

***Śābdabodha* of Sentences in Commentary**

Composing a commentary aims to make the reader understand the meaning of words in the primary text. In the tradition of Sanskrit literature, the general nature of commentaries is to explain the target text by giving an epithet or describing phrases. A synonymous word is attached for each word in the target sentence. For instance;

Target

Rāmaḥ Rāvaṇam hanti.

Rāma kills Rāvaṇa.

Commentary

Rāmaḥ Daśarathaputraḥ Ravaṇam Daśānanam hanti mārayati.

Rāma, i.e. Daśaratha's son, kills Rāvaṇa, i.e. the ten-headed, he kills, i.e. makes him dead.

The presence of two verbs in such sentences – one verb being the explanation for the other – leads to a problem: since the *Vyākaraṇa* school considers each sentence to have only one verb (*ekatiṅ vākyam*), how does the *śābdabodha* function in sentences containing two synonymous verbs?

Renowned scholars such as B.K. Matilal and Kunjunni Raja have analysed the meaning of words and the intricacies of linkages within verbal cognition. One of this paper's authors has conducted research on diverse aspects of *śābdabodha*, including "The *Śābdabodha* of Groups of Sentences and its Structural Analysis" and "The *Śābdabodha* of Conversational Sentences." The present topic, part of a holistic study of the *śābdabodha* of multiple sentences, is unique in its focus on analysing sentences in Sanskrit commentaries. The authors believe this particular topic has received little attention from previous scholars, making it a novel area of research.

Along with the traditional five meanings of a word—*jāti* (the universal), *vyakti* (the specific), *liṅga* (gender), *saṃkhyā* (number), and *kāraka* (relation to verb)—later scholars have recognised a sixth meaning: "the word itself". We propose that in a sentence from a commentary, the semantic component of all words becomes subordinate, while the word itself becomes the head. In the example above, the semantic component of *mārayati* (i.e., *māraṇa*—the act of killing) is subordinate to the word *mārayati*. The other word units in the sentence are linked to this semantic component of *mārayati*; this concept is shown in Diagram 1.

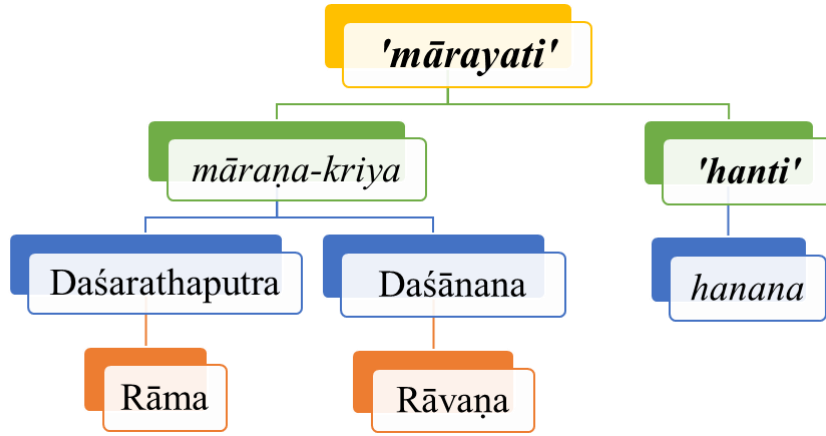


Diagram 1: Illustration of the semantic component (*māraṇa* - the act of killing) being subordinate to ‘*mārayati*’, the word itself, and the linking of other units in the sentence to this semantic component.

References

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