

Lesson 24

Vocabulary Practice 4

Vocabulary

beróo

Conjunction: because

bithim

to meet

boóbin

to braid [boó (three)]

dalel

object; made-thing [dal (thing) + el (make)]

ed

tool

el

to make

lam

health

lámála

to caress; to stroke

losh

money, credit

ri

to record

shal

courtesy; manners

shim

to sexual-act (completely neutral & abstract term)

shub

to do

une

to wear

waálh

Evidence Word: assumed false because speaker distrusts source; evil intent also assumed [waá (UNTRUSTED) + -lh (PEJ)]

we

Evidence Word: perceived in a dream

wili

creek, river

wóo

Evidence Word: used to state a total lack of knowledge as to the validity of the matter

wóoban

to give birth

zhe

to be like; to be similar; to be the same

The word “beróo” (because) was originally formed as “bróo” utilizing a forbidden consonant cluster, “br.” This was considered an historical accident (occasioned by the fact that, linguistically, “r” is a different class of consonant from “b”) and corrected by the second generation developing Láadan. We won’t use the “bróo” form, but you should recognize it if you should happen upon it.

The word “dalel” (object) was originally formed as “dale” with the only feature that distinguished it from “dal” (thing) being an “e” that looks and sounds just like the “e” that is inserted to separate consonants. The result was that, any time either of them received a suffix that began with a consonant (and almost all of them do), it was impossible to determine whether a “thing” or an “object/made-thing” was being discussed. The second generation changed it to “dalel” to solve this problem—and made its etymology transparent at the same time!

Now that we have the vocabulary, here’s the idiom for asking what the weather is like.

Báa shub ro bebáath?

What is the weather?

Literally, the question means, “What does the weather do?”

Láadan uses the word “zhe” to express similarity. However, it’s used very differently than its English equivalents. In English, we say that “X is like/similar to/the same as Y;” “X” is understood to be the Subject, and “Y” is the Object. Contrarily, in Láadan the verb “zhe” (be similar) takes two (or more) Subjects: “...mezhe X i Y (i Z)...” (...X and Y (and Z) are similar/alike...). For the purposes of translation to English, we may take either (any) of these Subjects as the English Subject; the other(s) can be translated as the English Object(s).

“**Waálh**” is simply “**waá**” (I mistrust the source of the report) with the pejorative affix, “**-lh**,” added to introduce the perception of ill intent to the situation; this is an excellent example of the use of the pejorative affix.

Now that we’ve been introduced to “**waálh**,” “**we**,” and “**wóo**,” we are now acquainted with the complete set of Evidence Words as provided by Suzette Haden Elgin.

Examples

Bíi laya mahina wi.

The flower is red (as anyone can plainly see).

Bíi laya mahina wa.

The flower is red (according to my perceptions).

Bíi laya mahina wáa.

The flower is red (I’m told, and I trust the source).

Bíi laya mahina waá.

The flower is red (I’m told, but I mistrust the source).

Bíi laya mahina waálh.

The flower is red (I’m told, but I mistrust the source—and I believe the source is misleading me on purpose with ill intent).

Bíi laya mahina we.

The flower is red (in my dream).

Bíi laya mahina wo.

The flower is red (in the story I’m making up; hypothetically).

Bíi laya mahina wóo.

The flower is red (as a guess, with no convincing evidence).

Exercises

Translate the following into English.

1 Bíi eril néde thi ábedá mewoléli wobabí boó wáa.

E: _____

2 Bíi wil nosháad wodóhada wodadem nayaháthu wa.

E: _____

3 Báa mehaba i melirihul mahina woháya wodalatha?

E: _____

4 Em, i medazhehal mi betha íi wa.

E: _____

5 Báa aril doth Mázhareth worabalin wohedin bethath?

E: _____

6 Ra, ranime bithim be wolawida wosherídan bethath wa.

E: _____

7 Bóo mebel nizh mewotháa wohemeneth.

E: _____

8 Bíi ril menime meralóolo déelahá; wóoban berídan bezhetha wa.

E: _____

9 Báa owa ili wilithu beróo ham rosh?

E: _____

10 Bíi ril mezhe dalel beye i ed hi wa.

E: _____

Notice the word “**nayaháthu**” in #2. Stripping off the Partitive ending, we are left with “**nayahá**” (**caregiver**) [**naya** (**care for**) + **-á** (**DOER**)]. Within a morpheme (indivisible meaningful word part), the vowel sequence “**aa**” would be allowable, but because one of these comes from “**naya**” (**care for**) and the other comes from “**-á**” (**DOER**), they must be separated by an “**h**.”

In #4 and #6, notice that there is no Type-of-Sentence word. This is an informal use acceptable because it’s an answer to a question—and the answer is providing not only agreement/disagreement but an expansion of the matter at hand. Formally, a Type-of-Sentence word would follow the “**em**” (**yes**) or “**ra**” (**no**) to make it clear how to construe the rest of the answer.

Translate the following into Láadan.

11 The assistant promised to braid the traveler's great-grandmother's hair.

L: _____

12 What did you (few beloved) eat? Was it good?

L: _____

13 I swear our (few) food was fruit, bread, and milk.

L: _____

14 The baker's offspring couldn't help (honored) Michael (I dreamed).

L: _____

15 Will some four large containers of grain be heavy?

L: _____

16 The bankers don't need to get trousers or skirts.

L: _____

17 A linguist created Láadan; it comforts us (many).

L: _____

18 The courteous scientist counted our money and recorded a number.

L: _____

19 Carol and Marsha will caress each other; afterward, they-honored may have sex.

L: _____

20 Clearly it's bitterly cold, but Matthew protects his health; he wears the correct clothing.

L: _____

In #12, because we've already established the interrogative mode and the past tense in the first sentence, we don't need to include either "Báa" or "eril" at the beginning of the second sentence (though we could, for emphasis or to remove any possibility of ambiguity).

In #16, were you able to form the word for "banker?" A banker is one who deals in (or "does") money and credit: "loshá."

In #17, did you notice the ambiguity? The Subject of the second clause is "be" (she/he/it/X). It is impossible to tell, from the Láadan, whether it is the language or the linguist that comforts us. More discourse would be required to clarify—for instance, if we used "dan hi" (this language) instead.

In #18, did you have any trouble forming a word for "scientist?" We have the prefix "e-" (SCIOF) and the suffix "-á" (DOER). Usually the nature of the science is inserted between them; however, in this case we dispense with the core word and use the nonspecific "doer of science" to mean "scientist:" "ehá." Remember the "h" to separate the vowels.

Did you notice, also in #18, that "shal" introduced as a noun (courtesy) was immediately used as a verb (to be courteous).

And, again in #18, also note that "lamith" (to count) is indistinguishable from "lamith" [lami (number) + -th (OBJ)]. This sort of thing can happen; in context, it won't cause any confusion.

Answers

- 1 A farmer wanted to have three yellow birds.
- 2 Would that the comic picture of the caregiver arrive.
- 3 Are the flowers of the beautiful plant fragrant and extremely colorful?
- 4 Yes, and its leaves are also unusually soft.
- 5 Will Margaret follow her young cousin?
- 6 No, she's unwilling to meet her pregnant niece.
- 7 Prithee bring (you, several, honored) the thriving bushes.
- 8 The gardeners are willing to be quick; their aunt is giving birth.
- 9 Is the river's water warm because it's sunny?
- 10 Some made-thing is similar to this tool.
- 11 Bíi eril dibé boóbin dená delith shinehothuletha imátha wa.
- 12 Báa eril meyod nabh bebaath? Thal be?
- 13 Bé eril ana lezhetho yum, balem, i lalem wa.
- 14 Bíi rathad den shem ebalátha Máyel bith we.
- 15 Báa aril mesho meworahíya wodim edethuth bim beyezh?
- 16 Bíi methem methel ra loshá inadeth e áayoth wáa.
- 17 Bíi eril el edaná Láadan wi; ril she be leneth wa.
- 18 Bíi eril lamith woshal wohehá losh lezhethoth i ri be lamith.
- 19 Bíi aril melámála Hérel i Másha hizh hizheth wa; rilrili meshim bizh aril.
- 20 Bíi ril ham rahowaháalish wi, izh dóyom Máthu lam bethoth wáa; une be wodóon wobudeth.