Introduction

From time immemorial man is aware of the importance of knowledge. Because knowledge reveals the world and with the help of this revealed world we can interact with other people properly. Hence, Man thinks about knowledge and gradually analyse it. The earliest record of Indian knowledge and wisdom are contained in the hymns of Rg-veda, in various Saṃhitas, Brāhmaṇas, Upaniṣads and later in the books of Ethics, Nītigranthas and Laws. So we can say that though the philosophical thinking begins with the Rg-veda itself; it is prominently revealed in the hymns like Nāsadeeya sūkta, Puruṣa sūkta and the sūktas ascribed to Dīrghatamas. Of these, the sūktas of Dīrghatamas contain the germs of the dualistic realism while the Puruṣasūktas and Devīsūktas show the germs of monistic idealism. On the basis of this monistic idealism or dualistic realism, there arose six philosophical systems in India.

These six schools of Indian thought are known as Āstika(orthodox or vaidika) darśanas on account of their recognising vedic authority. They form a group of 'saddarśanas' -viz. Pūrvamīmāṃsa of Jaimini, Uttaramīmāṃsa of Bādarāyaṇa, Sāṃkhya school of Kapila, Yoga school of Patanjali, Nyāya system of Gotama and Vaiśeṣika school of Kanāda. Side by side with these orthodox schools, there developed Nāstika (non-orthodox or heterodox) or avaidika (Non-vedic) schools
of philosophy, as they came to deny the authority of the veda and the existence of God. These three are the Baulda, Jaina and Carvakadasanas.

Most of the philosophical systems of India take up the problem of language as a part of their epistemological concern, otherwise known as pramāṇa śāstra. These systems draw a clear line of distinction between cognition or jñāna and knowledge or pramāṇa. While analysing the concept of pramāṇa, they categorise different methods or means of knowledge or pramāṇa.

Among the Nāstikas and Āstikas, the Carvākas opine that the world can be revealed by only one form of knowledge ie perception. The Buddhists and the Vaisēśikas hold that the world can be revealed by perception and Inferential cognition. But according to the Sāṃkhyaśas, the world can be revealed by perception, Inferential cognition and verbal cognition. The Naiyāyikas hold that the world is revealed by four types of knowledge ie perceptual cognition, Inferential cognition, analogical cognition and verbal cognition. But according to Prabhākaras, there are five types of cognition ie perception, inference, analogy, verbal cognition and the pre-supposition or presumption. The Bhāṭṭa school thinks that we need six types of cognition to reveal the world. These are:- the above mentioned five types of the Prabhākaras and the sixth being 'Anupalabdhi' ie not finding something which is fit to be found. Similarly according to the Paurāṇikas, in addition to the above mentioned six types of cognition, the world is revealed by two more forms of knowledge namely, a cognition generated by 'Aitihyā' and a cognition generated by 'Sāmbhava'.

In short all the schools of Indian philosophy regard certain means of knowledge as valid. The word Pramāṇa signifies the essential means of arriving at valid
knowledge. As such it is defined as ‘Pramākaraṇaṃ pramāṇaṃ’. Here pramā means valid knowledge and that which makes valid knowledge possible is therefore called pramāṇaṃ.

Among the different epistemological systems, Naiyāyikas opine that language encodes the knowledge which is to be verbalised. The Nyāya theory of reality is based on the theory of knowledge and accordingly, the discussion of pramāṇas acquire a great importance in the Nyāyā system. They have reduced the number of the eight type of knowledge and also argued that among the above mentioned eight types, five to eight may include in the first four types, and there is no need to give a special status of distinct type of valid instrument of knowledge or pramāṇa. In their opinion, language is the medium through which the speaker or the writer transmits his knowledge to the learner or reader. Hence the Naiyāyikas call the universe as padārtha, the referent of language. This language is usually referred as śabda in all the schools of Indian philosophy and this śabda pramāṇa constitutes a major source of our knowledge. Like other Orthodox schools of Philosophy, Naiyāyikas accept the sabda-pramāṇa or verbal testimony as a means of right cognition. Therefore Gautama, the author of Nyāya sūtra wrote the aphorism ‘Āptopadeśaḥ śabdaḥ’.

In human life, language occupies a very significant place because we use language for communication and that performs the role of advancing and generating thought. Like every philosophical problem, concerning language also admit of alternative approaches and understandings. This accounts for variety of philosophies of languages. The science of language is the most outstanding contribution that the scholars of ancient India have made, and in this linguistic literature, Vedic Sikṣa or
phonetics, Vyākaraṇa or formal Grammar and Nirukta or Etymology has a unique place not only in India, but also in whole world. Of these, the Nirukta of Yāska mentions the names of several authorities and shows that the speculation on meaning and language had begun long before Yāska and it also stated that at the end of the Vedic period, metaphysical and syntactical problems of language had been fully stated. On the basis of these problems, the schools of Indian philosophy have developed their views. Hence a comparative study of śabda-vyāpāras or word-functions in Indian thought has flown into different channels in divergent direction.

Connecting with this study, there have been raised several issues that have been discussed by the different schools of Indian thought. In this field, Ritualism or Mīmāṃsa, Grammar or Vyākaraṇa and Logic or Nyāya systems have made the most significant contributions to the development of the philosophy of language, by analysing word (śabda or pada), sentence (vākya) and their meaning (padārtha and vakyārtha) in the most scientific way. Besides them, the newer schools of these systems ie Navyas have contribute many significant theories of linguistics and philosophy.

Among the different epistemological problems, concept of śabda, śabda-vyāpāra and śābdabodha ie the process of comprehending the meaning of a sentence demand a serious study as it contribute largely to the Indian theory of meaning. In the above mentioned topic, Nyāya sidhānta muktāvali, the famous Nyāya text of Viśvanātha sums up the latest thinking of Nyāya scholars. With the help of the comparative study of the technical terms illustrated by Viśvanātha,

"Padajñānaṁ tu karaṇaṁ dvāraṁ tatra padārthadhīḥ
Śābdabodhaḥ phalaṁ tatra śaktidhīḥ sahakāriṇī;"
we should get a clear picture about the concept of śabda, śabdavyāpāras and śabdabhodha according to Mīmāṃsakas, Naiyāyikas and Vaiyākaraṇas. Here we can see the terms pada, padārtha, śakti and śabdabhodha respectively function as karaṇa, Dvāra, Sahakārikāraṇa and phala. All these terms are concerned with the concept of cause and effect.

The present study contains five chapters. The first chapter is 'Śabda-A major source of knowledge'. The second chapter is 'Pada and padārtha - the soul of the speaker'. The third chapter is 'Śabda- vyāpāra- the root of the use of language'. Fourth chapter is 'Śabdabhodha-a distinct feature of verbal knowledge'. Fifth and the last chapter is 'Conclusion.'

The first chapter explains an outlook about the language [śabda] like the importance of language, its historical background, major contributions of language, its concept, derivation etc. Because language is the prime vehicle for the conveyance of meaning. Therefore in the study of śabda vyaparas, language has a prominent place and then only the śabda, pada, padārtha and vākya. Various thinkers have an opinion that there is a close relationship between thought and language. Hence it described in the first chapter. Then the various levels of speech, the unit of language, concept of aksara, the importance of śabda, the nature and concept of śabda- all these are explained in this chapter.

The second chapter begins with the illustration of the above mentioned karika of śabdakhaṇḍa viz-

"Padajñānaṁ tu karaṇaṁ dvāraṁ tatra padārthadhīḥ
Śabdabhodhaḥ phalaṁ tatra śaktidhīḥ sahakāriṇīḥ;"
In the opinion of Viśvanātha, the knowledge of words (Pada-jñāna) function as an instrument (Karaṇa), the process (dvāra) (vyāpāra) is the knowledge of the meanings of the words (padārthadhiṣṭ), the product (phala) is the Verbal cognition (śābdabodha) and the knowledge of denotative function (śakti) is the auxiliary cause (Sahakāri kāraṇa). Among these technical terms 'Pada' is first. Hence firstly this 'Pada' is illustrated. Here the definition and classification of pada, the nature and meaning of padārtha, relation between padā & padārtha (word & meaning) ie śakti, its importance, the locus of śakti, the ascertainment of śakti or śaktigrahopayas, the nature and definition of sentence, also have been described.

Third chapter deals about the different śabda - vyāpāras or word-functions like Abhidhā (śakti), Lakṣanā, Tātparya and Vyañjanā. These functions function as the root of the use of language which plays an important role in our thought communication.

In the fourth chapter, the concept, derivation and definition of śābdabodha, process of śābdabodha, various stages in the process of śābdabodha, central nucleus of a sentence and like wise two types of śābda bodha, the different theories of śābdabodha, necessary conditions of śābdabodha has been taken into account.

Last chapter describes about the many concepts in the Indian philosophy of language which are unknown to Western analysts. For example - the concepts of sphiṣṭa, apoha, anvitabhidhāna etc. Here noticed the basic distinction between Eastern & Western concept of philosophy, many similarities and dissimilarities of the concepts of East & West, the major issues handled by the Indian epistemological systems etc. Then finally reach a concluding point after the comparison of the views of Indian epistemologists- all these are included in this chapter.