

# Manchu: underspecification and activity

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EGG 2022

## Written Manchu

Table 1: The vowel inventory of Written Manchu

Front	Central	Back
i		u
		ʊ
	ə	
	a	ɔ

The vowel [i] exerts a palatalizing influence on at least some preceding consonants.

## Vowel harmony in Written Manchu

Table 2: ATR harmony in Written Manchu

Unaffixed	Affixed	Gloss	Affix
xəxə	xəxə-ŋgə	'woman'	Genitive
kumun	kumu-ŋgə	'noise'	
aga	aga-ŋga	'rain'	
itʃʰi	itʃʰi-ŋga	'direction'	
tursun	tursu-ŋga	'form'	

Unaffixed	Affixed	Gloss	Suffix
tʰɔn	tʰɔ-ŋga	'number'	
susə	susə-tə-	'coarse'	Causative
χɔrɕa	χɔrɕa-ta-	'fishing net'	
tulpa	tulpa-ta-	'careless'	
tʂili	tʂili-ta-	'anger'	
silxi	silxi-ta	'envy'	
xətʰu	xətʰu-kən	'stocky'	Attenuative
gulu	gulu-kən	'plain'	
farɕɔn	farɕɔ-kan	'dark'	
χɔtun	χɔtu-qan	'fast'	
pəki	pəki-lə-	'firm'	Causative
paqtʂʰin	paqtʂʰi-la-	'opponent'	
xərə-	xərə-ku	'ladle out'	Nominalization
paqtʰa-	paqtʰa-qɔ	'contain'	
tʂʰili-	tʂʰili-qɔ	'choke'	
səxəxun	səxə-xuri	'vertical'	Augmentative
laqtaɕɔn	laqta-χɔri	'drooping'	
əmtʰə	əmtʰə-li	'one each'	Adjectivization
taɕa	taɕa-li	'follow'	
uli-	uli-xə	'string'	Past
ana-	ana-ɕa	'push'	
pu-	pu-xə	'give'	

Questions:

- What is the distribution of velars and uvulars? How do they relate to vowels?
- What classes do the vowels fall into with respect to ATR alternations?
- Are any vowels exempt from patterns involving ATR?

Table 3: Rounding harmony in Written Manchu

Unaffixed	Affixed	Gloss
kumun	kumu-ŋgə	'noise'
tursun	tursu-ŋga	'form'
pɔtʂʰɔ	pɔtʂʰɔ-ŋgɔ	'colour'
χɔtun	χɔtu-qan	'fast'
fɔɕɔɔn	fɔɕɔɔ-qɔn	'short'
gulu	gulu-kən	'plain'
tɔ-	tɔ-na-	'alight'

Unaffixed	Affixed	Gloss
tɔ:-	tɔ:-na-	'cross'
pɔtɔ-	pɔtɔ-χɔ	'think'
pu-	pu-χə	'give'

Questions:

- The data is a bit sparse, but can you make a generalization about when rounding harmony occurs?
- Which vowels trigger rounding? Which ones don't?

### Analysis

Given the above generalizations, what featural specifications can we justify?

Feature	/i/	/u/	/ʊ/	/ɔ/	/ə/	/a/
[low]						
[coronal]						
[ATR]						
[labial]						

### Xibe

Xibe has no /ʊ/, but has acquired /ɛ y œ/, primarily by assimilation of original /a u ɔ/ by a following /i/.

Table 5: Xibe vowel inventory

Front	Central	Back
i y		u
ɛ œ	ə	ɔ
	a	

### Vowel harmony in Xibe

Table 6: Vowel harmony alternations in Xibe

	Written Manchu	Xibe	Gloss
a.	gəthə-xə	gət <sup>h</sup> ə-xə	'awoke'
	uli-xə	uli-xə	'stringed'
	ana-χa	anə-χə	'pushed'
	gətʂ <sup>h</sup> i-χa	gətʂi-xə	'cherished'
b.	pu-xə	pu-xu	'gave'
	pətɔ-χɔ	pətu-χu	'thought'
c.	nətʂi-kən	nətʂi-kən	'flat'
	ərtə-kən	ərtə-kən	'early'
	ampa-qan	am-qən	'big'
	χantʂi-qan	χantʂi-qən	'near'
d.	dzuʂuxu-kən	dzyɛxu-kun	'sour'
	xət <sup>h</sup> u-kən	xət <sup>h</sup> u-kun	'stocky'
	laptu-qan	lavtu-qun	'many'
	farχɔ-qan	farχu-qun	'dark'
	fɔχɔɔ-qən	fœχulu-qun	'short'
	ɔsɔχɔ-qən	ɔsχɔ-qun	'small'

Questions:

- What happened to [ATR] harmony in Xibe? What about the consonants?
- How does rounding harmony work? What are the relevant classes?

### Analysis

Given the above generalizations, what featural specifications can we justify?

Feature	/i/	/u/	/y/	/ɛ/	/œ/	/ɔ/	/ə/	/a/
[low]								
[coronal]								
[ATR]								
[labial]								