

Lesson 67

Numbers, Pt 2

This lesson is actually more about some number-related idioms than any new grammatical features of Láadan. The vocabulary section of the lesson will, therefore, be atypical; no list of words will be presented; rather, we'll see instructions on how to apply the various idiomatic models addressed.

Interrogative Quantifier

lamiba

interrogative quantifier

We've had occasion to notice the lack of any mechanism to ask "How many...?" We now have one: lamiba (interrogative quantifier) [lami (number) + -ba (interrogative inspired by "báa")]. It is used just like any other quantifier, but rather than meaning "several" or "many" or "all," "lamiba" means "how many"—of course, it's used only in interrogative settings.

Báa thi ne thuzheth lamiba wa?

How much (How many) cake(s) do you have?

Fractions

-yi-

Infix (numbers): fraction marker

To form a fraction, we insert the infix "-yi-" between the numerator (the top number) and the denominator (the bottom number). So, one-half would be nedeyishin [nede (#1) + -yi- (FRAC) + shin (#2)]. Similarly, two-thirds would be shineyiboó [shin (#2) + -yi- (FRAC) + boó (#3)].

As we've come to expect, numbers and quantifiers are postpositional to the noun-phrase they modify; this expectation is equally valid for fractions which are merely another form of number/quantifier.

Bíi thi le thuzheth nedeyishin wa.

I have half a cake.

Of course, we can pose a question about the fraction by including "lamiba."

Báa thi ne thuzheth lamibayinib?

How many eighths of the cake do you have?

Báa thi ne thuzheth boóyilamiba?

The English here gets a bit convoluted:

I see you have three pieces of cake; what fraction of the cake is each piece?

Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal numbers (in English, "first," "second," "third," etc.) are formed in Láadan by adding "-ya" (TIME) to a number.

In English, it's always best to be first; to be second is not nearly so good (the English idioms "second-best," "second-rate," "second fiddle," and "second-class," among a host of others, all illustrate this), and to be third is to be woefully deficient. In Láadan, on the other hand, "nedeya" simply means the first in time; it carries no "baggage" of "best," "most proficient," "most laudable." And "shineya," "boóya," and so on, carry none of the inverse baggage of "lacking," or "deficient."

Bé aril thi ne thuzheth nedeya wa.

[promise] You will have the first cake.

It's also possible to pose a question using "lamiba:"

Báa aril thi Méri thuzheth lamibaya wa.

At what point in the sequence will Mary have cake?

Frequency Numbers

We've seen the idioms “hath nedebe” (**seldom**) and “hath menedebe” (**often**). Well, if we want to speak or write about “**once**” meaning “**on one occasion**” in Láadan, we can use the same structure: “hath nede.” Likewise, “**twice**” meaning “**on two occasions**” becomes “hath shin.” And “**thrice**” or “**three times**” meaning “**on three occasions**” is “hath boó.” This can continue through all the numbers and quantifiers all the way from “hath raho” (**never; on no occasion**) to “hath woho” (**always; every time; on every occasion**). Did you notice that “hath raho” and “hath woho” are synonyms for “rahadihad” (**never**) and “hadihad” (**always**), respectively?

Bíi eril thi le thuzheth hath shin sháaleya eril wa.

I had cake twice yesterday.

We could, of course, also pose the question “**how often**” meaning “**on how many occasions**” with the phrase “hath lamiba”.

Báa aril thi ne thuzheth hath lamiba sháaleya aril?

How many times will you have cake tomorrow?

Factors of Comparison

A very different use of the English words “**twice**” or “**thrice**” or “**three times**” or their ilk is in comparisons, to mean “**double**” or “**treble/triple**.” The idiom above, “hath #” (**on # occasion(s)**), is not appropriate for this use. There is another idiom altogether that fills this need, which would be used in the explicit comparison structure—the one that uses “hesho” (**to surpass, in comparisons**).

[(Aux) + hesho [verb:surpass] + (Neg) + CP-S + (CP-O) + (#nal)]

The new element in this structure is **#nal** (**factor of surpassing**) [**#** (**a number word or quantifier**) + **-nal** (**MANN**)]. The use of the Manner case on the number is saying that the one that surpasses does so “**two-ly/twofold**” (**shinenal**) or “**three-ly/threefold**” (**boónal**) or “**four-ly/four-fold**” (**bimenal**)—or, indeed, “**several-ly/several-fold**” (**nedebenal**) or “**many-ly/manifold**” (**menedebenal**).

Bíi methi le i ne thuzheth; hesho le shinenal wa.

I have twice as much cake as you do.

Of course, the interrogative can be used in this setting, too:

Bíi methi Ána i le thuzheth wa; báa hesho Méri lamibanal?

How many times as much cake does Mary have than I do?

Examples

Báa eril yod Méri doyuth lamiba?

How many apples did Mary eat?

Bíi eril yod be doyuth boóyibim neda wa.

She only ate three quarters of an apple.

Bíi eril yod le doyuth nede i nedeyishin wa.

I ate an apple and a half.

Báa eril yod Méri doyu bethoth nedeya e shineya?

Did Mary eat her apple first or second?

Bíi eril yod Méri doyu bethoth nedeya; yod le hi lethoth shineya wa.

Mary ate her apple first; I ate mine second.

Báa yod ne doyuth hath lamiba?

How often (on how many occasions) do you eat apples?

Bíi yod le doyuth hath menedebe; eril yod le doyuth hath bim sháaleya eril wa.

I eat apples often; I ate apples four times yesterday.

Bíi eril meyod Méri i le doyuth; hesho le wa.

I ate more apple than Mary.

Báa hesho ne lamibanal?

How much more?

Bíi hesho le shinenal wa.

Twice as much.

Exercises

Translate the following into English.

1 Bii háya sháal ril i háya sháal eril; hesho sháal ril nedebenal wa.

E: _____

2 Báa thi ni mideth lamiba?

E: _____

3 Bii wéedan Bétheni Zháaba áabeth hi hath menedebe; dódelishe wud umeya bath hath woho wáa.

E: _____

4 Bii eril ban Máthu Hothul dalathameth ledim wa; yod le bineth nede i shineyiboó.

E: _____

5 Bii eril mesháad le i lan letho shan elaheladim híyahatheya shin eril; nosháad Máyel batheya wa.

E: _____

6 Bii mesho rul i omid; hesho omid wi; báa hesho omid lamibanal?

E: _____

7 Báa mahinin Mázhareth hath nede neda sháaleya woho?

E: _____

8 Bóo dóham ne womileth ábedunesha nedeyishin hiwethasha; bii ham ede hiwethosha wa.

E: _____

9 Bii Méri shem nitham nedeya, i Átheni nibeya wáa; báa Shuzhéth lamibaya?

E: _____

10 Bii merahíya áwith i sháawith; hesho sháawith thabeshin i shanenal wa.

E: _____

Translate the following into Láadan.

11 Each year the farmer uses only six-sevenths of his fields.

L: _____

12 If Monday is the first day of the week, then which is Wednesday?

L: _____

13 Stephen attends church three times each week.

L: _____

14 February is half-again as cold as November.

L: _____

15 How many times were the fish fed yesterday?

L: _____

16 Many plants bloomed last spring; the jonquils bloomed first.

L: _____

17 Thunder is many times as loud as the wind.

L: _____

18 The drinker drank three-fifths of the coffee that was in the cup [I dreamed].

L: _____

19 Marsha knows how much vegetable the tortoise ate.

L: _____

20 Will Elizabeth fast eight times this year?

L: _____

Answers

- 1 Today is several times more beautiful than yesterday.
- 2 How many animals do you (honored) have?
- 3 Dear Old Miss Bethany reads this book often; the seventh part makes her (beloved) cry every time.
- 4 Grandpa Matthew gave me berries; I ate a bowl and two-thirds.
- 5 Five friends of mine and I went to the celebration two weeks ago; Michael arrived sixth.
- 6 A horse is clearly heavier than a cat; by how much?
- 7 Does Margaret cook only once each day?
- 8 Prithee put (cause to be present/cause there to be) the livestock in the left half of the pasture; there's grain in the right.
- 9 Mary is your (honored you) first child, and Anthony is your eighth; which number is Suzette?
- 10 An adult is twenty-five times as large as an infant.
- 11 Bíi duth ábedá dun betho(th) batheyihum neda hathóolethameya woho wáa.
- 12 Báa bere Henesháal sháal híyahathethum nedeya, ébere Hunesháal lamibaya?
- 13 Bíi ham Thíben áathamesha hath boó híyahatheya woho wáa.
- 14 Bíi merahowa Ashin i Anedethab; hesho Ashin boóyishinenal (OR nede i nedeyishinenal) wa.
- 15 Báa eril thilidim mebaneshub anath hath lamiba sháaleya eril?
- 16 Bíi eril memahina dala menedebe wemeneya eril; memahina léeli nedeya wa.
- 17 Bíi mezho yul i lorolo; hesho lorolo menedebenal wi.
- 18 Bíi eril rilin ranahá ham yob nishaháa(th) boóyishan we.
- 19 Bíi lothel Másha eril yod balinemid medath lamibahée wáa.
- 20 Báa aril dod Elízabeth hath nib hathóolethameya ril?