

Lesson 32

Source Case

Source Case

[VP CP–S CP–O CP–Mann
CP–Instr CP–Assoc
CP–Goal CP–Source]

–de

Suffix (noun phrase): Source Case

The Source Case identifies a case phrase as the origin or beginning-point of an action. To mark a Case Phrase as a Source, use the ending “–de.” If the word ends in a consonant, you’ll need to insert “e” to separate the consonants, of course.

Along with the Source Case, we get the conjunction “údehú” (*whence*; a fairly-archaic English term for “from where”). Not a question word, “údehú” introduces a clause that acts as the Source in its sentence; it translates as the “*whence*” in an English sentence such as “I know *whence* the birds fly.”

Examples

Bíi sháad behid wa.

He comes/goes.

Báa sháad behid bebáade?

Whence (from where) does he come/go?

Bíi sháad behid déelade wa.

He comes/goes from a garden.

Bíi sháad behid Méri bede wa.

He comes/goes from Mary.

Bíi sháad behid déela Méri bethode wa.

He comes/goes from Mary’s garden.

By this time it should be routine to note that personal names do not take suffixes, as in the fourth and fifth examples above, and that the Case ending will move to the end of the Possessive case phrase, as in the fifth.

You may not recognize the rather archaic form “*whence*.” It is Source Case in English and means “from where” (“*bebáade*” in Láadan). There are a few other English Goal Case forms: “*hence*” means “from here” (“*nude*” in Láadan); “*thence*” means “from there” (“*núude*” in Láadan); “*nowhence*” means “from nowhere” (“*rade*” in Láadan).

Bíi medibíi bezh údehú sháad behid wa.

They (few) declare whence he comes/goes.

Bíi mesháad bezh nude wa.

They (few) go hence (from here).

Bíi mesháad bezh núude wa.

They come/go thence (from there).

English is persnickety about needing to know whether someone or something is “coming” or “going.” In reality, this is a distinction without a difference. Láadan doesn’t make the distinction and

works just fine, as a language, without it. Linguists have a name for this type of ambiguity: *deixis*; it discusses an action for which there are two words, depending upon the point of view of the speaker. In the first example above, the English need to have the ambiguity resolved is satisfied. Because “they” are coming/going “from here” (“here” being, by definition, where the speaker is located), the verb can be clarified to “go” rather than “come.”

Bíi mesháad bezh hide wa.

They (few) come/go from this/that (place/person/thing).

Bíi mesháad bezh zhede wa.

They come/go from the same (place/person/thing).

Bíi mesháad bezh beyede wa.

They come/go somewhence (from somewhere).

Bíi mesháad bezh rade wa.

They come/go nowhence (from nowhere).

Bíi mesháad bezh déela rade wa.

They come/go anywhere but from a garden.

Bíi mesháad bezh hizh hizhede wa.

They come/go from each other.

Notice the pair of examples using “*rade*” [ra–(NON) + –de (GOAL)]. The first of these is a straightforward statement that there is nothing to which the Source Case applies. The second, on the other hand, states that the case does apply, but that the noun it would be applied to absolutely does not. In effect, this example *excludes* this noun from the Source Case function.

“Nedaba”

[In response to Elfquest Chaoist’s question, “It seems that question words don’t have any way to indicate whether they’re asking about a person or an object or a location, although some questions will be obvious,” Suzette Haden Elgin wrote:]

EC is correct; the third person pronoun is ambiguous in questions, so that “Báa eril yod bebáa thilith?” could be either “Who ate the fish?” or “What ate the fish?” and “Báa eril sháad ne bebáade?” could be either “Where did you come from?” or “What did you come from?” This sort of ambiguity is typical of human languages—the classic example for English is sentences like “Visiting relatives can be difficult”—but is a problem only for isolated examples. In actual discourse, spoken or written, ambiguity is very rare, and the language has plenty of resources for fixing it if it happens.

Nevertheless, EC’s question makes it clear that it would be useful for Láadan to have a “which” question word. Let’s add one—“nedaba,” roughly “ONLY + Q”—and set it up like this.

1 Báa eril yod bebáa thilith?

Báa	eril	yod	bebáa	thilith?
Q	PAST	EAT	QPRN1 + SUBJ	FISH + OBJ

Who/what ate the fish?

To disambiguate:

Báa eril yod bebáa thilith? (Báa) with nedaba?

Báa	yod	thilith?	(Báa)	nedaba?
Q	EAT	FISH + OBJ	(Q)	WHICH
eril	bebáa		with	
PAST	QPRN1 + SUBJ		PERSON	

Who ate the fish?

or

Báa eril yod bebáa thilith? (Báa) mid nedaba?

Báa	yod	thilith?	(Báa)	nedaba?
Q	EAT	FISH + OBJ	(Q)	WHICH
eril	bebáa		mid	
PAST	QPRN1 + SUBJ		CREATURE	

What ate the fish?

NOTE: The parentheses around the “Báa” before “nedaba” means that it’s optional; it can be used or left out, as the speaker/writer wishes. And you could of course specify “wild animal” or “domestic animal” instead of the generic “creature” if the context required it.

2 Báa eril sháad ne bebáade?

Báa	eril	sháad	ne	bebáade?
Q	PAST	COME _{GO}	YOU ₁	QPRN1 + SRC

Where/What did you come from?

To disambiguate, follow the sentence with either “(Báa) hoth nedaba?” (which place) or “(Báa) dal nedaba?” (which thing).

NOTE: This doesn’t mean that the Láadan word “which” should be used the way the English one is; “nedaba” is intended only as a question word. You wouldn’t use it to translate “I know which child ate the fish.” How that would be done is a separate issue, and this is enough for now.

Vocabulary

áatham

church [áath (door) + tham (circle)]

ábedun

shepherd's or farmer's field [ábed (farm) + dun (field)] {SH}

bod

dish

bóodan

to rescue

hatham

center [tham (circle)]

hibo

hill [híya (small) + bo (mountain)]

rabo

plain [ra- (NON) + bo (mountain)]

sheni

intersection

thed

to be far

wehe

store; market

Exercises

Translate the following into English.

1 Baa aril nasháad woshel wolamithá honedim áathamede?

E: _____

2 Bé eril thel woyide woyodá wohowa wodehenith bod lethode wa.

E: _____

3 Bii wil láad imá oyunan údehú aril mebel hena letha baleth wa.

E: _____

4 Baa eril mewida edin netha thesheth bebáade? Dunede nedaba?

E: _____

5 Bii rilrili eb hoshemid halátha wohéthe womazheth Ána bede wa.

E: _____

6 Bée aril néde doth wolodo wohomid dená nethoth hibodim hatham ábedunethude wáa.

E: _____

In #2, did you have any trouble with the word “yodá” (diner; eater) [yod (eat) + -á (DOER)]?

Notice in #3, that we cannot yet disambiguate the deixis on “bel” (to bring; to take) as to whether my siblings will “take” or “bring” bread. However, it must also be noted that the disambiguation is for English purposes only; Láadan has no need for it.

In #6, did the word “lodo” (be brave/courageous; be strong of mind/will; be firm of intention; etc) [lo- (INT) + do (be strong)] give you any trouble? We have seen the prefix “lo-” in “lohil” (pay attention internally) and “loláad” (perceive internally), but never previously called it out as a *productive morpheme* (linguist-speak: a unit of meaning that can be used to form new words through regular processes).

Incorporate the second noun phrase as a Source; translate into English before and after.

7 Bii aril medumina héena letho mewoshane woromideth wáa.

ábed

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

8 Bii eríli shumáad wonée wodathimá nudim wáa.

woleyi wohash

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

9 Bée aril duhoób néehá wa.

wohu wodem belidethu ehátho

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

10 Bé eril ilisháad sherídan ehashátha eshenan meladim wáa.

woyom woréele

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

11 Báa aril medom melalom meworabalin woduthahá?

urahu déelathu

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

12 Bóo ril meyime nin shoná ralóolonol róomathedim.

worahowahel woholin

E: _____

L: _____

E: _____

In #10, did you notice the construction “ilisháad ... eshenan”? Literally, it means “to swim using a boat,” but idiomatically it means “to sail; to go by boat.” It makes sense when one considers that “ilisháad” [ili (water) + sháad (to go; to come)] means, at core, “to come/go in/on water;” a person can “swim” and a boat can “sail;” both fit that definition.

Translate the following into Láadan.

13 Clearly, the farmer causes food to grow from the earth.

L: _____

14 Did the fragrance of the colorful flowers cause the beneficial insects to arrive from afar?

L: _____

15 I promise my grandfather will go with the dancer from the busy store.

L: _____

16 (WARN) Carol’s uncle promises to buy a plant from the weary shopkeeper.

L: _____

17 Does the eastern road lead from the intersection to the plain?

L: _____

18 Prithé now declare honored-you-several whence that sage traveled to the river.

L: _____

In #16, did you have any difficulty forming “wehehá” (shopkeeper) [wehe (market) + -á (DOER)]?

Answers

- 1 Will the rigorous accountant depart westward from the church?
- 2 I swear the hungry diner got warm meat from my dish.
- 3 Would that the traveler hear whence my siblings will take/bring the bread.
- 4 From which field did your cousins carry the herbs?
- 5 The worker's grandchild may buy the clean car from Anna.
- 6 (WARN) I understand the strong-willed horse will want to follow your assistant to the hill from the center of the farmyard.
- 7 I understand my heart-siblings will try to move the furry wild animals.
Bíi aril medumina héena letho mewoshane woromideth ábedede wáa.
I understand my heart-siblings will try to move the furry wild animals from the farm.
- 8 I understand the alien needleworker flew hither long ago.
Bíi erili shumáad wonée wodathimá nudim woleyi wohashede wáa.
I understand the alien needleworker long ago flew hither from the blue star.
- 9 (WARN) The alien will try to jump.
Bée aril duhoób néehá wuhu wodem bethethu eháthode wa.
(WARN) The alien will try to jump from the open window of the scientist's house.
- 10 I swear the astronomer's niece/nephew sailed to sea.
Bé eril ilisháad sherídan ehashátha eshenan meladim woyom woréelede wáa.
I swear the astronomer's niece/ nephew sailed to sea from a safe harbor.
- 11 Will the young healers remember to sing?
Báa aril medom melalom meworabalin woduthahá urahu déelathude?
Will the young healers remember to sing from the garden gate?
- 12 Prithee, honored-you-many peacemakers, run quickly to the barn.
Bóo ril meyime nin shoná ralóolonal róomathedim worahowahel woholinede.
Prithee, honored-you-many peacemakers, run quickly to the barn from the trivially-cool forest.
- 13 Bíi dónáwí ábedá anath donide wi.
- 14 Báa eril dónosháad aba mewoliri womahinatha mewothal wozhubeth thedede?
- 15 Bé aril sháad hothul lethá amedaraháden woshóod wowehelede wa.
- 16 Bée ril dibé eb berídanid Hérel betha dalath wohóoha woweheháde wa.
- 17 Báa un wohene woweth rabodim shenide?
- 18 Bóo ril dibíi nizm údehú im wothá hi wilidim.