CHAPTER-II

THE SITUATION AND ROLE OF THE PĀLĪ LANGUAGE IN THAILAND
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2.0 Introduction

The following chapter presents the situation and role of the Pāli language in Thailand. Most Buddhists, who believe in Buddhism in Thailand, use Pāli, the language in which the Buddha had preached to pray. Monks and novices always use Pāli for preaching the teaching of the Buddha to the Thai people.

Furthermore, in Thailand Pāli is being taught to Buddhist monks as well as to common people from the level of the primary school to the university. But the curriculum of the Pāli studies for the Buddhist monks is different from that of the common people. For the Buddhist monks, the Pali studies are divided into two systems; one system is approved by the Ministry of Education but conducted by the Sangha. This system has a curriculum of education similar to that of the current educational system of the Thai people. The other system which is organized by the Sangha is only for the Buddhist monks. Both the systems have been discussed in detail in the section 2.6.1.
2.1 The Meaning of Pāli

There are diverse opinions regarding the meaning and derivation of the word ‘Pāli’. As Barua (1965: xvii-xix) reports the oriental scholars like Buddhaghosa and Dhammapala the great monks of Buddhism in the Theravada sect known as Phra Butdhaghosacan and Phra Thammapala in Thailand, opine that the word ‘Pali’ means (i) Buddhavacana (tanti) incorporated in the Tripiṭaka; (ii) row or line (panti) of the Tripiṭaka; (iii) the language of the Tripiṭaka. According to them the word ‘Pāli’ has been derived from the root pāl- ‘to protect’ (saddattaṁ atthāṁ pāleti pāli).1

Urai Karuna-Rueang (1986: 23) agrees with the view of the great commentators and states that Pāli is the language which recorded the Buddha’s doctrines, well known as the Buddhist Scriptures (Tripiṭaka), and it is the language in which the Buddha used to declare his doctrines in his life time.

The views of some modern scholars are a bit different. A scholar as mentioned in Bhattacharya (introduction, pp.4.) Pāli is the language of the rural people, i.e. the language of the village (palli). So the word ‘pāli’ is derived from the word ‘palli’. Bhattacharya derives the word ‘pāli’ from the Sanskrit word ‘paṅkti’ (paṅkti > panti > patti > paṭṭi > pali > pāli). Bhattacharya further mentions that the word ‘paṅkti’ was used to mean the main scripture i.e. the Tripiṭaka. Again, according to Siddhartha (1983) the word ‘pāli’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘pātha’ (pātha > pāla or pāla > pāli or pāli) and means the text of the Buddhist scriptures.

Kashyap Jagadish (Bhikshu) (1979: 11) holds the view that the word ‘pāli’ is originated from the word pariyāya (pariyāya > pāriyāya >
pāliyāya > pāli- the word has been shortened) i.e. Buddhavacana in the Tripiṭaka. King Asoka also mentions this word in his Bhābru edict.

Geiger (2004: 1) states “By Pāli is understood the language in which is composed the Tipiṭaka, the sacred scriptures of Ceylon and Hinter India, and its ancillary literature. The word ‘Pāli’ however signifies only ‘text’, ‘sacred text.’ If we use this word to designate the language, it is merely a convenient abbreviation for pālibhāsā. Synonymous with pālibhāsā is tantibhāsā.”

Thus it becomes clear that the use of the word ‘Pāli’ as the name of a particular language arose from the compound ‘pāli-phāsā’; being misunderstood as meaning ‘pāli language’ instead of ‘language of (canonical) text.’

2.2 The Origin or the Homeland of Pāli

There are several opinions regarding the origin of Pāli. As Geiger states (2004: 2) “there is now on the whole a consensus of opinion that Pāli bears the clear stamp of a ‘Kunstsprache,’ i.e., it is a compromise of various dialects.” He further mentions that though Pāli is an artificial and literary language and has occasionally drawn materials from all possible dialects, it must have had a particular dialect as its foundation. According to the Theravāda tradition Pāli was the Māgadhī language which was the language of the region where Buddhism had arisen. Further, it was claimed that the Tripiṭaka was composed in the language used by the Buddha himself. The Tripiṭaka, therefore, represents the original canon. That is why Māgadhī is also called ‘Mūlathāsa’. But scholars like
Burnouf and Lassen (Geiger, 2004: 3) express their views against the theory that Pāli is a 'Magadha dialect'.

Westergaard, E. Kuhn and R.O.Franke (Geiger, 2004: 3) hold that Pāli was the dialect of Ujjain.

Sten Konow, Grierson and Dutt Nalinaksha point out Paisācī features in Pāli. Konow identifies the Vindhya region as the home of Pāli. According to Grierson Pāli was basically the language of Magadha and it was taken to Taxila in the north-west of India where Paisācī was current.

Chatterji, S.K. (Woolner, 1928: 73) identifies the similarities between Pāli and Sauraseni. He also opines that some archaic features from north-western and other Aryan dialects were also taken into Pāli.

Oldenberg and E. Muller point out that Pāli was the language of Kalinga.

Sylvain Levi and Hermann Lüders observe that Pāli canon was based on an earlier canon composed in the old Ardha Māgadhī.

T.W. Rhys Davids suggests that Pāli was based on the language of Kosala.

Geiger and Windisch (Geiger, 2004: 4) fall back on the old tradition and hold that Pāli should be regarded as a form of Māgadhī.

Norman, K.R. (Asher, 1994: 2914) opines that Pāli is predominantly western though Buddha at times used an early form of Māgadhī — an eastern Prākrit. He, of course, admits that Pāli must be
classified as a literary language, not of uniform structure and showed a number of archaisms.

There is no Pāli alphabet of its own. It is written in several scripts, depending on the country and the intended audience. Thus, it commonly appears in Sinhala script in Srilanka, in Davanāgri in India, and in Burmese, Cambodian, and Thai script in respective countries. In the West, it is commonly written in the Roman alphabet with some diacritics.

2.3 Different Stages of Pāli

Following Geiger (2004: 1-2) four distinct stages of Pāli can be identified:

(i) The Language of the Gāthās: It refers to the language of the metrical pieces. The Suttanipāta is a text of this stage. The language is not uniform and it shows many archaic speech forms.

(ii) The Language of the Canonical Prose: It is comparatively homogeneous. The majority of the canonical literature exhibits the language of this stage.

(iii) The Later Prose of the Post –canonical Literature: The language of Milinda-book (Milinda-pañha), the great commentaries of Buddhaghosa, Dhammapala and Buddhadatta belong to this stage.

Progressive standardization of the language is observed at this stage. It also reflects its artificial and erudite style.
(iv) The Language of the Later Artificial Poetry: It does not contain any uniform character. The authors borrowed speech forms from older and later literature.

2.4 The Spread of Pāli to Thailand

According to Thichinphong Pricha (1991: 9) Buddhism was introduced to Thailand during the reign of King Asoka (3rd century B.C.). King Asoka had sent Phra Soṇa and Phra Uṭṭara who were Indian missionaries to Thailand to preach the Buddha’s teaching. They came first to Suwannabhumi which was Nakhonpathom province in the central Thailand at that time. Along with Buddhism Pāli – the language in which the scriptures were written was thus introduced to Thailand. There are many archaeological evidences in Thailand, recorded in Pāli. The archaeological evidences found at Pong Tuk, Phra Pathom and elsewhere have proved the flourishing state of Buddhism in Thailand since the first or second Century A.D. (Sengupta, 1994: 61) As mentioned earlier (see 1.2) the oldest archaeological evidences in Pāli are the inscriptions called ‘Ye dhammā hetupabbhāvā (hetuppabhāva)’ “Of conditions that arise from a cause, the cause and cessation has been declared by the Great Contemplative” and ‘Dhammachaka’ “the wheel of law”.

2.5 The Importance of Pāli in Thailand

There is a close relationship between Buddhism and the Thai nation. Nearly 95 per cent of the Thai people believe in Buddhism. They use Pāli for praying. Moreover, Buddhist monks usually use Pāli to preach Buddhism to the Thai people. Pāli is the language in which the
Buddha’s doctrines are recorded. So it is very important for the Buddhist people in Thailand to understand Pāli.

Somdetbramahamangalacan, (2000: 5-6) the most venerable monk in Thailand, states that the study of Pāli is very important as it forms the foundation for maintaining the Buddhism. He further mentions that the aim of teaching and learning of Pāli is to preserve or to protect the Buddhism. As long as novices and Buddhists study Pāli, the prosperity of Buddhism will increase in the world.

Pengphala Pat (1992: 22-23) states that the whole of the Buddha’s doctrines well known as Tripitaka was written in Pāli. If the monks know Pāli very well, they can help to develop the religion and society as well by supporting and spreading morality, ethics, culture and tradition of the Buddhism. He further opines that that is why the Religious Affairs Department and Ministry of Education of Thailand have given emphasis on the study of Pāli.

It is noteworthy that in Pāli descriptions of the psycho-ethical account of Dhammas, a list of various branches of consciousness, mental processes, and causal relation are available. Some Pāli books describe life and activities of Buddha and other contemporary teachers. Thus, the study of Pāli is important for the Thai people who want to know the various aspects of religion, culture and political history of ancient India, especially the doctrines of the Buddha.

2.6 The Teaching and Learning of Pāli in Thailand

While describing the teaching and learning of Pāli in Thailand Sangtaksin Yupon (1998: 46-50) mentions that the Ecclesiastical
Education in Thailand developed for the first time in the Sukhothai (Sukhodaya) period and functioned till Ratanakosin period, prior to the twentieth century. It was the study of the Pāli Tripiṭaka, the most fundamental teaching of the Theravada tradition of Buddhism. The textbooks were written in the Pāli language and recorded in Khom (Combodian/Khmer) characters written on Palm-leaves. There were three classes, namely, Parien-Tri (Third class), Parien-To (Second class) and Parien-Ek (First class). In 1816, King Rama II changed the three grade-Parien system into the nine grade-Parien system, which is the origin of the modern system. Apart from the Tripitaka, its commentaries were also added to the curriculum. This was called the Study of Phrapariyatidhamma or the Study of Pāli.

Thailand’s ecclesiastical education in the twentieth century, beginning with the last phase of the reign of King Rama V (1868-1910) till King Rama IX (i.e. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, 1964-present) is an extremely important and most interesting phase in the history of Thai education.

Having succeeded to the throne, King Rama V understood that the provision of education was a vital factor in the development of the country. He provided full support to the educational administration, both secular and ecclesiastical. It was found that two types of ecclesiastical education were arranged. They were the former Phrapariyatidhamma study, and the study of general character conducted at Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya and Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya which were both at the college level. The former was the study of Pāli which was like that of previous time. But the programme of study and the examination
procedure were improved. However, the oral examination of the Pāli course was carried on till the end of King Rama V's reign. The latter was the new system called Mahamakut System. It was later systematized. The curriculum, teaching and examination system were organized on new lines under the leadership of Ven. Vajirañāvarorasa who was the most important leader in the management of ecclesiastical education. He introduced the western system of written examination. The Mahamakut system was first used at Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya established in 1893, and later at Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya which was initially established in 1889 and was officially founded in 1896. Again, the Tripitaka, formerly a set of Palm-leaf books in Khom characters, was revised and printed in the form of normal books using Thai characters. In addition, the by-product of educational improvement was the issue of the Ecclesiastical Act of 1902 which effectively supported ecclesiastical educational activities. Regretfully, when the Sangha took the responsibility of the management of urban education of the country, the administration of Mahamakut system was to decline. But students themselves were not interested in the Phrapariyatidhamma study. Eventually, in October 1902, the Mahamakut examination was cancelled by the order of the Sangha which was very powerful at that time. Although the new Mahamakut system of ecclesiastical education suffered from certain obstacles till it was cancelled, it shows that the beginning point of the new system of ecclesiastical education emerged at the time.

As pointed out by Somin Saloemphon (2003: 136) at present for Buddhist monks and novices in Thailand there is still the traditional system of education (i.e., that is the Phrapariyatidhamma study) consisting of the Dhamma studies and Pāli studies at the temple. Thus,
Pāli studies in Thailand have two systems: In one system the Pāli studies have nine levels of study at the temple for the Buddhists monks. The Sangha of Thailand organizes the curriculum of Pāli for this system. It is called the traditional system of Phrapariyatidhamma. In the other system the Pāli studies belong to the stream of foreign languages at the school, college and university levels for both Buddhists monks and common people. There is the Ministry of Education in Thailand organizing the curriculum of Pāli for this system. These two types of Pāli studies are introduced below.

2.6.1 The Traditional system of Phrapariyatidhamma

According to Somin Saloemphon (2003: 128-136), the Pāli Study in the Phrapariyatidhamma traditional system as is said in Thailand, is the study of the Buddha’s teachings as contained in the Tipiṭaka and its commentaries. As mentioned before (see sec. 2.6) the study of Pāli was carried out since the Sukhothai period; it was eventually improved and divided into nine grades during the reign of King Rama II of the Chakri dynasty. Now, the educational administration is in the hand of Somdej Phramaha Rajamanglacaraya (Chuang Narapuṇṇio) of the Paknam Monastery. He is the chief monk of the Pāli Course with three vice-chiefs, a secretary and assistant secretaries being his staff-workers.

The Phrapariyatidhamma traditional system is meant for the monks only. No other subjects other than Pāli are taught in this system. Obviously, the course is difficult and heavy. It has already been mentioned that the Pāli Course in this system was divided into nine grades during the King Rama II’s period, starting from the third grade to the ninth grade. The total number of classes was seven. The first grade
and second grade were included in the third grade. Now, it is also divided into nine grades, starting from the first-second grade onwards. There are eight classes in total. Again, the above-mentioned nine grades have been categorized into three levels similar to those of olden days. These are:

Level one – Parien-Tri: The person who has passed the third grade is called Parien-Tri. He obtains the title ‘Phramaha’.

Level two – Parien -To: The person who has passed the fourth or the fifth or the sixth grade is called Parien-To.

Level three – Parien - Ek: The person who has passed the seventh or the eighth or the ninth grade is called Parien-Ek.

2.6.1.1 The Curriculum of the Pāli Course in the Phrapariyatidhamma traditional system

The curriculum of the first and second grade up to the fifth grade covers the Sutta aṭṭhakatha, the sixth up to the seventh grade the Vinaya-aṭṭhakatha and the eighth and the ninth grade lie on the Abhidhamma-dika and Abhidhamma-pakarana. The brief curriculum of each grade is as follows:

I. The First-Second Grade (Prayog 1-2)

In the first and second grade the two subjects used for study are Pāli Grammar and Pāli-Thai Translation. They are presented in detail as follows:
**Pāli Grammar:**

The textbooks used in this grade are the different volumes of the elementary Pāli Grammar, i.e., Volume I containing Samaññaśāhīdhan-Sandhi (Designation of vowel and consonant-Euphonic-combination), Volume II containing Nama-Avyayasabda (Noun and Affix), Volume III containing Samāsa-Tadhita (Compound and Secondary derivatives) and Volume IV containing Ākhayata-Kitaka (Verb and Primary-Derivatives). All of these were compiled by the late Supreme Patriarch, Prince Vajiraṅgāvavārāsā. The subjects aim mainly at memorization rather than the understanding for students.

**Pāli-Thai Translation:**

The textbooks used for this purpose are Commentary of Dhammapadaāṭṭhakathā, Volumes I to IV which contain the history of the Buddha, his teaching and his disciples, composed by Phra Buddhaghosacaraya.

**II. The Third Grade (Prayog 3)**

There are four subjects scheduled for the third grade. They are Pāli Grammar, Pāi Syntax, Pāli-Thai Translation and Official Letter Writing. The details of all these subjects are pointed out below:

**Pāli Grammar:**

The Pāli grammatical texts used in this grade are the same as in the previous grade but students have to study by memorizing and criticizing, for the subject is based on analytical reasoning.
Moreover, the students have to make a clear understanding of the part of speech in grammar because it is useful to study the Pāli Syntax.

Pāli Syntax:

The textbook of Pāli Syntax is called the Vākyasambandha in Thai. It describes the usage of linking-words in each sentence. Each linking-word is named in accordance with its rules. The texts used for the purpose of examination are the Commentary of Dhammapadaatthakathā, Volume V to VIII. It helps students greatly to understand the usage of Pāli in depth.

Pāli-Thai Translation:

The textbooks used are the Commentary of Dhammapadaatthakathā, Volume V to VIII like the subject of Pāli Syntax. All of these textbooks contain the history of the Buddha's teaching and his disciples.

Official Letter Writing:

This subject is called Būrababhāga (Formal Letter) in Thai. It refers to the formal writing of Thai letters used for official purposes. The textbooks used in this subject are dependent on the teacher but the teacher must teach the form of a formal letter to the students.

III. The Fourth Grade (Prayog 4)

In this grade, there are only two subjects for learning. They are Pāli-Thai translation and Thai-Pāli translation. The details of both subjects are given below:
Pāli-Thai Translation:

The curriculum includes the Buddhist text called the Mañgalatthadīpanī, volume I compiled by Phra Sirimanggalaracaraya (Thai Bhikkhu) of North Thailand. It is an extensive commentary on the Mañgala Sutta, the small discourse from the Khuddhakapāṭha. Students learn to translate this Pāli text into Thai.

Thai-Pāli Translation:

The textbook used for this purpose is the Dhammapadaatthakathā, volume I. This is the first step for students who study the process of translating Thai into Pāli. Students, here, learn to translate this text in Thai into Pāli.

IV. The Fifth Grade (Prayog 5)

The fifth grade contains two subjects for studying; they are Pāli-Thai translation and Thai-Pāli translation. This grade helps the students to understand the process of translating both Thai texts into Pāli and Pāli texts into Thai properly. The details of the textbooks are explained as follows:

Pāli-Thai Translation:

The textbook used is the Mañgalatthadīpanī, volume II, compiled by Phra Sirimanggalaracaraya (Thai Bhikkhu). It is an extensive commentary on the Mañgala Sutta. In this connection it can be mentioned that the volume I of the same text is used for Pāli to Thai translation in fourth grade.
Thai-Pali Translation:

The textbook used in this grade is the Dhammapadaatthakathā, volume II to IV. This is the second step of learning translating Thai to Pali for the students. The volume I of the same text is used for Thai-Pali translation in the fourth grade.

V. The Sixth Grade (Prayog 6)

The sixth grade has the same subject as in the fifth grade; they are different only in case of the textbook used for learning and teaching, which it is presented as follows:

Pāli-Thai Translation:

The textbook used in this grade is called the Samantapāsādikā, volume III to V. The textbooks contain the details of the rules of Buddhist monks for maintaining discipline.

Thai-Pali Translation:

The textbook used for Thai-Pali translation is the Dhammapadaatthakathā, volume V to VIII. The question-papers designed on the basis of these texts are more detailed and complicated in form than those of the previous grade.

VI. The Seventh Grade (Prayog 7)

The subjects for the seventh grade are the same as those of the previous grade. But they are different only regarding the textbooks used for learning and teaching. The details of the subjects are mentioned as follows:
**Pāli-Thai Translation:**

The textbook used in this grade is Samantapasadikā, volume I to II which say about the rules of Buddhist monks.

**Thai- Pāli Translation:**

This course includes the translation of Thai into Pāli by using the textbook named the Mañgalatthadīpanī, volume I which is the Pāli-Thai translated textbook of the fourth grade.

**VII. The Eighth Grade (Prayog 8)**

There are three subjects in the eighth grade; they are Pāli-Thai translation, Thai-Pāli translation and Pāli poetry as explained below:

**Pāli-Thai Translation:**

The textbook used for learning and teaching of Pāli-Thai translation is called the Visuddhimagga compiled by Phra Buddhaghosacaraya. The matter of this textbook contains the method of practicing the meditation and morality; otherwise, it contains the details of religious precepts of Buddhist monks.

**Thai-Pāli Translation:**

The textbook used for this purpose is the Samantapasādikā, volume I which is in the curriculum of the seventh grade related to the Pāli-Thai translation.
Pāli Poetry:

The subject is concerned with the writing of Pāli poetry. The textbook is dependent on the teacher and the teacher must teach the students the method of writing poetry in Pāli. At the time of examination students are asked to compose a Pāli Poetry on a given topic.

VIII. The Ninth Grade (Prayog 9)

This is the last grade i.e. the ninth grade of the curriculum of the Pāli course belonging to the Phrapariyatidhamma traditional system. There are three subjects in this grade. They are Pāli-Thai translation, Thai-Pāli translation and Pāli Composition. The details of all these subjects are stated as follows:

Pāli-Thai Translation:

The textbook used is the Abhidhammatthavibhāvini, compiled by Phra Anuruddhacaraya in a simple way for students. It is almost a new commentary on Abhidhamma Piṭaka related to the philosophical treatment of the Buddha’s teachings.

Thai-Pāli Translation:

Visuddhimagga, The Pāli-Thai translated book of the eighth grade is used here as the text book for Thai-Pāli translation.

Pāli Composition:

In this course students are taught to write Pāli essays on the topics given and the textbooks used for teaching and learning depend on the teacher who is teaching.
2.6.1.2 Assessment and Evaluation

The process of Assessment and Evaluation in this system is called Royal Pāli Examination, because in ancient time, the Thai Kings used to carry on the activities involving Pāli Studies by themselves. Though in later time, their Majesty the king assigned these activities to the government officials, but still these activities are supported by the king.

When the time of examination comes, the administrators of the Royal Pāli Department in Bangkok headed by the Chief of the Royal Pāli Department fix the date and place of the examination and then prepare the question-papers. After that, some senior monks are assigned by the administrators in Bangkok to take those question-papers to organize the examination in various places as fixed earlier.

The process of assessment and evaluation is very strict. The examinees have to gain at least 88 marks (out of 100 marks) to pass the subject of translation from Pāli into Thai and vice versa, and at least 75 marks (out of 100 marks) to pass the subject of Pāli Grammar. In evaluation, the evaluation-score is "H" (called Hai in Thai). In each subject, the full score is 3Hs, and the examinees have to gain at least 2 Hs (of 3Hs) for every subject to pass each grade. This is a tough examination. Even though the examination in Pāli studies belonging to the Phrapariyatidhamma traditional system conducted by the Thai Sangha is generally regarded as very heavy and difficult as a large number of monks and novices fail in the examination every year, we should not consider it as a waste of time or useless. Anyway, this is the tradition of screening-process by the Thai Sangha. The time of examination is usually
in February of every year. The examination is held for one time every year.

2.6.2 The New Phrapariyatidhamma School

As per the documents produced by the Ministry of Education, Thailand (2001: 26) the New Phrapariyatidhamma School is the system of ecclesiastical education approved by the Ministry of Education but conducted by the Sangha in the form of Secondary School. The system is meant for both the general students and Buddhist monks. But normally Buddhist monks join this system. If we look at the history of this school we find that the cause of establishment of such school was due to the functioning of the Pāli-Madhayomsueksa School for which Mahachulalongkorn Buddhist University provided the educational administration. The curriculum of this system included some of the subjects of the Pāli course and Dhamma course, including some general subjects. A candidate who finished the fourth grade of the general school, the compulsory education of those days, could apply for his study in this school by being a novice or monk first. Later the number of schools belonging to the New Phrapariyatidhamma school system increased both in the city and provinces. Most monks and novices were interested in studying at these schools. Then, these schools came under the name of “Pāli-Visamansueksa School” by the Sangha administrators. In 1957, the Ministry of Education supported the school by granting a certificate to those who had successfully passed the sixth grade and the ninth grade of these schools equivalent to those of general schools. By this way, the number of monks and novices increased more and more. The Sangha administrators reviewed the situation carefully and realized that monks
and novices who studied in the said schools were seemingly interested in avoiding the study of the Pāli course and Dhamma course. The Sangha administrators were afraid of the fact that in future the study of both Pāli and Dhamma courses might decline. And at the same time they realized that the study of general subjects was a must in the modern world. Thus, the then chief monk of the Pāli course (Fuen Jutindharo) appointed a special committee to revamp the old character of the curriculum of the ecclesiastical education. The new school was named “PālisueksaSamansueksa-Paridasnasueksa School”.

But the new curriculum mostly relied on the study of Pāli. The school was proclaimed in 1964 and the former school was abolished in that year. It was seen that most students were not interested to study at the new school because the secondary certificate was not granted by the Ministry of Education, like before. That is why, monks and novices of those days applied for and got enrolled in general schools. The ecclesiastical education of this level was highly complicated at that time. Later, the Department of Religious Affairs and other Departments of Education Ministry suggested the way-out over this by permitting to establish the Phrapariyatidhamma School in the form of Secondary School. The school was set up on July 20, 1971. Pāli is a compulsory subject in this system along with other general subjects. The course of Pāli here is comparatively easy in comparison with that of the traditional system of Phrapariyatidhamma. The main aim was to benefit the religious and state domains. That is to say, the domain of religion will get good Buddhist heirs, both in knowledge and behaviour. In case they are disrobed, even they can help in the development of the country in various ways.
This kind of schools is generally established in a monastery with the Headmaster being the chief administrator. There is also the academic committee. Even though the Sangha provides educational administration, the Director-General of Religious Affairs Department is officially responsible for the administrative policy.

It is important to mention that the present thesis is concerned with this system only.

2.6.2.1 The Programme of the Course

According to the documents produced by the Department of Religious Affairs (2006: 16) the academic year is divided into two semesters; the first semester (from May to October) and the second semester (from October to April). Each semester consists of not less than 18 weeks. Classes are usually held in the afternoon, five days in a week.

2.6.2.2 Learning Time Allocation

Time allocated for classroom learning and development activities is as below:

(I). The lower secondary grade VII-IX: - annual average 1,000-1,200 hours:-daily average 5-6 hours;

(II). The upper secondary grade X-XII:-annual average, not less than 1,200 hours:-daily average, not less than 6 hours.
2.6.2.3 The Basic Education Curriculum Structure for both general students and Buddhist monks

The following table presents the Basic Education Curriculum Structure for both general students and Buddhist monks:

**The Basic Education Curriculum Structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade levels</th>
<th>Secondary Education (Class VII-IX)</th>
<th>Secondary Education (Class X-XII)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 Subject Groups</td>
<td>Compulsory Education</td>
<td>Basic Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai language</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies, religion, and culture</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and physical education</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career and technology</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign language</td>
<td>■</td>
<td>■</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development activities</td>
<td>▲</td>
<td>▲</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time allocation</td>
<td>Annual average 1,000-1200 hrs.</td>
<td>Annual average not less than 1,200 hrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Educational institutions must teach these subject groups to build up foundation for thinking, learning and solving problems.
- Core subjects for promotion of humanities, fundamental potential required for thinking and working.
- Extra-curricular activities required for self-development in accordance with individuals’ potential.
2.6.2.4 The Structure of the Curriculum at the Upper Secondary Level

The following table presents the structure of the Curriculum for Buddhist monks at the upper secondary level:

The Table of the Structure of Curriculum at Upper Secondary Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Group</th>
<th>Units/Times/Semester</th>
<th>Semester I</th>
<th>Semester II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Add basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>Hour</td>
<td>Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Basic education</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Thai language</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Mathematics</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Science</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Social studies, religion and culture</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Health and physical education</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Art</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Career and technology</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Foreign language</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total basic education</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Add basic education</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Social studies, religion and culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dharma practice</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dharma Vinaya</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Foreign language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- English</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pāli</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3 Other basic education

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total add basic education</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ecclesiastic development activities</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Time/Semester</td>
<td>720</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes on the curriculum:

1. Educational institutions may adjust time-frame and subject groups to suit each target group as necessary.

2. All educational institutions must impart some basic education in any foreign language to the students.

It is worth mentioning that at the general school Pali is not a compulsory subject and students learn Pali as a foreign language. There are other languages also like English, German and so on to be treated as foreign languages and students are generally interested to study a language other than Pali as a foreign language. But at the Phrapariyatidhamma School the curriculum of Pali is heavy as well as compulsory.

Notes

1. Quoted by R.C Childers in his *A Dictionary of the Pāli Language*, pp. 322 from a manuscript as mentioned by Bhattacharya Vidhusakhar, 1358 (B.S.) introduction, pp. 3.

2. As Hazra (1982: 68) says, "According to Ceylon chronicles Mahādhammarakkhita and Mahārakkhita introduced Buddhism to
Mahāraṭṭha and Yona region during the reign of Aśoka. The author of the Śāsanavamsa identifies Mahāraṭṭha with Siam. He mentions that Mahāraṭṭha is Mahānagararāṭṭha in Siam. He states further that the Yonaka country extends along the valleys of the Menam and Mae Phing rivers and includes the Shan states to the north of these”.

But most scholars accept Mahāraṭṭha as the region of Mahāraṣṭra in Western India and the Yona region as the north-west region of India, where there were Indo-Greek settlements. (Hazra, 1982: 69)

References


