

Argument structure in the *Mahābhāṣya*

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The *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali has a unique argument structure. In this text, the arguments are given in a form of a dialogue between students and a teacher. Generally, the dialogs start with a presentation of a topic and continue with a discussion in the form of questions and answers on related issues. The arguments of the teacher, who usually answers the questions and presents the final decision (*siddhānta*) on the topic (and is hence called the *siddhāntin*), are fairly apparent. Thus, one would expect that the argument of the *siddhāntin* would be easy to notice. Yet, in many discussions in the *Mahābhāṣya* the arguments of the *siddhāntin* on a specific topic are lost and difficult to distinguish. The reasons for this are various; for example, the *Bhāṣya* often presents more than one equal answer to a certain issue. Sometimes the *Bhāṣya* provides contradicting conclusions on the same topic. In addition, many hypothetical arguments are given under the assumption that an ultimately discarded assumption would be the case.

In my paper, I select a few discussions from the *Mahābhāṣya* that all start with the same question. They advance in a similar manner and share common phrases. Some are concluded in the same way while others are concluded differently. I make a comparison between these discussions particularly from the aspect of how they are presented and developed, and how they reach the final remarks. In addition, I associate some phrases presented in the discussions with the same phrases given in other places in the *Mahābhāṣya*. I show whether these phrases generate similar succeeding arguments. This method provides information about to whom the arguments and the final remarks in the chosen discussions belong — whether to an *ekadeśin* or to a *siddhāntin*.