

Burmese Speakers' Use of English in the "Development" World

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1) Examples of English-language concepts common in "development speak," usually expressed as nouns with the "dummy" verb *loo?* "make, do."¹

- 1.1 run *programs te əyɪŋ ətəiŋ run loo?* *ne te*
 programs PLU previous as run do CONT REAL
 "(We're) running our programs as before."
- 1.2 request *sʰəyama ko request loo?* *cʰɪŋ te*
 woman.teacher OBJ *request do want REAL*
 "(I) would like to make a request of you" ("teacher" as a term of respect)
- 1.3 join *əma meeting join lə.ya te*
 big.sister meeting join can REAL
 "You can join the meeting." ("big sister" as a term of respect)
- 1.4 launch *research project launch loo?* *pì θwà pì*
 do finish go FINISH
 "(They) have already launched the research project."
- 1.5 support *təcʰə partners te support loo?* *te*
 some PLU do REAL
 "(We) support some of our partners," i.e., "We give money and other help to
 some of our grantees." (Direct reference to money can be taboo).

1.6 Other similar terms:

implement, implementation
assessment
facilitate, facilitation
invitation (often pronounced [ɪŋbaɪ?tefɪŋ])
roll-out (in sense of beginning a new program)

2) Other examples of nouns etc:

- 2.1 "Training," often used with *pè give*, sometimes with the native expression
 training pè te
 give REAL
 "Train (someone), give a training."

Or its Burmese equivalent:

θɪŋ.dàŋ pè te
 training give REAL

2.2 Numbers and dates are generally in English

two thousand six ma cəma.tə capacity building program əθi? *sə loo?* *te*
 in we new begin do REAL
 "We started the new capacity building program in 2006."

¹ Capitalized terms have been grammaticalized. Abbreviations: BEN = benefactive; CONT = continuous; EMPH= emphatic; IRR = irrealis; OBJ = object; PLU = plural; POSS = possessive; REAL = realis; TAG = tag question. "Creaky" tone is marked as *ɿ*; falling tone as *ː*. Final *-ŋ* is usually realized as nasalization of preceding vowel. Voicing in close juncture has not been marked.

3) Adjectives, usually used with the *p^hyi?* “be, become.” Native “adjectives” are usually stative verbs.

related, in the sense of “be connected, be relevant”

rushed (usually pronounced “rush”)

4) Adverbs, usually used as they stand, without any marking.

4.1 *in english* yè mɛ
write IRR
“(I’ll) write it in English.”

4.2 *before lunch* looʔ pè nɔ
do BEN TAG
“Do it (for me) before lunch, okay?”

4.3 *program* ko *systematically run* looʔ mə yə mɛ
OBJ do only GET IRR
“(They) will have to run the program systematically.”

4.4 *they registration legally* looʔ thà tɛ
they do PUT REAL
“They have been legally registered,” “they have registered themselves legally.”

4.5 *sɔ wɪŋta on the way* la ne tɛ
Saw Winter come CONT REAL
“Saw Winter is on his way here,” “Saw Winter is coming.”

4.6 *this coming Monday meeting* ʃɪ tɛ
exist REAL
“There’s a meeting on Monday.”

5) Use of English for rhetorical emphasis

5.1 *No no, this is wrong. That is not the way to do it.* èdi lo mə looʔ yə p^hù
that way NEG do MUST EMPH
“(They) should not do it that way; that’s not the way.”

5.2 *èdi delta kə ywa te mə θu.tə yɛ traditional culture* ʃɪ tɛ
that from village PLU in they POSS have REAL
“They have their own way of doing things in those villages in the delta [of the Irrawaddy].”

6) Examples of jargon and acronyms

PLHVA	People Living with HIV/AIDS (more encompassing than “HIV victim”)
MSM	Men who have Sex with Men (instead of “gay” or “homosexual,” which are terms that have cultural connotations that may not be appropriate to Burma)
CSW	Commercial Sex Workers (instead of “prostitute” or other words that may have a stigma)
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drugs
Mobile populations	Refers to truck, taxi, and “sidecar” drivers who may be involved in purchasing or selling commercial sex.