Bridging the Gap between Semantic Elucidation (*Nirvacana*) in the Sanskrit Tradition and Historical Linguistics

Kenji Takahashi and Yūto Kawamura

Department of Indological Studies

Kyoto University

1. Introduction

The *nirvacana* analysis is a hermeneutic practice in the Sanskrit tradition that has a history of more than twenty-five hundred years. The *nirvacana* analysis accounts for the meaning of a particular noun in association with a verbal root which is phonetically similar to the noun. For example, the Sanskrit word *ap/āp-* "water" is associated with √*āp-* "reach," and water is explained as "that which reaches something (i.e., flows towards, *āpnoti* [< √*āp-*])" or "that which is reached (*āpyate* [< √*āp-*])." In this way, it is believed that an action denoted by a verb plays a crucial role in the semantic analysis of nouns.

This kind of analysis, however, does not take into consideration the historical phonetic background underlying a given word; nor does it compare the word in question with its cognates in other related languages such as Avestan, and so on. Due to these shortcomings, the *nirvacana* analysis has been frequently dismissed as "folk-etymology" in modern studies of the Sanskrit language. However, a careful investigation on what this Indian tradition sought to achieve and how it made sense in its original context will reveal how Sanskrit speakers view their own language. This paper will focus on the *Nirukta* by Yāska (ca. 5th–4th C. BCE), the earliest comprehensive document of the method of *nirvacana* analysis. By contextualizing the method of the semantic elucidation elaborated in this text in the broader history of semantic analysis in ancient India, we would like to point out two distinct features of the *Nirukta*: (1) Yāska strived to derive all the nouns from verbal roots; (2) compared to its forerunners in Vedic literature, Yāska sought for more comprehensive and clearer explanation of each word. These features strongly influenced the Ancient Indians' understanding of their own language.

2. An Overview of the Sanskrit Language and Sanskrit Literature

The Sanskrit language belongs to the Indo-European family, which includes most of the European languages such as Lithuanian, Russian, German, English, Dutch, Irish, Latin, Italian, French, Albanian, Greek, Armenian, some of the Indo-Iranian languages such as Avestan, Persian, Middle and Modern Indic languages, Tocharian, and Anatolian languages such as Hittite. These languages

show striking similarities to each other. According to the results of comparative historical linguistics, these languages stem from a single hypothetical language, which is called the Proto-Indo-European language. For example, the word for "father" is *pitár-* in Sanskrit, πατήρ in Greek, *pater* in Latin, *Vater* in German, and *père* in French, and their Proto-Indo-European form is reconstructed as *$ph_2tér$-*. Nowadays, the Indo-European languages are spread all over the world from North and South America to Russia, but it is assumed in general that the people who spoke the Proto-Indo-European language originally lived in the Northeast of the Black Sea at least from around the 5th millennium BC. From then on, the Indo-European people migrated to various parts of the world.

The tribe(s) who migrated to South Asia called themselves the Āryas (Aryans in English). Around the middle of the second millennium BC, the Āryas crossed the Hindu Kush Mountains from Afghanistan and reached the Indian subcontinent. From then on, they gradually spread over the Indian subcontinent from the North-West to the North-East and the South. Through many years of negotiations with the peoples who had lived in South Asia before their arrival and together with the peoples who constantly surged into India (Greeks, Huns and so on) afterwards, the Āryas (more correctly the people in South Asia) developed a unique and rich literary culture.[1]

Sanskrit was the main language for their literary composition. It would be helpful to summarize the history of Sanskrit literature to the extent that it is concerned with the *nirvacana* analysis. The earliest extant literary work is the *Ṛgveda* compiled around 1200 BC. It consists of 1,017 hymns amounting to more than ten thousand verses. The period between the middle of the second millennium and the end of the first millennium is called the Vedic age. During this period, many liturgical works were created. They can be classified into four types: (1) the Vedas or the Saṃhitās (including the *Ṛgveda*), which are the collection of hymns used in rituals; (2) the Brāhmaṇas, which are mainly intended to give exegetic explanations of rituals and formulas used therein; (3) the Āraṇyakas, which contain teachings on secret rituals; (4) the Upaniṣads, which develop philosophical and ritualistic speculations. This classification roughly corresponds to the chronological order of the texts. The Sanskrit used in Vedic Literature is called Vedic Sanskrit.

The Sanskrit language after the Vedic period is called Classical Sanskrit. One of the striking features of Classical Sanskrit literature is the remarkable development of scholarly investigation on all kinds of subjects: their interest ranged from philosophy, poetics, astronomy, astrology, mathematics, grammar, politics to elephantology, the ways of love-making or even stealing.[2]

3. Indian Grammatical Tradition

Among the varieties of Indian thought, Sanskrit grammar (*vyākaraṇa*) is generally granted the most

elevated status. There are three great sages (*trimuni, munitraya*) in the history of Sanskrit grammar: 1) Pāṇini (ca. 5th–4th c. BCE), the author of the world's oldest grammatical treatise called *Aṣṭādhyāyī*; 2) Kātyāyana (ca. 3rd c. BCE), who wrote the *Vārttika* intended to annotate Pāṇini's grammar; 3) Patañjali (ca. 2nd c. BCE), who composed an enormously influential work, the *Mahābhāṣya*, which is intended as a discussion of the two former treatises in greater detail. The *Aṣṭādhyāyī* consists of about four thousand grammatical rules. In these, Sanskrit usage current in Pāṇini's time is accounted for through a derivational procedure in which affixes (*pratyaya*) are introduced after verbal and nominal bases (*dhātu* and *prātipadika*). The Sanskrit language Pāṇini describes in his grammar can be roughly identified with Middle Vedic Sanskrit, attested in the Brāhmaṇas, the Āraṇyakas, the early Upaniṣads, and the Sūtras. In the *Vārttika* and the *Mahābhāṣya* Kātyāyana and Patañjali "discuss the validity of rules, how they are stated, their relations to other rules, and whether some rules or parts of them can be eliminated without harm and additional rules need to be stated" (Cardona 1976: 244). The influence of Pāṇinian grammar established by these ancient grammarians on the Sanskrit language was so tremendous that it came to be regarded as the authority with respect to correct Sanskrit usage. Generally speaking, Sanskrit users in the classical period were required to follow this grammar. Surprisingly, Pāṇinian grammar is still developing.

It is possible to have new insights into linguistic phenomena by taking into consideration both the details of modern linguistics and the knowledge to be gained from Pāṇinian grammar.[3]

4. Vedic Background for the *Nirvacana* Analysis: Poetic Pun in the Vedas and Ritualistic Exegesis in the Brāhmaṇas

As briefly introduced in Section 1, the *nirvacana* analysis consists in a semantic analysis of a particular noun by a verb which is phonetically similar to the noun. The current section explores the forerunners of the *nirvacana* analysis by taking examples of the words *agní-* "fire, the god Agni" and *sóma-* "the Soma plant, its juice of the Soma plant, the god Soma."

4.1 *agní-*

Ṛgveda 6.16.48ab describes *agní-* as follows:

(1) *Ṛgveda* 6.16.48ab

agníṃ devā́so agriyáṃ indháte vṛtrahántamam |

The gods kindle Agni as the foremost, the best obstacle-smasher.

The poet does not intend this as a semantic or grammatical explanation for the word *agní-*, but plays

on a poetic pun between *agní-* and *agriyá-*. Deeg (1995: 106) explains that the phonemes /a/ and /g/ of the word *agní-* is explained by the word *agriyá-*. However it would be more reasonable to suggest that /i/ is also shared by the words *agní-* and *agriyá-*. It is possible that the phoneme /n/ in the verb *indháte* corresponds to that in the word *agní-*, but there remain some doubts about this assumption. If it is the case, the order of the explanation is slightly unfavorable because /n/ comes before /i/ in the word *agni-*, whereas /n/ is explained (*indháte*) after /i/ (*agriyám*). We find another interesting example of a poetic pun concerning *agní-*:

(2) *R̥gveda* 1.31.1a

tvám agne prathamó áṅgirā ŕ̥ṣir

You, O Agni, are the first Aṅgiras, the seer...

Here *agní-* is associated with the word *áṅgiras-*. Although the order of the phonemes is slightly different, the word *áṅgiras-* contains all the phonemes corresponding to those of the word *agní-*. The dental nasal /n/ in *agní-* is related to the guttural nasal /ṅ/ in *áṅgiras-*. This difference is justifiable because the former (/n/) automatically changes into the latter (/ṅ/) before gutturals (in this case /g/ of *áṅgiras-*) in Sanskrit phonetics.

The Brāhmaṇas contain the forerunners of the *nirvacana* analysis in the context of the explanation of the background knowledge of rituals. For instance, the same word *agní-* is explained in the following way:

(3) *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 2.2.4.1–2

prajā́patir ha vā́ idám ágra éka evā̀sa | sá aikṣata katháṃ nú prájāyeyéti só 'śrāmyat sá tápo 'tapyata sò 'gním evá múkhāj janayā́ṃ cakre . . . || 1 ||

"Prajāpati alone, indeed, existed here in the beginning. He considered, 'How may I be reproduced?' He toiled and performed acts of penance. He generated Agni from his mouth." (Eggeling 1882–1900. I: 322–323)

tád vā́ enam etád ágre devā́nām ajanayata | tásmād agnír agrír ha vái nā́maitád yád agnír íti sá jātáḥ pū́rvaḥ préyāya yó vái pū́rva ety ágra etī́ti vái tám āhuḥ sò evàsyāgnítā || 2 ||

"He thus generated him first of the gods; and therefore (he is called) Agni, for *agni* is the same as *agri*. He, being generated, went forth as the first (*pūrva*); for of him who goes first, they say that he goes at the head (*agre*). Such, then is the origin and nature of that Agni." (Eggeling 1882–1900. I: 323)

In this example, the word *agní-* is explained by the fact that the Creator (Prajāpati) generated (*ajanayata*) him first (*ágre*) among the gods. The phonemes /a/ and /g/ of the word *agní-* are

explained by the word *ágra-* and the phoneme /n/ by the verb *ajanayata* (< √*jan^i/jā-*). It is difficult to notice that the phoneme /n/ in the verbal form *ajanayata* is intended as corresponding to that in *agní-*, because this phoneme appears in the middle of this verbal form. The *nirvacana* analysis basically utilizes the initial or second syllables of words.[4] The phoneme /i/ of the word *agni-* is accounted for by identifying *agní* with *agrí*. The word *agrí-* seems to be an invention by the author since it is not attested elsewhere in Sanskrit literature (cf. *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 6.1.1.11). The expression *ágra eti* indicates that the word *agrí-* is understood to derive from the combination of *ágra-* and *eti* (√*e/i-*) (cf. Deeg 1996, 185).

4.2 *soma-*

sóma is the exhilarating drink made from an unidentified plant (presumed to be ephedra) whose preparation and offering are the focuses of the Soma sacrifice, the most important Vedic ritual. *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 3.9.4.22 explains the reason why it is called *sóma-*:

> (4) *Śatapathabrāhmaṇa* 3.9.4.22
>
> *átha yásmāt sómo nā́ma | yátra vā́ eṣó 'gre devā́nāṁ havír babhū́va tád dhekṣā́ṃ cakre màivá sárveṇevātmánā devā́nāṁ havír bhūvām íti tásya yā́ júṣṭatamā tanū́r ā́sa tā́ṃ apanídadhe tád vái devā́ aspṛṇvata té hocur úpaivàitā́ṃ právṛhasva sahàivá na etáyā havír edhī́ti tā́ṃ dūrá ivopaprā́vṛhata svā́ vái ma eṣéti tásmāt sómo nāmá ||*
>
> "Now as to why he is called Soma. When he first became sacrificial food for the gods, he thought within him, 'I must not become sacrificial food for the gods with my whole self! That form of his which was most pleasing he accordingly set aside. Thereupon the gods were victorious; they said, 'Draw that unto thee, for therewith shalt thou become our food!' He drew it to him even from afar, saying, 'verily, that is mine own (*svā me*); hence he was called Soma." (Eggeling 1882–1900. II: 246)

In this passage, the word *sóma-* is explained by the phrase *svā́ vái ma eṣā*. It is clear that the phonemes /s/ and /m/ of *sóma-* are explained by /s/ in *svā́* and /m/ in *me* respectively. The phoneme /v/ in *svā́* or *vái* seems to account for /o/ in *sóma-* because /o/ can be a full-grade of /v/, but this relationship is not evident. The phoneme /a/ in *sóma-* appears to correspond to that in *ma*. Moreover, it is to be noted that this semantic analysis is not based on verbal forms.

4.3 Features of the *Nirvacana* Analysis in Vedic Literature

The *R̥gveda* contains the earliest attestations of the *nirvacana* analysis in the form of poetic puns, which ancient Indian poets were fond of ([1], [2]). In the Brāhmaṇas, phonetic similarity is utilized to

explain the mythical background behind the given words ([3], [4]). Unlike the *nirvacana* analysis elaborated in Yāska's *Nirukta* which will be discussed later, nouns are not always associated with verbal roots ([2], [4]), and not all the phonetic elements are clearly explained ([1], [4]). Additionally, the order of the phonemes is not strictly taken into account ([1], [2]). These features may result from the fact that the Vedas and the Brāhmaṇas (as well as the Āraṇyakas and the Upaniṣads) are not intended to give a grammatical or semantic explanation for the terms.

5. Yāska's Methodology

In Vedic literature, a systematic method for analyzing nouns had not been established. Yāska is the first to compose a treatise which deals with Vedic words and their *nirvacana* analysis, the *Nirukta*.[5] One of the fundamental features of *nirvacana* analysis is that all nouns are accounted for as derived from verbs. To put it another way, all of them are considered to be relative to the action signified by the verb:

(5) *Nirukta* 1.12

tatra nāmāny ākhyātajānīti śākaṭāyano nairuktasamayaś ca | na sarvāṇīti gārgyo vaiyākaraṇānāṃ caike |

Of them (i.e., the four classes of words: nouns, verbs, preverbs, and particles), nouns are derived from verbs—this is [the opinion of] Śākaṭāyana and also a convention among the Nairuktas; not all [nouns]—this is [the opinion of] Gārgya and some grammarians.[6]

According to Yāska, this way of analysis is possible when the grammatical derivation of nouns is clear:

(6) *Nirukta* 2.1

tad yeṣu padeṣu svarasaṃskārau samarthau prādeśikena guṇenānvitau syātāṃ tathā tāni nirbrūyāt |

"So, in the case of words where accent and grammatical formation would be in agreement with the meaning (*samarthau*) [which is to be expressed] [and are] accompanied by a [phonetic] quality which is in accordance with the grammatical derivation, they should be analysed in a regular manner." (Kahrs 1998: 36)

As can be expected, however, it is sometimes difficult to observe a direct relationship between a noun and a verb. Even if this is the case, Yāska insists on not giving up the analysis:

(7) *Nirukta* 2.1

athānanvite 'rthe 'prādeśike vikāre 'rthanityaḥ parīkṣeta kena cid vṛttisāmānyena |

avidyamāne sāmānye 'py akṣaravarṇasāmānyān nirbrūyāt |

"But when the meaning is not accompanied [by a regular accent and grammatical formation] [and a phonetic] modification is not in accordance with the grammatical derivation, one who is intent on a meaning should examine [the word] through some similarity with a [phonetic] formation [accepted by the grammarians in other cases]. Even when [such] a similarity [with a phonetic change accepted by the grammarians in other cases] is not found, one should analyse on the basis of [a possible similarity] in syllables or in single sounds." (Kahrs 1998: 36–37)

In the *Nirukta*, Yāska mainly focuses on the words which are seemingly difficult to explain by means of grammatical analysis alone.

6. Yāska's Analysis of the Words *agni-* and *soma-*

6.1 Yāska on *agni-*

From the viewpoint of the comparative historical linguistics of Indo-European languages, the word *agni-* can be reconstructed as **(H)n̥gni-* as a Proto-European form. Latin *ignis* and Lithuanian *ugnìs* are cognates of *agni-* (cf. Mayrhofer 1992–2001. I: 44–45). Linguistically speaking, the word *agni-* does not derive from any verb attested so far. In English, this word appears in the word *ignite*, which derives from Latin *ignis*. Yāska explains this word as follows:

(8) *Nirukta* 7.14

agraṇīr bhavaty agraṃ yajñeṣu praṇīyate |

[Agni] is led first (*agraṇī*). He is led (summoned, *praṇīyate*) first in sacrifices.[7]

In this case all the phonemes of the word, /a/, /g/, /n/ and /i/, are explained in the proper order. The phonemes /a/ and /g/ are explained by *agra-* or *agraṃ*, and the phonemes /n/ and /i/ by *agraṇī-* (*agra +√nayi/nī-*) or *praṇīyate* (*pra +√nayi/nī-*). The dental nasal /n/ in *agni-* is related to the retroflex dental /ṇ/; this is acceptable because the original /n/ in *√nayi/nī-* is changed to /ṇ/ when compounded with *agra-* or *pra-* (ruki-rule). The short vowel /i/ is explained by the long vowel /ī/. It seems that Yāska did not care to distinguish the length of vowels. He then gives an alternative explanation for the word *agni-*:

(9) *Nirukta* 7.14

aṅgaṃ nayati san namamānaḥ |

It directs a part [of itself] by bending down.[8]

In this case, the phonemes /a/ and /g/ of *agni-* are explained by the word *aṅga-* "limb, part" and /n/ and /i/ by the verb *nayati* (√*nay^i*/*nī-*).[9] Though the phoneme /i/ itself does not appear in the above sentence, we can postulate that Yāska has √*nī-* as the underlying verbal root in mind.

He goes on to quote two different opinions given by his predecessors/contemporaries within the *nirvacana* tradition:

(10) *Nirukta* 7.14

aknopano bhavatīti sthaulāṣṭhīviḥ | na knopayati na snehayati ||

Sthaulāṣṭhīvi says, "[Agni] is not a moistener (i.e., drier, *aknopana*)." It does not moisten [something]. It does not make [something] wet.

Sthaulāṣṭhīvi, who is mentioned twice in the *Nirukta* (cf. Bhattacharya 1958: 90), associates the phoneme /a/ in *agni-* with the negative *a-* (*a-knopana-*), and the phonemes /g/ and /n/ with *knopana-* "moistener." It seems that /g/ in *agni-* corresponds to /k/ in *knopana-*. This association can be justified by the fact that /k/ is changed to /g/ under certain phonetic circumstances. Here /i/ is not explained.

He further quotes an opinion by another predecessor/contemporary:

(11) *Nirukta* 7.14

tribhya ākhyātebhyo jāyate iti śākapūṇiḥ | itāt | aktād dagdhād vā | nītāt | sa khalv eter akāram ādatte gakāram anakter vā dahater vā nīḥ paraḥ ||

Śākapūṇi says, "[the word *agni-*] is produced from three verbs. From *ita-* (√*e/i-* "to go"), from *akta-* (√*añj-* "to smear") or *dagdha-* (√*dah-* "to burn"), from *nīta-* (√*nay^i*/*nī-* "to lead"). He actually takes the phoneme /a/ from *eti-* (√*e/i-*), the phoneme /g/ from *anakti-* (√*añj-*) or *dahati-* (√*dah-*), and [the verbal root] *nī-* (√*nay^i*/*nī-*) is the remaining (i.e.,√*nay^i*/*nī-* accounts for the phonemes /n/ and /i/).

Śākapūṇi is the most cited scholar in the *Nirukta*. *ita-*, *akta-*, *dagdha-*, and *nīta-* are the verbal adjectives deriving from √*e/i-* "to go," √*añj-* "to smear," √*dah-* "to burn," and √*nay^i*/*nī-* "to lead" respectively. *dagdha-* and *nīta-* do explain /g/ and /ni/ of the word *agni-*, but *ita-* and *akta-* do not explain /a/ and /g/.[10] Scharfe (2009: 111, n. 23) suggests that Śākapūṇi follows an archaic practice to employ verbal adjectives to denote verbal roots. In fact, Yāska paraphrases Śākapūṇi's presentations into his own terminology: He uses the present, indicative, active, 3rd person singular form to denote verbal roots (*eti-*, *anakti-*, *dahati-*, cf. Kahrs 1998: 104ff). Scharfe (2009: 111, n. 22) infers that Śākapūṇi gets /a/ of the word *agni-* from the verbal forms of √*e/i-* such as *ayāni* (the present, imperative, active, 1st person, singular) and /g/ from *anakti* (the present, indicative, active, 3rd

person singular of √*añj-*) or *dagdhvā* (the gerundive of √*dah-*). We basically follow Scharfe's interpretation, but his interpretation that *anakti* accounts for /g/ should be modified because *anakti* does not have the phoneme /g/. We propose that *añgdhi* (the present, imperative, active, 2nd person singular form of √*añj-*) be one of the forms that Śākapūṇi had in mind. Śākapūṇi's explanation covers all the phonemes in the right order.

Yāska may have considered that these interpretations of the two scholars were possible alternatives conforming to his principles of the *nirvacana* analysis.

6.2 Yāska on *soma-*

Yāska explains the word *soma-* as follows:

> (12) N 11.4
>
> *oṣadhiḥ somaḥ sunoter yad enam abhiṣuṇvanti |*
>
> Soma as herb [is derived] from *sunoti-* (√*sav/su-*), because they press it out.

Yāska derives the word *soma-* from √*sav/su-*. The phonemes /m/ and /a/ of *soma-* are not explained. We can infer that Yāska intends to say that the word *soma-* is the combination of √*sav/su-* and the suffix *-ma-* and does not feel the necessity to mention the latter because it is one of the common suffixes in the Sanskrit language. Yāska's analysis deriving the word *soma-* from √*sav/su-* is linguistically correct (cf. Mayrhofer 1992–2001. II: 748–749).

6.3 Features of Yāska's Semantic Analysis Compared to its Vedic Precedents

In Vedic literature, we can find the forerunners of the *nirvacana* analysis in which a noun is associated with other phonetically similar words. Some of these descriptions foreshadow Yāska's *Nirukta* in that they conform to his methodology ([1] and [3]). However, the methodology of the semantic analysis based on phonetic similarity is not documented yet. We also find different kinds of schemes and methods ([2] and [4]).

The importance of Yāska's *Nirukta* in the history of Sanskrit literature lies in the establishment of the methodology of the *nirvacana* analysis. He consistently derives nouns from verbs. What is more, examples (8) and (9) indicate that he attempts to explain all the phonemes in the right order in a clear way.

7. Concluding Remarks: Two Perspectives to the Sanskrit Language

In the modern study of the Sanskrit language, the Pāṇinian grammatical tradition has been highly valued due to its rational method and the grammarians' keen observation of their language. On the

other hand, the *nirvacana* analysis has not been appreciated because of its seemingly irrational methodology. To be sure, it does not reveal linguistic reality. However, its way of thinking did influence Sanskrit speakers' or writers' understanding of their language. We should analyze the Sanskrit texts not only from the viewpoint of modern linguistics and Pāṇinian grammar, but also from their own perspectives. A careful study of the method of the *nirvacana* analysis will give a clue to a deeper understanding of Indian thought.

Sanskrit Texts

Aṣṭādhyāyī: See Appendix III (Aṣṭādhyāyīsūtrapāṭha) in Cardona (1997).

Bṛhaddevatā: See Tokunaga (1997).

Nirukta: See Roth (1852).

Ṛgveda: See Aufrecht (1877).

Śatapathabrāhmaṇa: See Weber (1855).

Uṇādisūtra: See Aufrecht (1859).

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Notes

[1] The historical information in this paragraph is based on Gotō (2013).

[2] Cf. Pollock (2006).

[3] It is to be noted in passing that in Pāṇini's system of grammar, the word *agni-* is derived from √*aṅg* "cover" with the *uṇādi* suffix *ni*. *Uṇādisūtra* 4.50 *aṅger nalopaś ca* teaches that the affix *ni* occurs after √*aṅg-* and the phoneme /ṅ/ of this verb is dropped (*aṅg + ni → aφg + ni → agni-* "that which covers/that by which something is covered [?]").

[4] This might be the reason why Deeg (1995: 184) does not notice that the phoneme /n/ is explained by the word *ajanayata*.

[5] Although he has been frequently considered to predate Pāṇini, this earlier date is still open to question. See Cardona (1976: §3.2.1).

[6] Kahrs (1998: 35) translates this passage as "with regard to this [=the four classes of words], nouns arise because of **[the actions denoted by]** verbs, according to Śākaṭāyana; this is also the doctrine of the Nairuktas; not all [nouns], according to Gārgya and some of the Vaiyākaranas" (emphasis ours). To be sure, Yāska's purpose is semantic one, as pointed out by Kahrs (1998: 35.22). However, in our opinion, there is no need of supplying here the phrase "[the actions denoted by]." Saying that nouns are derived from verbs (*nāmāny ākhyātajāni*) amounts to saying that the former are related to the activities expressed by the latter. The following passage clearly shows Yāska's attitude that he tries to explain nouns as derived from verbs.

> *Nirukta* 2.2
> *athāpi bhāṣikebhyo dhātubhyo naigamāḥ kṛto bhāṣyante | damūnāḥ | kṣetrasādhā ity athāpi naigamebhyo bhāṣikāḥ | uṣṇam | ghṛtam iti |*
> "Moreover, Vedic primary nouns are analysed on the basis of verbal roots belonging to classical Sanskrit, such as *damūnāḥ, kṣetrasādhāḥ*, but also classical [primary nouns] on the basis of Vedic [roots], such as *uṣṇam, ghṛtam*." (Kahrs 1998: 32)

[7] Cf. *Bṛhaddevatā* 1.87ab *nīyate 'yaṃ nṛbhir yasmān nayaty asmād asau sakṛt |*

[8] This sentence is difficult to interpret. Sarup (1920–27. II: 120) translates it as "he makes everything, to which it inclines, a part of himself," but this rendering is too far from the original text. We have interpreted *aṅga* "part" as a flame of the fire.

[9] It is possible that /ṅ/ of the word *aṅga-* is related to /n/ in *agni-*, but we have interpreted that *nayati* is responsible for /n/. This interpretation is better in terms of the order of the phonemes.

[10] To be sure, *ita-* contains the phoneme /a/. However, as shown by Yāska's paraphrase of *ita-* with *eti-*, he does not consider /a/ in *ita-* as explaining that in *agni-*.