s when Sun (1982a, 1983a) was conducting his fieldwork. This situation has changed a lot in recent years. Through my immersion fieldwork, I observed that in daily conversation, Ersu is under much influence of Mandarin in many respects even in Lajigu, a comparatively isolated and nearly monolingual village (§1. 4. 1). Details about language change and endangerment will be provided in §14. This section only discusses Mandarin loanwords from the perspective of phonology.

Generally speaking, Mandarin loanwords come into Ersu in two different ways:

1) The Ersu directly borrow Mandarin without any adaptation. This tends to become more and more obvious and frequent in recent years. Consequently, the phonemes that are borrowed from Mandarin such as nasalized vowels are not presented in this Chapter. Otherwise, one would have to present a phonological

description of Mandarin, which can be found elsewhere (e. g. Li & Thompson 1981; Wang 1985; Yip & Rimmington 2004; etc).

2) The Ersu assimilate Mandarin into their mother tongue by making the former sound quite similar to Ersu. This applies to the words borrowed in earlier times. Therefore, it was never an easy job for me, a non-native Ersu speaker to sort out Mandarin loanwords spoken by the older speakers, especially those people who are over 70 years old. The reason is that the adapted Mandarin words sound so similar to Ersu.

The main ways to adapt Mandarin words are summarized as follows:

1) No nasals in the coda of Mandarin are heard in the Ersu loanwords. I hypothesize that this is because no codas exist in native Ersu. Similar phenomena are found in the neighboring languages such as Yi (Xu 1997) and Yongning Na (Lidz 2010:106). For example, the pronunciation of *yũ*^{51} *toŋ*^{51} (*pinyin: yùndòng*) 'MC:campaign' becomes *yùtò* 'campaign' when it enters Ersu.

2) When the diphthongs in Mandarin also exist in Ersu, they are directly borrowed. However, when the diphthongs in Mandarin do not exist in Ersu, only one of the vowels that constitute the Mandarin diphthong is kept. Most often, only the back vowel is still kept. For example, the Mandarin diphthong /uo/ is only kept the mid back unrounded vowel /o/ after it is adapted to Ersu lexicon.

3) It was observed that the sound of the /ə/ and /ɤ/in Mandarin are always changed into the mid back unrounded /o/ as the word gets borrowed.

4) Finally, most interestingly, the tones of Mandarin are all transformed into the mid level tone in Ersu.

Note that all the four ways discussed above often cooperate with each other during the whole process to borrow a Mandarin word, more strictly speaking, to make Mandarin a "new" Ersu word. Examples are given in (2. 59).

(2. 59)

pre-loan *pinyin*	**post-loan Ersu**	**Gloss**
diàngān	*diàkà*	'(electrical) pole'
yánghuǒ	*yàxò*	'match'
dàgē	*tàkò*	'the eldest brother'
gānluò	*kàlò*	'Ganluo (county)'

However, there are two Mandarin words entering Ersu in a different way. One is 'duck' and the other is 'goose'. Each of the two words ends with an open syllable in Mandarin but is borrowed into Ersu with a nasalized coda. Moreover, a stressed glottal stop is very obviously heard at the onset of the word. Finally, the vowel /ə/ in the word 'goose' in Mandarin is also changed to /ɑŋ/[35]. The tones are also transformed into the mid level tone. Details are shown in (2. 60).

(2. 60)

pre-loan *pinyin*	**post-loan Ersu**	**Gloss**
yā	*ʔyàn*	'duck'
é	*ʔwàŋ*	'goose'

In addition, some terms of the new objects that come from Han areas come into Ersu as descriptive expressions to form an indigenous Ersu neologism. Some of my consultants are very proud of this because they think that their ancestors are so clever that they could create new words. However, in fact, the neologisms created in this way are quite rare and seldom heard in daily uses. Examples are given in (2. 61).

[35] I hypothesize that 'goose' is not borrowed from Mandarin, but the native speakers insist that it should be from Mandarin rather than other neighboring languages. I also consulted the people who can speak Tibetan or Yi, but it seems to me that the word is not from those two languages, either.

(2. 61)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ʐəʐə=sù	‘crawl.RDUP=NOM:vehicle(Lit*:* crawling device)
guagua=sù	‘fly.RDUP=NOM:plane (Lit*:* flying device)
dzo-ma-si	‘water-NEG-tree:white poplar (Lit*:* tree that could not live without water)

Loan translation seems not to be effective in borrowing Mandarin words. However, there is a quite interesting word that is assumed to have come into Ersu through translation. That is, *ɱdzɿɱdzɿ* ‘lightly, Lit*:* cat cat’. The word functions to describe that it rains or snows lightly. It should have come from Mandarin *mɔ́mɔ́* (*pinyin*: *máomáo*) ‘lightly, Lit: fur fur’. I hypothesize that two steps cause Mandarin *máomáo* to become Ersu *ɱdzɿɱdzɿ*: The first step is that the person who introduced *máomáo* to the Ersu community has changed the Mandarin rising tone into Ersu high level tone. Then, *máomáo* became *mɔmɔ* (*pinyin: māomāo*) ‘cat cat’. The second step is that the person has translated *māomāo* ‘cat cat’ into Ersu *ɱdzɿɱdzɿ* ‘cat cat’ and has put it to use to describe a light rain or snow. What is interesting is that this misunderstood translation becomes the Ersu word *ɱdzɿɱdzɿ*, which is still actively used by the old people in daily conversation. Examples are given in (2. 62). Note that (2. 62a) is a Mandarin clause while (2. 62b) is an Ersu clause.

(2. 62) a. *zài xià máomao yǔ* (Mandarin)
PROG fall fur.RDUP rain
‘It is raining lightly (just as if fur is falling from the sky).’

b. *gua ɱdzɿɱdzɿ ʑo=gə* (Ersu)
rain cat.RDUP fall=PROG
‘It is raining lightly (just as if cat is falling from the sky).’

Chapter 3 Word Classes

This chapter discusses Ersu word classes, focusing on the three open word classes: nouns, verbs and adjectives. §3. 1 presents three major criteria to differentiate the three open word classes. §3. 2 demonstrates subclassification of nouns (§3. 2. 1) and verbs (§3. 2. 2). §3. 3 focuses on adjectival word classes including their structure, formation process, semantic subclasses and pragmatic functions. §3. 4 discusses the "semi-closed" word classes including adverbs and classifiers. §3. 5 introduces closed word classes including noun-related words like pronouns and demonstratives, verb-related words like modal verbs and negators, and other closed word classes such as interjections, coordinators and particles.

3. 1 Criteria to Differentiate Nouns, Verbs and Adjectives

Nouns, verbs and adjectives can be derived from one another, which demonstrate that they are open word classes. For many languages, adjectives for a long period of time have not been recognized as an independent word class (Dixon 2006a, 2010a: 62). However, if a deeper investigation is given or all relevant factors are considered, adjectives can be cross-linguistically defined (Dixon 2006a, 2010a: 62) "at the levels of morphosyntax, semantics and syntactic usage" (Pustet 2006: 60). Ersu distinguishes these three open word classes, that is, nouns, verbs and adjectives in the following respects: **morphological properties** (§3. 1. 1), **morphosyntactic properties** (§3. 1. 2) and **syntactic usages** (§3. 1. 3). This section aims to discuss the criteria to differentiate the three open word classes. Consequently, only a brief description is given here. Details are respectively given in §4 on nouns and nominal morphology, §5 on noun phrase, §8 on verbs and verb phrases and other relevant chapters of this grammar. The similarities and differences between Ersu nouns, adjectives and verbs are summarized in Table 3. 1 below.

			N	ADJ	V
morphology	number of syllables	monosyllabic	many	no	existential, modal
		disyllabic	many	many	many
		trisyllabic	few	few	many
		quadrisyllabic or more	few	no	no
	morphological features	prefix	*a-*	*ya-*	nine prefixes
		suffix	gender	no	no
		compounding	many	few	few
		inherent reduplication	few (onomatopoeia)	many	root RDUP
morphosyntax		reduplication	no	full word RDUP	prefix RDUP & full word RDUP
		derivation	no	deadjectival V	deverbal ADJ
		nominalization		no	many
		postnominal marking	yes	no	no
		aspectual marking	no	yes	yes
		negation	no	yes	yes
		prohibition	no	no, (but deadjectival V yes)	yes
		NUM+CL	yes	yes	no
		intensification	no	*ŋa, gui, làlà, t^{h}atsa*, full word RDUP	full word RDUP
		parameter of comparison	no	yes	no
syntactic usage		NP head	yes	yes, but contextually dependent	no
		predicate head	yes, intransitive predicate	yes, intransitive predicate	yes, with different transitivity properties
		NP modifier	prenominal	postnominal	not attested
		A	yes	yes	no
		S	yes	yes	
		O	yes	no	no
		OBL	yes	no	no
		V	no	no	yes
		modified by ADJ	many	not attested	few

Table 3. 1 Similarities and differences between nouns, verbs and adjectives

3. 1. 1 Morphological properties

This section discusses the morphological properties of nouns (§3. 1. 1. 1), verbs (§3. 1. 1. 2) and adjectives (§3. 1. 1. 3).

3. 1. 1. 1 Morphological properties of nouns

Many nouns are monomorphemic (§4. 2. 1), and most of them are either monosyllabic or disyllabic, such as *su* 'person', *tsə* 'cloud', *tʂɿ* 'star', *dzo* 'water'; *ndzòmò* 'official'; *gotsʰɛi* 'fate'; *kàtsʰɿ̀* 'idiot'; and many others. Trisyllabic nouns and nouns with more than three syllables are quite scarce, mainly found in some proper names. For example: *yiʂamutɕi* 'person name'; *latɕikù* 'village name'; *solomà* 'village name', etc. A few onomatopoeic nouns are inherently reduplicated, for example: *tʂʰatʂʰa* 'magpie'.

Prefixation (§2. 4. 2. 1, §4. 2. 4) is seen in kinship (§4. 3. 1. 1) and directional terms (§4. 3. 1. 9) with the prefix *a-*, for example: *a-ma* 'KPFX-mother'; *a-pa* 'KPFX-father'; *a-pu* 'KPFX-grandfather', *a-ga* 'distal-uphill' and *a-ȵa* 'distal-downhill'. Suffixation is found in gender-marked nouns (§7. 1. 1), such as *ȵo-ma* 'day-SFX.FEM:the sun'; *tsʰo-pʰa* 'dog-SFX.MAS:young person'; *gu-pʰa* 'mouse-SFX.MAS:mouse'.

Noun compounds are also attested in Ersu and they can be divided into five subtypes (§4. 2. 2). They are: 1) [class term+formative] (§4. 2. 2. 1). For example: *bɛ+tsɿ* 'insect+?:insect' and *bɛ+yo* 'insect+?:fly'; 2) [formative+class term] (§4. 2. 2. 2). For example: *ta+ȵo* '?+day:today' and *ya+ȵo* '?+day:yesterday'; 3) [N_1+N_2]→N_3 (§4. 2. 2. 3). For example: *ŋuà+tsɿ̀* 'ox+meat:beef' and *ndzà+fu* 'Han+language: Chinese'; 4) [N_1+ADJ]→N_2 (§4. 2. 2. 5). For example: *na+nbo* 'ear+deaf:deaf person' and *ɚ+tsʰi* 'stone+thin in diameter:sand'; 5) [N_1+V]→N_2 (§4. 2. 2. 5). For example: *vù+tɕò* 'head+bind:turban' and *mɛ̀+tɕi* 'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace'.

3. 1. 1. 2 Morphological properties of verbs

Monosyllabic and monomorphemic verbs are attested in Ersu including all the existential verbs (§8. 4) such as *dzo* 'EXT'; *xa* 'EXT' and *dʐa* 'EXT' and some modal verbs (§10. 2) such as *pʰa* 'MOD:can', *ȵo* 'MOD:dare' and *xo* 'MOD:need'.

Verbal enclitics are quite rich in Ersu (§3. 1. 2) but suffixes are seldom found. Ersu has nine directional verb prefixes that are often prefixed to a verbal root, causing verbs in Ersu to have a strong tendency to be disyllabic (§8. 1. 1). The nine prefixes are: *də-* 'upward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1); *nə-* 'downward' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 2); *kʰə-* 'inward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 3); *ŋə-* 'outward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 4); *tʰə-* 'away-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 5); *kʰuɑ-* 'leftward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 1); *ŋuɑ-* 'rightward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 2); *dʑi-* 'upward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 3) and *ȵi-* 'downward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 4). For example: *dɑ-la* 'upward-come: come upward', *nɑ-la* 'downward-comd:come downward', *kʰɑ-la* 'inward-come:come inward', *də-dʑima* 'upward-fear:fear'.

Some verbs are root-reduplicated (§8. 1. 2). Verbs of this type either have a reciprocal meaning, or refer to a repetitive and/or continuous action and they may also take a prefix. Some of them are inherently reduplicated (§8. 1. 2. 1), such as *də-dʐudʐu* 'encounter with each other'. Others derive from a semelfactive verb (§8. 1. 2. 2). For example: The reduplication of the root of *də-to* 'upward-jump', forms another verb, *də-toto* 'upward-jump.RDUP:dance' which literally means 'jump repeatedly for some time'.

3. 1. 1. 3 Morphological properties of adjectives

Most of the adjectival roots are monosyllabic or disyllabic (reduplicated). However, a monosyllabic root often takes a prefix, causing an adjective in Ersu to have a tendency towards disyllabicity.

Both prefixation and reduplication are found in adjectives. However, the process of prefixation and reduplication of adjectives is different from that of verbs. The

prefix of an adjective is *ɣɑ-* 'APFX-', which is never seen in nouns and verbs, but is used for a large number of adjectives. It can be viewed as a defining feature of adjectives in Ersu. For example: *ɣɑ-ɲtɕʰo* 'APFX-beautiful'; *ɣɑ-ɲtsʔ* 'APFX-tired'; *ɣɑ-ɲtɕʰu* 'APFX-good' and so on. Color adjectives form a special subset. Many take a *də-* 'APFX' prefix that is shared with verbs (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1). For example: *də-əᴵ* 'APFX-white'; *də-ɲuɑ* 'APFX-black'. Besides prefixation, there is also a large number of inherently reduplicated adjectives without any prefixes, such as *nini* 'a few, a little' and *soso* 'clean'.

Adjectives that are not prefixed or reduplicated are rather marginal in Ersu and the marjority of them are disyllabic. For example: *kʰatʂɑ* 'healthy'; *ʂaŋɑ* 'poor; sympathetic'. Adjective compounds are much scarcer. For example: *go+ də-ndzʐə* 'thorax+upward-tremble:angry', is a SV compound which consists of two free forms, a noun *go* 'thorax', and a prefixed verb *də-ndzʐə* 'upward-tremble'. Consequently, *go+ də-ndzʐə* 'thorax+upward-tremble:angry' literally means 'thorax trembles'.

3. 1. 2 Morphosyntactic properties

This section first discusses morphosyntacitc properties of nouns (§3. 1. 2. 1), verbs (§3. 1. 2. 2) and adjectives (§3. 1. 2. 3), then discusses the mutual derivation among the three word classes.

3. 1. 2. 1 Morphosyntactic properties of nouns

Reduplication, derivation and negation are not attested in nouns. Nouns may take such enclitics as *=yikə* '=AGT' (§4. 5. 2), *=və* '=ACC' (§4. 5. 3), *=yi* '=DIM' (§4. 5. 4), *=pʰɛ* '=COMI' (§4. 5. 5), *=yi* '=GEN' or *=zʔ* '=GEN:family' (§4. 5. 6), *=tə* '=ABL' (§4. 5. 7),*=pɑ* '=COMP' or *=tɕʰo* '=COMP' (§4. 5. 8). Nouns may also take a relator noun that is grammaticalized from a lexical noun, including *=pə* '=RLN.LOC:space surrounding a specific referent except for a human' (§4. 6. 2. 1), *=ʂə* '=RLN.LOC:space surrounding a specific referent often a human' (§4. 6. 2. 2),

=*tɕʰo* '=RLN.LOC:above, on' (§4. 6. 2. 3), =*tɕʰikə* '=RLN.LOC:beside' (§4. 6. 2. 4), =*tʂaŋa* '=RLN.LOC:below, under' (§4. 6. 2. 5) and =*kə* '=RLN.LOC:in, on (a plane area)' (§4. 6. 2. 6). For example:

(3. 1) *amu=yi* *vù+tɕò*
PN:male name=GEN head+bind:turban
'Amu's turban'

(3. 2) *tʰə* *ɑ-pu=ʂə̀*
DEM: this KPFX-grandfather=RLN.LOC:surrounding area
'area surrounding the old man'

In addition, a noun is most often followed by a noun classifier (§7. 1. 2) or a unit of [NUM+CL/QUAT] and when the number is *tə* 'one', either *tə* 'one' or the numeral classifier can be omitted (§7. 1. 3). For example:

(3. 3) *xuafu=kaka*
apple=NCL:roundish, no smaller than a fist
'apple'

(3. 4) a. *ɑ-pu* *tə-wo*
KPFX-grandfather one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'one old man'

b. *ɑ-pu-wo*
KPFX-grandfather-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'the old man'

c. *ɑ-pu* *tə*

KPFX-grandfather one

'an old man'

3. 1. 2. 2 Morphosyntactic properties of verbs

Verbs may have a reduplicated form. Inherent reduplication of a verb is discussed in §3. 1. 2. 2 and §8. 1. 2. 1. Reduplication is also seen at morphosyntactic level and there are different subtypes, including PFX-syllable$_1$+PFX-syllable$_2$ reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 4), V=*tɑ*+V reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 5) and *ɑ*+V+*mɑ*-V reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 6). For example, the prefix of the verb *nə-ʂʅpu* 'downward-be diligent' can be reduplicated and form the construction of *nə-ʂʅ nə-pu* 'downward-be diligent downward-be diligent:be very diligent'.

Verbs may have a negative form and a prohibitive form. These are respectively realized through the prefixes *mɑ-* 'NEG-' (§10. 1. 1. 2) and *t^{h}ɑ-* 'PHTV-' (§10. 1. 2. 1). For example, *də-ɳp^{h}i* 'upward-be cold'→*mɑ-ɳp^{h}i* 'NEG-be cold:be not cold'; *dɑ-ka* 'upward-hit' →*mɑ-ka* 'NEG-hit:not hit'; *dɑ-la* 'upward-come:come up'→*dɑ-t^{h}ɑ-la* 'upward-PHTV-come:do not come up'. Verbs also take postverbal aspectual markers (§9), such as =*gə* '=PROS/=PROG', =*á* '=PFV', =*tsà* '=PFT' and evidential markers (§11. 1. 1) such as =*dʑà* '=EVID:reported' and =*dʑɛ̌* '=EVID:reported'. Verbs also occur with modal verbs (§10. 2), such as *xo* 'need', *ɻo* 'dare' and *p^{h}ɑ* 'can'. In addition, verbs may take a causative suffix -*su* '-CAUS'. For example: *nə-ɳbɛ* 'downward-cry:cry' →*nə-ɳbɛ-su* 'downward-cry-CAUS:make…cry'.

3. 1. 2. 3 Morphosyntactic properties of adjectives

Adjectives do not take the above mentioned postnominal enclitics (§3. 1. 2. 1), but they may take a unit of [NUM+CL] and encode an anaphoric referent or the referent that can be recoverable in context. For example:

(3. 5) *ɑ-kʰua* *tə-wo*

APFX-big one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a big (referent)'

Similar to verbs, adjective can also take aspectual markers (§3. 1. 2. 2 & §9) and evidential markers (§11. 1. 1). However, there are 11 aspectual markers that can be used for verbs while only three of them can be used for adjectives. They are: =*gə* '=PROS', =*á* '=PFV' and =*tsà* '=PFT'. Adjectives never take a modal verb (§10. 2).

Adjectives have intensifying forms. Unlike a verb whose intensification is mainly realized through prefix reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 4), the intensification of an adjective is realized through three ways depending on its lexical morphology: to use preadjectival intensifier *ȵɑ=* 'very=', *gui=* 'very, very/the most='; postadjectival intensifier =*tʰatsɑ* '=too', =*làlà* '=INTS', and whole word reduplication (§3. 3. 3. 4).

Similar to verbs, the negation of an adjective is also realized through the negative marker *mɑ-* 'not'. For example: *ɑ-li* 'APFX-good' →*mɑ-li* 'NEG-good:not good' or *ɑ-li* 'APFX-good' →*ɑ-mɑ-li* 'APFX-NEG-good:not good'. An adjective never takes a prohibitive marker *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-', but it takes causative suffix *-sɯ* '-CAUS'. For example:

(3. 6) *do+kɯ* *ɑ-ntsʰə-sɯ*

eye+hole:eye APFX-quick=CAUS

'make eyesight sharp' Lit: make eye quick

3. 1. 2. 4 Mutual derivation between nouns, verbs and adjectives

Nouns are seldom used as either a verb or an adjective in Ersu. The only example is that the two relator nouns (§4. 6) =*pà* '=RLN.LOC:space surrounding a specific referent except for a human' and =*kə* '=RLN.LOC:in' may take a directional verb

prefix (§8. 1. 1) and be used as a verb. For example: *kʰə-kə* 'inward-RLN.LOC: in<(go/come) inside'; *na-pa* 'downward-RLN.LOC:space surrounding a specific referent except for a human <arrive'.

Nouns may be derived from verbs. Verbs can take a nominalizer and become a noun. Ersu has a rich set of nominalizers that follow a verb and form deverbal nominals (§4. 2. 3). They include *=su* '=NOM:agentive' (§4. 2. 3. 1), *=ta* '=NOM:instrumental/locative' (§4. 2. 3. 2), *=li* '=NOM:purposive' (§4. 2. 3. 3) and *=ʂə* '=NOM:temporal/locative' (§4. 2. 3. 4). For example:

(3. 7) *dzŋ=li*
eat=NOM
'something for eating or edible'

(3. 8) *zɻ̀=ta*
sit=NOM
'device or place for sitting'

Nouns may also be derived from an adjective through zero derivation, that is, an adjective can be used as a noun directly. This is only found in an anaphoric context or in context where the referent can be recoverable as discussed in §3. 1. 2. 3 and as shown in Example (3. 5) above. In this situation, adjectives can take a unit of [NUM+CL], but they do not take other postnominal markers that a noun often takes as discussed in §3. 1. 2. 1.

Verbs and adjectives can sometimes derive from each other. By changing the prefix of a verb into the adjectival prefix *ya-* 'APFX-', the verb can become an adjective, for example, *da-ga* 'upward-like/love' can be changed into *ya-ga* 'APFX-liking/loving'. Many adjectives in Ersu are originated from verbs and formed

in this way. In addition, when *ya-* 'APFX-' is added to the existential verbs, for example, *ɲɔ* 'EXT', it becomes an adjective *ya-ɲɔ* 'APFX-wealthy'. *ya-* 'APFX-' is also added to the monosyllabic modal verbs, for example, *pʰa* 'MOD:can', and this can make it become an adjective *ya-pʰa* 'APFX-able'. Adjectives can be verbalized when they are followed by a light verb *ŋu* 'do'. For example, *ya-ntʂʰə* 'APFX-clever'→*ya-ntʂʰə ŋu* 'APFX-clever do<be clever'. Adjectives can also be verbalized through changing the prefix *ya-* 'APFX-' into a directional verb prefix. For example: *ya-kʰua* 'APFX-big'→*da-kʰua* 'upward-big:be big or grow up'; *kʰukʰu* 'curvy.RDUP'→*nə-kʰukʰu* 'downward-curvy.RDUP:make…curvy'. A deadjectival verb functions in the same way as other verbs, taking aspectual markers, negative, prohibitive markers and so on as discussed in §3. 1. 2. 2.

3. 1. 3 Syntactic properties

Prototypically, Ersu nouns function as the head of an NP, while verbs function as the head of a predicate and adjectives function as an Nh (head noun) modifier. Nouns also occasionally modify an Nh, but they always precede the Nh which is being modified, as in (3. 9). Adjectives are typical postnominal modifiers, as in (3. 10).

(3. 9) *ɲi* *ŋga* *ta* *ŋga*
gold door one RPT:door
'a gold door (a door made of gold)'

(3. 10) *ŋga* *də-ɲi* *ta* *ŋga*
door APFX-red one RPT:door
'a red door'

Verbs can co-occur with a noun to form a noun compound, for example, *vù+ʈɕò* 'head+bind:turban', but verbs are not attested as Nh modifiers in the data.

At a clausal level, nouns and verbs occupy completely different syntactic slots,

and adjectives may occupy a syntactic slot that either a noun or a verb does, as is discussed below. §3. 1. 3. 1 discusses the syntactic functions of nouns. The syntactic functions of verbs and adjective are discussed in §3. 1. 3. 2 and §3. 1. 3. 3, respectively.

3. 1. 3. 1 Syntactic functions of nouns in a clause

A noun often functions as an A argument (subject of a transitive clause), an O argument (object of a transitive clause), an S argument (subject of an intransitive clause), an oblique (OBL), or a verbless predicate (P). Details about clause arguments and verbless predicates are given in §8. 5. 1 and §12. 1. 3. 2, respectively. Only examples are given from (3. 11) to (3. 14) here.

(3. 11) **Noun as A & O**

xidzŋgù=nɛ̀,	*pu*	*tso,*	*nbòxitsŋ=nɛ̀,*
Hidzigu(A)=TOP	potato(O)	cook(V)	Nbohidzi(A)=TOP
ʂanda	*ntsʰa*		
Shanda(O)	make(V)		

'Hidzigu was cooking potatoes, (and) Nbohidzi was making a Shanda[36]'.

(3. 12) **Noun as S**

yi	*ngongo*	*sì*	*ŋə-lə*
house(S)	empty	only	outward-remain(V).

'Only the empty house is left.'

[36] A "Hidzigu" is a kind of four-legged animal who is keen to dig the tender bamboo shoots or roots for food. It looks a bit similar to a rabbit. A "Nbohidzi" is a kind of wild rabbit. A "Shanda" is a kind of potato container which is made of bamboo. This container can still be found in some of the Ersu families.

(3. 13) **Noun as OBL**

za+bu=nè,	*əˈpʰɛ*	*tə-pʰɛ*
hundred+manage:king(A)=TOP	foot(O)	one-CL: half of a paired referent
nbò=tɕʰo	*tsɿ*	
horse(OBL)=RLN.LOC:on	put	

'The king put one foot (O) on the horse (OBL).'

(3. 14) **Noun as S and P**

a=zɿ	*pʰamo*	*dʑì*	*so+xa=nè,*
1sg.SLF=GEN:family	father(S)	also	before+time:previous time=TOP
ʂapa	*tə*		
PN:Shaba(P)	one		

'In earlier times, my father (was) also a Shaba.'

3. 1. 3. 2 Syntactic functions of verbs in a clause

Verbs always head a predicate. They can be classified into subsets of transitive (§8. 5. 2), intransitive (§8. 5. 3), ambitransitive (§8. 5. 4), ditransitive (§8. 5. 5), and extended intransitive (§8. 5. 6) verbs. Verbal transitivity is further discussed in §8. 5. Examples are given as follows:

(3. 15) **Transitive**

su+yi	*ʂapa*	*tə*	*ndza*	*la*
person+family:someone else	PN:Shaba(A)	one	drum(O)	EMPH:all
da-ba	*kʰə-nə-zɿ=tsà*			
upward-carry…on one's back(V)	inward-downward-sit(V)=PFT			

'A Shaba still carried a drum on his back (and) sat inside (the clouds).'

(3. 16) **Intransitive**

tʰə-wo=nɛ̀, *də-*

DEM:this=NUM.CL: generic and non-sticklike=TOP upward

dʑimo=á=dʑɛ̌

become rich (V) =PT=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) this person became rich.'

(3. 17) **Ambitransitive**

a. *Hailong* *ŋə-dzŋ=á*

MC:person name (S) outward-eat=PFV(V)

'Hailong has eaten.'

b. *Hailong* *pu* *si-pa* *ŋə-dzŋ*

MC:person name (A) potato(O) three-CL: pearl-like outward-eat(V)

=á

=PFV

'Hailong has eaten three potatoes.'

(3. 18) **Ditransitive**

tʰə=zì *a-ma* *silə* *psŋ-ma*

3sg.PRT=GEN:family KPFX-mother bow(O) flat-SFX.FEM:toad (E)

=và *ŋə-tɕʰi*

=ACC outward-give (V)

'His mother threw a bow (out of the door) to the toad.'

(3. 19) **Extended Intransitive**

tʰə *kafu* *duá=dʑɛ̌*

3sg.ORT(S) PN:village name(E) go.PFV (V)=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) he went to Goudong.'

3. 1. 3. 3 Syntactic functions of adjectives in a clause

Besides their prototypical function as adnominal modifiers, adjectives can also function like a noun and head an NP through zero derivation as discussed in §3. 1. 2. 4. In this situation, an adjective-headed NP shares similar properties of a noun-headed NP at a clausal level. They take the unit of [NUM+CL] and can function as A (3. 20), O (3. 21) or S (3. 22). However, they never occur as OBL in a clause. In addition, unlike an Nh that is often modified by an adjective, when a deadjectival nominal heads an NP, it is never modified by other adjectives[37].

(3. 20) *ɣɑ-kʰuɑ tə-wo ˌsɑ=tsʰuʂʰu*
APFX-big(A) one-CL:generic, non-sticklike wheat (O)=NCL:tuft-like
ŋə-dzŋ=gə
outward-eat (V)=PROG
'A big (ox) is eating the wheat (plants).'

(3. 21) *ɑ tʰə ɣɑ-kʰuɑ-wo xo*
1sg.SLF DEM:this APFX-big (O)-CL:generic, non-sticklike want
'I want the big (one).'

(3. 22) *ɣɑ-ntɕʰo tʰə-wo*
APFX-beautiful(S) DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike
nə-nbɛ nə-nbɛ...
downward-cry downward-cry
'The beautiful (daughter) cried again and again…'

Note that although adjectives can head an NP, the referents they denote can be either anaphorically or contextually retrieved. This is very common in Ersu, a "topic-comment" language (§12. 1. 2). This also implies that an adjective-headed NP

[37] The co-occurrence of two or more adjectives in an NP is never seen in the data.

seldom occurs as an initial mention in a context unless the referent is contextually retrieved.

Adjectives are also observed to occupy the predicate slot in a clause, functioning as a verbless predicate (§8. 5. 1). In a context like this, the subject of the clause is a "topic" and the role that the adjective undertakes is a "comment". Even if an adjective operates as a predicate, it does not share the same properties as a verb. As discussed in §3. 1. 2. 4, adjectives never take a prohibitive marker or a modal verb. However, they occasionally take one of the three aspectual markers *=gə* '=PROS', *=á* '=PFV' and *=tsà* '=PFT'. In addition, they do not have the various patterns of transitivity that a verb may have[38]. For example:

(3. 23) a. *na+ku* *mɑ-ntsʰu=gə*
ear+hole:ear NEG-good (P)=PROS
'The hearing will not be good.' Lit: Ear will not (be) good.

b. *na+ku* *mɑ-ntsʰu=á*
ear+hole:ear NEG-good (P)=PFV
'The hearing was not good.' Lit: Ear (was) not good.

3. 2 Semantic Subclassification of Nouns and Verbs

3. 2. 1 Subclasses of nouns

In general, proper nouns and common nouns constitute two major subclasses of Ersu nouns.

A proper noun (§4. 3. 2) denotes a specific referent rather than a class of referents. Proper nouns include animal names (often names given to farming or pet animals. For

[38] This is unlike Qiang (LaPolla & Huang 2004) and Yongning Na (Lidz 2010:362), in which an adjective or a "stative verb" (Lidz 2010:362) possesses the majority of verbal properties like taking aspectual markers, co-occurrence with an auxiliary verb, etc. when the adjective heads a predicate. In Ersu, only deadjectival verbs are observed to operate in this way (§3. 1. 2. 4).

example: *ʂʅma* 'a dog's name'), human names (§4. 3. 2. 1) and place names (§4. 3. 2. 2). Human names are often attested in recordings but seldom in daily conversation apart from young people's names. This is so because in Ersu, when people are talking about those belonging to an older generation or the same generation, they are accustomed to using kin terms rather than names. Otherwise, they would be regarded as being impolite (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3). Indigenous Ersu place names are often the names of neighboring villages and mountains. Other place names like cities, provinces and countries are borrowed from Yi or Southwestern Mandarin Chinese.

A common noun (§4. 3. 1) denotes a class of referents rather than a specific referent. Semantically, common nouns can be further classified into terms for kinship (§4. 3. 1. 1), human body parts (§4. 3. 1. 2), fauna (§4. 3. 1. 3), flora (§4. 3. 1. 4), nature (§4. 3. 1. 5), cultural artifacts (§4. 3. 1. 6), vocation (§4. 3. 1. 7), direction (§4. 3. 1. 9), and time (§4. 3. 1. 10). Abstract nouns or nouns referring to concepts are seldom found in Ersu. Among the subclasses of nouns, kinship nouns form a closed subclass. The temporal noun that denotes the smallest unit of time is half days such as *so* 'morning' and *nkʰua* 'night'. There are no words corresponding to the English words such as "hour, minute or second". However, the locative nominalizers *=ta* '=NOM' and*=ʂə* '=NOM' may follow an SV structure to indicate the exact time when an event happens (§4. 2. 3. 2). For example, *la ŋ=ʂə* 'chicken crow=NOM:rooster-crowing time, dawn'. Instrumental nouns and vocational nouns are also often realized through nominalization. For example: *ʂə tsu=sù* 'iron punch=NOM:iron-punch person, blacksmith').

3. 2. 2 Subclasses of verbs

Verbs in Ersu can be generally subclassfied into three subclasses: volitional verbs (§8. 2. 1), verbs denoting internal state (§8. 2. 2) and observable phenomena (§8. 2. 3). However, it is never an easy job to classify verbs into subclasses from the perspective of semantics. Firstly, the meaning of verbs may overlap. For example, similar to Galo, there exist a large number of words sharing the meaning of "cut".

Ersu "cut" words are also related to "manner, result and/or type of entity affected" (Post 2007: 250). Examples are given in Table 3. 2. Secondly, there is also a considerable number of verbs that are polysemous or polyfunctional. For example, *la* may mean 'come, get, shout, plough, chicken, fertilizer, etc.' All these factors may contribute to the difficulty of the subclassifying of verbs in Ersu. Consequently, the semantic subclassification of verbs in this grammar is only a rough approximation.

Ex.	Gloss
nə-dodzi	'downward-cut (with great strength, often to cut bones)'
nə-tsitsi	'downward-cut.RDUP (at a very fast speed and repeatedly)'
nɑ-lualua	'downward-cut.RDUP (cut at a slow speed and in order)'
də̀-zì	'upward-cut (with a knife, just once)'
də-ɲpʰɛ	'upward-cut (into halves)'
nɑ-tsɑ	'downward-cut (into regular segments)'
də-ntsʰuntsʰu	'upward-cut.RDUP (to make something sharpened)'
tʰɑ-lua	'away-cut (with great strength and two hands holding a tool, often cutting trees and firewood)'

Table 3. 2 Examples of Ersu "cut" words

3. 3 Adjectives[39]

As mentioned in §3. 1. 2. 4, adjectives in Ersu are mainly derived from verbs. In addition, adjectives and nouns and verbs may be derived from each other. Adjectives thus form an open word class in Ersu. This section presents Ersu adjectives with a focus on their morphological structure (§3. 3. 1), semantic subsets (§3. 3. 2) and other features of adjectives (§3. 3. 3).

3. 3. 1 Morphological structure

Morphologically, the majority of Ersu adjectives either take a *yɑ-* 'APFX-' prefix (§3. 3. 1. 1), or *də-* prefix (§3. 3. 1. 2), or are inherently reduplicated (§3. 3. 1. 3). However, there are also a few adjectives whose structure is unpredictable (§3. 3. 1. 4).

[39] A version of this section was presented at The 14th China International Conference on Comtemporary Linguistics (Zhang 2012b).

3. 3. 1. 1 Adjectives taking a *yɑ-* 'APFX-' prefix

Most Ersu adjectives that denote dimension, value, physical property, speed, difficulty and a few of the adjectives that denote human propensity (§3. 3. 2) take a *yɑ-* 'APFX-' prefix. Examples are given in Table3. 3.

Semantic Subtype	Ex.	Gloss
dimension	*yɑ-kʰuɑ*	'APFX-big'
value	*yɑ-li*	'APFX-useful'
speed	*yɑ-ntʂʰə*	'APFX-quick'
difficulty	*yɑ-ndzɿ*	'APFX-difficult'
human propensity	*yɑ-ŋɑ*	'APFX-strong'
	yɑ-tɕo	'APFX-obedient'
physical property	*yɑ-ntɕʰo*	'APFX-beautiful'
	yɑ-ndə	'APFX-fat, good'
	yɑ-tsɿ	'APFX-severe'
	yɑ-tɕo	'APFX-obedient'
	yɑ-ntsʰu	'APFX-kind'

Table 3. 3 Examples of *yɑ*-prefixed adjectives

Similar to Lizu (Chirkova 2008), Ersu *yɑ-* 'APFX-' also functions a bit like a comparative marker though its function in comparison is not quite transparent because the standard for comparison does not occur in context. For example: Although *yɑdzə yɑ-ntɕʰo tə-wo* 'child APFX-beautiful one-CL:generic, non-sticklike' literally means 'a beautiful child', a listener may often infer that the speaker is talking about 'a more beautiful child than other children'. However, this can only be understood from context. Consequently, adjectives of this type do not have an inherent scalar meaning, and their exact meanings depend on the context (§3. 3. 3. 1. 1).

3. 3. 1. 2 Adjectives taking a *də-* 'APFX-'prefix

Nearly all the taste- and flavor-related adjectives, and most color-related adjectives take a *də-* 'APFX-'prefix. Examples are given in Table 3. 4.

Semantic Type	Ex.	Gloss
color	*də-ə˥*	'APFX-white'
	də-ȵi	'APFX-red'
	də-nua	'APFX- black'
taste	*də-tʂʰo*	'APFX-a right sort of taste'
	də-tsʰʅ	'APFX-bitter'
flavor	*də-xə*	'APFX-fragrant'
	də-ŋua	'APFX-smelly'

Table 3. 4 Examples of *də-* 'APFX-' prefixed Adjectives

However, there are some exceptions for the morphological structure of the above-mentioned adjectives that encode color and taste. They are:

1) Three color-related adjectives: *ə˥nbu* 'purple', *nuanbu* 'blue' and *ȵi+za* 'grass+tender:green' do not take *də-* 'APFX-prefix'. Among them, *ȵi+za* 'grass+tender:green' is an N+ADJ compound, that is, two monomorphemic words *ȵi* 'grass' and *za* 'tender' forming the adjective *ȵi+za* 'grass+tender:green', which literally means 'tender grass'.

2) One taste-related adjective: *zʅ+kʰə-tʂʅ* 'taste+inward-bite:spicy' also does not take the prefix *də-* 'APFX-'. It is an S+V compound, that is, two monomorphemic words *zʅ* 'taste' and *kʰə-tʂʅ* 'inward-bite' forming the adjective *zʅ+kʰə-tʂʅ* 'taste+inward-bite:spicy'. It literally means 'bite the taste'.

3. 3. 1. 3 Inherently reduplicated adjectives

Many adjectives encoding dimension, age, and physical property are inherently reduplicated. Examples are given in Table 3. 5.

Semantic Type	Ex.	Gloss
dimension	*nini*	'low.RDUP:low'
	ɳiɳi	'shallow.RDUP:shallow'
	dʐodʐo	'short.RDUP:short'
age	*momo*	'old.RDUP:old'
	zaza	'immature.RDUP:immature'
physical property	*dzidzi*	'wet.RDUP:wet'
	ɳoɳo	'soft.RDUP:soft'
	gogo	'light.RDUP:light'

Table 3. 5 Examples of inherently reduplicated adjectives

3. 3. 1. 4 Morphologically unpredictable adjectives[40]

Ersu has some adjectives whose structure is unpredictable. Phonologically, they are either disyllabic or trisyllabic. And there are also a couple of idiomatically quadrisyllabic adjectives. Morphologically, some of them are compounds, but most of them are monomorphemic. Adjectives of this kind involve nearly all the semantic subsets. All these morphologically unpredictable adjectives found in my data are listed in Table 3. 6.

[40] Reported by my language consultants, Wang A'mu and Wang Zhongquan, many of the monomorphemic adjectives listed in Table 3. 5 are borrowed from Yi or Tibetan. That is the reason why they take on a different structure with other words. This needs further investigation from the perspective of comparative linguistics.

Semantic Subtype	Ex.	Gloss	Structure
dimension	*mala*	'small'	monomorphemic
	ə^{l}+ʂə	'road+long:far'	compound
	ə^{l}+ɳi	'road+little:near'	compound
	zotugà	'square'	monomorphemic
age	*tʂ^{h}o-p^{h}a*	'dog-SFX.MAS:young'	monomorphemic
	pali	'old (inanimate)'	monomorphemic
	ʂʅzua	'new (inanimate)'	monomorphemic
value	*p^{h}ɛ+k^{h}ua*	'value+big:expensive'	compound
	p^{h}ɛ+ɳiɳi	'value+little:cheap'	compound
	ʂaŋa	'poor'	monomorphemic
physical property	*lia*	'sticky'	monomorphemic
	tɕipa	'tight'	monomorphemic
	kakapi	'hard'	partially reduplicated monomorphemic
	ŋada	'blunt'	prefixed monomorphemic
	kuazakuaza	'loose.RDUP'	fully reduplicated and idiomatic
	ɲtsʰʅɲtsʰɛ	'slippery'	monomorphemic
	bɛtsʰu	'rough'	monomorphemic
	dalədalə	'thick and sticky (liquid)'	fully reduplicated and idiomatic
	dzopudzoga	'thin and watery (liquid)'	The reduplicated *dzo* means 'water', but the meanings of *pu* and *ga* are unknown in this idiomatic word.
	k^{h}uyadzo	'heavy (only used to describe the weight of a child)'	monomorphemic and idiomatic
	ləpi	'heavy (a person's own feelings about the weight of loads carried on one's back)'	monomorphemic
color	*ɲuanbu*	'blue'	monomorphemic
	ə^{l}nbu	'purple'	monomorphemic
	ɳi+za	'grass+tender:green'	compound
human propensity	*ʂə+psʅ*	'louse+flat:greedy'	compound
	zava	'happy'	monomorphemic

Table 3. 6 Whole list of morphologically unpredictable adjectives

3. 3. 2 Semantic subclassification and origin of adjectives

Ersu has a fairly large number of adjectives that may involve most of the

semantic subsets of adjectives suggested by Dixon (2010b: 73-74). The semantic subsets of adjectives in Ersu include: DIMENSION (§3. 3. 2. 1), AGE (§3. 3. 2. 2), VALUE (§3. 3. 2. 3), PHYSICAL PROPERTY (§3. 3. 2. 4), COLOR (§3. 3. 2. 5), HUMAN PROPENSITY (§3. 3. 2. 6), SPEED (§3. 3. 2. 7), DIFFICULTY (§3. 3. 2. 8) and QUANTIFICATION (§3. 3. 2. 9)[41]. However, many Ersu adjectives are polysemous and their meanings may be contextually dependent. Consequently, the above semantic subclassification of Ersu adjectives is mainly subclassified in accordance with the meanings in isolation. This is discussed in §3. 3. 2. 10.

Many of the adjectives are derived from verbs through changing the directional verb prefixes into the adjectival prefix *ɣɑ-* 'APFX-'. Adjectives can also be formed through eliminating the directional prefixes of verbs. If the verbal root is monosyllabic, the root should be reduplicated to form an adjective. For example, *tʰə-mo* 'away-become old' is a verb. When the prefix *tʰə-* 'away-' is not used and the monosyllabic verbal root *mo* 'become old' is reduplicated, an adjective *momo* 'old.RDUP:old' is thus formed. The minimal pairs in (3. 24) below show the differences between a verb and an adjective used in discourse. In (3. 24a), *tʰə-mo* 'away-become old' is used as a verbal predicate while in (3. 24b), *momo* 'old.RDUP:old' is used as an adjectival Nh modifier in an NP.

[41] The number of adjectives obtained through elicitation is much larger than that of the adjectives attested in the data collected through narratives and daily observations. The parameters that I abide by to identify adjectives are discussed in §3. 2. The adjectives listed here are those adjectives that possess salient properties of adjectives, such as functioning as NP modifiers and so on. For example:*ŋɑ-dʐɑ* 'outward-(be) horizontal', *də-tsʰu* 'upward-(be) vertical', *nə-bu* 'downward-(be) right', *tʰə-yo* 'away-(be) wrong', *nə-ʂŋpu* 'downward-(be) diligent' and many others are all reported to be "adjectives" through elicitation. However, with more careful and deeper investigation into the data, I found that in fact, these words should be subclassified as verbs. The reasons are: 1) they have typical verbal morphology; 2) they never function as NP modifier; 3) they never head an NP. On the contrary, they always occupy the slot of verbal predicates and take postverbal markers that are not found in adjectives. Words of this type are not listed here though they may be "like" adjectives in semantics (Dixon 2010b: 63).

(3. 24) a. *a* *tə+ɲo+ɲo* *tʰə-mo=gə.¶* *nə* *yotsɛ*

1sg.SLF one+day+day:every day away-become old=PROG 2sg self

yotsɛ *tʰə-siŋu* *xo*

self away-look after MOD:need

'I am becoming old day by day. You need to look after yourself.'

b. *ɑ-pu* *momo* *tə-wo*

KPFX-grandfather old.RDUP:old one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

dɑ-lá

upward-come.PFV

'An old man came up.'

3. 3. 2. 1 Dimension

Apart from the four morphologically unpredictable adjectives listed in Table 3. 6, there are fifteen adjectives encoding dimension of a referent in Ersu. All of them are derived from verbs. There are seven pairs of antonyms except for the adjective *yɑ-bo* 'APFX-flat' that does not have an antonymic counterpart. They are given in Table 3. 7.

As Verbs		As Adjectives		As Verbs		As Adjectives	
Ex.	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
də-kʰua	'become big'	*ya-kʰua*	'big'	*nə-mala*	'become small'	*mala*	'small'
də-ɳbo	'become tall'	*ya-ɳbo*	'tall'	*nə-ni*	'become low'	*nini*	'low'
də-ʂə	'become long'	*ya-ʂə*	'long'	*kʰə-dʐo*	'become short'	*dʐodʐo*	'short'
ŋə-zɿ	'become wide'	*ya-zɿ*	'wide'	*kʰə-ə˥*	'become narrow'	*ə˥ə˥*	'narrow'
də-bu	'become thick'	*ya-bu*	'thick (in height)'	*kʰə-psɿpsɿ*	'become thin'	*psɿpsɿ*	'thin (in height)'
ŋə-bi	'become thick'	*ya-bi*	'thick(in diameter)'	*kʰə-tsʰi*	'become thin'	*tsʰitsʰi*	'thin (in diameter)'
nə-nɛ	'become deep'	*ya-nɛ*	'deep'	*nə-ɳi*	'become shallow'	*ɳiɳi*	'shallow'
ŋə-bo	'become flat'	*ya-bo*	'flat'				

Table 3. 7 Adjectives encoding dimension and their origin

3. 3. 2. 2 Age

There are five adjectives encoding age. All of them are derived from verbs. In addition, they show animate and inanimate distinction. There are two pairs of antonyms. They are given in Table 3. 8.

As Verbs		As Adjectives		As Verbs		As Adjectives	
Ex.	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
tʰə-mo	'getting old'	*momo*	'old (animate)'	*ŋə-tʂʰo-pʰa*	'getting young'	*tʂʰo-pʰa*	'young (animate)'
				ŋə-zaza	'getting young'	*zaza*	'immature (non-human animate)'
na-pʰali	'getting old'	*pʰali*	'old (inanimate)'	*ŋə-ʂɿtsua*	'become new'	*ʂɿtsua*	'new (inanimate)'

Table 3. 8 Adjectives encoding age and their origin

There are no age adjectives for middle-aged animates. In Ersu, people often employ exact or approximate temporal nouns in this situation. For example:

(3. 25) *su* *ŋuà+zɿ* *əˈ* *tə-wo*

person five+ten:fifty age one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a 50-year-old person'

People also occasionally use an idiom-like phrase to describe a middle-aged person. That is, *mɑ-mo=dʑ̊à làlà* 'NEG-old=EVID:reported INTS→middle-aged'. For example:

(3. 26) *su* *mɑ-mo=dʑ̊à* *làlà* *tə-wo*

person NEG-old=EVID:reported INTS one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a middle-aged person' Lit: a not very old person

3. 3. 2. 3 Value

Apart from the three morphologically unpredictable adjectives listed in Table 3. 6, there is one adjective found in Ersu that encodes value. It is *yɑ-li* 'APFX-useful'. The adjective is derived from the modal verb *li* 'MOD:willing to' (§10. 2. 2. 4). It can be translated into 'good'. However, it only refers to something that is good in condition and can still be used. For example:

(3. 27) *yi=ta* *yɑ-li* *tɑ-ka*

sleep=NOM APFX-useful one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a good bed'

Though (3. 27) is translated into 'a good bed', it implies that the bed is in good condition and can be used for sleeping.

3. 3. 2. 4 Physical property

The number of adjectives encoding physical property must be quite large. Many of them are formed through compounding as shown in Table 3. 6 and many derived

from verbs. I thus hypothesize that the exact number of this subclass of adjectives must be much larger than the data demonstrate. In the data, there are 11 morphologically unpredictable adjectives encoding physical property as listed in Table 3. 6. There are also another 13 adjectives encoding physical property. They are either inherently reduplicated or take a *ya-* 'APFX-' prefix. There are three pairs of antonyms while other seven adjectives do not have an antonymic counterpart. They are given in Table 3. 9.

As Verbs		As Adjectives		As Verbs		As Adjectives	
Ex.	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
ŋə-ntɕʰo	'be beautiful'	*ya-ntɕʰo*	'beautiful'				
də-dzə	'be comfortable'	*ya-dzə*	'comfortable'				
də-ndɛ	'be fat, good'	*ya-ndɛ*	'fat; good'				
ŋə-ntsʰu	'be kind'	*ya-ntsʰu*	'kind'				
də-nbu	'be strong'	*ya-nbu*	'strong (in shape)'				
nɑ-tsʰua	'be sharp'	*ya-tsʰua*	'sharp'				
dɑ-tsʰa	'be hot'	*tsʰatsʰa*	'hot'	*də-npʰi*	'be cold'	*npʰinpʰi*	'cold'
ŋə-tsutsu	'be straight'	*tsutsu*	'straight'	*də-kʰukʰu*	'be curvy'	*kʰukʰu*	'curvy'
unattested		*ya-mɑ*	'delicious'	unattested		*mɑ-ya*	'not tasty'
		ʒuʒu	'harmonious'				

Table 3. 9 Adjectives encoding physical property and their origin

3. 3. 2. 5 Color

There are ten adjectives encoding color in Ersu. Six of them take a *də-* 'upward-' prefix. Four of them that take a directional verb prefix can be directly used as verbs. When they are used as verbs, they function as intransitive verbal predicate. When they are used as adjectives, they function as post-head modifiers in an NP. They are given in Table 3. 10.

As Verbs		As Adjectives	
Ex.	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
də-ə́	'be white'	*də-ə́*	'white'
də-nua	'be black'	*də-nua*	'black'
də-n̩i	'be red'	*də-n̩i*	'red'
də-ʂu	'be yellow'	*də-ʂu*	'yellow'
də-ɕo	'be grey'	*də-ɕo*	'grey'
də-puka	'be two or more colors mixed'	*də-puka*	'two or more colors mixed'
ŋə-ə́nbu	'be purple'	*ə́nbu*	'purple'
ŋə-nuanbu	'be blue'	*nuanbu*	'blue'
ŋə-n̩i+za	'be green'	*n̩i+za*	'grass+tender:green'
unattested		*asika*	'brown'

Table 3. 10 Adjectives encoding color and their origin

3. 3. 2. 6 Human propensity

There are ten adjectives encoding human propensity found in the data. Six of them take a *yə-* 'APFX-' prefix. Two of them are compounds and there are another two disyllabic adjectives that are not inherently reduplicated. Four of them are derived from verbs. They are given in Table 3. 11.

As Verbs		As Adjectives	
Ex.	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
də-ŋa	'become strong'	*yə-ŋa*	'strong (in one's mind)'
də-ntʂʰə	'become clever'	*yə-ntʂʰə*	'clever'
də-nkʰua	'become skillful'	*yə-nkʰua*	'skillful'
unattested		*yə-tɕo*	'obedient'
		yə-tsʅ	'evil'
		yə-kʰàkʰà	'cunning'
də-kʰatʂa	'become healthy'	*kʰatʂa*	'healthy'
unattested		*ʂə+psʅ*	'louse+flat: greedy'[42]
		go+də-ndzə	'angry'
		zava	'happy'

Table 3. 11 Adjectives encoding human propensity and their origin

[42] *ʂə+psʅ* 'louse+flat:greedy' literally means 'a flat louse'. A hungry louse is flat and it must be very greedy for food. Consequently, it metaphorically means 'greedy'. This is also found in Mandarin Chinese. When people want to say someone who is clingy, Han people also say: He/She is like a flat louse.

3. 3. 2. 7 Speed

There is only one adjective that encodes speed in Ersu. It is *ya-ntʂʰə* 'APFX-quick'. Its origin is unknown and the word does not have an antonymic counterpart that denotes 'slow' in Ersu.

3. 3. 2. 8 Difficulty

There are two antonyms that encode difficulty in Ersu. They are *ya-ndzɿ* 'difficult' and *ya-ʒɿ* 'easy'. They are not derived from verbs and their origin is also unknown.

3. 3. 2. 9 Quantification

There are five adjectives encoding quantification in Ersu. Each of them has an antonymic counterpart. Similar to the "speed" adjectives, they are also not derived from verbs and their origin is unknown. They are given in Table 3. 12.

Ex.	Meaning	Ex.	Meaning
ya-mi	'much/many'	*ŋiŋi*	'little/few'
da-ba	'full'	*gogo*	'empty'
ya-nɛ	'heavy'		'light'

Table 3. 12 Adjectives encoding quantification

3. 3. 2. 10 Semantic extensions of adjectives

In Ersu, some adjectives are polysemous due to semantic extensions or rhetoric uses. This means that the meaning of adjectives in Ersu is sometimes contextually dependent. For example: *ya-kʰua* 'APFX-big' means 'big', but it also denotes 'eldest (among siblings), respected, terrific, etc.' in discourse. Examples are given in (3. 28), (3. 29) and (3. 30) below.

(3. 28) *ɑ=zɳ̀* *ɑ-pa* *yɑ-k^{h}uɑ-wo*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-father APFX-big-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'my eldest uncle'. Lit: I family big father

(3. 29) *davɑ-wo=nɛ̀* *yɑ-k^{h}uɑ=tə*

guest-CL:generic, non-sticklike APFX-big=DES

'A guest (should be) respected.' Lit: guest big

(3. 30) *ni* *gamɛ* *ts^{h}u* *da* *ts^{h}ɑ=nɛ̀* *tɕiyi*

2sg.GEN clothes such one CL:two-dimensional=TOP always

*ndənd*ə *yɑ-k^{h}uɑ=tə*, *ɑdɑ*?

really APFX-big=DES ITRG

'Yours, such a piece of clothes, (is) always and really terrific, are you sure?'

Another example is the adjective *tsutsu* 'straight'. It can also be used to describe a human being. Its meaning is then metaphorically extended to refer to a person's personality, that is, 'honest, straight and direct'. For example:

(3. 31) *t^{h}ə=nɛ̀,* *su* *tsutsu* *tə-wo*

3sg.PRT=TOP person straight one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'He (is) a straight person.' Lit: He a straight person

Many other adjectives are also polysemous in Ersu. For example: *mala* 'small, youngest (among siblings)'; *yɑ-ndɛ* 'APFX-fat, good (in situation), kind (in heart)'; *yɑ-ntʂ^{h}ə* 'APFX-quick, clever (quick in reaction)'; *yɑ-nɛ* 'APFX-deep, heavy'; *yɑ-bu* 'APFX-thick (in height), heavy'; *yɑ-ndzɳ* 'APFX-difficult, tired, boring', etc. Consequently, the semantic subsets of adjectives described from §3. 3. 2. 1 to §3. 3. 2. 9 are a rough subclassification, not a precise one because sometimes, there is no distinct boundary in the meanings of adjectives.

3. 3. 3. Other features of adjectives

Adjectives can function as either an NP modifier, or an NP head, or a verbless predicate head as discussed in §3. 1. 3. 3. This section discusses other features of adjectives including comparative construction (§3. 3. 3. 1), negation (§3. 3. 3. 2), adverb-like uses (§3. 3. 3. 3), intensification (§3. 3. 3. 4), verbalization (§3. 3. 3. 5) and the uses of adjectives in discourse (§3. 3. 3. 6).

3. 3. 3. 1 Comparative construction[43]

In Ersu, only adjectives can function as "the parameter of comparison" (Dixon, 2010b: 82). This is unlike Qiang, in which "certain verbs …can appear as the predicate in a comparative construction" (LaPolla & Huang 2004). Ersu comparative constructions can be divided into three subtypes: underlying comparison (§3. 3. 3. 1. 1), "comparative of discrepancy" (§3. 3. 3. 1. 2) and "comparative of equality" (§3. 3. 3. 1. 3) (Post 2008).

3. 3. 3. 1. 1 Underlying comparison

Underlying comparison refers to the situation where *ya-* 'APFX-' prefixed adjectives are used and the parameters of comparison are understood only through context. Adjectives of this type do not have an inherent scalar meaning and their exact meanings depend on the context. In a *ya-* 'APFX-' prefixed adjective, *ya-* 'APFX-' functions a bit like a marker of comparative of discrepancy though this function is not quite transparent because the referent being compared does not occur in context. The reason for this might be because in Ersu, ellipsis quite frequently occurs in context (§13. 3). As is (3. 32), though the sentence literally means 'a beautiful bird', a listener may often infer that the speaker is talking about 'a more beautiful bird than some particular bird or something else'.

[43] It is observed that only *ya-* 'APFX-' prefixed adjectives can be used to comparative constructions. Inherent reduplicated adjectives and other types of adjectives are not used in this way.

(3. 32) *tʰə* *xuɑ=yi=nɛ̀,* *yɑ-ntɕʰo* *tə-wo*

DEM:this bird=DIM=TOP APFX-beautiful one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'This small bird (is) beautiful.'

3. 3. 3. 1. 2 Comparative of discrepancy

Comparative of discrepancy in Ersu is realized through the structure of [$NP_{1\ being\ compared}$]+[$NP_{2\ standard\ of\ comparison}$]+*tɕʰo(là)*$_{comparative\ marker}$+Adjective$_{parameter\ of\ comparison}$. The meaning of comparative of discrepancy is similar to English 'Mary is more beautiful than Jane.' The adjective in the context functions as a verbless predicate and no verbs are used any more. *là* in the comparative marker *tɕʰo(là)* only has a 'stress' function like English 'much' in 'much more than' and it is sometimes ellipsed. For example:

(3. 33) *nə* *ɑ=tɕʰo* *là* *yɑ-ntʂʰə ,*

2sg 1sg.SLF=COMP:more than EMPH:all APFX-quick

ɑ=zɿ=ɛ̀?

ITRG=COP=ITRG

'You (are) much quicker than me, aren't you?'[44]

(3. 34) *nə=zɿ̀* *vɛ-bɛ̀* *ɑ=zɿ̀=tɕʰò*

2sg=GEN:family pig-QUAT.pl1sg.SLF=GEN:family=COMP:more than

la *yɑ-ndə* *tə-bɛ̀*

EMPH:all APFX-fat one-QUAT.pl

'Your pigs (are) much fatter than mine.'

3. 3. 3. 1. 3 Comparative of equality

The basic structure of comparative of equality is: [$NP_{1\ being\ compared}$]+[$NP_{2\ standard\ of\ comparison}$]+*pɑ*$_{comparative\ marker}$+Adjective$_{parameter\ of\ comparison}$. Comparative of equality is similar to English 'Mary is as beautiful as Jane.' For example:

[44] This is an example taken down when two children were planning to have a race competition. It literally means 'You are quicker than me, aren't you?', but it really means that 'Are you quicker than me? No, not at all. I am quicker than you! Otherwise, let's run and see!'

(3. 35) *Hefei* *Chengdu=pa* *ɑ=kʰuɑ=è?*

MC: city name MC: city name=COMP: as…as ITRG=big= ITRG

'Is Hefei as big as Chengdu?'

(3. 36) *nə+tsʰɿ* *əˈ* *xɑ=nè,* *tʰi* *gamɛ*

two+ten:twenty age LINK:when=TOP 3sg.GEN body size

yadzi̯ə *ʒɿ̀* *ngə* *bùtʂhə̀* *tʰə-bu=tə* *pa*

child eight nine year outward-reach=DES COMP: as…as

sì *kʰua.*

only big

'When (he was) twenty years old, his body size (was) only as big as that of a child who was about eight or nine years old.'

(3. 35) and (3. 36) above indicate that when an adjective with *ya-* 'APFX-' prefix is used for comparative of equality, the prefix is ellipsed. This demonstrates that *ya-* denotes underlying comparison. However, *pa* 'COMP:as…as' also occurs with the interrogative pronoun *tsʰo* 'how many/much' to exclaim a powerful feeling, forming a structure of [$NP_{1being\ compared}$]+[$tsʰo_{standard\ of\ comparison}$]+$pa_{comparative\ marker}$+$Adjective_{parameter\ of\ comparison}$. In this situation, *ya-* 'APFX-' is obligatorily used. For example:

(3. 37) *yadzi̯ə=nè,* *tɑ+ɲo* *ɑ=yi* *da-tua,*

child=TOP ?this+day: today 1sg.SLF=AGT upward-hug

tsʰo=pa *ya-tɕo,* *nə* *xɑ-mɑ-sɛ*

ITRG:how many/much APFX-obedient 2sg understand=NEG-understand

'When I was taking care of the child, as you would not believe, how obedient he was!' Lit: Child, today I hug, as much as obedient, you not understand.

3. 3. 3. 2 Negation

As shown in Table 3. 1, Ersu adjectives can be negated. The negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-' that an adjective takes is the same as that used by a verb. Negation is mainly attached to an adjective with *yɑ-* prefix. The negative form of other adjectives like inherently reduplicated adjectives and *də-* prefixed COLOR adjectives does not occur quite often. The only one found in the data is *ʒuʒu* 'harmonious'→*mɑ-ʒuʒu* 'NEG-harmonious'. Negation of adjectives is realized through replacing the prefix *yɑ-* 'APFX-' with the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-', or through inserting *mɑ-* 'NEG-' between the prefix *yɑ-* 'APFX-' and the adjectival root, forming a structure either of [NEG+adjectival root] or of [APFX+NEG+adjectival root] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 3) as shown in Table 3. 13.

Original Form		**Negative Form**	
yɑ-ntɕʰo	'APFX-beautiful'	*mɑ-ntɕʰo*	'NEG-beautiful:not beautiful'
		yɑ-mɑ-ntɕʰo	'APFX-NEG-beautiful:not beautiful'
yɑ-ndə	'APFX-fat'	*mɑ-ndə*	'NEG-fat:not fat'
		yɑ-mɑ-ndə	'APFX-NEG-fat:not fat'
yɑ-ntsʰu	'APFX-kind'	*mɑ-ntsʰu*	'NEG-kind:not kind'
		yɑ-mɑ-ntsʰu	'APFX-NEG-kind:not kind'
yɑ-ʒɿ	'APFX-easy'	*mɑ-ʒɿ*	'NEG-easy:not easy'
		yɑ-mɑ-ʒɿ	'APFX-NEG-easy:not easy'
yɑ-tɕo	'APFX-obedient'	*mɑ-tɕo*	'NEG-obedient:not obedient'
		yɑ-mɑ-tɕo	'APFX-NEG-obedient:not obedient'
yɑ-ntʂʰə	'APFX-clever'	*mɑ-ntʂʰə*	'NEG-clever:not clever'
		yɑ-mɑ-ntʂʰə	'APFX-NEG-clever:not clever'

Table 3. 13 Examples of adjective negation

Note that the two negative constructions of adjectives, that is, [NEG+adjectival root] and [APFX+NEG+adjectival root] show pragmatic differences in discourse. [NEG+adjectival root] implies a factual description of the state or the properties of a referent. For example: *mɑ-ntɕʰo* 'NEG-beautiful:not beautiful' describes the fact that a referent is not beautiful without any other implications. However, [APFX+NEG+ adjectival root] means that the state or the properties of a referent are not the same as one imagines. For example: if a speaker takes it for granted that a referent is beautiful,

but when s/he sees the referent personally and finds that the referent is not as beautiful as s/he originally thinks, *ɣɑ-mɑ-ntɕʰo* 'APFX-NEG-beautiful:not beautiful' rather than *mɑ-ntɕʰo* 'NEG-beautiful:not beautiful' is used in this context. [APFX+NEG+ adjectival root] is also used in the context when a speaker shows her/his self-modesty in response to someone else's praises of a referent that is closely associated with the speaker, especially a referent that is possessed by the speaker. For example:

(3. 38) A: *ni* *zìyì* *tsɛ* *ɣɑ-ntsʰo*
2sg.GEN daughter really APFX-beautiful
'Your daughter (is) really beautiful.'
B: *gui=ɣɑ-mɑ-ntsʰo*
INTS:very, very=APFX-NEG-beautiful
'Not very beautiful.'

(3. 39) A: *ni* *vɛ-bɛ̀* *ɣɑ-ɑ=ndə=ɛ̀*?
2sg.GEN pig-QUAT.pl APFX-ITRG=fat=ITRG
'(Are) your pigs fat?'
B: *gui=ɣɑ-mɑ-ndə*
INTS:very, very=APFX-NEG-fat
'Not very fat.'

As shown in (3. 38) and (3. 39), when Speaker B hears that Speaker A is praising a referent that s/he possesses, Speaker B uses the structure of [APFX+NEG+ adjectival root] to show her/his self-modesty even if her/his daughter is really beautiful or her/his pigs are really fat. In this context, the structure of [NEG+adjectival root] is not used. Otherwise, Speaker A would misunderstand that Speaker B is not satisfied with the praises.

In addition, there is one exception in terms of the negation of adjectives. The

negation of *ya-ma* 'APFX-delicious' does not abide by the above mentioned principle. Its negation is to negate the prefix *ya-* 'APFX-' rather than the root *ma* 'delicious'. That is: *ma-ya* 'NEG-APFX:not delicious'. This is a strategy to avoid misunderstandings in utterance. If the negation of *ya-ma* 'APFX-delicious' followed the normal principle for adjectival negation, it would be **ma-ma*. Then it would sound the same as the noun classifier *mama*, which categorizes roundish and pearl-like inanimates or female and diminutive referents (§7. 1. 2. 1).

3. 3. 3. 3 Adverb-like uses

In Ersu, adverbs are rather few. The adverbial notions like frequency, degree, time-duration, intensity of a verbal action are most frequently denoted by the unit of [NUM+VCL/V]. Details about the unit of [NUM+VCL/V] are given in §7. 2. Here, only two examples are given.

(3. 40) *tʰə=kə* *si-tʂaˈ* *da-lá*
DEM:this-RLN.LOC:in<here three-VCL:time upward-come=PFV
'came (upward) here three times'

(3. 41) *si* *xaˈ*
three sway
'swayed three times'

However, adjectives can also occasionally modify a verbal predicate, functioning like an adverb. Unlike the unit of [NUM+VCL/V] that always precedes a verbal predicate, adjectives follow it. For example:

(3. 42) *nua* *tsopa-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *ŋpʰo* *ma-ndzə.*
PN:Yi robber=QUAT.pl=TOP steal NEG-comfortable
'The Yi robbers cannot steal (things) easily.' Lit: Yi robbers steal not comfortable.

(3. 43) *sò+tsə* *tɑ+ŋɔ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=yikə*

blood+egg:pustule ?this+day:today=TOP 1sg.SLF=AGT

ŋə-pʰi, *yadzə-wo* *kʰɑ-mɑ*

outward-tear…open child-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-sleep

yɑ-li, *mɑ-zɿ=ɑ?*

APFX-good NEG-COP=ITRG:right

"Today, I tore the pustule open (and) the child slept well. Right?" Lit: I tear pustule today, the child sleep good.

(3. 42) and (3. 43) show that the adjectives *mɑ-ndzə* 'NEG-comfortable' and *yɑ-li*, 'APFX-good' respectively modify the verbal predicates, *ŋpʰo* 'steal' and *kʰɑ-mɑ*, 'inward-sleep'. They both follow the verbal predicates.

3. 3. 3. 4. Intensification

An adjective can be intensified depending on its morphology:

1) If the adjective takes a *yɑ-* 'APFX-' prefix or other prefixes, it follows either the preadjectival intensifiers *ŋɑ=* 'very=', or, *gui=* 'very, very =', as in (3. 44) and (3. 45) or precedes the postadjectival intensifier *=tʰatsɑ* '=too' as in (3. 46).

(3. 44) ***ŋɑ=* 'very=' intensified adjectives**

a. *ŋɑ=yɑ-ntɕʰo*

INTS:very=APFX-beautiful

'very beautiful'

b. *ŋɑ=yɑ-ndə*

INTS:very=APFX-fat

'very fat'

c. *ɲa=də-ɲi*

INTS:very =APFX-red

'very red'

(3. 45) ***gui*= 'very, very=' intensified adjectives**

a. *gui=yɑ-ntɕʰo*

INTS:very, very =APFX-beautiful

'very, very beautiful'

b. *gui=yɑ-ndə*

INTS:very, very=APFX-fat

'very, very fat'

c. *gui=də-ɲi*

INTS:very, very=APFX-red

'very, very red'

(3. 46) ***=tʰatsa* '=too' intensified adjectives**

a. *yɑ-ntɕʰo=tʰatsa*

APFX-beautiful=INTS: too

'too beautiful'

b. *yɑ-ndə=tʰatsa*

APFX-good=INTS: too

'too good'

c. *də-ɲi=tʰatsa*

APFX-red= INTS: too

'too red'

2) When an adjective is inherently reduplicated, its intensification is realized through adding a reduplicated intensifier =*làlà*, as in (3. 47).

(3. 47)	*soso*	'clean'	<	*soso=làlà*	'very clean'
	nini	'little'	<	*nini=làlà*	'very few, little'
	tsutsu	'straight'	<	*tsutsu=làlà*	'very straight'
	xixi	'smooth'	<	*xixi=làlà*	'very smooth'
	gogo	'empty'	<	*gogo=làlà*	'very empty'
	ʒuʒu	'safe/harmonious'	<	*ʒuʒu=làlà*	'very safe/harmonious'

Note that the =*làlà* intensification does not always function to intensify the adjectives. It may be used to stress that the speaker is satisfied with the state being described. For example, *soso=làlà* 'clean.RDUP=INTS:very clean' does not necessarily mean 'very clean'. It may imply that the surroundings are 'clean' either in his/her opinion or to his/her satisfaction.

3) If an adjective is not prefixed or not inherently reduplicated (quite rare, see §3. 3. 1. 4), the intensification is also realized through *ȵɑ=* 'very=', *gui=* 'very, very =' and =*tʰatsa* '=too' as those prefixed adjectives. However, the adjective *kʰatʂa* 'healthy' has two forms of reduplication, either '*kʰakʰatʂatʂatʂa*', or '*kʰatʂa kʰatʂa*'with the former to express wishes and the latter to respond to a greeting. For example:

(3. 48) *kʰakʰatʂatʂa*
healthy.RDUP
'Wish you healthy!'

(3. 49) A: *ɑ=kʰatʂa=ɛ̀*?
ITRG=healthITRG
'How are you?" Lit: Healthy?
B: *kʰatʂa kʰatʂa*
healthy.RDUP
'Fine.' Lit: Healthy.

3. 3. 3. 5 Verbalization

Most adjectives in Ersu are derived from verbs as discussed in §3. 1. 2. 4 and as shown §3. 3. 2. This means that by changing the prefix *ɣɑ-* 'APFX-' of the adjectives, adjectives can resume to being verbs. Verbs of this type possess the majority of verbal properties, but they cannot take a prohibitive prefix *t^hɑ-*. For example: **dɑ-t^hɑ- k^huɑ* 'upward-PHTV-become big→Do not become big' is not acceptable.

Adjectives can also be verbalized when they occur with the light verb *nə-ŋu* 'downward-do' (§8. 7). Deadjectival verbs of this type share nearly all the properties with other verbs. They may head a predicate, take aspectual markers, negative prefix *mɑ-* 'NEG-' and prohibitive prefix *t^hɑ-* 'PHTV-', and so on. Examples are given in (3. 50), (3. 51) and (3. 52).

(3. 50) *ʒuʒu=làlà* *nə-ŋu.*
harmonious=INTS downward-do
'Do be united together.' Lit: Do harmonious.

(3. 51) *sɻʅi* *mɑ=ndə* *nɑ=t^hɑ=ŋu.*
heart NEG =good downward=PHTV=do
'(A person's) heart should not be bad.' Lit: Heart do not be not good.

(3. 52) *zɑ+pu=tə=nɛ̀* *su* *mɑ-nts^{h}u* *tə-bɛ=và*
hundred+manage:king=one=TOP person NEG-good one-QUAT.pl=ACC
ʂaŋa *ŋu* *xo=dʑà*
sympathetic do MOD:need=EVID:reported
'A king needs to sympathize with those poor people.' Lit: A king need do sympathetic (to) people not good.

3. 3. 3. 6 Appropriate uses of adjectives in discourse

Adjectives must be used in an appropriate way in Ersu. Firstly, it is true that the

major function of an adjective is to operate as an NP modifier, forming an NP like [Nh+ADJ+NUM+CL]. However, the data indicate that there are many more NPs of [Nh+NUM+CL] than those of [Nh+ADJ+NUM+CL]. Secondly, as can be seen from §3. 3. 2, many adjectives do not have an antonymic counterpart apart from the semantic subsets of DIMENSION and AGE. Derogatory djectives such as 'ugly', 'disgusting', 'annoying' and 'jealous' are hardly ever used in discourse though they might be elicited.

However, there is an SV structure used rather widely and frequently among Lajigu Ersu to denote the referents that a speaker does not like. It is also used to berate or curse the addressees in a direct way. The SV structure is: *vù də-tsu* 'head upward-smash:head to be smashed'. For example, if someone dislikes or hates someone else, s/he might say:

(3. 53) *t^hə-wo* *vù* *də-tsu*
DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike head upward-smash
'this disgusting/annoying/evil (referent).' Lit: this whose head should be smashed.

The structure also applies to the context such as: when people are threatening a barking dog; when people are driving poorly-behaved livestock; when people are severely scolding a poorly-behaved child; when people are carelessly falling over themselves; and many other context.

It is also not appropriate to use adjectives to praise or flatter the addressees in a direct way, though it is acceptable to use them to describe a 'third person'. For example, it is suitable to say something like "He/She is (so) kind/nice/pretty….", but not suitable to say: "You are (so) kind/nice/pretty…." because sentences of this kind sound ironic to a native Ersu addressee. Instead, an euphemistic strategy (that the Ersu think) is employed. They would accept sentences like: "There has never been a person

who is as (kind/nice/pretty…) as you." and/or "How could you be so (kind/nice/pretty…)?" For example: in (3. 54), (3. 54a) is viewed as being not appropriate though it is semantically and syntactically correct. Only (3. 54b) and (3. 54c) are acceptable.

(3. 54) *a. *nə ɳa=ya-ntɕho=tə.*

2sg INTS:very=APFX-beautiful=DES

'You (are) very beautiful.'

b. *nə a-ntɕi ɳa=ya-ntɕho=tə=è?*

2sg ITRG-how INTS:very=APFX-beautiful=DES=ITRG

'How could you be so beautiful?'

c. *su nə pa=ntɕ^{h}o=tə ma-dzo.*

person 2sg COMP:as…as=beautiful=DES NEG=EXT

'There is no person who is as beautiful as you.' Lit: Not have person as beautiful as you.

3. 4 Semi-closed Word Classes

Semi-closed word classes include adverbs (§3. 4. 1) and classifiers (§3. 4. 2).

3. 4. 1 Adverbs

Ersu locational terms (§4. 3. 1. 8), temporal terms (§4. 3. 1. 10), the unit of [NUM+VCL] (§7. 2) and adjectives (§3. 3. 3. 3) can be used like adverbs and modify a verbal predicate. In other words, adverbial function in Ersu can be undertaken by other word classes such as the classifier class, some members of the noun class and the adjective class. In this sense, adverbs in Ersu form an open class. However, there are some adverbs that form a closed class in the data. They can neither be derived from other word classes, nor can they function like other word classes. In addition, they are always formally unmarked. Consequently, I view Ersu adverbs as a

semi-open word class.

Adverbs are fairly simple both in syntactical functions and in semantic types. Syntactically, they function to modify either adjectival modifiers or adjectival intransitive predicates (or copula complements) or verbal predicates or a whole clause. The majority of the adverbs precede the adjectives or verbs being modified, which is unlike adjectives that always follow those words being modified. Semantically, adverbs could be further classified as manner adverbs (§3. 4. 1. 1), degree adverbs (§3. 4. 1. 2) and temporal adverbs (§3. 4. 1. 3).

3. 4. 1. 1 Manner adverbs

Manner adverbs describe how an action is undertaken or going on. They are used to modify verbal predicates. There are five manner adverbs found in Ersu. They are given in Table 3. 14.

Ex.	Gloss
zaza	'carefully'
la	'still, after all'
tɕiyi	'continuously, successively'
tʰakua	'continuously, successively (to describe previous actions)'
totua	'mutually'

Table 3. 14 List of manner adverbs

Example (3. 55) below demonstrates that an adverb is used to modify a verbal predicate in discourse.

(3. 55**)** *tʰə yadzə̠-wo tɕiyi*
DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike continuously
nə-ɲbɛ nə-ɲbɛ
downward-cry downward-cry
'The child continuously cried and cried.'

3. 4. 1 .2 Degree adverbs

Degree adverbs function to modify either adjectives or verbs, especially when an adjective heads a verbless predicate. They are used to denote the degree of the action or the state being described. The six degree adverbs found are given in Table 3. 15.

Ex.	Gloss
ɲa=	'INTS:very'
gui=	'INTS:very, very'
tsɿndə	'really'
ndəndə	'very really'
vatɕi	'almost'
la	'EMPH:all, completely'

Table 3. 15 List of degree adverbs

The uses of the degree adverbs *ɲa=* 'INTS:very' and *gui=* 'INTS:very, very' are used as intensifiers to modify adjectives as discussed in §3. 3. 3. 4. Example (3. 56) below demonstrates that a degree adverb *la* 'EMPH:all, completely' is used to modify a verbal predicate in discourse.

(3. 56**)** *t^{h}i-xa=nè,* *a-nɛ* *la* *bo*

DEM:this-time<now=TOP ITRG-what EMPH:all EXT

'Now, we have everything (that we need).' Lit: Now, what all have.

3. 4. 1. 3 Temporal adverbs

Besides those locational and temporal nouns that function as adverbs, there are also three temporal adverbs attested in the data. They are not nouns because they cannot head an NP, cannot act as S/A, or O in a clause, cannot take post-nominal case markers (§4. 5). They prototypically modify a whole clause or a verbal predicate. They can occur at the beginning of, in the middle of or at the end of a clause. The three temporal adverbs are given in Table 3. 16.

Ex.	Gloss
tʰətɕua	'from now on'
dzokua	'immediately'
ŋ̍axa	'usually'

Table 3. 16 List of time adverbs

Example (3. 57) below demonstrates the uses of temporal adverb *tʰətɕua* 'from now on' in a clause.

(3. 57) a. *yò-dzi=nɛ̀,* *tʰətɕua=nɛ̀,* *ta-wa*
1sg.SLF-dl=TOP from now on=TOP one-CL:circle<together
dzo=gə=tsʰuá
live=PROS=IMMI
'We two will immediately live together from now on.'

b. *tʰətɕua=nɛ̀,* *yò-dzi=nɛ̀,* *ta-wa*
from now on=TOP 1sg.SLF-dl=TOP one-CL:circle<together
dzo=gə=tsʰuá
live=PROS=IMMI
'We two will immediately live together from now on.'

c. *yò-dzi=nɛ̀,* *ta-wa* *tʰətɕua=nɛ̀,*
1sg.SLF-dl=TOP one-CL:circle<together from now on=TOP
dzo=gə=tsʰuá
live=PROS=IMMI
'We two will immediately live together from now on.'

d. *yò-dzi=nɛ̀,* *tɑ-wa* *dzo=gə=ts^{h}uá*

1sg.SLF-dl=TOP one-CL:circle<together live=PROS=IMMI

t^{h}ətɕuɑ=nɛ̀

from now on=TOP

'We two will immediately live together from now on.'

(3. 57a) above is directly extracted from a narrative. However, my language consultant Wang Zhongquan later paraphrased the clause as shown in (3. 57b-d). These paraphrased clauses are also accepted by other consultants with the exception that (3. 57d) sounds not very "natural" to some of the native speakers. This shows that the constituent slot that a temporal adverb occupies in a clause is quite flexible.

3. 4. 2 Classifiers

Ersu has a fairly complex nominal and verbal action classification system. Classifiers can be further classified as noun classifiers, numeral classifiers and verbal action classifiers. Numeral classifiers consist of sortal classifiers, mensural classifiers and "sortal-mensural" classifiers. Noun classifiers and some bound numeral classifiers form a closed class. However, there are many nouns that function as numeral classifiers and classifiers are also found to head an NP in anaphoric way or to be used as a verbless predicate. This implies that classifiers in Ersu form a "semi-open" word class as is further discussed in §7.

3. 5 Closed Word Classes

Similar to Thai word classes (Iwasaki and Ingkaphirom 2005: 9-11), Ersu closed word classes can also be further classified as "noun-related" words (§3. 5. 1), "verb-related" words (§3. 5. 2) and other words are grouped as "miscellaneous" words (§3. 5. 3).

3. 5. 1 Noun-related words

"Noun-related" words either possess some features of, or are associated with

nouns and/or noun phrases. They include pronouns (§4. 4), numerals (§6), relator nouns (§4. 6) and quantifiers (§4. 7). Pronouns are rich in Ersu. They consist of personal pronouns (§4. 4. 1), autonomous and reflexive pronouns (§4. 4. 2), demonstrative pronouns (§4. 4. 3), interrogative pronouns (§4. 4. 4), indefinite pronouns (§4. 4. 5), and anaphoric pronouns (§4. 4. 6). Syntactically, they are quite similar to nouns in discourse. Numerals include cardinal numerals (§6. 1), ordinal numerals (§6. 2), fractions and times (§6. 3), and words for approximate numeration (§6. 4). Numerals often co-occur with a classifier, forming a unit of [NUM+CL], to modify a Nh in an NP. Relator nouns are derived from lexical nouns and still resemble lexical nouns in some aspects. They often follow a head noun to denote locational or temporal concepts (§4. 6). Quantifiers are similar to classifiers in their syntactic functions and constituent order. They often directly follow a noun, or follow a numeral to "quantify" an Nh in an NP (§4. 7).

3. 5. 2 Verb-related words

"Verb-related" words are either subsets of verb class or those that co-occur with verbs and/or verbal phrases. Closed verb-related words include copulas, existential verbs, modal verbs, negators, and some particles. There are two copulas with limited uses in discourse (§8. 3). There are five existential verbs attested in the data, which function to categorize nominals (§8. 4). Modal verbs supply the main verbs with additional modal information such as obligative, abilitive, volitive, desiderative and venturative (§10. 2). There are two negators, prohibitive *t^ha-* 'PHTV-' (§10. 1. 2. 2) and negative *ma-* 'NEG-' (§10. 1. 1. 2). Particles are rich in Ersu. They help denote aspects (§9), mood and modality (§10), evidentiality (§11). They are given specific terms in this grammar. For example, the particles that denote evidentiality are called "evidential markers" or "evidentials" throughout this work.

3. 5. 3 Miscellaneous words

Miscellaneous closed word classes include coordinators, clause linkers and

onomatopoeia. Ersu coordinators include *la* 'CO:and/or' and *dʑì* 'CO:also'. They may connect two adjacent lexemes or two coordinate clauses. Clause linkers include *dà* 'but' (§12. 4. 2), *lə* (§12. 4. 2), *tʰə* 'if' (§12. 3. 2. 1), *ànɛ̀* 'after' (§12. 3. 2. 2. 1), *xa* 'when' (§12. 3. 2. 2. 2), *dəsi* 'until then' (§12. 3. 2. 2. 3), *buànɛ̀* 'because' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 1), *tətəyì* 'so/consequently' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 2) and *dʑigə* 'subsequently/consequently' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 3). An onomatopoeia is often the sound that a referent produces and then used as its name. For example: *tʂʰatʂʰa* 'magpie' is the sound produced by a magpie.

Chapter 4 Nouns and Nominal Morphology

This chapter first gives an overview of nouns (§4. 1), then discusses noun structure (§4. 2), semantic subtypes of nouns (§4. 3), pronouns (§4. 4), case markers (§4. 5), relator nouns (§4. 6), diminutive marking (§4. 7) and quantification (§4. 8).

4. 1 An Overview

As discussed in §3. 1, nouns in Ersu are different from verbs and adjectives in morphological properties (§3. 1. 1), syntactic functions (§3. 1. 2) and slots occupied in an NP (§3. 1. 3). Nouns "are words that express highly and obviously time-stable concepts" (Payne 1997: 33) and "have the function of identifying the participants that are involved in the action, process or state that the verbs denote" (Bhat & Ningomba 1997: 65). Nouns in Ersu are either monomorphemic (§4. 2. 1) or compounded (§4. 2. 2). Nouns can also be derived from verbs or verb phrases through nominalization. More specifically, a verb or a verbal phrase bearing a nominalizer can form a noun, such as agentive marker =*su*, purposive marker =*li*, temporal/locative marker =*ʂə̀* and instrumental/locative marker=*ta* (§4. 2. 3). In addition, many kinship terms and directional terms take an *ɑ*-prefix. They are the only affixed nouns found in Ersu (§4. 2. 4). Nouns can be semantically divided into proper nouns and common nouns, as summarized in §3. 2. 1. A proper noun often denotes a specific referent while a common noun often denotes a class of referents. §4. 3 presents a full semantic subclassification of nouns. Pronouns and demonstratives share some common properties with common nouns, but they also have their own features. This is discussed in §4. 4. Nouns may bear case markers including genitive marker =*yì*, accusative marker =*vɑ̀*, comitative marker =$p^{h}ɛ$, etc (§4. 5). There are six relator nouns found in Ersu, which follows a head noun and denote either locative or temporal concepts. This is given in §4. 6. §4. 7 presents diminutive marking. This chapter ends with a discussion of nominal quantification (§4. 8).

4. 2 Noun Structure

As mentioned in §4. 1, nouns can be morphologically divided into three types in terms of their components: **monomorphemic nouns, compounds, nominalizations and affixed nouns**. The majority of monomorphemic nouns are either monosyllabic or disyllabic. Trisyllabic nouns and nouns consisting of more than three syllables seem to exist mainly in proper nouns in Ersu (§3. 1. 1. 1). Among them, some of the disyllabic nouns are inherently reduplicated. Compounds are either "bound-rooted" or "free-rooted". "Bound-rooted" compounds contain a bound root and an attached morpheme whose semantics are not known[45]. "Free-rooted" compounds consist of two free roots, forming a [root+root] structure. Free rooted compounds are quite rich in Ersu. They can be further divided into endocentric or coordinate noun-noun [N+N] compounds, endocentric noun-adjective [N+ADJ] compounds, and exocentric noun-verb [N+V] compounds. Some nouns derive from verbs or verb phrases through taking a nominalizer (§4. 1). Kinship terms and directional terms constitute a separate subset. As mentioned in §2. 4. 2. 1 and §3. 1. 1. 1, many of them take an *a*-prefix. They are either disyllabic or trisyllabic (§4. 2. 4). A summary of noun structure is given in Table 4. 1.

[45] A historical analysis of TB languages might reveal the meanings of those semantically "empty" morphemes. They may well go back to some archaic desemanticized lexemes. This is something like the English compound "cranberry". In which the meaning of "cran-" is an allomorph of "crane" (Krueger 1963).

noun structure				reference
monomorphemic nouns (§4. 2. 1)	monosyllabic			§4. 2. 1. 1
	disyllabic	common		§4. 2. 1. 2
		reduplicated		§4. 2. 1. 3
	trisyllabic nouns and nouns with more than three syllables			§4. 2. 1. 4
compounds (§4. 2. 2)	bound-rooted	[class term +formative]		§4. 2. 2. 1
		[formative + class term]		§4. 2. 2. 2
	free-rooted[46]	[N_1+N_2]→N_3	endocentric/coordinate	§4. 2. 2. 3
		[N_1+ADJ]→N_2	endocentric	§4. 2. 2. 4
		[N_1+V]→N_2	exocentric	§4. 2. 2. 5
nominalizations (§4. 2. 3)	agentive			§4. 2. 3. 1
	instrumental/locative			§4. 2. 3. 2
	purposive			§4. 2. 3. 3
	temporal/locative			§4. 2. 3. 4
affixed nouns (§4. 2. 4)	*a*-prefixed kinship terms and directional terms			

Table 4. 1 An overview of noun structure

4. 2. 1 Monomorphemic nouns

Monomorphemic nouns involve all semantic subtypes of nouns. They may contain only one syllable or several syllables, though the majority are either monosyllabic or disyllabic (§4. 2. 1). Examples are given from (4. 1) to (4. 4).

4. 2. 1. 1 Monosyllabic and monomorphemic nouns

(4. 1)

Ex.	**Gloss**
tʂʅ	'star'
tsə	'cloud'
vɛ	'pig'
la	'chicken'
ts^{h}ʅ̀	'salt'
ntʂ^{h}ə	'rice'
mɛ	'soldier'
su	'person'
xi	'bamboo'
pzʅ	'rope'

[46] The classification of Ersu compounds is consistent with the parameters suggested by Aikhenvald (2007) and Lidz (2010:168). Consequently, I also use the terms "endocentric" and "exocentric" that they do.

4. 2. 1. 2 Common disyllabic and monomorphemic nouns[47]

(4. 2)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	tsʰuala	'graveyard'
	yadʐə	'child'
	kàtʂʰʅ̀	'idiot'
	dàvà	'guest'
	loəʳ	'dove'
	kʰali	'walnut'
	sòmò	'strength'
	mitsʰu	'gun'
	badʐə	'money'

4. 2. 1. 3 Reduplicated disyllabic and monomorphemic nouns

(4. 3)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	bubu	'lane'
	ʂʅʂʅ	'weasel'
	tʂʰatʂʰa	'magpie'
	ndʑondʑo	'tassel'
	tʂʰotʂʰo	'knob'
	lala	'soul'
	ȵoȵo	'chest'
	papa	'foodstuff'
	mimi	'pork (used when an adult talks to a child)'
	ȵuȵu	'seedlings'

4. 2. 1. 4 Trisyllabic and monomorphemic nouns and nouns with more than three syllables

Trisyllabic monomorphemic nouns and monomorphemic nouns with more than three syllables are mainly attested in some proper nouns. For example:

[47] These disyllabic monomorphemic nouns might be also bound-rooted compounds from the perspective of historical linguistics as mentioned in Note 45. However, the meanings of the morphemes are not attested in modern Ersu. I thus group them as monomorphemic nouns here.

(4. 4)

Ex.	Gloss
latɕikù	'the name of a village'
solomà	'the name of a village'
ts^{h}ikumɛɲo	'the name of a village'
xə^{l}tawanga	'the name of a person'
dʑimaə^{l}xa	'the name of a persom'
yiʂamutɕi	'the name of a person'

4. 2. 2 Compounds

Compounds are productive in Ersu. They are mostly attested in some nouns that denote kinship, fauna, flora, nature, time, direction and body parts. Among them, $[N_1+N_2]\rightarrow N_3$ compounds are most frequently observed. In this section, different types of compounds (see Table 4. 1) are respectively presented from §4. 2. 2. 1 to §4. 2. 2. 5.

4. 2. 2. 1 [class term + formative]

Compounds of this type have a common semantic nucleus ("root"), which denotes the class of the referent. The semantics of the attached formative remains unknown[48]. Only when the root and the attachment occur with each other, forming a "Generic-Specific compound template" (Post 2006), can the compound be meaningful in isolation. The semantic nucleus here heads the compound and denotes a "class", which is similar to "class term" also found in other Asian languages such as Tani (Post 2006), Galo (Post 2007:278) and Thai (Haas 1964). For example, *bɛ+dzɿ* is a generic term for insects. In this compound, *bɛ* denotes the class of insects. It should occur with the formative *dzɿ*, though the meaning of *dzɿ* is unclear. Otherwise, either *bɛ* or *dzɿ* would mean nothing, or would mean something else irrelevant to insects. However, in realization, only *bɛ* can be contextually used to denote 'insects'. When *bɛ* occurs with other attachment and denotes a specific kind of insects, then *dzɿ* is not used. Examples are given in (4. 5).

[48] The meaning of the "formative" in §4. 2. 2. 1 and §4. 2. 2. 2 may have historically meant something, but the meaning is not transparent to modern Ersu speakers and the formations are not productive. This needs further studies from the perspective of historical linguistics as mentioned in Note 45 and Note 47.

(4. 5) **Insect**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	bɛ+dzɿ	'insect+? :insect'
	bɛ+yo	'insect+? :'fly'
	bɛ+ts^{h}a	'insect+ ?hot: mosquito'
	bɛ+kua	'insect+?:white grub'

This type of compounds also involves nature terms (4. 6) and body parts (4. 7).

(4. 6) **Nature**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	mɛ̀	'nature-related terms, such as fire, sky, earth'
	mɛ̀+tɕò	'nature+?wrap:sky'
	mɛ+li	'nature+? :earth'
	mɛ+ba	'nature+?burn:flame'
	mɛ+ts^{h}a	'nature+? hot:sunlight'
	mɛ+ə^{l}	'nature+? bark:wind'
	mɛ+dzɿ	'nature+?: thunder'
	mɛ+ɬi	'nature+? :lightening'
	mɛ̀+nk^{h}uà	'nature+?sea:rainbow'

Note that in speech, the nouns that denote 'sky', 'earth' and 'fire' can be shortened to only employ the root *mɛ̀*. Consequently, *mɛ̀* might mean either 'sky', or 'earth', or 'fire'. A listener then has to specify its exact meaning in discourse, depending on the context. In addition, the tone of *mɛ̀* varies in accordance with that of the attached formative (§2. 4. 1).

(4. 7) **Body Parts**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	do+ku	'eye+? hole: eye'
	do+pi	'eye+?: eyelid'
	do+sɛ	'eye+? core:eyeball'
	lə+p^{h}o	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand) +?: upper limb'
	lə+ta	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand) +?:arm'
	lə+kuatʂù	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand) +?:elbow'
	lə+tsua	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand)+?:wrist'
	lə+nbu	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand)+?:the back of the hands and fingers'
	lə+su	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand) +?:finger'
	ə^{l}+p^{h}o	'lower limb(leg and foot)+?:lower limb'
	ə^{l}+bɛ	'lower limb(leg and foot)+?:instep'
	ə^{l}+ʂu	'lower limb(leg and foot)+?:toe'

Also note that in speech, the nouns that denote 'eye', 'hand' and 'foot' are

sometimes shortened to *do*, *lə* and *ɔ*^{l}, respectively.

4. 2. 2. 2 [formative + class term]

Compounds of this type are quite similar to the above described [class term+ formative] compounds. The only difference is that the constituent order is reversed. In this group of compounds, a class term is also the head of a compound but it follows an informative, whose meaning is also unknown. This is unlike [class term+formative] compounds, in which a class term always precedes the attached formative. Nouns that denote time (4. 8) and trees (4. 9) are typical of [formative + class term] compounds.

(4. 8) **Time**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	ta+ɲo	'?this+ day:today'
	ya+ɲo	'?last+day:yesterday'
	su+ɲo	'?next+day:tomorrow'
	ts^{h}i+xi	'?this+year:this year'
	yɛ+xi	'?last+year:last year'
	so+xi	'?before+year:the year before'
	su+xi	'?next+year:next year'

Note that although *ɲo* means 'day' and *xi* denotes 'year', both are bound roots that can never be used independently either in isolation or in realization. If *ɲo* is not used to form a compound, it should always occur with a numeral. *xi* is only seen in compounds as shown in (4. 8). This is unlike some of the bound class terms ("roots") presented in §4. 2. 2. 1 that can used as free roots in discourse.

(4. 9) gives examples for "tree" compounds:

(4. 9) **Trees**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	si+pu	'tree+CL: bunch of living plants:tree'
	ʂa+si	'?+ tree:pine tree'
	lə+si	'?+ tree:cedar tree'
	ɬaɬa+si	'?+tree:white poplar tree'
	tsotsʅ+si	'?+ tree:robur tree'

4. 2. 2. 3 $[N_1+N_2] \rightarrow N_3$

$N_1+N_2 \rightarrow N_3$ compounds are observed to be the most common compounds in Ersu. They involve all semantic subtypes of nouns. They can be further divided into two subtypes:

1) Endocentric compounds: N_2 is the head that governs the grammatical category of the noun and N_1 is employed to modify and delimit N_2. Then, N_1+N_2 forms a compound, N_3, that is a subtype of N_2. This type of compound is the most productive in Ersu. For example, in the compound *vɛ+ʂʅ* 'pork', N_2 *ʂʅ* 'meat' categorizes the compound and N_1 *vɛ* 'pig' delimits N_2. N_3, *vɛʂʅ* 'pork', the compound is a subtype of 'meat' (N_2). More examples are given in (4. 10).

(4. 10)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ŋuà+ʂʅ̀	'ox+meat:beef'
yo+ʂʅ̀	'sheep+meat:mutton'
dzo+ŋuà	'water+ox:water buffalo'
dzo+kaə^{1}	'water+ crow:ossifrage; fish-catching crow'
ndzà+fu	'Han+language:Chinese'
nua+fu	'Yi+language=>Yi'
ɲi+ganbu	'gold+threshold:gold threshold'
si+ganbu	'tree+threshold=>wooden threshold'
tʂ^{h}o+tso	'dog+excrement:dog excrement'
tʂʅ+tso	'star+excement:meteor[49]'

2) **Coordinate compounds**: In a coordinate N_1+N_2 compound, both have an "equal" status. In other words, neither of them heads the compound. In an endocentric compound as described above, N_3 is a subtype of N_2, while in a coordinate compound, both N_1 and N_2 tend to be a subtype of, or a part of N_3 as shown in (4. 11).

(4. 11)

Ex.	**Gloss**
yɛxi+soxi	'last year+the year before: ancient times'
a-pu+a-wa	'grandfather+ grandmother:ancestors'
p^{h}oza+zìmò	'husband+wife:couple'
xima+dzama	'sisters+female cousins:woman (general term)'

[49] The word 'meteor' is a compound with a figurative meaning in Ersu. I hypothesize that this is because the trace of a meteor in the sky is something like that of excrement-excretion.

4. 2. 2. 4 [N_1+ADJ]→N_2

This type of compound is also productive in Ersu. The endocentric N_1+Adjective→N_2 compounds belong to another major type of compounds in Ersu. In these compounds, N_1 denotes the class of the noun and heads the compound. The adjective is used to modify N_1. The compound, N_2, is then a subtype or a part of N_1. For example, the compound N_2 *do+ɲua* 'the black of the eye' contains a noun (N_1) *do* which refers to 'eye' and an adjective (ADJ), *ɲua*, which means 'black' and modifies the head noun *do*. It can be seen that N_2, *do+ɲua* 'the black of the eye' is a part of N_1, *do* 'eye'. More examples are given in (4. 12).

(4. 12)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ə^{l}+psɿ	'lower limb(leg and foot)+flat: the flat of foot'
lə+psɿ	'upper limb(from shoulder to hand) +flat:the flat of hand'
ɲa+ɲbo	'ear+deaf:deaf (person)'
go+ə^{l}	'vegetable+white: Chinese cabbage'
dzɿ+ɲo	'grass+tender:bud of grass'
ŋuà+ɲi	'ox+red:common cattle'
ə^{l}+k^{h}ua	'stone+big:stone'
ə^{l}+ts^{h}i	'stone+thin in diameter:sand'
dzo+ ts^{h}a	'water+hot:warm or boiled water'
dzo+ ɲbi	'water+cold:uncooked water or cold water'

4. 2. 2. 5 [N_1+V]→N_2

In an exocentric N_1+V→N_2 compound, N_1 is observed to be an object of V, that is to say, V is transitive, bearing an argument N_1. N_2 possesses the function of N_1+V. This type of compound is not very productive though compounds like N_1+*dʑi* are comparatively productive. In these N_1+*dʑi* compounds, N_1 refers to domestic animals or poultry and *dʑi* means 'keep…confined to'. Then N_2 formed through N_1+*dʑi* means 'something or a place to keep N_1'. For example: the compound N_2, *ɲbò+dʑi*, 'stable' consists of N_1, *ɲbò* 'horse' and V, *dʑi* 'to keep…confined to a place'. It indicates that *ɲbò+dʑi* 'stable' has the function to keep horses. More examples are given in (4. 13).

(4. 13)

Ex.	Gloss
vù+tɕò	'head+bind:turban'
la+dʑi	'chicken+keep…confined to:a ground or a hut to keep chickens'
mɛ̀+dʑi	'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace'
ŋ̀ì+ndʑi	'illness+cure:medicine'

4. 2. 3 Nominalization

Ersu has four types of nominalizations: agentive nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 1); instrumental/locative nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 2), purposive nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 3) and temporal/locative nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 4). A nominalized noun derives from a verb or a verb phrase that take a nominalizer. All these marker are enclitics rather than suffixes as discussed in §2. 4. 2.

4. 2. 3. 1 Agentive nominalization

In an agentive nominalization, action verbs [or verb phrases] can be made into nouns meaning one which "verbs" (Comrie & Thompson 2007). The agentive marker *=su* undertakes this function. *su* 'person' is orignally a noun, which has been grammaticalized into an agentive marker. This nominalization is the most productive and most frequently seen in Ersu. The majority of terms that denote a vocation bear a *=su* marker, such as 'teacher', 'carpenter', 'blacksmith' and so on. Examples are given in (4. 14).

(4. 14)

Ex.	Gloss
xaxa=su	'teach.RDUP=NOM:teacher'
soso=su	'learn. RDUP=NOM:student'
ʂə+tsu=su	'iron+hammer=NOM:blacksmith'
ŋ̀ì+dzolo=su	'illness+see=NOM:doctor'
guagua=su	'fly. RDUP=NOM:aircraft'
ʐəʐə=su	'crawl.RDUP=NOM:motor vehicle'

Note that though "aircraft" and "vehicle" do not denote human beings, they are in fact personified and presumably new formations.

4. 2. 3. 2 Instrumental/Locative nominalization

There are no distinctive formal differences between instrumental and locative nominalizations in Ersu. Both are realized through the same one marker *=ta*. This is common in TB languages for instrumental and locative or ablative cases to be syncretic (Noonan 2008a, 2008b). However, terms for instruments tend to be replaced by Mandarin loanwords in recent years. For example: in about 2005, the local government launched a "Bench Project". Each Ersu family in Lajigu was offered a set of benches free of charge, and then, they began to use the furniture such as tables, chairs, sofas and so on. However, some of the old native speakers still use an instrumental or a locative nominalizer to name the furniture or tools. Examples are given in (4. 15).

(4. 15)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	zɳ=ta	'sit=NOM: chair or place for sitting'
	yi=ta	'sleep=NOM:bed or place for sleeping'
	tʂʰətʂʰɚ=ta	'cook. REDUP=NOM: kitchen or place for cooking'
	tsʰɛ=ta	'drink=NOM: instrument used for or place for drinking'
	dzɳ=ta	'eat=NOM: instrument used for or place for eating'
	ndzondzɳ+lo=ta	'word+write =NOM:instrument used for or place for writing words'

4. 2. 3. 3 Purposive nominalization

It is common to see that the marker *=li* often follows a verb or a verb phrase to denote that something is used for a certain purpose. A quite similar nominalizer -di33 is also found in Yongning Na and Lidz (2010:184-185) names it as "purposive nominalizer". Following this, I view this type of nominalization as purposive nominalization and also list *=li* as a purposive marker in Ersu. Examples are given in (4. 16).

(4. 16)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	tsʰɛ=li	'drink=NOM:something used for drinking'
	dzɳ=li	'eat=NOM:something used for eating'
	ndzondzɳ+lo=li	'word+write =NOM:something that can be used for writing words on'
	zɳ=li	'wear=NOM:something that can be used for wearing'
	gagɑ=li	'play. RDUP=NOM:something that can be used for playing'

4. 2. 3. 4 Temporal/Locative nominalization

The relator noun =ʂə̀ follows an N, a pronoun, or an NP to indicate that it is a place (§4. 6). For example: *tʰə=ʂə̀* '3sg.PRT=RLN.LOC:his place'. However, it can also function as a temporal/locative nominalizer and follow a verb or a verb phrase to denote either a place where an event is happening or a time point when an event is happening, for Ersu does not strictly distinguish temporal and locational terms sometimes. I thus define =ʂə̀ as a temporal/ locative marker. Examples are given in (4. 17).

(4. 17)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	dʑəkʰua+dʐ=ʂə̀	'lunch+have =NOM:time/place for having lunch'
	la+ŋ=ʂə̀	'rooster+sing=NOM:time when/place where a rooster is singing'
	la+dʑi=ʂə̀	'chicken+keep…confined=NOM:time when/place where chickens are being kept'[50]
	ȵbò+tʂa=ʂə̀	'horse+look for= NOM:time when/place where horses are being looked for'[51]

4. 2. 4 Affixed nouns

Affixed nouns are not productive in Ersu. They are only found in some kinship terms and directional terms. The majority of them are disyllabic. For example:

(4. 18)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	ɑ-pu	'KPFX-grandfather'
	ɑ-wɑ	'KPFX -grandmother'
	ɑ-pɑ	'KPFX -father'
	ɑ-mɑ	'KPFX -mother'
	ɑ-dʑɑ	'KPFX -sister (a male to call his elder sister)'
	ɑ-ɲɑ	'LPFX-downhill'
	ɑ-gɑ	'LPFX-uphill'
	ɑ-ɲɑ	'KPFX -mother's brother's wife'

[50] When I was in the field, I observed by chance the differences between =ʂə̀ following the compound *la+dʑi* 'a ground or a hut to keep chicken' and =ʂə̀ following the verb phrase *la dʑi* 'to keep chicken'. When it follows the compound, the generic classifier *wo* is inserted between the compound and the locative marker, then forms an NP: *la+dʑi-wo=ʂə̀* 'a hut to keep chicken'. In this context, =ʂə̀ only denotes the particular place to keep chicken and does not denote time. In addition, the NP *la+dʑi-wo=ʂə̀* denotes a place more specific than the nominalization, *la+dʑi=ʂə̀* (see §4. 6. 2. 1).

[51] The Ersu often drive and graze horses in a nearby mountain area and leave them there. In the middle afternoon, people often go to the mountain to look for their horses. So, *ȵbò+tʂa=ʂə̀* 'time to look for horses' roughly refers to mid-afternoon.

There are two *ɑ-*prefixed kinship nouns. They are:

(4. 19)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ɑ-kəŋɑ	'KPFX -male cousin (sister's children to call brother's)'
ɑ-boza	'KPFX -male cousin (brother's children to call sister's)'

4. 3 Semantic Subtypes of Nouns

Nouns in Ersu can be semantically divided into common nouns and proper nouns in general. Proper nouns denote a specific referent rather than a class of referents and common nouns denote a class of referents rather than a specific referent. Proper nouns include farm and pet animal names (§3. 2. 1), place names and human names. Common nouns consist of nouns that denote kinships, body parts, fauna, flora, nature-related objects, location, direction, time, instruments/tools and handcrafters (§3. 2. 1 and §4. 1).

Most Ersu common nouns denote classes of concrete entity. Nouns that denote abstract concepts are mainly borrowed from Mandarin Chinese. Only six conceptually indigenous abstract Ersu nouns are found in my data. They are given in (4. 20).

(4. 20)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ə^{l}ʂa	'policy'
woxa	'society'
tʂɯi	'life'
gamɛ	'health[52]'
k^{h}azɿ	'fate'
ndzɿndza	'thinking'[53]

In addition, abstract nouns like "time", "weather" and nouns that denote emotions such as "gladness", "anger" and so on are quite few. They are mainly expressed through nominalized verbs or verb phrases instead (§4. 2. 3). For example,

[52] This noun also means 'body'. I hypothesize that the meaning 'health' is the semantic extension of its original meaning 'body'. This is similar to Mandarin Chinese, in which *shēntǐ* 'body' is semantically extended to mean 'health'.

[53] *ndzɿndza* 'thinking' is derived from the verb *də-ndzɿndza* 'upward-think, consider'.

Ersu does not have a noun that denotes 'time', but there is a time nominalizer =*ʂə̀* that follows a verb or a verb phrase to entail the "time" when certain kinds of events happen regularly in daily routines (§4. 2. 3. 4). There are nouns that denote superordinate notions such as *si* 'tree', *xua* 'bird', *papa* 'foodstuff' and *su* 'person'. However, there are no such words corresponding to 'animal', 'plant', 'drink', 'kin', etc. In these context, nominalizations or more specific terminologies are employed. For example: *tsʰɛ=li* 'drink=NOM:something used for drinking' (§4. 2. 3. 3) is used in Ersu to refer to all that could be drinkable, such as drinking water, soup, juice, and so on. When people see an unfamiliar animal, they often define and describe it as "dog-like", "pig-like" instead of a general term "animal".

The semantic subtypes of Ersu nouns are summarized in Table 4. 2.

subtype		**reference**
common nouns §4.3.1	kin	§4. 3. 1. 1
	human body parts	§4. 3. 1. 2
	fauna	§4. 3. 1. 3
	flora	§4. 3. 1. 4
	nature	§4. 3. 1. 5
	cultural artifacts	§4. 3. 1. 6
	vocation	§4. 3. 1. 7
	location	§4. 3. 1. 8
	direction	§4. 3. 1. 9
	time	§4. 3. 1.10
proper nouns §4.3.2	human names	§4. 3. 2. 1
	place names	§4. 3. 2. 2

Table 4. 2 The semantic subtypes of Ersu nouns

4. 3. 1 Common Nouns

4. 3. 1. 1 Kinship terms

This section is divided into the following subsections: the kinship system (§4. 3. 1. 1. 1), the kinship terms (§4. 3. 1. 1. 2) and kinship terms in daily uses (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3).

4. 3. 1. 1. 1 The kinship system

As mentioned in §1. 2. 2. 3, cross-cousin marriage used to be quite common in the Ersu communities and a cross-ethnic marriage was strictly forbidden before the establishment of the People's Republic of China. In addition, similar to other small communities in Mainland South Asia like Galo, the Ersu also "have traditionally lived in vertically-extended family settings, surrounded by kin, with marriageable women leaving for other villages and women from other clans marrying in" (Post 2007: 212) . This long tradition of marriage and residential pattern shapes an Iroquoian-Dravidian kinship system (Scheffler 1971) of six linear generations, each with a corresponding kinship term. The six generations are shown in Figure 4. 1 (with the speaker as an ego):

G1 G2 G3 G4 G5 G6

grandparents >parents > (ego) sibling >children >grandchildren >great grandchildren

←oldest---------- youngest→

Figure 4. 1 Ersu generations attested with kinship term(s)

The Ersu kinship system is shown in Figure 4. 2 and Figure 4. 3 as below:

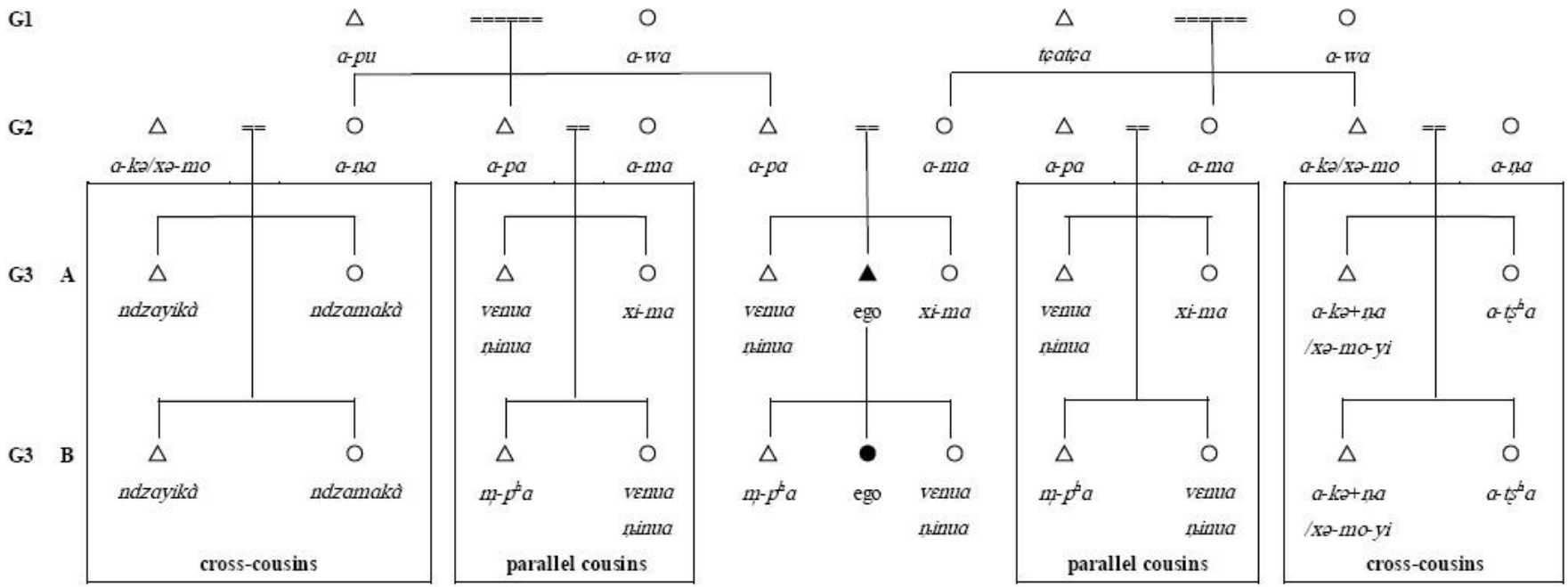


Figure 4. 2 Ersu kinship system (grandparental, parental, avuncular and sibling relations**)**

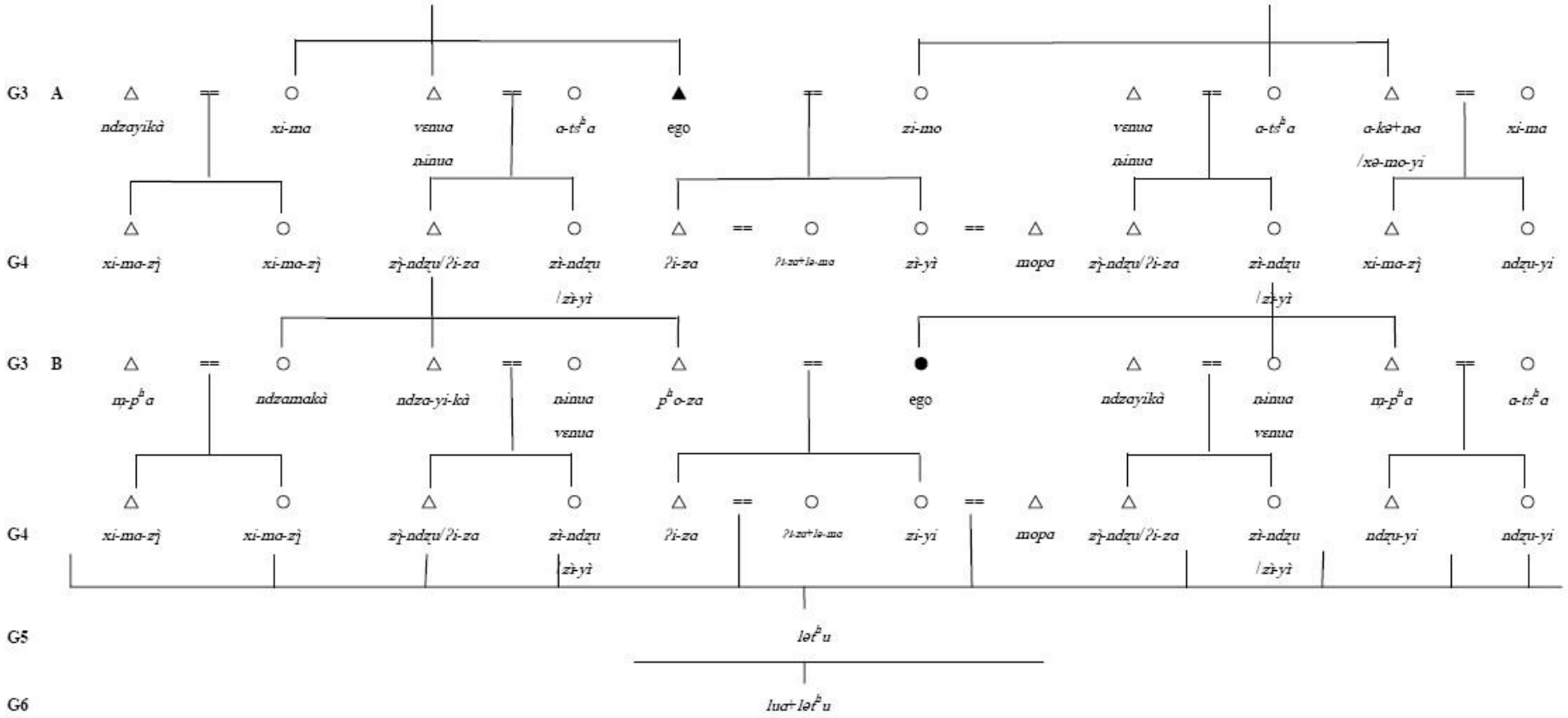


Figure 4. 3 Ersu kinship system (sibling + sibling-spousal relations and filial + filial-spousal relations)

Note: Abbreviations and symbols for Figure 4. 2 and Figure 4. 3 are: G = generation; a number = order of a generation; △= male; ▲ = male ego; ○= female; ●=female ego; == = affinal relations; │ = filial relations; ── = sibling relations; Line A and Line B respectively demonstrate the differences corresponding to male and female ego.

As can be seen from the above Figure 4. 2 and Figure 4. 3, there is no term for a person whose generation is higher than G1 or lower than G6. In this situation, people often employ *a-pu* 'grandfather' or *a-wa* 'grandmother' to refer to a person whose generation is higher than G1. I originally hypothesized that the formative *lua* in the term *lua+ləthu* 'great grandchild' (G6) can be used for a potentially infinite number of times to denote a person whose generation is younger than G6. However, my fieldwork investigation demonstrates that this is impossible because people only call a person of the younger generation either by using his or her name, or by using the term *yadzə* or *yaya* which means 'child'.

In the six generations, terms for G1, G5 and G6 are quite simple. G1 has a gender distinction. Masculine G1 distinguishes between a consanguineal referent and an affinal referent while feminine G1 does not have this distinction. G5 and G6 respectively has just one term without showing gender, consanguineal and affinal distinction. G2, G3 and G4 are much more complicated. Terms for these generations have a masculine vs. feminine, consanguineal vs. affinal, and paralleling vs. crossing distinction. Due to the cross-cousin marriage tradition, relatives are tightly intertwined with each other, forming a "quasi-symmetrical" kinship system that is reflected in the kinship terms as shown in Figure 4. 2 and Figure 4. 3. This is the reason why many kinship terms are polysemous in Ersu, which means that a term for a specific referent should be understood in accordance with the discourse context. Finally, the gender difference of an ego brings about the semantic variation of a term for siblings in Ersu kinship system, as is in Table 4. 3.

Ego \ Siblings	brother(s)	sister(s)
Masculine	*vɛnua* 'elder brother'	*xi-ma* ?sister-SFX.FEM 'sister'
	n̩inua 'younger brother'	
Feminine	*m̩-pʰa* ?brother-SFX.MAS 'brother'	*vɛnua* 'elder sister'
		n̩inua 'younger sister'

Table 4. 3 Semantic variation of sibling terminology

In an Ersu clan, a person often has more than one sibling. In addition, a kinship term functions as a referent's name that identifies his or her identity (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3) in the Ersu communities. Therefore, even if a person is not a relative of a speaker, he or she has to use a suitable or widely-accepted kinship term to "name" the person, supposing that the person is older than the speaker, or has a higher generation than him or her, or both. For example, if a male referent shares the same generation with a speaker's father in the same clan, the speaker has to view him as his or her "father's brother" and thus has to call him "father" even if the relationship between the speaker's father and the referent is quite distant or almost irrelevant. Consequently, there must be many classificatory "fathers", "mothers", "brothers" and so on in the Ersu communities. In this situation, people often use one of the adjectival modifiers such as *ya-kʰua* 'big', *ɬaɬa* 'middle' and *n̩a/malakà/mama* 'small' to respectively denote the eldest, the middle and the youngest person of the same generation, but the middle ones are not further distinguished. Take "father'" as an example shown in Table 4. 4.

Term	Meaning
ɑ-pa KPFX-father	'father'
ɑ-pa *yɑ-kʰua* KPFX-father APFX-big	'father's eldest brother' *lit*: 'big father'
ɑ-pa *ɬaɬa* KPFX-father middle.REDP	'father's brother who is younger than the eldest and older than the youngest' *lit*: 'middle father'
ɑ-pa *ȵɑ/malakà/mama* KPFX-father small	'father's youngest brother' *lit*: 'small father'

Table 4. 4 Adjectival modifiers showing the ranking of father's generation

It should be noted that *ȵɑ*, *malakà* and *mama* all mean 'small'. They show no semantic differences while being used to denote the 'youngest' person of the same generation. The one that a speaker picks up depends on his or her individual style. Normally, they choose to use the one that they learned in the early stage of their mother tongue acquisition. In addition, the Ersu tend to use kinship terms borrowed from Mandarin in daily conversation instead of the indigenous Ersu kinship terms. More details are given §4. 3. 1. 1. 3.

4. 3. 1. 1. 2 The kinship terms

Kinship terms of the six generations described above form a closed subclass of nouns and they are never part of the verb class, or of the adjectival class in Ersu. They have the function to categorize human referents in accordance with their relationship with an ego. Consequently, they can also be viewed as **classificatory terms**. Only one monosyllabic kinship term, that is, *zɛ* 'wife', is attested in Ersu. Other monomorphemic kinship terms are disyllabic. The other kinship terms are formed either through compounding or through nominalization. Many terms that refer to a person whose generation is higher than, or is the same as the ego's, take a prefix *ɑ-*. This is seldom found in other subclass of nouns except for a few demonstratives and directional nouns, as discussed in §2. 4. 2. 1 and §4. 2. 4.. Kinship terms thus constitute a separate subclass of nouns. *ɑ-* prefixation of kinship terms is shared by many ST languages such as Qiang (Huang 2004: 134), Lisu (Yu 2007: 107), Yongning

Na (Lidz 2010: 167), Anong and Chinese (Sun & Liu 2009: 56-57). In Ersu, the majority of the kinship terms that refer to an ego's grandparental, parental, avuncular relations and some of the terms that refer to sibling relations take an *ɑ-* prefix as shown in Table 4. 6. However, none of the terms for descent generations has an *ɑ-* prefix. The morphological types of Ersu kinship terms are summarized in Table 4. 5.

Morphology			**Example**	**Meaning**
monomorphemic	monosyllabic		*zɛ*	'wife'
	disyllabic	*ɑ-* prefix	*ɑ-wɑ* PFX-grandma	'grandmother'
		non *ɑ-* prefix	*mopa*	'son-in-law'
compound			*ɑ-pu+ɑ-wɑ* KPFX-grandfather+KPFX-grandma	'grandparents'
nominalization			*tʂʰətʂʰə-su* cook.REDP-NOM	'wife or husband'

Table 4. 5 Ersu kinship term morphology

The Ersu kinship terms for the six generations are given in Table 4. 6:

G1. grandparental	
ɑ-pu KPFX-grandfather	1. father's father; 2. father's father's male siblings; 3. father's father's male parallel cousins; 4. mother's father; 5. mother's father's male siblings; 6. mother's father's parallel cousins; 7. an old man (in general)
ɑ-wɑ KPFX-grandmother	1. father's mother; 2. father's mother's female siblings; 3. father's mother's female parallel cousins; 4. mother's mother; 5. mother's mother's female siblings; 6. mother's mother's female parallel cousins; 7. an old woman (in general)

(to be continued)

(to continue)

G2. Parental		
ɑ-pa KPFX-father	1. father (referential and vocative); 2. father's male siblings; 3. father's male parallel cousins; 4. mother's female siblings' spouse	
papa father.REDP	father (vocative)	
bɑ-ya father-SFX.VOC		
ɑ-ma KPFX-mother	1. mother (referential and vocative); 2. mother's female siblings; 3. mother's female parallel cousins; 4. father's male siblings' spouse	
mɑ-mo mother-SFX.FEM.	mother (referential)	
mɑ-ya mother-SFX.VOC.	mother (vocative)	
mama mother.REDP		May be used for mother's female siblings or female parallel cousins by some speakers
ɑ-kə KPFX-mother's male siblings *xə-mo* mother's male siblings -SFX.FEM	1. father-in-law; 2. mother's male siblings; 3.mother's male parallel cousins; 4. father's male cross-cousins; 5. father's female siblings' spouse; 6. mother's female cross-cousins' spouse	
ɑ-ŋɐ KPFX-father's female siblings	1. mother-in-law; 2. father's female siblings; 3. father's female parallel cousins; 4. mother's female cross-cousins; 5. mother's male siblings' spouse; 6. father's male cross-cousins' spouse	

(to be continued)

(to continue)

G3. siblings, cousins and their spouses		
vɛnua	ego (male)	1. elder male siblings; 2. elder male parallel-cousins; 3. wife's elder female sibling's spouse; 4. elder female cross-cousin's spouse
	ego (female)	1. elder female siblings; 2. elder female parallel-cousins; 3. husband's elder male siblings' spouse; 4. elder male cross-cousins' spouse
ɲinua	ego (male)	1. younger male siblings; 2. younger male parallel cousins; 3. wife's younger female siblings' spouse; 4. younger female cross-cousins' spouse
	ego (female)	1. younger female siblings; 2. younger female parallel cousins; 3. husband's younger male siblings' spouse; 4. younger male cross-cousins' spouse
ɲi-pʰa male siblings-SFX.MAS	ego (female)	1. male siblings; 2. male parallel cousins; 3. husband's female siblings' spouse
a-dʑa KPFX-elder female siblings	ego (male)	1. elder female siblings; 2. elder female parallel cousins; 3. wife's elder male siblings' spouse
dʑadʑa elder female siblings.RDUP		
xi-ma female siblings-SFX.FEM		(general term for) 1. female siblings; 2. female parallel cousins; 3. wife's younger male siblings' spouse (general term)
a-kə+ɲa KPFX-mother's male siblings +child	1. male cross-cousin (mother's male siblings' sons); 2. wife's male siblings	
xə-mo=yi mother's male siblings-SFX.FEM =DIM		
a-tʂʰa KPFX-female cross-cousin	1. female cross-cousins (mother's male siblings' daughters); 2. male sibling's spouse; 3. male parallel- cousins' spouse; 4. wife; 5. wife's female siblings	
ndzayikà	1. male cross-cousin (father's female siblings' sons); 2. female siblings' spouse; 3. female parallel cousins' spouse; 4. husband or husband's male siblings	

(to be continued)

(to continue)

ndzamakà	1. female cross-cousin (father's female siblings' daughters); 2. husband's female siblings	
zi-mo wife-SFX.FEM	wife (referential)	
zɛ		
pʰo-za husband-SFX.MAS	husband (referential)	
tʂʰətʂʰə-su cook.REDP-NOM	husband or wife (referential)	
yava+su home+person		
G4. sons, daughters, nephews, niece, etc.		
ʔi-za son-SFX.MAS	1. son; 2. parallel-gender siblings' son; 3. spouse's parallel-gender siblings' son	
zì-yì daughter-SFX.DIM	1. daughter; 2. parallel-gender siblings' daughter; 3. spouse's parallel-gender siblings' daughter	
zʅ+ndzu ?son+nephew/niece	1. parallel-gender siblings' son; 2. spouse's parallel- gender siblings' son	
zì+ndzu ?daughter+nephew/niece	1. parallel-gender siblings' daughter; 2. spouse's parallel-gender siblings' daughter	
xi-ma-zʅ female sibling-SFX.FEM-SFX.MAS	ego (male)	1. female siblings' child; 2. wife's male siblings' son
	ego (female)	husband's female siblings' child
ndzu-yi nephew/niece-SFX.DIM	ego (male)	wife's male siblings' daughter
	ego (female)	male siblings' child
mopa	daughter's husband	
ʔi-za+lə-ma son-SFX.MAS+hand?-SFX.FEM	son's wife	
lətʰu	**grandchildren (G5)**	
lua+lətʰu crop?+grandchildren	**great-grandchildren (G6)**	

Table 4. 6 List of Ersu kinship terms

The expression of the possession of kinship terms in Ersu is alienable. A genitive marker should be used between the possessor and the possessee. This possession of kinship terms is further discussed in §5. 3. Here just an example is given:

(4. 21) *ɑ=zì* *ɑ-ma*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [KPFX-mother:mother]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my mother'

In addition, some kinship terms are often used to "group or categorize" relatives of a clan. They do not occur on their own and they obligatorily follow a numeral. They are defined as "family group classifiers" (Bradley 2001) in this grammar, a subset of numeral classifiers in Ersu (§7. 1. 3. 1. 5). Take *pʰɑ-ma* in (4. 22) as an example:

(4. 22) *pʰo-za* *zi-mo* *na*

husband-SFX.MAS:husband wife-Yi.SFX.FEM:wife two

pʰɑ-ma

SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM:CL:woman and man

'husband and wife, a couple'

4. 3. 1. 1. 3 Kinship terms in daily uses

As mentioned in §4. 3. 1. 1. 1, a kinship term can function like a person's name in the Ersu culture. Meanwhile, more and more Mandarin kinship terms are observed to co-exist with indigenous Ersu kinship terms in daily life. The Ersu appear to prefer Mandarin terms to Ersu terms in a vocative context. Ersu terms occur more often in referential forms than in address forms. Furthermore, it is not uncommon to see some polysemous Ersu terms refer to several different referents of the same generation, also some synonymous terms denote the same referent as shown in Table 4. 6.

4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 1 Kinship terms and personal names

In the Ersu communities, it is taboo for a younger person of a younger generation to directly address a person of a higher generation or who is older than the speaker. A classificatory kinship term is then employed instead of a person's name. Nowadays, it is acceptable for an adult of a younger generation to directly call a child's name of a

higher generation. However, if a younger person of a higher generation gets married, it is still unacceptable for the speaker of a younger generation to directly call his or her name even if the speaker is an old person. Consequently, it is not surprising to hear an old person calling a young man *ɑ-pu* 'grandfather' in the Ersu communities. In this situation, an older person often uses *tʰə=zɿ̀ ɑ-pu* 'his or her grandfather' instead of the mere *ɑ-pu* 'grandfather' to avoid embarrassment.

All my language consultants confirm that all Ersu people are relatives because of the long tradition of cross-cousin marriage. A classificatory kinship term is thus polysemous as it can denote many different referents of the same generation. Consequently, using a kinship term may often cause referential ambiguity especially when a speaker is talking about a distant or an extended relative. The Ersu often employ the name of the referent's descent family members to clarify this ambiguity. The person whose name is used in this situation often shares the same generation with the speaker, or is the most familiar to the speaker, or the eldest one or the most prominent one among his or her siblings. For example:

(4. 23) *shibu=zɿ̀* *ɑ-pu*
MC.PN:person's name=GEN:family KPFX-grandfather:grandfather
'Shibu's grandfather'

Examples like (4. 23) are frequently heard in Lajigu. That the kinship term *ɑ-pu* 'grandfather' is possessed by a person's name indicates that the "grandfather" is a distant relative of the speaker. In addition, the person Shibu and the speaker should belong to the same generation, or Shibu is of a younger generation than the speaker. Finally, Shibu is not the oldest one among his siblings but his name is still used here because Shibu is a household name in the village as he was the first person who worked as a government civil servant and migrated to Xichang, the capital city of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture.

4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 2 Mandarin kinship terms and indigenous Ersu kinship terms

The uses of Ersu kinship terms are under great pressure with the influx of Mandarin kinship terms. Although Mandarin kinship terms are seldom found in narratives like mythological, folkloric and biographical stories, they surely co-exist with indigenous Ersu kinship terms in daily conversation. This is reflected through the change of kinship terms used for the first three of the six generations listed in Figure 4. 1. The younger Ersu in the field are more familiar with some of the kinship terms of Mandarin than with those of Ersu. This shows that the Ersu language is losing its ground to Mandarin and is thus endangered (§14). The co-existence of Mandarin and Ersu kinship terms is discussed below in the order of the six generations shown in Figure 4. 1.

G1. My language consultants stated that previously, Ersu did not have a consanguineal and affinal distinction in using the terms for G1. In other words, the term *ɑ-pu* 'grandfather' refers to both father's father and mother's father and the term *ɑ-wɑ* 'grandmother' denotes both father's mother and mother's mother. However, nowadays, there is a distinction between father's father and mother's father among all the speakers in the field. More specifically, *ɑ-pu* 'grandfather', only refers to father's father while *tɕɑtɕɑ* 'grandfather', is used to refer to mother's father which is shared by the Mandarin variety spoken in Yuexi county of Sichuan Province. Moreover, the younger Ersu tend to directly employ Mandarin Chinese *yéyé*, 'grandfather' to denote their own father's father rather than the indigenous Ersu word *ɑ-pu*, which they usually use to denote a distant relative including an old man in general. The younger Ersu also distinguish father's mother from mother's mother. They use Mandarin Chinese *pópó* 'old lady or husband's mother' to denote mother's mother and keep the original Ersu *ɑ-wɑ* to denote father's mother. The reason why the younger Ersu employs *pópó* 'old lady or husband's mother' to denote mother's mother is unknown. However, some of my consultants suggest that this might be because of the patrilineal inheritance pattern in the Ersu communities (§4. 3. 1. 1. 1) where people inherit surname and property through the male line. Father's mother is viewed as a member

of the family whereas mother's mother is not. The indigenous Ersu term *ɑ-wɑ* seems to be a bit closer to their hearts than *pópó*.

G2. The younger Ersu seldom use Ersu kinship terms to denote avuncular relations especially when a referent is in the "middle" of a speaker's father's or mother's siblings, parallel- or cross-cousins. I hypothesize that this is so because using Mandarin may help to differentiate the referent's birth order in his or her siblings. For example: the Ersu term *ɑ-pɑ ɬaɬa* 'father's brother who is younger than the eldest and older than the youngest' (See Table 4. 4) can still cause confusion under the circumstances where a father has several "middle" brothers. By using Mandarin, "fathers" of this group could be listed with cardinal numerals, such as *èrbà* 'father's second brother'; *sānbà* 'father's third brother' and so on. Thus, each specific referent corresponds to his or her specific birth order in Mandarin. A comparison of kinship terms for father's brothers in Ersu and in Mandarin is given in Table 4. 7.

Ersu term	Meaning	MC Term	Meaning
ɑ-pɑ yɑ-kʰuɑ KPFX-father PFX-big	'father's eldest brother' *lit*: 'big father'	*dà+bà*	'father's eldest brother' *lit*: 'big father'
ɑ-pɑ ɬaɬa KPFX-father middle.REDP	'father's bother who is younger than the eldest and older than the youngest' *lit*: 'middle father'	*èr+bà*	'father's second brother' *lit*: 'two father'
		sān+bà	'father's third brother' *lit*: 'three father'
		sì+bà…	'father's fourth brother' *lit*: 'four father'…
ɑ-pɑ ɲɑ KPFX-father small	'father's youngest brother' *lit*: 'small father'	*yāo+bà*	'father's youngest brother' *lit*: 'small father'

Table 4. 7 A comparison of kinship terms between Ersu and Mandarin

The above description is also applicable to *ɑ-mɑ* 'mother's sisters, parallel female cousins and father's brother's spouse' and *ɑ-ɲɑ* 'father's sisters, cross female cousins and mother's brother's spouse'. The prefix *ɑ-* is respectively changed into Mandarin *dà* 'big', *èr* 'two', *sān* 'three',…*yāo* 'small' in accordance with the referent's birth order with no alterations of the root of the Ersu kinship terms.

However, *ɑ-kə/xə-mo* 'mother's brothers, cross male cousins, father's sister's spouse' is replaced by Mandarin *jiùjiù* 'mother's brothers, cross male cousins' and *gūyé* 'father's sister's spouse' respectively. They are followed by Madarin *dà* 'big', *èr* 'two', *sān* 'three',…*yāo* 'small' in accordance with the referent's birth order.

G3. In indigenous Ersu kinship terms, there is a distinction between a male ego and a female ego (see Table 4. 3 and Table 4. 6). The birth order is also indicated by *kʰua* 'big', *ɬaɬa* 'middle' and *mama/ŋa/malakà* 'small'. However, younger Ersu are observed to directly use Mandarin kinship terms in daily conversation to denote their siblings. Moreover, they also adopt Mandarin strategies to address a referent: Firstly, they use Mandarin *dà* 'big', *èr* 'two', *sān* 'three', …*yāo* 'small' to denote birth order as discussed above; secondly, people still use the root of an Ersu term to denote avuncular relations. However, in G3, people seldom use the root of an Ersu kinship term to denote their siblings, parallel- or cross-cousins. They often use Mandarin in a direct way; thirdly, in daily speaking, they tend to employ a referent's name to denote someone in G3 younger than them as Mandarin speakers currently do. Table 4. 8 lists the kinship terms for G3 originally used in Ersu and currently used in Mandarin and adopted by younger Ersu people.

Ego	Referent	Ersu	Mandarin
male	elder brother or male parallel cousin	*vɛnua*	*gēgē* or *biǎogē* (elder)
	younger brother or male parallel cousin	*ɳ̩inua*	*dì* or *biǎodì*(younger)
	male cross-cousin (mother's brother's son)	*ɑ-kə+ɳ̩a* KPFX-mother's male siblings+ child	*biǎogē* (elder) or *biǎodì*(younger)
	male cross-cousin (father's sister's son)	*ndzayikà*	
	elder sister/female parallel cousin	*xi-ma* sister-SFX.FEM	*jiějiě or biǎo-jiě* (elder)
	younger sister/female parallel cousin		*mèimèi* or *biǎo-mèi* (younger)
	female cross-cousin (mother's brother's daughter) or wife	*ɑ-tʂʰa* KPFX-female cross-cousin	*biǎo-jiě* (elder) or *biǎo-mèi* (younger)
	female cross-cousin (father's sister's daughter)	*ndzamakà*	
female	brother or male parallel cousin	*ɳ̩-pʰa* brother-SFX.MAS	*gēgē* (elder) or *dì* (younger)
	male cross-cousin (mother's brother's son) or husband	*ɑ-kə+ɳ̩a* KPFX-mother's male siblings+ child	*biǎo-gē* (elder) or *biǎo-dì*(younger)
	male cross-cousin (father's sister's son)	*ndzayikà*	
	elder sister or female parallel cousin	*vɛnua*	*jiějiě* or *biǎo-jiě* (elder)
	younger sister or female parallel cousin	*ɳ̩inua*	*mèimèi* or *biǎo-mèi* (younger)
	female cross-cousin (mother's brother's daughter)	*ɑ-tʂʰa* KPFX-female cross-cousin	*biǎo-jiě* (elder) or *biǎo-mèi* (younger)
	female cross-cousin (father's sister's daughter)	*ndzamakà*	

Table 4. 8 Kinship terms used for G3 in Ersu and Mandarin

As shown in Table 4. 8, kinship terminology in Mandarin is much simpler than that in Ersu. It does not have a male vs. female ego distinction. In addition, there are only four terms for referents of G3, that is, *gē* 'elder brother', *jiě* 'elder sister', *dì* 'younger brother' and *mèi* 'younger sister' with all siblings being reduplicated and all

cousins taking a *bičo-* prefix, and without a parallel- vs. cross-cousin, or a father's sister's child vs. mother's brother's child distinction. In comparison with Mandarin, there are eight kinship terms in Ersu and Ersu has a male vs. female ego distinction, a parallel- vs. cross-cousin and a father's sister's child vs. mother's brother's child distinction. From this perspective, it can be concluded that with the Ersu language under the influx of Mandarin, it is losing many distinctive features of its erstwhile kinship system.

G4, G5 and G6. People of G4, G5 and G6 belong to an ego's filial generations. In referential form, people still keep the indigenous Ersu terms. However, in vocative form, people are observed to use the referent's names. The reason why people keep the indigenous Ersu terms for G4, G5 and G6 in the referential form is that people who have filial generations in the field are normally quite old. It cannot be observed through participant observation how the comparatively younger Ersu who have filial generations are using the terms because most of them have moved out to seek jobs outside the Ersu communities.

4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 3 Vocative forms and referential forms

In Ersu, when a speaker addresses a filial referent, he or she often directly employs the referent's name. However, if the referent is one of the speaker's distant relatives, especially when the speaker and the referent are not quite familiar with each other, he or she uses a kinship term that matches the referent's identity, functioning as his or her name (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 1). This is considered to be more polite.

There are different terms for "close" kin of a speaker's parental generation and of his or her same generation that distinguish vocative forms and referential forms. These involve terms for "father", "mother", "wife" and "husband". They are given in Table 4. 9.

English Term	Vocative	Referential
father	*papa* father.REDP	*ɑ-pa* PFX-father
	ɑ-pa KPFX-father	
	bɑ-ya father-SFX.VOC	
mother	*mɑ-ya* mother-SFX.VOC	*mɑ-mo* mother-SFX.FEM
	ɑ-ma KPFX-mother	*ɑ-ma* PFX-mother
	mama mother.RDUP	
husband	husband's name; eldest or favorite child's name + *tɕʰɑ-pa*	*pʰo-za* husband-SFX.MAS
wife	wife's name; eldest or favorite child's name + *tɕʰɑ-ma*	*zi-mo* wife-SFX.FEM
		zɛ
husband or wife		*yava+su* home+person
		tʂʰətʂʰə-su cook.REDP-NOM

Table 4. 9 Vocative and referential forms for 'father', 'mother', 'husband' and 'wife'

4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 4 Synonyms and polysemies

Synonyms are mainly found for terms denoting 'father', 'mother', 'husband' and 'wife', as discussed in §4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 3. In addition, there are also two synonyms *ɑ-kə* and *xə-mo* used for the same kin, that is, 'mother's brother, father-in-law or father's sister's husband'. However, *xə-mo* is more frequently used in indirect or formal speech, not for vocative speech. *ɑ-kə* is said to be used for vocative speech but is not attested in daily conversation because it has been replaced by Mandarin *jiùjiù* for 'mother's brother' (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3. 2), *ganlǎohɑ́iér* for 'father-in-law' and *gūfu* for 'father's sister's husband'. Accordingly, there are also two synonyms for the son of mother's brother or wife's brother (not for father's sister's son, see Figure 4. 3). They are: *ɑ-kə+ŋɑ* and *xə-mo-yi*. Among them, both *ŋɑ* and *yi* can mean 'child' and the

latter functions as a diminutive marking (§4. 7). Thus, *a-kə+ȵa* literally means 'child of mother's brother' and *xə-mo-yi* literally means 'small of mother's brother's'.

Due to the quasi-symmetrical kinship system (see Figure 4. 2 and Figure 4. 3), polysemous kinship terms are even more productive than synonymous ones. Most of the terms for G2, G3 and G4 may denote a referent's parallel gender siblings, parallel cousins and his or her spouse's parallel gender sibling's spouse. For example, the referent *a-pa* 'father' may also refer to either 'father's brothers', or 'father's parallel siblings', or 'mother's sister's spouse' (see Table 4. 6 for more details).

4. 3. 1. 2 Human body parts

This section first presents the morphology of human body parts (§4. 3. 1. 2. 1) and then discusses their semantic extensions (§4. 3. 1. 2. 2)

4. 3. 1. 2. 1 Morphology of terms for human body parts

Similar to other subclasses of nouns, Ersu body parts are either monomorphemic words or compounds or formed through nominalization. Most of them are disyllabic and monomorphemic. For example: *vùliɛ̀* 'head'; *sɿȵi* 'heart'; *yip^{h}a* 'stomach'. The number of monosyllabic body parts is much smaller than that of disyllabic ones. For example: *dzi* 'head hair' and *ma* 'body hair and non-human animates' hair'; *sò* 'blood'; *sɛ̀* 'breath'; *ʂʅ̀* 'flesh'. Trisyllabic and quadrisyllabic and monomorphemic body parts are quite rare in Ersu. Two of them are trisyllabic: *loȵomà* 'chest'; *yibuai* 'armpit'. One of them is quadrisyllabic: *xamakatu* 'nape'.

Compounding also plays an important role in the formation process of body parts. Compounds are mostly found in body parts that are eye-related, arm/hand-related and leg/foot-related. Body parts may involve endocentric or coordinate noun-noun $[N_1N_2]N_3$ compounds and endocentric noun-adjective $[N_1ADJ]N_2$ compounds. All the compounds that denote body parts take a bound morpheme (§4. 2. 2).

There are two body parts formed through nominalization. One is *bɛ=li* 'urine=NOM:kidney'; the other is *sò=ta* 'blood=NOM:vessel'. Unlike kinship terms that are alienably possessed (§4. 3. 1. 1. 2), body parts in Ersu could be alienably or inalienably possessed (§5. 3).

In discourse, the second syllable of some of the disyllabic Ersu body parts is always omitted in context. This includes *vùliɛ̀* 'head'; *do+ku* 'eye+?hole:eye'; *ŋa+ku* 'ear+?hole'; *lə+pʰo* 'from shoulder to hand+?:upper limbs'; *ə˥+pʰo* 'from bottom to foot+?:lower limbs' and *yipʰa* 'stomach'. Details are given in Table 4. 10.

In Isolation	In Realization	Gloss
vùliɛ̀	*vù*	'head'
do+ku	*do*	'eye'
ŋa+ku	*ŋa*	'ear'
lə+pʰo	*lə*	'hand'
ə˥+pʰo	*ə˥*	'foot'
yipʰa	*yi*	'stomach'
ngama	*ŋga*	'back'

Table 4. 10 Shortening of Ersu body parts in discourse

Take *yipʰa* 'stomach' as an example (4. 24):

(4. 24) *a* *yi* *dɑ-ŋa* *tʰatsa*
1sg.SLF stomach upward-hungry INTS:too
'I am too hungry.' Lit: I stomach too hungry.

4. 3. 1. 2. 2 Semantic extenstions of terms for human body parts

Some of the Ersu body parts can be extended in semantics to refer to temporal-spatial[54] orientation, and they may also have metaphorical extensions.

Two words *tsomo* 'bottom' and the shortened form of *ngama* 'back' can occur with each other to denote temporal or spatial concepts. Both may mean 'underneath'

[54] In Ersu, nearly all the spatial or locational nouns can also be used to denote time.

or ‘later’ as shown in the following examples:

(4. 25) *tsomo+ŋgɑ=nɛ̀,* *fiɪ* *tə* *fiɪ* *dzo*
bottom+back:beneath=TOP village one RPT:village EXT
‘There is a village down there.’

(4. 26) *tsomo+ŋgɑ=nɛ̀,* *yotsɛ* *yi* *ɲuɑ* *yotsɛ*
bottom+back:later=TOP self house black self
də-ɕo=dʑɛ̌
upward-sweep=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) later, each cared for his own family.’ Lit*:* Later, self sweep self black (dirty) house.

In addition, ‘hand’-, ‘heart’-, ‘body’-, ‘eye’-, ‘bottom’-, ‘tear’- and ‘thorax’-related body parts are seen to have metaphorical extensions that refer to emotions, health, personality, and so on. Among them, ‘hand’- and ‘heart’-related body parts are found to have varying meanings in accordance with the context in which they are placed. Examples are given as follows.

(4. 27) ***ŋgɑmɛ* ‘body’→ ‘health’**
ŋə=zɿ̀ *zɛ* *ŋgɑmɛ* *ɑ-ɲtsʰɯ=ɛ̌*?
2sg=GEN:family wife body ITRG-good=ITG
‘How is your wife?’ Lit:Your wife body good?

(4. 28) ***miɑpo* ‘tear’→ ‘grievance’**
miɑpo *zɑ-mɑ* *ŋə-tsʰɛtsʰɛ*
tear rice-SFX.FEM outward-drink.RDUP.
‘(Someone is) feeling a lot of grief.’ Lit: eat, eat tears and rice.

(4. 29) ***go*** **'thorax→ 'anger'**

go *də-ndzə̰*

torax upward-tremble

'(Someone is) feeling very angry.' Lit: thorax tremble.

(4. 30) ***do+ku*** **'eye'→ 'judgment'**

su *t^hə-wo* *do* *mɑ-nts^hə*

person DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike eye NEG-quick

'This person does not have good judgment.' Lit: This person eye not quick.

(4. 31) ***lə*** **'from shoulder to hand'→ 'under the control/care of'**

ɑ=zɳ̀ *ɑ-pu* *lə=kə=nɛ̀* *dʑimo*

1sg=GEN:family KPFX-grandfather hand=RLN.LOC:in=TOP wealthy

'(My family was) rich (while being) under the care of my grandpa.' Lit: In the hand of I grandfather wealthy.

(4. 32) ***lə*** **'from shoulder to hand'→ 'fairness'**

lə+psɳ *k^hə=*

upper limb(from shoulder to hand) + flat:the flat of hand inward=

p^hɛ *dʑì ʂɳ̀,*

LOC:inside CO flesh

lə+psɳ

upper limb(from shoulder to hand)+ flat:the flat of hand

ɳo=p^hɛ-bɛ̀ *dʑì ʂɳ̀*

outward=LOC:outside-QUAT.pl CO flesh

'(A person should be) fair (to his/her sons or daughters).' Lit: Flesh inside hand and fingers flesh, and outside hand and fingers flesh

(4. 33) ***sɻɲi* 'heart'→ 'bravery'**

sɻɲi yɑ-k^{h}uɑ nə-ŋu

heart APFX-big downward-do

'Do be brave.' Lit: Make heart big

(4. 34) ***sɻɲi* 'heart'→ cleverness**

sɻɲi mɑ=ntʂ^{h}ə

heart NEG=quick

'(Someone is) not clever' Lit: heart not quick

(4. 35) ***sɻɲi* 'heart'→ 'kindness'**

sɻɲi mɑ-ndə

heart NEG-good

'(Someone is) not kind.' Lit: heart not good

4. 3. 1. 3 Fauna

Nouns that denote fauna reflect the Ersu's living environment. In Ersu, there is a large number of terms for land and sky creatures (including reptiles), but there is only one indigenous Ersu word, *zù* 'fish' denoting water creatures. No words are found to denote subclasses of fishes, such as 'loach', 'crucian' and 'chub'. There are no terms for superordinate natural classes such as 'animal' and 'poultry', but there are terms attested to denote the fauna classes such as *zɳgu* 'livestock', *ɲilɑxà* 'wild animals', *xuɑ* 'bird' and *bɛdzɳ* 'insect'.

Morphologically, the majority of nouns denoting wild animals and livestock are either monosyllabic or disyllabic, such as *dzɳ* 'leopard', *ɲbò* 'horse', *ŋuà* 'ox', *yo* 'sheep', and *lop^{h}uɑ* 'wolf'. Most nouns denoting birds are disyllabic, such as *tsɑguɑ* 'eagle' and *ɲdzɻmo* 'wild goose'. Many insects are compounds that share a common bound root *bɛ* that semantically refer to 'insect' (§4. 2. 2. 1). For example,

bɛ+yo ‘insect+?:fly’, *bɛ+ts^{h}a* ‘insect+?hot:mosquito’. Some of the nouns that denote the subclasses of a particular class of creatures are formed through noun-noun $[N_1N_2]N_3$ compounds and noun-adjective $[N_1ADJ]N_2$ compounds, sharing a common root that denoting the “generic” class (§4. 2. 2. 2). Take the different subclasses of oxen as an example (4. 36):

(4. 36)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ŋuà	‘ox’
ŋuà+ɲi	‘ox+red:common cattle’
dzo+ŋuà	‘water+ox:water buffalo’
là+ŋuà	‘tiger+ox:yak’

Nouns denoting livestock and poultry are observed to optionally occur with a gender suffix especially when the speaker wants to highlight the gender differentiation of a creature in speech. And many terms used for animals, birds, and poultry often take a diminutive marker *=yi* ‘=DIM’ (§4. 7). The co-occurrence of fauna nouns and gender differentiation suffixes will be further discussed in §7. Here, examples are given in (4. 37) for an overview of the word, *ŋuà* ‘ox’, taking a diminutive marker and gender noun classes.

(4. 37)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ŋuà=yi	‘ox=DIM:calf’
ŋuà-ma	‘ox-SFX.MAS:mother ox’
ŋuà-zɿ	‘ox-SFX.MAS.adult:father ox’
ŋuà-p^{h}a	‘ox-SFX.MAS.juvenile and male:young male ox’

Similar to human body parts, fauna body parts are also alienably possessed (§5. 3). The majority of nouns that denoting body parts of fauna are the same as those used for human body parts (§4. 3. 1. 2). However, there are some animal body parts that are different from human body parts or only possessed by animals or birds or poultry. For example:

(4. 38)

Ex.	**Gloss**
supi	‘mouth of snakes, birds and poultry’
dʐodʐo	‘leg’
dʐɭdʐɭ	‘paw’
ʐɭ	‘hoof’
lo	‘horn’
mɛntsʰə	‘tail’
buɬi	‘wing’
tsə	‘egg’

Note that *tsə* ‘egg’ tends to show differences between a form used in isolation and a form used in discourse. In discourse, *tsə* ‘egg’ always follows *la* ‘chicken’ to form a compound *la+tsə* ‘chicken egg’. Consequently, *la+tsə* ‘chicken egg’ functions to denote all types of eggs. For example (4. 39):

(4. 39)

Ex.	**Gloss**
la+tsə	‘chicken+egg: chicken egg’
ʔwàŋ+la+tsə	‘goose+chicken+egg: goose egg’
ʔiàn+la+tsə	‘duck+chicken+egg: duck egg’
xua=yi+la+tsə	‘bird=DIM+chicken+egg:bird egg’
bɛəˈ+la+tsə	‘snake+chicken+egg:snake egg’

I hypothesize that this is because the Ersu have a tradition to keep chicken, while geese and ducks are from areas outside Ersu communities (§2. 6). The Ersu are then more familiar with eggs laid by chickens than those produced by other poultry and birds and snakes. Consequently, the compound *la+tsə* ‘chicken egg’ with a specific meaning is extended to denote all types of eggs instead of the monomorphemic word *tsə* ‘egg’ with a generic meaning.

Examples for Ersu nouns that denoting fauna are given in (4. 40)[55].

[55] In (4. 40), examples that have appeared in the texts are not listed. In addition, fauna nouns in (4. 40) are just a few representative examples. There is in fact no possibility to give a full list since there is a large number of fauna nouns in Ersu.

(4. 40)

	Ex.	Gloss
ɲilaxà 'wild animals'	*là*	'tiger'
	əˈdzə	'dragon'
	mi	'monkey'
	la	'musk deer'
	fa	'bear'
xua 'birds'	*kʰumo*	'owl'
	xuasu	'sparrow'
	tʂʰatʂʰa	'magpie'
	kəpo	'cuckoo'
	tsaxa	'pheasant'
zɳgu 'livestock'	*tʂʰo*	'dog'
	ɲbo	'horse'
	tsʰi	'goat'
	tʰua	'mule'
	ɲtsɳ	'cat'[56]
bɛdzɳ 'insects'	*ʂabɛla*	'ant'
	kala	'spider'
	tsʰolo	'flea'
	ʂə-ma	'louse-SFX.FEM:louse'
	laəˈ	'scolopendra'
'reptile and water creatures'	*bɛəˈ*	'snake'
	psɳ-ma	'flat-SFX.FEM:toad'
	psɳ-ma +buaka	'flat-SFX.FEM:toad +?:toad'
	zù	'fish'

4. 3. 1. 4 Flora

It is reported by most of the Ersu in Lajigu that there must be thousands of terms denoting flora in the Ersu communities. This is the case. It is observed that there are countless plants in the living areas of the Ersu. However, the Ersu, including the oldest villager, cannot identify most of the plants in the village and the mountains. Flora in Ersu can be further divided into five subclasses, each with a specialized term denoting it as shown in Table 4. 11.

[56] Dogs and cats are not kept just as pets in Ersu communities. Dogs are kept to guard houses and cats are fed to catch mice (§1. 2. 2. 5). Consequently, I group them as livestock.

Subclass	Term	Gloss
1	*si*	'tree'
2	*ndzɛ*	'grass'
3	*nts^{h}o*	'thorn bush'
4	*ɲi*	'creeper'
5	*lət^{h}u*	'crop'

Table 4. 11 Subclasses of Ersu flora

Although there are some monomorphemic flora nouns in Subclasses 1, 2 and 3, the majority of them are compounds in the form of [formative+class term (*si/ndzɛ/nts^{h}o*)](§4. 2. 2. 2) or [N_1+N_2 (*si/ndzɛ/nts^{h}o*)] N_3 (§4. 2. 2. 3). However, Subclass 4, that is, terms belonging to *ɲi* 'creeper', take a reversed order in compounding for unknown reasons. More specifically, nouns denoting creepers are found to be compounds in the form of [class term (*ɲi*)+formative] or [N_1(*ɲi*)+N_2] N_3. Similar to Subclass 1, 2 and 3, in which the compounds are subtypes of *si/ndzɛ/nts^{h}o*, *ɲi*-related compounds are also sybtypes of *ɲi* 'creeper'. Finally, the majority of terms denoting *lət^{h}u* 'crop' (Subclass 5) are monosyllabic or disyllabic monomorphemic though there are also some compounds. Examples are given in (4. 41)[57].

[57] There are some plants listed in (4. 41) only available in the Ersu communities. In addition, my language consultants only know the indigenous Ersu names of some plants and they cannot find Mandarin terms for them. I myself cannot identify them. I tried to get some clues from Lahu (Matisoff 2005), but failed. However, though I cannot give an official English name here, I am trying to make my descriptions as detailed as possible here.

(4. 41)		Ex.	Gloss
	si 'trees'	*ɬaɬa+si*	'?+tree:poplar'
		vɛ+dʑi+si	'pig+keep…confined to+tree:a kind of tree whose leaves are similar to poplar, but branches are very flexible. The Ersu often use its branches to tie up livestock such as pigs, horses'
		katsa+si	'crotch+tree: a kind of tree with many crotches'
	ndzɛ 'grass'	*psɻ-ma+ndzɛ*	'flat-SFX.FEM:toad+grass:a kind of grass that grows in clumps and is short'
		tʂʰa+ndzɛ	'devil+grass:a kind of grass that grows high and is often used as an instrument to drive away devils in religious practices'
		pa+ndzɛ	'?+grass:a kind of grass that can be seen everywhere in Ersu communities and whose leaves are sharp'
	ntsʰo 'thorn bush'	*tsʰanua+ntsʰo*	'?+thorn bush:a kind of bush whose main branches have long thorns of about 2cm'
		loko+ntsʰo	'?+thorn bush:a kind of bush whose main branches have thorns growing in pairs, less than 1cm'
		bòlò+ntsʰo	'?+thorn:a kind of sisal-like grass each of whose leaves with a thin and long thorn'
	ɳi 'creeper'	*ɳi+katsa*	'creepter+crotch:a kind of creeper with many crotches'
		ɳi+koyo	'creepter+?:a kind of creeper that is very tender and viewed as livestock's favorite food'
		ɳi+la+xòntɕò	'creeper+?land+ MC:pepper< wild pepper'
	lətʰu 'crop'	*pu*	'potato'
		tso	'highland barley'
		dzà	'rice'
		ʂa	'wheat'
		ndzɻ	'buckwheat'
		go+pi	'vegetable'
		go+əˈ	'vegetable+white: cabbage'
		go+nua	'vegetable+black:a kind of highland vegetable whose leaves are big in size and dark in color'
		go+nba	'vegetable+root=> radish'
		fu	'garlic'
		fu+dzi	'garlic+?:pepper'
		fu+bu	'garlic+?:shallot'

Examples for monomorphemic flora nouns in the wild are given in (4. 42):

(4. 42)

Ex.	Gloss
ɬa	'a kind of liana plant whose leaves are like a maple's but grows many hair-like minute thorns, extremely stingy and poisonous. It is the most notorious plant in the area.'
via	'a kind of wormwood-like plant that is very combustible'
la^{l}	'a kind of fan palm-like plant that grows in humid or shady places'
logo	'a kind of plant whose stem is very tender and edible, tasting a bit bitter'
ok^{h}ua	'a kind of liana whose stem is purple and whose leaves are like pepper's'

Terms denoting fruit trees constitute a special subtype. All of them are [N_1 (fruit) +N_2 (*si*)] N_3 (fruit tree) compounds. They are some sort of "loose compounds": according to the size of the fruit, either the noun classifier *kaka* 'NCL: round and as big as/bigger than a fist' or the noun classifier *mama* 'NCL: round and often smaller than a fist, especially pearl-like' (§7) is inserted between N_1 (fruit) and N_2 (*si*), forming a compound in the form of [N_1 (fruit) +NCL(*kaka/mama*) N_2 (*si*)] N_3 (fruit tree). However, the insertion of a noun classifier is not obligotary. It is often inserted in the context to highlight the shape and size of the fruit. Examples are given in (4. 43).

(4. 43)

Ex.	Gloss
siyɑ-(kaka)+si	'peach-(NCL)+tree:peach tree'
yobɛ-(kaka)+si	'persimmon-(NCL)+tree:persimmon tree'
otɕa-(kaka)+si	'pear-(NCL)+tree: domesticated pear tree'
otɕa-(mama)+si	'pear-(NCL)+tree:wild pear tree'[58]
yinua-(mama)+si	'cherry-(NCL)+tree:cherry tree'
xandzɔ-(mama)+si	'grape-(NCL)+tree:grape tree'

The possession of flora "body parts" is alienable. This is given in §5. 3.

4. 3. 1. 5 Nature

Terms denoting nature-related referents are comparatively fewer than those of other subclasses. Many of them are compounds sharing a common bound root *mɛ̀* 'nature' (§4. 2. 2). Besides *mɛ̀* compounds, some of the terms referring to the features

[58] Terms denoting domesticated and wild pears are differentiated by the uses of different noun classifiers. Domesticated pears are associated with *kaka* because they are much bigger than wild pears which are then associated with *mama*.

of topography have a bound root *la* in common which means 'a piece of land with some type of flora or for special uses'. For example (4. 44):

(4. 44)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	si+la	'tree+land:forest'
	ndzɛ+tʂʰʅ+la	'grass+?cut+land: grassland'
	tʂʰʅgu+la	'? +land:land with grass and small bushes'
	ntsʰo+la	'thorn+land:land with thorn clumps'
	ɬa+la	'*lla*+land:land with *lla*[59]'
	tsʰua+la	'split+land: cemetery'

Most of the other nature-related nouns are monosyllabic and monomorphemic. Disyllabic and monomorphemic terms are seldom found in my data. Nouns of this class could be further divided into three subclasses: features of landscape, features of sky/weather and natural substances. Examples are given in (4. 45).

[59] *ɬa* is a kind of fatally poisonous plant found in the Ersu communities. There are a lot of fur-like thorns growing on its leaves. In many traditional stories, the name of the plant occurs with a quite high frequency.

(4. 45)

	Ex.	Gloss
sky/weather-related	*ɲo-ma*	'sun-SFX.FEM:sun'
	ɬa-pʰa	'moon-SFX.MAS:moon'
	tʂʅ	'star'
	tsə	'cloud'
	gua	'rain'
	zʐ̀	'snow'
	tsʰu	'hail'
landscape	*ɲbi*	'mountain'
	lo	'cliff, rock, pitch'
	dzo	'river, water'
	ɲbo	'ravine'
	ə́-pʰa	'road-SFX.MAS:road'
	bòbò	'plain'
	dʑiwu	'highland'
	zʅxua	'paddy field'
natural substances	*tsʰu+psʅ*	'fog+?flat:dust'
	tsʰuli	'soil'
	ə́+kʰua	'stone+big:stone'
	ə́+ɲtʂʰə	'stone+(ground) rice:pebble'
	ɲi	'gold'
	ɲua	'silver'
	ɲò	'brass'
	ʂə	'iron'
	xəyi	'aluminium'

4. 3. 1. 6 Cultural artifacts

Many terms that denote modern appliances or tools in Ersu such as TV, table, match and so on are directly borrowed from Mandarin Chinese. However, original Ersu terms for cultural artifacts are also abundant. The morphology of Ersu terms within this class involves monomorphemic words, compounds and nominalizations. Many of them are formed through verb or verb phrase nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 2). Similar to other types of nouns, monomorphemic nouns for cultural artifacts are also either monosyllabic or disyllabic.

Ersu terms denoting cultural artifacts are closely associated with the Ersu's living environment and tradition. As inhabitants of mountainous areas, they have to either adapt to, or rebuild their living surroundings in order to survive. Consequently, there

are various terms referring to tools used for cutting, digging, hunting and ploughing. Take "cutting tools" as an example. There are several different tools in Ersu, each of them functioning to "cut" some different kinds of things. For example (4. 46):

(4. 46)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	batʂa	'knife (generic)'
	tsʰito	'cutting knife, used in kitchen'
	batʂa+tʂəma	'knife (generic)+?:a kind of knife used for cutting medium-sized trees'
	paɬi	'a kind of knife used for cutting grasses mixed with bushes'
	zè	'a kind of knife used for cutting grasses and crops'
	zè+tʂəma	'a kind of knife similar to *zè* in appearance but much bigger, used for cutting thick-stemmed grasses and crops'
	vutsʰua	'axe, used for cutting huge trees or for cutting trees into pieces'
	tsua	'a kind of hoe-like device that is much smaller and narrower than a hoe, used for cutting wooden grooves to contain food for pigs'

Terms for cultural artifacts are so rich that it is impossible to give a full subclassification of them. However, they can be roughly further divided into the following subclasses: clothing, interior-used tools, exterior-used tools, musical instruments (some are also used by Shabas) and further tools only used by Shabas. Examples are given in (4. 47).

(4. 47)		**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	'clothing'	*gamɛ*	'coat'
		zatsʰɛ	'pants'
		tʂʰa	'skirt'
		zɿ	'shoes'
		vù+tɕò	'head+bind:turban'
	'interior-used tools'	*tʂɿ*	'cabinet'
		dzʐò	'wok'
		tʂə	'scale'
		ntʂʰu	'steamer'
		ʒuma	'soup ladle'
		sintɕʰo	'water ladle'
		ʂatsʰi	'broom'
		latʰa	'stone miller'
		ʂəntsʰɿ	'fire tongs'

(to be continued)

(to continue)

(4. 47)	'exterior-used tools'	*dù*	'plough'
		ʂaba	'harrow'
		dzəpsʰʅ	'a kind of hoe used for digging soil'
		bo=ta	'weed=NOM: a kind of hoe used for weeding'
		pɛku+tsʰu=ta	'hole+open=NOM:aiguille'
		ŋgangu+kuɑ=ta	'tool +put… into=NOM: tool box'
		suɑ=ta	'saw=NOM: sawer'
		suəˈ=ta	'?=NOM:whetstone'
	'musical instruments'	*ndza*	'drum'[60]
		tʂʰalo	'cymbals'[61]
		danbaˈ	'rattle-drum'
		ɬa	'flute'
		tʂʰʒ̀lo	'small bell'[62]
	'Shaba-used tools'[63]	*zuàlətsʰa*	'a kind of wooden instrument looking like a huge pokal used by a Shaba to catch devils'
		tʰilankʰolòpɑ=ta	'?=NOM: a kind of wooden mould carved with particular images, used to print the images on a piece of paper or cloth that is worn by a patient with headache or ear-ringing to treat diseases'
		tsʰosinkʰolòpɑ=ta	'? =NOM:a kind of wooden mould carved with particular images, used to print the images on a piece of paper or cloth that is worn by a female patient with disorders or infertility to treat diseases'
		tuatsùkì=ta	'? =NOM:a kind of short bronze stick used by a Shaba to put into and "clean" water and then to mix the water with alcohol in order to treat various diseases'
		əˈbɛ	'a conch that is blown by a Shaba during various ceremonies'
		ŋpʰòlà	'something like a necklace with an eagle pendant to indicate the identity of a Shaba'
		ɬantʂə	'a graduation certificate of a Shaba which consists of many big wing feathers of a white rooster placed on a piece of cloth hung on the wall of the sitting room of a Shaba's house'

[60] Drums are necessary instruments used by a Shaba. The drums used by Shabas have three different sizes: big, medium and small. They should be chosen in accordance with different rituals, mainly depending on the number of attendants. In general, the more people attend a ritual, the bigger is the drum used.

[61] Cymbals are also necessary instruments used by a Shaba.

[62] A small bell is also a necessary instrument used by a Shaba.

[63] Terms for the tools used by a Shaba are very conservative and the Shaba themselves do not know what each morpheme means. Consequently, terms of this subtype are not further glossed on a morpheme-basis.

4. 3. 1. 7 Vocation

In Ersu, terms referring to vocation could be generally divided into two subclasses: religious practitioners and handcrafters. There are three disyllabic and monomorphemic nouns denoting religious practitioners, while all terms denoting handcrafters except cooks are formed through nominalization (§4. 2. 3. 1) as in (4. 48).

(4. 48)		**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	'religious practitioners'[64]	*ʂapa*	'a local religious practitioner in Ersu communities'
		ŋuamo	'someone said to have natural and in borne relationship with Buddha, who can drive devils'
		suva	'a Tibetan-Buddhism practitioner who received education in Tibetan temples'
	'handcrafters'	*ʂɿ̀+kə-ma*	'meat+?in-SFX.FEM:cook<a cook whose responsibility is to cook dishes'
		za+kə-ma	'rice+?in-SFX.FEM:cook<a cook whose responsibility is to cook rice'
		vu+kə-ma	'alcohol+?in-SFX.FEM:cook< a cook whose responsibility is to take care of alcohol'
		si+ngangu+ntsʰa=sù	'wood+tool+make=NOM: carpenter, Lit: a person who makes wooden tools'
		ʂə+tsu=sù	'iron+hammer=NOM: blacksmith, Lit: a person who hammers iron'
		əˈkʰua+tsu=sù	'stone+hammer=NOM: stonecutter, Lit: a person who hammers stones'
		vu+ntʂʰu=sù	'alcohol+steam=NOM:winemaker, Lit:a person who steams alcohol'
		xaxa=sù	'teach. RDUP=NOM: teacher, Lit:a person who teaches'
		soso=sù	'learn.RDUP=NOM:student, Lit:a person who learns'

As can be seen in (4. 48), "cooks" in Ersu share the same formative: *kə-ma*. I

[64] Nowadays, Shabas are the most active among the three groups of religious practitioners and they are "all-round" people who can hold many rituals. *ŋuamo* are only invited to drive devils. *suva* are not seen any more.

hypothesize that *kə-ma* 'cook' is formed through the combination of the relator noun *kə* 'inside area' and the gender suffix *-ma* 'SFX.FEM' though the constituent order looks a bit odd considering the language. I base this hypothesis on the fact that in colloquial Mandarin Chinese, people often use *wū=lǐ=de* 'house=LOC:in/inside= DES.NOM' to refer to 'wife' which literally means 'someone at home'. Consequently, *kə-ma* 'inside area-SFX.FEM:cook' that literally means 'inside female' might be a literal translation of the Mandarin word *wū=lǐ=de* 'someone at home' because similar to many other traditions throughout China, an Ersu woman also takes on the responsibility to cook at home. It is then not surprising to find that *kə-ma* 'cook' bears a suffix denoting females regardless of a cook's real gender. In addition, the term 'cook' is a culturally dependent word, which does not refer to a professional cook who works in restaurants but refer to a helper employed for various ceremonies where many guests gather. Whenever a ceremony is held in the Ersu communities, there are often scores of, even hundreds of guests coming. People who help cook are then necessary. They are further divided into three types according to their responsibilities, each containing a formative *kə-ma* 'cook'.

4. 3. 1. 8 Location

Ersu has a rich and complex location-denoting system. Terms denoting location are closely associated with geographical features and objects of reference in speech. Locational terms can be "specific", "semi-specific" and "generic".

A "specific" location is often indicated by specific referents such as human beings, fauna, flora, body parts and so on taking a relator noun. Consequently, a specific location often refers to a specific place. For example: *si+pu=tɕʰo* 'tree+CL:living plants=RLN.LOC:on<on a tree'; *tʂʰo=tɕʰikə* 'dog=RLN.LOC:beside <beside a dog'. Nouns denoting specific locations is further discussed in §4. 5.

A "semi-specific" location is often indicated by stable referents that cover some square areas such as a house, a barn floor, a yard, etc. taking a relator noun. It refers to

a certain place but the specific location in the place is not clearly addressed. For example, *tsotʂʰə=kə* 'barn floor=RLN.LOC:in<on a barn floor'. This example denotes the place "on a barn floor" but which part of the barn floor is not specified. However, there are also some semi-specific locations that do not take locative markers. They are closely associated with a house and some of them are compounds sharing a common formative (bound root) *xɛ* 'side' (§4. 3. 1. 8. 1).

A "generic" location often refers to some place without a referent. If not, the reference is at most a place denoting an indefinite vast area, such as *ɲbi+ɲba* 'moutain+root:the foot of a moutain'. Many terms of this type are also compounds that share a common bound root *xɛ* 'side' or *pʰɛ* 'side'. However, they are not seen to take locatives such as *=kə*, *=tɕʰi=kə*, *=tɕʰo* that are found in "semi-specific locations". The meaning of a generic location is often indefinite and may vary in accordance with the context (§4. 3. 1. 8. 2).

4. 1. 3. 1. 8. 1 House-related locations ("semi-specific" locations)

This section focuses on locational nouns related to a traditional Ersu house. In Lajigu, although there are three families that have newly-built Han-styled houses, nearly all the other houses were built in around the mid- or late-1900s and the arrangements of each house are almost uniform (§1. 2. 2. 5). Each room/space in the house has a particular name. They are given in Figure 4. 4.

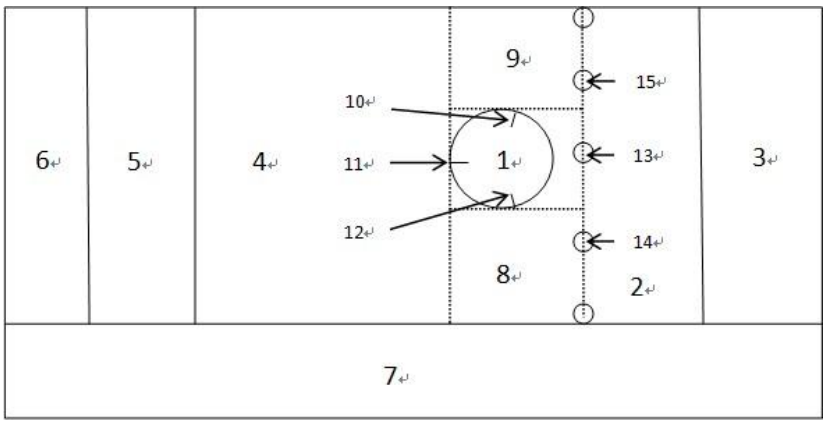


Figure 4. 4 Scheme of a traditional Ersu house

Figure 4. 4 illustrates the arrangements of a traditional house. In this figure, a real line implies that there is a wall and a dotted line means that the Ersu distinguish the areas and give them different locational terms though there are no walls or other borderlines. The five small circles show that there are five thick wooden pillars and three of them have been given specific names. The big circle stands for a fireplace that is very important to an Ersu family. The original function of a fireplace is for cooking. However, the Ersu family members and visitors often sit around a fireplace. The areas surrounding it thus become a space for casual chats or for formal discussions/meetings (§1. 2. 2. 5). Centering on a fireplace, the Ersu give different terms to different spaces or rooms in a house. For example, if the fireplace is located on the opposite side in Figure 4. 4, the arrangements of the house will be correspondingly reversed. Consequently, locational terms denoting a room/space in a house do not match with a generic direction such as the east or the west, but is closely associated with the location of a fireplace in a house. More specifically, *xuakə* 'host and hostess' room' (No.3 in Figure 4. 4) is located in the east in this family, but may be in the west in another family, depending on the location of the fireplace of a family. In addition, similar to Galo (Post 2007: 43), a fireplace also helps identify a person because there are seating etiquettes stipulated according to the areas connected with a fireplace[65]. More specifically, a particular area is for a particular person (or a particular group of persons). Terms matching the numbers in Figure 4. 4 that denote locations in a house are given in Table 4. 12.

[65] This was very strict in previous time. However, though some old villagers are observed to stick to the custom, it is not that strict nowadays.

No.	Location		Comment
	Term	Gloss	
1	*mɛ+dʑi*	'fire+keep…confined to: fireplace[66],	
2	*dʑi+kuɑ=xɛ̀*	'fireplace+north=LOC:side<a space behind the fireplace'	This is an area for the old, the respected people to sit in. It is also an area to hang dried pork and to keep harvested crops.
3	*xuakə*	'host and hostess' room'	
4	*dʑi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀*	'fireplace+south=LOC:side< a space in front of the fireplace'	This larger blank area is often used for get-together. People often dance, sing and drink (toast to each other) here.
5	*yi+dzo*	'house+?:room for guests and other family members'	
6	*dzo+dʑi*	'water+keep…confined to<a small room to keep livestock and poultry[67],	
7	*yi+gɑ=xɛ̀*	'house+uphill=LOC:side< uphill side of a house'	This is a long room where the Ersu cook, prepare food for livestock and poultry.
8	*dʑi+pɯ=xɛ̀*	'fireplace+manage=LOC:side<a space on the left side of the fireplace given that a person sits behind the fireplace and faces it'	This is an area for the host to sit in.
9	*dʑi+ɲi=xɛ̀*	'fireplace+downhill=LOC:side=>a space on the right side of the fireplace given that a person sits behind the fireplace and faces it.'	This is an area for the hostess and children to sit in.
10	*zuɑ-ma*	'?-SFX.FEM: one of the three erected stones that hold cooking utensils'	The term with a gender noun classifier indicates its adjacent area, *dʑi+pɯ=xɛ̀*, is for a hostess.
11	*zuɑ-xa*	'?-SFX.MAS: one of the three erected stones that hold cooking utensils'	The area adjacent to this stone is for the guests to sit in.

(to be continued)

[66] It is always shortened to *dʑi* in discourse. Consequently, the space behind a fireplace is, *dʑi+kuɑ=xɛ̀* not *mɛ+dʑi+kuɑ=xɛ̀*. This also applies to other compounds including the root *mɛ+dʑi*.

[67] The function of this room has changed in most of the Ersu families. It has become a room to keep firewood because they build other small rooms surrounding the enclosure to keep livestock and poultry. The word, *dzo+dʑi*, is formed through two free roots, water and keep…confined to. I hypothesize that in this compound, 'water' implies excrements from livestock and poultry and then stand for livestock and poultry. Thus, *dzo+dʑi*, means '(a place to) keep livestock and poultry', not its literal meaning '(a place to) keep water'.

(to continue)

No.	Location		Comment
	Term	Gloss	
12	*zɑ+pu*	'hundred+manage:king[68], here refers to one of the three erected stones that hold cooking utensils'	The term that originally means 'king' indicates its adjacent area, *dʑi+pu=xɛ̀*, is for a host. This also reflects that in ancient times, a man might have a higher social status than a woman in Ersu communities.
13	*kʰu+ndza*	'?+stand:the name of the middle one of the five pillars'	
14	*bu+ndza*	'?+stand: the name of the pillar on the side of *zɑ+pu* (No.12)'	
15	*dù+ndza*	'?+stand: the name of the pillar on the side of $zua^{55}.ma^{55}$ (No.10)'	

Table 4. 12 Major terms denoting interior locations

Terms that denote exterior locations surrounding a house are closely associated with the geographical features of a landscape where the house is built. Nearly all the Ersu houses in Bao'an Tibetan Township of Yuexi County (§1. 4. 1) were built on a slope of a mountain. Then, terms denoting an exterior location tend to use the slope as a focal deixis. The back side of a house that often faces an upward slope is called *yi+gɑ=xɛ̀* and its opposite side (front side) facing a downward slope is called *yi+ɲi=xɛ̀*. When a person stands in front of the house and faces the downward slope, areas are respectively called *yi+kuɑ=xɛ̀* (his/her right hand side) and *yi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀* (his/her left hand side) (Figure 4. 5). Terms that denote exterior locations around a house are given in Figure 4. 5 and glossed in Table 4.14.

[68] I was told by my language consultants that Ersu is a small ethnic group. *zɑ+pu* originally refers to 'someone who manages one hundred households' and this the highest official rank in Ersu communities. Thus the Ersu view a *zɑ+pu* as their king though no historical records prove that there was a king among the Ersu.

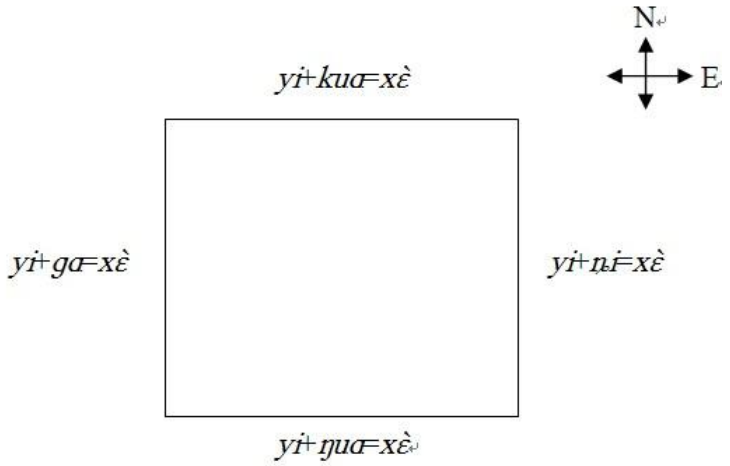


Figure 4. 5 Major terms denoting exterior locations

Term	Gloss
yi+gɑ=xɛ̀	'house+uphill=LOC:side<the exterior side of a house facing an upward slope, often the back of a house'
yi+ŋɛi=xɛ̀	'house+uphill=LOC:side< the exterior side of a house facing a downward slope, often the front of a house'
yi+kuɑ=xɛ̀	'house+north=LOC:side <the exterior right side of a house'
yi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀	'house+south=LOC:side < the exterior left side of a house'

Table 4. 13 Glossed exterior locational terms

Since the definition of these locational terms is with reference to a mountain slope, the same term might refer to an opposite place in a different direction in different Ersu villages. This environmentally-based "topographical deixis" shift might be common in those languages spoken in high mountainous ethnic communities such as Tani languages (Post 2011). More specifically, *yi+gɑ=xɛ̀*, *yi+ŋɛi=xɛ̀*, *yi+kuɑ=xɛ̀* and *yi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀* might roughly correspond to 'west', 'east', 'north' and 'south' in Lajigu that is situated on the northern slope of Mt. Shengze (§1. 4. 1). While in Gafu, another Ersu village that is situated on the southern slope of the mountain, *yi+gɑ=xɛ̀* and *yi+ŋɛi=xɛ̀* respectively change to refer to 'east' and 'west'. However, terms denoting locations in the direction of south and north are hypothesized to keep stable since all the Ersu live along the valleys featuring from north to south (§1. 1)[69]. The comparisons of exterior locations and their corresponding directions between Lajigu

[69] I can only offer a hypothesis, not an affirmative statement here because I have not managed to travel to other Ersu villages far from Lajigu. This description may only apply to the Ersu villages in Bao'an Tibetan Township.

and Gafu are given in Table 4. 14.

Term	Lajigu	Gafu
yí+gɑ̀=xɛ̀	‘west’	‘east’
yí+ŋɔ́=xɛ̀	‘east’	‘west’
yí+kuɑ̀=xɛ̀	‘north’	‘north’
yí+ŋuɑ̀=xɛ̀	‘south’	‘south’

Table 4. 14 Terminological differences of exterior locations between Lajigu and Gafu

4. 3. 1. 8. 2 Generic location

As mentioned in §4. 3. 1. 8, terms denoting a generic location often refer to a place without a referent. The inventory of generic locations is large, which can be further divided into two subsets: “common generic locations” also found in other languages and “unique generic locations” based on geographical features. Table 4.15 gives a full list of Ersu terms that denote generic locations.

Subset	Term	Gloss
'common generic locations'	*so=p^hɛ*	'before=LOC:side<front side'
	gamɑ+ŋo	'body+outside:back side[70]'
	$tɕ^h$i=kə	'edge= LOC:in<beside, around, at the edge of'
	lə+yi	'hand+right:left side'
	lə+tsu	'hand+left:right side[71]'
	guɬa	'center'
	$tɕ^h$o=p^hɛ	'up=LOC:side<upside'
	ʈʂaŋa	'beneath, downside'
	ŋo=p^hɛ	'outside=LOC:side<outside'
	k^hə=kə	'inward =LOC:in<inside'
'unique generic locations'	***kuɑ=xɛ***	'north=LOC:side< northern side'
	ŋuɑ=xɛ	'south=LOC:side< southern side[72]'
	gɑ=xɛ	'uphill=LOC:side< uphill side'
	ŋi=xɛ	'downhill=LOC:side<downhill side'
	kɛ=p^hɛ	'LOC:in=LOC:side<this side, referring to the area covering Lajigu'
	ts^hɑ=p^hɛ	'?=LOC:side< other side , referring to the area opposite to Lajigu[73]'

Table 4. 15 List of Ersu generic locational terms

It should be noted that the **bold** terms in Table 4. 15 are also listed in Sun's papers (1982a, 1983a). However, there are some differences between the terms that he documented in the village of Zela and the terms that I am describing here. They are: **1)** *$tɕ^h$o=p^hɛ* 'upside' is documented as *$tɕ^h$o-wo* in his papers (Sun 1982a, 1983a). *k^hə=kə* 'inside' is documented as *k^hə-p^hɛ* in his paper. **2)** Sun (1982a, 1983a) points out that *k^hə-p^hɛ* 'inside' also denotes an upstream location and *ŋo=p^hɛ* 'outside' also denotes

[70] This is also a term that denotes a human being's back.

[71] I **hypothesize** that this is a wrong translation from Mandarin Chinese, but it is accepted by the Ersu communities and forms a new Ersu term. This is because: 1) the pronunciation of *yi* 'left' is quite similar to Mandarin Chinese *yòu* 'right' that is in fact pronounced as *yi* when the Lajgiu Ersu speak Mandarin. The same situation also applies to *tsu* 'right', which sounds similar to *zuǒ* 'left' when they speak Mandarin Chinese. 2) terms denoting right side or left side are not frequently heard in daily conversation. 3) I tested this with the oldest villager, Huang Muli, 82 years old. He is fluent in Ersu and Yi, but could speak little Chinese. I found that he could not pronounce 'right hand' and 'left hand' in Ersu.

[72] I group *kuɑ=xɛ* 'northern side' and *ŋuɑ=xɛ* 'southern side' as "unique generic locations" because they are approximately in the directions of south and north.

[73] There is a river named Baisha River, flowing along the valley between the foot of Mt. Shengze where Lajigu is located and the foot of another unknown mountain. The river is about 5km far from Lajigu. The Ersu in Lajigu view the river as a borderline, calling the vast area covering their living area as *kɛ=p^hɛ*, and the vast area on the other side of the river as *ts^hɑ=p^hɛ*. They can be respectively translated into 'this side' and 'opposite side' though in fact, there are no roots denoting 'this' and 'opposite' in the two compounds denoting locations actually.

an downstream location. However, the semantics of both *kʰə=kə* and *ɲo=pʰɛ* is irrelevant to upstream and downstream locations in Lajigu. I hypothesize that this is because the village Zela is situated by a river while the nearest river to Lajigu is about 5km far away. Lajigu people seldom connect a location with a river, but occasionally connect a direction with a river in minds (§4. 3. 1. 9). **3)** According to Sun (1982a, 1983a), each locational term has a four-way distinction: original terms, proximal, distal and remote forms. Though in daily conversation, I observed that the Ersu in Lajigu seldom use these forms, I find that they do exist through elicitation. However, the forms are different. The differences are given in Table 4.16.

Village	**Zela**				**Lajigu**			
Gloss	**Term**	**Proximal**	**Distal**	**Remote**	**Term**	**Proximal**	**Distal**	**Remote**
'upside'	*tɕʰo-wo*	*tʰi~*[74]	*tʰitʰi~*		*tɕʰo=pʰɛ*			
'downside'	*tʂaŋa*				*tʂaŋa*			
'outside'	*ɲo=pʰɛ*				*ɲo=pʰɛ*			
'inside'	*kʰə=pʰɛ*	*tʰɑ~*	*tʰatʰɑ~*	*tsʅ~*	*kʰə=kɛ*	*tʰi~*	*tʰitʰi~*	*tsʅmɛ~*
'northside'	*kuɑ=hɛ*				*kuɑ=xɛ*			
'southside'	*ŋuɑ=hɛ*				*ŋuɑ=xɛ*			
'uphill side'	*gɑ=hɛ*				*gɑ=xɛ*			
'downhill side'	*ɲi=hɛ*	*tʰi~*	*tʰitʰi~*		*ɲi=xɛ*			

Table 4. 16 Differences in terms denoting locations between Zela and Lagiju

The differences indicate that in the Ersu communities, there exist subdialectal variations (§1. 3. 2. 3). They also indicate that the subdialect in Zela is more conservative than the one in Lajigu (§2. 1. 3. 4), judging by the simplification of proximal and distal forms in Lajigu.

4. 3. 1. 9 Direction

Ersu has two separate subsets of terms referring to direction. One subset is "modern" and is used in daily conversation. Terms of this subset mainly derive from locational terms (§4. 3. 1. 9. 1). The other is "conservative" and is almost unintelligible to most of the villagers in Lajigu (§4. 3. 1. 9. 2).

[74] The symbol "~" in Table 4. 17 stands for the terms listed in Column 2 and Column 6.

4. 3. 1. 9. 1 “Modern” directional terms

Daily terms denoting directions, similar to those denoting locations, are dependent on the local geographical features or speech context. Consequently, the Ersu are previously unfamiliar with cardinal directions that denote the east, the south, the west and the north though directions of this kind are in fact found in “conservative” Ersu language (§4. 3. 1. 9. 2). However, with more contacts with the outside Ersu communities, the Ersu have begun to coorelate cardinal directions with indigenous Ersu directional terms. This is the reason why these terms are glossed as cardinal directional terms in this work. Directions are expressed through: **1)** directional prefixes of verbs (§8. 1); **2)** directional terms that derive from locational terms; 3) directive marker *=kaxɛ* that often follows a locational term, a locative marker, a demonstrative or a genitive pronoun (§4. 5). This section focuses on the directional terms used in daily Ersu conversations.

There are four directional terms that are most frequently used and that they derive from locational terms. They are given in Table 4.17.

Location		**Direction**	
Term	**Gloss**	**Term**	**Gloss**
kuɑ=xɛ	‘north=LOC:side< northern side’	*ɑ-kuɑ*	‘LPFX-north/downstream:north/downstream direction’
ŋuɑ=xɛ	‘south=LOC:side< northern side’	*ɑ-ŋuɑ*	‘LPFX-south/upstream:south/upstream direction’
gɑ=xɛ	‘uphill=LOC:side< northern side’	*ɑ-gɑ*	‘LPFX-upward/uphill:upward/uphill drection’
ɲi=xɛ	‘downhill=LOC:side< northern side’	*ɑ-ɲɑ*	LPFX-downward/downhill:downward/downhill direction

Table 4. 17 A comparison between Ersu locational terms and directional terms

It is shown in Table 4. 17 that: **1)** When the locational terms are changed into terms denoting directions, the locative marker *=xɛ* ‘side’ must be omitted and an *ɑ*-prefix must be added to precede the root of the locational terms. **2)** Similar to locational terms, the semantics of the four directional terms also tend to have a

village-based difference (§4. 3. 1. 8. 1). That is, the exact direction that a term denotes might vary depending on the context. Therefore, the directions that a directional term denotes in Ersu are not unchangeable, but contextually changeable. **3)** The four directional terms cannot be used for interior directions because the *ɑ-*prefix refers to distal deixis. Therefore, interior directions are only expressed through locational terms discussed in §4. 3. 1. 8. 1. **4)** Lajigu people seldom connect the locational terms *kuɑ=xɛ* and *ŋuɑ=xɛ* with a river. However, the directional terms *ɑ-kua* and *ɑ-ŋua* may respectively refer to downstream and upstream directions.

Each of the directional terms has a two-way distinction: distal and remote. The two-way distinction of directional terms can also help convey information source in the language (§11. 4). This is realized through changing the sound of the prefix *ɑ-* from a short vowel /ɑ/ to a long one /ɑː/. Meanwhile, the tone of the prefix becomes much higher (§2. 4. 2. 1 & §2. 5. 3). Table 4. 18 shows this distinction.

Distal		**Remote**	
Term	**Gloss**	**Term**	**Gloss**
ɑ-kua	'LPFX-north/downstream:north/down-stream direction'	*ɑː-kua*	'LPFX.far-north/downstream:far north/downstream direction'
ɑ-ŋua	'LPFX-south/upstream:south/upstream direction'	*ɑː-ŋua*	'LPFX.far-south/upstream: far south/upstream direction'
ɑ-ga	'LPFX-upward/uphill:upward/uphill direction'	*ɑː-ga*	'LPFX.far-upward/uphill: far uphill direction'
ɑ-ɲa	LPFX-downward/downhill:downward/ downhill direction	*ɑː-ɲa*	LPFX.far-downward/downhill: far downhill direction

Table 4. 18 Distal and remote distinction of directional terms

In addition, all the *ɑ-*prefixed directional terms are bound morphemes that must always co-occur with a noun denoting a location. They are the only proclitics found in Ersu (§2. 4. 2. 2). For example:

(4. 49) "*ɑ-gɑ=mɛ+tɕo=tɕʰo*

LPFX:distal-upward:upward direction=nature+bind:sky=RLN.LOC:on

ɲo-ma *la* *ɬa-pʰa* *tsɳtsʅ=gə*"

sun-SFX.FEM CO:and moon-SFX.MAS bite.REDP=PROG

=dʑà=nɛ̀

=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(He said like this): "The sun and the moon above (us) are biting each other.'"

(4. 50) "*ɑ-ɲɑ=zùmadzo-*

LPFX: distal-downward:downward direction=PN:name of a river-

ka *dzo-bɛ̀* *ɲokua* *nə-ntsʰɛ=yi*

CL:genric, sticklike water-QUAT.pl all downward-leak=CSM

zù-bɛ̀ *si* *ŋa-papɑ=tsà.*

MC:fish-QUAT.pl only outward-be everywhere=PFT

'Water in the *Zumadzo* river downward has leaked (up and) only there are fish everywhere.'

4. 3. 1. 9. 2 "Conservative" directional terms

Conservative directional terms refer to those directions that are seldom used in daily conversation. Ersu has a complete system that denotes the common eight directions in other languages. However, this system is only used by a couple of Shabas and fortune-tellers. What is interesting, is that though they know how to use the eight directions in their religious or superstitious practices, they never think about matching the directions with their daily lives. I was exposed to this system by chance. When I was in the field, I observed that all the villagers over 50 years old can sing *The East Is Red*, an ode of praise to Chairman Mao and also a household song throughout China in the 1960s and the 1970s. It is striking that the song was translated into Ersu and the Ersu sang it in Ersu rather than in Mandarin Chinese. There is a line in the song saying that "As the sun rises red in the east, Mao Zedong was born in

China.” In its Ersu translation, *ʂàtɕʰo* denotes ‘the east’. Later on, I was on the scene where a Shaba was invited to drive “devils” in a family. I found that he was using an image with eight arrows to locate where the “devils” were and I also heard him frequently speak out *ʂàtɕʰo*. After this ceremony, I asked him whether the arrows in his image indicate directions and whether *ʂàtɕʰo* agrees with the direction in which the sun rises in the image. He confirmed that what I was thinking about is the case according to the Shaba oral literature that he has acquired. With his help, the eight directions were finally figured out. The eight conservative Ersu terms denoting directions are given in Figure 4.6.

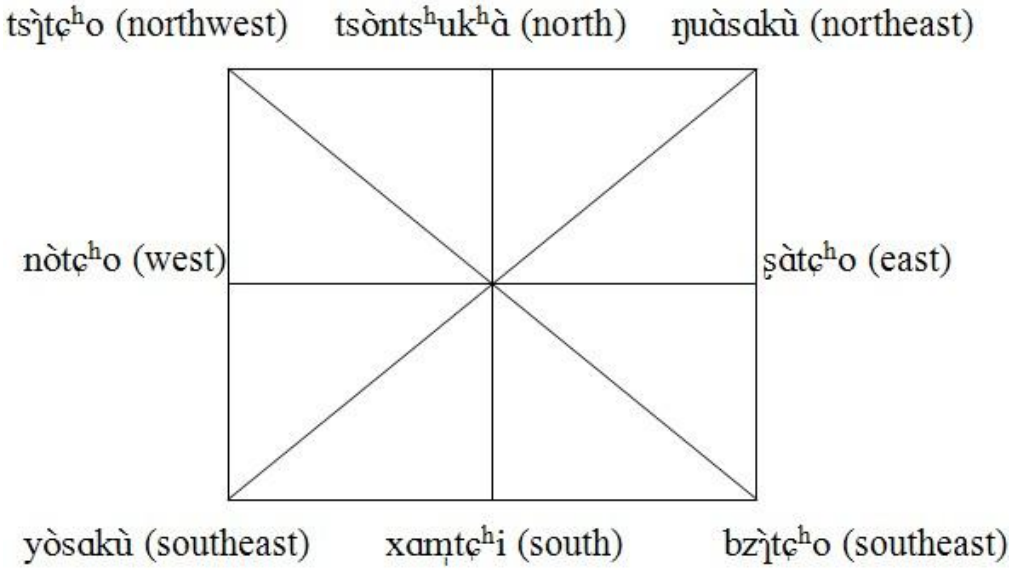


Figure 4. 6 Ersu conservative directional terms [75]

4. 3. 1. 10 Time

Temporal terms can be subclassified in accordance with the length of time that they denote. They are summarized in Table 4. 19.

[75] Judging by the fact that some formatives are used multiple times, there should be some morphological structures for each of the direction. However, the morphological structure cannot be further divided here because terms for these directions are too archaic and no one in Lajigu can explain them to me clearly. One of the examiners suspects that these “conservative” directional terms might be early Tibetan loans. This needs further studies in the future.

Term	Reference
year	§ 4. 3. 1. 10. 1
month	§ 4. 3. 1. 10. 2
day	§ 4. 3. 1. 10. 3
divisions of a day	§ 4. 3. 1. 10. 4
eventual time	§ 4. 3. 1. 10. 5

Table 4. 19 Temporal terms

4. 3. 1. 10. 1 Year

There are three terms referring to 'year' in Ersu. They are: 1) *bùtsʰə*, 2) *ə˧* and 3) *xi*.

1) *bùtsʰə*: This term is a typical temporal classifier that almost always occurs with a numeral, a demonstrative or an interrogative. The most frequently seen form is the unit of [numeral+ *bùtsʰə*] that refers to the duration of time or a particular calendar year or a person's age. Examples are given from (4. 51) to (4. 55).

(4. 51) **numeral+*bùtsʰə*→ duration of time**

yò=nɛ̀, *si* *bùtsʰə=kə* *pɑ+lɑ=gə*

1sg.OTR=TOP three year=RLN:in RLN: place+come:arrive=PROS

'I will come in three years.'

(4. 52) **numeral+ *bùtsʰə*→ calendar year**

tə tu *ŋgə zɑ* *tsʰu* *zɿ* *bùtsʰə=nɛ̀,*

one RN:thousand nineRN:hundred six ten year=TOP

gòngchǎndǎng *ə˧ʂa* *tɑ-ka* *ŋɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀,*

MC:CPC policy one-CL: generic, sticklike outward-come=PAUS

yi *dɑ-ŋɑ=á*

stomach upward-starve=PFV

'In 1960, a piece of policy from the CPC came and caused (us) to starve.' Lit: 1960 year, one CPC policy came toward (us), stomach starved.

(4. 53) **numeral+*bùtsʰə̀*→ age**

ɑ=zŋ	*mamò=nɛ̀,*	*tsʰəsa*	*bùtsʰə̀*
1sg.SLF=GEN:family	mother=TOP	thirteen	year
tʰə-bu=nɛ̀,	*kʰə-ʂu=á=dʑɛ̌*		
outward-become =TOP	inward-marry=PFV=EVID:reported		

'(It is said that) my mother got married at the age of 13.'

(4. 54) **demonstrative+ *bùtsʰə̀*→ year (general)**

tʰəɹ	*zò-wo*	*tʰə*	*bùtsʰə̀*	*ŋu*
3pl.PRT	four-CL:generic, non-sticklike	DEM:this	year	do

tʰə-mo=á

away-die =PFV

'The four of them died in this year.'

(4. 55) **interrogative+*bùtsʰə̀*→ year (general)**

nə	*tsʰi-xi*	*tsʰo*	*bùtsʰə̀*	*dɑ-ɑ-lɑ=è?*
2sg ?+year:this year		ITRG:how many year		upward-ITRG-come=ITRG

'How old are you this year?' Lit: You this year how many years come?

2) *əɹ*: This term often follows one of the 12 Chinese Zodiac Animals that represent the rotating 12-year cycle. I thus hypothesize that it is etymologically under the influx of Mandarin Chinese. The formative of 12 animals is a literal translation from Mandarin Chinese to Ersu and *əɹ* is a diminutive marker frequently used in Mandarin Chinese that is directly borrowed into Ersu. The only difference is that Mandarin Chinese employs the word *nián* 'year' to follow a Zodiac animal, while Ersu uses the original diminutive marker *əɹ*. However, *əɹ* has become a free word in speech, with the meaning of 'year' attributed to it, as in (4. 56).

(4. 56) *nə* *ɑ-nɛ* *ə^{I}* *də-dzɿ=tə=ɛ̀*?

2sg ITRG-what year upward-bear=DES=ITRG?

'When were you born?' Lit: You what year bear?

Consequently, the unit [Zodiac animal+*ə^{I}*] is a compound formed through the structure of [N_1N_2]N_3 (§4. 2. 2. 3) rather than that of [class term+formative] (§4. 2. 2. 1). Years denoted by a Zodiac animal and *ə^{I}* are given in (4. 57) in the order from the first year to the last year in the 12-year circle.

(4. 57)

Ex.	**Gloss**
gu+ə^{I}	'rat+year: year of rat'
ŋua+ə^{I}	'ox+year: year of ox'
la+ə^{I}	'tiger+year: year of tiger'
xi+ə^{I}	'rabbit+year: year of rabbit'
ə^{I}dzə+ə^{I}	'dragon+year:year of dragon'
bɛ+ə^{I}	'snake+year:year of snake'
nbo+ə^{I}	'horse+year:year of horse'
yo+ə^{I}	'sheep+year:year of sheep'
mi+ə^{I}	'monkey+year:year of monkey'
dzə+ə^{I}	'rooster+year:year of rooster'
tʂ^{h}o+ə^{I}	'dog+year: year of dog'
vɛ+ə^{I}	'pig+year:year of pig'

It should be noted that in (4. 57), nouns that denote animals have some slight alterations for pragmatic reasons: **1)** in the compound *la+ə^{I}* the root *la* refers to *laka* 'tiger' instead of *la* 'chicken'. And 'chicken' is denoted by *dzə*, though this root does not mean 'chicken' in daily conversation. I hypothesize that this is to avoid ambiguities between 'year of tiger' and 'year of rooster'; **2)** in the compound *bɛ+ə^{I}*, the root *bɛ* is the shortening of *bɛə^{I}* 'snake'. This obviously attempts to avoid the repetition of *ə^{I}* in one word denoting 'year of snake'.

3) ***xi***: This is a bound root which forms "temporal shifters", a term suggested by Post (2007: 230-231). It functions as a core term denoting 'year' shared by all the

temporal shifters in this group. In these temporal shifters, the compound *ts^{h}i+xi* 'this year' works as a deictic center. Centering on *ts^{h}i+xi* 'this year', there are two years counted into the past and three years counted into the future. They are give in Table 4. 20.

Position	Term	Gloss
Past	*so+xi*	'before+year:two year ago'
	yɛ+xi	'? last+year:last year'
Center	*ts^{h}i+xi*	'?this +year:this year'
Future	*su+xi*	'?next+year:next year'
	dzɳ+xi	'? +year:two years hence'
	mi+xi	'? +year:three years hence'

Table 4. 20 Temporal shifters 1: years

In Table 4. 20, *yɛ+xi* and *so+xi* are seen to occur with each other to form a new compound *yɛ+xi+so+xi* that means 'ancient times/things' as shown in (4. 58):

(4. 58) *yɛ+xi+so+xi* *ɑ^{I}=yi*

?+year"last year+before+year:two years ago<ancient times 1pl.SLF=GEN

k^{h}uak^{h}ua-bɛ̀ *vaka* *tə-sɽ̀* *da-k^{h}at^{h}o*

big.REDUP:parentship-QUAT.pl about one-QUAT:bit upward-tell

=gə

=PROS

'(I will tell you) a bit about our parents (that happened) in the past.'

As above decribed, *xi* 'year' is a bound morpheme while *bùts^{h}ə̀* 'year'and *ə^{I}* 'year' have a free-standing position in discourse. In addition, *bùts^{h}ə̀* 'year'and *ə^{I}* 'year' demonstrate some culturally specific differences while being used to ask about a person's age. *bùts^{h}ə̀* 'year' is used to ask about a young person's age while *ə^{I}* 'year' is applicable to an adult's. However, when a young person answers the question about her/his age, s/he can use *ə^{I}* 'year'. For example:

(4. 59) A: *nə tsʰi-xi tsʰo bùtsʰə̀*

2sg ?+year:this year ITRG:how many year

da-a-la=ɛ̌?

upward-ITRG-come =ITRG

'How old are you this year?' Lit: You this year how many years come?

B: *zò ɚ˥=kə da-la=á*

four year=RLN.LOC:in upward-come=PFV

'Four years old' Lit: In four years came.

(4. 60) A: *nə tsʰi-xi tsʰomia (ɚ˥) kʰə-tsɿ=ɛ̀?*

2sg ?this+year:this year ITRG:how many year inward-increase

'How old are you this year?' Lit: You this year how many years increase?

B: *ʒɿ zɿ (ɚ˥) kʰə-tsɿ=á*

eight ten (year) inward-increase =PFV

'80 years old.' Lit: 80 years increased[76].

Note that *ɚ˥* 'year' may co-occur with either *bùtsʰə̀* 'year' or *xi* 'year' in discourse. This further implies that *ɚ˥* 'year' might have been lexicalized from the diminutive marker *ɚ˥* in Mandarin Chinese as described above. For example:

(4. 61) *ŋua ɚ˥+xi=nɛ̀, latɕikù=pa=ʂə̀ ŋua-la=á*

five year+year=TOP PN:Lajigu=LOC=LOC southward-come=PFV

'(I) came to Lajigu (at) the age of five.'

[76] While talking about an adult's age, *ɚ˥* is seldom used. It is more common to see only the interrogative *tsʰomia* 'how many' used in questions and the numeral used in answers.

(4. 62) *a=nɛ̀,* *xitsɿ* *əʳ* *bùtsʰə̀* *də-dzɿ=tə*

1sg.SLF=TOP rabit year year upward-bear=DES

'I was born in the year of rabbit.'

4. 3. 1. 10. 2 Month

In Ersu, *ɬa* 'moon' is also used for 'month'. The structure of terms referring to different months is observed to be directly borrowed from Mandarin Chinese with phonological variation (§2. 6), and then added to the indigenous Ersu term *ɬa* 'month' .The basic structure of 12 months is: *cardinal+ yi +ɬa*. Lin (1999) has a brief study on Ersu months based on previous texts. She also points out that the pattern of Ersu terms "probably originated from Southwestern Mandarin nearby". However, I cannot agree with her on the point that "the syllable *i* apparently means 'one' (probably from Chinese)". I hold the view that in these structures that denote different months, *yi* originates from Mandarin Chinese *yuè* 'moon', first because *yuè* is pronounced very close to *yi* in Southwest Sichuan, second because in daily conversation, *ɬa* is often heard to be omitted. For example, *aʳyiɬa* 'February' is often replaced by *aʳyi* in speech. In this term, *aʳyi* comes from Mandarin *èryuè*, 'two+month:February' and cannot mean 'two+one:February'. Consequently, if *yi* means 'one' as Lin (1999) states, all the ellipses of the 12 months in discourse then make no sense at all.

Terms for 12 months in Chinese and in Ersu are both given in Table 4. 21 for comparisons.

Months in MC	Months in Ersu	
pinyin	**Ersu**	**Gloss**
zhēngyuè	*tsɿyi+ɬa*	‘zheng month(MC)+month: the 1st Chinese lunar month’
èryuè	*dʲyi+ɬa*	‘two month(MC) +month: the 2nd Chinese lunar month’
sānyuè	*suayi+ɬa*	‘three month(MC) +month: the 3rd Chinese lunar month’
sìyuè	*siyi+ɬa*	‘four month(MC) +month: the 4tht Chinese lunar month’
wǔyuè	*vuyi+ɬa*	‘five month(MC) +month: the 5th Chinese lunar month’
liùyuè	*əʲyi+ɬa*	‘six month(MC) +month: the 6th Chinese lunar month’
qīyuè	*tsʰɿyi+ɬa*	‘seven month (MC) +month: the 7th Chinese lunar month’
bāyuè	*payi+ɬa*	‘eight month (MC) +month: the 8th Chinese lunar month’
jiǔyuè	*tsuyi+ɬa*	‘nine month (MC) +month: the 9th Chinese lunar month’
shíyuè	*ʂɿyi+ɬa*	‘ten month (MC) +month: the 10th Chinese lunar month’
dōngyuè	*tuyi+ɬa*	‘winter month (MC) +month: the 11th Chinese lunar month’
làyuè	*luayi+ɬa*	‘la month (MC) +month: the 12th Chinese lunar month’

Table 4. 21A comparison of terms referring to months between MC and Ersu

It should be pointed out that the borrowing of the terms is based on Chinese lunar calendar, in which *zhēngyuè* ‘the 1st Chinese lunar month’, *dōngyuè* ‘the 11st Chinese lunar month’ and *làyuè* ‘the 12th Chinese lunar month’ conventionally do not employ cardinals *yī* ‘one’, *shíyī* ‘eleven’ and *shíèr* ‘twelve’ in Yuexi dialect of Southwest Mandarin. Consequently, the pronunciation of the three months that are lent to Ersu is closer to *zhēngyuè* ‘the 1st Chinese lunar month’, *dōngyuè* ‘the 11st Chinese lunar month’ and *làyuè* ‘the 12th Chinese lunar month’ and sounds irrelevant to *yīyuè* ‘one month (MC): the 1st Chinese lunar month’, *shíyīyuè* ‘eleven month (MC): the 11st Chinese lunar month’ and *shíèryuè* ‘twelve month (MC): the 12st Chinese lunar month’. Another phenomenon that deserves attention is that for unknown reasons, ‘June’ in Ersu sounds more like *èryuè* ‘February’ in Mandarin and not similar to Mandarin *liùyuè* at all.

There are no terms denoting seasons found in the data and in daily conversation. However, I discovered that in a traditional Ersu ode on wedding ceremonies, one year is divided into four ‘three months’, each possessed by a natural phenomenon in an alienable way. Therefore, I hypothesize that these four ‘three months’ may match with the four seasons. They are:

(4. 63) *ɳo=yi* *si* *ɬa*

bud= GEN three month

'spring' Lit: bud's three month (This is because flora are budding in spring.)

(4. 64) *ndzɑ̀=yi* *si* *ɬa*

rice= GEN three month

'summer' Lit: rice's three month (This is because rice has been grown and it is growing more and more vigorous in Ersu communities in summer)

(4. 65) *ko=yi* *si* *ɬa*

fall=GEN three month

'autumn' Lit: fall's three month (This is because tree leaves are falling in autumn)

(4. 66) *ts^{h}u=yi* *si* *ɬa*

be cold=GEN three month

'winter' Lit: cold's three month (This is because it is cold in winter.)

In addition, the notion of "day" is closely linked to the understanding of "month" among the Ersu. The Ersu divide a month into two half-months in accordance with the cycle of the moon. They hold the view that the first day of the first half-month is the day when the moon becomes brighter and brighter until the fifteenth day when the moon becomes the brightest. Accordingly, the first day of the second half-month, that is, the sixteenth day of a month, is the day when the moon becomes darker and darker until the second fifteenth day, that is, the thirtieth day of a month, when the moon becomes the darkest. This means that: **1)** in Ersu, there is no number larger than '16' referring to the days of a month; **2)** the notion of 'month' is borrowed from Mandarin Chinese judging by this half-month circulation and the terms denoting 12 months are directly borrowed from Mandarin Chinese as above described.

In Ersu, the first half-month is called *ɬa+ɜ^{I}* 'moon+white:the first half-month' and the second half-month is called *ɬa+ɲua* 'moon+black:the second half-month'. In conversations, when the Ersu talk about the days belonging to the first half-month, the term *ɬa+ɜ^{I}* is optionally employed. However, *ɬa+ɲua* is obligatorily used to denote the second half-month. Example (4. 67) shows how the Ersu count 'days' in a month.

(4. 67)

***ɬa+ɜ^{I}* (the first half month)**	***ɬa+ɲua* (the second half month)**
(ɬa+ɜ^{I}) tə-wo ɲo	*ɬa+ɲua tə-wo ɲo*
(moon+white) one-CL: generic day	moon+black one-CL: generic day
'the first day (of a month)'	'the sixteen day (of a month)'
(ɬa+ɜ^{I}) nə-wo ɲo	*ɬa+ɲua nə-wo ɲo*
(moon+white) two-CL: generic day	moon+black two-CL: generic day
'the second day (of a month)'	'the seventeenth day (of a month)'
(ɬa+ɜ^{I}) si-wo ɲo	*ɬa+ɲua si-wo ɲo*
(moon+white) three-CL: generic day	moon+black three-CL: generic day
'the third day (of a month)'	'the seventeenth day (of a month)'

4. 3. 1. 10. 3 Day

Similar to most TB languages, *ɲo-ma* is also a polysemous word that refers to both 'sun' and 'day' in Ersu, as in (4. 68):

(4. 68) *ta+ɲo=nɛ̀, ɲo-ma yɑ-li tə ɲo*

?+day:today=TOP sun-SFX.FEM:day APFX-good one day

'It is a good day today.' Lit: today day good one day[77].

(4. 68) indicates that when *ɲo-ma* denotes a day, the 'day' is in fact an abstract notion. When it is used to refer to the duration of time or a specific day, it should be shortened to *ɲo*. *ɲo* can be either a classifier that always occurs with a numeral, or a bound morpheme of a compound denoting the terms such as 'today', 'yesterday' and 'tomorrow'. The most frequently seen form is the unit of [numeral+*ɲo*] that denotes

[77] Before the Ersu hold big ceremonies, they often ask a Shaba or a fortune-teller to foretell which day is suitable for a ceremony. This statement is irrelevant to the description of a sunny day, but implies that the day could be for such events.

the number of days in which an event or a state lasts. The form second to this is the unit of [numeral-*wo*+*ŋo*] that refers to the order of a day in a half-month. The differences between the two forms are shown in (4. 49).

(4. 69)

[numeral *ŋo*]	**[numeral-*wo*+*ŋo*]**
tə ŋo	*tə-wo+ŋo*
one day	one-CL: generic+day
'one day'	'the first day (of a half-month)'
nə ŋo	*nə-wo+ŋo*
two day	two-CL:generic+day
'two days'	'the second day (of a half-month)'
si ŋo	*si-wo+ŋo*
three day	si-CL:generic+day
'three days'	'the third day (of a half-month)'

Besides being used as a classifier that occurs with a numeral, *ŋo* is also seen to be used as a core term (or a bound root) in some of the temporal shifters. The deictic center of temporal shifters that denote 'day' is *ta+ŋo* 'today'. Centering on *ta+ŋo* 'today', there are three days that can be counted into the past and five days that can be counted into the future. Unlike *xi* 'year' (§4. 1. 3. 1. 10. 2) that is shared by all the temporal shifters denoting 'year', *ŋo* is seen to only occur in the shifters that are closer to the deictic center *ta+ŋo* 'today'. Day-related temporal shifters are given in Table 4. 22.

Position	**Term**	**Gloss**
Past	*soso+ŋo*	**'**before.RDUP+day:three days ago'
	so+ŋoŋo	'before+day.RDUP: two days ago'
	ya+ŋo	'?+day: yesterday'
Center	***ta+ŋo***	'?+day: today'
Future	***su+ŋo***	'?next+day:tomorrow'
	ndzɿsu	'two days hence'
	misu	'three days hence'
	mindzɿsu	'five days hence'
	mingalalaso	'four days hence'

Table 4. 22 Temporal shifters 2: days

Among the temporal shifters listed in Table 4. 22, the **bold** ones are still frequently used in daily conversation. The others are only occasionally heard in the old people's speech.

4. 3. 1. 10. 4 Divisions of a day

Although there is no clear time delimitation between different divisions of a day, the Ersu tend to divide a day into four parts. They are listed in order from an earlier period of time to a later period of time in one day as in Table 4. 23:

Term	Gloss
mɛ̀+ntsʰu+mɑ-ntsʰu	'sky+?open+NEG-?open:dawn'
ntsʰo	'morning'
miɬagù	'mid-day'
mɛ̀+nkʰuɑ=ʂə̀	'sky+night=LOC:afternoon'
mzɛ=ʂə̀	'?=LOC:evening'
nkʰua/xuɑ/xɑ/mɛ̀+nkʰuɑ	'night'

Table 4. 23 Divisions of a day

All terms apart from *mɛ̀+ntsʰu+mɑ-ntsʰu* 'dawn' in Table 4. 23 are bound roots used in temporal shifters. There are four different terms denoting 'night' in Ersu. Among them, *nkʰua* is a general one that can be interchangeable with *xuɑ*, *xɑ* and *mɛ̀+nkʰuɑ*. *nkʰua* may co-occur with either *xuɑ* or *xɑ* in denoting day divisions, but other terms cannot co-occur with each other. Temporal shifters of day divisions can only be further counted two or three days into the past and two, three and even five days into the future, centering on the deictic center 'today's divisions and depending on which term in Table 4. 23 is used. Temporal shifters referring to a day's divisions are given in Table 4. 24. Note that terms marked with parentheses can be optionally used in discourse and terms marked with brackets are compound day temporal shifters listed in Table 4. 22 or Table 4. 23 above.

Position	Term	Gloss
Morning		
Past	*susu+so* (+*nts^{h}o*)	'?+before(+morning):morning of three days ago'
	so+ŋ̩o+so (+*nts^{h}o*)	'before+day+before(+morning): morning of two days ago'
	ya+so (+*nts^{h}o*)	'?last+before(+morning):yesterday morning'
Center	*ta+so* (+*nts^{h}o*)	'? +before(+morning): this morning'
Future	*su+nts^{h}o*	'?next+morning: tomorrow morning'
	[*ndzŋ+su*]+*nts^{h}o*	'[two days hence]+morning: morning of two days hence'
	[*mi+su*]+*nts^{h}o*	'[three days hence]+morning: morning of three days hence'
	[*mindzŋsu*]+*nts^{h}o*	'[four days hence]+morning: morning of four days hence'
	[*mingalalaso*]+*nts^{h}o*	'[five days hence]+morning: morning of four days hence'
Mid-day		
Past	[*so+ŋ̩oŋ̩o*]+*miɬagù*	'[two days ago]+mid-day:mid-day of two days ago'
	[*ya+ŋ̩o*]+*miɬagù*	'[yesterday]+mid-day:mid-day of yesterday'
Center	[*ta+ŋ̩o*]+*miɬagù*	'[today]+mid-day:mid-day of today'
Future	[*su+ŋ̩o*]+*miɬagù*	'[tomorrow]+mid-day:mid-day of tomorrow'
	[*ndzŋ+su*]+*miɬagù*	'[two days hence]+mid-day:mid-day of two days hence'
Afternoon		
Past	[*so+ŋ̩oŋ̩o*]+ [*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[two days ago]+[afternoon]:afternoon of two days ago'
	[*ya+ŋ̩o*]+[*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[yesterday]+[afternoon]: yesterday afternoon'
Center	[*ta+ŋ̩o*]+[*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[today]+[afternoon]: this afternoon'
Future	[*su+ŋ̩o*]+[*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[tomorrow]+[afternoon]:tomorrow afternoon'
	[*ndzŋ+su*]+[*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[two days hence]+ [afternoon]: afternoon of two days hence'
	[*mi+su*]+[*mɛ̀+nk^{h}uɑ̀=ʂə̀*]	'[three days hence]+[afternoon]:afternoon of two days hence'

(to be continued)

(to continue)

Position	Term	Gloss
Evening		
Past	*so+su+*[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘before+?next+[evening]:evening of three days ago’
	so+ɲo+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘before+day+[evening]:evening of two days ago’
	[*ya+ɲo*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[yesterday]+[evening]: yesterday evening’
Center	[*ta+ɲo*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[today]+[evening]:this evening’
Future	[*su+ɲo*]+ [*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[tomorrow]+[evening]:tomorrow evening’
	[*ndzŋ+su*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[two days hence]+[evening]:evening of two days hence’
	[*mi+su*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[three days hence]+ [evening]:evening of three days hence’
	[*mindzŋsu*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[four days hence]+ [evening]:evening of four days hence’
	[*mingalalaso*]+[*ɱzɛ=ʂə̀*]	‘[five days hence]+ [evening]:evening of four days hence’
Night		
Past	*so+su+nkʰua*	‘before+?next+night:night of three days ago’
	so+ɲo+nkʰua	‘before+day+night:night of two days ago’
	ya+xa (*+nkʰua*)	‘?last+ night(+night): last night’
Center	*ta+xua* (*+nkʰua*)	‘?+night (+night):tonight’
Future	*su+*[*mɛ̀+nkʰua*]	‘?next+[night]:tomorrow night’
	[*ndzŋ+su*]+*nkʰua*	‘[two days hence]+ [night]: night of two days hence’
	mi+[*mɛ̀+nkʰua*]	‘?+ [night]: night of three days hence’
	[*mindzŋsu*]+*nkʰua*	‘[four days hence]+ night: night of four days hence’
	[*mingalalaso*]+*nkʰua*	‘[five days hence]+night: night of four days hence’

Table 4. 24 Temporal shifters 3: divisions of a day

4. 1. 3. 1. 10. 5 Precise time reference

Ersu has no temporal units shorter than the above-described day divisions. In other words, there are no terms corresponding to ‘hour’, ‘minute’ and ‘second’. With the development of economy and technology, many Ersu families have modern domestic appliances such as clocks, TVs and VCD players bearing timers. This leads many of the Ersu to accept the contemporary notion of time by using Mandarin Chinese. However, in daily conversation, they also use time/locative nominalizers *=ʂə̀* to denote “precise time” (§4. 2. 3. 4). They would like to describe the time connected with events that regularly happen during a day. For example, the time to cook, the time to look for horses and the time to sleep, etc.

4. 3. 2 Proper nouns

Proper nouns can be further divided into human names (§4. 3. 2. 1) and place names (§4. 3. 2. 2) and a few names for farm and pet animals as mentioned in §3. 2. 1. Unlike common nouns that often denote a class of referents, proper nouns typically denote a specific referent, that is, a particular human being or a particular place. Occasionally, the Ersu also give names to some animals or nature-related referents if they think that these non-human referents have human attributes.

4. 3. 2. 1 Human names

The name of a person in Ersu consists of two components: family name and given name. Similar to Mandarin Chinese, a family name always precedes a given name. It is reported by one of my language consultants, Wang Dehe that there are about 500 family clan names distributed in the Ersu communities.

Ersu human names have experienced some historical changes, which might be the best evidence that the Ersu, a smaller group of people, are always under the influence of Yi and Han, the two larger groups of people in that area. For example, each of the family clan names has a Chinese counterpart. Examples are given in (4. 70).

(4. 70)

Ersu Family Name	**Chinese Counterpart**
dʑima	Wang
yiʂa	Zhang
pʰowu	Huang

However, there is no information about when and how an Ersu family name had developed a Chinese counterpart. Traditionally, an Ersu person's given name is often associated with the conservative Ersu terms denoting a direction (§4. 3. 1. 9. 2). The direction is located through calculation of a person's birth time and his/her mother's age. This is a rather complicated operation that is only mastered by Shabas and their apprentices. I was given a traditional Ersu name when I was in the field. My family name matches *yiʂa*, one of the Ersu family clan names. It is said that a good name for

me should be relevant to the north because I was born in early morning and I am 33 years younger than my mother. The name that the Ersu give to me, *yiʂɑ-tsonts^{h}uyɛ*, is a typical Ersu name in which, *tsonts^{h}u* is the core formative relevant to the north direction *tsonts^{h}uk^{h}à* (§4. 3. 1. 9. 2). However, a given Ersu name like mine is seldom found nowadays. Currently, an Ersu often has two co-existing names: one is an "Ersu" name and the other is a Chinese name, though the two names have little in common semantically. Furthermore, many of the younger people who were born after the 1980s are found to have only one Chinese or Yi name, not an Ersu name. In addition, the majority of the modern "Ersu" given names are not real Ersu names in fact, but names borrowed from Yi communities or the combination of Ersu and Yi, as in (4. 71).

(4. 71) *dʑima-muɬi-ɔ^{l}xɑ*

Ersu: family name-Yi: second son-Ersu: given name

In (4. 71), *muɬi* is borrowed from Yi. In Yi tradition, the eldest son of a family is often named *amu*, and the second son is often named *muɬi* while names of daughters and sons younger than the second are often given in a comparatively casual way. The Ersu have imitated this tradition and it is not surprising to find that there are many people in the same village who share the same names. I was told by many of the Ersu that the reason why the Ersu borrow Yi or Chinese names is quite simple. They did not have a written orthography for household registration that has been a long governmental tradition throughout China, inherited for thousands of years.

Pragmatically, a person who is old or whose generation is higher, is seldom called by his/her name directly (§4. 3. 1. 1. 3) except for some special occasions, for example, to allocate foods, seats on ceremonial occasions or to allocate tasks at a meeting. Otherwise, it will be considered impolite or rude. In daily conversation, it is common to address an elder, or a person of a higher generation by using a suitable kinship term (§4. 3. 1. 1), which is quite similar to Lisu (Yu 2007: 106). In addition,

Chinese names are becoming more preferrable in daily use nowadays. Sometimes, when an older person is talking about a younger person (whose generation is often also lower than the speaker), a gender differentiation suffix is seen to optionally follow the referent's name to denote masculinity or feminity. If the name consists of two syllables, the whole name is employed; if the name consists of three syllables, only the given name is employed[78]. For example (4. 72):

(4. 72)

	Masculine name (in pinyin)-*zà*	**Feminine[79] name (in pingyin)-*ma***
whole name	Wang Bing-*za*	Wang Ying-*ma*
	Zhang Jun-*za*	Zhang Li-*ma*
given name	Hailong-*za*	Jinzhi-*ma*
	A'mu-*za*	Yongzha-*ma*

When I was in the field, I also observed that when the host or the hostess of the family where I stayed was dissatisfied with their son's behaviors, he/she always called the young man loudly with his Chinese given name plus the generic numeral classifier -*ka*, that is, "Hailong-*ka*!" However, when I asked my language consultants whether calling a young man in this way implies dissatisfaction or blames, they have no idea about this. The Ersu have the tradition not to scold their children when there are guests present. Consequently, I had no chances to observe whether this is a common linguistic phenomenon or just a family-dependent linguistic variation since I have not stayed with other families as a "true" family member. This phenomenon thus needs to be further investigated.

4. 3. 2. 2 Place names

Place names are comparatively simple in Ersu. The meanings of some names are unknown maybe for the reason that words used for place names are so archaic that contemporary people are unfamiliar with, or for the reason that the places were named arbitrarily. Take *latɕigù* 'Lajigu', the village where I stayed as a case in point.

[78] In fact, no Chinese names in Ersu communities are found to consist of more than three syllables.
[79] There are also some people who have the tendency to use the Yi female gender suffix -*mò*.

However, many other village names often contain a core class term *fɯ* 'village'. For example, *ka+fɯ* '?+village' refers to a village near to Lajigu. In addition, many of the places are named according to the features of landscapes. For example, *bobo* 'flat.RDUP' which originally means 'a plain place', is employed as the name of a place that is plain, halfway on the mountain behind Lajigu. There are also places that are named after their typical functions. Names of this type are often verb or verb phrasal nominalizations taking a relator noun=*ta*. For example, *toto=ta*, 'jump.RDUP:dance=RLN.LOC:place<dancing place' is used as the name of a ground in Lajigu where people often sing and dance on festivals or on ceremonial occasions.

With more and more young Ersu moving to the outside world for education or for work, they bring many Chinese names of places far away back to the Ersu communities. Only two Ersu names denoting cities in Ersu are attested in the data. One is *vakə*, the name of the local county seat (Yuexi), and the other is *otsu*, the name of the local capital city of Liangsha Autonomous Yi Prefecture (Xichang). The Ersu traditionally use the two major directional terms (§4. 1. 3. 1. 9. 1), *ɑ-kɯɑ* 'LPFX-north' and *ɑ-ŋɯɑ* 'LPFX-south' to denote the names of a remote place. This may be because the Ersu communities are isolated from the outside by high mountains in the east and in the west, they might not link things to these two directions in minds. Moreover, since the Ersu communities are located in the south, *ɑ-kɯɑ* 'LPFX-north' is used much more frequently than *ɑ-ŋɯɑ* 'LPFX-south'. When the Ersu do not know the name of a place, they are prone to just use *ɑ-kɯɑ* 'LPFX-north'; when they know the place but do not know it quite well, they tend to use *ɑ-kɯɑ* 'LPFX-north' plus the name, without caring about where the place is exactly. For example, even if I told my fellow villagers that I am studying in Australia, a place to the far south of China once and again, they always introduced me to visitors to Lajigu in this way (4. 73):

(4. 73) *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀* *ɑ=yi* *ndʑo*

DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN friend

tə-wo *ɑ:-kuɑ=ɔ̀odɑ̀lɨ̀à*

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike LPFX:remote-north=MC:Australia

lɑ-tə

come-DES

'This is my friend who is from far north Australia.'

(4. 73) indicates that the speakers know the name of Australia, but do not know Australia very much, and consequently, they used the structure *ɑ:-kuɑ=ɔ̀odɑ̀lɨ̀à*. Interestingly, they used *ɑ:-kua* (§4. 3. 1. 9. 1) to denote that Australia is in the "far north" instead of *ɑ:-ŋua* "far south" that is the very fact: Australia is far south to the Ersu communities. It is then hypothesized that all foreigners are referred as coming from the north by the Ersu.

4. 4 Pronouns

Ersu pronouns include personal pronouns (§4. 4. 1), autonomous and reflexive pronouns (§4. 4. 2), demonstrative pronouns (§4. 4. 3), interrogative pronouns (§4. 4. 4), indefinite pronouns (§4. 4. 5) and anaphoric pronouns (§4. 4. 6). They each form a closed subset in Ersu nominal categories. They are given in Table 4. 25.

Pronouns		Reference
Personal pronouns (§4. 4. 1)	nominative	§4. 4. 1. 1
	genitive	§4. 4. 1. 2
	accusative	§4. 4. 1. 3
	person distinction	§4. 4. 1. 4
	number distinction	§4. 4. 1. 5
autonomous & reflexive pronouns (§4. 4. 2)	autonomous pronous	§4. 4. 2. 1
	reflexive pronouns	§4. 4. 2. 2
Demonstrative pronouns (§4. 4. 3)	nominal demonstratives	§4. 4. 3. 1
	adverbial demonstrative *tʰədʑi* 'like this'	§4. 4. 3. 2
Interrogative pronouns (§4. 4. 4)	interrogative+N/[NUM+CL]	§4. 4. 4. 1
	'where' and 'who'?	§4. 4. 4. 2
Indefinite pronouns (§4. 4. 5)	interrogatives directly used as indefinite pronouns	§4. 4. 5. 1
	reduplication of interrogatives used as indefinite pronouns	§4. 4. 5. 2
	su 'someone'	§4. 4. 5. 3
	su+yi 'someone else'	§4. 4. 5. 4
Anaphoric pronouns	*tʰəsu* 'such' and *tsʰu* 'such'	(§4. 4. 6)

Table 4. 25 Pronouns in Ersu

4. 4. 1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns encode deictic speech act participants. In Ersu, personal pronouns inflect for a nominative (§4. 4. 1. 1), genitive (§4. 4. 1. 2), and accusative (§4. 4. 1. 3) cases, judging by the syntactic constituents that they occupy. They also show a three-person (§4. 4. 1. 4) and number distinction (§4. 4. 1. 5). In addition, the first persons show a "1.SLF" ("first person self-speaker") vs. "1.OTR" ("first person other-speaker") distinction (§4. 4. 1. 4. 1). The third person singular shows a "3sg. PRT" (third person singular and present referent) vs. "3sg. NPRT" (third person singular and non-present referent) distinction, but it shows no male vs. female, animate vs. non-animate distinction (§4. 4. 1. 4. 2). Ersu personal pronouns are given in Table 4. 26.

person	number		nominative	genitive	accusative
first person	1sg	SLF	*ɑ*	*ɛi* or *ɑ=yi*	*ɑ=và*
		OTR	*yò*	*yò=yi*	*yò=và*
	1dl	SLF	*ɑ=dzi*	*ɑ=dzi*	*ɑ=dzi=và*
		OTR	*yò=dzi*	*yò=dzi*	*yò=dzi=và*
	1pl	SLF	*ɑ^{l}*	*ɑ^{l}=yi*	*ɑ^{l}=và*
		OTR	*yò^{l}*	*yòə^{l}=yi*	*yòə^{l} =và*
second person	2sg		*nə*	*ni* or *nə=yi*	*nɑ=và*
	2dl		*nə=dzi*	*nə=dzi*	*nə=dzi=và*
	2pl		*nə^{l}*	*nə^{l}=yi*	*nə^{l}=và*
third person	3sg	PRT	*t^{h}ə*	*t^{h}i* or *t^{h}ə=yi*	*t^{h}ɑ=và*
		NPRT	*zò*	*zò=yi*	
	3dl		*t^{h}ə=dzi*	*t^{h}ə=dzi*	*t^{h}ə=dzi=và*
	3pl		*t^{h}ə^{l}*	*t^{h}ə^{l}=yi*	*t^{h}ə^{l}=và*

Table 4. 26 Ersu personal pronouns

4. 4. 1. 1 Nominative

The nominative form of a personal pronoun functions as either a transitive subject (A) or an intransitive subject (S) in a clause. It may be marked with the agentive marker =*yikə* when it functions as the A of a clause (§4. 5). For example:

(4. 74) *ɑ* *latɕikù* *dzo=tə*
1sg.SLF PN:village name live=DES
'I live in Lajigu.'

(4. 75) *sò+tsə* *tɑ+ŋɑo=nè,* *ɑ=yikə*
blood+egg:pustule ?this+day:today=TOP 1sg.SLF=AGT
ŋə-p^{h}i, *yadzɻə-wo* *k^{h}ɑ-ma*
outward-tear…open child-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-sleep
yɑ-li, *mɑ-zɻ=ɑ?*
APFX-good NEG-COP=ITRG:right
'Today, I tore the pustule open (and) the child slept well. Right?'

4. 4. 1. 2 Genitive

The genitives are formed through adding a genitive marker *=yi* (§4. 5) to the nominatives (see Table 4. 26). However, each singular personal pronoun has two different forms due to morphophonological process[80]. In the corpus, the 2sg genitive *ni* and the 3sg genitive *tʰi* occur much more frequently than their corresponding form *nə=yi* '2sg=GEN' and *tʰə=yi* '3sg.PRT=GEN', but *ɑ=yi* '1sg.SLF=GEN' occurs more frequently than *ɛi* '1sg.SLF.GEN' for unknown reasons, maybe due to the limit of the data. Examples are given in (4. 76).

(4. 76) a. *ni* *ɱ̩tsʔ* *ɑ-kuɑ=otɕɑ-pu*
2sg.GEN cat LPFX-north:north=pear-CL:living plants
tʂ̩aŋa *dzɻ̩a*
below EXT
'Your cat was under the pear tree in the north.'

b. *nə=yi* *ɱ̩tsʔ* *ɑ-kuɑ=otɕɑ-pu*
2sg=GEN cat LPFX-north=pear-CL:living plants
tʂ̩aŋa *dzɻ̩a*
below EXT
'Your cat was under the pear tree in the north.'

(4. 76a) and (4. 76b) show that there is no semantic differences between *ni* '2sg.GEN' and *nə=yi* '2sg=GEN'. However, (4. 76a) is directly extracted from a folkloric story told by my language consultant. (4. 76b) is obtained through elicitation based on (4. 76a), which the speaker believes to be also acceptable, though he feels that it is slightly "atypical". This shows that '2sg.GEN' and *nə=yi* '2sg=GEN' can be mutually interchangeable, but the former is more frequently used than the latter.

[80] The 1sg.SLF genitive *ɛi* is the allomorph of *ɑ=yi* because of syllable contraction (§2. 5. 6). The 2sg genitive *ni* derives from the compositional *nə=yi* because of vowel harmony (§2.5.2) and vowel fusion (§2. 5. 4). The 3sg genitive *tʰi* derives from the compositional *tʰə=yi* also because of vowel harmony (§2.5.2) and vowel fusion (§2. 5. 4).

When the 2sg genitive *ni* and the 3sg genitive *tʰi* precede *a*-prefixed kinship terms, the vowel /i/ in *ni* and *tʰi* is often reduced to zero and the two initial consonants /n/ and /tʰ/ experience palatalisation, respectively becoming alveo-palatal /n̻/ and /tɕʰ/. For example: People often say *n̻a-ma* '2sg.GEN.KPFX-mother:your mother' rather than *ni a-ma* '2sg.GEN KPFX-mother:your mother'; *tɕʰa-ma* '3sg.PRT.GEN. KPFX-mother:his/her mother' rather than *tʰi a-ma* '3sg.PRT.GEN KPFX-mother: his/her mother'. According to Sun (1982a, 1983a), using *n̻a-* and *tɕʰa*-kinship terms can express some sort of more intimate, much friendlier and more respectful feelings. However, all my language consultants tend not to accept this opinion. Moreover, very occasionally, it is observed that *ni* '2sg.GEN' or *tʰi* '3sg.GEN' can be further added before the structure of *n̻a-* or *tɕʰa*-kinship terms, as in (4. 77) and (4. 78).

(4. 77) *ni* *n̻a-ma*
2sg.GEN 2sg.GEN.KPFX-mother
'your mother' Lit: your your mother

(4. 78) *tʰi* *tɕʰa-ma*
3sg.GEN 3sg.GEN.KPFX-mother
'his/her mother' Lit: his/her his/her mother

I thus suggest that *n̻a-* and *tɕʰa*-kinship terms are respectively derived from *ni* '2sg.GEN' and *tʰi* '3sg.GEN' *a*-prefixed kinship terms because of the fast speech flow. Generally, they become lexicalized and form an independent word. Consequently, they can be modified by genitive pronouns.

In addition, the compositional *nə=yi* '2sg=GEN'and *tʰə=yi* '3sg.PRT=GEN' do not precede *a*-prefixed kinship terms. In this situation, the above discussed *n̻a-* '2sg.GEN.KPFX-' and *tʰɕa-* '3sg.PRT.GEN.KPFX-' or the nominative form of *nə*

'2sg.GEN' or *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' taking a special kin genitive =*zì* 'GEN:family' (§4. 5) are more preferably used to precede *ɑ*-prefixed kinship terms (§5. 3. 1. 1). Therefore, in the following examples, (4. 79a) is unacceptable, while both (4. 79b) to (4. 79c) are often found, and (4. 79c) occurs more frequently than (4. 79b) (§4. 5).

(4. 79) a. * *nə=yi* *ɑ-pu*
2sg=GEN KPFX-grandfather
'your grandfather'

b. *nɑ-pu*
2sg.GEN.KPFX-grandfather
'your grandfather'

c. *nə=zì* *ɑ-pu*
2sg=GEN:family KPFX-grandfather
'your grandfather' Lit: your family grandfather

4. 4. 1. 3 Accusative[81]

The accusatives are formed through adding an accusative marker =*và* to the nominative forms. Whether to use =*và* or not in a clause is contextually dependent (§4. 5. 3). Due to vowel harmony (§2. 5. 2), the sound of the 2sg nominative *nə* has been changed into *nɑ*, and the sound of the 3sg nominative *tʰə* has been changed into *tʰɑ* (see Table 4. 26). Furthermore, the vowel /ɑ/ of ɑ '1sg.SLF', *nɑ* '2sg' and *tʰɑ* '3sg.PRT' should be lengthened to /ɑ:/ when the onset of the accusative marker=*và* is reduced to zero due to syllable reduction (§2. 5. 3 & 2. 5. 5) as shown in (4. 80).

[81] As is pointed out by one of the examiners, this case can also be labeled "primary object" (Dryer 1989) since it also marks recipient arguments in ditransitive (§4. 5. 3).

(4. 80) a. *a* *ŋa=và* *da-ka=gə*

1sg.SLF 2sg=ACC upward-hit=PROS

'I will hit you.'

b. *a* *ŋa:* *da-ka=gə*

1sg.SLF 2sg.ACC upward-hit=PROS

'I will hit you.'

4. 4. 1. 4 Person distinction

Personal pronouns distinguish three persons: first, second and third as shown in Table 4. 26. In addition, Table 4. 26 also demonstrates that Ersu further distinguishes between '1. SLF' and '1.OTR' (§4. 4. 1. 4. 1), and between '3sg.PRT' and '3sg. NPRT' (§4. 4. 1. 4. 2).

4. 4. 1. 4. 1 '1. SLF' and '1.OTR'

In Ersu, each of the three first persons, 1sg, 1dl and 1pl, shows a '1.SLF' vs. '1.OTR' distinction. This distinction is extracted from Table 4. 26 as shown in Table 4. 27 below.

person	number		nominative	genitive	accusative
first person	1sg	SLF	*a*	*ɛi* or *a=yi*	*a=và*
		OTR	*yò*	*yò=yi*	*yò=và*
	1dl	SLF	*a=dzi*	*a=dzi*	*a=dzi=và*
		OTR	*yò=dzi*	*yò=dzi*	*yò=dzi=và*
	1pl	SLF	*dʲ*	*dʲ=yi*	*dʲ=và*
		OTR	*yòʲ*	*yòʲ=yi*	*yòʲ =và*

Table 4. 27 '1.SLF' vs. '1.OTR' distinction

The referent of '1sg.SLF' is the speaker him/herself, whereas the referent of '1sg.OTR' is not the speaker him/herself, but someone else. '1sg.OTR' often occurs in a quoted speech, especially in folkloric and historical narratives. Similar to '1sg. SLF' and '1sg.OTR', '1dl. SLF' and '1pl.SLF' also include the speaker him/herself, while

‘1dl.OTR’ and ‘1pl.OTR’ exclude the speaker him/herself. A similar phenomenon is found in the personal pronominal inventory of Milang, which distinguishes “two types of plural pronoun in first and third persons” (Post & Modi 2012: 239). However, Ersu distinguishes not only the plural pronouns, but also the singular and the dual pronoun. I hypothesize that ‘1.OTR’ derives from the reflexive *yotsɛ* ‘self’ (§4. 4. 2. 3). This is consistent with the fact that the reflexive pronoun can be used to refer to discourse participants or people already referenced in a discourse. It is not synchronically interchangeable with *yotsɛi* ‘self’ maybe because *yò*, the core morpheme of ‘1.OTR’ has developed a more restricted function, that of anaphoric reference to discourse participants.

Some of the speakers, especially the younger Ersu, often use the two sets of different first persons interchangeably even in the same narrative. This is often thought as being incorrect or inappropriate by the older Ersu. It is also observed that one of my language consultants, Ms. Wang Azhi who is illiterate, is always sensitive to the differences between ‘1.SLF’ and ‘1.OTR’ and keeps consistency in differentiating the two in every one of her narrations. In addition, some of the children in Lajigu did not know the meaning of ‘1.OTR’ personal pronouns when I was testing them in the field. This implies that firstly, the language is tending to become simplified; secondly, school education with the instruction media of Mandarin Chinese has endangered the language to some extent. Examples are given in (4. 81).

(4. 81) a. *a* *kàtʂʔ* *tə* *də-kat^{h}o=gə*
1sg.SLF idiot one upward-tell=PROS
‘I will tell a story about an idiot.’ Lit: I will tell an idiot.

b. *ɑ-ndʑo!* *ɑ-ndʑo!* *nə* *yò=và*

KPFX-friend KPFX-friend: friend 2sg 1sg.OTR=ACC

mɛntʂʰə-ka *də-tsʰu,* *yò* *da-ga,*

tail-CL:generic,sticklike upward-pull 1sg.OTR upward-sing,

na: *dzʲə* *la-su=gə,*

2sg.ACC money come-CAUS=PROS

də-dʑimò-su=gə

upward-be rich-CAUS=PROS

'Friend! Friend! (If) you pull out my tail, I will sing to make you get money and make you rich.'

As can be seen in (4. 81a), the '1sg.SLF' is the speaker himself who will tell a story. While in (4. 81b), the '1sg.OTR' does not refer to the speaker himself, but a cat whose tail was caught by a stone. The speaker uses direct quotations to make his storytelling more vivid. This is a technique that the Ersu storytellers often employ. Therefore, the '1. OTR' occurs quite frequently in the data.

4. 4. 1. 4. 2 '3sg.PRT' and '3sg.NPRT'

The 3sg shows a "present" vs. "non-present" distinction (see Table 4. 26). By saying someone "present", it does not mean that the referent should be present on the scene where the speech happens. He/She may be either present or not present. However, while saying someone "non-present" who serves as a topic in discourse, he/she is certainly not present on the scene where the speech happens. Most important of all, when a speaker wants to hint that someone is distant in his/her feelings, he/she often employs *zò* '3sg.NPRT' rather than *tʰə* '3sg.PRT'. More specifically, the referent that *zò* '3sg.NPRT' denotes only exists in traditional myths, folklore or in previous events that happened in real world. Furthermore, *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' can refer to either an animate or a non-animate referent, but *zò* '3sg.NPRT' can only encode a human being or a personified animate/non-animate referent. In addition, unlike *tʰə*

‘3sg.PRT’, *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’ does not have corresponding dual, plural, genitive and accusative counterparts. Finally, *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’ most often bears an agentive marker *=yikə* (§4. 5). Similar to *yò* ‘1sg. OTR’, *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’is also seldom used by the younger Ersu. I thus hypothesize that *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’ is an archaic indigenous Ersu word that remains in daily use. Examples in (4. 82) give a comparison between *tʰə* ‘3sg.PRT’ and *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’.

(4. 82) a. A: *Hailong* *ɑ-nɛ* *ŋu=gə=è?*
MC.PN:person name ITRG-what do=PROS=ITRG
‘What is Hailong doing?’
B: *tʰə* *zɑ-ma* *dzŋ=gə*
3sg.PRT food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG
‘He is eating.’

b. *xitsŋ* *dʑì* *zò=yikə=nè* *tə do=yi* *sipʰɛtsʰala*
rabbit also 3sg.NPRT=AGT=TOP one jump=CSM bush
=kə *ɲi-nbɛ* *ɑnɛ,* *ŋə-ʂʔdʑì*
=RLN.LOC:in downward-slip LINK:after outward-disappear
‘The rabbit, he also did a quick and sudden jump and slipped into the bushes and disappeared.’ Lit: The rabbit, after he also one jump, slip in the bush, disappeared.

c. *ɑ-tʂʰaɲà,* *ɑ-pu,*

KPFX-mother's brother's youngest daughter KPFX-grandfather

zò=nɛ̀, *yò=và:* *"ndzɳ* *si-pa*

3sg.NPRT=TOP 1sg.SLF=ACC buckwheat three-CL: pearl-like

la *tə-ɲpʰɛɲpʰɛ* *pa+la*

CO one-half. REDUP RLN.LOC:place+come:arrive

mɑ-tsà'=dzigə. *ɑ-ndʑi=gə=è?*

NEG-PFT=EVID:reported ITRG-how=PROS=ITRG

'Wife, wife, father-in-law, he told me: "There are still three and a half pieces of buckwheat seeds that have not been collected." How will I do next?' Lit: Cousin (female), Cousin, Grandpa he (told) me: 'three and a half pieces of buckwheat not arrive.' How?

(4. 82a) comes from a telephone conversation. When this conversation happened, the person referenced by *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' was present on the scene. (4. 82b) shows that the *zò* '3sg.NPRT' bears an agentive marker *=yikə*. This is the most common way in which *zò* '3sg.NPRT' is used in context. Among the 17 examples found in my data, only three do not bear an agentive marker *=yikə* as in (4. 82c). In (4. 82b), *zò* '3sg.NPRT' refers to a human-like rabbit who uses his wisdom and magic power to help a poor orphan get married to the daughter of a wealthy official. In (4. 82c), *zò* '3sg.NPRT' refers to a future father-in-law, a snake, who sets up various hurdles to hinder a young man from marrying his daughter, a lovely small dog. This is a direct quotation in which the young man is asking his wife, the dog, for ideas on how to overcome one of the hurdles, to look for three and a half buckwheat seeds in a field, something impossible in real world.

4. 4. 1. 5 Number distinction

Each of the three persons described in §4. 4. 1. 4 shows a singular, dual and plural distinction. However, *zò* '3sg.NPRT' only has a singular form (see Table 4. 26). The

third person singulars *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' and *zò* '3sg.NPRT' do not distinguish between male and female, and between animate and non-animate. The dual persons are formed through the singular persons plus a dual quantifier *=dzi* that is also seen to follow a noun or noun phrase (§4. 6). For example: *ɑ* '1sg.SLF'→ *ɑ=dzi* '1dl.SLF'. The plural personal forms are derived from the singular personal forms through changing the non-rhotic vowels into rhotic ones. For example: *ɑ* '1sg.SLF'→ *ɑʴ* '1pl.SLF'. This is unlike nouns whose plural forms are formed through a noun plus a plural quantifier *-bɛ̀* (§4. 6). The number distinction of personal pronouns is shown in (4. 83):

(4. 83) a. *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *xīnmín* *duá*
3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday MC.PN:township name go.PFV
=dzɛ̌
=EVID:reported
'He went to Xinmin yesterday.'

b. *tʰə=dzi* *ya+ɲo* *xīnmín* *duá*
3.PRT=dl ?last+day:yesterday MC.PN:township name go.PFV
=dzɛ̌
=EVID:reported
'The two of them went to Xinmin yesterday.'

c. *tʰəʴ* *ya+ɲo* *xīnmín* *duá*
3pl.PRT ?last+day:yesterday MC.PN:township name go.PFV
=dzɛ̌
=EVID:reported
'They (more than two persons) went to Xinmin yesterday.'

Note that the nominative and genitive dual persons share the same formation with each other (see Table 4. 26). I hypothesize that this is due to vowel fusion (§2. 5. 3)

since the final vowel of the dual persons *=dzi* is /i/, which shares the same pronunciation with the genitive marker *=yi*. For example, the two /i/s in *ɑ=dzi=yi* '1dl.SLF=GEN' are fused to be *ɑ=dzi* '1dl.SLF.GEN', which is the same as *ɑ=dzi* '1dl.SLF.GEN'. Its meaning can be figured out through the context. For example:

(4. 84) a. *ɑ=dzi* *ndzondzɿ* *kʰə-lo=gə*
1sg.SLF=dl:1dl.SLF written words inward-write=PROG
'We two are writing.' Lit: We two are writing written words.

b. *ɑ=dzi* *ndzondzɿ* *ŋə-ʂʅ̀dʑì*
1sg.SLF=dl.GEN:1dl.SLF.GEN written words outward-lose
=á
=PFV
'Our (two persons) books are lost.' Lit: We two's written words lost.

In addition, *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' is isomorphic with the proximal demonstrative *tʰə* 'DEM:this' in Ersu, which is similar to its neighbouring languages such as Puxi Qiang (Huang 2004:56) and Yongning Na (Lidz 2010:191). In other words, the proximal demonstrative *tʰə* 'DEM:this' can also be used as *tʰə* '3sg.PRT'. This is common in Tibeto-Burman languages and cross-linguistically (Lidz 2010:191). For example:

(4. 85) a. *tʰə* *nə-nbɛ* *nə-nbɛ=gə=dzɛ̌*
3sg.PRT downward-cry downward-cry=PROG=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) he was crying again and again.'

b. *tʰə* *yadzə* *nə-nbɛ* *nə-nbɛ=gə*

DEM:this child downward-cry downward-cry=PROG

=dzɛ̌

=EVID:reported

‘(It is said that) the child was crying again and again.’

4. 4. 2 Autonomous &. reflexive pronouns

Similar to Lisu (Yu 2007: 126-131), the autonomous pronouns (§4. 4. 2. 1) and the reflexive pronouns (§4. 4. 2. 2) share the same form in Ersu. Autonomous/reflexive pronouns can be further divided into two subsets: One subset is formed through the reduplication of either the genitives or the nominatives and the other consists of compounds through adding a free root *yotsɛi* ‘self’ to either the genitives or the nominatives. Whether to use a genitive or a nominative to form an autonomous/reflexive pronoun is arbitrary as shown in Table 4. 28 below. Furthermore, *zò* ‘3sg.NPRT’ does not have a reflexive counterpart, just as it does not have a genitive and an accusative counterpart.

Generally speaking, people older than about 60 years old prefer to use the reduplicated form of autonomous/reflexive pronouns and that the younger Ersu would like to use the autonomous/reflexive compounds. Similar to personal pronouns, autonomous/reflexive pronouns also exhibit person and number distinction. Autonomous/reflexive pronouns are given in Table 4. 28.

person	number		reduplication	compound
first person	1sg	SLF	*ɛi ɛi*	*ɑ+yotsɛi*
		OTR	*yò yò*	*yò+yotsɛi*
	1dl	SLF	*ɑ=dzi ɑ=dzi*	*ɑ=dzi+yotsɛi*
		OTR	*yò=dzi yò=dzi*	*yò=dzi+yotsɛi*
	1pl	SLF	*ɑˈ ɑˈ*	*ɑˈ+yotsɛi*
		OTR	*yòˈ yòˈ*	*yòˈ+yotsɛi*
second person	2sg		*ni ni*	*nə/ni+yotsɛi*
	2dl		*nə=dzi nə=dzi*	*nə=dzi+yotsɛi*
	2pl		*nəˈ nəˈ*	*nəˈ+yotsɛi*
third person	3sg	PREST	*tʰi tʰi*	*tʰə/tʰi+yotsɛi*
	3dl		*tʰə=dzi tʰə=dzi*	*tʰə=dzi+yotsɛi*
	3pl		*tʰəˈ tʰəˈ*	*tʰəˈ+yotsɛi*

Table 4. 28 Autonomous/reflexive pronouns in Ersu

4. 4. 2. 1 Autonomous pronouns

Autonomous pronouns, or auto-reflexive pronouns occupy the same syntactic constituent as the nominative pronouns in a clause (§4. 4. 1. 1). That is, they work either as A of a transitive clause or as S of an intransitive clause. The difference lies in the fact that an autonomous pronoun implies that it is the very referent him/herself "autonomously"undertakes or deals with something, not forced or driven by anyone else. For example:

(4. 86) a. *tʰə=kə,* *ɛiɛi* *ŋɑ-baŋi*

DEM:this=LOC:in<this time 1sg.SLF.RDUP:AUTO outward-rest

=tə

=DES

'This time, I myself retired.' Lit: This time, I myself rested.

b. *tʰə=kə,* *ɑ+yotsɛi* *ŋɑ-baŋi*

DEM:this=LOC:in<this time 1sg.SLF+oneself:AUTO outward-rest

=tə

=DES

'This time, I myself retired.' Lit: This time, I myself rested.

c. *tʰə=kə,* *a* *ŋa-baɲi=tə*

DEM:this=LOC:in<this time 1sg.SLF outward-rest=DES

'This time, I retired.' Lit: This time, I rested.

In (4. 86), (4. 86a) is directly extracted from an autobiographical narrative. Both (4. 86b) and (4. 86c) are elicited based on (4. 86a). All the three statements are acceptable. The younger Ersu prefer to (4. 86b), a compound pronoun while the older prefer to (4. 86a). The difference between (4. 86a-b) and (4. 86c) is that (4. 86a-b) makes it clear that it is the speaker "I" himself retired from his work, while (4. 86c) gives no information about whether he is forced to be retired or "autonomously" does so.

The autonomous pronoun is used as S of an intransitive clause in (4. 86). It also works as an A of a transitive clause as shown in (4. 87). In addition, (4. 87) also indicates that *yotsɛi* 'oneself' can be used as a free word in the clause. When it occurs with other elements to form a compound, it must be a free root rather than a bound root.

(4. 87) *si* *dʑì* *aʳ+yotsɛi* *də-ntʂʰʅ.* ¶

tree also 1pl.SLF+oneself:1pl.AUTO upward-split.

a-nɛ+a-nɛ *yotsɛi* *nə-ŋu*

ITRG-what.RDUP<whatever oneself downward-do

'We ourselves cut the trees. Everything was done by ourselves.' Lit: trees ourselves split. What what oneself did.

4. 4. 2. 2 Reflexive pronouns

As mentioned in §4. 4. 2, an autonomous pronoun shares the same form as a reflexive pronoun. They can be differentiated from each other in accordance with the different syntactic functions that they undertake in a clause. An autonomous pronoun works as either A or S of a clause while a reflexive pronoun refers to a clause in which

A and O (objective of a transitive clause) are coreferential. Note that O is always expressed through *yotsɛi* 'oneself' in a reflexive construction. For example:

(4. 88) a. *ɛiɛi* *yotsɛi* *tʰə-siŋu* *xo*
1sg.SLF.RDUP:REFL oneself away-manage MOD:need
'I need to take care of myself.'

b. *ɑ+yotsɛi* *yotsɛi* *tʰə-siŋu* *xo*
1sg.SLF+oneself:REFL oneself away-manage MOD:need
'I need to take care of myself.'

(4. 86a-b) and (4. 88a-b) demonstrate that an autonomous pronoun and a reflexive pronoun share the same form with each other. More specifically, *ɛiɛi* '1sg.SLF. RDUP'and *ɑ+yotsɛi* '1sg.SLF+oneself' work as autonomous pronouns in (4. 86a-b) while they work as reflexive pronouns in (4. 88a-b). Again, both (4. 88a) and (4. 88b) are acceptable while the older prefer the former and the younger like the latter, in general. Reflexive pronouns are further shown in (4. 89) as below:

(4. 89) *yɑ+ɳɻo=nɛ̀*, *tʰitʰi* *yotsɛi*
?last+day:yesterday=TOP 3sg.PRT.RDUP:REFL oneself
nə-dzi=á
downward-cut=PFV
'He cut himself yesterday.'

4. 4. 3 Demonstratives

Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns that refer deictically to individuals or locations or actions. They function as anaphors to refer to entities introduced in previous linguistic context. Ersu demonstratives can be further divided into two subtypes: nominal demonstratives (§4. 4. 3. 1) and adverbial demonstratives (§4. 4. 3. 2).

4. 4. 3. 1 Nominal demonstratives

Nominal demonstratives in Ersu work as a constituent in an NP, either modifying a head noun or heading an NP. There is one basic nominal demonstrative *tʰə* 'this', which is isomorphic with the 3sg.PRT nominative *tʰə* (§4. 4. 1. 5). There are three demonstratives in total, but the other two are derived from *tʰə* 'this', and they do not have number distinction, as in Table 4. 29.

Distance	Term	Gloss
proximal	*tʰə*	'this/these'
distal	*ɑ-tʰə*	'that/those'
remote	*ɑ:-tʰə*	'that/those (remote, possibly invisible)'

Table 4. 29 List of nominal demonstrative pronouns

As shown in Table 4. 29, the distal demonstrative pronoun derives from the proximal demonstrative pronoun *tʰə* 'this/these' through adding a distant deictic prefix *ɑ-*. When the vowel /ɑ/ in the prefix *ɑ-* is lengthened to be a long vowel /ɑ:/, the distal demonstrative will become the remote demonstrative *ɑ:-tʰə* 'that/those (remote)' (§2. 5. 3). It is observed that both the proximal and the distal demonstratives are quite frequently used in speech. The remote demonstrative is seldom used. The proximal, distal and remote form of a nominal demonstrative can also be used to encode information source in Ersu (§11. 4).

The 3sg.PRT nominative *tʰə* can occur as a free word in context as discussed in §4. 4. 1. However, similar to Lisu, demonstratives in Ersu also always occur with something following them such as a nominalizer, a relator noun, or the structure of [NUM+CL] (Bradley 2002: 2, 2012). They may be followed by nouns, classifiers, locative markers, temporal markers, the unit of [numeral + classifier] and NPs. This difference is the most effective way to identify the two isomorphic pronouns, the 3sg nominative *tʰə* and the proximal demonstrative *tʰə*. Demonstrativs can also function as determiners modifying NPs.

Example (4. 90) shows that *tʰə* 'this/these' respectively precedes and modifies a proper noun *mèvè* 'name of a god'and an NP *[ɱpʰa si-wo]* '[three brothers]'.

(4. 90) *tʰə* *mèvè* *a-pu-ka*
DEM:this PN:name of a god KPFX-grandfather-CL:generic and sticklike
-wo=nè, *tʰə* *[ɱpʰa si*
-CL:generic and non-sticklike=TOP DEM:this [brother three
-wo]=và...
-CL:generic and non-sticklike]=ACC
'This old gentleman, Maivai (told) these three brothers…'

Example (4. 91) below shows that *tʰə* 'this/these' precedes a numeral classifier and follows an Nh and modifies the Nh together with the classifier.

(4. 91) *mè+tɕò* *tʰa-ka* *tʂana=nè,*
nature+bind DEM:this-CL:generic and sticklike below=TOP
'under this sky…'

Example (4. 92) below shows that *tʰə* 'this/these' occurs with the relator noun *=kə* '=RLN.LOC:in' with the meaning of 'here'.

(4. 92) *tʰə=kə=nɛ̀,*
DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here=TOP
gə-zɻ̀+gə-ma *dʑì* *ma-bo=á*
seed-SFX.MAS+seed-SFX.FEM:seeds also NEG=EXT =PFV
'There were no seeds here.' Lit: Here male seed female seed not had.

Example (4. 93) below shows that *tʰə* 'this/these' can be used to head a unit of [NUM+CL] and to anaphorically refer to a referent in previous context.

(4. 93) *ɱ̩* *tsɿ* *xi* *tsɿ* *t^hə*

brother sole sister sole DEM:this

nə-wo=nɛ̀

two CL:generic and non-sticklike =TOP…

'The sole brother and the sole sister, the two…'

Example (4. 94) below shows that the distal demonstrative *ɑ-t^hə* 'that/those' modifies an NP, *[su-bɛ̀ do+ku]* '[person-pl eye+?hole:eye]'.

(4. 94) *ɑ-t^hə* [*su-bɛ̀* *do+ku*] *=và*

LPFX:distal-DEM:this<that [person-pl eye+?hole:eye]=ACC

ɲi-tso

downward-thrust

'(You) thrust at those people's eyes.' Lit: Thrust downward those people eye.

Example (4. 95) below shows that the demonstrative *ɑ:-t^hə* 'that/those (remote)' modifies an NP, *[nbi=tɕ^{h}o]* '[mountain=RLN.LOC:on→on the top of that mountain]'.

(4. 95) *ɑ:-t^hə* [*nbi=tɕ^{h}o*]*=nɛ̀,*

LPFX:remote-DEM:this<far that [mountain=RLN.LOC:on]=TOP

si+pu *mɑ-dzo=tə*

tree+CL:living plants<tree NEG=EXT=DES

'There is no trees on the top of that mountain far remote.'

Note that all the above examples are selected from the same one traditional Ersu folkloric story that describes the origin of the sun and the moon in a recording of five minutes and fifty-five seconds. This implies that demonstrative pronouns are quite frequently used in discourse. The above examples also illustrate that a demonstrative pronoun may occur with various kinds of nominals.

In addition, as shown in (4. 90), a demonstrative may occur with a proper noun, that is, the name of a god, *mèvè*. This is similar to Mandarin Chinese, in which the unit of [DEM + CL] can precede and modify a proper noun. For example:

(4. 96) *zhè* *ge* *zhāngsìhóng* *hěn* *lǎn*
DEM:this CL:generic PN:person's name INTS:very lazy
'This Zhang Sihong (is) very lazy.'

4. 4. 3. 2 Adverbial demonstratives *tʰədʑi* and *tʰi* 'like this'

Both *tʰədʑi* 'like this' and *tʰi* 'like this' can act as an adverbial demonstrative. They are used to modify a verbal action. They give the information about the manner that an action is taken as shown in (4. 97). They are called an adverbial demonstrative because they function like an adverbial. §14. 5. 3. 3 further discusses this and here an example is given.

(4. 97) *su=yikə* *nə-zi* *tʰədʑi* *ŋu* *anɛ,* *təᴵ*
someone=AGT downward-exploit like this do LINK:after 3pl.PRT
=nɛ̀, *sɻni=kə* *xasɛ=tə*
=TOP heart=LOC: in understand=DES
'After someone exploited (them) like this, they knew in (their) heart.'

4. 4. 4 Interrogative pronouns

The basic structure that denotes a question is …*a*-…*=è* (§10. 1. 3). For example: *xasɛ* 'understand' can be changed into a question as *xa-a=sè* '(Do you) understand?' (§2. 4. 2 1). Consequently, most of the interrogative pronouns, except *sɛ* 'who/which' and *tsʰo* 'how many', contain a morpheme "*a*" that denotes questions in Ersu as shown in Table 4. 30.

Term	Gloss
sɛ	'who/which'
a-nɛ	'what'
a-ndʑi	'how/why'
a-mua	'why'
ȵaxa	'when'
kʰa	'where/who/which'
tsʰo	'how many/much'

Table 4. 30 Ersu interrogative pronouns

Interrogative pronouns function to denote content questions in a clause. This is further discussed in §10. 1. 3. 3. This section focuses on the co-occurrence of interrogative pronouns and a noun or the unit of [NUM+CL] (§4. 4. 4. 1), and the differences between *sɛ* and *kʰa* when the meanings of the two interrogatives overlap and encode 'who/which' (§4. 4. 4. 2).

4. 4. 4. 1 The co-occurence of interrogatives and N/[NUM+CL]

The interrogatives *sɛ* 'who/which', *a-nɛ* 'what' and *kʰa* 'where/who/which' in Table 4. 30 often co-occur with a noun or a unit of [NUM+CL] when they are used to denote questions concerning specific referents or a specific class of referents. Examples are given in (4. 98) below. However, *a-ndʑi* 'how/why', *ȵaxa* 'when' and *a-mua* 'why' are not followed by a noun or a unit of [NUM+CL]. They always occur on their own in conversation. In addition, *tsʰo* is only followed by a noun or a classifier rather than the unit of [NUM+CL]. This indicates that *tsʰo* can be considered as an interrogative quantifier. It is a bound pronoun that does not have a free-standing position in discourse.

(4. 98)

Ex.	Gloss
sɛ tə-wo	'who one-CL:generic→which person'
sɛ tə yi	'who one CL:family→which family'
sɛ tə=yi=tə	'who one=GEN=DES→whose'
kʰa tə-wo	'who one-CL:generic→ which person'
	'which one-CL:generic→which one'
kʰa tə=kə	'which one=RLN.LOC:in→which place'
kʰa tə-əˈnbɛ	'which one-CL:kind→which kind'
ɑ-nɛ tə-wo	'ITRG-what one-CL:generic→what one'

4. 4. 4. 2 *kʰa* 'where'+[NUM+CL] vs. *sɛ* 'who'+[NUM+CL]

When *kʰa* is followed by the unit of [*tə-wo*], the structure of [*kʰa tə-wo*] can denote either a human referent, 'which person' or a non-human referent, 'which one', depending on the discourse context. When it denotes a human referent, it is quite similar to [*sɛ tə-wo*] 'which person' in semantics that also denotes a human referent. Both are observed to be used interchangeably on most occasions. They are often used in the context where the speaker may know some information about a referent, but not quite sure and then s/he asks for more convincing information. Or, they are used in the context where there are many people and the speaker wants to get information about a particular referent. However, [*sɛ tə-wo*]'which person' is different from [*kʰa tə-wo*] 'which person' in the context where the former seems to serve as a rhetorical question, functioning as something like a kind of expression of dislike. For example:

(4. 99) a. *nə-wo* *tʰɛi* *yɑ-mɑ.* ¶ *nə*
two-CL:generic, non-sticklike EMPH:both APFX-delicious 2sg
[*kʰa* *tə-wo*] *xo=è?*
[ITRG:which one-NUMCL:generic, non-sticklike MOD:want=ITRG
'Both are delicious. Which one do you want?'

b. [k^ha $tə$-wo]=$nɛ̀$, $nə$
ITRG: which one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 2sg
=$zɿ̀$ mp^ha-wo=$ɛ̀$?
=GEN:family brother-CL: generic, non-sticklike=ITRG
'Which one is your brother?'

c. [$sɛ$ $tə$-wo]=$nɛ̀$, $nə$
ITRG: which one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 2sg
=$zɿ̀$ mp^ha-wo=$ɛ̀$?
=GEN:family brother-CL: generic, non-sticklike=ITRG
'Which one is your brother?'

Examples in (4. 99a-c) above illustrate the differences between k^ha 'where'+ [NUM+CL] vs. $sɛ$ 'who'+[NUM+CL]. [k^ha $tə$-wo] 'which person' is used both in (4. 99a) and (4. 99b). A listener can judge that it refers to a non-human referent in (4. 99a) in accordance with the word ya-ma 'APFX-delicious:delicious' and that it refers to a human referent in (4. 99b) in accordance with the word mp^ha 'brother'. (4. 99b) and (4. 99c) share the same translation literally, but (4. 99b) indicates that the speaker really wants to get some information about who is someone else's brother. However, (4. 99c) often occurs in the situation where the speaker is dissatisfied with the fact that someone else states that they are "brothers". The speaker says like (4. 99c) to show that 1) he is not someone else's brother; or 2) he is his/her brother, but he feels unhappy with this fact.

4. 4. 5 Indefinite pronouns

There are four different ways to denote an indefinite referent in Ersu: interrogative pronouns used as indefinite pronouns (§4. 4. 5. 1), the reduplication of interrogatives used as indefinite pronouns (§4. 4. 5. 2), indefinite pronoun su 'someone' (§4. 4. 5. 3) and su+yi 'someone else' (§4. 4. 5. 4).

4. 4. 5. 1 Interrogative pronouns used as indefinite pronouns

In Ersu, most of the interrogative pronouns, except for *ɑ-mɯɑ* 'why', can directly function as indefinite pronouns to denote indefinite human beings, objects or places. Among them, *ɑ-nɛ* 'what' occurs quite often in discourse. Unlike interrogatives that often co-occur with a noun or a unit of [NUM+CL] (§4. 4. 4. 1), indefinite pronouns that derive from interrogatives are not followed by a noun but may precede a unit of [NUM+CL]. When they are used as indefinite pronouns, they mean something like English 'no matter wh-' or 'wh-ever'. They are given in Table 4. 31.

Term	Gloss
sɛ	'whoever/no matter who'
ɑ-nɛ	'whatever/no matter what'
ɑ-ndʑi	'the/this/that/these/those way'
ɳaxa	'whenever/no matter when'
k^ha	'wherever/no matter where'
ts^ho	'no matter how many/how much'

Table 4. 31 Interrogative pronouns used as indefinite pronouns

Example (4. 100) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *sɛ* 'who' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'whoever'.

(4. 100) *sɛ* *tə-wo* *yɑ-ɲts^hə,* *sɛ*
whoever one-CL:generic, non-sticklike APFX-quick whoever
tə-wo *mimi* *lɑ=gə*
one -CL:generic, non-sticklike meat come=PROS
'Anyone who is quick will get the meat.' Lit: Whoever quick, whoever meat will come.

Example (4. 101) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *ɑ-nɛ* 'what' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'whatever'.

(4. 101) *ɑ-nɛ* *dzŋ* *buatʂə,* *ɑ-nɛ*

ITRG-what:whatever eat MOD:want ITRG-what:whatever

dzŋ *la* *pʰa*

eat come MOD:can

'Whatever (people) want to eat, they can get it.' Lit: Whatever want to eat, whatever can come eat.

Example (4. 102) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *ɑ-ndʑi* 'how' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'this way'.

(4. 102) *nə=nɛ̀,* *yò=yi* *ɑ-ndʑi* *dɑ-katʰo=nɛ̀,*

2sg=TOP 1sg.OTR=GEN ITRG-how:this way upward-tell=PAUS

ɑ-ndʑi *nə-ŋu=mǎ*

TRG-how:this way downward-do=RQT

'You do the way that I told you, OK?' Lit: You my this way tell, this way do.

Example (4. 103) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *ɳaxa* 'when' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'whenever'.

(4. 103) *nə* *ɳaxa* *latɕikù* *pa+la* *dʑì*

2sg whenever PN:village name LOC+come:arrive also

diànhuà *tə* *ɑ=và* *tɕʰi=gə*

MC:telephone one 1sg.SLF=ACC give=PROS

'Whenever you come to Lajigu, give me a call.'

Example (4. 104) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *kʰa* 'where' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'wherever'.

(4. 104) *bɛə^{l} tɑ-kɑ=nɛ̀, t^{h}ə k^{h}a duá*

snake one-CL:generic, sticklike=TOP 3sg.PRT wherever go.PFV

=nɛ̀, t^{h}ə so=p^{h}ɛ k^{h}ə-lo

=PAUS 3sg.PRT before=RLN.LOC:side inward-stop

'Wherever he went, a snake in front of him stopped him.' Lit: A snake, he wherever went, he front side stopped.

Example (4. 105) below shows that the interrogative pronoun *ts^{h}o* 'how much/many' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'no matter how many'.

(4. 105) *vɛ ts^{h}o-wo dzo*

pig no matter how many-CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT

ndzɑ+tso xɑ=nɛ̀ nɑ-kɑ=gə

Han+festival:Spring Festival time=TOP downward-kill=PROS

'No matter how many pigs there are, (they) will be killed when Spring Festival comes.' Lit: No matter how many pigs have, Han festival time, will kill.

4. 4. 5. 2 Interogative pronouns reduplicated to function as indefinite pronouns

The majority of the interrogative pronouns in Ersu, except for *ɳɑxɑ* 'when' and *ɑ-mua* 'why', can be reduplicated to function as indefinite pronouns with the meaning similar to 'everyone', 'everywhere', etc. in English. Note that the reduplication form of *ts^{h}o* 'how many or how much' must co-occur with a numeral classifier to denote indefinite referents. Reduplicated indefinite pronous are given in Table 4. 32.

Term	Gloss
sɛsɛ	'everyone'
ɑ-nɛɑ-nɛ	'everything'
ɑ-ndʑiɑ-ndʑi	'every way'
k^hɑk^hɑ	'everywhere'
ts^ho-CL ts^ho-CL	'several'

Table 4. 32 Interrogative pronouns reduplicated to function as indefinite pronouns

Example (4. 106) below shows that the reduplicated form of the interrogative pronoun *sɛ* 'who' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'everyone'.

(4. 106) *t^hə ɑ=và dɑ-k^hɑt^ho=gə,*
3sg.PRT 1sg.SLF=ACC upward-tell:tell=PROS
sɛsɛ t^hə=kə
who.RDUP:everyone DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here
yɑ-nts^hu=tə
APFX-good=DES
'He is telling me (that) everyone here is good.' Lit: He is telling me who who here good.

Example (4. 107) below shows that the reduplicated form of the interrogative pronoun *ɑ-ndʑi* 'how' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'every way'.

(4. 107) *tsʰo+la=kə* *nə-toto* *la*

thorn+land:thorn bush=LOC:in downward-jump.RDUP come

tə-bɛ̀; *ɬa+la=kə* *də-vùlà* *la*

one-QUAT.pl *lla*[82]+land=LOC:in upward-roll on the ground come

tə-bɛ̀, *ɑ-ndʑiɑ-ndʑi* *la* *tə-bɛ̀.*

one-QUAT.pl ITRG-how.RDUP:every way come one-QUAT.pl

'(I) got these (treasures because I) kept jumping in thorn bushes; (I) got these (because I) kept rolling in *lla*s; (I) got these (through) every way.' Lit: In thorn land jump, jump, come some; in *`lla* land roll, roll, come some; how how come some.

Example (4. 108) below shows that the reduplicated form of the interrogative pronoun *ɑ-nɛ* 'what' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'everything'.

(4. 108) *si* *dʑì* *aᴵ+yotsɛi* *də-ntʂʰɿ.* ¶

tree also 1pl.SLF+onself:ourselves upward-split *yotsɛi*

ɑ-nɛɑ-nɛ *yotsɛi* *nə-ŋu*

ITRG-what.RDUP oneself downward-do

'We ourselves cut the trees. Everything was done by ourselves.' Lit: trees ourselves split. What what oneself did.

Example (4. 109) below shows that the reduplicated form of the interrogative pronoun *kʰa* 'where' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'everywhere'.

[82] See Example (4. 42).

(4. 109) *tʰə* *ɳbi=tɕʰo* *kʰakʰa*

DEM:this mountain=RLN.LOC:on where.RDUP:everywhere

la *si* *xa*

EMPH:all tree EXT

'Trees are everywhere on the mountain.' Lit: On the mountain, where where have trees.

Example (4. 110a) below shows that the reduplicated form of the interrogative pronoun *tsʰo*+CL 'how many/much+CL' is used as an indefinite pronoun with the meaning of 'several'. If it is not reduplicated, it functions as an interrogative rather than an indefinite pronoun as shown in (4. 110b).

(4. 110) a. *tsʰo-wotsʰo-wo*

how many-CL:generic, non-sticklike.RDUP:several several

ɳa-duá

downward-go.PFV

'(They) went downward in threes and fours.' Lit: Several several went downward.

b. *tsʰo-wo* *ɳa-duá*?

how many-CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-go.PFV

'How many (of them) went downward?' Lit: How many went downward?

4. 4. 5. 3 Indefinite pronoun *su* 'someone'

su means 'person' denoting a class of referents, that is, 'human beings' rather than other creatures such as animals and plants. It has been grammaticalized to be an agentive nominalizer (§4. 2. 3. 1), which is a bound morpheme following a verb or a verb phrase. However, it can also be used as an indefinite pronoun referring to an indefinite referent. As an indefinite pronoun, it means 'someone/some people' and has

a free-standing position in context. In this situation, it is not a class term denoting 'human beings', but referring to a specific person or group of persons. For example:

(4. 111)	*su*	*tə-bɛ̀*	*t^hə=zì*	*yava*
	someone	one-QUAT.pl	3sg.PRT=GEN:family<his/her	home
	dzo			
	EXT			
	'People are in his home.'			

(4. 111) is used in the situation when the speaker is asked to find some people in A place, but s/he has found that they were in B place. When s/he comes back, s/he reports the result by using (4. 111). This means that *su* refers to a specific group of people rather than a class term or nominalizer.

4. 4. 5. 4 Indefinite pronoun *su+yi* 'person+family:someone else'

su+yi is in fact a compound formed through two free roots, *su* 'person' and *yi* 'family'. Therefore, it literally means 'person family', but is used to refer to 'someone else'. This is similar to Mandarin Chinese. In Madarin Chinese, *rénjiā*, a compound consisting of two free roots, *rén* 'person' and *jiā*'family', literally means 'person family', but also used to refer to 'someone else' or 'oneself'. However, unlike Chinese *rénjiā* that is used as a free word in a clause, *su+yi* is always followed by some more detailed information in Ersu, such as a person's name or his/her kinship term or the title of his/her social status, as in (4. 112). Moreover, *su+yi* cannot be used to denote 'oneself'. Pragmatically, using *su+yi* 'someone else' often implies that the speaker has some sort of positive feelings on a human referent.

(4. 112) *tʂaŋa tə tsə=kə=nè, su+yi*

later one CL:a part of a story=LOC:in=TOP person+family:someone else

ŋua+la=su tə-bè də-dzʰudzʰu anɛ...

ox+plough=NOM:person one-QUAT.pl upward-meet.RDUP LINK:after

'In a later stage of (the story), after (the liar) came across some farming people…' Lit: In later one stage, met across someone else, ox-ploughing persons…

4. 4. 6 Anaphoric pronouns

There are two anaphoric pronouns attested in Ersu. They are: *tsʰu* 'such' and *tʰəsu* 'such'. They, co-occurring with the unit of [NUM+CL], are used to refer to a referent that previously occurs in context. Unlike the demonstrative *tʰə* 'this' which itself refers to an anaphor in previous linguistic context (§4. 4. 3), the two anaphoric pronouns discussed here are observed to not only modify the "previous referent", but also highlight it in an NP. *tsʰu* 'such' and *tʰəsu* 'such' are two synonyms, which one to choose is dependent on an individual speaker's style. For example:

(4. 113) *ɱ tsʔ xi tsʔ tʰəsu nə-wo*

brother sole sister sole such two-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'(the) sole brother (and) sole sister, such two (persons)'

(4. 113) demonstrates that the anaphoric pronoun *tʰəsu* 'such' co-occur with the unit of [NUM+CL] and closely follows the previous referents, "the sole brother and the sole sister". It does not only have the anaphoric reference function, but also highlight the referents.

(4. 114) *tʰəsu ŋua dzʐ*

such five line of words

'such five lines of words'

(4. 114) shows that the structure of *tʰəsu* 'such' plus [NUM+CL] also functions to anaphorically refer to previous referents, that is, "five lines of words". However, the content of the "five lines of words" occurs in previous context and is ellipsed here. This implies that *tʰəsu* 'such' plus [NUM+CL] does not necessarily follow a previous referent as closely as it does in (4. 113).

The descriptions above also apply to the synonym of *tʰəsu* 'such', that is, *tsʰu* 'such' as shown in (4. 115)

(4. 115) *tʰə* *lo-wo=kə,* *mito* *a*
DEM:this cliff-CL:generic, non-sticklike=LOC:in flower LPFX:distal
-tʰə *ɲa* *ya-ntɕʰo* *tsʰu* *tə-pu*
-DEM:this< that ITNS APFX-beautiful such one-CL:living plants
xa=yi
EXT=CSM
'On the cliff, there is such a very, very beautiful flower.' Lit: In this cliff, has that very beautiful flower, such one (flower).

4. 5 Case Markers

This section presents nominal case markers in Ersu. All of them are postpositional markers and no prepositional markers are found. In addition, they are enclitics rather than suffixes (§4. 5. 1). Case markers in Ersu consist of agentive marker =*yikə* (§4. 5. 2), accusative marker =*và* (§4. 5. 3), comitative marker =*pʰɛ* (§4. 5. 4), genitive marker =*yi* and =*zɿ̀* (§4. 5. 5), ablative marker =*tà* (§4. 5. 6) and comparative marker =*pa* and =*tɕʰo* (§4. 5. 7). These case markers are given in Table 4. 33.

marker	category	reference
case marker: enclitics or suffixes		§4. 5. 1
=*yikə*/=*yi*/=*kə*	agentive	§4. 5. 2
=*và*	accusative	§4. 5. 3
=*yi*/=*zɳ̀*	comitative	§4. 5. 4
=$p^h\varepsilon$	genitive	§4. 5. 5
=*tà*	ablative	§4. 5. 6
=*pa* and=$tɕ^ho$	comparative	§4. 5. 7

Table 4. 33 Nominal case markers in Ersu

4. 5. 1 Case markers: enclitics or suffixes?

As mentioned above, nominal case markers in Ersu are enclitics rather than suffixes because they are phrasal operators rather than morphological operators. The typical characteristic is that other elements can be inserted between a root and a case marker. This is unlike the morphological operators that function as suffixes (§2. 4. 2. 1), in which none of the other elements can be inserted between a root and a suffix. For example:

(4. 116) a. *ɑ-pu=yikə* $t^hə$ *nuà nuà* *nɑ-kɑ=á*
KPFX-grandfather=AGT DEM:this ox RPT:ox downward-kill=PFV
=*dʑɛ̌*
EVID:reported
'(It is said that) the old man killed the ox.'

b. *ɑ-pu-wo=yikə* $t^hə$ *nuà*
KPFX-grandfather-CL:generic, non-sticklike=AGT DEM:this ox
nuà *nɑ-kɑ=á=dʑɛ̌*
RPT:ox downward-kill=PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) the old man killed the ox.'

(4. 116a) is extracted from a piece of folkloric story while (4. 116b) is elicited based on (4. 116a). All of my language consultants hold the opinion that the generic classifer

-*wo* can be inserted between *a-pu* 'grandfather' and the agentive marker =*yikə* '=AGT' and they think (4. 116b) is not only acceptable but also sounds more natural in discourse. This characteristic of case markers and the host is consistent with the criteria that function to differentiate suffixes and clitics in Ersu (§2. 4. 2). Consequently, I view them as enclitics (§2. 4. 2. 2).

4. 5. 2 Agentive

This section discusses agentive marking in Ersu. §4. 5. 2. 1 presents three different allomorphs of the agentive marker =*yikə* and §4. 5. 2. 2 discusses the functions of agentive marker.

4. 5. 2. 1 Allomorphs of agentive markers

LaPolla (1995) reports that =*yikə*[83] is an agentive marker in Zela variety of Ersu and that it can be optionally shortened as =*yi*. =*yikə* is also used as an agentive marker in Lajigu variety of Ersu. However, as shown in Table 4. 33, most of the nominal case markers in Ersu are monosyllabic except for =*yikə* '=AGT'. The data demonstrate that there is also a tendency that the agentive marker is in the process of simplification, that is, tends to be monosyllabic, either =*yi* '=AGT' or =*kə* '=AGT'[84]. When the agentive marker follows a host that ends with the close vowels /u/, /i/ and /ɿ/, people tend to use the sole =*yi* '=AGT'. When the agentive marker follows a polysyllabic host that ends with the open vowels /ɑ/ and /ɑ^{ɪ}/, people tend to use the sole =*kə* '=AGT'. If the host is monosyllabic, such as *a* '1sg.SLF', either =*yikə* or =*yi* can be used. However, this needs further study because occasionally, there are some exceptions occurring in the data for example, (4. 120) below. Consequently, there are three allomorphs of the agentive marker =*yikə* '=AGT'. They are: =*yikə*, =*yi* and =*kə*. Examples are given in (4. 117) with the sole =*yi* and in (4. 118) with the sole =*kə* as the agentive marker.

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[83] It is documented as *i*^{55}*kə*^{55} in his paper.

[84] LaPolla (1995) reports that the agentive marker =*yikə* Ersu is "partially" isomorphic with the genitive marker =*yi*. I hyphothesize that =*yikə* '=AGT' is partially isomorphic with the combination of both the genitive marker =*yi* and the locative maker =*kə* '=RLN.LOC:in' (§4. 6) since either =*yi* or =*kə* can be used as an agentive marker on its own.

(4. 117) *ɬatɕolə-gɑ-wo*

PN:person's name-CL:generic, sticklike-CL:generic, non-sticklike

su=yi *də-sɻ=tsɑ*

someone=AGT upward-kill=PFT

'Someone has killed Llajole.'

(4. 118) *ɳ̩ɑyi-mɑ=kə=nɛ̀,* *kʰə-əˈliɑ=nɛ̀,*

?-SFX.FEM<PN:female name=AGT=TOP inward-feel=PAUS

tʰə=zɻ̀ *ɳ̩pʰɑ-wo* *vuli*

3sg.PRT =GEN:family brother=CL: generic, non-sticklike head

-wo=dʑigə

CL: generic, non-sticklike =EVID:reported

'Niayima felt (it) and found (it) was her brother's skull.'

As shown in (4. 117), the host *su* 'someone' ends with the close vowel /u/ and =*yi* used as agentive marker. While in (4. 118) the host *ɳ̩ɑyi-mɑ* 'person's name' ends with the open vowel /ɑ/ and =*kə* used as agentive marker.

4. 5. 2. 2 Function of agentive marker and context where it is obligatory

The agentive marker denotes the initiator or the causer of an action, that is, an "agent". It follows an agent in a clause which involves two (or three) arguments—the agent and the object (or sometimes, an oblique). The agent in this context does not distinguish between a speech act participant and a non-speech act participant. In other words, the agent may involve the first persons, the second persons or the third persons. The object in this context is always a patient, a recipient, or a beneficiary of a ditransitive verb. The agentive system in Ersu does not reflect syntactic relations and mainly plays a semantic role when pragmatic factors are considered. It is also not a full obligatory paradigm (LaPolla 2004). This is very similar to many other TB languages in this area (LaPolla 1995, 2004). The main function of the agentive marker

is to **disambiguate** confusions in context, that is, to clarify the ambiguous roles of referents in discourse. In addition, there are also context where the agentive marker is optionally used. In this situation, the function of an agentive marker is to **highlight** the agent of an action. An agentive marker is obligatorily used in Ersu in the following context: 1) an inanimate actor used as an agent (§4. 5. 2. 2. 1); 2) an object placed in the sentence-initial position as a topic (§4. 5. 2. 2. 2); 3) the object contextually absent (§4. 5. 2. 2. 3); 4) for emphatic reasons (§4. 5. 2. 2. 4).

4. 5. 2. 2. 1 Inanimate referent used as an agent

When an inanimate actor is used as an agent in a clause, it must be followed by an agentive marker as shown in (4. 119)

(4. 119) *tə ɲo=nè, ndzondzɿ tʰə-wo*
one day=TOP written word[85] DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike
=nè, mɛəˈ=kə tʰə-tʂɿ tɕi duá
=TOP wind=AGT away-tear…apart take go.PFV
'One day, the wind tore the sign apart and took (it) away.'

(4. 119) shows that the agent in this context is inanimate, *mɛəˈ* 'wind', it is thus followed by an agentive marker. This is seen to apply to all other inanimate agents in the data.

4. 5. 2. 2. 2 Object topicalized and placed sentence-initial

The canonical syntactic constituent order of Ersu is either AVO or SV (§12. 1. 1). However, as a "topic-comment" language (§12. 1. 2), A or S of a clause does not always occurs at the sentence-initial position. When O is topicalized, it may be placed at the beginning of a clause or a sentence. In this situation, the agent, in other words, A must take an agentive marker as shown in (4. 120).

[85] Here, 'word' stands for the piece of cloth, or something else on which a 'word' is written as a sign. This happens in a story. Because a wise lady's husband, a farmer always comes home late, she makes a sign to remind him that as soon as the sunlight reaches the sign, he must go home.

(4. 120) *nə=nɛ̀,* *nə=zɿ̀* *zìyì-wo*

2sg=TOP 2sg=GEN:family daughter-CL:generic, non-sticklike

ʂɿ̀-bɛ̀ *tɕi=tə* ¶ *nə=zɿ̀* *zìyì-tʂə*

meat-QUAT.pl take=DES 2sg=GEN:family daughter-QUAT:pair

ʂɿ̀-bɛ̀ *ni=yi* *dɑ-bɑ=tsɑ̀=tə*

meat -QUAT.pl 2sg=AGT upward-carry…on one's back=PFT=DES

'What you took is your daughter's flesh. What you carried on your back is your two daughters' flesh.' Lit: You took your daughter meat. You carried your daughter meat on your back.

In fact, (4. 120) contains two sentences that occur in a story in a sequencing order with quite similar syntactic constituents. As can be seen, the first sentence does not use the agentive marker, in which the agent, *nə* '2sg' is the canonical sentence-initial topic, but in the second sentence, the same agent *ni* '2sg' employs the agentive marker because the object, *nə=zɿ̀ zìyì-tʂə ʂɿ̀-bɛ̀* 'your two daughters' flesh' is topicalized and placed at the sentence-initial position.

4. 5. 2. 2. 3 Absence of an object

Ellipsis occurs a lot in Ersu. Almost every syntactic constituent can be omitted whenever it can be recovered from the context (§13. 2). When the O argument of a clause is ellipsed and absent, the agent, that is, the A argument must take an agentive marker, as shown in (4. 121).

(4. 121) *zikɑ-mɑ-wo* *dzo*

?-SFX.FEM<PN:female name-CL:generic, non-sticklike water

tɕʰi *duá=nɛ̀,* *zintsʰə-mɑ=yikə*

carry…on one's back go.PFV ?-SFX.FEM<PN:female name=AGT

kʰə-dzolo=dʑà=nɛ̀

inward-look=EVED:reported=PAUS

'When Zziigama went to carry water, Zziinchema had a look (at Zziigama's children).

(4. 121) is extracted from the same folktale as (4. 120). The background of (4. 121) is the younger sister *zikɑ-mɑ* asked her elder sister *zintsʰə-mɑ* not to look at her dog-like children. However, *zintsʰə-mɑ* did not listened to her younger sister's words and had a look at them. In (4. 121), the object, the younger sister's children are omitted and the agent *zintsʰə-mɑ* is then followed by an agentive marker, *=yikə*.

4. 5. 2. 2. 4 Used for emphatic reasons

In the context from §4. 5. 2. 2. 1 to §4. 5. 2. 2. 3, an agentive marker is obligatorily used. In other situations, it is optionally used. If an agent is highlighted, an agentive marker is used. Otherwise, whether to use it or not depends on the speaker's style in speaking. For example:

(4. 122) a. *ɑ=yikə* *tʰɑ=và* *dɑ-ka*

1sg.SLF=AGT 3sg.PRT=ACC upward-hit

'I hit it.'

b. *ɑ* *tʰɑ=và* *dɑ-ka*

1sg.SLF 3sg.PRT=ACC upward-hit

'I hit it.'

The above (4. 122a) and (4. 122b) are documented through daily observations. The

two sentences convey nearly the same meanings. However, in (4. 122a), the agentive marker =*yikə* is used to follow the agent *a* '1sg.SLF', but it is not used for the same *a* '1sg.SLF' in (4. 122b). The reason for this is that the speaker in (4. 122a) "highlights" the agent *a* '1sg.SLF'.

4. 5. 3 Accusative

In Ersu, when an O argument encodes a patient, a recipient and a beneficiary of an action, it should bear an accusative marker =*và*. Since Ersu does not mark a patient, a recipient or a beneficiary of an action in a different way, I then define the sole enclitic =*và* as 'accusative marker' rather than a specific marker such 'dative' or 'benefactive'[86].

The use of an accusative marker in Ersu is semantically based. In addition, both agentive marking and accusative marking are attested in Ersu. Accoring to LaPolla (2004), whether to use an agentive marker, or an accusative marker, or both is often optional in a language when the language has the two kinds of markers and the marking is often not systematic. However, the data demonstrate that an accusative marker is obligatory in the following context in Ersu: 1) the absence of an agent (§4. 5. 3. 1); 2) a personal pronoun used as an O argument (§4. 5. 3. 2); 3) the causee of a causative construction (§4. 5. 3. 3); 4) the possessor of body parts that are used as an O argument (§4. 5. 3. 4); 5) =*và* '=ACC' used as a formative of a quoted speech (§4. 5. 3. 5).

4. 5. 3. 1 Absence of an agent

As described in §4. 5. 2. 2. 3, when an object is absent in a clause, the agent must take an agentive marker. Accordingly, when an agent is absent in a clause, the object should also take an accusative marker. Using an accusative marker then contributes to

[86]When =*và* follows an object ending with the vowel /ɑ/, the phenomenon is that not only the sound of the onset /v/ is often reduced to zero, but also the nucleus /ɑ/ is merged into the /ɑ/ of the object and the two forms are pronounced as one long vowel /ɑː/. *tʰɑ=và* could be pronounced as *tʰɑː* (see §2. 5. 3). This case marker can also be viewed as "primary object" marker as mentioned in §4. 4. 1. 3.

the disambiguation of the role of a referent. For example:

(4. 123) a. *ɑ=và* *dùkǒu* *duɑ=yi,* *dʑo-la*
1sg.SLF=ACC MC.PN: city name go.PFV=PAUS return-come
=tə=dʑà
=DES=EVID:reported
'(Someone asked) me to come back from *dùkǒu* where I went.'

b. *ɑ* *dùkǒu* *duɑ=yi,* *dʑo-la*
1sg.SLF MC.PN: city name go.PFV=PAUS return-come
=tə=dʑà
=DES=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) I came back from *dùkǒu* where I went.'

(4. 123a) is extracted from an autobiographical narrative. The speaker reported that someone asked him to come back from *dùkǒu*. Here, the agent "someone" is absent and the accusative marker is thus obligatory to follow *ɑ* '1sg.SLF', showing that *ɑ* '1sg.SLF'is not the agent but the patient. (4. 123b) is elicited based on (4. 123a), in which *=và* '=ACC' is not used. Though (4. 123b) is syntactically correct, yet its meaning is quite different as shown above. This is so because when *=và* '=ACC' is not used, *ɑ* '1sg.SLF' is an agent rather than a patient.

4. 5. 3. 2 A personal pronoun used as an O argument

When a personal pronoun is used as an O argument, it always takes an accusative marker no matter whether the A argument is absent or not absent. This obligatory marking follows the principle of "animacy hierarchy" that Dixon (1994: 85) described. For example:

(4. 124) *ɑ-tʰə* *tsopɑ-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *tʰɑ=và*

distal-DEM:this<that robber-QUAT.pl=TOP 3sg. PREST=ACC

tʰi *kʰatʰo=dʑɛ̌*

so tell=EVID:reported

‘(It is said that) those robbers told him so.’

(4. 125) *ɑ-ma,* *ɑ-ma,* *ŋɑ=và* *la* *ŋɑ-ka,*

KPFX-mother KPFX-mother 2sg=ACC EMPH:all downward-kill

ŋə-dzŋ=gə=dʑà

outward-eat=PROS=EVID:reported

‘Mother, Mother, (it is said that she) will kill and eat you!’

4. 5. 3. 3 The causee of a causative construction

The causee, that is, the O argument of a causativized verb in a causative construction should always take an accusative marker. As in (4. 126), the causee “Afufu” is marked with an accusative marker =*và* ‘=ACC’.

(4. 126) *tɑ+ɲo=nɛ̀,* *ni* *ŋuà ŋuà* *yò=zŋ̀*

?this-day:today=TOP 2sg.GEN ox RPT: ox 1sg.OTR=GEN:family

afùfù=và *ku* *yi-su=mɑ̌*

PN:person’s name=ACC graze go-CAUS=RQT

‘Today, (you) let my Afufu graze your ox. OK?’

4. 5. 3. 4 Possessor of body parts that are used as an O argument

In Ersu, the possessive relationship between a referent (possessor) and its body parts (possessee) is inalienable and formally unmarked (§5. 3. 2). For example:

(4. 127) *xili-ma* *pʰu*

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name neck

'Hilima's neck'

When a term for body parts or body substances is used as an O argument, *=và* '=ACC' is not used to mark the term denoting a body part, but to mark the possessor. For example, in (4. 128a) Hilima is marked with the accusative marker and the sentence is acceptable. However, (4. 128b) is not acceptable because the accusative marker *=và* '=ACC' is used to mark the O argument, that is, "neck" rather than the possessor of the "neck", that is, Hilima. In addition, in this context, the possessor is obligatorily marked. Consequently, (4. 128c) is also not correct because the accusative marker is used neither to mark the possessor (Hilima) nor to mark the possessee (neck).

(4. 128) a. *(tʰə)* *mo,* *xili-ma=và* *pʰu* *lua*

(3sg.PRT) again PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=ACC neck cut

xa=nɛ̀...

time=TOP.LINK:when…

'When she was cutting Hilima's neck…'

*b. *(tʰə)* *mo,* *xili-ma* *pʰu=và* *lua*

(3sg.PRT) again PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name neck=ACC cut

xa=nɛ̀...

time=TOP.LINK:when…

'When she was cutting Hilima's neck…'

*c. *(tʰə)* *mo,* *xili-ma* *pʰu* *lua*

(3sg.PRT) again PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name neck cut

xɑ=nɛ̀…

time=TOP.LINK:when…

'When she was cutting Hilima's neck…'

4. 5. 3. 5 Used as a formative of a quoted speech

=và '=ACC' can function as the formative of a quoted speech in context. When it is used, verbs like 'tell', 'say', etc. are often not used. On its own, *=và* '=ACC' can not only denote an addressee, but also can imply a speech report with the omission of the speaker. In this context, *=và* '=ACC' is always used. This occurs very frequently in narratives and traditional stories (§13. 5. 2). For example:

(4. 129) *tʂaŋɑ=nɛ̀,* *tɕʰɑ-pu=nɛ̀,* *mopɑ=và,* "*yò=dzi*

later=TOP 3sg.GEN-grandfather=TOP son-in-law=ACC "1sg.OTR=dl

ɳpʰi *tsɳtsɳ*

hide-and-seek compete against.REDUP: compete against each other

=gə=tsʰuá

=PROS =IMMI"

'Later, his father-in-law (told) the son-in-law, "Let us two compete against each other by doing hide-and-seek right away.'" Lit: Later, his grandfather son-in-law, "We two hide-and-seek compete against each other."

4. 5. 4 Comitative

The comitative marker *=pʰɛ* is isomorphic with the relator noun *pʰɛ* 'side' and probably historically derives from it. It follows a referent to denote that the referent does something "(together) with" or "is followed by" the other referent(s). The structure is observed to be stable in various context: Referent A+Referent B=*pʰɛ*, which means 'Referent A follows/together with Referent B'. For example:

(4. 130) *tə mɛli=kə tɑ-ka nɑ-duá=nè,*

one land=LOC:in one-CL:generic, sticklike downward-go.PFV=PAUS

t^hə dzo+ndzomo=p^hɛ

DEM:this water+official:god in charge of water=COMI

sɿsɿ

fight.RDUP:fight against each other

'Each (of the dragons) was dispatched to a place and fought against the god in charge of water.' Lit: One went downward into one land, fight against each other with water official.'

(4. 131) *a nə=p^hɛ mɑ-soso*

1sg.SLF 2sg=COMI NEG-learn

'I do not do as you do.' Lit: I not learn with you.

(4. 132) *a nə=p^hɛ ə^{l}su+fù soso=gə*

1sg.SLF 2sg=COMI PN:Ersu+language learn=PROS

'I will follow you in learning Ersu language.'

4. 5. 5 Genitive

Ersu has two genitive markers: One is *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' (§4. 5. 5. 1) and the other is *=yi* '=GEN' (§4. 5. 5. 2). Both are used to denote alienable possession (§5. 3. 1).

4. 5. 5. 1 *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' as a genitive

=zɿ̀ '=GEN:family' has the meaning of 'family' and is thus used to refer to "possessions possessed by a whole family", such as kinships, land, house, open court yard, etc. This phenomenon is similar to Mandarin Chinese, in which the nominal term *jiā* 'family' can function as a generic associative noun, denoting kin relationship and other things possessed by a whole family. In addition, both *jiā* in Mandarin

Chinese and *=zì* '=GEN:family' in Ersu are observed to follow only terms denoting human beings. However, the Ersu *=zì* '=GEN:family' and the Mandarin Chinese *jiā* are different in the following respects.

1) In Mandarin Chinese, *jiā* is optionally used when it is used to denote kin relationship, but in Ersu, *=zì* '=GEN:family' is obligatorily used in this context, as shown in Table 4. 34.

MC			Ersu
pinyin	**Meaning**	**Ex.**	**Meaning**
wǒ (jiā) bàba	'my father'	*ɑ=zì ɑ-pa*	'my father'
nǐ(jiā) nǚér	'your daughter'	*nə=zì zìyì*	'your daughter'
tā jiā gǒu	'his family's dog'	*$t^hə$=zì ts^ho*	'his family's dog'
mùnǎi jiā fángzi	'Munai's family's house'	*mutɬi=zì yika*	'Munai's family's house'

Table 4. 34 A comparsion of 'family' used to denote possessive relationship between Ersu and Mandarin

Table 4. 34 shows that in Mandarin Chinese, in the NP [*wǒ (jiā) bàba*], *jiā* 'family' can be omitted. Then [*wǒ bàba*], means 'my father' rather than its literal meaning 'I father'. Chinese people prefer to say things like [*wǒ bàba*], 'I father' or [*wǒ jiā bàba*] '1sg family father:my family's father<my father' rather than use a generic genitive marker *=de* following the possessor *wǒ*, like *wǒ=de bàba* '1sg=GEN father:my father' though the latter seems more grammatically right and can also be accepted, especially in written documents. However, in Ersu, in the NP [*ɑ=zì ɑ-pa*], *=zì* '=GEN:family' cannot be omitted. Consequently, it is unacceptable to say [*ɑ ɑ-pa*]'1sg KPFX-father:I father'. The above described linguistic phenomenon applies to all other possessor-possessee kin relationships both in Mandarin Chinese and in Ersu. While denoting possessor-possessee relationships other than kin ones, both *jiā*, 'family' in Mandarin Chinese and *=zì* '=GEN:family' cannot be omitted. For example, it is not acceptable to say [*tā gǒu*] in Mandarin Chinese and [*$t^hə$ ts^ho*] in Ersu, both with a literal meaning of 'he dog'.

2) In Mandarin Chinese, *jiā* is a free word and thus has a free-standing position in context. However, *=zì* '=GEN:family' is a bound morpheme that can only follow a human referent to denote possessive relationship. For example:

(4. 133) a. *zhè* *ge* *jiā* *hěn* *dà*
DEM:this CL:generic family INTS big
'This family is very big.'

*b. *tʰə* *zì-wo* *ŋa* *ya-kʰua*
DEM:this family-CL:generic, non-sticklike INTS APFX-big
'This family is very big.'

3) The associative noun *jiā* in Mandarin Chinese can co-occur with the generic genitive *=de*. However, in Ersu, *=zì* '=GEN:family' and the generic gentive *=yi* '=GEN' are mutually exclusive. In other words, they can never co-occur with each other. For example:

(4. 134) a. *tā* *jiā=de* *gǒu*
3sg family=GEN dog
'his family's dog'

*b. *tʰə=zì=yi* *tsʰo*
3sg.PRT=GEN:family=GEN dog
'his family's dog'

Therefore, though the Ersu *=zì* '=GEN:family' is similar to the Mandarin Chinese *jiā* 'family' in semantics, the grammatical functions that they undertake are quite different. In other words, *=zì* '=GEN:family' in Ersu is a genitive marker rather than an associate noun like *jiā* 'family' in Mandarin Chinese. Throughout this grammar, it is glossed as '=GEN:family' so as to be differentiated from the generic genitive

marker =*zì* '=GEN".

4. 5. 5. 2 Generic genitive marker=*yi* '=GEN'

=*yi* '=GEN' is a generic genitive marker attested in Ersu. Compared with =*zì* '=GEN:family', =*yi* '=GEN' is more widely used in Ersu[87]. It can not only refer to a "family possession", but also can refer to an individual possession. Consequently, =*zì* '=GEN:family' in Table 4. 34 can all be replaced by =*yi* '=GEN', though it may sound not very "native" according to my language consultants. The reason for this, they say, is that a relative belongs to a family, not an individual. What's more, =*yi* '=GEN' can also be used to follow different nouns that include human and non-human, animate and non-animate. For example:

(4. 135)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ɑ=yi gɑmɛ	'1sg=GEN clothes:my clothes'
lɑ=yi ntʂʰə	'chicken=GEN nest:chickens' nest'
latɕikù=yi su	'Lajigu=GEN person:Lajigu's people'

4. 5. 6 Ablative

There is one ablative marker =*tà* found in Ersu. Similar to the comitative =*pʰɛ* (§4. 5. 5), it is also isomorphic with the relator noun =*tà* denoting a place. Consequently, the ablative marker may be historically derived from the relator noun =*tà*. It can denote both spatial concepts as in (4. 136) and temporal concepts as in (4. 137).

(4. 136) *ȵbi-wo=tɕʰo=tà* *yadzə*

mountain-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.LOC:on=ABL:from child

tə-bɛ̀ *ȵɑ-lɑ=á*

one-QUAT.pl downward-come=PFV

'Some children came from the top of the mountain.'

[87] This genitive marking can also be applied to verb stems, and some verbal CTPs can be viewed as a "possessor" in certain complementation structures as shown in §12. 3. 3.

(4. 137) *tʰə=kə=tà,* *lo* *nɑ-dzָɑ*

DEM:this=INESS:in<here=ABL:from rock downward-fall off

=dzָɛ̌

=EVID:reported

'From then on, (it is said that) rocks fell off.' Lit:From here, rocks fell off.

4. 5. 7 Comparative

There are two comparative markers *=pà* and *=tɕʰo* found in Ersu. Both are respectively derived from the relator noun *pà* 'a generic place' and *tɕʰo* 'above, on'. They share the same structure and are used in comparative construction as discussed in §3. 3. 3. 1. The structure with *=pà* indicates comparative of equality, similar to English 'as…as', and the structure with *=tɕʰo* indicates comparative of descrepancy, similar to English 'more than'. Examples are given in (4. 138) for *=pà* and in (4. 139) for *=tɕʰo*.

(4. 138) *nə+tsʰɿ* *kʰə-tsɿ* *xa,* *yadzָə* *ʒɿ,* *ngə*

two+ten:twenty inward-grow LINK:time child eight nine

butsʰə *tʰə-bu=tə=pà* *si* *kʰua*

year away-become =DES=COMP:as…as only big

'A twenty-year-old person only has a size as big as an eight or nine-year-old child.' Lit: When twenty grow, only as big as an eight/nine year old become

(4. 139) *nə* *ɑ=tɕʰo* *la* *yɑ-kʰua,* *ɑ=zɿ=ɛ̀*?

2sg 1sg.SLF=COMP:more than EMPH:all APFX-big ITRG-COP=ITRG

'Are you stronger/more respected than me?' Lit*:* You are bigger than me, aren't you?[88]

[88] This example was documented after one child was threatening another child. In this context, it actually means that 'You are not as strong as me at all. I hit you as easily as I kill something much weaker than me.' Later, I consulted my language consultants about it, and I was told that it was used quite frequently with a much wider meaning when an addresser is dissatisfied with the addressee. For example, if a younger person made an older unhappy, the older may use it to imply that the younger should not be rude to him because a younger should be respectful to the older. Consequently, it may also mean that 'You are not as respected as me and you must not be impolite to me.'

4. 6 Relator Nouns

The concept of "relator nouns" is typically associated with Asian languages such as Tibetan and Burmese (DeLancey 1997). They are derived from lexical nouns and still resemble lexical nouns in some aspects. They do not have referential value any more, but are always used as a postposed modifier to modify a head noun in an NP (Post 2007:378). This section first gives an overview of the Ersu relator nouns (§4. 6. 1) and then presents the six relator nouns found in the data (§4. 6. 2). The co-occurrence of relator nouns is shown in §4. 6. 3.

4. 6. 1 Ersu relator nouns: an overview

There are six relator nouns found in Ersu. They are: *pà*, *ʂə̀*, *tɕʰo*, *tɕʰikə*, *kə* and *tʂaŋa*. They are relator nouns rather than bound postpositional morphemes (enclitics) because they may have a free-standing position and function as a lexical noun in context. However, very often, they work as a post-head modifier and modify a head noun in an NP rather than a lexical noun that heads an NP. In this situation, they seem to be a bound morpheme on the surface. Consequently, the sign "=" that is used to denote clitic boundary is also used to denote the boundary between other elements and a relator noun in an NP in this work. They all function to encode spatial or locational concepts, and three of them, that is, *ʂə̀*, *kə* and *tʂaŋa* are found to encode both spatial/locational and temporal concepts. This is similar to other Asian languages (DeLancey 1997; Post 2007:374). They are given in Table 4. 35:

Term	Lexical Noun	Relator Noun	Concept Encoded	Reference
pà	'place'	'space surrounding a specific referent except for a human)'	spatial/locative	§4. 6. 2. 1
ʂə̀	'place'	'space around a specific referent often a human)'	spatial/locative & temporal	§4. 6. 2. 2
tɕʰo	'top'	'on, above, top'	spatial/locative	§4. 6. 2. 3
tɕʰikə	'edge'	'beside'		§4. 6. 2. 4
tʂaŋa	'space underneath'	'under, below, down'	spatial/locative & temporal	§4. 6. 2. 5
kə	'inside space'	'in, on (a plane area)'		§4. 6. 2. 6

Table 4. 35 List of Ersu relator nouns

4. 6. 2 Uses of Ersu relator nouns

This section discusses the uses of each relator nouns that are found in Ersu. References to the subsections are given in Table 4. 35.

4. 6. 2. 1 *=pà*

pà is found either to follow a proper noun (the name of a place) or a term denoting some static objects. It encodes the area surrounding a place or a static object. Examples are given in (4. 140).

(4. 140)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ŋgɑ=pà	'door=RLN.LOC:space around a door'
si+pu=pà	'tree+CL:living plants<tree=RLN.LOC:space around a tree'
mɛ+dʑi=pà	'fire+keep…confined to:fireplace=RLN.LOC:space around a fireplace'
latɕikù=pà	'PN:village name=RLN.LOC:space around Lajigu'
vakə=pà	'PN:county seat name=RLN.LOC:space around Yuexi'

The data demonstrates that *pà* can still function like a lexical noun. It can be used in context to denote an unspecified location. In this situation, it often occur with locomotive verbs such as *la* 'come', *yi* 'go (to).HABT' or *duá* 'went (to).PFV', to form compounds that mean 'arrive at (a place)'. Examples are given in (4. 141) and (4. 142).

(4. 141) *kʰɑ-ma duá=nɛ̀, ŋkua, tsopa pà+la=nɛ̀,...*

inward-sleep go.PFV=TOP night robber place+come:arrive=PAUS

'(They) went to sleep, (and) the robbers came at night…' Lit: went to sleep, the robbers came to the place…

(4. 142) *ŋkua dəsinɛ, tʰə də=kə pà+duá=nɛ̀,...*

night LINK:until 3sg.PRT family=RLN.LOC:in place+go.PFV=TOP

'Until night, (the devil) went to his/her home…' Lit: until night, went to his/her home, the place.

(4. 141) and (4. 142) show that though it is not translated into English, *pà* is employed to show the destination of 'come' or 'go', that is, 'a place'. *pà* can also be verbalized, bearing a verbal directional prefix and functioning as a verbal predicate. For example:

(4. 143) *duá=nè,* *ə˥=kə* *tə+kə*

go.PFV=PAUS road-RLN.LOC:in one+inside space:half

ŋa-pà=nè,…

outward-arrive=PAUS

'(He) left, (and when) he got to the halfway (mark) on his way…' Lit: went, get to one inside space of the road…

In addition, when *pà* follows the name of a place as in (4. 144), it can be semantically extended to refer to all the people from the place. This is heard quite frequently on ceremonial occasions where people from different villages gather. When the banquet time comes, guests are often arranged for meals village by village or clan by clan if there is a large number of people. In this situation, the banquet organizer often uses a sentence like (4. 144) as below:

(4. 144) *ka+fu=pà-bɛ̀* *dzŋ*

PN:?+village:village name=RLN.LOC:area around a place-QUAT.pl eat

la=ts^{h}uá !

come=IMMI

'People from Goudong come and eat, quickly!'

4. 6. 2. 2 =ʂə̀

As discussed in §4. 2. 3. 4, =*ʂə̀* can be used as a locative nominalizer denoting a place where an event is happening or a time point when an event is happening. Similar to =*pà*, =*ʂə̀* is also observed to follow terms denoting a static object (but not the name of a place) to encode the surrounding areas. There are no differences

between =*pà* and =*ʂə̀* in this situation. =*ʂə̀* can also follow terms that denote human beings including nominative personal pronoun, kinship terms or a person's name to make "persons" become "locations", that is, "a person's place". But =*pà* cannot be used in this way. In addition, =*ʂə̀* is a relator noun that cannot have a free-standing position, maybe because it might have been fully grammaticalized, or maybe due to the limits of the data. This is also unlike =*pà*, which can be used as a lexical noun. Examples are given in (4. 145).

(4. 145)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	ɑ̀ⁱ=ʂə̀	'1pl.SLF=RLN.LOC:space around us[89]'
	yò=ʂə̀	'1sg.OTR=RLN.LOC:space around me'
	ɑ=zì kʰuakʰuɑ=ʂə̀	'1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:parentship =RLN.LOC:space around my parents'
	ȵayi-mɑ=ʂə̀	'PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=RLN.LOC:space around Niayima'
	si+pu=ʂə̀	'tree+CL:living plants=RLN.LOC:space around a tree'
	ȵbi+ȵbɑ=ʂə̀	'mountain+root:mountain foot=RLN.LOC: space around the mountain foot'

4. 6. 2. 3 =*tɕʰo*

=*tɕʰo* '=on, above' is found to follow nouns of different semantic types including human beings, flora, fauna, furniture and so on. Examples are given in (4. 146).

(4. 146)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	ȵbi=tɕʰo	'mountain=RLN.LOC:on<on a mountain'
	ə̀ⁱkʰuɑ=tɕʰo	'stone=RLN.LOC:on<on a stone'
	si+pu=tɕʰo	'tree+CL:living plants<tree=RLN.LOC:on<on a tree'
	ȵbò-wo=tɕʰo	'horse-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.LOC:on<on a horse'
	yi-ka =tɕʰo	'house-CL:generic, sticklike=RLN.LOC:on<on a house'
	pokukà=tɕʰo	'the upper part of a leg=RLN.LOC:on<on the upper part of a leg'
	ŋga+ȵbu=tɕʰo	'door+threshold=RLN.LOC:on<on a door threshold'

tɕʰo can be used as a free morpheme. In other words, it can be used as a lexical

[89] It is not the equivalence of 'our family or home'. It denotes wherever 'we are', though in the recorded data, it can be translated as 'our family or home' for most of the time. This also applies to other examples in which =*ʂə̀* follows a term that denotes human beings.

noun with the meaning of "top", as in (4. 147).

(4. 147) *tɕʰo=nɛ̀,* *əˡ* *psɿpsɿ* *nə-pu* *ànɛ̀,* *dzo*
top=TOP stone flat.RDUP downward-cover LINK:after water
tə-mi *kʰə-na-gua*
one-QUAT:bit inward-downward-put
'After the top was covered with a flat stone, a bit of water was put onto it.'

4. 6. 2. 4 *=tɕʰikə*

=tɕʰikə 'beside' follows a term that denotes a unmovable referent, and cannot follow a term that denotes a movable referent as shown in (4. 149). I hypothesize that it is a compound formed through the combination of two lexical nouns *tɕʰi* 'edge' and *kə* 'inside space'. However, *tɕʰi* 'edge' cannot stand alone to denote 'edge' and it should always co-occur with *kə* 'inside space' to function either as a lexical noun 'edge' or as a relator noun 'beside'.

(4. 148)

Ex.	**Gloss**
nbi=tɕʰikə	'beside a mountain'
əˡkʰua=tɕʰikə	'beside a stone'
si+pu=tɕʰikə	'beside a tree'
yi=tɕʰikə	'beside a house'
nga+nbu=tɕʰikə	'beside a door threshold'

When *tɕʰikə* is used as a lexical noun, it means 'edge'. For example:

(4. 149) *tɕʰikə* *tʰə-wo* *ya-ntsʰu*
edge DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike APFX-good
'This edge is good.'

4. 6. 2. 5 (=)*tʂaŋa*

Unlike other relator nouns that often function as modifier in an NP (§4. 6. 2), *tʂaŋa* 'under, beneath' is observed to mainly function as a free lexical noun more than

a bound relator noun. When it works as a relator noun, *tʂaŋa* 'under, beneath' is a bound morpheme and follows a noun or an NP to denote a location "under, beneath" a referent as in (4. 150) and (4. 151). Other than this, it works as a lexical noun. It can denote time in the future, similar to English 'later' (4. 152) or 'following/coming' (4. 153). In addition, it can also denote a referent's spatial position like English 'the last', as in (4. 154).

(4. 150) ***=tʂaŋa→under***

ɲbò *yipa=tʂaŋa* *nə-ɲbɛ*

horse stomach=RLN.LOC:under northward-slip

'(The toad) slipped under the horse's stomach.'

(4. 151) ***=tʂaŋa→below***

ni *ɱdzʅ* *a-kua* *otɕa+pu*

2sg.GEN cat LPFX:distal-north pear+CL:living plants<pear tree

=tʂaŋa *dzʐa*

=RLN.LOC:below EXT

'Your cat is below the pear tree in the far north.' Lit: Your cat under the north pear tree have.

(4. 152) ***tʂaŋa→later***

tʂaŋa=nɛ̀, *su,* *liliʐ* *nə-wo*

later=TOP person man two-CL: generic, non-sticklike

ŋa-la=nɛ̀...

outward-come=PAUS

'Later, two men came towards (her).'

(4. 153) ***tʂaŋa→following/coming***

tʰə	*tʂaŋa*	*ɲo=nɛ̀,*	*za+pu*	*nbò*
DEM:this	following	day=TOP	hundred+manage:king	horse
də-ndzɛ	*ŋa-la=nɛ̀...*			
upward-ride	outward-come=PAUS			

'The following day, the king rode a horse (and) came towards (him)…'

(4. 154) ***tʂaŋa→the last***

… *mó,*	*tʂaŋa*	*ŋu*	*tʰədʑi*	*da-la=nɛ̀...*
again	the last	do	DEM:like this	upward-shout=PAUS

'…again, (when she) walked as the last (one of the three old ladies), (the crow still) shouted like this… ' Lit: …and, did the last, shouted like this…

4. 6. 2. 6 *=kə*

=kə is possibly the most widely used relator noun in Ersu. It is observed to follow terms denoting nature, flora, body parts, instruments, demonstrative pronouns, time, number, verbal nominalizations and so on. When it is used as a lexical noun, it may denote 'inside a place', 'in an area of a place', 'in a period of time', 'in a group of people'. When it follows a demonstrative pronoun or a numeral, it is extended to denote 'a place in general' or 'a time point in general'. Examples are given in Table 4. 36.

To Follow	Ex.	Meaning	Comment
nature	*dzo=kə*	'in water'	
	mɛli=kə	'in the earth'	
	mɛtɕo=kə	'in the sky'	
	lo=kə	'in a ditch'	
	əˈpʰa=kə	'on the road'	Lit: 'in the area of the road'
flora	*tsʰola=kə*	'in the thorns'	
	sipu=kə	'in a tree'	

(to be continued)

(to continue)

To Follow	Ex.	Meaning	Comment
body parts	*sɿɻi=kə*	'in one's heart'	It denotes a person's psychological behavior.
	lə=kə	'in one's hand'	It may mean physically 'in one's hand' and may also mean 'under the control/care of'
	vùliè=kə	'on one's head'	Lit: 'in the area of one's head'
	tsomo=kə	'in one's bottom'	
	miku=kə	'in one's throat'	
instruments	*guyi=kə*	'in a pocket'	
	dʐò=kə	'in a wok'	
	dalo=kə	'in a trough'	
	pɑ=kə	'in a *ba*'	*ba*, a kind of container also a kind of measurement device. One *ba* is about 10 kilos.
	tʂɿ=kə	'in a cabinet'	
DEM	*tʰə=kə*	'here'	Lit: this place
		'at this moment'	Lit: in this period of time
	ɑ-tʰə=kə	'there'	Lit:that place
		'at that moment'	Lit: in that period of time
time	*ȵə butsʰə=kə*	'in two years'	
nominalization	*mɛdʐi=kə*	'in a fireplace'	
	ȵbòdʐi=kə	'in a stable'	
other	*tə ɻo tə=kə*	'in one day/half day'	Lit: one day one in
	əˈpʰɑ=kə tə=kə	'on the road/ halfway'	Lit: in the road one in
	tʰə-bɛ=kə	'among these people'	
	tsʰɛzo ŋuàəˈ=kə	'in around 14, 15 years old'	
	tə tsə=kə	'in another stage'	

Table 4. 36 Examples of the relator noun *=kə*

4. 6. 3 Co-occurrence of relator nouns and other postpositional markers

Relator nouns may co-occur with each other. This includes the co-occurrence of *=pà* and *=ʂə* (§4. 6. 3. 1), the locative/instrument verbal nominalizer *=ta* (§4. 2. 3. 2) and possibly all the relator nouns (§4. 6. 3. 2), the ablative marker *=tà* and possibly all the relator nouns (§4. 6. 3. 3).

4. 6. 3. 1 *=pà* and *=ʂə*

According to my language consultants, *=pà* and *=ʂə* can occur with each other to follow any locations and to "highlight" the places. It is true that there are many examples for their co-occurrence in my data. However, it is interesting that this co-occurrence is only attested with proper nouns, more specifically, the name of villages. It is then contrary to the statement from my language consultants that they can follow any terms denoting locations. In addition, the data demonstrate that the difference between the only *=pà* or *=ʂə* following a village name and their co-occurrence modifying a village name is that the co-occurrence can function to denote that the place has human activities. Examples are given in (4. 155).

(4. 155)

Ex.	**Meaning**
solomà=pà=ʂə	'(the village) Soloma'
laɕikù=pà=ʂə	'(the village) Lajigu'
bokʰua=pà=ʂə	'(the village) Bbokua'
lòlò=pà=ʂə	'(the village) Lolo'

4. 6. 3. 2 Nominalizer *=ta* and the relator nouns

The locative/instrument nominalizer *=ta* may be followed by all the relator nouns. Take *zɭ̀=ta* 'place for sitting/chair' as an example (4. 156).

(4. 156)

Ex.	**Meaning**
zɭ̀=ta =tɕʰo	'on the chair'
zɭ̀=ta=tʂaŋa	'under the chair'
zɭ̀=ta=kə	'in the place for sitting'
zɭ̀=ta =tɕʰikə	'beside the chair'

4. 6. 3. 3 Ablative=*tà* and relator nouns

As can be seen from (4. 136) and (4. 137), the ablative =*tà* can co-occur with the =*tɕʰo* and =*kə*. It in fact can follow nearly all the other locative markers except for =*pà* for unknown reasons, as in (4. 157).

(4. 157)

Ex.	Meaning
latɕikù=pà=ʂə=tà	'from Lajigu'
mɛtɕo=tɕʰo=tà	'from the sky'
mɛli=tʂaŋa=tà	'from under the earth'
zŋhua=tɕʰikə=tà	'from beside the rice field'
yika=kə=tà	'from inside the house'

4. 7 Diminutive Marking

The diminutive marker =*yi* is observed to follow terms that denote an animal referent that is either small in size or young in age from the speakers's viewpoint. It can also be used for a referent that endears the speaker. Examples are given in (4. 158).

(4. 158)

Ex.	Gloss
ŋuà=yi	'ox=DIM:small ox'
nbò=yi	'horse=DIM:small horse'
tʂʰo=yi	'dog=DIM:small dog'
laka=yi	'tiger=DIM:small tiger'
kala=yi	'spider=DIM:small spider'
vɛtsŋ=yi	'wild boar=DIM:small wild boar'

There are other situations in which the diminution of human beings is realized through particular words, for example, *yadzə̠* 'baby/ child', or gender suffixes (§7. 1), for example, *muɬi-zà* 'PN:person name-SFX.MAS:Mili (young and male)'. It is found through daily observations that a speaker expresses his/her fondness of a baby or a child by calling it *ya*, or by using reduplicated *yaya* rather than by its name or *yadzə̠* 'baby/child'. I hypothesize that this is under the influence of Mandarin Chinese. In Mandarin Chinese, *yáyá* is also used to denote a child or a baby that is small and lovely.

One exceptional example found in the recorded data is that the narrator from an older generation, who is just several years older than a person from a younger generation, talks about the person by using his name plus *yaya*, as in (4. 159).

(4. 159) *puxa=yaya*

PN:person's name=baby/child

'child Buha'.

However, the person named *puxa* is not a child at all. He is about 55 years old and has two grandchildren. Later, I was told by my language consultants that this is common in the Ersu communities. A person often has a nickname which semantically denotes a child when one was a child. When he/she grows up, people are accustomed to calling him/her with a given name plus a nickname, regardless of his/her age.

In addition, *=yi* '=DIM' cannot be used for inanimate referents or flora. In this situation, only adjectival modifiers like *mala* 'small' (used both for inanimate referents and animate botanic referents) and *zaza* 'tender' (only used for flora). For example:

(4. 160)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	si-pu mala	'wood-CL:living plants< tree small→small tree'
	zì=tà mala	'sit=NOM:sitting place/device small→small chair'
	badʐə mala	'knife small:small knife'
	go+nba mala	'vegetable+root:radish small→small radish'
	si-pu zaza	'wood-CL:living plants< tree tender→ tender tree'
	go+nba zaza	'vegetable+root:radish tender→tender radish'

4. 8 Quantification

Nominal quantification in Ersu is realized through: the unit of [numeral+ classifier] (§4. 8. 1), plural marking on pronominals (§4. 8. 2), quantifiers (§4. 8. 3) and adjectival modifiers (§4. 8. 4).

4. 8. 1 Unit of [numeral + classifier]

The function of the unit of [numeral+classifier] is to quantify nouns. The choice of numeral and classifier is respectively dependent on the exact number of the referent and the shape, the arrangement, or the container often used for the referent, or the habitual collocation between a classifier and the referent. For example:

(4. 161)

Ex.	**Gloss**
la tə-wo	'chicken one-CL:generic.non-sticklike→ one chicken'
la tɑ-ka	'chicken one-CL:generic.sticklike→ one rooster'
la tə ɲtʂʰə	'chicken one CL:nest→one nest of chickens'

As can be seen from (4. 160), *la* 'chicken' is habitually associated with the generic classifier -*wo*. Consequently, *la tə-wo* may generically refer to either a chicken, or a hen, or a rooster. However, when *la* co-occur with *ka*, *la* only denotes a rooster. This is a habitual collocation, irrelevant o the kind of a chicken. The quantification of a noun can also be counted through the arrangement of the referents. *la tə ɲtʂʰə* 'one nest of chickens' well demonstrate this (refer to §7 for more details about the construction of numeral plus classifiers).

4. 8. 2 Plural marking on pronominals

As mentioned in §4. 4. 1, some of the plural pronouns are formed through changing the non-rhotic vowels of a singular pronoun into rhotic vowels (See Table 4. 27.).

4. 8. 3 Quantifiers

There are four quantifiers found in Ersu. They are given in Table 4. 37:

Ex.	**Gloss**
bɛ	'some'
dzi	'both'
dzɚ	'pair'
sɹ̀	'little/few'

Table 4. 37 Ersu quantifiers

Among them, *bɛ̀* 'some', *dʐə* 'pair' and *sɿ̀* 'little/few' are a subclass of numeral classifiers (§7) that often co-occur with a numeral. However, *dzi* is in fact an enclitic marking duality and never co-occur with a numeral.

bɛ̀ 'some' is an indefinite quantifier which functions to pluralize a noun or an NP and it has no countable or uncountable distinction. It is used to modify nearly all nominal subclasses and often follows the numeral *tə* 'one', no other numerals are found to precede it. Whether to use *tə* 'one' or not encodes definiteness or indefiniteness (§7). Finally, *bɛ̀* is a bound morpheme that cannot stand alone. It always occurs with a noun or an NP or the numeral *tə* 'one'. Example (4. 162) illustrates how *bɛ̀* makes a referent pluralized.

(4. 162)	**Singular**[90]	**Plural**	**Meaning**
	su	*su (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some people'
	ŋuà	*ŋuà (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some oxen'
	si	*si (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some trees/woods'
	dzo	*dzo (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some water'
	tʂɿ	*tʂɿ (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some stars'
	zɿ̀	*zɿ̀ (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some snow'
	ma=ta	*ma=ta (tə)-bɛ̀*	'some sleeping places'

dzi 'both' and *dʐə* 'pair' are two near-synonyms sharing the similar meaning "the two". However, *dzi* 'both' is a postnominal dual marker, directly following either a noun, or an NP to make it dual. It is also used to denote the duality of a personal pronoun (See §4. 4. 1 and Table 4. 26.). It never occurs with any numerals but always follows a modifiee. *dʐə* 'pair' is a type of classifiers and often follows the numeral *tə* 'one', forming a unit of [*tə-dʐə*]. Similar to *bɛ̀* 'some', *dʐə* 'pair' also does not follow any other numerals apart from the numeral *tə* 'one'. In addition, in the unit of [*tə-dʐə*], *tə* 'one' is seen to be optionally used, depending on whether to denote definiteness or indefiniteness (§7). Examples are respectively given in (4. 163) and (4. 164).

[90] Ersu does not distinguish countable or uncountable nouns. I use "singular" here to denote the original form of these words. This does not correspond to "singularity" in English.

(4. 163) *ɲayi-ma* *ɲayi-kɑ=dzi*

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name PN:?-SFX.FEM:male name=QUAT.dl

(nə-wo)

(two-CL:generic, non-sticklike)

'Niayima and Niyig*a*, both of them'

(4. 164) *ziyi* *(tə)-dzᵽə*

daughter (one)-QUAT:pair

'two daughters/daughters, the pair'

(4. 163) indicates that *dzi* 'both' may co-occur with the unit of [*nə*+ classifier]. When the unit occurs with the dual marker *dzi* 'both', the number "two" is then stressed in utterrance. Otherwise, either of the two, *dzi* 'both' or [*nə*+ classifier] can be used to mean 'both/two'. (4. 164) illustrates that *tə* 'one' and *dzᵽə* 'pair' may co-occur with each other, however, *tə* 'one' can be omitted if it can be recovered from the context. It should be noted that *tə* 'one' is never seen to occur with the unit of [*nə*+ classifier], as in (4. 165).

(4. 165) **ziyi* *(tə)-dzᵽə* *(nə-wo)*

daughter (one)-QUAT:pair (two-CL:generic, non-sticklike)

'two daughters/ daughters, the pair'

4. 8. 4 Adjectival modifiers

There are three adjectives in Ersu denoting nominal quantity. They are given in Table 4. 38:

Ex.	**Gloss**
ɲòkuà	'all'
yɑ-mi	'many/much'
nini	'a little/a few'

Table 4. 38 Ersu adjective modifiers denoting quantity

ɲɔ̀kuà occurs a lot in discourse. It can be used as a modifier of the head of an NP and can also stand freely to denote previous referent(s) in an anaphoric way, functioning like an indefinite pronoun, as in (4. 166) and (4. 167). In addition, it also has emphatic function. *ya-mi* and *nini* only function as adjectival nominal modifiers and denote quantity as in (4. 168) and (4. 169).

(4. 166) *zɳgu-bɛ̀* *ɲɔ̀kuà* *ɕo* *tʰə-tɕu=á*
livestock=QUAT.pl all sweep away-complete=PFV
'All the livestock were robbed of.' Lit: All livestock sweep complete.

(4. 167) *ɲɔ̀kuà* *nbi=tɕʰo* *duá*
all mountain=RLN.LOC:on go.PFV
'All (people) went to the top of the mountain.'

(4. 168) *tsʰi+xi=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=zɳ̀* *pu-bɛ̀*
?+year:this year=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN:family potato=QUAT.pl
ya-mi *dzo*
APFX-many EXT
'This year, my family has many potatoes.'

(4. 169) *nə=nɛ̀,* *dzo* *nini* *ŋə-tsʰɛ*
2sg=TOP water a little outward-drink
'You drink a little water.'

Chapter 5 Noun Phrase

This chapter discusses the Ersu noun phrase (NP). §5. 1 presents NP subtypes in terms of headedness. §5. 2 further discusses the internal constituent order and structure of an NP. §5. 3 focuses on possession since it plays an important role in Ersu NPs. This includes alienable possession and inalienable possession. §5. 4 illustrates NP coordination, including conjunctive and disjunctive coordination of two or more NPs. NP apposition occurs with a high frequency in different text styles and it is worthy of particular attention. This is discussed in §5. 5.

5. 1 Subtypes of NPs

NPs can be classified into two major types: headed and headless, according to whether an NP contains a head or not. The data demonstrates that headed NPs occur more frequently than headless NPs in discourse. A common lexical noun, a proper noun, a personal pronoun, a demonstrative pronoun, or a nominalization can work as the head of an NP (Nh). Headless NPs include: 1) adjective-type NP; 2) verb-type NP; and 3) [numeral plus classifier]-type NP. The Ersu NP subtypes are given in Table 5. 1.

Headedness	Subtype	Reference
headed (§5. 1. 1)	lexical nouns as head	§5. 1. 1. 1
	proper nouns as head	§5. 1. 1. 2
	pronouns as head	§5. 1. 1. 3
	nominalizations as head	§5. 1. 1. 4
	[NUM+ CL (temporal)] as head	§5. 1. 1. 5
headless (§5. 1. 2)	headless adjective-type NP	§5. 1. 2. 1
	headless verb-type NP	§5. 1. 2. 2
	headless [NUM+CL]-type NP	§5. 1. 2. 3

Table 5. 1 NP subtypes

5. 1. 1 Headed NPs

5. 1. 1. 1 Lexical nouns as head

This type of NP is the most common in Ersu. The Nh may involve all semantic subsets of lexical nouns, including terms such as kinship terms, body parts, fauna,

flora and so on (§4. 3. 1). For example:

(5. 1) *psʅ-ma* *tə-wo*

[[flat-SFX. FEM:toad]$_{Nh}$ [one-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'a toad'

5. 1. 1. 2 Proper nouns as head

Though NPs headed by a proper noun are much fewer in frequency than those headed by a common lexical noun, they are also quite normal in Ersu. A proper noun alone can function as an NP. However, a proper noun also occurs with a pre-head demonstrative, or a post-head modifier (*tə* 'one', see §7), or both to form an NP. More will be discussed in §5. 2. Here, an example is given in (5. 2).

(5. 2) *t^hə* *t$ɕ^h$oli-ma*

[DEM:this [PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'this Qolima'

5. 1. 1. 3 Pronouns as head

The majority of pronouns are attested as heads of NPs. This includes personal pronouns (§5. 1. 3. 1), demonstratives (§5. 1. 3. 2), indefinite pronouns (§5. 1. 3. 3), anaphoric pronouns (§5. 1. 3. 4) and interrogative pronouns (§5. 1. 3. 5).

5. 1. 1. 3. 1 Personal pronouns as head

A personal pronoun is often followed by a genitive marker, either *=yi* '=GEN'or *=zʅ̀* 'GEN:family' (or, genitive form of a personal pronoun, see §4. 4. 1. 2), forming a pre-head genitive phrase and denoting possessive relationship between the possessor (personal pronoun) and the possessee (the head of an NP) (§5. 3). In addition, a personal pronoun is often the only element in an NP in a clause without any sort of

modification. The dual and the plural forms of a personal pronoun (see Table 4. 26) are also occasionally found to head the "enumerative" unit of [numeral + classifier] to work as an NP, as in (5. 3).

(5. 3) *tʰə=dzi* *nə-wo*

[[3sg.PRT=dl]$_{Nh}$ [two-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the two of them'

5. 1. 1. 3. 2 Demonstratives as head

Ersu demonstratives never stand alone and are always followed by some other elements, at least a relator noun or a numeral classifier (§4. 4. 3. 1). They mainly occur as a pre-head modifier to a lexical noun. However, sometimes they can also be followed by a classifier or a unit of [NUM+CL], referring to a referent in an anaphoric way. In these context, they function to head an NP as in (5. 4).

(5. 4) *yò* *də=kə* *vɛ=yi-ma* *na*

1sg.OTR home=RLN.LOC:in pig=DIM-SFX.FEM two

-pa *la=tsà=yi.* ¶ ***tʰə*** ***na***

-CL:round and peal-like come=PFT=PAUS **[[DEM:this]$_{Nh}$** **[two**

-pa=nɛ̀ *na-ka...*

-CL:round and pearl-like]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$=TOP downward-kill…

'Two female piglets have already come to my home. (I will) kill [**the two**]…'

As can be seen from (5. 4), the demonstrative *tʰə* 'DEM:this' heads the NP, [*tʰə na-pa*], and it in fact refers to *vɛ=yi=ma* 'pig=DIM=SFX.FEM:female piglets' together with the unit of [*na-pa*] 'two-CL:round and pearl-like' in the context.

5. 1. 1. 3. 3 Indefinite pronouns as head

The indefinite pronoun *su* is often followed by either a classifier, or the indefinite

quantifier -*bɛ̀* '-QUAT.pl' or the unit of [numeral + classifier] to form an NP, as in (5. 5).

(5. 5) *su-wo*

[[person/someone]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic]$_{DEFT.ENUM.NP}$

'the person/someone'

5. 1. 1. 3. 4 Anaphoric pronouns as head

Similar to a demonstrative pronoun, an anaphoric pronoun in Ersu can also be used with other modifying elements to head an NP, denoting an anaphoric referent in various context. Example is given in (5. 6).

(5. 6) *yi-ka* *dʑì tsɳndə* *mɑ=li.* ¶ ***ts^{h}u***

house-CL:generic, non-sticklike CO really NEG=good. **[[such]$_{Nh}$**

tɑ-kɑ=kə *dzo…*

[one-CL:generic, sticklike]$_{ENUM}$=RLN.LOC:in]$_{NP}$ live

'The house is really not good. (They) live in such a house.'

Example (5. 6) shows that the anaphoric pronoun *ts^{h}u* 'such' heads the NP, meanwhile, refers to 'house' in an anaphoric way.

5. 1. 1. 3. 5 Interrogative pronouns as head

Interrogative pronouns are attested to occur with either a classifier or a unit of [numeral+classifier] to head an NP. For example:

(5. 7) ***sɛ*** ***tə-wo*** *yɑ-ɳtɕ^{h}o* ?

[[who]$_{Nh}$ **[one-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$** APFX-beautiful

'Who/Which one is more beautiful?'

5. 1. 1. 4 Nominalizations as head

Deverbal nominalizations bearing a nominalizer are quite frequently found to head an NP. Nominalizations share the same properties as common lexical nouns which head an NP. In Ersu, a nominalization can be realized through a lexical verb or a verb phrase, even a clause taking a nominalizer (§4. 2. 3). Consequently, Ersu nominalizations can also be viewed as relative clauses (§12. 3. 1) when a nominalizer is "nominalizing" a clause. I view all these elements bearing a nominalizer as "nominalizations" whatever the constituent is, whether it is a lexical item or a clause (mainly relative clause) in order to keep consistency in description in this chapter, as in (5. 8).

(5. 8) *tʰə* *xuɑ=và* *pʰu=sù-wo*

[[DEM:this bird=ACC catch=NOM]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the bird-catcher' Lit: the bird catch person

In (5. 8), *xuɑ=và pʰu* is in fact a simple clause. It not only embodies the meaning of a clause 'catch birds', but also bears the syntactic property of a clause in which the accusative marker =*và* is still kept. However, when the simple clause is followed by a nominalizer, it becomes a pronominal that functions like a grammatical nominal. It is used to head an NP here.

5. 1. 1. 5 [NUM+ CL (temporal)] as head

The particularity of a temporal noun in an NP is that it always follows a numeral, forming an NP-like unit of [numeral+temporal noun]. In this unit, the term denoting time not only functions as a classifier, but also denotes the notion of time. The unit can be used on its own, neither referring to an anaphoric referent nor modifying a head noun. In this case, the whole unit alone should be treated as an NP as in (5. 9).

(5. 9) *si* *butsʰə* *tʰə-bu* *dʑì*

[**three** **CL:year**]$_{Nh.ENUM.NP}$ away-become also

pa-ma-lá

place-NEG -come.PFV:not arrive

'After three years, still (he) did not come.' Lit: three years become also not come the place

5. 1. 2 Headless NPs

5. 1. 2. 1 Headless adjective-type NP

An adjective "seems" to be able to "head" an NP under the circumstances that the referent has been mentioned in previous context or that all the speech-act participants know which referent the adjective is modifying. However, a distinct head noun is in fact ellipsed in these context. Consequently, I view them as a type of headless NP and they are named as "headless adjective-type NP", as shown in (5. 10) below.

(5. 10) a. *ya-ntɕʰo* *tʰɑ-pa*

[APFX-beautiful [DEM:this-CL:lovely children]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the beautiful'

b. *zìyì* *ya-ntɕʰo* *tʰɑ-pa*

[[daughter]$_{Nh}$ APFX-beautiful [DEM:this-CL:lovely children]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the beautiful daughter'

Example (5. 10a) is extracted from a piece of folklore about the stories between a rabbit, also a god with magic power, and a wretched orphan. The rabbit helped the orphan to court a girl from a high official's family. The official had three daughters and the rabbit asked the orphan to court the youngest and the most beautiful one. In this context, whenever my language consultant mentioned the girl, he uses (5. 10a), 'the beautiful' to denote the youngest girl rather than (5. 10b), 'the beautiful daughter'.

zìyì ‘daughter’ of (5. 10b) is contextually ellipsed and thus forms a headless NP as in (5. 10a).

5. 1. 2. 2 Headless verb-type NP

Ersu verbs cannot be used to head an NP. They should take a nominalizer to head an NP (§5. 1. 1. 4). However, when a distinct head is contextually ellipsed, verbs seem to be able to “head” an NP on the surface, denoting an anaphoric referent, as in (5. 11a). In this context, the referent can always be recovered, as in (5. 11b). This type of NPs is in fact headless NPs, and I name them as “headless verb-type NPs” here. In addition, the verbs or verb phrases should always take a numeral classifier or a quantifier.

(5. 11) a. *mɑ-baŋ̩i-bɛ̀*

[NEG-listen to-QUAT.pl]$_{NP}$

‘those disobedient’ Lit: not listen to

b. *ə^{l}dzə* *mɑ-baŋ̩i-bɛ̀*

[[dragon]$_{Nh}$ NEG-listen to-[QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

‘those disobedient dragons’ Lit: dragons not listen to

(5. 11a) is taken from a creation myth in which there are many dragons. The god of heaven dealt with those dragons with different personalities in different ways. The NP *mɑ-baŋ̩i-bɛ̀* refers to those dragons that did ‘not listen to’ his words, that is, ‘disobedient’. In this NP, the head *ə^{l}dzə* ‘dragon’ of (5. 11b) is contextually ellipsed. Therefore, (5. 11a) is a headless NP in fact, which just “seems to be headed” by the verb complex *mɑ-baŋ̩i* ‘not listen to’

5. 1. 2. 3 Headless [NUM +CL]-type NP

In Ersu, the most commonly seen NP structure is a head noun followed by the “enumerative” unit of [numeral + classifier], that is, [N$_h$+NUM+CL]$_{NP}$. However, as a

"topic-comment" language (§12. 1. 2), anaphora occurs quite frequently in discourse. More specifically, an Nh is often ellipsed for the reason that the head is contextually recoverable. The unit of [NUM+CL] thus semantically functions as a headed NP in an anaphoric way, but occurs in the form of a headless NP. This type of headless NP occurs a lot in the data, as shown in (5. 12).

(5. 12) *tə-wo* *kʰua-duá,*
[**one-CL:generic, non-sticklike**]$_{ENUM.NP}$ northward-go.PFV
si-wo *ŋua-duá*
[**three-CL:generic, non-sticklike**]$_{ENUM.NP}$ southward-went
'One went northward, three went southward.'

(5. 12) is taken from the notes of daily conversation. It is an answer to a question "Did you see where the four oxen went?". Consequently, the units, *tə-wo* and *si-wo*, respectively denote 'one ox' and 'three oxen'. As can be seen from (5. 12), the unit [NUM+CL] is anaphorically used and its meaning may vary a lot, depending on what it refers to in discourse.

5. 2 NP Constituent Order and Structure

The simplest NP in Ersu can be a simple lexical noun, a demonstrative or a pronoun, etc. as discussed in §5. 1. However, it is more common for a head to bear modifying elements to form an NP. These elements can be further classified as two groups: pre-head and post-head. Pre-head modifying elements include genitive phrases (GEN), demonstratives (DEM), nominal directional terms (DIR) and modifying nominals (MNOM). More elements in an NP are post-headed, including: diminutives (DIM), noun classifiers (NCL), demonstratives (DEM), anaphoric pronouns (ANAP), intensifiers (INTS), adjectives (ADJ), numerals (NUM), numeral classifiers (CL)/quantifiers (QUAT), case markers (CASE) and particles, especially the topical marker (TOP) =*nè*, which plays a vital role in Ersu discourse organization (§13. 5. 1). The basic constituent order and structure for a NP in Ersu comes as

follows:

GEN+DEM/DIR+MNOM+**N$_h$**+DIM+NCL+DEM+INTS+ANAP+ADJ+NUM+CL/QUANT+CASE+TOP
←pre-head post-head→

Figure 5. 1 Basic constituent orders of an Ersu NP

It should be noted that:

1) Not all the above listed elements will occur with each other in an NP at the same time or in the same context. Figure 5. 1 only illustrates the possible co-occurrence. However, the constituent order should be like this in general.

2) The term "Nh" here and throughout this grammar stands for not only a lexical noun, but also any elements that can head an NP such as a pronoun, a demonstrative, a pronoun and a unit of [NUM+CL] as discussed in §5. 1.

3) Like Galo (Post 2007: 294), a demonstrative may occur before, or after an N_h, or may occupy twice, that is, both pre-head and post-head slots in an NP. However, what conditions the distribution of a demonstrative is unclear and needs further studies.

4) Some of the modifying elements are "incompatible". That is, they cannot occur with each other. For example, a demonstrative is always incompatible with a nominal directional term, and the two never co-occur in discourse. This also applies to such situations: If a demonstrative itself works as an Nh, then no other demonstratives can be used to modify it.

5) A topical marker =*ɲɛ̀* very often occurs in or at the boundary of an NP. Since it is also widely used in other context, for example, following a verbal phrase or a clause, it is not a grammatical constituent of an NP. Actually speaking, whether to take =*ɲɛ̀* or not does not have any impact on the meaning of an NP. Its function is not

grammatical, but rather pragmatic. It is also attested to exist in Lizu. Chirkova (2008) believes that this is a loanword from Mandarin Chinese. I listed it as an element of an NP in Figure 5. 1 because it is so tightly associated with an NP. It is an important element in discourse organization and is further discussed in §13. 5. 1. Here an example is given in (5. 13).

(5. 13) *tʰə=zɿ̀* *zìyì* *nə*
[[3sg. PRT=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [daughter]$_{Nh}$ [two
-wo=nɛ̀…
-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$=TOP]$_{NP}$
'her two daughters…'

6) An Nh being modified by the unit of [NUM+CL] or [NUM+QUAT] is the most common structure of Ersu NPs. However, when the numeral is *tə* 'one', either *tə* 'one' or the numeral classifier or the quantifier can be ellipsed, as shown in (5. 14). Note that the three examples in (5. 14) are all acceptable, however, they show some semantic and pragmatic differences. This is further discussed in §7. 1. 3. 5. 1.

(5. 14) a. *su* *tə-wo*
person one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'one person'

b. *su* *tə*
person one
'a person'

c. *su-wo*
person-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'one/the person'

Examples for NPs with various constituent orders and structures are given from (5. 15) to (5. 52). They are further subclassified as head noun alone functioning as an NP (§5. 2. 1), head taking pre-head modifying elements (§5. 2. 2), head taking post-head modifying elements (§5. 2. 3) and head taking both pre-head and post-head modifying elements (§5. 2. 4).

5. 2. 1 Head alone functioning as an NP

As discussed in §5. 2, an Nh may stand alone and form the simplest NP in Ersu. In other words, a head alone can be used as an NP without taking any modifying elements as shown in (5. 15).

(5. 15) *zò* *ɑ=và* : "*dzo* *də-tsu* *ànɛ̀*,
[3sg.NPRT]$_{NP}$ [1sg.SLF=ACC]$_{NP}$ [water]$_{NP}$ upward-boil LINK:after
ts^{h}ɿ-po *ŋə-p^{h}i=á* *k^{h}ə-na-kuɑ*"
[salt-CL:package-like]$_{NP}$ outward-tear=PFV inward-downward-put
'She (told) me: "After the water is boiled, tear off the salt package and put (the salt) into (the water)."'

As can be seen in (5. 15), *zò* '3sg.NPRT' and *dzo* 'water' stand alone and function as an NP without taking any modifying elements. In addition, personal pronouns never take a modifying element and proper nouns seldom take a modifying element and often function as an NP on their own. This phenomenon is also found in Nuosu, a branch of Yi languages spoken in the neighbouring Ersu communities and it is named a "bare classifier NP" by Jiang & Hu (2010).

5. 2. 2 Head taking pre-head modifying elements as an NP

When a genitive construction, a nominal directional term or a lexical noun is used to modify a head, they always precede it. When a demonstrative is used to modify a head, it may occur either before or after the head.

Example (5. 16) shows that a genitive construction occurs before the head that function as a possessee in the NP as below.

(5. 16) **GEN+Nh**

a=zɿ̀ *yadʐə*

[[1sg.SLF=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [child]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP}$

'my child'

A demonstrative can precede a head and in this situation, it may encode either definiteness or deixis, as shown in (5. 17) below.

(5. 17) **DEM+Nh**

tʰə *bùtʂʰə*

DEM:this year

'this/the year'

A demonstrative may precede a modifying nominal that is followed by a head and in this situation, it may also encode either definiteness or deixis, as in (5. 18) below.

(5. 18) **DEM+MNOM+Nh**

tʰə *mɛ̀+tɕò* *za+pu*

[DEM: this [nature+bind:sky]$_{MNOM}$ [hundred+manage:king]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP}$

'the heaven king'

A directional term always precedes a head, which should be a term denoting a location in this context. In an NP of this type, a directional term provides general and approximate direction, and the Nh, that is, the locational term offers more specific information about the direction of the location, as shown in (5. 19). Note that in (5. 19), the Nh in (5. 19a) is a common lexical compound, while in (5. 19b), the Nh is a nominalization

(5. 19) **DIR+Nh**

a. *ɑ-ɲɑ=dzo+nbɑ*

[LPFX:distal-downhill direction=[river+root:riverbank]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP}$

'(the) downhill riverbank'

b. *ɑ-gɑ=xəmo=ʂə̀*

[LPFX:distal-uphill=[mother's brother=RLN.LOC:place]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP}$

'(the) family of the uncle who lives in the uphill direction'[91] Lit: north mother's brother's place

(5. 20) is an example for an NP in which the head is modified by another lexical noun. In this situation, the head follows the modifying noun.

(5. 20) **MNOM+Nh**

xuɑ *gɑmɛ*

[[bird]$_{MNOM}$ [clothes]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP}$

'bird-like clothes' Lit: bird clothes

5. 2. 3 Head taking post-head modifying elements as an NP

NPs with head taking post-head modifying elements are the most frequently seen internal structure of Ersu NPs. A head may take a unit of [NUM+CL] or [NUM+QUAT], may take a classifier or a quantifier or a numeral directly when the numeral is *tə* 'one', may take a classifier plus a relator noun, may take an adjective and other elements such as a relator noun, a unit of [NUM+CL] or [NUM+QUAT], etc. Examples are given as follows.

Examples in (5. 21) below show that a head is followed by a unit of [NUM+CL/QUAT]. The head could be either a lexical noun, or a nominalization and

[91] For unknown reasons, this only refers to mother's brothers born to and brought up by the same parents, not her "parallel male cousins", for example, someone born to and brought up by mother's father's brothers.

also a pronoun. Numerals could be 'one' or the numbers larger than 'one'. Classifiers or quantifiers could be different ones including repeaters.

(5. 21) **Nh+[NUM+CL/QUAT]**

Nh Type	**Ex.**
lexical noun	*ts^{h}ɿ tə-po* [[salt]$_{Nh}$ [one-CL:package]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a package of salt'
	ŋuà ŋua ŋuà [[ox]$_{Nh}$ [five RPT:ox]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'five oxen'
	dzo tɑ-ka [[river]$_{Nh}$ [one-CL:generic, sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a river'
nominalization	*dzi+ə^{l}=ta tə-tɕi* [[hair+cut=NOM:shaver]$_{Nh}$ [one-CL:tools with a handle]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a shaver'
	xaxa=su si-wo [[teach.RDUP=NOM:teacher]$_{Nh}$ [three-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'three teachers'
	dzɿ=li tə-bɛ̀ [[eat=NOM:things for eating]$_{Nh}$ [one-QUAT.pl:some]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'some food'
pronoun	*ts^{h}u tə-wo* [[such]$_{Nh}$ [one-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'such one'
	t^{h}ə=dzi nə-wo [[3sg.PRT=dl]$_{Nh}$ [two-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'they two'

Table 5. 2 Examples of N_h+[NUM+CL/QUAT] NPs

An NP can also be formed through a head directly taking a classifier or a quantifier when the numeral in the unit of [NUM+CL] is *tə* 'one' as shown in (5. 22). The head could be either a lexical noun, or a nominalization, but a pronoun cannot be used in this case. Classifiers or quantifiers could be different ones including repeaters. In this situation, the classifiers or quantifiers function to encode definiteness (§7. 3. 5. 1).

(5. 22) **Nh+CL/QUANT**

Nh type	**Ex.**
lexical noun	*yadzɻə-wo* [[child]$_{Nh}$-[CL: generic, non-sticklike]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'one/the child'
	dzo-wo [[water]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic, non-sticklike] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'water'
	ʂɑ-bɛ̀ [[wheat]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT.pl:some] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'some wheat'
	vùlà-sɻ̀ [[cloth]$_{Nh}$[QUAT:little/bit] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a little of cloth'
	ŋuà-ŋuà [[ox]$_{Nh}$-[RPT:ox]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'the ox'
nominalization	*dzo+ tɕ^{h}i=su-wo* [[water +carry=NOM:water-carrier]$_{Nh}$-[CL: generic, non-sticklike] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'the water-carrier'
	mɑ=tɑ-bɛ̀ [[sleep=NOM]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT:some] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'the sleeping places'
	dzɻ=li-bɛ̀ [[eat=NOM:things for eating]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT:some] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'the food'

Table 5. 3 Examples of N_h+[CL/QUAT] NPs

An NP can possibly be formed through a head directly taking *tə* 'one' as shown in (5. 23) below when the numeral in the unit of [NUM+CL] is *tə* 'one'. The head could be either a lexical noun, or a nominalization, but a pronoun cannot be used in this case, which is similar to examples in (5. 22). In this situation, *tə* 'one' functions to encode indefiniteness (§7. 1. 3. 5. 1).

(5. 23) **Nh+NUM *tə* 'one'**

Nh type	**Ex.**
lexical noun	*yadzə̧* *tə* [[child]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a child'
	kàtʂʰì *tə* [[idiot]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'an idiot'
	ʂa *tə* [[wheat]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a wheat seed'
	su *tə* [[person]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a person'
	ŋuà *tə* [[ox]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'an ox'
nominalization	*dzo+ tɕʰi=sù* *tə* [[water +carry=NOM:water-carrier]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a water-carrier'
	mɑ=ta *tə* [[sleep=NOM]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a sleeping place'
	dzi+ ə^{l}=ta *tə* [[hair+cut=NOM:shaver]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$ 'a shaver'

Table 5. 4 Examples of N_h+[NUM *tə* 'one'] NPs

NPs like examples in (5. 21), (5. 22) and (5. 23) occur with the highest frequency among all NPs in the data[92]. Examples below are comparatively fewer in Ersu. However, they are also quite normally used by the Ersu native speakers.

Example (5. 24) below shows that an NP can be formed through a head taking a numeral classifier plus a relator noun.

[92] This is also the reason why I give some more examples for them in this study.

(5. 24) **Nh+CL+RLN**

a. *dzo-kɑ=kə*

[[river]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic, sticklike]$_{DEFT:ENUM}$=RLN.LOC:in]$_{NP}$

'in a river'

b. *ʂə+tsu=su-wo*

[[iron+punch=NOM:blacksmith]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{DEFT:ENUM}$

=ʂə̀

=RLN.LOC:space around a referent]$_{NP}$

'the area around the blacksmith's' Lit: iron punch person place

Example (5. 25) shows that an NP can be formed through a head taking a unit of [NUM+CL] plus a relator noun.

(5. 25) **Nh+[NUM+CL]+CASE**

ɲbi	*tə*	*ɲbi=tɕ^{h}o*
[[mountain]$_{Nh}$	[one	RPT:mountain]$_{ENUM}$=RLN.LOC:on]$_{NP}$

'on top of a mountain'

Examples from (5. 26) to (5. 31) below show that an NP can be formed through a head being followed by an adjective alone, or an adjective plus other elements such as a unit of [NUM+CL/QUAT], a numeral or a quantifier.

(5. 26) **Nh+ADJ**

si+pu	*yɑ-ɲbo*
[[wood+CL:living plants<tree]$_{Nh}$	APFX-tall]$_{NP}$

'a tall tree'

(5. 27) **Nh+ADJ+NUM**

ə˥ *kʰukʰu* *tə*

[[road]$_{Nh}$ curvy.RDUP [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]]$_{NP}$

'a curvy road'

(5. 28) **Nh+ADJ+NUMCL**

vɛnua *ya-kʰua-wo*

[[elder same gender sibling]$_{Nh}$ APFX-big-[CL:generic] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the eldest brother/sister'

(5. 29) **Nh+ADJ+NUM+QUAT**

vɛ+ʂʔ̀ *ya-ndə* *tə-bɛ̀*

[[pig+meat:pork]$_{Nh}$ APFX-good [one- QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'some good pork'

(5. 30) **Nh+ADJ+[NUM+CL]**

xuafu *də-ɲi* *na-pa*

[[apple]$_{Nh}$ APFX-red [two-CL:roundish and pearl-like]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'two red apples'

(5. 31) **Nh+ADJ+RLN**

tsotʂʰə *kʰua=kə*

[[barn floor]$_{Nh}$ big=RLN.LOC:in]$_{NP}$

'on the big barn floor'

Examples from (5. 32) to (5. 34) below show that the head of an NP may be followed by a diminutive marker plus other elements including the unit of [NUM+CL], a quantifier, an adjective, a noun classifer, etc.

(5. 32) **Nh+DIM+[NUM+CL]**

tʂʰo=yi *tɑ-pa*

[[dog]$_{Nh}$=DIM [one-CL:lovely animal or human being]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'a small dog'

(5. 33) **Nh+DIM+QUAT**

lɑ=yi-bɛ̀

[[chicken]$_{Nh}$=DIM-[QUAT.pl:some]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'some small chickens'

(5. 34) **Nh+DIM+NCL+ADJ+[NUM+CL]**

vɛ=yi-mɑ=tsʰulili *na*

[[pig]$_{Nh}$=DIM-SFX.FEM=NCL: fat and round and smooth [two-

-pa

-CL:lovely animal or human being]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'two fat, round, smooth female piglets'

As discussed in §5. 2. 2, a demonstrative can precede the head of an NP. However, it can also follow the head of an NP together with other elements such as a classifier or the unit of [NUM+CL] as shown in (5. 35), (5. 36) and (5. 37) below.

(5. 35) **Nh+DEM+CL/QUAT**

a. *mɛ̀* *tʰə-pʰu*

[[fire]$_{Nh}$ [DEM:this-CL:pile]$_{DEFT.\ ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'this pile of fire'

b. *soso=su*

[[learn.RDUP=NOM:student]$_{Nh}$

t^hɔ-bɛ̀

[DEM:this-QUAT.pl:some]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'these students'

(5. 36) **Nh+[DEM+NUM+CL]**

bɛ+ɔ^l *t^ha* *si-ka*

[[insect+?:snake]$_{Nh}$ [DEM:this three-CL:generic, sticklike] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the three snakes'

(5. 37) **Nh+NCL+DEM+CL**

pu=kaka *t^hɔ*

[[potato]$_{Nh}$=NCL:round and no smaller than a fist [DEM:this-

-wo

CL:generic, non-sticklike] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'this potato'

A noun classifier may co-occur with other post-head elements to form an NP as in (5. 34) and (5. 37) above. In (5. 34), a noun classifier is used between a diminutive marker and an adjective that is followed by a unit of [NUM+CL]. In (5. 37), it closely follows the head of an NP and precedes a demonstrative plus a numeral classifier. More examples for an NP taking a noun classifier are given in (5. 38) and (5. 39). All the examples with a noun classifier show that it can co-occur with a numeral classifier in discourse. §7. 1. 2. 2 further discusses the differences between a noun classifier and a numeral classifier.

(5. 38) **Nh+NCL+[NUM+CL]**

pu=kaka *si*

[[potato]$_{Nh}$=NCL:round and larger than a fist [three

-wo

-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'three potatoes'

(5. 39) **Nh+NCL+CL**

xandzə̤=mama *tə*

[[grape]$_{Nh}$=NCL:pearl-like [one]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'a grape'

5. 2. 4 Head taking both pre-head and post-head modifying elements as an NP

As shown in Figure 5. 1, an NP in Ersu can be formed through a head taking both pre-head and post-head modifying elements. In this situation, a demonstrative used as pre-head modifying element occurs with the highest frequency in the data.

Examples from (5. 40) to (5. 41) below demonstrate an NP is formed through the head taking a pre-head genitive construction and a post-head numeral classifier.

(5. 40) **GEN+Nh+CL**

t^{h}ə=zɨ̀ *ɑ-pa*

[[3sg.PRT=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [KPFX-father]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'his father'

Examples in (5. 41) are two NPs taking both pre-head and post-head modifying elements. They demonstrate that the slot in an NP that a genitive phrase or a demonstrative occupies is not stable. A genitive phrase may precede a demonstrative,

and vice versa. In (5. 41a), the genitive phrase is modifying the head, and is essentially apposed to the demonstrative. However, in (5. 41b), the demonstrative is modifying the head internal to the genitive phrase, that is, *xi-ma+ndza-ma* '?-SFX.FEM+Han people-SFX.FEM:woman'. Consequently, the demonstrative precedes the genitive phrase. In addition, (5. 41c) contains an inalienable possession, *su-bɛ̀ do+ku* 'person-QUAT.pl eye+hole:eye→people's eyes'. It looks like a structure DEM+MNOM+QUAT+N_h +QUAT that is not listed in Figure 5. 1 on the surface. However, in essence, it should be a structure as DEM+GEN+Nh because the unit [MNOM+QUAT] in (5. 41c) denotes an inalienable possessor in this context (NP possession is discussed in §5. 3).

(5. 41) a. **GEN+DEM+Nh+[NUM+CL]**

t^hi *$t^hə$* *zɿ*

[[3sg.PREST.GEN:his/her]$_{GEN}$ DEM:this [shoe]$_{Nh}$

tə-$p^hɛ$

[one -CL:half pair]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the one shoe of hers'

b. **DEM+GEN+ Nh+QUAT**

$t^hə$ *xi-ma+ndza-ma*

[DEM:this [?-SFX.FEM+Han people-SFX.FEM:woman

=zɿ̀ *$tɕ^hɑ$-pa+ $tɕ^hɑ$-ma*

=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [3sg.GEN-father+3sg.GEN- mother:parents]$_{Nh}$

-bɛ̀

-QUAT.pl]$_{NP}$

'the woman's parents'

c. **DEM+[MNOM+QUAT]$_{GEN}$+Nh+QUAT**

t^{h}ə *su-bɛ̀* *do+kɯ-tʂə*

[DEM:this [person-QUAT.pl]$_{GEN}$ [eye+hole:eye]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT:pair]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'those people's eyes'

Examples in (5. 42) below show that a head can take two pre-head modifying elements, that is, a demonstrative and a modifying nominal, and one post-head modifying element, that is, a numeral classifier to form an NP. In (5. 42a), the modifying nominal *su+yi* 'person+family:someone else' is an indefinite pronoun (§4. 4. 5. 4). However, in (5. 42b), the modifying nominal is a common lexical noun.

(5. 42) a. **DEM+MNOM+Nh+CL**

t^{h}ə *su+yi* *yadzə*

[DEM:this [person+family:someone else]$_{MNOM}$ [child]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the child'

b. **DEM+MNOM+Nh+CL**

t^{h}ə^{55} *mɛ̀+tɕò* *ɑ-pu*

[DEM: this [nature+bind:sky]$_{MNOM}$ [KPFX-grandfather]$_{NAP}$

-wo

-[NUMCL:generic]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the old man in the sky'

Examples in (5. 43) below demonstrate that an NP can be formed by a head taking a pre-head demonstrative and a post-head numeral classifier. The head can be a deverbal nominalization bearing a nominal marker as in (5. 43a), or a lexical noun as in (5. 43b), or a proper noun as in (5. 43c), or a zero-derived deadjectival nominalization as in (5. 43d).

(5. 43) **DEM+Nh+CL**

a. *tʰə* *vùlà* *ɲtsʰɛ=sù*

[DEM: this [cloth carry…on one's shoulder=NOM:cloth carrier]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the cloth-carrier' Lit: this cloth carry on shoulder person

b. *ɑ-tʰə* *ɲo-ma*

[PFX:distal-DEM:this<that [day-SFX.FEM:sun]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'that sun'

c. *tʰə* *yintʂʰə-ma*

[DEM: this [PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name]$_{Nh}$

-wo

-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'Yinchema'

d. *tʰə* *yɑ-ntɕʰo*

[[DEM: this] [APFX-beautiful]$_{Nh}$

-pa

-[CL:lovely animal or human being]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the beautiful girl'

Examples in (5. 44) below show that an NP may consist of a pre-head demonstrative and a post-head relator noun (5. 44a), or the post-head modifying elements including a numeral classifier plus a relator noun (5. 44b). In addition, the head of (5. 44a) is a nominalization while that of (5. 44b) is a lexical noun.

(5. 44) a. **DEM+Nh+RLN**

tʰə *mɛ+li* *tsə=tɑ=kə*

[DEM:this [nature+?:earth dig=NOM.LOC.]$_{Nh}$=RLN.LOC:in]$_{NP}$

'in this area of land-digging'

b. **DEM+Nh+CL+CASE**

tʰə *mɛ-pʰu=ʂə̀*

[DEM: this [fire]$_{Nh}$-[CL:pile]$_{ENUM}$=RLN.LOC:space around a referent]$_{NP}$

'the place of the pile of fire'

Examples from (5. 45) to (5. 48) below demonstrate that an NP can be formed through a head taking a pre-head demonstrative and multiple post-head modifying elements such as a numeral classifier, a unit of [NUM+CL], a diminutive and a noun classifier. In (5. 48), the demonstrative *tʰə* occurs twice: both pre-head and post-head in the NP. The "double" uses of *tʰə* have an emphatic function in discourse.

(5. 45) **DEM+Nh+NUM+CL**

tʰə *ɱpʰa* *si*

[[DEM:this] [female's opposite gender sibling]$_{Nh}$ [three

-wo

-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the three brothers'

(5. 46) **DEM+Nh+DIM+CL**

tʰə *tʂʰo=yi-wo*

[[DEM: this] [dog]$_{Nh}$=DIM-[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the small dog'

(5. 47) **DEM+Nh+DIM+NCL+[NUM+CL]**

tʰə *vɛ=yi=pulili*

[[DEM:this] [pig]$_{Nh}$=DIM=NCL:smooth and fat like a ball

nə-wo

[two-CL:generic]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the two small fat piglets'

(5. 48) **DEM+Nh+DEM+[NUM+CL]**

tʰə *ɲbò* *tʰə* *nə* *ɲbò*

[DEM:this [horse]$_{Nh}$ DEM:this [two RPT:horse]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the very two horses'

Examples from (5. 49) to (5. 52) below demonstrate that an NP can be formed through a head taking a pre-head modifying nominal and multiple post-head modifying elements such as a numeral classifier, a unit of [NUM+CL], a quantifier and an adjective. In addition, the modifying nominal could either be a proper noun as in (5. 49) or a common lexical noun as in (5. 50) and (5. 51). It can also be a pronoun as in (5. 52).

(5. 49) **MNOM+Nh+[NUM+CL]**

əˡsu *vù+tɕò* *tə-wo*

[[PN:Ersu]$_{MNOM}$ [head+bind:turban]$_{Nh}$[one-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'one Ersu turban'

(5. 50) **MNOM+N$_h$+QUAT**

ɬaɬa+si *tsʰɑ-bɛ̀*

[[?+tree:white poplar]$_{MNOM}$ [leaf]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT.pl]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'the leaves of white poplars'

(5. 51) **MNOM+Nh+RLN**

ɲi *nbi=tɕʰo*

[[grass]$_{MNOM}$ [moutain]$_{Nh}$=RLN.LOC:on]$_{NP}$

'on the mountain where much grass grows'

(5. 52) **MNOM+Nh+ADJ+CL**

aˡ *xi-ma*

[[1pl.SLF]$_{MNOM}$ [?-SFX.FEM:female opposite gender sibling]$_{Nh}$

ya-kʰua-wo

APFX-big-[CL:generic, non-sticklike] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'one of our elder sisters'

5. 3 Possession

Ersu possessive relationship can be subclassified into two types: alienable possession (§5. 3. 1) and inalienable possession(§5. 3. 2). Inalienable possession is used to denote the perpetual or unseparated relationship between the possessor (Pr) and the possessee (Pe). Alienable possession is used for the context when the relationship between the possessor and the possessee is assumed to be, or to have the possibility to be changeable or separable. The choice of alienability or inalienability depends on the semantic properties of the possessee. The use of a genitive marker in noun-noun subordination indicates alienable possession. The absence of a genitive marker indicates inalienable possession.

5. 3. 1 Alienable possession

As mentioned in §5. 3, alienable possession is indicated by a genitive marker. An alienable possessive relationship is thus realized through the structure of [Pr=*yi* '=GEN' or =*zɿ* '=GEN:family' +Pe]. When the Pe is a term encoding kinship (§5. 3. 1. 1), property (§5. 3. 1. 2), location (§5. 3. 1. 3) or an abstract concept (§5. 3. 1. 4), an alienable possession structure is used. The Pr is often a common lexical noun, a

proper noun, a pronominal or an NP[93]. In other words, the genitive marker =*yi* '=GEN' or =*zì* '=GEN:family' can be viewed as the sign of alienable possessive relationship. Generally speaking, =*yi* '=GEN' is a generic genitive marker while =*zì* '=GEN:family' is only used for the situation when the Pr-Pe relationship is viewed as belonging to a family rather than an individual, for example, kin relationship or properties of a family. As discussed in §4. 5. 6, this is quite similar to Mandarin Chinese in which an associate noun *jiā* 'family' can be used to denote something possessed by a family. However, Ersu =*zì* '=GEN:family' is different from *jiā* 'family' in many respects and it can only be used as a genitive marker. The difference between =*yi* '=GEN' or =*zì* '=GEN:family' is shown in (5. 53).

(5. 53) a. *tʰə=zì* *pɯ-kaka*
[[3sg.PRT]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[potato]$_{Nh}$-NCL:irregularly roundish, fist-like
-bɛ̀
[-QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'his family's potatoes'

b. *tʰi* *pɯ-kaka*
[[3sg.PRT.GEN]$_{Pr}$ [[potato]$_{Nh}$-NCL:irregularly roundish, fist-like
-bɛ̀
[-QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'his potatoes'

(5. 53a) indicates that the potatoes are viewed as properties possessed by a family rather than an individual person. (5. 53b) is often used in the situation when the potatoes are viewed as food possessed by an individual person rather than a family.

[93] =*yi* '=GEN' can also be attached to some verb CTPs (Complement Taking Predicate), which makes the CTP appear to be a possessor taking a complement as a possessee on the surface (§12. 3. 3).

5. 3. 1. 1 Possession of kinship

Kin relationship is treated as alienable possession that must bear an overt genitive marker in Ersu. This is different from one of its neighboring TB languages, Yongning Na, in which kinship terms are often inalienably possessed (Lidz 2010: 244) though some are occasionally attested as being alienably possessed. The data demonstrate that both *=yi* '=GEN' and *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' can be used to denote kin relationship. However, *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' occurs more frequently than *=yi* '=GEN' in this situation. For example, *ɑ=zɿ̀ ɑ-wa* '1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-grandmother' that literally means 'my family's grandmother' sounds more acceptable than *ɑ=yi ɑ-wa* '1sg.SLF KPFX-grandmother:my grandmother'. This is so maybe because a "grandmother" might be several other people's "grandmother" in the Ersu communities where a person often has more than one sibling. Consequently, if the Pe that a kinship term denotes might belong to all or several members of a family, either *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' or *=yi* '=GEN' could be used although the use of *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' sounds more "comfortable" to the native speakers as shown in examples from (5. 54) to (5. 58) below. Note that the Pr could be a pronominal (5. 54) and (5. 55), a proper noun (5. 56), a common noun (5. 57) and an NP (5. 58). In addition, when the Pe can only be possessed by a family rather than an individual person, only *=zɿ̀* '=GEN:family' can be used for denoting the possessive relationship. (5. 58) below is an example for this since a maid in the context is not "possessed" by the king only, but by the whole family.

(5. 54) a. *ȵə=zɿ̀* *ɑ-pa*

[[2sg]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [KPFX-father]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'your father'

b. *ȵɑ* *ɑ-pa*

[[2sg.GEN]$_{Pr}$ [KPFX-father]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'your father'

(5. 55) a. *yò=zì* *yadzᵚə-bɛ̀*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[child]$_{Nh}$[-QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my children'

b. *yò=yi* *yadzᵚə-bɛ̀*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[child]$_{Nh}$[-QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my children'

(5. 56) a. *vɛmatɕ^{h}odzᵚù=zì* *zìyì*

[[PN:a devil's name]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [KPFX-daughter]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'Vaimaqodzhu's daughter'

b. *vɛmatɕ^{h}odzᵚù=yi* *zìyì*

[[PN:a devil's name]$_{Pr}$=GEN [KPFX-daughter]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'Vaimaqodzhu's daughter'

(5. 57) a. *ɑ-pu=zì* *lət^{h}u*

[[PFX-grandfather]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [grandchild]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'an old man's grandchild'

b. *ɑ-pu=yi* *lət^{h}u*

[[PFX-grandfather]$_{Pr}$=GEN [grandchild]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'an old man's grandchild'

(5. 58) a. *ɑ-t^{h}ə* *zɑ+pu*

[[LPFX:distal-DEM:this<that [hundred+manage:king]$_{Nh}$]]$_{NP.Pr}$

=zì *vɑ-mɑ*

=GEN:family [?-SFX.FEM:maid]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'the maid of the king's family'

*b. *ɑ-tʰə* *zɑ+pu=yi*

[[LPFX:distal-DEM:this<that [hundred+manage:king]$_{Nh}$]]$_{NP.Pr}$=GEN

vɑ-ma

[?-SFX. FEM:maid]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'the maid of the king's family'

What deserves attention is that people also prefer *=zì* '=GEN:family' to *=yi* '=GEN' in talking about a spouse relationship though a spouse does not have any possibility to be possessed by a family. For example:

(5. 59) a. *tʰə=zì* *pʰoza*

[[3sg.PRT.GEN]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [husband]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'her husband' Lit: her family's husband

b. *tʰi* *pʰoza*

[[3sg.PRT.GEN]$_{Pr}$ [husband]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'her husband'

In addition, not only kin terms, but also other terms that denote the relationship among human beings, such as 'teacher', 'guest' and so on are also treated as alienable possession. In this situation, *=yi* '=GEN' is more preferable than *=zì* '=GEN:family' except for the relationship between people are explicitly possessed by a family rather than an individual. Examples are given from (5. 60) to (5. 61).

(5. 60) a. *ɑ=yi* *so+pu*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [learn+manage:teacher]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my teacher'

b. *ɑ=zì* *so+pu*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [learn+manage:master]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my master'

(5. 61) a. *ɑ=yi* *ndʑo*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [friend]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my friend'

b. *ɑ=zì* *ndʑo*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [friend]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my friend'

Note that though the above (5. 60b) is grammatical for the native speakers, it is in fact not used in discourse. This is so because in the Ersu communities, a 'teacher' is never employed by a family. Consequently, only (5. 60a) is really used in speech. However, both (5. 61a) and (5. 61b) are used in discourse depending on the fact whether the 'friend' is of an individual or of a whole family.

5. 3. 1. 2 Possession of property

If the Pe is a term denoting property owned by a Pr, the possessive relationship is alienable. It can also be formally marked with either *=yi* '=GEN' or *=zì* '=GEN:family'. However, the choice of the two genitive markers is dependent on whether the speaker views something possessed by an individual person or a family as shown in (5. 53) above. That is, whether to use *=yi* '=GEN' or *=zì* '=GEN:family' is contextually dependent. This is unlike the expression of kin relationship in which people habitually prefer *=zì* '=GEN:family' to *=yi* '=GEN' as discussed in §5. 3. 1. 1. For example:

(5. 62) a. *amu=zì* *nbò*

[[PN:person's name]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[horse]$_{Nh}$

nbò

[RPT:horse] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'a horse of Amu's family'

b. *amu=yi* *nbò* *nbò*

[[PN:person's name]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[horse]$_{Nh}$ [RPT:horse]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'Amu's horse'

Interestingly, (5. 63a) and (5. 63b) below show some sort of gender distinction in discourse which is culturally specific. The hostess of a family often uses (5. 63a), which may imply that in her mind, the dower must belong to the whole family. However, the host of a family often uses (5. 63b), which may imply that in his mind, the dower must belong to him individually. This must be due to the patrilineal inheritance pattern in the Ersu communities (§4. 3. 1. 1. 1) where people inherit property through the male line.

(5. 63) a. *ɑ=zì* *pozigagu-bɛ̀*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[dower]$_{Nh}$-[QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my dower'

b. *ɑ=yi* *pozigagu-bɛ̀*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[dower]$_{Nh}$=[QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'my dower'

5. 3. 1. 3 Possession of location

A location can be a "possessee" in Ersu. Possession of location is a kind of alienable possessive relationship. Note that terms for body parts are traditionally inalienably possessed (§5. 3. 2. 1), but when they are followed by a relator noun (§4.

6) denoting a location, the relationship between a Pr and a Pe in the form of [body part=RLN. LOC] becomes alienable. Similar to the expression of possessive relationship of property, whether to use the genitive marker *=yi* '=GEN' or *=zì* '=GEN:family' is contextually dependent. More specifically, *=yi* '=GEN' is used for the context where the location is closely associated with an individual person as in (5. 64), (5. 65) and (5. 66) below. However, *=zì* '=GEN:family' is used for the context where the location is closely associated with a family as in (5. 67) and (5. 68) below.

(5. 64) *ɑ=yi* *ŋɑ+ku=kə*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [ear]$_{Nh}$=RLN.LOC:in]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'in my ears' Lit: my ears in

(5. 65) *ŋbò=yi* *miɑ+ŋgɑ=tà*

[[horse]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[face+door:face]$_{Nh}$=RLN.LOC:space around a referent]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'area around the horse's face'

(5. 66) *yò=yi* *dzo* *tɕ^{h}i=tɑ*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$=GEN [water carry=NOM:water-carrying place]$_{Nh}$

=kə

=RLN.LOC:in]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'in my water-carrying place' *lit*: my water carry place in

(5. 67) *yò=zì* *t^{h}a* *ts^{h}uɑ=kə*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [DEM:this [room]$_{Nh}$=RLN.LOC:in]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'in this room of my family'

(5. 68) *nə=zì* *yi+gɑ=xɛ̀*

[[2sg]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[house+LOC:uphill=LOC:side]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'side behind your house' Lit: you family house uphill

5. 3. 1. 4 Possession of abstract concepts

As mentioned in §4. 3, indigenous abstract Ersu terms are quite few. The possession of abstract concepts is alienable and it is formally marked with the genitive marker =*yi* '=GEN'. =*zɿ* '=GEN:family' is never used in this context. For example:

(5. 69) *ɑ=yi* *ndzɿndzɑ*
[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[thinking]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'my ideas'

(5. 70) *su=yi* *kʰɑzɿ*
[[person]$_{Pr}$=GEN [[fate]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'a person's fate'

5. 3. 2 Inalienable possession

In Ersu, inalienable possession includes possessive relationship of body parts of human beings and animals (§5. 3. 2. 1), part-whole (§5. 3. 2. 2) and human or animal excrements (§5. 3. 2. 3). The basic construction for inalienable possession is [Pr+Pe], in which there is no genitive marker used. In other words, the possessive relationship is realized through the juxtaposition of the Pr and the Pe.

5. 3. 2. 1 Possession of body parts

The marking of the expression of body parts shows some sort of contextual variation. The texts of traditional stories indicate that the structure for the possession of body parts is always formally unmarked as described in §5. 3. 2 with the exception that an organ is cut off from the body in some folktales. However, my observation is that in daily conversation, people either use a genitive marker or do not use it, depending on a speaker's style in speech. In addition, people have a strong tendency to use it especially through elicitation. Consequently, I hypothesize that the unmarked possessive relationship is traditionally applicable to the possession of body parts. I thus view the possession of body parts as a kind of inalienable possessive relationship.

Examples in (5. 71) below show that the possession of body parts can be formally marked or unmarked and the both can be heard in daily conversation.

(5. 71) a. *ɑ=yi* *vùliè* *də̀-ɲì=gə*
[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$=GEN [head]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$ upward-ache=PROG
'My head is aching.'

b. *ɑ* *vùliè* *də̀-ɲì=gə*
[[1sg.SLF]$_{Pr}$ [head]$_{Nh.Pe}$]$_{NP}$ upward-ache=PROG
'My head is aching.'

All the examples from (5. 72) to (5. 75) below are extracted from texts of narratives about mythological, folkloric and creation stories. These examples are all about the possession of human body parts. As seen from these examples, the possession of body parts is inalienable and no genitive marker is used between the Pr and the Pe. In addition, the Pr could be a common lexical noun, as in (5. 72) and (5. 73) and could also be an NP, as in (5. 74) and (5. 75). Furthermore, the Pr. in (5. 74) contains a construction with alienable possession encoding kin relationship. That is, (5. 74) presents both alienable possession and inalienable possession.

(5. 72) *yadzə̨* *vùliè-wo*
[[child]$_{Pr}$ [head]$_{Nh.Pe}$ -[CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$
'the child's head'

(5. 73) *yadzə̨* *mo-wo*
[[child]$_{Pr}$ [corpse]$_{Nh.Pe}$ -[CL:generic]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP}$
'the child's corpse'

(5. 74) *ɑ-tʰə* *su-bɛ̀*

[[LPFX:distal-DEM:this<that [person]$_{Nh}$-[=QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP.Pr}$

do+ku

[eye+hole:eye]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'those people's eyes'

(5. 75) *tʰə=zɿ̀* *ziyi-dʐə*

[[[3sg.PRT]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [daughter]$_{Nh.Pe}$-[=QUAT:pair]$_{ENUM}$]]$_{NP.Pr}$

ʂɿ̀ *tə-bɛ̀*

[[flesh]$_{Nh}$ [one-QUAT:some]$_{ENUM}$]]$_{NP.Pe}$]]]$_{NP}$

'some flesh of her two daughters'

The texts of traditional stories show that when an organ is cut out off from the body, the possessive relationship of body parts could be either marked or unmarked as in (5. 76) and (5. 77) below.

(5. 76) *yò* *ʂɿ̀* *ŋɑ-tʰɑ-dzɿ*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$ [meat]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$ outward=PHTV=eat

yò *lə* *ŋɑ-tʰɑ-tsʰɛ*

[[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$ [liquid]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$ outward=PHTV=drink

'Do not eat my meat and do not drink my blood.'

(5. 77) *nə=nɛ̀,* *yò=yi* *kʰuasɿ-bɛ̀* *sì*

2sg=TOP [[1sg.OTR]$_{Pr}$=GEN [hoof-[QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$ only

də-ngongo=à, *tʰə-siŋu=mǎ*

upward-pick up.REDUP=PART:pause away-keep=RQT

'You only pick up my hooves and keep them.'

Both (5. 76) and (5. 77) above are extracted from the same folktale about a person's two wives, the senior wife and the junior wife. The senior wife was killed by the

junior one and then the senior one became an ox. However, the ox was killed by the junior wife again. The senior wife (the ox) asked her daughter, an ox-herding girl, not to eat her meat and not to drink her blood, but to pick up and keep her hooves that turned into gold and silver in the later stage of the story. In (5. 76), 'my meat' and 'my blood' are expressed through unmarked possession, while in (5. 77), marked possession is used to denote 'my hooves'. Consequently, (5. 77) seems to conflict with the principle that the possession of body parts in traditional stories should be inalienable. I asked several consultants about this. I was informed that when a human being or an animal was killed and if the body was cut into pieces, then the body parts could be viewed as being either separable or inseparable, depending on the reporter's individual conception. If he/she thinks that it is acceptable to cut the parts off the body, the "sign" of alienable possession, that is, the genitive marker *=yi* '=GEN' will be employed as in (5. 77). On the contrary, if he/she holds the view that a body part should not have been cut off, no possessive marker will be used. Consequently, inalienable possession is used to denote the relationship between the Pr and the Pe, as in (5. 76). Since this involves a speaker's inside psychological activities that might be inconsistent, whether to use alienability or inalienability is then quite unpredictable.

Another example similar to (5. 77) for the possession of body parts, which is marked, is extracted from a traditional folktale about two sisters, a clever one and a stupid one in Ersu communities. There is a passage in the story where a devil was planning to kill the two girls but the clever girl trapped the devil to kill her own two daughters and cut them into pieces, instead. My language consultant reports the story in this way:

(5. 78) *tʰə=zɿ* *zìyì*

[[[3sg.PRT]$_{Pr}$=GEN:family [[daughter]$_{Nh}$-[CL:generic,

-wo=yi *ʂɿ-bɛ̀*

non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP.Pr}$ =GEN [flesh-[QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'one of her daughters' flesh'

(5. 78) employs the genitive marker that implies a formally marked possessive relationship between the devil's daughter and her flesh. However, unmarked possession is used in (5. 70) above, which is reported by the same speaker and shares quite similar meanings with (5. 78). Consequently, there exist variation in possessive relationship when people talk about body parts that were cut off from the body. The variation might lead to the fact that at present time, people may either use or not use a genitive marker to denote the possession of body parts in daily conversation as discussed at the start of §5. 3. 2. 1.

Examples from (5. 79) to (5. 82) below are also extracted from texts of narratives relevant to traditional stories. They show that the possession of animal body parts is traditionally unmarked. Note that (5. 81) contains two coordinated NPs and each presents an inalienable possessive relationship. In addition, (5. 82) contains two NPs that respectively functions as the Pr and the Pe, the structure of the both NPs is quite complex. This implies that two complex NPs in Ersu could be apposed to denote possessive relationship without being formally marked.

(5. 79) *ŋuà dʐo*
[[ox]$_{Pr}$ [leg]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'an ox's leg (s)'

(5. 80) *la ma*
[[chicken]$_{Pr}$ [feather]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'a chicken's feather(s)'

(5. 81) *ŋuà ə^{l}ku la t^{h}ə ŋuà k^{h}uatsɲ-bɛ̀*
[[ox]$_{Pr}$ [bone]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$ CO [DEM:this [[ox]$_{Nh.Pr}$ [hoof]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$-[QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$
'the ox's bones and hooves'

(5. 82) *vɛ=yi-ma-pulili*

[[[pig]$_{Nh}$=DIM:small-SFX.FEM-NCL:fat and smooth, ball-like]]$_{NP.Pr}$

ʂʔ̀ *tə-bɛ*

[[meat]$_{Nh}$ [one-QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP.Pe}$]]$_{NP}$

'some meat of the fat and smooth piglets'

5. 3. 2. 2 Possession of part-whole

The expression of part-whole relationship for an inanimate referent is always formally unmarked and inalienable. A genitive marker can never be inserted between the Pr. and the Pe. For example:

(5. 83) *tso* *ŋga*

[[open yard]$_{Pr}$ [door]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'the door of the open yard'

(5. 84) *tsatsi* *bɛ+ku*

[[wall]$_{Pr}$ [?+hole:hole]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'the hole in the wall'

(5. 85) *dzo* *ŋba*

[[river]$_{Pr}$ [root]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'river bank' Lit: river root

(5. 86) *si* *katsa*

[[tree]$_{Pr}$ [branch]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'tree branches'

5. 3. 2. 3 Possession of excrements and exhalations

Similar to the expression of the possession of part-whole relationship, that of the possession of human and animal excrements is also unmarked and inalienable. For

example:

(5. 87) *ŋuà tso*

[[ox]$_{Pr}$ [excrement]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'the excrement of an ox'

(5. 88) *su sɛ̀*

[[person]$_{Pr}$ [breath]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$

'a person's breath'

5. 4 Coordination

Coordination discussed in this section denotes two or more referents co-occurring in a certain sequence and each has a different referential value. Ersu coordination includes conjunctive coordination (§5. 4. 1) and disjunctive coordination (§5. 4. 2). Conjunctive coordination occurs with much higher frequency than disjunctive coordination in the data.

5. 4. 1 Conjunctive coordination

Similar to Yongning Na (Lidz 2010: 252), conjunctive coordination in Ersu can be further subclassified as asyndetic conjunctive coordination (§5. 4. 1. 1), monosyndetic conjunctive coordination (§5. 4. 1. 2) and bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination (§5. 4. 1. 3). The difference between the three types of coordination is clear in structure, but semantically and pragmatically, they are not fully distinct. This is briefly discussed in (§5. 4. 1. 4).

5. 4. 1. 1 Asyndetic conjunctive coordination

Asyndetic conjunctive coordination refers to a situation where two or more referents occur with each other in the same NP, or two or more NPs are coordinated together in a natural way without any marking of conjunction. Asyndetic conjunctive coordination is structurally identical to unmarked inalienable possession structure (§5.

3. 2) in Ersu. However, they are semantically quite different from each other. Unmarked inalienable possession structure encodes the Pr and Pe relationship between two or more nouns or NPs while in a construction of asyndetic conjunctive coordination, two or more nouns or NPs are semantic parallels. In addition, the coordinator *la* 'CO' can be inserted between the components of asyndetic conjunctive coordination. However, it cannot be inserted between the elements that form an unmarked inalienable possession structure. For example:

(5. 89) a. *su* *dzi*
[[person]$_{Pr}$ [hair]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'person's hair'

*b. *su* *la* *dzi*
[[person]$_{Pr}$ CO [hair]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP}$
'person and hair'

(5. 90) a. *ɲinua* *vɛnua*
[younger same gender sibling]$_{Nh.NP1}$ [[elder same gender sibling]$_{Nh.NP2}$
'younger (and) elder same gender siblings'

b. *ɲinua* *la* *vɛnua*
[younger same gender sibling]$_{Nh.NP1}$CO[[elder same gender sibling]$_{Nh.NP2}$
'younger and elder same gender siblings'

As shown in (5. 89) above, the two nouns in a Pr-Pe construction are not semantic parallels. More specifically, *dzi* 'hair' is possessed by *su* 'person'. In addition, when the coordinator *la* 'CO' is inserted between them, *su la dzi* 'person and hair' is completely illogical in meanings. However, in a construction of asyndetic conjunctive coordination, the two nouns that is, *ɲinua* 'younger same gender sibling' and

vɛnua ‘elder same gender sibling’ are semantic parallels. When the coordinator *la* ‘CO’ is inserted between them, there is no unsuitability of *n̩inua la vɛnua* ‘younger and elder same gender siblings’ in meanings.

Asyndetic conjunctive coordination could involve noun plus noun coordination, as in (5. 90) above and NP plus NP coordination, as in examples from (5. 91) to (5. 93) below. In (5. 91), both of the two NPs are comprised of an Nh and an adjective. In (5. 92), the first NP *nbò=yi* ‘horse=DIM’ contains an Nh *nbò* ‘horse’ and a diminutive marker=*yi*, and the second one consists of an Nh *nbò* ‘horse’ and a gender suffix -*ma* ‘-SFX.FEM’. In (5. 93), both NPs consist of an Nh and an enumerative expression, that is, the unit of [numeral + classifier].

(5. 91) *nt̩ʂʰa* *ə˥* *nt̩ʂʰa* *nua*

[[dress]$_{Nh}$ white]$_{NP1}$ [[dress]$_{Nh}$ black]$_{NP2}$

‘white dress (and) black dress’

(5. 92) *nbò=yi* *nbò-ma*

[horse]$_{Nh}$=DIM]$_{NP1}$ [[horse]$_{Nh}$=SFX.FEM]$_{NP2}$

‘baby horse and mother horse’

(5. 93) *m̩-pʰa* *si*

[[?-SFX.MAS:female’s opposite gender sibling]$_{Nh}$ [three

-*wo*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$

xi-ma *tə*

[[?-SFX.FEM: male’s opposite gender sibling]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP2}$

‘three brothers (and) a sister’

The data indicate that the majority of asyndetic conjunctive coordination are comprised of two constituents. However, there are also examples found in the data

where three or more constituents occur with each other, as in (5. 94).

(5. 94) *vɛ vùliɛ̀ tə-po, vɛ sɿpsɿ,*

[[pig]$_{Pr}$ [head]$_{Pe}$ [one-CL:package-like]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ [[pig]$_{Pr}$ [tongue]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP2}$

vɛ ntsʰa, vɛ ȵo,… tə-sɿ̀ la

[[pig]$_{Pr}$ [liver]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP3}$ [[pig]$_{Pr}$ [intestine]$_{Pe}$]$_{NP4}$,… one-QUAT:bit EMPH:all

tʰa-tsʰa ma-pʰa

away-MC:lack NEG-MOD:can

'A whole pig head, a pig tongue, a pig liver (and) pig intestines…(the groom's family) cannot lack anyone of them at all.'

(5. 94) above is extracted from a ceremonial narrative describing Ersu wedding procedures. At an Ersu ceremony, it is compulsory for the groom's family to kill a pig, hosting the guests from the bride's family. Nearly all the edible organs of the pig must be kept and cooked. If any of the organs is missing, it will be considered to be not respectable, not polite and not hospitable. In (5. 94), there are four NPs coordinated without any markers used. (5. 94) also demonstrates that animal body parts are possessed in an inalienable way (§5. 3. 2. 1).

There are also a few examples of this type modified by a postnominal quantifier. For example:

(5. 95) *ȵa-pa ȵa-ma-bɛ̀*

[2sg.GEN-[father]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$ [2sg.GEN-[mother]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP2}$-QUAT.pl

'your father (and) your mother'

(5. 96) *ɲayi-ma*

[[PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name]$_{Nh.NP1}$

ɲayi -ka-dzi

[PN:?-CL:generic, sticklike:male name]$_{Nh.NP2}$-[QUAT.dl]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP}$

'Niayima and Niayiga'

5. 4. 1. 2 Monosyndetic conjunctive coordination

Monosyndetic conjunctive coordination means that when two or more referents co-occur in the same NP, or two or more NPs are coordinated together, there is a conjunctive coordinator, *la* 'CO' which is used to link the conjuncts. Furthermore, if there are more than three referents occurring with each other, only the penultimate and last members are overtly marked with *la* 'CO'. The earlier members of referents are marked via intonation. In general, the vowel of the final syllable of these members is a bit lengthened and there is no overt airflow termination between them, thus forming a speech continuum. In other words, in monosyndetic coordination, *la* 'CO' is obligatory to be employed, but only one *la* 'CO' is used in the context. This is unlike asyndetic conjunctive coordination, in which all the referents co-occur without any markers used.

The coordinator *la* 'CO' is postpositive in a structure of monosyndetic conjunctive coordination. That is, it does not precede, but always follows a referent that it coordinates. This is because the speakers always pause after *la* 'CO' in their speech in the way like "referent$_1$… referent$_2$ *la* 'CO'…referent$_3$" rather than "referent$_1$…referent$_2$… *la* 'CO' referent$_3$". Monosyndetic conjunctive coordination occurs much more frequently than asyndetic conjunctive coordination in Ersu. Moreover, the constituents in asyndetic conjunctive coordination are mostly attested to be noun-headed NPs as described in §5. 4. 1. 1, while in monosyndetic conjunctive coordination, not only noun-headed NPs, but nominalization-headed NPs and pronominal-headed NPs are observed to operate as coordinated constituents. In addition, the number of monosyndetic conjunctive coordination bearing an

enumerative expression is also much larger than that of asyndetic conjunctive coordination. Most instances of monosyndetic conjunctive coordination in my data take an enumerative expression, including postnominal quantifiers and the unit of [NUM+CL]. Examples of monosyndetic conjunctive coordination are given as follows.

(5. 97) *kʰəvɛ* *tə* *la*
[[a guest from the bride's family group]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ CO
dava *tə*
[[a guest from the groom's family group]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP2}$
'a guest from the bride's family group and a guest from the groom's family group'

(5. 98) *zikɑ-mɑ* *la*
[[PN:?-SFX. EM:female name]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO
zintʂʰə-mɑ
[PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name]$_{Nh.NP2}$
'Zziigama and Zziinchema'

(5. 99) *ɳbò* *tə* *ɳbò* *la*
[[horse]$_{Nh}$ [one RPT: horse]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ CO
dzi-pulili *tə*
[thread]$_{Nh}$-NCL:irregularly roundish, ball-like [one]$_{INDFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP2}$
'one horse and a ball of thread'

The three examples above indicate that noun-headed NPs could be coordinated together without taking an enumerative expression. However, much more data indicate that monosyndentic coordination is prone to occur with an enumerative expression, as in (5. 100) and (5. 101) below.

(5. 100) *kʰuatsʅ* *la* *əˈku-bɛ̀*

[hoof]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [bone]$_{Nh.NP2}$[-QUAT.pl]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$

'hooves and bones'

(5. 101) *ɲi* *lə+tʂu* *la*

[[gold]$_{MNOM}$ [hand+?:bracelet]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$ CO

ŋua *lə+tʂu-bɛ̀*

[silver]$_{MNOM}$ [hand+?:bracelet]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP2}$ -[QUAT.pl] $_{DEFT.ENUM}$

'gold bracelets and silver bracelets'

The constituents in monosyndetic conjunctive coordination from examples (5. 97) to (5. 101) above are all nound-headed. However, nominalization-headed and pronoun-headed constituents in monosyndetic conjunctive coordination are also attested, as in (5. 102) and (5. 103) below.

(5. 102) *dzi+ʂʅ=ta* *bua* *la*

[[hair+comb=NOM:comb]$_{Nh}$ shabby]$_{NP1}$ CO

mia+lo *bua-bɛ̀*

[[face+look:mirrow]$_{Nh}$ shabby]$_{NP2}$-[QUAT.pl]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$

'shabby combs and mirrors'

(5. 103) *a* *la* *tʰə* *ta+ɲo* *tə-tʂəŋù*

[[1sg.SLF]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [3sg.PRT]$_{Nh.NP2}$?this+day:today one-VCL:together

otsu *ʒʅ=gə*

PN:place name go.NPFV=PROS

'He and I will go to Xichang together today.'

Note that examples like (5. 103) are seldom found in the recorded data. However, in daily conversation, this is quite common. Then it is not surprising for people to say something like "you and me", "he and you" and so on in utterance. In addition, there

are no regulations for the coordinated sequence of personal pronouns. That is, people may begin from the first persons to the second persons and then to the third persons, or vice versa.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, when three or more referents co-occur in the same context, the coordinator *la* 'CO' is only used to link the last two referents, as in (5. 104) and (5. 105).

(5. 104) *zɿ̀=ta,* *ma=ta* *la*

[[sit=NOM:chair]$_{Nh.NP1}$ [sleep=NOM:bed]$_{Nh.NP}$ CO

vù+dʑi

[head+keep…confine to:pillow]$_{Nh.NP3}$

'chairs, beds and pillows'

(5. 105) *bɛ+ɚ^{I},* *psɿ-ma,* *ȵi* *la*

[[insect+?:snake]$_{Nh.NP1}$ [flat-SFX. FEM:toad]$_{Nh.NP2}$ [grass]$_{Nh.NP3}$ CO

xa=bɛ̀

[wild aninals]$_{Nh.NP4}$=[QUANT.PL]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$

'snakes, toads, grasses and wild animals'

5. 4. 1. 3 Bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination

Bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination refers to the type of coordination in which each of the referents/constituents takes a conjunctive coordinator *la* 'CO'. That is, each coordinand is marked with a *la* 'CO', forming a structure like [NP_1 *la* NP_2 *la* NP_3 *la*…]$_{NP}$. Note that the last NP in bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination also takes a coordinator *la* 'CO'. Coordination of this type thus implies an open set with the meaning of 'NP_1 and NP_2 and NP_3… etc'. Bi/multisyndetic coordination only occasionally occurs in the data. Examples are given in (5. 106), (5. 107), (5. 108) and (5. 109) below.

(5. 106) *dʐə* *la* *ma* *la*

[lance]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [arrow]$_{Nh.NP2}$ CO

'lance and arrow, (etc.)'

(5. 107) *tso* *la* *ba* *la*

[excrement]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [urine]$_{Nh.NP2}$ CO

'excrements and urine, (etc.)'

(5. 108) *tʂ^{h}o* *tso* *tə* *la* *vɛ*

[[dog]$_{Pr}$ [excrement]$_{Pe.}$ [one]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]]$_{NP1}$ CO [[pig]$_{Pr}$

tso *tə* *la* *su* *tso*

[excrement]$_{Pe.}$ [one]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]]$_{NP2}$ CO [[person]$_{Pr}$ [excrement]$_{Pe}$

tə *la*

[one]$_{DEFT.ENUM}$]]$_{NP3}$ CO

'dog excrement and pig excrement and human excrements, (etc.)'

(5. 109) *mɛtʂə* *la* *ndzŋ* *pi* *la* *dʐuk^{h}ua* *la*

[[hay]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [[buckwheat]$_{MNOM}$ [bran]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP2}$ CO chopsticks CO

ʔits^{h}u *la*

wooden spoon (a kind of traditional soup container) CO

'hay and buckwheat bran and chopsticks and wooden spoon, (etc.)'

5. 4. 1. 4 Difference between asyndetic, monosyndetic and bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination

As described in §5. 4. 1. 1, §5. 4. 1. 2 and §5. 4. 1. 3, asyndetic conjunctive coordination, monosyndetic conjunctive coordination and bi/mutisyndetic conjunctive coordination are structurally distinct from each other. The conjunctive coordinator *la* 'CO' contributes to this distinction. More specifically, *la* 'CO' is not used in asyndetic conjunctive coordination; used once in monosyndetic conjunctive coordination and at least twice in bi/multisyndetic conjunctive coordination.

However, they do not seem to have any semantic differences, as in (5. 110).

(5. 110) a. *ɑ=zì* *muɬi=zà*

[[1sg.SLF=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [PN:Muli-SFX.MAS:male name]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$

nə=zì *wayi-ma*

[[2sg=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [PN:Wayi-SFX.FEM:female name]]$_{NP2}$

=dzi

=QUAT.dl

'our Muli (and) your Wayi' Lit*:* I family Muli you family Wayi two

b. *ɑ=zì* *muɬi=zà*

[[1sg.SLF=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [PN:Muli-SFX.MAS:male name]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$

la nə=zì *wayi-ma*

CO [[2sg=GEN:family]$_{GEN}$ [PN:Wayi-SFX.FEM:female name]]$_{NP2}$

=dzi

=QUAT.dl

'our Muli and your Wayi' Lit*:* I family Muli and you family Wayi two

Both (5. 110a) and (5. 110b) are extracted from a traditional ode sung at wedding ceremonies with the theme to send all good wishes to a new couple. It applies to every wedding ceremony except the groom's and the bride's names always change in accordance with their true names. I observed that using the conjunctive coordinator *la* 'CO' or not completely depends on the singer's personal style. Some of them always use it to link the two referents while some others never use it. There are also some singers who do not keep consistency, that is, in the same context, they may use it this time but may not use it next time. This demonstrates that the three types of coordination show no sematic differences though they are structurally distinct.

5. 4. 2 Disjunctive coordination

la ‘CO’ also functions as a disjunctive coordinator, linking two or more different referents in NPs. Disjunctive coordination is mainly found in interrogative mood, as in (5. 111).

(5. 111) *nə=dzi* *nə-wo* *sì* *la*

[[2sg=dl]$_{Nh}$ [two -CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ only CO

dʑidʑi *ndʑo* *a-dzo=ɛ̀?*

[[Yi:other]$_{MNOM}$ [friend]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP2}$ ITRG-EXT=ITRG

‘Are there only you two or someone else?’ Lit: You two only or other friends have?

Disjunctive coordination does not occur in the data quite often. People tend to use Mandarin Chinese *huòzhě* ‘or’ or *yàome* ‘either…or…’ in discourse. However, the native speakers are observed to use two clauses as a disjunctive coordination strategy. More will be discussed in §12. 2. 5, and here one example is given:

(5. 112) *ȵi* *nga+nbu* *nbzi=gə* *la*

[[gold]$_{MNOM}$ [door+threshold]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$ step over=PROS CO

ŋua *nga+nbu* *nbzi=gə=ɛ̀?*

[[silver]$_{MNOM}$ [door+threshold]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP2}$ step over=PROS=ITRG

‘Are (you) going to step over the gold door threshold or the silver door threshold?’ Lit: Are (you) going to step over gold door threshold or are (you) going to step over silver door threshold?

5. 5 Apposition

NP apposition denotes situations where two or more referential expressions occur with each other and they refer to the same referents. Just as coordination, apposition also occurs quite frequently in the data. There are two types of apposition attested in Ersu. They are:

1) **[[NP$_1$] [NP$_2$]…]$_{NP}$**, in which all juxtaposed NPs are headed (§5. 5. 1);

2) **[[NP$_1$][NP$_2$]…enumerative expression]$_{NP}$**, in which the juxtaposed constituents are headed NP(s) being followed by an enumerative quantifying expression including (DEM+) quantification and the unit of [(DEM)+numeral+ classifier] (§5. 5. 2).

5. 5. 1 [[NP$_1$] [NP$_2$]…]$_{NP}$ apposition

In a structure of headed NP apposition, two or more constituents occur with each other, but they often denote the same referential value. None of them takes a marker for apposition. Most of time, the latter constituent often provides more specific information about the referent than the former one, forming a sequence like "generic→specific". Examples are given as follows:

(5. 113) *ɑ=dzi* *nə-wo,* *ɑ=dzi*
[[1sg.SLF=dl]$_{Nh}$ [two-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ [1sg.SLF=dl]$_{Nh}$
nɑ-pʰɑzì
[two-CL:father & son]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP2}$
'we two, father and son'

(5. 114) *dzo* *ndzòmò,* *tʰə* *mɑ-li*
[[water]$_{MNOM}$ [official]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$ [DEM:this [NEG-good]$_{Nh}$
-wo
-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{NP2}$]$_{NP}$
'the official in charge of water, the one who is not nice' Lit: water official, this not good

(5. 113) above contains two juxtaposed NPs without any overt marking. The first constituent, *ɑ=dzi nə-wo* 'we two' provides some general information, and then the

second constituent *ɑ=dzi nɑ-pʰazɿ̀* offers more specific information about the relationship between the two persons, that is, 'father and son'. Similar to (5. 113), *dzo ndzòmò* in (5. 114) denotes a vocation, 'water official', and then the following constituent *tʰə mɑ-li-wo* 'this not good' provides more information about the personality of the official, thus, makes the vocation 'water official' refer to a more specific referent. As seen in (5. 115) below, there are more than two referential expressions occurring with each other and they present more and more specific information about the same referent in the context:

(5. 115) *ɑ=yi* *ndʑo,* *su+yi,*
[[1sg.SLF]=GEN [friend]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP1}$ [person+family:someone else]$_{Nh.NP2}$
ɑ-kuɑ=ndzɑ *tʂʰɑ*
[[PFX:distal-north=[PN:Han people]$_{MNOM}$ [city]$_{Nh}$]$_{NP3}$
Anhui *dzo=tə* *xaxɑ=su*
[[MC.PN:place name live]$_{Nh}$=DES]$_{NP4}$ [[teach.REDP=NOM:teacher]$_{Nh}$
tə=dʑà
[one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP5}$=EVID:reported
'my friend, someone who lives in Anhui, a Han city in the downstream direction, (is) a teacher' Lit: my friend, someone else, living in the downstream Han city, Anhui, a teacher

(5. 115) is extracted from the beginning of an autobiographical narrative, in which the speaker first introduces me before talking about himself. As seen from (5. 115), the information provided becomes more and more specific, from 'friend' to 'a teacher' which helps to explain "what kind of his friends" I am; from 'a Han city' to a more specific "city", that is, Anhui which is my hometown.

5. 5. 2 [[NP$_1$] [NP$_2$]…enumerative expression]$_{NP}$ apposition

As discussed in §5. 4. 1, conjunctive coordination is attested to bear a postnominal enumerative quantifying expression, including quantifiers and the unit of

[NUM+CL]. In this situation, the enumeration structure functions to denote the number of the apposed referents. Quantifiers -*bɛ̀* 'QUAT.pl' and -*dzi* 'dl' are often used to mean that there are more than two referents. The unit of [NUM+CL] is often employed to denote the exact number of the referents. Consequently, the enumeration structure and the earlier members of coordinate NPs refer to the same referents. In other words, the enumerative expression and the preceding coordinate NPs form a kind of apposition relationship. This is something like what Lichtenberk describes as inclusory construction in Austronesian (and other) languages (Lichtenberk 2000). For example:

(5. 116) *ɲua* *tə* *ə^{l}su* *tə*

[[PN:Yi]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP1}$ [[PN:Ersu]$_{Nh}$ [one]$_{INDEFT.ENUM}$]$_{NP2}$

t^{h}ə *ɲə-wo*

[[DEM:this]$_{Nh}$ two-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{ENUM}$]$_{NP3}$

'a Yi and an Ersu, **the two (persons)**'

(5. 117) a. *ɲi* *la* *ŋua* *t^{h}ə-bɛ̀*

[gold]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [silver]$_{Nh.NP2}$ [[DEM:this]$_{Nh}$=QUAT.pl]$_{ENUM.NP3}$

'gold and silver, **these things**'

b. *ɲi* *la* *ŋua-bɛ̀*

[gold]$_{Nh.NP1}$ CO [silver]$_{Nh.NP2}$-QUAT.pl

'gold and silver'

As seen from (5. 116) and (5. 117a), the first two NPs in the context are in conjunctive coordination and the apposition occurs between the first two NPs and the third. The apposition structure of this type is very common in Ersu. It should be noted that when the postnominal quantifier -*bɛ̀* does not follow the demonstrative *t^{h}ə* 'DEM:this', it only functions as an NP plural marker, implying that there are more than two referents in the context, as in (5. 100), (5. 101), (5. 102), (5. 105) and also (5. 117b) above. In

this situation, it is not really an appositional structure, but a coordinative structure. However, when -*bɛ̀* follows a demonstrative *tʰə* 'DEM:this', it forms another NP that is apposed with other NPs in the apposition construction.

Chapter 6 Numeral System

This chapter discusses the numeral system of Ersu. Numerals are typical bound syntactic words, which must occur together with classifiers and enumerate entities, forming the construction of [NUM+CL]. The only two exceptions are: 1) that the numeral *tə* 'one', can occur without a classifer when modifying the head noun or the head of an NP and encoding indefinite reference (§7); 2) that two consecutive numerals are used to denote approximation (§6. 4. 1). The structure of this chapter is as follows: cardinal numerals (§6. 1), ordinal numerals (§6. 2), fractions & times (§6. 3) and approximate numeration (§6. 4). §6. 5 discusses the current situation of numerals used in the Ersu communities in regard to their serious endangerment under the influence of Mandarin Chinese.

6. 1 Cardinal Numerals

Cardinal numerals in Ersu include ten simple numerals (≤10) (§6. 1. 1) with the remainder being compound numerals (>10) (§6. 1. 2).

6. 1. 1 Simple cardinal numerals

Ersu has a base ten numeral system. Unlike some languages such as English and Mandarin Chinese that have a numeral denoting "zero", Ersu does not have a "zero". There are ten basic cardinal numerals that denote numbers from "one" to "ten". All of them are monosyllabic except *sɿn̩* 'seven', which bears a final nasalized syllable and *tsʰɛtsʰɛ* 'ten', which has an inherently and obligatorily reduplicated form. They are given in Table 6.1.

NUM	Gloss
tə	‘one’
nə	‘two’
si	‘three’
zò	‘four’
ŋuà	‘five’
ts^{h}u	‘six’
sɿɲ	‘seven’
ʒɿ	‘eight’
ngə	‘nine’
ts^{h}ɛts^{h}ɛ	‘ten’

Table 6. 1 Basic numerals

6. 1. 2 Compound numerals

Numbers larger than ten are formed through compounding. The numbers larger than ten but smaller than 100 are structurally and morphologically further divided into three types in accordance with the different allomorphs of the combining form ‘ten’ used. They are: numbers from 10 to 19 using the base *ts^{h}ɛ* ‘ten’; (§6. 1. 2. 1) numbers from 20 to 39 using the base *ts^{h}ɿ* ‘ten’(§6. 1. 2. 2); 3) numbers from 40 to 99 using the base *zɿ* ‘ten’ (§6. 1. 2. 3). Numbers larger than 100 are presented in §6. 1. 2. 4.

6. 1. 2. 1 Numbers from 10 to 19

Numbers from 10 to 19 are coordinate compounds containing a base *ts^{h}ɛ* ‘ten (combining form)’ followed by a simple numeral except ‘eleven’ and ‘thirteen’. They are given in Table 6. 2.

NUM	Gloss
ts^{h}ɛ+tsɿ	‘ten (combining form)+sole:eleven’
ts^{h}ɛ+nə	‘ten (combining form)+two:twelve’
ts^{h}ɛ+sa	‘ten (combining form)+ ?three:thirteen’
ts^{h}ɛ+zò	‘ten (combining form)+four:fourteen’
ts^{h}ɛ+ŋuà	‘ten (combining form)+five:fifteen’
ts^{h}ɛ+ts^{h}u	‘ten (combining form)+six:sixteen’
ts^{h}ɛ+sɿɲ	‘ten (combining form)+seven:seventeen’
ts^{h}ɛ+ʒɿ	‘ten (combining form)+eight:eighteen’
ts^{h}ɛ+ngə	‘ten (combining form)+nine:nineteen’

Table 6. 2 Numbers from 10 to 19

As shown in Table 6. 2, the numeral 'eleven' is not formed through the base *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' and the simple numeral *tə* 'one', but *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' and an adjectival quantifier *tsɿ* 'sole'. Similar to 'eleven', the numeral 'thirteen' is also not formed through the base *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' and the simple numeral *si* 'three', but *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' and an attachment *sɑ* which might be borrowed from Mandarin Chinese[94].

6. 1. 2. 2 Numbers from 20 to 39

Numbers from 20 to 39 share a base *tsʰɿ* 'ten (combining form)' which is different from the base *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' that is used for numbers from 11 to 19 both in morphology and in syntactic constituent order. As shown in §6. 1. 2. 1, *tsʰɛ* 'ten (combining form)' precedes the simple numerals presented in §6. 1. 1 to form compounds encoding numbers from 10 to 19. However, *tsʰɿ* 'ten (combining form)' follows *nə* 'two' and *sɑ* '?three', forming two compounds that encode 'twenty' and 'thirty', respectively. Subsequently, numbers from 21 to 29 are formed through the compound *nə+tsʰɿ* 'two+ten (combining form):twenty' plus a simple numeral and numbers from 31 to 39 are formed through the compound *sɑ+tsʰɿ* '?three+ten (combining form):thirty' plus a simple numeral. Examples are given in (6. 1).

(6. 1)

NUM	**Gloss**
nə+tsʰɿ	'two+ten (combining form):twenty'
nə+tsʰɿ+tə	'two+ten (combining form)+one:twenty-one'
nə+tsʰɿ+nə	'two+ten (combining form)+two:twenty-two'
nə+tsʰɿ+si	'two+ten (combining form)+three:twenty-three'
…	…
sɑ+tsʰɿ	'three+ten (combining form):thirty'
sɑ+tsʰɿ+tə	'three+ten (combining form)+one:thirty-one'
sɑ+tsʰɿ+nə	'three+ten (combining form)+two:thirty-two'
sɑ+tsʰɿ+si	'three+ten (combining form)+three:thirty-three'
…	…

[94] I hypothesize that *sɑ* in *tsʰɛ+sɑ* 'ten (combining form)+?three:thirteen' and *sɑ+tsʰɿ* '?three+ten:thirty' is borrowed from Mandarin Chinese, *sān* 'three' after sound changes, that is, without employing the nasal final /n/ in loan. This is a normal adaption for the Ersu to borrow Mandarin Chinese (§2. 6). However, why the other basic numerals are not loaned in compounds like this is unknown.

6. 1. 2. 3 Numbers from 40 to 99

Numbers from 40 to 99 follow the pattern of "simple numeral + "base *zɿ* 'ten (combining form)' + basic numeral". Note that the base *zɿ* 'ten (combining form)' used for the numbers from 40 to 99 is different from that of numbers from 10 to 19 and also that of numbers from 20 to 39 as described in §6. 1. 2. 1 and §6. 1. 2. 2. Examples are given in (6. 2).

(6. 2)

NUM	**Gloss**
zò+zɿ	'four+ten (combining form):forty'
ŋuà+zɿ	'five+ten (combining form):fifty'
ts^{h}u+zɿ	'six+ten (combining form):sixty'
sɻ̩+zɿ	'seven+ten (combining form):seventy'
ʒɿ+zɿ	'eight+ten (combining form):eighty'
ŋgə+zɿ	'nine+ten (combining form):ninety'
zò+zɿ+tə	'four+ten (combining form)+one:forty-one'
ŋuà+zɿ+nə	'five+ten (combining form)+two:fifty-two'
ts^{h}u+zɿ+si	'six+ten (combining form)+three:sixty-three'
sɻ̩+zɿ+zò	'seven+ten (combining form)+four:seventy-four'
ʒɿ+zɿ+ŋuà	'eight+ten (combining form)+five:eighty-five'
…	…
ŋgə+zɿ+ŋgə	'nine+ten (combining form)+nine:ninety-nine'

6. 1. 2. 4 Numbers larger than 100

Numbers larger than 100 are compounds that often take the three bases given in Table 6. 3.

Base	**Gloss**
za	'hundred'
tu	'thousand'
ɳbots^{h}o	'ten thousand'

Table 6. 3 List of bases for numbers larger than 100

As seen from Table 6. 3, the bases like "million" and "billion" in English are not attested in Ersu and the largest one in Ersu is *ɳbots^{h}o* 'ten thousand'. Supposing that a large number contains all the bases listed above, it should be expressed from a larger base to a smaller one as shown in Figure 6. 1 which indicates the scheme of the

expression of the number 67,823 in Ersu.

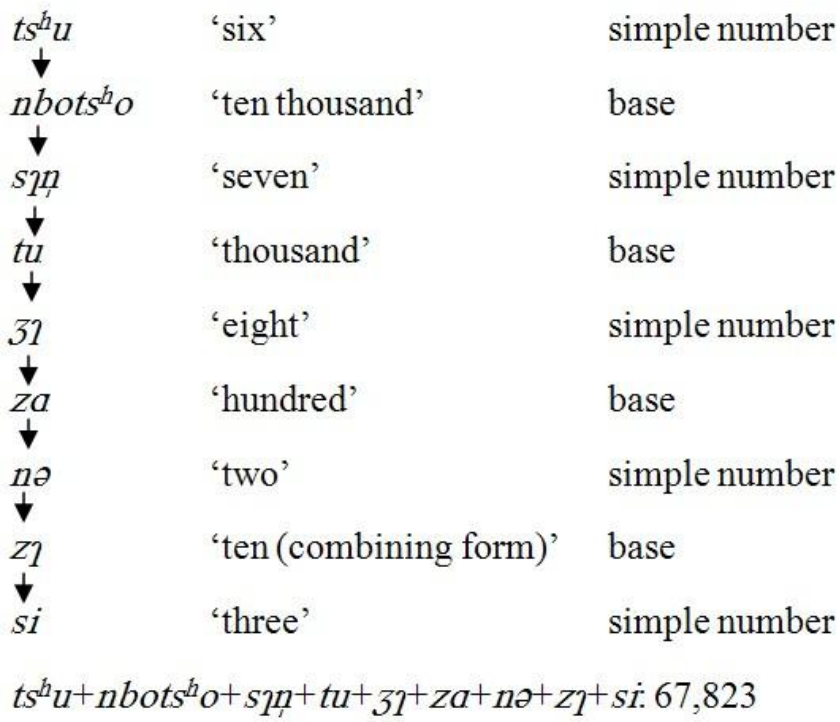

Figure 6. 1 Scheme of the expression of the number 67,832 in Ersu

However, not all numbers take the bases and simple numerals described above. The use of them depends on the exact value of the number. Examples in (6. 3) demonstrate that the value of the number decides the choices of the bases and the simple numerals.

(6. 3)	**Number in Ersu**	**Arabic Numbers**
	ŋuà+nbotsʰo+ngə+tu+sɻɲ+za+zò+zɿ+tə	‘59,741’
	tə+nbotsʰo+tə^{55}	‘10,001’
	nə+tu+nə+za+nə+zɿ+nə	‘2,222’
	ta+za+ngə+zɿ	‘190’
	tə+nbotsʰo+ta+za+ngə+zɿ+ngə	‘10,199’
	də+tu+ʒɿ	‘1,008’

Note that a coordinator *la* ‘CO:and’ is optionally inserted between two bases, or a base (numerals larger than 100) and a compound smaller than 100 or a simple numeral. In other words, whether or not to use *la* ‘CO:and’ shows no semantic

distinction, but depends on a speaker's style in speaking. Consequently, numerals in (6. 3) can also be expressed as in (6. 4).

(6. 4)	**Number in Ersu**	**Number in Arabic**
	ŋuà+nbots^{h}o+la +ngə+tu+la +sɿn̩+za+la +zò+zɿ+tə	'59,741'
	tə+nbots^{h}o+la +tə	'10,001'
	nə+tu+la +na+za+la+nə+zɿ+nə	'2,222'
	ta+za+la+ngə+zɿ	'190'
	tə+nbots^{h}o+la+ta+za+la +ngə+zɿ+ngə	'10,199'
	də+tu+la +ʒɿ	'1,008'

6. 2 Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals derive from cardinal numerals through suffixation. More specifically, when a cardinal numeral is followed by a suffix -*wogə*, it can be used as an ordinal numeral. The meaning or the origin of -*wogə* remains unclear. Example (6. 5) illustrates how ordinal numerals are derived from cardinal numerals.

(6. 5)

Cardinal Numerals		**Suffix**		**Ordinal Numerals**	
NUM	**Gloss**			**NUM**	**Gloss**
tə	'one'	-*wogə*	→	*tə-wogə*	'first'
nə	'two'			*nə-wogə*	'second'
si	'three'			*si-wogə*	'third'
zò	'four'			*zò-wogə*	'fourth'
ŋuà	'five'			*ŋuà-wogə*	'fifth'
ts^{h}u	'six'			*ts^{h}u-wogə*	'sixth'
sɿn̩	'seven'			*sɿn̩-wogə*	'seventh'
ʒɿ	'eight'			*ʒɿ-wogə*	'eighth'
ngə	'nine'			*ngə-wogə*	'ninth'
ts^{h}ɛts^{h}ɛ	'ten'			*ts^{h}ɛts^{h}ɛ-wogə*	'tenth'
ts^{h}ɛ+tsɿ	'eleven'			*ts^{h}ɛ+tsɿ-wogə*	'eleventh'
…	…			...	…

Note that the description above of ordinal numerals is obtained from elicitation, neither from the recorded data nor from notes of daily conversation. When I was in the field, I consulted many villagers about how to express ranking orders in the situations such as competitions, achievements, wealth and so on, they could only use Mandarin ordinal numerals to denote the orders except for several persons of 70 years

old or older who could figure out the above-listed ordinal numerals. Meanwhile, the older consultants also informed me that they themselves almost forgot how to use Ersu in order-ranking.

6. 3 Fractions & Times

6. 3. 1 Fractions

Though it is hard to find ordinal numerals in daily conversation, it is easy to hear the Ersu using fractions in speech. The structure of a fraction is: cardinal numeral$_1$ (denominator) +*ŋgukə* + cardinal numeral$_2$ (numerator) +*ŋgu*, as is shown in (6. 6).

(6. 6)

Denominator				Numerator				Fraction
NUM	**Gloss**			**NUM**	**Gloss**			
si	'3'	+ *ŋgukə*	+	*tə*	'1'	+ *ŋgu*	→	'1/3'
ts^{h}ɛ	'10'			*ŋgə*	'9'			'9/10'
tɑ+zɑ	'100'			*ts^{h}ɛ+ŋuà*	'15'			'15%'
tə+tu	'1000'			*ts^{h}ɛ+ŋgə*	'19'			'19/1,000'
ɳbots^{h}o	'10000'			*si*	'3'			'3/10,000'

6. 3. 2 Times

When -*ŋgu* is suffixed to a cardinal numeral, then the unit of [cardinal numeral-*ŋgu*] expresses 'times'. The Ersu use times of numerals quite frequently, especially in daily conversation. Examples are given in (6. 7).

(6. 7)

Cardinal Numerals		Suffix		Times	
NUM	**Gloss**			**NUM**	**Gloss**
tə	'one'	-*ŋgu*	→	*tə-ŋgu*	'1 time'
nə	'two'			*nə-ŋgu*	'2 times'
si	'three'			*si-ŋgu*	'3 times'
zò	'four'			*zò-ŋgu*	'4 times'
ŋuà	'five'			*ŋuà-ŋgu*	'5 times'
ts^{h}u	'six'			*ts^{h}u-ŋgu*	'6 times'
sɻ̩	'seven'			*sɻ̩-ŋgu*	'7 times'
ʒɻ	'eight'			*ʒɻ-ŋgu*	'8 times'
ŋgə	'nine'			*ŋgə-ŋgu*	'9 times'
ts^{h}ɛts^{h}ɛ	'ten'			*ts^{h}ɛts^{h}ɛ-ŋgu*	'10 times'
…	…			…	…

6. 3. 3 Origin of *ŋgukə* used for fractions and *-ŋgu* used for times: a hypothesis

I hypothesize that the uses of fractions and times in Ersu might be developed under the influence from Mandarin Chinese.

Firstly, in official Mandarin Chinese, people use *bèi* to denote 'times'. However, *gǔ* 'share', is often employed by those people who never or hardly received any school education and live in rural areas to denote 'times'. For example:

(6. 8) *nǐ=de* *shì* *wǒ=de* *wǔ-gǔ* (MC)
2sg=GEN COP 1sg=GEN five-SFX:share/time
'Yours is five times as much as mine.'

Secondly, under-educated people from rural areas are seldom heard to use the unit of *m-fēnzhi-n* to denote a fraction, in which *m* stands for a denominator and *n* stands for a numerator, as described by Chao (1968: 575) although this sounds more like some sort of "standard Mandarin". However, people whom I mentioned above often use the unit of *m-gǔ(=zhi)-n* to denote a fraction, in which *=zhi* is optionally used. It literally means '*n* share(s) in *m* shares', that is, 'n/m', as in (6. 9).

(6. 9) *sān* *gǔ(=zhi)* *yī* (MC)
three share(=GEN) one
'1/3' Lit: 1 share in 3 shares

Based on the above descriptions, I thus hypothesize that *ŋgu* in Ersu is borrowed and adapted from Mandarin Chinese *gǔ* since the two sound quite similar. Furthermore, *ŋgukə* is the combination of Mandarin Chinese *gǔ* and the indigenous Ersu relator noun *kə* 'RLN.LOC:in'. For example:

(6. 10) *si* *ŋgukə* *tə* *ŋgu*

three ?MC:share(=RLN.LOC:in) one ?MC:share

'1/3' Lit: 1 share in 3 shares

As seen from (6. 9) and (6. 10) above, Ersu and colloquial Mandarin Chinese spoken in rural areas share the same literal meaning, that is, 1 share in 3 shares. Consequently, numerals denoting fractions and times in Ersu are most likely under the influence from Mandarin Chinese.

In addition, the expression of fractions and times is not found in narratives relevant to traditional stories, in which language is comparatively conservative. Furthermore, several older villagers in Lajigu report that when they were young, they did not know how to use fractions and times and they never heard their parents use them. Consequently, the above hypothesis that the origin of *ŋgukə* used for fractions and -*ŋgu* used for times is from Mandarin Chinese might be a plausible guess.

6. 4 Approximate Numeration

"Exact or precise numeration" is discussed in §6. 1. However, if someone has a general idea about the number of referents, for example, "about 5", "approximately 5" or "more than 5" but does not know the precise number, he/she will employ "approximate numeration". There are three ways to express an approximation: use of two consecutive numerals (§6. 4. 1); enclitics *mazɛ* (§6. 4. 2) and *maka* (§6. 4. 3).

6. 4. 1 Use of two consecutive numerals

The co-occurrence of two consecutive numerals in Ersu denotes approximate numeration, especially used in the situation, in which the speaker knows the "approximate" number of referents but is not quite sure of the "exact" number. In this context, the first numeral does not take a classifier but the second numeral must occur with a classifier.

The use of two consecutive numerals encoding approximation can be further divided into the following subsets: numbers smaller than 10 and larger than 20 (§6. 4. 1. 1); numbers from 11 to 19 (§6. 4. 1. 2); "base numbers" (§6. 4. 1. 3) and consecutive numerals ending with a simple numeral and a base number (§6. 4. 1. 4).

6. 4. 1. 1 Numbers smaller than 10 and larger than 20

The use of two consecutive simple numbers can denote the approximation of numbers smaller than 10 and larger than 20. If the number is larger than 20, the bases including *ts^{h}ɿ* 'ten (combining form)', *za* '100', etc., are not repeated, only the simple numerals are used in a consecutive way. For example:

(6. 11)	**NUM**	**Gloss**
	tə, nə-wo	'one, two-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about one or two'
	ŋuà, ts^{h}ɯ-wo	'five, six-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about five or six'
	ʒɿ, ngə-ka	'eight, nine-CL:generic, sticklike:about eight or nine'
	nə+ts^{h}ɿ+si, zò-ka	'two+ten (combining form)+three, four-CL:generic, sticklike:about 23 or 24'
	sa+ts^{h}ɿ+sɿn̩, ʒɿ-ka	'three+ten (combining form)+seven, eight-CL:generic, sticklike:about 37 or 38'
	zò+zɿ+zò, ŋuà-wo	'four+ten (combining form)+four, five-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 44 or 45'
	ta+za+ʒɿ+zɿ+ŋuà, ts^{h}ɯ-wo	'one+hundred+eight+ten (combining form)+five, six-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 185 or 186'

6. 4. 1. 2 Numbers from 11 to 19

The approximation of the numbers from 11 to 19 forms an interesting subset. If the first numeral of the two consecutive numbers is an odd one, the base *ts^{h}ɛ* 'ten (combining form)' should be repeated. In other words, the two consecutive numbers encode approximation. However, if the first numeral of the two consecutive numbers is an even one, the base *ts^{h}ɛ* 'ten (combining form)' is not repeated and only the consecutive simple numbers can function to encode approximation. However, *ts^{h}ɛ* 'ten (combining form)' in the approximation of 'about 16 or 17' is still repeated though the first numeral of the two is an even number, that is, 16. They are all given in (6. 12).

(6. 12)	**NUM**	**Gloss**
	ts^{h}ɛ+tsɿ, ts^{h}ɛ+nə-wo	‘ten (combining form)+?:11, ten (combining form)+two:12 -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 11 or 12’
	ts^{h}ɛ+nə, si-wo	‘ten (combining form)+two:12, three-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 12 or 13’
	ts^{h}ɛ+sa, ts^{h}ɛ+zò-wo	‘ten (combining form)+?three:13, ten (combining form)+four:14 -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 13 or 14’
	ts^{h}ɛ+zò, ŋuà-wo	‘ten (combining form)+four:14, five-CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 14 or 15’
	ts^{h}ɛ+ŋuà, ts^{h}ɛ+ts^{h}u-wo	‘ten (combining form)+five:15, ten (combining form)+six:16 -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 15 or 16’
	ts^{h}ɛ+ts^{h}ù, ts^{h}ɛ+sɿɲ-wo	‘ten (combining form)+six:16, ten (combining form)+seven:17 -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 16 or 17’
	ts^{h}ɛ+sɿɲ, ts^{h}ɛ+ʒɿ-wo	‘ten (combining form)+seven:17, ten (combining form)+eight:17 -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 17 or 18’
	ts^{h}ɛ+ʒɿ, ngə-wo	‘ten (combining form)+eight:18, nine -CL:generic, non-sticklike:about 17 or 18’

6. 4. 1. 3 “Base numbers”

“Base numbers” here refer to the numbers ending with the bases such as *tsɿ* ‘ten’, *za* ‘hundred’, *tu* ‘thousand’ and *nbots^{h}o* ‘ten thousand’. The approximation of numbers such as ‘about forty or fifty’ is expressed through the consecutive simple numerals *zò* ‘four’ and *ŋuà* ‘five’ co-occurring with the only *zɿ* ‘ten (combining form)’. That is, it not acceptable to say *zò+zɿ, ŋuà+zɿ* ‘forty, fifty’, but acceptable to say *zò, ŋuà+zɿ* which literally means ‘four, five tens’. Examples of the approximation of base numbers are given in (6. 13).

(6. 13)	**NUM**	**Gloss**
	nə, sa+ts^{h}ɿ-wo	‘two, three+ten (combining form)-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 20 or 30’
	si, zò+za-wo	‘three, four+hundred-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 300 or 400’
	zò, ŋuà+tu-wo	‘four, five+thousand-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 4, 000 or 5,000’
	ŋuà, ts^{h}u+nbots^{h}u-wo	‘five, six+ten thousand-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 50,000 or 60,000’

6. 4. 1. 4 Consecutive numerals ending with a simple numeral and a base

When there are two consecutive numerals with the first one ending with a base (for example, 20) and the second one ending with a simple numeral (for example, 21), they cannot be used to encode approximation. In other words, it is unacceptable to say things like ‘about 20 or 21’ or ‘about 40 or 41’ in Ersu.

However, two consecutive numerals, with the first one ending with a simple numeral (for example, 19) and the second one ending with a base (for example, 20), can be juxtaposed to encode approximation. Examples are given in (6. 14).

(6. 14)

NUM	**Gloss**
ts^{h}ɛ+ŋgə, nə+ts^{h}ɿ-wo	‘ten (combining form)+nine:19, two+ ten (combining form):20-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 19 or 20’
ts^{h}u+tsɿ+ŋgə, sɿɲ+tsɿ-wo	‘six+ten (combining form)+nine:69, seven+ ten (combining form):70-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 69 or 70’
ŋgə+tsɿ+ŋgə, ta+za-wo	‘nine+ten (combining form)+nine:99, one+hundred: 100-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 99 or 100’
zò+za+ts^{h}ɛ+ŋgə, nə+ts^{h}ɿ-wo	‘four+hundred+ ten (combining form)+nine:119, two+ ten (combining form):20-CL:generic, non-sticklike: about 199 or 120’

6. 4. 2 Enclitic =*mazɛ*

mazɛ ‘more than’ occurs after the unit of [NUM+CL], and [NUM+CL=*mazɛ*], to denote ‘more than …’. This can also encode approximation in Ersu. Examples are given in (6. 15), (6. 16) and (6. 17).

(6. 15) *su* *tə+tu-wo=mazɛ*

person one+thousand -CL:generic, non-sticklike= more than

‘more than 1,000 people’

(6. 16) *si* *nə+ tsʰɿ-ka=mazɛ*

wood two+ten (combining form)-CL:generic, sticklike=more than

'more than 20 pieces of woods'

(6. 17) *ŋuà* *ta+ za* *ŋua=mazɛ*

ox one+hundred RPT:ox=more than

'more than 100 oxen'

6. 4. 3 Enclitic =*maka*

The enclitic *maka* 'approximate' also occurs after the unit of [NUM+CL] to denote approximation. [NUM+CL=*maka*] means 'approximately…' For example:

(6. 18) *su* *tə+ tu-wo=maka*

person one+thousand:1,000-CL:generic, non-sticklike=approximate

'approximately 1,000 people'

(6. 19) *si* *nətsʰɿ-ka=maka*

tree two+ten(combining form):20-CL: generic, sticklike=approximate

'approximately twenty trees'

(6. 20) *ŋuà* *ta+ za* *ŋua=maka*

ox one+hundred:100 RPT:ox=approximate

'approximately 100 oxen'

6. 5 Current Status of Numerals in Ersu

The daily uses of numerals may provide the best evidence that Ersu, like many other "smaller" languages in China, is being seriously threatened by the dominant language Mandarin Chinese.

Firstly, Ersu numeration has the tendency to undergo a strong Mandarin influence

not only lexically but also syntactically. Terms denoting fractions and times display an intergration of Ersu and Mandarin Chinese, as discussed in §6. 3.

Secondly, ordinal numerals are in the process of extinction (§6. 2). Only a few villagers over 70 years old can still remember how to derive an ordinal numeral from a cardinal numeral and none of the Ersu that I consulted in Lajigu still uses indigenous Ersu ordinal numerals in speech. Instead, all of them use Mandarin ordinal numerals in daily conversation. I also had the experience in the field that when some of the older people tentatively used Ersu ordinal numerals in conversations at my requests, none of the younger people under 20 years old can understand what the older people were talking about.

Finally, although terms denoting "smaller" numbers, especially the simple numerals smaller than 10, are still very active in speech, cardinal numerals larger than 100 are almost replaced by Mandarin Chinese in the Ersu's daily life, except for the "base numbers" (§6. 4. 1. 3) such as *zò+za* 'four+hundred: 400', *ŋuà+tu* 'five+thousand: 5,000 and *ts^{h}u+ɲbots^{h}o* 'six+ten thousand:60,000.

People are under such great influence from Mandarin Chinese that some of my language consultants spontaneously and subconsciously used Mandarin numerals even if they were eager to show me their "genuine Ersu" language when I was collecting the data in the field. They either appeared to be hesitating in using indigenous Ersu numerals, or directly employed Mandarin numerals when they were reporting a larger number, especially when those data about historical narratives or biographies involve the expression of years such as 1976 and 1981.

Chapter 7 Nominal and Verbal Action Classification[95]

This chapter discusses the classification system of nominals, and verbal actions in Ersu. §7. 1 presents the Ersu nominal classification system which consists of gender differentiation devices, noun classifiers, numeral classifiers, repeaters and existential verbs. §7. 2 demonstrates the Ersu verbal action classification devices that function to classify verbal actions.

7. 1 Nominal Classification System

Ersu has a well-developed nominal classification system. It is a language that allows "the coexistence of different classifier types" (Aikhenvald 1998). They include gender differentiation devices, noun classifiers, numeral classifiers and repeaters. Gender differentiation devices are suffixed to the root and encode the masculinity and the femininity of a referent (§7. 1. 1). Noun classifiers never co-occur with a numeral and only function to "highlight" the physical properties of a head noun (§7. 1. 2). Numeral classifiers obligatorily follow a numeral in the context of enumeration. They are quite rich and form a semi-open word class (§7. 1. 3). Ersu has ten repeater-type classifiers (Aikhenvald 2000: 103), or auto-classifiers (Matisoff 2003b). These are used to classify nouns, referring to objects which are either quite important or tightly linked to the Ersu people's daily life and living surroundings (§7. 1. 4). There are five existential verbs found in Ersu which distinguish between animate vs. inanimate referents, concrete vs. abstract referents, movable vs. unmovable referents, possession vs. location/existence (§7. 1. 5). They can also be considered as a type of nominal classificatory device (Aikhenvald 2000: 155-56).

7. 1. 1 Gender differentiation devices

Gender differentiation in Ersu can be realized either through suffixation or through inherently gender-encoding words. There are eight suffixes encoding masculinity and one suffix encoding femininity. They are given in Table 7. 1.

[95] A version of this chapter was published as Zhang (2012a).

Semantics		MAS	FEM
generic		*-pʰa*	*-ma*
specific & nearly adolescent	*ŋua* 'ox'; *ɳbò* 'horse'	*-xa*	
specific & adult	human	*-zì*	
	ŋua 'ox'		
	dzo+ŋua 'water buffalo'	*-bu*	
	tsʰi 'goat'		
	yo 'sheep for reproduction'	*-la*	
	vɛ 'pig for reproduction'		
	vɛ 'emasculated pig'	*-tsʰo*	
	da 'emasculated sheep'	/[96]	
specific & adult or non-adult	*la*	*-pʰɛ*	
	ɱdzŋ 'cat'		
	Proper name suffixation	*-zà*	
Others		*ɬa-pʰa* 'moon'	*ɳo-ma* 'sun'
		gu-pʰa 'mouse'	*ʂə-ma* 'louse'
			psŋ-ma 'toad'
			dzu-ma 'fox'

Table 7. 1 List and distribution of Ersu gender suffixes

Table 7. 1 indicates that the gender suffixes are not equally productive. Although the suffix denoting femininity is quite simple and only *-ma* '-SFX.FEM' is used for this, the suffixes denoting masculinity are fairly complex. The choice of many suffixes used for masculinity is culturally specific and dependent on the specific referent that they follow except for the generic gender suffix *-pʰa* '-SFX.MAS' that can be extensively used for different referents (§7. 1. 1. 1). Table 7. 1 also demonstrates that gender differentiation in Ersu mainly involves human beings (§7. 1. 1. 2), domesticated animals closely associated with the Ersu's life such as oxen, pigs, sheep and horses (§7. 1. 1. 3) and other referents that "customarily" take a gender suffix such as chicken, cat, moon, sun, mouse, and toad (§7. 1. 1. 4). Those referents whose gender is considered less important are not attested with gender differentiation, including most of the wild animals, plants, birds, reptiles, insects, natural phenomena, and other poultry such as geese and ducks that are said to be introduced to the Ersu communities from the neighboring communities such as Han or Yi ethnic group. In

[96] No masculine gender classifier is used for *da* 'an emasculated sheep' because the word *da* itself is used for a castrated male sheep.

addition, a gender suffix is not an indispensible morpheme of a term encoding a referent except for those lexicalized suffixes. Otherwise, they are only used in context where a speaker "highlights" the gender of a referent (§7. 1. 1. 5) in speech.

7. 1. 1. 1 Generic masculine suffix *-pʰa* and feminine suffix *-ma*

-pʰa '-SFX.MAS' functions as a generic classifier which indicates masculinity. It can be used to encode almost all referents that are thought to be masculine except for some of the referents that may take a specific masculine gender suffix as listed in Table 7. 1. For example:

(7. 1)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	tsʰo-pʰa	'dog-SFX.MAS:male dog or unmarried young person'
	nbò-pʰa	'horse-SFX.MAS:male horse'
	vɛ-pʰa	'pig-SFX.MAS:male pig'
	ŋuà-pʰa	'ox-SFX.MAS:male ox'

My experience is that even if there are some referents that may take a specific masculine suffix, it is also understandable and acceptable to use *-pʰa* '-SFX.MAS' to encode their masculinity. For example: *la* 'chicken' always takes *-pʰɛ* '-SFX.MAS' to encode its masculinity. However, when I use *la-pʰa* 'chicken-SFX.MAS', my language consultants also confirm that it is accepted although they think that *la-pʰa* 'chicken-SFX.MAS' does not sound very "native".

The feminine suffix *-ma* is more widely used than the masculine suffix *-pʰa* as shown in Table 7. 1. It can denote femininity of all female referents since it is the only suffix that encodes femininity in Ersu. For example:

(7. 2)

Ex.	Gloss
ts^{h}o-ma	‘dog-SFX.FEM:female dog’
nbò-ma	‘horse-SFX.FEM:female horse’
la-ma	‘pig-SFX.FEM:female pig’
ɱ̩dzɿ-ma	‘cat-SFX.FEM:female cat’
vɛ-ma	‘pig-SFX.FEM:female pig’
yo-ma	‘sheep-SFX.FEM:female sheep

7. 1. 1. 2. Human gender differentiation

The differentiation of human genders shows a great diversity in terms of a specific referent. This can be realized through suffixation or terms that inherently denote masculinity or femininity as shown in Table 7. 2.

Subtype	Gender	Term		Gloss	
child	masculine	*yadzə*	*ŋuà+la=su*	‘child’	‘ox+plough=NOM:ox-plougher’
	feminine		*dzo+ tɕ^{h}i=su*		‘water+carry=NOM:water-carrier’
unmarried	masculine	*ts^{h}o-p^{h}a*		‘dog-SFX.MAS:unmarried person’	
	feminine				
married	masculine	*lili-zɿ̀*		‘?-SFX.MAS:married man’	
	feminine	*zixi*		‘married woman’	
aged	masculine	*ɑ-pu*		‘KPFX-grandfather’	
	feminine	*ɑ-wa*		‘KPFX-grandmother’	
kinship	masculine	*ʔi-za*		‘?-SFX.MAS:son’	
	feminine	*zìyì*		‘daughter’	
	masculine	*ɱ̩-p^{h}a*		‘?-SFX.MAS:male opposite gender sibling’	
	feminine	*xi-ma*		‘?-SFX.MAS:female opposite gender sibling’	
proper noun	masculine	*ndzɑ-p^{h}a*		‘Han-SFX.MAS:Han man’	
		nuɑ-p^{h}a		‘Yi-SFX.MAS:Yi man’	
		mutɬi-zà		‘Yi:second son-SFX.MAS:male name’	
		amu-zà		‘Yi:first son-SFX.MAS:male name’	
	feminine	*ndzɑ-ma*		‘Han-SFX.FEM:Han woman’	
		nuɑ-ma		‘Yi-SFX.FEM:Yi woman’	
		zintʂ^{h}ə-ma		‘?-SFX.FEM:female name’	
		yondzɑ-ma		‘?-SFX.FEM:female name’	

Table 7. 2 Ersu human gender differentiation

As can be seen from Table 7. 2, many terms for different groups of human beings take the suffix *-ma* ‘SFX.FEM’ to denote femininity, such as

xi-ma '?-SFX.MAS:female opposite gender sibling' and *nua-ma* 'Yi-SFX.FEM:Yi woman'. There are three masculine suffixes used for a male referent. They are: *-zì*, *-p^ha* and *-zà*, all used to encode masculinity. For example: *lili-zì* '?-SFX.MAS:married man', *ɱ-p^ha* '?- SFX.MAS: male opposite gender sibling' and *amu-zà* 'Yi:first son-SFX.MAS:male name'. However, terms for children and those people who are unmarried do not have a gender distinction in general. More specifically, *yadzə* 'child' and *ts^ho-p^ha* 'unmarried person'[97] can respectively refer to a child and an unmarried person without considering their gender. Note that in the Ersu culture, a person who is not married is always viewed as a non-adult without considering his/her age. In other words, they are treated as if they were a child. This might be the reason why the term for an unmarried person does not show a masculine and feminine distinction, just as Aikhenvald (2006a) states that a child could be viewed as "a residue gender with no clear semantic basis". A child's gender may be differentiated when it was just born and people were interested in its gender. In this situation, people use *ŋuà+la=su* 'ox+ plough=NOM:ox-plougher' to denote a newly-born male child and *dzo+$tɕ^hi$= su* 'water+carry=NOM:water-carrier' to denote a newly-born female child, respectively. These are in fact different vocations or social role that a male and a female undertook in previous time. That is, a man's duty was to drive an ox to plough fields while a woman's duty was to carry water for the family. In addition, there are also some terms that inherently differentiate genders without taking a gender suffix. For example: *zixi* 'married woman' and *ɑ-wa* 'KPFX-grandmother: grandmother'.

7. 1. 1. 3 Masculine gender suffixes used for domesticated animals

Domesticated animals that are closely associated with or are quite important to the Ersu's life can take different masculine suffixes in terms of their age or their reproduction ability. These animals include ox (§7. 1. 1. 3. 1), horse (§7. 1. 1. 2. 2), sheep, goat and pig (§7. 1. 1. 3. 3). Oxen and horses are important to the Ersu because

[97] *ts^ho-p^ha* 'dog-SFX.MAS:unmarried person' taking a is figuratively used to denote an unmarried person. This is further discussed in §7. 1. 3. 1.

they help them with farming work and transportation. Sheep, goats and pigs are also important because they provide meat sources to the Ersu. This might be the reason why terms for these animals take comparatively complex gender suffixes. Similar phenomena are also found in some Mayan languages, for example, Jacaltec, in which noun classifiers reflect the world where people are living (Aikhenvald 2000: 283-85; Craig 1986).

7. 1. 1. 3. 1 Masculine gender suffixes used for *ŋuà* 'ox'

There are four different masculine suffixes affixed to a root denoting different types of oxen. For example:

(7. 3) *ŋuà-pʰa* *ta* *ŋuà*
ox-SFX.MAS one RPT:ox
'a male ox (generic)'

(7. 4) *ŋuà-xa* *ta* *ŋuà*
ox-SFX.MAS one RPT:ox
'a male ox (nearly adolescent)'

(7. 5) *ŋuà-zɿ̀* *ta* *ŋuà*
ox-SFX.MAS one RPT:ox
'a male ox (adult)'

(7. 6) *dzo+ŋuà-bu* *ta* *ŋuà*
water+ox:water buffalo-SFX.MAS one RPT:ox
'a male water buffalo (adult)'

7. 1. 1. 3. 2 Masculine gender suffixes used for *nbò* 'horse'

There are two masculine gender suffixes affixed to a root denoting different types of horses. For example:

(7. 7) *ɲbò-pʰa* *tə* *ɲbò*

horse-SFX.MAS one RPT:horse

'a male horse (both young and adult)'

(7. 8) *ɲbò-xa* *tə* *ɲbò*

horse-SFX.MAS one RPT:horse

'a male horse (nearly adolescent)'

7. 1. 1. 3. 3 Masculine gender suffixes used for *yo* 'sheep', *tsʰi* 'goat' and *vɛ* 'pig'

Since pork and mutton are important meat sources for Ersu people, male sheep and pigs are either kept for reproduction, or emasculated for producing meat. Accordingly, there are different masculine suffixes denoting their reproduction ability and emasculation. For example:

(7. 9) *yo-la* *tɑ-ka*

sheep-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a male sheep (for reproduction)'

(7. 10) *da* *tɑ-ka*

sheep.EMAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a male sheep (emasculated)'

(7. 11) *vɛ-la* *tə-wo*

pig-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a male pig (emasculated)'

(7. 12) *vɛ-tsʰo* *tɑ-ka*

pig-SFX.EMAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a male pig (emasculated)'

(7. 13) *tsʰi-bu* *tɑ-ka*

goat-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a male goat (adult)'

7. 1. 1. 4 Gender suffixes used for other referents

Terms for some referents may "customarily" take some particular gender suffixes. The reason for this is unknown. For example, the masculine suffix *-pʰɛ* '-SFX.MAS' is only used for a male chicken and a male cat. For example:

(7. 14) a. *lɑ-pʰɛ* *tɑ-ka*

chicken-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a rooster'

b. *m̩dzɿ-pʰɛ* *tə-wo*

cat-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a male cat'

A mouse is always associated with masculinity no matter whether it is male or female. A louse and a toad are always associated with femininity regardless of its actual sex. For example:

(7. 15) *gu-pʰa* *tə-wo*

mouse-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a mouse (either male or female)'

(7. 16) *ʂ̩ə-ma* *tɑ-ka*

louse-SFX.MAS one-CL:generic, sticklike

'a louse (either male or female)'

(7. 17) *psɳ-ma* *tə-wo*

flat-SFX.MAS:toad one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a toad (either male or female)'

In addition, the sun always takes a feminine suffix *-ma* '-SFX.FEM' while the moon always takes a masculine suffix *-pʰa* '-SFX.MAS' as shown in Table 7. 1. This might be due to mythological association (Bani 1987; Dixon 1972:308). There is a mythical story about the origin of the sun and the moon in the Ersu communities. It says that many, many years ago, there were three brothers and one sister. They went and cut trees in a mountain every day. Then, a god in heaven came down and stopped them from cutting trees once and for all. This irritated the two eldest brothers and they were planning to kill the god. However, the youngest brother and the sister let out the secret to the god. The god got very angry with the two brothers, created huge floods and drowned them. Before the flooding, the god made the youngest brother and the sister stay and sleep in a hollow tree trunk with his magic power. Then, the brother and the sister survived the flooding. When they saw that the earth was completely dark after the flooding, they were determined to give light to human beings in turn. After their discussion, the brother was on a night shift and the sister was on a day shift because she would feel dreadful if she had to go out at night. Finally, they became the sun and the moon in the sky, respectively. This is reflected in Ersu language, *ɬa-pʰa* 'moon-SFX.MAS:the moon' is "masculine" and *ɲo-ma* 'sun-SFX.FEM:the sun' is "feminine".

7. 1. 1. 5 Gender differentiation device: optional or obligatory?

A gender differentiation device is optionally suffixed to a root when it is a lexical word on its own. It is used only in the situation when the gender of a referent is highlighted. For example:

(7. 18) a. *ȵbò-ma* *tə* *ȵbò*

horse-SFX.FEM one RPT:horse

'a female horse'

b. *ȵbò* *tə* *ȵbò*

horse one RPT:horse

'a horse'

(7. 18) shows that *ȵbò* 'horse' as a lexical word can either take a gender suffix (7. 18a) or does not take it (7. 18b). Both (7. 18a) and (7. 18b) are grammatically correct. The difference between them is that in (7. 18a), the gender of the horse is highlighted.

Furthermore, a person's name taking a gender suffix (see Table 7. 2) is only used when an older or a person of a higher generation talks about the referent. This functions to encode friendliness and intimateness. For example: in *amu-zà* 'Yi:the eldest son-SFX.MAS:Amu', *-zà* '-SFX.MAS' can be omitted when a speaker is younger than the referent Amu or does not want to show friendliness and intimateness.

However, when the root is not a lexical word, or when it is a lexical word, but encoding a referent different from the one that co-occurs with a gender suffix, a suffix is obligatory because in this situation, the gender suffixes have been lexicalized. For example: the suffix *-ma* '-SFX.FEM' in the noun *ȵo-ma* 'sun-SFX.FEM:the sun' should be always used. Otherwise, the sole *ȵo* would mean 'day' rather than 'the sun'. Words like this including the above mentioned *m̩-pʰa* '?-SFX.MAS:male opposite gender sibling', *lili-zì* '?-SFX.MAS:married man', *psʅ-ma* 'flat-SFX.FEM:toad', *xi-ma* '?-SFX.FEM:female opposite gender sibling', etc.

7. 1. 2 Noun classifiers

Noun classifiers in Ersu refer to the classifiers which are bound morphemes,

always following an Nh and categorizing it, but are not "obligatory in a noun phrase" (Aikhenvald 2006a). §7. 1. 2. 1 presents all the five noun classifiers attested in Ersu. §7. 1. 2. 2 shows the differences between noun classifiers and numeral classifiers. Noun classifiers are quite similar to adjectives in Ersu, but they are different from each other in many respects. §7. 1. 2. 3 discusses the similarities and differences between noun classifiers and adjectives.

7. 1. 2. 1 Semantics, functions and uses of noun classifiers

The major function of a noun classifier is to highlight the Nh in terms of its physical properties, such as shape, animacy or non-animacy, human or non-human. There are five noun classifiers found in Ersu. They are given in Table 7. 3.

NCL	Type of Nh to follow	Semantics
pulili	animals and human beings	fat and short in shape with smooth skin or fur
	inanimates (balls of thread and metal devices)	irregular roundish shape and (often) no smaller than a fist, often ball-like
	fruits and root vegetables	irregular roundish shape and (often) no smaller than a basketball
	mountains and hills	ball-like
kaka	fruits and root vegetables	irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist
mama[98]	inanimates, fruits and root vegetables	round and smaller than a fist, often pearl-like
wawa	inanimates	round and plane
ts^{h}uts^{h}u	living plants (like bushes, crops and grass)	tuft-like

Table 7. 3 Ersu noun classifiers

Noun classifiers in Ersu are only used by the speakers to focus on the physical properties of an Nh, especially in explaining things to children or non-Ersu speakers. For example:

[98] The morpheme *mama* is polysemous. When *mama* is used to denote the birth order of siblings, it means "the youngest". In this situation, it can occur on its own.

(7. 19) *otɕa=kaka*

pear=NCL:irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist

tə-wo

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a pear'

(7. 20) *ʂa=tsʰutsʰu* *tə-pu*

wheat=NCL: tuft-like one-CL:living plant

'a tuft of wheat'

(7. 21) *xantʂə=mama*

grape=NCL: round and smaller than a fist, often pearl-like

tɑ-pa

one-CL:three-dimensional, often pearl-like

'a grape'

(7. 22) *qiú=pulili* *tə-wo*

MC:ball=NCL:ball-like one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a ball'

(7. 23) *vɛ=pulili*

pig=NCL:fat and short in shape with smooth skin or fur

tə-wo

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a fat, short and smooth pig'

(7. 24) *ɬa-pʰa= wawa*

moon-SFX.MAS:the moon= round and plane

tə- wo

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'the moon (round)'

7. 1. 2. 2 Noun classifiers vs. numeral classifiers

As can be seen from (7. 19) to (7. 24) above, a noun classifier does not follow a numeral, but follows an Nh. The enumerative function is undertaken by the unit of [NUM+CL] even if an NP contains a noun classifier, then forming an NP construction of [Nh=NCL [NUM+CL]$_{ENUM}$]. This mainly contributes to the differentiation between noun classifiers (without an enumerative function) and numeral classifiers (whose main function is to enumerate) in Ersu. For example:

(7. 25) a. *pu* *tə- wo*

potato one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a potato'

b. *pu= kaka*

potato=NCL:irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist

tə- wo

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a potato'

Examples (7. 25a) and (7. 25b) illustrate the differences between noun classifiers and numeral classifiers in Ersu. (7. 25a) takes a generic numeral classifier -*wo* while (7. 25b) takes a noun classifier *kaka* and also the same numeral classifier -*wo*. (7. 25a) and (7. 25b) show no transparent semantic difference. In daily conversation, a native speaker prefers (7. 25a) to (7. 25b). (7. 25b) is only used in the situation where the speaker aims to highlight the shape of a potato. Therefore, an NP in Ersu optionally

takes a noun classifier. The optional use of a noun classifier in an NP also demonstrates that "noun classifiers" in Ersu are not equivalent to bound morphemes or bound adjectives in a noun compound because a morpheme in a compound is an indispensable component and can never be omitted.

7. 1. 2. 3 Noun classifiers vs. adjectives

Ersu noun classifiers are quite similar to adjectives. Firstly, their morphology is quite similar, that is, many of them are inherently reduplicated (see Table 7. 3 and §3. 3. 1. 3). Secondly, they occupy the same slot in an NP, that is, both occur between the Nh and the unit of [NUM+CL]. For example:

(7. 26) a. *minpʰu* *ya-ntɕʰo*
pearl PFX-beautiful
ta-pa
one-CL:regular or irregular roundish, often no bigger than a fist
'a beautiful pearl'

b. *minpʰu=mama*
pearl=NCL: round and smaller than a fist, often pearl-like
ta-pa
one-CL:regular or irregular roundish, often no bigger than a fist
'a pearl'

However, several factors distinguish noun classifiers from adjectives in Ersu:

First of all, a noun classifier is a bound morpheme while an adjective is an independent word that can stand freely in a specific context.

Moreover, a noun classifier denotes the permanent physical properties of an Nh (Table 7. 3) while what an adjective denotes is often temporary. For example, the

shape of a referent, as in Examples from (7. 19) to (7. 24) and (7. 25b), (7. 26b) above, is constant while the looks of a referent, as in Example (7. 26a), might not last forever.

Thirdly, noun classifiers and adjectives can occur in the same NP. In other words, an Nh with a noun classifier can be further modified by an adjective. An NP like [Nh= NCL ADJ NUM+CL] is thus acceptable in Ersu. For example, the combination of (7. 26a) with (7. 26b) can form a new NP, as in (7. 26c).

(7. 26) c. *minpʰu=mama* *ya-ntɕʰo*
pearl=NCL:round and smaller than a fist, often pearl-like PFX-beautiful
ta-pa
one CL:regular or irregular roundish, often no bigger than a fist
'a beautiful pearl'

Fourthly, an adjective can often act as the head of an NP in an anaphoric context, but a noun classifier can never be used in this way. For example:

(7. 27) a. *ya-ntɕʰo* *tə-wo*
PFX-beautiful one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'a beautiful (daughter)'

*b. *kaka* *tə-wo*
NCL one-CL: generic, non-sticklike
'a round and ball-like thing'

Fifthly, an adjective can be negated while a noun classifier cannot, as in (7. 28).

(7. 28) a. *ma-ʒuʒu*
NEG:not-harmonious
'not harmonious'

b. **ma-kaka*

NEG:not-NCL:irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist

'not irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist'

Finally, an adjective can operate as a stative verb, but a noun classifier cannot be used in this way. For example:

(7. 29)	a.	*tʰə=zɿ̀*	*zì-mò*	*ya-ntʂʰə*	*tə*
		3sg.PRST=GEN:family	wife-SFX.FEM	PFX-clever	PART.DES
		'His wife is clever.'			

	*b.	*tʰə =zɿ̀*	*pu*
		3sg.PRST=GEN:family	potato
		=kaka= tə	
		NCL:irregularly round and (often) no smaller than a fist=DES	
		'His potatoes are round and no smaller than a fist.'	

To conclude, noun classifiers share similarities with numeral classifiers in Ersu because they both categorize an Nh in terms of its physical properties. However, they are different from each other because noun classifiers never follow a numeral while numeral classifiers always occur with a numeral with the exception of *tə* 'one' (§7. 1. 3). Moreover, a noun classifier is not a bound morpheme of a noun compound since they are optionally used to modify an Nh. Though noun classifiers are similar to adjectives both in morphology and in syntactic slot within an NP, they are in fact distinctive in many aspects as discussed above. Consequently, noun classifiers in Ersu can be established as a subtype of nominal classifiers, being separate from the numeral classifier type or from the adjectival word class.

7. 1. 3 Numeral classifiers

Ersu numeral classifiers have a close association with numerals. They obligatorily follow a numeral except the numeral *tə* 'one'. Consequently, an Nh is enumerated by the unit of [NUM+CL] rather than a bare numeral, as mentioned in §7. 1. 2. 2. Sun (1988) hypothesizes that if a Tibeto-Burman language has an enumerative construction such as [NUM+CL], the language might have a well-developed classifier system with a fairly large number of numeral classifiers. This is the case in Ersu. Both "sortal classifiers" (§7. 1. 3. 1) and "mensural classifiers" (§7. 1. 3. 2) are attested in the language. A sortal classifier categorizes the Nh in terms of its "inherent properties" such as animacy, shape, dimensionality, arrangement, kinship, etc. (e.g. Craig 1992; Aikhenvald 1998, 2000: 115, 2004b, 2006a). A mensural classifier denotes "an entity which is employed in, which is an abstract standard of, or which is the result of grouping, division or measurement of some other entity or entities" (Post 2007: 386). In Ersu, there are also some numeral classifiers that not only denote the inherent properties of an Nh but also "group/divide" it or "measure" its quantity. They are defined as "sortal-mensural classifiers" in this paper (§7. 1. 3. 3) in order to differentiate them from "sortal classifiers" or "mensural classifiers". For example:

(7. 30) *ʈʂu* *tɑ-pɑ^{l}*
bean one-CL:three dimensional (small, roundish and of small quantity)
'a few beans'

In (7. 30), the numeral classifier *-pɑ^{l}* not only categorizes the Nh *ʈʂu* 'bean' that is roundish in shape, small in size but also measures its quantity, that is, 'a few'.

There are two forms of numeral classifiers in Ersu: bound forms and free forms. Bound forms, whose origins are unknown, can only act as classifiers. These classifiers constitute a closed class of morphemes. Free forms are those classifiers that have been grammaticalized from nouns and verbs. When they are used as nouns or verbs, they used as free words in context. However, when they are used as classifiers, they

obligatorily occur with a numeral. The data demonstrate that all terms denoting a container can be used as a mensural classifier and that all temporal terms can be used as time classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 4). This demonstrates that mensural classifiers and time classifiers form an open word class. Consequently, numeral classifiers as an entirety are a "semi-open" class in Ersu.

Numeral classifiers in Ersu can help differentiate the meanings of a polysemous Nh, specify the referential value of an Nh, denote the degree of intimacy, and so on. The pragmatic functions of numeral classifiers are discussed in §7. 1. 3. 5.

7. 1. 3. 1 Sortal classifiers

Ersu sortal classifiers can be further subcategorized as generic classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 1), shape classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 2), consistency and inherent nature classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 3), arrangement classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 4), family group classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 5) and specific classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 6).

7. 1. 3. 1. 1 Generic classifiers

Similar to Lizu (Chirkova 2012) and Liangshan Yi (Hu & Sha 2005) in which there are two "general classifiers", there are also two bound morphemes, *-wo* and *-ka*, used as generic classifiers in Ersu. They share some semantic similarities with Mandarin Chinese *gè* (*-wo*) and *tiáo* (*-ka*). *-wo* is associated with almost all "non-sticklike" referents and *-ka* is used for almost all "sticklike or elongated" objects. They can categorize both animate and inanimate referents. Besides this, they are also observed to modify a conceptually abstract Nh (Table 7. 4). Their semantic range is so broad that small children in Lajigu are seen to categorize objects with either *-wo* or *-ka* in the early stage of their mother tongue acquisition.

Referent		Examples	
		-wo	*-ka*
animate	**human**	*yadzẹ̀ sɨ-wo* child three-CL:non-sticklike 'three children'	
	animal	*vɛ nə-wo* pig two-CL:non-sticklike 'two pigs'	*bɛəˡ nɑ-ka* snake two-CL:sticklike 'two snakes'
	body parts	*vùlìè tə-wo* head one-CL:non-sticklike 'a head'	*sɻpsɻ tɑ-ka* tongue one-CL:sticklike 'a tongue'
	plant	*pu sɨ-wo* potato three-CL:non-sticklike 'three potatoes'	*dzɛ sɨ-ka* grass one-CL:sticklike 'three pieces of grass'
inanimate	**concrete**	*əˡkʰua sɻɨ-wo* stone seven-CL:non-sticklike 'seven stones'	*pzɻ sɻɨ-ka* rope seven-CL:sticklike 'seven ropes'
	abstract	*əˡẹ̀sɑ-wo* society-CL:non-sticklike 'society'	*sòmò tɑ-ka* strength one-CL:sticklike 'strength'

Table 7. 4 Examples with the generic numeral classifiers *-wo* and *-ka*

Table 7. 4 indicates that the two generic classifiers *-wo* and *-ka* can be used to cover a broad range of terms including those loanwords. *-wo* categorizes non-sticklike referents and *-ka* is employed for elongated things except for those "shapeless" abstract nouns. Abstract nouns are quite marginal in the indigenous Ersu vocabulary (§4. 3). They are associated either with *-wo* or with *-ka*. However, the assignment of the two generic classifiers to a specific abstract noun seems to be arbitrary. For example, the reasons why the abstract noun *əˡẹ̀sɑ* 'society' occurs with *-wo* whereas the abstract noun *sòmò* 'strength' is associated with *-ka* are hard to explain.

In addition, *-ka* 'generic and elongated' is associated with animate male referents especially when a speaker wants to highlight the masculinity of a referent. This might be because male genital organs are "sticklike". For example:

(7. 31) a. *la* *nə-wo*

chicken two-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'two chicken/hens/roosters'

b. *la-pʰɛ* *na-ka*

chicken-SFX.MAS:rooster two-CL:generic, sticklike

'two roosters'

(7. 31a) implies that when the generic classifier *-wo* is used, the meaning of *la* 'chicken' is general, referring to either a chicken or a hen or a rooster. When the gender of *la* is highlighted with a suffix *-pʰɛ* denoting masculine as in (7. 31b), the generic classifier *-ka* is employed for *la-pʰɛ* 'chicken-SFX.MAS:rooster'. That is, there is a mild correlation between "natural gender" (Aikhenvald 2012) and classifier choice in Ersu.

A similar phenomenon can be found in the situation where *-ka* is used for human beings. Table 7. 4 shows that *-ka* is not used for the categorization of human beings. However, one exception is that while talking about young and unmarried adults, people are sometimes heard to use *-ka* in a joking way. For example:

(7. 32) a. *tʂʰo-pʰa* *si-ka*

dog-SFX.MAS:young and unmarried man three-CL:generic, sticklike

'three young and unmarried men'

b. *tʂʰo-pʰa-ma*

dog-SFX.MAS- SFX.FEM:young and unmarried woman

si-ka

three-CL:generic, sticklike

'three young and unmarried women'

Actually, the two examples in (7. 32) are figurative expressions, in which *ʈʂʰo-pʰa* 'dog-SFX.MAS' originally refers to 'a male dog' that is passionate and energetic in the Ersu's viewpoint. *ʈʂʰo-pʰa* 'dog-SFX.MAS:male dog' denotes a 'young and unmarried man'. The suffix *-ma* denoting femininity is added to *ʈʂʰo-pʰa* 'dog-SFX.MAS:male dog' to form a new word *ʈʂʰo-pʰa-ma* 'dog-SFX.MAS: male dog-SFX.FEM', denoting a 'young and unmarried woman'. This is because people of the two types are often "passionate and energetic", like male dogs, according to my language consultants' interpretation. Consequently, when people are talking about a young and unmarried man or woman in a joking way, they often use (7. 32) with the generic classifier *-ka* without considering the referents' gender differences.

There is only one example that seems to "violate" all the above described principles for the uses of the two generic classifiers in the data; see (7. 33).

(7. 33) *ʂə-ma* *ta-ka*
louse-SFX.FEM one-CL:generic, sticklike
'a louse'

A louse is often small and round and the term *ʂə-ma* 'louse-SFX.FEM' takes the suffix *-ma* '-SFX.FEM'. However, when the Ersu are talking about a louse, they employ *-ka* 'generic and sticklike'. Some of my language consultants explain that because a louse is too small to be seen, when people report the existence of a louse on their head or body, they have to base their judgment on their feelings of the route that a louse crawls. I thus conclude that *-ka* 'generic and sticklike' is used to categorize a louse, a "small and roundish" referent, maybe because the "route" that it crawls is "sticklike and elongated".

7. 1. 3. 1. 2 Shape classifiers

Shape classifiers categorize an Nh in terms of its dimensionality and form.

According to Aikhenvald (2000: 271-274), the term "dimensionality" refers to three values: one-dimensional (elongated or sticklike), two-dimensional (flat or paper-like) and three-dimensional (spherical or ball/pearl-like). As discussed in §7. 1. 3. 1. 1, one-dimensional is expressed through the generic classifier -*ka* 'generic and sticklike', and the generic classifier -*wo* may denote non-sticklike referents including two- and three-dimensional objects. Besides -*ka* and -*wo* that may be used to denote shape, there are another seven numeral classifiers in Ersu that are closely associated with the shape of an Nh. They often convey further information about the Nh such as size, thickness, regularity and so on besides dimensionality (Table 7. 5).

CL		Semantics	Examples
bound	*tsʅ*	two-dimensional (irregularly roundish, interior- hollowed and ring-like)	*tɕaku ŋgə-tsʅ* shackle nine-CL 'a shackle with nine rings'[99]
	pa[100]	three-dimensional (regular or irregular roundish, often no bigger than a fist)	*tʂu nɑ-pa* bean two- CL 'two beans'
	ŋbu	three-dimensional (irregularly roundish and lump-like, often rubbish things)	*vɛ tso nə-ŋbu* pig excrement two-CL 'two piles of pig excrements'
	p^hua	two-dimensional (thin, flat and paper-like)	*vùlà tɑ-p^hua* cloth one-CL/CL 'a piece of cloth'
free	*ts^ha*		*vula ta ts^ha* cloth one CL 'a piece of cloth'
	ŋts^{h}a	two-dimensional (flat and paper- or brick-like)	*vula ta ŋts^{h}a* cloth one CL 'a piece of cloth' *vɛ+ʂʅ ta ŋts^{h}a* pig+meat:pork one CL 'a piece of pork'
	tɕo	three-dimensional (irregular roundish and oval-shaped)	*ə^{1}k^{h}ua tə tɕo* stone two CL 'two oval-shaped stones'

Table 7. 5 List of Ersu numeral classifiers referring to shape[101]

[99] Literally, *tɕaku ŋgə tsʅ* means 'nine ring shackle'. However, numerals may function as quantifiers in Ersu, as is the case in Mandarin Chinese or Vietnamese (Daley 1998: 55). *ŋgə* 'nine' often means 'many'. Consequently, *tɕaku ŋgə tsʅ* actually means 'a shackle with many rings'. Also see Table 7. 7.

[100] *pa* is a polysemous classifier. It can also be used to categorize 'non-adult human beings or livestock'. The classifier can also have overtones of intimacy and endearment. Details are given in §7. 1. 3. 5.

[101] Table 7. 5 indicates that bound classifiers and free classifiers show no syntactic differences when they are used to classify the head noun.

Table 7. 5 demonstrates that *pʰua* and *tsʰa* are synonymous and can be used in an interchangeable way. Their choice depends on a speaker's individual style. *ntsʰa* and *pʰua* or *tsʰa* are near-synonyms. When they are used to categorize paper-like things, they are interchangeable. Take "a piece of cloth" as an example. All the three classifiers can be used in this context and none of my language consultants can figure out their differences. However, only *ntsʰa* can be used for flat and brick-like things. It is thus unacceptable to say **vɛ+ʂʅ ta-pʰua* or **vɛ+ʂʅ ta tsʰa*.

In Table 7. 5, *pʰua*, *tsʅ*, *pa* and *nbu* are bound forms and only used as numeral classifiers. *tsʰa*, *ntsʰa* and *tɕo* are free forms. *tsʰa* has been grammaticalized from the noun 'leaf'. For example, *si tsʰa* 'tree leaf'. Both *ntsʰa* and *tɕo* are originated from two verbs: *na-ntsʰa* 'downward-mend (something with some pieces of accessories)', *kʰə-tɕo* 'inward-roll, make something oval-shaped'.

7. 1. 3. 1. 3 Consistency and inherent nature classifiers

There are three numeral classifiers denoting "consistency" and "inherent nature" (Aikhenvald 2000: 271-274) of a referent. They are: *ntʰua*, *ntʂʰa* and *ntsʰu*. All are bound forms. Among them, *ntʰua* is used to categorize an Nh in its consistency. Another two, *ntʂʰa* and *ntsʰu* categorize an Nh according to its inherent nature. For example:

(7. 34) *miabo* *na-ntʰua*
tear two-CL:drop(s) of liquid or fluid things
'two drops of tears'

(7. 35) a. *tʂʰo=yi* *si-ntʂʰa*
dog=DIM three-CL:(often lovely) non-adult human beings or livestock
'three small dogs'

b. *yadzʐə* *si-ntʂʰa*

child three-CL:(often lovely) non-adult human beings or livestock

'three children'

(7. 36) *kʰali* *tə-ntsʰu*

walnut one-CL:flower(s) or flower-like seeds of all plants

'a walnut seed'

Examples (7. 35a) and (7. 35b) above imply that *ntʂʰa* is polysemous, denoting both human beings and all other animates. It is a near synonym of the classifier *pa* in this situation (see Table 7. 5 and §7. 1. 3. 5).

7. 1. 3. 1. 4 Arrangement classifiers

Arrangement classifiers in Ersu are those classifiers that indicate how people are grouped or how inanimate objects or living plants are configured or organized (Aikhenvald 2000: 271-274). There are 13 arrangement classifiers attested in the data (see Table 7. 6).

CL		Semantics	Examples
bound	*-po*	things bound together like a package or a book	*tsʰʅ tə-po* salt one-CL 'a pack of salt'
	-tɕʰo	bundle	*vula tə-tɕʰo* cloth one-CL 'a bundle of cloth'
	-pʰo	a set of things like costumes, furniture, etc	*gamɛ tə-pʰo* clothes one-CL 'a suit of clothes'
		people of the same or similar experience, age, profession and etc.	*su tə-pʰo* person one-CL 'people of the same/identical one group'
	-pʰɛ	one part of paired objects	*ləpʰo tə-pʰɛ* hand one-CL 'one hand'
	-bo	bunch of things (that are put together in a circular form)	*kʰutsʅ tə-bo* key one-CL 'a bunch of keys (put together with a ring)'
	-bu	group of people that are related to each other	*nə a=dzi nə-bu* 2sg 1sg.SLF=DL two-CL 'the two families: yours and mine[102]
free	*pu*	group of inanimate things that are related to each other	*vu+tɕo tə pu* head-twine:turban one CL 'a turban'
		living plants that grow from underground like trees and crops	*otɕa tə pu* pear one CL 'a pear tree'
	ngatsu	pyramid-like stack of harvested crops	*ndzʅ ʒʅ ngatsu* buckwheat eight CL 'eight pyramid-like stacks of buckwheat'
	ntsʰɛ	either side of the loads on the shoulder	*vula tə ntsʰɛ* cloth one CL 'one shoulder load of cloth'
	va	the load on the back	*ndzʅ na va* buckwheat two CL 'two loads of buckwheat carried on the back'
	tso	pile	*pu tə tso* potato one CL 'a pile of potatoes'
	tsʰua	space or land divided into parts	*yi ta tsʰua* house one CL 'a room'
	ntsʰantsʰa	bunch of things (that are put together in a linear form)	*minpʰu ta ntsʰantsʰa* pearl one CL 'a bunch of pearls (put together with a thread)'

Table 7. 6 List of Ersu numeral classifiers referring to arrangement

[102] This example is extracted from an Ersu ode sung at wedding ceremonies. Ersu has a cross-cousin marriage tradition. In this context, the singer uses *bu* to imply that the two families have an intrinsic and complicated relationship since they have been related for generations.

As can be seen from Table 4, six of the 13 arrangement classifiers are bound forms and only used as numeral classifiers. Seven of them are free forms grammaticalized from verbs. They are: *nə-pu* 'downward-put something together (by piling one above another)'; *də-ŋgatsu* 'upward-put harvested crops together (by making pyramid-like stacks)'; *də-ɲtsʰɛ* 'upward-carry loads on the shoulder with a shoulder pole'; *da-va* 'upward-carry loads on the back with ropes or a basket, a sack, etc.'; *nə-tso* 'downward-pile something together'; *na-ɲtsʰantsʰa* 'downward-drag (things that are tied together) or lead aged/blind people hand by hand'; *na-tsʰua* 'upward-divide space or land into parts'.

7. 1. 3. 1. 5 Family group classifiers

In Ersu, some kinship terms are often used to "group or categorize" relatives of a clan. They do not occur on their own and they obligatorily follow a numeral. They are here defined as "family group classifiers" (Bradley 2001), a subset of numeral classifiers in Ersu. They are given in Table 7. 7.

CL	Meaning
pʰa-ma SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM	'woman and man, often referring to a couple'
vɛŋo	'same gender siblings'
mɛxi	'opposite gender siblings'
pʰu-zɿ̀ ?grandparents-SFX.MAS	grandfather and grandson(s) or grand-daughter(s)
	grandmother and grandson(s) or grand-daughter(s)
pʰa-zɿ̀ SFX.MAS-SFX.MAS	father and son(s) or daughter(s)
ma-zɿ̀ SFX.FEM-SFX.MAS	mother and son(s) or daughter(s)

Table 7. 7 List of Ersu family group classifiers

Examples are given from (7. 37) to (7. 42):

(7. 37) *pʰo-za* *zi-mo* *na*

husband-SFX.MAS:husband wife-Yi.SFX.FEM:wife two

pʰa-ma

SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM:CL:woman and man

'husband and wife, a couple'

(7. 38) *ȵinua* *vɛnua* *nə*

elder same gender sibling younger same gender sibling two

vɛȵo

CL: same gender siblings

'two brothers or sisters: younger one and elder one'

(7. 39) *aᴵ* *yadʐə* *sɿn̩* *mɛxi*

1pl.SLF child seven CL:opposite gender siblings

'we siblings: seven brothers and sisters '

(7. 40) *tʰə=zɿ̀* *nə*

3sg.PRT=GEN:family two

pʰu-zɿ̀

grandparents?-SFX.MAS:CL:grandparent and grandchild

'they two: grandfather and grandson'

(7. 41) *xitsɿ* *la* *yadʐə* *na*

rabit CO child two

pʰa-zɿ̀

SFX.MAS-SFX.MAS:CL:father and child

'two persons: rabbit and child (father and son)'[103]

[103] This is an example extracted from a folktale, in which a rabbit is a person-like character who brings up an orphan. The example first introduces the two roles, that is, the rabbit and the child and then tells their relationship, that is, father and son. This relationship is expressed through the classifier *pʰa-zɿ̀* 'CL:father and child'.

(7. 42) *nə=zɿ̀* *ŋa* *mɑ-zɿ̀*

2sg=GEN:family two SFX.FEM-SFX.MAS:CL:mother and child

'you two: mother and child'

Family group classifiers are also attested in the adjacent and related languages such as some Yi languages (Bradley 2001) including Lisu, a dialect of Yi (Yu 2007: 110-118). There are six family group classifiers attested in the data. They occur more frequently in historical or cultural narratives or a referential context than in a vocative context. In a vocative context, they are occasionally used only when the speaker is giving orders or assigning tasks at a meeting or a ceremony. This is unlike Yi and Lisu, in which family group classifiers are frequently used both for reference and for address (Bradley 2001). Moreover, the data show that except for *mɛxi* 'brother(s) and sister(s)', all the other family group classifiers co-occur with the numeral *nə*/*ŋa* 'two', possibly due to the data limits. However, my language consultants provided examples with the co-occurrence of other numerals and family group classifiers through elicitation. For example:

(7. 43) *nə=zɿ̀* *zò* *mɑ-zɿ̀*

2sg=GEN:family four CL:SFX.FEM-SFX.MAS

'you four: mother and children'

In addition, family group classifiers in Ersu, similar to Yi (Bradley 2001), are disyllabic and formed either through compounding or suffixation. More specifically, the majority of them take a morpheme that denotes gender class. For example: *pʰɑ-mɑ* 'woman and man; couple' consists of two general gender suffixes, that is, *-pʰɑ* '-SFX.MAS' and *-mɑ* '-SFX.FEM'. The classifiers grouping a higher generation and a lower generation are suffixated by the masculine gender class term *-zɿ̀* '-SFX.MAS', but *zɿ̀* '-SFX.MAS' also includes the female of a lower generation in this context.

Furthermore, in some Yi languages, the [NUM+CL] construction is often used without an Nh. If it follows an Nh, the Nh is often a pronoun (Bradley 2001). However, Table 7. 7 indicates that the [NUM+CL] sequence in Ersu always follows an Nh or two juxtaposed Nhs. They offer more information about the relationship between the Nhs. For example, *ŋ̩inɯa vɛnɯa nə-vɛŋ̩o* 'two bothers: younger one and elder one'. Moreover, when [NUM+CL] follows a pronoun, it is possessed by the pronoun taking an overt genitive marker *=zɿ̀*. For example, *nə=zɿ̀ nɑ-mɑ-zɿ̀* '2sg=GEN:family two-SFX.FEM-SFX.MAS→you two: mother and son/daughter'. This possessive construction is never found for other subtypes of numeral classifiers.

Finally, apart from *pʰɑ-mɑ* 'man and woman; couple', the family group classifiers only refer to consanguineal (often filial and sibling) relations, not affinal relations. Therefore, those family group classifiers refer to conventionally or culturally established groups. Otherwise, they are ungrammatical. For example, it is not acceptable to group "father-in-law (wife's father)" and "son-in-law (daughter's husband)" together. Accordingly, there is not any term for such a "group", as in (7. 44).

(7. 44) **nə=zɿ̀ nə*
2sg=GEN:family two
xə-mo+mopa
mother's male siblings-SFX.FEM: wife's father+daughter's husband
'you two: wife's father and daughter's husband'

7. 1. 3. 1. 6 Specific classifiers

Specific classifiers "refer to specific uses of objects, or kinds of action which are typically performed on them" and classifiers of this type are often "culture-specific" (Aikhenvald 2000: 273). Specific classifiers are given in Table 7. 8. These include the

classifier *ə˧nba* ‘a kind of’ with a somewhat generic meaning. It is listed as a specific classifier here because its meaning is not as generic as the generic classifiers (§7. 1. 3. 1. 1) and also because it does not denote shape (§7. 1. 3. 1. 2), consistency and inherent nature (§7. 1. 3. 1. 3), arrangement (§7. 1. 3. 1. 4), and family group (§7. 1. 3. 1. 5). It is thus a bit culture-specific.

CL		Semantics	Examples
bound	*-ku*	most of the new non-sticklike technological devices[104]	*chēzi tə-ku* MC:vehicle one-CL 'a vehicle'
	-ts^{h}a	a song	*ŋga tɑ-ts^{h}a* song one-CL 'a song'
	-tsə	a part of a story	*xi+nba tə-tsə* say+root:story one-CL 'a part of the story'
	-ə^{l}nba	a kind of	*ə^{l}dzə nə-ə^{l}nba* dragon two-CL 'two kinds of dragons'
	-dza	a meal	*zama tɑ-dza* food one-CL 'a meal'
	-tʂ^{h}o	a piece of land	*za tə-tʂ^{h}o* grassy and bushy land one-CL 'a piece of land with grass and bushes'
	-p^{h}u	a pile of fire	*mɛ tə-p^{h}u* fire one-CL 'a pile of fire'
	-ndzə	a person (in rags or in unsuitable costumes on an occasion)	*su tə-ndzə* people one-CL 'a person in rags or dressed unsuitably'
free	*tɕi*	any tool with a handle for farming, cutting, hunting, and etc.	*batʂa nə tɕi* knife two CL 'two knives'
	tsa	a stage of an event or a part of a song	*tɕinbaʂua ta tsa* PN:a traditional Ersu ode one CL 'a part of Jinbashua'
		all members of a family or a family group	*su ta tsa* people one CL 'all people of a family'
	p^{h}sɿ	a person who is not welcome or is hated	*su tə p^{h}sɿ* people one CL 'a unwelcome person'
	ndzo	a mouthful of drink	*vu tə ndzo* alcohol one CL 'a bit of alcohol'
	bi[105]	a mouthful of solid food	*lɑ+sɿ tə bi* chicken+meat:chicken one CL 'a bit of chicken'

Table 7. 8 List of Ersu numeral classifiers referring to specific referents

[104] *-ka* is still used for all new sticklike technological devices. For example:

(7. 45) *bǐ* *tɑ-ka*
MC:pen one-CL:generic, sticklike
'a pen'

[105] Both *ndzo* and *bi* are translated into Mandarin Chinese as *kǒu* 'mouth' by the local people though they do not mean 'mouth' in Ersu. Consequently, *vu tə ndzo* '*yìkǒu jiǔ* (MC)' and *lɑ+sɿ tə bi* '*yìkǒu jīròu* (MC)' literally mean 'a mouthful of alcohol' and 'a mouthful of chicken', respectively. In addition, *bi* is polysemous. It can also denote 'a handful of sticklike things' (see Table 7.9 and §7. 1. 3).

Table 7. 8 shows that there are 13 specific classifiers in Ersu and they categorize some specific head nouns, or those nouns which are prominently culture-dependent. Eight of them are bound forms. Five of them are free forms grammaticalized from verbs: *də-tɕi* 'upward-take something (often with hands)'; *nɑ-tsɑ* 'upward-cut a piece of wood into lengthy pieces'; *t^hə-p^hsɿ* 'away-throw away'; *ŋə-ndzo* 'outward-drink a lot at a time'; *ŋə-bi* 'upward-eat a bit at a time'.

7. 1. 3. 2 Mensural classifiers

As mentioned in §7. 1. 3, a sortal classifier categorizes an Nh with reference to its intrinsic properties and a mensural classifier is associated with measuring the quantity of the Nh. Native terms with reference to the length or the weight of a referent are not attested in the data. In daily conversation, the Ersu are observed to use mensural terms from Mandarin Chinese for weight or length. In original Ersu culture, measurement is often realized through containers that contain liquid or solid objects. Consequently, mensural classifiers are free forms grammaticalized from nominal terms used for containers. Theoretically, every term that denotes a container can be used as a mensural classifier. In the Ersu communities, there are hundreds of different containers and therefore, the number of mensural classifiers that originates from container terms is quite large and cannot be exhaustively listed at present. Here, just some examples are given.

(7. 46) *ntʂ^{h}ə* *tɑ* *puɑ*
rice one CL:bushel
'a bushel of rice'

(7. 47) *lɑ+ʂɿ* *tə* *zu*
chicken+meat:chicken one CL:basin (often used to contain food)
'a basin of chicken'

(7. 48) *yi* *nə* *ko*

tobacco two CL:smoking pipe

'two pipes of tobacco'

(7. 49) *vɛ=yi* *ŋuà* *ntʂʰə*

pig=DIM five CL:nest

'five nests of baby pigs'

7. 1. 3. 3 Sortal-mensural classifiers

Sortal-mensural classifiers in Ersu are those classifiers that categorize an Nh both in its inherent properties and in its quantity (see the classifier *pɑ*^{I} in Example (7. 30) and §7. 1. 3). There are seven classifiers of this type in the data. All of them are bound forms and obligatorily follow a numeral. They are given in Table 7. 9.

CL	Semantics		Examples
	Inherent Properties	Quantity	
kɑ^{I}	one-dimensional (sticklike or elongated in shape)	a few or a little	*xao* *tɑ-kɑ*^{I} wormwood one-CL 'a few wormwood plants'
pɑ^{I}	three-dimensional (regularly or irregularly roundish in shape, small in size)		*tʂu* *tɑ-pɑ*^{I} bean one-CL 'a few beans'
kʰɑ^{I}	powder-like in shape such as flour, dust or ashes	a little	*tsoyi* *tɑ-kʰɑ*^{I} zanba flour one-CL 'a little of zanba flour[106]'
mi	liquid or fluid such as wine, soup, blood or water		*vu* *tə-mi* alcohol one-CL 'a little of alcohol'
ntʂʰo	three-dimensional (regularly or irregularly roundish in shape)	handful	*ndzɳ* *zɳ-ntʂʰo* buckwheat eight-CL 'eight handfuls of buckwheat (seeds)'
tsʰi	one-dimensional (sticklike or elongated and well-bound in shape)		*xɑ* *dzu* *ŋgə-tsʰi* needle awl nine-CL 'nine handfuls of needles and awls'[107]
bi	one-dimensional (sticklike or elongated, not necessarily well-bound in shape)		*ɲi* *nə-bi* grass two-CL 'two handfuls of grass'

Table 7. 9 List of Ersu sortal-mensural classifiers

In Table 7. 9, the classifiers *kɑ*^{I}, *pɑ*^{I}, *kʰɑ*^{I} and *mi* that denote 'a few or a little in

[106] Zanba flour is a kind of roasted highland barley flour, which is the main food for Tibetan people.

[107] *ŋgə* 'nine' here also means 'many'. See Note 98.

quantity' can only occur with the numeral *tə* 'one'. However, there are no such limitations for the co-occurrence of numerals and the classifiers *ɲtʂʰo*, *tsʰi* and *bi* that denote 'handful'. In other words, they can occur with any numerals to enumerate the Nh.

7. 1. 3. 4 Time classifiers

Time classifiers form a particular subset of Ersu numeral classifiers. They are free forms and mainly originated from temporal nouns, such as *zu* 'life span', *bùtʂʰə̀* 'year', *ɬa* 'month', *ɲo* 'day', *so* 'morning' and so on. No lexical nouns denoting a week or time less than an hour are found in Ersu (§4. 3. 1. 10). Accordingly, there are no classifiers of this kind. In addition, Ersu time classifiers do not function as a noun categorization device, which is similar to many other languages in the world, for example, Lisu (Yu 2007: 162). They are "quasi-measures" or "autonomous measures", as in Mandarin Chinese (Chao 1968: 608-609). These classifiers refer to the forms that are both nouns and classifiers at the same time. The unit of [NUM+CL] in Ersu forms an independent NP without any Nh denoting "time", as in (7. 50) and (7. 51).

(7. 50) *su=yi* *tə* *zu=nɛ̀,* *ɲiɲi=tə*
person=GEN one CL:life span=TOP short.REDP=DES
'A person's whole life (is) short.'

(7. 51) *ta* *ɬa=kə=nɛ̀,* *sɑ+tsʰʅ* *ɲo*
one CL:month=RLN.LOC:in=TOP three+ten:thirty CL:day
dzo=dʑɛ̌
EXT:have=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) a month has 30 days.'

7. 1. 3. 5 Pragmatic functions of Ersu numeral classifiers

The basic function of the unit of [NUM+CL] in Ersu is to categorize an Nh in terms of its inherent properties, to enumerate it, and/or to "measure" its quantity, as it

is in all classifier languages. Besides this, the unit of [NUM+CL] may encode definiteness or indefiniteness (§7. 1. 3. 5. 1), may function to disambiguate a polysemous noun (§7. 1. 3. 5. 2), denote different referential value of the same referent (§7. 1. 3. 5. 3), encode intimateness and endearment (§7. 1. 3. 5. 4), function as "afterthoughts" (§7. 1. 3. 5. 5), undertake anaphoric functions (§7. 1. 3. 5. 6) and denote distribution (§7. 1. 3. 5. 7).

7. 1. 3. 5. 1 Encoding definiteness or indefiniteness

When a numeral classifier follows *tə* 'one', either *tə* 'one' or the CL can be optionally used, forming an NP of either [Nh *tə*] or [Nh CL] and denoting definiteness or indefiniteness. This is quite similar to Mawo Qiang (Liu 1998: 145) and Vietnamese (Daley 1998: 60) in which a numeral classifier can be absent from an NP when it follows 'one'. However, Liu (1998: 145) and Daley (1998: 60) do not mention whether in the two languages, the numeral "one" can be ellipsed or not, and then form a structure of [Nh CL], a "bare classifier phrase" that is also attested in Liangshan Yi (Jiang & Hu 2010). For example:

(7. 52) a. *ʈʂʰo* *tə-wo*
dog one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'one dog'

b. *ʈʂʰo* *tə*
dog one
'a dog'

c. *ʈʂʰo-wo*
dog-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'the dog'

Example a, b and c in (7. 52) are all acceptable but they have different semantic

attributions. Example (7. 52a), that is, a unit of [Nh *tə* CL], not only denotes indefiniteness like Yongning Na (Lidz 2010: 206) but also highlights singularity of the referent. Example (7. 52b) with a structure of [Nh *tə*] just denotes indefiniteness, which is shared by its adjacent languages such as Vietnamese (Daley 1998: 60), Shixing (Chirkova 2009) and Lizu (Chirkova 2008). Example (7. 52c) with a bare classifier phrase may only denote definiteness. This is so because the data demonstrate that [Nh CL] often occurs at later mentions of the same referent in context. It is also observed that [Nh CL] can occur with a demonstrative, for example, *tʰə* 'this', to denote definiteness in Ersu while [Nh *tə*] cannot, as in (7. 53). This further demonstrates that [Nh CL] and [Nh *tə*] denote definiteness and indefiniteness, respectively.

(7. 53) a. *tʰə* *sʔzà-wo*
DEM:this god-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'the god'

*b. *tʰə* *sʔzà* *tə*
DEM:this god one
'the god'

7. 1. 3. 5. 2 Disambiguating a polysemous noun

Numeral classifiers in Ersu can "disambiguate different meanings of a polysemous noun" (Aikhenvald 2004). For example:

(7. 54) a. *dzo-wo*
water-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'the water'

b. *dzo* *tɑ-ka*

river one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'a river'

c. *dzo* *tə* *ʔits^{h}u*

soup one CL:a kind of wooden spoon that is used to drink soup with

'a spoonful of soup'

(7. 54) indicates that *dzo* is polysemous in Ersu. The use of different numeral classifiers to modify the head *dzo* can make its meanings quite transparent in context.

7. 1. 3. 5. 3 Denoting different referential values of the same referent

Numeral classifiers in Ersu can denote different referential values of the same Nh and make it more specific in meanings. See Figure 7.1 as an example.

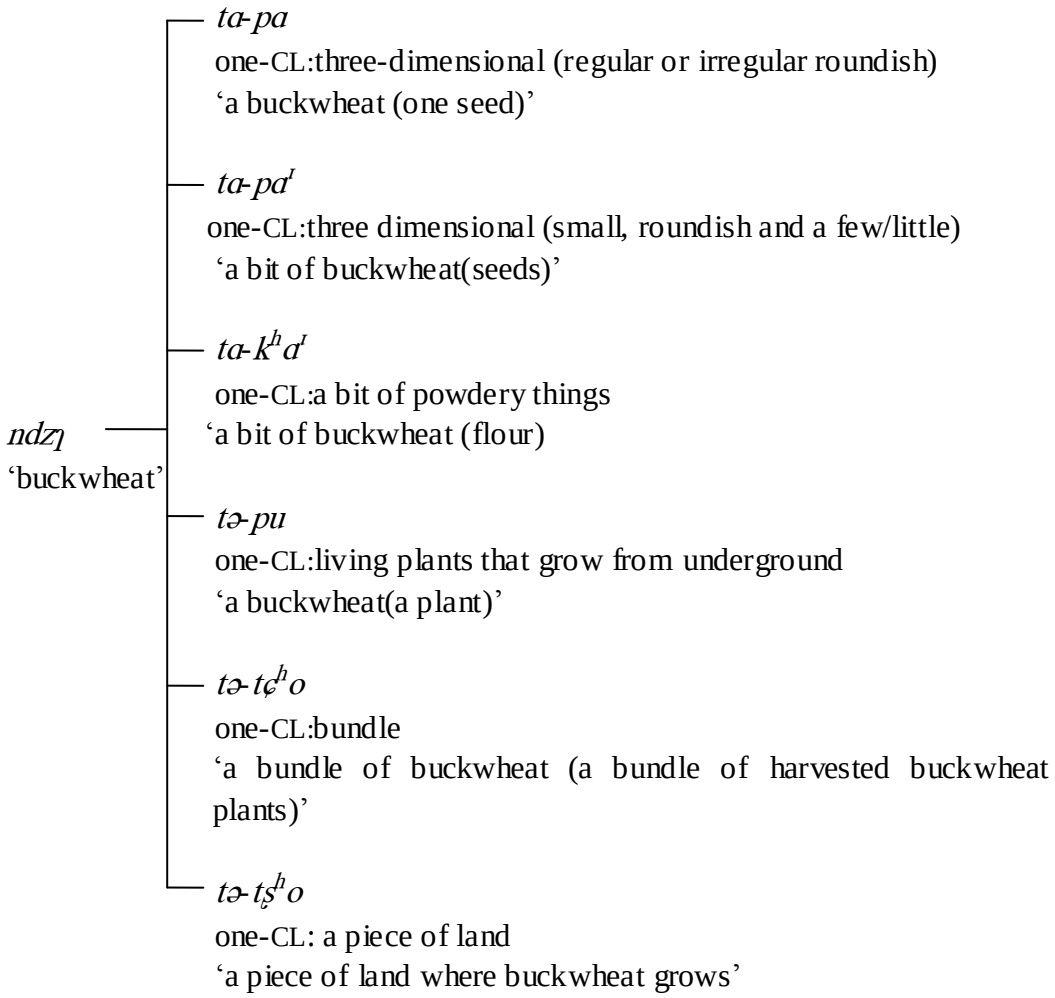

Figure 7. 1 Example for different referential values of a word taking different CLs

7. 1. 3. 5. 4 Encoding intimacy or endearment

Numeral classifiers can imply a speaker's degree of intimacy or endearment towards a human referent. Take the Nh *yadzə* 'child' as an example (see Figure 7. 2).

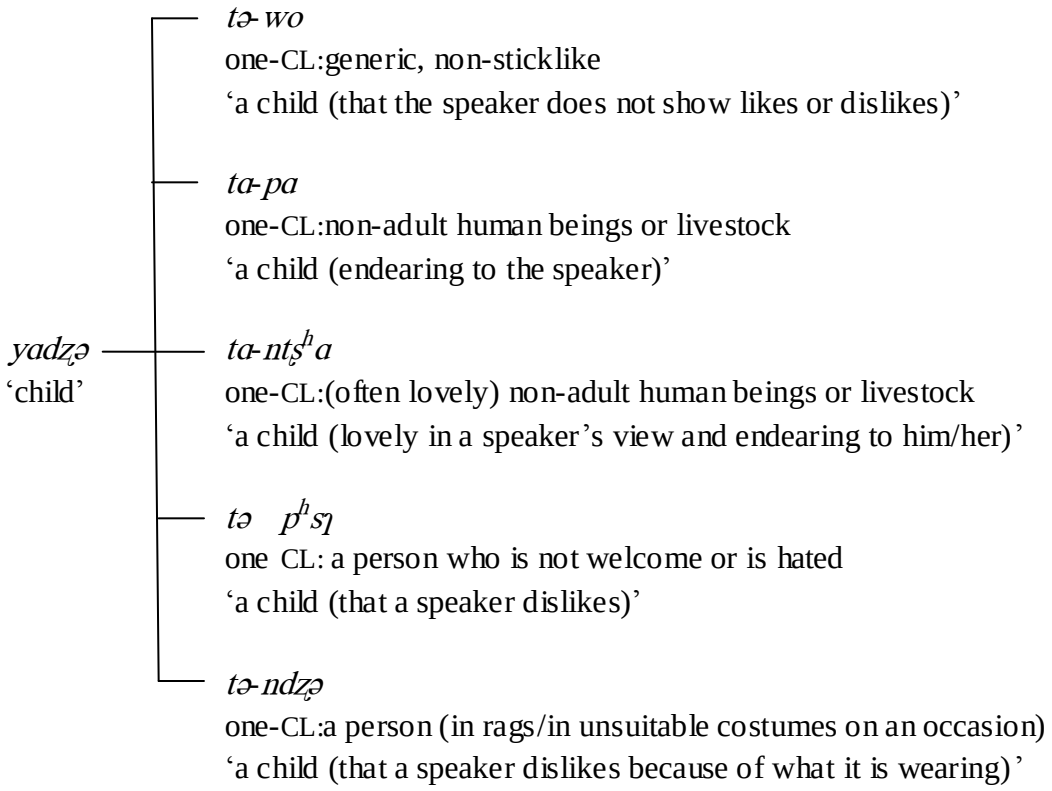

Figure 7. 2 Numeral classifiers implying a degree of intimacy or endearment

7. 1. 3. 5. 5 Functioning as "afterthoughts"

The native speakers of Ersu often end a sentence with a repetition of [NUM/DEM +CL] that may seem to be semantically and syntactically redundant. This occurs not only in affirmative sentences, but also in negative and interrogative sentences. Previous studies on this kind of "double marking" with [NUM/DEM+CL] have not been attested in other Tibeto-Burman languages (Jackson T.S. Sun & Katia Chirkova p.c.). For example:

(7. 55) *tʰi* *dzondzɿ* *nə-po*

3sg.PRT.GEN book two-CL:things bound together

kʰə=sì=zɿ *nə-po*

inward=just=buy two-CL:things bound together

'His two books have just been bought.'

(7. 56) *ni* *<u>tʰə-bɛ̀</u>* *ɑ-ndzi* *la*

2sg.GEN DEM:this-QUAT.pl ITRG-how come

<u>tə-bɛ̀</u>?

one-QUAT.pl.ITRG

'How did you get these?' Lit: Your these how come these?

(7. 57) *ə́dzə* *<u>tə-wo</u>* *baŋi* *mɑ-li*

dragon one-CL:generic, non-sticklike listen NEG-good

<u>tə-wo</u>

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'One dragon is not obedient.' Lit: One dragon listen not good one.

This is somewhat similar to Galo "afterthought NPs" (Post 2007: 315). In Galo, an "afterthought" NP often "closely follows another, coreferential NP" to provide additional information. However, in Ersu, the unit of [NUM/DEM+CL] is always put at the end of a sentence and it does not offer extra information to the Nh that the same preceding reduplicated [NUM/DEM+CL] closely follows. This could be another sort of "afterthought" that might also exist in other languages, such as English: "He has bought two books, two!" I hypothesize that this construction in Ersu has an emphatic value, in other words, to stress the enumeration of the NP being modified. Nevertheless, this needs further study since it may be a novel linguistic phenomenon in Tibeto-Burman languages and "cross-linguistically" (Alexandra Aikhenvald p.c.).

7. 1. 3. 5. 6 Undertaking anaphoric function

Classifiers can also work together with numerals as an independent unit without a head noun, especially when the head noun is contextually retrievable or obvious. Consequently, Ersu numeral classifiers may be used anaphorically and have varying functions which is similar to other languages in the world (Aikhenvald 2000: 98). The independent unit of [NUM+CL] can thus undertake some functions of a head noun, being used as an A or an O argument in a clause. For example:

(7. 58) *ɑ-dzò!* *tə-wo* *so=p^hɛ* *gɑ=gə,*

VOC-look one-CL:generic, non-sticklike front=LOC:side sing=PROG

si-wo *tʂana* *də-toto*

Three-CL:generic, non-sticklike back side upward-jump.EDUP:dance

=gə[108]

=PROG

'Look! One (person) is singing in the front, (and) three (people) are dancing behind him.'

(7. 59) *otɕa* *si-wo* *sì* *bo=á¶* *ɑ=dzi*

pear three-CL:generic, non-sticklike only EXT=PFV 1sg.SLF=dl

tə-wo *dzŋ, t^hə^I* *nə-wo* *dzŋ*

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike eat 3pl.PRT two-CL:generic, non-sticklke eat

'There are only three pears. We two eat one, and they eat two.'

7. 1. 3. 5. 7 Encoding distribution

The reduplication of [NUM+CL] is a general technique in Ersu to express the meaning of distribution. This indicates that an event occurs one by one, or group by group. It can also indicate that an action is distributed to referents, one by one, or group by group. The choice of the numeral is decided by the number of the members of a group. For example:

[108] This example was taken down on the occasion where people were sitting and drinking by the fireplace, one person was asking others to watch a TV programme through describing what was on the TV. Here, he did not mention the actors on the TV and directly used the unit of [NUM+CL] because on this occasion, what he was talking about is known to all the others. That is, it is contextually obvious.

(7. 60) *ɑ˥* *ə˥su* *də=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-nɛ* *dzì* *si*

1pl.SLF PN:Ersu family=TOP ITRG-what CO three

-wo, *zɑ-mɑ* *dzɿ* *dzì* *su=nɛ̀*

-CL:generic,non-sticklike ?-SFX.FEM:food eat CO person=TOP

si-wo *si-wo* *ta*

three-CL:generic, non-sticklike three-CL:generic, non-sticklike one

wɑ *dzɿ*

VCL:circle eat

'In our Ersu communities, whatever we are doing, we do in a group of three. When we are eating, we would like to eat together in a group of three people. (Lit*:* Our Ersu family what is three. Eat food, people eat together three by three.)

(7. 61) *ta* *tsʰua* *ta* *tsʰuɑ=kə* *ŋ̩̀kuà* *dzolo*

one CL:room one CL:room=RLN.LOC:in EMPH:all look

=dʑigə

=EVID:reported

'(It is said that he) searched all the rooms, one room by one room. (Lit*:* to look at all, in one room, in one room.)

Similar to the reduplication of [NUM+CL], there is another structure, [*tə* + CL_1] +[*tə*+CL_2] that is found to indicate that one action or different actions are distributed to the referents one by one. For example:

(7. 62) *ȵbò ti yi tə ȵbò tʰə-tɕʰi, dzi*

horse one CL:house one RPT: horse away-give thread

-pulili ti yi tə-wo tʰə-tɕʰi

-NCL:ball-like one CL:house one-CL:generic, non-sticklike away-give

ànè…

LINK:after

'After a horse was given to the one and a ball of thread was given to the other…'

7. 1. 4 Repeaters

Like other languages in the world such as Lao (Enfield 2004) and Yongning Na (Lidz 2010: 220), there are some nouns that function to "classify" themselves in Ersu, that is, "auto-classifiers" (Matisoff 2003) or "repeaters" (Aikhenvald 2000: 103). Repeaters in Ersu encode either something of great importance to, or something closely associated with local people's life or surroundings, for example, *ŋuà* 'ox' and *fu* 'village', or some of the repeaters that can be used as classifiers on their own, for example, *dzŋ* 'a line of talk'. Nouns with human reference cannot be used in this way. All nouns that can function as repeaters are found to be either monosyllabic or disyllabic. Correspondingly, the realization of a repeater can be divided into two different situations. Firstly, if the noun is monosyllabic, then the repeater is the very noun. Secondly, if the noun is a disyllabic one, then the repeater is the second syllable. This is shared by other Tibeto-Burman languages in which there are repeaters (Sun 1988). There are ten nouns that can function as repeaters attested in the data. They are given in Table 7. 10.

Nouns	Semantics	Examples
ȵbò	horse	*ȵbò nə ȵbò* horse two RPT:horse 'two horses'
ŋuà	ox	*ŋuà ŋua ŋuà* ox five RPT:ox 'five oxen'
ȵbi	mountain	*ȵbi si ȵbi* mountain three RPT:moutain 'three mountains'
fu	village	*fu tə fu* village one RPT:village 'a village'
ŋga	door	*ŋga ta ŋga* door one RPT:door 'a door'
dzɿ	line of words	*dzɿ tə dzɿ* line of words one RPT:line of words 'a line of words'
ba	urine	*ba si ba* pee three RPT:pee 'three pees'
sipu	tree	*sipu si pu* tree three RPT:tree 'three trees'
zɿxua	paddy	*zɿxua si xua* paddy field three RPT:paddy field 'three pieces of paddy field'
sits^{h}a	tree leaf	*sits^{h}a ta ts^{h}a* tree leaf one RPT:leaf 'a tree leaf'

Table 7. 10 List of Ersu repeaters

It should be noted that in all the repeaters except for *si ts^{h}a*, the repeater technique is the only way to classify the Nh. However, *ts^{h}a* in *si ts^{h}a* 'tree leaf' can be replaced by *p^{h}ua*, a shape classifier (see §7. 1. 3.1. 2 and Table 7. 5). For example:

(7. 63) a. *si ts^{h}a si ts^{h}a*
tree leaf three RPT:leaf
'three tree leaves'

b. *si ts^{h}a si p^{h}ua*
tree leaf three CL:paper-like
'three tree leaves'

(7. 63a) and (7. 63b) show no differences in meanings in the context. This is unlike Lao, a language in which when a numeral classifier can be optionally used, "a repeater construction would be odd or unacceptable." (Enfield 2004).

7. 1. 5 Existential verbs used as nominal classification devices

Ersu has a rich set of existential verbs. They can distinguish referents between animate vs. inanimate, concrete vs. abstract, movable vs. unmovable, possession vs. location/existence as mentioned in §7. 1. This is further discussed in §8. 4. Two examples are given here.

(7. 64) "*nɤ=zʅ̀ ɑ-pa mi=su, tʂaŋa dzo*
2sg=GEN:family KPFX-father swallow=AGT.NOM behind EXT
sɛ̀."=tʰɤ-ɑ-dʑigə
still=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'(The clouds said this): "The clouds (that) swallowed your father are still behind (us).'"

(7. 65) *mó, dzo kʰua tɑ-ka xa=dʑɛ̌*
again river big one-CL:generic, sticklike EXT=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) again, there is a big river.'

7. 2 Verbal Action Classification System

Verbal action classification system in Ersu is comprised of different verbal action classifiers. This section first discusses the concept and the function of verbal action classifiers (§7. 2. 1), then presents the semantic subtypes of verbal action classifiers (§7. 2. 2). In addition, the delimitative aspect, that is, the construction of [NUM+VCL] can also function to categorize a verbal action with respect to unexpectedness and degree (§7. 2. 3).

7. 2. 1 The concept and the function of verbal action classifiers

A verbal action classifier discussed here is not a "verb-incorporated classifier" (Aikhenvald 2006a) that categorizes a noun, such as the classifiers in Bangladesh Khumi (Peterson 2008). This sort of verbal classifiers is generally not recognized as a typical feature of Tibeto-Burman languages (Peterson 2008). The verbal action classifiers discussed here categorize a verbal action in its frequency, manner, degree, distance and so on. Verbal classifiers of this sort may be an areal feature in Tibeto-Burman languages because they are found in many languages in East and Southeast Asia. However, terms used for the verbal action categorization devices vary a lot in previous literature. For example: "independent classifiers" in Thai (Haas 1942); "modifying classifiers" in Vietnamese (Daley 1998:7); "verbal classifiers" in Newar (Bhaskararao & Joshi, 1985); "verbal action classifiers" in Puxi Qiang (Huang 2004: 75); "dependent temporal classifiers" (Yu 2007: 161-164) and "manner classifiers" (Yu 2007: 168) in Lisu and "verb classifiers" in Anong (Sun & Liu 2009: 71-72). In this grammar, I refer to them as verbal action classifiers because they function to classify verbal actions. In addition, using the term "verbal action classifier" can also help differentiate it from a "verbal classifier" that Aikhenvald (2000: 149-71, 2006a) proposes and is widely accepted in the literature.

Ersu is rich in verbal action classifiers. Similar to numeral classifiers, they always occur with a numeral. However, they are different from numeral classifiers both in syntactic functions and in structure. Functionally, they are used as a verbal action categorization device like an adverb, not a nominal categorization device like a numeral classifier. Structurally, even if the numeral is *tə* 'one', they obligatorily follow it. However, numeral classifiers may be optionally used in this situation (§7. 1. 3. 5. 1). This shows that verbal action classifiers have a much closer relationship with a numeral than numeral classifiers do. In addition, the unit of [NUM+CL] always follows an Nh, but the unit of [NUM+VCL] always precedes a verb. Like numeral classifiers, verbal action classifiers also form a "semi-open" set of word class because both bound verbal action classifiers and free verbal action classifiers that have been

derived from verbs and nouns are attested as sources of verbal classifier as an entirety in Ersu.

7. 2. 2 Semantic subtypes of verbal action classifiers

As mentioned in §7. 2. 1, verbal action classifiers classify verbal actions in terms of their frequency, degree, distance, etc. They are like an adverb modifying a verb, then forming a verbal complex. They can be further subclassified as frequency classifier (§7. 2. 2. 1), degree classifier (§7. 2. 2. 2), time duration classifiers (§7. 2. 2. 3), manner classifiers (§7. 2. 2. 4) and distance classifiers (§7. 2. 2. 5).

7. 2. 2. 1. Frequency classifiers: *tʂɑ*^{I} 'time' and*tɕo* 'time'

In Ersu, both *tʂɑ*^{I} 'time' and *tɕo* 'time' can overtly indicate the frequency of a verbal action. *tʂɑ*^{I} 'time' is a bound morpheme while *tɕo* 'time' is derived from the verb *də-tɕo* 'upward-return'. *tʂɑ*^{I} 'time' is observed to modify various kinds of actions, such as 'fight', 'strike', 'grind', 'come', 'speak', etc. *tɕo* 'time' implies variation of distance and location of an action. They co-occur with different numerals, the choices of a numeral depending on the exact times that an action happens. For example:

(7. 66) *nɑ-tʂɑ*^{I} *də-sʅsʅ=tɕ*^{h}*i*
two-VCL: time upward-fight. RDUP=EXP
'fight twice'

(7. 67) *t*^{h}*ə=kə* *si-tʂɑ*^{I} *dɑ-lɑ=á*
DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here three-VCL:time upward-fight=PFV
'(I) came (upward) here three times'

(7. 68) *ɑ* *vakə* *tə* *tco* *pa* *yi=tɕ*^{h}*i*
1sg.SLF PN:county seat name one VCL:return place go.NPFV=EXP
'I have been to Yuexi once.'

7. 2. 2. 2 Degree classifier: *sɿ̀* 'bit/slightly'

sɿ̀, a bound verbal action classifier, only occurs with the numeral *tə* 'one' to categorize a verbal action as being 'slightly or a bit'. It can also function as a consistency numeral classifier denoting 'a bit of something originally inseparable' (see Table 7. 7). When it is used as a degree classifier, it modifies a verbal action and encode the degree of strength of the action. In addition, it can modify adjectival concepts of value, temperature, size and so on, especially when an adjective functions as a stative predicate in a clause. For example:

(7. 69) *a* *tʰə-wo* *tə-sɿ̀* *xasɛ*
1sg.SLF DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike one-VCL:a bit understand
'I slightly understand this.'

(7. 70) *a* *vùliɛ̀* *tə-sɿ̀* *də̀-ȵì*
1sg.SLF headone one-VCL:a bit upward-ache
'My head aches a bit.'

(7. 71) *tʰə=zɿ̀* *yi* *tʰa-ka* *tə-sɿ̀*
3sg.PRT=GEN:family house DEM:this-CL:generic, sticklike one-CL: a bit
ya-li
APFX-good
'His house (is) a bit good.'

7. 2. 2. 3 Time duration classifiers

In Ersu, almost all the "autonomous" time classifiers and lexical temporal nouns (§7. 1. 3. 4) can also operate as a verbal classifier indicating how long an action lasts. This does not subsume *əʳ* 'age, general' and *kʰətsɿ* 'an adult's age', two nouns that denote a person's age. For example:

(7. 72) *ngə ȵo ngə yi nə-dʐə*

nine CL:day nine MC.CL:night downward-grind

'(They have) ground for nine days and nine nights (It actually means a long period of time.)'

In addition, there are two synonymous bound time duration classifiers: *tɕʰi* and *pʰu* encoding 'approximate time'. The free numeral classifier *tsʰa* (Tabl 7. 5) can also function as a verbal action classifier encoding 'approximate time'. In this situation, *tɕʰi*, *pʰu* and *tsʰa* can be interchangeably used. They only co-occur with *tə* 'one' as shown in (7. 73), (7. 74) and (7. 75), respectively. These time duration classifiers can only be used as adverb-like classifiers, which is unlike some other time classifiers that are derived from lexical temporal nouns, which can form an NP together with a numeral as is already shown in (7. 50) and (7. 51).

(7. 73) *tə-tɕʰi ka-ma=nɛ̀…*

one-VCL:a period of time inward-sleep=PAUS

'(He) slept for a while…'

(7. 74) *nuandzɿȵo tə-pʰu dzo=á*

PN:village name one-VCL:a period of time live=PFV

'(I have) lived in Nuanzinio for some time.'

(7. 75) *tʰə yadʐə ta tsʰa nə-nbɛ=á*

DEM:this child one VCL:a period of time downward-cry

'The child has cried for a while.'

7. 2. 2. 4 Manner classifiers

Ersu has six verbal action classifiers that categorize the manner of a verbal action. 'Manner classifiers' (Yu 2007:168) in Ersu often have quite specific meanings. They have to be interpreted though detailed descriptions in other language such as

Mandarin Chinese or English. However, a native Ersu can use just one manner classifier to convey abundant meanings. Take *tɕola* as an example. It implies that 'an action happens in a circular way, but without any information about what to circle around' as shown in Table 7. 11. They are either bound morphemes such as *tʂəŋù* 'together' and *ʒo* 'same', or derived from nouns such as *wa* 'together' which originally means 'circle' and *kaxɛ* 'side' which originally means 'direction', or derived from verbs such as *kuala* 'walk around something in a circular way' which can be used as a verb, *dɑ-kuala* 'make…rotate' and 'walk in a circular way' which can also be used as a verb with the meaning of 'return back'.

VCL	Semantics	Examples
wa	together (precedes verbs without location changes)	*ta wa dzo* one VCL live 'live together'
tʂəŋù	together (precedes verbs denoting location changes)	*tə tʂəŋù ŋɑ-la* one VCL outward-come 'come together'
ʒo	same	*tə-ʒo tʰə-so=á* one-VCL outward-die=PT 'died in the same way'
kuala	walk around something in a circular way, often with the information about what to circle around	*tsotʂʰə si kuala* barn yard three VCL *dɑ-sa* upward-leave a mark 'to walk three circles around the barn yard'
tɕola	walk in a circular way, often without any information about what to circle around	*nə tɕola dɑ-sa* two VCL upward-leave a mark 'to walk two circles'
kaxɛ	side	*tə-wo ta kaxɛ* one-CL:generic, non-sticklike one VCL *nə-ɲbɛ* downward-cry 'each cried on one side'

Table 7. 11 List of Ersu manner classifiers

It should be noted that the manner classifiers *tʂəŋù* 'together', *wa* 'together' and *ʒo* 'same' only co-occur with the numeral *tə* 'one' in the data. This may be the

same as many languages worldwide, in which 'together' and 'same' imply viewing the referent as one entity. The rest of the three manner classifiers can occur with different numerals, also implying the frequency of an action as shown in Table 7. 11 above.

7. 2. 2. 5 Distance classifiers

In Ersu, three lexical nouns that denote natural features are grammaticalized to function as classifiers, indicating distance of a "deictic locomotion" (Bhaskararao & Joshi 1985). They are: *bi* 'mountain', *lo* 'wide and deep ditch' and *dzo* 'river'. In this situation, either *lo* 'wide and deep ditch' or *dzo* 'river' co-occurs with *ȵbi* 'mountain'. The numeral that they often follow is *ȵgə* 'nine' that actually denote 'many or much' rather than 'nine' in this context (see §7. 1. 3. 1. 2). Consequently, *ȵgə bi ȵgə lo* 'nine mountains nine wide and deep ditches' or *ȵgə bi ȵgə dzo* 'nine mountains nine rivers' often occur together in the same context. It looks like an idiom and means 'to do something in a long distance and with a lot of difficulty or energy'. In addition, this can only be found in traditional stories or songs, not in daily conversation. For example[109]:

(7. 76) *tʰi* *ɱ̩-pʰɑ-bɛ̀=yikə*

3sg.PRT.GEN ?-SFX.MAS:male opposite gender sibling-QUAT.pl=AGT

tʰə *vɛmatɕʰodʑu-wo* *ȵgə bi*

DEM:this PN:devil's name-CL:generic, non-sticklike nine VCL:mountain

ȵgə lo *nɑ-tʂɑ* *nɑ-tʂɑ*

nineVCL:ditch downward-dirve downward-drive

'Her brothers drove Vaimaqodzhu (the devil) again and again, with much energy and for a long distance.' Lit: Her brothers drove, drove Vaimaqodzhu nine mountains nine ditches.

[109] Someone might suspect that the so-called verbal action classifiers are just lexical nouns in these two examples. This is not the case. In Ersu, numerals or [NUM+CL] constructions are post-head modifying elements in an NP (§5. 2). However, as can be seen from (7. 76) and (7. 77), numerals precede these lexical nouns. In other words, these lexical nouns occupy the syntactic constituent of a classifier. This is the reason why classifiers are used here.

(7. 77) *ŋgə* *bi* *ŋgə* *dzo* *ŋɑ-la*

nine VCL: mountain nine VCL:river outward-come

‘(She) came (back to her parents’ home) overcoming many harships and covering a long distance.’ Lit: came nine mountains, nine rivers.

7. 2. 3 The construction of [NUM+V]

In Ersu, a verbal predicate can directly follow a numeral, forming a construction of [NUM+V] that can encode the suddenness, unexpectedness, strength and/or frequency of a verbal action. This is considered as delimitative aspect in Ersu. Details are given in §9. 3. 4. Here an example is given.

(7. 78) *yadzə̨=nɛ̀,* *də-tɕimɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-ndʑi* *xo*

child=TOP upward-be scared=PAUS ITRG-how MOD:ought to

=tə *xɑ-mɑ-sɛ̀* *xɑ=nɛ̀,* *xitsŋ* *tə*

=DES understand-NEG-understand LINK:when=PAUS rabbit one

=nɛ̀, *tə* *to=yì* *tʰi* *so=pʰɛ*

=TOP one jump=CSM 3sg.GEN before=LOC:side

ɲi-duɑ́=dʑigə

downward-go.PFV=EVID:reported

‘(It is said that) when the child was feeling scared and did not know what (he) ought to (do), a rabbit suddenly jumped (and) went before him.’ Lit: When the child was scared, did not know ought to how, a rabbit one jumped, went downward his side.

Chapter 8 Verbs and Verb Phrases

This chapter discusses verbs and verb phrases in Ersu. §8. 1 presents verbal morphology, with a special focus on verb prefixes. §8. 2 discusses the semantic subtypes of Ersu verbs. §8. 3 presents the copulas, which appear to have limited uses in Ersu. §8. 4 focuses on a set of five existential/locative/possessive verbs, and discusses their semantic differences. Verb transitivity is discussed in §8. 5. §8. 6 explicates the verbal causative suffix *-su* '-CAUS'. §8. 7 discusses the uses of a light verb *ŋù* 'do'. §8. 8 describes Ersu serial verb constructions (SVC). §8. 9 examines the structure of verb phrases. Finally, verb phrase coordination is presented in §8. 10.

8. 1 Verbal Morphology: an overview

The majority of Ersu verb roots are monosyllabic. Disyllabic roots are quite few, and polysyllabic roots are very rare. Additionally, verb roots often bear a directional prefix. Consequently, the most commonly seen structure of a verb is prefix+root with a tendency towards disyllabicity of a resulting stem much as in the western dialect, Lizu (Chirkova 2008). For example: *də̀-ɲì* 'upward-ache:be sick'; *tʰə-tɕʰi* 'away-give:give'. However, not all verbs in Ersu should take a directional prefix. Modal verbs (§10. 2) and existential verbs (§8. 3) never take a directional prefix and all of them are monosyllabic. Moreover, some of the directional prefixes have evolved to denote aspectual concepts and imperative mood rather than directional notions. The causative *-su* is the only verbal suffix that is attested in Ersu (§8. 5). The negative *mɑ-* 'NEG-' and the prohibitive *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' are often inserted between the directional prefix and the root of a verb, forming a structure of [PFX-NEG/PHTV-root] (§10. 1. 1. 2).These are the most common instances of the co-occurrence of prefixes in Ersu. Most other prefixes are mutually exclusive except for the prefix *kʰə-* 'inward-' that may occasionally occur with other prefixes (§8. 1. 1. 4). Post-verbal, or clause-final enclitics that denote aspect and evidentiality are rich in Ersu. Person, number or gender agreement of a predicate verb is not observed in Ersu. Verbal compounds are seldom attested in the data. Verbs could be either

root-reduplicated or prefix-reduplicated. §8. 1 first presents the Ersu directional verb prefixes (§8. 1. 1), then discusses reduplication in Ersu verbs (§8. 1. 2).

8. 1. 1 Directional verb prefixes

Directional verb prefixes are typical of Qiangic languages (Sun 2001). The rich set of directional prefixes to verbs is viewed as a defining grammatical characteristic of the Qiangic languages and they can be used to indicate real or figurative direction of a verbal event (Matisoff 2003: 89). Yu (2012: 141), based on his extensive fieldwork and literature investigation on six sub-dialects of Ersu, states that "the Ersuic languages are notable for their use of directional prefixes on almost all verbs". In fact, the use of directional verb prefixes has attracted much attention from linguists who have studied the language. Sun (198a, 1983a) lists seven directional prefixes and Liu (1983) lists five directional prefixes in Ersu[110]. Following Sun (1982a, 1983a), Song (2006) discusses six directional prefixes that Sun (1982a, 1983a) proposes, plus an additional prefix *tʰə-* 'away' that she has obtained from her fieldwork in Ganluo county. There are nine directional prefixes in the variety of Ersu spoken in Lajigu. §8. 1. 1. 1 presents the semantic subtypes of the nine directional prefixes. §8. 1. 1. 2 discusses the co-occurrence of directional prefixes and verb roots. Directional prefixes might have been grammaticalized from locational terms. The origin of directional prefixes is given in §8. 1. 1. 3. §8. 1. 1. 4 demonstrates the sequence of co-occurrence of prefixes affixed to a verb root.

8. 1. 1. 1 Semantic subtypes of directional verb prefixes

The nine directional verb prefixes attested in the Lajigu variety of Ersu can be further divided into two subtypes according to the meanings that they encode. Five of them can denote both "real" and "figurative" directions (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1) and four of them can only denote "real" directions (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2) of a verbal event, which is

[110] Liu (1983) says that "there are ten directional prefixes denoting past tense in Ersu". They are: *də-* 'upward-', *nə-*'downward-', *kʰə-*'inward-', *ŋə-*'outward-', *tʰə-*'away-', *dɑ-*'upward-', *nɑ-*'downward-', *kʰɑ-* 'inward-', *ŋɑ-* 'outward-' and *tʰɑ-* 'away-'. However, the fact is that the latter five of the prefixes are allomorphs of the former five due to vowel harmony (§2. 5. 1).

consistent with Matisoff's (2003: 89) description of directional prefixes in Qiangic languages. In addition, the four directional verb prefixes that only denote "real directions" can also denote the four horizontal directions centering on a fireplace in a house (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2). Finally, there are two prefixes encoding 'upward-' and two prefixes encoding 'downward-'. They show both semantic and syntactic differences (§8. 1. 1. 1. 4). The structure of this section and the semantic subtypes of the directional prefixes are given in Table 8. 1.

PFX		Gloss	Reference
"real and figurative" direction (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1)	*də-*	'upward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1
	nə-	'downward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 2
	kʰə-	'inward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 3
	ŋə-	'outward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 4
	tʰə-	'away-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 5
"real" direction (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2)	*kʰuɑ-*	'leftward-/away from the speaker-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 1
	ŋuɑ-	'rightward-/toward the speaker-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 2
	dʑi-	'upward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 3
	ɳi-	'downward-'	§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 4
prefixes encoding interior horizontal directions			§8. 1. 1. 1. 3
də- 'upward-' vs. *dʑi-* 'upward-' and *nə-* 'downward' vs. *ɳi-* 'downward-'			§8. 1. 1. 1. 4

Table 8. 1 List of directional verb prefixes in Ersu

8. 1. 1. 1. 1 Prefixes encoding both "real" and "figurative" directions

Though the semantic base of these prefixes denotes the direction of a verbal action in principle, they have a strong tendency to develop further semantic extensions. That is, they could be figuratively used and their meaning might be irrelevant to directions. When they do not explicitly denote a direction, the co-occurrence of a directional prefix and a verb root is in fact unpredictable and hard to explain[111] and the meaning of resulting combination of "prefix+root" is hard to predict. The co-occurrence of directional prefix and verb root is further discussed in §8. 1. 1. 2. In the subsections below, only examples are given to show their

[111] This might be due to the historic development of the language and lexicalization of the prefixes. Since this work aims to offer a synchronic description of the language, a further detailed discussion about this phenomenon is not given here.

co-occurrence. In addition, all directional prefixes are glossed in accordance with their meaning that encodes "real" direction even if its meaning might be irrelevant to a direction when it has developed further semantic extensions.

8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1 Prefix *də-* 'upward'

də- 'upward-' is the most frequently attested directional prefix. Its basic function is to encode an upward direction when it is prefixed to a verbal root of movement, motion or action. It can denote both "real" directions and "figurative" directions. Examples are given in (8. 1).

(8. 1)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
"real" direction	*də-to*	'upward-jump:jump upward'
	də-ʐɛ	'upward-crawl:crawl upward'
	də-tsʅ	'upward-place:place upward'
	də-li	'upward-throw:throw upward'
	də-la	'upward-come:come upward'
	də-duá	'upward-go.PFV:go.PFV upward'
"figurative" direction	*də-xi*	'upward-tell:tell (often a story)'
	də-ba	'upward-be full:be full'
	də-kʰatʂa	'upward-be healthy:be healthy'
	də-la	'upward-shout:shout'
	də-si	'upward-be until:be until'
	də-zu	'upward-bring up:brigh up'
	də-tsu	'upward-wear: wear (often a turban)'
	də-tsu	'upward-boil:boiled'

8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 2 Prefix *nə-*'downward'

nə- 'downward-' is semantically opposed to *də-* 'upward'. It basically denotes a 'downward' direction and is prefixed to a verb root of movement, motion or action. It can also denote both "real" directions and "figurative" directions. Examples are given in (8. 2).

(8. 2)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
"real" direction	*nə-to*	'downward-jump:jump downward'
	nə-ʐɛ	'downward-crawl:crawl downward'
	nə-tsʅ	'doward-place:place downward'
	nə-li	'downward-throw:throw downward'
	na-la	'downward-come: come downward'
	na-duá	'downward-go.PFV: go.PFV downward'
"figurative" direction	*nə-su*	'downward-become bad:(often voice) become unpleasant'
	na-gua	'downward-become bald:become bold'
	nə-ʂʅ	'downward-comb:comb'
	nə-zì	'downward-sit:sit'
	na-ntʂʰa	'downward-hit:hit (often with a stick)'
	na-kua	'downward-put…into:put…into'
	nə-dʑo	'downward-blame for: blame for'
	nə-nbɛ	'downward-cry:cry'

8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 3 Prefix *kʰə-*'inward'

The basic meaning of the prefix *kʰə-* is 'inward-'. According to Sun (1982a, 1983a), Liu (1983) and Song (2006), the prefix basically denotes an 'upstream-' and also an 'inward-' direction. However, the meaning of 'upstream-' is not observed in Lajigu, where the nearest river is several kilometers away from the village. Their studies also indicate that there are another two prefixes *ŋə-* and *ŋua-* that are respectively associated with 'downstream-' and 'direction towards a river-'. However, the two prefixes also have no semantic reference to river or water in Lajigu. This implies that the topographical features of a community may exert some influences on the formation of their language[112]. This demonstrates that "topographical deixis" which correlates with people's living environment, for example, the Milang (Post 2011) can be also attested in Ersu. *kʰə-* 'inward-' can denote both real and figurative directions as shown in (8. 3).

[112] It is reported by Wang Dehe that there is a river flowing through the village, Nuandzinio of Zela Township, Ganluo County, where Sun Hongkai conducted his fieldwork in the 1980s.

(8. 3)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
"real" direction	*kʰə-to*	'inward-jump:jump inward)'
	kʰə-ʐɛ	'inward-crawl:craw inward'
	kʰə-tsɿ	'inward-place:place inward)'
	kʰə-li	'inward-throw:throw inward'
	kʰɑ-la	'inward-come:come inward'
	kʰɑ-duá	'inward-go.PFV:go.PFV inward'
"figurative" direction	*kʰə-ʂɿ*	'inward-defeat:defeat'
	kʰə-bozì	'inward-get married:get married'
	kʰə-ʂu	'inward-set fire:set fire'
	kʰə-tʂʰə	'inward-cook :cook (often rice)'
	kʰɑ-xaxa	'inward-teach.RDUP:teach'
	kʰə-tʂʰu	'inward-place…onto:place…onto'
	kʰə-tʂʰutʂʰu	'inward-crouch:crouch'
	kʰə-gu	'inward-herd:herd'

8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 4 Prefix *ŋə-*'outward'

The basic meaning of the prefix *ŋə-* is 'outward-'. It occurs with motion verbs and verbs implying movements and actions. *ŋə-* 'outward-' can also be figuratively used. Examples are given in (8. 4).

(8. 4)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
"real" direction	*ŋə-to*	'outward-jump:jump outward'
	ŋə-ʐɛ	'outward-crawl:crawl outward'
	ŋə-tsɿ	'outward-place:place outward'
	ŋə-li	'outward-throw:throw outward'
	ŋɑ-la	'outward-come:come outward'
	ŋɑ-duá	'outward-go.PFV:go.PFV outward'
"figurative" direction	*ŋɑ-ʐa*	'outward-gather:gather'
	ŋə-dzɿ	'outward-eat:eat'
	ŋə-ʂuʂu	'outward-string…together:string…together'
	ŋɑ-kà	'outward-become thin:become thin'
	ŋɑ-ɲpʰɛ	'outward-split:split (often into halves)'
	ŋɑ-ba	'outward-be tired:be tired'
	ŋə-bu	'outward-explode:explode'
	ŋɑ-ɲtsʰa	'outward-drag:drag'

8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 5 Prefix *tʰə-* 'away'

The prefix *tʰə-* affixed to a verb root encoding an action or a motion 'away from

the speaker or the agent and towards the others'. It is glossed as 'away-' in this grammar. However, it cannot denote the direction of a movement such as 'come', 'go', 'crawl' and 'jump'. In addition, unlike other prefixes that have an antonym as described above such as *də-* 'upward-' vs. *nə-* 'downward-'; *kʰə-* 'inward-' vs. *ŋə-*'outward-', *tʰə-* 'away-' does not have an antonymic counterpart that denotes 'towards-'. This is shared by the other sub-dialects of Ersu (Yu 2012: 142). When an action or a motion occurs towards the speaker, the verb root does not take a prefix *tʰə-*'away-'. For example:

(8. 5) a. *vu* *tə-mi* *a= và* *ku*
wine one-CL:a bit (liquid) 1sg.SLF=ACC toast
'Toast me with a bit wine.'

b. *vu* *tə-mi* *tʰa= và* *tʰə-ku*
wine one-CL:a bit (liquid) 3sg.PRT=ACC away-toast
'Toast him with a bit wine.'

(8. 5a) above shows that when the speaker asks a person to toast "I", the speaker him/herself, that is, an action "towards" him/her, *ku* 'toast' does not take the prefix *tʰə-* 'away-'. However, (8. 5b) above demonstrates that when the speaker asks a person to toast someone else, not the speaker him/herself, that is, an action "away" from him/her, *ku* 'toast' takes the prefix *tʰə-* 'away-'.

Besides its basic meaning to denote 'away-', *tʰə-* is frequently used in a figurative way. Examples are given in (8. 6).

(8. 6)

Ex.	Gloss
tʰə-tɕʰi	'away-give: give (often something to others)'
tʰə-tsɿ	'away-feed: feed others (often with solid things)'
tʰə-ku	'away-feed: feed others (often with liquid things)'
tʰə-pu	'away-become:become'
tʰə-li	'away-release:release'
tʰə-tɕo	'away-return:return'
tʰɑ-gua	'away-take off:take off (clothes)'
tʰə-ʐu	'away-catch:catch'
tʰə-tɕu	'away-complete'
tʰə-dzɿ	'away-listen to:listen to'
tʰə-tʂʰɿ	'away-pick:pick (something that sticks to sth. else or that is a part of an entity)'

8. 1. 1. 1. 2 Prefixes encoding "real" directions only

As mentioned in §8. 1. 1. 1 and shown in Table 8. 1, there are four directional prefixes that only encode "real" directions. The occurrence frequency of these prefixes is much lower than that of the above-discussed five prefixes. In addition, they do not give rise to extended semantics. That is, they cannot be used figuratively.

8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 1 Prefix *kʰua-* 'leftward-/northward-'

The prefix *kʰua-* denotes the direction towards the left side, or towards the fireplace. In addition, it can also roughly refer to the direction of north with more and more people in Lajigu understanding the cardinal directions used in the outside communities. Consequently, it is also glossed as 'northward-' in this grammar. This is also applicable to the prefix *ŋua-* 'leftward-/southward-' (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 2). Examples are given in (8. 7).

(8. 7)

Ex.	Gloss
kʰua-to	'leftward-/northward-jump:jump toward the left/north'
kʰua-ʐɛ	'leftward-/northward-crawl:crawl toward the left/north'
kʰua-tsɿ	'leftward-/northward-place:place toward the left/north'
kʰua-li	'leftward-/northward-throw:throw toward the left/north'
kʰua-la	'leftward-/northward-come:come toward the left/north'
kʰua-duá	'leftward-/northward-go.PFV:go.PFV. toward the left/north'

In addition, *kʰua-* 'leftward-/northward-' can also encode a movement away from

a speaker. In this situation, it cannot be prefixed to *la* 'come' since terms for 'come' encode directions inherently. Therefore, it is unacceptable to say **k^hua-la* 'away from a speaker-come: come!' if a speaker commands a referent to stay away from her/him. S/he can only say *k^hua-yi* 'away from a speaker-go.NPFV:go!'.

8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 2 Prefix *ŋua-* 'rightward-/southward-'

The prefix *ŋua-* 'rightward-/southward-'denotes an opposite direction of the prefix *k^hua-* 'rightward-/northward-'. In other words, it refers to the direction towards south, the right or towards the speaker. Examples are given in (8. 8).

(8. 8)

Ex.	**Gloss**
ŋua-to	'rightward-/southward-jump:jump toward the right/south'
ŋua-ʐɛ	'rightward-/southward-crawl:crawl toward the right/south'
ŋua-tsʅ	'rightward-/southward-place:place toward the right/south'
ŋua-li	'rightward-/southward-throw:throw toward the right/south'
ŋua-la	'rightward-/southward-come:come toward the right/south'
ŋua-duá	'rightward-/southward-go.PFV:go.PFV. toward the right/south'

When the prefix encodes a movement towards a speaker, it cannot be prefixed to *yi* 'go.NPFV' or *duá* 'go.PFV'. Therefore, it is unacceptable to say **ŋua-yi* 'towards a speaker-go.NPFV:go!' if a speaker commands a referent to come towards her/him. S/he can only say *ŋua-la* 'towards a speaker-come:come!'.

8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 3 Prefix *dʑi-* 'upward-'

dʑi- 'upward' does not occur much in the data. Examples are given in (8. 9)

(8. 9)

Ex.	**Gloss**
dʑi-yi	'upward-go.NPFV:go upward'
dʑi-ntɕ^{h}o	'upward-pump:pump upward'
dʑi-toto	'upward-gaze:gaze upward'
dʑi-ɕo	'upward-sweep:sweep upward'
dʑi-tua	'upward-hug:hug upward'

8. 1. 1. 1. 2. 4 Prefix *ɳi-* 'downward-'

Similar to *dʑi-*, the prefix *ɳi-* 'downward-' is also seldom attested in the data. Examples are given in (8. 10).

(8. 10)

Ex.	Gloss
ɳi-la	'downward-come:come downward'
ɳi-pʰsɿ	'downward-throw:throw downward'
ɳi-to	'downward-jump:jump downward'
ɳi-ʂə	'downward-move:move downward (often slowly and slightly)'
ɳi-ɕo	'downward-sweep:sweep downward'
ɳi-yi	'downward-go.NPFV:go.NPFV. downward'
ɳi-fiukà	'downward-fall: fall downward'

8. 1. 1. 1. 3 Prefixes encoding interior horizontal directions

The above described four directional prefixes that can only encode "real" directions (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2) can be used for interior horizontal directions. In this situation, they show some sort of semantic variation. Since the notion of interior horizontal directions is based on the location of *mɛ+dʑi* 'fireplace' in a family (see Figure 4. 4 and Table 4. 13), the directions that they encode also center on *mɛ+dʑi* 'fireplace'. More specifically, *kʰuɑ-* refers to 'the direction towards *dʑi+kuɑ=xɛ̀*'; *ŋuɑ-* refers to 'the direction towards *dʑi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀*'; *dʑi-* refers to 'the direction towards *dʑi+pu=xɛ̀*' and *ɳi-* refers 'the directiontowards *dʑi+ɳi=xɛ̀*'. Take the verb *yi* 'go.NPFV' taking the four directional prefixes as an example, as shown in Figure 8. 1.

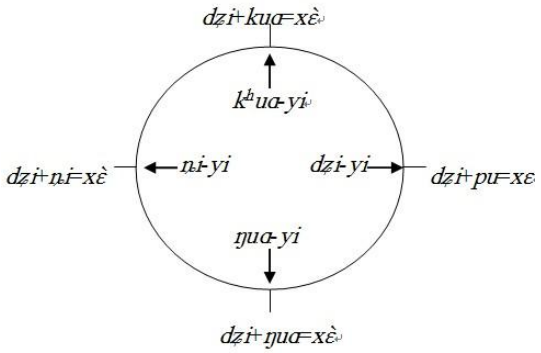

Figure 8. 1 Examples of interior directions[113]

[113] Please refer to Table 4. 13 for the glossing and the translation of the four locational terms centering on a fireplace.

8. 1. 1. 1. 4 *də-* 'upward-' vs. *dʑi-* 'upward-' and *nə-* 'downward' vs. *ɲi-* 'downward-'

As can be seen from the discussions above, there are two sets of different directional prefixes that respectively encodes 'upward-' (*də-* and *dʑi-*) and 'downward-' (*nə-* and *ɲi-*). Though they share the same meaning, they are different from each other in discourse in the following respects:

1) Prefixes *də-* 'upward-' and *nə-* 'downward-' cannot be used for interior horizontal directions as described in §8. 1. 1. 1. 3.

2) *də-* 'upward-' and *nə-* 'downward-' prefixed verbs can be used in imperative and prohibitive context, while *dʑi-* and *ɲi-*prefixed verbs cannot be used in this way, as shown in (8. 11) and (8. 12).

(8. 11) a. (*nə*) *də-to*!
(2sg) upward-jump
'(You) jump upward!'

*b. (*nə*) *dʑi-to*!
(2sg) upward-jump
'(You) jump upward!'

(8. 12) a. (*nə*) *də-tʰɑ-to*!
(2sg) upward-PHTV-jump
'(You) do not jump upward!'

*b. (*nə*) *dʑi-tʰɑ-to*!
(2sg) upward-PHTV-jump
'(You) do not jump upward!'

3) *dʑi-* 'upward-'and *ɲi-* 'downward-'prefixed verbs tend to put an emphasis on the description of the process or the development of a movement. For example, they can be used in the situation when an addresser is giving instructions to an addressee on how to find his/her way, as shown in (8. 13).

(8. 13) *nə ga=xɛ̀* *dʑi-yi* *dʑi-yi*,
2sg uphill=LOC:side upward-go.NPFV upward-go.NPFV
a=zɿ̀ *ŋga=pa*
1sg.SLF=GEN:family door=RLN.LOC:space around the door
pa+la=gə
place+come:arrive=PROS
'You keep going upward (along) the uphill side, (and you) will arrive at my home.'

4) As described in §8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1 and §8. 1. 1. 1. 1. 2, both *də-* 'upward-'and *nə-* 'downward-' may have a figurative semantic extension. In other words, the two can denote 'diagonally upward (i. e. up an incline)' and 'diagonally downward (i. e. downward a decline)', respectively. For example, it is acceptable to say *da-ba* 'upward-full:become full' and *nə-su* 'downward-bad (often voice) become unpleasant'. However, *dʑi-* 'upward-'and *ɲi-* 'downward-'prefixed verbs do not have this kind of semantic implication.

8. 1. 1. 2 Co-occurrence of directional prefixes and verb roots

In Ersu, verbs apart from existential verbs and auxiliary verbs may all take a directional prefix. However, not all the nine directional prefixes listed in Table 8. 1 always encode directionality as described above. There are five directional prefixes encoding both "real" and "figurative" directions (§8. 1. 1. 1. 1). When they have "figurative" meanings, the co-occurrence of directional prefixes and verb roots can be rather semantically opaque. In general, the co-occurrence of directional prefixes and verb roots are dependent on three factors: **1)** the deictic connection (§8. 1. 1. 2. 1); **2)**

the "hard-to-explain" connection (§8. 1. 1. 2. 2) and **3)** the marking of aspect or mood (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3).

8. 1. 1. 2. 1 The deictic connection

Verb roots that denote locational/directional movement or motion may take the majority of directional prefixes. In this case, the use of a directional prefix signifies the corresponding direction of movement or motion. Which prefix to be chosen is contextually dependent as described above. These roots may have the meaning such as 'come', 'go', 'walk', 'crawl', 'throw', 'jump', 'place' and 'grasp'. Example (8. 14) shows that different directions of motion are conveyed by directional prefixes.

(8. 14) *kʰua-ntʂʰontʂʰo* *tʂʰo tso* *da-lia,* *ŋua-*
leftward-grasp.RDUP dog excrement upward-glue on rightward-
ntʂʰontʂʰo *vɛ tso* *da-lia*
-grasp.RDUP pig extement upward-glue on
'(He) grasped leftward and was glued on dog excrement, (and he) grasped rightward and was glued on pig excrement.'

8. 1. 1. 2. 2 The "hard-to-explain" connection

As mentioned above, when the directional prefixes do not encode "real" directions, but "figurative" directions, the connections between a prefix and a root are unpredictable and customary. The reasons why there is this kind of co-occurrence cannot be easily explained and this needs further investigations. A large number of verbs can only co-occur with only one of the directional prefixes listed in Table 8. 1. For example: *kʰa-ndza* 'inward-stand'; *nə-zɿ* 'downward-sit'; *ŋə-dzɿ* 'outward-eat'; *ŋə-tsʰɛ* 'outward-drink'; *tʰə-mo* 'away-die'. One more example is that all the verbs sharing the similar meaning with 'say, speak' only take the prefix *də-* 'upward' such as *də-xi* 'upward-tell (a story)'; *da-la* 'upward-shout'; *da-kʰatʰo* 'upward-tell (a story)' and *də-koyi* 'upward-call for'. In addition, the same one root taking different

directional prefixes may have different meanings. For example: *dɑ-ka* 'hit' and *nɑ-ka* 'kill'; *dɑ-ntsʰɑ* 'drag' and *nɑ-ntsʰɑ* 'repair'. Verb roots of this type with the particular meaning can only occur with some particular prefixes as described above. This implies that directional meaning of those "figurative" directional prefixes that co-occur with some particular roots unpredictably and customarily has been bleached. In addition, they do not obligatorily co-occur with the verb roots. Consequently, it is hypothesized that these directional prefixes are still in the process of lexicalization. For example:

(8. 15) a. *ɑ* *yɛ+so+xɑ* *tə-sɥ̀*
1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one-QUAT:bit
dɑ-kʰɑtʰo=gə
upward-tell=PROS
'I am going to tell an ancient story.'

b. *ɑʲ=yi* *ɑ-pu+ɑ-pɑ=bɛ̀*
1sg.SLF=GEN KPFX-grandfather+KPFX-father:ancestor=QUAT.pl
ɑʲ=và *kʰɑtʰo* *xɑxɑ…*
1pl.SLF=ACC tell teach.RDUP
'Our ancestors tell us and teach us…'

8. 1. 1. 2. 3 Directional prefixes and aspect/mood

In Ersu, the use of the directional prefixes is closely associated with aspect and mood. The directional prefixes except for the four that can only denote directionality (§8. 1. 1. 1. 2) can all be used as markers of aspect and mood. They are obligatorily affixed to verb roots and co-occur with the postpositional aspectual markers to encode the perfective, the perfect, the repetitive and the changing of state as shown in (8. 16), (8. 17), (8. 18) and (8. 19) respectively. In addition, they are also obligatory in imperative and prohibitive mood as shown in (8. 11), (8. 12) above and (8. 20) below. In other context, they are optional, which is quite similar to other TB languages in the

neighboring area such as Qiang, Prinmi, Namuzi, rDrapa (Shirai 2009) and its western dialect, Lizu (Chirkova 2008).

(8. 16) **Perfective**

ta ma kʰə-tsʰo anɛ, m̩ngu=và kʰə-zo=á

one arrow inward-shoot LINK:after forehead=ACC inward-target=PFV

=dʑigə

=EVID:reported

'(It is said that he) shot an arrow and hit (the person's) forehead.'

(8. 17) **Perfect**

xuafu=kaka na-pa

apple=NCL:irregularly roundish and fist-like two-CL:round and pearl-like

kʰa-sa=tsà

inward-fructify=PFT

'The tree has already had two apples.'

(8. 18) **Repetitive**

tʰə n̥inua=nɛ̀ a-tʰə=kə

DEM:this younger male sibling=TOP LPFX:distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:there

nə-nbɛ nə-nbɛ nə-nbɛ=gə

downward-cry downward-cry downward-cry=PROG

'The younger brother was crying again and again there.' Lit: This younger brother there cry, cry, cry.

(8. 19) **Changing of State**

a latɕikù də-dzɿ da-kʰua=yì...

1sg.SLF PN:village name upward-be born upward-be big=CSM

'I was born and grew up in Lajigu.'

(8. 20) a. **Imperative**

dɑ-lɑ!

upward-come

'Come upward!'

b. **Prohibitive**

dɑ-tʰɑ-lɑ!

upward-PHTV-come

'Do not come upward!'

8. 1. 1. 3 Origin of directional prefixes

Linguists have different opinions on the origin of directional prefixes in Qiangic languages. Huang (1994: 151) believes that they originate from orientation pronouns. Sun (1982a, 1983a) and Song (2006) claim that the directional prefixes in Ersu have been grammaticalized from locational terms. Though this chapter aims to offer a synchronic description of locationals and directionals in Ersu rather than a study of historic development of the directional prefixes, it is obvious that locational terms are the origin of both the nominal directional terms and verbal directional prefixes. For example, the same morpheme of the prefixes *ŋuɑ-* 'south-/rightward-' is shared by the nominal directional term *ɑ-ŋuɑ* 'south/upstream direction' and the locational terms *dʑi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀* 'space in front of the fireplace' and *yi+ŋuɑ=xɛ̀* 'the exterior right side of a house' in Ersu.

8. 1. 1. 4 Co-occurrence of multiple prefixes

As mentioned in §8. 1, the negative prefix *mɑ-* 'NEG-' and the prohibitive prefix *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' are often inserted between the directional prefix and the root of a verb, forming a structure of [PFX-NEG/PHTV-root] with a sequence of two prefixes. However, the negative *mɑ-* 'NEG-' and the prohibitive *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' are mutually exclusive. In addition, since the imperative mood of a verb always takes a directional

prefixes, the prohibitive, that is, the negative imperative *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' is always inserted between a directional prefix and a verb root as shown in (8. 12a) and (8. 20b) above and (8. 21b) below. For example:

(8. 21) a. *dɑ-mɑ-kʰɑtʰo*
upward-NEG-tell
'Not tell'

b. *dɑ-tʰɑ-kʰɑtʰo*
upward-PHTV-tell
'Do not tell.'

*c. *dɑ-mɑ-tʰɑ-kʰɑtʰo*
upward-NEG-PHTV-tell
'Do not not tell'

In addition *kʰə-* 'inward-' is the only prefix that sometimes co-occurs with other directional prefixes and it always precedes them. In this situation, *kʰə-* 'inward-' does not have a semantic extension and only denotes direction. Meanwhile, the prefix following it does not denote directionality and has the meaning of "figurative" direction only. For example:

(8. 22) *kʰə-nɑ-kuɑ*
'inward-downward-put
'put…into…'

(8. 23) *kʰə-nə-zɿ*
inward- downward-sit
'sit down in…'

8. 1. 2 Verbal reduplication

Reduplication is characteristic of Ersu verbs. Reduplication may take different forms, which can be further classified as six different types: inherent reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 1), semelfactive verb root reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 2), PFX-*dzɨ̀*+PFX-root reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 3); PFX-syllable$_1$+PFX-syllable$_2$ reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 4), V=*ɑ*+V reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 5) and *ɑ*+V+*mɑ*-V reduplication (§8. 1. 2. 6).

8. 1. 2. 1 Inherent reduplication

Many Ersu verbs are inherently reduplicated. The root of these verbs consists of two reduplicated morphemes. Only when the two morphemes co-occur can they form a word. If there is only one morpheme used, its meaning is either unattested or irrelevant to the word with two reduplicated morphemes. For example, "*xɑ*" is reduplicated in the word *kʰɑ-xɑxɑ* 'inward-teach. RDUP:teach'. If only one "*xɑ*" is used, *kʰɑ-xɑ* would mean nothing. "*to*" is reduplicated in the word *kʰə-toto* 'inward-look.RDUP:look'. If only one "*to*" is used, *kʰə-to* would mean 'inward-jump:jump inward', whose meaning is completely not associated with 'look'. More inherently reduplicated and monomorphemic verbs are given in (8. 24)

(8. 24)

Ex.	Gloss
kʰɑ-tɕɑtɕɑ	'inward-clip.RDUP:clip'
kʰə-soso	'inward-learn.RDUP:learn'
nə-ɳbzɻɳbzɻ	'downward-share.RDUP:share'
ŋə-ʂuʂu	'outward-make…neat.RDUP:make…neat'
də-ŋgoŋgo	'upward-pick up.RDUP:pick up'
ŋɑ-kɑkɑ	'outward-burst off.RDUP:burst off'
də-dʐɯdʐu	'upward-encounter.RDUP:encounter'

8. 1. 2. 2 Semelfactive verb root reduplication

The reduplication of the roots of semelfactive verbs such as 'kill', 'punch' and 'kick' can form a verb, which often has a reciprocal, or a repetitive, or a continuous meaning. The meaning of verb formed through the reduplication of semelfactive verb roots is still associated with the original verb, as shown in Table 8. 2.

Original Verb		Reduplicated Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
də-sɿ	'upward-kill:kill'	*də-sɿsɿ*	'upward-fight.RDUP:fight' Lit: kill each other
də-to	'upward-jump:jump'	*də-toto*	'upward-dance.RDUP:dance' Lit: jump repeatedly and continuously
də-tsu	'upward-hit:hit'	*də-tsutsu*	'upward-hit.RDUP:hit each other'
			'upward-hit.RDUP:hit repeatedly and continuously'
də-gu	'upward-kick'	*də-gugu*	'upward-kick.RDUP:kick each other'
			'upward-kick.RDUP:kick repeatedly and continuously'
nə-ʂə	'downward-move'	*nə-ʂəʂə*	'downward-kick.RDUP:move repeatedly and continuously'

Table 8. 2 Root reduplication of semelfactive verbs

8. 1. 2. 3 Prefix-*dzì*+prefix-root reduplication

The prefix of a verb can be reduplicated and linked by *dzì* 'also', forming a structure of [PFX-*dzì*+PFX-root]. This is often used in the context when the speaker expresses her/his resignations and compromises about a situation. It also implies that the speaker is fed up with some sort of verbal event or action. S/he does not want to do it again or does not want it to occur again. It can be translated as 'have already done something and done enough'. Note that the meaning of *dzì* 'also' has bleached and it only function as a linker here. Examples are given in Table 8. 3.

Original Verb		Reduplicated Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
ŋə-ntɕʰi	'outward-annoy:annoy'	*ŋə-dʑì+ŋə-ntɕʰi*	'outward-LINK+outward-annoy:annoy enough'
də-wa	'upward-be full (of food):be full'	*də-dʑì+də-wa*	'upward-LINK+upward-be full (of food):be full enough'
nə-nbɛ	'downward-cry:cry'	*nə-dʑì+nə-nbɛ*	'downward-LINK+downward-cry:cry enough'
də-ka	'upward-hit:hit'	*də-dʑì+də-ka*	'PFX-LINK+PFX-hit:hit enough'

Table 8. 3 Examples of PFX-*dzì*+PFX-root reduplication

8. 1. 2. 4 Prefix-syllable$_1$+prefix-syllable$_2$ reduplication

When a verb root consists of two different syllables, that is, a verb like PFX-syllable$_1$syllable$_2$, the two syllables can be separated from each other and each

takes the same one prefix, forming a structure as [PFX-syllable$_1$+PFX-syllable$_2$]. Verbs of this type are often stative verbs. In addition, the meaning of only one syllable of these verbs is unknown though they can be separated from each other in this situation. This kind of reduplication has an emphatic function, which can be translated as 'be very…' as shown in Table 8. 4.

Original Verb		Reduplicated Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
də-dʑimò	'upward-be rich:be rich'	*də-dʑi+də-mò*	'upward-?be rich+upward-?be rich:be very rich'
ŋə-baɲi	'outward-be tired: be tired'	*ŋə-ba+ŋə-ɲi*	'outward-?be tired+outward-?be tired:be very tired'
nə-ʂʅpu	'downward-be diligent:be diligent'	*nə-ʂʅ+nə-pu*	'downward-?be diligent+downward-be diligent:be very diligent'
də-dʑima	'upward-be scared'	*də-dʑi+də-ma*	'upward-?be scared+upward-?be scared:be very scared'

Table 8. 4 Examples for PFX-syllable$_1$+PFX-syllable$_2$ reduplication

8. 1. 2. 5 V=*ta*+V reduplication

A verb can be reduplicated through the occurrence of the same verb taking a locative nominalizer=*ta* (§4. 2. 3. 2), forming a structure of [V=*ta*+V]. It literally means that something happens again or a state still exists in the situation where it has already happened or existed. This structure functions to denote that the state has not changed and is contrary to a speaker's expectation. It can be translated as 'still…' as shown in Table 8. 5.

Original Verb		Reduplicated Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
dʐa	'EXT:there be'	*dʐa=ta+dʐa*	'EXT=NOM+EXT:there still be'
dʐʅ	'eat'	*dʐʅ=ta+dʐʅ*	'eat=NOM+eat:still eat'
nə-ntsʰɛ	'downward-leak'	*nə-ntsʰɛ=ta+nə-ntsʰɛ*	'downward-leak=NOM+downward-leak:still leak'
ŋə-ntɕʰo	'downward-leak'	*ŋə-ntɕʰo =ta+ŋə-ntɕʰo*	'outward-pump=NOM+outward -pump:still pump'

Table 8. 5 Examples of V=*ta*+V reduplication

8. 1. 2. 6 *a*+V+*ma*-V reduplication

[*a*+V+*ma*-V] reduplication is used to denote that a speaker holds an indifferent attitude towards other person's action and s/he also dislikes it. In a structure of [*a*+V+*ma*-V], the meaning of the morpheme *a* is unknown and *ma*- is a negative marker. In addition, a verb in this context never takes a directional prefixes. This structure can be translated as 'whether …or not, (I do not care)' as shown in Table 8. 6.

Original Verb		Reduplicated Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
la	'come'	*a-la+ma-la*	'?-come+NEG-come:whether to come or not, (I do not care)'
tʰə-so	'away-die:die'	*a-so+ma-so*	'?-die+NEG-die:whether to die or not, (I do not care)'
nə-nbɛ	'downward-cry:cry'	*a-nbɛ+ma-nbɛ*	'?-cry+NEG-cry:whether to cry or not, (I do not care)'
da-ka	'upward-hit:hit	*a-ka+ma-ka*	'?-hit+NEG-hit:whether to hit or not, (I do not care)'

Table 8. 6 Examples of *a*+V+*ma*-V reduplication in Ersu

Huang Zhifu (黄志富), one of my language consultants stated that this structure is under the influence of Mandarin Chinese because he is quite sure that when he was young, the Ersu never used the structure of [*a*+V+*ma*-V]. I hypothesize that his statement is correct. Mandarin Chinese also has a structure of [*ài*+V+*bù*-V], in which *ài* means 'like' and *bù* is a negative marker. Similar to [*a*+V+*ma*-V], Mandarin [*ài*+V+*bù*-V] also denotes that a speaker holds an indifferent attitude towards another person's action and s/he also dislikes it. For example: *ài-lái+bù-lái* 'like-come+NEG-come' also means 'whether to come or not, (I do not care)'. I hypothesize that in [*a*+V+*ma*-V], the morpheme *a* is a direct loan of Mandarin *ài* 'like'. This is consistent with the Ersu loanword strategy. That is, the Ersu tend to choose one of the two vowels that constitute Mandarin diphthongs (§2. 6). *ma*- is a calque from the Mandarin negator *bù*.

8. 2 Semantic Types of Ersu Verbs

The semantic classification of verbs in a language is associated with the epistemic stance of a speaker Aikhenvald (2004a). Verbs of different semantic subtypes may also correlate with their transitivity (§8. 5). According to Aikhenvald (2004a), it is useful to distinguish among volitional verbs, internal state verbs, verbs of perception and verbs with inherent aspect. Sun's (1993) study on Amdo Tibetan indicates that verbs in Amdo can be further classified into three semantic categories from the aspects of volitionality, consciousness and observability. Verbs in Lizu distinguish controllability vs. non-controllability from the perspective of verbal semantic features, volitionality vs. non-volitionality from the perspective of meanings conveyed by verbal markers (Chirkova 2008). Lidz (2010: 373-81) states that there are three major subsets of verbs in Yongning Na, that is, volitional verbs, internal state verbs and verbs denoting an observable state. With reference to previous literature and based on what the data reveal, I divide Ersu verbs into three semantic categories as described in the following subsections. They are: verbs expressing volitionality (§8. 2. 1), verbs denoting internal state (§8. 2. 2) and verbs denoting observable phenonmena (§8. 2. 3).

8. 2. 1 Volitional verbs

Volitional verbs are verbs that describe an action performed intentionally by a sentient agent or subject. Actions of this type are also under the control of the agent or the subject. This includes verbs denote motion, action, action-processes and utterance. Examples are given in (8. 25).

(8. 25)

Ex.	Gloss
də-toto	'upward-jump.RDUP:dance'
də-ka	'upward-hit:hit'
kʰa-ma	'inward-sleep:go to bed'
də-ntʂʰa	'upward-hit (often with a stick):hit'
də-tsʰu	'upward-build:build'
də-ʐa	'upward-collect:collect'
kʰə-soso	'inward-learn.RDUP:learn'
nə-npʰo	'downward-steal:steal'
də-la	'upward-come:come upward'

8. 2. 2 Internal state verbs

Internal state verbs are verbs that denote cognition, emotion and feeling of a subject. Since a person has direct knowledge of his/her own mind, the information source of a person is unmarked. However, regarding a non-speech act participant, the speaker often uses the inferential evidential marker to indicate the information source as inferred and reported (§11. 1). Examples for internal state verbs are given in (8. 26).

(8. 26)

Ex.	Gloss
də-xasɛ̀	'upward-understand:understand'
tʰə-mɛ	'away-forget:forget'
tʰə-ndo	'away-see, understand:see, understand'
tʰə-dʐ	'away-hear:hear'
də-tɕima	'away-fear:fear'
də-ga	'upward-like, love:like, love'
go+də-ndʐə	'thorax+upward-tremble:be angry'

8. 2. 3 Verbs denoting observable phenomena

Verbs denoting observable phenomena are those describing a phenomenon that is observable to the speaker. Verbs of this type include non-controllable, non-volitional verbs and verbs denoting natural phenomena including position verbs, weather verbs and verbs of involuntary process. Similar to internal state verbs regarding to a non-speech act participant, the speaker often uses the inferential evidential or reported marker to indicate the information source as observed or inferred (§11. 1). Examples for verbs denoting observable phenomena are given in (8. 27).

(8. 27)

Ex.	Gloss
ŋɑ-baɳi	'outward-be tired:be tired'
də-ɳì	'upward-be sick:be sick'
də-tsɑ	'upward-hang, be hung:hang, be hung'
tʰə-mo	'away-become old, die:become old, die'
də-kʰua	'upward-be big:be grown up'
də-tsʰa	'upward-be hot:be hot'
də-tsu	'upward-get dawn:get dawn'
ŋə-ndə	'outward-be good:be good'

8. 3 Copula

There are two copulas that denote "relational rather than referential meaning" (Dixon 2010b:159) in Ersu. One is *zŋ* 'COP:general'[114] and the other is *tʰə-pu* 'COP: become'. As Dixon (2010b: 180) points out that "if a language has two copula verbs, 'be' and 'become', it is more likely that 'be' will be omissible than 'become'". This is the case in Ersu. *zŋ* 'COP:general' only occurs in a negative sentence and in a "question tag" following a declarative statement (§8. 3. 1). *zŋ* 'COP:general' never occurs in an affirmative sentence. *tʰə-pu* 'COP:become', refers to either a state change or a temporal development (§8. 3. 2) and can be more widely used than *zŋ* 'COP:general'.

8. 3. 1 Copula *zŋ*

Similar to Puxi Qiang and Mandarin Chinese, Ersu is also a typical "topic-comment language", in which a simple clause often consists of two components, "topic" and "comment". A "topic" is often an NP, while a "comment" could be a verbal predicate complex, an NP, an adjective and even a simple clause (§12. 1. 2). Consequently, relations between copula subject (COPS) and copula complement (COPC) conveyed by a copula construction in Ersu can be expressed through a "topic-comment" construction rather than a copula construction. More specifically, in an affirmative sentence, the apposition of "Verbless Clause Subject

[114] The meaning of *zŋ* is quite similar to Mandarin *sh i* 'be' and also English 'be'. It can denote various relational meanings in general. Consequently, I gloss it as 'COP:general'

(VCS)" and a "Verbless Clause Complement (VCC)" (Dixon 2010b:160) can denote relational meanings. In other words, a copula that often refers to the state of relations in other languages does not function to denote this state in Ersu, although Ersu have the word *zɿ̀* 'COP:general'. However, in a negative sentence, *zɿ̀* 'COP:general' must be used. Examples are given as follows.

(8. 28) **Identificational Relation**

a. *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀,*
[DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{VCS}$=TOP
ɑ=zɿ̀ *ɑ-pa*
[1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-father]$_{VCC}$
'This (is) my father.'

b. *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀,*
[DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{COPS}$=TOP
ɑ=zɿ̀ *ɑ-pa* *mɑ=zɿ̀*
[1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-father]$_{COPC}$ NEG-COP:general
'This is not my father.'

*c. *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀,*
[DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{COPS}$=TOP
ɑ=zɿ̀ *ɑ-pa* *zɿ̀*
[1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-father]$_{COPC}$ COP:general
'This is my father.'

(8. 29) **Attributive Relation**

a. *tʰə=zɿ̀* *zìyì* *yɑ-ntɕʰo=tə*
[3sg.PREST=GEN:family daughter]$_{VCS}$ [APFX-beautiful=DES]$_{VCC}$
'His daughter (is) beautiful.'

*b. *tʰə=zɿ̀* *zìyì* *yɑ-ntɕʰo*

[3sg.PREST=GEN:family daughter]$_{COPS}$ [APFX-beautiful]$_{COPC}$

zɿ=tə

COP:general=DES

'His daughter is beautiful.'

Note than the negative form of *zɿ* 'COP:general' is not used for negative attributive relation. In this situation, *zɿ* 'COP:general' is not used and the attributive elements should be negated, as shown in following examples:

(8. 29) c. *tʰə=zɿ̀* *zìyì*

[3sg.PREST=GEN:family daughter]$_{VCS}$

mɑ-ntɕʰo=tə

[NEG-beautiful=DES]$_{VCC}$

'His daughter is not beautiful.'

*d. *tʰə=zɿ̀* *zìyì* *yɑ-ntɕʰo*

[3sg.PREST=GEN:family daughter]$_{COPS}$ [APFX-beautiful]$_{COPC}$

mɑ-zɿ=tə

NEG-COP:general=DES

'His daughter is not beautiful.'

(8. 30) **Possessive Relation**

a. *lɑ* *tʰə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=zɿ̀*

[chicken DEM:this-QUAT.pl]$_{VCS}$=TOP [1sg.SLF=GEN:family

tə-bɛ̀

one-QUAT.pl]$_{VCC}$

'These chickens (are) my family's.'

b. *la* *tʰə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=zɿ̀*

[chicken DEM:this-QUAT.pl]$_{COPS}$=TOP [1sg.SLF=GEN:family

tə-bɛ̀ *mɑ-zɿ*

one-QUAT.pl]$_{COPC}$ NEG-CPO:general

'These chickens (are) not my family's.'

*c. *la* *tʰə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=zɿ̀*

[chicken DEM:this=QUAT.PL]$_{COPS}$=TOP [1sg.SLF=GEN:family

tə-bɛ̀ *zɿ*

one-QUAT.pl]$_{COPC}$ COP:general

'These chickens are my family's.'

Beneficiary relation is expressed through the volitional verb, *tʰə-tɕʰi* 'away-give:give'. That is, in Ersu, people do not say something like 'This is for someone else'. They only describe the event that 'someone gives something to someone else', instead. In addition, locative relation in Ersu is expressed through the existential/locative/possessive verbs (§8. 4)[115].

In addition, *zɿ* 'COP:general', often carries the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-' and the interrogative markers *=ɑ=* and *=ɛ̀*, forming the construction of *mɑ-zɿ=ɑ̀* and *ɑ=zɿ=ɛ̀*. The two structures show no differences in either semantics or pragmatics. Either of the two functions as a "question tag" following a declarative statement with the meaning similar to 'isn't it?' or 'right ?' (§10. 1. 3. 2). For example:

[115] One of the examiners questions how to express **X used to be Y, X was Y, X must be Y**, etc. in Ersu and their negative forms. These are in fact the same as what I describe in this section. The only difference is that the native speakers of Ersu use some lexical adverbials, temporal nouns, lexical verbs, etc. to the sentences like X used to be Y, X was Y, etc. For example, if one wants to say "Those chicken must be my family's", she/he might add something like *ɑ=yi ndzɿndzɑ=nɛ* '1sg.SLF=GEN thinking=TOP:my thinking (is that) …' before (8. 30a).

(8. 31) ‘*baŋ̊i=sù* *ma-dzo*’=*dʑà.*

take care of=NOM NEG-EXT=EVID:quotative

ma-zɿ=a?

NEG-COP:general=ITRG

‘(She said like this): “there was no one who cared about her.” Right?’ Lit: Care person not have. not be?

(8. 32) *tʂaŋa* *nə-tsʰɿ* *kʰə-tsɿ=à=nɛ̀,* *dʑo* *la,*

later two-ten:twenty inward-increase=PFV=PAUS return come

dʑi. *a=zɿ=ɛ̀*?

consequently ITRG=COP:general=ITRG

‘He later came back when he was approximately 20 years old. Right?’ Lit: Later, increased to 20, come back. be?

Both (8. 31) and (8. 32) are extracted from a narrative story about the speaker’s parents’ previous experiences. Though two tag questions are used in the two examples, the speaker did not pause for an answer in her speech. In (8. 31), she used *ma-zɿ=a* to highlight the hardship that her mother suffered. In (8. 32), *a=zɿ=ɛ̀* is used to imply that she was not quite sure what she was describing. In addition, later elicitation shows that *ma-zɿ=a* and *a= zɿ=ɛ̀* can be used interchangeably.

In daily conversation, if a speaker uses either of the two structures, then he/she expects a confirmation. And the answer to a question like this is either *zɿ=tə/=dǒ* ‘COP:general=DES/=PART:affirmative’ (similar to English ‘Yes’), as in (8. 33) or *ma-zɿ=tə/=dǒ* ‘NEG-COP:general=DES/PART:affirmative’ (similar to English ‘No’), as in (8. 34).

(8. 33) A: *nə=nɛ̀,* *za+pu* *tə*

[2sg]$_{VCS}$=TOP [hundred+manage:king one

-wo, *ma-zɿ=a*?

-CL:generic, non-sticklike]$_{VCC}$ NEG-COP:general=ITRG

'You (are) the king. Right?'

B: *zɿ=tə/=dǒ*

COP:general=DES/=PART:affirmative

'Yes.'

(8. 34) A: *nə* *hailong=zɿ̀* *a-ma.*

[2sg]$_{VCS}$ [PN. MC:person name=GEN:family KPFX-mother]$_{VCC}$

a=zɿ=ɛ̀?

ITRG-COP: be=ITRG

'You (are) Hailong's mother. Right?'

B: *ma-zɿ=dǒ*

NEG-COP:general=PART:affirmative

'No.'

8. 3. 2 Coplula *tʰə-pu* 'away-become:become'

The copula *tʰə-pu* 'away-become' functions to denote change from one state into another. Unlike *zɿ* 'COP:general', this copula is not omissible in Ersu. It occurs quite frequently in mythical and folkloric stories. It is often attested in such context in which 'A becomes B', as in (8. 35) or 'A in this state becomes A in the other state', as in (8. 36). In addition, it is often found to denote the development of time, as in (8. 37). In this situation, a copula subject is often omitted since in Ersu and an argument can be retrievable through contextual clues (§12. 1. 2).

(8. 35) *tʰɚ=nɛ̀…* *nbò* *də-ɜˈ* *tə* *nbo*

[3sg.PRT]$_{COPS}$=TOP [horse upward-white one RPT:horse]$_{COPC}$

tʰə-pɯ=á.

[away-become]$_{COPC}$=PFV

'He (the toad) became a white horse.'

(8. 36) *nə,* *tʰə-tɕuà=nɛ,* *yò=yi* *dzivè*

[2sg]$_{COPS}$=TOP DEM:this-?:from now on=TOP [1sg=GEN husband

tə *tʰə-pɯ=á.*

one]$_{COPC}$ [away-become]$_{COP}$=PFV

'You, from now on, become my husband.'

(8. 37) *tʰə-xɑ=nɛ̀,* *nə-tu* *bùtʂʰə=maka* .

[DEM:this-time:now]=TOP [two-thousand year=over]$_{COPC}$

tʰə-pɯ=á

[away-become]$_{COP}$=PFV

'Now, (it is) after the year of 2000.' Lit: This time became over 2000 years.

8. 4 Existential/Locative/Possessive Verbs[116]

Tibeto-Burman languages often have more than one existential/locative /possessive verb. Huang (2013) has surveyed 100 Tibeto-Burman languages and has found that 73 of them have two, or more than two existential/locative verbs. According to LaPolla (2003a), existential/locative verbs in Tibeto-Burman languages are semantically distinctive from each other in animate vs. inanimate, abstract vs. concrete, location within a container vs. on a plane, etc. Huang (2004: 92-96) reports that there are four existential/locative verbs in Puxi Qiang. They are respectively used for animate referents, inanimate referents, referents in a container and immovable referents or referents inalienably connected to a larger entity. Chirkova (2008) finds that there are six existential/locative verbs in Lizu "used for purposes of nomimal

[116] A version of this section was presented at the HLS 19 at ANU (Zhang 2013).

sub-classification", that is, animate referents, movable referents, abstract referents, unmovable referents, referents in a container and referents in "general". Yongning Na has four existential/existential verbs. Furthermore, Yongning Na does not distinguish between animate and inanimate, but distinguishes the referents that are "protrude" or not, in a container or on a plane, exist in the past or non-past existence of time, and a "generic existential verb" (Lidz 2010: 356). Ersu has four existential/locative /possessive verbs: *bo*, *dzo*, *dẓa*, *xa* and *ɲo*[117]. Existential verbs in Ersu never take a directional prefix, but they may take negative markers (§10. 1. 1. 2. 2). Aspectual and modal markers are seldom found to follow existential verbs. Ersu existential verbs could be followed by the causative marker *-su* (§8. 6) but do not have an imperative or a prohibitive form. The five existential verbs, together with their semantic implications and pragmatic uses, are given in Table 8. 7.

EXT	**semantic implications & pragmatic uses**				**Reference**
dzo	animate	concrete	movable	possessive/locative/existential	§8.4.1
bo	inanimate			possessive	§8.4.2
dẓa				locative	§8.4.3
xa	inanimate/living plants		unmovable		§8.4.4
ɲo	inanimate	abstract	not applicable	possessive/locative	§8.4.5

Table 8. 7 List of Ersu existential verbs

Table 8. 7 indicates that the principal distinction among Ersu existential/locative /possessive verbs is that they are distinct from each other in denoting between animate vs. inanimate referents, concrete vs. abstract referents, movable vs. unmovable referents, possession vs. location/existence. However, these distinctions may overlap. For example, *dzo* may sub-classify both animate and concrete referents, and both possessive and locative referents. Details are discussed from §8. 4. 1 to §8. 4. 5.

[117] In this section, I group existential, locative and possessive verbs together rather than the conventional way to group existential and locative verbs together. This is so because in Ersu, though *bo* is a transitive possession verb rather than an intransitive existential/locative verb, its other features are quite similar to other four existential/ locative/possessive verbs. For example, they do not take a directional prefix or a prohibitive prefix, etc.

8. 4. 1 Existential/Locative/Possessive verb: *dzo*

dzo 'EXT' is the most widely used one among all the five existential/locative /possessive verbs. Its basic function is to denote animate and concrete referents, either human beings or non-human creatures, as in (8. 38) and (8. 39).

(8. 38) *tʰə də yi su zɿ-wo dzo*
3sg.PRT family house person eight-CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT
'There are eight people in his house.' Lit: He family house eight people have.

(8. 39) *a də yi ŋuà na ŋua dzo*
1sg.SLF family house ox two RPT:ox EXT
'There are two oxen in my family.'

dzo 'EXT' often denotes existential relationship, that is, 'There is something or someone in some place'. In this context, the referent in speech follows the location as in (8. 38) and (8. 39) above and (8. 40a) below.

(8. 40) a. *ɑ-tʰə=kə la tə dzo.*
distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there chicken one EXT
'There is a chicken over there.'

However, when a referent in speech precedes the location, *dzo* 'EXT' may denote locative relationship, that is, 'Something or someone is in some place', as in (8. 40b) below.

(8. 40) b. *la tə ɑ-tʰə=kə dzo*
chicken one distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there EXT
'A chicken is over there.'

dzo 'EXT' can also be used as a transitive possession verb to denote possessive relationship, that is, 'Someone has something or someone else', as in (8. 41) and (8. 42).

(8. 41) *a* *zù* *ŋa-ka* *dzo*
1sg.SLF fish two-CL:generic, sticklike EXT
'I have two fish.'

(8. 42) *tʰə* *yadzə̠* *nə-wo* *dzo*
3sg.PRT child two-CL: generic, non-sticklike EXT
'He has two children.'

dzo 'EXT' can also be used for fluids. The exact reason for this is not quite clear. However, several of my language consultants agree that this might be because the Ersu view fluids as animate ones in their cognition since the state of liquids such as water, blood, soup, etc. is unstable and changeable. This is shared by Mandarin Chinese. Chinese people also view fluid things as animate ones. It is common for Chinese people to talk about '*sǐ shuǐ* (dead water)', which means that water is not flowing, or '*huó shuǐ* (living water)', which means that water is flowing. For example:

(8. 43) *tʰə* *dzo-ka=kə* *dzo*
DEM:this river-CL: generic, sticklike=RLN.LOC:in water
ma-dzo=á.
NEG -EXT= PFV
'There was no water in this river.'

(8. 44) *tʰə* *gua* *tə=kə* *dzo* *dzo*
DEM:this ditch one=RLN.LOC:in water EXT
'There is water in this ditch.'

As can be seen from (8. 43) and (8. 44), *dzo* 'EXT' is used for both flowing water in a river and not-flowing water in a ditch. This is different from Mandarin Chinese in which there is a distinction between flowing fluids and non-flowing fluids.

8. 4. 2 Possessive verb: *bo*

The existential verb *bo* 'EXT' is used to denote inanimate referents and also for loan words, like TV, pen, etc. It is observed that *bo* 'EXT' has quite generic meanings in denoting inanimate referents, as in (8. 45).

(8. 45) *də-dʑimò=yi, dʐə dʑì bo, pa dʑì bo,*
upward-be rich=CSM money CO EXT foodstuff CO EXT
dʐɿ=li dʑì bo, tsʰɛ=li dʑì bo, ʐɿ=li dʑì
eat=NOM CO EXT drink=NOM CO EXT wear=NOM CO
bo, ti xa=nɛ̀, a-nɛ la bo
EXT DEM:this time< now=TOP ITRG-what EMPH:all EXT
'(We) have become rich. (We) have money, have foodstuff, have things to eat, have things to drink, have things to wear. Now, (we) have whatever (we want).'

(8. 45) is extracted from a piece of narrative story about the speaker's family history. The speaker uses (8. 45) to describe the happy life that they are enjoying in current society. This example illustrates that the semantic implication of *bo* 'EXT' is quite general, denoting various kinds of inanimate referents. In addition, it often refers to something that is precious to a possessor, like money, food, etc. as is shown in (8. 46) below. However, it is a transitive possession verb. Consequently, it cannot denote a locative/existential relationship, but a possessive relationship only. For example:

(8. 46) *əˡsu-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *ŋgɑ-wo*

PN:Ersu-QUAT.pl=TOP door-CL:generic, non-sticklike

tɕʰo=pʰɛ *ndʑo* *tə* *nə-tsʅ* *bo*

above space=LOC:side PN:jjo one downward-put EXT

'There is a jjo put (on the wall) above the door of an Ersu family.' Lit: The Ersu have a jjo put above the door.

(8. 46) indicates two semantic and pragmatic implications of *bo* 'EXT': **1)** It is often used to denote precious referents. jjo is in fact a white stone that the Ersu worship and that the Ersu view as the symbol of an Ersu family (§1. 2. 2. 1). Though it is a common stone to other ethnic groups, it is of great significance to the Ersu as long as they put it on the wall above the main door of their house. Consequently, *bo* 'EXT', denoting something precious, is used instead of other existential verbs in this context. **2)** Though the meaning of (8. 46) in fact indicates existential relationship, 'there is…', the speaker still uses A (the Ersu)→ O (jjo)→V (have) syntactic construction, in which A, the Ersu, is the possessor of O jjo. This verifies that *bo* is only used as a transitive verb denoting possessive relations.

Note that when a person wants to defecate excrement, s/he also uses *bo* 'EXT' to denote this, as shown in (8. 47).

(8. 47) *ɑ-wa,* *ɑ-wa,* *a* *tsò* *tə* *bo*

KPFX-grandmother KPFX-grandmother 1sg.SLF excrement one EXT

'Grandmother, grandmother, I want to defecate excrements.' Lit:

Grandmother, grandmother, I have excrement.

8. 4. 3 Existential/Locative verb: *dʐa*

While talking about inanimate, movable and concrete object, a speaker uses the existential verb *dʐa* 'EXT'. In other words, *dʐa* 'EXT' is used for inanimate referents

that can be movable and that also have a concrete referential value. Unlike *bo* 'EXT' that always denotes possessive relationship and *dzo* 'EXT' that can not only denote existential and locative relationship, but also possessive relationship, *dʐa* 'EXT' can denote existential and locative relationship rather than possessive relationship. For example:

(8. 48) a. *mɛ-li=ku* *si* *tʂəngu*
nature-?<earth= Yi. LOC: on wood stick
na-ka *dʐa*
two-CL: generic, sticklike EXT
'There are two wooden sticks on the ground.'

b. *si* *tʂəngu* *na-ka*
wood stick two-CL: generic, sticklike
mɛ-li=ku *dʐa*
nature-?<earth= Yi. LOC: on EXT
'Two wooden sticks are on the ground.'

(8. 48) shows that *dʐa* 'EXT' can denote both existential relationship and locative relationship when the referent and the location occupy different syntactic constituent order. As is similar to *dzo* 'EXT', when a referent in speech follows a location, *dʐa* 'EXT' denotes an existential relationship. If the referent and the location take a reverse order, *dʐa* 'EXT' denotes a locative relationship.

(8. 49) a. *a* *si* *tʂəngu* *na-ka* *bo*
1sg.SLF wood stick two-CL: generic, sticklike EXT
'I have two wooden sticks.'

*b.	*a*	*si*	*tʂəngu*	*na-ka*	*dʐa*
	1sg.SLF	wood	stick	two-CL: generic, sticklike	EXT
	'I have two wooden sticks.'				

(8. 49) indicates that the possession of an inanimate object can only be expressed through the use of *bo*, as in (8. 49a). *dʐa* is unacceptable to be used in this way, as in (8. 49b).

Moreover, *dʐa* is also used to refer to a dead animate referent. Ellipsis is quite a common phenomenon in Ersu discourse. For example: when a person or an animal has died, people seldom use a word such as 'corpse' to talk about the referential except that they want to stress 'the dead body' as a focus. On the contrary, they just use 'the dog, the fish, the cat…' to denote the 'body' of a dog, a fish, a cat…In this situation, *dzo* 'EXT' is used to denote a living referent, as in (8. 50a), and *dʐa* 'EXT' functions to denote a dead one, as in (8. 50b) below.

(8. 50)	a.	*ni*	*ɱtsʅ*	*ɑ-kuɑ*	*otɕɑ+pu*
		2sg.GEN	cat	distal-north	pear+CL:living plants: pear tree
		=tʂaŋa		*dzo*	
		=RLN.LOC:below		EXT	
		'Your (living) cat is below the pear tree in the far north.'			

	b.	*ni*	*ɱtsʅ*	*ɑ-kuɑ*	*otɕɑ+pu*
		2sg.GEN	cat	distal-north	pear+CL:living plants: pear tree
		=tʂaŋa		*dʐa*	
		=RLN.LOC:below		EXT	
		'Your (dead) cat is below the pear tree in the far north.'			

(8. 50b) is directly extracted from a folkloric story. This statement describes that the cat was killed and thrown under a pear tree by the quoted speaker. Then, I asked my

language consultant whether I can use *dzo* 'EXT' to replace *dẓa* 'EXT'. He quickly accepted the statement of (8. 50a), but pointed out that if (8. 50a) is used, the cat should be still alive. This indicates that *dzo* 'EXT' and *dẓa* 'EXT' respectively denotes an animate referent and a dead animate referent. It should be noted that though *bo* 'EXT' implies an inanimate referent, it cannot be used for a dead human being or an animal.

8. 4. 4 Existential/Locative verb: *xa*

The principal function of *xa* 'EXT' is to denote unmovable referents, either animate or inanimate. For example, it can be used to denote a village or a house, as in (8. 51). It can also denote living plants, as in (8. 52), and referents attached to a larger entity, as in (8. 53) and (8. 54). In addition, similar to *dẓa* 'EXT', this verb also denotes both existential and locative relationship only, not possessive relationship.

(8. 51) *ɑ-tʰə* *tsʰɑ=pʰɛ* *fu* *tə* *xa*
distal-DEM:this<that ?=LOC:side< opposite side village one EXT
'There is a village on that opposite side.'

(8. 52) *ɑˡ=yi* *nbi=tɕʰo* *si+pu*
1pl.SLF=GEN mountain=RLN.LOC:on wood+CL:living plants<tree
ɑ-nɛ *əˡnbɛ* *la* *xa*
ITRG-what CL:kind EMPH:all EXT
'There are various kinds of trees on our mountain.'

(8. 53) *si+pu=tɕʰo* *kʰali* *nə-wo*
Tree+living plants<tree=RLN.LOC:on walnut two-CL:generic, not-sticklike
xa .
EXT
'There are two walnuts on the tree.'

(8. 54) a. *zats^{h}ɛ-ka= kə* *bɛku* *tə* *xa*

pants-CL: generic, sticklike=RLN.LOC:in hole one EXT

'There is a hole on the pants.'

As is similar to *dzo* 'EXT' and *dʐa* 'EXT', when *xa* 'EXT' denotes an existential relationship, the location occurs before the referent in speech as shown in the examples from (8. 51) to (8. 54a) above. When the referent in speech is followed by a location, *xa* 'EXT' can denote locative relationship, as shown in (8. 54b) below.

(8. 54) b. *bɛku* *tə* *zats^{h}ɛ-ka= kə* *xa*

hole one pants-CL: generic, sticklike=RLN.LOC:in EXT

'A hole is on the pants.'

In addition, although the sun, the moon, the clouds and the stars are moveable, the Ersu use *xa* to describe their existence in this sky. For example:

(8. 55) *ta+ȵo* *mɛ̀+tɕò=kə* *ȵo-ma* *ma-xa*

?+day:today nature+bind:sky=RLN.LOC:in ?-SFX.FEM:sun NEG-EXT

'There is no sun in the sky today.'

8. 4. 5 Existential/Possessive verb: *ȵo*

ȵo 'EXT' is used for abstract referents. Since terms for abstract concepts are quite few in Ersu (§4. 3), *ȵo* 'EXT' accordingly does not occur as frequently as other existential verbs. It quite frequently co-occurs with *sɿ̀* 'matter', a loanword from Mandarin Chinese. In this situation, *ȵo* 'EXT' is used as a transitive possession verb and denotes a possessive relationship. Examples are given in (8. 56), (8. 57) and (8. 58).

(8. 56) *yadzɻə-bɛ̀, su-bɛ̀, kots^{h}i-bɛ̀, sə̀*

Child-QUAT.pl person-QUAT.pl life-QUAT.pl MC:matter

ɑ=ɲo=ɛ̀?

ITRG=EXT=ITRG

'Was there anyone, either children or adults, who was killed?' Lit: Children, persons, lives matters have?

(8. 57) *su-bɛ̀ sə̀ mɑ-ɲo=nɛ̀,*

person=QUAT.pl MC:matter NEG-EXT=TOP

mɑ-xɑ, mɑ-xɑ

NEG-EXT:no problem[118] NEG-EXT:no problem

'Since no one was killed, it does not matter.' Lit: People have no matter, no problem, no problem.

(8. 58) *ɑ t^{h}i+xɑ sə̀ ɲo=tə*

1sg.SLF DEM:this+time:now MC:matter EXT=DES

'Now I have things (to do).'

ɲo is also used for medications, as in (8. 59) and electricity, as in (8. 60). In these context, *ɲo* 'EXT' is an intransitive existential verb denoting an existential relationship.

(8. 59) *yɛ-xi+so-xi=nɛ̀, ɲitɕi mɑ-ɲo=á*

last-year+before-year< previous time=TOP medicine NEG-EXT=PFV

'There was no medicine in previous time.'

[118] *mɑ-xɑ* 'NEG-EXT:not have' has become an idiomatic expression that is used in daily conversation quite frequently. It means 'No problem'or 'It does not matter.'

(8. 60) *diàn* *ɑ=ŋo=ɛ̀?*

MC:electricity ITRG=EXT=ITRG

'Is there electricity?' Lit: Electricity have?

8. 5 Transitivity

As mentioned in §3. 1. 2. 2, Ersu verbs can be further classified into transitive (§8. 5. 2), intransitive (§8. 5. 3), ambitransitive (§8. 5. 4), ditransitive (§8. 5. 5) and extended intransitive (§8. 5. 6) verbs in terms of the arguments they take (§8. 5. 1). The majority of verbs are both transitive and intransitive, that is, ambitransitive, occurring as the form of S=A. Ambitransitive verbs occurring as S=O are not found in Ersu.

Valency changing is attested in Ersu. Through the reduplication of verb roots, a transitive verb can be changed into an intransitive verb with a reciprocal meaning as discussed in §8. 1. 2. For example, *də-gu* 'upward-kick' is transitive. If its root *gu* 'kick' is reduplicated, the verb *də-gugu* 'upward-kick.RDUP:kick each other' turns into an intransitive verb. A transitive verb can also be formed from an intransitive verb through adding a causative marker *-su* to it (§8. 6). For example, *nə-nbɛ* 'downward-cry' is intransitive. If it takes the causative *-su*, then *nə-nbɛ-su*, 'downward-cry-CAUS:cause…to cry' is transitive.

8. 5. 1 Argument structure & transitivity

As suggested by Dixon (2010b: 115-158), clauses in a language can be analyzed as having four core arguments, that is, S (intransitive subject), A (transitive subject), O (transitive object) and E ('extension' to core). The choice of core arguments is closely interrelated with verbal transitivity. There may be also some peripheral arguments including instrument, beneficiary, time and place. Prototypically, in Ersu, a transitive verb takes two core arguments (A and O). An intransitive verb takes one core argument (S). An ambitransitive verb either takes one core argument (S) or two core arguments (A and O). A ditransitive verb takes three arguments (A, O and E). An

extended intransitive verb takes two arguments (S and E). The most common argument structure in an Ersu clause is AOV/SV. Occasionally, AOEV/SEV is also found. However, the "core element" of a clause is a verbal predicate (V) except for a verbless clause (§8. 3. 1). A, S, O and E can be ellipsed under the condition that it can be recoverable in the context of discourse. And this is quite often in Ersu. More about the ellipsis of an argument in a clause is discussed in §13. 3. In this section, whenever transitivity is discussed, I just take the core arguments that a verb has regardless of argument ellipsis.

8. 5. 2 Transitive

Most of the volitional verbs such as action verbs, action-process verbs and factive verbs (§8. 2. 1) in Ersu are transitive. A transitive verb takes two arguments: A and O. A is often an animate referent[119] except some inanimate referents in mythological or folkloric stories are used in a rhetoric way, for example, personification. In general, A is an actor who carries out an action while O is an undergoer of the action[120] in a transitive clause. In addition, O can be either animate or inanimate. For example:

(8. 62) *tʰə* *yadʐə-wo* *dʐu-ma*
DEM:this child (A)-CL: generic, non-sticklike fox-SFX.FEM:fox(O)
tə *kʰə-mi=á*
one inward-catch (V)=PFV
'The child caught a fox.'

[119] I state that "A is often an animate referent" because the data demonstrate that an animate referent occurs as an A with the highest frequency. I do not mean to say that an inanimate referent cannot function as an A argument. In fact, an inanimate referent can also undertake the function of A. For example:

(8. 61) *mɛ=yikə* *tʰə* *yadʐə-wo* *na-npʰa*
fire=AGT DEM:this child-generic, non-sticklike downward-burn
'The fire has burnt the child.'

[120] This is the most common and prototypical feature, not absolute. In (8. 61) above, A is obviously not an actor. However, there are quite a few examples like (8. 61) after all.

(8. 63) *tʰə* *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə*

3sg.PRT(A) clothes (O) wash(V)=PROG

'She/He is washing clothes.'

As can be seen from (8. 62), the transitive verb *kʰə-mi* 'inward-catch' takes an A argument, *yadzə̱* 'child' and an O argument *dzu̱-ma* 'fox-SFX.MAS'. The argument *yadzə̱* 'child' in this context is an actor of the action 'catch' and 'fox' is an undergoer of the same action. Both arguments are animate. In (8. 63), the transitive verb *tsʰɛ* 'wash' also takes two core arguments: an actor A, a third person and an undergoer O, *gamɛ* 'clothes'. However, in (8. 63), O is inanimate. This illustrates that A is often animate while O can be either animate or inanimate.

In Ersu, A may take an agentive marker *=yikə* and O may take an accusative marker *=và.* Whether to take an agentive marker or an accusative marker or not is discussed in §4. 5. 2 and §4. 5. 3.

8. 5. 3 Intransitive

Verbs denoting internal state are often intransitive. They include emotional verbs, position verbs, weather verbs, and verbs of involuntary processes (§8. 2). Some of the action verbs like 'sing' and motion verbs like 'go' (§8. 2) are also intransitive. An intransitive verb takes one core argument, that is, S. S may be either animate or inanimate. Unlike A argument of a transitive verb that can optionally take an agentive marker, S never takes an agentive marker in Ersu (§4. 5. 2). Examples are respectively given in (8. 64) and (8. 65).

(8. 64) *tʰəˈ* *tsotʂʰə=kə* *toto=gə*

3pl.PRT(S) barnyard=RLN.LOC:in jump.RDUP:dance(V)=PROG

'They are dancing in the barnyard.'

(8. 65) *guà* *ʑò=gá*

rain (S) fall (V)=IMMI

'It is going to rain soon.'

(8. 64) and (8. 65) above show that in an intransitive clause, there is only one core argument. In (8. 64), the argument *tʰəɪ* '3pl.PRT' is animate while the argument *guà* 'rain' in (8. 65) is inanimate. It should also be noted that there is a peripheral argument *tsotʂʰə* 'barnyard' in (8. 64).

As mentioned in §8. 5, the reduplication of the root of a transitive verb can form an intransitive verb with reciprocal meanings. In this situation, a reciprocal verb often takes one core argument with the semantics of plurality. For example:

(8. 66) a. *tʰə* *ȵbò* *tʰɑ=và* *də-gu=á*

DEM:this horse(A) 3sg.PRT(O)=ACC upward-kick (V)=PFV

'The horse kicked him/her.'

b. *ȵbò* *tʰə* *ȵə* *ȵbò* *də-gugu*

horse DEM:this two RPT:horse(S) upward-kick.RDUP

=gə

=PROG

'The two horses are kicking each other.'

(8. 66) contains a transitive verb *də-gu* 'upward-kick' with two core arguments, *ȵbò* horse (A) and a third person (O). However, when *gu* 'kick' in *də-gu* 'upward-kick' is reduplicated, the transitive verb becomes intransitive with the meaning of 'kick each other'. Then, it takes only one core argument of plurality, *ȵbò ȵə ȵbò* 'horse two RPT:horse→two horses'.

8. 5. 4 Ambitransitive

A large number of verbs in Ersu are either transitive or intransitive and these are defined as ambitransitive verbs. The majority of them are volitional verbs (§8. 2. 1). When an ambitransitive verb takes two core arguments, A and O, it shares similar features with a transitive verb (§8. 5. 2). Similarly, when an ambitransitive verb takes one core argument, S, it functions as an intransitive verb and has the features of an intransitive verb (§8. 5. 3). For example:

(8. 67) a. *tʰə* *sɯ-bɛ̀* *ga=gə*
DEM:this person (S)-QUAT.pl sing (V)=PROG
'These people are singing.' Lit: These people sing.

b. *tʰə* *sɯ-bɛ̀* *ga* *ta-tsʰa*
DEM:this person=QUAT.pl(A) song one-CL:paper-like(O)
ga=gə
sing(V)=PROG
'These people are singing a song.'

As can be seen from (8. 67), the verb *ga* 'sing' in (8. 67a) is used as an intransitive verb, taking only one core S argument, an NP *tʰə sɯ-bɛ̀* 'DEM:this person-QUAT.pl→these people'. However, in (8. 67b), it is used as a transitive verb, taking two core arguments, an O argument, the NP *ga ta tsʰa* 'song one CL:paper-like→one song' and an A argument, the same NP *tʰə sɯ-bɛ̀* 'DEM:this person-QUAT.pl→these people' that functions as S in (8. 67a). (8. 67) shows that S=A is possible in Ersu. (8. 68) further illustrates this:

(8. 68) a. *tʰə* *yadzi̯ə-bɛ̀* *ɑ-tʰə*

DEM:this child-QUAT.pl(S) distal-DEM:this<that

=kə *gagɑ=gə*

=RLN.LOC:in<there play.RDUP=PROG

'The children are playing over there.'

b. *tʰə* *yadzi̯ə-bɛ̀* *ɑ-tʰə*

DEM:this child-QUAT.pl(A) distal-DEM:this<that

=kə *tʂʰo* *tə* *gagɑ=gə*

=RLN.LOC:in<there dog(O) one play. RDUP=PROG.

'The children are playing with a dog over there.'

(8. 68) indicates that the same NP *tʰə yadzi̯ə-bɛ̀* 'these children' is used as an S argument in (8. 68a) and also as an A argument in (8. 68b). Furthermore, the same verb *gaga* 'play' functions as an intransitive verb in (8. 68a), taking one S core argument while it functions as a transitive verb in (8. 68b), taking two core arguments, one A (*tʰə yadzi̯ə-bɛ̀* 'these children') and one O (*tʂʰo tə* 'a dog').

As mentioned in §8. 5, S=A is frequently found while S=O never occurs in the texts of recordings and in daily conversation. S=O cannot be obtained even through elicitation. For example:

(8. 69) a. *yadzi̯ə* *tʰə-wo=kə* *zi̯uao* *la*

child DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike=AGT bowl(O) EMPH:all

dɑ-pʰo=á

upward-break (V)=PFV

'The child broke the bowl.'

b. *ʐuao-wo* *la* *tʰə=kə*

bowl-CL:generic, non-sticklike(O) EMPH:all 3sg.PRT(A)=AGT

da-pʰo=á

upward -break (V)=PFV

'The bowl was broken.' Lit: The bowl, he broke.

(8. 70) a. *tʰə* *ɑ=yi* *ɲbò* *ɲə-ɲpʰo=á*

3sg.PRT(A) 1sg.SLF=GEN horse (O) downward-steal (V)=PFV

'He stole my horse'

b. *ɑ=yi* *ɲbò* *su=yi* *ɲə-ɲpʰo=á*

1sg.SLF=GEN horse (O) person=AGT downward-steal(V)=PFV

'My horse was stolen.' Lit: My horse, person stole.

(8. 69a) and (8. 70a) are extracted from the data. (8. 69b) and (8. 70b) are obtained through elicitation based on (8. 69a) and (8. 70a), respectively. I just asked my language consultants to translate "The bowl was broken." and "My horse was stolen." As can be seen from (8. 69b), the speakers still add *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' as an A argument and *ʐuao* 'bowl' continues functioning as an O argument, as is in (8. 69a). The same phenomenon is also found in (8. 70b). Even if the speakers do not know who (the agent) stole the horse, they add an indefinite pronoun *su* 'person' as an A argument and *ɲbò* 'horse' continues functioning as an O argument, as is in (8. 70a).

8. 5. 5 Ditransitive

Volitional verbs (§8. 2. 1) with the meanings of 'speaking' and 'giving' (Dixon 2010b:127) can be ditransitive. A ditransitive verb prototypically takes three core arguments, that is, A, O and E, forming an extended transitive clause. In an extended transitive clause, the recipient of a 'giving' verb and the addressee of a 'speaking' verb are obligatorily marked with the accusative *=và* . For example:

(8. 71) *tʰə* *la* *tə-wo* *a*

3sg.PRT (A) chicken one-CL:generic, non-sticklike (O) 1sg.SLF (E)

=và *tɕʰi=á*

=ACC give= PFV

'She/He gave me a chicken.'

(8. 71) indicates that the ditransitive verb *tɕʰi* 'give' takes three arguments: the "donor" and also the A core argument *tʰə* '3dg.PRT', the "gift" and also the O argument *la* 'chicken', the "recipient" and also the E argument *a* '1sg.SLF'. (8. 71) also show that the E argument *a* '1sg.SLF' is marked with the accusative = *và*.

(8. 72) *tʰə* *aˡ=và* *ndzondzɿ* *kʰa-xaxa*

3sg.PRT (A) 1sg.pl (E)=ACC written words (O) inward-teach

'She/He teaches us writing.' Lit: She/He teaches written words to us.

In (8. 72), the verb *kʰa-xaxa* 'teach' is ditranstive. It also takes three arguments. The "teacher" *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' acts as an A argument that undertakes the action "teach" while the "medium", *ndzondzɿ* 'written words' is used as an O argument that undergoes the action "teach". *aˡ* '1sg.pl' taking an accusative marker = *và* acts as an E argument that indicates the "extension" of the action "teach".

8. 5. 6 Extended intransitive

Some verbs, for example, verbs that denote movement such as 'come', 'go' and 'arrive' may take two arguments, S and E, forming an extended intransitive clause. E refers to the direction, the location or the destination of the movement. For example:

(8. 73) a. *tʰə* *də-ɲì* *buànɛ̀,* *ma-lá*

3sg.PRT (S) upward-be sick (V) LINK:because NEG-come.PFV

'Because she/he was sick, (she/he) did not come.'

b. *tʰə* *su+ŋo* *tʰə*

3sg.PRT(S) ?next+day:tomorrow DEM:this

fu=kə *la=gə*

village (E)=RLN.LOC:in come=PROS

'He will come to this village tomorrow.'

As can be seen form (8. 73), the verb *la* 'come' functions as an intransitive verb taking one core argument S, that is *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' in (8. 73a). However, in (8. 73b), it takes two arguments, that is, the S core argument (*tʰə*'3sg.PRT') and the E argument (*fu* 'village')[121].

8. 6 Causative *-su*

In Ersu, the causative marker *-su* is often suffixed to a verb or an adjective with the meaning of 'let/make/cause…(to) do/be…'. It mainly functions to increase the valency of an intransitive verb, a copula (*tʰə-pu* 'away-become') or an adjective, thus attributing a causative reading to an intransitive verb, a copula or an adjective. Examples are given in (8. 74).

(8. 74)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**[122]
VI	*tʰə-so*	'away-die'	*tʰə-so-**su***	'away-die-CAUS:make…die'
	nɑ-la	'come'	*nɑ-la-**su***	'downward-come-CAUS:make..come'
COP	*tʰə-pu*	'become'	*tʰə-pu-**su***	'away-become-CAUS:make…become'
EXT	*dzo*	'EXT'	*dzo-**su***	'EXT-CAUS:make…have'
ADJ	*yɑ-li*	'good'	*yɑ-li-**su***	'APFX-good-CAUS:make…good'
	yɑ-ntʰo	'sharp'	*yɑ-ntʰo-**su***	'APFX-sharp-CAUS:make…sharp'

(8. 75) below shows how *-su* '-CAUS' contributes to the valency changing of an intransitive verb in Ersu:

[121] Note that in (8. 68b), E (*fu* 'village') is obligatory and takes a relator noun though it is marked with "LOC" here (§4. 6). This is the reason why I view (*fu=kə* 'village=RLN.LOC:in') as an argument rather than an oblique in this example.

[122] In (8. 74), I just use 'make' to gloss the causative *-su*. Actually speaking, it also means 'let'or 'cause…to'. For example, *tʰə-so-**su*** may also mean 'cause…to die' or 'let…die'.

(8. 75) a. *tʰə* *tʰɤ=kə* *nə-zɿ*

1sg.PRT (S) DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here downward-sit (V)

=á

= PFV

'She/He sat here.'

b. *tʰə* *tʰi* *ɑ-pɑ=và* *si* *psɿ*

1sg.PRT (A) 3sg.PRT.GEN KPFX-father (O)=ACC wood flat

tə *nə-zɿ-su=á=dʑigə*

one downward-sit-CAUS(V)=PFV=EVID: reported

'(It is said that he) let his father sit on a wooden bench.' Lit: He let his father sit a flat wood.

(8. 75) indicates that the verb *nə-zɿ* 'downward-sit' is intransitive and takes only one S core argument *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' in (8. 75a). However, when it is followed by a suffix *-su* '-CAUS' denoting causative, the verb becomes transitive and takes two core arguments: the A argument *tʰə* "3sg.PRT" and the O argument *tʰi ɑ-pa* 'his father'.

(8. 76) below shows how *-su* contributes to the valency changing of the copula *tʰɤ-pu* 'away-become' in Ersu:

(8. 76) a. *tʰɤ=nɛ̀…* *nbò* *də-ɜˈ* *tə* *nbò*

[3sg.PRT]$_{CS}$=TOP [horse APFX-white one RPT:horse]$_{CC}$

tʰɤ-pu=á.

[away-become]$_{COP}$=PFV

'He (the toad) became a white horse.'

b. *sɿ̀zà=nɛ̀,* *tʰa=và* *nbò* *də-əʳ* *tə*

god (A)=TOP 3sg.PRT=ACC(O) horse APFX-white one

nbò *tʰə-pu-su=á*

RPT: horse away-become-CAUS (V)=PFV

'The god made him (the toad) become a white horse.'

As can be seen that in (8. 76a), *tʰə-pu* 'away-become' is a copula that takes a copula subject, *tʰə* '3sg.PRT' and a copula complement, *nbò də-əʳ tə nbò* 'horse upward-white one RPT:horse→a white horse'. However, when the copula takes a causative *-su* '-CAUS', it has the feature of a transitive verb. It takes an A argument, *sɿ̀zà* 'god' and an O argument *tʰa* '3sg.PRT'.

(8. 77) below shows how *-su* '-CAUS' contributes to the valency changing of an adjective in Ersu:

(8. 77) *tsʰo=gə* *xa=nɛ̀,* (*nə*) *do+ku*

shoot=PROS time=TOP:when (2sg) (A) eye+?hole:eye

na+ku *ya-ntʰo-su*

ear+?hole:ear (O) APFX-sharp-CAUS (V)

'When (you) are shooting, (you should) make your eyes and ears sharp.'

(8. 77) indicates that when the adjective *ya-ntʰo* 'APFX-sharp' takes a causative suffix *-su* '-CAUS' then the [adjective-causative] construction functions like a transitive verb, taking two core arguments: the A argument *nə* '2sg' and the O argument *do+ku na+ku* 'eyes and ears'.

(8. 78) below shows how *-su* contributes to the valency changing of an existential verb in Ersu. However, this occurs in a low frequency in the data:

(8. 78) *xuafu* *na-pa* *t^hə=yikə* *tsɳ*

apple two-CL:roundish, fist-like 3sg.PRT=AGT cabinet

=kə *na-kua* *dzo-su=á*

=RLN.LOC:in downward-place EXT-CAUS=PFV

'She placed the two apples into the cabinet (and) make (them) there.'

8. 7 Light Verb *ŋù* 'do'

The verb *ŋù* 'do' is quite frequently used in Ersu. It can be used as a main verb functioning as a verbal predicate independently. In this situation, it can refer to any activity that a speaker does not know, or is unsure of, or is unhappy with. For example:

(8. 79) *nə* *ɑ-nɛ* *ŋù=gə=ɛ̀?*

2sg ITRG-what do=PROG=ITRG

'What are you doing?'

(8. 80) *nə* *ɑ-ndʑi* *t^hədʑi* *ŋù=tə=ɛ̀?*

2sg ITRG-how DEM:like this do=DES=ITRG

'How can you do it like this?' Lit: You how do like this?

(8. 79) functions as a greeting when the speaker cannot see what the addressee is doing. This occurs especially when the speaker sees someone in a distant place or when the speaker greets the addressee in a telephone conversation. In (8. 79), *ŋù* 'do' itself acts as the predicate of the clause and it implies any kind of actions that the addressee may be performing. Example (8. 80) indicates that the speaker is unhappy with the addressee's action. Whatever kind of action the speaker feels unhappy with, s/he may use *ŋù* 'do' to denote it. Consequently, (8. 80) is also quite frequently heard in daily conversation.

However, *ŋù* 'do' is much more often observed to have little semantic content of its own. It frequently follows a noun, an adjective or a main verb to "jointly predicate within a monoclausal structure" and has "lexical semantic specifications that are of a very general nature" (Butt 2003, 2010:48-78; Butt & Lahiri 2013). I thus define it as "light verb", a separate subset of verbs in Ersu. The meaning of *ŋù* 'do' is mainly determined by the nouns, adjectives and other verbs that it follows. It should be noted that the frequency of [noun+*ŋù*] construction is much higher than that of [adjective+*ŋù*] or [verb+*ŋù*] construction. A list of the co-occurrence of *ŋù* 'do' and nouns, adjectives and other verbs is given in (8. 81)[123].

(8. 81)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
ADJ+*ŋù*	*zuzɯ-lalà* ***ŋù***	'harmonious-EMPH **do**:should be harmonious'
	soso-lalà ***ŋù***	'clean.RDUP-EMPH **do**:should make…clean'
	ya-kʰua ***ŋù***	'APFX-big **do**:should be brave'
N+*ŋù*	*yadzə* ***ŋù***	'child **do**:be like a child'
	dava ***ŋù***	'guest **do**:work as a guest'
	kʰuakʰua-zʔ ***ŋù***	'big.RDUP-SFX.MAS:head **do**:act as a village head'
	ndza+mɛ ***ŋù***	'PN:Han+army **do**:join the army'
	nbò-pʰa ***ŋù***	'horse-SFX.MAS **do**:become a male horse'
	ɲi+ntɕʰi ***ŋù***	'grass+tear..apart **do**:do farming work'
V+*ŋù*	*dzo* ***ŋù***	'live **do**:used to live'
	kʰa-ndza ***ŋù***	'inward-stand **do**:used to stand'

The light verb construction of [ADJ+*ŋù*] used as a predicate complex in a clause is given in (8. 82) below[124].

(8. 82) *tsʰo=gə* *xa=nɛ̀...* *siɲi* [*ya-kʰua* *ŋù*] , *tɕʰitɕʰa*
shoot=PROG time=TOP:when heart [APFX-big do] limbs
ya-ndə *ŋù*, *nɛ̀*, *kʰə-zo=gə*
APFX-good do then inward-target=PROS
'When (you) are shooting, (you) should be brave and prompt, then you will target (your prey).' Lit: When will shoot, heart do big, limbs do good, then

[123] All examples listed in (8. 76) are extracted from naturally reported narratives. The glosses here are dependent on the context, not meanings in general.
[124] Light verb constructions are put in brackets from (8. 82) to (8. 84).

target.

The light verb construction of [N+*ŋù*] used as a predicate complex in a clause is given in (8. 83) below.

(8. 83) *a^{l}=nɛ̀*, [*yadzə̯ ŋù*] *xa=nɛ̀*, *ndzondzɿ so*
1pl.SLF=TOP [child do] time=TOP:when written words learn
'When we were children, (we) went to school.' Lit: When we do children, learn written words.

The light verb construction of [V+*ŋù*] used as a predicate complex in a clause is given in (8. 84) below.

(8. 84) a. *a bok^{h}ua=pa=ʂə̀*
1sg.SLF PN:village name=RLN.LOC:place=RLN.LOC:place
ya-ʂə tə-p^{h}u [*dzo ŋù*] *=á*
APFX-long one-VCL:a period of time [live do]=PFV
'I used to live in Bbokua for quite a long period of time.' Lit: I did live in Bbokua a long while.

b. *a bok^{h}ua=pa=ʂə̀*
1sg.SLF PN:village name=RLN.LOC:place=RLN.LOC:place
ya-ʂə tə-p^{h}u dzo=á
APFX-long one-VCL:a period of time live=PFV
'I lived in Bbokua for quite a long period of time.' Lit: I live in Bbokua a long while.

Note that whether a verb takes a light verb *ŋù* 'do' or not is grammatically correct as shown in (8. 84). However, when a verb takes a light verb, it encodes that a verbal action or event occurred previously but did not occur at the time of speaking.

Consequently, it can be translated as ‘used to do…’ as in (8. 84a). When a verb does not take a light verb, it only encodes a verbal action or event without offering extra information such as the time of the action or the event and the relevance to the time of speaking as in (8. 84b).

A verb root without taking a directional prefix can be reduplicated and take a light verb, forming a construction of [V+V+*ŋù*] to encode that an action that lasts for a short duration every time but occurs repeatedly and continuously. For example, *ɲbɛ̀ ɲbɛ̀ ŋù* ‘cry cry do’ can be translated into ‘cry again and again’, but in fact, it also offers extra information implying that a referent is crying for a short period of time every time. More examples are given in (8. 85), which are all just translated as ‘V again and again’ without giving extra information as mentioned above.

(8. 85)	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
	k^hat^ho k^hat^ho ***ŋù***	‘talk.RDUP **do**:talk again and again’
	dzə dzə ***ŋù***	‘dig.RDUP **do**:dig again and again’
	yi $ts^hɛ$ $ts^hɛ$ ***ŋù***	‘tobacco drink.RDUP **do**: smoke again and again’
	to to ***ŋù***	‘jump.RDUP **do**: jump again and again’
	ga ga ***ŋù***	‘sing.RDUP **do**:sing again and again’

8. 8 Serial Verb Construction (SVC)

Aikhenvald (2006b) defines a serial verb construction (SVC) as “a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any other sort”. She further points out that the sequential verbs in an SVC should describe a single event, have the same intonational properties as those of a monoverbal clause and share just one tense, aspect and polarity value. In terms of composition, SVCs can be divided into two subtypes: symmetrical and asymmetrical SVCs. In a symmetrical SVC, all verbs are from an open word class. However, in an asymmetrical SVC, a major verb may be from an open verb class that is modified by a minor verb from a closed set of verbs.

Given this definition and classification, only asymmetrical SVCs are attested in

Ersu[125]. In Ersu SVCs, the sequence of verbs is "major verb-minor verb", in which a major verb can be any verb that semantically denote an action, a motion, action-process, etc. while a minor verb can be only from directional verbs, *la* 'come', *yi* 'go.NPFV' and *duá* 'go. PFV'. In an SVC, the three directional verbs does not exactly mean 'come' or 'go', but typically refer to a movement or an action toward deictic center (*la* 'come'; §8. 8. 1), or a movement or an action away from deictic center (*yi* 'go.NPFV' and *duá* 'go. PFV'; §8. 8. 2) or the result of an action (*la* 'come'; §8. 8. 3).

8. 8. 1 SVC denoting a movement/an action toward deictic center

An SVC denoting a movement or an action toward a deictic center contains two verbs, that is, a major verb with the meaning of movement or action is followed by the directional verb *la* 'come'. Examples are given in (8. 86)[126].

(8. 86)

Ex.	**Gloss**
dʑo ***la***	'return come:come back'
tɕi ***la***	'take come:bring'
tʂa ***la***	'search come:search (back)'
dzolo ***la***	'look come: come to look'
so ***la***	'borrow come:borrow'
lua ***la***	'cut come:come to cut'
tsɛ̀ ***la***	'meet come:come to meet'

The following are examples for SVCs denoting a movement or an action toward a deictic center expressed through the directional verb *la* 'come' used in a clause.

[125] In Ersu, VPs can be juxtaposed in a natural way and without taking any overt marker, functioning to denote a sequence of a single event or different events. They are quite similar to symmetrical SVCs as Aikhenvald (2006b) describes. This makes the work to differentiate conjunctive coordinated VPs from SVCs an almost impossible job. Whether symmetrical SVCs really exist in Ersu or not needs further investigation. At present, I view the co-occurrence of verbs without an overt marker as sequences of coordinated VPs rather than SVCs because verbs in conjunctive coordinated VPs either denote different events, or form the same semantic continuum but may take different aspectual prefixes that are grammaticalized from directional prefixes (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3). More about conjunctive VP coordination is given in §8. 10. 1.

[126] SVCs are underlined in all the examples of §8. 8, not in other sections in this grammar.

(8. 87) *dzɿ la*

eat come

'Come and eat.'

In (8. 87), the major verb *dzɿ* 'eat' and the minor verb *la* 'come' form an SVC. Though it is translated as 'Come and eat', it exactly means 'It is time to eat'. It is an imperative clause most frequently spoken by the hostess of a family who has prepared a meal and invites others to eat. In this context, there is no independent motion event associated with the lexical verb *la* 'come' and only its deictic-directional properties remain.

(8. 88) *bzɿ-lə ta tʰuandzə=à, la tə tɕi la=nɛ̀…*

bee-liquid:honey one-CL:jar=PAUS chicken one take come=TOP

'Bring a jar of honey and a chicken…'

(8. 88) is a bit different from (8. 87). In (8. 88), the deictic center is not the speaker but a protagonist in a folktale. Here, *la* 'come' is used to denote that the action, *tɕi* 'bring' is toward the protagonist's family. Again, *la* 'come' only functions to imply the direction of an action rather than its original meaning 'come'.

(8. 89) '*yò la, ʂu la=gə* ¶ *nə la, ʂada ntsʰa la*

1sg.OTR come cook come=PROS 2sg come basket make come

=gə'

=PROS

'I will come and cook and you will come and make baskets.'

(8. 89) is a direct quotation from a folktale. As can be seen that (8. 89) contains two clauses, and in each clause, there are two *la*s. The first *la* acts as a lexical word with its original meaning 'come' and the second *la* functions as a minor word in an SVC

respectively modifying a major verb, *ʂu* ‘cook’ and *ɳtsʰa* ‘make’, denoting that the action happens toward or near the deictic center, that is, the speaker and also a protagonist in the folkloric story.

8. 8. 2 SVC denoting a movement/an action away from deictic center

When a major verb is followed by *yi* ‘go.NPFV’ or *duá* ‘go.PFV’, an SVC denoting a movement or an action away from a deictic center is formed. It should be noted that *yi* and *duá* are not distinct from each other in semantics. *duá* is perfective form of *yi*. The both of them mean ‘go’ originally. However, in an SVC, they both function to refer to a movement or an action away from a deictic center rather than its original meaning ‘go’. Examples are given in (8. 90).

(8. 90)

Ex.	Gloss	Ex.	Gloss
dʑo ***yi***	‘return go.NPFV:go back’	*dʑo* ***duá***	‘return go.PFV:go back’
tɕi ***yi***	‘take go.NPFV:take (away)’	*tɕi* ***duá***	‘take go.PFV:take (away)’
tʂa ***yi***	‘search go.NPFV:go to search’	*tʂa* ***duá***	‘search go.PFV:go to search’
dzolo ***yi***	‘look go.NPFV:go to look’	*dzolo* ***duá***	‘look go.PFV:go to look’
ʂo ***yi***	‘borrow go.NPFV:lend’	*ʂo* ***duá***	‘borrow go.PFV:lend’
lua ***yi***	‘cut go.NPFV:go to cut’	*lua* ***duá***	‘cut go.PFV:go to cut’
tsɛ̀ ***yi***	‘meet go.NPFV:go to meet’	*tsɛ̀* ***duá***	‘meet go.PFV:go to meet’

The following are examples for SVCs denoting a movement or an action away from a deictic center expressed through the directional verb *yi* ‘go.NPFV’ or *duá* ‘PFV’ used in a clause.

(8. 91) *dzi+ʂʅ̀* *tɑ-ka* *kʰə-ʂo*

hair+comb:comb one-CL:generic, sticklike inward-borrow:borrow

tɕi duá=nɛ̀

bring go:PFV=PAUS

‘(He) borrowed (his younger brother’s) comb and took it away…’

Both (8. 91) and (8. 88) above are extracted from the same folkloric story in which the

deictic center is the protagonist, "the younger brother" of the story. In (8. 88), *la* 'come' following the major verb *tɕi* 'bring' denotes that the action is toward the protagonist's family. However, when the same major verb *tɕi* 'bring' is followed by *duá* 'go.PFV' as in (8. 91), the SVC *tɕi duá* 'bring go.PFV' denotes that the action is away from the protagonist's family. Consequently, when *tɕi* 'bring' co-occurs with *la* 'come', *tɕi la*, 'bring come' means 'bring over' in English; when *tɕi* 'bring' co-occurs with *yi* 'go.NPFV ' or *duá* 'go.PFV ', then *tɕi yi* 'bring go.NPFV ' or *tɕi duá* 'bring go.PFV ' respectively means 'take away' in English.

(8. 92) *tʰə* *mó* *duá=nè,* *bɛəˀ* *tɑ-ka*
1sg.PRT also go.PFV=PAUS snake one-CL:generic, sticklike
mi duá=dʑigə
catch go:PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) he also went (there) and caught a snake.'

duá 'go.PFV ' occurs twice in (8. 92) above. The first one has its original meaning 'go.PFV'. However, the second one following the major verb *mi* 'catch' is grammaticalized to denote the action is away from the deictic center with the meaning of 'go to do something' rather than 'go.PFV'.

(8. 93) *tɕʰɑ-pu=nè* *so* *ŋpʰi duá=dʑě*
3sg.GEN-grandfather=TOP before hide go.PFV =EVID: reported
'His father-in-law went to hide from (him).'

(8. 93) is extracted from the context about a son-in-law and a father-in-law playing "hide-and-seek" in a mythological story. The son-in-law is the deictic center. Therefore, *duá* 'go.PFV ' here is used to denote that the action *ŋpʰi* 'hide' is away from the son-in-law rather than its original meaning 'go.PFV '.

8. 8. 3 SVC denoting the result of an action

la 'come' may also be used for result/cause-effect serial verb constructions when it follows a major verb that denotes an action or a movement. In this situation, it denotes that someone has got or obtained something. For example:

(8. 94) *tɕʰo+la=kə=nè,* *də-totsɛ la;*
thorn+land:thorn bush=RLN.LOC:in=TOP upward-jump & stamp come
ɬa+la=kə=nè, *də-vùlà la;*
lla[127]+land:lla bush=RLN.LOC:in=TOP upward-roll come
dzo-ka nbi *dʑi-ntɕʰo la;*
River-CL:generic, sticklike mountain upward-pump come
si kala lo=kə *na-ra la;*
tree branch pitch= RLN.LOC:in=TOP downward-collect come
vùliɛ lo=và 'kuàkuà' *kʰə-li la;*
head rock=ACC ONMO:'guagua' inward-punch come

'(I) got (these treasures because I) jumped and stamped on the bushes of thorns; (I) got (these treasures because I) rolled in the bushes of *`llas*; (I) got (these treasures because I) made (the water of a) river (flow) up toward a mountain; (I) got (these treasures because I) collected tree branches from (deep) ditches; (I) got (these treasures because I) punched (my) head on a rock (with the sound of) "guagua".' Lit: Jumped and stamped in thorn bush come; wallowed in lla bushes come; pumped river upward mountain come; collected tree branches in pitches come; head punched head rocks 'guagua' come.[128]

[127] lla is a kind of stem plant whose leaves bear fur-like fatally poisonous thorns that is said to be only found in Ersu communities and its neighborhood.

[128] (8. 94) deserves much attention because the example occurs in several pieces of folkloric or mythological stories. It is often a quoted speech of what the hero or the heroine utters in a story. The hero or the heroine is often a kind-hearted and poor character, but becomes rich unexpectedly and suddenly (most of the time) with the help of a "god-like" character with magic power. The "god" does this for the hero or heroine because she/he has previously helped the "god" pull through temporary difficulty. When the hero or the heroine becomes rich, an evil-hearted, greedy and often comparatively richer character (often one of the hero's or the heroine's close relatives) may come and ask the reasons why and how the hero or the heroine has got rich suddenly. Then, the hero or the heroine answers her/him with the content of (8. 94), as is taught by the "god" so that the fact should not be unveiled. As can be seen in (8. 94), *la* 'come' functions as a minor verb modifying a major verb from an open verb

8. 9 Structure of Verb Phrases (VP)

An Ersu verbal phrase may consist of an adverb (§3. 4), a numeral (§6) or a numeral together with a verbal action classifier (§7. 2. 3), a directional verb prefix (§8. 1. 1), a prohibitive and/or a negative prefix (§10. 1. 1. 2 & §10. 1. 2. 2), a head verb (Vh), a causative (§8. 6), an aspectual marker (§9) or a modal/auxiliary verb (§10. 2), an evidential marker (§11. 1). Among them, a Vh is the core element of a VP that may function as a formally unmarked minimal VP. The structure of the Ersu verb phrase is illustrated in Figure 8. 2.

Slot	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**
	ADV	+NUM	+VCL	+DIR	+PROH	+NEG	**+Vh**	+CAU	+ASPECT MODAL	+EVID PART

Figure 8. 2 Structure of Ersu verb phrase

Figure 8. 2 illustrates a general constituent order that different slots may occupy in a VP. However, not all the slots in Figure 8. 2 necesssarily co-occur with each other in one VP. Their co-occurrence is dependent on semantic needs and discourse uses. The commonly seen co-occurrence is summarized in Table 8. 8.

class. Semantically, it does not exactly mean 'come', but denotes the result of an action or the effect of a cause. I thus define an SVC like this as a resultative SVC.

Slots										Reference	Example
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
√			√			√				§8. 9. 1	(8. 95)
	√	√	(√)			√		(√)		§8. 9. 2	(8. 96)
	√					√					(8. 97)
			√			√		(√)		§8. 9. 3	(8. 98)
			√	√		√				§8. 9. 4	(8. 99)
			√		√	√		(√)		§8. 9. 5	(8. 100)
					√	√		(√)			(8. 101)
						√				§8. 9. 6	(8. 102) (8. 103)
			(√)			√	√			§8. 9. 7	(8. 104)
						√		√		§8. 9. 8	(8. 105)
			√			√		√	√	§8. 9. 9	(8. 106)
Exceptions of slot ranking orders in a VP										§8. 9. 10	(8. 107)~ (8. 108)

Table 8. 8 Commonly found co-occurrence of slots in a VP

8. 9. 1 Slot 1: adverbs

Adverbs are not frequently found in a VP because temporal nouns, locational nouns and the unit of [NUM + VCL] or [NUM +V] can undertake the function that an adverb undertakes in Ersu (§7. 2. 3). However, there are still some adverbs that modify a Vh found in the data and the majority of them precede the Vh, as in (8. 95).

(8. 95) *tʰə* *yadʐə-wo* [*tɕiyi* *nə-nbɛ*
DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike [continuously downward-cry
nə-nbɛ]$_{VP}$
downward-cry]$_{VP}$
'The child continuously cried and cried.'

8. 9. 2 Slot 2: numerals and Slot 3: verbal action classifiers

Both Slot 2 and Slot 3 always precede a Vh in a VP. Whenever Slot 3 is used, it obligatorily occurs with Slot 2, that is, a verbal action classifier always follows a numeral, forming a unit of [NUM+VCL] to modify a Vh. Then a VP of [NUM+VCL (+DIR)+Vh] is constructed. However, Slot 2, the numeral *tə* 'one' can be used to modify the Vh without Slot 3, a verbal action classifier, forming a VP of [NUM+Vh] denoting delimitative aspect (§9. 2. 4). The Vh that Slot 2 and/or Slot 3 modify often

denotes an action or a motion. In addition, the unit of [NUM+VCL] never co-occurs with Slot 5 (prohibitive) and Slot 6 (negative) in a VP. The unit of [NUM+Vh] never co-occurs with Slot 4 (directional), Slot 5 (prohibitive) and Slot 6 (negative). A [NUM +VCL+Vh] or a [NUM + V] VP denotes either the frequency, or the degree, or the manner, or the suddenness of an action or a motion (§7. 2. 3). For example:

(8. 96) *nə=dzi nə-wo yò=và* [*tə-sə̀*
2sg=dl two-CL:generic, non-sticklike 1sg.OTR=ACC [one-VCL:bit
nɑ-sɑ]$_{VP}$ *ɑ-gə=ɛ̀*?
downward-hug]$_{VP}$ ITRG-PROS=ITRG
'Will you two take me gently down (from the tree)?' Lit: You two hug me a bit down. Will (you)?

(8. 97) *kʰə=yi ŋga ŋbu* [*tə tsu*]$_{VP}$,
inside area=GEN door threshold [one run into]$_{VP}$
ŋɑo=yi ŋga ŋbu [*tə tsu*]$_{VP}$*=nɛ̀*…
outside area=GEN door threshold [one run into]$_{VP}$ =PAUS
'(The old lady) ran into the door threshold once inside and (also) ran into the door threshold once outside…' Lit: Inside area's door threshold one run into, outside area's door threshold one run into

8. 9. 3 Slot 4: directional verb prefixes

Slot 4 could be any one of the nine directional prefixes that are used to either denote the direction of a movement, an action or a motion, or to refer to aspects and mood as discussed in §8. 1. 1. This is the most commonly found slot in a VP that precedes a Vh. For example:

(8. 98) *dava-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *tʰə* *yiva* *tʰə* *dzà* *əˈ*
guest-QUAT.pl=TOP DEM:this house DEM:this rice hay
-bɛ̀=kə [*nə-zɳ̀=gə*]$_{VP}$
=QUAT.pl=RLN.LOC:in [downward-sit=PROS]$_{VP}$
'The guests will sit on the rice hay in the house.'

8. 9. 4 Slot 5: prohibitive

Slot 5 is for the prohibitive marker *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-'. It is a prefix but can only be inserted between a directional prefix and a Vh. In other words, when *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' is used, the co-occurrence of [DIR+PHTV+Vh] is obligatory. This is so because the imperative of a verb must always take a directional verb prefix as discussed in §8. 1. 1. 2. 3. For example:

(8. 99) *ɲɑyi-ma,* *ɑ=yi* *dzɳ=pulili*
PN?-SFX.FEM:female name 1sg.SLF=GEN thread=NCL:ball-like
-wo *tʰə-tsɛi* *ŋɑ-la,* *duá*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike away-drop off outward-come go:PFV
à, *an,* [*kʰɑ-tʰɑ-əˈlia*]$_{VP}$, [*tə* *gu*]$_{VP}$
PART:pause PART:pause [inward-PHTV-touch]$_{VP}$ [one kick]$_{VP}$
[*kʰɑ-lɑ-su*]$_{VP}$
inward-come-CAUS
'Niayima, my ball of thread (In fact, it is Niayima's brother's head) dropped off (and) went to (your place). an… (You) did not touch (it), (but you) kicked it (with much strength) and let it roll (to my place).' Lit: Niayima, my thread ball dropped off, came out, went, do not touch, one kick, let come.

8. 9. 5 Slot 6: negative

This slot is for the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-'. Unlike *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' that can only be used between a directional prefix and a verb root, *mɑ-* 'NEG-' can be used either between a directional prefix and a verb root, forming a VP of [DIR+NEG +Vh],

or preceding a Vh directly, forming a VP of [NEG+Vh]. Whether the structure of [NEG+Vh] to take a directional prefix or not is determined by several factors as discussed in §8. 1. 1. 2. For example:

(8. 100) *dzo* *dʑi* [*nɑ-mɑ-lá*]$_{VP}$
water also [downward-NEG-come.PFV]$_{VP}$
'There was also no water.' Lit: Water also did not come.

(8. 101) *tʰə* *yadzə̠-wo* *ndzondzɿ*
DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike written words
[*mɑ-so=á*]$_{VP}$
[not-learn. REDUP=PFV]$_{VP}$
'The child dropped out of school.' Lit: This child did not learn written words.

8. 9. 6 Slot 7: head verb (Vh)

This slot is the core element in a VP. It could be a verb root, an existential verb (§8. 4), a copula (§8. 5), a light verb construction (§8. 7) or an SVC (§8. 8). If it is an existential verb, it does not occur with Slot 4 (directional) since an existential verb in Ersu does not take a directional prefix. Slot 7 can form a minimal VP on its own without taking any other slot. For example:

(8. 102) *vu* *tə-mi* *ɑ=và* [*tɕʰi*]$_{VP}$
wine one-CL:bit 1sg. SLF=ACC [give]$_{VP}$
'Give me a bit of wine.'

(8. 103) *ɑ-tʰə=kə* *su* *si*
LPFX:distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there person three
-wo [*dzo*]$_{VP}$
-CL:generic, non-sticklike [EXT]$_{VP}$
'There are three people there.'

8. 9. 7 Slot 8: causative

Slot 8 is for the causative suffix *-su* '-CAUS' that always directly follows a Vh, as in (8. 99) above and (8. 104) below.

(8. 104) *mo-xa*! *ga* *xo* *ma-ga* *xo*
NEG-EXT:no problem love MOD:want NEG-love MOD:want
a=và [*ʐɻ-su*]$_{VP}$
1sg.SLF=ACC [go.NPFV-CAUS]$_{VP}$
'It does not matter whether she loves me or not. You just let me go (and court her).' Lit: Not have! Want to love or do not want to love. Let me go.

8. 9. 8 Slot 9: aspect markers or modal verbs

This slot is for aspect markers (§9) as in (8. 96), (8. 98), (8. 99) and (8. 101) above and modal verbs (§10. 2) as in (8. 104) above and (8. 105) below. (8. 105) and the examples mentioned above illustrate that aspect markers and modal verbs often follow a Vh as shown in Figure 8. 2.

(8. 105) *mopa, mopa, yò na* [*na-ʈʂa la*
son-in-law son-in-law 1sg.SLF 2sg.ACC [downward-search come
ma-p^{h}a]$_{VP}$.¶ *nə ŋa-la=ts^{h}uá*
NEG-MOD:can]$_{VP}$ 2sg outward-come=IMMI
'Son-in-law, son-in-law, I cannot find you. You come out immediately.'

8. 9. 9 Slot 10: evidential markers

This is for one of the evidential markers or the evidential strategies (§11). Especially reported or quotative evidentials are frequently used for Slot 10 and often a clause-final position. For example:

(8. 106) *sɿ̀zà-wo=nɛ̀,* *vùliɛ̀* [*nə-nt^{h}unt^{h}u*

god-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP head [downward-nod.RDUP

=á=dʑigə]$_{VP}$

=PFV=EVID:reported]$_{VP}$

'(It is said that) the god nodded his head.'

8. 9. 10 Exceptions of slot ranking orders in a VP

There are two elements that might not abide by the ranking order of slots in a VP listed in Figure 8. 2. They are: the slot that an adverb occupies in a clause (§8. 9. 10. 1) and the slot that a negative occupies in a clause (§8. 9. 10. 2).

8. 9. 10. 1 The slot that an adverb occupies

Adverbs are quite free in a clause or a sentence and they do not necessarily occur together with a Vh in a VP. They have a strong tendency to occur at the beginning of a clause or a sentence. This includes temporal adverbs, locational adverbs and some manner adverbs. Degree adverbs that can also act as an adjective may follow a Vh. For example:

(8. 107) a. *a* *so-xa=nɛ̀,* *a-kua=dziɬalò*

1sg.SLF before-time:previously=TOP distal-north=PN:village name

=kə [*dzo*]$_{VP}$

=RLN.LOC:in [live]$_{VP}$

'I previously lived in (the village of) Dzillalo that is in the north.'

b. *so-xa=nɛ̀,* *a* *a-kua=dziɬalò*

before-time:previously=TOP 1sg.SLF distal-north=PN: village name

=kə [*dzo*]$_{VP}$

=RLN.LOC:in [live]$_{VP}$

'I previously lived in (the village of) Dzillalo that is in the north.'

(8. 107a) is extracted from an autobiographical narrative that is reported in a natural way and (8. 107b) is obtained through elicitation based on (8. 107a). Both (8. 107a) and (8. 107b) are acceptable to my language consultants. The two examples in (8. 107) imply that a temporal adverb does not necessarily occur together with the Vh *dzo* 'live' and it may occur at the beginning of a clause or a sentence, as in (8. 107b).

(8. 108) below shows that a degree adverb that is derived from an adjective always follows a Vh.

(8. 108) a. *su* *tʰə-wo* *sɿɲi* *ma-dzə*
person DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike heart NEG-good
tə-wo
one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'This person is not kind. ' Lit: This person, a not good heart.

b. *nɛ̀,* *nua* *tsopa-bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* [*npʰo* *ma-dzə*]$_{VP}$
PAUS Yi robber-QUAT.pl=TOP [steal NEG-good]$_{VP}$
'Then, the Yi robbers cannot steal (things) easily.' Lit: Yi robbers steal not comfortable.

ma-dzə 'NEG-good' in (8. 108) is the negative form of the adjective *ya-dzə* 'good' (§3. 2). It is used as an adjective in (8. 108a) to modify the head noun *sɿɲi* 'heart' in an NP. However, it can also be used as an adverb to modify the Vh *npʰo* 'steal' as shown in (8. 108b). The adverb does not precede the Vh as shown in Figure 8. 2, but follows it.

8. 9. 10. 2 The slot that a negative occupies[129]

When the Vh takes one of the modal verbs, or =*gə* that denotes either prospective or progressive aspect, the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-' always occurs after a Vh and is prefixed to the modal verb, the prospective/progressive =*gə* as in (8. 109) and (8. 109).

(8. 109) *mó, mopɑ=và [kʰə-ʂŋ ma-pʰa]*$_{VP}$
again son-in-law=ACC [inward-defeat NEG-MOD:can]$_{VP}$
'Again, (he) cannot defeat (his) son-in-law.'

(8. 110) *a su+ɲo vakə zŋ*
1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow PN:county seat name go.NPFV
ma-gə
NEG-PROS
'I will not go to Yuexi tomorrow.'

As can be seen from the above two examples, the negative marker precedes the modal verb *pʰa* 'can' and follows the Vh *kʰə-ʂŋ* 'inward-defeat' in (8. 104). In (8. 105), the negative marker precedes prospective aspectual marker =*gə* and follows the Vh *zŋ* 'go.NPFV'.

8. 10 Verb Phrase Coordination

VP coordination can be further divided into conjunctive coordination (§8. 10. 1) and disjunctive coordination (§8. 10. 2). Conjunctive VP coordination is formally unmarked while disjunctive VP coordination is marked with an overt disjunctive coordinator *la* 'or'.

[129] One of the examiners asks whether the prohibitive share the same features with the negative in this situation. This is impossible because the prohibitive is always inserted between a directional prefix and a Vh as described in §8. 9. 4. Another examiner states that this section is the evidence that =*gə* is possibly auxiliary verb. This is a thoughtful statement and needs further study in the future.

8. 10. 1 Conjunctive VP coordination

In Ersu, it is common to see two or more VPs co-occur without taking an overt linker or coordinator. They can have common value of aspect, modality and information source. They can also share the same arguments. Consequently, conjunctive VP coordination looks like asymmetrical serial verb construction in this situation. However, conjunctive VP coordination can also encode distinct events. They often take different arguments, that is, two or more VPs are conjunctively coordinated, but each of them takes a different argument. Examples are given in (8. 111) and (8. 112).

(8. 111) *tsʰi=yi* *tʰɑ-pɑ* [*nə-ntʂʰʅ*]$_{VP1}$

goat=DIM DEM:this-CL: lovely animals [downward-cut open]$_{VP1}$

[*ŋɑ-lɑ*]$_{VP2}$ [*kʰə-dzo*]$_{VP3}$ [*ŋə-dzʅ=á*]$_{VP3}$

[outward-come]$_{VP2}$ [inward-cook]$_{VP3}$ [upward-eat= PFV]$_{VP3}$

'(They) cut the baby goat open, cooked (it) and ate (it).'

In (8. 111), there are four conjunctive VPs: *nə-ntʂʰʅ* 'downward-cut', *ŋɑ-lɑ* 'outward-come', *kʰə-dzo* 'inward-cook' and *ŋə-dzʅ* 'outward-eat'. Three of them, that is, *nə-ntʂʰʅ* 'downward-cut', *kʰə-dzo* 'inward-cook' and *ŋə-dzʅ* 'outward-eat' share the same subject, '3pl.PRT (the speaker's father and uncles)' that is ellipsed in the context. The subject of the VP *ŋɑ-lɑ* 'outward-come' is also ellipsed and it can be contextually recoverable, referring to the inside organs of the baby goat. Consequently, the four conjunctive VPs share different arguments and encode different events including killing the goat, cooking and eating its meat, and also the goat's organs coming out. However, there are no overt conjunctive markers used between them and they also share the same aspect marker, that is, the perfective *=á*. Consequently, on the surface, (8. 111) is quite similar to an SVC but in essence, it is not.

(8. 112) *ni=kə* [*dɑ-ka*]$_{VP1}$, [*nə-nbɛ* *nə-nbɛ*]$_{VP2}$

2sg=AGT [upward-hit]$_{VP1}$ [downward-cry downward-cry]$_{VP2}$

[*tsatɕo la*]$_{VP3}$

[return come]$_{VP3}$

'You hit (them and they) cried again and again and came back.' Lit: You hit, cried cried return come.

As can be seen from (8. 112), the VP *dɑ-ka* 'upward-hit', *nə-nbɛ* 'downward-cry' and the SVC *tsatɕo la*, 'return back' co-occur with each other without any overt marker. However, they take different core arguments and encode different events. *dɑ-ka* 'hit' takes an A argument *ni* '2sg' while the other VPs share an S argument, '3pl.PRT' that is ellipsed and can be recovered from the context. The different events include hitting and crying, and coming back.

Due to frequent nominal ellipsis in Ersu discourse, conjunctive VP coordination occurs quite often in the data. It is not uncommon to find that there are several VPs co-occurring with each other without an overt core argument. For example:

(8. 113) [*duá*]$_{VP1}$=*nɛ̀*, *dzo=tɕ^{h}ikə*, [*nə-nbɛ*

[go:PFV]$_{VP1}$=PAUS river=RLN.LOC:beside [downward-cry

nə-nbɛ]$_{VP2}$, [*k^{h}ɑ-mɑ*]$_{VP3}$=*nɛ̀*, [*t^{h}ə-yimuɑ*]$_{VP4}$=*nɛ̀*,

downward-cry [inward-sleep]$_{VP3}$=PAUS [away-dream]$_{VP4}$=PAUS

su *tə* *t^{h}ɑ=và* *koyi=gə*

person one 3sg.PRT=ACC call= PROG

'(He) went to the riverside, cried again and again, (then he) fell asleep and had a dream. (In the dream,) a person is calling him.' Lit: Went to riverside, cried, cried, fell asleep, dreamed, a person is calling him.

8. 10. 2 Disjunctive VP coordination

Disjunctive VP coordination is not attested in the recordings, maybe due to the

limitation of text genres. However, it is often heard in daily conversation. Disjunctive VP coordination is marked with the coordinator *la* 'or'. For example:

(8. 114) *yɛ-xi+so-xi=nɛ̀,* *su* *tə* [*dzo=sɛ*]$_{VP1}$
last-year+before-year:previous time=TOP person one [live=CONT]$_{VP1}$
la [t^h*ə-so*]$_{VP2}$ *la* *xɑ-mɑ-sɛ̀=á*
CO [away-die]$_{VP2}$ EMPH:all understand-NEG-understand=PFV
'In previous time, whether a person was living or dead was unknown.'

(8. 114) is taken from a daily conversation. The speaker is talking about the situation in previous time when there was no paved road or telephone. Whether a person was living or dead was often unknown to her/his relatives for several days. This was so because it often took a messenger many days to convey the information due to mountain isolation.

It should be noted that if two disjunctive coordinated VPs take the same repeated Vh, the second Vh that follows the coordinator *la* 'or' is often ellipsed. For example:

(8. 115) a. *nə* *su+ŋo* [*ʐɿ=gə*]$_{VP1}$ *la* [*mɑ-gə*]$_{VP2}$
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow [go.NPFV=PROS]$_{VP1}$CO [NEG=PROS]$_{VP2}$
=ɛ̀?
=ITRG
'Will you go or not tomorrow?' Lit: You tomorrow go or not ?

b. *nə* *su+ŋo* [*ʐɿ=gə*]$_{VP1}$ *la* [*ʐɿ*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow go.NPFV=PROS CO [go.NPFV
mɑ-gə]$_{VP2}$*=ɛ̀*?
NEG=PROS]$_{VP2}$=ITRG

(8. 115a) often occurs in daily conversation. It demonstrates that *zɿ* 'go.NPFV' is ellipsed in the second VP that follows the coordinator *la* 'CO'. (8. 115b) is elicited based on (8. 115a). My language consultants felt that it could also be acceptable but they felt a bit unnatural.

Chapter 9 Aspect System

This chapter discusses the Ersu aspect system. §9. 1 discusses whether Ersu has a tense system or not. §9. 2 demonstrates Ersu aspectual system which consists of 11 different aspects. §9. 3 presents the co-occurrence of different aspectual markers. §9. 4 summarizes the correlations between other grammatical categories.

9. 1 The Concept of "Tense" in Ersu

Tense is associated with the moment of the occurrence of one situation with respect to a "deictic center", that is, the time of a speech in which another situation is brought up (Comrie 1976: 1-3; Li & Thompson 1981: 184; Xu 2007: 121; Lidz 2010: 423). Tense is thus deictic since it functions to refer to an event or the occurrence of a situation to the moment of speaking or to some other situation (Xu 2007: 121). It can be expressed by grammatical systems or lexemes or a combination of these (Dixon 2012: 9). In Ersu, the concept of "time" is only conveyed through lexical temporal terms and aspectual enclitics rather than an overt tense marker. For example:

(9. 1) a. *tʰə* *tʰi+xa* *za-ma* *dzɲ=gə*
3sg.PRT DEM:this+time:this moment food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG
'He is eating food now.'

b. *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *tʰi+xa*
3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday DEM:this+time:this moment
za-ma *dzɲ=gə*
food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG
'He was eating food at this time yesterday.'

c. *tʰə* *su+ŋo* *tʰi+xa*

3sg.PRT ?next+day:yesterday DEM:this+time:this moment

za-ma *dzŋ=gə*

food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG

'He will be eating food at this time tomorrow.'

Examples in (9. 1) above show that different temporal terms are used to denote the concept of "time". The verb *dzŋ* 'eat' takes the same progressive marker *=gə* '=PROG' in three different temporal settings, that is, "now" (9. 1a), "at this moment yesterday" (9. 1b) and "at this moment tomorrow" (9. 1c). This demonstrates that there are no grammatical tense markers in Ersu.

(9. 2) below illustrates that the situation where "there was a couple who lived together and the husband dug the land every day" occurs much earlier than the time of utterance, that is, *yɛ+so+xa* '?previous+before+time:ancient time'. However, the existential verb *dzo* 'EXT' and the action verb *dzə* 'dig' used in (9. 2) below are formally unmarked, without any tense or aspect marking. This is so because (9. 2) describes a habitual situation that is conveyed through a formally unmarked habitual aspect though the situation existed earlier than the occurrence of the utterance. In (9. 2), the lexical term *yɛ+so+xa*, '?previous+before+time:ancient time' is used to convey the information of "time".

(9. 2) *yɛ-so-xɑ=nɛ̀,* *su* *tə* *yi*

?previous-before-time: long time ago=TOP person one CL: family

dzo=nɛ̀, *pʰo-za* *zi-mo* *na*

EXT=TOP ?-SFX.MAS:husband wife-Yi.SFX.FEM:wife two

pʰɑ-ma *dzo=dʑɛ̌.*¶

SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM:man and women EXT=EVID: reported

pʰo-zɑ=nɛ̀, *tə+ɲo+ɲo* *mɛ-li* *dzə…*

?-SFX.MAS:husband one+day+day: everyday nature-?:land dig…

'It is said that in ancient time, there was a couple who lived together. The husband dug the land every day.' Lit: Long time ago, there was a family of persons. There was a husband a wife two persons (a man a woman). Husband one day day dig land.

In Ersu, a locational term can also be used to denote a temporal concept (§4. 2. 3. 4), as in (9. 3).

(9. 3) *ɲilaxɑ-wo* *dʑì*

wild animal-CL: generic, non-sticklike also

tʰə=kə *su* *dzɳ*

DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here person eat

'In those times, wild animals also ate human beings.'

(9. 3) is extracted from a creation story. In this example, the speaker uses a locational term *tʰə=kə* 'DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in→here' to denote 'time'. Though the event might have happened thousands of years ago, that is, quite distant to the time when the story-telling occurs, the verb *dzɳ* 'eat' is still formally unmarked because the example describes a habitual situation in previous time.

Consequently, Ersu temporal or locational terms are used to denote temporal concepts. In addition, a verb does not take a marker indicating the "time" of the

occurrence of an event. In other words, tense in Ersu is not a grammatically encoded category.

Note that a term denoting ‘time’ is often ellipsed in a clause or a sentence if it is followed by a preceding clause or sentence that takes a term encoding time. Consequently, temporal concepts can only be figured out through a larger discourse context. (9. 4) below is extracted from the same creation story in which (9. 3) above occurs. None of the clauses in (9. 4) takes a temporal or a locational term encoding ‘time’. Moreover, none of the verbs takes a tense or an aspectual marker. However, a listener may get the information that this is a description relevant to ancient habitual situations since this is a traditional story concerning creation.

(9. 4) *ȵo=pʰɛ* *zɿ̀gu* *dzo,* *ya* *zɿ̀gu* *dzo;*
out=LOC:side<outside livestock EXT home livestock EXT
ȵo=pʰɛ *nbò* *dzo,* *ya* *nbò* *dzo;*
out=LOC:side<outside horse EXT home horse EXT
ȵo=pʰɛ *ŋuà* *dzo,* *ya* *ŋuà* *dzo;*
out=LOC:side<outside ox EXT home ox EXT
mɛ̀ *zà+pù=kə* *nə-ʒɿʒɿ* *tʰə-tɕʰi*
sky hundred+manage:king=AGT downward-sort.RDUP away-give
=á
=PFV

‘Whenever there was livestock outside (in the wild), there was (the same tamed) livestock at home; whenever there were horses outside (in the wild), there were (the same tamed) horses at home; whenever there were oxen outside (in the wild), there were (the same tamed) oxen at home. The sky king sorted them out and gave (them to human beings).’

9. 2 Aspect System

Aspect denotes the properties of a situation itself and concerns with "the internal constituency of the one situation" (Comrie 1976: 5). It refers to "how the situation itself is being viewed with respect to its own internal makeup" (Li & Thompson 1981:184). Bhat (1999: 43) states that aspect "indicates that the temporal structure in an event, i. e., the way in which the event occurs in time". There are two subtypes of aspects: grammatical and lexical (Bache 1995: 123). According to Lidz (2010: 423), aspect plays an important role in encoding the concept of "time" in Tibeto-Burman languages. This is the case with Ersu. In Ersu, the representation of time is mainly expressed through a well-developed aspectual system consisting of 11 different aspects. Ersu aspects are realized through verbs that are either formally unmarked (habitual aspect), or marked with grammatical markers, numerals (delimitative aspect) and the repetition of verbs (repetitive aspect). The 11 aspects are summarized in § below.

perfective aspect	§9. 2. 1
perfect aspect	§9. 2. 2
experiential aspect	§9. 2. 3
delimitative aspect	§9. 2. 4
state-changing aspect	§9. 2. 5
habitual aspect	§9. 2. 6
progressive aspect	§9. 2. 7
prospective aspect	§9. 2. 8
imminent aspect	§9. 2. 9
continuous aspect	§9. 2. 10
repetitive aspect	§9. 2. 11

Table 9. 1 Different types of aspects in Ersu

9. 2. 1 Perfective aspect

Perfective aspect is used for an event in speech that is viewed as a whole (Li & Thompson 1981: 185) and as being bounded "without respect for its temporal constituency" (Dixon 2012: 35). Perfective aspect in Ersu is realized through a verb taking a directional prefix and an enclitic *=á* '=PFV'. It should be noted that in a

perfective aspectual context, a directional prefix is obligatorily used except for existential verbs (§8. 3) and modal verbs (§10. 2) that never occur with a directional prefix.. The close relationship between a directional prefix and aspect is quite similar to other Qiangic languages as described in §8. 1. 1. 2. 3. For example:

(9. 5) *a* *bok^{h}ua=pa=ʂə̀* *ya-ʂə*
1sg.SLF PN:place name=RLN.LOC:place= RLN.LOC:place APFX-long
tə-p^{h}u *dzo* *ŋù=á*
one-VCL:period of time EXT do=PFV
'I lived in Bbokua for a long period of time.' Lit: I did live in Bbokua a long while.

(9. 6) *tsaŋa=nɛ̀,* *zixi-wo=yikə* *la*
later=TOP woman-CL:geneic, non-sticklike=AGT chicken
t^{h}ə-wo *nə-sɿ=á*
DEM:this -CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-kill=PFV
'Later, the woman killed the chicken.'

As can be seen from (9. 5) and (9. 6), *=á* '=PFV' is used to follow a verb and encode perfective aspect. *dzo* 'EXT' does not take a directional prefix because it is an existential verb as shown in (9. 5). However, an action verb like *sɿ* 'kill' must take a directional prefix as shown in (9. 6).

Note that almost all the verbs take *=á* '=PFV' to form a perfective aspect as shown in examples from (9. 5) to (9. 6) above. However, the verbs *ʑɿ* 'go.NPFV' and *yi* 'go.NPFV' show a different strategy. Though the two verbs share the same meaning of 'go' in English, they are used in different context. *ʑɿ* 'go.NPFV' is an intransitive verb that must take a locational term as an E argument in a clause as shown in (9. 7a). It never takes an infinite-like complement (§12. 3. 3) and is never used in an

imperative mood as shown in (9. 8b) and (9. 8d), respectively. In contrast, *yi* 'go.NPFV' is also intransitive but it can never take a locational term as an E argument as shown in (9. 7b). It always takes an infinite-like complement (§12. 3. 3) or is used in an imperative mood as shown in (9. 8a) and (9. 8c), respectively. The two verbs do not take =*á* '=PFV'. A perfective form *duá* 'go.PFV' is used to denote the perfective aspect of both *ʒɿ* 'go.NPFV' and *yi* 'go (to).NPFV' as shown in (9. 9a-b). However, *duá* 'go.PFV' cannot be used in an imperative mood as shown in (9. 9c). In an imperative context, both *ʒɿ* 'go.NPFV' and *yi* 'go.NPFV' must take the perfective aspectual marker =*á* '=PFV' to encode perfective aspect as shown in (9. 11).

(9. 7) a. *a* *su+ȵo* *gānluò* *ʒɿ=gə*
1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow MC.PN:Ganluo go.NPFV=PROS
'I will go to Ganluo tomorrow.'

*b. *a* *su+ȵo* *gānluò* *yi=gə*
1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow MC.PN:Ganluo go.NPFV=PROS
'I will go to Ganluo tomorrow.'

(9. 8) a. *a* *su+ȵo* *si* *tsɿ* *yi=gə*
1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow wood cut go.NPFV=PROS
'I will go to cut firewood tomorrow.'

*b. *a* *su+ȵo* *si* *tsɿ* *ʒɿ=gə*
1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow wood cut go.NPFV=PROS
'I will go to cut firewood tomorrow.'

c. *də-yi* !
upward-go.NPFV
'Go upward!'

*d. *də+ʒŋ* !
upward-go.NPFV
'Go upward!'

(9. 9) a. *a* *ya+ŋo* *gānluò* *duá*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:yesterday MC.PN:Ganluo go.PFV
'I went to Ganluo yesterday.'

b. *a* *ya+ŋo* *si* *tsŋ* *duá*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:tomorrow wood cut go.PFV
'I went to cut firewood tomorrow.'

*c. *da-duá* !
upward-go.NPFV
'Go upward!'

Perfective aspect is often used in a "tail-head" construction (Huang 2007: 316-18) or "head-tail" linkage (Vries 2005; Aikhenvald 2008: 544-45) in discourse (§13. 4. 1. 3) to encode the first event in a sequence as shown in (9. 10). The first event is thus viewed as being bounded and is marked with the perfective marker *=á* '=PFV'. The data indicate that a particle *=ŋè* '=PAUS' which signals a pause in speech, follows the perfective marker *=á* most of the time. The middle rising tone always changes into a high level tone, then forming a structure of [verb=*ɑ=ŋè*]. Very similar to Mandarin Chinese, "in such cases, the first event is of interest as an unanalyzed whole; the speaker signals that its occurrence is bounded by the subsequent event" (Li and Thompson 1981: 198). The first event that takes a clausal final *=ɑ=ŋè* can be translated as an 'after', 'because' or 'when' clause into English. They are to some extent lexicalized and function as subordinate clause linkers (§12. 3). For example:

(9. 10) *vɛmatɕʰodzu=kə =nɛ̀,* ***nə-ntɕʰi*** ***ŋə-dzŋ=á***

PN:evil's name=AGT=TOP downward-bite outward-eat=PFV

=dzɛ̌. ¶ ***nə-ntɕʰi*** ***ŋə-dzŋ=ɑ=nɛ̀,***

=EVID: reported downward-bite outward-eat= PFV=PAUS

ɑ-tʰə *ȵayi-ka*

distal-DEM:this<that PN:?-CL:generic, sticklike:male name

ȵayi=mɑ=yi *tɕʰɑ=ma*

PN:?=SFX.FEM:femail name=GEN 3sg.GEN=mother

-wo=yi *gamɛ=bɛ̀=nɛ̀* *vɛmatɕʰodzu*

-CL: generic, non-sticklike=GEN clothes=QUAT.pl=TOP PN:evil's name

də-zŋ=yi *duá=dzɛ̌*

upward-put on=CSM go:PFV=EVID: reported

'(It is said that)Vaimaqodzhu bit (Niayiga and Niayima's mother dead) and ate (her). (It is said that) after she bit and ate her, Vaimaqodzhu put on her clothes and went away.'

As seen from the English translation of the examples above, perfective aspect seems to be the same as past tense in English. It is true that perfective aspect is most often used in a previous temporal setting. However, this does not mean it always denotes an event occurring in a past time frame. Its basic function is to denote an event as an unanalyzed whole. It can be put into a non-past context especially when it signals the first event in a sequence. For example:

(9. 11) *nə nə-yi=á* *kʰə-dzolo=ɑ=nɛ̀,*

2sg downward-go:NPFV=PFV inward-look=PFV=PAUS

xasɛ̀=gə

understand=PROS

'After you go (down there) to have a look, (then you will) understand.'

In (9. 11), the perfective aspect marker =*á* '=PFV' occurs twice and follow two verbs, *nə-yi* 'downward-go:go downward' and *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look:have a look' in imperative mood. It is used to mark the first event in a sequence. (9. 11) above indicates the situation where the speaker commands the addressee to do something, that is to say, the event may occur later than the speech. The clausal final prospective marker=*gə* '=PROS' (§9. 3. 8) encodes an event later than the speech. This demonstrates that =*á* cannot be interpreted as a past tense marker. In addition, (9. 11) also demonstrates that *duá* 'go.PFV' cannot be used in imperative mood. The perfective aspect is realized through the non-perfective form of *nə-yi* 'downward-go.NPFV' taking a perfective aspectual marker =*á* '=PFV'.

9. 2. 2 Perfect aspect

Unlike the perfective aspect which is used to view an event as being bounded and as an unanalyzed whole, the perfect aspect is a grammatical form used to describe what was previously described as a past event with present relevance, or a present state resulting from a past situation, or still continuing at present (Comrie 1976: 12; Dixon 2012: 31). In Ersu, perfect aspect is formally marked with =*tsà* '=PFT'. However, the data demonstrate that the use of perfect aspectual marker =*tsà* '=PFT' indicates a person distinction. It is most frequently used for third person, occasionally used for second person and never used for first person. For example:

(9. 12) a. *tʰə* *vakə* *duá=tsà*
3sg.PRT PN:county seat name go.PFV=PFT
'He has been to Yuexi.'

b. *nə* *vakə* *duá=tsà*
2sg PN:county seat name go.PFV=PFT
'You have been to Yuexi.'

*c. *a* *vakə* *duá=tsà*

1sg.SLF PN:county seat name go.PFV=PFT

'I have been to Yuexi.'

The minimal pairs in (9. 12) above show that both (9. 12a) and (9. 12b) are acceptable. (9. 12a) is often used to describe an event that is associated with third person. (9. 12b) is only used in the context where the speaker went to find a referent but failed. Then later the speaker reported to the addressee about this event. (9. 12c) is not accepted to the native speakers. The reason for this remains unknown and needs further study. If a speaker describes an event that was previously associated with her/himself, only (9. 13) is acceptable. That is, only perfective aspect can be used in this context.

(9. 13) *a* *vakə* *duá*

1sg.SLF PN:county seat name go.PFV

'I have been to Yuexi.'

Note that similar to perfective aspect, a verb that denotes an action, a motion or a movement (except for verbs denoting 'come' and 'go') obligatorily takes a directional prefix (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3) as shown in (9. 14) and (9. 15) below.

(9. 14) *zi-mo* *kʰə-dzolo=ɑ=nè,* *yadzə*

?-Yi.SFX.FEM:wife inward-look= PFV=PAUS child

-wo *tʰi=yikə* *ntsʰɛ*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike 3sg.PRT=AGT fontanelle

-wo *kʰə-ntsʰ ɛ* *tʰə-so=tsà*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-pinch away-die=PFT

dʑigə

consequently

'Later, when (his wife) had a look, (she found that) he had pinched the child's fontanelle (and the child) had died consequently.'

(9. 15) *xuafu=kaka* *nɑ-pa*

apple=NCL: irregularly roundish and ball-like two-CL:pearl-like

kʰɑ-sɑ=tsà

inward-fructify=PFT: already

'The tree has already had two apples.'

9. 2. 3 Experiential aspect

Experiential aspect is used to denote that "an event has been tried, experienced, or undergone" (Lidz 2010: 433). More specifically, an experiential aspectual marker "signals that the event has been experienced at least once at some indefinite time, which is usually the indefinite past" (Li & Thompson 1981: 226). In Ersu, *=tɕʰi* '=EXP'encodes experiential aspect. *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' does not have a person distinction and it can be used for all persons. It can further refer to the source of information, functioning as an evidential strategy (§11. 2. 1). Although *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' denotes an event that occurs before the speech, a verb that takes *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' is always used in its original form. In other words, *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' never co-occurs with other aspectual markers.

In addition, experiential aspect is different from perfective aspect. The experiential *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' highlights a speaker's previous experience while the perfective *=á* denotes a bounded event and conveys the information that the event took place. For example:

(9. 16) a. *ɑ* *bokʰuɑ=pɑ=ʂə̀*

1sg.SLF PN:village name=RLN.LOC:place=RLN.LOC:place

ʒɿ=tɕʰi

go.NPFV =EXP

'I have (previously) been to Bbokua.'

b. *a* *bok^{h}ua=pa=ʂə̀*

1sg.SLF PN:village name=RLN.LOC:place=RLN.LOC:place

duá

go.PFV

'I went to Bbokua.'

(9. 16a) uses =*tɕ^{h}i* '=EXP' with a focus on the experience that the speaker has been to Bbokua in some previous time. (9. 16b) is also acceptable but it views the event that 'I went to Bbokua' as an entirety and focuses on the fact.

The commonly heard dialogues in (9. 17) further illustrate the differences between the experiential aspect and the perfective aspect.

(9. 17) a. A: "*dzʂə-k^{h}ua* *ŋa-dzŋ=ɛ̀*?"

?-big:lunch outward.ITRG-eat=ITRG

'"Have (you) had lunch?"'

B: "*ŋə-dzŋ=á.*"

outward-eat=PFV

'"(I) have."'

b. A: "*nə zù ʂŋ* *ŋa-dzŋ=tɕ^{h}i=ɛ̀*?"

2sg fish meat outward.ITRG-eat=EXP=ITRG

'"Have you eaten fish meat?"'

B: "*ŋə-dzŋ=tɕ^{h}i.*"

outward-eat=EXP

'"(I) have."'

(9. 17a) in Ersu functions as a daily greeting, just like 'How are you?' in English. The answer to 'Have you had your lunch?' employs perfective aspect with the reference to

the fact that the speaker had her/his lunch. In (9. 17b), Speaker A, in fact, wants to obtain the information whether Speaker B has eaten/tasted fish in previous time. When Speaker B responds to the question, he uses the experiential *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' indicating that he had the experience.

Examples above show that *=tɕʰi* '=EXP' can be used for first person as in (9. 16a) and also for second person as in (9. 17b). It can also be used for third person as shown in (9. 18) below.

(9. 18) *tʰə* *bokʰua=pa=ʂə̀*
1sg.SLF PN:village name=RLN.LOC:place=RLN.LOC:place
ʒɿ=tɕʰi
go.NPF=EXP
'He has (previously) been to Bbokua.'

9. 2. 4 Delimitative aspect

Delimitative aspect in Ersu is formed through the construction of [NUM+V]. In other words, a verbal predicate directly follows a numeral can denote that an action lasts for a short period of time, especially when the numeral is *tə* 'one'. It is used to categorize an action with respect to degree, suddenness, unexpectedness and/or frequency. Consequently, I view the construction of [NUM+V] not only as delimitative aspect, but also as a verbal action classification device (§7. 2. 3). For example:

(9. 19) *a-wa* *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀,* *nga* *nbu*
KPFX-grandmother DEM:this-CL:generic=TOP door threshold
tə *tsu...*
one run into
'One old lady ran into the door threshold, unexpectedly and severely (just once)...' Lit: A grandmother one run into door threshold.

(9. 20) *mɛntʂʰə-ka* *mè-wo*

tail-CL: generic, sticklike sky-CL: generic, non-sticklike

si *xa*^{I} *mi-wo* *si* *xa*^{I}

three sway under-earth-CL:generic, non-sticklike three sway

'(You) sway your tail towards the sky three times and towards earth underneath three times.'

(9. 21) *xitsɿ=nɛ̀,* *tə* *to=yi,* *sitsɑ=kə* *ŋə-ʂɿtɕi=á*

rabbit=TOP one jump=CSM forest=RLN.LOC:in outward-disappear=PFV

'The rabbit suddenly did a jump into the forest with great strength and disappeared.' Lit: Rabbit one jump into the forest disappeared

Delimitative aspect with the structure of [NUM+CL] is also reported in the languages that neighbor Ersu, including Mandarin Chinese and Yongning Na. However, they are different in meanings. Delimitative aspect in Mandarin Chinese means doing an action "a little bit", or for a short period of time with the structure of [V-*yi* (one)-V. RDUP], for example, *wèn-yi-wen* 'ask-one-ask: inquire a little' (Li & Thompson 1981: 232-236). In Yongning Na, it "indicates a short-lived or brief action, and takes the iconic derived structure ['one'+V]" (Lidz 2010: 435).

9. 2. 5 State-changing aspect

State-changing aspect is used in context where the state or situation under discussion undergoes a change. In Ersu, it is realized through a verb marked with the enclitic *=yì* '=CSM' and the directional prefix that a verb takes (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3). In other words, a verbal directional prefix is obligatory for denoting state-changing aspect. This is similar to perfective aspect and perfect aspect that also require a directional prefix (§9. 2. 1 & §9. 2. 2). On the surface, the semantic reading of this aspect is almost the same as perfective aspect. Sometimes, some of the young Ersu are heard to use *=yì* '=CSM' and *=á* '=PFV' interchangeably. However, they are different

from each other as long as a larger discourse context is taken into consideration. The sole function of state-changing *=yì* '=CSM' is to denote the change of state. Consequently, the understanding of *=yì* '=CSM' should to some extent be dependent on the context. For example:

(9. 22) *minpʰu tɑ-pa* *tʰə-pu=yì.* ¶ *minpʰu*
pearl one-CL:pearl-like away-become=CSM pearl
tɑ-pa *tʰə-pu=ɑ=nɛ̀,* *tʂaŋa=nɛ̀,*
one-CL:pearl-like away-become=PFV=PAUS later=TOP
tʂʅ=kə *nɑ-kua*
cabinet=RLN.LOC:in downward-put
'(The bird) has become a pearl. (When it) became a pearl, (she) put it into the cabinet.'

(9. 22) contains two sentences. The first sentence is marked with the state-changing *=yì* '=CSM', denoting that the state has changed (from being a bird to being a pearl). The first clause in the second sentence is nearly the same as the first sentence, however, it is marked with the perfective *=ɑ* '=PFV' which signals the first bounded event in a sequence of events (§9. 2. 1).

(9. 23) below indicates that the child is growing older. This change of state can be figured out from the context where the rabbit and the child lived together, which is expressed through the first sentence in the example. Consequently, the clause is marked with the state-changing aspectual marker *=yì* '=CSM'.

(9. 23) *xitsɿ* *la* *tʰə=dzi* *kʰə-xəxə* *tɑ-wɑ*

rabbit CO 3sg.PRT=dl inward-support.RDUP one-VCL:circle

dzo.¶ *dzo=ɑ=nɛ̀,* *tə-sɻ̀* *dɑ-kʰuɑ=yì*

live live= PFV=PAUS one-VCL:bit upward-be big=CSM

'The rabbit and he (the child), they two, supported each other and lived together. (After they) lived together, (the child) grew older and older.' Lit: Rabbit and he two support support together live. live, be a bit big.

The context of (9. 24) below is the story of a bird-catcher who worked very hard and often forgot to come home on time. His wife decided to make a sign in the field for him. He was told that whenever he arrived at the sign, he should come back. When the story-teller says that the woman has finished making the sign, a written word, he used the state-changing *=yì* '=CSM' to show that the state has changed from an idea to a fact, that is, the result was attained.

(9. 24) *ndzondzɿ* *tə* *kʰə-lo=yì*

written word one inward-write=CSM

'(She) wrote a word.'

9. 2. 6 Habitual aspect

Habitual aspect is used to express that an event occurs habitually. In other words, it is used for the situation where an action is performed or a state exists ordinarily, usually or customarily. In Ersu, it is formally unmarked regardless of the situation whether an event occurs in a past or non-past temporal frame (§9. 1). The aspect is mostly seen for existential verbs, modal verbs and verbless clauses. For example:

(9. 25) *yɛ+xi+so+xi=nɛ̀,* *dʐɿ-li* *dʑì*

?previous+year+before+year:previous time=TOP eat-NOM CO

ma-bo, *tsʰɛ-li* *dʑì* *ma-bo,* *a-nɛ*

NEG-EXT drink-NOM CO NEG-EXT ITRG-what

la *ma-bo;* *tʰi+xa=nɛ̀,* *dʐɿ-li*

EMPH: all NEG-EXT DEM:this+time:nowadays=TOP eat-NOM

dʑì bo, *tsʰɛ-li* *dʑì bo,* *a-nɛ* *la* *bo*

CO EXT drink-NOM CO EXT ITRG-what EMPH:all EXT

'Previously, (people) had no food to eat, had no drinks to drink, (people) had nothing; currently, (people) have food to eat, have drinks to drink, (people) have everything (they want or need).'

(9. 25) illustrates the different living situation of the Ersu in previous time and the present. The state under discussion is usual, ordinary and customary. Habitual aspect is thus used. As can be seen in (9. 25), the existential verb *bo* 'EXT', is formally unmarked though overt temporal terms, past *yɛ+xi+so+xi* '?previous+year+before+year:previous time' and current *tʰi-xa* 'DEM:this+time:nowadays', are used.

(9. 26) below presents a predicted usual situation in a future temporal frame. Habitual aspect is thus employed in this context. In this example, the modal verb *to* 'MOD:can' is formally unmarked to encode habitual aspect.

(9. 26) *nə tʰə* *tʂaŋa=nɛ̀* *a-nɛ* *dʑì* *ŋu* *ma-to*

2sg DEM:this later=TOP ITRG-what CO do NEG-MOD:can

'You, from now on, cannot do anything.'

(9. 27) below is a verbless clause that describes an ordinary situation, the possession of the oxen, expressed through habitual aspect. The clause is then formally unmarked.

(9. 27) *ɑ-tʰə* *ŋuà-bɛ̀* *ɑ=zì* *tə-bɛ̀*

distal-DEM:this<that ox-QUAT.pl 1sg.SLF=GEN:family one-QUAT.pl

'Those oxen (are) my family's.'

9. 2. 7 Progressive aspect[130]

Progressive aspect expresses an ongoing event. The marking of progressive aspect is comparatively complicated. Its use depends on person and discourse genres. Third person is always formally marked with the enclitic *=gə* '=PROG'. Second person, usually occurring in an interrogative clause, is always unmarked. First person is formally unmarked in daily conversation if the 'first person' is the speaker him/herself. However, first person should be formally marked with *=gə* '=PROG' in quoted speech of a narrative or a long conversation when the 'first person' is not the speaker him/herself, but someone else (see §4. 4. 1. 4. 1 for first person distinction in Ersu). Table 9. 2 summarizes this discourse genre and 'person' distinction for the progressive aspect marking.

Person / Discourse genre	1st person	2nd person	3rd person
daily conversation	unmarked	unmarked	*=gə*
direct quotation in narratives or long conversations	*=gə*		

Table 9. 2 Progressive aspect marking in Ersu

The following examples in (9. 28) are taken from daily conversation.

(9. 28) a. *ɑ* *tʰi+xɑ* *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ*

1sg.SLF DEM:this+time<now clothes wash

'I am now washing clothes.'

[130] One of the examiners questions whether Ersu actually has a formally unmarked *imperfective* which subsumes both "habitual" and "progressive" meanings, and an overt enclitic progressive *=gə* which, like the perfect *=tsà*, displays an additional epistemic function, possibly along the lines of the *egophoric* vs. *allophoric* distinction widely attested in many Sino-Tibetan languages. This is a very meaningful comment that deserves future study.

b. *nə* *tʰi+xa* *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=à?*
2sg DEM:this+time<now clothes wash=ITRG
'Are you washing clothes now?'

c. *tʰə* *tʰi-xa* *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə*
3sg.PRT DEM:this+time<now clothes wash=PROG
'He is now washing clothes.'

As can be seen from (9. 28), although (9. 28a), (9. 28b) and (9. 28c) are in a progressive aspect situation, both (9. 28a) with a 1sg person and (9. 28b) with a 2sg person are unmarked while (9. 28c) with a 3sg person is marked with *=gə* '=PROG'.

The examples (9. 29) and (9. 30) below are extracted from narratives.

(9. 29) A: "*nɛ*, *yadzə*, *yadzə*, *nə* *a-nɛ* *ŋu=è*?"
PART:hello child child 2sg ITRG-what do=ITRG
'Hey! Child! Child! What are you doing?'
B: "…*a=nɛ̀*, *tʰə=kə* *mɛ+li* *tə*
…1sg.SLF=TOP DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here nature+?=land one
-sə̀ *də-ndzə=gə=dǒ*'
-CL:bit upward-dig=PROS=AFFM
'…I am here digging a small piece of land.'

(9. 29) is a dialog between an evil (A) and an orphan (B) in a folktale. The question proposed by A takes a second person and it is still unmarked just as it is unmarked in (9. 28b) that is taken from daily conversation. However, the answer from B takes a first person but is marked with *=gə* '=PROG'. This is unlike (9. 28a), in which the clause with the first person is formally unmarked in daily conversation.

(9. 30) below is also extracted from a narrative, takes a third person and it is

marked with =*gə* '=PROG' just as it is marked in (9. 28c) that is taken from daily conversation.

(9. 30) *tʰə* *əˈndzə-bɛ̀* *ɑ-tʰə=kɛ*
DEM:this dragon-QUAT.pl distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there
dɑ-kɑkɑ=gə
upward-hit.RDUP=PROG
'These dragons were fighting each other there (in the sky).'

It should be noted that although progressive aspect seems to convey the information that an event occurs in a current time frame and it functions like a non-past tense marker on the surface, its basic function is to denote an ongoing event rather than non-past tense. Progressive aspect can also be used in a past time frame. It can be put into a past time context like (9. 31).

(9. 31) *tʰə* *yɑ+ŋo* *tʰi+xɑ*
3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday DEM:this+time<now
tɑ-tuɑ *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə*
one -MC.CL:period of time clothes wash=ITRG
'He was washing clothes at this moment yesterday.'

Note that in Ersu, both habitual aspect (§9. 2. 6) and first/second person progressive aspect in conversations are formally unmarked. This is, a verbal form unmarked for aspect may have either a habitual or a progressive reading when first/second person is involved. This can be distinguished through verbal semantics and context, especially the uses of temporal terms. Habitual aspect is mainly attested for existential verbs, stative verbs, and feeling verbs. Progressive aspect is mainly attested for verbs denoting actions or activities. Their differences can be figured out through context. For example:

(9. 32) a. *a* *pu-bè* *dzŋ* *ma-ga*

1sg.SLF potato=QUAT.pl eat NEG-like

'I do not like eating potatoes.'

b. *a* *t^hi+xa* *pu-bè* *dzŋ*

1sg.SLF DEM:this+time<now potato-QUAT.pl eat

'I am now eating potatoes.

As seen from the two examples in (9. 32), the verbs in (9. 32a) and (9. 32b) are not marked for aspect. However, (9. 32a) takes a habitual aspect because the verb used here is a feeling verb *ga* 'like'. Progressive aspect is attested in (9. 32b) because the temporal term *t^hi+xa* 'DEM:this+time<now' and the action verb *dzŋ* 'eat' can cooperate to imply that an event is ongoing.

9. 2. 8 Prospective aspect

Prospective aspect denotes that an event occurs subsequent to a given reference of time that might be overtly indicated with temporal terms, might be figured out through context, and most often, might be the time of utterance. Prospective aspect is overtly marked with the enclitic *=gə* '=PROS' that is also used for progressive aspect (§9. 2. 7) [131]. Unlike progressive *=gə* '=PROG', prospective *=gə* '=PROS' can be used for all persons. Specifically, it is applicable to first person and third person declarative mood and second person interrogative mood. For example:

(9. 33) a. *a* *su+ɲo* *pu* *tʂŋ* *yi=gə*

1sg.SLF ?next-day:tomorrow potato plant go:NPFV=PROS

'I will go to plant potatoes tomorrow.'

[131] Thanks to one of the examiners for pointing out that the prospective *=gə* can also be analyzed as an extended use of the progressive *=gə* since progressive marking can sometimes develop "futurate" connotations (Pustet, Wijaya &. Win 2006).

b. *nə su+ɲo pu tʂʅ yi a=gə*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow potato plant go:NPFV ITRG=PROS
=è?
=ITRG
'Will you go to plant potatoes tomorrow?'

c. *tʰə su+ɲo pu tʂʅ yi=gə*
3sg.PRT?next+day:tomorrow potato plant go:NPFV=PROS
'He will go to plant potatoes tomorrow.'

Prospective aspect is formally unmarked in the context of second person imperative mood. This is often used in the situation when the addressee is commanded to perform an action in the future (§10. 1. 2. 1). For example:

(9. 34) *nə su+ɲo pu tʂʅ yi*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow potato plant go.NPFV
'You go to plant potatoes tomorrow.'

(9. 35) *nə su+ɲo gamɛ nə-tsʰɛ*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow clothes downward-wash
'You wash clothes tomorrow.'

As can be seen from (9. 34) to (9. 35), an overt temporal term is often used in the context of prospective aspect. However, this is not always the case. A temporal term is often ellipsed. Consequently, the given reference time can only be figured out through a larger discourse context. For example:

(9. 36) A: “*ɑ-pa,* *ɑ-pa,* *kʰa* *tʂù=gə=è*?”

KPFX-father KPFX-father ITRG:where pick=PROS=ITRG

=dʑà=nè

=EVID:quotative=PAUS

‘“Father, Father, where will we pick up (the seeds of wild buckwheat)?” (The two daughters) said like this.’ Lit: Father, Father, where will pick up?

B: “*pìnbi* *tsètsɛ dɑ-pɑ=tɑ=kə*

knee joint.RDUP upward-place:arrive=NOM.LOC=RLN.LOC:in

tʂù=gə. ”*=dʑà=nè*

pick=PROS=EVID:quotative=PART: pause

‘“(When the wild buckwheat plants) are as tall as (our) knees, (we will) pick up (the seeds of the wild buckwheat).” (The father) answered like this.’ Lit: “Arrive knee joint will pick up.

(9. 36) above is extracted from a traditional folkloric story about the adventure of two sisters. In the story, there is a scene where the girls’ father was designing a plot to dispatch them because he was told by a Shaba that his illness was due to the two girls’ born under an unlucky star. The fact was that they offended the Shaba because of their uncontrollable laughter when he farted while praying. He then advised their father to throw them away. Their father was planning to take them into the deep area of a vast land covered with wild buckwheat plants. He cheated them by telling them to pick up buckwheat seeds and by leading them from the place where the shortest plants were the length of a human feet to the place where the highest plants were higher than human head. The two girls were always asking their father where to pick up the seeds. Their father was always answering them like “the place where the height of the buckwheat plants reached from a human being’s feet, to knees, to bottom, to waist, to shoulder and finally, to head.” (9. 36) is a dialogue taking place between the two girls and their father when they reached the place where the buckwheat plants were as high as human knees. In (9. 36), the event to pick up buckwheat seeds is not only

subsequent to the time when the dialogue occurred but also subsequent to the time when they reached the above described place. Consequently, both the question and the answer have been marked with the prospective aspect=*gə* '=PROS'.

Since progressive aspect and prospective aspect share the same marker=*gə*, it is not an easy job to differentiate them if there are no overt temporal terms used as hints. The readings of =*gə* can only depend on a discourse context. For example:

(9. 37) *tʂaŋa=nɛ̀, tə ɲo k^{h}ə-dzolo=a=nɛ̀,*
later=TOP one day inward-look= PFV=PAUS
ts^{h}uts^{h}u np^{h}a =gə...
a kind of traditional musical instrument play=PROG
'Later, one day, (she) had a look (and found two girls there who) were playing Cucu.'

As seen from (9. 37), =*gə* in this context marks progressive aspect rather than prospective aspect because 'she' had a look and found the event was ongoing.

(9. 38) below describes one of the procedures of a traditional Ersu wedding ceremony, that is, the dress-up of a bride. In (9. 38), =*gə*occurs three times. The first =*gə* used as a progressive aspect marker indicates that the dress-up is ongoing. The second =*gə* used as a prospective aspect marker expresses that the event of 'carrying the bride on someone's back under a tree' is subsequent to the event of dress-up. The third =*gə*again used as a progressive aspect marker indicates that the event of 'crying' is ongoing when the event of 'carrying the bride on someone's back under a tree' occurs. If a listener is not familiar with the whole procedures of an Ersu wedding ceremony, it must be quite difficult for her/him to identify which aspect each =*gə*refers to.

(9. 38) *aˡ* *əˡsu-bè=nè,* *lɛ-ma* *sɔsa=gə*

1pl.SLF PN:Ersu=QUAT.pl=TOP ?-SFX.FEM:bride dress up=PROG

xa=nè, *da-ba* *si*

LINK:when=PAUS upward-carry on one's back wood

+pu=tsaŋa *sɔsa=gə* *tə*

+CL:living plants:tree=RLN.LOC:under dress up=PROS one

-bè, *si+pu=tsaŋa* *su*

QUAT.pl tree wood+CL:living plants:tree=RLN.LOC:under person

tə-bè *nbɛ=gə*

one-QUAT.pl cry=PROG

'When we Ersu people are dressing up the bride, (someone) carries (the bride) on his back below a tree to dress (her) up. (Meanwhile,) some people are crying under the tree.'

9. 2. 9 Imminent aspect

Imminent aspect, like prospective aspect, also denotes that an event occurs subsequent to a given reference of time. However, prospective aspect offers no information about "when" the subsequent event will occur, while imminent aspect expresses that the subsequent event will "immediately" occur. The marking of imminent aspect shows person distinction. First person is marked with *=gə=tsʰuá* '=PROS=IMMI'. Second person is marked with *=tsʰuá* '=IMMI' and is only used in imperative mood, which means that an addressee is commanded to perform an action as soon as possible. Third person is marked with *=gá* '=IMMI' (§9. 4 & Table 9. 4). The marking of first person imminent aspect is obviously the combination of a prospective aspectual marker *=gə* '=PROS' (§9. 2. 8) and an imminent marker *=tsʰuá* '=IMMI'. For example:

(9. 39) a. *a* *kʰa-ma=gə=tsʰuá*

1sg.SLF inward-sleep=PROS=IMMI

'I will go to bed immediately.'

b. *nə* *kʰɑ-mɑ=tsʰuá*

2sg inward-sleep=IMMI

'You go to bed immediately.'

c. *tʰə* *kʰɑ-mɑ=gá*

3sg.PRT inward-sleep=IMMI

'He is going to bed immediately.'

(9. 40) a. *ɑ* *nə-yi=gə=tsʰuá*

1sg.SLF downward-go.NPFV=PROS=IMMI

'I am going downward immediately.'

b. *nə* *nə-yi=tsʰuá*

2sg downward-go.NPFV=IMMI

'You go down immediately.'

c. *tʰə* *nə-yi=gá*

3sg.PRT downward-go.NPFV =IMMI

'He is going down immediately.'

As seen from (9. 39) and (9. 40) above, different persons take different imminent aspectual markers in Ersu. Note that the marking of third person is not only applicable to third person pronouns, but also to a lexical noun used in the context. For example:

(9. 41) *dzo-wo* *də-dzu=gá*

water-CL:generic, non-sticklike upward-boil=IMMI

'The water is going to boil immediately.'

Examples from (9. 39) to (9. 41) above are taken from daily conversation. Examples (9. 42) and (9. 43) are extracted from narratives.

(9. 42) *pìnbi tsètsɛ dɑ-pɑ=nɛ̀, "ɑ-pɑ, ɑ-pɑ,*
knee joint.RDUP upward-arrive=PAUS KPFX-fatherKPFX-father
tʂu=ts^{h}uá mɔ̌."=dʐà=nɛ̀
pick=IMMT PART:request=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(When the wild buckwheat plants) are as tall as (their) knees, (the two girls said this): "Father, Father, (you let us) pick up (the seeds of the wild buckwheat) immediately." Lit: Arrive knee joint, "Father, Father, pick up immediately".

(9. 42) is the continuation of (9. 36) extracted from the same narrative. By comparing (9. 36) with (9. 42), we can infer that the father and the two girls had completely different inside feelings and psychological activities. The aim of the father was to take the two girls into a deeper area where higher wild buckwheat plants were growing and to throw them away. He always made excuses for the reason why they did not pick up the seeds of the wild buckwheat. Therefore, just *=gə* '=PROS' is used to denote a subsequent event in (9. 36) without any reference to a given time. *=gə* '=PROS' is always used by the father in his speaking whenever they arrived at a new place. The two girls were different from their father. When they were led to deeper and deeper areas, they desired to pick up the seeds as soon as possible. Consequently, *=ts^{h}uá* '=IMMI' is used to denote an immediately subsequent event in (9. 41). And *=ts^{h}uá* is always used by the two girls in their speaking whenever they arrived at a new place. (9. 42) is in fact used in an imperative mood with the subject, "you (the father)" ellipsed. Consequently, only *=ts^{h}uá* '=IMMI' is used.

(9. 43) below is the continuation of (9. 21) in the same narrative. (9. 43) occurs in a folktale, when an orphan who was brought up by a rabbit was at the age of 16, the rabbit decided to help him court a girl to marriage. The imminent aspectual marker *=gə=ts^{h}uá* '=PROS =IMMI', rather than the prospective marker *=gə* '=PROS', is used here because the quoted speaker, that is, the rabbit thinks that the marriage

should be sought immediately. In addition, (9. 43) also shows that the marking of first person imminent aspect is *=gə=tsʰuá* '=PROS=IMMI'.

(9. 43) *tsʰɛ-tsʰu* *əˡ=bɛ̀=kə* *da-la*
ten-six:sixteen year-QUAT.pl=RLN.LOC:in upward-come
=a=nɛ̀, "*an,* *yadzi̯ə,* *a* *ni* *vaka*
=PFV=PAUS "PART:sigh child 1sg.SLF 2sg.GEN help
lɛ-ma *məntɕʰi=gə=tsʰuá,* oh!"=*tʰə-a-dzi̯gə*
?-SFX.FEM:bride ask=PROS=IMMT, oh=EVID:quotative
'(When the child) was at 16 years old, (the rabbit) said like this: "well, child, I need to help you find a bride immediately. Oh!'" Lit: 16 years came, "an, child, I your help bride ask need immediately. Oh!"

9. 2. 10 Continuous aspect

Continuous aspect implies that a state continues to exist, or an event that might have previously occurred continues to be ongoing until a given reference time. When it is used to denote a continuous state, it is realized through the marker *=sɛ̀* that can be translated as 'still' in English. When it is used for an ongoing event, it always follows the progressive aspect marker *=gə* '=PROG', forming a combined structure of different aspectual markers *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT' that denotes not only the ongoing of an event but also its continuation (§9. 3. 2). This might be the reason why Sun (1982a, 1983a) reports *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT' as a progressive marker (§9. 1). Progressive aspect marked with the only *=gə* '=PROG' (§9. 2. 7) and continuous aspect marked with *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT' are in fact distinct from each other. The former only denotes an ongoing event while the latter denotes not only an ongoing event but also its continuation. For example:

(9. 44) *ɑ-ga* *ɑ-wɑ-kɑ=zì*

distal-uphill KPFX-grandma-CL: generic, sticklike=GEN:family

tsotʂʰə=pa *la* *tə* *mo* *dʐa=sɛ̀*

courtyard=RLN.LOC:place EMPH:all one corpse EXT=CONT

'There is still a corpse in the courtyard of the old lady who lives uphill.'

(9. 44) above is extracted from the same folkloric story as (9. 14) above. After the idiot killed his child by pinching its fontanelle, his wife asked him to bury its body. The body fell from his arms onto the old lady's courtyard, but he was unaware of this. When he went home and found his wife crying, he reassured her by saying (9. 44). What he said implies is that his wife need not feel sad because not only the child of his family died, but also some other family's child was found dead in the courtyard (But the body was in fact his child!). *=sɛ̀* '=CONT' is used in (9. 44) to indicate that the state of *dʐa* 'EXT', continues until the speaker's (the idiot's) utterance in his mind.

(9. 45) below is an example from daily observations. In this example, *=sɛ̀* '=CONT' follows *=gə* '=PROG' to denote an ongoing event that continues until the speech occurs, and may keep going on after the speech.

(9. 45) *tʰə* *tʰi-xa* *gaɱɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə=sɛ̀*

3sg.PRT DEM: this-time<now clothes inward-sleep=PROG=CONT

'S/he is still washing clothes now.'

9. 2. 11 Repetitive aspect

Repetitive aspect indicates that an action occurs "again" or "again and again". It is realized through two different ways – verbal repetition and *=sɛ̀* marking.

The repetition of the root of a verb by changing its prefix into the prefix *nə-*,

forming the structure of [*ɲə*-verbal root *ɲə*-verbal root…] can express the repetition of an action. This is quite similar to the iterative aspect reported in Yonging Na that denotes "an action that occurs again and again over a period of time" which is common cross-linguistically (Timberlake 2007; Lidz 2010: 440). Verbal predicate repetition is an important strategy in discourse organization. §13. 5. 4 further discusses this. An example is given here.

(9. 46) *tʰə=dzi* *ɲə-pʰo* *ɲə-pʰo* *ɲə-pʰo*
3sg.PRT=dl downward-run downward-run downward-run
ɲə-pʰo...
downward-run
'The two of them ran and ran…'

The reading of a repetitive aspect can also be realized through a verb taking an enclitic=*sɛ̀* '=RPTV'. Being different from the above described predicate repetition that denotes the same action occurs repeatedly and lasts for some time, the =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' repetitive aspect refers to an event or a similar event that occurs 'again' rather than 'again and again'. In addition, =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' itself can be repeated to follow different verbs, often antonyms, forming a structure of [V_1=*sɛ̀*, …V_2=*sɛ̀*] to express that one action occurs (maybe ends, maybe does not end) and then another event occurs 'again'. For example:

(9. 47) *əˈʂa* *ta-ka* *ŋa-la=sɛ̀=á*
policy one-CL: -generic, sticklike outward-come=RPTV=PFV
'A policy came out again.'

(9. 47) above is extracted from an autobiographical narrative. The example is about various new policies issued by the P. R. China after its establishment and their influences on the speaker himself. Here, =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' is used to imply that previously, there were some policies coming out and a new one came out again.

(9. 48) *tʰə* *nə-nbə=a=sɛ̀,* *də-əʳ=à=sɛ̀*

3sg.PRT downward-cry=PFV=RPTV upward-laugh=PFV=RPTV

yadʐə *tə* *zɿxa*

child one seem

'He seemed to be a child: first (he) cried, then (he) laughed again.' Lit: He cried again, laughed again, seem a child.

In (9. 48), =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' is used to link two antonyms *nə-nbə* 'downward-cry' and *də-əʳ* 'upward-laugh'. This expresses that the first action occurs and then another action occurs again.

9. 3 Co-occurrence of Aspectual Markers

The co-occurrence of two different aspectual markers is acceptable in Ersu. The co-occurrence of more than two aspectual markers is not attested. This co-occurrence offers various possibilities listed in Table 9. 3.

Aspects	**Markers**	**Reference**
prospective+ imminent	=*gə=tsʰuá*	§9. 3. 1
progressive + continuous	=*gə=sɛ̀*	§9. 3. 2
perfect + perfective	=*tsà=á*	§9. 3. 3
perfect+ continuous	=*tsà=sɛ̀*	§9. 3. 4
perfective+repetitive/repetitive+perfective	=*á=sɛ̀/=sɛ̀=á*	§9. 3. 5
prospective + perfective	=*gə=á*	§9. 3. 6

Table 9. 3 Co-occurrence of different aspectual markers

9. 3. 1 Prospective + Imminent

As mentioned in §9. 2. 9, when the imminent=*tsʰuá* '=IMMI' follows the prospective =*gə* '=PROS', the co-occurrence of =*gə=tsʰuá* '=PROS=IMMI' can mark first person imminent aspect. A reverse order, that is, =*tsʰuá=gə* is unacceptable. For example:

(9. 49) *a* *yi* *tə* *ko* *ts^{h}ɛ=gə=ts^{h}uá*

1sg.SLF MC:tobacco one pipe drink=PROS=IMMI

'I am going to smoke immediately.' Lit: I immediately drink a pipe of tobacco.

(9. 50) *ndzà-tso=kə* *xà=nɛ̀,*

PN:Han people-festival:Spring Festival=RLN.LOC:in LINK:when=PAUS

ndzà-tso *vɛ-ts^{h}o* *ka=gə*

PN:Han people-festival:Spring Festival pig-SFX.EMAS kill=PROS

=ts^{h}uá

=IMMI

'When Spring Festival comes, we will kill Spring Festival pigs[132] immediately.'

9. 3. 2 Progressive + Continuous

Just like *=gə=ts^{h}uá* '=PROS=IMMI', the co-occurrence of *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG =CONT' is also very common in Ersu. However, *=sɛ̀=gə* is not acceptable. The continuous *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT' and the progressive *=gə* '=PROG' are different from each other because the former denotes not only an ongoing event but also its continuation while the latter only denotes that an event is ongoing, as discussed in §9. 2. 10. It should be noted that only *=sɛ̀* '=CONT' can express the continuation of an action. Some of my language consultants believe that *=sɛ̀* '=CONT' is the shortening of *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT'. More careful investigation into the data indicates that *=sɛ̀* '=CONT' is more often used for existential verbs, stative verbs and other verbs that denote a state rather than verbs

[132] The Ersu have a tradition of feeding many pigs in every family. There is always one or several pigs emasculated in order that they can grow as big as possible for the Spring Festival feast. If a family has the biggest one in the village, it is viewed with pride. A pig for the Spring Festival uses is called 'Spring Festival pig', literally, 'Han people festival emasculated pig'. In addition, this example was taken down just before the coming of the Spring Festival and the killing of the Spring Festival pigs was going to happen soon. Consequently, though this is a customary cultural description, the speaking uses imminent aspect is used instead of the habitual aspect.

denoting an action or an activity. On the contrary, *=gə=sɛ̀* '=PROG=CONT' is more closely associated with an action or an activity. For example:

(9. 51) *tʰəɪ* *za-ma* *dzɿ=gə=sɛ̀*
3pl.PRT food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG=CONT
'They are still eating food.'

9. 3. 3 Perfect+Perfective

Quite occasionally, the co-occurrence of *=tsà=á* '=PFT=PFV' is also found in the data. A reverse *=á=tsà* '=PFV =PFT' is not accepted. This co-occurrence means that an event denoted by a clause that takes a perfect marker *=tsà* '=PFT' can be treated as a bounded and unanalyzed entirety. However, this is only limited to the situation when the perfective *=á* is used to refer to the first event in a sequence, as in (9. 52).

(9. 52) *tsa* *kʰə-ŋu=tsà=á=nɛ̀,* *aɪ=yì*
taboo[133] inward-do=PFT= PFV=PAUS 1pl.SLF=GEN
pʰamo-bɛ̀ *la* *a-ȵa-bɛ̀* *tʂʰɿyì*
father-QUAT.pl CO KPFX-aunt-QUAT.plL orphan
nə-ku-bɛ̀=nɛ̀, *tʰə*
downward-become-QUAT.pl=TOP DEM:this
=kə=ta *də̀-ȵì*
=RLN.LOC:in<here=RLN.LOC upward-be sick
'After (someone) had already done some taboos, our uncles and aunts, (those who) became orphans were sick from then on.'

[133] I translated *tsa* into 'taboo' in English. However, it in fact refers to something forbidden during the course of a praying or religious practice. If a person hates a family, s/he often breaks the rule and does some taboos in a secret way when the family asks a Shaba to conduct religious or praying rituals. S/he aims to cause the family trouble or misery.

9. 3. 4 Perfect+Continuous

The co-occurrence of the perfect =*tsà* '=PFT'and =*sɛ̀* '=CONT' functions to highlight that an event has occurred before the speech and is still ongoing when the speech occurs. For example:

(9. 53) *bɛ+ tsʰɑ=yikə* *yadzi̱ə-wo= và*
insect+hot: mosquito=AGT child-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ACC
kʰə-tsɿ=tsà= sɛ̀
inward-bite=PFT=CONT:still
'The mosquito is still biting the child.'

9. 3. 5 Repetitive + Perfective/Perfective+Repetitive

The repetitive =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' and the perfective =*á* '=PFV' may co-occur, forming a combined structure of=*sɛ̀=á* '=RPTV=PFV', as in (9. 54a). A reverse order of the two markers, that is, =*á=sɛ̀* '=PFV=RPTV' is also acceptable as in (9. 54b). In other words, the co-occurrence of the repetitive =*sɛ̀* '=RPTV' and the perfective =*á* '=PFV' shows a "free order". For example:

(9. 54) a. *dian* *mɑ-n̩ò=sɛ̀=á*
MC: power NEG-EXT=RPTV=PFV
'Again, there is no power.'

b. *dian* *mɑ-n̩ò=á=sɛ̀*
MC:power NEG-EXT=RPTV=PFV
'There is no power again.'

The above (9. 54a) and (9. 54b) are both acceptable but they are a bit different in meanings. In (9. 54a), the speaker views the repetition of the event "no power" as a whole. It implies that there must have been power cutoff in a short period of time, for example, in one hour, for several times and this might annoy her/him a lot. In (9. 54b),

the speaker views the event "no power" as a whole that occurs again. It implies that there must have been power cutoff at least once in a previous time, maybe in the same day or maybe several days ago. This is just a factual description.

9. 3. 6 Prospective + Perfective

In Ersu, an event that occurs subsequently in a given reference time, for example, the moment of a speech can be viewed as a whole. Consequently, the prospective *=gə* '=PROS' and the perfective *=á* '=PFV' may co-occur with each other forming a structure of *=gə=á* '=PROS=PFV'[134]. This is so because perfective aspect functions to encode an event as being bounded (§9. 3. 1). In this situation, the event is viewed as being bounded though it takes a prospective marker. A reverse order, that is, *=á=gə* '=PFV =PROG' is unacceptable. This demonstrates that firstly, perfective aspect does not always denote a past event; secondly, perfective aspect is bounded in Ersu because it cannot be followed by unbounded prospective aspect marker *=gə* '=PROS'. For example:

(9. 55) a. *a* *ʒɿ* *mɑ=gə=á*
1sg.SLF go:NPFV NEG=PROS=PFV
'I will not go (determined).'

b. *a* *ʒɿ* *mɑ=gə*
1sg.SLF go:NPFV NEG=PROS
'I will not go.'

Note that both (9. 55a) and (9. 55b) are acceptable. However, (9. 55a) implies that the event 'I will not go' is determined because the speaker has already made up his/her mind. The moment that the decision is made can be viewed as a definite endpoint and can thus be viewed as being bounded. (9. 55b) just expresses that the speaker

[134] I hypothesize that the marking of third person imminent aspect *=gá* '=IMMI' (§9. 3. 9) is derived from the combination of *=gə=á* '=PROG=PFV' through vowel fusion (§2. 5. 4). However, this needs further studies.

considers not going and the decision has not been made, or it has been made but could possibly change under external influences.

(9. 56) a. *mɛ̀+ tɕò* *tʰə-pʰu=gə=á*
nature+bind:sky away-change=PROS=PFV
'The weather is going to change (for sure).' Lit: Sky will change.

b. *mɛ̀+ tɕò* *tʰə-pʰu=gə*
nature+bind:sky away-change=PROS
'The weather is going to change.' Lit: Sky will change.

c. *mɛ̀+ tɕò* *tʰə-pʰu=á*
nature+bind:sky away-change= PFV
'The weather changed.' *lit*: Sky changed.

The above three minimal pairs in (9. 56) are all acceptable. In (9. 56a), the event "The weather is going to change" is viewed as a whole. This means that some natural phenomena the speaker has witnessed convince her/him in this judgment. The moment that the observable phenomena occurred is the endpoint and thus the event is thought to be bounded. (9. 56b) could be just based on the speaker's subjective hypothesis. Consequently, the possibility of weather changing in (9. 55b) is much less than that in (9. 56a). (9. 56c) denotes that the event, as a whole, has already occurred.

9. 4 Aspectual Marking and Other Grammatical Categories

As discussed above, the marking of progressive aspect (§9. 2. 7), prospective aspect (§9. 2. 8), imminent aspect (§9. 2. 9), and perfect aspect (§9. 2. 2) shows person, mood and text genre distinction. These three grammatical categories may interplay in the form of aspectual marking. First person progressive is formally unmarked in daily conversation but is marked with the progressive *=gə* '=PROG' in narratives. Second person progressive is always formally unmarked regardless of text

genres and is only used in interrogative mood. Third person progressive is always marked with the progressive =*gə* '=PROG' regardless of text genres. The marking of prospective does not show text genre distinction. Both first person and third person are always marked with the prospective =*gə* '=PROS'. Second person interrogative is marked with the prospective =*gə* '=PROS' but it is formally unmarked in an imperative mood. Imminent aspectual marking shows a three-person distinction regardless of mood and text genres. First person is marked with =*gə*=*ts*^{h}*uá* '=PROS=IMMI'. Second person is marked with =*ts*^{h}*uá* '= IMMI' and third person is marked with =*gá* '=IMMI'. The perfect aspect =*tsà* '=PFT' is never used for first person, occasionally used for second person and should be used for third person. The marking of aspects and other grammatical categories is summarized in Table 9. 4 below.

Person / aspectual marking	1		2		3
progressive aspect	unmarked (daily conversation)	=*gə* (narratives)	unmarked (only used in interrogative mood)		=*gə*
prospective aspect	=*gə*		=*gə* (interrogative)	unmarked (imperative)	=*gə*
imminent aspect	=*gə*=*ts*^{h}*uá*		=*ts*^{h}*uá*		=*gá*
perfect aspect	not applicable		=*tsà*		

Table 9. 4 Aspectual marking and other grammatical categories

Chapter 10 Mood and Modality[135]

This chapter discusses mood (§10. 1) and modality (§10. 2) in Ersu. The mood system consists of three major types of moods, that is, declarative mood (§10. 1. 1), imperative mood (§10. 1. 2), and interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3). Each mood can be further divided into several subtypes. The moods, except for affirmative declarative mood, are all morphosyntactically marked. The modal system consists of two "deontic modals" (§10. 2. 1) and several "dynamic modals" (§10. 2. 2) (Palmer 2001: 9-10) that function as grammaticalized auxiliary modal verbs following a lexical verb. Modal verbs are most frequently used in negative mood context. The correlation between mood and modality is discussed in §10. 3. Most of the modal verbs are monosyllabic except that the obligative *nɑ-pɑ* 'must'[136], the permissive *bɑŋo* 'allow' and the desiderative *buɑtʂə* 'allow' are disyllabic. Modal verbs never take a directional prefix.

10. 1 Mood

Declarative mood (§10. 1. 1), imperative mood (§10. 1. 2) and Interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3) are all attested in Ersu, which are respectively associated with three major simple clause types (§12. 1. 3): statement, demand and question. Declarative mood can be further subdivided into affirmative and negative. Imperative mood can be further subdivided into imperative, prohibitive (negative imperative) and requestive. Interrogative mood can be further subdivided into polar interrogative, tag interrogative and content interrogative. Among them, all moods are morphosyntactically marked except that affirmative mood is formally unmarked. Moods in Ersu are summarized in Table 10. 1.

[135] One of the examiners points out that discussion on epistemic modality lacking in this chapter. This is the case because my corpus does not contain any evidence in favor of epistemic overtones of modality markers in Ersu. This is an issue for further study, maybe based on the data obtained through elicitation since the data used for this grammar are mainly obtained through spontaneous narration or participant observation rather than purposeful elicitation.

[136] *nɑ-pɑ* literally means 'downward-place:arrive'. *nɑ-pɑ* 'downward-place:must' is being grammaticalized from 'downward-place:arrive' (§10. 2. 1. 1).

Mood		Clause type	Reference
declarative	affirmative	statement	§10. 1. 1. 1
	negative		§10. 1. 1. 2
imperative	imperative	demand	§10. 1. 2. 1
	prohibitive		§10. 1. 2. 2
	requestive		§10. 1. 2. 3
Interrogative	polar	question	§10. 1. 3. 1
	tag		§10. 1. 3. 2
	content		§10. 1. 3. 3

Table 10. 1 List of Ersu moods

10. 1. 1 Declarative

10. 1. 1. 1 Affirmative

In Ersu, a clause does not take a marker to specially denote affirmative mood though it may take evidential markers and/or aspectual markers, as in (10. 1) and (10. 2).

(10. 1) *dzo+ts^{h}ɛ=li* *la* *mɑ-bo*
water +drink=NOM:purposive EMPH:all NEG-EXT
'(We) do not have drinking water at all.'

(10. 2) *t^{h}ə* *sʮzɑ̀-wo=ɲɛ̀,* *vùliɛ̀*
DEM:this god-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP head
ɲə-t^{h}ùt^{h}ù=ɑ́=dʑigə
downward-nod.RDUP=PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) the god nodded his head.'

However, there are some clause-final particles used in an affirmative clause, depending on a speaker's speech style. Consequently, these particles are used based on pragmatic choices rather than grammatical rules. It is hard to predict which particle should be used in a context. There are two particles occurring quite frequently and also optionally used for affirmative mood. They are: *tə* and *dǒ*.

tə functions quite similarly to *de* (的) in Mandarin Chinese. The particle seems to always follow the verb *xi* 'name'. In other situations, it is optionally used. I notice that the more frequently a speaker has contact with Mandarin Chinese, the more times s/he uses the particle in speech. It is also more frequently used by younger people who have received some school education. I thus hypothesize that the use of *tə* might be under the influence of Mandarin Chinese. For example:

(10. 3)	*a*	*yiʂamutɕi-yɛ*	*xi = tə*
	1sg.SLF	PN: person name-SFX.MAS:male name	name =DES
	'My name is Yishamuji.'		

dǒ is used as a marker when a speaker offers information that is requested by others. It is especially applicable to the occasions when the speaker responds to a question or a request reluctantly, but still offers an affirmative reply out of politeness, friendship or obligation. One typical example is that in the field, whenever I asked some of my consultants to help provide me with some recordings, most of them often refused in the beginning because of shyness or nervousness. When they finally accepted my requests after my insistence or after other fellow villagers' persuasion, most of time they would say something like "I do this *dǒ* ". *dǒ* in this situation implies that a speaker accepts my request but appears to "do so after second thoughts" at my request. (10. 4) is a good example for this.

(10. 4) *ɑ=nɛ̀,* *tʰi-xɑ=nɛ̀,*

1sg.SLF=TOP DEM: this-time: now=PAUS

yɛ-xi+so-xi *kʰuakʰuɑ-bɛ̀* *vaka*

last-year+before-year: previous time big.RDUP:father-QUAT.pl about

tə-sə̀ *də-xi+nba*

one-CL:bit upward-tell+root:tell something from the start to the end

tʰə=kə *nɑ-kuɑ=gə=dǒ*

DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in downward-put=PROS=PART:affirmative

'Now, I am going to tell you something about my father and uncles in previous time for you to record.' Lit: I, now, speak a bit about fathers put into this (recorder).

10. 1. 1. 2 Negatives

Negation in Ersu is realized through the marker *mɑ-*. The negative forms can be further divided into the following different subtypes: [PFX+NEG+verbal root] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 1); [NEG+EXT/MOD/verbal root] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 2); [NEG+adjectival root] or [APFX+NEG+adjectival root] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 3); [verbal syllable$_1$+NEG+verbal syllable$_2$] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 4); Negation of SVC, verb+PROS and verb+MOD (§10. 1. 1. 2. 5); [NEG+*tɕə̀*+NEG+verbal/adjectival root] (§10. 1. 1. 2. 6).

10. 1. 1. 2. 1 [PFX+NEG+verbal root]

If a verb takes a directional prefix, the negative *mɑ-* is inserted between a directional prefix and a verbal root, forming a structure of [PFX+NEG +root] since a verb in Ersu often takes a prefix as discussed in §8. 1. This is one of the frequent co-occurrences of multi-prefixes though multi-prefixes do not often occur in Ersu as discussed in §8. 1. 1. 4. Examples are given in Table 10. 2.

Original Form		Negative Form	
EX.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
də-kʰatʰo	'upward-speak:speak'	*də-mə-kʰatʰo*	'upward-NEG-speak:not speak'
də-la	'upward-yell:yell'	*də-mə-la*	'upward-NEG-yell:not yell'
də-tsu	'upward-punch:punch'	*də-mə-tsu*	'upward-NEG-punch:not punch'
ŋə-dzŋ	'outward-eat:eat'	*ŋə-mə-dzŋ*	'outward-NEG-eat:not eat'
ŋə-baɲi	'outward-be tired:be tired'	*ŋə-mə-baɲi*	'outward-NEG- be tired: be not tired'
nə-la	'downward-come:come'	*nə-mə-la*	'downward-NEG-come:not come'
tʰə-tɕʰi	'away-give:give'	*tʰə-mə-tɕʰi*	'away-NEG-give:not give'
kʰə-mə	'inward-sleep '	*kʰə-mə-mə*	'inward-NEG-sleep:not sleep'

Table 10. 2 Sample list of negative forms of verbs taking a directional prefix in Ersu

The following example (10. 5) and (10. 6) illustrate the uses of the above negative verbal forms in a clausal context.

(10. 5) *vu* *tə-mi* *ŋə-mə-ɲtɕʰo=nɛ̀,*
wine one-CL:bit outward-NEG-pick up=PAUS
ə=dzi *ə-ndʑi* *lɛ-mə* *tə ʂu=gɛ̀* ?
1sg.SLF=dl ITRG-how ?-SFX.FEM one marry= PROS.ITRG
'If we do not buy a bit of wine, how could I help you marry a bride?' Lit: Wine a bit not pick up, how will we two marry a bride?

(10. 6) *yə-ʂə* *tə-pʰu* *nə=và* *tʰə-mə-ndo=á*
APFX-long one-CL:period of time 2sg=ACC away-NEG-see=PFV
nə kʰə *duá=dà*?
2sg ITRG:where go:PFV=ITRG
'It is a long time that (I) have not seen you. Where have you been?'

10. 1. 1. 2. 2 [NEG+ EXT/MOD/verbal root]

If a verb does not take a prefix, such as existential verbs and modal verbs, *mə-* is directly added to the verb, forming a structure of [NEG+verbal root]. Note that on some occasions, the directional prefix of a lexical verb is not used in certain context[137]

[137] Lexical verbs are observed to obligatorily take a directional prefix in their imperative mood, in perfective, perfect and repetitive aspects (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3 & §9. 3. 11). In addition, existential verbs and modal verbs never take a

(see Table 10. 3)

Original Form		Negative Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
dzo	'EXT'	*mɑ-dzo*	'NEG-EXT'
dʐɑ	'EXT'	*mɑ-dʐɑ*	'NEG-EXT'
to	'MOD:can'	*mɑ-to*	'NEG-MOD:cannot'
xo	'MOD:need'	*mɑ-xo*	'NEG-MOD:need not'
dɑ-kɑ	'MOD:hit'	*mɑ-kɑ*	'NEG-MOD:not hit'
tʰə-tsu	'MOD:wear'	*mɑ-tsu*	'NEG-MOD:not wear'

Table 10. 3 Sample list of negative forms of verbs not taking a directional prefix

The following examples (10. 7), (10. 8) and (10. 9) respectively illustrate the negative form of an existential verb, a modal verb and a lexical verbal root that does not take a directional prefix used in a clausal context.

(10. 7) *ɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-pa* *dʑì* *mɑ-dzo,*
1sg.SLF=TOP KPFX-father CO NEG-EXT
ɑ-mɑ *dʑì* *mɑ-dzo*
KPFX-father CO NEG-EX
'I do not have father and mother.' Lit: I, father also not have, mother also not have.

(10. 8) *tʰi-xɑ=nɛ̀,* *dzɿ* *dʑì* *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-*
DEM:this-time:now=TOP eat CO away-finish NEG-
pʰa *tsʰɛ* *dʑì* *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-pʰa*
MOD:can drink CO away-finish NEG-MOD:can
'Nowadays, (we have sufficient food that we) cannot finish eating and (we also have sufficient drinks that we) cannot finish drinking.' Lit: Now, eat also cannot finish, drink also cannot finish.

directional prefix. In other situations, they sometimes take a directional prefix, sometimes not. This needs further investigation.

(10. 9) *tʰə* *ɑ-nɛ* *la* *ɑ= và* *mɑ-tɕʰi*

3sg.PRT ITRG-what EMPH:all 1sg.SLF=ACC NEG-give

'S/he gives me nothing.' Lit: S/he what all not give me.

10. 1. 1. 2. 3 [NEG+adjectival root] or [APFX+NEG+adjectival root]

In Ersu, adjectives can also be negated through the marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-'. The negative form of an adjective is similar to that of a verb. The negation of an adjective can be realized through inserting the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-' between the adjectival prefix *yɑ-* 'APFX-' and the adjectival root, or changing the adjectival prefix *yɑ-* 'APFX-' into the negative *mɑ-* 'NEG-'. If an adjective is inherently reduplicated without a prefix, *mɑ-* 'NEG-' directly precedes the adjective. More is discussed in §3. 3. 4. 2. Here just some examples are given in Table 10. 4.

Original Form		**Negative Form**	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
yɑ-ŋɑ	'APFX-strong'	*mɑ-ŋɑ*	'NEG-strong:not strong'
		yɑ-mɑ-ŋɑ	'APFX-NEG- strong:not strong (self-modest)'
yɑ-dzə	'APFX-good'	*mɑ-dzə*	'NEG- good:not good'
		yɑ-mɑ-dzə	'APFX-NEG- good:not good (self-modest)'
yɑ-ntsʰə	'APFX-quick'	*mɑ-ntsʰə*	'NEG-quick:not quick'
		yɑ-mɑ-ntsʰə	'NEG-NEG-quick:not quick (self-modest)'
ʒuʒu	'same'	*mɑ-ʒuʒu*	'not same'

Table 10. 4 Sample list of adjectival negative forms in Ersu

The negative form of an adjective that is used in a clausal context is given in (10. 10).

(10. 10) *ŋuà-wo* *ts^{h}ʅ-wo*

ox-CL:generic, non-sticklike goat-CL:generic, non-sticklike

=tɕ^{h}o *ya-k^{h}ua,* *tʂ^{h}o-wo*

=RLN.COMP:above APFX-big dog-CL:generic, non-sticklike

=nè, *ts^{h}ʅ-wo=pa* *ma-k^{h}ua*

TOP goat-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.COMP:as…as NEG-big

'An ox is bigger than a goat, (while) a dog is not as big as a goat.'

10. 1. 1. 2. 4 [verbal syllable$_1$+ NEG+verbal syllable$_2$]

There are four disyllabic verbs that never take a directional prefix whose negative form is formed through inserting the negative *ma-* 'NEG' between the two syllables. In other words, these four words are negated through inserting the negative *ma-* 'NEG' between the two syllables of the root. In this sense, *ma-* 'NEG' functions as an infix rather than a prefix. The reasons why only these four words are negated in this way are unknown. They are given in Table 10. 5.

Original Form		Negative Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
xasɛ	'know'	*xa<ma>sɛ*	'know<NEG:not know'
dzə̱li	'believe'	*dzə̱<ma>li*	'believe<NEG>:not believe'
baŋo	'allow'	*ba<ma>ŋo*	'MOD:allow<NEG>:not allow'
buatʂə	'want'	*bua<ma>tʂə*	'MOD:want<NEG>:not want'

Table 10. 5 Negative form of four special disyllabic verbs

(10. 11) illustrates the pragmatic use of the negative form of disyllabic verbs that are used in a clausal context.

(10. 11) *t^{h}ə* *yadzə̱-wo* *a* *xa<ma>sɛ*

DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike 1sg.SLF know<NEG>

'I do not know the child.'

10. 1. 1. 2. 5 Negation of SVC, verb + PROS[138] and verb +MOD

If a verb takes a prospective aspect marker *=gə* '=PROS' or takes an auxiliary modal verb (§10. 2), the negative *mɑ-* is added to *=gə* '=PROS' or the modal verb rather than a lexical verb. The negation of an asymmetrical SVC (§8. 8) is realized through adding the negative *mɑ-* to a minor verb rather than to a major verb. This is presented in Table 10.6.

Original Form		Negative Form	
Ex.	**Gloss**	**Ex.**	**Gloss**
verbs taking *=gə*			
ʒʃ=gə	'go=PROS:will go'	*ʒʅ mɑ=gə*	'go NEG=PROS:will not go'
gɑ=gə	'love=PROS:will love'	*gɑ mɑ=gə*	'love NEG=PROS:will not love'
tʰə-ndo=gə	'away-see=PROS:will see'	*tʰə-ndo mɑ=gə*	'away-see NEG=PROS:will not see'
lexical verbs taking a modal verb			
ŋɑ-la pʰa	'outward-come MOD:can <can come'	*ŋɑ-la mɑ-pʰa*	'outward-come NEG-MOD: can<cannot come'
kʰə-npʰi xo	'inward-hide MOD:need<need to hide'	*kʰə-npʰi mɑ-xo*	'inward-hide NEG-MOD:need<need not hide'
kʰə-ʂu do	'inward-marry MOD:can<can marry'	*kʰə-ʂu mɑ-xo*	'inward-marry NEG-MOD:can<cannot marry'
SVC			
dʑo la	'return come:return'	*dʑo mɑ-la*	'return-NEG-com:not return '
tɕi la	'take-come:bring'	*tɕi mɑ-la*	'take-NEG-come:not bring'
tɕi duá	'take-go.PFV:took (away)'	*tɕi mɑ-duá*	'take-NEG-go.PFV: not took(away)'
ʂo yi	'borrow-go.NPFV'	*ʂo mɑ-yi*	'borrow-NEG-go.NPFV:not lend'

Table 10. 6 Negative form of verbs taking *=gə* or a modal verb or an SVC

Examples for the negative form of SVC, a verb taking the prospective aspect marker *=gə* and a modal verb are respectively given in (10. 13), (10. 14) and (10. 15).

[138] It is occasionally observed that when a verb takes a perfect aspect marker *=tsà* '=PFT', the negative form is also realized through the negation of *=tsà* '=PFT' rather than through the negation of the verb. However, this is not found for other aspects. The negation of *=tsà* '=PFT' does not occur as frequent as that of *=gə* '=PROS'. Whether this, like the negation of *=gə* '=PROS', can be generalized as a grammatical rule or not needs to be studied in the future. Here, an example is given:

(10.12) *ndzʅ* *si-pa* *la* *tən-pʰɛnpʰɛ* *pɑ+la* *mɑ=tsà*
buckwheat three-CL:pearl-like CO one -CL:half .RDUP place+come:arrive NEG =PFT
'There are three and half buckwheat seeds that have not yet been found.' Lit: Three and half buckwheat have not yet arrived.

(10. 13) *yadʐə=à,* *nə* *tɕi ma-la* *tʰi*

child=PART.VOC 2sg bring NEG-come DEM:this

tʰə=nɛ̀, *na=và* *dʐɿ=gə*

LINK:if=PAUS 2sg=ACC eat=PROS

'Child, if you do not bring (me your chick), (I) will eat you.' Lit: Child, if you take not come, you eat.

(10. 14) *a=ʂə* *kʰua-pʰo* *la,* *nɛ̀,*

1sg.SLF=RLN.LOC:place toward-speaker-run come PART:pause

yò, *ma-xa,* *na=và* *ka-su*

1sg.OTR NEG-EXT <no problem 2sg=ACC hit-CAUS

ma=gə=tə

NEG=PROS=DES

'No problem. (You) run towards me (and) I will not let (the king) hit you.'

Lit: I place run come. I, no problem, will not let hit you[139].

(10. 15) *tʰə* *latʰa* *də-mi* *ma-do*

3sg.PRT stone grinder upward-catch NEG-MOD:can

'She cannot reach the stone grinder.'

10. 1. 1. 2. 6 [NEG +*dʑì*+ NEG + verbal/adjectival root]

The negative marker *ma-* 'NEG-' may occur twice, forming a structure of [NEG+*dʑì*+NEG+verbal/adjectival root]. In a structure like this, the directional prefix of a lexical verb or the adjectival prefix of an adjective is never used. The structure of [NEG+*dʑì*+NEG+verbal root] functions as an idiom that is like English 'should have done something, but did not'. The structure of [NEG+*dʑì*+NEG+ adjectival root] also functions as an idiom that is like English 'not very'. The two structures are presented in Table 10.7.

[139] This example also well illustrates that the speaker cannot keep consistency in his speaking to strictly differentiate the two pronouns of *a* '1sg.SLF' and *yò* '1sg.OTR' (§4. 4. 1. 4).

Ex.	Gloss
NEG +*dʑì* + NEG +verbal root	
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-tɕʰi	'NEG-CO-NEG:give<should have given, but not'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-lɑ	'NEG-CO-NEG:come<should have come, but not'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-dzɿ	'NEG-CO-NEG:eat<should have eaten, but not'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-xosɛ	'NEG-CO-NEG:speak<should have spoken, but not'
NEG +*dʑì* +NEG +adjectival root	
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-ntɕʰo	'NEG-CO-NEG:beautiful<not very beautiful'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-li	'NEG-CO-NEG:good<not very good'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-dzə	'NEG-CO-NEG:good<not very comfortable'
mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-kʰua	'NEG-CO-NEG:big< not very big'

Table 10. 7 Sample list of double negative in Ersu

Examples for the above two structures are respectively given in (10. 16) and (10. 17).

(10. 16) *mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-xosɛ=nɛ̀,* *"ni* *kʰatʰo*

NEG-CO-NEG-speak=PFV=PAUS 2sg say

xuɑ=yi *tə* *dzo=dʑigə.* *mɑ-zɿ,* *adà* ?"

Bird=DIM one EXT=EVID:reported NEG-COP:general ITRG

=dʑà=nɛ̀

=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(When the king discovered that the bird) should have sung, but did not, (he spoke like this:) "You say that there is a bird. It is not the fact. Right?" Lit: Should have spoken, but not. "You say have a bird. Not be, right?"

(10. 17) *tʰə=zɿ̀* *tʂʰo-wo* *mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-kʰua*

3sg.PRT=GEN:family dog-CL:generic, non-sticklike NEG-CO-NEG-big

=tə

=DES

'His dog is not very big.'

10. 1. 1. 2. 7 [*ɑ* + verbal root + NEG + verbal root]

As discussed in §8. 1. 2. 6, the structure of [*ɑ* + Verbal root + NEG + Verbal root] implies that a speaker holds an indifferent attitude towards an event or an action. Here, another example is given as in (10. 18).

(10. 18) *ɑ* *su+ŋo* *vɛ-wo*

1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow pig-CL:generic, non-sticklike

kɑ=gə, *tʰə* *ɑ-lɑ-mɑ-lɑ*

kill= PROS 3sg.PRT ?-come-NEG-come

'I will kill the pig tomorrow. Whether he comes or not, I do not care.'

10. 1. 2 Imperative

As mentioned in §10. 1, imperative moods can be further divided into imperative (§10. 1. 2. 1), prohibitive (§10. 1. 2. 2) and requestive (§10. 1. 2. 3). All three are used to express demands and orders. When an addresser demands an addressee do something, imperative mood is employed. When an addresser demands an addressee not do something, prohibitive, that is, negative imperative mood is employed. When an addresser demands an addressee do or not do something in a polite, or an intimate, or a friendly, or a persuasive manner of speaking, a special marker *mǎ* is added to imperative or prohibitive mood. Here, I define it as a subtype of imperative moods and name it "requestive mood".

10. 1. 2. 1 Imperative

Imperative mood is used when an addressee is commanded to do something. Consequently, existential verbs, stative verbs and adjectives are not used in imperative mood. Imperative mood is realized through a verb taking a directional prefix (§8. 1. 1. 2. 3). In this sense, a directional prefix is grammaticalized to function as an imperative marker and does not necessarily denote directions. Its subject is always second person(s) that is either not overtly expressed or overtly expressed. If the subject of an imperative mood is not overtly expressed, it indicates that a speaker's

manner of speaking is much stronger, which makes the imperative mood function like an order. If it is overtly expressed, it indicates that a speaker's manner of speaking becomes mild, which makes the imperative mood function not like an order, but rather like a common request or demand. In addition, imperative mood can co-occur with prospective aspect (§9. 2. 8) and imminent aspect (§9. 2. 9) in Ersu. For example:

(10. 19) a. *nə-zɔ̀!*
downward-sit
'Sit down!'

b. *nə* *nə-zɔ̀*
2sg downward-sit
'You sit down.'

(10. 20) a. *kʰɑ-mɑ=tsʰuá!*
inward-sleep=IMMI
'Go to bed immediately!'

b. *nə* *kʰɑ-mɑ=tsʰuá*
2sg inward-sleep=IMMI
'You go to bed immediately.'

Both a. and b. in (10. 19) and (10. 20) are acceptable to the native speakers. However, if a speaker uses a., it implies that s/he strongly urges a listener to do what is said. Consequently, both (10. 19a) and (10. 20a) function as a strong order. However, b. is used to imply that a speaker requests (not orders) a listener to do what is said. From this perspective, both (10. 19b) and (10. 20b) function as a common demand or request. In addition, (10. 20) illustrates the use of the immediate aspect imperative. The meaning is that of a command to be performed immediately.

(10. 21) is an example for the co-occurrence of imperative mood and formally unmarked prospective aspect (§9. 2. 8). It implies that the addressee is commanded to perform an action in a later period of time, that is, 'tomorrow' in this example.

(10. 21) *nə su+ŋo fiɪ=kə=yì ŋuà-bɛ̀*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow village=RLN.LOC:in=GEN ox-QUAT.pl
gu yi
graze go.NPFV
'You go and graze the oxen of the village tomorrow.'

Commands to third persons and first person (plural) are not attested. (10. 22) and (10. 23) below seem to be a command to a third person and a first person (plural) respectively on the surface. However, they in fact function as a request to the second person, asking the second person to allow a third person or a first person (plural) to do something. In this situation, the verb always take a causative suffix *-su* '-CAUS'. For example:

(10. 22) *tʰɑ=và kʰɑ-mɑ-su*
3sg.PRT=ACC inward-sleep-CAUS
'Let him go to sleep.'

(10. 23) *ɑ=và si tsɿ yi-su*
1pl.SLF=ACC wood cut go.NPFV-CAUS
'Let us go to cut firewood.'

10. 1. 2. 2 Prohibitive

Prohibitive mood is used in the situation when a listener is commanded not to do something. In comparison with negative and imperative form, prohibitive form is much simpler. It is realized through inserting the prohibitive marker *tʰɑ-* 'PHTV-' between a directional prefix and a verbal root. Since in imperative form, the

co-occurrence of directional prefix and verbal root is obligatory, the prohibitive *tʰɑ-* is observed to be always inserted between a directional prefix and a verbal root, forming a structure of [DIR+PHTV+V]. This is also one of the seldom attested co-occurrences of prefixes in Ersu (§8. 1). Prohibitive mood is presented in Table 10. 8.

Ex.	Gloss
ŋɑ-tʰɑ-dzŋ	'outward-PHTV-eat:Do/Must not eat!'
dɑ-tʰɑ-la	'upward-PHTV-cry:Do/Must not cry!'
dɑ-tʰɑ-kʰatʰo	'upward-PHTV- speak:Do/Must not speak!'
nɑ-tʰɑ-la	'downward-PHTV-come:Do/Must not come (downward)!'
dɑ-tʰɑ-ndʑindʑi	'upward-PHTV-fight.RDUP:Do/Must not fight (with each other)!'
kʰɑ-tʰɑ-ma	'inward-PHTV-sleep:Do/Must not sleep!'
kʰɑ-tʰɑ-ɔʲlia	'inward-PHTV-touch:Do/Must not touch!'

Table 10. 8 Sample list of prohibitive form in Ersu

(10. 24) and (10. 25) are examples for prohibitive form used in a clausal context.

(10. 24) *nɔ=nɛ̀,* *yò=yì* *ʂŋ̀=nɛ̀ ,* *ŋɑ-tʰɑ-dzŋ*
2sg=TOP 1sg.OTR=GEN flesh=TOP outward-PHTV-eat
'You must not eat my flesh.'

(10. 25) *sɛ̀-wo* *ya-bu* *ŋɑ-tʰɑ-yi*
breath-CL:generic, non-sticklike APFX-big outward-PHTV-go.NPFV
-su
-CAUS
'(You) must not breathe heavily.' Lit: Do not let breath go out big.

Prohibitive mood is not used for other aspects. However, it can be used for a clause with prospective aspect as shown in (10. 26) and (10. 27) below, respectively.

(10. 26) *k^hɑ-t^hɑ-mɑ=ts^huá!

inward-PHTV-sleep=IMMI

'Do not sleep immediately!'

(10. 27) nə^V si-wo su+ɲo si

2sg three-CL:generic, non-sticklike ?next+day:tomorrow wood

t^hɑ-t^hɑ-luɑ=gə

away-PHTV-cut=PROS

'You three must not cut wood tomorrow.'

10. 1. 2. 3 Requestive

In Ersu, a speaker often uses a clause-final marker *mǎ* to make imperative mood and prohibitive mood sound either more polite, or more intimate, or more friendly, or more persuasive. This is especially used by an elder to a younger, or a person with a higher social status to a person with a comparatively lower one when s/he hopes a listener to perform what is said. For example:

(10. 28) nə t^hi tʂaŋɑ=nɛ̀ , dɑ-t^hɑ-ʒu=à=mǎ

2sg DEM: this later=TOP upward-PHTV-feed=PAUS=RQT

'From now on, you must not keep (dogs).'

(10. 28) shows that *mǎ* is used in a prohibitive context. The example is extracted from the traditional folktale about the rabbit and the orphan. The rabbit is in fact a god with the image of an old gentleman. (10. 28) is a quoted speech of what the rabbit said to the orphan. He asked the orphan, his adopted son in the story, not to feed dogs because dogs always chased him, a rabbit and he could not visit the orphan's family.

(10. 29) below shows that *mǎ* is used in an imperative context. The example is extracted from the folktale about the adventure of two sisters. It is a quoted speech from the two girls' father. He gave each of the two girls one ball of thread and one

horse. He requested them to go to the top of a mountain and throw off the ball of thread and just let it roll down . He also asked them to go and live in the place where the ball of thread stopped rolling. (10. 29) is what he said to his two girls.

(10. 29) *nə=dzi* *nə-wo=nɛ̀*, *zà*
2sg=dl two-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP go
tʰə=kə, *zì=mǎ*
DEM:this =RLN.LOC:in<here go:NPFV=RQT
'You two, go here, go.'[140]

10. 1. 3 Interrogative

Ersu has three subtypes of interrogative clauses, that is, polar question (§10. 1. 3. 1), tag question (§10. 1. 3. 2) and content question (§10. 1. 3. 3). Interrogatives are marked with *ɑ-* or content interrogative words and the clause-final enclitics *=ɛ̀/=dà/=dò* . However, the three clause-final enclitics have some semantic differences (§10. 1. 3. 4). Interrogative mood is prototypically used for the situation when a speaker seeks information from others. However, tag questions are also used for the context when a speaker "highlights" her/his certainty or hesitation of the content of her/his speech rather than for seeking answers from others.

10. 1. 3. 1 Polar question

Polar questions are marked with the clitic *ɑ=* and a clause-final enclitic *=ɛ̀*[141] . The slot that *ɑ=* occupies in a verbal phrase or adjectival phrase is rather complicated.

[140] In Ersu, a canonical syntactic constituent is AOV/SV. That is, a verb always occupies a clause-final position. However, *zà* 'go' does not abide by this principle. It always follows the topic of a clause and precedes the destination of *zà* 'go', forming a structure like SVE (E stands for the extension of the S core argument) though it can be translated into 'go' in English. It also functions to mean 'go to do something', but which word class it belongs to is unknown. For example:

(10. 30) *nə* *zà* *la* *ma* *ta* *nɑ-ka* *tɕi* *la*
2sg go chicken feather one two-CL:generic, sticklike take come
'You go to bring some chicken feather (for us).' Lit: You go take come one two chicken feather.

[141] As is discussed in §2. 5. 3, vowel fusion is applicable to the co-occurrence of *=ɑ=* or *=ɛ̀* and other vowels such as /ɑ/ and /ə/. However, in this section, the examples given are documented in isolation in order to have a clearer presentation of the interrogative clitics. For example: the pronunciation in discourse of *xɑ=ɑ=sɛ=ɛ̀* ? 'know=ITRG=know=ITRG' should be *xɑ=sɛ̀* ? 'know.ITRG=know.ITRG'.

This is presented in §10. 1. 3. 1. 1. §10. 1. 3. 1. 2 presents the different discourse strategies to answer a polar question.

10. 1. 3. 1. 1 The slot that =*ɑ*= may occupy in a clause

The negative *mɑ-* can be inserted between a directional prefix and a verbal root, can precede a verb without taking a directional prefix and can be inserted between a disyllabic verb root. When a lexical verb takes the prospective =*gə* or a modal auxiliary verb, the prospective and the modal are negated rather than the lexical verb itself (§10. 1. 1. 2). The uses of the interrogative =*ɑ*= are quite similar to the negative *mɑ-*. In other words, the distribution of the two markers is conditioned by lexis and morphosyntactic factors. This is shown as follows:

1) It could be inserted between a prefix and a verbal root, as in (10. 31).

(10. 31) *nə* *t^hə-bɛ̀* *la* *dɑ=ɑ=k^hɑt^ho=ɑ̀?*
2sg DEM:this-QUAT.pl EMPH:all upward=ITRG=say=PAUS
'Did you say all these (things)?'

2) It could precede its host that could be either a verb root or an adjectival root, as shown in (10. 32) and (10. 33).

(10. 32) *ni* *də* *vɛ* *ɑ=dzo=è?*
2sg family pig ITRG=EXT=ITRG
'Does your family have pigs?'

When it is used to raise a question relevant to an adjective, the adjectival prefix *yɑ-* or *də-* should be changed into *ɑ=*, forming a structure of [*ɑ*+adjectival root]. (10. 33) is an example for this. In (10. 33), the prefix *yɑ-* 'APFX-' of the adjective *yɑ-nts^{h}u* 'APFX-good' is not used in a polar interrogative clause.

(10. 33) *ndzondzɿ* *tə-sɿ̀* *a=ntsʰu=ɛ̀* ?

written word one-CL:bit ITRG=good=ITRG

'Is (your daughter's) school record a bit good?' Lit: written word a bit good?

3) It could be inserted between the two syllables of the four disyllabic verbs that never take a directional prefix (see Table 10. 5).

(10. 34) *su* *tʰə-wo* *nə*

person DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2sg

xa<a>sɛ=ɛ̀ ?

know<ITRG> =ITRG

'Do you know this person?'

4) When a verb takes the prospective =*gə* or a modal auxiliary verb, it precedes the prospective marker or the modal. Examples are respectively given in (10. 35) and (10. 36).

(10. 35) *nə* *zà* *tʰa=và* *koyi* *a=gə=ɛ̀* ?

2sg go 3sg. PRT=ACC call ITRG=PROS=ITRG

'Will you go to call for him?'

(10. 36) *nə* *ȵi-də* *a=ndzo=ɛ̀* ?

2sg downward-weave ITRG=MOD:know how to=ITRG

'Do you know how to weave?'

10. 1. 3. 1. 2 Answering a polar question

The use of a polar question implies that the addresser expects a 'Yes/No' answer. In response to it, an addressee is observed to employ the copula *zɿ* 'COP:general'. S/he might use *zɿ=tə/=dǒ* 'COP:general=DES/AFFM' to mean 'Yes' and

mɑ-zɿ=tə/=dǒ 'NEG-COP:general=DES/AFFM' to mean 'No', which is also used as the answer to a tag question in conversations (§8. 3. 1). Besides this, the following two ways are also seen as common reactions to a polar question.

1) An addressee might use a syllabic nasal particle *m̩* or a monosyllabic particle *ɛ́* to answer a polar question which means that s/he agrees with an addresser. Or, s/he can repeat the formally marked verbal or adjectival predicate as a positive answer to a polar question. For example:

(10. 37) A: *nə tə-sɔ̀* *ŋɑ=ɑ=bɑ=ɛ̀*?
2sg one-VCL:bit outward=ITRG=be tired=ITRG
'Are you a bit tired?'
B: *ŋɑ-bɑ/m̩/ɛ́*
outward-be tired/PART:positive answer to a polar question/PART:
positive answer to a polar question
'Yes.'

(10. 37) shows that B can answer A either through the verbal predicate *ŋɑ-bɑ* 'outward-be tired' or through either of the two particles *m̩* and *ɛ́*. It is observed that the choice of *m̩* and *ɛ́* is dependent on a speaker's style and either of them may imply that B does not want to speak anything more in this context. However, the answer *ŋɑ-bɑ* 'outward-be tired' does not have this implication.

2) An addressee might use the prospective aspect marker *=gə* '=PROS'or a modal auxiliary verb in response to a polar question that is discussed in the item **4)** of §10. 1. 3. 1. 1. If the answer is 'Yes', just *=gə* '=PROS' or a modal auxiliary verb is used. If the answer is 'No', *=gə* or the modal auxiliary verb must be marked with the negative marker *mɑ-* 'NEG-'. Examples are respectively given in (10. 38) and (10. 39).

(10. 38) A: *nə* *su+ŋo* *ŋgamɛ* *ta* *ts^{h}a*

2sg ?next+day:tomorrow clothes one CL:paper-like

k^{h}ə-zɿ *ɑ=gə=è* ?

inward-buy ITRG=PROS=ITRG

'Are you going to buy a coat tomorrow?'

B: '*gə/mɑ-gə* '

PROS/NEG-PROS

'Yes/No.' Lit: Will/ Not will.

(10. 39) – "*ŋa* *nə-wo* *à,* *ŋa*

child two-CL:generic, non-sticklike PART: showing intimacy child

nə-wo *à,* *nə=dzi*

two-CL:generic non-sticklike PART:showing intimacy 2sg=dl

ŋi-də *ɑ=ndzo=è* ?"

downward-weave ITRG=MOD:know how to=ITRG

'"(You) two children, (you) two children, do you two know how to weave (cloth)?"'

– *zikɑ-mɑ=nɛ̀,* "*yò =nɛ̀,*

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=TOP 1sg.OTR=TOP

ndzo."=*t^{h}ə-ɑ-dʑà*

MOD:know how to=DEM:this-?-EVID:quotative

'Zziigama answered like this: "Yes, I know."

– *zi ntʂ^{h}ə-mɑ=nɛ̀,* "*yò =nɛ̀,* *mɑ-*

PN?-SFX.FEM:female name=TOP 1sg.OTR=TOP NEG-

ndzo."=*t^{h}ə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌* .

MOD:know how to=DEM:this-?-EVID:quotative

'Zziinchema answered like this: "No, I do not know."'

10. 1. 3. 2 Tag question

A question tag follows a declarative statement directly but with a pause in

speaking. The most common seen tag interrogative is formed through the copula *ʐɿ* and the polar interrogative markers *ɑ=* and *=ɛ̀* or the negative marker *mɑ-* and a clause-final particle *=ɑ*, that is, *ɑ=ʐɿ=ɛ̀* and *mɑ-ʐɿ=ɑ* with the meaning of 'Isn't it?' or 'Right?'. The two can be used interchangeably in context. It should be noted that a tag question is not a prototypical interrogative in a narrative because a speaker does not really expect an answer from the listener. They denote either the speaker's hesitation or her/his focus on a topic in speaking. More about tag interrogative formed through the copula is given in §8. 3. 1. In this section, another form of tag interrogative clause is presented.

Besides *ɑ=ʐɿ=ɛ̀* and *mɑ-ʐɿ=ɑ*, *ɑdà* is another form of interrogative tag in Ersu. This is especially used in the situation when the speaker knows some fact that is inconsistent with what the listener has previously described or promised. The speaker does not really expect an answer from the listener, but urges her/him to confirm her/his previous description or not to break her/his previous promises. Consequently, this tag form is more rhetorical than interrogative. For example:

(10. 40) "*ni* *ŋgɑmɛ* *tsʰu tɑ* *tsʰɑ=nɛ̀*, *tɕiyi* *ndəndə*
2sg.GEN clothes such one CL:paper-like=TOP always really.RDUP
yɑ-kʰuɑ=tə."*=dʐ̩à*, *ɑdà*?
APFX-big=DES=EVID:quotative ITRG
'People say: "Your clothes are always really great." Are you sure?'

10. 1. 3. 3 Content question

A content question is used when the addresser expects some particular information provided by the addressee. This is realized through interrogative pronouns (§4. 4. 4) and the clause-final *=ɛ̀*. In Ersu, there is no fixed position in a clause for a content interrogative. The Ersu interrogative pronouns are listed in Table 4. 30 of §4. 4. 4. For the conveniences of reading, it is presented as below again.

Term	Gloss
sɛ	'who/which'
ɑ-nɛ	'what'
ɑ-ndʑi	'how/why'
ɑ-mua	'why'
ŋ̩axa	'when'
k^ha	'where/who/which'
ts^ho	'how many/much'

Table 4. 30 Ersu interrogative pronouns

Examples are given below to show how these interrogative pronouns are used in the context of content questions.

10. 1. 3. 3. 1 Examples of *sɛ* 'who'

(10. 41) a. *ɑ=zɿ̀ ɑ-pa mi=su, sɛ*

1sg=GEN:family KPFX-father swallow=NOM ITRG:who

tə-wo=è?

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ITRG

'Who (is) the person (that) has swallowed my father?' Lit: I family father swallow person, who one?

b. *su ŋ̩òkuà zù ngongo=gə na-duá.* ¶

person all fish pick up.RDUP=PROG downward-go.PFV.

sɛ tə-wo nə^{l}=và

ITRG: who one-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2pl=ACC

ʐu+ŋu=gə=è?

lie+do:joke=PROS=ITRG

'All people went downhill to pick up fish. Who will tell you jokes?' Lit: All people will pick up fish, went downward. Who one will do jokes to you?

The differences between (10. 41a) and (10. 41b) above lie in that (10. 41a) is a

common question asking for some information, while (10. 41b) is a rhetorical question, which indicates that the speaker refuses to tell jokes to those people who required him to do so in the traditional story. The difference can only be figured out through discourse context rather than morphosyntactic features.

10. 1. 3. 3. 2 Examples of *ɑ-nɛ* 'ITRG-what'

(10. 42) a. *nə ɑ-nɛ ŋu=è*?
2sg ITRG-what do=ITRG
'What are you doing?' Lit: You what do?

b. *tʰə-ntsʰu=nè, ɑ-nɛ mito*
DEM:this-CL:flower=TOP ITRG-what flower
tə-ntsʰu=dà?
one -CL:flower=ITRG
'Which kind of flower is this?' Lit: This flower, what flower one flower?

c. *nə ɑ-nɛ su tə-wo=è?*
2sg ITRG-what person one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ITRG
'Which kind of a person are you?' Lit: You what person one?

Note that (10. 42a) is a general question, which implies that the speaker may know nothing about the referent. However, (10. 42b) indicates that when *ɑ-nɛ* 'ITRG-what' is followed by a noun or a unit of [one+classifier], this means that the speaker may know something about the referent, that is, 'the flower', and he/she wants to get some more detailed information, 'the kind'. In this situation, the clausal final interrogative marker *=è* '=ITRG' is often replaced by another interrogative marker *=dà* '=ITRG' for a stronger meaning (§10. 1. 3. 4). In addition, *ɑ-nɛ* 'ITRG-what' plus a noun or a unit of [one+classifier] can also serve as a rhetorical question, which might indicate that the speaker is not satisfied with someone or something, as shown in (10. 42c) above. (10. 42c) is in fact not a question. It is used to scold someone who may have

some sort of behavior that has dissatisfied the speaker.

10. 1. 3. 3. 3 Examples of *ɑ-ndʑi* 'ITRG-how'

(10. 43) *nə ɑ-ndʑi t^hə nbi=$tɕ^h$o dɑ-pɑ*

2sg ITRG-how DEM:this mountain=RLN.LOC:on upward-place:arrive

=tə=dà?

=DES=ITRG

'How did you arrive (at) the top of the mountain?'

Note that *ɑ-ndʑi* 'ITRG-how', quite frequently precedes the prospective aspect marker *=gə* in a direct way. That is, *ɑ-ndʑi =gə=è* is accepted in Ersu. It means 'What should/could I do?' in English. For example:

(10. 44) *ɑ-pu la yo=dzi np^hi tsitsi*

KPFX-grandfather CO 1sg.OTR=QUAT.dl hide compete.RDUP

=gə=dʑigə.¶ ɑ-ndʑi=gə=è ?

= PROS=subsequently ITRG-how=PROS=ITRG

'Father-in-law and I will play hide-and-seek. What should I do?' Lit: Grandfather and I will compete hide. How?

When the addresser is dissatisfied with the addressee's behavior, the 2sg pronoun is then added before *ɑ-ndʑi =gə=è*. This means "How could you do like this?" and is often heard in daily conversation, as in (10. 45).

(10. 45) *nə vɛ la tʂa la mɑ-p^hɑ.¶ nə ɑ-ndʑi*

2sg pig EMPH: all seek come NEG-MOD:can 2sg ITRG-how

=gə=è ?

=PROS=ITRG

'You cannot retrieve the pigs. How could you do like this?' Lit: You cannot seek for pigs come. You how?

10. 1. 3. 3. 4 Examples of *ɑ-ndʑi* 'ITRG-why' and *ɑ-mua* 'ITRG-why'

(10. 46) a. *nə ɑ-ndʑi ɑ=zɿ̀ yi-ka*
2sg ITRG-how 1sg.SLF=GEN:family house-CL:generic, sicklike
=tɕʰo əˈ+kʰua tsə=ɛ̀?
=RLN.LOC:on stone+big:stone throw=ITRG
'Why did/How could you throw stones onto the roof of my house?'

b. *nə ɑ-mua ɑ=zɿ̀ yi-ka*
2sg ITRG-why 1sg.SLF=GEN:family house-CL:generic, sicklike
=tɕʰo əˈ+kʰua tsə=ɛ̀?
=RLN.LOC:on stone+big:stone throw=ITRG
'Why did you throw stones onto the roof of my house?'

(10. 46a) and (10. 46b) illustrate that *ɑ-ndʑi* 'ITRG-why' and *ɑ-mua* 'ITRG-why' can be interchangeably used in context. However, they show some semantic differences. *ɑ-ndʑi* is more semantically like 'How could…'. It implies that a speaker not only asks for reasons but also scolds that a referent who has conducted some actions. *ɑ-mua* 'ITRG-why' only denotes a question concerning the reasons for something that has happened.

10. 1. 3. 3. 5 Example of *ȵɑxɑ* 'when/what time'

(10. 47) *nəˈ ȵɑxɑ vakə zɿ̀=gə=ɛ̀?*
2pl ITRG:when PN:county seat name go.NPFV=PROS=ITRG
'When will you go to Yuexi?'

10. 1. 3. 3. 6 Example of *kʰɑ* 'where'

(10. 48) *nə kʰɑ zɿ̀=gə=ɛ̀?*
2pl ITRG:where go.NPFV=FT=ITRG
'Where will you go?'

(10. 48) is in fact a greeting while people meet across each other, functioning a bit like 'How are you?' in English. When *kʰa* 'where' is followed by the unit of [one+classifier], it may refer to a human referent or a non-human referent, as discussed in §4. 4. 4. 2.

10. 1. 3. 3. 7 Examples of *tsʰo* 'how much/many'

(10. 49) a. *pu=kaka-bɛ̀* *tə*
potato=NCL:roundish and no larger than a fist=QUAT.pl one
tʂə *tsʰo-mi=ɛ̀*?
CL:half-kilo ITRG:how much-CL:little=ITRG
'How much are (these) potatoes per half-kilo?'

b. *nə vu* *tsʰo* *tʂa* *tsʰɛ* *to=tə*
2sg alcohol ITRG:how many MC.CL:glass drink MOD:can=DES
=ɛ̀?
=ITRG
'How many glasses of alcohol can you drink?'

(10. 49a) and (10. 49b) indicate that *tsʰo* 'how much/many' does not have a number distinction. The reference of number is denoted by the noun or classifier that follows it.

10. 1. 3. 4 Clause-final interrogative markers: *=ɛ̀/=dà/ =dò*

There are three clause-final interrogative markers in Ersu. They are: *=ɛ̀* , *=dà* and *=dò*. Each of them can function to denote interrogative mood together with *=a=* or a content interrogative word. Among them, *=ɛ̀* is the most frequently seen marker in questions. *=dà* and *=dò* do not occur often either in narratives or in daily conversation. *=ɛ̀* and *=dà* can be used in an interchangeable way on the surface. However, a more careful investigation into the data indicates that the three have some slight differences in semantics. This is summarized in Table 10. 9.

Marker	Semantics
=*è*	common Interrogative mood and most frequently used
=*dà*	stronger Interrogative mood and not very frequently used
=*dò*	used for joking while at the same time, expecting an affirmative answer

Table 10. 9 Semantic differences between =*è* /=*dà*/ =*dò*

Examples are given in (10. 50) below:

(10. 50) a. *nə* t^h*ɑ=và* *ɑ=gɑ=tə=è* ?
2sg 3sg.PRT=ACC ITRG=love=DES=ITRG
'Do you love her/him?'

b. *nə* t^h*ɑ=và* *ɑ=gɑ=tə=dà* ?
2sg 3sg.PRT=ACC ITRG=love=DES=ITRG
'You love her/him?!'

c. *nə* t^h*ɑ=và* *ɑ=gɑ=tə=dò* ?
2sg 3sg.PRT=ACC ITRG=love=DES=ITRG
'You love her/him, right?'

The above (10. 50a), (10. 50b) and (10. 50c) are all obtained through elicitation based on similar questions that occur in the narratives reported in a natural way. It is interesting that when my language consultants heard the above three questions, their first reaction is that only (10. 50a) is "correct". However, when I let them listen to the recordings of narratives, they began to admit that the three questions are all acceptable. Finally, they agree that (10. 50a) is a quite common and a normal way for a speaker to raise a question; (10. 50b) is used for the situation when the addresser is surprised at the information s/he has got and expects verification from an addressee with much curiosity; (10. 50c) is used on a joking occasion. For example, when the addressee is found to have some sort of quite intimate relationship with someone else but in fact, they do not necessarily fall in love with each other.

10. 1. 3. 5 Interrogative intonation

Ersu clause intonation seems to be closely associated with the clause-final syllabic tone, as discussed in §2. 5. 8. Whether moods have a significant impact on intonation or not needs further study, especially through the audio measurement software such as PRAAT.

10. 2 Modality

Modality in Ersu is expressed through modal auxiliary verbs that follow a head verb, forming a structure of [Vh+MOD]. Ersu modals can be subdivided into two major types: deontic and dynamic, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Obligative modals *ɳa-pa* 'must' and *xo* 'ought to/need', and permissive modal *baɳo*, 'allow' mark the deontic modality. Dynamic modality is expressed by abilitive modals *pʰa* 'can', *to* 'can' and *ndzo* 'know how to', volitive modals *xo* 'want (to)' and *li*, 'willing to', desiderative modal *buatʂə* 'want to' and venturative modal *ɳo* 'dare'. They are given in Table 10. 10.

Major Type	Modal	Term	Gloss	Reference
deontic (§10. 2. 1)	obligative	*ɳa-pa*	'must'	§ 10. 2. 1. 1
		xo	'ought to/need'	§ 10. 2. 1. 2
	permissive	*baɳo*	'allow'	§ 10. 2. 1. 3
dynamic (§10. 2. 2)	abilitive	*pʰa*	'can'	§ 10. 2. 2. 1
		to	'can'	
		ndzo	'can'	§ 10. 2. 2. 2
	volitive	*xo*	'want (to)'	§ 10. 2. 2. 3
		li	'willing to'	§ 10. 2. 2. 4
	desiderative	*buatʂə*	'want to'	§ 10. 2. 2. 5
	venturative	*ɳo*	'dare'	§ 10. 2. 2. 6

Table 10. 10 List of modal verbs denoting modality[142]

10. 2. 1 Deontic modality

10. 2. 1. 1 Obligative *ɳa-pa* 'downward-place:must'

The obligative modal *ɳa-pa* 'Mod:must' is being grammaticalized from the

[142] Modal verbs can also function as complement taking predicates (CTP). The complements that they take are discussed in §12. 3. 3. 7.

lexical verb ‘arrive’ that can be literally glossed as ‘downward-place:arrive’ in which *pà* ‘space surrounding a specific referent (except for a human being)’ is originally a relator noun that is verbalized and take a directional prefix here (§4. 6. 2. 1 &. §8. 1. 1 & Example (10. 43) above). It is an on-going process of grammaticalization because the meaning of components is transparent. Moreover, the meaning of the whole can be inferred from the components. When it is used as a modal auxiliary verb with the meaning of ‘must’, the head verb that it follows obligatorily takes a locative/instrumental nominalizer *=ta* (§4. 2. 3. 2). A structure of [Vh=*ta* +*nɑ-pɑ*] is thus formed with the meaning of ‘must do something’. Meanwhile, *=ta* in the structure does not denote a location or an instrument. *=ta* has been grammaticalized from the nominalizer to function as a complementizer (§12. 3. 3. 7) and co-occur with *nɑ-pɑ* to express obligative modality. This grammaticalizaion path is quite particular and not mentioned in Heine & Kuteva (2002). The lexical verbal *nɑ-pɑ* ‘downward-arrive’ and the modal verb *nɑ-pɑ* ‘MOD:must’ is respectively given in (10. 51) and (10. 52) for comparison.

(10.51) *ɑ* *ɑ-tʰə=kə* *nɑ-pɑ*
1sg.SLF distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there downward-place:arrive
mɑ-pʰɑ
NEG-MOD:can
‘I cannot arrive here.’

(10.52) *nə* *ndzondzi* *so=ta* *nɑ-pɑ*
2sg written word learn=NOM downward-place<MOD:must
‘You must receive school education.’ Lit: You arrive written word place.

Two more examples for the obligative *nɑ-pɑ* ‘MOD:must’ are given in (10. 53) and (10. 54).

(10. 53) *nə dzolo tə-bi dzɿ=ta nɑ-pa*

2sg more one-CL:mouth eat=NOM:place downward-place<MOD:must

'You must eat a bit more.' Lit: You arrive one more mouth eat place.

(10. 54) *ɑ t^hɑ=và kɑ=ta nɑ-mɑ-pa*

1sg.SLF 3sg.PRT=ACC hit=NOM downward-NEG-place<must not

=tə

=DES

'I should not have hit him.' Lit: I not arrive hit him place.

10. 2. 1. 2 Obligative *xo* 'ought to/need'

Unlike English, Ersu does not distinguish between 'ought to' and 'need'. Both are expressed through the modal auxiliary verb *xo*. Its exact meaning is determined by the discourse context. In comparison with *nɑ-pa* 'MOD:must' that mainly functions as a demand or a command or an instruction, although *xo* 'ought to/need' also marks obligation, its illocutionary force is not as strong as that of *nɑ-pa* 'MOD:must', pragmatically. When *xo* means 'ought to', it is used to express a request or a suggestion rather than a demand or a command. When it means 'need', it denotes the necessity to perform an action. For example:

(10. 55) *$tɕ^h$ɑ-pɑ+$tɕ^h$ɑ-mɑ*

3sg.PRT.GEN-father +3sg.PRT.GEN-mother:his/her parents

-wo=nɛ̀, yadzɻə=và yatʂɿ xo

-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP child=ACC care for MOD:ought to

'A child's parents ought to care for their children.'

(10. 56) *nə zɑ-mɑ dzɿ yi xo*

2sg food-SFX.FEM eat go.NPFV MOD:need

'You need to go and eat food.'

The negative form of *xo* 'need', that is *mɑ-xo* 'do not need' is frequently used in daily conversation with the meaning similar to English 'No, thanks'. It is especially used in the situation when someone invites the speaker to have some food or drink. If the speaker has already had some food or drink and is invited to have some more, *xo* must take a perfective marker *=á*, functioning as a response to the invitation. *mɑ-xo=á* is always pronounced as *mɑ-xuá* due to syllable contraction (§2. 5. 5). In discourse, both *mɑ-xo* and *mɑ-xuá* are repeated once and again depending on either the speaker's speech style or the degree of his/her willing to reject the invitation. The more times a speaker repeats *mɑ-xo* or *mɑ-xuá*, the stronger his/her willing will be. For example:

(10. 57) A: *vu* *tə-ndzu* *ŋɑ=ɑ=ts^hɛ=è ?*
wine one-CL:mouth outward=ITRG=drink=ITRG
'Would you like some wine?' Lit: drink a mouth of wine?
B: *mɑ-xo*
NEG-MOD:need
'No, thanks.' Lit: Not need.

(10. 58) A: *vu* *tə-ndzu* *ŋɑ=ɑ=ts^hɛ=è=sɛ̀?*
wine one-CL: mouth outward=ITRG=drink=ITRG=CONT
'Would you like some more wine?' Lt: Drink a mouth of wine continuously?
B: *mɑ-xuá*
NEG-MOD.PFV:need
'No, thanks.' Lit: Not need.

10. 2. 1. 3 Permissive *bɑŋo* 'allow'

bɑŋo 'allow' is in fact not used either in narratives or in daily conversation. It is obtained through elicitation because only its negative form *bɑ-mɑ-ŋo* is found in speech. For example:

(10. 59) a. *kʰa-ma* *ba-ma-ŋo*!

inward-sleep MOD:allow-NEG –allow<not allow

‘(You are) not allowed to sleep!’

*b. *kʰa-ma* *baŋo*

nward-sleep MOD:allow

(You are) allowed to sleep’

(10. 60) a. *tʂaŋɑ=nè*, *nə-əˈnba* *ŋu* *ba-ma-ŋo*

later=TOP two-CL:kind do MOD:allow-NEG –allow< not allow

‘Later, (I was) not allowed to do the two kinds of (jobs).’ Lit: Later, two kinds do not allowed.

*b. *tʂaŋɑ=nè*, *nə-əˈnba* *ŋu* *baŋo*

later=TOP two-CL:kind do MOD:allow

‘Later, (I was) allowed to do the two kinds of (jobs).’

In the examples of (10. 59) and (10. 60) above, (10. 59a) is taken from participatory observation and (10. 60a) is extracted from an autobiography. Both (10. 59b) and (10. 60b) are obtained through elicitation, but they are not acceptable to native speakers. There are some more examples supporting the negative form of *baŋo* ‘allow’, but whenever I used its declarative form in the field, my language consultants did not accept it. This proves that for unknown reasons, *baŋo* ‘allow’ can only be used in its negative form.

10. 2. 2 Dynamic modality

10. 2. 2. 1 Abilitives *pʰa* ‘can’ and *to* ‘can’

There are two auxiliaries, that is, *pʰa* and *to* used to denote ability in Ersu, which means ‘can or be able to’. They function to express physical abilities. For example:

(10. 61) *tʰi-xɑ=nɛ̀,* *dzɿ* *dʑì* *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-pʰa*

DEM:this-time:now=TOP eat CO away-finish NEG-MOD:can

tsʰɛ̀ *dʑì* *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-pʰa*

drink CO away-finish NEG-MOD:can

'Nowadays, food cannot be finished and drinks cannot be finished.' Lit: Now, eat also cannot finish, drink also cannot finish.

(10. 62) *xi-mɑ* *ŋaŋa* *tə,* *ɲi*

?-SFX.FEM:male's opposite gender sibling humble one gold

gɑ+nbu *ŋua* *gɑ+nbu* *bzɿ* *mɑ-to*

door+threshold silver door+threshold step over NEG-MOD:can

'(Your) sister is a humble person, (and I) cannot step over (your) gold threshold or (your) silver threshold.'

The difference between *pʰa* and *to* is very subtle. They may have different overtones to a speaker. *pʰa* may express "relative" ability while *to* may denote "absolute" ability. For example, the negative form of *pʰa* may imply that although somebody 'cannot do something', s/he finally 'can do it' if much more effort is made. In contrast, the negative form of *to* may imply that somebody 'can never do something' no matter how hard s/he tries. For example:

(10. 63) a. *tʰə* *yadzə* *ndzondzɿ* *kʰə-lo* *ya-li*

DEM:this child written words inward-write APFX-good

mɑ-pʰa

NEG-MOD:can

'The child cannot write well.'

b. *tʰə* *yadzə* *ndzondzɿ* *kʰə-lo* *mɑ-to*

DEM:this child written words inward-write NEG-MOD:can

'The child cannot write.'

(10. 63a) means that the speaker thinks that the child could write better if s/he works much harder. S/he cannot write well maybe due to her/his attitude. However, (10. 62b) is used in the situation when the child is physically disabled or never received education. S/he cannot write well even if s/he tries her/his best.

Due to the subtle difference between *pʰa* and *to*, it is observed that the two can be used interchangeably. For example:

(10. 64) *si kala lo=kə na-ʐa dʑì*
tree branch ditch=RLN.LOC:in downward-collect CO
da-ba ma-pʰa
upward-be full NEG-MOD:can
'(He) cannot collect tree branches (and make) the ditch full.'

(10. 65) *si-bɛ̀ na-ʐa na-ʐa da-ba*
tree=QUAT.pl downward-collect downward-collect upward-be full
ma-to
NEG-MOD:can
'(He) cannot collect trees (and make the pitch) full.'

(10. 64) and (10. 65) share the similar meaning though they are extracted from different narratives told by the same speaker. The two examples show that *pʰa* and *to* can be used in the same context.

10. 2. 2. 2 Abilitive *ndzo* 'can'

ndzo 'can' is used to mark learned ability. A more precise translation could be 'know how to do something' in English. Ersu distinguishes between physical ability and learned ability in a quite clear way. *ndzo* and *pʰa* or *do* can never be used in an interchangeable way. For example:

(10. 66) *yò=và* *də-tsʰɯ=á* *nɛ̀,* *yò* *ga.*¶

1sg. SLF=ACC upward-take out=PFV then 1sg.OTR sing

yò *ga* *ndzo=tə*

1sg.SLF sing MOD:can/know how to=DES

'(If you) took me out (from the stone), I would sing (for you). I can/know how to sing.'[143]

10. 2. 2. 3 Volitive *xo* 'want (to)'

The volitive modal auxiliary *xo* 'want (to)' is a homophone of the obligative *xo* 'ought (to)/need'. It expresses a speaker's willingness. If the subject of a clause is the speaker her/himself, it has the meaning of 'planning to do something', as in (10. 67). If the subject is someone else, it functions like a request that expresses that the speaker wants other person(s) to do something, as in (10. 68).

(10. 67) *a* *zɑ-ma* *dzɿ* *xo*

1sg.SLF food-SFX.FEM eat MOD:want to

'I want to eat food.'

(10. 68) *tɕʰɑ-ma* *tʂu* *ku* *ta*

3sg.PRT.GEN-mother bean fried one

-pɑ˥ *kʰɑ-ndza,* *tʰɑ=và*

-CL:a bit of ball-like things inward-fry 3sg.PRT=ACC

də-dzɿ *xo*

upward-eat MOD:want to

'His mother fried a bit of beans (and) wanted him to eat.'

[143] (10. 66) is extracted from a folktale. The "speaker" of (10. 66) is a cat with magic power. He farted so strong that the stone was split in half and his tail was caught by the stone. The cat promised the protagonist of the story to sing a song and make him become rich if he could pull out his tail from the stone. He then asked how a cat could sing a song. The cat answered him by using (10. 66) to say that he knows how to sing a song. This example shows that *ndzo* 'can' is used to express learned ability rather than physical ability as is expressed through *pʰɑ* 'can' and *to* 'can' discussed in §10. 2. 2. 1 above.

Similar to 'want' in English, *xo* 'want (to)' can also act as a lexical transitive verb in Ersu, taking two core arguments: the agent (A) and the object (O). For example:

(10. 69) *nə=nɛ̀,* *sɛ=và* *la* *mɑ-xo,* *yò=và*
2sg=TOP ITRG:who=ACC EMPH:all NEG-want 1sg.OTR=ACC
sì *xo*
only want
'You do not want anyone else at all, just want me.' Lit: You whoever all not want, only want me.[144]

10. 2. 2. 4 Volitive *li* 'willing to'

Compared with the volitive *xo* 'want (to)', *li* 'willing to' is farily simple and just expresses willingness. I hypothesize that it is relevant to the morpheme of *ya-li* 'APFX-good' as discussed in Note 143 below. When it expresses volitive modality, only its negative form is attested in the data, both in narratives (10. 70) and daily conversation (10. 71).

(10. 70) *nɑ:* *koyi* *lɑ=yì,* *nə* *la* *mɑ-li*
2sg.ACC call for come=CSM 2sg come NEG-MOD:willing to
'(They) came and called for you, (but) you were unwilling to come.'

(10. 71) *t^hə* *yadzə* *zɑ-ma* *dzŋ* *mɑ-li*
DEM:this child food-SFX.FEM eat NEG-MOD:willing<not willing
'The child is unwilling to eat.'[145]

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[144] (10. 69) is extracted from the same story as (10. 66). It is a quoted speech from the protagonist's fiancée who was originally a dog. She is teaching the hero how to get their marriage permitted by her father. She told him that she would change back to a dog. In (10. 69), she asked him to tell her father that he wanted nothing else, just the dog when he went to her family. In this example, *xo* 'want (to)' is not used as a modal auxiliary, but a lexical verb that takes 'you' (A) and *sɛ* 'who'/*yò* '1sg.OTR' (O) as core arguments.

[145] The phenomenonof 'good' being grammaticalized to express willingness is attested in Mandarin Chinese. In Mandarin Chinese, the negative form of the reduplicated *hǎo*, that is, *bù-hǎohǎo* can also be used to denote unwillingness and only the negative form can function like this. For example:
(10. 72) *zhè* *háizi* *bù-hǎohǎo* *chī* *fàn*
DEM:this child NEG-good.RDUP eat rice
'The child is unwilling to eat.'

10. 2. 2. 5 Desiderative *buatʂə* 'want to'

buatʂə 'want to' is used to express desires, which is unlike the volitive *xo* 'want (to)' that is used to express a speaker's willingness to do something or the speaker wants others to do something (§10. 2. 2. 4). *buatʂə* 'want to' functions to express a speaker's desire to do something if the subject of a clause is the speaker her/himself, as in (10. 73). If the subject of a clause is not the speaker her/himself, it can function to describe someone else's desire in a declarative form, as in (10. 74), or functions to get information about other person's desire in interrogative form, as in (10. 75).

(10. 73) *ɑ* *tsʰi-xi=nɛ̀,* *nbò* *nə* *nbò*
1sg.SLF ?-year:this year=TOP horse two RPT:horse
də-ʒu *buatʂə*
upward-feed MOD:want to
'This year, I want to feed two horses.'

(10. 74) *tʰə* *yadzʐə* *nbò* *tʂa*
DEM:this child horse search for
bua<mɑ>tʂə
MOD:want to<NEG>:not want to
'The child does not want to search for horses.'

(10. 75) *mɛ̀+tɕò* *dɑ-tsʰɑ* *tʰatsa,* *nə* *zɑ-ma* *dzŋ*
nature+bind:sky upward-be hot too 2sg food-SFX.FEM eat
bua=ɑ=tʂə=ɛ̀ ?
MOD:want to-ITRG-MOD:want to-ITRG
'It is too hot. Do you want to eat?'[146]

[146] In (62), the realization of *bua-ɑ-tʂə-ɛ̀* should be pronounced as *buatʂɛ̀* due to vowel fusion (§2.5.3).

10. 2. 2. 6 Venturative *ɳo* 'dare'

The modal *ɳo* 'dare' is used to denote whether the subject dares to do something by exposing to danger/risk or not. In other words, it expresses the ventures of a subject might confront with. For example:

(10. 76) *tʂaŋa=nɛ̀,* *jiěfàng,* *nua* *tsopa* *la*
later=PART: pause MC: liberate PN: Yi robber come
ma-ɳo
NEG-MOD: dare
'Later, (China was) liberated, the Yi robbers dare not come.'

(10. 77) *nə* *bɛɜ^{l}* *ta-ka* *k^{h}ə-mi*
2sg snake one-CL: generic, sticklike upward-catch
a-ɳo-è ?
ITRG-MOD: dare-ITRG
'Dare you catch a snake?'

10. 3 Correlation between mood, modality and polarity

The data indicate that Ersu modal verbs are often used in the context of negative mood (§10. 1. 2) and interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3). The permissive modal *baɳo* 'allow' and the volitive *li* 'willing to' are only used in a negative context. Modals are also used in a declarative (§10. 1. 1) context, but its frequency is quite low. The negative or interrogative form of a [Vh+MOD] clause is realized through marking on the modal verb rather than the head verb (§10. 1. 1. 2. 2 & §10. 1. 3. 1. 1). A modal verb alone or its negative form can function as an answer to a polar question as is discussed in §10. 1. 3. 1. 2.

Chapter 11 The Expression of Information Source[147]

This chapter discusses the expression of information source in Ersu with a focus on evidentiality. §11. 1 presents Ersu evidential system and its correlation with other grammatical categories. §11. 2 shows evidential strategies. §11. 3 demonstrates epistemic strategies. §11. 4 discusses how demonstratives and directional terms express information source. §11. 5 illustrates parentheticals. Lexical verbs can also be used to encode information source. This is discussed in §11. 6.

11. 1 Evidential System

Evidentiality, a linguistic term for the expression of information source, is a "closed and restricted" grammatical category attested in many languages in the world (Aikhenvald 2004a; forthcoming). Evidential systems have been reported as a salient genetic feature of Tibeto-Burman languages (e.g. Sun 1993; LaPolla 2003; Aikhenvald & LaPolla 2007; etc.). Many languages in this area show multiple evidential markers, for example, Lhasa Tibetan (Delancey 1985, 1986, 1990, 1992), Amdo Tibetan (Sun 1993), Qiang (LaPolla 2003) and especially its Puxi dialect (Huang 2004:195-97), Baima (Chirkova 2008a), Yongning Na (Lidz 2007; 2010:476-500), and many other adjacent languages that are not listed here.

Ersu, as a member of the Tibeto-Burman language family, is not an exception. Evidentials are also found in the language. An overview of Ersu evidential system is given in §11. 1. 1. §11. 1. 2 presents evidentials and their semantic sybtypes, including direct evidence (§11. 1. 2. 1), inference (§11. 1. 2. 2), reported (§11. 1. 2. 3) and quotative (§11. 1. 2. 4). §11. 1. 3 discusses the correlation between evidentials and other grammatical categories, including evidentiality and speech genres (§11. 1. 3. 1), evidentiality and specch act participant vs.non-speech act participant (§11. 1. 3. 2), evidentiality and verbal semantics (§11. 1. 3. 3), evidentiality and aspectual markers (§11. 1. 3. 4). §11. 1. 4 demonstrates the co-occurrence of evidentials.

[147] A concise version of this chapter is in press (Zhang forthcoming).

11. 1. 1 Ersu evidential system: an overview

Evidentials in Ersu exhibit a C_3 evidential system with four choices, that is, direct, inferred, reported and quotative (Aikhenvald 2004a: 51-60). Ersu evidentials occur after aspect/modal morphemes and occupy a clausal- or sentential-final position (see Figure 8. 2). Occasionally, a particle *ɲɛ̀* that functions as a topic, a focus or a pause marker may follow an evidential (§13. 5. 1). Similar to Yongning Na (Lidz 2007), pragmatics also plays an important role in the Ersu evidential system. In a larger discourse context such as a long narrative, an evidential is often ellipsed, depending on the speaker's discourse style especially when an overt evidential has already been used earlier in the narrative. In other words, evidential marking in Ersu may appear to be optional on the surface, but in essence, it is obligatory. If an evidential cannot be understood from the context, a misunderstanding may occur. Suppose a dialogue is taking place between A and B. A is asking B where a person went yesterday. If B did not see this but got the information from someone else, a reported evidential =*dʑɛ̌* can is never omissible, as in (§11. 1). Otherwise, A would take it for granted that B personally saw the event.

(11. 1) A: *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *kʰa* *duá,* *ɲə*

3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday ITRG:where go:PFV 2sg

xa=a=sɛ=ɛ̀?

understand=ITRG=understand=ITRG

'Where did he go yesterday, do you know?'

B: *kuaʂa* *duá=dʑɛ̌*

MC:town go:PFV=EVID:reported

'(He) is said to have gone to the town.'

Evidentials in Ersu have a clausal or sentential scope. Direct evidence of information source is unmarked, while others are marked. Person (speech act participant vs. non-speech act participant), text genres, verbal types, aspectual markers and evidential markers may interact to denote information source. In addition,

Ersu evidential markers may co-occur.

11. 1. 2 Evidentials and their semantics

Direct evidential in Ersu may refer to information acquired by seeing, hearing and any sensory perception (Aikhenvald 2004a: 54), and generic knowledge. This is formally unmarked (§11. 1. 2. 1). Ersu does not distinguish inference and assumption, marking both with *=pà* (§11. 1. 2. 2). Consequently, *=pà* may denote inference based either on "visible or tangible evidence or result" or on "logical reasoning" (Aikhenvald 2004a; forthcoming). Both *=dʑɛ̌* and *=dʑigə* are used "for reported information (§11. 1. 2. 3) with no reference to who it was reported by" (Aikhenvald 2004a; forthcoming). Quotative evidential marking has several variants that include *=dʑɛ̌*, *=dʑigə*, *=dʑà* and some others (§11. 1. 2. 4). They are all used for "reported information with an overt reference to the quoted source" (Aikhenvald 2004a; forthcoming). However, "an overt reference" is often ellipsed in larger discourse context. The marking of different evidentials described above is given in Table 11. 1.

Evidential marking	Semantics	Reference
unmarked	direct	§11. 1. 2. 1
=pà	inference	§11. 1. 2. 2
=dʑɛ̌, *=dʑigə*	reported	§11. 1. 2. 3
=dʑɛ̌, *=dʑigə*, *=dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə*	quotative	§11. 1. 2. 4

Table 11. 1 Ersu evidential markers

11. 1. 2. 1 Direct evidence

According to Aikhenvald (2004a: 73; forthcoming), direct perception tends to be cross-linguistically less marked than other types of evidence. This is generally the case in some Tibeto-Burman languages such as Yongning Na (Lidz 2007). Direct evidence in Ersu is also formally and functionally unmarked. It is the preferred evidential found in nearly all text genres. Both the speaker and the listener in Ersu can intuitively understand that the information that a clause or a sentence without an inferential marker, a reported marker or a quotative marker conveys is based on direct

evidence. That is, they know that the information is either based on the speaker's seeing (11. 2), or hearing (11. 3), or feeling (11. 4), or smelling (11. 5), or generic knowledge (11. 6) as shown below.

(11. 2) *si+pu=tɕʰò* *loəˡ* *tə* *dzo*
wood+CL:living plants<tree=RLN.LOC:on turtle dove one EXT
'There is a turtledove on the tree.'

(11. 3) *tʂʰo* *tə* *əˡ=gə*
dog one bark=PROG
'A dog is barking.'

(11. 4) *ta+ɲo* *mɛ̀+tɕò* *dzolo* *da-tsʰa*
?present-day:today nature+bind:sky over upward-be hot
'It is very hot today.'

(11. 5) *tʰə* *ŋuà+ʂʔ̀-bɛ̀* *tsɛ* *də-xə*
DEM:this ox+meat:beef-QUAT.pl really upward-smell good
'This beef really smells good.'

(11. 6) *aˡ* *əˡsu-bɛ̀* *tə+ɲo+ɲo* *vù+tɕò*
1pl.SLF PN:Ersu-QUAT.pl one+day+day:every day head+bind:turban
də-tsu
upward-wear
'We Ersu people wear a turban every day.'

Examples from (11. 2) to (11. 6) above demonstrate that direct evidence is formally unmarked. Otherwise, one of the following evidential markers, *=pà* (inferential), *=dʑɛ̌* or *=dʑigə* (reported) and quotatives such as *=dʑà* and others should be used. For example, if a speaker gets the information from others, that is,

"hearsay", it is obligatory for her/him to use (11. 7) rather than (11. 2).

(11. 7) *si+pu=tɕʰò* *loəˡ* *tə* *dzo*

wood+CL:living plants<tree=RLN.LOC:on turtle dove one EXT

=dʑɛ̌ɛ

=EVID:reported

'It is said that there is a turtledove on the tree.'

11. 1. 2. 2 Inference

The reading of inference or assumption is realized through the clausal- or sentential-final *=pà*. *=pà* is obligatorily used. Otherwise, the native speaker would view the information as being from direct evidence since absence of overt marking indicates direct evidence. The inferential marker is seldom attested in narratives, but quite frequently found in daily conversation. *=pà* can be used in a future context. In this situation, it has epistemic overtones, indicating the speaker's uncertainty about the occurrence of an event, as in (11. 8). The speaker's inference is either from "visible or tangible evidence or result" (11. 8) or from "logical reasoning" (11. 9).

(11.8) *mɛ̀+tɕò* *su+ȵo* *tʰə-pʰu=gə=pà*

nature+bind:sky ?next-day:tomorrow away-change=PROS=EVID:inferential

'The weather is going to change tomorrow.'

(The speaker makes this inference based on the evidences such as the changes of clouds, temperature, wind, etc.)

(11. 9) *tʰə* *ȵbò* *tʂa* *duá=pà.*

3sg.PRT horse search go.PAST=EVID:inferential

'He might have gone to search for his horse.'

(The speaker went to someone's house, and found that the person is not at home at a particular time, for example, 5:00 pm when an Ersu in Lajigu often

goes to find a horse. They have this logical reasoning according to their general knowledge rather than evidences.)

11. 1. 2. 3 Reported

Oral transmission as information source in Ersu is realized through =*dʑɛ̌* or =*dʑigə*. Similar to quotative markers, =*dʑɛ̌* and =*dʑigə* can be seen to be grammaticalized from the verb =*dʑi* 'say' (§11. 1. 2. 4).

Ersu does not distinguish between "second-hand" and "third-hand" information source. In other words, both =*dʑɛ̌* and =*dʑigə* are applicable to all non-firsthand information. They show no semantic or functional differences in discourse. The data show that =*dʑɛ̌* occurs more frequently than =*dʑigə* in daily conversation as an evidential[148]. As long as a piece of information is reported neither from direct evidence nor from inference or direct quotation, either =*dʑɛ̌* or =*dʑigə* is an obligatory component in a clause or sentence. However, in a larger context, it could be omissible (§11. 1. 1). Examples (11. 10) and (11. 11) below show that both =*dʑɛ̌* and =*dʑigə* can be used to encode reported information source.

(11. 10) *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *kuaʂa* *duá=dʑɛ̌*
3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday MC:town go.PFV=EVID:reported
'It is said that he went to the town yesterday.'

(11. 11) *ta ma* *kʰə-tsʰo=nɛ̀,* *ɱɲgu=và*
one CL:arrow inward-shoot=PAUS forehead=ACC
kʰə-zo=á=dʑigə
inward-shoot and get the target=PFV=EVID:reported
'It is said that (he) shot an arrow and hit the target of (the person-swallowing cloud's) forehead.'

[148] Both in narratives and conversations, =*dʑigə* can also be used as linker to connect either a sequential temporal clause with the meaning of 'subsequently' (§12. 3. 2. 2. 1) or a cause-effect clause with the meaning of 'and consequently' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 3).

11. 1. 2. 4 Quotative

Quotative evidentials appear to be quite complex in Ersu. There are several interchangeable variants used for quotative information sources. They are: *=dʑ̊à*, *=dʑ̊ɛ̌*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊à*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊ɛ̌* and *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊igə*. According to Katia Chirkova (2012 p.c) and Dehe Wang (2012 p.c), *=dʑ̊à*, *=dʑ̊ɛ̌* and *=dʑ̊igə* all contain a verb 'say' in the Ganluo variety of Ersu (§1 &. §2. 1. 3). Later, my language consultants HUANG Zhifu, WANG Zhongquan, WANG Amu, HUANG Aguo, etc. in Lajigu also confirmed that *dʑ̊i* possibly means 'say', but this meaning can only be obtained through elicitation. Consequently, *=dʑ̊à* might be derived from the verb *dʑ̊i* 'say' and the perfective aspectual marker *á* through vowel fusion and tonal variation. *=dʑ̊ɛ̌* derives from the verb *dʑ̊i* 'say' and an unknown formative, *ɛ̌*, also through vowel fusion. *=dʑ̊igə* consists of the verb *dʑ̊i* 'say' and the progressive/prospective aspectual marker *gə* without any phonological reduction during the course of grammaticalization. It should be noted that the *=gə* in *dʑ̊igə* does not have any aspectual implications. *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊à*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊ɛ̌* and *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊igə* might contain a demonstrative *tʰə* 'this' and the meaning of *ɑ* here is not known. It is also observed that the three, *tʰə -ɑ-dʑ̊à*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊ɛ̌* and *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊igə*, have a free-standing position in utterance depending on the need of discourse organization. In addition, whenever *=dʑ̊à*, *=dʑ̊ɛ̌*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊à*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊ɛ̌* or *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊igə* are used after a direct/overt quotation, no verb with the meaning of 'say' is used in the context. This further proves that the five quotative evidentials might be derived from the verb *dʑ̊i* 'say' with some phonetic changes.

However, none of my consultants could use *dʑ̊i* 'say' well even through elicitation. Thorough investigation into the data also shows that *dʑ̊i* 'say' has never been used as a free verb in narratives and daily conversation. The data also demonstrate that *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊à*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊ɛ̌* or *tʰə-ɑ-dʑ̊igə* are almost exclusively found in folkloric and mythological narratives in which the speech style is more conservative than in daily conversation. Meanwhile, *=dʑ̊à*, *=dʑ̊igə* and *=dʑ̊ɛ̌* occur much more

frequently than *tʰə-ɑ-dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌* and *tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə* even in narratives. Of these, only =*dʑɛ̌* and =*dʑigə* are also used for reported information source with a high frequency (§11. 1. 2. 3) though some of the speakers are observed to use other quotative markers for reported information source quite occasionally. All this shows that =*dʑà*, =*dʑɛ̌*, =*dʑigə*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌* or *tʰə-ɑ- dʑigə* are in the process of grammaticalization. It is most likely that =*dʑà*, =*dʑigə* and =*dʑɛ̌* might develop into completely grammaticalized evidentials in the future, with the first one used for quotative and the other two used for reported information source. Consequently, I view them all as evidential markers rather than evidential strategies in this chapter. If not, they are at least "quasi-evidential markers" at the present stage[149]. It should be noted that a "stable and mature" quotative evidential has not fully grammaticalized. It is thus not surprising that the five forms can be used interchangeably[150]. For example:

(11. 12) *ɑ-wɑ=nɛ̀*, "*kʰɑ-la* *ŋə-dzɿ=gə*."
KPFX-grandmother=TOP inward-plough outward-eat=PROS
=*dʑɛ̌*
=EVID:quotative
'The old lady said like this: "(The ox should be fed) to plough fields and provide food."

ɑ-pu=nɛ̀, "*nɑ-ka* *ŋə-dzɿ=gə*."
KPFX-grandfather=TOP downward-kill outward-eat=PROS
=*dʑà*.
=EVID:quotative
'The old man said like this: "(The ox should) be killed and eaten."'

[149] *tʰə-ɑ-dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌* or *tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə* might be more suitably interpreted as evidential strategies since they have a free-standing position in context. A narrator often repeats them in narratives and then moves to a new topic or clause/sentence. In this situation, a particle *nɛ̀* often follows them.

[150] All my language consultants insist that any of the five, =*dʑà*, =*dʑɛ̌*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑà*, *tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌* and *tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə* can be used to replace each other. They can choose to use each of the five in discourse, depending on a speaker's style in speaking.

(11. 12) has been extracted from a traditional folkloric story which says at the very beginning that there is an old couple who keep an ox. The old lady wants to keep the ox so as to plough fields and provide food while the old man wants to kill the ox and eat the beef. The two sentences occur in succession in the same context. The first one employs the quotative =*dʑɛ̌* and the second one uses the quotative =*dʑà*. My language consultant's intuition indicates that if the two evidentials were used in a reverse order, no semantic and functional difference would arise. Consequently, the two evidentials can be used interchangeably. In addition, (11. 12) shows that there is no verb with the meaning of 'say' used in the context.

A similar example for the interchangeability of the two variants *tʰə-a-dʑà* and *tʰə-a-dʑɛ̌* is given in (11. 13).

(11. 13) – "*ɲa nə-wo=à, ɲa*
child two-CL:generic non-sticklike=PART:showing intimacy child
nə-wo=à, nə=dzi
two-CL:generic non-sticklike=PART:showing intimacy 2=dl
ɲi-də a=ndzo=ɛ̀?"
downward-weave ITRG=MOD:know how to=ITRG
'"(You) two children, (You) two children, do you two know how to weave (cloth)?"

– *zika-ma=nɛ̀, "yò=nɛ̀, ndzo."*
PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=TOP 1sg.OTR=TOP MOD:know how to
tʰə-a-dʑà
DEM:this-?-EVID:quotative
'Zziigama answered like this: "I know how to (weave cloth)."

– *zintʂʰə-ma=nè*, "*yò=nè*, *ma-ndzo*."

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=TOP 1sg.OTR=TOP NEG-MOD:know how to

tʰə-a-dʑɛ̌.

DEM:this-?-EVID:quotative

'Zziinchema answered like this: "I do not know how to (weave cloth)."'

(11. 13) is a dialogue extracted from a traditional folkloric story about two sisters, a clever one and a stupid one. (11. 13) indicates that in this dialogue, both the person who proposed the question and the evidential marker are ellipsed[151]. In answer to the question, *tʰə-a-dʑà* follows the direct quotation of what Zziigama said while what Zziinchema said is followed by *tʰə-a-dʑɛ̌* in the same context. Again, no verb of "say" is used here.

(11. 14) is an example of *tʰə-a-dʑigə* that is excerpted from a mythological story, which tells about a brave son who rescued his father, who has been swallowed by a dark cloud.

(11. 14) "*nə=zɳ* *a-pa* *mi=su* *tʂaŋa* *dzo=sè*."

2sg=GEN:family KPFX-father swallow=NOM back EXT=CONT

tʰə-a-dʑigə

DEM:this-?-EVID:quotative

'(A cloud) said like this: "(The cloud that) has swallowed your father is still after (us)."'

11. 1. 3 Evidentials and other grammatical categories

The choice of evidential is associated with other grammatical categories, such as speech genres, speech act participant vs. non-speech act participant, verbal semantics, and aspect, etc. Above all, it should be noted that all these factors are interrelated and

[151] Ellipsis is quite frequently found in Ersu (§13. 3). In a direct quotation in utterance, the ellipsis of an addresser and/or addressee is very common. This is quite similar to Semelai, a Mon-Khmer language of the Malay Peninsula (Kruspe 2004: 405-407).

intertwined with each other in how they determine the uses of evidential markers. In this section, the correlations between evidentiality and other grammatical categories are discussed separately.

Speech genres supporting this thesis can be classified as narratives and conversations (§13. 1), in which different types of evidentials show different frequency of occurrence. §11. 1. 3. 1 discusses evidentials and speech genres.

In terms of "speech act participant" and "non-speech act participant", a narrator, or a speaker in a narrative is a speech act participant and all the others are non-speech act participants, while in a conversation, a speech act participant includes first-person and second-person (human beings) and a non-speech act participant refers to third-person (either human beings or non-human beings). The correlation between evidentials and "speech act participant" vs. "non-speech act participant" is given in §11. 1. 3. 2.

Verbs in Ersu can be semantically sub-divided into volitional verbs, internal state verbs and verbs denoting observable phenomena as is discussed in §8. 1. Evidentiality and verbal semantics are discussed in §11. 1. 3. 3.

The concept of time is expressed through temporal terms that can be omissible, but can be recoverable in a larger context (§9. 1). Ersu has a fairly rich aspectual system with eleven aspectual markers (§9. 2). §11. 1. 3. 4 discusses the correlation between evidentials and aspects.

11. 1. 3. 1 Evidentiality and speech genres

Different types of evidentials may be determined by different speech genres. The inferential evidential =*pà* is only occasionally found in autobiographical narratives[152],

[152] Autobiographical narratives share a lot of similarities with daily conversation in using evidentials. This is because autobiographical narratives, similar to conversations, are also closely linked to the real world. In this

and it is not attested in mythological, folkloric, procedural and creative narratives. This might be so because the information source in a narrative comes from the speaker's internalized memory, seldom from their inference. However, reported and quotative evidentials occur quite frequently in narratives though they are sometimes ellipsed in context. In conversations, all the four subtypes of evidentials are frequently heard. Among them, unmarked direct evidence occurs with the highest frequency and second to it, is reported evidential *=dʑɛ̌*. As discussed in §11. 1. 3, "person" differentiation is closely linked to speech genres in Ersu. Consequently, it is necessary to discuss the correlations between evidentiality and speech genres together with the opposition between speech act participant and non-speech act participant (§11. 1. 3. 2).

11. 1. 3. 2 Evidentiality and speech act participant vs. non-speech act participant

"In Tibetan, the category of person constitutes an important factor which determines much of the verbal morpho-syntax" (Sun 1993: 955). Hale (1980) first pointed out that there is a "conjunct vs. disjunct" person distinction in Kathmandu Newar, in which verbal marking shows a 1st vs. 2nd/3rd distinction in statements, in the same way as a 2nd vs. 1st/3rd person distinction in questions. Following Hale, DeLancey (1986, 1990, 1992) employs "conjunct vs. disjunct" to distinguish persons in Lhasa Tibetan. However, Tournadre (1991, 2008) holds the opinion that it is more appropriate to use the term "egophoric" to denote the person distinction in Tibetan. Sun (1993: 955) prefers "a referentially fluid dichotomous distinction between self person and other person" in Amdo Tibetan since in the language, "self person sentences are marked as utterances produced by oneself" (1993: 956). He further states that the term "self person" is appropriate for first person statements, second person questions and some quotes. Yongning Na has a system "similar to a conjunct/disjunct system" that has a "self" and "other" distinction, and "other" further

chapter, the term "narrative", other than when clearly stated, refers to mythological, folkloric narratives and narratives about creation.

distinguishes between speech act participant, with information source appearing in a question, and non-speech act participant with information source as either a marked inference of internal state or an unmarked observable state (Lidz 2007). In the Lizu dialect of Ersu, there is an "egophoric vs. other person" distinction. "Egophoric utterances express personal knowledge or intention on the part of the speaker (the first person) … Other person utterances are consequently linked to the non-first person" (Chirkova 2008a).

Similar to the above mentioned Tibeto-Burman languages, Ersu also has a person distinction. However, it is more appropriate to categorize "person" as "speech act participant" vs. "non-speech act participant" in relation to speech genres, as shown in Table 11. 2.

Genres	**speech act participant**	**non-speech act participant**	
narrative	the speaker /1.SLF(*a*)	1.OTR (*yò*), 2	3
evidential	direct	quotative	reported
conversation	addresser (1.SLF), addressee (2)	3	
evidential	direct/inferential	direct/inferential/reported/quotative	

Table 11. 2 Evidential marking distinction driven by person and speech genres

11. 1. 3. 2. 1 Speech act participant vs. non-speech act participant in narratives

Table 11. 2 indicates that in narratives, Ersu distinguishes speech act participant, first person *a*, also the speaker her/himself and a non-speech act participant, first person *yò*, often a role in a narrative (§4. 4. 1. 4. 1). Information source concerning the speech act participant *a* is considered as direct evidence and unmarked as in (11. 15a), while the non-speech act participant *yò* is always associated with an overt quotation and a quotative evidential is obligatory (11. 15b), with the exception of a retrievable ellipsis in context.

(11. 15) a. *a* *yɛ̀-so-xa* *tə-sə̀* *də-xi=gə*

1sg.SLF ?last-before-time:ancient times one-CL:bit upward-tell=PROS

'I will tell an ancient story.' Lit: I will tell ancient times.

b. "*yò* *tʂʰə tə* *ʂə̀* *na:* *tɕʰi=gə.*"=*dʑà=nɛ̀*

1sg.OTR rice one CL:litre 2sg. ACC give=PROS=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(His elder brother said this): "I will give you a litre of rice."

In (11. 15a), *a* '1sg.SLF' refers to the speaker himself who is going to tell a story. "I" myself is a speech act participant and the information source is viewed as direct evidence. In contrast, *yò* '1sg.OTR' in (11. 15b) refers to a role in a narrative. Consequently, the quotative evidential is obligatorily used.

In a narrative, both second person and third person are treated as non-speech act participant. Information about second person occurs either in a question or in an imperative or prohibitive statement and is marked with a quotative evidential. For example:

(11. 16) *"nə ta+ɲo* *a-nɛ* *nə-ŋu,* *nə* *kʰatʰo*

2sg ?present+day:today ITRG-what downward-do 2sg speak

a=gə=è ?"=dʑà=nɛ̀

ITRG=PROS=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(Her nine brothers spoke this): "What you did today, will you tell (us)?"'

(11. 17) "*nə yò* *yibayì* *ŋə-nbɛ=nɛ̀,* *nə* *da-tʰa-fusɛ...*"

2sg 1sg.OTR armpit outward-crawl=PAUS 2sg upward-PROHIB-speak…

=dʑà

=EVID:quotative

'(She spoke this): "You hide in (crawl into) my armpit and you do not speak…"

Information about third person, also as non-speech act participant in narratives, is most frequently marked by reported evidentials, as in (11. 18). This might be so because in Ersu, a language without written records, people can only "hearsay" narratives like myths, folkloric stories, etc. that are transmitted generation by generation in oral forms. However, quotative evidentials used for third person in a narrative is not frequently found, as in (11. 19).

(11. 18) *tʰə* *ɑʂʮʂʮ=nɛ̀,* *xuɑ=yi* *tə* *tʰə-pu*

DEM:this PN:person name=TOP bird=DIM one away-become

=à=dʑɤ̌ɛ

=PFV=EVID:reported

'It is said that Ashishi became a small bird.'

(11. 19) "*yò=zʮ* *ɑ-pa* *mi=su* *tʰə*

1sg.OTR=GEN:family KPFX-father swallow=NOM DEM:this=

=kə *ɑ=dzo=ɛ̀?"=dzà=nɛ̀*

RLN.LOC:in<here ITRG=EXT=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(He asked like this): "Is the person who swallowed my father here?"'

11. 1. 3. 2. 2 Speech act participant vs. non-speech act participant in conversations

In conversations, especially in daily short conversations, speech act person includes first person (addresser) and second person (addressee) as shown in Table 11. 2. Both unmarked direct evidential and marked inferential evidential are attested. However, since oral information transmission between first person and second person is always in a direct way, reported and quotative evidential are not applicable in this situation. Information relevant to second person often occurs in a question, as in (11. 20) with a direct unmarked evidential and in (11. 21) with inferential marker *=pà*.

(11. 20) *nə* *kʰa* *ʒɿ=gə=ɛ̀ ?*

2sg ITRG:where go.PFV=PROG=ITRG

'Where are you going?'

(The question in (11. 20) occurs frequently in daily conversation. It pragmatically functions as a greeting, similar to English 'How are you?'. This conversation occurs when two people meet each other along the way. Consequently, the information is visual and the unmarked direct evidential is used here.)

(11. 21) *nə* *ya+ȵo* *go+də-ndʑə*

2sg ?last+day:yesterday thorax+upward-tremble:be angry

=pà

=EVID:inferential

'You must have been angry yesterday.'

In addition, second person statement is seldom used in daily conversation. However, it is heard when first person gives an order, a command or a request to second person, such as to assign a task at a meeting or to allocate a seat at a ceremony, etc. For example:

(11. 22) *nə* *tʰə=kə* *nə-zɿ*

2sg DEM:this=LOC.INESS:in<here PFX:downward-sit

'You sit here.'

Non-speech act participants in conversations refer to third person. All evidentials can be used with a non-speech act participant, depending on the source of information. More specifically, the choice of an evidential is dependent on whether the speaker acquires the information through their sensory perception (direct evidence), through their inference (inferential evidential), or through oral transmission (reported or quotative evidential). As discussed in §11. 1. 2. 3 and §11. 1. 2. 4, in conversations,

the most frequently used reported evidential is =*dʑɛ̌* and the most frequently used quotative evidential is =*dʑà*, other evidential variants are not frequently used. Examples are given in (11. 23).

(11. 23) a. *tʰə* *ɳbò* *tʂa* *duá*
3sg.PRT horse search go:PFV
'He went to search for his horse.' (*The speaker saw the event*.)

b. *tʰə* *ɳbò* *tʂa* *duá=pà*
3sg.PRT horse search go:PFV=EVID: inferential
'He might have gone to search for his horse.' (*The speaker inferred the event*. See also Example (11. 9).)

c. *tʰə* *ɳbò* *tʂa* *duá=dʑɛ̌*
3sg.PRT horse search go:PFV =EVID: reported
'He went to search for his horse.' (*The speaker heard about the event from others.*)

d. Hailong=*nɛ̀*, "*tʰə* *ɳbò* *tʂa* *duá*."
MC:person name=TOP 3sg.PRT horse search go:PFV
=*dʑà*
=EVID: quotative
'Hailong said like this: "He went to search for his horse."'
(The speaker heard about the event from Hailong, and Hailong himself saw the event. Here, *the speaker quoted Hailong's original speaking in a direct way*.)

e. Hailong=*ɲɛ̀*, “ ‘*tʰə* *ɲbò* *tʂa* *duá* ’

MC:person name=TOP 3sg.PRT horse search go:PFV

=dʑà ”=*dʑà*

=EVID:quotative=EVID: quotative

‘Hailong said like this: “He went to search for his horse.”‘

(*The speaker heard about the event from Hailong, and Hailong directly quoted what someone else told him. Here, the speaker also directly quoted Hailong's original speaking and the quotative evidential =dʑà marked twice. This example shows that Ersu does nto distinguish second-hand and third-hand information as discussed in §11. 1. 2. 3.* Note that this kind of information transimission does not occur quite often in daily conversation. In addition, there is always an obvious pause between the first =*dʑà* and the second =*dʑà* in discourse.)

11. 1. 3. 3 Evidentiality and verbal semantics[153]

11. 1. 3. 3. 1 Direct evidence and verbal semantics

Information that is sourced from the speaker’s sensory perception or general knowledge, that is, direct evidence, shows no difference in evidential forms, regardless of person and verbal semantics. All the direct sources are formally unmarked. Take third-person and the verbs *duá* ‘go:PFV’ (volitional), *tʰə-gi* ‘away-be happy’ (internal state) and *ɲə-ʒò* ‘(rain/snow) fall’ (observable phenomena) as examples. If a person witnesses or feels the event, all take the unmarked evidential, as in (11. 24), (11. 25) and (11. 26).

(11. 24) *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *kuaʂa* *duá*

3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday MC:town go:PFV

‘He went to the town yesterday.’ (*seeing and volitional*)

[153] Discussion of §11. 1.3. 3 is based on daily conversation. In narratives, the choices of evidentials are mainly based on the context, regardless of verbal semantics, since information sources are under control of the narrator's ways of oral transmission (§11. 1. 3. 2.1).

(11. 25) *tʰə* *ya+ŋo* *tʰə-gi=á*

3sg. PRT ?last+day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV

'He was happy yesterday' (*feeling and internal state*)

(11. 26) *guà* *ʒò=á*

rain fall=PFV

'It rained.' (*seeing and observable*)

11. 1. 3. 3. 2 Inferential evidential and verbal semantics

If a verb denotes observable phenomena, information concerning speech act participants, both the addresser and the addressee, can be marked by the inferential evidential =*pà*. For example:

(11. 27) a. *a* *də̀-ŋì=gə=pà*

1sg.SLF upward-be sick=PROS=EVID:inferential

'I am going to be sick.'

(*speech act participant (first-person)—observable phenomena*[154]*—The speaker inferred the event based on one's own feelings.*)

b. *nə* *də̀-ŋì=gə=pà*

2sg upward-be sick=PROS =EVID:inferential

'You are going to be sick.'

(*speech act participant (second-person)—observable phenomena—The addresser inferred the event based on her/his observations about the addressee's physical state.*)

If a volitional verb or an internal state verb is used, first-person (the 'addresser') information source is unmarked as one has direct knowledge of one's intent and

[154] *də̀-ŋì* 'upward-be sick' in Ersu is not a verb encoding internal state because it is the semantic extension of the verb *də̀-ŋì* 'upward-hurt', a physical state that can be externally observable.

internal state, as in (11. 28) and (11. 29).

(11. 28) a. *a* *ya+ŋo* *tʰa=va* *da-ká*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:yesterday 3sg.PRT=ACC upward-hit.PFV
'I hit him yesterday.'

*b. *a* *ya+ŋo* *tʰa=va* *da-ká*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:yesterday 3sg.PRT=ACC upward-hit.PFV
=pà
=EVID:inferential
(*speech act participant (first-person)—volitional—direct evidence, inference not applicable.*)

(11. 29) a. *a* *ya+ŋo* *tʰə-gi=á*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV
'I was happy yesterday.'

*b. *a* *ya+ŋo* *tʰə-gi=á=pà*
1sg.SLF ?last+day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV=EVID:inferential
(*speech act participant (first-person)—internal state—direct evidence, inference not applicable.*)

When a volitional verb or an internal state verb is used, information source about second-person can be marked by an inferential evidential if the speaker has not got the information through direct sensory perception, as in (11. 30) and (11. 31).

(11. 30) *ŋə ya+ŋo t^{h}a= và da-ká*

2sg ?last-day:yesterday 3sg.PRT=ACC upward-hit.PFV

=pà

=EVID: inferential

'You must have hit him yesterday.'

(*speech act participant (second-person)—volitional—inference*)

(11. 31) *ŋə ya+ŋo t^{h}ə-gi=á=pà*

2sg ?last-day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV=EVID:inferential

'You must have been happy yesterday.'

(*speech act participant (second-person)—internal state—inference*[155].)

Information concerning non-speech act (third-person), can all be qualified with an inferential marker regardless of verbal semantics. For example:

(11. 33) *t^{h}ə ya+ŋo ŋa= và da-ká*

3sg.PRT ?last+day:yesterday 2sg=ACC upward-hit.PFV

=pà

=EVID:inferential

'He must have hit you yesterday.'

(*non-speech act participant (third-person)—volitional—inferenc*e)

(11. 34) *t^{h}ə ya+ŋo t^{h}ə-gi=á=pà*

3sg.PRT ?last-day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV=EVID:inferential

'He must have been happy yesterday.'

(*non-speech act participant (third-person)—internal state—inference*)

[155] Even if a speaker 'sees' the event or the state, a statement concerning second-person is seldom used, but often takes a tag question. For example:

(11. 32) *ŋə ya+ŋo t^{h}ə-gi=á, a=zɿ=è?*
2sg ?last+day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV ITRG=COP=ITRG
'You were happy yesterday. Right?'

(11. 35) *tʰə də̀-ŋì=á=pà*

3sg.PRT upward-be sick=PFV=EVID:inferential

'He must have been sick.'

(*non-speech act participant (third person)—observable phenomena—inference*)

11. 1. 3. 3. 3 Reported evidential and verbal semantics

As discussed in §11. 1. 3. 2. 2, oral information transmission between two speech act participants is always in a direct way. Therefore, a reported evidential is not applicable to speech act participants, both the addresser and the addressee, regardless of verbal semantics. However, a reported evidential is obligatory to any piece of "hearsay" information relevant to non-speech act participant, regardless of verbal semantics. For example:

(11. 36) *tʰə ya+ŋo ŋa=và da-ká=dzě*

3sg.PRT?last+day:yesterday 2sg=ACC upward-hit.PFV=EVID:reported

'It is said that he hit you yesterday.'

(*non-speech act participant (third-person)—volitional—reported*)

(11. 37) *tʰə ya+ŋo tʰə-gi=á=dzě*

3sg.PRT ?last-day:yesterday away-be happy=PFV=EVID: reported

'It is said that he was happy yesterday.'

(*non-speech act participant (third-person)—internal state—reported*)

(11. 38) *tʰə də̀-ŋì=á=dzě*

3sg.PRT upward-be sick=PFV=EVID:reported

'It is said that he was sick.'

(*non-speech act participant (third-person)—observable phenomena—reported*)

11. 1. 3. 3. 4 Quotative evidential and verbal semantics

A quotative evidential is used for information source with an overt reference. This means that the speaker directly quotes the information obtained from other's utterances. The use of direct quotation is to make her/his own speaking appear to be more vivid or/and more authentic. Consequently, the speaker's own speech style decides whether to use a quotative evidential or not. Its use is less relevant to person or verbal semantics. Again, take the verbs *duá* 'go:PFV' (volitional), *tʰɔ-gi* 'be happy' (internal state) and *nɔ-ʒò* '(rain/snow) fall' (observable phenomena) as examples (§11. 1. 3. 3. 1). Here, first person is employed in the examples.

(11. 39) *Hailong=nɛ̀,* "*a* *ya+ŋo* *kuaṣa*
MC:person name=TOP 1sg.SLF ?last-day:yesterday MC:town
duá."=*dʑà*
go:PFV =EVID:quotative
'Hailong spoke like this: "I went to the town yesterday." (*volitional*)

(11. 40) *Hailong=nɛ̀,* "*a* *ya+ŋo* *tʰɔ-gi*
MC:person name=TOP 1sg.SLF ?last-day:yesterday away-be happy
=á."=*dzà*
=PFV=EVID:quotative
'Hailong spoke like this: "I was happy yesterday." (*internal state*)

(11. 41) *Hailong=nɛ̀,* "*gua* *ʒò=á.*"=*dzà*
MC:person name=TOP rain fall=PFV=EVID:quotative
'Hailong spoke like this: "It rained." (*observable*)

11. 1. 3. 4 Evidentiality and aspect

In Ersu, the co-occurrence of evidentiality and aspect appears to be unconstrained. That is, there is no limitation for a certain subtype of evidential to occur with some

certain subtype of aspect morphemes. Evidentiality may occur in various clauses or sentences taking different aspectual markers, completive or perfective, progressive or prospective, etc. Take the co-occurrence of the reported evidential *dzɛ̌* and the volitional verb *tsʰɛ* 'wash' as an example:

(11. 42) a. **perfective**

tʰə *ya+ŋo* *gamɛ* *nə-tsʰɛ=á*

3sg.RPT ?last+day:yesterday clothes downward-wash=PFV

=dzɛ̌

=EVID:reported

'It is said that he washed his clothes yesterday.'

b. **perfect**

tʰə *gamɛ* *nə-tsʰɛ=zà=dzɛ̌*

3sg.RPT clothes downward-wash=PFT=EVID:reported

'It is said that he has washed his clothes.'

c. **progressive**

tʰə *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə=dzɛ̌*

3sg.RPT clothes wash=PROG=EVID:reported

'It is said that he is washing his clothes.'

d. **prospective**

tʰə *su+ŋo* *gamɛ* *tsʰɛ=gə=dzɛ̌*

3sg.RPT ?next+day:tomorrow clothes wash=PROS=EVID:reported

'It is said that he will wash his clothes tomorrow.'[156]

The co-occurrence of the inferential evidential *pà* with different types of aspect morphemes is given in (11. 43).

[156] It is also attested in Yongning Na (Lidz 2007)The reported evidential takes scope over the future clause.

(11. 43) a. **Perfective**

ya+xa *guà* *ʒò=á=pà*

?last-night:last night rain fall=PFV=EVID:inferential

'It must have rained last night. '

(*The speaker may make the inference based on the fact that the ground is wet when she/he gets up in the morning.*)

b. **Progressive**

guà *ʒò=gə=pà*

rain fall=PROG=EVID:inferential

'It must be raining. '

(*The speaker may make the inference based on the fact that people may hear the sound of raining while sitting at home. Especially when a speaker does not want to go and have a look outside, s/he will say in this way.*)

c. **Prospective**

su+ŋɛ̀o *guà* *ʒò=gə=pà*

?next+day:tomorrow rain fall=PROS=EVID:inferential

'It will rain tomorrow, (I guess). '

(*The speaker may make the inference based on the dark clouds in the sky, or the heavy air, etc.*[157])

11. 1. 4 Co-occurrence of evidentials

Co-occurrence of different types of evidentials in Ersu has been sparsely attested. Besides third-hand information transmission context where two evidentials co-occur as discussed in 11. 1. 2. 3 and shown in (23e), the inferential evidential =*pà* is the only one to co-occur with the reported and quotative evidentials and =*pà* always

[157] It should be noted that the co-occurrence of non-past prospective (future) marker =*gə* and the inferential evidential =*pà* has an epistemic extension in semantics. In this situation, =*pà* and *mixa* (§11. 2. 2) can be used interchangeably.

precedes them. The reverse order is never allowed. For example:

(11. 44) *tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *kuaʂa* *duá*

3sg.PREST ?last+day:yesterday MC:town go.PFV

=pà=dʑɛ̌

=EVID:inferential=EVID:reported

'It is said that he must have been to the town yesterday.'

(11. 45) *Amu=nè,* *"tʰə* *ya+ɲo* *kuaʂa* *duá*

PN:male name=TOP 3sg.PRT ?last-day:yesterday MC:town go.PFV

=pà."=dʑà

=EVID:inferential=EVID:quotative

'Amu spoke like this: "He must have been to the town yesterday."'

11. 2 Evidential Strategies

Aikhenvald (2004a:105) points out that "categories and forms which acquire secondary meanings somehow related to information source are called evidentiality strategies" (also see Aikhenvald forthcoming). In other words, categories and forms whose semantic extensions (not primary meanings) are relevant to information source are evidential strategies. Two other types of marking might be considered evidential strategies rather than evidentials. They are: *tɕʰi* denoting 'a person's previous personal experience' (§11. 2. 1) and *mixa* 'seem' (§11. 2. 2).

11. 2. 1 Evidential strategy *=tɕʰi*

In Ersu, there is an experiential aspectual marker *=tɕʰi* denoting that an event previously happened to a narrator/speaker (§9. 3. 3). Whenever *=tɕʰi* 'previous experience' is used, the information being conveyed is, firstly, about the narrator or the addresser themselves and secondly, about one's earlier life experience. It should be noted that though one's personal experience belongs to one's own knowledge, that

is, direct evidence (§11. 1. 2. 1), a clause or a sentence is often marked with =*tɕʰi*. For example:

(11. 46) *a* *vakə* *ʒɿ=tɕʰi*

1sg.SLF PN:name of the county seat go:NPFV=EXP

'I have previously been to Yuexi.'

(11. 47) *ndzà* *mɛ* *ŋu* *duá=nɛ̀,* *na-tʂaᴵ*

PN:Han people army do go:PFV=PAUS two-CL:time

də-sɿsɿ=tɕʰi

upward-fight.RDUP=EXP

'(I) went to join the Han army, (and) personally attended two battles then.'

Lit: went do Han army, fought twice personally and previously.

11. 2. 2 Evidential strategy *mixa*

The meaning of *mixa* is very similar to English 'seem' or '(be) like'. It acts as a verb in Ersu, taking the whole clause in its scope. It functions not only to denote that the information being reported is based on the speaker's own inference (often logic reasoning), but also to express uncertainty. For example:

(11. 48) *guà* *ʒò=gə* *mixa*

rain fall=PROS seem

'It seems that it is going to rain.'

(*The speaker may make the inference based on the dark clouds in the sky, or the heavy air, etc.*)

(11. 49) *ɛ!* *ya,* *yò,* *mó,*

PART:regrettable child 1sg.OTR also

yɛ+xi+so+xi, *zìyì* *nə*

previous+year+befor+year:previous time daughter two

-wo *mixa=yì,* *tʰə-su*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike seem=PART:pause DEM:this-?:such

tə-tʂə *ŋə-ʂʒ̀tɕì=tɕʰi=tò*

one-CL:pair outward-lose=EXP=PART:unhappy

'Ai! Children, long time ago, I also (had) two daughters (who) seem like (you two), (but) such a pair (of daughters) were previously lost.'

11. 3 Epistemic Strategy

Unlike an evidential strategy that may denote information source, the epistemic strategy discussed here only conveys the speaker's degree of certainty in the statement and it undergoes semantic extension to assess epistemic value, which may undertake some other grammatical duty (Lidz 2007). Ersu has an element that might be an idiom functioning as an epistemic strategy, that is, *là-mɑ-ntɕʰì*. Literally, here *là* seems to be an emphatic particle that means 'all'; *mɑ-* seems to be a negative that means 'not'. However, though the meaning of *ntɕʰì* can be understood as 'know' in this context, its meaning in other context or in isolation is attested as 'bite'. The term for 'know' in Ersu is *xasɛ*. *là-mɑ-ntɕʰì* often occupies a clause-final slot and has a clear meaning like English 'no one knows' or 'who knows?' It is used to reflect a speaker's inner flow of thinking, especially with uncertainty. For example:

(11. 50) *tʰə* *ŋə-dzɻ=á* *là-mɑ-ntɕʰì* ?

3sg.PRT outward-eat=PFV ?EMPH:all-?NEG:not-?know:who knows

'He has eaten. Who knows?'

(11. 51) *tʰə* *sə̀zà* *əˈ-pʰo* *də-ki=á*

DEM:this god lower limb-?:leg upward-fall off=PFV

là-mɑ-ntɕʰì ?

?EMPH:all-?NEG-?know:who knows

'The god might have had his leg broken. Who knows?'

11. 4 Information Source Conveyed through Demonstratives and Directional Terms

Similar to Dyirbal, an Australian language that has "a three-system of noun markers" (Dixon 1972, 2010a: 244, forthcoming), Ersu also has a three-system of demonstratives (§4. 4. 3. 1) and a two-system of directional terms (§4. 3. 1. 9. 1) which combine reference to visibility and spatial distance of the noun that they modify.

In Ersu, if the demonstrative *tʰə* 'this', near the speaker, is has a prefix *ɑ-* attached to it, the meaning of *tʰə* becomes 'that', that is, not near to the speaker. A referent modified by *ɑ-tʰə* may be either visible or invisible. If the sound of *ɑ-* is lengthened as a long vowel /*ɑ:*/, that is, *ɑ:-*, a referent modified by *ɑ:-tʰə* should be invisible, and most often, information about the referent may only exist in one's memory. The three-system demonstratives are shown in Table 11. 3.

Demonstrative	**Gloss**
tʰə	'this', visible and near the speaker
ɑ-tʰə	'that', visible or invisible and not near the speaker
ɑ:-tʰə	'that (remote)', invisible and often in memory

Table 11. 3 Ersu demonstrative system that conveys information source

Examples are given in (11. 52):

(11. 52) a. *tʰə* *fɯ=kə* *dzo* *ɱɑ-dzo*

DEM:this village=RLN.LOC:in water NEG -EXT

'There is no water in this village.' (*The speaker might be in or very close to the village.*)

b. *ɑ-tʰə* *fɯ=kə* *dzo* *ɱɑ-dzo*

distal-DEM:this:that village=RLN.LOC:in water NEG -EXT

'There is no water in that village.' (*The speaker is not in the village and might see or might not see the village.*)

c. *ɑː-tʰətʰə* *fɯ=kə* *dzo* *ɱɑ-dzo*

remote-DEM:this village=RLN.LOC:in water NEG -EXT

'There is no water in that (remote) village.' (*The village is invisible to the speaker and might only exist in her/his memory.*)

The stem of an Ersu directional term often contains a prefix *ɑ-*, for example, *ɑ-kɯɑ* 'distal-north'. A referent being modified by *ɑ-kɯɑ* might be visible or invisible to the speaker, but it is certain that it is not near to them. Similar to demonstratives, if the vowel of the prefix in *ɑ-kɯɑ* is lengthened to be *ɑː-*, a referent is then understood to be invisible to the speaker or only exists in one's memory. For example:

(11. 53) a. *ɑ-kɯɑ* *ɳbi=tɕʰò* *yi* *tɑ-ka*

distal-north mountain=RLN.LOC:on house one-CL:generic, sticklike *xa*

EXT

'There is a house on the mountain in the north.' (*The house may be visible or invisible to the speaker.*)

b. *ɑ:-kua* *ȵbi=tɕʰò* *yi* *tɑ-ka*

distal-north mountain=RLN.LOC:on house one-CL:generic, sticklike

xa

EXT

'There is a house on the mountain in the (remote) north.' (*The house is invisible to the speaker and maybe only exists in one's memory.*)

11. 5 Parentheticals

There are two particles that function to attract the audience's attention. Both are quite frequently used in narratives and in daily conversation. Both might derive from the verb *kʰə-dzolo* 'look', each respectively taking a syllable of the disyllabic root *dzolo* with tonal variation. They are: *adzò* and *alò* and both means 'look/you see'. The difference between them is as follows: *adzò* denotes the information reported as either coming from others, or being far from the speaker, or being irrelevant to her/him while *alò* denotes the information reported either coming from the speaker her/himself, or being relevant to, or being close to her/him. Consequently, more precisely, *adzò* means 'look there/you see there' and *alò* means 'look here/you see here'. For example:

(11. 54) a. *alò,* *yɛ+so+xɑ=ȵɛ̀,* *mɑ-li*

look ?previous+before+time:ancient time=TOP NEG-good

ȵə-ŋu *mɑ-li* *tə-bɛ̀=tsà*

downward-do NEG-good one-QUAT.pl=PFT

'You see, (this story taking place) in ancient times (tells us that when a person) did evil (things), evil (things would have happened to the person).' Lit: You see, did not good, not some not good.

b. *adzò,* *tʰi* *ndzɳndzɑ-nɛ̀, ...*

look 3sg.PRT.GEN idea=TOP

'You see, his idea (is)…'

(11. 54a) is extracted from a folktale about two brothers. The elder one is rich and the younger one is poor. The elder brother always exploits the younger one. Finally, the elder brother was bitten to death by a snake. The speaker concludes the story with (11. 54a). She used *alò* to indicate that this information is her own ideas. (11. 54b) is an example quite frequently heard in the field. If an Ersu is planning to restate someone else's opinions, s/he often starts the speech like this to imply that what is going to talk about is not her/his own ideas.

(11. 55) a. *alò, $t^hə$ $lat^hɑ$=tʂaŋa, la dzə*
look DEM:this stone grinder=RLN.LOC:below chicken egg
tə dzi̱a
one EXT
'Look (here)! There is a chicken egg below this stone grinder.' (*alò* used here means that both the grinder and the egg are close to the speaker.)

b. *adzò, ɑ-$t^hə$ $lat^hɑ$=tʂaŋa,*
look distal-DEM:this<that stone grinder=RLN.LOC:below
la dzə tə dzi̱a
chicken egg one EXT
'Look (there)! There is a chicken egg below that stone grinder.' (*adzò* used here means that both the grinder and the egg are far from the speaker, especially opposite to one's own location.)

11. 6 Information Source Conveyed through Lexical Verbs[158]

Lexical verbs such as *dɑ-k^hat^ho* 'speak/tell', *də-xi* 'tell', *də-fɯsɛ* 'tell', *$t^hə$-dzɿ* 'hear', *$t^hə$-ndo* 'see' and *dɑ-ŋua* 'smell of' can also encode the source of information. Verbs of this type often take a complement clause that denote information source (§12.

[158] One of the examiners questions why I do not include complementation involving the lexical verbs in the subsection as an evidential strategy under subsection §11. 2. The reason for this is that in this work, I view evidential strategy as categories and forms whose semantic extensions (not primary meanings) are relevant to information source as discussed in §11. 2. However, the primary function of the lexical verbs discussed here is to convey information source. Therefore, I do not include them in §11. 2.

3. 3). For example:

(11. 56) *a* *ɳbò* *ɳə* *ɳbo* *gugu=tà*

1sg.SLF child two RPT:horse kick.RDUP:kick each other=CPZ

t^hə-ɳdo=á

away-see=PFV

'I saw that the two horses were kicking each other.'

(11. 57) *a* *si+pu=$tɕ^h$o* *xuɑ=yi* *fusɛ=tà*

1sg.SLF wood+living plants:tree=RLN.LOC:on bird=DIM say=CPZ

t^hə-dzɿ=á

away-hear=PFV

'I heard that birds were singing on the tree.'

(11. 58) *t^hə* *ŋuà+sɔ̀-bɛ̀* *yɑ-ma* *dɑ-ŋua*

DEM:this ox+meat:beef=QUAT.pl APFX-delicious upward-smell of

'These beef smells delicious.'

Chapter 12 Clause Types and Clause Combining

This chapter discusses clause types and clause combining in Ersu. There are three major clause types: simple clauses (§12. 1), coordinate clauses (§12. 2) and subordinate clauses (§12. 3). The canonical constituent order of a simple clause is either AVO or SV. However, there are variations due to ellipsis and topicalization. Different combining strategies are attested among coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses.

12. 1 Simple Clauses

This section begins with the constituent order of a simple clause (§12. 1. 1), then discusses the topic-comment constructions in Ersu (§12. 1. 2). Types of simple clauses are given in §12. 1. 3. They include: verbal clauses (§12. 1. 3. 1) and verbless clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2).

12. 1. 1 Constituent order of a simple clause

12. 1. 1. 1 Canonical constituent order

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the canonical constituent order of a simple clause in Ersu is either AOV or SV. In a simple clause, S, A and O could be either a single NP or two (or more than two) coordinate NPs (details about NP are given in §5). In an SV clause, a verbal predicate should be an intransitive or an ambitransitive VP (verb phrase) while in an AOV clause, it could be a transitive, an ambitransitive, or a ditransitive VP (details about VP are given in §8. 9 and §8. 10). Figure 12. 1 shows the constituent order of a simple clause in Ersu:

SV clause:	S (NP) + V (VP)	(intransitive clause)
AOV clause:	A (NP_1) + O (NP_2) + V (VP)	(transitive clause)

Figure 12. 1 The canonical constituent order of a simple clause in Ersu

Examples for SV clauses and AOV clauses are respectively given in (12. 1a) and

(12. 1b):

(12. 1) a. [*ɲbò-bɛ̀*]$_S$ [*ŋə-ʂɳtɕi=á*]$_V$

Horse-QUAT.pl outward-lose=PFV

'The horses are lost.'

b. [*ɲbò-bɛ̀*]$_A$ [*yimi-bɛ̀*]$_O$ [*ŋə-dzɳ=gə*]$_{V(VP)}$

horse=QUAT.pl MC:corn=QUAT.PL outward-eat=PROG

'The horses are eating the corn.'

12. 1. 1. 2 Ellipsis of constituent slots in a simple clause

Any of the above-mentioned constituent slots in a canonical simple clause (§12. 1. 1. 1) can be ellipsed whenever it can be recoverable in a narrative or conversational context.

12. 1. 1. 2. 1 Ellipsis of S in an SV clause

S in an SV clause can be ellipsed whenever it can be recoverable from the context. For example:

(12. 2) a. **[Ø]**$_S$ [*kɑ-mɑ=ts^{h}uá*]$_V$

inward-sleep=IMMI

'(I) am going to sleep right away.'

b. [*ɑ*]$_S$ [*kɑ-mɑ=ts^{h}uá*]$_V$

1sg. SLF inward-sleep=IMMI

'I am going to sleep right away.'

As shown in (12. 2a), S in an SV clause is ellipsed. A clause like this is often heard in the situation when people are sitting together, chatting, drinking, watching TV, etc. If the speaker tells others that s/he is going to sleep, s/he seldom uses a

syntactically complete clause like (12. 2b) with an S, that is, *a* '1sg.SLF'.

12. 1. 1. 2. 2 Ellipsis of V in an SV clause

V in an SV clause can also be ellipsed when it can be recovered from the context, as shown in (12. 3):

(12. 3) A: [*sɛ* *tə-wo*]$_S$
ITRG:who one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
[*ɲə-ɲbɛ=gə=è?*]$_V$
downward-cry=PROG =ITRG
'Who is crying?'
B: [*ɱɬi-zà*]$_S$ **[Ø]**$_V$
PN.Yi:second son of a family-SFX.MAS:person name
'Mulai (is crying).'

12. 1. 1. 2. 3 Ellipsis of A in an AVO clause

In an AOV clause, A is often ellipsed especially in a larger discourse context, then forming a clause like OV that can be found in nearly all long pieces of narratives in the data. For example:

(12. 4) *tə* *ɲo* *ɲua* *tsopa* *ŋa-lá*…. **[Ø]**$_A$ [*vu*]$_O$
one day PN:Yi people robber PFX:outward-come.PFV wine
dʑì [*ts^{h}ɛ*]$_V$ **[Ø]**$_A$ [*za-ɱa*]$_O$ *dʑì* [*dzɿ*]$_V$…, **[Ø]**$_A$
CO drink, food-SFX.FEM:food CO eat
[*vɛ+ʂɿ-bɛ̀*]$_O$ *dʑì* *ɲòkuà* [*t^{h}ə-tʂ^{h}ɿ*
pig+meat:pork-QUAT.pl CO all away-take down
tɕi *t^{h}ə-tɕu*]$_V$
take away-finish
'One day, the Yi robbers came… (They) drank wine, (they) ate food…(and they) took down all the pork and took it away.'

(12. 4) tells about a speaker's memories about how the Yi robbers were dangerous and fierce before the liberation of China. The speaker first presents the background about how the Yi robbers came one day. She then describes how the robbers were armed and how they searched the Ersu village, family by family. Finally, she describes what and how the robbers did in every family. In her description, she never uses the slot A, that is, *nua tsopa* 'Yi robbers' in the AOV clauses like 'They drank wine, they ate food…and they took down all the pork and took it away.' Instead, she uses 'drank wine, ate food…took down all the pork and took it away.'

(12. 5) occurs in the same narrative as (12. 4). In (12. 5), there are two simple clauses: One is an AOV clause and the other one is an SV clause. Both A and S refer to *nua tsopa* 'Yi robbers' , but the both are ellipsed since they can be recovered from the context:

(12. 5) **[Ø]**$_A$ [*yi+k^{h}u*]$_O$ [*nə-pupí*]$_V$¶
house+?:roof downward-tear open
[Ø]$_S$ [*nə-to* *nɑ-lá*]$_V$
downward-jump downward-come.PFV
'(The Yi robbers) tore the roof open. (They) jumped down and came (in).'

12. 1. 1. 2. 4 Ellipsis of both A and V in an AVO clause

In a conversational context, both A and V can sometimes be found ellipsed, as shown in (12. 6a):

(12. 6) a. A: [*nə*]$_A$ [*ɑ-nɛ*]$_O$ [*nɑ-tʂɑ=gə*]$_V$=*è* ?
2sg ITRG-what downward-look for=PROG=ITRG
'What are you looking for?'

B: **[Ø]**$_{A}$ [*ɑ-zɿ* *nbò-wo*]$_{O}$ **[Ø]**$_{V}$

1sg.SLF-GEN:family horse-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'My horse.'

In a conversation like (6a), when both A and V are recoverable in the context, they are very frequently ellipsed and only the information of O is provided. Consequently, the answer to a question like "What are you looking for?" is seldom a complete AOV clause, as in (12. 6b):

(12. 6) b. A: [*nə*]$_{A}$ [*ɑ-nɛ*]$_{O}$ [*nɑ-tsɑ=gə*]$_{V}$=*è*?

2sg ITRG-what PFX:downward-look for=PROG=ITRG

'What are you looking for?'

B: [*ɑ*]$_{A}$ [*ɑ-zɿ* *nbò*]$_{O}$

1sg.SLF 1sg.SLF-GEN:family horse

[*nɑ-ʈʂɑ*]$_{V}$

downward-look for

'I am looking for my horse.'

12. 1. 1. 2. 5 Ellipsis of O in an AOV clause

O can also be ellipsed in an AOV clause. In this context, A bears an agentive marker =*yikə* (§4. 5. 2. 2. 3). For example:

(12. 7) [*su*]$_{A}$=*yikə* **[Ø]**$_{O}$ [*nɑ-ka,* *nɑ-ka,*...]$_{V}$

person=AGT downward-hit downward-hit

'Someone hit (him) once and again…'

(12. 7) is extracted from a biographical narrative. The speaker talks about her uncle's earlier miserable life. When he was a child, he was sold to a family as a slave and was often beaten by his owner. In (12. 7), the term for the speaker's uncle (that is, O of the AOV clause) was ellipsed, forming a clause like AV on the surface.

12. 1. 1. 2. 6 Ellipsis of both A and O in an AVO clause

(12. 8) shows that both A and O are ellipsed in context since they can be recovered from the preceding clause:

(12. 8) [*asʅsʅ=zì* *tɕʰa-ma-wo=nɛ̀*]$_{O}$

PN:person's name 3sg.GEN-mother-CL:generic, non-sticklike =TOP

[*tʰi*]$_{A}$ *=yikə* [*vù də-tsì=yí*]$_{V}$. ¶ **[Ø]**$_{A}$

1sg.PRT=AGT head PFX:upward-hammer.IDM:kill=CSM

[Ø]$_{O}$ *xatso=tʂaŋa* [*da-kua=zà*]$_{V}$*=dʑɛ̌*

hazo=RLN.LOC:beneath upward-put=PFT=EVID: reported

'She killed Ashishi's mother. (She) put (her) under the hazo[159].'

As can be seen from (12. 8), both A and O are ellipsed in the second sentence '(She) put (her) under the hazo.' This is so because both A, referring to the person who killed Ashishi's mother and O, referring to Ashishi's mother, occur in the preceding clause and thus can be understandable in this context.

12. 1. 2 Topic-comment construction

Similar to its adjacent languages such as Mandarin (Li & Thompson 1981: 85-103) and Puxi Qiang (Huang 2004: 248-63), Ersu is also a typical "topic-comment" language, in which topic-comment constructions are frequently found. This section first discusses the characterization of topic-comment constructions (§12. 1. 2. 1); then compares the "topic" with the "subject" of a simple clause (§12. 1. 2. 2); thirdly, compares the "comment" with the "predicate" of a simple clause (§12. 1. 2. 3), fourthly, discusses the marking of a "topic" (§12. 1. 2. 4) and ends with topicalization (§12. 1. 2. 5).

[159] A "hazo" is a round stone pile which is covered by a stone plate. In previous time, the Ersu had to carry water home on their back in a barrel. When they got water, they put their barrel on the "hazo". That way they need not bend their back picking up and putting down the barrel.

12. 1. 2. 1 Characterization of topic-comment constructions

A "topic" in Ersu is what a clause is about, and a "comment" is the rest of the clause that describes, comments on, or offers necessary and/or further information about the "topic". A topic often occupies a clause-initial slot that is either formally unmarked, or marked with the topical marker *=ɲɛ̀* (§12. 1. 2. 4). Normally, an NP functions as a topic in a clause, while a comment could be any other constituents following a topic, including clauses, VPs, NPs, adjectival phrases, NUM+CL units, etc. The structure of topic-comment construction in Ersu is shown in Table 12. 1:

Topic	Comment	Example
NP(s)	VP(s)	(12. 9)
	NP(s)	(12. 10)
	adjectival phrase(s)	(12. 11)
	NUM+CL unit(s)	(12. 12)
	clause(s)	(12. 13)

Table 12. 1 Topic-comment construction in Ersu

Examples are given from (12. 9) to (12. 13) as indicated in Table 12. 1:

(12. 9) [*ɑ*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*tə-sɿ̀*] *ŋɑ-bɑɲi* *xo*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
1sg.SLF one-CL:little outward-rest MOD:need
'I need to rest for a while.'

(12. 10) [*ɑ-tʰə* *momo-wo=ɲɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$
distal-DEM:this old.RDUP-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP
[*ɑ-zɿ̀* *ɑ-pu*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
1sg.SLF-GEN:family KPFX-grandfather
'That old man (is) my grandfather.'

(12. 11) [*si+pu* *tʰə-pu*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*tsɛ*

wood+living plants:tree DEM:this-CL:living plants really

ya-ɲbo]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

APFX-tall

'This tree (is) really tall.'

(12. 12) [*yadzə̧-wo=ɲɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*si-wo*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

child-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP three-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'(There are) three children.'

(12. 13) [*a*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*yiṣamutɕi-yɛ* *xi=tə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

1sg.SLF PN:person's name-SFX.MAS call=DES

'My name is Yishamuji.' Lit: I, (people) call Yishamuji.

Ersu also has "a secondary scene-setting locative or temporal topic" (Huang 2004: 249) in a simple clause. In this situation, the "secondary topic" is a either a temporal or a locative NP, as is in (12. 14) and (12. 15). It should be noted that a "secondary topic" occurs in the context where it is introduced for the first time:

(12. 14) [*a*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*su+ɲo*]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC}}$ [*ɲisa* *yi=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow hunt go.NPFV=PROS

'I am going to hunt tomorrow.'

(12. 15) [*a-tʰə* *ɲbi=tɕʰo*]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC}}$ [*su*

distal-DEM:this<that mountain=RLN.LOC:on person

tə-bɛ̀]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*ŋuà* *gu=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

one-QUAT.pl ox herd=PROG

'Some people are herding oxen on that mountain.'

It is also acceptable for a simple clause to have both a temporal secondary topic

and a locative secondary topic. For example:

(12. 16) [*ɑ*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*su+ȵɑo*]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC1}}$ [*ɑ-tʰə* *ȵbi*
1sg.SLF next+day:tomorrow distal-DEM:this<that mountain
=tɕʰo] $_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC2}}$ [*ȵisa* *yi=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
=RLN.LOC:on hunt go.NPFV=PROS
'I am going to hunt on that mountain tomorrow.'

Just like S of an SV clause or A of an AOV clause in which S or A can sometimes be ellipsed, a topic of the topic-comment construction can also be ellipsed if it is recoverable in a discourse context. For example:

(12. 17) **[Ø]**$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*tʰə-tɕu=á*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
away-finish=PFV
'(It's) over.' Lit: finished

(12. 17) occurs in most of my language consultants' narratives. Whenever they finish their narration, they end their talking with *tʰə-tɕu=á* 'away-finish=PFV: over'. By saying so, they aim to: firstly, remind me to turn off my recorder; secondly, express that they are relieved to have given the narration. In this situation, they always omit the topic and just say "finished".

12. 1. 2. 2 Topic vs. subject

The topic of a topic-comment construction and the subject of a simple clause may overlap in some context. In other words, a topic may also be a subject. For example:

(12. 18) [*tʰəɾ*]$_{\text{TOPIC. A}}$ [[*zɑ-ma*]$_{\text{O}}$ [*dʐ=gə*]$_{\text{V}}$] $_{\text{COMMENT}}$
3pl. PRT food-SFX.FEM eat=PROG
'They are eating food.'

As can be seen in (12. 18), the pronoun *tʰəˀ* functions as the topic of the comment "are eating food". Meanwhile, it can be viewed as a transitive subject of the verbal predicate "are eating (food)". In (12. 9) above, *a* '1sg. SLF' also functions both as a topic and as an intransitive subject.

However, a topic may also be different from a subject. A clause in Ersu may have a topic but does not have a subject when the subject can be recovered from the context (§12. 1. 1). There are many clauses like this in Ersu, which is similar to Mandarin (Li & Thompson 1981: 88). For example:

(12. 19) [*pa* *yi* *tsu* *yi*
MC:eight month<August MC:nine month<September
=kə=ȵɛ̀]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC}}$ [*pu*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*ȵbɑ=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
=RLN.LOC in=TOP potato dig=PROS
'(People) dig potatoes in about August or September.' Lit: In August or September, will dig potatoes.

(12. 19) shows that *pu* 'potato' occurs before the verbal predicate *ȵba* 'dig'. However, it is not an intransitive subject here. It is in fact the object of the transitive verb *ȵba* 'dig'. The transitive subject of *ȵba* 'dig', that is 'people' is not mentioned here, but it can be understood from the context, in which the speaker is narrating the annual farming work in the Ersu communities. Here, *pu* 'potato' is the topic since it offers the information about what the clause is about, and the rest of the clause offers further information about it, that is, comment.

12. 1. 2. 3 Comment vs. predicate

In most of the situations, a comment is also the predicate of a simple clause, either a verbal predicate, as in (12. 9) above, or a verbless predicate, as in (12. 10) and (12. 11) above. However, when a comment is a unit of NUM+CL, as in (12. 12), or a clause, as in (12. 13) above, it is different from a predicate.

In Ersu, a unit of NUM+CL that directly follows an NP can never function as a predicate. For example:

(12. 20) a. *ʈʂʰo* *si-wo*
dog three-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'three dogs'

b. [*ʈʂʰo=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*si-wo*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
dog three-CL:generic, non-sticklike
'(There are) three dogs/ (Someone) has three dogs.'

(12. 20a) can only be an NP rather than an SV clause. In this NP, the NUM+CL structure is used to modify the head noun *ʈʂʰo* 'dog'. However, when *ʈʂʰo* 'dog' takes a topical marker *=nɛ̀*, then a topic-comment construction like (12. 20b) is formed. A construction like (12. 12) above and (12. 20b) is often used when the speaker is listing objects or is answering a question like "How many dogs do you have?"

In (12. 21), which is like (12. 13) above, the comment of a topic-comment construction is a clause which can never be used as a predicate.

(12. 21) [*su* *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*a* *sɿ*
person DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.SLF MC:matter
tə-sɿ̀ *tʰɑ=va* *kʰato* *mɑ=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
one-CL:bit 3sg.PRT=ACC tell NEG=PROS
'This person, I will not tell him anything.' Lit: This person, I will not tell him a bit of matters.

As can be seen from (12. 21), the comment is an entire clause which has a transitive subject (A) *a* '1sg.SLF', an object (O) *tʰa* '3sg.PRT' and a verbal predicate

(V) *kʰato* ‘tell’. It is obviously not the predicate of the topic *su tʰə-wo* ‘this person’.

A comment often consists of both the predicate and the object of a simple clause, that is, O and V, as shown in (12. 18) above.

12. 1. 2. 4 Topic marking

The topical marker in Ersu is *=ȵɛ̀* ‘=TOP’, and it most frequently follows a topic. When the topic also functions as a subject, it might be formally unmarked, as in (12. 9), (12. 11), (12. 14), (12. 15), (12. 16) and (12. 18) above. When the topic is an NP and the comment is a simple clause, the topical marker is optionally used. For example, the topic *ɑ* ‘1sg.SLF’ in (12. 13) above is unmarked but the topic *su tʰə-wo* ‘person DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike:this person’ in (12. 21) above is marked with the marker *=ȵɛ̀*. My language consultant’s intuition is that if a *=ȵɛ̀* ‘=TOP’ follows the topic *ɑ* ‘1sg.SLF’ in (12. 13) and that if *=ȵɛ̀* in (12. 21) is omitted, the revised (12. 13) and (12. 21) above are both acceptable. When a subject is ellipsed, the topic could be either unmarked or marked. For example: the topic *pu* ‘potato’ of (12. 19) above is unmarked. It can also be marked as in (12. 22) below, without showing any semantic or pragmatic differences:

(12. 22) [*pɑ* *yi* *tsu* *yi*
MC:eight month<August MC:nine month<September
=kə=ȵɛ̀]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC}}$ [*pu=ȵɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*ȵbɑ=gə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
=RLN.LOC:in=TOP patato=TOP dig=PROS
‘(People) dig potatoes in about August or September.’ *Lit*: In August or September, will dig potatoes.

However, when the topic is an NP and the comment is also an NP or a unit of [NUM+CL], the topic obligatorily takes a marker *=ȵɛ̀*, as in (12. 10) and (12. 12) above. More examples for this are respectively given in (12. 23) and (12. 24).

(12. 23) [*ɑ-tʰə* *ŋuà* *ta* *ŋuà=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$

distal-DEM:this<that ox one REPT:ox=TOP

[*ɑ-zɿ* *ŋuà* *tə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

1sg.SLF-GEN:family ox one

'That ox (is) my family's.'

(12. 24) [*ta ɬa=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*sa+tsʰɿ* *ɲo*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$,

one month=TOP three+ten<thirty day

[*təbùtʂhə=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*tsʰɛ+nə* *ɬa*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$.

one year=TOP ten+two:twelve month

'A month (has) 30 days (and) a year (has) 12 months.'

12. 1. 2. 5 Topicalization

As described in §12. 1. 1, the canonical constituent order in Ersu is SV or AOV. However, topicalization is frequently found in Ersu. Topicalization in Ersu means that a slot which would be expected to be in the middle or the end of a simple clause, such as an object, an oblique argument and so on, but it is placed into a clause-initial position to form a topic. In Ersu, there are no restrictions on which arguments or participants can be topicalized. In this situation, the slot must often take a topical marker =*nɛ̀*. This further demonstrates that a topic is different from a subject as discussed in §12. 1. 2. 2. Examples are given in (12. 25):

(12. 25) a. [*nə*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*ɑ-tʰə* *vu* *tʂa* *tʰa*

2sg distal-DEM:this<that wine CL:cup 3sg.PRT

=và *tʰə-ku*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$

=ACC away-toast

'You must toast that cup of wine to him.'

b. [*ɑ-tʰə* *vu* *tʂɑ=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*nə* *tʰɑ*
distal-DEM:this<that wine CL:cup=TOP 2sg 3sg.PRT
=và *tʰə-ku*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
=ACC away-toast
'That cup of wine, you must toast to him.'

c. [*tʰɑ=và=nɛ̀*]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*nə ɑ-tʰə* *vu* *tʂɑ*
3sg.PRT=ACC=TOP 2sg distal-DEM:this<that wine CL:cup
tʰə-ku]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$
away-toast
'To him, you must toast that cup of wine.'

Examples in (12. 26) are ditransitive clauses, in which the verb takes three arguments, A, O and E (§8. 5. 5). In (12. 26a), the topic *nə* '2sg' is the ditransitive subject (A), that is, the donor, which is formally unmarked. However, when O, that is, the gift *ɑ-tʰə vu tʂɑ* 'distal-DEM:this<that wine CL:cup→that cup of wine' in (12. 26b) and E, that is, the recipient *tʰɑ* '3sg.PRT' in (12. 26c) are placed in the clause-initial position as a topic, they both take a topical marker *=nɛ̀*. As can also be seen from Example (12. 8) above, when O, that is, *ɑʂʅsʅ=zʅ̀ tɕʰɑ-mɑ-wo* 'PN:person name=GEN:family 3sg.GEN -mother-CL:generic, non-sticklike→Ashishi's mother' is topicalized and put in the clause-initial position, it is marked with *=nɛ̀*.

12. 1. 3 Types of simple clauses

Types of simple clauses can be categorized either from the perspective of moods (§12. 1. 3. 1) or from the perspective of the characterization of predicates (§12. 1. 3. 2). In Ersu, coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses can also be categorized from these two perspectives. As far as these two perspectives are concerned, the types of coordinate and subordinate clauses are consistent with those of simple clauses. Consequently, though this section focuses on the types of simple clauses, they can also mirror the types of coordinate and subordinate clauses.

12. 1. 3. 1 Types of simple clauses: a perspective of mood

Judging from the perspective of mood, Ersu has three major types of simple clauses: statement, demand and question. §10. 1 has given a detailed discussion. Consequently, only a brief summary is given here. A statement is expressed through declarative mood (§10. 1. 1), including affirmative mood (§10. 1. 1. 1) and negative polarity (§10. 1. 1. 2). A demand is conveyed through imperative mood (§10. 1. 2), including imperative mood (§10. 1. 2. 2), prohibitive mood (§10. 1. 2. 2) and requestive mood (§10. 1. 2. 3). A question is formed through interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3), including polar interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3. 1), tag interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3. 2) and content interrogative mood (§10. 1. 3. 3).

12. 1. 3. 2 Types of simple clauses: a perspective of predicate characterization

There are two types of simple clauses in Ersu, judging by the characterization of predicates. They are verbal clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 1) and verbless clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 2) as is discussed below, respectively.

12. 1. 3. 2. 1 Verbal clauses

A verbal clause usually contains either one VP, or two or more coordinate VPs (§8. 10) as a verbal predicate. In terms of the characteristics of verbal transitivity, verbal clauses in Ersu can be further subclassified as transitive clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 1) and intransitive clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 2). There are also some clauses taking an existential, possessive or locative verb. They are thus defined as existential, possessive or locative clauses in this section (§12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 3).

12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 1 Transitive verbal clauses

The VP of a transitive verbal clause could be either transitive, or ambitransitive, or ditransitive. If the VP is transitive, the clause has two arguments: A and O (§8. 5. 2). An ambitransitive VP in Ersu could be either transitive or intransitive. When it is transitive, the clause, similar to the verbal clause with a transitive VP, also has two

arguments: A and O (§8. 5. 4). A may take an agentive marker =*yikə*, while O may take an accusative marker =*và*. The use of the agentive marker and the accusative marker is dependent on the context (§4. 5. 2 & §4. 5. 3). If the VP is ditransitive, the clause has three arguments, that is, A, O and E. Verbs with the meaning of "speaking" and "give" are typically ditransitive (§8. 5. 5). In this situation, E is obligatorily and formally marked with the accusative marker =*và* (§4. 5. 3).

12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 2 Intransitive verbal clauses

The VP of an intransitive verbal clause should be either intransitive or ambitransitive when the latter is intransitive. An intransitive verbal clause has only one argument, that is, S. Unlike A or O of a transitive clause that may be formally marked, S of an intransitive clause is always unmarked (§8. 5. 3). Some of the verbal clauses may contain an extended intransitive verb. In this situation, the clause can have two arguments: One is the core argument (S), and the other is an oblique (E). Intransitive VPs of this type denote "come", "go", "arrive", etc (§8. 5. 6).

12. 1. 3. 2. 1. 3 Existential, possessive and locative clauses

In Ersu, the possessive relationship between two NPs can be conveyed through the possessor taking a genitive marker (§6. 3). The language also has a rich and complex location-denoting system which includes locational nouns and locative markers (§4. 3. 1. 8 & §4. 5. 8). In addition, existential, possessive and locative clauses can also function to denote a possessive relationship, to assert the existence of an entity and to introduce an entity into the discourse. Clauses of this type always contain an existential/possessive/locative verb (§8. 4). There are five existential/possessive/ locative clauses in Ersu. They are:

1) A clause that takes the verb *dzo* 'there be/have' (§8. 4. 1) can be used not only to introduce the existence of animate referents, fluids and referents mixed with others, but also to denote possessive relationship.

2) A clause that takes the verb *bo* 'have' (§8. 4. 2) prototypically refers to a possessive relationship, used for inanimate referents. Occasionally, it is observed to denote locative/existential relationship. However, the basic structure is still like "someone has something in some places."

3) A clause that takes the verb *dẓa* 'there be' (§8. 4. 3) is only used to denote existential/ locative relationship, suitable for inanimate, movable and concrete objects. It cannot be used for a possessive relationship.

4) A clause that takes the verb *xa* 'there be' (§8. 4. 4) is also only used to denote existential/locative relationship, used for unmovable referents, either living plants or inanimate referents. It cannot be used for a possessive relationship, either.

5) A clause that takes the verb *ɲo* 'there be' (§8. 4. 5) is used for abstract referents. It can denote both possessive and existential/locative relationship.

12. 1. 3. 2. 2 Verbless clauses

Verbless clauses, that is, clauses without a verbal predicate, are quite common in Ersu, a "topic-comment" language (§12. 1. 2). Verbless clauses can be further divided into adjectival clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 1) and nominal clauses (§12. 1. 3. 2. 2).

12. 1. 3. 2. 2. 1 Adjectival clauses

Adjectives in Ersu form a major word class that is distinct from the noun class and the verb class (§3. 3). An adjective can function as a predicate in a simple clause and there is no copula used in the context (§8. 3. 1). For example: "is" in the English clause "She is beautiful" can never be omitted. However, in Ersu, a copula like "is" is never used in this situation. Consequently, the Ersu say "She beautiful" rather than "She is beautiful". In an adjectival clause, the NP as the subject should be definite and should obligatorily take a demonstrative; the adjective as the predicate can optionally

take a clause-final descriptive particle =*tə*. (12. 11) above is a topic-comment construction, and it is also an adjectival clause. In (12. 11), =*tə* is not used[160]. However, it can also be used, as in (12. 26):

(12. 26) *vɛ* *tʰə-wo* *ya-ndɛ=tə*
pig DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike APFX-fat=DES
'This pig (is) fat.'

12. 1. 3. 2. 2. 2 Nominal clauses

Nominal clauses are formed through two or more than two juxtaposed NPs. There is also no copula used to link the NPs in an affirmative mood, just as adjectival clauses in which no copula is used (§8. 3. 1). In a nominal clause, the NP as the subject takes a topical marker while the NP as the predicate is formally unmarked, as in (12. 10) above. The NP predicate functions to identify or classify the subject NP, as respectively shown in (12. 27) and (12. 28):

(12. 27) *tʰə* *yadzə̨-wo=nɛ̀* *a-zì*
DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.SLF-GEN:family
lətʰu
grandchild
'This child (is) my grandchild.'

(12. 28) *xitsɿ* *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀* *sɿ̀zà* *tə*
rabbit DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP god one
'This rabbit (in this mythological story is) a (kind of) god.'

12. 2 Coordinate Clauses

Coordinate clauses in Ersu are two or more simple clauses conjoined together,

[160] Whether a clause takes a clause-final particle =*tə* does not show any semantic difference. However, pragmatically, a clause taking the particle =*tə* is often used in the context where the speaker is reporting something to someone else. This remains unclear at present stage and needs further study in the future.

with a parallel syntactic and semantic status. In other words, these simple clauses form a coordinate clause as an entirety without a modifying vs. modified relationship. Clausal coordination in Ersu include conjunctive coordination (§12. 2. 1), comparative-correlative coordination (§12. 2. 2), sequential coordination (§12. 2. 3), adversative coordination (§12. 2. 4) and disjunctive coordination (§12. 2. 5).

12. 2. 1 Conjunctive coordination

There are three subtypes of conjunctive coordination in Ersu: asyndetic coordination (§12. 2. 1. 1), *dʑì* coordination (§12. 2. 1. 2) and NUM+CL coordination (§12. 2. 1. 3).

12. 2. 1. 1 Asyndetic coordination

Asyndetic coordination refers to the juxtaposition of two or more simple clauses without any coordinator. This is the most frequently seen clausal conjunctive coordination in Ersu. This is quite similar to the context where there are two or more separate independent sentences occurring with each other. However, there are two major strategies to distinguish a coordinate clause consisting of several simple clauses from the co-occurrence of several separate independent sentences:

1) In an Ersu's utterance, the pauses between separate independent sentences are longer than those between the conjunctive coordinate clauses. Actually, a listener can easily understand whether the speaker will continue her/his speaking or not in narration.

2) Simple clauses conjoined in a conjunctive coordinate clause are often used to describe the same event or situation from different perspectives. Most of the coordinate clauses in Ersu consist of two or more syntactic-parallel simple clauses, while the separate independent clauses that occur with each other are not like this. In addition, there is often a simple clause in the coordinate clause which functions to introduce the context or offer a semantic summary. For example:

(12. 29) a. *ɑ* *so+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-kuɑ=*

1sg.SLF before+time: previous time=TOP distal-north=

dziɬalo=kə *dzo=tə.¶* *dziɬalo*

PN:village name=RLN.LOC:in live=DES PN:village name

=kə *də-dzɿ* *dɑ-k^{h}uɑ=yi*

=RLN.LOC:in upward-bear upward-be big=CSM

'In earlier years, I lived in (the village named) Dziillalo. (I) was born in Dziillalo and grew up there.'

b. *a...* *vɛ* *dʑi* *tɑ-zɑ=mɑkɑ* *k^{h}ə-ʈʂ^{h}o=tɕ^{h}i;*

1sg.SLF pig wild one-hundred=more than inward-shoot=EXP

xitsɿkù *tɑ-zɑ=mɑkɑ* *dɑ-nbɑ=tɕ^{h}i;*

bamboo rabbit one-hundred =more than PFX:upward-dig=EXP

... *ɑ-nɛ* *lɑ* *k^{h}ə-ʈʂ^{h}o=tɕ^{h}i.*

ITRG-what EMPH:all inward-shoot=EXP

'I…have previously shot more than 100 wild pigs; have previously dug more than 100 bamboo rabbits; … (I) have previously shot various kinds of things.'

There are two separate independent sentences occurring with each other in (12. 29a). They tell different things. The first sentence tells us where the speaker lives while the second sentence begins to describe his experience there. In contrast, (12. 29b) is a coordinate clause that consists of three juxtaposed simple clauses. They function to describe the same event, that is, the speaker's hunting experience. The coordinate clause begins with an introduction (a separate independent sentence that is omitted here) saying that the speaker likes hunting a lot. Then he further introduces what kind of hunting experience that he has had and ends with a summary to say that he has had different kind of experience.

More asyndetic conjunctive clauses are given in (12. 30) and (12. 31).

(12. 30) *ɑ^{l} ə^{l}su-bè=nè, momo-bè=nè,*

1pl.SLF PN:Ersu-QUAT.pl=TOP old.RDUP:old people-QUAT.pl=TOP

vù+tɕò da-nua tsu tə-bè;

head+bind:turban upward-black wear one-QUAT.pl

ts^{h}o-p^{h}ɑ-bè=nè, vù+tɕò

dog-SFX.MAS:young people-QUAT.pl=TOP head+bind:turban

də-ə^{l} tsu tə-bè; lə-ma

upward-white wear one-QUAT.pl hand?-SFX.FEM:bride

sɻ-wo=nè, vù+tɕò da-nua

new-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP head+bind:turban upward-black

tsu tə=bè.

wear one=QUAT.PL

'We Ersu people (are dressed like this): the old people wear a black turban; the young people wear a white turban (and) the newly-married brides (also) wear a black turban.'

(12. 31) *ə^{l}su-bè dzats^{h}onba xà=nè, su*

PN:Ersu-QUAT.PL PN:a kind of religious ritual time=TOP person

ya-mi tə-bè na-ra=gə tə-bè:

APFX-many one-QUAT.pl downward-gather=PROS one-QUAT.pl

t^{h}ə=kə tə=bè vu ts^{h}è;

DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here one-QUAT.pl wine drink

ɑ-t^{h}ə=kə tə-bè yi

distal-DEM:this<that=RLN.LOC:in<there one-QUAT.pl tobacco

ts^{h}è; ɑ-nɛ ŋu=su la dzo.

drink ITRG-what do=NOM EMPH:all EXT

'When the Ersu are doing the Dzaconba ritual, a lot of people will gather: (there are) some people drinking; (there are) some people smoking; (there are)

people doing whatever (all kinds of things).'

As can be seen from (12. 30) and (12. 31) above, there is always an introduction (either a topic as in (12. 30) or an independent sentence as in (12. 31)) preceding the coordinate clause. In (12. 31), the last clause offers a semantic summary of the coordinate clause.

12. 2. 1. 2 *dʑì* coordination

In conjunctive coordination, the adverb *dzì* 'also' is observed to precede the predicate of each of the simple clauses in the coordination structure. In a coordinate clause of this type, *dzì* 'also' has been grammaticalized and functions only as a coordinator. Consequently, it is glossed as CO 'coordinator' rather than ADV 'also' in this section. For example:

(12. 32) *a^{l}=yi gamɛ dʑì ya-dzə; gaga*
1pl.SLF=GEN body CO APFX-good play.RDUP:entertainment
dʑì ya-dzə; yip^{h}a-wo dʑì da-wa
CO APFX-good stomach-CL:generic, non-sticklike CO upward-be full
'We are in good health; (we) are enjoying entertainments (and we) are not starving.' Lit: Our body good; play good; stomach full.

(12. 33) *latɕikù=nè tə-sʔ ya-li: tɕ^{h}o dʑì*
PN:village name=TOP one-CL:bit APFX-good zanthoxylum CO
ku, kuàtsʔ dʑì ku.
yield MC:melon seed CO grow
'Lajigu (is) a bit better: (Here) zanthoxylum can be grown (and) melon seeds can be grown.' Lit: Lajigu a bit good: zanthoxylum grow; melon seeds yield.

12. 2. 1. 3 NUM+CL coordination

As ellipsis often occurs in Ersu, the unit of [NUM+CL] can be assigned to each

of the juxtaposed simple clauses to express asyndetic conjunctive coordination when the referent can be recovered from the context, as in (12. 34) and (12. 35).

(12. 34) *tə-wo=nɛ̀*, *so=pʰɛ* *ga=gə*; *tə-*
one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP before-LOC:side sing=PROG one-
wo=nɛ̀, *tʂaŋa* *toto=gə*.
CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP behind jump.RDUP:dance=PROG
'One (person) is singing in the front (and) the other (person) is dancing behind.'

(12. 35) *tə-wo=nɛ̀*, *ma-pɛ*; *tsʰɛtsʰɛ-*
one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP NEG-enough ten.RDUP-
wo=nɛ̀, *pɛ*.
CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP enough
'One (of these is) not enough (and) ten (of these are) enough.'

12. 2. 2 Comparative-correlative coordination

Comparative-correlative coordination is semantically similar to English "The more…the more…" construction. In Ersu, this is realized through the reduplication of the prefixes of the verbal or adjectival predicates in the juxtaposed simple clauses. This is quite unique and not reported in the literature on adjacent languages so far. For example:

(12. 36) *tsi* *nə-nə-sɳ=nɛ̀*, *tsi*
hair downward-downward-comb=TOP hair
ŋə-ŋə-ndə
outward-outward-good
'The more (they use the comb to) comb (their hair), the better (their) hair (is).'

(12. 37) *dalo*

a container made of a thick and long carved wood to contain pig food

=kə	*vɛ*	*ɳdza*	*ɳə-ɳə-tsɻ,*
=RLN.LOC:in	pig	pig food	downward-downward-feed
vɛ-bɛ̀	*ŋa-ŋa-ka.*		
pig-QUAT.pl	outward-outward-be thin		

'The more (he fed his) pigs with (the) container, the thinner (his) pigs (became).'

The comparative-correlative construction is formed not only through the reduplication of directional prefixes of a verb and the adjective prefix of an adjective as shown in (12. 36) and (12. 37) above, but also through the negative *mɑ-* 'NEG-' as shown in (12. 38) below.

(12. 38)

mɛ̀+ʧò	*mɑ-mɑ-ɳdo=ɳɛ̀,*	*sɻsɻ*
nature+bind:sky	NEG-NEG-see=PAUS	walk.RDUP
mɑ-mɑ-ɳdzə		
NEG-NEG-comfortable		

'The darker it is, the more difficult it is to walk.' Lit: The sky not not see, walk not not comfortable.

12. 2. 3 Sequential coordination

Sequential coordination refers to the fact that two or more simple clauses are conjoined to express that the preceding event leads to the later event, or that the preceding event has happened, and then the later event occurs as a sequence.

A sentential-final adverb *dʑigə* 'subsequently' can be used to mark sequential coordination.[161] In sequential coordination, clauses denoting the preceding events

[161] *dʑigə* can also be used as a sentential-final evidential marker (§11. 1. 2).

need not take an aspectual marker while the last clause can be marked with an aspectual marker, depending on the context (§10. 1), as show in (12. 39) and (12. 40):

(12. 39) *da ma kʰə-tsʰo=nɛ̀, ɱgu=và kʰə-zo*
one arrow inward-shoot=TOP forehead=ACC inward-target
=á dʑigə.
=PFV ADV:subsequently
'(He) shot an arrow (and) subsequently, (he) shot (the person in the) forehead.'

(12. 40) *ɑ=zɿ̀ kʰuakʰuɑ-wo=nɛ̀,*
1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:father-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP
dɑ-ma-ɕoɕo tʰi kʰɑ-ndza,
upward-NEG-move.RDUP DEM:like this inward-stand
tɕi-su=á dʑigə
take-CAUS=PFV ADV:subsequently
'My father did not move (at all and kept) standing like this, (and) subsequently, let (them, the Yi robbers) take (away all things in the house).'

Sequential coordination can also be expressed through two or more juxtaposed simple clauses without taking any formatives like the above *dʑigə* 'subsequently'. The reading of sequences could be figured out through a listener's logical reasoning. For example:

(12. 41) *tʰə* *vɛmatɕodʐu=và* *kʰə-ʂʅ* *ma-to;*

DEM:this PN:a devil's name=ACC inward-win NEG -MOD:can

vɛmatɕodʐu=kə=nɛ̀, *nə-ntɕʰi* *ŋə-dzʅ=á*

PN:a devil's name=AGT=TOP downward-bite outward-eat=PFV

=dʑɛ̌.

=EVID:reported

'(It is said that she) could not win against Vaimaqodzhu (and) Vaimanqodzhu bit (her) (dead and) ate (her).'

12. 2. 4 Adversative coordination

Adversative coordination refers to two or more simple clauses conjoined to indicate semantic opposition or contrast. Adversative coordination can be formally further divided into three subtypes: the juxtaposition of two or more simple clauses (§12. 2. 4. 1), two or more simple clauses linked through *dà* 'CO:but' (§12. 2. 4. 2) and the construction of "X *lə* X-adjectival root" or "Y *lə* Y' taking a coordinator *dà* 'CO:but' (§12. 2. 4. 3).

12. 2. 4. 1 Juxtaposition of simple clauses

Adversative coordination in Ersu can be expressed through the juxtaposition of two or more than two simple clauses without any coordinators or formatives. However, the opposite or contrastive meaning of the simple clauses can be figured out by a listener through context. For example:

(12. 42) *a* *tsɛ* *ʂaŋa,* *a* *npʰo* *ma=gə*

1sg. SLF really poor 1sg. SLF steal NEG =PROS

'I (am) really poor, (but) I will not steal.'

12. 2. 4. 2 Simple clauses linked through *dà* 'but'

In this context, there is one (or more than one) clause functioning as a statement and there is another clause which conveys the information of counter-expectation or

of a contrast meaning. The coordinator *dà* 'but' is used to combine these simple clauses, which follows the preceding clause as a statement. For example:

(12. 43) *gamɛ* *tʰa-tsʰa* *dzolo* *ya-ndzə* *dà,*
coat DEM:this-CL: paper-like look APFX-good CO:but
tə-sɿ̀ *tʰə-ʂə=á.*
one-CL:a bit away-long=PFV
'The coat looks good, but (it is) a bit long.'

(12. 44) *tʰə* *gamɛ* *malakà=tə* *dà,* *sòmò* *ya-dzo=tə.*
3sg.SLF body small=DES CO:but strength APFX-EXT=DES
'He is small in size, but (he is) strong.' Lit: Although his body small, has strength.

The coordinate clause in (12. 42) shows a contrastive meaning. That is, the speaker is satisfied with the looks of the coat, but s/he may feel dissatisfied with its size. (12. 43) conveys the information that the speaker might take it for granted that a person should be weak due to his/her small size, but the person that s/he describes in (12. 43) is in fact strong. This is contrary to her/his expectation.

12. 2. 4. 3 Construction of "X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*" or "Y *lə* Y *dà*"

The data also show that when the Ersu are talking to themselves, they use "X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*" or "Y *lə* Y *dà*" construction to express their inner thinking or worries about something that might counter their expectation. It can be translated as 'It is really… and this is the case, but…' A clause then follows either of the two constructions to form adversative coordination.

In the construction of **"X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*"**, X is the prefix of an adjective, either the prefix *ya-* or other prefixes (see §3. 3. 1 for adjectival morphology). It could also be the first syllable of an inherently reduplicated adjective. For example, the

adjective *yɑ-li* 'APFX-good' can be reduplicated as *ya lə yɑ-li dà* 'APFX CO APFX-good CO:but→It is really good and this is the case, but…'. The adjective *k^huk^hu* 'curvy.RDUP' can be reduplicated as *k^hu lə k^huk^hu dà* 'curvy CO curvy.RDUP CO:but→It is really curvy and this is the case, but…'

In the construction of **"Y *lə* Y *dà*"**, Y is the adjectival root. Consequently, the adjective *yɑ-li* 'APFX-good' can also be reduplicated as *li lə li dà* 'good CO good CO:but →It is really good and this is the case, but…'

When an adjective is *yɑ-*prefixed, either of the two constructions, that is, "X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*" and "Y *lə* Y *dà*", can be used and the both show no semantic and pragmatic differences. For example, both *ya lə yɑ-li dà* 'APFX CO APFX-good CO:but' and *li lə li dà* 'good CO good CO:but' mean 'It is really good and this is the case, but…' and they can be used in the same context. However, when an adjective does not take a *yɑ-* prefix, but other adjectival prefixes such as *də-*, only the construction of "X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*" can be used. In other words, when an adjective does not take the prefix *yɑ-*, only its prefix can be reduplicated in this context, not its root. For example, it is acceptable to say *da lə dɑ-nua dà* 'APFX CO APFX-black CO:but→It is really black and this is the case, but…', but it is unacceptable to say *nua lə nua dà* 'black CO black CO:but'. More examples are given in Table 12. 2:

ADJ	RDUP Construction	Translation
ya-nts^{h}u 'good'	*ya lə ya-nts^{h}u dà*	It is really good and this is the case, but…
	nts^{h}u lə nts^{h}u dà	
ya-ntɕ^{h}o 'beautiful'	*ya lə ya-ntɕ^{h}o dà*	It is really beautiful and this is the case, but…
	ntɕ^{h}o lə ntɕ^{h}o dà	
də-ə^{l} 'white'	*də lə də-ə^{l} dà*	It is really white and this is the case, but…
da-nua 'black'	*da lə da-nua dà*	It is really black and this is the case, but…
tsutsu 'straight'	*tsu lə tsutsu dà*	It is really straight and this is the case, but…
zuzu 'harmonious'	*zu lə zuzu dà*	It is really harmonious and this is the case, but…

Table 12. 2 Reduplication forms of adjectives with adversative meaning

Note that *lə* 'CO' is quite unique in the construction of "X *lə* X-adjectival root *dà*" or "Y *lə* Y *dà*". It only functions as a coordinator. In addition, it never experiences vowel harmony, which is unlike /ə/ in other words. (12. 45) below demonstrates the above construction is followed by a simple clause to indicate adversative coordination:

(12. 45) *li lə li dà, nbanba=kə*
good CO good CO:but root.RDUP=RLN.LOC:in
a-nɛ mixa ma-ntɕ^{h}i ?
ITRG-what seem NEG:not-?know
'(The boy) is really good and this is the case, but what (his) older generation seems like, who knows?' Lit: good good, but what root seems, not know?

(12. 45) is a speech from a girl's father who is thinking about whether to marry his daughter to a young man or not. He is satisfied with the boy himself, but he feels unsure about whether the boy's family is suitable or not. This is taken when the man was talking to himself, which reflects his inner thinking.

12. 2. 5 Disjunctive Coordination

Disjunctive coordination refers to two or more simple clauses conjoined to express the information "…or…" This is realized through the coordinator *la* 'or/otherwise', which is also used in disjunctive coordinate NPs (§6. 4. 2) and in disjunctive coordinate VPs (§8. 10. 2). However, clausal disjunctive coordination occurs in a quite low frequency in the data. For example:

(12. 46) *ȵə su+ȵo vakə ʒɿ=gə*
2sg ?next+day:tomorrow PN: county seat name go=PROS
la tʰə su-ȵo vakə
CO:or 3sg.PRT ?next-day:tomorrow PN:county seat name
ʒɿ=gə=è?
go=PROS=ITRG
'Will you go to Yuexi or will he go to Yuexi tomorrow?'

(12. 47) *ȵə vu tʰa tʂaˈ ŋə-tsʰɛ la*
2sg wine DEM:this MC:glass PFX:outward-drink CO:or
a tʰa tʂaˈ tsʰɛ=gə
1sg.SLF DEM:this MC:glass drink=PROS
'You drink this glass of wine, or I will drink the glass.'

12. 3 Subordinate Clauses

In Ersu, there are some sentences which consist of a main clause and a subordinate clause (or a dependent clause). A subordinate clause offers additional or further information about the main clause and it cannot stand alone as an independent sentence. There are three types of subordinate clauses found in Ersu. They are: relative clauses (§12. 3. 1), adverbial clauses (§12. 3. 2) and complement clauses (§12. 3. 3).

12. 3. 1 Relative clauses: an overview

Ersu has two types of relative clauses: headless relative clauses (§12. 3. 1. 1) and headed relative clauses (§12. 3. 1. 2). Relative clauses are mainly externally pre-headed. Post-headed ones are seldom found in the data. However, the syntactic constituent order between a relative clause and an NP head can be adjusted in accordance with the need of topicalization (§12. 1. 2. 4). This is discussed in §12. 3. 1. 3.

Relative clauses are commonly formed through a nominalized clause construction in Tibeto-Burman languages (e.g. Delancey 1999, 2005, 2011; Genetti et. al. 2008; Noonan 2008a; etc.). The construction of a relative clause in Ersu can also be realized through a nominalized clause on its own (§4. 2. 3) as shown in (12. 48a) below (a headless relative clause), a nominalized clause plus an NP head (a headed relative clause) as shown in (12. 48c) below, and a simple clause or a VP plus a numeral classifier or a quantifier (headless relative clause) or a lexical noun (a headed relative clause) as shown in (12. 48b) below. When it is formed through a VP plus a numeral classifier or a quantifier, it is quite similar to an Irish "subjectless clause" (Noonan 2004).

When a relative clause is formed through a simple clause or a VP plus a numeral classifier or a lexical noun, the classifier and the noun occupy the same syntactic slot as a nominalizer does. They directly follow the simple clause or the VP. For example:

(12. 48) a. *tʰə* **[***baŋ˧i* *ma-li=su***]**$_{RC}$
DEM:this listen to NEG:not-good=NOM
'the **one that is not obedient**' Lit: the not good listener

b. *tʰə* **[***baŋ˧i* *ma-li***]**$_{RC}$*-ka*
DEM:this listen to NEG:not-good-CL:generic, sticklike
'the **one that is not obedient**' Lit: the not good listening

c. *tʰə* **[*baŋi*** ***ma-li*]**$_{RC}$ *əˈndzə*

DEM:this listen to NEG:not-good dragon

'the dragon **that is not obedient**' Lit: the not good listening dragon

The three examples in (12. 48) are all excerpted from the same folktale. As can be seen from (12. 48), the nominalizer =*su* in (12. 48a), the classifier -*ka* in (12. 48b) and the noun *əˈndzə* 'dragon' in (12. 48c) all directly follow the VP *baŋi ma-li* 'listen to NEG-good→not obedient'. Since the noun *əˈndzə* 'dragon' can be recovered from the context, (12. 48a), (12. 48b) and (12. 48c) show no semantic differences, all referring to 'the dragon that is not obedient'. However, they show some sort of syntactic and pragmatic distinctions. Both (12. 48a) and (12. 48b) have an anaphoric function, and (12. 48a) can further take a classifier, forming a relative clause like *tʰə baŋi ma-li=su-ka* 'DEM:this listen to NEG-good=NOM-CL:generic, sticklike→ the one that is not obedient' while (12. 48b) cannot. (12. 48c) is only used in the context where the referent is being highlighted and can also further take a classifier as *tʰə baŋi ma-li əˈndzə-ka* 'DEM:this listen to NEG-good dragon-CL:generic, sticklike →the dragon that is not obedient'.

12. 3. 1. 1 Headless relative clauses

Headless relative clauses refer to those clauses without an explicit NP head. The head is either coreferential with the relative clauses or is underlying and can be recoverable in context. The clauses of this type include nominalized relative clauses with an overt nominalizer, that is, "headless nominalized relative clauses" (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1) and those relative clauses with a classifier (or a quantifier), rather than an overt nominalizer marker, thus defined as "headless non-nominalized relative clauses" (§12. 3. 1. 1. 2) in this section.

12. 3. 1. 1. 1 Headless nominalized relative clauses

The most commonly seen relative clauses in Ersu are headless nominalized

relative clauses. In other words, nominalization is a major relativization strategy in Ersu and a nominalized clause itself can function as a relative clause. Just like Galo (Post 2007: 758), Ersu also has two subtypes of nominalized clauses: gapped nominalized clauses (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1. 1) and full nominalized clauses (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1. 2). There is at least one ellipsed syntactic constituent "which is coreferential with the nominalized predicate" (Post 2007: 758) in a gapped nominalized clause. In contrast, none of the syntactic constituent is ellipsed in a full nominalized clause. The data demonstrate that gapped nominalized clauses by far outnumber full nominalized clauses in Ersu. Both gapped nominalized clauses and full nominalized clauses may function as an underlying coreferential argument NP head of a main clause on their own.

12. 3. 1. 1. 1. 1 Gapped nominalized clauses

In a gapped nominalized clause, either a transitive subject (A) or an intransitive subject (S) can be ellipsed.

Gapped nominalized clauses without "A" are shown from (12. 49) to (12. 52) below.

(12. 49) *zintʂʰə-mɑ=nɛ̀,* **[Ø** ***xuɑ=vɑ̀***
PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=TOP bird=ACC
pʰu =su]$_{RC}$ *tə=ʂə̀*
catch something with a rope loop =NOM one=RLN:space around a referent
pɑ+ duɑ́= dʑɛ̌
place+go.PFV:arrived =EVID:reported
'(It is said that) Ziinchema arrived at a **bird-catching person**'s family.'

(12. 50) **[Ø *nbò* *ə*^{I} *tʂ*^{h}*ʅ=su*]**$_{RC}$ =*nɛ̀*, *tə+ȵo+ȵo* *t*^{h}*ə*

horse hay cut=NOM=TOP one+day+day:every day DEM:this

xua=yi-wo *sì* *tsʅtsʅ*

Bird=DIM-CL:generic, non-sticklike only play.RDUP

'(The) **person who cuts hay for horses** plays with the little bird every day.'

Nominalized clauses like (12. 49) and (12. 50) with an overt nominalizer =*su* are the most productive in Ersu. In a clause of this type, the transitive subject A is always ellipsed since =*su* '=NOM' itself is an agentive nominalizer (§4. 2. 3). In addition, the nominalized clause functions not only as a relative clause but also as an underlying argument NP head. The nominalized structure *nbò ə*^{I} *tʂ*^{h}*ʅ=su* 'horse hay cut=NOM→ the person who cut horse hays' in (12. 50) is a case in point.

When the nominalizer is not the agentive =*su*, but other nominalizers such as the purposive =*li* or the locative/instrumental =*ta* (§4. 2. 3), the transitive subject A can also be ellipsed. For example:

(12. 51) *nə* *də* **[Ø *vɛ* *tə* *ka=li*]**$_{RC}$ *la* *ma-bo*

2sg family pig one kill=NOM EMPH:all NEG-EXT

'Unexpectedly, your family does not have **something that (we can) kill a pig.**' Lit: You family one pig kill all not have.

(12. 52) *t*^{h}*ə* **[Ø *dzo* *tɕ*^{h}*i =ta*]**$_{RC}$=*kə*

DEM:this water carry…on one's back=NOM=RLN.LOC:in

ndzontsʅ *tə* *dʐa=nɛ̀…*

written word one EXT =PAUS

'There is a written word in the **place where (I) carry water**…'

Gapped nominalized clauses without "S" are shown in (12. 53) and (12. 54) below.

(12. 53) *tʰə* [**Ø** ***nə-nbɛ̀=gə =su***]$_{RC}$*=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=yi*

DEM:this downward-cry=PROG=NOM=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN

yadzə

child

'The **one who is crying** (is) my child.'

(12. 54) *yɛ̀+so+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ^{l}* *ə^{l}su-bɛ̀* [**Ø**

from-before-time=TOP:ancient times 1pl.SLF PN:Ersu-QUAT.pl

kʰɑ-mɑ=tɑ]$_{RC}$*-bɛ̀* *la* *mɑ-bo*

inward-sleep=NOM=QUAT.pl EMPH:all NEG-EXT

'In ancient times, we Ersu did not have **devices for sleeping**.'

As can be seen from (12. 53) and (12. 54), both *nə-nbɛ̀* 'downward-cry' and *kʰɑ-mɑ* 'inward-sleep' are intransitive verbs that can only take an intransitive subject (S). However, S in the two nominalized clauses is ellipsed.

12. 3. 1. 1. 1. 2 Full nominalized clauses

Full nominalized clauses are those clauses in which no syntactic constituent is ellipsed. Examples are given in (12. 55) and (12. 56).

(12. 55) *tʰə* [*za+pu=zì*] *va-ma*

DEM:this hundred+manage:king=GEN:family ?-SFX.FEM:female maid

dzo ***tɕʰi =su***]$_{RC}$-*wo=nɛ̀*, *tə*

water carry…one's back=NOM-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP one

ȵo=nɛ̀, *dzo* *ta* *xa* *sì* *tɕʰi*

day=TOP water one CL:barrel only carry…on one's back

=dʑigə

=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) the **one who is the female water-carrying maid of the king's family** only carries one barrel of water a day.'

(12. 56) *yò*^{I} *tʂʰa=nɛ̀*,… [*tʂʰo* *ma-ə*^{I}*=ta*]$_{RC}$ *=kə*,

1pl.OTR devil=TOP dog NEG-bark=NOM=RLN.LOC:in

[*la* *ma-ŋ=ta*]$_{RC}$*=kə* *ʒŋ=gə*

chicken NEG-crow=NOM=RLN.LOC:in go.NPFV=PROS

'We devils…will go to the **places where dogs do not bark and where roosters do not crow**.'

In (12. 55), the nominalized clause is a complete AVO construction without any syntactic constituent ellipsed. It contains the transitive subject (A), *za+pu=zì va-ma* 'hundred+manage:king=GEN:family ?-SFX.FEM:maid → the king's maid', the object (O), *dzo* 'water' and the transitive verb (V), *tɕʰi* 'carry…on one's back'. (12. 56) consists of two juxtaposed coordinate nominalized relative clauses. The two nominalized clauses are full SV constructions with both the intransitive subjects (S) *tʂʰo* 'dog' and *la* 'rooster' and the intransitive verbs (V) *ə*^{I} 'bark' and *ŋ* 'crow' being completely kept.

12. 3. 1. 1. 2 Headless non-nominalized relative clauses

As mentioned in §12. 3. 1, a headless non-nominalized relative clause refers to a relative clause that does not take an overt nominalizer. The relativization is realized

through a simple clause or a VP directly taking a classifier or a quantifier. An NP head is ellipsed because it can be recoverable from the context. Note that when a classifier or a quantifier follows a simple clause, the internal structure of the simple clause is the same as that of a nominalized clause, that is, it may be either "gapped" or "full" (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1). For example:

(12. 57) **[*dava ŋu=gə-bɛ̀*]**$_{RC}$ *=nɛ̀,* *ndzɻa* *ŋə-tsʰɛ=á*

guest do=PROG-QUAT.pl=TOP ndzha outward-drink=PFV

'(The people) **who are guest**s have eaten ndzha[162].' Lit: Do as guests eat ndzha.

(12. 58) *ɑ-tʰə* **[*kʰə-tʂʰʅ=tsɑ̀-wo*]**$_{RC}$

distal-DEM:this<that inward-bite=PFT-CL:generic, non-sticklike

=nɛ̀, *m̩nɡu* *batɕa* *tə-sʅ* *kʰɑ-sɑ=tsà*

=TOP forehead scar one-CL:bit PFX:inward-leave a mark=PFT

dʑigə

consequently

'Consequently, that (apple becoming a girl) **which was bitten** has a scar on (her) forehead.'

The examples above show that the NP head "the people" in (12. 57) and "the apple becoming a girl" in (12. 58) are ellipsed. This is so because they can be understood from the context. Classifiers and quantifiers prototypically follow an NP and either enumerate or classify the NP in Ersu (§7. 1). When they follow a simple clause or a VP, native speakers can spontaneously reason out that the clause or the VP

[162] "ndzha" is a culturally-specific word closely associated with Ersu marriage rituals. It is a kind of food made with fried rice, tofu and meat served in a basin. ndzha is prepared by two groups of people. The first group is the groom's relatives or friends who live along the roads where the bride is supposed to pass by. They cook ndzha and feed those people from the bride's family group who are sending the bride to the groom's family when they are halfway. The second group is the villagers of the groom's village. They also cook ndzha and feed those people who are sending the bride exactly at the time when they arrive at the groom's village. The functions of ndzha is firstly, to let guests from the bride's side have a rest on the way and secondly, to show that the bride is warmly welcomed into the groom's village.

denote a nominal referent. Consequently, classifiers and quantifiers can to some extent "nominalize" a clause or VP in this context though they are not nominalizers.

12. 3. 1. 2 Headed relative clauses

Headed relative clauses can be further divided into two subtypes: headed nominalized relative clauses (§12. 3. 1. 2. 1) and headed non-nominalized clauses (§12. 3. 1. 2. 2). A "headed nominalized relative clause" refers to a clause in which an NP head follows a nominalized clause with an overt nominalizer. A "headed non-nominalized relative clause" is that an NP head directly follows a simple clause or a VP without any nominal marking.

12. 3. 1. 2. 1 Headed nominalized relative clauses

The basic structure of a headed nominalized relative clause as discussed above is that a nominalized clause is followed by an NP head. There are two indispensible elements in a clause of this type: an overt nominalizer and an NP head. In this situation, the nominalized clause and the NP head are coreferential. The difference between a headless nominalized relative clause and a headed nominalized relative clause is that a speaker knows more about the referent of a headed clause than of a headless clause. For example:

(12. 59) a. *ɑ=yikə* *ɑ-tʰə* **[*ɑ=zɿ*** ***ŋuà***
1sg.SLF=AGT distal-DEM:this<that 1sg.SLF=GEN ox
***ȵpʰo=su*]**$_{RC}$ *dɑ-ká*
steal=NOM upward-hit.PFV
'I hit (**the person who) stole my ox**.'

b. *ɑ=yikə* *ɑ-tʰə* **[*ɑ=zì*** ***ŋuà***
1sg.SLF=AGT distal-DEM:this<that 1sg.SLF=GEN ox
***ŋpʰo=su*]**$_{RC}$ *yadzi̱ə-wo* *da-ká*
steal=NOM child-CL:generic, non-sticklike upward-hit.PFV
'I hit the child **who stole my ox**.'

(12. 59a) is a headless nominalized relative clause and (12. 59b) is a headed nominalized relative clause. In (12. 59a), although the speaker says that s/he hit the person who stole her/his ox, no more information is provided. However, (12. 59b) provides further information about the ox-stealing person, that is, 'that child'. (12. 59b) demonstrates that the nominalized clause and the NP head are coreferential, both referring to 'that child'.

More examples for headed nominalized clauses are given in (12. 60) and (12. 61):

(12. 60) … **[*tsi əʲ=ta*]**$_{RC}$ *batsa* *lalaŋu=yi,* *tʰə-əʲ* *tʰɑ-luɑ=yi...*
hair cut=NOM knife prepare=CSM away-cut away-cut=CSM
'… prepared a knife **that is a hair-cutter** and cut (the strings bound on her waist…)'

(12. 61) *tʰə* **[*mɛ+sa*** ***dzolo=su*]**$_{RC}$ *sìzà*
DEM:this nature+leave a mark:geomantic omen look=NOM god
-wo=nɛ̀, *"yòyò* *ta* *kuala*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.OTR.RDUP:myself one CL:circle
=nɛ̀, *nə* *də=kə* *la=gə…"*
=TOP 2sg family=RLN.LOC:in come=PROS…
'The god **who is a geomancer** (says): "I myself will come to your family and have a look…'" Lit: The geomantic-omen-looker, the god: "I will come to your family a circle."

12. 3. 1. 2. 2 Headed non-nominalized relative clauses

As discussed in §12. 3. 1, a headed non-nominalized relative clause in Ersu is a simple clause or a VP that is directly followed by an NP head without an overt nominalizer. More specifically, a simple clause or a VP without an overt nominal marker in Ersu can be used to modify an NP head in a straightforward way. In this context, the verbal predicate of the relative clause can take an aspectual marker as in (12. 62) and (12. 63)

(12. 62) *t^{h}ə=kə,* **[*za+pu*** ***də***
DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<then hundred+manage:king family
t^{h}ə ***asʮsʮ=và*** ***tsɛ*** ***yi=gə***]$_{RC}$ *ɲo=nè,*
DEM:this PN:name=ACC meet go.NPFV=PROS day=TOP
asʮsʮ=nè, *za-ma* *ts^{h}ə-su=tsà*
PN:person's name=TOP food-SFX.FEM cook-CAUS=PFT
=dʑigə
=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) then, on the day (**when) the king's family was going to meet Ashishi**, Ashishi was required to cook food.'

(12. 63) **[*la-wo*** ***xa***]$_{RC}$ *də=dʑigə...*
tiger-CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT family=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) a family (**that) has a tiger**…'

12. 3. 1. 3 Syntactic constituent order of a relative clause and an NP head

Huang (2007: 263) reports that there are two types of embedded relative clauses in Puxi Qiang. They are either "head-external" or "head-internal". Head-external relative clauses can be further divided into three subtypes: "pre-head", "post-head" and "headless" relative clauses. Andrews (2007) states that there are external relative clauses, internal relative clauses and free relative clauses cross-linguistically. Ersu relative clauses are mainly externally headless or pre-headed as shown in the

examples from (12. 48) to (12. 63) and as discussed in §12. 3. 1. 1 and §12. 3. 1. 2.

Externally post-headed relative clauses are also found in Ersu, but they occur comparatively infrequently. Post-headed relative clauses are always unmarked. For example:

(12. 64) *ȵinua=kə=nɛ̀* *m̩tsɿ-wo* *mɛntʂʰə*

same gender sibling=AGT=PAUS cat-CL:generic, non-sticklike tail

-ka **[*ə^{I}kʰua-wo=kə***

-CL:generic, sticklike stone-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.LOC:in

***kʰa-tɕatɕa=zà*]**$_{RC}$ *də-ntʂʰə* *də-tsʰu* *ànɛ̀…*

inward-clip=PFT upward-pull upward-open LINK:after

'After the younger brother pulled out the cat's tail **that was caught by a stone**…'

(12. 65) *nə* "*za+pu*"*=tə=dʑà,* *nə gamɛ*

2sg hundred+manage:king=DES=EVID:quotative 2sg coat

ta-tsʰa, **[*tʰi*** ***mixa*]**$_{RC}$ *a=bo=ɛ̀ ?*

one-CL:paper-like 3sg.GEN seem ITRG=EXT=ITRG

'(People call) you "the majesty", (but) do you have a coat **that is like his**?'

It should be noted that though the majority of relative clauses in Ersu are externally pre-headed, an NP head can be pre-posed to a relative clause in a topicalization context (§12. 1. 2). For example, (12. 61) above extracted from a folkloric story which is reported in a natural way can be changed into (12. 66) below obtained through elicitation and is accepted by my language consultants. For reading convenience, (12. 61) is re-copied here to compare with (12. 66).

(12. 61) *tʰə* **[*mɛ+sa*** ***dzolo=su*]**$_{RC}$ *sʔ̀zà*

DEM:this nature+leave a mark:geomantic omen look=NOM god

-wo=nɛ̀, *“yòyò* *ta* *kuala*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.OTR.RDUP:myself one CL:circle

=nɛ̀, *nə* *də=kə* *la=gə…”*

=TOP 2sg family=RLN.LOC:in come=PROS…

‘The god **who is a geomancer** (says): “I myself will come to your family and have a look…”’

(12. 66) *tʰə* *sʔ̀zà-wo* **[*mɛ***

DEM:this god-CL:generic, non-sticklike nature

***+sadzolo=su*]**$_{RC}$*=nɛ̀,* *“yòyò*

+leave a mark:geomantic omen look=NOM=TOP 1sg.OTR.RDUP:myself

ta *kuala=nɛ̀,* *nə* *də=kə* *la=gə…”*

one CL:circle=TOP 2sg family=RLN.LOC:in come=PROS…

‘The god **who is a geomancer** (says): “I myself will come to your family and have a look…”’

In (12. 61), the relative clause is pre-headed while in (12. 66), it is post-headed. (12. 61) and (12. 66) show no semantic differences. However, *sʔ̀zà* ‘god’ is topicalized in (12. 61) and *mɛ+ sa dzolo=su* ‘nature+leave a mark look=NOM:geomantic omen-looker’ is topicalized in (12. 66).

Topicalization can function not only to adjust the syntactic constituent order between a relative clause and an NP head but also to divide a rather long relative clause into two or more shorter coordinate relative clauses that are used to modify the same one NP head as shown in (12. 67) below.

(12. 67) a. *ɑ-tʰə* **[***ni=yikə* ***badzɻə*** ***yɑ-mi*** ***tə-***

distal-DEM:this<that 2sg=AGT money APFX-much one

bè ***tʰə-tɕʰi*** ***yo*** ***gu=su***]$_{RC}$

QUAT.pl away-give sheep shepherd=NOM

-wo, *ɑ=nɛ̀* *tɕiyi*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike 1sg.SLF=TOP always

gui=mɑ-gɑ

INTS=NEG-like

'I always dislike that **person** a lot, **who is a sheepherder and to whom you gave much money**.' Lit: That you give much money sheep-shepherding person, I always very do not like.

b. *ɑ-tʰə* **[***yo*** ***gu=su***]$_{RC1}$

distal-DEM:this<that sheep shepherd=NOM

-wo, ***ni=yikə*** ***badzɻə*** ***yɑ-mi*** ***tə-***

-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2sg=AGT money APFX-much one

bè ***tʰə-tɕʰi-wo***]$_{RC2}$*=nɛ̀* *ɑ*

QUAT.pl away-give-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.SLF

=nɛ̀ *tɕiyi* *gui=mɑ-gɑ*

=TOP always INTS=NEG -like

'I always dislike that **person** a lot, **who is a sheepherder and to whom you gave much money**.' Lit: That sheep-shepherding person, the one you give much money, I always very do not like.

(12. 67a) above is extracted from a long conversation which is reported in a natural way. When I was curious about this long modifying relative clause in the field, my language consultant spontaneously produced (12. 67b). He told me that the two examples in (12. 67) share the same meanings and both are acceptable. It can be seen that the rather long headless nominalized relative clause (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1)

ni=yikə badzə̧ ya-mi tə-bɛ̀ tʰə-tɕʰi yo gu=su ‘who shepherds sheep and to whom you gave much money’ in (12. 67a) is divided into two shorter relative clauses in (12. 67b), that is, a headless nominalized relative clause (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1) *yo gu=su* ‘who shepherds sheep’ and a headless non-nominalized relative clause (§12. 3. 1. 1. 2) *ni=yikə badzə̧ ya-mi tə-bɛ̀ tʰə-tɕʰi-wo* ‘to whom you gave much money’.

12. 3. 2 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses in Ersu can be further divided into three subtypes: conditional clauses (§12. 3. 2. 1), temporal clauses (§12. 3. 2. 2) and cause-effect clauses (§12. 3. 2. 3). They are overtly marked with different clause-final subordinating linkers. Most of the linkers may co-occur with the pause marker *=nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1). This is so-called because native speakers always pause after *=nɛ̀* in their speaking. Consequently, in this context, *=nɛ̀* can also be viewed as a boundary between a subordinate clause and a main clause. For example:

(12. 68)	[*ŋɑ-bɑ*	*tʰə=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$	[*tə-sɿ̀*	*ŋɑ-bɑŋi*]$_{MCL}$
	outward-be tired	LINK:if=PAUS	one-CL: a bit	outward-rest
	‘If (you) are tired, rest for a while.’			

It should be noted that *=nɛ̀* does not follow all subordinate linkers. More specifically, some obligatorily take *=nɛ̀* and some optionally take it. Furthermore, there are some linkers never co-occurring with it. Details are given in the subsections below, respectively.

12. 3. 2. 1 Conditional clauses

Conditional clauses provide a situation or condition for the main clauses. When the conditions are satisfied, an event described in the main clauses will be realized or come true. Most of the languages in the world distinguish between realis conditionals and irrealis conditionals (Thompson, Longacre &. Hwang 2007). Realis conditionals denote real present, habitual, generic or past situations while irrealis conditionals

present hypothetical, counterfactual, imagined and predicted situations.

Ersu also distinguishes between realis conditionals and irrealis conditionals. They share the same syntactic rules and the same marking strategy. Both are marked with the clause-final linker *tʰə* 'if', which optionally takes the pause marker *=ɲɛ̀*. The distinction between realis conditionals and irrealis conditionals is based on the semantic role that a conditional clause plays and the state of the conditions that a conditional clause denotes in the context. In addition, conditional clauses, regardless of realis or irrealis, always precede the main clause, no matter whether they take a pause marker or not.

Realis conditionals, irrealis conditionals and the co-occurrence of the linker *tʰə* 'if' and the pause marker *=ɲɛ̀* are respectively discussed in §12. 3. 2. 1. 1, §12. 3. 2. 1. 2 and §12. 3. 2. 1. 3 in order.

12. 3. 2. 1. 1 Realis conditionals

As discussed in §12. 3. 2. 1, realis conditionals in Ersu are associated with either presently, or habitually occurring events. They are all overtly marked with the linker *tʰə* 'if', or the co-occurrence of *tʰə* 'if' and the pause marker *=ɲɛ̀*.

A present conditional clause sets a condition in a current situation. If the condition is satisfied, a subsequent event will accordingly happen. For example:

(12. 69) [*ɲə tɑ+ɲo yɑ=và dzo=gə tʰə=ɲɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*yɑdzə-wo tʰə-siŋu*]$_{MCL}$

2sg ?+day:today home=ACC stay=PROG LINK:if=PAUS child -CL:generic, non-sticklike away-take care of

'If you are at home today, (you) take care of the baby.'

(12. 70) [*ɲə=nɛ̀,* *tʂʰo tso* *tə la* *vɛ* *tso* *tə la* *su*

2sg=TOP dog excrement one CO pig excrement one CO person

tso *tə* *kʰə-tʂutʂu,* *yò=và* *dzŋ* *la* *tʰə*

excrement one inward-wrap.RDUP 1sg=ACC eat come LINK:if

=nɛ̀,]$_{SCL}$ [*yò=nɛ̀,* *ɲɑ=và* *dɑ-kʰatʰo=gə*]$_{MCL}$

=PAUS 1sg.OTR=TOP 2sg=ACC upward-tell=PROS

'If you wrap up a dog excrement, a pig excrement and a human excrement and feed them to me, I will tell you.'

A habitual conditional clause proposes a general or common condition for an event. When the condition is fulfilled, a subsequent event will habitually happen, as shown in (12. 71) and (12. 72):

(12. 71) [*yi* *dɑ-ŋa* *tʰə=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*tʂʰo=yi* *tʰə*

stomach upward-starve LINK:if=PAUS dog=DIM DEM:this

-bɛ̀ *tɕiyi* *əˈəˈ=gə*]$_{MCL}$

-QUAT.pl always bark.RDUP=PROG

'If (they feel) starving, these small dogs are always barking and barking.'

(12. 72) [*guà* *ʒò=gə* *tʰə=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*aˈ* *latɕikù* *su=nɛ̀,*

rain fall=PROG LINK:if=PAUS 1pl PN:village name person=TOP

yɑ-mi *tə-bɛ̀* *tɑ-wa* *vu* *tsʰɛ̀=gə*]$_{MCL}$

APFX-many one-QUAT.pl one-circle:together wine drink=PROG

'If it is raining, many of us, the Lajigu people, are drinking wine together.'

12. 3. 2. 1. 2 Irrealis conditionals

Irrealis conditionals in Ersu can be further divided into hypothetical conditionals (§12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 1), predictive conditionals (§12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 2) and counterfactual conditionals (§12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 3). As discussed in §12. 3. 2. 1, they are all marked with

the clause-final linker *tʰə* 'if', or the co-occurrence of the linker *tʰə* 'if' and the pause marker =*nɛ̀*. This is the same as the realis conditionals.

12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 1 Hypothetical conditionals

A hypothetical conditional clause sets a condition as a person imagines in his/her mind. If the condition is satisfied, a subsequent imagined event may possibly happen. For example:

(12. 73) [*nə ndʐə-ma-li* *tʰə*,]$_{SCL}$ [*nə zɿ̀=ta* *bo*
2sg believe-NEG -believe LINK:if 2sg sit=NOM flat
=*kə* *pa+duá=nɛ̀*, *kʰə-dzolo*]$_{MCL}$
=RLN.LOC:in place+go.PFV:arrive=PAUS inward-look
'If you do not believe (in me), you have a look (when you) come to a flat sitting place'

(12. 74) [*tʰə* *baŋi* *ma-li* *tʰə=nɛ̀*,]$_{SCL}$ [*da-ntʂʰa*]$_{MCL}$
3sg.PRT listen to NEG -good LINK:if=TOP upward-hit…with a stick
'If he does not listen to (you), hit (him).'

12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 2 Predictive conditionals

A predictive conditional clause proposes a situation in the future. If it is satisfied, a subsequent event will also happen in the future. "Future" in this context is often expressed through temporal terms that denote a future moment or a future period of time. In addition, the VP of the main clause is often marked with the prospective aspectual marker =*gə*. For example:

(12. 75) [*ŋə tɑ+xuɑ la tʰɤ=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*ɑ nɑ*

2sg ?+night:tonight come LINK:if=PAUS 1sg.SLF 2sg.ACC

tʂɑ yi mɑ=gə]$_{MCL}$

find go.NPFV NEG=PROS=PFV

'If you come tonight, I will not go and find you.'

(12. 76) [*sɯ+ɻo nə si tʂʅ yi=gə tʰɤ=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$

?next+day:tomorrow 2sg wood cut go.NPFV=PROS LINK:if= PAUS

[*ɑ^{l} dʑì tʂʅ yi=gə*]$_{MCL}$

1pl.SLF also cut go.NPFV=PROS

'If you go and cut firewood tomorrow, we will also go and cut firewood.'

12. 3. 2. 1. 2. 3 Counterfactual conditionals

The marking of counterfactual conditionals appears to be rather complicated. A counterfactual conditional clause often follows a clause stating the fact which is marked with *tətəgəʂə* 'the fact is…'[163]. It is also marked with *tʰə* 'if' or *tʰɤ=nɛ̀* 'if=PAUS'. Then, it is followed by a main clause that denotes an imagined counterfactual event. However, the "fact" clause can be ellipsed in large discourse context like a narrative. In short daily conversation, it is seldom found to be ellipsed. Consequently, an entire counterfactual conditional is like: fact→imagined counterfactual condition→imagined counterfactual result as shown in (78) and (79).

(12. 77) *tʰə mɑ-la tətəgəʂə,* [*la tʰə,*]$_{SCL}$ [*ɑ=yikə*

3sg NEG-come ?the fact come LINK:if 1sg.SLF=AGT

dɑ-kɑ]$_{MCL}$

upward-hit

'The fact is that he did not come. If he had come, I would have hit him.'

[163] Though *tətəgəʂə* as an entirety can be translated into 'the fact is…', the meaning of the compositional elements is not attested.

(12. 78) [*ɑ-tʰɑ-xa* *tʰi* *tɕʰa* *tʰə*

distal-DEM:this-time<that moment DEM:like this do LINK:if

=nɛ̀,]$_{SCL}$ [*tʰɑ-lɑ-tʰə-nbu=tə* *la* *mɑ-ndo*]$_{MCL}$

= PAUS away-EMPH:all-away-succeed=DES EMPH:all NEG-see

'At that moment, if (I) had done so, (I) would have succeeded.' Lit: that time, if do like this, all succeed all not see

(12. 77) above is taken from a daily conversation. In this example, the clause that denotes the fact and is marked with *tətəgəʂə* 'the fact is…' is not ellipsed. In contrast, (12. 78) above is extracted from an autobiographical narrative, in which the fact that "I did not do so" is ellipsed since it can be recovered from the context.

12. 3. 2. 1. 3 Co-occurrence of the linker*tʰə* 'if' and the pause marker =*nɛ̀*

As discussed above and as shown in the examples above, a conditional clause can be marked with either the sole linker *tʰə* 'if' or the co-occurrence of the linker *tʰə* 'if' and the pause marker =*nɛ̀*. When it is marked with both *tʰə* 'if' and =*nɛ̀*, there is an obvious pause in the speaker's utterance, but whether a conditional clause marked with *tʰə* 'if' or with *tʰə=nɛ̀* 'if=TOP' shows no semantic and pragmatic difference. Consequently, =*nɛ̀* is optionally used in the context. For example:

(12. 79) a. [*otɕa* *dzɿ* *buatʂə* *tʰə,*]$_{SCL}$ [*a* *ni* *vaka*

pear eat want LINK:if 1sg.SLF 2sg.GEN help

kʰə-zɿ=gə]$_{MCL}$

inward-buy=PROS

'If (you) want to eat pears, I will help you buy (them).'

b. [*otɕa dzɿ buatʂə $t^hə$ =nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*a ni vaka*
pear eat want LINK:if= PAUS 1sg.SLF 2sg.GEN help
$k^hə$-zi=gə]$_{MCL}$
inward-buy=PROS
'If (you) want to eat pears, I will help you buy (them).'

When I was in the field, I consulted with my language consultants about whether to use a pause marker or not. They held different opinions on this. Some insisted that the pause marker =*nɛ̀* should be obligatorily used in this context, while some objected to this. However, most of them believed that if *$t^hə$* 'if' is followed by =*nɛ̀* '=PAUS', the speaking sounds more "natural and spontaneous". This implies that =*nɛ̀* may develop into an indispensible morpheme of the adverbial clause linkers since the linkers of temporal adverbial clauses (§12. 3. 2. 2) and the linkers of cause-effect adverbial clauses (§12. 3. 2. 3) also co-occur with it. Moreover, =*nɛ̀* '=PAUS' can never be omitted in the temporal sequential linker *ànɛ̀* 'after' and the causal linker *buànɛ̀* 'because'.

12. 3. 2. 2 Temporal clauses

Time relations in Ersu can be expressed with multiple strategies. This includes temporal nouns (§4. 3. 1. 10), aspectual markers (§9), and pause marker =*nɛ̀* in an utterance (§13. 5. 1). Take temporal nouns for example. Both *tʂaŋa* 'later' and *tsomo+nga* 'bottom+back:later' can denote that two events occur in a temporal sequence. *tʂaŋa* 'later' is a general term while *tsomo+nga* 'bottom+back:later' is a rhetorical temporal term that derives from *tsomo* 'bottom', a term originally referring to a body part. *$t^hə$=gə* 'DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in→at the time' can imply that two events occur simultaneously.

Time relations in Ersu can also be expressed through temporal clauses. They can be further divided into sequential temporal clauses (§12. 3. 2. 2. 1), simultaneous temporal clauses (§12. 3. 2. 2. 2) and boundary temporal clauses (§12. 3. 2. 2. 3). Like

conditional clauses, temporal clauses also precede the main clauses in Ersu. Each subtype of temporal clauses is marked with a different subordinating linker.

12. 3. 2. 2. 1 Sequential temporal clauses

A subordinate sequential temporal clause indicates that the event occurs before another event. Note that in Ersu, a term for "before" is not found in the data. The sequential relationship between two events is expressed through *ànɛ̀* 'after'. That is, "After A (a sequential temporal clause) occurs, B (a main clause) subsequently occurs." In this context, the sequential temporal clause is marked with the clause-final linker *ànɛ̀* 'after', while the main clause is left unmarked.

I hypothesize that the subordinating linker *ànɛ̀* 'after' has been lexicalized from the combination of the perfective aspectual marker =*á* and the pause marker =*nɛ̀* and by changing the tone of *á* to *à*. This is so because the perfective =*á* can also denote the first event in a sequence (§9. 3. 1. 3). This is consistent with the expression of a sequential temporal clause that is pre-posed to the main clause and also denotes the first one of the two events. It is lexicalized because *à* and *nɛ̀* in *ànɛ̀* 'after' can never be separated from each other when they are used together as a sequential temporal clause linker. For example:

(12. 80) [*yadzə̨ tə dzo ànɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*duá=yi, a-pu+*
child one EXT LINK:after go.PFV=CSM KPFX-grandfather+
a-n̥o=ʂə̀ xi-ma
KPFX-mother-in-law:parents-in-law=LOC:place ?-SFX.FEM:woman
+*vu tɕi duá*]$_{MCL}$ =*dzɛ̌*
+wine take go.PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) after (they) had a baby, (he) went to the parents-in-law's family to fetch woman wine[164].'

[164] "woman wine" is culturally specific. In Ersu, when a woman has just delivered a baby, she will stay in an unventilated room. (This is so in some Han communities, too.) It is said that a woman cannot expose herself to

(12. 81) [*zɑ-mɑ* *kʰə-tʂʰə* *ànɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*ʂə+dzo*

food-SFX.FEM inward-cook LINK:after flea+soup:soup made of fleas

tə-bɛ̀ *kʰə-tʂʰɤ=yɪ*]$_{MCL}$

One-QUAT.pl inward-cook=CSM

'After cooking rice, (the devil) cooked some soup with louses.'

12. 3. 2. 2. 2 Simultaneous temporal clauses

A simultaneous temporal clause denotes that when an event occurs, another event simultaneously occurs or the two events may overlap for some time. In Ersu, this is expressed through the subordinating temporal clause marked with the clause-final linker *xɑ* 'when', or the co-occurrence of *xɑ* 'when' and the pause marker *=nɛ̀*. Just like the co-occurrence of the conditional linker *tʰə* 'when' and the pause marker *=nɛ̀* (§12. 3. 2. 1), whether *xɑ* 'when' takes *=nɛ̀* or not is optional, without showing any semantic and pragmatic differences. In addition, the co-occurrence of *xɑ* 'when' and *=nɛ̀*, that is, *xɑ=nɛ̀* 'when=PAUS' occurs much more than the sole *xɑ* 'when' in the data.

xɑ 'when' is also a bound morpheme which means 'time' such as *tʰɑ-xɑ* 'DEM:this-time<now/at present', *ɑ-tʰɑ-xɑ* 'distal-DEM:this<that-time<that time', *so+xɑ* 'before+time:previous time', etc. Examples are given in (12. 82) and (12. 83).

(12. 82) [*kʰə-dzolo* *xɑ=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*zìyì=mɑmɑ*

inward-look LINK:when= PAUS daughter=NCL:small and round

tə-dzə *tʰə-pɯ=yɪ*]$_{MCL}$

one-QUAT:pair away-become=CSM

'When (she) had a look, (the two apples) became (her) two daughters.' Lit: When look, has become a pair of daughters.

wind and cold water for at least one month after her giving birth. This tradition is still kept in the Ersu communities and in the rural Han communities nowadays. In addition, in this month, an Ersu woman is said to be able to keep healthy by drinking wine made by her parents. This wine is called "woman wine" literally.

(12. 83) [*nə=zì* *ʂì* *dzɿ* *vu* *ts^{h}ɛ* *xɑ=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$

2sg=family meat eat wine drink LINK:when= PAUS

[*yò=và* *mɑ-k^{h}at^{h}o*]$_{MCL}$

1sg.OTR=ACC NEG-tell

'When your family are eating meat and drinking wine, (you) do not tell me.'

Simultaneous temporal clauses can also be realized through the interrogative pronoun *ɳaxa* 'when'. However, this is quite marginal since it does not occur quite often in the data. For example:

(12. 84) [*nə də* *nə-mɛxi=nè,* *lɑ-p^{h}ɛ*

2sg family two-CL:opposite gender siblings=TOP chick-SFX.MAS:rooster

t^{h}ɑ-ka *də-ŋ* *ɳaxɑ=nɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$

DEM:this-CL:generic, sticklike upward-crow when=TOP

[*t^{h}ɑ-xa* *ŋɑ-lɑ=mǎ*]$_{MCL}$

DEM:this-time outward-come=RQT

'You two, brother and sister, should come out when the rooster crows.'

12. 3. 2. 2. 3 Boundary temporal clauses

A boundary temporal clause is marked with the clause-final linker *dəsi* 'until' or the co-occurrence of *dəsi* 'until then' and the pause marker *=nɛ̀* with the latter optionally used. This is similar to the co-occurrence of the conditional linker *t^{h}ə* 'if' and the pause marker *=nɛ̀* (§12. 3. 2. 1. 3). In this context, the subordinate clause, that is, the marked temporal clause, occurs before the main clause. In addition, it is found that the subordinate clause always takes a perfective aspectual marker *=á*. For example:

(12. 85) [*tsʰi=yi* *tʰɑ-pa* *nə-ntʂʰʅ*

goat=DIM DEM:this-CL:lovely young animals downward-cut open

ŋɑ-la *ŋə-dzʅ=á* *dəsi=nè,*]$_{SCL}$

outward-come PFX:outward-eat=PFV LINK:until= PAUS

[*tʰə=kə=ta* *tə-sʅ*

DEM:this-RLN.LOC:in<this time=RLN.LOC:place one-CL:a bit

da-kʰatʂa]$_{MCL}$

upward-be healthy

'(They) did not become healthier and healthier until (they) killed the small goat and ate it.' Lit: Until (they) killed the small goat and ate (it), (they) became healthier and healthier from then on.

However, although *dəsi* 'until' marks the initial subordinate clause in Ersu, its reading could be the marking of the main clause in English. I hold the opinion that it marks the subordinate clause rather than the main clause because there is an obvious pause in utterance between *dəsi* 'until' and the main clause, but there is no pause between it and the subordinate clause. That is, a boundary temporal clause sounds like "A-*dəsi* 'until', B." For example:

(12. 86) [*tʰi* *tʰə-siŋu=á* *dəsi,*]$_{SCL}$ [*tʰə* *də*

DEM:like this away-care for=PFV LINK:until 3sg.PRT family

=kə *tʰə-mo-su=á*]$_{MCL}$

=RLN.LOC:in away-die-CAUS=PFV

'(They) cared for (geomancker) like this, until (he) died in their family.'

As can be seen from (12. 86) above, *dəsi* 'until' occurs in the initial subordinating temporal clause in Ersu. However, in its English translation, its reading lies in the main clause.

In Ersu, a temporal boundary relation can also be realized through the main

clause marked with an adverb *si* 'until then'. *si* 'until then' always precedes the predicate of the main clause. Furthermore, a subordinate boundary temporal clause is left unmarked though it occurs before the main clause. The predicate of the subordinating clause also takes a perfective aspectual marker =*á*. For example:

(12. 87) [*ʂɿ̀-bɛ̀* *kʰə-tso* *də-xi=á,*]$_{SCL}$ [*si*
meat-QUAT.pl inward-cook upward-well cook=PFV ADV:until then
dzɿ pʰa]$_{MCL}$
eat MOD:can
'Not until the meat is cooked well, can it be eaten' Lit: Meat should be well cooked, until then (it) can be eaten.

(12. 88) [*ɑ=zɿ̀* *ɑ-pu* *tʰə-sɔ=á,*]$_{SCL}$ [*a*
1sg=GEN:family KPFX-grandfather away-die=PFV 1sg.SLF
si *də-dzɿ=zà*]$_{MCL}$
ADV:until then upward-be born=PFT
'Not until my grandfateher had passed away was I born.' Lit: My grandfather passed away, until then I was born.

12. 3. 2. 3 Cause-effect clauses

A cause-effect structure involves two clauses: one clause that offers reasons and the other clause that denotes effects or results. There are three subtypes of cause-effect clauses in Ersu judging by the different clause-linkers used: the clause-final linker *buànɛ̀* 'because' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 1), the linker *tətəyì* 'so/consequently' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 2) that can be either clause-initial or clause-final, and the clause-final *dʑigə* 'subsequently/consequently' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 3).

12. 3. 2. 3. 1 *buànɛ̀* 'because'

buànɛ̀ 'because' is the most commonly used cause-effect linker in the data. It always occupies a clause-final slot. In this context, the subordinate causal clause is

marked with *buànɛ̀* 'because', while the main clause that refers to the result is unmarked. In addition, the subordinate clause precedes the main clause. I hypothesize that the linker *buànɛ̀* 'because' consists of two inseparable morphemes with the morpheme *bua* 'because' and the pause marker =*nɛ̀*. This is quite similar to the sequential temporal clause linker *ànɛ̀* 'after' (§12. 3. 2. 2. 1). For example:

(12. 89) [*tʰə* *də̀-ȵɪ̀=á* *buànɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$ [*ma-la*]$_{MCL}$
3sg.PRT upward-be sick=PFV LINK:because NEG-come
'Because he is sick, (he) does not come.'

(12. 90) [*a-tʰə=kə* *də-tsu=zà* *buànɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$
distal-DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<there upward-boil=PFT LINK:because
[*tsʰɿ-po* *dʑɪ̀ a-tʰə=kə* *na-kua*]$_{MCL}$
salt-CL:package also distal-DEM:this= RLN.LOC:in<there downward-put
'Because (the river water) is boiling there, (I) put the salt (into it).'[165]

12. 3. 2. 3. 2 *tətəyì*, 'so/consequently'

tətəyì 'and so/consequently' is different from *buànɛ̀* 'because' in that it is often used in a clause-initial slot. It can also be used in a clause-final slot but there are just a few examples. The most important of all, it is employed to mark the main clause, that is, the clause denoting results rather than reasons. When *tətəyì* 'so/consequently' occurs in a context, a structure like "reason, → *tətəyì* 'and so/consequently'→result" or occasionally like "reason,→ result→ *tətəyì* 'and so/consequently'" is found in the data. Note that *tətəyì* 'and so/consequently' can replace *buànɛ̀* 'because'. For example, the (12. 89) above can also be linked with 'so/consequently' as in (12. 91) below. One more example is also given in (12. 92) below.

[165] (12. 90) is extracted from a narrative about an idiot. When his wife delivered a baby, he went to his parents-in-law's family. His mother-in-law gave him some salt and told him that the salt could only be pour into boiled water. When he was going home and he saw a river with many huge waves. He took it for granted that the water in the river was boiling and poured the salt into it.

(12. 91) [*tʰə də-ɲɛ̀=á*]$_{SCL}$ [*tətəyì mɑ-la*]$_{MCL}$

3sg.PRT upward-be sick=PFV LINK:consequently NEG-come

'He is sick, and consequently, (he) does not come.'

(12. 92) [*ɑ-tʰə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀, bo tə-bɛ̀,*]$_{SCL}$

distal-DEM:this-QUAT.pl=TOP EXT one-QUAT.pl

[*tətəyì vùlà ntsʰɛ tə-bɛ̀*

LINK:and consequently cloth CL:load of one shoulder one-QUAT.pl

tə=sə̀ tʰi mɑ-tɕʰɑ dʑì mɑ-pʰɑ]$_{MCL}$

one-CL:a bit DEM:like this NEG-do also NEG-MOD:can

'Those (people are) rich, and consequently, (we) must do so to (get) a load of (their) cloth.' Lit: These have, and consequently, cannot not do so to (get) a load of, a bit of cloth.

(12. 93) is an example showing that *tətəyì* 'and consequently' may occur after the main clause, that is, it occupies the clause-final slot in the main clause.

(12. 93) [*zŋ la zi-bɛ̀=và ŋə-ndzŋndzɑ=yi,*]$_{SCL}$

son CO daughter=QUAT.pl=ACC outward-think about=CSM

[*tʰə yi nə-ʂʐpu tətəyì*]$_{MCL}$

3sg.PRT MC:also downward-be diligent LINK:and consequently

'(She always) thinks about (her) sons and daughters, and consequently, she is working very hard.'

Note that the linker *tətəyì* has a variant *tɕʰɔtətəyì* 'so/consequently' that can stand alone when the reason is recoverable from the context. (12. 94) is an example for *tɕʰɔtətəyì* 'so/consequently'. In this context, the speaker has already told a long folkloric story in which a king was always tricked by a smart woman. Therefore, the king used his right and power to hold back the development of women's wisdom. After giving all the background information, the speaker then summarizes the story

with (12. 94), in which the clauses denoting the reasons are ellipsed since they can be recoverable from the context:

(12. 94) *tɕʰɔtətəyì,* *xi-mɑ-bɛ̀=nɛ̀*
LINK:consequently woman-SFX.FEM-QUAT.pl=TOP
mɑ-ntsʰə=tə=dʑɛ̌
= NEG-smart=DES=EVID:reported
'Consequently, (it is said that) women are not smart (any more).'

12. 3. 2. 3. 3 *dʑigə* 'subsequently/consequently'[166]

In Ersu, the sequential coordinator *dʑigə* 'subsequently' can also be used to mark the main clause of the cause-effect construction, which can be translated as 'consequently'. It occupies a sentential-final position. Actually, it is not an easy job to distinguish the sequential *dʑigə* 'subsequently' and the result-denoting linker *dʑigə* 'consequently' because if it is translated as 'subsequently' in a cause-effect construction, it is also acceptable. The reason for this might be that the relationship between cause and effect can also be viewed as a sequence. That is, when the cause occurs, then the effect or the result will subsequently occur. For example:

(12. 95) [*bɛəˡ* *tɑ-ka* *kʰə-dzolo=á,*]$_{SCL}$ [*də-tɕima*
snake one-CL:generic, sticklike inward-look=PFV upward-scare
dʑigə]$_{MCL}$
LINK:consequently/subsequently
'(He) saw a snake and consequently/subsequently, (he) felt scared.

[166] *dʑigə* can also be used as a reported evidential marker (§11. 1. 2. 3).

(12. 96) [*mamɑ-kɑ=nɛ̀,* *vùlà* *mɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀, …*]$_{SCL}$

small-CL:generic, sticklike=TOP cloth NEG-come=TOP

mamɑ-kɑ=nɛ̀ *nə-nbɛ=á*

[small-CL:generic, sticklike=TOP downward-cry=PFV

ʤigə]$_{MCL}$

LINK:consequently/subsequently

'The youngest (daughter) did not get the cloth … and consequently/subsequently, the youngest (daughter) cried.'

12. 3. 3 Complement clauses[167]

In Ersu, there are some verbal predicates that can take an embedded clause rather than an NP as a core argument. These clauses are not relative clauses, conditional clauses, locative and temporal clauses but complement clauses since they function as the core arguments of predicates (Noonan 2007; Dixon 2006b; 2010b: 370). An Ersu complement clause is often embedded as an O argument of a complement-taking predicate (CTP), forming a constituent order of A→complement clause (O) → CTP (V) as shown in (12. 97), in which the clause 'what he said' is used as an O argument.

(12. 97) *ɑ* [*tʰə* *ɑ-nɛ* *kʰɑtʰo-yi*]$_{CC}$

1sg.SLF(A) [3sg.PRT ITRG-what tell-CSM](O)

xɑ-mɑ-sɛ

know-NEG-know:not know(V)

'I do not know **what he said.**'

In accordance with the types of CTPs, Noonan (2007) points out that complement clauses can be further subdivided into the following subtypes: utterance, knowledge

[167] Cross-linguistically, a complement clause must take an overt complementizer (Alexandra Aikhenvald &. R. M. W. Dixon p. c.). However, the "complement clauses" discussed in this section are embedded in a main clause witout any markers except for complement clauses of perception. Consequently, many "complement clauses" discussed here can be alternatively analysed as clauses in apposition. However, these unmarked "complement clauses" in Ersu, similar to the complement clauses in other languages, also occupy an O slot and function as the core argument of a main clause, which is a salient feature of complement clauses. Therefore, I analyse them as "complement clauses" in this work.

and acquisition of knowledge, fearing, desiderative, manipulative, modal, achievement, phasal (or aspectual), propositional attitude, pretence, modal and immediate perception. Dixon (2006b; 2010b: 270) states that a complement clause features the internal structure of a clause, core argument of another clause and a proposition. Considering these characteristics of a complement clause, Ersu has a relatively more restricted set of complement clauses. They are (in terms of the semantic type of CTPs): utterance (§12. 3. 3. 1), perception (§12. 3. 3. 2), knowledge (§12. 3. 3. 3), fear (§12. 3. 3. 4), desiderative (§12. 3. 3. 5), phasal (§12. 3. 3. 6) and modal (§12. 3. 3. 7). In addition, it is observed that only complement clauses of the perception CTPs take a complementizer *=tà* and that other complement clauses are embedded in a main clause without any markers.

12. 3. 3. 1 Utterance

Utterance CTPs in Ersu mainly involve indirect quotation like English: "He said that he was tired", rather than quoted speech like English: He says: "I am tired" although utterance CTPs taking quoted speech appear to be the norm in other Tibeto-Burman languages[168]. This is so because quoted speech in the language is marked with the clausal- or sentential-final evidentials which might have grammaticalized from a conservative lexical verb *dʑi* 'say' rather than the daily used lexical verbs such as *də-kʰatʰo* 'upward-tell'; *də-fusɛ* 'upward-say'; *də-xi* 'upward-utter'; etc. This is discussed in §11. 1. 2. An example for quoted speech taking a quotative evidential is given here:

(12. 98) *tʰə=nɛ̀* "*yò* *ʂʔ=và* *la* *vu=và*
3sg.PRT=TOP 1sg.OTR meat=ACC CO wine=ACC
bɑ=dǒ."=*dʑà=nɛ̀*
carry…on one's back=AFFM=EVID:quotative=TOP
'She (spoke this): "I am carrying meat and wine on my back."'

[168] Thanks to one of the examiners for pointing out this typological features of other Tibeto-Burman languages.

In (12. 98), there is no lexical verb like "say" used. The reading of "say" is conveyed through the evidential =*dʑà* and its variants that might have been grammaticalized from the lexical verb *dʑi* 'say' and the perfective aspectual marker =*á* through vowel fusion and tonal variation (§11. 1. 2. 3).

The data demonstrate that the lexical verb *da-kʰatʰo* 'upward-tell' can take a complement clause as a core argument. In addition, even if a lexical verb is used, a quotative evidential is still obligatory in the context. For example:

(12. 99) "*nə kʰatʰo=yì* **[*yadʐə=nɛ̀ tə+ȵo+ȵo nə-nbɛ***
2sg say=GEN child=TOP one+day+day:every day downward-cry
=*yì* *ma-tɕo=tə*]$_{CC}$" =*dʑà*
=CSM NEG -be obedient=DES=EVID:quotative
'(He spoke like this): "You said **that the child cried every day and was not obedient**.'"

(12. 100) "*nə* … **[*a-nɛ ȵo=nɛ̀, a-nɛ ȵo*]**$_{CC}$
2sg ITRG-what EXT=TOP ITRG-what EXT
aʳ=và da-kʰatʰo=mǎ" =*dʑà*
1pl.SLF=ACC upward-tell=RQT=EVID:quotative
'(He said like this): "You tell us **whatever you want to say**.'" Lit: You tell us what have what have.

Note that (12. 99) above shows that the CTP verb *kʰatʰo* 'say' is extraposed before the complement clause, forming a AVO-like syntactic constituent order. This is quite rare in the data. The majority of the examples still show a canonical AOV constituent order (§12. 1. 1) even if the utterance verb takes a complement clause. The reason for this extraposed phenomenon, I hypothesize, is that this is a quotation which is marked with the clause-final quotative evidential =*dʑà*. One more example like (12. 99) is given as below:

(12. 101) *nɛ̀,* *yadʐə=và* *kʰatʰo=yì* **[“*nə=nɛ̀,*** ***tʰə***

then child=ACC say=GEN tell=GEN 2sg=TOP DEM:this

-wo=kə=nɛ̀, ***si+la***

-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.LOC:in wood+land:bushes

=kə ***ȵi-nbɛ*** ***yi*** ***kʰə-npʰi***

=RLN.LOC:in downward-slip go.NPFV inward-hide

***xo*”]**$_{CC}$=*tʰə-a-dʑigə*

MOD:need=EVID:quotative

‘Then, (he) said to the child: **“You need to go and slip into the bushes and hide (yourself)”** (He said this).’

(12. 101) is an example that involves quoted speech and this is seldom found in the data. This is the reason why at the beginning of this section, I assert that utterance CTPs in Ersu “mainly” rather than “only” involve indirect quotation.

Both (12. 99) and (12. 101) indicate that there is a genitive marker =*yì* following the CTP verb *kʰatʰo* ‘say/tell’ when it is extraposed. This makes the reading of the two examples sounds like “what someone says is…” or literally, “someone says’s”. This forms a possessive structure like “[Someone (A) says(V)=GEN]$_{PR}$ [complement clause (O)]$_{PE}$”. A similar kind of AVO structure is also reported in its neighboring language Yongning Na, in which the Na people use the pause marker *dʑɔ*33 rather than a genitive marker (Lidz 2007: 570). This linguistic finding in Tibeto-Burman languages deserves further studies.

Although there are several other near-synonyms of *da-kʰatʰo* ‘upward-tell’ such as *də-xi* ‘upward-say’, *də-xinba* ‘upward-dwell on’, *da-la* ‘upward-shout’, *də-fusɛ* ‘upward-speak’, etc, they are not observed to take a complement clause for unknown reasons. They only take an NP core argument. Take *də-xi* ‘upward-say’ in (12. 102) below as an example. In (12. 102), the verbal predicate *də-xi* ‘upward-say’ takes the

NP *tʰəsu tsʰo dzɿ* 'several such lines of words' as an O argument.

(12. 102) *a* *ta+ŋo* *tʰəsu* *tsʰo*
1sg.SLF ?this-day:today such ITRG:how many
dzɿ *də-xi =gə*
line of words upward-utter =PROS
'I will utter several such lines of words.'

12. 3. 3. 2 Perception

Perception CTPs are the sensory verbs that denote "look", "see", "hear", "feel", etc. They can take a complement clause as a core argument.

When the CTPs are *tʰə-ndo* 'away-see', *tʰə-dzɿ* 'away-hear' and *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look', the complement clauses always take an overt marker *=tà* which is also a locative nominalizer (§4. 2. 3. 2). However, these clauses are quite different from headless nominalized relative clauses (§12. 3. 1. 1. 1) because firstly, they function as a core argument of the CTPs and secondly, *=tà* in a relative clause still denotes a location. It only functions to signal a complement clause in a complement clause. Consequently, *=tà* in this context should be a complementizer. In addition, a verbal predicate in an embedded complement clause overtly marked with *=tà* does not take any prefix and aspectual marker.

Examples for *tʰə-ndo* 'away-see' are given in (12. 103) and (12. 104).

(12. 103) *a* **[*yadzə nə-wo*** ***tsutsu***
1sg.SLF child two-generic, non-sticklike hit.RDUP:hit each other
=tà]$_{CC}$ *tʰə-ndo=á*
=CPZ PFX:away-see=PFV
'I saw **that the two children were hitting each other.**'

(12. 104) *tʰə* **[***bɛəˈ* ***ta-ka*** ***ʐɛʐɛ=tə̀***]$_{CC}$

3sg.PRT snake one-CL:generic, sticklike crawl.RDUP=CPZ

tʰə-ndo=á=dʑɛ̌

away-see=PFV=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) he saw **that a snake was crawling.**'

tʰə-ndo 'away-see' in the above two examples can also be replaced by *kʰə-dzolo* 'look'. However, when *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look' is used, the meanings of (12. 103) and (12. 104) are changed as in (12. 105) and (12. 106). It should be noted that (12. 105) and (12. 106) below are elicited based on the pattern of (12. 103) and (12. 104). They also sound natural to my language consultants.

(12. 105) *a* **[***yadzə* ***nə-wo*** ***tsutsu***

1sg.SLF child two-generic, non-sticklike hit.RDUP:hit each other

=tə̀]$_{CC}$ *kʰə-dzolo=gə*

=CPZ inward-look=PROG

'I am watching **that the two children were hitting each other.**'

(12. 106) *tʰə* **[***bɛəˈ* ***ta-ka*** ***ʐɛʐɛ=tə̀***]$_{CC}$

3sg.PRTsnake one-CL:generic, sticklike crawl.RDUP=CPZ

kʰə-dzolo=gə=dʑɛ̌

inward-look=PROG=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) he was watching **that a snake was crawling.**'

Examples for *tʰə-dzɿ* 'hear' are given in (12. 107) and (12. 108).

(12. 107) *a* **[***fu-gə* ***tʂʰo əˈ=tə̀***]$_{CC}$ *tʰə-dzɿ=á*

1sg.SLF village=RLN.LOC:in dog bark=CPZ away-hear=PFV

'I heard **that dogs were barking in the village.**'

(12. 108) *a* **[***a-tʰə* ***su-wo***

1sg.SLF distal-DEM:this<that person-CL:generic, non-sticklike

yadzɻə=và ka=tà]$_{CC}$ *tʰa-ma-dzɻ=á*

child=ACC hit=CPZ away-NEG-hear=PFV

'I did not hear **that the person was hitting the child**.'

In Ersu, a verb that denotes the perception of "feeling" is not found. However, the reading of a person's feeling can be expressed through the verb *zɻxa* 'seem'. *zɻxa* 'seem' can also take a complement clause. In this situation, the above discussed complementizer *=tà* is not used and a verbal predicate in an embedded complement clause can take both a prefix and an aspectual marker. For example:

(12. 109) **[***mè+tɕò tʰə-pu=gá***]**$_{CC}$ *zɻxa*

nature+bind:sky PFX:away-change=PROS seem

'I am feeling (or: It seems) **that the weather is going to change**.' Lit: seem sky change

(12. 110) **[***a=yì vùliè=tɕʰo ʂə-ma ta-ka*

1sg.SLF head=RLN.LOC:in flea-SFX.FEM one-CL:generic,sticklike

*ʐɛʐɛ=gə***]**$_{CC}$ *zɻxa*

crawl.RDUP=PROG seem

'I am feeling (or: It seems) **that a flea is crawling on my head**.'

12. 3. 3. 3 Knowledge

There are two knowledge CTPs found in Ersu: *xasɛ* 'understand, know' and *tʰə-ndo* 'see'. Complement clauses of knowledge CTPs do not take a complementizer. Examples for *xasɛ* 'understand, know' is given in (12. 111) and (12. 112).

(12. 111) **[***ŋə tʰɑ=và* *mɑ-gɑ=tə***]**$_{CC}$ *ɑ* *xasɛ=tə*

2sg 3sg.PRT=ACC NEG-like=DES 1sg.SLF know=DES

'I know **that you do not like her.**'

(12. 112) **[***ɑ* *yɑ+ŋo* *vakə* *duá***]**$_{CC}$

1sg.SLF last?+day:yesterday PN:name of county seat go.PFV

tʰə *xasɛ=tə*

3sg.PRT know=DES

'He knows **that I went to Yuexi yesterday**.'

Note that *tʰə-ndo* 'away-see' used as a knowledge CTP has the reading of 'know'. This is quite similar to English "I see". However, the data show that when *tʰə-ndo* 'see' means 'know', it always occurs in a negative context. Furthermore, the complementizer *=tà* is not used in this situation. This is different from the context where it is used as a perspection CTP as discussed in §12. 3. 3. 2. For example:

(12. 113) **[***ɑ-ndə=kə* *xua* *dɑ-ŋɑ* *tə*

ITRG-where=RLN.LOC:in bird upward-be dirty one

la *tɑ+ŋo=nè* *tʰə=kə*

come ?this-day:today=TOP DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in<here

*pɑ+lɑ***]**$_{CC}$ *ɑ* *mɑ-ndo*

LOC-come:arrive 1sg.SLF NEG-know

'I do not know **where the dirty bird came from and (it) arrived here today.**'

(12. 114) **[***zixi* *yɑ-ntsʰu* *tsʰu* *tə-wo* *ɑ*

woman APFX-good such one-CL:generic, non-sticklike 1sg.SLF

də=kə *dzo***]**$_{CC}$ *mɑ-ndo*!

family=RLN.LOC:in EXT NEG-know

'(I) do not know **that there is such a good woman in my family**!'

Examples from (12. 111) to (12. 114) show that all the complement clauses of knowledge CTPs are fronted to the subject of the main clause, that is, the experiencer of the knowledge predicates, forming an OAV-like syntactic order on the surface. This constituent order is fixed and different from the canonical AOV constituent order as discussed in §12. 3. 3 above.

12. 3. 3. 4 Fear

Predicates of this type denote that the subject of the main clause, that is, the experiencer "fears" or "worries about" the possible results that the embedded complement clause indicates. Complement clauses of fearing CTPs do not take a complementizer and they are also embedded as an O argument of the main clause, forming an AOV constituent order as discussed at the beginning of this section. Fearing CTPs in Ersu include *də-dʑima* 'be afraid' and *da-ndʐa* 'be worried'. Examples for *də-dʑima* 'be afraid' are given in (12. 115) and (12. 116), while (12. 117) and (12. 118) are examples of *da-ndʐa* 'be worried'.

(12. 115) *a* **[*yi*** ***ya-mi*** ***ŋə-tsʰɛ*** ***xa,***
1sg.SLF MC:cigarette APFX-many outward-drink LINK:when
gamɛ ***ma-kʰatʂa=gə*]**$_{CC}$ *də-dʑima*
body NEG-be healthy=PROS upward-be afraid
'I am afraid **that when (I) smoke too much, (I) will not be healthy.**'

(12. 116) *a* **[*kaoshi*** ***ma-ntsʰu=gə*]**$_{CC}$ *də-dʑima*
1sg.SLF MC:exam NEG-good=PROS upward-be afraid
'I am afraid **that my exams will not be good**.'

(12. 117) *tʰə* **[*badʐə=bɛ̀*** ***tʰə-tɕu=gə*]**$_{CC}$ *da-*

3sg.PRT money=QUAT.pl away-finish=PROS upward-

ndʐa=dʑɛ̌

be worried=EVID:reported

'(It is said that) he is worried **that (his) money will be finished.**'

(12. 118) *a* **[*mɛ*** ***na-nkʰua*** ***so-pʰɛ*** ***ya*** ***tsa***

1sg.SLF nature downward-be dark before-LOC:side home return

yi ***ma-to=gə*]**$_{CC}$ *da-ndʐa*

go.NPFV NEG-MOD:can=PROS upward-be worried

'I am worried **that (I) cannot go and return home before it gets dark.**'

12. 3. 3. 5 Desiderative

ɕolo 'hope' can function as a desiderative CTP found in the data. In this context, the verbal predicate of the embedded complement clause can take a prefix, but it is not seen that it takes an aspectual marker. For example:

(12. 119) *a=nɛ̀,* **[*nə ndondua*** ***ndzondzɿ*** ***kʰə-so*]**$_{CC}$

1sg.SLF=TOP 2sg carefully written words inward-learn

ɕolo

hope

'I hope **that you study hard**.' Lit: I hope you carefully learn written words.

(12. 120) *tʰə* **[*a*** ***su+ȵo*** ***latɕigù***

3sg.PRT 1sg.SLF ?next+day:tomorrow PN:village name

***la*]**$_{CC}$ *ɕolo=tsà*

come hope=PFT

'He hopes **that I (will) come to Lajigu tomorrow**.'

In Ersu, the modal verb *buadzə̨* 'want to' (§12. 3. 3. 7) can work as desiderative CTP with the meaning of "want". However, the concept of "want" can also be expressed through the CTPs *də-ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'upward-consider' and *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look'. When they are used as CTPs that mean 'want', they occur in different structures as shown in Figure 12. 2 below.

1) A (experiencer)=*yì* (GEN)+V(*ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'consider')=*nɛ̀* (TOP)+O (CC)

2) A (experiencer)=*yì* (GEN)+V(*kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look')=*xa* (LINK)+ O (CC)

Figure 12. 2 Structure of *də-ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'consider' or *kʰə-dzolo* 'look' used as "want" CTPs

As shown in Figure 12. 2, when *də-ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'upward-consider' and *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look' are used as desiderative CTPs, both are "possessed" by the subject of the main clause taking an overt genitive marker =*yì*. They themselves are also marked, but with different markers. Specifically, *də-ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'upward-consider' takes a pause marker =*nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1) while *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward- look' takes a temporal linker *xa* 'when'. In addition, the prefix of the verb *də-ndzɿ̀ndzà* 'consider' is not used while the prefix of the verb *kʰə-dzolo* 'look' is kept. Finally, the syntactic constituent order is also AVO-like in this situation. This is similar to *da-kʰatʰo* 'say/tell' when it takes a complement clause (§12. 3. 3. 1). The two structures appear to have no semantic difference and both mean "someone wants CC". For example:

(12. 121) a. *a=yì* *ndzɿ̀ndzà=nɛ̀* **[*a*** ***su+ȵo***
1sg.SLF=GEN consider=TOP 1sg.SLF ?next-day:tomorrow
sɿ̀ ***tʰə-wo*** ***nə+ŋu***
MC:matter DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-do
=*gə*]$_{CC}$
=PROS
'I want **to do this tomorrow.**' Lit: "My consider" **I do this matter tomorrow.**

b. *ɑ=yì* *kʰə-dzolo* *xa* **[*a***
1sg.SLF=GEN inward-look LINK:when 1sg.SLF
su+ŋo ***sɔ̀*** ***tʰə***
?next+day:tomorrow MC:matter DEM:this
-wo ***nə-ŋu=gə***]$_{CC}$
-CL:generic,non-sticklike downward-do=PROS
'I want **to do this tomorrow.**' Lit: When "my look" **I do this matter tomorrow.**

12. 3. 3. 6 Phasal

Phasal CTPs indicate the phase or the stage of an act or a state, such as its start, continuation or termination (Noonan 2007). In Ersu, there are no verbal predicates indicating the continuation of an event. The verb *də-tsʰu* 'start' is intransitive and always occurs in an SV simple clause. It never takes an NP and a complement clause as a core argument. However, it is observed that the verb *tʰə-tɕu* 'finish' is ambitransitive. It can take a VP or a complement clause as a core argument and thus, it can function as a CTP. When it takes a VP as core argument, it is a "complementation strategy (CS)", as is proposed by Dixon (2006b; 2010b: 405-413) rather than a complement clause. For example:

(12. 122) *yò=dzi …* **[*zatsʰè ngamɛ ŋòkuà ndzŋndzŋ***]$_{CC}$ *tʰə-tɕu*
1sg.OTR=dl pants coat all exchange.RDUP away-finish
ànè…
LINK:after
'After we two finish **exchanging all the pants and coats…**'

(12. 122) shows that the CTP *tʰə-tɕu* 'finish' takes an OV clause in which its underlying transitive subject is coreferential with the subject of the main clause, that is, *yò=dzi* '1sg.SLF=dl'. (12. 123) below shows that *tʰə-tɕu* 'finish' takes an

infinitive-like VP as core argument. The data show that *tʰə-tɕu* 'finish' most often takes an infinitive-like VP, that is, CS rather than a CC. For example:

(12. 123) *su+ŋo=nɛ̀,…* *nbi* *la* *lo-bɛ̀* *ŋokuɑ=nɛ̀,*
?next+day=TOP mountain CO ditch-QUAT.pl all=TOP
[ʒŋgua]$_{CS}$ *tʰə-tɕu=gə*
collapse away-finish=PROS
'Tomorrow, all the mountains and ditches will **be completely collapsed**' Lit: Tomorrow, all mountains and pitches will finish **collapse**.

12. 3. 3. 7 Modal CTPs

Modal CTPs, quite similar to the phasal CTP *tʰə-tɕu* 'finish', can take either an infinitive-like VP or a clause as complement. But in most context, they take an infinite-like VP rather than a clause as complement. Consequently, this is a kind of "complementation strategy" in a strict sense. In this situation, the head verb that functions as a complement, or as the predicate of the complement clause sledom takes an aspectual marker. It should be noted that the head verb of obligative modal *ŋɑ-pɑ* 'must' always take a *=tà* complementizer that is also used in the complement of the perception CTPs (§12. 3. 3. 2). In addition, the subject of the main clause is often coreferential with that of the complement clause in a modal CTP clause. Modal CPTs can be further divided into six subtypes: obligation (§12. 3. 3. 7. 1), permission (12. 3. 3. 7. 2), ability (§12. 3. 3. 7. 3), volition (§12. 3. 3. 7. 4), desiderative (§12. 3. 3. 7. 5) and daring (§12. 3. 3. 7. 6). §10. 2 gives a detailed discussion on the uses of modal verbs. In this section, only examples of a modal verb being used as CTPs are given.

12. 3. 3. 7. 1 Obligation

There are two modal CTPs, that is, *ŋɑ-pɑ* 'downward-place:must' (§10. 2. 1. 1) and *xo* 'ought to/need' (§10. 2. 1. 2)**,** which often take an infinite-like complement. They denote that it is the obligation of a referent to perform a task or to do something.

(12. 124) **obligative *ŋɑ-pɑ* 'downward-place:must'**

ɑ **[***ŋbò-mɑ* *ŋbò=yi* *ʈʂɑ* *yi=tɑ̀***]**$_{CS}$

1sg.SLF horse-SFX.FEM horse=DIM look for go.NPFV=CPZ

ŋɑ-pɑ

downward-place:MOD:must

'I must **go and look for the mother horse and the baby horse.**'

(12. 125) **obligative *xo* 'ought to/need'**

nə *su+ɲɔ=nɛ̀,* **[***ni* *lɑ* *tʰə*

2sg ?next-day=TOP 2sg.GEN chicken DEM:this-

-wo *nə-sŋ=á* *tɕi* *lɑ*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-kill=PFV take come

yò=vɑ̀ *tsŋ* *lɑ***]**$_{CS}$ *xo*

1sg.OTR=ACC feed come MOD:ought to

'You ought to **kill your chicken and bring (it) here and feed (it) to me tomorrow.**' Lit: You tomorrow ought to **kill your this chicken, come to take, come to feed me**.

12. 3. 3. 7. 2 Permission

The modal CTP *bɑɲɔ* 'allow' often takes an infinite-like complement. However, only its negative form is attested (§10. 2. 1. 3) and it is used to denote that a referent is not allowed to do something.

(12. 126) **permissive *bɑɲɔ* 'allow'**

yɑdzɻə-bɛ̀=nɛ̀ **[***yi* *ʈʂʰɛ***]**$_{CS}$ *bɑ-mɑ-ɲɔ*

child-QUAT.pl=TOP MC:cigarette drink allow-NEG-allow

'Children are not allowed to **smoke cigarettes**.' Lit: Children not allow to drink cigarettes.

12. 3. 3. 7. 3 Ability

There are three modal CPTs that can take an infinite-like complement, denoting that a referent has the ability to do something. They are *pʰa* 'can', *to* 'can' and *ndzo* 'can/know how to'. They show some semantic differences as discussed in §10. 2. 2. 1 and §10. 2. 2. 2.

(12. 127) **abilitive *pʰa* 'can'**

vɛnuɑ=nè… **[*dzo-ka***

same gender sibling=TOP river-CL:generic, sticklike

nbi-wo ***dʑi-tɕʰo*** ***dʑì***

mountain--CL:generic, non-sticklike upward-pump also

də-yi]$_{CS}$ *mɑ-pʰa*

upward-go.NPFV NEG-MOD:can

'The elder brother…cannot **pump the water of the river and make it flow up to the mountain.**' Lit: Elder brother cannot **pump the river and go to the mountain.**

(12. 128) **abilitive *to* 'can'**

tʰə **[*ɑ-tʰə=kə=nè***

3sg.PRT distal-DEM:this<that=RLN.LOC:in<that time=TOP

lɛ-mɑ ***kʰə-ʂu***]$_{CS}$ *mɑ-to*

?-SFX.FEM:bride inward-marry NEG-can

'At that time, he cannot **marry a girl**.' Lit: At that time, he cannot marry a bride.

(12. 129) **abilitive *ndzo* 'can/know how to'**

nə **[*tʰə*** ***dzɿ*** ***la*** ***kʰə-məntɕʰi*]**$_{CS}$ *mɑ-*

2sg DEM:this line of words EMPH:all inward-ask NEG-

ndzo, *ɑ=zɿ=ɛ̀*?

MOD:know how to ITRG=COP=ITRG

'You do not know how **to ask such a line of words**. Is it right?'

12. 3. 3. 7. 4 Volition

There are two modal CTPs that are used to denote a referent's willingness to do something. They are *xo* 'want (to)' (§10. 2. 2. 3) and *li* 'willing to' (§10. 2. 2. 4) and they often take an infinite-like complement.

(12. 130) **volitive *xo* 'want (to)'**

nə *bzɿ-mɑ* *tə …* **[*tɑ+ɳɑo=nɛ̀*** ***ɑ-ndʑi***

2sg flat-SFX.FEM:toad one ?this+day:today=TOP ITRG-how

ŋgɑ-wo ***la*** ***tsʰu*]**$_{CS}$ *xo*

door-CL:generic, non-sticklike EMPH:all open MOD:want to

=tə=dɔ̀?

=DES=ITRG

'You, a toad…How come (you) want (us) **to open the door (for you)** today?'

(12. 131) **volitive *li* 'willing to'**

ɑ **[*su*** ***tʰə-wo*** ***nɑ-pɑ*]**$_{CS}$

1sg.SLF person DEM:this-generic, non-sticklike downward-marry

mɑ-li

NEG-MOD:willing to

'I am not willing **to marry this person**.'

12. 3. 3. 7. 5 Desiderative

As mentioned in §12. 3. 3. 5, desiderative complementation can be expressed through several different ways including the modal verb *buatʂə* 'want to'. They appear to have different syntactic structures. *də-ndzɔ̀ndzà* 'upward-consider' and *kʰə-dzolo* 'inward-look' form an AVO-like construction. *ɕolo* 'hope' must take a complement clause while *buatʂə* 'want to' must take an infinite-like complementation strategy as shown in (12. 132).

(12. 132) **desiderative *buatʂə* 'want to'**

tə	*ɲo=nɛ̀,*	*tʰəˡ*	***[ʂɔ̀***	***dzŋ]***$_{CS}$	*buatʂə*
one day=TOP		3pl.PRT	meat	eat	MOD:want to

'One day, they want **to eat meat.**'

12. 3. 3. 7. 6 Daring

ɲo 'dare' can be used as a modal CTP taking an infinite-like complement. It is used to denote that a referent dares to do something (§10. 2. 2. 6).

(12. 133) **venturative *ɲo* 'dare'**

aˡ	*əˡsu=bɛ̀,*	***[nbò***	***ʂɔ̀***	***ŋə-dzŋ]***$_{CS}$
1pl.SLF	PN:Ersu=QUAT.pl	horse	meat	PFX:outward-eat

mɑ-ɲo

NEG-MOD:dare

'We Ersu people dare not **eat horse meat**.'

Chapter 13 Discourse Analysis and Discourse Organization

This chapter describes discourse analysis and discourse organization, focusing on narratives. §13. 1 presents discourse genres. §13. 2 discusses the variation of syntactic order driven by pragmatic motivations. §13. 3 discusses ellipsis in context. Sentence linking and suprasentential constituents are given in §13. 4. Further topics of discourse organization such as quoted speech, anaphora, repetition, etc. are discussed in §13. 5.

13. 1 Discourse Genres

Discourse genres on which this grammar is based include narratives, long conversations and songs as shown in Table 13. 1. Narratives include myths, folklores, creation, (auto-)biographies, procedural descriptions, ancestor's instructions, etc. The topics of long conversations deal with children's education and family conflicts. Songs mainly consist of solos, and antiphonal songs, a kind of informal song contests.

In Ersu, mythological stories and folkloric stories do not have a clear-cut distinction. This is so because the characters in these two kinds of stories are often switching their identities between a god, a devil, an animal and a human being, and also because a human character always has a close relationship with other creatures such as a god, a devil or an animal.

Genre	Subtype	Speaker	Topic	Length
Narratives	mythological or folkloric stories	WANG, Zhongquan	a cat & two brothers	19'20''
			a clever woman & the king	04'53''
			two wives	17'32''
			two sisters	24'43''
			a clever man	05'50''
			an idiot	05'15''
		ZHANG, Baocai	an orphan & a rabbit	16'32''
			a geomancer & a poor family	05'46''
		HUANG, Aguo	a brother & a sister	15'33'

(to be continued)

(to continue)

Genre	Subtype	Speaker	Topic	Length
Narratives	mythological or folkloric stories	HUANG, Azhi	a cunning rabbit	06’02’’
			a liar	03’26’’
			two brothers	02’19’’
			a father-searching son	02’04
			a father & a son	08’18’’
		WANG, Ayi	a frog god	05’47’’
		WANG, Hailong	a clever man	02’47
	biographies	WANG, Zhongquan	family history	02’06’’
			personal experience	03’39’’
		HUANG, Zhifu	personal experience	15’46’’
		HUANG, Aguo	life of father & mother	11’10’’
		ZHANG, Muji	personal experience	02’46’’
	ancestors’ instructions		How to be a strong ethnic group	01’33’
	creation and historical or cultural descriptions	WANG, Zhangquan	origin of “sanguozhuang”	06’41’’
			origin of the sun and the moon	06’55’’
		ZHANG, Baocai	origin of the sky and the earth	09’16’’
			origin of “xiaobu”	05’32’’
			origin of “lalannu”	08’15’’
		HUANG, Aguo	previous Yi robbers	07’55’’
	procedural descriptions	WANG, Zhongquan	the procedures of an Ersu marriage	15’06’’
		ZHANG, Baocai	the procedures of doing “xiaobu”	03’17
		ZHANG, Muji	the procedures of hunting	02’46’’
	other	HUANG, Aguo	description of a wedding picture	02’54’’
			description of a gathering picture	02’12’’
			description of this year’s weather and farming work	02’16’’
songs	solo	WANG, Zhongquan	marriage song	12’35’’
			ode to wine	07’45’’
	antiphonal	WANG, Buha vs. YANG, Aga	questions and answers	04’32’’
conversations		WANG, Ayi; WANG, Amu; WANG, Buha; HUANG, Ayi	child’s education and family conflicts	21’54’’

Table 13. 1 Text genres

The style of mythological/folkloric narratives and cultural/historical descriptions

is similar to each other. This is the case because cultural/historical descriptions are always associated with a legend in which there are mythological characters. These narratives are driven by story plots, in other words, the events and the actions. In addition, quoted speech occurs a lot in any piece of mythological/folkloric narratives and cultural/historical narratives.

Quoted speech also occurs in a biographical narrative, but the frequency is much lower than that in mythological and folkloric narratives. The narration of biographical narratives is driven either by time sequence of a character's life, or by the sequences of events that a character has experienced, or by the most significant events occurring in his/her life, or by the interaction of these three factors.

The narration of procedural descriptions is driven by the procedural sequence of an event or an action that is being talked about. Quoted speech is seldom found in procedural narratives.

Long conversations demonstrate quite different characteristics. Topics in a long conversation can be switched without any signals. It is observed that interruptions are signaled by an interrupter's raised voice. Interestingly, when a speaker does not want to be interrupted, s/he may also raise his/her voice in this situation.

Language in mythological/folkloric narratives, cultural/historical narratives and ancestor's instructions is relatively more conservative, in which loanwords are seldom found. However, language in biographical narratives, procedural narratives and long conversations is less conservative than that in mythological/folkloric narratives, historical/cultural narratives and ancestor's instructions. Loanwords are often found.

The Ersu are gifted singers and dancers (§1. 2. 2. 5). Songs are sung on various kinds of occasions such as wedding ceremonies, festive ceremonies, religious rituals and also after a good drinking. Ersu songs themselves can form a big research project.

Consequently, only some quite general characteristics of songs are given here. Songs include traditional songs and "on-the-scene" songs. Both the lyrics and the melodies of a traditional song are stable and inherited from the Ersu ancestors. On-the-scene songs refer to those songs whose melodies are fixed while the lyrics can be adjusted in accordance with the occasion. The application of rhyme harmony and rhetorical devices such as parallelism and metaphor features the language of Ersu songs.

However, different discourse genres also share some common linguistic features. For example: anaphora, "head-tail" (Vries 2005; Aikhenvald 2008: 544-45) or "tail-head" (Huang 2007: 316-18) sentential linkage, the variations of syntactic constituent order triggered by pragmatic motivations, etc., are found in all kinds of discourse genres. The strategies of discourse organization, with a focus on narratives, are discussed in the subsequent sections.

13. 2 Pragmatic Variation of Syntactic Constituent Order

The canonical syntactic constituent order in Ersu is either AOV or SV as described in §12. 1. 1. In other words, Ersu is predominantly a verb-final language. However, as a "topic-comment" language (§12. 1. 2), the topicalized constituent of a clause is often fronted to the clause-initial slot (§12. 1. 2. 5). Besides topicalization, the syntactic constituent order in Ersu may also vary in accordance with pragmatic motivations in discourse organization. This may result from logical connection (§13. 2. 1), "afterthoughts" (§13. 2. 2), the highlighting of a constituent (§13. 2. 3) and the influence of Mandarin Chinese (§13. 2. 4) in narration. There are also some fixed constructions in which the constituent order never varies (§13. 2. 5).

13. 2. 1 Logical connection and syntactic constituent order

Quite occasionally, a verbal predicate may be pre-posed to a clause-initial slot in order to keep logical consistency in narration. In this situation, a pause marker =*nè* (§13. 5. 1) always follows the pre-posed VP and there is always a short pause in speaking. Consequently, an object could thus follow the verbal predicate, forming an

(A)VO-like clause. A in this situation can be omitted. This always occurs in a "tail-head" linkage context (§13. 4). For example:

(13. 1) *tʰə=kə=nɛ̀, tɕi duá=dʑɛ̌.¶ tɕi duá*
DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in=PAUS take go.PFV=EVID:reported take go.PFV
=nɛ̀, dzitʂʰa tə=kə na-kua, tɕi duá,
=PAUS sack one= RLN.LOC:in downward-put take go.PFV
da-tsa, tʰə ȵbò+xitsʅ=và
upward-hang DEM:this horse+rabbit:wild rabbit=ACC
'(He) took (the wild rabbit) away. (He) put (it) in a sack and took (it) away and hung (the wild rabbit) up.'

(13. 1) contains two sentences. The first sentence ends with the verb phrase *tɕi duá* 'take go.PFV:took away' and the second sentence begins with the same verb phrase. This "tail-head" linkage occurs quite a lot in a narrative, and consequently, I hypothesize that it is logical for the speaker to initially describe the verbal actions 'put into a sack, took away and hung up' and then to introduce the object, that is, *tʰə ȵbò+xitsʅ* 'DEM:this horse+rabbit:wild rabbit → the wild rabbit'. In this situation, the accusative marker *=và* is obligatorily used to indicate that the object is the patient of the verbal actions.

13. 2. 2 "Afterthoughts" and syntactic constituent order

Both S in an SV clause and O in an AOV clause may be postposed to a verbal predicate, forming a VS-like or an AVO-like clause. Note that in this context, there is always an obviously and comparatively long pause between the verbal predicate and the S or the O. However, the pause marker *=nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1) is not used here. The postposition of S and O occurs in the context where the speaker intends to clarify his/her speaking by adding extra information to it, which can thus be viewed as "clarifying afterthoughts" (Aikhenvald 2008: 515-39). For example:

(13. 2) *tʰə-tɕɯ=á,* *tʰə-wo*

away-finish=PFV DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike

'Finished, this one.'

(13. 2) signalizes the end of a narrative. Most of my language consultants end their narration just with *tʰə-tɕɯ=á* 'finished' (§13. 4. 2. 2. 2). However, the speaker here ends her speaking with an additional *tʰə-wo* 'this one', forming a VS-like clause. This is so because she was asked to tell several stories by me one after another on the same afternoon when I was in the field. By using *tʰə-wo* 'this one', her underlying words are that she will now proceed to tell some other stories.

In an afterthought context, an O can also be postposed to a verbal predicate, as in (13. 3):

(13. 3) *ɑ=zɿ̀* *kʰuakʰua* *pɑ+duá=nɛ̀,*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:father place+go.PFV:arrive=PAUS

sɯ=yikə *nɑ-ka* *nɑ-ka* *nɑ-ka*

people=AGT downward-hit downward-hit downward-hit

nɑ-ka, *tʰə* *nua* *ndzòmò*

downward-hit DEM:this Yi official

'(When) my father arrived there, people were hitting the Yi official again and again.'

As can be seen in (13. 3), the object *tʰə nua ndzòmò* 'the Yi official' occurs after the verbal predicate *nɑ-ka* 'hit'. This is obviously a clarifying afterthought because if the extra information *tʰə nua ndzòmò* 'the Yi official' were not added, a listener would take it for granted that *ɑ=zɿ̀ kʰuakʰua* 'my father' was hit by people again and again. The reason is that a clause without this extra information "sounds" more syntactically correct to the native speakers, as shown in (13. 4):

(13. 4) *ɑ=zʔ̀* *kʰuakʰua* *pɑ+duɑ́=nɛ̀,*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:father place-go.PFV:arrive=PAUS

sɯ=yikə *nɑ-ka* *nɑ-ka* *nɑ-ka*

people=AGT downward-hit downward-hit downward-hit

nɑ-ka

downward-hit

‘(When) my father arrived there, people hit (him) again and again’

13. 2. 3 Highlighting and syntactic constituent order

When a constituent is highlighted, it always occurs in a clause-initial slot. The most commonly seen pre-posed constituent for highlighting in Ersu is the O in an AVO clause. Consequently, an OAV-like clause is formed in this situation. Note that a highlighted constituent also functions as a topic of a “topic-comment” structure (§12. 1. 2). This implies that Ersu does not distinguish between highlighting and topicalization (§12. 1. 2. 4) to a large extent. For example:

(13.5) *vɛ vùliɛ̀* *la* *ʂʔ̀* *la* *tʰə* *vɯ-bɛ̀*

pig head CO meat CO DEM:this wine-QUAT.pl

ɲɔ̀kuɑ̀=nɛ̀, *vɛmatɕʰodzɥ=kə* *ŋə-dzʔ* *tʰə-tɕu*

all=TOP PN:a devil’s name=AGT outward-eat away-finish

ànɛ̀...

LNK:after

‘After Vaimaqodzhu has eaten up all the pig’s head and pork and wine…’

(13. 5) highlights that all the gifts including pig’s head, pork, and wine that the character was sending to her brother’s home were robbed of and eaten up by the devil Vaimaqodzhu. The O constituent *vɛ vùliɛ̀ la ʂʔ̀ la tʰə vɯ-bɛ̀ ɲɔ̀kuɑ̀* ‘pig head CO meat CO DEM:this wine-QUAT.pl all→all the pig head and pork and wine’ is fronted to the clause-initial slot. Meanwhile, it takes a topical marker *=nɛ̀*. This indicates that it is not only highlighted but also topicalized.

13. 2. 4 Mandarin Chinese and syntactic constituent order

Although Ersu is changing under the influence of Mandarin Chinese, a canonical SV/AVO language, the data demonstrate that the syntactic constituent order of Ersu is almost all preserved. Clauses in Ersu are still predominantly verb-final even if the verbal predicate is a Mandarin loanword (§14. 1. 2). The only one exception is the Mandarin loanword *lái* 'come'. Whenever it is directly used in a context rather than the native Ersu verb *la* 'come', it is followed by a term denoting a location, that is, E (extended intransitive argument). Consequently, an SVE-like clause is formed though an SEV clause (§8. 5. 6) is a canonical Ersu syntactic order. Example (13. 6) below is a typical calque from Mandarin Chinese:

(13. 6) *ɲɹinua* *də-dzimo* *ànè*,
younger same gender sibling upward-be rich LINK:after
vɛnua=nè, *lái*
elder same gender sibling=TOP MC:come
ɲɹinua=ʂə
younger same gender sibling=RLN.LOC:place
'After the younger brother became rich, the elder brother came to the younger brother's home.'

13. 2. 5 Fixed constructions without constituent order variations

Though the canonical syntactic constituent order could be flexible in a discourse context as described above, there are some fixed constructions in which the order never varies. They are:

1) In a clause with an existential/locative/possessive verb used as a predicate, the existential/locative/possessive verb always occupies the clause-final slot. No other constituents can be postposed to it (§8. 4).

2) In a serial verb construction (SVC), a minor verb can never be pre-posed to a

major verb (§8. 8).

3) A modal auxiliary verb always follows a head verb. This order can never be reversed (§10. 2).

4) In a possessive construction, a possessee can never be preposed to a possessor (§6. 3).

5) All post-head modifying elements in an NP (§5. 2) such as adjectives, the unit of [NUM+CL] and classifiers can never occur before the head noun .

6) In a VP, the unit of [NUM+VCL] (§7. 2) can never be postposed to the verbal predicate (§8. 9).

13. 3 Ellipsis

Any constituent of a simple clause can be theoretically ellipsed, whenever it can be recovered from the context. This is found both in narratives and in daily conversation (§12. 1. 2). This section further discusses ellipsis in a larger discourse context.

In a narrative, even if a referent has not occurred in a preceding context, it can be omitted when the narrator thinks that it is not necessary to overtly mention this. For example:

(13. 7) *ɑ=zɿ̀* *kʰuɑkʰuɑ-wo=nɛ̀,*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:father-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP

ɑ-tʰə *tʰɑ=và* *zǔzhǎng* *tə*

distal-DEM:this<that 3sg.PRT=ACC MC:village head one

nə-ŋu-su

downward-do-CAUS

'(People) made my father work as a village head at that time.'

(13. 7) is extracted from a biographical narrative in which the speaker tells about her father's and mother's earlier life before the liberation of China. (13. 7) in fact aims to tell the listeners that her father was a village head then. Consequently, it is not necessary to tell about "who" the people were that made her father work as a village head. As can be seen from (13. 7), the referent "people" is ellipsed. However, the object *tʰa* '3sg.PRT' is marked with an accusative marker =*và* and the verbal predicate *nə-ŋu* "downward-do" takes a causative marker -*su*. The two markers indicate that it is not her father himself who actively took the job as a village head but "someone else" made him do this.

The most commonly seen ellipsis occurs when a referent is mentioned in a preceding context. This could lead to the ellipsis of the same referent in all the following sentences. For example:

(13. 8) **[ɳɑ̀ɪnuɑ̀]$_{R1}$**=*kə*=*nɛ̀* **[m̩tsʅ]$_{R2}$**-*wo*

younger same gender sibling=AGT=PAUS cat-CL:generic, non-sticklike

mɛntʂʰə-ga *əˈkʰuɑ-wo*=*kə*

tail-CL:generic, sticklike stone-CL:generic, non-sticklike=RLN.LOC:in

kʰɑ-tɕatɕɑ=*zà* *də-ntʂʰə* *də-tsʰu* *ànɛ̀,*

inward-clip.RDUP=PFT upward-pull upward-open LNK:after

[Ø]$_{R1}$ *m̩tsʅ* *su* *duɑ*=*yì*. ¶ **[Ø]$_{R1}$** **[Ø]$_{R2}$** *ʂʅ*=*nɛ̀*

cat lead go.PFV=CSM meat=TOP

nbinbi *nə-tsʅ,* **[Ø]$_{R1}$** **[Ø]$_{R2}$** *vu*=*nɛ̀* *kʰɑ-tsʰɑ*

cold.RDUP downward-feed wine=TOP inward-heat

nə-ku *ànɛ̀,* **[Ø]$_{R2}$** *ga* *tʂʰo* *dʑì* *ɳɑ*=

downward-toast LNK:after sing voice also INTS=

yɑ-ndə. ¶ *nɛ̀,* **[Ø]$_{R2}$** *dɑ-ga* *ànɛ̀,* *ɛ̀,*

APFX-good then upward-sing LNK:after PAUS

dzə̩ *la* *lə* *la,* **[Ø]$_{R1}$** *də-dʑimo*=*á*

money come treasure come upward-be rich=PFV

=*dʑɛ̌*

=EVID:reported

‘After **the younger brother** pulled out the cat’s tail that was caught by a stone, **(the younger brother)** took the cat away. After **(the younger brother)** fed **(the cat)** with cold meat (and after) **(the younger brother)** toasted **(the cat)** with warmed wine, **(the cat’s)** voice of singing became very good. After **(the cat)** sang, both money and treasure came (and) **(the younger brother)** became rich.’

There are three sentences in (13. 8). In the first sentence, the two referents, that is, the younger brother (R1) and the cat (R2) are mentioned. Then, in the subsequent two sentences, the two referents (shown in **bold** and in parentheses in the English translation as above) are ellipsed without any overt markers functioning as an indicator. The tracking of the referents can only be based on a listener’s understanding

of the language and the meanings that a sentence conveys.

Quoted speech is typical of Ersu narratives (§13. 5). In a context of quoted speech, the addresser and the addressee seldom co-occur. It is observed that either the addresser, or the addressee, or the both can be ellipsed in this situation. When the addressee is ellipsed, the term that refers to the addresser always takes a pause marker or a topical/pause marker =*nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1) as in (13. 9). When the addresser is ellipsed, the term that refers to the addressee is always marked with an overt accusative marker =*và* as in (13. 10). The ellipsis of both the addresser and the addressee also occurs in a quoted dialogue. One typical example is that both are ellipsed in all the quoted speech throughout a mythological narrative. The narrative tells of a son who is searching for his father swallowed by a human-eating cloud (see Text 1 of Appendix 1). The ellipsis of both the addresser and the addressee is also given in (13. 11) here. Note that in a quoted speech, an evidential marker (§11. 1) can never be ellipsed (§13. 5). In addition, the ellipsed speech act participant is added in **bold** and in the brackets of the English translation of (13. 9), (13. 10) and (13. 11) below, which is recoverable from the context of narratives.

(13. 9) *ȵinua=nɛ̀*: “*nə* *tʰə* *xa* *sì*
younger same gender sibling=TOP 2sg DEM:this time only
yima *da=tsa,* *a=zɿ̀=ɛ̀?...*” =*dʑà*
sleep upward-wake up ITRG=COP=ITRG=EVID:quotative
‘The younger brother (said **[to his sister]**): “You sleep and wake up only at this time. Right?...”’

(13. 10) *tʰa=và*: “*ʂa* *la* *yi* *xo.*”=*dʑà*
3sg.PRT=ACC wheat sow go.NPFV MOD:need=EVID:quotative
‘**[His wife]** (said) to him: “You need to go and sow wheat.”’

(13. 11) — "*nə a-nɛ* *ba=ɛ̀*?" =*dʑà=nɛ̀*

2sg ITRG-what carry…on one's back=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'**[Vaimaqodzhu]** (asked) **[the woman]** (like this): "what are you carrying on you back?'"

— "*yò* *ʂʅ=và* *la* *vu=và* *ba*

1sg.OTR meat=ACC CO wine=ACC carry…on one's back

=*dǒ*."

=AFFM=*dʑà=nɛ̀*

=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'**[The woman]** (answered) **[Vaimaqodzhu]** (like this): "I am carrying meat and wine on my back.'"

13. 4 Sentence Linking and Suprasentential Constituents

A sentence in Ersu could be either a simple clause (§12. 1), or two coordinate clauses (§12. 2), or the combination of a subordinate clause and a main clause (§12. 3). Two or more sentences (§13. 4. 1) could be linked through juxtaposed coordination (§13. 4. 1. 1), sentential connectors (§13. 4. 1. 2) and "tail-head" linkage (§13. 4. 1. 3). Suprasentential constituents (§13. 4. 2) discussed here include paragraphs (§13. 4. 2. 1) and a narrative as an entirety (§13. 4. 2. 2).

13. 4. 1 Sentence linking

13. 4. 1. 1 Juxtaposed coordination

Two or more sentences in Ersu could be juxtaposed without an overt linker. This can be found in any type of discourse genre. For example:

(13. 12) *a* *yisamutci=yɛ̀* *xi=tə.¶* *tsʰi+xi=nɛ̀,*

1pl.SLF PN:person's name=SFX.MAS call=DES ?+year:this year=TOP

sɻ̩-zɻ *kʰə-tsɻ=á.¶* *aˡ=yì* *a-*

seven-ten:seventy inward-increase=PFV 1pl.SLF=GEN KPFX-

pu+a-pa-bɛ̀ *aˡ=và*

grandfather+KPFX-father:ancestor-QUAT.pl 1pl.SLF=ACC

kʰa-tʰo *xaxa...*

inward-tell teach.RDUP

'My name is Yisha Muji. This year, (I am) 70 years old. Our ancestors tell and teach us…' Lit: I call Yisha Muji. This year rise 70. Our ancestors tell and teach us…

(13. 12) is the start of a narrative. As is seen from (13. 12), there are three sentences juxtaposed without any markers. The first sentence tells about the speaker's name and the third sentence offers the information of his age. The last sentence indicates what topic he is going to choose in this narrative.

13. 4. 1. 2 Sentential connectors

The linkage of two or more sentences can be realized through sentential connectors. There are two connectors found in the data. They are: (=)*nɛ̀* and *tʂaŋa* 'later/next'.

The pragmatic uses of (=)*nɛ̀* are rather complex and tricky in Ersu. This is summarized in §13. 5. 1. When (=)*nɛ̀* is used to link two or more sentences, it can stand alone. It always occupies the sentence-initial slot of the subsequent sentence. It appears to be a particle but has the meaning of "then". There is always a pause between (=)*nɛ̀* and the sentences that follow it. Therefore, it might have been lexicalized from the pause marker =*nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1). For example:

(13. 13) *tʂʰa* *la* *su-wo* *totua* *gaʂŋ.*¶

ghost CO person-CL:generic, non-sticklike mutually fight

nɛ̀, *su* *lalɑ-wo* *tʂʰɑ-yikə*

then person soul.RDUP-CL:generic, non-sticklike ghost=AGT

kʰə-mi *tɕi* *duá*

inward-catch take go.PFV

'The ghost and the person fought each other. Then, the ghost caught the person's soul and took (it) away.'

In Ersu, the relator noun *tʂaŋa* 'below/under' (§4. 6. 2. 5), which also means 'later/next', can be used to link two sentences that denote two subsequent events. Similar to (=)*nɛ̀*, it also occur in a sentential-initial slot. It can optionally take a topical marker=*nɛ̀*. The data show that *tʂaŋɑ=nɛ̀* as in (13. 14) occurs much more frequently than the sole *tʂaŋa* 'later' as in (13. 15).

(13. 14) *ŋuɑ=pulili* *tɑ-pa*

silver=NCL:irregular roundish one-CL:round and no bigger than a fist

tʰə-tɕʰi, *vu* *ta* *tuantsə* *tʰə-ku.*¶ *tʂaŋɑ=nɛ̀,*

away-give wine one CL:crock away-toast with drinks later=TOP

kʰə-ʂu *kʰɑ-la* *nə-ŋu=á*

inward-marry inward-come downward-do=PFV

'A piece of silver was given (and) toasted with a crock of wine. Later, (a bride) was married to (a groom in such a simple way).'

(13. 15) *tʰə* *əˈkʰuɑ=tɕʰo* *tə-pʰu* *kʰɑ-*

3sg.PRT stone=RLN.LOC:on one-VCL:a period of time inward-

má.¶ *tʂaŋa,* *tʂʰo=yì* *də-əˈ=gə* *tʰɑ=và*

sleep.PFV later dog=DIM upward-bark=PROG 3sg.PRT=ACC

dɑ-xɑ=yì

upward-wake up=CSM

'He slept on the rock for a while. Later, a little dog was barking and woke him up.'

13. 4. 1. 3 "Tail-head" linkage

"Tail-head" linkage (Huang 2007: 316-18) or "head-tail" linkage (Vries 2005; Aikhenvald 2008: 544-45) is very frequent in Ersu narratives, but seldom found in daily conversation. Tail-head linkage refers to the context in which the repetition of one or more constituents of the preceding sentence (a "tail") functions as the beginning of the subsequent sentence (a "head"). In Ersu, the constituents being repeated used as "tail-head" could be the OV slots of an preceding AVO clause (§13. 1. 4. 3. 1), a full sentence (§13. 1. 4. 3. 2), an NP (§13. 1. 4. 3. 3) and a verbal predicate (§13. 1. 4. 3. 4). Tail-head linkage occurs quite often in the data and it is a very important strategy in discourse organization (§13. 1. 4. 3. 4).

Different subtypes of "tail-head" linking strategies are respectively discussed below. Note in the examples below, both the "tail" of the preceding sentence and the "head" of the subsequent sentence are marked in boldness.

13. 4. 1. 3. 1 OV slots used as tail-head

The most frequently seen "tail-head" linkage is that the "head" of the subsequent sentence is sourced from the repetition of both the O and the V constituents of the preceding AOV sentence. In this situation, A of the preceding sentence is always ellipsed in the subsequent sentence as shown in (13. 16):

(13. 16) *mɛ+li* *dzə xɑ=nɛ̀,* *tə* *ŋ̩ɔ=nɛ̀,*

nature+?:land dig LINK:when=TOP one day=TOP

zɑ+pu *tə* ***nbò-pʰɑ*** ***tə*** ***nbò***

hundred+manage:king one horse-SFX.MAS:stallion one RPT:horse

də-ndzɛ ***nɑ-lɑ=dʑɛ̌.¶*** ***Ø*** ***nbò*** ***də-ndzɛ***

upward-ride outward-come=EVID:reported horse upward-ride

nɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀, *mɛ+li* *dzə=sɯ=và:…*

outward-come=PAUS nature+?:land dig=NOM=ACC

"(It is said that) when (he) was digging the land, a king **rode a stallion and came**. (The king) **rode a stallion and came** (and said to) the land-digger…"

13. 4. 1. 3. 2 Full sentence used as tail-head

The repetition of a full preceding sentence can function as the "head" of the subsequent sentence. This is often found in the situation where the preceding sentence is an SV structure and the S also overtly functions as the subject (either A or S) of the subsequent sentence. For example:

(13. 17) *fɑ* *tə* *ŋɑ-lɑ.¶* *fɑ* *tə* *ŋɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀:*

bear one outward-come bear one outward-come=PAUS

"*ɑ-nɛ* *ŋɯ=è,* *à-ndʑò?" =dʑà=nɛ̀*

ITRG:what do=ITRG KPFX-friend= EVID:quotative=PAUS

'**A bear came**. **A bear came** (and asked like this): "What are you doing, my friend?"'

As seen from (13. 17), the full preceding sentence *fɑ tə ŋɑ-lɑ* 'bear one outward-come → a bear came.' is repeated and used as the "head" of the second sentence. *fɑ* 'bear' functions not only as S of the intransitive verb *ŋɑ-lɑ* 'outward-come' but also as A (addresser) of the quoted speech.

13. 4. 1. 3. 3 NP used as tail-head

When the predicate of the preceding sentence is an existential/locative/possessive verb, the only NP subject can be repeated to function as the "head" of the subsequent sentence. In addition, the full sentence can also be repeated as the "head" of the subsequent sentence in this context (see (13. 21) below). For example:

(13. 18) ***p^{h}o-za*** ***zi-mo*** ***na***
?-SFX.MAS:husband ?-SFX.FEM:wife two
p^{h}a-ma *dzo=dʑɛ̌.* ¶
CL:SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM:man and woman EXT=EVID:reported
p^{h}o-za ***zi-mo*** ***na***
?-SFX.MAS:husband ?-SFX.FEM:wife two
p^{h}a-ma=*nɛ̀,* *p^{h}o-za*
CL:SFX.MAS-SFX.FEM:man and woman=TOP ?-SFX.MAS:husband
=*nɛ̀,* *tə*+*ŋo*+*ŋo* *mɛli* *dzə*;
=TOP one+day+day:every day nature+?:land dig
zi-mo=*nɛ̀* *yava* *dzo*
?-SFX.FEM:wife=TOP home stay
'(It is said that) there was **a husband and a wife, a couple**. (The tasks of) **the husband and the wife**, **the couple, (were that)** the husband ploughed the land every day (and) the wife stayed at home.'

13. 4. 1. 3. 4 Verbal predicate used as tail-head

It is also possible for the only V constituent of the preceding sentence to be repeated and then to function as the sentential-initial slot of the subsequent sentence. For example:

(13. 19) *silə* *tə* *tɕi* *də-tɕi*

Bow one CL:tool with a handle upward-take

tʂa ***duá***=*dʑɛ̌*.¶ ***tʂa*** ***duá***=*nɛ̀*, *tə-bu*

search go.PFV=EVID:reported search go.PFV=PAUS one-CL:group

nɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀…

outward-come=PAUS…

‘(The son) took a bow (and) **went to search for** (his father). (When he) **went to search for** (him), a group of (clouds) came…’

13. 4. 1. 3. 5 Functions of tail-head linkage

“Tail-head” linkage is a very important sentential linking strategy in Ersu. First of all, it is found in every narrative in the data. It is also a useful device to ensure the cohesion of a story. Furthermore, a speaker may successively use different subtypes of “tail-head” linkages as above described in one context as shown in (13. 20) and (13. 21).

(13. 20) *ɑ-tʰə-wo* *so* *vɛŋo*

distal-DEM:this<that-CL:generic, non-sticklike excrement intestine

-kɑ=nɛ̀, *ɑ-wɑ-kɑ*

-CL:generic, sticklike=TOP KPFX-grandmother-CL:generic, sticklike

m̩ŋgu=và *ŋa-ntʂʰɑ.¶* *m̩ŋgu=và*

forehead=ACC outward-hit (with a sticklike tool) forehead=ACC

ŋa-ntʂʰɑ=nɛ̀, *dzo+ba* *tə*

outward-hit (with a sticklike tool)=PAUS water+tumor:blister one

ŋa-lɑ.¶ *dzo+ba* *tə* *ŋa-lɑ=nɛ̀,*

outward-come water+tumor:blister one outward-come=PAUS

ʔi-za *tsuyitsu* *tə* *lɑ+duá*

?-SFX.MAS:son PN:name of a god one come+go.PFV:deliver

=dʑɛ̌.¶ *ʔi-za* *tsuyitsu* *tə*

=EVID:reported ?-SFX.MAS:son PN:name of a god one

lɑ+duá=nɛ̀…

come+go.PFV:deliver

'That (old man) **hit the old lady's forehead** with the excrement sausage. (After) **hit(ting) (her) forehead**, **a blister came out** (on her forehead). (After) **a blister came out**, **the son, Zuyizu, was delivered** (from the blister). (After) **the son, Zuyizu, was delivered**…'

(13. 21) *tʰə-kə=nɛ̀, aʂʅ̀ʂʅ̀*

DEM:this-RLN.LOC:in<at this time=TOP PN:girl's name

*-wo **su** **duá=dʐɛ̌.*¶ **su***

-CL:generic, non-sticklike lead go.PFV=EVID:reported lead

***duá**=nɛ̀, **za+pu** **zɛ̀** **nə-ŋu**=á.*¶

go.PFV hundred+manage:king wife downward-do=PFV

***zapu** **zɛ̀** **nə-ŋu** ànɛ̀, aʂʅ̀ʂʅ̀,*

hundred+manage:king wife downward-do LINK:after PN:girl's name

*=nɛ̀ **yadzə tə dzo**=á.*¶ ***yadzə tə dzo** ànɛ̀, …*

=TOP child one EXT=PFV child one EXT LINK:after

'At this time, Ashishi **was taken away**. (After) **being taken away**, (she) **became the king's wife**. After **becoming the king's wife**, Ashishi **had a child**. After (she) **had a child**, …'

13. 4. 2 Supersentential constituents

13. 4. 2. 1 Paragraphs

It is always a challenging job to identify different paragraphs in a narrative. This is so because all the narratives supporting this grammar are not elicited, but reported in a spontanuous way. Moreover, all the traditional stories narrated by my language consultants only exist in their early memories. In the earlier years, the Ersu's sole after-dinner entertainment was to tell mythological and folkloric stories, whereas this tradition has gradually disappeared since the emergence of electronic appliances such as radios and TVs. Consequently, when I asked my language consultants to help provide data, almost all of them could only recollect what they knew many years ago. Few of them could tell a traditional story that the others believed was completely intact and correct. It is also not surprising to hear that a speaker frequently added some more content to his/her preceding narration when s/he suddenly thought of something that was important while speaking. This section can thus only offer a general understanding, rather than a precise description of paragraphs in a narrative.

A paragraph contains more than one sentence. There are two ways to identify a paragraph in general:

Firstly, a paragraph can be justified through a speaker's way of speaking. A speaker often raises the pitch of his/her voice at the start of a paragraph. When she/he finishes a paragraph, the last sentence is always in a falling intonation. Furthermore, there is often an obvious and long pause between two paragraphs. Sometimes, markers that signalize a pause such as *è* and *nè* 'then' (§13. 4. 1. 2) also occur between two paragraphs.

Secondly, a paragraph in Ersu narratives is closely associated with a scene or an event. A paragraph normally describes one scene or one event. Two particles *ʈʂaŋa* 'later/next' and *mó* 'again' can mark the change of scenes and events in a narrative. Consequently, they can also function to mark the change of paragraphs.

As described in §13. 4. 1. 2, *ʈʂaŋa* 'later/next' can be used to link two sentences. However, it can also be used to mark the change of scenes or events. Take the procedural narrative "The Procedures of Ersu Marriage" reported by Mr. WANG, Zhongquan as an example (see Table 13. 1). This narrative is made up of the following 6 major scenes: 1) to court a marriage → 2) to decide on a marriage → 3) to prepare a wedding → 4) to welcome the bride → 5) to celebrate the wedding → 6) to begin a new family. *ʈʂaŋa* 'later/next' is used at the beginning of four scenes/events, that is, 2), 3), 4) and 5).

mó 'again' can also mark the change of scenes or events. Unlike *ʈʂaŋa* 'later/next' that marks the sequence of scenes or events, *mó* 'again' refers to the fact that a referent conducts the same or a similar action or is in the same or a similar sate again, or refers to the fact that the same or a similar event or state that happens to a referent again. *mó* 'again' can occupy either a sentential-initial or a sentential-middle slot. It may occur in one sentence for several times. A pause in utterance can be heard

between *mó* ‘again’ and other elements of a sentence.

Take the folkloric narrative “A Liar” narrated by Mrs. WANG, Azhi as an example (see Table 13. 1). This story describes how the liar cheated people again and again. It consists of seven scenes. Scene 1 says that the liar caught a mouse and asked a family with a cat to care for it. The cat ate the mouse and he overcharged the family and got the cat. Scene 2 says that the liar sent the cat to a family with a hunting dog and asked them to care for the cat. The dog bit the cat to death and he consequently overcharged the family and got the dog. The plots of the subsequent scenes are all similar to these two. *mó* ‘again’ is used in all the scenes except for the first one. It should be noted that *mó* ‘again’ occurs not only in the first sentence, but also in the following sentences in the paragraph. The description of Scene 2 is given in (13. 22).

(13. 22) ***mó***, *tɕʰi duá.*¶ ***mó***, *tʂʰo+ȵbzɿ* *dzo* *tə*

again take go.PFV again dog+?:hunting dog EXT one

yi *kʰə-pʰzɿ=á.*¶ “*a*,” ***mó***, “*su+ȵo*

CL:family inward-chain=PFV 1sg.SLF again ?next+day:tomorrow

=nè, *lɑ=gə=tə*” *=dʑà=nè.*¶ *zò* *ŋua ȵo* *tʰə-*

=TOP come=PROS=DES=EVID:quotative=PAUS four five day away-

bu *mɑ-lɑ=nè*, *su+yi* *alò*

become NEG-come=PAUS person+family:someone else PARE:you see

ȵtsɿ *dʑì* *tʂʰo=yikə* *nə-ntɕʰi=á.*¶ *nə-ntɕʰi* *ànè*,

cat also dog=AGT downward-bite=PFV downward-bite LINK:after

mó, *su+yi* *tʂʰo tʰɑ=và* *tʰə-tɕʰi*

again person+family:someone else dog 3sg.PRT=ACC away-give

‘**Again**, (he) took (the cat) away. (He) **again** chained (the cat) in a family having a hunting dog. (He) **again** (said this): “I will come tomorrow”. (When) four or five days passed, (he did) not come. You see, the cat was bitten by other people’s (i.e. that family’s) dog. After being bitten, **again**, other people gave him the dog.’

tʂaŋa ‘later/next’ and *ȵó* ‘again’ may co-occur to mark the change of scenes. The co-occurrence order of *tʂaŋa* ‘later’ and *ȵó* ‘again’ can be flexible. That is, *tʂaŋa* ‘later’ may precede or follow *ȵó* ‘again’, which is dependent on a speaker’s speaking style, as in (13. 23). Note that in (13. 23), *ȵó* ‘again’ occurs for three times.

(13. 23) ***mó***, ***tʂaŋa***=*nè*, ***mó***, *zʅ̀*=*ta* *bo*=*kə*

again later=TOP again sit=NOM flat=RLN.LOC:in

tə=*kə*=*nè*, ***mó***, *ndzɿ* *pi* *ta* *pua*

one=RLN.LOC:in=PAUS again buckwheat straw one CL:bushel

la *ʔits*^{h}*u* *ta*-*ka* *t*^{h}*ə*-*p*^{h}*sɿ* *ànè*, …

CO wooden spoon one-CL:generic, sticklike away-throw LINK:after

"**Again**, **later**, after (the two girls) **again** throw a bushel of buckwheat straws and a wooden spoon **again** on one of the flat sitting place…"

13. 4. 2. 2 Narratives

A narrative as an entirety consists of three parts: introduction (§13. 4. 2. 2. 1), body (§13. 4. 2. 2. 2) and ending (§13. 4. 2. 2. 3).

13. 4. 2. 2. 1 Introduction

A speaker always begins his/her narration in one of the two ways: informing a listener what s/he is going to talk about as in (13. 24) and directly introducing the topic as in (13. 25). Or, a speaker may first states what s/he is going to tell and then introduces the topic as in (13. 27).

(13. 24) *yɛ*-*xi* +*so*-*xi* *a*^{l} *k*^{h}*uak*^{h}*ua*

?previous-year+before-year:previous time 1pl.SLF big.RDUP:father

-*bɛ̀* *vaka* *tə*-*sʅ̀* *da*-*k*^{h}*at*^{h}*o*=*gə*=*dǒ*

-QUAT.pl about one-CL:bit upward-tell=PROS=AFFM

'I am going to tell (you) a bit about our parents and their previous life.'

(13. 25) *yɛ+so+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-wɑ* *si*

?previous-before-time:ancient times=TOP KPFX-grandmother three

-wo *tə-tʂəŋu* *dzo*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike one-VCL:together water

tɕʰi *duá*

carry…on one's back go.PFV

'In ancient time, three old ladies went to carry water together.'

(13. 24) and (13. 25) show that no matter which way a speaker chooses to begin his/her narration, a major character of the narrative is introduced in the introduction. More specifically, (13. 24) indicates that the speaker is going to talk about her "parents" and (13. 25) indicates that a story about an old lady is going to be told.

The verb *dɑ-kʰatʰo* 'upward-tell' can be replaced by its synonym *də-xi* 'upward-tell' or near-synonym *də-xi+nbɑ* 'utter…in detail' which can be glossed as 'upward-utter+root' and literally means 'tell root', as in (13. 26).

(13. 26) a. *ɑ* *yɛ+so+xɑ* *tə-sə̀*

1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one-CL:bit

də-xi=gə

upward-utter=PROS

'I am going to tell (you a story that happened) a long time ago.'

b. *ɑ* *yɛ+so+xɑ* *tə-sə̀*

1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one-CL:bit

də-xi+nbɑ=gə

upward-utter+root: tell… in detail=PROS

'I am going to tell (you a story that happened) a long time ago in detail.'

Note that when a speaker has not offered the information about a major character

like (13. 26) above, s/he always introduces the character in the following sentence. For example:

(13. 27) *a* *yɛ+so+xa* *tə-sɔ̀*
1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one-CL:bit
də-xi=gə. ¶ *yɛ+so+xa=nɛ̀,*
upward-utter=PROS ?previous+before+time:ancient time=TOP
ɲinua *vɛnua*
younger same gender sibling elder same gender sibling
nə-wo *dzo=dʑɛ̌*
two -CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT=EVID:reported
'I am going to tell (you a story that happened) a long time ago. (It is said that) there were two brothers: an younger one and an elder one in ancient times.'

13. 4. 2. 2. 2 Body

The body of a narrative consists of more than one paragraph. The characteristics of paragraphs of Ersu narratives are discussed in §13. 4. 2. 1. No more details are given here.

13. 4. 2. 2. 3 Ending

There are three different ways in which a speaker can finish a narrative. Firstly, as mentioned in §13. 2. 2, most of the speakers choose to finish their narration with *tʰə-tɕɯ=á* 'away-finish=PFV:finished'. When they say this, they may attempt to remind me to turn off the recorder. Secondly, there are some speakers who finish a narrative in a natural way. This means that whenever the last scene or paragraph ends, they also finish their speaking without any indications. Finally, there are also some speakers who use conclusory remarks to signal the end of a narrative. Sometimes, a conclusory remark may co-occur with *tʰə-tɕɯ=á* 'finished'. For example:

(13. 28) *alò* *yɛ+so+xɑ=nɛ̀,*

PARE:you see ?previous+before+time:ancient times=TOP

mɑ-li *nə-ŋu* *mɑ-li* *tə-bɛ̀=tsà,*

NEG-good downward-do NEG-good one-QUAT.pl=PFT

mɑ-zɿ=à ?¶ *tʰə-tɕu=á*

NEG-COP=ITRG away-finish=PFV

'You see, in ancient times, (if someone) did bad (things), bad (things) would fall upon him/herself, isn't it right? Finished.' Lit: You see, in ancient time, do not good some not good, not be? Finished.

(13. 28) is extracted from the folkloric narrative "A Cunning Rabbit" (see Table 13. 1). It is about a rabbit that cheated a lot of animals. He was so excited that he rolled around on the ground to celebrate but he eventually and carelessly cut his lips on a tree stump. Consequently, a rabbit now has a cleft palate. The speaker then concludes the narrative as (13. 28) above.

13. 5 Further Topics about Discourse Organization

This section discusses further topics concerning discourse organization in Ersu. This includes the multifunctional morpheme (=)*nɛ̀* (§13. 5. 1), quoted speech (§13. 5. 2), anaphora (§13. 5. 3) and predicate repetition (§13. 5. 4).

13. 5. 1 Multifunctional morpheme (=)*nɛ̀*

As mentioned in §13. 4. 1. 2, it is never an easy job to categorize the different functions of (=)*nɛ̀* in Ersu. It is estimated that *nɛ̀* has the highest frequency in the data since it can be found in almost every clause in a narrative. It may occupy a clause-initial, clause-middle and clause-final slot. It can be a bound morpheme; however, it can also stand alone in context. I would like to view it as a very important discourse organizer.

It can function as a topical marker that closely follows a topic. In this situation, it

is a bound morpheme as discussed in §12. 1. 2. 4. (=)*nɛ̀* can also stand alone in a context to link two sentences. When it functions as a sentential connector, it occupies the sentential-initial slot of the second sentence as discussed in §13. 4. 1. 2.

It can also function as a bound pause marker, which is most commonly seen in various context. It may serve as a clause boundary maker and follow a subordinate clause linker (§12. 3. 2. 1. 3), an evidential marker (§11. 1), the addresser of quoted speech with the ellipsis of the addressee (§13. 3) and the repeated constituents that function are the "head" of a subsequent sentence in a "tail-head" linkage construction as shown in the examples from (13. 16) to (13. 21) above. One more example is given in (13. 29).

(13. 29) [t^hə=kə=**nè (1)**,]$_{\text{SECONDARY TOPIC}}$ [*zikɑ-ma* *la*

DEM:this=RLN.LOC:in=TOP PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name CO

zints^{h}ə-mɑ=dzi =**nè (2)**,]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name=QUAT.dl=TOP

[*ʈʂ^{h}uʈʂ^{h}u* *ɳp^{h}a*]$_{\text{COMMENT.}}$ ¶

a kind of musical blowing and playing instrument blow and play

ʈʂ^{h}uʈʂ^{h}u *ɳp^{h}ɑ=nè* **(3)**,

a kind of musical blowing and playing instrument blow and play=PAUS

[t^hə=*zì* *ziyi=nè* **(4)**,]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*vɛmatɕ^{h}odʑu=zì*

3sg.PRT=GEN:family daughter=TOP PN:devil's name=GEN

ziyi=nè **(5)**,]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*tə-wo=nè* **(6)**]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$

daughter =TOP one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP

[*tɕ^{h}oli-maxi=tə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$; [*tə-wo*

PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name call=DES one-CL:generic,non-sticklike

=**nè (7)**]$_{\text{TOPIC}}$ [*xili-ma* *xi=tə*]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$]$_{\text{COMMENT}}$…

=TOP PN:?-SFX.FEM:female name call=DES

'At this time, Zzigama and Zzinchema were blowing and playing *cucu*. (When they) were blowing and playing *cucu*, her daughters, Vaimaqodzhu's daughters: one named Qolima (and) the other one Hilima…'

Example (13. 29) above demonstrates the high frequency of occurrence of (=)*nè* in discourse. There are two sentences in this example, and (=)*nè* occurs seven times. Five of them are topical markers and one of them is a pause marker.

However, the fourth (=)*nè* can also be viewed as a pause marker because in the speaking, there is a long pause and also because the NP *vɛmatɕ^{h}odʑu=zì ziyi* 'Vamaqodzhu's daughters' that follows it refer to the same referents as t^hə=*zì ziyi* 'her daughters'. The fifth (=)*nè*, that is, the one that follows *vɛmatɕ^{h}odʑu=zì ziyi* 'Vamaqodzhu's daughters' can also be viewed as a focal marker because in the speaking, the speaker purposefully raises his pitch of voices to "highlight" that the

two daughters are Vamaqodzhu's, not someone else's. Consequently, it is really confusing to identify the exact functions of (=)*nɛ̀* in context.

To be brief, I gloss it either as a topical marker (=TOP) or a pause marker (=PAUS) without considering its marking of focus in the speech. This is so because when it marks a focus, it can also be viewed as either a pause or a contrastive topic. When it functions as a sentential connector, it has the meaning of "then" and I thus gloss it as "then".

(13. 30) further demonstrates the high frequency of occurrence of (=)*nɛ̀*, in which almost each of the constituent of a clause takes a (=)*nɛ̀* with all the functions described above found.

(13. 30) *ŋɑ-ntsʰa la kʰə-dzolo=**nè**,*

outward-drag come inward-look=PAUS

*xi-mɑ-wo=**nè**.¶*

?-SFX.FEM:female opposite gender sibling-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP

*tʰə-kə=**nè**, bzŋ+lə la la*

DEM:this-RLN.LOC:in=TOP bee+liquid:honey CO chick

*-wo tɕi duá=**nè**.¶*

-CL: generic, non-sticklike take go.PFV= PAUS

*la-wo kʰə-nbu dzŋ **ànè**,*

chick- CL: generic, non-sticklike inward-roast eat LINK:after

***nè**, kʰɑ-lɑ=nè, "ɑ-nɛ ŋu, ɑ-ndʑò?"*

then inward-come=PAUS ITRG-what do KPFX-friend

*=dʑà=**nè***

=EVID:quotative=PAUS

'(The wild rabbit) dragged (the corpse) out and had a look, (and found that it was his) sister (who was bringing him honey and a chicken which he killed). At this time, (he) took away the honey and the chicken. After (he) roasted the chicken, then, (he) came in (and asked): "What are you doing, my friend?'"

13. 5. 2 Quoted Speech

Quoted speech is a major characteristic of Ersu mythological, folkloric and biographical narratives. It exists in almost each piece of these narratives. While introducing quoted speech, a verbal predicate such as *dɑ-kʰɑtʰo* "upward-tell", *də-fɯsɛ* "upward-say" and *də-xi* "upward-utter" is seldom used. However, the data show that a quotative evidential marker is obligatorily used though other types of evidential markers in Ersu are optionally used (§11. 1). Quotative evidential markers might have grammaticalized from the conservative verb *də-dʑi* "upward-say, tell" and have several variants (§11. 1. 2. 4).

As discussed in §13. 3, speech act participants in quoted speech are often ellipsed.

However, an addresser is always marked with the topical or pause marker =*nɛ̀* when an addressee is ellipsed. In contrast, an addressee always takes an accusative marker =*và* when an addresser is ellipsed (§4. 5. 3. 2. 5 &13. 3).

Note that in quoted speech, an evidential is only used when the quotation ends. It is not used for every clause or sentence in a piece of quotation. If it is used, this means that a quoted addresser is quoting or reporting someone else's words. For example:

(13. 31) "*yò=zɿ̀* *nbò* *gu=su* *ŋuà gu=su,*
1sg.OTR=GEN:family horse shepherd=NOM ox shepherd=NOM
yò=zɿ *zɿgu* *gu=su-bɛ̀* *na* *koyi*
1sg.OTR l ivestock shepherd=NOM-QUAT.pl 2sg.ACC call for
la¶…" *yò=zɿ* *a-pa* *mi+ku*
come 1sg.OTR=GEN:family KPFX-father ?+hole:throat
də-ȵì=dʑà. *na* *koyi* *la.* ¶…" =*dʑà*
upward-ache=EVID:reported 2sg.ACC call for come=EVID:quotative
=*nɛ̀*
=PAUS
'Our family's horse-herders, ox-herders and all livestock-herders came and called for you… (They) came and call for you (because) (it is said that) my father's throat was aching… '

(13. 31) above is extracted from a long piece of quotation. The evidential marker =*dʑà=nɛ̀* is used when the whole quotation ends. It is true that there is another evidential =*dʑà* used to mark the clause *yò=zɿ a-pa mi+ku də-ȵì* 'My father's throat was aching'. However, this indicates that the quoted addresser, the little dog that is personified in the narrative, is reporting what her father said to her. It does not imply that the story-teller is quoting a speech.

13. 5. 3 Anaphora

The anaphoric function can be undertaken by personal pronouns (§13. 5. 3. 1), the unit of [NUM/DEM+CL] (§13. 5. 3. 2) and the adverb-like demonstratives *tʰədʑi* and *tʰi*, both with the meaning of "like this" (§13. 5. 3. 3).

13. 5. 3. 1 Personal pronouns as anaphora

Personal pronouns can refer to previously mentioned antecedents in context. Note that in Ersu, first persons have a "1. SLF" vs. "1. OTR" distinction (§4. 4. 1. 4. 1) and third persons have a "PRT" vs. "NPRT" distinction (§4. 4. 1. 4. 1). In addition, personal pronouns in Ersu can only denote human referents except for the context where non-human referents are personified in narratives. The '1.OTR' personal pronouns the denote quoted speakers rather than the story-teller him/herself. The '3.NPRT' pronouns denote referents that a speaker dislikes or only exists in previous time (§4. 4. 1). The anaphoric function that a personal pronoun undertakes is shown in the examples below.

(13. 32) *ɑ=zɿ̀* ***kʰuɑkʰuɑ***=*nɛ̀*, "***yò*** *yadzɿə*
1sg.SLF=GEN:family big.RDUP:father=TOP 1sg.OTR child
tə la *dɑ-tuɑ=tsà…*"=*dzà*
one EMPH:all upward-hug=PFV=EVID:quotative
'**My father** (said): "**I** have already hugged a child…"'

(13. 32) above shows that *yò* 'I' refers to the previous mentioned referent, that is, "my father" rather than the story-teller herself.

(13. 33) below shows that a second-person personal pronoun *ȵə* '2sg' can also undertake anaphoric functions, referring to the "sister" mentioned in preceding context.

(13. 33) *tʰə* *tsaŋa* *ȵɔ=nɛ̀,*

DEM:this later day=TOP

xi-ma= *và* *tsadʑo-su…¶*

?-SFX.FEM:female opposite gender sibling=ACC return-CAUS

"***nə*** *tsadʑo=tsʰuá=mǎ"=dzà=nɛ̀*

2sg go back=IMMI=RQT=EVID=PAUS

'(On) the next day, (they) let (their) **sister** go back…(They said to her): "**You** go back home soon, OK?"'

(13. 34) below demonstrates that a third-person personal pronoun *tʰa* '3sg.ACC' is used to refer to the previously mentioned "idiot" in the context.

(13. 34) *yɛ+so+xɑ=nɛ̀* *a* *katsʰì* *tə* *dɑ-*

?previous+before+time:ancient time=TOP 1sg.SLF idiot one upward-

kʰatʰo=gə.¶… *tə* *ȵɔ=nɛ̀,* *tʰa=và:* *"ʂa* *la* *yi*

tell=PROS one day=TOP 3sg.ACC wheat sow go.NPFV

xo" =tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌

MOD:need=EVID:quotative

'I will tell about **an idiot** in ancient times….One day, (his wife said) to **him**: "(You) need to go and sow wheat.'"

13. 5. 3. 2 [NUM/DEM+CL] as Anaphora

As discussed in §7. 1. 3. 5. 6, a numeral or a demonstrative plus classifier structure, that is, the unit of [NUM/DEM+CL] can be anaphoric in a discourse. A unit like this can refer to both human and non-human referents, both animate and inanimate referents mentioned in a previous context. For example:

(13. 35) a. **animate & human referents**

a ***m̩p^{h}a*** ***si-wo***

1sg.SLF male opposite gender sibling three-CL:generic, non-sticklike

dzo. ***¶tə-wo*** *ndzà mɛ ŋu duá,*

EXT one-CL:generic, non-sticklike Han Chinese army do go.PFV

nə-wo*=nɛ̀* *yava dzo*

two-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP home stay

'I have **three brothers**. **One** (brother) joined the army, (and) **two** (brothers) stay at home.'

b. **animate & non-human referents**

a ***ʈʂ^{h}o*** ***si-wo*** *dzo.* ¶

1sg.SLF dog three-CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT

tə-wo*=nɛ̀* *n̩iŋi=tə,* ***nə***

one-CL:generic, non-sticklike short=DES two-

-wo*=nɛ̀* *ya-nbo=tə*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP ADJ.PFX-tall=DES

'I have **three dogs**. **One** (dog) is short, (but) **two** (dogs) are tall.'

c. **inanimate & non-human referents**

a ***ndzondzŋ*** ***si-po*** *dzo.* ¶

1sg.SLF book three-CL:things bound together EXT

tə-po*=nɛ̀* *yŭwén=tə,* ***nə***

one-CL:things bound together=TOP MC:Chines=DES two-

-po*=nɛ̀* *shùxué=tə*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP MC:maths=DES

'I have **three books**. **One** (book) is short, (and) **two** (books) are about maths.'

The unit of [DEM+CL] that undertakes anaphoric functions is shown in (13. 36).

(13. 36) *adzò,* *ts^{h}i+xi* *a* *də=kə*

PARE:you see ?this+year:this year 1sg.SLF family=RLN.LOC:in

vɛ=yi=*nɛ̀* *zò-wo* *dzo.* ¶

pig=DIM=TOP four-CL:generic, non-sticklike EXT

ɑ-t^{h}ə-wo=*nɛ̀* *ɑ-zì*

distal-DEM:this<that-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN:family

ɲinuɑ *xo=tə*

younger same gender sibling MOD:want=DES

'You see, my family has four **baby pigs**. My younger brother/sister wants **that** (pig).'

13. 5. 3. 3 *t^{h}ədʑi* 'like this' and *t^{h}i* 'like this' as anaphora

As mentioned in §4. 4. 3. 2, *t^{h}ədʑi* 'like this' and *t^{h}i* 'like this' can be used to modify a verbal predicate and refer to an action or an event occurring in a previous context. They always precede a verbal predicate though there may be some other elements that may separate them as in (13. 37). In this situation, *t^{h}ədʑi* and *t^{h}i* 'like this' show no semantic and pragmatic differences. However, *t^{h}i* 'like this' can directly precedes the conditional subordinating linker *t^{h}ə* 'if', or the co-occurrence of *t^{h}ə* 'if' and the pause marker =*nɛ̀* but *t^{h}ədʑi* 'like this' cannot be used in this way. *t^{h}ədʑi* 'like this' contains a morpheme *t^{h}ə* 'DEM:this' and *dʑi* whose meaning is unknown here. *t^{h}i* 'like this' is isomorphic with *t^{h}i* '3sg.GEN'. For example:

(13. 37) a. *t^{h}ədʑi* *ɑ^{l}* *yadʑə* *siɲ-mɛxi* *də-zu-á*

like this 1pl.SLF child seven-CL:siblings upward-bring up=PFV

'(She) brought up us, seven children as brothers and sisters like this.'

b. *t^{h}i* *ɑ^{l}* *yadʑə* *siɲ-mɛxi* *də-zu-á*

like this 1pl.SLF child seven-CL:siblings upward-bring up=PFV

'(She) brought up us, seven children as brothers and sisters like this.'

(13. 37a) is directly extracted from a biographical narrative. Before (13. 37a), the speaker gives a rather detailed description of the hardships and miseries that her mother experienced. Then the speaker uses *tʰədʑi* 'like this' in (13. 37a) to refer to this situation described in the preceding context. (13. 37b) was made by myself based on (13. 37a) and also based on other similar examples occurring in the data when I was in the field. My language consultants could not figure out if there were any differences between (13. 37a) and (13. 37b). Consequently, *tʰədʑi* 'like this' and *tʰi* 'like this' can be used in an interchangeable way in this context.

However, as discussed above, *tʰi* 'like this' can directly precede the conditional linker *tʰə* 'if' or *tʰɤ=nɛ̀* 'if', but *tʰədʑi* 'like this' cannot be used in this way. For example:

(13. 38) a. *tʰə* *su+ȵo* *ɑʲ=ʂə* *la* *ma*
3sg.PRT ?next+day:tomorrow 1pl.SLF=LOC come NEG
-gə=dzà.¶ *tʰi* *tʰɤ=nɛ̀,* *a* *tʰa*
-PROS=EVID:reported like this LINK:if=PAUS 1sg.SLF 3sg.PRT
=và *tʂa* *yi=gə*
=ACC look for go.NPFV=PROS
'(It is said that) **he will not come to my family tomorrow**. If (it is) **like this**, I will go and look for him.'

*b. *tʰə su+ɳo ɑʲ=ʂə la ma*

3sg.PRT?next-day:tomorrow 1pl.SLF=LOC come NEG

-gə=dzà.¶ tʰədʑi tʰɚ=nè, a tʰa

-PROS=EVID:reported like this LNK:if=PAUS 1sg.SLF 3sg.PRT

=và tʂa yi=gə

=ACC look for go.NPFV=PROS

‘(It is said that) **he will not come to my family tomorrow**. If (it is) **like this**, I will go and look for him.’

13. 5. 4 Predicate repetition

The repetition of a verbal predicate is often found in the data. A verbal predicate used in this way is to denote the lasting and/or the repetition of an action or an event. In general, the longer an action or an event lasts and/or the more times an action or an event is repeated, the more times a verbal predicate is repeated. It is observed that female speakers use verbal predicate repetition in this way much more than male speakers do. In this situation, both the prefix and the root are repeated. (13. 3) above is an example for this. More examples are given in (13. 39) and (13. 40).

(13. 39) *ɱpʰɑ-bè=kə=nè, duá=yì,*

male opposite gender sibling-QUAT.pl=AGT=PAUS go.PFV=CSM

vɛmatɕʰodzʮ=và na-tʂa na-tʂa

PN:devil’s name=ACC downward-chase downward-chase

na-tʂa na-tʂa...

downward-chase downward-chase

‘The brothers went to chase Vaimaqodzhu again and again and for a long period of time.’

(13. 40) *tʰə* *yadʑə-wo* *ɑ-ndʑi*

DEM:this child-CL:generic, non-sticklike ITRG-how

tɑ+ɲo *nə-nbɛ* *nə-nbɛ* *nə-nbɛ*

?this+day:today downward-cry downward-cry downward-cry

nə-nbɛ *nə-nbɛ=gə=dà ?*

downward-cry downward-cry=PROG=ITRG

'How come the child is crying again and again and for a long period of time today?'

Chapter 14 Language Change and Language Endangerment

This chapter first discusses language change and language endangerment (§14. 1), and then discusses the factors that result in this situation (§14. 2). §14. 3 discusses the limitations of this work and suggests further research topics on Ersu.

14. 1 Current Situation of Language Change and Endangerment

Under the influx of Mandarin, Ersu is changing both at the phonological level (§14. 1. 1) and at the lexical level (§14. 1. 2). At present stage, few changes are observed at the syntactic level (§14. 1. 3). Ersu speakers' multilingual ability (§14. 1. 4) and their attitudes towards their mother tongue (§14. 1. 5) are also changing. All these factors demonstrate that Ersu is losing its ground to Mandarin and is thus endangered.

14. 1. 1 Phonological change

As discussed in §2. 1. 3, the language has a distinctive change at the phonological level between different age groups, that is, people under 50 years old and people older than age 50. This is reflected in the fact that the younger Ersu and the older ones show a different accent in pronunciation. In general, the younger Ersu are observed to have acquired those phonemes that also exist in Southwest Mandarin and they often ignore those that only exist in indigenous Ersu. For example, /s/ has replaced /ʂ/ in Yuexi dialect of Southwest Mandarin, and the younger speakers also use /s/ to replace /ʂ/ when they are speaking Ersu.

There are five initial consonants that have corresponding allophones in free variation when they occur before the vowel /u/ or /o/ (§2. 1. 3. 1). Some younger Ersu still use both the consonant and its allophone as the older Ersu do. However, the majority of younger people tend to only choose those consonants that are also found in the Yuexi dialect of Southwest Mandarin that they speak, especially those who have received education or are working outside the Ersu communities. The differences

between the younger speakers and the older speakers in using the allophones in free variation are shown in Table 14. 1.

Older speakers		Younger speakers		Gloss
Allophones	**Example**	**Consonant**	**Example**	
[tʂ] and [ts]	*tʂutʂu* *tsutsu*	[ts]	*tsutsu*	'honest'
[tʂʰ] and [tsʰ]	*tʂʰo* *tsʰo*	[tsʰ]	*tsʰo*	'dog'
[dʐ] and [dz]	*dʐo* *dzo*	[dz]	*dzo*	'water'
[ʂ] and [s]	*ʂo* *so*	[s]	*so*	'blood'
[ʐ] and [z]	*ʐù* *zù*	[z]	*zù*	'fish'

Table 14. 1 Differences between the older speakers and the younger speakers in using allophones in free variation

Table 14. 1 shows that the older speakers in Lajigu might use either of the two pairing allophones, that is, both the retroflex consonants and the apico-alveolar consonants in their speaking. However, the majority of younger speakers only choose the apico-alveolar consonants in their speaking. It should be noted that not all younger speakers stop using the retroflex consonants in this situation and start using the apico-alveolar consonants only. I observed that these younger Ersu who still use either of the two pairing allophones often have one parent who had migrated from other Ersu villages, especially the villages in Ganluo county, due to marriage, though more detailed statistical data are needed. The fact that the majority of younger speakers only choose the five apico-alveolar consonants implies that their pairing retroflex allophones will possibly become distinct in the Lajigu variety of Ersu in the future.

§2. 1. 3. 4 describes that some phonemes, which still exist in Zela Township, Ganluo County, are almost not used in Lajigu any more except for those villagers in Lajigu over 75 years old (five people altogether) still use them in their speech. The phonemes that are lost are those post-alveolar affricates including /tʃ/, /tʃʰ/, /ʃ/, /dʒ/

and the voiced apico-alveolar trill /r/. They are respectively replaced by retroflex affricates /tʂ/, /tʂʰ/, /ʂ/, /dʐ/ and the apico-alveolar approximant /l/. These post-alveolar affricates and the trill are not found in Mandarin but the retroflex affricates and the apical-alveolar approximant are all (except for /dʐ/) attested in Mandarin. The reason for this phonological change is that the Ersu villages in Yuexi County have comparatively more convenient transportation to Yi or Mandarin speaking communities than those in Ganluo County. They thus had more contacts with Han businessmen than those Ersu in Ganluo in previous time (§14. 2. 6).

There are also some phonemes that the older speakers still use, while none of the younger Ersu use them at all (§2. 1. 3. 3). More specifically, the older speakers still distinguish between the voiceless aspirated dorso-velar fricative /x/ and the voiceless glottal fricative /h/, but the younger Ersu only use /x/. Older speakers still distinguish between the open front unrounded vowel /æ/ including its rhotic counterpart /æˑ/ and the open back unrounded vowel /ɑ/ including its rhotic counterpart /ɑˑ/, but the younger people only use /ɑ/ and /ɑˑ/. Again, /h/ and /æ/ do not exist in Mandarin, while /x/ and /ɑ/ are part of the the phonemic inventory of Mandarin. This shows that the phonology of Ersu spoken by the younger people is converging with the Mandarin Chinese prototype.

14. 1. 2 Lexical change

The influx of many loanwords from Southwest Mandarin in the data indicates that Ersu is changing at the lexical level. Sun (1982a, 1983a) states that there are very few loanwords in Ersu. This indeed is the case in mythological, folkloric, cultural and historical narratives. However, nowadays, loanwords from Mandarin frequently occur in daily conversation and procedural and biographical narratives. Generally, the more tightly a topic is associated with the Ersu's daily life and the younger a speaker is, the more loanwords there will be in speech. Loanword phonology is given in §2. 6. This section focuses on the categories of loanwords from the perspective of semantic implications. Loanwords found in the data involve coordinate or subordinate linkers

(§14. 1. 2. 1), numerals (§14. 1. 2. 2), terms that denote kinship relations (§14. 1. 2. 3), political topics (§14. 1. 2. 4), economic topics (§14. 1. 2. 5), new technological products (§14. 1. 2. 6), new social phenomena (§14. 1. 2. 7), education (§14. 1. 2. 8) and some other terms including daily expressions or verbs or adverbs (§14. 1. 2. 9). Note that examples here for loanwords from Mandarin employ standard Romanization *pinyin* rather than the adapted loanword phonemes (§2. 6) in the Ersu's speech.

14. 1. 2. 1 Linkers used for coordinate and subordinate clauses

Linkers that are used for coordinate clauses and subordinate clauses are rich in the indigenous Ersu data. These include *dʑigə* 'subsequently' for sequential coordination (§12. 2. 3), *dà* 'but' for adversative coordination (§12. 2. 4), *la* 'or' for disjunctive coordination (§12. 2. 5), *tʰə* 'if' for conditional clauses (§12. 3. 2. 1), *buànè* 'because' (§12. 3. 2. 3. 1) and *tətəyi* 'consequently' for cause-effect clauses (§12. 3. 2. 3. 2). They occured both in narratives and in conversation when I was recording people's speech in the field. However, I observed that many of the speakers used Mandarin loanwords to replace the indigenous Ersu linkers in their actual daily conversation. I thus hypothesize the reason that loanword linkers were seldom found in the recordings is because people purposefully avoided using Mandarin loanwords while facing a recorder. They aimed to provide me with "pure" Ersu language.

Table 14. 2 gives a list of Mandarin linkers that are often used by the Ersu in their daily conversation.

Ersu Linkers Occurring in Recordings of planned discourse	Mandarin Linkers Occurring in Daily conversation	Meaning
dʑigə	*jiù* or *jiùshì*	'subsequently'
dà	*dànshì*	'but'
la	*huòzhě*	'or'
tʰə	*rúguǒ*	'if'
buànè	*yīnwéi*	'because'
tətəyi	*suǒyǐ*	'consequently'

Table 14. 2 A comparison of Ersu linkers and Mandarin linkers used by the Ersu

14. 1. 2. 2 Numerals

As discussed in §6, the Ersu had a strong tendency to use Mandarin terms for numerals to replace the indigenous Ersu ones. Firstly, they liked to employ Mandarin for large numbers. Secondly, few Ersu in Lajigu still used indigenous Ersu ordinal numbers. They used Mandarin ordinal numbers instead. Thirdly, they shared quite similar techniques to express fractions (§6. 3. 1), times (§6. 3. 2) and approximates (§6. 4). Fourthly, people only used Mandarin ordinal numerals in daily conversation (§6. 2). It is also found in the recordings, some of the speakers used Mandarin numerals to talk about years (for example, 1961) at first, and then switched to Ersu numerals in their speaking as soon as they were aware of this. This phenomenon implies that Mandarin numerals are sometimes more familiar to them than those Ersu numerals. This may also reflect the rising importance of Mandarin Chinese in their emerging market economy.

However, the construction of numerals and classifiers remains unchangeable. The reason why this construction remains unchangeable might be that Mandarin Chinese is also a classifier language. In addition, Ersu and Mandarin Chinese share the same constituent order of numeral-classifier constructions. More specifically, a classifier always follows a numeral in the two languages.

14. 1. 2. 3 Kinship terms

Mandarin kinship terms have replaced some indigenous Ersu kinship terms. The younger Ersu (those under 30 years old) were observed to use Mandarin terms in vocative forms, but they still used indigenous Ersu terms in referential forms. There are also some Mandarin kinship terms used both in vocative forms and referential forms (§4. 3. 1. 1). For example, although *xəmo* ‘mother’s brothers’ does exist in the data, people were seldom heard to use it. Instead, they used the Mandarin term *jiùjiù* to refer to ‘mother’s brothers’ in daily conversation. In addition, a speaker would like to use a referent’s name to refer to the person who was younger than him/her. This is also common in most of the Han communities.

14. 1. 2. 4 Terms relevant to political topics

Terms relevant to political topics occurred a lot in every piece of biographical narratives. When a speaker talked about a referent's personal experiences, s/he always compared the referent's life before the establishment of the P. R. China and that after its establishment. The Ersu, regardless of age group, only used Mandarin political terms. For example: *gòngchǎndǎng* 'the Communist Party', *jiěfàng* 'liberation', *wénɡé* 'the Cultural Revolution', *míngǎi* 'ethnic reforms' and so on.

14. 1. 2. 5 Terms relevant to economic topics

Terms relevant to economic topics mainly occurred in daily conversation and were often used by the younger Ersu. Terms of this category are directly borrowed from Mandarin. For example: *fēnhóng* 'bonus', *ɡǔpiào* 'stock', *bǎoxiǎn* 'insurance', *lìrùn* 'profit', etc.

14. 1. 2. 6 Terms relevant to new technological products

When I had just arrived in the Ersu communities, some people stated that the Ersu were skillful in creating words for new technological products. Two examples that they gave were *ʐəʐə=su* 'crawl.RDUP=NOM:vehicle' which literally means 'crawl-er' and *guaguɑ=su* 'fly.RDUP=NOM:aircraft' which literally means 'fly-er'. However, I observed that they never used the two words on a daily basis. In daily conversation, they still used Mandarin loanwords such as *chēzi* 'vehicle' and *fēijī* 'aircraft'. Actually, all terms that were related to new technological products were under the influence of Mandarin. Both older speakers and younger speakers used Mandarin to talk about new products because there were no such terms in Ersu. Other examples include *xiàngpiàn* 'photo', *diànhuà* 'telephone', *diànshì* 'TV', and so on.

14. 1. 2. 7 Terms relevant to new social phenomena

Mandarin terms relevant to new social phenomena were widely used in daily conversation. Terms of this type included new occupations such as *chìjiǎo yīshēng* 'bare-foot doctor', *dàikèjiàoshī* 'casual teacher'; new administrative districts such as

gōngshè or *xiāng* ‘township’, *shěng* ‘province’, new administrative ranks such as *kēzhǎng* ‘section chief’, *cūnzhǎng* ‘village head’; new economic activities such as *dǎgōng* ‘do physical work (often) in cities’, *gōngdì* ‘working sites’ and so on.

14. 1. 2. 8 Terms relevant to education

There was no official education in Ersu communities in previous time. However, some Ersu religious practitioners went to Tibetan temples to study written religious scriptures. These people are called *suva*^{r} (Wang 2010a: 145). Consequently, there are few indigenous terms relevant to education. They are given in Table 14. 3.

Term	Gloss	Meaning
kʰə-so	inward-learn	‘learn’
soso=su	learn.REDP=NOM	‘learner’
kʰɑ-xaxa	inward-teach.REDP	‘teach’
xaxa=su	teach.REDP=NOM	‘teacher’
so+pu	learn+manage	‘master’
ndzondzɿ	written words	‘written words’
kʰə-lo	inward-write	‘write’
ndzondzɿ so	written words learn	‘go to school’

Table 14. 3 List of indigenous Ersu terms relevant to education

Modern school education did not exist in the Ersu communities until the establishment of the P. R. China, in which the teaching media was Mandarin. Therefore, terms relevant to contemporary education all directly came from Mandarin and they co-existed with the indigenous Ersu terms listed in Table 14. 3. For example: *bānjí* ‘class’, *niánjí* ‘grade’ and all the terms for subjects like *yǔwén* ‘Chinese’, *shùxué* ‘mathematics’, *yīnyuè* ‘music’, etc.

14. 1. 2. 9 Other Mandarin loanwords

Other Mandarin loanwords discussed here refer to those loanwords that occur in the data but were not listed in the categories described above. They were found both in the recordings of planned discourse and in daily conversation. They include the abstract noun *shì* ‘matter’; the adverbs like *chàbuduō* ‘almost’, *shíjìshang* ‘actually’,

háish ì ‘still’; the verb *chà* ‘be different, lack’ and some daily expressions like *méifǎ* ‘no solving plans’, etc. It is interesting that the adjective *rènao* ‘funny, happy and exciting’ which describes gatherings or ceremonial occasions are changed to *nàorè* ‘funny, happy and exciting’ when my language consultants used it in their speaking. I hypothesize that this is so because *rènao* literally means ‘hot noises’ with a syntactic order as “adjective→Nh” in Mandarin. When the Ersu used *rènao* ‘funny, happy and exciting’, they might change the syntactic order as “Nh→adjective” which is the canonical constituent order in an Ersu NP. Consequently, they preferred *nàorè* to *rènao* in their speaking.

14. 1. 3 Slight change of syntactic constituent orders

Though more and more Mandarin loanwords occur in Ersu daily conversation, the syntactic constituent order remains SV/AOV and head-initial in an NP. This is unlike Mandarin, in which the constituent order should be SV/AVO and head-final in an NP. On the contrary, it is observed that even if a sentence almost consists of Mandarin loanwords only, it should be V-final as is predominant in Ersu rather than O-final as is predominant in Mandarin. For example[169]

(14. 1) a. ***sān*** ***yuè*** ***wǔ*** ***hào*** *ɲo*

MC:three MC:month MC:five MC:date day

zàng+lì+nián

MC:Tibetan+MC:calendar+MC:year<Tibetan New Year Festival

guò=dʑà

MC:celebrate =EVID:reported

‘(It is said that people) celebrate the Tibetan New Year Festival on March 5.’

[169] Mandarin loanwords in examples of this chapter are in bold.

*b. ***sān yuè wǔ hào guò***

MC:three MC:month MC:five MC:day MC:celebrate

zàng+lì+nián

MC:Tibetan+MC:calendar+MC:year<Tibetan New Year Festival

'(People) celebrate Tibetan New Year Festival on March 5.'

As can be seen from (14. 1a), only one indigenous Ersu temporal noun *ɲɔ* 'day' occurs in the sentence. However, the sentence is V-final and the evidential marker *dʑɤ̀* 'EVID:reproted' is used. This is completely consistent with Ersu canonical syntactic constituent order. In addition, since the information is not direct evidence, the evidential marker is used here (§11. 1). Though (14. 1b) is consistent with Mandarin syntactic constituent order, it is not accepted by the Ersu speakers.

One more example is given in (14. 2). Note that again, in (14. 2b) *zhào xiàngpiàn* 'take photo: take a photo' is syntactically correct in Mandarin, but the Ersu use (14. 2a) rather than (14. 2b). That is, they prefer to use *xiàngpiàn zhào* 'photo take: take a photo' rather than *zhào xiàngpiàn* 'take photo:take a photo'.

(14. 2) a. *ɲɔ̀kuà-bɛ̀ tɑ-wa kʰɑ-ndzɑ=yì*

all-QUAT.pl one-VCL:together inward-stand=CSM

xiàngpiàn zhào

MC:photo MC:take

'All stand together (and) take a photo.'

*b. *ɲɔ̀kuà-bɛ̀ tɑ-wa kʰɑ-ndzɑ=yì* ***zhào***

All-QUAT.pl one-VCL:together inward-stand=CSM MC:take

xiàngpiàn

MC:photo

'All stand together (and) take a photo.'

It is observed that the Mandarin verb *chà* 'be different, lack' often takes an indigenous Ersu verbal prefix *t^{h}a* 'PFX:away' in context as in (14. 3) and (14. 4).

(14. 3) *ɑ=zɿ̀* *m̥p^{h}a*

1sg.SLF=GEN:family male opposite gender sibling

-wo *la* *ɑ=zɿ̀* *ɑ-*

-CL:generic, non-sticklike CO 1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-

ʈʂ^{h}a *ɬaɬɑ=dzi* *mɛ̀+tɕò*

male opposite gender sibling's spouse middle= dl nature+bind:sky

mɛ̀+li=pa *k^{h}uɑ=tə* ***t^{h}ɑ-chà=tsà***

nature+?:earth=COMP:as …as big=DES away-MC:be different=PFT

'The difference between my brother and my brother's wife is as big as that between the sky and the earth.' Lit: My brother and my brother's wife two as big as the sky the earth be different.

(14. 4) *vɛ* *vɛŋ̥o,* *vɛ* *bup^{h}a,* *vɛ* *ɳdzi=nè* *tə-sɿ̀* *la*

pig intestines pig stomach pig rib=TOP one-CL:bit EMPH:all

t^{h}ɑ-chà *mɑ-p^{h}a*

away-MC:lack NEG-MOD:can

'Pig intestines, pig stomach (and) pig ribs, all have to be there.'

There is only one exceptional loanword that may change the syntactic constituent order in Ersu. This is the Mandarin loanword *lái* 'come' as discussed in §12. 3. 4. Example (13. 6) in §12. 3. 4 is repeated here for convenience.

(14. 5) *ɲɹinua* *də-dzimo* *ànè,*

younger same gender sibling upward-be rich LINK:after

vɛnuɑ=nè, ***lɑ̂***

elder same gender sibling=TOP MC:come

ɲɹinuɑ=ʂə̀

younger same gender sibling=RLN.LOC:place

'After the younger brother became rich, the elder brother came to the younger brother's home.'

14. 1. 4 Change of the Ersu's language-speaking ability

The Ersu were proud to be "people with three tongues". This means that the majority of the Ersu could speak three languages: Ersu, Mandarin and Yi years ago. However, their trilingual ability is dramatically changing in recent years. A general tendency is that the younger Ersu are becoming either monolingual in Mandarin Chinese or bilingual in Ersu and Mandarin Chinese. Those Ersu in Lajigu (12 of the children under 10 years old) who are becoming monolingual can only speak Mandarin and those Ersu who are bilingual can speak both Ersu and Mandarin. Few of the younger Ersu could still speak and understand Yi language.

In order to find out the change of the Ersu's language-speaking ability, I conducted a survey on the Lajigu Ersu when I was in the field. Though an extensive investigation into the whole Ersu communities was not conducted, my language consultants suggested that the situation in Lajigu undoubtedly mirrors the linguistic situation in other Ersu communities. They also state that the Ersu's multilingualism in other adjacent villages in Yuexi County is poorer than the Lajigu villager's because the other Ersu in the county have more contacts with Han people.

There are 77 families with 365 permanent residents registered in Lajigu. However, there were actually 164 people staying there during my first period of fieldwork, namely from November 2010 to July 2011. When I was conducting my second period

of fieldwork from October 2012 to February 2013, there were only 103 people staying in Lajigu. This is so because more and more comparatively well-off families have moved to the plain areas or the outskirts of some cities and also because more and more villagers have migrated to seek laboring jobs outside the Ersu communities. They only come back to Lajigu for important festivals like the Spring Festival or for big events like funerals or wedding parties. Those villagers staying in Lajigu are mainly the old and their young grandchildren (§1. 4. 1). The Lajigu villagers' bi-/tri-lingual abilities are summarized in Table 14. 4 below.

Age	Number	Ersu	Yi	Mandarin
above 70	21	good	average	poor
50~69	27	good	average	average
40~49	54	good	poor	average
30~39	53	good	around 20% in listening around 10% in speaking	average
20~29	45	good	less than 5% in listening no speaking	good
10~19	76	good	zero	good
	39	average		good
3~9	21	good		good
	8	poor		good
	12	zero		good

Table 14. 4 The change of the Ersu's language-speaking ability in Lajigu

The data in Table 14. 4 were collected in January 2013 when many villagers working outside came home to celebrate the 2012 Spring Festival. Telephone interviews were conducted by me and Mr. WANG Amu to question those who did not come back to Lajigu. Consequently, the questionnaires were distributed to all of the 356 registered residents. Note that this investigation does not include nine children under three years old since they could not speak any language well enough. Questions concerning preschool children (younger than six years old and older than three years old) were answered by their guardians. The Lajigu Ersu's language-speaking ability was described in accordance with their age group as below. However, *there is no clear-cut matching border-line between different age groups and their*

language-speaking abilities. There are always some individual deviations among the same group of people (Dorian 2009). These exceptions are not described here since this work is a descriptive grammar rather than a thesis on sociolinguistics. In general, the descriptions below are evaluated to reflect at least 90% of the linguistic situation in Lajigu.

The 21 people over 70 years old were trilingual. Their Ersu was much better than both Yi and Mandarin. Meanwhile, they could speak Yi much better than Mandarin. I observed that most of them could only partially understand what others were talking about in Mandarin, and they could not speak Mandarin well. When they spoke Mandarin, they had to rely a lot on gestures and also Ersu or Yi loanwords.

The 27 people of 50~69 years old were also trilingual. Ersu was dominant in this age group. They could speak Yi as well as Mandarin. They occasionally had difficulty in communicating with both the Yi speakers and the Mandarin speakers.

Although the 54 people of 40~49 years old were still trilingual, yet their Yi-speaking ability was poorer than their Mandarin-speaking ability. Many of them stated that they might have difficulty in talking with their Yi neighbors in Yi. In this situation, they had to switch to Mandarin. In addition, they felt much more "comfortable" to speak Ersu than to speak Mandarin.

The 53 people of 30~39 years old could only understand about 20% when others spoke Yi and they themselves only spoke about 10% of Yi. Although this group's Ersu was still better than their Mandarin, they felt that speaking Ersu was almost as "comfortable" as speaking Mandarin. This implied that their Mandarin-speaking ability was much better than that of those who were above 40 years old.

The group of 45 people who were 20~29 years old could not speak Yi anymore and they could only understand about 5% when others spoke Yi. Their Ersu was as

good as their Mandarin. They could communicate with people of other ethnic groups in Mandarin without any difficulty.

The people who were 10~19 years old could not understand and speak Yi at all. This group could be classified into two subgroups. 76 of them believed that their Ersu was as good as their Mandarin. This was very similar to the people of 20~29 years old. Thirty-nine of them thought that their Mandarin was better than their Ersu. Those 39 younger people either had received better school education, or had stayed and worked outside the Ersu communities longer than those 76 younger people.

The children who were 3~9 years old could be further categorized into three subgroups. Twenty-one of them who were staying with their grandparents in Lajigu could still speak Ersu quite fluently. This group of children stated that they could speak Ersu as well as they could speak Mandarin. However, I hypothesized that their Ersu should be a bit better than their Mandarin. This was so not only because they showed no difficulty in communicating with the adults in Ersu, but also because they talked to each other in Ersu most of the time. Eight of the children were reported to speak poorer in Ersu than in Mandarin, and twelve of them were reported to not be able to speak Ersu at all. These children were registered as Lajigu residents, but actually, they were staying with their parents and also receiving school education outside Lajigu. None of the children of this age group has knowledge of Yi.

In addition, almost 90% of the people between 16 and 45 were either studying or working outside the Ersu communities in recent years. These people were still fluent in Ersu. However, their abilities to tell traditional Ersu stories and to sing traditional Ersu songs were much poorer than those who still stayed and lived in Lajigu.

To conclude, Table 14. 4 shows that Ersu is still a dominant language in Lajigu, but this dominance will soon be replaced by Mandarin in the future since the Ersu under the age of 20 numbering 80 can speak Mandarin better than their mother tongue,

Ersu. Among the 80, there are 12 children who cannot speak Ersu at all. This implies that Ersu is really "highly endangered" (Bradley 1997; Mosley 2010). Furthermore, the number of those who can speak Yi has amazingly declined among the Ersu under 50 years old. All those younger Ersu who are under 20 years old numbering 156 have no knowledge of Yi in terms of both speaking and understanding. Consequently, the Ersu are shifting from a trilingual ethnic group to either a bilingual or a monolingual ethnic group. In short, the Ersu's language-speaking ability in Lajigu is weakening at a fast rate.

14. 1. 5 Change of the Ersu's attitudes towards their mother tongue

This section is based on my observation as a participant rather than on questionnaires since people always offered positive answers to questions like "Do you think that it is important to protect your mother tongue?" or "Are you proud that you can speak not only Ersu but also Yi and Mandarin?"

While talking about events that happened in previous time, the majority of the Ersu in Lajigu were fairly proud because they could speak their mother tongue, Ersu, which is unintelligible to the neighboring ethnic groups like the Yi, the Minyak and the Han Chinese. This is so because they believe that Ersu, their indigenous language was useful for effective communications among themselves when they had conflicts with other ethnic groups before the liberation of the P. R. China. According to many Ersu in Lajigu, their ancestors could discuss measures against their "enemies", for example, even at the time when they were facing the "enemies" because they could understand Han or Yi while the Yi or the Han could not understand Ersu. They were proud of their mother tongue also because they believed that their language had "mighty and magic power". They were told that some Ersu Shabas in earlier days could kill or defeat the invaders just by relying on the cursing power of their language (§1. 2. 3). Many Ersu proudly told me about these kinds of stories with different versions, when I was in the field.

However, this pride in their mother tongue only exists in regard to previous events for most of the Ersu in Lajigu. Their attitudes towards Ersu have experienced great changes in recent years. When I was talking about the importance of protecting Ersu in the field, I observed that people could be divided into three groups concerning this topic: people who advocated the protection of the Ersu language, people who were indifferent to this topic and people who objected to the protection of the Ersu language.

People who were in favor of the protection of Ersu were rather few. Some of them had received senior middle school education or above. They believed that their mother language was "the blade of identity" (Aikhenvald 2013) as an "Ersu person". They basically understood that a language was of great importance to an ethnic group. Take one of my major language consultants, Mr. WANG Amu, as an example. He often worried that when his mother tongue was lost, the Ersu as an ethnic group would be lost. People of this group also included those who firmly insisted that the Ersu should be an independent ethnic group rather than a sub-branch of Tibetan (§1. 2. 1). They advocated that everything relevant to the Ersu ethnic identities should be protected well, which of course, includes their mother tongue.

The majority of the Ersu in Lajigu had an indifferent attitude towards the protection of their mother tongue. They thought that Ersu was not useful any more since there were no ethnic conflicts in modern society. In addition, Ersu did not play any useful role in education, employment and economic development. However, they did not object to the protection of Ersu. They thought that it was good to keep Ersu alive because they viewed the language as a heritage from their ancestors and thus should be well preserved.

People who objected to the protection of their mother tongue were either Tibetan ethnicity advocators (§1. 2. 1) or those who were working or living outside the Ersu communities. The people who believed that the Ersu people should be a sub-branch of

the Tibetans held the opinion that everything relevant to Ersu must be eliminated, including Ersu tradition, Ersu culture, Ersu costumes and also Ersu language. They felt proud to be called a Tibetan rather than an Ersu. The other group of people who objected to the protection of the Ersu language were those who did not stay in the Ersu communities any more. They have broadened their world view because of the frequent contacts with the world outside. They viewed Ersu as a backward language and they thought people should let it die. They desired to be immersed into the "modern world". They thought that only when an Ersu learned Mandarin well could s/he have opportunities to enter good universities, to find decent jobs and to be accepted by the Han Chinese. These people attached comparatively high importance to their young children's education. However, whenever there was any possibility, they would like to send their children to some "better" schools in which the students were mainly Han Chinese, neither the Yi nor the Ersu.

14. 2 Factors Resulting in the Changes in Ersu and the Endangerment of Ersu

§14. 1 describes that under the influx of Mandarin, Ersu has changed both at the phonological level and the lexical level. The Ersu's trilingual ability and their attitudes towards their mother tongue are also changing. All the above indicate that Ersu is changing and is endangered. This section focuses on the factors that result in the changes and the endangerment of Ersu from the perspective of non-linguistic parameters. The factors might be manifold. They do not separately play a role in the process of Ersu language change and endangerment. On the contrary, they are interwoven with each other to result in the current situation of Ersu. The major factors include economic stimuli (§14. 2. 1), migration (§14. 2. 2), technological development (§14. 2. 3), education (§14. 2. 4), inter-ethnic marriage (§14. 2. 5), trading (§14. 2. 6) and governmental policies on ethnic identification (§14. 2. 7).

14. 2. 1 Economic stimuli

The Ersu lived an almost self-sufficient life before the late 1990s. At that time, people seldom went out of their villages except that they occasionally went to buy

goods in nearby towns and the county seat. They might also leave their village to visit other Ersu people or to participate in such events as funerals or wedding parties in other Ersu communities. Consequently, the Ersu lived in a comparatively isolated environment before the 1990s. Their daily used language was undoubtedly their mother tongue rather than Yi or Mandarin because the people they had contacts with were mainly the Ersu.

However, this situation has greatly changed since the late 1990s, especially in recent years. With the development of economy and the expansion of cities in China, more and more laborers such as assembling-line workers, site workers including bricklayers, carpenters and so on are needed by manufacturers and construction companies outside the Ersu communities. Those previously traditional farmers who were strong, healthy and energetic began to swarm into urban areas and enter labor-consuming workplaces. This is common throughout China at present. This trend also spreads to the Ersu communities and it is becoming more and more popular. Any person between about 20 and 45 years old who stayed and farmed at home, would be viewed as people of lower capacity and thus be mocked at by others. Consequently, more and more Ersu, willingly or unwillingly, left the Ersu communities and sought jobs outside. They were scattered in many parts of China. Only the Lajigu Ersu were reported to work in many cities of Sichuan Province such as Chengdu (成都), Xichang (西昌), Mianyang (绵阳), Meishan (眉山) and Leshan (乐山). Some of them even stayed and worked in the coastal provinces like Zhengjiang (浙江), Jiangsu (江苏), Fujian (福建) and Guangdong (广东).

The situation of people working outside stimulated by economic development leads to at least the following issues relevant to the change and the endangerment of Ersu. Firstly, the dominant language in their workplaces was undoubtedly Mandarin. The Ersu had to speak Mandarin all the time and their Mandarin was thus becoming better and better, but their Ersu was being marginalized in daily life and thus becoming poorer and poorer. Many people reported to me that they were feeling

“uncomfortable” to speak Ersu when they occasionally came back to Lajigu. Secondly, more and more Ersu were aware that speaking good Mandarin would help them in job markets. They had a strong tendency to avoid using Ersu and chose Mandarin for utilitarian reasons. They objected to the protection of Ersu because they considered Ersu as a backward language (§14. 1. 5). Finally, whenever there was any possibility, in other words, whenever they could afford to send their children to schools outside the Ersu communities, they would take up the opportunity. My survey indicates that more and more children who were staying with their parents and receiving their schooling education in urban areas either spoke poor Ersu or could not speak Ersu any more (§14. 1. 4).

14. 2. 2 Migration

Migration is accompanied by economic stimuli described above. On the one hand, the Ersu were migrating to outside areas to earn money; on the other hand, when they have earned enough money, they would not consider going back to the Ersu communities any more. This is so because they never wanted to live in the isolated mountainous areas again as their parents or grandparents did. They either pursued better living conditions for their family or sought better pedagogical conditions for their children. It is true that there are 77 families registered in Lajigu (§14. 1. 4). However, six families together with their children were in fact staying in the eastern provinces of China like Zhejiang (浙江) or Jiangsu (江苏). Though they were renting apartments in these areas, they were struggling to reside there permanently. There were another 15 families that have permanently moved either to the plain areas like Mianyang (绵阳) or Mainzhu (绵竹), or to Qinglong (青龙) and Jiuchang (酒厂), the outskirts of the Yuexi county seat (§1. 2. 1). The case is that they were migrating to different regions in China, but the common feature was that these regions were mainly Han Chinese communities where the dominant language is Mandarin. One lucky thing is that the Ersu prefered to gather together and formed new Ersu residential communities outside the traditional Ersu communities (§1. 2. 1). When they met with each other, they still communicated with each other in Ersu rather than Mandarin.

However, even if new Ersu communities were formed, Ersu was seriously threatened by Mandarin. According to all the language consultants who travelled to Xieluo (蟹螺), a well propagated Ersu village that is located in Shimian County of Ya'an Municipality, Sichuan Province (四川省雅安市石棉县) (§1. 2. 1) and surrounded by Minyak and Han villages, the Ersu there seldom used their mother tongue for mutual communication in daily life. Their Ersu-speaking ability was in fact quite poor. I also happened to meet two Ersu visitors from Hanyuan County (汉源), also of Ya'an Manucipality in the field. They both were over 70 years old, but they could not understand and speak Ersu at all. They reported that although there were about 300 hundred Ersu people in their county, people of their age either could understand and speak a bit of Ersu, or could not speak and understand Ersu at all. The reason for this, they thought, was that they spontaneously picked up Mandarin rather than Ersu when they were young. They did not want to be viewed as "odd" children and actively "melted" into the circle of Han Chinese children. It could thus be predicted that the situation in Shimian and Hanyuan would be the future of those newly formed Ersu communities surrounded by Mandarin speakers. How Ersu in these communities, like an island in the sea, is flooded by Mandarin and then shifts, changes and finally dies out should be an interesting topic for future studies.

14. 2. 3 Technological development

The development of technology has not only brought many Mandarin loanwords for new technological products (§14. 1. 2. 6), but also improved the level of the Ersu's Mandarin-speaking and changed their opinions on Ersu language.

Take TV as an example. With the fast development of economy in China, almost every family in Lajigu had a TV set. Nowadays, the children's favorite entertainments are not to listen to the adults' story-telling but to watch TV programs in the evening. Though Lajigu people could receive TV programs both in Mandarin and in other "minority" languages such as Tibetan, Yi and Mongolian, they only watched

Mandarin programs. I observed that children staying in Lajigu could speak fairly standard Mandarin though their guardians (often their grandparents) always communicated with them in Ersu. Then, I surveyed this and found that all the preschool children had acquired Mandarin through TV-watching. Watching TV has improved not only the children's Mandarin, but the adults' as well. Several illiterate villagers told me that TV had contributed a lot to their Mandarin language improvement.

Technological development has also changed the Ersu's perspectives on their mother tongue. Almost all the packaging and the descriptions of new technological products are printed in Chinese and/or Yi in the Ersu communities. This situation further impresses on the Ersu the importance to learn Mandarin, both speaking and reading. When I was in the field, I attempted to teach Ersu orthography to the students of the village primary school, which was created by WANG Dehe and me and mainly based on Romanization *pinyin* and Yi letters. I was soon prevented from doing so by the children's guardians. Their reasons were that Mandarin is now everywhere. The examples they gave were that all manual scripts of technological products were in Mandarin. The children were already burdened to learn the "important" language, Mandarin at school. Therefore, they did not need to be overburdened by learning a "useless" language, Ersu in their opinions.

14. 2. 4 Education

Undoubtedly, what is seriously endangering Ersu is that Mandarin Chinese is the sole language of instruction from primary to senior high schools in the Ersu-speaking areas and also that Mandarin Chinese is a dominant language in China. The situation is the same as that in nearly all other minor ethnic groups in China. If a student wants to enter university, s/he has to master Mandarin not only because Chinese is a compulsory subject for examination, but also because all test papers are printed in Chinese characters except for the subject of foreign languages like English. Moreover, it is also important for people to have a good knowledge of Chinese for their personal

success in the future in a Han-dominated society. This is a decisive factor that leads to people's change of attitudes towards their own languages. They prefer to learn Chinese or even English rather than learn their mother tongue most of the time.

This situation started since the establishment of the P. R. China and has lasted until nowadays. In addition, the government policy of promoting *putonghua* "standard Mandarin" further stresses the importance of Mandarin. Education has resulted in the fact that the younger speakers and the old speakers have demonstrated some different accents in pronunciation in Lajigu (§2. 1. 3). It was observed that among the younger speakers, the more school education a person received, the better his/her Mandarin might be and the "less standard" his/her Ersu might be. When I say "less standard" here, I mean that their Ersu is still fluent and not poor, but they may sometimes use their mother tongue in a not totally correct way in the respect of accents, lexical choices or syntactic orders. For example, I found that many school-age students could not identify the differences between existential verbs (§8. 3).

14. 2. 5 Inter-ethnic marriage

Traditionally, only cross-cousin marriage among the Ersu ethnic group was accepted by the Ersu (§1. 2. 4). However, this situation is changing. Inter-ethnic marriage is now allowed by the Ersu, especially Ersu-Han marriage, Ersu-Tibetan marriage and Ersu-Na marriage. Though Ersu-Yi marriage is still not welcome to some of the older Ersu, their children may pursue this if they meet with the "right" Yi person (§4. 3. 1. 1. 1). In an inter-ethnic family, the only medium for communication is Mandarin. I observed that the second generation of an inter-ethnic marriage family could only speak Mandarin. An investigation conducted by Wang (2010c) shows that only 2 out of 13 younger Ersu people who were born in inter-ethnic marriage families could communicate in Ersu in Xinshiba Town (新市坝镇) of Ganluo County. And the two were brought up by their grandparents, not their parents. Both of their grandparents were Ersu and always communicated with each other in Ersu.

14. 2. 6 Trading and transportation

With China's fast development of economy and quick improvement of transportation in recent years, like other ethnic groups, the Ersu communities which were previously and geographically cut off are now open to the outside world. It has become much easier, more convenient and more frequent for people to go out and to come in. When I was in the field, I often encountered some local Han businessmen who ventured to drive a van or a truck to sell goods village by village in the area in spite of the rather poor road conditions. The Ersu thus have more contacts with other ethnic groups like the Han and the Yi. These changes are inevitably accelerating language shift and change.

Wang Dehe (2011 p.c.) states that the Ersu communities in Yuexi County were historically more easily accessible than those in Ganluo County. There was an important trading passage, called "Southern Silk Road" (Chinese name: 南方丝绸之路) passing through Yuexi County in previous time. An influential bazaar was established in one Ersu village, Laobao'an (老保安), which is about 4km from Lajigu. People from different ethnic groups, especially those Han merchants gathered at the bazaar. Though it was hard for Lajigu villagers to get there because the two villagers were isolated from each other by a mountain, they still climbed over the mountain to purchase necessities for daily life. In WANG Dehe's opinion (p. c.), the Ersu in Yuexi had more communications with the Han Chinese than the Ersu in Ganluo. Consequently, Ersu language in the two counties occurs with some dialectical variation. Ganluo variety is more conservative than Yuexi variety with the latter under much more influx of Mandarin (§2. 1. 3 and §14. 1. 1).

14. 2. 7 Ethnic identification policy

Ersu people's ethnic identification is another factor which potentially threatens Ersu language. Though some Ersu people applied for re-recognition of their ethnic identity, all of them were classified as a Tibetan group (§1. 2. 1). Just as Poa and LaPolla (2007) stated that the lumping of the speakers of a language into a larger

nationality could affect the prospects for maintaining that language, many Ersu people were gradually consciously or unconsciously ignoring their original ethnic identity and also the language of their ethnic group. WANG Dehe is a good example for this. When I asked him to write an invitation letter to introduce me to the Ersu communities, he frequently named themselves as "Ersu Tibetans" instead of "Ersu people". Another extreme example is that whenever I talk to a young Ersu through internet chat, s/he always says "our Tibetan language", not "our Ersu language". This also resulted in some Tibetan ethnicity advocators strongly objecting to the protection of Ersu language (§14. 1. 5).

14. 3 Limitations of This Grammar and Suggestions on Future Research Topics

The aim of this grammar was to produce a synchronic description of Ersu, a previously underdescribed language. Though I endeavored to go into as many details as I could, it was impossible for this grammar to cover every aspect of the language. This was so because although the language is endangered, it is still a dominantly living language in Lajigu. I am sure that the longer a linguist stays with the local people, the more findings s/he will make, especially from the perspective of pragmatics.

This grammar did not view Ersu from the perspective of historical linguistics. The result is that the sources of some morphemes like bound classifiers (§7), aspectual markers (§9) and evidential markers (§11. 1) are not clearly unveiled.

Another limitation is that the description of the Ersu phonological system (§2) was based on my own observation rather than on audio computer software such as PRAAT, etc. This was not enough as Hunston (2002: 20) says: "Although a native speaker has experience of very much more language…much of that experience remains hidden from introspection". I hypothesize that if the analysis of the Ersu phonological system was based on the images and the data produced by audio software, it would be more direct and vivid. However, since this is a reference

grammar of Ersu with the aim of offering an overall presentation of Ersu, I have not relied too much on computer software to analyze the Ersu phonological system. Otherwise, a thesis that only focuses on the Ersu phonological system would be the result.

Every limitation of this grammar described above can be further studied in the future. Other research topics may include a comparative study of the three dialects of Ersu, that is, the eastern dialect Ersu, the western dialect Lizu and the central dialect Tosu (§1). Such a study would not only help discover the genetic relationship between the three dialects, but also help find the dialectical differences between them. Hopefully, Katia Chirkova (2013 p.c.) may begin this meaningful work with the funding of the ELDP programme.

Moreover, I found that the eastern dialect Ersu itself appeared to have some dialectal differences across different villages due to the mountainous isolation (§1. 2. 1, §2. 1. 3, §14. 1. 1 & §14. 2. 6). A further and extensive investigation into different Ersu villages and a systematic study on these dialectical differences might be meaningful for a linguist to track the traces of language variation from the perspective of geographical linguistics.

Finally, a study from the perspective of sociolinguistics might be also meaningful. For example, this grammar only describes the impact of language contact on Ersu with a focus on Mandarin due to my limited understanding of Tibetan and Yi. How the three languages co-work to influence Ersu deserves further study. Another example is that with more and more Ersu families migrating from the Ersu communities, new Ersu communities were established and formed among the Han communities (§1, §14. 2. 2). How Ersu shifts, changes and even becomes extinct in this situation might also be an interesting topic.

In short, this grammar is just like a drop in the ocean. It is only a preliminary

study of Ersu, a living but highly endangered language. It is just the start, not the end of the study of Ersu at all. My hope is that this grammar will function as a catalyst for many new and valuable studies. As the Chinese saying goes: Throw a brick in the air and it comes down as a piece of jade.

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Appendix: Selected Excerpts from Ersu Narratives & Conversations

Note that: 1) all the excerpts from Ersu narratives and long conversations were recorded in Lajigu; 2) the person who helped me to transcribe all the recordings was Mr. Wang Amu (王阿木 *dʑima amu* in Ersu).

Text 1: A Father-searching Son

Narrator: HUANG Azhi (*pʰɔo atʂʅ*)
Age: 78
Year of Recording: 2010
School: None

(1.1) *a* *yɛ+so+xa* *tə-sʔ̀*
1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one-QUAT:bit
da-kʰatʰo=gə
upward-tell=PROS
'I am going to tell an ancient story.'

(1.2) *yɛ+so+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *su* *tə* *yi*
previou?s+before+time:ancient time=TOP person one family
=nɛ̀, *tɕʰɑ-pɑ=nɛ̀,* *ŋə-ʂʅtɕi=nɛ̀,*
=PAUS 3sg.GEN-father=TOP outward-lose=PAUS
ʔi-zɑ̀=nɛ̀, *yi=tɕʰo* *dʐu* *pʰɯ=á*
?-SFX.MAS:son=TOP house=RLN.LOC:on tile sort through=PFV
'Long time ago, (in) one family, the father was lost and the son was rummaging through the tiles on the house (roof).'

(1. 3) *tɕʰɑ-ma* *tʂu* *ku*
3sg.GEN-mother bean fried
tɑ-pdʲ *kʰɑ-ndza,* *tʰa*
one-CL:pearl-like in shape and little in quantity inward-fry 3sg.PRT
=va *də-tsʅ* *xo=dʑɑ̀=nɛ̀*
=ACC upward-feed (solid food) MOD:want=EVID:report=PAUS
'(It is said) that his mother fried a bit of beans and wanted to feed him.'

(1. 4) *də-tɕʰi* *ànɛ̀,* *zò=kə=nɛ̀,* *ləpʰo*
upward-give LINK:when 3sg.NPRT=AGT=PAUS hand
kʰə-tʂʅtʂə=nɛ̀, "*watsʅatsʅ,* *yò=yi* *ləpʰo*
inward-grab =PAUS ONOM 1sg.OTR=GEN hand
nɑ-npʰa." *=dʑɑ̀=nɛ̀*
downward-burn=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'When (she) was passing (the fried beans to her son), he grabbed (her) hands and (she cried like this): "Oh, my dear! My hands are burnt!"'

(1. 5) “*yò=zì* *ɑ-pɑ-wo*
1sg.OTR=GEN:family KPFX-father-CL:generic, non-sticklike
kʰa *duá* *nə* *dɑ-kʰatʰo.*” *=dʑà*
ITRG:where go.PFV 2sg upward-tell=EVID:quotative
=nɛ̀
=PAUS
‘(The son said like this): “You tell (me) where my father went.”’

(1. 6) “*nɔ=zì* *ɑ-pɑ-wo* *tsə*
2sg=GEN:family KPFX-father-CL:generic, non-sticklike cloud
nua *ŋɑ-mɑ-mi=nɛ̀* *yò=yi* *xasɛ.*
black outward-NEG-swallow=PAUS 1sg.OTR=GEN know
ɑ=zŋ=ɛ̀?”=tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌
ITRG=COP=ITRG:right=DEM:this-?-?<EIVD:quotative
‘(The mother said like this): “According to my knowledge, your father was swallowed by a dark cloud[170].”’

(1. 7) *duá=yì,* *silə* *tə* *tɕi* *də-tɕi*
go.PFV=CSM bow one CL:tools with a handle upward-take
tʂa *duá=dʑɛ̌*
search go.PFV=EVID:reported
‘It is said that (the son) went out, and took a bow and went to search for his father.’

(1. 8) *tʂa* *duá=nɛ̀,* *tə-bu* *ŋɑ-lɑ=nɛ̀,*
search go.PFV=PAUS one-CL:group outward-come=PAUS
“*yò=zì* *ɑ-pɑ* *mi=su,* *nɔ*,
1sg.OTR=GEN:family KPFX-fathersw allow=AGT.NOM 2pl
ɑ=zŋ=ɛ̀?”=dʑà=nɛ̀
ITRG-COP-ITRG:right=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(When he) went (to search for his father), a group (of clouds) came towards (him and he said like this): “You are the clouds (that) swallowed my father. Right?”’

(1. 9) “*nɔ=zì* *ɑ-pɑ* *mi=su,* *tʂaŋɑ* *dzo*
2sg=GEN:family KPFX-fathers wallow=AGT.NOM behind EXT
sɛ̀.”=tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə
still=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
‘(The clouds said like this): “The clouds (that) swallowed your father are still behind (us).”’

[170] According to the superstitions of the Ersu, some devils may live in dark clouds.

(1. 10) *mó, tə-bu ŋa-la, "yò=zì*
again one-CL:group outward-come "1sg.OTR=GEN:family
a-pa mi=su, tʰə=kə
KPFX-father swallow=AGT.NOM DEM:this=LOC:in<here
a=dzo=è?" =dʑà=nɛ̀
ITRG=EXT=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'Again, a group of (clouds) came towards (him and he asked like this): "Are the clouds (that) swallowed my father here?"'

(1. 11) *"nə=zì a-pa mi=su, tʂaŋa*
2sg=GEN:family KPFX-father swallow=AGT.NOM behind
ŋa-la ŋa-la=gə
outward-come outward-come=PROS
'(The clouds said like this): "The clouds (that) swallowed your father will come behind (us).'

(1. 12) *nə=zì ɲa-pa mi=su*
2sg=GEN:family 2sg.GEN-father swallow=AGT.NOM
ŋa-la=nɛ̀, tsə ə˥ tsə nua
outward--come=PAUS cloud white cloud black
də-dzudzu ŋa-la=gə."
upward-gather.RDUP outward-come=PROS
=tʰə-a-dʑigə
=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'(When the clouds that) swallowed your father come towards (you), the white clouds and the dark clouds will gather (together) and come.'"

(1. 13) *nɛ̀, ŋa-la=nɛ̀, "yò=zì a-pa*
then outward-come=PAUS 1sg.OTR KPFX-father
mi=su, sɛ tə-wo=è?"
swallow=AGT.NOM ITRG:who one-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ITRG
=dʑà=nɛ̀
=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'Then, (when the clouds) came towards (him), (he asked them like this): "Which one (of you) swallowed my father?"'

(1. 14) *"o, a-tʰə guɬa-wo."*
PART:oh distal-DEM:this<that middle-CL:generic, non-sticklike
=tʰə-a-dʑɛ̌
DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'(The clouds answered like this): "Oh, (it is) that one in the middle (of us)."'

(1. 15) *nɛ̀,* *tʰɐ=kə* *silə* *ma* *ta* *ma*
then 3sg.PRT=AGT bow arrow one arrow
kʰə-tsʰo=nɛ̀, *m̩gu=và* *kʰə-zo=a*
inward-shoot=PAUS forehead=ACC inward-target=PFV
=dʑigə
=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) he (took out his) bow and arrows and shot (out) an arrow and hit the forehead (of the cloud).’

(1. 16) *ta* *ma* *kʰə-tsʰo* *ànɛ̀,* *sɳi=và*
one arrow inward-shoot LINK:after heart=ACC
kʰə-zo=á=dʑigə
inward-target=PFV=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) after he shot another arrow and targeted the heart (of the) cloud).’

(1. 17) *nɛ̀,* *tʰə* *na* *ma* *kʰə-zo* *ànɛ̀,*
then DEM:this two arrow inward-target LINK:after
tʰə-so=á
away-die=PFV
‘Then, after the two arrows targeted, (the cloud) died.’

(1. 18) *nə-ntsʰɿ* *kʰə-dzolo=nɛ̀,*
downward-cut…open inward-look=PAUS
tɕʰɑ-pɑ-wo *ndzɑ-wo*
3sg.GEN-father -CL:generic, non-sticklike drum-CL:generic, non-sticklike
la *dɑ-bɑ=yì,* *su+yi*
still upward-carry…on one’s back=CSM person+family:other person
m̩sapa *tə* *dzɑ-wo* *la*
PN:Shaba one drum-CL:generic, non-sticklike still
dɑ-ba *kʰə-kə* *nə-zɿ=tsà*
upward-carry…on one’s back inward-RLN.LOC:in downward-sit=PFT
=dʑigə
=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that he) cut (the cloud) open (and) had a look, (and) his father still carried a drum on his back, (and) the person, a *Shaba*, carried a drum and sat inside (the cloud).’

(1. 19) *tʰɐ=kə* *nə-ntsʰɿ=yì,* *su*
DEM:this=LOC:in<at the time downward-cut…open=CSM person
tʰɑ-mɑ-so *kʰə-kə* *dzo*
away-NEG-die inward-RLN.LOC:in EXT
‘At this time, (he) cut (the cloud) open, there was the person (his father who) did not die and sat inside (it).’

(1. 20) *alo,* *t^hədʑi=tə=dʑigə*
PARE:you see like this=DES=EVID:reported
'You see, it is said like this.'

(1. 21) *t^hə-tɕɯ=á,* *t^hə+xɑ=ɲè*
away-finish=PFV DEM:this+time:now=TOP
'Now, (the story) finished.'

[**Text Translation**]

I am going to tell an ancient story. Long time ago, there was a family in which the father was lost and the son was sorting through tiles on the roof of their house. The mother fried some beans and wanted to feed the son. When she was passing the beans on her son upward, he suddenly and tightly grabbed her hand and said:

—"You tell me where my father is."

—"I know that it was a dark cloud that swallowed your father."

The son took a bow and went out to search for his father. When he went out, a group of clouds came towards him.

—"You are the clouds that swallowed my father. Right?"

—"The cloud that swallowed your father is still behind us."

Another group of clouds came towards him.

—"Are the clouds that swallowed my father here?"

—"The cloud that swallowed your father will come behind us. When the cloud that swallowed your father comes out, the white clouds and the dark clouds will gather together and come out."

Then, the clouds came out.

—"Which one of you swallowed my father?"

—"Oh, it is that one in the middle."

Then, he took out his bow and arrows. He shot an arrow and hit the forehead of the cloud. He shot another arrow and hit the heart of the cloud. After being hit by the two arrows, the cloud died. The son then cut the cloud open and had a look. He found that his father was carrying a drum on his back. His father, a *Shaba*, was still carrying a drum on his back and was sitting inside the cloud. He cut the cloud open, and there was his father who did not die inside it. You see, this is the story. Now, it is over.

Text 2: A Clever Man

Narrator: WANG Hailong (*dʑima xɛlõ*)
Age: 21
Year of Recording: 2010
School: Primary School

(2. 1) *yɛ+so+xɑ=nè,* *ʐù+ŋu* *pikà* *tə*
previous?+before+time:ancient time=TOP lie+do:liar ? one
dzo=dʑɛ̌
EXT=EIVD:reported
'(It is said that) long time ago, there was a liar *runnubiga*[171].'

(2. 2) *ʐùŋupikà* *tə* *dzo=ɑ=nè,* *ɬatɕoləkà* *xi=tə*
runnubiga one EXT=PFV=PAUS PN:person's name call=DES
=dʑɛ̌
=EIVD:reported
'(It is said that) there was a liar *runnubiga* called *Llajolega*.'

(2. 3) *tə* *ɲo* *tə=kə=tɑ=nè,* *tʰə=nè* *ə˥-pʰa*
one day one=RLN.LOC:in=LOC=PAUS 3sg.PRT=TOP path-SFX.MAS
=kə *ʂʅʂʅ=dʑà=nè*
=RLN.LOC:in walk.RDUP=EVID:reported=PAUS
'(It is said that) he was walking on the road one day.'

(2. 4) *dzo* *tɕʰi=su* *tə-bè* *də-*
water carry…on one's back=AGT.NOM one-QUAT.pl upward-
dʐudʐu *ànè,* *dzo* *tɕʰi=su-bè*
meet.RDUP LINK:after water carry…on one's back=NOM-QUAT.pl
=nè, *tʰɑ=và:* "*ʐùŋupikà,* *ʐùŋupikà,* *ɲə* *tə*
-QUAT.pl=TOP 3sg.PRT=ACC *runnubiga* *runnubiga* 2sg one
-sʅ *də-ʐù+ŋu* *ɑ˥=và*
-QUAT:bit upward-lie+do:liar<tell a lie 1pl.SLF=ACC
kʰɑ-baɲi=su *xa*" *=dʑà=nè*
inward-listen=CAUS PART:request=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'After some water-carriers encountered with him, the water-carriers (said) to him (like this): "*runnubiga, runnubiga,* you tell a small lie to let us have a listening."'

[171] *ʐu+ŋu pikà* literally means 'liar *pikà* ' with the meaning of *pikà* unknown. It is now used as a cultural-specific nickname referring to any person who likes telling lies out of his/her own control. However, the role in this story appears to be very clever. Consequently, I entitled the story to "A Clever Man". In addition, since *ʐuŋupikà* can be used as a nickname, it is not glossed separately in subsequent sentences.

(2. 5) *yɛ+so+xa* *dzo* *tɕʰi*
previous?+before+time:ancient time water carry…on one's back
=su-bɛ̀=nɛ̀, *dzu̯=và* *kʰa-tsa,* *sɻɱpʰu*
= NOM-QUAT.pl=TOP waist=ACC inward-bind barrel
-bɛ̀=dʑà=nɛ̀
-QUAT.pl=EVID:reported=PAUS
'(It is said that) in ancient time, water-carriers bound barrels on their waist.'

(2. 6) "*o,* *nə* *zu̯ù* *ŋu* *zu̯ù* *ŋu,* *sɛ* *tə*
PART:oh 2sg lie do lie do ITRG:who one
-wo *nəˈ=và* *zu̯ù* *ŋu=tà* *la=tsà.*"
-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2pl=ACC lie do=LOC come=PFT
=dʑɛ̌
=EVID:reported
'(He said like this): "You tell a lie, tell a lie, (but) who has come here to tell you a lie?"'

(2. 7) "*a-ga* *mɛ+tɕo=tɕʰo* *n̥o-ma* *la*
distal-uphill nature+bind:sky=LOC:on sun-SFX.FEM CO
ɬa-pʰa *tsɻtsʃ=gə"=dʑà=nɛ̀*
moon-SFX.MAS bite.RDUP=PROG=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(He said like this): "The sun and the moon above (us) are biting each other.""

(2. 8) *dʑi-dzolo* *ànɛ̀,* *dzo-bɛ̀* *n̥okua* *zixi*
upward-look LINK:after water-QUAT.pl all woman
-bɛ̀=ʂə *na-kàkà=á=dʑɛ̌*
-QUAT.pl=RLN.LOC downward-burst out=PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) after (the water-carriers) had a look (upward), all water spilt over (the barrels) onto these women's body.'

(2. 9) *tʰə=nɛ̀,* "*xa,* *xa,* *xa,…* *zu̯ù* *ŋu=nɛ̀,*
3sg.PRT=TOP ONOM:laughing RPT RPT… lie do=PAUS
tʰə-bɛ̀ *ma-zu̯ù* *ŋu=nɛ̀,* *a-nɛ* *tə-bɛ̀*
DEM:this-QUAT.pl NEG-lie do=PAUS ITRG-what one-QUAT.pl
zu̯ù *ŋu=ɛ̀?"=dʑà=nɛ̀*
lie do=ITRG=EVID=PAUS
'He burst into laughter (and said like this): "Ha, Ha, Ha,…(When I) tell lies, (if I) do not tell these lies, what lies shall (I) tell?""

(2. 10) *mó, tə ȵo=nɛ̀, tʰə=nɛ̀ əʳ-pʰa=kə*
again one day=TOP 3sg.PRT=TOP path-SFX.MAS=LOC:in
liga xa=nɛ̀, ŋua la=su tə-bɛ̀
run in a hurry LINK:when=PUAS ox plough=NOM one-QUAT.pl
də-dʐudʐu ànɛ̀, "ʐùŋupikà, ʐùŋupikà,
upward-meet.RDUP LINK:after *runnubiga runnubiga*
nə tə-sɿ̀ də-ʐù+ŋu aʳ=và
2sg on-QUAT:bit upward-lie+do:tell a lie 1pl.SLF=ACC
kʰa-baȵi=su xa" =tʰə-a-dʑɛ̌
inward-listen=ACC PART:request=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'Again, one day, when he was running on a road, a group of ox-ploughers encountered (him) (and after they encountered each other, the ox-ploughers said to him like this): "*runnubiga*, *runnubiga*, you tell a small lie to let us have a listening."'

(2. 11) *tʰə=nɛ̀, mó, "ʐù ŋu ʐù ŋu, sɛ tə*
3sg.PRT=TOP again lie do lie do ITRG:who one
-wo nəʳ=và sì ʐù ŋu=tà
-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2pl=ACC only lie do=RLN.LOC
la=tsà"=dʑɛ̌
come =PFT =EVID:quotative
'He, again, (said like this): "Tell a lie, tell a lie, (but) who has come here to only tell you a lie?"'

(2. 12) "*a-ȵa zùmadzo-ka dzo*
distal-downhill PN:name of a river-CL:genric, sticklike water
-bɛ̀ ȵokua nə-ntsʰɛ=yi zù-bɛ̀
-QUAT.pl all downward-leak=CSM MC:fish-QUAT.pl
sì ŋa-papa=tsà.
only outward-be everywhere=PFT
'(He said like this): "Water in the *Zumadzo* river leaked (up and) only fish have been everywhere.'

(2. 13) *su-bɛ̀ ȵokua pɛtu*
person-QUAT.pl all MC:basket for carrying something on one's back
də-tɕi=yì, zù ngongo=gə." =dʑà
upward-take=CSM MC:fish pick up.RDUP=PROG=EVID:quotative
=nɛ̀
=PAUS
'All the people took a basket (and) were picking up fish."'

(2. 14) *ŋua lɑ=su=bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *bu=bɛ̀* *la*
ox plough= NOM-QUAT.pl=TOP plough=QUAT.pl EMPH:all
tɕʰi *nə-tsə* *duɑ́=nɛ̀,* *mó,* *dzo*
edge of a field downward-throw go.PFV=PAUS still river
kʰua *tɑ-ka* *xa=dʑɛ̌*
big one-CL:generic, sticklike EXT=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) all the ox-ploughers threw their ploughs at the edge of the fields (and) went (to pick up fish), (but when they arrived there, they found that) there was the river still full of water.'

(2. 15) *mó,* *tsadʑo* *lɑ=yì,* *tʰɑ=và* *məntɕʰi* *lɑ=á*
again return come=CSM 3sg.PRT=ACC ask come=PFV
=nɛ̀, "*nə* *kʰatʰo* *zù=bɛ̀* *ŋa-papa*
=PAUS "2sg say MC:fish=QUAT.pl outward-be everywhere
=tsɑ=dʑigə, *mɑ=zɿ=a*? *kʰa* *dzɑ=ɛ̀*?"
=PFT=EVID:reported NEG-COP=ITRG ITRG:where EXT=ITRG
=dʑà=nɛ̀
=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'Again, (the ox-ploughers) came back (and) asked him (like this): "You said fish have been everywhere, right? Where were (they)?"'

(2. 16) "*zɑ̨ù ŋu=nɛ̀,* *tʰə=bɛ̀* *mɑ-zɑ̨ù* *ŋu=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-nɛ*
lie do=PAUS DEM:this=QUAT.pl NEG-lie do=PAUS ITRG-what
-bɛ̀ *zɑ̨ù* *ŋu=ɛ̀*?" *=tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌*
-QUAT.pl lie do=ITRG=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'He (answered them like this): "(When I) tell lies, (if I) do not tell these lies, what lies shall (I) tell?"'

……

[Text Translation]

Long time ago, there was a liar *runnubiga*. There was a liar *runnubiga* whose name was *Llajolega*. One day, while he was walking on the road, a group of water-carriers encountered him. The water-carriers said to him:

—"*runnubiga*, *runnubiga*, You tell a small lie to let us have a listening."

—"Oh! You tell a lie, tell a lie, (but) who has come here to tell you a lie? The sun and the moon above are biting each other."

In ancient time, the water-carriers bound their barrels on their waist. When the water-carriers looked up, the water split over the barrels onto the women's body. He burst into laughter and said:

—"Ha, Ha, Ha,…(When I) tell lies, (if I) do not tell these lies, what lies shall (I) tell?"

Again, one day, when he was running in a hurry on the road, a group of ox-ploughers encountered him and said to him:

—"*runnubiga*, *runnubiga*, you tell a small lie to let us have a listening."

—"Tell a lie, tell a lie, (but) who has come here only to tell you a lie? Water in the *Zumadzo* river has leaked out (and) fish are everywhere. All the people took their

baskets and are picking up fish (there).”
(On hearing this,) the ox-ploughers threw away their ploughs at the edge of their fields and went (there). (However, they found that) the river was still full of water. Then, they returned and asked him:
—“You said that there were fish everywhere, right? Where are the fish?”
—“(When I) tell lies, (if I) do not tell these lies, what lies shall (I) tell?”
……

Text 3: An Idiot

Narrator: WANG, Zhongquan (*dʑima tʂõtɕʰuẽ*)
Age: 50
Year of Recording: 2010
Schoo: Primary School

(3. 1) *yɛ+so+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *a* *katʂʰɻ̀* *tə*
previous?+before+time:ancient time=TOP 1sg.SLF idiot one
dɑ-kʰatʰo=gə
upward-tell=PROS
'I am going to tell about an idiot in ancient time.'

(3. 2) *ɛ̀,* *katʂʰɻ̀* *dʑalaɲanpʰi* *xi=tə* *dzo*
PART:sigh idiot PN:person's name call=DES EXT
=dʑɛ̌
=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) there was an idiot called *Jjalanianpi*.'

(3. 3) *dʑalaɲanpʰi* *tə* *dzo=nɛ̀,* *tə* *ɲɔ=nɛ̀,* *tʰa*
PN:person's name one EXT=PAUS one day=TOP 3sg.PRT
=và "*ʂa* *la* *yi* *xo.*"
=ACC wheat sow go.NPFV MOD:need
=tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌
=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'This was *Jjalanianpi*. One day, (someone told him like this): "You need to go and sow wheat."'

(3. 4) "*ʂa la*" *=dʑà* *xɑ=nɛ̀,* *ʂɑ=bɛ̀* *tɕi*
wheat sow=EVID:quotative LINK:when=PAUS wheat=QUAT.pl take
duá=yì, *bubu* *tə* *dɑ-bɑ=yì,*
go.PFV=CSM hole.RDUP one upward-dig=CSM
nɑ-kuaʂa
downward-bury
'When (someone told him like this) "sow wheat", (he) went to take some wheat, dug a hole (and) buried (the wheat into the hole).'

(3. 5) *tʰə-pʰsɿ* *ànɛ̀,* *ʂɑ=tsʰutsʰu* *tə* *dzo*
away-throw LINK:after wheat=NCL:tuft-like one EXT
'After (he) threw (the wheat into the hole), there was a tuft of wheat plants.'

(3. 6) *tʂaŋa ʂɑ=tsʰutsʰu dʑì ŋuà=yikə, tə ɳɔ=nè, ŋua*
later wheat=NCL:tuft-like also ox=AGT one day=TOP ox
ta ŋua tʰə-tsə duá=yì, ŋuɑ=yi
one RPT:ox away-slip go.PFV=CSM ox=AGT
ŋə-dzɿ=á=dʑě
outward-eat=PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) later, an ox went to slip outside and ate the tuft of wheat plants one day.'

(3. 7) *tʰə tʂaŋɑ=nè, mó, lɛ-ma tə kʰə-məntɕi*
3sg.PRT later=TOP again ?-SFX.FEM:bride one inward-ask
'Later, he had a bride.'

(3. 8) *lɛ-ma tə kʰə-məntɕi kʰɑ-lɑ=nè, yadzə*
?-SFX.FEM:bride one inward-ask inward-come=PAUS child
tə dzo
one EXT
'(After he) had got a bride, (he) had a child.'

(3. 9) *yadzə tə dzo ànè, duá=yì, ɑ-pu*
child one EXT LINK:after go.PFV=CSM KPFX-grandfather
ɑ-ɳɔ=ʂə xi-mɑ+vu
KPFX-wife's mother=RLN.LOC ?-SFX.FEM:woman+alcohol[172]
tɕi duá=dʑě
take go.PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) after he had a child, (he) went to (his) father-in-law (and) mother-in-law's home to take woman alcohol.'

(3. 10) *xi-mɑ+vu tɕi duá=nè, ɑ-ɳɔ=nè,*
?-SF.FEM:woman+alcohol take go.PAUS=PAUS KPFX-wife's mother
"*mopa, mopa, nə, alò, vùla sʔ̀*
daughter's husband RPT 2sg PARE:you see cloth QUAT:bit
tɕi yi ànè, yadzə-wò,
take go.NPFV LINK:after child-CL:generic, non-sticklike
è, mɛ+tsʰɯ=yi si ɬa də-
PART:sigh nature+open:winter=GEN three month upward-
ŋpʰi xɑ=nè, gamɛ tʰə-sʔ̀=nè,
be cold LINK:when=PAUS coat DEM:this-QUAT:bit=TOP
də-ndzə tʰə-ʂɿ=mǎ." *=dʑà=nè*
upward-tailor away-dress=PART:requestive=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(When he) went to take woman alcohol, (his) mother-in-law (said to him like this): "Son-in-law, son-in-law, you see, after you take away this bit of

[172] "woman alcohol" refers to the alcohol specially made or bought for a woman to drink when she has just delivered a baby in the Ersu communities.

cloth, when it is cold in winter's three months, (you) tailor this bit of cloth to be a coat to dress (the child). OK?'"

(3. 10) "*o*"=*tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə*
"PART:oh"=DEM:this-?-?<EVID:quotative
'(He answered like this): "Oh!'"

(3. 11) *tsʰɿ̀ tə-po* *tʰə-tɕʰi* *tɕi duá=nɛ̀,* *"tsʰɿ̀-po*
salt one-CL:package away-give take go.PFV=PAUS salt-CL:package
=nɛ̀, *nɔ=nɛ̀,* *dzo-wo* *də-tsu*
=TOP 2sg=TOP water-CL:generic, non-sticklike upward-boil
ànɛ̀, *tɕi yi* *ànɛ̀,* *dzo* *kʰə-tsu=á*
LINK:after take go.NPFV LINK:after water upward-cook=PFV
də-tsu *si* *kʰə-nɑ-kua*
PFX:upward-boil until inward-downward-put
=mǎ."=dʑɑ=nɛ̀
=PART:requestive=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(When he) took a package of salt away, (his mother-in-law said to him like this): "After taking the package of salt away, you cook (some) water (and) after the water is boiling, (and) until (then), you put (the package of salt) into (it)."'

(3. 12) "*o*"=*dʑà*
PART:oh=EVID:quotative
'(He said like this): "Oh!'"

(3. 13) *o,* *duá=nɛ̀,* *ɚ˥=kə+tɔ=kə*
PART:oh go.PFV=PAUS road=LOC:in+one=LOC:in<halfway
ŋɑ-pɑ=nɛ̀, *ɬaɬa+si* *tə-pu*
outward-arrive=PAUS ?+tree:poplar tree one-CL:living plant
=nɛ̀, *mɛ+ɚ˥* *də-ɚ˥* *ɬaɬa+si*
=TOP nature+blow:wind upward-blow ?+tree:poplar tree
tsʰɑ-bɛ̀=nɛ̀, *"pʰatʰatsʅtsʅtsʅ... tʰɑ̀"*
leaf-QUAT.pl=TOP ONOM:the sound of wind blowing tree leaves
=gɔ=nɛ̀, *"tɑ+ȵo=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-zɿ̀* *yadzɻ̩ə*
=PROG=PAUS this?+day:today=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN:family child
=tɕʰo *la* *yɑ-tsʅ=tə* *tʰə=kə*
=COMP:more than EMPH:all APFX-serious=DES DEM:this
dzo=tsà
=LOC:in<here EXT=PART:surprise
'(He) went away (and when he) arrived halfway, the wind was blowing a poplar tree (and) the leaves of the poplar tree was sounding "*patazizizi...ta*" (and he said to himself) "today, there is (someone who) is more serious (feeling much colder) than my child here!'"

(3. 14) *ɛ̀,* *ta+ȵo,* *ta+ȵo* *ndʐəndʐə*
PART:sigh this?+day:today this?+day:today tremble.RDUP
"*pʰatʰapʰatʰa*" =*gə*"=*dʑà*
ONOM: the sound of wind-blowing tree leaves=PROG=EVID:quotative
'ai, (he) is (feeling so cold) to tremble and is making the sound of '*patapata*'"'

(3. 15) *vùla-wo* *nə-ʂʅ*
cloth-CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-tear…into pieces
na-ʂua=yì *sipu* *pu=và*
downward-tear…into pieces=CSM tree CL:living plants=ACC
kʰa-za=yì, *tʰə-pʰsʅ,* *sipu=và* *nə-*
inward-bind=CSM away-throw tree=ACC downward-
ʂʅ=a=dʑɛ̌
dress=PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that he) tore the cloth into pieces (and) bound the tree (with the pieces of cloth and) left (them there and in his mind, this is to) dress the tree (to keep it out of coldness).'

(3. 16) *sipu* *pu=và* *nə-ʂʅ* *ànɛ̀,* *mó,*
tree CL:living plants=ACC downward-dress LINK:after again
ŋa-la=nɛ̀, *dzo* *ta-ka* *ba*
outward-come=PAUS river one-CL:generic, sticklike bank
ŋua-ku=á.
DIR:southward-arrive=PFV
'After (he) dressed the tree, (he) came towards a river bank again.'

(3. 17) *dzo-ka=kə* *dzo* *ŋə-ku* *ŋa-*
river-CL:generic, sticklike=LOC:in water outward-arrive outward-
la=nɛ̀, *dzo* *tsu=bɛ̀* *si* *da-gaga*
come=PAUS water boil=QUAT.pl only upward-flow/run quickly
=*yì*
=CSM
'(When he) came and arrived the river, the water (in the river) flowed very quickly (with many waves and looked like) boiling water.'

(3. 18) *dzo* *tsu=bɛ̀* *si* *da-gaga=tsà*
water boil=QUAT.pl only upward-flow/run quickly=PFT
'(He thought that this was) only boiling water flowing quickly'

(3. 19) *dzo* *tsu* *ndəndə* *tsu=gɔ=nɛ̀,* *ɛ̀,*
water boil really.RDUP boil=PROG=PUAS PART:sigh
ts^{h}ɿ-po *dʑì* *ŋə-p^{h}i* *k^{h}ə-na-kuɑ=yì*
salt-package also outward-tear…open inward-downward-put=CSM
‘(He thought that) the boiling water was really boiling, (and he) tore the salt package open and poured (the salt into the river water).’

(3. 20) *nɛ̀,* *ya* *dʑo* *la* *ànɛ̀,* *zi-mò*
then home return come LINK:after ?-SFX.FEM:wife
-wo=ʂə *bɑ+lɑ=nɛ̀,* “*nə,*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=LOC LOC+come:arrive=PAUS 2sg
yò=zɿ *ɑ-pa* *ɑ-mɑ-bɛ̀*
1sg.OTR=GEN:family KPFX-father KPFX-mother-QUAT.pl
nɑ=và *vùla* *tə-sɿ* *dʑì* *yadzə* *gamɛ* *dʑì*
2sg=ACC cloth one-QUAT:bit also child clothes also
mɑ-tɕ^{h}i=ɑ=to?” *=dʑà=nɛ̀*
NEG-give=ITRG=PART:suspicious=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘Then, (he) returned home (and) arrived at (his wife’s) side (and his wife asked him like this): “You! Did not my father (and) my mother give you some cloth (and) some baby’s clothes?”’

(3. 21) “*ɛ̀,* *yadzə* *gamɛ,* *yadzə* *gamɛ,* *ɑ-kua*
PART:sigh child clothes child clothes distal-northward
tɑ+nɔ *ə^{l}=kə+tə=kə* *ɑ-zɿ* *yadzə*
this?+day:today road=LOC:in+one=LOC:in<halfway 1sg.SLF child
-wo=tɕ^{h}o *la* *də-np^{h}i=tsà=tə,*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike EMPH:all upward-be cold=PFT=DES
ndzəndzə “*p^{h}at^{h}ap^{h}at^{h}a*” *=gə,* *təp^{h}ɿ*
tremble.RDUP ONOM:the sound of wind-blowing trees=PROG randomly
nə-ʂɿ *nɑ-ʂuɑ=yì,* *ɑ-*
downward-tear…into pieces downward-tear…into pieces=CSM distal-
t^{h}ə-wo=và *t^{h}ə-ʂɿ=á.*”
DEM:this<that-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ACC away-dress=PFV
‘Ai, baby’s clothes, baby’s clothes, (when I was on the way home,) today, (I met someone who was feeling) much colder than my baby halfway in the north, trembling (and) making the sound of “*patapata*”, (and I) tore the cloth into pieces (and) dressed that person.’

(3. 22) “*t^{h}i* *t^{h}ɔ=nɛ̀,* *nə* *ts^{h}ɿ* *tɕi* *mɑ-lɑ=a*
so LINK:if=PAUS 2sg salt take NEG-come=ITRG
=to?” *=dʑà=nɛ̀*
=PART:suspicious=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(His wife said like this): “If so, did not you take back the salt?”’

(3. 23) “*ɑ=nɛ̀,* *tsʰɿ tɕi* *tsʰɿ tɕi,* *ɑ=zɿ̀* *ɑ-*
1sg.SLF=PAUS salt take salt take 1sg.SLF=GEN:family KPFX-
ɲo-wo, *zò* *a*
wife’s mother-CL:generic, non-sticklike 3sg.NPRT 1sg.SLF
=và “*dzo* *də-tsu* *ànɛ̀,* *tsʰɿ-po* *nə-*
=ACC water upward-boil LINK:after salt-CL:package downward-
pʰi=á *də-tsu* *ànɛ̀,* *kʰə-nɑ-kua*”
tear…open=PFV upward-boil LINK:after inward-downward-put
=dʑà
=EVID:quotative
‘ “I take the salt, take the salt, my mother-in-law (said to me like this): “After the water was boiled, (you should) tear the salt package open (and) pour (the salt in to the water).””

(3. 24) *apuà,* *ɑ-kua* *dzo* *tsɯ=bɛ̀* *si* *dɑ-*
Yi:surprise distal-northward water boil=QUAT.pl only upward-
gagɑ=yì, *təpʰzɿ=a*
flow/run quickly=CSM randomly=PART:pause
ɑ-tʰə=kə *də-tsɯ=tsà* *buànɛ̀,*
distal-DEM:this=LOC:in<there upward-boil=PFT LINK:because
tsʰɿ-po *dʑì* *ɑ-tʰə=kə* *nɑ-kua.*”
salt-CL:package also distal-DEM:this=LOC:in<there downward-put
=tʰə-ɑ-dʑɛ̌
=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘My dear, (there was) only boiling water was flowing quickly in the north, (and) because (water) here has been boiled, (I) also hurriedly tore the salt package open (and) poured (the salt) there.” (He told his wife like this.)’

(3. 25) *nɛ̀,* *yadzə̧* *tə* *dzo=dʑɛ̌*
then child one EXT=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) he had a child.’

(3. 26) *yadzə̧* *tə* *dzo* *ànɛ̀,* *zi-mò=nɛ̀,* *tə* *ɲo=nɛ̀*
child one EIXT LINK:after ?-SFX.FEM:wife=TOP one day=TOP
“*nə tɑ+ɲo* *yava* *dzo=gə* *tʰə=nɛ̀,* *yadzə̧*
2sg this?+day:today home stay=PROS LINK:if=PAUS child
-wo *tʰə=siŋu.*” *=dʑà=nɛ̀*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike away-look after=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘After (he) had a baby, one day, (his) wife (said to him like this): “If you stay at home today, (you) look after the child.”’

(3. 27) *nè, yadzɻə-wo=nè, nbɛ xɑ=nè,*
then child-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP cry LINK:when=PAUS
o, $t^hə$ su+yi yadzɻə-
PART:sigh DEM:this person+family:other person child
wo=nè, ɬa la da-mɑ-ndzì
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP month EMPH:all upward-NEG-reach
=tə sɛ xɑ=nè, $nts^hɛ$-wo
=DES still LINK:when=PUAS fontanelle-CL:generic, non-sticklike
t^hi=yikə vùliɛ-wo $k^hə$-tʂʅtsə=yì
3sg.RPEST head-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-pinch=CSM
'Then, when the child was crying—when the child has not yet reached one month, (there is a fontanelle on its head), he pinched the fontanelle on (the child's) head.'

(3. 28) *$nts^hɛ$-wo $k^hə$-$nts^hɛ$ ŋə-p^hi*
fontanelle-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-pinch outward-tear…open
ɳ̩ò ŋə-$nts^hɛ$=su ànè, tsɑŋɑ zi-mò
brain outward-pinch=CAUS LINK:after later ?-SFX.FEM:wife
pɑ-lɑ=nè
LOC-come:arrive=PAUS
'After (the child's) fontanelle was pincked and torn open, letting the brain be pinched (flow out), (his) wife came (home).'

(3. 29) "*nə k^hat^ho=yì "yadzɻə-wo=nè,*
2sg tell=CSM child-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP
tə+ɳ̩oɳ̩o nbɛ=yì mɑ-tɕo=tə"
one+day.RDUP:every daycry=CSM NEG-be obedient=DES
=dʑà
=EVID:quotative
'"You said (like this): "The child cries every day and is not obedient.""

(3. 30) *tɑ+ɳ̩o ɑ=yi dɑ-dua ts^ho*
this?+day:today 1sg.SLF=AGT upward-hug ITRG:how many
=pa yɑ-tɕo la xɑ-mɑ-sɛ
=COMP:as…as APFX-obedient EMPH:all know-NEG-know
'Today, when I was hugging him, I did not know how obedient (he) was!'*Lit*: Today, I hugged as how many as obedient all do not know.

(3. 31) *xiǎodélā yadzɻə vùliɛ-wo*
MC:who knows child head-CL:generic, non-sticklike
sò+tsə tə ŋɑ-lɑ=tsà
blood+egg:pustule one outward-come=PFT
'There has been a pustule on the child's head, who knows?'

(3. 32) *sò+tsə* *ta+ŋ̩o=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=yikə* *ŋə-*
blood+egg:pustule this?+day:today=TOP 1sg.SLF=AGT outward-
pʰi, *yadzə̧-wo* *kʰɑ-ma* *yɑ-*
tear…open child-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-sleep APFX-
li, *mɑ-zɿ=ɑ*?
good NEG-COP=ITRG:right
'Today, I tore the pustule open (and) the child slept well. Right?'

(3. 33) *tʰə* *xa* *la,* *adzo,* *kʰɑ-ma* *yimua*
DEM:this time EMPH:all PARE:you see inward-sleep dream
da-mɑ-tsa *sɛ.*"=*tʰə-ɑ-dzà*
upward-NEG-wake up still=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
'You see, (the child) is still having a sound sleep and is not awake until now." (He said like this).' *Lit*: This time all, you see, sleep dream not wake up still.

(3. 34) *o,* *zi-mò* *kʰə-dzolo* *anɛ,* *yadzə̧*
PART:sigh ?-SFX.FEM:wife inward-look LINK:after child
-wo *tʰi=yikə* *ntsʰɛ*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike 3sg.PRT=AGT fontanelle
-wo *kʰə-ntsʰɛ* *tʰə-sɔ=tsà* *dʑigə*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike inward-pinch away-die=PFT consequently
'After (his wife) have a look, (she found that) he had pinched the child's fontanelle (and the child) had been dead consequently.'

……

[**Text Translation**]

I am going to tell (a story) about an idiot in ancient time. There was an idiot whose name is *Jjalanianpi*. One day, someone said to him: "You need to sow wheat." Then, he went to sow wheat. He dug a hole and buried the wheat in it. A tuft of plant thus grew. Later, an ox slipped out and ate up the wheat tuft.

Later, he married a girl. After he had a bride, a baby was born. After the baby was born, he went to father-in-law and mother-in-law's family to fetch woman wine. When he went to fetch woman wine, his mother-in-law told him: "Son-in-law, son-in-law, you see, I am also giving you a bit of cloth. When you have the cloth, you can sew a coat to dress the baby in the three months of winter when it is cold." He answered: "OK." His mother-in-law gave him a package of salt, and said to him: "You take this package of salt, and you put it into water when the water boils." He answered:"OK."

He went back home. Halfway, there was a poplar tree whose leaves were being blown by the wind and was making the sound of "*patazizizi…ta*". He thought: "I am surprised! There is someone who is feeling much colder than my baby here today! Ai, today someone is trembling and making the sound of "*patapata*". He tore the cloth into strips and bound them around the tree. He left the cloth there and in his mind, he thus dressed the tree.

After he dressed the tree, he arrived at the bank of a river. When he came towards

the water, the water in the river was flowing very quickly with many waves. He thought that only boiling water was flowing very quickly with many waves. In his mind, the water was really boiling. Therefore, he tore the salt pack open and poured the salt into the river water.

Then, he returned home and came to his wife's side, and his wife asked him: "You, did not my father and my mother give you some cloth to sew the baby's clothes?" He said: "Ai, don't mention the baby's clothes. Today, there was someone who was feeling much colder than our baby, halfway there in the north. He was so cold that he was trembling and making the sound of "*patapata*". I tore the cloth into pieces and dressed that person." His wife asked him again: "If so, didn't you bring the salt back?" He said: "When I was taking the salt, my mother-in-law told me: After the water is boiling, I should tear the salt pack open and pour the salt into it. My dear! In the north on my way home, there was boiling water that was flowing quickly with many waves. Because the water there was boiling, I hurriedly poured the salt into it."

Then, (let me tell you when) he had a baby (again). After he had a baby, one day, his wife said to him: "If you stay at home today, you look after the baby." Then, when the baby was crying (when a baby is not yet one month old, there is a fontanelle on the head), he pinched the baby's fontanelle and tore it open and let the brain flow out.

Later, his wife came home. He told her: "You said: "The baby was crying every day and was not obedient." Today, I hugged him and you cannot imagine how obedient he was! Who knew that there was a pustule on the baby's head?! Today, I tore the pustule open and the baby was sleeping well, right? You see, he is still sleeping and not awake till now." Oh, after his wife had a look, she found that he had pinched the baby's fontanelle and consequently, the baby had been dead.

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Text 4: Autobiography

Narrator: WANG, Zhongquan (*dʑima tʂõtɕʰuẽ*)
Age: 50
Year of Recording: 2010
School: Primary School

(4. 1) *a so+xɑ=nè, ɑ-kuɑ=*
1sg.SLF before+time:previous time=TOP distal-northward=
dziɬalo=kə dzo=tə
PN:village name=LOC:in live=DES
'Previously, I lived in the northward *Dzillalo*.'

(4. 2) *dziɬalo=kə də-dzɿ dɑ-kʰuɑ=yì*
PN:village name=LOC:in upward-bear upward-be big=CSM
'(I) was born and grown up in *Dzillalo*.'

(4. 3) *aˡ=nè, yadʐə ŋu xa la, ndzondzɿ*
1pl.SLF=TOP child do LINK:when PART:pause written words
so
learn
'When we were children, (we) went to school.' *Lit*: When we did children, learn written words.

(4. 4) *ndzondzɿ so=nè, tʂaŋɑ=nè, tsʰɛ+ŋuɑ=kə*
written words learn=PAUS later=TOP ten+five:fifteen=LOC:in
dɑ-lɑ=nè, ɑ=zɿ pʰɑ+mo
upward-come=PAUS 1sg.SLF=GEN:family SFX.MAS+?:father
=nè, dʑimaŋoxatsa xi=tə, tʰə-so=á
=TOP PN:person's name call=DES away-die=PFV
'(I) was at school until 15 years old when my father, whose name is *Jjimaniohaza*, passed away.' *Lit*: Learn written words, later, come to 15, my father called *Jjimaniohaza* died.

(4. 5) *tʰə-so ànè, zhōngxué dʑì so yi*
away-die LINK:after MC:middle school also learn go.NPFV
mɑ-to yava dzo
NEG-MOD:can home stay
'After (my father) passed away, (I) could not go to middle school (and) stayed at home.'

(4. 6) *ya* *ɲi+ntɕʰi* *ŋu, nbò* *gu* *ŋua* *gu*
home grass+pull:farming work do horse shepherd ox herd
ʐɳgu *gu=tə*
livestock shepherd=DES
'(I stayed at) home (and) did farming work (including) herding horses, herding oxen (and) herding (other) livestock.'

(4. 7) *aᴵ* *dziłalo=kə=nè,* *ɑ-nɛ* *la*
1pl.SLF PN:village name=LOC:in=TOP ITRG-what EMPH:all
mɑ-li=nè, *dànsh ì* *ʐɳgu* *nɑ-ntʂʰa*
NEG-good=PUAS MC:but livestock downward-hit (with a stick)
də-ɕoɕo=á *ʐɳgu* *kʰə-gu*
upward-drive (the livestock)=PFV livestock inward-shepherd
yɑ-li
APFX-good
'(When) we were in *Dzillalo*, everything was not good, but it is good for livestock.' *Lit*: in *Dzillalo*, what all not good, but hit (and) drive livestock good.

(4. 8) *tʰə* *tʂaŋɑ=nè,* *a* *latɕikù* *ŋuɑ=lɑ=nè*
DEM:this later=TOP 1sg.SLF PN:village name southward-come=PAUS
'Later (after) this, I came to *Lajigu*.'

(4. 9) *kʰɑ=tə=kə* *dzo dʑì ta* *pa* *li*
ITRG:where=DES =LOC:in live also one COMP:as…as good
latɕikù=nè, *tə-sʔ̀* *yɑ-li*
PN:village name=TOP one-QUAT:bit APFX-good
'(Although it is said) where to live is the same, *Lajigu* (is) a bit better.' *Lit*: Live in where also as good as one, Lajigu a bit good.

(4. 10) *latɕikù=nè* *tə-sʔ̀* *yɑ-li:* *tɕʰo*
PN:village name=TOP one-QUAT:bit APFX-good:zanthoxylum
dʑì ku, *guāzǐ* *dʑì ku.*
CO grow MC:melon seed CO grow
'Lajigu (is) a bit better: (Here) zanthoxylum can be grown (and) melons can be grown.' *Lit*: Lajigu a bit good: zanthoxylum grow; melon seeds grow.

(4. 11) *dʐə-wo* *latɕikù* *la* *yɑ-*
money-CL:generic, non-sticklike PN:village name come APFX-
pʰa
MOD:can
'It is much easier to earn money in Lajigu.' *Lit*: Money can come Lajigu.

(4. 12) *tʰə+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *yadzɻ̩ə=bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *dʑì*
DEM:this+time<now=TOP child=QUAT.pl=TOP also
ndzondzɿ *so*
written words learn
'Now, the children also go to school.'

(4. 13) *tʰə+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *yadzɻ̩ə=bɛ̀* *dʑì* *dɑ-kʰua*
DEM:this+time<now=TOP child=QUAT.pl also upward-be big
buànɛ̀, *ɲo-pʰɛ* *dzɻ̩ə* *tʂa*
LINK:because out-side:outside money search
'Now, because the children are grown up, (they) earn money (in the) outside (areas).'

(4. 14) *aˡ* *gamɛ* *dʑì* *ya-dzə,* *gaga* *dʑì* *ya-dzə,*
1pl.SLF body CO APFX-good play.RDUP CO APFX-good
yipʰɑ-wo *dʑì* *dɑ-wa*
stomach-CL:generic, non-sticklike CO upward-be full
'We are in good health, (we have) good entertainments (and) we are not starving.' *Lit*: We body good, play good, stomach is full.

(4. 15) *tʰə+xɑ=nɛ̀,* *dzɿ* *dʑì* *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-pʰa,* *tsʰɛ*
DEM:this+time<now=TOP eat CO away-finish NEG-MOD:can drink
dʑì *tʰə-tɕu* *mɑ-pʰa,* *aˡ* *əˡsu-bɛ̀*
CO away-finish NEG-MOD:can 1pl.SLF PN:Ersu-QUAT.pl
kʰa *dzo=tə=kə* *ɲokua* *tʰə+xa*
ITRG:where live=DES=LOC:in all DEM:this+time<now
=nɛ̀, *də-tɕimo=yì*
=TOP upward-be rich=CSM
'Now, (we) cannot finish (our) eating, (and we) cannot finish (our) drinking, (and) now, all of our Ersu people have become rich wherever we live.'

(4. 16) *də-tɕimo=yì,* *dzɻ̩ə* *dʑì* *bo,* *pa* *dʑì* *bo,* *dzɿ*
upward-be rich=CSM money CO EXT foodstuff CO EXT eat
=li *dʑì* *bo,* *tsʰɛ=li* *dʑì* *bo,* *tʰə+xɑ=nɛ̀,*
NOM CO EXT drink=NOM CO EXT DEM:this+time<now=TOP
ɑ-nɛ *la* *bo*
ITRG-what EMPH:all EXT
'(Because we have) become rich, (we) have money, (and we) have foodstuff, (and we) have things for eating, (and we) have things for drinking, (and now, we) have whatever (we want).'

[**Text Translation**]

I previously lived *Dzillalo* which is north of *Lajigu*. I was born and grew up in *Dzillalo*. When we were children, we went to school. (I) was at school until 15 years

old when my father, whose name was *Jjimaniohaza*, passed away. After my father passed away, I could not go to middle school and stayed at home. (I stayed at) home (and) did farming work, (including) herding horses, herding oxen (and) herding (other) livestock. (When) we were in *Dzillalo*, everything was not good, but it is good for keeping livestock.

Later, I moved to *Lajigu*. Although it is said that it is the same to live in any place, *Lajigu* (is) a bit better. *Lajigu* is a bit better because here zanthoxylum can be grown (and) melons can be grown. It is also much easier to earn money in *Lajigu*.

Now, the children also go to school. Now, because the children are grown up, they earn money outside. We are in good health, and we have good entertainments, and we are not starving. Now, we cannot finish our food, and we cannot finish our drink, and now, all of our Ersu people have become rich wherever we live. Because we have become rich, we have money, have foodstuff, and have things for eating, have things for drinking, and now, we have whatever we want.

Text 5: Description of Weather & Farming Work

Narrator: HUANG, Aguo (*pʰɔo ako*)
Age: 47
Year of Recording: 2011
Schoole: Primary School

(5. 1) *tsʰi-xi=nɛ̀, ɑ-nɛ gaga mɑ-ndo*
?this-year:this year=TOP ITRG-what play.RDUP NEG-see
'This year, what is making trouble is unknown.' *Lit*: This year, what play not see.

(5. 2) *mɛ̀ də-dzu=yì*
nature upward-be dry=CSM
'It became dry.'

(5. 3) *mɛ̀+tɕo ŋə-ndə ŋə-ndə ŋə-ndə*
nature+bind:sky outward-be good outward-be good outward-be good
ŋə-ndə ŋə-ndə=yì
outward-be good outward-be good=CSM
'It was always sunny every day.' *Lit*: Sky good, good, good, good, good, good.

(5. 4) *ɛ̀, dzo la tsʰɛ la mɑ-pʰa*
PART:sigh water EMPH:all drink come NEG-MOD:can
'Ai, (people) cannot get water to drink.'

(5. 5) *dzo dʑì nɑ-mɑ-la, ɛ̀, mɛ̀+li dʑì*
water CO downward-NEG-come PART:sigh nature+?:land CO
ŋə-zɿ ŋə-zi
outward-crack outward-crack
'Water did not come and the land has cracked.'

(5. 6) *zɿmi kʰə-dzɿ pu kʰə-dzɿ-bɛ̀ dʑì də-*
corn inward-plant potato inward-plant-QUAT.pl CO upward-
ɳɔo mɑ-pʰa, zɿmi-bɛ̀ dʑì nə-ku
germinate NEG-MOD:can corn-QUAT.pl CO downward-curl up
nə-ə˥ kʰə-kə dzo
downward-curl up inward-LOC:in EXT
'The planted corn and the planted potatoes cannot germinate and the corn is curling up and stayed inside (the land).'

(5. 7) *mɛ̀+li=kə* *tɑ-kuala* *dzolo* *duɑ=yì,* *zɻmi*
nature+?=LOC:in one-VCL:circle look go.PFV=CSM corn
dʑì *də-ɲo* *mɑ-tsà*
also upward-germinate NEG-PFT
'(I) went to have a look at the land, (and I found that) the corn have not germinated.'

(5. 8) *è,* *mɛ̀+li=bɛ̀=kə* *tə-tsʰo* *tə-*
PART:sigh nature+?:land=QUAT.pl=LOC:in one-CL:piece of land one-
tsʰo=kə *də-dzədzə*
CL:piece of land=LOC:in upward-run without any purposes.RDUP
kʰə-dzolo *anɛ,* *zɻmi* *si+ŋgu=yi+də+ŋgu*
inward-look LINK:after corn three+share=GEN+one+share:one third
la *də-ɲo* *mɑ-tsà=do*
EMPH:all upward-germinate NEG-PFT=AFFM
'Ai, after (I) had a random look at the lands piece by piece, (I found that) one third of the corn have not germinated.'

(5. 9) *apua,* *tʰə=bɛ̀* *ŋə-ndzɻndza*
Yi:surprise DEM:this=QUAT.pl outward-consider
go+də-ndzə̨=yì, *ɲi+ntɕʰi* *dʑì*
thorax+upward-tremble<be angry=CSM grass+pull:farming work also
ŋu *bua-mɑ-tʂə=á*
do MOD:want-NEG-MOD:want=PFV
'Abua! (Whenever I) think of these, (I have become) angry and do not want to do farming work.'

(5. 10) *è,* *zɻmi* *tʰəᴵ=nɛ̀* *zɻmi* *əᴵpo=gə,*
PART:sigh corn 3pl.PRT=TOP corn replant=PROG
ɑᴵ=nɛ̀ *mɑ-dʑì-mɑ-əᴵpo=do*
1pl.SLF=TOP NEG-also-NEG-replant: do not replant at all=AFFM
'Ai, they are replanting the corn, (but) we do not replant (them) at all.'

(5. 11) *è,* *də-ɲo-pu* *si* *nə-*
PART:sigh upward-germinate-CL:living plants only downward-
ntsʰɻntsʰa *ŋə-dzɻ=á* *suànqiú*
care about outward-eat=PFV MC:forget about it
'Ai, (I will) only care about (those corn that) have germinated (and) eat (these). Forget about it!'

(5. 12) *è,* *su=bè* *ya-mi=ko* *ŋokua*
PART:sigh person=QUAT.pl APFX-many=among:the majority all
ŋo-pʰɛ *ŋa-duá=yì* *dăgōng* *duá*
out-side:outside outward-go.PFV=CSM MC:do laboring work go.PFV
dzɐ+tsa+lə+tsa *duá*
money+search+treasure+search:search for wealth go.PFV
'Ai, the majority of the people all went to do laboring work outside and went to search for wealth.'

(5. 13) *aˡ=nè,* *ŋo-pʰɛ* *dzì* *ŋə-yi* *ma-do,*
1pl.SLF=TOP out-side:outside also outward-go.NPFV NEG-MOD:can
yava *mè+li* *tə-sə̀* *nə-ŋu=á* *ŋi+ntɕʰi*
home nature+?:land one-QUAT:bit outward-do=PFV grass+pull
nə-ŋu=á, *za-ma* *dzŋ=gə=dzà*
downward-do=PFV ?-SFX.FEM:food eat=PROS=EVID:reported
=nɛ̀
=PAUS
'(It is said that) we cannot go outside (to search for wealth), (and thus we should) cultivate some land (and) do some farming work (and we) will have food to eat.'

(5. 14) *mɛ̀+tɕo-wo=kə=nɛ̀,* *mɛ̀*
nature+bind:sky-CL:generic, non-sticklike=AGT=PAUS nature
də-dzu=tʰatsa=yì
upward-be dry=too=CSM
'It has been too dry.' *Lit*: The sky has made the nature too dry.

(5. 15) *è,* *lətʰu* *kʰala=bɛ̀* *dzì*
PART:sigh crop inward-grow.RDUP=QUAT.pl CO
də-ŋo *ma-pʰa=á;* *dzo* *dzì*
upward-germinate NEG-MOD:can=PFV water CO
na-la *ma-pʰa*
downward-come NEG-MOD:can
'Ai, the grown crops could not germinate and the water could not come.'

(5. 16) *dzo* *dzì* *na-ma-la,* *dzo* *tsʰɛ=li* *la*
water also downward-NEG-come water drink=NOM EMPH:all
ma-bo
NEG-EXT
'There is no water and even there is no drinking water.' *Lit*: Water does not come, drinking water all not have.

(5. 17) *dzo* *ts^{h}ɛ=li* *mɑ-pɛ,* *è,* *ʂɻp^{h}u də-tɕi*
water drink=NOM NEG-be enough PART:sigh barrel upward-take
k^{h}ak^{h}a *dzo* *tɕ^{h}i*
ITRG:where.RDUP<everywhere water carry…on one's back
duá=yì
go.PFV=CSM
'Drinking water is not sufficient, (and I) went to take a barrel to carry water everywhere (wherever there is water).'

(5. 18) *ts^{h}i-xi* *mixa* *tə* *bùtʂ^{h}ə* *mɑ-dzo*
?this-year:this year alike one CL:year NEG-EXT
'No year is like this year.' *Lit*: This year alike one year not have.

[**Text Translation**]

What is the reason for trouble this year is unknown. It is always sunny, and it is dry. There is no rain, and there is no drinking water. The land is cracked. The planted corn and the planted potatoes cannot germinate and the corn is curling up in the land.

I went to have a look at the land, and I found that the corn has not germinated. Ai, after I had a random look at the land piece by piece, I found that one third of the corn has not germinated. Abua! Whenever I think of this, I get angry and do not want to do farming work (anymore). Ai, other people are re-sowing the corn, but we do not re-sowing (it) at all. Ai, I will only take care of corn that has germinated and (we) will eat that. Forget about it!

Ai, the majority of the people went to do laboring work outside and went in search for wealth. People say that we (old ladies) cannot go outside to search for wealth, and thus we should cultivate some land and do some farming work, and we will have food to feed ourselves. But it has been too dry! Ai, the sown crops could not germinate and the rain did not come. There is no water, and there is even no drinking water. Drinking water is not sufficient, and I took a barrel to fetch water from wherever there was water.

No year is like this year!

Text 6: The Orphan and the Rabbit

Narrator: ZHANG, Baocai (*yiʂà pɔtsʰɛ*)
Age: 50
Year of Recording: 2011
School: Primary School

(6. 1) *a* *yɛ+so+xa* *tə* *xi=gə*
1sg.SLF ?previous+before+time:ancient time one talk=PROS
'I am going to talk about an ancient story.'

(6. 2) *yɛ+so+xa=nɛ̀,* *su+yi*
?previous+before+time:ancient time=TOP person+family:other person
ɳa *tɑ-pa* *tʂʰʅyi* *ta*
child one-CL:immature and lovely creature orphan one
-pa *ɑ-pa* *dʑì* *mɑ-dzo*
-CL:immature and lovely creature KPFX-father CO NEG-EXT
ɑ-ma *dʑì* *mɑ-dzo* *tsʰu* *ta*
KPFX-mother CO NEG-EXT such one
-pɑ=dʑigə
-CL:immature and lovely creature=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) in ancient time, there was such a child, an orphan (who) did not have father and did not have mother.' *Lit*: In ancient time, a child, an orphan did not have father, did not have mother, such one.

(6. 3) *nɛ̀,* *tʰədʑi* *tʰə* *si* *yava* *tʰədʑi* *tʰi* *dzo*
then like this 3sg.PRT only home like this like this live
'Then, only he himself lived like this at home.'

(6. 4) *dzo=nɛ̀,* *mɛ̀+li* *dzə*
live=PAUS nature+?:land dig
'(He) lived (like this at home and) did farming work.' *Lit*: lived, dug land.

(6. 5) *yava* *ʐʅgu* *tə* *dʑì* *mɑ-dzo,* *la* *ta*
home livestock one also NEG-EXT chicken one
-ntʂʰa *si* *dzo=dʑigə*
-CL:immature creature only EXT=EVID:reported
'There was no livestock but a chicken only in his home.'

(6. 6) *so=yi* *tə* *ɳo* *də-dzə,* *dʑo* *la* *ya*
before-GEN one day upward-dig return come home
zɑ-mɑ-sʅ̀ *kʰə-tʂʰə* *ŋə-dzʅ=á*
?-SFX.FEM:food-QUAT:bit inward-cook outward-eat=PFV
'On a prior day, (he) dug (land and) returned home to cook some food (and) ate up.'

(6. 7) *mó, tʂaŋa ɳo, mó, dzɻa-mi k^{h}ə-tsu*
again later day again breakfast-QUAT:bit (liquid) inward-cook
ŋə-ts^{h}ɛ=nè, duá=yì, mè+li dzə duá
outward-drink=PAUS go.PFV=CSM nature+?:land dig go.PFV
'Again, later one day, (he) cooked some breakfast and ate (it) up (and) went to dig land.'

(6. 8) *mè+li dzə duá=nè, mè+li dzədzə ŋu*
nature+?:land dig go.PFV=PAUS nature+?:land dig.RDUP do
=nè, p^{h}ali zɻxa ts^{h}u tə-wo
=PAUS big basket identical such one-CL:generic, non-sticklike
ba ɬa ba ɬa t^{h}ə=ʂə ɳi-ku
steep slope roll steep slope roll 3sg.PRT=LOC downward-arrive
=dzigə
=EVID:reported
'(It is said that he) went to dig land (and when he) was digging land, something like a big basket rolled down the steep slope (and) arrived at his side.'

(6. 9) *t^{h}ə=ʂə ɳi-ku ànè, vɛmatɕ^{h}otʂù də*
3sg.PRT=LOC downward-arrive LINK:after PN:devil's name one
=dzigə
EVID:reported
'(It is said that) after (the one) arrived at his side, (he knew that it was) a devil—*Vaimaqozhu*.'

(6. 10) "*nɛ*! *yadzɻə, yadzɻə, nə ɑ-nɛ ŋu=tə=*
PART:hey child child 2sg ITRG-what do=DES=
ɛ?"=*dʑà=nè*
=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(The devil asked like this): "Hey! Child, child, what are you doing?"'

(6. 11) "*ɑ=nè, ɑ-pa dʑì mɑ-dzo ɑ-ma*
1sg.SLF=TOP KPFX-father CO NEG-EXT KPFX-mother
dʑì mɑ-dzo, ɑ=nè, t^{h}ə=kə mè+li
CO NEG-EXT 1sg.SLF=TOP DEM:this=LOC:in<here nature+?:land
tə-sʔ də-dzə=gə=do"=*dʑà*
one-QUAT:bit upward-dig=PROG=AFFM=EVID:quotative
'(The child answered like this): "I do not have father, do not have mother (so) I am digging a bit of land here."'

(6. 12) “*nə yava taə^{l} ɑ=dzo=è?” =dʑà=nè*
2sg home things ITRG=EXT=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(The devil asked like this): “Is there anything in your home?”’

(6. 13) “*a ɑ-nɛ=tə dʑì mɑ-dzo=tə=do*
1sg.SLF ITRG-what=DES also NEG-EXT=DES=AFFM
‘(The child said like this): “I have nothing.’ *Lit*: I what also not have.

(6. 14) *a yadzə̧ tɑ-pa, ɑ-nɛ*
1sg.SLF child one-CL:immature and lovely creature ITRG-what
=tə dʑì zu̧ mɑ-to=tə
=DES also feed NEG-MOD:can=DES
‘I am a child (and) I cannot feed anything, either.’ *Lit*: I a child, cannot feed what also.

(6. 15) *yò=nè, la tɑ-ntʂ^{h}a si dzo=tə.”*
1sg.OTR=TOP chicken one-CL:immature creature only EXT=DES
=t^{h}ə-ɑ-dʑě
=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘I only have a chicken.”’

(6. 16) “*nə la tɑ-ntʂ^{h}a dzo t^{h}ə=nè, nə*
2sg chick one-CL:immature creature EXT LINK:if=PAUS 2sg
su-nɻo=nè, ni la t^{h}ə-
?next-day:tomorrow=TOP 2sg.GEN chicken DEM:this
wo nə-sʮ=á, tɕi la
-CL:generic, non-sticklike downward-kill=PFV take come
yò=và dzɳ la xo” =t^{h}ə-ɑ-dʑigə
1sg.OTR=ACC eat come MOD:ought to=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘(The devil said like this): “If you have one chicken, you ought to kill your chicken (and) send (it) to me to eat.”’

(6. 17) “*ɑ=và dzɳ lɑ=nè, ɑ=nè, ni vaka*
1sg.SLF=ACC eat come=TOP 1sg=TOP 2sg.GEN help
mɛ̀+li də-dzə=gə.” =t^{h}ə-ɑ-dʑigə
nature+?:land upward-dig=PROS=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘(The devil said like this): “(If you) send (the chick) to me to eat, I will help you dig land.”’

(6. 18) “*yadzɻə-wo,* *nə* *tɕi* *mɑ-lɑ* *tʰi* *tʰə*
child-CL:generic, non-sticklike 2sg take NEG-come like this LINK:if
=nɛ̀, *nɑ=và* *dzɻ=gə,* *nɑ=và* *dzo=su* *mɑ=gə.*”
=PAUS 2sg=ACC eat=PROS 2sg=ACC live=CAUS NEG=PROS
=tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə
=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘(The devil said like this): “Child, if (it is) like this, you do not take (the chicken to me), I will eat you and will not let you live.”’

(6. 19) *yadzɻə-pɑ=nɛ̀,* *dʑo* *lɑ=nɛ̀,*
child-CL:immature and lovely creature=TOP return come=PAUS
də-tɕimà=yì, *lɑ-ntʂʰɑ*
upward-be scared=CSM chicken-CL:immature creature
nə-sʔ̀ *dzo* *tsɻ* *nə-tʂɻ=á*
downward-kill water scald downward-scald=PFV
‘The child returned (home and) became scared, (so) he killed the chicken and scalded (it with) boiling water.’

(6. 20) *də-tɕi* *tɕi* *duá=nɛ̀,* *baŋi=tà* *tə=kə*
upward-take take go.PFV=PAUS rest=NOM one=LOC:in
zɻ=tà *bo* *tsʰu* *tə=kə* *pɑ+duá*
sit=NOM flat such one=LOC:in LOC+go.PFV:arrive
‘(The child) took (the chicken and) went, (and then) he arrived at a place for resting, a flat place for sitting, such a place.’

(6. 21) *yadzɻə=nɛ̀,* *də-tɕimɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-ndʑi* *xo*
child=TOP upward-be scared=PAUS ITRG-how MOD:ought to
=tə *xɑ-mɑ-sɛ̀* *xɑ=nɛ̀,* *xitsɻ* *tə*
=DES understand-NEG-understand LINK:when=PAUS rabbit one
=nɛ̀, *tə* *to=yì* *tʰi* *so-pʰɛ* *ŋi-duá*
=TOP one jump=CSM 3sg.GEN before-side downward-go.PFV
=dʑigə
=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) when the child was feeling scared and did not know how (he) ought to (do), a rabbit suddenly jumped (and) went before him.’ *Lit*: When the child was scared, did not know ought to how, a rabbit one jumped, went downward his side.

(6. 22) *ȵi-to* *ànɛ̀,* *xitsɿ=nɛ̀,* *sɿza*: "*yadʐə, yadʐə,* *nə*
downward-jump LINK:after rabbit=TOP god child child 2sg
kʰa *ʒɿ=gə=tə=ɛ̀*?"
ITRG:where go.NPFV=PROG=DES=ITRG
=dʑà=nɛ̀
=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'After jumping downward (the child), the rabbit, also a god (said to the child like this): "Child, child, where are you going?'"

(6. 23) "*a=nɛ̀* *mɛ̀+li* *dzə=gə=tə=do*" *=dʑà*
1sg.SLF=TOP nature+?:land dig=PROS=DES=AFFM=EVID:quotative
=nɛ̀
=PAUS
'(The child said like this): "I am going to dig land."'

(6. 24) "*nə a-ndə* *tɕi* *tɕi=ɛ̀*?" *=dʑà=nɛ̀*
2sg ITRG-what take take=ITRG=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'(The rabbit asked like this): "What are you taking (in your hand)?"'

(6. 25) "*aya,* *a* *la* *ta-ntʂʰa* *si* *dzo*
PART:sigh 1sg.SLF chicken one-CL:immature creature only EXT
'(The child said like this): "Aya, I only have one chicken.'

(6. 26) *la* *ta-ntʂʰa* *si* *nə-sɿ̀* *də-*
chicken one-CL:immature creature only downward-kill upward-
tɕi *la=tə*
take come=DES
'(I) killed the only chicken (and) took (it).'

(6. 27) *a-tʰə=kə* *pʰali* *zɿxa* *tsʰu* *tə*
distal-DEM:this=LOC:in<there big basket identical such one
-wo *a=và* *tʰa*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike 1sg.SLF=ACC DEM:this
-ntʂʰa *nə-sɿ̀* *tʰa=và*
-CL:immature creature downward-kill 3sg.PRT=ACC
tsɿ *la*
feed (solid food) come
'Such a (devil) like a big basket over there asked me to kill this chick and to take (it) to feed (him).'

(6. 28) *ɑ=yi* *vaka* *mɛ̀+li* *də-dzə;* *tʰɑ-ma*
1sg.SLF=GEN help nature+?:land upward-dig like this-NEG
-tʰə, *ɑ=và* *ŋə-dzɿ=gə=tə=dzɛ̌*”
-LINK:if 1sg.SLF=ACC outward-eat=PROS=DES=EVID:reported
=dʑà=nɛ̀
EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(He also said that he) would help me dig land; if (it is) not like this, (he) would eat me.”’

(6. 29) “*ɛ̀,* *moxa,* *moxa,* *nə* *də-tɕima*
PART:sigh no matter no matter 2sg upward-be scared
mɑ-xo=á
NEG-MOD:need=PFV
‘(The rabbit said like this): “Ai, it does not matter. It does not matter. You need not be scared.’

(6. 30) *ni* *la* *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀,* *yò*
2sg.GEN chicken DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP 1sg.OTR
=và *tsɿ* *la*
=ACC feed (solid food) come
‘(You) give and feed me with your chicken.’

(6. 31) *yò=nɛ̀,* *də-yi=gə;* *nə=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=yi*
1sg.OTR=TOP upward-go.NPFV=PROS 2sg=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN
ɑ-ndʑi *də-kʰatʰo=nɛ̀,* *ɑ-ndʑi*
ITRG-how upward-tell=PAUS ITRG-how
nə-ŋu=mɑ̌” *=tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə*
downward-do=PART:requestive=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘I will go upward; you do as what I have told you. OK?”’ *Lit*: I will go upward; you how my tell how do.

(6. 32) “*ɑ-ndʑi* *nə-ŋu* *xo=ɛ̀*?”
ITRG-how downward-do MOD:ought to
=tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə
=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘(The child said like this): “How should (I) do?”’

(6. 33) “*ɑ=nɛ̀,* *adzò,* *ɑ-tʰə* *sipʰɛtsʰalɑ=kə* *dzo*
1sg.SLF=TOP PARE:you see distal-DEM:this bushes=LOC:in stay
=gə, *nə=nɛ̀,* *nə-yi* *mɛ̀+li* *dzə*
=PROS 2sg=TOP downward-go.NPFV nature+?:land dig
yi=mɑ̌” *=tʰə-ɑ-dʑigə*
go.NPFV=PART:requestive=DEM:this-?-?:EVID:quotative
‘(The rabbit said like this): “I, you see, will stay in those bushes; You go downward and go to dig land. OK?”’

(6. 34) *nɛ̀,* *nɑ-duá,* *yadzə̩-wo*
then downward-go.PFV child-CL:generic, non-sticklike
mɛ̀+li *dzədzə* *ŋu* *xɑ=nɛ̀,* *pʰali*
nature+?:land dig.RDUP do LINK:when=PAUS big basket
zɻxa *tʰə-wo* *vɛmatɕʰotə̩ù=nɛ̀,*
identical DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike PN:devil’s name=TOP
ba *ɬa* *ba* *ɬa* *tʰə=ʂə̀* *nɑ-la*
steep slope roll steep slope roll 3sg.PRT=LOC downward-come
=dʑigə
=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that) when the child went downward (and) was digging land, the big basket-like *Vaimaqozhu* rolled down along the steep slope (and) came toward him (the child).’

(6. 35) “*nɛ̀,* *yadzə̩* *ni* *la*
PART:attract one’s attention child 2sg.GEN chicken
-wo *tɕi* *ɑ=lɑ=ɛ̀*?”̀
-CL:generic, non-sticklike take ITRG=come=ITRG
=dʑà=nɛ̀
=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(The devil said like this): “Hey! Child, did (you) take your chicken here?”’

(6. 36) “*amuyì,* *amuyì,*
PART:tone appearing to be humble PART:tone appearing to be humble
tɕi *mɑ-lɑ=dɔ*” *=dʑà=nɛ̀*
take NEG-come=AFFM=EVID:quotative=PAUS
‘(The child said like this): “Poor me, poor me, (I) did not take (it) here.”’

(6. 37) *xitsʅ=nɛ̀,* *sipʰɛtsʰalɑ=kə=tà,* “*ɑ-nɛ* *tə*
rabbit=TOP bushes=LOC:in=DAT ITRG-what one
-wɔ=ɛ̀? *ɑ-nɛ* *tə*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ITRG ITRG-what one
-wɔ=ɛ̀?
-CL:generic, non-sticklike
‘The rabbit (shouted like this) from the bushes: “What? What?’

(6. 38) *taəʳ ma-dzo! taəʳ ma-dzo!" =dʑà=nɛ̀*
things NEG-EXT things NEG-EXT=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'Nothing! Nothing!'"*Lit*: Things not have! things not have!

(6. 39) *vɛmatɕʰotʂù=nɛ̀, də-tɕimà=dʑigə*
PN:devil's name=TOP upward-be scared=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) *Vaimaqozhu* was feeling scared.'

(6. 40) *yadʐə=kə xitsɿ da-kʰatʰo=tsà buànɛ̀, tʰə*
child=AGT rabbit upward-tell=PFT LINK:because DEM:this
=kə=nɛ̀, dzəpʰsɿ ŋə-łi ŋə-tsɿ
=LOC:in<this time=TOP hoe outward-swing up outward-swing up
ta ma m̩gu=và kʰa-m̩pʰa=nɛ̀, tʰə-so
one pound forehead=ACC inward-hit severely=PAUS away-die
=á=dʑigə
PFV=EVID:reported
'(It is said that) because the child has been taught by the rabbit, at this moment, he swung up (his) hoe (and) suddenly pound (and) severely hit (*Vaimaqozhu*'s) forehead, (so *Vaimaqozhu*) died.'

(6. 41) *tʰə-so ànɛ̀, tʰə=kə xitsɿ tə to*
away-die LINK:after DEM:this=LOC:in<this time rabbit one jump
=yì yadʐə so-pʰɛ nə-to=a=nɛ̀, "yadʐə
=CSM child before-side downward-jump=PFV=PAUS child
a, a-nɛ mixa?" =dʑà=nɛ̀
PART:pause ITRG-what seem=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'After (*Vaimaqozhu*) had died, at this moment, the rabbit suddenly jumped and jumped before the child (and said like this): "Child, am I great?"'*Lit*: after died, this time, rabbit one jumped, jumped towards the child: "What seem?"

(6. 42) "*amuyì, a-pu a,*
PART:tone appearing to be humble KPFX-grandfather PART:pause
a-ndʑi=gə ma-ndo.
ITRG-how=PROS NEG-see
'(The child said like this): "Poor me! Old gentleman, (I) do not know how (to do).'

(6. 43) *a dʑì na=và dʑì, mó, tə-sɿ̀ da-ndʐa*
1sg.SLF also 2sg=ACC also again one-QUAT:bit upward-be afraid of
də-tɕimà=tə=do" =dʑà=nɛ̀
upward-be scared=DES=AFFM=EVID:quotative=PAUS
'Again, I am also afraid of (and) scared of you.'"

(6. 44) “*ɛ̀,* *nə* *də-tɕimà* *mɑ-xo=á,* *də-*
PART:sigh 2sg upward-be scared NEG-MOD:need=PFV upward-
tɕimà *mɑ-xo=á.*
be scared NEG-MOD:need=PFV
‘(The rabbit said like this): “Ai, you need not be scared (of me), need not be scared (of me).’

(6. 45) *ɑ* *ɑ-pu* *dzo=nɛ̀,* *nə* *ɲɑ* *ta*
1sg.SLF KPFX-grandfather EXT=PAUS sg child one
-pɑ
-CL:immature and lovely creature
‘I am an old man (and) you (are) a child.’

(6. 46) *nə* *ts^{h}utɕuɑ=nɛ̀,* *ɑ=yi* *lət^{h}u* *nə-ŋu,*
2sg from now on=TOP 1sg.SLF=GEN grandchild downward-do
ɑ=yi *lət^{h}u* *nə-ŋu=á,* *ɑ=nɛ̀,* *ni*
1sg.SLF=GEN grandchild downward-do=PFV 1sg.SLF 2sg.GEN
k^{h}uɑk^{h}uɑ *nə-ŋu=gə.*” *=dʑà*
big.RDUP:elder generation downward-do=PROS=EVID:quotative
‘From now on, you are treated as my grandchild and I am treated as your grandfather.’”*Lit*: You, from now on, do my grandchild, do my grandchild, I do your elder generation.

(6. 47) *nɛ̀,* *yadzə-pɑ=nɛ̀,* “*gəʂə*! *gəʂə*!” *=dʑà*
then child-CL:immature and lovely creature=PAUS OK OK
=dʑà
=EVID:quotative
‘Then, the child (said like this): “OK! OK!”’

(6. 48) *tə-tsəŋù* *yɑvɑ* *lɑ=dʑɛ̌*
one-VCL:together (dynamic action) home come=EVID:reported
‘(It is said that they both) came home together.’

(6. 49) *yɑvɑ* *lɑ=nɛ̀,* *xitsʅ* *lɑ* *t^{h}ə=dzi* *k^{h}ə-*
home come=PAUS rabbit CO:and 3sg.PRT=dl inward-
xəxə *ta*
rely on each other.RDUP one
-wɑ *dzo*
-VCL:together (static action or action without locational change) live
‘(After they) came home together, the rabbit and he, the two relied on each other and lived together.’

……

[**Text Translation**]

I am going to tell an ancient story. Long time ago, there was a child who did not

have a father and did not have a mother. This is the child, an orphan. Only he himself lived at home and did farming work. There was nothing but a chicken in his home.

One day, he cooked a bit of food to eat. On the other day, he cooked his breakfast to eat. Then, he went to dig the land. When he was digging and digging, something like a big basket, such a thing, rolled down the steep slope and arrived before him. After it arrived before him, he found that it was *Vaimaqozhu*.

Vaimaqozhu asked the child: "What are you doing?"

The child answered: "I do not have a father and I do not have a mother. I am here digging a bit of land."

Vaimaqozhu asked the child again: "Is there anything (for eating) in your house?"

The child answered: "I have nothing. I am just a child and I can feed nothing. I only have a chicken."

Vaimaqozhu said: "If you only have a chicken, you ought to kill the chicken and take here to feed me tomorrow. If you feed it to me, I will help you dig the land. You are just a child. If you do not bring it to me, I will eat you and will not let you live."

The child returned home, feeling very scared. He killed the chicken and scalded it in the boiling water and then went to take it to *Vaimaqozhu*. When he arrived at the resting place, a flat place to sit on, the child was very scared and did not know what to do.

At that moment, a rabbit suddenly jumped in front of him. The rabbit is in fact a god. The rabbit asked the child: "Child, where are you going?"

The child answered: "I am going to dig the land."

The rabbit then asked: "What are you holding in your hand?"

The child answered: "Aya! I only have one chicken. I killed the only chicken and broght it. Something like a big basket there, such a thing, asked me to kill the chick and feed him. He will help me dig land. If I do not do so, he said that he would eat me."

The rabbit said: "Ai, it does not matter. It does not matter. You need not be scared. You give the chicken to me and let me eat it. I will go up there and you will just do as what I have told you."

The child said: "What should I do?"

The rabbit said: "You see, I will stay in the bushes over there. You go, you go to dig land. OK?"

The child went to dig land. When he was digging and digging, the basket-like thing, *Vaimaqozhu*, rolled down the steep slope and came before him.

Vaimaqozhu said: "Hey! Child! Did you bring the chicken here?"

The child said: "Poor me, Poor me, I did not bring it here."

The rabbit said from the bushes: "What?! What?! Nothing! Nothing!"

Vaimaqozhu was feeling very scared. At this moment, because the child was taught by the rabbit, he suddenly swung his hoe and severely hit *Vaimaqozhu*'s forehead. So it died.

After *Vaimaqozhu* died, the rabbit suddenly jumped up before the child and said "Am I (not) great?"

The child said: "Poor me! Old gentleman, I do not know what to do. I am also

scared of you."

The rabbit said: "Ai, you need not be scared, need not be scared. I am an old man and you are just a child. From now on, you are treated as my grandchild and I am treated as your grandfather. "

The child said: "OK! OK!"

Then, they two returned home together. After returning home, they cared for each other and lived together.

……

Text 7: Long Conversations

Participants:	**A:**WANG, Amu (*dʑima amu*);	B:WANG, Ayi (*dʑima ayi*);
Age:	27	37
Year of Recording:	2011	
School:	Junior College	Junior Middle School

(7. 1) A: *nə=zʔ* *yondzɑ-mò* *chū*

2sg=GEN:family PN-SFX.FEM:girl's name MC:junior middle school

jǐ *so=á=dʑɛ̌,* *dà+yé?*

MC:which learn=PFV=EVID:reported MC:big+MC:uncle:eldest uncle

'Eldest Uncle, in which grade of junior middle school is your *Yondzhamo*?'*Lit*: Your *Yondzhamo* learn which grade of junior middle school, big uncle?

(7. 2) B: *tʰi+xa* *chū+*

DEM:this+time:now MC:junior middle school+

yī=ma,

MC:one:Grade One, Junior Middle School=MC.PART:uncertain

chū+yī

MC:junior middle school+ MC:one:Grade One, Junior Middle School

si *dìèr+cè*

only MC:the second+MC:volume:the second semester

'Now, (she) must be in Grade One, Junior Middle School, only in the second semester of Grade One, Junior Middle School.'

(7. 3) A: *dìèr+cè,* *ɑ=zʔ*

MC:the second+MC:volume:the second semester INTRROG=COP

=ɛ̀?

=ITRG

'The second semester, right?'

(7. 4) B: *m̩*

Yes

'Yes.'

(7. 5) A: *ndzondzʔ* *tə-sə̀ʔ* *ɑ=ntsʰu* *mɑ-ntɕʰi*

written words one-QUAT:bit ITRG=good NEG-?know

=ɛ̀?

=ITRG

'Is (her) performance good (at school)? (Maybe you) do not know ?'*Lit*: Written words a bit good, not know?

(7. 6) B: *mɑ-ntsʰu* *mɑ-nɛ̀,* *cɑ́i* *kɑ̌o* *shí+*

NEG-good NEG-PAUS MC:only MC:score MC:ten+

jǐ *fēn*

several:more than 10 but less than 20 point

'Not good at all. (She can) only score 10 or 20 points (on tests).'

(7. 7) A: *nà,* *tʂɑnɑ* *ɑ-ntɕʰi=gə*?

MC.PART:well later ITRG-how=PROS

'Well, what will you do later?' *Lit*: Well, how later?

(7. 8) A: *chūzhōng* *bɣ̀è=su=ɑ=gə*

MC:junior middle school graduate=CAUS=ITRG=PROS

=ɛ̌?

=ITRG

'Will you let (her) finish (her) junior middle school education?' *Lit*: Will let graduate from junior middle school?

(7. 9) B: *pʰa tʰə,* *bɣ̀è=su=gə* *la*

MOD:can LINK:if MC:graduate=CAU=PROS EMPH:all

mɑ-ndo

NEG-see

'If (she) can, (I will) let (her) finish (her junior middle school education), but I am not sure.' *Lit*: If can, will let graduate, all not see.

(7. 10) B: *mɑ-pʰa* *tʰə=nɛ̀,* *nɑ̌ohuǒ,* *ɑ=yi* *yiva,*

NEG-MOD:can LINK:if=PAUS MC:trouble 1sg.SLF=GEN home

jiātíng=kə *yě* *méi-fǎ*

MC:home=LOC:in MC:also MC:no-MC:way<no way

'If (she) cannot, (it should be a) trouble because my family is also a problem.' *Lit*: If cannot, trouble, in my family also no way.

(7. 11) B: *jiātíng* *yiva* *dʑì tɕiyi* *lala+pipi*

MC:home home also always quarrel.RDUP+blame.RDUP:conflict

=bɛ̀ *si* *ɳ̩o=á*

=QUAT.pl only EXT=PFV

'My family also only has conflicts.'

(7. 12) B: *tʰə-wo=và* *də-ndʑindʑi*

DEM:this-CL:generic, non-sticklike upward-dispute.RDUP

'(I and my wife always) quarrel about this child.'

(7. 12) A: *ndzondzɿ=nɛ̀, kʰə-so ànɛ̀, yɑ-li*
written words=TOP inward-learn LINK:after APFX-good
'After going to school, (there must be something) good (for her).' *Lit*: After learn written words, good.

(7. 13) A: *chūzhōng, nə tʰi+xa mɑ-so=su*
MC:junior middle school 2sg DEM:this+time:now NEG-learn=CAUS
=á tʰə=nɛ̀, tsʰɿpʰo mala sè
=PFV LINK:if=PAUS age small still
dǎgōng shíhòu dʑì mɑ-pa sè
MC:do laboring work MC:time also NEG-arrive still
'If you do not let (her) finish middle school education, (she is) still young (and she) has not arrived at (her age to) do laboring work.'

(7. 14) A: *su tə=nɛ̀, tə-zu=nɛ̀, ndzondzɿ*
person one=TOP one-CL:life span=TOP written words
tʰɑ-pɑ˞ kʰɑ-mɑ-
DEM:this-CL:pearl-like in shape and little in quantity inward-NEG-
so=nɛ̀, tʂaŋa tə-zu=nɛ̀, jīhuì
Learn=PAUS later one-CL:life span=TOP MC:opportunity
tʰə-sɿ̀ ɳo=tə
one-QUAT:bit EXT=DES
'In a person's life, (if s/he) does not go to school, (s/he) will not have opportunities to go to school.' *Lit*: A person one life, not learn this bit of written words, later one life has only a bit of opportunities.

(7. 15) B: *dànshì=nɛ̀, ɑ so=su gɑ dà, yiva*
MC:but=PAUS 1sg learn=CAUS like CO:but home
=su jiùshì so=su mɑ-li=á
=NOM:wife/husband MC:that is learn=CAUS NEG-good=PFV
'However, I hope (to let her) study, but (my) wife does not hope (to let her) study.' *Lit*: But I like let learn, but my home person let learn not good.

(7. 16) B: *ɑ-zɿ̀ yivɑ=su jiù tɑ+ɳo*
1sg.SLF home=NOM:wife/husband MC:that is this? +day:today
"*yò so=su mɑ=gə*" *su-ɳo*
"1sg.OTR learn=CAUS NEG=PROS" ?next-day:tomorrow
"*yò so=su mɑ=gə*"*=dʑà*
"1sg.OTR learn=CAUS NEG=PROS"=EVID:quotative
'My wife (says like this) today: "I will not let (her) study" (again says like this) tomorrow: "I will not let (her) study"'

(7. 17) B: *tʰə-so* *ɑ=và* *tɕʰi=gə*
away-die 1sg.SLF=ACC give=PROS
'(If I do not agree with her,) (she threatens to) commit suicide (and let me see).' *Lit*: will give die to me.

(7. 18) B: *ɑ-ndʑi=gə*?
ITRG-how=PROS
'What shall I do?' *Lit*: will how?

(7. 19) B: *wǒ* *jiù* *méi+fǎ*
MC:1sg MC:consequently MC:no+MC:way<no way
'Consequently, I do not know what to do.' Lit: I consequently no way.

(7. 20) A: *tʰə-wo=nɛ̀*, *yɑ-nbu*
DEM:this-CL:generic=TOP APFX-serious
'This (is) serious.'

(7. 21) A: *yadzə̧=nɛ̀*, *dʑì ndzondzɿ=nɛ̀*, *yɑ-nbu* *mɑ-ntsʰu*
child=TOP also written words=TOP APFX-serious NEG-good
'The child's performance at school is really not good.' *Lit*: Child written words serious not good

(7. 22) A: *ndzondzɿ* *yɑ-ntsʰu* *tʰə*, *jiātíng* *badzə̧*
written words APFX-good LINK:if MC:home money
kʰə-ʂo *dʑì so=su=gə*
inward-borrow also learn=CAUS=PROS
'If (her) performance at school (is) good, (even if your) family (has to) borrow money, (you will) let (her) go to school.' *Lit*: If written words good, home borrow money also let learn.

(7. 23) A: *ndzondzɿ* *mɑ-ntsʰu* *buànɛ̀*, *nǎo* *dʑì*
written words NEG-good LINK:because MC:trouble CO
nǎohuǒ *tə=bɛ̀=do*
MC:trouble one-QUAT.pl=AFFM
'Because her performance at school is not good, it is really a trouble.' *Lit*: Because written words not good, really some troubles.

(7. 24) B: *apuà,* *kʰə-ʂo=tə=ʂè* *na-ma*
Yi.PART:surprise inward-borrow=DES=LOC downward-NEG
-pa=tə sɛ, ma-zɳ=a?
-arrive still NEG-COP=ITRG
'My dear! (I) have not yet arrived the situation to borrow (money), right?'*Lit*: Abua! Not arrive borrow place yet, isn't it?

(7. 25) B: *a* *tʰi+xa=nɛ̀,* *ta*
1sg.SLF DEM:this+time:now=TOP one
-paˡ *dʑì na-*
-CL:pearl-like in shape and little in quantity also downward-
tʂa *to=tə*
search MOD:can=DES
'Now, I can still earn a bit of (money).'

(7. 26) B: *jiùshì* *yiva* *wèntí* *jiātíng* *mǎodùn* *tə*
MC:that is home MC:problem MC:home MC:conflict one
-sɿ̀ *ɳ̩o*
-QUAT:bit EXT
'The problem is that there are some conflicts in my family.' *Lit*: That is there are a bit of home problems, home conflicts.

(7. 27) B: *a* *gong=le* *to=á* *yiva*
1sg.SLF MC:support=MC:PFV MOD:can=PFV home
=su=nɛ̀, *"ni* *tʰə*
=NOM:wife/husband=TOP 2sg.GEN DEM:this
-wo=và *gong=le=nɛ̀,*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ACC MC:support=MC:PFV=PAUS
yò=yi *tʂaŋa* *nə-wo=nɛ̀,*
1sg.OTR=GEN below two-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP
a-ndʑi=gə?
ITRG-how=PROS
'I can support (her schooling), (but my) wife (said like this): "(You) supported your (daughter's schooling), how could you support my two younger children?'*Lit*: I can support, home person: "Your this one support, how my below two?[173]

[173] In this conversation, Speaker B, that is, Mr. WANG, Ayi was divorced. The girl, Yonzhamo in this speech is Mr. WANG, Ayi and his ex-wife's daughter. He and his current wife have another two children. That is the reason why his "wife" does not want the girl to continue her schooling.

(7. 28) B: *yò=yi* *tʂaŋa* *nə-wo=và*
1sg.OTR=GEN below two-CL:generic, non-sticklike=ACC
zu *mɑ=gə,* *ɑ=zɿ=ɛ̀*?" *=dʑà*
bring up NEG=PROS ITRG=COP=ITRG
'(You) will not bring up my two younger children, right?'"

(7. 29) B: *tʰə-sɿ̀* *si* *ɑ=pʰɛ* *tɕiyi* *mɑ́odùn*
DEM:this-QUAT:bit only 1sg.SLF=COM always MC:conflict
ȵo *mɑ-zɿ=ɛ̀*?
EXT NEG-COP=ITRG
'(She) always has conflicts with me about this bit (of things). Isn't it?'

(7. 30) A: *tʰə=bɛ̀=nɛ̀,* *yotsɛ* *ndzɿndzɑ* *chà=tə*
DEM:this=QUAT.pl=TOP REFL:self consider MC:bad=DES
'Her opinions about these are bad.'*Lit*: These self consider bad.

(7. 31) A: *wánquán* *ndzɿndzɑ* *mɑ-ndzo*
MC:completely consider NEG-MOD:know how to do
'(She) does not know how to consider (these) completely.'

(7. 32) A: *su* *tə=nɛ̀,* *ndzondzɿ* *kʰə-so* *dʑì*
person one=TOP written words inward-learn CO
zɑ-mɑ *tʰə-bi* *dzɿ=gə;*
?-SFX.FEM:food DEM:this-CL:bit of solid food eat=PROS
kʰɑ-mɑ-so *dʑì* *zɑ-mɑ* *tʰə*
inward-NEG-learn CO ?-SFX.FEM:food DEM:this
-bi *dzɿ=gə*
-CL:bit of solid food eat=PROS
'No matter whether a person goes to school or not, s/he has to eat.' *Lit*: A person learns written words also eats this bit of food, does not learn written words also eats this bit of food.

(7. 33) A: *dànshì* *kʰə-so=nɛ̀,* *yɑ-li=tə*
MC:but inward-learn=TOP APFX-good=DES
'But going to school (is) good.'

(7. 34) A: *chūzhōng* *bɤ̀yè* *la*
MC:junior middle school graduate CO:and
chūzhōng *kʰɑ-mɑ-so=nɛ̀,* *qūbié*
MC:junior middle school inward-NEG-learn=PAUS MC:difference
=nɛ̀, *ɑ-ndʑi* *la* *dʑì* *ɳo=gə=tə,*
=TOP ITRG-how EMPH:all also EXT=PROS=DES
tɕʰɔtətəyì, *zhìshǒo* *chūzhōng* *bɤ̀yè* *so*
consequently MC:at least junior middle school graduate learn
=nɛ̀, *bɤ̀yè* *so* *yɑ-li=tə*
=PAUS graduate learn APFX-good=DES
'After all, there will be differences between graduating from junior middle school and not going to junior middle school, consequently, at least graduating from junior middle school is good.' *Lit*: Junior middles school graduate and junior middle school does not learn, however there will be differences, at least, junior middle school graduate learn, graduate learn good.

(7. 35) A: *jiātíng* *mɑ́odùn* *ɳo* *tʰə* *nə* *bùtʂhə̀*
MC:home MC:conflict EXT=PAUS DEM:this two year
kʰə-gi=á, *yadzə* *chūzhōng* *bɤ̀yè*
inward-endure=PFV child MC:junior middle school MC:graduate
gong=le
MC:support=MC.PFV
'(Though) there are conflicts (in your) home, (you) endure (it for) two years and support the child to graduate from junior middle school.'

(7. 36) B: *zɿ=tə,* *zɿ=tə,* *ɑ* *mó* *tʰə*
COP=DES COP=DES 1sg.SLF also DEM:this
-wo=nɛ̀ *ndzɿndzɑ=tə*
-CL:generic, non-sticklike=TOP consider=DES
'Yes, Yes, I also consider this.'

……

[**Text Translation**]

A: Eldest Uncle, in which grade of junior middle school is your *Yondzhamo*?
B: Now, she must be in the second semester of Grade One, Junior Middle School.
A: The second semester, right?
B: Yes.
A: Is her performance good at school? Maybe you do not know?
B: Not good at all. She can only score 10 or 20 (out of 100) points on tests.
A: What will you do later? Will you let her finish her junior middle school education?
B: If she can, I will let her finish her studies. However, I am not sure. If she cannot, it would mean a trouble because my family is also a problem. There are conflicts in my family. I and my wife always quarrel about this child.
A: It should be good for her to go to school. If you do not let her finish middle

school education, she is still too young to do laboring work. In a her life, if she does not go to school now, she will not have opportunities any more.

B: I hope to let her study, but my wife does not think so. My wife said like this today: "I will not let her go to school." Again, she may say tomorrow: "I will not let her go to school." If I do not agree with her, she threatens to commit suicide and let me see. Consequently, I do not know what to do.

A: This is serious. The child's performance at school is really not good. If her performance at school were good, even if your family had to borrow money, you would let her go to school. Because her performance at school is not good, it is really a problem.

B: Dear! I am not yet in the situation where I have to borrow money, right? Now, I can still earn a bit of money. The problem is that there are some conflicts in my family. I can support her school education, but my wife said: "You support your daughter's education. How can you support my two younger children? You will not bring up my two younger children, right?" She always has quarrels with me about these small things. Right?

A: Her opinions about these are bad. She does not know how to consider these completely. No matter whether a person goes to school or not, s/he has to eat. But going to school is good. After all, there will be a difference between graduating from junior middle school and not going to junior middle school. Consequently, it is good to graduate at least from junior middle school. Though there are conflicts at your home, you'd better endure them for two years and support the child to graduate from junior middle school.

B: Yes. Yes. I also think so.