

Lesson 2

Word Order

Vocabulary

áya	to be beautiful
Bíi	Type-of-Sentence Word—declarative
doth	to follow
hal	to work
hena	sibling (by birth)
mid	animal; any creature
óoha	to be tired; to be weary
thul	parent
wa	Evidence Word—claimed to be true because the speaker herself perceived what has been said
with	person

Note that Láadan doesn't divide adjectives and verbs into two classes as English does. Thus "áya" means "be beautiful" without any need for a separate word "be" in the sentence.

When discussing the distinctions among the types of verbs in Láadan, it can be useful to describe the descriptive verbs as "stative verbs" (verbs that describe a state of being) as differentiated from "active verbs" (verbs that describe an action).

Word Order 1

NOTE: If you find grammar-geekiness intimidating, skip to "Word Order 2."

[Type-of-Sentence Word, Verb, Case Phrase–Subject, Evidence Word]

Don't be concerned about the notation above; it will be useful in the long run. A "Case Phrase" is the same thing as what traditional English grammars call a "prepositional phrase." In English this means a preposition and its following noun phrase, as in "with a hatchet" or "to the beach," most of the time; in Láadan it usually means a noun phrase and its ending. This will become clear as we go along, and each of the sentence patterns explained will use the notation, with "Case Phrase" abbreviated to just "CP" in future to save space. "Case Phrase–Subject" will be written "CP–S."

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Word Order 2

A Láadan sentence begins with a word, called the *[Type-of-Sentence Word]*, that tells you what sort of sentence it is—statement, question, request, etc. The most common of these words is “**Bíi**,” which begins ordinary statements (known grammatically as declarative sentences).

A Láadan sentence ends with a word, called the *[“Evidence Word,”]* that states why the speaker considers the sentence to be true. Probably the most common of these words is “**wa**,” which means “**claimed to be true because the speaker herself perceived whatever has been said.**”

Within the sentence that begins with the Type-of-Sentence Word and ends with the Evidence Word, the Verb comes before the Noun(s).

Examples

Bíi áya hena wa.	(The/A) sibling is beautiful.
Bíi doth mid wa.	(The/An) animal follows.
Bíi hal thul wa.	(The/A) parent works.
Bíi óoha with wa.	(The/A) person is weary.

Note that Láadan has no separate words for “a(n)” or “the.” In future examples, one or the other will be provided for the purposes of the English translation.

Bíi áya Bétheni wa. Bethany is beautiful.

Note that names occupy the noun’s place in a sentence, just like any other noun.

Exercises

You will find worksheet space immediately following the exercises. My answers are shown at the end of each lesson.

Translate the following from Láadan to English.

- 1 Bíi doth hena wa.
- 2 Bíi hal mid wa.
- 3 Bíi óoha thul wa.
- 4 Bíi áya with wa.
- 5 Bíi doth Másha wa.
- 6 Bíi hal hena wa.

1 En:

2 En:

3 En:

4 En:

5 En:

6 En:

Put these in correct Láadan word order, then translate them into English.

7 mid wa bíi óoha

8 bíi thul áya wa

9 doth with bíi wa

10 wa Elízhabeth bíi hal

11 hena bíi óoha wa

12 áya bíi wa mid

7 La:

En:

8 La:

En:

9 La:

En:

10 La:

En:

11 La:

En:

12 La:

En:

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Translate these from English to Láadan.

- 13 The parent follows.
- 14 The person works.
- 15 Margaret is weary.
- 16 The parent is beautiful.
- 17 A person follows
- 18 Michael works.

13 La: _____

14 La: _____

15 La: _____

16 La: _____

17 La: _____

18 La: _____

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1 A sibling follows. 2 The animal works. 3 The parent is tired. 4 The person is beautiful. 5 Marsha follows. 6 The sibling works.

7 Bii óoha mid wa. The creature is weary. 8 Bii áya thul wa. The parent is beautiful. 9 Bii doth with wa. The person follows. 10 Bii hal Elízhabeth wa. Elizabeth works. 11 Bii óoha hena wa. The sibling is tired. 12 Bii áya mid wa. The animal is beautiful.

13 Bii doth thul wa. 14 Bii hal with wa. 15 Bii óoha Mázhareth wa. 16 Bii áya thul wa. 17 Bii doth with wa. 18 Bii hal Mágel wa.