Lesson 6.A

The symbols for the consonants inherently include a following **a** vowel, for example बं (**ba**) is the symbol for the the consonant **b** together with a following short (**hrasva**) **a**. Thus the word **bala** (strength) is written बल. Note that the characters are written left to right, like the Roman, and that the horizontal line links the letters together.

6.A.1   Vowels after Consonants

The short vowel **a** (अ) is never written unless it begins a word; for example **abala** (weakness) is written अबल. (The 'a-' prefix to a noun usually means negation, rather like the English 'un-'.)

All the vowel forms given earlier, occur only at the beginning of a word. Where the vowel following the consonant is other than **a**, this is indicated by an embellishment on the consonant itself. The written form thus resembles the oral form, maintaining the principle that a consonant can only be sounded together with a vowel. The forms indicating the various following vowels are:

ब	ba	बा	bā
बि	bi	बी	bī
बु	bu	बू	bū
बृ	bṛ	बॄ	bṝ
बॢ	bḷ	बॣ	bḹ
बे	be	बै	bai
बो	bo	बौ	bau

These vowel signs are used with all consonants (**ka** through **ha**), but note these exceptions:

रु	ru	रू	rū	हृ	hṛ

Where the embellishment is above the letter itself (with or without the addition of a following vertical bar), namely for **i ī e o ai au**, these should link to the character where it joins the top horizontal bar, and where the character meets the bar more than once, to the rightmost junction. For example:
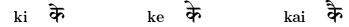
कि ki   णे ṇe

These syllables are connected together to form words: they are literally connected by the horizontal bar. For example:

devanāgarī	देवनागरी
mātṛkā	मातृका
vadāmi	वदामि
veda	वेद
gītā	गीता
guru	गुरु

6.A.2   History of Vowel Embellishment

It bothers some students that, in a script read from left to right, there should be the seeming anomaly that **ki** (कि) for example, is written back to front as it were, with the **i**-sign before the consonant.

Originally the embellishment for **i** after a consonant had no down stroke at all, so that **ki ke kai** were written as:

ki के   ke के   kai कै

However, as personality tends to intrude into handwriting, it could prove difficult to distinguish between **ki** and **ke**, especially if the 'flag' was written somewhere between the two positions.

To solve this problem, the downstroke was added for **ki**.

Whether this is true or not, is debatable, but it does make a nice story!

Lesson 6.B

6.B.1   Sentence Structure: English and Sanskrit

In English speech or writing, the order of words shows their connection or relationship to the whole sentence. For example, in the simple sentence,

desire limits the mind,

the information as to which is the limiter and which the limited, is given by the position of the words in relation to the verb. This is an important point:

in a sentence, a word's physical position (in time or space),
reflects its subtle position (the relationship or part that it plays).

Now, a word may be placed before or after the verb — but these are the only two possibilities, before or after, and thus can indicate only two relationships, namely subject and object. The subject comes before an active verb, and the object after it. (The order is reversed for a passive verb, e.g. the mind is limited by desire.)

In order to show the relationship in a more complete sentence, such as,

desire limits the mind by attachment,

we make use of a phrase containing a preposition (in our example 'by') to indicate the relationship of the word 'attachment' to the activity of limiting.

But notice the operation of the preposition — 'pre-position' — it is an element which is placed before ('pre-') to give 'position' to the word, that is, to indicate its relationship to the activity. Using prepositional phrases we can thus enlarge our sentence, as for example,

in the waking state desire limits the mind from the universal to the particular by attachment.

Now we can split up this sentence into its core subject-verb-object, and a number of related phrases:

| in the waking state | desire limits the mind | from the universal | to the particular | by attachment | .

We may now shuffle these components around in any order and still retain the meaning: in doing so, we may well lose some clarity, or we may even sound poetic, for example:

| from the universal | to the particular | desire limits the mind | in the waking state | by attachment |.

The problem with these prepositional phrases is that it is not at all clear whether they are related to the the activity of the whole sentence (i.e. to the verb), or are merely qualifying one of the nouns. For example, the intention was to indicate that the mind suffers limitation/restriction/reduction from its natural open state of universality to the confined state when identified with the particular, however, other interpretations are possible: the phrases | from the universal | to the particular | in the first of the two split up sentences may be construed as qualifying the word 'mind' and thus be understood as a range of separate minds 'from gods to dogs'; in the second of these split up sentences these phrases could be viewed as qualifying the word 'desire' and mean a range of desires 'from the general to the personal'.

The phrases can thus be re-arranged to produce all sorts of misunderstandings, so let us be clear that the intended meaning of the other two phrases is that 'attachment' is the instrument/means/method by which the mind is limited, and that the 'waking state' is the circumstance where/when the limitation takes place.

In an inflected language (one that uses case endings) the relationship to the verb is shown by a suffix appended to the word; our sentence would thus become something like:

| waking state $_{IN}$ | desire $_{SUBJECT}$ limits $_{VERB}$ mind $_{OBJECT}$ | universal $_{FROM}$ | particular $_{TO}$ | attachment $_{BY}$ |.

There are two points to note here: firstly, the subject and object also have endings to show their relationship; and secondly, the word endings indicate the relationship to the verb by definition. All the words in the sentence are quite independent of their position (order or arrangement) which is one limitation in a non-inflected language like English; but more importantly, the relationship to the verb is precisely defined, and thus minimizes the possibility of misunderstanding.

In Sanskrit there are seven case endings: the sixth indicates a relation to another noun in the sentence, and the other case endings indicate the relationship to the verb.

It matters not whether we give these case endings names or numbers, provided that the relationship is clearly defined. Using the Sanskrit numerical system, our sentence becomes:

| waking state$_7$ | desire$_1$ limits$_{\text{VERB}}$ mind$_2$ | universal$_5$ | particular$_4$ | attachment$_3$ | .

In fact Sanskrit uses both names and numbers for these relationships: it names the relationships (subtle) when defining them, and numbers the actual phonic suffix endings (physical), and then associates the two according to circumstance; for example, when a verb changes from active to passive:

       desire$_1$ limits$_{\text{ACTIVE}}$ mind$_2$ (desire limits the mind)

       mind$_1$ limits$_{\text{PASSIVE}}$ desire$_3$ (the mind is limited by desire).

The affix to the verb indicates tense, mood, person, and number, as well as voice.

In English, the words marked with '1' in these two sentences are both called the subject of the sentence; this accords with the Sanskrit **prathamā-vibhakti** (first case ending). However, in Sanskrit the agent (**kartṛ**) is the initiator, having the power to bring about the action: with an active verb the **kartṛ** is expressed in **prathamā**, but with a passive verb **kartṛ** is expressed by **tṛtīyā**; similarly the **karman** (that most directly aimed at by the **kartṛ**) is expressed in **dvitīyā** and **prathamā** respectively. Thus **kartṛ** and **karman** name the relationship, whereas **prathamā** (and English 'subject') etc. merely indicate that relationship. Like the **vibhakti** adorning a word, so the clothing of a stage actor indicates his role: the crown is not the king, but is worn by the actor playing the role of king.

English is also sensitive to pauses between phrases, and these too can change the relationship and the whole meaning of the sentence. For example:

       Scripture says desire limits the mind,

       Scripture, says desire, limits the mind.

The basic punctuation marks in English are the comma, semicolon, colon, and full stop, which indicate pauses of increasing length.

A fully inflected language like Sanskrit, being inherently clearer, has no need of these embellishments; Sanskrit uses only two punctuation marks, the **virāma** (।) and **pūrṇavirāma** (॥) to indicate respectively the halfway point and end of a stanza of verse. In prose they are used to indicate the end of a sentence and the end of a paragraph respectively.

6.B.2   Noun Gender

The nouns considered thus far are all masculine (**puṃ-liṅga**); the paradigms below are for the neuter (**napuṃsaka-liṅga**) noun **phala** 'fruit', and the feminine (**strī-liṅga**) noun **bālā** 'girl'.

	eka-vacana	dvi-vacana	bahu-vacana
prathamā	phalam	phale	phalāni
sambodhana prathamā	he phala	he phale	he phalāni
dvitīyā	phalam	phale	phalāni
tṛtīyā	phalena	phalābhyām	phalaiḥ
caturthī	phalāya	phalābhyām	phalebhyaḥ
pañcamī	phalāt	phalābhyām	phalebhyaḥ
ṣaṣṭhī	phalasya	phalayoḥ	phalānām
saptamī	phale	phalayoḥ	phaleṣu

	eka-vacana	dvi-vacana	bahu-vacana
prathamā	bālā	bāle	bālāḥ
sambodhana prathamā	he bāle	he bāle	he bālāḥ
dvitīyā	bālām	bāle	bālāḥ
tṛtīyā	bālayā	bālābhyām	bālābhiḥ
caturthī	bālāyai	bālābhyām	bālābhyaḥ
pañcamī	bālāyāḥ	bālābhyām	bālābhyaḥ
ṣaṣṭhī	bālāyāḥ	bālayoḥ	bālānām
saptamī	bālāyām	bālayoḥ	bālāsu

Note that, due to internal **sandhi**, the **napuṃsaka-liṅga bahu-vacana** forms of **prathamā** and **dvitīyā** will also change from **-āni** to **-āṇi** if preceded by 'r' or 'ṣ'.

There is another **sandhi** rule applicable within a word, that applies here: the **saptamī bahu-vacana** ending **-su** changes to **-ṣu** following any vowel except **a** or **ā**—thus **-ṣu** is the most common form, but in the declension of **bālā** it remains as **-su**. This **sandhi** rule will be described more fully in a later lesson. (11.A.3).

6.B.3   Summary of Case Information

	Sanskrit case	Latinate name	English grammar	Answers question	Relation to Verb
1.	**prathamā**	nominative	subject	Who? What?	names the agent/subject of the verb.
	sambodhana	vocative			calling/addressing.
2.	**dvitīyā**	accusative	direct object	Whom? What?	indicates immediate destination of action.
3.	**tṛtīyā**	instrumental		By whom/what?	the means by which action accomplished.
4.	**caturthī**	dative	indirect object	To/for whom/what?	recipient, beneficiary, purpose of action.
5.	**pañcamī**	ablative		From whom/what?	place from which action begins; also cause/motive.
6.	**ṣaṣṭhī**	genitive	genitive	Of whom? Whose?	relation of source/possession/etc. relation is NOT to verb.
7.	**saptamī**	locative		When? Where?	place/time where/when action takes place.

6.B.4   Exercises

(a) Practise reading and writing all the letters of the alphabet.

(b) Practise sounding the full declension of **bālā** and **phala**.

(c) Translate the following sentences into English:

1. **bālā aśvam vṛkṣam phalāya nayate**

2. **aśvaḥ naram ca bālām ca vṛkṣam vahati**

3. **narasya aśvaḥ phalam bālāyāḥ labhate**

4. **narau vṛkṣāṇām phalāni aśvam labhete**

5. **bālāḥ narān phalāni aśvena nayante**

6. **bāle vṛkṣeṣu tiṣṭhataḥ vadataḥ ca**

7. **vṛkṣau gacchāmi ca phalāni labhe**

8. **naraḥ phale vṛkṣāt bālāyai vahati**

9. **bāle phalāni narasya vṛkṣāt labhete**

10. **bālā naraḥ ca vṛkṣam aśvam vahataḥ**

(d) Translate the following sentences into Sanskrit:

1. The man stands and the girl speaks.

2. You (two) lead the horse and I take the fruit.

3. The man and the girl go among the trees by horse.

4. We (two) take the man and the girl from the tree to the horse.

5. The man goes to the trees (pl.) by horse for fruit (pl.).

6. The girl takes the fruit (two) from the tree for the horses (pl.).

7. The horse carries the tree to the girl for the man.

8. The man leads the horse by means of fruit.

9. The horse carries the fruit (pl.) to the girls for the man.

10. The girls (two) stand on the horse and take the fruit (s.) from the tree.