Among logicians and linguists there are long standing widespread opinions about the foundations of semantics which, like any other scientific opinion, should be scrutinized in the light of recent advances. According to one of the opinions in question, to keep a sharp distinction between a language and its metalanguages is necessary under the penalty of contradictions. The second opinion is that there is a substantive difference between the semantical antinomies and the set theoretical antinomies. To exemplify, the liar's antinomy is considered semantical (it supposedly confuses a language with its metalanguage) but Russell's antinomy is viewed as set theoretical (as it allegedly deals with the concept of a set). The third opinion to be critically examined holds that there is a sharp cleavage between syntax and semantics of a language. According to this view, syntax should determine all well formed sentences independently of any semantics. Only after that does semantics assign values to the well formed sentences and to their parts. Finally, among logicians, there is a suspicion that a natural language is doomed to trouble, inconsistencies, unresolvable ambiguities. Montague and others have done a great deal to allay some such fears but further defence of natural language and its own logic is needed.
The antinomies result from the supposition that every property determines an object and that if an object is determined by two properties then these properties apply to the same objects. If the objects determined by the properties are sets, the antinomies are called set-theoretical; if they are words, the antinomies are called semantical. The suppositions were stated by Frege; if the relation between the determined object and property is symbolized by 'α', his principles say

A1. \( \land \forall \alpha \forall \alpha \left[ a_\alpha \right] \)
A2. \( \land \alpha \forall \alpha \left[ \forall \alpha \left( \alpha \land \alpha \forall \alpha \lor \alpha \forall \alpha \implies \alpha \forall \alpha \lor \alpha \forall \alpha \right) \right] \).

If we now add, as Russell did, the definition

\( \land \alpha \left[ \forall \alpha \left( \exists \forall \alpha \left( \alpha \land \alpha \forall \alpha \lor \alpha \forall \alpha \implies \sim \alpha \right) \right] \),

we can deduce by means of A2 alone that

\( \land \alpha \left( \sim \alpha \circ \circ \right) \),

contrary to A1.

The amendments to A1, A2 and the definition of R preoccupied many logicians in the first half of our century. If I add one more amendment, it is mainly because it leads to a semantic theory of some virtue, both in clarity and in applicability. The clarity is connected with a more restrained philosophy; the applicability will be illustrated by sketching a semantics of the utterance in which its later fragments change the assertions previously made in the utterance. Such is usually the case in conversation. But the semantics of a text is not a simple sum of semantics of its sentences. Every sentence uses what has been said before it, often adding conditions, corrections, elaborations.