

# The role of teacher in Myanmar Proverbs

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## Abstract

Some thinkers said that education is power of life and human welfare. Professor E. B. Tylor (1832–1917, English anthropologist, the founder of anthropology) said that culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, customs, and another capabilities and habits acquired by means as a member of society. In Myanmar culture, there are many proverbs that are related with social, moral, law, business, knowledge and education and so on. The problem is how the teachers in Myanmar play an important role in Myanmar society. Education is the vital component of every culture. Without education, it will be impossible for the development and peace of society. In the process of education, teaching, learning, teacher and learner are reciprocally related. Thus, this paper tries to present the role of the teachers found in Myanmar proverbs.

## Introduction

For the preservation of the cultural values, human beings play an important role. It is noted as to be the relation between culture and way of thinking in a society. Here, the abilities of the people who live in that culture are very important and education can provide people to get these abilities.

Philosophy of education is the study of education concerned with virtually every aspect of the educational enterprise. Most of the philosophers had claimed that education is mainly related with morals, virtue, knowledge, state affairs, society, and culture. In Myanmar society, *Kantaw Min Monastery Sayadaw* (1438–1513) described that the teachers teach the students not only different fields of study but also give guidance or ways and means to achieve material successful life. Philosophy of education seeks to examine the basic concepts of education. It connects the findings of different educational policies based on education. Philosophy, education and philosophy of education are inseparable. Only philosophy of education can support for the development of education. Education can train people to face the future with vision, to be broad and tolerant in outlook, to be seekers after peace, and to consider the rights of others. Mere education or mere teaching is not enough. Teachers are responsible, at least in part, for the kind of education which exists and for the individual and social attitudes which arise from the educative process. According to *Immanuel Kant* (1724–1804, German Philosopher), teachers should not regard the economic or other success of their changes but should center attention upon the fullest possible development of their abilities. Although there

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are many theories of education, most of the philosophers had accepted that education is a set of practical activities connected by the common aim.

### **The Role of Teacher in Myanmar Proverbs**

The proverb “knowledge means to say golden run” is highly valued and accepted in Myanmar society. Golden run is here used as a figure of speech. It is obvious that the teachers are placed in a supreme place by including them in the Five Great Benefactors. Thus, the role taken by the teachers in teaching is highly valued.

The meaning of the teacher derives from *Pali* word “*Sayar*” which means the one gives the cool shade. In Myanmar dictionary, it means “*Sayar*” the definition of which is the one who can give knowledge and can guide others to the right way and thought.

In an age of learning which is overwhelmed by learning, the role of teachers is very important for the emergence of human society that is perpetual in pursuit of knowledge and the appearance of learners who are capable of thinking rationally.

In Myanmar culture, there are many proverbs in dealing with faith, moral, cultural, social and knowledge and so on. Teachers are considered as the great benefactors to the social sphere and the student’s development in Myanmar society. This sense can be found in the following proverbs.

“If the teacher is clever, the pupil will be brilliant.”

It means that a pupil who has been taught by the clever teacher will be complete with knowledge. Because of his quality, he will be famous in his society.

Goodness can come from only the good thing. The teacher himself who is a basic person, therefore, should try to be good and clever in every field. The main responsibility of the teacher is to distribute his knowledge and experiences to his pupils, although there can be different views. Moreover, it can be assumed that the development and survival of human being, society and country also depend on the teacher. The teacher, therefore, should fulfill himself with several knowledge and crafts to be skillful and complete.

“Even roasting fish–paste calls for a teacher’s guidance.”

It means that unless a teacher teaches a pupil the roasting method of fish–paste, he cannot make it truly although how much it is easy to make.

A teacher is necessary for pupils or person of less knowledge. If teachers’ teaching and training cannot be got, even easy work will make a person face the great problems. Unknowing or less knowledge is an enemy for all persons. Myanmar, however, thought that although teacher and knowledge are necessary for a pupil, a teacher should not teach his knowledge easily to his pupils.

“The Apprentice Having Superior Workmanship to the Master.”

“An apprentice who is learning under a vocational trade may become superior than his master.”

Learners must strive to become an outstanding skilled technician by attentively studying technical knowledge under a master. Only then he can become an inventive pupil who is superior to his master. By studying this saying, the teachers should try to teach technical knowledge to their pupils to be more skilled.

“It is easy for the teachers to get good students. It is not easy for the students to get good teachers.”

It means that for the students it is not easy to find the teachers who are replete with knowledge and competence in teaching. In other words, it is not easy to find teachers who are replete with knowledge and who are able to teach effectively. Only then the students acquire knowledge to the fullest extent. The text shows the idea that it is essential to find good teachers who are replete with knowledge in their fields of study and who are able to teach the students inspiringly to arouse their interest.

“The son is dead with too many physicians”

This is a proverbial saying that consulting with many physicians result in the death of a son.

This saying shows the disadvantage of consulting with many physicians with different diagnoses. Methods of teaching students can be different from one person to one another. Due to divergence of teaching, the pupils are unable to decide which is right and which is wrong. As the students are not skilled and cannot rightly decide, he will meet with disadvantages or problem. If the teaching of that teacher is not recognized and neglected, that student will enjoy advantages. Thus, it is important that the method of teaching to produce beneficial results is important.

“One who turns against one’s mentor will suffer from the piercing of the roof the mouth with a spear.”

This proverb is connected with a person who does not recognize the gratitude of his or her teacher tends to meet with danger. Everybody in this world owes gratitude to someone who teaches him knowledge, technical knowledge, skills in archery, skill in playing with spear, etc. When his skill becomes beneficial, he might become conceited and tends to forget his teacher or does not want to recognize him as his teacher. Such an ungrateful person tends to meet with misfortune or dreadful danger. By observing this proverb, all the learners of religion, knowledge, skill in martial arts, etc. should always remember and be grateful to their teachers.

## Conclusion

The teachers are the ones who are capable of rearing the pupils to become good educated citizens who are reliable by the state. Being said so, it is very important to have well qualified teachers for the development of human society.

The meaning of the Good Teacher is defined in *Manle Sayadaw's* (1841-1920) *Magha Deva New verse*,

the one who admonishes the pupils  
with loving kindness and compassion  
whenever he sees the mistakes  
without keeping in mind

It means that the teachers must have only loving kindness and compassion but also guidance the right way and critical thinking to their pupils.

John Dewey (1859-1952, American Philosopher, Psychologist, Educational Reformer), said that the teacher creates practical activities that would guide the students through the problem solving and show its relevance to their lives outside of the classroom.

To be a good teacher, one also needs to become a teacher who has not only enough teaching experience but also can judge mixed blessing for human society, who can consider, who wants to study and who can guide students or learners to understand the real values of human.

Only under such capable guidance of good teachers, there will emerge exemplary good citizens. Only with emergence of exemplary good citizens, can a peaceful and develop human society can built.

In Myanmar culture, there is a saying, "If the teacher is clever, the pupil will be brilliant."

Only if he is a good teacher, he can bear good pupils. Those can be good citizen. As the status of a country is measured by the value of citizens, it is important to bear human society of many abilities. So that, it may be the best human society.

In saying the emergence of good society, it is important that the learners are ardent in learning and good in character. Only then will there emerge good civilized citizens who are contributable to the environment and society, duty, law-abiding, sympathizing, and wanting to raise the dignity of one's race and country.

Only if these appear those kinds of learners who can lead the good society, it can keep abreast of the other countries around the world as the developed one with own culture, having sympathy and it can stand proudly among the countries in the world.

According to description, with the present effect and past effect of being a good teacher or a bad one in the custom, saying, literature and admonition of Myanmar society, it can easily be known how they pay much attention to the concept for good

teacher. Among them, one of the sayings which is because of teachers if one is a bad pupil can accentuate the fact that it is the duty of teachers if there is no best new generation.

Thus, the ability of good well qualified teachers takes plays an important role for the development of a country, for the emergence of a civilized, sympathizing human society and for the emergence of humanitarian environment and social circle.

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### မြန်မာဘာသာကျမ်းကိုးစာရင်း

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| 1။ | သန်းဦး၊ ဦး  | ၂၀၁၃ | <i>မြန်မာ့ပညာရေးအယူအဆ</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။<br>ဆုစာပေတိုက်။                                      |
| 2။ | အောင်သိန်း၊ ဦး<br>(နန်းညွန့်ဆွေတည်းဖြတ်)                          | ၁၉၆၁ | <i>ဟံသာဝတီဆုံးမစာပေါင်းချုပ်</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။<br>ဟံသာဝတီပုံနှိပ်တိုက်                       |
| 3။ | ရဲအောင်၊ ဒေါက်တာ  | ၂၀၁၂ | <i>ဆရာဆိုတာ</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။ ဆုစာအုပ်တိုက်  |
| 4။ | အောင်ကြိုင်၊ ဦး<br>(ပညာတန်ဆောင်)                                  | ၂၀၁၂ | <i>ဆရာဘဝ၊ ဘဝဆရာနှင့်ဆင်ခြင်ပြင်ဆင်ဖွယ်ရာ<br/>အတွေးလှိုင်းများ</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။ လောကသစ်စာပေ  |
| 5။ | သင်းမောင်၊ ဒေါက်တာ  | ၂၀၁၂ | <i>နိုင်ငံကြီးသားအမြဲခေတ်မှီနိုင်ငံရေးသမားနှင့်<br/>ပညာရေး</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။ ကောင်းသန့်စာပေ။ |
| 6။ | မန်လည်<br>(ဆရာတော်ဘုရားကြီး)                                      | ၁၉၈၈ | <i>မဟာသုတကာရီ မဃဒေဝလင်္ကာသစ်နှင့် လိနတ္ထဒီပနီ</i><br>ရန်ကုန်မြို့။ ချိုးဖြူ စာပေပုံနှိပ်တိုက်။ |
| 7။ | ပညာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊<br>မြန်မာစာအဖွဲ့                                | ၁၉၇၉ | <i>မြန်မာအဘိဓာန်အကျဉ်းချုပ်</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။<br>ဖိုတိုလစ်တိုပုံနှိပ်တိုက်။ စာ-၁၊ အတွဲ-၂     |
| 8။ | ဦးပုတ်စိန်၊ ဘီအေ<br>(ဂုဏ်ထူး)၊ ဘီအယ်                              | ၁၉၇၈ | <i>မြန်မာ၊ အင်္ဂလိပ်၊ ပါဠိအဘိဓာန်</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။ ဒေးလီဂေးဇက်<br>စာပုံနှိပ်တိုက်။          |
| 9။ | ရှေးဟောင်းမြန်မာ<br>ပညာရှိပုဂ္ဂိုလ်ဝန်ကြီးတို့<br>ရေးသားစီကုံးသည် | ၁၉၂၆ | <i>ဆုံးမစာပေါင်းချုပ်ကြီး</i> ၊ ရန်ကုန်မြို့။<br>သူရိယသတင်းစာတိုက်လီမိတက်။                     |



