Burmese By Ear

or

Essential Myanmar

Reference text
to accompany the audio
Burmese By Ear
or
Essential Myanmar

By
John Okell

Available for free download from
http://www.soas.ac.uk/bbe/
The website of
The School of Oriental and African Studies,
University of London
Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Daw Khin Mya Swe and Daw Yin Yin May, both of whom read the draft course for accuracy. He is also grateful to the following for finding time to come to the studio and contribute to the recordings:

U Khin Daw Khin Mya Swe
U Nay Tun Daw Mo Mo Khaing
U Nay Win Daw Saw Yu Win
U Pe Than Daw Tin Htar Swe
U Than Lwin Tun Daw Tin May Aye

The recordings were made at The School of Oriental and African Studies in the University of London by Michael Baptista and Bernard Howard. Some vital late-stage electronic editing would have been impossible without the capable and generous help of Dr Justin Watkins, Lecturer in Burmese at SOAS. And SOAS provided facilities for computing, printing, copying, tape-editing, faxing, phoning, email and so on.
The author

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Okell has made numerous visits to Burma (Myanmar), is the designer of the Ava Burmesefont for computers, and acts as consultant for various Burma-related activities. He is a Research Associate at the School of Oriental and African Studies, and Chairman of the Britain-Burma Society in London. He was awarded the Tuttle Grand Prize for 1996 for his work on Burmese By Ear.


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The audio

The language has two names: Burmese and Myanmar.
See “About Burmese” below.

The audio for Burmese by ear, six hours of playing time, was originally issued on four cassette tapes, distributed as follows:

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For the web edition the audio has been converted to mp3 format. Neither the text nor the audio files have been changed to reflect the transfer from tape to mp3. So when you read or hear a reference to a particular tape, please understand it as referring to the corresponding track on the mp3 files. The new format makes it easier to find your place on the audio as each Lesson and each Section has its own track:

- Track 1 Lesson 1.1
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To start using the course

Simply put Tape 1 in your player and follow the instructions you hear. The tapes carry all the teaching and all the practice for Burmese by Ear, so you can learn everything in the course without using the booklet at all. The booklet is provided for reference and backup only. For more detail see “About this course” below.

Help yourself to learn: two vital steps

1. After each Exercise, wind back the tape and repeat the exercise until you can speak the answers without hesitating.
2. At the end of each Unit, insert Tape 4 into your player and work through the Review Sections on Side B. Wind back and repeat each Review until you can answer fluently and accurately.

Why wind back?

This is a highly compressed course. In order to squeeze all the material into the narrow compass of four tapes we had to leave out much of the review and repetition that a longer course would have given you. This means that you yourself have to provide the repetition you need to fix the new material in your memory. Hence the importance of the two steps above.
ABOUT THIS COURSE

BBE is a systematically graded foundation course in modern colloquial Burmese. It aims to give you a confident and enjoyable start in speaking Burmese, focussing on what you are most likely to need when you visit Burma: “survival language” for cafés, taxis, shops, and so on, and “social language” for getting to know people and making friends. You will find that Burmese is a much easier language to learn than many people think.

BBE has several advantages over the conventional traveller’s phrase book. First, it begins by giving you a grounding in the rudiments of Burmese grammar, concentrating exclusively on the high-frequency elements you need for survival and social purposes. So instead of having to parrot-learn lengthy and unmemorable phrases, you learn how to make up your own sentences and say what you want to say.

Secondly, you take a speaking part in the exercises and dialogues in BBE, so you have active practice in talking, and what you learn takes root.

Thirdly, because you take in the whole course through your ear you achieve an accurate pronunciation effortlessly from the start — instead of having to try and make sense of baffling romanized spellings and inadequate written descriptions of sounds.

Fourthly, you can listen to the tapes when your eyes and hands are occupied, so instead of having to find time in the day to sit down and study, you can learn Burmese while you’re walking or washing or travelling or driving.

Course structure

The course is divided into four “Parts”. Before you can feel at all confident with a new language you need to get to know the
common sentence types — how to make statements, how to ask questions, and so on — so Part 1 of BBE concentrates on just that. You can get by in Burmese with surprisingly few sentence types, so the focus of the lessons soon changes from sentence types to situations: talking to waiters, talking to shopkeepers, and so on.

Also built into Part 1 are lessons on the Burmese number system and counting, and separate sections on pronunciation. Many of the sounds of Burmese are the same as the sounds of English, so if you’re a speaker of English it won’t be hard to get those sounds right. However, there are other sounds in Burmese that English speakers often get wrong, and if you do, the results can be quite serious: you can find you’ve said something quite different from what you meant to say — sometimes disastrously different. The separate sections for pronunciation training are there to ensure that you don’t fall into that trap.

Part 2 is about “first needs”: the kinds of things you’re likely to want to say and understand soon after you arrive in Burma — talking to waiters and shopkeepers, asking the way and so on; and Part 3 is about meeting people socially: introducing yourself, making friends, and finding out about each other.

Part 4 is the Review Section. Most of the course is made up of short “lessons”: each one introduces you to two or three new words or phrases or structures, and gives you some practice with them. Every now and again the tape will advise you to listen to the relevant Review. The Review runs through all the language you’ve learned in the last few lessons, giving you an overview of what you’ve covered, and reminding you of any words and structures that may be slipping from your memory.

Another way you may find the Review Section helpful is when some weeks or months have passed since you worked through the lessons, and you just want to brush up what you learned. The Review Section lets you have some practice without having to listen to the explanations in the lessons all over again.

In some of the practice dialogues you will find — as you will in real life — that the Burmese speaker says something you can’t follow. These passages are put in deliberately. They are there to acclimatise you to the experience (so you won’t panic when it happens for real) and to give you practice in making appropriate responses: “Could you say that again?”, “I’m sorry: I don’t understand”, and so on.

What’s in the book

All the explanations and practice of the course are on the tapes. The book is an unnecessary extra. It provides —

1. a summary, for each lesson, of the new structures and words you have learned from the tapes, helpful if you want a quick overview of what you learned last time, or a reminder of some words or structures you’ve forgotten
2. a written reminder of the orally presented material, helpful for those who can memorise language more easily if they see it written down — but don’t let the romanization mislead you into producing strange pronunciations
3. notes and explanations that are too detailed for the tape
4. in the appendices, for reference purposes, a brief outline of Burmese grammar, of the pronunciation, of the script, and the number system; and a vocabulary.

In the book, Burmese words and phrases are written both in Burmese script and in a romanization. There is no widely accepted system for romanizing Burmese. Some methods fail to make all the distinctions you need to make in pronunciation, and other methods are awkward to read, so no one system has yet been devised that satisfies everyone. The system used in the book is just one among many. Rather than relying on a romanization it is better to learn words by ear, or to learn to read the script.
ABOUT BURMESE

Burmese and Myanmar

The indigenous population of Burma is made up of several different ethnic and linguistic groups. Just as the United Kingdom has its Scots and Welsh and English inhabitants, so does Burma have Karens, Shan, Kayah, Mon, Kachin, and others. The largest of these groups is the Burmese, who account for nearly 70% of the total population.

The Burmese name for themselves and their language has two forms: you use Myanmar in formal contexts (e.g. in book titles or the names of university departments), and Bamar in informal conversation. The name of the country in other languages — English, French, German, Thai, Japanese — is based on the informal version. The difference between the two forms is rather like the way speakers of English talk informally about going to “Holland” but address letters to “The Netherlands”.

In 1989 the government announced that they wanted foreigners to stop using the words “Burma” and “Burmese”. Instead they wanted the world to use “Myanmar” for the country and its indigenous people, and “Bamar” for the majority ethnic and linguistic group. So members of the ethnic minorities — Karen, for example — would be Myanmar by nationality and Karen by race; while the majority group would also be Myanmar by nationality, but their race would be Bamar. Previously, the same distinction was made by using “Burmese” for the nationality and “Burman” for the race.

The language you learn from this course is the language of the “Bamar”, but as it is recognized as the national language of the country and is used as a lingua franca by the Karen and Shan and other ethnic groups, the government refers to it as “Myanmar”.

Not everyone accepts the change of name. International organizations like the UN have naturally acted on notification from the government; and the international business community, who need to avoid governmental displeasure, have adopted the new name without reservation. Foreigners and Burmese expatriates who oppose the military government, and contest its right to rule, deliberately persist in using the old names Burmese and Burma as a symbol of their opposition and defiance. A third group, which includes the author of this course, continue to use the old names on the grounds that those are the names their audience is familiar with, whereas there are still many people who don’t yet know the new name Myanmar.

Speakers of Burmese

The population of Burma is estimated at around 45 million. Of these, around 70% are mother tongue speakers of Burmese, and most members of the ethnic minorities learn Burmese at school or in the course of trading and travelling. Outside Burma there are groups of speakers in Thailand and Bangladesh, many of them refugees fleeing persecution. There are also quite large expatriate groups in Australia (particularly Perth), the US, the UK, and Japan.

You will find many people in Burma who can speak English well, and others who remember a bit from schooldays. All staff in immigration, customs, tourist shops and most hotels are English speakers. However, it is useful to learn to speak at least a little Burmese for two reasons. One is that you will find that English speakers are less common once you are off the beaten track. The other reason is that a foreign speaker of Burmese is still a rarity, and it gives genuine pleasure to many Burmese to find that you have taken the trouble to try and learn the language. And you will receive a warmer reception as a result.
The Burmese language

Precise relationships among many of the languages related to Burmese are not yet fully worked out, but the following family tree will give an idea of current thinking among specialists.

Sino-Tibetan

Sinic

Tibeto-Burman

Bodic Baric Burmic Kareni

varieties of Chinese

Tibetan Kuki-Chin Lolo- Burmese langs of Karen
Kanauri Naga (E Burma, W Thailand)
Gurung Meithei (Assam,
(Tamang Jinghpaw etc Manipur, N Burma,
(N India, Himalayas)

Loloish: Lolo (Yi), Lahu, Lisu
Akha (Yunnan, N Burma, Thailand, Vietnam)

Burmish: Burmese, Maru, Atsi
(Burma, Yunnan)

Table adapted from data in A guide to the languages of the world by Merritt Ruhlen (1987) and The major languages of East and Southeast Asia by Bernard Comrie (1990, London, Routledge).

The sound system and structure of Burmese and its relatives differ from English and the more familiar European languages in several striking ways. The phonology of Burmese includes a three-way contrast (voiced, voiceless and aspirate, e.g. g-k-kh) at five points of articulation, it has six pairs of plain and breathed continuants (e.g. l-h), and distinguishes four types of syllable by means of a combination of pitch and voice quality (high vs low, creaky vs plain). Notable features of Burmese syntax are that the verb is always final in the sentence, that all subordinate clauses precede the main clause, that relative clauses precede their head noun, that markers corresponding to English prepositions follow the noun, and that the counting system uses classifiers.

The two styles of Burmese

When Burmese speakers write a letter to a friend they write just as they speak. However, when they are writing something weighty, like an academic article or an application to a government department or a notice to display on the wall, they use a markedly different style. The normal conversational style is usually called the “colloquial” style, and the formal one is called the “literary” style. The difference lies almost entirely in the grammar words: the words for if, but, when, from, and, and so on. You use one set of grammar words in the colloquial style and a different set for the literary style. For example:

The Burmese for: from because but plural
In colloquial style: แก่ .ico ด้วย ดเว
In literary style: ーム ยวึ่ย มู มี่า

Apart from a few exceptions, all the other words — nouns and verbs and so on — remain the same in both styles.

The contrast between the two styles can be seen most clearly in fiction. All the narrative in the text is written in literary style, but the dialogue, when the characters are saying things to each other, is all written in the colloquial style.

What you learn in this course is all in the colloquial style. To study the literary style you need to learn to read the script.
Burmese script and literature

Burmese has its own script. It was adapted for Burmese around 1100 AD from the script used by the Mon people for their language, and that in turn was derived ultimately from a script devised and used in India between 500 BC and 300 AD. Many of the languages of India and South East Asia are written in scripts derived from the same source, so, although at first sight the characters of Burmese, Thai, Javanese, Khmer and the rest may not look much like each other, they do share many common features. You will find an outline of the Burmese script system in Appendix 2.

The earliest texts in Burmese are stone inscriptions recording the foundation of monasteries and pagodas, and donations of land to the Buddhist religion. From around the 1400s and 1500s we have long poems on Buddhist history and teaching, and others in praise of the king and his exploits. There are also early prose texts on law and history. In succeeding centuries there were several innovations in literary creation, of which the most momentous was the introduction of fiction in the early 1900s. Contemporary Burmese publishing covers much the same range as any modern culture: newspapers and magazines, novels and short stories (historical, thriller, detective, courtroom, propagandaist, allegorical, romantic, comical, social, psychological, etc), comic strips, plays, poems, memoirs, travelogues, biographies, autobiographies, essays, educative writing and manuals and studies of literature, history, economics, technology, religion, medicine, business, etc. There is also an active film and video industry. All publications in whatever medium are subject to strict state censorship.

Romanizing Burmese

People who can’t read and write Burmese script have to find a way of representing Burmese words and names in other writing systems. Ever since the first days of contact with visitors from the West people have attempted to write Burmese words in the roman letters, but not many agree on how the sounds of Burmese should be spelled in the alien alphabet. You’ll find the same sound romanized as Me or May or Mei or Mey or Mae, and many other sounds have just as many variants.

The problem is that Burmese has several sounds for which there are no obvious characters in the roman alphabet. The best you can hope for is that any one book should be consistent from beginning to end, and that the letters it chooses to represent the sounds of Burmese are not too implausible. Remember that any romanization system, however carefully designed, can’t avoid using some letters that stand for one sound in English and another in Burmese. So you need to make a conscious effort to produce the sound you hear on the tapes, not the sound you think you ought to hear when you read the romanization.

Body language

Every culture has its set of conventional signs and gestures that show respect or cause offence. Things to remember in Burma:

- Treat older people and Buddhist monks with respect. Also Buddha images and other religious objects.
- Don’t tower over people senior to yourself: lower your head a little if you have to pass close in front of them.
- Don’t point your feet towards a senior person.
- Don’t touch people on the head.
- Behave modestly: don’t wear revealing clothing, and avoid hugging and kissing in public.
- Use both hands to hand something to a person senior to yourself, and to receive something from them.
- Take off shoes and socks before entering a house or the grounds of a monastery or pagoda.
- Keep calm and courteous in all situations.

For a full account of what’s polite and what’s offensive in Burmese society, see Culture shock Burma, by Saw Myat Yin (details in Appendix 6).
SUMMARY AND NOTES
FOR THE LESSONS ON THE TAPES

REMEMBER
All the essential information this course contains is on the tapes, along with all the practice in talking and listening. This booklet only contains summaries, additional notes, and reference lists. On its own it will not help you learn to speak Burmese.

PART 1. FIRST WORDS AND SENTENCE TYPES

UNIT 1. STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS, NUMBERS 1-9999, AND PRICES

1.1. IT IS …, ISN’T IT?

New words
pu-deh ပဲတခု to be hot, it is hot
è-deh ခဲတခု to be cold, it is cold
kaundeh ကြာတခု to be good, it is good
yà-deh ယောတခု to be all right, it is all right

Sentences
Pu-deh-naw? ပဲတခုနဲ့ It’s hot, isn’t it?
È-deh-naw? ခဲတခုနဲ့ It’s cold, isn’t it?
Kaundeh-naw? ကြာတခုနဲ့ It’s good, isn’t it?
Yà-deh-naw? ယောတခုနဲ့ It’s all right, isn’t it?

Notes
Suffixes. Any word which is attached to the end of other words is called a “suffix”. For example, in English -ing is a suffix: you add it to talk to make talking, to fill to make filling and so on. Suffixes are very important in Burmese, because they are the bits that carry almost all the grammar: ideas like “did”, “don’t”, “will”, “in”, “if” and many others.

-naw is a suffix that you add to a statement when you want someone to agree with you. You can think of it as meaning “right?”, but it’s often more appropriate to translate -naw with phrases like “isn’t it?”, “don’t you?”, “won’t they?”, and so on.

-deh is a suffix that has two functions:
1. It is used to show you are making a statement, as in:
   Pu-deh.  It’s hot.
   È-deh.  It’s cold.
2. It is used when you are talking about individual Burmese words, as in:
   Pu-deh.  To be hot.
   È-deh.  To be cold.

For a summary of essential Burmese grammar see Appendix 3.

Adjectives. Although we have to translate pu-deh, è-deh and the others with the English adjectives: “hot”, “cold”, and so on, in terms of Burmese grammar they must be classified as verbs: “to be hot”, “to be cold”, etc.

“It”. Burmese does have words for “it”, but when it’s obvious what you’re talking about you normally leave them out. So in the question —
Kaundeh-naw? ကြာတခုနဲ့ It’s good, isn’t it?
all you are actually saying in Burmese is “Is good, right?”

Writing and pronouncing Burmese. Burmese is normally written in its own script, which is what you see in the central column above. Learners who haven’t yet learned to read Burmese script have to use a romanization — a method of representing Burmese sounds in roman letters. That is what you see in the left hand column. As Burmese has some sounds which are not used in English, and a romanization has to try and represent them with familiar roman letters, not all the letters stand for the sounds you may expect. That is one of the reasons why it is far more effective to learn through your ears from the tapes rather than from the printed page. Guidance on pronunciation is given on the tape in each of the first eight lessons. Always follow the pronunciation you hear on the tape, and don’t try to read new words aloud from the page. At the end of this booklet you will find a description of all the sounds of Burmese, a note of which
Pronunciation points

Pronunciation points that need attention are mentioned on the tape as they occur in the first few Lessons. For an overview of the sounds of Burmese, and the roman symbols used here to represent them, see Appendix 1.

Plain P and aspirate P:

\[ \text{páñ-deh, p'áñ-deh} \quad \text{to spurt, to catch} \]

Plain K and aspirate K:

\[ \text{koun-bi, k'oun-bi.} \quad \text{It's all gone, It's started jumping.} \]

High tone and low tone:

\[ \text{pu-deh, pú-deh} \quad \text{to be hot, to be stuck together} \]

Numbers

\[ \text{tiq— hniq— thóù— ló} \quad \text{1—2—3—4} \]

For figures in Burmese script see Appendix 2 (outline of Burmese script).

Pronunciation points

Plain T and aspirate T:

\[ \text{taùn-deh, t'aùn-deh} \quad \text{to ask,} \]

Plain N and breathed N:

\[ \text{na, hna} \quad \text{sore, nose} \]

\[ \text{niq, hniq} \quad \text{sink, two} \]

Glottal stop:

\[ \text{tiq, hniq, c’auq} \quad \text{one, two, six} \]

For a summary of the Burmese number system see Appendix 4.

1.2. YES, IT IS.

Sentences

S1 stands for “Speaker 1”, and S2 for “Speaker 2”. We use this convention to show when one sentence is a response to another.

S1 \[ \text{Pu-deh-naw?} \quad \text{It's hot, isn't it?} \]
S2 \[ \text{H ouq-kéh. Pu-ba-deh.} \quad \text{Yes, it is.} \]
S1 \[ \text{É-deh-naw?} \quad \text{It's cold, isn't it?} \]
S2 \[ \text{H ouq-kéh.} \quad \text{Yes, it is.} \]
S1 \[ \text{Kau´n-deh-naw?} \quad \text{It's good, isn't it?} \]
S2 \[ \text{H ouq-kéh.} \quad \text{Yes, it is.} \]
S1 \[ \text{Ya´-deh-naw?} \quad \text{It's all right, isn't it?} \]
S2 \[ \text{H ouq-kéh. Ya´ba-deh.} \quad \text{Yes, it is.} \]

Notes

\[ \text{H ouq-kéh.} \quad \text{Literally “It is so.” Used like “Yes” in English to show you agree with what someone has said. Also to show you are following what they say — you hear it a lot when someone is listening to a caller on the phone.} \]

\[ \text{-ba (in pu-ba-deh etc) is a suffix people add in to show they are being polite. So both Pu-ba-deh and Pu-deh mean “It's hot”, but the first is a little more polite and courteous, the second a little more casual, even brusque. For practice on the tape we use the politer option \[…]\text{-ba-deh throughout}. Note that -ba is not needed in questions: it is perfectly polite to ask Pu-deh-naw? (rather than Pu-ba-deh-naw?)} \]

Pronunciation point

Vowels e and en:

\[ \text{lé-deh, lêh-deh} \quad \text{to be heavy, to fall over} \]
\[ \text{we-deh, weh-deh} \quad \text{to share out, to buy} \]

Numbers

\[ \text{lé— ngà} \quad \text{c’auq— k'un-hniq} \quad \text{4—5} \]
\[ \text{6—7} \]
Burmese By Ear

Pronunciation point

Consonant ng:

| ngà | ငင် | five |

1.3. NEW WORDS

à-deh အမှန်တကယ် to be free
hlá-deh အများတွင် to be pretty
saq-teh အနေဖြင့် to be hot (to taste)
caiq-teh ကျွန်ုပ်တွင် to like

Notes

-teh. After a word ending in -q the suffix -deh (see 1.1) is pronounced -teh, as in saq-teh and caiq-teh above. In the same way after a word ending in -q the suffix -ba (see 1.2) is pronounced -pa; example:

S2 Saq-pa-deh. စကလက်တယ် It is hot to taste
(not Saq-ba-deh.)

These two changes are examples of the “Voicing Rule”. For more, see Appendix 1. When we need to refer to these two suffixes again, we give both the normal and the voiced forms: -pa/-ba, -teh/-deh.

"You" and "I". Burmese does have words for "you" and "I", as it does for "it", but most of the time it’s quite clear from the situation who or what you are talking about, so people simply leave out those words. So, for example, in this exchange:

S1 Caiq-teh-naw? ကျွန်ုပ်တယ်မှာ You like it, don’t you?
S2 Ma˘caiq-pa-bu´. မှယ်ပစ်စွာ No, I don’t.
S1 Ya´-deh-naw? ရှေးတယ်မှာ It’s all right, isn’t it?
S2 Ma˘ya´-ba-bu´. မှရာစွာ No, it isn’t.

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1.4. NO, IT ISN’T.

Sentences

S1 Caiq-teh-naw? ကျွန်ုပ်တယ်မှာ You like it, don’t you?
S2 Ma˘caiq-pa-bu´. မှယ်ပစ်စွာ No, I don’t.
S1 Ya´-deh-naw? ရှေးတယ်မှာ It’s all right, isn’t it?
S2 Ma˘ya´-ba-bu´. မှရာစွာ No, it isn’t.

Notes

Ma˘[…]-ba-bu´. “It isn’t […]” or “I don’t […]” etc. Ma˘ is the “negative prefix”: it is attached to the beginning of a word, and conveys the meaning “not”; and when you’re making a negative statement, instead of using the suffix -teh/-deh, you use the suffix -p'u/-bu´.

-ba (in Ma˘pu-ba-bu´ etc) is the same polite suffix as the -pa/ ba in Pu-ba-deh etc. It is a signal that you are being polite. So you will hear people saying both Ma˘pu-ba-bu´ and Ma˘pu-bu´. Both mean the same thing, but the first is more polite than the second.

"No". Burmese doesn’t use a word that corresponds directly to "No". When you’re asked if you like something and you want to answer “No”, you just say “Not like”.

Pronunciation point

Plain C and aspirate C:

c'eq-teh, e'eq-teh ကျွန်ုပ်တယ်မှာ to learn by heart, to cook

Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>သို့မဟုတ်</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unit 1: First words

Pronunciation point

Vowels o and aw:

| o-deh, aw-deh | စားစေမှာ to be old, to shout |

Pronunciation point

Plain L and breathed L:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>laun-deh, လက်စားမည်</th>
<th>to burn,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hlaun-deh လက်စားမည်</td>
<td>to store away</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pronunciation points

Plain high tone and creaky high tone:

| yá-deh, yá-deh ဗိုလ်စားမည် | to be all right, to itch |

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Teh-li-p'ou'n nan-baq “telephone number”. Examples of English words that have been adopted into Burmese. Some speakers pronounce English loanwords with a good English accent (usually British English), and others pronounce them with a strong Burmese accent.

Beh-lauq-lêh “what is?” Literally “how much?”

K‘un. A short form of k‘un-hniq often used in saying phone numbers.

Thoun-nya‘ “zero”. Take care not to confuse this word with thou‘ “three”: apart from the second syllable nya, a major difference is that “three” has a high tone (thou‘) where “zero” has a low tone (thoun).

-ba (or -pa after a word ending in -q). A suffix added to a sentence to show you are being polite, like the -pa/ -ba in Pu-ba-deh etc.

Pronunciation points

Consonant ny-:

thoun-nya‘ နည်  zero

Final nasal -n:

thoun, teh-li-p‘ou’n နည်  နည်း  three, telephone

1.5. NEW WORDS

nà*le-eh-deh နောင်းလှိုင်စား  to understand

Literally “ear (nà) goes round”

zè·ci-deh နောင်းလှိုင်စား  to be expensive

Literally “price (zè) is great”.

Notes

*: We use the * to remind you that the negative prefix goes before the second element, not before the first:

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Notes
Theiq used with a negated verb means “It is so, but not extremely”; example:

Theiq mápu-ba-bù = “It’s not very hot”,
in the sense of: “It is hot, but not extremely hot”.

Word order. Notice that theiq and caiq-pa-deh come in that order:
“very much I like” — the opposite order from English. The rule is that in Burmese all verbs come at the end of the sentence.

Pronunciation point
Consonant t- and consonant th-:
tou´n-deh, thou´n-deh tuM;ty'; to be stupid, to use

Numbers
Numbers between the round tens are made in the same way as in English; examples:
c’auq-s’èh-lè cl;:e®Kak'sy.; 64
ngà-zèh-kò cl;:cl;:e®Kak'sy.; 59
e°kau´n-deh eneK;K¥oty; to be cheap
ne*kau´n-deh eneK;K¥oty; to be well
Literally “the price is sweet”
Literally “status is good”. Ne*kau´n-deh-naw “You’re well, aren’t you?” is a common greeting, like “How are you?”
ás’in*pye-deh aS;Sc;e®pty; to work out well
Used in connection with, for example, whether your accommodation is satisfactory, or whether you are comfortable in the back seat, etc.

Variant.
In place of c’auq-s’èh-lè etc you may sometimes hear c’auq-s’èh
lè, literally “sixty and four”. More examples:
ngà-zèh-kò cl;:e®Kak'sy.; 59
or ngà-zèh-nèh kò 0r cl;:c;:e®Kak'sy.; 59
thou´n-zèh-c’auq cl;:e®Kak'sy.; 36
or thou´n-zèh-nèh c’auq 0r cl;:c;:e®Kak'sy.; 36

1.7. NEW WORDS

s’èh-tiq, 0r s’èh-hniq, etc eneK;K¥oty; 0r cl;:e®Kak'sy.

1.8. IS IT? DO YOU?

Example sentences
S1 Nà leh-dhàlì? 0r cl;:c;:e®Kak'sy.; Do you understand?
Notes
Voicing.  The suffix -thālaʾ is voiced to -dha˘la´ except after a syllable ending in q. See “Voicing Rule” in Appendix 1.

Questions ending in -naw encourage S2 to answer Yes, whereas questions ending in -thālaʾ/dha˘la´ don’t attempt to push S2 in either direction. Compare these two examples:

Caiq-thālaʾ?  Do you like it?
Caiq-teh-naw?  You do like it, don’t you?

Earlier you learned Ne-kaũn-deh-naw? “You’re well, aren’t you?” as a form of greeting. The question also occurs in three other versions. Here are all four:

1  Ne-kaũn-deh- new?  You are well, aren’t you?
2  Ne-kaũn-dhālaʾ?  Are you well?
3  Ne-kaũn-lā?  Are you well?
4  Ne-kaũn-yēh-lā?  Are you well?

As greetings formulae, all four are used interchangeably. The second form in this list uses the regular question ending you have just learned. The third is a reduced version of that. And the fourth uses the suffix -yēh in place of the suffix -dha˘-. See the verb suffixes section in Appendix 3 (outline grammar).

In all four cases the answer is the same:
Ne-kaũn-ba-deh.  I’m fine.

Numbers
Numbers between the round hundreds are made in the same way as in English; examples:
tāya kō-zēh shiq  198
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā  265
etc

Notes
Word order. Notice that in sentences like Ėh-da caiq-pa-deh. Burmese word order is the opposite of English. In English you say “I like that one”, but in Burmese you say “That one I like”. The rule is that in Burmese all verbs come at the end of the sentence. We noticed the same rule with theīq in Lesson 1.6.

This and that. There is no clear-cut boundary between da and Ėh-da: don’t be surprised if we sometimes translate da as “that” and Ėh-da as “this”. The boundary is equally vague in

Notice that the syllable ya “hundred” is often changed to yā (low tone changes to creaky tone) when followed by another number. You may hear either tāya kō-zēh shiq or tāya kō-zēh shiq. The same tone change occurs with s’ēh “ten” (Lesson 1.6).

Variant.
In place of tāya kō-zēh shiq etc you may sometimes hear tāya-nēh kō-zēh shiq, literally “a hundred and ninety eight”. More examples:

hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā  265
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā  720
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā  265
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā

There is a similar variant for numbers in tens and units (Lesson 1.6).

1.9. THIS AND THAT

da  this (nearer me)
ēh-da  that (nearer you)

Example sentences
Da saq-thālaʾ?  Is this hot to taste?
Da ē-dhālaʾ?  Is this cold?
Ėh-da zē cī-dhālaʾ?  Is that expensive?
Ėh-da caiq-pa-deh.  I like that one.

Notes
There is a similar variant for numbers in tens and units (Lesson 1.6).

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hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā
hnāyā c’auq-s’ēh ngā

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Ėh-da zē cī-dhālaʾ?  Is that expensive?
Ėh-da caiq-pa-deh.  I like that one.

Notes
There is a similar variant for numbers in tens and units (Lesson 1.6).

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Word order. Notice that in sentences like Ėh-da caiq-pa-deh. Burmese word order is the opposite of English. In English you say “I like that one”, but in Burmese you say “That one I like”. The rule is that in Burmese all verbs come at the end of the sentence. We noticed the same rule with theīq in Lesson 1.6.

This and that. There is no clear-cut boundary between da and Ėh-da: don’t be surprised if we sometimes translate da as “that” and Ėh-da as “this”. The boundary is equally vague in
English: compare (a) “The date: this is what I want to discuss” with (b) “The date: that is what I want to discuss”.

Other words for “this” and “that”: see the Topical Vocabulary for “this, that and what”.

**Numbers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Approximation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–1000</td>
<td>tät'aun—hna'at'aun</td>
<td>1000–2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000–2000</td>
<td>thōun-daun—lē-daun</td>
<td>3000–4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000–3000</td>
<td>ngā-daun—c'auq-t'aun</td>
<td>5000–6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000–4000</td>
<td>k'un-nat'aun—shiq-t'aun</td>
<td>7000–8000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000–5000</td>
<td>k'o-daun—tāthau'ān</td>
<td>9000–10000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weakening. The numbers tiq, hniq, k'un-hniq weaken before t'aun “a thousand” as usual (Lesson 1.5).

Voicing. T'aun “a thousand” is voiced to daun except after a syllable ending in -q or in -ā. It is obeying the same rule as s'eh “ten” (Lesson 1.5). See the examples, and “Voicing Rule” in Appendix 1.

**1.10. NEW WORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lo-jin-deh</td>
<td>to want (something)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hma-deh</td>
<td>to order (e.g. a drink in a café)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ātha'pa-deh</td>
<td>to have meat in (“meat contain”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

lo-jin-deh. Make sure you keep the low tone on lo- good and low. If you pronounce lo with a high tone, the word sounds like a coarse way of saying you want to have sex.

**Pronunciation point**

Plain M and breathed M:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maq-teh,</td>
<td>to be steep,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hmaq-teh</td>
<td>to make a mark</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Numbers

Numbers between the round thousands are made in the same way as in English; examples:

- c'auq-t'aun ngā-ya (6500)
- hna't'aun kō-ya ngā-zēh (2955)
- ngā tā't'aun hna'yā thōun-zēh lē (1234)

Notice that the syllable t'aun “thousand” may be changed to t'au'n (low tone changed to creaky) when followed by another number. You may hear either c'auq-t'aun ngā-ya or c'auq-t'aun ngā-ya. The same tone change occurs with s'eh “ten” and ya “a hundred” (Lessons 1.6, 1.8).

Numbers beginning with one thousand often lose the first syllable. In place of tā't'aun tāya (1100), tā't'aun hna'yā ngā-zēh (1250) etc, you will hear t'au'n tāya, t'au'n hna'yā ngā-zēh, etc. There is a similar variation for numbers beginning with tās'eh (Lesson 1.6).

**Variant.**

In place of c'auq-t'aun ngā-ya etc you may sometimes hear c'auq-t'aun-nēh ngā-ya, literally “six thousand and five hundred”. More examples:

- hna't'aun kō-ya ngā-zēh ngā (2955)
- or hna't'aun-nēh kō-ya ngā-zēh (2955)
- ngā tā't'aun hna'yā thōun-zēh lē (1234)
- or tā't'aun-nēh hna'yā thōun-zēh lē (1234)

There are similar variants for numbers in tens and units and in hundreds and units (Lessons 1.6 and 1.8).

**1.11. WHICH ONE?**

**Example sentences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beh-ha ātha'pa-dhālēh?</td>
<td>Which one has meat in?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh-ha saq-thālēh?</td>
<td>Which one is hot to taste?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh-ha ē-dhālēh?</td>
<td>Which one is cool?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which ones are cooler/the coolest?
Notes
Beh-ha: literally “which thing?” “which one?”. Also used where English speakers would say “which things?” “which ones?”. Burmese does have ways of distinguishing singular and plural, but you don’t always have to use them.
Questions that ask Which? What? Why? etc (in this case beh-ha) end in -thālēh (or its voiced version -dha˘lēh). Questions that can be answered with a Yes or a No end in -thā˘la´/-dha˘la´.
Beh-ha pu-dha˘lēh? Which one is the hot one?
Eh-da pu-dha˘la´? Is that one hot?

Numbers
S1 Da beh-lauq-le˘h? How much is this?
S2 Lê-zè˘h c’auq-caq-pa. It’s 46 kyats.
caq “kyat”. The unit of Burmese currency. In 2009 the official exchange rate was 6 kyats to US dollar, but on the street you could get around 1000 kyats to the dollar.

Update on prices in 2013
This course was written in 1996. In the intervening years the cost of living in Burma has risen spectacularly. A cup of tea, for example, that cost under 20 kyats in 1996 cost 300 kyats in 2013. A ball point pen that cost 8 kyats at the time of writing would cost around 1000 kyats in 2013. As a general rule, 200 kyats is now the lowest denomination in use, and the example prices used in BBE should be multiplied by about 15 to reflect 2013 prices.

Voicing. In compounds the word caq is voiced to jaq except after -q, or after hna˘ or k’un-na˘. With tà˘ however, you say tà˘jaq.
For more see “Voicing Rule” in Appendix 1.

Weakening. The numbers tiq, hniq, k’un-hniq weaken before caq “kyat” as usual (Lesson 1.5).

Round numbers. When a number of kyats ends in a 0, the word caq is omitted; examples:
tà˘t’aun 1000 kyats
ngá-ya 500 kyats
If there’s any ambiguity, people may add a word meaning “money”: ngwe ngá-ya, or a word meaning “Burmese currency”: Bâma ngwe ngá-ya.

Prices in Burmese currency
Tape Learner
tá˘jaq 1 kyat
shìj-s’é˘h hna˘caq 37 kyat
thou˘n-zè˘h k’un-
nácaq
caq-yå nga˘-zeh 650 kyat
thou˘n-ze˘h thou˘n-
nácaq
le˘-dau˘n kò-ya 4900 kyat
Tape Learner
How much is this?
It’s 6 kyat. C’aq-caq-pa.
It’s 21 kyat. Hrā’s’é˘h tá˘jaq-pa.
It’s 174 kyat. Tà˘yà k’un-nás’é˘h lè-
jaq-pa.
It’s 10 kyat. Tà˘s’è˘h-ba.
It’s 530 kyat. Ngà-ya thou˘n-zèh-ba.
It’s 8900 kyat. Shìq-t’aûn kò-ya-ba.
Question and answer

Tape  Learner
S1 You’re well, aren’t you?
Ne kaũn-deh-naw? ညက်နည်နှံ့
S2 Yes I am.
Houq-kêh. Ne kaũn-ba-deh.
ညက်နည်ဖြည်းတော်ဖူ
S1 This is all right, isn’t it?
Yã-deh-naw? ညတာ်ဖူ
S2 Yes it is.
Houq-kêh. Yã-ba-deh.
ညတာ်ဖူညတာ်ဖူဖူ
S1 You understand, don’t you?
Na˘leh-deh-naw?
နယ်လိုတာ်ဖူ
S2 No I don’t.
Na˘ma˘leh-ba-bu˘.
နယ်ဦးည်တော်ဖူဖူ
S1 This is all right, isn’t it?
Ya˘-deh-naw?
ုတာ်ဖူ
S2 Yes it is.
Houq-kêh. Ya˘-ba-deh.
ညတာ်ဖူညတာ်ဖူဖူ
S1 You understand, don’t you?
Na˘leh-deh-naw?
နယ်လိုတာ်ဖူ
S2 No I don’t.
Na˘ma˘leh-ba-bu˘.
နယ်ဦးည်တော်ဖူဖူ
S1 It’s working out all right, isn’t it?
Ás’in pye-deh-naw?
အစာ်ဖူည်တာ်ဖူ
S2 No it isn’t.
Ás’in mäpye-ba-bu˘.
အစာ်မမည်တော်ဖူဖူ

A lot and a little

Tape  Learner
It's very pretty.  Theiq há-ba-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It's very hot.  Theiq pu-ba-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It’s a bit cold.  Néh-néh ë-ba-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It’s a bit expensive.  Néh-néh zë çi-ba-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It's very cheap.  Theiq zë ç’o-ba-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It's not very hot to taste.  Theiq mäsaq-pa-bu˘.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
It's not very good.  Theiq mäkaũn-ba-bu˘.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ

This and that

Tape  Learner
S1 Do you like this one?
Da caiq-thâlã?
တတ်တာ်ဖူတတ်တာ်ဖူ
S2 Not very much.
Theiq mäcaiq-pa-bu˘.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ
S1 Which one do you like?
Beh-ha caiq-thâlãh?
ဗိုလ်မိတ်တာ်ဖူတာ်ဖူ
S2 I like that one.
Éh-da caiq-pa-deh.
ညည်တာ်ဖူညည်တာ်ဖူ

Greetings

How are you?
Ne kaũn-deh-naw? ညက်နည်နှံ့
Ne kaũn-dha˘la´? ညက်နည်နှံ့ညက်နည်
Ne kaũn-la˘? ညက်နည်ညက်ညက်
Ne kaũn-ye˘h-la˘? ညက်နည်ညက်ညက်ညက်
I’m fine.
Ne kaũn-ba-deh. ညက်နည်ညက်ညက်

UNIT 2.
GOING TO DO, WANT TO DO, PLEASE DO, COUNTING

2.1. EATING AND DRINKING

New words

ba ဝါ  what?
sà-deh စတာတာ to eat
thauq-teh သုပ်ဆာတာ to drink

Some foods and drinks known in Burma under their foreign names

Cocacola, Pepsi, Seven-Up, Fanta, Sparkling, Vimto, lime juice
Horlicks, Ovaltine, Milo, cocoa, coffee
beer, whisky, rum
Burmese By Ear

sandwich, hamburger, hotdog, biscuit (= US cookie)

Example sentences
S1 Peq-si thauq-thalāʔ?  Did you drink a Pepsi?
S2 Māthauq-pa-buʔ.  No, I didn’t.
S1 Ba thauq-thalāʔ?  What did you drink?
S2 Kouq thauq-pa-deh.  I drank a Coke.

Notes
ba “what?” is derived from ḏeh-ha “which one?”  Questions containing ba, like questions containing ḏeh-ha, take the suffix -thalāʔ/-dhalēh (see the note in Lesson 1.11).

Present and past.  The suffixes -pa-deh and -pa-buʔ (or their voiced forms -ba-deh and -ba-buʔ), which mark statements, and the suffixes -thalāʔ, -thalā, and -thalēh (or their voiced forms -dhalēh, -dhalā, and -dhalēh), which mark questions, can refer either to the present or to the past.  So, for example, Peq-si thauq-thalāʔ? can mean either “Do you drink Pepsi?” or “Did you drink Pepsi?”  Which meaning the speaker has in mind is usually obvious from the context.  It is surprising how rarely there is any ambiguity – and if a sentence is ambiguous, there are words one can use to make one’s meaning clear.

2.2. GOING TO DO

To make statements or ask questions about future events, you use a different set of verb suffixes.  Essentially all you are doing is replacing -teh/-deh with -mēh, but the correspondence is a little

Word order.  As noted earlier (1.9), in Burmese the verb is the last element in the sentence: Kouq thauq-pa-deh “I drank a Coke” is literally “Coke drank”.

Numbers
Prices in dollars.  Dollars are counted in much the same way as kyats; example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyats</th>
<th>Dollar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>173</td>
<td>$173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one important difference.  When you were saying round numbers of kyats you omitted the word caq, but when you have a round number of dollars you keep the word daw-la but put it in front of the number; examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyats</th>
<th>Dollar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8000</td>
<td>$8000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same principle operates for anything else you can count.  We call it “the Round Number Rule”.  Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>gallon</td>
<td>19 gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>gallon</td>
<td>20 gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
<td>mile</td>
<td>295 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>mile</td>
<td>300 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one exception to the Round Number Rule.  Although the number 10 ends in a zero and is mathematically a round number, it is treated in speech as an unround number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>dollar</td>
<td>10 dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>gallon</td>
<td>10 gallons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>mile</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When combined with daw-la the numbers tiq, hniq, k’un-hniq weaken in the usual way: tādaw-la, lē-zēh-hnādaw-la and so on.

2.2. GOING TO DO

To make statements or ask questions about future events, you use a different set of verb suffixes.  Essentially all you are doing is replacing -teh/-deh with -mēh, but the correspondence is a little
obscured. Compare the following two sets of sentences. They use the verb thauq-teh “to drink”.

Present/past
1. Kaw-p'i thauq-tha˘la´?
   ကဝါ၀င် သံ့ကြည်ယွ? Did you (do you) drink coffee?
   မသံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် ဖ်န် No, I didn’t (I don’t).
3. Ba thauq-thálèh?
   ယွ သံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် အို What did you (do you) drink?
   ကု ဝါ သံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် ဖ်န် I drank (I drink) cocoa.

Future
1. Kaw-p'i thauq-ma˘la´?
   ကဝါ၀င် သံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် မွစ် Are you going to drink coffee?
   မသံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် ဖ်န် No, I’m not.
3. Ba thauq-ma˘le´h?
   ယွ သံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် အို What are you going to drink?
   ကု ဝါ သံ့ကြည်ယွၾင် မွစ် I’m going to drink cocoa.

Note that on line 4 in each set, -teh/ -deh corresponds to -meh. You can use the polite suffix -pa/ -ba with both -teh/ -deh and -meh:

   thauq-teh = thauq-pa-deh
   thauq-meh = thauq-pa-meh

People tend to use -pa/ -ba more often with -teh/ -deh than with -meh, which is why we use -pa-deh/ ba-deh here but not -pa-meh/ -ba-meh; but in principle you can add or omit -pa/-ba with both -teh/-deh and -meh.

In questions, before -lå or -låh (lines 1 and 3), -meh is weakened to -mä, reflecting the way in which -teh/-deh is weakened to -thå/-dåh å in the same environment. For “weakening” see Lesson 1.5.

In the negative there is no change; so “I didn’t drink”, “I don’t drink”, and “I’m not going to drink” are all Mäthauq-pa-bu´.
2.4. NEW WORDS

daq-poun ပစ္စုး  photograph
yaiq-teh ပြနှစ်စုး  to hit, strike, stamp
daq-poun yaiq-teh ပစ္စုးပြနှစ်စုး  to take a photograph
'tain-deh နေစုး  to sit
yaiq-teh ပြနှစ်စုး  to stop

Example sentences
Di-hma daq-poun yaiq-meh ပစ္စုးခြင်းချင်  I’m going to take a photograph here.
Beh-hma 'tain-mālēh? နေချင်းလာချင်  Where you going to sit?
Di-hma yaiq-mālēh? ပြနှစ်စုးလာချင်  Are you going to stop here?

Numbers
Counting by helpings, platefuls, portions
pwē/hwē ပူး  helping or plateful
p'īqsh-in-chiq ပူးစိုးစိုးစေမှ  two platefuls of fish
hnāpweh ဟိုးပူး  and chips
beiq-bin lé-bwēh ပူးပူးပူးပူး  four portions of baked beans

Example sentences
Di-hma daq-poun yaiq-meh ပစ္စုးခြင်းချင်  I’m going to take a photograph here.
Beh-hma 'tain-mālēh? နေချင်းလာချင်  Where you going to sit?
Di-hma yaiq-mālēh? ပြနှစ်စုးလာချင်  Are you going to stop here?

2.5. WANTING TO ...

Example sentences
Di-hma t'ain-ba-deh. နေချင်းဝန်ထား  We sit here.
Di-hma t'ain-jin'ba-deh. နေချင်းဝန်ထားကိုဘာ  We want to sit here.
Kaw-p'ī māthauq-pa-bû. မှသားနိုင်ခြင်းဗိုင်း  I don’t drink coffee.
Kaw-p'ī māthauq-c'ın-ba-bû. မှသားနိုင်ခြင်းဗိုင်း  I don’t want to drink coffee.
Ba sā-dhālēh? ဘာရွိန်ထား  What does he eat?
Ba sā-jin-dhālēh? ဘာရွိန်ထားကိုဘာ  What does he want to eat?

The suffix -c'in- is voiced to -jin- except after -q. See the examples, and “Voicing Rule” in Appendix 1.

Don’t confuse [...]-jin-deh “to want [to do something]” with [...] lo-jin-deh “to want [something]” (Lesson 1.10).

Numbers
Counting discrete items
k'û'gû နုနေ  item, unit, article
han-ba-ga c'auq-k'û နိမ်ပါနိမ်  six hamburgers
s'ìn-wic' hnâkû စိက်နိမ်နိမ်  two sandwiches
han-ba-ga thōn-gû နိမ်ဗိုင်းဗိုင်း  three hamburgers
s'ìn-wic' lê-gû စိက်စိက်  four sandwiches

In Burmese, instead of asking for three hamburgers, you ask for: “hamburger three units”, in just the same way as you ask for "coffee three cups" or "Pepsi five bottles". Compare the examples above with –
kaw-p'ī thōn-gweq မှသားနိုင်ခြင်းဗိုင်း  three cups of coffee
Peq-si ngā-loûn ပါခဲ့နိုင်ခဲ့  five bottles/cans of Pepsi
Counting in round numbers also follows the same pattern (“dollars five-tens” etc):

- daw-la ngà-zeh  ဒေဝလ် ငှန်းမွာ - fifty dollars
- paun ngà-ya  ဘေဿန်းကား - five hundred pounds

Voicing. K’ú is voiced to gú except after -ā and -q. See the examples, and “Voicing Rule” in Appendix 1.

Weakening. The numbers tiq, hniq, k’un-hniq weaken before k’ú as usual (Lesson 1.5).

2.6. PLEASE DO … PLEASE DON’T …

Example sentences

- T’ain-ba.  သာအင်း - Please sit down.
- Mát’ain-ba-néh.  မိတ်အင်းနွန်း - Please don’t sit down.
- Di-hma yaq-pa.  ဒီးရဲးရှောင် - Please stop here.
- Di-hma māyaq-pa-néh.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်နွန်း - Please don’t stop here.

Notes

To make a request or an order, you replace -teh/-deh with -pa/-ba.

To ask someone not to do something, you replace -p’u´/bu´ with -néh. Notice the small but crucial difference between “Please don’t […]” and “It doesn’t (or we don’t etc) […]”:

- Di-hma māyaq-pa-néh.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်နွန်း - Please don’t stop here.
- Di-hma māyaq-pa-bu´.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်ပိုး - It doesn’t stop here.

The -pa/ba in T’ain-ba and Mát’ain-ba-néh is the same polite suffix you have been using in […]-pa-deh, and if you leave it out you are still making a request, but without -pa/ba it sounds peremptory:

- T’ain-ba.  သာအင်း - Please sit down.
- T’ain!  သာ - Sit down!
- Mát’ain-ba-néh.  မိတ်အင်းနွန်း - Please don’t sit down.
- Mát’ain-néh!  မိတ်နွန်း! - Don’t sit down!

Notes

To make a request or an order, you replace -teh/-deh with -pa/ba.

To ask someone not to do something, you replace -p’u´/bu´ with -néh. Notice the small but crucial difference between “Please don’t […]” and “It doesn’t (or we don’t etc) […]”:

- Di-hma māyaq-pa-néh.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်နွန်း - Please don’t stop here.
- Di-hma māyaq-pa-bu´.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်ပိုး - It doesn’t stop here.

The -pa/ba in T’ain-ba and Mát’ain-ba-néh is the same polite suffix you have been using in […]-pa-deh, and if you leave it out you are still making a request, but without -pa/ba it sounds peremptory:

- T’ain-ba.  သာအင်း - Please sit down.
- T’ain!  သာ - Sit down!
- Mát’ain-ba-néh.  မိတ်အင်းနွန်း - Please don’t sit down.
- Mát’ain-néh!  မိတ်နွန်း! - Don’t sit down!

Notes

To make a request or an order, you replace -teh/-deh with -pa/ba.

To ask someone not to do something, you replace -p’u´/bu´ with -néh. Notice the small but crucial difference between “Please don’t […]” and “It doesn’t (or we don’t etc) […]”:

- Di-hma māyaq-pa-néh.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်နွန်း - Please don’t stop here.
- Di-hma māyaq-pa-bu´.  ဒီးရဲးမိုးရှောင်ပိုး - It doesn’t stop here.

The -pa/ba in T’ain-ba and Mát’ain-ba-néh is the same polite suffix you have been using in […]-pa-deh, and if you leave it out you are still making a request, but without -pa/ba it sounds peremptory:

- T’ain-ba.  သာအင်း - Please sit down.
- T’ain!  သာ - Sit down!
- Mát’ain-ba-néh.  မိတ်အင်းနွန်း - Please don’t sit down.
- Mát’ain-néh!  မိတ်နွန်း! - Don’t sit down!
“Where have you been?”, “Have you eaten yet?”, “You’re here very early!” and so on). Min-gàla-ba was deliberately created as an all-purpose greeting for teachers and pupils in schools in the 1930s, explicitly matching the English time-of-day greetings.

Some Burmese speakers, pestered by foreigners for “the Burmese for Good morning”, have resorted to offering Min-gàla-ba as a stopgap answer to an unanswerable question, and so the phrase has begun to spread beyond the schoolroom. You will find it used mostly to foreigners, and occasionally in public announcements, but very rarely between one Burmese speaker and another – unless they are teacher and pupil.

REVIEW FOR UNIT 2: FOUNDATIONS, PART 2
Review exercises are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

Prices in dollars

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Learner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 dollars</td>
<td>s’ëh ngà-daw-la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>973 dollars</td>
<td>kò-ya k’un-nàs’ëh thòun-daw-la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 dollars</td>
<td>daw-la hñàt’auun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4860 dollars</td>
<td>daw-la lë-daun shiq-ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner</td>
<td>c’auq-s’ëh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s 1 dollar. | Tàdaw-la-ba |
It’s 68 dollars. | C’auq-s’ëh shiq-daw-la-ba |
It’s 295 dollars. | Hñàya kò-zèh ngà-daw-la-ba |
It’s 10 dollars. | S’h-daw-la-ba |
It’s 450 dollars. | Daw-la lë-yà ngà-zèh-ba |
It’s 7000 dollars. | Daw-la k’un-nàt’aun-ba |

Counting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Learner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>one glass of lime juice</td>
<td>lain-jù tàk’weq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups of coffee</td>
<td>kaw-p’ï hràk’weq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 bottles of beer</td>
<td>bi-ya lë-loûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 cans of 7-Up</td>
<td>S’e’h-bìn-aq s’e’h-loûn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 hotdogs</td>
<td>hñà-dàw ngà-gú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 sandwiches</td>
<td>sin-wic’ shiq-k’û</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Going to do something

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>Learner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m going to drink coffee.</td>
<td>Kaw-p’ï thauq-meh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are you going to drink?</td>
<td>Ba thauq-màle’h?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are you going to order?</td>
<td>Ba hma-màle’h?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you going to order a sandwich?</td>
<td>S’in-wic’ hma-màlå?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you going to eat a pudding?</td>
<td>Pu-dìn sà-màlå?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m going to eat a pudding (+ male tag).</td>
<td>Pu-dìn sà-meh K’in-bya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m going to take a photograph (+ male tag).</td>
<td>Daq-poun yaiq-meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to take a photograph.</td>
<td>Daq-poun yaiq-c’in-ba-deh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to take a photograph here.</td>
<td>Di-hma daq-poun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanting to do something and Here and there</td>
<td>Yaiq-c’in-ba-deh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Where do you want to take a photograph?
Do you want to stop?
Do you want to sit here?
I don’t want to sit here (+male tag).
I want to sit there (+female tag).

Do and don’t.

Tape
Please sit here.
Please don’t sit there.
Please don’t eat a hamburger.
Please stop here.
Please don’t stop there.
Please don’t take a photograph (+female tag).
I won’t take a photograph (+male tag).

Greetings (schoolroom and foreigners)
[greeting] Min-gå-la-ba.

**UNIT 2: Eating and drinking**

At this point in the course you have covered all the essential grammar you need for saying and understanding a surprisingly wide range of Burmese sentences. Accordingly the focus of the lessons changes from sentence types and grammar to situations and topics: cafés, taxis, family and so on. Some additional grammar points will be introduced where necessary, but from here on what you most need is to expand your vocabulary.

**UNIT 3. LANGUAGE HELP**

3.1. **SORRY: I DON’T UNDERSTAND.**

Na’måle-ba-bu’.

S’aw-ri-naw? I don’t understand.

Variants
S’aw-ri-bèh-naw? I’m sorry.
S’aw-ri-bèh. I’m sorry.

The suffix -bèh adds a slight emphasis in S’aw-ri-bèh(-naw?) but the meaning remains unchanged.

3.2. **PLEASE SAY THAT AGAIN.**

T’aq pyåw-ba-ou’ın.

T’aq pyåw-ba. Please say that again.

New words
pyåw-deh to say
t’aq*pyåw-deh to say again, to repeat
T’aq pyåw-ba. Please say that again.

A common variant is:
Pyån pyåw-ba-ou’ın. Please say that again.

3.3. **DID YOU SAY 50?**

Repeat the unclear word with the question suffix -là; as in line 3 in this example dialogue:
3.4. CAN YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?

S1 In-gähleiq ságà. = Myan-ma ságà = Bama ságà
= English language

S2 Mápýàw-daq-pa-bù. = Myan-ma pye = Bama pye
= Burmese country

New words

pyàw-deh. ပိုးချင် to say, speak
pyàw-daq-teh. ပိုးချင်သိုး to know how to speak
ságà စိုက် word, words, language
In-gähleiq ságà အင်္ဂလိပ်စိုက်: English language
In-gähleiq-lo အင်္ဂလိပ် (in) English
Bama ságà or မာအိုး: Burmese language
Myan-ma ságà မြန်မာစိုက် in Burmese
Bama-lo or Myan-

Notes

“You” and “I”. Burmese leaves out words for “You” and “I” when it is clear who you are referring to. See the note at Lesson 1.3.

“Burmese”. The Burmese for “Burmese” has two forms: Bama, which is more colloquial (and the form which gave the world the word “Burma”), and Myan-ma, which is more formal. Typically, you find Myan-ma in formal writing and announcements, and you use Bama in conversation and personal correspondence. Examples:

In 1989 the government decreed that these two forms were to be given different meanings. Myan-ma was to be used for referring to anything involving the whole country, or all its ethnic groups (Shan, Karen, Kachin etc), and Bama was to be used for the Burmese ethnic group only. At the same time it was decreed that English and other languages should mark the distinction by replacing “Burma” with “Myanmar”, and “Burmese” with “Myanmar” or “Bamar” as appropriate. Although Burmese is the language of the ethnic “Bamar”, and not the mother tongue of the other races, it is officially called “Myanmar” on the grounds that it is the national language of “the Union of Myanmar”. Some foreign writers have adopted the changes, and others continue to use the old terms, either to flaunt their opposition to the government, or because they believe their readers are not yet familiar with the new names.

3.5 AND 3.6. WHAT’S THAT CALLED IN BURMESE?

IT’S CALLED “thaýe-h-thi”

S1 Eh-da Bama-lo beh-

lo k’aw-dha-léh? = What is that called
= Bama-dha-thi

S2 Thaýe-h-thi-ló k’aw-

ba-deh. = It’s called “Thaýe-

h-thi”.

New words

beh-lo ဘိရိုခေါ်: how (“which way”)
k’aw-deh ကျွန်ုပ် to call, to be called
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

[name]-ló   suffix marking end of name or quotation; like a spoken ("")

Note
Take care not to confuse the -lo in beh-lo with the -ló in [name]-ló. They are entirely unrelated words.

REVIEW FOR UNIT 3: LANGUAGE HELP
Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

The review material for this and subsequent Units in the Review Section takes the form of “review dialogues”. Here in the booklet the review dialogues are simply written out in playtext format: Speaker 1 ..., Speaker 2 ... and so on. On the tape the format is different. There are four phases to each exchange:
1. The prompt tells you in English what to say.
2. The tape keeps quiet while you speak in Burmese.
3. A speaker on the tape repeats your utterance, to confirm or correct what you said.
4. You hear a second Burmese speaker responding to what you said.

For example:
1. Prompt: Ask her what this is called.
2. Learner: Éh-da Bâma-lo beh-lo k'aw-dhâleh?
3. Tape speaker 1 (repeats): Éh-da Bâma-lo beh-lo k'aw-dhâleh?

All the dialogues are set in Burma. Remember that the Burmese speakers on the tape sometimes use words and phrases you have not yet learned. This is deliberate; the words are there to give you some practice in coping with the same situation in real life.

Review Dialogue
Scene: At a fruit stall in Burma. S1 is a foreign visitor and S2 is minding a shop that sells bananas. S1 picks up some bananas and asks –

UNIT 4. CAFÉS AND RESTAURANTS

4.1. ORDERING FOOD AND DRINK

S1 Ba hma-mâlè?  ဝါ၀ိမာလီ?  What will you order?
S2 Kaw-p'î hùn'kweq pé-ba.  ကိုးပင် ၂ိန်းက်ားပါ ပိုးပေးလိုလျင်မှာ။ We'd like to have two cups of coffee. Fine.

S1 Ba hma-jin-dhâlè?  ဝါ၀ိမာစိုက်ပျိုး?  What wd you like to order?
S1 Ba yu-malèh?
What will you have?

S2 Kouq talou-nèh
Sàpa-kàlin
We’d like to have one Coke and one Sparkling, please.

talouèn pè-bà.

Ba yù-màlèh?
What will you have?

Kouq talou-nèh
Sàpa-kàlin
We’d like to have one Coke and one Sparkling, please.

talouèn pè-bà.

New words
pè-deh
yu-deh
A-nèh
B

A-nèh
B

A and B

Notes
-nèh “and” is a suffix: it is attached to the end of the preceding word, and doesn’t stand between the two words like “and”. If your list consists of more than two items, the suffix -nèh normally comes after the second-last item:
A, B, C-nèh D
A, B, C, D

Kauñ-ba-bì “Fine”. In this idiomatic expression the usual suffix -teh/deh is replaced by -bi/pi, which slightly changes the meaning:
Kauñ-ba-deh.
It is good
Kauñ-ba-bì.
That’s fine. OK.

4.2. FOOD AND DRINK

The list below gives the items practised on the tape. For a fuller list see the Topical Vocabulary for foods and drinks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t'amín-jaw</td>
<td>fried rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k'auq-s'wèh-jaw</td>
<td>fried noodles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àsein-jaw</td>
<td>fried vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tauq-tauq-caw</td>
<td>fried minced meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lein-maw-ye</td>
<td>orange juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nwà-nò, nó</td>
<td>milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>làp'eq-ye</td>
<td>tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ye-nwè-jàn</td>
<td>plain tea ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sàmu-s'a</td>
<td>samusa ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pàla-ta</td>
<td>parata ³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
1. Ye-nwè-jàn = “plain tea”, literally “plain warm water”. Also called ye-nwè (“warm water”), làp'éq-yè-jàn (“plain tea”), àcàn-yè (“plain infusion”). A variety of tea, made weak and taken without milk or sugar, cheap and widely available, provided free in cafés.
2. Samusa (or samosa). A patty filled with meat or potato.

4.3. DO YOU HAVE ANY ... ?

S1 Bi-ya shì-dhàlì?
Do you have any beer?

S2 Shi-ba-deh.
Yes, we have.

Beh-hnàlòun yu-
màlèh?
How many cans would you like?

A variant

S1 Sàmu-s'a yà-
màlì?
Could we have some samusa?

S2 Ya-ba-deh.
Yes, you can.

Beh-hnàk'ú yu-
màlèh?
How many would you like?

If there isn’t any

S2 Màshi-ba-bù.
No, we haven’t any.

Koun-dhwa-bì.
We’ve run out.

S‘aw-ri-nàw.
I’m sorry.

New words
shì-deh
samusa ²
to exist, to be

beh-hnà-
parata ³
how many [bottles, cans, cups, etc]
**4.5. IS THAT ALL?**

**New words**

S1 Da-bèh-là?  ပိုင်ယူခြင်း Is that all?

or Da-bèh-naw? ပိုင်ယူနေ Is that’s all, is it?

S2 Da-bè-bèh. ပိုင်ယူခြင်း Yes, that’s all.

or Shi-ba-dhè-deh. ပိုင်ယူမှု There’s more. There’s something else.

**Note**

Shi-ba-deh. “There is something”.  
Shi-ba-dhè-deh. “There is something else”.  

The suffix -dhè/deh conveys the meaning “additional, more, further”.

**4.6. WHAT’S THAT or THIS?**

Da ba-lèh? ပူး ပါဝင် It’s that?

Sàmu-s’a-ba. ပူးပါဝင် A “samusa”?

Houq-kèh. Sàmu-s’a. ပူးပါဝင် Yes, a samusa.

**Notes**

Da ba-lèh? literally “That what-question”. Burmese doesn’t need a word that corresponds to “is” (compare Da beh-lauq-lèh? “How much is that?” Lesson 1.11).

-ba. Remember that -pa/ba is suffixed to an answer to convey politeness, and is not part of the name (see also Lesson 1.4 numbers: 3419-ba.). So the name of the object is “sàmu-s’a”, not “sàmu-s’a-ba”.

**4.7. IS THERE A TOILET HERE?**

S1 Di-hma ein-dha shì-là? တိုင်းကို ပါဝင်မှု Is there a toilet here?

S2 Shi-ba-deh. ပိုင်ယူမှု Yes, there is.

Di-beq-hma. ပိုင်ယူခြင်း It’s this way.

or

S2 Mâshi-ba-bù. ပါဝင်မှု No, there isn’t.
Notes
Di-beq “this direction”, “this way”.

4.8. SETTLING UP

S1 Paiq-s’an shin-meh. ဗိုလ်ခေါင် မင်မယ် We’ll settle up now.
Beh-lauq သည်နှစ်မှ�� What does it come to?
cá-dhalièh? ကြက်မှေ
S2 Shiq-caq-pa. စိုက်ကိုချေ Eight kyats.

New words
paiq-s’an ဗိုလ်ခေါင် money
shìn-deh မင်မယ် to clear up, to settle
beh-lauq သည်နှစ်မှﬁ how much
cá-deh ကြက်မှေ to come to, to add up to

4.9. PAYING AND LEAVING

S1 Paiq-s’an di-hma. ဗိုလ်ခေါင် မင်မယ် Here’s the money.
S2 Cé-zù tin-ba-deh. ကျဲ သင်းမယ် Thank you.
or Cé-zù-bèh. ကျဲ Thanks.
S1 Thwá-meh-naw. သွားမယ် Goodbye.
S2 Kau˘n-ba-bi. ကွန်းပေါင်း Goodbye.

Notes.
Cé-zù-bèh “Thanks” is a shade more casual than Cé-zù tin-ba-deh.
Thwá-meh-naw literally: “I’m going to go – is that OK?”. There are many variants, e.g.
Pyan-meh-naw. ဖျင်သွင်းမယ် I’m going home now – OK?
Thwá-ba-ùn-meh. သွားပေါင်းမယ် I will go now.
Kau˘n-ba-bi = “That’s fine”, “Yes, that’s all right”. The standard response to a Goodbye phrase.

Review for Unit 4: Cafés and Restaurants

Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

Review Dialogue
Scene: A café in Rangoon. S1 is the waiter. S2 is a foreign visitor who has gone in for a cup of tea with a friend.

S1 Beh-hma tʾain-jin-dhalièh, Kʾin-bya? သည်နှစ်မှﬁတာလာ ကင်-ပါည Where would you like to sit?
S2 Di-hma သည်နှစ်မှﬁ Is it cool here?
S1 Houq-khń. သည်နှစ်မယ် Please sit down.
S2 Ka˘n-ba-bi. ကွန်းပေါင်း Right.
S1 Ba hma-malēh. ကင်မယ် What would you like to order?
S2 Làpʾeq-ye လုပ်ဗျားနိုင် tʾakʾweq-nēh သန်းနိုင် Vīn-tō tʾakʾweq pē-ba. Give us a cup of tea and a glass of Vimto.
S1 Vīn-tō māshı´-ba-bū, Kʾin-bya. သန်းနိုင် Sʾaw-ri-naw Where have we no Vimto. I’m sorry.
S2 Di-lo-so နဝနေ့ ဗိုလ်ခြင်း yā-malā? နဝနေ့ In that case, could we have some milk?
S1 Yʾa-ba-deh. Beh-hnākʾweq yu-malēh? သန်းနိုင် သာလိုင် Yes. How many glasses would you like?
S2 Tʾakʾweq. သန်းနိုင် One glass.
S1 Làpʾeq-ye လုပ်ဗျားနိုင် tʾakʾweq-nēh သန်းနိုင် nyā-nō tʾakʾweq. သန်းနိုင် Yʾa-ba-deh. Da-bèh-lā? သန်းနိုင် One cup of tea and one glass of milk. Fine. Is that everything?
S2 Shī-ba-dhē-deh. စိုးပေါင်း Eh-da ba-lēh? စိုးပေါင်း No. there’s more.

Notes.
Kau˘n-ba-bi = “That’s fine”, “Yes, that’s all right”. The standard response to a Goodbye phrase.
UNIT 4: Cafes and restaurants

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

S1 Lap'eq-ye tawk'weq, nwâ-nô kaw-byân-jaw tâk'û. Thouń-zéh hnâcaq-pâ. 
One cup of tea, one glass of milk, and one spring roll. 32 kyats please.

S2 Thouń-zéh hnâcaq-lâ?
32 kyats?

S1 Houq-kêh-ba. 
That’s right.

S2 Paiq-s'an di-hma. 
Here’s the money.

S1 Cè-zû tin-ba-deh. 
Thank you.

S2 Thwâ-meh-naw? 
Goodbye.

S1 Kaün-ba-bi, K'in-bya. 
Goodbye.

UNIT 5. TAXIS

The words you learn in this Unit can also be used for bicycle trishaws, and for pony carts in Mandalay and Maymyo and other towns.

5.1. WHERE TO?

S2 Beh thwâ-malèh? 
Where are you going to?

or 
Beh thwâ-jin-dhâlèhn? 
Where do you want to go to?

or 
Beh-go-lèh? 
Where to?

S2 Sätt'ârin Ho-tee thwâ-meh. 
I’m going to the Strand Hotel.

S1 Yâ-ba-deh. 
All right.

or Kaün-ba-bi. 
Fine.

or Teq-pa. 
Get in.

or Teq. 
Get in (less courteous).
New words

beh  ပား  where to
teq-teh  သန်သွား  to mount, go up, get into

Notes

Beh thwà-máiēh? “Where are you going to?” and Sa˘t’a˘rín Ho-tèh thwà-meh “I’m going to the Strand Hotel.” Notice that in Burmese you say “Where are you going to go?” and Sa˘t’a˘rín Ho-tèh thwà-meh “I’m going to go to the Strand Hotel.” You use thwà-meh not thwà-deh.

Sa˘t’a˘rín Ho-tèh thwà-meh “I’m going to the Strand Hotel.” “The Strand Hotel” comes before “I’m going to” the opposite order to English. See also Lesson 1.9: Eh-da caiq-pa-deh “I like that one”, literally “That one I like”.

Note also that Burmese does not need to use a word corresponding to the English “to”. There is a suffix (-go/ -ko) that can be used to avoid ambiguity, but it is normal to use no suffix at all.

5.2. DESTINATIONS

The list below gives the items presented on the tape. For a fuller list see the Topical Vocabulary for sites and places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>làn လမ</td>
<td>road, street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bo-jouq Làn ပိုးရိုးလမ</td>
<td>Bogyoke Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māhà Ban-dú-là မဟာပျဉ်္စလမ</td>
<td>Maha Bandoola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Làn လမ</td>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ánaw-yàt’a Làn အနွေးရာသာလမ</td>
<td>Anawrahta Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88 Bo-jouq Làn မျဉ်းနေစိုးလမ</td>
<td>88 Bogyoke Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 Māhà Ban-dú-là မဟာပျဉ်္စလမ</td>
<td>47 Maha Bandoola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Làn လမ</td>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p’àyà ပုစ</td>
<td>pagoda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(also used to refer to Buddha images and the Buddha himself)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shwe-dà-goun စိုက်ပျဉ်္စ</td>
<td>Shwedagon Pagoda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P’àyà ပုစ</td>
<td>Sule Pagoda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

Bo-jouq: short for Bo-jouq Aun S’a˚n “General Aung San”, the national leader who won independence for Burma from the British, but was assassinated by a rival in 1947.

Māhà Ban-dú-là: a talented general who commanded the king’s armies in campaigns against the British in 1824-1825.


5.3. CHECKING THE FARE

Before getting into the taxi

S1  Beh-lauq pè-yà-máiēh? ရာလှော်ပူး-ဗမာခွင့်  How much shall I have to pay?
S2  Hnàya pè-bà. ရာရှ်ပူး  Give me 200 kyats.
S1  Kàun-bà-bì. ကျားပါ  Let’s go. (Literally “We’ll go”)
At the end of the journey
S1 Hnäya-naw? 200/- ฉันมา
It was 200 kyats,
wasn’t it?
S2 Houq-pa-deh.  htu
Yes, that’s right.

New words
pè-yá-deh အောင်  to have to give, to pay
houq-teh  လိုအပ်

Notes
pè-yá-deh: pè-deh means “to give” Inserting -yá- into pè-deh (or other verbs) adds the sense of “have to, must”: e.g.
Di-hma t’ain-deh.  မိုး  ရိုးလိုအပ်  He sat here.
Di-hma t’ain-yá-deh.  မိုး  ရိုးလိုအပ်  He had to sit here.
Ngà-daw-la pè-meh.  ကျွန်ုပ်  လိုအပ်  I’ll give them $5.
Ngà-daw-la pè-yá-meh.  ကျွန်ုပ်  လိုအပ်  I’ll have to give them $5.

Fares. Prices in Burma are subject to serious inflation. The taxi fares used here were normal in 1997 when the course was recorded. By 2008 (the date of some minor revisions) the lowest fares around town were 2000-3000 kyats.

5.4. NEGOTIATING THE FARE 1

S1 Néh-nèh myà-deh.  နှစ်လုံ ပူးပေါင်း  That’s a bit too much.
Sháw-ba-oùn-là?  ပေါင်း နှစ်ခြုံ  Could you bring it down a bit more?
or Beh-lauq pè-jin-dhài-èh?  လျှောက်လျှင်  လိုအပ်  How much do you want to pay?
or Beh-lauq pè-mài-èh?  လျှောက်လျှင်  လိုအပ်  How much will you pay?
S1 Táyà ngà-zèh pè-meh.  ရောင်း လိုအပ်  I’ll pay you 150 kyats
Yàmài-là?  ယူနေလိုအပ်  Will you accept that?

S2 Yà-ba-deh.
or Kaùn-ba-bi.
Teq-pa.

5.5. NEGOTIATING THE FARE 2

S1 Táyà  lie-zèh pè-meh.
Yàmài-là?  ယူနေလိုအပ်  How about that?
S2 Máyà-bù Bya.  ပေါင်းလျှင်  ယူနေလိုအပ်  I can’t do that.
or Nèh-deh Bya.  ပေါင်းလျှင်  ယူနေလိုအပ်  That’s too little.
or Di-lauq másháw-nain-bu-bù.  လျှင် လျှင် ယူနေလိုအပ်  I can’t drop it that much.
S1 Beh-lauq sháw-mài-èh?  လျှင်လျှင်  လိုအပ်  How much will you take off?
S2 Táyà k’un-nàs’èh pè-ba.
or Táyà k’un-nàs’èh t’a-ba.
S1 Kaùn-ba-bi.
Thwà-meh.

Pronounce eî as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
New words

Bya [short for K’in-bya: see 2.7] pronounced as in vein
néh-deh to be a little, too little pronounced as in Thailand
di-lauq this much, so much pronounced as in Sauerkraut
sháw-nain-deh to be able to reduce
tá-deh to put at, to set at, to “make it”

5.6. NEGOTIATING THE FARE

S1 Nèh-nèh mya´-ba-deh. [that's a bit steep.]
Sháw-ba-oùn-là? How about bringing it down a bit?
S2 Mäsháw-nain-ba-bù. I can't reduce it.

or Da ánèh-zoùn-bèh. That's the lowest price.
S1 Aw. Di-lo-s'o mäsi-dáw-ba-bù. Oh. In that case I won't take your taxi.

New words
ánèh-zoùn the lowest, the least pronounced as in Vein
dí-deh to ride, travel in or on pronounced as in Thailand

Notes
Mäsi-ba-bù = “I won't ride (in your taxi)”. Mäsi-dáw-ba-bù = “I won't ride (in your taxi) after all” – with the implication that you fully intended to, but his high fare has made you change your mind. The suffix -táw/dáw with a negated verb conveys the meaning “no longer, not any more, not after all”.

5.7. WHERE TO STOP

Questions
Di-hma yaq-c’ín-dhálà? Do you want to stop here?
Di-hma yaq-malà? Are we (or you) going to stop here?

Answers
Houq-kén, di-hma yaq-meh. Yes, we'll stop here.
Houq-kén, di-hma yaq-pa. Yes, please stop here.
Di-hma máyaq-c’ín-ba-bù. I don't want to stop here.
Lo-ba-dhè-deh. There's still some way to go.
Shè-nà-hma yaq-meh. We're going to stop just over there.

New words
lo-deh to be lacking, to be missing pronounced as in Vein
shè-nà-hma just over there (ahead-vicinity-in) pronounced as in Thailand

Notes
The suffix -ya- adds the idea of “have to, should, ought to”.

Compare Lesson 5.3 and 5.4: Beh-lauq pé-yá-maléh “How much shall I have to pay?” as against Beh-lauq pé-maléh “How much will you give me?”

Lo-ba-dhè-deh “something is missing, there is some way to go”. Lo-ba-dhè-deh “something is still missing, there is still some way to go”. Compare Lesson 4.5: Shi-ba-dhè-deh “There is more to come.”

REVIEW FOR UNIT 5: TAXIS, PART 1 (LESSONS 5.1–5.7)
Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.
Review Dialogue 1
Scene: A street in Rangoon. S1 is a foreign visitor and S2 is a taxi driver. The foreigner approaches the driver, who is sitting in his taxi, and asks –

S1 Á-dha˘la´?

Are you free?
Yes, I am (+ tag).

Beh thwà-jin-
thdàihéh?

Where do you want to go?

S1 Bì-màn le-yin-
yùn thwà-jin-
ba-deh.
S2 Beh youn-
lièh?

I want to go to the
Biman airline office.
The Biman Airline office.

S1 Aw. Bì-màn-
là?
S2 Bì-màn le-
yùn-ba.

Oh – Biman, is it?
The Biman Airline office.

S1 Yà-ba-deh. Teq-
pa.

That’s all right. Get in.

S1 Beh-lauq pé-yà-
màíhéh?

How much shall I have to pay?

To Biman? Give me umm – K120.

S2 Bì-màn go-
là?

120 kyats?

Hàwa-lauq pé-
bàw. Tàyà hnaś’eh.

That’s right (+ tag).

S1 Tàyà hnaś’eh-là?
S2 Houq-pà-deh
K’in-bya.

120 kyats?

That’s right (+ tag).

S1 Nèh-nèh myà-
ba-deh.
Shàw-ba-oùn-là?

That’s a bit too much.

S2 Beh-lauq pé-jin-
thdàihéh?

How about dropping it?

S1 Tàyà pé-meh.
Y’à-màlà?

120 kyats?

I’ll give you 100 kyats. Would you accept that?

When you get near the Biman office the driver asks –

S2 Beh-hma yaq-
c’in-thdàihéh?

Where do you want to stop? Should I stop here?

Di-hma yaq-yà-
màíhéh.

S1 Lo-ba-
thdè-deh.
Shè-nà-hma yaq-
meh.

We’re not there yet. We’ll stop just over there.

S2 Di-hma-
là?

You mean here?

S1 Houq-khé. Di-
hma.

Yes here.

Tàyà tás’eh-naw?

It was 110 kyats wasn’t it?

S2 Houq-pà-deh
K’in-bya.

That’s right (+ tag).

S1 Pàiq-s’an di-hma.

Here’s the money.

S2 Gè-zú tin-
ba-deh.

Thank you.

S1 Thwà-meh-naw?

Goodbye.

S2 Kaùn-
ba-bi.

Goodbye.
Review Dialogue 2

Scene: a street in Rangoon. S1 is a foreign visitor and S2 is a taxi driver. The foreigner flags down a taxi and the driver asks –

S2 Beh-lèh Bya? Where to (+ tag)?
S1 Thòun-zèn lè Mâha Ban-dú-lâ Lân thwà-meh.

S2 Yà-deh. Teq. OK. Climb in.
S1 Tàyá ngâ-zeh-lâ? How much will I have to pay?
S2 Mâhouq-p’u. It’ll cost you K250.

S1 Ne’h-ne’h mya´-ba-dhà-neh. It’s a bit too high.
S2 Mâshâw-nain-bâ-bû. Da anèh-zoûn-bèh. No I can’t. That’s the lowest I can go.

S1 Aw. Di-ło’so má-sì-dâw-bà-bû. In that case I won’t take the taxi after all.
S2 Kaün-bà-bi. Very well.

5.8 AND 5.9. WE WANT TO GO TOMORROW. WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO TAKE US?

S1 Mâneq-p’àn né-leh Ngâ-daq-ci P’âyà thwà-jin-ba-deh. We want to go to the Ngadatkyi Pagoda tomorrow at midday.

S2 Da-bâw Bya. Hrâyà ngâ-zeh.
S1 Néh-nèh myâ-ba-deh. Shàw-ba-oûn-là? That’s a bit too high. Can you bring it down?
S2 Mâshâw-nain-bâ-bû. Da anèh-zoûn-bèh. No I can’t. That’s the lowest I can go.

S1 Aw. Di-ło’so má-sì-dâw-bà-bû. In that case I won’t take the taxi after all.
S2 Kaün-bà-bi. Very well.

Notes and variants
di-né “today”: also di-gâné and gâné.
mâneq-p’àn “tomorrow”: also mâneq-p’yân, mâneq-p’yin, neq-p’an, neq-p’yân, and neq-p’yin.
laiq-pó-deh “to take (someone somewhere)”: people often add the suffix -p’ê- (from the word pê- “to give”), making laiq-pó-pê-deh, which acknowledges the fact that you are doing your passengers a service, and therefore sounds more polite. In the
dialogue above the phrase also carries the suffix -nain- “to be able to”, making lai-pó-pó-nain-deh. For -nain- see also Lesson 5.5: Di-lauq másháw-nain-ba-bù “I can’t drop it that much”.

5.10. FIXING A TIME

New words
na-yi น้​า​ยี  hour, clock
mí-niq မာ​နို  minute

Examples of times
lè-na-yi လယ်​နော်  four o’clock
kò-na-yi ကြို​နော်  nine o’clock
kò-na-yi s'éh-ngà-mí-niq ကြို​နော်​ဆောင်​နော်​နို  9:15

Notes
Note that tiq, hniq, k’un-hniq weaken as usual (see Lesson 1.5, 1.7, 1.9):
tâna-yi တော်​နော်  one o’clock
k’ün-nâna-yi ကို​နော်​နော်  seven o’clock
And the Round Number Rule is observed (see 2.1):
hnâna-yi mí-niq ဟာ်​နော်​နို  2:20
hnâs’ëh ဟေ​စော်​  6:30
c’auq-na-yi mí-niq ကော်​နော်​နို  6:30
niq thôn-zeh နို​ထွင်​  6:30
Half past the hour is sometimes shortened. For example, for “6.30”, in place of the pattern above, you may hear –
c’auq-na-yi-gwë’h ကော်​နော်​ ဗိ​  6:30
and so on for other times. The suffix -k’wë’h/gwë’h means “and a half”.

5.11. PLEASE COME AT 8:30.

S1 Beh âc’ein la-yá-mâléh?  ဘာ​အက်​ဦး​လျင်​လာ​လို​ချင်မလာလာ  What time should I come?

S2 Shiq-na-yi-gwë’-hma la-ba.  စို​ကြာဦး​ဗိ​လှ​လာ  Please come at half past eight.

S1 Yâ-ba-deh.  ယော်​လာ​လို​ Fine.
S2 Shiq-na-yi-gwë’-hma di-hma saûn-ne-meh.  စို​ကြာဦး​ဗိ​လှ​လာ​တာ​လို​စားနော်​လို  I’ll wait here at half past eight.
S1 Ka’ûn-ba-bi.  ကြော်​လာ​လို​ Very well.

New words
la-deh လာ​လို  to come
saûn-ne-deh စားနော်​လို  to wait

Notes
Beh âc’ein la-yá-mâléh? Another occurrence of the suffix -yá- “have to, should, ought to”. For earlier examples see Lesson 5.3 Beh-lauq pé-yá-mâléh? “How much should I pay?” and Lesson 5.7 Beh-hma yaq-yá-mâléh? “Where should I stop?”.

Beh âc’ein la-yá-mâléh? There are a couple of common variants for la- “to come” in this context. You may hear la-gënh- “to come round” or “to come back” or “to come over”; or la-k’aw- “to come and fetch”; e.g.

S1 Beh âc’ein la-gënh-yá-mâléh?  ဘာ​အက်​ဦး​လျင်​လာ​လာ​လို​ချင်မလာလာ  What time should I come round?
S2 Shiq-na-yi-gwë’-la-gënh-ba.  စို​ကြာဦး​ဗိ​လှ​လာ  Please come round at half past eight.
You may also hear la-ze-jin-deh “to want (someone) to come”, and the variants la-gënh-ze-jin-deh and la-k’aw-ze-jin-deh.

Example:

S1 Beh âc’ein la-gënh-ze-jin-dâléh?  ဘာ​အက်​ဦး​လျင်​လာ​လာ​လာ​လို​ချင်မလာလာ  What time would you like me to come round?
S2 Shiq-na-yi-gwë’-la-gënh-ba.  စို​ကြာဦး​ဗိ​လှ​လာ  Please come round at half past eight.

Shiq-na-yi-gwë’-hma: the suffix -hma “at, on, in” is optional with times. For examples of both options see the sentences above.
**REVIEW FOR UNIT 5: TAXIS, PART 2 (LESSONS 5.8–5.11)**

Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

**Review Dialogue**

**Scene:** Mandalay, outside the railway station. A foreign visitor (S2) wants to arrange for a pony cart driver (S1) to fetch her the following morning.

S1 Beh laiq-pó-pé-ya-mále? K'in-bya?
Where can I take you (+ tag)?

S2 Mánéq-p'an P'áya-thwa-jin-ba-deh.
I want to go there.

S1 Beh ác'ein thwa-jin-dhále?
What time do you want to go?

S2 Mánéq thwa-jin-ba-deh.
I want to go in the morning.

S1 Aw. Lé-na-yi-gwéh-hma.
I'm not free at 4:30 (+ tag).

S2 Nà måleh-ba-bú. S'áw-ri-naw?
I don't understand.

S3 Keiq-sá máshí-ba-bú bya. Mát'ú-hlá-ba-bú.
Never mind. It's nothing important.

S2 Nà måleh-ba-bú. Beh hma la-k'aw-ze-jin-dhále?
Where do you want me to pick you up?

At the Mandalay Hotel. The Mandalay Hotel. Fine.

The foreigner would normally agree a fare at this point, but to keep the scene short we're omitting that phase. The dialogue resumes with the foreign lady confirming the arrangement.
UNIT 6. SHOPS

6.1. ASKING THE PRICE AND PAYING UP

Da beh-lauq-leh?  ဦး ဘာလိုက်လိုက်  How much is this?
S2 S'én-ngá-jaq-pa. ရိုး/ဉာဏ် 15 kyats.
S1 Kaün-ba-bi. ကျွန်းပြား  OK
   Yu-meh.  ရုပ်မြင်  I’ll take it.
   Di-hma.  ရုပ်မြင်  Here you are.
S2 Ce-zú tin-ba-deh. ကျွန်းပြားပြား  Thank you.
S1 Thwá-meh-naw.  သို့မှော်ပြား  Goodbye.
S2 Kaün-ba-bi. ကျွန်းပြား  Goodbye.

New words
yu-deh  ရုပ်မြင် to take

Variants
Da beh-lauq-néh  ဦး ဘာလိုက်လိုက် How much is this?
yauⁿ-dhá leth?  နောင်ပြား ("With how much do you sell this?")
Da beh-lo yauⁿ-dhá leth?  နောင်ပြား ("How do you sell this?")

6.2. HAVE YOU GOT ...? YES.

S1 Ba áló shí-ba-dhá leth?  ဦး အရှေ့ပြားလည်  What do you need?
S2 Ba lo-jín-dhá leth?  ဦး လူးပြားလည်  What do you want?

or  Ba weh-jín-ló-leh?  ဦး ဝက်လူးလည်  What would you like to buy?
S2 Pó-sákq shí-là?  ပြားက်  ရောင်လူး  Do you have any postcards?
S1 Shí-ba-deh.  Di-hma.  ရုပ်မြင် ရုပ်မြင်  Yes I have. Here.
S2 Ci-meh-naw?  ကျွန်းပြား  Do you mind if I have a look at them?
S1 Ci-bá.  ကျွန်းပြား  No, do.
   Y'ábá-deh.  ကျွန်း  That's all right.

New words

weh-deh  ဝက်ပြား to buy
álo 'shí-deh  အရှေ့ ရောင်  to need, to want
lo-jín-deh  လူး ရောင်  to want (something)
ci-deh  ကျွန်း  to look at
shí-deh  ရောင်  to have, to be (somewhere)

Some imported items in shops are known by their English names in Burmese: e.g. film, plaster, postcard, cigarette, sellotape, ball pen, T-shirt, and others.

Notes
lo-jín-deh: literally: “need+want to”. Clearly the word has changed its meaning since this compound was first put together. Don’t confuse –
   [...] lo-jín-deh “to want [something]” with
   [...]-jin-deh “to want [to do something]”: e.g.
P’álín lo-jín-ba-deh.  ပြားဗုဒ္ဓ့ ကျွန်းပြား  I want a film.
   T’ain-jín-ba-deh.  လူးဗုဒ္ဓ့  ကျွန်းပြား  I want to sit down.
plaster = Band Aid in the USA.
sellotape = Scotch tape in the USA.
ball pen = ball point pen in the UK.

Variant
In place of Ci-meh-naw? you may hear –
   Ci-yá-aun.  ကျွန်း  Can I have a look?
6.3. HAVE YOU GOT ...? NO.

S2 Pa˘la-sa˘ta shí-là?  Do you have any sticking plaster?
S1 Mashi-ba-bu.  No, I haven’t.
or Mashi-daw-ba-bu.  No, I haven’t any more.
Koun-dhwà-bí.  I’ve run out.
S’aw-ri-naw?  I’m sorry.

Notes
Keiq-sá máshi-ba-bu.  Literally “activity + not + exist”: hence “it’s no bother”, “it doesn’t matter”.
Máshi-ba-bú “I haven’t any”. Máshi-dáw-ba-bú. “I haven’t any more. I no longer have any”. The suffix -táw/ -da˘w with a negated verb conveys the meaning “no longer, not any more, not after all”. Compare Mási-dáw-ba-bú. “I won’t take (your taxi) after all” in 5.6.

6.4. THINGS TO BUY
New words
The following are the words practised on the tape. For other things you may want to buy look in the English-Burmese vocabulary.
paiq-s’an-eiq pursue (“money bag”)
lweh-eiq shoulder bag (see note below)
sa-eiq envelope (“letter bag”)
sa-yé-seq-ku writing paper (“letter-write paper”)
uouq-t’ouq hat (“head binding”)

Note
lweh-eiq is literally a “hang-from-the-shoulder bag”. A bag woven of wool and cotton with a long integral loop to drape from your shoulder. Also called “Shan bag” in English because many of them are made in the Shan State.

6.5. HOW MANY?
New word
beh-hnà-...  How many ...?

Countwords
The following are the countwords used on the tape. For a fuller list see Appendix 4 (the number system).
k’weq  cup, glass (of drink)
bú  packet (of plasters, cigarettes), jar (of coffee), tube (of toothpaste)
leiq  roll (of film, toilet paper)
k’we  reel (of tape)
lo˘n  bottle, can; also countword for bags, envelopes, hats, ...
k’u  item, unit (for samusa, postcard, ...)

Example sentences
S1 Pa˘la-sa˘ta beh-hnà-bu˘ yu-ma˘le˘h?  How many boxes of plaster will you have?
S2 Ta˘bu˘ yu-meh.  I’ll take one.
S1 P’a˘lin beh-hnà-leiq yu-ma˘le˘h?  How many rolls of film will you have?
S2 Ta˘leiq yu-meh.  I’ll take one.

6.6. DIFFERENT KINDS
New words
da-myò  that kind
thoun-myò  three kinds
ämyò-myò  various kinds
di-pyin or di-pyin  apart from this (“this + outside”)

Sample exchanges
S1 Da-myò caiq-là?  Do you like this kind?
I don’t like that kind very much.

What do you have apart from this?

Besides that we have two other kinds.

That’s all I have.

Besides that we have two other kinds.

That’s all I have.

Note

Ba ʃi-dhalèh? “What is there?”. Ba ʃi-dhalèh? “What else is there?”. Compare Shì-ba-dhe´-deh “There is more to come” in 4.5, and Lo-ba-dhe´-deh “something is still missing, there is still some way to go” in 5.7.

Colours

In case you want to ask for different colours here is a list of some words that may be helpful.

Basic colour words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Burmese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a˘yaun</td>
<td>အရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘pya</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘sein</td>
<td>အရုစိ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘wa</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘ni</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘p’yu</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a˘nyo</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñneq</td>
<td>အရှေ့</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example

A˘pya shì-la’? အရှေ့ စိုးလေ့မည် Do you have a blue one? Do you have any blue ones?

Sa-eiq-àp’yu စိုးစိုးအရှေ့မည် I like the white envelope. I like the white envelopes.

Colours named after objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Burmese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lein-maw-yaun</td>
<td>လီမော် ရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’àyän-yaun</td>
<td>ကြီးရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pàn-yaun</td>
<td>ပွေ့ရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shwe-yaun</td>
<td>စိုးရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngwe-yaun</td>
<td>နေဝါရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi-gó-yaun</td>
<td>မိုးရိုအင်</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needless to say, the list above is indefinitely extendable.

If pressed, you can always fall back on comparison: point to something and say –

di-àyaun စိုးအင် this colour

6.7. I’LL LEAVE IT THANKS

New words and phrases

Di-lo-s’o မော်လောguard—away

daw-ba-bù. ဒေါ်ဖြစ်အလေ့ In that case I’ll leave it.

Ci’oûn-meh-naw? ကျွန်ုပ်များအလေ့ I’ll keep on looking.

I’ll think about it

Sample exchange

S1 Nèh-nèh myà-ba-deh. နယ်နိုင်ငံယုန်မြို့ In that case I’ll leave it.

I’ll think about it

Shàw-ba-oûn-là. စိုးချင်းလေ့ How about dropping the price?

S2 Mâyà-bù-byà. မရိုအောင်ပြေး No.

I can’t drop it.

S1 Aw. Cè-zù tin-ba-deh. အဝိုက်စိုးမြင် ကျွန်ုပ်များအလေ့ I’ll keep on looking.

S2 Kaûn-ba-bì. ကျွန်ုပ်များအလေ့ As you wish.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Notes
Māweh-ba-bù “I won’t buy it”. Māweh-dāw-ba-bù “I won’t buy it after all”. The suffix -dāw-/hāw- with a negated verb conveys the meaning “no longer, not after all”.

Ci-meh-naw? “I’m going to have a look – OK?”
Ci-ou´n-meh-naw? “I’ll keep on looking – OK?”. The suffix -ou´n- conveys continuation, something extra, more.

REVIEW FOR UNIT 6: SHOPS
Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

Review dialogue 1
S1, a foreign visitor, wants to buy a purse. He goes into a shop that has some purses on the counter, and picks out one he quite likes. He asks the shopkeeper (S2) –

S1 Eh-da Bāma-lo beh-lo k’aw-dhāle˘h?
S2 Paiq-s’an-eiq-pa.

What’s that called in Burmese?
S1 Paiq-s’an-eiq-la˘?
S2 Houq-pa-deh.

It’s called “paiq-s’an-eiq”.
S1 Da beh-lauq-le˘h?
S2 225-jaq-pa.

Yes.
S1 T’aq-pyaw-ba˘-ou˘n.
S2 225-jaq-pa.

Please could you say that again?
S1 Di-pyin ba shi˘-dhāle˘h?
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

How much is that?
S1 Da-yeh, da-yeh, da-yeh.
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

At the moment we have three types.
S1 Da-yeh, da-yeh, da-yeh.
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

This one, this one, and this one.
S1 Da-myo˘ caiq-thāl˘a˘?
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

Do you like that kind?
S1 Di-pyin ba shi˘-dhāle˘h?
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

What else do you have?
S1 Da-yeh, da-yeh, da-yeh.
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

This one, this one, and this one.
S1 Da-myo˘ caiq-thāl˘a˘?
S2 Lāw-lāw-zeh thōn-myō˘-bēh shi˘-ba-deh.

Do you like that kind?

Review Dialogue 2.
Scene: Another shop. S1 is a foreign visitor and S2 is the shopkeeper.

S1 Theiq mācaiq-pa˘-bū.
S2 Beh-ha caiq-thāle˘h?
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

Which kind do you like?
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

I like that one.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

Right. It is pretty.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

The leather is good quality too.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

It was 225 wasn’t it?
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

Yes it was.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

That’s a bit too much.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

How about bringing it down a bit?
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

I can’t bring that down.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

That’s my lowest price.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

Oh. Then I’ll carry on looking.
S1 Eh-da caiq-pa˘-deh.
S2 Houq-kē˘˘. Hī˘˘-ba˘-deh.

As you wish.
S1 Di-pyn ba shî-dhê-dhâlêh?  What else do you have?
S2 Ba-hmâ mashî-bû bya.  I don’t have anything else.
Di tâmîyô-dêh-bêh shî-ba-deh.  I just have this one kind.

The customer decides to take it after all.
S1 Da beh-lauq-leh?  How much is this?
S2 S’e­h­-hna­­caq-pa k’in­-bya.  12 kyats, Sir.

S1 Neh-nêh myà-ba-deh.  That’s a bit too much.
Shàw-ba-oûn-là.  How about reducing that?
S1 Beh-lauq shàw-ma­le­h?  How much would you reduce it by that much?
S2 Ta­tjaq-ta­w shàw-îo­-mâyá-bû bya.  I could take off a kyat.

S1 Beh-lauq shàw-mâlêh?  How much would you reduce it?
S2 Ta­tjaq-tâw shàw-îo­-yâ-deh.  I could take off a kyat.
S’êh-tâjaq pê­-laiq-pa­-là?  How about you paying me 11 kyats?

S1 Kaûn-ba­-bi. Yu­-mêh.  All right. I’ll take it.
Sa­-yê-seq-ku shî­-là?  Do you have any writing paper?
S2 Sa­-yê-seq-ku­-dâw mashî­-dâw-ba­-bû.  I haven’t any writing paper left.
Koun-dhwa­-bi.  It’s all sold.
S’âw-ri­-naw.  Sorry.

UNIT 7. TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS

7.1 AND 7.2. EXCUSE ME (TO MEN AND TO WOMEN)

Normally you attract someone’s attention by using a kin term, choosing one that is appropriate to the gender and relative age of the person you want to speak to. The list below gives a short selection which will provide you with a term suitable for almost all occasions.

ú-lê  uncle
Daw-daw  aunt
A­­ko  brother
A­­má  sister
Thà  son
Thà­­mí  daughter

Common responses to “Excuse me”
Houq-kên?  What is it?
Ba-le­h?  Yes?
Bya?  Yes? (man speaking)
Shin?  Yes? (woman speaking)

Note
Bya? is a shortened form of K’in-bya, the polite tag for male speakers.
Shin? is the same word as the polite tag for female speakers.
7.3. DO YOU MIND IF I TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH?

S1 Di-hma daq-poun yaiq-c’ìn-ba-deh. I’d like to take a photograph here.

S2 Yä-deh-naw? That’s all right isn’t it?

S1 K’âná-lê-naw? Just a moment, OK?

Kêh. There.

Pi-bi. I’ve taken it.

Alternative ending

S1 Di-hma daq-poun yaiq-c’ìn-ba-deh. I’d like to take a photograph here.

S2 S’ain-gó daq-poun yaiq-meh? You’re going to take a photograph of the shop?

Yä-ba-deh. Of course you can.

Mäyaq-ta-bi. The photographer takes one shot, and then decides to take another.

S1 K’âná-lê-naw? Just a moment, please.


Cë-zú tin-ba-deh. Thank you.

S2 Yä-ba-deh Shin. That’s all right.

Da-néh Shin beh la-da-lêh? By the way, what country do you come from?

S1 Nâ mâle-ha-bi. I don’t understand.

Bâm-a sâg-thei mäpyaw-daq-pa-bu. I don’t speak much Burmese.

New words

k’âná a moment, an instant

k’âná-lê a little moment

pi-deh to finish

Notes

Kêh is a word you can use when you’ve just finished one thing and you’re going on to another. In English you might say “There” or “Right” or “Well” or “Now”.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

UNIT 8. ASKING THE WAY

8.1. WHERE CAN I GET A … NEAR HERE?

The question

S1 Ouq-t’ouq weh-jin-ba-deh. I’d like to buy a hat.
Di-nà-hma beh-hma yà-màlèh thì-(dhà)là? Do you know where I could get one near here?

Answer 1

S2 Shì-ba-deh. There are some.
Ya´-ba-deh. You can get one.
S2 Di-beq thwà-ba. Go this way.

Answer 2

S2 Di-nà-hma. There aren’t any around here.
Ho-beq-hma yà-meh. You’d get some way over there.

Answer 3

S2 Màthì-ba-bu. I don’t know.
S’a´w-rì-naw? I’m sorry.

New words

di-nà-hma near here (“this + area + in”)
yà-deh to get, to obtain
thì-deh to know
di-beq this way
ho-beq-hma over there

Notes

Di-nà-hma beh-hma yà-màlèh thì-dhàlà? A long sentence. It is built up like this –
Beh-hma yà-màlèh? Where could I get one?
Burmese By Ear

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8.2. IS THERE A ... NEAR HERE?

Places you may want to ask for.
The words below are those practised on the tape. For a fuller list
see the Topical Vocabulary for sites and places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t'a-mı́n-zain</td>
<td>restaurant (“rice shop”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>làp’eq-ye-zain</td>
<td>café (“tea shop”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àe-zain</td>
<td>cold drinks bar (“cold things shop”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’e-zain</td>
<td>chemist’s shop (“medicine shop”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note
Restaurant signboards often use more elegant or pretentious
names than t’a-mı́n-zain; e.g.

sà-thauq-s’ain 。“eat-drink-shop”

Do you know where
thalá?

Di-nà-hma hó-teh 。“Is there a hotel near
shí-thalá?”

Beh-lo thwa´-ya´-ma˘le´h? 。“How do I get there?”

Note
Beh-lo thwa´-ya´-ma˘le´h?: Beh-lo “how”, thwa´-ya´-ma˘le´h? “should I go”.

REVIEW FOR UNIT 8: ASKING THE WAY
Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4
Side B.

Review Dialogue 1
Scene: a street in a town in Burma. S1 is a foreign visitor, and S2 a
Burmese man.

S1 Ú-lás. 。“Excuse me.”
S2 È. 。“Yes?”

S1 Sa-eiq weh-jin-ba-deh. 。“I want to buy an
envelope.”
S2 Ba weh-jin-deh? 。“You want to buy
what?”

T’aq-pyaw-ba-oún. 。“Please say that
again.”

S1 Sa-eiq-pa. 。“An envelope.”
Di-dàw ... ? 。“So ... ?”

S1 Di-nà-hma beh-hma yá-málèh thí-là? 。“Do you know where
I could get one
around here?”

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Review Dialogue 2
Scene: a street in a town in Burma. S1 is a foreign visitor, and S2 a Burmese woman.

S1 Daw-daw.
S2 Ba-le`h Taw?
S1 Di-nà-hma ã-ë-zain shì-la`?
S2 Æyin-dòûn-gâ dì-hma shì-gêh-deh Maun-yin.
Màhnìq-kà-dàw, s`ain-sh`i`n s`iûn-dhwà-da`-là bà-la mathi-bù, peiq-t`à-laiq-ta òthà`i tà`-mi-pà-deh.
S1 Nà màle-ba`bù K`in-bya.
S2 Æyin-dòûn-gà dì-hma shì-gêh-deh Maun-yin.
Màhnìq-kà-dàw, s`ain-sh`i`n s`iûn-dhwà-da`-là bà-la mathi-bù, peiq-t`à-laiq-ta òthà`i tà`-mi-pà-deh.
S1 Daw-daw Ænàw-ya`-tà`l à`là.

Review Dialogue 3
Scene: a street in a town in Burma. S1 is a foreign visitor, and S2 a Burmese man.

S1 Ako.
S2 Houq-kèh K`in-bya.
S1 Ænàw-ya`tà`l à`là bì-hò thà`-gà dàp-bù. I`m `à`là.
S2 Ba la`n-kèh? Gàw-ràk`a Làm-li`a?
S1 Màhuq-pà-bù. Ænàw-ya`tà`l Làm-li`a.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
UNIT 9. YOUR VISIT TO BURMA

Unit 9 covers seven of the commonest topics you'll be asked about in connection with your visit.

9.1. TOPIC 1: YOU SPEAK BURMESE!

The reaction to your Burmese

\[S1\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-daq-teh-naw?  
You can speak Burmese, can't you?

\[or\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-daq-thālā?  
Can you speak Burmese?

\[or\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-daq-teh houq-lā?  
So you can speak Burmese, can you?

\[or\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-daq-pa-lā!  
Hey – you can speak Burmese!

Compliments

Yes, I can speak a bit.

\[S1\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-da theiq kāun-da-bēh.  
You speak Burmese really well!

\[or\] Bāma sāgā pyāw-da āyān pi-da-bēh.  
You speak Burmese wonderfully!

\[S2\] Aw. Cē-zū tin-ba-deh.  
Oh, thank you.

Theiq māpyāw-daq-thē-ba-bū.  
I can't speak much yet.

\[S1\] Bāma-zā-gāw p’aq-taq-thālā?  
Can you read Burmese as well?

\[S2\] Māp’aq-taq-thē-ba-bū.  
Not yet.

Yes, I can read a little.

New words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sāgā</td>
<td>to talk, speak, converse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sāgā pyāw-deh</td>
<td>to know how to talk, to be able to talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sāgā pyāw-daq-teh</td>
<td>writing, text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa p’aq-teh</td>
<td>to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sa p’aq-taq-teh</td>
<td>to know how to read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pi-deh</td>
<td>to be accurate, well pronounced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āyān</td>
<td>tremendously, stunningly, amazingly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes

Bāma sägā “Burmese (spoken language)” and Bāma sa or Bāma-za “Burmese (writing)”: you may also hear Myan-ma sägā and Myan-ma sa which have the same meanings, but are more formal terms (see 3.4).

Nēh-nēh pyāw-daq-pa-deh “I can speak a bit”. A common variant is –

Nēh-nēh-bēh  I can speak only a little so far.

The suffix -bēh means “only”, and the suffix -thē/dhe’ with positive verbs means “so far, as yet”.

-gāw/ka’w “and how about ... ?”. A suffix that asks the previous question about a new topic; example –

Peq-si caiq-

Do you like Pepsi?

Houq-kēh. Caiq-

Yes, I do.

Kouq-kāw –

How about Coke –

caiq-thēlā?

The suffix -thē/dhe’ with negated verbs conveys the meaning “so far, yet, as yet”; example –

Māa-ba-bū.  It’s not free.

Māa-dhē-ba-bū.  It’s not free yet.

Āyān kāun-da-bēh “it’s really good”: a variant, mildly exclamatory, on Theiq kāun-ba-deh “it’s very good”.

9.2. TOPIC 2: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

S1 Beh-gā la-
dhālēh? Where do you come from?

or  Beh nain-ngan-gā la-dhālēh? What country do you come from?

S2 In-gālan-gā la-
ba-deh. I come from England.

Alternative question
S1 Ba lu-myō-lih? What nationality are you?

S2 Dutch lu-myō-ba. I’m Dutch.

New words
la-deh to come
beh-gā  where from?
nain-ngan country, state
lu-myō race, nationality (“man + kind, type”)

Notes

Take care to distinguish the three basic place suffixes: -ka/-gā “from”, -hma “in, at”, and no suffix (sometimes -ko/go) “to”. Examples:

Tha-zi-ga la-ba-deh He comes from

Tha-zi-hma ne-ba-deh He lives in Thazi.

Tha-zi thwā-ba-deh He went to Thazi.

Variants.

Beh-gā la-da-lēh? Where do you come from? The three sequences [verb]-da-lēh? [verb]-dhālēh? [verb]-lēh? are all used in much the same way:

Beh-gā la-da-
lēh? Where do you come from?

Beh-gā la-
dhālēh? Where do you come from?

Beh-gā la-lēh? Where do you come from?

The same is true of questions ending in -lā:

In-gālan-gā la-
da-lā? Do you come from

In-gālan-gā la-
dhālā?  Do you come from

In-gālan-gā la-lā? Do you come from
You will also hear the suffix -ta/-da in statements:

In-gālan-gā la-da-ba.  I come from England.
In-gālan-gā la-ba-deh.  I come from England.

At this stage it is best to keep with the familiar forms (la-dhālā? la-ba-deh etc) for your own speaking, but you need to know the variants so that you can recognise them when others use them.

Names of countries

The Burmese names of the countries of the world are mostly modelled on the English names; for example:

In-gālan England
Āmeri-kā America
Ja-mānī Germany
I-tālī Italy
Jāpān Japan
In-do-ni-shā Indonesia
Āw-sātrē-lyā Australia

Country names that are not based on English versions include the following:

Tāyouq Nain-ngan China
Pyin-thiq Nain-ngan France
Thi-rī Lin-ga Nain-ngan Sri Lanka

Another group of countries have an official name and a colloquial name, comparable to “The Netherlands” (official) and “Holland” (colloquial) in English:

Tàin Nain-ngan Thailand (official)
Yò-dāyā Nain-ngan Thailand (colloquial)
Thi-rī Lin-ga Nain-ngan Sri Lanka (official)
Thi-ho Nain-ngan Sri Lanka (colloquial)

When the Burmese government wishes to express disapproval of Thai policies and actions, as it has done during the military and verbal skirmishes of 2001-2002, the state-run media have used Yò-dāyā in place of the customary Tàin Nain-ngan. The colloquial term has thus been given, in those contexts, a hint of contempt or hostility.

Formerly the Burmese name for Burma itself also had official and colloquial variants:

Myan-ma Nain-ngan Burma (official)
Bàma Nain-ngan Burma (colloquial)

However, in 1989 the military government of Burma ruled that the form Myan-ma should be used for the whole country and matters concerned with it, while the form Bàma should be limited to the ethnic Burmese. (The combination Bàma Nain-ngan was thus to become meaningless, as the ethnic Burmese have no one state of their own.) The new distinction is observed in printed material in Burma, and in spoken public addresses, but in everyday conversation the traditional meanings are still preserved. The same ruling is applied to the English terms “Burma” and “Myanmar”: see About Burmese in the introduction to this booklet.

In many cases, and particularly for the colloquial forms, the word nain-ngan “country” may be replaced by pye (e.g. Yò-dāyā Pye), which means the same thing; or it may be omitted altogether: people say Jāpān thwā-meh “I’m going to go to Japan”.

9.3 AND 9.4. TOPIC 3: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN HERE? HAVE YOU BEEN HERE LONG?

S1 (Bàma-pye) yauq-ne-da beh-lauq ca-bi-lēnh?
How long is it since you came (to Burma)?
S2 Thōun-baq shī-bi. I’ve been here three weeks.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Alternative version

S1 (Bàma-pye) yauq-ne-da ca-bì-là?
Is it long since you came (to Burma)?

S2 Ca-bì. S’eh-là-
lauq shì-bì.
Yes: it’s been about ten months.
or Màca-dhè-ba-bù. S’eh-yeq-lauq shì-bì.
No: it’s been about ten days.

New words
ca-deh to take time, to take a long time
yauq-teh arriving and being here
eyeq day
paq week
là month
hnìq year

Notes
Bàma-pye yauq-ne-da— ca-bì-là? Literally: Your arriving and staying in Burma — has it been long?
Bàma-pye yauq-ne-da— beh-lauq — ca-bì-lèh? Literally: Your arriving and staying in Burma — how much — has it been long?
Ca-bì-là? For the verb suffix -bi/pi see Verb Paradigms in Appendix 3 (outline grammar).
Bàma and Myan-ma. For the two forms of the name of the country see 3.4.
Màca-dhè-ba-bù “not long yet, not long so far”. For -thè/dhè with negated verbs see Lesson 9.1.
-lauq: a suffix added to quantities with the meaning “about, approximately”: bi-ya thòùn-lòùn three cans of beer
bi-ya thòùn-lòùn-lauq about three cans of beer
ngà-hnìq five years
ngà-hnìq-lauq about five years

9.5 AND 9.6. TOPIC 4: WHERE ARE YOU STAYING? HOW MUCH DOES IT COST? IS IT ALL RIGHT?

S1 Beh-hma tèh-(-ne)(dha˘)le˘h?
Where are you staying?

S2 H o-teh-hma tèh-
ne-ba-deh.
I’m staying in a hotel.

S1 Àk’àn-gá beh-
lauq pé-yà-
(dhà)le˘h?
How much is the rent?

S2 Tànya ngà-zeh.
K50 a night.
or Tàla hñàt’aun.
K2000 a month.

S1 Èh-hma tèh-
yà-da ñs’in pye-
là?
Is it all right staying there?

S2 Theiq ñs’in-pye-
ba-deh.
It’s working out very well.
or Theiq ñs’in
mápye-ba-bù.
It’s not working out very well.

New words
tèh-deh to stay
in inn
càun-zaun student hostel (dorm)
“school building”
meiq-s’we ein a friend’s house (“friend house”)
àk’àn-gá rent (“room charge”)
tèh-yà-da staying, the stay
Review Dialogue 1

Scene: a street in a town in Burma.  S1 is an elderly Burmese man.  S2 is a foreign woman who has just asked him the way to somewhere.

S1 Ne-ba-oùn Bya.  Beh nain-ngan-gá la-da-leh?
S2 Káne-da-gá la-ba-deh.
S1 Bámá-pye yauq-ne-da ca-bi-lá?
S2 Máca-dhè-ba-bù. Tápaq-lauq shi-bi.
S1 Bámá ságá-dáw  kaun-gaun pyáw-daq-thá-bèh.
S2 Meiq’swe ein-hma têh-ne-ba-deh.
S1 Éh-di-hma têh-yá-da à’s’in pye-lá?
S2 Theiq ñs’in pye-ba-deh.
S1 Kàun-ba-deh Bya. Theiq kàun-ba-deh.
S2 Kèh. Thèwà-mèh-naw?
S1 Houq-kèh. Kàun-ba-bi.

Review Dialogue 2

S1 is a woman in charge of a shop.  S2 is a foreign man who has just bought something in the shop and is about to leave.

S1 Yauq-ne-da beh-lauq ca-bi-leh? S2 C’auq-yèq-lauq shi-bi.

Notes
Beh-hma têh-ne-dhále? “Where are you staying?”: the suffix -ne indicates temporary, non-permanent, activity; compare:
Ba sàdha?- What do you eat? or What did you eat?
Ba sà-ne-dhále? What are you eating? or What were you eating?
Têh-yà-da “staying”: similar to yauq-ne-da “arriving” in Lesson 9.3.
Tányà ngà-zeh “K50 a night”: literally “One night: 50”.

Please treat the hotel room charges used in the exercises as for practice only.  Inflation has made actual charges rise dramatically.
Burmese By Ear

9.7 AND 9.8. TOPIC 5: WHY HAVE YOU COME TO BURMA?

A question

Bāma-pye ba keiq-sá-néh la-dháleíh?

Some answers

Alouq-néh la-ba-deh.

I came here with my job.

Ayaun-āweh keiq-sá-néh la-ba-deh.

I came on business.

Āleh-bèh la-ba-deh.

I have just come for a visit.

Tū-riq-pa-bèh.

I am just a tourist.

A variant question

Bāma-pye ba louq-p’ò la-dháleíh?

What have you come to Burma to do?

Some more answers

Daq-poun yaq-p’ò la-ba-deh.

I came here to take photographs.

Lweh-eiq weh-bó la-ba-deh.

I came here to buy Shan bags.

Thü-te-thàná louq-p’ò la-ba-deh.

I came here to do research.

Alouq louq-p’ò la-ba-deh.

I came here to work.

A false assumption

Āleh-bèh la-dalë?

Have you just come for a visit?
The answer

Màhouq-pa-bù. မဟာဝိဝင်ပော်မှုမှာ  No.
Álouq-nék la-ba-deh. အလျောက်နည်းလား  I came with my job.

New words

 álouq အလျောက်  work, job
 álouq louq-teh အလျောက်လျောက်  to do a job, to work
 áyaun-āweh အားဆောင်  business, trading
 ("buying + selling")

áleth အလိုက်  a visit, for a visit
thú-te-thäná သူ့သူ့သိန်း  to do research
thú-te-thäná သူ့သူ့သိန်း  to do research
louq-teh လျောက်သိ  a visit, for a visit
Màhouq-pa-bù. မဟာဝိဝင်ပော်မှုမှာ  No (“that is not correct”)

If your own reason for being in Burma is not one of these, you may find the words you need in the English-Burmese vocabulary at the end of this booklet.

Notes

Ba keiq-sá-néh la-dhalhèh? “What have you come for?”: keiq-sá means “business” or “activity”, so literally the phrase means “with what business” or “for what activity”.
The suffix -p'e'h/-be'h means “only, just”; compare:
Áleth la-ba-deh. အလိုက်လား  I have come for a visit.
Áleth-be'h la-ba-deh. အလိုက်လားလား  I have just come for a visit.
The suffix -p'ó/bo' means “to, in order to”. See the examples above.

9.9. TOPIC 6: WHAT DO YOU THINK OF BURMA?
Three questions on the same topic, using slightly different words.

Question 1

S1 Bàmapye-hma (ne-ya-da) ပုံမှန် (နည်းလာ)  Are things going all right for you in Burma?
or Bàmapye-hma ပုံမှန် အလာ  Is living in Burma working out all right?
or Di-hma ne-ya-da အလာ မန်  Is living here working out all right?
S2 Houq-khè. သိချင် အလာ  Yes, it is.
or Houq-khè. Theiq သိချင်း အလာ  Yes, it’s working out very well.
or Kaun-gau' အလားမရှိ  It’s working out very well.
or Más'ó-ba-bù. မဟာဝိဝင်ပော်မှုမှာ  It’s not bad.

Question 2

S1 Bàma-pye-hma (ne-ya-da) ပုံမှန် (နည်းလာ)  Do you enjoy being (living) in Burma?
or Bàma-pye-hma ပုံမှန် အလာ  Do you enjoy being (living) in Burma?
S2 Houq-khè. သိချင် ပုံမှန် အလာ  Yes, I do.
or Houq-khè. Theiq သိချင်း ပုံမှန်  Yes, I enjoy it very much.
or Áyán အားထဲမှာ  I enjoy it hugely.
Question 3

S1 Bàma-pye-hma ne-yà-da beh-lo ne-dhàlèh?  How do you find living in Burma?

S2 Kàun-ba-deh. It’s good.
or Pyaw-ba-deh. I’m having a good time.

New words
- kaûn-gaûn well
- s’ô-deh to be bad
- pyaw-deh to enjoy oneself, have a good time

Notes

Pyaw-yèn-là? “Do you enjoy it? Are you enjoying yourself?” A variant of Pyaw-dhàlà? and Pyaw-là?, giving a slightly more animated flavour to the question, suggesting “Are you really enjoying yourself? (I do hope you are or I can hardly believe that you are)”.

Beh-lo ne-dhàlèh? “What is it like? How do you find it?” Literally “How does it stay?”

9.10. TOPIC 7: DON’T YOU FIND IT HOT?

Questions
- Pu-deh-naw? It’s hot isn’t it?
- Mâpu-bû-li? Isn’t it too hot for you?
- Bàma-pye-hma pu-deh-naw? It’s hot in Burma isn’t it?
- Ya-dhî-ú-du mâpu-bû-li? Isn’t the climate too hot for you?

Answers
- Houq-kêh, pu-ba-deh. Yes, it is hot.

Notes
Ne-lo´ kau´n-ba-deh. Literally “Live-ing is good.” -lo´ is a suffix that has several functions, and one of them is similar to English “-ing”.

New words
- ya-dhî-ú-du climate, weather
- âne-daw just right (“living + suitable”)

REVIEW FOR UNIT 9: YOUR VISIT TO BURMA, PART 2 (LESSONS 9.5 TO 9.10)
Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

Review Dialogue
S1 is a Burmese man, and S2 a foreign woman. She has just said something in Burmese, so S1 says –

S1 Ha! Bàma sågà pyaw-daq-pa-gàlì?  Hey! So you can speak Burmese!

S2 Houq-kêh, nèn-nèh pyaw-daq-pa-deh. Yes, I can speak a bit.
UNIT 10. ASKING NAMES AND AGES

10.1. BURMESE NAMES

Names are more important in Burmese society than they are in the West because in Burmese you often use a person’s name where in English you would say “you” or “yours”. For example, if you wanted to say “Is this your car?” in Burmese, and you were talking to someone called Tin Maung, you’d say “Is this Tin Maung’s car?”.

Most Burmese names are made up of two syllables; e.g.

- Tin Há
tin hla
- Myá Sein
mya sein
- Thàn U
than oo

Some names have three syllables; e.g.

- Tin Maung Win
tin maung win
- Khin San Nweh
khin san nweh
- Hlaing Win Swe
hlaing win swe

Some two-syllable names have one of the syllables doubled to make up three in all:

- I i K’in
(II khin)
i i khin
- Maung Maung Nyunt
maung maung nyunt
- Thin Thin Aye
thin thin aye

Less commonly, you come across people with names that have four syllables, like –

- Maung Maung Soe Tint
maung maung soe tint
- Hla A
hla a

Most of the name elements are words that mean something precious or desirable; e.g.

- Há
pretty, attractive
- Thàn
a million (for good fortune)
- Myá
emerald
- Sein
diamond
- Win
radiant
- K’in
lovable, loving
- Maun
younger brother
- Thin
fragrant
- È
cool, calm

By tradition Burmese names are not family names. You could find a man called Htay Maung, with a wife called Win Swe.
Myint, and one child called Cho Zin Nwe and another called Than Tut. None of the names has any relationship to the others: they’re all individual.

Here and there you may meet a woman who has added her husband’s name to her own to avoid confusion when living or travelling abroad: ambassadors’ wives often find it convenient to do this (hence “Madame Hla Maung” etc). And some parents add elements of their own names to their children’s names. But families that do this are the exception. There are also some Burmese who use Western names like “Kenneth”, “Gladys” and so on, either as nicknames (often originating in schooldays), or to make life easier for Western friends.

It is exceptional to use someone’s name on its own: normally people use a prefix in front of it – words like Mr and Mrs and Colonel and Dr. The only people you wouldn’t use prefixes for are small children, or close friends of your own age. If you use an unprefixed name for anyone else it sounds quite offensive. The two commonest prefixes are –

- Ù (for men; from the word meaning “uncle”)
- Daw (for women; from the word for “aunt”)

Others you may meet are –

- Ko (for younger men; from “brother”)
- Mā (for younger women; from “sister”)
- Maun (for boys; from “younger brother”)
- S’aya Teacher (male)
- S’aya-mā Teacher (female)
- Bo-hmū: Major
- Bo-jouq: General

10.2–10.3–10.4–10.5. INTRODUCING YOURSELF

S1 Nan-meh beh-lo k’aw-dhālēh? What is your name?
S2 Albert-ba. Albert.
or Albert-iō k’aw-ba-deh. It’s Albert.

New words

- nan-meh name
- beh-lo how
- k’aw-deh to call, to be called
- meiq-s’we friend (also used for “you”)
- cânaw I (man speaking)
- cânaw written I
- cânaw my (man speaking)
- câná İ (woman speaking)
- câná İ written I
- twé-deh to meet
- twé-yā-da being able to meet, having the opportunity to meet
- wūn-tha-deh to be happy
- -lēh also
Notes

Albert-ba. The name with the polite suffix.

Albert-là? “Did you say ‘Albert’? Was that ‘Albert’?” For checking questions see 3.3.

H ouq-pa-deh. “It is so. That’s right. Yes.” Similar to Houq-ke’h.

Meiq-s’we “friend”. Burmese uses a range of words for “you” and “your”. The most frequent are (a) kin terms, such as U-lé “uncle”, Daw-daw “aunt”, etc (for more see 7.1 and 7.2); (b) a title such as S’áya-má “teacher”, Th-an-àmaq-cì “Ambassador”; (c) the person’s name (if you know it), normally with a prefix (see 10.1); or, as a fallback, the word used above: Meiq-s’we “friend”.

Meiq-s’we-gàw “How about you?” The suffix -ka’/- gà carries a meaning like “how about …?” and has the effect of repeating a previous question about a new topic; e.g.

S1 Ne-kau´n-deh- nanaw? You’re well, I hope?
S1 George-gàw? George-ècōj How about George?

(understand: is he well too?)

cànaw “I (male speaker)” and câmá “I (female speaker)”. The commonest terms for “I”. As you have seen, Burmese normally omits words for “you” and “I”, but when there is a change of subject, as here (“I’m happy too – as well as you”), you need to put one in to show who you are talking about. Careful speakers say cun-daw and cun-má, but the slightly shortened forms used above are more common. Originally the words meant “your honoured servant” and “your female servant” respectively.

Among friends and family people often use kin terms for “I” – the words for “Father”, “Sister” etc. Children and young women often use their names; e.g. a girl named Má Sàn Sàn might say

Sàn Sàn-lèh cânaw-pa-deh. I like it too.

Literally: “San San likes it too.”

This is the second gender-specific pair of words you’ve met: men always say cànaw and k’in-byà, and women always say câmá and shin (for the polite tags see Lesson 2.7).

cànaw nan-meh “my name (male speaker)”. Most possessives in Burmese simply precede the noun possessed without change; e.g.

Bo-joq + daq-poun = Bo-joq daq-poun
General + photograph = The General’s photograph
Ú Hlá + ouq-t’ouq = Ú Hlá ouq-t’ouq
U Hlá + hat = U Hlá’s hat
Câmá + nan-meh = Câmá nan-meh
I + name = My name

However, if the first noun (the possessor) ends in a low tone syllable, that syllable is given a creaky tone to mark possession:

S’áya + daq-poun = S’áya daq-poun
Teacher + photograph = Teacher’s photograph
Ko Tin + ouq-t’ouq = Ko Tin ouq-t’ouq
Ko Tin + hat = Ko Tin’s hat
Cànaw + nan-meh = Cànaw nan-meh
I + name = My name

Cànaw nan-meh-gà “my name”. The suffix -kái’/gà draws attention to a new subject in the conversation. It has an effect like “on the other hand” or “as for”, but is much weaker than those phrases are in English.
twé-yá-da “being able to meet, having the opportunity to meet” from twé-deh “to meet”. Compare yauq-ne-da “arriving” in 9.3, tèh-yá-da “staying” 9.6, ne-yá-da “staying, living, the stay” 9.9.

wún-tha-ba-deh “I am happy.” Literally “my stomach (wún) is pleasant.” Twé-yá-da wún-tha-ba-deh “I am happy to have met you.” Literally “At meeting I am happy.”

Canaw-lèh wún-tha-ba-deh. “I am happy too.” Literally “I-too – be-happy” The suffix -léh means “also, too, as well”; e.g.

wu´n-tha-ba-deh “I am happy.” Literally “my stomach (wu´n) is pleasant.” Twe´-ya´-da wu´n-tha-ba-deh “I am happy to have met you.” Literally “At meeting I am happy.”

Ca˘naw-le´h wu´n-tha-ba-deh. “I am happy too.” Literally “I-too – be-happy” The suffix -léh means “also, too, as well”; e.g.

S1 A˘theq beh-lauq shı´-bi-le´h? “How old are you?” Literally: “Age – how much – have?”

S2 A˘theq thou˘n-zèh thou˘n-hniq shı´-bi. “I am 33 years old.”

or A˘theq thou˘n-zèh thou˘n-hniq shı´-bi. “I am 30 years old.”

New words
átheq  —  age
hniq  —  year

Notes
Átheq – beh-lauq – shı´-bi-le´h? “How old are you?” Literally: “Age – how much – have?”
Burmese By Ear

Could you say that again?

It’s Ko San Maung is it?

I can’t say much yet (+ tag).

I’m 30 (+ tag).

UNIT 11. ASKING ABOUT WORK

11.1–11.2. DO YOU HAVE A JOB? WHERE DO YOU WORK?

Are you working?

Yes, I am.

What job are you doing?

I work at an airline office.

I am working as a doctor. How about you: are you working?

Where do you work?

He/she works, has a job.

He/she is working.

to work, to do a job

He/she works, has a job.

words for occupations and workplaces

The following are the words introduced on the tape.

darain-ba  တရားမ့်  driver
ing-in-ni-ya  ငေငြင်ဖြူ  engineer
koun-dheh  ကျောင်းထွေ  businessman ("goods + dealer")
cau'n-s'aya  ကျောင်း-စိုး  teacher ("school + teacher")
cau'n-s'aya-ma'a  ကျောင်း-စိုး-မှ  teacher ("school + teacher + female")
s'aya-wun  စိုးဖွေ  doctor ("teacher + burden")
aso'-ya ahmudan  အဆောက်အအုံ:  civil servant ("government + affairs + bear, carry")
le-yin-yo'un  လော်င်ယောင်:  airline office ("air-vehicle + office")
ban-daiq  ဗိန်းခေါင်  bank ("bank building")
koun-daiq  ကျောင်းခေါင်  department store ("goods building")
sa-daiq  စိုးခေါင်  post office ("letter building")
poun-hneiq-taiq  ပိုင်ရှင်  printing press ("image + impress + building")
The following are additional words for occupations you may find useful:

- **accountant > sāyin-gain**
- **agent, middle-man > pwen-zā**
- **architect > bī-thū-ka**
- **army officer > siq-bo**
- **artist > bājī-sāya**
- **author, writer (male) > sa-ye-sāya**
- **author, writer (female) > sa-ye-sāya-ma**
- **businessman > koun-dheh**
- **clerk > sāyē**
- **dentist > thwa-sāya-wun**
- **Director > hnyun-cā-yē-hmū**
- **Deputy Director > dū-hnyun-cā-yē-hmū**
- **Assistant Director > teq-t'aq-hnyun-cā-yē-hmū**
- **editor > eh-dī-ta**
- **employee > wun-dān**
- **farmer, peasant > leh-dhāma**
- **film actor > youq-shin min-dhā**
- **actress > youq-shin min-dhāmi**
- **guide: tourist guide > ēh-lān-hnyun**
- **insurance > a-mā-gan**
- **labourer > alouq-thāmā**
- **lawn mower**
- **lawyer > sē-ne**
- **manager > man-ne-ja**
- **market stall holder > zē-dheh**
- **missionary (male) > tha-dhāna-byū sāya**
- **missionary (female) > tha-dhāna-byū sāya-mā**
- **monk: Buddhist monk > p'ou-bun**
- **novice monk > ko-yin**
- **nun: Buddhist nun > meh-thi-la-yin**
- **nurse (male) > naq-s**
- **nurse (female) > naq-s-ma**
- **police officer > ye-a-si**
- **reporter > thādīn-dauq**
- **shopkeeper > sain-shin**
- **singer > as's-daw**
- **soldier > sjī-thā**
- **student (male) > caun-dhā**
- **student (female) > caun-dhu**
- **teacher: school teacher (male) > teq-kātho sāya-mā**
- **teacher: school teacher (female) > teq-kātho sāya-ma**
- **university teacher (male) > teq-kātho sāya-mā**
- **university teacher (female) > teq-kātho sāya-ma**
- **writer, author (male) > sa-yē-sāya**
- **writer, author (female) > sa-yē-sāya-ma**

**Notes**

Alouq louq-ne-ba-deh “He/she is working.” The suffix -ne is attached to a verb to express temporary action; e.g.,

- **Ba meq-gāzin အိမ် ချင် (မိဘို့ ကြည်) What magazine do you read?**
- **Ba meq-gāzin အိမ် ချင် (မိဘို့ ကြည်) What magazine are you reading?**

Compare Beh-hma tēn-ne-dhāleḥ? “Where are you staying?” in 9.5.

### 11.3. NOT IN WORK

**S1**

- **Ālouq louq-ne-dhāla?**
- **Małouq-pa-bū.**
- **Ein-hmū keiq-sā louq-pa-deh.**
- **Mālouq-tāw-bā-bū.**
- **Ein-hmū keiq-sā louq-pa-deh.**

**S2**

- **Małouq-pa-bū.**
- **Ein-hmū keiq-sā louq-pa-deh.**
- **Mālouq-tāw-bā-bū.**
- **Ein-hmū keiq-sā louq-pa-deh.**

**New words**

- **ein-hmū-keiq-sā**

- **housework (“house affairs activity”)**

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Review Dialogue

Scene: A café in Rangoon. S2 is a young man visiting Burma, who happens to be sharing a table with S1, a Burmese woman named Daw Saw Yin, and her husband and daughter. They get talking, and at one point S1 asks –

S1: Bāma-pye ba-keiq-sā-nēh la-lēh, Shin?  What brought you to Burma?

S2: A˘louq-ne´h la-ba-deh, K’in-bya.  I came with my job (+ tag).

S1: Aw. Ba ˘louq louq-ne-dhālēh?  Oh. What job are you doing?

S2: Ban-daiq-hma louq-pa-deh.  I work in a bank.

S1: Aw. Ban-daiq-hma-lā?  Oh. In a bank is it?

S2: Daw Saw Yin-gāw?  — ˘louq louq-ne-dhālā?  How about you? Are you working?

S1: Mālouq-pa-bū, Shin. Ein-hmū-keiq-sā louq-pa-deh.  No I’m not (+ tag). I look after the household. She indicates her husband. U Zaw Win is a doctor.

S2: Aw. S’aya-wun-lā?  Oh. So he’s a doctor. How about your daughter? Is she working?
UNIT 12: ASKING ABOUT FAMILY

This Unit covers questions on marriage and children. There wasn’t room on the tape to cover talk about parents and brothers and sisters as well, but we’ve added a few words and phrases for those topics here in the booklet. You’ll find them set out at the end of this Unit.

12.1. ARE YOU MARRIED?

S1 Ein-daun shı´-dha˘la´?  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqchi  Are you married?

S2 Shı´-ba-deh.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqchi Yes, I am.

or Māshı´-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No, I am an old bachelor.

or Māshı´-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No, I am an old spinster.

or Māshı´-daw-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No. We have split up.

or Māshı´-daw-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No. My wife has died.

or Māshı´-daw-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No. My husband has died.

S1 Ein-daun cá-bi-là?  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči Are you married yet?

S2 Houq-këh. Cá-bi.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči Yes, I am.

or Mācạ-dhè-ba-bu´.  Ḏọnqemɗ̄cq dolàqči No, not yet.
12.2. HOW MANY CHILDREN DO YOU HAVE?

S1  K’ālē shī-lā?
S2  Houq-kēh, shī-ba-deh.
or  Māshī-ba-bū.
or  Māshī-dā-ba-bū.

Do you have any children?
Yes, I have.
No, I haven’t.
No, I haven’t any yet.

S1  Kālē beh-hnāyaq shī-dālēh?
S2  Tāyaq shī-ba-deh.

How many children do you have?
I have one.

Notes
Kālē beh-hnāyaq shī-dālēh? “How many children do you have?” The word -yauq is a countword for people. Examples:

- meiq-s’we lē-yauq four friends
- s’āya-wun dāpya’ dūmawaw a two doctors
- hńāyaq
- āko thūn-yauq tā’i pāntse’ three brothers
- thāmī tāyaq tā’i jī tādaww tādawwā one daughter
- tū-niŋ beh-hńāyaq tā’i jī tādaww tādawwā how many tourists

Compare other countwords in 6.5.

Unit 12: Asking about family

S1  Thā-lā? Thāmī-lā?
S2  Thā-ba.
or  Ngā-yauq shī-ba-deh.

Is it a son or a daughter?
It’s a son.
I have five.
Are they sons or daughters?

S1  Thā-de-lā?
S2  Thā thōun-yauq, thāmī hńāyaq.

Three sons and two daughters.

New words

k’ālē  thōun yauq child
-yauq  -de countword for people:
-de or sometimes -dwe  –og plural suffix: see note

Variant

Mein-k’ālē-lā?
Y auq-ca’-lē-lā?

Is it a girl or a boy?
You will find a list of words for other relatives in the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms.

Notes

K’ālē beh-hńāyaq shī-dālēh? “How many children do you have?” The word -yauq is a countword for people. Examples:

- meiq-s’we lē-yauq four friends
- s’āya-wun dāpya’ dūmawaw a two doctors
- hńāyaq
- āko thūn-yauq tā’i pāntse’ three brothers
- thāmī tāyaq tā’i jī tādaww tādawwā one daughter
- tū-niŋ beh-hńāyaq tā’i jī tādaww tādawwā how many tourists

Compare other countwords in 6.5.

Thā-lā? Thāmī-lā? “Is it a son or a daughter?” This is the standard pattern for questions taking the form “A or B?”.

Examples:
Burmese By Ear

12.3. HOW OLD ARE THE CHILDREN?

Kālä beh-āyweh shī-bi-lēh?
C’auq-hniq shī-bi.
or, for more than one child
Kālä-de beh-āyweh-de shī-bi-lēh?
Thā-gā shiq-hniq, thāmī-gā c’auq-hniq shī-bi.
or Thāmī-āci-gā sē’-lē-hniq, thāmī-āngeh-gā sē’-hniq shī-bi.

How old is your child?
She is six.

My son is eight, and my daughter is six.

My older daughter is 14, and my younger daughter is 10.

New words

āyweh  အော်လဵ  size; age (of children)

Notes

Beh-āyweh shī-bi-lēh? “What age is he/she?” When asking about children, people more often use beh-āyweh “what size” than ātheq beh-lauq “how old”. Compare ātheq beh-lauq shī-bi-lēh? “How old are you/is s/he?” in 10.6.

Thā-gā shiq-hniq, thāmī-gā c’auq-hniq shī-bi “My son is 8 and my daughter is 6.” Notice the contrastive suffix -kā/gā: see the note in 10.5. Adding the suffix produces an effect similar to “my son on the one hand … and my daughter on the other …”, but not so strong.

REVIEW FOR UNIT 12: ASKING ABOUT FAMILY

Review dialogues are recorded in the Review Section, on Tape 4 Side B.

Scene: The platform of the Shwedagon Pagoda. Imagine that a foreign visitor, a man in his 40s named Roland, has found a seat in a shady spot. There’s a Burmese lady of about the same age there already, whose name is Daw Aye Aye Shwe, and they get talking. This dialogue is a part of their conversation.

S1 Ein-dau shi-dhäalä, Ro-lan? Are you married Roland?
S2 Måshì-ba-bù. Lu-byo-ji-ba. I’m an old bachelor.
S1 Hā ha. Bämä sāgā pyaw-da theiq kaun-ba-deb Shin
You speak Burmese very well (+ polite tag)

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.


Thank you.
I can't say much yet.
How about you?
Are you married?

S1 Houq-kēn. Shi-ba-deh.

Yes I am.

S2 Kālē beh-hnāyaq shi-dhālēh?

How many children do you have.

S1 Thuôn-yauq shi-ba-deh.

I have three.

S2 Thuôn-yauq-lā?

Did you say three?

S1 Houq-kēn. Thōn-yauq, Thā-hnāyaq, thāmī tāyauq.

How big are they?

S2 Beh-āyweh-de shi-bi-lēh?

The older son is 24.
The younger son is 22.
The daughter is 19.

S1 Thā-āci-gā hnsā'ē-h-ñiq. Thā-āngē-gā hnsā'ē-h hńāhńiq. Thāmī-gā s'é-h-kō-hńiq shi-bi.

Have they got married yet?

S2 Ein-daun cá-bi-lā?

Yes. My older son is married.
The younger one is not married any more.
He is divorced.


Oh. How about the daughter?

S2 Aw. Thāmī-gāw? Āmē sh₂-ō-

The daughter hasn't got married yet.

UNIT 12 EXTENSION.
PARENTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS

The following words and phrases are not practised on the tape. They are noted here for reference.

S1 Āp'e-āme shi-dhē-dhālā?

Are your parents still alive? (see note)

S2 Houq-kēn. Shī-ba-deh.

Yes, they are.

or Āme shī-ba-deh.

My mother is. My father has died.

or Māshī-dāw-ba-bū. S'ōn-dhwā-ba-bi.

No.

They have died.

S1 Nyi-āko maun-hnāmā shi-dhālā?

Do you have any brothers and sisters?

S2 Houq-kēn. Shī-ba-deh.

Yes, I have.

S1 Beh-hnāyaq shi-dhālēh?

How many do you have?

S2 Āko tāyauq, āmā tāyauq-nēh nyī-mā hńāyaq shi-ba-deh.

I have an older brother, an older sister and two younger sisters.

S1 points to her companion

S1 Da-gā cámā ăkō-ba.

This is my brother.

S2 Aw. Twē-yā-da wń-tha-ba-deh.

Oh. I am happy to have met you.
Words for siblings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Roman</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>အချင်</td>
<td>a˘ko</td>
<td>older brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>အမေ</td>
<td>áma˘</td>
<td>older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မန်</td>
<td>maun</td>
<td>younger brother (of woman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြား</td>
<td>nyi</td>
<td>younger brother (of man)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြစ်မှ</td>
<td>nyi-má</td>
<td>younger sister (see note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြစ်မြ</td>
<td>hnámá</td>
<td>younger sister (see note)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြစ်မြားကြောက်မှ</td>
<td>nyi-áko maun-</td>
<td>brothers and sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြစ်မြားမှ</td>
<td>hnámá or just</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>မြစ်မြား</td>
<td>maun-hnámá</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

“Ape-ame shi-dhē-dhālā?” “Are your parents still alive?” The suffix -thē/dheē conveys the meaning “still”. Compare these two sentences:

Ban-daiq-hma လာနီးခါး အလီး အလီး
Is he working at the bank?

Ban-daiq-hma လာနီးခါး အလီး အလီး
Is he still working at the bank?

Māshi-daw-ba-bű  “They are no longer living.”. For the suffix -taw/-da˘w with a negated verb see 5.6, 6.3, 11.1, 11.3.

Nyi-má and hnámá “younger sister”. In earlier times nyi-má referred to the younger sister of a woman, and hnámá to the younger sister of a man. In contemporary Burmese, however, hnámá is rarely used, and nyi-má is used for the younger sisters of both men and women.

Nyi-áko maun-hnámá “brothers and sisters”. Another word you may hear is thā-jin, a term which includes the speaker and his/her brothers and sisters; so thā-jin thoun-yauq shi-ba-doh would mean “There are three of us all told” (e.g. the speaker and two others).

For a fuller list of words for relatives see the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms.

Da-gā “this” can refer to a person. For suffix -gā/kā see Lesson 10.5.

APPENDIX 1

OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF THE SOUNDS OF BURMESE

BBE is a tape-based course, so you will receive all the listening and pronunciation training you need as you work through the lessons. Written descriptions are no substitute for hearing and imitating. The purpose of the notes below is simply to provide an overview of the sound system of Burmese.

The following notes are adapted from “The sounds of Burmese”, which appeared as Appendix 1 in my longer course Burmese: an introduction to the spoken language (published by Northern Illinois University, 1994).

The parts of the syllable

For describing the sounds of Burmese, it is helpful to think of the syllable as being made up of two parts:

1. the “head”, which is a consonant (like m-) or a consonant with a second consonant (like my-)
2. the “rhyme”, which is a vowel (like -a) or a vowel with a final consonant (like -an)

In addition, every syllable has a “tone”, marked (in this transcription) by an accent (as in -ā): see the heading “Tones” below.

So the word pyoun “to smile” is made up of –

the head       py-
the rhyme      ou
the tone       an

All syllables have a vowel and a tone, but not every syllable has a head. For example, the syllable aun has the rhyme aun and the tone -ā, but no head.

Remember that there is no standard method of representing Burmese sounds in the roman alphabet: the examples below are presented in the system used in this booklet, but other books and courses use a variety of different conventions.
Heads

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>roman script</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>as in English bore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c</td>
<td>as in Italian ciao, or ‘cello; something like ch in English chore, but made with the flat of the tongue (not the tip) against the palate; and made without aspiration: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c’</td>
<td>same as c but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>as in English door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dh</td>
<td>like th in English this, there (not th in English thin, thig)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>as in English gore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>as in English hoar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hl</td>
<td>same as l but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hm</td>
<td>same as m but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hn</td>
<td>same as n but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hng</td>
<td>same as ng but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hny</td>
<td>same as ny but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>same as w but aspirated: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>like gi in Italian Giorgio; something like j in English jaw, but made with the flat of the tongue (not the tip) against the palate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>like c in French corps: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’</td>
<td>like c in English core: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>as in English law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>as in English more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>as in English nor; see also under Final consonants below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ng</td>
<td>like ng in English long oar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ny</td>
<td>like gn in Italian gnocchi; something like ni in English senior, but made with the flat of the tongue (not the tip) against the palate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>as in French port: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p’</td>
<td>as in English pore: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>glottal stop: see under Final consonants below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>as in English raw (mostly used in foreign loan words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>as in English soar: see under Aspirates below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1 Sounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roman</th>
<th>Script</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k’</td>
<td>k’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t’</td>
<td>t’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c’</td>
<td>c’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’</td>
<td>s’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those on the first line are known as “aspirate” consonants, and those on the second are known as the corresponding “plain” or “unaspirated” consonants. The difference between the two sets is that the aspirate consonants have a short puff of breath expelled after the consonant is pronounced and before the vowel begins; while after a plain consonant there is no audible breath: the vowel begins immediately the consonant has been pronounced.

Put this way, this distinction may sound unfamiliar, but you have probably heard examples of both aspirate and plain consonants, perhaps without being aware of the difference. Most speakers of English use aspirate consonants in words like kill, till, pill. To a Burmese ear these words sound like k’ill, t’ill, p’ill. Plain consonants on the other hand are used in French and Italian: think of French words like casse, tasse, passe. French and Italian speakers (and Indians and Pakistanis even more noticeably) often use these plain consonants when they speak English – a habit that contributes to making their English sound “foreign.” They say kill, till, pill instead of k’ill, t’ill, p’ill. Burmese uses both sets and gives equal status to each, so pə and p’a (for example)
are two different words: pà means “cheek” and p’a means “frog”. Careful listening to the tapes will help you recognize and pronounce the two sets differently.

The paired aspirate and plain consonants in the second set are these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roman</th>
<th>Script</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hng</td>
<td>ᵃⁿᵍ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hn</td>
<td>ᵃⁿ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hm</td>
<td>ᵃᵐ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hny</td>
<td>ᵃⁿʸ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hl</td>
<td>ᵃˡ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hw</td>
<td>ᵃʷ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those on the first line are sometimes called breathed or voiceless consonants. They are pronounced like the plain set, but with breath expelled quietly through the nose (through the mouth for hl, hw) before voicing begins.

hm is like English hmmm in “Hmm – let me see”

hl is like Welsh ll in Llandudno

hw is like English wh in “breathy” pronunciations of what, where, etc.

The remaining consonants in this set – hng, hn, hny – are produced by the same mechanism as hm.

2. Medial consonants

Some consonants may be followed by a “medial” consonant: y or w; e.g.:

y in myan-myan quickly ㎡¾
w in mwé-né birthday ㎡¾

Rhymes

(for descriptions of -q and -n see the note on Final consonants below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>roman</th>
<th>script</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>à</td>
<td>ᵃ</td>
<td>like a in English about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ᵃʰ</td>
<td>like a in English car, but closer to a in French car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a in aq and an</td>
<td>ᵃʰ/ᵃⁿ²</td>
<td>like a in English cat and can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ai in aq and ain</td>
<td>ᵃʰ/ᵃⁿ³</td>
<td>like i in English site and sine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>au in auq &amp; aun</td>
<td>ᵃʰ/ᵃⁿ⁴</td>
<td>like ou in English lout and lounge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 1 Sounds

| e     | ᶦ | like é in French élève   |
| e in eh | ᶦʰ | like e in English sell  |
| e in eq | ᶦʰ | like e in English set |
| ei in eq and ein | ᶦʰ⁻ | like a in English late and lane |
| i     | ᵢ | like i in English ravine |
| i in iq and in | ᵢ⁻ | like i in English sit and sin |
| aw    | ᵡʰ | like aw in English saw |
| o     | ᵧ | like eau in French peau |
| ou in ouq & oun | ᵧ⁻ | like o in English toe and tone |
| u     | ᵧ | like u in English Susan |
| u in uq and un | ᵧ⁻ | like oo in English foot and full |

Final consonants

-ń -ⁿ⁻ -ⁿ⁻ -ⁿ⁻ represents nasalization, as in French un, bon, vin, jean

-ｑ -ᴷ⁻ -ᴷ⁻ -ᴷ⁻ represents a glottal stop, as in “Cockney” English “The ca’ sa’ on the ma’,” or (in our transcription) “The caq saq on the maq.”

Note that neither -ń nor -ｑ are very satisfactory symbols for the Burmese sounds they are used to represent, because they stand for quite different sounds in English. Don’t let them deceive you into saying “Win” when you should be saying Win, or “Chick” when you should be saying C’iq.

Tones

Tones are marked in the transcription used here by accents (or absence of accent) placed over the vowel. They are illustrated here with the vowel a.

a  ᵠ low pitch, called “low” tone (marked here by having no printed accent)

à  ᵠʰ high pitch spoken with normal or relaxed throat: “plain high tone”

â  ᵠʰ high pitch spoken with a tightened throat: “creaky high tone”
There are two other kinds of syllable in Burmese. Though they don’t have a place in the three-way contrast just described, they are listed here for completeness.

aq  əʊ̞ː  high pitch, followed by a glottal stop, called a “stopped” syllable (may be pronounced with low pitch when followed by a high tone)

ā  [ə]  low pitch, only on the vowel ā. A syllable with the vowel ā is called a “weak” syllable, or a “reduced” or “unstressed” syllable. It may be pronounced with high pitch if sandwiched between two high tones.

Schematically, the tones can be arranged like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pitch</th>
<th>Plain</th>
<th>Creaky</th>
<th>Stopped</th>
<th>Weak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>ā</td>
<td>ā əʊ̞ː</td>
<td>aq əʊ̞ː</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a əʊ̞ː</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ā</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be understood that “low pitch” and “high pitch” are relative terms:
"low" means lower than neighbouring highs, and
"high" means higher than neighbouring lows.

A syllable spoken in isolation can’t readily be identified as having either high or low pitch (though it may be distinguished by features other than pitch, namely creakiness, glottal stop, or weak vowel).

* * *

Syllables in combination: voicing and weakening

1. Voicing

When two syllables are joined together to form a compound word, there is often a change in the second syllable: its first consonant is “voiced”, e.g.

lē  +  s’ēh  ⇒  lē-zēh  – not lē-s’ēh:

because s’ is “voiced” to z.

four  +  ten  ⇒  forty

Not all consonants can be voiced. The voiceable consonants, and their voiced counterparts, are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>This row: kct spt h</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and this: k’c’ t’ s’ p’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice to: gj dzbd h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is one exception to the voicing rule: it does not operate when the first syllable ends in -q: e.g.

shiq  +  s’ēh  ⇒  shiq-s’ēh  – not shiq-zēh:

voicing is suspended after -q.

eight  +  ten  ⇒  eighty

And consonants that are not in the “voiceable” list remain unchanged anyway; e.g.

lē  +  ya  ⇒  lē-ya̐  no change

because y is not voiceable.

four  +  ten  ⇒  forty

ngā  +  main  ⇒  ngā-main̐  no change

because m is not voiceable.

five  +  mile  ⇒  five miles

Further examples:

pu  +  tēh  ⇒  pu-deh (not pu-tēh)
be hot  +  suffix  ⇒  it is hot

th is voiced to d (see 1.3)
t’ain  +  pa  ⇒  t’ain-ba (not t’ain-pa)

p is voiced to b (see 2.6)
sit  +  suffix  ⇒  please sit down

ā  +  thālā  ⇒  ā-dhālā (not ā-thālā)

th is voiced to dh (see 1.8)

be free  +  suffix  ⇒  are you free?

ngā  +  caq  ⇒  ngā-jaq (not ngā-caq)

c is voiced to j (see 1.11)

five  +  kyat  ⇒  five kyats

thōun  +  k’weq  ⇒  thōun-gweq (not thōun-k’weq)

k’ is voiced to g (see 1.14)

three  +  cup  ⇒  three cups
2. **Weakening**

You will have learned from the tapes that when you join the words for “one” and “a hundred” to make “one hundred”, the first of the two words is “weakened”:

\[
\begin{align*}
tiq & + ya \Rightarrow t\ddot{a}ya \text{ (not tiq-ya)} \\
one & + \text{hundred} \Rightarrow \text{one hundred}
\end{align*}
\]

When a syllable is weakened, its rhyme is replaced by the vowel -\ddot{a}.

Weakening occurs regularly with tiq, hniq, k’un-hniq (“one, two, seven”) when they are joined to a following word; e.g.

\[
\begin{align*}
hniq & + k’weq \Rightarrow hn\ddot{a}k’weq \text{ (not hniq-k’weq)} \\
two & + \text{glass} \Rightarrow \text{two glasses}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
k’un-hniq & + caq \Rightarrow k’un-n\ddot{a}caq \text{ (not k’un-hniq-caq)} \\
seven & + \text{kyat} \Rightarrow \text{seven kyat}
\end{align*}
\]

Weakening also occurs regularly in combinations in which -meh or -teh/-deh is followed by -lā or -lēh; e.g.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{thwâ-meh} & + lā \Rightarrow \text{thwâ-mâlā} \text{ (not thwâ-meh-lā)} \\
you’ll go & + \text{question} \Rightarrow \text{W i l you go?}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
ba & + \text{lo-jin-deh} + lēh \Rightarrow \text{ba lo-jin-dhâlēh} \text{ (not ba lo-jin-deh-lēh)} \\
what & + \text{you want} + \text{question} \Rightarrow \text{What do you want?}
\end{align*}
\]

Note the extra change here from d to dh.

In most other contexts weakening occurs sporadically and unpredictably; e.g.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nga “fish” weakens in: ngâgin “grilled fish”} \\
& \text{but not in: ngâ-caq-tin “smoked fish”} \\
\text{thu “person” weakens in: thâk’ô “thief”} \\
& \text{but not in: thu-na “invalid”} \\
\text{thà “child” weakens in: thàû “firstborn”} \\
& \text{but not in: thà-laûn “embryo”}
\end{align*}
\]
APPENDIX 2
OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF BURMESE SCRIPT

Contents
1. Syllable structure: heads and rhymes
2. Characters for writing heads
3. Characters for writing rhymes
4. Other characters
5. Irregularities
6. Further reading

Introduction

A full tutorial for reading and writing Burmese script would be too long for this booklet. What you will find below is simply an overview: it explains how the script works and gives a list of the characters and regular character combinations.

The Burmese alphabet consists of 33 consonants and 18 symbols which can be attached to the consonants. The attached symbols represent vowels, medial consonants, tones or other features. There are in addition 8 “free-standing characters”. The consonants and the attached symbols are combined to form syllables, and syllables are combined to form words and sentences.

1. Syllable structure

For learning purposes the syllable is the basic unit of the script. Each syllable can be analysed into a “head” and a “rhyme”. “Head” is the name given to the initial consonant (or an initial consonant combined with a second consonant), and “rhyme” is the name for the remainder of the syllable, namely the vowel (or the vowel and a final consonant) and the tone. Some examples from English may help to clarify the structure:

syllable = head + rhyme

[initial consonant, or initial and second consonant] + [single vowel, or vowel with final consonant]

FEE = F + EE
FILL = F + ILL
FRILL = FR + ILL
FLEE = FL + EE

1.1. Heads

In Burmese script the head of a syllable may be either
• an “initial consonant”; for example, the consonants
  written: p l n q
  pronounced: pl ln n th

  or
• an initial consonant combined with a second consonant, referred to below as a “medial consonant”; for example, the combinations
  written: py ly hn thw
  pronounced: py ly hn thw

There are only four medial consonants in Burmese script.

1.2. Rhymes

The rhyme of a syllable may be written with either
• an attached vowel symbol; e.g.
  written: p l n q
  pronounced: pl ln n tho

  or
• a consonant marked as a final consonant by carrying the “killer” symbol -
  written: pan lan naq theq
  pronounced: pan lan naq theq

  or
• a combination of an attached vowel symbol and a final consonant; e.g.
  written: poun lein naun thaiq
  pronounced: poun lein naun thaiq
1.3. Tones
Tones are part of the rhyme and are mostly represented by the two tone marks - and -; e.g.
written: ဗာ, ဗိ, ပါ: ပါး, ပါချင် ဗား
pronounced: ပြူ ဦး နာ နွာ
Other ways of representing tone are used for certain rhymes.

2. Characters for writing heads
2.1. Initial consonants (set out in traditional alphabetical order)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Consonant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k-</td>
<td>k'-</td>
<td>g-</td>
<td>g-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s-</td>
<td>s'-</td>
<td>z-</td>
<td>z-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t-</td>
<td>t'-</td>
<td>d-</td>
<td>d-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p-</td>
<td>p'-</td>
<td>b-</td>
<td>b-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>w-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This symbol is used to write syllables that have no initial consonant, such as
  i written ဗ, an written ဗါ, ဗါး written ဗါး
The “consonant” ဗ occupies the position of the initial consonant in the written syllable, but is read aloud as “no initial consonant”.

2.2. Medial consonants
-¥ ®- -∑-˙
-y- -y- -w- h-
The following combinations of consonant and medial consonant have modified pronunciations:

3. Characters for writing rhymes
3.1. Attached vowel symbols and tone marking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>low</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creaky</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
1. The vowel symbol → is modified to the elongated form -l with certain consonants, thus:
   ဗ, ဗ, ဗ, ဗ, ဗ (and similarly for ဗ etc)
The reason for using the modified form is to avoid ambiguity between combinations with the form - and certain initial consonants; e.g. for the syllable ပ if you wrote ပ + -a the result would be ပ which is identical with the consonant ပ pronounced ပ. Modifying the shape (ပ + -l = ပ) avoids this ambiguity.
2. The vowel symbols - and - are modified to the elongated forms -l and -l when there is no room for them to occupy their normal position; e.g.:
Burmese By Ear

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Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

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Appendix 2 Script

3.  Note that the absence of a written vowel symbol is just as significant as the presence of one. A head with no written vowel is pronounced with the rhyme -a ; e.g.

3.2. Final consonants

stop finals  nasal finals

alternatives  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö

pronounced  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö

Examples  coö  coö  coö  coö  or coö  or coö

pronounced  leiq  leq  lin  lan

Graphically the rhymes written -ö  and -ö should be included in this section. However, as they are pronounced without a final -ö or -ö, they are usually listed among the vowel symbols. See 3.1 above.

3.3. Combinations of vowel symbol and final consonant

For the pronunciation of diphthongs in the roman transcription see the note at the foot of the page.

stop finals  nasal finals

alternatives  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö

pronounced  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö  -ö

Examples  coö  coö  coö  coö  or coö  or coö

pronounced  leiq  leq  lin  lan

3.4. Tone marking in syllables with a final consonant

Syllables with a stop final (-q) are pronounced with a high tone and can occur with no other, so they carry no tone mark other than their own stop final. Syllables with a nasal final (-n) occur in three tones, marked as in this example:

3.5. Stacked pairs of consonants

In certain words correct spelling requires that the initial consonant of one syllable should be written underneath the final consonant of the preceding syllable. For example, the word pronounced s’an-da is written – not Sn∂ – with the d on the line in the usual way but s’öq – with the ö of the second syllable underneath the final ö of the first.

Note that when two consonants are “stacked” in this way, the upper consonant is written without its killer stroke ö : not Sn∂ but s’öq .

Not all pairs of consonants can be stacked. The following is a list of the pairs that can.

Unstacked equivalents of the above

-öö  -öö  -öö  -öö  -öö  -öö  -öö

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
1. Unlike other finals in stacked pairs the final consonant ę is positioned above the line instead of on the line.
2. Note modified shapes for these pairs.

4. Other characters
4.1. Free-standing vowel syllables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>쬙</th>
<th>-haspopup</th>
<th>𞕆</th>
<th>[ə]*</th>
<th>𞕁</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ӑ</td>
<td>ʔ</td>
<td>ú</td>
<td>ę</td>
<td>ӑw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2. Abbreviated syllables (used in literary style Burmese)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ṭ</th>
<th>ẗ</th>
<th>ضة:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>ywé</td>
<td>hnaq</td>
<td>lágaún</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>０</th>
<th>１</th>
<th>２</th>
<th>３</th>
<th>４</th>
<th>５</th>
<th>６</th>
<th>７</th>
<th>８</th>
<th>９</th>
<th>０</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Irregularities

Some words are written with a combination of vowel symbol and final consonant not found in the standard system; e.g. ṭ: ʔein or .addColumn(100, 100) in /mouq/. There are ways of working out how to pronounce these words, but they are too detailed to set out in this brief summary. See Section 6 below.

In many words, or combinations of words, there is a mismatch between the spelling and the pronunciation. Some mismatches are unique; e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>apparently pronounced</th>
<th>actually pronounced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṭ:</td>
<td>bi</td>
<td>bein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.addColumn(100, 100)</td>
<td>thu-yin-hnã</td>
<td>sã-yin-hnã</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other mismatches follow partially predictable patterns. The most pervasive of these is the Voicing Rule; examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>apparently pronounced</th>
<th>actually pronounced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṭ: ʔye-ʔin-pa-teh</td>
<td>nã-c-in-pa-teh</td>
<td>nã-jin-ba-deh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more on the Voicing Rule see the appendix on sounds.

Another frequently encountered mismatch is “weakening”: when a syllable is written with a full rhyme but pronounced with the vowel ā; e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>spelling</th>
<th>apparently pronounced</th>
<th>actually pronounced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ṭ: ʔe-ʔe-kíd</td>
<td>tiq-kíd</td>
<td>tâ-kú</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭ: ʔe-ʔe-kíd</td>
<td>kú-ʔa-ʔain</td>
<td>kà-ʔa-ʔain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ṭ: ʔe-ʔe-kíd</td>
<td>tã-ʔa-ʔain</td>
<td>tã-ʔa-ʔain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Further reading

For details of irregular combinations, mismatches, traditional names of the symbols, handwriting, decorative styles, a character identification chart, and more, see —

_Burmese: an introduction to the script_ by John Okell: 1993, Northern Illinois University (text and 7 audio cassette tapes)

For a programmed introduction, with writing practice, see —

_An introduction to the Burmese writing system_ by H D Roop: 1972, Yale University Press
APPENDIX 3
OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF BURMESE GRAMMAR

This section draws together the grammar points that are noted in the lessons. A reference in the form “(L 1.1)” tells you that the point was first introduced in Lesson 1.1. For more detail see —

Burmese: an introduction to the spoken language, Book 2, Appendix 4 (John Okell, Northern Illinois University, 1993)

Contents
1. Sentences
1.1 The standard structure
1.2 Word order
1.3 Pronouns and referents
1.4 Verbs and adjectives
1.5 Is are sentences
2. Suffixes
2.1 Some common sentence suffixes
2.2 Some common phrase suffixes
2.3 Some common verb suffixes (tense etc)
2.4 Some common verb suffixes (modality etc)
2.5 Some common noun suffixes (marking relationship to verb)
2.6 Some common noun suffixes (expanding; plurality etc)
3. Compound sentences
4. Verb paradigms

1 Sentences
1.1 The standard structure.
The typical Burmese sentence consists of one or more “noun phrases” followed by a “verb phrase.” In this context “noun phrase” is used as a wide-cover term to include “adverbs” and other elements. Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>noun phrase 3</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my husband</td>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>a little</td>
<td>understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“My husband understands a little Burmese.”

1.2 Word order (L 1.6)
Notice that Burmese order is the reverse of English:
Burmese: Burmese – a little – (I) understand
English: (I) understand – a little – Burmese

1.3 Pronouns and referents (L 1.1, 1.3)
Burmese does have words corresponding to the English he, it, they, etc. But when both speaker and hearer know what is under discussion, pronouns and other referents are normally omitted; e.g. Context: continuation from the example above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>noun phrase 3</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“(He) understands a little Chinese.”

Context: S2 tries a drink given her by S1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>like-statement-right</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S2: “Yes, I do.”

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
1.4 Verbs and adjectives (L 1.1.)
Although we have to translate မီး ပိုချိ (အမှန်) and similar words with the English adjectives: “hot”, “cold”, and so on, in terms of Burmese grammar they must be classified as verbs: “to be hot”, “to be cold”, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>မီး</td>
<td>ပိုချိ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>နည်း-နည်း</td>
<td>ပို-ပို</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a little</td>
<td>be hot-polite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“It is rather hot.”

1.5 Is/are sentences (L 1.11, 4.6)
A sentence that identifies an item, or equates two items, normally has no verb phrase in the Burmese equivalent. It contains just two noun phrases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ဒေ</td>
<td>က်ပ္</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>nice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“That is coffee.”

Sentences of this type are referred to here as “is/are sentences”.

2 Suffixes
A “suffix” is an element that is attached to the end of a word, like the English -ing in words like learning, thinking, etc. Most of the grammatical information in a Burmese sentence is carried by suffixes. Most suffixes are used with just one part of speech.

1. Suffixes attached to sentences show whether the sentence is a statement or a question or a command.
2. Suffixes attached to phrases carry meanings like “also”, “however”, and so on.
3. Suffixes attached to verbs indicate tense (did go, will go etc) and modality (can do, may do, want to do, is doing, etc).
4. Suffixes attached to nouns signal relationships in the same way as English prepositions (went to Rangoon, comes from England, go by car) and for expansion (marking plurality, coordination, etc).

5. Another category of suffix subordinates one sentence to another.

2.1 Some common sentence suffixes

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>[sentence]-ဗ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>[sentence]-ဗ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>[sentence]-ဗ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>[statement]-ဒ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>[I’m going to …]-ဒ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>[request]-ဒ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. The suffix -ဗ is pronounced -ခ after the final consonant -က and is voiced to -ခ after other finals. Examples:

1. -ဗ is not voiced: -ခ  
   ဒ  က်ပ္  ဗ  ၀  က်ပ္  
   that Horlicks  polite

2. -ဗ is voiced: -ခ  
   ဒ  က်ပ္  ဗ  ၀  က်ပ္  
   that Horlicks  polite

This is the effect of the Voicing Rule: see Voicing in Appendix 1.

Note 2. The sentence suffix -ဗ -ခ/ခ takes this position (sentence-final) in is/are sentences. For -ဗ -ခ/ခ in verb sentences see under verb suffixes (modality) below.

Note 3. Questions ending in -နေ encourage your listener to answer Yes (like “isn’t it?”, “don’t you?”, “won’t they?”, and so on), whereas questions ending in -ထောထော ဗ/ဗ don’t attempt to push him/her in either direction. (L 1.8)

Note 4. Questions that ask for information (Which? What? Why? etc) end in -ထော (or its voiced version -ထော). Questions that
can be answered with a Yes or a No end in -thàlai/-d há. Compare these two:

Beh-ha pu-dhàle? ဝေးချင် ဗျာခင်  Which one is the hot one?
Èh-da pu-dhàla? ခင် ဗျာခင်  Is that one hot?

Note 5. Parallel questions in -là imply alternatives (L 12.2). See the example below.

Examples of sentence suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>là</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that            | coffee        | question       |

"Is that coffee?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>noun phrase 2A</th>
<th>noun phrase 2B</th>
<th>sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>kaw-p'ì</td>
<td>là</td>
<td>là</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>question</td>
<td>tea</td>
<td>question</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Is that coffee or tea?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>ba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that            | coffee        | polite          |

"That is coffee (and I am expressing deference)."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>ièh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that            | what coffee   | question       |

"What coffee is that?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>naw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that            | coffee        | right?          |

"That is coffee, isn’t it?"

2.2 Some common phrase suffixes:

1. [phrase]-lèh
   [phrase]-leh
   "I’m pleased too."

2. [phrase]-dàw/tàw
   [phrase]-daw or yàw
   "My mother, however, doesn’t like it."

3. [phrase]-gàw or [phrase]-bèh/-p'èh
   how about? (L 9.1, 10.4, 11.1)

4. [phrase]-beh/-p'èh
   just, only [less than you’d think] (L 9.4, 9.7)

5. [phrase]-beh/-p'èh
   emphatic (L 3.1, 9.1)

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>verb phrase ± sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>kó-na-yì la-meh nàw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>nine o’clock come right?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"I’ll come at 9.0. Will that be all right?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase 1</th>
<th>noun phrase 2</th>
<th>verb phrase ± sentence suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>èl</td>
<td>da</td>
<td>kó-na-yì la-gèh nàw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that</td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>nine o’clock come right?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"You will come at nine, won’t you?"
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Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Note 1. The two suffixes -teh/-deh and -meh (⁻-⁰) usually take a variant form when combined with sentence suffix -lā (⁻-⁰): [verb]-⁰ + ᵃ = [verb]-⁰ or [verb]-⁰ or [verb]-⁰: [verb]-deh + lā = [verb]-lā or [verb]-lā or [verb]-lā.

Note 2. For more on [verb]-bi/pi see under Verb paradigms below.

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase + verb suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sān-ne</td>
<td>yauq -teh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>arrive past or present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“They arrived on Saturday.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or “They arrive on a Saturday (regularly).”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase + verb suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sān-ne</td>
<td>yauq -meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>arrive future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“They are going to arrive on Saturday.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase + verb suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mān-da</td>
<td>yauq -pi-lā?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>arrive has now happened-question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Have they got to Mandalay yet?”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

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Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

noun phrase | verb phrase + verb suffix
---|---
Màn-dàlê | mà-thwà -bù
Mandalay | not-go statement

“They didn’t go to Mandalay.”
or “They won’t go to Mandalay.”

noun phrase | verb phrase + verb suffix
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”

noun phrase | verb phrase + verb suffix
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please don’t sit there.”

2.4 Some common verb suffixes (modality etc):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>verb</th>
<th>verb suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>[verb]-tí</td>
<td>[verb]-ba/-pa-1 shows the speaker is being polite (L 1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>[verb]-jín-</td>
<td>[verb]-jin-/-c’in- want to [verb] (L 2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>[verb]-nàin-</td>
<td>[verb]-nain- be able to [verb] (L 5.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>[verb]-naic-</td>
<td>[verb]-daq/-taq- know how to [verb], be able to [verb] (L 9.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>[verb]-yá-</td>
<td>[verb]-yá- can, may, must, have to [verb] (L 5.3, 5.7, 8.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-</td>
<td>[verb]-ne- be [verb]-ing (L 9.5, 11.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>[verb]-pà-</td>
<td>[verb]-pà- [verb] for someone’s benefit (L 5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>[verb]-naic-</td>
<td>[verb]-dàw/-táw- [verb] at last, finally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>[verb]-naic-</td>
<td>[verb]-dàl/-thà- [verb] at last, finally</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example of verb suffixes (modality etc)

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
[verb]-tí | [verb]-ba/-pa-1 shows the speaker is being polite (L 1.2)
[verb]-jín- | [verb]-jin-/-c’in- want to [verb] (L 2.5)
[verb]-nàin- | [verb]-nain- be able to [verb] (L 5.5)
[verb]-naic- | [verb]-daq/-taq- know how to [verb], be able to [verb] (L 9.1)
[verb]-yá- | [verb]-yá- can, may, must, have to [verb] (L 5.3, 5.7, 8.3)
[verb]-ne- | [verb]-ne- be [verb]-ing (L 9.5, 11.1)
[verb]-pà- | [verb]-pà- [verb] for someone’s benefit (L 5.9)
[verb]-naic- | [verb]-dàw/-táw- [verb] at last, finally
[verb]-naic- | [verb]-dàl/-thà- [verb] at last, finally

Note 1. The verb suffix -pa/-ba- has the same effect as the sentence suffix -pa/-ba- both show that the speaker is being polite. The difference is in the position of the suffix. In sentences with a verb -pa/-ba- is placed after the verb and before the verb suffix indicating tense ([verb]-ba-deh, [verb]-ba-bi, etc), whereas in is/are sentences -pa/-ba- is placed after the second noun: [noun 1] [noun 2]-pa/-ba.

Examples of verb suffixes (modality etc)

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Màn-dàlê | mà-thwà -bù
Mandalay | not-go statement

“Please don’t sit there.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please don’t sit there.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please don’t sit there.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please don’t sit there.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please don’t sit there.”

noun phrase | verb phrase
---|---
Di-hma | t’ain-ba —
Here | sit [request]

“Please sit here.”
“I can’t drop it that much.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>know how</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Can you speak Burmese?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(mod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I am going now.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(mod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“There’s still more. There’s something else.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(mod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“He doesn’t work any more.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(mod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“He doesn’t work yet.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(mod)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+verb sfx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(tense)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
2.5 Some common noun suffixes (marking relationship to verb):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Noun Suffix</th>
<th>Meaning/Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-m˙a</td>
<td>in/at/on [noun] (L 2.3, 5.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-hma</td>
<td>from [noun] (L 9.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-k or -k`</td>
<td>to [noun] (L 5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-nóh</td>
<td>with/means of [noun] (L 9.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>-ga<code>/-ka</code></td>
<td>this noun is the subject of the verb (L 10.5, 12.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-ka`/-gak</td>
<td>this noun is the object of the verb (not introduced in the Lessons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>-ló</td>
<td>suffix marking end of name or quotation; like a spoken (&quot;) (L 3.5, 10.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples

- noun + noun suffix (rel) verb phrase ± sentence suffix
  - Pathein -hma ne-ba-deh. (I live in Pathein.)
  - Pathein go/-ko la-ba-deh. (I come from Pathein.)
  - Pathein go/-ko thwá-ba-deh. (I went to Pathein.)

2.6 Some common noun suffixes (expanding: plurality, coordination, etc)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Noun Suffix</th>
<th>Meaning/Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>-tui≥</td>
<td>[noun] and associated [noun]s (see example below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-dwe</td>
<td>[noun]s (L 12.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-elak</td>
<td>approximately, about [quantity] (L 9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>-nóh [noun2]</td>
<td>[noun1] and [noun2] (L 1.6, 4.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples

- noun + noun suffix (rel) verb phrase ± sentence suffix
  - Pathein -tui≥ laql´. (What matter with came)
  - Pathein -dwe la-dha˘le´h? (“What brought you here?”)
  - Pathein -elak la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)
  - Pathein -nóh [noun2] la-da˘le˘h. (My son is eight years old.)
  - Pathein -nóh [noun2] la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)

- noun + noun suffix (rel) verb phrase ± sentence suffix
  - Pathein -tui≥ kai˘q-sa´-ne´h la-dha˘le˘h? (Son subject has eight years)
  - Pathein -dwe shı´-bi. (Son subject)
  - Pathein -elak la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)
  - Pathein -nóh [noun2] la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)

- noun + noun suffix (rel) verb phrase ± sentence suffix
  - Pathein -kuiq-sa´-ne´h la-dha˘le˘h? (Son subject)
  - Pathein -go/-ko la-dha˘le˘h. (Son subject)
  - Pathein -elak la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)
  - Pathein -nóh [noun2] la-da˘le˘h. (Son subject)
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Note 1. Used only when [noun1] ends in a low tone syllable.

Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[noun1]</th>
<th>[noun2]</th>
<th>Uncle and associates, you and your colleagues, countrymen, family, etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>thəm-dwe</td>
<td>daughters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>daw-la</td>
<td>about 30 dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>mother and father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>my uncle’s son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>ëuNuk`</td>
<td>my aunt’s son</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 Compound sentences

A compound sentence is one which contains two or more simple sentences. The suffix at the end of the first sentence shows that the sentence is part of a combined sentence and that there is more to come. Example:

Simple sentence 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>daq-poun</td>
<td>yaiq-p’ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photograph</td>
<td>take</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I take photographs.”

Simple sentence 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun phrase</th>
<th>verb phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bämà-pye</td>
<td>ia-ba-deh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Burma</td>
<td>come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I came to Burma.”

Suffixes that are used to make compound sentences in this way are called “subordinating suffixes”. Burmese uses a large range of subordinating suffixes (e.g. [verb] -rc | [verb] -yin “if [verb]”, [verb] -lo’ | [verb] -lui≥ “because [verb]”, [verb] -t´.AKå | [verb] -de´h-a˘k’a “when [verb]”), and the order is always the same as the example above: the subordinated sentence precedes the main sentence. Only three subordinating suffixes are introduced in this course. They are:

1. [verb] -Pui≥ [verb] -bo´/-p’ó in order to [verb], to [verb] (L 9.8)
2. [verb] -ta [verb] -da/-ta [verb]-ing (makes verb into noun) (L 9.3, 9.6, 9.9)
3. [verb]-lui≥ [verb]-lo´ [verb]-ing (see example below) (L 9.10)

Examples of subordinating suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sentence 1</th>
<th>sentence 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ñæe</td>
<td>ñæe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñæe</td>
<td>ñæe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñæe</td>
<td>ñæe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: “I am to have met you (happy at meeting you).”

Appendix 1 Grammar

Compound sentence (Simple sentences 1 + 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>sentence 1</th>
<th>sentence 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ñæe</td>
<td>ñæe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñæe</td>
<td>ñæe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I came to Burma to take photographs.”
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

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Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

sentence 1 | sentence 2
---|---
Bāma-pye | yauq-ne-da
beh-lauq | ca-bi-lēh?
to Burma | arriving
how much | has been long?

“How long have you been in Burma?”

sentence 1 | sentence 2
---|---
Di-hma | ne-lō
here | live-ing
– | is good

“It is good living here.”

4 Verb paradigms

The following list draws together for comparison some high frequency combinations of verb suffix and sentence suffix. In the list “someone” is used as a cover term for “someone, something, somewhere” etc.

Statements and questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>someone</th>
<th>[verb]-ba-deh.</th>
<th>[someone]</th>
<th>[verb]-bi-la?</th>
<th>[verb]-da-Påy</th>
<th>[verb]-ba-ou?</th>
<th>[verb]-ba-lā?</th>
<th>[verb]-daq-eq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[someone]</td>
<td>[verb]-dha-‰la?</td>
<td>[who/what/which]</td>
<td>[verb]-bi</td>
<td>[verb]-bi</td>
<td>[verb]-bi</td>
<td>[verb]-bi</td>
<td>[verb]-bi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[someone]</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
<td>[verb]-meh.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[someone]</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
<td>[verb]-ne-ba-deh.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exclamations

Theiq [verb]-da-bēh! | [verb]-laiq-ta! | [verb]-laiq-ta! | [verb]-laiq-ta! |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[verb]-da-bēh!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[verb]-da-bēh!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
<td>[verb]-laiq-ta!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note 1. The polite suffix -ba/ -pa is not obligatory in requests. You will hear requests and commands in the form “[verb]” and “mā-[verb]-nēh” but a request with no polite suffix can sound very peremptory, so it is prudent to use it in all requests until you are sure of what you are doing.

Note 2. The verb suffix -yēh is nowadays virtually confined to a couple of polite formulaic inquiries and to questions implying disbelief: “Do you really like it?! (I thought you’d hate it.)” etc.
APPENDIX 4
OUTLINE DESCRIPTION OF THE BURMESE NUMBER SYSTEM

Figures in Burmese script

The number system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese script</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>tiq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>hniq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>thoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ngä</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>c'aug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>k'un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>kô</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>täs'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>shiq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ko'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>täs'eh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weakening with numbers

- + ya ⇒ täya 100
- + ya ⇒ hniya 200
- + ya ⇒ k'un-hniya 700

The Voicing Rule

- s'eh + s'eh ⇒ e.g., c'auq-s'eh, shiq-s'eh
- hniq + s'eh ⇒ e.g., täs'eh, hnas'eh, k'un-näs's'eh
- + s'eh ⇒ zeh e.g., thoun-zeh, lê-zeh, ngâ-zeh

Compound numbers

shiq-t'aun ngâ-ya c'aug-s'eh(-neh) hniq: 8562

eight thousand five hundred six tens (and) two: 8562

The initial ta˘ in a compound number beginning with täs'eh or tät'aun is frequently omitted; e.g.

täs'eh-kô usually s'eh-kô 19

tät'aun-ngâ-ya usually t'aun-ngâ-ya 1500

Ordinal numbers

There are three ways of expressing ordinal numbers.

1. Ordinal numbers taken from Pali
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pali</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>täs'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>hnas'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>thoun-zech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>ngâ-zech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>c'aug-s'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>k'un-näs's'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>shiq-s'eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>kô-zech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>thoun-nya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   Most people know the first three of this list, but the remainder are less and less frequently used the higher they come up the number scale. Pali ordinals above dá-thâmá are used in scholarly texts, but are rare in colloquial speech.

2. In some contexts cardinal numbers are used as ordinals; e.g.
3. Order is expressed by the formula CARDINAL + COUNTWORD + myauq (or myauq-téh) NOUN; e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARDINAL</th>
<th>COUNTWORD</th>
<th>NOUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shiq-cein</td>
<td>myauq</td>
<td>Eighth Annual Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nga-yeq</td>
<td>myauq-téh</td>
<td>the fifth day (&quot;five-day-myauq-téh day&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s'éh-hnaya</td>
<td>myauq</td>
<td>the twelfth soldier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Counting**

**Two-part number phrases**

**Standard order:** NUMBER + COUNTWORD

- thou´n mi-ta ⇒ 3 metres
- s'éh-ngà máníq ⇒ 15 minutes
- thouén-zéh-kò daw-la ⇒ 39 dollars

**Weakening with countwords (as for tens and hundreds etc):**

- tiq + mi-ta ⇒ tâmi-ta 1 metre
- s'éh-hnîq + máníq ⇒ s'éh-hnámáníq 12 minutes
- thouén-zéh k’un-hnîq + daw-la ⇒ thouén-zéh k’un-nâdaw-la 37 dollars

**Three-part number phrases**

**Standard order:** NOUN + NUMBER + COUNTWORD

Number phrases with units of measurement like the metres, dollars and minutes in the examples above have only two components: the number and the countword. When you are specifying quantities of some substance, the number phrase

---

**Appendix 4 Numbers**

**The Round Number Rule:**

**COUNTWORD+NUMBER+TENS/HUNDREDS etc**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard order</th>
<th>Round number order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>number + countword</td>
<td>countword + number + tens/hundreds etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- hnas'ëh-kò máníq 29 minutes
- daw-la hñayá-thoun- zeh 230 dollars
- tan tâyá tà s'éh 110 tons

**EXCEPTION:** The word s'éh "ten" on its own, although it ends in 0, is not subject to the Round Number Rule.

- s'éh mi-ta 10 metres
- s'éh daw-la 10 dollars
- s'éh máníq 10 minutes

---

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Burmese By Ear

contains three components: the noun + the number + the count-word (i.e. the measuring unit). Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>countword</th>
<th>number phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lain-ju</td>
<td>c’auq</td>
<td>k’weq</td>
<td>six glasses of lime juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>limejuice</td>
<td>six</td>
<td>glass</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peq-si</td>
<td>lè</td>
<td>pālín</td>
<td>six bottles of Pepsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pepsi</td>
<td>four</td>
<td>bottle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pālín</td>
<td>thoún</td>
<td>leiq</td>
<td>three rolls of film</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>film</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>roll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bì-ya</td>
<td>s’èh-c’auq</td>
<td>bù</td>
<td>sixteen cans of beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beer</td>
<td>sixteen</td>
<td>can</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Counting as “items”

Burmese uses exactly the same pattern when counting discrete items such as hamburgers, biscuits, calendars etc. In place of the unit of measurement used in the examples above, you use the countword -k’ú (or voiced -gú) “item”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>countword</th>
<th>number phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>han-ba-ga</td>
<td>c’auq</td>
<td>k’ú</td>
<td>six hamburgers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamburger</td>
<td>six</td>
<td>item</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pyeq-s’we</td>
<td>shiq</td>
<td>k’ú</td>
<td>eight calendars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’ádein</td>
<td>eight</td>
<td>item</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calendar</td>
<td>dò</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pó-sàkaq</td>
<td>thoún</td>
<td>gú</td>
<td>three postcards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postcard</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>item</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Classifying” countwords

Some discrete items are placed in “classes” for counting purposes, and for these items there are specific countwords, other than -k’ú/gú, sometimes called “classifying countwords” or “classifiers”; e.g.:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>countword</th>
<th>number phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ti-shaq</td>
<td>hnà</td>
<td>t’eñ</td>
<td>two T-shirts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-shirt</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>garment</td>
<td>(using the countword for clothes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biaw-pin</td>
<td>tà</td>
<td>c’auñ</td>
<td>one ball-point pen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ball pen</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>long thing</td>
<td>(using the countword for pens, knives, teeth, sticks, legs etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meiq-s’we</td>
<td>thou’n</td>
<td>yauq</td>
<td>three friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>person</td>
<td>(using the countword for persons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ml-dhì</td>
<td>hnás’èh-lè</td>
<td>loùn</td>
<td>24 light bulbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>light bulb</td>
<td>twenty</td>
<td>round</td>
<td>(using the countword for round things: balls, fruit, cans, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’wè</td>
<td>hnà</td>
<td>kaun</td>
<td>two dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>animal</td>
<td>(using the countword for animals, birds, fish, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seq-beîn</td>
<td>lè</td>
<td>zì</td>
<td>four bicycles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bicycle</td>
<td>four</td>
<td>mount</td>
<td>(using the countword for vehicles, cars, boats, etc, and riding animals)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Round Number Rule:

NOUN+NUMBER+TENS/HUNDREDS etc

In three-part number phrases containing a round number, the round number replaces the countword:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>round number</th>
<th>replacing countword</th>
<th>number phrase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pó-sàkaq</td>
<td>thoún</td>
<td>zeh</td>
<td>thirty postcards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postcard</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ti-shaq  hnà  t’aun  two thousand
T-shirt  two  thousand  T-shirts
sîq-thà  thòùn  ya  three hundred
soldier  three  hundred  soldiers
si-gàreq  hnàyà  nga  zeh  250 cigarettes
smacسر  200 + 5  ten
DATES

Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hniq</th>
<th>year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-q</td>
<td>-k’il-gú</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: 1964 =
Ta’t’aun  ko’-ya  c’auq-s’èh  lè-gú  hniq
One thousand nine hundreds six tens four units year

Seasons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mò-ya-dhi</th>
<th>rainy season (June to October)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s’aun-ya-dhi</td>
<td>cool season (November to February)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nwe-ya-dhi</td>
<td>hot season (March to May)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lá</th>
<th>month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan-nàwa-ri-lá</td>
<td>January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P’e-baw-wa-ri-lá</td>
<td>February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maq-lá</td>
<td>March, etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a traditional Burmese calendar, with months based on the waxing and waning of the moon and a year that starts in April, but most Burmese are familiar with the Western system and the English names of the months, so the Burmese month names are not given here.

Days in the month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>yeq-né</th>
<th>day of the month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s’éh-c’aug yeq-né</td>
<td>the sixteenth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hna’séh yeq-né</td>
<td>the twentieth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh-hnàyeq-né-lish?</td>
<td>What date?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh-hnàyeq-né la-màlèh?</td>
<td>What date will (they) come?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weekdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>né</th>
<th>day (of the week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tànin-gânwe-né</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tànin-la-né</td>
<td>Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-gà-né</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bouq-dàhù-né</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ca-dhàbàdè-né</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thauq-ca-né</td>
<td>Friday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sàne-né</td>
<td>Saturday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh-né la-màlèh?</td>
<td>What day will (they) come?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sàne-né la-mèh</td>
<td>They are coming on Saturday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you find it difficult to memorise the names of the days of the week don’t worry unduly: most of the people you are likely to meet will know the English names anyway.

Dates in Burmese run from large units to small:
Tàt’aun  ko’-ya  c’auq-s’èh  lè-gú  hniq
One thousand nine hundred four tens eight units year,
= The fourth of January, nineteen hundred and forty eight

TIME

Hours and minutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>àc’ein</th>
<th>time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>na-yì</td>
<td>hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese By Ear</th>
<th>Appendix 4 Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

PRICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mi-nil or màniq</th>
<th>minute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thòun-na-yi</td>
<td>three o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’un-nàna-yi</td>
<td>seven o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c’àuq-na-yi-gwèh</td>
<td>half past six o’clock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kò-na-yi s’èh-ngà màniq</td>
<td>9.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’èh-na-yi s’èh màniq</td>
<td>10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lè-na-yi thòun-zèh-ngà-mànìq</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh àc’èin la-màlèh?</td>
<td>What time will you come?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Round Number Rule applies to minutes (other than “10 minutes” itself) as it does to other units:

| tâna-yi mi-nil hns’èh | 1.20 or 1 hr and 10 mins (1 hr, 2 mins) |
| s’èh-hnàna-yi mi-nil lè-zèh | 12.40 or 12 hrs and 40 mins (12 hrs, 4 mins) |

Parts of the day

| mânèq | morning, a.m. |
| nyá-ne | afternoon, p.m. |
| nyá | night, evening |
| mânèq k’un-nàna-yi lè-zèh-ngà-mànìq | 7.45 a.m. |
| nyà kò-na-yi mi-nil hns’èh | 9.20 p.m. |
| né-leh | midday |
| nyà thàgaun | midnight |

Note 1. The pya was in use till the early 1990s, but inflation drove its value so low that it is no longer in use today (2001). The word is sometimes used for prices in US or UK currency, when pya = US cent or UK penny.

After numbers the Voicing Rule makes caq into jaq, and pyà into byà, except after -q, or after hns- or nà- (see the note in Section 10):

| lè-jaq hns’èh-ngà-byà | four kyats and twenty-five pya |
| c’aq-caq shiq-pyà | six kyats and eight pya |
| k’un-nàcaq hns-pyà | seven kyats and two pya |

The Round Number Rule applies to currency as to other units:

| pyà ngà-zèh | pya five tens |
| lè-zèh-lè-jaq pyà lè-zèh | forty-four kyat, pya four tens | K44/40 |
When kyat are counted in round numbers, the word က်က္း ဗ်း ဗ်း is usually omitted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>အင်္ဂါ ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>hnas’eh or ngwe hnas’eh</td>
<td>(money) two tens</td>
<td>K20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>လေ့ ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>lę-ya or ngwe lę-ya</td>
<td>(money) four hundreds</td>
<td>K400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number ten, with currency as with other units, is exempt from the Round Number Rule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ဆိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>s’eh-daw-la</td>
<td>ten-dollar</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဆိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>s’eh-maq</td>
<td>ten-mark</td>
<td>DM10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

except with Burmese currency:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ဆိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>täs’eh or ngwe täs’eh</td>
<td>money one ten</td>
<td>K10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fractions of a kyat (in use till the 1980s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>စုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>tamaq</td>
<td>one quarter</td>
<td>K-/25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>စိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>thoung-maq</td>
<td>three quarters</td>
<td>K-/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>စိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>ngà-mù</td>
<td>five mu</td>
<td>K-/50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX 5

TOPICAL VOCABULARIES

Topical vocabularies
5.1 Food and drinks
5.2 Sites and placenames
5.3 Kin terms
5.4 You and I
5.5 This, that and what
5.6 Traditional Burmese clothing

TOPICAL VOCABULARY 5.1

FOOD AND DRINKS

The list below gives a selection of common items to choose from and add to. Smaller cafés and restaurants tend to specialise in one type of cuisine, mostly Indian, Chinese, Burmese or European, according to the racial origins of the proprietor. Larger establishments offer a wider range.

Drinks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ရွှေး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>aye</td>
<td>alcoholic drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>အေးင်း ဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>lein-maw-ye</td>
<td>orange juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>သန့်ဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>than-báya-ye</td>
<td>lime juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ကန့် ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>can-ye</td>
<td>sugar cane juice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ပုံ ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>p’yaw-ye</td>
<td>fruit juice (“infused juice”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ဗိုး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>bi-laq-ye</td>
<td>sweet carbonated drink (“foreign juice”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>လီဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>lap’eq-ye</td>
<td>tea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>နိုး-ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>nwà-nó</td>
<td>ဗ်း or just ဗ်း</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>နိုး-ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>nó-ë</td>
<td>ဗ်း</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ပဲဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>p’a-lu-da</td>
<td>faluda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ရွှေး ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>ye</td>
<td>water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ရွှေး-ဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>ye-nwè-jàn</td>
<td>ဗ်း or just ဗ်း</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ရွှေး-ဗ်း ဗ်း ဗ်း</td>
<td>ye-jeq-ë</td>
<td>ဗ်း</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Café snacks

ye-geh-mou
kei-mou
i-ca-kwè
bi-sâkiq
pu-din
paun-mou
nan-byà
t'âw-baq
paun-mou t'âw-baq-thouq
nan-byà t'âw-baq-thouq
pêh-byouq
sâmû-s'à
pála-ta
p'eq-t'ouq
pauq-si
kaw-býañ-(leiq)-jaw
áthouq
jin-dhouq
k'âyân-jin-dhi-dhouq
bâzun-dhouq

Hot meals

– Starches
t'âmin
k'auq-s'weh
nànn-ji
cà-za

– Proteins
åthà
weq-thà
àmêh-dhà
s'eîq-thà
bêh-dhà
ceq-thà
bàzun

– Methods of cooking
-p'ouq
-hlaw
-kine-gin
-paûn/-baûn
-pyouq/-byouq
-caw/-jaw
-thouq
-àc'auq
-kaun-lou

– Names of dishes
hin
t'âmin-jaw
dan-bauq t'âmin
k'auq-s'weh-jaw
k'auq-s'weh-byouq

Appendix 5 Topical vocabularies

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
**Appendix 5 Topical vocabularies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burmese By Ear</th>
<th>Pronounce as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flavourings</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngápi</td>
<td>ç:i or çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pêh-ngápi</td>
<td>ç:i or çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>âcín</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jin</td>
<td>çâ or çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngâyouq</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sâ</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngâyouq-kaun</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-w-za-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceq-mauq-thi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cwêh-gaw-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dú-yin-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lein-maw-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma-laka-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maya-n-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meq-ma-n-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meq-mun-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min-guq-thi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na-naq-thi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngapyaw-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oûn-dhi</td>
<td>çâ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

water melon
apple
jackfruit
grape
grapefruit

water melon
apple
jackfruit
grape
grapefruit

(but tastes like lemon)

– Other foods
bread
butter
biscuit, cookie
cheese
fish sauce
milk
sugar
oil
instant coffee
milk powder
condensed milk
sweets, candy

TOPICAL VOCABULARY 5.2
SITES AND PLACENAMES

A selection of the names of places and sites you may need to know

Homes and addresses

house, home
road, street
building

neighbourhood, quarter
Township
Division
State
Bogyoke Street
Maha Bandoola Street
Anawrahta Street
Strand Road
Merchant Street
Pansodan Street
Shwe Bontha Street
Pyay Road (Prome Road)

U Wisara Road
88 Bogyoke Street
47 Maha Bandoola Street

pagoda
Shwedagon Pagoda
Sule Pagoda
Ngadatkyi Pagoda
Botataung Pagoda
Mailamu Pagoda
World Peace Pagoda

monastery

meditation centre

church ("lord-revere-monastery")

office

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Burmes By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Appendix 5 Topical vocabularies

Public buildings
- myan-ma A˘than Myan-ma Airways office
- Bu-da-youn large public building
- Youq-shin-youn ministry
- Byi-ti-sha Than-youn British Embassy
- Seq-youn railway station
- A˘louq-youn factory
- Ta˘reig-s’an-youn zoo
- A˘than-hliwn-youn broadcasting station
- Myanmar A˘than Voice of Myanmar (national broadcasting station)
- S’e˘-youn hospital
- S’e˘-ga˘n clinic
- Ye˘h-t’a˘na˘ police station
- I˘n-sein T’a˘n Insein Jail
- Ein-dha toilet

Hotels and restaurants
- ho-teh hotel (or restaurant)
- Ka˘ra-o-ke karaoke
- S’a˘t’ar˘in Ho-teh Strand Hotel
- Da˘goun Ho-teh Dagon Hotel
- S’a˘k’a˘n-dha Ho-teh Sakanttha Hotel
- Yo˘m˘a Ho-teh Yoma Hotel
- In-y˘a Leiq Ho-teh Inya Lake Hotel
- Tha˘m˘a˘da Ho-teh President Hotel
- Ka˘raweiq Ho-teh Karaweik Hall and Restaurant

Market and shops
- Ze˘ market
- Bo-jouq Ze˘ Bogyoke Market
- Thein-ji Ze˘ Theingyi Market
- L˘ha˘-byin Ze˘ The Open Air Market
- Sa˘-thauq-s’ain restaurant
- A˘e˘-zain cold drinks bar
- Da˘q-poun-zain café
- Za˘bin-hnyaq-s’ain barber’s shop
- S’a˘n-tha˘-zain hairdressers
- S’e˘-zain chemist’s

“Buildings”
- Tauq brick or stone building
- Ban-da˘iq bank
- Py˘a-da˘iq museum
- Sa˘-daiq post office
- Koun-daiq department store
- Sa-˘ci˘-daiq library

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Educational institutes

teq-kátho သိပ္ပါးသူ  university
Y an-goun Teq-kátho ဗိုလ်ချုပ်သိပ္ပါး  University of Yangon
cáun ကျောင်း  monastery, school
áteq-tán cáun အသင်းကျောင်း  high school
cáun-zaun ကျောင်းအခန်း  hostel, dorm

Open air places
pán-jan ပန်ယန်  garden, park
(“flower enclosure”)
úa-yin ဗိုလ်ယန်  garden, park
Pyi-dhú Ú-yin မြောက်ယန်  People’s Park
ye-kú-gan ယောက်ကန်  swimming pool
(“water-cross + pool”)
gauq-kwın ကောက်ဝင်  golf course (“golf field”)
á-kāzā-gwın ကန့်အလိုက်  sports field
(“strength-play + field”)

Transport
le-yin-gwın လယ်ယန်  air field (“air-vehicle + field”)
le-zeiq လစ်ယောက်  airport (“air port”)
thin-baw-zeiq ဆိုက်ကန်  dock, embarcation point
(“ship port”)
kà-geiq ကျောက်ချို  bus depôt (“car gate”)
hmaq-tain ကျောက်တိုင်  bus stop
bu-da(-youn) ပဲတော  railway station

TOPICAL VOCABULARY 5.3

KIN TERMS

áp'o အဖ်  grandfather
áp'wà အဖ်:  grandmother
áp'e အဖ်:  father
áme အမ်:  mother
ámyo-thà အမ်းပါ:  husband, boyfriend
ámyo-thàmi အမ်းပါချင်း:  wife, girlfriend

Kin terms are frequently modified in one of two ways. 1. They may be duplicated, which has the effect of making them sound more affectionate; e.g.

ádaw အတွာ  aunt
⇒ daw-daw တိုးတိုး – auntie
áme အမ်:  mother
⇒ me-me မီးမီး – mummy

and so on for almost all the kin terms.

2. They may be followed by a suffix indicating relative age: most frequently

-jì စိ:  older
-lé လို:  younger
-laq လိုက်:  middle

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Examples:

āko-jì  ဗား ဗား:  older brother

daw-lè  မဂား မဂား:  younger aunt

thà-laq  များ များ:  middle son

TOPOCAL VOCABULARY 5.4
YOU AND I

Burmese does have words that correspond to you and I and it and other English pronouns, but most of the time it’s quite clear from the situation who or what you are talking about, so people simply leave out those words (L 1.3). For example, in the following exchange:

S1  Caiq-teh-naw?  You like it, don’t you?

all you are in fact saying in Burmese is –

S1  Caiq-teh-naw?  Like, right?

When you can’t avoid using a word for “you” (as you couldn’t, for example, in “I’m fine. How are you?”) you have a range of options. The most common are listed below in order of frequency.

(a) kin terms, such as Ù-lè “uncle”, Daw-daw “aunt”, etc (for more see L 7.1, 7.2)
(b) a title such as S’āya-má “teacher”, Than-āmaq-ći “Ambassador”, Ashin-p’āyā “Reverend Sir”
(c) the person’s name (if you know it), normally with a prefix (see L 10.1)
(d) as a fallback, the word Meiq-s’we “friend” (L 10.4)

Similarly there are occasions when you are forced to use a word for “I” (e.g. when saying “And I am happy to have met you.”). The Burmese equivalents for “I” are equally varied (L 10.5).

(a) Perhaps the most common equivalents, in courteous speech between social equals, are the words cânaw “I (male speaker)” and câná “I (female speaker)”. Careful speakers say cun-daw and cun-má, but the slightly shortened forms cânaw and câná are more common. Originally the words meant “your honoured servant” and “your female servant” respectively.

(b) Among friends and family (and in some contexts to strangers) people often use kin terms for “I” – the words for “Uncle”, “Sister”, “Son” etc (L 10.4).

(c) Teachers and Buddhist monks often use their title: S’a˘ya (male) or S’āya-má (female) “Teacher”, P’ou˘n-ji “Monk”, etc. A lay person speaking to a monk refers to him/herself as Tābyi-daw (male) or Tābyi-daw-má (female) “Your disciple”.

(d) Children and young women often use their names to refer to themselves; e.g. a girl named Má Sān Sān might say Sān Sān-lèh caiq-pa-deh.  စိန်စိန် စိန်စိန် ကြား Pu “I like it too.”

Literally: “San San likes it too.”

Words for he, she, and it are normally omitted in the same way as words for you and I. When you need one, you can use thu; e.g.

Cāmā caiq-teh.  ကွန်းကြား ကြား I like it.
Thū mà caiq-pa-bu˘.  သို့မဟာ ကြား She doesn’t.

Plural pronouns

Equivalents for English we, you (plural) and they are made by adding the suffix -dó to the singular form; e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cânaw</td>
<td>cânaw-dó we (man speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>câná</td>
<td>câná-dó we (woman speaking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thu</td>
<td>thu-dó they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You and I using kin term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daw-daw</th>
<th>(Aunt)</th>
<th>Daw-daw-dó we</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daw-daw</td>
<td>you (Aunt)</td>
<td>Daw-daw-dó you (plural)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You and I using title

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S’āya</th>
<th>(Teacher)</th>
<th>S’āya-dó we</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S’āya</td>
<td>you (Teacher)</td>
<td>S’āya-dó you (plural)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You and I using name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sān Sān</th>
<th>(San San)</th>
<th>Sān Sān-dó we</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sān Sān</td>
<td>you (San San)</td>
<td>Sān Sān-dó you (plural)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TOPICAL VOCABULARY 5.5**  
**THIS, THAT AND WHAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which [noun]?</td>
<td>this [noun]</td>
<td>that [noun]</td>
<td>there (some way off)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh-beq ဗ်-ဗင်</th>
<th>di-beq ဒိ-ဗင်</th>
<th>ဗ်-di-beq ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-beq ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which way?</td>
<td>this/that way</td>
<td>that way over there</td>
<td>that way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh-lân ဗ်-လမ်း</th>
<th>di-lân ဒိ-လမ်း</th>
<th>ဗ်-di-lân ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-lân ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which road?</td>
<td>this/that road</td>
<td>that road</td>
<td>that road</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh-ha ဗ်-ဟု</th>
<th>di-ha ဒိ-ဟု</th>
<th>ဗ်-di-ha ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-ha ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>which thing?</td>
<td>this thing, this one</td>
<td>that thing, that one</td>
<td>that thing, that one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Referring to place**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh-hma ဗ်-နမ်</th>
<th>di-hma ဒိ-နမ်</th>
<th>ဗ်-di-hma ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-hma ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in which place? (at) where?</td>
<td>in this place, (at) here</td>
<td>in that place, right (at) there</td>
<td>in that place, (at) there (far off)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh ဗ်</th>
<th>di ဒိ</th>
<th>ဗ်-di ဗင်</th>
<th>ho ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to which place? (to) where?</td>
<td>to this place, (to) here</td>
<td>to that place, (to) there</td>
<td>to that distant place, (to) there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>beh-ga ဗ်-ကု</th>
<th>di-ga ဒိ-ကု</th>
<th>ဗ်-di-ga ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-ga ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from which place?</td>
<td>from this place, from here</td>
<td>from that place, from there</td>
<td>from that distant place, from there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Referring to things**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ba ဗ်</th>
<th>da ဒိ</th>
<th>ဗ်-da ဗင်</th>
<th>ho-ha ဟာ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what thing?</td>
<td>this/that thing</td>
<td>that thing over there</td>
<td>that thing over there (also used to mean “the wossaname”)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOPICAL VOCABULARY 5.6**  
**TRADITIONAL BURMESE CLOTHING**

- gaũn-baũn ဂျည်-ဗားး: *gaung-baung* (Burmese turban: a cloth wrapped round head and tucked in to leave a corner protruding)
- eĩn-jì ဗီးနီး: *upper garment (shirt, blouse, jacket, coat)*
- thàbèq, pàwa သော်ဗ် ပဝ: *tabet or pawa* (woman’s light scarf for formal occasions)
- t'aiq-poun-eĩn-jì ဗ်ဗ်ဗ်ဗ်ဗ်: *man’s formal jacket*
- loun-jì လျင်း: *longyi, sarong*
Burmese By Ear

pəs’ə ပျဉ်း:  
paso (long longyi for men, worn on formal occasions)
təmein သိမ်းငါး:  
tamein (long longyi for women, worn by stage dancers)
suq-ceh စောင်ချက်:  
vest, undershirt
baw-li ပေါ်လူး:  
woman’s bodice
hnyaq-pənaq ဟိနာပွန်း:  
thong sandals
jəpaq-pənaq ကြားပွန်း:  
rubber sandals

Learning Burmese: self-study

Spoken language

Burmese: An Introduction to the Spoken Language, Books 1 and 2, by John Okell. 1994, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University. All in script and roman, with 12 tapes for Book 1 and 14 tapes for Book 2. Book 1 lays the groundwork, with copious exercises on tape, covering high-frequency sentence structures, pronunciation, question and answer, numbers, prices, want to, have to, please do, and so on. It ends with a set of dialogues, again with plenty of oral practice, covering 12 situations, including survival (shops, taxis and so on) and social (Where are you from? Are you married? Shall we meet again? and so on). Book 2 extends your competence in the 12 situations. Includes a full vocabulary, an outline grammar, and notes on social customs, talking about language, talking to monks.


Phrase books

customs and home life, common phrases, arrival in Myanmar, travelling around, at the hotel, eating and drinking, shopping and bargaining, making friends, living in Myanmar, at a doctor’s office, post telegraph and telephone, ministries and government departments, English Myanmar vocabulary. All words are presented in three cols: English, roman, script.


**Learning the script**

*Burmesse: an introduction to the script*, by John Okell. 1994, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University. c.450 pages and 7 x 60” tapes. The method largely avoids relying on romanized equivalents: students learn by associating script symbols on the page with sound from the tapes. Includes sections on alphabetical order, the Burmese names of the letters, handwriting, and display typefaces.

*An introduction to the Burmese writing system*, by H D Roop. 1972, Yale University Press. A programmed teach-yourself course, which assumes you are already familiar with the pronunciation.

**Literary style**

*Burmesse: an introduction to the literary style*, by John Okell. 1994, Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University. c. 200 pp and 1 x 60” tape of readings of the texts. A selection of passages from school readers, with “interludes” of material from other sources, provided with vocabularies and exercises.

**Dictionaries**


**Burmese customs**


*Dos and Don’ts in Myanmar*, by Win Pe. Book Promotion and Service Ltd, Bangkok, 1996, pp 151-153

**Where to find more**


**Book suppliers**

John Randall, 47 Moreton Street, London SW1V 2NY. 071 630 5331

U Thant Thaw Kaung, Nandawun, N° Y Thukhawady, Kaba Aye Pagoda Road (next to Sedona Hotel), Yankin Tnsp, Yangon. Ph 571498, 542744. Email mbcbook@mptmail.net.com or nandawun@yahoo.com.

U Ba Kyi, Pagan Bookshop, 100 37th Street, Yangon. Stationery, Printing and Photographic Stores Trading, 72 Bo Aung Kyaw Street, Botataung, Yangon

Tamarind Books, PO Box 49217, Greensboro, NC 27419, USA. ph 919 852-1905, fax -5510

White Lotus Co. Ltd, GOP Box 1141, Bangkok 10501 Thailand, ph 662-2861100, fax 662-2131175.

Copies of John Okell’s *Burmesse: an introduction …* can be obtained from: The Center for Burma Studies, Northern Illinois University, 412 Adams Hall, DeKalb, Illinois 60115, USA. Fax 0101 815 753 1651, phone 815 753 1771. Or Probsthain’s bookshop
Learning Burmese: taught language courses

In Burma/Myanmar courses for foreign learners are given at the University of Foreign Languages, 119-131 University Avenue, Yangon 11081, Myanmar (Burma). Phone +95 1 531713. Also at several commercial language schools. Look in the Yellow Pages, or ask expatriates for recommendations. Burmese courses are also given at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and at universities in Berlin, Heidelberg, Paris, Australia, the USA, Russia, China, Japan, Korea, and Thailand.

There is an intensive nine-week course held every summer in the USA. It is called The South East Asian Studies Summer Institute (SEASSI). It gives you a concentrated dose of language learning; 4 hours of classwork a day, five days a week, and plenty of homework.

Otherwise try –

Private lessons with a Burmese speaker. Advantages: relatively cheap, can be timed to suit your schedule. Disadvantage: the teacher may not have much experience in the needs of foreign learners.

Self-study, with book and tapes. Advantages: cheap, can be timed to suit your schedule. Disadvantage: you have no one to encourage, correct, and urge you on.

Contacts:
SOAS Burmese language learning web pages:
http://www.soas.ac.uk/SouthEastAsia/Burmese/home1.html
Justin Watkins, Lecturer in Burmese: justin.watkins@soas.ac.uk
John Okell, retired Lecturer in Burmese: jo@soas.ac.uk
Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
cassette player > keq-s’eq

cassette tape > keq-s’eq-k’we

certain: to be definite, certain > the-ja-deh

cost: to be cheap, inexpensive > zêco-deh

chemist’s shop, drugstore > s’è-zain

take out > “medicine shop”

cold drinks bar > àè-zain

cold: to be cold > ë-deh

colour > ë-yaun

comb > bi ści

come > la-deh

cotton > c’ì

cotton wool, absorbent cotton > gûn

cup, glass > k’weq

dark: to be dark > hmaun-deh

direction: to be a direction > thàmi

day > yea -c’ó

dead, died > They are dead > S’ûn-dhrà-à-bí

definite: to be definite, certain > the-ja-deh

dentist > thwà-s’èya-wun

drinks: to drink > è-deh

drop, reduce, lower, bring down (price) > shàw

drunk > q’èh

driver > dàraín-bà

drop in, stick to > k’à

difficult: to be difficult > k’eq-teh

director > Hnyun-c’ày-hmù

division: to be a division, group > wè-deh

diver: to be a diver, swimmer > s’è-zain

dumpling > p’auq-s’è

dust: to be dusty > p’ìn t’èh

ear > nà

earring > ngàq

dock, embarkation point > thín-baw-ziq

dotted line > “ship port”
doll, image, statue > ëyaq

dollar > daw-la

dorm, hostel > caùn-zaun
dress > ga-wun

drink: to drink > thauq-teh

driver: to be a driver, swimmer > k’à

drop in, stick to > k’à

dictionary > abí-dàn

died, dead > They are dead > S’ûn-dhrà-à-bí

difficult: to be difficult > k’eq-teh

director > Hnyun-c’ày-hmù

direction: to be a direction, group > wè-deh

driver: to be a driver, swimmer > k’à

drop in, stick to > k’à

dictionary > abí-dàn

died, dead > They are dead > S’ûn-dhrà-à-bí

difficult: to be difficult > k’eq-teh

director > Hnyun-c’ày-hmù

division: to be a division, group > wè-deh

easy: to be easy > lweh-deh

eat > sà-deh [sà-thà:] 2.1
editor > e-h-dí-ta [e-h-sà:] 3.7
eight > shií whàh [sài] 1.3
elastic band > thâye-gwin

elbow > tâdaun-zíq [tâ%!dàu-síq] 3.4
else ◊ what else do you have? > Ba shií-dhá-dháleh? [sài-sâi-tà:] 6.6
embarrassed: to feel bad about imposing on someone > à-na-deh [sài] 11.1
embarrassing: to be embarrassing > à-na-zâya*[kàu]-deh

embassy > than-yoûn [ùn] ("envoy office") 5.2
employee > wun-dân [wun-sà:] 1.1
engineer > in-jín-ni-ya [ùn-sà:] 11.1

English (language) > ìn-gâ-leîq-sâgà [ùn-gâ-sàgà] 3.4
enjoy: to enjoy oneself, have a good time > pyaw-deh

9.9, to be enjoyable, to be fun > pyaw-zâya*[kàu]-deh

[engaging oneself or belonging to oneself] 5.11

father > âp’e [sà] 12E and see the

Topical Vocabulary for kin
terms
fetch: come and fetch > la-k’aw-deh

5.11
few: to be little, few > néh-deh

fiancé/e, sweetheart > âs’eq

[one’s] 3.4 though, au as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Excuse me > use kin term 7.1 and

7.2 and see the Topical Vocabulary for You and I

expect, look out for > hmyaw-ne-deh

expensive: to be expensive > zê-cí-deh

["machine building"] 1.5
eye > myeq-shà [mye-sâ] 1.5

decorate > cí’pa-deh

["appliance"]
cin-
hj’súm-deh

["electric appliance"]

fan (electric) > pan-ka

(hand-held) > yaq-taun

farmer, peasant > leh-dhàmá

father > âp’e [sà] 12E and see the

Topical Vocabulary for kin
terms
catch: come and catch > la-k’aw

deh

5.11
few: to be little, few > néh-deh

fiancée, sweetheart > âs’éq

[your] 3.4 though, au as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

fine (Eng) > pàlín [pàlìn] (English

"film") 6.2

film actor > youq-shíng

["male"]

min-dhàmé [min-dhàmé] 4.1

film actress > youq-

["female"); see also

the Topical Vocabulary for kin
terms

film > pàlín [pàlìn] (English

"film") 6.2

film actor > youq-shíng

["male"]

min-dhàmé [min-dhàmé] 4.1

dress \\n
fine (Eng) > Pàlín, OK > Kàun-bà-bí

[finish now]

4.1

define > leq-c’âun [leq-sâun]

c’kàw-deh

[engaging oneself or belonging to oneself] 5.11
give > pè-deh

GREETINGS! > see Lesson 2.8

goodbye > thàw-méh

[sài?] 9.9, to be enjoyable,
to be fun > pyaw-zâya*[kàu]-deh

[engaging oneself or belonging to oneself] 5.11
garden, park > pàn-jàn [pàn-jàn] 9.2

["flower enclosure") or ú-yin

gasoline, petrol > daq-sí [dàq-sí] 9.2

genitals (male) > yaq-cà-in-ga

["male"]

mein-mà-in-ga [màn-màn-ga] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
gas > fà-yàn [fà-sà] 9.2
hairdresser’s > s’an-tha’-zain
k’o˘na˘ ("hair-beauty + shop")
hallo > see lesson 2.8
hand, arm > leq
handbag, purse > paiq-s’an-eiq
handkerchief > leq-kain-pawa
happy: to be happy > wûn-tha-deh
{ widget: "js_tts_speak" id: "eiq_speech" }
I am happy to have met you >
Twé-yá-da wûn-tha-ba-deh
{ widget: "js_tts_speak" id: "eiq_speech" }
hat > ouq-t’ouq
have, there is > shi-deh
{k’o˘na˘} Do you have
any coffee? K’pî shî-
dhàlà? K’pî yà-màlà?
{k’o˘na˘} How many X?
I have three children >
K’ài-è-thoùn-yauq shi-ba-deh
{k’o˘na˘} How many children?
I have three children.
{ widget: "js_tts_speak" id: "eiq_speech" }
he, she, it > thu
and see the
Topical Vocabulary for You and I
head > gûn
{k’o˘na˘}
head > gûn
hearing, portion (countword) >
-pwe˘h/-bwe˘h
here, in this place > di-hma
2.3 and see the Topical Vocabulary
for this, that and what
hold, grasp > kain-deh
hold fast > kain-t’a-deh
home, house > ein
{k’o˘na˘}
hospital > s’ê-youn
{k’o˘na˘} ("medicine building")
hostel, student hostel, dorm >
caûn-zaun
hot: to be hot > pu-deh
{k’o˘na˘}
1.1, to feel hot > aîq-teh
{k’o˘na˘}
hot: to be hot to taste, spicy >
saq-teh
{k’o˘na˘}
1.3
hotel > ho-teh

hours > na-û
{k’o˘na˘}
5.10
house > ein
{k’o˘na˘}
9.5, friend’s
house > meiq-s’we
{k’o˘na˘}
9.5
housework > ein-hnû-keiq-s’á
{k’o˘na˘}
11.3
how about [noun]? > [noun]-
kàw/-gàw

[noun]-
{k’o˘na˘} 10.4
how long? How long have
you been here? > Y auq-ne-da
{k’o˘na˘}
beh-lauq ca-bi-lêh?
{k’o˘na˘}
9.3
how many X? > Beh-hnà-X-lêh?
{k’o˘na˘}
or suq–X-lêh 4.3
and see the Topical Vocabulary
for this, that and what
how much? > Beh-lauq-lêh?
{k’o˘na˘}
how much is that? Da beh-lauq-lêh? 11
{k’o˘na˘}
How much does it come to?
> Beh-lauq ca-dhàlêh?
{k’o˘na˘}
{k’o˘na˘} 4.8
how? > beh-lo
{k’o˘na˘}
3.5 How
{k’o˘na˘} is it? What is it like?
Beh-lo
{k’o˘na˘}
ne-dhàlêh?
{k’o˘na˘} 9.9
and see the Topical Vocabulary
for this, that and what
married  Is he married?  > Ein-daun shi-dhali? 12.1  Is he married yet?  > Ein-daun ca-bi-li? 12.1  match, lighter  > mi-jq 5.10  matter  > Kei-q-sa mashi-ba-bu 6.3  meat  > atha 5.6  Does it have meat in it?  > Atha-pa-dhali? 5.6  meat, minced and fried  > tau-qaq-caw 4.2 and see the Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks  medicine  > s'e 3.2  meditate  > tay-a-t'ouq-teh 0.3 meditation centre  > yeiq-tha huq 1.1  meet  > tw-deh 10.3, s'oun-ja-deh 4.2  merchant, businessman  > koung-dheh 11.1  middle  > ne-leh 4.2  middle  > tw-deh 10.3, s'oun-ja 4.2  merchant, businessman  > koung-dheh 11.1  milk  > nw-a-no or no 4.2 and see the Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks  mind  > Never mind  > Kei-q-sa mashi-ba-bu 6.3  ministry  > tun-yu-on 6.3  (“Minister’s office”)  minute  > mi-niq. maniq 5.10  missionary  > tha-dhana-byu-s'aya 9.2 

mother  > ame 12E and see the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms  mouth  > p'aq 3.2  much, too much  > mya-deh 4.2  that’s a bit too much, too expensive. Neh-nneh mya-ba-deh 4.2  museum  > pya-daq 5.4  (“exhibit building”)  Myanmar see under Burmese name  > nan-meh 4.2  What’s your name?  > Nan-meh beh-lo k'aw-dhali? 4.2  see as well  Ye Myint. Yath Myin-ba or Yath Myin-ko k'aw-ba-deh 10.2  nationality, race  > tu-myo 9.2  near: near here  > di-nah-ma 8.1, to be near  > mi-deh 7.3  neck  > leh-dain or leh-bin 12.1  need: to need  > lo-deh 5.8  to need, want (something)  > lo-jin-deh 11.1  neighbourhood, quarter  > yaq-kwe 9.3  nephew  > tu-q see also the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms  newspaper  > thadin-za 9.3  niece  > tu-ma 4.2 see also the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms  nine  > ko 1.3  no  > ma-[verb]-ba-bu or-[verb]-la 1.4  noodles  > k'aq-s'weh 4.2 and see the Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks  nose  > hnack'au 5.5  notebook  > hnaq-su-sa-ouq 5.5  nought, zero  > thon-my 4.2  1.4  number  > nan-baq 1.4  nun: Buddhist nun  > meh-thi-lai-yin 5.10  nurse (male)  > naq 4.2  (female)  > naqs-ma 4.2  tho-na-nyu-s'aya-ma 5.10  o'clock  > nine o'clock  > ko-nah-yi 5.10  office  > yuoin 5.2, airline office  > le-yin-yuoin 5.2

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.
Appendix 7 General vocabulary

plaster, Band Aid > pâla-sâta
plastic > pâla-sâteiq, pâla-sâtïq

please [verb] > [verb]-pa-ba
[verb]-ni please don’t [verb]

police station > yên-t’a-nâ dêh
policeman > yên-eya-shí dêh
polite tag > k’in-bya âeçek (male
speaker), shin ëe (female
speaker) 2.7

porcelain, enamel > cwe or cwe-
deh (คำ) portion, helping (countword) >
pwêh/bwêh – 2.4
post office > sa-daiq (คำ)
(“letter building”) 11.2

postage stamp > tâzeiq-gaun
postcard > pó-sâkaq (คำ) 6.2

pottery > mye or mye-deh
powder > pau-da ëiææ
pretty: to be pretty > há-deh

printing press > poun-hneiq-taïq
prison > taun ëiææ
purple > k’âyân-yauq äeçëë
purse, handbag > païq-s’an-eïq
put, place > t’â-deh ëiææ
put in > t’éh-deh ëiææ
queue, line up > tân’si-deh

race, nationality > lu-myê ëiææ
radio > re-di-yo ëiææ
railway station > bu-da or bu-da-
yon (คำ) (“station
building”)

rain: to rain > m’ô-ywa-deh
razor, razor blade > mouq-s’eiq-
eyiææ-dëh ëiææ
(“beard-shave + blade”) ëiææ
reach, arrive > yauq-teh
read > p’aq-teh ëiææ
red ëiææ

reduce, lower, bring down,
drop (price) > shâw-deh
How about
reducing the cost? Shâw-ba-
oum-lâ? (คำ) 5.4
rent: to rent a house > ein hngâ-
deh ëiææ ëiææ 9.5
repeat Ë Could you please
repeat that? > T’aq-pyâw-ba-
oûn (คำ) 3.2
reporter > thâïn-dauq

research > thué-thëâna (คำ)
( Çalış) to do research > thué-
thëâna loq-teh (คำ) 9.8
restaurant > sa-thauq-s’ai

sauerkraut.

Thailand, ou as in

vein, ai as in

Thai.

How old are you? > ëteeq
beh-lauq shî-blêh? ëiææ
How old is your son? > Thâ beh-
âyweh shî-blêh? ëiææ
the

oldest son, older son > thâ-
âci ëiææ 12.3

one > tïq (or tâ- in compounds)

orange (colour) > lein-maw-yaun
orange juice > lein-maw-ye

order: to order (in restaurant etc)

> hma-deh ëiææ 1.10

out: to come or go out > t’weq-
teh ëiææ

pagoda > p’âyâ ëìææ, or ze-di

(คำ) 5.2

painkiller > gâin-kaïq-pyauq-s’ëiææ

(“headache-remove +
medicine”)

colour] > [colour]-nû –
pants, underpants > àtwîn-gan-
bain-bî ëiææ

paper > seq-ku ëiææ

writing

paper > sa-yê-seq-kü

plan, intend > asi-asi shî-deh

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

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Burmese By Ear

Appendix 7 General vocabulary

return: to return, get back > pya*n'yaq-teh (4.2)
rice > täm-in (4.2 and see the Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks)
ride, take (taxi, bus etc) > sî-deh
right > It's just right > ñëv-daw-ba-bëh (9.10)
right: to be right, correct > hman-deh
ring: finger ring > leq-suq
road, street > län (5.2)
room charge, rate per room (in hotel etc) > âkân-gà (9.6)
rubber, eraser > kë-h-byeq (female)
run out > koun-deh (9.6 and see the Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks)

sanitary towel > paqd (female)
school, monastery > cain (female)
	She is attending school. > Cain teq-ne-deh (female)
	school 11.3; high school > âtëq-tâ'n cain
scissors > kaq-
Scotchtape, sellotape > së'h-lo-teiq (6.2)

script: Burmese script > Bâmaza or Myan-ma-za (8.1)
secretary > sá-yë (female)
sell > yauñ-deh
sellotape, Scotchtape > së'h-lo-teiq (6.2)
separated, divorced > We have split up > Kwen-dhâ-ba-bi (12.1)
settle up, pay the bill > pëq-s'an
seven > k'un-hniq or k'un (in compounds k'un-nà) (6.4)
shampoo > gauñ-shaw-zë
Shan bag, shoulder bag > lweh-eiq ghâ-la 6.4
she, he, it > thu and see the Topical Vocabulary for You and I
shirt > shaq-ein-jî (female)
shoes > shû-p'ânaq (female)
shop > s'ain ghâ ('ain-shin (female)
shorts > baûn-bi-do (female)
shoulder > pâk'ûn (female)
shoulder bag, Shan bag > lweh-eiq (female) 6.4
show > pyâ-deh (female)

sibling, brothers and sisters > maun-hnàm (female or yî-âko maun-hnàm (female) 12E
paper > p'o (female)
silver > ngwe (female) silver (colour) > ngwe-yaun

singer > âs'o-daw (female)
sister (older than self) > âmá (7.2, younger than self) > nyi-mà (12E and see the Topical Vocabulary for kin terms
sit > tain-deh (12.2)
six > c'auq (6.1)
skin > âyê-byâ (female)
skirt > sâkaq (female)
sleep > ëiq-teq (female)
small: to be small > ûh-deh
soap > s'âq-pya (female) soap powder, detergent > s'âq-pya-hmûin (female)
socks > c'ëiq (female)
soldier > sîq-thà (female)
son > thà (7.1, 12.2)

The Topical Vocabulary for kin terms
sorry > s'âw-ri-naw? s'âw-ri-bëh, s'âw-ri-bëh-naw? (female)
speak: to be able to speak > pyâ-daq-teh (female) 3.4
spectacles > myëq-hmûin (female)
spinner: old spinner > âpyo-ji (female) 12.1
sports field > â-kâ-zaw-gwîn

"strength-play + field"

stand, stop > yaq-teh (female) 2.4
State > piy-neh (female)
station: railway station > bu-da or bu-da-yon (female) ("station building")
(station building)
stay (in hotel, with friend) > tûn-deh (female) (12E)

steal > than-màni (female)
stockings > taiq-tï (female)
stomach > baîa (female)
stop, stand > yaq-teh (female) 2.4
street, road > Îân (5.2)
student (male) > caûn-dhâ (male)
suit > suq-wuq-soun (female)
suitcase, box, chest, trunk > thîq-ta, tiq-ta
sun > ne 4.4 to be sunny
sweet > c'ë (female)
sweater, cardigan > s'weh-ta (female)
sweetheart, fiancé/e > âs'ëq

swim > ye-kû-deh (female)
swimming costume > ye-kû-wuq-soun (female)
swimming pool > ye-kû-gan (female) ("water-cross + pool")

T-shirt > ti-shaq (female)

T-shirt > ti-shaq (female) 6.2

take (someone somewhere) > laîq-pô-deh (female) or laîq-pyâ-deh (female)
Could you take us there? > Laiq-pô-pô-nain-mà? (female) 5.9, take, have (in café, shop etc) > yû-deh (female) 4.1; take, ride
Sauerkraut.

Thailand, ou as in vein, ai as in Proun. Pronounce ei as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

(‘taxi, bus etc) > sî-deh တွေ့
5.6
talented: to be clever, talented >
taw-deh တွေ့

talk > ságá ‘pyáw-deh

tampon > use trade name

tape (audio) > te̱q-k’we သာစားသာ

tea > láp-eq-ye သာစားသာ
plain tea > ye-nwè-jän

bág သာစားသာ


topoical Vocabulary for food and drinks

teacher: school teacher (male) >
caún-s’áya ကွင်းရှင်
(female) > caún-s’áya-má
(11.1; university teacher (male) >
teq-kátho-s’áya သာစားသာ
(female) > teq-kátho-s’áya-má

telephone > teh-li-p’oùn

thero-phone > p’oùn’s’eq-teh

and see the Topical Vocabulary for You and I

phone number > teh-li-p’oùn

1.4, to make a

phone call > p’oùn’s’eq-teh

1.4, to make a

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

5.6

that (nearer you) > èn-da ထား

1.9  ၊ that [noun] > èn-di

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[‘noun] ထား [noun] and see the

Topical Vocabulary for this, that and what

there is, have > shi-deh, yá-deh

နှစ် ပြော

Do you have any coffee? Kaw-p’i shì-là?

Kaw-p’i yá-málà? ကိုတင် စိုက်

4.3

there, in that place (nearer you)

> èn-di-hma ထား

2.3; (over

there, some way off) > ho-

hma ထား

over there > ho-

beq-hma ထား

8.1; and see the

Topical Vocabulary for this, that and what

they > thu-dó ပြော

and see the

Topical Vocabulary for you and I

thing, object, luggage > pyiq-si

ပြော

this, that (nearer me) > da ထား

1.9  ၊ this way > di-beq ထား

4.7

and see the Topical Vocabulary for this, that and what

three > thóun မိုး

1.1

tie (clothing) > neq-tain တစ်

ပြော

at what

time? > beh-ac’ein-lish

ထား

5.11

tissue, paper tissues > tiq-shù

ထား

today > di-né စိုက်

and variants

5.8
toe > c’i-jau’n စိုက်

toilet, lavatory > ein-dha စိုက်

public convenience > amyá-

dhóun စိုက်

toilet paper > ein-dha-dhóun-

seq-ku စိုက်

tomorrow > máneq-p’an စိုက်

and variants

5.8

tongue > sha စိုက်

tooth > thwà စိုက်

toothbrush >

thwà-taq-tan စိုက်

Appendix 7 General vocabulary

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toothpaste > thwà-taq-s’è

စိုက်

torch, flashlight > leq-hneiq-da-

mi စိုက်

tourist > tú-riq စိုက်

9.7

township > myò-neh စိုက်

trade, business, commerce >

áyáun-awèh-keiq-s’à

စိုက်

9.7

tray > bân စိုက်

trishaw pedaller > s’aiq-kà-

dhàmà စိုက်

trousers > bâun-bì စိုက်

true: to be true, correct >

hman-deh စိုက်

two > hńqi or hñà-g (j) 1.1

umbrella, sunshade > t’i စိုက်

uncle > nà-á စိုက်

7.1 see also the

Topical Vocabulary for kin
terms

underpants, pants > àtwin-ga-

búin-bí စိုက်

understand > nà-leh-deh

စိုက်

female

1.5

unit, item (countword) > -k’úl-gú

- 2.5

university > teq-kátho စိုက်

urine > s’a˘ya စိုက်

2.5

or these စိုက်

urinate > thè-pauq-teh

စိုက်

c’i-jau’n

c’i-jau’n စိုက်

throat > c’i-jau’dhóun

စိုက်

vegetables, fried mixed >

aśe-in-

jáw စိုက်

4.2 and see the

Topical Vocabulary for food and drinks

very, very much, a lot > theiq

စိုက်

1.6, áyàn စိုက်

orious pronunciation!

A˘yan pi-da-bèh! စိုက်

9.1

visit နှစ် ပြော

Just for a visit > áleh-bèh

စိုက်

9.7

wait > sa’un-ne-deh စိုက်

5.11

wake up > nò-deh စိုက်

walk > lâ*shaq-teh

စိုက်

want [to verb] > [verb]-c’in/-jìn-

[verb]-qú 2.5; want: to need,

want (something) > lo-jin-deh

စိုက်

1.1.0, ၊ What do you

need? > Ba áo shi-bà-

dàhèp? စိုက်

6.2

watch, wrist watch > leq-pa-

na-yi စိုက်

strap > leq-pa-na-yi-c’ó

စိုက်

way: this way > di-beq စိုက်

8.1

we > see the Topical Vocabulary

for You and I

weather, climate > ya-dhi-ú-dú

စိုက်

9.10

week (countword) > -paq/-baq

- 9.3

well: to be well > na’kàun-deh

စိုက်

You’re well, I hope! Ne-ku’n-deh-naw?

စိုက်

1.7

what? > ba-lèh စိုက်

What is that? > Da ba-lèh? စိုက်

4.6, ၊ What is your phone

number? > Teh-li-p’oùn

na-yi စိုက်

beh-lauq-lish?
Burmese By Ear

Pronounce ei as in vein, ai as in Thailand, ou as in though, au as in Sauerkraut.

Appendix 7 General vocabulary

write > yé-deh -widget write
out for someone > yè-pê-deh -widget

writer, author
(male) > sa-yè-s'âya -widget
(female) > sa-yè-s'âya-mâ -widget

wrong: to be wrong > hma-deh -widget

year (countword) > -hnîq -qu 9.4
yellow > awa -widget

yes (= I agree, I understand,
that's right) > H ouq-kêh -widget

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