



Faculty of Communication &
Media – University of Athens

Deutsches Seminar –
Universität Zürich



Corrective practices in the print media

Greece vs. Germany

Spiros A. Moschonas · Jürgen Spitzmüller

Prescriptivism and purism

- Moschonas, S. A. & Spitzmüller, J. 2009. "Prescriptivism in and about the media: A comparative analysis of corrective practices in Greece and Germany", in S. Johnson and T. Milani (eds), *Language Ideologies and Media Discourse: Texts, Practices, Politics*, London: Continuum 17-40.
- 2005. "Greece's Latest Language Issues". *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 22.2: 173-206.
 - 2005. *Ιδεολογία και γλώσσα*. Athens: Patakis.
 - 2009. "Language Issues after the Language Question: On the Modern Standards of Standard Modern Greek", in *Standard Languages and Language Standards: Greek, Past and Present*, ed. A. Georgakopoulou and M. Silk. London: King's College – Centre for Hellenic Studies, 293-320.
- Spitzmüller, J. 2005. "Metasprachdiskurse. Einstellungen zu Anglizismen und Fremdwörtern in der deutschen Wissenschaftlichen Literatur". *Zeitschrift für Sprachkritik und Sprachkultur* 3: 248-261.
- 2005. "Das Eigene, das Fremde und das Unbehagen an der Sprachkultur: Überlegungen zur Dynamik sprachideologischer Diskurse." *Aptum. Zeitschrift für Sprachkritik und Sprachkultur* 3: 248-261.
 - 2007. "Staking the Claims of Identity: Purism, Linguistics and the Media in post-1990 Germany". *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 11.2: 261-285.

Why the press?

- » The press is not just a vehicle, but also a popular *target* of prescriptivism.
- » It is often criticized for its *bad* language use.
- » It is often blamed as the main propagator of (undesirable) language change – a prototype of bad language use.
- » Paradoxically, those criticizing the most are among those criticized the most. Critique to (media) language comes mostly from the press, a partly antagonistic medium. Hence, articles in the press are a suitable index for the study of prescriptivism in both the print and the electronic media.

Data: Texts *in the press about* the language of the media

Greece

- » period: 1970 – 2001 +
- » Corpus: 364 texts (Nov. 99- Jan. 2000) / 10,600
- » compiled through a press monitoring agency from 76 newspapers and 102 magazines
- » no metalinguistic reference excluded
- » references to media language increase after the privatization of the electronic media (Greek Laws 1730/1987 and 1866/1989)

Germany

- » period: 1990 – 2001 +
- » Corpus: 1,783 texts
- » manually compiled from 9 (+42) newspapers and 3 (+9) magazines;
- » focus on purism – references to spelling reform excluded
- » concentration of references to media language in the periods 1994 (10) - 1995 (11) and 1999 (15) - 2000 (18)

Data: Texts *in* the press *about* the language of the media

Greece

- » texts on media language = 80 / 364 (22%)
 - ▶ letters to the editor (7)
 - ▶ opinion articles [incl. "usage columns"] (34)
 - ▶ short comments (11)
 - ▶ news articles (21)
 - ▶ features (4)
 - ▶ interviews (3)

Germany

- » texts on media language = 81 / 1,783 (4.5%)
 - ▶ letters to the editor (44)
 - ▶ commentaries (23) [= "Glossen" (17) & "Kommentare" (6)]
 - ▶ essays (7)
 - ▶ reviews (4)
 - ▶ news articles (3)
 - ▶ no "usage columns"

Prescriptivism: Sets of correctives (Moschonas 2005a)

» A corrective is a directive speech act of a metalanguage-to-language direction of fit that has the following form:

One should neither say nor write X [prohibitive];
one should say and write Y [normative],
because Z [explicative]

e.g., one should neither say nor write “αποφασίζω *ότι*” [to decide *that*]; one should say and write “αποφασίζω *να*” [to decide *to*], because ...” (Papazafiri 1991:14-16)

e.g., one should neither say nor write “geschockt” [shocked]; one should say and write “schockiert”, because ...” (Natorp 1996)

Correctives: An example (Greece)

“Malapropisms”,
newspaper *Ethnos*

ΤΑ ΜΑΡΓΑΡΙΤΑΡΙΑ

► **Ακούστηκε:** Από το ΦΠΑ διαφεύγουν 1,5 δισεκατομμύρια τον χρόνο.
Το λάθος: Μόνο στον... παράδεισο συμβαίνουν αυτά.
Το σωστό: 1,5 τρισ. δραχμές τον χρόνο!

► **Ακούστηκε:** Ο παπός των παλιοημερολογιτών.
Το λάθος: Τρία πουλάκια κάθονταν...
Το σωστό: Παλιοημερολογιτών.

► **Ακούστηκε:** Εδώσε και πήρε το ευχέλαιο αυτές τις μέρες.
Το λάθος: Ναι, στην Κορώνη βρέχει λάδι και στην Καλαμάτα σύκα...
Το σωστό: Οι ευχές, το ευχολόγιο ήθελε να πει, ποιος ξέρει...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Η ορθοπεδική σήμερα κάνει θαύματα...
Το λάθος: Γι' αυτό και συ την τσάκισες τη γλώσσα!
Το σωστό: Η ορθοπεδική...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Ηρθαμε δεύτεροι μεταξύ των πρώτων...
Το λάθος: Καλά, εσένα σε χρειάζεται η στατιστική επιστήμη.
Το σωστό: Δεύτεροι και τα υπόλοιπα εκ του περισσοῦ.

X = prohibitive (“we heard: ...”)

Z = explicative (“the mistake is: ...”)

Y = normative (“the right is: ...”)

ΤΑ ΜΑΡΓΑΡΙΤΑΡΙΑ

► **Ακούστηκε:** Η πλειοψηφία των αντικειμένων...
Το λάθος: Ήταν... και τα αντικείμενα!
Το σωστό: Η πλειονότητα...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Η κατάσταση προχωρά με χωρίς περιορισμούς...
Το σχόλιο: Αυτό μάλιστα είναι λεκτικό κάτορθωμα.
Το σωστό: Χωρίς, σκέτο...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Εμείς θέλουμε να σας καθησιγάσουμε...
Το σχόλιο: Ποιος είπε ότι δεν υπάρχουν σήμερα γλωσσοπλάστες;
Το σωστό: Καθησυχάσουμε...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Ο αποπεμπόμενος πρώην υπουργός...
Το σχόλιο: Χμ, μια αποπομπή σου χρειάζεται...
Το σωστό: Ο αποπέμφθεις...

► **Ακούστηκε:** Πέντε διεκδικούν την κατασκευή του προαστικού...
Το σχόλιο: Αμάν πια, ας το μάθουν επιτέλους...
Το σωστό: Προαστιακός...

Correctives: An example (Germany)

Haßwort der Woche

X = prohibitive ("... eine kleine

Marotte, die sich hartnäckig hält .Sü) *deutsche Zeitung*,
10 August 1996: 15

Unkosten

Da sage noch einer, die deutsche Sprache sei in sich logisch (sagt keiner? äh, egal). Jedenfalls gibt es da eine kleine Marotte, die sich hartnäckig hält und immer wieder heftig zu der Vermutung Anlaß gibt, die Deutschen seien Meister in der Verschleierungstaktik, um nicht zu sagen im Selbstbetrug. Warum sonst setzte man hierzulande vor gewisse Mengenangaben die unauffällige, negierende Vorsilbe *un-*, auf daß ungemaine Verwirrung herrsche, welche Dimensionen der Anlaß nun angenommen hat? Sind Kosten entstanden? Nein, Unkosten. Welche Mengen lagern? Unmengen, um nicht zu sagen Unmassen, laut Duden bedeutungsgleich mit 'sehr große Menge'. Warum nur, fragt sich der Laie, greift man im Deutschen

Z = explicative ("... *un-* is a negating prefix [and thus must not be used to denote anything else, since*] ...")

Y = normative (implicit: "don't use the prefix *un-* to mark a big amount of x")

presupposition (*"the" German language should [ideally] be logical in itself)

aw

Metalanguage₁ and Metalanguage₂ (< Silverstein / Preston)

Prohibitives + normatives } a **corrective practice**
(**metalanguage₁**)

Explicatives } a **conceptual scheme**, set of beliefs
or ideology proper (**metalanguage₂**)

- » *Hypothesis*: corrective practices (metalanguages₁) vary significantly across languages, periods and linguistic forms (**F. Braudel**: “courte durée”); on the other hand, conceptual schemes (metalanguages₂) tend to be long-term phenomena of wider (even supra-cultural) scope (**Braudel**: “longue durée”)
- » German and Greek prescriptivism are characterized by **varying corrective practices** operating under **similar conceptual schemes**

Metalinguage₁: Corrective repertoires (Greece's NR/TC)

- * [nominal agreement in archaistic morphology: 'of the existing (masc.) predictions (fem.)' instead of 'of the existing (fem.) predictions (fem.)']
- * [nominal agreement in archaistic morphology: 'of the undertaken (masc.) initiatives (fem.)']
- * [adverbial endings: appropriate 'archaistic' ending for 'probably']
- * [the Greek expression for 'sine qua non', misphrased]
- * [adverbial endings: appropriate archaistic ending for 'possibly']
- * [adverbial endings: appropriate archaistic ending for 'previously']
- * [an archaistic rule: internal augment in the aoristic imperative is prohibited]
- * [an archaistic rule: mistaken internal augmentation in aorist]
- * [phraseology: 'to exercise' vs. 'to practice']
- * [phraseology: 'deal with' vs. 'be concerned with']
- * [phraseology: appropriate archaistic form of 'to change residence']
- * [orthography: 'heap, pile' vs. 'corpse']
- * [phraseology: 'the information leaked (intrans.)' vs. 'they leaked (trans.) the information'].

Metalanguage₁: Corrective repertoires (Germany)

“Abgesehen von den Umstellungsmühen verändert die Schreibreform hauptsächlich das Schriftbild. Die Ausdruckskraft der deutschen Sprache leidet unter der Reform nicht wesentlich. Die deutsche Sprache befindet sich vielmehr aus anderen Gründen im Krankenstand. Die Diagnose lautet: Unklarheit, Widersprüchlichkeit, Anhäufung von Füllwörtern, Mißachtung der Grammatik. Unsere sprachzuständigen Institutionen verweigern eine Therapie. [...] Beispiele, täglich zu finden in Literatur aller Art, Rundfunk und Fernsehen:

- » davon ausgehen. [...] anstelle von erwarten, annehmen, vermuten, erhoffen, unterstellen, voraussetzen, glauben, damit rechnen, voraussagen etc. [...].
- » Worte. Die Mehrzahl von Wort heißt Wörter. [...] Worte sind mehrere Wörter, die zusammengenommen einen Sinn ergeben. [...]
- » sich bedanken. Laut Grammatikregel 'bleibt bei (reflexiven Verben) das Geschehen im Bereich des Subjekts'. Wer sich bedankt, dankt sich also selbst. [...]
- » Scheinbar. Anscheinend (= vermutlich), wissen viele nicht, daß jemand, der scheinbar schläft, wach ist (scheinbar = zum Schein).
- » -fähig. Lenkfähige Autos gibt es nicht; sie sind lenkbar. Steuern sind nicht abzugsfähig, sondern abziehbar. [...]
- » wirklich, echt, tatsächlich, in der Tat. Die Inflation der Bestärkungen erfordert bald eine Verdoppelung: echt wirklich. [...]"

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

- » X/Y-pairs: 328 (= 4.10/text)
 - ▶ token-pairs: 252 (3.15/t)
 - ▶ type-pairs: 76 (0.95/t)
- » X/∅-references: 162 (2.03/t)
- » Total: 490 (6.13/t)

- » Highest concentration:
 - ▶ 51 references (Charis 29/1/2000)
 - ▶ 31 x/y-pairs (Charis 29/1/2000)
- » Lowest concentration:
 - ▶ 0 references (34 texts)

Germany

- » X/Y-pairs: 239 (= 2.95/text)
 - ▶ token-pairs: 221 (2.73/t)
 - ▶ type-pairs: 18 (0.22/t)
- » X/∅-references: 388 (4.79/t)
- » Total: 627 (7.74/t)

- » Highest concentration:
 - ▶ 38 references (Natorp 20/6/1998)
 - ▶ 23 x/y-pairs (Natorp 6/11/1999)
- » Lowest concentration:
 - ▶ 0 references (7 texts)

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

- » **Lexicon: 98 (20%)**
 - ▶ foreign words: 30 (6.1%)
 - › English loans: 24 (4.9%)
 - › loans from other languages: 3 (0.6%)
 - › loan translations: 3 (0.6%)
 - ▶ marked archaistic forms: 38 (7.8%)
 - ▶ marked *demotic* forms: 17 (3.5%)
 - ▶ dialectal: 6 (1.2%)
 - ▶ translation of archaisms: 7 (1.4%)

Germany

- » **Lexicon: 170 (27.1%)**
 - ▶ foreign words: 169 (27%)
 - › English loans: 157 (25%) [-11.2%]
 - › loans from other languages: 9 (1.4%)
 - › loan translations: 3 (0.5%)
 - ▶ colloquialisms: 1 (0.1%)

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

- » Discourse/
Pragmatics:
15 (3%)
 - ▶ media discourse structure: 13 (2.7%)
[+ 21 articles on 'Greek in the new media']
 - ▶ euphemisms: 1 (0.2%)
 - ▶ politeness: 1 (0.2%)

Germany

- » Discourse/
Pragmatics:
210 (33.5%)
"overused"/inapprpr. used
 - ▶ words: 110 (17.5%)
 - ▶ metaphors: 64 (10.2%)
 - ▶ formulaic expressions: 30 (4.8%)
 - ▶ superlatives: 4 (0.6%)
 - ▶ fillers: 2 (0.3%)

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

» Semantics:

13 (2.7%)

- ▶ obscurity of learned/archaistic forms: 7 (1.4%)
- ▶ semantic differentiation or change: 6 (1.2%)

Germany

» Semantics:

89 (14.2%)

- ▶ wrongly used foreign words: 29 (4.6%)
- ▶ loss of semantic differentiation: 26 (4.1%)
- ▶ “illogical” semantics: 18 (2.9%)
- ▶ “contaminated” expressions: 9 (1.4%)
- ▶ misapplications of technical terms: 6 (1%)
- ▶ “odd” metaphors: 1 (0.1%)

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

- » **Morphology / Syntax: 199 (45.7%)**
 - ▶ violation of archaistic rules: 27 (5.5%)
 - ▶ agreement / attraction: 12 (2.4%)
 - ▶ demotic adv. ending (-α): 29 (6%)
 - ▶ stress mov. in declension: 25 (5.1%)
 - ▶ wrong affix: 36 (7.3%)
 - ▶ augmented imperative: 6 (1.2%)
 - ▶ prep + relative clause: 1 (0.2%)
 - ▶ nouns with no plural / sing.: 60 (12.2%)
 - ▶ loan adaptation: 25 (5.1%)
 - ▶ mixed (Greek-foreign) compounds: 2 (0.4%)
 - ▶ foreign word morphology: 1 (0.2%)
- » **Phraseology: 29 (5.9%)**
 - ▶ formulaic expr.: 21 (4.3%)
 - ▶ ἀφορά (σε) [to concern / be about]: 8 (1.6%)

Germany

- » **Morphology / Syntax: 113 (18%)**
 - ▶ wrong inflection: 43 (6.9%)
 - ▶ wrong prepositions: 15 (2.4%)
 - ▶ agreement: 3 (0.5%)
 - ▶ code-switching: 3 (0.5%)
 - ▶ word order: 2 (0.3%)
 - ▶ wrong conjunction: 1 (0.1%)
 - ▶ wrong tense ("foreign" syntax): 1 (0.1%)
 - ▶ "illogical" morphology: 34 (5.4%)
 - ▶ foreign word morphology: 11 (1.8%)
- » **Phraseology: 25 (4%)**
 - ▶ foreignisms: 25 (4%)

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

» Orthography:

75 (15.3%)

- ▶ for/against monotonic: 5 (1%) vs. 4 (0.8%)
- ▶ for/against Roman script (in some registers): 3 (0.6%) vs. 10 (2%)
- ▶ loan transliteration: 7 (1.4%)
- ▶ “final –v” rule (assimilation): 5 (1%)
- ▶ CC clusters (dissimilation): 1 (0.2%)
- ▶ punctuation: 2 (0.4%)
- ▶ misspellings: 38 (7.8%)

Germany

» Orthography:

13 (2%)

- ▶ spelling reform*: 9 (1.4%)
- ▶ spelling of loanwords: 1 (0.1%)
- ▶ misc.: 3 (0.5%)

(*consider corpus constraints!)



Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics

Greece

- » **Miscellaneous**: 25 (5.1%)
 - ▶ pronunciation: 2 (0.4%)
 - ▶ pronunciation of loans: 7 (1.4%)
 - ▶ false etymologies: 6 (1.2%)
 - ▶ blunders/boners: 10 (2%)

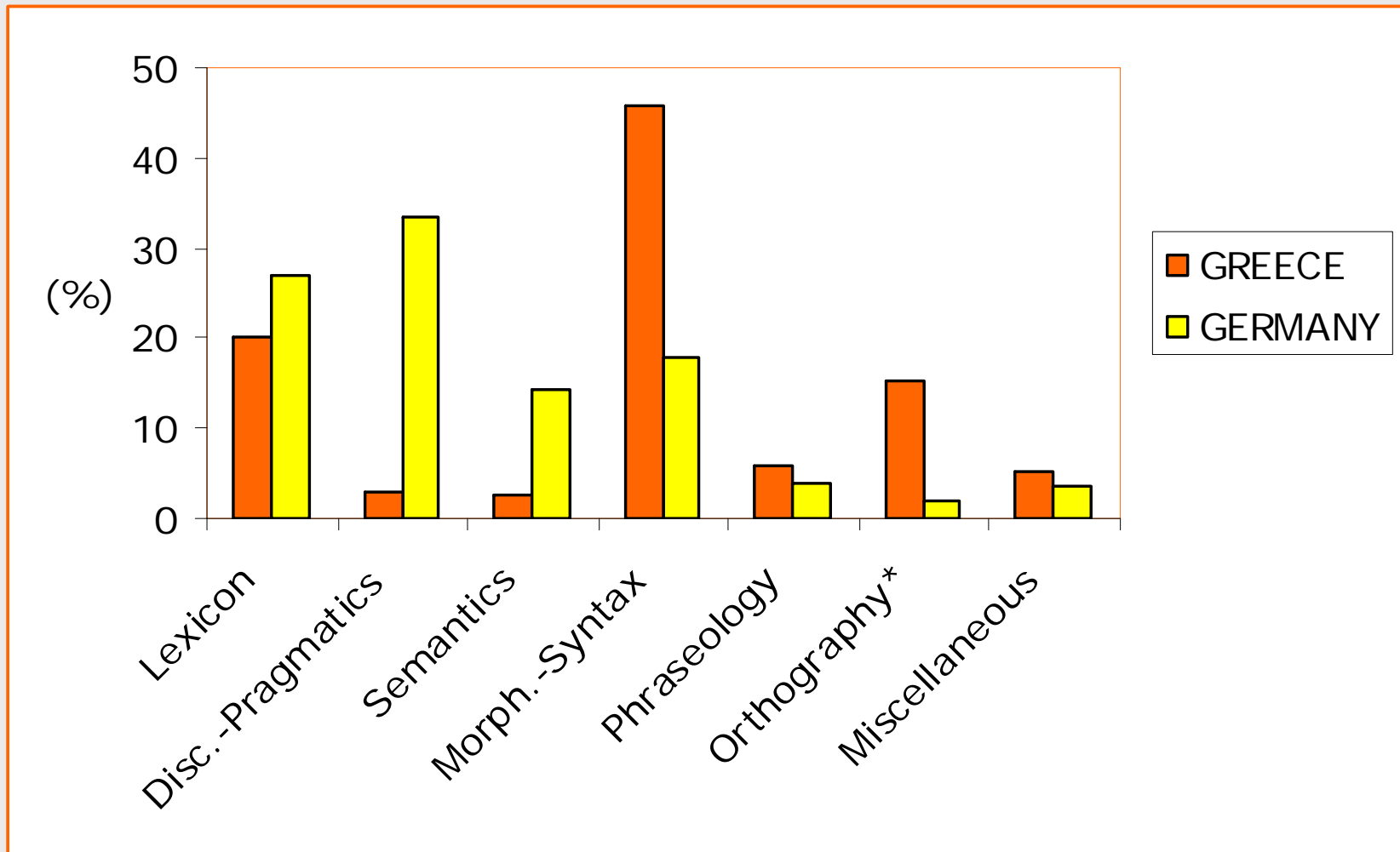
Germany

- » **Miscellaneous**: 22 (3.5%)
 - ▶ pronunciation: 1 (0.1%)
 - ▶ pronunciation of loans: 9 (1.4%)
 - ▶ typos: 12 (2%)

- » **loans**: 62 (12.7%)
- » **diglossia**: 158 (32.2%)

- » **loans**: 254 (40.5%)
- » **orthography**: ?

Metalanguage₁: Tendencies and statistics



(*consider corpus constraints!)



Metalanguage₁: Recent trends of Greek and German prescriptivism

Greece

- » Diglossia: *demotic* vs. archaistic/puristic variety (two standards)
- » Restandardization:
 - ▶ Standard Modern Greek = *demotic* + archaisms
 - ▶ internal purism
 - ▶ external purism
- » “Grammatical” model → “phraseological” model:
 - ▶ “comprehensive”
 - ▶ “etymological”
 - ▶ “conventional”
 - ▶ “internal”

Germany

- » Long prescriptive tradition (standardization)
- » Restandardization:
 - ▶ purism against Anglicisms
 - ▶ spelling reform: battle for the right to prescribe (cf. [Johnson 2005](#))
- » “Grammatical” model → “semantic” model:
 - ▶ “comprehensive”
 - ▶ “etymological”
 - ▶ “logical”
 - ▶ “external”

Metalanguage₁: Shared presuppositions

- » Presuppositions of correctives:
 - ▶ variation of X and Y
 - ▶ awareness of X and Y
 - ▶ variation is “transitional”
 - ▶ correctives raise awareness of X and Y through X/Y, with the aim of replacing X by Y.
- » Variation is not the “normal case” (as in sociolinguistics); rather, it is a “transitional” stage between two exclusive uses (X *or* Y) – a motion in a pendulum. Could correctives prove felicitous under particular circumstances? Could an increase in awareness of X/Y in favour of Y stop the pendulum swinging towards X?

Metalanguage₂: Media language as a model (Greece)

Τα θετικά και αρνητικά για τη γλώσσα

ΓΙΩΡΓΟΣ ΜΠΑΜΠΙΝΙΩΤΗΣ

(Καθηγητής Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών)

Από τη λειτουργία της ιδιωτικής τηλεόρασης σε σχέση με τη γλώσσα, έχουν προκύψει ορισμένες θετικές και αρνητικές πλευρές και κυρίως παραλείψεις. Στις θετικές πλευρές είναι ο



πρότυπα άσχημα για τη γλώσσα. Επίσης οι σειρές — πλην εξαιρέσεων — έχουν κατά κανόνα κακό λόγο, με την έννοια ότι τα πρότυπα που προβάλλουν έχουν συχνά ένα χυδαίο χαρακτήρα και προχειρότητα στις επιλογές προκειμένου να βγάλουν το «αστείο».

Πέρα από το ξενόγλωσσο στοιχείο που ακούγεται, δεν βοηθάει επίσης την ελληνική γλώσσα, η μεταγλώττιση των ξένων σειρών. Συχνά υπάρχουν σοβαρά ορθογραφικά λάθη και κακή απόδοση των ελληνικών τα οποία κάνουν κακό στη γλωσσική συγκρότηση του θεατή.

Στις αρνητικές πλευρές θα έβαζα και τα ριάλιτι σόου, όπου ο λόγος που εκπαιδεύεται είναι κατά κανόνα πολύ κακής ποιότητας. Θα μπορούσε η ιδιωτική τηλεόραση να δώσει ένα ποσοστό χρόνου αφιερωμένο στην ελληνική γλώσσα.

Υπάρχει ήδη ο Νόμος Βενιζέλου που υποχρεώνει τα κανάλια να τα κάνουν, πράγμα το οποίο δεν γίνεται. Έτσι, δεν περνάει στην τηλεόραση, αυτό που εγώ λέω, πως η γλώσσα ως αξία, και ως ένα αγαθό πολιτιστικό, πρέπει να προσεγθεί και να προβληθεί. Γιατί ο λόγος στην τηλεόραση λειτουργεί ως πρότυπο και καθώς συνοδεύεται από την εικόνα αποτυπώνεται όσο τίποτε άλλο.

“the media language is [should be] exemplary in both expression and structure”

Ethnos 29/11/1999

media language as a model

Metalanguage₂: Media language as a model (Germany)

“Unbestreitbar ist, daß diejenigen Institutionen und Personen, die der Bevölkerung jeden Tag mit ihren schablonenhaft formulierten Sätzen in den Ohren liegen, **Verantwortung dafür tragen**, daß sich die Sprache so wie beschrieben wandelt. Denn **nach diesen Leitfiguren richtet sich die Masse.**”

Politiker von sich geben und Fernsehen und Rundfunk dann Millionen von Haushalten vermitteln, wird dort aufgesogen, weiterverbreitet und weitergegeben. Wenn aus dem Lautsprecher stets nur ‘erneut’ ertönt und die vielen anderen

“Was etwa Politiker von sich geben und Fernsehen und Rundfunk dann Millionen von Haushalten vermitteln, wird dort aufgesogen, weiterverbreitet und weitergegeben. Wenn **aus dem Lautsprecher** stets nur ‘erneut’ ertönt und die vielen anderen Möglichkeiten wie wiederum, abermals, ein weiteres Mal, noch einmal, aufs neue vernachlässigt werden, bleibt eben am Ende nur ‘erneut’ übrig.”

Metalanguage₂: Media language as a model (Germany)

“Aber es gilt zu unterscheiden. Im Privaten sind Ungenauigkeiten und notfalls das schlichte Gewäsch Gleitmittel, die Gespräche in Gang setzen oder halten. Völlig anders liegt der Fall, wo es um den öffentlichen Sprechdurchfall geht. [...] Politiker, Spitzenbeamte, Wirtschaftsführer, Journalisten und andere, die am großen gesellschaftlichen Gespräch mitwirken, sie alle haben eine besondere Verantwortung für Exaktheit, Wahrheit und zeitökonomische Verwendung von Sprache. Mit anderen Worten: Sie entscheiden, ob wir eines Tages redend oder schreibend nichts mehr sagen.”

Mit anderen Worten: Sie entscheiden, ob wir eines Tages redend oder schreibend nichts mehr sagen.” (Großkopff 1997) **publicity ↔ norm infringements**

“Es sollte selbstverständlich sein, daß diejenigen, die sich in Wort oder Schrift artikulieren, die Regeln der

“Es sollte selbstverständlich sein, daß diejenigen – privat kann jeder reden, wie ihm der Schnabel gewachsen ist.” (Jastrow 1994)

Metalanguage₂: Shared presuppositions about language

- » languages are homogeneous and distinct, separable entities
- » languages are internally logical and precise
- » languages are stable
- » the only “real” function of language is denotation
- » variation (without variation in denotation) is a transitional stage (metalanguage₁)

Purism

- » Conforms to the “Herderian concept of language” (Gal 2006: 14 ff.)
 - long tradition and supra-cultural scope

Metalanguage₂: Shared presuppositions about *media* language

0. Since languages are homogeneous, distinct, logical, precise and stable, there is also one and only one language ("the" language) of the media, which itself is homogeneous, distinct, logical, precise and stable.

"This" one and only language of the media

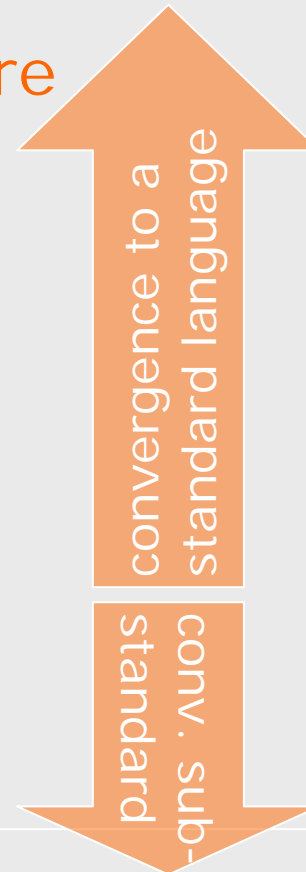
(Re-)standardization

1. is/should be standard; it models language usage
2. has to be monitored carefully: high publicity requires low tolerance with regard to infringements to "the" norm;
3. can be evaluated by ideals of transparency, logicity and standardness that contradict actual media usage; it can be corrected mechanically (by 'proofreaders' or 'professionals');
4. it is influential, i.e., it affects language change.



Studies asserting that media affect language change

- » Anthony Naro & Maria Scherre
 - ▶ (Brazil's Portuguese)
- » Ana Maria Carvalho
 - ▶ (Uruguay's Portuguese)
- » Rudolph Muhr
 - ▶ (Austria's German)
- » Jane Stuart-Smith
 - ▶ (Glaswegian)
- » [Jannis Androutsopoulos]
 - ▶ (Immigrants' German)



Susan C. Herring, ed., 2003. *Media and Language Change*, special issue of *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 4.1



Media and language change: Prescriptivism justified?

- What is to be proved in order to show that *media affect language change*?
- That language change would not have occurred without the media's influence
 - a counterfactual condition

language change	exposition to media
+	+
+	-
-	+
-	-

Media and language change: Prescriptivism and Scientism

What recent scientific research denies as a counterfactual condition, prescriptivists readily accept as a truism: media *could* and, if so desired, *should* inhibit language change.

The presupposition prescriptivism shares with scientific research is that media-effected change is –solely, mostly– upward:
– convergence towards a standard language.

But then, is this/any standard a/the language of the/any media?



Conclusions

1. In metalanguage₁, purism manifests itself as a collective linguistic practice.
2. In metalanguage₂, purism manifests itself as the most general conceptual/ideological presupposition of media discourse about the discourse of the media.
3. Metalanguage₁ is based on the presupposition that variation is a transitional, exceptional state, unless it conforms with “variation” in denotation.
4. For prescriptivists, the main function of media language is to serve as a model of “the” language.
5. The same conceptual scheme explains the differences as well as the similarities between Greek/German prescriptivism. While linguistic practices vary, language ideologies are long-term, supra-cultural phenomena.
6. Could the same conceptual scheme also explain differences (as well as similarities) between prescriptivists and descriptivists?



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