

Centre of Buddhist Studies
The University of Hong Kong
Master of Buddhist Studies
Language Courses Course Outline 2026-2027

(Course details laid out in this course outline are only for reference. Please always refer to the latest version presented in the HKU course moodle page.)

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BSTC7006 Pāli I

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

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Course Description

Pāli is the language of Theravāda Buddhism commonly practiced in South and Southeast Asia. This Theravāda school of Buddhism is the only Buddhist school that has preserved a complete canon since the 3rd century B.C.E. This course is meant for those students who have no prior knowledge of the language and who wish to become familiar with Pāli expressions and idioms, and with the basic requirements to understand Pāli Buddhist texts. The main focus of the course is to introduce basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This introductory course is designed for students who have no prior knowledge of Pāli language. The content of this course deals with Pāli grammar that includes nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, secondary and primary derivatives, particles, and combinations. These are intended to serve as a primer to read the Pāli primary sources with glossary and dictionary. Examples and exercises will be done from the Pāli *suttas* which will help students understand early Buddhist teachings.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to understand basic Pāli grammar such as declensions, conjugations, tenses, and other grammatical forms, and literature with an understanding of its importance for the study of Pāli Canon and Theravāda Buddhism.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

➤ Coursework (50%):

- Class participation (10%)
- Homework (20%) [homework grades will be based on the content for lectures 6 and 11. For these two lectures, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical texts, which they must prepare at home for reading and translation in class. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for

further details]

- Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	(a) Introduction to the Pāli language and its alphabet • Phonological remarks • Vowels short and long • The letter classified • Pronunciation (b) Nouns: Masculine (m), Neuter (n) and Feminine (f) (c) Cases: Declension of nouns ending in- <i>a</i> (d) Verbs: Present tense (e) Example of Pāli sentences containing verbs
Lesson 2	(a) Adjectives (b) Indeclinable (c) Declension of pronouns (d) Exercises
Lesson 3	(a) Genitive case used for expressing “to have” ▪ Three grades of root strength (b) Conjugation of verbs ▪ Thematic and athematic verbs (c) Classes of verbs I and X (d) Usage of the instrumental, the ablative, the vocative cases (e) Ablative of reason (f) Exercises
Lesson 4	(a) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ā</i> (f): <i>paññā</i> ‘wisdom’ (b) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (m): <i>pati</i> ‘chief/husband’ (c) More on adverbial usages (d) Prefixes (e) Class VI and IV verbs (d) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (m): <i>bhikkhu</i> ‘monk’ (d) Exercises
Lesson 5	(a) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (n): <i>cakkhu</i> ‘eye’ (b) Declension of - <i>u</i> ending (f): <i>dhenu</i> ‘cow’ (c) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (f): <i>jāti</i> ‘birth’ (d) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>i</i> (n): <i>akkhi</i> ‘eye’ (e) Declension of nouns ending in- <i>ī</i> (f): <i>nadī</i> ‘river’

	(f) Causatives (g) Exercises
Lesson 6	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 1 to 5.
No class	Reading Week
Lesson 7	(a) Denominatives (b) Class II verb • Conjugation of <i>atthi</i> (exist/is) (c) Declension of consonant-ending nouns: <i>bhagavant</i> (m) and <i>bhavant</i> (m) (d) Possessive suffixes– <i>vant</i> and– <i>mant</i> (e) Exercises
Lesson 8	(a) Gerund (b) Possessive suffix – <i>in</i> , – <i>vin</i> • Declension of <i>rūpin</i> (c) Past Participle Passive (PPP) • Formation of PPP • PPP as adjective (d) Declension of nouns ending in– <i>an</i> : <i>attan</i> (m), <i>rājan</i> , <i>brahman</i> (m), <i>san</i> (m), <i>kamman</i> (n) (e) Declension of demonstrative pronouns: <i>ayaṃ</i> (m, f), <i>idaṃ/imāṃ</i> (n) (f) Declension of personal pronouns: <i>ahaṃ</i> , <i>tvaṃ</i> , <i>so</i> , <i>taṃ</i> (n), <i>sā</i> (f) (g) Exercises Mid-term Test
Lesson 9	(a) Pronominal adjectives (b) Declension of <i>sabba</i> ‘all’ as pronominal adjective (c) Class V verbs (the <i>nu</i> Class) (d) Conjugation of $\sqrt{\text{śru}}$ ‘hear’ (e) Class VIII verbs (the <i>tanādi gaṇa</i>) (f) Conjugation of $\sqrt{\text{kr}}$ ‘do’, ‘make’ (g) Examples of sentences with Class V and Class VIII verbs (h) Exercises

Lesson 10	(a) Declension of <i>-as</i> and <i>-us</i> ending noun ▪ Declension of <i>vacas</i> (n) ‘speech’ ▪ Declension of <i>manas</i> (n) ‘mind’ ▪ Declension of <i>āyus</i> (n) ‘life’, ‘life-span’ (b) Class IX verbs (c) Present Participles (PrP) (d) Relative pronouns and relative clauses (e) Exercises
Lesson 11	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 7 to 10.
Lesson 12	(a) Present participles (b) Relative pronouns and relative clauses (c) Interrogative pronouns <i>kad</i> (d) Interrogation and interrogative clauses (e) The optative mode (f) Revision and discussion for final exam

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*.
Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. London: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.

<https://dsal.srv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

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BSTC7007 Pāli II

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

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Course Description

The main focus of the course is to introduce more practical knowledge of Pāli that enables students to read easy Pāli passages both prose and verse extracted directly from the Pāli texts. It also introduces remaining grammatical components not included in Pāli I such as basic grammar together with exercises, including phonetics, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax and classification of sentences. At the end of the course the students are expected to be able to read simple Pāli sentences and understand their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Course Content

This course is designed for students who have completed the course BSTC7006 Pāli I. The main focus of Pāli II is to introduce grammar that includes past, present, future participles, numerals, syntax, compounds, conditional tense, causative and reading passages from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, etc.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to be able to

- acquire elementary reading skills in Pāli;
- practice the fundamentals of Pāli grammar, syntax and pronunciation;
- demonstrate the skills of translation and apply their knowledge to other academic disciplines to gain a better understanding;
- understand the value of the Pāli language as a gate to appreciate Theravada culture and its relation to other forms of Buddhist culture.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7006 Pāli I or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [homework grades will be based on the content for lectures 6 and 11. For these two lectures, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical texts, which they must prepare at home for reading and translation in class. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-textbook exam.

Lecture Schedule

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	a) Optative mode b) Optative of <i>labhati</i> ($\sqrt{labh}$ 'obtain'), <i>atthi</i> ($\sqrt{as}$ 'be'), and <i>karoti</i> ($\sqrt{kr}$ 'do') c) Examples of sentences with optative d) Future Passive Participles (FPP) ▪ $\sqrt{vad}$ (<i>vadati</i>); $\sqrt{dā}$ (<i>dadāti/deti</i>); $\sqrt{bhū}$ (<i>bhavati</i>); etc. e) Exercises
Lesson 2	(a) Class III verbs (b) Conjugation of $\sqrt{dā}$ 'give' (c) Numerals (cardinal) (d) Declensions of <i>eka</i> 'one'; <i>dve</i> 'two'; <i>ti</i> 'three' (e) Exercises
Lesson 3	(a) Locative and genitive absolute (b) Imperative mood (c) Conjugation of $\sqrt{labh}$ 'obtain'; $\sqrt{kr}$ 'do'; and $\sqrt{sru}$ 'hear'

	(d) <i>attanopada</i> verb forms (e) Conjugation of future tense $\sqrt{labh}$ ‘obtain’; $\sqrt{kr}$ ‘do’ in the <i>attanopada</i> (f) Passive voice (pas): present and future passive verbs (g) Exercises
Lesson 4	(a) Aorists • The root-aorist • Example: $\sqrt{dā}$ ‘give’; $\sqrt{bhū}$ ‘become’; $\sqrt{as}$ ‘be’ • The a-aorist (b) Class VII verbs • Conjugation of Class VII verbs (c) Exercises
Lesson 5	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 1 to 4.
Lesson 6	(a) Infinitive (b) Declension of $-ū$ ending m and f nouns • <i>Subbaññū</i> (m) ‘omniscient’ • <i>Jambū</i> (f) ‘rose-apple tree’ (c) Exercises
No Class	Reading Week
Lesson 7	(a) Suffixes and nominal derivation • Primary suffixes • Secondary suffixes (b) Some irregular declensions: <i>sakhi</i> (m) and <i>go</i> (m) (c) Nominal compounds (<i>samāsa</i>): <i>dvanda</i>, <i>tappurisa</i>, <i>avyayībhāva</i>, <i>kammadhāraya</i>, <i>digu</i> (d) Exercises
Lesson 8	(a) Perfect tense (b) Agent nouns: $\sqrt{ah}$ I ‘say’ • Declensions of <i>sattar</i> (m) ‘teacher’; <i>pitar</i> (m) ‘father’ and <i>mātar</i> (f) ‘mother’

	(c) Periphrastic future (d) Example of Pāli sentences (e) Exercises Mid-term Test
Lesson 9	(a) Ordinal numeral (b) Nouns and adj compounded with <i>-kr</i> and <i>-bhū</i> (c) Prohibitive (d) <i>Bahubbīhi-samāsa</i> (e) <i>Bahubbīhi</i> formed with – <i>kāma</i> as the last member (f) Adverbial suffix: - <i>tra</i> , - <i>thā</i> , - <i>dā</i> , - <i>dhā</i> , - <i>to</i> , - <i>so</i> (g) Exercises
Lesson 10	Reading and translation of selected Pāli passages from the Pāli canonical texts, including their contexts, based on the grammatical components covered in Lectures 6 to 9.
Lesson 11	(a) Past Participle Active (PPA) (b) Conditional tense • Conditional tense for $\sqrt{bhū}$ ‘become’ (c) Exercises
Lesson 12	(a) Desiderative ▪ Desiderative adjectives and nouns (b) The Intensive ▪ Adjectives of intensive forms (c) Revision and discussion for final exam

Note: The content above may be adjusted based on the feedback from students during the class.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course (Parts I & II)*. Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

- Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. London: The Pali Text Society, 1994.
- Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.
- Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.
<https://dsalsrv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

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BSTC3044 Pāli language III (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

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Course Description

Pāli is the language of a large body of Theravāda canonical and non-canonical Buddhist literature. Here we find a rich variety of texts that contain valuable information on the religious, social, political, literary and linguistic history of South Asia. Important contributions are made in Pāli to philosophy and psychology through the analysis of the nature of *dharmas*, the classification of various kinds of mind and mental states, phenomenal processes and their causal relations. All of these topics can be understood through a careful study of Pāli literature. The course is devoted to the understating and translating of selected Pāli passages, as well as explaining the content of the Pāli canon and its commentaries and gradually building sufficient vocabularies for the purpose of reading the Pāli texts independently.

Course Content

This course helps students to practice translating selected texts from Pāli to English. It introduces sentences, passages, and sections chosen from a variety of Pāli canonical texts, such as the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, for students to learn grammar and practice translation skills with a focus given to analyzing

Pāli passages meaningfully. Students will get the opportunity to develop their skills in understanding and translating the texts, while also acquainting themselves with the vast Pāli canonical literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of this course, students are expected to read the Buddhist texts in Pāli with doctrinal value of early Buddhist teachings and culture. Students will also understand the nature of the Buddhist teachings within the context of the religion-philosophical system of ancient Indian thought.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC7007 Pāli II or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [For homework grade, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, which they must prepare with full grammatical analysis at home for reading and translation in lecture 5 and 10. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossary and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	• Introduction to the course • <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 420 – 422] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 2	• <i>Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion) [SN V 422– 424] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lesson 3	• <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Discourse on the Abiding of Mindfulness) [MN I 55 – 56] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 4	• <i>Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Abiding of Mindfulness) [MN I 57 – 58] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 5	Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i> /passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
No Class	Reading Week
Lesson 6	• <i>Nidānasamyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on Causation): Chapter 1 – <i>Buddha Vagga</i> [SN II 1–4] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 7	• <i>Maggasamyutta</i> (Connected Discourses on the Path): <i>Vibhaṅga Sutta</i> [SN V 8 – 9] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. Mid-term test
Lesson 8	• <i>Gahapati Vagga</i> (The Chapter on Householders) [AN IV 208–212] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 9	• <i>Bāla Vagga</i> (The Chapter on Fools) [AN I 61] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.
Lesson 10	Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i> /passages from the Pāli canonical or post-canonical texts, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
Lesson 11	• <i>Mettānisaṃsa Sutta</i> (The Discourse on Advantages of Loving-kindness) [AN V 342] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis.

Lesson 12	• The <i>Dhammapada</i> • <i>Yamaka Vagga</i> (The Chapter on the Path of the Dhamma–Pairs) [Dhp 1–2] ◦ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis. • Summary of the course and revision for the final exam.
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Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. London: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. London: PTS, 1888-2001.

The Saṃyutta Nikāya Vol I-IV, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, Leon Feer, and G.A. Somaratne. London: PTS, 1884-2000.

The Aṅguttara Nikāya, Vol I-V, edited by A.K. Warder, Rev. Richard Morris, E. Hardy. London: PTS, 1855-1999.

The Dhammapada, edited by Oskar von Hinüber and K.R. Norman. London: PTS, 1994-1995.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course* (Parts I & II). Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Mar 2021.
<https://dsalsrv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. London: The Pali Text

Society: <https://ancient-buddhist-texts.net/Reference/PTS/Pali-English-Dictionary.pdf>

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BSTC3045 Pāli language IV

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Barua Dipen

Email: dipen@hku.hk

Course Description

This course enables students to independently read Pali texts with the help of dictionaries. Every assigned reading will be self-contained in its relation to Buddhist teachings and their significance. The main focus of this course is to make grammatical explanations as clear as possible, while also gaining access to Pāli original sources for textual studies research using the Pāli dictionary and vocabulary. Each lesson includes a set of readings with an accompanying glossary and grammatical notes covering different nouns and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, compounds, primary and secondary derivatives, syntax, clause and numerals.

Course Content

Building on their learnings in Pāli Language I, II, and III, this course introduces skills to analyze and understand complex grammatical structures of Pali texts, with a special focus given to reading, understanding, and translating the selected passages from the discourses in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, the *Majjhima Nikāya*, the *Udāna*, and the *Milindapañha*, together with their counterpart commentarial literature.

Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, students are expected to be able to

- read and analyze the Pāli passages grammatically and doctrinally and their importance for the study of Pāli canonical and non-canonical literature;
- consult the many scholarly sources on Buddhist concepts and philosophy;
- enhance the knowledge of technical Buddhist terms with commentarial explanation;
- interpret original Pāli sources.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions and tutorials

Prerequisite

BSTC3044 Pāli language III or teacher's approval

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

- Coursework (50%):
 - Class participation (10%)
 - Homework (20%) [For homework grade, students will be given selected passages from the Pāli Canon of Commentaries, which they must prepare with full grammatical analysis at home for reading and translation in lecture 6 and 11. Please refer to the respective lecture outlines for further details]
 - Mid-term test (20%)
- The final examination (50%) will be held at the end of the semester. It is an open-book exam. Students can use lecture notes, glossaries and dictionary during the exam.

Lecture Outline for Semester II

Lesson	Contents
Lesson 1	• Introduction to the course • <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 55 – 58] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 2	• <i>Mahānidāna Sutta (The Great Discourse on Causation)</i> [DN II 59– 71] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 3	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 4	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I]

	○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 5	• <i>Ariyapariyesana Sutta (The Discourses on the Noble Search)</i> [MN I] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 6	• Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i>/passages from the Pāli Canon or Commentaries, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
No Class	Reading Week
Lesson 7	• <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 8	• <i>Paṭisambhidāmagga (The Path of Discrimination)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary. Mid-term Test
Lesson 9	• <i>Netti-pakarāṇa (The Guide)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 10	• <i>Netti-pakarāṇa (The Guide)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart commentary.
Lesson 11	• Reading and translation of selected Pāli <i>sutta</i>/passages from the Pāli Canon or Commentaries, including their contexts, with full grammatical analysis.
Lesson 12	• <i>Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)</i> [selected passages] ○ Guide to the text and meaning of the selected passages with grammatical analysis together with their counterpart sources from other texts. • Summary of the course and revision for the final exam.

Notes: Lecture notes and supplementary materials will be provided in class throughout the semester.

Textbooks

The Dīgha Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids and J.E. Carpenter. London: PTS, 1889-2007.

The Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by T.W. Rhys Davids, J.E. Carpenter and W. Stede. London: PTS, 1968–1971.

The Majjhima Nikāya Vol I-III, edited by V. Trenckner, T.W. Rhys Davids, J. Estlin Carpenter, Robert Chalmers. London PTS, 1888-2001.

The Majjhimānikāya-aṭṭhakathā (Papañcasūdanī) Vol I – V, edited by J.H. Woods, D. Kosambi and I.B. Horner. London: PTS, 1922–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga Vol I–II, edited by A.C. Taylor. London: PTS 1905–1979.

The Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā (Saddhammappakāsinī) Vol I–III, edited by C.V. Joshi. London: PTS, 1933–1979.

The Netti-pakaraṇa, edited by Prof. E. Hardy. London: The Pali Text Society, 1902.

The Visuddhimagga, edited by Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids. London: PTS, 1975.

Recommended Readings

Anuruddha, Kakkapalliye. *A Guide to the Study of Pali: The Language of Theravada Buddhism*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhism Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2010.

Buddhadatta, A.P. *The New Pali Course* (Parts I & II). Sri Lanka: Buddhist Cultural Centre, 1997.

Geiger, Wilhelm. *A Pāli Grammar*. Translated by Batakrishna Ghosh. Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1994.

Dhammajoti, KL. *Reading Buddhist Pāli Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide*. Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong, 2025 (3rd edition).

Nyanatiloka. *Buddhist Dictionary, Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1988.

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, 1993.

Warder, A.K. *Introduction to Pali*. London: The Pali Text Society, 2001.

Pāli Dictionaries (online)

Rhys Davids, T.W. and W. Stede (eds). *Pali-English Dictionary*. Oxford: The Pāli Text

Society. Available on Digital Dictionaries of South Asia. Updated in Feb 2017. <https://dsalsrv04.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/pali/>
Pāli Dictionary. Available on Buddhistdoor Global.
<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/dictionary/search/?k=Buddha&l=3>

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BSTC7008 Sanskrit I
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit, one of the most ancient languages known to humankind, is considered a key to understanding human civilization, particularly the rich cultural, philosophical, and religious heritage of India, whose influence on the world continues to be felt. Students of history, history of science, comparative literature, general and historical linguistics, philosophy, and religions will discover that a basic knowledge of the language greatly enriches their studies. For students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, an ability to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts is essential. This course provides an overview of the history of Sanskrit Buddhist literature, as well as the basic grammar and language, covering topics such as scripts, phonetics, declensions, conjugations, participles, and *sandhi*.

Course Content

This course is designed for absolute beginners. No prior knowledge of Sanskrit is required for this course. The course begins with the alphabet and the Devanāgarī script and gradually introduces elementary Sanskrit grammar along with exercises selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts. As the students learn and attempt the graded passages, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them in a gradual build-up manner. This course mainly covers the following grammatical parts: Sanskrit alphabets, writing Devanāgarī scripts, three genders, three numbers, different nouns and their declensions, Different classes of Sanskrit verbs are their conjugations, personal pronouns, Demonstrative pronouns, Interrogative pronouns, causative verbs, gerunds, present tense, past passive participle, *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* verbs, and *sandhi*.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to read simple Sanskrit passages and comprehend their religious and philosophical significance in context.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

Assessment

Coursework 50%: This consists of three components:

- Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions. Active involvement includes activities such as asking questions, offering comments or insights during class, responding to questions posed by the instructor or classmates, participating in group work, and respectfully engaging in classroom dialogue.
- Mid-term Quiz 25 %, which will be conducted on Oct 24, 2026, in the classroom. Duration 1 hour (open-book).
- Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission. Homework assignments will consist of short translation exercises, grammar practice, and brief reading comprehension tasks, based on material covered in class. Each assignment is expected to be approximately 1-2 pages in length. Homework will be posted weekly on Moodle and should be submitted electronically through the platform by the stated deadline.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. Duration: three hours (Open book).

Lecture Schedule

Lecture 1 (Sep 5, 2026)

- Introduction to the course
- Introduction to Sanskrit Language and Literature
- Introduction to the Sanskrit Alphabet
- Writing Devanāgarī Scripts

Lecture 2 (Sep 12, 2026)

- Writing complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Three Genders of Sanskrit Nouns
- Introduction to the Eight Cases in Sanskrit

Lecture 3 (Sep 19, 2026)

- Continue Writing complex Devanāgarī Scripts
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in -a:
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in -a:
- Introduction to Adjectives

- ‘Verb to be’ (*bhavati*)
- Indeclinable particles *ca*, *vā* and *api*
 - Practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises Sep 26 no class (General Holiday)

Lecture 4 (Oct 3, 2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit verbs:
 - Verbal prefixes
 - Three grades of strengthening verbs
 - Class I, IV, VI, and X verbs
 - Conjugation of class I verbs in the present tense.

Lecture 5 (Oct 10, 2026)

- Partial declension of Feminine nouns ending in —ā
- The indeclinable particle —*iti*, *eva*, and *sma*
- Vocabulary and practice of Sanskrit-English translation exercises
- Oct 17, no class (Reading week)

Lecture 6 (Oct 24, 2026)

- Mid-term Quiz
- Suffixes—*tā*, *tva*, and *tas*
- Vocabulary and practice of Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 7 (Oct 31, 2026)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Personal Pronouns
- Causative verbs system
- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 8 (Nov 7, 2026)

- Past Passive Participle formation and its functions
- Declension of masculine nouns ending in —u
- Declension of neutral nouns ending in—u
- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 9 (Nov 14, 2026)

- Introduction to Demonstrative Pronouns
- Introduction Interrogative Pronouns
- Declension of **masculine** nouns ending in —**i**
- Declension of **neutral** nouns ending in —**i**
- Declension of **feminine** nouns ending in —**i**

- Vocabulary and practising Sanskrit-English translation exercises

Lecture 10 (21, 2026)

- Parasmaipada and ātmanepada verbs
- Gerunds form
- Introduction to Sandhi rules
- Visarga Sandhi

Lecture 11 (Nov 28, 2026)

- Vowel Sandhi
- Consonant Sandhi
- Vocabulary and Sanskrit-English translation exercises
- Review for the final examination

Note: The schedule provided is approximate and flexible. Adjustments may be made based on students' learning pace and interest.

Support options: Students are encouraged to seek help early if they have questions or encounter difficulties. Office hours will be available each week for individual consultation with the instructor. In addition, peer study groups may be formed to facilitate collaborative learning and mutual support. Extra help or tutorial sessions can be arranged if there is sufficient demand. Please refer to the course Moodle page or contact the instructor for details about office hours, study groups, and additional support opportunities.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide (3rd edition)*, The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd. Hong Kong. (Those who want to have a copy can directly buy from the Buddha-Dharma centre of Hong Kong: <https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary-Grammatical-Guide>.)

Handout: We will be selective in our use of the textbook. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class. Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources, and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Reference books

Ruppel, A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. New York: Dover Publications.

Goldman, Robert P., & Goldman, Sutherland, Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Some of these references will be available on the course Moodle. Students are not required to buy these books.

Online Resources:

For Devanagārī script writing and alphabet pronunciation practice:

<https://enjoylearningsanskrit.com/sanskrit-alphabet-tutor/>

For additional Sanskrit Grammar practice:

<https://ubcsanskrit.ca/>

Sanskrit Dictionary

1. <https://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/scans/MWScan/2020/web/webtc/indexcaller.php>
2. <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/dictionaries/apte/>

Note:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The University upholds the principle that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable, and any student found plagiarising is liable to disciplinary action in addition to failing the assessment concerned. Please read the following webpage on "plagiarism" for details:

<http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism>

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BSTC7009 Sanskrit II

(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

The main focus of the course is to guide students to read Buddhist Sanskrit passages and

comprehend Sanskrit Buddhist literature. This course covers Sanskrit grammatical components together with exercises selected from Sanskrit Buddhist texts, which are not included in Readings in Sanskrit Buddhist Texts I. This course covers, parts of speech, nouns of different genders and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, compounds, different forms of past tense, future tense, locative and genitive absolutes, syntax and classification of sentences.

Prerequisite

BSTC7008 Sanskrit I or teacher's approval

Course Content

The course covers Present Participle, Future Passive Participle, Relative and Co-relatives, three forms of Past tense, Future Tense, Active and Passive voice, Imperative and Optative Moods and compounds, different nouns and their declensions, Class II, III, V, VII, VIII and IX verbs and their conjugations. All examples and exercises will be selected from Buddhist Sanskrit texts, all the grammar involved will be analyzed, and doctrines will be explained to them.

Expected Outcome

At the end of the course, students are expected to:

- Read and translate short Sanskrit passages, especially from Buddhist texts, with the aid of dictionaries
- Identify and explain key grammatical forms and structures taught in the course
- Analyze sentence constructions and recognize different verb conjugations and noun declensions
- Use Sanskrit dictionaries independently for research purposes
- Understand and interpret fundamental Buddhist doctrines as presented within Sanskrit texts

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures, class discussions, and tutorials.

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework 50%: This consists of three components:

- Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions. Active involvement includes activities such as asking questions, offering comments or insights during class, responding to questions posed by the instructor or classmates, participating in group work, and respectfully engaging in classroom dialogue.

- Mid-term Quiz 25 %, which will be conducted in the classroom. Duration 1 hour (open book).
- Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission. Homework assignments will consist of short translation exercises, grammar practice, and brief reading comprehension tasks, based on material covered in class. Homework will be posted weekly on Moodle and should be submitted electronically through the platform by the stated deadline.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. Duration: three hours (Open book).

Lecture Schedule

Lecture 1 (Jan 21, 2027)

- Introduction to the possessive suffix *-in* ending nouns
- Future Passive Participles
- Introduction to Sanskrit Relatives and Correlatives

Lecture 2 (Jan 28, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Numerals
- Sanskrit Vocabularies
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 3 (Feb 4, 2027)

- Introduction to Possessive nouns ending in ‘-mant’ and ‘-vant’
- Introduction to Future Tense
- Introduction to Sanskrit Compounds — *dvandva* and *tatpuruṣa*

Feb 11, 2027, no class (Lunar New Year)

Lecture 4 (Feb 18, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Infinitive
- Vocabularies
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 5 (Feb 25, 2027)

- Introduction to Sanskrit Demonstrative ‘that’
- Introduction to Sanskrit nouns ending in *-an*
- The Class II verbs
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises

Lecture 6 (Mar 4, 2027).

- Present participles

- Passive Voice
- *Karmadhāraya-samāsa* and *Avyayībhāva-samāsa*
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Mar 11, 2027, no class (Reading Week)

Lesson 7 (Mar 18, 2027)

- Mid-term Quiz
- Passive Voice
- Introduction to Sanskrit nouns ending in *-an*
- Class IX verbs

Lesson 8 (Mar 25, 2027)

- Sanskrit-English transition exercises
- The Imperative Mood
- Sanskrit Agent Nouns
- Conjugation of Class V verbs
- Vocabulary and Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 9 (Apr 1, 2027)

- Sanskrit-English transition exercises
- Conjugation of Class VIII verbs
- The Optative Mood
- Continuation of Sanskrit Compound — *Bahuvrīhi*

Lesson 10 (8, 2027)

- The Past Participle Active
- Conjugation of Class III verbs
- Aorist
- Sanskrit-English transition exercises.

Lesson 11 (Apr 15, 2027)

- Class VII verbs
- The Perfect Tense
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 12 (Apr 22, 2027)

- Locative and Genitive Absolute constructions
- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

Lesson 13 (Apr 22, 2027)

- Reading selected Sanskrit passages

- Exam review

Note: The schedule provided is approximate and flexible. Adjustments may be made based on students' learning pace and interest.

Support options: Students are encouraged to seek help early if they have questions or encounter difficulties. Office hours will be available each week for individual consultation with the instructor. In addition, peer study groups may be formed to facilitate collaborative learning and mutual support. Extra help or tutorial sessions can be arranged if there is sufficient demand. Please refer to the course Moodle page or contact the instructor for details about office hours, study groups, and additional support opportunities.

Textbook

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015), *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide (3rd edition)*, The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong Ltd. Hong Kong. (Those who want to have a copy can directly buy from the Buddha-Dharma centre of Hong Kong: <https://buddhadharma.co/Reading-Buddhist-Sanskrit-Texts-An-Elementary-Grammatical-Guide>.)

Handout: We will be selective in our use of the textbook. Therefore, handouts will be uploaded to Moodle before every class. Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources, and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Reference books

Ruppel, A.M. (2017). *The Cambridge Introduction to Sanskrit*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Thomas, Egenes (1994). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part I*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2000). *Introduction to Sanskrit: Part II*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, Williams D. (1979). *The Roots, Verbs-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

_____ (2003). *Sanskrit Grammar*. New York: Dover Publications.

Goldman, Robert P., & Goldman, Sutherland, Sally J. (2011). *An Introduction to the Sanskrit Language*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Some of these references will be available on the course Moodle. Students are not required to buy these books.

Online Resources

Basic Sanskrit Grammar online <http://www.learnsanskrit.org/grammar>

Online Sanskrit-English Dictionary <http://www.sanskrit-lexicon.uni-koeln.de/monier/>

Note:

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BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit is one of the most ancient languages in the world and is studied by scholars of language and literature, religion, history and anthropology, and anyone who is interested in India's Buddhist cultural heritage. Sanskrit is the language not just of the religious literature of Hinduism and Buddhism but extends to the fields of philosophy, science, art, music, mathematics, architecture, and history, covering over three thousand years of development. Knowledge of Sanskrit grants access to an enormous body of Indian and Buddhist literature. The main focus of this course is the grammar of the language, covering parts of speech, nouns of different gender and their declensions, verbs and their conjugations, participles and their functions, syntax, and reading and translation of selected Sanskrit passages from the *Jātakamāla* and the *Mahāvastu*. Students will be able to read and comprehend simple Sanskrit passages by the end of the course.

Prerequisite: Students enrolling in this course are expected to have completed BSTC7009 Sanskrit II or to possess an intermediate level knowledge of Sanskrit grammar and vocabulary. If you have not completed BSTC7009, but studied Sanskrit elsewhere, please write to the teacher for approval.

Course Content

This Advanced Sanskrit course mainly focuses on reading and translating selected Sanskrit passages from Buddhist texts. Passages will be selected mainly from the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra*), the Bodhisattvabhūmi, and the Mahāvastu Avadāna. As the course proceeds, gradually and systematically, all grammatical features, vocabulary and the doctrines involved in the

selected passages will be explained. Pedagogically, it balances the traditional practice of textual reception (reading and grammar) with language production.

The pedagogical rationale for this selection of readings is that these three texts represent three distinct genres of Buddhist Sanskrit literature. The Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra is one of the earliest Mahāyāna Buddhist texts. It forms the basis for the expansion and development of Prajñāpāramitā sūtra literature. It greatly influenced the development of Madhyāmaka and Yogācāra thought. Linguistically, it represents sūtra, or Buddhist canonical writing styles and techniques. The Bodhisattvabhūmi is a foundational treatise in Mahāyāna Buddhism detailing the training, practices, and progressive stages of a bodhisattva. Linguistically, it represents the Sanskrit Śāstra writing styles and techniques. Mahāvastu Avadāna is a canonical text of the Mahāsāṃghika Lokottaravāda school of Early Indian Buddhism. It contains a multi-life hagiography of the Buddha Shakyamuni and stories of Early Buddhist monks. The Mahāvastu is considered a primary source for the notion of a transcendent Buddha, common to all Mahāsāṃghika schools. Linguistically, it represents a hybrid of Buddhist Sanskrit.

Learning outcomes

1. Upon completing this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend Sanskrit texts.
2. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts and civilization.
3. Understand the significance of Sanskrit Buddhist literature.
4. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
5. Students will be able to chant and recite with a high degree of accuracy.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework (50%): This consists of three components:

- (1) Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions.
- (2) Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission.
- (3) Either a short essay based on selected passages discussed in the classroom or a translation of a Buddhist Sanskrit text (25%), evaluated on the clarity of argument or translation accuracy, coherence, and proper use of grammar and vocabulary.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)

Lecture Schedule

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lectures 1 (Sep 1, 2026)

- Introduction to the Course
- A Brief General Introduction to Sanskrit Buddhist Literature
- Reading selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtram* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.

Lecture 2 (Sep 8, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra* with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 3 (Sep 15, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra* with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 4 (Sep 22, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra* with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lectures 5 (Sep 29, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra* with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 6: (Oct 6, 2026)

- An introduction to the Bodhisattvabhūmi
- Reading selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Oct 13 Reading week (no class)

Lecture 7: (Oct 20, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 8: (Oct 27, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Bodhisattvabhūmi with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 9: (Nov 3, 2026)

- Introduction to the Mahāvastu Avadāna
- Reading selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 10: (Nov 10, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 11: (Nov 17, 2026)

- Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 12 (Nov 24, 2026)

- *Continue reading and translating selected passages from the Mahāvastu Avadāna with grammatical analysis.*
- *Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.*
- **Note:** This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on the pace of students' comprehension and interest.

Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra

passages for advanced practice.

Textbooks (only selected chapters)

Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā (ed.) Vaidya, P. L. The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning. 1960. (The first two chapters only).

Bodhisattvabhūmiḥ (ed.) Dutt, Nalinaksha. K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute. 1966. (Chapter 2 only).

Le Mahāvastu (ed). Par É. Senart. Paris Imprimerie Nationale. 1882 (Volume 1 only).

Reference books

Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose (2007). *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students*. The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015). *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide* (3rd edition). Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

Edgerton Franklin. (1953). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. I & II. Indian Reprint, 2004.

Kale, Moreshwar R. (1884). *A Higher Sanskrit Grammar*. Indian Reprint 1977.

Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers.

Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Whitney, William D. (1885). *The Roots, Verb-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

Online Resources

1. Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon

<https://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/browse-by-list/1>

2. GRETEL - Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages

<https://gretel.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel.html>

BSTC3041 Sanskrit language IV
(6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Amrita Nanda

Email: nanda@hku.hk

Course Description

Sanskrit, being one of the most ancient languages, is studied by scholars of language, religion, literature, history, and anthropology, and anyone who is interested in Indian and Buddhist cultural heritage. It is one of the three languages in which Buddhist teachings are preserved. Indian Buddhist schools, such as Sarvāstivāda, Yogācāra, Mādhyamikā, and the various schools of Indian Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna, composed their texts in Sanskrit. Therefore, for students who intend to specialize in different aspects of Buddhism, a reading knowledge of Sanskrit is essential. Students of Buddhist philosophy and history will discover that knowledge of the Sanskrit language greatly enriches their studies. This course is designed for students who wish to read and comprehend Buddhist Sanskrit texts and employ Sanskrit Buddhist resources for their future research.

Prerequisite: BSTC3040 Sanskrit language III or teacher's approval

Course Content

This is an advanced Sanskrit course mainly focused on reading, translating and interpreting Buddhist Sanskrit commentarial literature. The course mainly concentrates on selected passages from Sthiramati's commentary on the *Triṃśikārikā of Vasubandhu* (Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ) and the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter four, Karmanirdeśa). These texts were chosen because they are foundational for understanding the major streams of Buddhist philosophical analysis in Sanskrit. Sthiramati's work offers detailed insight into Yogācāra thought, while the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya provides a comprehensive overview of Abhidharma doctrines. Studying these commentaries allows students to engage directly with the core ideas and interpretive traditions that have shaped Buddhist philosophy.

The pedagogical rationale for this selection is that both texts are doctrinally significant in Buddhist Philosophy. The Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ is an important text for understanding Buddhist Yogācāra philosophy, and the Abhidharma-kōśabhāṣyaṃ is one of the most important texts in understanding Abhidharma philosophy. It is often described as a compendium of Buddhist philosophy; its influence is visible in the development of many Buddhist schools of thought. In terms of language production, both texts represent the Sanskrit commentarial styles of presentation.

Expected Learning Outcome

1. At the end of this course, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend

classical Sanskrit Buddhist literature.

2. Students learn to examine and investigate Buddhist teachings from different perspectives.
3. Understand the development of Buddhist thoughts.
4. Students can utilize Sanskrit Buddhist sources for their future research.

Teaching and Learning Method

Lectures and class discussions

Assessment

50% coursework and 50% examination

Coursework (50%): This consists of three components:

- (1) Class participation (10%), which is assessed based on regular attendance and active involvement in discussions.
- (2) Weekly homework (15%), graded on accuracy and timely submission.
- (3) Either a short essay based on selected passages discussed in the classroom or a translation of a Buddhist Sanskrit text (25%), evaluated on the clarity of argument or translation accuracy, coherence, and proper use of grammar and vocabulary.

Examination (50%): Final examination at the end of the semester. (Open-book examination)

Detailed Lecture outlines:

Lectures 1 (Jan 19, 2027)

- Introduction to the Course
- A Brief General Introduction to *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam*
- Reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 2 (Jan 26, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 3 (Feb 2, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyam* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Feb 9, 2027, no class for Lunar New Year

Lecture 4 (Feb 16, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 5 (Feb 23, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 6 (Mar 2, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣyaṃ* with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Mar 9, 2027, no class (Reading week)

Mar 16, 2027, no class (University holiday)

Lecture 7 (Mar 23, 2027)

- Reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 8 (Mar 30, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 9 (Apr 6, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lectures 10 (Apr 13, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 11 (Apr 20, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Lecture 12 (Apr 27, 2027)

- Continue reading selected passages from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (chapter 4) with a guide to grammatical analysis and translation into English.
- Doctrinal and historical discussion of the selected passage.

Note: This schedule is both approximate and flexible. We may deviate from it depending on students' comprehension and interest.

Reading materials will be provided by the course instructor on Moodle before classes. In addition to the required readings, supplementary resources and further readings will be made available to students who wish to deepen their understanding of the material. These may include recommended articles, digital libraries, reference websites, and extra passages for advanced practice.

Textbooks (only selected chapters).

Buescher, Hartmut (2007) *Sthimamati's Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya: Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Texts and its Tibetan Translation*. Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, ÖAW,

Vasubandhu: Abhidharmakosa-bhasya (rev. 2nd ed.) Pradhan P. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Centre, 1975. (chapter four, karmanirdeśa only).

Reference books

Gary A. Tubb and Emery R. Boose (2007). *Scholastic Sanskrit: A Handbook for Students*. The American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University in the City of New York.

Bucknell, R.S. (1994). *Sanskrit Manual: A quick-reference guide to the phonology and grammar of Classical Sanskrit*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Dhammajoti, Kuala Lumpur (2015). *Reading Buddhist Sanskrit Texts: An Elementary Grammatical Guide* (3rd edition). Hong Kong: The Buddha-Dharma Centre of Hong Kong.

Edgertonm Franklin. (1953). *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Vol. I & II. Indian Reprint, 2004.

- Kale, Moreshwar R. (1884). *A Higher Sanskrit Grammar*. Indian Reprint 1977.
- Monier, Williams (1979). *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers.
- Speijer, J.S. (1998). *Sanskrit Syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Whitney, William D. (1885). *The Roots, Verb-forms and Primary Derivatives of the Sanskrit Language*. Reprinted by Motilal Banarsidass, 1973.

Online Resources

1. Digital Sanskrit Buddhist Canon
<https://www.dsbcproject.org/canon-text/browse-by-list/1>
2. GRETEL - Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages
<https://gretel.sub.uni-goettingen.de/gretel.html>

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BSTC7010 Classical Tibetan I (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Zhou Jiacaierang

Email: To be provided

Course Description

Classical Tibetan is one of Asia's major literary languages and a vital medium of Tibetan Buddhism, used across a vast cultural sphere extending from the Tibetan Plateau and the Himalayan regions (Bhutan, Nepal, Sikkim, Ladakh, and northern Pakistan) to Mongolia and parts of southern Russia (Kalmykia, Tuva, and Buryatia). For centuries it has served in the transmission and interpretation of both exoteric and esoteric Buddhist teachings, preserving not only an immense corpus of translated Indian Buddhist literature but also a vast body of indigenous Tibetan scholarship and commentary. This course provides a systematic introduction to Classical Tibetan, covering its script, transliteration, grammar, syntax, particles, and core nominal and verbal constructions. No prior knowledge of the language is required to enroll in this course.

Course Learning Outcome

By the end of the course, the students will be able to read elementary Classical Tibetan, identify and analyze fundamental grammatical structures, and translate simple sentences and brief Buddhist texts into English.

Course Assessment:

Class participation: 10%

Weekly Exercise and Translation: 10%

Quiz: 30%

Final Exam: 50%

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Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:

http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The University upholds the principle that plagiarism in any form is unacceptable and any student found plagiarizing is liable to disciplinary action in addition to failing the assessment concerned. Please read the following webpage on “plagiarism” for details:

<http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism>

Course outlines (Weekly lecture materials and lesson plan will be made available on Moodle)

Lesson 1	Course introduction Historical context & literary styles Tibetan alphabet (vowels and consonants) Pronunciation
Lesson 2	Writing Tibetan script Transliteration (Wylie system) Prefixes, Suffixes, and post-suffixes
Lesson 3	Superscripts and subscripts Syllable structure Transliteration practice
Lesson 4	Nouns and adjectives Genitive particle Noun phrase structure Numbers (cardinal and ordinal)
Lesson 5	Copula and its negation Word order (SOV) Compound words

	Demonstratives Pronouns Conjunctive particles
Lesson 6	Introduction to Verbs (Past, Present, Future, Imperative) The Agentive particles Terminative particles
Lesson 7	Transitive vs. Intransitive Adverbs
Lesson 8	La particles (Part I): Ablative Objective case Locative Dative Adverbs
Lesson 9	La particles (Part II): Time Direction Purpose functions Manner Beneficiary
Lesson 10	Conditional, Concessive, and Causal particles Interrogative particles Interrogative pronouns
Lesson 11	Gerundial particles Emphatic and possessive particles
Lesson 12	Relative pronouns Nominal and diminutive particles

References

Textbook list

1. Bialek, Joanna. 2021. *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*. London: Taylor & Francis.
2. Hodge, Stephen 2019. *An Introduction to Classical Tibetan*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
3. Rockwell, John, Jr. 1991. *A Primer for Classical Literary Tibetan*. Vol. 1, The Grammar. Revised ed. Pinecliffe, CO: Samadhi Publishing.

I Dictionaries / Glossaries

1. Das, Sarat Chandra. 1970. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit Synonyms*. Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
2. Hackett, Paul G. 2003. *A Tibetan Verb Lexicon: Verbs, Classes, and Syntactic Frames*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications.
3. Hopkins, Jeffrey. 2011. *Uma Institute Tibetan-Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Charlottesville, VA: UMA Institute for Tibetan Studies.
4. Jäschke, Heinrich August. 1980. *A Tibetan-English Dictionary, with Special Reference to the Prevailing Dialects*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1881. Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.
5. Nagano, Yasuhiko. 1997. *A Morphological Index of Classical Tibetan*. Tokyo: Seishido.
6. Rikey, Thubten and Andrew Ruskin. 1992. *A Manual of Key Buddhist Terms: a Categorization of Buddhist Terminology with Commentary by Lotsawa Kaba Paltseg*. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.
7. Thubten Nyima (Alak Zenkar Rinpoche) & Dr. Gyurme Dorje. *An Encyclopaedic Tibetan-English Dictionary*. Volume 1. The Nationalities Publishing House & The School of Oriental and African Studies.
8. Tsepak Rigzin. 2008. *Tibetan English Dictionary of Buddhist terminology* (Revised and Enlarged Edition). Reprint. Dharamsala: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives.

II Grammar

1. Beyer, Stephen. 1992. *The Classical Tibetan Language*. NY: State University of New York Press
2. Hannah, Herbert Bruce. 1973. *A Grammar of the Tibetan Language, Literary and Colloquial*. Reprint. Delhi: Cosmo Publications.
3. Jäschke, H. A. 1989. *Tibetan Grammar*. Reprint. Delhi: Sri Sat Guru Publications.
4. Miller, Roy Andrew. 1993. *Prolegomena to the first two Tibetan Grammatical treatises*. Vienna: Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde 30.
5. Preston, Craig. *How to Read Classical Tibetan*, Vol. I and II. Boston & London: Snow Lion Publications.

6. Tournadre, Nicolas. 2003. *Manual of Standard Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.
7. Wilson, Joe B. 1992. *Translating Buddhism from Tibetan: An Introduction to the Tibetan Literary Language and the Translation of Buddhist Texts from Tibetan*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

III. Tibetan Script and Translation

1. Cabezón, José Ignacio, and Roger Jackson. 1996. *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*. New York: Snow Lion Publications.
2. Halkias, Georgios T. 2004. "Tibetan Buddhism Registered: An Imperial Catalogue from the Palace Temple of 'Phang-thang." *The Eastern Buddhist* 36 (1–2): 46–105.
3. ———. 2014. "Translating the Foreign into the Local." *Translation and Global Asia*. Chinese University Press, 143–166.
4. Laufer, Berthold. 1918. "Origin of Tibetan Writing." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 38: 34–46.
5. Raine, Roberta. 2014. "'Translation Archaeology' in Practice: Researching the History of Buddhist Translation Tibet." *Meta: Journal des traducteurs / Meta: Translators' Journal* 59 (2): 278–296.
6. Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999. "Translation, Transmission, Tradition: Suggestions from Ninth-Century Tibet." *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1–2): 67–77.
7. Van der Kuijp, Leonard. 1996. "The Tibetan Script and Derivatives." In *The World's Writing Systems*, edited by Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, 431–441. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
8. van Schaik, Sam. 2011. "A New Look at the Tibetan Invention of Writing." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 45–96. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
9. ———. 2012. "The Origin of the Headless Script (*dbu med*) in Tibet." In *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion*, edited by Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein, and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, 411–446. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa.
10. Verhagen, Pieter Cornelis. 2000. *A History of Sanskrit Grammatical Literature in Tibet*. Vol. 2, *Assimilation into Indigenous Scholarship*. Leiden: Brill.
11. Wylie, Turrell. 1959. "A Standard System of Tibetan Transcription." *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 22: 261–267.

III Other Online Sources

Online Dictionaries

1. Tibetan-English-Sanskrit Dictionary: <https://dictionary.christian-steinert.de/>
2. The Tibetan and Himalayan Library: <https://ttt.thlib.org/>

3. Sambhota Dictionary Search: <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>

Tibetan Romanization

1. THL Wylie transliteration: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate>
2. THL Tibetan Phonetics: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/phonetics>

Tibetan Letters Pronunciation

1. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+their+Sounds+

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BSTC7011 Classical Tibetan II (6 credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Zhou Jiaccairang

Email: To be provided

Course Description

Building upon a foundational knowledge of Classical Tibetan, this course provides systematic instruction in advanced grammar and syntax. Topics include relative clauses, nominalization, verbal constructions, auxiliary particles, case relations, and other features characteristic of Classical Tibetan literature. Through the guided reading and translation of selected prose and verse texts, students will apply these concepts directly to primary sources and develop greater proficiency in the interpretation and translation of Classical Tibetan writings.

Prerequisite

Students must have successfully completed BSTC7010 Classical Tibetan I or obtained permission from the instructor prior to enrolment.

Course Learning Outcome

At the end of the course, the students are expected to analyze and translate selected passages, demonstrating a command of complex syntax, classical grammar, and specialized Buddhist vocabulary.

Course Assessment

- 10% Class participation
- 20% Weekly homework (exercises and translation)
- 20% Quiz
- 50% Final Examination

Grade Expectations in Faculty of Arts:

http://arts.hku.hk/grade_expectations.pdf

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<http://arts.hku.hk/current-students/undergraduate/assessment/plagiarism>

Course outline (Weekly lecture materials and lesson plan will be made available on Moodle)

Lesson 1	Auxiliary verbs Comparatives and superlatives
Lesson 2	Nominalization Relative clauses
Lesson 3	Analytical verb constructions Case converbs
Lesson 4	Direct speech Indirect speech
Lesson 5	Modal verbs Causative verbs
Lesson 6	Passive Possessive attributes Complex attributes
Lesson 7	Impersonal clauses Light verbs
Lesson 8	Postpositions and postpositional phrases Indefinite pronouns
Lesson 9	Idioms Double case particles
Lesson 10	Auxiliary particles Purposive particles Concessive auxiliary
Lesson 11	Determiners Reduplications Numerals

Lesson 12	Review of previous lessons Reading and Translation
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References

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1. Bialek, Joanna. 2021. *A Textbook in Classical Tibetan*. London: Taylor & Francis.
2. Hodge, Stephen 2019. *An Introduction to Classical Tibetan*. Bangkok: Orchid Press.
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5. Nagano, Yasuhiko. 1997. *A Morphological Index of Classical Tibetan*. Tokyo: Seishido.
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2. The Tibetan and Himalayan Library: <https://tth.thlib.org/>
3. Sambhota Dictionary Search: <https://dict.dharma-treasure.org/>

Tibetan Romanization

1. THL [Wylie transliteration: https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate](https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/transliterate)
2. THL Tibetan Phonetics: <https://thlib.org/terms/#/terms/phonetics>

Tibetan Letters Pronunciation

1. [https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+their+So
unds+](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=2.%09Tibetan+Consonants+and+their+Sounds+)