

Lesson 9

Passive

Usage

Passive verbs are not very common in Pali, which has a strong preference for the active except in certain favoured expressions with past participles.

In Lesson 7, we saw how the past passive tense is able to be expressed through the past participle. The **Past Participle is the most frequent form of passive construction**.

For example: *so hato* = 'He was killed.' *Hato* comes from the verb *hata*.

This session deals with a less common way to express the passive voice: **Passive Conjugation** for the passive voice in the **present indicative**.

Present Passive

Formation:

Passive stems are formed with the suffix **ya** or **iya/iya** added to any transitive verb.

Passive Conjugation: formation (-ya-)

• on the present stem:

$v+i\bar{i}-ya$ {gaccha}-īya → gacchīya
 {desaya}-īya → desīya

The newly formed Passive Conjugation

1. *ya* can be added directly when the root ends with a long vowel
2. when the root ends with a short vowel, the vowel will be lengthened.
3. But often, the vowel in the root is dropped, and *iya* is added.

• on the root:

$v+i\bar{i}-ya$	$\sqrt{h\bar{a}}-ya$ → hāya
	$\sqrt{su}-iya$ → sūya
	$\sqrt{h\bar{a}}-iya$ → hiya

The root is usually unchanged, but some roots show a weaker form.

Normally the **root has the same form as in the past participle**. Roots ending in a vowel often lose the vowel.

It is the **stem which shows whether a verb is active or passive**.

Warder cites the present passive of *pa-√hā* ('abandon') as a paradigm for the present indicative passive.

The simple verb *√hā* ("to abandon", "to diminish") may have the unweakened stem *hāya*.

(Root vowel elided)

	singular	plural
3rd person	<i>pahiyati</i> "it is given up"	<i>pahiyanti</i>
2nd person	<i>pahiyasi</i>	<i>pahiyatha</i>
1st person	<i>pahiyami</i>	<i>pahiyama</i>

When the root ends with a consonant, if it is *r* or *h*, *īya* is added, but often it is methathesised and certain sounds are swapped around. This is the remnant of different spoken dialects of Pali.

Root	Stem for passive	verb	meaning
<i>kar</i> (to do)		<i>Kariyati</i> <small>करीयति</small>	it is done (the <i>i</i> may be long or short; another spelling is <i>kayirati</i>)
<i>(ñ)ñā</i> (to know) - (with the prefix <i>(p)pa</i>)		<i>paññāyati</i>	it is understood
<i>dā</i> (to give)		<i>dīyati</i>	it is given

C+iī-ya <i>r, h</i>	√kar-īya → <i>karīya</i>	r+y → <i>yr yy</i>
	→ <i>kayīra</i>	r+iy → <i>yir</i>
	√gah-ya → <i>gayha</i>	h+y → <i>yh</i>

For other consonants (= two consonants together), the *y* sound is assimilated. The result is the doubling of the first consonant. Exceptions are:

- t+y → cc
- th + y → cch
- d + y → jj or dd
- dh + y → jjh or ddh

Assimilation of -y-

C+y → CC

k+y → kk	g+y → gg	n+y → ññ
kh+y → kkh	gh+y → ggh	m+y → mm
c+y → cc	j+y → jj	
ch+y → cch	jh+y → jjh	
t+y → cc	d+y → jj or dd	l+y → ll
th+y → cch	dh+y → jjh or ddh	s+y → ss
p+y → pp	b+y → bb	v+y → bb
ph+y → pph	bh+y → bbh	

The root \sqrt{vid} (= to find)

$\sqrt{vid} + ya \rightarrow vijja$ (= was found)

Often the suffix *ya* is combined with the final consonant of the root, and sometimes its presence is inferred merely from the apparent doubling of this consonant.

For example: the verb \sqrt{vuc} ('speak') becomes *vuccati* (*vuc + ya = vucca-*); \sqrt{han} becomes *haññati* (*han + ya- = hañña-*).

Root	Stem for present passive	verb	meaning
<i>vac</i> (to say)	<i>vuc + ya = vucca-</i>	<i>vuccati</i>	it is said, it is called (cf. the past participle: <i>vutta</i>)
<i>han</i> (to kill, strike)	<i>han + ya- = hañña-</i>	<i>haññati</i>	he is killed
<i>(d)dis</i> (to see)	<i>dis + ya = dissa???</i>	<i>dissati</i>	he is seen

\sqrt{labh} -ya → labbha
 \sqrt{han} -ya → hañña
 \sqrt{vac} -ya → vucca
 \sqrt{vid} -ya → vijja

Once we get the Passive Conjugation stem, then we have to conjugate it into the Present Indicative = Passive Indicative.

Passive Indicative

\sqrt{vac} -ya → vucca-ti

idam vuccati dukkham
 This is called misery.

personal endings

pers.	sgl.	pl.
3 rd	-ti	-nti
2 nd	-si	-tha
1 st	(ā)mi	(ā)ma

{dese}-īya → desīya-ti

bhagavatā upāsake dhammo desīyati
 the dhamma is taught
 (to) the laypeople
 by the blessed one

personal endings

pers.	sgl.	pl.
3 rd	-ti	-nti
2 nd	-si	-tha
1 st	(ā)mi	(ā)ma

The example above shows that the **logical agent** of the verb is in the **Instrumental Case** (*bhagavatā* here).

But it is common for the agent to be omitted to create an indefinite or impersonal sense. E.g.

personal endings

pers.	sgl.	pl.
3 rd	-ti	-nti
2 nd	-si	-tha
1 st	(ā)mi	(ā)ma

vi-√muc-ya → vimucca-**ti**

virāgena vimuccati
through dispassion, He *is* freed

Note the different formation of the passive voice in English, which uses an auxiliary verb + past participle. The auxiliary verb will indicate the tense.

But in Pali, the suffix *ya* is a derivational affix that alters the verb to create a separate passive stem, which theoretically at least, can be inflected into any tense or mood. Therefore, the Passive Stem is sometimes called a secondary conjugation or a secondary derivation. Anyway, these inflections are rare on the passive stem.

{ passive stem } vimucca	-ti	pres. ind.	(he/it) is freed
	-tu	imp.	let... be freed
	-eyya	opt.	(he/it) might be freed
	-i	aor.	(he/it) was freed
	-issa-ti	fut.	(he/it) will be freed
	-issa	cond.	(he/it) were to be freed
	-mān-o	pres. pt.	while being freed
	-itabb-aṃ	fut. pass. pt.	(he/it) should be freed
	-itvā	absol.	having been freed
	-ituṃ	infin.	to be freed

The most frequent are: 1. the Passive Indicative (this lesson), 2. the Aorist, and 3. the Present Participle.

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	-eyya	opt.	(he/it) might be freed
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	-itvā	absol.	having been freed

Passive Voice in the Past (2. the Aorist)

We saw in Lesson 4, **past passives** are usually made with the past participle, they are sometimes made by **adding aorist endings to the passive stem**. Mostly found in the third person.

Warder gives the example of *haññimsu*: 'They were killed.'

Passive Aorist

aorist endings		
pers.	sgl.	pl.
3 rd	-i	-imsu
2 nd	-i	-ittha
1 st	-im	-imha/ā

vimucc-i

āsavehi cittaṃ vimucci

from pollutions, the mind was freed

The *ehi* ending in the *āsavehi* above looks like an Instrumental Case, but it is in fact an ablative, which gives a sense of separation. ([in some languages] in the form that a noun, a pronoun or an adjective can take to show, for example, who or what something is done by or where something comes from) In English, we would use the preposition 'from'.

3. Passive Present Participle

The affix *-mana* when applied to a present stem is used to create a present participle.

It is more common to see *-mana* applied to a passive stem to create a Passive Present Participle.

desaya + māna = teaching
desīya + māna = being taught

vucca + māna = being spoken
kariya + māna = being done

A **present participle passive** is formed by adding the suffix *māna* to the passive stem and inflecting as a participle: *kayira māna* = "being done", *hañña māna* = 'being killed'.

satthena hañña māno puriso dukkhaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti.
= 'A man feels pain as he is killed by a sword.'

English doesn't have a passive present participle, but it uses a present progressive auxiliary verb to give the passive meaning ('being done', 'while being done').

Being a participle, the present participle needs to decline to agree with the subject in number, case and gender.

So, *vimucca + māna* → *vimuccamāno* to agree with a first person singular nominative masculine

Passive Present Participle

	Masculine -a		Neuter -a		feminine -a	
	sgl	pl	sgl	pl	sgl	pl
Nom	-o	-ā	-am	-āni	-ā	-ā
Acc	-am	-e			-am	-āyo
Inst	-ena	-ehi	-ena	-ehi	-āya	-āhi

vimucca-mān-o
being freed

vimuccamāno uggacchiṃ
being freed, I arose

The next example, *kattha* is an adverb meaning 'where'. We have a passive present participle *pahīyamānā*, which agrees with the subject *taṇhā*. The main verb is a passive verb *pahiyati* (which, of course, agrees with the subject *taṇhā*)

Passive Present Participle

	Masculine -a		Neuter -a		feminine -a	
	sgl	pl	sgl	pl	sgl	pl
Nom	-o	-ā	-am	-āni	-ā	-ā
Acc	-am	-e			-am	-āyo
Inst	-ena	-ehi	-ena	-ehi	-āya	-āhi

pa-hīya-mān-ā
being abandoned

taṇhā kattha pahīyamānā pahiyati
where, while being abandoned,
(is) thirst abandoned?

VOcab

Feminine Nouns in -ā

Feminine nouns in ā have the following inflections in the first three cases:

	Masculine -a		Neuter -a		feminine -ā	
	sgl	pl	sgl	pl	sgl	pl
Nom	-o	-ā	-aṃ	-āni	-ā	-āyo
Acc	-aṃ	-e			-aṃ	
Voc	-a	-ā	-a		-e	
Inst	-ena	-ehi	-ena	-ehi	-āya	-āhi

Note that the long ā ending doesn't change in the feminine nominative singular. Remember the inflection of the pronoun *sā* = she.

	singular	plural
nominative	<i>kathā</i> कथा = "talk", "story"	<i>kathā</i> or <i>kathāyo</i>
accusative	<i>kathaṃ</i>	
instrumental	<i>kathāya</i>	<i>kathāhi</i>
Vocative	<i>kathe</i>	<i>kathā or kathāyo</i>

The feminine of the pronoun (*e*)*tad* is (*e*)*sā*. It is inflected as follows:

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	<i>sā</i>	<i>tā</i>
Accusative	<i>taṃ</i>	<i>tā</i>
Instrumental	<i>tāya</i>	<i>tāhi</i>

The feminine of the pronoun *idaṃ* is *ayaṃ*. It is inflected as follows:

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	<i>ayaṃ</i>	<i>imā</i>
Accusative	<i>imaṃ</i>	<i>imā</i>
Instrumental	<i>imāya</i>	<i>imāhi</i>

noun	meaning
<i>avijjā</i> อวิชา	ignorance
<i>upāsikā</i> อุบาสิกา	female lay disciple
<i>taṇhā</i> ตัณหา	desire, "thirst"
<i>devata</i> เทวดา	deity, divine being, spirit
<i>paññā</i> ปัญญา	understanding, wisdom
<i>parisā</i>	assembly
<i>mālā</i> มालา	garland

noun	meaning
<i>vācā</i> วาจา	speech
<i>vijjā</i> วิชา	science, knowledge
<i>vedanā</i> เวทนา	sensation
<i>saññā</i> สัญญา	perception
<i>sālā</i> ศาลา	hall

Verb of the first conjugation

stem	verb	meaning
<i>apa-(k)ham</i> (the prefix <i>apa</i> means "off", "away")	<i>apakkamati</i>	he goes off, he withdraws

Noun

noun	meaning
<i>ajo</i>	goat

Indeclinables

indeclinable	meaning
<i>bhante</i>	sir! (polite address to a Buddhist monk)
<i>vā</i>	or, either (enclitic, used like <i>ca</i> in Vocabulary section of Part 4)
<i>saccaṃ</i>	it is true that, is it true that? (whether this is interrogative can appear only from the context - and no doubt from the intonation in speaking)