

Two Unique Grammatical Tools Used in the Traditional Pali Studies of Burma

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1. General Introduction

Pali learning in Burma has been unique — for better or for worse. Burma has been a comparatively isolated country, and the traditional field of Pali studies, as part of the cultural heritage of the country, has developed more or less independently of outside influences. As a result, modern fields of comparative philology, research methodology, etc., are unknown to the majority of Pali students in Burma. On the other hand, generations of students and scholars have managed to preserve traditional methods and contributions — many of which are still highly relevant and useful today.

Unfortunately the language barrier has prevented modern scholars from taking advantage of many contributions of Burma towards Pali studies. (This is especially true as regards the monastic jargon — obscure even to ordinary Burmese people not brought up in the atmosphere of monastic education) It would be the task of Burmese monks like the present author to make them accessible for the modern scholarship. And it is hoped this paper would be a small step to accomplish it.

Out of many traditional Pali tools still used in Burma, two of the most important would be discussed here. These two are almost unknown outside Burma yet they are fundamental tools used by Burmese students and scholars in day to day Pali reading. In fact, they are the most important means by which the Burmese people understand Pali as a language.

They are as follows:

1. Relational Grammar

2. Thematic Units

The approach used here would be admittedly of pragmatic nature—to see how these tools have been, and still are, used for Pali reading in Burma. The history and development of these tools would be an interesting subject calling for further exploration, and there would be some hints on that topic at the end. However, the main objective of the paper would be to give an overview and evaluation of these tools.

2. Relational Grammar¹

2.1. Introduction

Relational Grammar (Hereafter RG), and nothing else, is Pali syntax for the Burmese people. The fundamental concept of RG is to think of Pali syntax solely in terms of word-to-word relations, and to entirely ignore the word order of Pali sentences.

Before going into details, some concepts different from those of modern grammars should be presented as follows:

1. The notion of *activity* / *inactivity* of subjects and objects in Pali sentences
2. The principle of Essential Content (*piṇḍattha*)
3. The exclusion of indeclinables (*nipātas*) from the sentence syntax
4. The scope of a sentence

2.1.1. Activity / Inactivity of Subjects / Objects²

Modern Pali grammars, probably influenced by some modern languages, seem to view the voice of a Pali sentence as a property inherent in the structure of the whole sentence. In the Burmese tradition, on the other hand, voice of a sentence is solely defined by the *type* of its main verb, which also determines the *activity* or *inactivity* of its corresponding subject and object.

It should be noted that:

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1. This term is a translation of the Burmese word *cācap*—of which there are two parts *cā* and *cap*. The former can refer to any written language, or any piece of literature while the latter means “being related, being connected, etc”. The combination of these parts has come to mean in the Burmese monastic jargon “formal word-to-word relations within a given sentence”.
 2. (See Guṇissara, *Pālibhodhi*, p. 6)

1. An Active (*vutta*) subject or object is one having concord with the verb governing it, and must be in *nominative* case if governed by the main verb of a given sentence.³
2. An Inactive (*avutta*) subject or object is not governed by its corresponding verb.
3. An Inactive subject is in instrumental or genitive case while an Inactive object is in always in accusative case. (Guṇissara, *Pālibhodhi*, p. 6)
4. Burmese tradition does not have the notion of a grammatical subject; an agent is always the subject (either Active or Inactive).

2.1.2. Principle of Abstract Content (*piṇḍattha*)

The Burmese tradition, as per classic grammatical systems, does not treat adjectives, and adverbs as separate grammatical categories but rather as nouns used adjectivally or adverbially. There is apparently a problem with this concept—if all

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3. Here is the explanation give by Rūp on why both the active subject and object have the nominative case. [Perhaps this is also the source of the Burmese classification of subjects and objects as active (*vutta*) or inactive (*avutta*)]

Yo pana ākhyātakitakataddhitasamāsehi vutto kamm'ādisaṃsaṭṭho attho, so'pi dutiy'ādīnaṃ puna attanā vattabbassa atthavisesass'ābhāvena avisayattā, liṅg'attha-mattassa sambhavato ca paṭhamāy-eva visayo. (Rūp, p. 138)

When the sense (of a noun stem) is mixed with the sense of object, etc. and denoted (i.e., governed) by a conjugated verb, a primary derivative, a compound or a secondary derivative, it is the locus of nominative case—because it is not the scope of the accusative case, etc. since they have no special (i.e. extra) sense to signify, and also because only the pure sense of *liṅga* (i.e., the noun stem) exists.

Here Rūp is explaining why Kacc sets the nominative case as denoting the sense of the pure noun stem [*liṅgatthe paṭhamā* (Kacc, p. 284)]. How the Burmese tradition understands that explanation can be shown using an example:

kammaṃ kataṃ purisena (= The work is done by a man)

In the example above, the sense “work” is denoted by the noun stem *kamma*; it is also mixed with the sense of object since *kammaṃ* is the object of the past participle *kataṃ*, which governs it. The accusative case usually denotes the object but it is not necessary here since the passive sense itself of the verb *kataṃ* is responsible for giving the sense of object. In other words, the word governed by a passive verb must be its object; there is no need for any other indicator.

Then only the pure sense of the noun stem (i.e., the sense “man”) remains to be signified. However, a noun stem without a case-ending cannot exist in actual usage; a case-ending is mandatory. It is for such forms that the rule *liṅgatthe paṭhamā* is laid down—a nominative case is to be used if there is no need for other types of case-endings, and it denotes nothing but the sense of the noun stem itself.

This is why nominative cases are used for both active subjects and active objects—the sense of subject or object is denoted by the active or passive verb respectively; the nominative case is responsible just for making the noun stem a “legal word”.

Table 1: Various types of voices, verbs, and corresponding subjects and objects

<i>Sentence voice^a</i>	<i>(main) verb</i>	<i>governs</i>	<i>subject</i>	<i>object</i>
active	active (<i>kattu-kriyā</i>)	subject	active	inactive
passive	passive (<i>kamma-kriyā</i>)	object	inactive	active
absolute	absolute (<i>bhāva-kriyā</i>) ^b	neither	inactive	inactive

a. Note that the voice of a given sentence is determined by the type of its main verb, not by other auxiliary verbs.

b. Absolute Voice is rarely used in actual literature, but it is recognized in classic grammars. See:

dhātv-attho kārak'āmisso, suddho bhāvoti manyate.

so kriyā sā ca sāmāññaṃ, tass'ekattaṃ patiyate. (“Saddatthabhedacintā”, p. 291)

When the pure sense of a root is unmixed with nominal cases (i.e., not denoting a subject, etc.), it is known as *bhāva*. That *bhāva* is a verb, of generic nature, and its singular number should be known.

adjectives and adverbs are only nouns used in different ways, all nouns can theoretically qualify as adjectives and adverbs. Then there must be some way to set apart adjectives and adverbs from ordinary nouns.

The Burmese solution for Pali adjectives is the Principle of Abstract Content (*piṇḍattha*). This principle has two parts as follows:

1. If two or more nouns in the same sentence have identical contents, they must be of the same case but may sometimes differ in gender and number.⁴ For example:

mahantena purisena (the same case, gender and number)

nandā (nāma) mātugāmo (the same case and number, but different gender)

vīsatiyā purisehi (the same case but different gender and number)

2. On the other hand, two or more nouns of different contents may have the same case, gender and number. For example:

sāriputto moggallāno ca gacchanti.

(The nouns *sāriputto* and *moggallāno* have the same case, gender and number but obviously they refer to different persons)

In the first example, *mahanto* and *puriso*, translated respectively as “The great one” and “man”, are viewed as two distinct nouns referring to a single entity; in

4. This seems to be an elaboration of the concept embodied in the following quotation given by *Subodhālaṅkāraṭīkā*, the older commentary on *Subodhālaṅkāra*.

Visesye dissamānā yā, liṅgasāṅkhyāvibhattiyo;

tulyādihikaraṇe bhiyyo, kātabbā tā visesaneye. (Subodh-pt, p. 53)

The gender, number and case found in the modified (noun) should generally be made (for) (i.e., assigned to) the modifier of the same content.

other words, they are identical in Essential Content (*piṇḍattha*) while different in literal sense.

In this particular case, they permit two different translations:

1. “(A / The) great man”: In this version, *mahanto* is viewed as a noun adjectivally used to qualify *puriso*; such nouns as *mahanto* are called “identical adjectives” (*tulyādhikaraṇavisesana*) to emphasize on their contents being identical with the nouns they modify, in contrast with the adjectives having contents different from the modified nouns⁵
2. “The great one (is) a man”: In this version, *mahanto* is no longer an adjective but the subject of a complete sentence.

It is the same with the second example:

nandā (nāma) mātuḡāmo (= The woman named Nandā ... OR the one named Nandā is a woman)

The third example, however, cannot be treated as a complete sentence since both nouns are not of nominative case; therefore:

vīsatihi purisehi (= with twenty men . . .)

2.1.3. The Exclusion of Indeclinables from Syntax

Indeclinables are usually counted out of syntax, i.e., word-to-word relations are not defined for them as far as RG is concerned . This treatment is based on the theory⁶ that indeclinables are not significant in themselves but they serve only as *jotakas* (“illuminators”) of content denoted by other words. This theory has two implications:

1. Some indeclinables, of which the most common are *hi*, *ca* and *pana*, usually serve as linkers that reflect on the structure integrating different sentences rather than the syntax within sentences they happen to reside in. These words, comparable to some English adverbs such as “however, therefore, etc.,” are not viewed as part of syntax.

5. For example, *gottena gotamo* (Rūp, p. 150) = “(named) Gotama by virtue of race”. In this example, the modifier *gottena* and the modified *gotamo* have different contents since the former refers to the entity of race while the latter refers to a particular person, i.e., the Lord Buddha in this case.

6. *sākhābhaṅgasadisā hi nipātā* (“Mahāganthaṭṭhipakaraṇa”, p. 237)

Indeclinables are like twigs broken (into pieces).

What that obscure sentence means, according to the Burmese tradition, is that just as a man entering a dense forest and yet afraid of getting lost, would scatter bits of dry twigs along his path to ascertain his return path, so also indeclinables guide a reader along obscure paths through literature. In other words, indeclinables are not an essential part of syntax; they are used just to guide the readers who would have got confused without them.

2. Some others, such as *ca*, *vā*, etc., are viewed as having no senses of their own but only helping to make other words clearer. For instance:

Sāriputto Moggallāno ca gacchanti. (= “Sāriputta and Moggallāna go”)

(OR) *Sāriputto Moggallāno gacchanti.* (= ... do ...)

Two sentences above are viewed by the Burmese tradition as equivalent.

The indeclinable *ca* in the former, though translated as “and”, is not treated as a word carrying a significance of its own but only as one helping to make explicit the difference of content between Sāriputta and Moggallāna. The latter is also viewed as correct with the exception of being a little more obscure yet still clear for someone who is familiar enough with the context to know that Sāriputta and Moggallāna are different persons.

Such jotakas are also not part of syntax.

2.2. How It Works and General Principles

An overview of RG can be best understood in the context of an example. Therefore, the following sentence is to be analyzed with RG as a tool.

Dāsiyā mātā sobanaṃ bhattaṃ sūpaṃ ca pacivā dhītuyā ānesi.

The typical approach is firstly to identify and analyze the main verb in a given sentence, which in this case, is obviously *ānesi*. It is derived from the prefix *ā*, the root *nī*, the conjugational sign *a*, and the verbal ending *si* (3rd person singular Aorist Tense Parassapada) It lacks the passive / absolute sign *ya*; accordingly, its type is defined as active, and consequently, the sentence is also of Active Voice.

An active verb calls for an active subject. Since *ānesi* is the main verb, its active subject must be in nominative case, and must agree with it in person and number. It is obviously *mātā*. Then *mātā* is related to *ānesi*.

mātā → *ānesi* [Active Subject – Verb(*vuttakattar* - *kriyā*) relation]

Trans. “Mother . . . brought . . .”

After identifying the main verb, and its active subject or object, the rule of thumb is to go backwards from the verb, one word at a time. The word *dhītuyā* comes just before the verb, and it may be of *instrumental*, *dative*, *genitive*, *ablative*, and *locative* cases. If the *dative* case is assumed in this case:

dhītuyā → *ānesi* [Receptive (*sampadāna* - *sampadānī*) relation]

Trans. “. . . brought . . . for the daughter”

As shown above, one has to concentrate at any given time on only two words one is trying to get related. However, one would also try to grasp the already completed

parts as a whole just to make sure the analysis remains on the right track—such translations would be given as “Trans. (completed)”.

Trans (completed). “Mother . . . brought . . . for the daughter”

pacitvā → *ānesi* [Adverbial (*kriyāvisesana–kriyā*)⁷ relation]

Trans. “Having cooked . . . brought . . .”

Trans (completed). “Having cooked . . . , mother . . . brought . . . for the daughter”

Both *bhattaṃ* and *sūpaṃ*, both being in accusative case, are obviously inactive objects for *pacitvā* and *ānesi*. Therefore:

bhattaṃ → *pacitvā* [Inactive Object – verb (*avuttakamma–kriyā*) relation]

sūpaṃ → *pacitvā* [Inactive Object – verb (*avuttakamma - kriyā*) relation]

Trans. “Having cooked rice and curry . . .”

Trans. (completed): “Having cooked rice and curry, Mother brought . . . for the daughter”

It should be noted that no relation is defined for *ca*, an indeclinable meaning “and, as well, etc.” for the reasons given above.

bhattaṃ → *ānesi* [Inactive Object – verb (*avuttakamma - kriyā*) relation]

sūpaṃ → *ānesi* [Inactive Object – verb (*avuttakamma - kriyā*) relation]

Trans. “. . . brought . . . the rice and curry. . .”

Trans. (completed): “Having cooked rice and curry, Mother brought the rice and curry (i.e., the food) for the daughter”

The next word *sobhanaṃ* is obviously the same as *bhattaṃ* and *sūpaṃ* in case, gender and number but the latter two are different in content; apparently *sobhanaṃ* cannot be said to be identical with both of them. Accordingly, there are two *sobhanaṃ*s assumed, each modifying *bhattaṃ* and *sūpaṃ* respectively, with only one expressed and the other buried in ellipsis.

sobhanaṃ → *bhattaṃ* [Identical Adjective(*tulyādhikaraṇavisesana – visesya*) relation]

Trans. “good rice” *sobhanaṃ* → *sūpaṃ* [Identical Adjective(*tulyādhikaraṇavisesana–visesya*) relation]

Trans. “good curry”

7. Note that gerunds are viewed as adverbs that qualify other verbs following them. See:

kriyāvisesanatthāva, tvādyantā tabbīsesato

kattuvisesanatthāti, keci kattari vuttito (“Saddatthabhedacintā”, p. 380)

Words ending in the suffixes, *tvā*, etc., have the sense of adverbs since they are modifiers of those (i.e., verbs). (However) some say that they are modifiers of the subjects since they arise in the subjects.

Trans (completed): “Having cooked good rice and good curry, mother brought the good rice and good curry (i.e., the good food) for the daughter”

dāsiyā → *mātā* [Possessor (*sambandha* - *sambandhī*) Relation]

Trans. “The mother of the slave woman”

Trans. (completed): “Having cooked good rice and good curry, the mother of the slave woman brought the good food for the daughter”

From the analysis above, the following facts should be noted:

1. The word order is entirely ignored. The path of analysis shown above is typical but not without alternatives. One can choose an entirely different path if one wishes; one can arrive at the correct interpretation of a sentence, irrespective of the path of analysis, if all word-to-word relationships one defines are grammatically and contextually valid as well as consistent with one another.
2. In this example, the active subject *mātā* is related to the main verb *ānesi*, but not *ānesi* back to *mātā*. This is the mono-directional nature of word-to-word relations.
3. The main verb *ānesi* is related to no other word. Generally speaking, the main verb is the key stone of any given sentence—other words may be related to it, they may depend on it, but not vice-versa.
4. Two correctly related words must make sense, and all defined relations must fit in the whole picture of completed relations.
5. In this example, both *bhattaṃ* and *sūpaṃ* are the inactive objects for both *pacitvā* and *ānesi*, and that two *sobhanaṃs*, one explicit and another understood, are the Identical Adjectives for *bhattaṃ* and *sūpaṃ* respectively. It may be difficult to make all such relationships explicit in a translation, which fact may lead to misinterpretation in other contexts, even if not in this simple example. RG, on the other hand, forces one to define such relations explicitly, and thereby to make correct interpretations.
6. The use of RG to deal with Pali syntax has led the Burmese tradition to have an implicit yet definite concept of “what a sentence is” in contrast with the vague definitions⁸ given in classic grammars. A sentence is a self-contained

8. For instance:

padasamūho vākyam (Mogg, p. 1.2.232)

Trans. “A collection of words is a sentence”.

āchātaṃ sābyayakāravisesanaṃ vākyam (Mogg-p, p. 1.2.232)

Trans. “A sentence is a conjugated verb together with indeclinables, nouns related to the verb,

set of word-to-word relations. This definition has led to a different analysis of some sentence formats. Some examples would be:

yo āgacchati, so tassa pitā (= The one who comes is his father)

yo → *āgacchati* [Active Subject-Verb relation] (= The one who comes . . .)

so → *pitā* [Nominal Identity (*tulyattha-liṅgattha*) relation] (= He is the father)

tassa → *pitā* [Possessor relation] (= . . . his father)

Modern scholars⁹ might view *yo āgacchati* as the Relative clause, and *so tassa pitā* as the Main clause, but the Burmese tradition views them as separate sentences since all word-to-word relations defined in each clause do not go out of the respective scope. Accordingly, the literal translation should be “The one who comes, (he) is his father”.

It is the same with direct quotes:

so vadati “ahaṃ āgantuko bhavāmi”ti (= He says, “I am a visitor”)

In the example above, *so vadati* and *ahaṃ āgantuko bhavāmi* are different sentences linked by the indeclinable *iti*.

Some standalone indeclinables, having no relation to other words, can be viewed as complete sentences in themselves. For instance:

kiṃ(= What?) *āma* (= Yes)

2.3. Discussion

The method of learning Pali using RG has both downsides and upsides.

As the downside, it is admittedly the more difficult approach for beginners, and for casual learners. A student new to learning Pali must master the fundamentals of all grammatical categories before tackling even an easy sentence, and it can be both boring and frustrating in having to study the grammar only in theory for an extended period of time. Furthermore, the analysis of Pali sentences, even of easy ones, can be demanding as well as time-consuming for beginners.

On the other hand, there are real benefits that make RG worthy of serious study. They can be summed up as follows:

1. When one chooses to analyze a Pali sentence using RG, one has to concentrate, at any given point of time, on TWO words being related together; consequently, a long and complex sentence is not necessarily complicated than simple,

and modifiers”.

ekākhyātikam vā vākyam (Mogg-p, p. 1.2.232)

Trans. “(A collection of words) having a single conjugated verb is a sentence”.

9. See (Warder, *Pali*, p. 291).

short ones. The primary Pali readers used in Burma are stories found in the commentaries on Jātakas and Dhammapada, obviously easier than other texts yet definitely of standard language; there is no need to make up streamlined exercises for beginners' reading.

2. In actual reading, the first story is usually the most difficult; it may take more than a month to analyze and translate the very first page. However, after the first story, teachers need not lead the students any more; students are expected to deal with the rest of stories on their own using dictionaries and grammars as references, and teachers are expected to give only corrections. RG is probably one of the best tools that enable a student to achieve a solid foundation in Pali reading skill in the shortest time possible.

3. Thematic Units (*Vākyakhvai*)

3.1. Introduction

This has often necessitated cutting up long involved sentences, omitting connecting particles (such as *pana*, *panettha*, *yasmā* when followed by *tasmā*, *hi*, *kho*, etc.), which serve simply as grammatical grease in long chains of subordinate periods. . . . (Ñāṇamoli, *Purification*, p. xlviii)

There is no problem with cutting up long sentences, but to treat connecting participles simply as “grammatical grease” is open to question.

Ñāṇamoli is right, to a certain extent, as regards the suttas themselves. They have been orally transmitted through a prolonged period, and inevitably bear the characteristics of a spoken language; many particles there are just like *ems* or *ars* that are scattered in spoken English. However, all commentarial literature belongs to the category of written language, and, ignoring particles therein would have resulted in no less than the ignorance of the structure of the exposition being studied.

The Burmese tradition, on the other hand, believes in the importance of particles in written Pali, and the treatment of participles, especially of those serving as linkers among different sentences, is a separate topic for a Pali student with the title of “Thematic Units”.

3.2. The Concept and Terms

3.2.1. The Underlying Concept

The most common connecting particles in Pali are the indeclinables *hi*, *ca*, and *pana*. These are usually placed immediately after the initial words of their

respective sentences¹. They serve to reflect on the structure of sentences formed into paragraphs, etc., and they are comparable to certain English adverbs such as “however, therefore, because”, etc.

However, the Burmese tradition views them as of extremely fluid in sense in contrast with their English counterparts, which have fixed senses. In fact, they are viewed as overburdened with many, and sometimes self-contradictory, senses ascribed to them. (For instance, *hi* can mean either “therefore” or “because” in different contexts!)

This notion is based on the following verses of *Ganṭhābharāṇa* (“Ganthābharāṇa”, p. 221):

vākyārambhe vitthāre ca, dahḷiyam phalahetuke
tappākaṭṭikare ceva, visese anvayepica
byatireke ca hisaddo, navatthesu pakāsito. (verse - 7)¹⁰
vākyārambhe phale ceva, kāraṇe ca visesake
tappākaṭṭikare ceva, dahḷiyampi pakkhantare
anvaye byatireke ca, casaddopi pavattate. (verse - 8)¹¹
vākyārambhe visese ca, hetuphalesu anvaye
dahḷītapappākaṭṭikare, byatireke pakkhantare
sambhāvane garahe ca, panasaddo pakāsito. (verse - 9)¹²

All different senses given above amount to 12. Of them, the sense of *vitthāra* (“elaboration”) is particular to *hi*, *sambhāvanā* (“approval”) and *garahā* (“disapproval”) to *pana*, but all others are common to all three indeclinables.

That is why the Burmese tradition has used a different approach in interpreting these connecting participles. This approach can be termed “The Principle of Speed Bumps”.

A speed bump laid across a driveway does nothing but forces a driver to slow down so that he or she can get enough time to respond before getting into a nasty accident. In the same way, connecting participles are viewed as having no particular senses of their own; they exist only to remind a reader to take time before going on, to try to grasp the contextual status of the particular sentences where they are placed. This is also consistent with the Relational Grammar where indeclinables are generally not accounted for in syntax (See the footnote 6.)

10. Trans. “The word *hi* is shown in nine senses — supplement, elaboration, confirmation, effect (conclusion), cause (premise), illumination, particularity, affirmative, and negation”. (The technical terms *vākyārambha*, etc. in all three verses have been translated to reflect their usage rather than their literal senses. See the appendix - B.)

11. Trans. “The word *ca* exists in (the senses of) supplement, effect (conclusion), cause (premise), particularity, illumination, confirmation, new topic, affirmative, and negation”.

12. Trans. “The word *pana* in (the senses of) supplement, particularity, cause (premise), effect (conclusion), confirmation, illumination, negation, new topic, approval, and disapproval”.

In other words, the Burmese tradition tries to understand the content structure of a given text, and deduce the meaning of the connecting participles therein instead of the other way around.

3.2.2. Thematic Units

The term thematic unit is a tentative translation of the Pali term *vākya*, which literally means “a sentence”, but which here means¹ an independent unit of content or subject matter, logically and contextually related to other units (Janākābhivamsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepru*, ca). The smallest thematic unit is a complete sentence, and each of them may combine to form larger ones — with their extents ranging two or more sentences up to a whole paragraph, a chapter, or even a whole book.

It is the job of the reader to identify all thematic units, and thereby, to grasp the structure of the text he or she is studying.

3.2.3. Thematic Relations and Abstract Content

Thematic relations are relations that integrate separate thematic units into consistent organisms, in contrast with word-to-word relations within a sentence expounded in the Relational Grammar. They are defined in terms of abstract content (*piṇḍattha*), which, in contrast with the literal content, is the essence of a given thematic unit. A thematic unit is related to the units that immediately precede and follow it in one of the following relations:

Identity Relation Two adjacent thematic units are related in Identity Relation when they are essentially identical in content (Janākābhivamsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepru*, ch). For instance, a simple sentence counting the Triple Gem as Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha has essentially the same content as a whole chapter explaining them one by one; after all, the subject matter, i.e., the Triple Gem, is the same.

Cause /effect (OR Premise / Conclusion) Relation Two adjacent thematic units, one of which expresses the cause of an event while the other speaks of the resultant event, are related in Cause / effect relation (Janākābhivamsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepru*, ch). On the other hand, if one unit gives a logical premise while its neighbour gives its conclusion, they are related in Premise / Conclusion relation.¹³

13. It should be noted that these two different types of relationships are traditionally given as variations of a single relationship (Kāraṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 72) because the Pali term *kāraṇa* can denote both senses of “premise” and “cause” (Cone, *Dictionary*, “kāraṇa”) while *phala*, both of “conclusion” and “effect” (ibid., “phala”).

General Relation Any given two adjacent thematic units not related in the two relationships given above are said to have a General relationship (Janākābhivamsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepru, ch*).

3.2.4. Types of Thematic Units

The type of a given thematic unit is defined based on its respective relationships to its preceding and following ones. For instance, if a unit is an *elaborated content* (See p-27) of the previous one but serves as one of *partial content* (See- p-28) to the following one, it is termed as a unit of both *elaborated* and *partial content*. Accordingly, the types of thematic units are usually given in pairs, of which each member has its type defined in reference to the other. A detailed list of thematic unit types, and their respective explanations, are given in the appendix B.

3.2.5. Thematic Markers (*vākyajotaka*)

Thematic markers are the indeclinables *hi*, *ca*, and *pana* that serve as connecting particles among different thematic units. Their senses are to be deduced from the contextual status of the particular units where they are placed.

It should be also noted that thematic markers are defined with reference to the preceding unit, not the following one.

3.3. An Example of the Analysis of Thematic Units

A *Dhammarājā imaṃ gāthamāha:*

*Manopubbaṅgamā dhammā, manoseṭṭhā manomayā;
manasā ce paduṭṭhena, bhāsati vā karoti vā;
tato naṃ dukkhamanveti, cakkamva vahato padanti.*

B *Tattha manoti kāmāvacarakusalādibhedam sabbampi catubhūmikacittam.*

C *Imasmim pana pade tadā tassa vejjassa uppannacittavasena niyamiamānaṃ vavatthāpiyamānaṃ paricchijjiamānaṃ domanassasahagataṃ paṭighasampayuttacittameva labbhati.*

D *Pubbaṅgamāti tena paṭhamagāminā hutvā samannāgatā. (Dhp-a, 1: 21)*

The text above is taken from the commentary on the Dhammapada verse, *manopubbaṅgamā*, etc.. It will be followed by a translation, in which the thematic marker *pana* of the sentence C would be left untranslated; its translation would be given only after the due analysis of the contextual status of C.

A The king of Dhamma ... spoke the verse, *manopubbaṅgamā*, etc..

B In that verse, *mano* means all types of consciousness belonging to four Spheres, classified as the Sense-sphere wholesome consciousness, etc..

C [*Pana*], in this word, when defined, resolved and analyzed by virtue of the mind that occurred to that doctor at that time, the only (type of) consciousness applicable is that (one) accompanied by displeasure, and associated with aversion.

D *Pubbaṅgamā* means endowed with that fore-running (consciousness).

Now the contextual status of each unit (i.e. sentence) above is to be analyzed.

The essence of A is that the Buddha recited the verse *manopubbaṅgamā*, etc.. Following it is a unit that explains that verse in detail — it begins with B and extends up to the end of the commentary on the story of Cakkhupālatthera (Suppose it be termed L). Accordingly:

1. A is the unit of *summarized content* with reference to L and
2. L is the unit of *elaborated content* with reference to A. (See p-27)

(In theory, the contextual status of A should also be defined with respect to its preceding unit. However, all units before A have been left out in the extracted text above, and A is the foremost unit of this “content block” — without having any precedent. Therefore, the status of A is considered only as regards its following unit.)

Next, the unit L itself is to be analyzed. Again, B is the foremost component unit in L without any unit preceding it. So its status only as regards its following unit would be considered.

B merely states the scope of the content literally denoted by the term *mano*. In this case of Cakkhupālatthera, however, *mano* here denotes his particular state of mind in a previous life when he, as a doctor, destroyed the eyesight of a woman. This fact is given by C. Therefore:

3. B is the unit of *partial content* with reference to C and
4. C is the unit of *continued supplement* with reference to B. (See p-28.)

Then *pana*, the thematic marker in C, should be translated as “To continue”. (See p-28.)

Next, B and C together explains *mano*, the first member of the compound *manopubbaṅgama* while D gives the sense of *pubbaṅgama*, the second member, and explains how the whole compound *manopubbaṅgama* is formed. Accordingly:

5. B and C together is the unit of *previous theme* with reference to D and

6. D is the unit of *next theme* with reference to B and C. (See p-29.)

The analysis given above is a typical example of how thematic markers (*hi*, *ca*, and *pana*) are treated by the Burmese tradition. It should be noted here that:

1. Every thematic unit has its own contextual status whether it has a thematic marker or not.
2. A thematic marker is translated by virtue of the contextual status of the unit where it is placed.

3.4. Discussion

The birth of the topic of thematic units can be attributed to the fact that, as shown above, thematic markers in Pali with their extremely fluid senses are not helpful as connecting particles in English. The Burmese tradition tries to remedy this defect by formalizing the way how one understands the structure of given content, and by deducing the senses of thematic markers from content structure than the other way around.

However, the knowledge of the general principles is simply not adequate in practice for a beginner to deal with actual literature. Therefore, there have been many guidelines produced to help Pali students. For instance:

- “A unit initiated with the indeclinable *tattha* is generally a unit of Elaborated Content” (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 3).
- “A unit initiated with the combination of indeclinables *na hi* is either a unit of Premise (Cause) or a unit of Confirming Content” (ibid., p. 5).

But it should be noted that these guidelines are not more than rules of thumb derived from the actual usage found in the commentarial literature. They are applicable only so long as they do not conflict with the general principles, and with the contextual relevance.

Even with the principles, so many guidelines and years of research work by generations of scholars, Thematic Units still remain one of the most difficult topics in the Burmese tradition of Pali studies since the interpretation of the content structure becomes somewhat subjective when a reader cannot rely upon connecting participles. There are still numerous textual instances where experts disagree as regards their contextual status.

4. Sources and Historical Remarks

4.1. Available Sources

The earliest sources available now for Relational Grammar are anonymous aphorisms dubbed *cācap niyams*, which usually accompany classic Pali grammars published in Burma as an appendix [For instance, see (*Saddākrī*, “appendix 5”)], and which appear from their language not earlier than 18th century AD at most. But modern compilers have changed the format into prose, and classified the contents in the order of specific nominal cases [For instance, (Pandita, “Basic Relational Grammar”)]; this pattern is more or less the standard now.

The primary authority and reference for RG is the *Kāraḥakappa*¹⁴ (the chapter on the usage of nominal cases) of major classic grammars.

On the other hand, the main source of the concept of Thematic Units is Ganthābharāṇa,¹⁵ a grammatical treatise of Burmese origin. However, the standard reference and authority is *Rhveye’soṇ Niyam*.¹⁶ It can be rightfully called the culmination of prolonged research and study on thematic units of the Burmese monastic tradition. The textbook most popular with students, on the other hand, is the relevant chapter in *Dhammācariya Myakrhu*, written by *Arhin Kāruṇika*, and first published in 1976.

Then are those concepts Burmese inventions? Even though the available sources are of a very recent date, they have roots probably much older — perhaps even as old as the commentarial literature itself. This hypothetical answer is based on textual evidences found in the commentarial literature, which are given below.

4.2. The Textual Evidence for Relational Grammar

In the commentarial literature, the phrase *iti sambandho* is a very common phrase; it is found to be usually used for explaining the syntax of a text portion that the commentator intends to expound. A close examination of the usage of this phrase indicates that Relational Grammar, or at least its principle of word-to-word relations, did exist at the time of commentators, and that word-to-word relations were probably what commentators understood as Pali syntax.

14. *Kaccāyana* (135), *Padarūpasiddhi* (136), and *Saddanīti* (117). *Moggallāna* (66) declines to assign a separate chapter for *kāraḥas* but the first 40 suttas in its chapter on nouns (*syādikaṇḍa*) do comprehensively explain how nominal cases are used.

15. A treatise ascribed to Ariyavaṃsa, a Burmese monk who prospered in 15th century AD. (Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma*, p. 43)

16. So called because it is an anthology of Burmese aphorisms written by Ū’ Krī, the abbot of Rhveye’soṇ monastery located at Mandalay, the second largest city in Burma. It is said to be written during the reign of the King Mindon (extending from 1858 to 1878).

Firstly, it should be noted that the noun *sambandha* literally means “relation”, and there are many instances where it clearly means a word-to-word relations. One example is:

*tena, bhikkhave, bhikkhunā rattibhāgaṃ vā divasabhāgaṃ vā so puggalo anāpucchā pakkamitabbaṃ, nānubandhitabbo.*¹⁷ (MN, 1: 106)

So puggaloti padassa nānubandhitabboti iminā sambandho. (Ps, 2: 72)

Trans. There is the relation of the word *so puggalo* with the phrase *nānubandhitabbo*.

That explanation of Ps is very clear when viewed through RG. The phrase *nānubandhitabbo* is actually a Sandhi combination of *na* and *anubandhitabbo*. And *anubandhitabbo*, the significant part, is a Future Participle and usually carries Passive Voice. However, a passive verb calls for an active object, which is not obvious in the sentence of MN. Therefore the commentator points out the active object as *so puggalo*. Therefore, it can be safely maintained that *sambandho* in the verse above, and in similar instances, means a word-to-word relation.

On the other hand, there is another very common different usage of *sambandho*—by paraphrasing a clause or sentence to be explained, and adding *iti sambandho* at the end. Does it also mean a word-to-word relation in such a usage? To answer this question, another example would be examined.

*sammāsambuddhamatulaṃ, sasaddhammagāṇuttamaṃ;
abhivādiya bhāsissaṃ, abhidhammatthasaṅgahaṃ.* (Abhidh-s, p. 1)
*sasaddhammagāṇuttamaṃ atulaṃ sammāsambuddhaṃ abhivādiya
abhidhammatthasaṅgahaṃ bhāsissanti sambandho.* (Abhidh-s-ṭ, p. 54)

In the instance above, Abhidh-s-ṭ has apparently paraphrased the original verse of Abhidh-s by changing the word order, and the resulting version seems clearer. However, is it possible to objectively explain why it is in fact clearer?

The first obvious answer might be that it is in “proper word order”. But what is a “proper word order” in Pali anyway? In a language where word order forms an essential part of the syntax, a proper word order does exist; any word arbitrarily changing place in a given sentence would result in a change of content (e.g., as in “A man beats a dog.” becoming “A dog beats a man.”) or in simply non-sense (as in “A man a dog beats.”)—excepting, of course, cases where sentence inversion is explicitly allowed. On the contrary, word order in Pali has never had such a status.

On the other hand, one can view a very different picture when that verse is analyzed using RG:

17. Trans. “O monks, that monk may leave, at daytime or at nighttime, without asking that person for permission; that person should not be followed (i.e., the aforesaid monk should not be his follower)”.

sasaddhammagaṇuttamaṃ → *sammāsambuddhaṃ* (Identical Adjective relation)

atulaṃ → *sammāsambuddhaṃ* (Identical Adjective relation)

sammāsambuddhaṃ → *abhivādiya* (Inactive Object - Verb relation)

abhivādiya → *bhāsiṣṣaṃ* (Adverbial relation)

abhidhammatthasaṅgahaṃ → *bhāsiṣṣaṃ* (Inactive Object - Verb relation)

When viewed through the relations above, the paraphrase of Abhidh-s-ṭ is found to have fulfilled two conditions that the original verse lacks:

1. The word order follows the direction of relations. In other words, each word is placed so that it comes before the word it is related to.
2. The members of each pair of related words are placed as closely to each other as possible.

In fact, these two conditions are fulfilled whenever a commentator gives a paraphrase together with *iti sambandho*, and an exception is yet to be seen. Then it can be safely maintained that the word *sambandho* in this instance, and in similar ones, means a word-to-word relation too.

In fact, it remains to be seen if there exists in the commentarial literature a single piece of syntactic explanation, with the word *sambandho* or without, that does not imply a certain sort of word-to-word relations. And if commentators use word-to-word relations whenever they have to explain the syntax of a given Pali sentence, one might conclude that Pali syntax as understood by commentators is nothing but word-to-word relations.

4.3. The Textual Evidence for Thematic Units

There is a very common type of text in the commentarial literature that the Burmese tradition calls Connecting Units (*anusandhivākya*)—they are used to explain the content structure of textual expositions. Such units might be the source that has inspired the later generations of scholars to form the concept of Thematic Units.

One example found in Sp-ṭ is to be discussed here — this particular instance has been chosen because it offers a rare insight into how commentators reason over thematic units. However, before going into the text of Sp-ṭ itself, one should know what it is trying to explain; the original text of Sp is given below:

A. *Tattha vuttaṃ yena yadā yasmāti idaṃ tāva vacanaṃ “tena samayena buddho bhagavā verañjāyaṃ viharati”ti evamādivacanaṃ sandhāya vuttaṃ. Idañhi buddhassa bhagavato attapaccakkhavacanaṃ na hoti, tasmā*

vattabbametam “idaṃ vacanam kena vuttam, kadā vuttam, kasmā ca vuttan”ti?

- B. *Āyasmatā upālittherena vuttam, tañca pana paṭhamamahāsaṅgītikāle.*
- C. *Paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma cesā kiñcāpi pañcasatikasaṅgītikkhandhake vuttā, nidānakosallattham pana idhāpi iminā nayena veditabbā. (Sp, 1: 3)*
- A. (Trans.) In that verse, firstly, the words *Tattha vuttam yena yadā yasmā* are spoken as regards the speech, “At that time, the Honoured Buddha resides at Verañjā”, etc.. Indeed, this is not the expression of the Honoured One himself. Therefore, one should mention who said these words, when and why.
- B. (It was) said by Venerable Upāli. And that (saying) was at the time of the First Great Council.
- C. Even though the First Great Council is expounded in the *Khandaka* on the Council of five hundred monks, here also it should be known thus for the sake of information on the causes (i.e. on those attributed to for the existence of Vinaya Piṭaka).

Sp is a commentary on the whole Vinaya Piṭaka, which records the First Great Council in the chapter of Pañcasatikakkhandhaka. Then the proper place to speak of the First Council in detail should be that chapter. However, the commentator decides to give an account of the First Council at the very beginning, and the unit C shows the reason he gives for it.

The unit C, and especially the thematic marker *ca* therein, is explained by Sp-ṭ as follows:

- A. *Idāni taṃ paṭhamamahāsaṅgītiṃ dassetukāmo tassā tanti-ārulhāya idha vacane kāraṇam dassento “paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma cesā . . . veditabbā”ti āha.*
- B. *Paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma cesāti ca-saddo īdisesu ṭhānesu vattabbasampiṇḍanattho, tañca paṭhamamahāsaṅgītikāle vuttam, esā ca paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti evaṃ veditabbāti vuttam hoti.*
- C. *Upaṇṇāsatto vā ca-saddo. Upaṇṇāsoti ca vākyārambho vuccati. Esā hi ganthakārānam pakati, yadidaṃ kiñci vatvā puna paraṃ vattumārabhantānam casaddapayogo.*
- D. *Yaṃ pana kenaci vuttam “paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma cāti ettha ca-saddo atirekattho, tena aññāpi atthīti dīpeti”ti. Tadeva tassa ganthakkame akovidataṃ dasseti. Na hettha casaddena atirekattho viññāyati. Yadi cettha etadatthoyeva ca-kāro adhippeto siyā, evaṃ sati na kattabboyeva paṭhamasaddeneva aññāsam dutiyādisaṅgītinampi atthibhāvassa dīpitattā. (Sp-ṭ, p. 1.25)*

A. (Trans.) “(The commentator), who wishes to show the First Great Council, said *paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma*, etc., showing the reason for speaking here of this Council recorded in the Canon.”

This is a Connecting Unit. It shows that the whole Sp chapter on the First Great Council proceeds from a single sentence *tañca pana paṭhamamahāsaṅgītikāle* (= “And that (saying) was at the time of the First Great Council.”)

B. (Trans.) “The word *ca* in the phrase *Paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma cesā* has the sense of implying that (the First Great Council) should be spoken of in such places (i.e., contexts) — that is to say that, that speech (*tena kho pana samayena* . . .) is uttered at the time of the First Great Council, and that this First Great Council (itself) should be known thus.”

Here Sp-ṭ defines the sense of *ca* probably after checking similar contexts. It is not only here that a disciple’s speech at a later time is incorporated into the Canon; indeed, in major Nikāyas, each sutta is headed by the sentence *evaṃ me sutam*, supposedly said by Ven. Ānanda at the time of the First Great Council. Accordingly, the First Great Council is expounded in the commentary on Brahmajālasutta (Sv, 1: 3), the very first sutta in that Nikāya, and that explanation is referred to in the commentaries on other major Nikāyas (Ps, 1: 3; Spk, 1: 3; Mp, 1: 3). Therefore, Sp-ṭ probably means to say that the indeclinable *ca* here implies the propriety of explaining the First Great Council whenever any text reputedly recited at that Council is to be made understood.

C. (Trans.) “Alternatively, the word *ca* has the sense of *upaññāsa*. And setting out on a (new) sentence (i.e., unit) is termed *upaññāsa*. Indeed, it is the nature of the authors to use the word *ca* when they attempt on another topic after speaking of something else”.

In this version, the indeclinable *ca* indicates a digression, for, after mentioning the agent (*yena*) and the time (*yadā*) of the words *tena kho pana samayena*, etc., Sp digresses in the form of the whole chapter of the First Great Council before giving the reason (*yasmā*).

D. (Trans.) “However, someone says that the word *ca* in the phrase *paṭhamamahāsaṅgīti nāma ca* has the sense “extra”, and that it shows there are still other Councils. This statement (itself) shows his incompetence in the course of text. Indeed, the sense “extra” is not denoted by the word *ca*. Besides, if the word *ca* of this very sense were intended here, it should not have been done (i.e., it should not have been mentioned at all) since with the very word *paṭhama* is indicated the existence of the Second Council, etc..”

Here the “someone” that Sp-ṭ is criticizing is none other than Vajīrabuddhi-ṭikā, the oldest sub-commentary on Sp (See Vjb, p. 21). Now one should note that:

1. Two authors of sub-commentaries disagree over the interpretation of *ca*, a very common indeclinable but serving as a connecting particle in this instance. This fact shows that the senses of connecting particles are, at least for commentators, rather flexible and subjective in nature.
2. They use the same approach—to deduce the sense of the particle from the context—but they come to different conclusions because they understand the context differently.

The concept of Thematic Units in the Burmese tradition is nothing but that approach formalized and applied to all connecting participles in the commentarial literature. This statement, however, does not mean that the text above of Sp-ṭ is the ultimate source of the concept; the actual development of the subject is still open to further research.

4.4. A Possible Objection to the Hypothesis

There is one obvious objection to this hypothesis; if the topics of Relational Grammar and Thematic Units have roots as old as the commentarial literature itself, why have classic grammars such as Kaccāyana, Moggallāna, etc. failed to give even a hint of them?

To answer this question would firstly require an answer to another question; what is the role that ancient grammarians have supposed for classic grammars anyway? The first obvious answer might be that they are intended for teaching and learning Pali. This answer reflects the traditional Pali studies seen nowadays, of which classic grammars form the cornerstone. However, there are some facts that indicate they are originally not meant for learners, especially not for beginners:

1. Classic grammars are written in Pali, a significant barrier in itself for new comers.
2. Using classic grammars as learning materials involves studying the grammatical system itself, which demands an additional steep learning curve.
3. Classic grammars, oddly enough, lack a proper explanation of syntax. The only topic that can be said to have some relevance to syntax is the *Kāraṅgakkappa* (The chapter on the usage of nominal cases. See the footnote 14). However, it really deals only with the usage of nominal cases —only part of the whole picture of Pāli syntax. The following rant of Ole Pind, though

meant for modern Pali grammars, is equally applicable to their ancient counterparts.

. . . As it is, linguists, who take a look at what MI scholars produce, will inevitably get the impression from reading modern Pāli grammars that Pāli is a language without syntax! As it appears, most of them describe Pāli as an assemblage of phonological peculiarities, generally treated atomistically and ad hoc . . . (Pind, “Message 1316”)

Learning a language without syntax simply makes no sense.

The reasons given above are probably convincing enough to make one think that these works are not for Pali learners. What is their purpose then?

Classic grammars as seen nowadays are philological systems — rigorous systems almost like the Euclidean geometry where problems are solved by using accepted theorems and axioms. For instance, one should see the following explanation given in *Padarūpasiddhi* (Rūp, p. 7) for a simple Sandhi combination:

loka + aggapuggalo →?

→ *lok . . . a + aggapuggalo (pubbamadhoḥhitamassaram sarena viyojaye)*¹⁸

→ *lok . . . + aggapuggalo (sarā sare lopam)*¹⁹

→ *lokaggapuggalo (naye param yutte)*²⁰

In the instance above, it could be seen that every step in the derivation of a Pali form is supposed to be verified by a particular rule (*sutta*). Such a derivation is possible only when all suttas are at one’s finger tips for use.

This particular arrangement of classic grammars can be understood only from one viewpoint; they are probably meant to be tools of textual criticism — for those who must justify all and every one of their textual preferences, i.e., editors and teachers that use manuscripts as main sources in their work.

If classic grammars are meant for textual criticism, it is not surprising that syntax (Relational Grammar?) is not properly presented in these works — context is much more important in dealing with any textual problem at syntactic level, i.e., covering a whole phrase, clause, one or more sentences, while anyone knowing the language well enough should already have possessed whatever knowledge of syntax required for such problems. The contextual structures (Thematic Units?), having even lesser effect on textual criticism, are out of the question.

On the other hand, really corrupted text is generally found at the level of individual words and compounds — perhaps this is why ancient grammarians

18. Trans. “The preceding (consonant) should be separated from (its) vowel, by making it (i.e., the consonant) stand below without a vowel

19. Trans. “The (preceding) vowel is elided on account of the (following) vowel.”

20. Trans. “A consonant standing below without a vowel should be moved to the following letter where appropriate.”

have tried to set up rigorous philological systems to maintain the language as it is handed down from manuscript to manuscript.

Now another question arises. If these tools are not given in classic grammars, what is the form that they have survived in? Probably they have been in vernacular languages — in Sinhala in Sri Lanka, in Burmese in Burma, etc. — which is understandable since learning materials for a foreign language, at the beginner's level at least, are best in a learner's mother tongue.

However, the line between classic grammars written in Pali and the learning materials in vernacular languages seems not a rigid one; much material has probably crossed it from one side to the other at various times and places. Just as classic grammars have been translated into vernaculars and come to form the core of traditional learning nowadays, learning aids might have also been palicized — One instance might be *Ganthābharāṇa* where some indeclinables (*hi*, *ca*, and *pana*) are treated in a particular way not found in Kaccāyana, etc..

5. Conclusion

In this paper, two most important tools in Burmese traditional Pali studies have been introduced. Since they are tools, their relevance and usability can be evaluated from practical usage, and if there arise, as a result of the application of them on certain texts, interpretations different from what are accepted by modern scholarship, they would be interesting topics to explore further. And it is hoped that some readers might like to give them a try. However, it should be noted that they cannot be learnt from mere books; an instructor's helping hand is indispensable.

On the other hand, a hypothesis of their historical origins has been put forward here — that these tools, as concepts at least, might be as old as the commentarial literature — and textual evidences have been given in proof. However, there is still much work to be done. Comprehensive researches on the usage in the commentarial literature of the phrase *iti sambandho* and Connecting Units (*anusandhivākya*) need to be carried out so that modern students can comprehend how ancient commentators understood the Pali syntax and content structure.

In addition, their actual development in history requires much more research, which can be quite challenging since the available Burmese sources are of very recent dates.

A. Tables of various relations for *nominal cases*

Note: The following tables are based on the chapter of Basic Relational Grammar—part of compiled lecture notes that I had prepared for teaching foreign students at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University from 2001 to 2002.

Basic relationships for each nominal case is given below; limited space has forced me to omit specific relationships for:

1. Causal verbs (*kāritakriyā*)
2. Gerunds
3. Infinitives
4. Defining Clauses (i.e., those having Present Participles as auxiliary verbs)

A.1. Nominative case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Nominal Identity (Ordinary) ²¹	<i>so ācariyo</i>	<i>so</i> → <i>ācariyo</i>	He (is) the teacher.
2	Nominal Identity (Denominative) ²²	<i>saro nandā</i> <i>nāma</i>	<i>saro</i> → <i>nandā</i>	The lake (is) Nandā by name.
3	Double Active Subject -Verb (ordinary) ²⁴	<i>so ācariyo hoti</i>	<i>so</i> (P) ²³ → <i>ahosi</i> <i>ācariyo</i> (S) ²⁵ → <i>hoti</i>	He is the teacher.
4	Double Active Subject -Verb (Denominative) ²⁶	<i>saro nandā</i> <i>nāma hoti</i>	<i>saro</i> (P) → <i>hoti</i> <i>nandā</i> (S) → <i>hoti</i>	The lake is Nandā by name.
5	Active Subject - Verb ²⁷	<i>puriso gacchati</i>	<i>puriso</i> → <i>gacchati</i>	(The / A) man goes.
6	Active Object - Verb ²⁸	<i>puriso haññate</i>	<i>puriso</i> → <i>haññate</i>	(The / A) man is killed.
7	Double Active Object - Verb ²⁹	<i>so bhikkhu</i> <i>karīyate</i>	<i>so</i> (P) → <i>karīyate</i> <i>bhikkhu</i> (S) → <i>karīyate</i>	He is made a monk.

21. *tulyattha - liṅgattha*

22. *saññī (nāmī) - saññā (nāma)*

23. P means *pakati* (Primary).

24. *pakatikattu- vikatikattu- kriyā*

25. S means *vikati* (Secondary).

26. *pakati (saññī, nāmī), vikati (saññā, nāma) - kriyā*

27. *vuttakattu-kriyā*

28. *vuttakamma-kriyā*

29. *pakati (saññī, nāmī), vikati (saññā, nāma) - kriyā*

A.2. Vocative case

No relations defined for nouns in vocative cases since they are considered to be outside the scope of sentence syntax.

A.3. Accusative case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Inactive Object - Verb ³⁰	<i>purise hanati</i>	<i>purise</i> → <i>hanati</i>	... kills (the) men.
2	Double Inactive Object - Verb ³¹	<i>sāmaṇere</i> <i>bhikkhū karoti</i>	<i>sāmaṇere</i> (P) → <i>karoti</i> <i>bhikkhū</i> (S) → <i>karoti</i>	... makes the novices (into) monks
3	Spatio - Temporal Continuity ³²	<i>yojanaṃ gacchati</i> <i>māsaṃ sajjhayati</i>	<i>yojanaṃ</i> → <i>gacchati</i> <i>māsaṃ</i> → <i>sajjhayati</i>	... goes (for) a <i>yojana</i> recites (for) a month.
4	Adverbial ³³	<i>sukhaṃ sayati</i>	<i>sukhaṃ</i> → <i>sayati</i>	... sleeps with pleasure, i.e., soundly

A.4. Instrumental case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Implemental ³⁴	<i>pharasunā chindati</i>	<i>pharasunā</i> → <i>chindati</i>	... cuts with (an/the) axe
2	Sociative ³⁵			
	Comitative	<i>puttena saha gacchati</i>	<i>puttena</i> → <i>saha</i>	... goes with the son.
	Abessive	<i>puttena vinā gacchati</i>	<i>puttena</i> → <i>vinā</i>	... goes without the son.
	Implicit	<i>puttena gacchati</i>	<i>puttena</i> → <i>gacchati</i>	... goes (with) the son.
3	Inactive Subject - Verb ³⁶	<i>purisehi ... haññate</i>	<i>purisehi</i> → <i>haññate</i>	... should be killed by (the) men.
4	Causality ³⁷	<i>annena vasati</i>	<i>annena</i> → <i>vasati</i>	... stays because of food.
5	Adjectival ³⁸	<i>gottena gotamo nāma</i>	<i>gottena</i> → <i>gotamo</i>	... (called) Gotama by virtue of (his) race.
6	Adverbial ³⁹	<i>samena dhāvati</i>	<i>samena</i> → <i>dhāvati</i>	... runs (in) unity.

30. *avuttakamma* - *kriyā*

31. *pakatiavuttakamma*, *vikatiavuttakamma* - *kriyā*

32. *accantasam̐yoga* - *accantasam̐yogavanta*

33. *kriyāvisesana* - *kriyāvesesasya*

34. *karaṇa* - *karaṇakriyā*

35. The Burmese tradition really uses another classification:

1. *sahayoga* - *sahayogavanta* (when the indeclinable *saha* is used.)
2. *sahādiyoga* - *sahādiyogavanta* (when other indeclinables such as *saddhim̐* (“together”), *vinā* (“without”), etc., are used.)
3. *sahatthayoga* - *sahatthayogavanta* (when the comitative sense is implicit.)

36. *avuttakattu* - *kriyā*

37. *hetu* - *phala*

38. *nāmavisesana* - *visesya*

39. *kriyāvisesana* - *kriyā*

A.5. Dative case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Receptive ⁴⁰	<i>bhikkhussa</i> <i>jalam dadāti</i>	<i>bhikkhussa</i> → <i>dadāti</i>	... gives water to (the/a) monk.
2	Purposive ⁴¹	<i>phalānaṃ gacchati</i>	<i>phalānaṃ</i> → <i>gacchati</i>	... goes for fruits.

A.6. Ablative case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Detachment ⁴²	<i>gāmasmā gacchati</i>	<i>gāmasmā</i> → <i>gacchati</i>	... goes (away) from (the / a) village.
2	Contrastive ⁴³	<i>so asmāhi pāpiyataro</i>	<i>asmāhi</i> → <i>pāpiyataro</i>	He is worse than us.
3	Causality ⁴⁴	<i>pītiyā na bhujjati</i>	<i>pītiyā</i> → <i>na bhujjati</i>	... does not eat on account of delight.

A.7. Genitive case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Possessor ⁴⁵	<i>bhikkhuno patto</i>	<i>bhikkhuno</i> → <i>patto</i>	(The / A) monk's bowl
2	Collection - Individual ⁴⁶	<i>rājā manussānaṃ ...</i>	<i>manussānaṃ</i> → <i>rājā</i>	(The) king, among men, ...
3	Inactive Subject - Verb ⁴⁷	<i>purisānaṃ haññate</i>	<i>purisānaṃ</i> → <i>haññate</i>	... killed by (the) men.

A.8. Locative case

	Relation Type	Example	Relation Format	Translation
1	Locus - Verb ⁴⁸	<i>gaṅgāyaṃ nhāyati</i> <i>rattiyaṃ gacchati</i>	<i>gaṅgāyaṃ</i> → <i>nhāyati</i> <i>rattiyaṃ</i> → <i>gacchati</i>	... bathes in the (river) Ganges. ... goes at night.
2	Motivational ⁴⁹	<i>cammesu haññate</i>	<i>cammesu</i> → <i>haññate</i>	... killed on account of (for the sake of) hides.
3	Whole - Part ⁵⁰	<i>rukkhe sākhā</i>	<i>rukkhe</i> → <i>sākhā</i>	... (a) branch of (the) tree.
4	Collection -			

40. *sampadāna* - *sampadānī*

41. *tumattha* - *tumatthakriyā*

42. *apādāna* - *apādānī*

43. *vibhattāpādāna* - *vibhattāpādānī*

44. *hetu* - *phala*

45. *sambandha* - *sambandhī*

46. *niddhāraṇasamudāya* - *niddhāraṇīya*

47. *avuttakattu* - *kriyā*

48. *ādhāra* - *ādheyya*

49. *nimitta* - *nimittavanta*

50. *samudāya* - *samudāyī*

Individual⁵¹ *rājā manussesu* *manussesu* → *rājā* (The) king, among men, ...

B. Tables of the different types of Thematic Units

B.1. The Coupled Units of Identity Relation

	Preceding Unit (PU)	Following Unit (FU)	Thematic Marker in FU (Trans.)
1 ⁵²	Summarized Content	Elaborated Content	“to elaborate”
2 ⁵³	Elaborated Content	Summarized Content	“to summarize”
3 ⁵⁴	Vague Content	Illuminative Content	“to explain / to make lucid”
4 ⁵⁵	Doubtful Content	Confirming Content	“It is true / Indeed / Really”
5 ⁵⁶	Prime Content	Concluding Content	“To sum up”

B.2. The Coupled Units of Cause-effect / Premise-Conclusion Relation

	Preceding Unit (PU)	Following Unit (FU)	Thematic Marker in FU (Trans.)
1 ⁵⁷	Premise	Conclusion	“Therefore it is known that . . .”
	Cause	Effect	“Therefore”
2 ⁵⁸	Conclusion	Premise	“It is known because”
	Effect	Cause	“Because”
3 ⁵⁹	Confirmable Content	Convincing Implication	“It would imply that . . . / Thus”
4 ⁶⁰	Disputable Content	Destructive Implication	“The blame here is”

51. *niddhāraṇasamudāya - niddhāraṇīya*

52. When a part, or the whole, of a unit's content is elaborated by a following unit, the former is called the Unit of Summarized Content (*saṅkhepavākya*) while the latter is called the Unit of Elaborated Content (*vitthāravākya*) (Janākābhivaṃsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepre, jh*)

53. When a previous large unit is summarized in a following small unit, the pair of units given above is reversed in format. (Janākābhivaṃsa, *Aṭṭhakathā Akhrepre, jh*)

54. This pair is similar to that of Summarized / Elaborated Content with one difference: a *simply exhaustive account* is a unit of Elaborated Content while one given using *similes, reasoning, or pros and cons* is a Unit of Illuminated Content (*tappākaṭṭhikaraṇavākya*) — its precedent is accordingly called the Unit of Vague Content (*apākaṭṭhavākya*) (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 71).

55. When a preceding unit is confirmed or validated in a following one either by quoting an authority or by logical reasoning, the former is called the unit of Doubtful Content (*dalhīyavākya*) and the latter, the unit of Confirming Content (*dalhīkaraṇavākya*) (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 71).

56. This pair is a special case of the pair [2]; the concluding part of a topic or a chapter or even a whole book is termed a unit of Concluding Content (*nigamanavākya*) while the preceding rest of the topic, etc. is called the unit of Prime Content (*nigamanīyavākya*) (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 72).

57. If the precedent unit is a premise of which the following one is the conclusion, the former is the unit of Premise while the latter is the unit of Conclusion. On the other hand, if the precedent unit shows a cause of which the result is given by the following one, the former is the unit of Cause and the latter is the unit of Effect.

It should also be noted that these two different pairs of units are traditionally given as a single one having members *kāraṇavākya* and *phalavākya*. (See also the footnote 13.)

58. This pair is nothing but the pair above in reversed order.

B.3. The Coupled Units of General Relation

	Preceding Unit (PU)	Following Unit (FU)	Thematic Marker in FU (Trans.)
1 ⁶¹	Partial Content	Continued Supplement	“To Continue” ⁶²
2 ⁶³	Partial Content	Resumed Supplement	“To Continue”
3 ⁶⁴	General Content	Particular Content	“In particular /specially /especially”
4 ⁶⁵	Particular Content	General Content	“Generally / in general”
5 ⁶⁶	Affirmative Content	Negative Content	“On the contrary”

59. When a following unit is:

- implied by its precedent unit,
- obviously sound in content and
- implicitly verifies its precedent by its own soundness

It is termed a unit of Convincing Implication (*laddhaguṇavākya*) and its precedent, unit of Confirmable Content (*yuttivākya*).

There are also different opinions (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 72) as regards this pair of units:

- Some say that *laddhaguṇavākya* is a unit of Conclusion (Effect) derived from its precedent, which is itself a unit of Conclusion (Effect) derived from another.
- On the contrary, some maintain that *laddhaguṇavākya* is the term for the unit of Conclusion (Effect) that precedes its corresponding unit of Premise (Cause).

60. If a following unit is:

- implied by its precedent unit,
- obviously false in content and
- implicitly refutes its precedent by its own falseness

OR if it is:

- implied by negation of its precedent unit [Certain words meaning “otherwise” (*itarathā*, *aññathā*, etc.) are typical of this second type]
- obviously false in content and
- implicitly verifies its precedent by its own falseness

It is termed a unit of Destructive Implication (*laddhadosavākya*) and its precedent, a unit of Disputable Content (*ayuttivākya*). (Kāruṇika, *Dhammācariyamakrhu*, p. 72)

61. When a following unit helps to complete the content given by its *immediate* precedent unit, it is termed a unit of Continued Supplement (*upanyāsavākya*) while its precedent, a unit of Partial Content (*āraddhavākya*). (ibid - 73)

62. The typical Burmese translation is retained here but probably the proper sense should have been “and, moreover”, etc. since it is meant to supplement the content given in the previous unit.

63. When a unit supplements the content of a previous unit of Partial Content *distantly* placed, it is termed a unit of Resumed Supplement (*vākyārambhavākya*). (ibid)

64. If a precedent unit gives all possible senses of a word or phrase while the following unit gives the contextually proper sense, the former is termed a unit of General Content (*sāmaññavākya*) and the latter, the unit of particular content (*visesavākya*). (ibid - 74)

65. This pair is nothing but the one above reversed in place.

66. If a precedent unit is contrary to its following unit in content, one is termed a unit of Affirmative Content (*anvayavākya*) while the other, unit of Negative Content (*byatirekavākya*). In ordinary writing, an affirmative statement is an *anvayavākya* while a negative statement is *byatirekavākya*. On the other hand, when a certain *saṃvaṇṇetabba* is being explained, the unit

6 ⁶⁷	Negative Content	Affirmative Content	“On the contrary”
7 ⁶⁸	Disapproved Content	Commended Content	“However / But”
8 ⁶⁹	Commended Content	Disapproved Content	“However / But”
9 ⁷⁰	Previous Theme	Next Theme	“Next”

compatible with it is termed *anvayavākya* while the one contrary to it, *byatirekavākya*. (ibid - 75)
(A *samvaṇṇetabba* is a quotation embedded in a commentary for the sake of explaining away)

67. This pair of units is nothing but the one above reversed in place.

68. This pair can best be explained with an example:

A. Even the devil himself would not commit such an act.

B. It is out of the question for a good man like me.

The unit A above is the unit of Disapproved Content (*garahāvākya*) since it suggests implicit dislike for the devil mentioned therein, and automatically implies the existence of the opposite, which is made explicit by B, the unit of Commended Content (*sambhavanāvākya*). One should notice that A is not complete without B.

69. This pair can best be explained with an example too:

A. Even Buddhas cannot escape death.

B. It is out of the question for ordinary mortals like us.

The unit A is the unit of Commended Content since it has implicit praise for Buddhas mentioned therein, and automatically implies the existence of the opposite, which is made explicit by B, the unit of Disapproved Content. One should notice that A is not complete without B.

70. When the following unit shows the content of a topic different from that of the precedent one, the former is termed the unit of Next Theme (*pakkhantaravākya*) while the latter, the unit of Previous Theme (*pakkhavākya*).

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