



#Course 1 / 20

Thai Phonetics

Why learn
Phonics?

Why learn Phonics?

Master pronunciation and tones

Phonics trains you to hear and produce Thai sounds and tones correctly from the start.

Why learn Phonics?

Read and write with confidence

**Understanding the connection
between letters and sounds
makes reading and writing
a whole lot much easier.**

Why learn Phonics?

Learn faster and independently

**With phonics skills,
you can figure out new words
on your own without relying
solely on tedious memorization.**

| | |
|---|----------------|
| # | Thai Phonetics |
| 1 | Script |
| 2 | 5 Tones |
| 3 | Consonants |
| 4 | Vowels |
| 5 | Spelling |
| 6 | Tone Rules |
| 7 | Reading drills |

#Unit 1 / 7

Script

Origin

The Thai script evolved from ancient Indian scripts, primarily Brahmi, through its derivative, the Pallava script, and the Khmer script, which also incorporated significant influences from Sanskrit.

Text layout

The Thai script writes left to right, but with no spaces between words.

Thai can, though not always, use full stops, commas, exclamation marks, but question marks are optional.

สวัสดีครับ ผมชื่อคริส เป็นคนอังกฤษ

นี่คือคอร์สสอนภาษาไทยสำหรับ

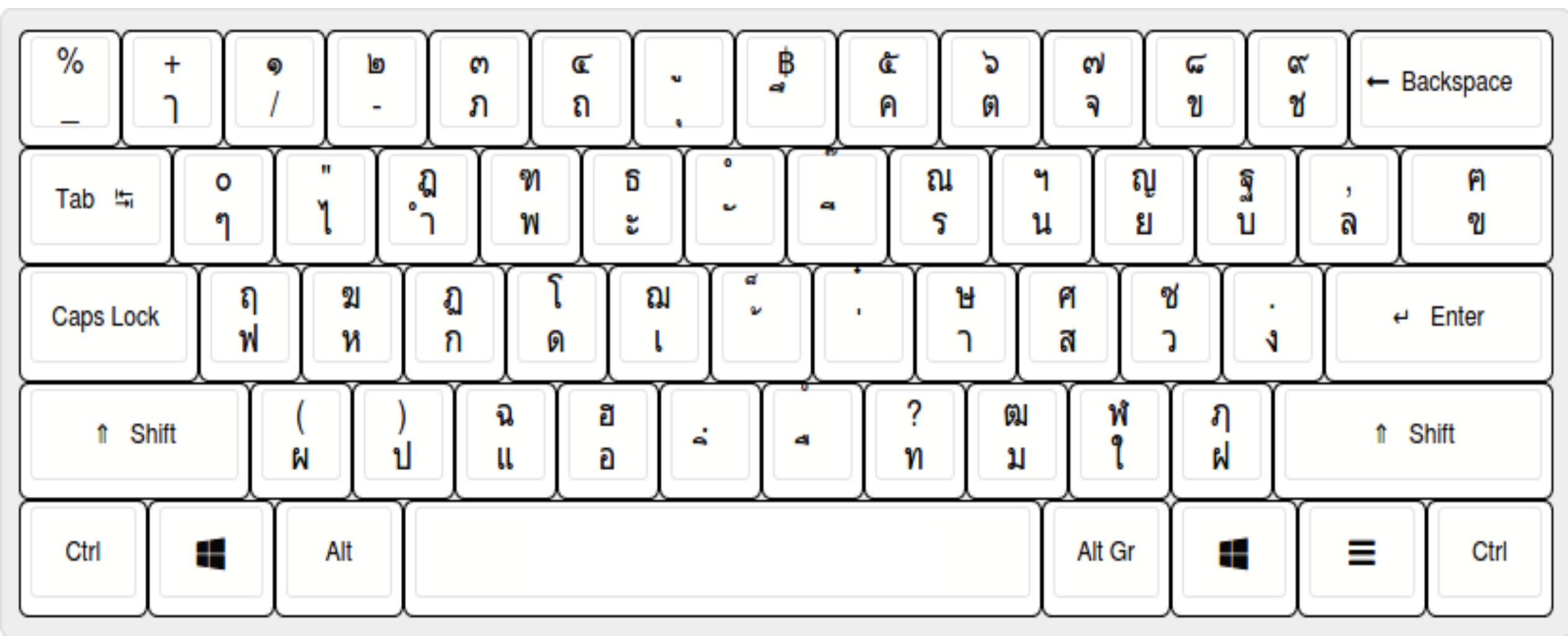
ชาวต่างชาติ ชื่อว่า **Fluent Thai**

ผมหวังว่าคุณจะชอบครับ

ขอบคุณที่ชมและติดตามครับ

Keyboard function

In order to accommodate the entirety of the Thai script, that being, consonants, vowels, tone markers and specific punctuation symbols, the standard English qwerty keyboard will have multiple choices for each key, which can be utilized via the shift key.

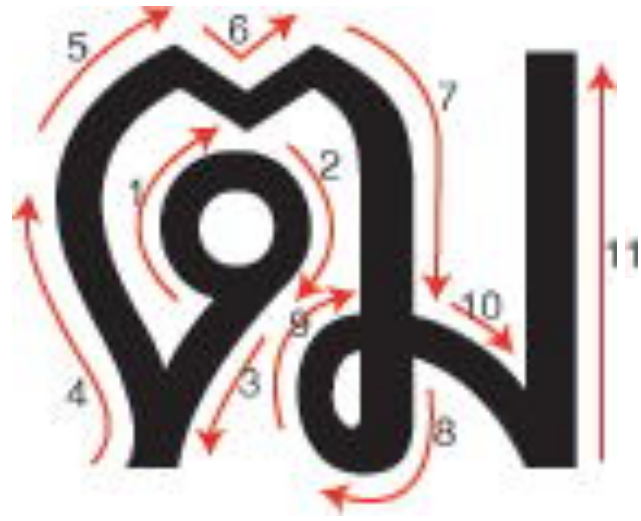


Writing

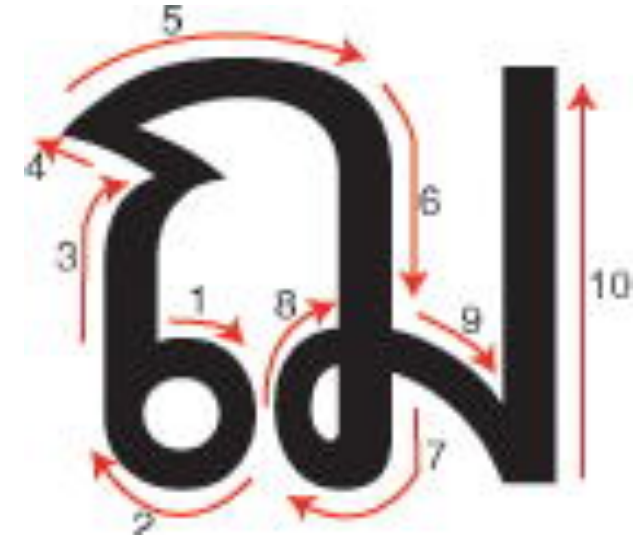
You may have noticed that the majority of Thai consonants will have a small circle, that of which is the starting point for the stroke order of that constant.

Thai vowels can appear all around script, either on the left, right, above and below. Thai script is mostly written left to right, then up to down, depending on the vowel.

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| # | Thai Phonetics |
|---|----------------|
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#Unit 2 / 7

5 Tones

Tones

Thai is a tonal language of **five** tones.

Each word has a fixed tone.

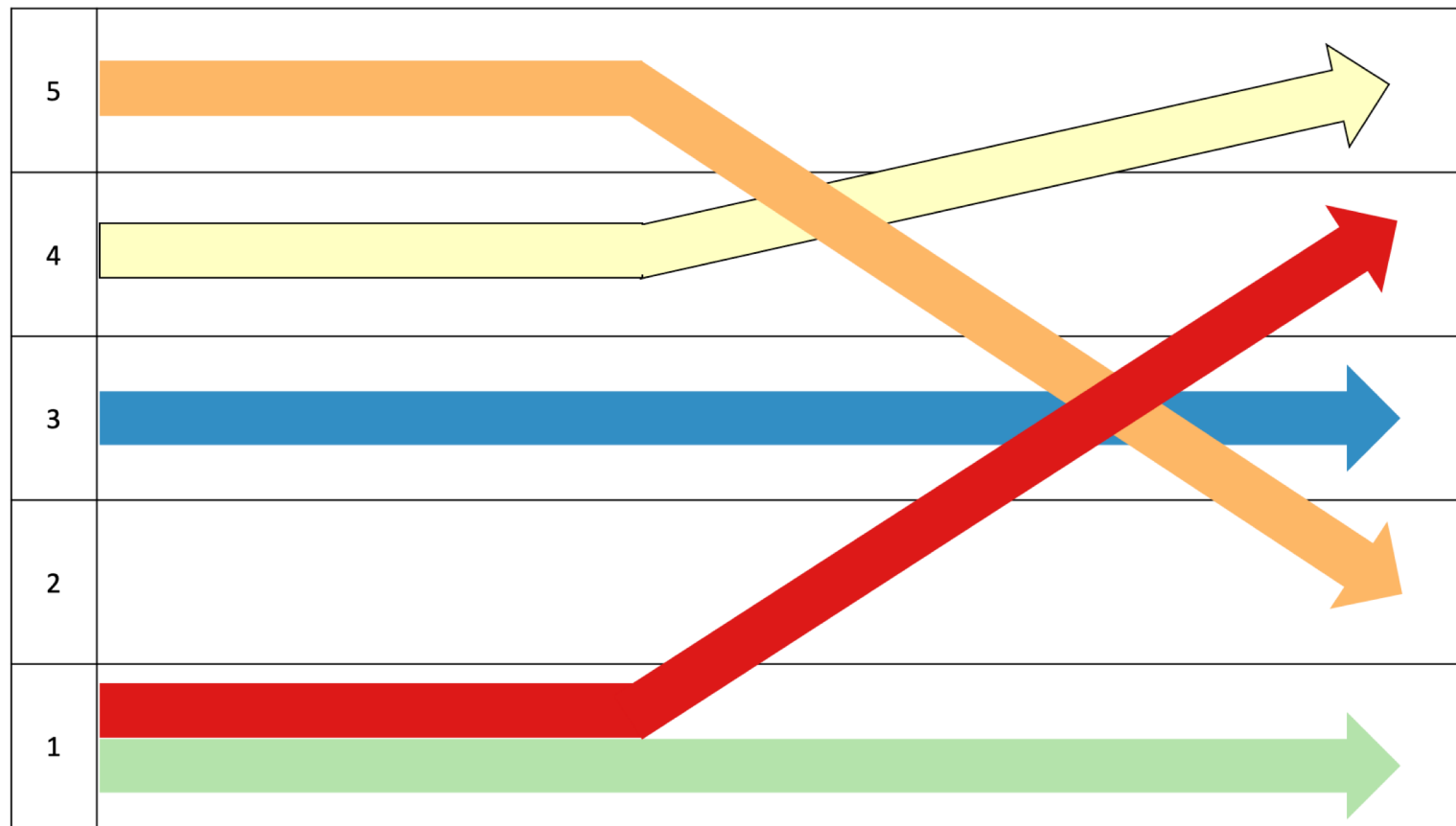
Some words can have multiple tone possibilities which will affect their meaning.

มา ma, with a mid-tone means 'come',

ม้า má, with a high tone means 'horse'

This may seem daunting at first,
but in reality it's not, because sentence
context will always help the listener
to know what the most likely
intended meaning of the word is.

PITCH



| | |
|--|---------|
| | MID |
| | LOW |
| | FALLING |
| | HIGH |
| | RISING |

Tone drills

Now let's focus differentiating fluently between the different tones with these set of tone drill exercises. Seeing as this is a tonal emphasis exercise, we will just simply use one word 'ma' in all 5 tones to do this.

Mid tone: **ma**

Low tone: **mà**

Falling tone: **mâ**

High tone: **má**

Rising tone: **mǎ**

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|--|---------|
| | MID |
| | LOW |
| | FALLING |
| | HIGH |
| | RISING |

DRILL #1:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| ma | ma | ma | ma | ma |
| mà | mà | mà | mà | mà |
| mâ | mâ | mâ | mâ | mâ |
| má | má | má | má | má |
| mă | mă | mă | mă | mă |

DRILL #2:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| mă | mă | mă | mă | mă |
| má | má | má | má | má |
| mâ | mâ | mâ | mâ | mâ |
| mà | mà | mà | mà | mà |
| ma | ma | ma | ma | ma |

DRILL #3:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| ma | mă | má | mâ | mà |
| mà | ma | mă | má | mâ |
| mâ | mà | ma | mă | má |
| má | mâ | mà | ma | mă |
| mă | má | mâ | mà | ma |

DRILL #4:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|----|----|----|----|
| má | mà | mă | mâ | ma |
| mà | ma | má | mă | mâ |
| mă | má | mâ | ma | mà |
| ma | mâ | mà | má | mă |
| mâ | mă | ma | mà | má |

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#Unit 3 / 7

Consonants

- The Thai script has 44 consonant letters.
(But 20 sounds, so some are duplicates)
- They are categorized into three classes:
low, mid, and high.

- Why?...

Because consonant class plays a role
in determining tones.

- Like English, Thai has both **single** consonants and consonant **clusters**.
- Thai consonants have an **initial sound** and can also function as **final sounds**.
 - The **final sound** can be either:
 1. Live syllable = ends in a sonorant or resonant sound.
 2. Dead syllable = ends in a glottal closure.
- Each consonant has a **specific name** assigned to it.

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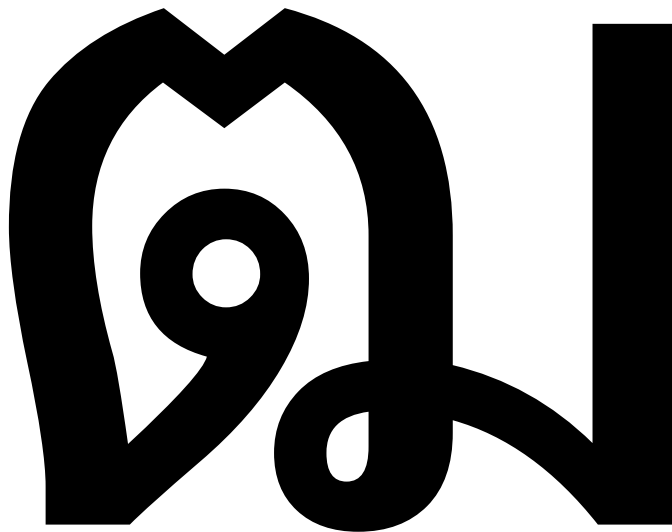
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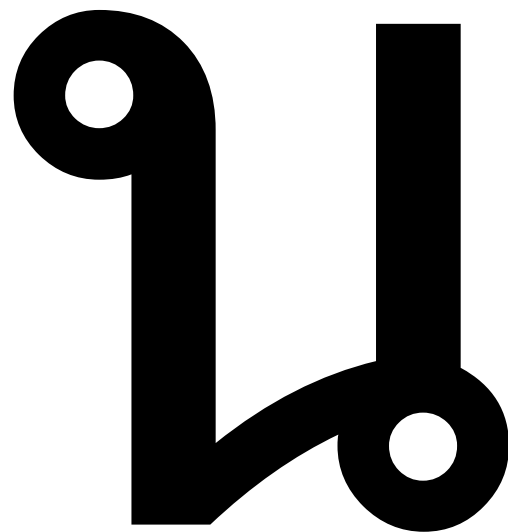
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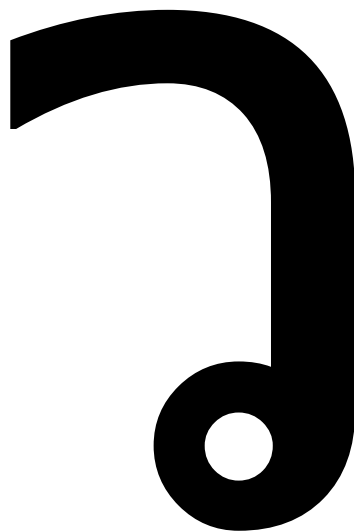
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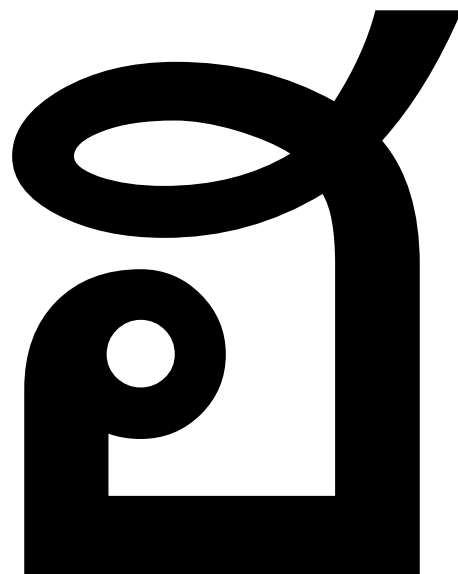
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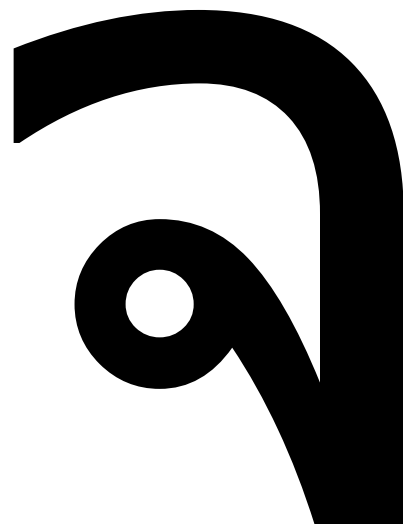
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Difference between D and DT

D =

1. Sound starts first.
2. Then release of tongue down from middle mouth roof position.

DT =

1. Sound and the release of tongue down from front mouth roof (closer to front teeth) position happens simultaneously.

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D

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DT

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B

(P)

M

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BP

(P)

Difference between B and BP

B =

1. Sound starts first.
2. Then release open closed-lips position.

BP =

1. Sound and the release open of closed-lips position happens simultaneously

M

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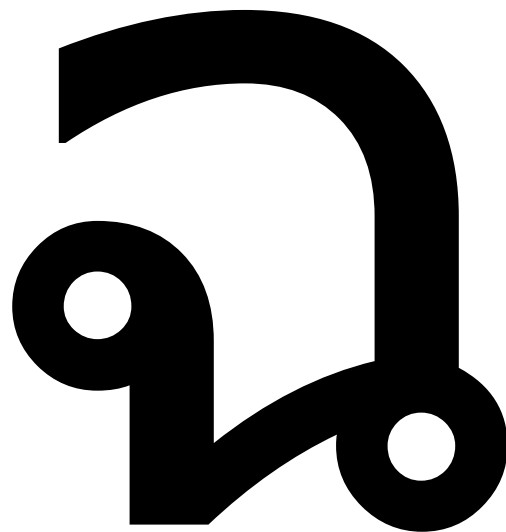
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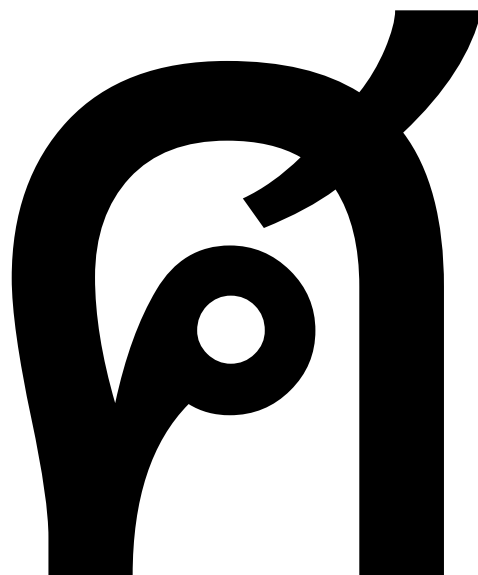


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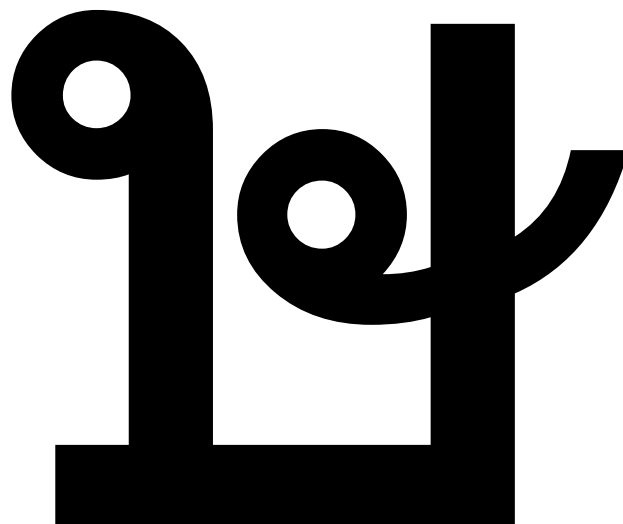


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Action plan

1. Print or by hand all 42 consonants slides.
2. Read 3 times a day for 2 weeks
3. Cover, test, review for 1 week

See you again
in 3 weeks!

Welcome back!

You now know all
42 Thai consonants
and their given **sounds**.

Consonant Duplicates?

There are 44 official Thai consonants, but 2 are obsolete, leaving a total of 42.

However, these represent only 20 distinct consonant sounds. Next, is a table showing which Thai consonants share the same pronunciation:

This table organizes the consonants by their pronunciation, making it easier to understand the relationship between Thai script and phonetics.

| No | English | Thai |
|----|---------|-------------|
| 1 | g | ก |
| 2 | k | ข ก ฅ |
| 3 | ng | ง |
| 4 | j | จ |
| 5 | ch | ฉ ช ฌ |
| 6 | s | ซ ศ ษ ส |
| 7 | y | ญ ย |
| 8 | d | ฎ ฏ |
| 9 | dt | ฏ ฏ |
| 10 | t | ฐ ฑ ฒ ถ ท ธ |

| No | English | Thai |
|----|---------|-------|
| 11 | n | ณ น |
| 12 | b | บ |
| 13 | bp | ป |
| 14 | p | ผ พ ภ |
| 15 | f | ฝ ฟ |
| 16 | m | ม |
| 17 | r | ร |
| 18 | l | ล พ |
| 19 | w | ว |
| 20 | h | ห ฮ |

Consonant clusters

(... or could be understood as Consonant Pairs)

In Thai, there are 2 main types of consonant clusters:

1. True Clusters

= Both consonants are pronounced together.

2. False Clusters

= Only one consonant is pronounced,
or the cluster creates a unique sound.

1. True Clusters

- These occur when two consonants appear together, and both sounds are heard.
 - Common examples:

ကရ = kr / ကလ = kl / ခရ = kr

| | ร | ล | ว |
|---|----|----|----|
| ก | กร | กล | กว |
| ข | ขร | ขล | ขว |
| ค | คร | คล | คว |
| ต | ตร | - | - |
| ป | ปร | ปล | - |
| ผ | - | ผล | - |
| พ | พร | พล | - |

2. False Clusters

- Some consonant clusters do not follow regular pronunciation rules.

Instead, they simplify into a single consonant sound or take on a different pronunciation altogether.

ทร = s ทราบ (sâhp) = to know

ทร = t* โทร (toh) = to call

| Spelling | Pronunciation | Example | Meaning |
|----------|---------------|----------------|----------|
| ทร | ซ (s) | ทราย (sai) | sand |
| ทร | ต (t) | โทร (toh) | to call |
| สร | ส (s) | สร้าง (sâng) | to build |
| ศร | ศ (s) | ศรี (sǐ) | glory |
| จร | จ (j) | จริง (jing) | true |

Leading Consonants

In Thai, some syllables consist of two consonants that are not pronounced together as a single cluster. Instead, a short "a" sound is inserted between the two consonants to make them easier to pronounce. This process is called epenthesis, which essentially means inserting a sound to make pronunciation smoother.

When you see two consonants that are supposed to start a syllable, but they cannot be pronounced together, the syllable is pronounced as two parts. A short 'a' sound is added between the consonants, making the syllable sound like two smaller syllables.

This rule helps in determining the tone for these syllables, but no extra tone markers are used for them.

Leading Consonants Examples

สนุก = fun

ถนน = road

ขจัด = eliminate

Leading Consonants Examples

สนุก sa-nùk = fun

ถนน ta-nǎn = road

กำจัด ka-jàt = eliminate

⚠ EXCEPTION ⚠

ปรี-

This prefix has a unique case where instead of a short "a," a longer sound "aw" is inserted. The tone rule is slightly adjusted here.

บริ- Examples

บริกาฬ bò-ri-gahn- = service

บริสุทธิ์ bò-ri-soòt = holy / pure

บริษัท bò-ri-sàt = company

บริ- Examples

บริกาฬ *bò-ri-gahn-* = service

บริสุทธิ *bò-ri-soòt* = holy / pure

บริษัท *bò-ri-sàt* = company

Leading Consonants ห and อ

ห & อ

which change the tone
of the following consonant.

1. ห

Makes the next consonant a high-class.

หฺง- / หฺน- / หฺม- / หฺย- / หฺร- / หฺล- / หฺว-

For example:

หฺงุดหฺงิด / หฺนาว / หฺมา

หฺยุด / หฺรือ / หฺลั้บ / หฺวาน

2. อ


Makes the next consonant a mid-class.
(only 4 words!)

อย่า / ยาก / ่าง / อยู่

Consonant pair as a complete syllable

There are cases where two consonants form a complete syllable without needing any inserted vowel sound.

The consonants can be paired as initial and final consonants within a syllable.

The two consonants together are pronounced as one unit and will use a  (short o sound) as its vowel.

Consonant pair as a complete syllable

- กบ → gò(p) = frog
- คน → kon = person
- ลด → lò(t) = to reduce

The ັ ັ sound

1. ັ ັ with a final consonant.

When ັ ັ comes before a final consonant, it sounds like a short "a / - ັ / - ັ" sound.

The วิว sound

1. วิว with a final consonant.

| Thai word | Expanded pronunciation | Thai pronunciation | Transliteration | English meaning |
|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| วรรค | ว + วิว + ค | ว้าค | wá(k) | a space a pause |
| กรรม | ก + วิว + ณ | ก้าม | gam | karma |

The ิน ิน sound

2. ิน ิน without a final consonant.

When ิน ิน has no final consonant,
it adds 'n', so becomes "an / อัน" sound.

The ะ ะ sound

2. ะ ะ without a final consonant.

| Thai word | Expanded pronunciation | Thai pronunciation | Transliteration | English meaning |
|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| พรรษา | พ + ะ ะ / ษ + ะ | พ้าน-ษะ | pan-sǎ | lent |
| บรรเทา | บ + ะ ะ ท + ะ-ะ | บั่น-เทา | ban-tao | relieve |

Glottal stops

Voiceless Thai consonants are pronounced with a glottal stop. The glottal stop endings are

-**k**, -**p**, -**t**

Glottal stops

In Thai, when voiceless consonants k, p, and t appear at the end of a syllable or word, they are typically pronounced with a glottal stop.

A glottal stop is a quick closure of the vocal cords, effectively cutting off the airflow in the throat, creating a sharp, abrupt stop. This is different from a fully articulated consonant where the airflow is released in a more noticeable manner.

For example, when a voiceless consonant like **k**, **p**, or **t** occurs in the final position, it won't have the same strong release as it would at the start of a word or syllable. Instead, the final sound will end abruptly, with a slight pause or stop.

Glottal stops examples

1. ก (k) : → ตก dtò(k) = "to fall"

2. ป (p) : → ชอบ choh(p) = "to like"

3. ต (t) : → วัด wá(t) - "to measure"

Importance of Glottal stops

The glottal stop serves to close the airflow quickly, without the full release that would happen if the consonants were at the start of a syllable. This is also why you might hear these sounds as being softer or more abrupt when compared to their voiceless counterparts in English.

The glottal stop isn't a distinct sound you consciously hear in every word, but it's important because it alters how the consonant is released at the end of the syllable. It's something Thai speakers naturally do, but it's key to pronunciation, especially in distinguishing words that may otherwise sound similar.

Glottal stop CHALLENGE

Try saying!

จจ

จก

จป

There's more to know about Thai consonants!

While we've covered the basics of Thai consonants, amazingly there's still yet more to discover.

As you continue your journey with the Thai language, you'll naturally encounter additional rules and unique traits. These will become clearer as you practice and engage with more Thai content. Think of it as a treasure hunt, each new discovery adds to your understanding! Enjoy the process!

| # | Thai Phonetics |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | Script ✓ |
| 2 | 5 Tones ✓ |
| 3 | Consonants ✓ |
| 4 | Vowels |
| 5 | Spelling |
| 6 | Tone Rules |
| 7 | Reading drills |

#Unit 4 / 7

Vowels

Introduction to Thai Vowels

Thai vowels function similarly to English, in that they have short and long versions. However, a unique characteristic of Thai vowels is that they can be positioned before, after, above, or below a consonant. They can also appear as single vowels or as combinations (diphthongs and triphthongs).

To demonstrate,


let's use the consonant
𑌎 (m) as an example.

The vowels arranged around 𑌎 (m)
are just for display purposes only.

(*note that some of these aren't actual words).

| Single Vowels | | Combination Vowels | |
|---------------|---------|--------------------|-----------|
| mai | (mai) | mai | (mee-a) |
| moo | (moo) | mao | (mao) |
| mee | (mee) | mae | (mǝǝ) |
| maa | (maa) | moh | (moh) |

Since Thai vowels require a consonant to be paired with,

the silent letter 

is used as a placeholder when displaying a vowel on its own.

The Thai word for "vowel"
is สระ (sà-rà).

Vowel names are simply formed by
adding สระ before the vowel sound.

For example, อี is called สระ อี

Learning Thai Vowel sounds

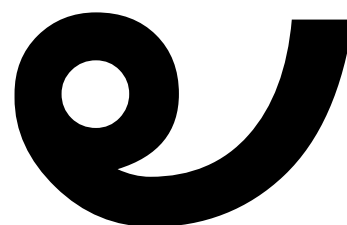
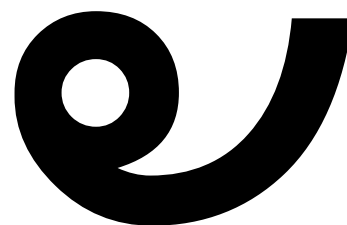
1. Listen and repeat
2. English equivalents
3. Linguistic approach

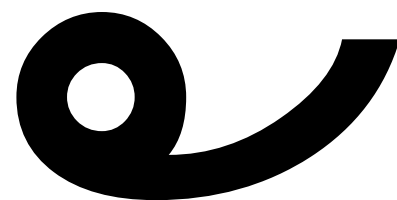
Learning Thai Vowel sounds

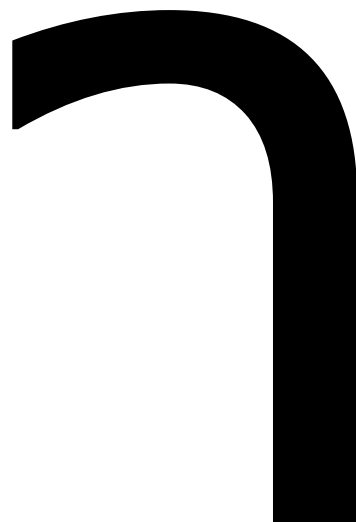
1. Listen and repeat
2. English equivalents
3. Linguistic approach

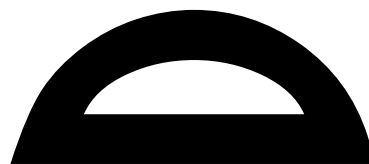
Learning Thai Vowel sounds

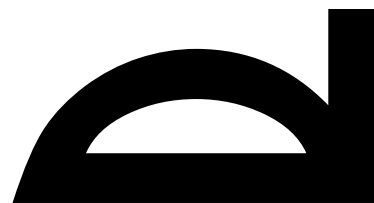
1. Listen and repeat

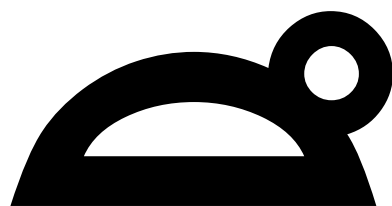


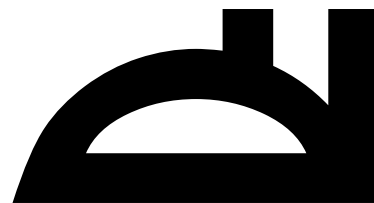




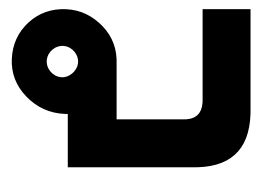




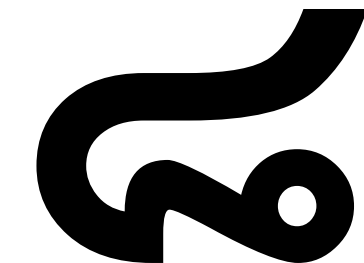
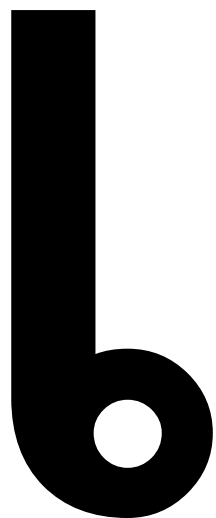








6 - 2



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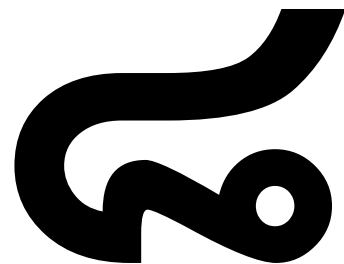
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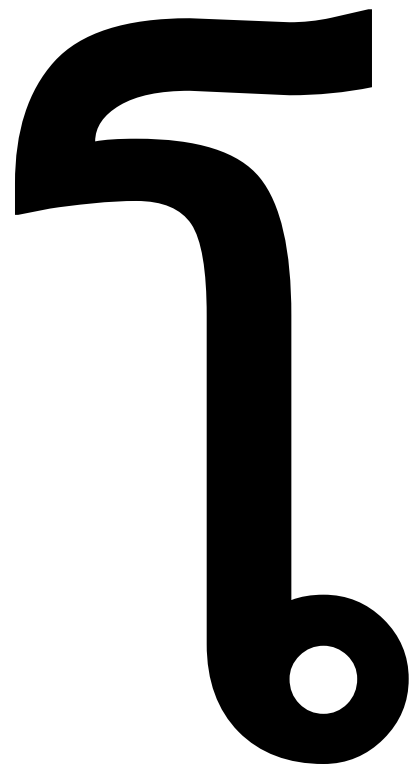
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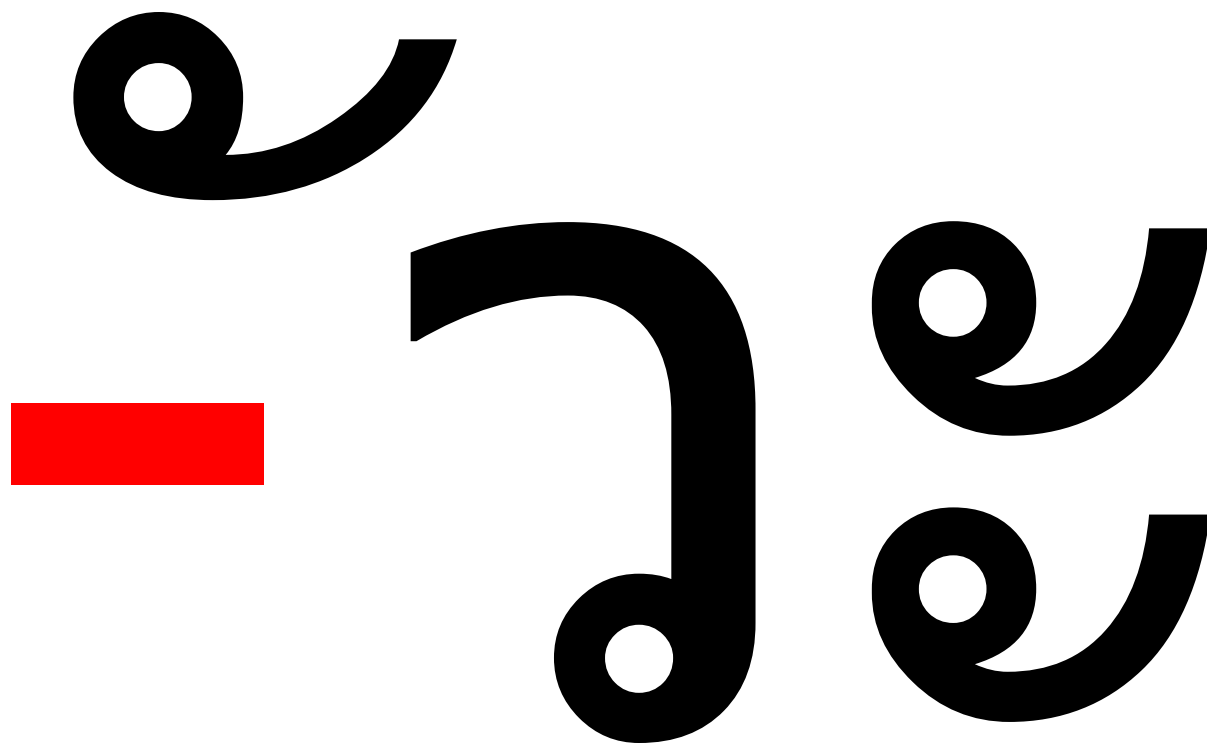
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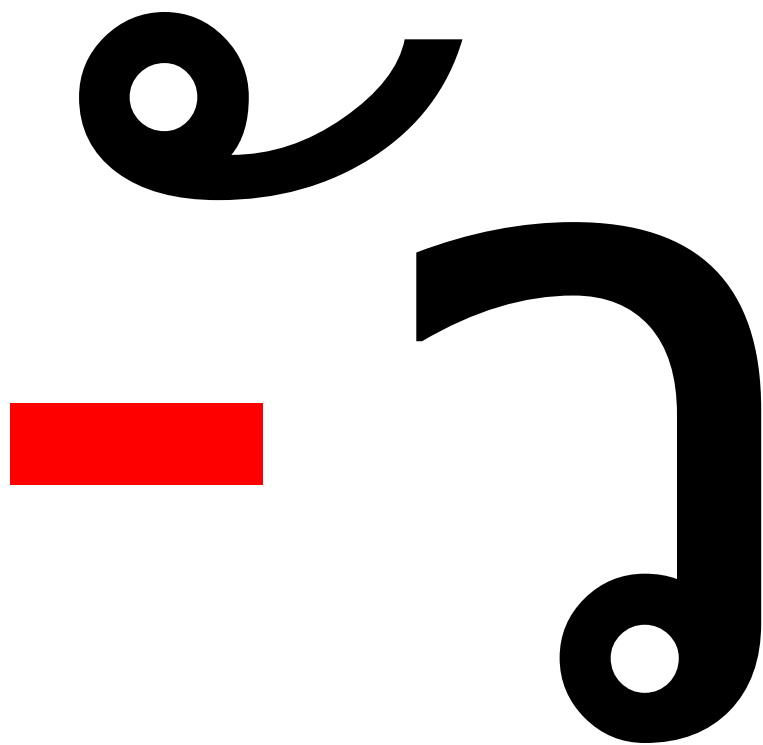
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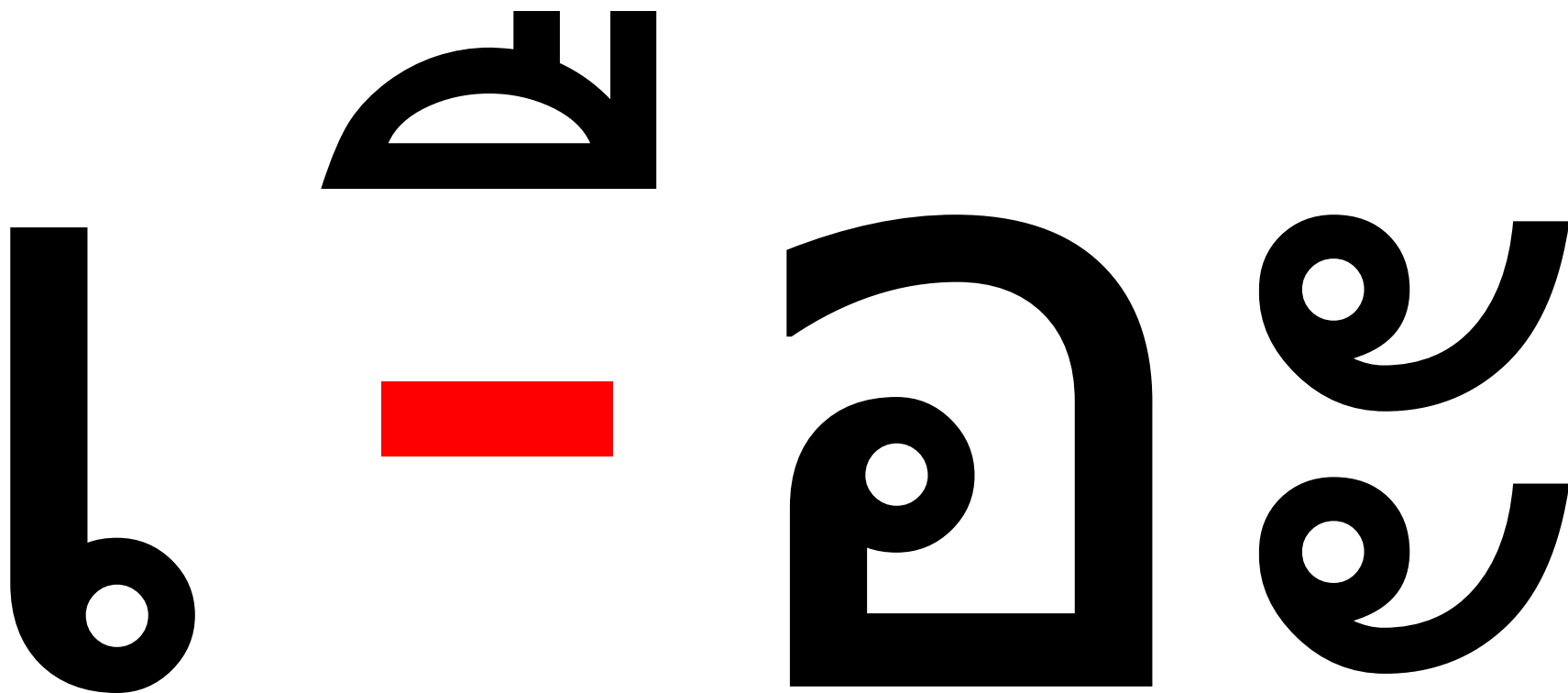


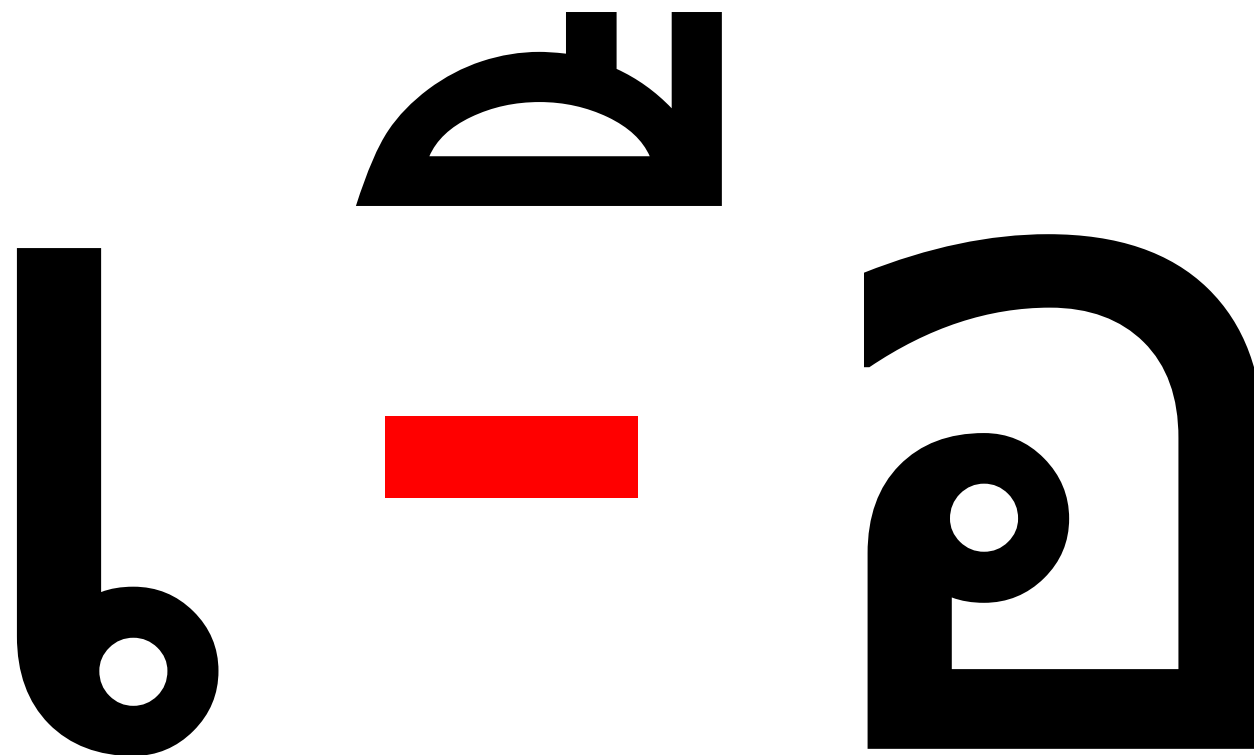




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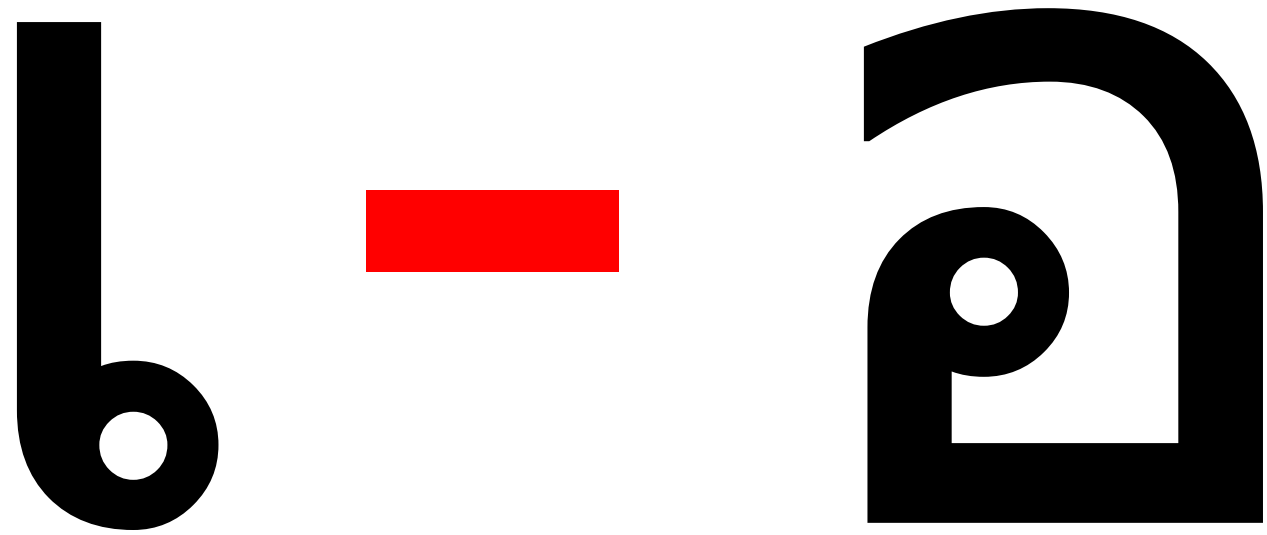


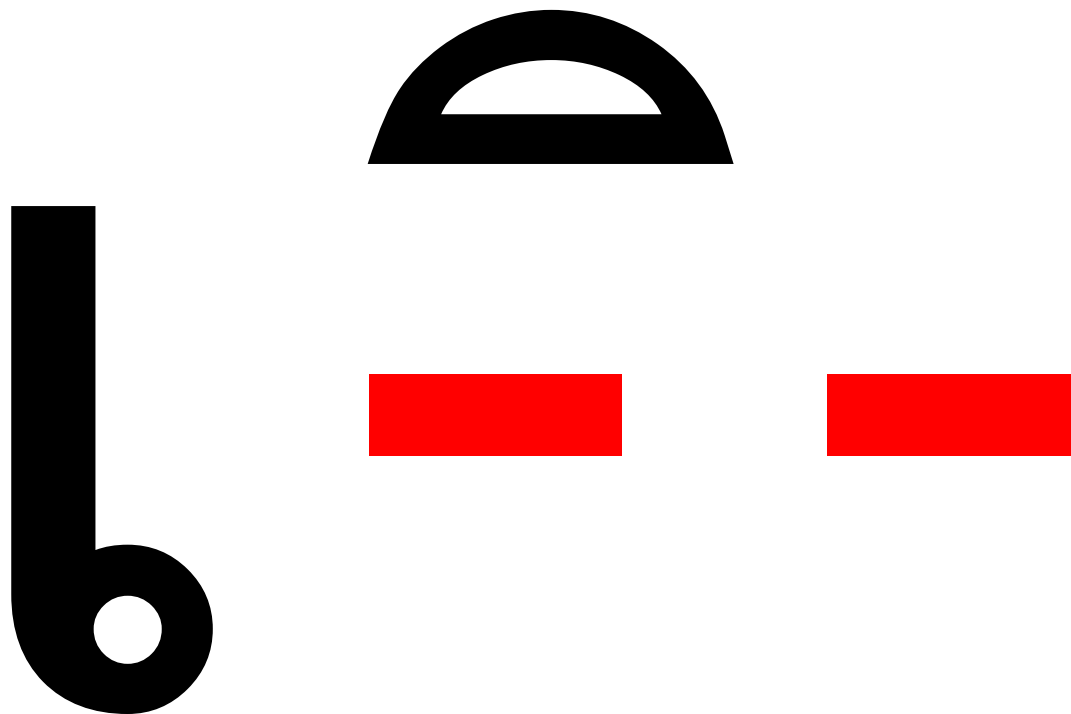
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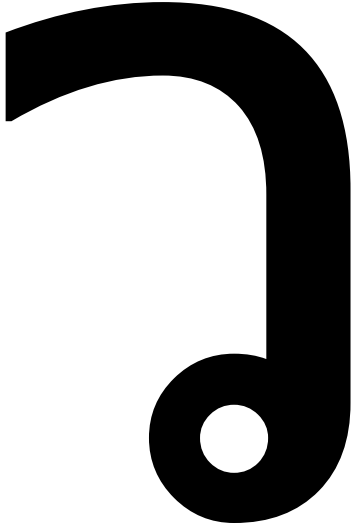
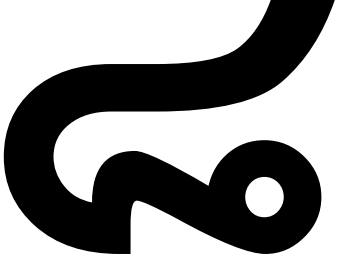
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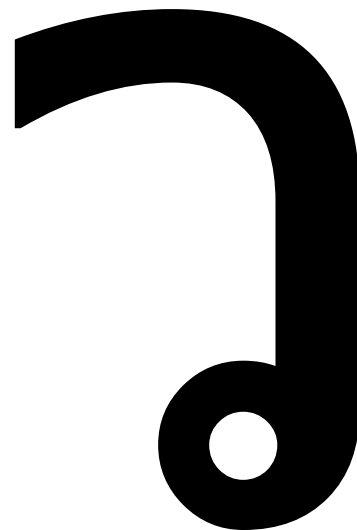
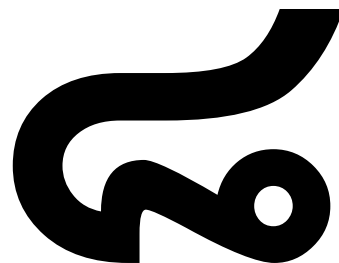
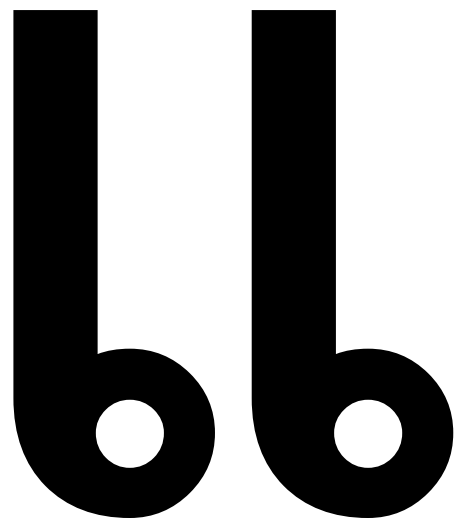
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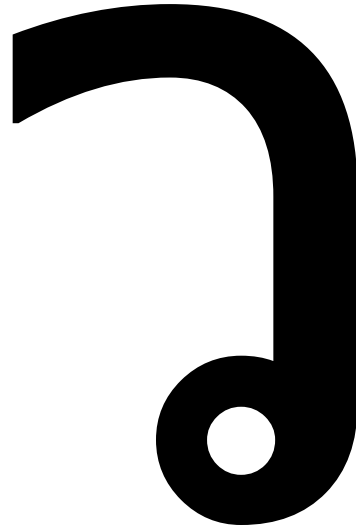
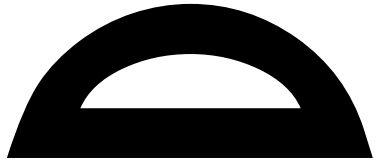
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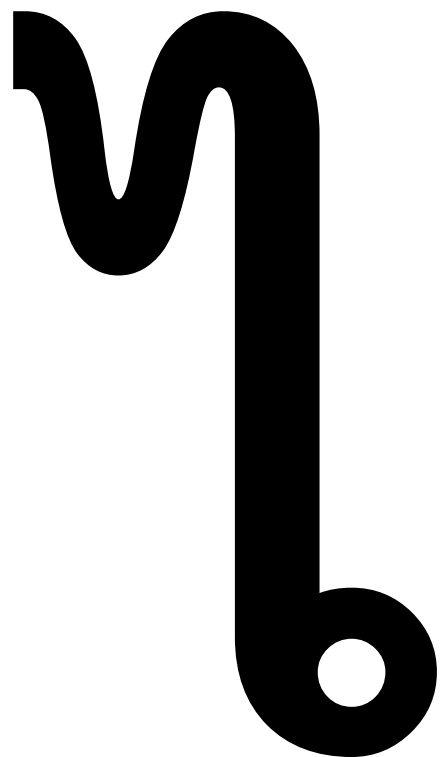
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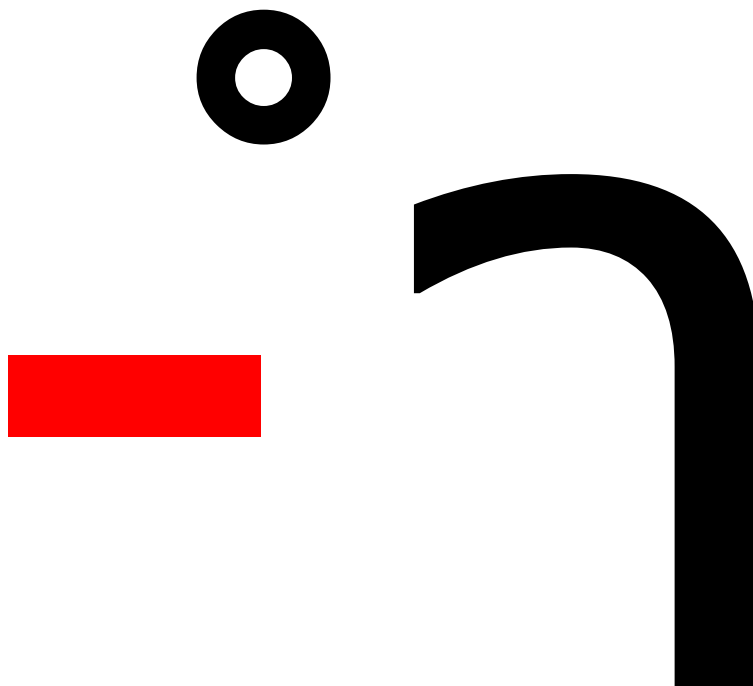
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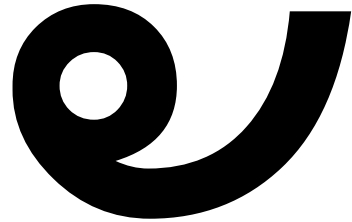
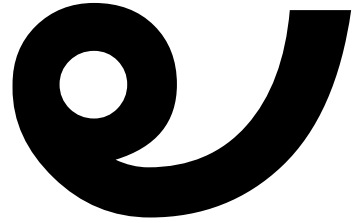
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Learning Thai Vowel sounds

2. English equivalents

SHORT

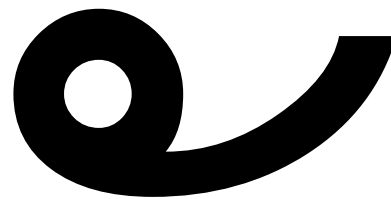
1



'at'

SHORT

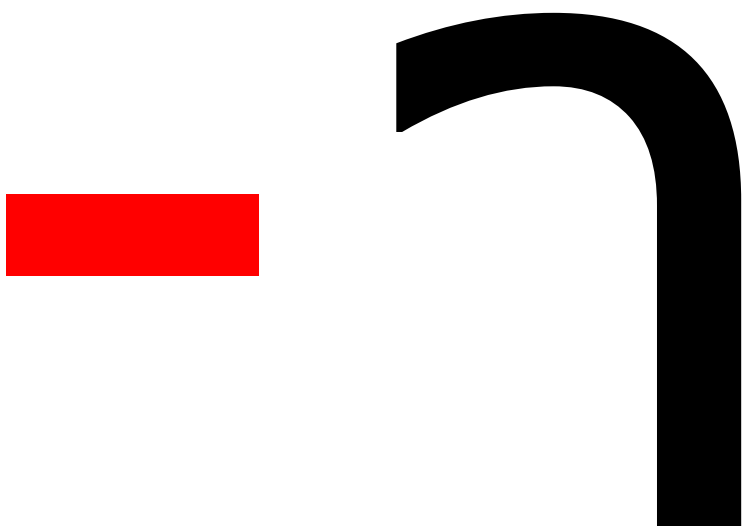
2



'at'

LONG

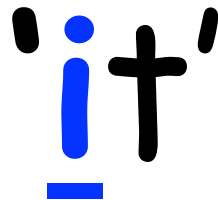
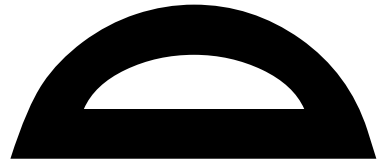
3



a → h'

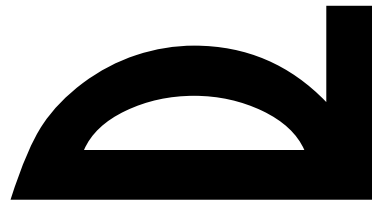
SHORT

4



LONG

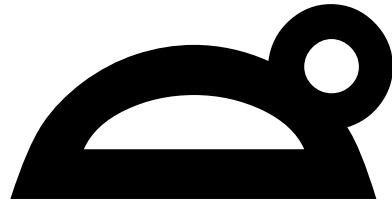
5



'bee'
ee

SHORT

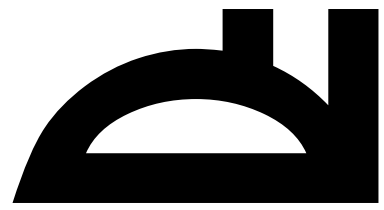
6



'put'

LONG

7



'pu→t'

SHORT

8



9

'p<oo>l'

LONG

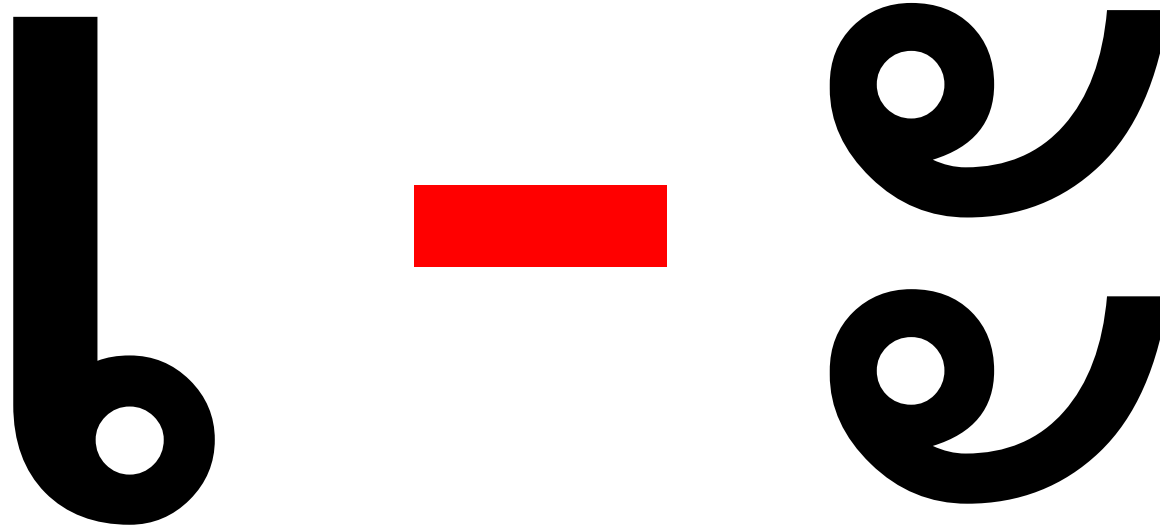
9



'poo→l'

SHORT

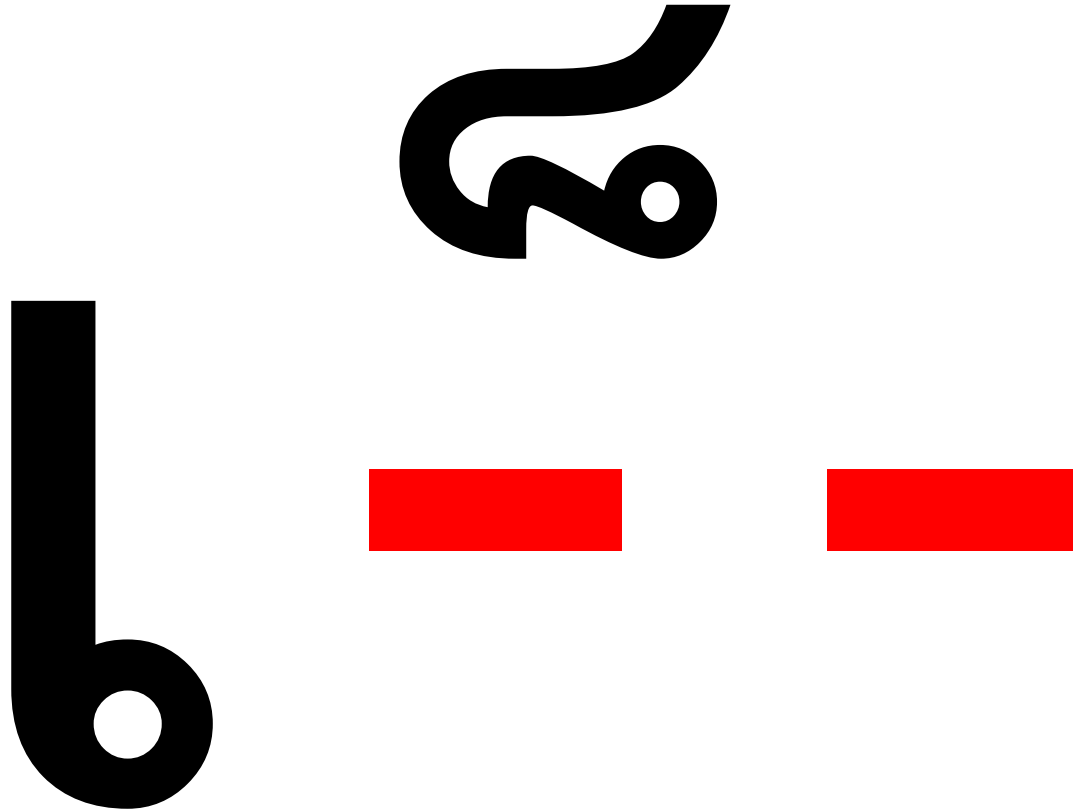
10



'd<ay>'

SHORT

11



'd<ay>'

LONG

12

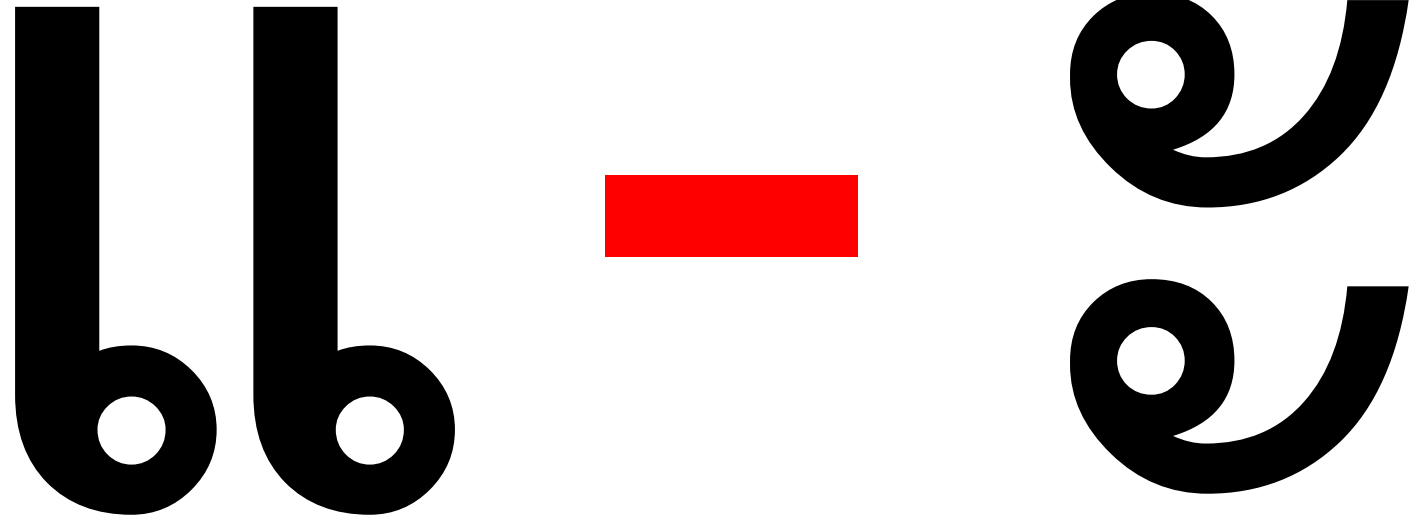
6



'day→'

SHORT

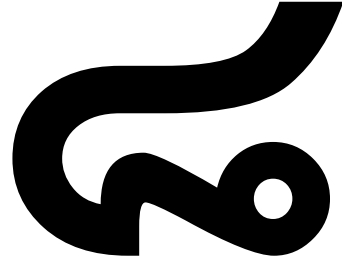
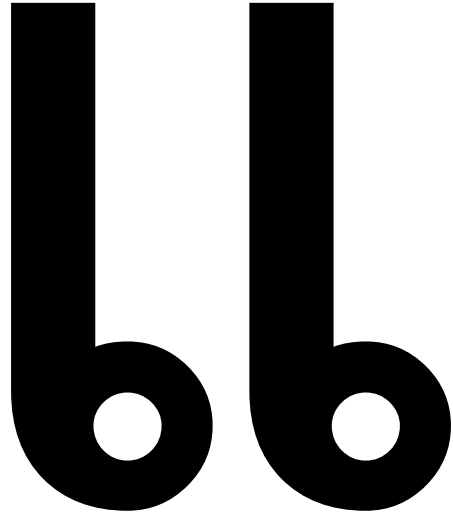
13



'bet'

SHORT

14



'bet'

LONG

15

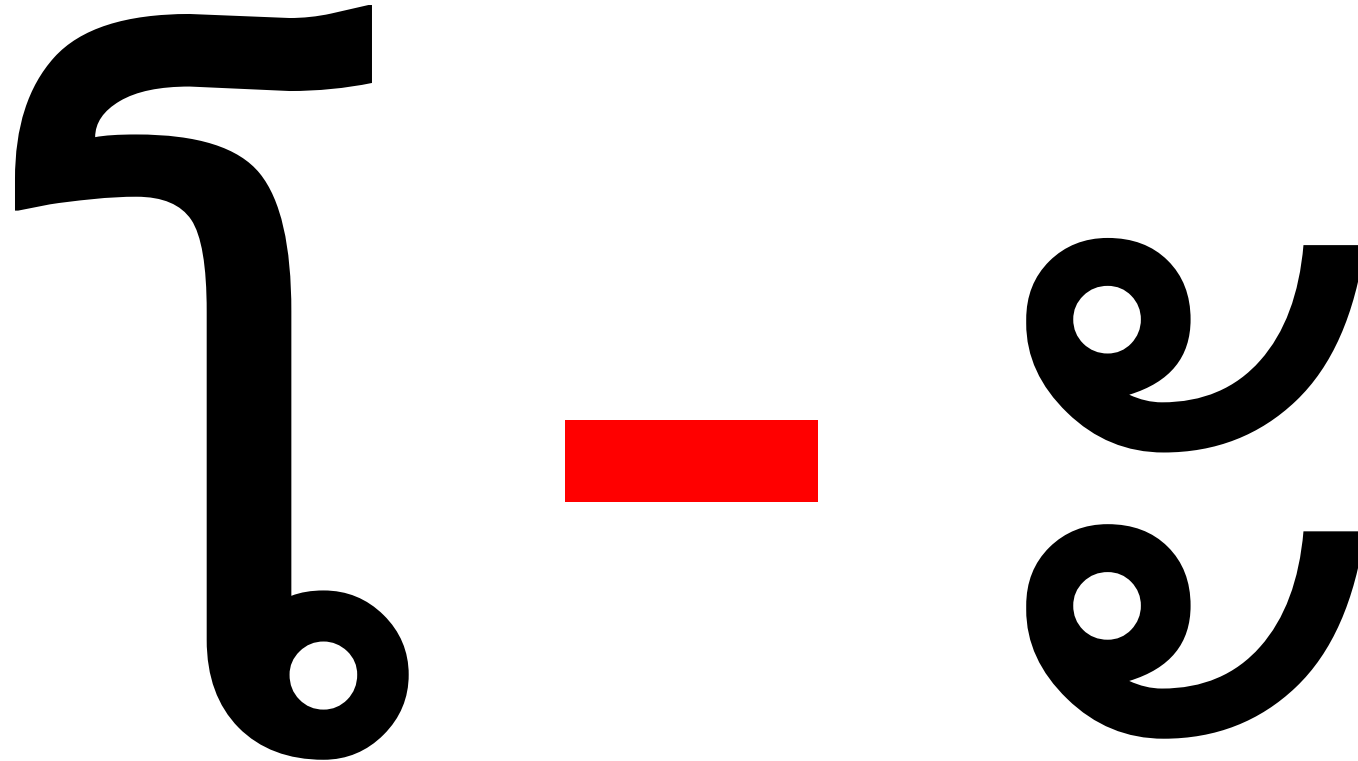
ll



ai → r'

SHORT

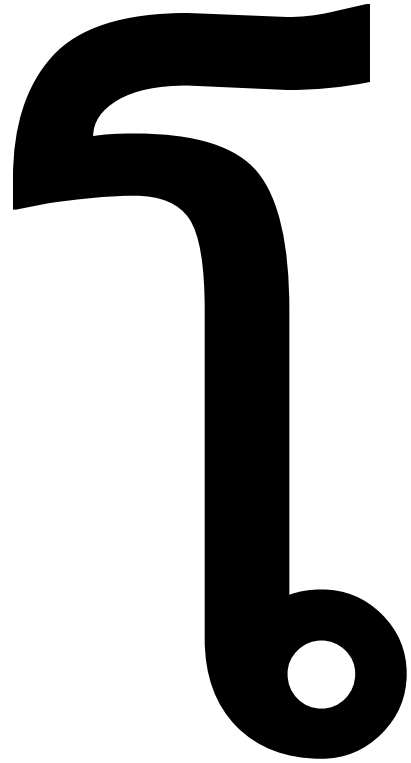
16



'on' (small rounded lips)

LONG

17



o → h' (small rounded lips)

SHORT

18

6

-

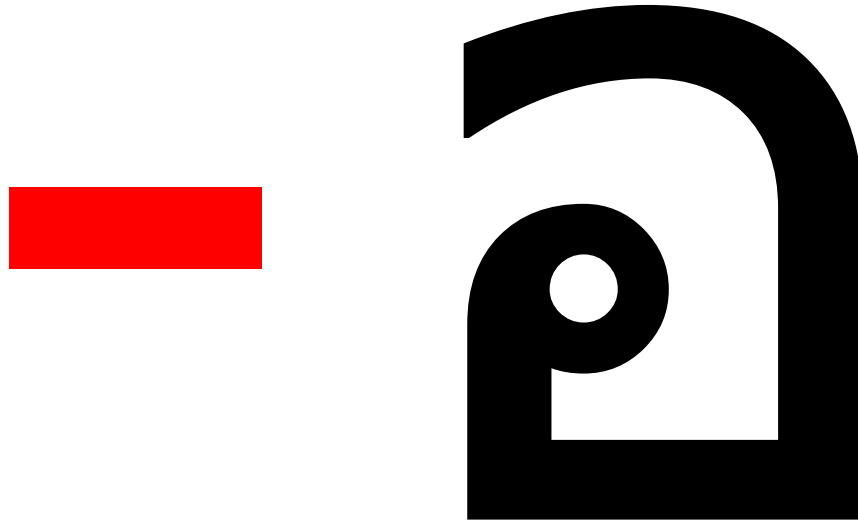
7

8

'on'

LONG

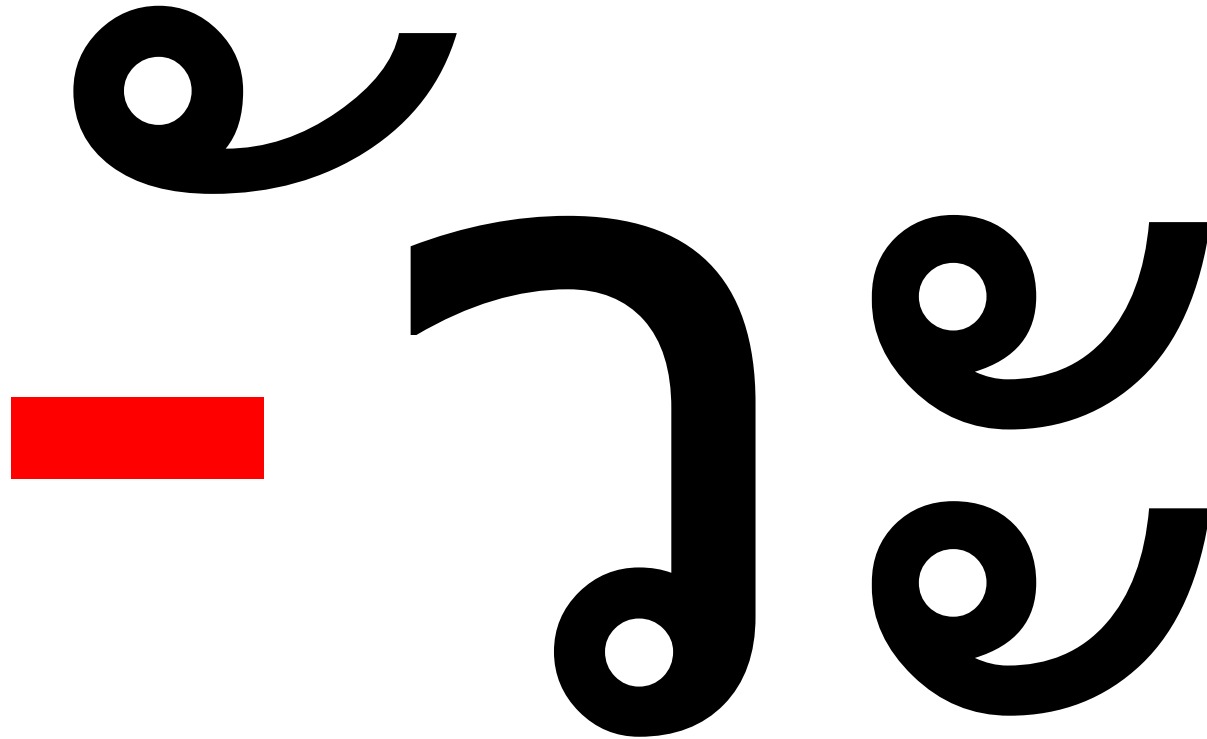
19



o → n'

SHORT

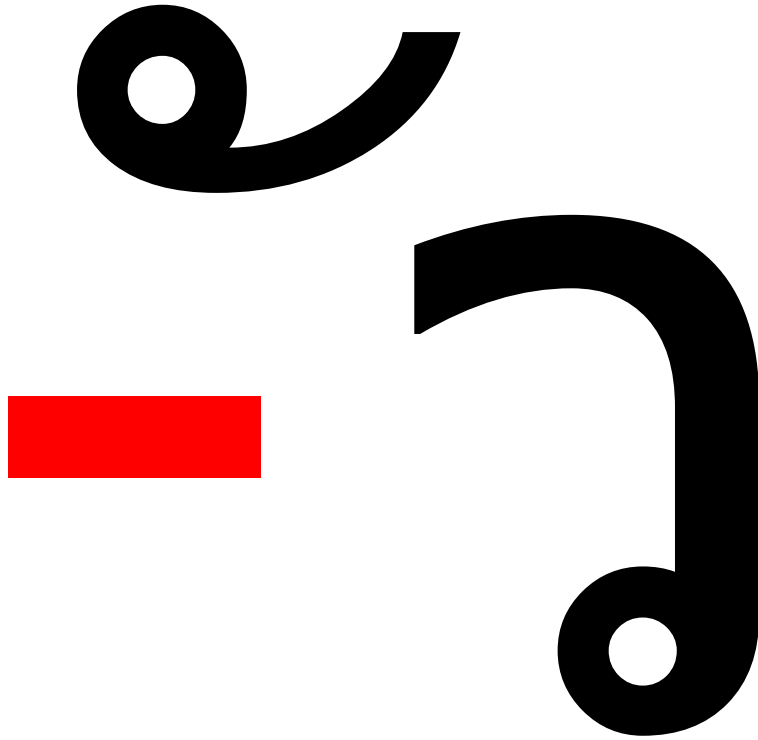
20



'p<oo>l' + 'at'

LONG

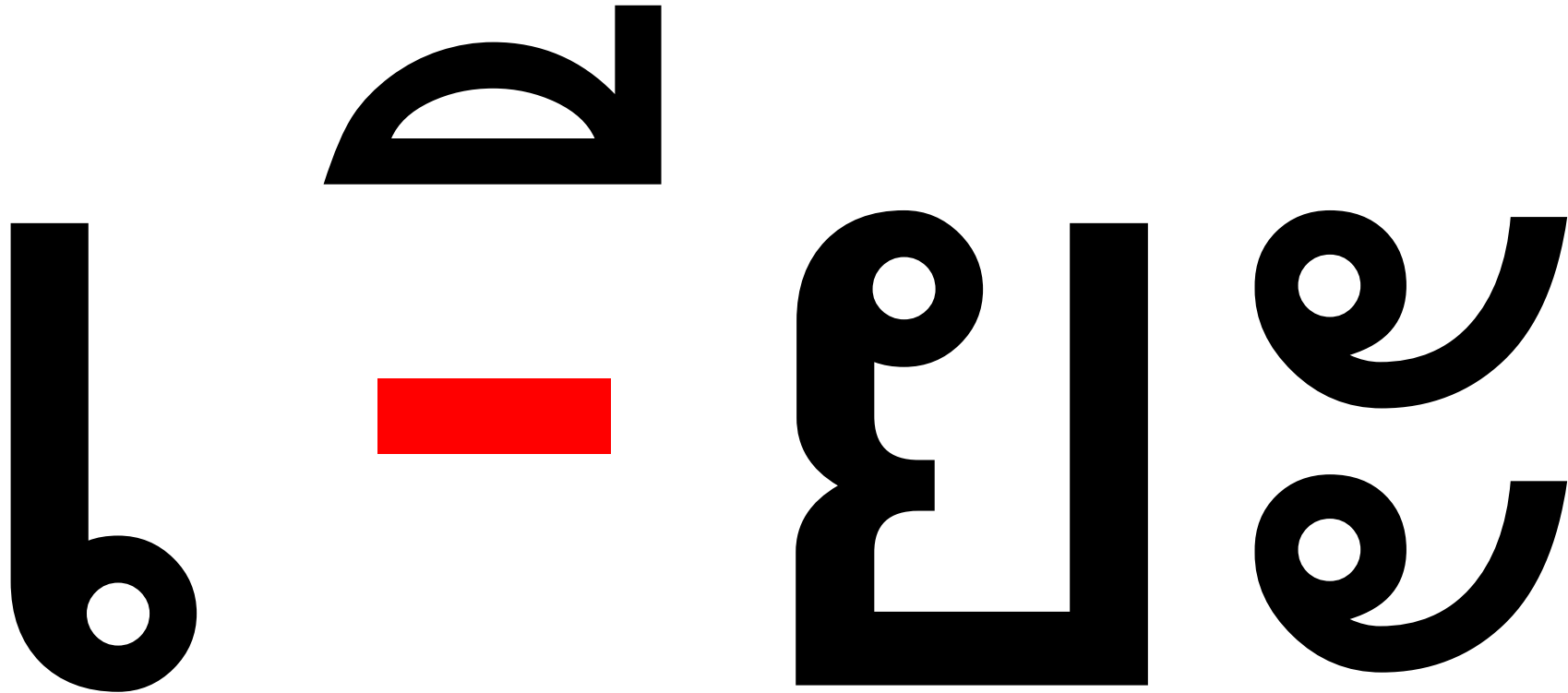
21



'poo→l' + 'at'

SHORT

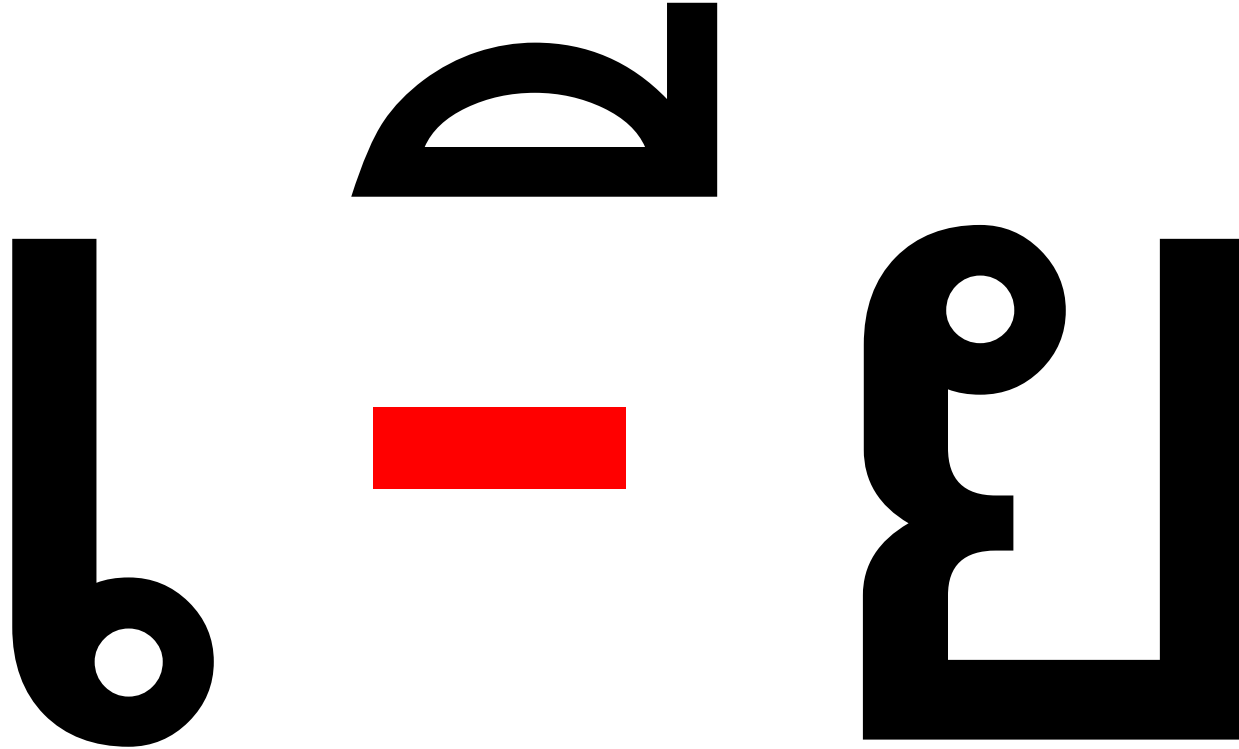
22



'b' < ee > ' + ' a t '

LONG

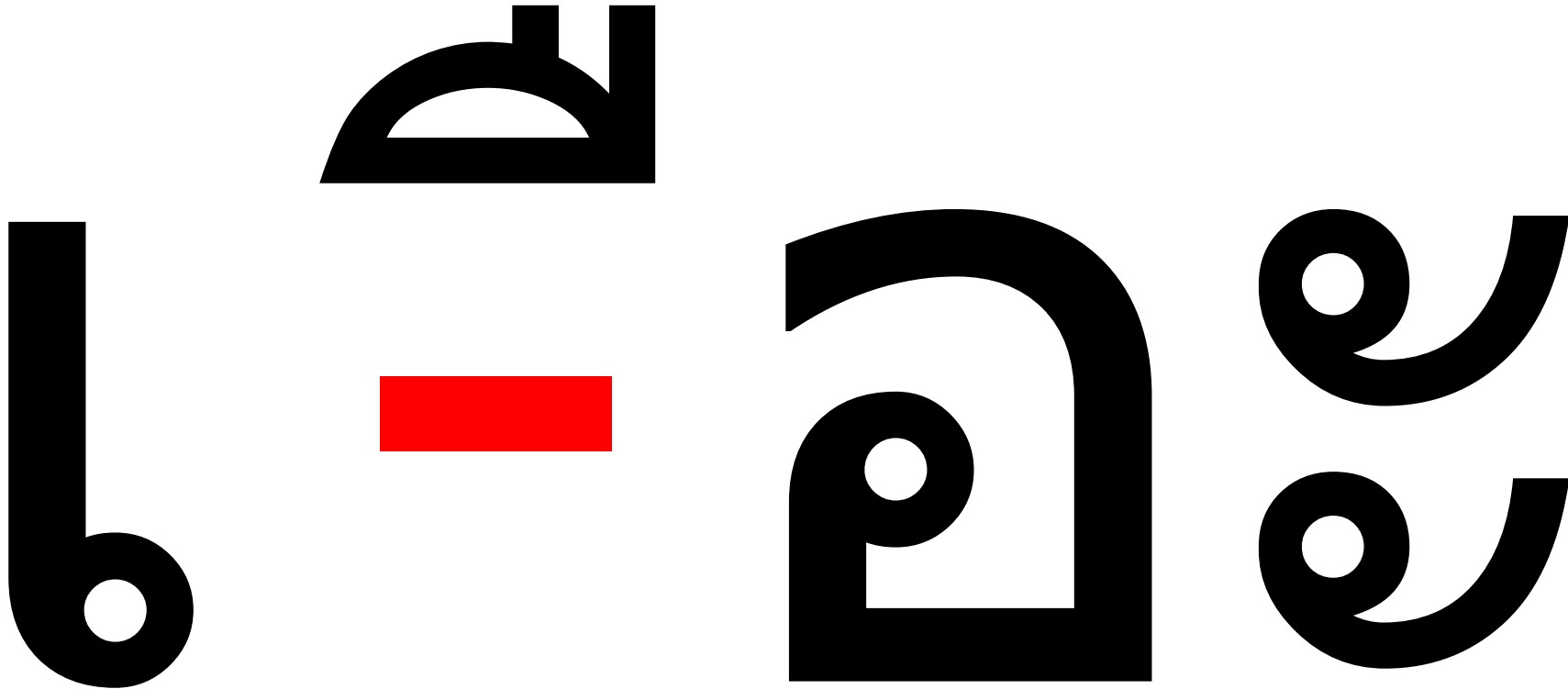
23



'bee' + 'at'

SHORT

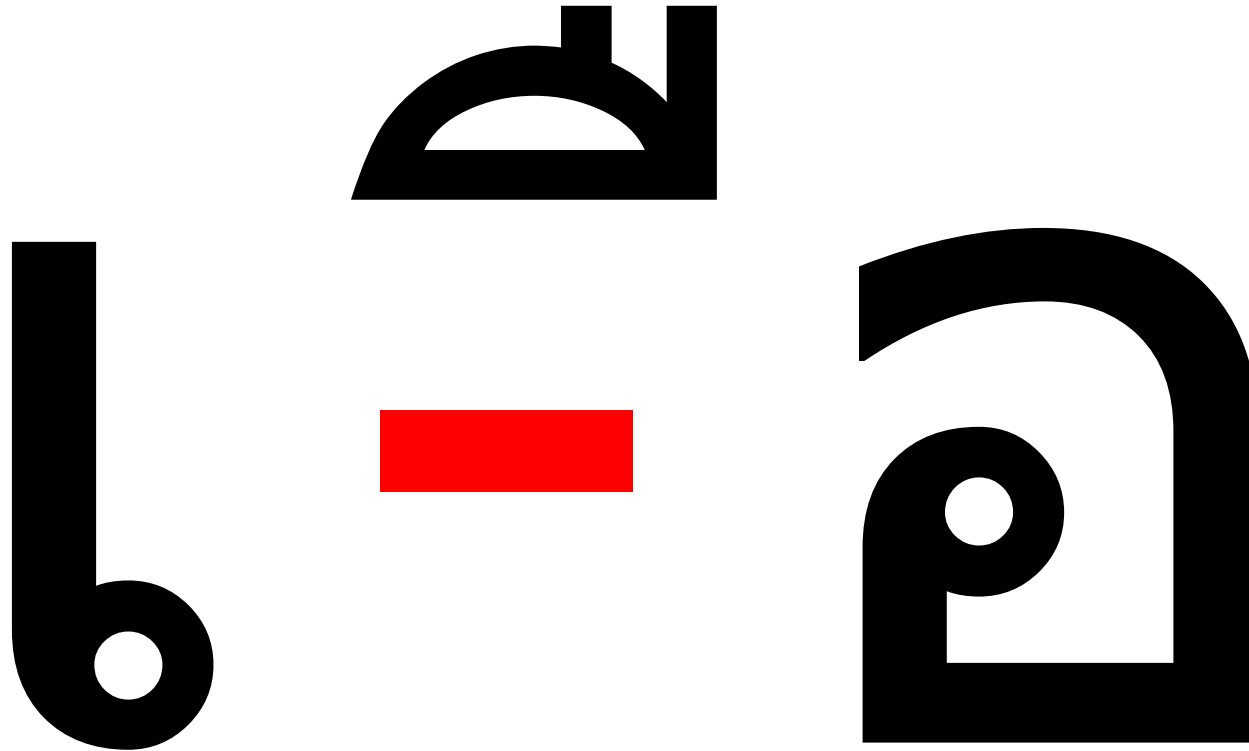
24



'p' < u > 't' + ' < a > 't'

LONG

25



'pu→t' + 'at'

SHORT

26

6



26

26

'<uh>'

LONG

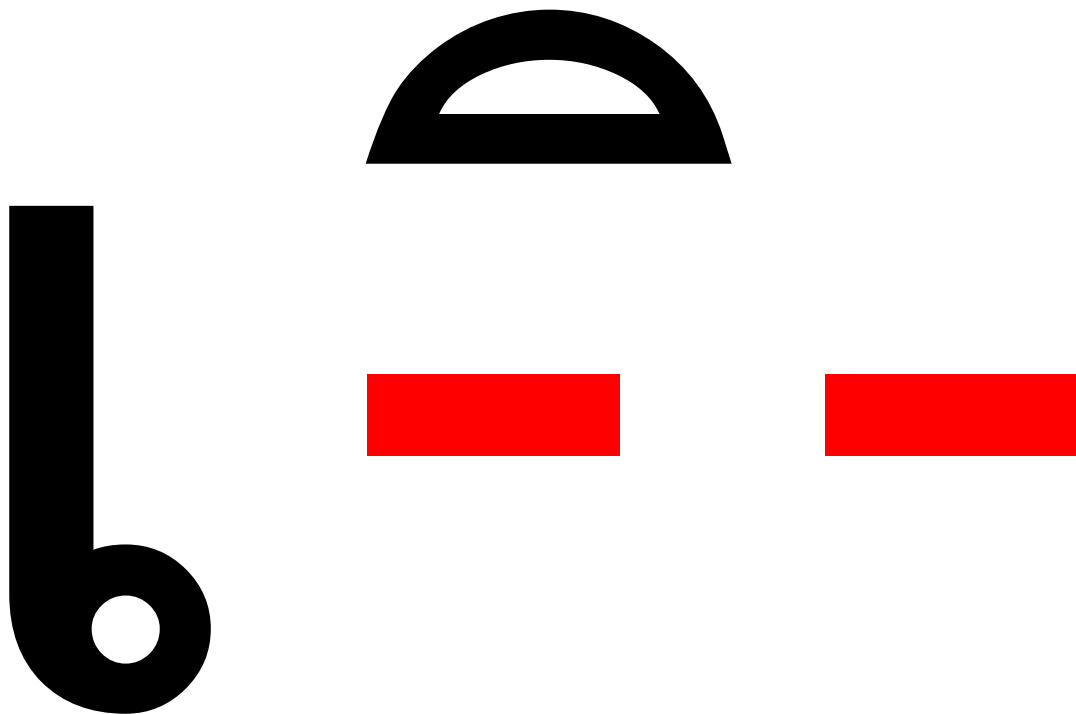
27



uh →

LONG

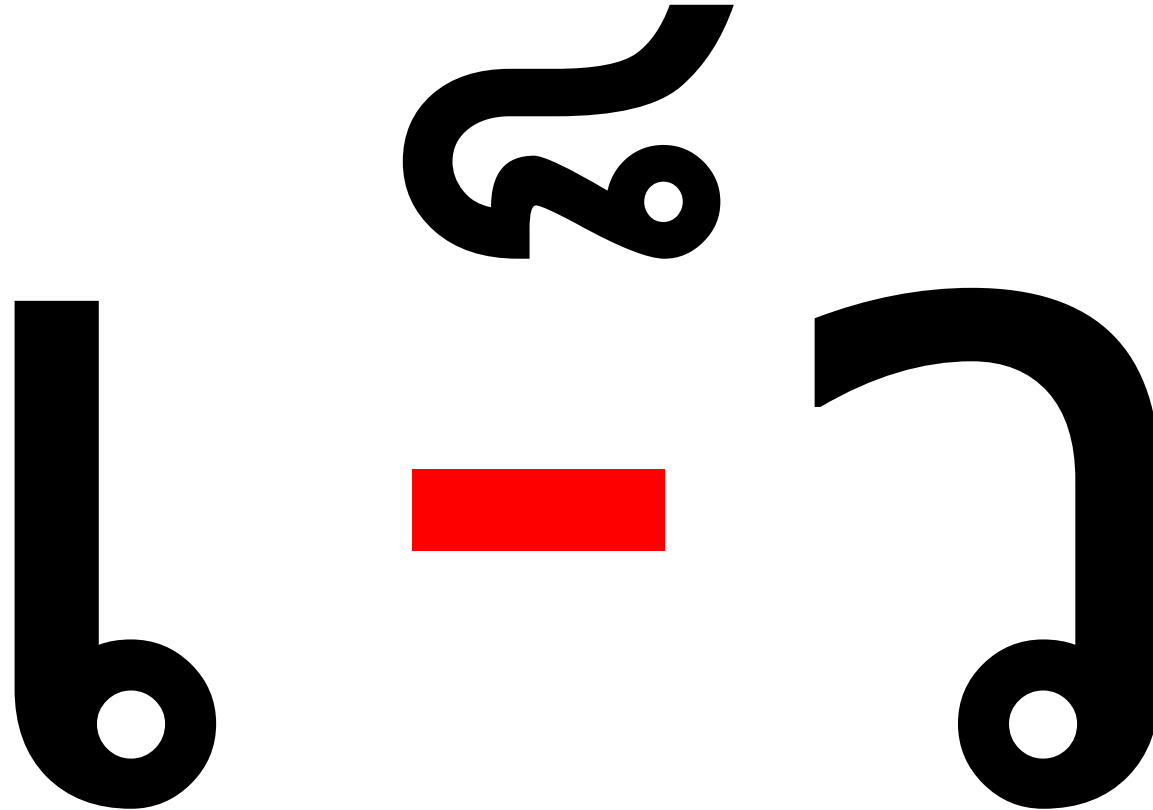
28



uh →

SHORT

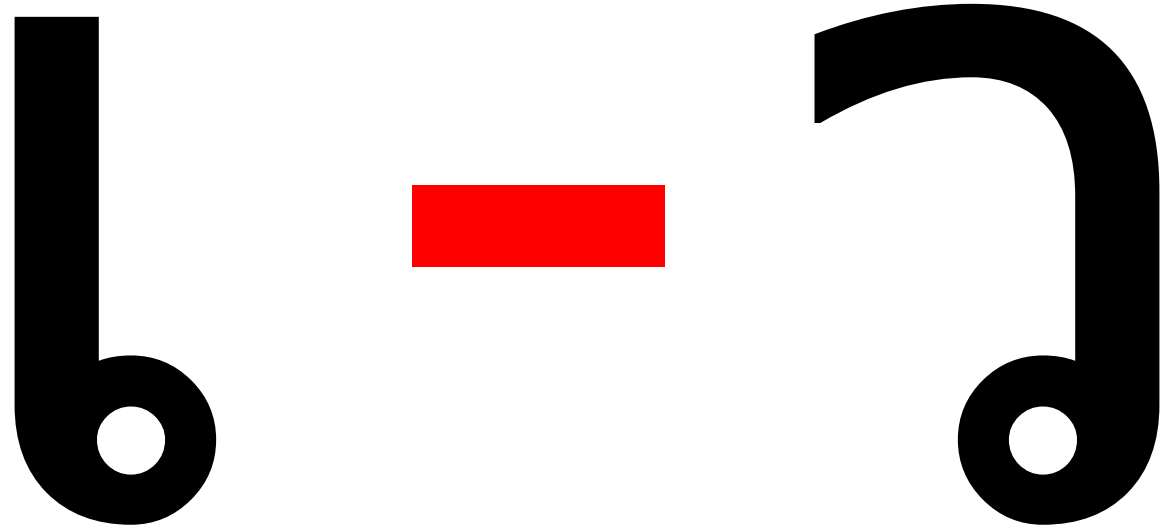
29



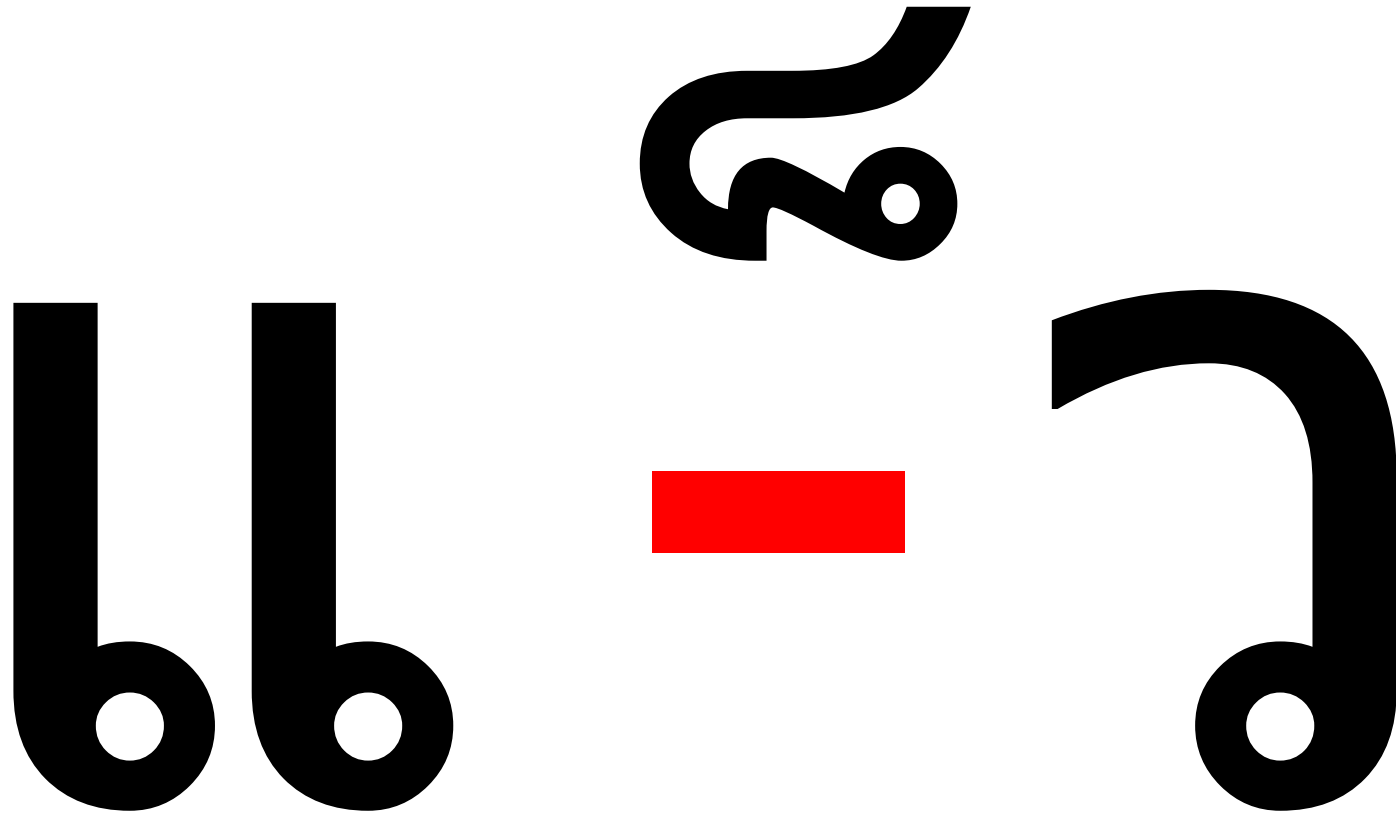
'd<ay>' + 'p<oo>|'

LONG

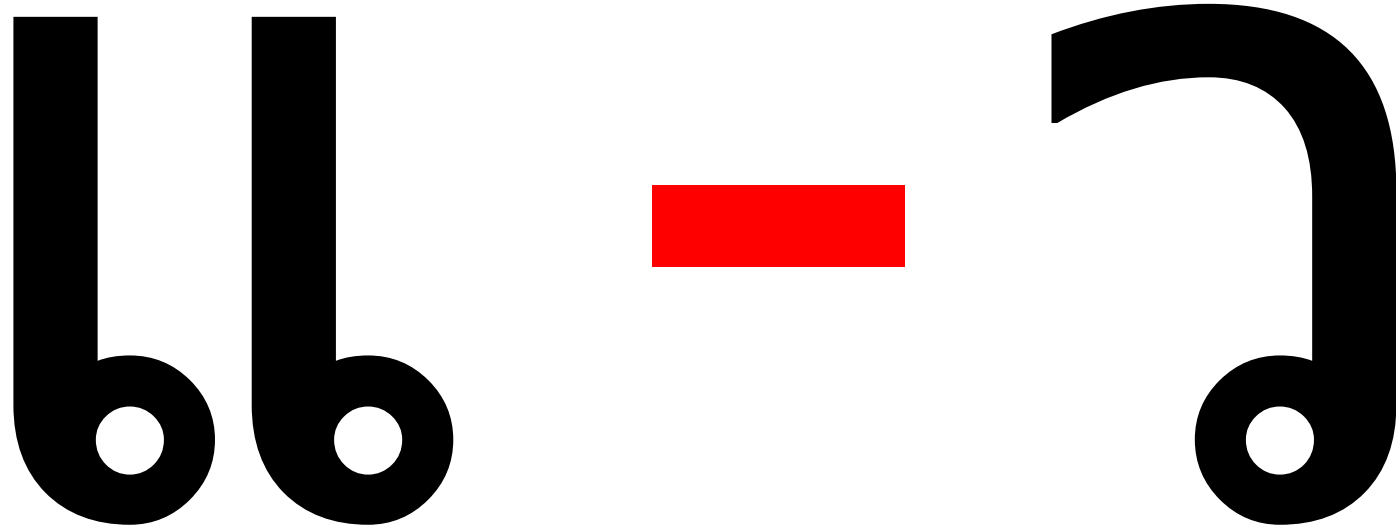
30



'day→' + 'poo→'



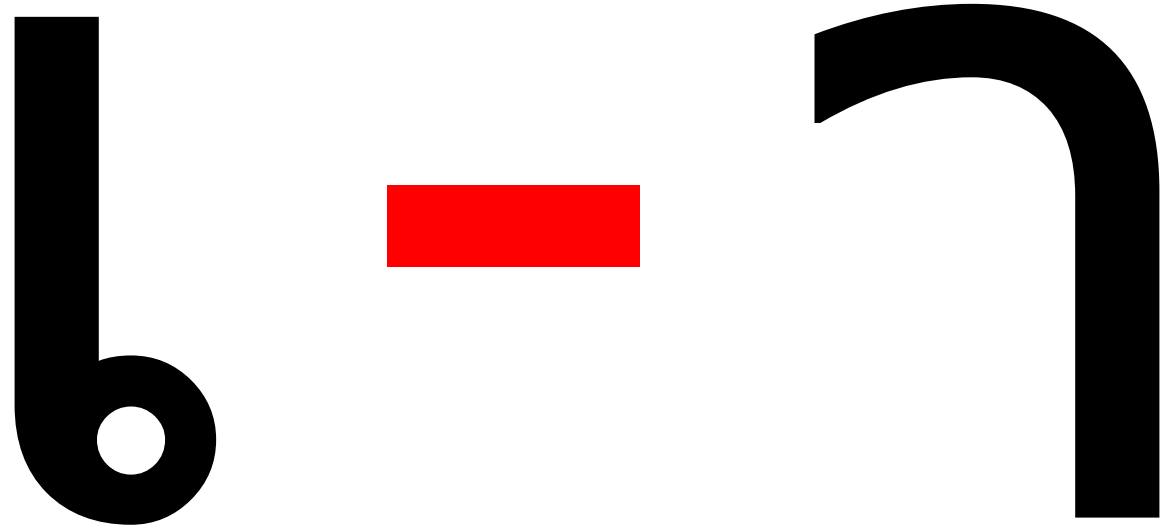
'<ai>r' + 'p<oo>l'



'ai→r' + 'poo→l'

SHORT

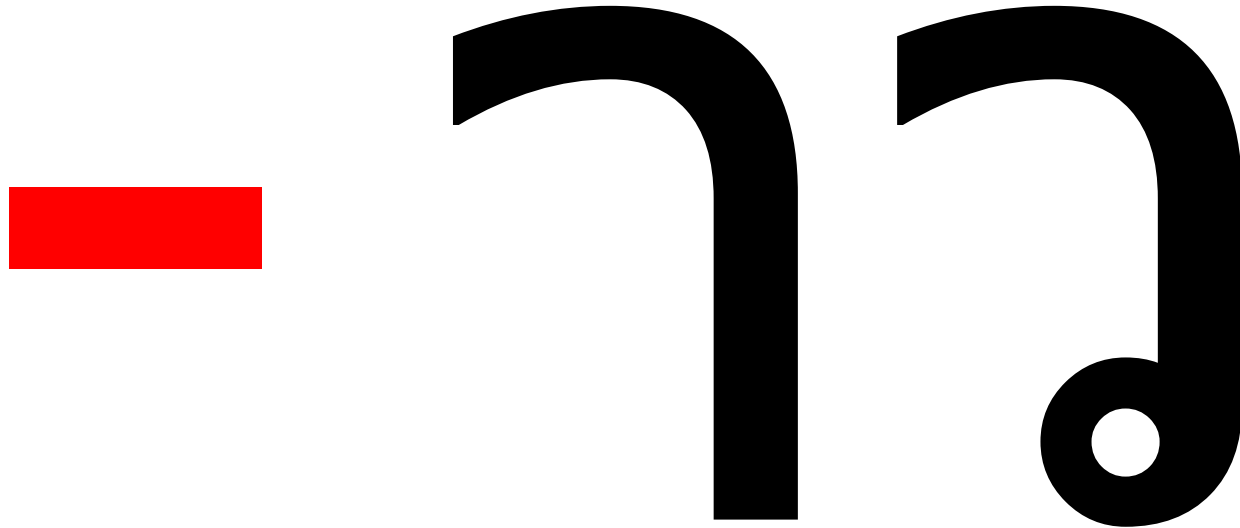
33



'n<ow>'

LONG

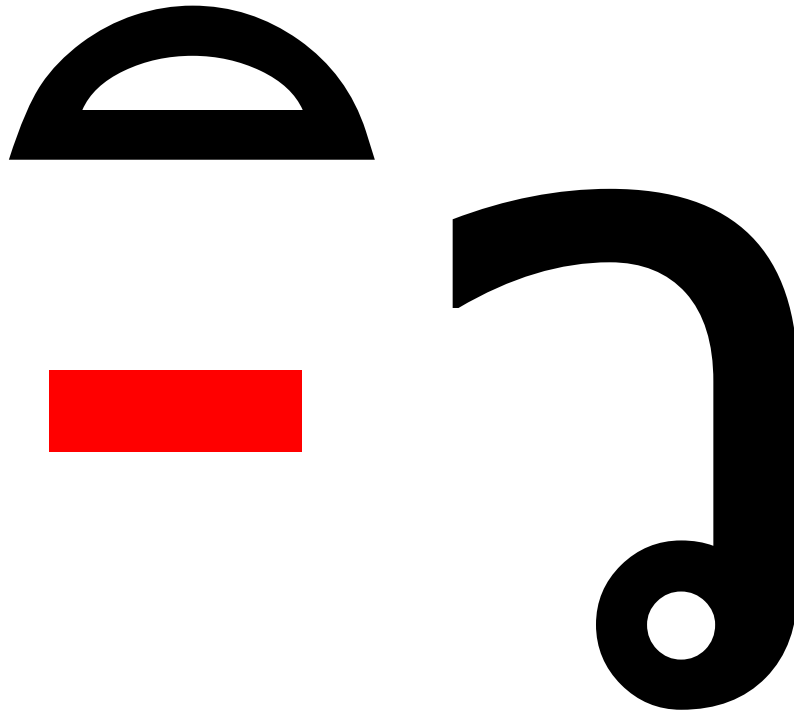
34



'now→'

SHORT

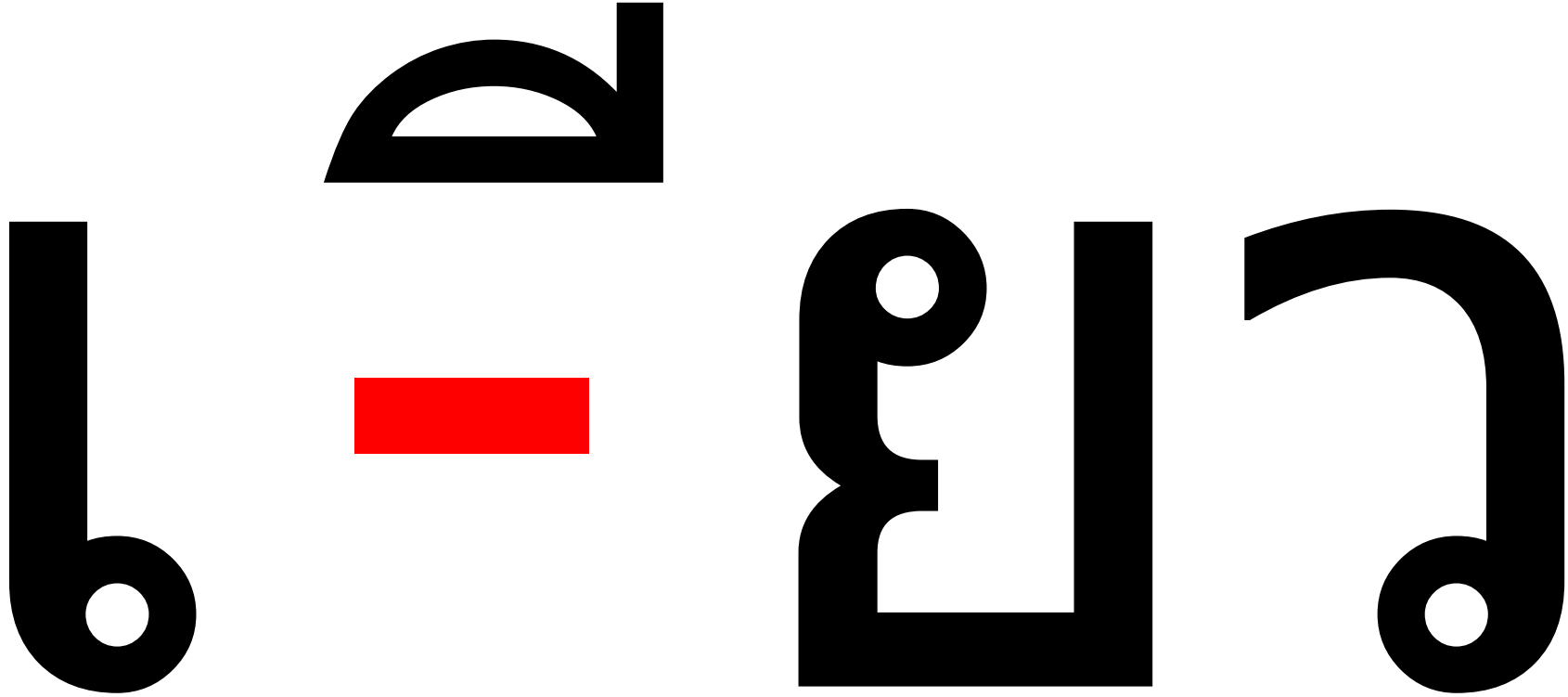
35



'it' + 'p<oo>l'

LONG

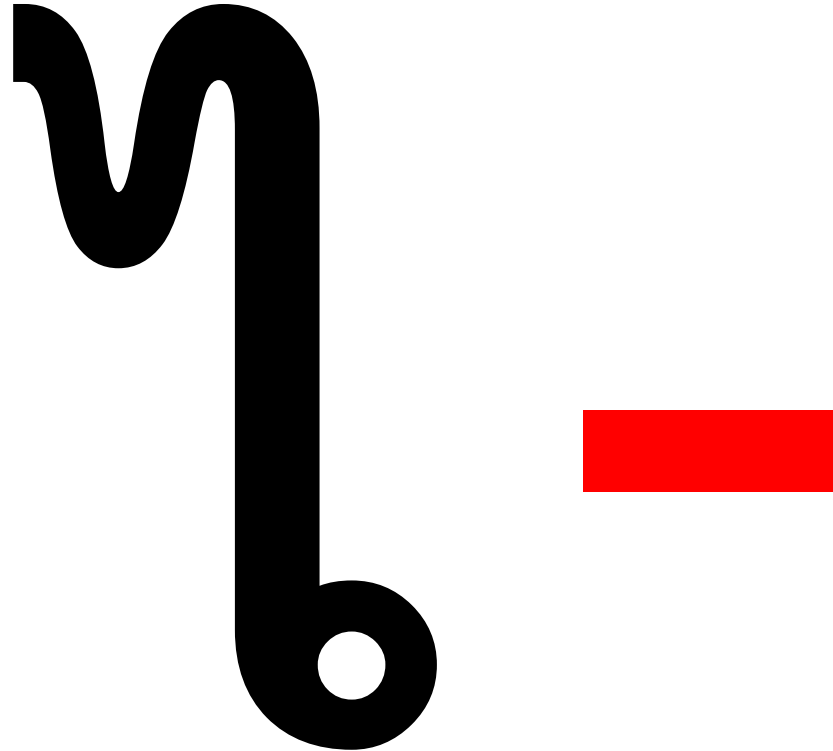
36



'bee' + 'now→'

SHORT

37



'm' < y >'

SHORT

38



'm' < y >'

LONG

39

— ער

'my→'

LONG

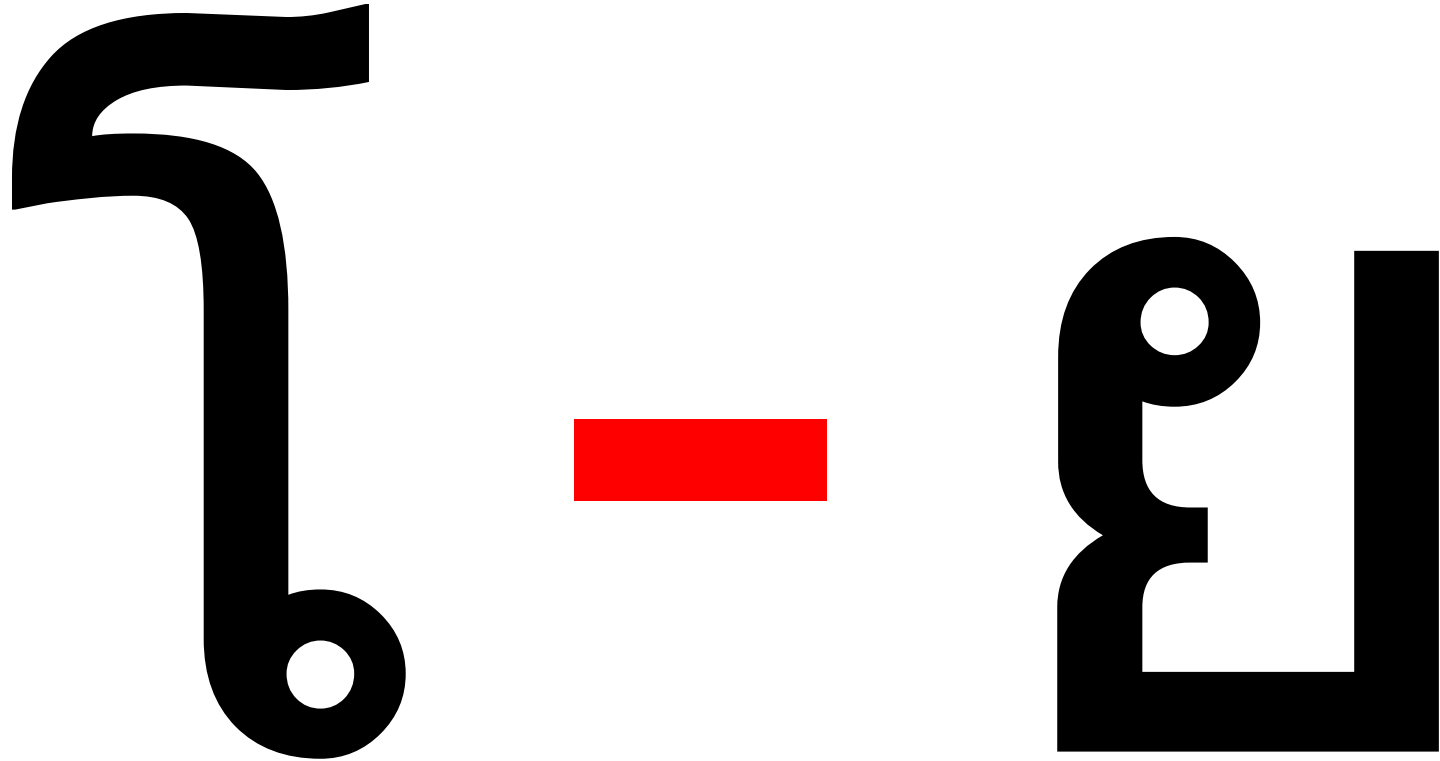
40

— ع ي

'boy→'

LONG

41



'o→h' (small rounded lips) + 'bee'

LONG

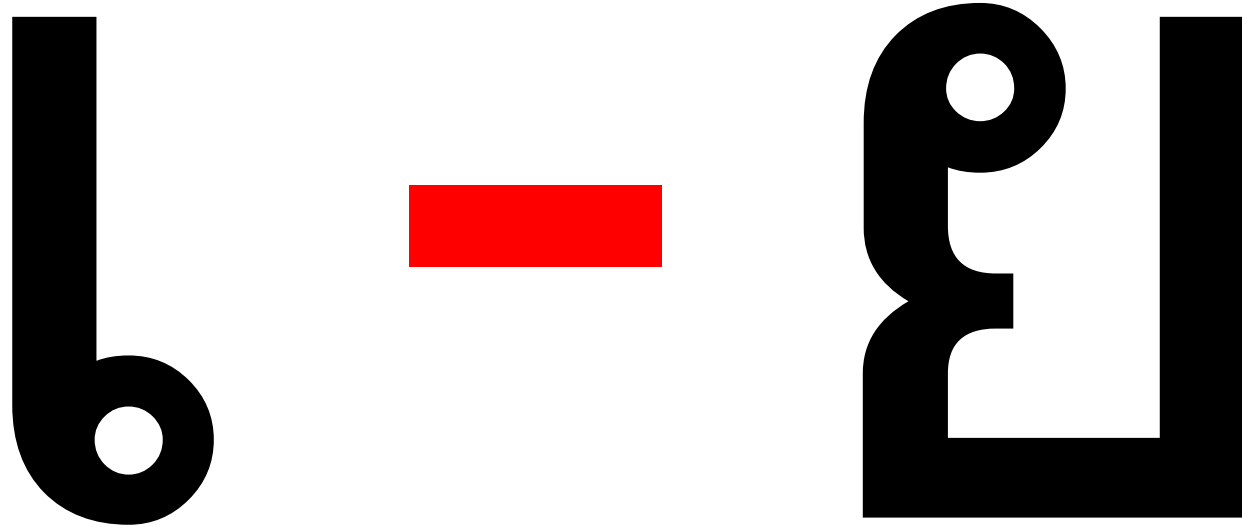
42

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'poo→l' + 'my→'

LONG

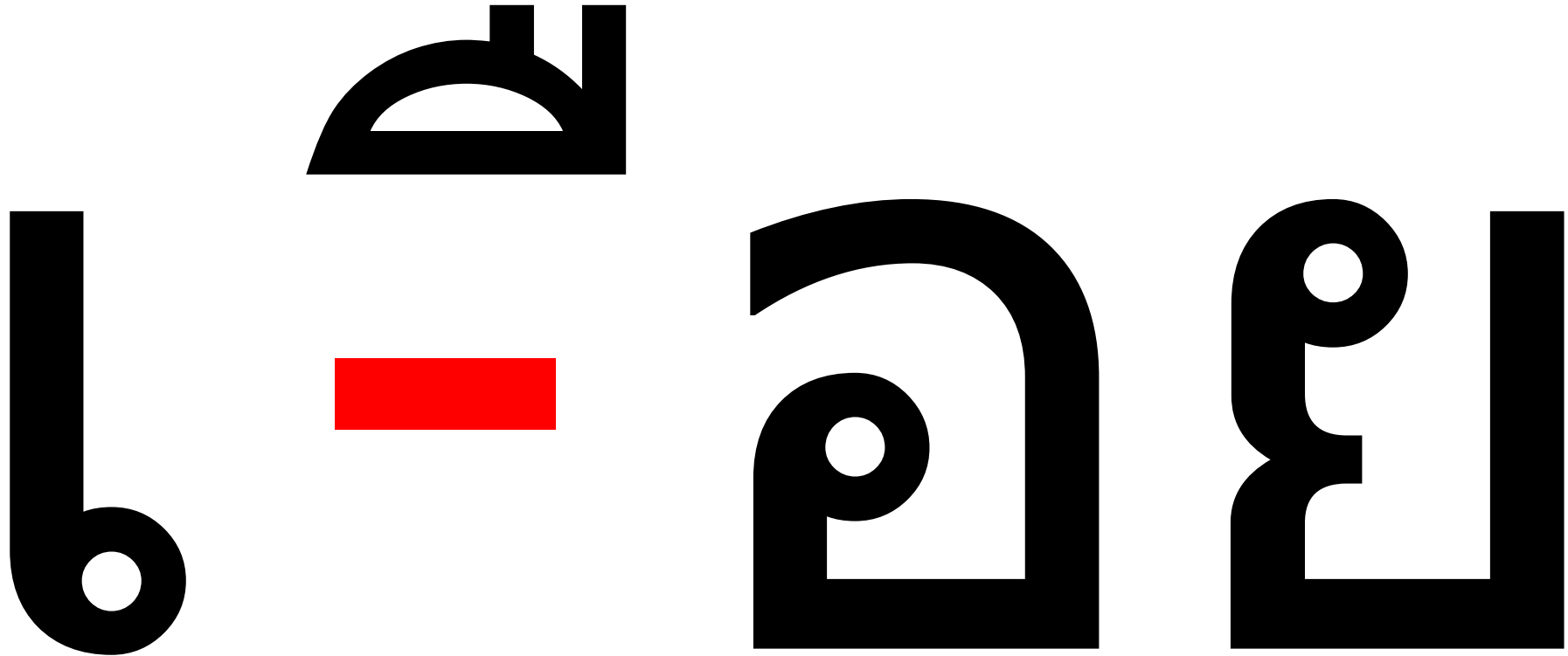
43



'uh→' + 'bee'

LONG

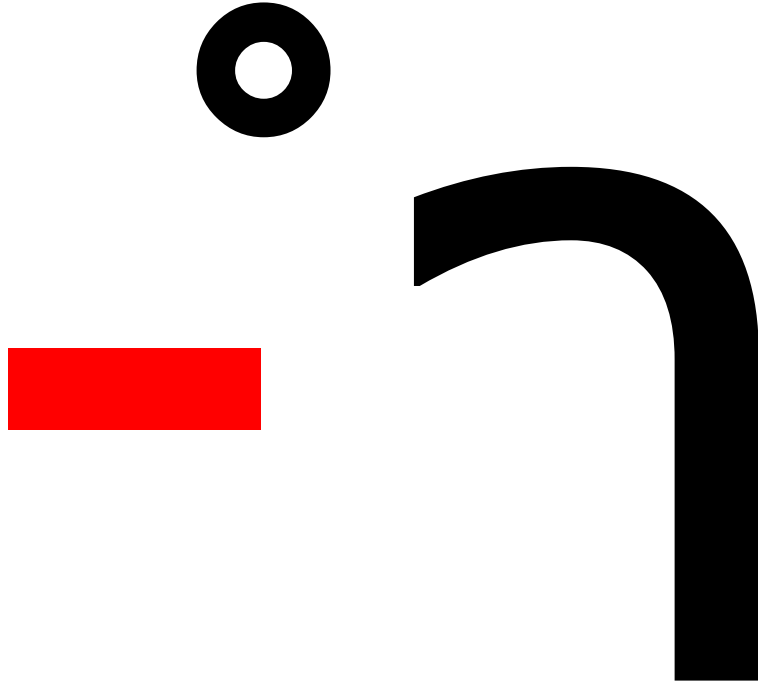
44



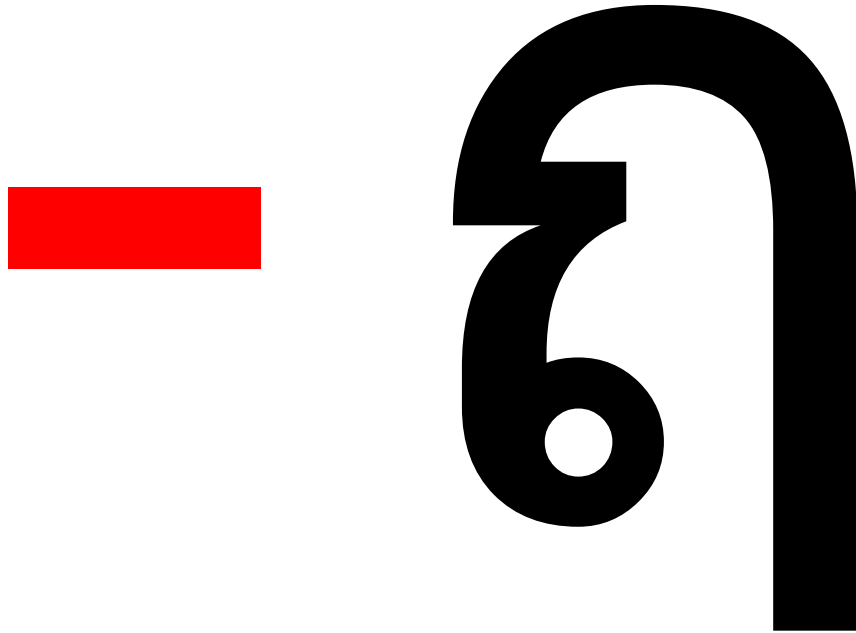
'pu→t' + 'bee'

SHORT

45



um




1. 'rip'

2. 'rookier'

Learning Thai Vowel sounds

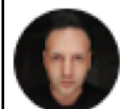
3. Linguistic approach



STUART JAY RAJ
CRACKING THAI FUNDAMENTALS - JCADEMY.COM

| | SHORT | LONG | STRETCHY | SHRINKY |
|--------------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| BACK | a อะ | a: อา | a: อา | a: อา |
| TOP | i: อี | i: อี | i:a เอือ | ai ไอ |
| FRONT | i: อี | i: อี | i:a เอีย | ai ไอ |
| LIPS | u อุ | u: อุ | u:a อัว | au เอว |

Thai Vowels for Dummies in 5 Min v2 - A System Impossible to Forget



Stuart Jay Raj
151K subscribers

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3.8K



Share



Action plan

1. Print or by hand all 46 **vowel** slides.
2. Read 3 times a day for **2** weeks
3. Cover, test, review for **1** week

See you again
in 3 weeks!

Welcome back!

You now know all

46 Thai vowels

and their given **sounds**.

| # | Thai Phonetics |
|---|----------------|
| 1 | Script ✓ |
| 2 | 5 Tones ✓ |
| 3 | Consonants ✓ |
| 4 | Vowels ✓ |
| 5 | Spelling |
| 6 | Tone Rules |
| 7 | Reading drills |

#Unit 5 / 7

Spelling

Consonant names

All Thai consonants have an assigned name, which is useful when it comes to spelling, as there are sometimes multiple consonants of the same sound, for example:

K = ค ข ฃ



chicken

ก

กอ ไก่



egg

บ

ขอไข่



bottle

บ

بوขวด



water buffalo

ค

คอ ควาย



person

คน

คน คน



bell

ฆ

หมอ ระฆัง



snake

ง

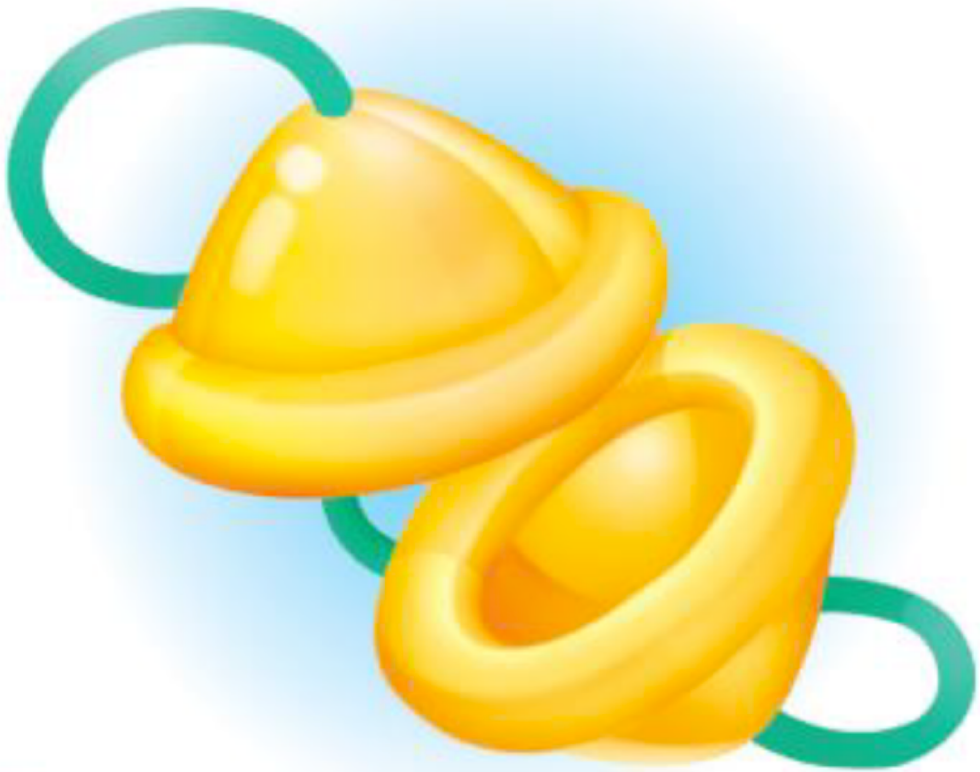
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plate

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จอ จาน



cymbal

ฉ

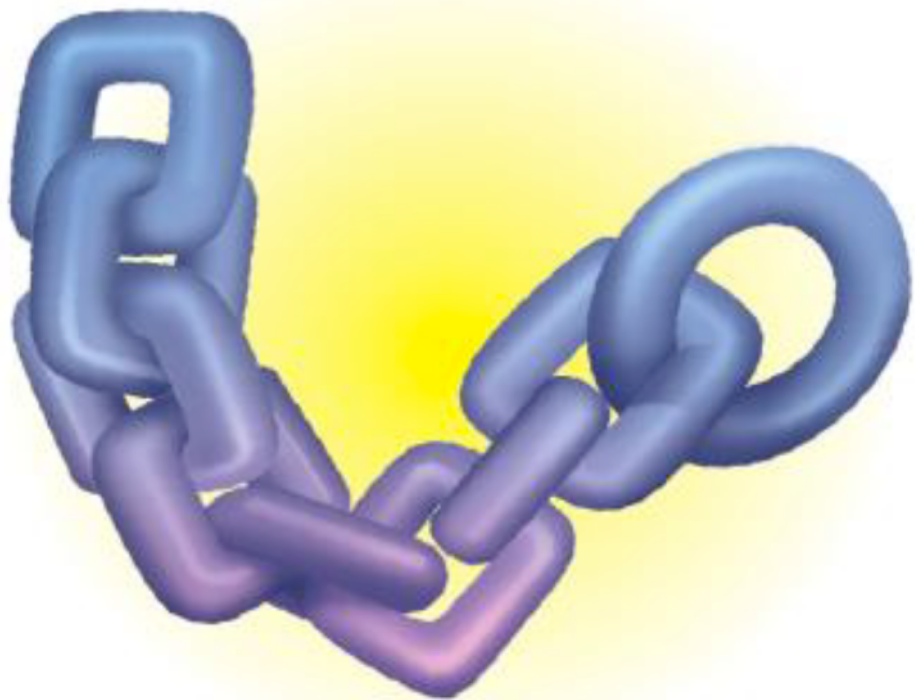
นอ หนึ่ง



elephant

ข

ขอ ข้าง



chain

ข

ขอ ไช้



tree

เม

มอ เมอ



woman

ณ

ณอ ห์ณึง



crown

ခ

ခ ဝ ချာ



spear

ချ

ချ ဝ ပချက်



base

๒๒

๒๒ ๒๒



Thai literature character

ชา

ชาอ มณโฑ



elderly person

ฒ

ฒอ ผู้เฒ่า



novice monk

ณ

ณ อ เนร



child

ด

ดอ เด็ก



turtle

ด

ดอ เต่า



bag

ඈ

ඈආ ඈභ



soldier

ท

ทอ ทหาร



flag

ธง

ธง อ ธง



mouse

น

นอ หุ่น



leaf

บ

บอ ใบไม้



fish

ป

ปอ ปลา



bee

ฟ

ฟอ ฟัง



lid

ฟ

ฟอ ฟา



tray

พ

พอ ฟาน



tooth

ฟ

ฟอ ฟัน



sail ship

ກ

ກອ ສຳເກາ



horse

ม

มอ ม้า



giant

ຍ

ຍ໑ ຍໍກໄຍ໑



boat

ร

เรือ เรือ



monkey

ล

ลือ ลิ้ง



ring

ว

วอ แหวน



pavilion

ค

ค อ ศาลา



hermit

๒๕

๒๐ ๖๖๒



tiger

ส

สอ เสือ



chest box

ห

หอ หีบ



kite

ฟ

พ่อ จุฬา



basin

บ

บบ บ่าง



owl

ฮ

ฮอ นกฮูก

Thai Punctuation

Thai script is written without spaces between words. Instead, spaces are used to separate sentences or phrases.

Thai: ฉันชอบกินข้าวผัดกุ้งมาก

English: I really like eating shrimp fried rice.

Note: Traditional Thai does not use commas (,) or full stops (.). However, in modern Thai, they are commonly used.

The symbol ๅ

ไม้ยมก (mái yá-mòk)

Is a Thai repetition mark. It indicates that the preceding word should be repeated.

၅

1. Repeats a Single Word

၆၅၅ = fast

၆၅၅ ၅ = hurry up, quickly!

๑

2. Softens and Intensifies Adjectives/Adverbs

ค่อย ๆ

= slowly, gradually, gently

๑

3. Used in Set Phrases

เรื่อย ๑ = continuously

บ่อย ๑ = often / frequently

๑

4. add casual, friendly,
r playful tone

ไป ๑ มา ๑ = back and forth

The symbol ๑

ไปยาลน้อย (bpai-yahn-nói)

Is a Thai punctuation mark used to indicate an abbreviation, similar to how English uses an apostrophe (') or ellipsis (...) to shorten words or phrases.

१

Function and Meaning:

It shortens phrases that are commonly understood by the reader.

Used mainly in formal writing, documents, and official names.

๑

กรุงเทพ๑

Abbreviation of กรุงเทพมหานคร

The full name is quite long,

so ๑ replaces the omitted part.

The symbol ๑

ไปยาลใหญ่ (bpai-yahn-yài)

Is another abbreviation mark used in Thai writing, similar to ไปยาลน้อย (๑) but with a slightly different function.

ଏତଦ୍

Function and Meaning:

Is used to represent "etc."
or "and so on" in English.

It is used to indicate that
more items or examples could follow,
but they are omitted for brevity.

ฯลฯ

มะม่วง ทุเรียน ลำไย ฯลฯ

Mangoes, durians, longans, etc.

Summary

၆ = A repetition marker

၇ = Abbreviation marker

၆၇၆ = An etc. marker

| | |
|---|----------------|
| # | Thai Phonetics |
| 1 | Script ✓ |
| 2 | 5 Tones ✓ |
| 3 | Consonants ✓ |
| 4 | Vowels ✓ |
| 5 | Spelling ✓ |
| 6 | Tone Rules |
| 7 | Reading drills |

#Unit 6 / 7

Tone rules

When reading Thai, every word has a fixed tone. There are **two** ways to determine the tone of a Thai word:

1. Memorization - Similar to Chinese, you can memorize the tone for each word individually.

2. Systematic Approach - You can learn the tone rules, which allow you to determine the correct tone based on a word's components.

For example, take the word
มาก (mâhk), which means "very."

If you rely on memorization, you would simply remember that it has a falling tone.

However, this approach often
requires *transliterations*
to recall tones accurately.

The **systematic** approach involves understanding tone rules, like this:

มาก (mâhk) → **LLD** = **Falling tone**

L = Low-class consonant (ฆ)

L = Long vowel (ํ)

D = Dead syllable (ั)

(ends in ั, which is a final k sound or glottal stop)

By learning the **tone rules**,
you can **DETERMINE**
the tone of **any word**
without relying on
transliterations.

Live vs Dead syllable

♥ Live syllable =

1. Ends in a long vowel
2. Sonorant or resonant sound. (m, n, ng)

♥ = 'LO-M N NG'

● Dead syllable =

1. Ends in a short vowel
2. Glottal stop. (k , p , t)

● = 'SHOR-K P T'

Tone Formula list

There are 20 possible formula combinations to determine a word's tone. Let's learn the first 12.

| No | Formula | Tone |
|----------|------------|-----------|
| 1 | LSD | = High |
| 2 | LSL | = Mid |
| 3 | LLD | = Falling |
| 4 | LLL | = Mid |

| No | Formula | Tone |
|----------|------------|-------|
| 5 | MSD | = Low |
| 6 | MSL | = Mid |
| 7 | MLD | = Low |
| 8 | MLL | = Mid |

| No | Formula | Tone |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| 9 | HSD | = Low |
| 10 | HSL | = Rising |
| 11 | HLD | = Low |
| 12 | HLL | = Rising |

Tone Markers

In addition to the basic tone rules, Thai also has four tone markers that can override the standard tone formulas. Think of these markers as having veto power—when present, they dictate the tone regardless of the normal rules.

To fully understand how tone markers work, let's first learn their names and then explore the **8** tone marker-specific formulas, which complete the full set of **20** formulas for tones.

Tone Marker Names

- ไม้เอก → mái àyk ˊ
- ไม้โท → mái toh ˊˊ
- ไม้ตรี → mái dtree ˊˊˊ
- ไม้จัตวา → mái jàd-dawa ˊˊˊˊ

Next,

let's go over the
8 tone marker-specific
formulas that complete the
full 20 formula system

| No | Formula | Tone |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| 13 | 1TL | = Falling |
| 14 | 1TM | = Low |
| 15 | 1TH | = Low |

| No | Formula | Tone |
|-----------|------------|-----------|
| 16 | 2TL | = High |
| 17 | 2TM | = Falling |
| 18 | 2TH | = Falling |

| No | Formula | Tone |
|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 19 | 3T | = High |
| 20 | 4T | = Rising |

| # | Formula | Tone | # | Formula | Tone |
|----|---------|---------|----|---------|---------|
| 1 | LSD | High | 11 | HLD | Low |
| 2 | LSL | Mid | 12 | HLL | Rising |
| 3 | LLD | Falling | 13 | ๑ 1TL | Falling |
| 4 | LLL | Mid | 14 | ๑ 1TM | Low |
| 5 | MSD | Low | 15 | ๑ 1TH | Low |
| 6 | MSL | Mid | 16 | ๑ 2TL | High |
| 7 | MLD | Low | 17 | ๑ 2TM | Falling |
| 8 | MLL | Mid | 18 | ๑ 2TH | Falling |
| 9 | HSD | Low | 19 | ๑ 3T | High |
| 10 | HSL | Rising | 20 | ๑ 4T | Rising |

Thai Tone Rules

| | <i>High</i> | <i>Mid</i> | <i>Low</i> |
|-------------|-------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Live</i> | R | M | M |
| <i>Dead</i> | L | L | F ^{VV} H ^V |
| ◌̌ | L | L | F |
| ◌̍ | F | F | H |
| ◌̎ | | H | |
| ◌̏ | | R | |

High, Mid, Low - Initial consonant class

Live - Syllable that ends with long vowel or sonorant final

Dead - Syllable that ends with short vowel or stop final

^V - Dead Syllable with short vowel

^{VV} - Dead Syllable with long vowel

Applying the Tone Formula in 3 Simple Steps

You can determine the
tone of any Thai word
in just **three** steps
using this method.

Step 1: Identify the initial consonant class.

Step 2: Determine if the vowel is short or long.

Step 3: Check if the syllable is LIVE or DEAD.

แสน

1. Initial consonant class?

→ ห (High-class) = H

2. Short or long vowel?

→ แอ (Long vowel) = L

3. Live or dead syllable?

→ Ends in น (a sonorant consonant) = L

Now, we have the formula **HLL**,
and according to our tone chart,
HLL corresponds to a rising tone.

Conclusion:

ᵛᵛᵛᵛᵛ = **HLL** (Rising tone)

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#Unit 7 / 7

Reading drills

Reading Thai words involves
2 key components:

1. Pronouncing the word correctly by reading it phonetically.
2. Identifying its tone.

For this **first exercise**,
we will focus solely on reading
each word with a mid-tone.

In the **second exercise**, we will
practice determining the correct
tones for some common words.

Ex-1 Set 1

मा

मि

मि

मि

मि

मि

मि

मा

मि

मि

मि

मि

Ex-1 Set 2

กา

คิ

กี

จา

คิ

จี

ปะ

ดา

ติ

ทึ

นู

ปู

Ex-1 Set 3

ปา

ปี

ฟู

มะ

มึ

มิ

วะ

ฮา

ปรี

พลี

ครุ

หุ

Ex-1 Set 4

พั่น

ขาม

ซัก

ญาณ

ธิป

ณีน

บิด

ป็น

มุค

ฟูก

ดุค

ตุน

Exercise 2

Tone determination

Let's learn

10 common verbs

and determine

the pronunciation with tone.

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | | | |
| 2 | write | เขียน | | | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่าน + น | | |
| 2 | write | เขียน | | | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่าน + น | 1TM | |
| 2 | write | เขียน | | | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่าน + น | 1TM | LOW |
| 2 | write | เขียน | | | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|--------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่า + น | 1TM | LOW |
| 2 | write | เขียน | ข + เอีย + น | | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|--------------|---------|------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่า + น | 1TM | LOW |
| 2 | write | เขียน | ข + เอีย + น | HLL | |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|--------------|---------|--------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่า + น | 1TM | LOW |
| 2 | write | เขียน | ข + เอีย + น | HLL | RISING |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |

| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|-------|--------------|---------|--------|
| 1 | read | อ่าน | อ่า + น | 1TM | LOW |
| 2 | write | เขียน | ข + เอีย + น | HLL | RISING |
| 3 | learn | เรียน | | | |
| 4 | teach | สอน | | | |
| 5 | eat | กิน | | | |



| No. | ENGLISH | THAI | COMPONENTS | FORMULA | TONE |
|-----|---------|------|------------|---------|------|
| 6 | drink | ดื่ม | | | |
| 7 | love | รัก | | | |
| 8 | like | ชอบ | | | |
| 9 | know | รู้ | | | |
| 10 | must | ต้อง | | | |



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