

Verb Forms

The Meaning of the Past Tense Suffix *-(I)widi*¹

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The suffix *-(I)widi*, as in *yéziwidi*, is **an alternative form to the suffix *-KANidi***, as in *yazghanidi*.² There is no need for the language learner to use the form *-(I)widi*; it is enough to recognize and understand it.

The form derives from a combination of the converb with the copula: *yézip + idi > yéziwidi*.

According to Tömür / Lee, *-(I)widi* expresses the "direct statement mood" of the "past perfect tense" and "... indicates that the state brought about by the action existed **before another related matter**, or at a certain time in the past."^{3, 4}

The matching forms for the "indirect statement mood" are *yazghaniken / yéziptiken / yéziwiken*.⁵

In main clauses

In main clauses, the form *-KANidi* serves to relate **background information** (earlier events, setting, explanation, evaluation). So does the form *-(I)widi*.

Ex. 1. ... bir qéri adem «Tapqach chiqsang» dep bek jékip kétiwidi. Silerning mushu dukanda bar, dep angliwidim.⁶
*..., an old man had become very demanding, saying "Find some before you come back". I had heard that in this shop of yours it is available.
(This explains why the speaker, having gone to many places, ended up in the present shop.)*

Ex. 2. Héliqi uchquchilarni bash-peshwa bilen östengge mollaq atquzuwetkenidingiz, sizni shumikin déwidim.⁷
*You had made those pilots tumble into the channel head-over-heels, you are that man, aren't you?, I had thought [Lit.: said].
(The girl then remembered his name and talked to him.)*

¹ Depending on the verb stem, the suffix takes on the forms *-widi / -iwidi / -uwidi / -üwidi*.

² So Tömür / Lee: Uyghur Grammar, who list them side by side on p. 337, and Friederich: Uyghurisch, p. 134f. Several speakers confirm this. *-(I)widi* might be used more in the North of Xinjiang. Cf. Rentzsch, Julian: Aspekt im Neuuygurischen, 2005, Wiesbaden, p. 115.

³ Tömür / Lee 341.

⁴ The suffix *-widi* is listed by Hahn: Spoken Uyghur, p. 597, as "perfect past" (whereas *-KANidi* is named "pluperfect"). Hazirqi zaman Uyghur tili, III p. 1733-35, discusses both building and usage. It is not treated by Engesaeth / Yakup / Dwyer: Handbook, or by Landmann: Kurzgrammatik.

⁵ Tömür / Lee 338 / 331. (The forms for the "present perfect tense" and for the "past perfect tense" are identical.)

⁶ Hoshur: Sarang 8.

⁷ Qahar: Tozumas gül 210.

- Ex. 3. Būgūn sēni kēlip qalidu dep kūje qaynitip qoyuwidim.⁸
Today, thinking you will come, I prepared some porridge.
(She has it now ready and only needs to heat it up.)

In subordinate clauses

It is not uncommon across languages for such a verbform which indicates background, to be used **within a subordinate clause** as well; it then provides some background for the – more or less climactic – action in the following main clause. *-(I)widi* is often used in this way. (*-KANidi* can be used in this way too.) It is then followed by a comma.

- Ex. 4. Yekshenbe kūni bazar aylinip kelmekchi bolup kochigha chiqiwidim, kimdur biri arqamdin dolamgha shapilaqlidi.⁹
On Sunday, wanting to walk around the market [and come back], I went out onto the street, when someone slapped me on my shoulder from behind.

- Ex. 5. Shu chaghda Rizwangül ornidin des turup:
– Mu'ellim, méning bir so'alim bar, – déwidi,
mu'ellim:
– Qéni sorang, dédi.¹⁰
At that time Rizwangül stood up vigorously, saying:
"Teacher, I have a question."
The teacher answered:
"Go ahead, ask."

- Ex. 6. Kōzeynikini éliwétwidi, ésimge keldi.¹¹
As he took off his glasses, it came back to my mind [who he was].

I.e. usually the form *-(I)widi* will occur in a context that is dominated by the standard narrative form *-Ti*, and slightly **highlight** the action of the main clause. The *-(I)widi*-action and the main verb action immediately follow each other.

Note that, when *-(I)widi* is used for the verb of the subordinate clause, and *-Ti* is used for the verb of the main clause, they **may have differing subjects**. In fact, this is so in each of the three examples above.

According to Rentsch, *-(I)widi* can indicate a **turning point** of some sort, like a change in the train of thought, adversity, change of agent, de-activating.¹²

⁸ Ötkür: *Iz* 9.

⁹ Hoshur: *Burut majirasi* 28.

¹⁰ Qahar: *Tozumas gül* 19.

¹¹ Hoshur: *Burut majirasi* 28.

¹² Orig. "Wechsel des Gedankenganges, Adversativität, Aktantenwechsel, Abschaltung der Aktualität". Rentsch 115. He also says "*gen idi* wirkt in der Regel sukzessionsbrechend, während *ividi* die lineare Sukzession in der Regel aufrecht erhält."