Scottish, English, British?
coding for attitude in the UK

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attitudes

'attitudes to language varieties underpin all manners of sociolinguistic and social psychological phenomena' (Garrett et al., 2003: 12)

'a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor' (Eagley & Chaiken, 1993: 1)

- **components:**

cognitive ⟶ beliefs

affective ⟶ feelings

behavioural ⟶ readiness for action

speaker-internal mental constructs - methodologically challenging

- **direct and indirect observation:**

•**explicit attitudes** – e.g. interviews, self-completion written questionnaires
•**implicit attitudes** – e.g. matched-guise technique, IATs

borders

- ideal test site for investigation of how variable linguistic behaviour is connected to attitudes – border area
- fluid and complex identity construction at such sites mean border regions have particular sociolinguistic relevance
- previous sociological research in and around Berwick-upon-Tweed (English town) (Kiely *et al.* 2000) – around half informants felt Scottish *some of the time*

the border

- Scottish~English border still seen as particularly divisive:

  > What appears to be the most numerous bundle of dialect isoglosses in the English-speaking world runs along this border, effectively turning Scotland into a "dialect island". (Aitken 1992:895)

- predicted to become more divisive still:

  > the Border is becoming more and more distinct linguistically as the 20th century progresses. (Kay 1986:22)

  > ... the dividing effect of the geographical border is bound to increase. (Glauser 2000: 70)

- AISEB tests these predictions by examining the linguistic and socio-psychological effects of the border

the team

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AISEB

three-pronged approach

production

- quantitative analysis of phonological variation and change

attitude

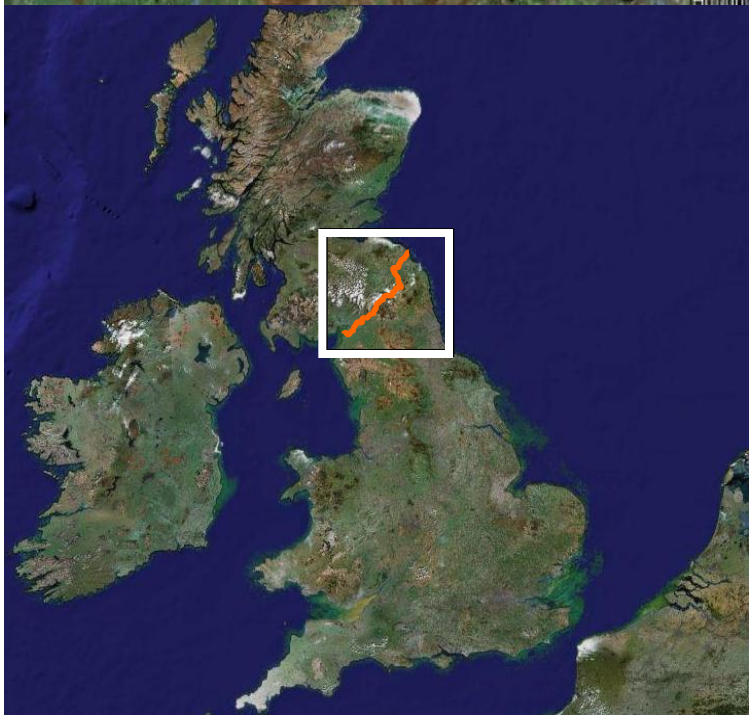
- cognitive vs. affective aspects of speakers' attitudes
- overtly stated attitudes and implicit associations
- qualitative and quantitative analysis of answers to questions about
  - local language
  - political and socio-psychological influence of border
  - how identities are defined and delimited

perception

- implicit and explicit knowledge of linguistic variation across the Border

the context

- four Border communities:
  - Gretna (2,700)
  - Carlisle (101,000)
  - Eyemouth (3,400)
  - Berwick (26,000)
- on major N/S routes
- border historically fluid



phonological variables

vowels

- FACE and GOAT
- NURSE
- commA ~ lettER
- MOUTH
- Scottish Vowel Length Rule

consonants

- (p t k)
- (r)

sample

- 40 informants per location
- stratified by
  - age (older 65+ ; young 16-25)
  - gender
  - social class (working class vs. middle class)

- speech styles elicited
  - read (word list, text passage *Fern's Star Turn*)
  - spontaneous (responses to structured questionnaire)

AISEB

coda (r)

(r)

(r) in coda position ('rhoticity')

- Scotland:
  - traditionally rhotic
  - non-rhoticity recently found in Edinburgh (Romaine, Scobbie), Glasgow (Stuart-Smith) - especially among WC
- Northern England:
  - almost completely derhotacised
  - process occurred later than in South

- (r) considered by some to be

  'the most important feature for defining the relationships between varieties of English' (Maguire *et al*. 2008)
- informants' overt comments suggest that (r) perceived as the major stereotype of 'Scottishness'

sample (coda (r) tokens)

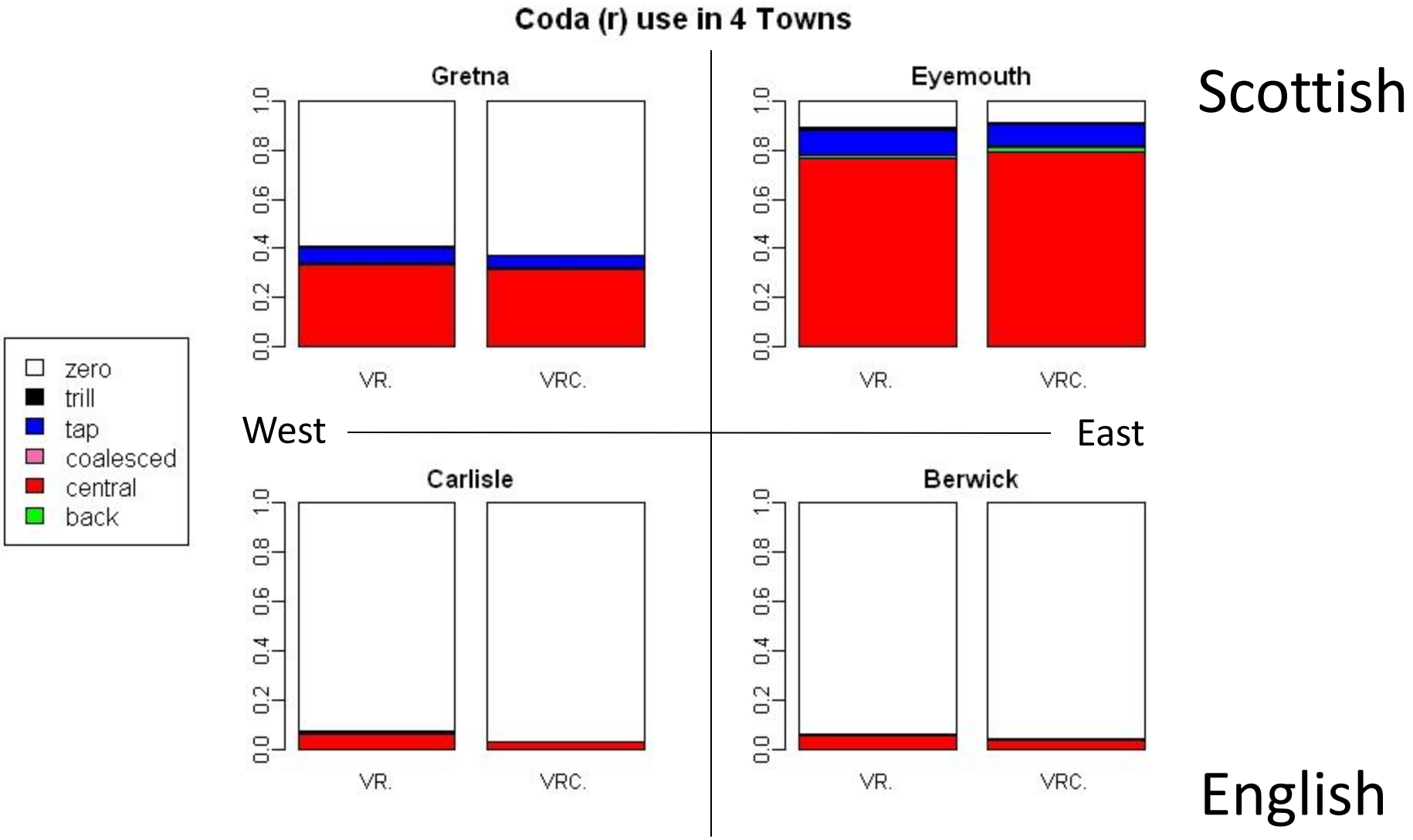
	older		younger		**total**
	m	***f***	***m***	***f***	
Gretna	1956	2130	2081	1977	**8144**
Carlisle	2222	2180	2209	2194	**8805**
Eyemouth	2149	1775	2061	1968	**7953**
Berwick	2190	2147	2196	1740	**8273**

N = 33,175

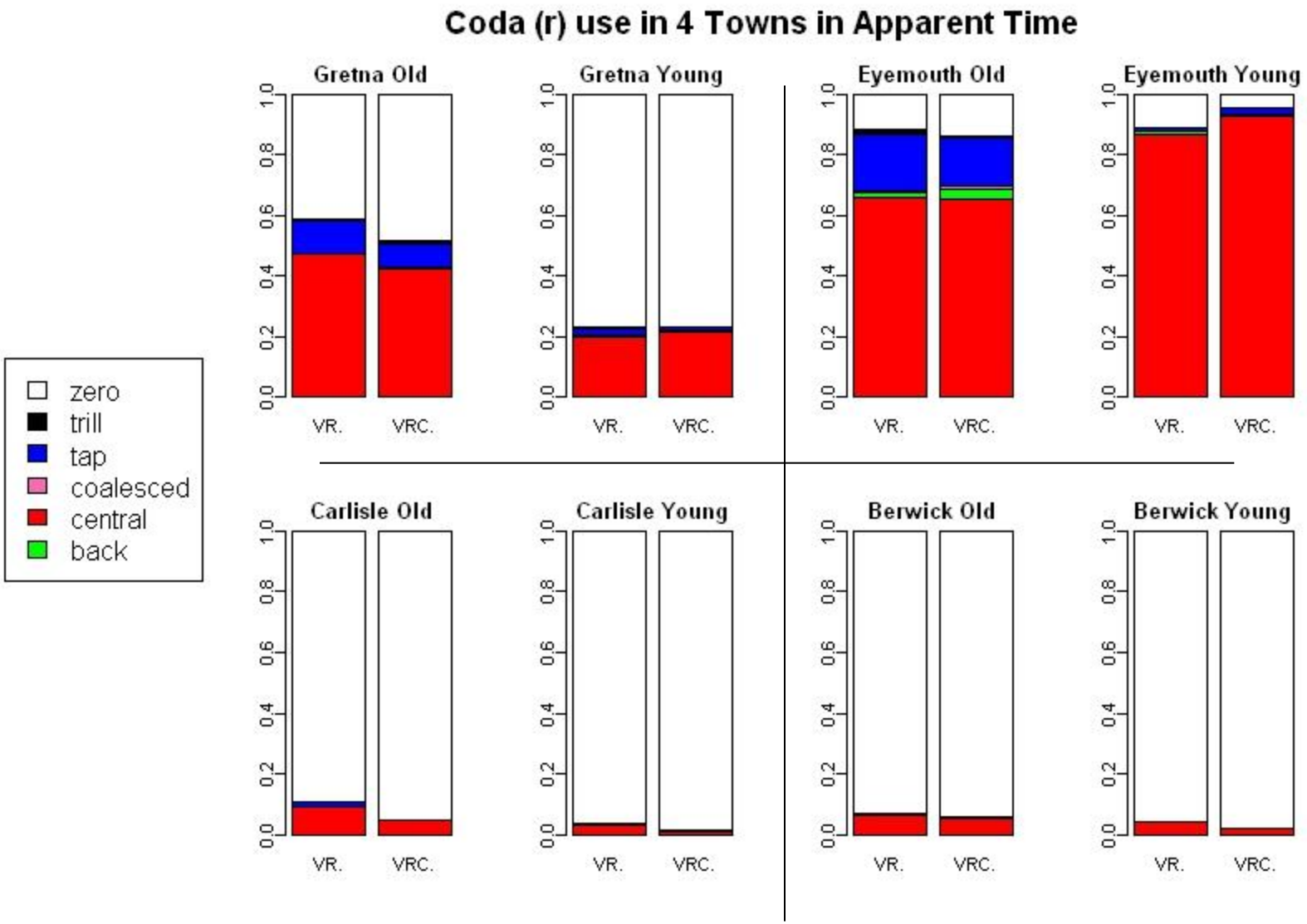
coda (r) variants

category	*form*	*frequency (%)*
zero	[V]	‘girl’ **68**
“central” approximants	[ɹ ɻ Vʲ Vˠ]	‘girl’ **24**
taps	[ɾ ɽ]	‘girl’ 6
trills	[r ʀ]	‘four’ **< 1**
“coalesced” sibilants	[Vʂ Vʐ]	‘Kirsty’ **< 1**
“back” approximants	[ʁ ʕ Vᵡ Vˤ]	‘however’ **< 1**
		N = 33,175

coda (r) across localities



coda (r) in apparent time



summary: (r)

- divergence wrt *rhoticity* on Scottish side
  - West end of border less rhotic
  - East end more realised coda (r)
- convergence wrt *realised coda (r)*
  - all Scottish young people use fewer taps

attitudinal strand

- qualitative data
  - targeted questions posed in the *Identity Questionnaire*
  - questions relating to
    - significance of border
    - description and evaluation of national identity and accent
    - perception and evaluation of inter- and intra-locality variation in linguistic behaviour etc.
      - cognitive component- identity and accent informant believes him/herself to have
      - affective component - evaluation of this identity and accent and how positively or negatively disposed towards this accent and identity informant feels
- quantitative data
- Implicit Association Tests (IAT) (Greenwald *et al*. 1998)
  - subjects' association of positive and negative personality traits with 'Scottish' and 'English'

quantitative measures

- two measures applied in AISEB:
  - agreement indices
  - relational clines
- agreement indices:
  - levels of agreement with authentic attitude statements grouped into
    - significance of the border
    - importance of national identity
    - link between accent and identity
- relational clines:
  - national and regional identity labels placed on same cline
  - distance represents relative importance

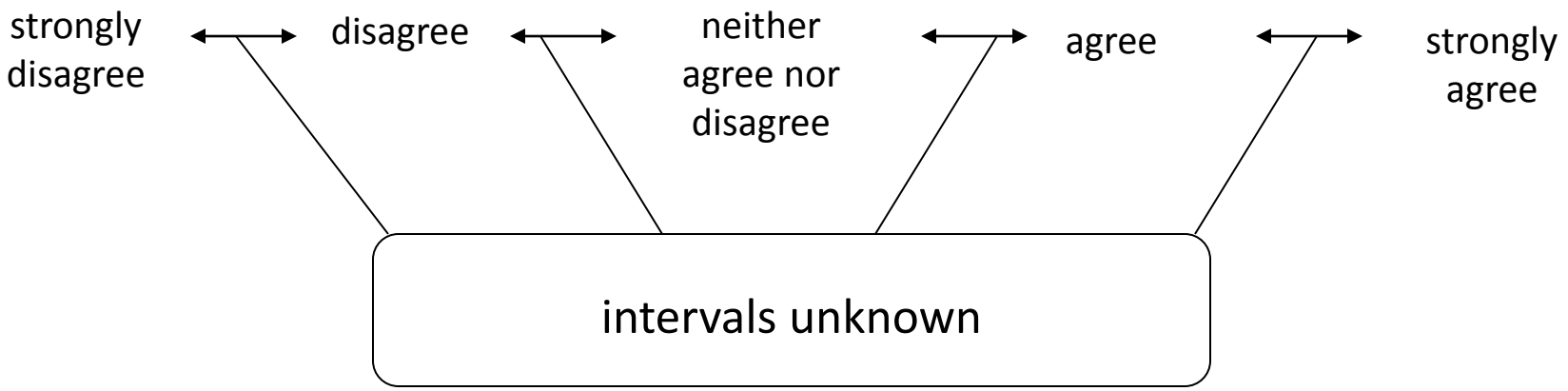
measurement tool

- attitude measurement

attempt ‘to place a person’s attitude on the straight line or linear continuum in such a way that it can be described as mildly positive, strongly negative and so on’ (Oppenheim, 1992: 175)

→ methodologically challenging

- conventional 5-point Likert Scale



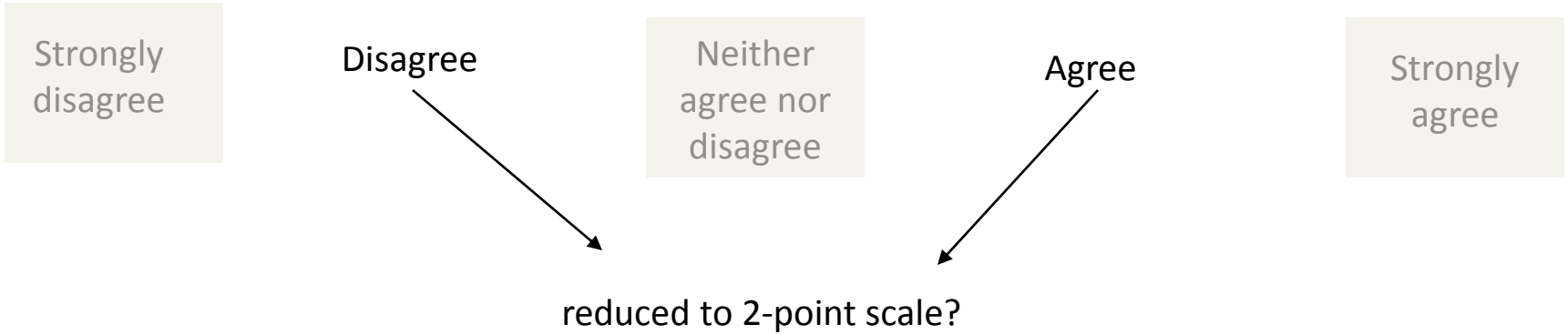
measurement tool

'There is no way of knowing in advance if our sensitivities are limited to a five-way distinction any more than a four-way distinction' (Bard *et al.*, 1996: 35)

→ limited freedom of expression for the informant

→ impossible to detect fine-grained attitudinal differences

→ central tendency bias



measurement tools

visual analogue scale
(agreement indices)

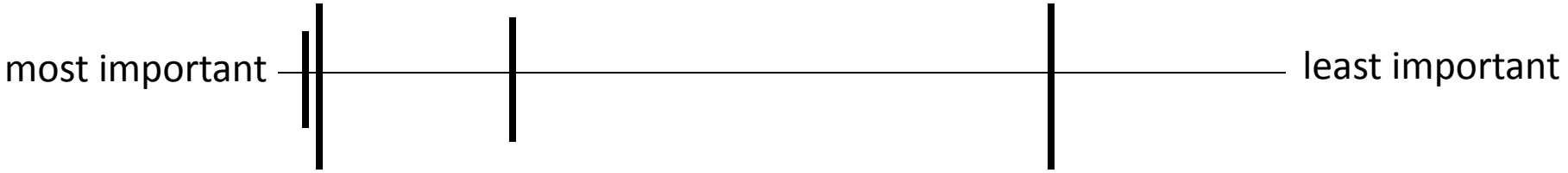
disagree ——————————————————————————————————————— agree

- accurate fast measurement of informants' self-positioning through use of digital image processing software, e.g., *ImageJ*

- agreement not limited to predetermined answering points
- increased freedom of expression for informant
- fine-grained continuous data for analyst
- mixed effects modelling retains detail than summated scores can lose

measurement tools

magnitude continuum (Redinger and Llamas 2010) (relational clines)



- accurate fast measurement of informants' self-positioning through use of digital image processing software

- measurement of relative distance between relevant identity categories

agreement indices

B19M3

Please mark a point anywhere along the lines below indicating how far you would agree or disagree with the opinions.

e.g., agree ——|—— disagree

I think:

"The Scots are different people than the English…we have a different religion, we have different money, we have a different school system…the border is a technical border but really, it's a cultural border as well."

agree ——————|—————— disagree

"I've been abroad and everybody thinks about Britain as England so when they're talking about Britain, they're really talking about England"

agree ——————————|—— disagree

"I feel British but I'm definitely more English than anything else"

agree ——————|—————— disagree

"I would say it [Berwick accent] is a mixture between Scottish and English…it's certainly not really English"

agree —|———————————— disagree

'I think the nearer the border you are, the more you are either one or the other' [Scottish or English]

agree ————————————|— disagree

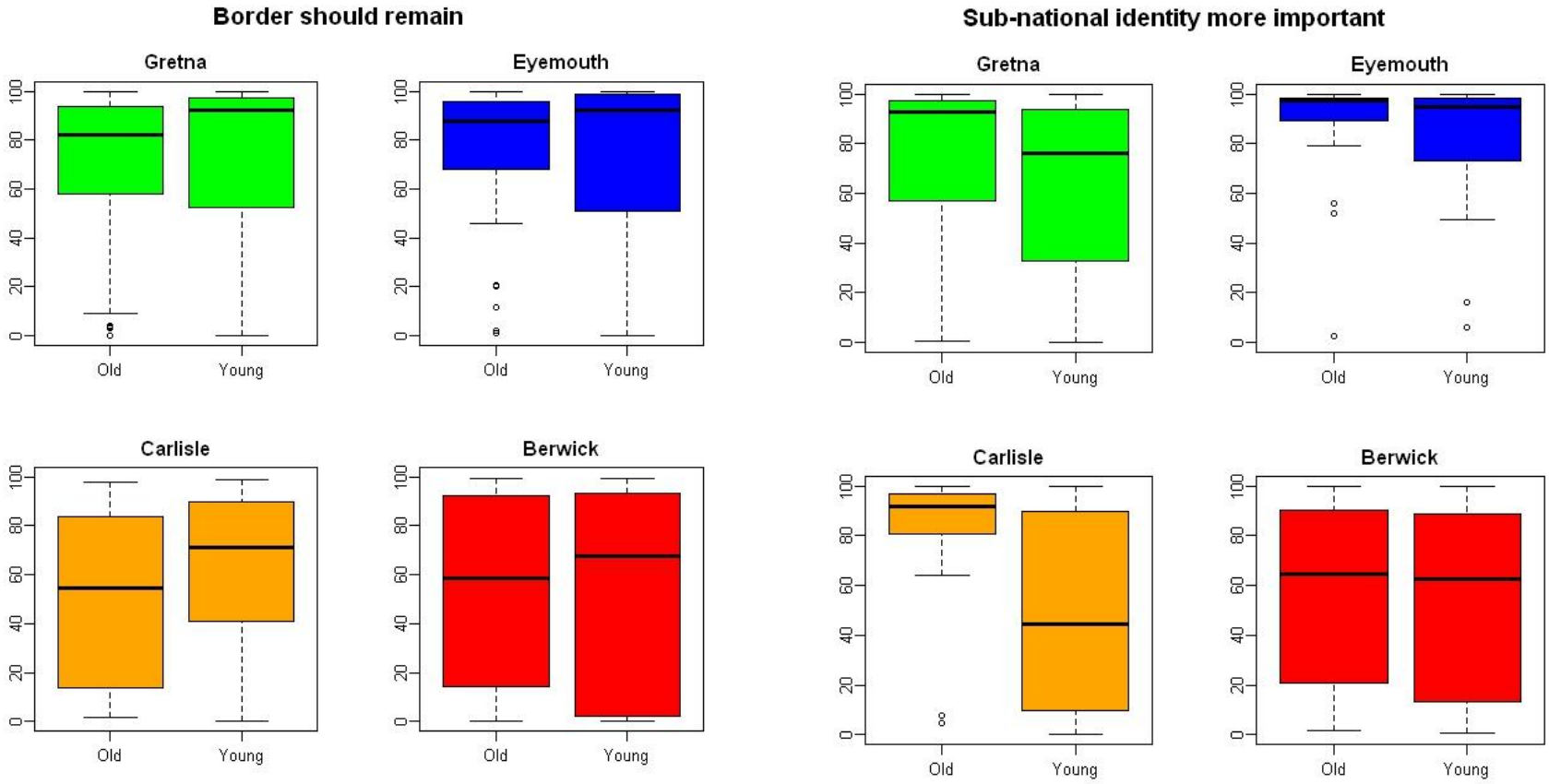
'I'm just English -- you don't need to sound English. You don't need to sound summat to be summat, do you?'

agree —|———————————— disagree

'Everything should just be Britain. Football -- England and Scotland. What's the point? Kick out the border. England, Scotland, Wales -- just have it as the United Kingdom'

agree ——————|—————— disagree

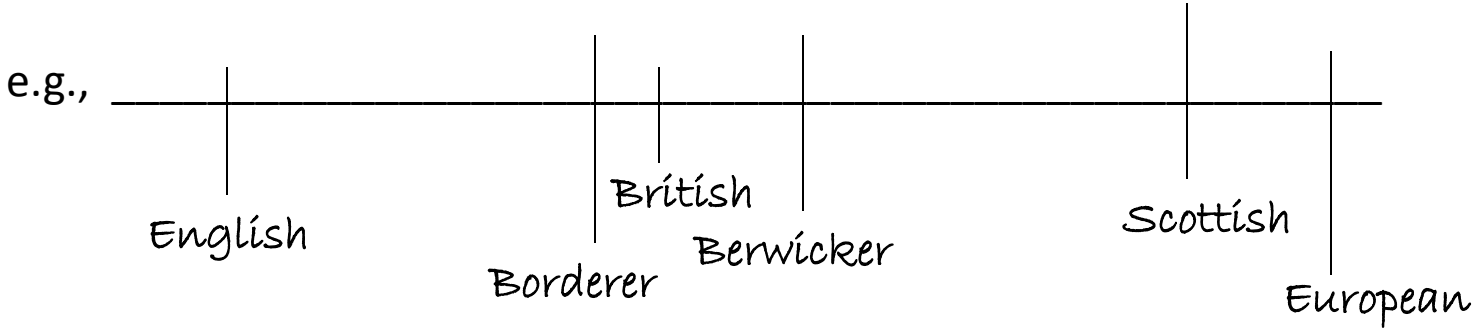
significance of the border



relational clines

identities

Please mark a point anywhere along the line below indicating where you would place these words in terms of how important you think they are to who you are (please also write each word underneath the line). You may also add other words that aren't listed here if you feel they are important to who you are.



I am:

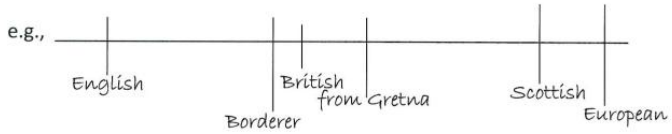
Borderer **British** **English** **European** **Berwicker** **Scottish**

most important _____ **least important**

G18F2

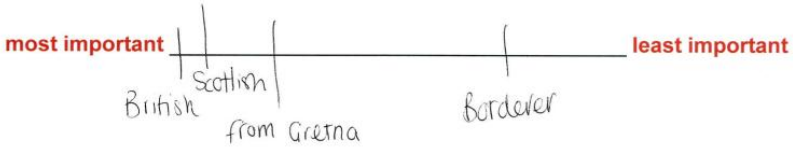
identities

Please mark a point anywhere along the line below indicating where you would place these words in terms of how important you think they are to who you are (please also write each word underneath the line). You may also add other words that aren't listed here if you feel they are important to who you are.



I am:

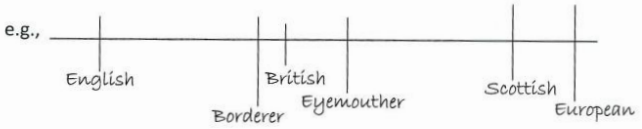
Borderer British English European from Gretna Scottish



E16F2

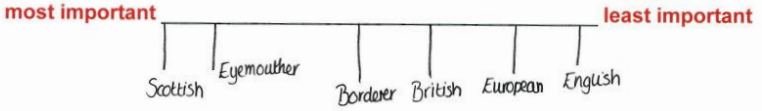
identities

Please mark a point anywhere along the line below indicating where you would place these words in terms of how important you think they are to who you are (please also write each word underneath the line). You may also add other words that aren't listed here if you feel they are important to who you are.



I am:

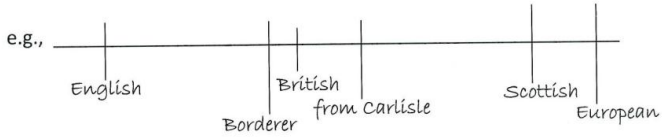
Borderer British English European Eyemouther Scottish



C23F2

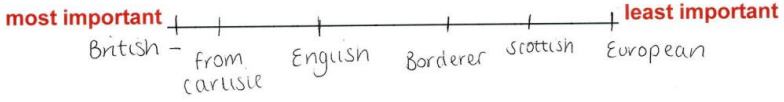
identities

Please mark a point anywhere along the line below indicating where you would place these words in terms of how important you think they are to who you are (please also write each word underneath the line). You may also add other words that aren't listed here if you feel they are important to who you are.



I am:

~~Borderer~~ British English European ~~from Carlisle~~ ~~Scottish~~



B16F

identities

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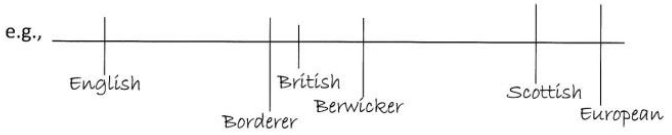
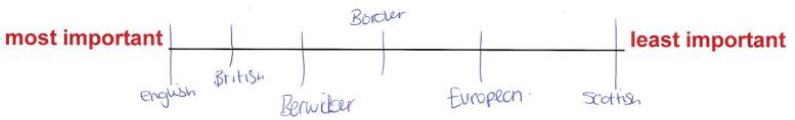
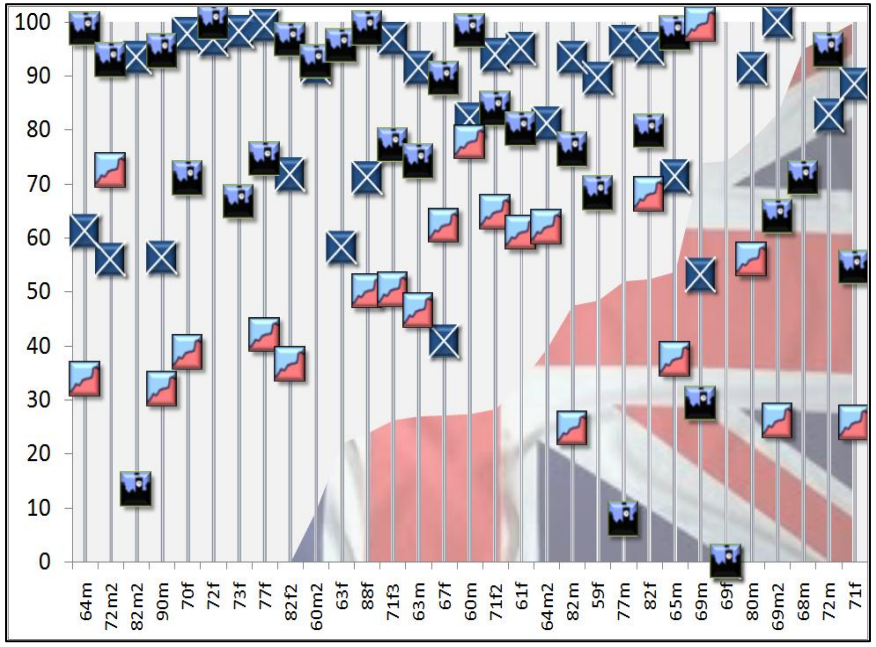


I am:

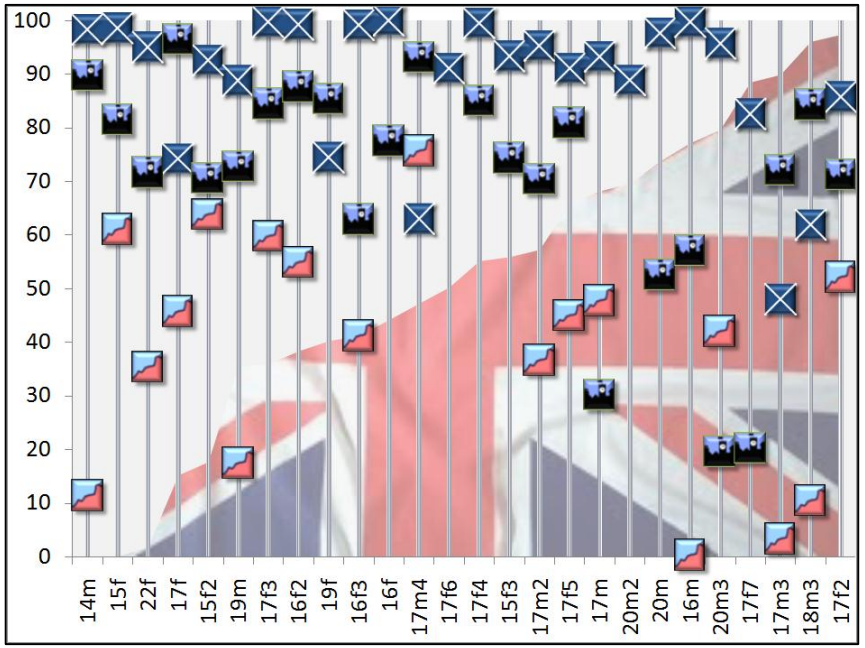
Borderer British ~~English~~ European ~~Berwicker~~ ~~Scottish~~

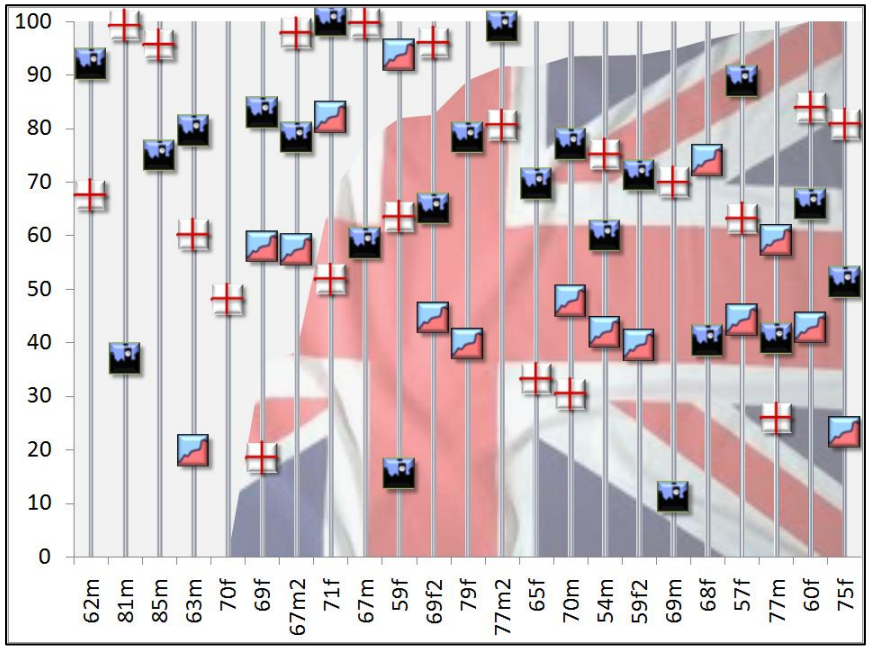


Eyemouth Older 81%



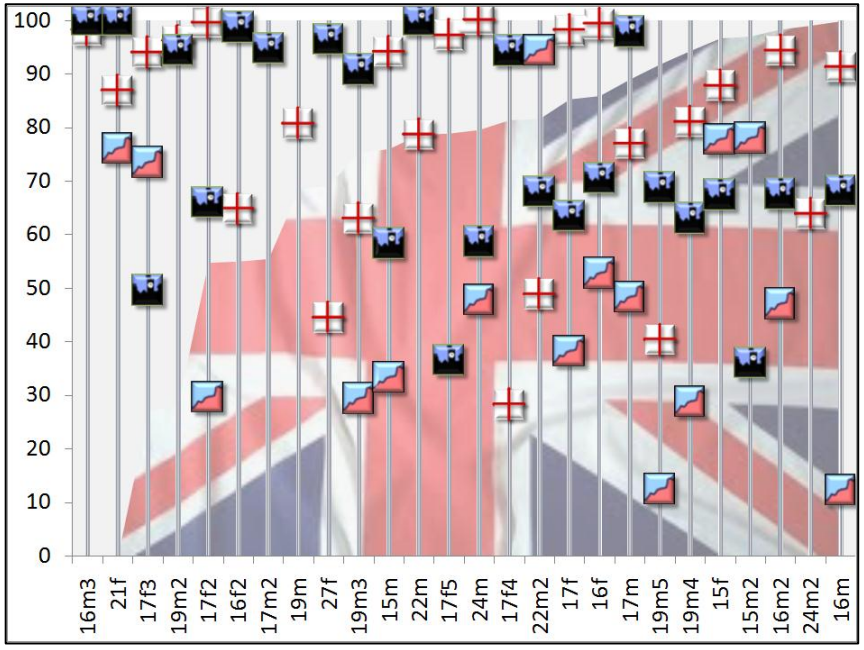
84% Eyemouth Young



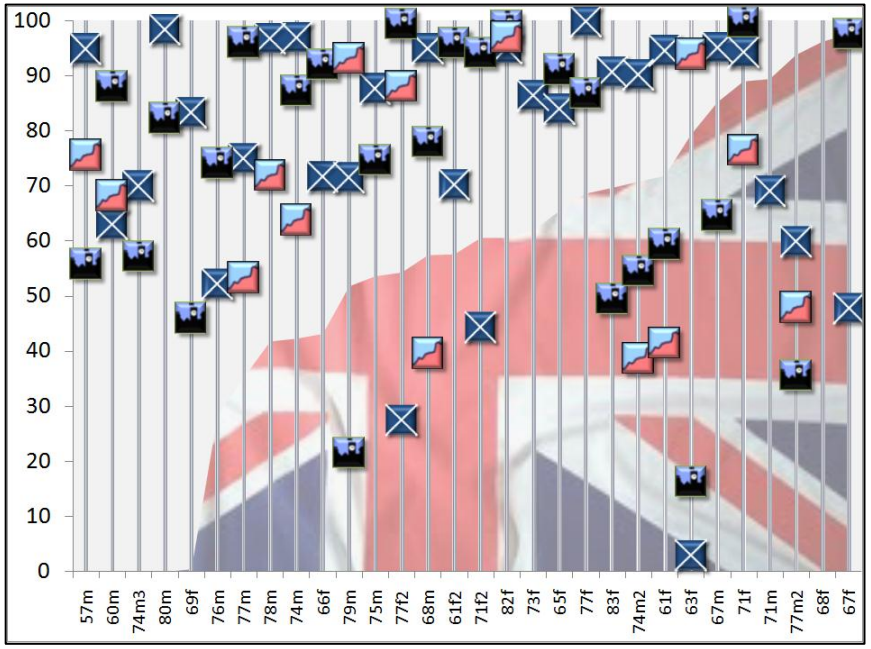


Berwick Older 35%

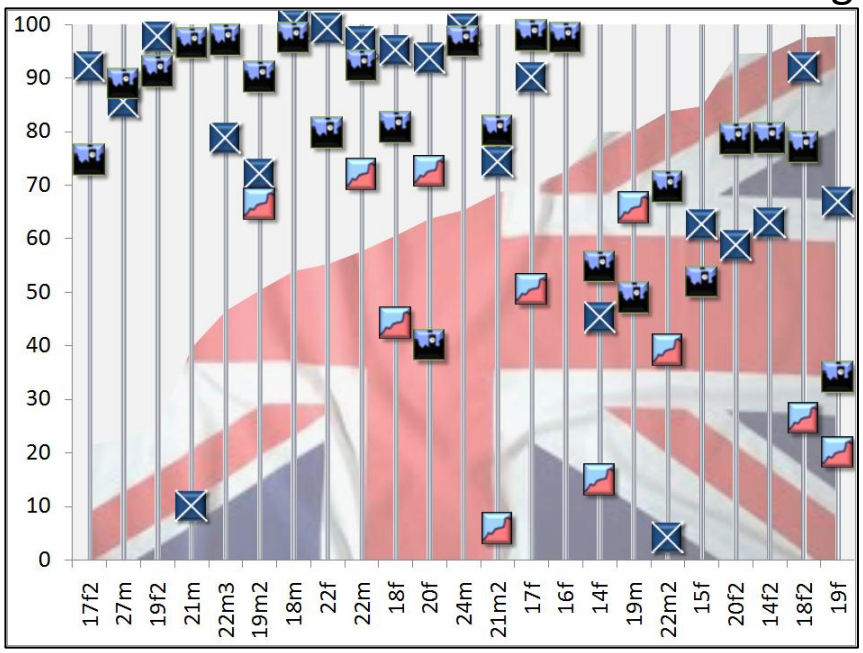
50% Berwick Young

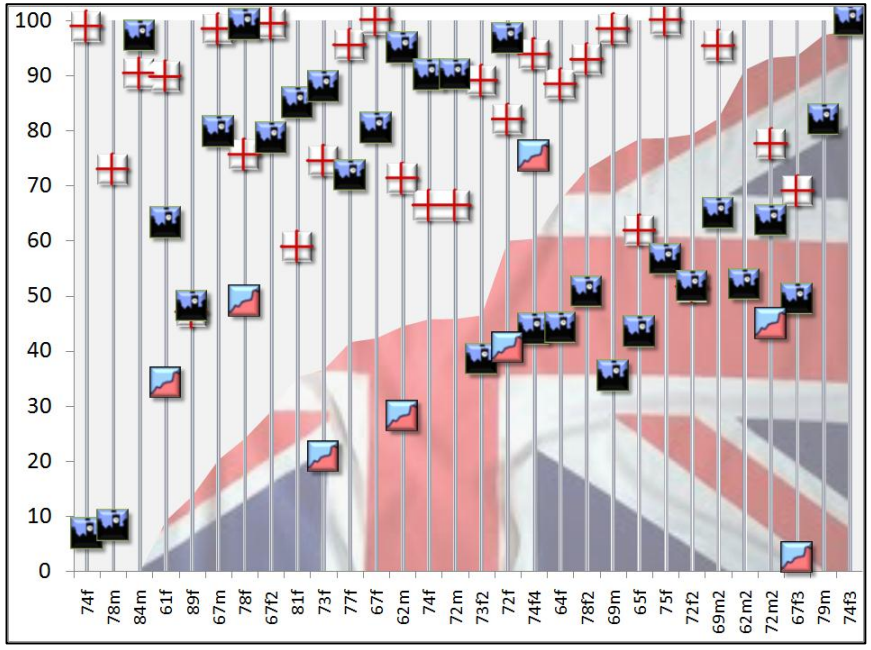


Gretna Older 77%

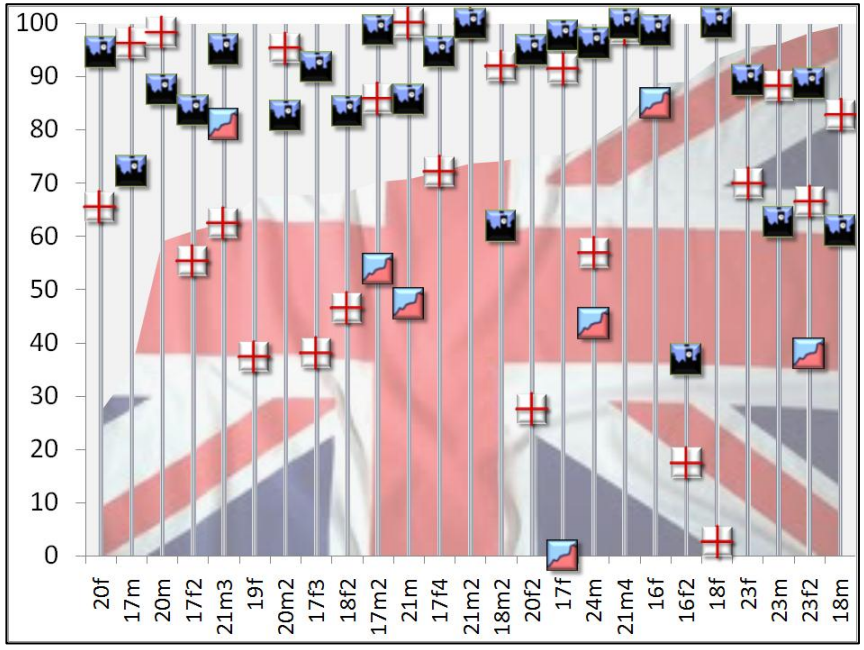


57% Gretna Young





Carlisle Older 73%



32% Carlisle Young

summary

- British identity
  - least important in Eyemouth
- national vs British
  - increase in shared preference for British identity in west (young speakers converging)
  - decrease in east (more stable divide)

synthesis and future questions

- clear connection between production data and attitudinal data *wrt* use of coda (r) and positive orientation towards Scottishness
- (r) has unusually high socioindexical meaning in region
- other variables doing less identity work? why?

- connections established between strands at group level
- how does this work at the individual level?
- is the individual's attitudinal positioning a better predictor of production patterns than the global categories used?

conclusions

- border and identities implicated in patterns of phonological variation
- relationships between border localities - might expect to see:
  - heightened sense of separateness, or
  - sense of affinity (part of separate border region)
- both strategies in operation at either end of a border of c. 100 miles

- systematic examination of attitudes (and perception of variation) offers more empirically-grounded account of speakers' motives for maintaining local norms versus adopting diffusing changes

thank you

Linguistic variation and national identity on the Scottish/English Border (AISEB)
ESRC RES-062-23-0525

www.york.ac.uk/res/aiseb

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