

The course on **Vākyavṛtti**, comprises seven lessons. A detailed description of the topics covered in each lesson is provided below.

Lesson 1: Introduction and Maṅgalācaraṇa [Verses 1 – 2]

- Mahāvākya is 'mahat' as it contains the central import of the Upaniṣads
- Mahāvākyas indicate what we seek – completeness, eternity and happiness
- What is a prakaraṇa-grantha?
- Maṅgalācaraṇa
 - Maṅgalācaraṇa of *Vākyavṛtti*
 - The various facets of the maṅgalācaraṇa
 - Offering the maṅgalācaraṇa to the Guru
- Mahāvākyas in the Upaniṣads

Lesson 2: Guru-upasadana [Verses 3 – 10]

- Role of a Guru
- The nature of the śiṣya
- Rarity of the student
- The three types of sufferings
- The student's qualifications
- The student's question: What is the means to be free from bondage?
 - The Guru's summary response
- Vastu-saṅgraha-vākya: Summary of the Upaniṣads
- Anubandha-catuṣṭaya
- Bondage explained
 - What is bondage?
 - Who is bound?
- The student's inability to grasp the vastu-saṅgraha-vākya
- The Guru's succinct response on who is the jīva, Paramātman and the tādātmya
 - The student's inability to understand the padārtha (word sense) of the jīva, and Paramātman

Lesson 3: Tvam pada – 1: The Self as Sākṣin [Verses 11 – 17]

- The Guru's exposition of the padārtha of 'tvam' and 'Tat'
 - Unless the padārtha is understood, the vākyārtha will not be grasped
- The Self as sākṣin, meaning of sākṣin
- The Self as Sat-Cit-Ānanda
- One must meditate on the nature of the Self as dhī-sākṣin, satyānanda-svarūpa and bodha-vigraha

- Logic to prove the body is not the Self
 - Reason 1: The body has a form and is perceivable by the senses
 - Reason 2: The body is made up of elements which are perceived
 - The above reasons explained using the concepts of hetu, sādhyā and pakṣa
- The student's request to describe the Self clearly
- The explanation of the Self as sākṣin
 - The Self is different from the body which is seen
 - The Self is different from the senses, mind and prāṇas
 - The Self is different from the gross and subtle body complex

Lesson 4: Tvam pada – 2: Self as Caitanya, Ānanda and Sat [Verses 18 – 27]

- Explanation of the Self as Caitanya (Consciousness)
 - The body and senses made up of elements that are inert and function because of Consciousness
 - Consciousness suffers no depletion
 - Consciousness undergoes no modifications
 - The body and mind have borrowed sentiency
 - The borrowed sentience of mind and the body is that of the reflected Consciousness
 - Consciousness does not come and go – sentiency does
 - Mind appears more sentient as it has the ability to hold Consciousness
 - The Self is the witness of the waking, dream and deep sleep states
 - Analogy of illumination of pot in a dark room that proves the presence of a lamp
 - Similarly the pot, body, mind and the senses are inert, but yet appear to be sentient because of the presence of Consciousness.
 - Just as the illuminator of the pot is different from the pot, so is Consciousness, the illuminator of the body and the mind, different from them.
- The Self as Ānanda: We love that which is connected to us
- The Self is Sat
- Sākṣin is the pointer to 'bodha' which is upalakṣaṇa for Satya and Ānanda nature of the Self
- The nature of I-thought
- The Self is different from the six modifications pertaining to the body and mind

Lesson 5: Inquiry into the Tat-pada [Verses 28 – 36]

- Upaniṣads explain Paramātman by method of negation and assertion

- Explanation of Paramātman with upādhis
- Paramātman has to be unlimited, for Its effect, the world, is unlimited
- In and through the Creation theories, the culminating message of Vedānta is Paramātman
- Paramātman having created the world has entered as the life principle, the jīva
- Paramātman is the dispenser of the fruits of actions

Lesson 6: Identity of Tat and Tvam [Verses 37 – 42]

- Saṃsarga and Viśiṣṭa relations
- “Tat tvam asi” indicates neither saṃsarga nor viśiṣṭa
- Concept of samānādhikaraṇam
- ‘Asi’ indicates the identity of ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’
- Understanding the tādātmya between ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’
- The notion of paricchinnā (limitedness) and finitude with respect to ‘tvam’ ceases when ‘tvam’ is seen to be identical with ‘Tat’
- The notion of parokṣatā or distance with respect to ‘Tat’ ceases when ‘Tat’ is seen to be identical with ‘tvam’
- “Tat tvam asi” explains the identity of ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’ not by the direct meaning but by lakṣaṇa
- Result of knowing the identity of ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’ – pūrṇa, ekarūpa and ānanda

Lesson 7: “Tat Tvam Asi” Revealing the Identity of ‘Tat’ and ‘Tvam’ [Verses 43 – 53]

- ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’ indicate deeper meanings
- The cognitive process that happens with the application of lakṣaṇa
- Preconditions required for understanding the correct import of “Tat tvam asi”
 - Faith in the śāstras (śruti) and Guru
 - Clarity on the nature of the Self
 - Clarity on the nature of Paramātman
- The cognitive processes that go in action while comprehending “Tat tvam asi”
 - ‘Tvam’ is understood as the individual Consciousness with vyaṣṭi-upādhi
 - ‘Tat’ is understood as the Consciousness with samaṣṭi-upādhi
 - Literal meanings of ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’ are not possible to arrive at the identity between both
 - When literal meaning is not possible, one takes to the indicative meaning
- Introduction to bhagatyāga-lakṣaṇa

- Bhagatyāga-lakṣaṇa is to be used to get the correct import of “Tat tvam asi”
- Overview of jahad- and ajahad-lakṣaṇas with examples
- We use bhagatyāga-lakṣaṇa in our every day life too
- Practices required for the Realisation of “I am Brahman”
- Grace of the Guru and śāstra helps one to comprehend the Truth
- Ignorance along with its effects end with Knowledge
- The Jñānin’s sañcita- and āgama karmas end with Knowledge
 - The Jñānin’s body remains till the exhaustion of prārabdha
 - The Jñānin attains the state of Viṣṇu at the fall of the body – the state of no return