Summary of Lectures 2, 3 and 4

What is व्याकरण?

* Grammar is called as व्याकरण in Sanskrit
* The objective of व्याकरण is to distinguish between correct usage from not so correct usage of sentences and words, i.e., to distinguish between साधु शब्द and असाधु शब्द
* It is a set of rules that offers a detailed description of a language
* Traces of initial attempts to do व्याकरण can be found in the Vedic texts
* The पदपाठ of Vedic मन्त्रs by Shakalya is also a sort of व्याकरण
* In the पदपाठ*,* the grammarian Shakalya has shown the segmentation of words in the मन्त्रs
* The word ‘व्याकरण’ is derived from वि+आ+कृ and it literally means ‘cutting’.8
* In व्याकरण we try to cut the sentences into words and words into further meaningful units.

The method of व्याकरण

* व्याकरण attempts to distinguish between साधु शब्द and असाधु शब्द
* The महाभाष्य of महर्षि पतंजलि discusses the exact way in which व्याकरण does this.
* It discusses the various possibilities in which this can be done -
  + giving an exhaustive list of both साधु शब्दs as well असाधु शब्दs and then prescribing the use only of साधु शब्दs
  + giving an exhaustive list only of असाधु शब्दs and saying that all the remaining शब्दs are साधु शब्दs
  + giving an exhaustive list only of साधु शब्दs and prescribing the use only of these शब्दs
* It is well known that for each साधु शब्द there are many असाधु शब्दs, so giving an exhaustive list of साधु शब्दs only is the shortest way to achieve the goal, but then even the list of साधु शब्दs is very long. So it is very difficult to make study and retain the entire list of साधु शब्दs. That is why creating a प्रतिपद-पाठ also becomes a lengthy process
* The grammarians hence, have come up with a set of default rules or उत्सर्ग and exceptions or अपवाद

लक्ष्य and लक्षण

* The word लक्ष्य is used for the target, which is ‘correct words’ and
* the word लक्षण is used for the rules of grammar that lead us to the लक्ष्य
* the grammarians had the लक्ष्य in front of them when they framed the rules or लक्षणs of grammar
* However, with the passage of time any language undergoes change, and the लक्ष्य goes on becoming more and more vague
* So, for us, the students of Sanskrit Grammar, it is primarily the लक्षण, which help us understand the लक्ष्य.

Who is Panini

* Panini was a Grammarian or a वैयाकरण who has written the grammar of Sanskrit language
* The grammar that he has written is known as अष्टाध्यायी, since there are 8 chapters or अध्यायs in his book
* From some references it seems that he belonged to शलातुर village located somewhere in the present north-west Pakistan
* His mother’s name may be दाक्षि and father’s name may be पणिन्

What is Linguistics?

* Linguistics is a systematic study of ‘Language’
* Language is a complex phenomenon through which beings communicate
* Human languages are much more complex than compared to languages of other beings
* Sounds, written symbols or gestures can be the media of communication
* Linguistics is a systematic investigation into features of a language in general
* The study of linguistics extends into all those areas that are connected to language like -
  + Psychology
  + Sociology
  + Neurology
  + Forensic studies
  + Computer science
  + Translation
  + Acoustics etc…