

Cultural Studies
Prof. Dr. Liza Das
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences
Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati

Module No # 01
Introduction
Lecture No # 10
Poststructuralism

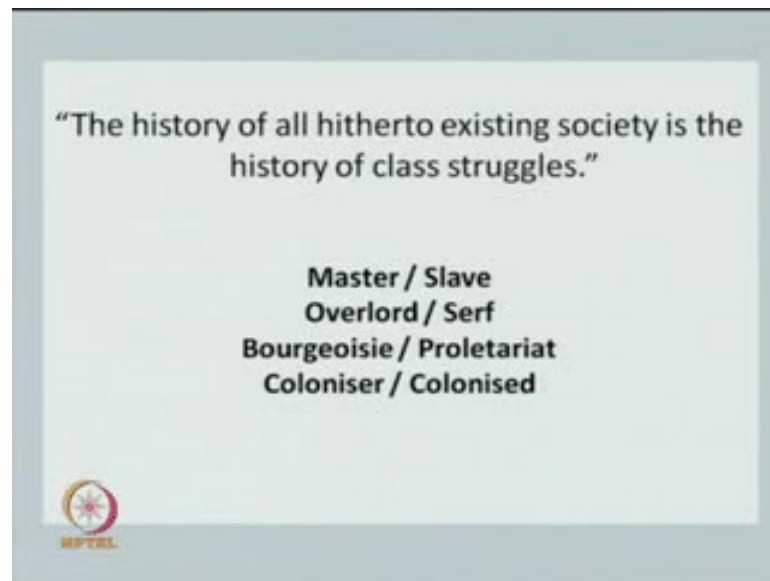
Welcome once again to the series of video lectures on cultural studies. We are today at the end of module 1 and this lecture, the tenth lecture is on poststructuralism as you are aware.

We looked at two other theories, we began with structuralism and then we went on to Marxism for which we devoted two lectures, and today, we are going to look at poststructuralism. Needless to say, this does not mean, that these are the only three theories in cultural studies. As I had mentioned earlier, what I would do is, when I go on to the other modules, for instance, when I look at key concepts - a gender, for instance, that is when I would be looking at feminist theory, then I go into the module which deals with virtual culture, I would look at post humanism and so on.

So, welcome back once again. As you are also aware, these lectures are being recorded under the National Program on Technology Enhanced Learning, which is an initiative, a joint venture by the Indian Institutes of Technology and the Indian Institute of Science. My name is Lisa and I teach English at IIT Guwahati.

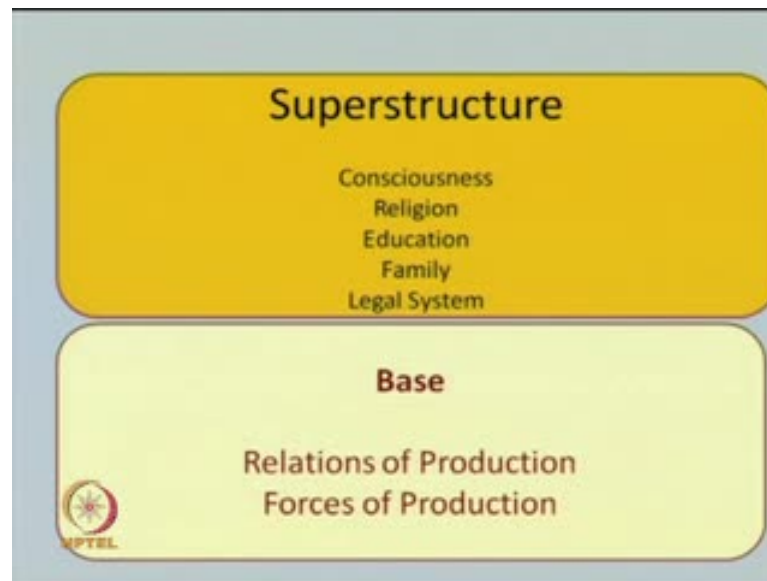
Well, as always, we do a recap of what we had discussed in the last lecture and you would recall that in the last lecture, lecture 9 of module 1, was devoted to Marxism. It was the second part of the two part lectures on the theory, the cultural theory of Marxism.

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Well, to, I shall run through very quickly over, which I think are the important points in the last lecture. You would recall this quotation from the communist manifesto, the history of all hitherto existing society is a history of class struggle, the class struggles. And we saw that over the ages, under different modes of production we may divide, you know, the population into two binary opposites, two major classes, so to speak, which are: master – slave, the overlord - serf in feudalism, master - slave in ancient slavery, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat under capitalism and the coloniser and the colonised under imperialism.

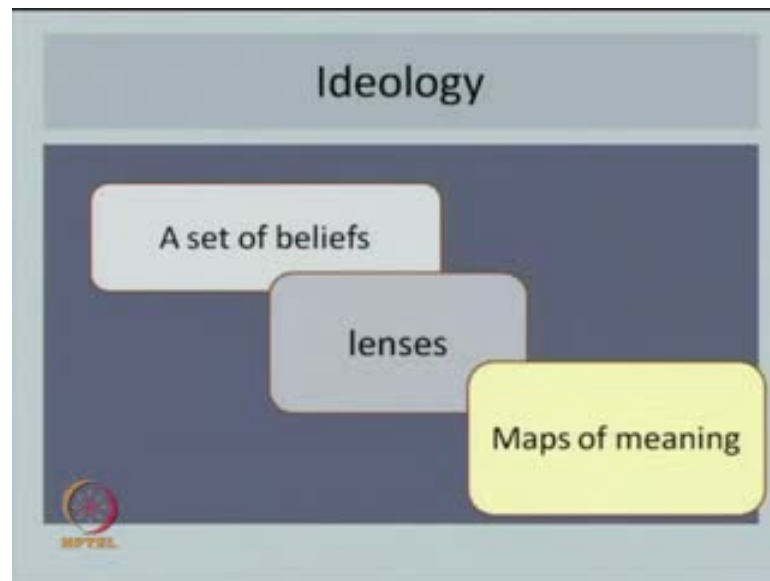
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We also looked at two very important concepts, which are, may be, the building blocks of Marxism and these are the base and this is the structure. You would recall, that we understood the base as comprising the relations of production and forces of production, that is, in a mode of production, at any given point of time.

And we saw, that Marx argued, that on the base, on this foundation, so to speak, there always arises the super structure, which are to do with, you know, our cultural arrangement. If you look at the, all of these are really, our cultural arrangements and they comprise at the legal system: the family, education, religion and ultimately our consciousness, which is within this theory, our social consciousness.

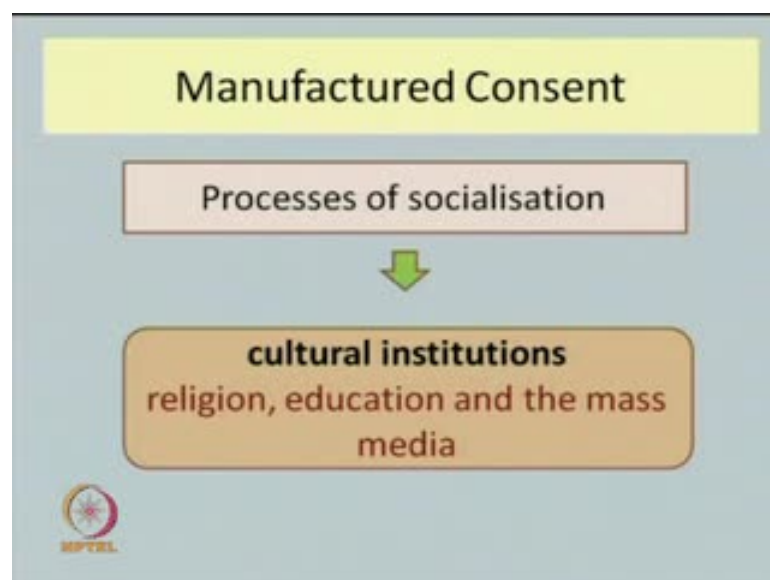
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Next, we went on to define ideology as a set of beliefs that people hold, which act as, you know, set of lenses through which we look at the world, and these ideologies give us maps of meaning. You would recall from the first two or three lectures that with, which I began these lecture series, that culture is also known as maps of meaning.

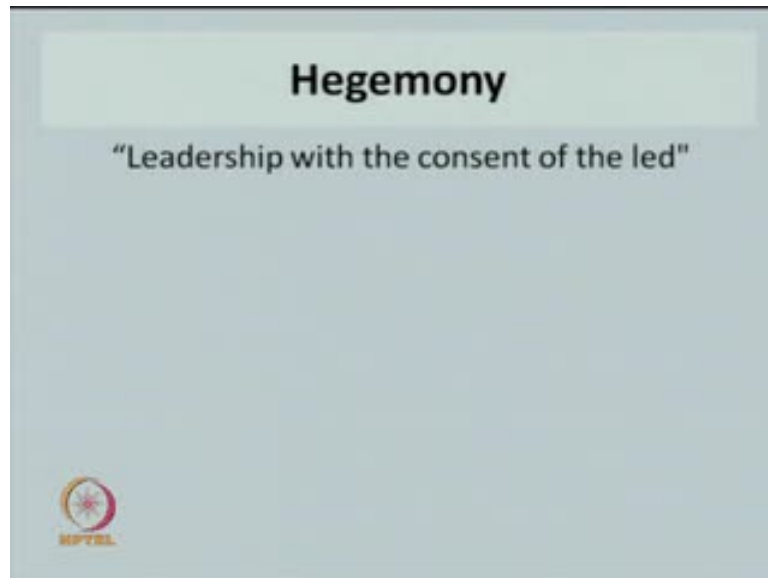
So, ideology, which is you know a set of beliefs, values that we hold, you know, give us or form for us, to construct, so to speak, for us maps of cultural meaning.

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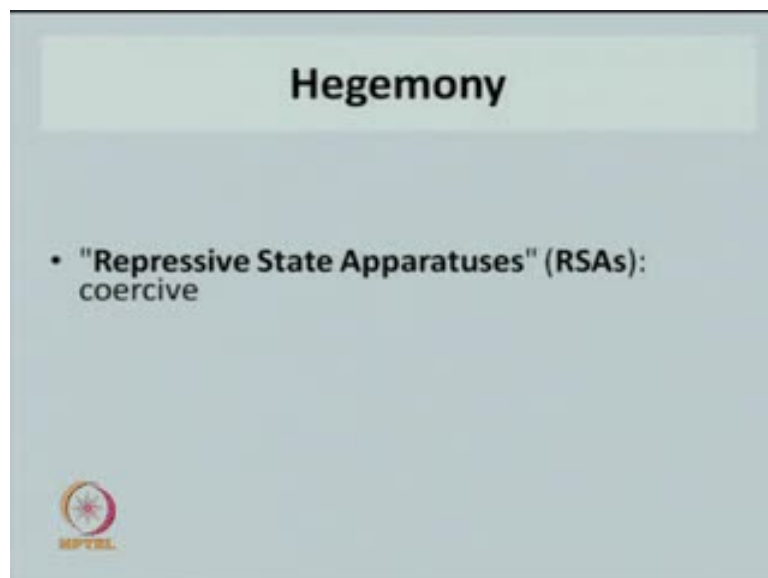


Then, we also looked at how consent is manufactured from people through processes of socialization, which are done through certain cultural institutions like religion, education and the mass media.

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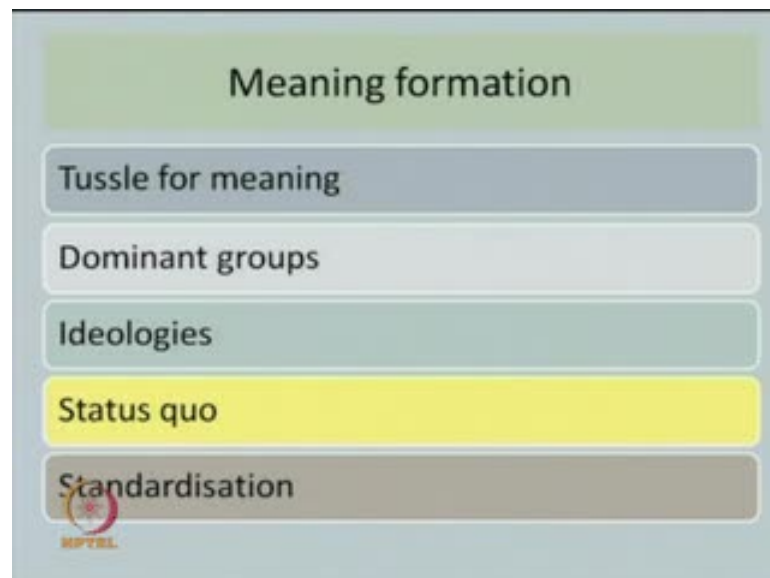
We looked at the concept of hegemony as a leadership with the consent of the led, and we looked very quickly, of course, not in detail, at Althusser's repressive state apparatuses like (()) etcetera, which are coercive measures to (()) consent and the

ideological state apparatuses, which are really soft policing; these are through the cultural institutions like (()), etcetera.

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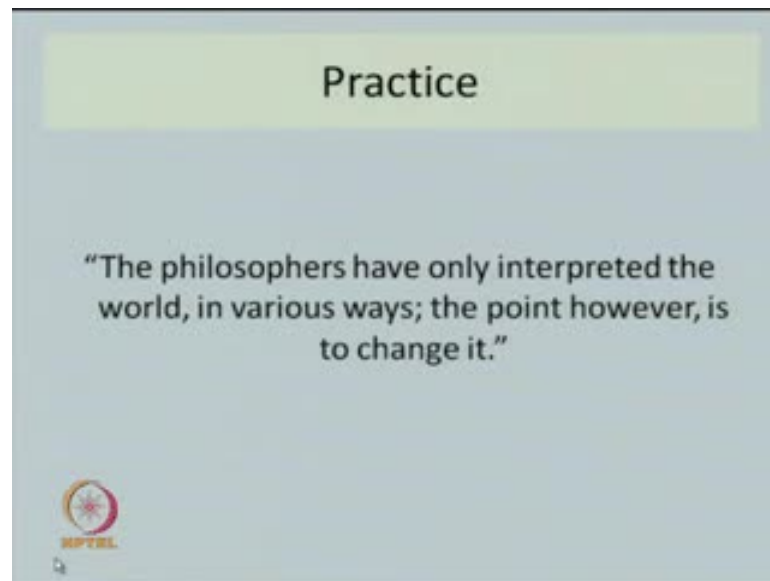


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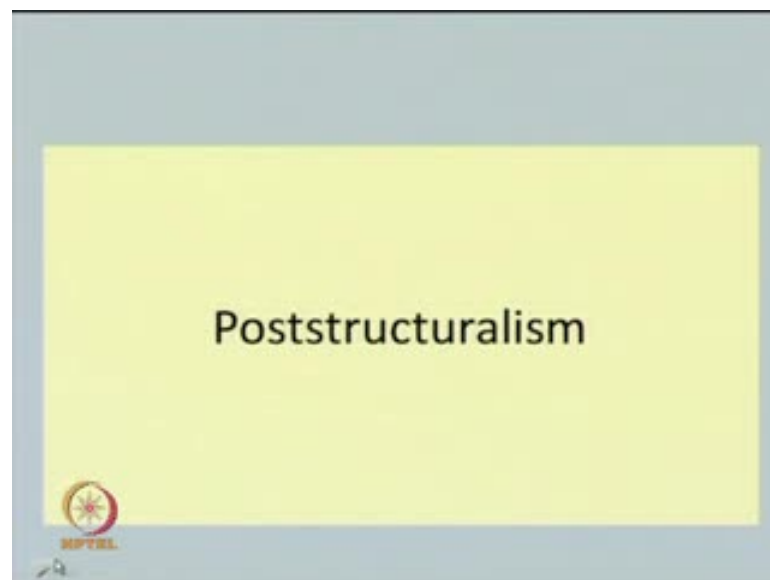
And meaning formation, we saw as really a sight of, you know, a sight, a very contentious sight, a sight of struggle; there is a tussle for meaning, where among dominant groups and ideologies seek to, seek to maintain, maintain the, the status quo, maintain the status quo and, you know, to standardize meaning.

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Then, we also looked at what practice meant for Karl Marx? And the very famous quotation, the philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point however, is to change it.

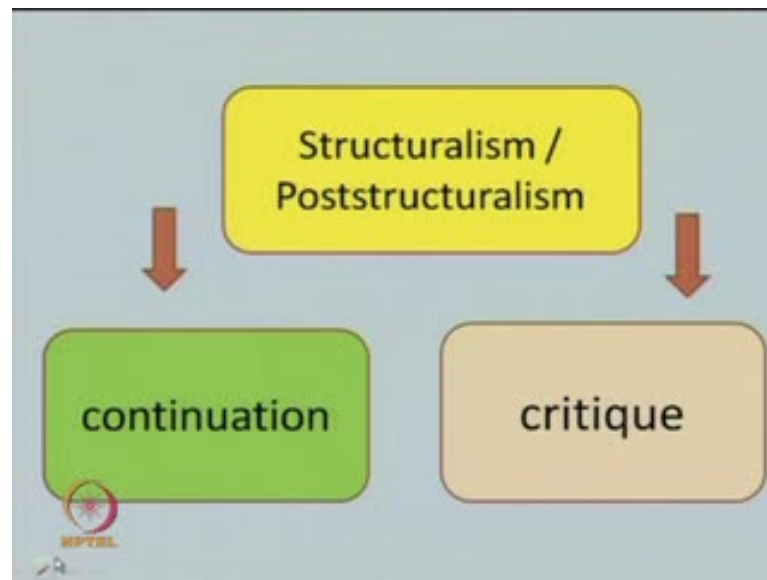
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Well, we now come to **what today's**, the topic for today's lecture and discussion. The topic is poststructuralism and you know, that we looked at structuralism and as I said, if perhaps, some of you may feel, that I should have done poststructuralism after structuralism, but the reason why I did, you know, put in two lectures on Marxism is that

Marxism may be looked as basically, a **structural**, structural way of looking at culture. And poststructuralism moves away from certainties, it may move away from looking at structures and that is why, I decided to keep poststructuralism to the end of this module.

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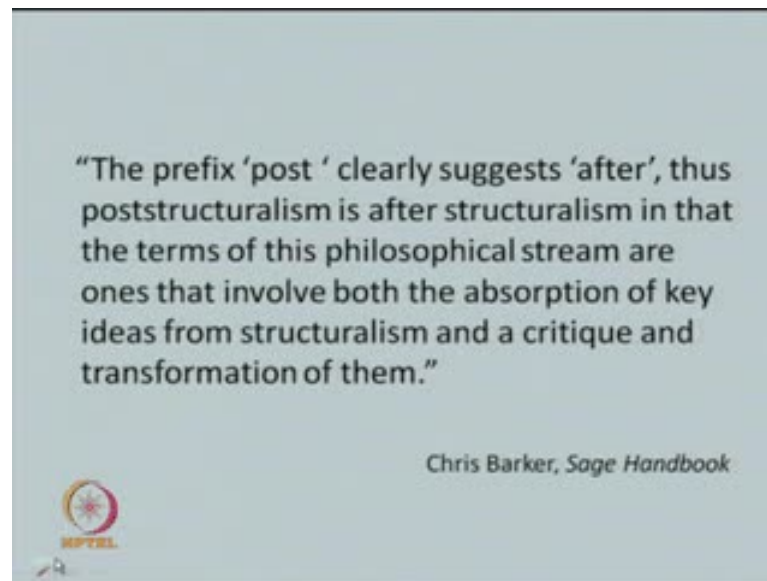


Well, what is the difference between structuralism and poststructuralism? We note here immediately, that there is a post here - structuralism and poststructuralism. So, there are two meanings here, one is obviously as, coming after, which would mean that poststructuralism is a continuation. A continuation of structuralism, which means that there are certain elements in structuralism, that are also present in poststructuralism and on the other hand, it is also a critique and **I**, we had an occasion to look at the term critique briefly in one of my earlier lectures, and what is the critique? A critique is not exactly criticism, a critique is an, **a critique is, is, an** exercise that we do, in order to lay there the assumptions of a certain theory.

So, what are the assumptions or the presumptions of particular theory, and which leads that theory to argue in a certain way?

So, poststructuralism is **both, (())** both, a continuation and a critique of structuralism and in what follows, we shall see, how.?

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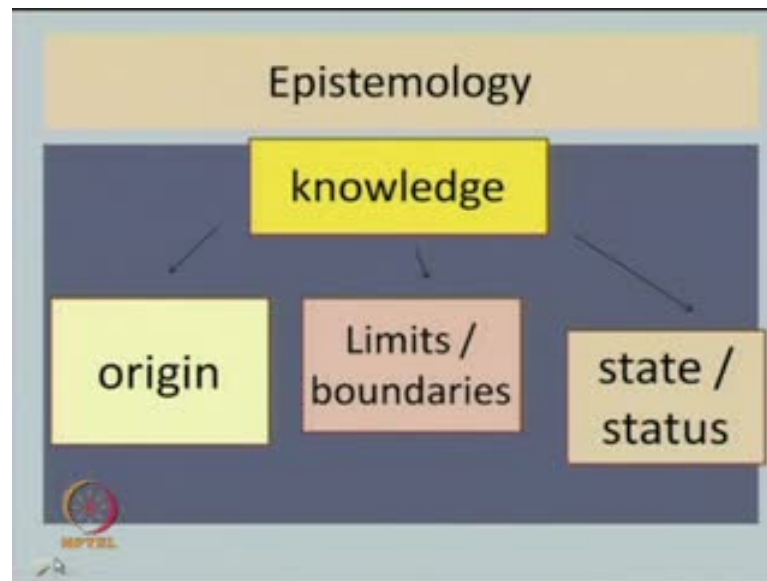


Let me quickly quote from the Sage Handbook by Chris Barker, some of you would find this extremely helpful in the sense that, you know, the concepts and terms have been very beautifully explained **in**, in this handbook.

The prefix post clearly suggests after, thus poststructuralism is after structuralism in that the terms of this philosophical streams are ones that involves both the absorption of key ideas from structuralism and the critique and the transformation.

We do not stop at critique; we also aim at a transformation of structuralism or structuralist ideas and premises.

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Well, **1**, I strongly feel that you know, we need to bring in a term from philosophy here. A branch of philosophy, which looks at knowledge because knowledge, within the post structuralist theoretical enterprise is highly problematised; so, it is important **for**, for us to know a certain terms from philosophy and that has always been my belief, and as far as possible, my practice, even when I teach in the class rooms in IIT Guwahati.

What is epistemology? Epistemology is or may be, very beautifully defined as the theory of knowledge. So, what do we mean when we say, theory of knowledge?

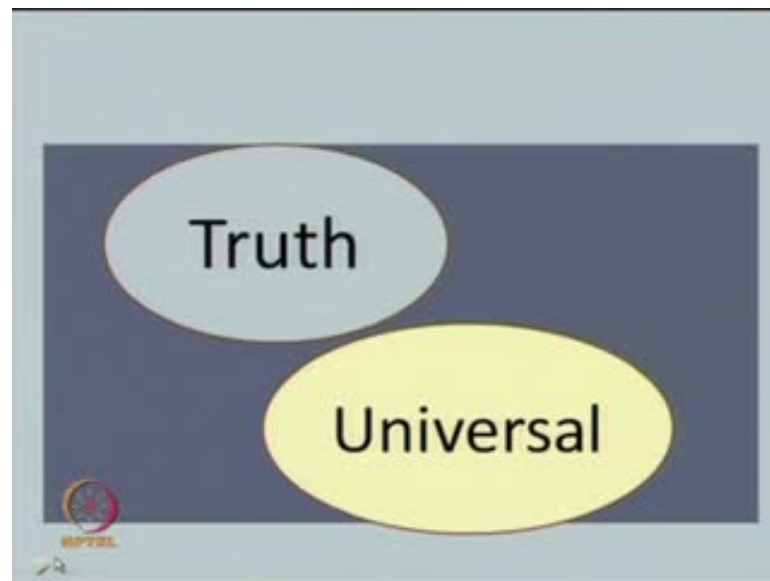
When we say theory of knowledge, we include among other things, these three things: one is the origin or the source of knowledge. What is, if I say, I have a piece of knowledge? Then I need to ask, I need to theorize and I need to speculate, I need to, you know, do may be a critique of that piece of knowledge and I would first ask, where did that knowledge come from? Where did I get my knowledge? Is it from, is it appealing to rational, the rationalist school, or am I appealing to the empirical school or like a many people, am I appealing to a certain mystical, you know, source for knowledge?

So, **one**, is the source or origin of knowledge; **two**, the limits and boundaries. When you say limits and boundaries, we do not exactly mean limitations. What we would really mean here is to ask questions like, what are the boundaries within which this piece of knowledge, that we are talking about or we are forwarding? What are the boundaries

within which such knowledge is possible? So, we need to, what we call, delimit the boundaries.

And what is the state of knowledge or what is the status of that piece of knowledge? So, these things go into epistemology and as I said, I reiterate, that it is important to look at this branch of philosophy when we talk about poststructuralism.

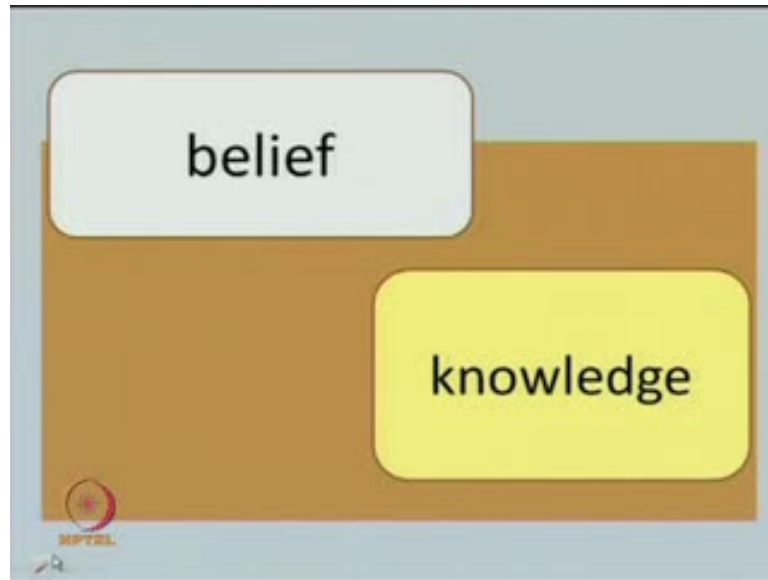
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Now, if I ask you, what do you think about truth? What is truth, and in this case truth with a capital T? Do you think truth is universal? Do you think, do you hold that there is something called universal truth, which all of us could access?

Stay with these, with this point and we shall, this will come, you know, this will fall into place as far as structuralism is concerned, in the next few minutes.

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Second, what is belief and what is knowledge? Is belief the same as knowledge? Another question would be, is belief, when this belief become knowledge?

In epistemology, we hold that knowledge is a belief, that has been justified. So, when does belief become knowledge? Belief becomes knowledge when it has been justified; so, belief is known as justified knowledge.

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The slide has a light blue background. At the top, there is a light orange horizontal bar containing the word "Postructuralism" in black text. Below this bar, there is a block of text in black: "Knowledge is not a question of true discovery but of the construction of interpretations about the world that are taken to be true. In so far as the idea of truth has an historical purchase, it is the consequence of power, that is, of whose interpretations come to count as truth." At the bottom right of the slide, the name "Chris Barker" is written in black. In the bottom-left corner, there is a small red circular logo with a white star-like shape inside, and the letters "NPTSL" below it.

Now, I would again use a quotation from Chris Barker, and I shall explain it in relation to what I have just raised. Knowledge is not a question in structure, poststructuralism of true discovery. Look at this, knowledge is nothing to do with true discovery, I have discovered this and this is truth and it applies also to science; it applies to science in the sense, that you cannot take any piece of knowledge for granted.

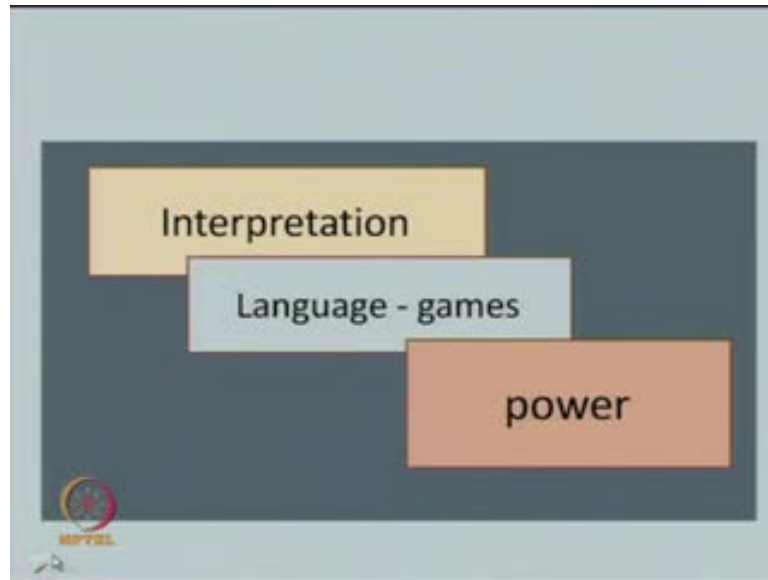
Well, let us read, continue to read this. Knowledge is not a question of true discovery, but of the construction of interpretations. And I need you to look at this word closely, **one is**, on the other hand, we have this claim within, well, a structuralist framework for instance, within a structuralist framework **that say**, which says, that it is possible to discover the truth.

On the other hand, within poststructuralism, we do not talk about discoveries and truth, we talk about only interpretations. So, the world, there is data in front of you, reality as data, and that data comes to you in the form of interpretation. So, knowledge is not a question of true discovery, but of the construction of interpretations about the world, that are taken to be true.

In, so far, as the idea of truth has a historical purchase, it is the consequence of power, that is, of whose interpretations come to count as truth. So, it is, well, **a** poststructuralism holds that you cannot look at knowledge, truth **in a, in a**, in a very naïve or in at face value.

Whenever we have interpretation, we will ask, whose interpretation is it or it is? And we know that, that interpretation is tied to another word, it is very seminal and which we shall look at here in briefly, but in another module; it would be the topic of a whole lecture. So, whose interpretations? The play of power, that is important.

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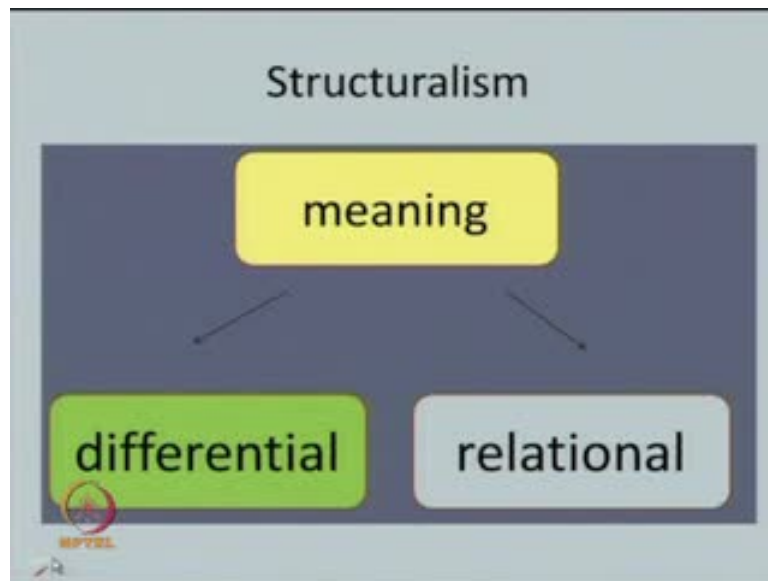


So, therefore, knowledge, truth, universal truth in poststructuralism, these becomes simply a matter of, a, interpretation, b, language games. Recall from my first two lectures, we had, from the first or second lecture we looked at the Wittgenstein's concept of language games and how language and language games, these two terms are similar to cultural studies, as you know, as different from the study of culture, we recall to; in my first or second lecture, I had mentioned this.

If at all, we have to make a difference between the study of culture in an anthropological sense **and**, and be in cultural studies, **so we these**, so truth, universal truth, knowledge, these are matters according to poststructuralism, related to interpretation, language, games and power.

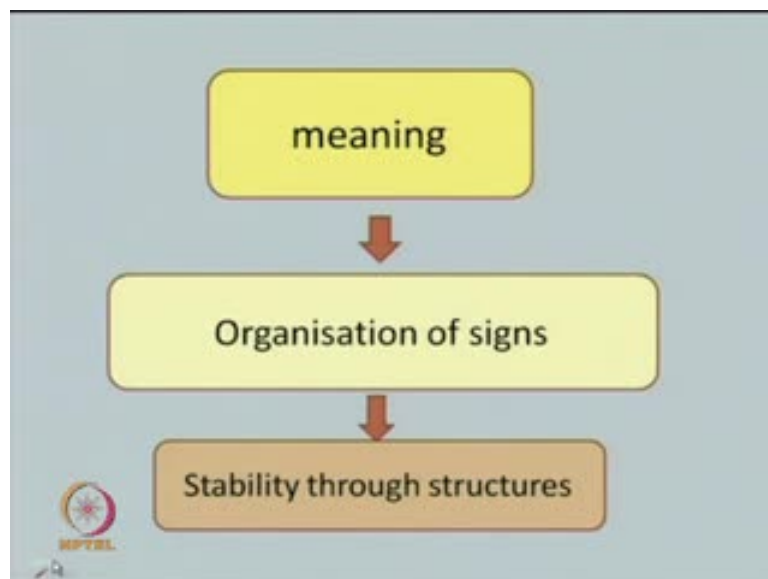
So, the whole, you know, you from your childhood, you may have heard of this slogan - knowledge is power. So, knowledge is power takes on a wholly new sort of **connotation**, connotation and recall **(())** differentiation between denotation and connotation. So, it takes on a whole new connotation when we talk about knowledge is power within cultural studies.

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So, well, now, how does poststructuralism problematize meaning? You would recall that in structuralism we learned that meaning, according to, this is orient theory, meaning is differential here, and relational. It operates in a network, in a system of structures **in which**, in which meaning emanates or meaning comes about in a differential and relational network.

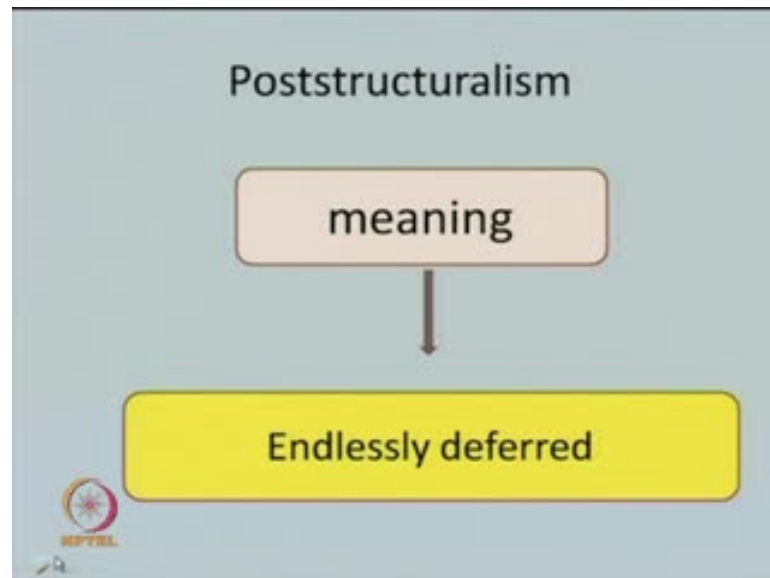
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Now, what poststructuralism does is, **it, it furthers**, it furthers this theory to well, quite an extreme, really. Now, let us look at it and we shall see **the**, a seminal figure here, theorist

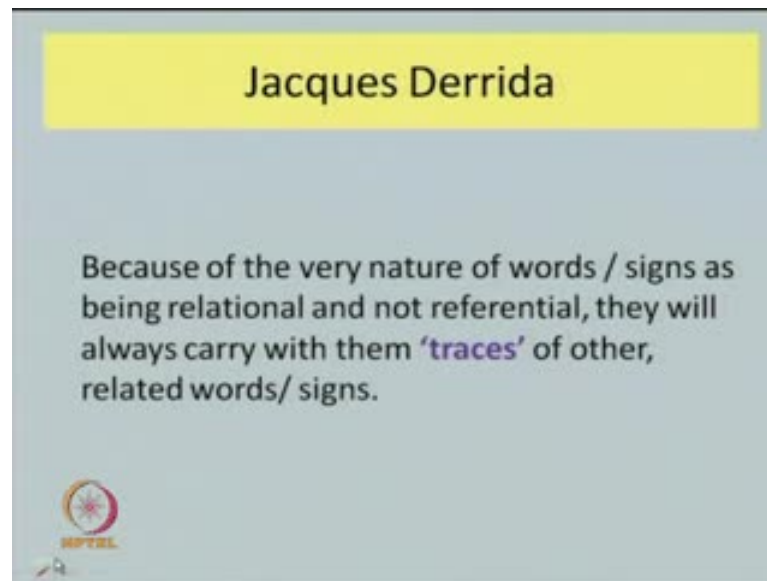
here. Again, **in**, in structuralism, we saw that meanings come about as organization of signs, and a certain stability of meaning is established through structures.

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Now, **in poststructuralism, the, you know** in poststructuralism, this all different differential and relational aspects of meaning, **is, is, is pushed to,** to such a limit, that meaning is seen as something that is endlessly deferred. Now, what is the meaning of deferred? You know, that the meaning of defer is to postpone, because we defer something, you defer an appointment etcetera. So, meaning is deferred, that is, you can never come or never arrive at a complete meaning, meaning is always provisional and meaning is always deferred, in the sense, that you can never grasp; you can never grasp a signifier totally.

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And this is theorist that I have referred to a just a while ago, his name is Jacques Derrida who is a French theorist and I am sure, many of you have heard of Derrida.

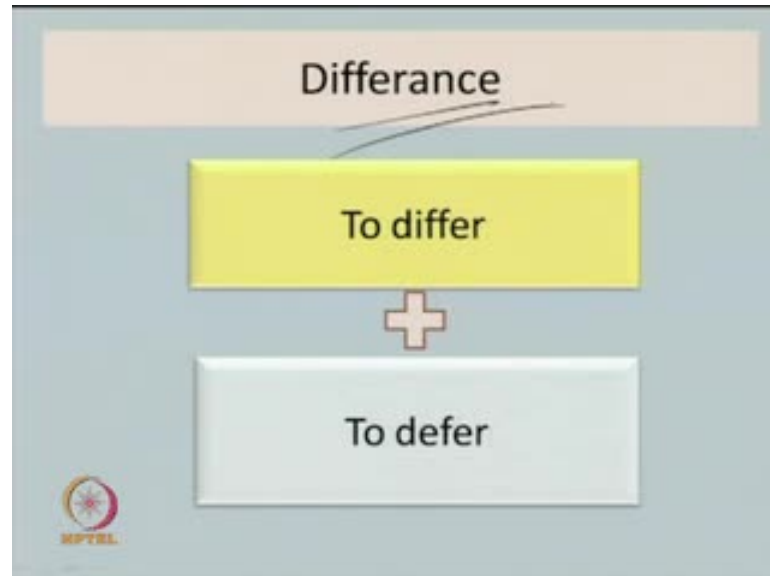
Derrida held the following, because of the very nature of words or signs as being relational and not referential. Recall, that signs are not referential, they do not by themselves refer directly, or in a one to one corresponding with reality; they are not referential, they are relational. They will now, because of this feature of words or signs, they will always carry with them traces of other related words and signs, and one of the examples are, a very common example in structuralism, which I am sure every teacher, you know, almost every teacher uses, is the difference between cat, hat, rat, mat, sat. And structuralism holds, that the meaning of rat or cat or mat comes about not by itself, but in a system of differences within the whole sign; these words, **of** where only the consonants are different, so we understand them in a system of differences.

Now, Derrida holds that **the**, when you say cat or rat or mat, each of these words will carry traces of other related words and signs. For instance, when you also, when you in another access, when you say cat, **you**, there is also the trace of cat being not a dog.

So **two**, two domestic animals, a cat is just simply not a cat, it is in fact, it is not simply that it is a cat, but more importantly, within the structuralist and poststructuralist framework, the cat is not a dog.

So, Derrida says that every term, because it is in a relational framework, it cannot help but carry the traces of the related signs that are there, in the system.

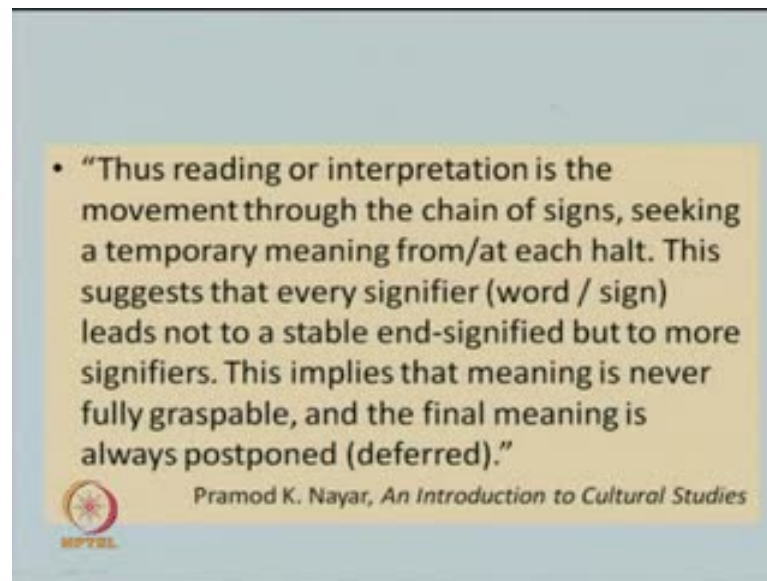
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Therefore, and let us look at the slide, therefore, Derrida says, uses a French word called differance, and this is the term he says, that we should not use the term difference, but differance, which means both, this word differance means both, to differ and to defer.

Difference from structuralism and differance from poststructuralism - the word differance carries with it the meanings of both, so meaning is both, it both differs and is forever deferred.

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I would like to quickly look at an apt quotation from **Pramod Kumar**, Prammod Nayar, a book which I had mentioned in my first lecture, as you know, which I think **is**, would be a very useful book for those of you who are beginning cultural studies. And as you know, these lectures are recorded primarily, for students who are, who opt for humanities electives in engineering colleges, so in that sense this would, book, I think would be very useful to you.

So, the quotation runs, thus reading or interpretation is the movement through the chain of signs, seeking, and look at this, **a temporary meaning**, a temporary meaning from or at each halt. So, meaning is provisional, meaning is always temporary and why so? Because meaning is deferred.

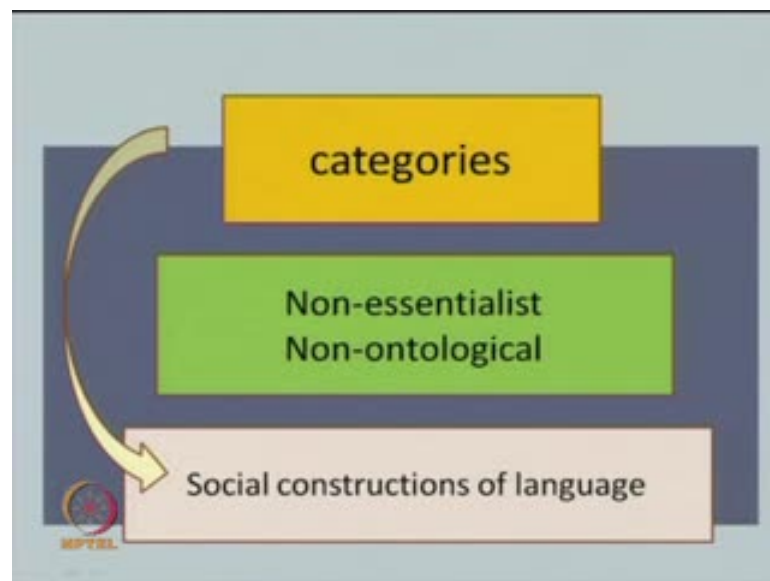
This suggests that every signifier, a word or a sign leads not to a stable end-signified, but to more signifiers. This is very important, a signified within structuralism, we saw a signifier reach to a signified, the signifier was what? Signifier was a sound, pattern or it was a mark on the board or the page or this PC, and the signified was the concept.

But this is how they revise, poststructuralist revise structuralist or structuralism, in that there, a signifier would not lead to a signified, but to more signifies, and this really is a very seminal point that you we need to grasp when nearing poststructuralism.

Now what does this mean? Nayar says, this implies that meaning is never fully graspable. So, there is always something in meaning that escapes us; when we think that we have caught in hold of meaning, it is an illusion. Meaning escapes us simply because, remember what Derrida said, a sign would carry (()) traces from other sides.

This implies that meaning is never fully graspable, and the final meaning is always postponed or deferred.

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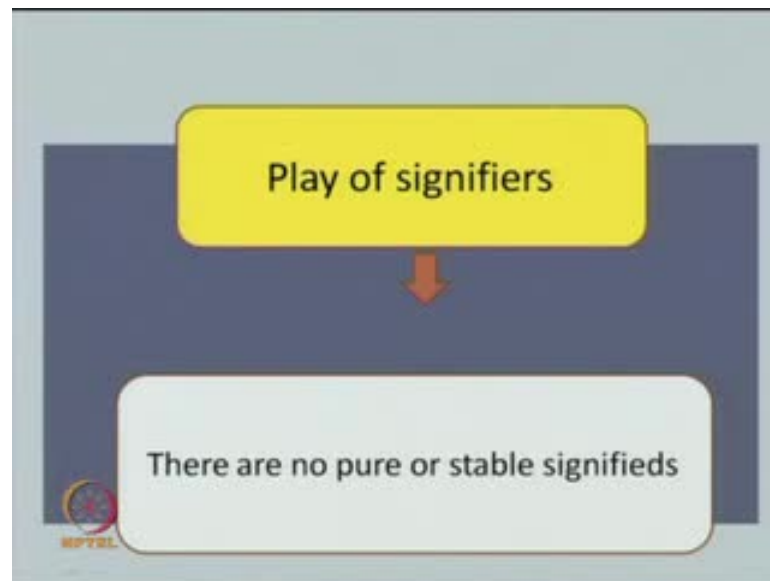


Therefore, the very categories, now let us look at this, this representation here, the very categories with which we carve out the world, the very categories through which we understand the world, are not essentialist and they are not ontological; they have no clear cut, once and for all, given a census.

So, our very categories themselves are what? They have social constructions and very importantly, they are social constructions through language, which means that they are social constructions through, through what? Through sign systems.

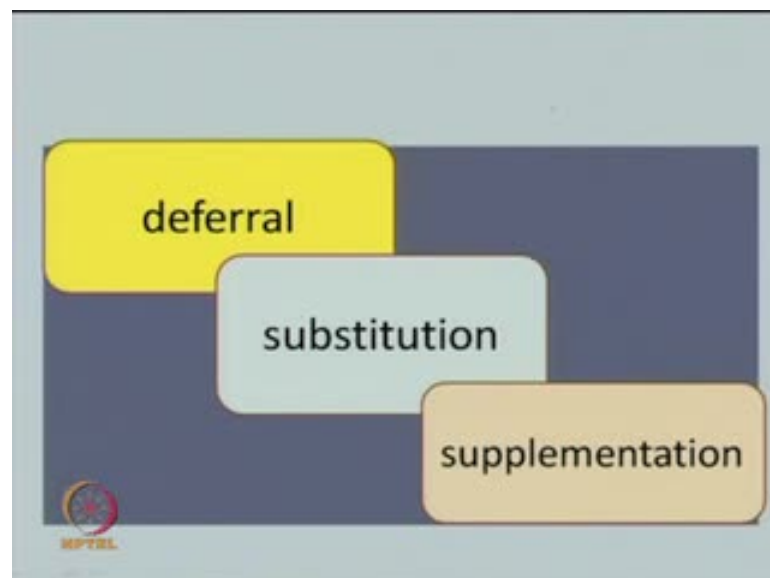
A very radical departure from previous ways of looking at the world, at the world, at reality and at categories, for instance; so, categories are social constructions, and that too through language; so, they are linguistic constructions.

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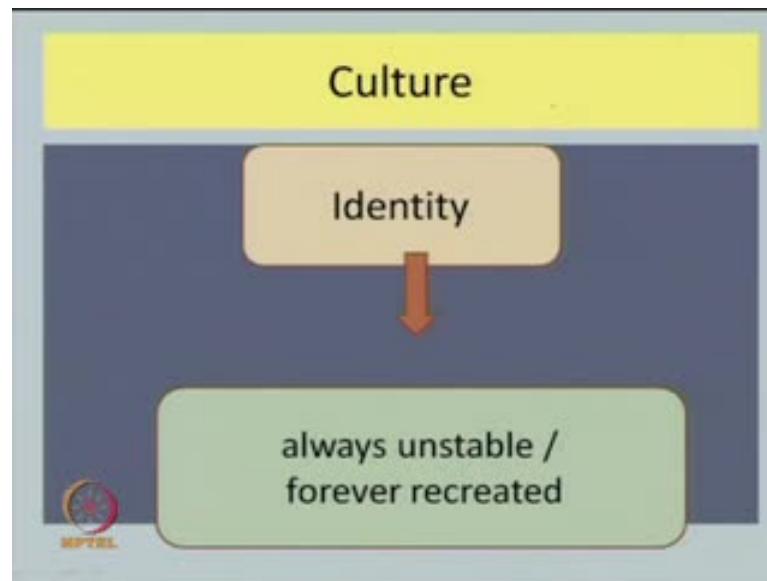
Therefore, in language, we would then say, following Derrida, **that** there are no pure or stable signifiers; **there** are no pure signifiers. So, this is what we have looked at just a while ago.

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Hence, words like deferral, substitution and supplementation, within the meaning system words; meaning is deferred, meaning is always substituted by another meaning and which is a Derridian term. There is always a supplementation in the whole meaning process.

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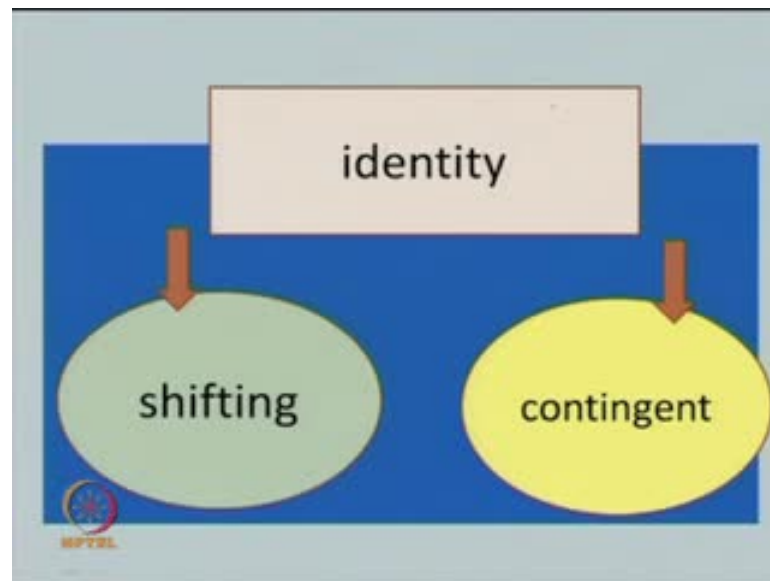


Now, you know, using these theoretical tools of poststructuralism on to our understanding of culture, how would we then use this for understanding of culture as a theoretical tool? We would say that in culture, identity, the question of identity and I shall devote another **a** whole lecture on identity. For now, **it is**, it is important for us to look at what poststructuralism talks about identity and this is the thrust of cultural studies.

Identity is therefore, always unstable, identity is forever recreated. Now, **when**, when you think that **you have a particular identity**, you have a particular identity as a person, as a human being, as belonging to a certain community or some region, etcetera, you feel that you have a certain hold, a certain identity, or people look at you with, you know, through this identity.

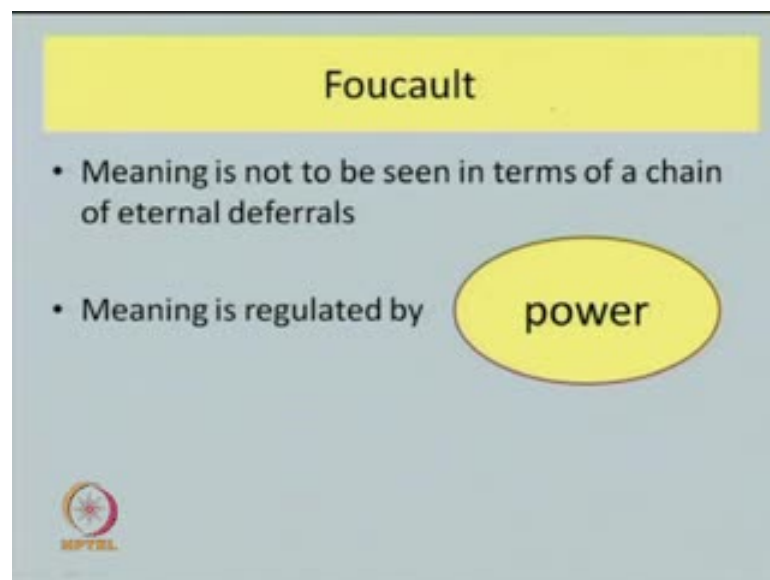
But **this**, this theoretical thrusts or this theoretical underpinning of cultural studies would tell you, that identity is as cultural meaning, as personal meaning, is following the sign system; so, **in, in**, in poststructuralism, identity is always unstable, and is forever being recreated. More about this when we look at identity in module two as a key concept.

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Therefore, identity is shifting and identity is always contingent, that is dependent on contingent events.

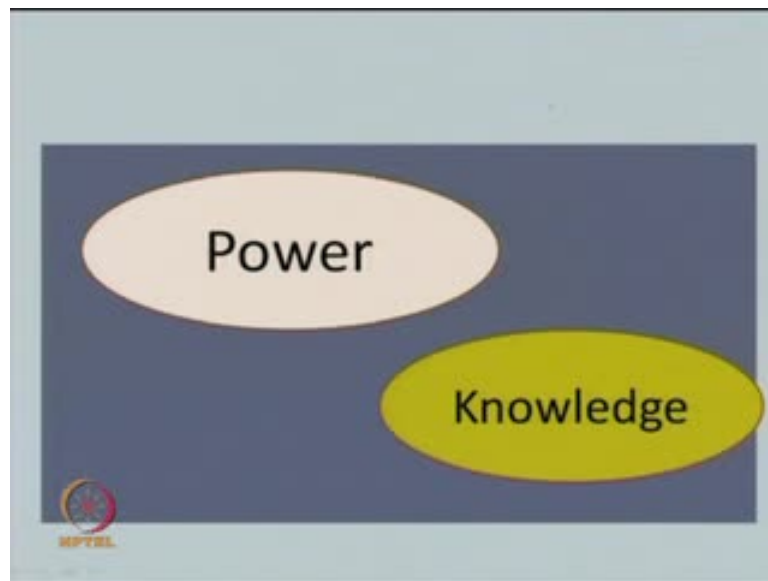
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Now, after Derrida we have to look at another, a French philosopher named Michel Foucault and Foucault is central to cultural studies, particularly when this very seminal concept in cultural studies called power, is concerned. Now, how does Foucault differ from Derrida?

Foucault says, now this is very important, please look at this sentence, Foucault says that well, meaning is not to be seen in terms of a chain of eternal deferrals. Foucault would perhaps hold that **it is**, it is a futile exercise, its meaning is seen as, you know, something that is eternally deferred, eternally, you know, ungraspable; there is no point really in continuing a sort of ad nauseam, you know, or ad infinitum; it does not lead us anywhere.

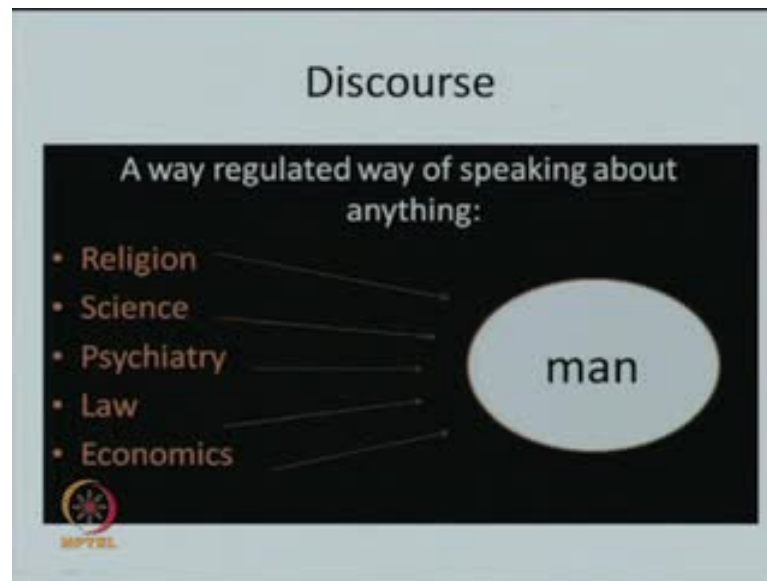
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Well, we may accept that feature of meaning, but he says, it is more important **to see, to look at, sorry,** to look at the regulation of meaning. And Foucault drew our attention to this other aspect of meaning by saying, this meaning is regulated by this word, look at this slide here please, meaning is regulated by power. Let us see how?

As I said, **you,** power is deeply connected to knowledge; in fact, we will always learn that knowledge is power, knowledge is going to give you power, but how is this power-knowledge relationship looked at in cultural studies, **(())** theoretical lenses, so to speak?

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Foucault says that every discourse, a discourse, we looked at it very briefly and I am going to look at it again in module two as a key concept, a discourse is a regulated way of speaking about anything; a discourse, well, what do we have? We have eight letters, let us combine and **form**, form words, words combine and form sentences and sentences combine to form discourses.

So, Foucault held that discourse is not innocent, discourse is not to be taken at face value, discourse he held, **is a**, is a way, it is a regulated way of speaking about something. For instance, let us look at the topic man; let us look at the concept man.

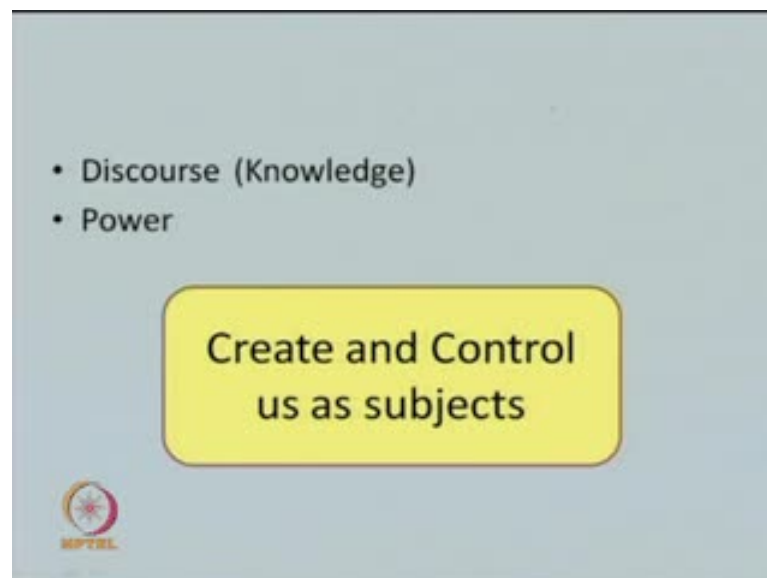
Foucault would say that **there are several discourses**, there are several discourses which are going to talk about man or say Homo Sapiens or human nature, for if you will. Every discourse is going to talk about man within its regulated way of speaking. Number one, **religion**; religion, he says, religion would give you a certain picture of man. For instance, religion may say, man is made in the image of God or religion may say that man is a fallen angel.

Science is also going to talk about man from within its discourses; biology for instance, is going to talk about man as a complex organism. Psychiatry again, is going to talk about man in within its own discourses, within its own premises, **within its**, within its own axioms.

Law is going to look at man in a different sort of a way and economics through its theories, through its discourses. It is a regulated way of speaking; it is going to talk about man in different ways. So, the point here is whichever discourse, and remember we are talking about power, whichever discourse is powerful, so to speak, will sort of, will lead people to look at any topic, any subject or matter of discussion, anything through its practices and it is going to sort of, change people to speak in that regulated sort of way.

So, all of us speak from certain discourses and according to Foucault, really, there is no escaping discourse.

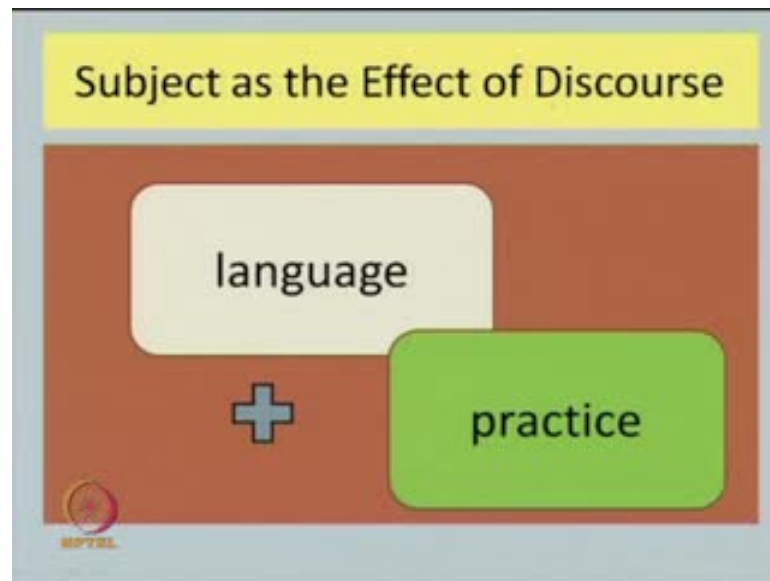
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So, discourse or knowledge, and power that is knowledge, again knowledge and power, combine to do what? They combine to create and control us as subjects.

Subject again, subjectivity is, will be my next lecture which is lecture 1 in module 2. Suffice it is for here to simply note, that Foucault held that discourse in the form of knowledge and power; they create and control us as subjects and this is, again, the realizing or acknowledging the political nature of power and knowledge.

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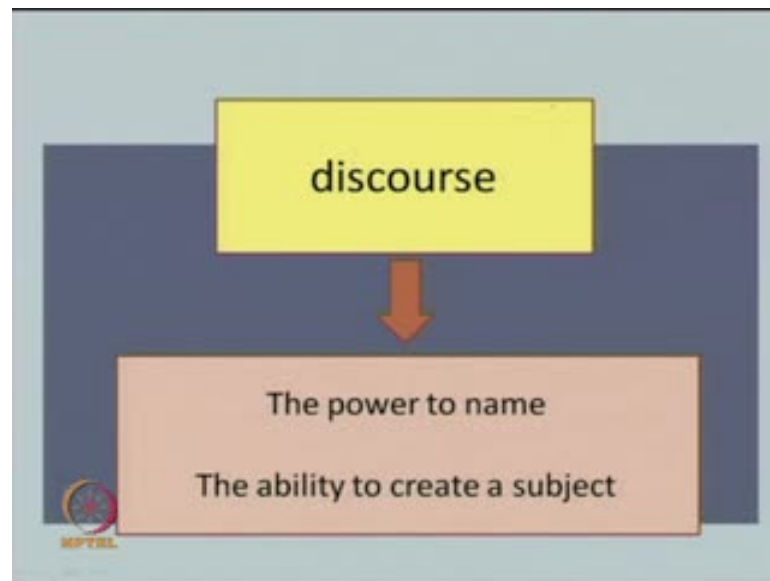


Therefore, the subject that is you and I, the subject is really in the ultimate analysis, is an effect of discourse.

Man, seen in a religious sort of a way, is not really what man is, or man seen from an economics point of a view, is not exactly the totality of what man is, within these two discourses. So, religion or economics, man is an effect; it is a result, so to speak, of our looking at man through the discourse of either religion, or economics. So, the subject you and I, are really the effect of discourse, and this is instantiated or established by language, you know, so which is seminal to the structuralist and poststructuralist theories and practice.

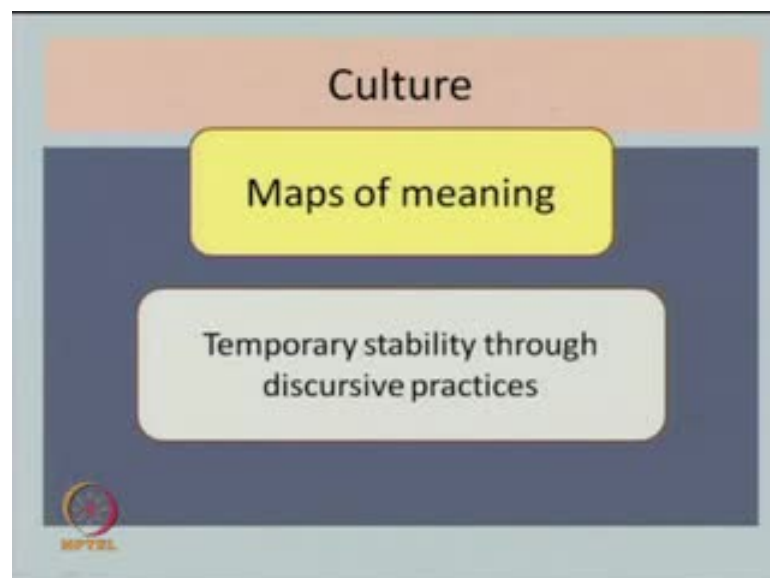
Both, language and practice bring about this, you know, bring about construction of the subject as an effect of discourse.

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So, therefore, discourse is the power to name, **right**? Names, labels, explanations, definitions, everything come from discourse **and the**, and through the power to name, discourse is given or discourse has the ability to create a subject. There is no, nothing ontologically, which is our subjectivity; our subjectivity is a creation by discourse.

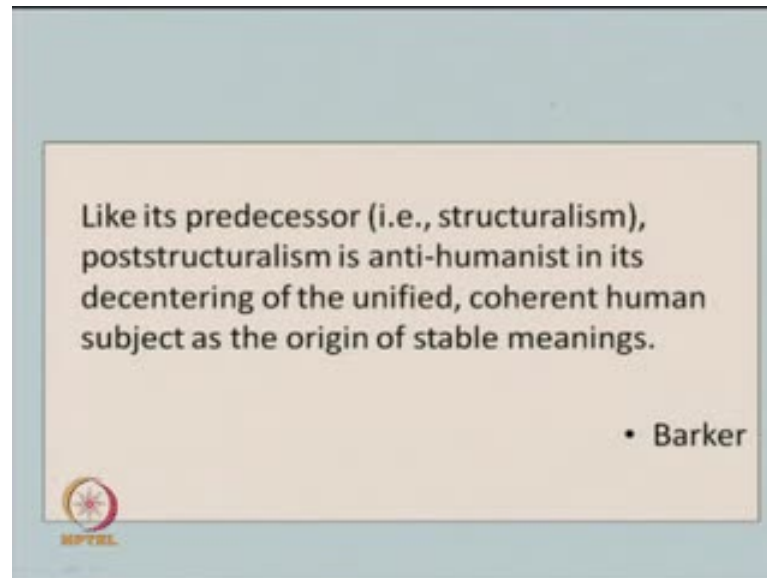
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So, in same way, therefore, culture, which as in we had discussed the maps of meaning, culture is also shifting, culture is also provisional in the sense, that the maps of meaning - they **achieve a temporary**, look at the slide here please, achieve a temporary stability

through discursive practices. Recall what Pramod Nayar said in that quotation just a while ago, that there is always a temporary meaning. So, cultures too, like our subjectivities, they have a temporary stability through discursive practices.

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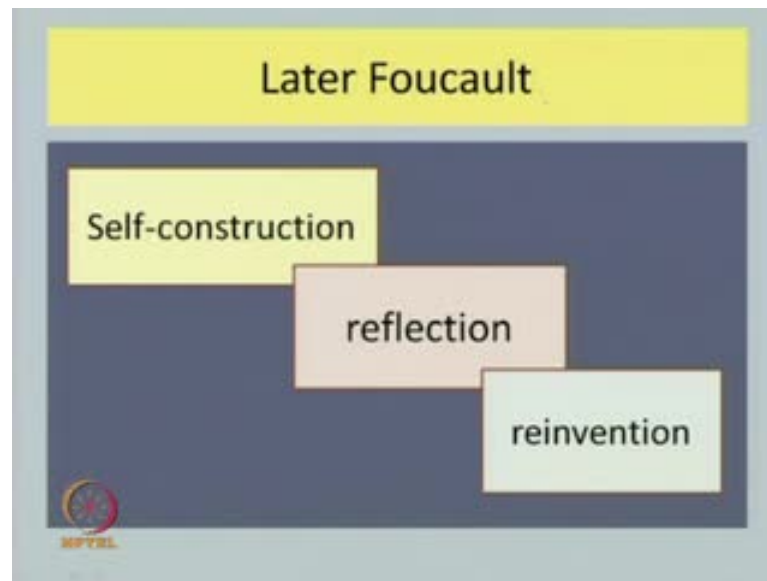


So, again from Barker, we will quickly look at **the**, his words and, like its predecessor, that is, structuralism, poststructuralism is anti-humanist.

Now remember we had said that to be, **sorry**, anti-humanist is not to be against human beings, **nor is it to**, nor is it not holding **a** humanitarian values; anti-humanist is simply a philosophic stance or a stance in the history of ideas, when you hold that the human is not the center of reference. Therefore, like its predecessor, structuralism, poststructuralism is anti-humanist in its decentering of the unified, coherent, human subject, as the origin of stable meanings.

If there is no, in the whole is, if, you know, manage only an effect of various discourses and every discourse is partial, then he cannot be the center of reference or she cannot be the center of reference, the point of reference and is not the originator of stable meanings.

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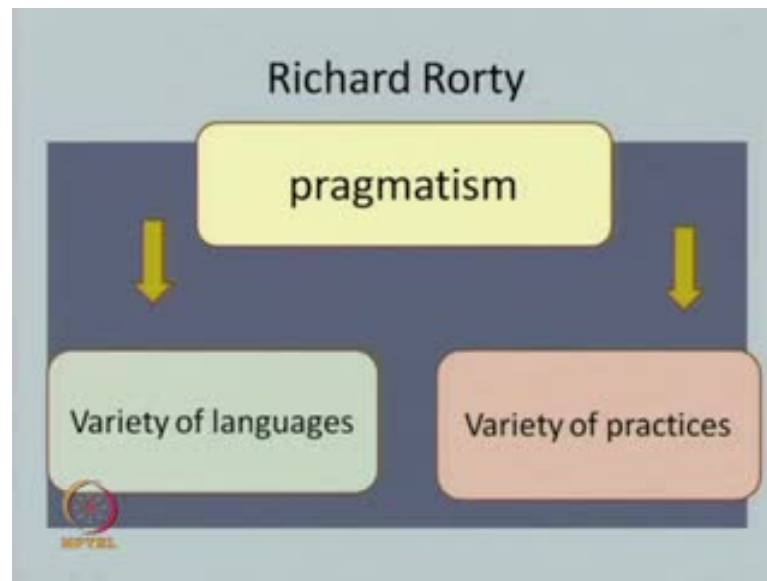


Second, there are no stable meanings. Later of course, Foucault decided not to leave us with this sort of, maybe, you feel it is really quite a dark picture as he says later, in later works, that there is you know, we **do**, do self-construct ourselves, our subjectivities in the sense, that we can reflect on them and we can reinvent ourselves.

So, we are not just slaves like, remember Richard Dawkins in the essay on memetics; similarly, here we are not, he said that we are not slaves of our genes and memes, we have foresight, we have true altruism.

Almost in a similar manner, Foucault though of course in a different domain, he says that our subjectivities can be reflected upon and our subjectivities can be even reinvented.

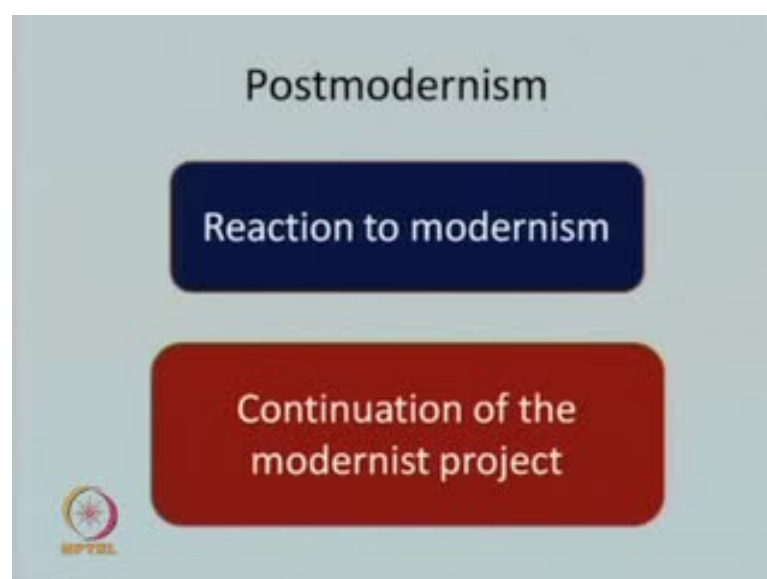
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Similarly, Richard Rorty, also another philosopher, comes away from such a dark picture and he says, well, we should take the pragmatic path. He says that **we**, we should live in the knowledge of plurality, we should understand that we can use a variety of languages for a variety of practices.

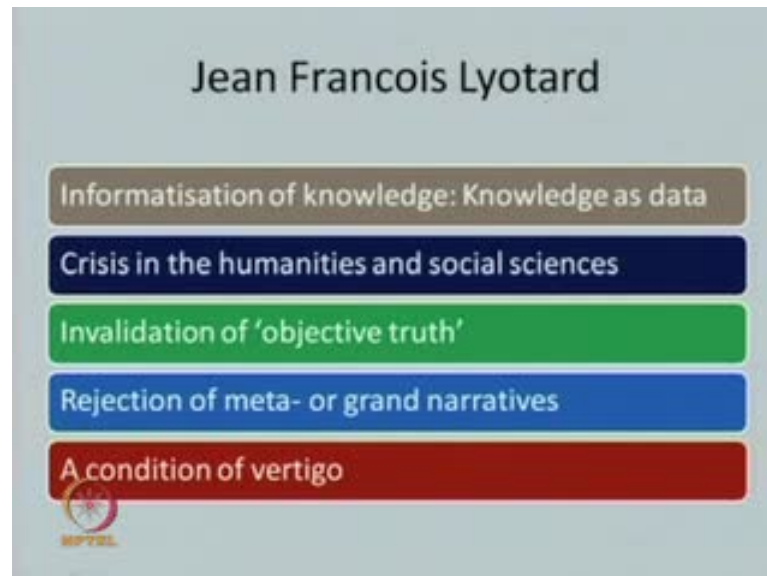
And therefore, it would, to adopt such a pluralist approach and to accept the fact that we have live in, you know, we use different sorts of languages for different practices, which is not a bad thing. It does not really make us seem so passive after all passive constructs.

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A related topic here is, I quickly look at it and I look at it elsewhere again, is postmodernism because the poststructuralism postmodernism are so closely related, which is, postmodernism is a reaction like poststructuralism, which it is structuralism. Postmodernism is a reaction to modernism and at the same time as some hold, it is also a continuation of the modernist project.

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Just one or two names here, one is another French philosopher named Lyotard who talking about, you know, the contemporary world says, that knowledge **has**, which was problematised in poststructuralism, knowledge is, **could be** today's seen because of the information boom, the knowledge is simply data and we see here in the postmodern situation, the informatisation of knowledge.

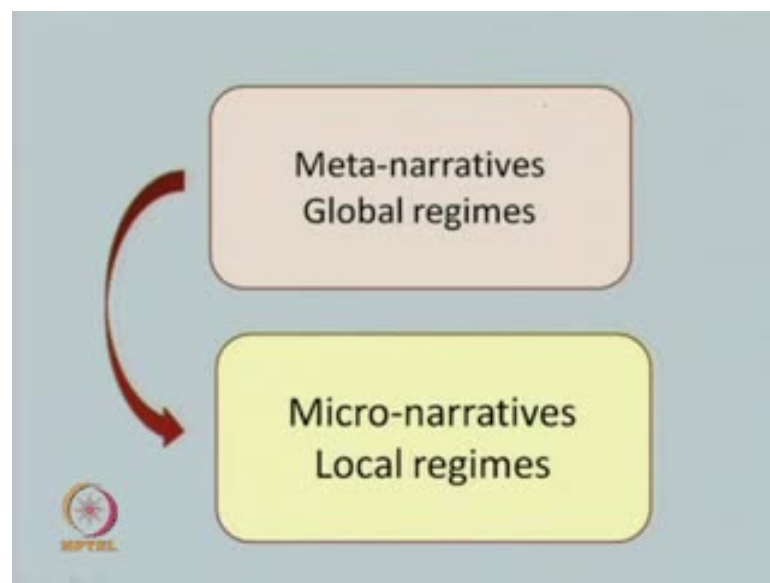
If it is a certain surface quality, which we will talk about just in a while, and this has led to a **crisis**, crisis in the humanities and social science. The very fact that knowledge is information, this is led to a crisis in the humanities and social sciences in the form of an invalidation of objective truth, and the rejection of meta or grand narratives.

This, you know, grand narratives for instance, religion is a grand narrative. Postmodernist would hold Marxism, you know, at least, doctrine in **a** Marxism or rather, historical materialism and understanding of history through the materialist school as a grand narrative, where they have problems with this, because the grand narrative seem to

be telling us and there is an objective truth, which has problematised both, in poststructuralism and postmodernism.

And look at this last point here, he says that this leads to a condition of vertigo, and what is vertigo? Vertigo **is a condition in which you know**, is condition in which you know, you feel that the world is spinning, you feel, you, it is a condition, it is confusing, it is a situation in which you probably feel that it is a chaotic situation, something that makes you feel giddy almost in a cultural sort of way.

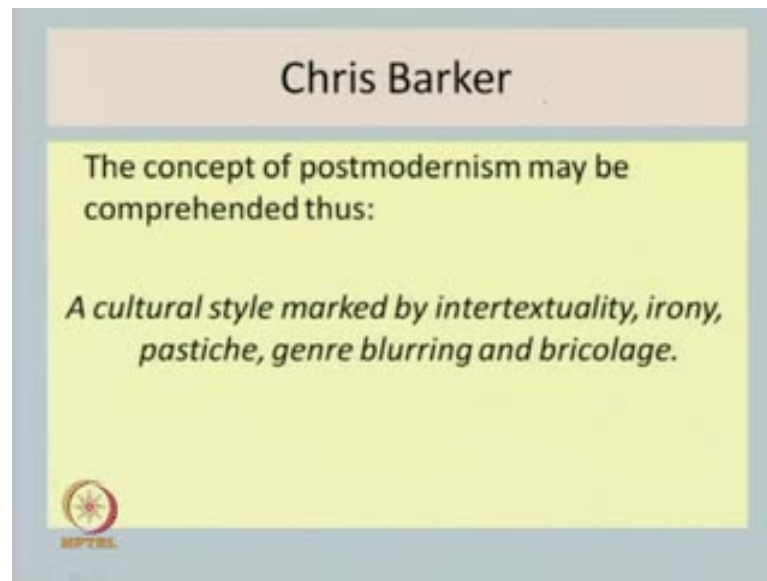
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Therefore, the thrust is on, you know, from meta-narratives to micro-narratives. If you do not have truth with a capital T, and I would like to quickly bring in each (()) said, that truth is nothing but a mobile arming of metaphors and meta-narratives. So, we should settle from micro-narratives; instead of a global regime, we should settle for a local regime.

Now **this, this**, this last point were local regimes and the understanding and what should I say, the recognition of local knowledge, of local regimes is something that I will take up, and it is a very important part of cultural studies.

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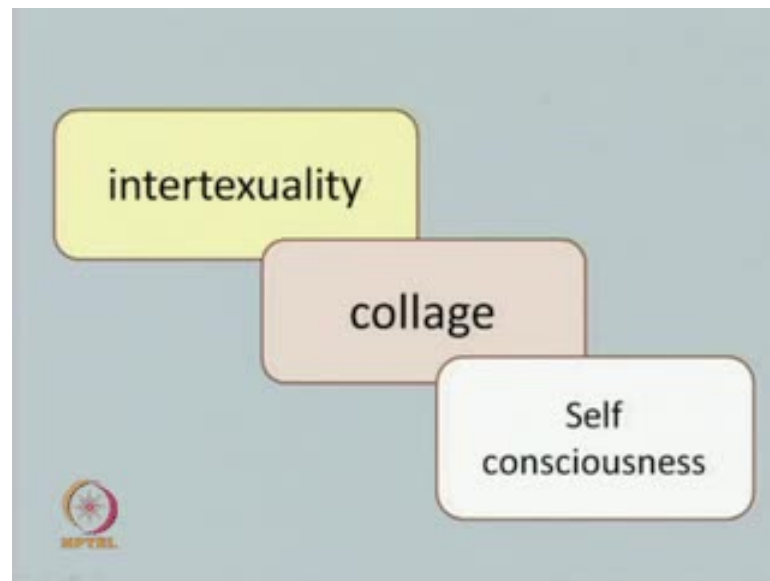


Now, Barker, here again, Barker says that the concept of postmodernism may therefore, be comprehended thus: it is a cultural style marked by intertextuality, irony, pastiche, genre blurring and bricolage. There is no clear cut one-dimensional representation of anything.

All these intertextuality, bricolage, genre blurring, all the blurring are involved in representation, precisely in order **to**, to make the points, that there are a plurality of representations and any one representation, of any event, any person, any subject, any object is essentially an act of power.

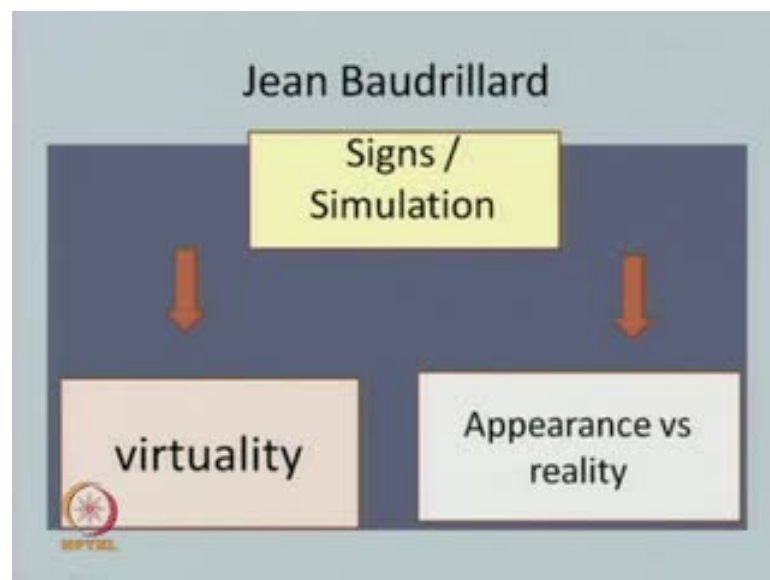
In order to, you know, get around this problem, you know, plurality of meaning; so, plurality of representations is preferred in poststructuralism.

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Therefore, intertextuality, a collage kind of technique and a certain self-consciousness or self-reflexivity, these are what mark postmodernism.

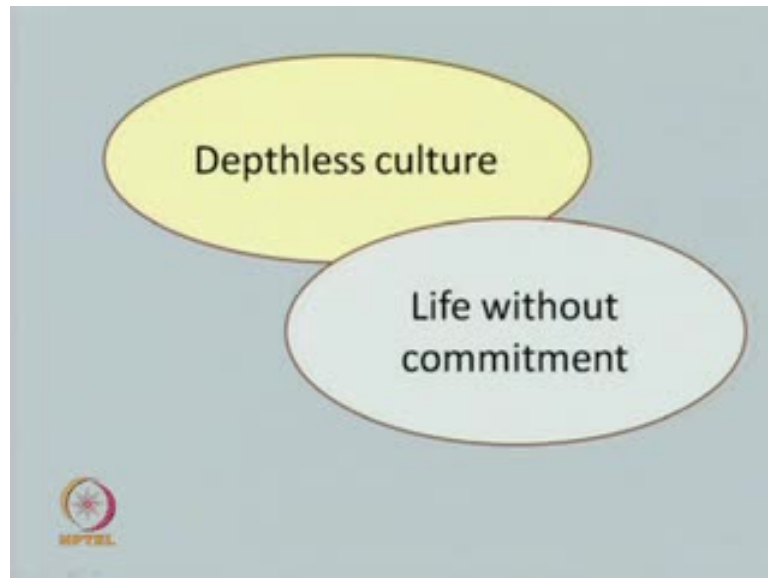
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Another figure here, which I will come to, I am just introducing him to you. Here, I come to him when I talk about virtual culture, is Jean Baudrillard and his work on signs and his very important term, simulation.

He says that reality today is really a virtuality. The whole thing moves on the crux of appearance versus reality; so, more about this is just to say, that he is somebody who will come up in our discussion.

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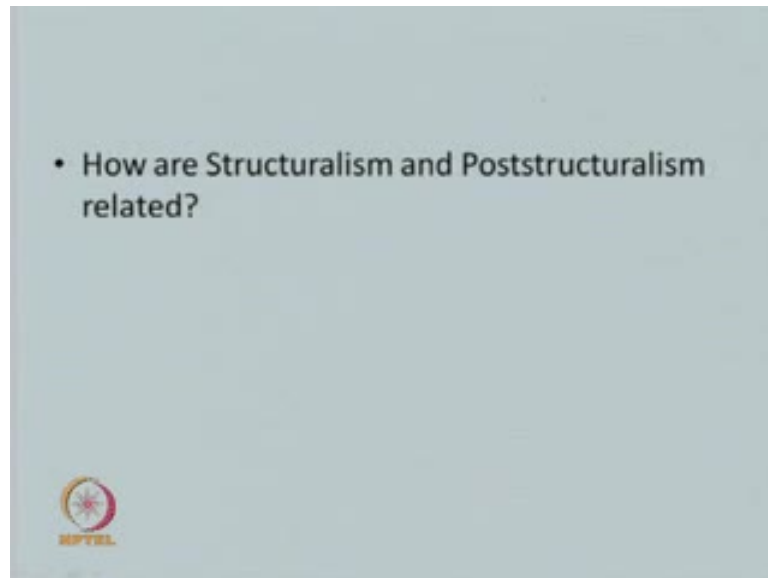
But simulation is, you could say, ironically, the real thing rather than reality, as we understand it. Therefore, postmodernism is well, it is criticized by many as a culture that is depthless because we go for surfaces. Remember you are (()) information and knowledge is information, knowledge is data (()), sorry I am sorry, both, (()) as signs and simulations and not reality, as we understand it.

So, postmodernism is often called, a depthless culture and life without commitment. If you are always in, you know, if you, with the belief or in the belief or in the belief system, rather where everything is provisional, everything is an effect of, is an effect of discourse or everything is, is virtual, is appearance and not reality, then it is very difficult to lead a life of commitment and in this sense it is diametrically also opposite Marxism.

So, on the one hand we have the grand narrative, a life of commitment, of practice, of remember, Marx changing the world, not simply interpreting it. On this side you have interpretation; you have the impossibility, so to speak, of commitment when the maps of meaning are changing every time.

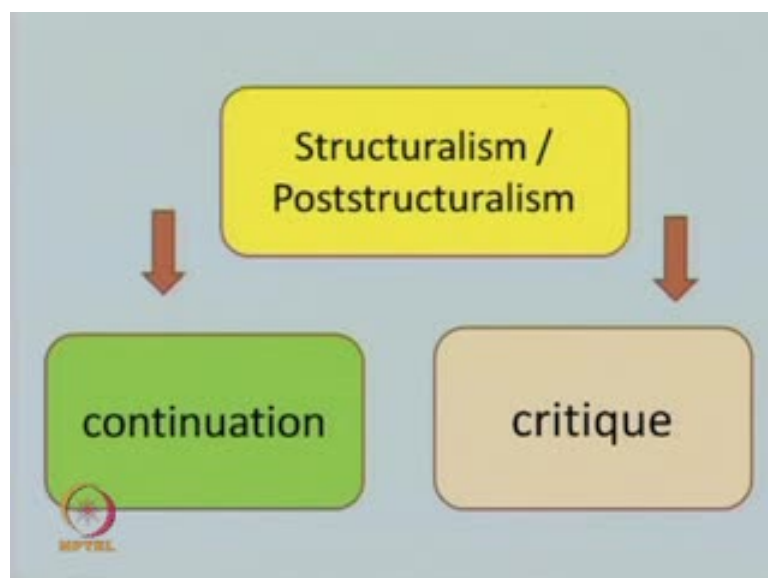
When meaning itself is deferred endlessly and everything is an act of power, then this is not seen as possible. This is a problematic issue and I shall be coming to it, **in**, later in other lectures.

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So, well, let us go in for the discussion, and what is our first question here? Our first question could be something like, how are structuralism and poststructuralism related?

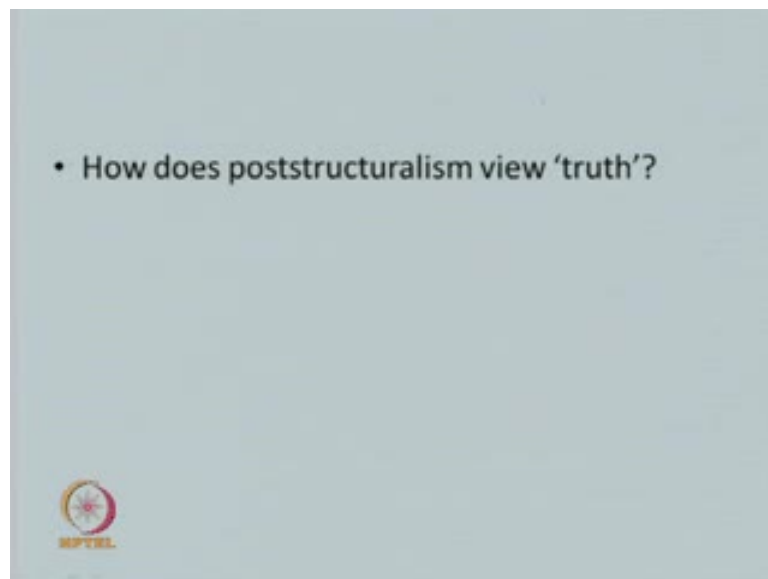
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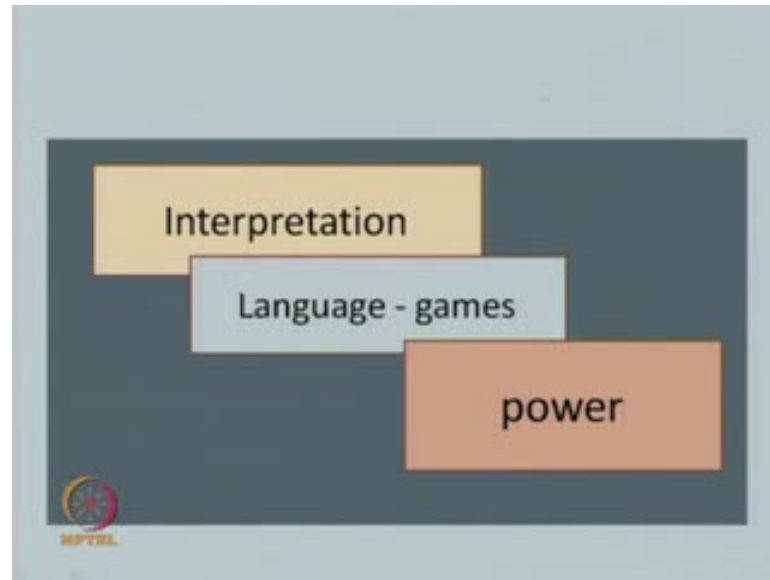
Structuralism and poststructuralism are related in the sense, a, **in a**, in a temporal sort of way, as something coming after structuralism. Poststructuralism is a continuation of structuralism in time, not only in time, well, it also contains within it so many of the seminal, **seminal**, to say, seminal points in structuralism. And at the same time, it is a critique, that is, **it lays there**, it lays there at the theoretical premises of structuralism, in a bid to show that there is something in structuralism, **which is**, which somehow seems perhaps, to be **a neat understanding of something**, a neat understanding of something.

As the structures are imposed by us on things, in a bid to have order, **but which apparently you know**, but apparently there being **no**, no order, you know, there order is something actually, imposed a true structuralism and things are really far more complex than that in offering. What I said is a critique of structuralism and this point is furthered **by**, by the **(())** of poststructuralism.

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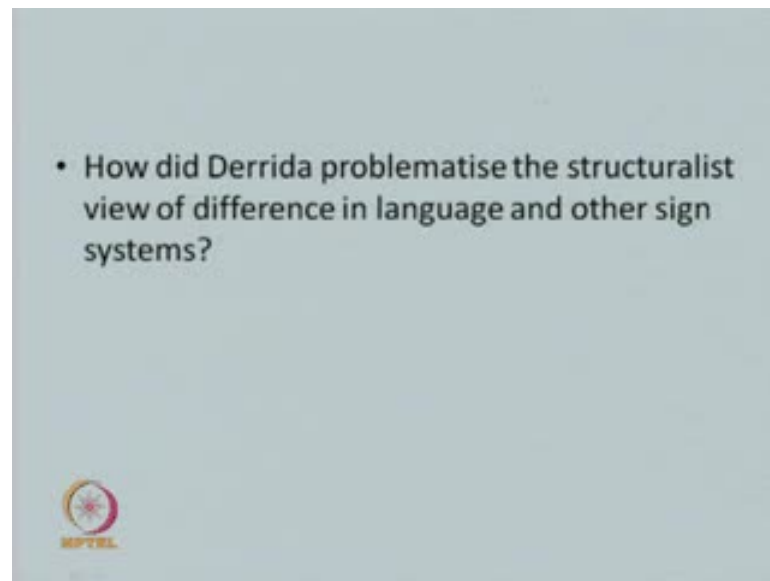
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Next, well, how does, please look at this question here, how do poststructuralism view truths? How is truth considered the whole concept, you know, understanding of truth considered in the poststructuralist view?

Well, we saw, that the answer here is - poststructuralism looks at truth simply as a matter of interpretation, as a matter of language games and of power, that is, poststructuralism holds, that there is no objective truth, and that truth is really a linguistic construction and **it is tied**, it is tied to power in. And Foucault has a book in fact, called power slash knowledge. So, truth is understood as these three things.

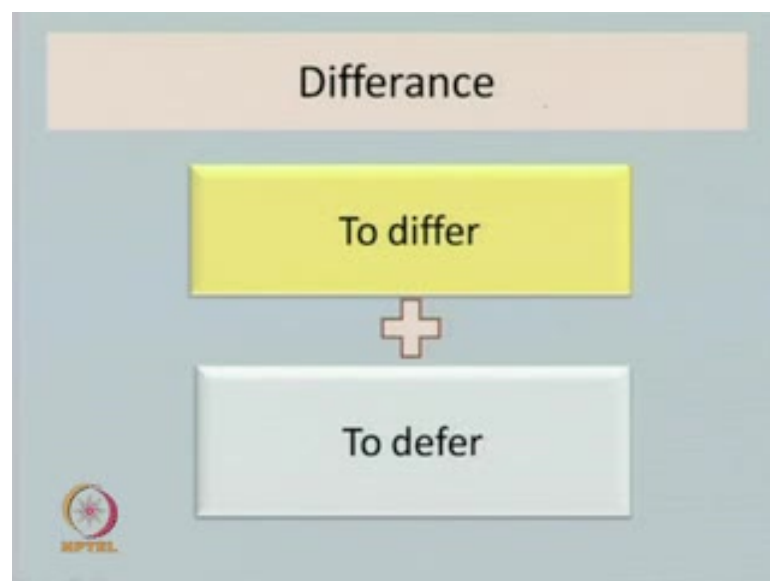
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Next question, how did Derrida problematise the structuralist view of difference in language and other sign system?

Let us look at it carefully, how did Derrida problematise difference, a key concept in structuralism; how did both, in language and in sign system?

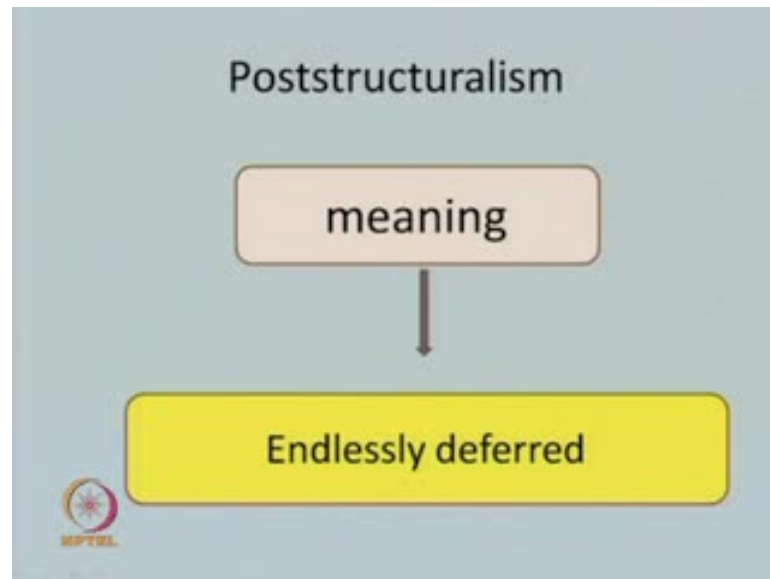
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Well, Derrida gave us of, you know, the French term called differance, which is a combination of two things - to differ and to defer, that is, you know, words have meaning

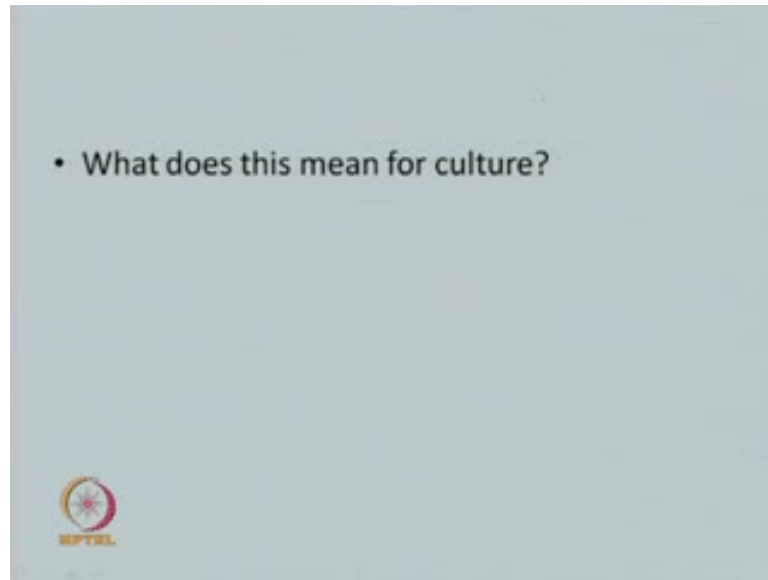
or signs, have meaning in through a system of difference. And because of meaning emanating only through difference and through relations, and not meaning, not being referential, meaning is forever deferred. Remember we saw the term pure, there are no or at the phrase, there are no pure signifiers. Every signifier leads to another signifier, there are no stable or pure signifiers, in the sign system.

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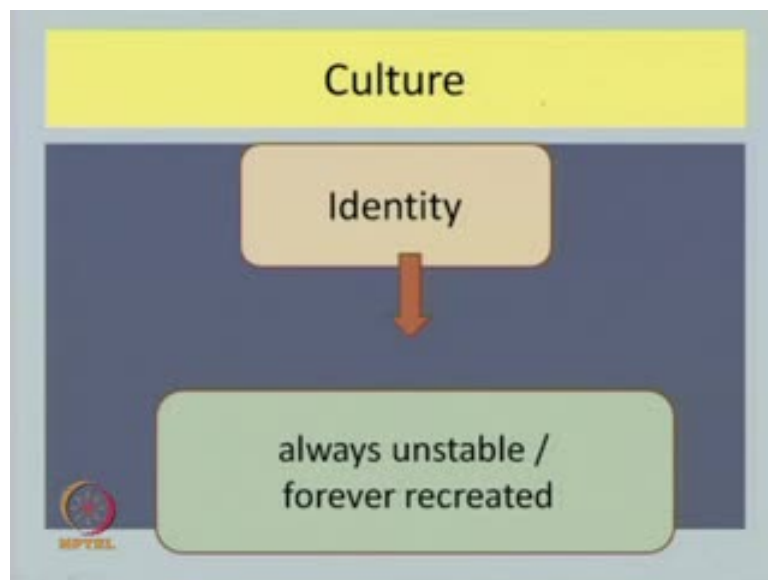
Also, poststructuralism in poststructuralism; therefore, meaning is meaning in on any count, whether it is meaning in language, whether it is meaning of a literary text, whether it is a meaning of a play that you are watching or a film that you are watching or any cultural event that you are watching, a cultural practice, the meaning of everything is therefore, endlessly deferred and ultimately undiscovering it.

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Then what does this mean for culture? **What**, what are the implications of holding such a theory for culture? Now, if you have this question, what does this theoretical trust mean for culture?

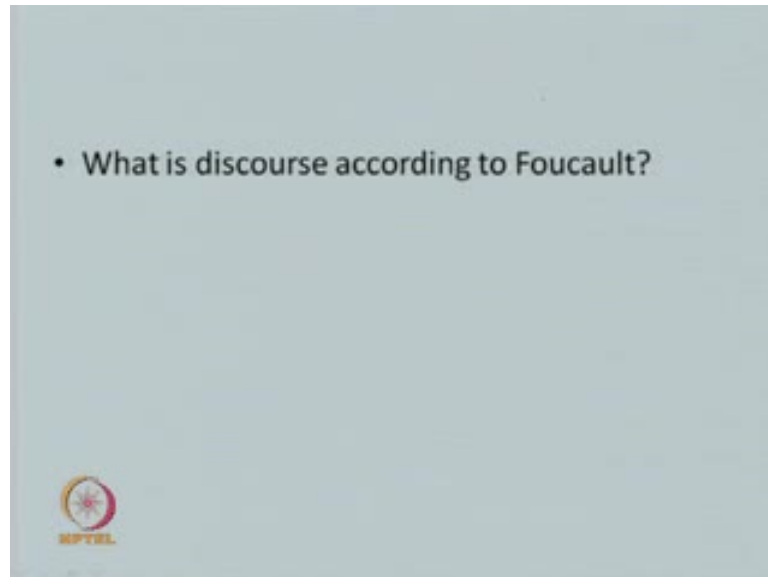
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And the answer here would be, as far as identity is concerned, identity - therefore, following the poststructuralist analysis of language in sign systems - it is always unstable and forever recreated. Well, I would say, of course, I am going to talk about **(())**.

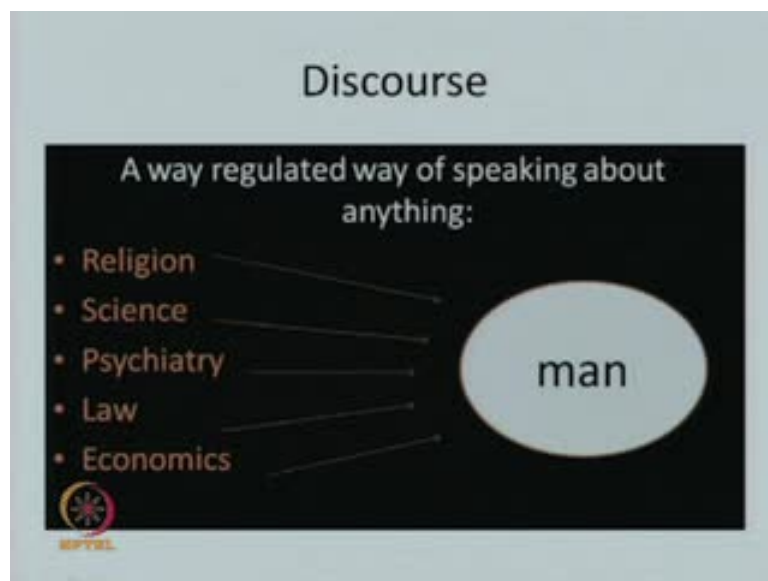
So this is really a liberatory thing to say, in a sense, that identity being unstable is something that has to be recreated by you and me, may be, over and over again. So, this gives us a chance not to be tied to, in to aid sort of identity, we can reinvent our self. Remember, that is a word which we use, when we talk about later Foucault; we can reinvent ourselves through self-reflection and introspection.

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Next question, what is discourse according to Foucault?

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According to Foucault, discourse may be defined as a regulated way of speaking about something, about anything for that matter, and the example that we saw was that of, you know, man and what are the discourses? Just a few of them, really, there are so many. What are the discourses that may grow into defining man?

Religion, science, psychiatry, law and economics, then each of these domains are really discourses and they have a regulated way of speaking; there are rules of speaking within this discourse, you cannot move out of these ways. These discourses have certain terminologies, they have certain terms, that you may use and you may not use other terms here.

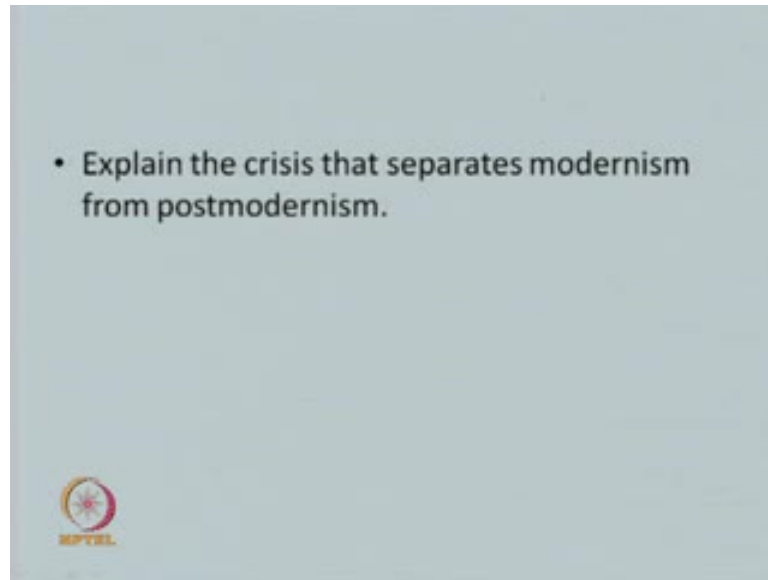
So, discourses are of, are also impenetrable, as one another is concerned.

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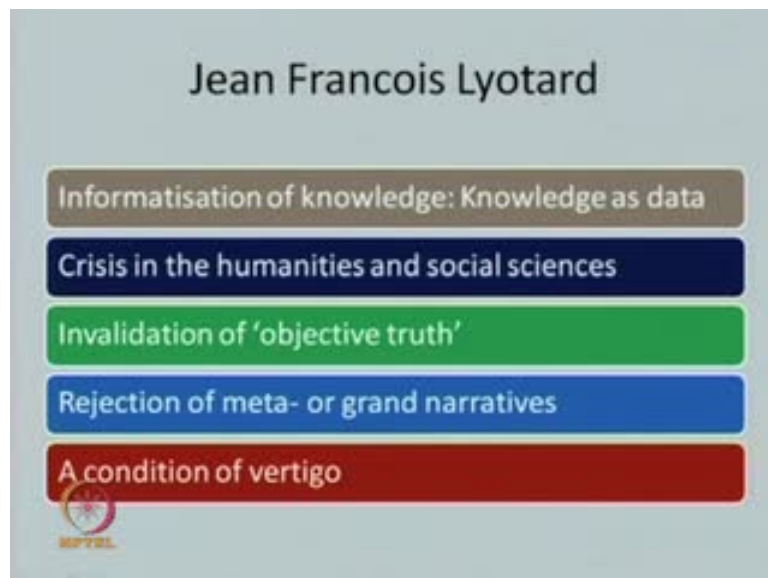
Discourse is power, discourse or knowledge is power, and this creates and controls us as subjects.

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Next, are, you know, question is, explain the crisis that separates modernism from postmodernism?

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What is the crisis that that led, you know, or gave rise to this new school of thought from modernism to postmodernism? And we saw this true, Lyotard, Jean Francois Lyotard and the answer here is the, that the crisis in the humanities and social sciences came about with, with, with the information technology, with information and communication technology, which gave us a picture or understanding of knowledge.

As data, knowledge as information, so a certain depths, you know, a certain depthness, if I may say, of knowledge is taken away here and is replaced by, as you know, a sort of surface information and this gives rise **to,** to an idea, you know, that there is, there cannot be any deep truth, there cannot be any objective truth, and truth is subjective in the sense, that truth is, you know, a matter of discourses and truth is a matter of how a perspective, how truth is knowledge. Truth is perspective in character and we also show, that the crisis here is also made very strong by a rejection of, you know, big stories.

A rejection of **meta,** meta is that it is going beyond meta or grand narratives, for instance, we saw that religion is a grand narrative, signs is a grand narrative, Marxism is a grand narrative. So, all these are seen, you know, **as,** as data, as seen as information, or seen as provisional knowledge and partial knowledge. This gives rise to a condition or confused sort of a cultural condition, which Lyotard calls vertiginous situation or condition of vertigo.

So, we have now come to the end of our discussion on poststructuralism, structuralism and where we come to the end of module 1 and to do a quick recap really, before we move on to the next module. What are the things that we looked at in module 1?

Module 1 began by talking about understanding cultural studies, two lectures were with, you know, devoted to an understanding of the field and in which I, I tried to bring to you certain key concepts, I just introduce these key concepts to you and we saw that understanding cultural studies **it is, well,** it is **looking,** looking at culture as a contested site.

Then, we looked at the scientific point of view of looking at culture and we looked at, we began, certain theories. So, this is all, by way of introducing cultural studies to you.

So, I hope **this,** these lectures, ten lectures were useful for you and we shall in the next lecture, move on to module two, which is devoted, as I said earlier, to key concepts and the first topic we would take up is subjectivity.

Thank You.