

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!"
afa! "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 ofi*
"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. hūda 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 isinjha "At the monkey hour they arrived at camp"
bi unengi mujilen i gūniha babe wacihiyame 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 niyalma 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

converb (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*, *gûnimbi*, *hendumbi*, *fonjimbi*, *jabumbi*, etc.)
tere duin gucu jabume, beile si buceci be simbe dahame bucembi seme henduhe
"The four friends responded, 'If you die, beile, 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

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

songgoro be nakafi, emgeri hengkilehe "Having stopped crying, he kowtowed once"
geli emu jedz be arafi takûraha "I wrote another memorial and sent it"
nimeku ulhiyen i ujelefi boo de bedereme "Because his illness got worse, he returned home"

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

14. -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 han oci, uyun hûlha 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 fafulafi
"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 tacihakū. (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 hūwangdi i desereke kesi de. fonde bošokū ci siran siran i baitalahai gūsai da de isibufi (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 bucetei faššame "truly, having caused my bones to shatter, I exert myself to death" (YZMaZPZZ, YZ3.6.20)