

Disentangling DIM(inutives) and NUM(ber): Umlaut in Gottscheerisch

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1 Introduction

- In this presentation, we build upon ongoing research on non-concatenative allomorphy from a late-insertion perspective (Arregi and Nevins, 2012; Bye and Svenonius, 2012; Lowenstamm, 2015a; Lowenstamm, 2015b; Lowenstamm, 2017; Shwayder, 2015; Embick and Shwayder, 2018; Müller, 2025)

- More specifically, we focus on **UMLAUT**
- **Working definition of *umlaut***: A phonologically consistent/regular alternation in stem vowel feature specification conditioned by morphosyntactic features.

- Empirical focus:**

- Plural formation in (standard) German (Köpcke, 1988; Köpcke, 1993; Köpcke, 1994; Wiese, 1996a; Wiese, 1996b) & Gottscheerisch (H. Tschinkel, 1908; W. Tschinkel, 1973; W. Tschinkel, 1976)

- Not all umlauts are created equal (e.g., ‘(little) wheel(s)’)

	SG	PL	DIM.SG	DIM.PL
German	<i>das Rad</i> [ʁat]	<i>die Räder</i> [ʁɛdɐ]	<i>das Rädchen</i> [ʁɛtçən]	<i>die Rädchen</i> [ʁɛtçən]
Gottscheerisch	<i>’s Rot</i> [rɔt]	<i>də Redər</i> [redər]	<i>’s Radle</i> [radle]	<i>də Radlain</i> [radlain]

- Key challenges:**

- Account for the ‘disentangling’ of DIM and NUM
- Lexemes with three distinct stem vowels
- Disfix & metathesis plural ‘suffixes’

Roadmap

Section 2 Overview of Gottscheerisch

Section 3 Plurals & diminutives in (standard) German & Gottscheerisch

Section 4 Analysis

Section 5 Conclusion (+ a really cool Appendix)

2 What is Gottscheerisch?



Source: Gottschee Digital

- S. Bavarian *Sprachinsel* ‘language island’ centered on Gottschee/Kočevje (ca. 1350–1941)
- Also called *Gottschee German* or *Granis(c)h*,¹ although the latter usage may also refer to Slovene varieties
- ≈30,000 speakers at its pre-WWI height prior to mass emigration

¹< Ger. *Krainisch* ‘Carniolan’ < Lat. *Carniola* ‘land of the Carni (diminutive)’ < Celt. *Carni* ‘ethnonym for an Alpine tribe of Noricum [present-day Austria] and Venetia’.

- ≈12,000 (≈95%) relocated in winter of 1941/2
- Today's population(s) are located in:
 - USA & Canada (thousands in Queens, Cleveland, Milwaukee, Kitchener [ON], etc.)
 - Austria (hundreds in Graz, Klagenfurt, Vienna, etc.)
 - Slovenia (very few in Kočevje)
- Moribund status, most speakers are over 70 years old

3 Plurals & diminutives in (Standard) German & Gottscheerisch

3.1 Plural formation

3.1.1 Standard German (StG)

- Five concatenative suffixes (-e, -er, -(e)n, -s, and \emptyset) and *umlaut*
- Vowel change is sometimes predictable by plural suffix:
 - -(e)n and -s never occurs with umlaut
 - -e and \emptyset can occur with and without umlaut
 - -er always occurs with umlaut
- Umlaut in StG = back vowels are fronted
 - Front vowels, e.g., [i, i], remain fronted
 - ◊ Examples: *Kind*~*Kinder* 'child(ren)'; *Lied*~*Lieder* 'song(s)'
 - Back vowels
 - ◊ Examples: see Table 1

Table 1: Vowel Alternations in Plurals (StG; back vowels only)

V _{Stem}	V _{PL}	Example	Gloss
u [u] or [ʊ]	ü [y] or [ʏ]	<i>der Fuchs</i> → <i>die Füchse</i>	'fox(es)'
o [o] or [ɔ]	ö [ø] or [œ]	<i>der Sohn</i> → <i>die Söhne</i>	'son(s)'
a [a] or [ɑ]	ä [ɛ]	<i>die Hand</i> → <i>die Hände</i>	'hand(s)'
au [aʊ]	äu [ɔɪ]	<i>das Haus</i> → <i>die Häuser</i>	'house(s)'

3.1.2 Gottscheerisch (Gott.)

Orthography & pronunciation

- Gottscheerisch orthography uses <ə> to represent schwa pronunciation. A written <e> is always pronounced [e].
- Written <ü> and <ö> are pronounced differently from their StG counterparts: [ʉ] and [ø], respectively.

- Four concatenative suffixes (-ə, -ər, -n, and \emptyset), -ə disfixation, -ər metathesis, and *umlaut* (See examples in Table 4 in the Appendix)
- Whether a vowel changes is sometimes predictable by plural suffix, but differs from the StG pattern:
 - -n and -ə disfixation never combine with umlaut
 - -ə, -ər, \emptyset , and -ər metathesis can occur with and without umlaut
 - no pluralizing morpheme always induces umlaut²

Table 2: Vowel Alternations in Plurals (Gottscheerisch)

Place	V _{Stem}	V _{PL}	Example	Gloss
front	i [i]	i [i]	's <i>Khint</i> → <i>də Khindər</i>	'child(ren)'
	e [e]	e [e]	<i>dər Eppfl</i> → <i>də Eppflə</i>	'apple(s)'
	iə [iə]	iə [iə]	's <i>Tiər</i> → <i>də Tiərə</i>	'animal(s)'
	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	's <i>Reach</i> → <i>də Reahə</i>	'deer'
central	ö [ø]	e [e]	's <i>Jöch</i> → <i>də Jechər</i>	'yoke(s)'
	ü [ʉ]	i [i]	<i>dər Viüksch</i> → <i>də Vikkschə</i>	'fox(es)'
	üə [ʉə]	iə [iə]	<i>dər Žbüər</i> → <i>də Žbiərə</i>	'oath(s)'
back	u [u]	a [a]	<i>dər Numə</i> → <i>də Namə(r)</i>	'name(s)'
	o [ɔ]	a [a]	<i>də Nocht</i> → <i>də Nachtə</i>	'night(s)'
	o [ɔ]	e [e]	<i>də Hont</i> → <i>də Hentə</i>	'hand(s)'
	o [ɔ]	ea [ea]	<i>də Tochtər</i> → <i>də Teachtrə</i>	'daughter(s)'
	a [a]	a [a]	's <i>Ascht</i> → <i>də Aschtər</i>	'nest(s)'
	uə [uə]	a [a]	<i>də Nuət</i> → <i>də Natə(r)</i>	'seam(s)'
	uə [uə]	e [e]	<i>dər Schuədn</i> → <i>də Schedn</i>	'damage(s)'
	oa [ɔa]	ea [ea]	<i>dər Vloach</i> → <i>də Vleahə</i>	'flea(s)'
	oai [ɔai]	oai [ɔai]	's <i>Oai</i> → <i>də Oaijər</i>	'egg(s)'
	ai [ai]	ai [ai]	's <i>Baip</i> → <i>də Baibər</i>	'woman, women'
aü [aʉ]	ai [ai]	's <i>Haiüsch</i> → <i>də Haižər</i>	'house(s)'	
au [au]	au [au]	<i>dər Hausch</i> → <i>də Haužə</i>	'throat(s)'	

²The -ər suffix is close to doing so, but one example doesn't allow us to make this claim.

- Umlaut in Gott. ≠ umlaut in StG ?
 - Front vowels remain fronted and central vowels change consistently
 - Back vowels, if they change, become either [e] or [a] (in one case: [i])
 - See Table 2 where stem vowels that change in plural are in **bold**
- Not ‘German umlaut’ but still mostly fronting?

We consider (most) Gottscheerisch alternations ‘fronting’

Front vowels Umlaut (‘fronting’) is applied vacuously

Central vowels These are consistently fronted, height doesn’t change

Back vowels Most appear fronted on the surface, and though there are some height changes, if we, for the moment, ignore the fact that [a] does not front, ignore the changes to a plural [e] vowel, and ignore the diphthong [au] back vowels front consistently.

We posit /v/ – an underlying vowel phoneme in Gott. that is low. It occurs rounded as low <o> (H. Tschinkel, 1908, pp. 12–13) and undergoes raising to <u> and breaking to <uə> in predictable environments (more work to be done to develop a phonological analysis of these patterns).

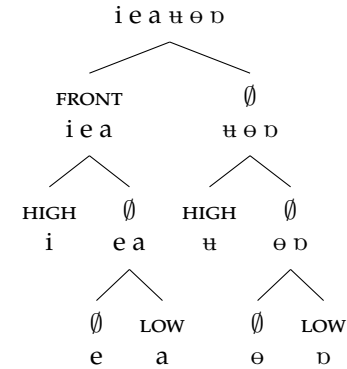
[a] **doesn’t umlaut because it’s already fronted** H. Tschinkel (1908) observes that <a> is fronted relative to <o/u> which are back vowels in Gott.

[au] **doesn’t umlaut because it’s not inherently a diphthong** [au] is the result of l-vocalization, i.e., not inherently a diphthong

Cf. Gott. *aut–eltar–eltischt* ‘old, elder, eldest’ & Gott. *Haüsch/Hausch* vs. Ger. *Haus/Hals* ‘house/throat’

[oai] **doesn’t umlaut because it patterns like [ai]** Umlaut is vacuously applied here just as it is to the diphthong [ai] (We can’t attribute the triphthong to the phon. environment – minimal pair: Gott. *main* ‘my’ & *moain*(ən) ‘to mean, say’ (cf. Ger. *mein* & *meinen*))

(1) Contrastive features for Gottscheerisch vowel phonemes



Key takeaways

- Umlaut in Gottscheerisch is **fronting**
- There is an /v, uə/ → [e] singular~plural exception that we deal with in a later section

3.2 Diminutive formation

- Diminutivization of a mass noun makes it countable

(2) Standard German (Wiltschko, 2021)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a. <i>viel Wein</i>
much wine
‘much wine’</p> | <p>b. <i>viel-e Wein-chen</i>
many-PL wine-DIM
‘many portions of wine’</p> |
|--|--|

(3) Gottscheerisch (W. Tschinkel, 1973)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>a. <i>vil Güt</i>
much cattle
‘much livestock’</p> | <p>b. <i>a Gät-le</i>
a cattle-DIM
‘a (little) cow’</p> |
|---|---|

3.2.1 Standard German

- Concatenative suffix, varies by region; StG = *-chen*
- Always causes stem vowel fronting of back vowels (e.g., *Brot*~*Brötchen*)

- Consistent across number: *ein Brötchen, zwei Brötchen* ('bread roll')
- Same vowel alternations as plural (see Table 1)

- Neuter gender

3.2.2 Gottscheerisch

- Concatenative suffixes *-le* and *-lain* for singular and plural diminutives, respectively: *Khneppfle~Khneppflain* 'little button(s)'
- Often causes vowel change in stem
 - The stem vowel is consistent across diminutives regardless of number: *Khnöpf~Khneppfle~Khneppflain* '(little) button(s)'
 - Alternations are the same we observe in plural (see Table 3 for a subset and changes in **bold** & Table 5 for more)
- Neuter gender

Table 3: Vowel Alternations in Diminutives (Gottscheerisch)

Place	V _{STEM}	V _{DIM}	Example	Gloss
front	i [i]	i [i]	<i>Tir</i> → <i>Tirle</i>	'door'
	e [e]	e [e]	<i>Vegl</i> → <i>Vegəle</i>	'bird'
	iə [iə]	iə [iə]	<i>Tiər</i> → <i>Tiərle</i>	'animal'
	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	<i>Schtearn</i> → <i>Schtearnle</i>	'star'
central	ö [ø]	e [e]	<i>Khnöpf</i> → <i>Khneppfle</i>	'button'
	ü [y]	i [i]	<i>Bürscht</i> → <i>Birschtle</i>	'sausage'
	üə [yø]	iə [iə]	<i>Vüəs</i> → <i>Viəsle</i>	'foot'
back	u [u]	a [a]	<i>Nugl</i> → <i>Nagəle</i>	'nail'
	o [ɔ]	a [a]	<i>Hont</i> → <i>Hantle</i>	'hand'
	o [ɔ]	ea [ea]	<i>Tochtər</i> → <i>Teachtərle</i>	'daughter'
	a [a]	a [a]	<i>Pam</i> → <i>Pamle</i>	'tree'
	uə [uø]	a [a]	<i>Huər</i> → <i>Harle</i>	'hair'
	oa [ɔa]	ea [ea]	<i>Doarf</i> → <i>Dearfle</i>	'village'
	oai [ɔai]	oai [ɔai]	<i>Oai</i> → <i>Oaile</i>	'egg'
	ai [ai]	ai [ai]	<i>Tsbaikh</i> → <i>Tsbaigle</i>	'branch'
	aü [aø]	ai [ai]	<i>Maiüş</i> → <i>Maižle</i>	'mouse'
	au [au]	au [au]	<i>Baut</i> → <i>Baudle</i>	'forest'

Key takeaways

- **Umlaut in StG and Gott.** can be categorized as a fronting process. This covers the vowel alternations we see in plurals and diminutives in both languages.
 - Exception: the /o, uə/ → [e] plural in Gott.
- **Diminutives in Gott.** exhibit distinct suffixes, dependent on number

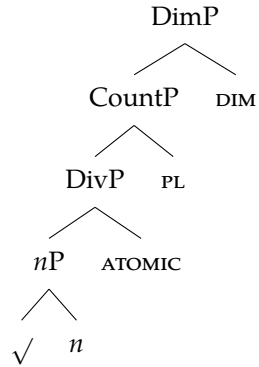
4 Analysis

4.1 Theoretical background

- Harbour (2014) proposes the following feature inventory:
 - singular-plural languages have a **binary** [\pm atomic] **feature** that occupies a NumP
 - [+atomic] = singular, [–atomic] = plural
- We adopt a variant of the **Split-NumP hypothesis** (Ritter, 1992; Borer, 2005; Borer, 2013; Scontras, 2022; Wiltschko, 2006; Wiltschko, 2021; Dali and Mathieu, 2021), in which grammatical number is split between (at least) **two projections**, one dividing and one counting
- We combine elements of both approaches:
 - a **DivP (dividing) projection** (Borer, 2005; Wiltschko, 2006; Ott, 2011), which hosts functional heads related to individuation,³ on which we house a privative singularizing ATOMIC feature
 - a **CountP (counting) projection**, which houses a privative pluralizing PL feature

³This projection is also the seat of the collective marker, which crucially does not trigger umlaut, but which we leave to further work.

(4) Structure of diminutives (to be revised)

**Goal of the remainder of this section**

4.2 Concatenative plural & diminutive morphology – we cover the concatenative pluralizing and diminutivizing strategies in Gottscheerisch

4.3 Non-concatenative plural & diminutive morphology – we address the stem allomorphy patterns in Gottscheerisch plurals and diminutives

4.2 Concatenative morphology: diminutive and plural suffixes

4.2.1 Diminutives

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Tsimmər</i>	<i>Tsimmər</i>	<i>Tsimmərle</i>	<i>Tsimmərlain</i>	‘(little)
StG	<i>Zimmer</i>	<i>Zimmer</i>	<i>Zimmerchen</i>	<i>Zimmerchen</i>	room(s)’

(5) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{ROOM}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Tsimmər}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -le$

(6) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{ROOM}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Zimmer}$
-
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.2 \emptyset plural

(7) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{ROOM}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Tsimmər}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -le$

(8) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{ROOM}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Zimmer}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
-
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.3 $-\partial$ plural

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Hont</i>	<i>Hentə</i>	<i>Hantle</i>	<i>Hantlain</i>	‘(little) hand(s)’
StG	<i>Hand</i>	<i>Hände</i>	<i>Händchen</i>	<i>Händchen</i>	

(9) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{HAND}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Hont}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -le$

(10) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{HAND}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Hand}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
-
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.4 $-\partial r$ plural

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Doarf</i>	<i>Dearfər</i>	<i>Dearfle</i>	<i>Dearflain</i>	‘(little) village(s)’
StG	<i>Dorf</i>	<i>Dörfer</i>	<i>Dörfchen</i>	<i>Dörfchen</i>	

(11) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Doarf}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial r / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -le$

(12) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Dorf}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
-
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{PL} \leftrightarrow -\partial r / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- $\text{DIM} \leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.5 *-n* plural

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Toschə</i>	<i>Toschn</i>	<i>Taschle</i>	<i>Taschlain</i>	'(little) bag(s)'
StG	<i>Tasche</i>	<i>Taschen</i>	<i>Täschchen</i>	<i>Täschchen</i>	

(13) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{BAG}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Toschə}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ə / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ər / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{\text{BAG}}, \dots\}$
- DIM $\leftrightarrow -le$

(14) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{BAG}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Tasche}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
-
- PL $\leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ə / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ər / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{\text{BAG}}, \dots\}$
- DIM $\leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.6 Disfix *-ə* plural

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Tsüngə</i>	<i>Tsüng_</i>	<i>Tsingəle</i>	<i>Tsingəlain</i>	'(little) tongue(s)'
StG	<i>Zunge</i>	<i>Zungen</i>	<i>Züngchen</i>	<i>Züngchen</i>	

(15) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- $\sqrt{\text{TONGUE}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Tsüngə}$
- $n \leftrightarrow -ə / _ (\text{PL}) \text{DIM}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset / _ \text{PL}$
- $n \leftrightarrow -ə / \{\sqrt{\text{TONGUE}}, \dots\}$
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / _ \text{DIM}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ə / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ər / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{\text{BAG}}, \dots\}$
- DIM $\leftrightarrow -le$

(16) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- $\sqrt{\text{TONGUE}} \leftrightarrow \textit{Zunge}$
-
-
-
- $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
-
- PL $\leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{ROOM}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ə / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -ər / \{\sqrt{\text{VILLAGE}}, \dots\}$
- PL $\leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{\text{BAG}}, \dots\}$
- DIM $\leftrightarrow -chen$

4.2.7 Metathesis plural

What has been previously documented as metathesis, is better understood as *ə*-epenthesis to break up underlyingly illicit consonant clusters.

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Tochtər</i>	<i>Teachtrə</i>	<i>Teachtərle</i>	<i>Teachtərlain</i>	'(little) daughter(s)'
StG	<i>Tochter</i>	<i>Töchter</i>	<i>Töchterchen</i>	<i>Töchterchen</i>	

• Singular: Gott. *Tochtər*

- Underlyingly /toxtɾ/
- *ə* is inserted to break up the illicit consonant cluster /xtɾ/

• Plural: Gott. *Teachtrə*

- $\sqrt{\text{DAUGHTER}}$ takes a *-ə* plural
- Resyllabification occurs and [ɾ] is now the onset of the final syllable. No illicit consonant cluster requires *ə* repair

• Singular & plural diminutives: Gott. *Teachtərle* & *Teachtərlain*

- Like in the singular non-diminutive, *ə* is inserted to break up the illicit consonant cluster /xtɾ/

Key takeaways

- 1 The Gott. plural diminutive suffix is made up of two components
- 2 Like StG, Gott. plural suffix application is root-specific
- 3 The Gott. disfix plural can be accounted for with the categorizer *n*
- 4 The Gott. *metathesis* plural is not actually a case of metathesis, but rather a combination of an *-ə* plural suffix and a phonological repair mechanism

4.3 Non-concatenative morphology: umlaut

4.3.1 Two-vowel patterns

Like StG, Gottscheerisch exhibits two-vowel patterns of umlaut, i.e., **one vowel, if unlauded, reliably becomes a second vowel.**

We claim that ATOMIC inserts the 'umlauting' feature in both Gott. and StG.

Umlaut in the diminutive

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Tröppfə</i>	<i>Tröppfm</i>	<i>Treppfle</i>	<i>Treppflain</i>	'(little) drop(s)'
StG	<i>Tropfen</i>	<i>Tropfen</i>	<i>Tröpfchen</i>	<i>Tröpfchen</i>	

- (17) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (Gott.)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM} \{\sqrt{\text{DROP}}\}$
 b. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- (18) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (StG)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM}$
 b. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$

Umlaut in the plural and the diminutive

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Lont</i>	<i>Lantər</i>	<i>Lantle</i>	<i>Lantlain</i>	'(little) land(s)'
StG	<i>Land</i>	<i>Länder</i>	<i>Ländchen</i>	<i>Ländchen</i>	

- (19) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (Gott.)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM} \{\sqrt{\text{DROP}}, \sqrt{\text{LAND}}\}$
 b. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{PL} \{\sqrt{\text{LAND}}\}$
 c. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- (20) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (StG)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM}$
 b. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{PL} \{\sqrt{\text{LAND}}\}$
 c. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$

4.3.2 Three-vowel patterns

In contrast to StG, Gottscheerisch exhibits three-vowel patterns in which the stem vowel of the singular noun differs from the plural and both of those vowels differ from that in the diminutivized noun. (See Table 6 in the Appendix)

Umlaut pattern *o-e-a*

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Hont</i>	<i>Hentə</i>	<i>Hantle</i>	<i>Hantlain</i>	'(little) hand(s)'
StG	<i>Hand</i>	<i>Hände</i>	<i>Händchen</i>	<i>Händchen</i>	

The stem vowel in Gott. $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ is **underlyingly** /ə/.

For the **singular**, (21d) triumphs. Lowered /ə/ is /ɒ/, which surfaces /ɔ/.

For the **plural**, (21c) wins competition. Fronted /ə/ is /e/.

For the **diminutive** (21b) wins out. Both [FRONT] and [LOW] are inserted. Fronted, lowered /ə/ is /a/.

- (21) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (Gott.)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM} \{\sqrt{\text{DROP}}, \sqrt{\text{LAND}}\}$
 b. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}][\text{LOW}] / _ \text{DIM} \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}\}$
 c. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{PL} \{\sqrt{\text{LAND}}, \sqrt{\text{HAND}}\}$
 d. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{LOW}] / \{\sqrt{\text{HAND}}\}$
 e. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$

- (22) Umlauting Vocabulary Items (StG)
 a. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{DIM} \{\sqrt{\text{DROP}}, \sqrt{\text{LAND}}, \sqrt{\text{HAND}}\}$
 b. -
 c. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow [\text{FRONT}] / _ \text{PL} \{\sqrt{\text{LAND}}, \sqrt{\text{HAND}}\}$
 d. -
 e. $\text{ATOMIC} \leftrightarrow \emptyset$

Could this be solved by leaning on the phonological environment rather than a new morphological trigger?

→ We don't think so. Compare $\sqrt{\text{LAND}}$ and $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ in Gottscheerisch.

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Lont</i>	<i>Lantər</i>	<i>Lantle</i>	<i>Lantlain</i>	'(little) land(s)'
Gott.	<i>Hont</i>	<i>Hentə</i>	<i>Hantle</i>	<i>Hantlain</i>	

Key takeaways

→ Our analysis suggests that there is no diminutive-triggered stem allomorphy per se, but rather **number-triggered stem allomorphy with diminutive as a possible contextual specification** (cf. Moskal 2015's work on the absence of case-triggered nominal suppletion vs. the commonality of number-triggered nominal suppletion).

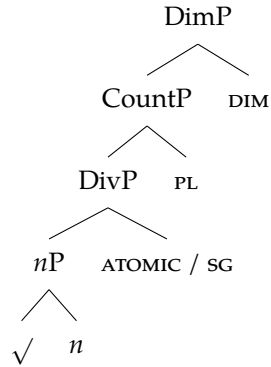
→ **It is not unusual to see diminutivization co-occur with countification/atomization** within Germanic and crosslinguistically (Ritter, 1992; Wiltschko, 2021; Alexiadou and Lohndal, 2023). Diachronically, Indo-European diminutives are double diminutives, so it is not unreasonable to see two surface reflexes of diminutivization (i.e., suffixation & stem allomorphy) synchronically.

4.3.3 Doublets

Two diminutive forms are recorded for some Gott. roots and are not attributed to regional variation, e.g., 'blouse' (W. Tschinkel, 1973, p. 67).

	SG	PL	SG.DIM	PL.DIM	
Gott.	<i>Plüzə</i>	<i>Plüz̄n</i>	<i>Plüz̄ərle</i>	<i>Plüz̄ərlain</i>	'(little) blouse(s)'
StG	<i>Bluse</i>	<i>Blusen</i>	<i>Blüschen</i>	<i>Blüschen</i>	

(23) Structure of diminutives, revised



To account for these, we posit a **feature sg** as a singular number feature, following a distributed number approach in which a singularizer can be structurally distinct from a singularivizer (Mathieu, 2012; Wiltschko, 2021; Borer, 2005; Dali and Mathieu, 2021).

- ATOMIC is a singularivizer that can trigger stem allomorphy.
- SG is a singularizer that does not trigger stem allomorphy.

(24) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- a. ATOMIC ↔ [FRONT] / _ (PL) DIM { $\sqrt{\text{DROP}}$, $\sqrt{\text{LAND}}$, $\sqrt{\text{BLOUSE}}$ }
- b. ATOMIC ↔ [FRONT][LOW] / _ (PL) DIM { $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ }
- c. ATOMIC ↔ [FRONT] / _ PL { $\sqrt{\text{LAND}}$, $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ }
- d. ATOMIC ↔ [LOW] / { $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ }
- e. ATOMIC ↔ \emptyset
- f. SG ↔ \emptyset

(25) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- a. ATOMIC ↔ [FRONT] / _ DIM { $\sqrt{\text{DROP}}$, $\sqrt{\text{LAND}}$, $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$, $\sqrt{\text{BLOUSE}}$ }
- b. –
- c. ATOMIC ↔ [FRONT] / _ PL { $\sqrt{\text{LAND}}$, $\sqrt{\text{HAND}}$ }
- d. –
- e. ATOMIC ↔ \emptyset
- f. –

Prediction (for future work)

- The singular (SG) potentiates a diminutive that does not contain an evaluative component (e.g., *Plüz̄ərle* 'blouselet')
- The singulative (ATOMIC) potentiates a diminutive that does contain an evaluative component (e.g., *Plizle* 'blousy-wousy')

Key takeaways

- Gott. PL & DIM umlaut is phonologically regular (sans the PL umlaut in 3-vowel lexemes).
- Plural diminutives that umlaut always surface with the vowel associated with the diminutive, because the phonological representation of the diminutive-triggered ablaut (e.g., front, low) contains the phonological representation of the plural-triggered ablaut (e.g., front).
- The existence of doublets motivates our distribution of individual across two separate features

5 Conclusion

What did we learn?

- Gottscheerisch exhibits a more complex morphological system w.r.t. PL & DIM realization (when compared with StG)
 - Gott. requires a split-DIM
 - The Gott. disfix plural can be accounted for with the categorizer *n*
- Topics for future work:
 - The role of grammatical gender in licensing both PL & DIM
 - How collective plurals fit into this system in Gott.
 - The role of evaluative morphology in Gott.

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Appendix

(26) Vocabulary Items (Gott.)

- a. $n \leftrightarrow -\partial / _ (PL) DIM$
- b. $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset / _ PL$
- c. $n \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- d. $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- e. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [FRONT] / _ (PL) DIM \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- f. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [FRONT][LOW] / _ (PL) DIM \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- g. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [FRONT] / _ PL \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- h. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [LOW] / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- i. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- j. $SG \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- k. $PL \leftrightarrow -n / _ DIM$
- l. $PL \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- m. $PL \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- n. $PL \leftrightarrow -\partial r / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- o. $PL \leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- p. $DIM \leftrightarrow -le$

(27) Vocabulary Items (StG)

- a. –
- b. –
- c. –
- d. $n \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- e. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [FRONT] / _ DIM$
- f. –
- g. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow [FRONT] / _ PL \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- h. –
- i. $ATOMIC \leftrightarrow \emptyset$
- j. –
- k. –
- l. $PL \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- m. $PL \leftrightarrow -\partial / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- n. $PL \leftrightarrow -\partial r / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- o. $PL \leftrightarrow -n / \{\sqrt{x}, \dots\}$
- p. $DIM \leftrightarrow -chen$

Table 4: Plural Formation Strategies in Gottscheerisch (Examples w/ Umlautable Vs)

PL-Ending	-Umlaut	Gloss	+Umlaut	Gloss
-ə	's <i>Schuf</i> → <i>də Schufə</i> <i>dər Tsokkl</i> → <i>də Tsokkla</i>	'sheep' 'wooden shoe(s)'	<i>də Nocht</i> → <i>də Nachta</i> <i>dər Övm</i> → <i>də Evma</i>	'night(s)' 'oven(s)'
-ər	's <i>Khafmos</i> → <i>də Khafmossər</i>	'bushel-like measurement, approx. 28L'	<i>dər Guarta</i> → <i>də Gartar</i> 's <i>Piäch</i> → <i>də Piächar</i>	'garden(s)' 'book(s)'
-n	<i>də Khommər</i> → <i>də Khommərən</i> <i>də Toschə</i> → <i>də Toschn</i>	'small room(s)' 'bag(s), pocket(s)'	<i>də Päuke</i> → <i>də Paikn</i>	'drum'
-Ø	<i>də Nuədl</i> → <i>də Nuədl</i> <i>dər Žümmər</i> → <i>də Žümmər</i>	'needle(s)' 'summer(s)'	<i>dər Hommər</i> → <i>də Hammər</i> <i>dər Schuədñ</i> → <i>də Schedñ</i>	'hammer(s)' 'damage(s)'
-(ə)*	<i>dər Schtükkhə</i> → <i>də Schtükkh</i> <i>də Tsüngə</i> → <i>də Tsüng</i>	'piece(s)' 'tongue(s)'		
~ər → rə	<i>dər Lötter</i> → <i>də Löttrə</i> 's <i>Khloaschtər</i> → <i>də Khloaschtrə</i>	'lazybones' 'cloister(s)'	<i>dər Priädər</i> → <i>də Priädərə</i> <i>də Tochtər</i> → <i>də Teachtərə</i>	'brother(s)' 'daughter(s)'

*Disfixation: The final vowel (ə) of the base singular form is dropped to form the plural.

Table 5: Vowel Alternations in Gottscheerisch

Place	V _{SG}	V _{PL}	V _{DIM}	Example (SG; PL; DIM)	Gloss
front	i [i]	i [i]	i [i]	<i>Khint; Khindər; Khintle</i>	‘child’
	e [e]	e [e]	e [e]	<i>Eppfl; Eppflə; Eppfəle</i>	‘apple’
	iə [iə]	iə [iə]	iə [iə]	<i>Tiər; Tiərə; Tiərle</i>	‘animal’
	ä [ɛ]	ä [ɛ]	ä [ɛ]	<i>Därrə; Därrn; Därrle</i>	‘roasting grill’
	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	<i>Žeab; Žeabə; Žeable</i>	‘lake’
central	ə [ə]	ə [ə]	ə [ə]	<i>Gərtsch; Gərttschə; Gərttschle</i>	‘wood knot’
	ö [ø]	ö [ø]	ö [ø]	<i>Möžar; Möžarə; Möžarle</i>	‘mortar’
	ö [ø]	ö [ø]	e [e]	<i>Tröppfə; Tröppfm; Treppflə</i>	‘drop’
	ö [ø]	e [e]	e [e]	<i>Jöch; Jechər; Jechle</i>	‘yoke’
	ü [ʉ]	ü [ʉ]	ü [ʉ]	<i>Düdl; Düdlə; Düdəle</i>	‘penis’
	ü [ʉ]	ü [ʉ]	i [i]	<i>Schtükkhə; Schtükkh; Schtikkhle</i>	‘piece’
	ü [ʉ]	i [i]	i [i]	<i>Vükksch; Vikkschə; Vikkschle</i>	‘fox’
	üə [ʉə]	üə [ʉə]	iə [iə]	<i>Žüəhə; Žüəhn; Žüəhle</i>	‘valley’
üə [ʉə]	iə [iə]	iə [iə]	<i>Püəch; Piəchər; Piəchle</i>	‘book’	
back	u [u]	u [u]	a [a]	<i>Gubl; Gublə; Gabəle</i>	‘fork’
	u [u]	a [a]	a [a]	<i>Nugl; Naglə; Nagəle</i>	‘nail’
	o [o]	o [o]	a [a]	<i>Bochtl; Bochtlə; Bachtəle</i>	‘quail’
	o [o]	a [a]	a [a]	<i>Lont; Lantər; Lantle</i>	‘land’
	o [o]	e [e]	a [a]	<i>Hont; Hentə; Hantle</i>	‘hand’
	o [o]	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	<i>Tochtər; Teachtrə; Teachtərle</i>	‘daughter’
	a [a]	a [a]	a [a]	<i>Pam; Pamə; Pamle</i>	‘tree’
	a [a]	e [e]	a [a]	<i>Prat; Predər; Pradle</i>	‘board’
	uə [uə]	uə [uə]	a [a]	<i>Huər; Huər; Harle</i>	‘hair’
	uə [uə]	a [a]	a [a]	<i>Guərtə; Gartər; Gartle</i>	‘garden’
	uə [uə]	e [e]	a [a]	<i>Žbuərn; Žbermə*; Žbarmle</i>	‘swarm’
	oa [oa]	oa [oa]	oa [oa]	<i>Oarə; Oarn; Oarle</i>	‘ear’
	oa [oa]	oa [oa]	ea [ea]	<i>Proažn; Proažn; Preažndle</i>	‘crumb’
	oa [oa]	ea [ea]	ea [ea]	<i>Doarf; Dearfər; Dearfle</i>	‘village’
	oai [oai]	oai [oai]	oai [oai]	<i>Oai; Oaijər; Oaile</i>	‘egg’
	ai [ai]	ai [ai]	ai [ai]	<i>Tsbaikh; Tsbaigə; Tsbaigle</i>	‘branch’
aü [aʉ]	aü [aʉ]	ai [ai]	<i>Schaüvəl; Schaüvəl; Schaivəle</i>	‘shovel’	
aü [aʉ]	ai [ai]	ai [ai]	<i>Haüsch; Haižər; Haižle</i>	‘house’	
au [au]	au [au]	au [au]	<i>Hausch; Haužə(r); Haužle</i>	‘throat’	

*Also: *Žbarmə*

Table 6: Lexemes with 3 distinct stem vowels (*o-e-a* & *uə-e-a*)

SG	PL	DIM	Gloss
<i>Bont</i>	<i>Bentə</i>	<i>Bantle</i>	‘wall’
<i>Glosch</i>	<i>Gležər</i>	<i>Glazle</i>	‘glass’
<i>Gonkh</i>	<i>Gengə</i>	<i>Gangle</i>	‘gait’
<i>Grop</i>	<i>Grebər</i>	<i>Grable</i>	‘grave’
<i>Hont</i>	<i>Hentə</i>	<i>Hantle</i>	‘hand’
<i>Oscht</i>	<i>Eschtə</i>	<i>Aschtle</i>	‘bough’
<i>Plot</i>	<i>Plettər</i>	<i>Plattle</i>	‘leaf, sheet’
<i>Pont</i>	<i>Pentər</i>	<i>Pantle</i>	‘band’
<i>Pot</i>	<i>Pedər</i>	<i>Padle</i>	‘bath’
<i>Pront</i>	<i>Prentər</i>	<i>Prantle</i>	‘blaze, fire’
<i>Ront</i>	<i>Rendər</i>	<i>Rantle</i>	‘edge, border’
<i>Rot</i>	<i>Redər</i>	<i>Radle</i>	‘wheel’
<i>Schtomm</i>	<i>Schtemmə</i>	<i>Schtammlle</i>	‘stem’
<i>Schtot</i>	<i>Schtetə</i>	<i>Schtatle</i>	‘city’
<i>Tsont</i>	<i>Tsendə</i>	<i>Tsantle</i>	‘tooth’
<i>Žbonts</i>	<i>Žbentsə</i>	<i>Žbantsle</i>	‘tail’
<i>Žokh</i>	<i>Žekkhə</i>	<i>Žakkhile</i>	‘sack’
<i>Žots</i>	<i>Žettsə</i>	<i>Žattsle</i>	‘sentence’
<i>Pfont</i>	<i>Pfentər</i>	[<i>Pfantle?</i>]	‘deposit’
<i>Žbuərn</i>	<i>Žbermə</i>	<i>Žbarmle</i>	‘swarm’
<i>Schuədn</i>	<i>Schedn</i>	[<i>Schadle?</i>]	‘damage’

Table 7: Vowel Alternations in Adjective Gradation (Gottscheerisch)

V _{Stem}	V _{COMP/SUP}	Base	Comparative	Superlative	Gloss
i [i]	i [i]	<i>pillikh</i>	<i>pilligar</i>	<i>pilligischt</i>	‘cheap’
ü [ʏ]	i [i]	<i>jünkh</i>	<i>jingar</i>	<i>jingischt</i>	‘young’
" [ʏ]	ü [ʏ]	tümm	tümmar	tümmischt	‘dumb’
e [e]	e [e]	<i>veschtə</i>	<i>veschtar</i>	<i>veschtischt</i>	‘firm’
ö [ø]	e [e]	<i>völl</i>	<i>vellar</i>	<i>vellischt</i>	‘full’
"	ö [ø]	"	völlar	völlischt	"
u [u]	u [u]	<i>plub</i>	<i>plubar</i>	<i>plubischt</i>	‘blue’
o [ɔ]	o [ɔ]	glott	glottar	glottischt	‘smooth’
"	e [e]	"	glettar	glettischt	"
a [a]	a [a]	<i>kampər</i>	<i>kamprar</i>	<i>kamprischt</i>	‘lively’
uə [uə]	uə [uə]	huərt	huərtar	huərtischt	‘hard’
"	e [e]	uərm	ermar	ermischt	‘poor’
iə [iə]	iə [iə]	<i>vriə</i>	<i>vriəjar</i>	<i>vriəjischt</i>	‘early’
üə [ʏə]	iə [iə]	<i>khlüəgə</i>	<i>khlüəgar</i>	<i>khlüəgischt</i>	‘smart’
ea [ea]	ea [ea]	<i>pleadə</i>	<i>pleadar</i>	<i>pleadischt</i>	‘stupid’
oa [oa]	ea [ea]	<i>hoach</i>	<i>heahar</i>	<i>heahischt</i>	‘high’
oai [oai]	oai [oai]	<i>proait</i>	<i>proaitar</i>	<i>proaitischt</i>	‘wide’
"	ea [ea]	"	preatar	preatischt	"
ai [ai]	ai [ai]	<i>bait</i>	<i>baitar</i>	<i>baitischt</i>	‘far’
aü [aʏ]	aü [aʏ]	praüin	praüinar	praüinischt	‘brown’
au [au]	au [au]	<i>vausch</i>	<i>vauschar</i>	<i>vauschischt</i>	‘false’