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Vijayadashami is usually a very special day to start, any related to Vidya. It is very auspicious to start Akshara Abhyasa [अक्षर अभ्यास अक्षर अभ्यास] at this day.

Traditionally, Children are made to write the letter "अ अ", and start their education.

So, in this auspicious day of Vijayadashami, lets start our lessons on Grantha Lipi. :-)

We'll start our lesson with the Vowels a.k.a Svara-s. [स्वराः स्वरः - स्वरः]

Sanskrit has 14 Svara-s and 2 Ubhayākṣara-s [उभयाक्षर उभयाक्षर] that go along with the Svara-s.

The 14 Svāra-s in order are:

a अ अ

क

ā आ आ

क

i इ इ

इ

ī ई ई

ई

u ூ ௓

உ

ū ளு ௓

உள

ṽ « ṽ ṽ

ஃ

ḷ « ṽ ṽ

ஃ

ḷ « ! ḷ

ள

आ॑ ई॒ लृ॑

आ॑

e ए॑ ऎ

ए॑

ai ङ॑ ऐ

ऐ॑

o ऋ॑ ओ

ऋ॑

au ऌ॑ ऎ॑ औ

ऌ॑

As you would have noted, some letters are same as that in Tamil and some are similar to that of Tamil.
Lets sum up the similar letters:

Same letters as in Tamil:

உ உள

Letters similar to that in Tamil:

ஆ கூ ஈ ஶ

ஏ ஊ ஒ ட

ஒள டள

Therefore, you would need to remember, only the following distinct forms.

அ கூ ரு « ட ஐ ஶெள

The other letters are only used very rarely, learn them at your own pace :-)

ஐ ள ளு

Pronunciation of Letters

I want to specifically write about the pronunciation of the following 4 letters. The other letters have the same pronunciation as in Tamil.

ஐ - Must be pronounced similar to the 'ரு' in கி'ரு'ஷ்ணன்.

Approximately, it has a pronunciation between /ri/ and /ru/

ஐ - It is the longer counterpart of the above letter.

ள - Similar to the pronunciation of ஐ , but with an /l/ sound instead of /r/.

It is highly erroneous to pronounce it as /lri/ as some people do.

ளு - The longer variant of the above letter

I end the lesson with this. Next week, we can see about the *Ubhayākṣara*-s in detail.

Wouldn't it be fair, to end the lesson without home work :-P. Try identifying the Akshara-s in the below jumbled text.

ளஃ ஹ ஃ ள

ள ஃ ள ள

ள ஃ ள ள

|| யஃஃ ள ள ள ||
