

Beginning Burmese

SEASSI 2015 (June 15th – August 7th)

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Course outline

Instructors: San San Hnin Tun, U Mya Hla

Office: 4266 Humanities Building

Telephone: 608 890 3305

Office hours:

- San San Hnin Tun (stun@wisc.edu) : Tuesday 2:00 – 4:00 p.m or by appointment
- U Mya Hla (umyahla@yahoo.com) : Thursday 2:00 – 4:00 p.m or by appointment

Objectives

This course aims to help develop all four language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing, for learners who have not had any or little exposure to Burmese before. The overall language pedagogy is based on a communicative and performance-based approach: learners are thus required to participate in various activities that are designed to help them master the linguistic skills at the basic level, which is defined as follows for this course:

- Ability to engage in a brief exchange about everyday topics in different social settings, using simple utterances and a limited set of vocabulary
- Ability to read and write in Burmese script: making an accurate association between the script (letters, symbols and various combinations of letters and symbols) and sounds they represent, including skills to recognize phonological aspect of tones
- Ability to communicate with sensitivity to various cultural aspects of Burmese societies, through awareness of socio-cultural aspects embedded in language use

Requirements

Given that language acquisition is a complex process that can be best achieved through a consistent and active participation in learning activities, learners are required to attend all classes and engage in all in-class activities everyday throughout the whole course period of SEASSI. Furthermore, all assignments to do outside must be submitted as specified by the instructors. Failure to fulfill these requirements will not only result in your personal failure to learn Burmese, but also in negatively affecting your grades (see grading criteria below for details).

Daily joint-sessions, gathering all students in Burmese, are designed to create a forum for discussions on all matters related to learning Burmese, with a special emphasis on pragmatics of language use, that take into account a crucial role of socio-cultural aspects of Burmese. Active participation in the forum is required as a part of course work.

Mid-term and final exam dates cannot be rescheduled, except for medical emergencies, for which an official medical certificate must be provided.

Be sure to follow all other specific instructions as they are given throughout the course period. Be sure to seek advice from the instructors if you have any doubts or concerns about your language learning process as soon as possible without waiting until the approaching exam periods.

Resources:

- Hnin Tun, San San (2014), *Colloquial Burmese: the complete course for beginners*, London, Routledge
- Saw Tun, *Burmese script* (available for purchase at Copy center)
- Okell, John (1994), *Burmese: An introduction to the script*, Northern Illinois University
- Okell, John (1994), *Burmese: An introduction to the spoken language, Book I*, Northern Illinois University
- NIU seasite (Myanmar): <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Burmese/>

Assessment

Your work in the course will be assessed through a daily evaluation of your participation in class, assignments turned in as required, quizzes (dates will be specified later) and two exams – mid-term and a final.

Grading criteria

- Attendance and class participation: 30%
- Homework and assignments: 20%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Mid-term: 20%
- Final: 20%

Time table: 15th June – 10th July

Room: () Humanities Building

8:00 – 8:50	Speaking Burmese (SSHT)
8:50 – 9:00	BREAK
9:00 – 10:00	Burmese script (UMH)
10:00 – 10:15	BREAK
10:15 – 11:15	Structure of Burmese 1
11:15 – 11:30	BREAK
11:30 – 12:00	Joint session

Intermediate Burmese

SEASSI 2015 (June 15th – August 7th)

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Course outline

Instructors: San San Hnin Tun, U Mya Hla

Office: 4266 Humanities Building

Telephone: 608 890 3305

Office hours:

- San San Hnin Tun (stun@wisc.edu) : Tuesday 2:00 – 4:00 p.m or by appointment
- U Mya Hla (umyahla@yahoo.com) : Thursday 2:00 – 4:00 p.m or by appointment

Objectives

This Intermediate Burmese course is intended for those who have studied Burmese at the basic level, and/or familiar with basic notions of Burmese linguistic structures, including Burmese script. Our goal is to help develop further all four language skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing – which should allow the learner to communicate in Burmese with an increased control and confidence. Learners will also be exposed further to written contemporary Burmese, which makes use of a greater amount of “literary Burmese”.

The overall language pedagogy is based on a communicative and performance-based approach: learners are thus required to participate in various activities that are designed to help them master the linguistic skills at the intermediate level, which is defined as follows for this course:

- Ability to engage in conversation about selected topics and social settings, using more complex utterances, including a better knowledge of lexical items that cannot only be explained in terms of their grammatical functions
- Abilities to read and understand texts in contemporary Burmese, including those written in literary style Burmese.
- Ability to communicate with increased sensitivity to various cultural aspects of Burmese societies, using socially appropriate behavior in interpersonal relations with Burmese speakers

Requirements

Given that language acquisition is a complex process that can be best achieved through a consistent and active participation in learning activities, learners are required to attend all classes and engage in all in-class activities everyday throughout the whole course period of SEASSI. Furthermore, all assignments to do outside must be submitted as specified by the instructors. Failure to fulfill these requirements will not only result in your personal failure to learn Burmese, but also in negatively affecting your grades (see grading criteria below for details).

Daily joint-sessions, gathering all students in Burmese, are designed to create a forum for discussion on all matters related to learning Burmese, with a special emphasis on pragmatics of language use, that take into account a crucial role of socio-cultural aspects of Burmese. Active participation in the forum is required as a part of course work.

Mid-term and final exam dates cannot be rescheduled, except for medical emergencies, for which an official medical certificate must be provided.

Be sure to follow all other specific instructions as they are given throughout the course period. Be sure to seek advice from the instructors if you have any doubts or concerns about your language learning process as soon as possible without waiting until the approaching exam periods.

Resources:

There is no set textbook for this level, but a selection of miscellaneous reading and listening materials will be drawn from various resources including the following:

- Okell, John (1994), *Burmese: An introduction to literary Burmese*, Northern Illinois University
- NIU seasite (Myanmar): <http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Burmese/>

Assessment

Your work in the course will be assessed through a daily evaluation of your participation in class, assignments turned in as required, quizzes (dates will be specified later) and two exams – mid-term and a final.

Grading criteria

- Attendance and class participation: 30%
- Homework and assignments: 20%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Mid-term: 20%
- Final: 20%

Time table: 15th June – 10th July

Room: () Humanities Building

8:00 – 8:50	Literary Burmese (UMH)
8:50 – 9:00	BREAK
9:00 – 10:00	Structure of Burmese 2
10:00 – 10:15	BREAK
10:15 – 11:15	Thematic conversation in Burmese
11:15 – 11:30	BREAK
11:30 – 12:00	Joint session