

Vārttika-s

Introduction —

Kātyāyana's *vārttika-s* (approximately 3rd C.b.c.) have set a norm of the shortest commentary that explains, criticizes and supports the theme of the text to be focused.

Though the history of the grammatical thoughts as well as the activities start from the Vedas and from the Ṛgveda *padapāṭha*; the actual known grammatical text is Pāṇini's *sūtra-s*. The corpus of these almost 4000 compact statements is called Aṣṭādhyāyī which belongs to the 5th century b.c. according to the majority of scholars.

It is believed that two hundred years after Pāṇini, when the need arose to supplement as well as to explain Pāṇini's observations about the language Kātyāyana wrote the *varttika-s*.

Vyākaraṇa as a vedāṅga —

For the better understanding of the vedic texts 6 ancillary systems came forth. These are called *vedāṅga-s* which are as follows –

Śikṣā (guidelines for correct pronunciation of the veda-s), *Kalpa* (aids to know how to follow ritualistic aspect of the vedas), *Vyākaraṇa* (guidelines to understand the language of the vedas), *Nirukta* (guidelines to understand the meaning of the vedic words), *Chandas* (guidelines to understand the metrical composition of the Vedas). *Jyotiṣa* (aids to understand exact time or positions of planets, constellation etc). These *vedāṅga-s* are helpful for reciting and understanding the vedic texts and for performing the ritual accordingly.

It goes without saying that the *vākaraṇa* is one out of these six *vedāṅga-s*. However Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī is the only text that is taken as the *Vedāṅga Vyākaraṇa*. The Aṣṭādhyāyī describes the nuances and intricacies of the classical Sanskrit. However Pāṇini takes note of the special features of the vedic language

and mentions those particular peculiarities with the words *chandasi*, *Brāhmaṇe*, *Yajuṣi*, etc.

The *daśagrantha* tradition includes these basic texts of the *vedāṅga*-s.

The traditional maxim '*trimuni vyākaraṇam*' shades light on the basic texts of the *vyākaraṇa vedāṅga* which are Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pāṇini, *vārttika*-s of Kātyāyana and Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali.

The Definition of the *vtt*. —

The traditional definition of the *vārttika*-s is as follows -

उक्तानुक्तदुरुक्तानां चिन्ता यत्र प्रवर्तते।
तं ग्रन्थं वार्त्तिकं प्राहुर्वार्त्तिकज्ञा मनीषिणः॥

(Tr. The wise ones call that text *vārttika* in which the discussion is held about what is spoken, what is not spoken and what is ill spoken.)

However Pt. Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka has pointed out that the said definition works in case of the *vtt*s which are on the *bhāṣya* and not on the *sūtra*. The *śloka* and *tantra vārttika*-s on Śābarabhāṣya and Sureśvara's *vtt*s on the *Sāṅkarabhāṣya* are the examples of this definition. The Kātyāyana-*vtt*s are directly on the *sūtra*-s. So this definition doesn't suit them. Pt. Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka quotes the definition of *vtt*s from Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa (*khaṇḍa* 3, *Adhyāya* 6). However the actual text of Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa says, 'सांवर्तिको धर्मगुणोऽष्टकश्च' whereas Pt. Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka reads it as 'स वर्तिको धर्मगुणोऽष्टकश्च'.

There are some other terms used for the *vtt*s such as *vākya*, *vyākhyāna-sūtra*, *bhāṣyasūtra*, *anutantra* and *anusmṛti*.

A brief account of the *vārttikakāra*-s other than those of Kātyāyana —

Pāṇini was followed by many grammarians out of which Bhāradvāja, Kṛoṣṭṛ, Vāḍava, Sunāga, Vyāghrabhūti, Vaiyāghrapāda and Kātyāyana wrote *vtt*s i.e. critical and supplementary notes on the Aṣṭādhyāyī. However except that of Kātyāyana, the works of other *vārttikakāra*-s have lost. Apart from the grammarians mentioned

by the MBh, some unknown grammarians have also contributed to the corpus of the *vtt*s. E.g. समो हिततयोर्वा लोपः this is the *vtt* on P 6.1.144. The name of any specific grammarian is not mentioned here. However Patañjali commenting on P 1.1.27 सर्वादीनि सर्वनामानि says, 'इहान्ये वैयाकरणाः समस्तते विभाषा लोपमारभन्ते – समो हिततयोर्वेति।'

This means the actual *vtt* समो हिततयोर्वा लोपः is from the grammarian other than Kātyāyana.

Patañjali has mentioned the *Vtt*s of Bhāradvāja in the *bhāṣya* on P 1.1.20,56; P 1.2.22; P 1.3.67; P 3.1.38,48,89; P 4.1.79; P 6.4.47,155.

Whether the Bhāradvāja *vtt*s directly focused the *Pāṇinīya sūtras* or these are the *vtt*s from some non-Pāṇinian grammatical tradition is not clear. A point should be noted that Pāṇini has also mentioned the grammarian Bhāradvāja.

Another bigger group of the *vtt*s is that of Saunāga *vtt*s. The MBh mentions the Saunāga *vtt*s in the *bhāṣya* on P 2.2.18, P 3.2.56, P 4.1.74;87, P 4.3.155, P 6.1.95 and P 6.3.43.

Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka maintains that like the Kātyāyana *vtt*s the Saunāga *vtt*s might have been directly on the Pāṇinian *sūtra*-s.

The Saunāga *vtt*s are comparatively bigger than Kātyāyana *vtt*s. Even Patañjali has noticed this fact saying , 'एतदेव च सौनागैर्विस्तरतरकेण पठितम्।'

There is only one reference to the Kṛoṣṭriya *vtt*s with the remark, 'परिभाषान्तरमिति च कृत्वा क्रोष्ट्रीयाः पठन्ति –नियमादिको गुणवृद्धी भवतो विप्रतिषेधेन।' (MBh on P 1.1.3)

The MBh on P 8.2.106 mentions Vāḍava and elsewhere Patañjali also mentions Kuṅaravāḍava. Whether both are one or different is a point of dispute. The MBh doesn't mention any *vtt* of Vāḍava. It is Nāgeśa in his Bhāṣyapradīpodyota on P 8.2.106 mentions 'सिद्धं बिदितोरिति वार्त्तिकं वाडवस्य'.

There is only occasional reference to Kuṅaravāḍava (कृणरवाडवस्त्राह नैष वहीनरः....वैहिनरिः।). No *vtt* is mentioned of Kuṅaravāḍava.

Vyāghrabhūti is not directly mentioned in the MBh. However Kaiyaṭa says that the *śloka-vārttika* जग्धिविधिल्यपि etc. quoted in the MBh on P2.4.36 is from Vyāghrabhūti.

The MBh does not mention any *vtt* of Vaiyāghrapadya. However a *śloka* शुष्किकाशुष्कजङ्घा च referred to by Kāśikā on P8.2.1 पूर्वत्रासिद्धम् is mentioned as from Vaiyāghrapadya by Bhaṭṭoji Dikṣita.

Pt. Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka maintains that Vaiyāghrapadya might have been a grammarian who might have composed his own grammar.

Thus the occasional references in the MBh suffice the fact that at least 8 grammarians have composed the *vtt*s on the Aṣṭādhyāyī out of whom Kātyāyana's ones are available to us.

About Kātyāyana and his *vārttikapāṭha* —

Kātyāyana —

The *vtt pāṭha* that is available today is believed to be that of Kātyāyana. Hence Kātyāyana is aptly recognized as the *vārttikakāra* even by MBh.

There are some other treatises that are also credited to the name Kātyāyana, such as Śulbasūtra, Yajur Prātiśākhya etc. Whether these are different Kātyāyana-s or one, is a point of dispute. This problem is resolved by Pt. Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka saying that there might have many Kātyāyana-s, out of them *vārttikakāra* Kātyāyana is Vararuci Kātyāyana staying in southern part (to the south of Vindhya mountains) of India as per the remark of Patañjali.

***Vārttikapāṭha* —**

Kātyāyana has composed *vārttika*-s on 1245 *sūtra*-s only. The number of the *vtt*s on each of 1245 *sūtra*-s varies. The total number of the *vtt*s goes upto 4000 approximately.

There are very few good editions of सवार्त्तिकसूत्रपाठ (i.e. the text of the *sūtra*-s accompanied by the *vtt*s there on). There are some editions that give bare texts of the *vtt*s as an appendix.

A point to be noted that a *vtt-pāṭha* appended to Kāśikāvṛtti and the one to the Siddhāntakaumudī slightly differ.

The *vtt*s are commented upon by Pantañjali. The commentary is called Mahābhāṣya. The *vtt*s that occur in the MBh are taken as the authentic one.

Thus there is no separate text of *vtt*s. They are always to be read in the context of the *sūtra*-s and as a part of the MBh.

About the *vārttika*-s —

The *vtt*s are like the small, compact notes on the *sūtra*-s. The *vārttikakāra* has tried to maintain *sūtra*-style i.e. a condensed statement without the verbal form. According to K.V. Abhyankar, the *vtt*s seem to be notes on the *sūtra*-s prepared by some teachers, to facilitate the teaching of the *sūtra*-s. The *vtt*s have suggested omission, addition, modification and explanation for either certain word of a *sūtra* or for the entire *sūtra*. So there are some *vtt*s explaining the meaning of the *sūtra*-s. E.g. *vtt*s on P 1.1.9 तुल्यास्यप्रयत्नं सवर्णम् and P 1.1.10 नाञ्जलौ. Here Kātyāyana has introduced the principle of *vākyāprisamapti* i.e. interdependency of the sentences in one given discourse. Accordingly one sentence plucked out of the context is meaningless. Some *vtt*s investigate the purpose behind the formation of the *sūtra*, E.g. 30 *vtt*s on P1.1.56 स्थानिवदादेशोऽनल्विधौ। Some *vtt*s reveal the significance of certain word of the *sūtra*. (E.g. 17 *vtt*s on the P 1.1.3 इको गुणवृद्धी and 10 *vtt*s on P 1.1.51 उरणपरः). The *vtt*s on the *sūtra*-s P1.1.6 दीधिवेवीटाम् and P 1.1.64 पूर्वपरावरदक्षिणोत्तरापराधराणि व्यवस्थायामसंज्ञायाम् have refuted some words from the *sūtra*-s. The *vtt*s on the *pratyāhāra sūtra* ऋलृक् and on P 1.1.4 न धातुलोप आर्घधातुके have refuted the entire *sūtra*-s. The *vtt*s on P 1.1.11 ईदूदेद्विवचनं प्रगृह्यम् and P 1.1.13 शे have justified the *sūtra*-s through the debate method.

Many scholars maintain that the *vtt*s are composed so to find out faults with Pāṇini. According to them the phrases 'उपसंख्यानम्' or 'इति वक्तव्यम्' in the *vtt*s are stating the lacuna of the *sūtra*-s. When Kātyāyana refutes a word and even a *sūtra*, he is taken as attacking Pāṇini. However so is not the case, holds K.V. Abhyankar.

He maintains that Kātyāyana's suggestions about the addition, omission and refutation of certain *sūtra* is the reflection of the change in the language. When Kātyāyana thinks that certain word - current in the language - could not be accounted for by the *sūtra*, he suggests the addition or modification in the *sūtra*, so to cover that particular word or the expression.

Kātyāyana's contribution to grammatical tradition —

1. Kātyāyana's first *vtt* सिद्धे शब्दार्थसंबन्धे लोकतः अर्थप्रयुक्ते शब्दप्रयोगे शास्त्रेण धर्मनियमः क्रियते यथा लौकिकवैदिकेषु। gave the decisive turn to the history of grammar. He states that the role of grammar is to make '*dharmaniyama*', i.e. the grammar 'instructs' that the correct words should be spoken since it contributes to the religious merit. With this crept the concept of '*sādhutva*' for the language and that of the *dharma* as a result of using *śāstra* i.e. grammar-sanctioned words. The *vtt* 9 from Paspasāhnikā also echos the same idea- 'शास्त्रपूर्वके प्रयोगेऽभ्युदयस्तत्तुल्यं वेदशब्देन (Tr. the prosperity lies in using the words with proper knowledge of the rules. It is just like the words from the veda-s)'. This gave the role of instructor of the *sādhu* words or sanctioning authority to the grammar.

This very concept of grammar being *śāstra* i.e. sanctioning authority motivated the *vārttikakāra* himself to compose the *upasaṁkhyāna vtt*s in order to bring some usages prevalent then under the purview of grammar. The *prakriyā* texts that guide the formation of the words according to the *sūtra*-s, other grammatical traditions giving easier and less complicated program to form the words and sentences came forth with the sole motivation of teaching how to form *sādhu* words.

2. Kātyāyana's view about the grammar is note worthy. He says, 'लक्ष्यलक्षणे व्याकरणम्। (*vtt* 14 quoted in the Paspasāhnikā of MBh). (Tr. the grammar means both the targeted language and rules to govern it). This foresighted grammarian has

explicitly stated that a grammar cannot neglect the spoken language, which further implies that if the language goes on changing then the grammar has to take note of it. According to this *vtt* the grammar is *lakṣaṇa* i.e. on one hand it 'describes' the language and on the other hand it 'defines' the language.

3. The *vtt* is first available text introducing debate or dialogue style of commentary. Considering the chronology of the Sanskrit literature Kātyāyana follows Yāska who has used prose 'explanatory style'. However it is Kātyāyana, who has tried actual argument style with the expressions, सिद्धं तु, 'न वा', 'इति वक्तव्यम्' etc. The structure of this style is 'if' it is 'A' then there should be 'B', otherwise there would be 'C' which is not desired.

E.g. कारक इति संज्ञानिर्देशश्चेत्संज्ञिनोऽपि निर्देशः । *vtt* 1 on P 1.4.23

इतरथा ह्यनिष्टप्रसङ्गो ग्रामस्य समीपादागच्छतीत्यकारकस्य ।। *vtt* 2 on P 1.4.23

Through subsequent *vtt*s 7,8,9 etc. he has stated how the role of *karṭr* can be assigned to the objects that are otherwise instruments, substratum etc. in the certain action. So the debate is settled on the point that the *saṃjñā sūtra* P 1.4.23 कारके doesn't need *saṃjñi*, since the technical term *kārake* itself is very significant and appropriate. The *vtt*s of Kātyāyana are bigger than Pāṇini *sūtra*-s but they have maintained the rhythmic prose style sometimes even akin to metrical composition.

4. The commentarial merit of the *vtt* lies in its justifying certain word from the *sūtra*. E.g. *vtt* on P 1.1.3 इको गुणवृद्धी is 'इग्रहणमात्सन्ध्यक्षरव्यञ्जननिवृत्त्यर्थम्' (Tr. The word *ik* in the *sūtra* is to restrict the application of *guṇa* and *vṛddhi* to *ā*, diphthongs i.e. *e*, *o*, *ai*, *au* and consonants). The *vtt* means to say that in absence of the word *ik*, the *guṇa* and *vṛddhi* would have been applicable to *ā*, diphthongs and to consonants also, which is not desired.

5. It is Kātyāyana who has given some novel techniques for the interpretation of the *sūtra*-s such as *yogavibhāga* i.e. splitting a rule.

E.g. P 1.1.17 is उञ् ऊँ (Tr. The particle *uñ* becomes *pragrhya* when followed by *iti* and substituted by *ū*).

Kātyāyana has suggested the split in the *sūtra* through the *vtt* on this *sūtra*. 'उञ् इति योगविभागः।' which means the *sūtra* should be split at *uñah*. Then the meaning we get is that the particle *u* is *pragrhya* when followed by *iti* according to Śākalya. This implies that according to Pāṇini it is not *pragrhya* and hence can undergo *samdhī*. Thus according to Śākalya the form will be 'उ इति' whereas according to Pāṇini the *u* would form *samdhī* with *iti* and it would be विति.

With split one gets one more rule 'ऊँ'. The *vtt* 2 on the *sūtra* is 'ऊँ वा शाकल्यस्य।' means according to Śākalya the *u* is substituted by ऊँ i.e. nasalized *uñ*.

The result of the *yogavibhāga* is there would be 3 forms with the particle 'u'

1. उ इति - no *samdhī* being *pragrhya*
2. विति - with *samdhī*
3. ऊँ इति - with substitution of nasalized

6. Extending scope of the *sūtra* through *upasamkhyāna vtt*s is the major contribution of the *vārttikakāra*. The scope of the *sūtra* is extended to cover the contemporary usages which otherwise would have been left unaccounted. E.g. P 1.4.24 ध्रुवमपायेऽपादानम् assigns the technical term *apādāna* to the object that is the stable point in the action meaning 'moving away'. Accordingly ग्रामादागच्छति (He comes from a village) is justified. However the colloquial usages अधर्मात् जुगुप्सते, धर्माद् विरमति, स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः etc. remain unjustified by the *sūtra*, since the verbs therein do not contain any element meaning movement. Thus the *vtt* on P 1.4.24 जुगुप्साविरामप्रमादार्थानामुपसंख्यानम् extends the scope of the *apādānasamjñā* to the *karakā*-s that are directly involved in these actions, viz *jugupsā* - abhorrence, *virāma* - deviation, *pramāda* - negligence.

6.1 The *vtts* that extend the scope of the *sūtra* are called *upasaṁkhyāna vtts*. As it is Pāṇini's *sūtra* corpus can hardly account for the usages such as प्रकृत्या मधुरः or प्रासादात् प्रेक्षते or किं निमित्तं वसति, केन निमित्तेन वसति and with all other *vibhakti*-s. It is *vārttikakāra* who composed *vtts* (*vtt* 1 on P 2.3.18, *vtt* 1 on P 2.3.28, *vtt* 1 on P 2.3.23) to justify these usages. These *vtts* got the status and authority of the *sūtra*-s.

6.2 Complimentary *vtts* to *dvittva* (reduplication) (*vtts* 2,3 on P 6.1.3) justify the forms such as *īrṣyiyiṣati* (or *īrṣyīṣati*), *kaṇḍūyiyiṣati* etc.

7. Exactly apposite to *upasaṁkhyāna*, the *vtts* have restricted the scope of the words from the *sūtra*, concentrating on their meaning. E.g. *vtt* 5,6,7 on P 1.4.52. The *sūtra* is about the roots meaning eating and about those meaning 'movement'. Out of several roots meaning to eat the roots *ad* and *khād* are excluded by the *vārttikakāra*. Out of the verbs meaning 'movement' he excludes the root '*vah*' when the agent of the *vah* is not under the control of the causative agent. There are several such examples. Like the *upasaṁkhyāna vtts* these restricting *vtts* also aim at getting *sūtra*-sanction to some current forms. It is necessary since the over application of the *sūtra* may yield the forms which are not used and those which are actually used would remain unaccounted.

I would like to discuss the point why Kātyāyana does so? I sincerely maintain that the entire *upasaṁkhyāna* or *anuktacintā* activity seems to be motivated by the concept of '*sādhutva*' which means forms derived by or sanctioned by the rules of grammar. If certain usage which is current in the language but could not be derived from the rules, then it means people are speaking wrong form. The *upasaṁkhyāna* or 'इति वक्तव्यम्' type of *vtts* bring these so called wrong or ungrammatical forms under the perview of grammar. As per Kātyāyana's definition of grammar (c.f. लक्ष्यलक्षणे व्याकरणम् / *vtt* 14 quoted in the Paspasāhnikā of MBh) the grammar cannot stand without *lakṣya* i.e. the language.

8. The *vtt* on P 1.4.27 वारणार्थेषु कर्मग्रहणानर्थक्यं कर्तुरीप्सिततमं कर्मेति वचनात्। (Tr. In the *Sūtra* वारणार्थानामीप्सितः, the word *karma* doesn't bear any significance, since Pāṇini has already formed the *sutra* कर्तुरीप्सिततमं कर्म।) gives the clue that the *vārttikakāra* might be having different wording of the *sūtra*, than what we know. The *vtt* says that the word *karma* in the present *sūtra* is of no use. However the actual *sūtra* doesn't bear the word *karman*.

9. The importance of the *vtt*s also lies in shading light on some crucial concept in the *sūtra*-s. E.g. P 2.1.1 समर्थः पदविधिः।

It is the *vtt* that defines the concept *sāmarthya* saying पृथगर्थानामेकार्थीभावः समर्थवचनम् *vtt* 1 on P 2.1.1. Kātyāyana also mentions another definition of *sāmarthya* (c.p परस्परव्यपेक्षां सामर्थ्यमेके *vtt* 4, *ibid*)

10. Definition of *vākya* is one more contribution of the *vtt*s. The *vtt*s 9 and 10 on P2.1.1 define *vākya*. *Vtt* 9 is आख्यातं साव्यकारकविशेषणं वाक्यम्। (Tr. A verbal form along with the particle, the *karaka*-s and the qualifiers is *vākya*). The *vtt* 10 defines *vākya* as एकतिङ् वाक्यम् (Tr. A group of words containing one *tinanta* i.e. finite verbal form is *vākya*).

11. The *vārttikakāra* has also introduced new suffix *kelimar* to be added to the roots in the agentive sense, (c.p केलिमर उपसंख्यानम् *vtt* 1 on P3.1.96) to account for the forms *pacelimāḥ*, *bhidelimāni* etc. Since Pāṇini has not enumerated this suffix, such forms could have been *asādhu*. With the *vtt* such forms got the *sādhutva* (i.e. grammatical correctness).

12. Some *vtt*s help to understand the *sūtra*-s. These *vtt*s are called *paribhāṣā vtt*s. E.g. नानर्थकेऽलोऽन्त्यविधिरनभ्यासविकारे *vtt* 2 on P 1.1.65 ज्याग्रहणमनर्थकं प्रातिपदिकग्रहणे लिङ्गविशिष्टस्यापि ग्रहणात्। *vtt* 4 on P 4.1.1 कृद्ग्रहणे गतिकारकपूर्वस्यापि। *vtt* 9 on P 1.4.13

न वा निर्दिश्यमानस्यादेशात्। *vtt* 3 on P 6.4.130

सिद्धं तु लक्षणप्रतिपदोक्तयोः प्रतिपदोक्तस्यैव ग्रहणात् *vtt* 2 on P 6.2.2

Several such *paribhāṣā vtt*s are incorporated in the *Paribhāṣenduśekhara* with slight change in the wording.

Some important theories proposed by the *vārttikakāra*. —

1. The *śabda* (word), *artha* (meaning) and their relationship is eternal i.e. not produced by any agency such as speech community or grammar or any grammarian.
2. Using the grammatically correct form yields the 'dharma' religious merit.
3. Though a long vowel seems to be a cluster of two short ones, it should always be treated as the separate integral entity and never as a cluster of two vowels. (*vtt* 9 on ऐऔच।)
4. A syllable is independently meaningless. However a certain sequence of the syllables when recognized as a root or stem or suffix (*prātipadika*) does bear meaning. (*vtt* on P 1.2.45)
5. *Vārttikakāra* maintains that *anusvāra* and *visarga* being *ūṣman* sound should come under the *antaḥsthā*.

Epilogue —

Thus the contribution of *vtt*s may be evaluated from 3 different view points. From language point of view it has set a trend to get authenticity to the words being used. From grammatical view point the *vtt*s have introduced new suffixes. From philosophical view point *vtt*s have introduced the concept of eternity of the word its meaning and their relationship.

So this foresighted *vārttikakāra* is aptly honoured by the tradition by including him
in *trimuni*.

Abbreviations —

- MBh - Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali
 P - Aṣṭādhyāyī *sūtra* of Pāṇini
vtt or *vtts* - *vārttika*-s of Kātyāyana

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