

A discussion about the Mimamsa theory of meaning

Dr. Bhaskar Jha,

Asstt. Prof. in philosophy, Raiganj University.

Abstract: *The present paper deals with the theory of meaning as illustrated by the Mimamsakas. Philosophers from ancient times tried to answer the question: How we can achieve knowledge? Mimamsakas said that verbal testimony is an important source by which we can achieve many valid knowledge. But the problems are: What is verbal testimony? How can we understand a certain meaning from a certain word? Whether only Vedic statements can be regarded as sabda pramana, or not? Whether by the sakti of the terms used in a sentence we can understand only separate meanings or also understand the relations among the meanings? Whether Vedas are eternal, or not? Whether the letters or varnas are eternal, or not? In this paper I shall explain all the above problems from the standpoint of Mimamsa philosophy. I shall also explain here whether the opinions of the Mimamsakas in respect of the above problems are acceptable, or not.*

Key words: *Pauruseya, Apauruseya, Anvitabhidhanvada, Abhihitanvayavada, Laksana.*

I

Indian epistemology accepts that knowledge is not possible without the four basic factors. The factors are: Pramata or the knower, Prameya or the knowable object, Pramana or the means of valid knowledge and Pramiti or valid knowledge of the object. In Indian epistemology, valid knowledge is called prama and the means of valid knowledge is called pramana. About the number of pramanas, there is controversy in Indian philosophy. Prabhakar Mimamsakas have accepted five pramanas, which are pratyaksa, anumana, upamana, sabda and arthapatti and Bhatta Mimamsakas have accepted six pramanas including arthapatti with the above five pramanas.

Mimamsakas say that sabda is a very important pramana. Sabda means verbal authority. "An intelligible sentence yields knowledge except when it is known to be the statement of an unreliable person (anapta-vakya). This is known as verbal testimony or simply testimony (sabda) or authority." 1

Prabhakar says that only Vedic sentence can be called sabda pramana. According to Prabhakara, sabda may be of two types – personal or pauruseya and impersonal or apauruseya. The words of trustworthy persons and all other persons are called pauruseya or personal because these are uttered by persons who may be associated with many types of defects. On the other hand, the words of Veda are called apauruseya because these are not created by any person. The words or sentences which belong to pauruseya-group cannot be accepted as sabdapramana, according to Prabhakara, because the knowledge produced by pauruseya words or statements is purely inferential. "Prabhakara holds that the sentences of common parlance i.e., non-Vedic sentences cannot be called sabda pramana, because the knowledge produced by them is purely inferential." 2 We may doubt the statements, which are uttered by a person. These statements may be contradicted afterwards. Prabhakara says that only Vedic statements are sabdapramana, because these are not pauruseya or created by persons and from these statements we can attain valid knowledge. Prabhakara have accepted the intrinsic validity of Vedic statements. According to him, the words of Vedas are valid in itself.

Testimony is derived from the meanings of words. Prabhakar Mimamsakas say that knowledge of the sentence- meaning arises from the words only. A word is that which has denotative power or sakti. Sakti is an auxiliary cause for understanding the meaning of a sentence. Prabhakara rejects the view of Kumarila that sakti belongs to the padartha. According to Prabhakara Mimamsa, sakti belongs to the pada because pada is the cause for understanding vakyartha or sentence-meaning. Salikanatha supports this view. To prove this view Salikanatha in his Vakarthamatrik said that the padas or words appear at first which have abhidha sakti and the purport of the vakya is determined by the padas. Mimamsakas say that sakti is the relation of a word with its meaning. Prabhakara says that in the form of an anvaya relation the padas denote vakyartha. "Regarding the question as to whether the padas or the padarthas are the causes of understanding the Vakyartha, the Prabhakaras contend that it is the padas and not the padarthas as stated by the followers of Kumarila. The padas, the Prabhakaras contend, denote the Vakyartha in the form of an Anvaya (relation)." 3

The Bhatta Mimamsa supports abhihitanvayavada, which formulates that the karana of vakarthabodha is padartha. They say that a word or pada denotes unrelated meaning. But Salikanatha strictly objects this view and said that pada is the karana of vakyartha i.e. from the padas we can understand the meaning of a sentence and padas have sakti. Prabhakara Mimamsa supports anvitabhidhanavada.

Anvitabhidhanavada accepts two powers of the padas: the producing power or Adhanasakti and the power to convey the relation of the padarthas or anvayajnapanasakti. With these two the Bhatta Mimamsa accepts one other sakti i.e. abhidhana-sakti or the power of denoting the mutual relation among the padarthas. The Bhatta Mimamsakas said that from the separate words of a sentence we can understand the separate meanings. “Afterwards, there is another knowledge through which the relation called Visesana-visesyabhava among the padartha is established which gives rise to the meaning of a sentence.”⁴ The Prabhakara Mimamsakas, on the other hand, said that if a word is not associated with a verb or action, then it cannot be meaningful. This theory is called anvitabhidhanavada.

According to Prabhakara Mimamsaka, sakti or signifying power exists in the significant words. Sakti is the relation of a word with its meaning. Sakti is inherent in a word. A word is a substance (dravya) and its signifying power is intrinsic to it in the sense that it does not come from outside. But though sakti is intrinsic to the sound, it is not identical with sound. The Mimamsakas accept sakti as a new kind of entity, which is different from the seven categories of the Vaisesikas. To them the signifying power or sakti of a term signifies a thing as related to another thing.

When we understand the meaning of a sentence then at first the meaning of the terms used in the sentence arise in our mind and the meaning of the terms arise by the sakti of the terms. We all know that a sentence is a complexity of related terms. We cannot form a sentence by some unrelated terms. Now the question is: How can we know the relation of the terms used in a sentence? Prabhakara says that by the signifying power or sakti we can understand not only the meanings but also the relation among the meanings of the terms. As in a sentence we cannot find anything other than the terms so we should accept that the relation among the meanings is produced by the sakti of the terms. That means, by the sakti we cannot only understand some unrelated things, but by the sakti we can understand a thing as related with another thing. Thus, by the sakti we can understand the relation. They are called Padavadins because they believe that sakti belongs to a pada. The meaning understood by the sakti of a term is called sakyartha. What is signified directly by the signifying power of a term is a class-character or universal. “According to the Mimamsakas, the word primarily denotes the universal or jati, by the function of abhidha”.⁵ The knowledge of the particular things having the universal arises indirectly. After hearing a term the Universal is at first presented to our mind. The knowledge of the particulars arises by implication (arthapatti). When someone is going to understand the meaning of a term like ‘cow’ etc. then he cannot understand a bare object without any character. In such cases, he understands something, which is characterized by certain attributes or features. The awareness of something having certain attributes or characters presupposes the knowledge of that attributes or character. Thus, when someone is going to understand the meaning of a term like ‘cow’ etc. the first thing to be presented in his mind is a class character or a feature which is common to all cows. The feature which is common to all cows is ‘cowness’. Cowness is a class-character or universal. So, it is the universal, which is first presented to our mind. The knowledge of particular things having the universal arises after this awareness. The knowledge of particular things arises by implication or arthapatti. So, the signifying power of a term directly signifies the universal and the knowledge of the particular arises indirectly by implication. In this way, Bhatta Mimamsakas prove that the signifying power of a term signifies the universal as after hearing a term the universal is at first presented to our mind (prathamopasthittvat). Mimamsakas take this position for logical economy or laghava. They think that if we do not accept this view, then we have to say that the signifying power or sakti signifies the particulars. But particulars are infinite in number. So we should accept infinity of signifying powers of a term. “For the Mimamsaka seems to feel that only alternative to his theory would be to say that the direct ‘signifying power’ of a term has reference not to the class-character but to each one of the particulars coming under the class. But since the particulars may be infinite in number and may exist through the past, the present and the future, a term like ‘cow’ has to be taken on the alternative view as having an infinity of ‘signifying power’.”⁶ But if we accept that the sakti or signifying power signifies a class-character or universal, then we can avoid this difficulty. For this reason the Mimamsakas argue that the signifying power of a term directly signifies the universal. Thus after hearing a term like ‘cow’ we can understand ‘cowness’ by its signifying power. The universals are eternal. A word denotes the eternal universal. As the relation between a word and its meaning is natural, necessary, inseparable and internal, so the relation is eternal and unchanging. The knowledge of sakti does not arise from the convention of the old. It is not due to God’s will also. It is natural and eternal. To the Mimamsakas language is not created by any person- human or divine. According to them, philology is a natural science. As light manifests objects, so the conventional element of language helps us to manifest the eternal words. So, it is called sahakari or secondary.

The Mimamsakas did not accept the view that the Veda is the work of God. They said that the Veda is eternal. “The Vedas are eternal, since the words of which they are composed are eternal. The relationship between the word and its meaning is natural and not created by convention. That there is such a relationship between the word and its meaning is directly cognisable.”⁷ So the Nyaya view of its divine origination cannot be accepted. An eternal thing cannot be produced or destroyed. We can remember the author of all books, not

the author of the Veda. So, it is not created by any person and it is eternal. No one can remember the divine authorship of the Vedas. A statement is a collection of words and a word is made by two or more letters (varna). A varna is an articulated sound. Spoken sounds are symbolized by the different letters of an alphabet. Thus the statement is a collection of letter sounds. To the Mimamsakas the letter sound is eternal. Letter sound or varna is different from the sound or dhvani when it is spoken and it is also different from its symbolic form or rupa when it is written.

The sound or dhvani and its symbolic form or rupa are the ways through which we can reveal the eternal varnas. So, these two are accidental features of the eternal varnas. A varna is eternal and unchangeable but its dhvani and rupa are momentary and changing. It seems that when a varna like 'a' is uttered, then it originates. But this is not right. If the same varna is uttered again and again, we feel that the acts of utterance are different, but the varna which is uttered is the same. This sense of identity or the knowledge that the same word is uttered at different times is an instance of recognitive perception or pratyabhijna. This recognitive perception is valid. So, we can say that the letter which is uttered at different times is not produced or destroyed. It is eternal. As the letters are eternal, the statements of the Veda are also eternal because the statements are collection of eternal varnas. Many varnas are manifested through a temporal series of utterances when they are spoken and they are manifested through a spatial series of written forms when they are written. "The sound and the symbol are only the vehicles of the manifestation of the eternal varna. When a varna is pronounced or written in ten different ways, there are not ten different varnas, but only ten different manifestation of the same varna. Therefore a word which is an agreement of two or more eternal varnas is itself eternal."⁸

The Veda consists by sounds and symbols as it is a literacy work. The Mimamsakas say that all uttered words and written words are really permanent, but sounds and symbols are impermanent and changing. Through sounds and symbols we can manifest the words. There is a difference between the Veda and other literacy works. All literacy works are composed by their authors, but the Veda is authorless. The authors make the order of words of their literacy works. So, there may be defects or errors. But the order of words which we find in the Veda is self-determined. And so it is intrinsically valid. Veda is self-proved and self-manifesting it is not created by any person, human or divine.

According to the Mimamsakas, some testimony gives us the knowledge of existing things i.e. we can attain knowledge of existential proposition by some testimony. For example, the dog exists. There is another type of testimony which directs us to perform certain actions. This type of testimony gives us the knowledge of injunctive propositions. Vedic testimony gives us the directions for the performance of some action. It gives us the knowledge of dharma which is super sensible. We cannot attain the knowledge of dharma by any other source of knowledge. Perception, inference, comparison, presumption, non-apprehension etc. cannot give us the knowledge of dharma and duties. The performer of the Agnistoma sacrifice will attain heaven is an example of duty relating to super sensible entity. We can attain the knowledge of such duty relating to super sensible entity only by Vedic testimony. The sole use of the Vedas lies in directing rituals. All existential statements of the Vedas are indirectly connected with some duty or command. They persuade people to do something or not to do something. Here we may find the similarity of Mimamsa with modern pragmatism because modern pragmatism believes that every type of knowledge is valuable only if it leads to some practical activity. As the Mimamsakas say that the value of Vedic knowledge is for ritualistic activity, we may describe the Mimamsa philosophy as ritualistic pragmatism.

A word and a sentence consist of the letters. To the Mimamsakas the letters are eternal. A word does not denote the individual, but it denotes directly the class or universal. The relation between a word and the object denoted by it is permanent and this relation is not created any person. "A word consists of letters which are eternal. It denotes a class or genus, and not an individual. It denotes an individual indirectly through a class denoted by it."⁹ It is impersonal. It is not created by God also. Prabhakara says that testimony gives us the knowledge of super sensible objects depending on the knowledge of words. The super sensible object is apurva or duty. We may know this apurva by the Vedas. Apurva is the object of Vedic testimony. Without testimony we cannot know apurva by any other source of knowledge. That means, testimony is the only means of knowledge of the apurva or moral command. As the Vedas are not created by any person or by God, so Vedic sentences manifest their meanings by their inherent powers. The Vedas give us the knowledge of moral law or duty and the sentence of the Vedas which give us the knowledge of moral law are intrinsically valid. The Mimamsakas believe in the intrinsic validity of knowledge. "Vedic sentences are intrinsically valid, and always yield valid cognitions, since they are impersonal and devoid of human origin. The entire Vedas which prescribe the Moral Law are intrinsically valid. The Moral Law is Ought or Duty, which is realisable by human volition."¹⁰

The Mimamsakas are the believers of svatah-pramanyavada. According to them, all apprehension is intrinsically valid and all knowledge is valid by itself. The validity of knowledge is not determined by any other knowledge. The Mimamsakas opine that the validity of knowledge arises from the causes from which the knowledge itself arises. When we know a thing, we also know its validity because the validity of knowledge

arises together with the knowledge. Cognition is called valid only if it fulfils four necessary conditions. The conditions are: Knowledge must not arise from the defective causes, knowledge must be free from contradiction, there should be novelty and knowledge must truly represent the object. In presence of the four conditions mentioned above knowledge arises and at the same time there also arises the validity of knowledge. Knowledge will be taken as an invalid one if any one condition is not fulfilled. A jaundiced person looks a white wall as yellow. Here his knowledge is invalid because it arises from defective cause.

Prabhakara and Kumarila both uphold the intrinsic validity of knowledge. All cognitions as cognitions are valid, there invalidity is due to their disagreement with the real nature of their objects. To Kumarila, the validity of knowledge consists in its apprehending an object; it is set aside by such discrepancies as its disagreement with the real nature of the object. All knowledge, therefore, is presumably valid and our normal life runs smooth on account of this belief. A need for explanation is felt only when knowledge fails to be valid. Its invalidity is inferred either from some defect in the instrument of knowledge or from a subsequent contradicting knowledge. "The Vedic testimony has intrinsic validity because it is valid in itself. But human testimony is not valid in itself. From the trust-worthy character of person we can infer the validity of human cognition. Human testimony may be concerned with doubt and error and hence it may be contradicted after words." 11

The central point of Mimamsa philosophy is Dharma. To the Mimamsakas the Vedic injunction is the proof for the existence of dharma. To explain the meaning of Vedic injunctions and secular or laukika sentences the Mimamsakas have developed their own philosophy of language. They have accepted that a word denotes the universal e.g. the word 'cow' denotes 'cowness'. This universal presents in all individual cows. The universal is eternal. And the relation between a word and its meaning is also eternal. "Jaimini in his Mimamsasutra 1.1.5 says that the relation between word and meaning is 'non-derived' or 'uncreated' (aupattika). Both Jaimini and katyayana used two rather difficult words, aupattika and siddha, which do not have any transparent sense. Both are however explained by their respective commentators, Sabara and Patanjali, in the sense of eternity or permanence. Sabara states clearly that aupattika means 'not created by human convention' of apauruseya." 12

The Mimamsakas also have accepted akamksa yogyata and sannidhi as the three factors for the understanding of the correlation of the words in a sentence. The later Mimamsakas have accepted one more condition, which is tatparya. Literally 'akamksa' means the desire of listener to know other words to complete the sense. It consists in a word not being able to convey a complete sense in the absence of another word. Salikanatha Misra says that akamksa is the curiosity of the listener. In the Vakyarthamatra Salikanatha says, "Atrocitate-abhidhanaparyavasana abhidheyaparyavasana jijnasodaye nibandhanam". 13 That means, akamksa is the enquiry of a person into another meaning and this enquiry arises due to the non-completion of the entire denotation, or sometimes, only of a denotable. "The enquiry into the counter correlative (meaning) which is for the sake of expression of the co-related or for the consistency of the already stated meaning is called expectancy." 14 Salikanatha speaks that akamksa may be of three types- visaya akamksa, karana akamksa and nyojya akamksa. If someone utters the word 'biting' then there may arise three types of curiosity in the mind of the listener. These are 'who is biting?', 'Why is he biting?', 'To whom is he biting?' etc. The above word is not able to give a complete sense alone. This word expects another word to give a complete sense. This is called akamksa. Another factor for understanding the meaning of a sentence is yogyata, which means compatibility. It is the suitability of the words to have syntactical relation with other words of the same sentence as observed on the Prabhakaras. The Bhatta Mimamsa also accepts it as an essential factor for understanding the meaning of a sentence. The sentence 'He sprinkles it with fire' has no meaning because the word 'sprinkle' is incongruous with the word 'fire'. But the sentence 'He sprinkles it with water' is meaningful as sprinkling is a work which is generally done with a liquid like water. So, there is suitability between the words 'sprinkling' and 'water'. The third factor for understanding the meaning of a sentence as recognized by the Mimamsakas is sannidhi or asatti. It means that the words of a sentence should be contiguous in time. It is the uninterrupted utterance or unbroken apprehension of the words of a sentence. If the words of a sentence are uttered at long intervals then there cannot arise the sentence meaning. To the supporters of Prabhakara, sannidhi is the proximity of cognition of the sense not necessarily of words actually uttered. They say that sannidhi is the immediate association of the ideal of meanings of the related words. Thus we find the difference between the view Prabhakara Mimamsa and Bhatta Mimamsa in respect of sannidhi as the later understands sannidhi as the contiguity of words and the former understands it as the contiguity of the idea of the meanings of words.

Sakti means denotative power. The relation of a word with its meaning is called sakti. To Prabhakara Mimamsa, sakti belongs to a pada; while to Bhatta Mimamsa, it belongs to padartha. The former thinks that as pada is the cause of understanding vakyartha so, sakti belongs to pada. Salikaatha Misra in his Vakyarthamatra supports this view. He says that as in a vakya the padas appear first, so they contain sakti and through the same we can understand the meaning of a vakya or sentence. To the Mimamsakas, a word denote the jati. Kumarila Bhatta supports the view that the padartha are the causes of understanding the vakyartha. On the other hand, Prabhakara says that in the form of anvaya relation, the padas denote the vakyartha.

The Mimamsakas have accepted *laksana*. To Salikanatha Misra, where there is the question of *svarthaparitaya*, there occurs *laksana*. 'Svartha' means the own meaning or primary meaning of a word. When the primary meaning of a word used in a sentence fails to give us the meaning of the sentence then we should accept a secondary meaning of the word which is called *laksana*. "According to the Mimamsakas, a word primarily denotes the universal or *jati*, by the function of *abhidha*. But in that case, the sense of the individual will never be conveyed by the word. Let us take the classic example, 'gauranubandhyah' -the cow must be sacrificed. Now if the word 'gauh' in the sentence is to refer to the universal *gotva* or cow-ness by *abhidha*, the sentence becomes absurd. The universal cowness cannot be sacrificed or in other words destroyed, since the universal is eternal and indestructible. Hence what is necessary here is to make the sense of the sentence lose its incompatibility. In the case of incompatibility of the primary sense or *mukhya artha*, the secondary sense is brought into cognition by the secondary function of *laksana*." 15

In the sentence "gangayam ghosah" the term 'Ganga' is used in a secondary sense which is "the bank of the river Ganga". It is a case of *laksana*. Here if we accept the primary meaning of the term 'Ganga' which is 'a river', then the sentence will be meaningless. So, here we should accept *laksana*. "There are two major criteria for the operation of *laksana* : (i) incompatibility of the primary sense and (ii) relation with the primary sense of a word." 16

The Prabhakara Mimamsa accepts that 'anvayanupatti' is the ground of *laksana* i.e., *anvayanupapatti* is the *laksanabija*. Supporters of this view say that syntax-difficulty is the occasion for admitting the indirect sense or *laksana* of a term. For example, "There is milkman's hamlet on the Ganga". Here if the term 'Ganga' is taken in its direct sense then there occurs syntax difficulty because the direct meaning of the term is 'a river' and milkman's hamlet cannot be in a river. Again, in the sentence "yastih pravesaya" the term 'yastih' is taken in an indirect sense. The direct sense of the term leads to syntax-difficulty. The sentence will be free from syntax difficulty if we understand the term in the sense of 'the persons who carry the sticks'. Thus the Prabhakara Mimamsa proves that in the case of syntax-difficulty we should accept *laksana*. But Kumarila Bhatta accepts *laksana* in each and every sentence. He says that neither the *vakya* nor the *padas* directly give the knowledge of sentence meaning or *vakyartha*, but the *padarthas* by means of *laksana* convey the *vakyartha*.

The Mimamsakas have accepted that some words have figurative sense or *gaunivrtti*, which are different from *laksana*. They say that we can understand the meaning of some terms used in a sentence indirectly, but these indirect senses are different from *laksana*. This type of indirect sense is called figurative sense. "According to the Mimamsa view, this figurative sense of the terms is 'indirect' no doubt, but it is not the same thing as 'laksana'. It is a new kind of signifying power of the terms and is other than 'sakti' or 'laksana'." 17 For example, "The young scholar is fire", "The young scholar is lion" etc. In the above two sentences the terms 'fire' and 'lion' are used in indirect senses. Directly the term 'lion' means 'a wild animal' and the term 'fire' means 'a burning substance'. A scholar cannot be a wild animal or a burning substance. So, the above sentence will be meaningless if the terms are taken in their direct senses. Here we should accept the indirect senses of the terms. The indirect sense of the term fire is 'purity' and 'brightness'. These properties are present in the scholar. These properties cannot be understood either by *sakti* or by *laksana* of the terms. So, the Mimamsakas have accepted *gaunivrtti* as a separate signifying power which helps us to understand the meaning of such terms.

II

In conclusion, it can be said that the Mimamsakas have given a very good explanation about *sabda pramana*. They have divided *sabda* into two types- *pauruseya* and *apauruseya*. But here I think that their opinion about *pauruseya* *sabda* is not acceptable from logical point of view. Prabhakara Mimamsa does not accept *pauruseya* statements as *sabda pramana* as because they are uttered persons. But it is a fact that we achieve many valid cognitions from the words of persons. For example, we all know that the earth is round. In the books of Geography we find so many proofs about it. This is a valid knowledge. We achieve many knowledge from the books which were written by wise persons. If we do not accept such sentences as infallible or *sabda-pramana*, then our day-to-day life will become impossible. At the time of illness, we accept the opinions or prescriptions of doctors without hesitatingly, otherwise we cannot become cure.

We find a good debate between Kumarila and Prabhakar in respect of understanding the meaning of a sentence which are known as *Abhihanavayavada* and *Anvitabhidhanavada*. According to Kumarila, with the help of *sakti*, every word or *pada* expresses a meaning without depending upon another word or *pada*. From the meaning of words we can understand the meaning of a sentence. After the knowledge of the relation of *Visesana-Visesyabhava* among the *padarthas*, the meaning of a sentence is understood. This theory of Kumarila is called *Abhihanavayavada*. But Prabhakara said that for the knowledge of meaning of a term used in a sentence, the term must be connected with a verb or *karya*. At first, by the *padas* the *padarthas* are connected independently and after that there arises the knowledge of *padarthas*. This theory is called *Anvitabhidhanavada*. I think that here we can remember the view of *Naiyayikas*. They also support *Abhihanavayavada*. According to

Gautama, to understand the meaning of a sentence we have to understand the meaning of the terms and also their relations. But the knowledge of relation of terms does not arise from any term of the sentence. The relation of words cannot be included in the purport of a word. The knowledge of the relation of words arises actually from the sequential order of the words. I think that this view is acceptable.

We cannot accept the Mimamsa view that the signifying power of a term directly signifies a class-character or a universal, because in that case we cannot understand the meaning of many sentences. For example, ‘bring the cow’, ‘the cow is died’ etc. Here if by the term ‘cow’ we understand ‘cowness’, then the sentences will become meaningless, because we cannot bring cowness. Understanding the meaning of a term is a unitary thing. So it is not right to say that particulars are understood by implication. Rather we may say that by the signifying power we can understand the particulars characterized by class-character. We cannot also accept the view that knowledge of sakti does not arise from the convention of the old, it is natural and eternal. Instead we may say that it is a fact that a child learns language initially after observing the behavior of elder persons. A new invested thing is named by a researcher and everybody knows it by that name. So, sakti may be the will of God or of human being. Moreover, we cannot accept the opinion of Mimamsakas that the Vedas are not created by any person, because like the Naiyayikas, I also believe that all literally works are created by persons, whether it may be the human being or God.

Lastly, in my opinion, the Mimamsa view that syntax-difficulty is the seed of laksana is not acceptable, but I think that purport-difficulty is the seed of laksana. Purport helps us to understand the meaning of all sentences. Purport is the intention of an utterance to convey a particular sense and context helps us to understand the purport of a term used in a sentence.

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