CHAPTER V

LANGUAGE AND MEANING: NYĀYA

V.1. The Epistemology of Nyāya:

The Nyāya system of Indian philosophy is founded by Gotama. Gotama and his followers maintain a particular attitude in all the spheres of Logic, Metaphysics, epistemology and the also in the philosophy of language. Gotama’s Nyāyasūtra is the first work of Nyāya philosophy. The subsequent works of the system are Vatsayana’s Nyāyabhaṣya, Uddyotabara’s Nyāyavārtikā, Vasaspati Misra’s Nyāya-vārtikātūtpāryatikā, Udayana’s Nyāya-vārtikā-tātparya-pariśuddhi
and *Kusumānjali*, Annam Bhatta’s *Tarkasāṅgaraha*, Jayanta Bhatta’s *Nyāyamanjari* etc. The attempt of all these subsequent work was to explain and develop the ideas contained in *Nyāyasūtra*. Thus ancient *Nyāya* is a development of the *sūtra* philosophy of Gotama through critical discussions – attack, counter attack, and defence.

The whole system of *Nyāya* philosophy contains within itself the theory of knowledge, the theory of physical world, the theory of individual self and its liberation, and the theory of God. The *Type equation* here system elaborately discusses sixteen philosophical topics like, *pramāṇa*, *prameya*, *saṁsāya prayojana*, *dṛṣṭānta siddhānta*, *avayava*, *tarka*, *nirnaya*, *vāda*, *jalpa*, *vitandā*, *hetvābhāsa*, *chala*, *jāti* and *nigrāhasasthāna*. Among all these *pramāṇa* is the matter of central concern for our present purpose. *Pramāṇa* is the instrument of valid knowledge (*Pramāṇa*). The word *pramāṇa* is used to mean valid knowledge. It is defined as “*yathārthānubhavaḥ pramāṇa*”.

*Pramāṇa* is the right apprehension of an object. It is the manifestation of an object as it is. "*Tadvati tatprakārakānubhava yathārtha saiva prametyucyate*" Valid knowledge is the knowledge which states the existence of something as it is. Regarding *anubhava* the *Naiyāyikas* hold, “*Tattvamanaropitam rupain, tasya śāṇānamamubhavah*” It means that *anubhava* is knowledge of given facts as distinguished from those that are imagined or supplied by the mind. It is definite and assured (asandīgdha) cognition of an object which is true and presentational. *Pramāṇa* is the definite categorical assertion distinguished from all indefinite categorical assertion distinguished from all indefinite, problematic and hypothetical knowledge. *Pramāṇa* is always sure, true or *yathārtha* knowledge. The truth of knowledge consists
in its correspondence for facts. Prama- according Nyāya is representational it represents the facts properly.

The instruments of pramā or valid cognition are called pramāṇas. They are the means of right knowledge. Pramāṇa is that which gives valid knowledge, and this valid knowledge is of objects. "Pramāṇa is the cause of valid cognition of objects, in as much as it gives us a knowledge of objects, as they really are and exist in themselves."⁴ Pramāṇa has a relation with objects, in the sense that the nature and attributes of objects, as revealed by pramāṇa, are obviously true of them, in spite of variations in space, time and other condition.

The concept of pramā, pramātā, prameya and pramāṇa are included in Nyāya epistemology.⁵ Pramā is unerring knowledge and the other three (pramātā, prameya, pramāṇa) are the necessary factors of pramā.⁶ Pramātā is the subject, prameya is the object and pramāṇa is the method of knowledge. In every knowledge situation there involves a subject or knower. The subject is the substantive ground of all cognition. The subject acts according to its own choice. It is the self, conceived as an intelligent agent. The subject is an independent entity which exists for itself and is an end to it self.

The knower knows the objects, i.e., the subject has the object to establish knowledge relationship. The object of knowledge is the prameya. Prameya is that to which it is directed. The prameya may be either existent or non-existent. Both positive and negative facts may become objects of knowledge. knowledge is positive in case of the existent objects and does not depend on anything other than its own. The knowledge of non-existent object is negative and conditional. It depends on
the direct apprehension of similar existent objects. The light of a lamp, which reveals the existence of certain perceived objects in a dark room, manifests also the non-existence of those that are not perceived for if the latter had existed there, they would have been perceived like the similar perceived objects”. Just as there can be no knowledge without a conscious subject so also there is no knowledge without an object. Both subject (pramātā) and object (prameya) are correlative factors involved in knowledge. Pramātā and prameya are distinguishable but cannot be separated in any act of knowledge.

The instrument of knowledge is pramāṇa. In western philosophy it is customary to analyse the knowledge in to a trifactoral relation of the subject, object and valid knowledge. These correspond to pramātā, prameya and pramā respectively in Indian philosophy. The pramāṇas are considered not as factors but instruments which is distinct from other factors. Nyāya does not deny the distinction, but yet considers the subject (pramātā), object (prameya), instruments (pramāṇas) and resulting state (pramā) as mutually implicated aspects of the whole truth. Each of the four is essential to knowledge. When these four principles are taken together in one whole, there is the realization of the Truth.

Pramāṇa as a factor of valid knowledge is as necessary as pramātā and prameya. Pramāṇa is the unique operative cause (karaṇa) of right knowledge. The pramanas have invariable relation (avyabhicārisambandha) with pramā. Nyāya philosophers admit four kinds of independent pramāṇas which give rise to four kinds of valid knowledge.

Yathārthānubhavachaturvidham – pratyakṣanumityupamitiśabdabhedat
Tatkaraṇamapi chaturvidham pratyakṣānumānopaśabdabhedat.7
The four kinds of valid knowledge are perceptual knowledge \((pratyakṣa)\), inferential knowledge \((anumiti)\), from comparison \((upamiti)\) and verbal knowledge \((śabda)\). Each of these has its own karana or cause. Perception \((pratyakṣa)\), inference \((anumāna)\), comparision \((upamāna)\) and words \((śabda)\) are the causes respectively.

The Naiyāyikas also maintain that the distinction between different kind of knowledge is due to the different pramāṇas. Perception \((Pratyakṣha)\), inference \((Anumāna)\), Testimony \((Śabda)\) and comparison \((Upamāna)\). Each of these pramāṇas gives rise to knowledge but of different kinds. The generally accepted standpoint from which knowledge can be classified is the ways of knowing or grounds of knowledge. Nyāya accepts this point of view which is also followed by Vedānta and some other schools of Indian philosophy. The pramāṇa is the operative cause of knowledge, knowledge gives truth in the sense of real correspondence between idea and object and it is the pramāṇa which leads to truth. Knowledge for its objective validity depends upon the pramāṇas.

Pratyakṣa or perception is defined by Gotama as a definite cognition which is produced by sense-object contact and is true or unerring. *Indriyārthasannikarṣotpannam jñānaṁ avyapadeshyam avyabhicāri vyāvasāyātmakam pratyaksam.* The perception of a table before the perceiver is due to the contact of the perceiver’s eyes with the table and the perceiver is sure that the object is a table. But this definition does not include divine and yogic perceptions. Therefore, Viswanātha defines perception as “jñānakarṣakāṁ jñānaṁ pratyakṣaṁ”, which means direct or immediate cognition not derived through the instrumentality of
any other cognition. This definition includes both ordinary and extra ordinary perceptions and excludes inference, comparison and testimony.

Perception has been classified into various kinds from different points of view. From the standpoint of the object of perception or prameya, ordinary (Laukika) and extra ordinary (Alaukika) are two different kinds perception. In laukika perception there is the actual sense - contact with the object present to the senses (indriyārthaśasannikarṣa). Laukika perception is again classified into external and internal. The external perception is due to the external senses i.e., five sense organs, and the internal is due to mind’s contact with psychical states. Thus Laukika perception is of six types - five external and one internal. Alaukika perception is of three kinds sāmānyalakṣaṇa, jñānalakṣaṇa and yogaja.

Alaukikastu vyāpārastribidhah parikirtitah sāmānyalakṣaṇo jñānalakṣaṇo yogajastathā. 

Sāmānyalakṣaṇa is the perception of universal which according to Nyāya, inhere in particulars. The universals are distinct class of reals. The universals inhere in particulars on account of which the particulars belong to different classes. A cow becomes a cow due to the universal cowness inhereing in it. This universals are not perceived ordinarily and therefore, Nyāya maintains that they are perceived extra-ordinarily. Jñānalakṣaṇa is the complicated types of perception where different sensations become associated and form one integrated perception. Here an object is not directly presented to sense organ, but is revived in memory through the past cognition of it and is perceived through representation. When one makes a judgment like ‘fragrant rose’ looking at rose from distance, the fragrance is perceived through representation of its past cognition yogaja perception is the
intuitive and immediate perception of all objects, past present and future possessed by the yogins through the power of meditation.

The Naiyāyikas maintain that there are two stages of ordinary perception indeterminate or nirvikalpa and determinate or savikalpa. Gotama in his definition of perception mentions the terms avyapadeshya and vyavasāyātmaka which mean indeterminate and determinate perception respectively. Annam Bhatta clearly explains the nature of nirvikalpa and savikalpa perception in the language tatra nisprakārakam jñānam nirvikalpakām saprakārakam jñānam savikalpam. When the sensation is not recognized with a name it is indeterminate or nirvikalpa and it becomes determinate or savikalpa when properly named after analysis. These two are not different kinds of perception, rather the earlier and the later stages of perception and applicable only in case of ordinary perception.

Inference or Anumāna is the knowledge of an object on the basis of previous knowledge of some sign or mark (linga). Nyāya defines anumana as the knowledge of an object by means of the knowledge of a linga (sign) and that of its universal relation or Vyāpti with the inferred object. Anumitikaranamanumanānam Parāmrśājanyam jñānamanumānīth. Inference is the cause of anumiti and anumiti is the knowledge arising out of parāmrśa. Parāmrśa is the knowledge of the relation between pakṣa and hetu qualified by vyāpti. The relation between pakṣa and hetu is pakṣadharmataḥ and when it is qualified by vyāpti, parāmrśa arises, which corresponds to the minor, major and middle term in Western Logic respectively. Vyāpti is the invariable concomitant relation between sādhyā and pakṣa and this Vyāpti is the basis of inference. It is the universal relation which makes the knower capable of knowledge about unperceived objects. Nyāya inference is an inductive –
deductive process. It contains five prepositions and three terms. The three terms are *pakṣa*, *sādhya* and *hetu*

Inference consists of five propositions and each the propositions have its name *pratijñāhetudāharano panayanigamanānyavayavāh*. They are *Pratijñā*, *Hetu*, *Udāharana*, *Upanaya*, *Nigamana*. *Pratijñā*, *hetu*, *udāharana* together constitute an inductive inference, while *udāharana*, *upanaya* and *nigamana* constitute deductive inference. The first proposition is the *pratijñā* which asserts a fact. The second *hetu* states the reason for this assertion. The third is the *udāharana* showing the connection between the reason and the asserted fact, as supported by known instances. The fourth *upanaya* is the application of the universal proposition to the present case. *Nigamana* is the last proposition which follows from the preceding propositions.

Comparison or *upamāna* is another cause of valid knowledge according Nyāya. The Naiyāyikas define *upamāna* as, *upamitikaranamupamānātm*. *Saṁjñā-saṁjñi sambandhatvājñānānaiṃ upamiti*. It is the cause of the relation between a name and the things so named or between a word and its denotation. Knowledge through *upamāna* is called *upamiti*. We have *upamiti* when some authoritative person tells that a word denotes a class of object of certain description, and then on the basis of the given description, apply the word to some objects which fit in with that description, although we might not have seen them before. The ground of our knowledge in *upamāna* are a given description of the objects to be known and a perception of their similarity, etc. to the familiar objects mentioned in the description. A man recognises a *gavaya* as such just when he perceives the description, that the *gavaya* is an animal resembling the cow.
Sabda or verbal testimony is the last pramāṇa accepted by Nyāya. It is the knowledge of objects derived from words or sentences. All verbal knowledge is not valid. Nyāya therefore, defines Sabda as a valid verbal testimony which consists in the assertion of trustworthy person.

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\text{Āptopadesah sabdaḥ (N.S.)}^{14}
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\text{Āptavākyam sabdaḥ āptastu yathārthavaktā (T.S.)}^{15}
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The reliable or authoritative person or script as called āpta. The statement made by such authoritative agency is āptavākyya. The words or sentences by themselves nor their mere perception give knowledge about objects. It is only when one perceives the words and understands their meanings that one can acquire knowledge from verbal statements (Vākyārthaḥnānaṁ sabdaḥnānaṁ)\(^{16}\). Hence while the validity of verbal knowledge depends on its being based on the statement of trustworthy persons, its possibility depends on the understanding of the meaning of that statement. Thus Sabda or testimony, as a source of valid knowledge, consists in understanding the meaning of the statements of trustworthy person and here arises the problem of meaning as an important epistemological one. Nyāya philosophy of language thus develops as a part of Sabda pramāṇa which attempts at determining the meaning of word and sentences.

V.2. Philosophy of Language- Nyāya :

The Naiyāyikas expressed their belongingness to the Vedas by means of logical reflection. They established the authority of the Vedas not by mere faith, feeling, intuition, scriptural testimony or dogmatic acceptance but by means of logical analysis and reflection. The world of beings and even one's own existence are not products of consciousness, rather they exist without being cognized by consciousness.
The origin of such an attitude can be traced back to the Upanisadic texts that foreshadow the central doctrines of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika. It is found in the Upaniṣads that the self should be heard (Śrotavyah) reflected (mantavyah) and constantly meditated upon (nididhyāṣītavyah). The implication is that there are some doctrines about logic and language in which reason or critical reflection is exercised.

The Nyāya linguists, on this basis hold that it is better to posit a personal God who can satisfy faith, feeling and willing. According to Nyāya God is pure-existence, consciousness, bliss, preserver, destroyer, sustainer, foster parent, eternal, immutable and moral governor of the world. God exists in the same way as other things like chair etc. exist. Their existence do not depend upon any mind nor do they depend upon whether we know them or not. The difference between God and other existent things is that God is at the top position of degrees of reality in which a chronological order is constituted by the eternal atoms, space, time, ether, self, earth, water, air, fire, objects of the world, language etc.

The words, according to the Naiyāyikas, are not eternal because they are produced and have a beginning from the personal God. For them God’s will (icchā) is the cause of world - creation at a time and the same creates language at the same time. The will of God is efficiency of language. Language consists of words and words consist of letters. Therefore, words and letters are endowed with efficiency (śakti). The Nyāya linguists also do not admit that the relation between words and referents is impersonal and eternal. When God wills in the form of language endowed with efficiency, it takes the shape of mantras, brāhmaṇas, vedāṅgas etc. The principle of causality has been employed by the Naiyāyikas in the linguistic plane. If the presence or absence of one word invariably follows the presence or absence of
another, the relation between the two words would be considered as that of cause and effect. The important point here is that simply a word cannot be a cause of verbal cognition; it is the knowledge of words that gives rise to verbal cognition. Because the utterance of a mere word may give rise to the cognition of other by means of samāvāya (inherence) which is not warranted. Hence knowledge of words is instrumental cause, the recollection (smarāṇa) by means of denotative function is an operation (vyāpāra); verbal cognition (śabdabodha) is the result (phalaṁ); and thus the understanding of the knowledge of words and relations by means of recollected word-meanings constitute the cause of linguistic cognition.

The philosophy of language of the Nyāya system is supported by the logical theory of the Naiyāyikas. The categories of Nyāya are objects (arthas) denoted by words. Because if a sakti means power to signify the existents, and category (padārtha) means the meaning of words (Padasya arthaḥ); then the categories like substance, quality, action, class, particularity, inherence, non-existence thus become arthas (objects). Moreover, the Nyāya categories like pramāṇa, prameya samśaya,prayojana, drśṭānta, siddhānta, avayava etc. are also meanings of words since they are signified by means of efficient words. Even perception in determinate form is also linguistic. It depends upon the language units like subject, predicate, this, that, difference, relation etc. such that comprehensive knowledge of objects becomes possible. Inference depends upon the perception of linga in one form or other, but it does not deserve supremacy. Even the members of argument like, Pratīṣṭhā, hetu, udāharaṇa, upanaya, nigamana constitute only the formal structured inference. After all logic as a whole is purely oral and linguistic in character. Logical reasoning is used in course of scientific debate in public forum that makes logic oral and linguistic.
Thus the Naiyāyikas through their metaphysics, epistemology and logic deal with the philosophy of language.

V.3. The Meaning of Words (Śabdārthā):

It is through the understanding of the meaning of sentences that sabda gives knowledge. The sentences may be verbal or written by some authoritative persons. The basic question, therefore, is how the sentences become intelligible; and what it is. A sentence or vākya is a group of words (pada) arranged in a certain way. The words are group of letters arranged in a fixed order. The essential nature of a word lies in its meaning. The words have fixed relations with some objects, so that it can be recalled whenever a word is heard. Thus words are significant symbols. Words have potency (śakti) to mean an object for which they are intelligible.

Nyāya philosopher regarding the nature of words hold that words are non-eternal. A word is a particular kind of sound and sound according to Nyāya is a physical phenomenon. Sound is the attribute of ākāsa or ether which is an intangible and all pervading substance. Air is the medium of its transmission. Śabda or sound is a produced phenomenon which has origin and decay. It is produced out of the conjunction of two bodies or of the disjunction of the parts of one composite body. Therefore it is non-eternal.

The words have as their constituents the letters (varṇas) and the letters are arranged in a fixed order padam ca varṇasamūhah. The order of the letters in a word cannot be changed; otherwise the meaning of the word would be changed. In other words if the meaning of a word is to be kept as it is, the order of letters cannot be altered. The word ‘man’ is a grouping of letters in the order ‘m - a - n’; this order
is the form of the word. If this order is changed like ‘n - a - m’ or ‘a - n - m’ etc., the word will be destroyed. The words ‘won’ and ‘own’ contain the same letters, but become different as the fixed order of the letters are different in the two words. A letter is a significant sound and a word is a symbolic sound of a higher order. Words stand for things or ideas whereas a letter is only a part of alphabet. Words are symbolic sounds consisting of letters in a definite arrangement. Spoken words are objects of auditory perception while written words are objects of visual perception.

According to Nyāya philosophers, a word has three types of meaning abhidhā, paribhāṣā and lakṣaṇā. These three kinds of meaning follows from the relation of a word to the objects signified by that word. That a word is a group of letters arranged in a fixed order is simply the structural definition of word. ‘The essential nature of a word lies in its meaning.’ Logically, a word is a sound that bears certain meaning. A word may have different meanings corresponding to the different ways in which it may be related to objects. Nyāya thus admits three kinds of meaning of a word - primary, technical and secondary meaning.

The primary meaning of a word is called abhidhā. The meaning signified by the inherent potency of a word is called abhidhā or primary meaning. It is also called Śaktyārtha as the word itself has the potency to mean the particular object directly. The word - meaning relationship may be either sanketa or lakṣaṇa. Sanketa is the direct relation between a word and its meaning, such that the knowledge of the word immediately leads to its relation to that meaning. This direct relation may also be either eternal or non - eternal. When the sanketa is eternal it is called Śakti. This Śakti or potency of a word, according to the Naiyāyikas is due to the will of God. For them it is not a natural relation but conventional. When the relation is established by
God, it is called sakti. It is the *mukhyārtha* as the word basically means for what it is capable and with this only the word is directly and immediately related.

The direct relation between a word and its meaning may be non-eternal or changeable. *Sanketa* in this non-eternal sense is called *paribhāsā*. *Paribhāsā* is the relation not due to the authority of God but due to the usage of mankind. It is the will of the authorities in any science which prescribes that such and such word will mean such and such object. *Paribhāsā* is the technical meaning called up by the convention and established by authorities. The word bearing such meaning is called *pāribhāṣīka* or technical word. The word ‘premise’ in logic, ‘Law’ in court etc. are technical words.22

*Lakṣaṇā* is the secondary meaning of a word which is indirect or implied meaning. In *lakṣaṇā* we have to understand the meaning of a word when its primary meaning does not consist with other words or the context. A word indirectly means an object when it is related to it because of its direct relation with something else with which the object is somehow associated. In the sentence “The house is on the Ganges”, ‘the Ganges’ has been used not in the primary meaning of ‘the current of water’; but in the secondary meaning of ‘the bank of the Ganges.’ The secondary meaning is here suggested through the association with the primary meaning. There are three kinds of secondary meaning *jahalakṣaṇā* *ajahalakṣaṇā* and *jahadajahallakṣaṇa* *Ajahalakṣaṇā* is that kind of secondary meaning where no part of primary meaning is retained. *Ajahalakṣaṇā* retains the primary in implied meaning and in *jahadajahallakṣaṇa* one part of the primary meaning is retained, while another part is discarded. These three kinds of *lakṣaṇā* depends on whether the primary meaning is retained or discarded wholly or partly.
Laksana is the implicative meaning of a word. It is a relation to that which is conveyed by the potency of a word due to the non-comprehensibility of the intention of the speaker. This intention (tātparya), according to the Naiyāyikas has great philosophical significance. They point out the significance of intention in the context of enquiring the root of laksana. For them the non-realisability of intention is the seed of laksana or implicative meaning. If the sentence ‘the house is on the Ganges’ is to be understood ‘the Ganges’ has to be interpreted as ‘the bank of the Ganges’ and this is possible only by accepting laksana. The non-realisability is not of the relation between word and object but of the intention which is the root of laksana. The importance of application of laksana lies in the fact of removing the non-realisability of intention (tātparyānupapatti) of the speaker. Implication or laksana does not belong to words alone; it belongs to group of words also. In the example, ‘There is a milk-man colony on the deep river,’ the group of two words ‘deep’ and ‘river’ refers to the ‘bank’ through implication.

There are different ways of knowing the meaning of a word. The meaning of word can be known from the dictionaries, from grammar, from comparison or upamāna, from the uses made by authoritative persons, from the context in which the word is used, from familiarity, explanation and so on. These various ways of knowing meaning show that the relation between word and meaning is not natural but a conventional relation. Had there been any natural relation between word and meaning, the word always should have coexisted with the object signified by it. In that case, we should have known their relation simply by means of perception. But a word does not co-exist with its denoted object. The word ‘fire’ does not co-exist with the object ‘fire’ and produce any burning sensation when the word
fire is uttered. The relation between a word and its meaning is not perceived in the same way the relation between fire and burning is perceived. Moreover, the conventional character of the relation between word and its meaning is evidenced by the different meanings in which the same word is used by different people or in different context. For example, the word ‘saīndhava’ when uttered in warfield, it will mean ‘the horse’ and when uttered at dinner table, it will mean ‘salt’. The hypothesis of natural relation between word and meaning cannot explain such variation in meaning. The convention that such and such word should mean such and such object is established by God where the relation between words and their meanings is a fixed and eternal relation called sākти. It is established by human being living in a society where the relation between them is a changeable relation called paribhāsā or laksānā.

V.4. The Import of Word:

Vātsāyana in the Nyāyabhāṣya explains about the import of word. Whether a word means an individual (vyakti), or a particular form (ākṛti) or a universal (jāti) has been explained differently by the philosophers from various points of view. It is the primary meaning with which such questions are concerned. For the Naiyāyikas all these three vyakti and jāti and ākṛti together constitute the meaning of a word. A word can not mean individual (vyakti) only. For if a word means an individual, then any word could mean any and every individual. But an individual is individual only in relation to a class or belonging to a class. Individuals bear the class character to which it belongs. In the sentence ‘that cow stands’, the individual cow is characterised by the generality of cowness. It is one of the important contributions of the Nyāya philosophers that for them the universal resides in the individual. They
therefore, do not admit that a word denotes individual only. The words may refer to
individuals on the basis of individuals’ association with the primary meaning. Individual without universal (jāti) cannot be conceived. The specification of the
individual at least requires some specific qualities which are universal. In order to
define an individual, the universal, i.e., qualities have to be mentioned. Thus the
understanding of the meaning of individual is possible only with reference to universal. Hence individual alone cannot be the import of a word.

Moreover, the form by itself is also not sufficient to constitute the
meaning of a word. The clay model of cow has the identical form with that of a cow,
but it is not what is meant by cow. Thus only the form apart from its class - essence
cannot be taken as the meaning of a word according to the Nātyāyikas.

The Nātyāyikas hold that word do not mean only universals also. Because the universal cannot be understood apart from the individuals and their particular forms. According to them a genus can be recognised only through the individuals that constitute the genus and the configurations of the individuals. A word, therefore, means all these three - the individual, the configuration and the universal. It is not that one of them is direct and the rest indirect. The individual, the universal and the configuration together constitute the meaning of a word. In the meaning of a word all the three factors are present in the same way but with different degree of prominence. It is due to the speaker’s interest that one of these three factors is seen as dominant in some cases. When the interest is to distinguish one thing from others, emphasis is given on individuality. In the same way according to the purpose emphasis is given on any one and the others remain as subservient factors in the meaning of word. Thus the old Nātyāyikas hold that meaning of a word has three
factors any one being predominant in one case. The three factors give rise to the three aspects of meaning of a word, viz., pictorial denotative and connotative. A word expresses a form, denotes individual and connotes the genus.

Gāngesa, the pioneer of Nātya-Nyāya philosophy holds that the particular as qualified by the universal (Jātivisistavyakti)²⁷ constitutes the meaning of a word. It is natural and logical for the particular to appear as qualified by the universal and this is the way things are understood. Both the particular and universal appear in the same awareness as bound together by a tie in which the particular appears as qualified by the universal. According to him the particular appearing as qualified by the universal constitutes meaning. Gāngesa in support of his view quotes Gautama’s aphorism where in he has used the word padārtha (meaning of word) in the singular number though what constitutes this meaning has been mentioned as consisting of the universal, the form and the individual. According to Gāngesa the implication of aphorism is that the individual as qualified by the form and by the universal constitutes the meaning (primary meaning) of a word. There are perhaps exceptions, e.g., when referring to an earthen imitation of a cow somebody says “this is a cow”, what is referred to by the word ‘cow’ is not a real cow having the relevant universal. Gāngesa maintains that the word ‘cow’ here refers to the form only through secondary signification, and envisages that there may be occasions when the universal only or the particular only may be referred to. But in such cases the mode of reference is through the process of secondary signification and it can be retained that what constitutes primary meaning is the qualified particular.
V.5. Meaning of Sentences - [Vākyārtha] :

The concept of vākya (sentential syntax) is one of the most important problem of logic and language that follows the rules of grammar. Grammar of a language is based on its own logical background. This background of grammar consists of verb (kriyā), adjective (viśeṣana), preposition (sarvanāma) and sentence (vākya). The verb conforms to the tense (vacana) and person (puruṣa), the viśeṣana conforms to linga and kāraka, preposition is subordinated to name and vākya gives rise to a synthetic import. On this logical basis diversified philosophical theories develop in Indian tradition regarding sentence meaning.

The Naiyāyikas put forward a theory of meaning that may be called the name theory of meaning. It expresses an ontological scheme. In this ontological scheme the names of different varieties are made substratum of qualifiers, different properties, action and dynamic aspects. Also the names are made to stands one another in a nexus, in a relation and in a definite pattern. There are many patterns and any name must fall in any of the patterns. Names cannot exist without a definite pattern; nor can they stand by themselves. According to the neo-logicians, these patterns are supplied by various linguistic syntaxes. The various words, phrases and compounds are grades of the pattern. The simplest pattern is the word; the phrases and the compounds are more complex patterns. These patterns are so fundamental that a definite meaning can be indicated by a name only in a definite pattern. In case of complex patterns, the constituent parts contribute two-fold functions; individual and collective. The individual functions are directed towards collectivity. The unity of referred and the unity of meaning lie upon this collectiveness. A sentential syntax (vākya) seems to supply a pattern where a series of names are directed towards
yielding a total meaning. A name whether complex or compound has a definite meaning which implies its knower; in the same way a series of names whether single or highly compound sentence also has its definite meaning that invariably implies its knower. This comprehension of whole meaning is called Vākyārthabodha (Cognitive meaning) by the Nyāya linguists. The Nyāya theory of meaning becomes significant only under this concept of vākyā rthabodha.

According to the Naiyāyikas, the notion of syntax (vākya) is objective. For the logical verb is nothing but self-linking relations (svarupasambandha). This relation is found in the subject-object (viṣayāviṣayi) complex of reality. Word-symbols make a syntax standing or facts. A word becomes symbol if it represents an individual (vyakti) of a universal (Jāti). Vākya has been defined by the Naiyāyikas as any word-cluster by stating that each word is not complete by itself, and that the word meanings must enter into a relation so as to produce a sentence meaning. There are various definitions of vākya and all of the definitions emphasize upon the unity of sentence (ekavākyatā) which presents the syntactic import. Regarding the question whether verb is necessary for unity of a sentence, the Naiyāyikas answer negatively. They hold that a word to be meaningful does not mean to possess a verb (kriyā), because then the word verb (kriyā) to be meaningful must possess another verb which leads to infinite regress.

The Naiyāyikas distinguish between pramāṇavākya (valid sentence) and apramāṇavākya (invalid sentence). A valid sentence is grammatically and semantically acceptable, while invalid is either ungrammatical or non-semantic or both. They exclude apramāṇavākya from their theory of language. The construction of an intelligible sentence must conform to four conditions which are ākāṅkṣā
(expectancy), Yogyatā (competency) and sannidhi (proximity) and tātparya (intention). Ākāmkṣā (expectancy) is the quality of words constituting the sentence. It is the quality of the words by which they expect or imply one another. A complete meaning cannot be conveyed by a single word itself. In order to express a full judgment a word must be brought into relation with other words such that vākyārtha can be understood.

Padasyapadāntaravatirekaprayuktānvātānuabhāvakatvamākāmkṣā

When one words is heard, expectancy arises in the mind of the hearer for the next word so that it can be understood. For example, when one hears the word ‘bring’, the hearer expects for the next word or words denoting some objects such as ‘the pot’. Then ‘bring the pot’ becomes a complete judgment. Annam Bhatta holds that ākāmkṣā is the incompleteness of a vākyārtha in respect of something without which it fails to express meaning (artha).

Yogyatā is the concept corollary to ākāmkṣā. Because though sentence is formally a valid sentence (pramānvākya) due to expectancy; if it lacks yogyatā, it may turn in to apramānavākya. Yogyatā is infact, a syntactic possibility between one artha and another if it belongs to the grammatical connection with words that can denote only those meanings. According to Annam Bhatta, yogyatā is connected more with semanticity of language in which it suggests non-contradiction (abādha) of a vākyārtha (arthāvādho yogyatā). The old school of Nyāya holds that yogyatā is only abhāva of any cognitive instrument that can convert vākyārtha by means of a particular string of words. Yogyatā is the mutual fitness which means absence of contradiction between the constituent words. The sentence ‘moisten with fire’ does not possess mutual fitness as there is contradiction between ‘moistening’ and ‘fire’. 
Hence, there must not be any incompatibility between the meaning of different words so as to render the sentence meaningless. Some modern Naiyāyikas do not consider the knowledge of fitness to be necessary condition of verbal knowledge. For them what prevent the understanding of a sentence is the knowledge of incompatibility between its words. The relationship between words, according to the Navya-Naiyāyikas maybe called yogyatā, provided its knowledge gives rise to linguistic cognition.

The third condition of a valid sentence or a verbal knowledge is the Sannidhi or āsatti. It consists in the proximity between the different words of a sentence (padānāmabilambenocchāraṇa sannidhi). The words which constitute a sentence must be continuous with one another in time or space. When the words are separated by long intervals in time they can not produce a sentence, even if they are uttered. The written words cannot produce a sentence when they are written with long intervals of space. For example, the words ‘bring a cow’ will not produce a sentence if the three words are uttered in three days or if the three words are written in three different pages. Here the other feature like ākāṅkyā and yogyatā may be present; but due to non-proximity it will not be a sentence.

The intention of the speaker (Tātparya) is another condition of verbal knowledge. It stands for the meaning, intended to be conveyed. Tātparya is the desire of the speaker (Vakturicchā tu tātparyam parikirtitam). In other words it has been stated that when a word or a sentence is uttered with a desire to convey something, It is called tātparya (tatpratitichhayāuccāritatvam). When there is the utterance of a particular word with a desire to convey one’s own idea to others this particular desire or intention is tātparya.
Tātparya plays a vital role in determining the meaning of ambiguous sentence having various meaning. The sentence ‘Saindhavamānaya’ may mean bringing of a horse or salt. The exact meaning is to be determined according to the intention of the speaker uttered under a particular context and this is why the knowledge of tātparya is taken to be the cause of verbal cognition. Regarding knowledge of one’s own intention is through a contact with the mind, but in case of understanding others’ intention the context (prakarana), the qualifier (vīsesana), space (desā) etc. serve as promoters. If in the context of taking meal the word saindhava is uttered, it will mean salt and if the context is like going to battle - field then it will mean the horse. In fact, the hearer infers the intention after hearing the sentence of the speaker.

Dinakari has analysed tātparya in the context of non-ambiguous sentence. Tātparya is the intention of the speaker of conveying the sentences like ‘Bring a jar’ (Ghatamānaya) in which jar has become a prakāra or qualifier, karmatva or the property of being an object attached to it has become a qualificand and superstratumness (ādheyatā) has become a relation. When there is the awareness of the ghatamānaya, there is the knowledge of a jārkarmatva as denoted by the word ‘ghatam’ and as this, being a property, remains in the substance ghata. Here the jar is the substratum and karmatva is the superstratum. This is the nature of awareness which is the intention of the speaker. When a particular sentence is uttered in order to convey a particular intention, the knowledge of such intention of the speaker is the cause of verbal comprehension. Thus tātparya is necessary to understand both ambiguous and non-ambiguous sentences.
Regarding the meaning of a sentence the *Naiyāyikas* advocate *abhihitānvayavāda*. The meaning of a sentence, according to this view, is merely the synthesis (*anvaya*) of the meanings of the separate words composing the sentence. When a sentence is uttered the hearer first goes through the meanings of the words one after another and putting then by together all the meanings of the words according to their expectancy, fitness, proximity and intention gets the meaning of the whole sentence. According to this view, the expression of the meanings of words precedes the construction of a sentence. In other words, there is a construction of the meanings as expressed in the words (*abhihitānvaya*). It is by means of memory that the different meanings which are successively expressed by the words are put together. The meanings of the words are understood successively and getting the last word of the sentence, the meanings of all the preceding words are remembered. The meaning of the last word being combined with those of the preceding words by means of memory, the meaning of the sentence as a whole is understood.

The theory of *abhihitānvayavāda* stands on the following reasons. The words have been classified into nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc. If the words of a sentence have no separate meanings then such classification of words become meaningless. But the classification of words cannot be called meaningless as all words are not used in the same way or status in a sentence. Hence, the classification of words justifies the theory. Moreover, in every case in which the meaning of a sentence has to be understood, it is essential to understand the meaning of its component words. A sentence cannot be quite independent of the meaning of words; because in that case any sentence would convey any meaning. Again, in order to understand the meaning of a new verse, generally one has to understand on the basis of the knowledge of constituent words and their separate meanings. This cannot be
explained by any understanding of the sentences, since they are new and unintelligible. So it is concluded that the meaning of a sentence is just the synthesis of the separate meanings of its words.\textsuperscript{35}

V.6. Evaluation :

According to the Naiy\={a}yikas knowledge is either \textit{pratyak\={s}a} (immediate) or \textit{parok\={s}a} (mediate). The mediate knowledge arises through the instrumentality of another knowledge. Knowledge of \textit{vyapti}, similarity and words serves as an instrument of inferential knowledge, knowledge through comparison and verbal comprehension respectively.\textsuperscript{36} It follows from this that knowledge of a \textit{pada} (\textit{pada\={j}\={n}\={a}na}) becomes the instrumental cause for the comprehension of meaning.\textsuperscript{37}

The recollection of meaning of a term through the knowledge of that term is called \textit{vy\={a}p\={a}ra}.\textsuperscript{38} In such case the medium is the \textit{sakti} or potency of a term. In the sentence ‘the jar exists’, the meaning of ‘jar’ is known through the term ‘jar’ and the meaning of the verb ‘exists’ is known through the usage of the term. Thus knowledge of meaning of a sentence is mediate knowledge. This concept of verbal comprehension has been introduced by the \textit{Navya-Naiy\={a}yikas} as they do not agree with the definition of Gautama as “\textit{\=uptopadesahsabdaḥ}”.\textsuperscript{39} When the knowledge of a word or sentence comes from authoritative person it is called \textit{pram\={a}na}. Here the problem arises regarding determining the authority of the person. In order to determine \textit{\=aptatva} (authority) there must be some criteria. The definition of \textit{\=apta} person is given as having real knowledge of an object, having no defect in sense organ etc. In other words the person who has no illusory cognition, no carelessness, no desire for cheating others and no weakness in sense organs is called \textit{\=apta}. But these cannot make a person reliable or authentic to be taken in to confidence. There may be
individual possessing all these characteristics but afterwards proved as non-authentic (anāpta). Therefore such persons’ words cannot be regarded as pramāṇa and the Neo-Naiyāyikas for this reason does not accept the concept of ṣabda as āptopadesah ṣabda. But if the meaning of the term āpta is taken as being the locus of real knowledge which is the cause of verbal usage, then it may be admitted. Because those who have the knowledge of the words that are used conventionally become āpta. Hence, the knowledge of word becomes the instruments of the knowledge of the meaning of a word or sentence. Thus padeśaṇā is the instrument, recollection of meaning is vyāpāra and the result is the comprehension of meaning.

Śabda is recognised as an independent pramāṇa; but the method of its occurrence is purely inferential in nature. To know the meaning of a particular word through convention is simply an inference from the verbal usage of the old persons (Vṛddhayavahāra). A beautiful explanation of child learning meaning is found in Śabdasaktiprakāśikā. A child comes to know the primary relation of a term with its meaning from the verbal usage of the old first. When a man who is aware of the meaning of a term asks another man who also knows the meaning of the same term to bring a cow, the later brings it after hearing the word of the senior and realizing the meaning of it. From the observation of this a child draws the inference like “This bringing of a cow is the result of the inclination, as it has got effortness in it, as in the case of my inclination to suck mother’s breast.” Here it may be raised that as it is a case of inference, there must be vyāpti as an instrument. It may be said to have vyāpti that lies between ‘chestātva’ (effortness) and ‘pravṛtti janayatva’ (being produced by inclination). The form is ‘where there is chestātva, there is pravṛtti janayatva’. The utdāharāṇa is ‘my inclination to suck mother’s breast. Then he comes to infer the state
of being produced by the knowledge of feasibility of which the bringing of a cow has become qualificand in respect of the inclination. This is done with the help of syllogistic argument in the form: "The inclination to bring a cow is produced by the knowledge of feasibility of which the inclination to the same has become qualificand, as it is endowed with the property of being an inclination as in the case of my own (inclination).\textsuperscript{41} Any inclination presupposes this type of feasibility. The child then infers that the knowledge of feasibility has an uncommon cause as it is on effect as in the case of a jar. As any type of effect has got its special cause, the effect of bringing a cow need's some special cause. From this the child comes to know that the knowledge of the verbal usages of the old is the uncommon cause of knowledge.

On the concept of \textit{vṛddhavyavahāra} as held by \textit{Navya Naiyāyikas}, Dr. R. N. Ghose comments that it is not tenable, \textsuperscript{42} because, the primary meaning of a term can be comprehended after being guided by the convention. But the secondary or suggestive meaning of a word may not always be comprehended from the verbal usage of the old, for the implication is always context dependent and the meaning of such type may be ascertained after depending on the comprehensive capacity of a person. Implicative meaning is not always same to all. Hence, the intellectual exercise of an individual is in evitable for proper understanding of the same. If the convention or \textit{vṛddhavyavahāra} is taken as criterion to comprehend meaning of a word, the initial verbal usage of a word which is present at the time creation of the world cannot be explained, because that particular word has no prior usage. The \textit{Naiyāyikas} try to explain the fact by bringing God. This is in fact a proof for the existence of God.

\textit{The Naiyāyikas} are of the opinion that a word has got some power of indicating its denotations which is given by God's desire. But there is no necessity of
bringing God in determining the meaning of a word or sentence. The initial verbal usage of an object may be introduced by a particular person, which may be followed by later generation. In our day to day life it is found that a new object is initially described by a scientist or by a researcher with the help of some name which is followed by others. Therefore, the knowledge of the meaning of a word is possible without accepting God’s desire. The Navya-Naiṣṭāyikas, therefore, hold that the desire of an individual but not God in the form: ‘This meaning is to be understood from this word’ is samketa. This power comes from the knowledge of grammar, comparison, dictionary, reliable texts or statement of trustworthy person, from the paraphrase and contiguity of well-known words. Nyāya admits ākāṅkaṣā, yogyatā and āsatti (expectancy, consistency and contiguity) as causes of comprehension of meaning. Among these expectancy and Contiguity are highly essential for primary, implicative and suggestive meaning. Consistency is cause for the comprehension of primary meaning (sakyārtha). In the example, ‘He is sprinkling with fire’ there is no consistency in the meaning of the statement. But in spite of lack of consistency it means something; at least it points to the fact that it is an impossible phenomenon. The usage of phrase ‘the egg of the horse’ etc., though not having consistency (yogyatā) can provide some meaning by implication. Thus for inverting some implicative meaning, the inconsistency in meaning sometimes may act as promoter. When the primary meaning is consistent, the implicative meaning is searched for. Therefore, the Nyāya position that comprehension of meaning is possible when there is no consistency is not at all true.

The meaning through implication requires ākāṅkaṣā and āsatti. Without expectancy and contiguity it is not possible to understand that there is inconsistency in meaning. In order to know the consistency in meaning
(arthāvādhatva) of a sentence, the structural order like expectancy etc. must be correct. Otherwise it will fail to give rise to the sakyārtha of the sentence leading to the non-apprehension of implicative meaning. The sakyārtha gives rise to lakṣārtha as per definition of lakṣanā. This is the uniqueness of language that it always gives some indication. Bhartrhari observes, ‘a reality which is not associated with an articulate verbal form cannot be the content of our thought and is regarded as fiction. On the other hand a fiction such as hare’s horn etc. when expressed through language appears to have existence and becomes object to logical predication.’ Hence the absence of an object which is absurd conveys some sense and thus inconsistency in meaning sometimes becomes meaningful.

In the comprehension of implicative and suggestive meaning the question arises regarding whether these meanings are properties of the sentence or those of speakers or readers or hearers. These are properties of sentence in the sense that the sentence must in here the power of lakṣanā and vyanjanā in it. The sentence ‘Gangāyām ghosah’ is capable of providing both implicative and suggestive meaning. But there are cases where a sentence endowed with the power of lakṣanā and vyanjanā may not be understood by the hearer. Particularly the suggestive meaning may not always be easy to understand, it depends on the intellect of the hearer or speaker also. Moreover, the suggestive meaning of a sentence may vary from person to person. Thus there involves a subjective element in the understanding of suggestive meaning which cannot be ignored. As an example of the role of subjective element in the comprehension of suggestive meaning the story of Lord Buddha may be cited. Lord Buddha advises his disciples in a single sentence ‘The sun is set’ and three disciples of Buddha having different sanskāras have apprehended
the meaning of the sentence in three different ways. It shows that in comprehending
the meaning of a sentence the role of both language and speaker is highly influential.

Together with expectancy, consistency and contiguity, the Naiyāyikas
also admit the intention of the speaker (tātparya) as another means of comprehending
words and sentences. It is so important in verbal comprehension that both realisability
and non-realisability of the speaker's intention gives rise to meaning. The realisability
of intention gives primary meaning and non-realisability of the same gives implicative
meaning. From this point, the intention of the speaker should be regarded as the sole
factor for verbal comprehension. The intention of the speaker is a prime factor for
understanding the meaning of the ambiguous and non-ambiguous sentences. The
sentence in the form 'there is a jar in the house' is non-ambiguous; for the intention
of the speaker here is the relation between the jar and the house and it can generate
cognition about the relation. If a sentence does not have expectancy or semantic
competency, it is understandable if the intention of the speaker is realised or
unrealised. In case of unrealisability the implicative meaning is to be explored. In fact
the non-realisability of the intention in a given sentence is the root of implicative
meaning through which the intention of the speaker is realised. In other words, the
inconceivability of the intention in the primary meaning gives rise to explore the
implicative meanings that reveals the true intention of the speaker.

There is much difference of opinion among the Indian thinkers
regarding the importance of tātparya as a condition of verbal knowledge. Some hold
that a definite knowledge of the intended meaning is an essential condition of verbal
knowledge. But some others think that knowledge of intended meaning is necessary
only in case of equivocal terms and ambiguous expressions. Some thinkers also are of
the opinion that tātparya should not be considered as separate conditions; rather it is to be included in ākānṣā. The Vedāntists hold that tātparya in the sense of intended meaning is not a condition of verbal cognition. When the parrot imitates such human expressions as ‘who comes’, ‘who goes’ etc. it can not be said that there is any intention behind such imitative cries. Moreover, when someone utters the Vedic texts without understanding their meaning, he cannot be said to intend the meaning which the hearers interpret out of them. Therefore, the Vedāntists hold that tātparya as a condition of verbal knowledge is not constituted by the meaning intended to be conveyed by the speaker, but by the fitness of the words of the sentence to give a particular meaning. In case of equivocal words like saîndhava etc. the tātparya lies in their fitness to yield a particular meaning in the absence of some other intended meaning. The word saîndhava is fit to mean salt in the absence of any intention to mean the horse. Thus the Vedāntists reduces tātparya to the fitness of words themselves. This difference of Nyāya and Vedānta position is due to their difference in the notion of meaning. For the Vedāntists, the primary meaning is a power inherent in the words, while for the Naiyāyikas, it is imported in to the words by the intention of the speaker who uses it. Tātparya has been explained in Tarkaśāṅgrahādīpiṇī as, Tatpratitīcchāyā uccāritatvarupa tātparyajnānām ca vākyārthajñānāhetuḥ.⁴⁵

When a particular word is uttered with a desire to convey his own idea to others, this particular desire is tātparya. In this definition the use of the term uccāritatva is controversial. Because in case of written statement there is no scope of uccāraṇa. When a dumb person expresses a statement in writing, the statement has tātparya although it is not uttered. Hence the term uccāritatva is superfluous and it is better to accept tātparya as the intention of the speaker (vakturicchā).
A sentence is the medium of expressing determinate knowledge (Savikalpañña). It is because indeterminate knowledge cannot be expressed in language, i.e. in words or sentences, according to the Naiyāyikas. The object of determinate knowledge is a thing qualified by an attribute. Thus determinate knowledge is that of qualified objects. Here something is known to be related to something else as substantive to adjective. Therefore, a sentence must contain two terms and express a relation between them. The two terms are subject and predicate. The subject is the locus of quality and thus becomes determinandum or what is presented to be determined and characterised by thought. The predicate is the visesana, which is referred to the subject (uddeśya or visesya). The predicate is the determinant of the subject. This type of analysis of a sentence resembles to a proposition in Western logic. But whereas the proposition of formal logic necessitates a copula, the Naiyāyikas do not admit the same. According to the Naiyā-ıyikas the complete meaning of a sentence can be expressed without copula just as "parvatobahnimān". The modern Western logician like Bradley, Bosanquet and Johnson hold the view that the copula as some form of the verb ‘to be’ is not an essential part of proposition. The Naiyāyikas go a step further and denies the necessity of verb in a sentence. There may be verbs implied but not expressed and such verbs stand for subjective mode of assertion, not for any part of the asserted fact or content. S. H. Mellone also holds, “There is no separate existence in thought corresponding to the separate existence of the copula in the typical proposition, ‘S is P’.”

The Naiyāyikas here makes a mistake of taking sentence as equivalent to proposition in western logic. A sentence is wider than a proposition. There are sentences that do not express and relation between subject and predicate or there may not be any subject or predicate, just as ‘come’, ‘go there’ etc. The Naiyāyikas’
The concept of sentence is more akin to modern logical concept of proposition in which subject predicate form is only one type of propositions; but different from that of traditional logic.

The import of a sentence, according to the Naiyāyikas is the predication of an attribute with regard to some thing or things. The relation between substantive and adjective is expressed in a proposition; but it does not mean that the sentence relates them; rather they are found related in a sentence. Both the substantive and adjective are real facts and sentence expresses a complex whole. Hence, the Naiyāyikas cannot agree with Bradley and Bosanquet who hold that a proposition is the reference of an ideal content to reality or that proposition characterises some part of reality. According to the Naiyāyikas, the predicate is not an ideal content, but as real as the subject. Nyāya differs from the view of Bradley and Bosanquet due to their difference in basic philosophical attitude - while Nyāya is realistic the other two, i.e., Bradley and Bosanquet are idealistic. As radical realists the Naiyāyikas are in favour of the objective view that the proposition expresses a real relation between two facts or reals. Mr. Gotshalk supports this naive view of the Naiyāyikas. He opposes the idealistic view and holds that "the subject of an ordinary judgment is not Reality itself but merely and simply that limited situation within reality engaging attention."50

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