PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

PHIL 123/224 (LING 123)  
Winter 2003  
T, Th 6:00pm–7:45pm  
Cowell 134  
Teaching Assistant: Sean Oliveira

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Texts

(Available at Literary Guillotine)
A.P. Martinich [M], The Philosophy of Language (3rd or 4th ed.) (OUP).
Devitt and Sterelny [D&S], Language and Reality (1st or 2nd ed.) (MIT).
Other readings [r] will be on reserve.

Requirements

3 papers, due at start of class on:
Th 1/30 (4 pages), Th 2/20 (4 pages), and Th 3/13 (6 pages).
Plus regular in-class quizzes.

Topics

Required readings (@), and optional supplementary readings (*).

1 Meaning and Reference

1.1 The “Fido”-Fido Theory of Meaning

@ Mill, “Of Names” [M]
@ Devitt and Sterelny, Language and Reality [D&S], ch. 1.

1.2 Sense and Reference

@ Frege, “On Sense and Reference” [M]
@ Devitt and Sterelny, Language and Reality [D&S], chs. 1 and 2
* Kenny, Frege, ch. 7 [r]
1.3 Names and Descriptions

@ Russell, “Descriptions” [M]
@ [D&S], ch.2 (esp. 2.5–2.7), ch.3
* Strawson, “On Referring” [M]
* Donnellan, “Reference and Definite Descriptions” [M]
* [D&S], 5.7

1.4 Causal Theory of Names

@ Kripke, “Naming and Necessity” [M]
@ [D&S], ch.4
* Evans, “The Causal Theory of Names” [M]

1.5 Natural Kind Terms

@ Putnam, “Meaning and Reference” [M]

1.6 Defending Descriptivism

@ Searle, “Proper Names and Intentionality” [M]
@ Devitt, “Meanings Just Ain’t in the Head” [r]
@ [D&S], ch.5
* Searle, “Proper Names” [M]

2 The Basis of Meaning

2.1 Tarski’s Theory of Truth

@ Tarski, “The Semantic Conception of Truth and the Foundations of Semantics” [M]
@ Tarski, “Truth and Proof” [r]

2.2 Truth and Meaning

@ Davidson, “Truth and Meaning” [M]
@ [D&S], 2.1–2.4 and 15.4–15.5
* Strawson, “Meaning and Truth” [M]
* Foster, “Meaning and Truth Theory” [r]
* Soames, “Truth, Meaning, and Understanding” [r]
2.3 Speaker’s Meaning and Literal Meaning

@ Grice, “Meaning” [M]
@ [D&S], 7.4–7.6

2.4 Convention

@ Lewis, “Languages and Language” [M]
  * Plato, Cratylus [r]

Further Reading

Optional.

* Wittgenstein, Tractatus (1922), and Philosophical Investigations (1953)
* Ayer, Language, Truth, and Logic (1946)
* Quine, Word and Object (1960)
* Lewis, Convention (1969)
* Kripke, Naming and Necessity (1980)
* Loar, Mind and Meaning (1981)
* Evans, The Varieties of Reference (1982)
* Salmon, Frege’s Puzzle (1986)
* Neale, Descriptions (1990)
* Hale and Wright, A Companion to the Philosophy of Language (1997)
* Stroll, Twentieth Century Analytic Philosophy (2000)
* Soames, Beyond Rigidity (2002)