

PALI CONVENTIONS
[Pali Conventions 1 appeared on 020925]

5. Quotation

Here are the opening and the ending sentences of the Buddha’s main instruction of the Ānāpānasati Sutta (M 118). Notice that this covers 36 paragraphs (actually a lecture!). Older translations (like the PTS) repeat the opening quotes at the beginning of each paragraph, or even line. To simplify reading I thought it better to place the quote marks only at the beginning and the end of the whole “lecture”.

M 118

8 “Apalāpā’yam, bhikkhave, parisā; nippalāpā’yam, bhikkhave, parisā;
Without-idle-talk this / O monks / company / free-from-idle-talk this / O monks / company

8 “Monks, this assembly is without idle talk, free from idle talk.

43 Evaṃ bhāvitā kho, bhikkhave, satta bojjhaṅgā,

Thus / are cultivated / indeed / O monks / the seven / enlightenment-factors,

43 Monks, this is how the seven enlightenment-factors are developed

evaṃ bahulī,katā vijjā,vimuttiṃ paripūrentī” ti.

thus / made much / true knowledge & liberation / are fulfilled / (end-quote)

and often cultivated to bring true knowledge and liberation to perfection.”

6. Pali embedded quote 1

In this excerpt, I think the embedded quotes should have secondary quote marks for easier reading:

M 22.2

So sato’va assasati, sato’va passasati:

He / mindfully just / he breathes in / mindfully just / he breathes out:

Mindfully he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out:

(1) dīgham vā assasanto ‘**Dīgham assasāmī**’ ti pajānāti;

long / or / breathing in / long / I breathe in (endquote) / he understands

(1) breathing in long, he understands: ‘Breathing in long’;¹

dīgham vā passasanto ‘**Dīgham passasāmī**’ ti pajānāti;

short / or / breathing out / long / I breathe out (endquote) / he understands

or, breathing out long, he understands: ‘Breathing out long’;

Note also that in long ending vowel ī in **assasāmī** and **passasāmī** denotes a geminated vowel (**i + i**) so that the ending **ti** is originally **iti**.

7. Pali embedded quote 2

This excerpt from §8 has an embedded quote (in bold). I think it is not necessary to insert the quote marks here (no quotes in the English translation, too). Moreover, the closing **iti** is an optional reading.

M 118.8

Tathā,rūpo ayam, bhikkhave, bhikkhu,saṅgho; tathā,rūpā ayam, bhikkhave, parisā
Such form / this / O monks / the Order of Monks / that form / this / O monks / the company /
Monks, such is this community of monks, such is this assembly,

yathā,rūpā parisā **āhuneyyā pāhuneyyā dakkhiṇeyyā añjali,karaṇīyā**

which form / the company/ worthy of offerings/ worthy of hospitality/ worthy of gifts / worthy of lotus-palm making
which is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the
lotus-gesture,

anuttaram puñña-k,khettaṃ lokassā ti .

incomparable merit field / of the world / (end-quote)
an incomparable field of merit for the world.

8. No quotes

An interesting alternative method is to altogether dispense with quote marks in Pali since the quotation is evident from **the idiomatic translation**. However this is only easy in the trilinear method, in which the student can deduce the **Pali quotation** from the idiomatic translation.

9. No quote marks

(a) No quote marks should be used where **iti** is used only for emphasis.

D 22.22

Ek'āyano ayam, bhikkhave, maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā soka,paridevānaṃ
samatikkaṃāya dukkha,domanassānaṃ atthaṅgamāya, ñāyassa¹ adhigamāya nibbānassa
sacchikiriyāya, yadidaṃ **cattāro satipaṭṭhānā 'ti**. Iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ, idam etaṃ paṭicca
vuttaṃ" 'ti.

However, **vuttaṃ" ti** closes the Buddha's words of the sutta.

(b) No quote marks should be used where the **iti** closes the whole sutta,

D 22.22 (Closing)

Idam avoca bhagavā. Attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandun 'ti.

Mahāsatiṭṭhānasuttaṃ niṭṭhitaṃ navamaṃ

¹ ñāya, "method, truth, system; later = logic" (PED). Here refers to the spiritual path.

10. Elisions

This excerpt exemplifies how **iti** is inserted following a nasal (niggahīta) or a conjunct vowels (2 different vowels combined):

Line 3: ṁ = (n) + iti, hence: **dukkhan’ ‘ti**

Line 4: ô = (o + i) + iti, hence: **samudayô’ ti** [similarly for line 5]

Line 5: ā = (ā in paṭipadā) + iti, hence: **paṭipadā’ ‘ti**

D 22.17

Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu

‘Idaṁ dukkhan’ ‘ti yathā, bhūtaṁ pajānāti,

‘Ayaṁ dukkha, samudayô’ ti yathā, bhūtaṁ pajānāti,

‘Ayaṁ dukkha, nirodhô’ ti yathā, bhūtaṁ pajānāti,

‘Ayaṁ dukkha, nirodha, gāmiṇī paṭipadā’ ‘ti yathā, bhūtaṁ pajānāti.

11. “letting go”

M 118.21

(16) ‘Paṭinissaggânupassī assasissāmī ti sikkhati;

Giving-up contemplating / I will breathe in / (end-quote) he trains.

(16) He trains himself thus: ‘I will breathe in contemplating the letting go [of defilements]’;

‘Paṭinissaggânupassī passasissāmī ti sikkhati;

Giving-up contemplating / I will breathe in / (end-quote) he trains.

He trains himself thus: ‘I will breathe out contemplating the letting go [of defilements]’;²

In this passage and its other occurrences in the sutta, I have decided to render **paṭinissaga** as “letting go” [of defilements] (rather than the negative “giving up”).

I have also used “letting go” for **ananuyoga** (M 139.8, Araṇavibhaṅga Sutta, where Bodhi uses “disengagement”).

I feel that the English “letting go” can be used in the two different contexts which although grammatically different conveys a very similar basic idea in spiritual practice. See Ajahn Brahmavamso’s note below.

As I have mentioned before I try to avoid Latinisms and Grecianisms as far as I can. To test the translation, I imagine I am meditating or listening to a meditation teacher’s practice instruction: that way I have a good idea in my choice of words.

² *Paṭinissagga*, “letting go, abandoning”. “In this context *Paṭinissagga* is not giving away what’s ‘out there’, but giving away what’s ‘in here’...the letting go of the “doer”,...even of the “knower”...especially letting go of... the “will”, the “controller”. This is the path to the end of suffering. (Brahmavamso, “Beautiful Breath”, 1999)