

How to escape the stimuli-reader-trap in humour research?

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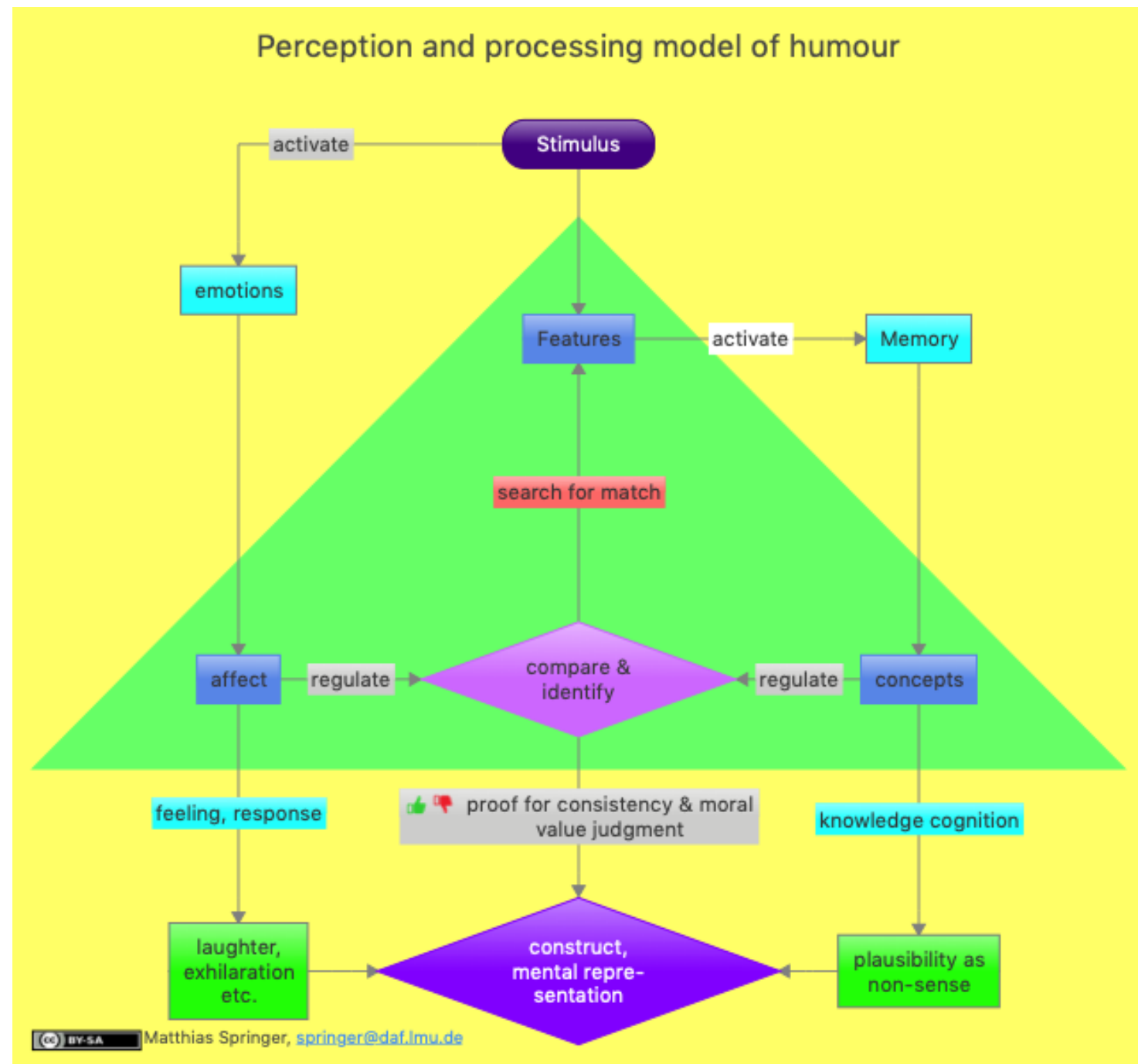
Prelimeries



- There does not seem to be a satisfactory answer to this question.
- Asking people about their heuristic theory of humor they always will answer that it is highly dependent from cultur, values and knowledge of the subject
- This means: Humour is a personality trait of man and not a matter of an object
- But: Some objects causes the humor effect and other don't
- There are theories which describe the texture and figure of objects which intent to cause a humour effect and explain how it works
- Just as we can observe objects which intent the humor effect but they will fail
- The challenge is: Presenting something humorous to recipients is always a bet on their response.
- There is a tension between the objectivity of the stimuli and the subjectivity of the recipient
- Hence we need models of humour which consider both: The objectivity of the stimuli and the subjetivity of the recipient

Modelling the Humour Process

1. Emotions activate memory and direct attention to the stimulus
2. Cognitive skills are necessary to compare the stimulus with concepts and to detect its construction as „humorous“.
3. The recipient must have volitional capacity and will to accept the humour and her or his affective responses as laughter and exhilaration.



Cognitive, emotional and volitional aspects in my model point to a model for humour competence:
The ability and the will to perceive humour, to accept it as a special way of representing an entity and to react to it in a more or less physically uncontrolled way.

Model refers to an concept of competence



Kompetenzen sind „die bei Individuen verfügbaren oder durch sie erlernbaren kognitiven Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten, um bestimmte Probleme zu lösen, sowie die damit verbundenen motivationalen, volitionalen und sozialen Bereitschaften und Fähigkeiten, um die Problemlösungen in variablen Situationen erfolgreich und verantwortungsvoll nutzen zu können“.

(Franz Weinert, 2001: Leistungsmessungen in Schulen, S. 27f.)

A general definition of competence



Competences are "the cognitive abilities and skills available in or learnable by individuals to solve specific problems, as well as the associated motivational, volitional and social dispositions and skills to use the problem solutions successfully and responsibly in variable situations".

(Franz Weinert, 2001: Leistungsmessungen in Schulen, S. 27f.)

Measuring humour as a competence



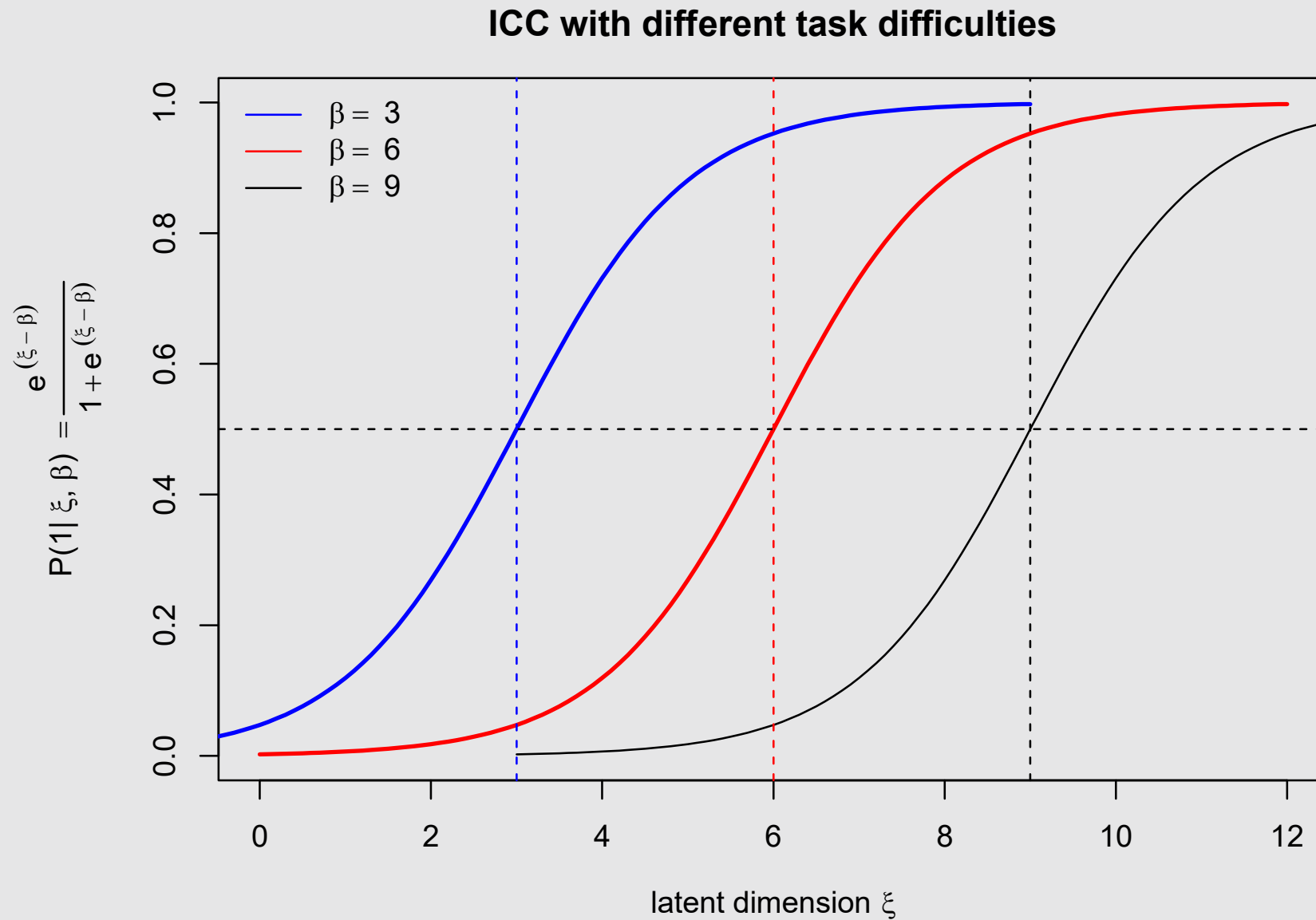
- Competence measurement means a combination of a subject's abilities as a latent construct and the difficulty of the task
- This supports my model of the humour process which considers both subjective skills and objective features
- In my case the task is presented as a potentially humorous stimuli – text, cartoon, video – which must be detected by the subject
- Hence you need a method which takes into account both the subjective and objective side
- The Rasch Model supports this feature

A Brief Introduction to the principles of the Rasch Model



- A test result is always composed of the ability of the test person (ξ „xi“) and the difficulty of the task (β „beta“)
- If the ability of the test person exceeds the task difficulty, the probability for the person to solve the task is correspondingly high; this is a positive correlation.
- The same applies the other way round: If the person's ability drops below the level of the task difficulty, the probability of solving the task decreases.
- The Rasch model can estimate these two parameters, task difficulty and person ability.
- If the task difficulty and the person parameters correspond, and their difference is equal to zero, then the probability of solving the task is 50 %.
- This relationship can be represented by the logistic function, its graph depicts the item characteristic curve (ICC).

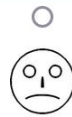
ICC with different task difficulties





19. Wie humorvoll finden das Meme „German Kinder“?

Wählen Sie einen Smilie aus der Skala, wobei der linke für „absolut humorlos“ und der rechte für „absolut humorvoll“ stehen.



20. Wie würden Sie die Art von Humor am ehesten beschreiben?

widersinnig, paradox

verspottend, herabsetzend

befreiend, erleichternd, erlösend

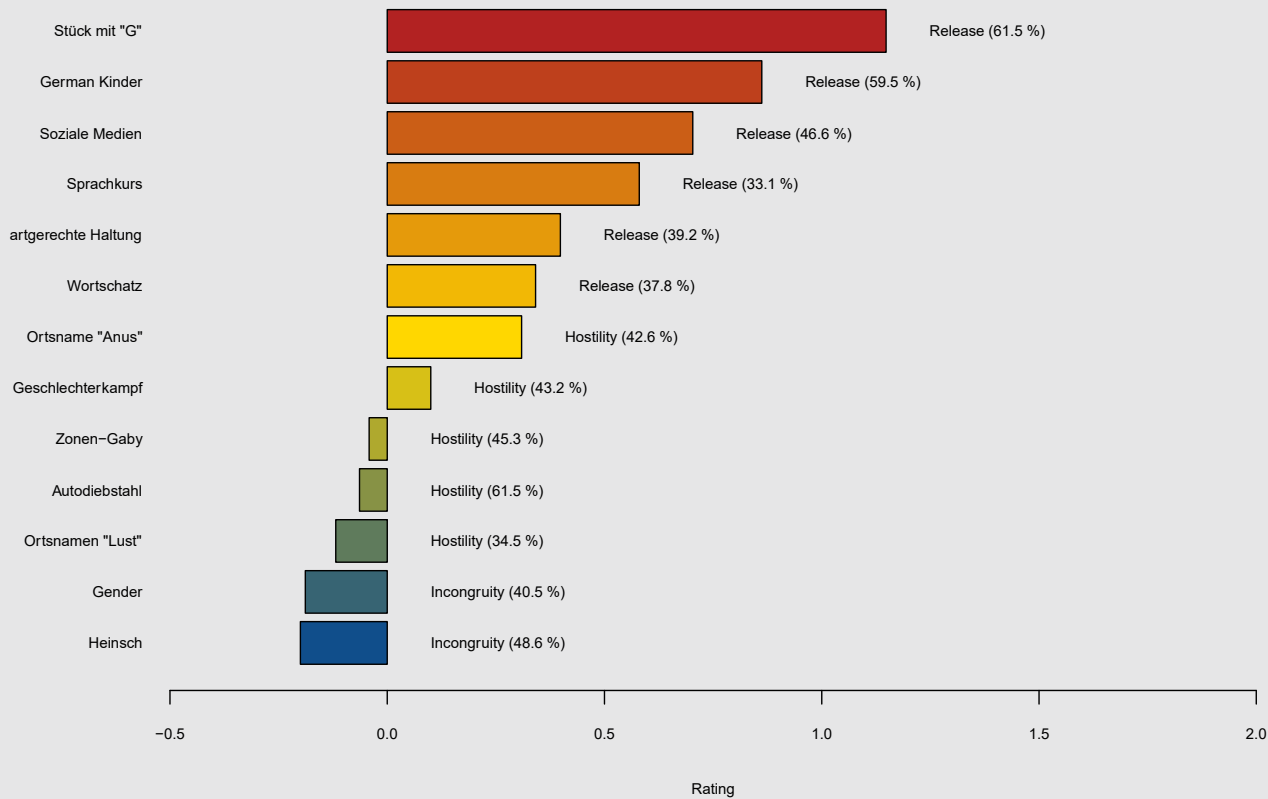
About my study



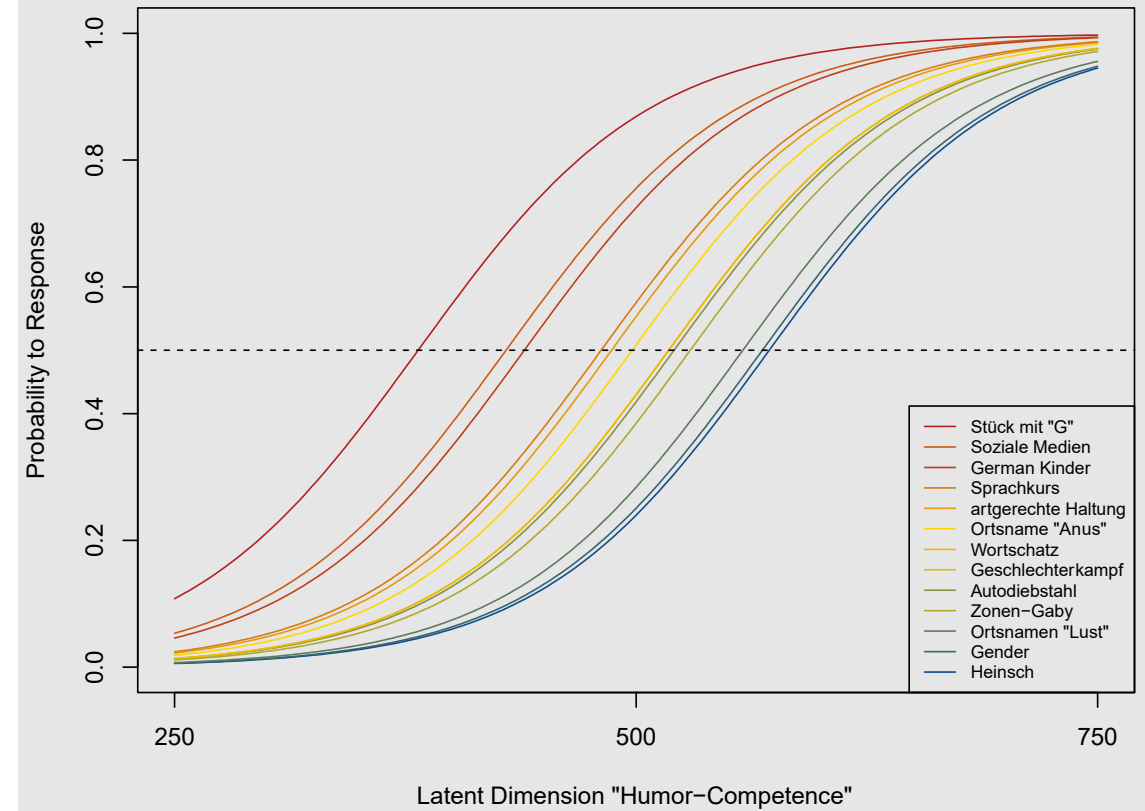
- 13 randomly selected stimuli: texts, cartoons, videos
- Rating on a 5-point rating scale (1 - not funny at all, 5 absolutely funny), the rating options were offered as emoticons.
- in addition, I asked subjects to classify the stimuli according to a humour theory.
- Finally, they were able to tell me their age, gender and mother tongue on a voluntary basis.
- These data were not evaluated.

Results: Rating and Item Characteristic Curve of the Stimuli: different ranking

Rating of Texts, Cartoons & Videos



Characteristic-Curves for Humor-Stimuli



Three Stimuli representing low, moderate & high difficulty



- Performance with Heinz Erhardt: Only words beginning with the letter „G“ are allowed.
- Kind of Stand Up comedy or „Impro-Theater“
- German comedian in the middle of the 20th century
- highest rated, low difficulty
- Humour-Category: „Release“



- Meme with the French town name „Anus“
- The text means: The ass of the world is located in France.
- Wordplay with the linguistic concept of homophones
- at the expense of the French
- medium rating, moderate difficulty
- Humour-Category: „Hostility“

Text

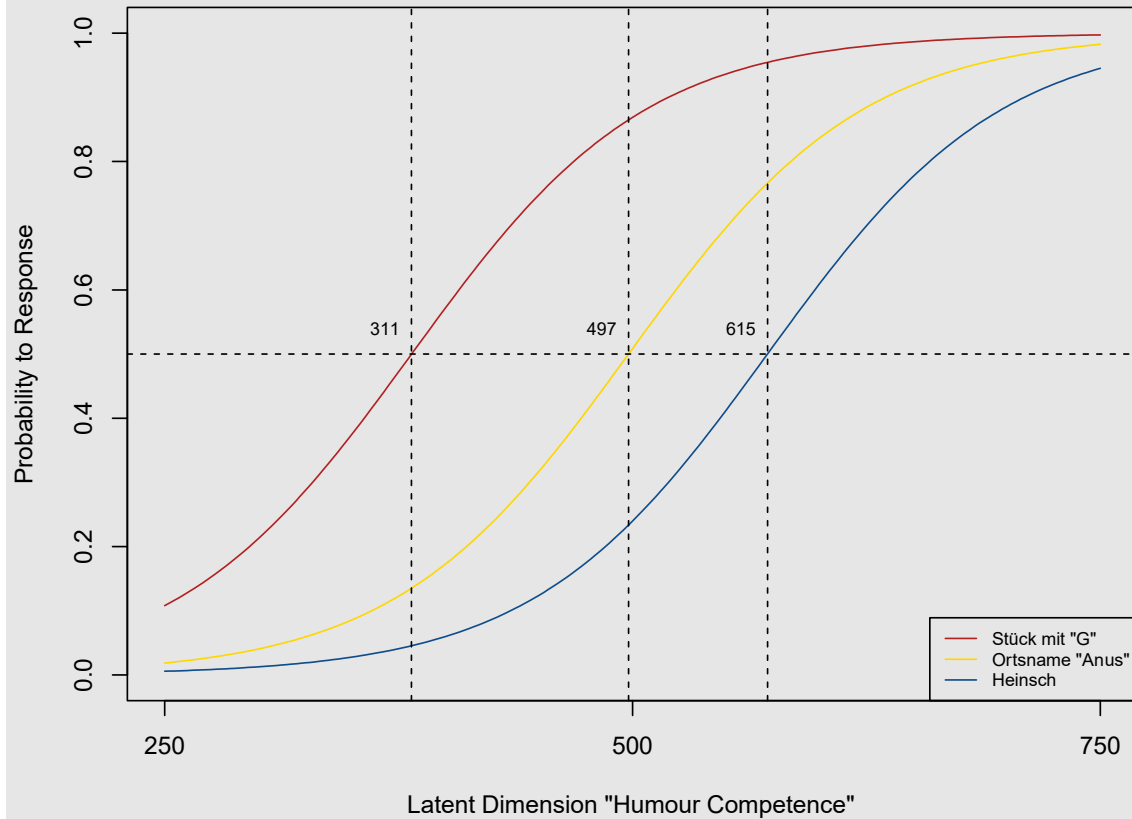
**How mathematics came into being
or: On the necessity of extended
administration**

By Thomas Heinsch

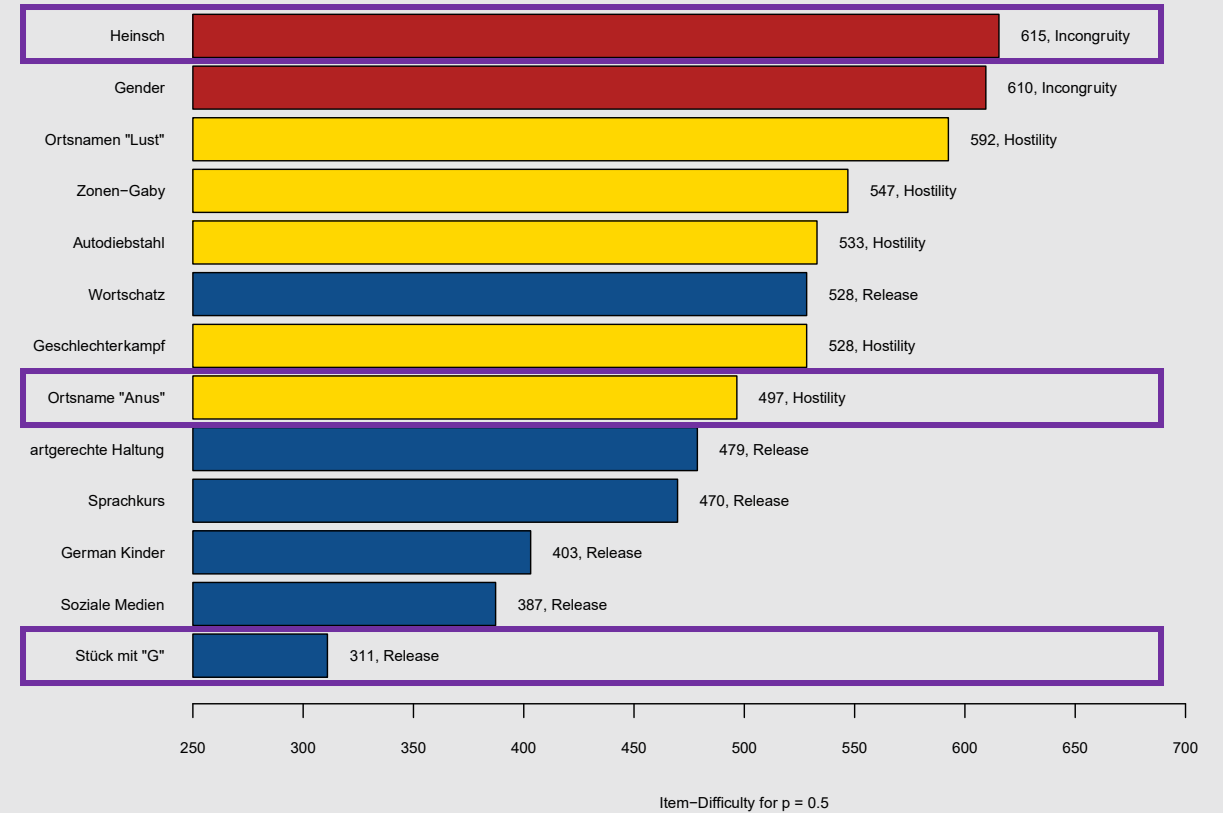
- Narrative about ants who built needles next to their anthill to make their work countable
- At the end, after n years there were $n + 1$ anthills, where n is a natural number – and mathematics came into being
- Non-sens story with the incongruity between the well organized but stupid work of ants and the highly abstract concept of mathematics
- Incongruity of concepts
- low rating, high difficulty
- Humour-Category: „Incongruity“

ICC of the three stimuli & humour classes

Characteristic Curves for Humour Stimuli

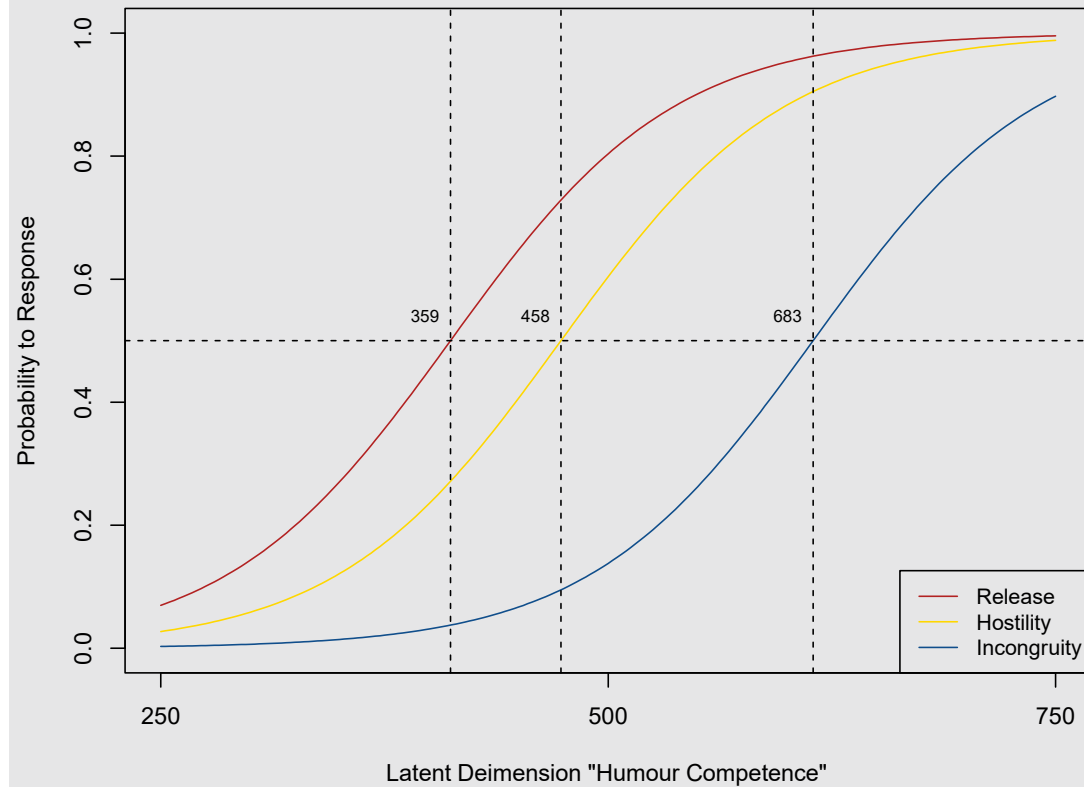


Difficulty of Humor in the Stimuli

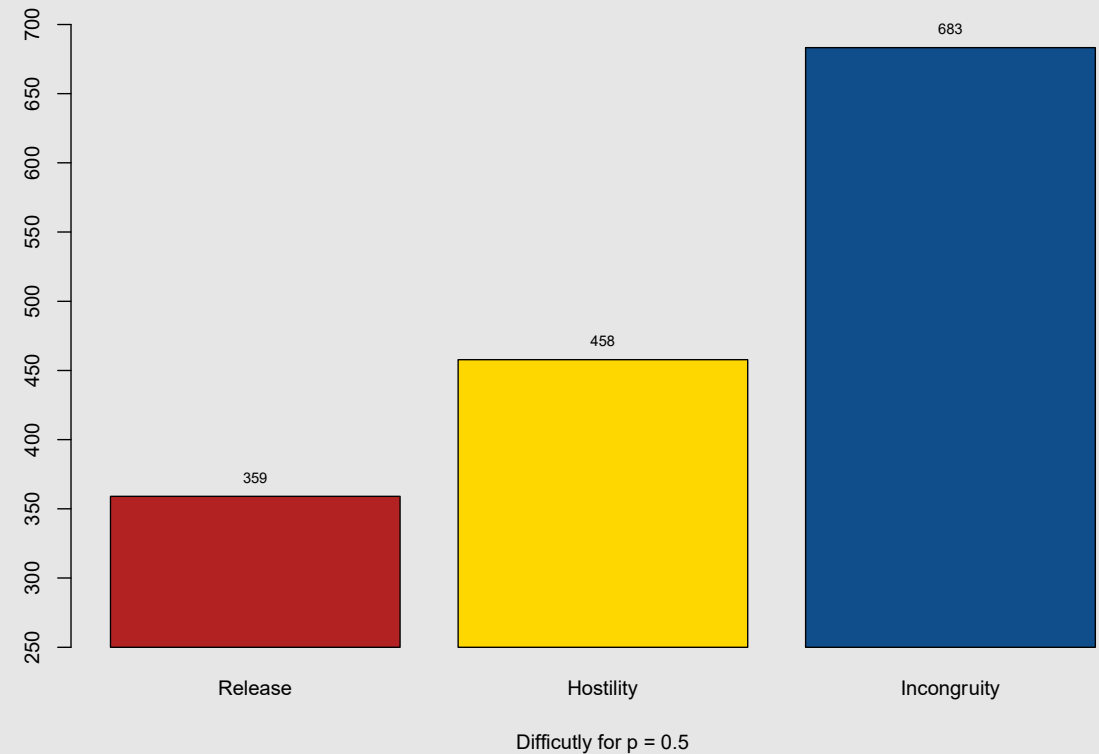


Summery of the theoretical categories of humour (ICC and Difficulty)

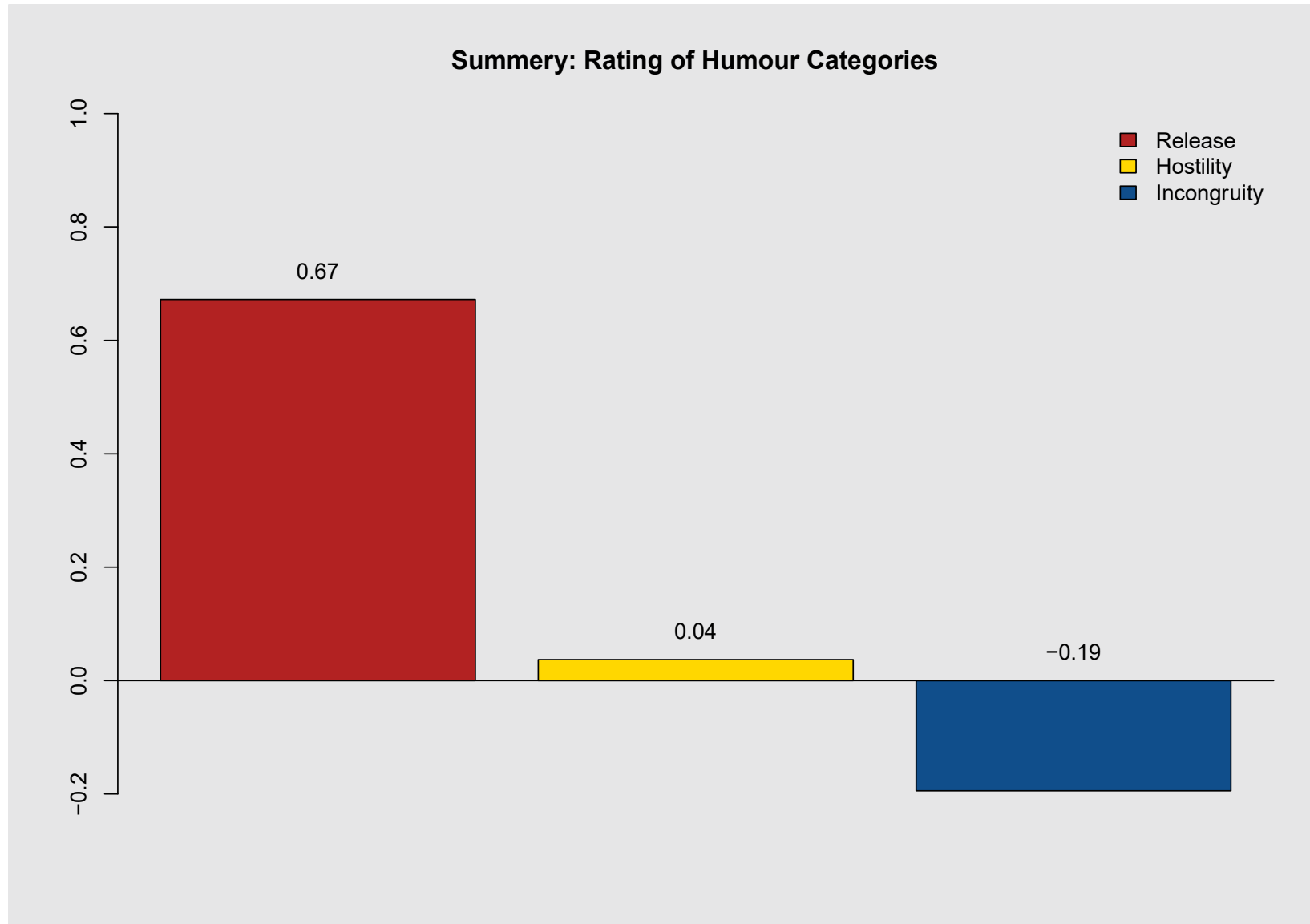
Characteristic Curves for Humour Categories



Difficulty of the Categories



Summery: Rating of the Categories



Standard-Setting: Thresholds for Levels of Humour Competence



	Randsumme	Humor500	Stimuli	Kat
Heinsch	26	615,4	Heinsch	1
Genderwitz	27	609,5	Gender	1
OrtsnamenD	30	592,5	Ortsnamen "Lust"	2
ZonenGaby	39	546,9	Zonen-Gaby	2
Autodiebstahl	42	532,9	Autodiebstahl	2
Geschlechterkampf	43	528,2	Geschlechterkampf	2
Wortschatz	43	528,2	Wortschatz	3
OrtsnameAnus	50	496,6	Ortsname "Anus"	2
Artgerechtehaltung	54	478,7	artgerechte Haltung	3
Sprachkurs	56	469,7	Sprachkurs	3
GermanKinder	70	403,1	German Kinder	3
SozialeMedien	73	387,2	Soziale Medien	3
StueckmitG	85	311	Stück mit "G"	3

≥ 590: high level

≥ 450 moderate level

< 450 low level

Levels correspond with the categories of humour:

Kat_E	Humor500
Incongruity	683.2
Hostility	457.8
Release	359,0

Personal Parameter ξ – the individual competence to perceive a stimulus with humour

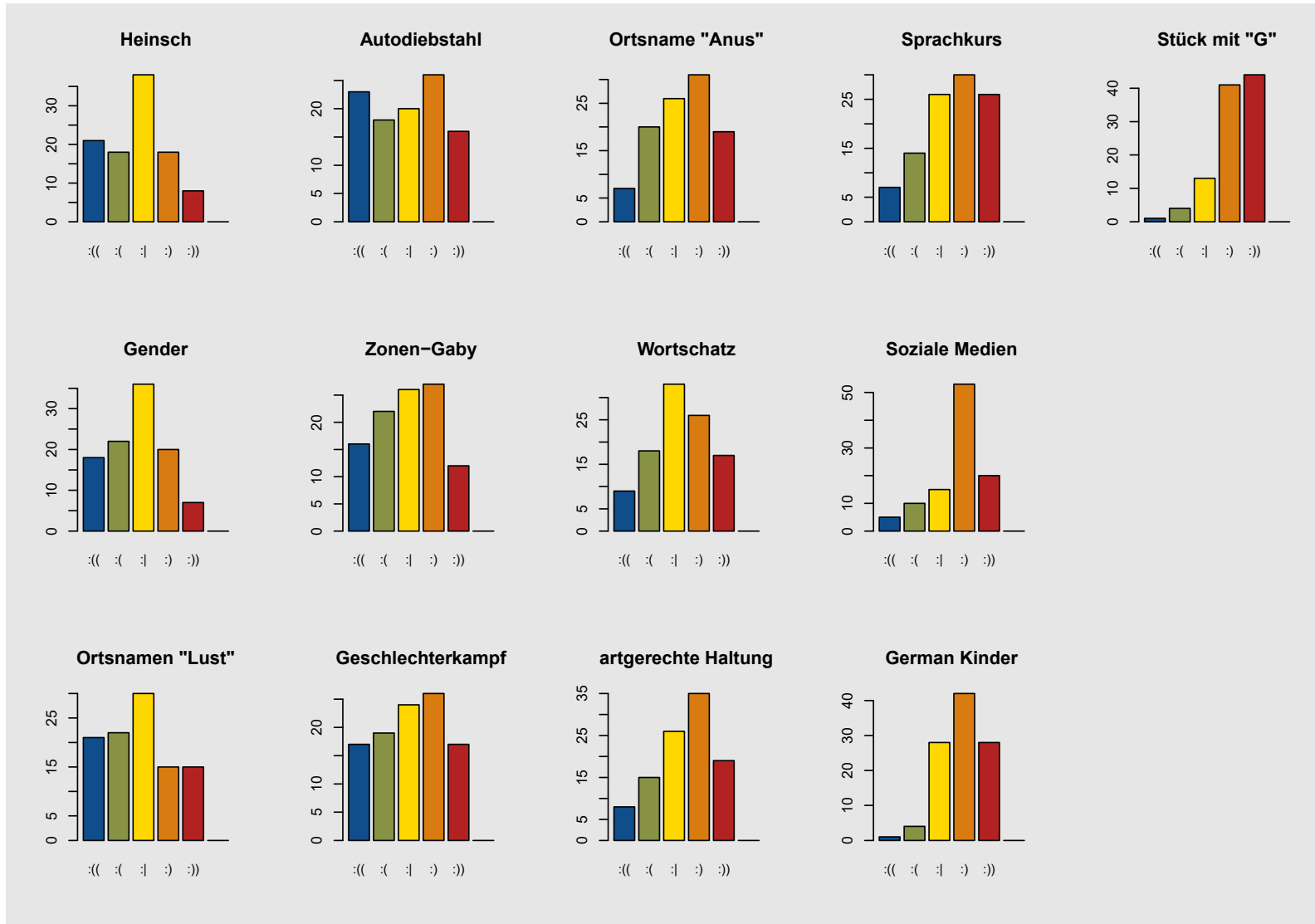


Competence Level	Score
high	≥ 590
moderate	≥ 450
low	< 450

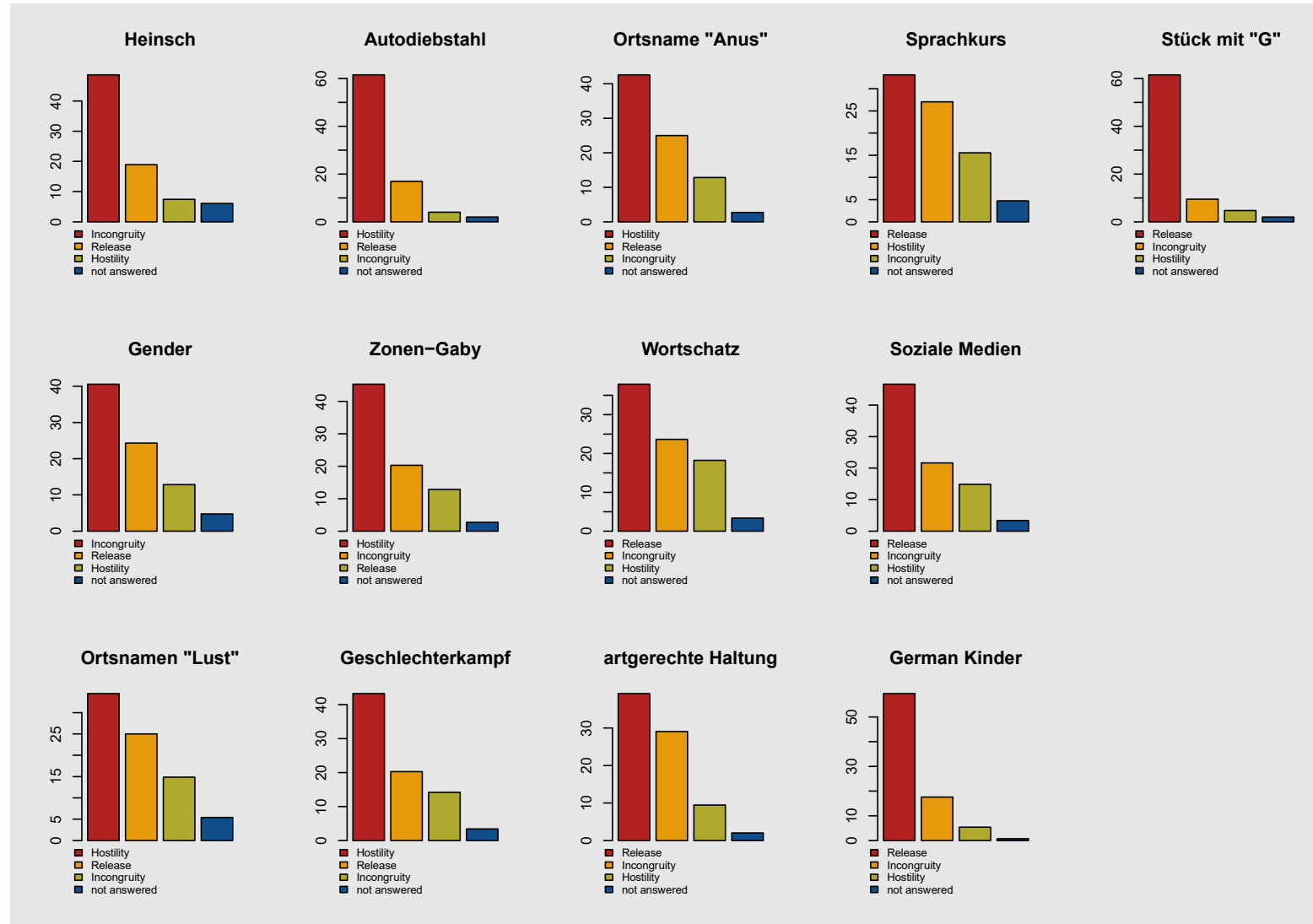
	P_Ergebnis	Result
22	448	Low
25	596	High
26	557	Moderate
28	218	Low
29	407	Low
31	448	Low
34	521	Moderate
37	407	Low
40	694	High
48	521	Moderate
49	596	High
51	521	Moderate
52	557	Moderate
55	485	Moderate
57	304	Low
58	485	Moderate
63	407	Low
64	521	Moderate
65	485	Moderate
66	521	Moderate

	Heinsch	OrtsnameAnus	StueckmitG
22	15,7 %	38,0 %	79,7 %
25	45,1 %	72,9 %	94,5 %
26	35,8 %	64,7 %	92,1 %
28	1,8 %	5,8 %	28,3 %
29	11,1 %	29,1 %	72,4 %
31	15,7 %	38,0 %	79,7 %
34	28,0 %	56,0 %	89,1 %
37	11,1 %	29,1 %	72,4 %
40	68,6 %	87,8 %	97,9 %
48	28,0 %	56,0 %	89,1 %
49	45,1 %	72,9 %	94,5 %
51	28,0 %	56,0 %	89,1 %
52	35,8 %	64,7 %	92,1 %
55	21,3 %	47,0 %	85,0 %
57	4,3 %	12,7 %	48,3 %
58	21,3 %	47,0 %	85,0 %
63	11,1 %	29,1 %	72,4 %
64	28,0 %	56,0 %	89,1 %
65	21,3 %	47,0 %	85,0 %
66	28,0 %	56,0 %	89,1 %

Shortcoming 1 – the 5 point rating scale: how to handle the middle category “3”? u or not?



Catagories of Homour - a heuristic apporach: Ambiguity in the selection of „Incongruity“, “Hostility“ and „Release“?



Adjectives were asked to determine the categories:

- contradictory paradoxical
- derogatory disparaging
- liberating, relieving
redeeming

I am the fool who tells you how well-developed
your humour competence is ...

Thank you for your attention.



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