

வாங்க, தமிழ் படிக்கலாம்
vAnga, thamizh padikkalAm

Lesson No. 6

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May 22, 2021

Hi everyone,

We have completed all the letters with dual sounds. This week we will talk about three more letters. One of them is a simple one but the other two pose a different kind of challenge which you have not come across so far.

Let's review what we have covered so far.

a	அ		n	ந்	ன்	th	த்
A	ஆ	aa	N	ண்		dh	த்
b	ப்		o	ஒ		ch	ச்
			O	ஓ		zh	ழ்
c	க்		p	ப்		gn	ஞ்
d	ட்		q	ஃ		nG	ங்
e	எ		r	ர்			
E	ஏ		R	ற்			
f	ஃப்		s	ச்			
g	க்		t	ட்			
h			u	உ			
			U	ஊ	oo		
i	இ	ய்	v	வ்			
l	ஈ	ee					
j			w	வ்			
k	க்		x				
l	ல்		y	ய்			
L	ள்						
m	ம்		z	ழ்			

	Already covered
	Covered in this lesson

Not bad, we are making good progress.

-oOo-

An overview of the three letters for this week.

	ர், ர	ற், ற	ய், ய
Thanglish letter	r, ra	R, Ra	y, ya
Pronunciation	"ir", "ra"	"rr", "tr", "dr"	"yiy", "ya"
can it come in the beginning of a word?	varum, AnA varAdhu	No	Yes

What is this "varum, AnA varAdhu"?

Let's watch this clip;



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hho-KlG3kg>

This famous contradictory statement conveys a very profound truth. *It is seldom Black or White; there will always be Grey.*

In life we will face many situations like this. Those of you who are taking this Course are also in that situation. If someone asks you "do you know Thamizh", you probably would say, "theriyum, AnA, theriyAdhu"; because you can speak but can't read or write.

How is this relevant for "ர"?

As per Thamizh grammar rules, a word cannot begin with "ர". But, you would find many words beginning with it; e.g. ராமன், ரவி, ரணம், ரத்தம், ரப்பர்.

A clear case of "varum, AnA varAdhu". To be more precise, "varakkUdAthu, AnA varum". But why this rule? What is wrong if it is permitted to be at the beginning of a word?

I couldn't get a logical convincing answer for this for a long time. One day, it struck me when I was narrating the story of Valmiki to my grandson.

If you Google for Valmiki's story, you will find many different versions. The version I heard from my father goes like this. Valmiki was a hunter/dacoit before he became the Sage Valmiki. Sage Naradha wanted to reform him and asked him to chant "Rama, Rama, Rama". But Valmiki couldn't do that. His tongue was incapable of producing that sound.

Then Sage Naradha thought of a way to make it easy for him. He asked Valmiki to chant "Mara, Mara, Mara". Valmiki could do this easily because, "Mara" meaning "tree" was an everyday word for him. He had absolutely no difficulty in chanting "Mara, Mara, Mara", which ultimately resulted in "Rama, Rama, Rama".

Do you realize the connection now? For an untrained tongue, it is difficult to start the tongue rolling with "ra". But when you add a "ma", it becomes simple. For the tongue to change from "ma" to "ra" is easy. Try saying "ra" and "mara". Do you see the difference?

Now, try saying these lines from a well-known Thamizh Verse.

ரரரரர ரரரரர ரரரரர ரரர	rararara rararara rararara rarara
ரிரிரிரி ரிரிரிரி ரிரிரிரி ரிரிரி	riririri riririri riririri ririri

It is a real challenger for any of us. Now we can understand Valmiki's problem!

No wonder, our forefathers thought of all this and made such rules to make it easy for us.

-oOo-

ர், ர

"ர்" sounds like the "ra" in "**ra**sam". I hope "rasam" is a familiar word for you. I couldn't think of any English word starting with "ra" and sounding like the "**ru**" in "**ru**n", "**ru**st", "**ru**bbber", etc.

The combinations are,

ர்	ர	ரா	ரி	ரீ	ரு	ரூ	ரெ	ரே	ரை	ரொ	ரோ	ரௌ
r	ra	rA	ri	ree	ru	roo	re	rE	rai	ro	rO	rau
"ir"	"ruh"	"raw"	"ri"	"ree"	"ru"	"roo"	"reh"	"ray"	"rye"	"roh"	"row"	"rau"

Type all the above combinations, while pronouncing each letter loudly, and get used to both the sound and the letter.

You can use the Comments section of the YouTube or the practice page for Lesson 5.

<http://www.homeopoonga.com/lesson-5-typing-practice/>

Remember, if you are a desktop user, you should have Azhagi running and you should press ALT 3, to type in Thamizh. If you are a phone user, you have to switch to Azhagi (ஒலி பெயர்ப்பு).

ற், ரு

Generally "ற்" sounds like the "ர்" but a little more heavy, something like "**rra**", although you don't say it with so much rolling of the tongue. It is ok even if it sounds like "ர்"

Although "ற்" has three different sounds depending on the context, we will use the "**rra**" sound for the moment. We will see the other one's later.

ற்	ரு	றா	றி	ரீ	ரு	ரூ	ரெ	ரே	ரை	ரொ	ரோ	ரௌ
R	Ra	RA	Ri	Ree	Ru	Roo	Re	RE	Rai	Ro	RO	Rau
"irr"	"rruh"	"rraw"	"rri"	"rree"	"rru"	"rroo"	"rreh"	"rray"	"rrie"	"rroh"	"rrow"	"rrau"

Type all the above combinations, while pronouncing each letter loudly, and get used to both the sound and the letter.

Example Word Collection

Since "ர" and "ற" have very similar sounds, we have look at the words pertaining to both the letters side by side to understand and appreciate how the change in the letter (and sound) results in drastic differences in their meaning. In spoken Thamizh, no one would be able to notice whether you used "ர" or "ற". But, when you write, usage of a wrong letter would be very glaring¹.

Click on the speaker icons of "கரை" and "கறை" to listen to their pronunciation. You will hardly notice any difference.

கரை  ² karai	bank (of river)	கறை  kaRai	stain
அரு aru	precious	அறு aRu	1. cut, snap, 2. saw (with a saw) 3. pertaining to six
அரம் aram	file (tool for filing metals)	அறம் aRam	moral or religious duty
அரை arai	1. half 2. hip	அறை aRai	1. room 2. slap
ஆரு Aru	who (colloquial)	ஆறு ARu	1. Six 2. River 3. cool down
இரை irai	prey, bait	இறை iRai	God
ஈர் eeru	nit	ஈறு eeRu	gum (tooth)
உரி uri	peel	உறி uRi	suspended pot
உரை urai	1. say 2. rub 3. explanatory notes	உறை uRai	1. sheath 2. freeze
ஏரு (ஏர்) Eru	plough	ஏறு ERu	climb
கோரு kOru	request	கோறு kORu	kill
கரி kari	charcoal	கறி kaRi	meat

¹ This is similar to "homophones" in English; words with similar sound but different spellings and meanings. Some examples are: new & knew, rain & reign, pair & pare, etc.

² This and all other sound files used in the lesson are from <https://commons.wikimedia.org>

மரை marai	screw thread	மறை maRai	The Vedas
மரம் maram	tree	மறம் maRam	bravery

The above list is just a small sample to impress upon you why it is important to use the correct letter.

Whenever you write a word with "ra", check with Google to make sure you are using the correct "ra". Type the Thamizh word (not Thanglish) in search bar.

Do you see that although the pronunciation is not much different, the change in the letter results in major differences in meaning?

ராமன், ரவி, ரணம், ரத்தம், ரப்பர்

What about those words we mentioned in the beginning?

Simple! Just implement the concept of "mara vs rama".

So, for words beginning with "ர", just place an appropriate letter like "அ" or "இ" before "ர".

Let's see some examples.

ராமன் rAman	becomes	இராமன் irAman	Lord Rama
ரவி ravi	becomes	இரவி iravi	Sun
ரணம் raNam	becomes	இரணம் iraNam	wound
ரத்தம் raththam	becomes	இரத்தம் iraththam	blood
ரப்பர் rabbar	becomes	இரப்பர் irabbar	rubber, eraser
ரங்கநாதன் ranganAthan	becomes	அரங்கநாதன் aranganAthan	Lord Vishnu in Srirangam (Thiruvaram in Thamizh)

Different sounds of ற

"ற" takes different sounds depending on the context.

Look at the example words given below. When there is a double occurrence, its sounds like "tr", but not as hard as that.

Listen to the sound of சுற்றம். Click on the speaker icon. You will notice it is not really "sutrum", which makes your tongue fold back; you say it without folding your tongue.

Listen to the sound and practice what I explained; you will understand the difference.

கற்றை ³ katrai	bundle	சுற்றம் ⁴ sutram	relatives	பற்றாக்குறை ⁵ patrAkkuRai	shortage
வெற்றி ⁴ vetri	victory			பொற்றாமரை ⁵ potrAmarai	Golden Lotus
சற்று satru	a little	சற்று satru	round	பற்று ⁵ patru	1. attachment 2. catch hold of

One peculiar thing happens here. So far, the Thanglish word I give below the Thamizh word also happened to be the phonetic way of writing.

Here, since "R" represents "ற்", I should have written "saRRu". But if I write it that way, you wouldn't know that it is supposed to be pronounced as "satru". So, I gave importance to the phonetic spelling.

The beauty of Azhagi is, whether you type "satru" or "saRRu", it will convert it to "சற்று" and make it easy for you.

Although "satru" is an option, please use "saRRu". You need to remember it is "சற்று" and not "சட்ரு".⁶

-oOo-

³ Used more commonly as கத்தை (kaththai)

⁴ Did you notice, it sounds like the English "victory"?

⁵ Applying a paste of சுக்கு (dry ginger) on forehead to get relief from headache is also called (சுக்கு) பற்று.

⁶ I have seen at times, Azhagi converting "satru" to "சட்ரு". So, stick to "saRRu"

What happens if "ற" is preceded by "ன்"?

Here it takes a different sound. Click on the speaker icons and listen to the sound.

நன்றி❦ nandri	thanks	கன்று❦ kandru	calf (of cow)	மன்றம்❦ mandram	A place where people meet
அன்று andru	that day	இன்று indru	today	என்று endru	which day

When "ற" is preceded by "ன்", its sound becomes "dr".

Why does it happen for "ன்" and not for other letters? We will look at it later. For the moment, just remember the pattern.

Here also, did you observe that I have used the phonetic spelling for Thanglish? I have not written it as "anRu". Although "anRu" also sounds correct, to make it very clear, I used "andru".

Azhagi converts both "anRu" and "andru" to "அன்று". I would advise you to stick to "anRu" just to keep reinforcing the memory, it is "ற"

To summarize, "ற" takes generally "rr" sound, changes to "tr" sound in some context, and "dr" in some other context.

Is it "ரி" or "ரீ"

Old	ரி	ர	ரா	ரி	ரீ	ரு	ரூ	ரெ
New	ர்	ர	ரா	ரி	ரீ	ரு	ரூ	ரெ
	r	ra	rA	ri	ree	ru	roo	re

Did you notice the small extension at the bottom of "ரீ" is missing in the top row, for some letters? The top row is the traditional way of writing the letters. The bottom row is the new rationalized way. When you type in your PC or phone, you may get one of the above.

I typed "ரி" and "ரீ" using the same "ree" combination. Can you? If you could, post it in the comments column of YouTube.

ய், ய

"ய" sounds like the "ya". Not much complication there.

These are the combinations

ய்	ய	யா	யி	யீ	யு	யூ	யெ	யே	யை	யொ	யோ	யௌ
y	ya	yA	yi	yee	yu	yoo	ye	yE	yai	yo	yO	yau
"yiy"	"yuh"	"yaw"	"yi"	"yee"	"yu"	"yoo"	"yeh"	"yay"	"yai"	"yoh"	"yow"	"yau"

Type all the above combinations, while pronouncing each letter loudly, and get used to both the sound and the letter.

Let's see how "ya" is used in words. Very few words begin with "ய".

யா yA	whichever ⁷	யார் yAr	who	யான் yaan	I (old literary usage)
யாம்	I (plural, old literary usage)	யாவர்	who (old literary usage)	யாது	which (old literary usage)
யாதவர் yAdhavar	shepherd community	யானை yaanai	elephant		

Did you notice that all those words begin with "யா"? As per Thamizh grammar rules, other variations of "ய" are forbidden. But for borrowed words, there is a workaround. An appropriate vowel would precede "ய". Look at the examples below.

யந்திரம் yanthiram	becomes	இயந்திரம் iyanthiram	machine
யேசு yEsu	becomes	இயேசு iyEsu	Jesus
யுத்தம் yuththam	becomes	உயுத்தம் uyuththam	war

⁷ If you are not convinced, Google for the meaning of the Kural "யாகாவார் ஆயினும் நாகாக்க. ."

Over a period of time, because of the influx and proliferation of borrowed words, words are used even without the support of a preceding vowel; e.g. யதுகுலம், யமுனை, யவனர், யவன ராணி, and so on.

In the middle of words, "ய" has no restrictions.

அய்யா ayyA	Sir	ஆயா AyA	Grandma	இயக்கம் iyakkam	movement, direction (cinema)
ஈயம் eeyam	Lead	உயரம் uyaram	height	ஐயா aiyA	Sir
ஓயாமல் OyAmal	non-stop, without interruption	அய்யோ ayyO	sound of exclamation	கையொப்பம் kaiyoppam	signature
கயிறு kayiru	rope	வயிறு vayiru	stomach	தயிர் thayir	curds
பயிர் payir	crops	மயிர் mayir	hair	உயிர் uyir	life
ஆயி Ayi	mother	மெய் mei	truth	ஓய்வு Oivu	rest
தாய் thAi	mother	சேய் sEi	child	பாய் pAi	mat

Did you notice, in the last few words, something is different?

"y" is missing!

I should have written "thAy" or "sEy". But that looks a little strange and not very phonetic. So, I used "thAi" and "sEi".

Similarly, the word ஓய்வு. I should have written "Oyvu". But "Oivu" is more intuitive and phonetic.

Azhagi, as usual, takes care of all those variations.

Reading Practice

Let's have some reading practice. I have collected together all the words we came across in this lesson. I have removed the meanings and the Thanglish guide.

Hope you can read them without referring back to the Thanglish version.

Practice reading them until you become fully conversant.

அய்யா	இன்று	கரை	மயிர்
அய்யோ	ஈயம்	கறி	மரம்
அரம்	ஈர்	கறை	மரை
அரு	ஈறு	கன்று	மறம்
அரை	உயரம்	கையொப்பம்	மறை
அறம்	உயிர்	கோரு	மன்றம்
அறு	உயுத்தம்	கோறு	மெய்
அறை	உரி	சற்று	யந்திரம்
அன்று	உரை	சுற்றம்	யாதவர்
ஆயா	உறி	சுற்று	யாது
ஆயி	உறை	சேய்	யாம்
ஆரு	என்று	தாய்	யார்
ஆறு	ஏரு (ஏர்)	நன்றி	யாவர்
இயக்கம்	ஏறு	பயிர்	யானை
இயந்திரம்	ஐயா	பற்றாக்குறை	யான்
இயேசு	ஓய்வு	பற்று	யுத்தம்
இரை	கயிறு	பாய்	யேசு
இறை	கரி	பொற்றாமரை	

Challenge Time

Get ready for the challenge. It is the same "Read, Record, Playback and Transcribe" challenge. You know what to do. We have gone through this earlier in great detail.

Get ready to start recording.

The list of words is in the next page. I have jumbled up the words.

Read one column of words at a time, from the list on the next page and record it. Do it with clear and crisp pronunciation with a brief pause between the words.

Now that words with "ர" and "ற" sound very similar, how would you distinguish the word when you play it back? So, for such similar sounding words, after you read the word, read the meaning also. For example, while reading "அரம்", read its meaning ("file") also. From its meaning, you should be able to decipher whether to use "ர" or "ற"⁸.

Play the recording, listen to the words and type them. You can pause and rewind as many times as you want.

After you are done, compare your typed word with the original.

Did you get all the words correctly? Remember, this time the challenge is to get the correct "ர" or "ற". The words sound the same but you have to type the "ர" or "ற" depending on the meaning of the word. Unless you remember which one has to come for which word, it is difficult.

Since there are very few words, do practice until you get it all correct.

After you complete the first column, continue with the remaining columns. Don't relent until you have got all the words correctly.

This is a wonderful way of getting to know your r's and R's.

Please take up the challenge and complete it.

⁸ You might get a bright idea to add a hint as "chinna ra" and "peria ra", instead of reading the meaning. Please don't do that. Let your brain attach the letter to the meaning of the word.

யாதவர்	மறம் (bravery)	உயுத்தம்	இன்று
தாய்	உரி (peel)	யானை	இயந்திரம்
பற்று (attachment)	உரை (rub)	கன்று	இரை (prey)
உறி (pot)	பாய்	ஆயா	உயரம்
உறை(sheath)	ஈறு (gum)	பற்றாக்குறை	ஐயா
அரம் (file)	யந்திரம்	அரு (precious)	ஆரு (who)
யாழ்	உயிர்	நன்றி	கறை (stain)
யேசு	ஆயி	சுற்றம்	மெய்
அறம் (moral)	மன்றம்	சுற்று	மயிர்
கறி (meat)	கரை (bank)	ஓயாமல்	யுத்தம்
யான்	இயேசு	கரி (charcoal)	யாம்
கயிறு	மரை (thread)	சற்று	இயக்கம்
அறு (six)	யாது	கோறு (kill)	பயிர்
ஓய்வு	ஏரு (ஏர்)	யாவர்	யார்
சேய்	(plough)	ஈர் (nit)	என்று
போற்றி	மரம்	அறை (room)	மறை (veda)
கோரு	ஈயம்	ஏறு (climb)	அரை (half)
(request)	இறை (God)	ஆறு (river)	அய்யா
	அன்று	அய்யோ	

Time to say, Bye for now.

We have made good progress. In few more lessons, we should be finishing the introduction to all the Thamizh Alphabets, before we move on to reading and writing small sentences.

Please do practice whatever I have been suggesting. Just reading the lesson is not sufficient if you want the full benefit of the time that you are spending now. Everything will look very simple and clear now. Very soon, it will all evaporate and you may have to start all over again. So, do not neglect hands-on typing practice.

Even more important is the Read, Record, Playback and Transcribe challenge. This is where you will make sure you retain what you learnt.

As always, I am open to suggestions. Let us make this journey a pleasant one for every one of us.

Until next week,

Best Wishes to you all,

Sundararajan

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