

---

## Content and form of Upper German case paradigms. A formalist approach to usage-based data?

---

Donnerstag  
09.03.2017  
11:15 – 11:45  
B4 1, 0.05

Sophie Ellsäßer  
*Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg*  
[sophie.ellsaesser@germanistik.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:sophie.ellsaesser@germanistik.uni-freiburg.de)

By its focus on describing divergences of content and form paradigms, Paradigm Function Morphology (PFM) (see, e.g. Stump 2015) is an interesting approach for modelling and describing inflectional paradigms with complex syncretic patterns. Since case marking in German dialects represents such complex systems, it provides a good testing ground for the theory.

Based on a corpus of spoken Upper German dialects (Ruoff 1984), I attempt an in- depth analysis of closely related case systems in an exemplarily selected dialect area. The texts in the corpus represent idiolectal systems of individual speakers. All potentially case marking word forms, such as definite and indefinite articles, pronouns and adjectives, are analysed. In this way, I aim at identifying the areal variation of case marking patterns on the one hand, but also to investigate patterns shared by all idiolects, revealing general principles of case marking on the other hand.

When applying PFM to the data gathered in the study, special attention has to be given to the properties of dialectal systems such as the geographical aspect of variation, which is but rarely implemented in the theory yet. An issue to cope with in particular is the decision to assume either one global or several different content paradigms (that is, the set of morphosyntactic properties providing canonical case forms). Thus, apart from outlining the design of my project and presenting first results, I will especially address problematic issues arising from modelling usage-based data of spoken language in its geographical variation from a general perspective beyond PFM.

**References:** • Ruoff, A. (1984): *Alltagstexte I. Transkriptionen von Tonbandaufnahmen aus Baden-Württemberg und Bayrisch-Schwaben*. Niemeyer. • Stump, G. (2015): *Inflectional Paradigms. Content and Form at the Syntax-Morphology Interface*. CUP.

AG12