

# Introduction

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Learning Burmese sometimes feels like stumbling upon a long-forgotten, moss-swept temple in some massive, humid jungle, in some misanthropic corner of the world: a temple, because the language and its script truly are majestic; massive, because Burmese is just one of the hundred or so languages that make up Southeast Asia—a linguist's wet dream by all accounts—and misanthropic, because of the current régime in power where this language is spoken. Burmese is unique, Burmese is exotic. Burmese can be a lot of fun if you have the right folks to guide you. Allow me to be your guide then, and hopefully we can all learn a little bit something new about this awesome language.

As you assuredly already know, there is not much material for Burmese—nothing like there is in the way of Chinese or Spanish, or any of the other all-consuming lingua franca of our day. Finding good material can be challenging. Though there is some good stuff out there for those truly inspired to learn Burmese as a foreign language. One hint is to look up the name *John Okell* the next time you are on Amazon.com, and you will stumble upon a few glittering gems. However, leaving Okell and the rest aside, I can promise you that there is nothing on the market like what you have in your hands now. This here is a little piece of dynamite, which I am sure the old hands of the Burmese language are not going to like one bit.

Welcome then to the first ever Burmese foreign language book dedicated to the twin pursuits of learning Burmese slang

and having an awesome night out on the town at the same time, whether it be in Yangon, in Mandalay, on the beaches of Nagapale, or somewhere along the border with all those good-hearted kids that make up the NGO crew. (Yes, I know this book will be a guilty pleasure for you NGO goodie-goodies, too. So get off your high horse, and come and dance with the libertine for a while!) Nowhere else will you be able to find material quite like what you have in this book.

I suppose I should also mention **CAUTION: USE YOUR BRAIN** when applying what you have learnt here. If I do not mention this, some jackass will surely pull this baby out at the most inauspicious time ever. So, again, please use your head for this one. We are all grownups, right?

All that is left to say now is, well, good luck! I hope you get a chance to enjoy Burmese as much as I have!

Cheers!

T. F. Rhoden