



MINISTER OF COMMERCE
INDIA

6 York Road, New Delhi
18th September, 1959.

Dear Dr. Krishnan,

I have ventured to take advantage of my acquaintance with you to write this letter on a matter which may be foolish in as much as it may be a scientific absurdity! But I have done so in the belief that you have enough patience and will pardon me.

I have been thinking if it is not possible to devise some system or method by which one can teach himself an Indian language. I have particularly in view Tamil which is a difficult language and to learn which I have made sporadic efforts without the least success. I believe that whatever system is developed, the best results can be obtained if direct teacher-pupil relation could be available, but I would rule this out, and would like to explore any secondary method which in common parlance one calls "self-taught lessons". I knew a friend who has taught himself the Spanish language with the help of Pellman books and also linguaphone records. A Jesuit missionary of Spanish origin said that the pronunciation of my friend's Spanish was of a high order.

I have been wondering if it is not possible to devise a system which will enable a middle-aged or elderly person to learn Tamil by his own efforts without having a teacher. Once a system is devised for a difficult language like Tamil, the same could be adopted for other Indian languages. Perhaps, by this means it may be possible to widen channels of communication between Indians speaking different languages.

If the idea is at all practicable, then perhaps group effort under the auspices of some institution would be necessary. From my own experience I have learnt that in any effort to be reasonably successful the first requisite is the enthusiasm of a few persons - may be even one or two. Here, I thought that the best person I could approach on this matter for advice and guidance would be you, and therefore I have encroached on your time. In case the idea is not totally impracticable, I shall be obliged to know if I could come over to you and discuss the same.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

N. Kanungo

(Nityanand Kanungo)

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