

Lesson 2

Word Order

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.”

Word Order 2

Bíi

Type-of-Sentence Word—declarative

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).

wa

Evidence Word—claimed to be true because the speaker herself perceived what has been said

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).

Vocabulary

ada

to laugh

áya

to be beautiful

doth

to follow

hal

to work

hena

sibling (by birth)

mid

animal; any creature

óoha

to be tired; to be weary

shóod

to be busy

thul

parent

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, eg “áya,” “óoha,” and “shóod” above) as differentiated from “active verbs” (verbs that describe an action, eg “ada,” “doth,” and “hal” above).

Examples

Bíi ada hena wa.

(The/A) sibling laughs.

Bíi áya mid wa.

(The/An) animal is beautiful.

Bíi doth thul wa.

(The/A) parent follows.

Bíi hal with wa.

(The/A) person works.

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 óoha Bétheni wa.

Bethany is weary.

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

Exercises

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

Translate the following from Láadan to English.

1 Bíi shóod hena wa.

E: _____

2 Bíi ada thul wa.

E: _____

3 Bíi áya with wa.

E: _____

4 Bíi doth Másha wa.

E: _____

5 Bíi hal hena wa.

E: _____

6 Bíi óoha mid wa.

E: _____

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

7 thul wa bíi shóod

L: _____

E: _____

8 bíi with ada wa

L: _____

E: _____

9 áya Elízhabeth bíi wa

L: _____

E: _____

10 wa hena bíi doth

L: _____

E: _____

11 mid bíi hal wa

L: _____

E: _____

12 óoha bíi wa thul

L: _____

E: _____

Translate these from English to Láadan.

13 The person is busy.

L: _____

14 Margaret laughs.

L: _____

15 A sibling is beautiful.

L: _____

16 An animal follows.

L: _____

17 The parent works.

L: _____

18 A person is weary.

L: _____

Answers

- 1 The sibling is busy.
- 2 A parent laughs.
- 3 The person is beautiful.
- 4 Marsha follows.
- 5 A sibling works.
- 6 The creature is weary.
- 7 Bíi shóod thul wa.
The parent is busy.
- 8 Bíi ada with wa.
A person laughs.
- 9 Bíi áya Elízhabeth wa.
Elizabeth is beautiful.
- 10 Bíi doth hena wa.
The sibling follows.
- 11 Bíi hal mid wa.
The animal works.
- 12 Bíi óoha thul wa.
The parent is weary.
- 13 Bíi shóod with wa.
- 14 Bíi ada Mázhareth wa.
- 15 Bíi áya hena wa.
- 16 Bíi doth mid wa.
- 17 Bíi hal thul wa.
- 18 Bíi óoha with wa.