



**2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan**  
**Institute of Languages, University of the Punjab, October 18—20, 2016**  
**(ICLAP 2016)**



## **Inaugural Session Speech by Dr. Ghulam Raza President of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan**

The honorable guests, the respected Dean, Oriental College, and respected faculty members of the varsity and the valuable participants of the conference, Good morning and Assalaamu Alaikum! I feel very much pleasure and honor in speaking before such a wonderful audience of the inaugural ceremony of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan. Still more honor for me is that I am here to introduce you the Linguistic Association of Pakistan and other concomitant linguistic organizations of the country, recently established to work in close cooperation with each other.

The history of the linguistic organizations in the region of Pakistan is older than the history of Pakistan but, interestingly, not older than the history of Lahore. In 1928, The Linguistic Society of India was constituted on the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Oriental Conference in the city of Lahore where we are convened today. After partition in 1947, The Linguistic Research Group of Pakistan emerged in 1960s. Dr. Anwar Shabnam Dil, who has been residing in the USA since long, had before worked with his team in Pakistan on this platform to promote linguistic studies in the country. Last year I was lucky to be able to talk to him for seeking his guidance and support in uplifting the Linguistic Association of Pakistan. The Linguistic Research Group of Pakistan organized two conferences on linguistics in Pakistan. They also published conference proceedings and some other valuable items on language and linguistics. In a few years, however, the group activities became discontinued.

After a long pause, the Linguistics Association of Pakistan emerged in 1980s owing to the efforts of the then faculty members of the Department of English at Baha-ud-Din Zakariya University in Multan. Prof. Dr. Zafar Iqbal had the leading role in the association and succeeded in launching the journal of the association with the name of the Pakistan Journal of Language. They, however, also could continue their activities of such kind for some years and then again there was a long pause.

In recent years a good number of young faculty members of different institutions of Pakistan have earned their PhD degrees in linguistics from abroad. On their return they realized that their country was lacking an active national linguistic forum as The Linguistics Association of Great Britain is in the UK, The Linguistic Society of Nepal is in Nepal, Die Duetshe Gesellschaft fur Sprachwissenschaft is in Germany and Anjuman Zubaan Shanaasee is in Iran. In 2014 they consented to revive the Linguistic Association of Pakistan, the main and the core objective of which is to promote the scientific study of languages in the country. The association aims to collaborate with the academic institutions and other language-related



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organizations of the country and abroad to make useful linguistic studies, develop linguistic resources and organize linguistic events in the country.

A very small team of young linguists vowed to organize an international conference on language and linguistics each year in the country on the platform of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan with the cooperation of the language departments of the universities and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. The 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan was successfully held at Kinnaird College for Women in Lahore last year and now the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan is being held at the University of the Punjab, again in Lahore. These conferences provide opportunities to the language scholars from across Pakistan as well as abroad to meet and present their views about the latest trends in linguistics. The participants can obtain the guiding comments of their peers and experts regarding their own ongoing research projects and share their mature opinion to other linguists working in the common areas of specializations.

Many young linguists from Pakistan have submitted the membership forms or have shown their interest in the conference registration forms to become members of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan. The association has the plan to develop a proper database of the members and issue them the membership numbers and the membership cards in near future. A nominal sum of membership fee would be charged on annual basis to continue the activities of the association. The members would in turn be charged reduced registration fees in the LAP events.

To boost strong research culture in the field of linguistics we intend to start publishing the Journal of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan this year. Participants of the ICLAP conferences would be invited to send their full papers to this journal. The papers would be peer reviewed again before publication. The proceedings of the recent two ICLAP conferences have already been published in the form of the Books of Abstracts.

The Linguistic Association of Pakistan is also planning to constitute a team of highly skillful and motivated linguists of Pakistan to work on language documentation projects so that minor languages of Pakistan which have not yet been properly documented may be described scientifically and preserved. In this regard, it is quite pertinent to highlight that Pakistan is a linguistically rich country. It has more than forty minor and seven or eight major languages from three different language families namely Iranian mainly represented by Balochi and Pashto, Dravidian represented by Brahui and Indo-Aryan represented mainly by Kashmiri, Urdu, Punjabi, Saraiki and Sindhi, etc. Each of these languages has a treasure of centuries old culture and civilization of the speakers. Thus, we have a large stock of knowledge and wisdom



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in the form of languages which are lying unearthed in the country. In the modern era, as the science of language has developed a lot and we have computer-based tools for analysis and have well-trained researchers available in the country, it is the right moment to document the henceforth undocumented languages of the country and discover which has not been discovered before. The Linguistic Association of Pakistan aims to work on all these and other similar issues for setting strong research trends in Pakistan. The opinions and ideas of motivated researchers are welcome for executing these projects.

To promote linguistic research of applied nature and to encourage the development of linguistic resources in the country, three other concomitant associations have also been established this year in Pakistan. One is the Pakistan Association for Lexicology and Lexicography shortly called PakLex in the pattern of EuraLex, AsiaLex, AfriLex, etc. The PakLex objective is to promote research in the field of lexicology and lexicography and to build lexical resources for major Pakistani languages. Dictionaries in the modern age have been much improved in their form and function and are the linguistic resources which are most often used in linguistic research and in language applications in the age of information technology. PakLex has also framed its workshop on the topic of Building Lexical Resources for Pakistani Languages within this conference.

Another organization has been constituted to make and promote the intercultural communication among people of different linguistic backgrounds. This organization has been named as the Pakistan Association for Interpreting and Translation Studies shortly called PAITS. This association is also conducting its workshop in the conference on the topic of Advancing Interpreting and Translation Studies.

Linguistic corpora have much significance in almost all fields of linguistics these days. There is dearth of corpora for Pakistani languages. For many languages of Pakistan the corpora do not exist at all and for others they are not of reasonable size that could be used for linguistic research or in computer applications. To help fill this gap, a third association with the name of the Pakistan Association for Inducing Corpus-Oriented Research, shortly called PAICOR, has been constituted.

Having all these platforms now in our country, we are very determined to avert the general people's attitude towards the languages of Pakistan, i.e., bringing them out of the matter of shame or prestige or politics to the matter of communication, knowledge and wisdom. Diversity is the co-existence of differences and it is the beauty in its own and we need to preserve it at any cost.



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I on behalf of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan want to thank again the worthy Vice chancellor of the University of the Punjab, Prof. Dr. Mujahid Kamran, the Dean Oriental Faculty, Dr. Fakhar-ul-Haq Noori and the Incharge, Institute of Languages and Director External Linkages, Dr. Maria Isabel Maldonado Garcia for their full support in organizing and hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference of the Linguistic Association of Pakistan. Many thanks also go to the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan which extends financial support for organizing international events of such kind in the country.

Thank you all!