Appreciating Linguistics: A typological approach
Dr. Anindita Sahoo
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Madras

Lecture - 43
Syntactic Typology - Part 3

Hi, hello everyone. Welcome to this session of my NPTEL course Appreciating Linguistics: A typological approach.

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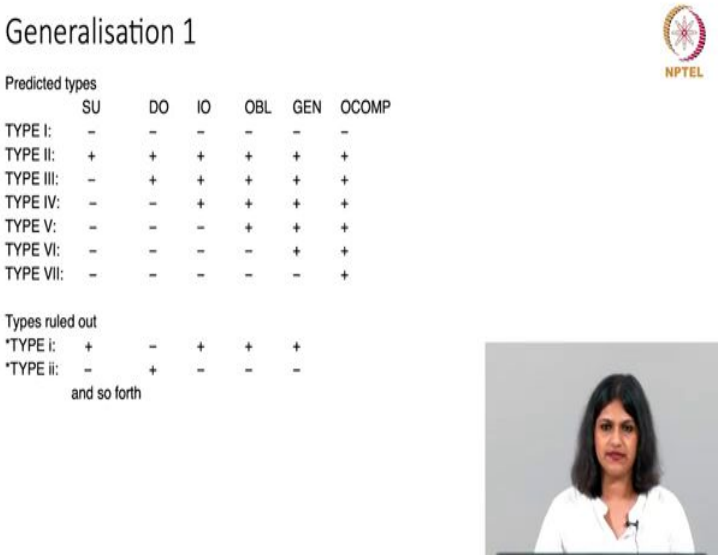

Now, let us look at our table that has been drawn to understand the first generalization that we have had.

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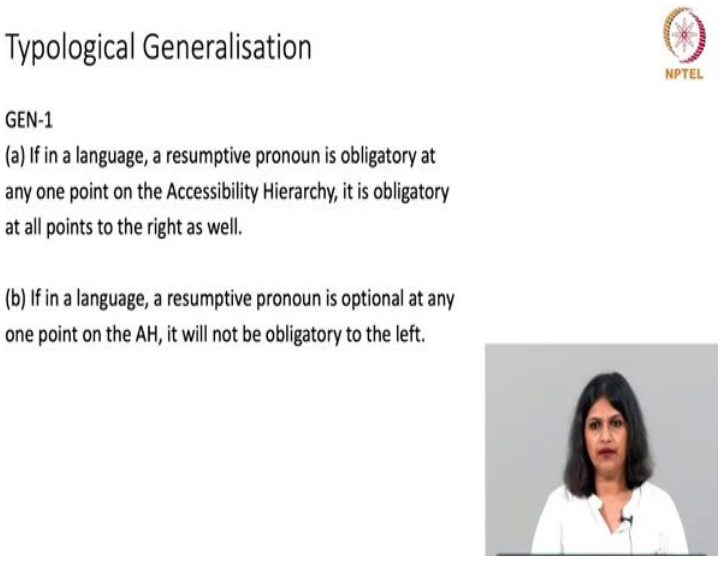

What is the first generalization? Let us try to recall, we said if a resumptive pronoun is mandatory on any point of the accessibility hierarchy, it is going to be mandatory or obligatory on every point towards the right. And if it is optional on any point of the accessibility hierarchy; it is going to be optional on any point on the left.

These are the possible types that we can have; type 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. If it is not mandatory, it is not going to be mandatory for any of this. So see, it is minus at every place. Type 2 is mandatory in all the categories or in all the sections. Type 3, the first one is optional, but the rest all of them are plus. Similarly a minus minus in case of you, you see the if there is a plus, you will not find a minus after the plus; and if there is a minus, you will not find a minus before the plus. So, what are the ruled out types? The ruled out types are type 1 and type 2 given here.

The plus sign here and then the minus sign here is going to be. So, when it is optional, it is optional in all types, if it is mandatory, it is mandatory in all types. Type 3 can be minus at the subject level, the other ones it is plus. Type 7 should be minus at all levels, only at the comparative thing it is going to be plus.

And what are the types that we can rule out? We can rule out if the first one, the highest subject has a plus and direct object is a minus, that is not possible. So, which one is violated?

The first one, 1a. If it is mandatory on any point on the accessibility hierarchy, it is going to be mandatory for all of them on the right, but here, this is violated.

The second one, type 2, if it is optional at any point, then it is going to be optional on all the points. So, let us see this is optional on the subject, then on the right it cannot be mandatory or if it is mandatory over here, this cannot be remaining optional. So, type 1 and type 2 are going to be the ruled out ones, and these seven are going to be the acceptable ones. Now, our concern is to find out which language should be in which category.

You can refer to more data in the book, but just remember Hebrew is a language which belongs to type 3. And when I say Hebrew is a language that belongs to type 3, that means, at the subject level, the resumptive pronoun is not mandatorily required, but it is mandatorily required at all the other levels. So, that is the Hebrew data; you can check it later.

A type 4 language is Hawsa. So, type 4 is what? The resumptive pronoun is not obligatory at the subject level and the direct object level, but it is going to be obligatory for the rest of the ones. So, my question for you would be why don't you find out which type would your language belong to? Do you know any language which might fall under the category of type 1, where it is not mandatory at all or let us say type 2 where it is mandatory at all levels?

If you know multiple languages, then it will be easier for you to find out the types that you know about the languages. So, that was one set of data that we have or one grammatical category that we have understood to find out the syntactic typology. The second one that I am going to discuss is the classifiers. The second grammatical unit that we need to discuss is classifiers.

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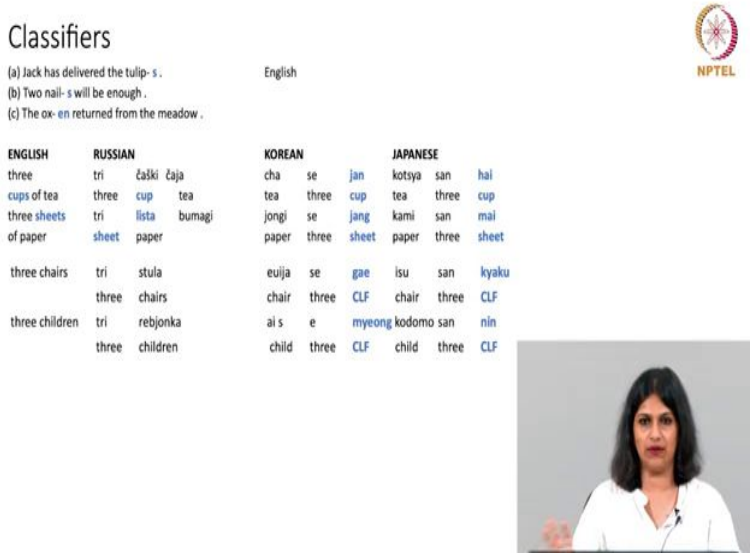

We had a discussion on the resumptive pronouns, and we saw how typologically we can segregate or typological we can put languages in different categories. Let us see now how classifiers can also help us to find out how syntactic typology can be understood. First thing, what is a classifier? A classifier is a grammatical item which marks or which is marked on any kind of noun, let us say when I say singular versus plural. So, the plural markers are the classifiers.

These plural markers have three different forms at least in English, and they are generally suffixed, and that is why we call them allomorphs. So, either they can be an -s morpheme, or it can be -en morpheme, or it could be an -es morpheme also.

When you say houses, tulips and oxen, all of them are allomorphs, because they are different morphemes which refer to the same semantic interpretation. So, the first example that I have here I have given here Jack has delivered the tulips. So, -s is the classifier. Two nails will be enough; -s again is the classifier. The oxen returned from the meadow, -en is the classifier and these are the plural markers. This simple process actually does not work for all the languages. It might work for English, but there are other languages in the world which are extremely complex as far as classifiers are concerned.

We have a set of data here, but let me just talk about what is the complexity. Let us say you want to pluralize nouns like coffee or wine, you cannot pluralize it. It does not have an overtly manifested classifier all the time. So, in this case, what are we supposed to do? It is only units of coffee and units of wine that can be pluralized, but you cannot say I want my coffees or I you cannot say I want my wines. The plural rule is not as simple as it looks. However, there is a majority section of words which follow this pattern, but there are also exceptions.

Now let us consider data from four different languages in the world and we will find out how they are categorized. The first set we have is English, then we have Russian, then we have Korean and finally, we have Japanese. Look at the screen in English, we have three cups of tea, then three sheets of paper, then we have three chairs. There is a typo here. Then we have three children. So, these are the examples that I have in hand.

Let us look at it. So, three cups of tea, then the second one, three sheets of paper, third one, - three chairs and three children. How does it look in Russian? The Russian example, three cups of tea is the first one, then second, then third and then fourth. Then the Korean examples are here and then the Japanese examples are here.

Look at the data carefully and let us try to read it. We will find out if there is a shared pattern in the pluralization of mass nouns in four languages. Are we able to identify or are we able to find out any rigid or fluid pattern? Let us see. We are going to highlight similarity in a while, we know in most of the cases, but in case of the differences, there is an interesting story emerging here.

What is that interesting story? When it comes to pluralizing the nouns that refer to naturally delimited units such a chair or child, the languages are different. Look at chair. Because these can be to the words like chair and child, they are naturally delimited actually. And in case of consider the third example, three chairs, I want your attention to be on languages like English and Russian. In English and Russian, they directly pluralize each countable noun. So, tri stula so that it chairs, three chairs. English and Russian do it directly. They mark the plural classifier on the word like for singular they have chair, for plural they have chairs stul and stula it could be.

But on the other hand, we have Korean and and Japanese. They do not follow the same pattern. What do these two languages do? They have different constructions and they have a marker here. In case of chair or in case of child, they have this classifier marker. So, it is like something in plural, there is an independent classifier marker in Japanese and Korean, which is not found in English and Russian.

In English and Russian, you have separate words for it. Now look at it, we can see a clear pattern. In case of Korean and Japanese for the countable nouns like child and chair, you have to classify a marking out here, CLF marking you see. The CLF markings are missing in English and Russian. English and Russian directly pluralize the noun, but in case of Korean and Japanese at least for the countable nouns, they are going to have an overt classifier marker.

But the story is different in case of the uncountable nouns like tea or paper, where you need the units. In case of units, the nominal classifiers are missing in Korean, Japanese, but the nominal classifiers are available in case of the countable ones. So, if you look at the non-countable or the units of tea and coffee, English, Russian, Korean, Japanese, hardly there is any difference. But when the matter comes to the countable ones then there are specific differences.

Now, the question is which languages have numeral classifiers. To understand the generalization of numeral classifiers, you have to find out which category fits to what, whether English is different, Russian is different or they are almost like as we just analyzed the data, we can put them together; Korean and Japanese they behave similarity in some cases, so we can put them together. So, with this data, let us see what kind of generalization that we can draw.

We have already discussed one generalization based on the resumptive pronoun, and now we are going to talk about the second generalization. The generalization number two as given on the screen by Greenberg(1977) is that all languages that have numeral classifiers also have mensural classifiers. Mensural classifiers would be measuring things.

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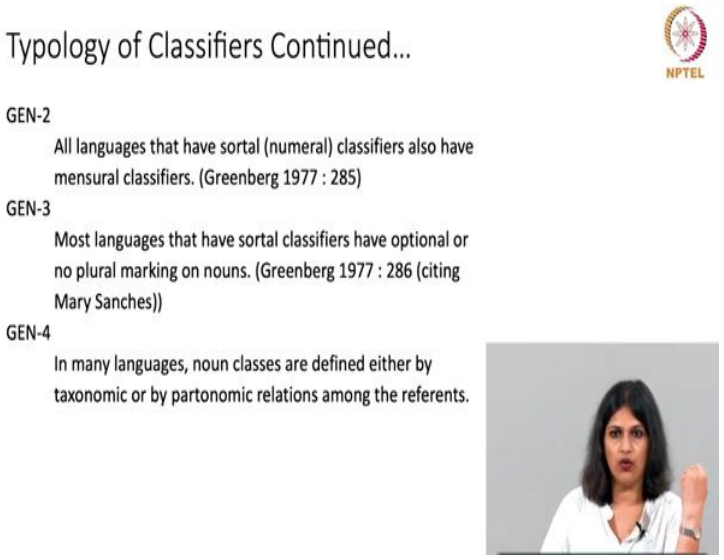

When you have a numeral one, you will also have the mensuration based things. And the second generalization would be most languages that have numeral classifiers have optional or no plural marking on the nouns. This is also Greenberg(1977). Most again, he is not saying here all languages, he is saying most languages that have numeral classifiers, they have optional or no plural marking on the nouns, but there is nothing mandatory out here.

Now let us move to the generalization number 4. In generalization number 4, here the discussion is going to be based on the taxonomic relation or the partonomic relation. Taxonomic relation is related to the similarity that it has, and partonomic relation is going to deal with the part-whole relationship that the noun classes have. Maybe I will give you a simple example from a daily life thing. When you go to a shopping mall, let us say you are looking for cloves. Cloves are a part of Indian spices.

You may find it at other spices sections, something like mustard seeds or cumin, so all these Indian spices wherever they will be, you will get these spices also. Taxonomically it is a spice, because it has a similar relation with other spices or other Indian spices in that matter.

But cloves are partonomically related to the whole domain called spices. It is a part of the edible items of the edible spices that we have. So, something similar, one is based on the similarity, the other one is the part-whole relationship and taking into account the taxonomic and the partonomic relations among the referents, the generalization 4 tells that in many languages noun classes are defined either by taxonomic or by partonomic relations. Either

you find out what are other similar grammatical categories and you put them together, or you find out where you have related categories or the whole categories or you can say the bigger sets of categories, you can put it over there.

So, on the basis of the taxonomy and the partonomic relation that it has, the classifiers in the world's languages can be typologically arranged. So, that is one way of understanding the classifiers. Classifiers also lead to the agreement relation, and what is agreement relation? Agreement relation is how the nouns are agreeing with the objectives, or it could be subjects are agreeing with the verbs, or sometimes in a language like Hindi where the object agreement is also possible. How the object is agreeing with the words.

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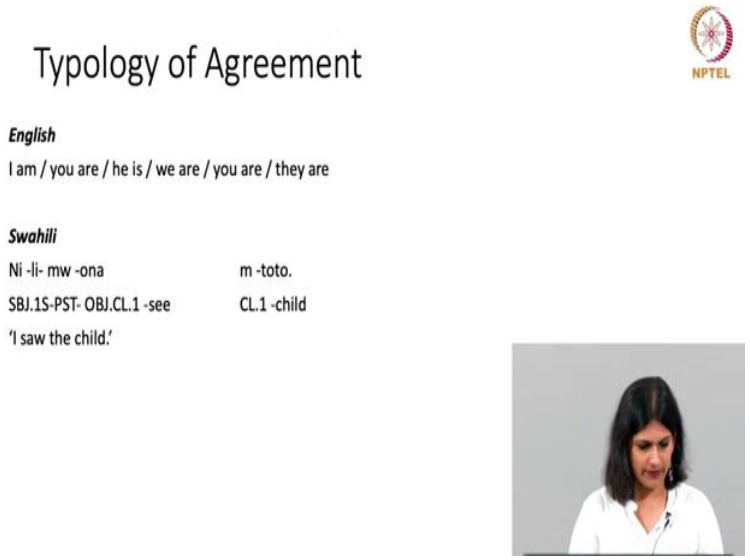

Let us look at the typology of agreement for a while. I will quickly go through it. I have data from two languages, one is English, the other one is Swahili. In English, either you can say I am, or you are, he is, we are, you are, they are. These are the relations or these are the agreement patterns that we have in English. What happens when you have a language like Swahili? In case of Swahili, you see this phrase ni li mw ona something like that and then m toto. This particular phrase is loaded with semantic information. There is a subject, then the tense marking, then there is an object, then there is a classifier, and then the verb everything is loaded together in a language like Swahili.

So, how is it different from English? In case of English, the past tense verbs in English, do not agree with any of the arguments, whereas the verb in the present tense does. When you say I am or he is, in the present tense am and is they are different, but when it is in the past tense it is going to be I was and he was. So, in the past tense the agreement is a little less visible, but in the present tense it is more widely visible. And you also see when the subject is I first person singular, it is the verb is going to be am.

But in case of Swahili what happens, in this example as given in Swahili, the verb agrees both with the subject in person and number also with the direct object. The subject here I believe is ni-li and the object here is ona. When you see the verb si, it also has been in agreement with both.

The child is the object, I saw the child, the child as the classifier it is like the first one, this written CL1. This classifier marking is also seen with the verb. So, in English, the verb agrees with the subject, but in Swahili the verb agrees not only with the subject, but also with the object without the object marking. The question or the sentence might be ungrammatical. Now, in case of the third language like the third set of data that we have in hand, there is a bit of problem with the data here. I will just try to change it. So, this should be like this.

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In case of Lebanese Arabic, there is a broader range of arguments controlling with the verbal agreement. So, in in case of English, it was only subject agreement; in case of Swahili, we saw both the subject and object, and in case of Lebanese Arabic we see we will see how this this agreement pattern works.

So, in Lebanese Arabic considering this is a more complex system, what it does? This also shows the gender agreement of the verb in the subject and the direct object. So, not only the classes, so in case of Swahili, you just had the classifier like the plural or the singular thing, but in case of in case of Lebanese Arabic, not only the singular plural feature of the direct object, but also the gender of the direct object controls the verb right. So, the the agreement system in Swahili, sorry the agreement system in Lebanese Arabic is even more complex than the other two.

The simplest one we had English, which is only the subject agreement as far as the number is concerned, singular plural and you are done. There is no gender agreement as such. In case of Swahili, no gender agreement, but you have the object that controls the verb. In case of Lebanese Arabic, if you look at the data carefully, we will see it is not only the subject, but also the object controls it besides the plural singular marking, it also agrees with the gender marking on the subject right. So, considering so much complexity is involved in Swahili, we will see how typologically we are going to form the generalizations.

The 5th generalization that we have here is that this is called controller hierarchy. It has two parts; first, if the verb agrees with the indirect object, it also agrees with the direct object. That is the first generation. The three sets of data that we had English, Swahili and Lebanese Arabic, one set of generalization that emerges as far as the controller hierarchy is concerned.

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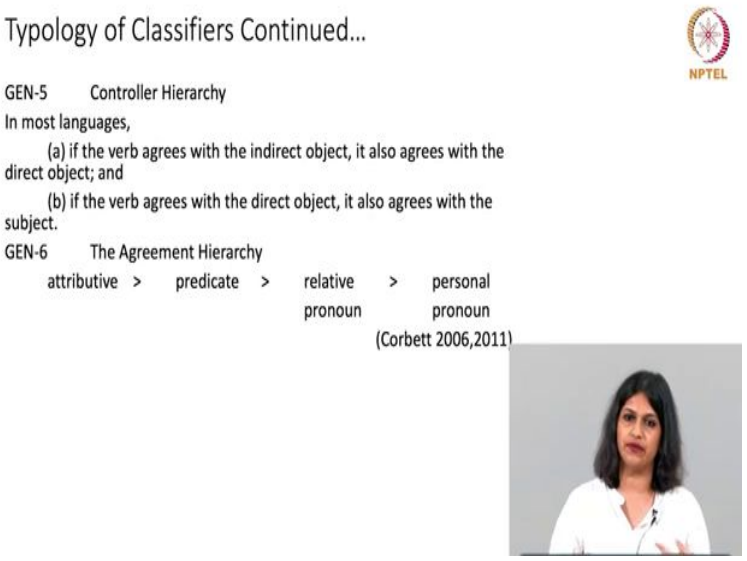

If the verb agrees with the indirect object, it also agrees with the direct object, because you remember the accessibility hierarchy. It was the subject, then we had DO, and then we had IO, I think that is the one. Let me check it again. So, the accessibility hierarchy subject and then IO and then we had the DO. Now, coming back to the controller hierarchy that we were talking about, if the verb agrees with the indirect object, it also agrees with the direct object. That is what we need to keep in mind when we were thinking about the accessibility hierarchy or the controller hierarchy. The direct object is higher than the indirect object.

So, in case of controller hierarchy also, if it agrees with the IO, it will also agree with the DO. And now the next thing is if the verb agrees with the DO, then it must agree with the subject also. So, these are the two different controller hierarchy that is emerging as far as the generalization five is concerned.

Besides the controller hierarchy we also have the agreement hierarchy. And how it agrees? The agreement hierarchy is something like that the attributive, is higher than the predicate, is higher than the relative pronoun is higher than the personal pronoun. So, these are six different generalizations that we need to remember when we were thinking about syntactic typology and taking into consideration grammatical items like classifiers and and resumptive pronouns, these are the stories of generalization.

So, up until now we have studied 6 different generalizations, and how the world's languages are categorized or are put under different categories or different types on the basis of the syntactic typological analysis.

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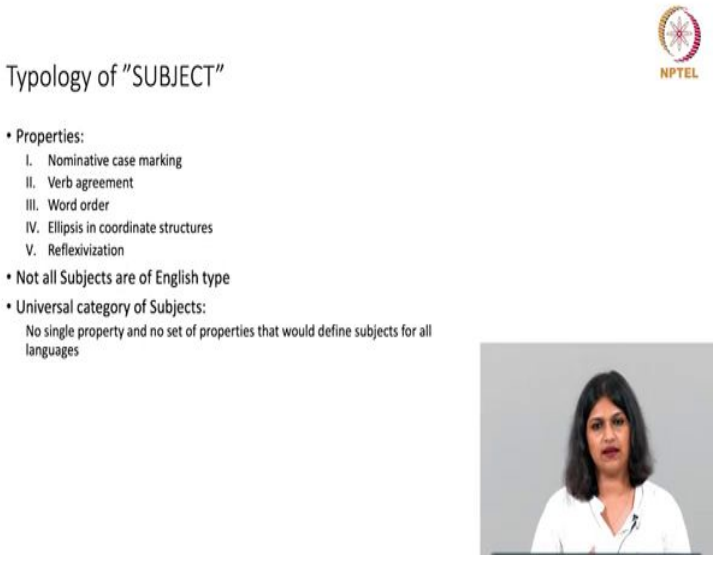

We will have more discussion on this in the next session, until then my suggestion for you would be to revisit the lectures and then the slides, and do find out which category your language belongs to as far as all the 3 semantic syntactic parameters that we discussed, choice of words, choice of word forms, and then the choice of word order. Thank you. We will continue the discussion in the next session.

Thanks.

Keywords: classifier, taxonomic relation, partonomic relation, controller hierarchy, agreement hierarchy