



**Ferdinand de
Saussure
(1875-1913)**

Course - IV

**By Sohini
Bhattacharyya**

- **Born in Geneva, Switzerland**
- **Swiss scholar**
- **The father of Structural Linguistics / Descriptive Linguistics.**
- **Attempted to frame a coherent theory of Linguistic science.**
- **Knew many languages - Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Swiss etc.**

Main Areas of his theory :-

- 1. Synchrony and Diachrony**
- 2. Language, Langue and Parole**
- 3. Linguistic Sign**
- 4. Linguistic Value / Associative value**
- 5. Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic**

Synchrony :-

- **Synchrony is a study of language in a given time.**
- **It is also called Descriptive linguistics.**
- **It studies a language at one period of time.**
- **It investigates the way people communicate in a given speech community in a given point of time.**
- **It deals with system.**

Diachrony :-

- It is a study of language through time.
- Also called Historical / Temporal Linguistics.
- It studies the development of language through time.
- Ex- would deal with French and Italian evolving from Latin etc.
- It would also investigate language changes.
- It deals with units.

Langage, Langue and Parole :-

- **Le langage - Human speech as whole.**
- **Le langage has two aspects - Le langue and Le Parole.**

Le langue :-

- It is the language system.
- It is the collective fact or totality of a language.
- A system of linguistic signs which are not abstract but real entities.
- It is the sum total of grammar.
- It includes three distinct concepts -
The language scheme, The language Norm and
The language Custom

Le parole :-

- **It is the act of speaking.**
- **It is a set of utterances**
- **A personal, dynamic, social activity which exists at a particular time and place in a particular situation.**
- **What one utters and is heard while langue constitute the underlying structures of that uttered speech.**

Linguistic Sign :-

- Based on two components -
Signified (Concept)
Signifier (Sound Image)

- Example -
(Signifier)

The concept of Dog

(Signified)

Dog has different signifiers in different languages.

Like in English - Dog,

In Hindi - Kutta

In Bengali - Kukur etc.

Associative Value :-

- Each linguistic sign has a value which is determined by its relationship within the total vocabulary of a language.
- Example -.
In French only one word 'Mouton' signifies two concepts - a four legged animal sheep and cooked meat.
In English, there are two different signs for Sheep and Mouton.

Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic :-

- Syntagmatic relationship is a chain like relationship.
- Restricted in certain orders.
- Example - Cat, Rat, Mat, Bat, Fat etc.
- Paradigmatic relationship are choice based.
- Words have something in common associated in memory.
- Example - Study, Knowledge, Education, School etc.