Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy
of Traditions and Cultures 13

Purushottama Bilimoria
Michael Hemmingsen *Editors*

Comparative Philosophy and J.L. Shaw

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Volume 13

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David Lumsden received his B.A. from the University of London and his Ph.D. from Princeton University and has been teaching at the University of Waikato in New Zealand since 1979. He is a co-author of *Natural Language and Computational Linguistics: An Introduction* (Ellis Horwood 1991). He has published philosophical articles on language and mind in a variety of international journals including *Dialogue*, *Philosophical Psychology*, *Erkenntnis*, *Philosophical Studies*, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly and Philosophia*. He has been chairperson of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Waikato for periods totalling more than eight years. He is the acting dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

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Papia Mitra did her B.A and M.A in English literature from Jadavpur University and is at present associate lecturer of English at Surendranath College for Women, Kolkata. But she had always been interested in philosophy. Her Ph.D. was done at Rabindra Bharati University on Alexander Pope and Existentialism. She later earned a degree in academic study of religion at Victoria University, New Zealand. Her publications include *Existentialism: A Reader's Guide* and *William Golding's Lord of the Flies: A Critical Guide*. Her latest published paper is "English in a post-colonised classroom: perils and strategies of teaching English literature in a multi-ethnic Indian college", published in the *Journal of Teaching and Education*. Currently she is teacher in charge of her college.

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Jaysankar Lal Shaw, a pioneer in the fields of comparative epistemology, logic and philosophy of language, has been teaching both contemporary Western and classical Indian philosophies at Victoria University of Wellington for more than

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Toshihiro Wada is professor at Graduate School of Letters, Nagoya University, Japan. He achieved his Ph.D. from Nagoya University, Graduate School of Letters and Poona University Graduate School of Sanskrit and Prakrit Language. His major focus is Indian logic and Indian language philosophy, particularly Navya-Nyāya.

Introduction

Purushottama Bilimoria and Michael Hemmingsen

It gives us immense pleasure to introduce this important volume to the scholarly audience. The volume is designed and intended to felicitate and honour the work and scholarly achievements of Dr. Jaysankar Lal Shaw, one of the significant stalwarts of Indian and comparative philosophy in the contemporary analytical context.

It is doubly honourable for us to be part of this venture as Dr. Shaw – or Jaysankar-da as we lovingly call him – has been a leading and guiding force in this field in our neck of the woods, so to speak – i.e. in Australasia (meaning Australia, New Zealand and Singapore), where Bilimoria and Jay have maintained a close contact across the Tasman waters over the past some 20 years. Although Bilimoria is based in Melbourne, Australia (and increasingly in Berkeley and New Delhi) and Dr. Shaw is based in Wellington, New Zealand, he has followed Dr. Shaw's career with much enthusiasm and zeal, and indeed derived immense inspiration and support for his own personal endeavours in terms of launching and promoting the field of comparative and East-West philosophy in Australia and New Zealand and the neighbouring Asia-Pacific regions. Bilimoria and Shaw have participated together in the founding of the Australasian Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy and helped to bring scholars and philosophers in this field from the region and abroad together over a decade-and-a-half to share and deliberate on the significant contributions that have emerged from the region and made a modest mark nationally and internationally also. This is not even to mention the enthusiasm Dr. Shaw has shown towards teaching, both in the area of Indian and

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comparative philosophy and otherwise. His support for his students is legendary, including visiting Hemmingsen at his doctoral university in Ontario, Canada. He mentors students with passion and dedication, and is always available to assist them in whatever way is required. There is no doubt in our minds that he has inspired a love of philosophy in generations of students.

This volume attests to the impact of Dr. Shaw's career, if in no other way than the extent and quality of the articles represented here from leading philosophers, thinkers and logicians from all over the world. Jaysankar Shaw has tirelessly worked to solve some of the pressing and key problems of contemporary philosophy of language, logic, epistemology, metaphysics and morals from the perspectives of classical Indian philosophers using comparative analytical approaches, as his 11 books and some 90 published papers testify. Thus the significance, in no small, measure, of Indian, especially Nyāya logic, epistemology, semantics and cognitive ontology has not escaped the attention of Western scholars who have seen the convergence or at least a point of fecundity with the long tradition of systematic thinking in these areas. Apart from having worked closely also with the late Professor Bimal K. Matilal, Professor J. N. Mohanty, and the late Professors Sibajiban Bhattacharya and Pranab Kumar Sen, the late Pandit Visvabandhu Tarkatirtha (traditional pandit and mentor to Shaw), and the late Pandit Dinesh Shastri, he has not shied away from working and inspiring a host of younger and lesser known philosophers and graduates, from Wellington, to Honolulu to Kolkata.

Hence, a special gratitude is owed to Jaysankar-da and it is the sincere hope of the editors that this small gesture will go towards fulfilling that *kalpana*. Equally rewarding we believe is the importance of the issues and range of problems that are discussed in these pages, each of which directly or indirectly bear on the kinds of questions that Jaysankar-da has in his own inimitable way been grappling with and spending much time and philosophical energy trying to resolve in the interstices of Indian and contemporary (Western) analytical thinking. So each of the articles ought to be seen as a 'gift of fruitful dialogue' and 'conversation' between (seemingly) disparate traditions of thought, even if a clear and decisive 'fusion of horizons' is not achieved in the process. As Heidegger, following an edict of the Tao, reminded us, it is "being on *the way*" that is the true measure and *telos* of philosophising rather than some *end* that might be reached.

Given the breadth of Shaw's influence across various sub-fields of philosophy, it is necessary to divide *Comparative Philosophy and J. L. Shaw* into four main sections: Language, Epistemology, Mathematics and Logic, and Ethics.

Language

The section on language starts with a piece by Partha S. Das, who takes up issues in the Nyāya philosophy of language, specifically Shaw's attempt to reconcile the views of Gottlob Frege and Saul Kripke regarding definite descriptions. For Frege, we must know the sense of a proper name before we can identify the referent; a proper name can be identified with a set of definite descriptions. On the other hand

for Kripke proper names are rigid designators that are true in all possible worlds, and we cannot identify proper names with a set of descriptions. For Shaw, definite descriptions of proper names are indicators, but are not the meaning of a proper name, yet they nevertheless do refer to the proper name. In this way, Das argues, Shaw brings together the views of Frege and Kripke.

David Lumsden also discusses issues in the Nyāya philosophy of language. He suggests that taking account of the Nyāya writings on the topic of noun phrases can shed some light on pragmatic accounts of how we understand the meaning of a sentence. Specifically, the fact that the Nyāya treat noun phrases as if they are sentences in themselves, and can therefore be assigned a truth value, assists the hearer in determining a referent for the noun phrase, and as such elaborates on the psychological processes by which we comprehend an utterance in a particular context.

Continuing with Frege in the context of Indian philosophy, Amitabha Dasgupta discusses Shaw's contribution to the issue of whether Frege's concept of sense can be accommodated within Indian philosophy of language. It is claimed that the distinction between sense and reference has been absent within Indian theories of language (most forcefully by Prof Mohanty). This raises the question of whether a concept such as 'sense' is available to philosophers of language in the Indian tradition. Dasgupta discusses Shaw's reconstruction of the Nyāya position that demonstrates that it is indeed possible for philosophers in the Indian tradition to make limited use of this concept.

Fred Kroon outlines a certain interpretation of the Buddhists' view of empty terms, a view previously argued for by Shaw. Following this, he maintains a similar position to Shaw and the Buddhists by showing how this view can be argued for through a sympathetic interpretation of some key Buddhist ideas using recent ideas in philosophical logic.

The discussion of the philosophy of language in this volume is concluded with a piece by Tamoghna Sarkar, which examines identity relations with particular reference to the Nyāya school, and the importance of admitting the existence of identity relations in ontology, epistemology and language. Sarkar elaborates on the nature of the identity relations in Indian thought, focusing chiefly on two subschools in the Nyāya tradition of verbal understanding: *saṃsargatāvāda* and *prakāratāvada*.

Epistemology

The second set of papers, on Epistemology, is framed by a piece by J.L. Shaw himself on how Indian epistemology can shed light on problems in contemporary Western philosophy. Specifically, he discusses an Indian approach to Justified True Belief (JTB) and belief sentences.

Also discussing JTB is Payal Doctor, whose chapter examines epistemic luck, or conditions in which we are able to arrive at a true conclusion from incomplete or faulty premises. She contrasts the Western view with that of the Nyāya, arguing that

the Nyāya perspective, contrary to the Western one, *would* say that an agent with epistemic luck has achieved a certain type of knowledge, in that they can successfully function with it, even though they do not have a robust sense of knowledge achieved by defect-free causal processes.

Following this, Anand Jayprakash Vaidya looks at the nature of perception. He proposes an approach he calls *causal disjunctivism*, rooted in the Nyāya misplacement theory of illusion, that he claims is a distinct form of disjunctivism than that found in the Western tradition. This new approach should shed some light on what he refers to as the metaphysical problem of perception, or the paradox created by four plausible-sounding but jointly inconsistent claims about perception: that perception is openness to the world, that humans are fallible, that perception, illusion, and hallucination fall under the same fundamental kind for a given explanatory purpose, and that if it seems to *S* that *Fa*, then there is something *x*, that is *F*, such that *S* is enabled to see *as if Fa*.

Concluding this segment, Monima Chadha provides a development of the Nyāya account of the relationship between non-conceptual and conceptual content. While non-conceptual content can be *a* cause of conceptual content, according to the Nyāya, it is necessary but not sufficient. Hence, for the Nyāya, Chadha argues, giving a causal-explanatory account of conceptual content in terms of non-conceptual content is misguided.

Mathematics and Logic

Nicholas Griffin begins the Mathematics and Logic segment with a discussion of the concept of negation. Griffin provides a survey of the notion of 'not' throughout Western and Indian logic. In both traditions weighty issues hang on how we choose to understand negation, even though there is a great deal of contention in each. However, Griffin says, the issues under dispute differ between the two philosophical traditions.

Negation is also the topic of Purushottama Bilimoria's chapter, specifically the logical theory of negation in the Mīmāṃsā school. He connects this scheme to the Mīmāṃsā hermeneutic of moral judgements, and further connects these two ideas to the Mīmāṃsā's epistemological radicalism, and their treatment of negative propositions.

Toshihiro Wada outlines the logical structure of the definitions of invariable concomitance in the thought of Navya-Nyāya mathematician and philosopher, Gaṅgeśa. In particular, Wada examines the Third and Fifth definitions of invariable concomitance in Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. While some might argue that these two definitions are merely two different ways of expressing the same idea, Wada suggests that their logical structures do in fact differ.

Engaging with Shaw's position in *Some Logical Problems Concerning Existence*, Rafal Urbaniak takes issue with Shaw's definition of mathematical existence – that an object has mathematical existence if it has all of its properties necessarily.

Urbaniak argues that for this to work, it must employ a rather complicated notion of the term 'property'. However, Urbaniak finds all explications of this concept unsatisfactory.

Examining some directly practical implications of Nyāya thought, G. S. Mahalakshmi concludes the segment on Mathematics and Logic with a discussion of how Nyāya conceptions of inference can be used in intelligent systems to assist in knowledge sharing and the revision of false beliefs.

Ethics

The first paper of the final section – Ethics – also discusses intelligent systems. However, rather than focusing on logic, Papia Mitra's contribution looks at artificial intelligence and the concept of *karma*. Mitra questions whether the idea of *karma*, or moral responsibility, according to Shaw's view, ought to also be applied to artificial intelligences, and if so to what extent.

The volume's final paper, by Gordon F. Davis, is a unique interpretation of the Buddhist notion of *nirvāṇa*. According to Davis' account, the most charitable way to take the Buddhist insistence in the 'ineffability' of *nirvāṇa* is to see it as referring to the highest good. After arguing for this interpretation, Davis explores Buddhist reflections on the unique normativity of the highest good.

And so here lies the virtue of the life of mind and a total – akin to a mystical – absorption in the analytic problems of philosophy that Jaysankar-da has so patently and unabashedly demonstrated in his own life. We are grateful also to each of the contributors for coming forward and preparing thoughtful essays that both reflect the spirit of the kind of enterprise Jaysankar-da has been engaged in for the nearly 50 years of his academic career, ever since he was an undergraduate in Calcutta and a doctoral candidate in Rice University in the USA, as well as enhance the comparative reach of the classical tradition in dialogue with a modern frame of thinking.

Purushottama Bilimoria (Berkeley and Venus Bay) & Michael Hemmingsen (Hamilton, Ontario).

Part I
Language

J.L. Shaw on Meaning

Partha S. Das

Abstract Professor Shaw wrote a battery of land mark articles and several books over four decades. There are several systems in Indian Philosophy and they have their own explanations on Meaning. Shaw is a devout Naiyāyika. By using Nyāya methodology, Shaw provides a new dimension to Western Philosophy. Saul Kripke criticized both Frege and Russell especially their theories of proper names. Shaw however, attempts to reconcile Kripke and Frege-Russellian views by the concept of "*pravṛtti-nimitta*" following Raghunātha Śiromoṇi. Russell's theory of definite description is widely known in Western hemisphere. Following Gadādhara, Shaw reasons that Nyāya explanation of Proper name is better than that of Bertrand Russell. Shaw suggested that meaning may be discussed at six levels: etymological, conventional, deep structure (*kāraka*), causal, metaphorical and suggestive. In this context, Shaw gives an illuminating explanation of the metaphysical term, 'Brahman' (Absolute). Brahman is said to be 'indescribable'. How does the word, 'Brahman' then refers to anything at all?

Keywords Nyaya • Kripke • Frege • Russell • Proper names

J. L. Shaw wrote a battery of landmark articles and several books over four decades. A diligent and meticulous thinker, he gave a new dimension to Western Linguistic philosophy. His penetrating insights influenced a generation of thinkers. From a Nyāya perspective, he attempts to resolve conflicting issues. Like Wittgenstein, he thinks philosophical problems are not verbal quibbles, but real problems amenable to investigation and even solutions.

Frege maintains that a proper name has a sense and reference. The sense of a proper name is known by a set of definite descriptions. Sense, says Frege, is the mode of presentation of the object referred to. Sense is not a property for Frege. Frege (1960, p. 51) clearly identified property with concept and a concept, being the reference of a predicate, belongs to the realm of reference. Frege gives the following arguments for his sense theory of proper names. Consider these two statements:

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1. Tully = Cicero
2. Tully = Tully

Although Tully is Cicero, we do not know that is the case unless somebody says so.

The two statements have different cognitive values. (1) is synthetic and *a posteriori* while (2) is analytic and *a priori*. Empty terms like 'the series with the least convergence' are meaningful and have senses. Searle and others maintain that the sense of a proper name is to be identified with the sense of a cluster of definite descriptions. Shaw maintains that the concept of sense leads to Platonism. It is neither subjective, like ideas or images, nor is it objective, like a material body. Frege's thesis regarding the sense theory of proper names is as follows: It is said that we cannot explain the difference between the statements '$a = a$' and '$a = b$', if '$a = b$' is true, unless 'a' and 'b' have different senses. Frege maintains the statement '$a = a$' is analytic and *a priori*, whereas the statement '$a = b$' is both synthetic and *a posteriori*.

Frege claims that we cannot identify the referent of a proper name unless we admit its sense. We can get the sense of the proper name 'Aristotle' from the definite description such as 'the teacher of Alexander the great'; Frege does not maintain rigidity in sense. Thus, different people might identify Aristotle in terms of different senses. Some may refer him as 'the teacher of Alexander the Great' others may identify him as 'the student of Plato' and so on. Frege admits meaningfulness of empty terms like 'the series with the least convergence'; he treats them as proper names and proper names – such as 'Pegasus' – are meaningful.

To explain indirect discourse and propositional attitudes such as belief, Frege postulates sense. In the sentence 'John believes that Shakespeare is the author of Waverley' the subordinate clause 'Shakespeare is the author of Waverley' refers to its sense, which Frege calls 'proposition'.

Frege's theory of sense may be summed up this way:

- It is a mode of presentation of the object.
- The sense of a proper name contains the manner and context of presentation.
- "The sense of a proper name is grasped by everyone who knows the language" (Feigl and Sellars 1949, p. 93). It illuminates the nominatum or referent, if there is any.
- The sense of a proper name belongs to the nominatum, if there is one.
- The step from the sense of a proper name to its nominatum is determinate (Shaw and Matilal 1985).

Like Frege, Russell maintains that sense is a description. Russell distinguishes between a logically proper name and an ordinary proper name. An ordinary proper name such as 'Aristotle' is a set of definite descriptions. Hence the meaning of 'Aristotle' is to be identified with that of a definite description such as 'teacher of Alexander'. This can be known only by direct knowledge, or what he calls, 'knowledge by acquaintance'. Unlike Frege, he maintains that a proper name is a name for a particular and it can only occur as a subject in a proposition. In a nutshell Russell's theory of proper name is as follows:

- A proper name is a simple symbol and can never be eliminated from a sentence in which it occurs.
- A proper name can only occur as a subject in a proposition. A proper name is a name for a particular.
- The meaning of a proper name is its referent or the particular it denotes.
- The meaning of a proper name can be grasped only through knowledge by acquaintance.
- The understanding of the meaning of a proper name does not involve understanding a proposition in which it occurs.

This view of Frege and Russell that a proper name is a definite description or a set of definite descriptions is criticised by Saul Kripke. According to Kripke, the name 'Aristotle' is a *rigid designator* and is true in all possible worlds. However, the property of being teacher of Alexander may not be applicable to 'Aristotle' in a different world. To identify a proper name with a set of descriptive definitions is therefore not justifiable. Like Mill, Kripke holds that a proper name has no sense or connotation. He admits that a proper name has a reference but it can never be equated with a quality, nor a 'bundle of qualities'. How do we know that this proper name designates this particular person? This happens because of initial baptism. When a child is baptised, pastor and parents give that child a name. The name is spread to the community and the child is referred to by that particular name.

Following Raghunātha Śiromoṇi, Shaw attempts to reconcile Frege and Kripke by the concept of *pravṛtti-nimitta*, which is not a part of meaning complex. For example, in the sentence, 'house of Devadatta is crow possessor', the 'crow possessor' is not a property of house but is just an indicator. It is not the meaning, but it correctly refers to a particular house. We gain this knowledge by acquaintance. It perfectly refers to Devadatta's house. This is a definite description as it refers to Devadatta's house (Frege and Russell) notwithstanding that it is not a part of meaning complex (Kripke). Thus Professor Shaw reconciles Frege and Russell with that of Kripke.

Regarding definite descriptions, Shaw maintains that the Nyāya analysis is better than that of Russell. A proper name is "an expression which *refers* to one and only one individual" (*eka–vyakti-vacaka*) but a definite description generates "a *cognition* of one and only one individual" (*eka–vyakti-bodhoka*). The meaning of a definite description, unlike the meaning of a proper name, is determined by the meanings of its parts and the syntactic relation between them. Further, it has uniqueness. Thus, the meaning of 'the author of Waverley' is determined by the meanings of 'the author', 'Waverley' and their syntactic relation along with their uniqueness. The definite article like 'the' implies the uniqueness condition. Following Gadādhara's explanation of the word 'only', the meaning of 'the author of *Waverley*' is explained as follows:

A man is an author of *Waverley*, and there is absence of other persons qualified by the property of being the author of *Waverley* by the relation of being in the same locus ('*sāmānādhikaraṇya-sambandha*'). For Russell, there is identity between an existent object having the property of *F* and an imagined object having the property

of *F*. The Nyāya distinguishes in meaning between the sentence 'the author of *Waverley*' and 'the author of *Waverley* exists' because they do not generate the same cognition. Nyāya theory is obviously better than that of Russell as it perfectly distinguishes between an existent and an imagined object.

In Indian Linguistic philosophy two approaches are found: holistic (*akhaṇḍapakṣa*) and analytic (*khaṇḍapakṣa*). The holistic approach maintains a sentence to be a unified entity, an indivisible unit not explainable in terms of its parts. Meaning is grasped in a flash of insight or intuition (*pratibha*). This view, called '*anvitābhidhānavāda*', is held by Prabhakara and his followers. Śalikanātha gives the following explanation:

> The word alone, by itself, never expresses 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 the use of older people, – and this usage is only in the form of sentences; and every single word is understood only so far as it is related to the other words in the sentence; hence it is established that what is expressive of the meaning is the sentence only, not any word alone by itself. (Salikanatha in Raja 1963, p. 198)

The analytical approach, on the other hand, maintains that we may get the meaning of a sentence from the meanings of its constituent parts; that is, words and their relations. If a sentence has the form '*a* is *F*' the meaning may be expressed in the following schema: '*a* R *F*' where R relates the relata '*a*' and '*F*'. According to the *anvitābhidhāna* theory, "the sentence has a unitary meaning of its own; the constituent words possess meaning only as they are related to this unitary sentence – meaning" (Raja 1963, p. 200). In the sentence, 'Bring the cow', the word 'cow' does not mean the isolated concept of 'cowness', but 'cow as related to the action of bringing'. The word 'bring' means the action of bringing in relation to the cow. For Prabhākara, "the word apart from its position is only an abstraction and rather a torso" (Sastri 1983, p. 173).

According to *abhihitānvaya* theory, the meaning of a word does not include either a relation or an action. This view is held by the followers of the Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā and Advaita Vedānta. For them, the words in a sentence give rise to the referents because of their own power, called '*śakti*'. The meaning of a sentence is due to the power of the referents, not that of the words. This power of the referent is called '*lakṣaṇā*'. Thus, words have their power and referents also have their power. The relation is cognised after cognising the referents of constituent words. Thus the meaning of a sentence is the secondary referent (*lakṣya*), not the primary referent (*śakya*). Bhaṭṭa therefore maintains that the "meaning of a sentence is always the secondary referent" (Bagchi 1981, p. 6). Old Naiyāyikas like Jayanta maintain that common nouns like the word 'cow' refer to a set of particular cows qualified by the universal cowness. This is the 'designative power' (*abhidhātṛi śakti*). But there is no designative power in words to refer to the relation of a sentence which is the meaning of a sentence. In the sentence '*a* R *f*' neither '*a*' nor '*f*' has the designative power to refer to the relation 'R' which is the meaning of a sentence as distinct from the meanings of its parts. To explain this, Jayanta postulates another power in words, called 'intentional power' (*tātparya śakti*).

Thus, Jayanta assumes three powers in a sentence: primary power or the designative power of words (*śakti*); secondary power or referential power (*lakṣaṇā*); and intentional power (*tātparya*). The New Naiyāyikas, however, do not admit this third power in words for explaining relations. For if we admit the 'type' of intentional power then we have to admit several 'tokens' of intentional power. Consider the sentence, 'bring *saindhava*'; the word '*saindhava*' in Sanskrit means 'horse' or 'salt'. We have to know the real intention of the word '*saindhava*' to fully apprehend the sentence, 'bring *saindhava*'. Again, consider the sentence, 'village is on the river Ganges'. Obviously, no village can be on the river Ganges. The assertor intends to mean the village that is on the bank of the Ganges. Thus we have to assume several tokens of intentional power. For the sake of the law of parsimony, the New Naiyāyikas admit only two: designative power and referential power.

Like Jayanta, the literacy critics (*ālaṅkārikas*), such as Rucyaka and Abhinavagupta, maintain that the referents of the meaning of a sentence have three properties: expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*), compatibility (*yogyatā*) and contiguity (*sannidhi*). However, there is no intentional power in a sentence. In the sentence, '*a* is followed by *f*', (*a* R *f*) we understand the meaning of the relation of 'following' because of expectancy, compatibility and the contiguity of the referents. The New Nyāya philosophers hold that if the relation is explained in terms of expectancy then that is simpler. Further, they point out that there is a distinction between the meaning of a sentence (*vākyārtha*) and understanding the meaning of a sentence (*vākyāryhavodha*), as there is the distinction of syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) and the cognition of syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā-jñāna*). Critics claim that expectancy is a property of a sentence, not a property of referents. Expectancy is a syntactic relation between the words and we can understand the meaning '*a* R *f*'. Compatibility and contiguity have nothing to do with the meaning of a sentence. The *anvitābhidhāna* theory (related designation) requires three types of referential power (*abhidhāna-śakti*) in a word to explain the meaning of a sentence. First, each of the words has the power to generate its own referent. Secondly, each of them has the power to refer to something other than their own referent. Thirdly, each has the power to refer to a relation which is related to something else.

The Nyāya theory maintains that the meaning of a sentence is different from the meaning of its parts. Consider the sentence, 'cooks' (*pacati*). Since the words 'cook' (*pac*) and 's' (*ti*) are there, it is a sentence. There is a syntactic relation between the words 'cook' and 's'. The word 'cook' refers to cooking activity and the word 's' refers to mental effort (*kṛtitva*); the latter is related to the former by the relation of conductiveness (*anukūlatva*). It is noteworthy that the Nyāya emphasises the direction of the relation, too. There is expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*); in the sentence 'Bring the cow', the word 'cow' means not the isolated concept of 'cowness' but 'cow as related to the action of bringing'. There is expectancy in the word 'bring'. It is also a causal condition of understanding the meaning of a sentence. Since the direction of the relation is part of the meaning of a sentence, the Nyāya clearly differentiates between the sentences, 'Brutus killed Caesar' and 'Caesar was killed by Brutus'. Contemporary Western philosophers are concerned with the problem of

whether transformation preserves the meaning of a sentence. The Nyāya gives a clear answer in the negative: 'A jar is on the floor' and 'The floor is jar-possessor' have different meanings.

Levels of Meaning

Shaw suggested that the meaning may be discussed at etymological, conventional, deep structure (or *kāraka*), causal, metaphorical and suggestive levels.

The Etymological Level

Patanjali says that every language has synonyms and homonyms. In every language, we find multiple meanings in the guise of synonyms (*paryaya-sabda*) and homonyms (*nānārtha-śabda*). Synonyms occur where several words are used for the same sense and homonyms occur when same word can be used with multiple senses. Example of synonyms are words such as '*hasta*', '*kara*', and '*hāth*', which all mean 'hand'; '*aśva*' and '*ghorā*' both mean 'horse'. Some example of homonyms are '*hari*', which means both 'Lord Krishna' and 'monkey', and '*dhenu*', which means both 'cow' and 'mare'. However, if such uses are explained in terms of verbal and nominal roots, etc., it is called the etymological meaning. The word '*pācaka*' (cook) is derived from the root '*pac*' (to cook) and the suffix '*aka*' (agent). Hence the word '*pacaka*' means 'the agent that does cooking'.

The Conventional Level

We receive conventional meaning from the use or the intention of the speaker or the writer. For example, 'Fire' may mean 'there is fire' or it may mean 'to terminate service'. Again, proper names like 'John', 'Devadatta' or general terms like '*ghaṭa*' (pot) cannot be explained in terms of roots, suffixes, prefixes, etc. Thus, there is need for the conventional level in addition to the etymological meaning.

Deep Structure Level

Pāṇini's grammar discusses the meaning at the semantic deep structure level and the meaning at the surface structure level. Kiparski and Staal (1969, p. 84) contend that Pāṇini's grammar is a system of rules for converting semantic representations of sentences into phonetic representations via two intermediate levels which may be

compared with the levels of deep structure and surface structure in a generative grammar. The levels may be represented in this way:

Semantic representations → Deep Structures → Surface Structures → Phonological representations.

At the level of semantic representations we find concepts such as goal, agent, location, etc. At the deep structure level we see the *kārakas* underlying the subject, underlying the object, etc. The surface structure is represented by different cases, derivational affixes, etc. The phonological level is found in various case-endings which express different cases, or by verbal affixes found in different voices.

Pāṇini's concept of *Kāraka* may be used to explain the sameness or identity of meaning. By *Kāraka* we know the agenthood, objecthood, goal or location. Consider the following cases:

(i) Rama cooks rice (*Ramaḥ taṇḍulaṃ pacati*)
(ii) Rice is cooked by Rama (*Ramena taṇḍulaḥ pacyate*)
(iii) Rama is the cooking agent for rice (*Ramaḥ taṇḍulasya paktā*)

In all these examples, agenthood is ascribed to Rama by the *kāraka* relation. In (i) by *ti*, in (ii) by the third case ending and in (iii) by the suffix *tṛc*.

The Causal Level

The causal level is introduced to explain Vedic sermons and other sermons. If we change the word order in a sermon, it will not be effective (Staal 1967). Since the purpose of a mantra or sermon is to produce certain results, the meaning of a mantra can be explained in terms of those results.

J. L. Austin recognises trichotomy in the use of language. When we say something, it may be an act 'of' saying something, or an act 'in' saying something, or an act 'by' saying something. Austin calls these uses 'locutionary', 'illocutionary' and 'perlocutionary' acts. Austin writes:

> Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons... We shall call the performance of an act of this kind, the performance of a 'perlocutionary act'. (Austin 1976)

Hence, perlocutionary acts too fall under the causal level. Similar to these are the utterances at ceremonies that aim at producing certain effects. At the marriage ceremony, when a female or male says, 'I do' that means they are taking their partners as husband or wife.

The Metaphorical Level

The metaphorical level of meaning is a secondary sense of meaning. Sentences like 'The village is on the ganges' (*gaṅgāyāṃ ghoṣaḥ*), 'the cots are crying' (*mañcā krośanti*), 'Devadatta is a lion' (*siṃho Devadattaḥ*) are such examples. Some philosophers ascribe metaphorical meaning to words only, while others have ascribed it to both words and sentences.

The Suggestive Level

The suggestive level is introduced to explain meanings in poems, religion, and in metaphysics. Shaw examines the metaphysical term 'Brahman' (Absolute). If the word, 'Brahman' is a singular term then it must be either a proper name or a definite description. Brahman is said to be 'existent' (*sat*), 'consciousness' (*cit*) and 'bliss' (*ananda*) These are not the properties of Brahman as there is no distinction in Brahman between property-possessor and property. The terms, '*sat*', '*cit*' and '*anada*', although universal terms, do not refer to the properties of Brahman. The meaning of the word 'Brahman' cannot be explained the way a general term may be explained. Brahman is said to be 'indescribable' (*anirvacanīya*). As it is not a descriptive expression, it is not a definite description. As it is not an individual or a particular, neither can we say that it is a proper name. As 'Brahman' is neither a general term nor a singular term, the word does not seem to refer to anything at all. It cannot be explained either by primary meaning or by secondary meaning. Hence, suggestive meaning is the most appropriate meaning that is applicable in this case. It suggests ideals such as 'bliss', 'freedom', 'pure love', 'pure knowledge', etc., which one can realise. The Advaita Vedānta school says, 'that art thou' (*tat tvaṃ asi*) meaning that one can realise those ideals. These metaphysical utterances are not saying but showing (Shaw 2000).

Suggestive meaning is often used in poems to reveal aesthetic beauty or the emotive meaning. In poetry this is called '*dhvani*' (resonance). Literary critics maintain that there are ten types of '*rasa*' (transcendental feelings) namely, '*śṛṅgāra*' (love), '*vīra*' (heroism), '*hāsya*' (mirth), '*rudra*' (fury), '*karuṇā*' (compassion), '*vibhatsa*' (disgust), '*bhayānaka*' (terror), '*āścarya*' (wonder), '*sānta*' (tranquility) and '*bhakti*' (devotion) These are not ordinary emotions rather transcendental feelings, a sort of identity with the poet as is produced in a sympathetic reader. In this stage, the reader forgets about himself and enjoys an impersonal state of mind. R. N. Tagore says, in intense love or pure love, "beloved becomes God and God becomes beloved" (Das 2010). When we realise a *rasa*, we break out from our individualism and enjoy a transcendent aesthetic feeling. As suggestive meaning is part and parcel of literature, religion and metaphysics, it supplements the other five levels of meaning. Thus, all six levels of meaning need to be recognised.

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Noun Phrases and Truth in the Nyāya and Western Pragmatics

David Lumsden

Abstract In the Nyāya, noun phrases are included within the category of sentence and can be assigned truth values, unlike the standard approach in Western philosophy and linguistics in which they are assigned referents. The approach to noun phrases developed here is to treat them as equivalent to sentences at a base level and assign the process of determining referents to pragmatic principles. We can see how this can occur within the Relevance Theory pragmatic framework of Sperber and Wilson, which approaches pragmatics in terms of principles of cognitive processing. We can also relate the approach to a pragmatic interpretation of Donnellan's referential-attributive distinction concerning definite descriptions.

Keywords Nyaya • Relevance Theory • Noun phrases • Definite descriptions • Referential and attributive

The Nyāya can be regarded as a grammatical and logical commentary on Sanskrit (Datta 2006, p. 145). But that does not rule out it also having a broader significance. Certain features could apply to other members of the Indo-European family of languages, including English. But more broadly it could supply inspiration for theories of universal characteristics of human language. A lot of early work in Chomskian Transformational Grammar was done using English as an example, even though the project was to construct grammars within a framework that was designed to reflect linguistic universals (Chomsky 1965). Taking account of the Nyāya writings can expand our understanding of the logical space of theories of language.

Consider the characteristic of the Nyāya that complex noun phrases are included within the category of sentence and thus can be assigned a truth value (Shaw 1991, 2000). This goes against the typical Western grammatical and logical analysis in which a noun phrase is assigned a referent but not a truth value. Many complex noun phrases can be considered as nominalisations of a sentential structure. Thus

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the noun phrase, ‘My speaking at Wellington’ can be considered a nominalisation of the simple sentence, ‘I spoke at Wellington’, and of course that sentence, when uttered in context, can be assigned a truth value. But can ‘My speaking at Wellington’ be assessed for truth? The standard thinking in much Western philosophy and linguistics is that this serves to pick out an event, which can then be ascribed a property, such as the property of being a pleasure. That I did speak at Wellington can be a presupposition of the sentence while not part of it.

In Lumsden (2006) I referred to Carstairs-McCarthy’s (1999) claim that the distinction between noun phrases and sentences is not an inevitable distinction in the way that many philosophers have assumed. I point out that a language of noun phrases alone, which I call ‘nominalised English’, could function effectively in communication. For example, the noun phrase ‘A definite improvement in your present appearance’, could stand alone and function to convey a similar meaning to, ‘You’re certainly looking a lot better now!’ That describes some possible linguistic situation, though our understanding of how English can be used informally supports our feeling that such a language would function effectively. Carstairs-McCarthy also develops a language called ‘monocategoric’ which contains only one category of complex expression, which we could think of as either a noun phrase or a sentence.

It is useful to consider a real example of a noun phrase that does serve as a sentence. Here is such an example from New Zealand Māori, which, significantly, is not an Indo-European language, but part of the Austronesian group. The expression, ‘*He taniwha*’, satisfies the definition of noun phrase and can be translated as ‘A monster’ or ‘Some monsters’ (Harlow 2001, p. 109). The same expression can stand alone and serve as a sentence, meaning ‘There are monsters’ (or, ‘There is a monster’) (Harlow 2001, p. 134). There are alternative translations for ‘*taniwha*’ including ‘chief’ but that does not concern us here. The particle ‘*he*’ when preceding a noun is typically translated as ‘some’ or ‘a’, but it can also precede qualities, for example ‘*taimaha*’, heavy. ‘*He taimaha tēnei pukapuka*’, can be translated as, ‘This book is heavy’.

This characteristic of Māori, to use a noun phrase as a sentence, is not such a frequently used or important feature of the language, but nor is it of the nature of an exception. It appears to follow from the basic principles of the language. What we should focus on is the interpretation of the one phrase as it appears either as a stand-alone sentence or as part of a sentence. The sentence, ‘*He taniwha a Karutahi*’, can be translated as ‘Karutahi is a monster’. The phrase ‘*he taniwha*’ in this context is a noun phrase used as a predicate. The question then arises as to whether this use of the phrase should be assigned the same or a different interpretation to the phrase used as a complete sentence. It is certainly possible to assign the stand-alone noun phrase a different interpretation, but general principles suggest we should first attempt to find a system which offers a unitary interpretation.

In Lumsden (2006) there is the suggestion that noun phrases could routinely be assigned a truth value by adopting an approach in which a noun phrase was assigned various items in its interpretation including a truth value and a referent, so that which items become part of the interpretation of a containing sentence depended on the situation. Here a different approach will be considered. Shrilekah Datta (2006, p. 144) explains how the Nyāya philosophers understand the meaning of a sentence