

Management and Communication in Buddhist Context

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Abstract:

This article examines the fundamental aims and the objective of Buddhism depending on its world view. For instance, the vision of Buddhist order is to realize nibbana, the cessation of suffering. Its mission is to propagate the Buddha's message throughout the world for the sake of all beings. The order of monks and nuns has rendered its service over two thousand and five hundred years in order to fulfil the above vision and mission. While observing the evolution of this process related to the order of sangha the article compares the main concepts of modern management system with those of the sangha society. Further, it introduces some unique concepts of Buddhist management system which can be considered as a contribution to the modern concept of management. Communication is an essential part of management and verbal communication has been the main medium of communication in the propagation of Buddhism throughout the world. So, the Buddhist sources include a wealth of information regarding the nature of language and its usage in the context of verbal communication. The important facts relevant to the subject have been elucidated with reference to the doctrinal and historical explanations in the early Buddhist sources.

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Introduction:

Management and communication are two areas of Buddhism which have not been adequately examined in the modern researches in this field. I have taken an attempt to clarify some important facts related to this field which I think, will provide a positive contribution to the existing knowledge of the subject in the modern world.

Result and Discussion:

Though the two subjects management and communication are studied in a wider context still the modern world faces a number of problems in addition to their positive contribution to solve many problems in the modern society. Therefore the new facts revealed in this article will provide a good context to revive the modern methods of these two subjects in order to bring them to a more profitable level.

Management is a most useful system of government and a highly developed subject of education in the modern world. Its usefulness is being felt more and more with the growth and complexity of the society. There are a number of species of beings in the world. Among these various kinds of beings the man is different from others because he has the ability to think, ability to communicate perfectly and is endowed with awareness of moral behaviour. In ancient times the human society was not complexed and its needs were simple in connection with simple way of life it was accustomed to. So it could maintain its life-style without much effort. With the development of modern science and technology and the related increase of human thinking the man's needs became very complexed. In order to meet with these unlimited needs he had to manage the limited resources of the world. He understood that he cannot fulfil these needs without a proper management of the limited resources. As a result there arose various organizations of production, distribution and management of goods in the society. Meanwhile there arose a necessity of a system of management in order to maintain these organizations successfully. As these organizations are interconnected worldwide their system of management also seems very similar in content. Such a plan of management which is universally accepted is called management. According to the modern view this process of management consists of the following themes:

1. Planning
2. Organization
3. Staffing
4. Direction
 - i. Leadership
 - j. Motivation
 - k. Communication
 - l. Co-ordination
5. Control

Buddhist teachings consist of not only the facts related to management but also important views regarding politics, economics, law, health, aesthetics and sociology. They are mostly available in conceptual form and need clarifications in accordance with the modern social context. Through such clarifications no doubt, we can surely make a positive contribution to those fields of study.

Before we go into the details of the concept of management it is worthwhile to consider in brief the Buddhist analysis of the individual and the related world. All Buddhist teachings are based on this world view.

According to Buddhism the world in reality is an unsatisfactory abode although we experience temporary feelings of satisfaction.

“Na kahāpanavassena titti kāmesu vijjati”¹

“The human beings are not satisfied even with a rain of gold”

The main reason for this dissatisfaction is the changing nature of the phenomena. The beings having created an unchanging world of concepts out of the constantly changing world try to experience an eternal satisfaction in it. In reality we attach to the concepts but not to the real world.

“Saṅkapparāgo purisassa kāmo”²

“Desire of the person means attachment to concepts”

The person who is attached to concepts sees suffering as happiness. “Dukkhaṃ sukhaṃ rūpeṇa”. All leave this world with some kind of a feeling of wanting. “Ūno loko atitto taṇhādāso”³. This is the reality of the world. Some people think that they can achieve success in life if they chase after pleasures having discarded the reality. The sciences such as economics, medicine, chemistry and management are being studied and practised in order to help the people in their unsuccessful attempt to achieve satisfactoriness. In reality, there has been no one in the past, will not be in the future and is not at present who has experienced full satisfaction in life.

“Na cāhu na ca bhavissati na cetaṛahi vijjati”⁴

Therefore, Buddhism after realistic analysis of the world of experience presents a true way of attaining full satisfaction in this very life. This way is completely different from the path recommended by the modern sciences. If the modern way of life is compared to a river flowing downward, the Buddhist path is equal to a reiver flowing upward.

“Paṭisoṭagāmiṃ nipuṇaṃ”⁵

Instead of following the path leading to sensual pleasures with blind beliefs, Buddhism shows the way to reduce desires. Modern sciences mostly recommend treatments to the effect but not to the cause. Let us take for example the treatments

recommended for birth control. The Buddhist recommendation for this is not controlling birth but controlling one's desires. Buddhism explains with facts that full satisfaction is not a dream if the life is planned on the above mentioned right view of the world.

“Victory brings enmity. Defeat brings suffering. Those who give up both are always satisfied”

“Jayam veram pasavati dukkham seti parajito
upasanto sukham seti hitva jayaparajayam”⁶

The concept of management becomes essential to plan the behaviour according to the reality of existence. Buddhist teachings point out that a proper management should be applied to all aspects of life: economic, political, religious and social.

I have shown above that there are several fundamental characteristics in the modern concept of management.

At the very outset it is important to clarify how these fundamental characteristics are applied in Buddhist teachings. Next we can clarify the Buddhist contribution that could be made in regard to the modern concept of management.

The concept of management is applied to a certain institution which generally constitutes of a group of people working together towards a common objective. The Buddhist community of sangha is an institution which has an unbroken history of about 2500 years. Its glorious history and success is mainly due to the principles of management on which it was established in the 6th century B.C. It will take several volumes to discuss its structure and aims in detail. Here our attention is focussed only to point out few facts in brief with regard to the organization of the order of sangha.

The sangha society was established on a firm ground with minor objectives and a direct goal. Its goal was to attain nibbana as a solution to the mass of suffering that human beings have to face in their wonderings in the existence⁷. The behaviour of the monk who treads upon this path contributes to the development of morality and peaceful environment in the society. These are considered as minor objectives of the sangha society⁸. The noble eightfold path is included within the threefold training system viz, morality, concentration and wisdom⁹. It should be emphasized that this path is recommended not only for the monks but also for the lay people who lead a worldly life. Planning includes aims and the objective of an institution and the determination of the means to achieve them. The above mentioned objectives, the goal and the path leading to achieve them with regard to the organization of the sangha can be compared with the aspect of planning.

The next aspect of management is termed as organization. This includes activities such as departmentation, authority, delegation of authority etc. The activities of the 3 sangha also has been divided in to divisions and sub-divisions and the authority of those divisions are ascribed to suitable members of the order. Mainly the disciplinary rules are divided into two groups as Ubhatovibhanga and Khandaka¹⁰. Ubhatovibhanga consists of the rules

pertaining to the individual life of a monk. They are the four great offences *pārājikā*, thirteen *saṅghādhisesas*, offences which can be decided only by a formal *saṅgha-kamma*, two *aniyatas*, uncertain rules etc. *Khandaka* includes rules and regulations pertaining to the social life of a monk. They are related to activities such as ordination (*pabbajjā*), higher ordination (*upasampadā*), ecclesiastical activities (*uposatha*), giving punishments (*daṇḍakamma*)¹¹, observing rainy season (*vassūpanāyika*) etc. Further eminent monks had been appointed as authorities in order to put these rules and appointments in to action Ven. Upāli as the authority on *Vinaya* and Ven. Ānanda as the treasurer of *dhamma* can be cited as examples. In addition, some monks have been appointed as advisors and the reciters of the rules and regulations at the regular meetings of the *saṅgha*¹². It should be noted here that the third aspect of management, staffing, is also included in the above activities. Appointments as authorities on various tasks and training provided for the monks under the distinguished teachers etc. are closely connected with the activities related to staffing.

The fourth aspect of management namely, direction means to lead the authorities properly, to act successfully in relation to their individual services. There are several things that should be completed so as to fulfil the purpose of direction. Leadership, motivation, communication and co-ordination are most important among them. As to the leadership Buddhism emphasizes that the leader should speak what he performs and should perform what he speaks (**yathāvādī tathākārī yathākārī tathāvādī**)¹³. There should not be any difference between his thoughts, speech and functions. Further he should be a talented, skilful, active and wise person (*vyatta, paṭibala, paṇḍita, sakka*)¹⁴. Through our Buddhist teachings one can notice that the Buddha and his leading disciples have motivated other followers by their exemplary characters as well as by various methods of teaching the *dhamma*. The communication among the members of the order was properly maintained through the regular meetings held twice a month¹⁵. In these meetings the members had the opportunity to communicate with their elders and friends. It was helpful to maintain mutual respect. Confidence and friendship among the members. This is called the act of co-ordination in management.

The *Vinayaṭṭakā* records a number of cases in which some Buddhist monks and nuns have transgressed the rules and regulations¹⁶. There are a large number of supplementary rules and punishments recommended in the *Vinaya* for the rehabilitation of such monks and nuns. It was the practice that wrong behaviour of the members was directly informed to the Buddha or leading disciples and the accused was summoned to settle the case by giving proper advice and thereby laying down new or supplementary rules and regulations. Further the monks had the opportunity to settle their problems pertaining to moral behaviour in the meetings held twice a month. Such activities in the order come under the fifth aspect of management called control.

Thus it is clear that almost all the fundamental aspects of the modern concept of management could be seen in the organization of the *saṅgha* society.

Now attention should be focussed on the above mentioned activities of the order in detail. No doubt it will be a task which needs volumes and a long-term endeavour to study all the aspects of the structure and the nature of disciplinary rules. Such a study will reveal many facts which can be adopted in order to revive the modern concept of management. Here our attempt is to point out in brief the evolution of the concept of ordination (pabbajjā) in the Theravada tradition as a guide to those who wish to further their studies in this regard.

Here our intention is to clarify the evolution of the order of sangha in the light of the Vinayaṭīka which is not only collection of vinaya rules but a historical record of the Buddhist order as a whole. It represents the history of order at least up to the time of the second Buddhist council, held one hundred years after the Buddha's passing away. The Cullavaggapāli includes details of the second council¹⁸ and the Parivārapāli includes even the names of monks who visited Sri Lanka at the time of King Asoka,¹⁹ in the third century B.C. Thus we can consider the Vinayaṭīka as representing the middle phase of the evolution of the concept of ordination although it consists of details relevant to the early phase of the order.

At the very outset it is extremely important to mention that the four conditions stated in the Pārājikāpāli regarding the deterioration of the order.

- i. long existence of the order
- ii. expansion and growth of its membership
- iii. receiving an abundance of requisites
- iv. intellectual progress of the members²⁰

A close observation of the Vinayaṭīka reveals that the above conditions came into being in the order in the course of time. Due to this reason the Buddha had to formulate a large number of disciplinary rules regarding the behaviour of monks and nuns. This occurred, according to the tradition, about twenty years after the Buddha's enlightenment. By that time the membership of the order had increased up to thousand when comparing with Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākā had gathered around the Buddha and his disciples with the intention of supporting and promoting its healthy existence. They made monasteries and supplied daily requisites in abundance²¹. Meanwhile some disciples like Sāti held different views regarding the teachings of the Buddha. All these conditions, according to the above mentioned statement, tend to create deterioration of the order. Therefore, the Buddha being concerned about the stability of the order in the future laid down disciplinary rules on different occasions with the following objectives:

- i. restraintment of the saṅgha society
- ii. well-being of the saṅgha society
- iii. restraintment of the untamed persons
- iv. well-being of the members who wish to be trained

- v. to safeguard oneself from the defilements pertaining to this world
- vi. to safeguard oneself from the defilements pertaining to the next existence
- vii. to rouse confidence among those who are not converted to Buddha's teachings.
- viii. To increase confidence of those who are already converted
- ix. for the long existence of the doctrine
- x. to encourage monks and nuns in their restraint ²²

These can be considered as the objectives of the order introduced in the course of its evolution. The Vinayaṭaka includes two hundred and sixteen disciplinary rules for the monks which are classified under six categories:

i.	pārājika	-	04
ii.	saṅghādisesa	-	13
iii.	aniyata	-	02
iv.	nissaggiyapācittiya	-	30
v.	pācittiya	-	92
vi.	sekhiyā	-	<u>75</u>
			216

Pārājika refers to grave transgression of the relevant rules for the monks and nuns and as a result one merits expulsion from the order²³. Saṅghādisesa means a class of offences which can be decided only by a formal saṅgha -kamma -ecclesiastical activities²⁴. Aniyata refers to the offences which are uncertain and therefore should be concluded by a trial²⁵. The offences that should be settled by giving up are called nissaggiya²⁶. The offences requiring expiation are termed as pācittiya²⁷. The rules connected with training are called sekhiyā²⁸. The entire concept of ordination depends on the main objectives of Buddhism. Vinaya or the disciplinary rules are considered as the life of the order²⁹. As ven. Buddhaghosa explains in his Visuddhimagga, discipline leads for restraint, restraint creates non-delusion, non-delusion creates delight, delight produces zest, happiness brings pacification, pacification produces happiness, happiness is for concentration, concentration paves the way for insight resulting in disgust with worldly life, disgust with worldly life brings non-attachment, non-attachment directs one to freedom or emancipation³⁰. The above statement clarifies the gradual progress expected through training in vinaya rules. It should not be overlooked here that these vinaya rules are meant for the spiritual progress of individual monks and nuns. There remains another aspect of ordination which covers the social life of the saṅgha. The relevant rules and regulations for this aspect are recorded in the vinaya texts called Cullavaggapāli³¹ and Mahāvaggapāli³².

With the evolution of the order in the course of time, the social life of the saṅgha turned to be more important than the individual life. Certainly the social life happened to be the main cause of the long standing of the order. The unbroken history of the order going back to about two thousand five hundred years is the result of these rules regarding the social life of the saṅgha. The rules and regulations connected with the social activities are collectively called khandhakavinaya³³. It includes a number of rules regarding every aspect of social life of the saṅgha. Some are connected with punishments given to certain offences which violate social harmony of the saṅgha. The Mahāvagga includes a large number of rules which are applicable to maintain a good relationship between teachers and pupils³⁴. The observance of rainy season coupled with several important rules was an essential aspect of conduct for the unification of monks and laity. The robe especially prepared for the monks who have observed rainy season is called kaṭhina and there are certain rules applied to it³⁵. It is a well known fact that the kaṭhina ceremony has created a great awareness among the faithful devotees up to date. Another important fact relevant to the social aspect is the recommendation given to the disciples to ordain individuals and confer on them the higher ordination. Rules have been laid down to prevent unsuitable persons entering the order³⁶. Seven criteria are recommended for settlement of disputes among the saṅgha³⁷. Further it is very important that the two councils held by the Theravādinas are recorded in the Cullavaggapāli³⁸. This event indirectly suggests that the preservation of the saṅgha tradition also comes under the social aspect of monk's life.

By the foregoing observation on the vinaya rules, one can easily infer the objectives of ordination which were introduced into the order in the course of its evolution. It was emphasized that the spiritual progress of the individuals was more important at the initial stage. When the saṅgha grew in number the social aspect was given a prominent place among the religious activities. This was further emphasized after the passing away of the Buddha. The demise of the Buddha greatly necessitated the preservation of his teachings for the sake of future generation. There was no individual leader appointed to look after the order. The Dhamma vinaya was designated to play the role of the Teacher. The Buddha's teachings at the time were scattered and an attempt was taken to collect and classify them through the councils³⁹. Further, in the course of time, the fundamentals of the teachings were abstracted and new discourses were composed consisting of only the doctrinal matters. They were re-defined with a language consisting of more technical terms. This process resulted in creation of a new set of discourses called Abhidhamma⁴⁰. By the time of the third Buddhist council held two hundred and thirty six years after the Buddha's passing away, in the reign of King Asoka, the Abhidhammapīṭaka of the Theravada had already been completed.

After the second Buddhist council, held one hundred years after the Buddha's demise, there occurred the schism of the order. The sangha was split into two traditions as Theravāda and Mahāsaṅghika⁴¹. They tried to make collections of the Buddha's teachings which differed in form and content, giving supportive evidence to prove their opinions. Mahāsaṅghikas presented the theory of the transcendental nature of the Buddha⁴². Other

schools of Buddhism sprang from the above mentioned two traditions, Personalist school (Puggalavāda) held that there exists a person in an absolute sense which transmigrates from one existence to the other⁴³. Sarvāstivādins upheld the theory that the elements of existence possess their own nature which does not change in the three periods of time⁴⁴. Theravādins emphasized that the elements of existence are real only in the present moment⁴⁵. Sautrāntikas emphasized the idealistic nature of the world of experience depending more closely on the original discourses⁴⁶. Thus it is clear that the role of the saṅgha after the demise of the Buddha was more connected with intellectual activities than with spiritual matters of individual life. Propagation of Dhamma was an essential task undertaken by the disciples and after the third Buddhist council on the instruction of ven. Moggalīputtatissa nine missionary groups were sent to different countries⁴⁷. A group of monks and a lay person headed by ven. Mahinda came to Sri Lanka and introduced Buddhism⁴⁸. From that day Sri Lanka has played a prominent role in the propagation of Theravāda tradition through out several countries in South Asia. Although Buddhism disappeared from its motherland it was preserved and developed well in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. It is a historical fact that Sri Lanka played a prominent roll in the expansion of Buddhism in several countries.

Communication:

Although we do not find a systematic exposition of language, there are numerous references to the nature and usage of language in the early Buddhist discourses. In such references, terms such as *sāmañña*, *saṅkhā*, *voḥāra*, *nirutti*, *sammuti*, *adhivacana* and *paññatti*⁴⁹ are used in connection with the aspects of linguistic communication. A study on these terms and their contexts reveals some important insight into the Buddha's attitude toward the nature and usage of language which might have influenced the evolution of the conception of *paññatti* in the later Pāli commentarial literature. The term *paññatti* which is used in the discourses synonymously with some other terms like *nirutti* and *sammañña* have been singled out in the post-cononical Theravada *abhidhamma* directly to refer to linguistic communication. Therefore, in our inquiry into the early Buddhist attitude toward the nature and usage of language, we should pay attention not only to the term *paññatti* but also to the other terms synonymous with it.

The Buddhist discourses include the facts regarding the nature of the world of experience. These facts are generally designated as *dhamma*. *Dhamma* has been explained in the discourses thorough language. The language, whatever is its form, is the primary means of communication⁵⁰. The communicator is necessarily aware of the medium that he uses to communicate his message. This is true even in regard to the Buddha's teachings. In many discourses we find the Buddha expressing his ideas about the nature and usage of language to his desciples. Prof. D.J. Kalupahana summarizes the content of such expressions of the Buddha as follows:

“The Buddha, who perceived the world of human experience as being in flux, was not willing to recognize language as a permanent and eternal entity. Like everything else, language loka- sāmañña = generality of the world, loka- vohāra = usage of the world, loka- nirutti = convention of the world is in flux”⁵¹.

As far as the numerous references that occur in the discourses regarding the nature and usage of language are concerned, the following facts can be discerned which probably influenced the evolution of the conception of paññatti in the post-canonical Theravāda abhidhamma:

- i. two constituents of language: sound and meaning
- ii. conditional nature of language
- iii. contextual basis of the meaning of language
- iv. the existence of various methods of communication
- v. psychological basis of linguistic communication

Language is a system which relates sounds with meanings⁵². Sounds and meanings are the two main constituents of language. Therefore, any explanation of the nature of language should be focussed on these two aspects. The Buddha who was well aware of the medium of communication, advised the disciples to preach the dhamma through a perfect style of language. According to him not only the meaning but also the sound of language (sātham sabyanjanam) should be perfect⁵³. This clarifies the Buddha's attitude regarding the usefulness of a standard means of communication for the propagation of his message, He possessed a voice consisting of eight resonant qualities. The Buddha himself was gifted with polite address, distinct, not hasty, suitable for conveying the relevant meaning⁵⁴. Some of his disciples were experts in delivering attractive sermons⁵⁵. Further, some of them have been declared as foremost among those who possess special qualities related to linguistic communication.

e.g.:

- Ven. Bhaddhiya for sweet voice
- Ven. Bhāradvāja for deep voice
- Ven. Puṇṇamantāniputta for teaching
- Ven. Mahākaccāyana for exposition
- Ven. Soṇakutikanna for clear utterance
- Ven. Kumārakāssapa for brilliant expression
- Ven. Mahākoṭṭhita for logical analysis
- Ven. Nandaka and Ven. Kappina for admonition⁵⁶

The proper understanding of Dhamma was of great importance on the part of the disciples because misunderstanding of it inevitably led to confusion among them.

Therefore, once the Buddha advised Ven. Cunda not to quarrel over the doctrines but to compare meaning with meaning and phrase with phrase so as to come to a right conclusio⁵⁷. In this regard Prof. K.N. Jayatilleke observes that “the failure to understand the limitations of language which employs static concepts to describe dynamic processes” of the world is partly responsible for misunderstanding of the reality⁵⁸. This was the reason for the Buddha's great emphasis on the nature and usage of language.

Language, though sometimes causes misunderstanding, is of great benefit if properly used with awareness of its true nature. The Buddha has stated this dual nature of language as follows:

“Just, Citta, as from a cow comes milk, and from the milk curds and from the curds butter, and from the butter ghee, and from the ghee junket; but when it is milk it is not called curds, or butter, or ghee, or junket; and when it is curd it is not called by any of the other names: and so on. Just so, Citta, when any one of the three modes of personality is going on, it is not called by the name of the other. For these, Citta, are merely names, expressions, turns of speech, designations in common use in the world. And of these a Thatagata (one who has won the truth) makes use indeed, but is not led astray by them⁵⁹. Commenting on the above discourse K.N. Jayatilleke says that “the Buddha uses the term *attapatilābha* to describe these states but does not assume the existence of an entity or entities corresponding to the word “atta” within one's person or body”. And again he says: “At the stage when milk has turned into any of these states it cannot be called by any other name than the name appropriate to describe each state. To this extent one cannot overstep convention. Nor should one assume that each of these names signifies an entity within the changing process”⁶⁰. In essence, though the terms such as curd, butter, ghee etc. refer to the same milk we cannot reject them when we deal with them in our day-to-day life. On the other hand we should not be attached to those terms thinking that they refer to separate things when we try to understand reality by means of language or convention. Referring to the same passage the translator describes the function of language in relation to reality as “There are a number of qualities that, when united, make up a personality always changing. When the change has reached a certain point, it is convenient to change the designation, the name by which the personality is known just as in the case of the products of the cow. But the abstract form is only a convenient form of expression⁶¹. In the Pāli Nikāyas we find mostly such clarifications of the limitations of the various expressions of language. Once we understand its limitations we can use it cautiously. This becomes evident in the *Araṇavibhaṅgasutta*, where the Buddha advises the monks not to affect the dialects of the countryside and not to deviate from recognized parlance.

“When it is said; “One should not affect the dialect of the countryside, one should not deviate from recognized parlance”, in reference to what is it said? And what, monks, is affectation of the dialect of the countryside and what is departure from recognized parlance “ In this case, monks, in different districts they know the different words *pāti... patta... vittha... sarāva... dhāropa... pona... piṣīla...* all the terms refer to the same object “bowl” . Thus as they know the word as this or that in these various districts so does a

person, obstinately clinging to it and adhering to it, explain: "This indeed is the truth, all else is falsehood'. Thus, monks, is affectation of the dialect of the country side and departure from recognized parlance. And what, monks, is non affectation if the dialect of the countryside and non departure from recognized parlance ? In this case, monks, in different districts they know the different words: pāti... yet although they know the word as this or that in these various districts a person does not cling to it but explains: These venerable ones definitely express it thus, This, monks, is non affectation of the dialect of the countryside and non departure from recognized parlance. When it is said. One should not affect the dialect of the countryside, one should not deviate from recognized parlance, it is said in reference to this" ⁶².

Prof. Kalupahana points out two important facts regarding language as revealed by the above passage.

- i. "recognition of the kinship of words, based on usage rather than on simple etymology adopted by the grammarians
- ii. language drift which is a repudiation of the absolute structures of language that are supposed to be revealed by linguistic analysis"⁶³.

Commenting on the same passage further he says that the Buddha's attitude towards language focuses on a midway position between strict adherence (abhinivesa) to it and transgression of its common usage. Because of this liberal attitude of the Buddha towards language, his disciples concentrated more on hermeneutical problems⁶⁴. The Buddha's permission for his disciples to use their own languages sakāyanirutti in dissemination the teachings⁶⁵ is also relevant to the above point.

Another important fact regarding the early Buddhist attitude to language was the emphasis on contextual interpretation rather than literary meaning. The conception of two kinds of discourses, (neyyattha) the discourses which need explanation and (nītattha)⁶⁶ which need no explanation points to the fact that a particular statement should be understood with reference to its context but not necessarily on etymology. The contextual interpretation of statements prohibits the innovations and refers to the current usage. This might have been one of the reasons for categorizing the Buddha's sermons according to various modes of expression. Some of them can be cited from the commentarial literature as follows:

- saṅkhittā dhammadesanā – concise sermon
- vitthāradhammadesanā -detailed sermon
- sāmuḅbhāsikā dhammadesanā – exalted sermon
- ānupubbikadhammadesanā – graduated sermon
- nippariyāyadesanā -non discursive sermon
- pariyāyadesanā -discursive sermon ⁶⁷

As stated above, language, according to Buddhism is not an absolute phenomenon as recognized in the Brahmanical tradition. It has mainly a psychological basis,

Ven. Nanananda says that the term “papañcasaññāsankhā” in the Madhupiṇḍikasutta refers to language or convention⁶⁸ The discourse clarifies the arising of “papañcasaññāsankhā” as follows:

“Visual consciousness, brethren, arises because of eye and material shapes; the meeting of the three is sensory impingement; because of sensory impingement arises feeling; what one feels one perceives, one reasons about; what one reasons about, one turns into ‘papañca’ papañceti; what one turns into “papañca”, due to that “papañcasaññāsankhā” assail him in regard to material shapes cognizable by the eye, belonging to the past...⁶⁹

According to the above description conventions papañcasaññāsankhā come into being as a result of the psychological process caused by contact between senses and their respective objects. Concepts that arise in consciousness are communicated through words and sentences in a given language. So language necessarily represents thoughts which are considered as meanings.

With regard to the canonical background of the conception of paññatti, the term “sammuti” also is worthy of consideration. As Prof. Y. Karunadasa states both the terms “Sammuti” and “paññatti” are often used in the early Buddhist discourses more or less synonymously to mean things whose reality is based on conventions⁷⁰. Conventions vary in nature owing to various causes and conditions. So the enlightened beings do not become attached to them but use them cautiously⁷¹.

Conclusion

Despite the fact that language has limitations in the process of the realization of truth, Buddhism further emphasizes its usefulness by including language as one of the four branches of logical analysis. They are as follows: Atthapaṭisambhidā–discrimination of meaning, Dhammapaṭisambhidā–discrimination of ideas, Niruttapaṭisambhidā–discrimination of language, Paṭibhānapaṭisambhidā–discrimination of perspicuity⁷², The forgoing observation reveals that the conception of language paññatti which evolved as a theory of language in the post canonical exegetical literature has a close relationship with the early Buddhist conception of communication.

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