Though Śabda or Verbal Testimony is placed after Pratyakṣa and Anumāna yet its importance in comparison to these is not less in any respect. A major portion of a person's stock of knowledge about the world is acquired from the oral or written testimony of other persons. The importance of testimony becomes obvious when we imagine a person deprived of all connection with other persons and books in which case he would simply be reduced to the level of a brute. Comparatively, we learn more by reading books than what we know from perception or Inference. So, the importance of Verbal Testimony as a source of knowledge is great indeed.

In the list of Pramāṇas Upamāna (comparison) is preceded by Inference i.e., the position of Upamāna is third. But it is to be noticed that Upamāna is not accepted as an independent pramāṇa by the Sāmkhyas. Vācaspati splits it up into Perception, Inference and Verbal Testimony. And, according to Sāmkhya, Perception
Inference and Verbal Testimony are the only three sources of Valid knowledge. The present chapter deals with Verbal Testimony. The Carvakas, the Bauddhas and the Vaisesikas have not recognised Verbal Testimony as a source of Valid knowledge. According to the Carvakas, Perception is the only means of cognition whereas to Bauddhas and to Vaisesikas, Perception and Inference are the two sources of valid knowledge. Verbal Testimony, as a source of valid knowledge is accepted by the Jainas, Sankhyaits, Vedantins, Mimamsakas as well as by the Naiyayikas. Verbal Testimony is designated in various ways by the different schools of Indian system. Thus it is 'Sabda' according to the Naiyayikas, 'Sastra' to the Mimamsakas, 'Aptavacana' to the Sankhyaits, 'Agama' to Vedanta, Yoga and to Jainas also and 'Nigama' to the Bhagavata. Except the Carvaka, the Buddhists and the Vaisesikas, all Indian philosophers have recognised Verbal Testimony as an independent source of knowledge. The Carvaka rejects Testimony in general, because, according to him, it does not give rise to valid knowledge and scriptural testimony in particular, because Vedic knowledge in his opinion is 'all fraud, a device of the cunning priests to earn their livelihood by cheating, the

1. pratyakenānumānena nigamenātmasāmavidā /
   ādyantavādāsaj jñātvā niḥsāmgo vicarediha //

   Bhagavatam,11. 28.9.
ignorant persons'. The Buddhists and the Vaiśeṣikas recognise testimony but not as an independent source of knowledge. They reduce testimony to Inference.

Testimony may be Verbal or Non-Verbal. Non-Verbal testimony consists of gestures. But it is not important because it lacks in precision. Valid Testimony consists of Verbal statements of people intended to express certain facts.

The Denial of the validity of the Vedas by the Carvākas:

The Carvākas reject the validity of the Vedas, because they are vitiated by falsehood, contradiction and tautology. They are incapable of being the means of valid knowledge. They are false because they make statements which are false. They are contradictory because they make statements, which are incompatible with one another. They are tautologous because they repeat the same statement several times. A Vedic text declares 'one who desires a son should perform the Putreṣṭi sacrifice. Yet we find that a son is not born after the sacrifice has been performed. The text is false. Another Vedic text declares 'one who desires to go to heaven should

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2. trayo vedasya kartāraḥ bhanda-dhūrtah- niśācarāḥ

perform the Agnihotra oblation'. If a text is false with regard to perceptible results, one with regard to imperceptible results must be false. In regard to the Agnihotra oblation there are the Vedic injunctions: (1) 'The oblation should be offered before sunrise', (2) 'The oblation should be offered after sun-rise', (3) 'The oblation should be offered before sunrise after the stars have become invisible'. These injunctions are incompatible with one another. So at least some of them must be false. There is a vedic text 'one should repeat the first verse thrice and the last verse thrice'. But a tautological assertion is made by a demented person. There is want of agreement among some Vedic texts. There is incompatibility among others. There is contradiction among others. So the Vedas have no validity as a source of knowledge. The three Vedas are inventions of cheats, knaves and demons. Their injunctions are meaningless talk. The rites and ceremonies enjoined by the Vedas are the inventions of the Brahmanas, who cheat the other castes to earn their livelihood. They are devoid of intelligence and manliness, and cannot earn their living by honest means. The Vedas are mere incoherent ramblings of knaves. The religious rites enjoined by them are intended to be the means of their
subsistence. Religion is priestcraft. If a beast killed in a sacrifice goes to heaven, why does not the person sacrifice his own father? If the food offered at the Srāddha ceremony appease the hunger of the departed souls, what is the need of supplying travellers with food for the journey? Their hunger may as well be appeased by the offering of food at home. If the departed souls are gratified with the food offered on earth, why are not persons on the first floor gratified with the food offered on the ground floor? If the soul issuing out of its body, goes to the next world, why does it not return to this world out of affection for the dear ones? When the body is burnt to ashes, how can it come back again? The soul is identical with the body. The rites are the inventions of impostors for their livelihood.

Bauddha view of Śabda:

It has already been stated that the Buddhist and the Vaiśesika do not recognise Verbal Testimony as an independent source of knowledge. Both of them reduce Testimony to Inference. The Buddhist maintains that the intention of a speaker finds expression in his statement.

4. N.Bh. NV, ii, 1, 56, NM, p. 273
SDS, Ch.I, UNC xvii, 63-64 and 67
5. SDS, Cārvāka, SDSM, p. 83.
The intention is the cause and the statement its effect. When a speaker utters a word, the hearer infers his intention as he infers the presence of fire from its effect, viz., smoke. In this inferential process the speaker is the minor term, his intention is the major term and the word is the middle term. Srīdhara also remarks.

Just as the inferential process functions through invariable concomitance, so do words also. As a matter of fact, we know that a word never denotes anything until it is known for certain that it never fails in its concomitance with such denotation, and when it does denote an object after the unfailing concomitance has been ascertained, it becomes an inferential sign pure and simple.  

The Buddhist maintains that when a word is heard the hearer infers the intention of the speaker. But how can one infer the said intention unless he has already understood what the word means? Whatever the intention of the speaker may be, the meaning of the uttered word has already been cognised by the hearer without the help of syllogistic reasoning.

6. TH., 1512-22
7. NK, pp.213-14.
Vaiśeṣika view of Śabda:

The Vaiśeṣika brings comparison (Upamāṇa), tradition (Aitihya) and Verbal knowledge (Śabda) under Inference. The validity of scriptural statements is an Inference from the authoritative character of the speakers. Like the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika repudiates the Mīmāṃsā theory of the eternity of sound and the absolute authoritativeness of the Vedas. The Vaiśeṣika infers the validity of Vedas from their unimpeachable veracity of the inspired seers. The scriptures give us real knowledge and not mere speculation. It is knowledge of things as they are, and in this sense has no beginning, though it is always directly known and realised by some beings in its entirety and by others in part. Abler minds realised the truths and communicated them to us. The Vedas, as collection of sentences, presuppose intelligent authors, and they must be possessors of complete and accurate knowledge of heaven and unseen destiny (adrṣṭam). Gradually this authorship was assigned to God. 'The meaning of words and sentences must be understood before they give us knowledge. Since the understanding of meanings depends on the recognition of universal concomitance, verbal knowledge is a case of Inference. The Vaiśeṣika holds that the meaning of a word is cognised through Inference, because just as the
cognition of fire from smoke depends on a positive and negative experience of smoke-fire relationship, so the cognition of the meaning of a word too depends on the experience of a positive and negative experience of word-object relationship. This experience we have in childhood when adults utter the word 'cow' and a cow is present and they do not utter this word and the cow is absent.

Kumārila criticises the views of Bauddhas and Vaiśeṣikas and contends that when we have already learnt the meaning of a word in the said manner and then afterwards hear that word, the cognition of its meaning arises in our mind through memory and not through Inference. Thus the understanding of the word being of the nature of recollection, which is not a pramāṇa at all. The Buddhists and Vaiśeṣikas attempt to reduce our cognition of meaning on hearing a word to Inference is futile, because what constitutes the Pramāṇa called verbal testimony is not a word but a sentence. Even if the meaning of a word be cognised through Inference, the knowledge of a fact on hearing a sentence is not inferential and hence the Buddhist and Vaiśeṣika arguments are irrelevant. 8

8. SV., Šabda, 60 and 104-108
The knowledge of the meaning of a sentence arises through the meaning of words whose relation was not apprehended before. Therefore, even the suspicion that the meaning of a sentence is known through inference is illegitimate. An inference presupposes a knowledge of the invariable relation between the probans and the probandum. In the cognition of sentence-meaning, the constituent words may be said to serve as the probans, but there is no Vyāpti. The relations between words are infinite. It is not possible to know in advance the infinite relations between words. It is an indubitable fact that when someone talks of distant countries, the particular meaning of the sentences uttered by him are comprehended through word-meaning even though they refer to entirely new and strange things. It shows that sentence-meaning does not depend on a previously known relation between the utterance of a sentence and a fact. Therefore, our knowledge of a fact from a sentence is not inferential.\(^9\)

Some people argue that verbal Testimony is of the nature of inference, because the validity of a sentence is inferred from the trustworthy character of the speaker.

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9. SD, p. 73.
It may be true, but it does not make the knowledge of a fact on hearing a sentence inferential, because the inference of validity takes place only after the meaning of the sentence has already been comprehended. The meaning of a sentence is grasped exactly after it is heard, for which no knowledge of the trustworthy or untrustworthy character of the speaker is needed. Even when the speaker of a sentence is not known at all, the meaning of the sentence is immediately grasped and it is only later that we have a recourse to inference when the validity of his assertion is doubted. Thus verbal testimony is independent of inference.¹⁰

Definitions of Śabda according to different Schools of Indian Philosophy

Among the Nāstika school of Indian system Cārvāka refused all other Pramāṇas except Perception. According to them perception or Pratyakṣa is the only Pramāṇa. Bāuddha included it in inference. Jainas accepted it and regarded it as Mediate knowledge or Parokṣa Jñāna.

Jaina view of Verbal Testimony: Verbal Testimony goes by the name of Āgama in Jaina philosophy. Verbal

¹⁰. SV, Vākyā, 243-46.
Testimony is the knowledge of objects derived from the words of reliable persons. For example, 'the north pole exists'. Every word denotes a particular object by its natural denotative power and convention. A reliable person is one who knows objects as they really are, and can express his ideas correctly. He is free from attachment and aversion. His words are in harmony with their denoted objects. They do not contradict the nature of their objects. Testimony is of two varieties - secular (Laukika) and non-secular (Lokottara). Testimony of Janaka and others are secular, while the Testimony of the Tirthamkaras is non-secular. The Jainas do not believe in the authority of the Vedas. They recognise the authority of the Tirthamkaras only who attained perfection and became omniscient. Testimony is a proposition composed of sentences, words and letters. A sentence is a collection of interdependent words. A word denotes an object by virtue of its natural denotative power and convention. Like a lamp illuminating an object, a word manifests an object by its natural power. The only difference from lamp is that word depends upon convention to produce knowledge of an object. But the truth or falsity of a word depends upon the excellence or imperfection of the speaker.  

11. PNT, iv, 1, 4-12.
Nyāya view of Šabda:

Šabda is the last pramāṇa accepted by the Nyāya. Literally šabda means verbal knowledge. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentences. All verbal knowledge, however, is not valid. Hence Šabda, as a pramāṇa, is defined in the Nyāya as valid verbal testimony. The Nyāya accepts Šabda or Testimony as a distinct source of knowledge. All our knowledge is not derived from perception and inference. Many of our knowledge depends on written documents — books, paper etc. as well as on the saying of others. Šabda, when used as a source of knowledge, means the assertion of a reliable person or a trustworthy person.12 The Āpta or the reliable person13 is the specialist in a certain field, 'One who, having had direct proof of a certain matter, desires to communicate it to others who thereby understand it.'

Gautama defines testimony as the instruction of a trustworthy person, who has immediate knowledge of the Moral Law, and who is competent to guide others in the performance of their duties and abstention from sins for the attainment of good and the avoidance of evil.14

12. āptopadesāh śabdah - NS, 1.1.7
13. āptastu yathārthavaktā - TS, p. 346
14. TR, pp. 94-95.
Trustworthy persons are those who perceive objects as they exist in their real nature, and communicate their right knowledge to others for their benefit out of compassion for them. They are free from attachment and aversion, and have immediate knowledge of eternal verities that exist in all times. Sages are the seers of truth. The assertions of those who know truths but speak falsehoods are not valid. The assertions of those who are ignorant of truths, but speak what they know are not valid. The assertions of trustworthy persons, which are not fit for guiding persons in the performance of right actions and the non-commission of sins are not testimony. Untrustworthy persons are tainted with delusion, mendacity and fraudulence.

Testimony is an instruction which is expressed in a sentence or proposition. The knowledge of a proposition is testimony, and the knowledge of its meaning is the result. Testimony is due to the knowledge of a sentence or words, while perception is due to the sense-object-intercourse, inference, to the knowledge of vyāpti, and comparison to the knowledge of similarity. But it is a matter of common observation that a sentence or statement is not by itself sufficient to give us any knowledge of things. Nor again does the mere perception of the words of a

15. NS, NBh, i, 1.7, NM, pp. 150-152, NVTT, 135-36
SM, pp.360-61.
sentence lead to any knowledge about objects. It is only when one perceives the words and understands their meanings that he acquires any knowledge from a verbal statement. Hence while the validity of verbal knowledge depends on its being based on the statement of a trustworthy person, its possibility depends on the understanding of the meaning of that statement. Hence Sabda or testimony, as a source of valid knowledge, consists in understanding the meaning of the statement of a trustworthy person.\textsuperscript{16}

There are two ways of classifying Sabda or verbal knowledge. According to the one, there are two kinds of Sabda, viz., knowledge relating to perceptible objects or the visible world (drṣṭārtha), and knowledge relating to imperceptible objects (adṛṣṭārtha). The testimony of reliable persons and of the scriptures with regard to perceptible objects of the world, such as crops, rainfall, rites, medicines etc. come under the first. The testimony of the scriptures, saints and seers with regard to imperceptible objects like future life, heaven, God and the like comes under the second head.

\textsuperscript{16} TS, p. 72, Bhāp and Muktāvalī, 81.
According to another classification, there are two kinds of testimony. Of course, it is the view of the modern Naiyāyikas. The two kinds of testimony according to them are (i) arising from the words of a person and (ii) arising from the words of impersonal origin\(^{17}\) according as the testimony is secular or scriptural. Secular testimony is the statement of a trustworthy person and scriptural testimony is the statement of the Vedas. The secular testimony is fallible, because man is liable to error. Again, it is valid or infallible if it is uttered by a trustworthy person. As Vedas are created by impersonal being, hence they are perfect and infallible. The Naiyāyikas are unanimous that testimony always proceeds from persons—human or divine. Testimony is always personal.

The intelligibility of a sentence according to the Naiyāyikas, depends on the following four conditions:

These are (1) \(ākāṅkṣā\) or expectancy, (2) \(yogyatā\) or fitness, (3) \(sannidhi\) or proximity and (4) \(tātpārya\) or knowledge of the intention of the speaker. Their definition and illustrations in serial order are as follows:

[1] In the first place, a sentence must consists of words which imply one another. This mutual implication

\(^{17}\) laukikam vaidikam ca — TS, p. 490.
is called expectancy or ākāṅkaśā¹⁸ e.g., 'Bring the umbrella'. The word 'bring' raises the question 'bring what?' (2) In the second place, a sentence consists of words which have fitness or Yogyatā for one another.¹⁹ As for example, 'Quench your thirst by drinking water.' All the words in this sentence have mutual fitness. (3) In the third place, a sentence in order to be intelligible must consist of words which are in close proximity or sannidhi to one another.²⁰ For example, if the words 'bring', 'a', 'horse' are uttered at long intervals, they do not convey any meaning. (4) In the fourth place, the intelligibility of a sentence depends upon the knowledge of the intention or tātparya of the speaker. Thus 'Bring saīndhava' may mean 'Bring salt' if it is uttered while taking meal, but it means 'horse' if it is uttered while starting on a journey. The intention of the speaker should be gathered from the context. It has different meanings in different contexts according to the intentions of the speakers. Some opine that the context, which determines the intention of the speaker, is a cause of understanding the meaning of a sentence.

¹⁸. padasya padāntaravyatirekaprayuktānvanānanubhāvavatvamākāṅkaśā. TS, p. 486
¹⁹. arthābadho yogyatā - Ibid, p. 486
²⁰. padānām avilambena uccāraṇām sannidhiḥ -Ibid, p. 486.
But it is wrong, since there is no common property in the contexts of different sentences. Some opine that the knowledge of the speaker's intention is a cause when some word in a sentence is equivocal. Hence a sentence, in order to be intelligible, must consist of words, which are interdependent on, compatible with, and juxtaposed to, one another, and convey a meaning in conformity with the speaker's intention. Compatibility implies formal consistency, while the knowledge of the speaker's intention implies material consistency. This is the syntactical analysis of a sentence.

The Nyāya holds that a word denotes an individual bearing a genus and with a particular form or configuration. The word 'cow' denotes an individual cow bearing the genus (jāti) of cow and with a particular configuration or arrangement of parts, e.g., a haunch, horns and a dewlap. An individual is a perceptible substance endued with qualities and movements. It is a corporeal body composed of parts which are united with one another. A genus subsists in many individuals, produces a common concept of them, and brings many individual under one class. A configuration is a definite arrangement of parts which is the peculiar mark of a genus.

21. NVTT, p. 139; NM., pp. 390-401, Bhāp, pp. 83-84
SM, pp. 383-394
Mīmāṃsā View of Śabda:

The Mīmāṃsā pays the greatest attention to this source of knowledge i.e., Śabda, because it has to justify the authority of the Vedas. Testimony is verbal authority.

According to Śabarasvāmin, the definition of Śabda is the knowledge of an object, not present to the senses, produced by the knowledge of words. Kumārila, founder of the Bhāṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsā, defines testimony as the knowledge of objects, which are supersensible, derived from sentences by comprehending the meanings of the constituent words. These words may be uttered by men or may belong to the Vedas. The former is the testimony of the trustworthy persons (Āpta-Vākyā). The latter is the testimony of the Vedas (Veda-Vākyā). The former is valid, if we are sure that it is the utterance of a trustworthy person. The latter (Veda-Vākyā) is valid in itself and eternal, having no human or divine authorship. But the former i.e. Āpta-vākyā in itself is not valid. Its validity depends on the trustworthy character of the speaker. Thus, Kumārila divides testimony into personal or human and impersonal or superhuman.²³ Prabhākara, founder of Prābhākara school

23. pauruṣeṣyām apauruṣeṣyām ca. SV, Śabda 51.
Mīmāṃsā and author of the Brhatī, admits only Vedic testimony as real testimony and reduces human testimony to inference because its validity is inferred from the trustworthy character of the person concerned.

Again, testimony may be of two types: one which expresses some existing thing (Siddhārtha-Vākya) and the other which expresses something to be done (Vidhēyaka-Vākya). The former is the statement of a fact and the latter is that of a command or order. The former refers to such facts as 'this is a jar' and the latter to commands such as 'do this', 'avoid this' etc. In the opinion of Kumārila, a word directly denotes a universal or class concept when a word is not used in a sentence, it means the universal for which it stands, and it does not refer to the existence of the universal, for a universal is eternal and no question of its existence arises. An affirmative factual statement, which contains the verb 'is', refers to the existence of something. But this something is not the universal directly denoted by the subject-word. It rather is the individual qualified by the universal. Regarding negative factual sentences, Kumārila says that they refer to non-existence which also is a fact like existence. The word 'not' occurring in a factual sentence sometimes serves the purpose of differentiating one
existing thing from another existing thing. 'A cow is not a horse' means 'a cow is different from a horse'. The function of the word 'not' occurring in a factual statement is to remove ignorance or doubt or to reject a false idea (ajñāta sandigdhaviparitārthavārānakam).

When a person is in doubt about something, as when one is not sure whether a thing is a man or a post, his doubt is removed on hearing a statement negating one of the affirmatives.

Testimony is verbal knowledge and is derived from the meanings of words which construct sentences. To uphold the eternity and the authorlessness of the Veda, the Mīmāṃsaka puts forward the view that words and meanings as well as their relation are all natural and eternal.24 A word composed of two or more letters (Vārṇa) and is a mere aggregate of the letters and not a whole (avayavi), though the letters must occur in a particular order. A varṇa is eternal (nitya), omnipresent (sarva-gata) and integral (nirvayava). It is different from its sound (dhvani) if it is spoken and also different from its symbolic form (rūpa) if it is written. A varṇa is eternal and immutable, while its

24. autpattikastu śabdasya artheṇa sambandhah, MS.1.1.5
Dhvani and Rūpa are momentary and changing. If many varṇas are spoken, they are manifested through a temporal series of utterances, if they are written, they are manifested through a spatial series of written symbols. The sound and the symbol are only the vehicles of the manifestation of the eternal varṇa. When a varṇa is pronounced or written in ten different ways, there are not ten different varṇas, but only ten different manifestations of the same varṇa. Therefore, a word which is an aggregate of two or more eternal varṇas is itself eternal. A word does not signify the particular things which came into existence and pass away, but the eternal universals underlying these particulars. Hence the meanings or the objects denoted by words, being universals, are eternal and unchanging. And the relation between a word and its meaning also, being natural, necessary, inseparable and internal, is eternal and unchanging. This relation is not conventional. It is natural and eternal. Language is not a creation of the human or even the divine mind. The conventional element in language is secondary (Sahakāri) and helps the manifestation of the eternal words and their meanings, just as light helps the manifestation of sight. The Mīmāṃsaka points out that sounds and the symbols are created and destroyed, while the real words are eternal. Words are manifested through human efforts.
The sounds and the symbols are the vehicles of the manifestation of the eternal words. The main object of the Mīmāṃsaka is to establish the authority of the Veda.

But even the permanence of the word and its meaning and the relation between the two does not make the Veda eternal. The Veda is a literary monument consisting of sounds and symbols. According to the Mīmāṃsā view, all the uttered and written words are really permanent, though the sounds and the symbols through which they are manifested may be quickly fading and changing. Then what is the difference between the Veda and any other literary work? The Mīmāṃsaka replies that the Veda is authorless. While all other works are the creation of their authors. The order in which the words occur in the literary works is determined by their authors and therefore, the works are subject to defects, doubts and errors. But the order in which the words occur in the Veda is self-determined and therefore, intrinsically valid. The Veda is neither created by God nor any human being. It is self-proved and self-manifesting. The particular order in which the words occur in the Veda (Ānupūrvī) is self-determined and eternal. The permanence of the text of the Veda is emphasized by the Mīmāṃsaka. The
Veda along with its text is eternal and authorless because the words, their meanings and their relation are all eternal and because long-standing-tradition is silent on the authorship of the Veda. Vedic testimony gives us the knowledge of duties (Dharma). Dharma is supersensible, and cannot be perceived through the sense-organs. The aim of the Mīmāṁsā is to ascertain the nature of Dharma. Inference, comparison, presumption and non-apprehension also cannot yield the knowledge of Dharma, since they presuppose perception. The knowledge that the performer of Agniṣṭoma sacrifice will go to heaven cannot be given by them. Vedic testimony is the only source of our knowledge of duties relating to supersensible entities. The vedic texts which enjoin us to perform certain actions which lead to beneficial results are authoritative. Injunctive sentences (vidhi) in the Vedas are authoritative, and prohibitions are injunctions in disguise. The other Vedic texts are authoritative in so far as they help persons to perform their duties. The Vedas are looked upon by the Mīmāṁsā as the book of commandments, and in these lies the value of the Vedas. The Vedic injunctions are never contradicted by any subsequent valid knowledge. The objects denoted by them can never be known by perception, Inference and other means of valid knowledge. Hence vedic testimony is valid in itself.25 Another argument is support of the theory

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25. ŚV., Šabda, 109; SD., pp. 72, 87-88.
that the Vedas are not the works of any person is that they enjoin some ritual duties and declare their fruits (like attainment of heaven). The connection between the actions and such fruits is not such as can be said to have been observed by any person (like the connection between the taking of a prescribed medicine and the cure of a disease). So no person can be said to be the author of Vedas. It is not also reasonable to hold that the author may be a cunning deceiver (as the Cārvākas suggest). For had it been so, no one would care to study such deceptive works and hand them down to posterity. The infallibility of the authority of the Vedas rests on the fact that they are not vitiated by any defects to which the work of imperfect persons is subject.

But in addition to the impersonal Vedic authority, the testimony of a reliable person (Āpta) also is accepted by the Bhāṭṭas as a valid source of knowledge. There is, however, a special value attached to Vedic authority, because the knowledge of the commandments (Dharma) which we have from it is not to be obtained from any other source, such as perception and inference. While the knowledge that personal authority may impart

26. ŚD, śabda-nityatā-dhikaraṇam (pp. 138 f) and PP, śabda-pariccheda (pp. 87 f)
27. ŚD, śabda-pariccheda, p. 72.
to us can be sometimes obtained otherwise by perception, inference etc., and is itself based on such previous knowledge, the knowledge derived from the Vedas is neither obtainable otherwise nor dependent on any previous knowledge, the Vedas being eternal. But the Prabhakaras,²⁸ like the Vaiśeṣikas, hold that the statement of a non-Vedic authority yields knowledge through inference based on the reliability of the authority.

In reply to those who try to reduce all knowledge derived from testimony to inference on the ground that the validity of such knowledge is ascertained by inference based on the reliability of authority, the Mīmaṃsā makes an important reply. It asserts that the validity of every knowledge is assured by the conditions which generate that knowledge, so that the knowledge imparted by authority, like every other knowledge, carries with itself such assurance of its own truth.

Both Prabhākara and Kumārila maintain that a word denotes a class, and indirectly refers to an individual through it. All injunctions would be meaningless, if words did not refer to classes. The word 'cow' denotes the class 'cow'. The generic idea of (cow ' represents the class 'cow'. A word cannot denote a

²⁸. PP, p. 95.
single individual, an aggregate of individuals, or all individuals. If a single individual only were denoted by it, there could be no eternal relation between it and its object, and no action would be possible, since one could not make sure which individual was meant by the word. Nor can it denote an aggregate of individuals, since all the individuals cannot be known, and, consequently, their aggregate cannot be known. Even if it could be known, the meaning of the word would constantly change, since some individuals are born and others perish. Nor can a word denote all individuals, since they can never be known, and, consequently, its meaning can never be fully comprehended. Hence a word denotes a class at first, then an individual through it.29

Advaita view of Sabda:

Agama or scriptural testimony, is accepted by the Advaitins as an independent source of knowledge. A sentence refers to an objective relation. A sentence is valid if the relation implied by its meaning is not falsified by any other means of knowledge.30 A sentence

29. NRM, p. 121, NYR, p. 123
30. yasya vākyasya tātparyaviśayābhūtasaṁsargo māṇāta rena na bādhya tadbāhyam prāmaṇam - as referred to in the footnote of IP, of Radhākrṣṇa, p. 494.
must fulfil four conditions in order to convey a meaning. It must have syntactical connection among its essential parts. The verb must demand a subject, a transitive verb an object, and the like. A sentence must have fitness or compatibility of meaning among its parts (Yogyatā). The objective relation conveyed by a sentence must be free from contradiction. It must be harmonious. 'He wets the ground with fire', this sentence is meaningless. The objective relation conveyed by it is self-contradictory. A sentence must have proximity of its parts i.e., Sannidhi or Āsatti. If the words 'bring', 'a', 'cow' are uttered at the interval of one hour each, they do not form a sentence, and convey any meaning. They must be uttered in close succession to form a sentence. A sentence must have an objective intention (Tātparya). 'Saindhavām ānaya'. It means either 'bring a horse' or 'bring salt'. If a person utters the sentence while taking his meal, it obviously means 'bring salt', but it means 'horse' if it is uttered while starting on a journey. Fitness is the formal compatibility of meaning. Intuition is compatibility in a material sentence. It is correspondence of the subjective intuition of the speaker with the objective relation conveyed by the sentence.

\[31\text{. catvāri kāraṇāni syuḥ vākyajānyadhiyaḥ prati / akāmksā yogyātā-satti-tātparyāni yathāyathām // Vedānta saṅjhāvalī, 118.}\]
A sentence is composed of words. The Nyāya maintains that words denote individuals, connote the genus, and suggest configuration, or that words denote individuals endued with the genus and configuration. But the Advaita Vedānta maintains that a word denotes a genus, and not individuals, since individuals are infinite in number. How, then, can it denote an individual? The genus and the individual are apprehended by the same cognition produced by a word at the same time.

Yoga view of Śabda:

The knowledge of an object seen or inferred by a trustworthy person may be communicated to others by means of words. This is the third means of knowledge, i.e., Āgama. Verbal cognition is based on reliable verbal testimony. For instance, one may not have actually been to Newzealand, but still he believes there is such a country, for he is reliably taught so in geography, and may have learnt about its existence through someone who has actually been there. The object, seen or inferred by a competent man, is prescribed by words for transferring his knowledge to another. The mental operation concerning the object derived from the word, is the verbal cognition to the hearer. The Verbal
cognition, - with reference to the object which is nei-
ther seen nor inferred by the speaker, the meaning of
whose words is not worthy of regard, - remains unsteady

But in the case of the Original Speaker the verbal cognition is undoubtedly steady with reference
to the object whether perceived or inferred.

Sāmkhya view of Sabda:

According to Sāmkhya, there are three Pramāṇas:
only they are Perception, Inference and is Sabda or
testimony. Valid testimony (Āptavacana) is reckoned by
Sāmkhya as a separate source of knowledge. Sabda is

32. The original speaker is Īśvara. By this, the author
strengthens the authority of the Vedic scripture.
Hereby we are authorised to reduce the contradic-
tory theories of our modern teachers - as referred
to in the YB of YS. I.i.7.

33. āptena drśto'numito bārthah parastra svabodhasaṁ-
krāntaye šabdenopadiśyate šabdattedarthaviśayā
vṛttiḥ śroturāgamaḥ. yasyāśraddheyārtho vaktā na
drśtā numitārthah sa āgamaḥ plavate. mūlavaktarī t.
drśtānumitārthe niṣiplava syāt. -YB of YS.I.i.7.

34. trividham pramāṇam TSS, 23,
(a) trividham pramāṇamiśtam - SK, Kā. 4,
(b) trini pramāṇānīti Devala,
(c) trividham pramāṇam - SS.I. 87.
authoritative statement and it gives the knowledge of objects which cannot be known by Perception and three kinds of Inference viz., Pūrvavat, Śeṣavat and Sāmānyatodṛṣṭa.35

A statement is a sentence composed of words arranged in a certain way. A word is a sign which denotes something (Vācaka), and its meaning is the thing denoted by it (Vācyā). The understanding of a sentence requires the understanding of the meanings of the words which compose it. The knowledge of the meaning of the words can be had in three ways. Firstly, we may have it from the statement of a trustworthy person. A trustworthy person points to a thing and says, 'It is a jar'. From this statement we get the knowledge of the thing denoted by the word 'jar'. Secondly, conventional use of a word also gives us the knowledge of its meaning. Somebody says 'Bring the cow', and a man obeys the order by bringing before us a particular animal. From this we derive the knowledge of the object denoted by the word 'cow'. Thirdly, we may relate a word to the thing denoted by it, by relating the different words composing the sentence.

35. tasmādapi cāсидdham paroक्षमांपगमात siddham

SK, Kā, 6.
For example: I have not seen a mango, nor have I ever tasted it. A boy is eating a fruit, and another person says, 'The boy is eating mango'. From this I come to know the thing denoted by the word 'mango'.

Valid testimony includes all valid revelations - such as the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas, the religious codes of Manu etc., and the utterings of a person who is free from any defect (Āpta). The utterings of Āpta is called Āgama. A person who is free from attachment, envy etc. never utters any falsehood because due to attachment, envy etc. a man tells a lie. So, a person who is free from such defects, why should he utter a falsehood? The person who follows the varṇāśramadharma thoroughly and properly, who has no any type of attachment, envy etc. who is adorable even to the high-souled persons, is called Āpta. According to Vācaspati, Āptata (reliability) is in a sentence, not in a puruṣa. But it is quite opposite in Yogabhaṣya i.e., according to which 'Āptata' is in a Puruṣa. A puruṣa is called 'Āpta' when he is free from error.

36. āgamo hi āptavacanaṁ āptaṁ dosāṣayādvīduḥ / kṣīṇadoso'ṛtam vākyam na brūyāṁ hetvasambhavāt // svakarmānyabhiyukto yah sanga dveṣa-vivarjitaḥ / nirvairah pūjitah saṁbhirāptō jñeyah sa tādṛṣṭāṁ iti// - as referred to the words of Jayamangalā in Kā,3.
negligence, disability of the sense-organs or desire-
ness to deceive others. The utterance or advice of
such a person is called Sabda-pramāṇa. 37

In the Yukti-Dīpikā, both these two opinions
are accepted. Āpta means śrutī and śrutī of Āpta —
both are Sabdapramāṇa. In the first case the imperso-
nal vedas are Sabdapramāṇa and in the second case the
utterance of Manu etc., Vedāṅga, Smṛti etc. are all
Sabdapramāṇa. 38

In Matharabhāṣya, those who have known the
characteristics of Dharma — the advice of such preceptor
authors Brahmā etc. as well as the Vedas — both are

37. YB, I.7

38. śravaṇām śrutih, āpta cāsau śrutih āptāśrutih
athavā āptō'śrāvyāptah, akāro matvarthīyah.
āptebhyaḥ śrutirāptasrutih. āptāśrutiscāptasruti-
scāptasrutih sarūpāṇāmityekaśeṣah. tatra
pūrvenāptāsrutigrahaṇenedam pratipādayati —
apuruṣa buddhipūrvaka āmnāyah, sa puruṣa —
nihśreyasārtham pravartamāno niḥśamāyaṁ pramāṇ-
miti. dvitīyena manvādinvandhanānām ca smṛtinām
vedāṅgatarketihṣapurāṇānāṁ śiṣṭānāṁ nānāśilpā-
bhijuktānāṁ cāduṣṭamanasāṁ yad vacastatpramāṇa-
mityetat siddham bhavati.

YD, p. 46.
Aptavacana.\textsuperscript{39}

A statement is a sentence composed of words arranged in a certain way. A word is a sign which denotes something (Vācaka), and its meaning is the thing denoted by it (Vācyā). To understand a sentence, the knowledge of the meaning of the words which compose it is essential. The knowledge of the meanings of the words can be had in eight different ways.\textsuperscript{40}(a) Knowledge of verbs, indeclinables, suffixes, compounds etc. can be had from Grammar i.e., Vyākarana. Thus the Śakti (meaning) of the root 'bhu' is 'to exist', the meaning of the root 'gam' is 'to go'. The indeclinable 'ca' is used in the sense of 'and'. The suffixes 'su', 'au', 'jas' etc. are used to denote a word in their respective ways. (b) Knowledge of similarity can be obtained

\begin{verse}
39. āptā Brahmādāya ācāryaḥ śrutivedastadetaduḥhayamāptavacanam. āptih sāksādarthapāptiryathārtakapalambhaḥ, taya vartate ityāptah sāksātkṛtadharmā yathārthāptyā śrutārthagrāhī taduktamāptavacanam

-Mātharavṛtttiḥ, SK, Kā, 5

40. śaktigraham vyākaranaṃ pamanākośāptavākyāt vyavahāraśca /
vākyasya sēṣāt vivṛtvedantī sāṃdhyātah
siḍgaḥpadasya vrddhāḥ // Bhāp, p. 71.
\end{verse}
through comparison i.e., Upamāna. Thus 'a gavaya is similar to that of a cow'. (c) Knowledge of synonymous terms etc. can be gathered by consulting a dictionary i.e., a Koga. Thus, Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-kānta etc. are all the different names of the Lord Viṣṇu. (d) The example of knowledge derived from Āptavākyya is when a reliable person, utters that 'Pika' means 'a cuckoo' the listener gathers the knowledge of cuckoo from the word 'pika'. (e) The example of the knowledge of Vākyāśesa is that it is laid down in the sāstra — 'yavamayah caruh bhavati'. Now, what is the meaning of the word 'yava'? Different people gives different definitions. Naturally, doubt arises among the common people as to the clear conception of the word yava. To remove the doubt one has to depend on sāstra then. It is laid down in the sāstra that when all the corncobs are decayed 'yava' remains fresh. (f) To express the meaning of a word by another word is called Vivaraṇa. Thus 'pacati' means 'pākaṃ karoti'. So, we can convert english 'cooks' in Sanskrit 'pacati' and 'pākaṃ karoti'. Both are correct. (g) Siddhapada sāníndhya means the knowledge of a word which is very near to a famous word i.e., a Siddhapada. Thus, for example, when somebody says, "'iha sahakāratarau madhurāṃ routi pika". Sahakāra means 'a mango tree', so, by the word 'pika', it is to be understood
as 'cuckoo' because there is natural likeness of cuckoo with that of a mango tree. (h) Vṛddhavyavahāra means usage of an elderly people, some knowledge which one can derive from the usage of superiors.

According to Sāmkhyaīts, Valid Assertion is right revelation*. 41 Valid Assertion is Āptavacana and Āptaśruti means right revelation. In the definition the word 'tu' is for restriction (tuśabdo'vadhāranārthaḥ) It implies that according to Sāmkhya also, Āptavacana is a mode of proof, is more reliable than the other two methods. When an experienced person pointing another experienced person, utters a few words (e.g. Bring the cow)— and the latter, thus being directed, does a certain manner (i.e., brings the cow),— the third person standing there having watched all these infers that the action of the directed person was due to his understanding the sense of the words uttered by the directing person,— and from this he comes to recognise the connection between the words used and the action performed,— moreover, a particular word is found to express its meaning i.e. a particular meaning only when there is recognition of the connection between that word and its meaning— from these two facts it follows that

41. Āptaśrutīāptavacanaṁ tu — SK, Kā, 5;
Āptopadesaḥ śabdaḥ — SS, I. 101.
Verbal cognition is led up to by Inference and that is why, after having discussed Inference, the definition of Valid Assertion is given by the author. Verbal testimony cannot be included in Inference. It being so, automatically refutes the view stated by those belonging to the other school i.e., Buddhists that the word Śīhsipa (balbergia sisso), etc., are included in determinate Inference (Nirvikalpaka Anumāna), because they are possessed of three characteristics. Śabda is generally said to be of two kinds, namely, laukika and vaidika. The first is the testimony of the ordinary trustworthy persons. This, however, is not recognised in the Sāmikhya as a separate pramāṇa. Since it depends on Perception and Inference. It is the testimony of Śruti or the Vedas that is to be admitted as the third independent pramāṇa.

The valid knowledge is self-sufficient in its authority, i.e., it is always right, inasmuch as it is brought about by the words of the Veda which is independent as it is not human-creation which is liable to error, doubt, defects etc. And it is for the same reason also that the knowledge derived from the Itihāsa and the Śruti, which are based on the Veda, is regarded as right i.e., āpta. The Vedas embody the intuitions of enlightened seers (ṛṣis). These intuitions being
universal and eternal experiences are not dependent on
the will or consciousness of individual persons. As
such the Vedas are impersonal (apauruṣeya). Yet they
are not eternal since they arise out of the spiritual
experiences of seers and saints, and are conserved by a
continuous line of instruction from generation to gener-
ation.

According to sage Kapila, the propounder of
the Sāmkhya system of thought, it is possible that the
remembered the revealed texts that he had studied during
previous time-cycles just as things known on the
previous day are remembered on the next-day, after
waking from sleep. That such remembrance is possible is
indicated by the conversation between Āvatya and
Jaigīśavya, 42 where the revealed Jaigīśavya speaks of
his remembering things that occurred in past lives,exten-
ding over ten Time-cycles—in the text—‘While I was
evolving during ten Time-cycles etc., etc.’

The presentation of the word ‘Āpta’ i.e.,
‘Right’ in the term ‘Right Revelation’ (Āptavacana) is
used only to exclude all false-revelations, such as the

42. The conversation between Āvatya and Jaigīśavya,
referred to by Vācaspati, occurs in Vyāsabhāṣya on
YS, 3.18.
scriptures of the 'Śākya-Bhikṣu' (Buddhist), the 'Nir-granthaka' (Jaina), the 'Samsāramocaka' (Materialist who regards killing on animal is a virtuous deed because on the otherhand, it frees it from the pains of existence) and others. That these scriptures are not right is to be inferred from (a) internal contradictions, (b) being devoid of any sound basis, (c) containing assertions unsupported by proofs and (d) being accepted by only a few low and beast-like persons such as Mlecchas and others.

'Valid Assertion' is totally different from 'Inference' or 'Anumāna'. Inference depends on previous connection. But in 'Valid Assertion' when the sentence expresses its meaning it does not stand in need of a previous connection between itself and the meaning as for example, it is found that in the case of the work of a new poet, the sentence is one never heard before and it, therefore, expresses a meaning which has never before been cognised as expressed by that sentence. In Anumāna, invariable concomitance between Major term (fire) and Middle term (smoke), as well as previous experience is essential for the knowledge of 'where there is smoke, there is fire.' But in 'Valid Assertion' or Sabda such type of previous experience and invariable concomitance is not necessary. So, it has been proved
that 'Valid Assertion' is totally a different source of valid knowledge or Pramāṇa.

Perception, Inference and Verbal Testimony are the only three sources of valid knowledge as supported by the Śāṅkhyāīts. And all other pramāṇas except the above-mentioned three may be included in the three pramāṇas supported by the Śāṅkhyā. So pramāṇas are not less than three or more than three (na nyūnām nāpyadhikam).

In concluding chapter this will be discussed thoroughly as far as possible.