The Tattvabindu of Vācaspati is an original treatise, which deals with the problem as to what exactly is the efficient cause of the meaning of a sentence. It is the only original text available, composed by Vācaspati and comparatively it is the most difficult of all his works.

It has been regarded as an important and authoritative work, which, in reality, cannot be stamped as belonging to one particular system of philosophy. It is a general work, dealing with the cause of the meaning of a sentence, taking its stand on the abhihitānvaya theory. As, unlike his other works, the Tattvabindu is not a commentary, it was more advantageous on the part of Vācaspati to display the characteristic peculiarities of his style throughout the work. The language of the Tattvabindu, from the very first line, has force, effect and grandeur. He begins the topic from the

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1 It was first published in the Pundit Series in 1892, with a gloss by Mm. Gangādhara Sāstri Mānavalli. Prof. V. A. Rāmaswāmī Sāstri has edited more scientifically the Tattvabindu along with its commentary by Paramesvara. The importance of this edition lies mainly in the exhaustive and erudite introduction. Recently, the Tattvabindu is edited with an introduction in French and English and the translation in French by Madeleine Biardeau and is published by the French Institute of Indology at Pondicherry in 1956.
very first sentence and points out the problem to be discussed in the work undertaken only in the first two sentences. He says —

The main problem has been thus made clear at the very outset, in an attractive manner without any formal introduction. So, although, from the title Tattvabindu, it is not possible to understand the exact nature of the work, it is very well indicated by the first two sentences.

Vācaspati has put forth five views in regard to the cause of the vākyārtha. They are as follows —

(1) The Sphoṭa theory:

The grammarians hold that the meaning of a sentence is conveyed by the Vākyasphoṭa. Although it is experienced as being possessed of parts, it is, in reality, partless. They argue as follows —

(A) The unitary cognition of 'a word' and 'a sentence' cannot be brought into existence unless a unitary Śabda or vākya called sphoṭa, quite different from syllables, is recognised. The syllables themselves cannot give rise to this unitary cognition, either each separately or in their combination; because, in the first alternative, the first syllable would

2 Tattvabindu, p.2.
convey the sense of the whole word and the remaining syllables would be superfluous. And in the second alternative, the combination of the syllables is not possible, because the syllables are eternal and all-pervading. They cannot be said to be associated with each other, in reality; and as the syllables are cognised with some time-sequence, it would not be reasonable to hold that the Varnas are cognised together.

(B) The last syllable, associated with the impressions of the former syllables, also cannot convey the sense, as the nature of these impressions cannot be satisfactorily explained.

(C) Also, the order of the syllables cannot be recognised in recollection, and hence the words like 'rasah' and 'sarah' would give one and the same meaning.

(D) Lastly, as the Sphota is admitted to be directly perceived, it can be possibly assumed that the Sphota is gradually manifested by each sound and is completely experienced by the last syllable. But this point of manifest and unmanifest cannot be raised in the case of syllables, as they are not directly perceived. For all these reasons, the Sphota doctrine should alone be resorted to.

Refutation

The view of the sphotaavadin is strongly refuted by Vacaspati. He appeals, quite humorously, to the sphotaavadin to abandon his strong partiality for his own theory and to
consider the problem from the point of view of a witness.

Arguments against the sphaṭa theory:

(A) It should be either regarded that the cognitions of the letters like 'ga' present only those letters or in addition to them they point out some unitary thing devoid of parts i.e. sphaṭa. The first alternative obviously excludes the possibility of the sphaṭa, as nothing except letters is known in that cognition. In the second alternative, 'Śabda', as different from the syllables is to be accepted as being understood in the cognition of letters. Thus the 'Śabdatva' or the generality of 'Śabda' is to be regarded as the conveyer of ideas. But as the Śabdatva is found everywhere, all the senses may be known from each and every word. The difference in the sense cannot be said to be due to the difference in their expressions viz. words; because, in that case, it would be more reasonable to explain this difference in cognitions as being due to the letters themselves, which are to be accepted even by the sphaṭavādin also. Moreover, there is no reason why other generalities like sattā, varṇatva - etc. should not be admitted as the conveyer of ideas. For all such difficulties, Śabdatva cannot be treated as the conveyer of ideas.

(B) The anusamhārabuddhi, produced by the cognitions of different syllables must have syllables alone as its object and nothing else like sphaṭa.
(C) The cognition of unitariness (i.e. the experience that 'greta' is one word) is not an authority to prove the existence of unitary object viz. sphota. This cognition accounts only for the usage of that kind. Although, we have the unitary cognitions in the form of -- it is an army, it is a forest - etc., which through some conditions (upadhi) present unitary objects like army and forest etc., it cannot be justifiably assumed that these cognitions of army and forest have, as their objects some entity (avayavin) other than elephants, horses, chariots - etc. and different trees like campaka, asoka, kimiska - etc. respectively. In short, the cognition of the unitary object need not necessarily lead to the acceptance of unitary object. Even though the objects are many, the cognition may be unitary due to some upadhi or condition.

(D) The view that the sphota is manifested not so clearly by the previous dhvanis, while it is manifested distinctly by the last sound (dhvani) is quite illogical, as the sphota is accepted to be devoid of parts; and the point of full and partial manifestation can be raised only in connection with a thing, which is possessed of parts. In his characteristic forceful manner, Vācaspati argues that a partless thing like sphota would either be cognised fully or would not be cognised at all. When it is cognised, there is nothing belonging to it that is not or cannot be cognised.

(E) Also, the manifestation of the sphota cannot be
said to be based on superimposition, because this superimposition requires its substratum (viz. sphoṭa) previously known and not unknown. And if the sphoṭa is understood to be partly cognised, then the view that the sphoṭa is partless, will have to be sacrificed. Any way, the doctrine of the partless sphoṭa as the conveyer of ideas, does not stand to reason.

(F) Moreover, the sphoṭa which is not perceptible, should not be resorted to, when its function can be explained by visible things. Further, the sphoṭa cannot be inferred by its effect, viz. the cognition of the object, because, the inference is possible only when the relation of the thing to be inferred with the reason has been understood first. And as the sphoṭa is not directly perceived, we cannot know its relation with its effect -- the cognition of the object. The mere existence of the Śabda cannot be said to be sufficient to produce the idea. In that case, there would always be the cognition of the object, as the existence of the Śabda (i.e. sphoṭa) is accepted to be eternal. So, the knowledge of the sphoṭa is inevitable to know the object, and the knowledge of the object infers the sphoṭa -- the position which is technically called the fallacy of interdependence -- the knowledge of the sphoṭa depending upon the knowledge of the object and the cognition of the object depending upon the sphoṭa.

(G) Lastly, it is not necessary to accept unitary Śabda like sphoṭa. It cannot be reasonably said that the
varṇas do not give rise to the cognition of the object. On the other hand, these varṇas alone, as the object of one recognition have got the capacity to convey the knowledge of the thing denoted by those letters.

Here, we want to draw attention to the serious objection raised by Sūryanārāyaṇa Śāstrī against one of the above arguments of Vācaspati viz. that in the cognition of any object, the idea of oneness (ekatvabuddhi) is aupādhika i.e. due to some conditions, while in reality, there are many syllables which are responsible for that cognition. According to the Professor, it is wrong on the part of Vācaspati to hold that 'bheda' is real while 'ekatva' is aupādhika, as he is the staunch Advaitin who, according to the Brahmaṣṭṭra — तद्न्यत्व-मार्गश्राब्दाद् 3 and following Śaṅkaraśārya on it, assumes that oneness is real while the difference is due to some conditions and hence false (illusory). The criticism seems to us quite strange and illogical, as these are altogether two different contexts where Vācaspati has held two different views. If he maintains the non-difference between Brahman and the world from the ultimate point of view, it is not incumbent on Vācaspati that he should hold the same view in worldly experiences, where the difference is real and the non-difference is apprehended due to some reason or another. Otherwise it would lead to sheer absurdities. As regards other objections

3 II.1.14.
of Professor Sūryanārāyaṇa Śastrī, they are, more or less, answered in this refutation of the sphoṭa theory. The view of the Professor that as Maṇḍana recognised the doctrine of sphoṭa, Vācaspati should have also wisely followed him, is also far from convincing as we have seen, in the previous chapter, that Maṇḍana also refuted the sphoṭa theory, on the authority of the Śābara bhāṣya and as we will see in the chapter on the Tattvavaiśāradī, that Vācaspati himself supported the sphoṭa theory, to the best of his abilities.

Now, we turn to the second of the five views, dealt with in the Tattvabindu.

(2) According to this view, the cognition of the meaning of a sentence arises from the cognition of the last syllable in it, assisted by the impressions produced by the cognitions of words and their meanings. This view, although it does not postulate any invisible thing like sphoṭa but treats the last syllable itself as the conveyor of idea, is refuted by Vācaspati for the following reasons. (A) In order that the last varṇa (syllable) should be the cause of the meaning of a sentence, there should be the recognition of the relation of the last syllable with its meaning. So, for the purpose, the impression, which gives rise to that memory, should be accepted as being brought into existence at that
time (and not formerly). This impression is produced after the last letter is heard. Thus, the impression should necessarily be created as soon as we hear the last syllable. At the same time, the experience of the last syllable gives rise to its own impression, which, on its part, destroys the former i.e. its cause. All this tends to mean that the last syllable ceases to exist in the next moment i.e. as soon as it is heard and its impression is produced. So, in these circumstances, the last syllable, as it is not in existence then, cannot be assisted by the recognition of its relation with its meaning. And if it is not assisted by that recognition, it cannot possibly give rise to the meaning of a sentence. (B) In the absence of such recognition, the meaning of a sentence cannot be produced, because, in that case, the relation between the last syllable and its meaning, is of no use at all, as it does not produce recollection. And that does not satisfactorily answer why verbal cognition is not produced, when the import of words is not understood.

In short, as the cognition of the last syllable and the recollection of the meaning of the last word do not exist simultaneously, the last varṇa cannot be accepted as the conveyer of the import of a sentence.

(3) According to the third view, the group of syllables (varṇamālā) is the cause of the vākyārtha. The
experience of each syllable, word and the meanings of words produce the impression, and the memory of the group of syllables, caused by these impressions, directly give rise to the meaning of a sentence. That is to say, the varṇamālā, in one mirror-like recognition, is the cause of the vākyārtha.

This theory has been refuted by Vācaspati for the following reasons:

(A) The group of syllables also requires the knowledge of words in producing the cognition of the meaning of a sentence. So, it would be more reasonable and justifiable to assume that the knowledge of words itself, without which the vākyārtha cannot be produced, is the cause of the vākyārtha.

(B) Although in a short sentence, the group of syllables is the object of one anusamhārabuddhi i.e. aggregate cognition of the sentence, in a long sentence it is very difficult to remember the group of syllables.

(C) According to this view, in the sentences like

अर्क गामान्यं, अर्क यां क्षान।
सिन्हावामान्यं, सिन्हा या क्षान।
बाण पामान्यं, बाण या क्षान।
हिन्म पामान्यं, हिन्म या क्षान।

one has to accept that each varṇamālā, which is a sentence, possesses different saktis to convey the sense of a sentence. Thus, eight saktis are to be accepted in above sentences.
But the Padavādin has to admit as many śaktis as many padas there are, and as the śakti of one word in different sentences is not different, the Padavādin has to admit only seven śaktis. If we add one more epithet śukla to the cow and form eight more sentences, the varṇamālā theory (i.e. the theory under discussion) will have to admit sixteen śaktis while the Padavādin has to accept only eight śaktis, as there are only eight words, even though the sentences are sixteen. For all these reasons, the group of letters cannot reasonably be admitted as the cause of the vākyārthapratīti.

(4) The fourth view, dealt with in the Tattvabindu in this connection, is the wellknown theory of the Prābhākaras. According to them, the cognition of the words themselves, is the cause of the vākyārtha. They hold that the words are related to each other by expectancy, compatibility and proximity and these words convey meanings related to one another. Hence, there is no necessity of admitting anything other than the cognition of the words to know the meaning of a sentence. Vācaspati has raised in the stanza —

पदान्तरस्य कृष्ण्यप्रेयत्स्तुताः त्वेषेऽकालेष्व

बुद्धान्तिकाणि प व्यक्तान्व्याश्चेतम्

two objections against this anvitābhidhāna theory of the Prābhākara school. These objections can be summarised as follows:

(1) In a sentence, the first word conveys its
meaning as related to the meanings of other words. Now, if the meanings of other words are not conveyed by those words, it obtains that they are expressed by the first word itself. So, these remaining words would be superfluous, as their meanings and relations are already known by the first word.

(ii) It also cannot be held that the meanings of other words are conveyed by those words themselves, because it would lead to the fallacy of interdependence, as the first word would convey its idea only when the other words convey their respective ideas, and the other words would convey their meanings only when the meaning of the first word is apprehended.

These objections are answered by the Prābhākaras in the following manner:

The first objection does not arise at all, as the Anvītaabhidhānavādins do not admit a single word as conveying the ideas of all the words. Further, there is no fallacy of interdependence, for the meanings of other words are not recollected as there is no abhyāsa, although the words convey their meanings and mutual relation. So, what is understood from one word is the meaning of that word along with its relation and not the meanings of other words. So there is no anyonyāśraya. Moreover, the cognition derived from the words should necessarily be accepted as recollection, and the object of recollection is always anvita or related to other
things. That is, this recollection represents both — the objects and their relation. Thus, the meanings of other words may easily be known by mere juxtaposition.

(5) Abhihitānvaya theory: Vācaspati has refuted the anvitābhidhāna theory, by way of establishing the abhihitānvaya theory of the Bhāṭṭas — the theory that is ultimately accepted in the Tattvabindu. He first points out the necessity of accepting the meaning of the word, by anvaya (presence) and vystireka (absence), as the cause of the Vākyārtha. His argument is like this: (i) Suppose for one reason or other, one knows only words and not their meanings. In this case, the cognition of the vākyārtha would not come into existence. Thus the knowledge of mere words is not the invariable cause of the vākyārtha. On the other hand, in addition to the knowledge of the words, if one recollects the meanings of the words, the cognition of the vākyārtha is invariably produced. Hence, the meanings of the words should reasonably be accepted as the cause of the Vākyārtha.

(ii) Moreover, it is a general rule that in the absence of any strong objection, the thing which stands very near to the effect is admitted to be the cause of it. For this reason, also, recollection of the meanings of the words, as they are nearer to the meaning of the sentence than the words themselves, should, without any grudge, be recognised as the cause of the vākyārtha.
The commentator, Parameśvara here, has very aptly pointed out the exact difference between the anvitābhidhānavāda and the abhīhitānvyayavāda. The words are accepted as the cause of the vākyārtha by the anvitābhidhānavādins, while the meanings of the words and not the words themselves, are considered to be so by the abhīhitānvyayavādins. It has been further elucidated as follows: That, the expectancy, the congruity and the proximity are the accessories in producing the vākyārtha and that the vākyārtha is the effect, is admitted by both the anvitābhidhānavādin and the abhīhitānvyayavādin. In these circumstances, what is immediate antecedent (avyavahitapūrva) to the effect viz. the vākyārtha, should be accepted as the cause of that effect. And that is recognition of the padārthas or the ideas. So, the padārthas are reasonably to be considered as the cause of the vākyārtha -- the view, which has been shared by the abhīhitānvyayavādins alone.

This, in short, is the abhīhitānvyay theory, elaborated by Vācaspati. The remaining part of the work is devoted to answer the charges levelled by the Anvitābhidhānavādin against the abhīhitānvyay theory, and to point out the defects in the former’s theory. Some of the important arguments are noticed below.

(i) The view that the abhīhitānvyay theory involves
the acceptance of three or at least two powers to express the meaning of the word; while the anvitābhidhāna requires only one power, is not a correct one. For, the abhibitanvayavādin has to accept only one power residing in the word in as much as it gives rise to its concept. The relation of one padārtha with other is not at all conveyed by the word through its abhidhā power but is understood by the lakṣaṇā. So in this view, no special sakti is conferred upon words for the knowledge of the anvitāvasthā or the relation between one padārtha and another. On the other hand, the anvitābhidhānavādin has to hold that the meaning of the word related with other words i.e. the meaning of the words as well as its relation is conveyed by the abhidhā power. So it involves more gaurava.

In fact, this relation cannot be conveyed by the abhidhā power of the word because of the general rule -- i.e. that alone which is not known by other source, is the meaning of the word.

Then follows a long discussion of the possibility of lakṣaṇā operating to convey the relation between words. Some objections -- especially the difficulty of resorting to this lakṣaṇā in Vedic sentences, where there is no intention of the speaker, which is necessary for the lakṣaṇā, are raised and answered. Vācaspati concludes the topic with the
authority of the Bhāṣya of Śabara -- पदार्थ स्वरूपविभाग निदृढ्यापारायणी; जैदानी पदार्थी आपस्ता; सन्दो वाचार्यगद्यग्रंथित ग्रंथिः।

i.e. words convey their ideas and cease to function further. Then the meanings of the words being cognised, they generate the meaning of the sentence.

Thus, in short, having refuted all the four theories, Vācaspati has established the abhihitānvaṇa theory.

General remarks:

It is, in reality, necessary to know who were the sponsors of these various views. As regards the sphiṭā, the anvitābhidhānavaṇā and the abhihitānvaṇavāṇa, there is no difficulty as the sphiṭa theory is propounded by the grammarians like Bhartṛhari and shared by the Advaitins like Maṇḍanamātra. The anvitābhidhānavaṇā is universally known as being held by the celebrated Mīmāṁsaka - Prabhākara and his followers; and the abhihitānvaṇavāṇa is supposed to have been shared by the Naiyāyikas and the Bhāṭṭamīmāṁsakas. With regard to the remaining two theories -- second (antyavarṇa vijñāna theory) and third (varṇa-mālā theory), it is difficult to come to any conclusion, without any confusion. Paramesvara, the commentator of the Tattvabindu introduces the antyavarṇavijñāna theory (i.e. the knowledge of the last syllable in association with the impressions generated by previous words and their meanings) as being the view of some of the Mīmāṁsakas. And

6 Śabarabhāṣya on I.1.7.
7 Tattvavibhāvanā, p.6.
the Varṇamālā theory also has been introduced by him as being held by some of the Mīmāṃsakas. It is quite clear that the commentator was not confident about his remark; nor had he any authority for it. For, he himself remarks that these views, according to some, were introduced as mere possibilities and were not shared by anybody actually; while some others say that old Mīmāṃsakas held these views; some others consider that they were propounded by some other philosophical schools. It is more striking that the commentator was unable to mention even the name of the authorities who remarked that these views were held by so and so. All this points out the lack of the historical sense in ancient Sanskrit writers. Paramesvara, as if being disappointed, lastly remarks — (whosoever may be the sponsor of these two views).

Gangadhara Śaśtṛi Mānāvallī, the editor of the first edition of the Tattvabindu in his tip Россия (note) has, on the contrary, pointed out that the antyavaramāṇa view has been held by the Naiyāyikas. A passage from the Vātsyāyanabhāṣya and the Siddhāntamuktāvali, to support his remark, have been quoted. The varṇamālā theory, according to the learned Śaśtri, was advocated by Upavarga and other Mīmāṃsakas. This remark has been based by him on the references to Upavarga, in the B.S.Bhāṣya of Śamkarācārya, the Śabarabhaṣya and the

8 Tattvavibhāvanā, p.7.
10 Ibid.
Yogasūtrabhāṣya, where his view that varṇas or letters themselves form a word, has been quoted. Madeleine Biardeau, the editor of the recent French edition of the Tattvabindu also assumes that the Varṇamālā theory was advocated by Upavarṣa.  

The first remark of Gangadhara Śāstrī, although it is right and based on facts, requires some explanation. The case is like this. The theory that the vākyārtha is caused by the cognition of the last letter, is accepted by the Naiyāyikas, as it is clear from the quotations given by Gangādharāśāstrī. The Naiyāyikas also hold the abhihitānvaya theory. That is to say, both the views are adopted by the Naiyāyikas. Then the questions arise whether these two theories are not contradictory and can be accepted side by side. Then why at all did the Naiyāyikas propound two theories? Did they present these two views as different or one as a corollary of the other? Why at all, then, did Vācaspati treat them as two different views without pointing out their mutual relation? The answer to these questions is neither given nor suggested anywhere. Here, an attempt has been made to make clear the position of the Naiyāyikas.

The Naiyāyikas hold the abhihitānvaya theory which either means that the recollection of the meanings of the words is the cause of the meaning of a sentence, or that the meanings of the words themselves as the object of recollection,

11 Introduction (Eng.), p.xxi.
12 Siddhāntamuktāvali on Śabdakhaṇḍa; kārīka 81.
are the cause of the meaning of a sentence. This 'padārthopasthiti' or the recollection of the meanings of the words, is in reality, according to both the schools -- old and new, of the Nyāya philosophy, necessary for the vākyārtha.

Now, there exist two views in regard to the exact nature of 'karaṇa'. The first view holds the dictum - 'vyāpāravād asādhrāṇam karaṇam karaṇam' i.e. the cause which has got some operation is the direct cause. According to this view, the knowledge of the last letter with the recollection of the meanings of the words, as the operation, is the direct cause of the vākyārtha. While the Navya-Naiyāyikas, hold simply 'asādhrāṇam karaṇam karaṇam', which ultimately means 'phaiāyogavyavacchinam karaṇam karaṇam' i.e. that cause, immediately after which effect comes into existence, is the direct cause. Hence according to them, the padārthopasthiti or the recollection of the meanings of words in a sentence is the direct cause of the vākyārtha, as it is invariably produced after this recollection. This in short can be the further explanation of Gangādhara Śāstrī's remark. Any way, although he is right in saying that this antyavarṇa theory was propounded by the Naiyāyikas, he should have given further explanation. And the commentator is quite wrong to say that

13 This is exactly analogous to the difference in regard to the process of inferential knowledge. The cause of inferential knowledge, according to the old school of Nyāya, is the 'vyāptijñāna' which has got 'parāmarśa' as the vyāpāra; while according to the Navya-Naiyāyikas, 'parāmarśa' itself is the cause of inferential knowledge and no vyāpāra as such is necessary.
that view was held by some Mīmāṃsakas. The authority of the Śābarabhāṣya\textsuperscript{14} given by him is also in connection with the śabdārtha and not with the vākyārtha. Hence, it is unjustifiable to quote the Śābarabhāṣya passage as the basis of the antyavārṇavijñāna theory.

As regards the second remark of Gangādhara Śāstrī, it is difficult to agree with the learned Śāstrī when he identifies the view which has been represented by Vācaspati as 'प्रकृति वर्णपद्यदर्शन-दुर्जयः शब्द-वाक्यदर्शन-दुर्जयः' (i.e. in short the view that all the varṇas together give rise to the vākyārtha) with the view of Upavarsa, which has been referred to in the bhāṣyas, mentioned above, as 'वच्चाक् य व च'। विदितं न वाक्यार्थं,\textsuperscript{16} i.e. the word is nothing but the letters themselves. For the view represented by Vācaspati is in connection with the Vākyārtha; while that of Upavarsa, at least as it is understood from the available quotations given by Gangādhara Śāstrī, is decidedly in connection with the meaning of the word and not with the meaning of the sentence. It is also noteworthy that in this connection only, the view of Upavarsa has been quoted by these Bhāṣyakaras. Neither Śaṁkarācārya nor Śabara nor Vyāsa in their respective bhāṣyas has quoted Upavarsa's Varṇa theory in connection with the

\textsuperscript{14} B.S. Bhāṣya I.i.ii.28. Śābarabhāṣya I.i.5. Vyāsabhāṣya III.17.

\textsuperscript{15} B.S. Bhāṣya I.i.ii.28.Śābarabhāṣya I.i.5. Vyāsabhāṣya III.17.
discussion of the vākyārtha. So, it is quite impossible, in
the absence of any other source, to remark that Upavarṣa held
the view that the group of letters leads to the knowledge of
a sentence. In fact, this view of Upavarṣa -- 'व्याख्या तेन तु जानन' --
is shared by the Bhāṭṭas who do not hold the varṇamāla theory
which has been identified with the former one by the said
Śāstrī. He might have identified these two views, probably
because of the word 'varṇa' used in the plural by Upavarṣa.
For, one may argue that if the word is nothing but the varṇas,
the sentence also is nothing but the varṇas, as the sentence
is constituted of words only. But this is not justifiable
as we have shown before that even accepting this varṇamāla
theory in connection with the meaning of the word, the Bhāṭṭas
have not adopted it in regard to the vākyārtha. And it is not
necessary also. For all these reasons, we are led to conclude
that Gangādharaśāstrī's note to the third view in the Tattvāb-
dindu does not seem to be an appropriate one and Madeleine
Biardeau also has not thought much over it.

It should be carefully noticed that these various
views taken into consideration, in regard to the cause of the
sense of a sentence, are of great use only in sharpening the
intellect of students. For, if we examine meticulously, we
find that all the theorists have to admit that syllables, words,
their meaning, their mutual relation, are all essential to
give rise to the sense of every sentence. The only question
remains as to what exactly should be treated as the most
important one. Only the Sphoṭavādin has to accept something different from all these. And Vācaspati is quite justified in rejecting the sphiṭa doctrine, as it implies something unseen when the problem can be explained by the things, clearly seen. Vācaspati’s maxim — स्थितिनाखर्षिययं गच्छो द्वारे राज्यामः, in establishing the abhihitānvaya theory would be helpful in every problematic discussion.

But Vācaspati could have been more scientific in the treatment of the subject he dealt with. At the very beginning, he points out that the bone of contention among the various schools, is in regard to the cause of the meaning of a sentence. But curiously enough, while justifying and refuting the sphiṭa he refers to the Śabda sphiṭa and discusses it at great length. While treating other theories also he casually refers to the problem of the śabdārtha. There is no objection referring to the śabdārtha-prakriya but he should have done it after the clear-cut distinction between the two problems.  

Vācaspati could have given the sub-division of the abhihitānvayavāda in connection with the understanding of the relation of one word with another. The author of the Muktāvali mentions two views in this connection — (i) that the mutual relation of all words is understood suddenly, (ii) that the relation of those words only, which are expected to be related by expectancy, compatibility and proximity, is first

17 And the commentator has merely added to the confusion.
18 P.342 (Śrikiṛṣṭa Vallabhācārya’s Kīraṇāvalī edition).
understood separately and then the mahāvākyārtha or the meaning of the whole sentence is cognised.

The value of the Tattvabindu, of course, is not altogether minimised by these deficiencies. It is a small good philosophical text to get oneself introduced to the argumentative method of ancient pandits, in regard to the vākyārtha. Because of the peculiar characteristics of Vācaspati, the work is more interesting. Vācaspati is quite confident of his success of the work undertaken. In the epilogue stanzas\(^\text{19}\) to the Tattvabindu, he states without any hesitation that the Tattvabindu, like the moon that dispels the darkness and points out the proper path, has shown the reasonable method in regard to the cognition of the sense of a sentence; and Vācaspati is justified in evaluating the Tattvabindu in this way.

\[^{19}\] तत्त्वबिन्दुपुस्तकांतः भक्तः कृपाश्रादा।
वाक्यार्थवचिं नृत्तव्यायं कृपाश्रादा।
वाक्यार्थवचिं पुंजां ब्रह्मस्तत्तथाचित्त।
जिन्दुमलामुनि मार्गी दशस्तंत्रबिन्दुनः।

Tattvabindu, p.161.