

Lesson 7

Your Turn 1

The seventh lesson of each set of seven will give you the opportunity to put your skills to use in translating from English into Láadan. This story will also be fairly cartoonish, but don't let that stop you from having fun with it.

Language is a fluid medium; there are always many ways to convey the same information. That said, my translation will be one way of rendering the English text into Láadan; yours may very well be another—especially as we go along and have more vocabulary and grammatical features with which to work.

Weather

boshum

cloud

ham

to be present; there is/are

rahowa

to be cold [ra- (NON) + owa (be warm)]

rohoro

storm

yul

wind

In English we say “It’s windy,” or “It’s cold,” or “It’s stormy.” There’s no specific thing being referred to by the “it” in these English sentences; it’s just the way we talk about the weather. Every language has little pieces of “how we say” certain things that, transposed word for word into another language, make no sense; language students call these pieces “idioms.” In Láadan the idiom for speaking about the weather involves the verb “ham” followed by the weather effect (sun, rain, wind, storm, and so on). So the English “It’s windy,” would be, in Láadan, “ham yul.” Of course, this sentence may need the Type-of-Sentence word and Evidence word: “Bíi ham yul wa.”

Patterned after the corresponding feature in many Romance languages—as well as the emerging standard in American English—Suzette Haden Elgin held that the verb “ham” when used in the “there is/are” sense would never be pluralized. While this works well in languages where the noun carries the plural, in Láadan where the plural is only carried on the verb, this leads to confusion. Also, it can be very difficult to determine whether the meaning of “ham” should be translated “be present” (which would be pluralized) or “there is/are” (which would not).

The second generation took the decision to pluralize “ham” wherever more than one Subject is being discussed, regardless of whether “be present” or “there is/are” is intended.

Because the weather idiom was coined before the second generation took the decision to pluralize “ham” wherever appropriate—and because there really is only one weather, no matter how many facets thereof are being discussed in a single sentence—the weather idiom is always singular. For example, “It’s windy, cloudy, and cold,” would be “Bíi ham yul, boshum, i rahowa wa.”

“Aspect” Prefixes

na-

Prefix (verb): to begin to VERB; to start VERBing

thée-

Prefix (verb): about to VERB, but not any minute

There are verb prefixes that seem, in the English translation, like “helping verbs,” but in Láadan they are just ways you can modify any verb. Two such are “na-” (begin to VERB; start VERBing) and “thée-” (about to VERB, but not any minute), listed above. There are many more that we’ll introduce when appropriate.

Degree Suffixes

-hul

Degree Marker: to an extreme degree; extremely

Notice, also, the ending “-hul.” This is the first we’ve seen of a whole set of Degree Markers. This one means that the verb to which it is attached is an “**extremely**” form of itself. This is straightforward in stative verbs (verbs that discuss a state of being—translated into English as adjectives); with active verbs (verbs that discuss an action—translated into English as verbs), “-hul” would intensify the action; the English would resemble “**VERB extremely hard**” or some such.

Vocabulary

ábed

farm

belid

house

dithemid

cow

doól

at last; finally

dozh

to be easy

edemid

mouse [ede (grain) + mid (creature)]

éeb

juice; sap

éesh

sheep

éezh

goat

híya

to be small

hob

butter

id

and then

lal

milk

lalom

to sing

meénan

to be sweet (flavor)

modi

to be ugly

omid

horse

rahíya

to be large [ra- (NON) + híya (be small)]

ralóolo

to be quick; to be rapid; to be fast
[ra- (NON) + lóolo (be slow)]

róomath

barn

thu

honey

woth

wisdom; used as a verb: to be wise

yom

to be safe; to be secure

English Text

The Farm

It was an ugly day. It was cloudy, windy and cold, and it was about to storm. The people were busy and working hard. But they sang, and then the work was easy.

The cows and pigs were big, and the horses were strong. The goats were wise, and the sheep were slow. The cats were quick; the mice were small and afraid. At last the animals were safe; the barn was strong. And then the storm began.

The house was strong and warm. There was bread and butter and honey. There were milk and juice. The bread was warm; the honey and the juice were sweet. The people ate, and sang and talked and laughed.

Your Láadan Translation & Retranslation into English

The Farm

L: _____

E: _____

It was an ugly day. It was cloudy, windy and cold, and it was about to storm. The people were busy and working hard. But they sang, and then the work was easy.

L: _____

E: _____

The cows and pigs were big, and the horses were strong. The goats are wise, and the sheep are slow. The cats were quick; the mice were small and afraid. At last the animals were safe; the barn was strong. And then the storm began.

L: _____

E: _____

The house was strong and warm. There was bread and butter and honey. There were milk and juice. The bread was warm; the honey and the juice were sweet. The people ate and sang and talked and laughed.

L: _____

E: _____

My Láadan Translation with Morphemic Analysis & Retranslation into English

The Farm

Ábed

Ábed

FARM

The/A Farm

It was an ugly day. It was cloudy, windy and cold, and it was about to storm. The people were busy and working hard. But they sang, and then the work was easy.

Bíide modi sháal wo. Ham boshum, yul i rahowa, i théeham rohoró. Meshóod i mehalehul with. Izh melalom with, id dozh hal.

Bíide	boshum,	théeham	mehalehul	with,
DECL + NARR	CLOUD	ABOUT- +	PL + WORK +	PERSON
modi	yul	BEPRESENT	DEGEXTREME	id
BEUGLY	WIND	rohoró.	with.	ANDTHEN
sháal	i	STORM	PERSON	dózh
DAY	AND	Meshóod	Izh	BE EASY
wo.	rahowa,	PL + BEBUSY	BUT	hal.
MADEUP	COLD	i	melalom	WORK
Ham	i	AND	PL + SING	
BEPRESENT	AND			

The day was ugly. It was cloudy, windy and cold, and it was about to storm. The people were busy and working extremely hard. But the people sang, and then the work was easy.

The cows and pigs were big, and the horses were strong. The goats were wise, and the sheep were slow. The cats were quick; the mice were small and afraid. At last the animals were safe; the barn was strong. And then the storm began.

Bíide merahíya dithemid i muda, i medo omid wo. Mewoth éezh, i melóolo éesh. Meralóolo rul, i mehiya i mehéeya edemid. Doól meyom mid; do róomath. Id naham rohoró.

Bíide	medo	melóolo	i	do
DECL + NARR	PL + BESTRONG	PL + BESLOW	AND	BESTRONG
merahíya	omid	éesh.	mehéeya	róomath.
PL + BELARGE	HORSE	SHEEP	PL + BEAFRAID	BARN
dithemid	wo.	Meralóolo	edemid.	Id
COW	MADEUP	PL + BEQUICK	MOUSE	ANDTHEN
i	Mewoth	rul,	Doól	naham
AND	PL + WISDOM	CAT	ATLAST	BEGIN + BEPRESENT
muda,	éezh,	i	meyom	rohoró.
PIG	GOAT	AND	PL + BESAFE	STORM
i	i	mehiya	mid;	
AND	AND	PL + BESMALL	CREATURE	

The cows and horses were large, and the horses were strong. The goats were wise, and the sheep were slow. The cats were quick, and the mice were small and afraid. At last the animals were safe; the barn was strong. And then it began to storm.

The house was strong and warm. There was bread and butter and honey. There were milk and juice. The bread was warm; the honey and the juice were sweet. The people ate, and sang and talked and laughed.

Bíide do i owa belid wo. Meham bal i hob i thu. Meham lal i éeb. Owa bal; memeénan thu i éeb. Meyod i melalom i medi i mehada with.

Bíide	Meham	Meham	memeénan	melalom
DECL + NARR	PL + BePRESENT	PL + BePRESENT	PL + BeSWEET	PL + SING
do	bal	lal	thu	i
BeSTRONG	BREAD	MILK	HONEY	AND
i	i	i	i	medi
AND	AND	AND	AND	PL + SPEAK
owa	hob	éeb.	éeb.	i
BeWARM	BUTTER	JUICE	JUICE	AND
belid	i	Owa	Meyod	mehada
HOUSE	AND	BeWARM	PL + EAT	PL + LAUGH
wo.	thu.	bal;	i	with.
MADEUP	HONEY	BREAD	AND	PERSON

The house was strong and warm. There were bread and butter and honey. There were milk and juice. The bread was warm; the honey and the juice were sweet. The people ate and sang and talked and laughed.

My Láadan Text

Ábed

Bíide modi sháal wo. Ham boshum, yul i rahowa, i théeham rohor. Meshóod i mehalehul with. Izh melalom with, id dozh hal.

Bíide merahíya dithemid i muda, i medo omid wo. Mewoth éezh, i melóolo éesh. Meralóolo rul, i mehiya i mehéeya edemid. Doól meyom mid; do róomath. Id naham rohor.

Bíide do i owa belid wo. Meham bal i hob i thu. Meham lal i éeb. Owa bal; memeénan thu i éeb. Meyod i melalom i medi i mehada with.

Comments

Yes, this is a lot of new vocabulary; the topic required more than was planned. But you can handle it. And at least some of the new vocabulary items are just opposites of words we already knew; Láadan forms opposites of many words by simply adding the prefix “ra-” (NON).

áath	Door	na-	BEGIN
ábed	Farm	ne	You1
ada	Laugh	née	BeAlien
Ána	Anna	nen	You>5
Aranesha	Arkansas	nezh	You2-5
Átheni	Anthony	omid	Horse
áya	BeBeautiful	óoha	BeWeary
bal	Bread	owa	BeWarm
belid	House	ra	NEG
Bétheni	Bethany	rahíya	BeLarge
bíi	DECL	rahowa	BeCold
bol	BeFleecyClouded	rahu	BeClosed
boshum	Cloud	ralóolo	BeQuick
bud	Clothing	rana	Beverage
dal	Thing	rawith	Nobody
dathim	Needlework	rohoró	Storm
-de	NARR	róomath	Barn
di	Speak	rul	Cat
dibíi	Declare	sháal	Day
dithemid	Cow	shóod	BeBusy
do	BeStrong	shum	Air
doól	AtLast	Shuzzhéth	Suzette
dóon	BeCorrect	tháa	Thrive
doth	Follow	thal	BeGood
dozh	BeEasy	tham	Circle
ede	Grain	thée-	ABOUTto-
edemid	Mouse	Therisha	Teresa
éeb	Juice	Thíben	Steven
éesh	Sheep	thili	Fish
éézh	Goat	thom	Pillow
Elízhabeth	Elizabeth	thosh	Sky
em	Yes	thu	Honey
hal	Work	thul	Parent
Halishóni	California	u	BeOpen
ham	BePresent	ud	Stone
hathal	BeGoodTime	wa	MYPERC
háya	BeBeautifulTime	wáa	TRUSTED
héeya	BeAfraid	wi	SELFEVID
hena	BirthSib	wíi	BeAlive
Hérel	Carol	Wílem	William
hesh	Grass	with	Person
híya	BeSmall	withid	Man
hob	Butter	withizh	Woman
hothal	BeGoodPlace	wo	MADEUP
hóya	BeBeautifulPlace	woth	Wisdom
-hul	DEGextreme	yod	Eat
i	And	yom	BeSafe
id	AndThen	yul	Wind
-id	MASC	zháadin	Menopause
ina	Sleep		
izh	But		
-izh	FEM		
Láadan	Láadan		
lal	Milk		
lalom	Sing		
laya	BeRed		
le	I		
len	We>5		
leyi	BeBlue		
lezh	We2-5		
lith	Think		
liyen	BeGreen		
lom	Song		
lóolo	BeSlow		
lula	BePurple		
Másha	Marsha		
Máthu	Matthew		
Máyel	Michael		
Mázhareth	Margaret		
me-	PL		
meénan	BeSweet		
Méri	Mary		
mid	Creature		
míi	BeAmazed		
modi	BeUgly		
muda	Pig		