

Social Networks
Prof. S. R. S. Iyengar
Department of Computer Science
Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar

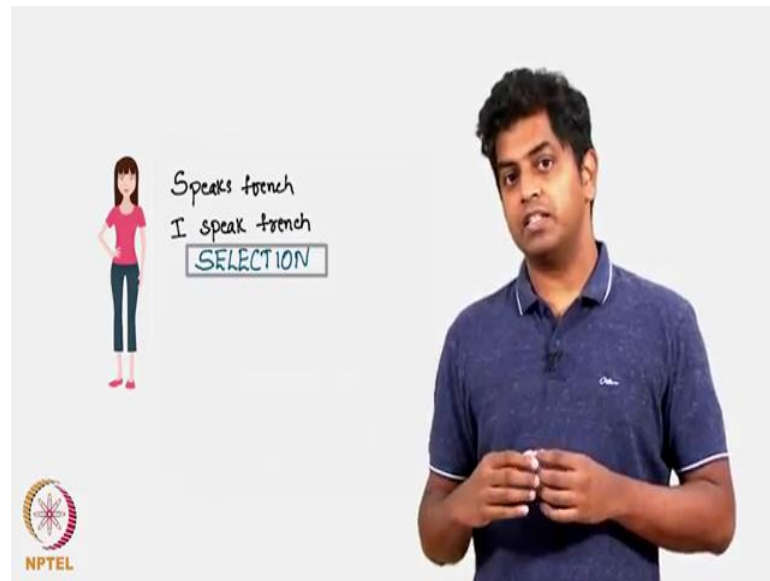
Lecture - 42
Strong and Weak Relationships (Continued) and Homophily
Selection and Social Influence

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We just now saw a nice, question the question was how we pick friends? Do we pick friends who are our types, or do we pick friends and then we become their types? Let us ask a few questions through examples.

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First question I meet this girl who speaks French I also speak French, we start speaking in French and we become friends. See it is very unlikely that in a place like Chennai I mean it is someone who speaks in French while I also know French this is some common interest, we become friends. This is called selection; we select friends based on the fact that they are our types they are just like us.

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This goes like, you probably know of this code which goes like this - Birds of the same feather flock together, correct. This may not always be true. Let us look at examples and classify these examples into selection or social influence.

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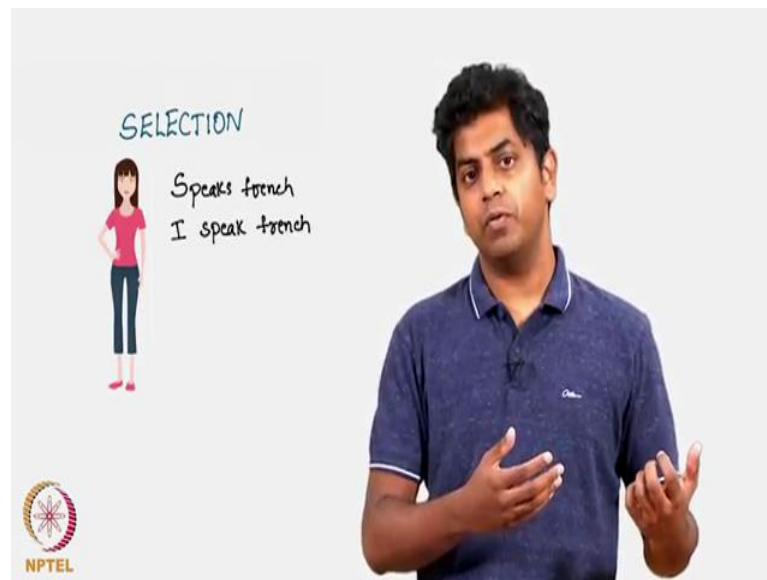


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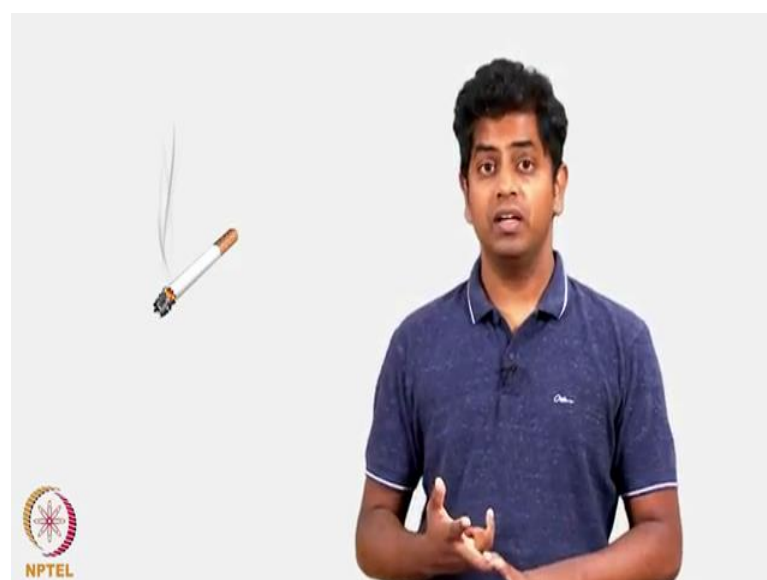
A good example of social influence is smoking. A good example of selection is a girl example I gave you.

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When I meet a person it is know that generally people start smoking because of friends. I meet a friend who is a smoker and he influence me to smoke I start smoking. Same with drinking too, people do not start drinking because they are alone rather, I mean they do not pick up this habit all by themselves, they generally pick up this habit because of their friends.

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So, example number one: I meet a French girl, I know French we start talking I select her as my friend because we both are similar and then there is this friend who asks me to try

smoking I try smoking I pick up this smoking, habit after becoming friends with him I become like him this is called social influence. Let me repeat there is one thing called selection another thing called social influence. The question that you just now saw was what exactly is in play is it selection or social influence. Let us see more examples.

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What about social status? Do you think I become friends with someone whose social status is higher than mine and my social status rises? Not really.

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In fact, two people of the same social status they become friends this again falls under the selection category. Class topper if someone is friends with him, he or she is also a class topper, if she is a class topper if he or she is friends with him he is also class topper, this here again selection is implied.

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Eating habits, you see a person who goes, and eats junk every second day, I probably cannot be friends with him unless I also eat junk right. Here it is social influence. I do not pick a person who eats junk as my friend. I start developing this habit if I am with friends with people, with the person who eats junk.

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Partying, what is it fall under? I am friends with someone who parties a whole lot I also start partying a whole lots social influence. Smoking as I told you social influence.

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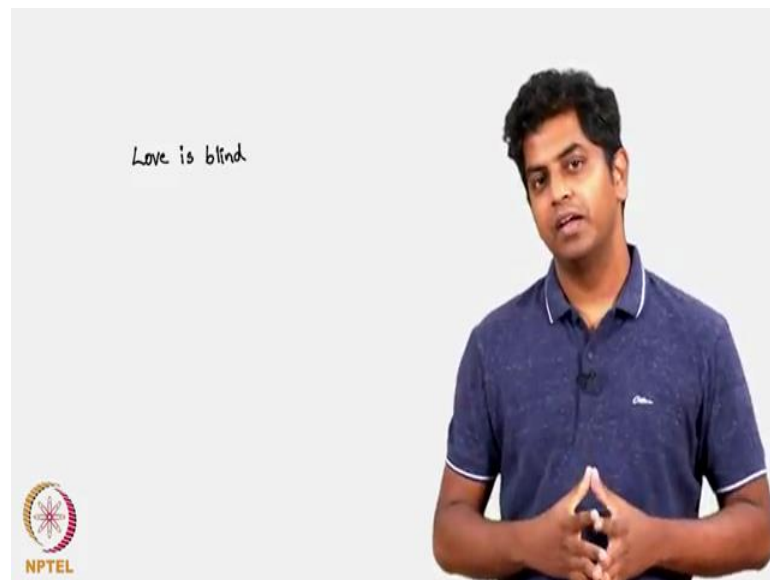


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So, we can classify these things into two broad categories namely social influence and selection. One of the biggest questions is what amount of friendships have social influence in them and what amount of friendships have selection factor into them. Let us investigate more of this slowly.

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So, we all know that they say love is blind I do not know how far that is true, I am not even sure if there is any study which says it is true, but for sure parents do not agree with a fact that they would say it better not be blind, love better not be blind when you fall in

love keep your eyes wide opened and then youngsters definitely agree to this, they say oh yeah love is blind right.

But then if you look at psychology behavioral economics, evolutionary biologist they have claimed that there is a lot of selfishness in love of course, that aside we probably will not debate more on how people fall in love and what happens in love and things like that.

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But in friendships when people make friendships the dynamics of these friendships seems to be very well understood at least under the domain of social networks.

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So, we will be observing, we will be investigating, we will be seeing how friendships happen and what exactly is in play when friendships happen. As we discussed just now is it social influence or selection or both, if it is both what amount of fit has social influence part what amount of it has the selection part.