

AGORA Project *din dialäkt*

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1. Perceptual dialectology and citizen science

Perceptual dialectology as a branch of 'folk linguistics'
Focus on the perception of dialects by lay informants

- How different from (or similar to) their own do respondents find the speech of other areas?
- What do respondents believe the dialect areas of a region to be?
- What do respondents believe about the characteristics of regional speech?
- Where do respondents believe taped voices to be from?**
- What anecdotal evidence do respondents provide concerning their perception of language variety?

(Preston 1988: 475-6)

2. Project aims and methodology

- Collect data on the perception (localisation) of Swiss dialects
- Transcription and translation
- Discussion (metalinguistic comments)

"The main goal is to encourage and foster a public discussion of dialect differences and dialect perception in Switzerland among speakers of Swiss German and Swiss French, and between the general public and expert linguists."

Data collection: audio samples and gamification (online platform)

4. Factors predicting dialect recognition

Language-internal:
dialect distinctness (similar vs. dissimilar speech samples)
focussed vs. diffuse (changing) dialects

Language-external:
proximity
familiarity (own- vs. other-recognition < personal contacts/experience, social networks, media, age, ...)
attitudinal (social attractiveness)

(Kerswill & Williams 2002, Baker et al. 2009)

5. Hypothesis: proximity and familiarity are good predictors

Proximity
own-community recognition increases with strength of local ties (Kerswill & Williams 2002)
"... listeners from the region ... are best able to identify speech samples of that variety and those of other similar varieties, in contrast to those from distant areas." (Baker et al. (2009: 67)

Familiarity (experience – defined as period of time living in the dialect region)
listeners with more than one year of residence in the dialect region performed better at dialect recognition

BUT
length of residence does not improve ability to distinguish fine-grained differences of similar dialects (Baker et al. 2009: 65-67)

6. Forum comments

Informant from Berne whose parents were from Thurgau: parental dialect and surrounding dialect easiest (Landberner 2.7.2017)

- "Der eget und was so ir Nöchi isch und der Walliserdialekt, erkenn ii am beste." (Mia18, 17.4.2017)
- "Z Bärnerland u Z Wallis isch halt für ne Bündnere scho unendlich wiit ewäg, scho fasch ir Romandie" (habidi, 13.5.2017)
- "Einfach zu erkennen sind natürlich in der Regel ebenfalls die Dialekte, die ich selbst spreche." (PointyEar, 12.5.2017)
- "Natüürlü min eiggne und sonig woni e Beziehig dezue ha, woni Lüüt käne wo so reded oder vu Gegende woni öppedie hiigang." (brusa-SH, 18.4.2017)
- "Die Valsere verstehe ich gut, weil ich mit Wallisern, Bündnern, Leichtensteinern, und Sarganserländern lebe oder zu tun gehabt habe." (habidi, 12.5.2017)

7. Modelling dialect recognition in German-speaking Switzerland

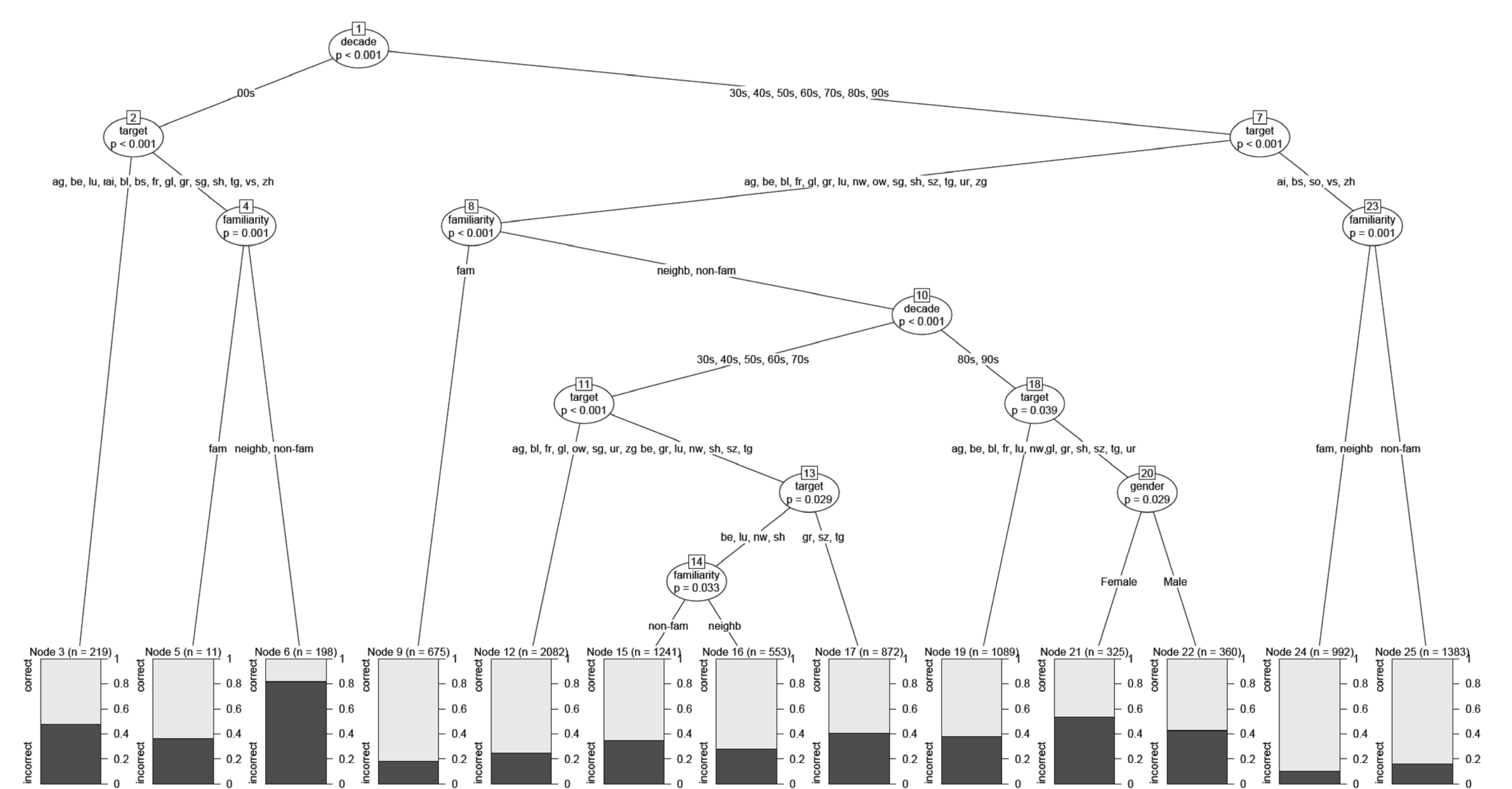


Fig. 3. Conditional inference tree on random subset of final data (from Hundt et al., forthcoming).

3. Heat maps for results of 'klettern' tasks

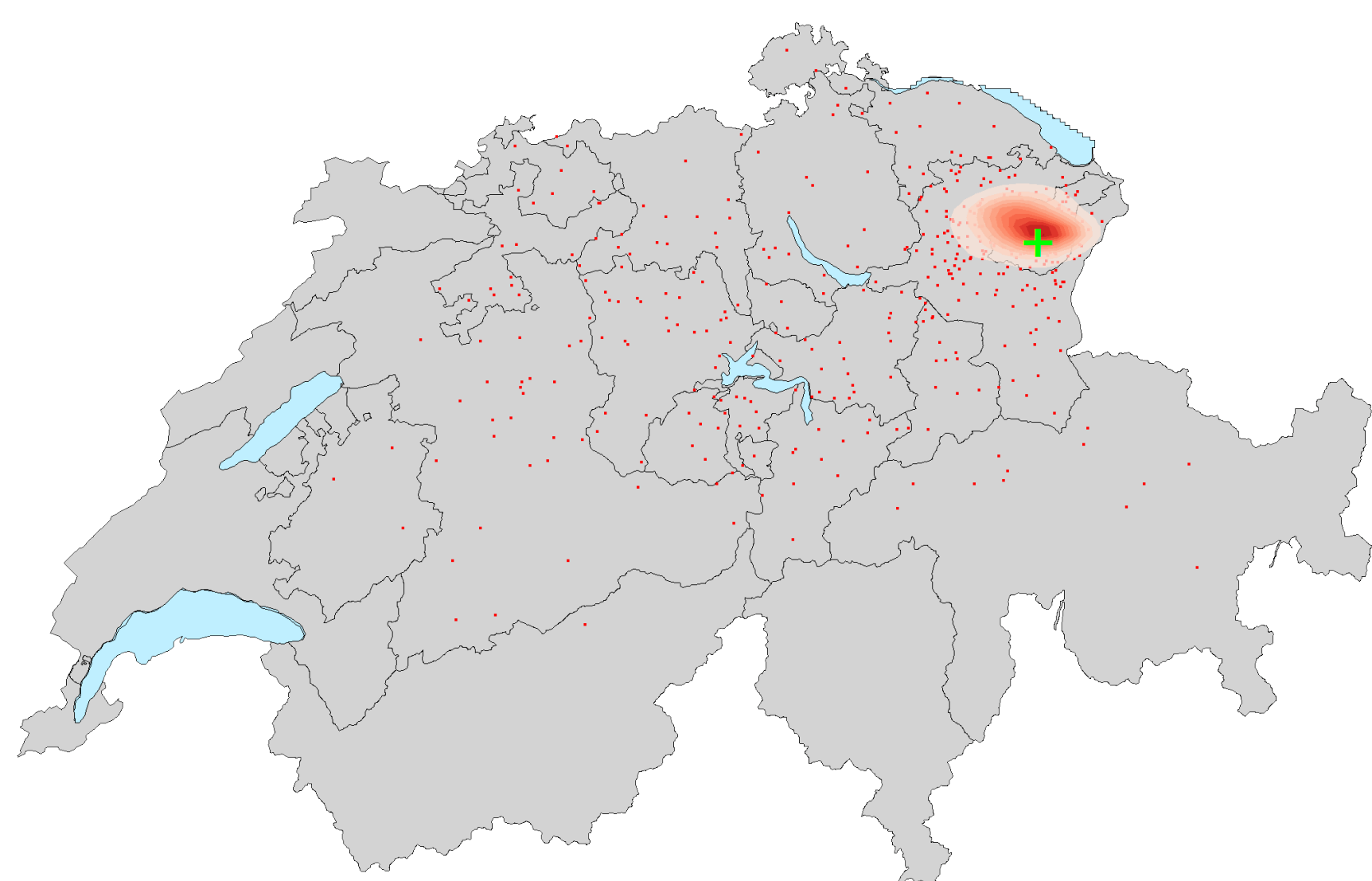


Fig. 1. Appenzell sample

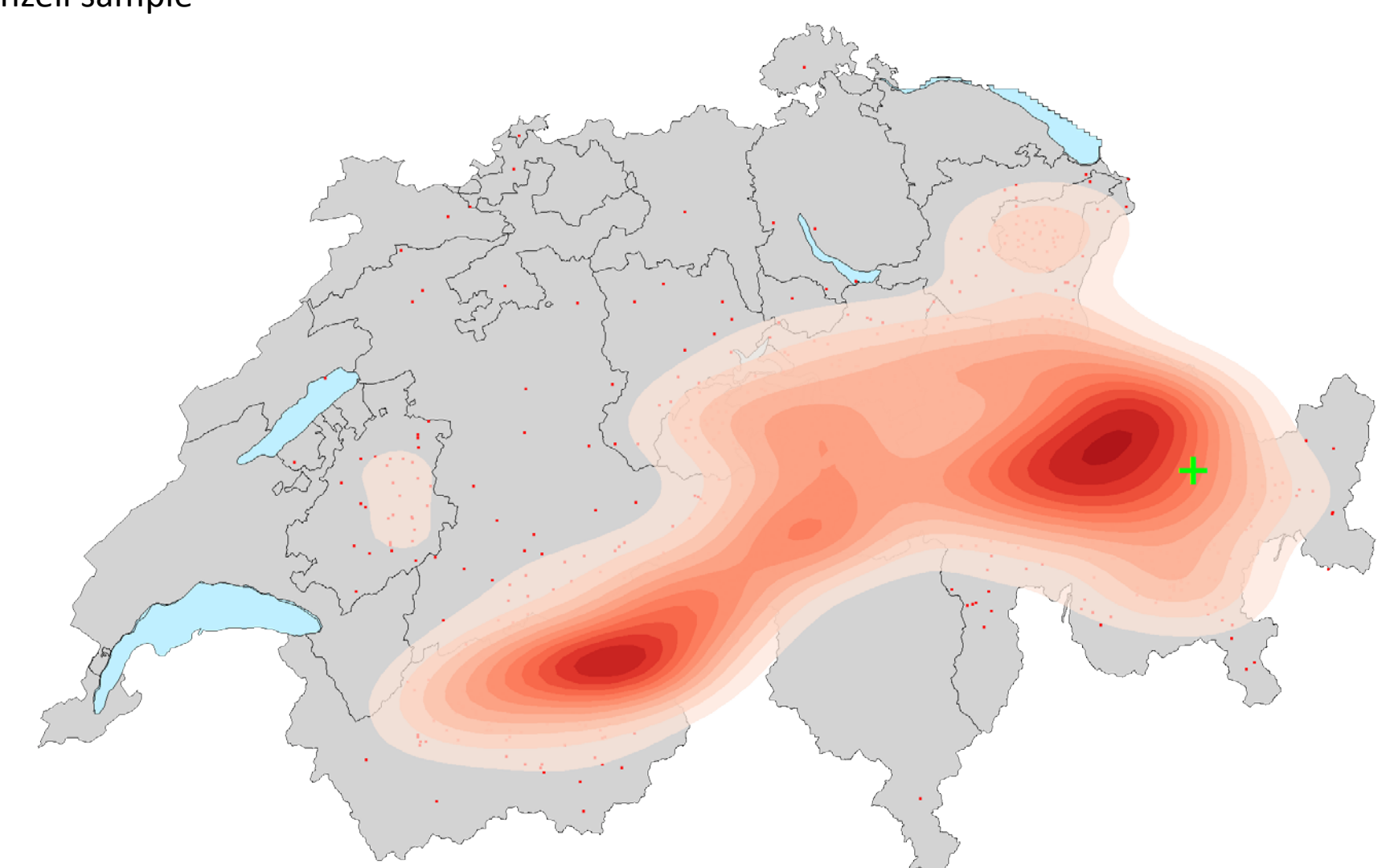


Fig. 1. Graubünden sample

8. References

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- Heat maps by Jean-Philippe Goldman.

9. Contact

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