Seeking order in chaos: morphosyntactic variation in Dutch dialects

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In this talk (which represents joint work with Marjo van Koppen) we use a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to explore a large data set of morphosyntactic variation in Dutch dialects. The goal is not only to present a linguistic analysis of the main patterns found in the data, but also to use this case study as a means to reflect on the methodology of doing dialect syntax research in an era of big atlas projects and large-scale questionnaires, and on the underlying principles of morphosyntactic variation in natural language.