Handout 3. Verbs

The notes below are based mainly on Jerry Norman, “A Grammatical Sketch of Manchu,” Phi Theta Annual, vol. 9 (Berkeley, 1965); Kawachi Yoshihiro, Manshūgo bungo bunten (Kyoto, 1996); and Gertraude Roth-Li, Manchu: A Textbook for Reading Documents (Hawaii, 2000).

Depending on how you count, Manchu has as many as twenty verb forms (Kawachi says 19; Norman says only 13, but does not count -mbi; Roth-Li does not provide a figure). All of these forms are understood to be formed with the verb stem.

1. -mbi  
   non-perfective finite form (dictionary form): incomplete action, habitual action, future action, action in general  
   
   amban bi ere jalin de ambula gelembi  "For this reason I, your official, am very afraid."

2. stem-  
   imperative  
   
   suwe becendure be naka "Stop your bickering!"  
   afal "Attack!"

3. -ra/-re/-ro  
   prospective finite (imperfect verbal noun); incomplete action, attributive action, future action, possible action, negation of action (with ume)  
   
   dergi amargi ergi serengge, muduri mukdere funghvwang deyere ba of  
   "The Northeast is the place where the dragons arise and the phoenixes fly"  
   
   gisurere be han donjifi "The king having heard what was being said"  
   amban ojoro niyalma "A man who becomes an official"  
   bi sinde alara "I'll tell you"  
   arki nure ume omire "No drinking of alcohol and spirits"  
   
   use w/ de  
   afame dosire de "While advancing to battle"  
   use w/ postpositions anggala, onggolo, dabala, jakade  
   damu fukjin Manju hafan cooha tumen funcere anggala. ududu minggan morin. temen nonggire jakade. hûda cun cun i wesike.  
   "But originally not only were there over ten thousand Manchu officers and soldiers, but because several thousand horses and camels were added, the price gradually increased."

4. -habi/-hebi/-hobi, etc.  
   perfective finite form: completed action, continuation of state of completed action  
   
   udu hacin yali alin i gese muhaliyahabi "The many layers of meat were piled up like a mountain"  
   te mini beye amba cooha ilifi sini ba na de sektefi jihebi "Now, having raised a great army, I have spread over your lands"
5. **-ha/-he/-ho, -ka/-ke/-ko**
   perfective participle (perfective verbal noun): completed action
   
   _bonio erin de ing de isinjih_ "At the monkey hour they arrived at camp"
   _bi uneggi mujilen i günihabe wachiyame gisurehe_ "I have completely expressed what I truly thought in my heart"

6. **-ha bihe/-he bihe/-ho bihe**
   past perfective finite form: completion of action anterior to past narrative – “had verbed”
   
   _gemun hecen de amban oho bihe_ “had been an official in the capital"
   _jegiyang golo de genehe bihe_ “had gone to Zhejiang province”

7. **-mbihe**
   past perfective processive (past imperfective): habitual action in the past
   
   _julge han i elcin jihe manggi hengkileme acambihe_
   “It used to be that when emissaries came to the khan they would kowtow in greeting"

8. **-ki**
   desiderative finite (desiderative): "want to"
   
   _bithe be bi hulaki_ "I want to read this book"
   _bi neneme geneki_ "I shall go first"
   _mini taciha gabtan niyamniyan be cendeme emu mudan abalame tuciki sembi_
   “I'd like to try out the skills I have learned in shooting by going hunting once”

9. **-kini**
   optative finite (desiderative 2): "want you to," "let it be that" (polite order)
   
   _dain de baturu nyalma dosici dosikini_ "Let the brave men enter the battle . . ." 
   _tubade dedukini_ "Please lie down there"
   _alin i gese yali efen be jekini, mederi gese arki be omikini_
   “Let it be so that we have mountains of meat and bread to eat and oceans of liquor to drink”

10. **-cina**
    optative finite (optative): "if only . . .", "it would be good if"
    
    _gucuse ilicina_ "If only they could be friends"
    _si te genecina_ "I want you to go right now"

11. **-rahû**
    apprehensive converb (temeritive): "if only [not]," "I'm afraid that . . ."
    
    _ama eme damu nimerahû seme jobombi_
    “I'm worried lest mother and father get sick;” “If only mother and father would not get sick"
    _mimbe warahû seme gelembi_
    “He is afraid that they may kill me”
12. -me

- me verb (imperfect converb) sets the scene for (simultaneous) action in main clause; set purpose or manner of action of main verb; auxiliary verb

*burulame* genere niyalma be ambula waha "they killed many of the people who were fleeing"
*Manju gisun getuken bime dacun* "The Manchu language is clear and to the point"
*alin de abalame genehe niyalma* "the people who went hunting in the mountains"
*nure omime muterakû* "I cannot drink wine"
*agame* deribuhe "it began to rain"

also introduces direct and indirect speech (w/ verbs sembi, günimbí, hendumbí, fonjimbí, jabumbí, etc.)
*tere duin gucu jabume, bele si buceci be simbe dahame bucembi* *seme* *henduhe* 
"The four friends responded, ‘If you die, bele, we will die with you’.”

also set forms like *dahame* (because), *jakarame* (along), *šurdeme* (surrounding), *seme* (-ly) *hûwanggar* *seme agambi* "to rain in torrents"

13. -fi/-pi

- pi perfective converb (perfect converb) sets the scene for sequence of actions

*songgoro be nakafi, emgeri hengkilehe* "Having stopped crying, he kowtowed once"
*gelí emu jedz be arafi takû rahê* "I wrote another memorial and sent it"
*nimeku ulhiyên i ujelefí boo de bedereme* "Because his illness got worse, he returned home"

also set form *ofi*, usually w/ imperfect converb "because"

14. -ci

- ci conditional converb (conditional-temporal converb) "if," "when"

*si geneci* "if you go," "when you go"
*geneci uthai genembi seme hendu, generakû oci uthai generakû hendu* 
"If you are going, then say so now; if you are not going, then say you are not going now"

*amba* *gurun be ajige obuci ajige* *gurun be amban obuci* *gemu* *abkai* *ciha kai*  
"Whether great countries become small ones or small countries great ones is entirely the will of heaven."

also set forms:

- *-ci* acambi "fitting," "should;"
- *-ci* bahambi, *-ci* mutembi *-ci*  etembi "can,"
- *-ci* ombi "it is okay"

*jeci  etembi* "can eat"
*manju gisun be gisureci mutembi* "can speak Manchu"
*si yali be jeci ombi* "you may eat meat"

oci is also a topic marker

*Hadai gurun i hanoci, uyun hûlah be waha sembi*  
"They say that the Hada khan killed nine bandits"

also set phrase *donjici* "I have heard"
*donjici si te manju bithe tacimbi sembi*  
"I hear you are now studying to read Manchu"

also set phrase *-ki seci* "although"
yabuki seci “although I wish to go” (lit., “[even] if I say, ’let me go;’”)

15. -tala/-tele/-tolo
   terminal converb (terminal, terminative converb) “up until, as far as”
   yaya Manju. Monggo. ujen cooha. Nikan. booi aha de isitala. gemu eteme ciralame tafulafi
   “having outlawed it strictly and successfully among every Manchu, Mongol, Hanjun, Chinese, all the way down to household slaves . . .” (YZMaZPZZ, YZ1.2.10)

16. -nggala/-nggele/-nggolo
   preparative converb (prefatory converb)
   onggolo “until; before, previous” (considered a postposition, but technically a form of the verb ombi)
   ahasi jurara onggolo Nikan hafan Yoo Jy Yen ahai baru hebšehengge
   “before your slaves set out, the Chinese official Yao Zhiyan approached us for a consultation . . .”

17. -cibe
   concessive converb (concessive converb) “even though”
   udu buya ajige baita bicibe ciralame kooli toktobufi (YZMaZPZZ, YZ1.10.8)
   “however petty or minor the matter may be, having strictly fixed the rules . . .”
   Yucen ere aniya juwan nadan se oho. udu juwan nadan bicibe. Manju gisun. bithe hergen be asuru tachak. (YZMaZPZZ, YZ3.2.29)
   “Yucen is 17 sui this year. Although he is 17, he has not learned much of Manchu speech or writing.”
   cooha ursei gabtara niyamniyarengge udu majige nonggibucibe. (YZMaZPZZ, YZ4.4.10)
   “however much the soldiers have been made to do a little more shooting from a stance and shooting from horseback” (lit., “although the shooting from a stance and from horseback by the soldiers has been increased slightly”)

18. -hai/-hei/-hoi
   durative converb
   šengdzu gosin húwangdi i deserek kesi de. fonde bošokú ci siran siran i baítalahi gúsai da de isibuři (YZMaZPZZ, YZ5.1.7)
   “thanks to the overflowing grace of his majesty the Shengzu emperor, [I] have been employed continuously from [the position of] corporal in succession up to that of banner commander”

19. -ralame/-relame/-rolame
   simultaneous converb (alternative converb)
   gisurelame injembi “to laugh while talking,” “to do things like talking and laughing”

20. -tai/-tei/-toi
   instrumental converb
   giyan i giran be meijebufi bucei faššame “truly, having caused my bones to shatter, I exert myself to death” (YZMaZPZZ, YZ3.6.20)