

The Present Forms of the Root *bhāṣ* in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*

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1. Introduction

The verb *bhāṣ* 'to speak' is conjugated in the middle voice as 3 sg. ind. *bhāṣate*, 3 sg. opt. *bhāṣeta* etc. from Vedic literature to the classical Sanskrit. In the metrical portion of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*, there are many active forms such as 3 sg. ind. *bhāṣati*, 3 pl. ind. *bhāṣanti* etc. However, middle forms of the *bhāṣ* are met with in the prose portion. The difference in readings may indicate the presence of textual strata in the Saddhp (→ 4.).

This paper concludes that the presents of *bhāṣ* in the original Saddhp were usually conjugated in the active and probably in the aorist if in the past tense (→ 2.3.). These wording, partially survived in the prose portion of Central Asian manuscripts, were replaced in the Gilgit and Nepalese traditions by middle forms and then by the presents with *sma* (→ 2.4.). Particularly for the optative, reliable readings are in active (→ 3.). Lüshun B18R8 reads *bhāṣī- syād yathedam*. It is characteristic construction of some *Dhāraṇī* literature, as previous studies have pointed out (→ 5.).

2. Paradigm

The conjugations of the *bhāṣ* in the metrical portion of the Saddhp are in the table below, based on the KN/WT. Forms in the metrical portion are mainly in the active.

	active (53 occurrences)	middle (14 occurrences)
ind.	1 sg. <i>bhāṣāmi</i> II ⁶ , V ³ , XI ¹ , XIII ¹ , XV ² ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣati</i> I ³ , II ¹ , III ¹ , V ² , XIII ² , XVIII ³ ; 3 pl. <i>bhāṣanti</i> V ¹ , VIII ¹ , XVIII ¹ ; <i>bhāṣant</i> ⁴ II ¹	2 sg. <i>bhāṣase</i> V ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣate</i> II ² , III ¹ , IV ¹ , XIII ¹ , XVIII ¹ ; 3 pl. <i>bhāṣante</i> XII ¹
ipv.	2 sg. <i>bhāṣa</i> VII ² , XIV ¹	2 sg. <i>bhāṣasva</i> II ² ; 2 pl. <i>bhāṣadhvam</i> XI ²
opt.	1/3 sg. <i>bhāṣe</i> III ¹ , VII ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣi</i> X ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣet</i> XI ⁴ , XII ² , XIII ¹ , XV ¹	3 sg. <i>bhāṣeta</i> XVIII ¹
pres. pt.	<i>bhāṣant</i> - I ¹ , VII ² , X ² , XIV ¹ , XVI ¹ , XVIII ¹	<i>bhāṣamāṇa</i> - XIII ¹
aor.	<i>abhāṣi</i> VII ¹	

On the other hand, active forms seem to be exceptional in the prose portion.

active (11 occurrences)		middle (93 occurrences)
ind.	1 sg. <i>bhāṣāmi</i> X ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣati</i> XVIII ¹	2 sg. <i>bhāṣase</i> XI ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>bhāṣate</i> V ² , VII ¹ , XI ¹ , XIII ¹ , XXI ¹ , XXVII ¹ ; 2 pl. <i>bhāṣadhve</i> V ¹ ; 3 pl. <i>bhāṣante</i> III ¹ , XX ¹
impf.		2 du. <i>abhāṣetām</i> XII ¹ ; 3 sg. <i>abhāṣata</i> I ¹ , II ⁶ , III ² , IV ¹ , V ² , VI ¹ , VII ³ , VIII ¹ , IX ⁵ , X ² , XI ⁴ , XIII ³ , XIV ² , XV ¹ , XVI ³ , XVII ² , XVIII ⁵ , XIX ¹ , XX ¹ , XXIV ² ; 3 pl. <i>abhāṣanta</i> III ¹ , VI ¹ , VII ¹ , VIII ¹ , XII ¹ , XIV ¹
ipv.	3 sg. <i>bhāṣatu</i> XV ⁶ , III ¹	3 sg. <i>bhāṣatām</i> II ⁴ , III ¹
opt.	1 sg. <i>bhāṣeyam</i> XX ¹ ; 3 pl. <i>bhāṣeyus</i> XI ¹	3 sg. <i>bhāṣeta</i> XVI ¹ ; 3 pl. <i>bhāṣeran</i> XV ¹
pres.pt.		<i>bhāṣamāṇa</i> - V ³ , VII ¹ , XI ² , XX ¹

The following is an overview of the main points, with some examples.

2.1. Active forms are commoner in the metrical portion

On the 3rd singular *bhāṣati*, there are a total of 13 examples, 12 of which occur in the metrical portion. The 3rd plural *bhāṣanti* has a total of four examples, all in the metrical portion. There are two instances of opt. *bhāṣe*, which can be interpreted as 1st sg. (BHSG §29.8) or 3rd sg. active (BHSG §29.12): Saddhp VII 91b *ayaṃ pratyayo yena hu dharma bhāṣe* “This is why I thereby speak the law” (KN 195,5 = WT 172,14 ~ Kashg 187b1 *aya pratyayo yeneha dharma bhāṣami*); III 144a *yo dharmu bhāṣe pariṣāya madhye* “If someone is to speak the law in the congregation” (KN 98,7 = WT 93,22 = Gilg B: 223,8 ~ Kashg 101a3 *yo dharma bhāṣet ...*). KN 236,3 *bhāṣi* is understood as optative: Saddhp X 23d *abhūto bhāṣi paṇḍitaḥ* “The wise should speak without fear” (KN 236,8 = WT 204,15 ~ Kashg 225a2 *atīto bhāṣi paṇḍitaḥ*).

2.2. Middle forms are somewhat questionable in the metrical portion

In the metrical portion, there are some middle forms. However, these readings seem to be uncertain. For the 2nd singular *bhāṣasva* ⇔ *bhāṣāhi*: Saddhp II 33a *vispaṣṭu bhāṣasva jināna uttamā* “Speak clearly, Oh Supreme One of the victors” (KN 36,9 = WT 34,17 ⇔ Kashg 43a5 *vispaṣṭa bhāṣāhi narendrarājā*); II 35a *bhāṣasva dharmam dvipadānam uttamā* “Speak the law, Oh Supreme One of the two-legged ones” (KN 38,2 = WT 35,15 ⇔ Kashg 44a6 *bhāṣāhi dharmam dvipadottamā*). The active ipv. *bhāṣāhi* would be an original reading in the metrical portion as other forms are,¹⁾ and it seems to have been replaced by *bhāṣasva* because it is metrically equivalent and grammatically preferred.

For the 3rd sg. *bhāṣeta*. Saddhp XVIII 1ab: *ya imaṃ sūtra bhāṣeta parṣāsu ca viśāradaḥ* “If anyone speak of this *sūtra* in the congregations, without fear ...” (KN 354,12

= WT 300,16 = Gilgit A: 133,12 = B: 265,13 ~ Kashgar XIX: 341b5-6 *ya idaṃ sūtram bhāṣeta pariṣa(n) ma(dhye...)*). It cannot be ruled out that the middle forms had already been introduced in the metrical portion of Chapter XVIII. But a reference to XVIII1c *prakāśeyā* opens up the possibility of revision **bhāṣeya > bhāṣeta*.

2.3. Impf. *abhāṣata*, *abhāṣanta* in stock phrases

There are a lot of stock phrases in which mid. impf. 3rd sg. *abhāṣata*, 3rd pl. *abhāṣanta* are used. But we can find the 3rd du. act. impf. *adhy-abhāṣatām* KN XXV: 462,2 = WT 378,3-4. On the other hand, 3rd du. mid. impf. *abhāṣetām* occurs in KN XII: 267,2 = WT 229,3 but its parallel Kashg XIII: 256a3 reads *bhāṣi(ṃ)su*. Presumably these must originally have been aorist forms, as seen in the following variants: KN VIII: 212,4 = WT 186,16 *abhāṣata* ~ Kashg 202a1 *abhāṣu(h)* ~ Lüshun B-8-V8 *bhāṣi*; KN XIV 308,7 = WT 261,15 = Gilg A: 106,3 *abhāṣata* = Kashg XV: 295b4 *abhāṣata* ~ Lüshun A-13-R8 *bhāṣī**. As stated above, the Lüshun shows the aorists. Therefore, it is possible that the *abhāṣata*, *abhāṣanta* attested in the KN/WT (or later manuscripts) were originally aorists.

2.4. Presents with *sma*

A particle *sma* is used with the indicative present for expressing a repeated act in the past.³⁾ In the Saddhp, however, the construction often only seems to mean simply the past. Conclusively, it would be aorists in origin, and aorist forms occasionally survives in the Central Asian manuscripts such as Kashg 74a7 *bhāṣi[m]nsu*. Later traditions may have altered or stylized them to be imperfect or historical present (ex. Kashg XIV: 277b4 *bhāṣati*) furthermore adding *sma* to indicate that they are in the context of past.

KN III: 69,12 = WT 67,23 <i>bhāṣante sma</i> (~ Gilg B: 208,18-19 <i>abhāṣante sma</i>) ⇔ Kashg 74a7 <i>bhāṣi[m]nsu</i> ·
KN XIII: 290,3 = WT 247,14-15 <i>bhāṣate sma</i> ⇔ Kashg XIV: 277b2 <i>bhāṣati sma</i> ·
KN XIII: 290,4 = WT 247,17 <i>bhāṣate sma</i> ⇔ Kashg XIV: 277b4 <i>bhāṣati</i> ·
KN XIII: 290,12-291,1 = WT 248,1 <i>bhāṣate sma</i> ⇔ Kashg XIV: 278b4 <i>bhāṣati sma</i> ·
KN XX: 390,2 = WT 330,2 <i>bhāṣante sma</i> (~ Gilg A: 152,32 <i>bhāṣate sma</i>) ⇔ Kashg XXI: 376a7 <i>babhāṣuḥ</i> Pf.

3. Optatives

It must be said that the active forms are certain and commoner. The middle optative forms are uncertain, although they are attested in some manuscripts.

As for 1st singular, the reading act. *bhāṣeyam* is widely attested and confirmed in

multiple manuscripts: KN XX: 391,2^p = WT 330,20 = Kashg XXI: 377b4-5 *bhāṣeyaṃ* ~ Kolkata 174b7 *bhāṣeya* (ṃ) ~ T8 98a8 *bhāṣeyan* (↔ Cambridge 127b1 = British Library 141b1 *bhāṣeyan*). Gilg A: 153,12 *bhāṣeyā* would be a Middle Indo-Aryan form (§BHS 29.29), not 1st singular middle *bhāṣeya* in classical Sanskrit, referring to Gilg B: 280,28 *bhāṣeyaṃ* (= Kashg). At the original stage of the Saddhp, the prose portion of chapter XX were also probably written in a Middle Indo-Aryan. On 3rd plural active *bhāṣeyuḥ*: KN XI: 242,5^p = WT 209,17 *bhāṣeyus* (= Kolkata 108a2-3 = Kashg XI: 230b2 ~ Cambridge 77b5 *bhāṣeyya* ↔ Gilg B: 234,19 *bhāṣeraṃs* ~ T8 62a4 *bhāṣerans* ~ British Library 96b4 *bhāṣeran*). Formal 3rd plural middle *bhāṣeran* occurred in KN XV: 321,10-11^p = WT 274,1 = Gilg A: 114,21. Kolkata 114a5 **bhāperan* would be emended to **bhāṣeran*. Cambridge 105b3 *bhāṣante* is isolated. If the KN is to be re-edited, we will revise *bhāṣeyuḥ* for consistency with KN XI: 242,5^p *bhāṣeyus* and with referring to Kashg XVI: 310b7 *bhāṣeyu* (s) ~ T8 82a6 *bhāṣeyuḥ*.²⁾ As mentioned above, Gilgit reads *bhāṣeran* and Kashgar reads *bhāṣeyus* consistently. It should be that Kashgar maintained the original reading and readings in Gilgit are corrected with the intention to its preference for grammatically preferable middle voice. The Nepalese manuscripts were unable to carry out correction.

4. Strata in the *Oṣadhi-parivarta*

There are two strata in the *Oṣadhi-parivarta*, 5th chapter of the Saddhp: first part is KN 121,1-131,12 and second part is KN 131,13-143,7. First half corresponds to the 5th chapter of the Kumārajīva's translation but second half has no counterpart. It is probably a common understanding among researchers that the latter is an additional part, and the conjugations of *bhāṣ* in these parts should be noted.

V-1 ^p	KN 121,3 = WT 114,4 <i>bhāṣadhve</i> ↔ Kashg 121b1 <i>bhāṣatha</i>
V-2 ^p	KN 124,2 = WT 116,11 <i>bhāṣate</i> ↔ Kashg 125a7 <i>bhāṣati</i>
V-3 ^p	KN 125,6 = WT 117,2 <i>abhāṣata</i> = Kashg 126a3 <i>abhāṣata</i>
V-4 ^m	V 1c : KN 125,8 = WT 117,4 <i>bhāṣāmi</i> = Kashg 126b3 <i>bhāṣāmi</i>
V-5 ^m	V 2d : KN 125,10 = WT 117,6 <i>bhāṣanti</i> = Kashg 126b5 <i>bhāṣanti</i>
V-6 ^m	V 4a : KN 125,13 = WT 117,9 <i>bhāṣāmi</i> = Kashg 126b6 <i>bhāṣāmi</i>
V-7 ^m	V 16c : KN 127,10 = WT 118,17 <i>bhāṣati</i> = Kashg 127b7-128a1 <i>bhā-ṣati</i>
V-8 ^m	V 20a : KN 128,5 = WT 119,7 <i>bhāṣāmi</i> = Kashg 128a6 <i>bhāṣāmi</i>
V-9 ^m	V 35c : KN 130,8 = WT 121,15 <i>bhāṣati</i> = Kashg 130a1 <i>bhāṣati</i>

That is, in the metrical portion the active forms are consistently used; in the prose

portion KN/WT show middle forms while the Kashgar manuscript reads active forms (with the exception of *abhāṣata* in the stock phrase → 2.3). The 2. pl. ipv. *bhāṣadhve* is questionable. Cambridge 38b4 = T8 32b4 read *bhāṣata* (~ Gilg A: 55,3 *bhāṣamta*). The original form can be regarded as Kashg 121b1 *bhāṣatha* (cf. BHSG §§26.12–13).

However, in the latter part of the *Oṣadhi-p.*, the Kashgar manuscript consistently shows middle forms in metrical- and prose-portion.

V-10 ^p	KN 137,7 = WT 127,3 <i>bhāṣate</i> = Kashg 136b4 <i>bhāṣate</i>
V-11 ^p	KN 137,15 = WT 127,14 <i>abhāṣata</i> = Kashg 137a4 <i>abhāṣata</i>
V-12 ^m	V 71d : KN 141,10 = WT 129,23 <i>bhāṣase</i> ~ Kashg 139a5 <i>bhāṣate</i>

Kashg V: 136b4 reads *bhāṣate* while Kashg V: 125a7 shows *bhāṣati* in the first half of the *Oṣadhi-p.* The fact can be interpreted as linguistic evidence for the stratigraphy. At this point, if we refer to the fact that Kashgar XII: 252a5 *bhāṣate* (= KN 263,8 = WT 226,3) in the *Devadatta-parivarta*, it is conceivable that 1) second half of the *Oṣadhi-p.* and the *Devadatta-p.* belong the same linguistic stratum, 2) the adoption and revision to middle *bhāṣate*, which is found in the metrical portion, could be dated to this period.

5. *syād yathedam* in the *Dhāraṇī-parivarta*

Lüshun B18R8, fragment belonging to the *Dhāraṇī-p.*, reads ... (sa) *tvo tāyāṃ velāyā[m] ime dhāra(nī)[pa]dā bhāṣī· syād yathe[da]m*. Its parallel, KN XXI: 398,3–4 reads ... *bhāṣate sma / tadyathā / jvale* ... (= WT 335,25–26 ~ Kashg XXIII: 383a5 (...) *tad yathā jvale* ...). The usage of *syād yathedam* seems somewhat characteristic and appears in some *Dhāraṇī* literatures, such as the *Suvarṇaprabhāṣottama* and *Mahāsāhasrapramardanī*.⁴⁾ This is because the *Dhāraṇī-p.* belongs to the ‘*Dhāraṇī* Kreis,’ which is related to these *sūtras*. And in the course of compiling the *Dhāraṇī-p.* into the Lotus Sutra, the wording was unified or standardized and the original reading may have been lost.⁵⁾

Notes

1) The 2nd plural *bhāṣadhvam* is attested in Saddhp XI 36a *bhāṣadhvaṃ kula-putrāho* “Speak, you gentlemen” (KN 255,11 = WT 219,11) but its parallel Kashgar XI: 245b3 reads *bhāṣatu* [“*bhāṣantu* or *bhāṣata*?”] *vāca kulaputrā* and Farhād Bēg 9b8 *bhāṣatha vāca kulapoutrā(h)*. Farhād Bēg *bhāṣatha* is more likely, because the ending *-tha* for 2nd pl. is the commonest in the Saddhp. 2) KN’s footnote (p.321, n.11) suggests “*bhāṣeyuḥ* the more original reading.” 3) See Gotō 2013, 150, n.333a.

4) See Davidson 2014, 47. 5) Here we may glimpse the process by which *pustakas* of different origins are brought together into a single *pustaka*.

Abbreviations

act.: active. **BHS:** Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit. **British Library:** see Mizufune 2011.
Cambridge: see Kotsuki 2010. **Gilgit:** Gilgit recension of Saddhp, see Watanabe 1975.
impf.: imperfect. **ind.:** indicative. **ipv.:** Imperative. **Kashg:** Kashgar recension of Saddhp.
KN: Saddhp edited by Kern-Nanjio. **Kolkata:** see Kotsuki 2014. ^m: metric portion.
mid.: middle. **opt.:** optative. ^p: prose portion. **Saddhp:** Sanskrit text of *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra*.
T8: see Kotsuki 2003. **WT:** Saddhp edited by Wogihara and Tsuchida.

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(This research was supported in part by KAKENHI, No. 20K00067)

Key words *bhāṣ*, *Oṣadhi-parivarta*, *Dhāraṇī-parivarta*, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit

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