How dialectally do German police answer emergency calls?
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Travelling through Germany one gets the impression that there are territorial differences in the amount and relevance of regional variants in everyday communication. These differences can be ascribed to the ongoing development of functional (domains of communication) and systemic (processes of convergence and divergence) aspects of the complete system of German. This evolution results in a marked variation space between dialects and standard German. In my project the question of how the organization of this space differs between the major dialect groupings is addressed using "real" spoken data for the first time. Data are being collected from informants from a well-defined social group - police staff - and in five distinct contexts, each requiring a different style. This is generating the first corpus of natural spoken language on the basis of which the whole German language area can be compared. In addition to the project I present a case study, in which a measurement of dialectality and an analysis of the frequency of regional variants in emergency calls are performed. Data are drawn from several locations in different dialect areas. The results will be presented and an explanation offered.