

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 take the “risk” will find that it sheds considerable light on how Láadan words and sentences are put together.

Vocabulary

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

Láadan Text

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 Ána. Áana 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.”

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Your Translation into English

Hathal Sháal

E: _____

Bíide hoya Halishóni wo.

E: _____

Mii Méri i di, "Bíi háya sháal wi."

E: _____

Bíide medathim Méri i Ána wo.

E: _____

Laya bud, izh melaya ra thom; melula thom.

E: _____

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

E: _____

Áana Méri.

E: _____

Bíide u áath wo.

E: _____

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Tháa i liyen hesh.

E: _____

Leyi i bol thosh.

E: _____

Mehéeya ra mid; di Ána, "Bíi meháya nezh wa."

E: _____

Bíide yod Ána wo.

E: _____

Methal bal i rana, izh thal ra thilhi.

E: _____

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

E: _____

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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 (**PREF + WORD + WORD + SUFF**); notice that the context words, prefixes and suffixes may be abbreviated.

Hathal Sháal

Hathal	Sháal
BEGOODTIME	DAY

Day Being-Good-Time

Bíide hóya Halishóni wo. Míi Méri i di, “Bíi háya sháal wi.”

Bíide	hóya	Halishóni	wo.
DECL + NARR	BEBEAUTIFULPLACE	CALIFORNIA	MADEUP

Míi	Méri	i	di,	“Bíi	háya	sháal	wi.”
BEAMAZED	MARY	AND	SAY	DECL	BEBEAUTIFULTIME	DAY	SELFEVID

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

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

Bíide	medathim	Méri	i	Ána	wo.	Laya	bud,
DECL + NARR	PL + NEEDLEWORK	MARY	AND	ANNA	MADEUP	BERED	CLOTHING

izh	melaya	ra	thom;	melula	thom.
BUT	PL + BERED	NEG	PILLOW	PL + BEPURPLE	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. Áana Méri.

Bíide	di	Méri	wo,	“Bíi	óoha	le	wa,”
DECL + NARR	SAY	MARY	MADEUP	DECL	BEWEARY	I	MYPERC

izh	óoha	ra	Ána.	Áana	Méri.
BUT	BEWEARY	NEG	ANNA	SLEEP	MARY

Mary said, “I’m weary,” but Anna wasn’t tired. Mary slept.

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

Bíide	u	áath	wo.	Tháa	i	liyen	hesh.
DECL + NARR	BEOPEN	DOOR	MADEUP	THRIVE	AND	BEGREEN	GRASS

Leyi	i	bol	thosh.	Mehéeya	ra	mid;	di	Ána,
BEBLUE	AND	BEFLEECY CLOUDED	SKY	PL + BEAFRAID	NEG	CREATURE	SAY	ANNA

"Bíi	meháya	nezh	wa."
DECL	PL + BEBEAUTIFUL	You2-5	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	yod	Ána	wo.	Methal	bal	i	rana,
DECL + NARR	EAT	ANNA	MADEUP	PL + BEGOOD	BREAD	AND	BEVERAGE

izh	thal	ra	thilhi.
BUT	BEGOOD	NEG	FISH + PEJ

Mary 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."

Bíide	lith	Ána	wo,	"Bíi	hothal	Halishóni	wa."
DECL + NARR	THINK	ANNA	MADEUP	DECL	BEGOODPLACE	CALIFORNIA	MYPERC

Mary thought, "California is good."

Free Translation

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."

Notes

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.

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