

Pronominal boundaries between the Südfränkisch and Kleverland dialect areas in Germany and the Netherlands

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At the end of the nineteenth century, German dialectologists established the Benrath and Urdingen line as the southern and northern boundaries of the 'Südniederfränkisch' dialect area. The status of the Urdingen line is contested as an important boundary in the Dutch dialect area. Its definition is based on the distinction between the pronominal forms *ik* and *ich* (= I) and the adverbial forms *ook* and *auch* (= too). Many other isoglosses collapse with the Urdingen line in the German dialect area, but only a few in the Dutch language area, more in particular in the province of Limburg. Global dialectometric research by Hoppenbrouwer & Hoppenbrouwer (2001) and Heeringa (2004) did not produce areas collapsing with the Urdingen line and the same can be concluded on the basis of the dialectometric studies by Bakker & Van Hout (2012, 2014) focusing on the Limburg area. They found a dialect boundary more to the north. The dialectometric studies were based on sound (string) patterns.

The transition area between the Südfränkisch (south) and Kleverland (north) dialects is marked by a host of varying pronominal forms, including the *gij-du* (= you) isogloss, both in Germany and the Netherlands. Different forms are found as well for other pronouns, including subject, object and possessive variants. In the area above and below the Urdingen line the southern system (more like the current German system) collides with the northern system (more like the current Dutch pronoun system). The central question is whether the pronominal forms can provide us with a more satisfactory demarcation of the dialect areas, both on the Dutch and German side (the German-Dutch state boundary was established in 1815). Our core data come from the famous Wenker dialect survey (Rhineland 1884/1885, just preceded by the Rhenish dialect survey 1876/1877; redone in the Netherlands in 1935). The data were supplemented by data from other dialect surveys. We analyzed the pronominal data from a linguistic, paradigmatic point of view and with overall dialectometric tools computing distances between the dialects involved. We will show that the different approaches converge and that the main split between the dialect areas runs north of the Urdingen line in the Netherlands, as predicted by earlier analyses in Bakker & Van Hout (2012, 2014). We found a pattern where the northern pronominal elements reach deeper south on the Dutch than on the German side, where the southern influence or expansion was and still is much stronger.