Introduction to Panini's Grammar

It is almost impossible to learn a foreign language without the study of grammar. In learning Sanskrit, the study of grammar plays a very important part. Among various Sanskrit grammatical systems, Panini's is the most significant and the most authoritative. The original work of Panini's grammar is called Astadhyayi. Previously students of Sanskrit used to commit to memory the whole work containing some 4,000 sutras. It was only then that they were able to form correct words. However, this system was somewhat difficult for students, and new arrangements of Panini's sutras were introduced to facilitate better orientation in his system of grammar. Bhattoji Dikshita's Vaiyakarana Siddhanta Kaumudi is the foremost of them. In the following introduction to the Sanskrit grammar, I will follow the format of Siddhanta Kaumudi. I will especially draw on a booklet titled Prarambha Paniniyam by Pt. Vishvanath Sastri. I hope it will help the interested students to make the first step on the path toward the knowledge of traditional Sanskrit grammar. It is advised that those who want to take full advantage of this introduction be acquainted with the basics of the Sanskrit language.

श्रीहरि: श्रणम् ।
श्रीगणेशाय नमः | श्रीसरस्वत्याय नमः ।
अथ संज्ञाप्रकरणम्

Definitions of Grammatical Terms

(शिवसूताणिणि)

अ इ उ ण् | ऋ ल क् | ए ओ ड् | ऐ औ च् | ह य व र ट् | ल ण् | झ म ड ण न म् | झ भ ज् | घ ठ ध ष् | ज ब ग ढ द श् | ख फ छ ठ थ च ट त व् | क प य् | श ष स र् | ह ल् ॥

The above mentioned fourteen sutras containing the Sanskrit alphabet are called प्रत्याहारसूत्राणिणि or अक्षरसमाम्नाय or शिवसूत्राणिणि or माहेश्वरणि सूत्राणि. It is believed that they come directly from Lord Siva. At the end of each sutra is a consonant with virama that does not belong to the alphabet. Its purpose is to designate a group of sounds in the most shortest and effective way by combining the first sound of the group with the consonant. In this way, अण्, for example, designates the vowels अ, इ, and उ; एँ, the
diphongs ए and ओ. These consonants following the sounds of the alphabet are called *it*. Consonants of the alphabet appear together with a-kara for better pronunciation.

1 उपदेशोःजननादिकं इत् (९.१३)

A nasal अच्छ is [called] इत्त in प्रत्याहारसूत्र s.

It is to be noted here that this nasality is not marked in writing.

2 हलन्त्यम् (९.१३)

The final (हल) [is called इत्].

3 अदर्शेन लोपः (९.१६)

Absence is called लोप.

4 तस्य लोपः (९.१६)

लोप pertains to इत्.

On account of this sutra, इत् disappears in the process of formation of words.

5 आदिदृत्वेऽवहता (९.१६)

The first [sound] together with the final इत् [designate everything that is between them].

Thus, अण्ड designates the vowels अ, इ, and ०; एड, the diphongs ए and ओ, etc.

6 उकालोङ्ग्स्य हस्तदीर्घपल्लुत् (९.१३)

According to the time [needed for pronunciation] of ऋ, अच्छ is [called] हस्त्व (short), दीर्घ (long), or प्लुत.

ऋ is a short vowel, ॠ long, and ॢ ४ प्लुत.
A vowel pronounced] in raised tone is [called] उदात.

[A vowel pronounced] in unraised tone is [called] अनुदात.

A conjuction [of both] is [called] स्वरित.

A sound] pronounced by the mouth and the nose is [called] अनुनासिक (nasal).

[Sounds pronounced] with the same action of the mouth are [called] स्वर्ण (homogenous).

Thus अ, आ, कवर्ग (क, ख, ग, घ, ड) and ह are homogenous because they are pronounced in the throat (कण्ठ). इ, ई, चवर्ग (च, छ, ज,झ, ज) and य are homogenous because they are pronounced in the palate (तालु), etc.

अण and उदित [designate], if they are not प्रत्यय (suffixes), [their] homogenous sounds.

अण stands for vowels and semivowels, i.e. for all sounds from अ to the second ण (ण of लण). उदित means इत्स that contain an उ as कु, चु, टु, तु, पु, whereas क is कवर्ग, चु चवर्ग, etc.

The closest mutual union [of sounds] is [called] संहिता.
It is also called sandhi.

[A group of] हल् (consonants) following one another is [called] संयोग.

[Anything] ending with सुप (case suffix) or तिङ्ग (personal suffix) is [called] पद (word).

[The sound] preceding the final अल् [i.e. an sound of the alphabet] is [called] उपधा.

इति संजाप्रकरणाम्
अथ अच-संधि:

Vowel Sandhi

इक् is substituted by यण.

In case of सहिता or sandhi, इक् is substituted by यण, whereas, according to the rules outlined in the previous prakarana, इक् stands for इ, उ, ऋ, ल और यण for य, व, र, ल. 

The closest related [is substituted] in place of the other.

Thus, on account of this sutra, if इ, उ, ऋ, ल at the end of a word meets another vowel in the onset of the following word or if they meet within a word in the process of formation of correct words, they change into य, व, र, ल respectively. इकार changes
into यकार, as in सुधी = उपास्यः=सुध्युपास्यः; उकार changes into वकार as in मधु + अरः = मध्वरः etc.

१९ एचौःयवायवः (६११६८)
एचौ is substituted by अयः, अदः, आयः, आदः.
एचौ stands for diphthongs एः, ऐः, ओः, ओः. Examples: हरि + एः = हरयः; विष्णु + एः =
विष्णवः; नैः + अकः = नायकः; पौः + अकः = पायकः; etc.

२० अदेंः गुणः (९१६२)
अत् and एः are [called] गुणः.

On account of the sutra तपस्तकालस्य which will be explained immediately after this
sutra, अत् means the sound अ only. एः stands for diphthongs ए and ओः.

२१ तपस्तकालस्य (९१७०)

[A vowel] with attached त् [designates the vowel] of that quantity.

Thus, अत् stands for अ only, and not also for आ, which is the same sound in quality but
different in quantity. We have seen that long vowels are absent in the प्रत्याहारसूत्र s.
There, a short vowel is considered to contain also the respective long vowel. Without
this sutra, it would be impossible to distinguish between short and longs vowels if
necessary.

२२ आदेंः (६१८६)

For अ और आ followed by a vowel, गुण is substituted.

Examples: उप + इन्द्रः = उपेन्द्रः; गंगा + उदकम् = गंगोदकम्, गज + इन्द्रः = गजेन्द्रः; etc.

२३ उणः रपः (९१६९)

ऋ and ॠ preceded by अः are substituted by रः.
As it has been already explained, अण् stands for अ, इ, and उ. Examples: कृष्ण + ऋद्वि: = कृष्णद्धि:, राज + ऋषि: = राजर्षि:, etc.

२४ वृङ्गिराधि (९१११)

आत्म and ऐघ are called वृङ्गि.

आत्म stands for आ, and ऐघ for ऐ and ओः.

२५ वृङ्गिरेचि (६११८)

For अ or आ followed by a vowel, वृङ्गि is substituted.

Examples: कृष्ण + एकत्वम् = कृष्णोकत्वम्, गंगा + ओः = गंगोः, देव + एण्ययम् = देवषययम्.

२६ अक: सवर्ण दीघ: (६१११०१)

If अक् is followed by a homogenous vowel, [both are substituted by the respective] long vowel.

अक् designates अ, इ, उ, ऋ, and ल. Examples: देत्य + अरि: = देत्यारि:, श्री + इशः = श्रीशः, विष्णु + उदयः = विष्णूदयः, होत्र + ऋकारः = होतृकारः.

२७ एड: पदान्तादति (६१११०९)

एड [standing] at the end of a word and followed by अत् is substituted by एड itself.

एड designates ए and ओः. Examples: अग्नि + अत् = अग्नेत्रः, कृष्णो + अहम् = कृष्णोःहम्.

२८ दूराद्वते च (८११८४)

And also when calling from a distance [the vowel becomes पङ्खुत].

Example: आगच्छ भो: माणवक देवदत्तः |
२९ प्रत्येक शब्द के अंत में 'ँ' नहीं लगाया जाता।

[Vowels that are] प्लूत और प्रगृह [do not undergo any change] before अच्छ.

Example: आच्छ, कृप्न अत्र गौँधरति। प्रगृह are sounds that are not subject to the rules of sandhi.

३० द्विवचन (dual) [ending] in ईत, ऊत, and एत is [called] प्रगृह.

Examples: धनुषी एते, विष्णू इत्यादि, कुले उत्कृष्टे, etc.

इत्यच-सन्धि

अथ हल-सन्धि:

Consonant Sandhi

३१ स्त्रोत सुना श्यु (८१४०)

If स् (सकार) or तु (तवग) meets श् (शकार) or चु (चवग), श् and च् are substituted [for सकार and तवग].

Examples: रामस् + शैले = मेंशैले, रामस् + चिनोति = रामन्धिनोति, चत् + चित् = सच्चित्,
शाइलिन् + जय् = शाइलिन्धजय्, कृष्णस् + चपल् = कृष्णाचपल्, ग्रामात् + चलित् =
ग्रामाचलित्।

३२ ज्ञान ज्ञानकन्ते (८१८९)

At the end [of a word], ज्ञि is substituted by जश्.

Examples: वाक् + ईश् = वाणीश्, मत् + आगमनम् = मद्

[At the end of a word,] यद् can optionally be substituted by a nasal before a nasal.
Examples: एतत् + मुरारि: = एतमुरारि:, वाक् + मधु = वाळधु: ष्ट् + मनोहरम् = सन्मनोहरम्, उद् + मानम् = उमानम्, भृंक + मन्त्र: = भृंमत्र:।

34 खरि च (८.१.९४)

Also before खर् [झ़ल् changes into चर्].

Example: अस्मद् + पुत्र: = अस्मपुत्रः।

35 मोनुस्वार: (८.१.२३)

[At the end of a word,] anusvara is substituted for म्.

Examples: हरिम् + वन्दे = हरिर् वन्दे, ग्रामम् + गच्छति = ग्रामं गच्छति, कृष्णम् + नमति = कृष्णण नमति।

36 नष्ठापदांत्तथ झ़लि (८.१.२४)

Before झ़ल् anusvara is substituted also for न् [i.e. for म् and also for न्] that does not stand at the end of a word (अपदान्त).।

Examples: यशान् + सि = यशाःसि, वासान् + सि = वासाःसि, आक्रम् + स्यते = आक्रंस्यते, प्रणाम् + स्यते = प्रणाःस्यते।

37 अनुस्वारस्य यथि परस्वर्यः (८.४.६८)

Before यस्य [that does not stand at the end of a word], the corresponding nasal is substituted for anusvara.

Examples: शां + त: = शान्त:, अं + चित: = अइक्त:, अं + चित: = अचित:, कुं + ठित: = कुणित:, घं + थ: = ग्रन्थ:, दां + त: = दान्त:, गं + फित: = गुम्फितः।

38 थमो हस्वादचि ढमुण्य निस्त्यम् (८.१.३२)
After ः, ण, and न (ःम्) preceded by a short vowel (ःस्व) [if they are at the end of a पद], the same nasal is always (नित्यम्) added to the beginning of the next vowel (अच).

ःमुट् refers to ःम् occurring at the onset of a पद. Examples: प्रत्यइ + आत्मा = प्रत्यइःआत्मा, सुगण् + ईश् = सुगणीश्, सन् + अच्युत = सन्नच्युत:।

३९ छे च (६.१.७३)

[त् is added to the preceding vowel] also before ः.

Example: शिव + छाया = शिवच्छाया। त् in शिवत् changes into शिवच् on account of the sutra स्तोऽ: धुना धुः: which has been explained at the beginning of this section about consonant sandhi. Therefore, the correct final form is शिवच्छाया.

इति हल्ल-सन्धिः।

अथ विसर्गसन्धिः

Visarga Sandhi

४० ससुजोरु: (८.२.६६)

[At the end of a word], ः is substituted for स् and for [ष in] सज्जुः.

� is a kind of secondary ः that undergoes other changes than the primary ः. Examples: अशिः + अत्र = अशिःत्र, वायुस् + अत्र = वायुत्र।

४१ खरवसासनयोविसर्जनीयः (८.३.१५)

Visarga is substituted [for ः] before खर् and in a pause.

४२ विसर्जनीयस्य स्: (८.३.३४)
Visarga is substituted by स् [if it is followed by ख़्]

Example: विष्णु: + नाता = विष्णुख़्ताता। According to the sutra खरवसासनयोविसर्जनीयः (sutra 41), र् (that was actually स् before sutra सस्ज्ञो र् was applied) was changed into visarga. The present sutra introduces another change. It must also be noted in this connection that स् can undergo further changes, for example, as per the sutra स्तो: भुना श्वः (sutra 31).

४३ अतो रोप्पलुनालप्पुते (६.१९२३)

[उत् is substituted] for र् if अत् that is not प्लुत precedes and follows it.

Example: शिवस् + अच्य: = शिवोच्चच्यः। शिवस् becomes शिवर् according to the sutra सस्ज्ञो र्:; and according to the present sutra र् in शिवर changes into त; so it will become शिव + त्. The sutra आदुः: (sutra 21) teaches that अ + त् = ओ, and we get the form शिवोच्चच्यः. Then we have to apply the sutra एड़: वदाल्तादति (sutra 27) according to which अ is dropped. Hence the final correct form शिवोच्चच्यः। In the same way we get forms like शुद्रोहम्, बुद्रोस्सम्, छात्रोश्यम्।

४४ हशि च (६.१९२४)

Also before हशः

उत् is substituted for र् also before हशः if अत् that is not प्लुत precedes it. Examples: शिवस् + वन्यः = शिवो वन्यः। Again, according to the present sutra र् in शिवर changes into त्; so it will become शिव + त्. The sutra आदुः: (sutra 21) teaches that अ + त् = ओ, and we get the form शिवो वन्यः। In the same way we get forms like रामो वदति, कृष्णो जयति, कायो डीयते, कर्मो ददाति, व्यासो ब्रूते।

४५ भोभमो अघोअपूर्वस्य योःशि (८.३१७)

य् is substituted [for र्] before अश् and after भो, भगो, अघो and if preceded by अ or आ।
are actually निपातs (particles) ending in स. Example: देवार् + इह = देवायिह, भोर + अत्र = भोयत्र. However, this इह is dropped as some like Sakalya teach, and we can get the form देवा इह.

46 इति सर्वेषाम् (८.३.२२)

In the opinion of all, [इह is dropped] before हल.

Examples: भो देवाः, भगो नमस्ते, अघो याहि, देवा नमस्ति, धामिका वर्धन्ते, भता भजन्ति, बाला रमते, याज्ञिका यान्ति, विप्रद दयते.

47 रो रि (८.३.१४)

० [is dropped] before ०.

48 द्रोपदे पूर्वस्य दीर्घार्थः (६.३.१२)

If ० and ० are dropped, the preceding अण् becomes दीर्घ.

Examples: पुनर् + रमते = पुना रमते, हरिर् + रम्यः = हरी रम्यः, शम्भूर् + राजते = शम्भू राजते, निर् + रसः = नीरसः, प्रातर् + रमते = प्राता रमते.

49 एततादः सुलोपोऽकोरन्नस्मासे हलि (६.१.१२)

In एतद् and तद् [the case ending] सू is dropped before हल् if ककार is not [added to them], or if they are not in नन्समास.

What is सू will be explained in the next prakarana. नन्समास is a negation compound.

Examples: एष्टस + विष्णुः = एष विष्णु, सस्त्र शम्भुः = स शम्भुः. And in the same way we get forms like एष शोभते, स चलति, स गच्छति, स च. However, एष्ठो, अनेषो, सको or असो ददाति.

इति विसर्गसन्धि: |