

## Secret of accent as depicted in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*

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Accent plays a very crucial role in comprehending the meaning of the Vedic verses and Pāṇini explains this issue very deeply. But there are some differences between Pāṇini's description and that of *Prātiśākhya*. So a question might arise here as to what extent Pāṇini could define and explain the accent and its types. This paper intends to get an answer to this question and for this accent-related sutras are proposed to be studied.

Pāṇini directly describes the following five accents in the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*.

1. *Udātta* The vowel that is perceived as having a high tone is called *udātta* or acutely accented. (*uccair udāttaḥ*, 1.2.29) For instance, in the verse of the Ṛgveda: *anuttamā te maghavan* (Ṛg. 1.165.9), the first vowel *a* and the last vowel *ā* of *anuttamā* are both *udātta* vowels.
2. *Anudātta* The vowel that is perceived as having a low tone is called *anudātta* or gravely accented. (*nīcāir anudāttaḥ*, 1.2.30) In the abovementioned Ṛgvedic verse, the vowel *a* of *-van* is an *anudātta* vowel.
3. *Svarita* The vowel that has the combination of *udātta* and *anudātta* tones is said to be *svarita* or circumflexly accented. (*samāhāraḥ svaritaḥ*, 1.2.31) In the aforesaid Ṛgvedic verse, the vowel *u* of *anuttamā* is a *svarita* vowel.  
Although *svarita* is defined here as a combination of two accents, its composition is yearned. So Pāṇini clears this thing in his further sutra: Of *svarita* the first portion is *udātta*, to the extend of a half measure, or prosodial length. (*tasyādīta udāttam ardhahrasvam*, 1.2.32)
4. *Ekaśruti* *Ekaśruti* is that which is perceived when a person is addressed in it; there is an absence of all the three tones mentioned alone; there is no definite pitch. It is therefore the ordinary recitative tone. (*ekaśruti dūrāt sambuddhau*, 1.2.33)
5. *Sannatara* The accent called *sannatara* is that which was originally *anudātta* and which is preceded by a *svarita* vowel and is followed by an *udātta* or *svarita* vowel.  
The *sannatara* vowel is pronounced lower than a mere *anudātta*. *Udāttasvarita-parasya sannataraḥ* (1.2.40) provides: the accent called *sannatara* occurs in place of an *anudātta* vowel which is followed by an *udātta* or *svarita* vowel.

Pāṇini describes only these kinds of accents but other scholars like Patañjali and the *Prātiśākhya*s describe other kinds like *anudāttatara* and *udātta* in *svarita* and many sub-divisions like dependent-*svarita* and independent-*svarita*. This paper attempts to find a solution to the problem of these new divisions and sub-divisions.