

entirely to the study of scriptures, by writing in all 74 books made up of 11 books on Pali grammar, 14 books on Vinaya, 14 books on Abhidhamma, 8 books on Suttanta Pitaka and 24 books on miscellaneous subjects dealing with all aspects of Buddhist Teaching and Sasana.

Ashin Janakabhivamsa was a celebrated teacher of Pali Scriptures and the Abbot of the famous Mahagandharama Monastery of Amarapura, Mandalay Division, Myanmar. He launched his whole time job of writing books which were to be useful guides and manuals for his thousands of students who later gathered round him till he passed away. He also wrote many small manuals for lay Buddhists who have no opportunity to study the Teaching of the Buddha directly from the Pali Canon.

He had a firm belief that monastic education should be for the Sasana, society and state, and the fellow monastics should be taught Pali to understand the Dhamma in easy way within a limited short period since there is a variety of subjects to study for the monks such as Language, Science and the skills related to the propagation of Sasana. As a result, a modern educated monk or nun will be able to bring the lay students in the monastery campus and make them to be good Buddhist and well-trained citizens. In fact, monasticism is one of the most fundamental institutions of Buddhism. Monks and nuns are responsible for preserving and spreading Buddhist teachings, as well as educating and guiding Buddhist lay followers. The ultimate goal of Buddhist monasticism is the liberation of all beings from the cycle of rebirth through Nibbana while it also aims the worldly happiness in accord with Dhamma.

Accordingly, Ashin Janakabhivamsa always pushed hard for changes in Pali education and he asked the Samgha Community to begin the new art of learning Pali and Buddhist studies. Even though many smaller groups of Samgha were enthusiastic about his new thought, it was generally met with a cold shoulder from the established Buddhist institutions. So he pushed himself to go on his own way and wrote the text books of the Integrated Syllabus.

A New Syllabus for Pali Study

Text books and the benefits

The Syllabus integrated by Ashin Janakabhivamsa for his monastic institution comprises the following levels;

- 1-Pre-school
- 2-(a) Primary (Part-1)

- (b)Primary (Part-2)
- 3-Basic level
- 4-Intermediate Level and
- 5-Higher Level.

PRE-SCHOOL (Duration-six months)

- (a)The Attributes of Triple Gems
- (b)Rules and Regulations of Monasticism
- (c)Palisikkha(A Basic Pali Composition)
- (d)A Concise Pali Grammar

This course is prepared for a basic knowledge of Buddhism and an access to Pali Study.

The book ‘‘The Attributes of Triple Gems’’ encourages the student to become a good Buddhist basically by reading about the attributes of Triple Gems (Buddha,Dhamma and Samgha),Five Precepts, Eight Precepts, Nine Precepts, and Ten Precepts. Furthermore, it also gives the additional knowledge of the law of Kamma and its effects, wholesome deeds and unwholesome deeds including formulae of Prayer.

The book ‘‘Rules and Regulations of Monasticism’’ instructs the young Buddhist student to conduct himself as a well-disciplined disciple of the Buddha by learning rules and regulations of Vinaya. It also gives the guidance for the basic meditation methods.

Palisikkha provides the basic knowledge of Pali composition and exercise works including some parts of the speech such as Nama (Nouns) Akhyata (Verbs) Namavisesana (Adjectives),Kriyavisesana (Adverbs)and so on.

A Concise Pali Grammar is a condensed book of Kaccayanabyakara which makes a wider skill in combining and dividing the Pali words, declining of Nouns, and conjugating of the Verbs.

PRIMARY (PART ONE) (Duration-Six Months)

- (a)Dhammapada Commentary (Yamakavagga)
- (b)A Basic Pali Grammar (the first three chapters)
- (c)Kathasallapasikkha(A Basic Spoken Pali)

Here Dhammapada is a preliminary reader of Original Pali Text to improve the students’ reading skills, build their understanding and to

increase their love for reading. The previous course helps them translate the text word by word.

A Basic Pali Grammar is a revised edition of Kaccayanabyakarana by Ashin Janakabhivamsa and it includes 8 chapters. Here in this level, only three chapters; 1) Sandhi kanda(combination of Pali words), 2)Namakanda (various kinds of nouns, Pronouns, adjectives, Conjunction, Prepositions and adverbs) 3)Akhyatakanda (Verbs) are taught in more detail.

Kathasallasikkha is designed to make fluent in a spoken Pali and it is more helpful to be skilful in reading and writing as well. By learning this way, Pali language skill is improving within one year.

PRIMARY (PART TWO) (Duration-Six months)

- (a) Dhammapada Commentary (Appamadavagga)
- (b) A Basic Pali Grammar (Kitakanda, Unhadikanda and Karakakanda)
- (c)A Basic Abhidhamma (The first three chapters)

Now it is an interesting and inspiring study made up of the Dhammapada stories and it helps the student become eager to know new stories, and comprehend Pali words and sentences more efficiently.

Another three chapters of A Basic Pali Grammar, kitakanda and Unhadikanda (Primary derivatives or Participles) and Karakakanda (eight cases in declension of Nouns) taught here in this level instructing how to enlarge and analyze the sentences from the Dhammapada and to write new sentences by own.

A Basic Abhidhamma is a revised textbook of Abhidhammatthasangaha and it has nine chapters. Here only first three chapters; Cittasangaha, Cetasikasangaha and Pakkinnaka sangaha are introduced. It is the first step to lay down the foundation of Abhidhamma and the young student come to know the number of consciousness, mental factors and their functions. When the Dhammapada is learnt, which kind of consciousness and the associated mental factors occur and how they work in the mood and action by the personality of the stories must be analyzed. It is not only just to give a scriptural learning but also a critical way of thinking.

BASIC LEVEL (Duration-six months)

- (a) Mahavaggapali (Vinayapitaka)
- (b) Anguttaranikaya (ekakanipata to tikanipata)
- (c) Dhammapada Commentary (yamakavagga and Appamadavagga)
- (d) A Basic Pali Grammar (Samasakanda and Taddhitakanda)
- (e) A Basic Abhidhamma (The first six chapters)

Now Pali study becomes higher and it is carefully built to go further forward of the advanced Pali Text. Mahavaggapali, the third book of Vinayapitaka gives the back ground stories of Samgha Community and its related matters made up of ten sections known as Khandhas.

Anguttaranikaya is a new acquaintance in this level and it is said a mini-encyclopedia of Buddhism for a wider information. It is an important source book on Buddhist psychology and ethics which provides an enumerated summary of all the essential features concerning the theory and practice of the Dhamma.

Another study of previous Dhammapada chapters is prepared to review the stories from the Pali grammatical and Abhidhamma point of views in more detailed and methodical way. Remaining chapters of A Basic Pali Grammar, Samasakanda (six kinds of Compound word) and Taddhitakanda (secondary derivatives) are taught. Now the whole book of Pali Grammar is studied here. The candidate, who has successfully completed this level, is allowed to sit for Sakyasiha first Level Examination.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL (Duration-six months)

- (a) Culavaggapali and Parivarapali
- (b) Anguttaranikaya (Catukka to Chakka)
- (c) Dhammapada Commentary (Dandavagga)
- (d) A Basic Abhidhamma (All Chapters)

A continued study of Culavagga and Parivara, Vinayapitaka is to get more aquatinted with an additional knowledge of Vinaya rules and procedures for institutional acts or functions known as Samgha kamma.

Anguttaranikaya and Dhammapada become more practical not only for comprehension of Pali and Abhidhamma but also for the art of living how to be successful.

All chapters of A Basic Abhidhamma are thoroughly taught. The candidate, who has successfully completed this level, is allowed to sit for Sakyasiha Second Level Examination and the Basic Governmental Pali Examination.

HIGHER LEVEL (Duration-six months)

- (a)Parajikapali and Pacittiyapali(Vinayapitaka)
- (b)Anguttaranikaya(the whole text)
- (c)Dhammapada Commentary (the whole text)

The first two books of Vinaya come last though they are more fundamental, it is a better way to introduce the last three books first with interesting background stories. The whole text of Anguttaranikayapali and Dhammapada commentary has been completely studied in this level. The candidate, who has successfully completed this level, is allowed to sit for Sakyasiha Third Level Examination and The Intermediate governmental pali Examination.

It is a surprise that, within three years, the following original Pali text; Five books of Vinaya Pitaka , Three books of Inguttaranikaya and Two books of Dhammapada Commentaries, have been proficiently done.

Moreover the syllabus saves the time and makes the student more skilful and well-versed in Pali and Abhidhamma. Now he can go easily further study for Higher Governmental examinations whereas he would seek much more time to explore the knowledge of Languages, contemporary communication methods and skills. Actually, this Integrated Syllabus is thoughtfully and well built for the purpose of understanding of the essence of Dhamma through Pali language in a limited short time and it is also meant to practice the Dhamma in the mean time.

Conclusion

Even though the Syllabus integrated by Ashin Janakabhivamsa is mainly effective for the Pali study, it is partly accepted in the several monastic institutions in Myanmar and it still needs to polish up meanwhile Pali is a popular language among the Buddhists in the world today and widely studied in easy way constructing the new syllabus and building the infrastructures for the study.

Here it should be quoted from the Paper that Aggacitta Bhikku, a Malaysian Buddhist scholar monk , presented in the forum’’ Role of the

Samgha in the New Millennium” at the Global Conference on Buddhism held in Shah Alam, Malaysia, in December 2002 that;

“In this new millennium, priority should be given to proper monastic training so that suitably qualified Samgha members can graduate to give inspiration and guidance to those who need them. Efforts should be made to encourage and inspire youths to become responsible and compassionate monastics while steps should be taken to source for qualified teachers who can give monastic training according to the following syllabus:

1. A Practical understanding of the Vinaya covering three main areas:
 - i. Training for individual development
 - ii. Regulations for harmonious communal life
 - iii. Samgha-laity relations
2. Theory and practice of Buddhist meditation
3. Study of relevant Buddhist doctrines and Suttas to address the new millennium syndrome
4. Contemporary propagation skills, with options in relevant courses on mass communication and information technology.”

In conclusion, it is time for change again, and to polish up the previous changes in Pali Education.

SOURCES

1. One life for Sasana(Dabhawa Tharnanar) by Ashin Gosita
2. Buddhist Culture by Ven.Piyasilo
3. Role of the Samgha in the New Millennium by Aggacitta Bhikkhu
4. Idealism and Pragmatism by Khammai Dhammasami
5. Guide to Tipitaka by U Kolay
6. A Bhidhamma in Dailly life translated by U Kolay

Links/

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