

Signs and Differentiation: *jaL* and *paaNi* in Gujarati

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Introduction

As humans, we are constantly surrounded by various symbols and meanings; they may be linguistic, cultural, or scientific. However, surviving without (re)cognising the things and communication happening around us is almost impossible. This paper is a humble attempt to understand this process of making sense of the word through the semiotic system of language. Many modern philosophers and linguists have tried to understand language through the tool of semiotics. Here, we will attempt the same from an ancient philosopher-grammarians' perspective – Bhartrhari – who opines that the ordinary object is never given to us in its purity or nakedness; the human mind always captures the object in some specific form of representation. The function of verbalisation is to make this guise or representation explicit (*Perception* 394). He proposes his theory of cognition, where the cognitive-episode is translated as an awareness-episode that is supported by two natural energies, *prakāś*¹ and *vimarś*. As we will see in detail later in the paper, these energies enable sign-users to make sense of the world around them and make themselves conscious of various abstract and concrete objects.

The present paper will try to understand the idea of awareness-episodes, the natural energies of *prakāś* and *vimarś*, and how they interact with human perception through the examples of Gujarati linguistic signs *jaL* and *paaNi*², both meaning "water." Here, *jaL* is a marked sign which is not colloquially used. The paper attempts to investigate how Gujarati sign-users differentiate and make sense of the two signs. To provide contextual meaning to the sign *jaL*, the majority of the compound words that consist of '*jaL*' are presented here. Section one below will provide very brief and basic information on Bhartrhari and his contribution to the study of language and cognition. The second section discusses the concept of the linguistic sign and how language and speech are conceptualised in the traditions that follow Bhartrhari and Kashmiri Śaivism; the subsection there primarily discusses Bhartrhari's idea of sign and the relationship between form and meaning. The third section describes the Gujarati linguistic signs of *paaNi* and *jaL*. The subsection there attempts to apply Bhartrhari's concepts to the Gujarati data and to provide an understanding of the process of cognition. The last section provides conclusions and a general discussion.

1. The Philosopher Grammarian: Bhartrhari

The Indian grammatical, as well as philosophical traditions are vast and varied. For a good introduction to contemporary philosophical ideas and scholars, Dalvi (645–660) can be checked. Similarly, Cardona (*Indian Linguistics* 25–60) presents an excellent review of the Sanskrit grammatical tradition, primarily concentrating on Pāṇini and his successors. Both these topics are not our primary concern in this paper. We would concentrate on the fifth-century philosopher-grammarian Bhartrhari and his holistic ideas on language, cognition, and meaning (Cardona). Baldeva Upadhyay (*Pāṇinian Studies* 247–8) claims Bhartrhari's origin in Kashmir, primarily based on his influence on Kashmiri grammarians. His main contribution to linguistic and philosophical thought comes from his work "*Vākyapadīya*," in which he introduces the now-famous theory of *Sphoṭa*. The work explicitly elaborates the theme of *sabda-brahman*, "grammar being studied in order to attain unity with the god that is speech" (*Indian Linguistics* 49).

Bhartrhari espouses a strong epistemological viewpoint: there is no knowledge without speech; "all knowledge is as though pierced through with speech (*anuviddham iva jñānam*) and appears only through speech (*sarvaṃ śabdena bhāsate*)" (*Indian Linguistics* 47). The basic characteristic of his view of languages is "the essential unity of higher units, utterances

(*vākyāni*) and their meanings (*arthāḥ*) (Ibid 49). He also adds that there are three levels of speech:

“the scattered sound that people perceive in everyday life (*vaikharī vāk*); the 'middle speech' (*madhyamā vāk*) or interior speech, that is not actually uttered but is in speakers' and hearers' minds a potential utterance; and 'seeing speech' (*paśyantī vāk*), which lacks any sequentiality.” (Ibid 49).

Interestingly, the first two types of speech described by Bhartrhari are very close to what Saussure identified as *la parole* and *la langue*, respectively (Saussure 9–13).

Bhartrhari has maintained that there is no difference between *vāk*³ and *artha* (*Word and the World* 123). He has maintained a holistic view, which is also the basis of his *sphoṭa* theory. The first verse of chapter 3 of part III of *Vākyapadīya* says: “From the utterance of words, the speaker's idea, the external object and the form of the word itself are understood. There stands (therefore) a relation between them (utterance of the word and the other three)” (as quoted and translated in *Word and the World* 129). One of the significant aspects of his theory, as Matilal (*Indian Philosophical Analysis* 12) observes, “Language and construction, verbalisation and conceptualisation, are actually indistinguishable from each other.”

2. The Linguistic Sign

Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce are two major foundational sources that define the concept of sign. Language is a semiotic system *par excellence*. The word, a combination of sound-image and the concept associated with it, is the sign that constitutes the semiotic system of language. The word is a linguistic sign which is arbitrary as well as psychological; both sound-image and concept exist in the minds of the users, and the relationship between the two is non-natural. Concentrating on linguistic signs, Saussure defines a sign as being composed of the signifier and the signified (Saussure 66). The relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary, which is the first principle of language for him (Ibid. 67). Hence it is founded upon the law of tradition (Ibid. 74). The relationship between signifier and signified is conventional: we believe that the word means something in the collective agreement. In terms of conventionality, Peirce also defined the linguistic sign. Peirce talks about three modes of signification: iconic, indexical, and symbolic. Linguistic signs are put into the category of symbolic mode. Symbols are not limited to words, although “all words, sentences, books and other conventional signs are symbols” (Peirce, 2.292, quoted in Chandler 46). The most important part, as expressed by Saussure (127), is that we do not normally express ourselves in a single linguistic sign, but rather we express ourselves through groups of linguistic signs. The French and American traditions led by Saussure and Peirce, respectively, emphasise the interrelations of internal parts of a sign. The arbitrariness and conventionality of linguistic signs are the main aspects of making sense of the sign and the sign-system. The Indian tradition, specifically Bhartrhari, is more concerned with identifying and differentiating the word as a linguistic sign from its linguistic and non-linguistic environment.

Referring to Śaivism, Padoux (1990) defines *Vāc* as “word” and says that “the word was very early regarded as a symbol of the Godhead, or more exactly as revealing the divine presence within the cosmos” (x). He adds that the word “creates, maintains, and upholds the universe” (x). ‘*Vāc*’, meaning “to speak, to say,” is translated as “word” by Padoux, and he adds, “the least inappropriate of all” translations (xii). This interpretation also entails that it is a ‘strictly verbal or aural—unwritten—character’ (xii). Here, *Vāc* is “the word heard by ṛṣis, the seers—poets of the Vedic hymns” (xiv). This specific quality of the *Vāc* explains the idea of linguistic purity as well as the sanctity associated with certain forms of language.

In Tantrism and non-dualistic Śaivism, *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* have a special place where they are equated with *Śiva* and *Śakti*, respectively. They stand for “pure light-consciousness” and “active consciousness.” (Ibid. 77) Though Padoux claims that “*vimarśa* is difficult to translate” (77), it is variously translated as “self-awareness,” “consciousness,” or

“active consciousness.” At the level of language, *Śiva* is equated to vowels and *Śakti* to consonants. Thus, each word is a *Śiva-Śakti*, two different entities yet inseparable. If we try to separate vowels from consonants, we do not get *Vāc*. It will just be noise, meaningless. By this analogy, the *prakāśa* and the *vimarśa* are also inseparable. The objects of a system are brought into appearance or perception by the *prakāśa*, i.e., *Śiva*, while, according to Abhinavagupta, *vimarśa* is the essence or soul of *prakāśa*. (Ibid. 175). The totality of the phonemes, i.e., significant sounds of a language, is defined as *Śiva-Śakti*. Thus, each manifestation of the word is *Śiva-Śakti*, in a way, making the user conscious of reality. Later, *prakāśa* is compared with the Sun and a male, and *vimarśa* is compared with the Moon and a female (Ibid. 158), emphasising the importance of vowels in the expression of a word. The way the moon cannot shine without the reflection of sunlight, the consonants cannot be produced without the vowels accompanying them. Thus, *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* are operational at the level of perception as well as the production as different manifestations of *Śiva* and *Śakti*.

Kashmir Śaivism, especially Utpala and Abhinavagupta, is directly influenced by Bhartrhari (*Word and the World* 121). Interestingly, the Śaivik conception of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* is inspired by Bhartrhari. Bhartrhari is one of the few philosophers whose work cannot be categorised into any specific school. His theory of cognition and language can be best referred to as “holistic” (*Perception* xiii). In his theory of awareness, each awareness-episode has two *natural* powers: *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*. *Prakāśa* is the power to reveal or illuminate, and *vimarśa* is the power to discriminate or differentiate. The second power, “equivalent to ‘languageing’ or differentiation through verbalisability, is never found without the first” (*Word and the World* 128 and 134). The power of articulating the grasped object in language – *vāg-rūpatā* – is intertwined with the revelatory or illuminative power of consciousness. The awareness-episode cannot be revealed without verbal discrimination. Here, *prakāśa* (illumination) means removing darkness, but simply removing the darkness is not enough to reveal the object, unless one can distinguish the outline of the object from its immediate surroundings or environment (Ibid. 136). According to most Indian philosophers, the Buddhists, the Naiyāyikas, and the Mīmāṃsakas, *Nirvikalpaka* is the sensory awareness where no concept, and hence no language or word (*śabda*) can appear (Ibid. 135). Bhartrhari and, following him, Utpala and Abhinavagupta maintained an opposite view. They maintained that awareness is only interpenetrated with *vāg-rūpatā* even in *nirvikalpaka*, because without it, “an awareness cannot be *aware* of an object, and illumination will not illuminate” (Ibid. 136, italics in original). Thus, both the natural powers of awareness-episodes, *prakāśa* and *vimarśa*, will not be operative without the “languageing” or *vāg-rūpatā*. Matilal (Ibid. 128) also adds that “The second power which is equivalent to ‘languageing’ or differentiation through verbalisability, is never found without the first.” So, the identification and illumination are first, and the differentiation is later.

2.1 Sign, Meaning, and Language

A perspective on *Śabda* coming from Bhartrhari is discussed by Matilal (cf. *Word and the World*). Here, *śabda* is normally translated as “language,” but at times, depending on the contextual needs, it may be translated as “utterance,” “sentence,” or “word.” Here, Nyāyasūtra defines it as “*śabda* or Word is what is instructed by a trustworthy person (*āpta*).” (quoted in *Word and the World* 6). Interestingly, Akṣapāda did not identify the concept of *śabda* with scriptures. Here, *śabda* stands for the means of knowledge called ‘word’, while *āpta* stands for a trustworthy or reliable person. Vātsyāyana defines *āpta* as “any person who is an expert and knowledgeable about certain facts (*āpti*) would qualify as an *āpta* irrespective of caste or creed or sex” (Ibid. 6). There is only one similarity between the Śaivism discussed above and Bhartrhari and post-Bhartrhari grammarians: all of them talk about “words” or “language” that is spoken. We listen to that person because his or her identity is revealed in front of us, and we tend to take those words seriously because they are evidence – *pramāṇa* – for us.

Matilal devotes a chapter (*Word and the World* 18–30) to the connection between the word and its meaning. Here, he elaborately compares the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika school and the

Mīmāṃsā school. The primary focus of the discussion here was whether the word and meaning are connected conventionally or are eternal. Jaimini and Śabara stated their view in terms of *autpattika*, meaning “not created by human convention” (Ibid 27), and considered it *siddha*, i.e., the relation between words and their meaning is given to us and not created by us. Some Naiyāyikas, on the other hand, believe in the theory of the origin of language from God; it is believed that in the beginning, God created the convention and taught men how to use the language. Matilal concludes with a balanced view that both the Conventionalist and the Eternal viewpoints have some grain of truth. Thus something like the *sphoṭa* theory – the word and its meaning are indistinguishable – becomes more important and relevant.

For Bhartṛhari’s holistic view, the distinction between signifier (*vāk*) and signified (*artha*) is fictional; for him, there is no distinction; they are identical (*Word and the World* 122–23). In another chapter, Matilal (Ibid. 156–166) specifically talks about the concept of “sign” in the Indian theory of argumentation. Here, the sign is called *linga* and the signified is *lignin*. The most important characteristic of the sign discussed here is that it ‘should be non-deviating’ (160), which means the *linga* must not be present where *lignin* is absent. In modern terms, the signifier should always be associated with its signified; then, and only then, do they together form a sign. Another interesting aspect Matilal (Ibid 160) raises here is that the argumentation theory here talks about the ‘sign-signified’ relationship and not the Saussurian ‘signifier-signified’ relationship.

The Sanskrit tradition also has many different perspectives on the concept of a word and its meaning. Describing the arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified is insufficient here. Kātyāyana states that in order to derive the meaning from the word, we depend on *guṇa* (the quality), but it remains ambiguous whether he refers to a simple attribute of the object associated with the word or whether it is universal, i.e., *jāti* (Ibid. 31). So, when I say “water”, the derivation of the meaning can be based on its quality of being liquid. However, in Gujarati, we differentiate *jaL* and *paaNi*. Both refer to ‘water’; both are liquid; both can be used for drinking or washing. Then how are they different? *Nyāyasūtra* states that a word conveys three ‘meanings’: the thing or the individual (*vyakti*), the ‘form’ of the thing (*ākṛti*), and the universal (*jāti*) (Ibid. 32). Considering this, *jaL* and *paaNi* have only one difference, and that is *vyakti*. Patañjali (Ibid. 33), while discussing the word for ‘cow’, observes that “it is neither the universal cowhood, nor the individual cow, nor its qualities, nor its actions.” He argues that the utterance of the word facilitates the cognition of everything related to the object and meaning at once. Nāgeśa, accepting this argument of Patañjali, says that by the utterance of a word, a number of objects are comprehended, but more importantly, the word “must not be conflated with other items in the cognition” (Ibid. 33). Bhartṛhari proposes another view in which he says that “at the level of *sphoṭa*, a linguistic unit and the meaning or the ‘thought’ it supposedly conveys are one and undifferentiated with words or language.” Hence, words and the concepts they convey cannot very well be separated in this view” (Ibid. 37). The Theory of *apoha* by Diñnāga, just like Saussure, says that the meaning is conveyed through the differences (Ibid. 38); ‘water’ is ‘water’ because it is not ‘milk’ or ‘petrol’, and so on.

3. The Signs of *jaL* and *paaNi*

For both these words, their origin can be found in Sanskrit⁴. The word ‘*jaL*’ originates from the Sanskrit root “*jal*,” from which the noun “*jalam*” is derived, which literally means “water” (Gode and Karve 729–30). While the word ‘*paaNi*’ originates from the Sanskrit root “*paaniya*,” a general term for “drinkable.” The modern Gujarati word for ‘water,’ *paaNi*, is derived from ‘*paaniyam*’ (Ibid 1008). In Sanskrit, *jal* had an alveolar lateral approximant [j], which becomes a retroflex lateral approximant – [ɻ] – in Gujarati. The Sanskrit word *paaniyam* undergoes a similar change, with the alveolar nasal sound [ɲ] changing to the retroflex nasal sound [ɳ]. Semantically, the word *jal* more-or-less retains its original meaning, but the word *paaniyam* in modern Gujarati usage has a more specific meaning, ‘water.’ In the root, it was referred to as a ‘drink’, while modern Gujarati usage uses the sign for any ‘water’, even if it is not fit for drinking purposes.

The Gujarati language offers multiple signs as a representamen of the object "water." The paper will investigate two of the most prominent ones, *jaL* and *paaNi*. The second sign, *paaNi*, is normally used in day-to-day communication and is primarily seen as the Gujarati word for "water." A statement like, "*paaNi pio*," ('Have some water') is perfectly normal in Gujarati. But, we cannot simply replace the sign "*paaNi*" with "*jaL*" and say, "*jaL pio*." It is unacceptable and incomprehensible for most of the users. The only change we make here is the replacement of one sign with the other, which literally means the same, yet the utterance does not give us the same interpretation. Similarly, the contexts in which "*jaL*" is used will not accept "*paaNi*."

- 1a. ***jaL***-*maarge* *pravaas khedyo*.
 1b. ****paaNi***-*maarge* *pravaas khedyo*.
 water-way through traveled
 (He) Travelled across the sea.

The only difference between (1a) and (1b) is that the sign "*jaL*" is replaced by the sign "*paaNi*". The interactant will comprehend the sentence (1b), but it is not acceptable for them; it is not ungrammatical but odd.

In this section, we will concentrate on some compound words that include the sign "*jaL*." The compound words are selected so that the sign gets a context for interpretation. All these compound words can be categorised into different domains of usage, namely, academic, archaic, and religious. Interestingly, the domains do not accept the other sign for "water," and almost all these compound words have their roots in Sanskrit. Let me begin with the list of compound words from the academic domain. By "academic domain," the idea conveyed is that the word is either technical in nature, i.e., used for teaching, learning, or research purposes, or primarily used to emphasise a certain level of purity. The way H₂O is used to imply the purity of the substance, the word *jaL* is used here to imply such a purity. The words listed here in all three categories are taken from *Sarth JodaNi Kosh*; they are all part of the entry of "*jaL*."

<i>jaLopchaar</i>	Hydropathy	<i>jaLghadi</i>	water-watch
<i>jaLchar</i>	something that lives in water	<i>jaLchargruh</i>	aquarium
<i>jaLaj</i>	belonging to water	<i>jaLjanit</i>	produced by water
<i>jaLjantu</i>	insects of water	<i>jaLaavaraN</i>	Hydrosphere
<i>jaLtarang</i>	music through water	<i>jaLtulaa</i>	water based weighing scale
<i>jaLdabaaN</i>	pressure of water	<i>jaLbhedan</i>	Hydrolysis

Table 1: Compound words with *jaL* from the academic domain.

In all these compounds, the first part is the sign "*jaL*" and the second part is from the academic domain. The sign "*paaNi*," though a synonym, cannot be attached to any of the words of the given compounds. In fact, the sign "*paaNi*" is not accepted and used in the Gujarati academic

domain for technical purposes. At the same time, the words like 'jaLtarang', 'jaLdabaaN' or 'jaLjantu' cannot be used with "paaNi" instead of "jaL" because a certain level of purity of water is expected in these concepts as well. It may be used only for explanation and simplification purposes; otherwise, the sign is not part of the academic register here. Considering this aspect, the signified for the signifier of the sound-image "jaL" is not simply "water" but something close to an "academically purified version of water," something like "H₂O." Another important aspect here is that the academic domain specifically uses the Sanskrit root for the word "water," which is also very close to the usage of "hydrogen" or "hydra" in English and other languages. This classical root not only comes with pedantic connotations but also brings in the notion of purity. The 'Mythic' association of classical languages with purity is carried through by the words we use in these domains.

Second, I would like to list a few archaic words. These words are not subject to change in terms of the modern usage of language, so they have survived because of the absence of modern equivalents for them.

<i>jaLkamaL</i>	Lotus	<i>jaLaj</i>	Belonging to water
<i>jaLbambaakaar</i>	full of water	<i>jaLtaadan</i>	useless attempts
<i>jaLdaagam</i>	Monsoon	<i>jaLghar</i>	cloud or sea, the house of water
<i>jaLnilikaa</i>	green vegetation on water	<i>jaLpati</i>	Sea
<i>jaLshikar</i>	sprinkle of water	<i>jaLsut</i>	Lotus

Table 2: Compound words with *jaL*, which are archaic.

Although all these words are listed in the "Saarth" spelling dictionary, they are rarely used by Gujarati speakers and writers. These words are not very productive in the speech and writing of the users. Being a Gujarati native speaker and having studied in Gujarati medium schools, it is a matter of surprise that except for *jaLbambaakaar* and *jaLkamaL*, no other word has been heard in the actual sentence by the present researcher.

The religious domain is the third field where words with "jaL" are mostly found. The accompanying compound words are also Sanskrit-based "tatsama" words. The colloquial Gujarati words are not found in these compound words.

<i>jaLkamaL</i>	Lotus	<i>jaLgariyo</i>	One who brings water for the worship of Lord Krishna (<i>Thaakor ji</i>)
<i>jaLdaah</i>	To cremate in water	<i>jaLdikshaa</i>	baptism using water
<i>jaLpaatra</i>	Vessel for water in rituals	<i>jaLYaatraa</i>	a festival in which Lord Krishna is taken on water-tour

<i>jaLsamaadhi</i>	Voluntarily drown oneself in water	<i>jaLsut</i>	Lotus
<i>jaLaanjali</i>	Ritual offering of water to deceased relatives	<i>annajaL</i>	food and water, ritualistic offering

Table 3: Compound words with *jaL* from the religious domain.

The most important significance of this set of compounds is that the word "*jaL*" automatically refers to pious water. Interestingly, wherever the concept of water is associated with any ritual, it automatically gains the connotation of "piousness." Here, the users normally go with the assumption that since it is part of a pious ritual, everything involved is also pious. As a result, all the participants in the ritual are also expected to be immaculate and holy. The idea of a ritualistic bath is also associated here.

Based on these three tables, we can safely assume that the linguistic sign *jaL* is expressed in specific domains with some specific words. Syntagmatically, the sign chooses its adjacent sign and forms an appropriate complex-sign in Gujarati usage. The synonymous sign, *paaNi*, does not fit in this syntagmatic order, meaning that the signs *jaL* and *paaNi* are in paradigmatic order. Both the signs have the same *object*, 'water'. But, both signify something different; the interpretants for them are different. Both the signs refer to the same transparent liquid that is used for drinking, washing, and cooking purposes and which is scientifically identified as H₂O. What makes the user identify this significant difference? What allows them to perceive *jaL* and *paaNi* differently?

If we consider the sign of *paaNi*, the chain of sounds is a *signifier* and the concept that we understand, "a liquid that is used for drinking and washing purposes," is the *signified*. For a user, this combination gives the sign '*paaNi*'. The sign '*jaL*' has a different chain of sounds, which is the *signifier*. It also contains the concept, "a liquid that is used for drinking and washing purposes" as part of the *signified*, but this signified contains a little more sense of 'piousness', 'concerned with important people in terms of religion or status', 'connected with the objective study or description', and so on, with respect to the kinds of interlocutors, domains, and topics at hand. The signified of *jaL* is not as fixed as that of *paaNi*.

3.1 *Prakāśa* and *Vimarśa*

Prakāśa and *vimarśa* are two powers that enable an individual to make sense of every awareness-episode. *Prakāśa*, meaning illumination, means a flood of light that makes an object or a sign identifiable in its environment; it is the removal of darkness so that we, as a user of language, will become aware of an object. Navya-Nyāya theorists connected the theory of apprehension of truth with the theory of the apprehension of cognition itself, *prakāśa* (*Logic, Language and Reality* 204–5, and *Word and the World* 136). While *Vimarśa*, simply defined as differentiation, allows an individual to identify and differentiate an object from its immediate environment, hence, illumination or removal of darkness is not enough as that identification may not be able to differentiate the object from its surroundings, and hence *Vimarśa* is needed. They are inseparable in this process of verbalising or languageing. The term for 'water' in Gujarati, "*paaNi*," is a sign that allows the users to identify what *paaNi* is, the basic characteristics that help define it, such as liquid, transparent, drinkable, used for cooking and washing, rivers are the main sources, and so on. The sound chain, *p-a-a-N-i*, works as an illumination that makes us aware of the object and its existence, but its signifying traits make us aware of how this object's existence differs from other closely adjacent objects. It is a liquid, which distinguishes it from other non-liquid objects. It is transparent, which differentiates it from other non-transparent liquid objects, such as "milk." Thus, each differentiating trait becomes the *Vimarśa* power, allowing the individual user to make complete sense of the sign.

Can we apply this understanding to the sign *jaL*? It is also a term for ‘water’ in Gujarati, which allows the users to identify what *jaL* is, and the basic characteristics that help define it, such as; liquid, transparent, drinkable, used for cooking and washing, rivers are the main sources, and so on. The sound chain, *j-a-L*, works as an illumination that makes us aware of the object and its existence, but its signifying traits make us aware of how this object’s existence is different from other closely adjacent objects. But how does the differentiation of *jaL* and *paaNi* become possible? Both of them bear almost similar characteristics. The difference we can identify is that the sign *jaL* is used for some very specific purposes. To put it very simply, non-ordinary *paaNi* is *jaL*. The water in some very specific domains like education, religion, deference, or respect, and at times, sarcasm, turns into *jaL*.

- 2a. *paaNi pio.*
Water drink
“Drink water.”
- 2b. *jaL grahaN karo*
Water accept
“Please, accept this water.”

Sentences 2a and 2b essentially talk about offering someone water to drink. But, when we use the sign *jaL*, it automatically connotes the notion of respect or deference. This additional connotation to the meaning of *jaL* also introduces another verb that is considered more appropriate with the noun *jaL*. Thus, the entire syntagmatic chain changes with the paradigmatic choice of the sign *jaL*. The paradigmatic choice is motivated by the domain or the interlocutor. For example, sentence 2b will be appropriate in a religious context or when the speaker is talking to someone of higher social status. Considering the idea of awareness-episode where ‘languageing’ clearly states that the natural power of *vimarśa* is not possible without the power of *prakāśa* (*Word and the World* 128), to put it differently, illumination precedes the differentiation. In our case, the sign-user must become aware of a new form of the object, *jaL*. Here, as a user, we are aware that the object we are now identifying is slightly different from the already defined object – *paaNi*; it has added significance of pious-ness, poetic-ness, or purity. Once this awareness comes, there will be a need for a new sign to distinguish it from the already existing sign inventory. That is, as a sign-user, we need a linguistic-sign that differentiates the newly identified object from a new sign. Bhartrhari’s followers, Utpala and Abhinava, bring in the idea of *manaskāra*. As Matilal writes (Ibid. 138–9), “the kind of determination by word that is needed in the epistemologically first perception can arise from what is called *manaskāra*, i.e., mental attention.” It is equated with “*cittābhoga*” – the expansion of mind, which incorporates the new concept associated with a different signification of the object. The mental attention to the difference of the object under question, *jaL*, allows the user to look for another sign to designate it; the ‘expansion of mind’ here refers to the need for conceptual expansion to incorporate this special need of the signification. As a matter of fact, Abhinava defines *manaskāra* as “a readiness for the distinguishing act,” a readiness for the *vimarśa* (Ibid. 139).

The power of *Vimarśa* is not just about distinguishing the sign from the environment and adjacent signs but also about the functional and social viability of the given sign. The sign *jaL* may have different connotations in different domains. There is no fixed meaning that can be added to the meaning of *paaNi*, and we get the meaning of *jaL*. For example, let us check the following compounds from the above tables:

- Table 1: *jaLghadi* (water clock, clepsydra, reading the time through the controlled mechanism of water)
- Table 2: *jaLkamaL* (Lotus)
- Table 3: *jaLaanjali* (Ritual offering of water to deceased relatives)

In the first example, *jaL* connotes the running mechanism of the machine. Here, being liquid is enough. At best, the purity of water for scientific and research purposes can be implied in

this academic usage of the sign *jaL*. In the second example, the sign connotes the flower that grows in water. Here, the body of water is signified by the word *jaL*. It does not add anything to the meaning of the word *kamaL*, as the lotus grows in water. Hence, *jaLkamaL* is largely used for poetic purposes. In the third example, the sign comes from the religious domain and clearly connotes its ritualistic significance. Here, the notions of piousness, holiness, and religious importance are added to the meaning of “water.” It cannot be ordinary water or an ordinary act of using water as an offering. The water may have come from some specified river, and/or it may have been ritualised with the help of religious chanting. How do we, as the users of language, distinguish this extra significance associated with water, specifically in the religious domain? This is where *manaskāra* comes into action and allows the user to differentiate the specialised usage from the ordinary one.

The signs *paaNi* and *jaL* signify the same Object, but at the level of the Interpretant, we have two different signs signifying two different perceptions of the Object. Observing Bharṭhari’s idea of *sabda-brahman*, the power of *prakāśa* allows the meaning-maker to perceive the Object – water; the power of *vimarśa* allows the meaning-maker to distinguish it from other similar Objects. But distinguishing *paaNi* from *jaL* is the most crucial. The real distinction is associated with the actual usage and procedure involved in the use of water. Both *paaNi* and *jaL* are used for washing, for example, but when a ritualistic wash is involved, the ‘water’ attains special status in terms of chanting of mantras or water being fetched from a “holy” source. When ‘water’ is offered to an important person, it gains a higher status; the offering is usually of *jaL*. Distinguishing the domain of usage or receiver of the message will define the selection of an appropriate sign. The choice is made on the basis of the pragmatic understanding of the situation, topic, and interlocutor. Bharṭhari brings in the concept of *anumāna vācakaḥ* (signifying through inference) (*Pāṇinian Studies* 47). The interlocutors have the main sign in their awareness, but when a vernacular term is used, it does not signify the object directly; he argues that the interlocutor infers the standard term’s meaning through the vernacular sign. Here, Bharṭhari provides examples of standard Sanskrit terms for “cow” and various vernacular terms. He advocates that the language user infers the standard Sanskrit meaning and connects it with the vernacular sign used by the interlocutor. Our case is a little different. Both *paaNi* and *jaL* are used in standard Gujarati, so when *jaL* is used, the interlocutor infers the signification of *paaNi*. Just that, the extra sense of purity or ritual aspect is missing. Again, the interlocutor’s *manaskāra* becomes important; while deriving the meaning through inference, the interlocutor’s mental attention allows him or her to come to the contextually and pragmatically correct interpretation.

The situation is something similar to what modern Peircean semiotics refers to as two types of objects: “the dynamical object” and “the immediate object” (Andreichuk 233). The first is the real object of reference; let us say ‘water’ in our case. The second is the object as the sign presents it, i.e., refers to ‘water’, or the ‘pious form of water’, or the ‘purest or idealised form of water’. The difference appears to be at the level of the interpretant, which is pragmatically determined. But, with the interpretant, we also have a new representamen; the object remains the same. It appears as if *paaNi* for Gujarati speakers is a common noun, like “male,” and *jaL* is a proper noun, like “Peter” or “Bimal.” Both “Peter” and “Bimal” are “males,” but they have their own distinct identities in the given social group. “*jaL*” with the same analogy is essentially “*paaNi*,” but in the religious context, it bears the identity of being pious and ritualistic, while in the academic context it is “purest.” The language-users are aware of this distinction and, at times, put the signs of one domain into another domain to give sarcastic connotations. For example, they may say, “*jaL grahaN karo*” (Translation: “Drink water.”) to their friends or children to give the idea of false superiority to them and make them realise that their tantrums are misplaced.

4. Conclusions

Here, the discourse on the sacred and the ritualistic enters. In almost all Indian traditions, the sacred and ritualistic are clearly defined. The majority of natural objects and artefacts are categorised as sacred. It is almost a tautology for an Indian if we talk about “Sacred” nature,

as various aspects of nature are already worshipped and part of major rituals in major religious sects of India. Nature is essentially sacred. Gadgil and Vartak (1994) talk about identifying "sacred groves" in the forest areas of Maharashtra. Their discussion also enlists the other such "sacred groves" in various parts of India and the world. What could have been the significance of the "sacred grove" in the larger forest area? It is already forest, and the majority of vegetation, greenery, and animals are safe there. The sacred grove, as discussed by Gadgil and Vartak, is a sanctified area, and everything within its limits is under the protection of the reigning deity. Any removal, even of shrubs, climbers, or dead wood, is taboo. Here, the primary motivation for identifying the sacred grove should be to differentiate the specific products of the forest from the rest. Analogically, the distinction between *paaNi* and *jaL* is also an attempt to sanctify certain forms of "water" and define its specialised usage in the religious and ritualistic domain.

To conclude, let us understand the entire awareness-episode in brief. Every new situation comes with a few new signs; let us take the Gujarati sign '*jaL*' as an example. In an academic conversation, the interlocutor encounters this new sign. Both the natural energies of *prakāś* and *vimarś* come into action here. The *prakāś* allows the user to perceive the new object and identify it; the *vimarś* allows the user to distinguish the object from its environment and other adjacent similar objects. Here, two other processes become helpful, first proposed by Bhartrhari, *anumānena vācakah*, making sense through inference – the sign user infers the meaning of the new sign through his or her existing understanding of the other synonymous and, in many cases, un-marked sign, '*paaNi*' in this case. The second process, proposed by his followers, *manāskara*, or mental attention, occurs when the user pays attention to the environment in which the sign is used and how it is different from the un-marked usage. The relationship between marked usage and specific context of usage, i.e., academic domain, allows the user to comprehend and perceive the signification – a 'pure form of water.'

It is quite enticing to simply translate the notions of *prakāśa* and *vimarśa* into Saussurian syntagmatic and paradigmatic choices. Both these concepts are applicable to a single sign to make sense of it. *Prakāśa* allows us to identify a sign in the given discourse, while *vimarśa* allows us to distinguish the sign from the adjacent signs. So, both powers should be operative to make a complete and correct sense of the given linguistic sign. In the case of *paaNi*, it is quite easy for a Gujarati user to identify what '*paaNi*' is, but another sense of this object, which is always employed in the specialised sense, *jaL*, poses a challenge for us. Though the object is the same, the domain differs, and hence it is important for the sign-user to identify and distinguish the correct sign for the given domain. Part of the requirement is the recategorisation of the object as something special: pious in the religious and ritualistic domains, while technical or pure in the academic domain. A similar understanding of meaning and cognition can be extended to other synonymous linguistic signs used in specific domains or styles.

Notes

¹ For all the Sanskrit terms, I have followed the transliteration style followed in the source texts.

² For *jaL* and *paaNi* – the Gujarati terms – I have used simple transliteration in which "L" stands for lateral retroflex sound, and "N" stands for retroflex nasal sound.

³ Matilal has transliterated this word with "k," while Padoux transliterates the same word with "c." Hence, we have a *vāk/vāc* variation for the same Sanskrit Sign.

⁴ I am indebted to Prof. Nilotpala Gandhi and Dr. Hemant Dave for this discussion.

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