

ABSTRACT

The Philosophy of Bhartṛhari is purely cognitive in the sense that it concerns only the cognitive world i.e the world which can be known. Actually, the cognitive background of Bhartṛhari's philosophy is analysed in my research work. Here an attempt is made to show that Bhartṛhari's philosophical discussion is confined only within the mental world. For him, only our mental world can be known and only our known world i.e the mental world can be expressed through language. So, his whole philosophical discussion is centred around mental world. The world of his philosophical discussion is the world of language. Bhartṛhari opined that the world of language consists of three units- *paśyantī*, *madhyamā* and *vaikharī*. *Paśyantī* is the state of pure consciousness, *madhyamā* is the state of idea or thought and *vaikharī* is the state of verbal language. First of all idea comes in our mind. Subsequently we feel an urge to express our ideas to others. Consequently we take the help of verbal language i.e *vaikharī* to communicate the same to others. This *vaikharī* level of language varies from subject to subject, from society to society but the other two level do not vary in that way. The verbal language may be high and low, rough and sweet, Bengali or English but the idea or thought remains the same. In this context one important point must be taken care of that the idea or thought is always intertwined with language, one cannot be divorced from another. No thought is possible without language. The only difference between the language of the *madhyamā* state and that of the *vaikharī* level is that the former one is non-verbal but the later one is verbal. The *paśyantī* level of language is presupposed as the locus of idea or thought. In this sense the state of *paśyantī* is inferred by the common people like us and only a few people who are the seers of truth can know that state directly through their intuition.

An attempt is made to discuss here about the *sphoṭa* theory of language advocated by other *śābdīka* philosophers from *veda* onwards and tried to compare them with Bhartṛhari's philosophy. Actually, Bhartṛhari did not take into account of the controversy raised by the opponents of the *sphoṭa* theory like Mīmāṃsakas, the Naiyāyikas and the vedāntins against Grammarians. *Vākyapadīya* is the earliest work in which *sphoṭa* doctrine of Grammarians is expounded. A comparative study between *Śabdabrahman* of Bhartṛhari and *Brahman* of Śaṅkarāchārya is also discussed in the present work. Bhartṛhari and Śaṅkarāchārya both of them claimed that there is only one ultimate reality. The ultimate reality accepted by Bhartṛhari is *Śabdabrahman* and the ultimate reality accepted by Śaṅkarāchārya is *Brahman*. The basic difference between them is that the ultimate reality of Śaṅkarāchārya is a metaphysical entity but the ultimate reality accepted by Bhartṛhari is purely cognitive entity. Actually, Bhartṛhari aimed to describe the world in terms of language and he technically used the term language in his philosophy. Actually, an attempt has been made in the present work to discuss Bhartṛhari's philosophy free from traditional metaphysical allegiances.