

PHIL 332: Philosophy of Language
Class 1: Introduction

1. We will be thinking about language and how we use it. Here are some interesting questions that we will not be considering:
 - a. What is a language?
 - b. Why do some systems of symbol usage constitute a language whereas others do not?
 - c. When do we have two languages rather than two dialects of a single language?
 - d. What is a word?
 - e. Why do some strings of letters count as words whereas others do not?
 - f. When do we have two words rather than two spellings of a single word?

2. We will mostly be concerned with questions that have to do with *meaning*:
 - a. What is meaning?
 - b. What is it for an expression (e.g. word, sentence) to have meaning (i.e. be meaningful)?
 - c. Why do some expressions ('brilliant') have meaning whereas others ('zokable') do not?
 - d. What is it for a speaker to mean something?
 - e. Which is more fundamental: a speaker meaning something, or an expression meaning something, or neither?
 - f. Are there such things as meanings?
 - g. What is the meaning of a name?
 - h. What is the meaning of 'and'? How about 'but'?
 - i. What is the meaning of 'the'? How about 'the dog'?
 - j. Why is there an ambiguity in 'Mary is a good dancer'?

3. Read the introductions to Lycan and Martinich.