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A systematic treatment to the polysemy of verb दा (to give) in Sanskrit

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This paper is an extension of the primary observations regarding the behaviour of दा¹ presented in the doctoral dissertation titled 'An Exploration and Analysis of Noun-Verb Light verb Constructions in Sanskrit' (Date, 2023). 'give ('दा' in Sanskrit)' is one of the most frequently occurring polysemous root verbs across languages (Christoffersen, 2016). Its use with a wide range of meanings is apparent and explored in detail in the literature (as in Newman 1996). The meanings associated with दा are also found to be mentioned in the traditional Sanskrit grammatical treatises. However, it is hard to find a detailed study and analysis of 'give' (दा) in Sanskrit, though its varied senses are observed to have been listed in the dictionaries.

The present paper is an attempt to give a systematic treatment to the polysemy associated with the verb दा in Sanskrit by differentiating between its most concrete or prototypical use and other abstract uses. In this paper, an attempt is made to place various uses of 'दा' on a cline with increase in the abstractness of their meanings. The use of 'दा', carrying the full lexical semantic content, is treated as the most concrete use as well as the full use, which is placed at the one end of the cline. The other abstract uses are treated as the light uses of 'दा' and they fall after the full use on the cline. The uses are differentiated and graded on the basis of their semantic properties. The paper therefore simultaneously handles two tasks - to show how the various uses of दा could be graded based on their abstractness and how they could be treated as light verb uses as opposed to one full use of दा.

Keywords - Polysemous verbs, Prototypical meaning, Full verb, Light verb, Traditional Sanskrit Grammar.

¹ IPA script is used for the transcriptions of sounds in Sanskrit.