

Lesson 12

Relativizer

Vocabulary

á-	Prefix (life-form): infant
aba	to be fragrant
berídan	aunt
dizh	kettle
du-	Prefix (verb): try to VERB
léli	to be yellow
mahina	flower
oba	body
othel	to be blessed
wo-	Prefix (verb-and-noun pair): relativizer

Our first vocabulary item above is just one of a set of life-stage prefixes: “á-” (infant); “háa-” (child); “yáa-” (adolescent); “sháa-” (adult); and “zháa-” (senior). These prefixes can be applied to **with** (person), or any animal to make specific what life-stage the person or animal has achieved. For example, the life-stages of humans would be “áwith” (infant), “háawith” (child), “yáawith” (teenager), “sháawith” (adult), and “zháawith” (senior).

Note the word “háawith:” it means “child” as a stage of maturity; it is distinct from “shem” (offspring). Therefore, unless you live where child slavery is the norm, you might be careful about any phrase where a child is owned; it’s more appropriate to say “shem X-tha” (X’s offspring).

And of birds: “ábabí” (hatchling), “háababí” (nestling), “yáababí” (fledgeling), “sháababí” (adult bird), and “zháababí” (senior bird). We probably have blood-sport—in the form of falconry, which was popular among English aristocracy—to thank for the variety of English words for the various life-stages of birds.

Relativizer

[Verb (Neg) CP–S]

Láadan has a form that is much like an English “adjective + noun” sequence, as in “green tree” or “small child.” You can take any sequence of verb and subject (remembering that “adjectives” are only ordinary verbs in Láadan) and put the marker “wo-” at the beginning of each one. “Beautiful woman” is thus “woháya wowith.” This is very useful, but it is a bit different from English because it can only be used if you have just one verb. You cannot use this pattern to translate an English sequence like “little red brick wall.”

The plural marker is always the last piece added to any verb; thus “beautiful women” will be “mewoháya wowith.”

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Of course, translating “woháya wowith” as “beautiful woman” and “mewoháya wowith” as “beautiful women,” as quoted above, is the older female-default version of Láadan.
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Linguistic Note:

English derives “the green grass” from “the grass which is green,” with “which is green” the relative clause; when a language does that with a morpheme instead of by grammatical processes like moving things around and deleting and inserting stuff, the morpheme is called a “relativizer.” So, “liyen” is “be green” and “hesh” is “grass;” “woliyen wohesh” is “green grass” because of the relativizing prefix.

Examples

Bíi aba mahina wa.

The flower is fragrant.

Bíi laya mahina wa.

The flower is red.

Bíi aba wolaya womahina wa.

The red flower is fragrant.

Bíi laya wohaba womahina wa.

The fragrant flower is red.

Bíi aba wolaya womahina ábedátho wa.

The farmer’s red flower is fragrant.

Bíi laya wohaba womahina ábedátho wa.

The farmer’s fragrant flower is red.

Báa owa belid?

Is the house warm?

Báa owa belid amedarahátho?

Is the dancer’s house warm?

Bíi óoha amedarahá wáa.

The dancer is tired.

Báa owa belid wohóoha wohamedarahátho?

Is the tired dancer’s house warm?

Exercises

Translate the following into English.

1 Bíi do wobalin wowith wa.

2 Bíi melawida mewoshane womid ábedátho wáa.

3 Bíi wam wohaba woshum bethethu wi.

4 Báa meralóolo mewoháya wobabí i womíi woberídan Elízhabeth betha?

5 Báa doth woshóod wohomideth bebáatho?

6 Báa dathim wothal wothul Therísha betha?

1 En:

2 En:

3 En:

4 En:

5 En:

6 En:

Notes
Notes
Notes

Transform the following into relativized form in Láadan; then translate the result into English.

Example: “**Bíi áya withizh wa. Balin withizh.**” becomes “**Bíi áya wobalin wowithizh wa.**” (**The old woman is beautiful.**)

Note that the Type-of-Sentence Word and Evidence Word are not included in the second source sentence. They would have to be if they changed or if the sentences were not connected to each other. The sentences are, by the nature of the exercise, connected; we can therefore assume that the Type-of-Sentence Word and the Evidence Word are the same.

- 7 **Bíi owa áwith wa. Áana áwith.**
- 8 **Bíi lalom onida omátha wa. Rahíya onida. Héeya omá waá.**
- 9 **Báa duhal hothul? Bíi zháadin hothul wa.**
- 10 **Bíi memahina ra dala wáa. Néé dala.**
- 11 **Bíi amedara muda wa. Tháa muda.**
- 12 **Bíi melithehul eshoná wáa. Merabalin eshoná.**

In #10, did you have any trouble translating “**memahina**”? Remember that any Láadan verb can be used as a noun (so long as the meaning isn’t nonsense). Just so, Láadan allows you to use a noun as a verb. This process is just as simple as the reverse. Simply apply the appropriate verb affixes (even the lack of an affix for a singular verb) to the noun and use it in the verb’s position in the sentence. Using more Latinate language, “**a flower**” (**mahina**) could be termed “**an efflorescence**,” in the same idiom, “**to flower**” would be “**to effloresce**.” Here the noun is clearly derived directly from the verb; I think we can safely use “**mahina**” to mean the verb “**to flower**” as well as the noun “**flower**.”

7 La:

En:

8 La:

En:

9 La:

En:

10 La:

En:

11 La:

En:

12 La:

En:

Notes

Translate the following into Láadan.

- 13 The new worker laughs.
- 14 Isn't Anna's red fish eating?
- 15 The black sheep don't jump.
- 16 Carol's wise sister's ugly friend is menstruating.
- 17 Anthony's tired heart-sibling's small goats and slow cow are present.
- 18 Of whose green house are the purple door and the blue windows open?

In #13, did you have any difficulty translating “new”? The worker isn't “new” as a person; however, as a worker, she is. Thus, we can use “**bun**” (new, of inanimates; occasionally of persons “new” to a role or position).

- 13 La: _____
- 14 La: _____
- 15 La: _____
- 16 La: _____
- 17 La: _____
- 18 La: _____

Notes _____

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Notes _____

Notes _____

Notes _____

Notes _____

1 The old person is strong. 2 The farmer's furry creatures are pregnant. 3 The fragrant air of home is still (obviously). 4 Are the beautiful birds and Elizabeth's amazed aunt quick? 5 Whose busy horse follows? 6 Does Teresa's good parent needlework?

7 Bii owa woháana woha'wíth wa. The sleeping baby is warm. 8 Bii lalom worahíya wohonida wohéeya wohomátha wá. The fearful teacher's large family sings. 9 Báa duhal wozháadin wothu? Is the menopausal grandmother trying to work? 10 Bii memahina ra mewoné wodala wá. The alien plants are not flowering. 11 Bii amedara wotháa womuda wá. The thriving pig dances. 12 Bii melithehul meworabalin woheshona wá. The young peace-scientists think deeply (I'm reliably informed).

13 Bii ada wobun woha'la wá. 14 Báa yod ra wolaya wothii! Ana betho? 15 Bii mehob' ra mewoloyo wohéesh wá. 16 Bii osháana womodi wolán wowoth wóhena'ho Hérel betha wá. 17 Bii meham mewohíya wohézh i wololo wodithe'mid wohóha wohéna'ho Anetheni betho wá. 18 Báa merahu wolúla woha'ath i mewoley! wodem woliyen wobeli'dethu bebáatho?