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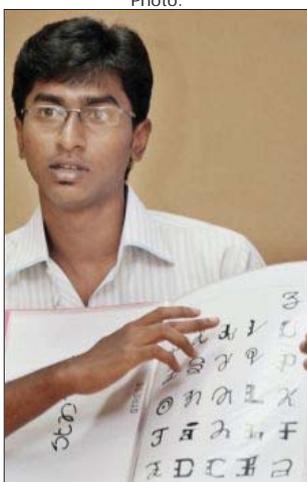
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Tamil Nadu - Coimbatore

Youth awaits chance for promoting Tamil ambigrams at Tamil meet

Anjana Anand and Gaurango Banerji

Photo:



AWAITING A CHANCE:S. Gowtham displaying his Tamil ambigrams.

Coimbatore: Even as the entire State is gearing up for the World Classical Tamil Conference, here is S. Gowtham, a student of Computer Science at Amrita School of Engineering with a series of Tamil ambigrams that can take the language a step forward.

Ambigram is a design or art form that may be read as one or more words when looked at angles of 90 or 180 degrees. The words readable in the other angles may be the same or different from the original words. One such ambigram that Gowtham has created is Kalaignar that can also be read as Muthalvar (Chief Minister).

"Tamil can be a very flexible language for ambigrams," says Gowtham. He adds that the language is older than the ambigrams and has the ability to blend itself with other languages which could help in mutual understanding between people of different nationalities, thus, helping break language barriers. With ambigrams, proficiency in a particular language would no longer be an issue.

Ambigrams came into focus after the release of books by Dan Brown namely the 'Da Vinci Code' and 'Angels and Demons'. They can be very helpful in passing secret messages between defence personnel and networking services.

Gowtham says that there are many English ambigrams available on the Net but when it comes to Tamil, there are hardly any. He has done around 20 Ambigrams, a few of them being The Hindu-Unmai (Genuine), DMK-Tamil, out of his passion for the language and wishes to get them into the World Classical Tamil Conference and prove that Tamil is one of the best Asian languages ever.

Gowtham looks forward to creating ambigrams that can be used to compress text. One of the main features of ambigrams is that it can compress and encrypt the text in a single step. He says that with the help of ambigrams one can compress a given text to half of its size. Gowtham is currently working on his book for ambigrams that will contain 676 combinations of letters.

The World Classical Tamil Conference that will contain great Tamil literary works can have a space for Tamil ambigrams that can generate curiosity amongst the public. He looks forward to a chance to draw the attention of the scholars to do more Tamil ambigrams with their help. At present, he is on his own and there are no set standards or guidelines for preparing Tamil

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ambigrams. "I want these ambigrams to become popular to take Tamil to more people and make them understand the rich legacy of this language."

He is at present knocking the doors of the Collector and officials involved in World Classical Tamil Conference arrangements for a chance in the form of a small corner in the exhibition hall. Once ambigrams make a foray into Tamil, they will become more popular, he says. For details, contact Gowtham at 9865249072 or 9865162509.

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