

Lewis, 'Languages and Language'

1. 'It is a platitude—something only a philosopher would dream of denying—that there are conventions of language'. Is it a platitude that there are conventions of language in Lewis's sense? (See 'Objection: Language is not conventional', and Chomsky, 'What is language?', pp. 654-6.)
2. Explain and give a preliminary assessment of Lewis's theory of what it is for a language  $\mathcal{L}$  to be used by a population  $P$ . What is Lewis's theory of what it is for a sentence  $\sigma$  to mean that  $p$  in a language used by a population  $P$ ?
3. Pick three or four of the more interesting objections Lewis discusses at the end. Are his replies convincing?
4. Hawthorne ('A note...') objects to Lewis, who replies in 'Meaning without use'. Hawthorne replies in 'Meaning and evidence'. Who wins?



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