I. Administrative

A. Enrollment issues? Books? TopHat?

B. Assignments: email assignment due tomorrow; PS#1 posted on the Handouts page; read the book through Ch. 2 if you have not already done so – and keep reading!

C. Honors Option

D. Questions?

II. Language and its Relation to Arguments

A. Our authors say, “…arguing is something we can only do with words or other meaningful symbols” (17). Are they right about this?

B. Whether or not they are, language can certainly be used to represent arguments

1. The structure of language corresponds to the structure of the argument

2. And the structure of the argument corresponds to the structure of reasoning

3. So, that implies that it is useful to examine the structure of language so as to make sense out of the structure of reasoning

C. Examples from the Wolfers piece

D. What can we say about the language used in these arguments? What are the various levels of language use at work here? Close attention to this can give us three different levels at which to seek linguistic insight:

1. The “conversational” level

2. The “speaker” level
3. The “language” level

E. This yields the structure of our analysis in what follows

III. Language and Its Meaning

A. As the authors note, language is conventional. What does this amount to? (2.1)

B. Language is clearly structured in a variety of ways, but what matters for us is its meaning. How does language mean?

C. Semantics is the discipline that focuses on this question, and there are a variety of cross-cutting suggestions forthcoming from semantics:

1. Social / Individual:
   a. Social: focus on conventional patterns as they arise in the context of speech communities
   b. Speaker-centric: focus on (say) the intentions of the speaker (e.g., Humpty Dumpty, Grice)
   c. Hybrid: combine elements of both (e.g., Searle)

2. Abstract / Concrete
   a. Abstract: meaning is something that language has independently of speakers or speech communities
   b. Concrete: meaning is a part of the lives of speakers (e.g., take language use to be an action and to have meaning in the context of lives)
   c. They can be served up in response to “Why?” questions, and also “How?” questions.

D. We’ll adopt for the purposes of our work in this chapter a hybrid, concrete approach
IV. Linguistic Acts

A. Morphological structure: root word, affixes, part of speech, stresses, etc.

B. Syntactic / grammatical rules: Is a linguistic item grammatical?

1. These focus on the structure of the linguistic items (although they have implications for meaning)

2. Words can be put in different orders and be inflected in different ways and still be grammatical:
   a. “John introduced Mary to Steve”, “Steve introduced John to Mary”, etc.
   b. “Bill is here”, “Bill was here”, “Bill and Ted are here”

3. Constitutive vs. stylistic rules

C. Semantic rules: What does the linguistic item mean?

1. These focus on the content or meaning of the linguistic items (although they have implications for structure)

2. Word combinations have different interpretations, but these are typically constrained by the meanings of the words and the semantic character of the constructions in which those words are put

3. Semantics can focus on word meaning (lexical semantics) or on the meanings of larger units (compositional semantics)

D. When these are put together in the production of a sentence, we have a linguistic act – to perform a linguistic act, you must say “something meaningful in a language” (21)

E. Ch. 2, Ex. 1 (2.2), (2.3)