

Fundamental Concepts in Sociolinguistics
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Saussure's Key Concepts


Welcome to class. In continuation to the last lecture, where we talked about Ferdinand de Saussure and his influence in linguistics and other social science disciplines. Today, we will focus on his key concepts known as dichotomies, binaries, ideas, or sometimes it is called paradoxes. So, we will talk about Saussurean key concepts today, and try to understand the way he saw language, structure and overall linguistic phenomenon.

As you understand, almost half of the 18th century and 19th century focused on reconstruction of languages and language families, historical linguistics, sound change, patterns, and other philological aspects in philological linguistics, philology that we see. The beginning of the 20th century changed the paradigm, and it is marked with a paradigmatic shift in understanding language as a phenomenon and language studies. The first quarter of the 20th century is the century of Ferdinand de Saussure and his style, his paradigm, his theory of linguistics. Saussure is known as the father of modern linguistics, and also the founder of a new approach, a new paradigm known as structuralism.

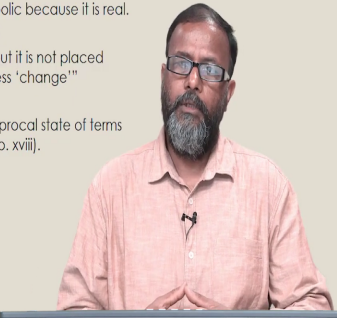
So, Saussure looked at language as a formal structure, as an underlying structure. And by talking about langue and parole, he distinguished between language and speech. So, we will talk about the key concepts in Saussurean linguistics, Saussurean framework, concepts like sign, signifier and signified, concepts like langue and parole, concepts like synchrony and diachrony in linguistics, concepts like syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships. He was the one who gave an elaborate understanding of semiotics. And in semiotics, he talks about the signs as a mental image. So, we will talk about these concepts in today's discussion and Saussure's key concepts in linguistics.

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Structure of Language



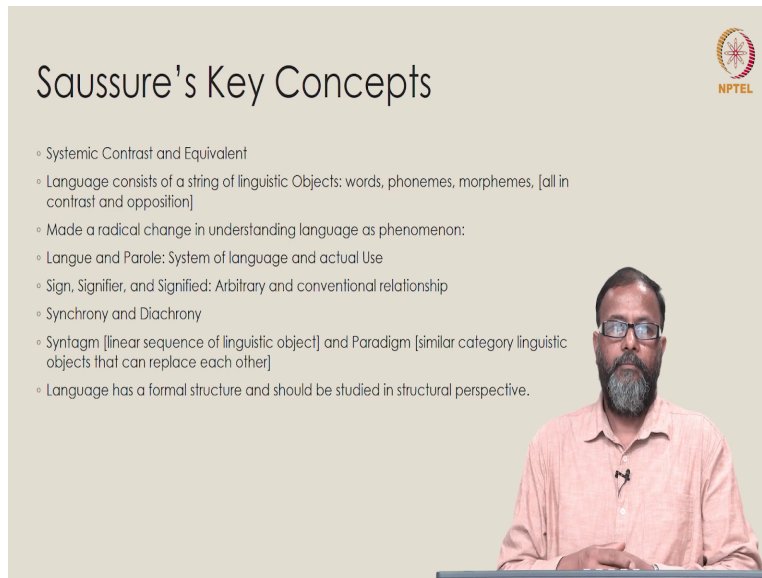
- Saussure emphasised on the structure of language.
- According to him language is a system of signs which includes "signifier" (the sound which is produced) and the "signified" (the actual concept to which it is being referred). The two terms "signified and signifier produce a world that is both wholly concrete and wholly conceptual at the same time.
- Indeed, the world itself—the real because it is symbolic and symbolic because it is real. Language and the world are continuous" (Saussure, 1959: p. xvii).
- The object of linguistics is the study of the structure of language but it is not placed outside history. "Language is 'evolutionary,' a function of ceaseless 'change'" (Saussure, 1959: p. xviii).
- Events occur within a language and as a consequence "the reciprocal state of terms after the event is not the same as it was before" (Saussure, 1959: p. xviii).



These concepts not only influenced the way we looked at language and in linguistic studies, but it also had a very deep impact on other disciplines, specifically in literature and literary analysis for that matter. So, he emphasized on the structure of language. And according to Saussure, language is a system of signs, which includes “signifier”, the sound image, which is produced, and the “signified”, the actual concept to which it is being referred to. The two terms, signified and signifier produce a world that is both wholly concrete and wholly conceptual at the same time. The object of linguistics is the study of the structure of language, but it is not placed outside history.

When we talk about synchrony and diachrony, we will talk about it and he says, “Language is evolutionary, a function of ceaseless change.” So, he looks at language as a dynamic process, as a dynamic entity, which is not static, that it evolves, it changes over a period of time. And when it comes to the time reference, he mentioned synchrony and diachrony, we will talk about it shortly. So, events occur within a language, and as a consequence, “the reciprocal state of terms after the event is not the same as it was before.” He talks about continuous evolution and change. So, he looked at language as a formal structure, property of language underlying the structure. He looked at language as a formal structure and the objects of language, constituents of language are in contrast and opposition, and that is why we are able to identify them and use them.

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The slide is titled "Saussure's Key Concepts" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. It contains a bulleted list of key concepts in Saussurean linguistics. In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light-colored shirt, speaking.

- Systemic Contrast and Equivalent
- Language consists of a string of linguistic Objects: words, phonemes, morphemes, [all in contrast and opposition]
- Made a radical change in understanding language as phenomenon:
- Langue and Parole: System of language and actual Use
- Sign, Signifier, and Signified: Arbitrary and conventional relationship
- Synchrony and Diachrony
- Syntagm [linear sequence of linguistic object] and Paradigm [similar category linguistic objects that can replace each other]
- Language has a formal structure and should be studied in structural perspective.

So, if you look at the key concepts in Saussurean linguistics, he says language is a system of Contrast and of Equivalent. It consists of a string of linguistic objects like words, morphemes, phonemes, etcetera, all in contrast and opposition. The discrete items, they are in contrast and opposition. He made a radical change in understanding language as a phenomenon. And we can see the deep impact of Saussurean linguistics on the European framework and American framework. So, we have European structuralism, we have American structuralism and the subsequent developments coming up to Chomsky linguistics and so on. So, the contribution of Saussure cannot be overestimated. It is a huge contribution, a huge significant impact on understanding language as a phenomenon, and it extends beyond linguistics to other disciplines like literature, like sociology, like psychology and psychoanalysis, in like philosophy, and other fields. He is known as the father of structuralism.

So, key concepts like langue and parole, langue, he talks about the underlying system, underlying structure or what you can say, language as a phenomenon, as a system, as a structural system. And parole is the speech, the use of this phenomena. So, langue is what you can roughly relate to today is competence and parole, roughly we can say, the performance. So, langue refers to the ability of the speaker, and control of the speaker and structures, understanding of the speaker of structures of a language, of a given language and parole refers to the actual use of it. So, what we call in Chomskyan linguistics, linguistic competence and linguistic performance, it cannot be equated by the way, both are two different paradigms, but conceptually we can relate to

competence as langue and performance as parole. So in Saussure linguistics, langue is the concept called language, and parole is the actual use of that linguistic phenomena in speech. Then we have concepts like sign, signifier and signified, and how they are arbitrarily related. So, sound-images and mental images combine, they are two surfaces of the same coin, two facets of the same coin. They become signifier of an object, of a concept. And signifier is the concept it refers to. So, when I say cat, as a sound image C-A-T cat, as a sound-image, and animal, it triggers in our mental image. So cat, as a sound-image becomes a signifier, and the actual animal which it refers to, becomes signified. Now the question is, there is no relationship between cat, the word, the signifier and the cat, the animal it refers to, the actual objective reality.

So, the signifier and the objective reality it represents have nothing in common, they are arbitrarily related, they are conventionally related, so meaning is conventionally related. There is no logical connection between the two. They are arbitrary and conventional. And except for a few things like onomatopoeic expressions like, “She fell down on the floor with a thud.” Now, the word ‘thud’, what we say in Hindi, ‘Dhadaam se.’ The sound itself represents the actual real, actualized sound, when you fall on the floor. Cat mews, when you say mews, the word ‘mew’ represents the actual sound of a cat. So, such expressions are very limited in a language, onomatopoeic expressions are very limited in a language, you can count on fingers. So, they are exceptions, otherwise the signifier and the signified have only conventional and arbitrary relationship. There is no logic. Why we call a guide a guide? Why we call a fan, a fan? Why we call a car, a car? Why we call a building, a building? No logic, no reason, this is conventionally assigned. So, signifier and signified are arbitrary and conventional.

Then another idea, he talks about is synchrony and diachrony. It refers to the time framework. Synchrony and synchronic linguistics, refers to understanding of language, study of language, a particular language at any given point of time. Whereas, diachrony or diachronic linguistics refers to a study of language through a period of time. So, historical linguistics, for that matter, we see sound change over a period of time in a particular language, diachronic linguistics.

Then, he talks about syntagm and paradigm. Saussure talks about syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationships. What is syntagm? Syntagm is a linear sequence of linguistic objects. And paradigm? The similar category linguistic objects that can be replaced by one another in a context. So, they stand in contrast and opposition, and they can be replaced, so they belong to the

same category of linguistic objects. If you look at the axis, syntagmatic is in the horizontal axis, the linear sequencing of linguistic objects and the relationship which cannot be replaced, they cannot replace each other. But in a paradigmatic relationship, we see it in the X axis, vertical, where words or linguistic objects from the same category can be replaced. I like an apple. So, the relationship of 'I' with 'like' with 'an' with 'apple', look at the constituents and their linear relationship, their positions are fixed. This is a syntagmatic relationship.

When we say paradigmatic relationship, I can say, "I like mangoes." I can replace 'apples' with 'mangoes'. So, this is a paradigmatic relationship, it can be replaced. So, apple is a fruit category and I can have any fruit in that category or I can have I like movies. So, this is paradigmatic relationship. And he says that language has a formal structure and should be studied in a structural perspective. So, this is what Saussurean linguistics is all about. Let us go to each of these concepts, one after the other.

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The slide features a title "Sign, Signifier, Signified" in the top left. In the top right corner is the NPTEL logo. The main content includes a quote from Saussure: "According to Saussure, 'the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image'. The sound image is 'the psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses' and the concept is 'abstract' (Saussure, 1959: p. 66). 'The combination of a concept and a sound image is a sign' (Saussure, 1959: p.67)." To the right of the text is a diagram of a circle divided horizontally into two sections: "Concept" on top and "Sound-image" on the bottom. Vertical double-headed arrows are on both sides of the circle. Below the diagram is the quote: "the bond between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary". In the bottom right corner, there is a video inset of a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light pink shirt, speaking.

So, we will start with Sign, Signifier and Signified. So, according to the Saussure, "the linguistic sign unites, not a thing and a name, but a concept and a sound-image". So, when we say linguistic sign, be it oral, be it written, it unites a concept and a sound-image. So, linguistic sign has two aspects. So, when I say cat, it relates, it unites, it combines the concept like cat, the mental image. And the sound, it produces sound-image, it produces sound-image in oral, it is sound, in writing, it is script. But whatever triggers that image, mental image, the sound-image


and the concept are two facets of the same coin. So, a sign, a linguistic sign, evokes two aspects, sound-image and the concept. And they are related, they are combined, they are composite, and they become signifier. So, the word 'cat' becomes signifier to refer to an animal, a particular animal. And all English speakers who share this concept and the sound image will understand what is a cat. So, the objective reality, the animal cat, and the linguistic sign C-A-T cat. They are arbitrarily related. So, you need to understand linguistic sign in terms of combination of two concepts, the concept it refers to, and the sound-image it produces. They are both combined, and they together become a linguistic sign and a signifier, cat. And then what is signified, what is being signified with the signifier? The actual animal cat. That is an objective reality. So, this linguistic sign refers to an actual animal.

So he says, the sound-image is a psychological imprint of the sound, the impression that it makes on our senses, and the concept is an abstract image. So, this abstract image and the concrete sound-image, they are combined and they become composite, one called sign, linguistic sign, which represents an objective reality. So, the combination of a concept and a sound-image is linguistic sign, it represents an objective reality. And it represents a particular animal, when you say cat, it represents a particular animal. But the word cat has two aspects, the sound C-A-T cat, and the image it evokes in our mind, the concept it triggers in our mind.

And together, it becomes a linguistic sign called signifier, and it signifies a particular animal called cat. So, this is a two layer understanding of the linguistic sign. Well, he says that the bond between signifier and signified is arbitrary. There is no logical connection between the signifier, the linguistic sign and what it actually represents. So, I call a pen, a pen, but why do I call a pen, a pen? Why do I call a fan, a fan? There is no logical relationship. And this is in fact the reason why different languages will have different linguistic signs, different linguistic signifiers to represent the same signified, the same objective reality. So, when I say pen in English, it becomes 'kalam' in Hindi. I say, fan in English, it becomes 'pankha' in Hindi. But the objective reality remains the same, it does not change. What is changing is a signifier, and what remains constant is the signified, which is the objective reality. So, pen is an object is an objective reality. But it can be represented with different linguistic signs in different languages, different signifiers in different languages, but the relationship between the objective reality and that is why the relationship between this objective reality and the signifier are arbitrary and conventional. And

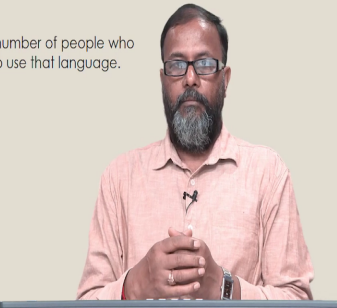
the speakers of that particular language understand these signifiers, and that is why they are able to relate to the signified. So, this is about sign, signifier and signified.

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Langue and parole

- *Langue* corresponds to the common meaning of *language*, and the pair *langue* and *parole* is properly expressed in English as 'language and speech'.
- *Langue* primarily refers to language as a general phenomenon, or to the human ability to have language.
- *Parole* primarily refers to the actual speech. Saussure intended for it to mean both the written and spoken language as experienced in everyday life.
- It is the precise utterances and use of *langue*.
- Therefore, *parole*, unlike *langue*, is as diverse and varied as the number of people who share a language and the number of utterances and attempts to use that language.

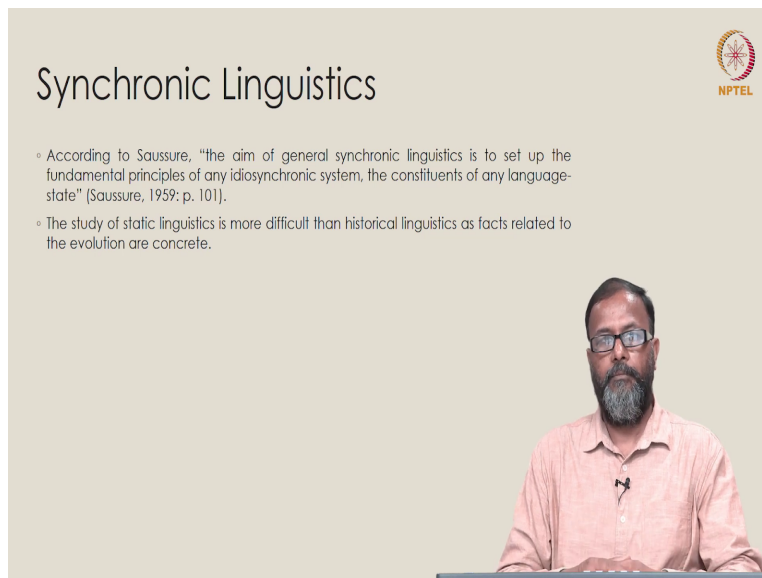


Moving on, another key concept and Saussurean dichotomy is *langue* and *parole*. Now, roughly, if you translate these two terms *langue* and *parole*, they refer to language and speech. So, language as a phenomenon, language as a structural reality and speech, the actual use of it, the actual product. So, speech is a product of language. And he assigns two levels, one level is *langue*, which is shared by all the speakers of the same community, of that speech community, and *parole* is individual, the actual use of it.

Now, if you recall, we talked about linguistic competence and linguistic performance in the Chomskyan linguistic framework, we talked about communicative competence in the Dell Hyme's framework. So, both of these theoretical approaches have a connection with the Saussurean idea of *langue* and *parole*, language and speech, which later in Chomskyan linguistics you know as competence, which is an underlined structural system. And every human child born is endowed with that, has capacity to acquire a language and that tacit knowledge is called linguistic competence. There is a technical difference between what Chomsky calls linguistic competence and what Saussure calls *langue*, but they can be broadly related, because they refer to underlined linguistic phenomenon, and *parole* is the actual use of it. So language, *langue* corresponds to the common meaning of language and the pair *langue* and *parole* is

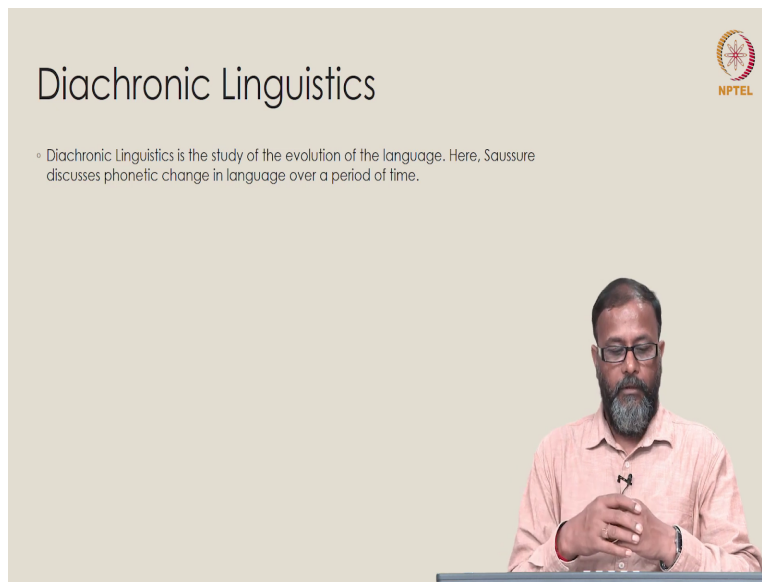
properly expressed in English as language and speech. So, langue primarily refers to language as a general phenomenon or to the human ability to have language. Parole primarily refers to the actual speech. And Saussure intended for it to mean both, the written and spoken language as experienced in everyday life. So, if langue is a system, parole is the use of that system. Therefore, parole unlike langue is as diverse or varied as the number of people who share a language and number of utterances and attempts to use that language. So, langue and parole, these two concepts relate to two aspects of language, the language as a phenomenon shared by all speakers of the particular language in the speech community, and parole refers to the individual performance, the individual use of it. And perhaps this is the reason why we all have different speech. We all have the same language, but different speech. So, we all use language constrained by our own idiosyncrasies and style registers and etcetera. So, parole is the actual speech, and langue is the language as a phenomenon shared by all the speakers of the same speech community.

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The slide features a title 'Synchronic Linguistics' at the top left. In the top right corner is the NPTEL logo, which consists of a circular emblem with a sun-like pattern and the text 'NPTEL' below it. Below the title, there are two bullet points: 'According to Saussure, "the aim of general synchronic linguistics is to set up the fundamental principles of any idiosynchronic system, the constituents of any language-state" (Saussure, 1959: p. 101).' and 'The study of static linguistics is more difficult than historical linguistics as facts related to the evolution are concrete.' At the bottom of the slide, there is a video frame showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light-colored shirt, sitting at a desk.

Yet another important concept is synchrony and synchronic linguistics. So according to Saussure, the aim of general synchronic linguistics is to set up the fundamental principles of any idiosynchronic system, the constituents of a language-state. The study of static linguistics is more difficult than historical linguistics as facts related to evolution are concrete. Synchronic linguistics refers to understanding, studying a language at a given point of time as opposed to diachronic linguistics, which refers to the study of evolution of language over a period of time.

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And here, Saussure discusses phonetic change in language over a period of time. So, changes happen over a period of time. So, when we are studying a particular phenomenon of a particular language over a period of time, the evolution of that phenomenon, that is diachronic and synchronic linguistics. Synchrony refers to the study of particular language and its structure at a particular given point of time. So, study of lets say modern Tamil, and the variations and the structures, etcetera, synchronic. But if I want to understand the evolution of a particular linguistic phenomenon in Tamil over a period of time, it is diachronic.

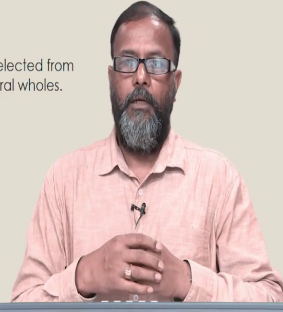
So, synchronic is point of time, and diachronic period of time. This is what we have to remember. So, when we say synchronic linguistics, we are talking about understanding and studying a language at any given point of time. But when we talk about diachronic linguistics, we are talking about understanding the language over a period of time, the evolutionary process of that particular phenomenon. So, he makes a distinction between these two approaches in understanding and studying language, synchronic linguistics and diachronic linguistics. And always remember synchronic means point of time, diachronic means over a period of time. This is what we need to understand.

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Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations



- "Syntagmatic" means that one element selects the other element either to precede it or to follow it.
 - For example, the definite article "the" essentially selects a noun and not any other item.
- In semiotics, a syntagma is a chain which leads to an understanding of how a sequence of events forms a narrative.
- Syntagmatic relations are the spatial relationship.
- Syntagmatic relations, in contrast, are concerned with how units, once selected from their paradigmatic sets of oppositions, are 'chained' together into structural wholes.



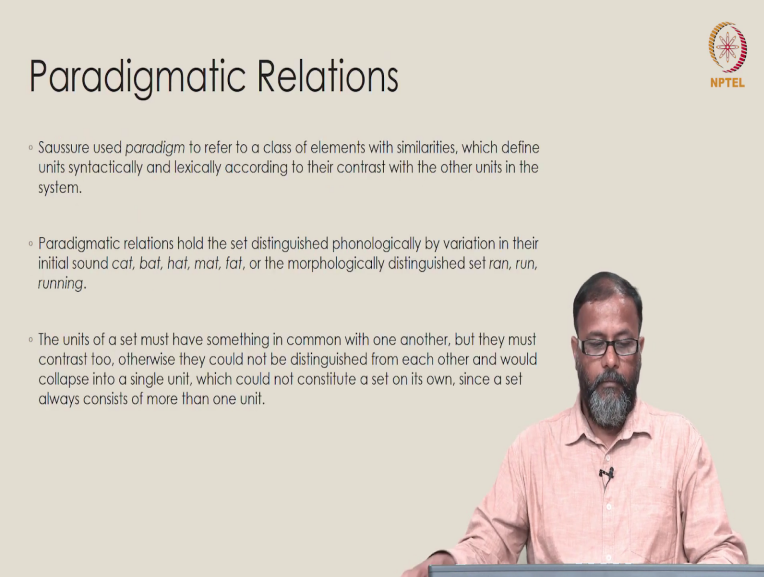
In Saussurean linguistics, another important concept is Syntagm and Paradigm. So syntagm, or we call syntagmatic relationship relations, paradigm or paradigmatic relationships. So, when we say syntagmatic, it means that a particular element selects another element in a string of linguistic objects. It may precede or follow. For example, the definite article, 'the' will certainly select a noun next to it. So, the market, the building, the, definite article, 'the'. It will not select any other category like Bob, the go, the come, we cannot say that. So, syntagm is the linear sequencing of linguistic objects in a string and when we say syntagmatic relationship, the relationship, linear relationship in a string of linguistic objects among the constituents.

For example, morpheme plural mark are morphemes, syntagm. So, if we say, "John eats an apple every day." And if you look at the constituents, 'John', 'eat' with plural marker 's', then, 'an' the article, 'apple' the noun, 'every day' adverb. And they have a sequential relationship. They are syntagm and there is a syntagmatic relationship in this string. So, each of these categories select each other and they are in a string, they make a meaningful sentence. John eats an apple every day. Now, if I say, "John drinks a cup of tea every day", eat, drink, play. So, this relationship we called paradigmatic relationship. An apple every day, a mango every day, a pastry every day, an ice cream every day, an ice cream, apple, mango, one category, and paradigmatic relationship where they can replace each other.

Every day, again I can say once a week, I can say every month, I can say every year, so one category of constituents, linguistic objects, which can replace each other. So, this vertical, if you

put all the sentences, this horizontal relationship, sequence and relationship is syntagmatic relations. And when we say a series of sentences with changing, different categories, these vertical relationships are, among these sentences are paradigmatic relationships. So, in semiotics, a syntagm is a chain, which leads to an understanding of how a subsequence of events forms and narrative. But in linguistics, we understand syntagm as the sequencing of linguistic objects in a string, and how by relating to each other they create a longer string and make a sense, sentence and a sense out of it. I hope you get it. So, syntagmatic relations are spatial relations, sequential horizontal relations. Syntagmatic relations in contrast, are concerned with how units once selected from their paradigmatic sets of opposition are ‘chained’ together into structural wholes. This is what he says. So, it is a spatial relationship among the constituents of linguistic objects in a longer string. And this helps us understand syntactic structures of a language.

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The slide is titled "Paradigmatic Relations" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. It contains three bullet points explaining the concept of paradigmatic relations. A video inset in the bottom right shows a man with a beard and glasses speaking.


Paradigmatic Relations

- Saussure used *paradigm* to refer to a class of elements with similarities, which define units syntactically and lexically according to their contrast with the other units in the system.
- Paradigmatic relations hold the set distinguished phonologically by variation in their initial sound *cat, bat, hat, mat, fat*, or the morphologically distinguished set *ran, run, running*.
- The units of a set must have something in common with one another, but they must contrast too, otherwise they could not be distinguished from each other and would collapse into a single unit, which could not constitute a set on its own, since a set always consists of more than one unit.


When we look at paradigm or paradigmatic relations, Saussure used paradigm to refer to a class of elements with similarities, commonalities, which define units synthetically and lexically according to their contrast with each other in the system. So, they belong to the same category, but they contrast with each other, *cat, bat, hat, mat, rat*, they all belong to the same category, they are all nouns, and out of which we select one. So, paradigmatic relations hold the set of distinguished phonologically by variation in their initial sounds like *cat, bat, hat, mat, rat*. If you look at the distinction that we see is the initial sound of the word, but each of these words are distinct and distinguishable, they are in contrast. Why? Because we have a variation in the first

sound, and they denote or signify different signifier this signify a different signifier, a signified. So, they are signifiers, they signify a different signified like cat, bat, rat, hat, mat, etcetera. Or they can be morphologically distinguished as come, comes, coming, came. So, the units of a set must have something in common with one another. If you are going, talking about paradigmatic relationships, they belong to the same paradigm, same set, but each of these signifiers are distinct and distinguishable. They must be distinguished from each other and would collapse into a single unit, which could not constitute a set, if they are not distinguished, then they will collapse into a single unit, of course, they will collapse into a single unit. How do we understand that the cat is different from mat, mat is different from bat, bat is different from hat, hat is different from rat? Because of change in the first, initial sounds and they are all distinct signifiers. So, he talks about spatial relationship among the linguistic units in a string. And he also talks about a set of units, which can replace the other, and they all in contrast and opposition, he calls it paradigm. So, syntagm and paradigm, syntagmatic relations, paradigmatic relations.

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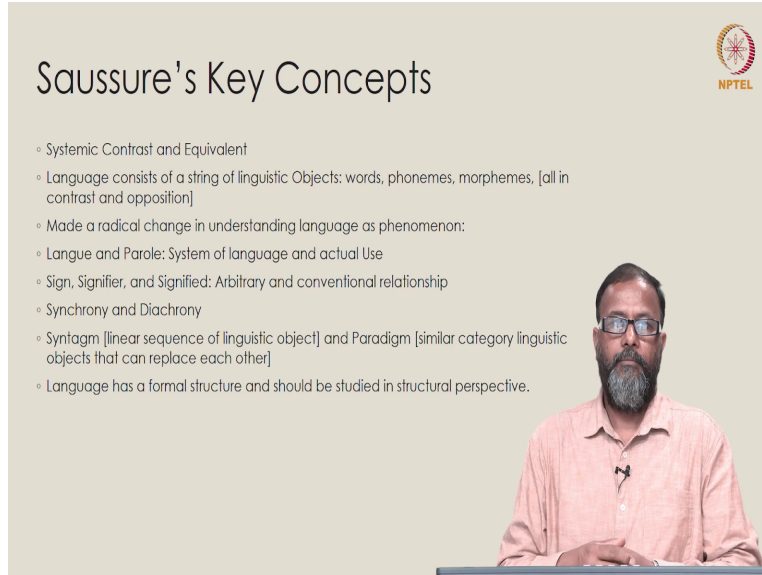
- Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations give the structural linguist a tool for categorization for phonology, morphology and syntax.
- Through paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis, we can discover the syntax of sentences.



So, this is a very important concept that allows us to, that helps us to understand the linguistic structure and discover syntactic structures. So syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations give the structural linguist a tool for categorization for phonology, morphology and syntax. And this is how we can understand phonological structures, morphological structures and syntactic structures. And in fact, if you look at the developments in Prague school and elsewhere in Europe, this idea had a larger impact. And when we come to American structuralism, we talked

about levels of representation in a language. We talk about the building blocks in a language. So, phonology, morphology and syntax, structural levels, and two more levels they talk about American structuralists, semantics and pragmatics. But here, we are concerned with three structural levels; phonology, morphology, and syntax. So, through paradigmatic and syntagmatic analysis, we can discover the syntax of sentences in a given language.

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The slide is titled "Saussure's Key Concepts" and features the NPTEL logo in the top right corner. It contains a list of key concepts:

- Systemic Contrast and Equivalent
- Language consists of a string of linguistic Objects: words, phonemes, morphemes, [all in contrast and opposition]
- Made a radical change in understanding language as phenomenon:
- Langue and Parole: System of language and actual Use
- Sign, Signifier, and Signified: Arbitrary and conventional relationship
- Synchrony and Diachrony
- Syntagm [linear sequence of linguistic object] and Paradigm [similar category linguistic objects that can replace each other]
- Language has a formal structure and should be studied in structural perspective.

In the bottom right corner of the slide, there is a video inset showing a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light-colored shirt, sitting at a desk.

So, just to recapitulate what we did in this class, we talked about Saussure's key concepts. So, we understand language as a formal system or formal structure, a systemic contrast and equivalent, set of systemic contrast and equivalent. Language consists of a string of linguistic objects like words, phonemes, morphemes, etcetera, and which are all in contrast and opposition. Then, we learned langue and parole. Langue refers to the underlying linguistic system shared by all speakers of the community, language. And parole refers to the actual performance, the actual use of it. So roughly, we can say langue is language as a phenomenon and parole is the actual use of it, the speech. Then, we learnt sign, signifier and signified.

So, any linguistic sign is a combination of two things. Number 1, the sound-image. Number 2, the concept it represents. So, as a composite unit it becomes a signifier. And a word, a signifier signifies a particular reality, it is called signified, so signifier and signified, the word and what it refers to. But the relationship between the word a signifier and what it refers to, the signified are arbitrary and conventional. So, there is no logical connection. So, why we call a cat, a cat, why

we call a cow, a cow? No reason. Except for onomatopoeic expressions in a language, which are counted very little. And what is an onomatopoeic expression? A word, a signifier, the onomatopoeic signifier like the combination of sound and image also denotes, represents, signifies the actual sound like cat mews. Mews, as a word, mew as a word, and the actual sound of a cat are the same. And that is why we call them onomatopoeic expressions.

So, we have to remember that a linguistic sign is a combination of two things, sound-image and concept. And it becomes a signifier, which signifies a signified like the concept, it actually represents. And there is no relationship between signifier and signified, they are arbitrary and conventional. Then, we talked about synchrony and diachrony. Synchrony is spatial relationship of linguistic units, linear relationship of linguistic units in a string. "John eats an apple", so each of these elements in the sentence are related spatially, linear, in a linear fashion, and they choose each other. It is like for example, an article 'a' or 'an' or 'the' will essentially choose a noun. So, an article will be followed by a noun. So, in an English sentence, you will have a subject, a noun followed by a verb, then, so this is the sequential relationship, spatial relationship called syntagm. So, how small things, small units combine together in a string to form a larger unit. In semiotics and literature, we study how smaller concepts together create a whole narrative.

Paradigmatic relationship, that the language, the structure selects from the single category elements, which are in contrast and opposition. So if I have to select a noun here, a noun, and I have a category called noun, like cat, hat, mat, bat, rat, whatever, and they all are in contrast and opposition. So, all these signifiers are in contrast and opposition. If you do not make the distinction, they will collapse into a single unit. So, they are different units within the same category, because each is in contrast and opposition. So, these are the key concepts in Saussurean linguistics. And these concepts gave birth to structural linguistics and structuralism as a phenomenon, as a theoretical construct. And structuralism as a theoretical construct had a deep impact in other disciplines like literature, like philosophy, like sociology, like psychology, psychoanalysis, and etcetera, all the related disciplines.

So, summing up, Ferdinand de Saussure, an early 20th century linguist, a philologist, a philosopher, was a Swiss and he spent his time in construction of Proto-Indo-European language, historical linguistics, he lectured on Sanskrit phonology. And he never published a book on these concepts. But after his death in 1913, his students collected the class notes, the lecture notes, he

delivered in Geneva, and they compiled it in form of a book named Course in General Linguistics, which became a landmark text of the first quarter of 20th century, which made changes, revolutionary changes in our understanding of language as a phenomena, and gave birth to a new theoretical construct called structuralism. And we can find the reminiscence of structuralism till date and all subsequent theories developed in linguistics, we owe it to this structuralist framework in some way or the other with certain changes. So, we are talking about pre Saussure, post Saussure, Saussurean linguistics, anti-Saussure. So, these are the references that we make, but Saussure cannot be discounted in all these references. He remains a changing force, a change agent in understanding and deepening our understanding of language as a phenomenon in the 20th century. So, this is it for now. We will continue talking about other relevant themes and topics in our next class. This is it for now. Thank you very much.