

Lesson 8: Verbs II

More Verb Forms

1. –ci (the conditional converb)
 - a. As a converb, -ci cannot end a sentence
 - b. The basic meaning of –ci is “if” – *si geneci, bi inu genembi* (If you go, I will also go).
 - c. This meaning can extend to mean “when” – *bi boode jici, umai niyalma akū* (When I return home, there is no one there)
 - d. Verbs like *gūnimbī* (to think) can begin a sentence in this form, with the literal meaning “if I think” or “when I think” taking on the simpler sense “I think that” – *bi gūnici, manju gisun manggai ulhire gisun bi* (If I think about it, Manchu is a difficult language to understand/I think that Manchu is a difficult language to understand). Similarly *tuwambī* (to see/look) becomes *tuwaci* (literally “when I look” or more naturally “it seems” – *bi tuwaci, boode niyalma akv* (When I look, there are no people in the home/It seems that nobody is home)
 - e. In the conditional, the verb *ombi* becomes a topic marker (“as for”) – *sefu oci, niyalma tondo gūnin sain bi* (As for the teacher, he is an upright person of good mind).
 - f. The forms *-ci acambi* and *-ci ombi* have special meanings and are extremely common. *-ci ombi* means that something is proper or permissible – *niyalma be holtoci ombi dere, abka be holtoci ombio* (It may be permissible to deceive people, but is it permissible to deceive heaven?). *-ci acambi* means “should” – *sain be yabuci acambi, ehe be yabuci acarakū* (One should do good and should not do evil).
2. –ki (optative)
 - a. The basic meaning of –ki is to express a desire to do something – *bi mederi de geneki* (I want to go to the ocean).
 - b. By extension, it can also express an intention to do something – *bi jidere aniya mederi de geneki* (I plan to go to the ocean next year)
 - c. By further extension, it can express the future tense, as long as it retains a sense of intentionality – *bi cimari mederi de geneki* (I will go to the ocean tomorrow)
 - d. When in the second person, -ki expresses a mild form of the imperative, like a polite request – *mini boode dosifi majige teki* (Come into my house and sit down for a bit).
 - e. When in the third person, -ki means to permit - *sefu ere be tuwaki* (Let the teacher see this).
 - f. When in the first person plural, -ki can express a meaning like “let’s” – *muse te boode mudaki* (Let’s return home now)
 - g. The form *-ki sembi* has the same meaning as the basic meaning of –ki (desire/intention), but can help distinguish that meaning from the future or

imperative, and can enable discussion of the desires of people other than the speaker – *mini boode teki* (Stay at my place) vs *mini boode teki sembio* (Do you want to stay at my place?) and *bi cimari mederi de geneki* (I will go to the ocean tomorrow) vs *bi cimari mederi de geneki sembi* (I want to go to the ocean tomorrow).

3. –kini (optative/imperative)

- a. –kini is used to express things that you want other people to do or that you wish to happen (but are outside your direct control) – *manju tacire niyalma ambula okini* (I hope that there will be many people who study Manchu)
- b. By extension, -kini functions as an imperative form, frequently used in edicts to convey the same meaning as the Chinese 著 – *ujen coohai urse be gūsaci tucibukini* (Let the Hanjun people be made to leave the banners)
- c. –kini sembi expresses a strong wish that someone do something, and marks the person you wish to do it with the accusative particle *be* – *bi imbe genekini sembi* (I want him to go)
- d. –kini followed by *inu* is a special construction meaning “even though” (note that sometimes the *inu* is dropped) – *tere niyalma nikan gurun de terakū okini inu nikan gisun be sambi* (Even though that person does not live in China, he still knows Chinese)

4. –cina (imperative)

- a. –cina expresses another form of the request/command, but it is only very rarely seen. The –na ending likely comes from the interrogative form, so one way to understand this is a request framed as a question – *tecina* (will you please sit down?/how about you sit down?)
- b. Other grammatical texts translate –cina simply as please – *tecina* (“please sit down”)
- c. Perhaps the most common appearance of –cina is as a form of the verb *sembi* (to say), with *secina* meaning literally “let it be called” – *yala ja de bahafi selacuka baita secina* (Let it be called an easily obtained happy matter)

