

# Lesson 6 Handout

Week 3: 21 September 2023

## Imperfective Finite *-mbi*

The imperfective finite form *-mbi* is the dictionary form, and is one of the most common verb forms used.

Because it is a finite form, it can only be used as the main predicate of a sentence, or embedded under the verb *sembi* ‘say’.

Because it is imperfective, it expresses action that has not yet been completed — general statements of facts, actions in the present or future, or habitual actions.

(1) *-mbi* is used to indicate:

a. Regular or frequent action

ᠨᡳᠠᠨ ᠨᡳᠶᠠᠯᠤᠮᠠ ᠨᡳᠠᠨ ᠭᡳᠰᡠᠨ ᠪᠡ ᠭᡳᠰᡠᠷᡳᠮᠪᡳ ”  
*nikan niyalma nikan gisun be gisure-mbi* .  
 Han people Han language ACC speak-IPFV.FIN .

‘Han people speak Chinese.’

b. Ongoing states

ᠪᡳ ᠡᠮᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠬᠠᡳᠷᠠᠮᠪᡳ ”  
*bi eme be haira-mbi* .  
 I mother ACC love-IPFV.FIN .

‘I love my mother.’

c. Concrete actions occurring at the time of speech

ᠰᡳ ᠠᡳᠪᡳᠳᠡ ᠭᠡᠨᠡᠮᠪᡳ ”  
*si aibide gene-mbi* .  
 you where.DAT go-IPFV.FIN .

‘Where are you going?’

d. Future events

ᠪᡳ ᠴᡳᠮᠠᡳ ᠠᠯᡳᠨ ᠳᠡ ᠭᠡᠨᠡᠮᠪᡳ ”  
*bi cimari alin de gene-mbi* .  
 I tomorrow mountain DAT go-IPFV.FIN

‘I will go to the mountain tomorrow.’

## Imperfective Participle *-ra, -re, -ro*

The imperfective participle undergoes vowel harmony. This will be discussed in a coming section.

Some verbs have irregular imperfective participles. These are usually noted in dictionaries, but the most common and important to know are ‘to become’ *ombi* = *ojoro* and ‘to be’ *bimbi* = *bisire*. Other commonly seen forms include ‘to come’ *jimbi* = *jidere* and ‘to eat’ *jembi* = *jetere*.

- (2) *-ra, -re, -ro* is used to indicate:

- a. Simple present or future action (like *-mbi*)

bi sinde niru be bu-re .  
 I you.DAT arrow ACC give-IPFV.PTCP .

'I { will give / am giving } you the arrow.'

- b. A modification of a noun, expressing incomplete action (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive)

*ini gisure-re gisun manju gisun bi .*  
his speak-IPFV.PTCP speech Manchu speech COP .

‘The language he speaks is Manchu language.’

- c. A nominalization denoting an incomplete action (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive; the verb directly takes the case marking relevant to what role the nominalization has in the main sentence)

{ <i>ci</i> / <i>ciŋi</i> }	ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ	ᐅᐱ ᐱᐱᐱᐱᐱ	»
{ <i>ce</i> / <i>ceŋi</i> }	<i>atanggi ji-dere</i>	<i>be sarkū</i>	.
{ <i>they</i> / <i>their</i> }	when come-IPFV.PTCP ACC not.know		.

- d. Used with dative case to denote that the main clause happens at the time of the action denoted by the verb (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive)

ከ ፍጥረት ስክ ከሁሉ-ራ      ዳ/ ፍ ፍጥ/ ስክ ገሰክ      ”  
*i bithe be hūla-ra      de bi buda be je-ke      .*  
 he book ACC read-IPFV.PTCP DAT I rice ACC eat-PFV.PTCP .

‘I ate a meal while he was reading the book.’

- e. prohibitions or negative commands; used with *ume* ‘don’t’ before the verb.

bira de uma dosi-re  
river DAT don't enter-IPFV.PTCP .

‘Don’t enter the river!’

- f. used with *unde* 'not yet' to denote an action that has not yet occurred. *unde* comes after the verb

ᠪᠢ ᠡᠷᠡ ᠪᠢᠲᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠬᠤᠯᠠ-ᠷᠠ ᠤᠨᠳᠡ ”  
*bi ere bithe be hūla-ra unde* .  
 I this book ACC read-IPFV.PTCP not.yet .  
 ‘I have not yet read this book.’

## Perfective Participle *-ha, -he, -ho / -ka, -ke, -ko*

The perfective participle undergoes vowel harmony. This will be discussed in the coming section.

Most verbs use the *-ha, -he, -ho* ending, but some use *-ka, -ke, -ko* and others use *-ngka, -ngke, -ngko*. The *k* and *ngk* forms will generally be denoted in dictionaries. There are some verbs which are homophonous except for which kind of perfective participle they use. For example, there are two verbs *jembi*, one meaning ‘to eat’, which has the perfective participle *jeke*, and the other meaning ‘to put up with’, which has the perfective participle *jengke*.

(3) *-ha, -he, -ho* is used to indicate:

a. simple past tense

ᠪᠢ ᠪᠢᠲᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠠᠷᠠ-ᠬᠠ ”  
*bi bithe be ara-ha* .  
 I book ACC write-PFV.PTCP .  
 ‘I wrote the book.’

b. A modification of a noun, expressing completed action (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive)

ᠪᠢ ᠢᠨᠢ ᠠᠷᠠ-ᠬᠠ ᠪᠢᠲᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠬᠤᠯᠠ-ᠮᠪᠢ ”  
*bi ini ara-ha bithe be hūla-mbi* .  
 I her write-PFV.PTCP book ACC read-IPFV.FIN  
 ‘I am reading the book that she wrote.’

c. A nominalization denoting a complete action (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive; the verb directly takes the case marking relevant to what role the nominalization has in the main sentence)

ᠴᠡ ᠢᠨᠢ ᠭᠢᠰᠦᠷᠡ-ᠬᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠳᠣᠩᠵᠢ-ᠬᠠ ”  
*ce ini gisure-he be donji-ha* .  
 They her speak-PFV.PTCP ACC hear-PFV.PTCP  
 ‘They heard what she said.’ (Lit. They heard her speaking.)

d. Used with dative case to denote that the main clause happens once the time of the action denoted by the verb has finished (in this case, the subject of the verb may be genitive)

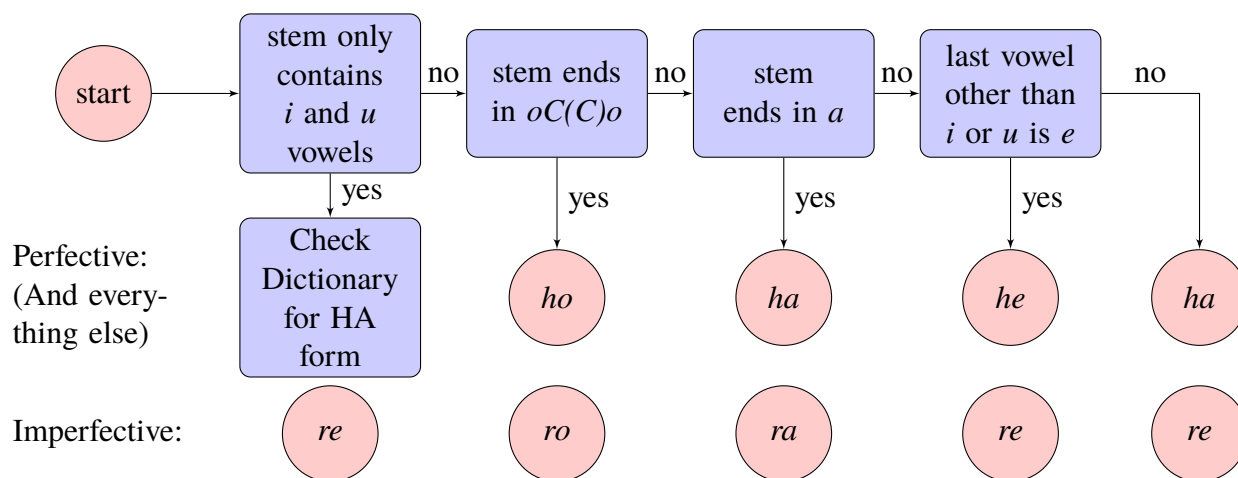
ᠢ ᠪᠢᠲᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠠᠷᠠ-ᠬᠠ ᠳᠠᠲᠤ , ᠪᠢ ᠪᠢᠲᠡ ᠪᠡ ᠬᠤᠯᠠ-ᠮᠪᠢ ”  
*i bithe be ara-ha de , bi bithe be hūla-mbi* .  
 he book ACC write-PFV.PTCP DAT , I book ACC read-IPFV.FIN

‘When he has written the book, I will read the book.’

ū

## Verbal Vowel Harmony

In Manchu, vowel harmony affects *ra*, *re*, *ro* differently than it affects any other ending with vowel harmony. To simplify, I have a chart below which shows how to determine the *ra*, *re*, *ro* form and the form that should be used for any other vowel harmony (denoted in the chart with *ha*, *he*, *ho*) forms. While verbs may irregularly have *ka* or *ngka* rather than *ha* endings for perfective forms, the vowel harmony is generally predictable. The only time when you should need to use a dictionary to find the correct vowel harmony is when the word only contains *i* and *u* vowels.



## Practice

For the following words, can you tell just by looking what the imperfective and perfective form are? If so, what is it? If not, can you find it by looking through a dictionary?

to stand	to take an oath	to rush	to cut	to tie	to cross	to make someone report	to get moldy