PREFACE

In Indian Philosophical parlance, language is usually called śabda. Śabda, essentially means sound (dhvani), both in its articulate and inarticulate aspects. The articulated form of sound is 'verbal'; and this verbal knowledge or śabda-jñāna constitutes a major source of knowledge. The word 'śabda' is as old as life on the earth. It is not at all an over statement that the most of the stock of knowledge of human beings and animals is possible not by pratyakṣa, anumāna or upamāna but by śabda. Due to this reason, the nature, importance, significance and applications of śabda attracted the attention of philosophers in India even before two or three thousands years ago. But in Western philosophy, discussions concerning the nature of language appears to have started very recently.

Among the different epistemological systems, Padvākyapramāṇaśāstras viz. Vyākaraṇa, Mīmāṃsa and Nyāya school play a crucial role attaining precision and perfection in philosophical expressions; and hence they assume supreme significance.

Concerning the nature and structure of language, the contribution of grammarians in general and that of Bhartṛhari, the author of Vākyapadiya in particular is really remarkable. The study of śabda however has been discussed right from Yaska's Nirukta. Pāṇini has incorporated certain special sūtras for this
purpose. Later Patanjali discusses these issues and hints at the well-known theory of sphoṭa. It is elaborately discussed and developed further by Bhartṛhari. Nageśa and Koṇḍabhaṭṭa also provide valuable contributions to this field.

Nyāya system is an analytical system of human behaviour since this system mainly discusses about the nature of knowledge, relationship between language and reality, philosophy of language, reality of universe etc. In their opinion, 'nishśreyasa' or 'apavarga' can be attained through knowledge only. Knowledge is based on language viz. words & sentences. Hence in Nyāyaśāstra, the study of śabda, artha, śabdavyāpāra and śabdabodha assumes a prominent place.

Mīmāṃsa system contributes very profusely to the Indian theory of meaning. This is the first system to undertake the analysis of sentence and its meaning systematically. It has greatly contributed to the development of linguistics, especially semantics, in ancient India by propounding various theories of verbal cognition. Among the theories, the theory of the correction of the expressed or Abhihitānvayavāda and the theory of the expression of the correlated or Anvītabhidhānavāda have significantly drawn the attention of Western scholars.

From all these we arrive at a conclusion that Indian thinkers have concentrated a lot on the theory and practice of verbal communication, and they have left no stone unturned in analysing different dimensions of language. An analysis of the topics related to language (śabda) plays an important role in moulding the character of individuals and hence this topic demand a serious study as it contributed largely to the Indian theory of meaning.

The present thesis is the result of my endeavour as a research student of M.G. University. The purpose of the attempt is to present a comprehensive view of the
epistemologists regarding šabda. Hence the various concepts of connecting šabda are found elaborated here in a comparative and comprehensive setting.

The thesis comprises of five chapters. In the first chapter, the importance, historical background and major contributions of language are illustrated. Then the various topics concerning šabda are described. In the second chapter, nature and concept of pada & padārtha (word & meaning), sakti, locus of sakti and saktigrahopāyas are elaborated. Third chapter deals with the different šabdavyāpāras like Abhidhā (sakti), Lakṣanā, Vyaṇjana, Tātparya etc.

In the fourth chapter, different concepts of šābdabodha are taken into account. Last chapter delineates many concepts in Indian Philosophy of language and finally a conclusion is arrived at, after the comparison of various views.