

# The Paiboon Burmese–English English–Burmese Dictionary

by Nance Cunningham and Aung Soe Min

Notes for users by JO Dec 2009

The English-Burmese section of the dictionary uses some conventions that can be misleading if you're not forewarned.

## Verbs

The dictionary lists Burmese verbs with the literary style suffix -သည်, e.g.

sit ထိုင်သည်

drink သောက်သည်

*[For the difference between literary style  
and colloquial style see BBE p 11.]*

If you are writing in colloquial style, you need to convert the dictionary's literary verb-သည် to colloquial verb-တယ်။ —

sit ထိုင်တယ်

drink သောက်တယ်

And then adapt as appropriate: ထိုင်သလား၊ မထိုင်ပါဘူး၊ ဘယ်မှာ ထိုင်မလဲ etc.

## Adjectives

For English adjectives the dictionary gives Burmese expressions in the form verb-သော။ e.g.

for "hot" you will find ပူသော

for "cold" you will find အေးသော

သော is again a literary style suffix. If you are writing in colloquial, you need to choose between two options:

1. when the adjective comes before a noun (as in "hot coffee"), convert literary verb-သော to colloquial verb-တဲ့၊

ပူတဲ့ ကော်ဖီ "coffee that is hot, hot coffee"

အေးတဲ့ ရေ "water that is cold, cold water"

2. when the adjective comes after English "is, are" etc, convert literary verb-သော to colloquial verb-တယ် and use the Burmese word as a verb; e.g.

for "This coffee is hot" you'd say ဒီကော်ဖီ ပူတယ်။

for "The water is not cold" you'd say ရေ မအေးပါဘူး။

Likewise,

for "thin" the dictionary gives ပိန်သော, but for

"The child was thin" you'd say ကလေး ပိန်တယ်။

for "bitter" the dictionary gives ခါးသော, but for

"Is this coffee bitter?" you'd say ဒီကော်ဖီ ခါးသလား။

for "clean" the dictionary gives သန့်ရှင်းသော, but for

"The hotel was not clean" you'd say ဟိုတယ် မသန့်ရှင်းဘူး။

for "heavy" the dictionary gives လေးသော, but for

"How heavy is the bag?" you'd say အိတ် ဘယ်လောက် လေးသလဲ။