

***Tantrayukti*, Tools for Understanding and Interpreting Samhitas: A Review.**

1.Dr. Shital S. Patil,

Asst. Prof., Dept. of Samhita & Siddhant, Hon. Shri Annasaheb Dange Ayurved Medical College, Ashta, Maharashtra.

2.Dr. Anuradha A. Patil

Corresponding Author: Asso. Prof., Dept. of Rasashastra & Bhaishajya Kalpana, Hon. Shri Annasaheb Dange Ayurved Medical College, Ashta, Maharashtra.

Contact: Mob.: 9860554264 , 9673860067, Email: dranuap@gmail.com

ABSTRACT :

We are blessed with *Ayurveda granthas* (treatises) like the *Bruhatrayi* comprising of *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* & *Astanga Hridayam*; the *Laghutrayi* which includes *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Madhava Nidana* & *Bhava Prakasha*, and many others. *Tantra* means *Shashtra* and *yukti* means planning, hence, *Tantrayukti* means planning for /about science.

Tantrayukti helps in understanding the appropriate meaning of the words and statements in the *granthas*. Texts of *Ayurveda* have been composed in *sutras* (shlokas), which is not so common and general in presentation. It is essential to apprehend *Tantrayukti* before reading full treatise of *Ayurveda*. *Tantrayukti* help in reading and understanding the treatises by people of various levels of intelligence.

There may be one meaning for different words or different meanings for one word. There are contexts which have been explained earlier or later, some statements are not clear, some create ambiguousness, where as some are stated in short. *Tantrayukti* is essential to understand appropriate meanings in reference to their contexts.

Key words – *Samhita*, *Tantra*, *Tantrayukti*, *Ayurveda*, reading, understand, etc.

INTRODUCTION:

Tantrayuktis were written to understand the two most important *Samhitas* of *Ayurveda* (*Charaka, Sushruta*) to ease the study of *granthas*. A person studying these *granthas* without proper knowledge of *tantrayukti*, may harm himself by incorrect interpretation, like a person handling weapons without skill. Inappropriate study of *Shastra* by *chikistaka* gives inadequate knowledge which may render harm to the patients. Hence, *tantrayukti* are mentioned to get proper knowledge of pros and cons of *Ayurvedic* treatise.

The word *Tantrayukti* is formed from two words *tantra* and *yukti*.

‘*Tantra*’ - Any treatise composed systematically is called as *tantra*.

‘*Yukti*’ – planning or working in organized manner.

‘*Tantrayukti*’ – it means planning of writing or reading a treatise.

Enlightening the hidden meanings of various statements by appropriate correlation is known as *Tantrayukti*’.

Tantra means *Shastra* and *yukti* means plan, so *Tantrayukti* means planned and proper study of the science.

Synonyms:

Ayurveda, Shakha, vidya, sutra, dnyan, Shastra – all mean the same.

References- various literary techniques – grammatical and compositional are called as ‘*Tantrayukti*’ or techniques of exposition.

Charaka and *Sushruta* have enumerated and elucidated *Tantrayukti* in their respective *Samhita*.

Arundatta, the commentator of *Ashtanga Hridaya* dealt with the *tantrayuktis, tantras* and *doshas* in detail.

Benefits: *Tantrayukti* are helpful in

1. Planning and arrangement of sentences and interpreting meanings of verses.
2. Contradicting and condemning statements of unskilled scholars and helps in establishing ones opinion with proper reasoning.
3. Exploring and understanding the hidden meanings of unclear or brief statements and theories.

While describing the importance of *Tantrayukti* in the study of any *Shastra, Acharya Sushruta* explains that it is essential for *Vakyayojana*, and *Arthayojana*.

- *Vakyayojana*: Rearrangement of sentences

In texts, some sentences are placed at different places and at first sight they reflect to be mutually not related to each other. The tools help to plan these sentences in regular order and thereafter. The messages of the sentences become clear.

- *Arthayojana*: Rearrangement of word meaning
In some places the meaning of any word is not clear or fit to the references.

Number of *tantrayuktis*: *Acharya Charak* has mentioned 36 *tantrayuktis* whereas *Acharya Sushruta* has named 32. *Bhattar Harishchandra* has added 4 more taking the total to 40.

1. ***Adhikarana*: Topic/ Chapter**

A chapter of a particular topic or subject is known as (*Adhikaran*). The subject matter taken as the main topic is described in detail in the particular *Adhikaran*. E.g. The chapter that describes a *roga* (disease) is named by that particular disease – *rogadhikar* viz; *jwaradhikar*, *shwasadhikar*.

2. ***Yoga*: Conjoiner**

In *Sanskrit* verses, the words may not be in the order that they actually are meant to describe as they are more in poetic forms. Hence, combining or joining words to give a proper meaning is necessary. This is known as *Yoga* or *Yojan*. In simple terms, it means rearrangement of words to bring about a meaningful sentence is *Yoga*.

3. ***Hetvartha*: Implication/simulative.**

The inference which is to be fairly understood, although not expressed in words, by implicating the resemblance to the fact that has already been told in other circumstances is *Hetvartha*. The author does not express in actual words, instead similarity with other contexts is given for the reader to speculate the implication of those words.

4. ***Padartha*: Meaning of a word or set of words.**

Word or set of word that possess the capacity of expressing some meaning is known as *Padartha*. Understanding the meaning of word in reference to that particular context is *Padartha*. One word may have different meanings or implications too.

5. ***Pradesh*: Adumbration / vague indication**

When a particular topic is too large to explain in a particular context, then it is limited only to the requirement and the other fragments are described elsewhere in their respective context. This is known as *Pradesh*, according to *Chakrapani*.

6. ***Uddesha*: Briefness/ concise / abstract**

Expressing things in brief is called *Uddesha*. When some long description is expressed though a word or two, it is known as *Uddesha*. When the word *Trisutra* Ayurveda is mentioned, it is to be understood that it implies for etiology, symptomatology and management / treatment for healthy and diseased person.

7. ***Nirdesh*: Elaboration**

Description in detail is *Nirdesh*. When a topic is re-written in detail it is known as *Nirdesh*. Description for the words of *Uddesha* is *Nirdesh*.

8. ***Vakyashesha*: Short / incomplete but understandable sentence**

When a sentence is written in short, but can be understood completely, it is known as *Vakyashesha*. In other words, although unfinished, the sentence elucidates the entire meaning. A sentence is shortened, but the meaning is clear. This may have been done to fit in poetic forms. The words that are omitted or left out are only those without which the meaning of the sentence can be understood.

9. Prayojan: Purposive / objective

The purpose or motive of elaborating a particular topic is *Prayojan*. The purpose of *Ayurveda* is maintaining the equilibrium of *dhatu* which ultimately means protection of the body from diseases, or having a preventive approach.

10. Upadesh: Advisory statements/guideline/instructions.

Advisory statements of the authoritative people are known as *Upadesh*. Statements of instruction or directions given by the authoritative people are also known as *Upadesh*. Such statements may include guidelines / instructions in determining course action.

11. Apadesh: Reasoning a statement/rationale.

Apadesh is a statement with reasons. Cause and effect are expressed together and the reader is expected to infer what is correct. A valid reason provided for achieving an objective is *Apadesh*.

12. Atidesha: Probability or foreseen possibility.

The foreseen possible event based on the current situation is known as *Atidesha*. Expressing the relative likelihood of an event happening. Describing a certain condition by providing information on the foreseen consequences and further mentioning that the same is applicable in other such situations too, is known as *Atidesha*.

13. Arthapatti: Presumption.

Presuming or understanding the unsaid part based on what has been expressed is known as *Arthapatti*. A particular part of a subject is expressed and expected from the readers to understand or presume the implied meaning. It is a condition upon which something is presumed. *Arthapatti* is also considered as one of the *Pramanas*.

14. Nirnaya: Making decision / Concluding

Thoughtful establishment of a meaning after discussion on various aspects of the subject is *Nirnaya*. It can be known as the ultimate decision reached after many rounds of enquiries and arguments or debates.

15. Prasanga- Contextual repetition

When a topic is repeated in reference to the present context or again in further topics, it is known as *Prasanga*. Sometimes, it becomes obligatory to repeat things along with the flow of discussion in order to make the subject understandable. These are occasional essential repetitions.

16. Ekanta- Certainty

That which is said with conviction is *Ekanta*. In other words, that which declines other opinions or views and confirms a view with certainty is *Ekanta*. A particular fact or event is mentioned with utmost specificity. It gives a definitive understanding to the reader about a particular topic.

17. Anaikanta: Uncertainty / Ambiguity

This goes exactly opposite to *Ekanta*. There are certain topics which are expressed differently in different contexts i.e. there is no certainty in the opinion or view, this is known as *Anaikanta*. The reader does not get clarity on a particular topic. While describing *dravya*, it is said that it may act as a whole or by its *rasa/ virya/vipaka/ prabhav*.

18. Apavarga: Exception

When an exception is mentioned for some generalized theory it is known as *Apavarga*. The rule is usually true, but there are a few exceptions.

19. Viparyaya: Reconfirmation of implied meaning/action

This is similar to *Arthapatti*, but is more confirmative.

20. Purvapaksha: Objection / Questioning

Act of objecting or cross questioning is *Purvapaksha*. An act of objecting or a statement expressing objection to an earlier statement is *Purvapaksha*.

21. Vidhan: Sequential statement of a particular topic

Explanation of a particular topic given in a sequential manner as required for the context is called *Vidhan*. Such arrangement in sequence / order / category is essential for proper and better understanding of the topic.

22. Anumat: Consideration

Taking in to account or accepting opinion of other scholars without any objection is *Anumat*.

23. Vyakhyan: Explanation/ elaboration

Elaborating a particular topic to the level which can be understood even by a person with lowest level of intellect is known as *Vyakhyan*. Explaining the meanings in between the words, (not expressed clearly) in detail with all technicalities is known as *Vyakhyan*.

24. Samshaya: Uncertainty / Doubt

In between two contradictory statements about a topic when there arises a question of which one to accept, it is known as doubt (*samshaya*). When multiple options / alternatives about a topic are given, there arises a doubt of which one to accept. This is known as *Samshaya*.

25. Atitavekshana: Retrospection

When an author refers to the previously described topics again in the present context, it is known as *Atitavekshan*. i.e. going back to the previous chapters for the reference.

26. Anagatavekshana: Anticipation

When an author suggests readers to refer the current topic in forth coming chapters, it is known as *Anagatavekshan*. i.e. going forward to get the references. Mention of referring a forth coming chapter for the details regarding the present context is *Anagatavekshan*.

27. Svasandhya- Terminologies

The technical terminologies pertaining to a particular science, which have meanings different from other literatures or general terminologies are *swasandhya*.

28. Uhya: Logical thinking

When something has not been mentioned in the literature but is to be understood on the basis of intelligence and logic is known as *uhya*. Understanding a topic and bringing into practice based on the need and utility according to the circumstances is *uhya*.

29. Samucchaya: Conglomeration

Describing two or more things at a point is *Samucchaya*. Mention of different things with a small common factor in one context is *Samuchhaya*. It is grouping things with some common element.

30. Nidarshana: Illustrating / exemplify

Explaining something with such illustrations and examples which are understandable to both wise and fools is *Nidarshana*. Establishing a fact with popular examples is *Nidarshana*. Clarifying something by giving or serving as, an example or comparison is *Nidarshana*. Generally the similes used are so common that it can be understood by all grades of people.

31. Nirvachana: Terminology / Definition

The definitive derivations and terminologies which can only be understood by wise people are known as *nirvachan*. The statements can be understood and interpreted only by the people of a particular expertise or profession.

32. Sanniyoga: Injunction

A statement of enjoining, directing, commanding or prohibiting is *Sanniyoga*. That which is an order or a mandate is *Sanniyoga*. The sentence that directs to do or to refrain from doing certain acts is *Sanniyog*.

33. Vikalpa: Alternative options.

When alternative choices or options are mentioned or made available in the treatment and management of disease or in any other context, it is known as *vikalpa*. Availability of multiple choices for a particular thing is *vikalpa*.

When *vikalpa* are given, the sentence contains the word 'vaa' which indicates choices. Sometime, the choice may be given without using the word 'vaa' which means that the choices may be used as alternatives or in combination.

34. Pratyustaar: Disapproval

To condemn or consider an opinion to be inappropriate is known as *Pratyustaar*. *Acharya sushruta* has not mentioned *pratyustar*.

35. *Uddhar*: Refutation

An act of disproving an opinion or theory by argument is *Uddhar*. In other words it means proving something to be false with rationale and putting forward ones' own theory. *Uddhar tantrayukti* has not been mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta*.

36. *Sambhav*: Source of origin.

The source of origin of a thing is known as its *Sambhav*. It may also be a consequence of an event.

Acharya Sushrut has not included this in *tantrayukti*. *Bhattar Harishchandra* has added 4 more *tantrayuktis* to the list of above mentioned 36. They are *Pariprashna*, *Vyakaran*, *Vyutkrantabhidhan* and *Hetu*.

37. *Pariprashna*:

This is similar to *Uddeshtantrayukti*. Something when expressed in brief is *pariprashna*.

38. *Vyakaran*:

This is similar to *Vyakhyan*. Explaining a point in detail is *vyakaran*.

39. *Vyutkrantabhidhana*:

This is same as *Nirdeshtantrayukti*. Elaborating a point in detail again is *vyutkrantabhidhan*.

40. *Hetu*:

Hetu is considered same as *pratyakshadipraman*.

Thus, there are 32 *tantrayuktis* mentioned by *Acharya Sushrut*, 36 by *Acharya Charak* and 40 by *Bhattarharishchandra*.

USES-

Tantrayukti help one to understand the meaning of the *shastra* (treatise) as a pond of lotus blooms upon getting sunlight or a house gets illuminated by lamp. *Tantrayuktis* help one to understand a science easily. The other advantages of having the knowledge of *tantrayukti* are.

1. *Charaka Samhita Siddhistan*, 12/47, 48

Understanding one science through the knowledge of another: if a person has good knowledge of a particular science, then with the help of *tantrayuktis* he/she becomes capable of understanding any other science too.

If a *chikitasak* studies the science of medicine without proper knowledge of *tantrayukti*, then he/she does not become capable of understanding that science. E.g. A person does not gain wealth unless he is fortunate enough i.e. One cannot gain wealth if he/she is unlucky.

2. *Charaka Samhita Siddhistan*, 12/49, 50.

Improperly gained knowledge can affect a person like a person who hurts oneself while using weapons without the proper knowledge of handling one. On the contrary, properly studied *shastra* (science) protects like a man with proper knowledge of handling weapons protects oneself and the community around. Hence it becomes necessary for a person to know *tantrayukti* before studying any *shastra*.

3. *Sushruta Uttarantra* 65/5

With the help of *tantrayuktis* one can identify the false statement and becomes capable of proving the truth with proper use of words.

4. *Sushruta Uttarantra*, 65/6

Tantrayuktis also help in understanding the hidden meaning of words and getting the complete and thorough knowledge of topics which have been briefly mentioned.

DISCUSSION:

Ancient classics are found to possess scientific approach while dealing with the topics. Uniform standards of writing treatises were mentioned by the authors of ancient days. The words used in *Ayurveda* which may not have been clarified where they are used are told in the chapter of *shastraadhyaya*. Thus, understanding the proper meaning of the words at suitable places is *Tantrayukti*.

All the treatises of *Ayurveda* have been composed in *Sutras* and are not so common and general in their presentation, that they can be easily understood by various levels of intelligence. All these *granthas* were revised and reedited by scholars, as *Agniveshtantra* was redacted bearing a new name as *Charak Samhita*, supplemented by *Dradhabela*. Similarly, *Sushrut Samhita* was expounded by *Divodas* compiled by *Sushruta* supplemented by *Nagarjuna* and retouched by *Chandrat*. Similarly other *Ayurveda Samhitas* also were revised / reedited. The last 17 chapters of *chikistasthana*, the *siddhi* and *kalpasthana* were added to the *Charaka Samhita* by *Drudhabal*. It is general experience that simply reading of any *Samhita* will not help an individual to understand the accurate meaning expressed by the original authors.

When one understands the *tantrayukti*, it is realized that they stand true even for the modern reference books. The *tantrayukti* are used by these modern authors too, but have not been defined or elucidated with such distinctness and details. This shows the ancient treatise were scientific and technically perfect in their presentation. Hence, anybody studying *shastra* without understanding *tantrayukti* cannot gain proper knowledge of the science and may face defeat in the debates. *Tantrayukti* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* classics are not merely to understand the hidden meaning of classical texts, but are also found useful in designing researches.

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