nɪ ɜbɪsɜ́dɪ dɜ ɜtɜmɪ́
The Language of the Ebisedi
A Beginner's Guide

H. S. Teoh

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Contents

1   Introduction

This is a beginner's guide to nɪ ɜbʊsɜ́dɪ dɜ ɜtɜmɪ̃, *the language of the Ebisedi*, also known as "Ebisedian". It is intended as a gentle introduction to the language for beginners who may find the reference grammar a bit too daunting.

1.1 Orthography

Ebisedian has its own writing system, called the **sanokí**.[1] However, in this tutorial we will employ instead an *orthography*, written using letters from the Roman alphabet and formatted in familiar, English-like conventions. (The **sanokí** uses only ligatures to mark word breaks and other punctuation—we feel that is too difficult to deal with for a beginner.)

1.2 The Alphabet

1.2.1 IPA

In discussing the Ebisedian alphabet, we will use the *International Phonetic Alphabet*, also known as *IPA*, to describe the corresponding pronunciations. In tables and figures, we will use IPA symbols as-is. Within running text, we will enclose IPA with [square brackets] to avoid confusion with orthographic text. For example, **nɪ ɜbɪsɔ́dɪ dɜ ɜtɜmí** is pronounced [ni əbisɔ́:di də ətəmǐ:].[2]

1.2.2 Vowels

Ebisedian has 9 vowels and 27 consonants. Table 1 shows the nine vowels with the closest IPA representation(s) for them. The top symbol in each cell, in **bold**, is the orthographic symbol for the vowel; the symbol(s) on the bottom is the IPA equivalent(s).

u	**ω**	**y**
u	ɵ, ʉ	y
o	**ɜ**	**ɩ**
o	ɘ, ə	i
ø	**a**	**e**
ɑ	a	æ, ɛ

Table 1: Vowels

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[1] In fact, it has more than one writing system. Another writing system is the **køromokí**, based on color patterns. But that's not important here.

[2] Note that stressed syllables may acquire a variety of tonal realizations, although phonemically there is only high and low pitch.

Vowels may be *long*. Long vowels are marked with a macron: **ā**. Vowels may also be nasal: **a̰** is a short nasal vowel, pronounced [ã]; **ā̰** is a long nasal vowel, pronounced [ãː].

At the beginning of a word, or immediately after another vowel, a vowel has one of three *breathings*:

- The *abrupt* breathing, which is the normal vowel breathing, is pronounced with a preceding *glottal stop*. For example, **ι** is pronounced [ʔi], and **aι** is pronounced [ʔaʔi].[3]

- The *smooth* breathing, indicated as **á̓**, is pronounced with a preceding semivowel. For example, **i̓** is pronounced [ji], **y̓** is pronounced [ɥy], **u̓** is pronounced [wu], and **á̓** is pronounced [a̯a].

- The *rough* breathing, indicated as **ha**, is pronounced with a preceding *unvoiced glottal fricative*. For example, **hɜ̄** is pronounced [həː].

1.2.3   Consonants

Table 2 show the 27 consonants in Ebisedian alphabetical order.

gh	**kh**	**ng**	**g**	**k**	**κ̂**
ɣ	x	ŋ	g	k	kʰ
dh	**th**	**n**	**d**	**t**	**t̂**
ð	θ	n	d	t	tʰ
jh	**ch**	-	**j**	**c**	**ĉ**
ʒ	ʃ	-	ʥ	ʧ	ʧʰ
z	**s**	-	-	**l**	**r**
z	s	-	-	l	ɽ, ɾ
v	**f**	**m**	**b**	**p**	**p̂**
β	ɸ	m	b	p	pʰ

Table 2: Consonants

The language is pitch-accented; syllables of high pitch are marked with an acute accent: **ka** is low-pitched, whereas **ká** is high-pitched. Similarly, **kā** is long and low-pitched; **kā́** is long and high-pitched.

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[3]Note that this only applies to word-initial vowels and vowels immediately following another vowel.

1.3 Punctuation

Unlike the multitude of punctuation in English, Ebisedian only has 3 types of punctuation: *word breaks*, *sentence breaks*, and *paragraph breaks*. Although the native writing[4] crams all words together and uses ligatures to mark word boundaries, in the orthography we use spaces instead. Sentence breaks are marked with a period (.), and paragraph breaks are marked by breaking the line and starting a new paragraph, as per English conventions.

2 Basic Concepts

Ebisedian has a few basic concepts which the learner absolutely *must* understand in order to make any sense out of the language. We will deal with them here.

2.1 Noun cases

Nouns are inflected for 5 cases. They are the *originative*, the *receptive*, the *instrumental*, the *conveyant*, and the *locative*.

In order to understand how noun cases in Ebisedian work, we need to understand how the Ebisedi think. Let's take a look at some examples.

2.1.1 The Originative and the Receptive

Consider the following sentence:

ebǿ zotǿ pízɜdu. *"I look at a man."*

The word **ebǿ** is the masculine first person pronoun, "I". It is in the *originative* case. The verb in this sentence is **zotǿ**, "look at".[5] The word **pízɜdu** means "man", and is in the *receptive* case.

So, if we write out the cases of each noun in the sentence, we have: "I (originative) look-at man (receptive)." Why is "I" in the originative case, and "man" in the receptive? Because to look at something, you are paying attention *to* that thing. You are the *giver* of attention, or the *origin* of

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[4]sanokí.

[5]For now, we won't worry about the fact that it's a physical incidental perfective verb. We'll worry about that when we discuss verbs.

attention. So "I" must be in the *originative* case. On the other hand, "man" here is the *receiver* of attention; hence, "man" must be in the *receptive* case.

Now, let's take a look at another sentence:

ebú fɔ̃t3 pɪ́z3dø.   *"I see a man."*

Here, we have **ebú**, which is, in fact, the *receptive* form of the word **ebɸ́**, "I". **fɔ̃t3** is a verb meaning "see". And **pɪ́z3dø** is the *originative* form of **pɪ́z3dɪ**, "man".

Now, this may appear to be totally backwards, because in English we are used to thinking of the "I" as the *subject* of the sentence, and "man" as the *object*. However, Ebisedian does not work in terms of 'subject' and 'object'. Instead, it works in terms of who/what is the *origin* of something, and what is the *recipient* of something.

In Ebisedian reckoning, seeing something is a matter of *receiving sight* of that thing; hence, the seer must be in the *receptive* case. Similarly, the thing which is seen is the *source*, the *origin*, of that sight; so it must be in the *originative* case. That is why in this sentence, "I" is *receptive*, whereas "man" is originative.

Let's look at more examples.

ebɸ́ tɔ̃ma pɪ́z3du.   *"I speak to the man."*

Here, we see that **ebɸ́** is in the originative case again, and **pɪ́z3du** in the receptive. **tɔ̃ma** is a verb meaning "speak".

As is to be expected, when you speak something, you are the *source*, or the *origin*, of the spoken words. Hence, the speaker, "I", in this sentence is in the originative case. Similarly, the person spoken to is the one *receiving* the words you spoke; hence, "man" here is in the receptive case.

On the other hand, consider the following sentence:

ebú kutɔ̃me pɪ́z3dø.   *"I hear the man."*

Here, **kutɔ̃me** is a verb meaning "hear". But who hears whom? "I", being the hearer, is the *recipient* of the words spoken by the man; hence, "I" must be in the *receptive* case. Since the words, or the sound, is coming *from* the man, "man" is in the *originative*.

2.1.2　The Conveyant

Now, let's examine the following sentence:

> **lýs ebɜ́ lóru.**　*"I went outside."*

Here, **lýs** is a verb meaning "go". **ebɜ́** is, in fact, still the same word for "I", but in another case inflection: this time, it is *conveyant*. Finally, **lóru** is a noun meaning "outside".[6] It is in the *receptive* case.

In other words, this sentence literally reads "go I (conveyant) outside (receptive)." If you are used to thinking about subject/object in English, you may find this quite surprising. Why is "I" in the conveyant case?

The answer is this: because "I" in this sentence is what is *going*, or *moving*, from point A to point B. It is being *conveyed* from point A to point B; hence, it is in the *conveyant* case.

The receptive noun, **lóru**, must therefore be the *destination* of motion. This is another aspect of the receptive case: it indicates goal.

Now suppose we add an originative noun to the sentence:

> **julǿr lýs ebɜ́ lóru.**　*"I left the house and went outside."*

Literally, this sentence says "from the house, I went outside". The originative noun marks the *origin* of motion, just as the receptive noun marks the destination of motion. That which travels between the origin and the destination is the conveyant noun, "I".

As a general rule, anything that starts from the origin and heads for the destination would be put into the conveyant case. This is shown in the next example:

> **ebǿ tɔ́lɜre talɜrɜ́ mɪrɜ́nu.**　*"I sing a song to the child."*

Here, we have **ebǿ**, "I" (originative); **tɔ́lɜre**, a verb meaning "sing"; **talɜrɜ́**, "song" (conveyant), and **mɪrɜ́nu**, "child" (receptive).

Since "I" is the source, or the origin, of the song, it is in the originative case. The child is the one being sung *to*; hence, it is in the receptive case. The song is what is being *conveyed* from the singer, "I", to the listener, "child". So it is in the *conveyant* case.

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[6]Actually, it means "plains" or "open area". Its meaning depends on context; it may be "outdoors" or it may be "countryside", or it may just be "the plains". Here, we'll just assume it means "outside".

2.1.3   The Instrumental

Consider the following:

lýs ebɔ́ mangá mő́ju.   *"I rode on the horse to the town."*

We have here **lýs**, "go"; **ebɔ́**, "I" (conveyant); **mangá**, "horse" *instrumental;* **mő́ju**, "city" (receptive).

Here, the use of the instrumental should be clear: "I" am going to the city *by means of* the horse. The "horse", being the instrumental noun, is what *drives* and *sustains* the motion of "I".

Let's take another look at the instrumental case. First, consider this sentence:

ebú kalű́ng mɜngɔ́.   *"I pulled the horse."*

Here, we have **ebú**, "I" (receptive), **kalű́ng**, "pull"; and **mɜngɔ́**, "horse" (conveyant).

The "I" is in the receptive case, indicating that the horse was being pulled *towards* the speaker. The horse, being the thing which is pulled, or moved, is in the conveyant case. So far so good.

Now compare this with the following:

ebá kalű́ng mɜngɔ́.   *"I pulled the horse."*

Here, **ebá** is "I", but in the *instrumental* case. What is the difference here?

The instrumental noun **ebá** indicates that "I" is the one *sustaining* or *driving* the pulling action. Hence, we could better translate this sentence as "I *dragged* the horse."

We could clarify the act of dragging by adding a receptive noun to the sentence:

ebá kalű́ng mɜngɔ́ jhílu.   *"I dragged the horse to the hut."*

jhílu means "small hut", and appears here in the receptive case. The meaning of this should be clear: the hut is the destination of the dragging action.

There is also another use of the instrumental case, involving *gerunds*. But we aren't ready to discuss gerunds yet, so we will leave it for now, until after we discuss verbs.

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2.1.4 The Locative

The locative case in Ebisedian has several distinct functions. This is very important to keep in mind when you see a locative noun; it will depend on context to determine which of these functions is intended.

1. When a locative noun is part of a larger sentence, it usually has a *locative* meaning—that is, it describes the *place* where an event happened; the *general vicinity* of some occurrence. For example:

   julír ebǿ tǿma pɪ́zɜdu.   *"In the house, I talked to the man."*

   Literally, the sentence reads "House (locative) I (originative) talk man (receptive)". Here, the locative noun "house" describes *where* the talking happened.

   This usage is also extended to mean "around" or "in the vicinity of", especially when the noun refers to a person. For example:

   ɜmɪrɜ́nɜ lesá̃ bɪteí.   *"The children were moving* around *the mother."*

   ɜmɪrɜ́nɜ is a conveyant noun meaning "children". The locative noun here is **bɪteí**, "mother". **lesá̃** means "moving", or "going".[7]   In this particular context, because **bɪteí** is *locative*, we understand that the children are neither moving away from or towards the mother, but rather moving *in the vicinity of* the mother.

2. A related use of the locative case is to mark *time.* For example:

   ɪsúɪ lɯ̃́s ebɜ́ mǿju.   *"In the future, I will go to the city."*

   Here, **ɪsúɪ** is a *temporal noun* referring to some particular time in the future. It functions here as a locative noun describing the *time* when "I" will go to the city.

3. When occurring by itself, the locative case may be a *vocative,* a term of address. This usually occurs with names. For example:

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[7]**lesá̃** is actually a *participle*, which is the instrumental case of a gerund. But we'll just pretend it's a 'verb' for now.

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ýmaí. ghí jꙍbɜ́?   *"Mother! where are you?"*

ýmaí is a feminine locative noun referring to one's own mother. It is often used as an endearing term of address. (For now, don't worry about the second part of the sentence. We will come back to it later, after we first understand stative sentences and interrogatives.)

4. The locative may also mark the noun as a *topic*. For example:

   ebø̸ tø̃ma mangí pízɜdu.
   "I talk to the man about *the horse."*

   Here, **mangí** is the locative form of "horse".

   This use of the locative case will be discussed in more depth when we cover *nominator sentences*.

5. Finally, the locative case is the *canonical* case in lexicons. All Ebisedian lexicons list nouns in their locative case forms.

2.1.5   Characteristic vowels

You may have noticed that in the previous examples, the final vowel on originative nouns is always **ø̸**, and on receptive nouns, **u**. With very rare exceptions, this is always true.

Each noun case has a *characteristic vowel*, which always[8] appears as the last vowel in the noun. The characteric vowels are as follows: originative—**ø̸**; receptive—**u**; instrumental—**a**; conveyant—**ɜ**; locative—**ɪ**.[9]

2.2   Stative sentences (1)

Unlike English and many other languages, Ebisedian sentences do not always have verbs. In fact, verbs are *not* used except to indicate *events* or *changes*. When describing a *static, unchanging* state of things, *stative sentences* are employed. These are verbless sentences comprising mainly of nouns or noun-phrases.

Noun cases play a vital role in stative sentences, as we shall see.

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[8]Barring said exceptions, of course.

[9]Caveat: noun cases are not merely formed from these characteristic vowels; various other vowel shifts often happen in the noun when it changes case. However, the characteristic vowels are a useful way for identifying the case of a particular noun.

2.2.1 Conveyant with Locative: containment

Let's take a look at a simple stative sentence.

> **ӡmιrǯnӡ jhίlι.**   *"[Many] children [are] in the room."*

This sentence consists of two nouns: **ӡmιrǯnӡ**, "children" (conveyant); and **jhίlι**, "room"[10] (locative).

How does a 2-word sentence translate to "many children are in the room"?

Firstly, in Ebisedian, plural nouns are often used emphatically, with an implication of "many" or "much". This is why in the translation given above we put [brackets] around 'many', to indicate that it is a supplied word.

Secondly, Ebisedian is *zero-copula*, which means that it does not have a word equivalent to the English 'to be'—'is', 'are', ..., etc.. This is why we put [brackets] around the word 'are'.

So, the above sentence literally reads "children (conveyant) room (locative)." But why is 'children' in the *conveyant* case, and why is 'room' in the locative case? Obviously, the room is the *place* where the children are; hence it is in the locative case.

How about the conveyant case? Here, we are in fact looking at another meaning of the conveyant case: that of *containment*. When a conveyant noun appears with a locative noun, it often implies that the *current location* of the conveyant noun is in the locative noun. For example:

> **lǽs ebǯ lǿrι mǿju.**   *"I am going through the countryside towards the town."*

We have seen a similar sentence before. **lǽs** is "go"; **ebǯ** is "I" (conveyant); and **mǿju** is "town" (receptive). This basically says that I am heading *towards* the town.

The additional locative noun here, **lǿrι**, "countryside",[11] describes my *current location*. I am moving towards the town; but I am *currently in* the countryside.

Of course, in this latter example, the conveyant case indicates movement; but it doesn't have to. In our first example, **ӡmιrǯnӡ jhίlι**, we have the children in the conveyant case; but they aren't moving anywhere. Their

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[10]You may recall that we previously translated this word as "hut". It can refer to either. Its original meaning is "small house"; the Ebisedi considers rooms as 'small houses', or 'sub-houses', within a larger house.

[11]Or, "plains".

placement next to a locative noun expresses a relationship of *containment*—the children are *in*, that is, *contained*, by the room.

Let's take a look at another similar sentence:

> **ʒtagoр̂еʒ́ tagít.**   *"There are five fingers in the hand."*

ʒtagoр̂еʒ́: "five fingers" (conveyant); **tagít**, "hand" (locative).

Here, we again see the conveyant placed alongside the locative. Here, it has a slightly different meaning: it expresses that the five fingers are *part of* the hand. We can see a similar usage in the following sentence:

> **p̂ɜ́mʒ køruмı.**   *"Pink is a colour."*

Here we have **p̂ɜ́mʒ**, "pink" (conveyant); and **køruмı**, "colour" (locative). The English translation "pink is a colour" is a bit imprecise; here, the Ebisedian indicates that "pink", being the conveyant noun, is *part of* the larger set of things called "colour". That is to say, it is a *subcategory* of colours. A better translation might be, "pink is one of the colours."

2.2.2   Originative with conveyant

Let's now look at another combination of noun cases in a stative sentence.

> **bıʒɜtʒǿ mɜrɜ́nʒ.**   *"The child is from the woman."*

Here we have **bıʒɜtʒǿ**, "woman" (originative); and **mɜrɜ́nʒ**, "child" (conveyant). As we've seen, the originative case is used to indicate source, or origin. When a conveyant noun is placed next to an originative noun, it indicates that the conveyant noun *comes from, originates from,* the originative noun.

Hence, here we see that the child came from the woman. In fact, this is a common Ebisedian idiom indicating that the child is the woman's offspring. It is rather difficult to translate this literally; a more English-like translation might be, "this is the woman's child".

Note that there is no particular emphasis on the "child" here. We could equally well translate this sentence as "the woman has a child". In Ebisedian, it works both ways.

Now let's see another usage of the originative with the conveyant:

> **mılɜdʒǿ dɜmɜ́l.**   *"The girl is pretty."*

Here, we have **mʊlɜdʒǿ**, meaning "girl" (originative); and **dʒmɭl**, meaning "pretty" (conveyant). The word **dʒmɭl** actually means "prettiness"; it is not an adjective (Ebisedian doesn't have true adjectives) but an abstract noun referring to the quality of being pretty.

Now this construct may appear to be rather foreign. Why is "girl" in the originative case, and why is "pretty" in the conveyant case? If we follow the same line of thought as in the previous example, we could transliterate this sentence as "prettiness comes from the girl", or, "the girl is the source of prettiness".

The thought of the Ebisedian here is that prettiness is an *expressed attribute*. As such, it 'emanates' from the person who possess the quality of prettiness. Hence, the sentence may be taken literally to mean "the girl shows forth prettiness".

2.2.3 Receptive with conveyant

Not all adjectives are 'expressed' attributes; hence, not all adjectives are expressing using an originative/conveyant construct. Let's take a look at another type of adjective:

> **thátɜ b́ɭʒnu.**   *"The boy is tall."*

Here, we have **thátɜ**, "height" or "tallness" (conveyant); and **b́ɭʒnu**, "boy" (receptive).

This is an example of a *received* attribute. You may understand this as implying that height was 'given' or 'bestowed upon' the boy. "Height", being the conveyant noun here, is 'received' by the boy, the receptive noun.

Another usage of the conveyant/receptive construct is to indicate possession:

> **mangɭ ebú.**   *"The horse is mine."*

mangɭ, "horse" (conveyant); **ebú**, "I" (receptive). The thought behind this is that possessing something means that you *received* it, or that it was given *to* you. Hence, the possessor is in the receptive case, and the thing possessed, being the thing that is 'given', is in the conveyant case.[12]

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[12]Another way to understand this is that the ownership of the horse was *transferred*, hence conveyant, to you; that's why you now possess it.

2.2.4   Summary

So far, we've seen three constructs that are used in stative sentences: the locative–conveyant construct, indicating containment, sub-part, or sub-category; the originative–conveyant construct, indicating origin, or describing *expressed* attributes; and the conveyant–receptive construct, indicating possession, or *received* attributes.

There are many more such constructs; we will return to this subject later. But for now, let's examine how these constructs are actually used.

2.3   Relative clauses

Relative clauses, or *subordinate clauses*, are clauses that modify a noun to refine or elaborate on its meaning. Relative clauses in Ebisedian are marked by the *subordinating particles*, **nɩ** and **dɩ**.

The particle **nɩ** is inflected for *gender, number,* and *case.* For now, since we haven't talked about gender and number yet, we'll just assume that **nɩ** inflects for case. It marks the *beginning* of a subordinate clause.

The particle **dɩ** is inflected *only* for case. It marks the *end* of a subordinate clause started by **nɩ**.

Relative clauses in Ebisedian *always* immediately *precede* the noun being modified. Furthermore, the gender, number, and case inflection on **nɩ** must always *agree* with the gender, number, and case on the modified noun. Hence, an Ebisedian relative clause has the structure:

nɩ ... **dɩ** ⟨*noun*⟩

The case inflection of **dɩ** indicates the case function of the modified noun *within the relative clause.* In this way, it is similar to the English 'who', 'whom', 'whose', ..., etc.. For example, in "I saw him who wore that red shirt", the 'who' indicates that 'him' is functioning as the *subject* in the subclause, "who wore that red shirt". On the other hand, in "I saw him whose car it was", the 'whose' indicates that 'him' is functioning as the *genitive* in the subclause, "whose car it was".

In the same way, consider the following sentence:

nɩ lýs pʼz̆ɜdɜ du lóɾɩ.   *"The countryside to which the man went."*

Notice that **nɪ** is in the locative case, agreeing with the modified noun, **lőrɪ**, which is also in the locative case. The relative clause here is **nɪ lýˊs pə̋zɜdɜ du**. The function of **nɪ** is simply to introduce the relative clause; so the actual clause itself is **lýˊs pə̋zɜdɜ du**. The **du** here is in the *receptive* case, indicating that within the relative clause, **lőrɪ** is functioning as a *receptive noun.*

So, we have in the relative clause **lýˊs**, "to go"; **pə̋zɜdɜ**, "man" (conveyant), and **du** (receptive). Since **du** here represents **lőrɪ**, the relative clause reads, "the man went to [the countryside]".

Let's take a look at another example:

> **ebǿ zotő̋ nu kɕ́ dø jolúr.**   *"I looked at the red house."*

Let's unpack this bit by bit. First, we have the relative clause between **nu** (receptive of **nɪ**) and **dø** (originative of **dɪ**). This clause is modifying **jolúr**, "house" (receptive). Again, note the case agreement between **nu** and **jolúr**.

Hence, the main sentence, without the relative clause, reads:

> **ebǿ zotő̋ jolúr.**   *"I looked at the house."*

Now let's examine the relative clause: **nu kɕ́ dø**. The purpose of the **nu** is simply to introduce the relative clause; so the actual clause itself is **kɕ́ dø**. We have **kɕ́**, "red" (conveyant), and **dø** (originative). So, the modified noun, **jolúr**, is functioning as an *originative* noun in the relative clause. In other words, we have: "red (conveyant) house (originative)".

Hence, the relative clause here is a stative sentence describing an *expressed attribute*. Literally, we may translate it as "(the house) which shows forth red."

So, the entire sentence reads, "I saw the which-shows-forth-red house." That is to say, "I saw the red house."

2.4   Word Order

As you may have noticed, Ebisedian has a rather free word order. The speaker can more or less place words in whichever order he likes. This is true for nouns and verbs.

Nevertheless, there is a *default word order*, which is a weak inclination for words to appear in a particular order. This order is: *originative, instrumental, verb, conveyant, locative, receptive*. The placement of the locative is

quite flexible, however. It often appears at the front of a sentence instead of being second-last in this order.

For other types of words, such as conjunctions and particles, there are much stronger rules:

- Relative clauses always precede the noun, as we have seen. The same goes for *prepositions* such as **ulíro**, **atáro**, etc.; and *demonstratives*, like **uro** and **aro**.

- Adverbial conjunctions, such as **keve** ("and so"), **mɪk̂á** ("in spite of all this"), **mɪrő**, ("meanwhile"), **mɪĉí** ("consequently", "therefore"), . . . etc., always appear at the *head* of the sentence.

- Nominal conjunctions such as **zo** and **zoro**, on the other hand, must always appear *between* the conjoined nouns.

- Similarly, prepositions (obviously) always precede the noun they modify. If the noun has a relative clause attached, however, prepositions appear *before* the **nɪ**.

- Optative particles (**usó, osó, øsó**), subjunctive particles (**ana, jɪna, myna**), and adverbal interrogatives (**áne, jíne, mýne**), also prefers to be at the *head* of a sentence, usually *after* any conjunctions. Sometimes these particles may appear in the middle of a sentence, but it is rare.

- Correlative particles, **k̂e, ve, ke, ce, re,** are *always* at the *end* of a sentence. Except under exceptional circumstances, they are always the last word in a sentence.

2.5   Nominator sentences

One aspect of Ebisedian that may be very confusing to beginners are the *nominator sentences.* Nominator sentences are sentences consisting of a single noun or noun phrase in the locative case. They act like a *title* or *topic* which the subsequent prose will discuss.

Unlike titles or section headings in English, nominator sentences are much more common in Ebisedian. The Ebisedi love to use them all the time, and they are also frequently employed in parenthetical or paraphrastic constructions. The reader should not be confused when confronted with unusually frequent occurrences of nominator sentences.

2.5.1 Titles & Headings

The simplest use of the nominator sentence is to give a title to a passage. Titles, obviously, occur at the beginning of a passage, and so are easy to identify.

Here are some examples:

nι bιzɜtʒǿ dɜ bɪ́lɜnι. *"The woman's son."*

This may also be understood as "*about* the woman's son." (Recall the use of the locative case to mean "about" or "regarding".)

nι ιsιlǿ dɜ ẏgomaí. *"Ygomai from Isili."*

Ygomai is a woman who lives in the city of Isili. The originative-conveyant construct is often used to indicate the *place of origin.* Again, this title may be understood as "*About* Ygomai [who is] from Isili."

nι ιk̂ίro kací̃ dɜ kací. *"The flower on [her] head."*

This particular title is a pun on **kací**, which is a Ferochromon plant with red flowers, and **kací̃**, which refers to a woman's head.

2.5.2 The Topic-Comment Construct

This construct accounts for most of the uses of the nominator sentence in a typical Ebisedian text. Although it is rather complex, it occurs frequently enough that we deem it necessary to discuss it in detail here.

This construct is built from an initial nominator sentence, the *topic*, followed by one or more *comments*, which are sentences containing the back-referencing particle **kιlι**.

Before we delve into the details of this construction, let's take a broad view of it. The *topic* names one or more nouns, about which the *comments* will discuss. Note that the Ebisedi may indiscriminately use this construct smack in the middle of a paragraph about something else. It should be understood as a brief description or elaboration, to give the reader or listener a bit more information about the noun(s) in the topic.

As an example, we note that we sometimes do this in English as well:

... and so she went into the pub and saw a tall red-faced man. **Now, this red-faced man happened to be the captain of**

**the ship she wanted to enquire about. He had been the
captain of the ship for more than 20 years, and had seen
it through many journeys across the ocean.**

Being unaware of this, she went up to him and asked, . . .

The part marked in **boldface** represents a segment in the story which the
Ebisedi would render using the topic-comment construct. The "red-faced
man" would be the topic; and the comments, which in the Ebisedian would
be broken down into individual sentences, would be (1) "[he] happened to be
the captain of the ship she wanted to enquire about"; (2) "he had been the
captain of the ship for more than 20 years"; and (3) "[he] had seen it through
many journeys across the ocean."

The back-referencing particle **kɪlɪ** would be used for each occurrence of
"he" in the comment sentences, inflected appropriately for the appropriate
case function in each sentence.

2.5.3   The back-referencing particle, kɪlɪ

The *back-referencing particle*, **kɪlɪ**, is one of the words in Ebisedian which
is inflected for *two* noun cases. The first case is called the *referent case,*
which must agree with the case of the noun being referred to. In the case
of a topic-comments construct, this would almost always be the locative
case. This referent case is marked on **kɪ-** by replacing the vowel with the
characteristic vowel for the noun case.

Similarly, the second case is called the *functional case,* which is the case
function of the word in the current sentence. This is also marked using the
case's characteristic vowel, on the second syllable, **-lɪ**.

So, for example, **kɪlø** refers to a *locative noun* in the previous sentence,
and functions as an *originative noun* in the current sentence.

kɪlɪ is also inflected for *number*. The singular number is unmarked; the
plural is prefixed with **ʒ-**; and the nullar is prefixed with **mý-**.

2.5.4   Some Examples

Let's now take a look at a sample passage using this topic-comments struc-
ture.

**ýlɜ́ lýs jhúlɪ ĝe. keve fǿtʒ jhɪtú pɪ́zʒdø ve. uro pɪ́zʒdɪ.
kɪlu thátʒ̄ ke. kɪlʒ rúcɪ ce. kɪlø zotǿ jhɪtú re.**

> *"Ylia went into the room, and she saw the man. This man, he was tall; he was on the bed; and he was looking at her. "*

The topic-comment structure starts at the 3rd sentence, beginning with **uro píz3dɩ.** We have given a slightly more literal translation here, so that you can see the topic-comment structure clearly. A more English-like translation would be:

> Ylia went into the room, and saw the tall man on the bed, looking at her.

Note that unlike English, Ebisedian dislikes stringing together too many sub-phrases in a single sentence in this way. Given this English sentence, a good Ebisedian translation would break it up into smaller sentences in the same way as the original above.

The topic here is **uro píz3dɩ**, "this man". The following three sentences describe "this man". Firstly, the referent case of **kɩlu** is locative; hence, it refers to "this man", as one would expect in this topic-comment construction. The functional case is *receptive*. This indicates that "this man" is functioning as a receptive noun in the sentence **kɩlu thátɜ̄ k̂e.** "He was tall", or literally, "tallness [is] to him".

Similarly, **kɩlɜ** in the next sentence also refers to "this man", but this time functions as a *conveyant* noun. Hence, "this man" is on the bed.[13] In the same way, **kɩlø** in the third sentence refers to "this man" and functions as an *originative* noun. Hence, we have, literally, "he was on the bed", and "he looked at her".

2.6 Correlatives

The passage in section 2.5.4 is a good example of *correlatives* in Ebisedian. You may have noticed the particles **ke**, **ce**, and **re**. These are *correlative particles,* and the Ebisedi love to use them all the time.[14]

Correlatives are used to indicate that a set of ideas are *parallel* or *complementary*. In the case of the example passage in section 2.5.4, correlatives

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[13]The word **rŭcɩ**, "bed", actually refers to the general area in a bedroom where one reclines; hence, a conveyant-locative construct is used here without a preposition.

[14]They are so obsessed with correlatives that they would often alter the structure of their prose just so it would fit into a correlative construct. You can't read very far into any non-trivial text before you run into a correlative construct.

are used to indicate three *aspects*, or *angles*, that make up the description of the man. There are three complementary comments in this description:

kɪlu thátɜ̄ ke.   *"He was tall."*

kɪlɜ rúcɪ ce.   *"He was on the bed."*

kɪlø zotⴱ̋ jhɪtú re.   *"He looked at her."*

The correlative particles **ke**, **ce**, and **re** mark these three comments as a group of parallel, or complementary sentences that describe the topic, the man.

Correlatives may also be used to indicate *sequence:*

pɪ́zɜdɪ. kɪlɜ lɜlɪ́s mangá lőrɪ ke. kɪlu főtɜ ɜghɜngⴱ̋ ce. keve kɪla mangɜ́ pűju re.
"The man was riding on horseback in the countryside, when he saw the Ghangi; and he stopped the horse."

Literally, this passage reads "The man. He was riding[15] through the countryside. He saw [some] Ghangi[16]. And so he stopped the horse." Here, the correlative particles, **ke**, **ce**, and **re**, emphasize this three-step sequence.

These two examples use *trichotomies.* A trichotomy is a 3-part correlative construct. There is also a 2-part correlative construct, the *dichotomy.* Trichotomies are marked using the *trichotomial correlative particles,* **ke**, **ce**, and **re**. Dichotomies are marked using the *dichotomial correlative particles,* which are **k̂e** and **ve**, respectively.

Dichotomies are similar to the English "on the one hand" and "on the other hand". For example:

bɪteɪ́. kɪlɜ chasíd k̂e. kɪlɪ t̂álɜn ve.
"The mother, she was deathly ill on the one hand, [but] she was joyful on the other hand."

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[15]The verb **lɜlɪ́s** is the *progressive* form of **lés**, "to go". The progressive is used here to indicate that his going was interrupted. Progressive verbs will be explained in more detail later, when we talk about verbs.

[16]A hunched, humanoid creature in the Ferochromon, stereotypically wild and beast-like. Here, the plural **ɜghangɪ́** is used, indicating that there are many of them.

Trichotomies are simply the 3-pronged analogues of this. One possible transliteration for the trichotomial particles is "for one", "for two", and "for three". For example, we could translate the earlier trichotomy example as:

> The man, he was riding in the countryside for one; and he saw Ghangi for two; and he stopped the horse for three.

However, this sounds quite clumsy in English. Generally, when translating Ebisedian correlatives, if the target language does not have analogous constructs, it is often better to paraphrase it in a way more idiomatic for that language or to leave out the correlatives altogether.

2.7 Conjunctions

In Ebisedian, there are two types of conjunctions: *adverbial* conjunctions, which can only conjoin sentences, and *nominal* conjunctions, which can only conjoin nouns.

There are a variety of verbal conjunctions: some of the common ones are **keve**, "and so"; **mɪk̃á**, "in spite of all this"; **mɪĉɩ́**, "as a result"; and **mɪró̃**, "meanwhile". These conjunctions tend to appear at the beginning of a sentence, and connects the sentence with the previous one. These conjunctions *cannot* be used between nouns; they are strictly adverbial.

Nominal conjunctions are, in fact, quite rare in Ebisedian. The most common one, **zo**, "and", usually only occurs for emphasis, or to avoid ambiguity. Ebisedian has a feature called *implicit conjunction*—whenever[17] two nouns of the same case appear together in a sentence, there is *implicitly* a conjunction between them. For example:

> **lýs ebɜ́ ýnarɜ́ ló̃ru.**   *"I and Ynari went outside."*

> **ebɵ́ ýnarú tó̃ma.**   *"I spoke to Ynari."*

> **ebɵ́ ýnɜrɵ́ tó̃ma.**   *"I and Ynari spoke (to someone else)."*

There may be more than two nouns conjoined this way:

> **ebɜ́ ýnarɜ́ et́ánɜ lýs mó̃ju.**   *"I, Ynari, and Etani went to the city."*

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[17]There is a case where this is not true—but we won't worry about that here.

When the conjunction **zo** is stated explicitly, it usually implies emphasis:

> **ýlä́ zo pä́zɜdɜ lýs.**   *"Ylia* and *the man went."*

Here, the presence of **zo** specifically emphasizes that Ylia went *with* the man, rather than alone. The normal, unemphasized sentence would simply use implicit conjunction: **ýlä́ pä́zɜdɜ lýs.**

3   All about Verbs

3.1   Verbs

We've already seen Ebisedian verbs in the many examples in the previous sections, but so far, we've not examined them closely. Now it's time for us to do just that.

It is worth mentioning again that Ebisedian verbs are *not* used when describing something static or unchanging. Verbs only appear when an event (i. e., a change of state) occurs. We shall see later how to describe actions that are continuous.

3.1.1   Aspect

Let's begin by examining two almost-identical sentences:

> **lýs jɷbɔ́ lóru.**   *"She went outside."*

> **lés jɷbɔ́ lóru.**   *"She started to go outside."*

For now, don't worry about the feminine pronoun **jɷbɔ́**, which appears here in the conveyant case.[18] Here, we see two different forms of the same verb: **lýs**, and **lés**, both meaning "to go".

We say that the first form, **lýs**, is in the *perfective* aspect, because it indicates one, complete event. Ebisedian verbs usually occurs in the perfective aspect. This is true even if the future is being described—to the Ebisedi, the event is *expected* to be completed eventually, and hence, it is described by a perfective verb. We have translated our example in the past tense; however, it is equally valid to translate it in the present tense:

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[18]Ebisedian pronouns need another chapter to explain, so we'll leave them be until later.

lýs jꞷbɔ́ lóru. *"She goes outside."*

It is equally valid to understand it as a present action, which is currently incomplete, but expected to be completed:

lýs jꞷbɔ́ lóru. *"She is going outside."*

We can even translate it in the *future* tense:

lýs jꞷbɔ́ lóru. *"She will go outside."*

Again, the perfective aspect implies that we're expecting her future going outside to be a complete action when it happens.

The second form, **lés**, is in the *inceptive* aspect. The inceptive aspect describes an event which has just begun, or which is just about to begin. So, in the second sentence, she has *just begun* to go outside.[19]

Another use of the inceptive verb aspect is as an *imperative*. It carries the force of "start doing this!". For example:

lés lóru ɩsɩ́. *"Go outside now!"*

Here, **ɩsɩ́** is a *temporal noun* meaning "now".[20]

zotá ebú. *"Look at me!"*

zotá is the inceptive form of **zotꞷ́**, "to look", which we've seen before.

táma jɩ́tɜmɜ. *"Speak the truth!"*

jɩ́tɜmɜ is the conveyant form of **jɩ́tɜmɩ**, "yes-word", or "correct word"; hence derivatively, "truth".

There is another verb aspect in Ebisedian: the *progressive*. Unlike English, however, it is *not* used as a continuous tense/aspect in the normal sense. There are *only two* cases where the progressive aspect is used:

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[19]One may ask, since the perfective verb can also be used for events that are not yet complete, why do we need the inceptive? The answer is that the inceptive emphasizes the fact that the event has *just begun;* she has *just begun* to go. The perfective, on the other hand, emphasizes the event itself, as a complete unit. It is also possible for the inceptive to indicate that something has started but may not have completed; in this case, it cannot be replaced by the perfective.

[20]It is also a present tense marker. Ebisedian verbs do not have tense; rather, tense markers like **ɩsɩ́** are used when the speaker wishes to clarify the time-frame of the events he is describing.

1. To describe an event that happens in parallel with another event. For example:

> **ꝫmırᷓnꝫ lꝫlís lőrı k̂e. ꝫjhıdıǿ kégā ve.**
> *"While the children were travelling through the countryside, they were laughing[22]."*

Notice that there is no word corresponding to the 'while' in the translation; the progressive aspect of the verb **lꝫlís** is sufficient to indicate that the subsequent event was simultaneous. Sometimes you may see a chain of progressive verbs, followed by a non-progressive:

> **bꝫꝫꝫtᷓꝫ lꝫlís lőru ke. pízꝫdø tꝫtᷓma bíilꝫnu ce. keve ghangꝫ́ lýs jolúr re.**
> *"While the woman was walking outside, while the man was talking to the boy, the Ghangi went into the house."*

2. To describe an event which is interrupted, or expected to be interrupted.[23] Examples:

> **ebꝫ́ lꝫlís k̂e. keve ghangá púju ebꝫ́ ve.**
> *"I was walking, when a Ghangi stopped me. "*

> **ekᷓꝫsø tőma tꝫ, áne lꝫlís jhꝫtꝫ́ hongaú? mýe! tꝫmꝫ.**
> *"Ekasi said, 'You are going to the enemies? No! (you shall not!)'."*

In the latter example, the progressive **lꝫlís** indicates that Ekasi expected the person to be unable to successfully reach the enemies. His interjection, **mýe** ("no", or "not so"), is a prohibition. The particle **áne** is an *interrogative marker,* which marks the sentence as a question.

The progressive aspect should *not* be used in any other context. Continuous actions are not described by the progressive verb; rather, they are described using participles, which we will cover later.

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[22]Or, playing.

[23]The inceptive also has this usage. However, unlike the inceptive, the progressive *always* anticipates either a simultaneous event, or an interruption of the current event.

3.1.2 Focus

Let's now take a look at another attribute of Ebisedian verbs, the *focus:*

ebɜ́ lýs mɔ́jø. *"I left the city."*

This is a simple sentence with the perfective verb **lýs** in its *incidental* form. Now let's see what happens if we change the focus of this verb:

ebɜ́ luýs mɔ́jø. *"I left the city purposefully."*

The verb **luýs** is in the *deliberative* focus. It indicates that my leaving from the city is a purposeful, rather than random, event. The incidental focus is used for describing casual events; the deliberative focus describes events that the speaker thinks are meaningful and purposeful.

In the first example, my leaving the city was just a casual event; in the second example, it is significant and focused.

Compare the following two examples:

ɩsúɩ ýlɜ́ lýs ɔ́ru. *"Ylia will come here."*

ɩsúɩ ýlɜ́ luýs ɔ́ru. *"Ylia will come here (with purpose)."*

Here, **ɩsúɩ** is a future tense marker, and **ɔ́ru** is the receptive of **úrɩ**, "here", "this place". In the first example, Ylia's coming is portrayed as casual; in the second example, the deliberative focus implies that her coming will be with a definite purpose, or will have a special significance.

Note that the deliberative focus is an attribute of the *verb*, rather than any particular noun in the sentence. Hence, although it often implies deliberation on the part of the noun(s) involved, its main emphasis is on the meaningfulness *of the event itself.* It is perfectly possible, in the example above, that Ylia herself may not have any particular purpose in her coming; but the *fact* of her coming may have a significant bearing on certain things or events.

Now let's look at the third possible focus:

ebɜ́ laýs mɔ́jø. *"I was caused to leave the city."*

Here, the verb **laýs** is in the *consequential* focus. The consequential focus implies that the event was caused by another event. For example, this sentence might occur in the following context:

na ebǿ dʒ ʒtʒmɪá gafǿne jωbɔ́. keve ebɔ́ laýs mǿjø.
"My words angered[25] her; and so I was caused to leave the city."

Literally, the second sentence simply reads "I left the city"; however, the consequential focus implies that the leaving was because of what happened in the first sentence—she was angered. One may infer that my leaving the city was caused by her being upset and chasing me away.

Just like the deliberative focus, however, the consequential focus is a property of the *verb,* not any noun; and hence does not always describe an unwitting consequence befalling upon the noun(s) involved. It simply indicates that the event described is a consequence, or a response, to a previous event. For example, a very common use of the consequential is in the verb **táma**, "to speak". The consequential, **atáma**, often means "to respond", "to reply", "to answer". For example:

ebǿ tǿma mɪlʒdaú tʒ, lés jhílu. tʒmʒ.
"I said to the girl, 'go into the room'."

jhɪtǿ taǿma tʒ, ghú? tʒmʒ. *"She replied, 'why?'."*

The verb **tǿma** is the perfective incidental of **táma**; and **taǿma** is the perfective *consequential* form. (For now, just think of **tʒ** ... **tʒmʒ** as representing the quotation marks surrounding what was spoken. Everything within is punctuated as though they were standalone sentences; hence there is a sentence break before the closing **tʒmʒ**.) The consequential focus indicates that her speaking was *in response to* mine; hence, we translate it as "replied".

In summary, the incidental focus of a verb describes an ordinary event; the deliberative emphasizes that an event has a purpose or significance; and the consequential indicates that the event is a consequence of a previous event.

The incidental form of a verb is unmarked; the deliberative and consequential forms are marked by the presence of a *characteristic vowel*: **u** for deliberative verbs, and **a** for consequential verbs. Depending on the *domain* (see section 3.1.3) of the verb, this vowel may appear in different places. Generally, it occurs *before* the stressed syllable in the verb.

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[25]Note here that **ʒtʒmɪá**, "words", occurs in the *instrumental* case, indicating that they were driving her to anger.

3.1.3 Domain

Now let's take a look at an interesting attribute of Ebisedian verbs: verb domain. Again, we start by looking at some examples. In the following sentences, all the verbs are cognate, in spite of appearances.

ebɜ́ lɏ́s lőru. *"I went to the countryside."*

ebɜ́ lízy nu chídø tőma dɜ ɜtɜmιú.
"I pondered over the words he had said."

ebɜ́ løsúe fĩna mőju. *"I infiltrated the city by [sending] [my] student [to it]."*

In the first sentence, we see a familiar verb, **lɏ́s**, the incidental perfective of **lés**, "to go". In the second sentence, the verb **lízy** is the perfective of **lázι**. The verb **lázι** is, in fact, cognate with **lés**. Similarly, the verb **løsúe** in the third sentence is the perfective of **løse**, also cognate with **lés**.

How can these verbs be cognate? The English translations for them certainly bear very little resemblance to each other. However, in Ebisedian, all three verbs have something in common. All three carry an underlying meaning of "to go", albeit this is not immediately obvious from the English gloss for the second and third verbs.

The verb **lázι** is a verb in the *introvertive* domain. We call it an *introvertive verb* for short. The introvertive domain indicates mainly psychological events, or events closely related to one's person.[26] In this particular case, it is mainly the former. Hence, **lázι** means "to go", *psychologically.* In the second sentence, it indicates that the speaker, after hearing the man's words, is now 'going', in his mind, back to those words to consider and ponder over them.

The verb **lázι** is also used for describing the act of changing topics during a conversation—one is 'going' from one topic to another, psychologically.

In the third sentence, **løsúe**, the perfective of **løse**, is an example of a verb in the *abstract* domain (or, an *abstract verb,* for short). Abstract verbs describe actions are comprise of other actions. For example, **cɜrǿte**, "to plan", is an abstract verb, because it comprises of activities such as examining maps, discussing strategies, brainstorming, writing up a sequence of steps, thinking over possibilities, etc..

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[26]This slighly resembles the middle voice in Proto-Indo-European.

In the same way, **løse** means "to go"; but not in a simple way. It implies an *abstract* 'going' (hence the term *abstract verb*) to some place. It carries the connotation that this is not a simple, physical action of relocating oneself elsewhere; but the act of sending a representative (the student, in this case) to the place; the *infiltrating* of new territory by sending a spy, a military presence, or a diplomatic presence. In other words, it refers to the abstract action akin to, e. g., a government 'going' into a new country by invading the country with an army; or sending a representative to *'bring'* the government to a particular locale.

In light of this, notice the vast difference between the following two sentences:

> **ekás̄ɜ lýs lóru.**   *"Ekasi went to the countryside."*

> **ekás̄ɜ løsúe lóru.**   *"Ekasi went to[28] the countryside."*

The first sentence describes a simple, physical going of Ekasi[29] to the countryside; the second sentence implies that Ekasi is invading the countryside, perhaps leading the troops for an attack or occupation.

The Ebisedi like to use physical metaphors to express their psychological actions. We have already seen how the verb **lés**, "to go", becomes **lázɩ**, "to consider", in the introvertive. This applies to many other physical verbs too. Here are some examples:

dámɩ "To think", "to say to oneself"; from **táma**, "to speak".

bójɩ "To hesitate", "to restrain oneself"; from **pǿju**, "to stop".

zátɩ "To consider", "to fixate on", "to plan to"; from **zotá**, "to look". Carries the idea of focusing one's attention upon a thought, an idea, or thing; may also mean to consider an idea from afar.

vátɩ "To realize"; from **fátɜ**, "to see". Refers to the inner registration of the significance of what one sees.

kákhɩ "To think evil about (someone or something)", "to wish harm to (someone)", "to verbally abuse"; from **k̂ékh**, "to injure".

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[28]I. e., *invaded.*

[29]A well-known Ebisedi King.

Similarly, the Ebisedi also like to derive more abstract notions from physical verbs, by using abstract verbs. Examples include:

tǿme "To bespeak", "to make a point by example"; from **táma**, "to speak". The abstract focus indicates that the speaking is not verbal, but the cumulative impression of exemplary actions and deeds.

ƙǿkhe "To cheat", "to cause disadvantage to"; from **ƙékh**, "to injure". The abstract focus indicates the harm is not necessarily physical, but the cumulative result of other actions that are aimed to disadvantage the victim.

mιlǿre "To mourn", "to lament"; from **mιlḗrɜ**, "to shed tears", "to weep".

3.1.4 Summary

In summary, Ebisedian verbs have three types of attributes: *aspect*, *focus*, and *domain*. Most verbs occur in all combinations of aspect and focus; some verbs are only present in one or two of the three possible domains. Because the derivation rules for abstract and introvertive forms are not regularly predictable, many Ebisedian lexicons list the different domain forms of a verb under separate entries. Nevertheless, it is insightful to understand that they are in fact the same verb.

Each verb domain represents a different conjugation scheme. Table 3 shows all the forms of the verb **táma**, "to speak", as a model of verb conjugations. Note that the *canonical form*[30] of a verb is its *incidental inceptive*.

3.2 Gerunds

Consider the following sentence:

> **nø bιzɜtɜǿ da tɜ́mɜø rɜsánɜ.**
> *"The woman's speaking is wise."*

Here, we have **rɜsánɜ**, the conveyant of **rosánι**, "wisdom".[31] The word **tɜ́mɜø** is the originative of **támaι**, "speaking". This is, in fact, a *gerund* formed from the verb **táma**, "to speak".

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[30]The form it appears in a lexicon.

[31]Specifically, wisdom in dealing with people, matters, and things.

		Inceptive	Progressive	Perfective
Physical	Incidental	**táma**	**tɜtɜ́ma**	**tɰ́ma**
	Deliberative	**utáma**	**tutɜ́ma**	**tuɰ́ma**
	Consequential	**atáma**	**tatéma**	**taɰ́ma**
Introvertive	Incidental	**dámɩ**	**dɜ́mɜ**	**dímy**
	Deliberative	**udámɩ**	**udɜ́mɜ**	**udímy**
	Consequential	**adámɩ**	**adɜ́mɜ**	**adímy**
Abstract	Incidental	**tǿme**	**ɜtémɜ**	**tǿmúe**
	Deliberative	**utǿme**	**utémɜ**	**utǿmúe**
	Consequential	**atǿme**	**atémɜ**	**atǿmúe**

Table 3: Conjugations of **táma**

Notice that the particle **da** is in the *instrumental* case, indicating that in the subclause, **támaɩ** is functioning as an instrumental noun. But why instrumental? To answer this, we'll need to take a closer look at gerunds and participles, which are derived from gerunds.

3.2.1 Forming gerunds from verbs

Gerunds are the noun form of verbs. In Ebisedian, most regular verbs can be converted into a gerund by the addition of the *gerundive suffix, -ā*, to the incidental inceptive form of the verb, and then inflecting it as a noun. For example, the verb **táma** becomes **támā** after the addition of the gerundive suffix, and in the locative case, it becomes **támaɩ**. Hence, **támaɩ** is "speech", or "the act of speaking", as we've seen in the previous example.

Gerunds behave just like nouns; however, they have a special meaning when in the instrumental case. When in the instrumental case, gerunds behave like *participles.*

3.2.2 Participles

As mentioned before, Ebisedian does not use verbs when describing an unchanging state of things. In such cases, a stative sentence is used, which have been described earlier. One aspect of stative sentence that we haven't yet covered is the use of *participles.*

Ebisedian participles are simply the *instrumental case* of the gerund de-

rived from the verb. For example, the verb **lés** has the gerund form **lésaɩ**; in the instrumental case, it is **lésā**. Hence, the participle of **lés** is **lésā**.

Let's see how participles are employed in a stative sentence. We begin by drawing a comparison between two sentences. The only difference between them is that one has a verb whereas the other has a participle.

> **ɜmɪrɜ́nø tő̃ma ɜkegɜtɜmɜ̃́.**
> *"The children told (some) jokes."*

> **ɜmɪrɜ́nø támā ɜkegɜtɜmɜ̃́.**   *"The children were telling jokes."*

The difference between a verb and a participle in Ebisedian is that the former describes an *event* on a *particular occasion;* whereas the latter describes a *continuous,* on-going action. The verb **tő̃ma** indicates that the children told jokes on *one particular occasion.* The participle **támā** indicates that the children were *continually* telling jokes.

One should be aware that we *cannot* replace the participle here with a progressive verb; as stated before, the Ebisedian progressive can only be used when describing another, *simultaneous* event, or when describing an *interrupted* event.[32]

In fact, this is the normal way one describes a static situation in Ebisedian: with a participle, instead of a verb. The cases of the other nouns remain the same as they would be if a verb were used.

Now we can understand the use of the instrumental **da** in the example given earlier:

> **nø bɪzɜtɜǿ da tɜ́mɜø rɜsánɜ.**
> *"The woman's speaking is wise."*

The particle **da** is in the instrumental case, because the gerund **tɜ́mɜø** is functioning as a *participle* within the subordinate clause. Extracting the sub-clause from the main sentence, we obtain:

> **bɪzɜtɜǿ támā.**   *"The woman is speaking."*

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[32]Some grammarians have noted that the Ebisedian participle behaves more like a continuous verb than a participle; whereas the progressive verb is like a crippled, auxilliary form of the continuous verb. One must not push this interpretation too far, however, because in subordinate clauses, the participle does indeed behave like an instrumental noun.

This indicates that the woman's speaking is *continually* wise, not just on one occasion. If we wanted to say that only her words on one particular occasion were wise, we would instead say:

> **nø bɪzɜtɜǿ tǿma dɜ ɜtɜmɪǿ rɜsánɜ.**
> *"The words which she spoke (on this occasion) were wise."*

4   Interrogatives

> **bɪtɜǿ tǿma tɜ ghɜ́ tǿnɪ bɪsɜ́dø? tɜmɜ.**
> *"The mother said, 'What did [that] person ask?'."*

Questions in Ebisedian are indicated by one or more *interrogatives*[33]. Although we include question marks in the orthography to make it more readable, Ebisedian native writing does not have such a mark. The presence of an interrogative is the sole indication that a sentence is a question.

There are two main types of interrogatives in Ebisedian. The first type marks the 'what'-questions: 'what is this', 'who was that', 'where did this happen', etc.. The other type marks yes-or-no questions, also called *confirmative* questions. These include questions such as 'is this true?', 'was he really the one who did it?', etc..

4.1   'What' Questions

'What' questions are marked by either the *nominal interrogative,* **ghɪ́**, or the *adverbial interrogative,* **ghé**. Simply put, the nominal interrogative **ghɪ́** is a *placeholder* for the place in the sentence where the answer to the question would appear.

Let's consider a simple example.

> **ghú lɜ́ys bɜsɜ́dɜ?**   *"Where did the person go?"*

Here, **ghú** is the receptive form of **ghɪ́**. As we have seen earlier, the verb **lɜ́ys** is the perfective of **lés**, "to go". The conveyant noun describes who is going, and the receptive noun describes where he is going. Here, the conveyant noun is **bɜsɜ́dɜ**, "person". The receptive noun is the interrogative **ghú**. Hence, the sentence is asking where the person was going.

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[33] Question words.

Since the interrogative is in the receptive case, the answer would also have to be in the receptive case. For example, here is a valid answer to the question:

mə́ju l�ýs bɜsɜ́dɜ.   *"The person went to the city."*

Or, in spoken conversation, one could simply answer:

mə́ju.   *"To the city."*

It would be *incorrect* to reply in another noun case, since that would not answer what the question asked. For example, it would be incorrect to answer:

mə́jø.   *"From the city."*

mə́jø is in the originative case, and does not match the receptive interrogative **ghú** in the question.

Let's see how else we can ask this question. For example, we could ask instead where the person came from:

ghǿ l�ýs bɜsɜ́dɜ?   *"Where did the person come from?"*

ghǿ is the originative form of **ghí**. Hence, the answer should be in the originative. For example, our previously inappropriate answer is now appropriate:

mə́jø.   *"From the city."*

I. e., the person came from the city.

We could also ask *how* the person came by using the *instrumental* form of the interrogative:

ghá lɪ́ys bɜsɜ́dɜ?   *"How did the person come?"*

An example answer might be:

mangá.   *"By horse."*

Or, to turn the question around, we might want to ask *who* just came from the city:

ghɜ́ lɪ́ys mə́jø?   *"Who came from the city?"*

The answer might be:

bɜsɜ́dɜ. *"The person."*

A question that might arise at this point is, how do we differentiate between 'who' and 'what'? For example, in this last question, how do we know whether the speaker is asking *who* came to the city, or *what* came to the city?

In this particular case, it could be both. It is equally valid to translate the sentence as "what came to the city?". How it should be translated would depend on the context of the question—in particular, what the answer is. However, there *is* a way to specifically ask for 'who' rather than 'what'. We can prefix the interrogative word with one of the *proper noun prefixes*. In Ebisédian, all proper names have a prefix that indicates the number and gender of the name. These prefixes can be applied to the interrogative noun ghɨ́ as well.

For example, the singular epicene proper noun prefix is **o-**. So we could rephrase the question as:

oghɜ́ lɨ́s mű́jø? *"Who came from the city?"*

The epicene case of **oghɜ́** indicates clearly that we expect the answer to the question to be a person, rather than a thing.

We could also specifically ask for a specific gender or number using the appropriate prefix. For example, the plural feminine proper noun prefix is **hy-**; so we could ask:

hyghɜ́ lɨ́s mű́jø? *"Who are the women who came from the city?"*

In this case, the answer would be expected to be in the feminine plural.

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4.2   Confirmative Questions

Confirmative questions are marked by one of the three interrogative particles, **áne**, **jíne**, and **mýne**.

5   Subordinate Passages; tɨ and tɨmɨ

Now we're ready to tackle one of the more obscure Ebisedian constructs, the *subordinate passage,* or a *nominalized passage.*

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We've already seen a few instances of this earlier, involving the verb **táma**, "to speak". What is spoken is placed between **tɜ** and **tɜmɜ**, and is fully punctuated. This is actually an instance of a subordinate passage; **tɜ** and **tɜmɜ** are in fact the conveyant forms of the *adverbial subordinating particles,* **tɪ** and **tɪmɪ**.

The adverbial subordinating particles, **tɪ** and **tɪmɪ**, are used to *nominalize* sentences, or even entire passages. That is, they turn the enclosed prose into a 'noun'. This 'noun' can then inflect for case, and participate in the main sentence.

5.1 Quoted Discourse

We have already seen that **tɪ** and **tɪmɪ** are used with the verb **táma**, "to speak". They serve to delimit the *quoted discourse*—what was spoken. Here's a typical example:

> **tɤ́ma bĭlɜnø tɜ ghɪ́ ẏmɜ́? tɜmɜ.**
> *"The boy said, 'where is [my] Mother?'."*

Grammatically speaking, the verb **tɤ́ma** here takes a *conveyant argument* for the thing being spoken. That is why we see **tɜ** and **tɜmɜ** surrounding the quoted discourse—they are the *conveyant* forms of **tɪ** and **tɪmɪ**, respectively. The entire quoted discourse effectively acts as a conveyant 'noun' in the main sentence.

Ebisedian does not distinguish between direct and indirect discourse. So this example may also be translated "the boy asked where [his] mother was".

Multiple sentences may occur between **tɜ** and **tɜmɜ**. For example:

> **gaɤ́fane jhɜtɜ́ gafánu ĝe. keve tɤ́ma ebú tɜ lés ẏbǿ ɪsí.**
> **øsó ẏbú fɤ́tɜ mýcumø ɪsú. tɜmɜ ve.**
> *"She became greatly angered; and said to me, 'Go away from me now! I do not want to see you [again] from now on!'."*

In the first sentence, **gaɤ́fane** is the consequential perfective of **gáfane**, "to become angry". **gafánu** is the receptive of **gafánɪ**, "anger". It is a common idiom to use these two words together for emphasis—literally, the sentence reads, "she was angered into anger".

The second sentence begins with **keve**, "and so", and actually continues all the way to the correlative **ve** at the end. Between **tɜ** and **tɜmɜ** are the contents of what she said.

Note here the use of the inceptive, **lés**, as an imperative. **ɪsɪ́** is a temporal marker meaning "now"; **ɪsú** is a temporal marker meaning "until the future", i. e., "from now on".

The particle **øsó** is a *strong optative marker*. Here, it indicates a strong opinion—"I want to see none-of-you from now on!", or, "May I see none-of-you henceforth!". Notice that Ebisedian prefers using a nullar noun, **mýcumø** (originative of the masculine distant pronoun, **cómɪ**) instead of negating the sentence.

Also worthy of note is the fact that the correlative particle **ve** comes *after* the closing **tʒmʒ**. Ebisedian convention always fully punctuates sentences quoted within **tɪ** ... **tɪmɪ**; this does *not* terminate the main sentence, which continues past **tʒmʒ** up to (and including) **ve**.