

= E language =

E ( simplified Chinese : 侬水话 ; traditional Chinese : 侬水話 ; pinyin : Nóngshuǐ Huà ) or Wuse / Wusehua ( simplified Chinese : 五色话 ; traditional Chinese : 五色話 ; pinyin : Wúsè Huà ; literally : " Colored Language " ) is a Tai–Chinese mixed language spoken primarily in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County , Guangxi , China . It contains features of both Tai and Chinese varieties , generally adopting Chinese vocabulary into Tai grammar . E is a tonal language distinguishing between seven tones and contains a few rare phonemes : voiceless versions of the more common nasal consonants and alveolar lateral approximant .

= = Etymology = =

The E language 's unusual pinyin @-@ transliterated name , which is also an autonym , consists of a single letter e . The character , which is written " 侬 " in Simplified Chinese and " 侬 " in Traditional Chinese , denotes an expression of affirmation . The language 's speakers also refer to their language as Kjang E. Wusehua is a derogatory name for E.

= = Geographical distribution = =

In 1992 , E was spoken by about 30 @,@ 000 people , but by 2008 this number had dwindled to 9 @,@ 000 . Most E speakers are classified as Zhuang by the Chinese government . E speakers live primarily in the Guangxi autonomous region of China , specifically in the Rongshui Miao county and border areas of Luocheng Mulao . Villages inhabited by E speakers include Xiatan , Simo , Xinglong , and the Yonglei district . Ethnologue classifies E as rank 6b ( Threatened ) . E speakers ' most commonly spoken other languages are Yue Chinese and the Guiliu variant of Southwestern Mandarin .

= = Phonology = =

E 's consonant and vowel inventories are mostly similar to those of its parent languages . However , it contains a few unusual consonants : the voiceless nasal consonants [ n̥ ] , [ ŋ̥ ] , [ m̥ ] , and the voiceless alveolar lateral approximant [ l̥ ] . All are voiceless versions of consonants that , in most languages , are always voiced . E allows syllabic consonants and diphthongs .

Like most Southeast Asian languages , including Tai and the varieties of Chinese , E is tonal . The language is described as having seven tones , with the seventh varying allophonically with the length of the vowel it is attached to . With numbers ranging from 1 to 5 , with 1 being the lowest tone and 5 the highest , the contours of the various tones in E are as follows .

= = Grammar and lexicon = =

E is usually classified as a mixed language deriving ultimately from the Tai @-@ Kadai and Sino @-@ Tibetan families , which both inhabit southern China and Southeast Asia . Some non @-@ Chinese scholars , however , consider it a Tai @-@ Kadai language with Chinese influence . Whatever its classification , the grammar resembles that of the Tai branch of Tai @-@ Kadai . Specifically , scholars consider E 's grammatical features a blend of Northern Zhuang , Mulam , and Kam . The Caolan language of Vietnam displays many similarities with E.

The vocabulary , however , is mostly Chinese , based on Guiliu and the Tuguai variant of Pinghua . Out of the 2 @,@ 000 most commonly used E words , only about 200 are of Tai @-@ Kadai origin . E also inherits elements of these Chinese dialects ' phonology and compound word formation . E morphology is primarily analytic , with concepts such as negation expressed with auxiliary words ( pat6 , m2 ) and no pronominal agreement .

In its pronouns , E distinguishes for person between first , second , and third ; in number between singular and plural ; and , in the case of the second @-@ person plural , between inclusive and

exclusive we . E does not , however , make distinctions for grammatical gender .