DiSCourse Seminar

The Research Institute Brenner-Archiv and the Digital Science Center
would like to invite you to the following presentation:

DDr. Joseph Wang

"Learn from Wittgenstein's Error: Why Certain Forms of AI Cannot Work"

It is said by scholars that one can distinguish between an early and a late period of Ludwig Wittgenstein's philosophy: The early philosophy is that of Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (TLP); and the late philosophy is that of the Philosophical Investigations (PI). One interpretation of Wittgenstein's oeuvre is that TLP and PI are different answers to the same question: "How is it possible that words and sentences mean something?" In TLP Wittgenstein was convinced that words have meaning because they refer to something in the world. Later he changed his mind in PI and claimed that "the use of the word is its meaning".

As one can regard TLP as groundwork for modern logic and therefore as a basis for a special kind of AI that works with knowledge representation and knowledge deduction, Wittgenstein's critique on TLP must mutatis mutandis also apply to these technologies. In this presentation I want to put forward a case study on GOFAI (Good old-fashioned Artificial Intelligence) by Hubert Dreyfus and my own considerations on Semantic Web Technologies. These are helpful and valuable tools, but they cannot be used for computers to understand human language.

In PI Wittgenstein coined terms like "language game" and "forms of life" to explain how human beings understand human language. In the last section of the presentation I want to speculate why constructing AI based on insights of late Wittgenstein also cannot work.

Date and Time: Friday, 8 May 2020, 12:00 (noon)

Please note: This presentation will be given **online**. Please send an e-mail to disc@uibk.ac.at to register for this seminar by Thursday, 7 May, 10 a.m. We will send you a link to the virtual meeting room shortly before the talk.