Lesson 6 Translation 1

In the sixth of each seven-lesson set, we'll take a moment out to try some free translation. We will usually add some vocabulary, but only what is necessary for the text at hand.

After the workspace for your translation—as part of my English translation—I'll give a morpheme-by-morpheme analysis. If grammar-geekiness intimidates you, feel free to skip this part; however, those willing to set that intimidation aside will find that it sheds considerable light on how Láadan words and sentences are put together.

Vocabulary

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bol
                                                   izh
   to be fleecy-clouded (of the sky)
                                                      but
                                                   lith
   Suffix (Type-of-Sentence Word): said
                                                      to think
   in narrative; said as a story
                                                   sháal
hathal
                                                      day
   good (of a time)
                                                   tháa
háva
                                                      to thrive; to be well
   beautiful (of a time)
                                                   thosh
hothal
                                                      sky
   good (of a place)
                                                   wo
hóya
                                                      Evidence Word: imagined or invented
                                                      by speaker; hypothetical
   beautiful (of a place)
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Láadan Text

Hathal Sháal

Bíide hóva Halishóni wo. Míi Méri i di, "Bíi háva sháal wi."

Bíide medathim Méri i Ána wo. Laya bud, izh melaya ra thom; melula thom.

Bíide di Méri wo, "Bíi óoha le wa," izh óoha ra Ána. Ina Méri.

Bíide u áath wo. Tháa i liyen hesh. Leyi i bol thosh. Mehéeya ra mid; di Ána, "Bíi meháya nezh wa."

Bíide yod Ána wo. Methal bal i rana, izh thal ra thilhi.

Bíide lith Ána wo, "Bíi hothal Halishóni wa."

Amberwind's Lessons Page 6.1

Your Translation into English Hathal Sháal Bíide hóya Halishóni wo. Míi Méri i di, "Bíi háya sháal wi." Bíide medathim Méri i Ána wo. Laya bud, izh melaya ra thom; melula thom. Bíide di Méri wo, "Bíi óoha le wa," izh óoha ra Ana. Ina Méri. Bíide u áath wo. E: Tháa i liyen hesh. Leyi i bol thosh. Mehéeya ra mid; di Ána, "Bíi meháya nezh wa." Bíide yod Ána wo. Methal bal i rana, izh thal ra thilhi. Bíide lith Ána wo, "Bíi hothal Halishóni wa."

My English Translation with Morpheme-by-Morpheme Analysis

Láadan uses words and word-parts to build more complex words—like toy blocks. To avoid any confusion in the following analysis, words that have their own meanings will begin with a capital letter (WORD); words that are built of two or more "pieces" will be presented with each "piece" beginning with a capital (WORD + WORD). Words that are there to give context but don't have their own translatable meaning will be presented in all-capital letters (WRD). Prefixes and suffixes will also be presented in all-capital letters (PFX + WORD + WORD + SFX); notice that the context words, prefixes and suffixes may be abbreviated.

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Hathal Sháal
Hathal Sháal
BEGOODTIME DAY

Day Being-Good-Time
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Bíide hóya Halishóni wo. Míi Méri i di, "Bíi háya sháal wi."
                                                                 "Bíi
                                                                                      sháal
Bíide
                     wo.
                         MADEUP
                                                                     DECL
   DECL + NARR
                                               AND
                     Míi
                                                                 háya
hóya
                                           di,
   BEBEAUTIFULPLACE
                                                                                          SELFEVID
                         BEAMAZED
                                                                     BEBEAUTIFULTIME
Halishóni
                     Méri
   California
California was beautiful. Mary was amazed and said, "The day is beautiful."
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Amberwind's Lessons Page 6.2

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Bíide medathim Méri i Ána wo. Laya bud, izh melaya ra thom; melula thom.
Bíide
                                                                                    melula
                                          Lava
                                                               melava
    DECL + NARR
                        AND
                                              BFRFD
                                                                   PL + BFRFD
                                                                                        PL + BFPURPLE
medathim
                     Ana
                                          bud,
                                                               ra
                                                                                    thom.
                                                                   NEG
   PL + Needlework
                        Anna
                                              CLOTHING
                                                                                        PILLOW
Méri
                     wo.
                                          izh
                                                               thom;
   MARY
                        MADEUP
                                              Вит
                                                                   PILLOW
Mary and Anna were needleworking. The clothing was red, but the pillows were not red; the
pillows were purple.
Bíide di Méri wo, "Bíi óoha le wa," izh óoha ra Ána. Ina Méri.
Bíide
                                          le
                                                               óoha
                                                                                    Ina
                     wo,
    DECL + NARR
                        MADEUP
                                             Τ
                                                                   BeWeary
                                                                                        SLEEP
                     "Bíi
di
                                                                                    Méri.
                                          wa,
                                                               ra
                                             MYPERC
   SAY
                        DECL
                                                                   NEG
                                                                                        MARY
                                                               Ána.
Méri
                     óoha
                                          izh
                        BEWEARY
                                              Вит
   MARY
                                                                   Anna
Mary said, "I'm weary," but Anna wasn't tired. Mary slept.
Bíide u áath wo. Tháa i liyen hesh. Leyi i bol thosh. Mehéeya ra mid; di Ána, "Bíi meháya nezh
wa."
Bíide
                     Tháa
                                                               Mehéeya
                                                                                    Ána,
                                          Leyi
   DECL + NARR
                        THRIVE
                                              BEBLUE
                                                                   PL + BEAFRAID
                                                                                        Anna
                                                                                    "Bíi
                                                               ra
   BEOPEN
                        AND
                                              AND
                                                                   NEG
                                                                                        DECL
áath
                     liyen
                                          hol
                                                               mid;
                                                                                    meháya
                                                                                        PL + BEBEAUTIFUL
                        BeGreen
                                              BeFleecyClouded
   Door
                                                                   CREATURE
wo.
                     hesh.
                                          thosh.
                                                               di
   MADEUP
                                                                                        You2-5
                        GRASS
                                              SKY
                                                                   SAY
                                                                                    wa."
                                                                                        MYPERC
The door was open. The grass was thriving and green. The sky was blue and fleecy-clouded.
The animals were not afraid; Anna said, "You are beautiful."
Bíide yod Ána wo. Methal bal i rana, izh thal ra thilhi.
Bíide
                     wo.
                                                               izh
                                                                                    ra
    DECL + NARR
                        MADEUP
                                                                   Вит
                                                                                        NEG
                                              And
yod
                     Methal
                                          rana,
                                                               thal
                                                                                    thilhi.
                        PL + BEGOOD
                                                                                        FISH + PE]
   EAT
                                              BEVERAGE
                                                                   BFG00D
Ána
                     bal
                        BRFAD
Anna ate. The bread and beverage were good, but the fish that had gone off was not good.
Bíide lith Ána wo, "Bíi hothal Halishóni wa."
                                          "Bíi
                                                                                    wa."
Bíide
                     Ána
                                                               Halishóni
    DECL + NARR
                                              DECL
                                                                                        MYPERC
                                                                   California
                        Anna
lith
                     wo,
                                          hothal
                        MADEUP
                                              BeGoodPlace
    THINK
Anna thought, "California is good."
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Amberwind's Lessons ______Page 6.3

My English Text

Day Being-Good-Time

California was beautiful. Mary was amazed and said, "The day is beautiful."

Mary and Anna were needleworking. The clothing was red, but the pillows were not red; the pillows were purple.

Mary said, "I am weary," but Anna was not tired. Mary slept.

The door was open. The grass was thriving and green. The sky was blue and fleecy-clouded. The animals were not afraid; Anna said, "You are beautiful."

Anna ate. The bread and the beverage were good, but the fish that had gone off was not good.

Anna thought, "California is good."

Comments

This story *is* rather cartoonish, but what more can be expected with a limited vocabulary and only a few grammatical features with which to work?

Note that the Láadan title of the story lacks the Type-of-Sentence Word and the Evidence Word. The concepts are there, but there's no "framework" to "hang" them on. Without the form provided by the Type-of-Sentence and Evidence Words, it's impossible to translate them into an English sentence.

Note that the Type-of-Sentence Words need not be repeated in connected speech. Of course, the content of a new paragraph is not connected to that of the previous paragraph, so the Type-of-Sentence Word would be required again. Also, the text within a quotation is not connected to that outside the quotation: the speaker would include a Type-of-Sentence Word, so when she's quoted, the Type-of-Sentence word would be included in the quotation.

Similarly, the Evidence Word need not be repeated within connected speech once it is established. The constraints regarding quotations and paragraph boundaries would also apply.

In this story we are introduced to the first of the Mood Suffixes. These will all modify the Type-of-Sentence Word; the sentence will still be a statement, question, and so on, but the purpose or emotional state behind the sentence is made specific. In this case "-de" signifies that what is being related is a story. And, in conjunction with the new Evidence Word "wo," it is clearly a made-up story.

The Mood Suffixes can also be attached to any communication verb: "dide" would mean "speaks, in narrative form," and "dibíide" would mean "states or declares, in telling a story."

Did you note the word "thilhi" in the second-to-last paragraph? We know the word "thili" (fish). Láadan makes it easy to adapt a word to incorporate a "pejorative" (negative) meaning on-the-fly. The sound "lh" is used in Láadan for nothing else, and can be added to the beginning, middle or end of any word to lend a temporary deprecatory meaning—so long as the addition doesn't violate Láadan's requirement that vowel sounds and consonant sounds within a word occur in strict alternation. In addition, if the original word contains the sound "l," that sound can be changed to "lh" (as was done to "thili" here). In either case, the change would not be included in any dictionary; it's strictly temporary and carries the sense of distaste or disapproval of a particular occurrence of the thing—of the fish, in this case.

A somewhat different case involving "lh" is words whose meanings are inherently negative. These words will often include the sound "lh" as a core part of their makeup. This is not temporary, and such words would be found in a dictionary.

Amberwind's Lessons ______Page 6.4