

**Barbara H. Partee (University of Massachusetts, Amherst / Moscow State University)**

**Challenges to compositionality as a driving force in the history of formal semantics**

The Principle of Compositionality, while not uncontroversial, has played a major role in the history of semantics, including but not limited to formal semantics. It was a guiding principle for Katz and Fodor and for Katz and Postal in the 1960 s, and played a role in the Linguistic Wars between Generative and Interpretive Semanticists. In logic, the widespread belief that natural languages could not be described compositionally drove the search for artificial formal languages that could be logically perfect languages , from Leibniz to Frege and Russell. Montague argued against the idea that there is any important theoretical difference between natural and artificial languages, and showed how natural languages could be described explicitly and compositionally with the tools of his higher-order intensional logic. In this talk I will try to answer the question, What major developments in the history of the field can be seen as responses to challenges to compositionality?