PART I. BEGINNING LINGUISTICS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

KEY TOPIC(S):
- Language and communication.
- Understanding linguistic methods.

READING ASSIGNMENT 6
The purpose of this reading assignment is to help you to place the study of language in a broader perspective by showing how language relates to other modes of communication, within the more general heading of semiotics; and by noting the nature of linguistic data.

PAIR DISCUSSION – Working in pairs, answer the questions that follow.

TEXT 1

1. How do you feel about the many language definitions mentioned? If you like them, why? If not, why not?
2. What does ‘language’ mean to you?

3. Why do you think that most Linguistics textbooks prefer to characterize the notion of language rather than define it?
4. Why do you think some linguists try to teach language to chimpanzees? Sum up their main findings using your own words.

5. What is Semiotics and how is it related with Linguistics?
TEXT 2


6. Write down two issues from the above article that have had an impact on you, and give your reasons.