About the project:
The project Regional Dialects in the Alemannic Border Triangle (University of Freiburg) deals with dialects actually used by average local speakers in their daily communication. The aim of the study is to describe the dialects’ structure and their geographic distribution with respect to the phonological dialect shift. For this purpose, six speakers in 37 places of the Alemannic language area were interviewed in different interview situations (dialect competence questionnaires and spontaneously produced data). In order to analyse the social stratification of the regional speech variation, the following variables are taken into account: gender, age and profession.

Talk 1)
Measurement of dialect levels and hyperdialectality in the Alemannic border triangle

The paper describes the influences of sociolinguistic parameters on the dialect competence and the utterances of hyperdialectal forms of speakers in South-West-Germany. On the basis of actually socio-linguistically differentiated data, measurement techniques are developed to calculate indices on dialect levels and indices on hyperdialectality for each speaker. Traditional data of the Southwest-German Linguistic Atlas (cf. Steger et. al. 1989ff.) serve as a basis of comparison. In a further step, the influences of extra-linguistic factors on the calculated indices are tested by using statistical models. Moreover, the relationship between dialect competence and hyperdialectality is discussed.

Talk 2)
Dialectometrics meets sociolinguistics - An investigation of the phonological dialect shift in the Southwest of Germany

While traditional dialects are thoroughly investigated with clear spatial structures occurring, little is known about the structure and distribution of the regional language in contemporary use. To capture the regional distribution of dialect similarities, phonetic-phonological distances based on the dialect competence questionnaires are computed by calculating the Levenshtein Distance between phonetic transcriptions (cf. Göbl 2006 and Nerbonne/Heeringa 2010). The contemporary data are compared with traditional dialect data collected in the Southwest-German Linguistic Atlas (cf. Steger et. al. 1989ff.). The results of the
dialectometric study will be visualized in different spatial maps based on the different speaker groups. These maps depict dialect areas by using different colours and hues based on cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling methods. To calculate and visualize the distances, the Software RuG/L04 (http://www.let.rug.nl/kleiweg/L04/) developed by Peter Kleiweg was used.

References:

http://www.let.rug.nl/kleiweg/L04/ (accessed Nov. 29th, 2010)