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Different concepts on lakṣaṇā

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Abstract

In any language, in addition to express their primary meanings, words may be used to indicate or suggest some secondary meaning also. This meaning is always different from the primary meaning. In the opinion of Dr. K.Kunjnni Raja. "If we take the word as denoting its normal primary meanings, the sentence may become non-sensical in the context. This produces a 'psychic resistance' in the listener, and there is a sort of break in the flow. It excites attention and requires interpretation for understanding the purport".

Keywords: Śakti, upacāra, gaṇi, vṛtti, bhakti, upalakṣaṇā

Introduction

The actual referent of the word has to be taken as different from its normal one, but in some way connected with it, either through similarity or through some other relation. This function of the word, denoting a referent different from its normal and primary one, but some how related to it, is called Lakṣaṇā or upacāra ^[1].

Concept of Lakṣaṇā

From this we can say that with the help of the primary signification or expressive power (Śakti), words can express primary meanings. VP Bhatta opine that when a speaker may intend to indicate or suggest a secondary meaning which is different from the primary meaning, but at the same time, related in some way or other to the primary meaning on the general that the primary meaning may not fit into context or that secondary meaning may point out some qualities of the referent or being about some poetical charm or excellence to the usage ^[2].

Besides Lakṣaṇā, the terms like upacāra, gaṇi, vṛtti, bhakti etc. are also used to refer to this secondary meaning. In English, the word metaphor is popularly used instead of this Lakṣaṇā ^[3].

To make a brief study about Lakṣaṇā, we are to mention Yāska first. Because various examples of Luptopama is 'simhaḥ' 'vyāghraḥ' etc. can be seen in Yāska's works and it should later becomes the stock example of Lakṣaṇā like simhomāṇavakaḥ' ^[4] etc. Thus many examples of Lakṣaṇā without being named as such occur in Yāska's work of the Grammarians, Patanjali is the earliest to recognise the phenomenon of the transference of epithet which is nothing other than what we call a Lakṣaṇā. Though he does not mention the terms Lakṣaṇā' or guṇavṛtti, he comes to refer to the practice of using a certain word for something other than what it usually stands for ^[5]. Bharṭhari comes to use the term Guṇa alone for the secondarily signified meaning; and no where in his work he has mentioned the term Lakṣaṇā. In later works, we can see that "kākebhyo dadhi rakṣyatām' is an example of 'upalakṣaṇā' ('ajahatsvārtha') or of an upādānalakṣaṇā' may be said to have originated from Bharṭhari's kākebhyo rakṣyatām sarphiḥ ^[6]. In Parama Laghu Mañjuṣa, we can see the approach of Nageśa to lakṣaṇā is that he is in favour of Tātparyānupapatti which is the Lakṣaṇā bīja ^[7].

Coming to the Ālamkārikas, we find that the secondary function does not come in use till Ānandavardhana's time. Bhāmaha shall have to be admitted as the first Ālamkārika to have recognised the transference of epithet i.e. Gaṇi vṛtti. An observation of Abhinavagupta also confirms our idea in the matter ^[8]. According to Dandin, Guṇavṛtti as the cause of certain. Ālamkāras and he recommends its acceptance for the purpose of removing Grāmyatādoṣa in poetry ^[9].

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Vamana comes to use the term lakṣaṇa in the sense of secondary signification in general. Anandavardhana uses the term Guṇavṛtti in a wider sense so as to cover all possible varieties of secondary signification. To describe this Guṇavṛtti, he uses the term 'amukhyavṛtti. By them term Guṇavṛtti, Abhinavagupta covers both the Gauṇi and suddhā varieties of lakṣaṇā, Bhojarāja maintain a line of demarcation between Guṇā vṛtti and Lakṣaṇā. Later Ālamkārikas like Mammata, Viśvanātha and Hemacandra gives an elaborate discussion about lakṣaṇa and from Mammata, lakṣaṇa came to be a generic name for all the varieties of secondary signification.

Among the Mīmāṃsakas, Jaimini used the term 'Bhakti' in the sense of secondary signification. Bādarayana, the author of Brahmasutra use the term Bhakti and Sabara-Swamin use the term Guṇavṛtti to denote the secondary signification. Kumārila is the first scholar who point out that it is the Lakṣaṇā function which operates to convey the sentence meaning in each and every sentence. Pārthasārathi Mīśra and Nārayaṇa Bhatta, the followers of Kumārila give support to Kumārila^[10].

Coming to the Prābhākara school, Prabhākara Mīśra uses the terms Upacāra. Guṇa and Bhakti for secondary signification under various contexts. His illustration of Guṇavṛtti is 'gaurvāhikah. Sālikanātha, the follower of Prabhākara, presents the view of Kumārila and asserts that lakṣaṇa cannot be resorted to in each and every sentence; but it can be resorted to only when the primary meaning of a word comes to be discarded as in 'gaṅgāyām ghoṣah.

Of the Naiyāyikas, Gautama has used the term bhakti (Bhākta) or upacāra to refer to the secondary signification of words. But Jayantabhatta has used the term lakṣaṇa for the first time in his Nyāya mañjari and later epistemologists such as Gadādhara adopted the term lakṣaṇā for the main secondary significative function of indicative power or transfer" Gangesa defines lakṣaṇa as a separate vṛtti of words to bring forth a secondary meaning for getting involved in a syntactical relation with a primary meaning of other words where the primary meaning of a word fails to do so^[11].

Definition of Lakṣaṇa

Among the Ālamkārikas, Mammata has defined lakṣaṇā as follows: When the primary meaning of a word is not compatible with the meaning of a sentence, the power of a word by which another meaning connected with the primary meaning of the word is conveyed through usage or motive is called Lakṣaṇā. He opinions that the three conditions under which lakṣaṇā operates are:

1. Mukhyārthabādha (obstruction or incompatibility of primary meaning)
2. Tadyoga (recognisable connection between the primary and secondary meanings)
3. Rudhi (usage) and prayojana (motive)

Another Ālamkārika, Viśvanātha has defined lakṣaṇā in a slightly different language. He opinions that Lakṣaṇa (Secondary Sense) is taken recourse to when Abhidha (Primary Sense) is not applicable i.e. when the chief meaning (Mukhyārtha or Vācyārtha) is obstructed or hampered (Badhita) in some way. It gives an occasion for figurative interpretation (Lakṣyārtha). In other words we can say that in their view, when the primary meaning of a word is logically incompatible with rest of the sentence, Lakṣaṇā function is resorted to for bringing into comprehension a new meaning connected with the failing primary meaning of the word.

Logicians defined lakṣaṇā in general to be the relation between the primary meaning and the secondary indicated meaning. In Padārtha candrika, we can see that the occasion for laksana arises only when there is an obstruction to primary meaning. In other words, if some syntactical incompatibility or a hindrance to the intended meaning that necessitates laksana. Another definition of lakṣaṇā similar to that of ālamkārikas is given by some naiyāyikas also. Later Naiyāyikas described lakṣaṇa as a Śakya Sambandha or Svaśakyasambandha. In their opinion, implication is the relation with that meaning which is denoted by the denotative function. In kārikāvali, we can see that implication is the relation with that meaning which is denoted by the denotative function, because of the incompatibility of the intention of the speaker. Gangesopādhyāya defines lakṣaṇa as a separate vṛtti of words to bring forth a secondary meaning for getting involved in a syntactical relation with a primary meaning of other words where the primary meaning of a word fails to do so^[12].

Prābhākara Mīmāṃsakas admitted Laksana and it is brought into separation by a relation of the primary meaning (The relation being with regard to another meaning which comes to be designated as the Lakṣyārtha). In the opinion of Bhattas laksana as being based on a relation of the denoted sense of the word that signifies a secondary sense. According to the Mimamsakas, the primary meaning (The relation of which with a newer meaning, i.e. lakṣyārtha, is stated to be the basis for a lakṣana) is described as 'Svabodhya' 'Svajñāpya' and sometimes svaśakya' also. These terms, in the sense of the primary meaning are applicable not only to a padārtha, but also to a vākyārtha. While in the Bhāṭṭa school, the primary meaning is the meaning of an individual word, in the school of the prābhākaras, it may be the total meaning of a sentence.

Conclusion

According to the Grammarians, Lakṣaṇā is the attribution or super imposition of the denotation on a secondary sense, ie, śakyatāvachedakāropa.

For example:- When the word 'Ganges' indicates the bank in 'gaṅgāyām ghoṣah; the indication of the same bank can be stated to be the super imposition of the denotation of word 'Ganges' on the secondary sense 'Bank'. Thus, this theory views the indication as an erroneous perception of the denotation. From this we can see that Grammarians also hold the same view with the Navya Naiyāyikas. According to them, lakṣaṇā comes for operation because of a Tātparyanupapatti be not accepted as the determining factor for the operation of a Laksana, in the expression gaṅgāyām ghoṣah' the word' ghoṣā' may mean an aquatic creature by lakṣaṇā. In his opinion śakyasambandhāḥ Lakṣaṇā^[13].

References

1. Indian theories of meaning (ITM); p. 231.
2. V.P. Bhatta: Gadadhara's sakti vāda. 1:54.
3. ITM-title page for the chapter on metaphor (Lakṣana).
4. atha..... kutsāyām kāka iti- Nirukta 3.18.
5. Siddham tu striyaḥ pumśabdenābhidhānāt. On 'pumyogādākhyāyām-Mahabhashyam under vārtika. 3. p. 4.1.48
6. Kākebhyo rakṣyatām sarpiriti balopi coditah/ upaghatapare vākye na svādibhyo na rakṣati – Vakyapadiya: 2.312.
7. Vastutastu tātparyanupapatti sandhānameva tadbijam - ParamaLaghu Manjusha. p. 45.

8. Bhämahenoktam Sabdaschando.....gunaventisca iti. Locana, vide Dhvanyaloka. p. 34 .
9. nithyütodgirñavântädi gunavṛtivyasrayam ati sundaramanyatra gramyakākṣām vigahate | Kavyadarsa-1.95.
10. itareṣām tu..... Mimāmsakāḥ - NRM - p. 101-102.
11. 11 laksana ca väkyärthänvayah Tattvacintamani (TC). p. 660.
12. Lakṣanā ca..... Väkyärthänvayah TC. p. 660.
13. Vayam tu padarthä lakṣanayaiva väkyärtham bodhayantiti brumah –Manameyodaya. p. 94.