

**Applied Linguistics.**  
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**Indian Institute Of Technology Madras.**  
**Lecture 19.**  
**Language and Gender.**

Gender plays a very important role in language. We see the influence of gender at every single step, at every single level in the sense that beginning from Sounds, words and sentences. Language is embedded and is part of both I language and E language, the kinds of distinction that we have been making throughout in understanding that categorization of language are also in terms of understanding the 2 significant aspects of language to deal with, formal and functional properties of language.

So, today we are going to look at the role of gender in language and it an elaborate discussion on how it works from applied linguistics perspective. We have dealt with language and society and language and culture, we want to look at language and gender to develop the comprehensive understanding of these factors in understanding language as a social phenomena from applied linguistics perspective and also these things are going to help us to what language does and how language is viewed, what language does in the society and how language is viewed in applied linguistics.

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## Introduction

Language is the most important communication tool for human beings. It not only reflects the reality of the society, but also has various functions to strengthen and maintain social existence. Given such a view, language does mirror the gendered perspectives and can also impact and contribute to changing people's perception of gender over time.



So, to give you a quick review of what we are looking at is the view where language mirrors gendered perspective and can also impact and contribute the changing perception of people over time is in the sense that language has as we have established so far is one of the most significant aspect of human communication. And not only it reflects reality of the society but

also various functions and it strengthens and maintains social existence. In such a context, that is language, gender plays a very significant role.

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## Constructing Gender

- Sex: biological categorization based primarily on reproductive potential
- Gender: social elaboration of biological categorization



How the simple construction of gender can be looked at from its biological categorisation based primarily on reproductive potential and also the social elevation of that biological categorisation is what we are looking at in this discussion and is what is relevant for the role of gender in language in general and role of how gender plays what kind of role for us to understand its applied linguistic perspective.

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## Gender

- Primary: gender can be content of a sign
- Secondary: associated meaning
- Grammatical: Embedded in structure
- The way someone talks: tone and pitch of voice, patterns, choice of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical patterns



Primarily, gender can be content of a sign, it can be associated with meaning and it is embedded in structure. When language shows embedding of gender in a structure is called grammatical gender, that is it gets reflected in agreement pattern, one of the functional properties of language which is at times not so visible. It also gets reflected in various ways when people talk, the tone, pitch, patterns, choice of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammatical patterns reflect gender as well. So, with this introduction of gender, its categorisation and its role in constructing language for the gender perspective is what we will be discussing in this unit. So, to do that, we have invited Dr Pritha Chandra from IIT Delhi and then we listen to her on her perspective of gender and how it plays a role in the study of language.

(Dr Pritha Chandra starts her presentation.)

So, what I will talk about today's gender in language, to the topic which is which is much studied in the linguistic literature. However much of the study has been conducted within domains of applied linguistics without taking the observations from theoretical linguistics. So, what I am going to suggest today is that if some of the insights from theoretical linguistics are considered, we may be able to better explain how language is put to use, which I think is the primary object of applied linguistics.

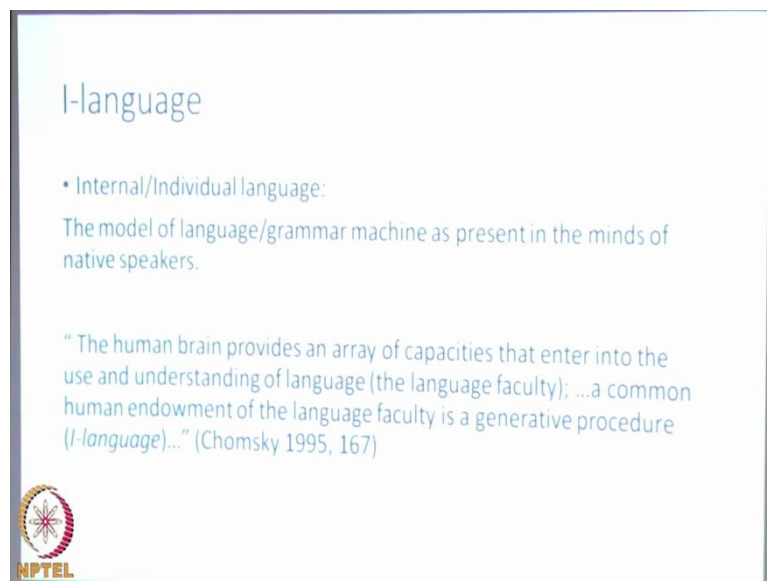
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I will take language therefore at 2 different levels of analysis or representation, the I language level which is the grammatical level and the E language level which is language where you have morph-phonological representation and therefore you are ready to use language. And we

would assume that these 2 are related to each other, however E language has an extra dimension called experience which native speakers consciously effect to get the maximum benefit from communication. And therefore I think that the applied linguistic should study language use at both ends, at the both levels, I language is used for unconscious thought and cognition and E language is used for conscious, what we call thinking for speaking and thought. I start off with what we understand by I language.

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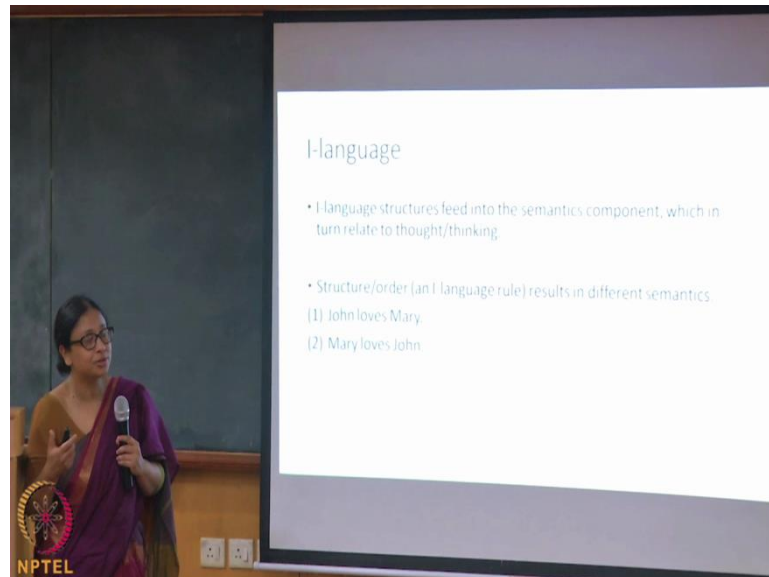
I language is internal language, internalised language and this idea stems from Chomsky's work in the 1950s but more specifically 1965 with the coming of aspects. The idea was that humans are born with genetic endowment for human language, this is to say that we all have a co-grammatical machine when we are born, all native speakers of languages, and it develops. It allows you to learn languages very quickly and in a very short span of time. So, that co-grammatical grammar machine is what we call I language now.

So, that the grammar, this is the quote from Chomsky of 1995, which is the Black book, minimalist program. 'The human brain provides an array of capacities that enter into use and understanding of language which is called the language faculty. A common human endowment of the language faculty is the generative procedure, the grammar machine'. And this we call the I language, it is a pretty abstract level of representation where you have the rules that give you language.

Linguist this I language, the internal language structures feed into the output that you have feed into the semantics component, they give you semantics, it gives you what we call

compositional semantics and this in turn relate to thought and or thinking, the way we think about the world for instance, and probably unconscious thinking that is related to the I language structures.

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And here is an example of how our I language structures all rules will give you semantics, so if John loves Marie, depending on the position of the noun phrase or the NP, you will have a different semantics for John, this will be experiencer. And this Marie over here will be given the principles or the rules word order in English, this will be the theme. But if you change the order, as you see in 2 Marie now becomes experiencer and John becomes the theme. So, somewhere I language structures are giving you the semantics as well as the thought, the ability to think because you have different thoughts.

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## I-language

- Spelke (2004) also shows, through experimental evidence, that human kids make a cognitive jump when they have a full, mental grammar.
- Human kids' behaviour is studied in contrast to mice/non-human animal behaviour.

(3) [X [near the cylinder] [at the corner] [of the room]]




And there are also numerous studies including those by Spelke 2004 who showed that with the development of I language, your cognitive skills also develops, so you have a cognitive jump when you have the ability to produce larger structures, for example if you have long sentences or if you have what we call complex structures, embedded structures. For those of you who know enough of linguistics, we call the property recursion. So, the more recursive structures you have, the ability, the cognitive ability goes up. So, here is an example. You have X near the cylinder at the corner of the room. And this is, this X is an object, any object, you can call it a camera, you can call it a table, so this X is modified by a prepositional phrase, let us call it PP. And you can see this X is near the cylinder and then there are 2 more PPs and each of the PPs at the corner, for instance modified cylinder of the room another PPs modifies corner. So, there is a lot of lots and lots of structures in the NP, so it is a big complex noun phrase.

Now, it tells out that when native, that kids as young as 2 and more, when they get this recursive structures, the ability to have larger structures, linguistic structures, more complex ones, they are also able to locate X despite the fact that it is inside a large noun phrase. So, somewhere they can locate it and this contrasts with the behaviour of trained mice who cannot locate something as complex as this. They can locate something like X near, if they are trained, they can locate something like X near the corner of the room, at the mall, maybe at the corner, that is perfectly fine. But something as complex as this can be only done by human kids. There is a positive correlation between your linguistic ability and your cognitive ability.

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## E-language


- By 'external' is meant "phonetic forms of UG" (Chomsky 1995, 16)
- "Note that if E-languages do exist, they are at a considerably further remove from mechanisms and behavior than I-language." (16-17)



In contrast I language, we have E language which is the external language. External language and where we have morphophonological form, it has a form which can be used. I was talking about representation which we were using just for thought. You do not need to externalize it all the time, you also think in language and that does not need to go for communication. External by the way is meant for communication, I mean you can use it for communication and Chomsky says these are the phonetic forms of UG is universal grammar. But phonetic forms, that have some representation and its ready to use. And Chomsky by the way is very clear on making a distinction between E and I language. He says I language and E language have different levels of representation, right, you would like to keep them separate.

And there is another quote from the same book, 1995, he says "Note that if E languages do exist, they are at a considerably further removed from mechanisms and behaviour of I language." So, Chomsky seems to be skeptical of giving a systemic analysis to E language which is used for communication ultimately. I think because E language is used for communication and communication itself is extremely multi-phased, it is very complex, it is a very complex phenomena, right, you have multiple aspects to it. When the Speaker and uses language or when we speak, you have to take the speaker's experience, you have to take the speaker's intention, you have to take the socio cultural, political, economic factors into account, so it is a very complex phenomena and probably for that reason Chomsky has not been very open to the idea of giving a systemic, like very narrow definition of E language.

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## E-language

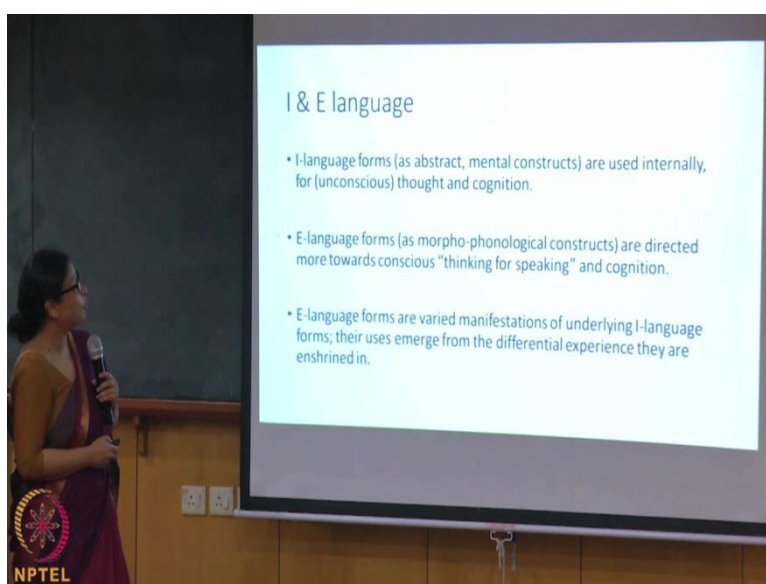
- E-language forms are used for communication, which are varied in nature.
- E-language is used for “thinking for speaking” (Slobin 1996).
- E-Language “surely directs us to attend – while speaking – to the dimensions of experience that are enshrined in grammatical categories”.

So, I think E language then is more conducive for something like thinking for speaking in the sense of Slobin 1996, thinking for speaking means that it is conscious because when you start speaking, when you start communicating, you are within the conscious realm of your mind. Right, you use language to adjust with the society and also to benefit most from your social interactions. So, you communicate, you already, you have enough control about what you do with language. Language then serves along with their experience as a tool for control, it allows you to understand the world better. So, here is a quote from Slobin, he does not have something called I E language distinction. He just has language, he does not believe in I language, right. So, I am just going to add E language as meaning language for him which is why you see I have put it in italics.

And he says “E language surely directs us to attend while speaking the dimensions of experience that I enshrined in grammatical categories.” So, you have this extra dimension of experience that comes in when you have E language.




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So, what do we get from this intro, right, so we have I language forms which are abstract mental constructs, they are used internally for unconscious thought and cognition, E language forms as morphophonological constructs are directed more towards conscious “thinking for speaking” and cognition. And E language forms, we would assume are manifestations, varied manifestations underlying that I language forms. You have I language from which you are going to take as universal, any language of manifestations. Their uses emerge from differential experience they are enshrined with.

So, okay, now if we have levels of representation I and E language levels of representation, what I am going to suggest now is that if we look at various categories, grammatical categories of human language including gender which I am going to focus on today, we will see that each of these categories could be dealt with at 2 different levels, I language and E language. And E language users are extremely varied, that is very fine cross linguistic variation. So, maybe if we have an idea of what goes into where, which categories serves what function at which level of representation, applied linguistics may gain a lot from that. But before I go to gender, I will quickly touch upon colour which is a very popular topic.

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## Colour

- A contentious, but a very widely studied topic relating linguistic forms to cognitive ability (Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis).
- There is a lot of cross-linguistic variation on colour terms.
- The most common colour terms are for black/dark, white/light, red, blue, green, yellow, brown.


So, let me touch on colour a little bit and do the same exercise with it. By the way there will be no different answers in applied linguistics, to applied linguistics questions from my side, I will leave it to the audience to ask this question. Okay, so colour by the way is a very contentious topic. In the sense that you really do not have any definite answers to what colour does and what is the representation. But it is very widely studied topic which relates, which tries to relate most of the, most papers dealing with, deal with colors to relate linguistic forms to cognitive ability which most of you will know is also called as Sapir Whorf hypothesis. Which is the idea that your language shapes thoughts. It could be a completely deterministic approach that your, your language that you can think all you can see, perceive idea, relativistic idea why you are saying that your language helps in your thinking and your perception.

Okay, so there is a lot, it is a very contentious topic but one concerns us, one thing we know is there is a lot of cross-linked with the variation on colour terms. The actual form you have, like red is the term, blue is the term, there is there is a lot of cross linguistic variations, some languages have as few as, some languages have as few as 2 colour terms, Black-and-white, some languages have 11, some languages have 18 colour terms, that is something we know because that has been a lot of typological study that has been done on colour terms. The other idea that is mostly accepted in the literature is that most common colour terms that you find across languages are black or dark, white or light, red, blue, green, yellow, brown, these are some of the core colors.

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## Colour

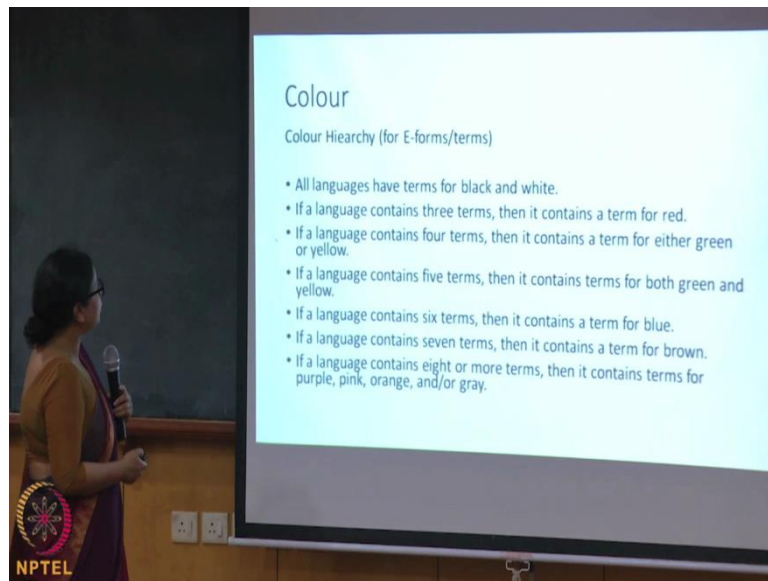
- Despite terminological differences and irrespective of the presence/absence of colour terms, language speakers recognize colours (cf. Heider 1972, Lucy and Shweder 1979, Davidoff, David and Roberson 1999, Kay and Kempton 1984).
- Berlin and Kay (1969) propose 'Universal Focal Colours', which constitute a common cognitive basis for color terms and color memory for all languages.



I mean there is a lot of cross-linked with the variation and people and researchers mainly cognitive scientists have, some of them have recognised, despite this difference is, despite the fact that some languages have colour terms for some colors and some language is do not have them, when you actually present speakers with colors, when you turn them into experimental subjects, you, they essentially recognise that colour. So, even if you do not have a colour terms for red in your language, you will recognise the colour red if you are given the stimulus. Right, that is the idea. And there are lots of studies, I have just included some of them over here, there are lots of them but Berlin and Kay's one of the most famous studies and also Lucy by the way.

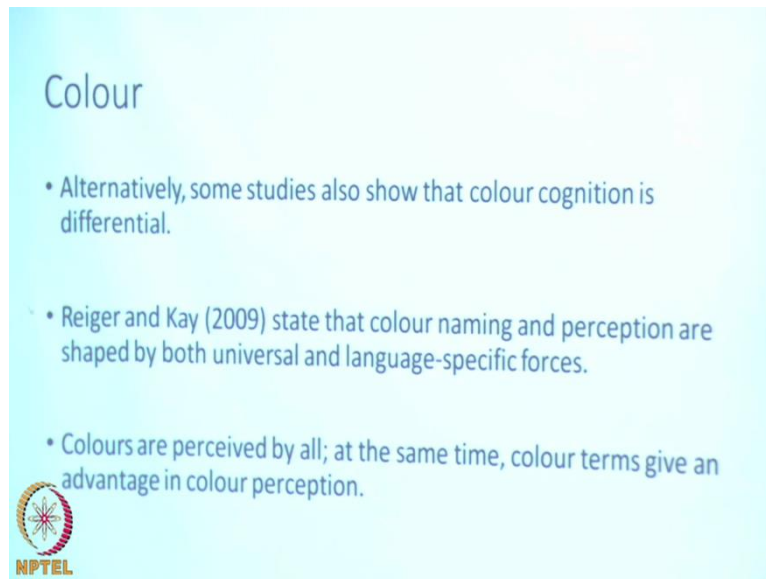
And Berlin and Kay took this idea that that we recognise colors despite the absence of colour terms in our languages, they take this idea to propose something called as universal focal colors, which is basically a common cognitive basis for colour terms and colour memory for all languages. So, you have this, this cognitive basis in your mind or in your brain that helps you recognise colors.

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And they also proposed something called as the color hierarchy for E form. So, the way the order of colour forms that you find in languages, colour terms, I am not talking about abstract colour perceptions, I am talking about colour terms here. There is a hierarchy, for instance, all languages will have comes for black and white and if a language contains 3 terms, then that term will be for red, if it has 4 terms, then that colour will be green or yellow, any one of them. If it adds another term to that, another term to that list, to that inventory, then that will be for green and yellow. So, whatever is there from the previous one, if it is green for the 4<sup>th</sup> term, then it will be yellow and so on and so forth and you have all these other colors but it has its a universal code and they also have a hierarchy as to how they are represented in their languages.

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Colour

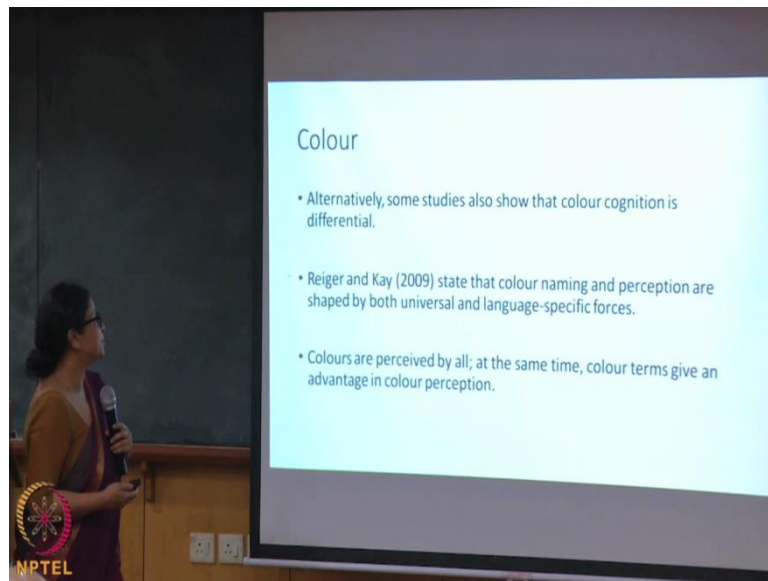
- Alternatively, some studies also show that colour cognition is differential.
- Reiger and Kay (2009) state that colour naming and perception are shaped by both universal and language-specific forces.
- Colours are perceived by all; at the same time, colour terms give an advantage in colour perception.



So, on one side while we have Berlin and Kay and Lucy and some others suggesting that speakers can perceive colors despite the absence of colour terms in their language, there are also many alternative studies that show that colour cognition is differential. That if you have linguistic terms, it helps you recognise colors more easily. Right. So, this is the famous study by Reiger and Kay 2009 who state that colour naming and perception are shaped by both universal and colour specific forces.

So, you can see most colors but if you have a very specific term, let us say very red or blood red, if you have a linguistic term for that in your language, you will be able to better perceive or quickly perceive that. So, you do not need a conscious effort to do it, you will be probably able to do it better than people who do not have that colour term in their language. So, what do we get then here, it is colors are perceived by all, at the same time colour terms give an advantage in colour perceptions. So, if we have the E form, it is easier for you to perceive that.

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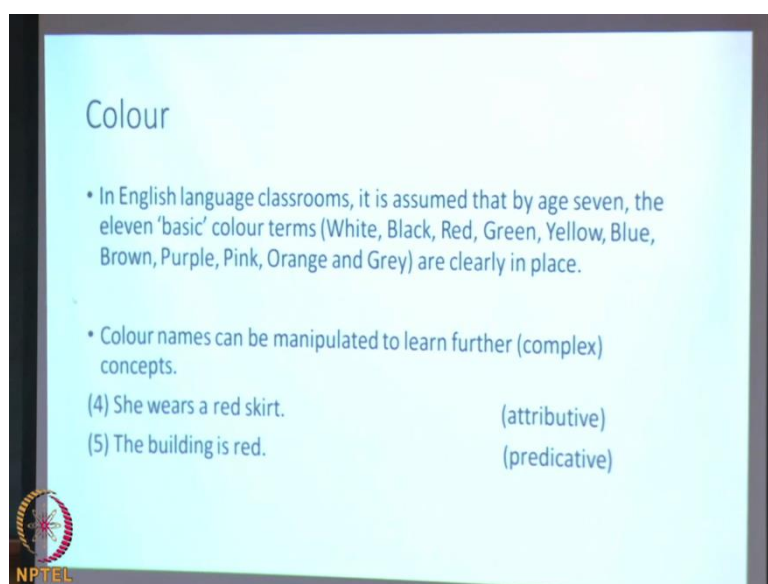


If you have to rephrase this whole thing into an I and E language distinction, what do we have? Well, there are some universal underlying colour I forms, we can call the cognitive basis the I form in all languages which explains similar colour cognition. So, the contradiction that we found in colour perception studies on one side the Lucy and Berlin and Kay and the other side we have Reiger and Kay. So, that contradiction gets solved once we recognise that there are 2 levels of colour.

One is the I form level which is the cognitive universal cognitive basis for colors and this underlying colour I forms in all languages will explain similar colour cognition. When you have colour E forms which are manifestations of the colour I forms and they are cross linguistic manifestations, even if they have a cognitive basis, how they ultimately get represented even if you have red, how, which shade of red will get represented in a more familiar language may vary from language to language.

You may not actually have a word for red in your language. So, once you have those colour E forms and they get enshrined in experience, once speakers put their experience into it, then it can give us differential cognition. So, the cognition be found in colour perception studies can be resolved if we get to that.

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### Colour

- In English language classrooms, it is assumed that by age seven, the eleven 'basic' colour terms (White, Black, Red, Green, Yellow, Blue, Brown, Purple, Pink, Orange and Grey) are clearly in place.
- Colour names can be manipulated to learn further (complex) concepts.

(4) She wears a red skirt. (attributive)

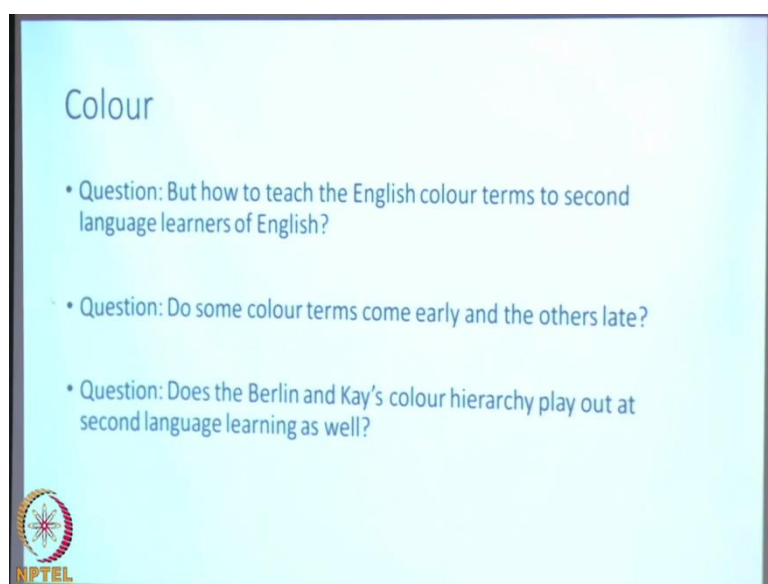
(5) The building is red. (predicative)

NPTEL

Now, since I am here for applied linguistics, here is the question. How would language pedagogues take this study into the classroom? Now, I don't have a definite answer as I said, so I do not know, I am just going to give away some tentative suggestions over here. So, for instance, we know from existing studies that in English language classrooms by the way for 1<sup>st</sup> language, people, kids who know the language or who are learning the language is a 1<sup>st</sup> language. It is assumed that by age 7, they have 11 basic colour terms of the language black, white, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange and grey, they are clearly in place. So, the kids know them, 7 years old children know this, now the teacher can use these colour terms to have or to manipulate, they can manipulate further complex concepts.

For instance you could then put it somewhere near, you could say a red skirt. By the way these are pretty easy for a 7-year-old because they come pretty early but if you have to make further complex structures, you could even try that. Here the colour red is used inside a noun phrase and it gives you an attribute to the adjective meaning. And here the red is part of the predicate, it is a predicate adjective meaning, it is still the same thing by the way, right, it is just that the structures are different. And in many languages, the attributive and predicative uses are many many differences, very interesting morphological differences as well. So, English is pretty simple in that because you may feel that there is hardly any difference over here and they learn it quickly. But kids learning this language and English also have an advantage when they have these colour terms.

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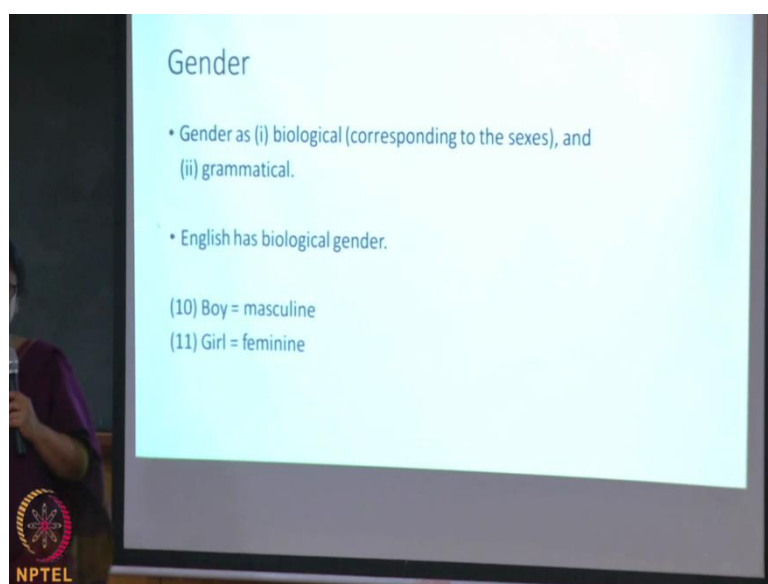


This is for the 1<sup>st</sup> language classrooms. However the question then will be: “How do we teach the English colour terms to second language learners of English? In languages were for instance they do not have those same colour terms, how would you teach them? And again since I do not have an answer, I am just going to raise questions with some of these colour terms, early and see others come late because we just assume that there is a cognitive basis, there are I forms, those I forms are more universal, so probably it is easy to get some colour terms and it tells us by the way that existing literature shows that many of the colour terms come pretty late. Colour terms are much more difficult to come by in for second language or adult learners for instance.

So, question would be put some colour terms, earlier, some of the other come late and for those which are coming in a, as they come along would we find that Berlin and Kay colour hierarchy play out a role there. So, would you really see let us say black and white, any way it would be there, so it will be probably to memorise those. But for something as as difficult as magenta, how would you teach that colour? Or if you have, there was a colour like Buff for instance, how would you teach that? So, would you really have a colour hierarchy play out there. So, maybe some of the insights, theoretical insights from from this kind of study could be taken to the language classroom as well.



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So, gender, the category gender is, is more interesting thing because it already has 2 subcategories. Colour, we have to do experiments to get to the 2 levels of representation, in gender, we already have these 2 categories because you actually get to see them. So, one is biological, which is much more abstract, it corresponds to the sexes, what we perceive, the Masculine, and feminine, the male and the female distinction which is there, that is how we cognize the world and that is how it is also represented in language, that is fine.

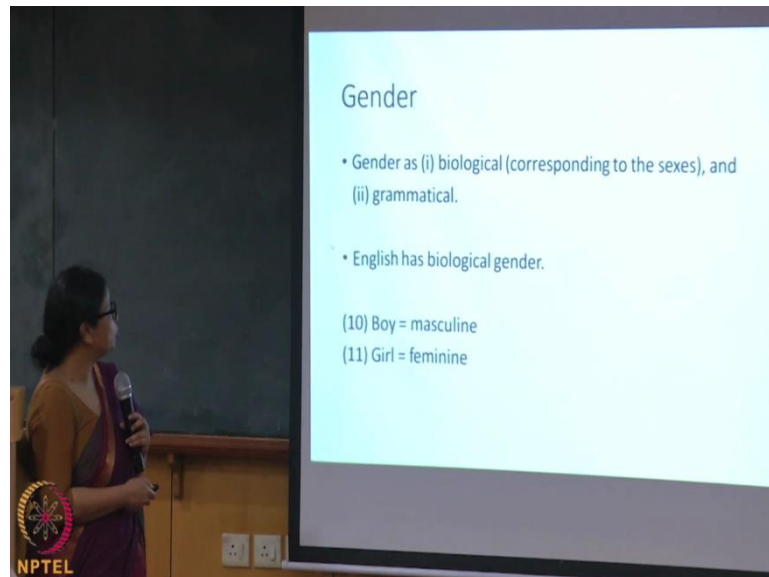
But there is also a second subcategory called grammatical gender which is not available in all languages and which is an extension of biological gender to a domain where you do not find biological gender. So, if you look, let us say if you have a chair and you have a language where you are going to impose your biological properties, the feminine and masculine features onto a chair, so that will be called a grammatical gender and there is a lot of variation there.

So, we have to see which plays out where. Which is an I language property, I language feature which is an E language feature and will also try to see if we can make something out of these studies for applied linguistics domain. So, this by the way is very clear, English has biological gender. So, if you if you have a boy, we will know if it is masculine, it will also get reflected in your pronominal, he, at least in the third person singular pronominal system, if we have girl, it is a she, that also gets reflected.

English is what you call inflectionally a poor language, you do not have much inflections, so, you do not see a lot of variation. But we will see how English speakers use gender to to

divide the world into specific sexes, we will see that. This is why the absence of grammatical gender, anyway. So, girl is feminine and have she for instance...

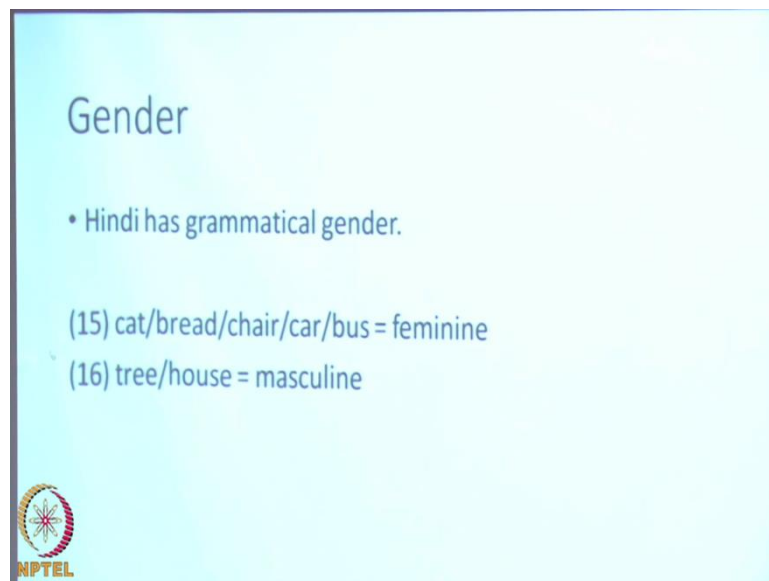
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However when you move onto something like cat, table, chair, you will see that English does not have grammatical gender. So, cat will be minus feminine, right, minus masculine and plus neuter, neuter will be taken as a category where you have minus and minus, minus feminine minus masculine, none of them exist.

And similarly when you have table, chair, bread, tree, we really do not make distinction in grammatical gender when we are speaking using these lexical forms in English. And this you can see, you can say I have brought a big slice of bread and I ate it, which is the neuter pronominal. So, you will not say I bought a big slice of bread and I ate him. That will be very strange, you have to say it because it is inanimate. I mean a bread, this this refers back to bread. Okay.

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Hindi also has biological gender, that we know, we will say Ladka, Ladki, it gets reflected in morphological forms, in morphology also. And but it also has grammatical gender in contrast to English. So, if you have cat, bread, chair, car, bus and if you know Hindi, I can give you the words billi, roti, kursi, car is gaadi and bus will be I guess bus, right. So, this is feminine, this is feminine, it has properties of feminine.

And cat by the way we also have a masculine, a separate word, morpheme for it, for the male cat. But bread, why would roti be feminine? But language is like this and it is the beauty of language that we still know these differences, we know the differences, the most of us speaking Western Hindi, not least in Hindi, feminine.

When you have tree or house, you have something like ped, right, also makaan, so you will have ped gir gaya and bada makaan. So, this is masculine, this is grammatical gender where we have taken the features, the biological sexes, masculine feminine features and impose them on to this domain where you do not have the sexes coming out very clearly, the gender coming out very clearly.


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## Gender

- Hindi grammatical gender has morpho-syntactic implications.

(17) moTii      roTii  
fat.fem. bread.fem  
'A big/fat slice of bread'

(18) maine moTii      roTii      khayii  
I fat-fem. bread.fem. eat.fem.  
'I ate a big/fat slice of bread'



Okay, grammatical, Hindi grammatical gender also has more syntactic implications. You can see it in the way we form the sentences, it has these repercussions, so for instance if you say roti and you want to add an adjective Moti, then it will become I cannot be mota roti, that is feminine because you are taking the features of feminine of the bread and putting out onto here. You can see the English counterpart will not have nothing like that.

And also this is within a noun phrase where you put the adjective and the at the end and you get this kind of a relation, agreement relation. Now, when you say maine roti moti roti khaai, here you have roti which will give a gift spelling features to the word, to the perfective word, also to the adjective. So, it is beyond the DP, if you consider this to be the DP, Moti roti, then it is beyond the I mean the noun phrase, then it is beyond this, we also see verbal agreement.


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You will not say maine moti roti khaya, very bad structure, I think what most of us. So, you have semantic, you have morpho syntactic implications. Romance languages, languages like Spanish, Italian, French, they have a lot of grammatical gender as well, they have the biological gender for sure which obviously is there in all languages. But they also have grammatical gender. I look at some of these examples where you will see that it is mostly biological gender but we will look at morphemes very carefully. So, when you say la Nina, you have the aa as depicting the feminine, all right. And you see that same, you see a phonological, sorry, morphological repercussion here la on what we call a article the, so it will get reflected there.

So, the feminine child. But the moment you say the the masculine child, bachcha for instance, it will also get reflected in a different way. El Niño, so you can look at these morphemes and keep them in mind because next slide, next slide I will bring on grammatical gender, the aa and the oo has to be kept in mind at the back of your mind. Aa is feminine and oo is masculine and you also see the difference in the determiner or article constructions. Articles, we do not see that, we will say wo ladka wo ladki in Hindi or some of the other languages where you have grammatical gender, you will not see a difference there. But Romance has this added thing, La Señora, the feminine women, again aa and aa over here, El Señor, the masculine man.

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## Gender

- Romance gender triggers contrastive semantics (Italian data from Ferrari 2005)

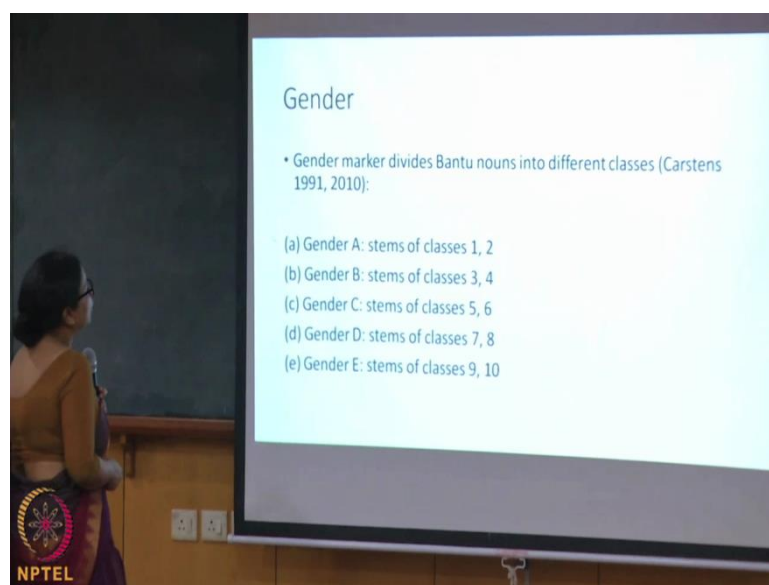
(23) ferrameto 'iron tool' – ferramenta 'hardware'	[count/mass]
(24) granolo 'grain' – granola 'the sifted grains'	[count/mass]
(25) raccolto 'crop' – raccolta 'harvest'	[+/- collective]
(26) buco 'small hole' – buca 'pit or big hole'	[small/big]
(27) mestolo 'small ladle' – mestola 'big ladle'	[small/big]
(28) rancio 'ration' – rancia 'the distribution of ration'	[concrete/abstract]

Romance gender very interesting and this is where we are going beyond biological gender and we are looking at how we use grammatical gender using our own experience to create meaning. So, we are, we are at the dimension of language where we are using something like a grammatical concept an I language concept to give us extremely different varied meaning. So, here and I think this part is like amazing, at least the data, right. So, we have Romance gender triggers contrastive semantics. Contrastive semantics, you can see that here, this is Italian data taken from Ferrari 2005. Again you can, as I told you to keep in mind the oo and the aa, so you can see that everywhere, oo aa everywhere and you are going to get contrastive semantics for this.

When we see the varied range, the extremely varied range of meanings you will get in this language. So, when you say ferrameto, it is iron tool and if you say ferramenta it is hardware. And there is account mass distinction which is very strange. Why would gender category which we have always taken to corresponding to sexes give us a meaning which is completely beyond the biological gender meaning? Right, so something else is happening in such languages where you have biological gender changed to grammatical gender and you are using grammatical gender to generate meanings. So, iron tool is account, you can count it, hardware is mass, so that becomes feminine. Similarly count mass distinction you can find in grain versus granola, sifted grains, then you cannot count it. You also get a plus minus collective reading.

Again using the same gender morphology oo and aa, crop and harvest, one is collective and the other is non-collective. Also small big differences can be obtained from using the grammatical gender morphemes, morphemes, right the e-forms, so you have buco and buca, so it has small hole and big hole, then mestolo, small ladle, mestola, big ladle. Again the small big distinction. Another difference that you find here, semantics difference over here is rancio and rancia, ration as a distribution of ration, and this will be concrete versus abstract. So, what we have done in Romance is take a gender morpheme or 2 gender morphemes to give us contrastive meanings. And this meaning is beyond the biological sexes.

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Now, in Bantu languages we find a further distinctive semantics coming out from Gender, Bantu languages also have biological gender, male-female distinction is always there in all languages, as I have already referred to. Bantu languages use the grammatical gender markers to do something else, they create noun classes. So, all their nouns classified into classes and often is very arbitrary.

One does not know what are the meanings, what are the reasons for why you classify one noun from the other noun. So, if you you have 5 gender morphemes in Bantu languages, it is a cluster of languages, Bantu languages, so there are multiple languages and even though they are concentrated in one population, not a small region, huge area, you have multiple differences also.

But this seems to be something that defines Bantu languages. You have these gender morphemes, 5 gender morphemes and each gender morpheme to will refer or will be used on

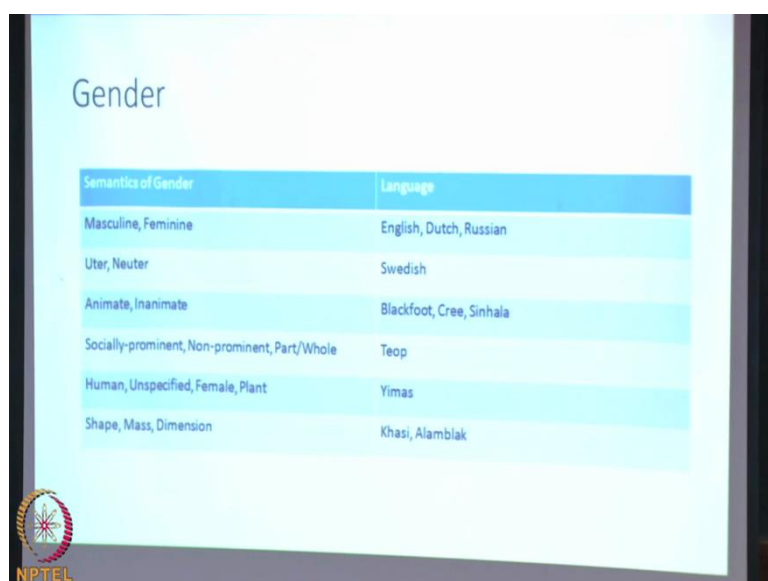
stems of particular classes. So, gender A morpheme will be used for classes 1 and 2, gender B for 3 and 4, gender C for 5 and 6 and D for 7 and 8, E for 9 and 10.

And here are some examples from Kilega which is a Bantu language, I think the same happens in Swahili which I think we are more familiar with, we may have heard it before. So, Kilega instances with different morphology and corresponding semantics depending on non-classes are given here. So, you can see mu and ba, these are by the way gender morphemes, right. Mu and ba used to give you the meaning difference, so the difference is with the noun class.

So, within this noun class you have Mu and ba gender morphemes that is giving you this contrast between 1 and 2. I could have kept it as a separate one also but this is within the 1 and 2. Then you have 3 bodies and 4 bodies, you can see again you have gender morphology playing the role over here. Right. So, female and male. Linyo li and me, ki and bi, this I think is a 0 morpheme.

So, you can see for each of these classes 1 and 2, 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8 and 9 and 10, you have different morphemes, gender morphemes, so it seems to be that gender is very sensitive noun classes it is giving you contrasted meaning. Why would otherwise a plural chair differ from a plural body? There is a minute difference for sure. Plural itself is a grammatical notion, so beyond the grammatical notion, what is the role?

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Semantics of Gender	Language
Masculine, Feminine	English, Dutch, Russian
Uter, Neuter	Swedish
Animate, Inanimate	Blackfoot, Cree, Sinhala
Socially-prominent, Non-prominent, Part/Whole	Teop
Human, Unspecified, Female, Plant	Yimas
Shape, Mass, Dimension	Khasi, Alambhak

And it is not just a Romance languages or Hindi or Bantu languages that show these differences, there are many other languages where grammatical gender is used to give us



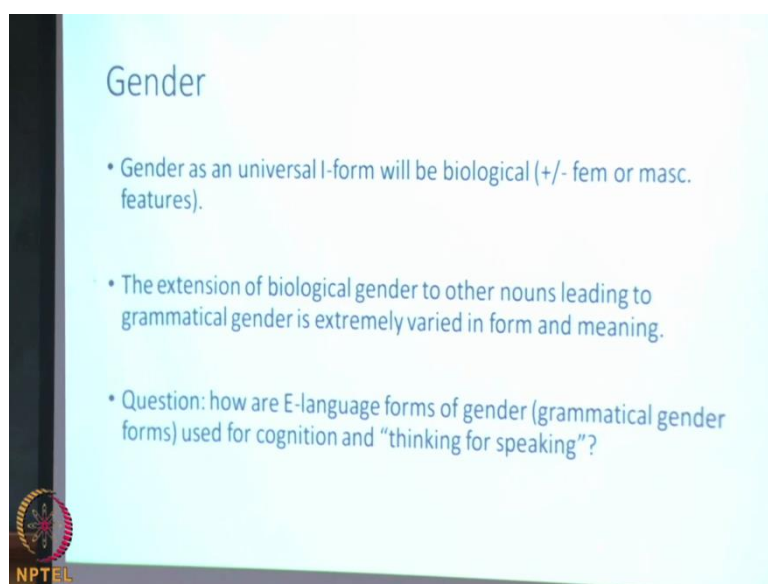
different meanings. So, English, Dutch and Russian are more like sticking to biological gender, so you see a masculine feminine difference, by the way this is semantics of gender and this is the language.

So, these 3 languages have a masculine feminine gender, seems that they have not gone beyond the biological gender. Swedish by the way has gone beyond the biology culture and, so they have a uter and a neuter. Uter is where you have plus feminine plus masculine which is positive for both the values and here is neuter, neuter means not having any of the values. So, Swedish seems to be playing a little bit more there with the features, biological gender features than English, Dutch and Russian.

Then look at Blackfoot, Cree and Sinhala where it, where semantics that you get from the gender morphology is animate, inanimate, so depending on whether something is animate or inanimate, you are going to play with gender morphology. Teop, socially prominent, these are minis you will get from gender morphology. Socially prominent, not prominent, part or whole, so again there is the contrast, socially prominent, not prominent, part or whole, gender morphology will give the difference.

Yimas give you specific semantics from different case, from different gender morphemes, human, unspecified, female, even plant. All right. And then we have our own Khaasi and Alamblak which gives us gender morphology gives us meanings like shape, mass and dimension. So, across languages where you have grammatical gender, you seem to be doing much more than just sticking to the biological sexes. You seem to be, you seem to go beyond it.

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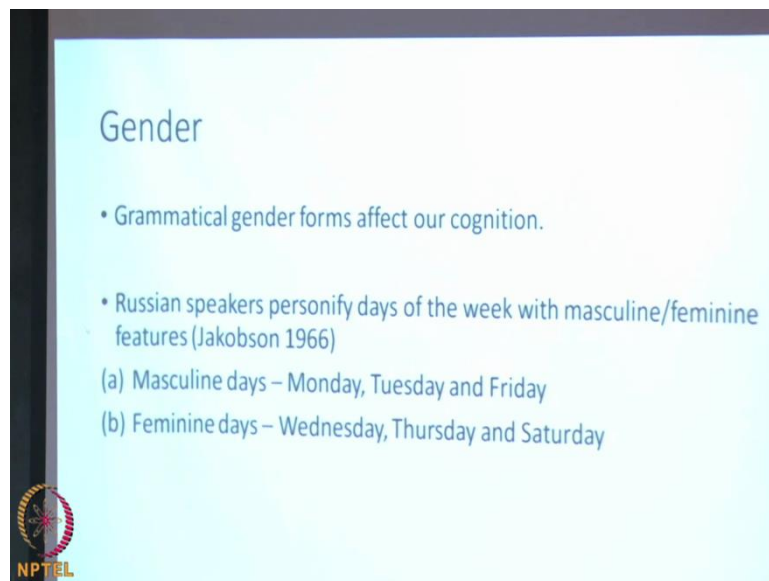


So, what do we have then, if we want to again play around with gender category at both layers, instead of just sticking to the grammatical layer or just sticking to the language that we speak. Right. If we use it as I E language category, then gender seems to be an universal I form and that will be biological because that is anyway there. It is there to start off with, plus minus feminine or masculine. So, maybe that is the default.

And that is what, how we can recognise or find that in all languages. But the extension of biological gender to other nouns leading to grammatical gender is extremely varied in form and meaning. So, the universal gender properties can then be extended and then you start getting morphological forms in different languages. In some languages they come out differently, in some languages they do not play around, you just stick to the biological gender, just like English, Russian and I think Dutch, from the previous table.

The question then is how our E language forms, the form that you actually see when you have grammatical gender in languages, how was E language forms are gender used for cognition and thinking for speaking, how do we use them? Do we use them consciously?

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And it turns out again from cognitive science literature that gender, grammatical gender forms affect our cognition. So, if you do have grammatical gender form, if you think of chair as a feminine thing or object, then probably going to extend that if you are asked consciously, not necessarily all the time. I do not think I will make a distinction between a tree and a chair if I am thinking about them unconsciously but if I am asked to do it consciously, I will. So, similarly grammatical gender does affect.

I will give you some examples to show you what I mean. Russian speakers and remember Russian was not playing around a lot with the features but it was just playing around with the biological features. And yet you can see that when you are asked consciously to personify days of the week masculine feminine features, so then you are forced to, you do not have an E form but you are forced to, it turns out that they will call Tuesday and these are otherwise given in English.

So, they will call, they will think that Monday, Tuesday and Friday are masculine days, I wonder what that means but they are probably going to give it specific masculine features. Somwar bohota gaya shaniwar bohota lambi thi, right in Hindi, I am trying to have a counterpart in Hindi. The feminine days turn out to be Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday and I think some way Sunday is missing from here and that is the day of rest, you do not do conscious thinking for speaking. Right. And this does, it seems like you are really pushing yourself to have some kind of a gender feature on these kinds of days that does not have biological gender.

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Now, for languages like German and Spanish where you do have grammatical gender, experiments were conducted by Konishi 1993, so they were given nouns, English nouns and they were asked to explain for the properties are. Here again remember when you are experimenting with subjects, you are mostly asking them to consciously think and give you answers.

So, it is conscious thought. So, it turns out, so if you give a chair English, English chair to these speakers, Spanish speakers have the word for chair, the word for cheering their language is 'butaca' most probably and that has feminine properties. And because the chair has feminine properties, when they are asked consciously to think about English chair, they are going to give you an English a feminine property for English. So, it will be slender maybe or it will be small, so all features that a feminine as you know, if you just assume.

And these kinds of stereotypes also. Then German speakers, because their 'stuhl' is their chair, it has masculine properties, so they will extend those masculine properties to English chair. So, again you are consciously affecting, or consciously influencing your L1 language forms onto something else. Or your L1 language forms onto another language. Okay, so it seems then that depending on the L1 language forms, different languages consciously use the category for thinking for speaking.

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So, here is one when we push it, when we push any speaker, whether they have grammatical gender or not, they will definitely be able to do something with it, even if they do not have E forms, they will try to divide the space before their into different genders. Now, English as a told you does not play around a lot with grammatical gender, it does not have biological gender onto its inanimate noun for instance or nonhuman nouns. However, English also uses lexical items and morphology for gender distinctions a lot. And this is by the way very consciously done because you create morphology or morphology of words are a repercussion of your society, how your society works. So, you have chairman, think that drive feminists crazy, chairman. Brotherhood, mankind, reflecting all of us.

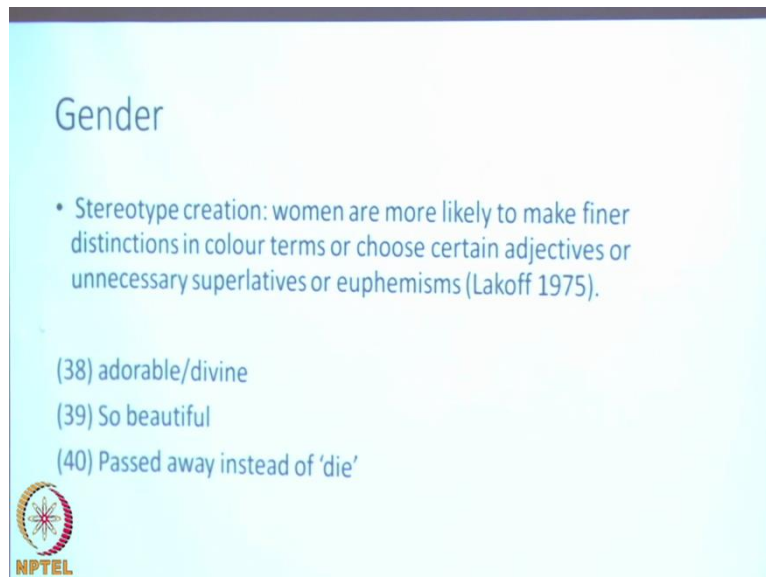
So, even if it is a chairperson and we have been seeing, let us have a chairperson, right, I mean we have done it to some extent but you have to really make a conscious effort. But you can see these are the default forms chairman, brotherhood, mankind reflect all of us and you can again see the world divided or the world very clearly as the default masculine world. Then you have doctor, manager, professor, they all seem to be default, by default masculine, right, which is why you have lady doctor, at least in Indian English.

I got this data from not an Indian English source, so I mean, the varieties of English. But the doctor by default is male, so you have to add lady doctor. A manager is by default a male occupation, so you have to add manageress. And then which we often face, I am sure many female faculty members face here is doctor and the professor, then they add this, the suffix this, why? Right, is not it is not very common to have this next to your professor? So, professor Pratha Chandra, this also goes many a times, at least in IIT Delhi. Right, so we

know, that it seems like, this is the default, this is the added one, it is a kind of the added thing, anomaly, it should not have been there.

Man is a primate, as if women are not, right. When a student studies hard, he scores well, so what about the girl students? Right so but it is very strange, you have the biological genders, you are not playing around a lot with grammatical gender in English, and yet you see there is a very conscious effort to divide the world according to the genders, very conscious efforts and that reflects a morphology.


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Gender

- Stereotype creation: women are more likely to make finer distinctions in colour terms or choose certain adjectives or unnecessary superlatives or euphemisms (Lakoff 1975).

(38) adorable/divine  
(39) So beautiful  
(40) Passed away instead of 'die'

 NPTEL

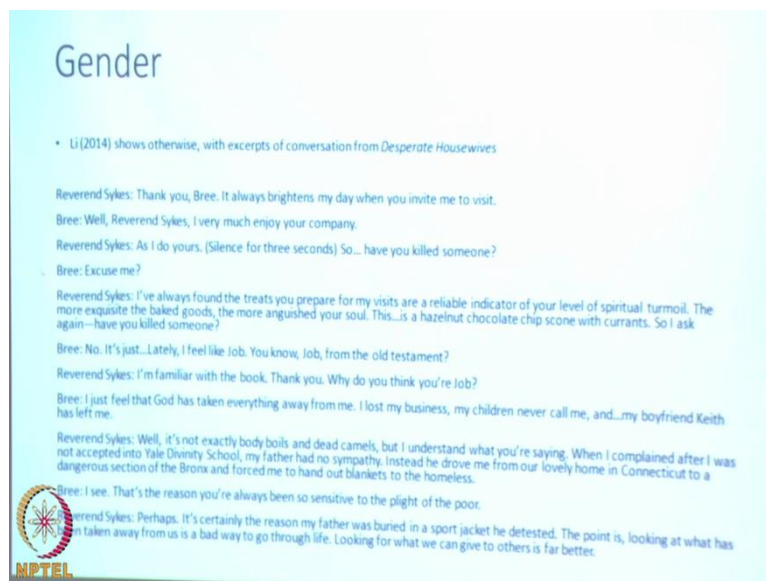
There is also a lot of stereotyped creation, I think it is stereotypical, these are really stereotypes, women are more likely to make finer distinctions in colour terms or choose certain adjectives or unnecessary superlatives and euphemisms. While they are necessary 1<sup>st</sup> of all I will note, by the way this is a very famous study Lakoff 1975. And if we say unnecessary and you still have written language, that is very strange, as a linguist I think the unnecessary word itself is very unnecessary, right. Even if they are used by women or even if they are unnecessary, I would question that they are really used only by women. Adorable and divine apparently only used by women are mostly used by women. So beautiful, when you extend the adjective, also instead of die which is like direct, practical, you are using passed away. So, euphemisms, you are going to use indirect one.

So, it seems we women or depending on certain context, we are going to use these kinds of morphology which meant to not use, why would be of course the question. Also stereotypical perceptions regarding differential language use by males and females, women talk more than

men. Women are more assertive than men. Women break the rules of turn-taking less than men do, maybe yes. And women use more standard forms than men.

That last part may be true depending on again the social status of woman. There is a very famous study by Labov in New York stores where they see that depending on which store is frequented by which class of women, you see a lot of formal use, use of formal form. So, that may be true. However, very quickly as detour, I am going to talk about this a little bit more and then go directly to the I E language distinction, our main concern. Women talk more than men.

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**Gender**

- Li (2014) shows otherwise, with excerpts of conversation from *Desperate Housewives*

Reverend Sykes: Thank you, Bree. It always brightens my day when you invite me to visit.

Bree: Well, Reverend Sykes, I very much enjoy your company.

Reverend Sykes: As I do yours. (Silence for three seconds) So... have you killed someone?

Bree: Excuse me?

Reverend Sykes: I've always found the treats you prepare for my visits are a reliable indicator of your level of spiritual turmoil. The more exquisite the baked goods, the more anguished your soul. This... is a hazelnut chocolate chip scone with currants. So I ask again—have you killed someone?

Bree: No. It's just... Lately, I feel like Job. You know, Job, from the old testament?

Reverend Sykes: I'm familiar with the book. Thank you. Why do you think you're Job?

Bree: I just feel that God has taken everything away from me. I lost my business, my children never call me, and... my boyfriend Keith has left me.

Reverend Sykes: Well, it's not exactly body boils and dead camels, but I understand what you're saying. When I complained after I was not accepted into Yale Divinity School, my father had no sympathy. Instead he drove me from our lovely home in Connecticut to a dangerous section of the Bronx and forced me to hand out blankets to the homeless.

Bree: I see. That's the reason you're always been so sensitive to the plight of the poor.

Reverend Sykes: Perhaps. It's certainly the reason my father was buried in a sport jacket he detested. The point is, looking at what has been taken away from us is a bad way to go through life. Looking for what we can give to others is far better.

**NPTEL**

There is this very interesting study done by Lee 2014 who shows otherwise. So, he takes excerpts of conversation from *Desperate Housewives* which I am not very aware of but I know that it is a television series shown on American TV, American channels. And it has been running from many years and they are all these female characters, the main leading characters are all female, so what he does is take an excerpt of conversation, the one that I, this is the one that I thought was very enjoyable and there are 2 characters, I think, because I have not seen this, so I really do not know if I am getting it right but I think Bree is the female one and Reverend Sykes is the male one.

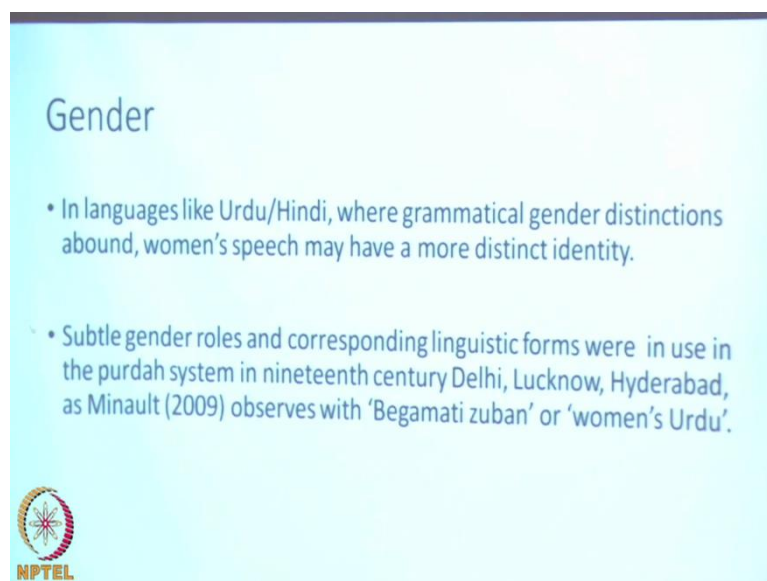
So, Bree is one of the housewives and you just look at the size of the conversation for each of them and you will think twice before saying women talk more than men. So, reverend Sykes says “Thank you Bree, it always brightens my day when you invite me to visit”. Bree’s

conversation, utterance is restricted. Bree “Well reverend Sykes I very much enjoyed your company.” Then reverend Sykes says again “As I do yours. So, as you kill someone?”

And then Bree says “Excuse me” very shocked, right. And then look at the length of reverend Sykes utterance and look at the amount of time he spends on all these things which we may think unnecessary. “I have always found the Treats you prepare for my visits to be a reliable indicator of your level of spiritual turmoil. The more exquisite the baked goods, the more anguished your soul. This is a hazelnut chocolate chip scone with currants” he knows a lot, right. “So I ask again, have you killed someone?”

Just look at this, right, here you see reverend Sykes, here reverend Sykes, here reverend Sykes, just a small indicator that it may be steered typical creation of our minds that women speak more, I do not think you can make a generalisation. Depending on what the context is, you will have males or females taking turns to speak more, I am speaking more now, but my next speaker will speak more any may be a male. Anyway, so just a small detour.

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So, what happened then, in languages like, so here was English when you did not have grammatical gender and use, yet you use a lot of grammatical, use a lot of category, the biological gender category that differentiate the world into sexes, you also try to show that this is how male and female world the divided which may or may not always be true. However languages like Urdu, Hindi where grammatical gender distinctions abound, women's speech may have a more distinct identity or entity, it may have a more. And that also depends on the social context, not necessarily women go out let us say in the

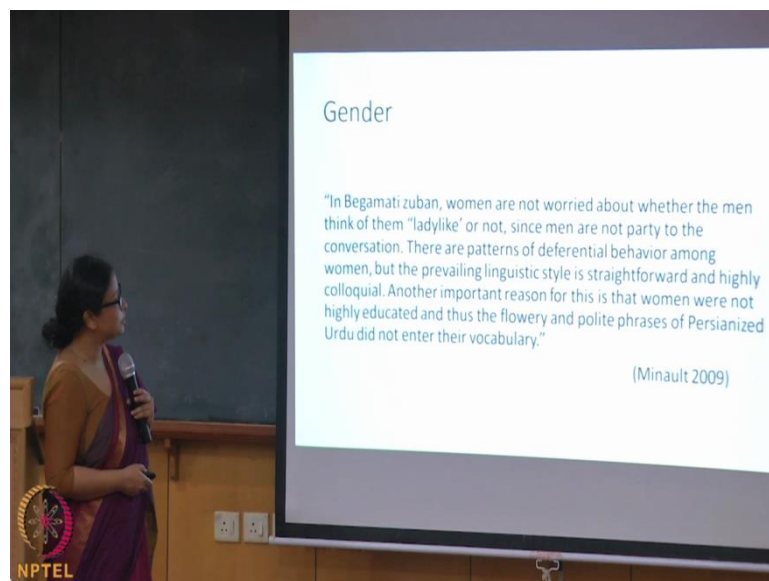


professional world where you anyway or very easily missing out with men or from people from the other sexes, so it does not probably matter.

But if you have a close world, you may create a different identity, a linguistic identity. So, here is this very famous work by Minault 2009 who observes that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Delhi, Lucknow, Hyderabad, when the purdah system was prevalent, there were subtle gender roles and corresponding linguistic forms that came about and this was called the Begamati Zuban or 'women's Urdu'.

This were by women of that century when women were not mixing out or going into the professional world, so they had world of their own. And they showed that Begamati Zuban language or women's Urdu had a lot of distinct characteristics but as I tell you, it is more of the level of words and idioms, a lot of words. Many examples.

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So, here, before we go to the example, Minault 2009, in Begamati Zuban, women are not worried about whether the dsmen think of them ladylike or not since men are not party to the conversation. There are patterns of differential behaviour among women but the prevailing linguistic style is straightforward and hardly colloquial. Another important reason for this is that women were not highly educated and does the flowery and polite phrases of Persianized Urdu did not enter their vocabulary.

So, this may be true of Begamati Zuban but it is also true of many rural areas where women also have a world of their own. So, they create a world and they are not going out, I mean they will probably have 2 varieties of language, one that they use with the outside world and

one they use with the internal circle. So, if you have that internal circle, it is bound to come about a new identity. But I think that is true for any community, any group of people, not just women. But this one is interesting, okay.

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Now I will go through the words and you will see a lot of them are very interesting and and I do not know if they are used in Persianized Urdu. So, you have rasna basna, woman who did not have to leave her home and they will see they are all related to her survival tactics, her uterus, to her children, right to things that allow her that give her Prestige in a household, that defines our existence, all related to that. Rasna Basna, woman who did not have to leave home.

Nigori, a woman who without support or companionship, so someone who is not really good, in their own world also. Then they would create all these different relations with the other women beyond their blood ties. So, if you change dupattas, stoles, then you will be called dupatta badalna bahin, if you shared elaichi or cardamom, then they would be called elaichi bahin, zinaki ka rishta means that you have taken a wish together.

So, you are creating these very interesting idioms that have their own specific meaning. Right. Then quite a few of these idioms you will see are more to do with the body parts that give them the power in the house. So, you have kaleja thanda rahe pet thanda rahe, meaning may your children be happy. Kokh aur maang se thanda rahe okay, so kokh is uterus, may you never become a widow. Teri man ka pet thanda rahe, may your mother never lose you.

So, it is everything to do with someone else who really determine your status within the family.

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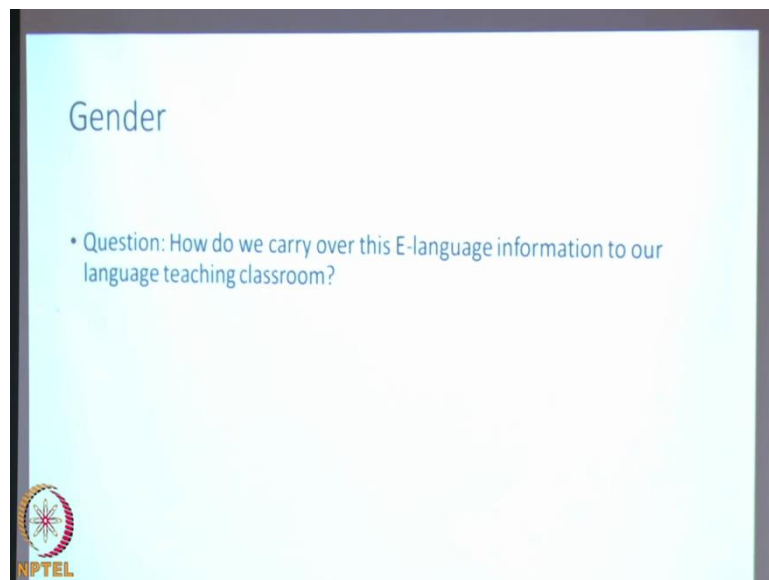
Also a lot of cuss words, I do not know if I can take many of them. Chulhe me ja, let me use the more chulhe me jaaye, go to hell. Then you have duniya se ude, into the grave, drop dead. Janhar Marne joga, worthy of dead. Then of course, kasbe bazari, ghungru ki sharik, meaning dancing girl or streetwalker which are not supposed to be, who is not supposed to be good women and then poor, nikatu, aate ki apa, incompetent, good for nothing. So, you have got a few cuss words.

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Okay, so what do we have here then? Here we see that in a community where you have biological gender plus also grammatical gender, you have already made a distinction in the society and the society seems to be already divided into the male, female groups very clearly. Not that the argument is not come out, but I am talking about this place or this error where there was a very clear women's space and role, you would have grammatical gender E forms used for conscious thinking for speaking and you will create a new language of that, a new identity for the language. And then they seem to be mostly manipulated at the morphological level. So, most of the things will come out at the word and the idioms level, among what is there.

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Okay, so question, how do we carry over this e-learning which information to our language teaching classroom?

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## Gender

- There is existing evidence that advanced/second/foreign language learners find it very difficult to learn grammatical gender in a target language.
- Grauberg (1971): one third of morphological errors in written essays are those of gender errors, made by advanced English learners of German.




And there is existing evidence that advanced or second or foreign language learners find it very difficult to learn grammatical gender in a target language and that you can see if you try to teach a Bengali, an adult Bengali a Hindi gender, right. Extremely difficult. And even if you have Easter speakers of Hindi trying to learn grammatical gender. And then, so, there are lots of studies to show that Grauberg 1971 for instance shows one third of morphological errors in written essays or those of gender errors made by advanced English learners of German. Very difficult to let grammatical gender.

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## Gender

- Rogers (1984): gender errors in free compositions are numerous for advanced learners.
- Rigault (1969): English learners of French, even after seven years of tuition/schooling, make frequent gender errors.



Rogers 1984 shows that gender errors in free compositions are numerous for advanced learners. Similarly Rigault 1969, which is a previous work shows that English learners of

French, even after 7 years of tuition or schooling which means explicit training make frequent gender errors. So, grammatical gender is much more difficult.

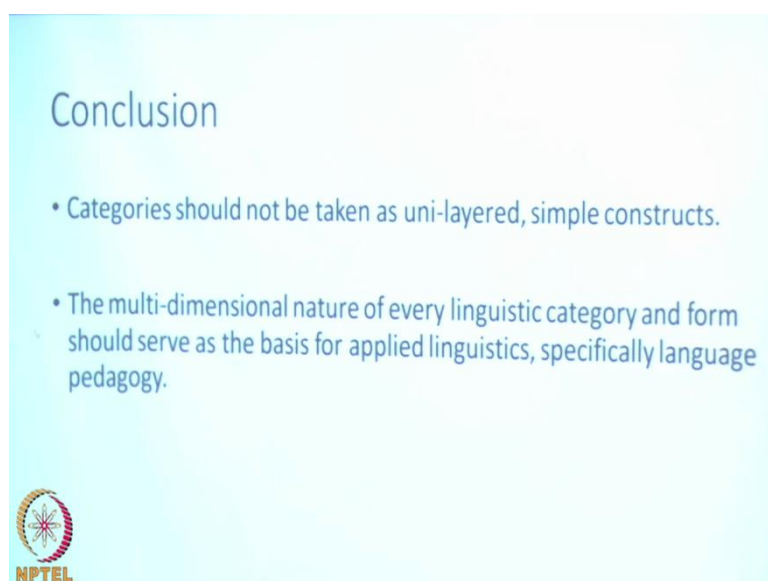
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So, which means what? What do we understand from this? We understand that biological gender, the I language for, the default plus minus masculine forms comes naturally to speakers. They are there, you probably do not have to teach them. Any learner will recognise that he is a male and she is a female, however, pedagogues, language pedagogues, more specifically need to develop pedagogical techniques for grammatical gender which are E language forms with multiple, cultural, social cues to have the learner understand the complexity of this construct.

So, it is not simply a question of rote memorisation, you just cannot take or make an inventory of words and say this is feminine, this is masculine. You have to you have to imbibe or make the right cultural association with these words. That is very important, which is where you have to make learning experience very important. Experience, social and cultural experience as an integral part of your classrooms.

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So, this is where we have again the I E language distinction and I believe that somewhere this will tell us that theoretical linguistics, because we study language as an abstraction, as an abstract entity may be useful to language pedagogues as well. So, what have we learned very specifically, well categories should not be taken as uni layered simple constructs.

So, we just cannot assume that you are teaching tense or you are teaching gender or your teaching time to a foreign language learner or a second language learner, you have to somehow have a method for that. You have to really look at which level are you considering. Is it the grammatical level, something that is already there for the for the learner to start with and you can manipulate that or is it at the E language level where you have to make a conscious effort to have experience put into it.

So, I think for language pedagogues, for also for applied linguists in general, the multidimensional nature of every linguistics category and form should serve as the basis for that discipline and specifically for language pedagogues. Thank you.

“Professor-students conversation starts.”

Student:

Few of us are doing a project on gender and language, so this was very informative. So, I was mainly thinking about the I language E language distinction that you are making, you said that biological gender might be related to eye language because it seemed universal. But is

not it possible that it is just because that male female gender bindings are more, the universal cultural construct than other applications of gender.

If you apply the, apply the feminist or clear theory to this argument, it is, it becomes little problematic to say that the male-female biological binding is I language, whereas others are E language. Because the argument is that all of it is E language with some of them being more universal than the others.

Dr. Pritha Chandra:

Asking whether this may lead to a problem specifically if you look at the world as it is now, instead of just a binary perception, I will I will tell you, even though I have used minus plus minus for feminine masculine, there is always a possibility... so these are features, this is not saying that your, this is what you see in the real world and that is what is there in your grammar. Your grammar will have only the features plus plus minus feminine plus minus Masculine and you can have multiple combinations, permutations with them.

So, even in cases where you have plus, feminine plus Masculine, you should be able to do that, right. So, your language will allow you would that possibility as E form where a person or where a thing is considered to have both the sexes, right, just in case your society allow that. So, Swedish is one of those languages which has a, biological gender does not mean exactly like male and female as seen in the society, that is a societal thing.

All that I meant was that there are features, let us say that the binary parameter for the features, but you can also have minus feminine minus masculine, right. Which does not go with what we see, at least in the human world. Right, we will think of well everyone should be either masculine or feminine because that is the way society has constructed it. But when you look at it from an I language perspective, it tells you that your ability to think beyond the social construct is much more, right.

So, at a time when we have let us say someone considered to have for the sexes, let us say plus feminine minus Feminine, will your I language will give you that possibility, I language meaning your language, right. Will your I language give you the possibility to create new terms for a society where you do not just consider this binary opposition, you think there can be people who can have both sexes or who can behave like male and females alike, would you allow that? I think your language gives you the possibility, which is where the immense power of language lies, right.



You are saying that it is not just plus feminine plus feminine and masculine, so binary opposition is not there is language, the opposition is created in the society, your language gives you that permutation. By the way, when I talk about I language, grammar essentially is telling you you are dealing with very ideal constructs, very few primitives. Those primitives have multiple permutations. So, even though I have said biological gender seems to be primitive, it does not mean that biological gender is only either this or that, that is out there.

Student:

I have 2 questions, first one is related to the colour term where you said that yes even if we do not have that colour term, we can recognise those colors. Very recently and please correct me if I sound really naive or something, but very recently I came across an article which said that ancient classics and ancient articles did not have colors for like the colour for oceans was dark but not blue.

So, probably because they did not have the term blue in their language, they did not see that okay it is, they did not see that the oceans can be blue and they termed it as dark. And, to check this, they recently went to Africa where they do not have distinctions between green and blue, so they had all green colors and one blue and they could not understand okay, which one is blue. But when they had different shades of green, they could easily say, okay, this is a different shade.

So, then I think again, coming to, I mean, if I read that article and I find here today, like all the scholars saying that even if it is not there, you can... So, I do not know what is true because if you do not have something, you cannot see it and my mom, like she cannot, she cannot distinguish between like different shades of pink. She is like everything is pink. So, what do you have to say on that A?

And second, when you gave that example, the distinction between gender like count and mass, so male and female and small and big, that is just an observation like, what is, what was interesting in that language was like small was for males and big was for females. Interestingly in Hindi, small is for females and big is for males. So, is it more of the society thing that they are giving importance to women?

Dr Pritha Chandra:

By the way I should say these are not naive questions, no questions are naive, very thoughtful. So, 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> is the colour perception, that if you have colour terms, it becomes easier for you to perceive them, in fact you have to make a very conscious effort. As I told you from the language pedagogical studies, people are found that in second language learning or foreign language learning, teaching colour terms is often very difficult, specifically if those colour terms are not there in your language, so you really cannot find the correspondence.

You see, even when we learn, let us say any structure, so if you learn a relative clause which is very similar to the relative clause structure of let us say the language you learning, let us say English and you are learning, you are a Hindi speakers, it will be easier oftentimes to impose your grammatical constructs onto that.

And we often do that, sometimes we do a direct translation which is not the right way to do, you know, the grammatical teaching or learning. So, colour perception as far as I understand will be difficult if you do not have those colour terms which is what was mentioned here that some of it is universal, some of it is not. So, the universal part probably will be where you take dark also as meaning black. So, you may not have a clear distinction between black and dark. Many people, many languages may have a term for dark instead of black and people may not, they just assume that.

So, if it is black, people can say dark, right, so, if something is dark here and I can see the base of the PC here as black, it is dark also. So, that that itself is very interesting that, which is why, remember the way the language, the colour terms were put, it is black or dark. So, if before they had the blue term which was more achieving to something that would, they would take for let us say the English-language, then they would have dark because it is true that the ocean can be very dark. You may also be imposing some other features, dark meaning something that does not bring you very not very auspicious for instance.

So, they may have had a disaster, you know that ancient history also tells that many of the civilisations were done away with because of floods, huge floods, maybe there were Tsunamis, there could be multiple things. So, dark could also be associated with culture specific terms. But the fact is you will have a colour term for, if you have only 2 colour terms in any language, it will be black or white or dark and white.

So, these colors are there to start off with. The second question was about, the way you see the society will come into work, it will start functioning... Because as you rightly said that if

in romance, and while I was writing these forms, from these Romance languages, I realised that small holes is masculine and big hole is feminine. A small something is masculine and big is feminine, so why is it that in Hindi, as you said, many a times we attribute smallness to female or feminine properties.

And I think that is where society comes in because the letter I language from will not be effective, in fact if I look at you or when I look at a hole, whether it is a small hole for a small cat to go through, remember the Eureka moment for, I forget which scientists, so he makes 2 holes, Archimedes, right. So, he makes 2 holes, one for the big cat to go through and one for the small cat to go through, right, without really thinking twice that even through the big hole, you could get the small cat go through.

Anyway that is the scientist thinking for you and really there were no engineers. But what is interesting is that you really do not think of holes as feminine or masculine, right, however when you live in a society and if you start using these features to gain more meaning, you know that you have to use that, then what you do is start constructing. So, in these countries, say Italy and Spain, I am not sure if they are not patriarchal societies, they are patriarchal societies but maybe there is more participation of women.

So, maybe they do not always attribute smallness to women that could also be it. I mean one has to look at the socio culture aspects. Yah, I agree, I agree, at some point I have heard that 17<sup>th</sup>-century French men were pretty short, right. So, that could be also a part of it, I do not know, I do not have an answer to that.

Participant:

We do not understand grammatical categories well enough to make any generalisation at all, not just gender or number or honour paradigms, even tense, the 3 forms or 2 forms of tense that we take for granted are not getting firstly attested and they have little to do with performance, you know, and people when they English speak, they use English or people who use French as an Francophile Africa and giving sufficient motivation and exposure they learn. I will come specifically one by one to, say for example the color terms.

You seem to have said that those who do not have terms for colour have difficulty recognising those colors. I can tell you from lots of data that those who have terms for colour also have difficulty in recognising those colors. Right. So, it is not that you know performance is necessarily linked, you know letter I or E language is necessarily linked with I

language. Okay. The so-called Hindi speakers and I do not know who they are, Hindi at the best is a linked language.

All kind of people make all kind of mistakes even with in Delhi, even with gender and there are N number of non-Hindi speakers who also write, speak, you know write and speak excellent Hindi. I will give you the most celebrated example, the entire poems of Kabir were collected by somebody called Jitendra Mohan Sen who using your paradigm was a Bengali, who did not live forever in Agra or Delhi but wrote and you know similarly the first grammar of Hindi, first grammar but not written by so-called Hindi speakers. You know, these things do not have one-to-one correlation with exposure, we do not know. I can take individual example. It is not that all you know the young lady over there, you seem to have agreed with her that small is feminine, not necessarily.

Always the smallest that we conceive of and only is masculine. Aaloo chhota hai aloo chhoti nahi hai. Aaloo aap naam de sakte hai ladki ka, aaloo ladke ka bhi naam ho sakta hai, Hindi me bhi, Bangla me bhi, Rajasthan me bhi, Himachal me bhi, kahi bhi. A small hole is not necessarily feminine, Saap ka bil chhota hai, chhoti nahi hai, jabke saap ka bill chuhe ka bill bada chhota hota hai and maa sher ki maa sher ka maa nahi kehte hai. You know these things do not have... our search for logic may be right but it is not in the right direction.

So for colour terms, how do you teach these terms in English to those who do not have it in their mother tongue and many things in English which we do not have in our mother tongues and we learned because human mind is not constrained by etymology. You may have N number of words in all our languages come, have a foreign origin, actually so much so that you at the end of it do not know what is native, it is just an attitude.

To stop here, I will say that capacities of human minds are infinite and our quest to generalise in terms of what we witness, no matter how much we witness is, in my opinion, a product of misplaced enthusiasm. Okay. What we should attempt at therefore, both as a teacher and as a linguist is number-one to have greater humility, number 2 to have more data. Thank you very much.

Dr Pritha Chandra:

Thank you. One is grammatical categories, we do not know much about them, I think that is the, that is something that we should not take away, in fact there is a lot of data collection that has been done and this is not just within the generative paradigm, it is also typologically done

by people who are outside the generative paradigm, people were not Chomsky, so, were not theoretical linguists as such.

A lot of data has been collected, a lot of data is being collected, that is one thing, in terms of just (( ))(67:03). The other is not knowing much about grammatical category, I think there also we are wrong because we do know, whatever we know, we have definitely a lot more to know but we do know for instance it is true that Hopi for instance does not have past, future and present distinction, it is true, right.

There are languages which take proximal and I have that at the end of slides that languages that take distance and Hopi is one of those languages, Blackfoot is one of those languages which take distance as the criteria instead of time and time. Now, the question is, could be somewhere, the work of the theoretical linguistics, and this is where the I think we should be open to theoretical linguistics, applied linguistics specifically should be open to theoretical linguists is that is it possible to attempt put them together under a single syntactic or generative or I language analysis, right. Which is what we did with gender also what I did with gender also, trying to bring them together. So, that is one thing, we do know there has been a lot of study, people have been spending years let us say collecting data from American Indian languages.

In fact most of American linguistics which may not be on the right track, I do not you know say that this is, that is the best way to go but including places like MIT have spent a lot of time and many universities in Canada for instance spent lots of time collecting data from Native American languages, partly due to guilt, partly due to save their language and also partly because of theoretical interest. That is one thing, so we do know a lot about grammatical category.

We know a lot, we do not know about it entirely, we do know a lot and from that knowing a lot, we can try to explain, we can use it. Second I and E language not related, depends on what you mean by E language, which is why I gave that quote from Chomsky very says that E languages exist at all, E language, the simplest definition you can give of E language from our perspective is a Morpho phonological representation, something that has a form, that you can use. Right?

After that as I said, you have experience and once you communicate and once you have experience and experience can come from all other things that Prof Choudhury was adhering,

it is a much much more complex phenomena, which is why you want to put it beyond your I language system, you do not want to call it grammar anymore. Right, which is where the other disciplines also come in, sociology comes in, economics comes into some extent, psychology, very specifically comes in. talking about Anu, you said that there are various ways of understanding smallness and bigness, I think a lot also goes back to etymology.

So there are these exceptions also, lots of exceptions, you will have a lot of exceptions and by the way when you have experienced and there is experience after every kilometre differential experience, you are also going to find a lot of variations in human language, so we have to take that into account.

So that the Saap ka bill and other bills, there are small or big, of course, you have by the way syntactically, any ka bill will be ka bill or if you put a feminine or masculine, whatever be the possessor, it will always be ka bill because you are taking the bill as a masculine, so the ka will show, it will not show as a ki. So, syntactically we will see that there is a morpho syntactic variation, I mean morpho syntactic manifestation but in terms of your experience, how you understand it, whether it is feminine, what the kind of semantics we attribute is beyond your E language. I said that E language is used for communication.

“Professor-student conversation ends.”