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Pramāṇa as Action: A New Look at Uddyotakara's Theory of Knowledge

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Abstract In this paper, I will suggest that the ideas of Uddyotakara, the 6th century author of the Nyāya-Vārttika, may have been largely overlooked as a result of Jitendra Nath Mohanty's and Bimal Krishna Matilal's influential works on Indian epistemology. Crucial to Mohanty's and Matilal's portrayals of Indian epistemology is the thesis that the *pramāṇa* theory incorporates a sort of causal theory of knowledge. The writers of *pramāṇa-śastra*, they argue, agreed that at the end of the day, knowledge comes down to an 'inner' occurrence, a temporally individuated cognitive episode, and that consequently—the *pramāṇa*—the most relevant factor affecting knowledge acquisition and the ultimate justification of knowledge acquisition—are "the cluster of phenomena that converge to bring such a cognitive episode about". I will argue, on the other hand, based on a discussion Uddyotakara conducts at the beginning of the introductory chapter of his work, which I believe to be of crucial importance, that causal factors play only a marginal role in his theory of knowledge and that he claims the *pramāṇa* to be dependent on *samartha-pravṛtti*—the habitual, customary and expected procedures or ways of attaining a goal—rather than on their causal antecedents. I will moreover suggest a reading of the *pramāṇa* of sense-perception, inference and analogy as action-based.

Keywords Nyāya · Uddyotakara · *Pramāṇa* · Knowledge · Action

The works of Jitendra Nath Mohanty and Bimal Krishna Matilal have had a tremendous impact on contemporary understanding of classical Indian theories of knowledge. Central to their portrayal of Indian epistemology is the thesis that the

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pramāṇa theory incorporates a sort of causal theory of knowledge.[1] The writers of *pramāṇa-śāstra*, they argue, agreed that at the end of the day, knowledge comes down to an 'inner' occurrence, a temporally individuated cognitive episode, and that consequently, the *pramāṇa*—the most relevant factor affecting knowledge acquisition and the ultimate justification of knowledge acquisition—are "the cluster of phenomena that converge to bring such a cognitive episode about" (Matilal 1986, p. 103). The view that knowledge-producing mental processes are the *pramāṇa* is so deeply ingrained in the thinking of contemporary scholars of Indian philosophy that it is seldom questioned or even brought into discussion. In this paper, I will suggest that causal factors play only a marginal role in the theory of knowledge put forward by Uddyotakara, the 6th century author of the Nyāya-Vārttika, and that his daring ideas have consequently been largely overlooked.[2]

Uddyotakara introduces the concept of *pramāṇa* at the beginning of the introductory chapter of his work. In a short and critical discussion, he examines the relationship between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti*. *Pravṛtti* is defined in Sūtra 1.1.17 as "any corporal, verbal or intellectual undertaking."[3] The adjective *samartha* means suitable, apt, qualified, or competent. Mohanty and Matilal take *samartha-pravṛtti* to stand for an action that attains the goal it is intended to attain.[4] I, on the other hand, suggest that *samartha-pravṛtti* corresponds more closely to what Wittgenstein calls a 'practice'. When speaking of *samartha-pravṛtti*, Uddyotakara does not mean to refer to one's actually attaining his goal but to one's following the customary practice used for the attainment of this goal—the habitual and expected procedure or way of attaining it. Obviously, not all actions that attain a goal are a matter of following the practice used for the attainment of this goal. It is equally obvious that following the practice used for the attainment of a goal does not always result in attaining it. To avoid confusion, I will refer to *samartha-pravṛtti* as effective action when discussing Mohanty's and Matilal's

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[1] Mohanty says that a sort of causal theory of knowledge is built into the *pramāṇa* theory: a true cognition must not only be true to its object, but must also be generated in the right manner, i.e. by the appropriate causes (Mohanty 1992, p. 229). Matilal's position is similar: *Pramāṇa* is what 'makes' knowledge. Since knowledge is always an episode (an inner event in Indian philosophy, in fact, a subcategory of mental occurrence), *pramāṇa* has also a causal role to play. It is the most efficient cause of the knowledge episode. Knowledge yields determination of an object x or a fact that p (*artha-pariccheda*) as the result, and *pramāṇa* is instrumental in bringing about that result. This is the causal role of a *pramāṇa* (Matilal 2002, p. 368).

[2] The commentarial tradition to which the Bhāṣya and the Vārttika belong is, according to Ganeri, a procedure through which fidelity to the texts is combined with a desire for the truth (Ganeri 2005, p. 44). Radhakrishnan notes that while the proponents of this procedure were employing logical methods and arriving at truths agreeable to reason, they were yet anxious to preserve their continuity with the ancient texts. They did not wish it to be thought that they were enunciating something completely new. While this may involve a certain want of frankness with themselves, it helped the spread of what they regarded as the truth (Radhakrishnan 1929, p. 21).

[3] NS (1997, p. 19): *pravṛttir vāg-buddhi-śarīrârambhaḥ.*

[4] Mohanty renders '*pravṛtti*' as practice. The practice is successful, he explains, when the person, setting out to acquire a thing, indeed acquires it, or setting out to avoid an undesired thing, indeed avoids it (Mohanty 1980, p. 443). Matilal renders *samartha-pravṛtti* as confirmatory behavior. When I perceive an unfamiliar man approaching me, for example, I can go and talk to the man, and his behavior that follows, if confirmatory, would allow me to infer: this perception has been a case of knowledge (Matilal 1986, p. 164).

readings of Uddyotakara's text, and as competent action when discussing mine—to highlight the fact that in carrying out a practice one displays his competence in following and using the various rules that define it. I will elaborate more on the difference between a competent action and a mere effective action in Section II.

Based on Uddyotakara's 9th century AD commentator, Vācaspati Miśra, Mohanty and Matilal suggest that the discussion of the relation of *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* is purposed to establish the following two points: The apprehension of an object by a *pramāṇa* conditions the execution of an effective action, and the execution of an effective action proves in turn that the object leading to its execution was apprehended by a *pramāṇa*.[5] Assuming that Uddyotakara truly admitted that properly-operating mental processes are the *pramāṇa*, Mohanty's and Matilal's suggestions seem pertinent. There is, however, nothing in the Vārttika to suggest that he did. Neither is such a position explicitly mentioned by his predecessors, Akṣapāda Gautama or Vātsyāyana. The thesis that early Nyāya theory of *pramāṇa* incorporated a sort of causal theory of knowledge which is, as mentioned before, crucial to the common framework Mohanty and Matilal structure for the explanations of Indian epistemology is, thus, a mere supposition. This, however, is an unnecessary supposition since, as we shall shortly see, Uddyotakara's discussion of the relationship between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* clears up any inaccuracy and confusion about the type of theory that early Nyāya theory of knowledge is. Once this unnecessary supposition is removed, Uddyotakara's discussion seems all of a sudden succinct and straightforward. The discrepancies it suffers from under Mohanty's and Matilal's readings disappear. Most importantly, the conclusion it leads to suddenly seems to be that competent actions (*samartha-pravṛtti*)—the habitual, customary and expected procedures or ways of attaining a goal—and not properly-operating mental processes are the *pramāṇa*.

In Section I, I will try to read Uddyotakara's discussion of the relationship between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* from Mohanty's and Matilal's perspective. This reading, I will show, suffer from a major flaw. In Section II, I will propose a more coherent and comprehensive reading of Uddyotakara's arguments. The conclusion of this revised reading will, however, be that *samartha-pravṛtti*—competent actions are the *pramāṇa*. In Section III I will briefly consider the implications of the new reading I propose. Based on arguments drawn from Uddyotakara's discussions of the *anumāna* and the *upamāna pramāṇas*, I will suggest in Sections IV and V that inferential knowledge and analogical knowledge are also regarded by early Nyāya as action-based. This will further support my arguments in the first two sections.

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[5] Mohanty's and Matilal's both base their interpretations on Vācaspati Miśra's commentary on Vātsyāyana's text. They ignore Uddyotakara's discussion of the relation between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* possibly because he has different ideas in mind.

I. The difficulty in Uddyotakara's discussion

Uddyotakara's discussion of the relationship between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* begins with him drawing a distinction between two forms of *pravṛtti* (action): effective (*samartha*) actions—actions that attain the goal they are intended to attain; and ineffective (*asamartha*) actions—actions that fail to attain their intended goal:

> Actions are of two kinds according to their being effective or ineffective. Indeed, actions which impassioned people take may be either effective or ineffective. When the thought 'I want to obtain that thing' propels a man to act, and he indeed obtains that thing, his action is said to be effective (*samartha*). When the thought 'I want to avoid that thing' propels a man to act, and he indeed avoids that thing, his action is also said to be effective (*samartha*). Otherwise, his action is said to be ineffective (*asamartha*).[6]

The execution of an effective action depends on the former identification of the object of perception. One could not climb, cut down or set a tree on fire, unless he first acknowledged that there was a tree. Its dependency on the former identification of the object is implied in the very definition of an effective action: An effective action is that action by which one obtains the object he sought to obtain or avoids the object he sought to avoid. The identification of the object of perception is achieved by the operation of mental processes. The process of identification completes when the operation of mental processes terminates. Only after the object has been identified is it possible to take an action to attain it.

After drawing our attention to the dependency of effective actions on objects of perception, Uddyotakara proceeds to argue the following:

> The classification of actions between effective (*samartha*) and ineffective (*asamartha*) corresponds to the classification of *pramāṇa* between the useful (*arthavat*) and the worthless (*anarthaka*).[7]

Uddyotakara's second point, just like the first, can be easily explained from Mohanty's and Matilal's perspective: a sound perceptual process produces as its end product an object of knowledge and is, thus, regarded as a *pramāṇa*. An impaired perceptual process fails to produce an object of knowledge and is, thus, considered a false *pramāṇa*. That *pramāṇa* enables effective actions and false *pramāṇa* leads necessarily to ineffective actions follows directly from Uddyotakara's previous point: correct perceptions enable effective actions and wrong perceptions leads necessarily to ineffective actions.

Next, Uddyotakara turns to explain in what a *pramāṇa* differs from a false *pramāṇa*. It is here that our attempt to read Uddyotakara's discussion under Mohanty's and Matilal's suppositions runs into difficulties. Uddyotakara claims that

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[6] NV (1997, p. 2): *pravṛtter api dvaividhyaṃ bhavati samarthâsamartha-bhedāt. yā khalu rāgâdimat-pravṛttiḥ sā samarthā câsamarthā ca bhavati. iṣṭam āpsyāmîti pravartamāno yadā prāpnoti tadā samarthā, aniṣṭaṃ hâsyāmîti pravartamāno yadā jahāti tadâpi samarthā. yadā viparyayas tadâsamarthêti.*

[7] NV (1997, p. 2): *tat punaḥ pravṛtter dvaividhyaṃ pramāṇasyârthavad anarthakatvāt.*

it is *samartha-pravṛtti* that reveals whether or not an object is provided by a *pramāṇa*:

> When a person acts after he apprehends an object by a *pramāṇa*, his action is effective (*samartha*) and this effective action that he takes reveals that he obtained the object by means of a *pramāṇa*. On the other hand, when a person acts after he apprehends an object by a false *pramāṇa*, his action is ineffective (*asamartha*).[8]

Uddyotakara's point is problematic, to say the least. If we had to take an action and wait for its results to unfold in order to affirm our perceptions, we could never act effectively, since a valid perception is a prerequisite for the execution of an effective action. If, on the other hand, our perceptual processes established our perceptions as true, we would not need to act upon them to establish them as such.

Uddyotakara is aware that his point may be easily misunderstood. In the subsequent passage, he turns to answer an objection raised by a *pūrvapakṣin*. The *pūrvapakṣin* points out in his objection the two undesirable consequences noted above as well as the underlying source of the problem:

> As there is mutual-interdependence, neither of the positions you have presented could be established…You have to clarify which comes first, the object's apprehension by a *pramāṇa* or its capacity to bring about effective action (*pravṛtti-sāmarthya*). If it is the object's apprehension by a *pramāṇa* that occurs first, how can its capacity to bring about effective action establish it as true, as it has not yet been ascertained? On the other hand, if it is the object's capacity to bring about effective action that manifests first, how can such an effective action take place without the object first being apprehended?[9]

The *pūrvapakṣin* focuses his attention on the factor of time. Uddyotakara's claim is unacceptable, he stresses, because there are *time differences* between perception and action. The reason perceptions cannot depend on effective actions for their validation and would never give rise to effective actions if they did, is that perception *temporally precedes* action. Action cannot affect perception in any way, according to the *pūrvapakṣin,* because perception causally conditions it.

Mohanty and Matilal attach great importance to the *pūrvapakṣin's* objection. They believe the *pūrvapakṣin* has made a good point, that cannot be easily dismissed.[10] This indicates that Mohanty and Matilal share the *pūrvapakṣin's*

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[8] NV (1997, p. 3): *so 'yaṃ pramātā yadā pramāṇenârtham avadhārya pravartate tadâsya pravṛttiḥ samarthā bhavati. yadā punaḥ pramāṇâbhāsenâvadhārya pravartate tadâsamarthā.*

[9] NV (1997, p. 3): *parasparâpekṣitvād ubhayâsiddhir iti cet - na, anāditvāt. yadi pramāṇato 'rtha-pratipattau pravṛtti-sāmarthyam, yadi vā pravṛtti-sāmarthyāt pramāṇato 'rtha-pratipattiḥ, kiṃ pūrvaṃ kiṃ vā paścād iti vācyam. yadi tāvat pramāṇataḥ pūrvam artha-pratipattiḥ, pravṛtti-sāmarthyam antareṇa kim iti pratipadyate? atha pūrvaṃ pravṛtti-sāmarthyam anavadhāryârthaṃ kim iti pravartate?*

[10] Mohanty states that we have then a case of vicious, mutual-dependence. All those philosophies which make ascertainment of truth dependent upon successful practice have to face this problem (Mohanty 1980, p. 443). Matilal maintains that no ostensible behaviour is likely to follow unless the perception has been a case of knowledge. Hence the said inference [of the knowledge-hood of the perception leading to the behaviour] will never arise unless it presupposes what it is supposed to prove (Matilal 1986, p. 164).

suppositions. They too believe that there are necessarily time differences between perception and action. They do not consider the possibility that the sort of relationship between perception and action that Uddyotakara refers to is other than causal. Consequently, they turn to Uddyotakara's commentators to explain why he does not argue that action affect perception, although, as we shall shortly see, that is exactly what he does.

Mohanty bases his solution on a distinction Vācaspati draws between knowledge of the object (*arthapratīti*) and the determination of this knowledge as true (*arthāvadhāraṇa*). Knowledge of the object consists in general familiarity with it and with its purposes and it is sufficient to drive one to act. The determination of this knowledge as true is not a necessary prerequisite for action. One may decide to take action even when he is not certain that his perception is correct.[11] Mohanty uses Vācaspati's example to illustrate this point. A farmer ploughs, sows seeds, and irrigates his field even though he is fully aware that his actions do not guarantee a successful harvest. He acts, although he knows that drought or flooding rain may cause his crops to fail. When one decides to take action and this action turns out to be successful, knowledge that an effective action was taken ensues. The accrual of such knowledge, in turn, establishes the knowledge leading to the execution of the effective action as true (*arthāvadhāraṇa*). Thus, action does not affect perception. The apprehension of the object by a *pramāṇa* gives rise to knowledge of that object. The effective action that follows establishes this knowledge as true—proves that it was apprehended by a *pramāṇa*.

Matilal offers a slightly different solution. Following Vācaspati and Udayana, he explains that Nyāya distinguishes between first-order knowledge and second-order knowledge. First-order knowledge occurs when an object is apprehended by a *pramāṇa*. Second-order knowledge is the knowledge that a previously perceived object was apprehended by a *pramāṇa*. Critically, the execution of an effective action depends only on the occurrence of first-order knowledge. Second-order knowledge ensues when one takes action and this action turns out to be successful.[12] Hence, action does not affect perception. First-order knowledge, i.e. the apprehension of an object by a *pramāṇa*, conditions the execution of an effective action and the execution of an effective action gives rise to second-order

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[11] Mohanty explains: Truth is inferred on the basis of 'familiarity'…and action follows upon it. However, in such cases it may be argued, appropriate action (*pravṛtti*) does not wait for determination of truth…Even where the knowledge is 'unfamiliar', that is, its object is new, but empirical, *pravṛtti* requires, not determination of truth, but ascertainment of object and inferential knowledge of the sort This object would serve this desired purpose…In other words, as Vācaspati says, *pravṛtti* depends on knowledge of the object (*arthapratīti*), not on determination of the object (*arthāvadhāraṇa*), the latter requiring determination of the truth of the former (Mohanty 1980, p. 444).

[12] Matilal writes: Vācaspati says that in both cases [familiar and unfamiliar mundane matters] the truth of my awareness is known to me by an inference…In the second case [unfamiliar mundane matters] I know that my perception has been veridical (that I am not under illusion) because it leads to confirmatory behavior (*pravṛtti-sāmarthya*)…It may be argued that no ostensible behavior is likely to follow unless the perception has been a case of knowledge. Hence the said inference will never arise unless it presupposes what it is supposed to prove. Nyāya makes room for this common intuition, but proposes to resolve the issue differently…even a dubiety, Nyāya asserts, may prompt us to act, and such action can very well be crowned with success. In such cases, Nyāya says, we infer the knowledge-hood of the awareness on the basis of some 'confirmatory behaviour' as evidence (Matilal 1986, p. 165).

knowledge, i.e. the knowledge that the object leading to the execution of the action was apprehended by a *pramāṇa*.

The problem with Mohanty's and Matilal's solutions is that they are incompatible with Uddyotakara's answer to the *pūrvapakṣin*:

> Your allegations are unfounded – "Why?" - Because the world has no beginning as we shall prove later on. If the world had a beginning, only then would the question 'which comes first, the apprehension of an object by a *pramāṇa* or the object's capacity to bring about action' be of any significance.[13]

It is impossible to appreciate an argument that undermines the suppositions on which a conceptual framework rests within the confines of that conceptual framework. For Mohanty and Matilal, who do not consider the possibility that Uddyotakara refers to a relationship between perception and action that is other than causal, the idea that action may affect perception is unthinkable. Uddyotakara does not deny, however, that he argues perception to both condition and be conditioned by action. Rather, he rejects in his response the suppositions under which such interdependence is rendered impossible. Relationships of interdependence are impossible when one of the relatas is thought to temporally precede the other. But if time plays no role in the relationship between *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti*, then their relationship may very well be that of interdependence. Uddyotakara, it seems, planned his discussion with the specific purpose in mind of making it clear that *pramāṇa* and *samartha-pravṛtti* are non-temporally interrelated. But are perception and action non-temporally related? What sort of a relationship is it? Can the discussion we have just followed be coherently read, if perception and action are assumed to be thus related? Finally and most importantly, how may such a reading affect our understanding of early Nyāya position in regard to *pramāṇa*? I will try to answer these questions in the following two sections.

II. Rereading Uddyotakara's discussion

What distinguishes one's following the customary practice used for the attainment of a goal from one's actually attaining it? Wittgenstein clarifies important facets of the concepts of following a rule and practice in the Philosophical Investigations, many of which are relevant to Uddyotakara's discussion. I single out the following:

1. A practice is an established rule-governed activity. To act in accord with the rules of a practice is to do what counts as the correct execution of this practice.[14]
2. To follow the rules of a practice as opposed to merely act in accord with them is to *intentionally* do what counts as the correct execution of the practice. Hence,

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[13] NV (1997, p. 2): *tac ca nâivam. kasmāt? anāditvāt. anādir ayaṃ saṃsāra iti pūrvâbhyasta-sūtre pratipādayiṣyāmaḥ. ādimati ca saṃsāre eṣa doṣaḥ, kiṃ pūrvaṃ pramāṇato 'rtha-pratipattiḥ, āhosvit pūrvaṃ pravṛtti-sāmarthyam iti.*

[14] I use the term 'rule' in this paper only in the restricted sense of 'what counts as the correct execution of a practice.'

following the rules of a practice presupposes the apprehension of actions as in accord or in conflict with its rules. This in turn presupposes the possession of a wide array of skills and abilities.

3. There is a consensus of opinions over what counts as the correct execution of a practice. People don't come to blows over it (Wittgenstein 1953, Sect. 240). If there were no agreement about how to V, there would be no concept of V-ing.[15]

4. The concept of following a practice is connected with the possibility of making predictions. The prediction will in each case be that the person competent in carrying out the practice will do what is correct—act in accords with the rules of the practice.

To highlight the differences between my and Mohanty's and Matilal's interpretations of *samartha-pravṛtti,* I will henceforth refer to *samartha-pravṛtti* as competent action. A competent action is that which people regard as the appropriate and suitable action for the attainment of a goal. The appropriate and suitable action for the attainment of a goal is the habitual and customary one for its attainment. And a habitual and customary action is an expected and predictable action. A person wishing to cut down a tree is expected to strike its trunk repeatedly with an axe. A person wishing to knit a sweater is expected to interlock loops of wool or other yarn with a pair of knitting needles. And a person wishing to store food in a jar is expected to open the jar, place the food he wishes inside, seal the jar, and position it in a cool and dry place. Indeed, a competent action is not an action which actually attains a goal *A*, but rather the habitual and customary way to attain *A*. Since competent actions are predictable actions, there is no need to actually take them and wait for their results to unfold in order to know what they are.

In what way, then, are perception and competent action related? To answer this question, let us go back to Uddyotakara's first argument. Uddyotakara's first move is to define 'competent action' as 'an action that attains the goal one seeks to attain'. For instance, when the thought 'I want to cut this tree down' propels a man to act, and he indeed 'cuts that tree down', his action is said to be competent. Similarly, when one wants to 'climb this tree', 'set this tree on fire', 'wear this sweater', 'take this sweater off'' or 'store food in this jar', and he indeed 'climbs that tree', 'sets that tree on fire', 'wears that sweater', 'takes that sweater off'' or 'stores food in that jar,' these actions that he takes are said to be competent. There is, of course, nothing unique about the above examples. A simple grammatical fact is that we use the same terms to express in language a goal and the action that attains it.

Now, an object of knowledge is something that has meaning. And a meaningful thing is something that we have an interest in, something that serves a purpose, something by which we can attain a goal. Something we have no interest in, serves no purpose whatsoever and leads to the attainment of no goal is almost by definition a meaningless thing. Understanding the meaning of something, thus, involves knowing the goals that thing leads to attaining. To know what trees are is to know that they can be climbed on, cut down, set on fire, etc. To know what clothes are is to know that they can be sewn into garments, worn, or taken off. And to know what

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[15] For more information see Agreement: consensus of human beings and their actions in Baker and Hacker (2009, pp. 223–230).

jars are is to know that they are used to store food or fetch water. Now, if we admit that the usage of a thing constitutes its meaning, we must also concede that knowing the meaning of something is tantamount to knowing the competent actions for which it is used; for, as we have seen, the goals a thing leads to attaining and the competent actions that attain them are expressed in language by the same terms.

Ludwig Wittgenstein uses the term 'grammatical relation' to refer to the relationship that exists between two things that are expressed in language by the same terms. Peter Hacker and Gordon Baker explain in the following passage, what Wittgenstein means by 'grammatical relation':

> The relata of internal [grammatical] relations,[16] appropriately specified, belong to each other in the sense that the very identity of each is bound up with the other. Hence one cannot grasp one without grasping the other; and the 'cannot' here is grammatical, i.e. there is no such thing (Baker and Hacker 2009, p. 95).

The fact that an object and the competent actions for which it is used are grammatically related entails that the identity of such objects is bound up with the identity of the competent actions for which they are used. That is, if *p* is a competent action for which an object is used, then *p* constitutes part of the meaning of that object, and if *p* is not a competent action for which an object is used, then *p* forms no part of the meaning of that object. The relation of identity that exists between objects of perception and competent actions is, of course, a non-temporal relation.[17] I will further elaborate on this relation of identity below.

Yet, can the rest of Uddyotakara's discussion be coherently read, if what he means to point out in his opening statement is that objects of perception and competent actions are grammatically related? As we recall, after drawing a distinction between competent and incompetent actions, Uddyotakara proceeds to argue that this distinction corresponds to the distinction between the *pramāṇa* and the false *pramāṇa*:

> The classification of actions between competent (*samartha*) and incompetent (*asamartha*) corresponds to the classification of *pramāṇa* between the useful (*arthavat*) and the worthless (*anarthaka*).

By definition, a *pramāṇa* is that which provides an object of knowledge. Apprehending an object by a *pramāṇa*, i.e. grasping its true meaning depends, as we have seen, on knowing the competent actions for which it is used. It follows that

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[16] Wittgenstein uses the term 'internal relation' interchangeably with the term 'grammatical relation'. Notably, his use of the term 'internal relation' is unique and not directly related to Bradley's doctrine of internal relations or the western externalism vs. internalism debate. For more information see Baker and Hacker (2009, p. 96).

[17] Under the interpretation of *samartha-pravṛtti* as competent action, the concept of *samartha-pravṛtti* interlocks with the concept of *pravṛtti-sāmarthya,* the capacity of an object to bring about actions that attain goals; the capacity of a tree to be climbed on, cut down or set on fire, for instance. There is no question here of there being a vicious circle between *samartha-pravṛtti* and *pravṛtti-sāmarthya,* for they are bound up by a timeless relation, a grammatical or internal relation, a relation of meaning. A tree has the capacity to be climbed on, cut down or set on fire for as long as there exist the customary practices of climbing trees, cutting then down and setting them on fire, and vice versa.

when the *pramāṇa* reveals the true meaning of an object, it reveals by the same token the competent actions for which it is used. It is in this sense, I wish to suggest, that Uddyotakara argues the *pramāṇa* to condition competent actions.

Next, we get to the argument to explain which, Mohanty and Matilal turn to Uddyotakara's commentators. Uddyotakara claims that competent actions condition correct perceptions—perceptions of objects by means of a *pramāṇa*.

> When a person acts after he apprehends an object by a *pramāṇa*, his action is competent and this competent action reveals that he obtained his object of perception from a *pramāṇa*.

When people act competently, they reveal by acting thus that they know what the object they act upon is. For, what constitutes the meaning of objects is nothing but the competent actions for which they are used. Hence, the competent actions for which an object is used comprise criteria for the knowledge of that object. Climbing trees, cutting them down, and setting them on fire comprise criteria for knowing what trees are; Sewing clothes, wearing them, and taking them off comprise criteria for knowing what clothes are; and storing food and fetching water in jars comprise criteria for knowing what jars are. In other words, what Uddyotakara means to argue is that competent actions constitute the criteria for the knowledge of objects. Competent actions are the *pramāṇa*.

III. Important consequences

How may the revised reading suggested above affect our understanding of Nyāya position in regard to the *pramāṇa?* The following are, in my opinion, the four most important consequences of my proposed reading:

First, the *pramāṇa* as competent actions comprises criteria for the identification of objects of cognition. Thus, it both provides the would-be knower with reasons for justifying the objects he cognizes, and establishes usage as a philosophical tool for ascertaining the validity of arguments. In the above discussion, Uddyotakara speaks of the *pramāṇa* in general. For the sake of clarity and simplicity, I used examples of perceptual objects, objects of the *pratyakṣa pramāṇa,* to illustrate his points. The definition of the *pratyakṣa* enumerates five distinctive features of the unique type of cognition it gives rise to: The *pratyakṣa* gives rise to a cognition that is the result of a sense-object contact, it is not verbal (but verbalizable), not erroneous and not doubtful. The purpose of a definition, explains Vātsyāyana in Nyāya-Bhāṣya 1.1.3, is not to give an exhaustive account of the phenomenon defined, but rather, to distinguish it from similar and dissimilar phenomena. In the particular case of *pratyakṣa*, the definition points out properties which distinguish the cognition it gives rise to from cognitions other forms of *pramāṇa* give rise to, and from what is not *pramāṇa*. But what is it that enables the object that comes in contact with one's senses to appear in his consciousness as it really is? Matilal believes that it is a mental process and that the knowledge-ness of the cognition it brings about consists in its truth-hitting character. This means that the mental process that gives rise to the cognition is incapable of proving that the object it reveals, at the time it is revealed,

actually hits the 'truth' or fully corresponds to the external object. The suggestion that his actions, if successful, would retrospectively establish his perceptions as true, is of little help to the would-be knower. This suggestion is crucial however to Nyāya in the context of its debate with its Buddhist rivals: If it managed to show that effective actions established everyday objects of perception as true, even if only retrospectively, this would counter the Buddhist contention according to which these objects are all fictitious.

It is true that the *pramāṇa* as competent actions is incapable of proving the truthfulness of the object it reveals, while it is revealed, either. But it at least provides the would-be knower with good reasons to justify his perceptions. More importantly, the *pramāṇa* as competent actions threatens Buddhist epistemology in ways that the *pramāṇa* as a sound mental process never could. For it establishes usage as the standard of correctness. And once usage is made the standard of correctness, any argument that deviates from this standard must be ruled inadmissible. For instance, the *pūrvapakṣin* argues in Vārttika 1.1.14 that 'the cognition of the jar proceeds from the cognition of discrete qualities appearing in that shape', while at the same time maintaining that these discrete qualities are no different from the jar. Uddyotakara, in response, points out that the employment of the word 'shape' in the statement '*p* has the shape of *q*' when *p* and *q* are taken to refer to one and the same thing violates the rules for the use of 'shape'. One might say that 'the cloud has the shape of a ship,' but it makes no sense to say that 'the cloud has the shape of a cloud' or that 'the ship has the shape of a ship.' The *pramāṇa*, the rules for the use of objects that competent actions provide reveal that the *pūrvapakṣin*'s statement is confused. He fails to perceive 'shape' as what it is. Unskillful use is also the reason the *pūrvapakṣin* wrongly argues in the same verse (Vārttika 1.1.14) that 'all perceptions are misperceptions'. Uddyotakara replies that misperceptions presuppose correct perceptions. Only for a person who knows what perceiving *p* is, does it make sense to speak of misperceiving *p*. Thus, by denying correct perceptions, the *pūrvapakṣin* is in fact acknowledging them. Here again, the *pūrvapakṣin*'s statement is confused. He does not fully understand what a 'misperception' is because he fails to note how this word is used.

Second, competent actions provide criteria for the knowledge of all objects and nothing but competent actions provide criteria for the knowledge of objects. All knowledge is either realizable or affirmable by competent actions. It is true that not all knowledge is realizable by corporal actions. As we have seen, however, the term *pravṛtti* does not refer to corporal actions only, but also to verbal and intellectual undertakings. Knowledge that no corporal action realizes, therefore, must be affirmable by either verbal or intellectual actions. There must be a verbal or an intellectual procedure that counts as the appropriate and suitable procedure to affirm knowledge that no corporal action realizes for the following simple reason: knowledge that lacks an appropriate procedure that affirms it and demonstrates its truth is, by definition, unjustifiable and indemonstrable knowledge; and unjustifiable and indemonstrable knowledge is no knowledge at all. We call the intellectual procedure that justifies the knowledge that 'penguins are birds' the justification that 'penguins are birds'. We refer to the intellectual procedure that affirms the knowledge that 'the earth has seven continents' as the affirmation that 'the earth has

seven continents'. We regard $'p \vdash \neg\neg p'$ as a fact because there is an intellectual procedure that demonstrates the truth of $'p \vdash \neg\neg p'$. Thus, there can be no knowledge that no corporal, verbal or intellectual competent action either realizes or affirms. The meaning of objects is, thus, fully determined by competent actions and nothing but competent actions determine their meaning.[18]

Third, competent actions are a relatively stable provider of meaning. They play in my suggested reading a similar role to the one that the external world plays in Mohanty's and Matilal's readings. Or perhaps, the world for the knowability of which Nyāya thinkers strive to account is the world as it is perceived by humans, a world for humans that use-objects constitute. Why do I say that competent actions are a relatively stable provider of meaning? To execute a competent activity or to understand others as executing such an activity, one must possess a certain array of abilities. These abilities are acquired at a certain point of time and may be lost at a latter point of time. The important point to note is that the span of time one is familiar with the use of the object A exceeds the span of time a particular perception of A arises in him. One who is familiar with, say, cooking knows what cooking entails (what cooks, ovens, and dishes are) irrespective of any actual occasion when he perceives a cook, an oven, or a dish. Hence, nothing the occurrence of which is confined to the time and place one actually perceives a cook, an oven or a dish can account for their perception. The competent actions for which an object A is used continue to constitute one's knowledge of A for as long as he possesses the abilities required to understand what these actions are. And these competent actions would continue to constitute the meaning of A for anyone who masters them, for as long as they are not abandoned. Only when the competent action that establishes, say, that 'A is p' is abandoned, would it cease to be a provider of meaning. But then, the claim that 'A is p' would also gradually lose its meaning and cease to be a knowledge-claim.

Finally, with competent actions as the *pramāṇa*, Nyāya has a strong case arguing that the *pramāṇas* are beyond justification. In his Remarks on the Philosophy of Psychology, Wittgenstein stated:

> Instead of the unanalyzable, specific, indefinable: the fact that we act in such-and-such ways, e.g. *punish* certain actions, *establish* the state of affairs thus-and-so, *give orders*, render accounts, describe colours, take an interest in others' feelings. What has to be accepted, the given – it might be said – are facts of living (Wittgenstein 1980, Sect. 630).

Commenting on this statement, Peter Hacker and Gordon Baker write: "In short, the natural history of man is the history of a convention-forming, rule-following, concept-exercising, language-using animal – a cultural animal…Wittgenstein did indeed think that forms of life lie beyond justification; also that conceptual

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[18] Daniel Dennett notes that discrimination by significance is limited by a creature's interests and activities—The significance an item in the environment can have for a creature is limited by the creature's behavioral repertoire…There is something appropriate a rat can do with a food pellet such that it makes a difference whether it is a food pellet or a marble, but there is nothing a rat could do with a circle such that it makes a difference whether it is a circle or a triangle (Dennet 1969, p. 75).

structures, world-pictures that characterize forms of life, transcend justification and so too are propositions of our world picture." (Baker and Hacker 2009, p. 221)

What I am suggesting, then, is that Uddyotakara claims the rules for the use of objects that competent actions provide to determine meaning and knowledge. We learn the meaning of the objects that inhabit the world we perceive when we learn how to use them. We learn that a tree is that thing we can climb on, cut down and set on fire when we learn what climbing trees, cutting them down and setting them on fire are. The competent actions that we learn to master shape the meaning of the objects for which they are used. Thus, they are the most important factor affecting knowledge acquisition. But they are also the ultimate justification of knowledge. How do we justify that 'penguins are birds', that 'the earth has seven continents' and that $'p \vdash \neg\neg p'$? We point out the intellectual procedures that affirm that 'penguins are birds', that 'the earth has seven continents' and that $'p \vdash \neg\neg p'$. What I will try to show in the following two sections is that Uddyotakara's discussions of two other forms of knowledge Nyāya acknowledges, inferential and analogical knowledge, cohere with the position I presented above.

IV. Inference as action-based

At the beginning of his discussion of the *anumāna-pramāṇa* in Vārttika 1.1.5, Uddyotakara presents what Mohanty and Matilal believe to be a description of the mental procedure by which inferential knowledge is acquired:[19] When one perceives the inferential sign (the *liṅga*), it causes a memory of its relation with the inferred property (the *sādhya*) to emerge in his mind. The subsequent perception of the form "this *liṅga* indicates the presence of the *sādhya*" which is brought about by the previous perception and the memory is the inference. There has been much debate in recent years about whether and how the putative mental procedure described above is capable of establishing the sort of relationship between the *liṅga* and the *sādhya* that is required for inference. The participants of this debate all presuppose that in order for inferential knowledge to arise, the relationship between the *liṅga* and the *sādhya* must be such that the two are always perceived jointly and never apart. The mental inferential procedure is supposed to establish the existence of this relationship by surveying previous perceptions of the *liṅga,* detecting that in all of them, the *liṅga* is perceived alongside the *sādhya* and then concluding that 'wherever the *liṅga* is present, the *sādhya* is also present.'

Uddyotakara, on the other hand, surprisingly denies in Vārttika 1.1.5, that inference is based on a constant companionship between the *liṅga* and the *sādhya*.[20]

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[19] Mohanty identifies the *anumāna-pramāṇa* with a cognitive procedure (Mohanty 1992, p. 101) Matilal asserts that Nyāya's explanation of inference…was typically in terms of causal sequences of mental episodes, and relevant physical behavior was looked upon as an effect of mental events. (Matilal 1986, p. 124) It is true that neither Mohanty not Matilal ascribe this view particularly to Uddyotakara (They speaks generally of Nyāya or Nyāya logicians), but they do not say that Uddyotakara or any other Nyāya philosopher for that matter, entertained different ideas either.

[20] I am referring to the discussion in Vārttika 1.1.5. where Uddyotakara tries to clarify what the relation between smoke and fire—on which the inference of the latter from the former depends—is. Uddyotakara

He states that the *liṅga*, say smoke, is not always perceived alongside the *sādhya*, say fire, and that anyway, the presence of fire is not inferred from the presence of smoke.[21] Let us try to find out what Uddyotakara is driving at. Assume that one sees smoke arising from her house. She rushes over to her house, fearing that it is on fire. Assume, further, that when she arrives at her house, she finds that she was mistaken —her house is not on fire. Would this prevent her from rushing over to her house the next time she sees smoke coming out of it? Now, let us assume that upon perceiving dark clouds approaching, one rushes outside to bring in the laundry she hanged there to dry, fearing that rain is soon to come. Assume, further, that the dark clouds passed through without producing any rain. Would this prevent her from rushing outside to bring in the laundry the next time she sees dark clouds approaching? The answer to both of these questions is no. She would again rush over to her house the next time she sees smoke rising from it, and she would again rush outside to bring in the laundry the next time she sees dark clouds approaching, and with the same sense of urgency.

We are taught to fear fire, we are taught that smoke indicates the presence of fire, and we are taught to react to smoke as if we see fire. When we learn the behavior of reacting to smoke as if we see fire, we learn to associate the meaning of 'smoke' with that of 'fire'; we learn that part of what 'smoke' means is that 'fire' may have broken out. The behavior of reacting to smoke as if we see fire establishes between fire and smoke a relation of meaning: smoke would not mean what it does for us, if we did not acknowledge the inference of the form 'there is smoke here, therefore, there is fire here.' If someone argued 'there is smoke here, therefore, there is no fire here,' we would say that he does not fully understand what 'smoke' means. We could not infer fire from smoke if we did not already acknowledge that smoke partly means 'that thing that indicates the presence of fire' and if we did not already acknowledge that fire partly means 'that thing whose presence is indicated by smoke.' Only a relation of meaning between fire and smoke could account for the fact that we continue to infer fire from smoke, even when in some previous cases we perceived smoke, we found that it was not accompanied by fire.

What I am suggesting is that Uddyotakara understands inferential behaviors such as the ones noted above to constitute what lies between inferential signs and inferred properties. My suggestion is in accord with Uddyotakara's claim that the presence of fire is not what is inferred by means of smoke. The *pūrvapakṣin* argues that this claim of Uddyotakara contradicts a universally recognized fact. The inference of fire from smoke results, Uddyotakara retorts, in one's apprehension of the smoke he

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Footnote 20 continued

denies that smoke and fire are related to each other as cause and effect, that they are bound together by the relation of 'inherence of the same object' or that they are related by some sort of general relation. I do not mean to argue here that Uddyatakara denies that inference of fire from smoke depends on the two being *avinābhāva*-related, but rather that the *avinābhāva*-relation between them consists in 'fire' being an internal property of 'smoke'—in the inability to think of 'smoke' without thinking of 'fire'—and not necessarily on their being always perceived together.

[21] NV (1997, p. 47): *yatra dhūmas tatra vahnir ity anenâiva pratyuktam. na cânyā gatir asti. tasmān na dhūmena vahnir anumīyata iti.*—Thus, it is improper to hold that wherever there is smoke, there is fire; and it is impossible to hold otherwise. It follows that fire cannot be inferred from smoke.

perceives as qualified by 'fire.'[22] It results in his realization that part of what the smoke he perceives means is that there is fire. Indeed, if the relation between smoke and fire is one of meaning, what determines whether one's inference of fire from smoke is valid is not whether there is actually fire where he perceives the smoke, but rather, whether he understands the smoke he perceives as, 'that thing that indicates the presence of fire.'[23]

Wittgenstein observes that the immediate reaction to smoke as if there is fire—the behavior of inferring fire from smoke—is of "the same kind" as one's fear that there is fire that may put the lives of his loved ones at risk.[24] According to Hacker, such "regular reactions to the factual, contingent regularities of the world around us, constitute the framework within which we learn to give reasons for doing and believing." Such regular reactions constitute the "framework of our practices of giving reasons to predictions" (Hacker 2000, p. 167). Empirical generalizations, on the other hand, such as the generalizations 'smoke is always accompanied by fire' and 'wherever there is smoke there is fire' form no part of the framework within which we learn to give reasons for our deeds and beliefs. We do not, in our non-logical inferences, reason, 'there is smoke coming out of the house, wherever there is smoke there is fire, and so the house is on fire.' Such reasoning, Hacker argues, is "a distortion of our actual practices of giving reasons" (Hacker 2000, p. 167). Rather, we reason 'there is smoke coming out of this house, so this house is on fire'. The grounds we have for accepting the generalization, 'wherever there is smoke there is fire' are exactly the same as the grounds we have for accepting the statement 'this smoke is accompanied by fire.' The explanation, 'this smoke is accompanied by fire' does not need the further support of the generalization 'wherever there is smoke there is fire' in order to comprise decent reasoning. In our "ordinary, mundane explanations of our beliefs and actions, we give our reasons for believing and doing against the background of our shared, common knowledge" (Hacker 2000, p. 167). The supposition that such ordinary explanations rest on inductive generalizations is pointless.

What Uddyotakara describes, then, in the beginning of Vārttika 1.1.5 is the form of reasoning by which we explain and justify our inferences in everyday life, not the operation of a mental process. Uddyotakara means to point out that upon perceiving smoke, a person who knows what smoke is and knows that smoke partly means 'there is fire' would reason as follows: 'This is smoke here, smoke indicates the

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[22] NV (1997, p. 47): *nâsti virodho dhūma-viśeṣeṇâgni-viśeṣaṇâsya dhūmasya pratipādyatvāt. kathaṃ punar ayam agnir dhūma-viśeṣaṇaṃ bhavati? yadā guṇa-bhūto bhavaty anumeyo 'gnim ānayaṃ dhūma iti.*—It does not contradict [a universally recognized fact], because upon perceiving smoke, the smoke is grasped as qualified by fire. How does fire come to qualify smoke? It is subordinate to smoke, for we infer the smoke as qualified by fire.

[23] Peter Hacker and Gordon Baker explain that a property is internal if it is unthinkable that its bearer should not possess it, and a relation between two objects is internal if it is unthinkable that *these* two objects should not stand in this relation. So internal properties and relations are partly constitutive of the natures of the things whose attributes they are. If F is an internal property of A-s, then if something lacks the property of being F it is not an A—we would not call something an A unless it were F (Baker and Hacker 2009, p. 85).

[24] Wittgenstein (1953, Sect. 473): The belief that fire will burn me is of the same kind as the fear that it will burn me.

presence of fire; therefore, there is fire here.' Thus, the perceptual knowledge that 'there is smoke here' and that 'smoke indicates the presence of fire' is the most relevant factor affecting the acquisition of the inferential knowledge that 'there is fire here'. And the ultimate justification of the inferential knowledge that 'there is fire here' is the perceptual knowledge that 'there is smoke here' and that 'smoke indicates the presence of fire'".

V. Analogy as action-based

The Bhāṣya and the Vārttika do not elaborate much on aphorism 1.1.6, which deals with the topic of the *upamāna-pramāṇa*, the criteria of analogical knowledge. The following points are noteworthy, however: *Upamāna* is the realization that a previously unknown object, q, is similar to or is of the same kind as a well-known object, p. Drawing an analogy between p and q depends entirely on one's familiarity with the nature of p and on having been told previously by a trust-worthy person that 'q is of the same kind of p.' *Upamāna* is further claimed to be distinct from either the *pratyakṣa* or the *anumāna*. It is distinct from the *pratyakṣa*, because the knowledge of p in itself does not lead to the knowledge that 'q is of the same kind.' And indeed, it is different from the *anumāna*, since the form of reasoning that results in obtaining analogical knowledge is different from the one leading to the obtainment of inferential knowledge.

Uddyotakara reveals crucial points regarding the nature of *upamāna* during his dialogue with the *pūrvapakṣin* in Vārttika 1.1.39.[25] The *pūrvapakṣin* requests Uddyotakara to explain in what the similarity between 'the production of dishes' and 'the production of sounds' consists. Dishes and sounds are not identical, notes the *pūrvapakṣin*. So, their similarity is not based on their identity. It is equally clear, he proceeds, that dishes and sounds are not produced in the same way. A dish may be produced, for example, by placing vegetables, meat, and spices in a casserole and placing the casserole in the stove. A sound, in contrast, can be produced by playing a musical instrument, by clapping hands, or by using the vocal chords. Since there is no other way in which the similarity between 'the production of dishes' and 'the production of sounds' can be explained, the *pūrvapakṣin* concludes, this similarity must consist of the mere fact that dishes and sounds both possess the general property of 'being produced.'

In response, Uddyotakara notes that first, the relation of analogy is not based on (and does not necessarily imply) the resemblance of its relata.[26] Drawing an analogy

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[25] Verse 1.1.39 deals with the Statement of the Conclusion (*nigamana*), the fifth and final stage of the *avayava* logical model. The *pūrvapakṣin* argues that the Statements of the Conclusion and Application are superfluous since they serve the same purpose as the Statements of the Hypothesis and Reason, respectively. Concerning the Statements of the Reason and Application, the *pūrvapakṣin* asks Uddyotakara to explain the difference between the Statement of the Reason and the Statement of the Application. Uddyotakara answers that the former depends on the *anumāna-pramāṇa*, whereas the latter depends on the *upamāna-pramāṇa*, and then proceeds to clarify what the *upamāna-pramāṇa* is.

[26] NV (1997, p. 130): *upamānârthaṃ upanaya iti. Tat côpamānaṃ na sarvathā sādhya-sādhana-bhāvam āśritya pravartata iti yat kiñcid etat.*

between the 'production of dishes' and the 'production of sounds' is not based on the two means of production resembling one another in any way; nor does it imply any such resemblance. Rather, drawing an analogy between 'production of dishes' and 'production of sounds' yields the realization that these two factors are 'of the same kind'—though they may be entirely distinct. Second, Uddyotakara argues that there is no such thing as 'production' in general. We speak only of the 'production' of specific objects, as unique rather than general production. Thus, inasmuch as the use of the word 'production' always refers to a unique form of production, there can be no such thing as 'production' in general; i.e., 'production' that is over and above the particular forms of production of specific objects.[27]

So, what is the *upamāna-pramāṇa*? What is the procedure for drawing an analogy between two things? And what are the criteria for determining two things to be of the same kind? "Punching keys on a computer, enclosing a written slip in an envelope or moving a piece of wood," Hacker notes, seem to be very different activities. But in terms of playing chess, these activities may be regarded as doing the same, i.e., making the same chess move. Conversely, though "a series of acts of writing a name on a slip of paper and putting it in a box seem to be the same," they might be "casting a vote, spoiling a ballot or taking part in a raffle … What counts as doing the same within a normative practice," Hacker concludes, "is determined from the perspective of the practice itself" (Baker and Hacker 2009, p. 146).

From the perspective of such practices as eating a bagel, a pizza or a bowl of soup, it makes a difference whether the bagel is eaten after it is baked and not before, whether the pizza is eaten after the cheese on top of it melts and not before, and whether the soup is eaten after it is cooked and not before. The fact that there is a point of time prior to which these dishes did not exist and after which they come into existence, the fact that these dishes are produced, matter to us when we carry out these practices. From this perspective, the facts that runners commence running only after the starting shot has been heard and not before, that actors bow down only after applause have been heard and not before, and that we respond to an order only after it is made and not before, may be regarded as 'doing the same thing'. It is in this sense that 'the production of dishes' is similar to 'the production of sounds'. Hence, analogical knowledge, i.e. the knowledge of the resemblance in some respects between p and q, is the understanding that relevant rules for the use of p apply also to q. Our previous knowledge of these rules for the use of p and us being notified that these rules apply also to q are the most relevant factor affecting the acquisition of analogical knowledge. This knowledge and notification are also the ultimate justification of analogical knowledge. They are the *upamāna-pramāṇa*.

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[27] NV (1997, p. 130): *kṛtakatva-sāmānyaṃ tu śabda-saṃnidhāv abhidhīyata iti citram idam. kṛtakatva-saṃnidhāv abhidhīyata iti. śabdena ca viśiṣyamāṇaṃ kathaṃ sāmānyaṃ bhaviṣyati?*—It is improper to say that 'production' in general subsists in sounds, for by saying that you already speak of the form of production that is particular to sounds; and once you speak of the form of production that is particular to sounds, how can you still consider it to be a general character? Hence, for the apprehension of similarity, we do not require the perception of a generic property, but rather, as J. L. Shaw notes, For the perception of a generic property (*jāti*) as a generic property, we require the apprehension of similarity (*anuvṛtti pratyaya*) (Shaw 1978, p. 256).

I have started to doubt Mohanty's and Matilal's readings of early Nyāya philosophy when I realized that Uddyotakara does not explicitly speak of knowledge as a clockable mental occurrence, of an object of knowledge as a replica of an external object or of the *pramāṇa* as a knowledge-producing mental process. Uddyotakara's commitment to the above views, it is safe to say, is anything but obvious. Some statements in the Vārttika may not be easily reconcilable with the reading I suggest. But it must be admitted that the interpretation of Uddyotakara under Mohanty's and Matilal's suppositions is no less flawless. However, the main purpose of this paper is not to suggest that my reading is in anyway superior to Mohanty's and Matilal's. I wanted to draw attention to the central role that language plays in Uddyotakara's philosophy, which I feel has been underemphasized in contemporary scholarly studies. Only by stressing the linguistic nature of Uddyotakara's work, I believe, can we begin to appreciate its real contribution to the Indian philosophical debate. Only when Uddyotakara is perceived as a grammarian, can his answers to the Buddhists seem decisive and the reason he was regarded by them as a formidable rival becomes clear.

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