The thesis is prepared under the guidance of Prof. K. V. Abhyankar, Hon. Prof. of Sanskrit, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. The title of the thesis is "A Critical Study of Some Aspects of Sanskrit Grammar with Special Reference to the Mahā-bhāṣya of Patañjali".

The Mahābhāṣya is a critical commentary on the sūtras of Pāṇini along with the Vārtikas of various scholars of grammar. It marks the culminating point in the development of the science of Sanskrit grammar. In addition to presenting a faithful exposition of the sūtras and the Vārtikas, the Mahābhāṣya furnishes this system of grammar with such principles and doctrines as are more or less philosophical in character. Besides, the Mahābhāṣya throws a considerable light on many aspects of the social and cultural life of the people of India in the second century B.C. and also before it. Several reputed scholars such as V. B. Agarwala (India as known to Pāṇini) and B. N. Puri (India in the time of Patañjali) have carefully scrutinized the material found in the Mahābhāṣya and discussed their cultural as well as historical significance.

The present thesis, however, is confined to the study of the various problems of Sanskrit grammar.
arising out of the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali. The Mahā-
bhāṣya forms the basis of grammatical research and an
authority on the usage of Sanskrit language. Reputed
scholars like Bhartṛhari, Kaiyāta, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita,
Nāgęśa and others have carefully studied the Mahābhāṣya
and have tried their best to elucidate the principles
and doctrines found in the Mahābhāṣya. Several distinguished
modern scholars like F. Kielhorn, R. G. Bhandarkar, P. C.
Chakravarti, K. V. Abhyankar, P. S. Subrahmanyam and others
have done considerable amount of work in this field. But,
inspite of their admirable work, much remains still to be
done, since the study of the Mahābhāṣya provokes quite a
large number of problems. The investigations so far
made in this respect have been mostly confined to a few
specific aspects. The work has not so far received as
much attention of modern scholars as it deserves. An
humble attempt has been made in this thesis to focus
attention on the critical study of a number of important
grammatical problems and theories occurring in the Mahā-
bhāṣya and their wide implications.

Chapter first discusses the origin of Sanskrit
grammar and naturally the origin of śabda, and shows the
greatness of the Aṣṭādhyāyī. It also discusses the date,
parentage and other biographical details of Patañjali
and also the traditions about the composition of the work
and its sanctity. It deals with the objective of the
Mahābhāṣya, its importance and its influence on later grammatical works.

Chapter second discusses the Vārtikas in prose as well as in verse, of previous grammarians and also the Vārtikas of Patanjali himself called Iṣṭi. It deals with the question of the authorship of the Vārtikas, the meaning of the term Vārtika and the purpose of the Vārtikas. An attempt has been made to show how the Vārtikas supply a link between the Sanskrit language of Pāṇini and that of Kātyāyana by pointing out certain grammatical forms unnoticed by Pāṇini. Kātyāyana's contribution to the Pāṇinian system of grammar is also discussed at some length.

In Chapter third, an attempt has been made to prove the existence of Vṛttis on the Astadhyāyī of Pāṇini before the Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali.

Chapter fourth discusses Paribhāṣā and other devices like Yogavibhāga, anabhidhāna etc. It further discusses the necessity of the Paribhāṣā-rules, their classification, authorship, etc.

Chapter fifth is devoted to the study of technical terms, characteristics, classification and purpose. Evidence has been offered to show that certain technical terms in this system of grammar are pre-Pāṇinian.
Chapter sixth seeks to emphasize the significance of the illustrations given in the Mahābhāṣya. It has also been shown how the illustrations are important and useful in ascertaining the correct forms of words and other grammatical matters concerning them. A table of illustrations from the Nirukta, the Mahābhāṣya, the Kāśīkā-vṛtti, the Prakriyā-kaumudī, and the Siddhānta-kaumudī has been given to prove the existence of stock examples.

Chapter seventh undertakes to study comprehensively the problems arising from the eternity of śabda, such as the s phoṭa-theory, the rationale behind it and the necessity of the various kinds of s phoṭa. An attempt has been made to trace the origin of each form of s phoṭa to the Mahābhāṣya or to the interpretation of the Bhāṣya passages given by Kaiyaṭa in his Pradīpa.

Chapter eighth deals with the division of words and their denoted senses. It discusses the division of words according to their different attributes and their functions in a sentence. It studies the sense of nouns and verbs, of their constituent parts, of prepositions, of particles as also of the sentences and discusses the relation between a word and its sense.

Chapter ninth deals with the peculiarities of the style of the Mahābhāṣya.
Chapter tenth is devoted to a retrospect of the conclusions arrived at in previous chapters.