Lesson 8 Handout

Week 4: 28 September 2023

Negation

There are five major negation words: *waka*, *akū*, *unde*, *ume*, and *umai*.

Nominal negator *waka*

waka is used to negate nominal predicates — it is equivalent to English "is not", or Chinese 不是. *waka* can be used as a modifier of nominal phrases as well.

(1) a. *ere niyalma mini ama waka* "This man is not my father"
   b. *yargiyan waka baita be ainu agdambi* "Why do you believe this matter which is not true?"

Verbal negator *akū*

akū is the generic negative, often translated as 'there is not' or simply 'not'. It can be used to denote that something does not exist or that an adjectival predicate does not hold of a noun.

(2) a. *boode niyalma akū* "There is no one in the house"
   b. *ubaci goro akū* "(it is) not far from here"

All verbs show negation with *akū* as a suffix on some participial form. Because of this, negations of converbs and finite forms rely on the participle to form, and often are identical to the negative participle.

(3)

Verb Kind	Example	Negative Form	Example
Imperfective Finite	*morin yalumbi*	Impf Participle + Neg	*morin yalurakū*
Imperfective Participle	*morin yalure*	Impf Participle + Neg	*morin yalurakū*
Perfective Participle	*morin yaluha*	Pfv Participle + Neg	*morin yaluhakū*
Imperfective Converb	*morin yalume*	Impf Participle + Neg	*morin yalurakū*
Perfective Converb	*morin yalufi*	Pfv Participle + Neg	*morin yaluhakū*
Conditional Converb	*morin yaluci*	Participle + Neg + *oci*	*morin yalurakū oci* *morin yaluhakū oci*

The last vowel of the participle is deleted when negation is added. When the past participle ends in *-he* or *-ke* or *-ngke*, the negation changes to fit the vowel harmony: becoming *ekū*. The negative conditional is based on the participle forms (adding *oci*) and so has a perfective-imperfective distinction.

rakū is sometimes shortened to *rkū*, especially in Sibe texts. In classical Manchu, only *sambi* is negated as *sarkū* regularly.

Negative Commands *ume*

ume is used before the imperfective participle to make negative commands. In these cases there is no negation on the verb.

(4)   *muke be ume dosire* "Don't enter the water!"

Events which have not yet occured with *unde*

unde is used after the imperfective participle to denote the meaning of "not yet". In these cases there is no negation on the verb.

(5)   *muke be dosire unde* "I haven't yet entered the water"

Not at all *umai*

umai is used before negative verbs, *akū*, and *waka* to intensify the negation. It often translated as "not at all".

(6)   *umai akara baita akū* "There is absolutely nothing to be sad about."