



THERAVĀDA BUDDHIST ENGLISH

Online Course

for

Intermediate & Advanced English Level Students

THERAVADA BUDDHIST ENGLISH
Reading Comprehension, Translation, Interpretation

LECTURE 1
(19:30-21:00, Sunday, October 31, 2021)

COURSE INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE

- Reading Comprehension
- Translation
- Interpretation

DURATION

6 months / 24 months (Sunday, 19:30 – 21:00)

4 months: study general knowledge of Theravāda Buddhism

2 months: practice listening and interpretation Dhamma Talks

METHOD OF STUDY

- Presentation
- Discussion

AREAS

- Morality
- Tranquillity Meditation
- Insight Meditation
- Dhamma in life
- Pāḷi

REFERENCES

- Dhamma books
- Dhamma talks (video, youtube)

DISCUSSION

Questions for Discussion (Sunday, Oct 31, 2021)

1. Your purposes in taking this course?
2. What do you know about the Buddha?
3. What do you know about Pāli Language?
4. What do you know about the Tipiṭaka?



Buddha statue from [Gupta period](#) (c. 5th century CE), [Sarnath](#), India
(Source: [wikipedia.org](#))

THE TEACHINGS OF BUDDHA

Cattāri Ariya Saccāni

Four Noble Truths (Tứ Diệu Đế, Bốn Sự thật Thánh thiện)

1. *Dukkha Sacca*: Truth of Suffering (Diệu Đế về Khổ)
2. *Samudaya Sacca*: Truth of the Cause of Suffering (Diệu Đế về Nguồn Gốc của Khổ)
3. *Nirodha Sacca*: Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (Diệu Đế về Sự Diệt Khổ)
4. *Magga Sacca*: Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (Diệu Đế về Con Đường Diệt Khổ)

REF:

4 Noble truths: truth of Suffering, Cause of suffering, Cessation of Suffering and the Way leading to the Cessation of Suffering
Over 45 years of preaching the Dhamma, the Buddha has been teaching the world nothing but these 4 truths.

1. **Truth of Suffering:** 3 types

- Birth, disease, aging, death, physical pain, mental distress, grief, dissociation from the beloved one, association with the undesirable things, etc. are suffering.
- Craving for the pleasure that one has experienced means suffering. (E.g.: She is used to the cold weather in Canada. Now, she stays in the Asian country. The weather here is humid and hot. Thus, she feels suffering craving for the coolness in Canada.)
- Except Nibbāna, all things in the world arise and dissolve according to its Law of Nature. We cannot control anything. We can not live forever. Thus, it is impermanence, suffering and non-soul. Being controlled in such way is suffering.

This truth covers all types of suffering in the world.

2. **Truth of the Cause of Suffering**

It is craving. By craving, beings are reborn again and again. And birth is again the starting point for all sufferings. (The Arahant has no more craving; therefore, he has no more suffering, i.e. no more rebirths).

There are 3 types of craving; for pleasure, for existence, and for non-existence.

3. **Truth of the Cessation of Suffering**

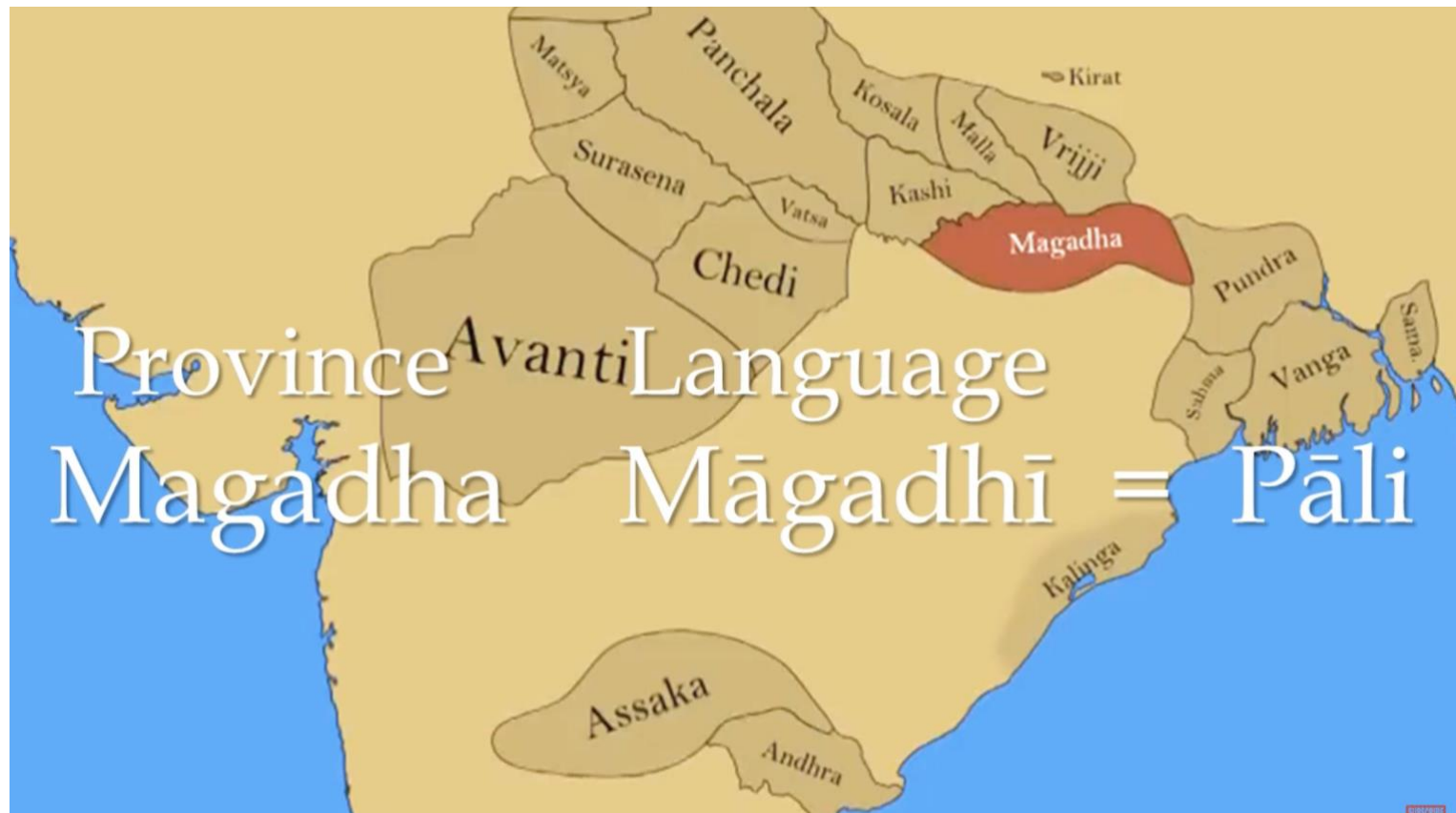
It is the extinction of suffering namely Nibbāna.

4. **Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering**

This means the 8-fold path including: Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

PĀLI LANGUAGE INTRODUCTION (REF)

- Māgadhī, Sanskrit, Pālibhāsā (Canon Language) misunderstood as Pāli Language → Pāli
- Tipitāka / Pāli Canon (Kinh điển Phật giáo Nguyên Thủy / Theravāda)
- 6 Theravāda Buddhist Councils.
- After the Third Buddhist Council, the entire words of the Buddha's teachings were inscribed on Ola (palm) leaf (during the reign of King Vattagamani Abhaya, Sri Lanka.) → Tipitaka



Ref: **Six Buddhist Councils**

The first Buddhist synod was held at Mount Vebhāra near Rājagaha after the demise of the Buddha. It was headed by the Ven. Mahākassapa and supported by King Ajātasattu. It lasted for 7 months.

The second Buddhist was held in Vesāli in 443 B.C. due to unlawful modifications in the rules of the Order by Vajian Bhikkhus. It was headed by Ven. Yasa and supported by King Kalasoka. It lasted for 8 months.

The third Buddhist synod was held in Pātalipūtra in 308 B.C. due to the corrupt lives of heretical views followed by 60.000 ascetics. It was headed by Ven. Moggaliputta and supported by Great Emperor Asoka. It lasted for 9 months. After this synod, the King sent 9 missions to 9 different places to propagate the sāsana.

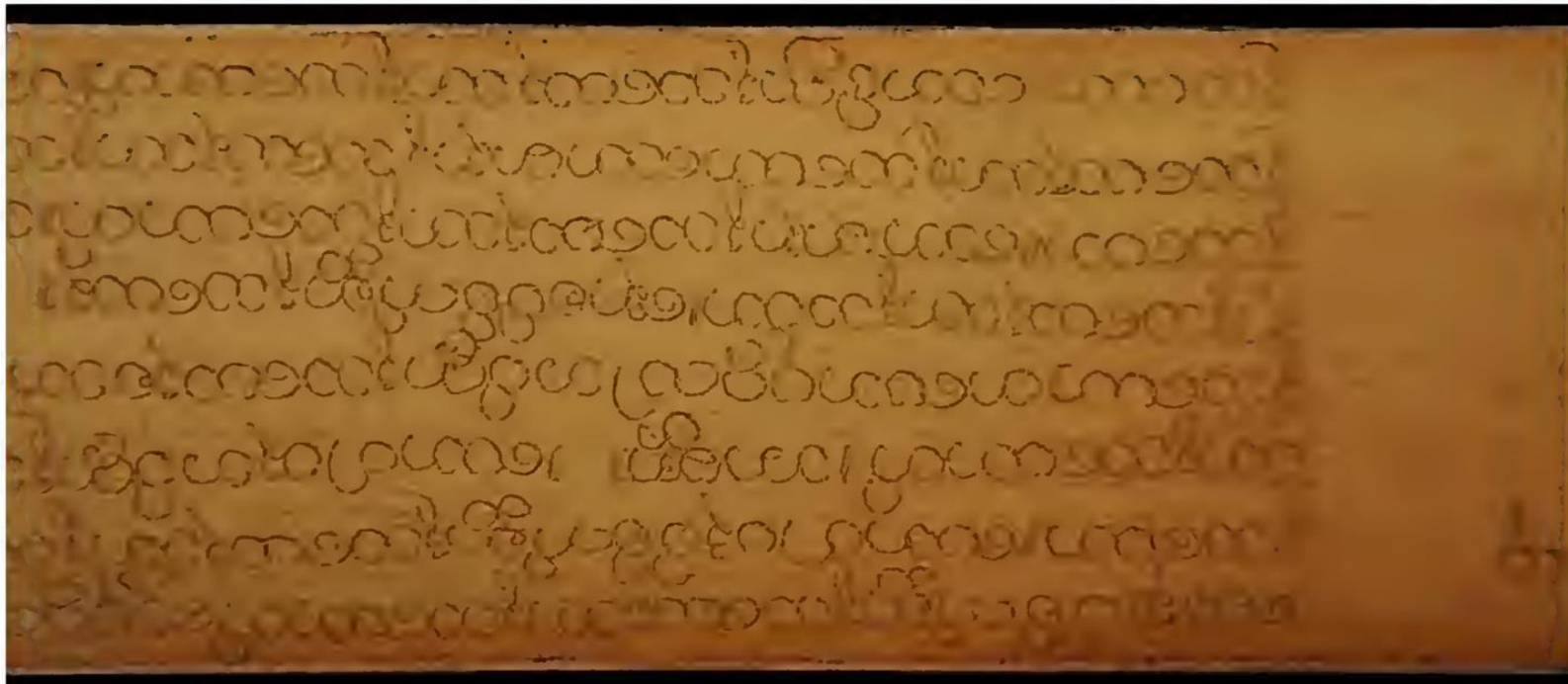
The fourth Buddhist synod was held at Malaya district in Sri Lanka in 94 B.C due to the declination of the power of mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom of the Bhikkhus, which was headed by Ven. Mahā Dhammarakhita and supported by King Vaṭṭagāmani. It lasted for one year. After this synod, the entire words of the Buddha's teachings were inscribed on palm leaves.

The fifth Buddhist synod was held in Mandalay in Myanmar in November 1871. It was headed by Ven. Jāgarābhivamsa and supported by King Mindon. At the end of this synod, the whole Tipiṭaka was inscribed on 729 marble slaps in the precincts of Lokamārajina Pagoda at the foot of the Mandalay Hill. It took seven years, six months, and fourteen days to finish this work. Then, Pāli texts were translated into the Myanmar language.

The sixth Buddhist synod was held at Mahāpāsana Cave in Kaba-Aye, Yangon, Myanmar, in May 1954. It was headed by Ven. Revata and supported by the Government of the Union of Myanmar. It was attended by delegates from five Theravāda Buddhist countries. At this synod, the Pāli texts, commentaries, and sub-commentaries were examined.

Opening of Vuttodaya, a work on Pāli prosody in six chapters, partly prose and partly verse, written by Saṅgharakkhita Thera of Sri Lanka. Ola Leaf Book written in Pāli in Sinhala Script.





Section of palm leaf manuscript in Pāli in Burmese regular script from Burma (Myanmar), about 1870. The full manuscript details the 227 rules of Patimokkha - the rules that Burmese monks are required to follow.





Corypha umbraculifera - Talipot palm

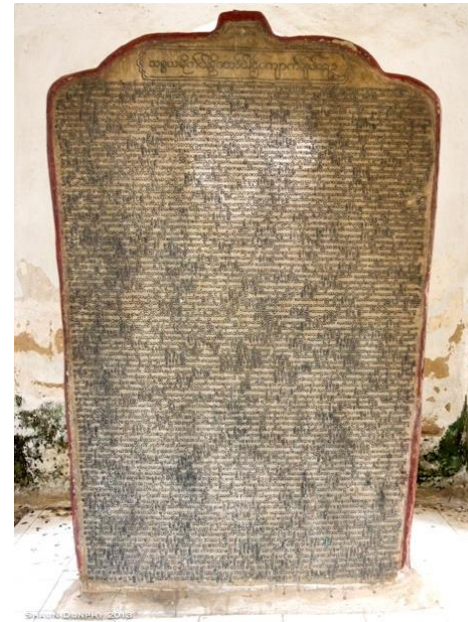


Borassus flabellifer - Palmyra palm

Ola (palm) trees



Sri Lankan monks inscribe Buddhist scripture on ola (palm) leaves



Tipitaka on 729 Marble slabs (Kuthodaw Pagoda, Mandalay, Myanmar)

Pāli Pronunciation

The Pāli alphabet runs as follows. It is important to learn the alphabet as it is the order followed by dictionaries.

a	ā	i	ī	u	ū	e	o
k	kh	g	gh	ṅ			
c	ch	j	jh	ñ			
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ			
t	th	d	dh	n			
p	ph	b	bh	m			
y	r	l	(ḷ)	(ḷh) v	s	h	

N.B. Aspirated consonants — such as ‘kh’ — are treated as one consonant and not two. *Rakkhita, Dhamma*

The vowels are:

a ā i ī u ū e o

Some examples of how vowels should be pronounced are:

- ‘**a**’ is pronounced like the **u** in ‘**hut**’ or the **a** in ‘**around**’.
- ‘**ā**’ is pronounced like the **a** in **father** or the **ar** in **march**.
- ‘**i**’ is pronounced like the **i** in **bin** or **sin**.
- ‘**ī**’ is pronounced like the **ee** in **feed** or the **ea** in **mean**.
- ‘**u**’ is pronounced like the **u** in **put** or the **oo** in **foot**.
- ‘**ū**’ is pronounced like the **oo** in **pool** or **stool**.
- ‘**e**’ is pronounced like the **a** in **make** or **lake**.
- ‘**o**’ is pronounced like the **o** in **go** or **tone**.

Buddha

Samādhī

Satī

Sīla, bhikkhunī

Bhikkhu

Bhikkhū

Bhante

Thero

a is like “**u**” in **but**

ā is like “**a**” in **art**

i is like “**i**” in **pin**

ī is like “**ee**” in **see**

u is like “**u**” in **put**

ū is like “**u**” in **rule**

e is like “**e**” in **ten**

o is like “**o**” in **hot**

k is like “**k**” in **key**

g is like “**g**” in **get**

ṅ is like “**ng**” in **ring**

c is like “**ch**” in **rich**

j is like “**j**” in **jug**

ṅ is like “**gn**” in **signor**

ṭ is like “**t**” in **not**

ḍ is like “**d**” in **hid**

ṇ is like “**n**” in **hint**

p is like “**p**” in **lip**

b is like “**b**” in **rib**

m is like “**m**” in **him**

y is like “**y**” in **yard**

r is like “**r**” in **rat**

l is like “**l**” in **sell**

v is like “**v**” in **vile**

s is like “**s**” in **sit**

h is like “**h**” in **hut**

l is like “**l**” in **felt**

ṃ is like “**ng**” in **sing**

Example:

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi, Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Dutiyampi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Tatīyaṃpi, Buddhamaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyaṃpi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatīyaṃpi, Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

Evamaṃ me sutamaṃ:

Ekamaṃ samayaṃ Bhagavā Sāvattīyaṃ viharati
Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa Ārāme.

PĀLI TERMS

Buddha: Enlightened One (Đức Phật, Bậc giác ngộ)

Dhamma: The teachings of Buddha (Pháp)

Saṅgha: Communitive (Tăng, cộng đồng, chúng)

Tathāgata: one who has gone so, The Enlightened One (Nhu Lai)

Sīla: morality (giới)

Samādhi: concentration (định)

Paññā: wisdom (tuệ)

Nibbāna: blowing out (Níp-bàn / Niết-bàn)

Sati: mindfulness, awareness (chánh niệm, nhận thức)

Samatha: calm, quietude of heart (tịnh lặng)

Vipassanā: insight (tuệ)

Bhāvanā: meditation (thiền)

Vinaya: discipline (luật, giới luật)

Suttanta: a discourse (kinh, bài giảng)

Abhidhamma: higher doctrine / higher teaching (luận / Vi diệu Pháp)

Piṭaka: basket (Tạng)

Tipiṭaka: three baskets (Tam Tạng)

Aṭṭhakathā: commentaries, explanations (Chú giải)

Tīkā: sub-commentaries are primarily commentaries on the commentaries (Phụ chú giải)

Bhikkhu: a male monk (tỳ khuru/kheo)

Bhikkhunī: a female monk, nun (tỳ khuru/kheo ni)

Samanera: a novice (sa-di)

Samaṇerī: a female apprentice of a nun (sa-di ni)

Bhante: Venerable (to address a respectful monk)

Note:

(In Myanmar)

Sayalay: nun (observes 8, 9 or 10 precepts)

Sayadaw: Venerable, respectful monk

(In Sri Lanka)

Swamiwahanse

(In Thailand)

Achan

GUIDE TO TIPITAKA

Vinaya Piṭaka (Tạng Luật)

Disciplinary and Procedural Rules for the *Saṅgha*

Suttanta Piṭaka (Tạng Kinh)

a collection of all the discourses delivered by the *Buddha*

Abhidhamma Piṭaka (Tạng Luận / Vi diệu Pháp)

Abhidhamma, the Higher Teaching of the *Buddha*

Ref: **Tipiṭaka (Pāli Canon)**

Tipiṭaka literally means “The Three Baskets”. The teaching of the Buddha expounded for forty-five years are divided into three baskets: Vinaya Piṭaka, Suttanta Piṭaka, and Abhidhamma Piṭaka.

The Vinaya Piṭaka contains disciplinary rules laid down for regulating the conduct of Bhikkhus. There are 227 rules to be observed by Bhikkhus and 311 rules by Bhikkhunis. The Vinaya Piṭaka is made up of the five books:

1. Pārājikapāḷi: Major Offences (Bộ Pārājikapāḷi)
2. Pācittiyapāḷi: Minor Offences (Bộ Pācittiyapāḷi)
3. Mahāvaggapāḷi: Greater Section (Đại Phẩm)
4. Cūlavaggapāḷi: Shorter Section (Tiểu Phẩm)
5. Parivārapāḷi: Epitome of Vinaya (Tập Yếu)

The Suttanta Piṭaka is a collection of the discourses preached by the Buddha on separate occasions throughout forty-five years. A few discourses are delivered by some of eminent foremost disciples such as Venerable Sāriputta, Mahāmoggallāna, Ānanda, etc. The Suttanta Piṭaka is divided into five collections known as Nikāyas:

1. Dīgha Nikāya (Collection of Long Discourses) (Trường bộ)
2. Majjhima Nikāya (Collection of Middle Length Discourses) (Trung bộ)
3. Saṃyutta Nikāya (Collection of Kindred Sayings), (Tương ưng bộ)
4. Aṅguttara Nikāya (Collection of Discourses with Serial Numbers of Facts) (Tăng chi bộ)
5. Khuddaka Nikāya (Collection of Minor Discourses) (Tiểu bộ)

The *Dīgha Nikāya* contains 34 long discourses; the *Majjhima Nikāya* 152 medium length discourses; the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* 7762 discourses of varied length; the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* 9557 short discourses; and according to the classification of the sixth Buddhist Council, the *Khuddaka Nikāya* consists of 18 books.

The *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* (the Basket of Ultimate realities) is the detailed analysis of consciousness (*citta*), the concomitant factors (*cetasika*), matter (*rūpa*) and Nibbāna. It comprises 7 books, namely:

1. *Dhammasaṅgani*: Classification of Dhamma (Pháp Tụ)
2. *Vibhaṅga*: Analysis of Dhamma (Phân Tích)
3. *Dhātukathā*: Speech of Elements (Nguyên Chất Ngữ)
4. *Puggalapaññatti*: Designation of Individuals (Nhân Chế Định)
5. *Kathāvatthu*: Points of Controversy (Ngữ Tông)
6. *Yamaka*: Analysis of Pairs (Song Đối)
7. *Paṭṭhāna*: Causal Relations (Duyên Hệ / Vị Trí)

HOMework

(Sunday, Nov 7, 2021)

Choose your Group and prepare your group's presentation. You have 5 minutes to present one of these topics:

- 1) *Gotama Buddha*: The Buddha / Enlightened One (Đức Phật Gotama) ([Ref](#))
- 2) *Tiratana*: Triple Gem (Tam Bảo) ([Ref](#))
- 3) *Sīla*: Morality (Giới) ([Ref](#))