Some Language Questions for Your Consideration

1. Do you accept that languages are systems of signs? Why or why not? Provide examples to support your answer.
2. How many languages are in existence now? Do all have writing systems?
3. What are some examples of dead languages? Why did they die? Have any languages been revived (brought back to life)?
4. For many, language is viewed as a socially-constructed activity, yet I suggested that it is a cultural artifact. Can these two ideas co-exist?
5. Where do you stand on the issue of having one “standard language”? In Japan, for example, students learn 標準語; in the US there is no de jure standard language although there is de facto standard English, which is essentially midwestern English.