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Acquiring attitudes in the German-Dutch border region dialects vs. languages

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1. Introduction: sociolinguistic development
2. Attitudes
3. Method: the speaker evaluation paradigm
4. The German-Dutch border region
 - # Data from *Digi+*
(collaboration with Mirjam Günther, Jordi Jager, Lukas Urbanek)
 - # Data from Vreden (D) – Winterswijk (NL) and Bad Bentheim (D) – Oldenzaal (NL)
(collaboration with Christian Gewering)
5. Conclusions



1. Introduction

- Sociolinguistic development:

Labov (1964): “acquisition of the full range of spoken English” only by “college educated persons with special interest in speech”

(and acquisition of non-academic registers proceeding into adolescence)

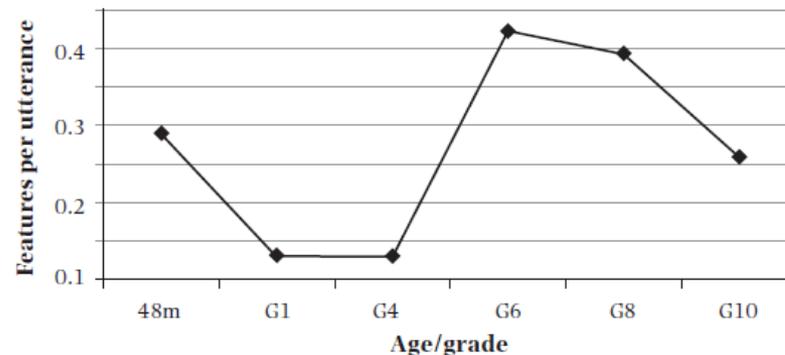
vs.

Chambers (2003): “there are no studies indicating a time gap between the acquisition of grammatical competence and the development of sociolinguistic competence”

- Sociolinguistic development: empirical studies:

De Houwer (2003); Smith, Durham & Fortune (2007): fine sociolinguistic competences in children (method: lg. usage, accommodation)

Van Hofwegen & Wolfram (2010): ‘rollercoaster trajectory’ in many (but not all) children



(a) ‘Roller coaster’ trajectory (conflated N = 22)

1. childhood: ‘vernacular-reduction’ trajectory (trigger: schooling)
2. adolescence: increased vernacularity (vernacular as **peer group variety**)
(similar patterns observed elsewhere)



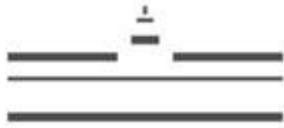
1. Introduction

- Sociolinguistic development & second/foreign languages?
 - # not intensely studied in relation to each other (but see Ender 2017, Schlee 2017)
 - (# exception: attitudes – see below)
 - (# implicit stance behind ‘minority language @ home’?)

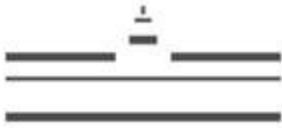


2. Attitudes

- Traditionally, a “disposition[s] to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects” (Sarnoff 1970) >>> *relevant for individual behaviour and, in the long run, language change*
- In linguistics, attitudes are understood as...
 - # analytical constructs
 - # multi-dimensional and context-sensitive (hence: dynamic)
 - # not *straightforwardly* related to behaviour (cf. Low German: positive attitudes do not result in increased usage)
- Complement ‘mechanistic’ accounts (E.g., “mere exposure effect”, Zajonc 1968; “frequency matching”, Labov 1994)
Cf. Ryan & Giles (1982), Münstermann & van Hout (1988), Auer & Hinskens (1996), Labov (2001: chapter 6), Giles & Billings (2004), Garrett (2010), Grondelaers & Kristiansen (2013)



- Development of language attitudes?
 - # Blum-Kulka (2004:197): “Most **sociolinguistic studies lack a developmental agenda**, and they are concerned with toddlers and preschoolers rather than with school-age children”
 - # working hypothesis (De Vogelaer 2017):
 - first > second > third-order indexicality* (cf. Silverstein 2003)
 - °pre-schoolers: first-order indexicality? (Barbu, Chevrot, Nardy & Juhel 2013)
 - °childhood: emerging prestige variety (e.g., Cremona & Bates 1977 on Italian; Day 1982 on English) + acquiring stereotypes (Kinzler & DeJesus 2013 on US English)
 - °adolescence: in-group varieties indicative of third-order indexicality
 - # (accents of) second/foreign languages: highly similar? E.g., Floccia et al. (2009) on UK, Zenner et al. (2020) on English in Belgium
 - # crucial factor: exposure (cf. Girard et al. 2008 on awareness); proficiency (Miller 2017)



2. Attitudes

- Attitudes and second/foreign languages?
 - # Gardner & Lambert (1969): strong link between language attitudes and second language learning
 - # Classroom context: attitudes and the 'L2 Motivational Self System' (Dörnyei 2005)
 - # German and Dutch as related languages: may trigger more favourable attitudes (esp. in border context, cf. Beerkens 2005)

2. Attitudes

- De Vogelaer & Toye (2017) on Kluisbergen (B):
 - # verbal-guise experiment evaluating 5 varieties (Standard Dutch, local dialect, West-Flemish/Brabantian/Ghent accents)
 - # n=116; age groups 8-10, 11-12, 13-14, 17-18





2. Attitudes

- De Vogelaer & Toye (2017) on Kluisbergen (B):

highlighted results:

°loosely structured > more coherent attitudes

°correlation with social development

e.g., peak in conventional and social-clique dominated reasoning about friendship around age of 16 (Turiel 1983, Horn 2003)

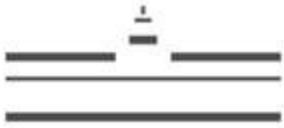
‘the speaker would be a good friend for me’

is associated with

PRESTIGE (8-10)

> SOCIAL ATTRACTIVENESS (13-14)

> PERSONAL INTEGRITY (17-18)



2. Attitudes

RQs: validating findings in German-Dutch border region

similar development towards more tightly structured attitudes?

further evidence for correlation with social development?

Additionally

insight in attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

relating to:

- 1) position of the local dialect
- 2) status of the dialect continuum (border dialect included)
- 3) position of the neighbouring language



3. Method

- ‘Speaker evaluation paradigm’ (Lambert et al. 1960)
 - # i.e. ‘indirect’ method, often with ‘matched-guise’ technique
 - e.g. “does this speaker earn a lot of money?”



- ‘Speaker evaluation paradigm’ (Lambert et al. 1960)
 - # i.e. ‘indirect’ method, often with ‘matched-guise’ technique
 - e.g. “does this speaker earn a lot of money?”
 - # well-established and robust, but also somewhat controversial...
 - °criticism: naive assumption that stimuli can be decontextualised, whereas attitudes are context-sensitive (and re-negotiated in interaction)
 - °defence:
 1. Soukup (2013): reconceptualise experiments as “discursive events”, revealing “social meaning”
 2. Grondelaers & Kristiansen (eds., 2013): results robust enough to warrant cross-linguistic comparison

- A **‘verbal guise’ experiment**
- Data from **Digi+** (D, n=53 & NL, n=13 ; Age=8-10)
- 742 **high school pupils in 2*2 locations** (Age range: 10-19):

Bad Bentheim (D; n=174)

vs.

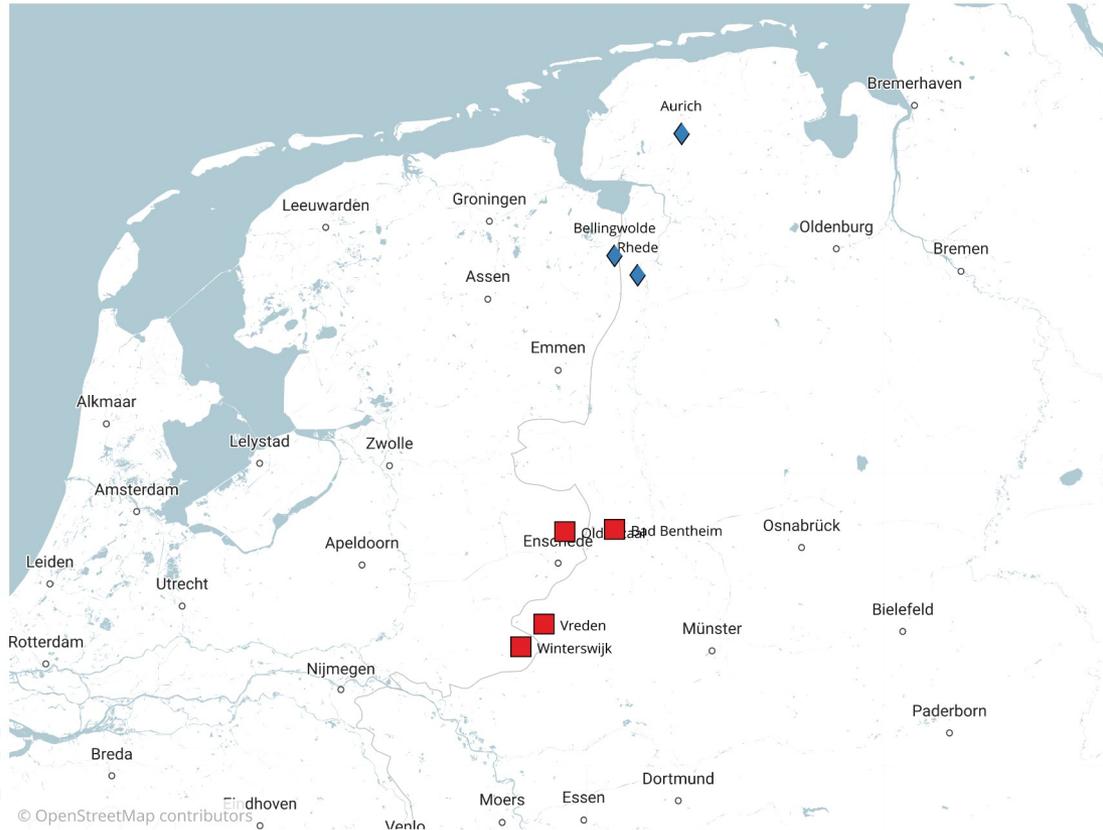
Oldenzaal (NL; n=186)

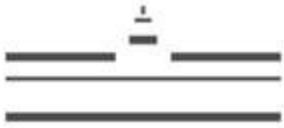
Vreden (D; n=199)

vs.

Winterswijk (NL; n=183)

◆ Digi+ ■ Border town study





3. Method

- Task: evaluate **4 sound clips**

Fairytales read-out by males aged 20-25

Read in 1) the national language;

2) the local dialect;

3) a dialect from across the border;

4) the neighbouring language

- Attitude labels: cf. 2 models in the literature
 - Prestige vs. Solidarity (e.g., Ryan 1979, cf. Ferguson's 1959 H- vs. L-variety)
 - Competence vs. Social attractiveness vs. Integrity (e.g., Lambert, Franckel & Tucker 1966)
- However:*
 - Additional dimensions proposed, e.g. Dynamism (Grondelaers, van Hout & Speelman 2011)
 - Models *not* developed for children/adolescents
- Solution: 'bottom-up' strategy, i.e. **11 attributes** associated with 'traditional' dimensions + Principal Components Analysis (PCA, Zahn & Hopper 1985)
 - + **12.** eligibility as a friend
 - + **13.** eligibility as a model for own language usage
 - + **label** the language heard (see De Vogelaer & Smits 2016 for some results)

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Sprecher 1:

01) Meiner Meinung nach ist der Sprecher dieses Fragments eine **intelligente** Person.

stimme völlig zu stimme eher zu neutral eher nicht überhaupt nicht

02) Der Sprecher dieses Fragments ist eine Person, die anderen Menschen **hilft**.

stimme völlig zu stimme eher zu neutral eher nicht überhaupt nicht

03) Der Sprecher dieses Fragments ist **intelligent**.

04) Der Sprecher dieses Fragments ist **helpful**.

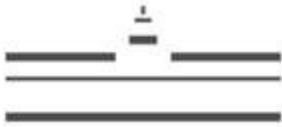
stimme völlig zu stimme eher zu neutral eher nicht überhaupt nicht

05) Ich würde gerne **intelligible** sein.

stimme völlig zu stimme eher zu neutral eher nicht überhaupt nicht

Attributes:

- intelligent
- helpful
- intelligible
- leader
- speak.like
- trustworthy
- funny (sense of humour)
- friendly
- reporter
- popular
- well-paid
- my.friend
- beautiful



4a. Data: Digi+

Rotated component matrix^a

Component 1 = ???

	Component	
	1	2
intelligible		,767
speak.like		,750
friendly	,459	,554
journalist		,717
friend		,719
beautiful		,785
smart	,747	
helpful	,806	
leader	,709	
trustworthy	,682	,434
funny	,618	,422
popular	,753	
well.paid	,674	

Component 2 = ???

a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation.

NB1.
Values obtained with SPSS after Varimax rotation

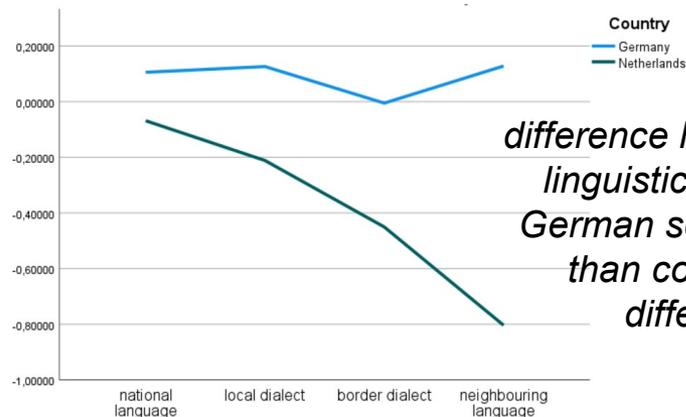
NB2.
n > .600: high loading
.600 > n > .400: intermediate
.400 > n: low loading (suppressed)

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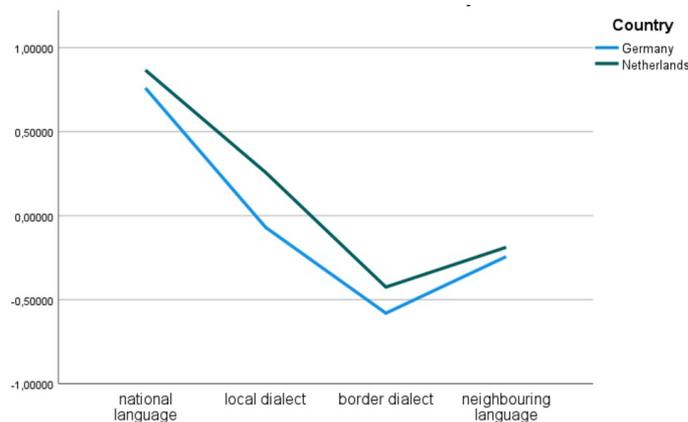
a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation.

Component 1 = *speaker-evaluation*

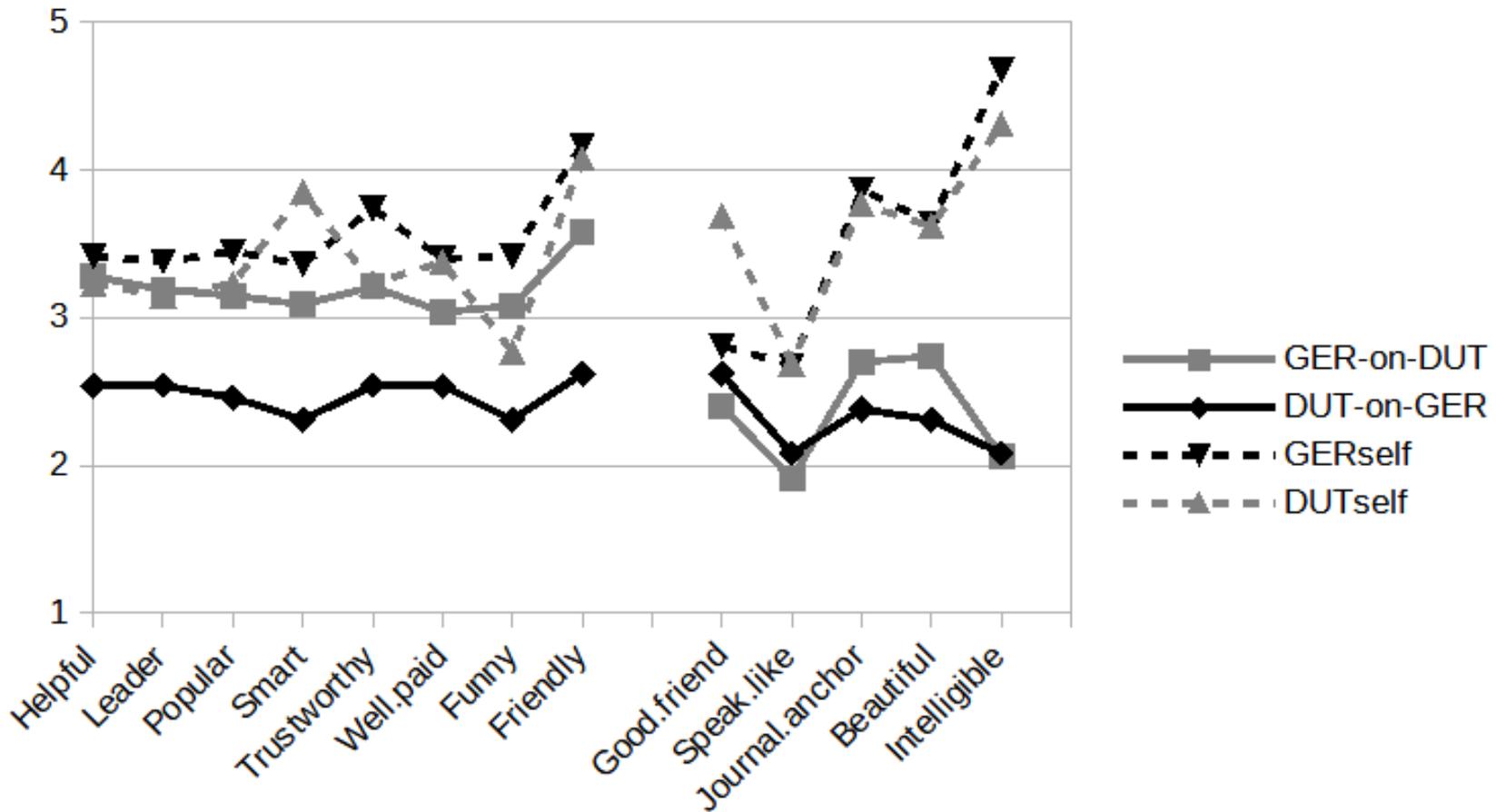


difference likely relates to linguistic diversity (in German schools) rather than country-level differences

Component 2 = *language-evaluation*



Zooming in on German vs. Dutch *(same data, different representation)*





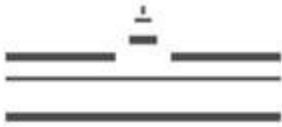
Conclusion on youngest age group (Digi+):

'structure' of attitudes not adult-like

different evaluations // linguistic distance to national language?

traditional explanation: attitudes emerge parallel to exposure

>>> **OK, but** exposure to 'generic' linguistic diversity seems to influence speaker-evaluation



4b. Data: border towns

Overall PCA

Rotated component matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
intelligent	,767	
helpful		,647
intelligible	,699	
leader	,743	
speak.like	,605	
trustworthy		,653
funny		,748
friendly		,776
reporter	,831	
popular		,684
well.paid	,737	
my.friend		,700
beautiful	,678	,445

a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser
normalisation

Component 1 = ???

Component 2 = ???

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Component 1 = **prestige**

Component 2 = **solidarity**

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a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation

Component 1 = **prestige**

Component 2 = **solidarity**

Cf. RQs

*similar development towards more tightly structured attitudes? >>> **yes (not shown)***

*independent evidence for correlation with social development? >>> **not really...***

*insight in attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area >>> **next sheets***



4b. Data: border towns

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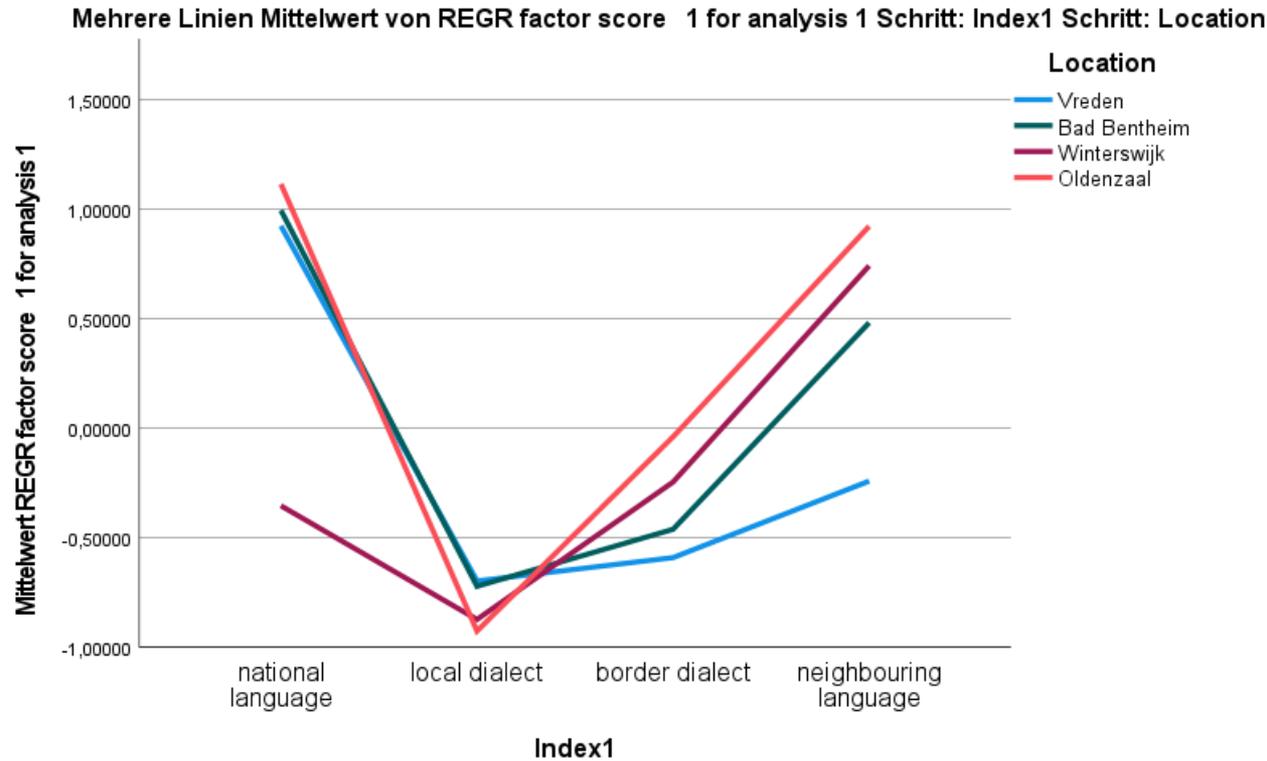
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a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation

attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

Component 1 = prestige // LOCATION





4b. Data: border towns

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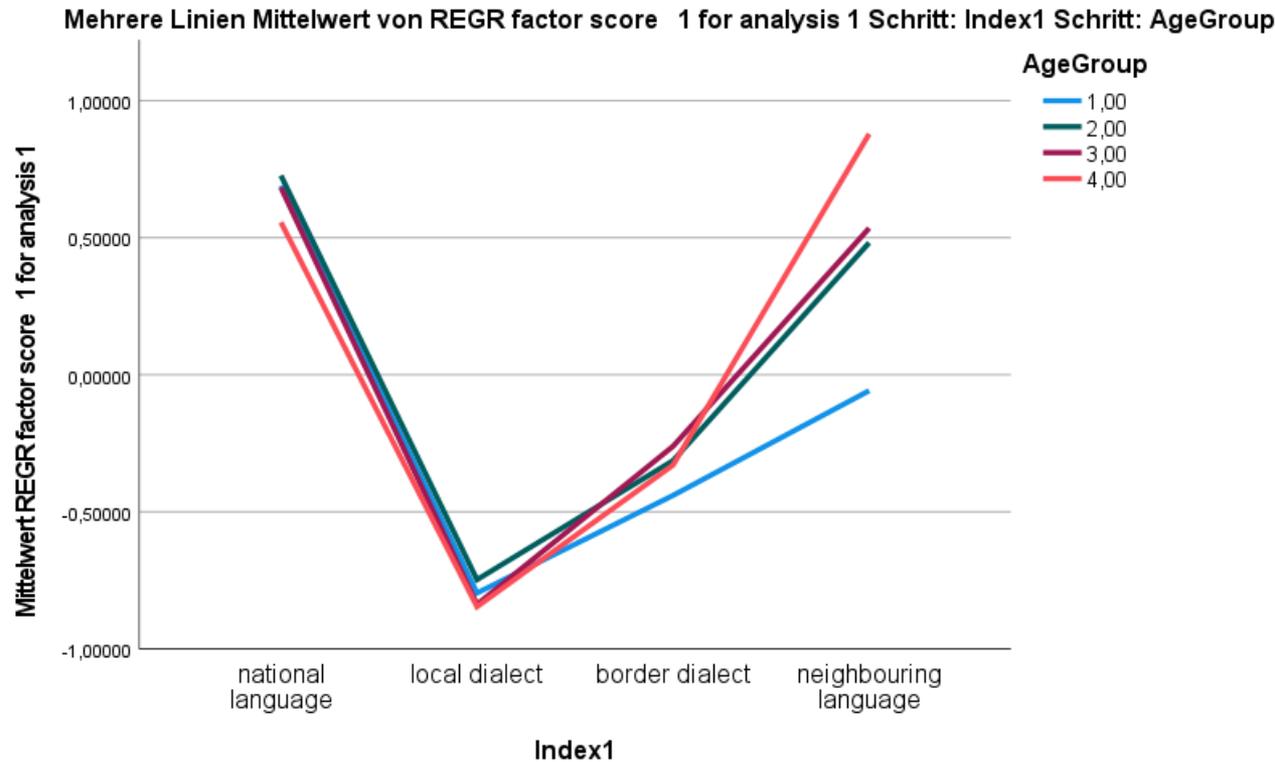
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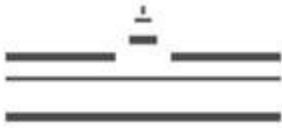
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a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation

attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

Component 1 = prestige // AGE

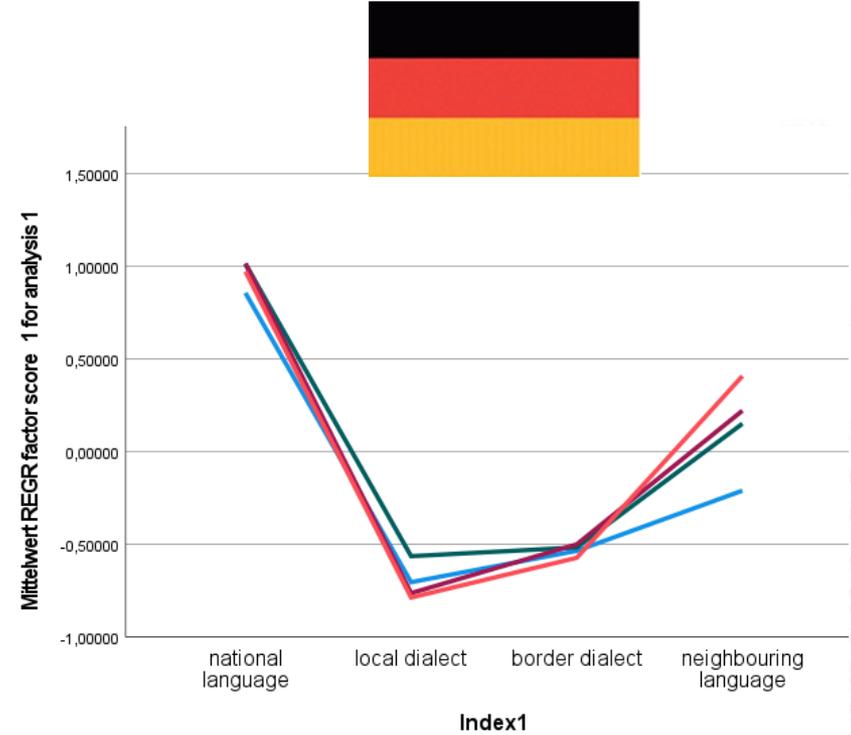
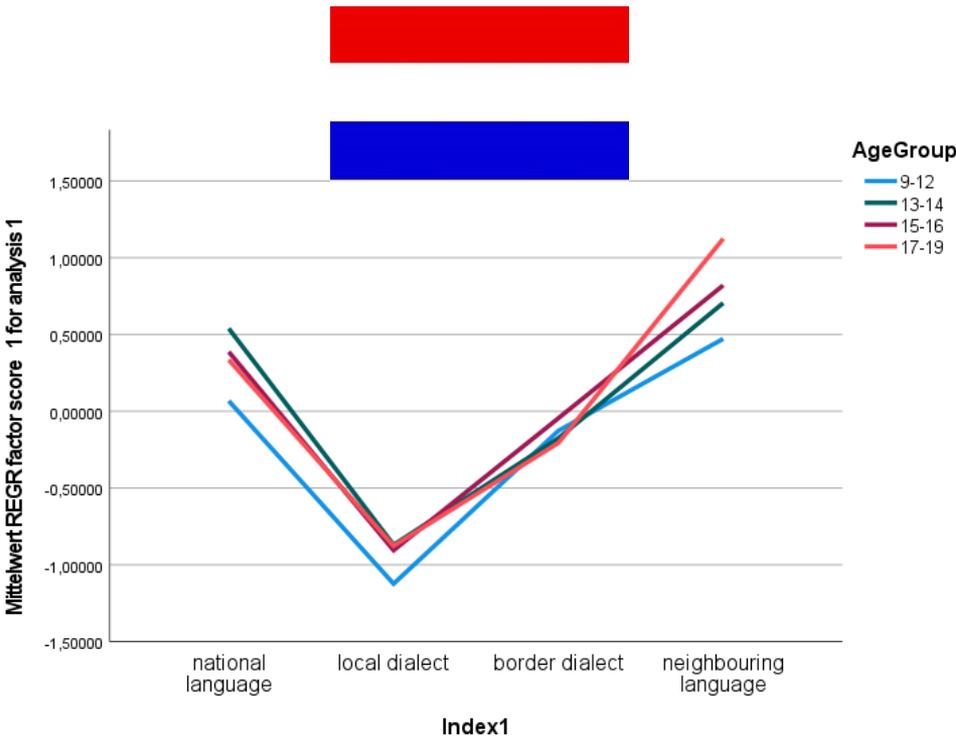




4b. Data: border towns

attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

Component 1 = prestige // AGE



4b. Data: border towns

Overall PCA

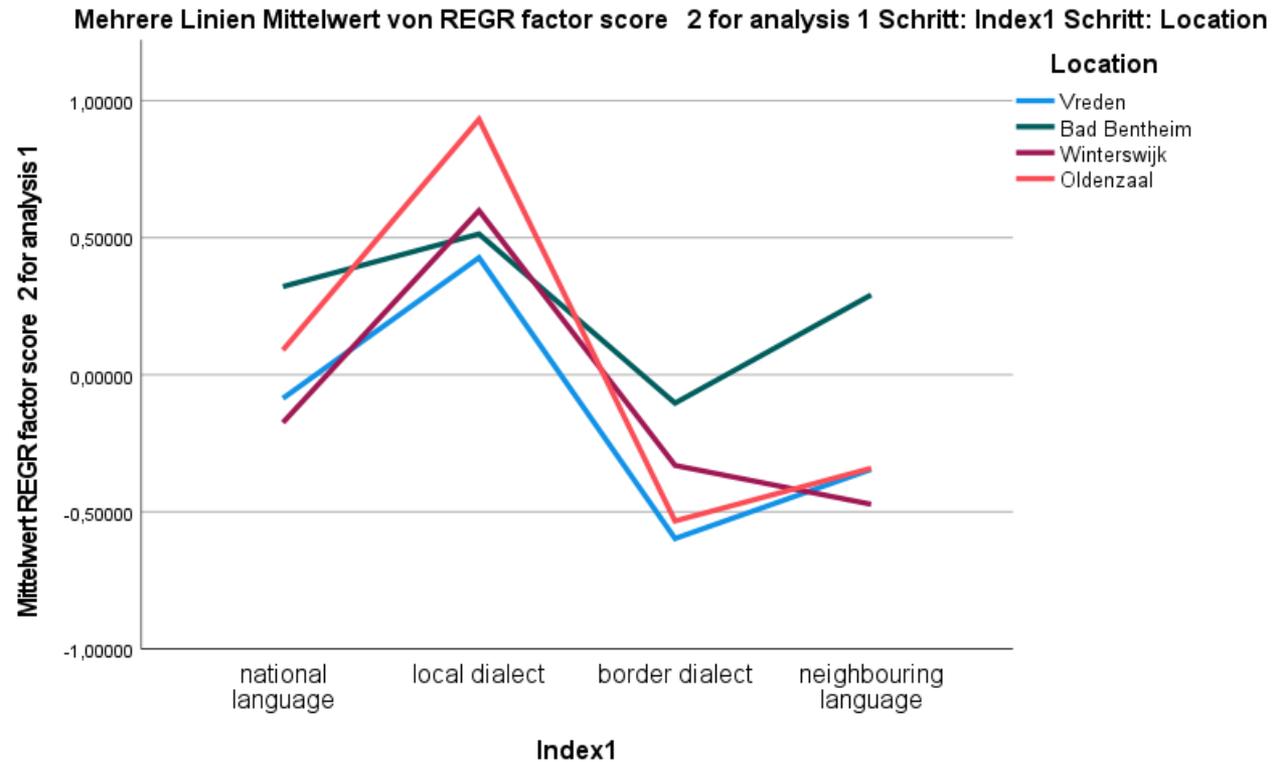
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a. Rotation: Varimax with Kaiser normalisation

attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

Component 2 = **solidarity** // **LOCATION**





4b. Data: border towns

Overall PCA

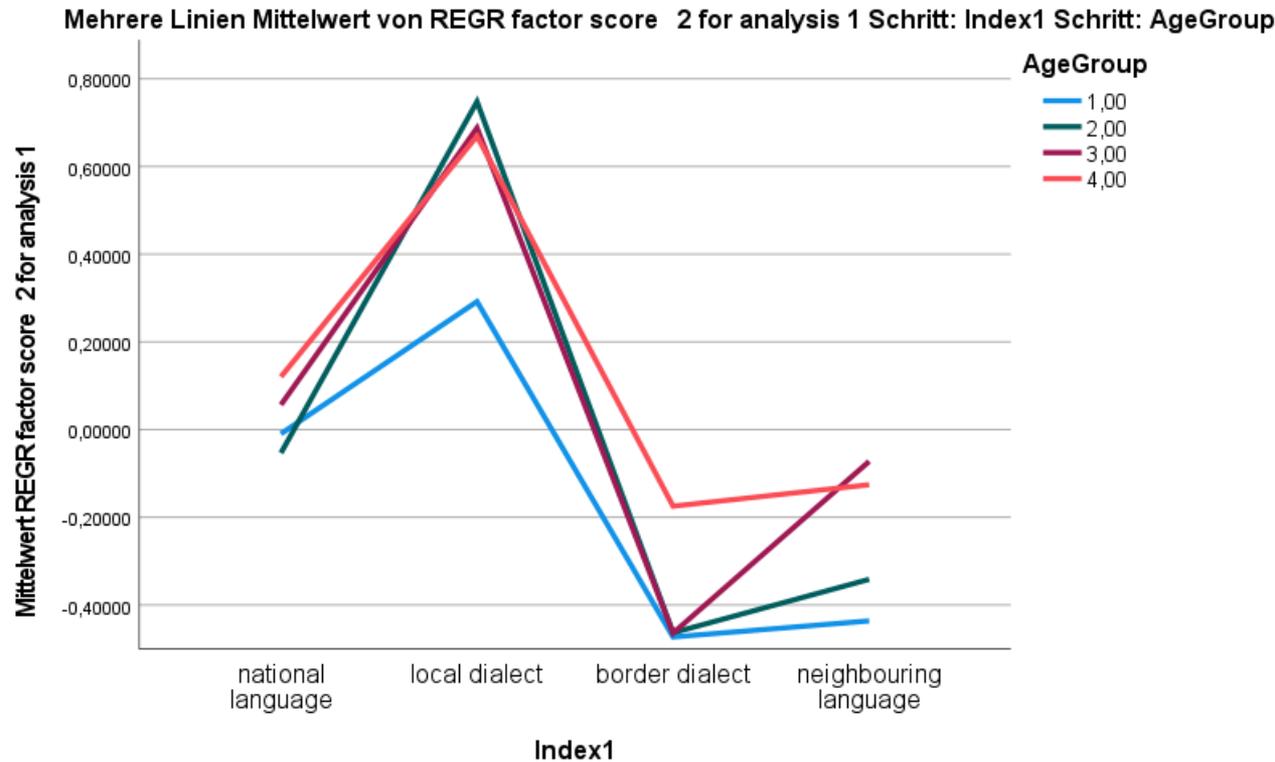
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4b. Data: border towns

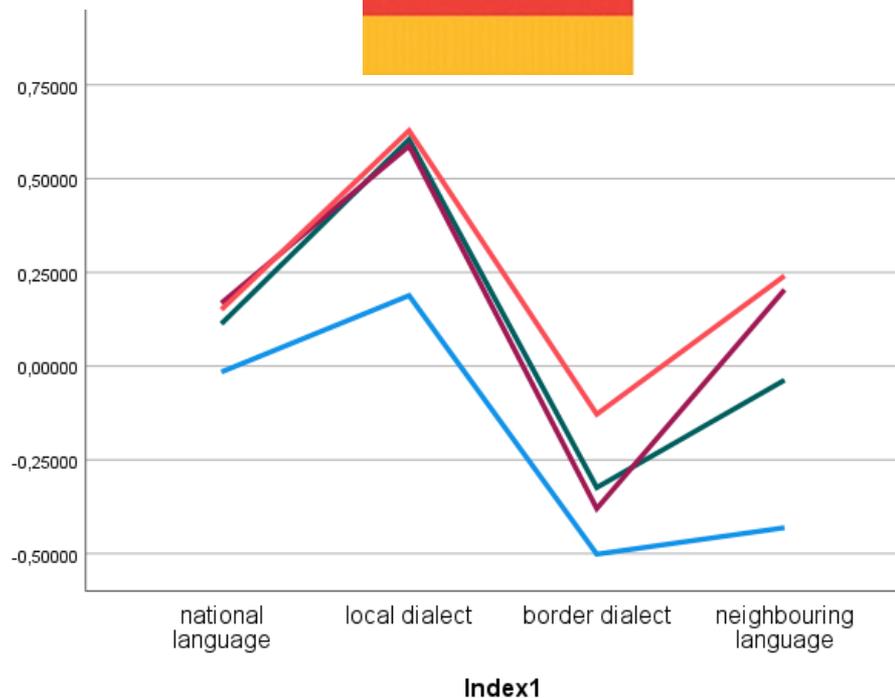
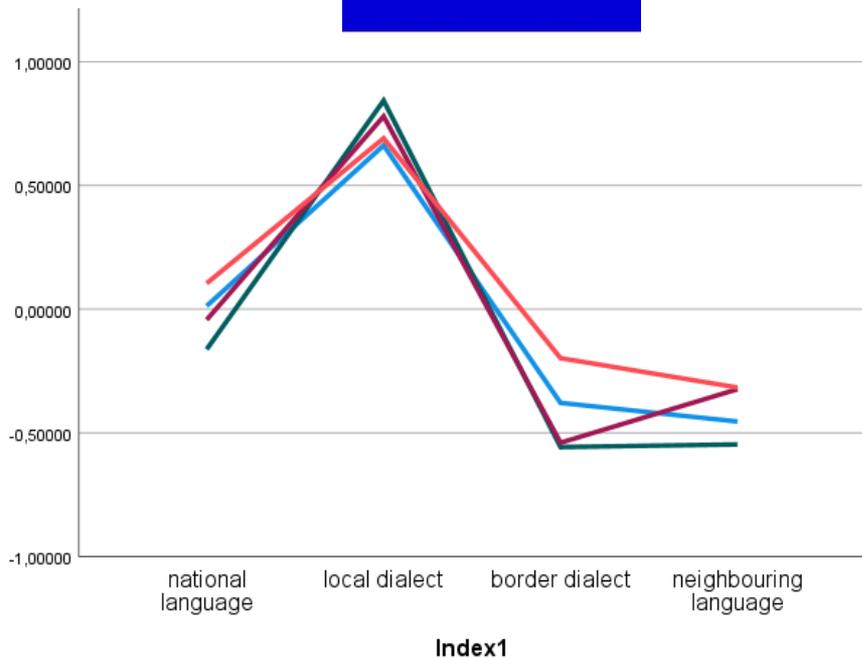
attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area

Component 2 = **solidarity** // **AGE**



AgeGroup

- 9-12
- 13-14
- 15-16
- 17-19





4b. Data: border towns

Conclusion on border town study:

- # somewhat more tightly structured attitudes in older age groups (not shown), but differences are subtle
- # neighbouring language becomes prestige variety in adolescence (Netherlands > Germany)
- # local dialect is a solidarity variety (NL) or becomes one (GER)
- # Germany: Dutch as a solidarity variety



5. Conclusions

RQs:

similar development towards **more tightly structured attitudes**?

>>> *yes*

independent evidence for **correlation with social development**?

>>> *in Digi+-data (but less visible in (general) PCAs of border town study)*

insight in attitudinal landscape in German-Dutch border area relating to:

1) position of the **local dialect**

>>> **solidarity varieties** (NL > GER)

2) status of the dialect continuum (border dialect included)

>>> *evaluation of local dialects (and neighbouring language) do NOT carry over to the border dialect, so dialect **continuum seems broken***

3) position of the **neighbouring language**

>>> **German = prestige** ; **Dutch = prestige AND solidarity**



Thank you!

Comments/questions:

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References/draft papers:

<https://uni-muenster.academia.edu/GuntherDeVogelaer>