
11-1-2017

(Close) the Door, the King (is Going): The Development of Elliptical Resolution in Bha Mīmāṃsā

Malcolm Keating
Yale-NUS College, mkeating@smith.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.smith.edu/phi_facpubs



Part of the [Philosophy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Keating, Malcolm, "(Close) the Door, the King (is Going): The Development of Elliptical Resolution in Bha Mīmāṃsā" (2017). Philosophy: Faculty Publications, Smith College, Northampton, MA.
https://scholarworks.smith.edu/phi_facpubs/71

This Article has been accepted for inclusion in Philosophy: Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@smith.edu

(Close) the Door, the King (is Going): The Development of Elliptical Resolution in Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā

Malcolm Keating¹ 

Published online: 14 September 2017
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2017

Abstract This paper examines three commentaries on the *Śabdapariccheda* in Kumāriḷa Bhāṭṭa's *Ślokavārttika*, along with the the seventeenth century Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā work, the *Mānameyodaya*. The focus is the Mīmāṃsā principle that only sentences communicate qualified meanings and Kumāriḷa's discussion of a potential counter-example to this claim—single words which appear to communicate such content. I argue that there is some conflict among commentators over precisely what Kumāriḷa describes with the phrase *sāmarthyād anumeyetvād*, although he is most likely describing ellipsis completion through *arthāpatti*. The paper attempts both a cogent exegesis and philosophical evaluation of the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā view of ellipsis completion, arguing that there remain internal tensions in the account of ellipsis preferred by the Bhāṭṭa, tensions which are not entirely resolved even by the late date of the *Mānameyodaya*.

Keywords Mīmāṃsā · Bhāṭṭa · Ellipsis · Language · Grammar · Kumāriḷa Bhāṭṭa

Abbreviations

- K Sucarita Miśra, *Kāśikā*, in the edition *Mīmāṃsāślokavārttika of Kumāriḷabhaṭṭa with Commentary Kāśikā of Sucaritamiśra*, ed. V. A. Ramaswami Sastri, 3 parts, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series Nos. 90, 99, 150, Government Press, Trivandrum 1926, 1929, 1943.

✉ Malcolm Keating
malcolm.keating@yale-nus.edu.sg

¹ Yale-NUS College, 16 College Ave W, #01-220, Singapore, Singapore

- MM Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa and Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita, *Mānameyodaya*, 3rd edition, eds. C. Kunhan Raja and S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri, The Adyar Library and Research Centre, Adyar 2004.
- MS Jaimini, *Mīmāṃsāsūtra*, in the edition *Śrīmañjainipraṇīte Mīmāṃsādarśane*, ed. V. Sastri, 7 parts, Samskrita Granthavali 97, Puṇya: Ānandāśram 1929–1934.
- NR Pārthasārathi Miśra, *Nyāyaratnākara*, in the edition *Ślokavārttikam of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa with the Commentary Nyāyaratnākara of Śrī Pārthasārathi Miśra*, ed. G. Jha, Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, Delhi 2009.
- ŚBh Śabaravamin, *Śabarabhāṣya*, for edition, see MS
- ŚV Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Ślokavārttika*, for edition, see NR.
- TpT Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa, *Tātparyāṭkā*, 2nd edition, ed. S.K. Ramanatha Sastri, revised 2nd edition by K.K. Raja and R. Thangaswamy, Madras Library Sanskrit Series 13, University of Madras, Madras 1971.
- TV Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, *Tantravārttika*, for edition, see MS.
- VP Bhartṛhari, *Vākyapadīya*, ed. K. A. Subramania Iyer, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1983.
- VPV *Vākyapadīyavṛtti*, for edition, see VP.

Introduction

Ellipsis is a pervasive feature of Sanskrit syntax and it is discussed by Indian grammarians, philosophers, and poetic theorists. As Gonda (1960) points out, getting a grip on what phenomena should be countenanced as “ellipsis” is difficult, and relatively few contemporary treatments of the Sanskrit corpus and its interpretation by classical thinkers exist.¹ In this paper, I focus on two examples of ellipsis which are treated in the *Ślokavārttika* of Kumārila Bhaṭṭa and later commentators. Their treatment is illuminating in several regards. First, it provides empirical data—albeit scant—for how ellipsis functions in Classical Sanskrit, a desideratum noted by Gillon (2010) for further study of the topic. Second, it tells us how philosophers proficient in Sanskrit thought of ellipsis. Third, it gives us a window into the historical development of the treatment of ellipsis within the tradition of Mīmāṃsā, for whom it is a crucial subject, especially in the Vedas. Finally, in broad philosophical terms, this historical survey shows that in at least two kinds of ellipsis, it is difficult to give a broadly inferentialist account of ellipsis completion on which we can recover, without indeterminacy, the

¹ Significant work includes Raja (1958) which is later included in Raja (2000), Deshpande (1985), Deshpande (1989), Phillips (2002), Gillon (2010), and Gillon (2013). Raja primarily treats the philosophical tradition of Mīmāṃsā (focusing on Śālikanātha and Kumārila), but also the poetical tradition in the work of Bhoja. Deshpande, on the other hand, focuses mostly on the grammatical theories of Pāṇini, Patañjali, Kātyāyana and others. In addition to Gonda (1960), which brings together Vedic examples of ellipsis, Phillips (2002) is a valuable treatment of ellipsis in the corpus of the Nyāya philosopher Gaṅgeśa, with some treatment of linguistic theories of ellipsis. Finally, the most recent work, that of Gillon, draws on Dharmakīrti’s *Pramāṇavārttika* and V.S. Apte’s *The Student’s Guide to Sanskrit Composition* to give an analysis of ellipsis and pronominal dependence. Gillon’s focus is on ellipsis which can be repaired by supplementing with linguistic material in the discourse context, which, as we will see, is only one variety of ellipsis discussed by Mīmāṃsā.

ellided content. Given this, we are left with the possibility that single words can, at least in some cases, communicate propositional content.

The *Ślokavārttika* on Ellipsis

Context of the Discussion

Within the section on Words (*Śabdaparicheda*) of the *Ślokavārttika* (*ŚV*), Kumārila argues for what I will call the Difference Thesis: verbal testimony (*śabda*) is authoritative but not in virtue of its being a variety of, or non-different from (*abheda*), inferential reasoning (*anumāna*). Put simply, *śabda* is different from *anumāna*.² He has multiple opponents: Sāṃkhya (vss 15–34), who agrees with the Difference Thesis, but for what Kumārila thinks are bad reasons; Prābhākara Mīmāṃsā (vss 38–51) who split the difference, maintaining that human testimony is *anumāna* but not the testimony of the authorless Vedas; Nyāya, who merit a brief mention (vss 52–53) for their insistence that *śabda* is authoritative in virtue of the speaker's character as an *āpta*; and together, Bauddha³ and Vaiśeṣika (vss 54–104), who argue that *śabda* is non-different from *anumāna*. This section comes between the *Anumānaparicheda* and the *Upamānaparicheda*. Kumārila will further develop his semantic theory in the rest of the *ŚV*, so here in the *Śabdaparicheda* he has not yet discussed, for instance, the meaning of words, the relationship between words and their meanings, or the relationship between words and sentences.

² The *Śabdaparicheda* is within Kumārila's lengthy discussion of Jaimini's *Mīmāṃsāsūtra* (*MS*) ad 1.1.5. Kumārila's discussion of *śabda* begins by quoting Śabara's *Bhāṣya* (*ŚBh*) on *MS* 1.1.5, which says, "Śāstra is knowledge where its object is not contacted [with sense perception] but is known through words." *ŚV Śabdaparicheda* 1 (p. 535): *śāstram śabdavijñānāt asannikṛṣṭe 'rthe vijñānam*. The term *śabda*, while it has a wider sense in Mīmāṃsā, meaning sound generally, is in the *Śabdaparicheda* restricted to speech. Specifically, the focus is uttering of words (*pada*) and not sentences (*vākya*), for dialectical reasons explained at the end of the chapter (*ŚV Śabdaparicheda* 108–111, pp. 572–573).

³ It is a bit puzzling which particular Buddhist(s) Kumārila is addressing, as he insists in verse 111 that his emphasis on *pada* is due to the Buddhists having focused on it, in contrast to *vākya*: *vākyeṣv dr̥ṣṭeṣv api sārthakeṣu padārthavinmātratayā pratītim dr̥ṣṭvānumānavyatirekabhātāḥ kliṣṭāḥ padābhedavicāraṇāyām* (p. 573). Yet Buddhists like Dharmakīrti argue that verbal testimony is inferential in virtue of inferences about speakers and their statements (*vākya*), such as in his *Pramānavārttika* (*PV*), where he argues that we reason to a speaker's intention based on her utterance, on which see Dunne (2004, p. 146, fn 5) and Dreyfus (1997, 293ff). And Dinnāga argues in *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (*PS*) 5:47–49 for the communicative primacy of sentences which convey a *pratibhā*. However, it may be that Kumārila is targeting Dinnāga, who begins Chap. 5 of the *PS* by comparing *śabda* with *anumāna*: "Verbal communication is no different from inference as a means of acquiring knowledge, for it names its object in a way similar to the property of having been produced, by precluding what is incompatible" (Translation Hayes 1988, p. 252).

However, as Yoshimizu (2011, p. 586) has pointed out, Dinnāga is concerned with words "extracted from the totality of discourse"—that is, not testimony in contexts of utterance, which is what Kumārila is concerned with when he defends *śabda* as an independent *pramāṇa*. As well, Dinnāga is not here defending *anumāna* as the source of authority for verbal testimony by a single word. Rather, he is comparing the way in which we gain knowledge of a word's meaning to the way in which inferential signs indicate their objects. (The literature on this process, known as *apoha*, is large, but see Hayes (2009) and Taber and Kataoka (2015) for recent discussion and citations.) Still, Dinnāga's emphasis on the close relationship between single words and inferential signs makes this discussion a likely target for Kumārila.

Still, Kumārila's argument for the independence of *śabda* as a *pramāṇa* relies on a claim which he will defend later, in the *Ākṛtipariccheda*, that the ordinary meaning of words is a universal or generic entity (*jāti*). This claim is crucial for his opening move in the lengthy debate against Bauddha and Vaiśeṣika beginning in verse 54, where he claims that the only similarity between *śabda* and *anumāna* is that they are both authoritative (*pramāṇya*). His argument for the Difference Thesis is straightforward:

1. If *śabda* were a variety of *anumāna*, it would have the same cognitive content as *anumāna*.
2. *śabda* does not have the same cognitive content as *anumāna*.
3. Therefore, *śabda* is not a variety of *anumāna*.

The support for premise 2 will come later in the *ŚV*, when Kumārila argues that the cognitive content (*viśaya*) of a word is a generic entity (*sāmānya*). However, he has already argued in the *Anumānapariccheda* that the inferred conclusion of *anumāna* is knowledge about a subject (*pakṣa*) which is qualified (*viśiṣṭa*) by a property.⁴ Kumārila's argument in full in the *Śabdapariccheda* verses 55 to 56 says:

First of all, the inferential mark (*liṅga*) and testimony [by word] (*śabda*) have different cognitive content (*viśaya*), since [the author] will establish that the word's cognitive content is a generic entity (*sāmānya*). (55)

And this has been established: the inferential subject (*liṅgin*) is the property-bearer (*dharmin*) which is qualified by a property (*dharma*);

For to the extent that something does not have that cognitive content, it is not inferential reasoning. (56)⁵

To understand Kumārila's reasoning, consider the classic example of inferential reasoning, as when I conclude "Fire is on the mountain" from seeing smoke on the mountain. Here we see what Kumārila means by "qualified" cognitive content: the

⁴ *ŚV Anumānapariccheda* 47b (p. 480) states the conclusion: *tasmād dharmaviśiṣṭasya dharmiṇaḥ syāt prameyatā*.

⁵ All translations are mine unless noted, though I have referred to Jha's 2009 edition for his translation of Kumārila as well as Pārthasārathi Miśra. My translations have been much improved also from e-mail conversation with Brendan Gillon as well as the comments of two anonymous referees. Of course, any errors are my own. A note on the Sanskrit text itself: the *śloka* is nearly the same as quoted by Uṃveka, Sucārita, and Pārthasārathi, but not precisely. Below is the reading I prefer, with notes where the versions differ. "U" refers to Uṃveka's version, in the 1971 edition (p. 361). "S" refers to Sucārita's version. Unfortunately, Sucārita's text is not available in its entirety in a printed edition, and I have had to rely on scans which are poorly digitized. Thus I have referred to the 1943 Trivandrum Series edition (pp. 122–123) along with GRETEL. "P" refers to Pārthasārathi's version, in the 1978 edition (p. 554) in which Kumārila's text and Pārthasārathi's *Nyāyaratmakāra* are edited together).

viśayo 'nyādrśas tāvad dṛśyate liṅgaśabdayoh |
sāmānyaviśayatvaṃ hi padasya sthāpayaṣyati* || 55*
dharmī dharmaviśiṣṭas ca liṅgīty etac ca sādhitam |*
na tāvad anumānaṃ hi yāvat tadviśayaṃ na tat || 56*

Verse 55b: *hi* | *ca*, S, P; *sthāpayaṣyati* | *sthāpayaṣyate*, U. Verse 56a: *dharmī dharmaviśiṣṭas* | *dharmādharma* *viśiṣṭas*, P. Verse 56b: *na* | *hi*, U.

mountain is qualified by the property of smoke. Inferential reasoning in this case can be represented as follows:

Inferential Reasoning: Paradigmatic Example

1. *Thesis*: There is fire on the mountain
2. *Inferential mark*: because there is smoke on the mountain,
3. *Pervasion*: and where there is smoke, there is fire,
4. *Supporting example*: as in the kitchen hearth.⁶

There being smoke on the mountain is the inferential mark (*liṅga*) that allows us to infer the presence of a particular property (*dharma*) on the mountain. Here, the property to be proven is being fiery. The mountain, as the subject of the inference (*pakṣa*), is qualified by both the inferential mark and the property. It is precisely that this qualification is in the same location, understood by a general rule or pervasion relationship (where there is smoke, there is fire) that allows us to conclude that there is fire on the mountain. However, this content is qualitatively different from what individual words convey. As Kumāriḷa says in 56b, “to the extent that something does not have that cognitive content, it is not inferential reasoning.” The “that” in “that cognitive content” (*tadviṣayam*) refers here to content being qualified by a property, specifically the property bearer, or inferential subject. In contrast, on the Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā analysis of word-meaning, the word “smoke” (or any noun or predicate, *subanta*) has as its content merely the generic property of SMOKINESS. Thus, hearing the word “smoke” does not prompt a knowledge-event of smoke being present at a particular time in a particular location; there is nothing understood as being qualified by the smoke. Due to this different in content, testimony by word cannot be reducible to inferential reasoning.

Kumāriḷa on Ellipsis

It is at this point that ellipsis enters the picture as a potential counter-example to Kumāriḷa’s claim. Imagine that you have called your local firefighters, worried about the presence of fire on a nearby mountain. The operator asks, “Why do you think there is fire on that mountain?” You reply hurriedly, “Smoke!” In this case, we might think that the operator hasn’t just understood you to mean SMOKINESS, but to have meant something like “There is smoke on the mountain!”⁷ Such a case, or something like it, may be what Kumāriḷa has in mind when he clarifies his stance in the next verse:

However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony,

Because of the sentence being inferred by *sāmarthyā*, although another word is unheard. (57)⁸

⁶ Extensive discussion of this case is found within *ŚV Anumānapariccheda*, pp. 463–534.

⁷ Of course, just *what* you have meant in this context is an important question, and will be addressed by Mīmāṃsā philosophers.

⁸ The Sanskrit reads as follows:

sāmānyād atirikṭam tu śābde vākyasya gocarah |
sāmarthyād anumeyatvād aśrute ‘pi padāntare || 57*

Kumārila first points out that qualified entities (things which are by definition distinct or different from generic entities) are within the scope (*gocara*) of sentences—in other words, their meaningful content. It is sentences which communicate propositions or states. (In this verse, *śābda* most plausibly refers to testimony in general, not the restricted sense of testimony by *pada*.) How, then, to explain the appearance of a *pada* communicating what *vākya* should convey? On what seems like Kumārila’s view, when someone utters “smoke” in a context like above, they are in fact able to communicate a complete sentence (*vākya*) by the hearer completing a sentence using *anumāna*. This is possible, even though the other words aren’t heard—they are filled in by the hearer. To sum up, the interlocutor has objected that, contrary to the Mīmāṃsā view, it seems like we sometimes can communicate a qualified cognitive content like “There is smoke on the mountain” just by uttering a single word. This would mean testimony by word could be reducible to inferential reasoning. But Kumārila explains this is just an appearance—in fact what happens is that a complete sentence is understood, which is what communicates the qualified cognitive content. Put another way, it is sentences, not words, that convey propositions. When we hear a single word, we are able to use inferential reasoning, to complete the missing sentence—and thereby understand a proposition.

There are two issues raised by Kumārila’s brief remark in 57b. One is exegetical, the other is philosophical (though, as usual, they are intertwined—if possible, we want the strongest reading on a principle of charity). First, there is the exegetical question of what Kumārila means by *sāmarthyād anumeyatvād*, a point on which his commentators seemingly disagree. Second, there is the philosophical question of how such elliptical completion could occur—and whether or not Kumārila’s account is correct (whatever it is).

Kumārila: Ellipsis is *sāmarthyād anumeyatvād*

The term *anumeya*, “inferred” is, strictly speaking, appropriate for the employment of *anumāna*. Understood this way, Kumārila is asserting that constructing a complete sentence from a single word (or syntactically incomplete set of words) is done through the *pramāṇa* of *anumāna*. However, this interpretation does not square with other points where he (and Śabara) appeal to *arthāpatti* and not *anumāna* to explain elliptical completion. In *ŚBh* ad *MS* 4.3.11, Śabara explains to an interlocutor that sometimes words must be supplied to complete Vedic sentences:

In that case elliptical completion (*adhyāhāra*) is appropriately posited. And by elliptical completion, moreover, there is positing (*kalpanā*), just when like “door, door,” being uttered, there is the positing of “close” or “open.” How, further, is this [word] understood? In this case, it is to be posited through elliptical completion. This [elliptical completion] is through the force of the sacred text

Footnote 8 continued

sāmarthyād] *sāmārthyād*, *ŚV Śabdapariçcheda* p. 554, likely simply a typographical error for *sāmarthyād*. I leave *sāmarthyād* untranslated here because it is the subject of commentarial dispute, on which see 3.3 below.

(*āmnānasāmarthyāt*). Thus, this sacred text [that is, the particular one in question here] will be meaningful and able to cause understanding of the meaning. Therefore, it is not meaningless.⁹

The term *kalpanā* refers to the outcome of the *pramāṇa* of postulation, *arthāpatti* (also translated “presumption”).¹⁰ We know by postulation that ellipsis should complete the sentence—and the completion itself is performed by postulation, too. Crucially, however, it is a tenet of Mīmāṃsā philosophy that *arthāpatti* is not the same as *anumāna*.

As for the term *sāmarthyāt*, it has a wide range of applications in Sanskrit, most broadly meaning “force” or “capacity.”¹¹ The most general interpretation would be that Kumārila means “inferred through the force of circumstances,” in which case he has not committed himself to any particular basis for the inference. However, commenting on Śabara’s last point in the previous passage, Kumārila adds that *āmnānasāmarthyāt* “means through the force of what is being brought into existence (*bhāvanā*).”¹² Thus ellipsis completion is a matter of *arthāpatti* and it is brought about through force of the sacred text (*āmnāna*)—in particular, Kumārila argues, through the force of what sacred texts are understood to bring about.¹³ Further, we should note that in another passage discussing ellipsis, Kumārila denies that words have the capacity (*sāmarthya*) on their own (*kevala*) to communicate what a sentence does.¹⁴ Thus the capacity in question in the *Śabdapariccheda* cannot be merely the word’s own—something else is involved.

The simplest explanation, *prima facie*, is that Kumārila means *anumāna* in a very general sense, as a kind of reasoning, and not as the specific *pramāṇa*. After all, Kumārila himself says that it’s acceptable to use the term *anumāna* to refer to cases

⁹ ŚBh ad MS 4.3.11 (vol 5, pp. 69–70): *tatrādhyāharo 'vakalpate. bhavati cādhyāreṇāpi kalpanā. yathā dvāraṇ dvāramityukte saṃvriyatāmapāvriyatāmiti vā. katham punaravagamyata ihādhyāhāraṇe kalpayitavyamiti. āmnānasāmarthyāt. evamidamāmnānamarthavadbhaviṣyati. śaknoti cārthamavagamayitum. tasmānnānarthakam.*

¹⁰ Throughout, I use “positing” for cognates of *kalpanā* and “postulation” for *arthāpatti*.

¹¹ Entry in Monier-Williams (2008): “efficacy, power, strength, force” and in the ablative, “through the force of circumstances,” “by reason of,” “in consequence of,” “on account of,” “as a matter of course.”

¹² TV ad MS 4.3.11 (pp. 70–71): *api vā 'mnānasāmarthyāt bhāvanāsāmarthyādityarthaḥ.* A full discussion of *bhāvanā* in Kumārila is impossible here, but see Ollett (2013) for a recent discussion of the concept, which refers to what state of affairs is being brought about by a Vedic injunction.

¹³ In addition to *āmnāna*, the term *sāmarthyād* is associated in Śabara and Kumārila with expressions like *ābhīdhānasāmarthyād*, *āmnānasāmarthyād*, *vacanasāmarthyād*, often along with *kalpanā* and its cognates such as *parikalpanā* (ŚBh 2.1.47; ŚBh ad MS 1.1.1, 1.4.30, 3.3.14, 4.3.11, TV ad 2.15) or with the idea implicit (ŚBh ad MS 2.3.2, 3.2.1). This is by no means a rule, and sometimes *prakaraṇasāmarthyād* is used: ŚBh ad MS 2.2.22, 2.32, 3.2.20, 3.3.11, 3.3.14.

¹⁴ The passage in the *Vākyādhikaraṇa* notes that words and letters both are able to be used apart from sentences, if a speaker so desires. Kumārila is only aiming to demonstrate the existence of words and letters as entities distinct from sentences, and so he does not here explain how they convey meaning. He does say that they cannot communicate a *vākyārthabuddhi* on their own, however (see bold): ŚV *Vākyādhikaraṇam* vss. 144–148 (pp. 1233–1234): *yadyapi vyāvahārāṅgaṇ na pūrṇaṇ padavarṇayoḥ tathāpyasyeva sadbhāvastanmātre prayuyukṣite. padārthamātrameveṣṭaṇ viśeṣe 'vagate kvacit padaṇ prayuñjate kecīd varṇaṇ vārthasamanvitam. granthādhyayanavelāyāṇ svarūpeṇāvadhāraṇam pradhānaṇ padavarṇānāṇ vicchinānāmupāśritam. tadā prasiddhasattvānāṇ cottaratrāsti sādhanam na hi vākyārthabuddhyaiṣāṇ rūpaṇ kiñcidviruddhyate. yadyapyeṣāṇ na sāmarthyaṇ kevalānāṇ tadudgame aviruddhastu sadbhāvaḥ kāryāsaktarathāgavat.*

of *arthāpatti*, even though they are, as we will see in more detail below, certainly different.¹⁵ Thus, given one's rhetorical aim, it could be appropriate to talk in terminology more germane to inference.¹⁶ While I think this is probably the best explanation for Kumārila's use of *anumeyatvāt*, understanding what he means by *sāmarthyāt* is more difficult, especially given the differences among commentators. Further, at least one commentator (Sucarita Miśra) uses terminology more specific to *anumāna* in his account, which raises the question of whether *anumāna* is involved in ellipsis completion.

In what follows, I look at three commentaries on this passage, along with a late Mīmāṃsā primer that takes up ellipsis completion, in order to answer both exegetical and philosophical sets of questions. The third section discusses Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa's *Tātparyāṭikā*, the fourth section Sucarita Miśra's *Kāśikā*, the fifth section Pārthasārathi Miśra's *Nyāyaratnākara*, and the sixth section Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's *Mānameyodaya*. Each section begins with a translation of the text, then an interpretation focusing on how they understand *sāmarthyāt anumeyatvāt*. I conclude each section with a philosophical evaluation of their analysis. Finally, while I am unable to entirely reconcile Sucarita Miśra's analysis with the others, I offer a suggestion which I believe to be novel—that elliptical completion may require two stages, beginning with postulation and concluding with inference. This approach may resolve some tensions in the commentaries and root text, while also making philosophical sense of the problem of ellipsis completion itself.

Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa's *Tātparyāṭikā*

The earliest extant commentary on the *ŚV* is the *Tātparyāṭikā*. Here, Uṃveka Bhaṭṭa (ca. 700–750 CE) does not develop this discussion very much, nor explain explicitly how inferential reasoning can complete elliptical expressions.¹⁷ However, what he does say is suggestive. After explaining the reasoning in verses 55 and 56, he says of verse 57 (reprinted below in bold for reference):

However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony, Because of the sentence being inferred by *sāmarthya*, although another word is unheard. (57)

However, that combination and so on [of word meanings] which is understood as distinct from generic entities is the content of a sentence—whose nature is the association of word(s) which are to be ascertained (*labhya*) by suitability

¹⁵ *ŚV Arthāpattipariccheda* 88 (p. 626): *tat sarvamityādyasamañjasam syānna cediyaṃ syādanumānato 'nyā evaṃsvabhāvāpyanumānaśabdam labheta cedasti yathepsitāṃ nah.*

¹⁶ Since Buddhists and Vaiśeṣikas do not accept *arthāpatti* as an independent *pramāṇa*, but merely a kind of inference, this would be appropriate here.

¹⁷ There is a question as to whether Uṃveka (also known as Umbeka) is the same person as Bhavabhūti, but no definitive conclusions have been reached. In any case, Uṃveka is also the author of a commentary on Maṇḍana Miśra's *Bhāvanāviveka*. For details, see Raja (1970–1972) and Potter (2014).

(*sāmarthya*), context (*prakaraṇa*), and so on. This is why [Kumārila] says “[distinct] from generic entities...”¹⁸

Here we see Uṃveka paraphrasing 57a with his first sentence, and then explaining the difference between words and sentences: in sentences there is a special combination together (*saṃsarga*) of word meanings. This combinatory nature enables word-meanings to qualify each other in particular ways: in the sentence “The white cow runs,” the cow is qualified by being white, rather than the other way around.¹⁹

Having established that sentences communicate meanings in qualified combination and not merely generic entities, Uṃveka explains the nature of sentences further: they consist of words being associated together (*samabhivyaḥāra*). In the case at hand, however—consider our fictitious “smoke” utterance—there may only be a single word mentioned. How, then are many words being brought together? Uṃveka says that the other words are to be ascertained (*labhya*) through *sāmarthya*, as well as context (*prakaraṇa*).²⁰ While he says nothing further about verse 57, this sentence gives us some clues as to how he understands *sāmarthya*.

Uṃveka on *sāmarthya* and *anumeya*

Uṃveka does not say that *sāmarthya* is inferred (*anumeya*) but that it is to be ascertained or grasped (*labhya*). This gloss of *anumeya* in the original verse suggests that Uṃveka does not think that the missing words are understood by inference.²¹ Second, the ascertaining is said to occur not just through *sāmarthya* but also *prakaraṇa*, or context. While the mention of *sāmarthya* and *prakaraṇa* together is not conclusive, it is suggestive of Bhartṛhari’s (ca. 450–550 CE) discussion in the *Vākyapadīya* of how to determine separate word-meanings in a sentence, which is a string of phonemes run together:

It is from sentence, context (*prakaraṇa*), meaning, propriety, place, and time
That the meaning of a word is distinguished and not solely from its form. (314)

¹⁸ *TpT* ad *ŚV Śabdaparicheda* 57 (p. 362):

sāmānyād atiriktaṃ tu śābde vākyasya gocaraḥ |
sāmarthyād anumeyatvād āsrute ’pi padāntare. || 57

yattu sāmānyātirikaṃ saṃsargādi pratīyate tat sāmarthyaprakaraṇādīlabhyapadasamabhivyaḥārātmakasya vākyasya viśaya ityāha sāmānyāditi.

¹⁹ Given the semantics mentioned earlier, in which nouns denote universals, the story for how this qualification can occur is complicated. See Scharf (1996) for discussion. Uṃveka hints at the complexity of what’s involved in the content of sentences, by adding “and so on.”

²⁰ Thanks to Brendan Gillon for pointing out in e-mail conversation that the *-ya* ending here may carry modal force, not simply describing the process of ascertainment, but giving a normative sense: this is the correct way to ascertain the words.

²¹ One anonymous reviewer suggests that *labhya* is a close synonym for *kalpya*, which is dependent on reasoning through *arthāpatti* based on something’s not being able to be otherwise (*anyathānupapatti*). However, I was not able to identify a strong association between *labhya* and *kalpya* in Uṃveka’s discussion in the *Arthāpatti-paricheda*. Uṃveka often uses *avagamyate* for what is understood by *arthāpatti*, and uses *√labh* only when echoing Kumārila’s use in verse 78.

Combination (*saṃsarga*) and separation, association, incompatibility,
 Meaning, context (*prakaraṇa*), evidence, proximity of another word. (315)
 Suitability (*sāmarthya*), propriety, place, time, gender, accent, and so on,
 When a word meaning is unclear, due to these causes its content is brought to
 mind. (316)²²

According to Jan Houben, Bhartṛhari uses *sāmarthyāt* in a way which overlaps in meaning with *prakaraṇa*, so that both of them may refer to an utterance's "context."²³ Thus, when it appears in the ablative in Bhartṛhari, *sāmarthya* can be translated in the sense of "because it is suitable in the context" or "according to what is suitable in the context."²⁴ Further, as Iyer has observed, the sense of *sāmarthya* is broader than *prakaraṇa*, in that the list of factors all amount to the force of the word, its *sāmarthya*.²⁵ To add to this evidence, we can look to a few verses later, where Bhartṛhari takes up the question of whether a single word can communicate a sentence. Not only does this discussion shed light both on the terms *sāmarthya* and *prakaraṇa*, but it illuminates what may be intended by *anumāna*. After noting that a verb can be characterized as a sentence under the correct conditions (when we're able to understand its full meaning), Bhartṛhari gives the position of a *pūrvapakṣin* who objects that we do this by means of *anumāna*. The author of the *Vṛtti* does not remark upon the use of *anumāna*, but merely paraphrases it as *śrutārthāpatti*:

It is a certain completeness of idea, separated by and depending on words
 that are not used,
 Which through inference, appears to be the cause of our understanding the
 meaning. (327)

Vṛtti: Just as through smoke in the case of inference-for-oneself [that fire is understood], through another word [e.g., "burns"] there is implication of fire—

²² VP 2.314–316 (pp. 124, 127):

vākyāt prakaraṇādarthādaucityāddeśakālata |
śabdārthā pravibhajante na rūpādeva kevalāt || (314)
saṃsargo viprayogaśca sāhacaryaṃ virodhatā |
arthaḥ prakaraṇaṃ liṅgaṃ śabdasyānyasya sannidhiḥ || (315)
sāmarthyamaucitī deśaḥ kālo vyaktiḥ svarādayaḥ |
śabdārthasyānavacchede viśeṣasmṛtihetavaḥ || (316)

Translation is mine, though with dependence on Iyer (1977, pp. 136–137). I thank both anonymous reviewers for pointing out this connection, although the reviewers differed in the passages they cited (one suggests VPV 1.206, 4 (perhaps a typo, as there are only 183 verses in the first *kāṇḍā*) and the other VP 2.314–315) as well as their evaluation of Uṃveka's interpretation of Kumārila (one thinks he is probably on the right track, while the other thinks his interpretation is further away than Pārthasārathi).

²³ Houben (1995, p. 332, fn 516).

²⁴ Houben (1995, p. 332, fn 516).

²⁵ The *Vṛtti* ad VP 3.316 says *tatra kecit sāmarthyamevaikaṃ śabdārthanirṇayanimitamiti manyate. yo 'pyarthaprakaraṇādīnā tatra bhedaḥ samadhigamyate so 'pi sāmarthyādevātra pratīyate iti kathayanti, sāmarthyameva hi saṃsargā dibhirvyajyate iti.* (p. 127). I do not here take a position on whether the *Vṛtti* is the work of Bhartṛhari or another author, only looking to the text as a source which Uṃveka might have used.

is it not thus here, as well? By means of verbal postulation there is posited the word “exists” from which there is separation.²⁶

The *Vṛtti* (though not the *Kārikā*) says that this process which, per the *pūrvapakṣa*, allows us to understand a verb (such as “burns”) from a single word (such as “fire”) is *śrutārthāpatti*, or verbal postulation, a *pramāṇa* which Mīmāṃsā distinguishes from *anumāna*. Discussion of the entire section is beyond the purview of this paper, but one of the examples of a single word which is putatively understood as a sentence is one we will see again in the later commentaries on Kumāriḷa: where, when hearing “door” (*dvāram*), one understands the verb “you shut” (*badhāna*) or “you open” (*dehi*). Bhartṛhari argues against that the Mīmāṃsā view that when one hears *dvāram*, it is by verbal postulation that another word is understood. It is within this section that we see the *Vṛtti* explaining *sāmarthyāt* (“because it is suitable in the context” or “according to what is suitable in the context”) with *prakaraṇādinā* (“by means of context and so forth”).²⁷

Still, the term is often mentioned independently, and while we could read Uṃveka’s compound *sāmarthyaprakaraṇādi* as a *karmadhāraya* (“context which is suitable, and so on”), given that he is glossing Kumāriḷa’s *sāmarthya*, it seems likely that he is explaining the various factors which Kumāriḷa’s *sāmarthya* may consist in, against the grammatical background of Bhartṛhari.

Thus we might translate Kumāriḷa’s verse as understood by Uṃveka as:

However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony,
Because of the sentence being inferred **by force of suitability and context, etc.**,
although another word is unheard.

Finally, we should note that while Kumāriḷa says that it is the sentence which is inferred by *sāmarthya* (*sāmarthyād anumeyatvaād*), Uṃveka says that what is ascertained (*labhya*) is a word or words (*pada*) by suitability (*sāmarthya*), context (*prakaraṇa*), and so on. His gloss is not inconsistent with Kumāriḷa’s verse, however, as we might characterize the entire sentence as being understood by context given that its parts are understood by context. What Uṃveka is recognizing by his emphasis on the individual word, however, is that in a single-word utterance (or any phrase which falls short of being a sentence), there may be some question about which word or words one should understand. In our hypothetical example, “smoke!,” I may be saying “There

²⁶ Translation adapted from Iyer (1977, p. 141). VP 2.327 (p. 134):

śabdavyavahitā buddhiraprayuktapadāśrayā |
anumānattadarthasya pratyaye heturucyate || (327)

yathā dhūmena svārthānumane śabdāntareṇa vahnerākṣepaḥ naivamatrāpi. śrutārthapattiyā parikalpito yo 'sau tiṣṭhatyādiśabdaḥ tena vyavahitā.

²⁷ VP 3.339 (p. 140):

na cāpi rūpāt sandehe vācakatvaṃ nivartate |
ardhaṃ paśoriva yathā sāmarthyāt taddhikalpyate ||

The *vṛtti* remarks: *atra paśvavayo 'rdhaṃ devadattavayo vārdhaṃ paśusvāmikamiti sandeheḥ. tatra kiṃ sandehe vākyamavacakam eva arthaprakaraṇādinā 'rthastatra kalpyata eva.*

is smoke on the mountain” or “Because there is smoke on the mountain” or “I think there is fire because I see smoke” or etc.

Philosophical Evaluation of Uṃveka’s Interpretation

If Uṃveka is alluding to Bhartṛhari here, then he is surely aware of the objections to *śrutārthāpatti* in the case of ellipsis. There are several, but two of the most important are: The word “door” on its own isn’t going to bring the meaning of *close* to our cognition, since its purpose (according to Mīmāṃsā) is to denote a *jāti* of DOORNESS. And, neither is it going to bring about the word “close,” since words cause cognitions of meanings, not other words. Bhartṛhari argues that, in fact, instead of *śrutārthāpatti*, it is *prakaraṇādivaśāt*, just by force of context and etc. (the factors earlier outlined) that the entire meaning is brought to mind, by the uttering of the single word. Uṃveka here gives no reason for us to prefer the Mīmāṃsā view, of intervening linguistic material, apart from restating the claim that only sentences convey qualified meanings. Further, even if we accept the requirement for linguistic material, in some contexts, either “open” or “close” might be equally suitable to complete the utterance of “door.” While he is surely correct to appeal to context as the solution, without more detail about what criteria determine which sentence (if any) is the appropriate one, simply saying that context is the means by which we interpret the utterance is more a truism than an explanation. We will have to look to Sucarita and Pārthasārathi for more detailed explanation.

Sucarita Miśra’s *Kāśikā*

Sucarita Miśra (ca. 950 CE), in contrast to Uṃveka, does develop Kumāriḷa’s line of reasoning further in his *Kāśikā* on the *Ślokavārttika*, adding some specific examples of putatively one-word “sentences,” within a series of objections and replies:

(Objection.) But a word is seen to have within its scope something which is qualified, as when there is the inquiry, “Which king goes?” and another answers, “The king of Pāñcāla.” Then, merely through the words “king of Pāñcāla” alone, a person as qualified by an action is understood.

(Reply.) Therefore [the author] says, “...generic entity...” Whenever there is knowledge due to verbal testimony, that which is understood as distinct from generic entities can be the content of a sentence only. For there is in fact a sentence, which is the word “goes” being extended (*anuṣaṅga*) to those words [“king of Pāñcāla”], as it means “The king of Pāñcāla goes.”

(Objection.) All right, allow that there is an extension (*anuṣaṅga*) of what is heard; still, despite another word being unheard, it is observed that there is a cognition of something qualified from a single word—just as when “The door!” is spoken, there is [understood] “let it be closed”²⁸ in that case. How?

²⁸ The verb here is *vivriyatām*, from *vi* + \sqrt{vr} , a passive imperative in the third singular. While typically this has the force of a polite direct command: “Please close the door,” the Sanskrit syntax is important to

(Reply.) This is why it says, *sāmarthyād*. For the factor (*kāraka*) that is known to be pervaded by action causes the inference of the action-word through the force of a pervasion relationship. Since there is in fact a sentence due to the inferred action-word, there is here, too the mental occurrence of a meaning which is qualified.²⁹

In this exchange, the objector points to a counterexample which would falsify Kumāriḷa's claim that it is only sentences which communicate qualified meanings. This is a case where someone replies to a question, "Which king goes?" with a single word in Sanskrit: *pāñcālarāja*, which in English is best translated as "the king of Pāñcāla" or perhaps to preserve the sense of the single word, "Pāñcāla-king." But, the objection continues, with just the expression *pāñcālarāja*, we understand the king is going—or that the king is qualified by going. Thus, it is possible to communicate qualified meanings by single words or sub-sentential phrases.

Sucarita responds that this is why Kumāriḷa says "...generic entity..." referring to 57a, where he says "However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony." Sucarita goes on to reiterate that only something distinct from a generic entity (i.e. a qualified meaning) can be the content of a sentence (*sa vākyasya eva viṣaya*). In other words, it can't be the meaning of a word like "Pāñcāla-king." While the objector's case would then seem to be a counterexample, it is not, since there is actually a sentence here—and it is comprised of the word "goes" being extended to "Pāñcāla-king." What Sucarita does not say explicitly, but the interlocutor understands, is that the word "goes" to which he refers is the word in the first question: "Which king goes?" The objection continues, provisionally accepting that there could be a connection extended to this word in the question.

The idea of such extension, *anuṣaṅga*, is found in *MS* 2.1.48, on which Śabara and Kumāriḷa both explain that extension is useful for applying a *mantra*, stated in full for one sacrifice, to others, where the *mantra* is only stated in part.³⁰ The linguistic

Footnote 28 continued

the argument and so I translate the verb more literally. On the polite passive use of the imperative, see [Hock \(1991a, p. 346\)](#) and [Van de Walle \(1993, p. 105\)](#).

²⁹ *K ad ŚV Śabdpariccheda* 57 (Part III, pp. 122–123): *nanu padamapi viṣiṣṭagocaram drṣṭam yathā ko rājā yānti pṛṣṭe paraḥ pratibravīti pāñcālarāja iti*. (Note: here the printed text should probably read *rājā iti*) *tadā kevalād eva pāñcālarāḷapadāt kriyāvīṣiṣṭaḥ puruṣo 'vagamyate ata āha sāmānyādīti. yad eva kiñcit śabde sāmānyādatiriktamavaḷamyaṭe sa vākyasyaiva viṣayaḥ. vākyameva hi tadanuṣaktayātīpadam pāñcālarāḷo yānti. namvastu śrutasyā ānuṣaṅgaḥ aśrute 'pi padāntare padād ekasmād viṣiṣṭabodho drṣṭa yathā dvāramītyukte vivriyatāmīti atra kathamata āha sāmārthyādīti. kārakaḥ hi kriyayā vidītavyāptikam vyāptīsāmārthyādeva kriyāpadamanumāpayati. anumitakriyāpadād vākyādeva tatrāpi viṣiṣṭārthapratyaya iti*. Unfortunately, Sucarita's text is not available in its entirety in a printed edition, and I have had to rely on scans which are poorly digitized. Thus I have relied on the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series edition along with a digital edition from GRETEL.

³⁰ The *sūtra* reads, "Extension completes the sentence, because it is equally applied to all of them." *MS* 2.1.48 (vol 2, p. 443): *anuṣaṅgo vākyasamāptiḥ sarveṣu tulyayogīvat*. Śabara and Kumāriḷa explain *anuṣaṅga* with the case of *Taittirīya Saḥhita* 1.2.112, *yā te agne 'yāṣayā tanūrvarṣiṣṭhā gahvareṣṭhogram vaco apāvadhīt tveṣam vaco apāvadhītṣvāhā yā te agne rajāṣayā yā te agne harāṣayā iti* (p. 443). Here, the second two clauses beginning with *yā* should be completed with material from the first clause, beginning with *tanūrvarṣiṣṭhā*. Because this material can be equally applied to both of the two clauses appropriately (Kumāriḷa observes that the clauses require a feminine object of *yā*), and it is taken from the first sentence, it is *anuṣaṅga*, or extension.

material from the complete *mantra* is used for the partial ones. Both Śābara and Kumārila address the question of how such extension happens—that is, which words from the discourse context do we use to complete incomplete sentences? Kumārila treats this question extensively (while Śābara is more focused on the particular case at hand), outlining a procedure which moves from most proximate discourse to more distant, from Vedic material to ordinary linguistic material, and making the caveat that mere proximity itself is not conclusive, but that interpreters must pay attention to the three factors for sentential unity: syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*), semantic contiguity or proximity (*sannidhi*), and semantic fittingness (*yogyatā*).³¹

Sucarita’s mention of *anuṣaṅga* for a question and answer, though brief, is suggestive of point that many contemporary linguists make regarding responses to questions like “Whom did Mary call?,” “What did Sylvia do?,” and so on, called *wh*-interrogatives.³² They argue that the responses have, at some level, a complete syntactic structure which is determined by the structure of the question.³³ These are cases of what is often called *syntactic* ellipsis, as opposed to *semantic* ellipsis. The latter, in contrast to the former, does not involve any unuttered syntactical content, but instead, metaphorically speaking, “packs” extra meaning into the pronounced material. In other words, the mapping between the phonology and the syntax may be unusual in a case of ellipsis, but the syntax is the same as in an analogous case without ellipsis.

An example of *wh*-interrogative ellipsis from Merchant (2010):

- (1) “With whom did you speak”?
- a. “With Hans.”
 - b. “I spoke with Hans.”

The difference between (1a) and (1b), on a syntactic account, is not that one lacks a syntactical feature the other has, corresponding to “I spoke with,” but merely that the entirety of the syntactical structure is not pronounced in (1a). The usual evidence that these cases are syntactic involves showing that deviations from missing syntactic material are unacceptable. For instance, linguists observe certain relationships between

³¹ Semantic contiguity is the requirement that phonemes are cognitively co-located in order for a unified sentence meaning to be possible. For instance, words must appear in sufficiently close proximity in a text for them to be understood as to having a relationship. Syntactic expectancy is often illustrated by a qualifying word like “red” which does not stand alone, but metaphorically “expects” a noun, such as “cow.” It is because of the syntactical capacity inherent in words that such expectancy exists. However, where syntactic expectancy can be understood in terms of grammatical categories, semantic fittingness is not. (Whether syntactic expectancy is purely grammatical or if it involves some psychological expectation on the part of the hearer is a point of debate.) A perfectly syntactically adequate sentence can fail to have semantic fittingness, as in “He sprinkles with fire.” Here, since fire is not the sort of thing one sprinkles, there is failure of semantic fittingness. Of course, we might say that someone sprinkles with fire metaphorically, which is why the failure of semantic fittingness is often taken to be a necessary condition for secondary meaning (*gauṣavṛtti*, *upacāra*, *lakṣaṇā*, etc.) in Indian philosophy of language. For discussion, see Raja (2000).

³² The “wh” stands for questions which in English generally begin with these letters: “who,” “when,” “where,” “which,” “what,” and (the exception to the rule) “how.”

³³ For an overview of these varieties of ellipsis, see Merchant (2010), writing in response to Stainton (2006) which also contains significant discussion.

the voice of the question and its response. Below, the asterisk indicates an infelicitous response:

- (2) “Who is sending you to Pāñcāla”?
- a. “The king.”
 - b. *“By the king.”
 - c. “I’m being sent by the king.”

Since (2b) is unacceptable but (2c) is acceptable, the problem isn’t that passive constructions are ungrammatical, but that the linguistic material available does not combine correctly with the passive. (One could imagine (2b) as the answer to “By whom are you being sent to Pāñcāla?”) Modern linguists like Merchant (2010) who consider these cases and give a syntactic explanation argue that some syntactic material is shared between the “trigger sentence” (the question) and the “target sentence” (the elliptically completed sentence), just as we see here in Sucarita’s explanation.

While the opponent is willing to grant that extension and shared linguistic material can explain the first putative counterexample, we can consider another possible case: the utterance of “door,” where we do not hear any other words in the discourse context, and yet we (contrary to Kumārila’s initial claims) understand a qualified meaning—the door should be closed.³⁴ (The qualification is implicit here—we understand another word or perhaps simply the meaning, and in virtue of this, we understand the qualification.) We thus have a case of what is often called “subsential,” or “discourse-initial” ellipsis, where there is no prior discourse context from which to draw syntactic or semantic material. It is at this point where Sucarita appeals to *sāmarthya*, apparently along with inferential reasoning, as responsible for resolving ellipsis. He says that Kumārila says *sāmarthyād* because we can infer the action-word *viṛiyatām* on the basis of a *vyāpti* or pervasion relationship. This pervasion is between a factor (*kāraka*) and action.³⁵ Here, because Sucarita refers to *kāraka*, it is possible that he understands *sāmarthya* in a different sense than Uṃveka.

Sucarita on *sāmarthya* and *anumeya*

The term *sāmarthya* is used by Pāṇini and other grammarians to mean, roughly, “syntax” or the relationship between words in a sentence that binds them together into a single, unified entity.³⁶ For this phenomenon, Mīmāṃsā thinkers usually employ the word *ākāñkṣā*, which is a term meaning the “expectancy” that a word on its own has for other words. Such expectancy is especially evident in an inflected language such

³⁴ All the other examples using *dvāram* which I have seen likewise omit any further conversational context, so this seems to be an important feature of the case, distinguishing it from *anuṣaṅga*. See for instance, Śabara’s *Bhāṣya* ad *MS* 4.3.10, Śālikanātha Miśra’s *vākārthamātrkā* in the *Prakaranapañcikā*, the *arthāpatti* section in the *Mānameyodaya*—which will be discussed later—and the *arthāpatti* section of the *Tantrarahasya*. The example also occurs in Nyāya and Vedānta in a similar manner. See Kanaujia (1992) for a survey of examples.

³⁵ On *kāraka* generally, see Cardona (1974), Deshpande (1991), Gillon (2007), and Chap. 5 of Matilal (1990).

³⁶ *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 2.1.1. See Hock (1991b, p. 32ff), Coward and Raja (1990, pp. 84–85) on this use of *sāmarthya*.

as Sanskrit where case markings indicate the grammatical roles a word plays. In the example of “door,” the Sanskrit word *dvāram* is marked with the case-ending which indicates it is either nominative or accusative singular.³⁷ This case marking tells us that the word is meant to play a particular role—here, if an accusative, it is (typically) the object of an action, and if a nominative, it is (typically) the agent of an action. In other words, because the word *dvāram* is accusative or nominative, it is related to an action, as a factor (*kāraka*) either as agent or object. However, there is no action yet—since no action word has been uttered. We have to infer it—and this is part of our mental operation of unifying the entire sentence.

Thus we might translate Kumāriḷa’s verse as understood by Sucarita as:

However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony,

Because of the sentence being inferred **by force of syntax**, although another word is unheard.

Further complicating our understanding of Sucarita’s commentary is the fact that, elsewhere, he has explicitly stated that cases of elliptical completion involve postulation. In his commentary on Kumāriḷa’s discussion of *arthāpatti*, Sucarita uses the term for syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) in explaining the case of fat Devadatta, arguing that the postulated expression “he eats at night” is understood through it.³⁸ He then elaborates that postulation also happens in cases of completing a *mantra* in a new context, where one *mantra* is split, and a new word is inserted via elliptical completion (*adhyāyāra*).³⁹ While we may not want to call the case of Devadatta elliptical completion—it has important differences with both the “door” and *wh*-interrogative case—this discussion, plus the lack of debate about ellipsis qua inferential reasoning, may be indirect evidence that Sucarita thinks verbal postulation works by relying on *ākāṅkṣā*. Thus, he is in his commentary, using terms that would be acceptable to Buddhists and Vaiṣeṣika interlocutors, who accept *arthāpatti* only as a form of *anumāna*, and not committing himself to the necessity of inference.

However, while this would explain use of the terms *anumīta* and *anumāpāyati*, it is less convincing when applied to the term *vyāpti*. At issue in the distinction between inferential reasoning and postulation is whether both have such a pervasion relationship. Mīmāṃsā only accepts this for the former. So could Sucarita be arguing that these particular cases of ellipsis completion are due to inference rather than postulation?

³⁷ The word *dvāra* is neuter, which means it could be read as either case.

³⁸ *K ad ŚV Arthāpattipariccheda* (Part 2, p. 174): *satyam arthadvārikaiva vākyasyānupapattiḥ. arthāntareṇa copapattiḥ. kintu tadvākyamanupapannaṃ vākyāntaramevākaṅkṣati yathā padaṃ padāntaram.*

³⁹ *K ad ŚV Arthāpattipariccheda* (Part 2, 174): *chedanamantre tvīṣetvetyatra chinadmīti padamadyāhriyate.*

Philosophical Evaluation of Sucarita's Interpretation

Below I give a reconstruction to motivate the view that ellipsis completion is a matter of inference (*anumāna*), and then show it is unsatisfactory.⁴⁰

Ellipsis Completion by Inference: First Attempt

1. *Thesis*: There is the unuttered word *vivṛiyatām* in a hearer's cognition
2. *Reason*: because there is a *kāraka*,
3. *Pervasion*: and where there is a *kāraka*, there is a corresponding and syntactically connected action-word,
4. *Supporting examples*: as in *rāmo gacchati*.

This inference, however, is hopeless. That there is a *kāraka* (agent, instrument, object, etc.), while it may require an action-word does not require a particular action word. We might, then, tighten the inference by specifying the *kāraka*.

Ellipsis Completion by Inference: Second Attempt

1. *Thesis*: There is the unuttered word *vivṛiyatām* in a hearer's cognition
2. *Reason*: because there is the syntactically expectant accusative case in *dvāram*
3. *Pervasion*: and where there is a syntactically expectant accusative, there is a corresponding and syntactically connected action-word,
4. *Supporting examples*: as in *rāmo gacchati*.

Again, this inference cannot work. First, there is the problem of identifying the *kāraka* from hearing "door." We might reason based on lexical knowledge that, as it refers to something inanimate, "door" refers to something which is the object of an action. However, as we've observed, *dvāram* can be understood as accusative or nominative, which underdetermines the associated verb form.⁴¹ Second, even if we identify the case (for example, because there is a conventional default that single-word noun utterances are always in the accusative), this alone cannot determine either the particular verb to be associated ("close" or "shut" or "exists") nor its tense and mode, etc.

How to fully account for the subsentential (or discourse-initial) cases which pose a problem for inference is a subject of wide-ranging discussion in contemporary linguistics and philosophy of language, and beyond the purview of this paper. Above I have simply shown that reconstructing this case in terms of inferential reasoning purely based on the pervasion relationship between *kāraka* and an action-word does not seem plausible. Since Sucarita can certainly work out this inference for himself, why would he use *vyāpti* in describing the process by which additional linguistic material is determined? One option is a rhetorical motivation, although given that the

⁴⁰ Sucarita is here silent on whether *anuṣaṅga* involves *vyāpti*, as his response is explicitly targeted at the counterexample of *dvāram*.

⁴¹ This is setting aside the question of identifying the uttered word as a noun or a verb. In colloquial English, "door" is a slang term common among cyclists for striking someone with a car door while they are bicycling. While *dvāram* is not used this way in Sanskrit, there are Sanskrit homophones which can be taken as verbs and nouns equally. For instance, *bhavati*, either "s/he it exists," from $\sqrt{bhū}$ in the third person singular, or "in/at/on your lordship" in the masculine/nominative singular locative of *bhavat*, or "your lady" in the feminine singular vocative of *bhavatī*.

Mīmāṃsā deny *arthāpatti* functions through *vyāpti*, this would be odd (he has no need to mention the term).

An alternative hypothesis—one which is going beyond the text but may find support in some similar ambiguity in Pārthasārathi—is that Sucarita is thinking of a two-stage process to resolve ellipsis. While *arthāpatti* may identify an incongruity, *anumāna* based on syntax will determine the missing linguistic material. This does not resolve the problem of how to construct a non-fallacious inference, but it does explain why Sucarita can say in one place that *arthāpatti* resolves ellipsis, and in another that it is *anumāna*. Both are involved, and his focus is a matter of rhetorical choice. Regardless of which explanation is more apt, turning to Pārthasārathi we see that he has avoided any terminology that is associated with *anumāna*, and thus has no need to identify a *vyāpti* for ellipsis completion.

Pārthasārathi Mīśra's *Nyāyaratnākara*

With Pārthasārathi Mīśra (ca. 1000–1400 CE, but probably closer to 1000 CE) we have discussion of the objection that Kumārila's abbreviated comment is intended to block in terms explicitly connected with postulation (Kumārila's words in bold):⁴²

(Objection.) However, a word is observed to have a qualified cognitive content, just as when there is an ordinary expression of inquiry, “What goes?” and there is the reply, “A horse.” What is understood is the action which is qualified by a horse, from the word “horse” alone.

(Reply.) Therefore, he says,

However, with regard to verbal testimony, things which are distinct from generic entities fall within the scope of sentence meaning.

(Objection.) How, when another word is unuttered, does it belong to a sentence?

(Reply.) Therefore, he says,

When there is another, unuttered word, however, that other word is inferred through *sāmarthya*.

The remainder of the sentence is posited as being the action word understood from the question sentence through extension (*anuṣaṅga*), because of its being incongruous. Moreover, in cases such as “The door,” the word “let it be closed,” for example, is inserted (*adhyāhriyate*) due to incongruity.⁴³

⁴² The dates for Pārthasārathi are controversial as he does not identify his region or mention any historical events useful for dating. According to Sastri, Cidānanda, who is dated in the thirteenth century, refers to him in his *Nītitattāvirbhava* (Sastri 1936). See Kataoka (2011) for more recent discussion of dates.

⁴³ NR ad ŚV *Śabdaparicheda* 57 (pp. 554–555): *nanu viśiṣṭaviṣayamapi padaṃ dṛṣṭam yathā loke ko yāti iti pṛṣṭe aśvaḥ ity ukte kevalādaśvapadādaśvaviśiṣṭakriyā gamyate ata āha sāmānyād atiriktaṃ tu śābde vākyasya gocarāḥ. katham aśrute padāntare vākyatvam ata āha sāmārthyād anumeyatvād aśrute 'pi padāntare praśnavākyagataṃ kriyāpadamanupapattiyānuṣaṅgeṇa vākyaśeṣaḥ kalpyate dvāramityādavapyanupapattiyauva samvriyatām ityādīkamadhyāhriyate iti.* Quoted text in bold.

Pārthasārathi on *sāmarthya* and *anumeya*

Where Kumārila has used the term “inferred” (*anumeya*), Pārthasārathi glosses this as “is posited...through extension because of its being incongruous” (*anupapattiyā anuṣaṅgeṇa...kalpyate*), a phrase which strongly suggests that the *pramāṇa* of postulation (*arthāpatti*) is being employed.⁴⁴ Postulation is a matter of positing (√*klp*, the verbal root of the present passive third singular *kalpyate*) an object which is in some way necessary given the presence of another object. Without this postulation, the established object (known through perception, testimony, etc.) would be incongruous, *anupapatti*.⁴⁵ Pārthasārathi, in his discussion of the verse appealing to *sāmarthya*, makes no explicit reference to context (*prakaraṇa*) like Uṃveka or factors (*kāraka*) like Sucarita, preferring to appeal to postulation instead. This language echoes what Kumārila says in the *TV ad MS 2.1.48*: “And there is not a suitable linguistic use (*vyavahāra*) for an incomplete sentence; therefore, because there is certainly incongruity otherwise for that [incomplete sentence], the rest of the sentence which has the capacity for completion must be posited.”⁴⁶

Note that, like Sucarita and Uṃveka, Pārthasārathi agrees with Kumārila that postulation is irreducible to inferential reasoning, despite the best efforts of Nyāya to explain it in terms of *kevalavyatirekānumāna* or negative-only-inference.⁴⁷ In postulation, there is no *vyāpti* or pervasion relationship which is ascertained. This makes Pārthasārathi’s explanation at odds with an inferential account of ellipsis, in which a *vyāpti* would be necessary. To see how this difference plays out, we can look at how verbal postulation (*śrutārthāpatti*), for both Kumārila and Pārthasārathi, is exemplified in the traditional case of Devadatta.

Postulation: Paradigmatic Example

1. *Knowledge by testimony*: “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day.”
2. *Incongruity*: Devadatta’s fatness lacks a cause and makes the sentence defective.
3. *Postulated content*: “Devadatta eats at night.”

Pārthasārathi, in explaining this case, says

⁴⁴ The term *anupapatti* is used throughout the *Arthāpattipariccheda* by Pārthasārathi along with *kalpanā* and other cognates of √*klp* (and sometimes without) to refer to the incongruity which triggers *arthāpatti*. See *ŚV Arthāpattipariccheda* ad 5, 29, 76, 77.

⁴⁵ The term *anupapatti* is translated variously—as “inconsistent,” “inexplicable,” and so on. The first cannot be correct, strictly speaking, as adding new information will not remove logical inconsistency between two propositions. The second would make every case of postulation have an explanatory effect, which may be correct for some, but not for all. I use “incongruous” as it need not require explanatory effects or strict logical incompatibility.

⁴⁶ *TV ad MS 2.1.48* (vol. 2, p. 444): *na cāparipūrṇenavyavhāro ’vakalpate tatra tadanyathānupapattiyā ’vaśyaṃ paripūrṇasamartho vākyaśeṣaḥ kalpanīyah*. (The edition reads *anupapapattiyā*, an obvious ditto-graphy.)

⁴⁷ For discussions of Kumārila on this, see Raja (1994) and Yoshimizu (2007). My understanding of Kumārila and his relationship to Pārthasārathi and Sucarita on *arthāpatti* is also indebted to conversation with Elisa Freschi and Andrew Ollett, in conjunction with reading drafts of their in progress work on this topic.

As fatness and the negation of eating are impossible as a unified sentence, there is posited the sentence about night as a supplied phrase in order to include the cause (of the fatness).⁴⁸

On the view that the meaning of “fat” involves a cause, if we accept the denial of a cause (not eating during the day), the sentence would fail to have semantic fittingness, one of the three requirements for a unified sentence. There is, then, as with “the door!” and “a horse,” linguistic material which is postulated in order to repair an incongruity. The utterance meaning itself is not “Devadatta eats at night” but this phrase must be postulated, on pain of incomprehensibility. Similarly, I take it that for Pārthasārathi, although “the door” directly means something generic like DOOR-NESS (on the standard Bhāṭṭa view), one can fill in through postulation what is missing in order to constitute a complete sentence.⁴⁹ From this sentence, one understands a qualified meaning.

Postulation of “Close the door”

1. *Knowledge by testimony*: “The door!”
2. *Incongruity*: No qualified content is communicated
3. *Postulated content*: “let it be closed”

While Pārthasārathi gives a proximate cause for the elliptical sentence completion (incongruity) he does not explain what, precisely, is incongruous about these cases. We might surmise that the lack of qualified content—there not being something propositional, in contemporary terms—is incongruous with the assumption that someone is trying to communicate, especially given Kumārila’s observation that incomplete sentences aren’t useful for linguistic use (*vyavahāra*). After all, speakers utter words in order to perform speech acts, and there is nothing asserted, commanded, etc., with the phrase “The door!”

Another clue to his understanding, elsewhere in Pārthasārathi’s commentary, is when he characterizes the case at hand as being resolved by recourse to *ākāṅkṣā*. This occurs in his remarks on ŚV ad MS 1.1.24, in the *Vākyādhikaraṇa*. Responding to an opponent who claims sentences lack any constituent parts, Pārthasārathi says that, if this were the case, then we would not have cases like *dvāram*, where another meaning is gotten by *ākāṅkṣā*.⁵⁰ While he does not elaborate further, on pain of internal contradiction, we should understand him as thinking (perhaps like Sucarita) that both syntactic expectancy (*ākāṅkṣā*) and postulation (*arthāpatti*) are together involved in resolving this case.

⁴⁸ NR ad ŚV *Arthāpattipariccheda* (p. 621): *pīnatvabhojanapratishedhayor ekavākyatvānupapattiyā tadupaṭādanāya taccheṣatvena rātrivākyam kalpyata iti*.

⁴⁹ In some cases, a noun can mean, indirectly, a particular. This happens not through the primary meaning function, though, but indication (*lakṣaṇā*). Indication also involves postulation in the meaning—determining process on the Mīmāṃsā view. See Das (2011), Keating (2017), and Raja (1994), and a dissenting view in Guha (2016).

⁵⁰ NR ad ŚV *Vākyādhikaraṇa* (p. 1312): *yā ca loke dvāraṃ dvāramityukte arthāntarākāṅkṣā*. We do not have Uṃveka or Sucarita’s commentary on the *vākyādhikaraṇa*, so we cannot see if they say anything comparable.

One hypothesis is that Pārthasārathi thinks there are two stages involved in resolving the case of ellipsis, a general and a specific one. In his discussion of ŚV ad MS 1.1.4, he notes that *arthāpatti* is insufficient as a source of knowledge about (unobservable) *dharma*, because the most it can do is tell us that there is *some* unseen entity, not precisely what the nature of it is. It tells us only generalities about causation, and not what a specific cause is. In contrast, the Vedas can tell us particularities (from which we can understand generalities).⁵¹ Perhaps, then, postulation operates to tell us that some additional meaning is necessary when we hear an incomplete sentence, but then it is by way of *ākāṅkṣā* that the specific word (and subsequently meaning) is adduced.

Unlike for Sucarita, however, the explanation for the door case and the *wh*-interrogative is explicitly the same. The case of “A horse (is going)” is incongruous, probably because “a horse” does not communicate anything in answer to the question, without postulating a verb, as below.

Postulation of “A horse is going”

1. *Knowledge by testimony*: “A horse.”
2. *Incongruity*: No qualified content is communicated
3. *Postulated content*: “is going”

Pārthasārathi does not explicitly draw any further connections between the two cases, which are different in an important respect: only one has prior discourse from which linguistic material can be drawn. In the case of “(Close) the door!,” we might equally postulate “shut” or “open,” as Śabara notes in the MS.⁵² We might even postulate “is open,” thinking that the speaker is telling us the door is open in order to politely suggest—rather than command—that we close it. However, as observed earlier, when asked “What is going?,” it would be odd to reply, “A horse is galloping” or “There is a horse.” Because of the linguistic material available in the interrogative, our postulatory choices seem constrained—if not necessitated.

In conclusion, on Pārthasārathi’s analysis, Kumārila’s original verse 57 might be understood as:

However, something distinct from a generic entity falls within the scope of a sentence in the case of testimony,

Because of the sentence being **reasoned to by force of congruity**, although another word is unheard.

Philosophical Evaluation of Pārthasārathi’s Interpretation

Pārthasārathi’s analysis bears explanatory responsibility for what counts as resolving incongruity. One clear maxim accepted by Mīmāṃsā for constraining postulation is found in ŚBh ad 2.1.7 and 2.2.1, where fewer unobserved properties are preferred to be

⁵¹ NR ad ŚV Pratyakṣasūtra 109 (p. 220): *sāmānyam hi sādhyantī arthāpattiḥ na viśeṣaṃ nirdhārayitumalam viśeṣaṃ tu sādhyacchāstram antarñītasāmānyameva sādhyatīti kiṃ pramāṇtareṇeti.*

⁵² ŚBh ad MS 4.3.11.

posited over many.⁵³ The reasoning for this principle is explained by Śabara (through the voice of an interlocutor): Unless we observe something, we ordinarily don't think it exists. However, we change our minds if our not positing that thing's existence causes an incongruity. (I don't, by default, think there is wind gusting outside my window. But then I see a leaf float by. If I do not postulate that there is a gust of wind, the movement of the leaf is incongruous with the principle that inanimate objects cannot move themselves.) We posit the existence of something unobserved only to resolve the incongruity, so once it has been resolved, we should not posit anything further. (I should not also posit that there is someone pulling the leaf with a thin strand of fishing wire.)

However, Śabara thinks that in this case, despite the maxim, it is explanatorily better to posit more entities.⁵⁴ Thus while the numerically simpler explanation is better, this is a principle which must be weighted against other considerations. Further, when word-meanings are the unobserved entities, whether "close" or "open" is posited, both are numerically equivalent, meaning that we must look for other clues.⁵⁵ Thus in the case of "door," we are left without a complete explanation as to how "let it be closed" is the correct completion of the ellipsis.

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's *Mānameyodaya*

By the time of Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa's Mīmāṃsā primer *Mānameyodaya* (*MM*) (ca. 1560 CE), the initial notion of *sāmarthya* mentioned by Kumāṛila is brought together with discussion of context in the explanation of postulation.⁵⁶ This happens through appealing to *anvaya*, a term often related to *sāmarthya* (in the sense preferred by Pāṇini) which, most broadly, means "connection."

Now, it is maintained that there is verbal postulation when words are brought in to establish linguistic connection (*anvaya*) in an incomplete sentence.

This is just as in the case of "the door, the door!," where the general knowledge-cognition (*sādhāraṇapramāṇa*) is that there must be a meaning to

⁵³ ŚBh ad MS 2.1.7 (vol 2, p. 370), *evam saty alpīyasadyadr̥ṣṭakalpanā nyāyyā*; ŚBh ad MS 2.2.1 (vol 3, p. 2), *adr̥ṣṭārthānāmupakāṛakalpanālpīyasī nyāyyeti*.

⁵⁴ The question at hand is whether the *jyotiṣṭoma*, which is characterized by sentences describing three ritual acts, should be understood as having its effect in virtue of a single result, collectively attained, or three results, singly attained by each act. The *siddhānta* argues for the latter position, since the sentences describing these ritual acts are not related in a way that would support a combinatory interpretation.

⁵⁵ In pointing out this general principle, one reviewer remarks that "shut" could be postulated as a "general word," but not "shut gently" or "shut quickly," as they are more specific, and that further, any word which expresses *pidhāna*—that is, "shut" or "close"—would be postulated, as long as they are equally simple. While true, even if we set aside differing connotations among close synonyms, the question of whether "close" or "open" are equally simple, and in what sense, remains.

⁵⁶ The *Mānameyodaya* is in fact authored by two writers: the section on *māna* is by Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, who seems to have planned the entire text but did not finish it, and the section on *meya* by Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita, who completes the work sometime in the seventeenth century (Unithiri 1983; Nārāyanabhāṭṭa 2004). It is a basic introduction to the Bhāṭṭa tradition, equivalent to works like the *Vedāntaparibhāṣā* (Vedānta) or *Siddhāntamuktāvali* (Nyāya). The *māna* portion of the text focuses on the *pramāṇa*-s discussed by Kumāṛila in his ŚV.

establish connection in the sentence through another meaning, such as “closing” (*āvāraṇa*), understood through a word. When, since no heard word is ascertained, there is a conflict with that [cognition], a meaning such as *closing* is to be posited as being understood from unheard word(s). And in this case, someone engaged in positing a meaning such as *closing* along with a word, because it is parsimonious to understand a meaning from a word alone, posits just a word. What has this word-positing character is verbal postulation.⁵⁷

The broader context of this excerpt is that Nārāyaṇa is arguing against the Prābhākara conception of postulation (which uses the same example of “the door!”). He defines postulation as resulting from an incongruity between general knowledge—cognition and a specific knowledge-cognition. The general knowledge-cognition (*sādhāraṇapramāṇa*) might be understood as background knowledge, or standing beliefs. Importantly, its content is not restricted in its scope to a particular time or place. It is a universal claim—for all utterances, there must be appropriately connected meanings to constitute a sentence meaning. In contrast, the specific knowledge-cognition (*asādhāraṇapramāṇa*) is restricted in scope. It is about a specific utterance: “the door, the door” is an utterance which lacks connection or *anvaya*.⁵⁸

Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa on *anvaya*

The term *anvaya* (from *anu* + \sqrt{i}) can mean simply “connection” or “association,” but in the context of linguistic theory, it refers to a specific kind of connection: the relationship between words in a sentence. Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsā, generally speaking, argue that it is the denotation of words (*jāti*) which in combination together result in *anvaya*. This is the theory of *abhihitānvaya*, or the connection of what has been denoted.⁵⁹ While *anvaya* is often translated as “syntactic connection,” given the role of *yogyatā*, it is equally important to understand semantic connection as present. Thus, while two words “the door, the door” are repeated, they do not make a sentence, as they lack the requisite syntactic-semantic connections.

When this specific knowledge (the utterance lacks *anvaya*) is considered against the general background knowledge (communicative sentences have *anvaya*), there is incongruity. Without the postulation of a third thing, there would be a difficulty (this

⁵⁷ *MM* ad *Arthāpatti* (p. 131): *yatra tvaparipūrṇasya vākyasyānvayasiddhaye śabdo 'dhyāhriyate tatra śrūtārthapattiriṣyate. yathā dvāraṃ dvāram ityasmin vākye nvayasiddhyartham śabdagamyaṇa āvaraṇādyaarthāntareṇa bhavitavyam iti sādhāraṇapramāṇam. tasya śrutaśabdānupalambhena bādhe sati aśrutaśabdagamyatvena āvaraṇādyaarthah kalpanīyaḥ. tatra ca śabdena sahaiva āvaraṇādyaarthakalpanodyuktaḥ śabdādevārvāgataḥ lāghavataḥ śabdameva kalpyati. seyam śabdakalpanārūpā śrūtārthapattih.*

⁵⁸ There is a difference between this case of incongruity and the earlier case in the *MM* involving Caitra’s absence from the home. In that case, the general knowledge-cognition is that Caitra is alive (somewhere or another). The specific knowledge-cognition is that Caitra is not in his home. This piece of information then excludes a place from the domain of places where Caitra could be, leaving that he is alive and outside of his home. However, in the case of “the door,” there is no exclusion in this way. Rather, there is a claim that all sentences must have a certain feature and a piece of evidence that, *prima facie*, would make that claim false. To avoid this claim turning out false, we postulate a specific unpronounced meaning.

⁵⁹ See Matil and Sen (1988), Taber (1989), and Siderits (1991).

utterance is not a communicative sentence) and so we postulate a word (the utterance is now a communicative sentence). While Nārāyaṇa does not explain the Devadatta case, we can incorporate Pārthasārathi's analysis and our general knowledge about ellipsis to represent the paradigmatic example of Devadatta:

Postulation: Paradigmatic Example, Updated

1. *Specific knowledge (by testimony)*: There is the utterance “Fat Devadatta does not eat during the day.”
2. *General knowledge*: Communication requires a unified sentence meaning with semantic fittingness, contiguity, syntactic expectancy.
3. *Incongruity*: Devadatta's fatness lacks a cause and therefore semantic fittingness.
4. *Postulated content*: “Devadatta eats at night.”

Postulation is thus well-suited to address someone's stating, out of the blue, “the door!” in an attempt to communicate “Close the door!” As a competent language user, one knows what is necessary for sentences to be complete. On hearing the words “the door!” (the new, specific knowledge), we might wonder, “Do what with the door?” This highlights that this single word is incongruous without another word and its associated meaning. Nārāyaṇa agrees with Kumārila that sentences are the conveyers of meaning—they, unlike single words, can communicate qualified cognitive content. He also agrees with Uṃveka that it is through words together that sentences are constructed, and that they are, by definition, unified entities, having *anvaya* (or *sāmarthya*). There is no appeal to conversationally adjacent discourse material, only the principle of postulating whatever makes the expression congruous with one's general background knowledge. Thus, the postulation of “close” proceeds as follows:

Postulation of “Close the door,” Updated

1. *Specific knowledge (by testimony)*: There is the utterance “The door!”
2. *General knowledge*: Communication requires a unified sentence meaning with semantic fittingness, contiguity, proper syntactic expectancy.
3. *Incongruity*: The expression fails to have proper syntactic expectancy, etc.
4. *Postulated content*: Closing is communicated by a word

Here, the postulated content is no longer a particular verb like *saṃvṛiyatām*, but it is merely a word which conveys *āvaraṇa*, a noun meaning “closing.” Perhaps by this time, Bhāṭṭa Mīmāṃsakas are feeling the force of arguments against verbal postulation that focus on the impossibility of determining whether “shut” or “close” is meant. Instead, whatever word successfully communicates the appropriate meaning is a suitable candidate.

Philosophical Evaluation of Nārāyaṇa Bhāṭṭa's view of ellipsis

In considering how Nārāyaṇa's account fares, we should consider the difference between discourse-initial ellipsis (the “door” case) and *wh*-interrogatives. We have seen Pārthasārathi identify incongruity in such cases (responding to the question “Who goes?” with “A horse” is incongruous). On the view described in the *MM* the incon-

gruity might be that if the word simply conveys HORSEHOOD, there is no connection, which is necessary for communicating a qualified content. The word alone fails as an assertion and as a response to the question. Thus, relying on the context, the hearer (probably more or less automatically) inserts “goes.”

Postulation of “A horse is going,” Updated

1. *Specific knowledge (by testimony)*: There is the utterance “A horse”
2. *General knowledge*: Communication requires a unified sentence meaning with semantic fittingness, contiguity, proper syntactic expectancy.
3. *Incongruity*: The expression fails to have proper syntactic expectancy, etc.
4. *Postulated content*: “is going”

Unlike the case of elliptical completion (*adhyāhāra*), in the case of extension (*anuṣaṅga*), there is a constraint on the material that resolves the incongruity, as we saw earlier when considering inappropriate responses to questions (“Who is sending you to Pāñcāla?” “By the king”). Nārāyaṇa does not discuss this case, and so we are left to consider on our own if the two cases of postulation work differently, and how. It might be possible to fill out the background knowledge against which the one-word expression is incongruous. Perhaps the general knowledge here includes expectations about how one responds to interrogatives. Suppose we know that a response to *wh*-interrogatives ought to include linguistic material from the question. In that case, the incongruity would be not just that “a horse” fails to have proper *anvaya*, but that it fails in using the available linguistic material. This would entail that what must be postulated to repair the incongruity must also address this failure.

We might apply a similar strategy of adding to the general knowledge in the case of “(Close) the door!” Building in general knowledge about how communication ought to relate to the context could constrain what must be postulated. The general knowledge might be that speakers communicate by relying on mutually available, salient features of the physical environment. In fact, this objection might support the competing Prābhākara account of postulation, which is that we should postulate a fact or meaning instead. The Prābhākara, as described in the *Mānameyodaya*, do not appeal to indeterminacy of content in their objection to the Bhāṭṭa, but they argue that it is more parsimonious to insert a fact or meaning, since even if we postulate a word, the removal of the incongruity does not occur until we understand what the word means.⁶⁰

Nārāyaṇa is responding to this account in the *Mānameyodaya*, and he argues that since it is the word, not the meaning, which enables an appropriate linguistic connection, we should postulate only a word. The meaning will come along after the word. However, his account of postulation still has unanswered questions. When are there constraints on the kind of linguistic material we should posit, and what are those constraints? Why should we resolve the incongruity with our general communica-

⁶⁰ Whether this is a position held by Prābhākara thinkers and when is an open question. It is clear that, at least by the time of the *Mānameyodaya*, this is the position attributed to the Prābhākara by Bhāṭṭa philosophers. One might worry, however, that Prābhākara would reject the use of postulation at all as responsible for completing the meaning of an uttered word or phrase, preferring to appeal simply to *ākāṅkṣā*. (This suggestion is due to conversation with Andrew Ollett.) If, in fact, their argument for postulation of an *artha* is counterfactual—that were one to attribute completion to postulation, it ought to be this way, and not of a *śabda*—the point still stands, that they reject the Bhāṭṭa position of inserting linguistic content.

tive principle by inserting linguistic material—why not either interpret the speaker as not having meant to communicate (she has misspoken) or amend our principle? The question which has plagued us since Kumāṛila remains unanswered: why not consider single-word utterances as a counterexample to the claim that only sentences communicate qualified content (propositions)?

Concluding Remarks

The original problem facing Kumāṛila is an objection to his claim that words only convey generalities and sentences are necessary to communicate qualified cognitive content. Single-word expressions seem to be able to communicate full-fledged propositional content, and in particular, responses to *wh*-interrogatives and cases of subsentential ellipsis are phenomena for which Kumāṛila and other Mīmāṃsakas need to account. We have seen efforts to explain these cases through appeals to syntax, grammatical rules, context, and human reasoning abilities. However, inferential reasoning requires a pervasion relationship, which appears to be unavailable for some important cases, like discourse-initial utterances like “the door.” Perhaps *wh*-interrogatives fare better on this account, since there is linguistic material from which to draw.

Postulation, another knowledge source which does not require pervasion, initially seems to be a plausible account of the apparent ellipsis counterexample to Kumāṛila’s claim. It is the account preferred by Bhāṭṭa of ellipsis, though we have seen that Sucarita’s commentary seems to imply that inference is involved. One solution is to take him as speaking in a loose manner, with rhetorical purpose. However, given that Pārthasārathi also has two different accounts of the *dvāram* case—in terms of *ākāṅkṣā* and *arthāpatti*, perhaps we should speculate (postulate?) that there is a two stage process for resolving discourse-initial ellipsis. First, *arthāpatti* identifies, by means of an incongruity, that there must be some word which brings about the rest of the sentence meaning. Then, by *anumāna*, perhaps with dependence upon regularities of syntax, we ascertain precisely which word is meant.

This is, though, not how these cases are explicitly described. Further, this leaves us with *arthāpatti* in a tenuous position as a knowledge source, since in some cases we seem to be able to ascertain specific content through it: Caitra is outside, the sun has the power to move, and so on. So, we must ask when it is that we can rely on *arthāpatti* to give us specific knowledge to resolve incongruities. We should posit as few entities as possible, but we have seen that explanatory simplicity is not merely about the number of entities. In the case of language, beginning with the assumption that only sentences communicate qualified meanings, single-word utterances cause an incongruity. However, the way to repair that incongruity is not self-evident.

If no alternative explanation can be given for how hearers understand qualified content from a single word, we might be forced to admit that, at least in some cases, a word can communicate such content without being embedded in a sentence. If single words are able to communicate in this manner—we can genuinely assert, enjoin, inquire, and so forth with them without additional linguistic material—then this challenges the sentence as being the most fundamental conveyor of testimonial knowledge. This

is not merely a Vedic assumption, but is a standard starting point for much contemporary philosophy of language. More investigation into Mīmāṃsā discussion of this topic is, as Gillon (2010, 2013) observes, an important desideratum.

References

- Cardona, G. (1974). Pāṇini's *Kāraḥ*: Agency, animation, and identity. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 2, 231–306.
- Coward, H., & Raja, K. K. (1990). *The philosophy of the grammarians*, Vol. 5 of *The encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Das, N. (2011). *Lakṣaṇā* as inference. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 39, 353–366.
- Deshpande, M. (1985). *Ellipsis and syntactic overlapping: Current issues in Pāṇinian syntactic theory*. Number 24 in Postgraduate and Research Department Series. Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Deshpande, M. (1991). Prototypes in Pāṇinian syntax. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 111, 465–480.
- Deshpande, M. M. (1989). Ellipsis in modern linguistics and Pāṇini. *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, 70(1), 103–124.
- Dreyfus, G. B. (1997). *Recognizing reality: Dharmakīrti's philosophy and its Tibetan interpretations*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Dunne, J. (2004). *Foundations of Dharmakīrti's philosophy*. Boston: Wisdom Publications.
- Gillon, B. S. (2007). Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī and linguistic theory. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 35, 45–468.
- Gillon, B. S. (2010). Linguistic investigations into ellipsis in classical Sanskrit. In *Sanskrit computational linguistics: 4th international symposium, New Delhi, India, 10–12 December 2010. Proceedings* (pp. 218–230). Berlin: Springer.
- Gillon, B. S. (2013). Constituency and contextual dependence in classical Sanskrit. In *Seminar on Sanskrit syntax and discourse structures*, Number 237–266. Paris: Université Paris Diderot.
- Gonda, J. (1960). *Ellipsis, brachylogy and other forms of brevity in speech in the Ṛgveda*. Amsterdam: N.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.
- Guha, N. (2016). On Arthāpatti. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 44(4), 757–776.
- Hayes, R. P. (1988). *Dīnāga on the interpretation of signs*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Hayes, R. P. (2009). Dignāga on sensation, inference, and language. In *Buddhist philosophy: Essential readings* (pp. 107–115). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hock, H. H. (1991a). *Principles of historical linguistics* (2nd ed.). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Hock, H. H. (1991b). *Studies in Sanskrit syntax*. Delhi: Motilal Banaradsidass.
- Houben, J. (1995). *The Saṃbandha-samuddeśa (Chapter on relation) and Bhāṛtharī's philosophy of language*. Groningen: Egbert Forsten.
- Iyer, K. A. S. (1977). *Vākyapadīya of Bhāṛtharī: Chapter II English Translation with exegetical notes*. Delhi: Motilal Banaradsidass.
- Kanaujia, T. R. (1992). Heterogeneity of arthapatti. In H. S. P. Gustav Roth (Ed.), *Philosophy, grammar, and indology: Essays in honour of Professor Gustav Roth* (pp. 165–184). Delhi: Indian Books Centre.
- Kataoka, K. (2011). *Kumārila on truth, omniscience, and killing*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Keating, M. (2017). Metonymy and metaphor as verbal postulation: The epistemic status of non-literal speech in Indian philosophy. *Journal of World Philosophies*, 2(1), 67–80.
- Matilal, B. K. (1990). *The word and the world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Matilal, B. K., & Sen, P. K. (1988). The context principle and some Indian controversies over meaning. *Mind*, 97(385), 73–97.
- Merchant, J. (2010). Three kinds of ellipsis: Syntactic, semantic, pragmatic? In F. Recanati, I. Stojanovic, & N. Villanueva (Eds.), *Context-dependence, perspective, and relativity* (pp. 141–192). The Hague: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Monier-Williams, M. (2008). *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary: Etymologically and philologically arranged (Indica et Buddhica HTML Version 0.3 RC1 Conversion to HTML from Cologne Source version by Richard (Mahoney) ed.)*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Nārāyaṇabhāṭṭa. (2004). *Mānameyodaya by Nārāyaṇa Bhāṭṭa and Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita* (3rd ed.). Chennai: The Adyar Library and Research Centre.
- Ollett, A. (2013). What is Bhāvanā? *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 41, 221–262.
- Phillips, S. (2002). Ellipsis and propositional anaphora in Gaṅgeśa's *Tattvacintāmaṇi*. In F. Grimal (Ed.), *Time and sources* (pp. 173–186). Pondicherry: Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient.
- Potter, K. (2014). *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies: Philosophy of Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* (Vol. XVI). Delhi: Motilal Banaridsidass.
- Raja, K. (1970–1972). Umbeka Bhāṭṭa. *Journal of Oriental Research* 40–41, 93–96.
- Raja, K. (1994). *Ākṣepa, Arthāpatti and Lakṣaṇā*. In V. D. et al (Ed.), *Cultura Indica: Tributes to an Indologist Professor Dr. Asoke Chatterjee Sastri* (pp. 103–106). Delhi: Sarada Publishing House.
- Raja, K. (2000). *Indian theories of meaning*. Adyar: The Adyar Library and Research Centre.
- Raja, K. K. (1958). The elliptical sentence-Indian theories. *Adyar Library Bulletin*, 40(22), 25–31.
- Sastri, V. R. (1936). A short history of the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Śāstra. In *Tattvabindu by Vācaspatimīśra with Tattvavibhāvanā by śiṣya Parameśvara*. Number 3 in Annamalai University Sanskrit Series (pp. 1–197). Trichinopoly.
- Scharf, P. (1996). The denotations of generic terms in ancient Indian philosophy: Grammar, Nyāya, and Mīmāṃsā. *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 86(3), 1–336.
- Siderits, M. (1991). *Indian Philosophy of Language*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Stainton, R. (2006). *Words and thoughts: Subsentences, ellipsis, and the philosophy of language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Taber, J. (1989). The theory of the sentence in Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Western philosophy. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 17, 407–430.
- Taber, J., & Kataoka, K. (2015). Coreference and qualification: Dignāga debated by Kumārila and Dharmakīrti. In The Oxford (Ed.), *Handbook of Indian Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Unithiri, N. (1983). A note on the anumāna chapters in Mānameyodaya and Nītitattvavirbhāva. *Adyar Library*, 47, 36–47.
- Van de Walle, L. (1993). *Pragmatics and classical Sanskrit: a pilot study in linguistic politeness*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Yoshimizu, K. (2007). Kumārila's propositional derivation (arthāpatti) without pervasion (vyāpti). In K. Preisendanz (Ed.), *Expanding and merging horizons: Contributions to South asian and cross-cultural studies in commemoration of Wilhelm Halbfass* (pp. 315–335). Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Yoshimizu, K. (2011). How to refer to a thing by a word: Another difference between Dignāga's and Kumārila's theories of denotation. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 39, 571–587.