Research article

Contrasting Approaches to Language, Meaning, and Knowledge in Advaita Vedānta and the Western Literary Traditions

Aayushee Garg
PhD in English, Assistant Professor at Amity School of Languages, Amity University, Lucknow.

Abstract

The present research article undertakes a comprehensive examination of contrasting approaches to language and meaning, topics that have engendered contemplation and discourse across a range of disciplines including literature, philosophy, and linguistics. The article commences by delving into the foundational disparities between Indian and Western literary theories concerning the intricate relationship binding knowledge and meaning. While the Western tradition concentrates predominantly on interpreting textual meaning, treating literary works as subjects for analysis and critique, the Indian tradition perceives concepts and ideas within texts as indirect indicators of reality and self-realization. The ancient Indian school of thought, Advaita Vedānta, presents a distinctive viewpoint on the dynamic interplay between language and meaning. The article further dissects the distinct attributes of the seemingly paradoxical and contradictory language prevalent in classical Indian texts. Through this exploration, it strives to uncover the methodology of constructing meaning as employed within the framework of Advaita Vedānta. This analysis is juxtaposed against the approach to linguistic interpretation prevalent in the Western literary tradition— a tradition largely rooted in the empirical world. Advaita Vedānta places significance on direct experience or *anubhava*, prioritizing it over transmitted knowledge, and acknowledges that the true essence of the self transcends human comprehension. By navigating the quandary of defining literary language, elucidating the process of meaning-making in Western literary theory, delving into Advaita Vedānta philosophy, and studying the role of language in representing the essence of the self, this research aspires to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse in the areas of literary criticism and philosophical studies.

Keywords: Language, meaning, self-realization, knowledge, Advaita Vedānta.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS   **Quality Education**

1. Introduction

Both Eastern and Western literature and philosophy share a profound interest in self-exploration and understanding reality, expressed through language. Post-structuralists and postmodernists have extensively explored in Western thought the contradictions inherent in language. Similarly, ancient Indian philosophy has a rich history of grappling with linguistic intricacies.

The present article contends that studying philosophical concepts of diverse intellectual traditions offers a systematic framework for analysing literature centred on the notion of self. By synthesizing these perspectives, this research aims to illuminate the intricate relationship among language, meaning, and knowledge, recognizing the inherent limitations of finite language in representing the empirical world. It also aims to elucidate how Vedāntic texts produce knowledge about objects that cannot be fully described in sentences without losing their essence (Graheli, 2022, p. 330) and thus proposes a unique approach to interpretation. This qualitative exploration centers on the hermeneutical and exegetical methods integral to Advaita Vedānta's soteriology.

The interpretation of signs, symbols, ideas, and concepts in literary texts has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry. In the twentieth century, literary criticism witnessed a dichotomy between new critics and structuralists, seeking fixed meanings in texts, and poststructuralist and postmodernist critics, challenging absolute meaning. Such questions surrounding the true meaning of the text, the nature of knowledge, and the representation of reality in literature continue to perplex scholars of philosophical literature.

To grasp the precise meaning of any philosophical text, understanding the nature and status of reality and language is necessary. Further, comprehending the nature of the self in Advaita Vedānta requires a close examination of the interplay between appearance and reality. Joshua Anderson, in his article "An Investigation of Mokśa in the Advaita Vedānta of Shankara and Gaudapada," explains the ontology of Advaita Vedānta through a structured hierarchy of 'being', in which absolute reality claims the topmost rung, while appearance and unreality assume secondary positions. Ignorance, extending beyond individual psychology, assumes a broader causal dimension. Anderson clarifies that the cognitive process of "subration" (Anderson, 2012) leads to the prioritisation of one judgment over another. The self, or Brahman, remains impervious to devaluation or contradiction by any other experience or reality. It is to be noted that the self does not exhibit an unstable pattern of appearance and disappearance within the realm of existence. Instead, it acts as the foundational bedrock underpinning everything that assumes the facade of existence, thus demonstrating its permanence. It is important to emphasise that ignorance goes beyond mere psychological phenomena. Rather, it possesses a causative origin that stretches beyond the individual self.

One prominent reason for the difference between the philosophies of the language of Western literature and its Eastern counterparts could be the predominance of the idea of mimesis in the former. In a comparative examination contrasting mimesis with the Chinese poetic device *xing*, Cecil Chu-chin Sun characterises mimesis as a method of perceiving reality through a hierarchical framework that inherently places human beings above the external natural world. This perspective is rooted in Western metaphysical thought. In Eastern traditions, language transcends the identity of a mere device at the writer's disposal for reflecting, imitating, or representing external reality. In its extended dimension, it is lyrical energy "that informs Chinese poetry predicated on a cultural orientation in which everything in reality, including human beings, is perceived holistically and as organically integrated" (Sun, 2006, p. 326). Likewise, Indian philosophy supposes language is endowed with creative and constitutive powers.

In the Indian tradition, the role of language extends beyond mere mimesis and representation. It operates not only as a medium for transferring ideas but also as the very substance of the content.

Language holds the dual capacity to shape and enlighten the world simultaneously. In his article titled "The Religious Significance of Language: The Example of the Vedas and the Indian Grammarians," Harold Coward claims that the entire world is contained within language. He condemns the contemporary scholarship that reduces language to a mere formal utterance or a tool for expressing objective reality, thus emphasising that in Indian tradition, language, and consciousness are interconnected, "and all aspects of the world and human experience were thought of as illuminated by language" (Coward, 1980, p. 93). In Vedic terms, language assumes three distinct roles: Firstly, it is perceived as a divine power. The invocation of *Vāk Devi*, the goddess of speech, is achieved through hymns and verses. However, mortals are granted access to only a quarter of this sacred language, while the remaining three-fourths remain the domain of the gods. UNESCO has recognised the classical Sanskrit chants in the ritualistic portion of the *Ṛg Veda* as "an Intangible Heritage of mankind" (Singh, 2015, p. 67). Secondly, language is regarded as a tool at the disposal of deities, utilized for the construction and regulation of the world. Thirdly, language functions as a means for humans to fulfill their desires. This divine language, accessible to ancient seers, is attainable through mystical introspection (Deshpande, 2022). While Vedic texts conceive language as a tool for creation, this study narrows its focus to Vedāntic philosophy and the process of meaning-making.

2. The Production of Meaning in Western Literary Theory

Before the onset of critical theory in the twentieth century, literary text was viewed as being intertwined with its historical and socio-political context. It was widely accepted that literature was significantly influenced by the time and space in which the author wrote, as well as the prevailing social, economic, and political conditions of the world at that time. Classicists and Humanists perceived literature as a medium with a dual purpose: to instruct and delight readers by evoking emotions and deep contemplation.

Within this perspective, literature went beyond merely expressing an author's ideas; it also functioned as a potent ideological tool for transmitting and propagating thoughts and concepts. Authors, guided by their unique sensibilities, purposefully employed specific genres and narrative techniques to convey their message effectively. Closely reading literary texts allowed readers to recognise the inherent power structures within the narrative, alongside the author's political ideology and religious viewpoints.

The emergence of literary theory brought about a radical transformation in the methods and modes of reading. From simply reading for pleasure, interpretation became a social practice. Meaning turned into a "public affair" (Eagleton, 2013, p. 145) or a "widespread cultural phenomenon" (Cavallaro, 2007, p. 49). When Bertolt Brecht, Louis Althusser, and Walter Benjamin established a correlation between literature and ideology after observing that both point to the "imaginary"–a substratum derived from belief, faith, narrative, and discourse and which could only be realized through a symbolic component–it brought about a revolutionary change in the perspective on 'language'. Language ceased to be a mere instrument of communication in the hands of the author and the reader. The language of literature transformed into a concrete, potent narrator, entrusted not only with representing the space-time conditions mirroring lived

experience but also constructing entirely new experiences, often moving away from an exclusive focus on objective reality. Language assumed the role of reformulating the context.

Critical theorists such as Louis Althusser and Jacques Lacan posited that from the moment of birth and the acquisition of language, individuals became subjects, their sense of self shaped by the ideologies they embraced and the language they used. According to these theorists, language played a pivotal role in producing the subject itself, blurring the lines between an innate self and the constructed self of ideology. Mikhail Bakhtin, on the other hand, offered an alternative perspective, recognizing language's ideological and dialogic dimensions. He viewed form and content as inseparable in fiction, which was deeply immersed in its time's social and historical rhetoric, manifesting as the 'heteroglossia' of language. Bakhtin called for transcending the dichotomy between formal and ideological approaches to studying verbal art, considering them equally abstract. Michel Foucault went a step further in examining the mechanisms and frameworks within which the world of 'meaning' operated and how discourse was instrumental in establishing relationships between power and knowledge.

However, not all schools of thought embraced such temporal and contextual contingencies in textual analysis. New Critics and Russian Formalists rejected the acknowledgment of time and place in favour of an objective method of reading, focusing solely on the innate qualities of the text. Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist, delves into the process of the production of meaning through language. In literature, language serves as a means of representation, taking on different roles based on how it is construed. When language is perceived as a 'reflective' medium, its function is mimetic, merely imitating the external world. It depicts objects and beings as they are perceived in nature, offering a mirror-like reflection of reality. In this mode, language mirrors the world without imposing any pre-decided meaning.

When language is 'intentional', it becomes a tool for imposing the writer's predetermined meaning upon the world. The writer's thoughts and ideas are expressed, and the reader is prompted to view the world from the writer's perspective. In this case, language serves as a vehicle for the author's intention, shaping the reader's interpretation accordingly.

In contrast to both reflective and intentional approaches, the 'constructionist' language model posits that representational systems, consisting of concepts and signs, enable the construction of meaning. In this view, meaning is not solely generated by the object being represented or by the reader or writer; rather, it emerges from the representation system itself. Language, in this context, becomes an active agent in shaping and constructing meaning.

The structuralists, differing from the constructionist approach, emphasized the arbitrariness of language and defined it as a self-contained relational structure. Ferdinand de Saussure's idea of interconnected linguistic units within an all-encompassing structural system provides the text with its 'meaning', not inherent in the text itself but found in cultures and conventions. Northrop Frye adds to this by asserting that the entire literary text functions as a structural system.

Structuralists were followed in quick succession by deconstructionists and poststructuralists, who rejected the idea of seeking meaning 'outside' the text. Instead, they recognised meaning as relative and language as supreme. This 'structurality' of language expands to understanding

various fields in human sciences, with Claude Lévi-Strauss analysing structural relations in cultural systems.

In response to the structuralists' point of view, Jacques Derrida, a pioneer of poststructuralist thought, introduced the linguistic concept of *différance*, thus extending Saussure's idea of a sign being composed of a 'signifier' and a 'signified' to accommodate a chain of signifiers. Derrida introduced the analytical and rhetorical method of 'deconstruction 'to critique the entire Western philosophical tradition by proposing to look at language in a non-traditional manner. He pointed out that the tradition of Western philosophy had hitherto thrived on *logocentrism*–language had erroneously been presumed adequate to represent reality when it was not so. With this development, literary theory acquired a new form and purpose. It was no longer confined to the mimetic, expressive, and representative but had made its way into the dialogic space between literature and the philosophy of language.

The divide between literary and philosophical writing was challenged, which called for dismantling the assumptions of hierarchies in binary oppositions rooted in Western metaphysics. In *A Course in General Linguistics*, a book that the students of Swiss structural linguist and semiotician Ferdinand de Saussure prepared compiling their class notes, consists of deliberations on the arbitrariness of the (assumed) fundamental association between the signifier and the signified, which was referred to as the 'sign'. Saussure contended that language was imperative to one's understanding of the world and drew a dichotomy between 'language' and 'speech'. 'Language', for Saussure, was a homogeneous, self-contained mass, while 'speech' was heterogeneous and belonged to the individual and the society. According to Saussure, the signifier and the signified were mutually exclusive and could only enter a relationship through the process of signification.

However, Derrida challenged Saussure's idea of the static difference between the signifier and the signified. Derrida introduced the neologism of *différance*, a French term that implies a temporal method of deferring or postponing meaning. For Derrida, the meaning of a word is always 'deferred' or 'postponed' due to the unreliability of language. The prerequisite of a deconstructive reading is analysing the text literally and figuratively. Deconstruction calls for a critical analysis of the relationship between the signifier and the signified.

According to Richard Rorty, around 1967, there was a pivotal historical event known as the 'linguistic turn,' marking a shift in philosophy's predominant focus toward language. Thinkers began recognising the significance of 'language' and its connection to 'meaning' and the world. In the Western philosophical tradition, several thinkers delved into language's properties, but Derrida stood out by bringing language and reality exceptionally close through his deconstructive approach, involving a destabilising strategy of critical questioning, which revealed metaphysical assumptions and internal contradictions that had long been taken for granted in literature and philosophy. He particularly emphasised the distinctions between binary opposites such as man/woman, presence/absence, inside/outside, and speech/writing. Derrida introduced the notion of 'undecidable,' words whose meanings resist being confined within established binary oppositions central to the interdependence between language and meaning. Most significant to Derrida's argument was the concept of *différance*, which disrupts the metaphysics of presence. *Différance* defies binary oppositions like presence/absence, inside/outside, and speech/writing. Derrida demonstrated that ideas could exist beyond the conventional categories of language

concepts and thus through the (non)method of deconstruction, he revealed the complexities of language and meaning, challenging traditional binary oppositions and introducing the possibility of ideas that transcend conventional linguistic boundaries.

Derrida's deconstruction theory highlights the privileging of one end in any binary opposition, leading to the subordination of the other. This interplay of language and meaning allows the presence of one term to signify the absence of the other. Despite critical awareness, the binary doesn't vanish; instead, a new binary emerges to take its place. In his essay, Derrida examines Claude Levi-Strauss's dismissal of the 'nature/culture' binary due to the paradox of incest. Although Levi-Strauss questions the binary, it persists in his ethnological studies, aligning with the premise of deconstruction. Therefore, Derrida's theory exposes the imbalanced nature of binary oppositions, where one term dominates the other. Even when these binaries are questioned, they often persist in various forms, demonstrating the complex interplay of language and meaning.

3. The Production of Meaning in Advaita Vedānta: The Authority of the Scriptures

Adi Shankaracharya refers to the *Upaniṣhads* as an "independent pramāna for brahman" (Rambachan, 1984, p. 134). He emphasizes that the language used in the *Vedānta-Vākya* is authentic and that the sentences written in the Vedānta *śāstras* comprise true knowledge. This knowledge is not derived from sense perception but rather through the authoritative śāstras. In his commentaries on the Mandukya Upaniṣad, Gaudapāda initially sought to explain the text using the authority of the Vedas and later transitioned to a logical explanation.

According to Adi Shankaracharya, the self can only be cognized through *śabda-pramāna*. No other means of knowledge, such as perception or interpretation, can lead one to self-knowledge. However, Adi Shankaracharya maintains that this knowledge, while enlightening, does not produce any tangible outcomes, making it fruitless in terms of bringing about external changes in the life of the self-realised individual (Rambachan, 1984, pp. 136-138).

When questioned about the fate of the body after self-realisation, Ramana Maharshi responded that such details were not essential to the path of self-inquiry. He asserted that after the realisation of the self, all dualities vanish, and the body and everything else appear as inseparable from the self (Osborne, 2014, p. 118). Although the self-realised being no longer identifies with the body, the body still undergoes the *prarabdha*, or destiny, based on the actions or karma accrued over lifetimes.

In his article, "The Concept of Adhyāsa and the Vedānta of Śaṅkara," S. K. Chattopadhyaya explains that authority is given to the revealed scripture not on any temperamental or psychological ground but on a logical one. The rationale for the infallibility of these texts is that no human being or divine force has 'authored' them, which lends an impersonal (*apauruṣeya*) character to them.

Chattopadhyaya clarifies that it is difficult to imagine that the Vedas might have different authors as they all have uniformity in the fundamental ideas presented and do not contain contradictions. The knowledge in the Vedas is unlike the kinds of knowledge produced at the mental and intellectual planes, which are lower than consciousness in the ontological hierarchy of Vedānta. "The Vedas are not the product of human intellect which has the limitations of Bhrama (delusion),

Pramāda (carelessness) and Vipralipsā (deceitfulness)" (Bharathi, 2010, p. 20). Since the Vedas deal with the knowledge that pertains to higher levels of consciousness, which are subtler than the mind and intellect, using methods of valid knowledge that are only applicable to the level of the mind and intellect would be unreliable.

Revelations of profound knowledge are not imparted by any higher authority considered more capable than the receiver of such knowledge; thus, they lack a specific origin. Instead, these insights are unveiled to those known as 'seers' when they attain a deep understanding of their true selves. Chattopadhyaya explains that while these truths find expression in personal consciousness, they transcend the personal, subjective, and psychological aspects of the mind through which they are revealed. It is important to note that they are not communicated or originated by any superior being, including gods or enlightened liberated souls. These truths are eternal (*nitya*) and exist independently of any temporal source. (Chattopadhyaya, 1978, pp. 87-88)

4. The Primacy of Direct Experience in Advaita Vedānta

Advaita Vedānta philosophy claims that direct experience is the only source of self-knowledge. A mere transfer of words cannot provide *Brahmajnāna* or the knowledge of the Absolute self, nor is it possible to locate Brahman in space and time. However, the classical texts of Vedānta describe the nature of the self. The Upaniṣads contain the wisdom revealed to sages who practiced penance in the early years of the Indian civilisation. The texts present truth in a language human beings can comprehend and interpret. The difficulty reconciling the two ideas arises from two reasons: one, that the self cannot be described, and the other, that reading the Vedāntic texts can aid liberation. Since these statements seem contradictory, it is essential to note that reading and meditating on the knowledge given in the *śāstras* is insufficient to reach the goal of realising the self. Instead, it only helps prepare the ground for the wisdom to percolate and hence purify the mind and the intellect. By this, there is a possibility of removing the self-created barriers to the truth. Also, reading and meditation on the texts can help one become more aware of and appreciate the roots of Indian culture. Those who have realised the true nature of the self testify to the statements given in the *śāstras.*

5. Interpreting Soteriological Texts: Overcoming Language Limitations

The Advaita Vedāntic method of interpretation entails a religious study of the statements presented in the classical texts, followed by regular meditation upon their meanings. Through this process, one embarks on a journey of preparing oneself for the profound revelation of self-knowledge. However, the language employed in the Upaniṣads often appears enigmatic, marked by self-contradictions and paradoxes, often leading to undesirable confusion. This disparity in comprehension arises from the discrepancy between the nature of metaphorical language commonly used in day-to-day conversations within the empirical world and that of the metaphysical language utilised in the scriptural texts. Eknath Easwaran, in his introduction and translation of the Upaniṣads, encapsulates the nature of the language of the Vedāntic *śāstras* in photographic terms:

> The Upanishads are the oldest, so varied that we feel some unknown collectors must have tossed into a jumble all the photos, postcards, and letters from this world that they could find, without any regard for source or circumstance. Thrown together like this, they form a kind of ecstatic slide show - snapshots of towering peaks of consciousness taken at various times by different observers and dispatched with just the barest kind of explanation. But those who have travelled to those heights will recognise the views: "Oh, yes, that's Everest from the northwest - must be late spring. And here we're in the south, in the full snows of winter." (Easwaran, 2020, pp. 8-9)

The language of the Upaniṣads might appear paradoxical to those unrehearsed with the metaphysics of Indian philosophy. However, for such seekers of truth who have meditated upon and internalised the esoteric knowledge presented in these spiritual texts, the Upaniṣads act as reminders of the universal truths of consciousness.

The Absolute self or Brahman, often represented using the term *sat-chit-ānanda* (loosely translated as truth-consciousness-bliss), lies beyond the binary oppositions perceived in the finite world governed by the effects of time and space, for example, existence/non-existence, light/dark, joy/sorrow, because Brahman lies outside the bounds of natural language and interpretation. The very purpose of language is to communicate ideas or transfer information. However, the social-transactional model of language fails when it is employed to describe the infinite and eternal Brahman. This problem occurs because the finite world, to express which the social-transactional language model has been developed, is itself finite and temporal. Objects in this world are near or far. There is life, and there is death. There is light, and there is darkness. The empirical language is only competent to describe such objects and not something that lies beyond these.

In his book *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, K.S. Murty presents the reflection made by Adi Shankaracharya in his commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* called the *Gitābhāsya*. Adi Shankaracharya asserts that Brahman can neither be described by "is" nor "is not." This is because it is indescribable and cannot be related to other words in a sentential structure. It is neither 'being' nor 'non-being'. In the social-transactional language model, only existing things can be connected to their attributes or something else. For this purpose, the auxiliary verbs 'is' and 'are' can be used. The possibility of the non-existence of an object is depicted by 'is not'. However, Brahman lies outside the two cases just discussed. Only things that belong to the world and function as objects of consciousness have the attribute of existence. They either exist or do not exist. Since Brahman or the Absolute self is not objective but subjective, it falls into neither the category of existence nor that of non-existence. Hence, it is neither *sat* nor *asat* (Rambachan, 1984, p. 146). Similarly, terms like 'being' and 'non-being' fail to denote it. Murty accounts for this juxtaposition inherent in Vedāntic language thus:

> According to Śaṅkara, it is possible to prove that Brahman cannot be described by words such as being or non-being, because all words, which are spoken, throw some light on a thing referred to, by enabling the hearer to cognise it by means of the apprehension of the relationship between themselves and their referents. It is possible to relate words to their referents either through species, action, quality, or connection. For example, a cow or a horse is signified by those words by means of the species 'cow' or 'horse'; the words 'reads', 'cooks' by means of action; the words 'white' or 'black' by means of quality; and

> the words 'possessor of money', 'possessor of cows' by means of connection. (Murty, 1974, p. 58)

In a sentence, it is impossible to write the ineffable Brahman and use an 'is' or 'is not' relation with a quality or attribute in the structure of a sentence since Brahman is neither existent nor non-existent. In his book, *The Principal Upaniṣads, Radhakrishnan* argues that Brahman cannot be placed in a predicate position because predication inherently involves duality, and Brahman transcends all forms of duality. Brahman is beyond any conceptual definition or limitation, making it impossible to describe or comprehend through ordinary linguistic expressions. The world, with its apparent duality, is considered empirical or phenomenal in Advaita Vedānta. The key to liberation lies in recognising and realising one's identity with the Supreme Brahman. This understanding allows the individual to break free from the cycle of birth and death, attaining spiritual liberation and oneness with the ultimate reality. (Radhakrishnan, 2018, p. 26)

The basic structure of a meaningful sentence is such that it includes a subject and a predicate. However, there is duality as soon as a sentence containing Brahman is divided into a subject and a predicate. Advaita cannot accept duality whatsoever. Only empirical language dealing with the empirical or phenomenal world can accommodate the concept of duality and have sentences with a subject-predicate structure. The soteriological method of Advaita Vedānta demands removing ignorance and realising the true nature of the self.

The nature of the self is ānanda or pure bliss, distinct from mere 'happiness' with connotations of presence and absence. The non-dual self transcends dual attributes like brightness/darkness and happiness/sadness. Similarly, limitless Brahman surpasses binary opposites, being self-luminous and of supreme brilliance. Swami Vimuktananda, in his commentary on *Aparokshānubhūti*, elucidates Adi Shankaracharya's purport:

> The light of Ātman is unlike any other light. Ordinary lights are opposed to darkness and are limited in their capacity to illumine things. It is a common experience that where there is darkness there is no light; and darkness always prevails at some place or other, thus limiting the power of illumination of such lights. Even the light of the sun is unable to dispel darkness at some places. But the light of the Ātman is ever present at all places. It illumines everything and is opposed to nothing, not even to darkness; for it is in and through the light of Ātman, which is present in everybody as consciousness, that one comprehends darkness as well as light and all other things. (Vimuktananda, 1982, p. 14)

As the very essence of consciousness within everyone, the light of the all-pervading self enables the comprehension of both darkness and light, transcending all limitations of ordinary illumination.

> The language of paradox effectively indicates the existence of Brahman, which transcends all classes and species, being unproductive, attributeless (*nirguna*), and always the subject, never the object. Chattopadhyaya suggests that classifying something makes it susceptible to falsification. As the self is beyond classification, its knowledge remains cannot be falsified by invalidation. (Chattopadhyaya, 1978, p. 475)

6. The Exegetical Tools of *Adhyāropa-Apavāda* or Superimposition-Negation

To guide the seeker towards self-realisation, the spiritual teacher trains the disciple's intellect by employing the two-step approach of *adhyāropa-apavāda*, which is illusory superimposition followed by negation. The term *adhyāropa* means the projection of the unreal on the real, and *apavāda* refers to the subsequent refutation.

In the first step or *adhyāropa*, the teacher describes the qualities of the Absolute Self as the opposite of the qualities attributed to ordinary objects of perception. This serves as a starting point for contemplation, helping the seeker distinguish the true self from the illusory world. In the second step or *apavāda*, the teacher instructs the disciple to distinguish the witnessing true self from the objects of the senses, thoughts, and mind. The seeker is guided to realise that the witness is distinct and separate from these objects, much like a swan separating milk from water. This growing awareness of separation dispels the false overlay of erroneously attributed qualities to the self. As a result of this process, the illusion created by using dualistic language gradually disintegrates, leaving only the awareness of the pure and non-dual self. This awareness goes beyond words and concepts, leading the seeker to experience the truth.

The snake and rope analogy often appears in Vedāntic texts to illustrate the role of ignorance and misperception. In the dark, one might wrongly judge the rope as a snake, terrified of it and trying to avoid it, but as soon as the darkness is dispelled by light, the truth becomes known, and one is no longer afraid of the rope. This analogy is powerful because it doesn't rely on complex philosophical concepts. It simply highlights how errors in perception can lead us to believe in false appearances. It is highly relevant because we can all relate to situations where we misinterpret something due to a lack of awareness. So long as one is unaware of the absolute truth of something, one goes on believing in the truth of its false appearance. Once one gains actual knowledge, the fallacy in one's judgments becomes evident. This realisation is akin to waking from a dream. While dreaming, one remains unaware of the waking world and might experience various realms like heavens and hells, never knowing that they are mere fragments of imagination. Similarly, until one gains true knowledge, the illusion of duality persists, and the oneness of existence remains concealed. Just as waking up from a dream reveals the dream's unreality, self-awareness and true knowledge unveil the illusory nature of the perceived separation in existence. This analogy underscores the significance of seeking genuine knowledge and self-awareness to overcome the illusion of duality and transcend the limitations of perception and attain a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of all existence.

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, the description of Krishna's colossal form or *Viśwarūpa* is symbolic of Brahman, the ultimate reality. The language used to describe this form appears paradoxical as it attempts to convey the ineffable, formless nature of Brahman. The use of such language serves to indicate the existence of the Absolute self beyond ordinary comprehension. According to Rambachan, the superimposition of sense organs and action on Brahman is merely a pedagogic device to indicate its existence (Rambachan, 1984, p. 146). While Brahman cannot be linguistically related to anything using "is," this doesn't mean it "is not." In Advaita Vedānta, a superimposition or false attribution becomes necessary to explain anything. Murty writes:

> Once Brahman is posited as the supreme self, the problem of its description arises, and then from the Upaniṣads and our own reasoning, we learn that all human concepts, derived

from man's experience of objective things in space and time, are inadequate to describe Brahman. But as long as one inquires about Brahman, words have to be used about it; but in order that the limitations of human concepts may be brought out, and the nature of Brahman revealed somehow through this odd and logically inappropriate language, an *adhyāropa*, i.e. a false attribution, is first made of Brahman, and then an *apavāda* or negation of this is made. (Murty, 1974, p. 59)

Describing Brahman is challenging as human concepts and terms prove insufficient. To depict the nature of the self, a false attribution (*adhyāropa*) is made, followed by negation (*apavāda*). The use of peculiar language reflects the limitations of human comprehension while attempting to convey the ineffable essence of Brahman.

In *Brahma Jnānavali Māla*, attributed to Adi Shankaracharya, the verse asserts Brahman's reality and the universe's indeterminate nature. *Jīva* and Brahman are non-different, implying the illusory nature of the material world. The question arises about Brahman's apparent plurality. *Adhyāsa*, the superimposition of *māyā* over Brahman, explains this concept. In his book, "The Advaita Tradition in Indian Philosophy," Chandradhar Sharma delves into the concept of adhyāsa, which refers to superimposition in the context of Advaita Vedanta. He explains how the reality of the individual ego is rooted in the Absolute self or Brahman. However, due to the influence of transcendental *avidyā* (ignorance or lack of true knowledge), this ego assumes a false identity by superimposing itself on the pure *Ātman* or Brahman. This superimposed egohood is deceptive and unreal (*mithyā*), rather than merely a figurative notion (*gauńa*). To dispel this false sense of ego, the text negates and denies the legitimacy of the superimposed egohood. Instead, it reasserts the true nature of the ego, which is its inherent purity as the Absolute self. (Sharma, 2007, p. 200)

It is erroneous to project the characteristics of the non-ego onto the subject, whose essence is intelligence and is associated with the notion of the ego. Similarly, it is incorrect to attribute the qualities of the subject and the ego to the object whose domain is the non-ego. The mutual superimposition of subject and object, along with their respective attributes, leads to confusion and misunderstanding. The absolute reality or the pure self remains untouched by the ego. It transcends any attributes and stands in contrast to the illusory self, the ego, with which the seeker mistakenly identifies due to the superimposition caused by *avidyā* or ignorance. The key to discerning the true self lies in the faculty of discrimination or *vidyā*, which helps recognise the true nature of the self beyond the erroneous superimpositions inflicted upon it. By discerning the true self from the false ego, one can attain clarity and liberation from the veils of ignorance, realizing the essence of pure consciousness. (Deutsch, 2006, pp. 196-197)

The absolute reality or the pure self is untainted by ego. It is devoid of attributes and has a nature opposite to that of the unreal self or the ego with which the seeker identifies due to its superimposition on the true self due to *avidyā* or nescience. The faculty of discrimination or *vidyā* helps recognise the true nature of the self beyond the superimposition inflicted on it.

S. K. Chattopadhyaya, in his article, "Śankara's Concept of Adhyāsa: A Textual Interpretation," asserts the necessity to understand the difference between the psychology of illusion and the philosophy of language. Adi Shankaracharya proclaims that the doctrine of *adhyāsa* is at the level of language and not the level of mind or psychology. This is where language meets reality in the

transcendental realm of spiritual discourse. Chattopadhyaya argues that Adi Shankaracharya uses superimposition to illustrate a logical point. The illusion caused due to the superimposition is not an "error of experience" or a "*positive* ignorance presenting a distorted view of things occasioned by some adventitious defect (*āgantuka doṣa*)" but instead, it stands for "the faulty logical process involved in all descriptive statements, of 'coupling' or combining two ideas which are the 'logical subject' and the 'logical predicate' belong to two radically distinct 'types' and are, therefore 'categorically different'." (Chattopadhyaya, 1978, pp. 474-476)

7. The Role of Language in Advaita Vedānta: Indicating the Absolute Self

According to Advaita Vedānta, Brahman or the Absolute self is the ultimate reality and the pure, undivided consciousness that underlies all existence. It is to be known, but once it becomes known, it does not remain an object of knowledge. Neither can it be described as pure knowledge. Brahman, by definition, is causeless and without any beginning. It is infinite and eternal and is unaffected by time and space. In other words, it lies beyond what we can know, hence incomprehensible. Although referring to Brahman, the terms 'reality' and 'knowledge' cannot be treated as adjectives to describe the Absolute self. They are merely pointers or indicators of what lies beyond words, language, and meaning. Lying on the periphery of language, these terms are used to denote Brahman's nature, which is incomprehensible but knowable. Simply put, Brahman is knowable, but words cannot describe it. Language is inadequate to denote or connote it. Murty comments thus:

> The phrase 'eternal infinite knowledge' is a logical impropriety, and by this very impropriety it serves to show the logical uniqueness of Brahman; by its striking oddness the phrase preserves as well as reveals to some extent the great mystery of Brahman. it preserves the mystery, because we have no idea as to what' eternal knowledge' is, though we know what 'knowledge' is; and it reveals, because the uniqueness of Brahman from all 'objects' and all empirical 'subjects' is effectively shown. (Murty, 1974, p. 64)

The Upaniṣads advocate that the negation of particularities or *viśeṣa* points towards Brahman. Murty borrows the reference of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad to explain the famous *neti, neti,* or 'not this, not this' method of Shankara, which is a process of expelling (*nivartakatva*) or elimination of that which does not indicate Brahman on the path of self-inquiry. This method advocates "removing all differences of limiting adjuncts (*sarvopādhiviśeāpohena*), that is, anything that is superimposed upon *brahman* and normally denoted by words" (Hirst, 2005, p. 144). Adi Shankaracharya condemns the possibility of using language to describe Brahman and Ātman. Words can refer to and signify only the objective, but according to the Upaniṣads, Brahman and Ātman are incomprehensible and indescribable. According to Shankara, Even the terms Brahman and Ātman are inadequate to denote Brahman. He argues that the only definite statement or *ādeśa* capable of referring to Brahman using language is "not this, not this" since it "serves to eliminate all specifications and all differences due to limiting adjuncts" (Murty, 1974, p. 63).

Rambachan discusses the method of pure negation, which serves as a means to detach words from their conventional, limited meanings. In the context of Brahman, purely negative definitions aim to distinguish it from any known and limited referents. The Upaniṣads frequently employ such

negative descriptions to deny all specifications that arise from superimposition. The essence of the negative method is to negate any conceptual limitations imposed on Brahman. The phrase "*neti, neti*" (meaning "not this, not this") is also a way to hint at Brahman's nature as the knower beyond objectified entities. By using the method of negation, the Upaniṣads indicate the ineffable reality of the transcendental self, freeing it from conventional definitions and limited associations. Negation does not merely convey the incapability of articulation of the self in language but, ironically, is also a positive and unconventional method of defining it. It also proves the non-objectivity of the self and its "freedom from all limiting characteristics" (Rambachan, 1984, p. 150).

Ludwig Wittgenstein's investigations into the philosophy of language aimed to connect language, meaning, and the world through a metaphysical model of interpretation. While he believed in the linguistic study of the world, he also shared a viewpoint similar to Advaita Vedānta, asserting that language is incapable of fully defining reality. R. Balasubramanian, in "Wittgensteinian Philosophy and Advaita Vedānta: A Study of the Parallels," highlights Advaita Vedānta's notion that the Real, beyond linguistic grasp (*yatovāco nirvartante aprāpya*), cannot be fully described even as *sat* (existence). This ineffable Reality reveals itself when the false distinctions caused by ignorance are dispelled through the help of language, as language approaches its limit, aligning with Wittgenstein's ideas. Both perspectives emphasise the limitations of language in capturing the ultimate truth, which can only be experienced beyond conventional expressions and understood when false notions are removed through contemplation and internalisation of concepts. (Balasubramanian, 1994, p. 54)

According to Chaudhary, Brahman, the ultimate reality, can be indicated by the scriptures, but it cannot be fully qualified by the adjectives used in these texts. Describing Brahman as "real" or using other attributes in the same way as we describe worldly objects like "blue" for a lily is not appropriate. Chaudhary explains that Brahman is indivisible (*niravayava*) and lacks any counterpart (*pratiyogin*). At the same time, Brahman is devoid of any internal (*svagata*) or external (*vijātīya*) distinctions (*bheda*). Therefore, attempting to qualify Brahman with adjectives used to describe ordinary, empirical objects becomes inadequate. Brahman transcends the limitations of human language and conceptualisation, and its true nature can only be grasped through a deep understanding of the scriptural teachings and contemplation beyond the realm of ordinary language and worldly perceptions. (Chaudhary, 2007, p. 55)

One peculiarity about the Vedāntic texts is that highly analogical and metaphorical language is used to explain advanced philosophical concepts. It is so often that the meaning is not available at the surface. Adi Shankaracharya claims that words that assert the individuality of the self are not to be taken as they are since their primary function is to serve as contemplative aids for the seekers beginning the inquiry. Almost every significant term used in Vedānta has a connotative meaning which is often far from its denotative meaning. In the book *The Essential Vedānta*, the exegetical method of Adi Shankaracharya, entwined with his style of philosophical reasoning, is put forth as follows:

> When *śruti* or *smrti* make metaphysical statements which, when taken literally, support the general position of Advaita then they are taken in their "primary" meaning; that is to say, their literalness is accepted. When, however, the literal meaning of metaphysical statements found in "scripture" conflict with Advaitic principles they are then taken in a

"secondary" sense; that is, another fundamental meaning is assigned to them. This arises most often in those cases where śruti seems to be upholding the idea of differentiation in the divine nature. Śamkara argues here that these statements are put forward only as meditative aids for those who are caught up in "ignorance" (*avidyā*): they are not meant to be true in themselves. (Deutsch, 2006, p. 195)

In this respect, one can notice a difference between the "surface" level and the "deep" level meanings while dealing with reality in the Vedāntic philosophy. Therefore, to understand a literary work with Vedāntic linguistic references, one needs to look beyond what is presented on the page and explore more profound implications of the text.

8. Levels of Meaning in Advaita Vedānta

Advaita Vedānta discusses three levels of meaning: direct, implied, and suggested. *Lakṣaṇa* pertains to the implied meaning of words and sentences. In Vedāntic texts, it becomes crucial to transcend the surface-level, primary meaning and explore the deeper and more pertinent implications conveyed by the text.

The essence of Advaita Vedānta is succinctly captured in four mahāvākyas or great sayings: "Consciousness is Brahman," "That Thou Art," "I am Brahman," and "This self is Brahman." These statements may seem absurd or challenging to comprehend initially, given the ignorance-induced delusion of the mind. However, true understanding arises only through direct experience of the ultimate reality. Besides these mahāvākyas, the Upaniṣads contain numerous other sentences that reveal the nature and identity of Brahman as the pure undivided consciousness. (Saraswati, 2013, p. 53).

In his chapter, "Paraa Vidhyaa: The Nominal State of Man," in the book *Authentic Human Destiny: The Paths of Shankara and Heidegger*, Vensus A. George explains how one of the four Vedāntic aphorisms *Tat Tvam Asi*, loosely translated as "That Thou Art" or "You Are That," is widely misunderstood because of incorrect interpretation. Only the direct meaning is considered, while the implied meaning holds greater significance. When the absolute truth is veiled by *māyā*, the reader understands the word *Tat* or 'That' in the sense of a "personal God associated with the universe" (George, 1998, p. 56). The seeker yearns to unite with this divine essence which is omnipotent and omnipresent, the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the worlds. In the Upaniṣadic teaching, 'Thou' (*Tvam*) represents any listener. 'Art' (*Asi*) signifies the identity between the seeker and the divine reality (*Tat*).

In conventional language, equating the limited seeker with the elusive sought seems absurd. However, ancient seers established this identity through direct experience. To comprehend this profound concept, Jahad-ajahal Lakṣaṇa, or quasi-implication, is used, discarding the immediate differences between 'That' and 'Thou.' Similarly, the implied meanings of other *mahāvākyas* can be grasped. Language processing and meaning-making in Vedānta differ from conventional techniques. Ludwig Wittgenstein's observations on language and reality align with this perspective. He views language as mirroring the world, and philosophical problems arise from gaps in understanding language logic. Bhartṛhari, the philosopher of language, sees little

distinction between the philosophy of the world and the philosophy of language. Marco Ferrante writes:

> Bhartṛhari's specificity in the philosophical panorama of classical India is well known: he puts language at the very centre of the ontological picture. There is no difference whatsoever between the way the world is understood–and epistemologically perceived through language–and the way the world is ontologically structured. (Ferrante, 2013, p. 14)

To this day, fundamental philosophical questions remain unanswered due to the challenges in language interpretation. Natural language structures prove inadequate in apprehending the ultimate truth of underlying reality. This discrepancy arises because the logic of social-transactional language conflicts with that which can hint at the ultimate truth, as they hold different structures and fundamental assumptions. Philosophy can be viewed as a critique of language, exploring the boundaries and limitations of linguistic expression.

However, perhaps in an attempt to denote the limits of language, philosophy connotes the limits of possible knowledge. Swami Chinmayananda, in the Preface to his commentary on Shankara's *Vākya Vritti*, sums up this argument succinctly and precisely thus:

> The finite words that constitute the elementary blocks with which all languages are built, can never hope to express the Infinite, which is the theme of discussion in the subjective science of the self (Brahmavidyā). Therefore, the ṛṣis and prophets had an unenviable job indeed - to express the inexpressible, to describe the indescribable, to explain that which is really inexplicable. (Chinmayananda, 1985, pp. iii-iv)

It is essential to recognise that interpretation alone cannot lead to the realisation of ultimate reality. Instead, it serves to pacify the intellect during the journey toward the truth. Adi Shankaracharya emphasises this in *Aparokshānubhūti*, verse 132.

> Only those in whom this consciousness (of Brahman) being ever present grows into maturity, attain to the state of ever-existed Brahman; and not others who merely deal with words. (Vimuktananda, 1982, p. 71)

9. Silence as a Language in Advaita Vedānta Philosophy

The incompetence of empirical language to describe the self might call for developing a new language. However, silence often becomes an efficient tool at the hands of the enlightened to guide the seeker on the path of self-inquiry. Gautama Buddha, the great enlightened being, often chose to remain silent when asked pertinent questions on the nature of reality due to the inefficiency of language in expressing the Brahman. Ramana Maharshi, a self-realised master, regards *mouna,* or silence, as the most potent initiation (Godman, 1985, p. 64). What cannot be described in words might well be described by silence. In *Aparokshānubhūti*, Adi Shankaracharya attests to this idea:

> Who can describe That (i.e. Brahman) whence words turn away? (So silence is inevitable while describing Brahman). Or if the phenomenal world were to be described, even that is beyond words. This, to give an alternate definition, may also be termed silence known

among the sages as congenital. The observance of silence be retraining speech, on the other hand, is ordained by the teachers of Brahman for the ignorant. (Vedanta Society of Southern California, 2016, 0:59)

Silence comes to the rescue when describing something in empirical language becomes impossible without indulging in contradictory and paradoxical statements. Silence also makes one aware of the futility of the various thoughts and resultant doubts that crowd the mind and take one away from being quiet, making one restless. Silence is the essence of the self. The self that is *sat-chit-ananda* is complete. It does not need language.

10. The Convergence of Advaita Vedānta and Derridean Deconstruction: Two Philosophical Approaches to Knowledge of Reality

Derridean Deconstruction and Advaita Vedānta both challenge conventional notions of language and meaning. According to Derrida, language is inherently unstable, and meaning is constantly deferred, while Advaita Vedānta reveals the limitations of language in expressing the non-dual nature of reality, which surpasses human comprehension.

Deconstruction is a critical methodology used to analyze the underlying assumptions and structures of language and thought. It reveals contradictions and ambiguities in literary texts and revaluates established notions of meaning and interpretation. As Carl Olson explains, deconstruction opposes the concept of presence and the logocentric error, which assumes that reality and its categories are directly accessible to the human mind (Olson, 2008, p. 372).

On the other hand, Advaita Vedānta emphasizes that language is restricted in its ability to articulate the non-dual nature of reality, which transcends human understanding. The ultimate reality can never be fully expressed through language. Instead, Advaita Vedānta stresses the importance of direct experiential knowledge (*anubhava*) over verbal or written knowledge (*śabda*). The self's knowledge is attainable through the method of *neti, neti*, signifying "not this, not this," as it eludes description and defies complete expression through language.

However, despite the limitations of language, Advaita Vedānta acknowledges certain words and concepts, such as Brahman or *ātman*, as pointers or upādhis towards the ultimate reality, without being the reality itself.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, in his work "The Principal Upaniṣads," highlights the significance of the unique linguistic style of the Upaniṣads. He celebrates its capacity to accommodate multiple interpretations, illustrating its flexibility and profound implications for scholarly inquiry. Radhakrishnan believes that in Upaniṣadic discourse, the intent, not the form or content, holds significance, and the paradoxical language effectively accentuates this profound message. In keeping with the Indian intellectual tradition, the Upaniṣads aim not to challenge the beliefs of the common people but to guide them progressively towards a deeper philosophical understanding underlying their beliefs. They develop Vedic ideas and symbols, giving them new meanings where necessary to transcend their formalistic character (Radhakrishnan, 2018, p. 27).

11. Conclusion:

The study explores the distinctive features of language used in classical Indian texts, unveiling the method of meaning-making employed in Advaita Vedānta, in contrast to the predominant linguistic interpretation in Western literary tradition. While the Western tradition focuses on analyzing textual meaning, the Indian tradition views knowledge as a means of spiritual liberation, with literature offering a transformative path towards self-realization and recognition of the universal and true self. A crucial aspect of Advaita Vedānta is the privileging of direct experience or *anubhava* over transmitted knowledge, recognizing the limitations of human comprehension in knowing the true nature of the self. This approach has revealed the profound and transformative nature of literary language, acting as a bridge between experience and reality.

As scholars continue to delve into these intricate labyrinths of meanings, the interplay between language, knowledge, and self-realization will remain a subject of perpetual inquiry, inviting further exploration and illumination from both Eastern and Western philosophical traditions. The comparative analysis of these traditions is an attempt at a deeper appreciation of the complexities of language and meaning, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between philosophy, language, and literature.

References

Anderson, J. (2012). *An Investigation of Moksha in the Advaita Vedanta of Shankara and Gaudapada.* Asian Philosophy, 22(3), 275–287.

Balasubramanian, R., & R. Kalyāṇasundara Sãstrî Varāhura. (1994). *The Tradition of Advaita: Essays in Honour of Bhāṣyabhāvajñā V.R. Kalyāṇasundara Śāstrĭ.* Munshiram Manoharlal Publ.

Brahma Jnānavali Māla- Verse 20. Shlokam. (2020, October 19). Retrieved October 25, 2022, from https://shlokam.org/texts/brahma-jnanavali-20/.

Cavallaro, D. (2001). *Critical and Cultural Theory.* Continuum International Publishing Group.

Chattopadhyaya, S. (1979). *The Concept of Adhyasa and the Vedanta of Samkara. Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, 6(4).

Chaudhary, R. K. S. (2007). *Wittgensteinian Philosophy and Advaita Vedānta: A Survey of the Parallels.* D.K. Printworld.

Chinmayananda, S. (1985). *Sri Ādi Śaṅkarācārya's Vākya Vritti: Exhaustive Analysis of That Thou Art.* Central Chinmaya Mission Trust.

Coward, H. (1980). "The Religious Significance of Language: The Example of the Vedas and the Indian Grammarians." *Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature*, 13(2), 91–102.

Culler, Jonathan. (1975). *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature*. Cornell University Press.

Culler, Jonathan. (1981). *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction.* Cornell University Press.

Culler, Jonathan. (1983). *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism.* Cornell University Press.

Derrida, J. (2007). Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences." Writing and Difference. Translated by Alan Bass, Routledge. 351–370.

Derrida, Jacques. (1967). *Writing and Difference.* University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, Jacques. (1976). *Of Grammatology.* Johns Hopkins University Press.

Deshpande, M. (2022). "Language and Testimony in Classical Indian Philosophy." In E. N. Zalta & U. Nodelman (Eds.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2022). Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2022/entries/language-india/.

Deutsch, E., & Rohit, D. (2006). The Essential Vedānta: A New Source Book of Advaita Vedānta. New Age Books.

Eagleton, T. (2013). *How to Read Literature*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Ferrante, M. (2013). "Vṛṣabhadeva's Sphuṭākṣarā on Bhartṛhari's Metaphysics: Commentarial Strategy and New Interpretations." *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 41(2), 133–149. doi:10.1007/s10781-013-9176-5

Frye, Northrop. (1957). *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*. Princeton University Press.

George, V. A. (1998). *Authentic Human Destiny: The Paths of Shankara and Heidegger. Council for Research in Values and Philosophy*.

Godman, D. (1985). *Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi*. Arkana.

Graheli, A. (2022). *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Indian Philosophy of Language*. Bloomsbury Academic.

Murty, K. S. (1974). *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*. Motilal Banarsidass.

Norris, Christopher. (1991). *Derrida*. Fontana Press.

Olson, C. (2008). *Studying Hinduism: Key Concepts and Methods* (S. Mittal, Ed.). Thursby, Routledge, London.

Radhakrishnan, S. (2018). *The Principal Upaniṣads*. HarperCollins Publishers.

Rambachan, A. (1984). *The Attainment of Moksha according to Shankara and Vivekananda with Special Reference to the Significance of Scripture (Sruti) And Experience (Anubhava).* Doctoral Thesis, The University of Leeds. https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/919/1/uk_bl_ethos_349108.pdf

Saussure, F. de, & Harris, R. (2016). *A Course in General Linguistics*. Bloomsbury.

Sharma, C. (2007). *The Advaita Tradition in Indian Philosophy: A Study of Advaita in Buddhism, Vedānta and Kāshmîra Shaivism*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.

Singh, K. (2015). *Sanskrit: The Divine Language.* India International Centre Quarterly, 42(1), 67–71.

Sun, C. C.-C. (2006). "Mimesis and Xing, Two Modes of Viewing Reality: Comparing English and Chinese Poetry." *Comparative Literature Studies,* 43(3), 326–354. doi:10.2307/complitstudies.43.3.0326

Vedanta Society of Southern California. (2016, May 26). *The Language of Paradox in Advaita Swami Sarvapriyananda* [YouTube Channel]. YouTube. Retrieved August 29, 2022, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiP5OAvkNFc

Aayushee Garg is an Assistant Professor of English at Amity University, Lucknow. She has published poems, stories, and research articles in renowned journals and magazines, and her research interests focus on Indian Philosophy, Literary Criticism, World Literature and Communication Studies. Her poem titled The Woman Wakes Up has been published by Rancid Idol Productions, UK.