“Tamil for Everyone” (2016-17)

A project by Chitra

Introduction

Tamil is the language of the bioregion and it is one of the languages of Auroville specified by the Mother. It is important that we all should have a basic knowledge of the language and the culture.

The goal of this project is to teach basic Tamil conversation for everyone, mainly Aurovilians, Newcomers and volunteers. This strengthens the relationship between the non-native and native speakers and promotes the qualities of human unity.

About the class

Starting on October 17, 2016, Tamil classes were conducted twice a week at the SAIIER conference hall by Chitra of AuroTraduction. The duration of the class initially was one hour, but it was extended to an additional 45 minutes due to the interest and enthusiasm of the participants. An average of 14 students attended each class. Once the course began, we were not able to accommodate students who would have liked to drop in on occasion – the class was for regular and dedicated students.

The learners were taught in a joyous and interactive manner, which enhanced their perseverance for learning Tamil. The class not only offered instruction in spoken Tamil, but also provided an introduction to Tamil culture.

We are attempting to give the student a basic understanding of the language and at the same time give them the opportunity to learn practical and proper conversational Tamil, so that they can use it in their everyday life.

Reflections

Through collaborating with the people of diverse nationalities, we found how Tamil and other foreign languages (namely Japanese, Portuguese, Korean, Russian) are connected.

The class was announced only once in the News & Notes, in October, and we have experienced a strong demand. We are constantly receiving emails from Newcomers and Aurovilians who would like to join the class.

Future direction

We would like to offer a 6-month structured class for beginners that will meet 3 days a week for three hours.