UGC Approved Journal
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ISSN: 2348 - 5612 | Volume: 04 Issue: 01 | January – March 2017

REVISITING THE DEBATE ON CONSCIOUSNESS AND LANGUAGE IN INDIAN CONTEXT

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Abstract

Understanding the nature of language has been one of the prime concerns of philosophies in ancient India. Indian intellectuals have been constantly debating on the role of language in cognitive process - whether language manifests meaning (artha) of objects or constitutes them. What is the relationship between language and cognition? Notably, consciousness and language are interwoven in such a way that one cannot comprehend the former without taking into account the nuances and intricacies of the latter. However, all the philosophical systems have reflected on the above questions but, specifically, debates on language and cognition have been centred among three systems of philosophy: Grammarians, Mīmāṃsākas, Buddhism.

In this regard this research paper has three main concerns: first, to explore - how the debate is rooted in Vedic and Upaniṣadic thought. Second, to understand assumptions and contentious issues concerning the ontic status of language, linguistic denotation, referential reality, eternity or non-eternity of words, the relationship between word and world etc. Third, to critically analyse how Buddhists respond to Grammarians and Mīmāṃsākas.

Keywords: Language, Cognition, Vāk, Sphoṭa, Śabda

Grammarian and Mīmāṃsā trace the roots of their exposition in Vedic and Upaniṣadic thought. But Buddhism being a heterodox philosophical system refuses to accept the sole authority of Veda. Buddhism accepted a logical and experiential approach to knowledge. It does not accept verbal testimony (śruti) as a valid source of knowledge. For Buddha the specific form of language was not important, it has only conventional significance. Buddha himself followed linguistic conventions prevailing in the society. It means that Buddha used that form of language which his audience understands easily. Accordingly, meaning (artha) is not permanently associated with words (śabda), rather it is merely a social convention to associate a meaning with a particular word. But for Grammarian and Mīmāṃsākas language is not merely conventional significance but has ontological significance since they proposed a metaphysical theory of language against the backdrop of Vedic and Upaniṣadic thinking.

Metaphysics of Language

The references of the discourse of relationship between consciousness and language can be traced in Vedas where consciousness has been metaphorically symbolized as supreme Deity and language as 'Vāk Shakti'. Humans were required to pray Vāk Shakti to please supreme deity.

Often the relationship of consciousness and language has been discussed as inseparable as the Vedic word 'Vāk' signifies both language and consciousness. Deity 'Vāk' is so profound and powerful that She covers and reveals the nature of reality. 'Vāk' has two inseparable aspects: first, it is described in terms of luminosity, second, it is as speech (utterance). It constitutes the reality of multiple forms and objects. Speech (Vāk) in its fundamental modes such as prayer or manta, participates in both the physical and spiritual realm. Dīrghatamas asks the fundamental question about origin of speech consciousness – 'What is the highest heaven of speech?' And in the next verse, he identified prayer as the origin saying – 'Prayer is the highest heaven in which Vāk dwells' (Ṛg1.164.35).[1] Consciousness originates in the communion of various power of the universe as in Ṛg Vedic society the primary function of prayer is to establish communion and community. Significantly, the power of speech lies in its function to unite individuals with other fellow beings. But later on, Upaniṣads[2] have developed more philosophical approach concerning discussion on consciousness and language. In Upaniṣads 'thinking-consciousness' has been not only considered as outer object of worship but also as inner principle of self (ātman). The philosophical reflection on outer and inner dimensions gave rise to two paths: action (pravṛiti) and non-attachment (nivṛtti). The path of 'pravṛiti' has given supreme importance to rituals and rites which was performed to please outer deity (Vāk) whereas path of 'nivṛtti' has searched inner dimension of consciousness by contemplation and meditations on self (ātman). The opposition of inner and outer dimensions of consciousness has been dissolved by the Upaniṣadic proclamation – 'I am He' and metaphysically 'self (ātman) is Brahman'. Accordingly, the idea emerged that consciousness has the ontic status of pure being free from all determination. The supreme state of consciousness is symbolised by the word 'AUM'. It represents the paradigm sound for all the human language. It also signifies the single basic energy principle which flows into and controls every particle of this cosmos (nāda Brahman). This is also the substratum of all the speech acts, sound and meaning. Expositions of this (akṣara tattva) have been made both in terms of a physical linguistic entity and metaphysical reality (Śabda Brahman).

Language functions by naming the objects and in the process of naming, language constitutes our cognition about the objects of the world. Resultantly, language and cognition are inseparable. Chāndogya Upaniṣad states: 'without speech who could explain right and wrong; good and evil; pleasant and unpleasant?' (Chāndogya III.1.6) In the subsequent sutra, Sage Sanatkumāra creates a hierarchy of cognition. He makes a distinction between verbal cognition and experiential cognition (i.e, mantravettā and ātmavettā respectively). He asserts- 'speech is greater than name ... and then the mind is greater than speech because speech is merged with mind.' (Chāndogya VII.1.16) Language is the creative power and cause of all the manifestations of forms (objects).
Language is symbolized both as an instrument and as object of knowledge. In some contexts, it is identified with the absolute reality while in other places it merely shows its instrumentality. Notably, Language functions in its different levels as we noticed that name and speech are the first

two steps and they along with the mind lead to knowledge of Truth. In Ṛg-Veda it is mentioned that- 'Speech has been measured out in four divisions; the Brahmanas who have wisdom know them. Three kept in close concealment cause no motion; of speech men speak only the fourth one' (Ṛg I.164.45). [3]

Levels of Vāk

The Vedic phrase 'catvāri śṛṅgā' has been referred to and interpreted variously by Vedanta, Saiva, Tantra, and Grammarian. Vāk (speech) manifests itself at four levels – parā, paśyantī, mādhyama, and vaikharī. The first three are the non-manifest forms to be known only at the higher states of consciousness.

Parā vāk has been advocated by Sāyananda, Mādhava, Somānand and Yāska, though, Bhaṛthari is almost silent. Tantric texts inform that its place is mulādhara cakra. It is without vibration or sensation (niṣpanda), non-divisible and cognition in itself that means it is not the object of cognition; it is devoid of modification and traces of meaning.

Paśyantī vāk accepted by Baṛthari and other grammarians, is considered as non-manifest but there is subtle vibration which signifies a desire to speak. According to Nāgeśa, it is an object of mind and intellect and beyond the pragmatic sphere. For Grammarian, it is an object of grammar in the form of the awareness of self (ahaṁkāra rūpa).

Madhyamā vāk has been especially mentioned and discussed by Bharthari. Its place is considered in the heart which is associated with the life-breath (Prāna vāyu) and intellect (buddhi). Madhyamā is neither completely mental nor completely physical. It is associated with the recollection of thought which can be experienced but cannot be articulated. But there is mental articulation sequential at the level of mind. It is considered as an association of word and meaning, the base of physical representation (āṅangika abhinaya) known as indeterminate meditation.

Vaikharī vāk has been explored in great length by Patanjali, Bhaṛthari and other grammarians. It is manifested or articulated form of speech. It is manifested from the throat (vocal cord). It manifests the inner word (sphoṭa) for the hearer with the vowels and consonants. It is the expression of semantic content. It is born of a physical body. It is associated with the thoughts of linguistically acceptable/non-acceptable forms (sadhū and asadhū).

In the above discussion, one may observe that the ontological status of language is eternal. It is without beginning and end, what appears as beginning and end, is its various transformations (vivarta) where one form merges into others. Buddhism does not recognise three levels of Vāk which are non-manifest since Buddhist logicians hold that language can never capture reality. It only constructs the objects of reality. But interestingly, these three levels of vāk have been indirectly incorporated either with perception or intuition.

Grammarians: Sphoṭavāda

Śabda has two aspects[4] : sphoṭa (to manifest) and dhvanī (to sound). According to Pāṇini former is a permanent element in the word and the latter is the actualised and ephemeral element and an attribute to the former[5]. The sphoṭa (potency to manifest) may be a single letter or fixed pattern of letters but it remains constant and not affected by the peculiarities of the individual speakers. Its linguistic value (semantic) is the same, although it is pronounced by different speakers. Dhvanī involves utterances with individual particularities. These two aspects of the word [śabda] correspond to 'prākṛa dhvanīi' and 'vaikṛta dhvanīi' of later Grammarians. Bhaṛthari points out that a word has double power; it reveals the form of expression as well as its content. Language is similar to consciousness in the sense that consciousness reveals itself as well as other things. The opening verse of Vākyapadīya asserts 'the Brahman is without beginning and end, whose essence is word, who is the cause of the manifested phonemes, who appears as the objects, from whom the creation of the world proceeds' (Iyer:1982).

Buddhists also accept the double power of a word to express their own identity as well as the things symbolized by them but according to them this character is cognised only when they become subject of conventional relation, and not at the time of perception.

The central point of the above discussion is that word has the potency to signify something. Consequently, the debate emerges – whether this potency is inherent or constructed. In the west, the same debate occurs as to whether a linguistic sign and its meaning, is natural or conventional[6]. The Grammarians hold that the relationship between word and meaning is given (nītya) mental, positive and objective. The word refers to fourfold entities: substance (dravya: cowness), quality (guna: white), activity (kriya: walking) and universal (Jātī cowness / gotva). Reflecting on the nature of sphoṭa, Bhratṛhari explains it is given (nityā), timeless, invariant, part-less (akḥand) and non-sequential (akarma). It is that entity that reveals the meaning. It is both abstract levels of sound and meaning. Bhratṛhari visualizes three aspects of language: vaikṛta dhvanīi, prākṛta dhvanīi and sphoṭa. Vaikṛta dhvani [phonetic aspect of language] is the actual sound spoken by a speaker and heard by a listener. It includes all the individual variations in intonation, tempo, pitch etc. Prākṛta dhvani means the sound pattern of norm. 'It is the arousal image of the normal expression or expression in mind, keeping the time order in it' (Kunjuni Raja 1977:120). Sphoṭa is considered to be an invariant, sequence-less, integral linguistic entity that is the unit of meaning. It is manifested by prakrta dhvanīi. Bhratṛhari explains how at a different stage of Vāk, this notion of Sphoṭa functions. At the level of paśyantī sphoṭa exists as an undifferentiated and non-sequential entity. Sphoṭa and its meaning, lie dormant in the potential form. It is initiated by the desire of a speaker to communicate. At the madhyamā level, it functions as abstract meaning and abstract form. Sphoṭa and meaning are still one but a speaker perceives them as distinct. All the linguistic elements are present in the latent form. A speaker is also able to recognise the articulated speech as distinct and separate from sphoṭa. At the vaikhari level, actual speech sounds are uttered by the speaker and heard by a listener. Accordingly, sphoṭa is given, invariant part-less non-sequential

but because it is expressed through the speech sound, it appears like variant, partitive and sequential. Bhratṛhari metaphorically explains- 'As in the peacock's egg, all the limbs of peacock exist, which later develops in an ordered organic entity, so also in sphoṭa – everything, meaning as well as the sound pattern exist'[7] (VP I. 51).

The sphoṭa, the integral linguistic symbol, is revealed by sounds produced in a fixed order. Bhartṛhari explicates that with the last sound, the word is grasped in the mind where the seed has been sown by the sounds and which has been brought to ripeness by the telling over in order [āvṛtti] to the sounds. The process of sphoṭa can be understood with the help of the analogy; it is like a jeweller examining precious stones by looking at them steadily for some time to enable him to determine their real value. He has series of perceptions: the first one gives him general knowledge of the gem, each subsequent perception helps in revealing the real nature of the gem, until the last perception aided by the impression of the previous ones. It helps him to grasp the real value of the gem completely and clearly. Accordingly, for grammarian even though each letter causes a vague cognition of the indivisible sphoṭa, these letters also figure in the cognition in the sense that the cognition as whole occurs that is significant and important. The whole taken as an integral symbol is something different from the parts while the parts may be considered as irrelevant and illusory. According to Mīmāṁsa when a word is uttered the individual sound reveals only sound-units and nothing more than this. These sound units act as a stimulus to produce the reaction of recognition of the meaning. But according to Grammarians, it is the whole indivisible word that is revealed by the sounds. The function of the letters in revealing the integral sphoṭa is based on their value in differentiating one word from another. Thus, while uttering the word 'gauḥ' the function of the letter 'g' is to distinguish the word from all other words that do not begin with the letter 'g'. This essential nature of letters in the building up of a word is noticed by Vyāsa in his yogasūta bhasya. He says the power of speech functions in the utterance of the various sounds and the ear gets its object only in the series of sounds. It is the mind of a listener that grasps the sounds as a significant unit at the end of the final sound. As the individual sounds cannot co-exist, one by one, they come into being and vanish without touching the word so none of them can be considered to have attained the form of the unit word. However, each one of these letters may be said to have the essence of a word and the potential capacity to express almost everything in so far as association with other letters in various combinations to form different words. Though a universe of meaning can be attached to a single letter, this potential capacity is limited by a convention on account of the order of sequences on which letters are uttered. Thus, the potential capacity of the letters - 'g', 'au' and 'h', is restricted to the object having dewlap, horn etc. when they follow one another in the particular sequence 'gauh'. Seemingly, Vyasa was not aware of the sphoṭa doctrine as developed by Bhartṛhari and Mandanmisra as he is trying to explain the function of letters in conveying the meaning of the word. Sesakṛsna in Sphoṭatattvanirūpaṇa has developed reasonable argument based on Vyāsa's thesis in this regard.

> 'When a man utters the sound 'ka' with the intention of saying 'kamalam' [lotus] we know that he is trying to utter a word beginning with 'ka'. Thus, the whole word is vaguely suggested by the first syllable itself for it gives a clue to the identity of the word. When he utters the next 'ma', we have another clue and the word can more clearly be guessed since it narrows the field. All the words that do not begin with 'kama' are now excluded, still the word is not quite clear, for we do not know whether he is going to say 'kamalam'. When the last sound 'lam' is also uttered the word is known fully and clearly' (Kunjuni Raja 1977:129)

The sphoṭa theory of grammarian has been opposed by Naya –Vaisesika, Mimaṃsā and Advaita Vedanta. Naiyāyikas hold that the word is composed of many letters or sounds therefore it is composite fact. And this composite fact [word] cannot be entirely different from the letters and sounds. If it is entirely different from its constituents then any word may mean anything which leads to failure of communication. Nayāyikās further assert that each sound or letter makes its impression on mind and the apprehension of the last sound in series aided by an accumulated impression of previous sound presents the meaning of the word. But it can be argued against the Naiyāyikās that suppose; the sense data are received as a series of atomic perceptions [instances of sound] but again it is to be admitted that they are remembered in their order but if the sounds are also remembered in the same order in which they are uttered how could they be simultaneously grasped?

Mimaṃsā (Kumāril) envisage a power of memory – impression by which they are related to other impressions. By this power of cohesion memory – impressions themselves generate cognition which includes all the letters and its content. Therefore, there is no need to establish sphoṭa.

Saṃkara explicates that the apprehension of the temporal sound sequences can be explained by the synthesising activity of mind, hence there is no need to postulate an independent entity called sphoṭa. Mimaṃsākas and Saṃkara are unable to explain how simultaneity and succession are compatible in the same act of mind.

Interestingly, modern psychologists have shown that even the present has a duration of its own and extends backwards in past and forward into the future (Chatterjee 1939:365). Thus, there is a possibility of simultaneous perception of all the letters of a word, though they are successively heard by us. So also, in visual perception, things are cognised as a whole. The earlier methods proceede from elements to the whole, from sound to the words, from words to a sentence and finally to the meaning of discourses as a whole. But the present methodology is just the reverse of the previous one – from meaning as a gestalt to the sentence and words as elements. The sphoṭa is the sentence or word considered as a linguistic sign and perceived as a gestalt.

Mimaṃsā: Vākyārthavadi

For Mīmāṁsa the word is sacred and eternal as they are not produced or created. Words are considered to be denotative of themselves Words are only expressed or manifested. Firstly, Jaimini has defined a sentence: 'A group of words serving a single purpose forms a sentence if the separate words are found to have ākāṃsa' (Mimaṃsāsutra II.I.46).[8] But in the next sutra where he lays down the principle of syntactical split [vākyabheda], the term ākāṃsa (syntactic expectancy) among words is accepted as an essential condition for a sentence. He states – 'when the sentence is independent of one another [each sentence having no requirement or expectation of words outside itself to complete its meaning] they should be treated as distinct sentences'. Ākāṃsa can be understood as a desire on the part of a listener to know the other words or their meaning to complete a sense of a sentence.

In this regard, Kununnni Raja (1977) argues that Mīmaṃsakās do not have any adequate criteria to distinguish between syntactic expectancy and psychological expectancy. Though Sālikanāth secures position by saying that akāmṣa being the curiosity on the part of a listener has been explained on the basis of invariable association; thus, an action implies agent, a place, an instrument and so on. Similarly, an agent or an instrument naturally implies an action to complete its sense. But again, this view is criticised on the ground that there is no end to curiosity aroused in the minds of a listener through such associations. Only those that are essential for the accomplishment of the intended purpose can be taken as the requirement. For example, in a sentence – 'Bring the cow with a stick'. 'Bring the cow' is a complete while 'with a stick' may be omitted in a sentence.

The Mīmaṃsakās explores ākāṃsa not only to explain syntactic incompleteness of sentence but also psychological incompleteness. They are concerned with the interpretation of Vedic injunctions. For Prābhākara the person who is enjoined to do something has to do it not because it will bring about some beneficial result but simply because it is the command. But Kumarila is more pragmatic; for him, an injunction must result in some beneficial result.

> Kumarila says that not even fool will act without purpose. The akāmṣa of Vedic injunction is for the itikartavayatā (the act enjoined), for the sādhana or karana [the means] and for the phala [the fruit of action] there is no special akāṃsa for a person who does it, anyone interested in fruit can do it (Kunjuni Raja 1977:160).

Prābhākara and Kumarila differ in their treatment as to what an injunction really means. For Prābhākara Vedic injunction[9] is a kind of command while Kumārila is having more pragmatic concerns.

Despite this primary condition of mutual expectancy of words [ākāṃsa], there are three other conditions: yogyatā, saṃnidhi and tātparya. Yogyatā can be understood as the logical compatibility of the words in a sentence for mutual association. It is on account of yogyatā in a sentence that the meaning of a sentence is not contradicted by experience. For example, in the

sentence he wets it with water there is yogyatā or consistency of meaning since wetting is generally done with liquid like water and nothing incompatible between the idea of wetting and water. But a sentence like he wets with fire has no yogyatā consequently, there is an incompatibility between wetting and fire.

Saṃnidhi means a condition of a sentence because those words in the sentence are proximate in time. If words are uttered at long intervals, a sentence would be broken and it will not produce any knowledge. Kumārila explains saṃnidhi as- continuous moving about the words or their meaning in the mind [buddhau vipariṿrttiḥ]. Bhaṭṭa School mentions two kinds of saṃnidhi - not being uttered together and not being signified by words (Narayanabhatta 1933:101) For example no syntactic relation is possible when different words in a sentence [bring ..... the cow], are uttered at different times. And a sentence such as 'Tie up the cow cannot have a syntactic affinity with the word 'horse', even though the horse is seen in front of cow as requiring to be tied up [10].

Tatparya (intention) is explained by later Naiyāyikās and Mīmāmsakas. According to later Naiyayikas tatparya is the meaning intended by the speaker. They emphasize that it is the incompatibility of the expressed sense with the intention of the speaker that prompts the listener to interpret a passage by restoring to laksana. For example, in a sentence the village is on the Ganges (gaṅgayaṃ ghoṣaḥ), it is the intention of the speaker that gives the meaning 'the bank of the Ganges' to the word ganga and if the intention of speaker has been otherwise the word 'village' could mean 'fish'. Accordingly, this view challenges the objective status of language as maintained by Mimamsakas.

> Mimamsakas use the term tatparya for the purport of a passage dealing with a topic and refer to six lingas: upakramopasamhārau [consistency in the meaning between introduction to conclusion], abhyāsa [repetition of main topic], apūrvata [the novelty of the subject matter, phala [the result intended, arthavāda [corroborative and eulogistic remarks as distinguished from the main theme and upapatti (argument in favour of the main topic). (Kunjunni Raja 1977: 184)

For Mīmāṃsākas there are two different theories concerning the nature of verbal comprehension namely anvitābhidhanavada propound by Prābhākara and abhihitaānvayavada advocated by Kumārila.

Prābhākara: Anvitābhidhānavāda

Anvitābhidhānavāda means mutually associated meaning (anvita) is communicated (bhidhāna) by the word. The words have their meaning by the mutual relationship in a sentence. Hence words do not have their meaning independent of a sentence.

> The word alone by itself never express any meaning it is only the sentence that does it as is clear from the fact that we learn the meaning of verbal expressions only from older people and this usage is only in the form of sentence and every single word is understood only in so far as it is related to the other words in a sentence; hence it is established that what is expressive of the meaning is the sentence only not any word alone by itself. (Kunjuni Raja 1977:198)

Prābhākara in fact emphasis on the natural method of learning the meaning of a word where a child always learns the meaning of a particular word concerning other words in a sentence. A child learns the meaning of a word by observing the usage and activity of elders. A child observes that when a person [x] utters 'bring the cow' to another person [y]. Then [y] brings the cow. Resultantly, a child observes both utterance and action. At this stage, a child learns the whole of statement and whole of what is signified (meaning). Later the child in another episode observes when [x] utters to [y] bring the horse, [y] is bringing horse. By comparing the two-sentence and their usages, a child understands the term bring common to the two must mean command to bring and cow and horse refer the two different animals. Therefore, by a psychological process of exclusion and inclusion, a child has an idea of individual words and their meanings. It is only sentences that produce a visible reaction or action on the part of a listener. Accordingly, the sentence has a unitary meaning of its own while words which are its constituents have meaning only as they are related to this unitary sentence meaning. Thus, in the utterance 'bring the cow' the word cow means not the isolated concept of 'cow-ness' but cow as associated with the action of bringing similarly the word 'bring' means 'the action of bringing in relation to cow'. The words give their meaning and their syntactic relation to the other words in the sentence so that the sentence meaning is directly conveyed by the words themselves.

Kumārila: Abhihitānvayavāda

According to Kumārila words (that constitute a sentence) express their individual meaning which are isolated and discrete. These individual meanings relate themselves by the three syntactic requirements: akaṃsa, saṇidhi and yogyāta. Therefore, a sentence is nothing but an aggregation of word meaning. In a sentence first, we understand the individual word meaning then we put together these meanings according to three syntactic factors and then arrive at the meaning of the sentence.

> 'The meaning of the word having expressed by each word, independently of one another it is solely from the connection among these word meanings that there follows the cognition of the meaning of the sentence' (Kumārila Bhaṭṭa 1929:586)

Probably, abhihitānvayavāda of Kumārila is based on the logical structure of the language in the sense that a sentence presupposes individual word meaning to make a logical connection among different words in it. If the words in a sentence do not have their separate meaning, then the

classification of noun, adjective, verb etc is not possible. And without this classification, even a sentence is not possible. Hence Kumaril much concerns about the ontological status of words in a language.

Buddhism: Apohavāda

Buddhist's logicians being non-essentialists oppose all the categories of reality like class, universal inherence etc. Therefore, for them words do not capture the objective reality in its true sense. Meaning is negative in character and words have no direct reference to objective reality. On the issue of the relationship between word (śabda) and sense (artha), Buddhists assert that it is merely conventional, there is no natural relationship as words do not have an objective, eternal status. Indeed, words are nothing just conceptual images which are purely subjective construction of the mind (vikalaps) resultantly there can be no real connection between words and external objects. They further explain that the meaning of a word is the negation of all its counter correlates (anyapoha) for example the word 'cow' does not mean the actual animal (object) with dewlap, horns etc., it only means only the exclusion of all objects that are not a cow. According to Dignāgā, a word cannot denote a real positive thing for only the momentary particular (svālakṣana) is the ultimately real. And the meaning of a word is a conceptual construction and not an objective fact. A word cannot signify a unique particular as it is a momentary entity and cease to exist in the next moment. Even if verbal relation is established between word and particular momentary instant then it cannot signify any other particular instant for example a word 'cow' would refer only to a particular cow at a particular time (t_1) not any other cows even the same cow at the next moment-(t_2).

Conclusion

The study observed that the discussion on the relationship between language and consciousness emerged from the metaphorical thinking of Vedas. In Vedic society, people symbolised natural forces as well as various human capacities (such as language, cognition, consciousness) as gods and goddesses and pleased them by performing various rituals and religious duties. The human capacity of language had been symbolised as 'Vak Devi'. She got prominent status in the life of humans since this world is created by words. Upaniṣads also deliberated on the nature of consciousness and discussed different levels of consciousness. Notably, Vedas and Upaniṣads have given importance to language and asserted that language reveals as well as conceals the nature of reality. Grammarians and Mimamsakas accepted the authority of Vedas and developed their metaphysic of language. Grammarians think that there are different levels of language and only in and through language one realises the true nature of reality. But Buddhists proposed the idea of two levels of reality: conceptual (language) and non-conceptual (perception). They maintained that there is strict division and bifurcation between these realms. One can realise the true nature of reality only by leaving the realm of language. The study visualises the convergence

of Grammarians and Buddhism since both believe in different levels of consciousness. The higher levels of Vak (such as parā, paśyantī, mādhyama,) might be understood as non-conceptual realm as understood by Buddhists. Actually, due to their epistemological concerns, Grammarians and Buddhists followed different routes.

Notes

[1] For Veda Hymns I quoted from The Vedas The Samhitas of the Rig, Yajur (White and Black) Sama and Atharva Veda single Volume Translation in to English by Griffith, Ralph, USA: Kshetra books Ideas Embodied.

[2] For Upaniṣads I quuted English translation of Swami Gambhiranand published by Advaita Ashram, Calcutta

[3] catvāri vāk parimitā padāni tāni vidurbrāmaṇaye maṇiṣiṇaḥ/ guhātrīni nihitā neṇgayanti tur:yāṁ vācā manuṣyāh vadanti (Ṛg Veda, I.164.45)

[4] dhvaniḥ sphoṭas ca śabdānaṃ dhvanis tu khalu lakṣyat / alpo mahāṃś ca keṣāṃcid ubhayaṃ tat svabhāvataḥ (Mahabbhasya of Patanjali Vol- 1 ed. By Kielhorn 1892: 181)

[5] spoṭaḥ śabdah, dhanih sabdagoṇaḥ (Mahabbhasya of Patanjali Vol- 1 ed. By Kielhorn 1892: 181)

[6] Linguistic sign has two aspects: the *sinifiant* [that which means] and the *signifiè* [that which is meant], in Indian philosophy these two are called respectively śabda and artha.

[7] For Vākyapadīya (VP) of Bharthari I quoted from The Vākyapadīya of Bharthari (4 Vol) by Iyer K S Subramania (1974).

[8] For Mimaṃsāsutra I used Mimaṃsādarśhan: The Mīmāṁsasutra-s of Jamini with Bhasya by Sabara and comms. Prabh Tantravartitikā and Tuptīkā ASS 97 Poona 1929

[9] For Prābhākara in the Vedic passage "viśvajitā yajeta" is command.

[10] gām badhana ity atra bandhanapekṣasya dṛśyamānasyāśvasya śabdabodhitatvad evānanvayaḥ. See slokavartika by Kumarilabhatta (1898 : 653)

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