ASSESSMENT OF PHONETIC DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN VEDIC AND CLASSICAL SANSKRIT WORDS

Abstract

Although the pronunciation of the Vedic words is very similar to the classical pronunciations, there are variations in those rules from place to place, time to time, and people to people. Sometimes this change is absorbed by the new scriptures and sometimes it is rejected. Sometimes new practices are adopted. In this context, it can be said that in some areas of Sanskrit literature, the root sounds of Sanskrit words have changed during lingual changes. It can be seen that the sounds in the Vedas were used according to a certain rule according to which the sounds were prevalent. But those phonemes have been narrowed down to some extent in classical Sanskrit literature. There are several questions come to mind. When, How, and Why the changes come into existence. Deep research can only clarify the issue.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Phonology carries great significance from the point of view of linguistics. The semantics of a language bears separate importance from phonology. If we look at Sanskrit literature, the necessity of phonetics is even more significant. If we look at the Vedic Sanskrit literatures we observe several peculiar uses which are in classical Sanskrit literature; either partially moderated or completely absent. There may be several uses. Here in this context, we can have some speculations to trace the thing which establishes a history of phonetic sciences. Among the two categories of Sanskrit literature, we find that the study of Vedic literature according to specific sounds was prevalent.We find some scriptures prescribing the pronunciation of this sound. Like *śikṣā* in *Vedāṅga* literature, this *Vedāṅga* is the best example of this genre. In this *Vedāṅga*, the fundamental nature of Sanskrit sounds is beautifully specified. After *the śruti* tradition, we experienced principles of *the śruti* tradition transformed into different literature or phonetic law books. Subsequently, in the classical Sanskrit literature, we can see several changes. Probably those phonetic changesin Vedic Sanskrit made Classical Sanskrit.

II. PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SANSKRIT WORDS

1. **Analysis of the word *mahān:*** We find a mantra in Rigveda's *śākalasaṃhitā:mahāindronṛvadā* (*Ṛgveda 6.19.1)*. There in the *Saṃhitā* text of this*mahān* pada, the pronunciation *mahā*was prescribed. and the preceding vowel has been converted into a nasal. If we look at the pronunciation process here, it is clearly understood that the nasal letter is affecting the pronunciation of the vowel *ā*. That is why the nasal letter is defined in the definition of *raktasaṅjaka* from the point of view of *Prātiśākhya*. According to the *sūtra*: "*loparephasmabhābepūrvastatsthānadanunāsikaḥsvaraḥ*"(*Ṛk-Prātiśākhya* 4.80) the preceding vowel of *n is* a nasal sound. That is, here *'n'*- this nasal is giving up its unique character and transferring nasality to the preceding vowel.

   But when the word *mahā* drops its form when it comes to classical Sanskrit, the same word is read as *mahān*. That is, in classical Sanskrit literature *'n'* consonant has abandoned its original form and adopted nasality distinctly. In other words, in classical Sanskrit literature, the deficiency in the process of influencing the pronunciation of vowels before nasals is observed. It is probably for this reason that two definitions of nasal characters are observed in the *saṃhitā* text. As for instance *anunāsika* and *raktasaṅjā*.

2. **Analysis of the word *Karhi:*** Thereafter the term *Karhi* is found in both Vedic Sanskrit literature and Classical Sanskrit literature also. Now this term is being discussed from the point of view of linguistics. This verse is found as part of this *mantra* in the *Ṛgveda:yadyadyakarhicit* (*Ṛgveda 8.73.5)*. Here the word *karhi* is pronounced *kar (ṛ)hi* as in the *saṃhitā* texts and the duration of the syllable produced in the pronunciation is half the length of the syllable. According to *Ṛk-prātisākhya*, this *ṛ-varṇa* is called *svarabhakti*. According to*Ṛk-prātisākhya*, if a *ref-varṇa* is preceded by a vowel and if there is a consonant, then there is an additional *ṛ*-character comes after the *ref-varṇa*, then that character is called *svarabhakti*. According to the*Ṛk-prātisākhyaSūtra:"rephātsvaropahitādvyaṅjnodayādrvarṇasvarabhktiruttaro"*(*Ṛk-*

prātiśākhya 4.80)this vowel is lengthened. In this example, the duration of the *ṛ-varṇa* is also lengthened due to the presence of the aspirate*h-* after the *ref-varṇa*.

But if we look at the phonetical application of the term comparatively in classical Sanskrit literature, it is clearly understood that *ref-varṇa* is pronounced in the cerebral position. In this context Panini has given the *sutra*:*"tulasyaprayatnamsvavarṇam"*(*Aṣṭādhāyī* 1.1.8). According to Panini's decision, there is no reference to the arrival of svarabhakti in the pronunciation of the *ref-varṇa*. After analyzing this example, it appears that the Vedic *Saṃhitā* texts preserved the principle of the phonology of the pad as during the chanting of the mantras. In classical Sanskrit literature, the originality of those terms has been disturbed in almost many places.

3. **Analysis of the word *īḷde:*** Next, we shall do a comparative linguistic analysis of a Vedic verb. The verb*īḷde* is found in the opening mantra of the early *sūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*. Part of the mantra is: *"agnimīḷde…"*(*Ṛgveda1.1.1).* Here the consonant *d*is sitting between two vowels. A clue is found in *Ṛk-prātisākhya* in this context (*Ṛk-prātisākhya 1.52*). According to this *sūtra* if the *d* consonant is sitting between two vowels then his pronunciation will be different. Here in the context of pronunciation, the influence of the guttural cannot be observed in the same way as the effect of the cerebral.

Now in Vedic Sanskrit literature *īḷde -* with this term is found in classical Sanskrit also. The phonological judgment of this term clearly shows that the pronunciation of the *d*-letter in this verb was mainly dominated by the guttural. But in classical Sanskrit, *d-varṇa* is pronounced only in the cerebral position according to Panini's rule, abandoning the primacy of the guttural position in its pronunciation. Panini has given sutras on this subject:*"tulāsyaprayatnaṃsavarṇam"*(*Aṣṭādhāyī* 1.1.8). From this point of view, it can be said that there has been a change in the original sound form of *d-kāra* in classical Sanskrit.

III. CONCLUSION

After the linguistic analysis of the three examples, if we now come to the evaluation of the research paper, the judgments that appear before us are as follows.

1. From a linguistic point of view, perhaps due to the natural evolution of the language, the form which was the original form of sound in the Vedic language has been partially or completely changed at some places in Classical Sanskrit.
2. An analysis of the *Karhi* pada reveals that the mid *svarāgama* observed in the pronunciation of the padas in Vedic Sanskrit literature tends to disappear in the pronunciation of those padas over time. From this instance, it is assumed that the Vedic word gradually abandoned its phonetic ideal.
3. In some cases, the accentuation changes of the varnas are of great significance in the context of the phonetic transformation of Vedic words in classical Sanskrit.
4. Nowadays, some people express doubts about the effectiveness of Vedic *Mantra*. It may be said here that in some cases the deviation of the sound of the Vedic words from their original form may be a possible cause.

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