

particularly sweet because of the preponderance of the 'A' sound in it. In fact, every letter in its combination is to be pronounced in Sanskrit with the sound of 'A' added to it to lengthen it to its full sweetness. This, as it were, lubricates the words, and consequently the language has no back-firing disturbances of rattling nuisance or disgusting hoarseness. Because of this smooth run of the 'A' sound in every letter, there is a melody even between words and a lingering echo between sentences. In fact, after a long chanting of a Sanskrit text in a hall, there is, for the sensitive, a perceptible atmosphere of soothing music in the air that can lull all the agitations of the human mind.

The sound 'A' is not only the essence in each letter of a word --- not only does it transcend, or overflow the sentences and flood the very atmosphere --- but it has itself the first place among the alphabets in all the languages. Realising these implications, the *Upanishads* declare that the 'A' sound is the essence in all speech.

OF ALL COMPOUND WORDS, I AM THE PAIR --- One of the Sanskrit forms of compounds is the "pair" (*dwandwa*) in which the essential components co-ordinate with each other in the newly formed compound word. According to Sridhara, perhaps the only commentator who tried to give us the why of this analogy, the *dwandwa*-method of combining words is very important among all the other types, because of this easy and direct co-ordination of its components. In the context of the usage