

Samskritam's A Tool To Explore The Universe

Indica November 1, 2023



Parnika Tembye, a Political Science graduate from Ramnarain Ruia Autonomous College, Mumbai, simultaneously pursued a Bachelor's degree in Sanskrit. Apart from doing these two degrees simultaneously, she explored her interest in Vyakaranam by diligently attending a two year Paniniya Vyakarana Course offered by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai. She has the experience of working as an educator for multiple educational companies based in Mumbai. She is currently associated with Agastya Gurukulam, developing a curriculum for Ganitam based on Indian Treatises and handling subjects like Samskritam, Ganitam and Itihaasa for primary children.

Parnika has been doing exceptionally well at her MA Sanskrit programme from MIT ADT University of Vedic Science. In this interview she talks about her love for Samskritam.

What drew you to Samskritam?

संस्कृतिः संस्कृताश्रिता ।

In modern times, most people my age frown upon the word karma and do not believe in its existence. I, on the contrary, am among those handful of youths who completely believe in it. I believe that this is one of the most just and brilliant models of existence given by our ancient sages and seers. Of course, in modern scientific parlance, it is just my belief but I am not ashamed to carry it. Having said that, my excitement and eagerness to understand, implement and imbibe the ancient Hindu *samskriti* and *samskara* led me to Samskritam. Thus started my spiritual and eternal journey with Samskritam.

What is the scope of learning Sanskritam at a higher degree level?

We all know that when we learn a new language, we also get a peek into the culture and traditions of its native speakers. Samskritam is no different. If we approach Samskritam with an open mind like any other language, we will come to know how blessed we are to be a part of this Bharatiya culture. I have experienced it, right from learning the *varnamala* of Samskritam to relishing the literary works of great poets. I started getting answers to my questions, not just about our deep culture, but also, *ganitam*, *vigyanam*, management, history and so on. Isn't it exciting and thrilling to know that no matter how many problems you face, you can somehow get the solution if you know decent Samskritam. It is because of the wide range of literature it has. Brilliant minds of Bharat have worked upon intricate problems and penned them down in this language. And probably that is why this beautiful language is boasted as Suravani (the language of Gods).

In my journey, the school of Vedic Sciences, MIT Pune, plays a vital role. If you have multiple responsibilities yet are excited to pursue a degree in Samskritam, MIT is the best option. All the classes are conducted online by devoted and qualified subject experts. I used to wonder why we should learn Samskritam through another language? Why shouldn't Samskritam be taught in Samskritam itself? But I am glad to mention that, in the School of Vedic Sciences, the mode of instruction for all the subjects is also Samskritam. Don't

be worried, if you face difficulty for a month or two to get adjusted with the mode of instruction. But this is the best way to develop our skills in this language. If what we pursue is not challenging, then what is the point of pursuing it? Samskritam will definitely challenge you, but it will keep you engaged and excited throughout. The recording of the lectures are also available for us to go through at a later point of time. All the materials are shared with us online. The only job for us as students is to be punctual to the class and be participative in the discussions.

Apart from this, it is mandatory for us to give the semester exam in person at MIT. It may sound like a big responsibility, but I urge you to sign up for the course just to visit the magnificent MIT campus that would make you feel bad for taking this course online. Its green and serene environment makes learning all the more interesting and engaging. They also provide hostel accommodation at a nominal price along with food for students who write the exam. And to top it all, if you are financially struggling and still want to pursue Samskritam, all you have to do is just seek help. Indica finds and magnanimously supports such students by fully or partially granting scholarships to deserving students. I would like to keep it here on record that only because of the financial support given by Indica, I am able to pursue my dream.



Apart from the language, what is the subject matter you are introduced to?

There are a wide range of subjects that one can explore through Samskritam and one may not be sure as to where their interests lie. Hence, MIT gives us an opportunity to glance into all aspects of Samskritam which definitely helps us in identifying our interest. We have been introduced to subjects like Sahitya (literature), Vyakaranam (grammar), Ved-Vedanta (Indian epistemology), Mimaansa (Indian heuristics) etc. It is not just going to be rote learning, but we will be able to appreciate its practical value in our life. For instance, we had an assignment in Alankara shastra, where we could choose any *kaavya* or movie and identify the components of *rupakam* that were taught in theory.

The language Samskritam, has definitely widened my horizon and continues to keep me in awe with the treasure trove of knowledge it contains. It gives great exposure to different Indian art forms like dance, drama etc. The text known as the fifth veda called Bharatnatyashastra, is the most ancient and elaborate text on dramaturgy. We also get to explore other treatises related to mathematics and astronomy like Leelavati, Aryabhatiyam, Shulba sutras, jyotirmayukh etc, Aarya Chanakya's Kautilya arthashastra related to polity, life lessons, principles of management and many more if we have the thirst of knowledge.

Samskritam is not just limited to teaching our culture, but opens the way to learn any topic of our interest. It will not be a hyperbole to state that this language acts as a tool to discover the entire universe.

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