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VACHIKA ENACTMENT

The entire act of acting is accomplished through two mediums - physical actions and dialogue delivery. Pronunciation of words on stage may seem very easy at first glance, but its science is as complex an art as singing. It is very important for an actor to undergo deep and continuous training as well as understand the techniques of speech and voice. When a fully trained actor delivers the dialogues of his role using his voice and dialogue delivery, the imagination of the character comes alive in the audience and they start listening to the character completely.

Being an actor, you must know your voice correctly. The voice of the actor should be such that people are surprised to see the new form of speech and expression of thoughts. If an actor wants to be successful on stage, one should give special emphasis on Vachika Enactment. Its importance can be gauged from the fact that Bharat Muni, the author of Natyashastra, has accepted it as a main distinction of enactment.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, you-

- know the general introduction of Vachika Enactment;
- know about the Swara, Varna, Kaku, Alankara and Angasa and can enact on your own accordingly; and
- know the importance of Vachikabhinaya in Chitrabhinaya and Samanyabhinaya and can enact on your own accordingly.

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2.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO VACHIKA ENACTMENT

Sanskrit scholars have termed Natya as visual poetry, that is, a poetry that can be seen. A poet provides words to the images of imagination and actors take those words to the level of imagination. Acharya Bharat has given a detailed discussion of vachika enactment after performing Angika Abhinaya. Vachika enactment has started with the analysis of the sound form of visual poetry. In the 15th chapter of Natyashastra, Bharat has started the discussion of vachika enactment.

In fact, vachika enactment is related to the dialogues and sounds spoken by the actor (Nata). As you know, Sanskrit plays were written in poetic style. All dialogues were also in this style. It is also relatively easy to memorize the verse. To give depth to intense emotions and meaning, it is also necessary that there should be a change in tone with the words and there should be rhythm in them. In such a situation, an actor should also have knowledge of swara (vowels), sawara changes with words and the use of rhythm. Acharya Bharat instructs to make special efforts on words-

**Vachi Yatrastu Kartavyo Natyasyaisha Tanuh Smuta.
Agnepathyasatvani vakyartha vyanjayanti.**

-(Natyasastra-15/2)

That is, words play an important role in the creation of poetry by the poet and in the use of it by the actor. Because these same words express the meaning of the essence of the entire theatrical performance and the satvabhinaya. What it means to say is that Angika, Aharya and Satvik forms of enactment are only helpful in vachika enactment.

If the vachika enactment is weak then the play performance cannot be effective with other enactments. In vachika enactment, words are important. It is extremely important that the actor has a good knowledge of the grammar and correct pronunciation of the language used in the play so that he can properly convey the meaning of the sentence to the audience. The actor should have complete knowledge of the grammar of the language in which the play is performed. If he does not know this then one will not be able to do vachika enactment.

Vachika Enactment and Language

Pronunciation has great importance in any language. We can gain mastery over language only through pronunciation. Generally, it is seen that the actors who cannot speak clearly are also not able to write the correct language. Even after being educated, they are not able to pronounce many sounds correctly because they are used to the domestic

dialect, like calling 'sha (ष)' and 'sha (श)' as 'sa (स)', 'ya (य)' as 'jha (झ)', 'va (व)' as 'ba (ब)' and 'ksha (क्ष)' as 'chha (छ)'.

In Chapter 18, Acharya Bharata has discussed the language provision for the actor by keeping the Prakrit text at the centre. What is Prakrit text? When the Sanskrit text becomes inferior to the qualities of the rituals and gets transformed, then it is called Prakrit text. Four types of language used in Natya (drama) - Atibhasha (used by Devgan), Aryabhasha (used by Bhupalas), Jatiyabhasha (used by Non-Aryans and Mlechchas) and Jatyantari (used by animals and birds living in villages and forests) have been described. Bharata also explains in detail on which occasions Sanskrit and Prakrit should be used for various characters in the drama.

Is it possible for an elite character to speak the language of the lower class? It is possible that there may be such a character in modern theatre, but the stylistic structure of Natyashastra supports the use of language (method of linguistic expression) according to the character. For example, Bharata, Sanskrit text is said to have been used for the heroes Dhairoddhata, Dhairialalita, Dhairrodatta and Dhairprashanta. Similarly, he also instructed to use Prakrit text for the heroes when necessary. Acharya Bharat also prescribes the language for other characters in the play. For example, the characters who are Jain monks, sages or jugglers should use Prakrit text, if the situation arises, female characters like a queen, a village bride or a craftsman can also use Sanskrit language, the dialogues for Apsaras should be in Sanskrit, but when if they roam on earth then naturally Prakrit text should be kept.

Bharat discusses two types of text in the play - Sanskrit and Prakrit. It is possible that when Natyashastra was written, Sanskrit and Prakrit would have been prevalent.

Swara (Vowels)

Tones are sounds that are produced without modulation. Bharat Muni has mentioned fourteen notes in the beginning of vachika enactment. These are usually hrishva (short) and deerga (long). In fact, Hrisva are those notes in whose production a small part of the breath is spent and more in Dheerga. For example, अ, इ, उ and ऐ are hrishva and ए, ओ, औ and एः are deerga. Why such classification of vowels at the beginning of vachika enactment? Probably Bharat considers swaras as the smallest unit of communication and for clear pronunciation it is necessary to understand the structure of swaras and its pronunciation.

Vyanjana (Consonants)

Consonants are those letters which cannot be pronounced without vowels. How to

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pronounce the consonant? Acharya Bharat also explains its diagnosis. He has divided each varna into Ghosha and Aghosha and has explained about their places of pronunciation -

The letters ka, kha, ga, gha, na, a, ha (क, ख, ग, घ, ङ, अ, ह) are pronounced from the throat (kantha).

The letters Cha, Chha, Ja, Jha, Ya, Sha (च, छ, ज, झ, य, श) are pronounced from the talu.

The letters ta, tha, da, dha, na, ri, ra and sha (ट, ठ, ड, ढ, ण, ऋ, र, ष) are pronounced from the Murdha.

The letters Ta, Tha, Da, Dh, Na, Lri, La and Sa (त, थ, द, ध, न, ल्, ल, स) are pronounced from the teeths.

The letters Pa, pha, Ba, Bha, Ma (प, फ, ब, भ, म) are pronounced from the aushtha.

Obviously, meaningful groups of letters together form words and meaningful groups of words form sentences. In this way, he discusses in detail the second unit of reading dialogues- the methods of pronunciation of consonants. Even today, actors keep trying to pronounce vowels and consonants correctly in their 'pronunciation practice'.

Word

Bharat has told about the combination of vowels and consonants and about vowels, sandhi, Vibhakti, noun, verb, prefix, nipat, taddhit, samasa, nama and dhatu. This mention of them is for the purpose of knowing the meaning inherent in the word. If the actor does not know the meaning of the words then how will one be able to pronounce that word Dhayani.

Padya (Verse)

It is certain that Natyashastra points towards dialogues. That is why, Bharat tells about the composition of poetry. After discussing the nature of the word, Bharat tells about the structure of verse formed from a group of words and discusses their differences. In Chapter 16- Vrittvidhana, Bharat explains the method of using chhandas in drama and in Chapter 17, while mentioning the poetic-alankara vidhan consisting of the Vritta characteristics formed from the verses, he explains the thirty-six characteristics inherent in poetry. These thirty-six characteristics are very important to understand the behavior of communication. Such as - Bhushana (when the poetic composition is decorated with gunas and alamkaras in such a way as if a person's body is decorated), Aksharsanghat (when a strange meaning is expressed with some slishta letters), Shobha

(when a new and desired meaning is expressed or to be proved or to explain an unknown subject in a proven form), Udaharana (when one meaning is revealed through two similar sentences), Hetu (when the desired thing is achieved by cleverly using small sentences), Sanshya (when due to predominance of thoughts, the sentence ends without knowing the entire meaning), Drishtanta (when a topic is supported in an entertaining way by giving reasons or examples). It is necessary for an actor to know the characteristics of poetic dialogues, only then will one be able to reveal the meaning inherent in the dialogues.

In today's environment, if we look at Bharata's instructions in the context of vachika enactment, we see both prose and poetry nature in the plays. In such a situation, if there is prose, then the actor should have knowledge about prose legislation. The actor should try to reveal the sentence structure and the meaning contained in it.

Alamkara

Figures of speech are especially used in poetry. Alankar means a pompous way of saying things. The dramatic acting of Natyashastra is stylistic which we can call 'stylized form'. How can communication be simple in such a situation? Poetic figures of speech have a special role for stylistic behavior in the delivery of dialogues. Acharya Bharata has given their number as 4 - Upama, Rupaka, Deepaka and Yamaka. In upama, the properties or nature of two substances are compared with the visible object. For example: Your face is like the moon. Metaphor is one in which words of different subjects are combined in one sentence. For example, there the lake remains beautiful with swans, the trees with flowers, the lotus with bees and the gardens with meetings always remain beautiful. Similarly, Yamaka - where words are repeated again and again but their meaning is different every time. Shlesha- In which multiple meanings are associated with a single word. These figures of speech are not only used in composing poetry but also determine the reading style.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.1

1. What do you understand by Vachika enactment?
2. How can one gain mastery over language?
3. In which chapter is language discussed in Natyashastra?
4. According to Bharata, what are the four languages used in drama?

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5. According to Bharat, how many types of texts are there?
6. What is swara?
7. What is meant by consonant?
8. What is the word?
9. In which chapter does Acharya Bharat discuss the chhandas?
10. What is the meaning of alamkara?

2.2 INTRODUCTION TO SHADANGA: GUNAS OF THE TEXT

After this Bharata starts discussing the gunas (qualities) and nature of the text. Their number is six- Swara, Sthana, Varna, Kaku, Alankara and Anga. To become proficient in vachika enactment, an actor can master these six elements by undergoing continuous training.

Swara (Notes)

The recitation of textual voice i.e. Nat is subject to these six technics. Using these technic, dramatic dialogue becomes more effective and communicative. The number of notes is seven- Shadaj, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhauvata and Nishada. These notes should be used as per rasa and in favorable circumstances. Madhyam and Pancham should be used in shringara and hasya respectively, Gandhar and Nishad in Karuna, Dhauvata in bhayanaka and bibhatsa.

Sthana

There are three places for vowels - urasthala, kantha and shirsha (chest, throat and head). These tips can be adopted for their practice- when a person who is located very far away is called, then the place of pronunciation of the voice should be the shirsh (head), the person standing at a distance should be called with the voice pronounced from the place of the kantha (throat) and the person standing near should be called from the place of urusthala (chest).

Varna

The text to be pronounced consists of four letter - Udatta, Anudatta, Swarita and Kampita. Varna refers to the tonal qualities of the language or the lyrical intonation. In hasya and sringar, there should be a high and sublime tone, in veera, raudra and adbhuta rasa, there should be sublime and trembling, in kampita, karuana, vatsalya and bhayanaka, there should be low, toned and trembling tone. It meaning is for feelings.

The main exercises done for this include asking the actor to speak with different expressions.

Kaku

Kaku is the vital element of the text because through this variation in vowels brings diversity in reading and the sentence acquires new meaning. There are two types of it - sakanksha and nirakanksha. If the meaning of a sentence is not fully revealed at the time of pronunciation and the sound is produced from the throat and chest area, which starts with a chord vowel and ends with a manda vowel, then it is called Saakanksha Kaku. In these the varnas and alamkaras are incomplete. Nirankaksha are called those in which the complete meaning of a sentence is revealed in its pronunciation and there is a scheme of swaras from mandra to tar. In these, varnas and alamkaras are completely present. It is mainly related to the fluctuations of the notes i.e. vocal tone.

Pronunciation

In the end, there is a discussion of six parts of pronunciation- Vichchheda, Arpana, Visarga, Anubandha, Deepan and Prashamana. Break due to vichchheda, recitation of vocabulary full of Leela or Saukumarya is 'Arpana', completing the sentence is 'Visarga', not breaking between two or more verses and saying it without breaking the breath is 'Anubandh', the vowel which increases high pitched after pronunciation in all three places is called 'Deepan' and bringing the high pitched vowels gradually downwards without any change is called 'Prashmana'. The use of these alamkaras of text gives rise to a special effect and beauty in the reading. For this, actors can be introduced to these six parts by going through the process of improvisation.

Acharya Bharat has also discussed about virama. They say that it depends on the end of the meaning or the situation. These pauses clarify the meanings. Drama directors should always pay attention to 'pause' in vachika enactment because acting depends on the meaning of the spoken words. For this, they also prescribe hand movements along with alamkaras. For example, in Raudra and veera rasa, hands are busy in wielding weapons. Hands shrink when they see something disgusting in bibhatsa rasa. In such a situation the meaning can be made clear only through alamkaras and punctuation.

The pauses kept in a verse i.e. text, are kept at the end of the meaning or to take a breath. Therefore, the actor should take a pause at the appropriate place and take a breath. As per requirement, more than one pause can be kept in the verse for rasa and feelings. To convey meaning on stage, clever actors can take breaks by changing the sequence.

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The text that the actor is reciting should not be contained by incorrect words. Pausing for a long time at any place other than the fixed pause and speaking loudly in a humble state is contrary to the meaning. Acharya Bharat says that the theater artist or the directors should keep the textual dialogues in a proper manner with tone, art, tala and rhythm.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.2

1. What are the Gunas (qualities) of text?
2. What is the number of vowels?
3. What are the places of origin of vowels?
4. According to Bharat, which varnas are there in the text?
5. What is meant by Kaku?
6. What is Kaku Bheda?
7. What are the parts of pronunciation?

2.3 VACHIMA ENACTMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE OF CHITRABHINAYA

Acharya Bharata has also mentioned vachika enactment in the context of Chitrabhinaya, under which he discussed Akashbhashita, Swagata, Apavarita and Janantika. A conversation made with a character which is from a distance or without any character's entry or is said indirectly while addressing someone who is not nearby is called 'Akashabhashita'. The words which are spoken to oneself are called 'Swagata' and the words which are said keeping it secret in the heart are called 'Atmagata' and the conversation of words related to some confidential feeling is called 'Apavarita'. Similarly, when one does not have to narrate something unexpectedly to a person nearby, then the conversation made with another person is called 'janantika'. Next, he explained the method of their use. Bharata says that the words which are spoken in panic, uproar, anger and shaking are called 'Punarukta'. The words said in these conditions should be repeated two or three times. If any words in the drama are distorted or incomplete then they should not be acted as per the character through body postures and gestures. In the dream state, it should not be demonstrated by using body movements or hands but only by the sentences spoken in sleep. In this condition, the sentences should be made in soft voice and in expressed and latent repeated words remembering the previous incident. In the speech of an elderly person, planning should be done to

avoid gurgling sounds and slurred syllables. Slurred sounds and incomplete words should be avoided in children's dialogues. At the time of death, latent dialogues should be planned which should be loose, heavy and with inferior characters, rattle in the throat, intermittent hiccups, hiccups, breathing movements should be used.

2.4 VACHIAKA ENACTMENT IN THE PERFORMANCE OF SAMANYABHINAYA

Even in the context of samanyabhinaya, twelve ways of vachikabhinaya have been explained containing the bhava and rasa, which are used for dialogue in the dramatic story. These are- Aalapa (speaking to someone), Pralapa (use of unrelated and meaningless phrases), vilapa (speech produced in a sad state), Anulapa (repeating the same thing again and again), Sanllapa (conversation consisting of statements and counterpoints), Apalapa (plan in other meaning of the previously mentioned vocabulary), Sandesha (tell him this- such sentences), Atidesha (I said what you said- agreeable sentence in this sense), Nirdesha (I say this- such sentences), Vyapadesha (something said under some pretext), Upadesha (do this and take this- such sentences) and Apadesh (to express one's point by quoting someone else's words).

Thus, the instructions given by Acharya Bharata under vachika enactment acting in Natyashastra are very important for an actor. Even though those instructions have been given keeping the composition of poetry at the center, many elements are visible equally in all the styles. The words of modern training system like word prestige, intonation, rhythm of recitation, pause, method of delivery, tone, loudness, projection, vocal tone etc. are included in the description of Bharat's vachika enactment. Today, Natyashastra can be seen with a modern perspective in the training of 'Speech and Voice'.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 2.3

1. What is Akashbhashita?
2. What is meant by sawagat?
3. What is meant by Apavarita?
4. What is janantika?
5. How many ways of vachika enactment involving bhava and rasa are there?

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WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

- Acharya Bharata has discussed vachika enactment under four types of enactment in his text Natyashastra.
- In the 15th chapter of Natyashastra, Bharata has started the discussion of vachika enactment.
- Vachika enactment is related to the dialogues spoken by the actor.
- In vachika enactment, Bharata considers words as important. It is very important that the actor has a good knowledge of the grammar and proper pronunciation of the language used in the play so that one can properly convey the meaning of the sentence to the audience.
- Explained the four types of language used in drama - Atibhasha (used by the gods), Aryabhasha (used by the Bhupals), Jatibhasha (used by the non-Aryans and Mlechchhas) and Jatyantari (used by the animals and birds living in villages and forests). Bharata also explains in detail on which occasions Sanskrit and Prakrit should be used for the various characters of the drama.
- The number of gunas (qualities) and forms of the text are six - Swara, Sthana, Varna, Kaku, Alankara and Anga.
- Kaku is the vital element of the text because through this variation in vowels brings diversity in reading and the sentence acquires new meaning.
- Acharya Bharata has also mentioned vachika enactment in the context of Chitrabhinaya, under which he discusses Akashbhashita, Swagata, Apavarita and Janantika.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

Sample Questions for Practical Examinations

1. What is the importance of language in vachika enactment? According to Bharata, Which language you will use when you are performing a character of elite character?
2. What is the importance of swaras in acting?

3. Why is Kaku the vital essence of the text? Try to enact sakanksha kaku in performance of vachika enactment?
4. What is the role of vachika enactment in the context of chitrabhinaya? Perform the akashabhashita as described by Bharata.
5. As described, it is expected to learner to enact anulapa as described in chapter?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

2.1

1. Vachika enactment is related to the dialogues and sounds spoken by the actor.
2. By knowing the correct way of pronunciation one can gain control over the language.
3. In Chapter 18, Acharya Bharat has discussed the language legislation.
4. Atibhasha, Aryabhasha, Jaatibhasha, Jatyantari
5. Two types- Sanskrit and Prakrit
6. Swara are those sounds which are produced without modulation.
7. Consonants are those letters which cannot be pronounced without vowels.
8. Bharat has explained the formation of words by the combination of vowels and consonants and by the use of vowels, conjunctions, inflections, nouns, verbs, prefixes, taddhit, samasa, nama and dhatu.
9. In Chapter-16 Vrittavidhaan, Bharat has discussed the use of chhandas.
10. Alankar means pompous way of saying things.

2.2

1. Swara, sthana, varna, kaku, alankar and anga.
2. The number of notes is seven - Shadaja, Rishabha, Gandhara, Madhyam, Panchama, Dhauvata and Nishada.
3. There are three places for vowels - urusthala, kantha and shiersh.

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4. There are four varnas in the text - Udatta, Anudatta, Swarit and Kampit. Varna refers to the tonal qualities of the language or the lyrical intonation.
5. Kaku is the vital element of the text because through this variation in vowels brings diversity in reading and the sentence acquires new meaning.
6. There are two types of Kaku - sakanksha and nirakanksha.
7. There is discussion of six parts of pronunciation - vichchheda, arapana, visarga, anubandha, deepan and prashamana.

1. A conversation made with a character which is from a distance or without any character's entry or is said indirectly while addressing someone who is not nearby is called 'akashabhashita'.
2. That word which is said to oneself.
3. The conversation of words related to some confidential feeling is called 'Apavarita'.
4. When unexpectedly something has to be said to a person nearby, then the conversation made with another person is called 'janantika'.
5. Aalapa, pralapa, vilapa, anulapa, sanllapa, apalap, sandesha, atidesha, nirdesha, vypadesha, upadesha and apadesha.