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***European Borders: Political and Linguistic***

We will present a case of inter-dialectic influencing of border-area dialects which runs counter to the traditional assumption of dialect divergence across political borders. The case that we investigate involves a single geographical dialect continuum of Germanic dialects, whereby this continuum is cut across by a national boundary, the one between the Netherlands and Germany, and each of the dialects across the Dutch–German border is associated with its own standard language based on varieties that are far removed from the continuum itself.

Judging from what has been described in other border-area dialects, one would expect divergence of the dialects on each side of the Dutch–German border. In the course of our discussion, we will show, however, that contrary to expectation, what we observe in this particular case is coming together, or convergence, of a number of local dialects into a distinct, border-area dialect, the Elmpt dialect.