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Classifications of Words in Ancient Sanskrit Grammars

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the classifications of words which were elaborated in the different schools of ancient Sanskrit grammar (*Vyākaraṇa*). It describes first the Pāṇinian classification of words, the most elaborate, and then presents the word class system in post-Pāṇinian Sanskrit grammars, which are predominantly topically organized. The final aim of the study is to provide an overview of the word class system in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition, similar to the one given by Robins in 1966 for the European grammatical tradition.

Keywords

Sanskrit grammar, Word class system, Pāṇinian classification, post-Pāṇinian classifications, topicwise grammars.

Introduction *

The cutting of continuous linguistic chains into units has a long tradition in India. One of the most ancient classifications of words seems to be the one in four parts: *nāman*, *ākhyāta*, *upasarga* and *nipāta*, which is traditionally translated by “noun, verb, preverb and particle”. This classification, which is found in several texts (*Rkprātiśākhya*, *Nirukta*, *Mahābhāṣya*), seems to come directly from the very early Sanskrit grammatical analyses which are rooted in the religious sphere. In order to guarantee the correct preservation of the Vedic religious texts (which constitute the basis of the ancient form of the Hindu religion), recitation techniques were elaborated involving sophisticated analyses of linguistic constituents. These techniques aimed at deconstructing Vedic texts in their “continuously recited” version (*saṃhitā-pāṭha*), where *sandhis* are applied, to yield a “word-by-word” version (*pada-pāṭha*) of the same texts, where any dissociable sequence was *de facto* isolated. This kind of analysis was based on an accurate study of morphology and syntax and it is most likely during this period that the four-part classification of words was elaborated. Having said that, I will not expand on this classification. In the present paper, I concentrate on Sanskrit texts belonging to the discipline called *Vyākaraṇa* “grammar”, which is traditionally considered to begin with the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* of Pāṇini (A hereafter) in the 5th c. BC (note however that Pāṇini himself refers to about ten predecessors, evidently considering his work as falling into a preexisting practice) and to end with the works of Nāgeśa in the 18th c. AD. As will be seen below, grammatical Sanskrit texts may belong to different schools, the best known among them – which established itself during the course of history – being the Pāṇinian school. As most of the Sanskrit grammatical works

* I warmly thank Professor George Cardona for his valuable suggestions.

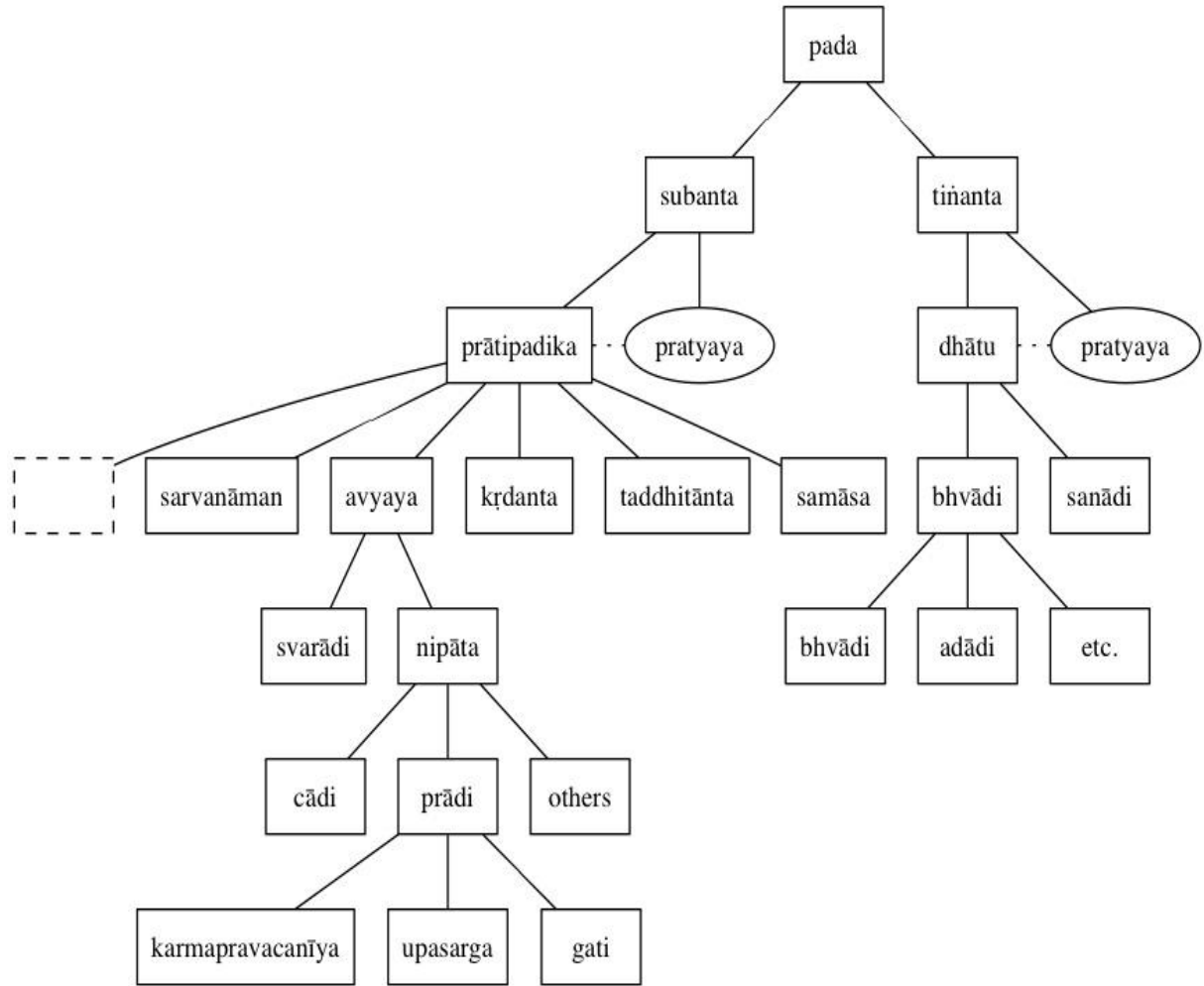
take Pāṇini's grammar as a basis and as it is in this text that one observes the most elaborate classification of words, I will my study with it. Then I give an overview of the word class system in post-Pāṇinian Sanskrit grammars. Note that the notion of "word" (*pada*) in scholarly Sanskrit disciplines is very ancient and probably one of the most stable – even though the criteria used to define it changed during the early period.¹ What I mean here by "classifications of words" is the way according to which Sanskrit grammarians subdivided 'word' classes and how they organized these subclasses. The aim of the present study is to provide an overview of the word class system in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition, similar to the one given by Robins in his 1966 paper. As will be seen, these two overviews are far from being in agreement.

1. The Pāṇinian classification of padas

On a practical level, Pāṇini's grammar provides guidelines for forming words by means of affixes. These affixes (*pratyaya*) are directly introduced (under meaning conditions and cooccurrence conditions) in some of the 4000 Pāṇinian rules, unlike most of the bases with which they combine and which are either verbal roots (*dhātu*) or nominal bases. Verbal and nominal bases constitute the two main formal starting points² of the derivational process which occurs throughout Pāṇinian rules, to generate more and more complex units ending up with grammatical sentences (*vākya*). The steps of this derivational process consist of the application of operations to these units and, generally, it is these very operations which determine the arrangement of the units in classes. For instance, a unit is called *prātipadika* "nominal stem", i.e. it belongs to the *prātipadika* class because it undergoes several operations. Sanskrit morphology being very rich, operations to be applied are numerous, and then too, the number of classes Pāṇini distinguishes is particularly high. The main classes are the following (the diagram is based on the diagram elaborated by Bhate 2006):

¹ Phonetic and semantic (a word = a meaningful unit which is likely to be followed by a pause) in *Prātiśākhya*s, morphologic and semantic in *Vyākaraṇa* (cf. Filliozat 1990).

² Note that the very first step, in the Pāṇinian derivational system, is a weak semantic level, closely related to syntax: nouns and verbs are not derived apart from the utterance of which they are a constituent (cf. Cardona 1997: 136-185).



This diagram uses technical terminology. The following comments are pertinent:

1. If one takes the diagram in its entirety, one notes that the Pāṇinian classification of *padas* consists of a hierarchical structure, where 32 classes of linguistic units are distributed on 7 different levels. Moreover, as I mentioned previously, there are only two main word classes, the nouns (*subanta*) and the verbs (*tiñanta*), within which the 29 other word classes fall.
2. At the top of the diagram, one finds the term *pada*.³ Pāṇini gives a definition of this term (probably the most ancient to have come down to us) which clearly delimits its extension: the rule A 1.4.14 states that the units which constitute the *pada* class are those that end in a nominal (*sup*) or a verbal (*tiñ*) ending (both kinds of units being suffixes – *pratyaya*), i.e. the inflected words.⁴ Note that there is no rule which explicitly says that *padas* are

³ Cf. Renou (1941-42: 135-138) for an explanation of *pada*'s etymology.

⁴ Note however that the next three rules (i.e. A 1.4.15, 16 and 17) extend the scope of the term *pada* to nominal stems before certain specific terminations, such as the *kya* affix (A 1.4.15), suffixes with the *s* exponent (A 1.4.16) and weak case endings (A 1.4.17). For the most part, this corresponds to the Padakāras' conception of

meaningful units, but this fact is nevertheless implied insofar as nominal stems and verbal roots⁵ are considered meaningful by Pāṇini.

3. One notes that there is an empty square in the diagram: it stands for the nominal stems which cannot be derived, such as *vrkṣa* “tree”, which are meaningful units but neither a verbal root (*dhātu*), nor a suffix (*pratyaya*), pronoun (*sarvanāman*), indeclinable (*avyaya*), primary derivative (*kṛdanta*), secondary derivative (*taddhitānta*), nor compound (*samāsa*). As far as I know, Pāṇini does not give a name – other than *prātipadika* – to this kind of unit.
4. Pāṇini does not enumerate the primary (*kṛdanta*) and the secondary (*taddhitānta*) derivatives as such. He first introduces the suffix class (*pratyaya*) in A 3.1.1-2, which he deals with in 3 sections (*adhyāya* 3, 4, 5) on 6. Within these sections, he enumerates (from 3.1.93 to 3.4.117) and details the conditions of use of the primary suffixes (*kṛt*), which enable the forming of the primary derivatives such as *karṭṛ* “doer” (directly derived from the root *kṛ-* “to do”), as well as (from 4.1.76 to 5.4.160) the secondary suffixes (*taddhita*) which enable the formation of the secondary derivatives such as *karṭṛtva* “the fact/propriety of being a doer” (derived from the nominal stem *karṭṛ*).
5. The *bhv-ādi* class, which includes the primitive verbal roots, is subdivided into ten root sub-classes, differentiated by the formation of their present tense stem. The *san-ādi* class gathers together derived verbs.
6. At the bottom of the diagram, one notes the important subdivision of the *avyaya* class, the class of indeclinables which constitutes a sub-category of the nominal stem class (nominal endings being dropped after indeclinables according to the rule A 2.4.82.⁶ The *svārādi* class includes indeclinables which express a meaning (or “descriptive adverbs”, according to Faddegon 1936: 10), such as adverbs of place, of manner, circumstance or causality.⁷ The *nipāta* class includes modal (interjections) and conjunctive particles.⁸ The *cādi* class is mainly made up of particles expressing conjunctive, emotional and interjectional values while the *prādi* class consists in three subcategories: the *karmapravacanīyas* “prepositions”, the *upasargas* “preverbs” and the *gatis*, which are units functioning “either

pada (cf. Jha 1992); Pāṇini, who mentions Śākalya, the author of the *Ṛgvedapadapāṭha*, clearly inherits this conception.

⁵ Cf. e.g. A 3.4.48 *hiṃsā-arthānām ca samāna-karmakāṇām* “[Affix *ṇamul* occurs after those verbal roots] which signify *hiṃsā* ‘injury, killing’, and share the same object [with roots subsequently used as a tag, provided they occur with a *pada* which ends in *ṭṛīyā*].” (transl. Sharma 1995: 623).

⁶ Due to the Pāṇinian principle according to which a fact (i.e. bearing the technical term *sub-anta*) caused by a dropped element (i.e. nominal endings) is still valid, indeclinables are still called *sub-antas*, and then *padas*.

⁷ Note: in the present context, adverbs do not constitute a separate class of units.

⁸ Cf. Faddegon 1936: 16.

as close adverbs to finite verbs or as prefixes to deverbative nouns or indeclinables; e.g. *pra* in *pra ṇayati* [“he leads out/forth”] and the compound derived from it *praṇāyaka* [“a guide, a head”]” (cf. Faddegon 1936: 16).

7. One notes that adjectives are not mentioned. As already pointed out by others (cf. S.D. Joshi 1966: 21-22), the adjectives and substantives have the same inflexion in Sanskrit, the chief difference between them being that the former class varies in three genders. Pāṇini nevertheless uses the terms *viśeṣaṇa* and *viśeṣya* in a rule (A 2.1.57) to distinguish the qualifier and the qualified in compounds such as *nīla-utpala* “blue lotus”.

Now, how are word classes introduced by Pāṇini? One notes two kinds of word class definition:

- **Intensional definitions**, e.g. definitions giving the necessary and sufficient conditions for belonging to the class: I have only noticed the form as condition or criterion in the definition of *pada* (A 1.4.14): “[A linguistic form] ending with *sup* (nominal endings) or *tiṅ* (verbal endings) [is called/is a] *pada*”.

- **Extensional definitions**, e.g. definitions giving every unit belonging to the class:

- most of the classes are defined by the mere enumeration of their units: e.g. *sarvanāman* (A 1.1.27): “[Units belonging to] the group beginning with *sarva*⁹ [are called/are a] *sarvanāman*.”

- some others are defined by the enumeration of their units associated with a formal criterion: e.g. *dhātu* (A 1.3.1, 3.1.32): “[Units belonging to] the group beginning with *bhū-* [and to the following groups in the *Dhātupāṭha* are called/are a] *dhātu*; [units] ending in *san* and the following [suffixes are called/are a] *dhātu*.”

- some others are defined by the enumeration of their units associated with a position or a syntactical criterion: e.g. *sub-anta* (A 4.1.1-2): “[nom.] *su, au, jas*, [acc.] *am, auṭ, śas*, [instr.] *ṭā, bhyām, bhis*, [dat.] *ṇe, bhyām, bhyās*, [abl.] *ṇasi, bhyām, bhyas*, [gen.] *ṇas, os, ām*, [loc.] *ṇi, os, sup* [are used] after a *prātipadika*.”

- and some others are defined by the enumeration of their units associated with a semantic criterion: e.g. *prātipadika* “nominal stem” (A 1.2.45-46): “[A form which] possesses a meaning and which is neither a verbal root nor an affix [is called/is a] *prātipadika*; a primary derivative, a secondary derivative and a compound [are also called/are also a] *prātipadika*.”

⁹ The complete list is given in an appendix called *Gaṇapāṭha*.

Extensional definitions are massively resorted to because, as I noted earlier, it is the operations the units undergo which determine the class they belong to. These “operations” are phonetic, morphologic and syntactic variations. In a way, they may be compared to the “accidents” of the Graeco-Latin grammatical tradition (see Colombat, Fournier, Puech 2010, §19), later labeled “grammatical” or “linguistic categories”. On that point, Colombat, Fournier and Puech (2010: 89) notice that: “L’*énumération des accidents peut permettre à elle seule d’identifier les classes de mots et de se dispenser de définition [...].*” This is exactly what one observes in Pāṇini’s grammar.

How are the word class definitions and the operations/accidents these classes undergo articulated in the Pāṇinian system? At first sight, the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* has not been composed to be read from beginning to end: there is neither progression nor continuity in the linguistic facts it describes (Pinault 1989a: 363). Frequently, rules which are to be considered together are found in sections separated by several rules, even several sections. As a consequence, the word class definitions are not systematically followed by the operations/accidents the classes undergo. For instance, the term *prātipadika* “nominal stem” is introduced in A 1.2.45. From this rule up to rule 1.2.73, the last of the 1.2 section, the operations taught concern the *prātipadika* class. Immediately after that comes the section beginning with the introduction of the term *dhātu* “verbal root”, followed by the description of the voice suffixes use. After that, one goes back to nominal stems (feminine suffixes) and then come the definition of *pada* (1.4.14), considerations regarding number (1.4.21-22) and the description of semantic cases (1.4.23-55). The nominal endings are given in A 4.1.2, while the verbal endings are given in A 3.4.78. Moreover, all the “accidents” which concern a word class are not given together, for instance, gender and number of compounds are described in 2.4.1-31, secondary suffixes which are added to them are given in 4.1.76-5.4.160 and morphology of compounds is treated in 6.3. In some other cases, such as the introduction of primary and secondary suffixes, technical terms (i.e. word class definitions) are immediately followed by the enumeration of the suffixes and the operations they undergo (their conditions of use).

Why such a framework? To put it briefly – because this is a vast field of study which goes beyond the scope of my paper –, it should be noted that, except for the rules which strictly concern totally different groups of units (such as nouns and verbs) and for which the order of application is unimportant,¹⁰ the extrinsic rule ordering is relevant in most cases. The fact

¹⁰ When one is deriving a nominal unit, one does not pay attention to verbal derivation rules.

remains that the rule ordering is often governed more by metarules (such as (1) the functions of the rules – *utsarga* “general” versus *apavāda* “specific”, *nitya* “necessary” versus *anitya* “non-necessary”, *antaraṅga* “internal” versus *bahiraṅga* “external” –,¹¹ (2) the fact that the application of one rule feeds the application of another rule and (3) by the avoidance of repetition in the formulation of the rules) than by the linguistic material itself. Whatever the case, the core of Pāṇini’s grammar is derivation of words (always considered in the context of a sentence), and this is treated in the third, fourth and fifth sections, those that are the most consistent.¹²

2. The classification of padas in post-Pāṇinian grammars

2.1. Preliminary observations

Two kinds of post-Pāṇinian grammar can be distinguished (whether “Pāṇinian” or “non-Pāṇinian”): (1) those which strictly preserve the Pāṇinian order of rules (*pāṭha-parampāra*) and (2) those which order – more or less evidently – the rules according to the linguistic material (*prakriyā-parampāra*) and which are traditionally called “topicwise grammars”.

The difference between these two kinds of grammar did not appear suddenly, it was established and developed progressively over the centuries. I present below two cases of topicwise grammars which perfectly illustrate the point: on the one hand, the *Kātantra* of Śarvavarman, which can be considered the earliest attempt to organize topically the Pāṇinian rules and which distinguishes four topics and, on the other, the *Siddhāntakaumudī* of Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita, composed 12 centuries later, which is considered the epitome of the topicwise genre and which distinguishes 15 topics.

As regards the first kind of grammar, those which strictly follow the Pāṇinian order, things will go quickly: only one grammar preserves Pāṇini’s order of rules (cf. Scharfe 1977: 168). This is the *Jainendravākaraṇa*, a Sanskrit grammar composed by Devanandin, a scholar of

¹¹ *Antaraṅga* rules teach operations which have internal (*antar*) condition (*aṅga*) while the *bahiraṅga* rules teach operations which have external (*bahir*) condition (*aṅga*) ; when an *antaraṅga* and a *bahiraṅga* rules contribute to the formation of a word, the former is applied prior to the latter. This *antaraṅgatva* principle, which is not different from bracketing, is essential machinery in the Pāṇinian puzzle because the demarcation of boundaries between *padas* is entirely based on it (internal operations apply inside the *padas*’ boundaries whereas external operations apply outside the *padas*’ boundaries) and one will see below that, as such, it played a central role in the so-called topicwise grammars.

¹² Derivation (the ultimate goal of which being the utterance or sentence) is clearly the hub of the system. Sections 1 and 2, which introduce the fundamental notions, most of the different words classes as well as technical processes, can be seen as preparing the application of the derivation. And sections 6, 7 and 8 present the results of the derivation, the words (taken as a sentence’s constituents), with their problems of internal junctions and their accents (Pinault 1989b: 371).

Jaina faith who would have lived during the 5th c. AD (cf. Belvalkar 1915: 64-65 ; Banerji 1996: 107). Both the order of the rules and the rules themselves are, generally speaking, the same as in Pāṇini's grammar. The compiler's contribution consists exclusively in the refinement of details, particularly the further economy of expression (cf. Kielhorn 1881: 76). The main differences thus observed lie on the metalinguistic level, where technical terms such as *prātipadika*, *samāsa* and *taddhita* are replaced by *mṛta*, *sa* and *hṛt* respectively.

2.2 Topicwise grammars¹³

The topicwise arrangement of grammatical rules started in the Buddhist and Jaina spheres, that is to say, outside the Pāṇinian tradition which is of Brahmanical (or Hindu) tradition. The aim was, for Buddhist and Jaina scholars, to have at their disposal a Sanskrit grammar less esoteric than Pāṇini's and fitting better the needs of a non Brahmanical audience.¹⁴ Topicwise grammars are mainly organized according to kinds of *pada*: the rules which introduce constituent units of one kind of *pada* as well as the rules which teach operations which apply inside the *pada*'s boundaries (the *antaraṅga* operations, see fn 12) are gathered together. The earliest work to come down to us within which a topical organization is detectable is the *Kātantra* (K hereafter) of Śarvavarman, a Buddhist scholar who would have lived around the 4th c. AD (cf. Cardona 2013, *Kātantra* entry). Its composition is as follows:

1. Section dealing with technical terms (among them *pada*, cf. K 1.1.20), phonology and phonetics;
2. Section dealing with nouns: vocalic and consonantal nominal stems (*liṅga*, cf. K 2.1.1), pronouns (*sarvanāman*), semantic cases (*kāraka*; the *karaka* section begins with the dropping of nominal endings after indeclinables (*avyaya*), cf. K 2.4.4) and use of nominal endings, compounds (*samāsa*) and secondary derivatives (*taddhita*);
3. Section dealing with verbs (*dhātu*, cf. K 3.1.9): conjugation (tenses and moods), formation of derived verbs, periphrastic perfect, aorist, verbal voices, verbal morphology such as doubling, nasalization, etc.;
4. Section dealing with primary suffixes (*kr̥t*).

¹³ Pāṇinian schools: *Rūpāvatāra* (10th c. AD), *Rūpamālā* (14th c. AD), *Prakriyākaumudī* (14-15th c. AD), *Prakriyāsarvasva* (1616), *Siddhāntakaumudī* (16-17th c. AD). Non-Pāṇinian schools: *Kātantra* (4th c. AD), *Cāndravāyākaraṇa* (5th c. AD), *Śākaṭāyanavyākaraṇa* (9th c. AD), *Siddhahemacandraśabdānuśāsana* (11th c. AD), *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābhāraṇa* (11th c. AD), *Saṅkṣiptasāra* (12th c. AD), *Mugdhabodha* (early 13th c. AD), *Sārasvatavyākaraṇa* (13-14th c. AD), *Supadmavyākaraṇa* (14th c. AD), *Harināmāmṛtavākaraṇa* (16th c. AD).

¹⁴ Buddhist and Jaina canonical texts were not initially composed in Sanskrit. It is when Sanskrit versions of them were adopted – more prestigious than the previous one, composed in Middle Aryan linguistic varieties – that they needed a Sanskrit grammar adapted to their practice of that language.

Note that, according to some commentators (cf. Cardona 2013, *Kātantra* entry), sections devoted to secondary and primary suffixes, as well as compounds, would have been added later. Whether it contains 3 or 4 parts, the noticeable facts are the following: (1) this grammar puts together word classes and the different operations they undergo (their “accidents”): kinds of noun and procedures of nouns formation (*antaraṅga* operations) are gathered together with declensions; kinds of verbal root and derived verbs are gathered together with conjugations; (2) rules introducing class technical terms (*saṃjñās*) as well as phonetics are put together, at the very beginning of the work.

Running through different grammars belonging to different schools, this topical organization developed over centuries, gaining progressively more popularity (cf. Bali 1976: 38). The most famous work of this type, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita’s *Siddhāntakaumudī* (SK hereafter), was composed in late 16th c.-early 17th c. AD and belongs to the Pāṇinian school. It is organized in 80 sections, covering 15 topics:

1. Section dealing with technical terms (*saṃjñā*)
2. Section dealing with metarules (*paribhāṣā*)
3. Sections dealing with phonology and phonetics (*sandhi*)
4. Sections dealing with nominal declensions:
 - stems’ modifications due to the addition of endings (*sv-ādi*)
 - declension of vowel-ending (*aj-anta*) masc., fem., nt. nouns and consonant-ending (*hal-anta*) masc., fem., nt. nouns [def. of *prātipadika*: SK 178-179, of *pratyaya*: SK 180-181, *sup* list: SK 183)
5. Section dealing with indeclinables (*avyaya*)
6. Section dealing with feminine suffixes (*strī-pratyaya*)
7. Section dealing with semantic cases (*kāraka*)
8. Sections dealing with compounds (def. of *samāsa*: SK 647): *avyayībhāva*, *tatpuruṣa*, *bahuvrīhi*, *dvandva*, *ekaśeṣa* “single remainder” and general rules relative to compounds
9. Sections dealing with secondary suffixes (def. of *taddhita*: SK 1072)
10. Section dealing with nominal reduplication (*dvir-ukta*)
11. Sections dealing with the conjugation of the ten classes of verbal roots (*tiṅ-anta-bhv-ādi... tiṅ-anta-cur-ādi*)
 - Sections dealing with the conjugation of derived verbs and others (*tiṅ-anta ṅic* “causatives”... *tiṅ-anta nāma-dhātu* “denominatives”, *tiṅ-anta-kaṇḍv-ādi* “kaṇḍū, etc.”)

Sections dealing with verbal voices, impersonal and reflexive verbs (*tiñ-anta-ātmanepada... karma-karṭṛ-tiñ*)

Section dealing with the semantic value of verbal tenses and moods (*lakāra-artha*)

12. Sections dealing with primary suffixes (*kṛd-anta*), as well as *uñ-ādi* suffixes¹⁵

13. Section dealing with the facts of the Vedic language (*vaidikī prakriyā*)

14. Sections dealing with accents (*svara* and *phīṭ-sūtras*)

15. Section dealing with gender (*liṅga-anuśāsana*)¹⁶

The tendencies observed in the *Kātantra* are firmly established here: (1) word classes and their “accidents” are gathered together (cf. topics 4, 8 and 11 in particular); (2) rules introducing class technical terms (*saṃjñās*), metarules (*paribhāṣā*) and phonetics (*sandhi*) are put together, at the very beginning of the work. However, it is to be noted that the Pāṇinian noun subclasses (indeclinables, compounds, secondary derivatives, etc.) seem to break away from the noun class: their belonging to the *subanta/prātipadika* class is no longer given prominence.

In grammatical works where Pāṇinian rules are topically organized then, it is the linguistic material or the application domain of rules which first of all commands the grouping of rules, neither the properties nor the function of the rules. As a consequence, such works are more pedagogical than Pāṇini’s grammar but, on the other hand, the Pāṇinian web of rules disintegrates and this results, among other things, in the reiteration of parts of rules which did not have to be repeated explicitly in Pāṇini’s corpus (cf. Cardona 1980: 278).¹⁷ The remaining question is then: does this topical organization disturb the Pāṇinian word class system? Insofar as the grammars preserve the definition of word classes which completely bears the hierarchy of the structure, I would say no. Remember that these definitions are based on the operations the linguistic units undergo; if these operations are conceived as in Pāṇini’s grammar, there is no reason for the word class system to be modified. Hence, the diagram of the word class system established for the Pāṇinian treatise can equally represent the word class system of the other grammars; this is the case of the *Siddhāntakaumudī*, among others. The risk, which ended by being realized, is that the different subclasses which break away from their general class tend to constitute autonomous classes: the subordination link ceases

¹⁵ *Uñādis* are suffixes added to verbal roots to derive nominal stems. They are originally taught in rules assembled in an ancillary text called *Uñādisūtras*. Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣita includes the *uñādi* rules in his SK.

¹⁶ Lists of words being “naturally” of feminine, masculine or neuter gender.

¹⁷ Cf. e.g. A 1.3.13 which is first given in the *ātmanepada* (“middle voice”) section of the SK (2679) and once again in the *bhāva-karma-tiñ* (“impersonal and passive voice”) section (2756).

to be felt, the definition is dropped and an independent class emerges. In Śākaṭāyana's grammar (9th c. AD), for instance, indeclinables (*avyaya*) and preverbs (*upasarga*) are conceived, as far as I could see, as totally independent classes (they are no longer classified in the nominal stem class). In such grammars, the word class system does not take the form of a hierarchical structure of classes but rather of a list of unconnected classes.

Conclusion

Contrary to the Graeco-Latin grammatical tradition, where the word class system developed from *logos* to the well-known eight parts of speech as clearly shown by Robins (1966) in his diagram, the development of the word class system in Ancient India was not in constant progression. From the recitation techniques elaborated during the Vedic period up to Pāṇini's grammar, which is considered to be the foundation work of the grammatical discipline, the Sanskrit word class system certainly developed itself: it moves from 4 to 32 classes. After Pāṇini, it does not undergo any development or spread ; rather, the occasional modifications it is subjected to are simplifications (deletion of the subclasses of the *avyaya* class, for instance) and/or rearrangements (transition from a hierarchical classification structure to a list of classes mixed with linguistic categories).¹⁸

Abbreviations

A: *Aṣṭādhyāyī*

K: *Kātantra*

SK: *Siddhāntakaumudī*

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¹⁸ In the sense of "accidents" (cf. Colombat, Fournier, Puech 2010: 87-91).

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