INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE MONISM AND HOMOGENISATION OF JOURNALISM

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Abstract

Different languages representing different frameworks of thought and perspectives on reality also carry different frameworks of thought on journalism and on how the profession may contribute to democracy. A shortcut to understanding varieties of journalism may be provided by the study of different understandings of journalistic key notions in different languages, by comparing two varieties of journalism – the "reporter" and the "publicist" tradition – in English and German. The current homogenisation of journalism, using the Anglo-American reporter traditions as the model, strengthened by the simultaneous move towards English as *the* international language, may be seen as a loss of diversity in journalism and even a threat to democratic diversity in Europe. An increased stress on language understanding and conceptual hygiene in the education of journalists is proposed to maintain diversity.

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Introduction

Concerned about future conditions of deliberative democracy, Jürgen Habermas points out that "Some authors consider the political journalism to which we are accustomed as a model that is being phased out. Its loss would rob us of the centrepiece of deliberative democracy" (Habermas 2006). The statement raises at least four salient questions: What is being phased out? Who is accustomed to the model? Who is phasing out the model– what kind of process is going on? And what does deliberative democracy mean?

A study of varieties of journalism may be helpful to provide some tentative answers to these questions and may even serve to hamper the process of phasing out models, leaving Europe, at the end of the day, with only one monolithic idea of journalism and its democratic tasks. This study is one of several possible approaches to gain understanding of different interpretations of shared journalistic key notions.

Different interpretations of the latter may be identified in different languages, e.g., English and German. Current journalistic homogenisation appears to be based on the understandings or translations (Latour 1993) of the profession and its conceptual building blocks which are largely tied to English-language frameworks. This may provide a clue concerning the above questions.

What is being phased out? The model of political journalism which is, possibly, in the process of being phased out, may be a journalistic variety which does not lend itself easily to expression in the dominant international language.

Who is accustomed? Those accustomed to any of the fragile varieties of journalism are likely to have originated in political cultures and varieties of democracy, which have evolved in other languages – in this case, German (and other closely related languages).

Who is phasing out – what kind of process is going on? One of the ongoing processes that may lead to the disappearance of varieties of journalism is a process which increases a largely unreflected language monism in international relations particularly in the areas of media research and the social sciences. By unreflected we mean that there is a general lack of attention to different frameworks of thought, embedded in different languages. The latter is not a necessary feature of the former.

What should deliberative democracy be taken to mean? Different understandings may be seen as examples of how clusters of basic assumptions (in different languages) may lead to very different interpretations of seemingly shared notions, affecting and affected by frameworks of thought on journalism and thereby informing its practice.

This article proposes, by way of exemplification, a link (or rather a multitude of links) between journalistic homogenisation, an unreflected drive towards language monism, and the possible loss of democratic diversity. This is good news, since Europe is rich in languages and possible translations of the profession. What this diversity needs is a permanent attention and care – and the recognition that attention to different conceptual understandings in different languages may be needed in particular when one language has acquired a dominant position.

Two Varieties of Journalism

Frameworks of thought about journalism and its tasks in democratic societies can be seen as models *en miniature* of wider frameworks or sets of ideas about society, politics and democracy. These ideas may be linked to more basic assumptions about the natural order of things.

This section briefly introduces two frameworks which are concerned with journalism as a profession rather than as an element of the media industry. One takes journalists to be *reporters*, the other one takes them to be *publicists*. The distinction corresponds roughly to the distinction between understanding journalism in an Atlantic and a North and Central European media model (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

The Reporter Framework

Seen from the outside, the Anglo-American reporter tradition, with its stress on exact information, constitutes a distinct cluster; it is well described and has gained such a dominant position that it is widely seen as the epitome of universal journalism (Meyer & Lund 2006). The reporter is supposed to take information about events – news – to the public and must do so objectively. *The Observer* and *The Spectator* are classic names of journals that illustrate the point of view of a tradition which observes the world from the outside – from the universe, if you like – and thus strives not to adopt any particular point of view.

The reporter is committed to (universal) truth – which makes science an obvious model – and to report facts simply as they are, focusing on the reporting of events. Notions of accuracy, fairness, balance, and the obligation to report both sides of conflicts, signify the guiding values of the reporter. The assumption that conflicts are characteristically two-sided appears to be an instance of the reporter tradition's world view: it is based on, and re-produces a dichotomist world view and consequently strives for purity (truth, facts, information). The reporter inhabits a bipolar world where the professional values of objectivity, neutrality and impartiality are contrasted sharply with notions of partisanship, advocacy, activism, commentary and even interpretation.

Society is also understood in terms of bipolarity with elites confronting the masses. The reporter is a servant of democracy and, thus, of the people. Therefore, a specific task of the reporter is to watch over and scrutinise holders of power (elites) to make abuses of power public, eventually leading to punishment. This is highlighted particularly in *investigative journalism* (Eijk 2005). The direct political task of the reporter is that of a watchdog and linked to the notion of accountability.

The reporter also has an indirect political task to include the masses so that they may become informed voters. The individual unit of the masses – the average or ordinary citizen – is expected to be alienated from intellectual questions and abstractions, uninterested in politics, and motivated primarily by emotions and self-interest; the latter may be extended to his or her local community. News criteria of proximity and sensation, the dramatisation of factual reports, and the use of what's-in-it-for-me approaches, which have been introduced to secure inclusion, however, are at odds with the ideal of factual reporting and provide the tradition of reporting with a continuous dilemma.

The Publicist Framework

The publicist framework of journalism is less well described and hardly recognised in current mainstream media research. It may have a stronghold (without being dominant) in German-speaking countries. The German term *Publizist* signifies a person who takes part in public life, and may be used as a synonym for journalist (Duden 2007). Similarly, Max Weber characterised journalism as the epitome of a political profession which he linked to the ethics of responsibility – directed at future action – as distinct from a universal ethics of ultimate ends (Weber 1992, 36-37). This fits well with the recent observation that German journalists, who see themselves as investigative journalists, tend to be more oriented towards public debate and less inclined to make use of social scientific methods when compared to colleagues in other countries (Eijk 2005, 259).

The publicist is supposed to facilitate public discussion on public affairs. Key notions of this tradition point to the position of the publicist/ journalist in human affairs and cannot be directly translated into English.

The notion of *Aktualität* – as distinct from *news* – is of particular significance. The term carries connotations of urgency and, thus, signifies the presence of crucial, burning issues (Duden 2007). Of Latin origins, the term relates to something at work which must be acted upon, connoting issues; it cannot be confined to events. Neither can it be translated into actuality, which merely signifies the actual existence of something (Hornby 1995), or substituted by the analytical notion of news, because it would exclude the essential judgement of relevance. There is no fit between the notion of *Aktualität* and an assumed dichotomy of news versus views (Blair 2007). In Hans Magnus Enzensberger's writings on media and journalism in the 1960s, *Aktualität* was the core notion. He argued that it is a "micro historic notion," entailing a "before" and an "after"; and it relates to consequences, not just to the life of one or several private persons, but to the course of the world of human affairs (Enzensberger 1964, 109, 131).

Orientierung – as distinct from the notion of *information* – is another important notion, which relates to the sunrise in the East. As a verb it signifies the act of deciding one's actual position on earth or in the world (Duden 2002). The notion is a specifically worldly one and does not translate well into the universal idea of "informing," nor into the word "orientation" (Hornby 1995). *Orientierung* serves assessing publicly (individually and collectively) the lay of the land with a view of choosing rather than having chosen a certain direction. It is a task attributed to journalism within the publicist framework.

Proper and rightful action (including public reflection on such action) rather than universal truth is the basic point of reference for this framework. Demands for objectivity are combined with demands for enthusiasm. The tasks of the publicist journalist include – without being confined to – reporting or the disclosure of abuses of power. Addressing an assumed public of equals with a capacity for critical judgement, the journalist is expected to provide questions for critical reflection and discussion and, more broadly, to identify issues of disagreement, using intellectual rather than emotional appeals. Consequently, this tradition of journalism is completely dependent on the existence of a specific audience, that is: a critically minded section of the citizenry, coming close actually to the classical notion of a *krites* audience (Aristotle 2002).

The Implicit World Views of Languages

Different frameworks of journalism – like the reporter and the publicist – seem to be constituted by a series of specific understandings of shared concepts. Here we attempt to trace some different conceptual interpretations in English and German as they relate to knowledge and politics. Particular attention is paid to endangered species of thought because they seem not to be easily served by English as the dominant language of international communication. To a large extent similar differences would be noted between English and the Scandinavian languages.

The focus is on the general, everyday usage in academic and political life, the discourse on journalism included, and the purpose is pragmatic. Rather than presenting a hypothesis for testing, the aim is to stimulate reflection. We do not lay claim to any specialised competence regarding linguistics, semantics or theories of translation. The method of the study is also pragmatic and may be used by those with access to ordinary, thorough reference books and with sufficient experience of more than one language.

Implicit world views are present in languages, but are, as a rule, not recognised as such by native speakers. Each language facilitates a large variety regarding the formation of opinions. On the other hand, different basic assumptions, present in different languages, do make a difference between languages as frameworks for thought. While fully acknowledging the existence of *intra*-language differences – such as, e.g., differences between British, American and Austrialian English or between varieties of German, Austrian and Swiss German – our comparisons are aimed at *inter*-language differences and focus on the level of basic assumptions that we take to be sufficiently fundamental to cut across intra-language variation. In everyday life, assumptions of this sort form the foundation of specific thoughts and practices, rather than being subjected to scrutiny. We believe that they tend to be taken for granted in communication between native and non-native users of English.

An analysis aimed at understanding and depicting different ways of thinking inevitably includes the use of the analyst's own way of thinking. Consequently, conclusive evidence cannot be provided, and we want to repeat that the purpose of this comparative exercise is merely to raise questions for further reflection. Nor should conclusions be considered carrying any strong explanatory power which might be used in predictions; indeed, it would be prevented by the necessary ambiguity of concepts (Koselleck 2000).

Two types of concepts and notions are treated in this study. One may be termed 'conceptual share-ware'; it consists of terms that appear to be easily transferable across the languages, because almost similar words are being used. Although no translation – in the literal sense – seems to be needed, it should be understood that translations – in a wider sense (Latour 1993) – take place anyway. Concepts and notions are appropriated and taken into the context of a specific language. They are worked on, moulded and provided with meanings that make them fit into the context and serve tasks and purposes, presented by other conceptual understandings and assumptions forming part of the language. Most of the terms originate in Greek and/or Latin and travelled via French to other parts of Europe at different times. The reception and translation of these concepts in many different contexts

have provided them with a wide interpretative scope. In effect, they may have acquired significantly different meanings – easily overlooked – in different languages. They are "contestable concepts" (Collier, Hidalgo & Maciuceanu 2006) and may be regarded as shared containers for a diversity of understandings which tend, in everyday usage, to go unrecognised.

The other type consists of the "(un)thinkables": terms that cannot be transferred directly into other languages. Frequently, inquiry into such terms is useful for understanding different interpretations of conceptual share-ware.

We are painfully aware that each of the differences of interpretation to be discussed below may easily warrant separate articles.

Assumptions about Knowledge

Objectivity is an ideal in both journalism traditions. But a closer look suggests that the seemingly shared *ideal* refers to different *ideas* about what objectivity means. And this, in turn, appears to be related to different understandings of reality.

One seems to be based on the assumption that for something to be real, it has to exist outside the mind. An understanding of objectivity as connected to this idea about reality – first recorded in English in the 1640s (Barnhart 2006) – easily develops into the idea that activity of the mind is somehow unreal and may prevent a direct access to reality. The founding fathers of the Royal Society, in 1660, made this understanding of reality and objectivity the foundation for the development of science as a search for universal truth, to be based on direct observation and without contaminating interference from thought, imagery and words (Redwood 1976; Porter 2001). The reporter's ideal of objectivity as observation from the outside appear to be closely connected to this idea of reality.

Another idea of objectivity suggests that private emotions and pre-judgements should not be allowed to direct (Duden 2002) or even influence (Hornby 1995) assessments, accounts and reports. In itself, this ideal of objectivity – noted in English in the mid-nineteenth century and taken to originate in German understandings of objectivity (Barnhart 2006) – does not exclude thought from reality and, thus, does not take thought and language to be obstacles to understanding reality. Instead, it separates, more or less rigidly, thought and emotion and provides directives for thinking and interpretation. The publicist's ideal of objectivity as a participatory norm may be connected to this understanding of reality, which takes reality, thought and language to be interconnected.

These different ideas of objectivity appear to be reflected in the English concept of science and the German concept of *Wissenschaft*. While science may be exactly described as "the study of the structure and behaviour of the physical and natural world and society, esp. through observation and experiment" (Hornby 1995), *Wissenschaft* is much less exact and much more open-ended and refers broadly to intellectual activity leading to knowledge. A battery of terms – like *Wissen, Kenntnisse, erkennen* – may be used to signify knowledge and the process of arriving at new knowledge and insight, by making use of impressions and experience (Duden 2002). Importantly, the latter is connected to two significantly different meanings and two words: *Erlebnis* is subjective, private experience, while *Erfahrung* is personal experience from life, transcending pure subjectivity and relating to the shared world of human affairs.

The humanities, or the arts, are – as *Geisteswissenschaften* – included in the domain of *Wissenschaft* on the assumption that personal experience, thought, interpretation, language and reality are interconnected. Although sharing roots with the English term ghost (Duden 2007), today's German terms *Geist* and *geistig* cannot be translated directly into English. While sharing some connotations with ghost, they also broadly signify intellectual activity; they are probably most frequently used to signify non-calculating and non-religious thought.

This terminology of knowledge does not fit into frameworks of assumed dichotomies, like pure objectivity versus pure subjectivity, and the material versus the spiritual. Rather, the notion of *Geist* relates to a worldly sphere which is not merely material, and it facilitates the maintenance of open borders (non-dichotomist distinctions) between knowledge, reason, thought, belief, understanding, and judgement. Accordingly, the idea of science as the epitome of reason, reflected in the understanding of unscientific as "not scientific, not done in a careful logical way" (Hornby 1995) is not matched by the German *unwissenschaftlich*. The latter, more neutral term, does not imply lack of care or logic (*Neues Deutsches Wörterbuch* 2003) and makes weaker claims on behalf of *Wissenschaft*.

Widely different conditions for ideas about journalism are created by these differences. Together they prepare the ground for ideas and ideals about journalistic observation and description, either as the opposite of judging and interpreting, or as an exercise of judgement in interpretations. This is complemented by different colourings in English of the notions of criticism and critical as first and foremost negative (Hornby 1995), but in German it means thorough, with negative connotations as a second option (Duden 2002). Along similar lines, it is complemented by different approaches to ambiguity and ambivalence. The prefix *ambi* points to a two-sided reality; ambiguity and ambivalence tend (like the term equivocal) to carry negative connotations. Translated from the German *Vieldeutigkeit* and *Mehrdeutigkeit* (Langenscheidt Collins 2006), which are more neutral and refer to more than two sides, a shift is made from reality as consisting of many sides or aspects to reality as two-sided. Similarly, the valuation of interpretation – implying that other interpretations may be made – changes from neutral or natural, with negative connotations as a second option, to much more distinctly negative.

Assumptions about Political Life

In English or German, the term *partisan* may denote a participant in guerrilla warfare. That, in fact, is the whole meaning of the term in German (*Neues Deutsches Wörterbuch* 2003; Duden 2002). In English, however, the term is also used to denote political participation (Hornby 1995). This meaning is heavily used in current literature on journalism, suggesting – as a rule – that partisanship be avoided. Partisanship differs from the German *Parteilichkeit* which is used to describe one-sided participation, but not political participation as such. This provides a clue to different assumptions about the nature of political life.

The concern is frequently voiced in public discussions that Germans tend to stress the importance of culture at the expense of politics and that there is an anti-political tendency in Germany. However, although politics, political and politician are terms that can be used in a derogatory sense in both languages, negative meanings appear to be more common in English. Typically, terms like cynicism and equivocal seem to be most easily explained by references to politics (Hornby 1995).

The negative understandings in English are related either to power aspects of politics or to the equation with a search for, and exercise of, power. This attitude of suspicion towards politics is combined with a celebration of democracy – a combination that does not make sense when compared to German understandings of democracy as appearing in ordinary reference books, explaining democracy as a political notion, signifying a system of societal decision-making (Duden 2002; *Neues Deutsches Wörterbuch* 2003). In everyday English, on the other hand, democracy seems to have a wider spectrum of possible meanings, and it does not only refer to political processes, but also – and perhaps more frequent – to (the absence of) social hierarchies. Democracy may mean "fair and equal treatment of each other by citizens, without social class divisions" (Hornby 1995). Thus, dislike of politics may easily be combined with devotion to democracy in English and, even stronger: politics may be seen as fundamentally undemocratic. The latter understanding makes sense on the assumption of a radical divide, reflecting social class distinctions, between (political) rulers and those who are being ruled – an assumption appearing to be present in the possible English meaning of *the people* as "the citizens of a country, esp. in contrast with those who govern them" (Hornby 1995). A similar radical divide between rulers and ruled appears in understanding *the masses* as "ordinary people, esp. as seen by political leaders" (Hornby 1995). The German derogatory term, *die Masse*, is used to signify a large part of the population lacking individual and independent thought and action (Duden 2002). The derogatory sense is strong, but it is not taken to represent a particular perspective of political leaders on the citizenry at large.

Possibly, the English notion of *empowerment*, used to denote the transfer of power, is somehow connected to understandings of democracy as a social concept. At the same time, it may be connected to a particular perspective on society: the position of an outside observer. Empowerment cannot be directly translated into German. It might be translated into *stärken* (Langenscheidt Collins 2006), but this is clearly inadequate and actually implies that empowerment is a superfluous term in English, and that the term *strengthening* would do – which, obviously, it does not. German have words for the transfer of formal authority, but those words do not – like empowerment – allow the stretching of meaning from the transfer of formal authority to the transfer of power proper. The notion of empowerment appears to provide a perspective on social status systems as mechanisms that may not only be observed, but also operated on from the outside.

On the other hand, the German concept, *Öffentlichkeit,* is not easily transferred into English. Since it refers, like empowerment, to informal rather than formal aspects of societal life, it is of significant importance to German understanding of public and political life in a broad sense. The translation into *public sphere* is not only inadequate, but directly misleading. The spatial metaphor – public *sphere* – is not present in the German term (Kleinsteuber 2001). *Öffentlichkeit* is neither a physical nor a virtual sphere or space. Researchers are likely to be looking for it in vain and may conclude that it is an illusion. *Öffentlichkeit,* however, refers to an activity, or a series of activities and, therefore, does not conform to the standards of actual or imaginary things. The concept is concerned with the activities of opening issues to scrutiny and discussion in public, and presupposes the existence of a critical public of equals. As such it has been crucial in German(y) for more than two centuries

(Kleinsteuber 2001; Arendt 1998); it has been applied by Jürgen Habermas (1962) and many others and may be seen as a marker of a German-speaking tradition of enlightenment with a fondness for critical discussion on aesthetic, literary and (meta)political issues. It has developed into an institution of public discussion which may serve to bridge the political system and society at large. As apparent in the positive meanings of the German terms *Streitkultur* (Rathgeb 2005) and *Streitgespräch* (*Streit* translates into argument, quarrel or fight) it is at odds with the assumption that for something to be genuinely public it must be above discussion (Porter 1995, 178).

Öffentlichkeit – less awkwardly translated into "publicness" (Thompson 2003) – belongs within the human world of plurality and action (Arendt 1969, 220 ff) or the world of human affairs. At the outset *the world/die Welt* meant exactly that: composed of the words for man and age or time (Barnhart 2006; Duden 2007) it referred specifically to human existence as limited in time and space and, thereby, as distinct from universal reality. The world was the human space. Like the Greek term, *demos*, meaning common people or district (Barnhart 2006), it pointed to space defined by the people, changing over time, who inhabited the space. As of today, that specific meaning of the word has been retained in the possible uses of it in English and German, but subtle differences of meaning imply that there is a preference in English for stressing the spatial dimension. The world appears as the human *space*, which is material rather than spiritual. In German, on the other hand, time is the more important dimension. *Die Welt* is a *human* space, and human beings are timely creatures. This idea of the world, prominent for instance in Hannah Arendt's writings, is easily connected to the classical virtue of practical (including political) reason, *phronesis*, as the exercise of judgement, nourished by experience from the past, aimed broadly at future action (Meyer & Lund 2006) and practised mainly in speech or discussion. The assumption that the German language is closer to reality than other languages (Henrich 1990) is probably based on this understanding of *die Welt* as human reality.

The reporter and the publicist journalist operate in the world, but at the same time they tend – as ideal types – to inhabit different worlds. The reporter, committed to universal truth, should stick to outside observation and avoid partisanship. Working within a framework that radically separates truth and politics, the mass(es) and elite(s), his/her political tasks are limited to exposing abuses of power and including *the common man*, so that he may make his own decisions. The publicist journalist, as a practical reasoner, should stimulate *Öffentlichkeit* and thereby facilitate the exercise of reason in political deliberation. Addressing a public of assumed equals, there is no political task of inclusion.

There is an obvious link between *Öffentlichkeit* and deliberative democracy. Straightforwardly, the latter may be taken to signify various forms of democracy circling the institution of public discussion, stressing the qualities of slow and careful considerations (Hornby 1995; Barnhart 2006; Langenscheidt Collins 2006) of public issues in public. For this understanding of deliberative democracy, the issues are in focus. The task of citizens is to provide multiple perspectives and judgements, and the publicist journalist becomes a centrepiece, whose disappearance may result in the collapse of the institution of public discussion. However, other understandings of deliberative democracy exist. Some current North-American perspectives,

for example, represent different translations. For instance, the individual citizen is to be empowered and to be included in making judgements. The absence of a presupposition of equality seems to turn the idea of deliberative democracy into an instrument to counter power relations and to realise an ideal of social equality (Huspek 2007). To this understanding of deliberative democracy, *public journalism* – a variety of the reporter traditions having made inclusion its first priority (Glasser 1999) – can be seen as the centerpiece, while the publicist journalist may be perceived as an obstacle. Traits in journalism like, "personalization, the dramatization of events, the simplification of complex matters, and the vivid polarization of conflicts" (Habermas 2006) lose the perceived quality of being obstacles to reasonable deliberation. Instead, they come to be perceived as means to achieve "mass democracy" and "intense popular participation in politics" (Aune 2007).

The Diverse Ideas about Diversity and Unity

The main difference between English and German concepts and notions, relating to knowledge and political life, seems to be an affinity for universal truth and the strict separation of spheres, like those of science and politics, among the English speakers, while an understanding of reality as worldly and, thus, many-sided and less clear-cut, seems to prevail in German. Those differences are joined in different interpretations of pluralism.

Pluralism is a complex (thick) notion. It may include, at the same time, aspects related to description and knowledge *and* normative and political aspects of a prescriptive nature. Thus, pluralism may refer to an approach to knowledge that includes a variety of different perspectives on reality. At the same time, it may refer to decision-making processes as processes that ought to include different points of view and different social interests.

Crudely speaking, the notion of pluralism may signify at least two very different and equally valid interpretations. There is an understanding of pluralism as political *form*, with the twin aims of sustaining the rights of minority groups and of preventing a concentration of power. And there is an understanding of pluralism as an articulation of and confrontation between *substantially* different points of view in public discussions, integrating political and knowledge aspects.

An early British understanding of pluralism referred to the separate existence in one (colonial) society of colonial masters and the original inhabitants. A more recent British understanding equates pluralism with local autonomy as opposed to political centralisation (Outhwaite & Bottomore 1998). American pluralism is concerned with minority groups and their rights with respect to being accepted and included and, thus, identifies pluralism with tolerance towards minority groups (Dahl 1966). Common to these understandings is that they take pluralism to be a normative, political notion, signifying peaceful co-existence in a society of separate social groups. These understandings are compatible with a definition of pluralism as "the existence in one society of a number of groups that belong to different races or have different political or religious beliefs", and "the principle that these different groups can live together in peace in one society" (Hornby 1995).

The possible relation between knowledge pluralism and normative, political pluralism presents itself in understandings that actually include both aspects; for instance, when pluralism is explained as the "philosophical view that the world

is composed of independent and separate principles" and as "the existence at the same time in one society of many, equally valid and competing ideas, values, interests, groups, institutions, views etc." (*Neues Deutsches Wörterbuch* 2003)[a]. Here, pluralism is linked broadly to the existence of different perspectives on reality, and normatively signifies their equal competition in society. Aspects of knowledge and political and normative aspects are not radically separated, but there is a gradual transition. This broad understanding of pluralism may contain a concern for minority groups, but cannot be reduced to mean only that.

One interpretation concentrates on form, another on substance. One interpretation may be connected to an ideal of strong unity and seems to be based on the assumption that societal conflicts are potentially threatening. Another interpretation takes such conflicts to be potentially useful and may be connected to a preference for soft or moderate unity that includes diversity and disagreement. One interpretation separates politics and knowledge, another – while maintaining the distinction – combines those aspects.

These different understandings do not only appear in reference works, but may be encountered in practice in the shape of essentially different English- and German-spoken discourses, referring to pluralism and to the relationship between journalism and pluralism (BBC Trust 2007; Schwan 2007).

In so far as pluralism is identified with the advancement of tolerance – or toleration – towards minority groups and with securing their rights, the reporter may contribute to pluralism by including representatives of such groups, reporting about their way of life and by disclosing instances of discrimination. Pluralism might also be furthered by the inclusion of members of minority groups in the profession (Manning-Miller & Brown Dunlap 2002). The reporter is less fit for furthering pluralism which is interpreted as vivid public discussion between substantially different perspectives and points of view. To further pluralism in the sense of *Öffentlichkeit*, the journalist must inquire into issues for public discussion, thereby transcending the mere reporting of events. This task requires the exercise of judgement for the purpose of identifying topics for discussion and substantially different points of view. This is crucial to the publicist's approach and to the understanding of deliberative democracy to which it is connected.

Conceptual Hygiene and Conceptual History

The current homogenisation of journalism, using the Anglo-American reporter traditions as the model, may be seen as a loss of diversity in journalism and even as a threat to the democratic diversity or the continued existence of different democratic traditions in Europe, each supported by different varieties of journalism. As this development in journalism is synchronised with a general move towards European language monism – turning English into *the* international language and reducing other languages to a for-domestic-use-only status – it may be hard to recognise what is being lost in the process.

We have used the publicist tradition of journalism as an example of a variety of journalism connected to basic assumptions that do not seem to be at home in the English language, but can be found in German or, possibly, in Scandinavian languages. Many subtle differences, pulling in the same direction regarding an understanding of concepts and notions, combine in English-spoken exchanges

to misconceptions of this tradition of journalism and of ideas about knowledge, politics and democracy to which it is connected. Other misconceptions regarding ideas about journalism, knowledge and politics in other European languages, like the Romance and Slavic languages, may be significant.

The use of English as a *lingua franca* belongs to the order of the day. Against that background and to maintain diversity in journalism, a general command of more than one major European language is an obvious priority for institutions of journalism education. Another option might be to stimulate awareness and curiosity regarding the implicit world views of languages and care for a conceptual hygiene in the education of journalists – hygiene, that is, in the sense of letting air and light into the containers of diverse interpretations, so that the diversity may be seen and reflected upon.

The existence in Europe of many languages, each providing different perspectives on reality, may be seen as a resource for responding to the fundamental condition of diversity in the world of human affairs and as a possibility for gaining a richer understanding of reality. Conceptual history, drawing on this language diversity, constitutes one possible avenue of prompting care for conceptual hygiene. Increased knowledge of the evolution of conceptual understandings, peculiar to individual languages or to groups of languages, might encourage reflection on concepts and notions as outcomes of human history and, thus, as susceptible to re-thinking and to "reciprocal recognition" (Collier, Hidalgo & Maciuceanu 2006). Notions like the reporter, the *Publizist*, *Geist*, partisanship, empowerment and *Öffentlichkeit* – or accountability and *Rechtsstaat*, for good measure – have their own translational history. They have been appropriated and elaborated upon by users of different languages. Thereby, they have been fitted into specific contexts and frameworks of thought and shaped to suit specific purposes. These histories – heavily influenced, probably, by wars and religious strife – form part of the historical background of European varieties of journalism. They may prove useful also to a purpose of stimulating exchange between different points of view *on* and *in* European varieties of journalism. Possibly such exchange, and the acceptance of universal journalism as characterised by diversity, are the only means of maintaining journalistic varieties which currently appear to be subjected to out-phasing.

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1. "Philosophische Anschauung, dass die Welt aus eigenständigen, nicht miteinander verbundenen Prinzipien besteht" and "Vielfalt gleichberechtigt nebeneinander in einer Gesellschaft konkurrierender Ideen, Werte, Interessen, Gruppen, Institutionen, Anschauungen etc."

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