

Some differences between Hul'q'umi'num' and English

One of the first things you need to think about when learning Hul'q'umi'num' grammar is that it often is not at all like English grammar.

Word Order

Take for example, basic order in a sentence. In English the order goes:

- (1) The man saw the woman.
subject verb object

But in Hul'q'umi'num', it often goes

- (2) **verb subject object**
 ni' lumnuhwus tthu swuy'qe' thu slheni'.
saw the man the woman.

Gender

Also, in English, all sorts of nouns take the determiner *the*. But in Hul'q'umi'num', you have to pay attention to the **gender** of the noun in order to choose the determiner.

- (3) Masculine nouns: tthu swuy'qe' tu swuy'qe' the man
 tthu swiw'lus tu swiw'lus the young man
 tthu stl'i'tl'qulh tu stl'i'tl'qulh the little boy
- (4) Feminine nouns: thu slheni' the woman
 thu q'e'mi' the young woman
 thu stl'i'tl'qulh the little girl

[Note a **noun** expresses a person, place, or thing.]

Person marking (first person “me”, second person “you”, third person “he/she/it”)

English uses **pronouns** for person marking. Pronouns are noun substitutes, occurring in the same places nouns occur in.

- (5) a. The man saw the woman.
 b. **He** saw **her**.
- (6) a. **I** saw the woman.
 b. The man saw **me**.

But Hul'q'umi'num' person marking don't work like nouns at all.

- (7) a. ni' lumnuhwus tthu swuy'qe' thu slheni'. The man saw the woman.
 b. ni' lumnuhwus. He/she/it/they saw him/her/it/them.
- (8) a. ni' **tsun** lumnuhw thu slheni'. I saw the woman.
 b. ni' lum**nam'shus** tthu swuy'qe'. The man saw me.