

**Course Title: Introduction to Language Studies****Level: BS 1<sup>st</sup>****Course Instructor: Dr. Tahira Asgher****Course Description**

Language is central to human experience. This course provides a comprehensive overview of language origin, evolution of language as human faculty, and traces the history of English language in order to provide an idea how languages developed. The part on the history of the English language covers story of English language from beginning to the present. The course also includes a brief introduction of the history of linguistics with special reference to various schools of thought that have contributed significantly to the development of Linguistics.

**Course Objectives**

This course aims to:

- Give students a comprehensive overview of language as human faculty.
- Familiarize students with different stories about the origin of language.
- Provide students an overview of how a language develops through a comprehensive exposure to English language development.
- Enable students to identify major theoretical formulations in the development of linguistics.

**Course Contents**

1. Language Origin
  - Language as a divine gift
  - Natural sound source theories
  - Social interaction source theories
  - The Physical adaptation sources
  - The genetic source
2. Speech vs Writing
  - Primacy of speech
  - Speech vs. Writing
  - Origin of writing
  - Types of writing systems
3. Language as Human Faculty
  - Human Language vs animal communication
  - Characteristics of Language: Design features
  - Animals lack language: A controversy
4. Language Families
  - What is a language family?

- Language Families in the World: A Brief Overview
- 5. Historical Linguistics
  - What is linguistics?
  - What is historical linguistics?
  - What does historical linguistics study? (phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic changes)
  - Methods of Language reconstruction
- 6. Old & Middle English Periods
  - Grammatical categories
  - Inflections
  - Grammatical gender
- 7. Renaissance
  - Old, Middle, and Modern English (grammatical categories)
  - Shakespeare
- 8. 18<sup>th</sup> Century
  - Major characteristics of the age
  - Problem of refining and fixing the language
  - Swift's proposal
  - Johnson's Dictionary
  - Grammarians
  - Vocabulary formation
  - Introduction of passives
- 9. 19th Century
  - Important events and influences
  - Sources of new words
  - Pidgins and Creoles
  - Spelling reforms
  - Development of Dictionary
  - Verb-adverb combination
- 10. English Language in America
  - Americanism
  - Archive Features
  - Difference between the British and American English

### **Development of Modern Linguistics**

- 11. Modern Linguistics
  - Emergence of Modern Linguistics: Saussure
  - Structuralism
  - American Structuralism
  - The Prague School
- 12. Contemporary Approaches to Linguistics
  - Functional Linguistics

### **Recommended Readings**

- Bough, A.C. & Cable, T. (2002). *A History of English Language*. London: Prentice Hall, Inc.

- Campbell, L. (2001), 'The history of linguistics', in M. Aronoff and J. Rees-Miller (eds), *The Handbook of Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, pp. 81-104.
- Joseph, J.E. (2002), *From Whitney to Chomsky: essays in the history of American linguistics*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- Yule, George. (2006). *The Study of Language*: 4<sup>th</sup>/ 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, Cambridge University Press.