

***Lakṣaṇā* as Inference**

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Abstract

This paper questions a few assumptions of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya's theory of ordinary verbal cognition (*laukika-śābdabodha*). The meaning relation (*vṛtti*) is of two kinds: *śakti* (which gives us the primary referent of a word) and *lakṣaṇā* (which yields the secondary referent). For Gaṅgeśa, the ground (*bīja*) of *lakṣaṇā* is a sort of inexplicability (*anupapatti*) pertaining to the composition (*anvaya*) of word-meanings. In this connection, one notices that the case of *lakṣaṇā* is quite similar to that of one variety of postulation, namely, *śrutārtāthāpatti*, where the subject hears only a part of a sentence and immediately grasps the words that are needed to render the sentential meaning complete. Unless he does that, sentential meaning, i.e., the composition (*anvaya*) of word-meanings shall suffer from the same inexplicability that characterizes instances of *lakṣaṇā*. In fact, in the 'Śaktivāda' section of *Tattvacintāmaṇi*, Gaṅgeśa himself draws a parallel between the cognition of sentential meaning in a *śrutārthāpatti*-like case and the cognition of sentential meaning in an instance of *lakṣaṇā*. However, Gaṅgeśa himself treats *śrutārthāpatti* as a piece of inferential cognition. If there is no fundamental difference between cases of *śrutārthāpatti* and cases of *lakṣaṇā*, then the cognition of sentential meaning in instances of *lakṣaṇā* must also be inferential in essence. In that case, we must admit, against Gaṅgeśa's view, that such cognition of sentential meaning cannot be accommodated within the framework of verbal cognition (*śābdabodha*). Therefore, I conclude that some revision is needed in Gaṅgeśa's theory of verbal cognition with respect to *lakṣaṇā*.

Keywords: Gaṅgeśa - *lakṣaṇā* – *śrutārthāpatti* – *yogyatā* - inference

This paper is primarily an exercise in textual exegesis. Its task is to compare certain parts of the ‘Anumānakhaṇḍa’ and the ‘Śabdakhaṇḍa’ of Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya’s *Tattvacintāmaṇi*(=TC). Finally it seeks to suggest, on the basis of such discussion, that, at least within Gaṅgeśa’s theory, the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā* can be shown to be inferential in nature. Before we begin our argument, however, we must clarify what *lakṣaṇā* is.

1. Introducing Gaṅgeśa’s idea of *lakṣaṇā*

Let us take, for example, the sentence: “Ghoṣa lives on the Ganges (*gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ prativasati*).” Ghoṣa is a dairyman. The expression ‘Ganges’ ordinarily of course refers to the river of that name: that is its *primary referent* (*vācyārtha* or *śakyārtha*). The relation that ties an expression to its primary referent is called *śakti* (literally meaning ‘power’ and, here, meaning the semantic power of the word). Now, in our attempt to understand this sentence, if we take into account just the primary referent of the word ‘Ganges’, we land ourselves in some sort of difficulty; for, a dairyman cannot surely live directly on the surface of a river. That is impossible. So, we must assign another referent—a *secondary referent*—to the word ‘Ganges’: namely, ‘the bank of the Ganges’.¹ Since a dairyman *can* live on the bank of the river, the difficulty that we previously encountered is removed; the sentence now makes perfect sense. The secondary referent that is assigned is called *lakṣyārtha* and the relation that mediates our cognitive transition from the word to its secondary referent is called *lakṣaṇā*.

This is just an informal introduction to the notion of *lakṣaṇā*. Gaṅgeśa’s official definition of *lakṣaṇā* portrays it as a relation that connects the primary referent with something else (*śakyasambandho lakṣaṇā*). Here the primary referent of the word ‘Ganges’ is the river Ganges, which is related by proximity (*sāmīpya*) to its banks.

¹ For the sake of simplicity, I am treating this as a case of *jahatsvārtha-lakṣaṇā*, where the secondary referent of a word does not include the primary referent as a part of itself. The reader may imagine the secondary referent as inclusive of the primary referent, insofar as the bank of the river may be characterized by coolness, purity etc, which are properties of the river itself. Under such a construal, this shall be a case of *ajahatsvārtha-lakṣaṇā*. I shall express my preference for neither of the two pictures, for the simple reason that the matter is irrelevant to the central point of this paper.

Hence, *lakṣaṇā* allows us to move from the primary referent of ‘Ganges’ to its secondary referent—the banks of the Ganges—on the basis of the proximity between the two. Now, we ask: what necessitates this transition? Earlier we saw that if we simply take the primary referent of the word, i.e., the river itself, into consideration, we will get ourselves into some sort of trouble. This trouble apparently arises out of an inexplicability (*anupapatti*) to arrive at a *permissible* meaning of the sentence ‘Ghoṣa lives on the Ganges.’ Why does this happen? In the ‘Śaktivāda’ section of *TC*, Gaṅgeśa has a few explanations to offer. Let us summarize them briefly.

1. A very obvious reply will be that, if the word ‘Ganges’ is construed as referring to the river, the sentence cannot yield a permissible sentential meaning which is strictly composed out of the meanings of the individual words used in the sentence. The name ‘Ghoṣa’ used in the sentence refers to a dairyman; the verb ‘live’ refers to an activity and the preposition ‘on’ refers to a spatial relation. All of these meanings cannot be combined with the primary referent of the word ‘Ganges’, without incurring a material absurdity; for it is impossible for people to live directly on the surface of a river. Therefore, this case suffers from an inexplicability (*anupapatti*) pertaining to semantic composition or the *anvaya* of word-meanings, which therefore is called *anvayānupapatti*.²
2. The stock counterexample to this explanation is *yaṣṭīḥ praveśaya* (Make the stick-bearers enter!), which yields a permissible sentential meaning, even when the primary referent of the word ‘yaṣṭi’, that is, stick, is taken into account. So there is no failure of semantic composition of word-meanings. But the meaning thus yielded is not quite accurate. From the context which is a situation of eating, we infer the intention of the speaker (*tātparya*): the speaker is actually commanding the admittance of people who would eat. So, the word ‘yaṣṭi’ cannot refer to a stick, but must designate a stick-bearing person. Otherwise, the sentential meaning cannot be explained in accordance with the speaker’s intention. So, if we take into account just the primary referent of the word ‘yaṣṭi’, an inexplicability

² Gaṅgeśa’s text in *TC* IV 2, p. 660: *lakṣaṇā ca vṛttyantaram yatra vācyārthānvayānupapattiyā vācyasambandhopasthāpīte vākyārthānvayaḥ, yathā gaṅgāyām ghoṣa ityatra gaṅgāpadasya gaṅgātīre*

pertaining to the speaker's intention (*tātparyānupapatti*) will persist. To avoid that, the secondary referent, i.e., stick-bearer, must be assigned to the word 'yaṣṭi'.³

3. Against this view, Gaṅgeśa offers another solution. He writes:

*vastuto 'nvayaparapramāṇaśabdasya mukhye 'nvayāyogyatvam eva lakṣaṇābījaṃ gaṅgāyāṃ ghoṣa ityādau pūrvoktanyāyena lakṣye tātparyagrahāt pūrvam eva mukhyasyānvayāyogyatvajñānena lakṣaṇopapādanāt*⁴

Here, Gaṅgeśa begins by emphasizing the fact that language, as a *pramāṇa*, an accredited means of cognition, revolves around semantic composition (*anvaya*).⁵ Hence, the root of *lakṣaṇā* must lie in some trouble pertaining to this composition. Actually, the need for *lakṣaṇā* arises when the primary referent of a word is found to be unfit to compose a sentential meaning together with the meanings of other words of the sentence (*mukhye 'nvayāyogyatvam eva lakṣaṇābījaṃ*). This is because the secondary referent is brought forth through *lakṣaṇā* by the cognition of the unsuitability of the primary referent, even before the speaker's intention is grasped. So, the inexplicability pertaining to semantic composition again forms the ground of *lakṣaṇā*. Even in the case of "yaṣṭīḥ praveśaya", the secondary referent of the word *yaṣṭi* is assigned on the basis of a failure of semantic composition. It is just that in this case the meaning of the word 'praveśaya' (referring to the action of making diners enter) is known, in abstract, from the context. Since the primary referent, that is, stick cannot be combined with that

³ Ibid., p.690: *lakṣaṇābījaṃ tātparyānupapattiḥ padasya vṛttiṃ vinā lakṣye tātparyānirvāhāt, na tu śakyānvayāyogyatvam bījaṃ yaṣṭīḥ praveśayetyatrājahatsvārthāyāñ ca śakyasyānvayayogyatve 'pi lakṣaṇāśattvāt tātparyānupapattis tatrāpi lakṣye tātparyam vinā lakṣaṇānudayād iti sampradāyah--*

⁴ Ibid., p.691.

⁵ This statement should be read in conjunction with other passages of the 'Śabdakhaṇḍa', where Gaṅgeśa denigrates the importance of cognizing the speaker's cognition of sentential meaning in verbal cognition. For example, see *TC IV I*, p. 50-53: *arthajñānaṃ pravartakaṃ na tu tajjñānaññānaṃ gauravād vyabhicārāc ca|.anyathā bhrāntasyeva bhrāntijñasyāpi pravṛttiprasaṅgaḥ tadubhayasaṃkarāpattiśca|* Such passages seem to imply that it is not the speaker's cognition of the sentential meaning, but the semantic composition of word-meanings (which in turn gives rise to the hearer's cognition of sentential meaning) that is crucial for verbal cognition.

action to compose a sentential meaning, the need for assigning a secondary referent arises.⁶

Gaṅgeśa refuses to recognize that the speaker's intention directly influences the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā*. This is perhaps an attempt to prevent a situation where the sentential meaning can be known as the object of the cognition that underlies the speaker's intention, which the hearer infers from the context, without any intervening cognition of the composition of word-meanings. In such a case, the cognition of sentential meaning can no longer be regarded as verbal, because semantic composition (which according to Gaṅgeśa is the essence of all verbal cognition) has no role to play in such cognition.⁷ The cognition of sentential meaning will perhaps be inferential; for it is by inference that the speaker's intention can be known. Gaṅgeśa perhaps thinks that, in order to prevent this inference and to reassert the *verbality* of the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā*, he must recognize the inexplicability pertaining to composition of word-meanings *cognized from words* as the direct cause of such cognition. One aim of this paper is to show that even this manoeuvre turns out to be futile at the end.

Let us have a look at the above passage again. It could be useful to notice the word '*pūrvoktanyāyena*' in this passage, alluding to the manner in which compositional failure compels us to have recourse to a secondary referent. Earlier in the opening discussion of *lakṣaṇā*, Gaṅgeśa describes the process as follows. When a fairly clever person hears a

⁶ It is intriguing that Gaṅgeśa, in his final analysis, maintains that inexplicability pertaining to semantic composition is the root of *lakṣaṇā*. Later Naiyāyika-s have expressed their preference for inexplicability pertaining to speaker's intention rather than semantic composition. One common argument claims that if *lakṣaṇā* relies on inexplicability pertaining to semantic composition, one could take into account the primary referent of 'Ganges' instead of 'Ghoṣa' and assign a secondary referent to the word 'Ghoṣa', say, construe Ghoṣa as some kind of fish. To avoid such gross misconstrual, one will have to rely on the speaker's intention in all cases of *lakṣaṇā*. So, the root of *lakṣaṇā* is inexplicability pertaining to speaker's intention. Here, I believe, Gaṅgeśa could have a comeback. He could point out that *lakṣaṇā*, by definition, is the relation of the primary referent with the secondary one. Therefore, in order to assign a secondary referent to the word 'Ghoṣa', one has to show some kind of plausible relation between the primary referent of the word 'Ghoṣa' and its secondary referent, i.e., between the dairyman and the fish. But such a relation is plainly far-fetched!

⁷ For a discussion on such a view, see Gaṅgeśa's text in *TC IV 1*, p. 53: *etena lakṣaṇādyanurodhāt tātparyagraho vākyārthadhīhetuḥ tātparyāñ ca padārthasamsargaviśeṣapratītyuddeśyakatvaṃ, tadgrāhakānumānād eva tātparyajñānāvacchedakatayā samsargasiddhir ity apāstam|*.

speaker, established as competent, saying, “The Ghoṣa-s live on the Ganges”, he infers that the sentence, will give rise to veridical verbal cognition, since a competent speaker has uttered it.⁸ Then, he faces a difficulty; for the primary referent of the word ‘Ganges’ cannot be combined with other word-meanings to compose a permissible sentential meaning. What happens next? I quote Gaṅgeśa:

*yathā vastreṇa pidhehīyatra karmatvāpanne dvāre adhyāhṛte yogye itarapadaiḥ
svārthānvayo bodhyate tathā śaktyā gaṅgāpadasmārite tīre yogyākāṅkṣite
itarapadaiḥ svārthānvayabodho ’trāpi sambhavati iti tato mukhyārthasmārite tīre
ghoṣādipadaiḥ svārthānvayabuddhir asya utpadyate*⁹

To begin with, we should just note how the cognition of the secondary referent takes place, facilitating along with itself the cognition of the composite sentential meaning. When the hearer catches the word ‘Ganges’ he remembers its primary referent, i.e., the river itself; by a well-established rule of thought, cognition of this primary referent must lead to the remembrance of things that are related to it. We know that a relation of proximity connects the river Ganges to its bank. Therefore, we inevitably have the recollective cognition of the bank of the river. Now, the bank of the river is a place where a dairyman can live. Hence, it is adopted at once and combined with the other word-meanings to yield the cognition of the appropriate sentential meaning.

Gaṅgeśa describes this entire process with the help of an analogy. He asks us to imagine a situation where one hears a command, “Close with the cloth!” (*vastreṇa pidhehi*). Here, the verb ‘close’ refers to the action of closing, but the object of that action has not been mentioned in the sentence. According to the context, again, one must make an inference and grasp thereby what the speaker actually wants to say. When one comes to realize that the speaker wants one to close the door with the cloth, one simply introduces the missing object of action, i.e., the door, on the scene and combines it with the other word-meanings to compose a complete and coherent sentential meaning. As Gaṅgeśa puts it,

⁸ Ibid., p.663: *tathāhi vyutpanno nirūpitāptabhāvasya gaṅgāyām ghoṣaḥ prativasatīti vākyam śrutvā vimṛśati idaṃ pramāṇam āptoktatvāt*

⁹ Ibid., pp.663-4.

the door, recognized as the suitable object of action, is incorporated on the semantic level and is combined with the meanings of the other words. The key concept invoked here is the notion of semantic incorporation (*adhyāhāra*), which also characterizes another way of knowing, namely, verbal postulation or *śrutārthāpatti*.

2. The Bhāṭṭa exposition of *śrutārthāpatti*

In this paper, I shall be concerned only with the Bhāṭṭa view of *śrutārthāpatti* for reasons that will become clearer as my argument progresses. Before we go into that, let us first clarify what postulation or *arthāpatti* in general is. As traditionally conceived, postulation is based on something called *anyathānupapatti*-- inexplicability--otherwise, where a seen or heard object remains inexplicable unless some other object or fact, which is neither seen nor heard, is not assumed.¹⁰ This other object or fact is ascertained by means of *arthāpatti*. For example, if I visit Devadatta's house and find him absent, though he is assuredly alive, we assume that he is elsewhere outside. Here, it is only Devadatta's absence that we perceived. Just to explain this perceived fact, we have to admit his presence at some other place outside his house: a fact which in itself is unperceived. This is a case where a perceived (*dr̥ṣṭa*) fact stands in need of explanation. Hence it is an instance of *dr̥ṣṭārthāpatti*.

However there may also be instances where what we hear (*śruta*) suffers from some kind of inexplicability. Those are the cases of *śrutārthāpatti*. In the *Ślokavārttika*, Kumāṛila cites one principal case of *śrutārthāpatti*. If someone tells me, "The fat man does not eat by day (*pīno divā na bhunkte*)", I will be led to understand that he eats at night. Clearly, the meaning of the sentence I hear leaves the mentioned fatness unexplained; it remains inexplicable unless nocturnal eating is admitted. Now, what removes this inexplicability? Does the mere fact of nocturnal eating explain everything? Kumāṛila tells us that, even before this fact (*artha*) can be known, the linguistic expression referring to this fact is cognized and the inexplicability is resolved. As a result, the fact is known later by means

¹⁰ Śabarabhāṣya on *Mīmāṃsā Sūtra* 1.1.5 quoted in Pārthasārathi Miśra's 'Nyāyaratnākara' in *MS*, p.450: *arthāpattir api dr̥ṣṭo vā śruto vārtho 'nyathā nopapadyata ityarthakalpanā*

of the verbal cognition arising from that linguistic expression. In his commentary ‘Nyāyaratnākara’, Pārthasārathi explains the underlying rationale: Just as the sentential meaning composed of the individual word-meanings is known through verbal cognition because it is based on words, the fact which is known due to inexplicability of sentential meaning is based on a sentence and therefore known through verbal cognition.¹¹ Since the postulated cognition merely requires something that will explain its foundational inexplicability, the task of explaining is carried out by the linguistic expression which is known first.¹² When the sentence I heard leaves things unexplained, there is an expectation that something else will remove the inexplicability. In the section of *TC*’s ‘Anumānakhaṇḍa’ on *arthāpatti*, Gaṅgeśa treats this matter from the perspective of the Bhāṭṭa: he says that this expectation of explanation is created out of language and hence can be fulfilled only by another linguistic expression (*śābdy ākāṅkṣā śabdenaiva prapūryate*).¹³ The linguistic expression, which represents the fact of nocturnal eating, performs this explanatory task: its meaning combines with the meaning of the sentence I hear, with which this linguistic expression forms one complete sentence.¹⁴

Another commonly cited instance of *śrutārthāpatti* obviously resembles the analogy invoked by Gaṅgeśa in his attempt to describe *lakṣaṇā*, where we hear the command, “Close with the cloth (*vastreṇa pidhehi*)!”, and insert the missing object of the action of closing, i.e., the door (*dvāra*). The case of *śrutārthāpatti* is slightly different. It tells us of a person who hears someone say, “The door (*dvāram*)!” and immediately incorporates the word ‘Close (*pidhehi*)!’ to render the command complete. Though the word “Close!” is never heard, it is inserted because, without it, the sentence “The door!” cannot make anyone understand that he is being commanded to close the door; or in other words, the semantic composition of the meanings of these words remains inexplicable.

¹¹ Verse 78 in the ‘Arthāpattipariccheda’, *ibid.*, p. 469: *vākyārthavacca kinnā’yam āgamārthaḥ pratīyate|| savikalpakavijñānaih śabdaḥ pūrvaṃ pratīyate*| In the ‘Nyāyaratnākara’, *loc. cit.*, we read: *yathā śabdā’bhihitapadārthagamyo’pi vākyārthaḥ śabdāmūlatayā śabdaḥ tathā vākyārthā’nupapattigamyo’py artho vākyāmūlatayā śabdō bhaviṣyatīti...tataś ca prathamā’vagatena śabdenaivā’nupapattiparīkṣayān nārtham yāvad arthāpattir gantum arhati*|

¹² *Nyāyaratnākara*, *ibid.*, p.470: *arthāpattistūpapādakamātreṇa santuṣṭā śabdasyāpy upapādakatvāt tatraiva prathamāvagate paryavasyati*|

¹³ *TC* II 1, p.685.

¹⁴ *Nyāyaratnākara* in *MS*, p.470: *śabdāvagato’rthas tadekavākyabhūtaśabdāntarapratipāditenaivārthena saha vākyārthībhavati*|

It is interesting to note that the same inexplicability pertaining to semantic composition (*anvayānupapatti*) which forms the basis of *lakṣaṇā* also necessitates these cases of *śrutārthāpatti*. This aspect is highlighted in Gaṅgeśa’s exposition of the Bhāṭṭa theory of *śrutārthāpatti*, especially in the role that it assigns to the notion of *yogyatā*. According to Mathurānātha, *yogyatā*, for the Bhāṭṭa-s, refers to the possession of a nature conducive to semantic composition (*anvayaprayojakarūpavattva*). For example, if there is an expression which designates someone’s fatness and another expression which refers to that person’s consumption of food, the latter meaning will be fit for combination with the former meaning; for fatness implies eating. Hence, the latter has a nature conducive to semantic composition. But if we have, on the one hand, the fact of fatness and, on the other hand, the fact of abstinence from food, the two will be inconsistent and hence cannot be united in the context of one sentence.¹⁵ Keeping such a conception of *yogyatā* in mind, we can examine the sentence, “The fat man does not eat by day.” Since I am told that the man does not consume any food by day, the only way to render the fact of his fatness plausible is to postulate the fact of nocturnal eating. The fact of nocturnal eating can combine with the fact of fatness to yield a complete sentential meaning.¹⁶ Here, according to Mathurānātha, though the condition of *yogyatā* can be fulfilled here merely by the fact of nocturnal eating, a verbal cognition of a complete sentential meaning will not be possible unless the *yogyatā* embodied in the fact of nocturnal eating is cognized from language. That is why it becomes necessary to imagine or incorporate a linguistic expression which will designate the fact of nocturnal eating.¹⁷ Once the sentence, “The fat man does not eat by day” is combined with that sentence, it will yield a complete sentential meaning. Most importantly, the Bhāṭṭa position seems to suggest that, if we do

¹⁵ ‘Rahasya’ in *TC* II 1, pp.684-5:..*tanmate ’nvayaprayojakarūpavattvasya yogyatātvena pīnatvānvaye bhōjitvasya yogyatātvena pīnatvanvaye ’bhōjitvasyāyogyatātīvāt...*

¹⁶ Gaṅgeśa’s text, *ibid.*, p.685: *atha yathā abhōjī pīna ityatrāyogyatājñānam tathā pīno divā na bhūṅkta ityatra divābhōjanasya bādhdā yogyatāghaṭakarātribhōjanasyāpratīteḥ ato yogyatāghaṭakopasthitim vinā anvayam alabhamānam idaṃ vākyam yogyatāghaṭakarātribhōjanopapādakam rātrau bhūṅkta iti vākyam kalpayitvā tena sahānvayam janayati|*

¹⁷ ‘Rahasya’, *ibid.*, pp.685-6: *tathā ca kevalārthakalpanena yogyatājñānanirvāhe ’pi śabdajanyopasthitim rātribhōjitvarūpasya yogyatvasya śabdabodhe bhānāsambhavāc chabdaḥ kalpyate tanmate śabdāyogyatāviśayakasyaiva śābdabodhasya janānānyamād iti bhāvah|*

not assume that the fat man consumes some food at night, the verbal cognition of the fat man's fatness despite his daily abstinence from food becomes inexplicable.

It might be asked why the Bhāṭṭa-s choose to envisage *yogyatā* in this fashion. This conception of *yogyatā* emerges out of a specific debate, which Gaṅgeśa discusses at length in *TC*. In his 'Apūrvavāda', the point at issue is how an injunction (*vidhi*), which in essence is either 'to-be-done-ness'¹⁸ (*kāryatva*) or conduciveness to some good (*iṣṭasādhanatva*) in general, combines with the action (that is, a sacrifice) represented by the verb root in a sentence like '*svargakāmo yajeta*' (He who desires heavenly happiness must perform sacrifice'). In this respect, the Bhāṭṭa view (which claims that all injunction-sentences primarily portray the prescribed action as conducive to some good) does not differ much from the Prābhākara view (which claims that an injunction-sentence ideally produces a cognition like 'This is to be done by me'), because each view admits that an injunction-sentence produces a undeniable verbal cognition that the prescribed action produces heavenly happiness (*svargasādhanatva*).¹⁹ But such a cognition seems impossible, because (i) the action prescribed by the above injunction can by no means be the immediate cause of heavenly happiness (because it is destroyed quite soon) and (ii) we are not told by the injunction that the action can produce heavenly happiness through some intermediary cause such as an *apūrva*. Thus, this injunction seems inexplicable, because the facts represented by the linguistic expressions in the sentence cannot be combined to form a permissible sentential meaning and hence lack *yogyatā*. This inexplicability prevents the cognition of sentential meaning from arising. In order to resolve this inexplicability, the Mīmāṃsaka-s conclude that the optative suffix (*liṅ*), etc. in such sentences must refer to an *apūrva*—something distinct from the prescribed action itself, which can be directly combined with the property of causing heavenly happiness ('*sākṣāt svargasādhanatvasyānvayayogyam*'). More importantly, the *apūrva* also allows the action to be portrayed as a goal toward which the volition of an agent, who desires heavenly happiness, can be directed ('*kāryopasthiter iṣṭasādhanatājñānam tatah kṛtiriti*

¹⁸ In order to capture the intuitive sense of '*kāryatva*', I borrow the expression 'to-be-done-ness' from J. L. Mackie who uses it in the context of ethical theory (Mackie 1977).

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 105-6: *iṣṭasādhanatāvidhipakṣe sphutaivānupapattiḥ | kāryatāvidhipakṣe anvayaparakāratayā sādhanatvaṃ śābdam iti phalato na kaścīd viśeṣaḥ* | See also Mathurānātha's commentary 'Rahasya' on this.

praṇālyā kriyāyāḥ kṛtisādhyatānirvāhakam’).²⁰ On the semantic level, it allows us to string together all the facts, which previously seemed so incompatible. Therefore, it truly possesses *yogyatā*, that is, the property of having a nature conducive to semantic composition. This, in turn, allows us to cognize that the prescribed sacrifice is the cause of heavenly happiness. For the Bhāṭṭa-s, as represented by Gaṅgeśa, a similar cognitive process characterizes instances of *śrutārthāpatti*, where an unheard linguistic expression is posited to remove the absence of *yogyatā* from meanings of words that we hear.²¹ In all of them, *yogyatā* plays a central role.

3. Gaṅgeśa’s refutation of *śrutārthāpatti*

Gaṅgeśa begins his refutation of the Bhāṭṭa view by rejecting this notion of *yogyatā*. He puts forward two alternative definitions of *yogyatā*: (i) absence of contradicting evidence (*bādhakapramāṇābhāva*) and (ii) absence of a nature which obstructs semantic composition (*anvayavirodhirūpaviraha*).²² Next, Gaṅgeśa contests the Bhāṭṭa view that we cannot even have the minimal cognition that the person in question is fat despite his daily abstinence from food if we do not assume that he eats at night. Clearly, when we hear the sentence “The fat man does not eat by day”, we come to know of the man’s fatness as well as his daily abstinence from food. This piece of verbal cognition in itself is not inexplicable. The semantic composition of all the word-meanings together is cognized without difficulty, thereby constituting our preliminary understanding of the sentential meaning. Therefore, here, the inexplicability does not lie with respect to *yogyatā*, as the Bhāṭṭa-s conceive it. If there had been an absence of *yogyatā* as the Bhāṭṭa-s understand it, if one of the word-meanings had not been conducive to semantic

²⁰ Gaṅgeśa’s text in *TC IV 2*, p.307: *ataḥ kriyāto ’nyat svargasādhanatārhaṃ kriyākāryatānirvāhakam liṅādyarthaḥ* | In his commentary ‘Rahasya’, loc. cit., Mathurānātha writes: *svayam upasaṃharati ata iti svargasādhanatārham iti sāksāt svargasādhanatvasyānvayayogyam ityarthaḥ, kriyākāryatānirvāhakam iti kāryopasthite iṣṭasādhanatājñānaṃ tataḥ kṛtiriti praṇālyā kriyāyāḥ kṛtisādhyatānirvākam ityarthaḥ* |

²¹ Gaṅgeśa’s text in *TC II 1*, pp. 686-7: *dvāram ityādaḥ pidhehītiśabdakalpanaṃ śrutārthāpattir eva śabdaś ca yadyapi śrūyamāṇo bādhitas tathāpy abhiprāyasthaḥ kalpyate yathā gurumate svargakāmo yajetety atra sāksātsādhanatābādhe paramparāghaṭakasyānupasthityā paramparāsādhanatājñānaviraho yogyatājñānābhāvāt prasiddhapadaśāmānādhikarānyānupapattir iti yogyatājñānāya paramparāsādhanatāghaṭakam apūrvam liṅādivācyam kalpayati tataḥ svargasādhanam yāga iti jñānam jāyate anyathā apūrvam api vācyam na syād iti...*

²² Gaṅgeśa’s text in *TC II 1*, p.687: *bādhakapramāṇābhavo ’nvayavirodhirūpaviraho vā yogyatā* | Gaṅgeśa discusses the reasons for adopting these two definitions of *yogyatā* in ‘Apūrvavāda’, *TC IV 2*, pp. 378-392.

composition with other word-meanings, the cognition of semantic composition would not have been possible at all. But that surely is not the case. There is no failure of *yogyatā* in that sense. On the contrary, that which is cognized is inexplicable.²³ Here, the fat man’s fatness, in the light of his daily abstinence from food, cannot be explained unless we assume that he eats at night. Once we do that, no inexplicability remains. Hence there is no need to imagine a linguistic expression stating the fact of his nocturnal consumption of food, just as there is no need to imagine that *apūrva* is a referent of a linguistic expression. Therefore, it seems that *śrutārthāpatti* does not require the insertion of a linguistic expression, but only the incorporation (*adhyāhāra*) of an object or a fact on the semantic level.

So, if the parallel between the *śrutārthāpatti*-like case and the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā* is to hold good, we cannot say that the cognition of the secondary referent arises not directly from the word that is actually uttered, but from another word which is imagined or incorporated to avoid inexplicability pertaining to semantic composition. On the contrary, we would have to admit that only the secondary referent is inserted and combined with the other word-meanings. I think this is quite evident from the passage on *lakṣaṇā* which we examined earlier: Gaṅgeśa writes as if it were the door itself—the object of action—which is inserted in order to arrive at a complete sentential meaning in the *śrutārthāpatti*-like case.

Gaṅgeśa wishes to reduce all postulation, including *śrutārthāpatti*, to inference. He is very clear with respect to cases of *dr̥ṣṭārthāpatti*. For example, when we come to know of the living Devadatta’s presence elsewhere outside his house from the perceived fact of his absence from his house, for Gaṅgeśa, we are actually employing a *kevalavyatirekin* inference of the form: “Devadatta is outside because he is alive and is the negatum of an absence which resides in his house; he who is not outside is either not alive or is not the counterpositive (*pratiyogin*) of an absence which resides in his house e.g. a dead man or a man present in his house (*devadattaḥ bahiḥ san jīvitve sati gr̥haniṣṭhābhāvapratyogitvāt*

²³ Ibid., pp.687-8: *divā bhōjane rātribhōjanāpratītāvapi bhōjanasādhyapīnatvād divā na bhūṅkta iti śabdād dhīr utpadyate na pratīyanupapatti*]

yannaivaṃ tannaivaṃ yathā mṛto grhasthito vā).” But how can Gaṅgeśa reduce *śrutārthāpatti* to inference? This seems impossible as long as we continue to view *śrutārthāpatti* as the Bhāṭṭa-s do, as long as we continue to incorporate inexplicability-resolving linguistic expressions in cases of *śrutārthāpatti*. As long as we do so, the final cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *śrutārthāpatti* will be a piece of verbal cognition; for it will depend immediately on the cognition of words. Once the need for postulating words is done away with, it becomes easier to consider the final cognition of sentential meaning as inferential. Perhaps it is this connection which Gaṅgeśa wants to show through the word ‘*tasmāt*’ in the following passage:

*praṭītānupapattiyā rātribhojanaṃ kalpyate...tasmān nārthāpattir anumānād
atiricyata iti*²⁴

The initial cognition of sentential meaning, which results from the sentence, “Devadatta, who is fat, does not eat by day”, lacks *yogyatā*, in Gaṅgeśa’s sense, because a person’s daytime abstinence from food is contradicted by the fact of his fatness. Thus, the meanings yielded by the various clauses of the sentence in question cannot be combined together to make much sense. Here, even under Gaṅgeśa’s account, the initial cognition of sentential meaning suffers from an inexplicability with respect to semantic composition, the very ground of *lakṣaṇā*. To remove this inexplicability, we simply imagine the further fact that Devadatta eats at night, just as we assigned a secondary referent to a word in cases of *lakṣaṇā*. Precisely because this fact is not cognized directly from the sentence itself or from any other linguistic expression, there is no need to regard the final cognition of sentential meaning as a piece of verbal cognition. The same question must also be raised with regard to instances of *lakṣaṇā*: Must the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā* be treated as verbal cognition?

4. Conclusion

²⁴ Ibid., p.688.

If the cognition of sentential meaning in instances of *śrutārthāpatti* is regarded as inferential, the cognition of sentential meaning in cases involving *lakṣaṇā* could also by the same token be reduced to an inferential awareness. For example, within Gaṅgeśa's theory, the inference in the case of "Ghoṣa lives on the Ganges" could take the form, "Ghoṣa lives on the bank of the Ganges, because (i) he is portrayed by a competent speaker as someone who (or something that) lives directly on the Ganges and yet (ii) he is the counterpositive of an absence that lies in the river. Whatever does not live on the bank of the Ganges is either not portrayed by a competent speaker as something that lives directly on/in the Ganges or is not the counterpositive of an absence that lies in the river. For example, a Gangetic dolphin!" First of all, it is imperative that the inferential cognition takes the form of the required cognition of sentential meaning. In this case, Ghoṣa is the site (*pakṣa*), to which we ascribe the target-property (*sādhya*) of the inference, namely, living on the bank of the Ganges. The ground (*hetu*) of this inference consists of a conjunction of two properties. The first, namely, 'the property of being portrayed by a competent speaker as someone who lives on the Ganges' points out why we should take such an inference seriously and also the initial cognition of sentential meaning which must be discarded. The second property, namely, counterpositive-ness (*pratiyogitā*) of an absence that lies in the river, tells us why we cannot hold on to the initial cognition of sentential meaning, adducing the evidence that contradicts it. The inference is based on just a negative concomitance (*vyatirekavyāpti*) between the ground of the inference and the target-property and therefore is *kevalavyatirekin*. This concomitance is exemplified in the case of a Gangetic dolphin which neither lives on the bank of the Ganges, nor is the counterpositive of an absence that resides in the river. Hence, it lacks both the target-property and the ground of the inference. I think this model can be suitably adapted to more complicated cases of *lakṣaṇā*, such as those where all the words within the sentence take secondary referents, simply by elaborating the ground of this inference.

This, in turn, would allow us to classify such cognition as non-verbal. Now, what are the arguments in favour of the view that the cognition of sentential meaning involving *lakṣaṇā* is a verbal cognition? I think there could be two responses to this question. The

first among them shall come from the older school of Nyāya. According to these older logicians, the verbal cognition, which results owing to the assignment of a secondary referent to a word, is not caused by that word itself²⁵; on the contrary, some other word which accompanies that word and which is responsible for the verbal cognition. For example, in the case of “Ghoṣa lives on the Ganges”, the word ‘Ghoṣa’ is responsible for the verbal cognition involving the bank of the Ganges.²⁶ The underlying rationale seems to be that, since the ultimate cognition is born out of the cognition of words, the cognition has to be regarded as verbal. Against this view, the neo-Naiyāyika urge that there are some sentences such as “*kumatiḥ paśuḥ!*” (roughly translatable as, “Wicked beast!”) where both the words take secondary referents and, where, even in the absence of any other accompanying word that, by means of *śakti*, could cause the final cognition of sentential meaning, we have the cognition of sentential meaning. Thus we have to admit that the cognition of those words themselves, which take secondary referents, the causes of verbal cognition.²⁷ So, the neo-Naiyāyika-s say that the words which are assigned secondary referents are responsible for the final cognition of sentential meaning.

I humbly confess that my understanding fails at this juncture. For it seems to me that in such cases (especially those in which all the words are given secondary referents) the final cognition of sentential meaning does not directly depend on the cognition of words. The preliminary cognition of primary referents, which arises directly from the cognition of the words themselves, is rejected completely in the light of contextual evidence and an entirely different set of referents is adopted. Whether the initial cognition of words has any instrumentality (*karaṇatva*) in bringing about the final cognition of sentential meaning is not very clear. The official position of the neo-Naiyāyika-s seems to be that, in cases of cognition of sentential meaning where *lakṣaṇā* is absent, the verbal cognition results immediately from the cognition of words which are assigned their primary referents and therefore, whose *śakti* alone is taken into consideration. In such cases, the

²⁵ TC IV 2, p. 695: *ata eva lākṣaṇikam padaṃ nānubhāvakaṃ anvayapratīyoginas tīrasya tato 'nupasthiteḥ anvayapratīyogyupasthāpakatvena padānām anvayānubhāvakatvāt*

²⁶ ‘Rāmarudrī’ of Rāmarudra Bhaṭṭācāryya in NSM, p. 289: *gaṅgāyāṃ ghoṣa ityatra ghoṣapadasyaiva tīraśābdabodhajanakatāyāḥ sarvānubhavasiddhatvāt*

²⁷ SSP, p. 159: *kumatiḥ paśur ityādau śakter iva bhakter api jñānam anubhāvakaṃ bhavatyeva, kāryatāvacchedakasya saṅkocācca na vyabhicārah*

cognition of words as having *śakti* (*śaktiprakāarakapadajñāna*) emerges as the cause of the final verbal cognition by a relation of temporal immediacy (*avyavahitottaratva*). However, in cases involving *lakṣaṇa*, the ultimate verbal cognition arises immediately from the cognition of the words which are assigned secondary referents and which therefore are characterized by *lakṣaṇā*. In those instances, the cognition of words as characterized by *lakṣaṇā* (*lakṣaṇāprakāarakapadajñāna*) becomes the cause of the final verbal cognition involving *lakṣaṇā* by a relation of temporal immediacy (*avyavahitottaratva*). So the set of causes shall vary according to the need of the situation, according to the need for *lakṣaṇā* or its absence.²⁸ But such a reply, which fails to explain the process of verbal cognition in a uniform manner, seems to be just a stop-gap solution. It seems to take it for granted that cognition of words characterized by *lakṣaṇā* directly causes verbal cognition.

Moreover, even if we grant that verbal cognition *does* occur in instances of *lakṣaṇā*, the difficulties do not disappear. According to the Naiyāyika-s, verbal cognition has to be regarded as the effect (*kārya*) of every such cognitive process. Now, we ask: can we identify any concrete delimiting property (*avacchedaka*), which characterizes and distinguishes all such effects? In other words, can we identify any *kāryatāvacchedaka*? Since the cause of verbal cognition varies radically from cases of *śakti* to cases of *lakṣaṇā*, it seems difficult to spell out any concrete property as the delimitor of effects in general (*kāryatāvacchedaka*), i.e., all instances of verbal cognition. An ambiguity appears in the Naiyāyika's conceptual scheme.

In fact, if one says that cognition of words causes the ultimate cognition of sentential meaning just by a relation of temporal immediacy (*avyavahitottaratva*), then one can explain only how a specific cognition of words causes a specific cognition of sentential meaning and *not* how cognition of words causes cognition of sentential cognition in general. This is because temporal immediacy is nothing but the occurrence of something after something else and, as such, is the relation of one specific cause to one specific

²⁸ 'Kṛṣṇakāntī', loc.cit.: *śaktiprakāarakam iva lakṣaṇāprakāarakam api padajñānaṃ śābdabodhajanakaṃ bhavātīty arthaḥ*

effect. Therefore, one must give up all pretence of positing a uniform delimitor of effects. Having raised one such objection in his commentary on *Śabdaśaktiprakāśikā*, Kṛṣṇākānta replies that, instead of explaining causation in terms of temporal immediacy, one must explain it in terms of having a corresponding cognition of words (*padajñānapratīyogikatva*), which is a uniform relation characterizing all instances of cognition of sentential meaning.²⁹ But that property can by no means capture the causal complexity that characterizes cases of *lakṣaṇā* and renders them so unique.

In the light of Gaṅgeśa’s analogy with the *śrutārthāpatti*-like case, it seems that cognition of sentential meaning involving *lakṣaṇā* could be inferential. In that case, there will no need to have an ambiguous *kāryatāvachedaka*, for all cognitions of sentential meaning involving *lakṣaṇā* will be classified under inferential cognition (*anumiti*), while all cognitions of sentential meaning involving *śakti* will be regarded as verbal (*śabdabodha*). Thus, ambiguity in the Naiyāyika’s conceptual scheme will be averted.

Here, a Naiyāyika could be tempted to appeal to *anuvyavasāya* (the mental perception of the properties of the soul such as cognition, happiness, pain and so on) and to assert that, when we become aware of the cognition that we have of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā*, we actually know it as verbal cognition.³⁰ This, again, could make us wonder what the *anuvyavasāya* will be like when we construe the command, “Close with the cloth!” as a command to close the door with a piece of cloth. Will such metacognition portray our cognition as a piece of verbal cognition, since it is admittedly similar to cases of *lakṣaṇā*? Or, will it be seen as an instance of *śrutārthāpatti* and hence considered

²⁹ Loc. cit.: *na cāvyavahittaratvasyānanugatatvena tena sambandhena padajñānavaiśiṣṭyasya tadvyaktitvāvacchinam prati tadvyaktitvenaiva hetutvaucityam kim gurudharmasyāvachedakatvakalpaneneti vācyam | avyāhittaratvānanugame’pi padajñānapratīyogikatvena tattatsaṃyogānām vahnipratīyogikatvasaṃyogatvādinevānugamasambhavāt, anugatasāvyavahittaratvasyāpi sambhavāt |* I have ignored the possibility of a nonspecific (*anugata*) relation of temporal immediacy, because even then the basic difference between cases of *śakti* and cases of *lakṣaṇā* shall make it impossible for us to identify a property that uniformly delimits all instance of verbal cognition.

³⁰ In fact, Mathurānātha resorts this argument quite frequently in his commentary ‘Rahasya’ on Gaṅgeśa’s ‘Śabdāprāmāṇyavāda’ in *TC IV 1*, pp. 19-22 & p. 81. He appeals to ordinary reports of verbal cognition such as “I am hearing of that object” or “This has indeed been heard from the *purāṇa*-s”, which prove that we cognize the universal ‘verbality’ (*śabdātva*) in these cognitions. Such reports are validated by common intuition and therefore cannot be played down.

inferential in nature? Mathurānātha thinks that we never cognize the so-called cases of *arthāpatti* as *such*.³¹ If we are to rely just on the testimony of Gaṅgeśa, reason seems to persuade us that an instance of *śrutārthāpatti* will be perceived as an inferential cognition. In that case, we could, by analogy, argue that the cognition of sentential meaning in cases of *lakṣaṇā* must also be regarded as inferential in character.

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³¹ ‘Rahasya’ in *TC IV 1*, p.81: *na caivam arthapayāmīty anuvyavasāyābalād arthāparther apy ādhikyāpattiriti vācyam...vastutas tādṛśānuvyavasāyaivābhāvāt*

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