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			Newsletter, published by the Reading Primers SIG of the International Society for Historical and Systematic Research on Textbooks and Educational Media		

□ Editorial

Dear readers,

In the editorial of the last issue of RPI we have mentioned the strong link between religious education and beginning reading instruction in the history of schooling in Europe and beyond. The complex nature of this relationship has been demonstrated anew in the panel "Learning to Read with Catechetical Texts – Historical Approaches", organized by the Reading Primers SIG as part of the IGSBi conference "Religion and Educational Media" in October 2017 in Augsburg, Germany. We are pleased that the panel has not only delivered valuable insights but also served as a starting point for a new project idea on catechism primers in Europe (see p. 3 of this issue).

It is no less a pleasure to inform you that Johari Murray, Cáceres (Spain) has joined the editorial team of RPI. Johari brings in, among others, a non-European perspective. She can be reached through [jnals.cc\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:jnals.cc(at)gmail.com).

Madrid/Cáceres/Essen/Wrocław, April 2018

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□ **RP-SIG: Developments and Plans**

7 October 2017: RP-SIG Panel "Learning to Read with Catechetical Texts – Historical Approaches" at IGSBi Conference in Augsburg, Germany

Wendelin Sroka, Essen (Germany)

The 2017 Annual Conference of the International Society for Historical and Systematic Research on Textbooks and Educational Media (IGSBi), held from 6 to 8 October 2017 in Augsburg, focused on "Religion and Educational Media". Margarita Korzo, Moscow (Russia) and the author of this report took the opportunity to initiate the panel "Learning to Read with Catechetical Texts – Historical Approaches". The preparation of the panel was supported by Tuija Laine, Helsinki (Finland) who also acted as co-moderator. The panel was aimed at addressing mainly two topics: a) features of textbooks for elementary reading, compiled under various historical conditions, that combined catechetical and secular texts and b) practices of elementary reading instruction, including the way on which various types of textbooks for such instruction were used.

Five papers – to be published in the forthcoming conference volume, edited by Vitaly Bezrogov, Eva Matthes and Sylvia Schütze – were presented and discussed in the main part of the panel. The papers addressed developments in Finland (Tuija Laine), Estonia (Mare Mürsepp, Tallinn), Prussia (Wendelin Sroka, Essen), Russia (Max Okenfuss, St. Louis/USA) and the Habsburg Monarchy (Anna Maria Harbig, Białystok). They highlighted not only connections of religious education and reading instruction as represented in school textbooks for beginning readers under specific political, religious, social and educational circumstances, but also the value of particular disciplinary approaches: theology/church history, pedagogy, general history and historical linguistics.



Speakers of the panel, from left to right: Mare Mürsepp, Tallinn (Estonia), Anna Harbig, Białystok (Poland), Wendelin Sroka, Essen (Germany), Max Okenfuss, St. Louis (USA), Tuija Laine, Helsinki (Finland).

The panel also included a general discussion about "Learning to Read with Catechetical Texts – Achievements and Potentials of Historical Research". It became apparent that, the complexity of the theme of the panel and the body of research literature in a number of countries notwithstanding, connectivity of such research to more general academic discourses – e.g. in the history of religion or in the history of reading – is hardly given. A to-do list for those with an interest to develop the research field would encompass, among others, systematic inter-disciplinary collaboration, especially with experts in the history of religion and religious education, the inclusion of non-Christian religions as objects of investigation (explicitly invited in the Cfp, but not achieved in the panel), the thorough consideration of educational practices and, finally, the overcoming of research within national limits – as suggested by the transnational character of religions. No doubt that there is still a lot to be done ...

□ **RP-SIG: Developments and Plans (continued)**

“Catechism Primers in Europe”: Proposal of a New RP-SIG Project and Call for Expressions of Interest

Britta Juska-Bacher, Bern (Switzerland) and Wendelin Sroka, Essen (Germany)

The 2017 IGsBi conference in Augsburg on “Religion and Educational Media”, and in particular the conference workshop “Learning to Read with Catechetical Texts” organised by the RP-SIG have demonstrated the strong connection of catechesis and reading instruction in the history of schooling in a number of European countries. In an effort to conjoin the topic of the 2017 conference with the forthcoming 2018 conference on “Europe and Educational Media” in Brixen/Bressanone (Italy), the RP-SIG considers preparing a booklet devoted to “Catechism Primers in Europe”, to be published in 2019. We trust that the results of a collaborative effort with a focus on catechism primers across countries and languages can shed light on an interesting part of the cultural heritage in Europe and might give fresh impetus for joint research. A workshop at the 2018 IGsBi conference would provide the opportunity to present and discuss general assumptions, opportunities, challenges and first preliminary texts of the publication project.

Basic features of the booklet might be that it is written for a general public, is illustrated and contains two parts. The first chapter will provide an introduction into the characteristics and the history of catechism primers in Europe and beyond, with a focus on communalities and differences of catechism primers considered in the second part. This second and main chapter will consist of a number of sections, with each section presenting preferably two catechism primers per country and language, and also a brief overview of the history of catechism primers in the respective country. Authors are free to define a criterion for the selection of two catechism primers; such criteria might be, for example, “old and young”, denominational variation, or design. As a rule, each section is supposed to cover four pages. However, general specifications of this chapter will also consider political, religious and linguistic peculiarities of catechism primers published in various European countries and regions.

Members and friends of the Reading Primers Special Interest Group should feel invited to express their interest to take part in this project. For those you wish to act as project partners, participation in the IGsBi conference in Brixen/Bressanone (October 5-7, 2018) is welcome, but not mandatory. Brief expressions of interest related to this project proposal (including countries and languages for which a contribution could be written) should be sent no later than May 20, 2018 to Britta Juska-Bacher, professor of linguistics and language education at the College of Education in Bern, Switzerland ([britta.juska\(at\)phbern.ch](mailto:britta.juska@phbern.ch)) or to Wendelin Sroka, Essen, Germany ([wendelin.sroka\(at\)arcor.de](mailto:wendelin.sroka@arcor.de)). Colleagues with an interest to take part in the project will be informed in June 2018 at the latest about the perspectives of the project idea.

Relaunch of “Reading Primers International”

15 issues of RPI have been published since 2009, with no thorough revision in terms of its materiality, design and underlying philosophy. The editors will start a relaunch of RPI in 2018, including the preparation of a comprehensive Style Guide. Readers of RPI are invited to express their views on RPI and share with us their ideas to improve the quality and attractiveness of the newsletter. Please send your comments to [rp-sig\(at\)arcor.de](mailto:rp-sig@arcor.de).

RP-SIG Meeting, October 6, 2018

An RP-SIG meeting will take place in the context of the forthcoming IGsBi conference in Brixen/Bressanone (Italy) on October 6, 2018. Points to be discussed will include

- ongoing activities of the SIG,
- the relaunch of “Reading Primers International”,
- the future organization of the SIG.

Members' News



On April 26, 2018 the National Library of Belarus hosted the opening of the international exhibition "Primers of the peoples of the world". At the exhibition for the first time in Belarus about 1,400 primers are presented in almost 600 languages of the most diverse peoples of the five parts of the world – Europe, Asia, America, Africa, Australia and Oceania. Each exhibit is a miniature encyclopaedia, in which, in a visual and fascinating form, knowledge is given about the history, geography, culture of its people. The basis of the exposition is a unique private collection of ABC-books and primers of the Latvian pedagogue, author of primers and books about the peoples of the world and their languages, the collector **Juris Cibuljs**. The collection numbers about 10,000 items in 1,132 languages. This is the largest collection of its kind in the world. – A special place at the exhibition is occupied by Belarusian textbooks for teaching literacy in the 16th–21st centuries from the collections of the National Library of Belarus. Different in composition, graphics, decoration and pedagogical teaching methods, they demonstrate the 400-year history of the Belarusian ABC-book. – The exhibition will be on display in the Museum of the Book of the National Library of Belarus until September 2018.

Anna D. Havinga, lecturer in sociolinguistics at the University of Bristol (United Kingdom), has published her PhD thesis in historical sociolinguistics as *Invisibilising Austrian German. On the effect of linguistic prescriptions and educational reforms on writing practices in 18th-century Austria*. (= *Lingua Historica Germanica* 18). Berlin: de Gruyter 2018, XVI + 256 pp. – The monograph investigates the invisibilisation of Austrian German features in 18th- and early 19th-century texts. The term invisibilisation refers to a process of implicit or explicit stigmatisation, which prevents the use of certain varieties and variants in writing. Since only written sources are available to historical linguists, any features not used in writing remain literally invisible to researchers. In this context, Havinga examines the role of language ideologies, 18th-century grammarians, and Empress Maria Theresa's school reform in the invisibilisation of a number of Austrian German variants. In the period under investigation (1744–1834), the majority of these variants were replaced by their East Central German (ECG) equivalents, which were prescribed by 18th-century grammarians, in formal writing. The monograph offers a comparison between top-down language policy and language use, as evidenced in three divergent text types: a) reading primers (primarily *Na(h)menbüchlein*), b) issues of the *Wienerisches Diarium/Wiener Zeitung*, and c) handwritten petitionary letters. The quantitative and qualitative study of these texts revealed that certain Upper German (UG) features (*e*-apocope in feminine and plural nouns, the verb form *seynd*) disappeared from these formal text types in the second half of the 18th century. The ECG dative *-e* was, in comparison, implemented later and less consistently. The UG absence of the prefix *ge-* in past participles, on the other hand, was clearly avoided by the mid-18th century. The differences in the development of these features indicate that there was not one single factor that led to the invisibilisation of Austrian German variants. It was rather the interplay of Empress Maria Theresa's appeal for a language reform, the normative work of 18th-century grammarians, the implementation of educational reforms, and the early introduction of ECG variants in newspaper issues that resulted in the disappearance of these variants from formal writing.

▣ Members' News (continued)

Jan Van Wiele, Tilburg (The Netherlands) and **Kira Mahamud Angulo**, Madrid (Spain), member of the MANES research group and co-editor of RPI, have been awarded the "Arsen Djurović Prize for Historical Research on Textbooks" of the International Society for Research on Textbooks and Educational Media (IGSBI). The award ceremony took place at the occasion of the annual conference of IGSBI in Augsburg/Germany, October 7, 2018. According to the jury the price was given to Kira Mahamud Angulo "for her intense, multi-dimensional research regarding primers in the Franco Regime, her dealing with the neglected topic of the procurement of emotions, and her related inclusion of linguistic aspects for the research on textbooks, for her interest in democratic transformations of dictatorial and autocratic systems, and the role of educational media in this context, and – last but not least – for her substantial methodological considerations, which she has applied in her own research".

▣ New Members

We are pleased to present in this issue four persons and one institution who have joined the Reading Primers Special Interest Group since November 2017: Dr **Britta Juska-Bacher**, Bern (Switzerland) is professor of linguistics and language teaching at the College of Education in Bern [*Pädagogische Hochschule Bern*]. Within these domains, her research focuses on vocabulary acquisition and reading, phraseology and dialectology. Her interest in historic textbooks initially arose while working on a concept for a new textbook of German for primary and secondary school. Currently the scope of her historical research encompasses textbooks from German-speaking Switzerland, especially from the canton of Bern. She is also interested in the study of reading primers from Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. She can be reached at the following email address: [britta.juska\(at\)phbern.ch](mailto:britta.juska(at)phbern.ch).

Maite Reig, Madrid (Spain) is librarian at the National University of Distance Education (UNED) in Madrid. For the past 20 years she has been in charge of the MANES library at UNED where she supports students and other researchers. She collaborates on the digitization and dissemination of the collection as well as exhibitions about MANES. Recently, she participated in the Erasmus professional development program and had the opportunity to visit the library of the *Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia* (UNIMC) in Macerata (Italy). Maite Reig can be reached through the following email address: [mreig\(at\)pas.uned.es](mailto:mreig(at)pas.uned.es).

Dr **Ekaterina Romashina**, Tula (Russia) is professor and currently dean of the Department of Arts, Social Studies and Humanities at Tula State Lev Tolstoy Pedagogical University. Her research interests are focused on the history of the Russian primers from the 18th to the early 20th centuries. The objectives of her research are: to compile a repertoire of ways to visualize information in textbooks for primary school; to consider the relationship of texts and images; to reveal methods of teaching children how to work with visuals; to determine the didactic functions inherent in the visuals of textbooks for initial literacy. The preliminary results are published, and a demo version of the "Atlas of Visual Elements of Allowances for Initial Literacy in Russia of the Second Half of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries" has been developed and is available at: <http://atlas.tspu.ru>. Ekaterina Romashina can be contacted for more information at the following email: [katerinro\(at\)yandex.ru](mailto:katerinro(at)yandex.ru).

Konstantinos Vlastaris M.A., Kavala (Greece) is a primary school headteacher, with a special interest on the role of play, games and toys in children's literature and its role in education. He holds a Master's degree in environmental policy and management. His Master's dissertation centered on the pedagogical methods of environmental education in primary education with a special focus on the role of play. At present he is also a PhD student in the field of literature at the University of Thessaly. His current research examines the depiction of children's play, games and toys in texts and illustrations in Greek primers. Konstantinos Vlastaris can be reached at the following email: [kostasvb\(at\)yahoo.gr](mailto:kostasvb(at)yahoo.gr).

□ New Institutional Member

We are pleased to welcome as RP-SIG's fifth institutional member the **Centro Internacional de la Cultura Escolar (CEINCE)** [International Centre of School Culture], located in Berlanga de Duero, Soria (Spain). CEINCE was set up in 2006 by the *Schola Nostra* Association, in collaboration with the Government of the Autonomous Community *Castilla y León* together with the *Sánchez Ruipérez* Foundation, and it is defined as an integral centre of documentation, research and interpretation in all aspects relating to school culture from a multidisciplinary and international perspective. The specific aim of CEINCE is the integral multidisciplinary study of school culture, a field it approaches in all its extension and complexity, and in all temporal perspectives. School culture is conceived as the set of practices (empirical culture), discursive forms (theoretical culture) and normative constructions (political culture) that inform and regulate the life of educational institutions and configure the working life of the teachers. CEINCE is organised in three main areas:

School Culture and the Knowledge Society

This area is set up as an observatory for the interpretation of school culture both in contemporary society and regarding its future development. School culture is discussed today, from an intelligent use of tradition and memory, among the great challenges we face in the present and regarding its projections into the society of the future: entry into the digital era and the society of knowledge; the challenge of diversity and interculturalism: new gender relations; the democratic game between freedom and equality; the response to the paradigm of sustainability. These are, among others, the basic lines of research guiding the priority actions developed in the centre.

Memory of the School and the Educational Heritage

In this field, CEINCE covers everything regarding recuperation, study and evaluation of the material and intangible heritage of school culture, with a special emphasis on the reconstruction of the historical memory of education in the context of the community where it was found but from an internationally comparative historical perspective. In this respect, its programmes attend the collection, analysis and diffusion of the voices and writings, the texts, images and objects which make up the legacy of educational tradition and the materials of the ethnographic furnishings of education, the cultural archeo-genealogy of education, with our attention fixed on understanding the codes which regulate the so-called grammar of schooling and the *habitus* of the teaching profession.

Manualística and Educational Documentation

This area covers the whole field of "*manualística*", a term coined by Professor Escolano referring to textbook research, describing a new sector of academic knowledge and analysis in Spain. The field is dedicated to the constitution of the documentary catalogue of school texts, material excluded until recently in our society from the official archives of cultural memory and now claimed by all the historians of our field as essential for the analysis the curricular codes and the models of sociability in which we have been educated. In this respect, CEINCE hosts one of the best collections of primers, readers, reading books and school textbooks from the 19th and 20th centuries to be found in Spain and has become a forum of reference on manualistics in both national and international circles.



Face of CEINCE's domicile, a historic building in Berlanga de Duero.

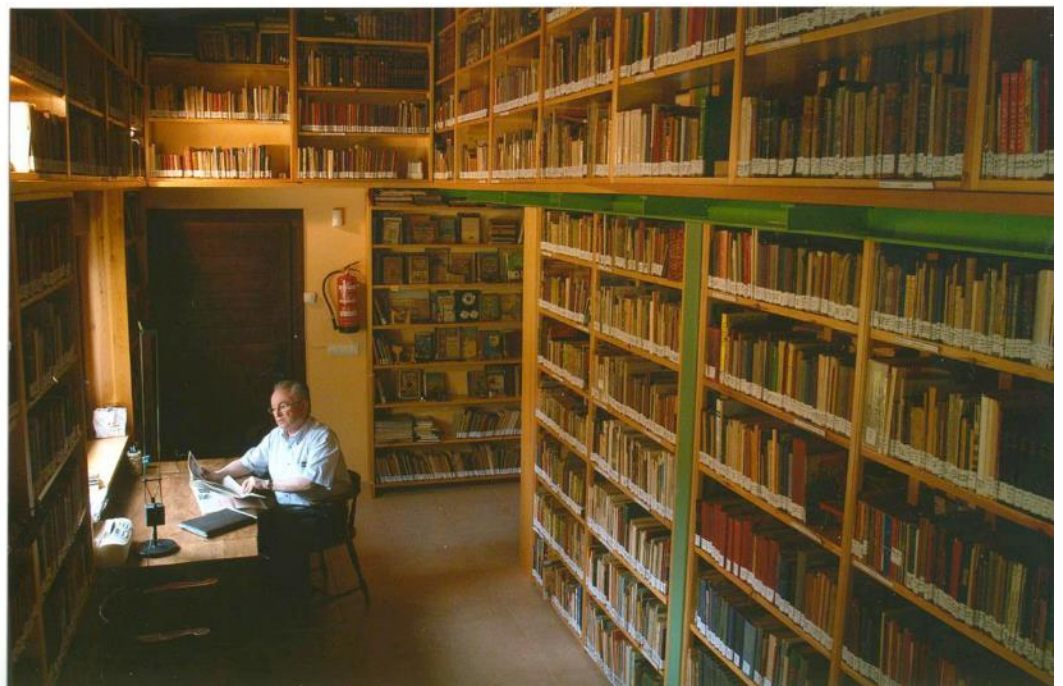
▣ **New Institutional Member (cont.)**

CEINCE, an experiment in sustainability

The Centre, in addition to being a pedagogical initiative, is conceived of as a revitalising nucleus of regional development by means of the implementation of socioeducational programmes related to the traditions and possible expectations which may support innovative sustainability strategies connecting the regional to the global. CEINCE is not an institution marked by historicism, but rather a forum open to the multidisciplinary communication of all available and future knowledge regarding school culture in all its aspects and from all times.

CEINCE is represented by **Agustín Escolano Benito**, professor of history of education at the University of Valladolid and founder-director of the Centre. He was previously a professor at the University of Salamanca, where he founded the *Revista Interuniversitaria de Historia de la Educación* [Interuniversity Journal of the History of Education], which he directed for nearly thirty years, and the series *Studia Paedagogica* and *Ciencias de la Educación* [Education Sciences]. He has also worked in other periods at the Complutense University of Madrid, University of Oviedo and the Autonomous University of Barcelona. He has been president of the Spanish Society for the History of Education and a member of the executive committee of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE). He was awarded a doctor honoris causa from the University of Lisbon (Portugal), and he is honorary doctor from the College of Doctors of Salamanca. His most relevant publications include: *Estudios de historia social de la educación* [Studies in the social history of education] (1983), *Historia de la Educación. Diccionario* [History of education, a dictionary, 2 volumes] (1985), *Leer y escribir en España. Doscientos años de escolarización* [Reading and writing in Spain. Two hundred years of schooling] (1992), *Historia ilustrada del libro escolar en España* [An illustrated history of the school textbook in Spain. 2 volumes] (1997-1998), *Historia ilustrada de la escuela* [An illustrated history of the school] (2006), *La cultura empírica della scuola* [The empirical culture of the school] (2016-2017, with editions in Portuguese and Spanish) and *Educazione ed emozioni. Un nuovo approccio formative* [Education and emotions. A new pedagogical approach] (2017).

<http://www.ceince.eu/index.php?&local=en>



Agustín Escolano Benito, founder-director of CEINCE, in the library.

▢ Articles

Bernese Reading Primers from the 17th to the 19th Century*

Britta Juska-Bacher, Bern (Switzerland)

The aim of this contribution is to provide insight into 200 years of the history of primers from the canton of Bern, Switzerland. For that reason, the accessible German primers (i.e. the oldest preserved editions) that were printed between 1680 and 1876 by a Bernese publishing company are presented and analysed from the perspective of language didactics. The oldest Bernese primer serves as a starting point, this contribution terminates at the end of the 19th century, just before "The Century of the Child" begins. In the 20th century, primers were subject to major changes and became a "Book of the Child" (Schmack 1960, 38).

According to Grimm's dictionary, the common German denotation of *Fibel* [reading primer] derived from the word *Bibel* [bible] (Grimm & Grimm 2004) during the Reformation period, starting its course in the Low German language area, then heading to the south (Schmack 1960, 9). As regional variants, the terms *Namenbüchlein* [booklet of names] and *ABC-Buch* [ABC book] were in use, too. In Bern, the name changed over time: In the 17th and 18th century, primers were known as *Namenbüchlein*, in the beginning of the 19th century they changed to *ABC-Buch* or *Lesebuch* [reading book], and at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century they were, inter alia, referred to as *Fibel* [primer].

Primers are meant to acquaint children with written language. Apart from the common reading training, primers also include initial reading texts. These texts convey societal core values, social behaviours, and pedagogic matters (Hofen 2006, 150; Skjelbred et al. 2017, 9). Thus, primers are not only used for the mediation of written language, but also for the realisation of an educational mandate (Schmack 1960, 17).

Similarly to other European countries (for Germany, see e.g. Bartnitzky 2015; Gabele 2002; Teistler 2007, for Norway e.g. Skjelbred et al. 2017, for Sweden e.g. Willke 1963, for Europe e.g. Sroka 2011, 25) one can distinguish different types of primers, classified according to their primary educational goal:

1. Catechism primer [German: *Katechismusfibel*]: reading as access to religious texts
2. Enlightenment or rational primer [German: *Aufklärungsfibel*]: reading as access to moral values and formation of reason
3. Object primer [German: *Anschaufungsfibel*]: reading and conception training

In sections one to three the analysed primers are assigned to these types, within the sections they are listed in chronological order. The description contains the composition and contents of the respective primer as well as the method of written language instruction. The Bernese primers are either working synthetically with the alphabet method or phonics, or analytic-synthetically with the keyword method.

1 Bernese Catechism Primers: Reading as Access to Religious Texts

The prototype of the catechism primer, published in various European countries and languages, consisted of a sheet in octavo format, which contained 16 pages when folded (a.o. Teistler 2007, 39; Skjelbred et al. 2017, 36). Within this small scope, the alphabet, syllables, and texts of catechism were presented in Fraktur; no pictures were included (with the only exception of the rear¹ or title page). This restriction on the introduction of the alphabet and first combinations for the teaching of basal reading skills on the one

* I wish to thank Fabian Fricke (University Library Bern), Mark Kohler (School Museum Bern), Franziska Lombardi (University Library Zurich) and Florian Steffen (Swiss National Library) for generously supporting my investigation.

□ Bernese Primers (continued)

hand, and hard to understand religious texts on the other hand, points to the fact that language teaching served religious purposes: pupils were supposed to learn reading in order to understand religious texts (Messerli 2002, 238). Until the beginning of the 19th century, children solely learnt reading upon starting school, only later might they acquire writing skills (Messerli 2002, 500), since it was not seen as necessary for the "salvation of one's soul" (Messerli 2002, 501). Therefore, writing skills were significantly less developed than reading skills (Messerli 1999, 310).

The catechism primers – in Bern in the spirit of the Reformation – are known as *Namenbüchlein*. They were published anonymously until the first third of the 19th century and taught reading with the alphabet method (Teistler 2007, 41; Skjelbred et al. 2017, 36). This means that the letter names were learnt in alphabetical order and constantly repeated for memorisation. For pupils, it was challenging to build a bridge from the names of letters in the alphabet to their phonetic sounds and to synthesise the letters.

After the introduction to the alphabet and first combinations, the following pages were dedicated to catechism, that is, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, and other prayers. Hyphen or blank spaces between syllables were the only support for pupils to make a transition from reading simple syllables to complex texts. Since catechism primers offered poor support in two challenging transitions; firstly, from the alphabet names to the sound of letters for synthesis and secondly, from simple to complex words then to texts. Pupils heavily relied on their teachers' didactic quality. Taking into account that teacher training was still absent in these days, not all pupils acquired reading skills during school time. According to a survey among priests about the children's reading skills in 1806, approximately half of the children living in a rural area could not read at all or only marginally when leaving school (Wyss 1978, 281).

1.1 «*Namenbüchlein mit unterschiedenen kurzen Silben sehr nützlich und beförderlich zu lernen: für die Jugend der deutschen Schulen, der Stadt und Landschaft Bern*» 1680

The oldest preserved Bernese primer from 1680 contains 16 pages, apart from the front page. The first two pages introduce the letters of the alphabet in lowercase, only the first letter A is capitalized. For each letter, there are three monosyllabic words. The first word is always a noun (usually a name) and thus capitalized, the two following words are lowercase. On the third page, the Lord's Prayer can be found. – This primer with its combination of two thirds reading training and one third prayer did not offer sufficient support for both learners and teachers. This reading primer was used by advanced schools and parents, who wanted to introduce pupils to catechism (Wyss 1978, 204).¹



Image 1 – «*Namenbüchlein mit unterschiedenen kurzen Silben sehr nützlich und beförderlich zu lernen [...]*» 1680, front page, pp. 2 and 4 (University Library Bern)

□ **Bernese Primers
(continued)**

1.2 «Namen-Büchlein, zur Unterweisung der jungen Kinder, samt dem Vater Unser, Glauben, und den Heiligen Zehen Geboten, nebst etlichen schönen Gebätten» 1773

Almost 100 years later, the next fully preserved primer with 24 imprinted pages appears. The reading training in Fraktur (the letters decreasing in size) occupies now 11 pages: It starts with the introduction of capital and lowercase letters, followed by reading units, ranging from two-letter combinations to mono- to multisyllabic words (still including names). The reading training part ends with the introduction of digits. The second part of this primer contains religious texts (Lord's Prayer, Creed, Ten Commandments, other prayers). In order to facilitate reading, blank spaces separated syllables, and commas separated words. A new feature appears on the last page, where teachers receive instructions to keep strict discipline and order. In comparison to the primer from 1680, pupils receive more exercises for the transition from letters to words. The combinations of vowels + consonants provide a first offer in the direction of phonics (see chapter 2).

This reading primer proved to be a classic²: Not only did a quite similar catechism primer already appear in 1778 (*Namenbüchlein zur Unterweisung der jungen Kinder samt nützlichen Lesübungen und Gebettern*³), but in 1824 and 1837, almost unchanged reissues of the 1773 primer followed. In 1837 the primer was supplemented by a bonus volume with reading texts (*Kurze und leichte Erzählungen für kleine Kinder, zur Uebung im Lesen*). It is unlikely that this additional volume was already available for the edition from 1773. It is explained in the preface (1837, 2) that this volume was meant as a transition from reading primers to catechism, knowing that the latter was too difficult for children at this stage. In an additional 24 pages, 66 short texts are presented in Fraktur, which are without exception moralizing model texts. The content of this additional volume points to the Enlightenment primers presented in section 2. It is surprising that this primer has been reissued for so long, since at the end of the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th century, new primers had appeared already, which heralded the start of a new primer area due to fundamental innovation (see section 2).

In the second third of the 19th century, two additional primers appear as advancements of the catechism primer, they are closely linked to former primers due to the scope and presence of religious texts. However, these two additional primers produce fundamental innovations. The colourful pictures are particularly noticeable.⁴ Since colourful printing is significantly more expensive, these primers were most likely not intended for schools, but for the use in bourgeois families (see Bartnitzky 2016, 3; Skjelbred et al. 2017, 44; Teistler 2007, 15f and 2015, 50 for the domestic use of ABC books).

1.3 «Neues ABC und Bilderbuch für die Jugend» 1836

The first rooster primer published in Bern (with the rooster on the front page) contains 16 unpaginated and partially illustrated pages. The second half of this primer bears striking similarities to the catechism primer, but the first one is more child-oriented and breaks new grounds in the introduction to written language. The first half of this volume is reminiscent of picture books due to numerous illustrations. The letters are provided in alphabetical order on one-third of the page. Such a page contains capitalized and lowercased letters as well as three nouns, which start with the respective letter; and, as an innovation, both illustrations for the three nouns and a double-spaced verse to one noun can be found (see image 2; the illustrations are manually coloured in the example of the University Library Bern).

Children get to know capitalized and lowercased letters in different Fraktura fonts; they probably already learnt the verses through listening to the teacher reciting them before learning to read them themselves. These verses are meant to provide pupils with worldly wisdom. Moreover, the rimes might have had the positive effect of improving phonological awareness.

▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

The second half is clearly reminiscent of the 1824s' primer. It starts with a page where capitalized and lowercased letters are listed in different orders and fonts. What follows is a page with combinations of letters; no words or sentences are provided. It is probable that one came back to the first part of the primer to let the pupils read longer units (or one started with part two and the pupils were looking at the first half only afterwards).

After letter combinations, punctuation characters and a grammatical part follow (article inflection, personal pronouns, conjugation of "be"). Finally, this primer also works with texts at the end, however, contrary to the 1824s' primer, the texts start with a one-and-a-half page long moral tale *der fromme gottlieb* [the devout Gottlieb], it is just the last four pages that contain religious texts (Lord's Prayer and other prayers).

This primer combines old and new method of reading instruction, opening two options for teacher and pupil: While the second part remains with the alphabet method, the first part, which visualises the phonetic values of letters using images similar to an *Anlauttabelle* [ABC sound clues], clearly refers to the phonics method.



Image 2 – «Neues ABC und Bilderbuch für die Jugend» 1836, front page, p. 2 (University Library Bern)

1.4 «Neues Namenbüchlein, oder, Anleitung nach der Stufenfolge, oder, Auf eine leichte Art, und in kurzer Zeit richtig lesen zu lernen» between 1830 / 1850

In the middle of the 19th century, a new primer provided another transition point, which oriented itself on previous reading primers. This primer contains 24 pages, like the 1824 version, however, the content is completely new, apart from one page with prayers at the end of the primer. In addition, the text pages are complemented with eight sheets containing three coloured ABC pictures each (see image 3).

Contrary to former primers the alphabet is not introduced en bloc. Instead, vowels (sounds = letter names) are introduced and soon combined with different consonants (introduced according to their place of articulation). That means one was not working with the name of letters, but with the sounds of consonants. In a first overview, vowels are systematically combined with the labials [b], [p], [f], and [m]. Following this path, the other consonants are being introduced (alveolars, velars, and glottal stops). Afterwards the letters are being combined to longer letter combinations and monosyllabic words. In a next step, the majuscules, capitalized monosyllabic nouns with articles, and first sentences formed with words of increasing length follow. Subsequently, numerous child-oriented texts are provided. After the introduction of digits, the primer ends with six short prayers.

The pages with pictures match the text pages in regard to format. How the publications were delivered is untraceable (in the exemplar that is accessible

▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

in the Swiss National Library the text and picture pages are integrated in a brochure.) Following the alphabet, each letter is introduced in a child-friendly way and a noun is provided (mostly an occupation or an animal).

This primer is characterised by four innovations: Firstly, the selected texts differ significantly from the ones presented in the previous primers. Religious texts (approximately 5%) are replaced with child-friendly texts that point to Enlightenment primers. Secondly, the introduction of letters is not in alphabetical order; vowels are introduced first and combined with consonants. Thirdly, the transition from sounds and single words to sentences and texts receives much more attention than in previous primers. Fourthly, the primers are supplemented with numerous appealing colourful illustrations, which facilitate the learning process. – The use of the more modern phonics points to the fact that this primer was established at a later stage than the 1836 primer, where the alphabet method was still in use.



Image 3 – «Neues Namenbüchlein, oder, Anleitung nach der Stufenfolge, oder, Auf eine leichte Art, und in kurzer Zeit richtig lesen zu lernen» between 1830 / 1850, front page, p. 2, supplement (Swiss National Library)

2 Bernese Enlightenment Primers: Reading as Access to Moral Values and Formation of Reason

In the canton of Bern, the way of thinking of the Enlightenment, supported by economical needs (Schmidt 2011, 432), began to have an impact on school since the end of the 18th century resp. the beginning of the 19th century. The acknowledgement of a necessity of an improved scholar education led to a development in teacher training (Scandola et al. 1992, 26), the introduction of mandatory schooling (1831⁵), and, last but not least, a change in learning materials. The aim of primary school was to develop and cultivate every child’s facilities and strengths, so that it can fulfil its purpose as a human being, as a Christian, and as a citizen (first Bernese primary school law, 1835⁶).

The Bernese primers, no longer entitled as *Namenbüchlein*, but more frequently as *Lesebuch* [reading book], were vaster in scope due to an extension of the reading part. Religious texts were replaced with secularly, moral and ethical texts in the spirit of the Enlightenment period. Moralizing narratives with children as protagonists tied the link to the children’s world of experience and exemplified morally correct behaviour. Since the 1830s, elementary language instruction expanded from the teaching of basal reading techniques to improved reading comprehension in combination with writing lessons according to the read-and-write method, which teaches both skills in functional correlation. Reading acquisition changed in approach, the alphabet method was replaced with phonics (sounds of letters). Sounds were learnt and linked to sound combinations at an early stage, therefore, the first critical transition

▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

from letters to sounds, as well as the synthesis of the two, was intensively facilitated (see section 1). The letters and respectively their sounds (as in the 1830 / 1850 *Namenbüchlein*), were not learnt in alphabetical order, but with increasing level of difficulty (sometimes with regard to pronunciation, other times with regard to writing). The second critical transition from reading words to reading texts was systematically introduced. Children first learnt reading syllables, then words and sentences, and finally texts appropriate for children.

2.1 «Neues ABC und Lesebuch für die Schweizerjugend von 5 bis 8 Jahren» 1797, by Johann Georg Heinzmann

The first primer that can be categorised as reflection of the Enlightenment rather than catechism primer appears in Bern in 1797, and for the first time, the author's name is given. The primer is 134 pages long and clearly breaks with the catechism primers traditions. Already, the new title "ABC and reading book" and the age of the target group point to the fact that Heinzmann's primer was not supposed to simply teach basal reading techniques as the authors of the catechism primers did, but that his book was meant to support pupils over a longer period of time and introduce them to reading comprehension. The primer's foreword points to the new zeitgeist:

Die Nothwendigkeit eines verbesserten Schulunterrichts, sonderlich auf dem Lande, fühlt man bey uns nun immer stärker und stärker, je nothwendiger es wird, die Leute durch Vernunft und Tugend den Gesetzen und ihren Pflichten getreu zu erhalten. (1797, 2)

[Especially in the countryside, one feels an increasing necessity of an improved school education since it becomes more and more necessary to keep the people's faithfulness in law and duties through reason and virtue.]

The reading training firmly adheres to the traditional alphabet method and starts with a listing of the alphabet (in Fraktur, Kurrent, and Antiqua script, at the end, the vowels are listed once more). An innovation is that teachers receive didactic comments for the implementation for the first part of the reading training (in a smaller font). The author's note suggesting not to split up multiple graphs such as <sch> or <ch> to single letters, but to treat them as a unit and pronounce them as [ʃə] or [xə], confirms that this book works with the alphabet method and not yet with phonics (if it were phonics, the sounds [ʃ] and [x] would be given).

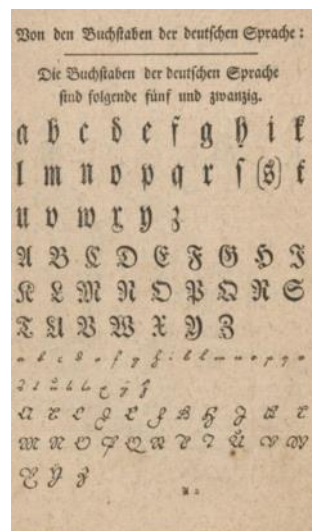


Image 4 – «Neues ABC und Lesebuch für die Schweizerjugend von 5 bis 8 Jahren» 1797, title page, pp. 3 and 4 (University Library Basel)

The reading training continues with the practise of mono-, bi-, and multisyllabic words, including a number of first names (as in the *Namenbüchlein*). Two moralizing stories follow the mediation of punctuation marks and rules on how to form syllables. At the end of the reading training, repetition with short sen-

▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

tences takes place. Here, the author also gives instructions to teachers; sometimes, he even provides whole sentences that need to be spoken to pupils. Contrary to previous primers, reading comprehension starts much earlier. Teachers receive the task of forming questions in order to examine whether pupils understood the text.

A short grammatical input on nouns and verbs builds the transition between reading training and reading part. The latter starts off with exercises of "reading and thinking", that is a series of proverbs and riddles. The following longish reading texts contain moralizing narratives, mostly with children as protagonists, which are interrupted by aphorisms. Religious texts are with more than 30 pages still a significant part of this primer. However, these texts are complemented with short stories about Christian virtues (patience, altruism, sincerity) and negative virtues (impatience, theft), instructions for children on how to correctly live (diligence, no animal abuse), sample letters, a long text about natural history, religious proverbs and sentences, and ethics for older pupils. As a new feature, 15 pages are dedicated to federal state laws. Numbers and measurements complete the primer. Heinzmann goes far beyond catechism primers: he wants children to develop basal reading skills for reading comprehension. Instead of a religious upbringing of children, he wants them to become reasonable, virtuous and law-abiding human beings (1797, 2).

2.2 «*Erster Lese-Unterricht für die Jugend.*» 1804, by Franz Wagner

This 38 page-long primer makes a link to the previously published primer by Heinzmann and combines the reading training and practice section in approximately the same way. The first part introduces the alphabet in different fonts (Fraktur, Antiqua script, Kurrent); letter combinations, mono- and multisyllabic words and sentences are studied. The first part finishes with digits and punctuation marks. Another feature adopted from Heinzmann are the didactic comments. In this primer they appear either in footnotes or as comments within the text. One of these comments sheds light on how the transition from letter names to sounds is realised - by combinations of vowels + consonants read according to the "A-B-Ab" method. The teacher starts off with pronouncing the single names of the letters, and in a following step, he synthesises the sounds. Wagner defends this traditional method as the most beneficial for automation (1804, 5-6).

The reading part contains (in Fraktur and Antiqua script): two texts about realia (the earth and human beings), and seven moralizing narratives, which are each introduced via a woodcut (e.g. *Edles Mitleiden* [noble compassion]). There is a total lack of religious primary texts such as prayers or the Creed (with this decision he takes a further step in the direction of a new type of primer than Heinzmann). For the purpose of the Enlightenment period, the moralizing stories are about religious tolerance towards people of a different creed, about the commonwealth as public responsibility, and about reason as decision-maker. – For the first time in the collection of Bernese primers, an author directly addresses children in a short introduction of the moralizing narratives:

[...] zu dem Ende theile ich Euch hier, liebe Kinder, zum Beschluß meines kleinen Buches einige Erzählungen und Fabeln mit, von denen ich hoffe, daß sie vortheilhaft auf Euch wirken sollen. (1804, 25)

[Dear children, at the end of this part, I present you with some stories and tales of which I hope that they might have a beneficial impact on you.]

Excursion: «*Anweisung zum Buchstabieren- und Lesenlehren.*» 1801, by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi

Pestalozzi levelled criticism against the methods of previously released primers, since he disliked the too hasty transition from simple syllables to difficult words and complex compositions (1801, III). In 1801, Pestalozzi published a manual

▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

for both teachers and mothers, who carried a crucial role in the education of children. The manual offers a 14 page-long introduction into Pestalozzi's methods and provides didactic hints for the teaching of reading. The second part spreads over 49 pages; it contains tables with syllables and words that children are supposed to read.

This method uses sounds as a starting point, not letters. Before children encounter letters, they have to be familiarized with the reception and production of sounds (1801, VI). First of all, they are supposed to learn vowels, followed by combinations of vowels + consonants. These combinations are not articulated separately but are synthesised (and therefore read as sounds). In the second part of the tables presented, both syllables and words in Fraktur were read systematically. It is not before children were able to master the tables that they received their personal reading book. Already before this manual Pestalozzi had repeatedly pointed out the importance of object-lessons for the acquisition of written language (see 1877).

Osterwalder and Reusser (1997, 341) suppose that this manual was popular and widely distributed a short period of time only, afterwards, however, the manuals disappeared. Apart from the primers from abroad, which already worked with phonics, Pestalozzi certainly promoted their introduction to Switzerland.

2.3 «Erstes Lese- und Sprachbuch, oder Uebungen, um richtig sprechen, lesen und schreiben zu lernen» 1831

According to the preface, this 99 page-long band matches the eponymous primer written by Wilhelm Harnisch, which appeared in Breslau in 1813. Only trifles were changed according to local conditions (1831, 2). The preface already points to the fact that this primer introduces, contrary to the previous Bernese ones, a new important feature, that is the read-and-write method, i.e. the combined teaching of both competences (1831, 2). A second new feature builds on Pestalozzi's critique (as outlined in the digression) on the primers of the 18th century. Here, the transition from simple syllables to difficult words is much smoother and illustrated in a more comprehensible way. Letters are no longer introduced *en bloc* within the whole alphabet during the reading training, but rather introduced gradually and combined and synthesised with other letters. Vowels are put at the beginning of this primer, followed by single consonants (nasals, vibrant, laterals, plosives, and fricatives), which are directly combined with the vowels and therefore read with their sounds rather than with the letter name. After the reading of syllables, mono- and multisyllabic words, and sentences (in Fraktur), this part is completed by some spelling exercises (about lengthening and sharpening).

The second part contains both a series of short stories about girls and boys describing their everyday life, and moralizing texts. In the last third, Antiqua script is introduced. Further texts (prose and lyrics) are presented. Four pages of prayers and biblical proverbs interrupt these texts.

A list of the complete alphabet in both upper and lower case, written in Fraktur and in Antiqua script, cannot be found until the appendix. The book closes with digits, time indications, shortenings, measurements and weights, and an overview of contents.

2.4 «Namen-Büchlein zum ersten Unterricht im Lesen und Schreiben» 1838, by Rickli

The next Bernese primer, also working with the read-and-write method, contains 83 pages and is arranged in three parts: part 1 reading of sounds (not letters) – part 2 reading of root syllables and words – part 3 grammar (reading of inflected and complex words). The primer is designed for pupils, only the preface and the titles (marked by another font) are for teachers only. In the preface, Rickli briefly explains the method while pointing towards the read-

□ Bernese Primers (continued)

and-write class by Raimund Jakob Wurst (1838, III). Since phonemes and graphemes do not have a one-to-one correspondence in German, and the sounds depend on the syllabic surrounding, pupils had to receive a vast array of exercises to know numerous words and their respective spelling. For that reason, the primer works with word stems and their derivations (1838, I-II). Wagner considers engagement with grammar imperative for the foundation of orthography.

In the first part of the band, vowels and vowel-consonant-combinations are taught. The consonants are neither introduced alphabetically nor according to the place and manner of articulation, but by the typeface: Firstly, consonants without ascenders or descenders (such as <n>, <m>) are introduced. Secondly, consonants with ascenders follow (like <l>,), thirdly, consonants with descenders (e.g. <g>, <p>), and finally consonants with both ascenders and descenders (such as <f>) follow. In the end, umlaut + consonants as well as diphthongs + consonants are introduced.

The second part of the band engages with the reading of word stems of different word classes gaining in length (mono- and bi-syllabics). Quite early a reference to orthography is made. The introduction of majuscules is connected with the hint of the capitalized spelling of "things" whereas in a next step, lengthening and sharpening are trained. It is not until almost the end of this part that the complete alphabet appears. A classification of sounds in vowel, umlaut and diphthong, and consonants in bilabial, lingual, palatal, and high sounds build the end of this part. As far as reading is concerned, pupils stop at the word reading level, a reading text part is missing.

The third part consists of grammar, i.e. the morphology (inflection and derivation). The appendix offers further grammatical inputs, e.g. for composition, word families, vowel gradation, and irregular verbs.

2.5 «Erstes Lesebuch, oder, Gründliche Anleitung zum Lesen (gestützt auf die Lautirmethode und auf vieljährige Erfahrungen im Gebiete dieses Unterrichtsgegenstandes)» 1838 (2 volumes), by G. Ramsler

In 1838, another two-volume primer utilises the read-and-write method. Unfortunately, only the second edition from 1852 of the first volume with reading training titled *Lautier- und Leseübungen* [sound- and reading exercises] remains. According to the preface (1852, n.p.) the original method was kept, only the scope was extended due to the takeover of texts from volume two plus an addition of a manual for writing classes (24 pages)⁷. The second volume of 140 pages reading texts, including an introduction to grammar, remains in the first edition of 1838 only, it is said to have been significantly shorter in edition two.

As with the previous primers, the reading training initially introduced vowels in combination with consonants (phonics). Noticeably early, Ramsler tried to combine phonological recoding with reading comprehension. Therefore, these letter combinations form first words such as <mai> [May] and <mama> (p. 2). Words gain in length, and before all letters are introduced, first sentences can be read. Already, after the introduction of majuscules, questions about orthography arise, such as lengthening and sharpening. The alphabet in both Fraktur and Antiqua script is introduced at the end of part one of this booklet. Regarding the exercises in Antiqua font, letters are introduced step by step; finally sentences and texts can be read in Antiqua script and Fraktur. Proverbs, poems, prayers, and small moralizing narratives are listed in the appendix.

The reading part offers an introduction to grammar – containing the inflection of word classes, word formation, passive formation, and vocabulary exercises – and further reading exercises. Competences are gradually established from simple to difficult. These are always linked in texts. The second half consists of moralizing narratives with children as protagonists – first in Fraktur, then in Antiqua script. The last five pages include proverbs, poems, songs, and prayers.

□ **Bernese Primers
(continued)**

2.6 «Erstes Lesebuch des Kindes zum Gebrauch beim Lautirunterrichte, bestehend aus den bekannten Strassburgertabellen in Buchformat» 1844

This 144 page-long teaching material contains a short part of reading training for the acquisition of reading techniques (using the phonics method), and a longer reading unit. First, the sounds of twelve consonants are learnt, followed by the introduction of vowels. Since [ʃ] for the multiple graph of <sch> is introduced at an early stage, it becomes obvious that spoken language is in the centre of attention. After a brief introduction of single sounds, systematic combinations of vowels + consonants follow. It is not before then that the sounds of the remaining consonants emerge. After only a few pages, first words are read and majuscules are introduced; the next page covers lengthening and sharpening. At the end of part one, first short sentences can be found and consonant clusters in initial word position are exercised.

The reading part covers 65 texts with increasing level of difficulty. Included are proverbs and moralizing narratives from children's environment, where the child is always addressed directly. At the end of this part, the alphabet is introduced in upper- and lowercase letters, in Fraktur and Antiqua script, and a restricted number of texts are provided in both fonts. The last pages are dedicated to concluding prayers and proverbs, which stretch along seven pages. Finally, a 12 page-long appendix containing folksongs closes this book.

3 Bernese Object Primers: Reading and Object-Lessons

The main feature of the new type of primer is the connection of language and object-lessons. The point is that children have to be familiarised with real objects from their environment in order to develop both intellectually and linguistically – not that children gain access to religion or that moralizing narratives serve as examples or act as deterrent (e.g. Bartnitzsky 2016, 10). Only after a close multi-sensorial perception of the object follows a linguistic view, e.g. through description and narratives (ibid.). At the beginning of the 19th century, Pestalozzi already considered multi-sensorial perception as fundamental to cognisance (1877, 145). A text written by Morf in 1857 illustrates the significance of object-lessons in the middle of the 19th century. According to Morf (1857, 24), children starting school hold unclear and incomplete worldviews, thus, objects of everyday life (realia) serve as perception aids for the indoctrination of mind (ibid., 25).

One can observe how primers of this type explicitly include *Anschauungsübungen* [object-lesson exercises], and how, in the middle of the 19th century, language books turn into a combination of language- and realia books, dealing with objects first, then with people, and finally with morality and religion (Gabele 2002, 29). However, the combination of language and realia only lasts until the beginning of the 20th century, when pure language books are reintroduced. Methodically, the read-and-write method [German: *Schreiblesemethode*] is established. In the middle of the 19th century, the first primers of this type continue using the phonics method. The 1880s and 1900s primers move away from a synthetic procedure towards an analytic-synthetic procedure and from abstract towards concrete operation units. The so-called *Normalwörtermethode* [keyword method], being a variant of the whole word method, uses a limited number of particularly suitable, child-friendly words. The children learn to segment them into letter sounds in order to synthesise them into new words.

3.1 «Erstes Lesebüchlein für die untern Klassen der bernischen Schulen» 1845

This teaching material is clearly reminiscent of the Enlightenment primer described in section 2, since the book is split in a primer- and a reading part; moralizing narratives can be found, too. However, it is the first Bernese primer to explicitly introduce an additional part with object-lesson exercises.

□ Bernese Primers (continued)

The first half of the 95 pages consists of reading training, where the phonics method, typical for the Enlightenment primers, is still in use. The only change brought about is that vowels are introduced in two steps (first: i, u, e, then: o, a) and directly combined with consonants. From the starting point of these combinations, reading of successively growing units as well as short texts follows.

The second half of the primer deviates from previous primers, since an object-lesson part was added between the reading training part and the reading text part. Sentences that are meant to represent children's environment are supposed to enhance children's competencies in reading, speaking, and writing. These sentences appear under the title of *Anschaunungsübungen* [object-lesson exercises]. The first chapter focuses on everyday objects from children's environments, from there the scope widens continually (e.g. everyday objects in classrooms, in the living room, the garden, village, country). Chapter two lists and inflects adjectives for the description of features. The third chapter describes the activities of the child, teacher, etc. and is followed by numerous occupations. All sentences are immediately used for an implicit grammar lesson (inflection of verbs according to person, time, and mode).

The last quarter of the primer consists of the traditional reading part, where narratives in the form of moralizing stories, descriptions of everyday objects, animals, etc. follow. Aphorisms, poems, and five pages of prayers are available for memorization.

3.2 «Lesebuch für die erste Stufe der Primarschule des Kantons Bern» 1864. «1. Theil: Der Lese-Schreib-Unterricht», «2. Theil: Die Anschauungs-, Denk- und Sprachübungen»

The reading book consists of 30 pages of reading training, and of a 160 page-long part about object-lesson, thinking, and language exercises, which are customized for pupils from first to third grade. Both parts should be used parallel to each other (1864, n.p.). The following paragraphs only describe the part for the first and second grade. The department of education in Bern declared both bands as mandatory teaching material.

What is new about the reading training part is that the letters are introduced in Kurrent, the previously used font Fraktur follows in the middle of this part. Taking the *Schreibschrift* [cursive handwriting] as a starting point indicates the significance of writing in this primer. The introduction of letters via their sounds commences with the vowels <i> and <e> in combination with the nasals <n> and <m>. Further vowels are introduced, followed by consonants, which are then combined to syllables and eventually to words. The second half of this part introduces majuscules written in both Kurrent and Fraktur, and reading is exercised with the help of sentences. This part closes with a morning- and evening prayer.

The second band (in Fraktur) is subdivided in a descriptive and a narrating part, which are supposed to stir the mind: respectively, phantasy and temper. Object-lessons build the basis: children shall eye and touch things (objects, people, etc.), they are supposed to talk about things before reading and writing about them.

The descriptive part focuses on naming and creating simple sentences about the perceived objects. Children have to talk and write about what they look like, what their functions are -they learn about school, their house, and environment. The narrative part contains prose and lyrical texts with moralizing content; this part thematically builds on the perceptive part. A page full of prayers follows at the end.

□ Bernese Primers (continued)

3.3 «Fibel. Erstes Sprachbüchlein für schweizerische Elementarschulen» 1876 (available in an unchanged edition from 1881), by H. R. Rüegg

In 1876, this reading teaching material arose as an order from the Swiss cantonal authorities of education, it was the first to carry the title *Fibel* [primer] in Bern. Hans Rudolf Rüegg, a scholar of Thomas Scherr, was supposed to create a German teaching book for first to third graders that could be used throughout the German speaking area of Switzerland. This German teaching book was created on the basis of Scherr's publications in Zurich. In 1876, the band for first grade appeared for the first time, in 1881 an unaltered edition was published, and in the years of 1880 and 1890 numerous further editions followed (sometimes in different fonts). In Bern, it was not declared as mandatory.

This primer strikes a new path, since this version of the read-and-write method does not start with single letters respectively single sounds towards "pointless syllables" (1881, 3), but rather with *Normalwörter* [keywords]. These keywords are put at the beginning, they are analysed, and the resulting sounds are synthesised again. Rüegg (1881, 4) suggests preliminary exercises where both hearing and speech organs (training of phonological awareness) as well as eyes and hands (recognition of forms and graphomotor exercises) are trained.

The first half of the 44 page-long primer is written in Kurrent script, the second half in Fraktur. Aided by black and white illustrations, simple and meaningful keywords are introduced in 21 paragraphs. Their referees were seen as objects and the words were split up in their phonetic components, translated to letters and finally composed to new words. After 16 keywords (e.g. *ei*, *seil* [egg, rope] etc.), different reading exercises follow, before another seven keywords for lengthening and sharpening (e.g. *beeren*, *lamm* [berries, lamb]) are learnt and practised. In a next step, lowercase letters are juxtaposed in opposition to majuscules. This part ends with six pages of object-lesson exercises. In the second half, the letters in Kurrent are contrasted with Fraktur and first words are already read. The last ten pages are dedicated to a reading part consisting of simple texts. The texts are about realistic scenes from children's environment (e.g. at home, in school), in the form of rhymes, poems, riddles, but also includes realia. In the ending, there are four short poems as well as a list of the alphabet in Fraktur.



Image 5 – «Fibel. Erstes Sprachbüchlein für schweizerische Elementarschulen» 1881, front page, p. 5 (Swiss National Library)

4 The Bernese primers from 1680 to 1876

As in other language regions, the Bernese primers can be allocated to different types of primer. However, these different types cannot be seen as isolated, homogenous groups. The Bernese catechism and Enlightenment primers show numerous transitions (see subsections 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, and 2.2). The catechism

□ Bernese Primers (continued)

primers only teach reading with the alphabet method, whereas the Enlightenment primers work with different methods of written language acquisition. Until the beginning of the 19th century, only reading is taught with the alphabet method (writing follows significantly later). As of 1830, both areas of competencies are introduced together in primers, one teaching with the phonics method. The group of object primers is not homogenous either. During the 1840s and the 1860s, the synthetic method was still in use, and the approach of realia within reading texts gained presence. As of 1870, a new analytical-synthetic method of reading instruction appears. See figure 1 for an overview of types of primers and their reading instruction methods.

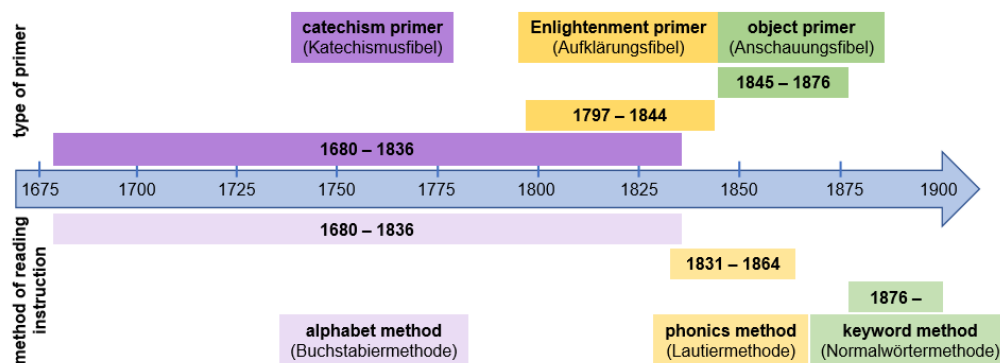


Figure 1: Bernese reading primers: different types of primer and methods of reading instruction and their chronological use⁸

Notes

1. Only four years later, another reading primer was published: *„Namen-Büchlein: Sampt dem Vatter Unser/ Glauben/ Zehen Gebotten/ auch andern schönen Gebä-ten/ mit unterschiedenlichen Sylben/ der Jugend vast nutzlich und fürderlich zu lehrnen*». [Reading Primer: Including the Lord's Prayer / the Creed / the Ten Commandments / other Lovely Prayers / with Different Syllables / Useful and Be-neficial for Youth's Learning Process]. Bern: Hoch-Obrigkeitliche Druckerey. Unfortunately, only an incomplete transcript remains (University Library Bern).
2. In 1799, a survey of teachers (called "Stapfer-Enquête") points to an animated use of the *Namenbüchlein*. It was among the ten most used teaching materials and was applied in almost every second school in the canton of Bern (see Pfaeffli-Ruggli 2007, 39).
3. What is new about this primer is that basics of grammatical knowledge of morphology (stem, derivation) are introduced, which, as we know today, support reading (e.g. Sénéchal & Kearnan 2007).
4. Due to the illustrations, Skjelbred et al. (2017, 44) classify similar Norwegian reading primers as a special type of primer, the *Bilde-abc-er*.
5. Online accessible via: <http://www.verfassungen.de/ch/bern/verf31-i.htm>
6. «Gesetz über die öffentlichen Primarschulen des Kantons Bern» [Laws about public schools from the canton of Bern], from 13.3.1835.
7. This manual consists almost exclusively of writing exercises (in Kurrent).
8. The keyword method is continued in the «*Fibel in Schreibrschrift*» (1901).

References, Part 1: Reading Primers (in Chronological Order)

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▣ Bernese Primers (continued)

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▣ Latgalian Primers

Latgalian Primers (1768-2018), Part 1

Juris Cibuļs, Riga (Latvia)

*Lethos, qui proprie dicuntur Lethigalli**

2018 marks the 250th anniversary of the first Latgalian primer having been published in 1768. Its title is in the Polish language *Elementarz łotewski z abecadłem, krótkim katechizmem* [Latvian Primer with the Alphabet, with a Short Catechism] since Latgale at that time was part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The first part of this article on the history of Latgalian primers deals with basic information about the Latgalian language, followed by sections on Latgalian catechism primers and on primers compiled in the 20th century by Latgalian authors in Latvia. The second part – to be published in issue 16 of RPI – will consider Latvian primers adapted for use in schools in Latgale, primers for the Russification or Lettonisation of Latgalians, Latgalian primers published in Soviet Russia and, finally, Latgalian primers published in independent Latvia since 1992.

Latgalians have been called Latvians throughout the centuries. It suggests that the word *Latvian* was synonymous with the word *Latgalian* (this makes sense if we consider that the compound *Lat-gale/Lat-gola* means *the place or the land of Latvians* (Karulis 1992, 504-505). In the Latgalian language that part of Latvia without Latgale is called *Čyuleja* and its autochthonous inhabitants – *čyuli* since Latgalians call themselves very often *latvīši* (Latvians). Latgalians have been called from the times immemorial *latgaji*, *lotygaji*, *letigali* or *latvīši*, *latvi*, *lati*, *letti*, *lotva*, *latiši*, *lotyši*.

The Latgalian language has been and still is called variously – *High Latvian language* (G. Manteuffel), *Latvian language* (J. Kurmins, O. Skrinda, P. Strods, F. Trasuns), *Latgal language* (A. Bērzkalns, M. Bukšs¹, J. Placinskis), *Latgal written language* (M. Bukšs), *Latgalian language* (V. Daškevica, L. Leikuma), *Latgalian literary language* (A. Breidaks), *Latgalian written language* (A. Ozols, K. Karulis, A. Augstkalns, A. Stafecka), *Latgalian literary written language* (A. Ozols), *Latgalian literary (written) language* (A. Breidaks, L. Leikuma, A. Stafecka), *High Latvian dialect* (M. Rudzīte), *written language of the dialect of*

* "Letts that in reality are called Latgals"; see: Henricus de Lettis, *Heinrici Cronicon Lyvoniae* [The Livonian Chronicle of Henry], Riga, 1224 – 1227, X. 3.

▣ Latgalian Primers (continued)

the eastern part of Latvia (M. Rudzīte), *Latgalian dialect* (V. Seile), *Latgal dialect* (J. Endzelīns, L. Latkovskis, P. Strods), *Latgalian subdialect* (P. Strods, V. Seile, J. Zēvers), etc. As the third living Baltic language – next to Latvian and Lithuanian – it has been considered by several Soviet linguists (Z. Agajan, N. Chemodanov, B. Golovin, A. Reformatski, R. Shor and others) as well as by researchers of the culture of civilisation of Latgale in exile, for example, M. Bukšs, J. Placinskis, L. Latkovskis and J. Lelis.

In the first Republic of Latvia, established after World War I, it has been allowed to make the entry “Latgalian” as one’s nationality in one’s passport at least still in 1924. Yet in the course of the years and especially after the coup d’état on May 15, 1934, on the political level a mononational Latvian culture was promoted, and this approach was renewed on the same ideological basis after 1991.

Today there are no precise data about the number of people with Latgalian as a native language, and estimations vary between 150,000 and 500,000 persons². During the last census in 2000 a lot of persons having been asked about their nationality (ethnic origin) responded that they are Latgalians. This was taken into account only on paper since when the data were entered into a computer all Latgalians were automatically changed into Latvians. Yet in a process of seven years (2003-2010) the individual code for the Latgalian language was finally received from the International Standardisation Organisation (ISO). The code attributed by the ISO 639/Joint Advisory Committee (USA) is LTG. At present the Latgalian language is taught only optionally in a few schools in Latgale. In 2000 the Association of Teachers of Latgalian Language, Literature and History of Civilisation has been established. It has been seeking to obtain support from the government for teaching Latgalian at schools in Latgale, with very modest success so far.

Overall some seventy-five different primers have been published in the Latgalian language and for Latgalians. The Latgalian primers have been written in different orthographies. The compilers of the Latgalian primers, published in the 18th and 19th centuries, have made use of the Polish orthography; however, already the very first Latgalian primers (the so-called catechism primers) demonstrate the typical features of the Latgalian language quite precisely.

The Latgalian primer is usually named *lementars* (compare in Polish: *elementarz*, in Lithuanian: *elementorius*, in Belarussian: *lemantar/лемантар*). This is an abbreviation of the word *elementārs* (compare in Latin: *elementarius* – the original, the primary, the simplest). The name of a Latgalian primer has been written differently: *lementars*, *lementers*, *elementiers*, *elementars*. The names originating from Latvian *ābece*, *abece* are used as well. There are primers with both these names on the cover and/or title page.

In the first independent Latvia (1918–1940) in the 1930s in schools of Latgale the language of instruction was Latgalian in the first four years, while the Latgalian language was taught as a subject starting with the third year twice a week. After the coup d’état on May 15, 1934 the Latgalian schools were closed, textbooks were withdrawn from use and even burnt. The same fate befell to the Latgalian books in the libraries.

The information about the first compilers, authors of the Latgalian primers is almost none. The amount of Latgalian primers and the geography of publishing show the efforts of local clergy (many authors of primers are Catholic clergymen) to consolidate their influence in Latgale, but the efforts of local intellectuals to always keep in mind the notion “education is easiest and most likely to be acquired in the mother tongue”: cannot be neglected. The Latgalian primers differ both in terms of the layout and volume of the material as well as the content and the addressee. The primers were most often intended for peasants’ sons, because girls were not allowed to attend school. From supplements to letter teaching it is easy to understand that not children, but adults will torment

□ Latgalian Primers (continued)

themselves over acquiring the wisdom of books by spelling out the words. Only in the 20th century the Latgalian primers, which were intended not only for boys but for children in general, appeared. Since 1925, at the disposal of the pupils of Latgale there are not only original works but also adaptations or translations of Latvian primers.

Historically, the Latgalian orthography has been developed on the basis of the Polish orthography. The following letters have been used in the Latgalian primers: a ā à á â ä a; b b.; c ç ć č; d d; e ē è é ê è e; f; g g; h; i ī ï í î; j; k k; l ł; m m.; n n; o ō ò ó ô; p p.; q; r r; s ś š ś š; t t; u ū ù ú û u; v v.; w; x; y ŷ; z z, ź ż. The apostrophe ' has also been used to show that the previous consonant is to be palatalised. In some primers the alphabets also include the letter combinations ch, dz, dż and ff.

The Latgalian orthography used in the Latgalian primers is very different in writing and highly inconsistent. There is also no consistency in the same author's primers published in different years. For example, in primers written by S. Svenne, the Latgalian equivalent of the sentence "I go to school" is presented as:

<i>Skūlā it' maņ gribīs.</i>	<i>Školā it maņ gribis.</i>	<i>Skūlā it maņ gribīs.</i>
(1923, 1925)	(1929)	(1937)

Such inconsistency can also be found in one and the same primer, and even in the same line, for example in the primer *PILNS Elementers deļ zemniku puīšķinu* [The Full Primer for Peasants' Boys] (Rīga, 1903): *Jis* [He] *bej. Viņš* [He] *sed.*

For the purpose of this overview I have classified the Latgalian primers in several groups (where it is possible to group them chronologically).

Catechism Primers

The first book that performed also the functions of the primer was a catechism, that is, a precept or a brief presentation of Christian teaching in the form of questions and answers. Traditionally, this has been done through a dialogue between a teacher and a pupil or one of parents and a child. All the first Latgalian primers are so-called catechism primers. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the compilers of primers inserted everything they thought a peasant should know. Therefore, in a primer there was a brief catechism and prayer texts.

As the very first primer in the Latgalian language can be considered *Elementarz lotewski z abecadiem, krótkim katechizmem* [The Latvian Primer with the Alphabet, with a Short Catechism"], published in Vilnius in 1768. This primer may have been written by Miķelis Rots (1721–1785) who was born in Ilūkste. From 1749 until the end of his life, he was a Jesuit priest and cared for believers in Dagda. When he began his mission, he first learned the language of the local people. It is supposed that M. Rots has also compiled an alternative primer published between 1772 and 1778 according to the method of spelling out the words, with Catholic religious reading texts composed of songs and prayers. These texts distinguished the publication from all other known Latgalian primers, where the supplement of the primer consists mainly of the catechism. Yet no copy preserved up today is known.

Several sources mention the following lost primers that are considered to be catechism primers:

- *Nauka Chrzesciańska Łotewskim Językiem Wyrazona* [Christian Science Expressed by the Latvian Language], 1775, republished in 1821 and 1861 (Seil 1936, 18-19).
- A primer (no author, title, place and year of publication), mentioned also by M. Bukšs: "12 pages, has been written in the Latgal dialect for Latvian Catholics, printed approx. 1775–1786" (1957, p. 733).

▣ Latgalian Primers (continued)

- A primer (no author, title and place of publication), 1788. With No. 469, the catalogue of ancient editions refers to this Latgalian primer by the method of spelling out the words, with Catholic religious reading texts (*Seniespiedumi latviešu valodā*, 1999). The headings in the primer are in Polish and in Latgalian, for example, *Katechizm krótki Eysa mociba* [Short Catechism], *Modlitwy krótkie lyugszonas eysas* [Short Prayers]. It is believed to be a part of the series of editions of primers, the first edition of which appeared in 1768 and is the oldest surviving edition. In the 1880s such a primer of 16 pages was found in the library of the town of Riga. No copy preserved is known.

The Latgalian catechism primers having been preserved up today include:

- A primer (no title and place of publication), after 1801 (the date judging after the paper watermark is 1802).

The Latgalian catechism primers having been preserved up until today include:

- A primer (no title and place of publication), after 1801 (the date judging after the paper watermark is 1802). The primer has had several editions from 1821 to 1855.

- The catalogue of ancient editions refers to the primer issued in Polotsk (Belarus) in 1828 or 1829 and in 1829. In terms of the content, it is very similar to the already mentioned primer of 1801.

- *Ejsa mociba un ejsas lyugszonas* [Short Catechism and Short Prayers]: M. Bukšs points out that this book, also with the title in Polish, was issued in 1768 in Vilnius. With the same title the primer has been issued in 1788. It had many different editions.

- *Mocieyba lassiszanas prieksz moziem berniem* [Teaching of Reading for Small Children]: This primer was issued in Vilnius in 1824. The cover depicts an unusual landscape of Latgale – ploughing with a bull and a palm. The book has two little drawings. V. Seile notes that “the text is in a pure Latgalian dialect, although the title does not sound Latgalian” (1936, p. 27).

- *Eysa mociba del masu bernu / Eysa mociba del mozu bernu* [Short Catechism for Small Children]: These primers were issued in Vilnius in 1835, 1839 (see image 1), 1849, 1856 and 1863. The 6th edition was issued in Daugavpils in 1855. It could be the first book published in Latgale. Another edition was issued in Dorpat (Tartu, Estonia) in 1867.

- *Pilns elementiers diel ziemniku puiszkinu / Pylns elementiers diel ziemnjku pujszkinu* [Full Primer for Peasants’ Boys]: These booklets have been issued in Vilnius in 1857 and in 1863 (see image 2). The text of the imprimatur is in Polish and Russian. The title of the primer indicates that it is intended for teaching peasants’ boys. There are copies with a different number of pages, but with the same year of publication. It is therefore permissible to assume that the primer has often been republished during the ban on printing as a smuggling item with a false place, a year of publishing and censorship permission. Some editions have been tied together with books in German, for example, with a guide to assembly and association rights, and a libretto of some operetta.

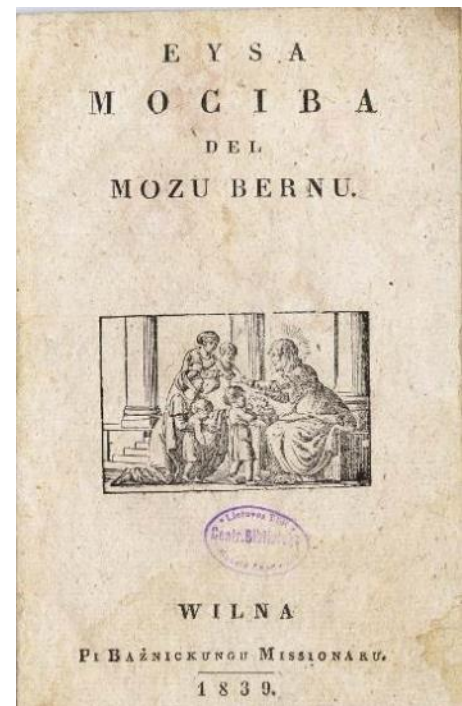


Image 1 – *Eysa mociba del mozu bernu*. Wilna 1839, title page.

▣ Latgalian Primers (continued)

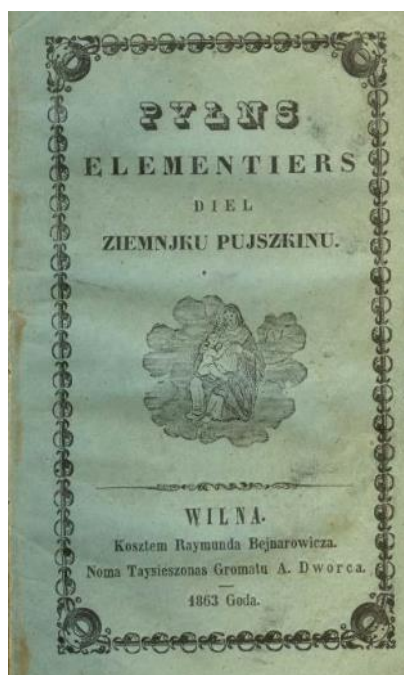


Image 2 – *Pylns elementiers diel ziemnjku pujszkinu*. Wilna 1863, title page.

During the print ban, contrafactions were often printed – editions with false information about their place of issue, time, authors, etc. The printing of contrafactions was encouraged by the fact that the administration of tsarist Russia had authorised the book printers of Vilnius to sell out the books of the religious and scientific content that had been printed before the ban on printing and which were not forbidden by censorship.

On p. 38 of this textbook one can find the text *Pawuycieyszona Swata Gora dél bierniniu* [Instruction of the Holy Spirit for Children] that begins with recognition of the necessity to birch children:

*Ar Reyksti Swats Gors, barnus sist' parédĕy,
Reykstia pawyssam ni winam naszkodiej.
Reykstia lut' padzań protu golwâ barnu, Wyuca
potieru, globoy slyktu runu.*

[With a switch the Holy Spirit orders to beat children, The switch does not make any harm to anyone. The switch helps very much to drive a mind in children's head, It teaches prayers, safeguards against using bad language.]

Editions of a Latgalian primer with very similar content and the same title – *PILNS Elementers deĵ zemniku pujskinu* – have been issued in Riga in 1903 and 1906, and several editions in unknown years in Tilsit (Eastern Prussia) at the printing house of J. Schoenke both with 32, 64 or even more pages. Gothic letters that have never been used in Latgalian orthography are taught in this primer. It has been explained why it is done:

A careful Latvian (= a Latgalian) needs to teach his children to read also books of the Middle Subdialect. In these books we find such good, useful and easily attainable things to be learned in this life that will never be taught in our subdialect. Therefore there is a sample following which children can read the books of the mentioned subdialect, that have been printed either with the Gothic or Latin letters.

Primers of Latgalian Authors in Latvia, 20th Century

The most popular authors of original Latgalian primers in the 20th century have been Francis (Fraņcs) Kempis, Francis (Fraņcs) Trasuns and Eduards Kozlovskis in Latvia and Izidors Meikšāns in Soviet Russia.

Primers of Francis Kempis

Francis Kempis (1876–1952) was one of the most outstanding persons of the Latgalian national awakening. At the beginning of the 20th century he participated in the development of the Latgalian orthography. He has issued the first newspaper and first magazine in Latgalian and has written textbooks, including primers. In 1905 he published the primer *Lementars aba moza Abece Mozim Latwišu barnim. Pırma mociba lasit un rakstit* [Primer or a Little ABC-book for Small Latvian Children. The First Teaching to Read and to Write] (see image 3). It was printed in Cēsis (Wenden) by J. Ozols. The year of publication has not been indicated, except for the censorship mark in Russian "Allowed by censorship, Riga, April 7, 1905".

At the beginning of the primer there is a brief guide to those who will want to teach children using this primer. The book contains many drawings featuring objects and animals, with their names below. All drawings are typical of Latgale, except for one with the letter T representing a Turk.

▣ Latgalian Primers (continued)

The foreword indicates that the child is able to tell what is seen in the drawing, even though he still cannot read. When the word has been pronounced, the child needs to be introduced to the letters of which this name is composed. When the primer has been read and a child can easily read alone itself, one needs to switch to writing. Firstly, separate letters are to be written, then whole words. Children should start to be taught to read already from the age of five or six years. This primer provides the name of each letter of the alphabet.

The primer *Lementars mozim Latwisu barnim* [Primer for Small Latvian Children] was issued in 1908 in Daugavpils and printed in Vilnius. The author of the primer is marked with X (M. Bukšs writes that it is F. Kemps, and also on the copy in the collection of the Latvian Academic Library a hand-written note marks "Kemps").

The motto on the cover of the primer runs as follows: "*Barni, mocatis lasit un rakstīt*" [Children, learn to read and to write]. The author believes that it is necessary to teach not only to read but also to write, since even adults [obviously those who are in exile or abroad – J. C.] are said to write letters to their motherland in a foreign language. The author teaches syllables, indicating that one does not have to teach by spelling each letter, for example, *be-a*, but read it right away – *ba*. It has been recognised that the most widely used teaching method in the Baltic languages is the sound method having several variations. Francis Kemps was the first to have attempted to use elements of the sound method in Latgalian primers. In 1909, the second edition of the primer *Lementars aba moza abece mozim Latwišu barnim. Pirmā mocība lasīt un rakstīt* was issued with a wider content. It was issued by V. Gaudze in Daugavpils, but published by J. Zavadzkiš in Vilnius. In this edition there is no teaching of syllables any more.

Primers of Francis Trasuns

Francis Trasuns (1864–1926) was a Catholic clergyman, publicist and writer. He studied at the Jelgava Gymnasium, the St. Petersburg Catholic Seminary and the Academy. He compiled the first most comprehensive reading book for Latgalian *Školas dōrzs* [School Garden] (1909), which was popular for popular scientific studies in it. F. Trasuns has also written a book *Latvišu volūdas gramatika* [Grammar of the Latvian (=Latgalian) language] and primers.

In 1921 Trasuns compiled the primer *Abece latgališu barnim* [Primer for Latgalian Children] together with Draugs, issued in Riga (see image 4). This primer does not provide sounds that are not typical to the Latgalian language and are represented by the letters F and H. Also in part 2, which consists of short texts for each letter, F and H are found

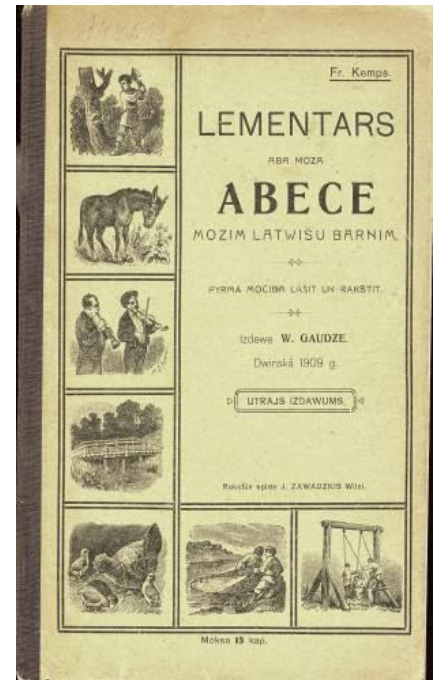


Image 3 – Francis Kemps: *Lementars aba moza abece mozim Latwišu barnim*. Cēsis 1905, front cover



Image 4 – *Abece. Latgališu barnim sastodija Draugs*. Riga 1921, front cover.

▣ Latgalian Primers (continued)

in the last text. Texts with religious content are not included in this primer. The primer *Abece* [Primer] was compiled by Draugs and issued by Trasuns in St. Petersburg, presumably in 1921. The teaching of letters and the texts for reading are the same as in the previous primer, but the spelling of the suffixes of the words, adjectives of the masculine gender, etc. are different.

Primers of Eduards Kozlovskis

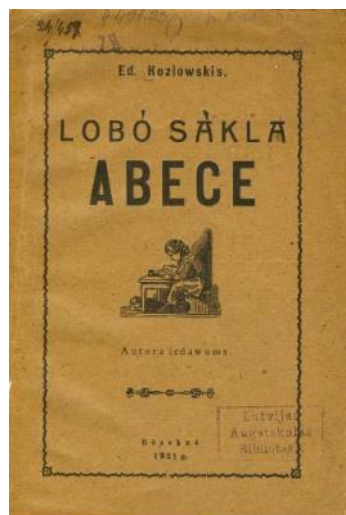


Image 5 – Eduards Kozlovskis: *Lobò sàkla. Abece.* Rēzekne 1921, front cover.

Eduards Kozlovskis (1878–1943) was a book publisher in Latgale and one of the most successful compilers of the Latgalian primers. V. Seile writes that the first E. Kozlovskis' primer *Lementars* is said to have been issued in 1916. In 1917, E. Kozlovskis' primer *Lementars del mozim bārnim* [Primer for Small Children] was issued in Rēzekne. Printing was authorised by the war censorship of the Rēzekne town on January 25, 1917. Yet the greatest achievement of the author in the field of pre-school books is the primer *Lobò sàkla* [Good Seed] (see image 5). The author's first edition was issued in Rēzekne in 1921, and the second edition appeared a year later. Readers with the same title, all in all four editions, were published between 1916 and 1922.

The primer of Nikodems Rancāns

Nikodems Rancāns (1870–1933) was a priest, teacher, writer, publicist and also a facilitator of the Latgale national awakening and unity. His primer *Lementars del mozim bārnim* [Primer for Small Children] was issued in Riga in 1923. The primer begins with hand exercises – drawing strokes and drawing contours of various objects. It has been shown how the pupil should sit on the bench and keep a pen on one's hand. On p. 41 there is a reprint from P. Abul's textbook *Skolas Druva* [School Cornfield] which claims that the rooster is singing *ku-ka-re-ku*. The Russian rooster sings like this! The Latgalian rooster's singing is imitated in writing as *ki-ki-ri-gī*.

Rancāns' primer is the only Latgalian primer distinguishing two letters *H* (*Helena, Heļa, Heņa*) and *Ch* (*Chaims, Chaika, cha - cha*). When I started attending school in 1958 I was given the first Latvian primer in which pupils were taught H and CH, but as soon as the following year we got a new edition which had only H. This is in contrast to written Lithuanian where both letters H and CH are in use. Another feature of the primer compiled by Rancāns is the inconsistency in the spelling of the proper name *Latgola* and *Latgale*.

Notes

¹ Miķelis Bukšs (1912–1977), a Latgalian publicist, a linguist, was born in Plešova, a village 6 km far from my native village Purlova.

² See http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=lv

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□ Review

Sabine Reh / Denise Wilde (Hrsg.): Die Materialität des Schreiben- und Lesenlernens. Zur Geschichte schulischer Unterweisungspraktiken seit der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts [The Materiality of Learning to Write and Read. On the History of School-Based Instructional Practices since the Middle of the 18th Century]. Bad Heilbrunn: Julius Klinkhardt 2016, 325 pp., publication price 24.90 €*

Reviewed by Agneta Floth and Michaela Vogt, both Bielefeld (Germany)

The edited volume, published in the series *Bildungsgeschichte. Forschung – Akzente – Perspektiven* [History of Education. Research – Priorities - Perspectives] of Klinkhardt Publishing House, is destined primarily to readers who have some prior knowledge of the field of research. The book title promises a scientific discussion of “materiality” in the area of learning to read and write, with a special focus, as pointed out in the subtitle, on instructional practices since the middle of the 18th century. Under this heading the volume unites – among others – papers presented at a conference that took place in autumn 2013 at the *Bibliothek für Bildungsgeschichtliche Forschung* [Research Library for the History of Education] in Berlin, Germany.

The group of authors represented in this volume covers a broad spectrum of research approaches, with academic disciplines ranging from educational research, cultural studies and literary studies to the history of medicine and philosophy. The 15 contributions examine issues of materiality and of “practices and media of school-based learning and teaching to read and write” [p. 15]. The arrangement of the articles is based on a general distinction between two periods: 1750 to 1850 and 1850 to 2000, even though these periods are not legitimized with reference to the volume’s subject matter. Furthermore, several contributions in part go beyond the area of the German-speaking countries, including also countries like Spain or the geographic space of contemporary Poland.

The volume starts with a general overview, written by the editors, Sabine Reh and Denise Wilde. This overview takes up historical turning points from 1750 onwards and additionally gives an overview about research work on materiality and practices of learning to write and read for that period of time. Also the overview introduces the corpus of sources that are relevant for the focal points of the volume. In the next section of the text key research questions, which refer to the general intention of the volume, are presented and discussed by the editors. Afterwards selected glimpses at situating key terms with main relevance for the editors collection follow and are additionally conceptualized and reflected with regard to their disciplinary background. Therefore the introduction discusses the terms “materiality”, “writing” and “reading”, but the spectrum of the scientific discourse on materiality is only sketched out here, taking up here the reader’s supposed professional knowledge. This is followed by a specific definition of materiality that guides the concept of the volume and comes along with a focus, as suggested by the subtitle, on the idea of “practices”. Within this approach also efforts were made to set both concepts in relation to one another. Thus, by the exploration of the “practice of learning and teaching [...] [of] in-

Bildungsgeschichte.
Forschung – Akzente – Perspektiven



Sabine Reh
Denise Wilde
(Hrsg.)

**Die Materialität des
Schreiben- und Lesenlernens**

Zur Geschichte schulischer Unterweisungspraktiken
seit der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts

k linkhardt

* All quotes in this review are provided as translations from the German original.

□ **Review (continued)**

structional routines [i.e. *practices*]“ „objects that were handled with and used in educational and learning processes, that prefigured these processes or were created within them“ become “historical sources” [i.e. *materials*] that may provide information about their use.” (p. 7). All in all the explanations presented in the introductory part are suited to the target group addressed; they present a reasonable frame for embedding the following articles, and they deliver an informative, albeit short introduction to relevant discourses. Individual aspects such as the embedding in an appropriate understanding of culture – as claimed for a thorough understanding of materiality for example by Schrage (2006) – are not mentioned, presumably for reasons of space.

The individual articles following the introduction address a broad spectrum of research questions, and in their entirety, they meet the expectation expressed by the editors that the volume “contributes to explore the educational history of what happens in the classroom and during lessons” (p. 15).

With a focus on the first historical period, Alfred Messerli examines administrative efforts for the nationwide promotion of literacy in Switzerland between 1750 and 1850, analyzing, among others data sources, relevant newspapers. The slate – a plate of slate for writing – is the object of investigation of articles by Peter O. Büttner and Tobias Fuchs (in both cases for the European space), by Marcelo Caruso (for Spain) and by Heinrich Bosse (primarily for German speaking countries): Peter O. Büttner investigates the profession of the calligrapher around 1800 in the context of “writing instruction”, whereas Marcelo Caruso, following analytical approaches derived from cultural studies, examines the set of conditions of the materials and the pupil as user of these materials, with a focus on processes of pupil’s subjectification. Considering “writing as a cultural practice” (p. 139) between 1800 and 1850, the article by Tobias Fuchs takes as a basis the understanding of materiality that examines writing materials and script as “two phenomenal areas of writing” (p. 140). Heinrich Bosse explores the role of the slate as a medium for pupil’s self-determined action between 1614 and 1823. In addition to the articles about the slate Andrea De Vincenti analyses data provided by a Swiss school survey from 1771 to describe the role of handwriting in contemporary reading and writing instruction. A report written by Carl Friedrich Riemann as an eyewitness is the starting point of an article written by Annedore Prengel and Hanno Schmitt about a model school in Brandenburg, founded by Friedrich Eberhardt von Rochow, and about von Rochow’s views on beginning reading instruction. Sabine Reh analyses the practice of reading aloud as described in one of the “first ‘subject-related didactical’ journal(s) for German instruction” (p. 16), published in 1843/44. Nearly the entire period of time covered by the volume is considered in Anja Werner’s historical outline of methods used in German speaking countries for language teaching of deaf persons.

The second group of contributions, focusing on the period from 1850 to 2000, starts with an article by Gert Geißler and Wendelin Sroka about bilingualism in primary schools in the Eastern provinces of Prussia from the end of the 18th century to 1910. Writing material is the subject matter in articles by Bettina Irina Reimers und Denise Wilde: Bettina Irina Reimers examines the teaching and learning of Sütterlin script at the beginning of the 20th century, and Denise Wilde presents a theory-based study on the fountain pen as a tool for the didactical mediation of script and writing in the post-1945 period, considering processes of individualization in the context of materiality. The other articles in the group devoted to the second period use reading primers as primary sources: With reference to the first decades of the 20th century, Beate Klostermann-Reimers analyses the Hebrew primer „Ner Israel“ (1929) from an art historic perspective. Judith Scherer undertakes a comparative study of images in reading primers published in the German Democratic Republic and in the Federal Republic of Germany in the 1970s, aimed at identifying gender stereotypes and role models that were supposed to be imparted to pupils by

□ Review (continued)

means of the primer. Finally, Verena Stürmer examines the “practical role of the medium ‘primer’ in beginning reading instruction in the German Democratic Republic” (p. 307).

With regard to the fit between the single articles and the topic of the edited volume the main question is: To what extent do the individual contributions in accordance with the theme of the edited volume refer to “materiality of learning to write and read”? All in all, the focus of the collection of articles is on the interplay of “materiality” – understood as materials or media – and practices in the context of learning how to read and write in school. The authors examine this interplay by considering learning and/or teaching as well as reading and/or writing or language to different degrees. Taking into account the varied character of the implemented research approaches, the authors, reflecting on the theme of the volume, could in part have explained their understanding of materiality more clearly and provided theoretical connectivity. Alternatively, the editors might have written a concluding, summarizing chapter, thus elaborating these connections. Another possibility to further elucidate the focal theme of the volume would have been choosing an alternative structure that – instead of relying on historical periods and mainly diachronic arrangement – could have been based on the primary focus of authors on materials for reading and/or writing instruction on the one hand and within the process for learning how to read and to write in school on the other hand. Thus, regardless of the two periods that organize the volume, Alfred Messerli, Annedore Prengel & Hanno Schmitt, Denise Wilde, Beate Klostermann-Reimers and Judith Scherer focus on a medium of language acquisition, whereas Peter O. Büttner, Sabine Reh, Gert Geißler & Wendelin Sroka and Bettina Irina Reimers examine practices of teaching to read and/or to write, and Heinrich Bosse studies practices of learning to read and write. A connection between “materiality” and “practices” is examined in the contributions by Marcelo Caruso (with reference of learning and teaching to read and write) and Tobias Fuchs (with reference to learning to write), while Verena Stürmer studies the specific relationship of “medium” and “practices” in beginning reading instruction. A structure of this kind would have helped to meet the editor’s claim to connect “with the current debate in educational research, social sciences and cultural studies on a ‘practical turn’” (blurb) and provided more stringency for the reader. Yet the structure as decided by the editors focuses on the selected sources and their historical context, emphasizing the special role of sources as a basis of empirical research in educational history – a priority that is justified as well.

In conclusion, the minor criticisms pointed out in this review cannot weaken the scientific content of the book and its contribution to the relevant area of studies: For historical research in (primary) school education, Sabine Reh and Denise Wilde open up pathways that have been neglected so far. The editors succeed in demonstrating, in a complex thematic field, relevant potentials to enhance and synthesise existing and to develop new research approaches. These approaches can – for example – be based on textbook research or building up on a discourse on materiality that is extended to cultural phenomena.

□ Commentary

Linguistic Continuity in Group Labeling

Johari Murray, Cáceres (Spain)

In Federico Guillermo Serrano-López and Miguel Somoza-Rodríguez’s article “Social Constructs Regarding the Physical and Sexual Energy of Whites, Indigenous South Americans and Blacks in Spanish and Colombian Primary School Reading Books Between 1900 and 1960,” published in *History of Education*, 46:5, 2017, both researchers provide a compelling exploration of how religious, medical and political ideologies of the past century determined “hidden agendas” present in popular reading books of young school children in Spain and Columbia. With strong historical insight, they pair various examples from primary sources as a way to elucidate their three major concerns; biased de-

□ **Commentary
(continued)**

pictions of race, physical and sexual hierarchy based on race, and cross national comparisons of these variables between Spain and Columbia. The article demonstrates how the imposed social constructs of race and sexuality are propagated in childhood through reading books and textbooks. It also provides an overview of how shifts in power and influence impacted the content and wording of those educational resources.

Acknowledging the critical role words play in connotative and denotative use, it does come as a surprise the authors' use of the word 'black' in their article. Black is a color - no it is a shade, the absorption of all color. No, Black is a race of people; which people? Black is a symbol, a signifier, a feeling. The same argument could be made for 'white'. Author of the 1992 book, *The English Patient*, Michael Ondaatje, wrote in his novel that "Words are tricky things." So they are. It is not that the words "black", "white" or "indigenous" should be avoided or even condemned. They are common terms and yes, there is much debate about the "classifying" labels of people and group affinities. Regardless of which, an awareness and consistency in the use of terminology for identifying people in the article is encouraged. The title could have read "white, brown and black," within it, but easily seen as insufficient. Race and ethnicity are fascinating and complex issues, especially if taking into account the realities of group mixing and geography. Using of the terms "of European descent, of African descent and of Indigenous descent" in the article would convey a keener sense of racial-ethnic reflection and linguistic continuity in terminology than "black, white and Indigenous." Yet, the authors chose not to put into practice the very social constructs, cultural subjectivities and linguistic paradoxes they question.

While there is a socio-political side to this issue, the initial concern is with linguistic continuity. Semantically marking one of the identifying units as "Indigenous South Americans" would lead to the expectation that the others would be marked/identified in a similar fashion: non-indigenous Africans or non-indigenous Europeans. Yet these groups are not expected to be indigenous to South America, hence the suggestion for the use of "descent". The underlying ideology looks to reconcile that there are embedded contradictions with "black" and "white" without putting them in opposition to "indigenous". Maybe this was the authors' intention, as to bring out a multi-layered debate on how far removed we are in the twenty-first century, if at all, from the ideologies of the past century. Can new abstractions of the words we use to identify people create new understandings and new realities as suggested in George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's 1980 classic text, *Metaphors We Live By*? It is for this reason, and many others, why works such as Federico Guillermo Serrano-López and Miguel Somoza-Rodríguez continue to be ever so important: unveil hidden agendas not just of the past, but the current and future.

□ **News Around
the World**

□ **Greece**

Athens is World Book Capital City 2018

The editors of RPI join the celebration of the International Day of the Book, 23rd April, proclaimed by UNESCO as the World Book and Copyright Day, through the Resolution adopted on the report of Commission IV at the twenty-second plenary meeting, on 15 November 1995.

In connection with World Book and Copyright Day, UNESCO developed the concept of World Book Capital City as an annual event. The title is nominated every year to a different city and the programs run from April 23rd to April 22nd of the following year. Athens was chosen as World Book Capital City 2018. Ms Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, pointed out in her message on the occasion of World Book and Copyright Day 2018 that Athens was chosen "in recognition of the quality of its programmes to support the publishing sector, which have facilitated access to books for the population as a whole, and for migrants and refugees in particular."

<http://www.un.org/en/events/bookday/>

▣ Poland

A Forgotten International Collection of Reading Primers

Joanna Wojdon, Wrocław (Poland)

In the archival holdings of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw there is a file entitled "A letter of Julian Tuwim concerning international reading primers". Julian Tuwim, born in 1894, was a renowned Polish poet of the interwar period who specialized in children's poetry. He spent the WWII years in exile moving from occupied Poland first to Romania, then to France, Portugal, Brazil and eventually to the United States. Like many other Polish intellectuals, he did not get very well to the hardships of life in foreign culture in exile. Thanks to his left-wing political views, unlike many other émigrés, he had no problem returning to Poland under Communist rule in 1946.

The letter in question, dated on June 8th, 1953, was addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Tuwim revealed his plan to write a book on the reading primers from various countries and languages, not only European but also "exotic", "colonial" ones. The poet asked if the Minister could assist him in acquiring necessary source material by asking the Polish diplomatic outpost to send the primers from the countries of their residence and colonies. He stressed that he was interested not only in the "mainstream" primers, e.g. the Dutch from the Hague, English from London or French from Paris, but also about the Indonesian books from Hague, various colonial primers from London, Francophone books from Africa and Indochina and Indian from the United States. He thought the Polish embassy in Moscow could send the primers in a hundred languages used in the Soviet Union. Tuwim wrote that he was aware of the burden his request might cause but at the same time suggested that the primers could be used not only for his research but also for an exhibition in Warsaw which would be both artistically and politically informative.

Even today, any researcher would appreciate such an assistance, though we have access to high-speed internet with digital resources, networks (such as RP-SIG), high-speed trains and airplanes, and many funding opportunities. Yet Poland in 1953 was in the nadir point of Stalinism. It was almost completely isolated from the world outside. Hardly anyone could get a passport, even to the countries of the Soviet bloc, not to mention the territories "behind the Iron Curtain". Moreover, low salaries, especially if exchanged into dollars, could not permit travels. For both political and economic reasons libraries did not acquire books from the "capitalist" countries and the control of the books (censorship) and of the access thereto was very tight. The mere interest in the Western culture could result in a person being accused of suspicious contacts with "imperialism" and in subsequent persecution.

But apparently, Tuwim's position was strong enough not to worry about such troubles and his letter received full attention of the Ministry, in its most positive sense. On July 10, 1953 the request of Tuwim was passed to 32 persons in charge of the Polish diplomatic outposts worldwide. The Minister assigned special funds for this purpose and asked to send the books as quickly as possible, due – as he explained it – to the importance of the topic and the position of the author.

The archival holdings demonstrate that the task was taken very seriously by the outposts, and the requested copies came to Warsaw from many places. In the file there are letters that accompanied the books, signed by consuls, secretaries of embassies, heads of their cultural sections, attaches and charge d'affaires. The first package contained 6 Hebrew primers from Israel, dispatched on July 28. A Bulgarian and a Turkish primer from Bulgaria followed, then a Hungarian primer from Budapest. Three Turkish books came from Ankara (and Greeks primers were to follow). A Czech and a Slovak *Prvni citanka* arrived from Prague, an Albanian primer from Tirana, a Romanian from Bucharest and a GDR (German Democratic Republic) primer from East Berlin. A German primer from West Berlin was accompanied with a promise to send more West German primers as soon as they were acquired – the letter stressed that each

▣ **Poland (continued)**

German land used different primers. Three Finnish, one Sami and one Swedish primer came from Helsinki, and two more Swedish primers were sent from Stockholm with a promise to obtain also a Sami primer.

Twelve primers in French, German and Italian published in Switzerland came from Bern, five German and Croatian primers from Austria, three Norwegian and one Icelandic primer from Oslo. Four "typical" Danish books were chosen out of many used in Denmark.

Fifteen primers in Arabic published in Egypt and in other Arab countries were sent from Cairo and more were to follow. Three Arab primers used in Syria, three more in use in Lebanon, one from Palestine and one from Transjordan were dispatched from Damascus. Five Italian primers were sent from Rome together with a note that the Italian Ministry of Education informed the Polish Embassy that the same books were in use also in the Italian colonies. The embassy in Paris reported on difficulties in buying the colonial primers. They asked a prof. Wallon for assistance and were awaiting his return from vacations.

The longest letter of explanation arrived from Moscow. On the one hand the embassy explained how difficult it was to buy even regular Russian school textbooks there (indeed, the Soviet textbooks were distributed at school libraries and were not available in the bookshops on regular basis), not to mention the ones in non-Russian languages. So far, the head of cultural department wrote, the embassy managed to buy only a Tatar primer. As a solution of this problem, they proposed to file a request to *Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga* [International Book] – a company that sold Soviet books to the international buyers who paid in Western currencies. Moreover, the Moscow embassy reported on its contacts with the embassies of Mongolia and Vietnam in Moscow who were asked to provide their primers (and they did; the embassy of Vietnam used the only copy they had in their own library). It proposed to get in touch also with 22 other embassies in Moscow, of the countries with whom Poland did not have direct diplomatic relations, but this offer was rejected in Warsaw.

The embassy in Washington initially sent 14 English ABC books and 3 more in a separate package later, while London – 78 English primers in the first package (September 11, 1953), eight more on September 25 and three on October 10. The embassy in The Hague sent one Dutch primer as a sample of many different books used for reading instruction in Holland and asked if Tuwim needed all of them. They also informed that books from the Dutch colonies had been ordered but getting them would take time due to long distances.

Five Brazilian textbooks came from Rio de Janeiro. 21 primers arrived from Mexico, both in Spanish and in some Indian languages. The embassy in Mexico City promised to get more books in Indian languages as well as primers from Guatemala, Ecuador and Haiti (2 Haitian primers were indeed sent on November 29). The Polish embassy in Buenos Aires sent an Argentinian and two Bolivian primers, three from Uruguay and five from Chile.

Altogether, 245 primers from almost 100 countries arrived to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until January 1954. They were supposed to be donated to Tuwim who was not able to make use of them, however, because he died quite unexpectedly on December 27, 1953 at the age of 59. The books were transferred alongside Tuwim's papers to the Adam Mickiewicz Museum of Polish Literature in Warsaw.

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□ Russia

Research Group in Tula Explores Visual Components of 19th and Early 20th Century Russian Primers

Ekaterina Romashina, Tula

Today teachers recognize visual components of the school textbook and active work with them as an important means of forming and developing the child's visual literacy which is necessary in the modern Digital Age. Yet the origins of qualitative changes as they apply to visual elements in school education can be found in the 19th century. To the greatest extent this applies to textbooks for beginning reading instruction: children's developmental age and the very situation of the impossibility to present textual information to a person who cannot read forced authors and compilers of these textbooks to look for the most effective ways of visualizing educational material.

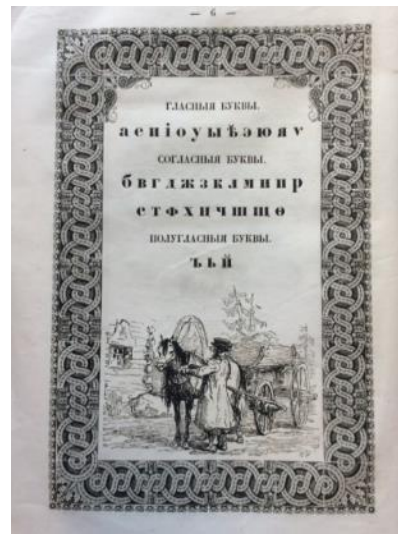
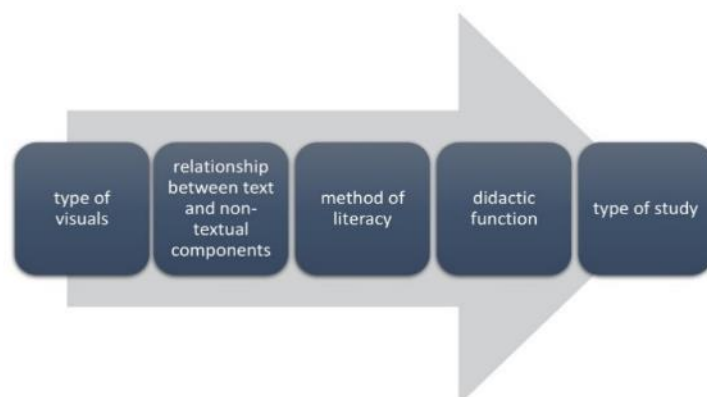


Image 1 – Velikolepnaya Russkaya Azbuka [Magnificent Russian Alphabet: a gift for kind children]. St. Petersburg, 1844, p. 6

It is from this background that an ongoing research project focuses on visual components in Russian ABC books [*azbuki*] and primers [*bukvary*]: A team of researchers at Tula State Lev Tolstoy Pedagogical University in Tula, Russia, investigates "The visual world of Russian abc-books and primers of the second half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries: the evolution of visual learning strategies [*Vizyal'nyj mir rossijskich azbuk i bukvariej vtoroj poloviny XIX – nachala XX vv.: evolucija strategij nagljadnogo obuchenija*]". Members of the research team include prof. DrSc. Ekaterina Romashina, Natalia Startseva, PhD., Associate Professor of the Chair of Russian Language and Literature, Galina Furtova PhD., Headmistress of School No. 11, Novomoskovsk, and Ivan Teterin, postgraduate student of the Chair of Pedagogics, Tula State Lev Tolstoy Pedagogical University. The project is financed from 2016 to 2018 by a grant of the Department of Social Sciences and Humanities of the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (No. 16-06-00113a).

The project focuses on the following research questions: What types of visual elements were used in the Russian abc-books and primers from the second half of 19th to the early 20th century? What is the frequency of their use in teaching aids of different types? Does the visual series of the textbook depend on the method of teaching literacy and, if so, how? What didactic functions are inherent in the visual series? What is the methodical equipment of visual materials for the student and for the teacher? The questions determined the conceptual framework of the model of structural and functional sources analysis:



▣ **Russia (continued)**

It is planned that the total sample of the study will be about 250 abc-books and primers, including reprints; teaching aids published by state, church and private printing houses in St. Petersburg, Moscow and in the Russian provinces will be considered. The work is carried out on the basis of the funds of the Russian National Library (St. Petersburg), the State Public Historical Library of Russia (Moscow), the Tula Regional Universal Scientific Library and the library of the Museum-Estate of L.N. Tolstoy "Yasnaya Polyana". A source of particular importance is the electronic database of bibliographic data of the K.D. Ushinsky Scientific Pedagogical Library, Moscow (<http://www.abc.gnpbu.ru>).

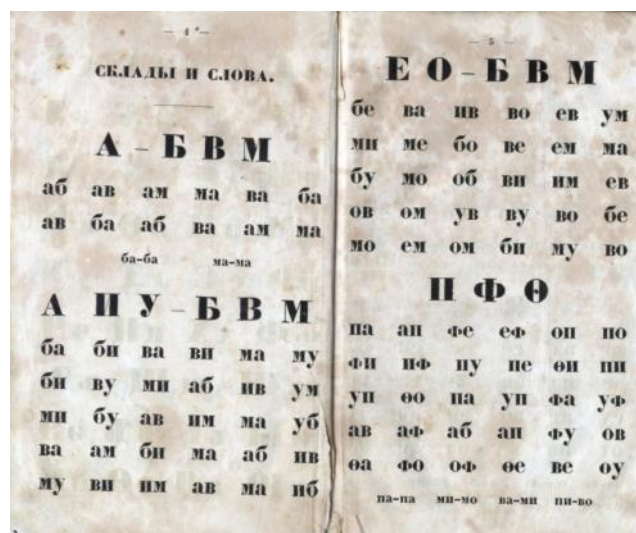


Image 2 – *Velikolepnaya Russkaya Azbuka* [Magnificent Russian Alphabet: a gift for kind children]. St. Petersburg, 1844, p. 6

So far the project work has concentrated on the analysis of abc-books and primers published before 1903. We found out that during the 19th century several types of teaching aids existed in parallel in Russia: 1) Books having a rich and diverse visual series, including engravings, hand-painted lithographs, complex ornaments, numerous pictures, various types of fonts, etc. were published, but not widespread because of the high cost. 2) Mass editions intended for use in public school and/or for adults had a set of printed signs and their combinations for teaching reading and mastering this skill, but were mostly combinations for teaching reading and without illustrations; the visual aspect is organized through graphical design elements, primarily fonts, ways of placing texts, dividing into fragments, alternating ways of material orienting, etc.

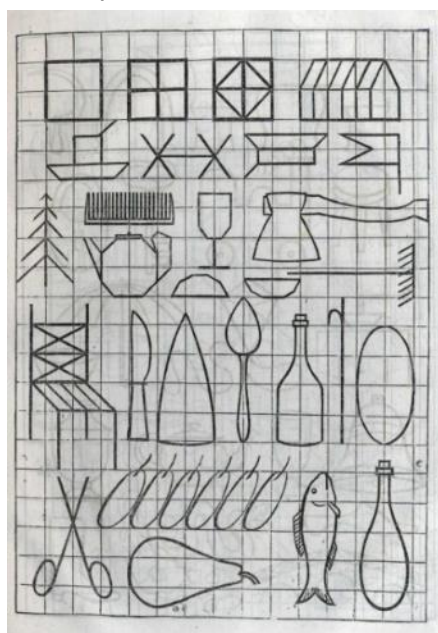


Image 3 – V. Vodovozov: *Russkaja Azbuka dlya detej* [Russian Alphabet for children]. St. Petersburg 1873, p. 1.

combinations for teaching reading and mastering this skill, but were mostly combinations for teaching reading and without illustrations; the visual aspect is organized through graphical design elements, primarily fonts, ways of placing texts, dividing into fragments, alternating ways of material orienting, etc.

The range of visual elements is represented by the following types: *artistic* (picture); *artistic design elements* (vignette, headpiece and frame); *graphic* (scheme, table); *graphic design elements* (lines, fonts, and intervals).

Until the 1860s, the most common visual elements were alphabetic schemes, lines and font accentuations. The number of pictures in the materials was small, the quality of printing was low. Tasks for pictures were extremely rare. Visual elements

▣ Russia (continued)



Image 4 – N. F. Bunakov: *Azbuka i uroki chteniya i pisma* [Alphabet and reading and writing lessons]. St. Petersburg 1889, p. 30.

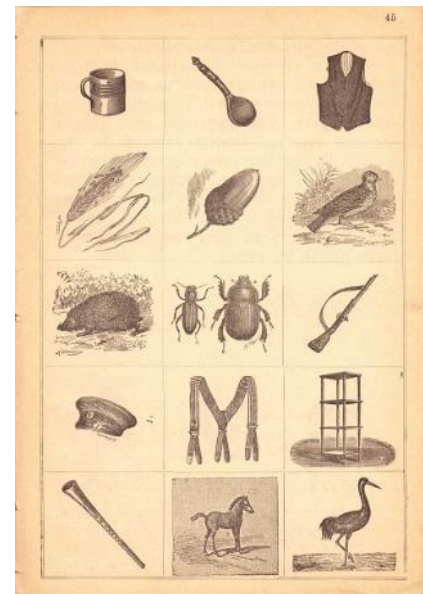


Image 5 – M. Volper: *Russkaya Rech* [Russian language]. St. Petersburg 1892, p. 45.

predominantly implemented the function of orientation, less often one of illustration and addition to the text. "Didactic inaction" of visual elements is widespread, i.e. they perform purely decorative functions.

From the 1860's onwards, visual elements of the alphabets and primers acquired a new didactic meaning: alphabetic schemes and pictures became directly included in the mechanism of mastering the reading technique; they were aimed at developing skills of sound fusion, recognizing the letter and the corresponding sound, the synthesizing of syllables and words (K. Ushinsky, *Rodnoe Slovo* [Native Word], 1864). Moreover, schematic pictures and tables for the development of fine motor movements and initial writing skills were introduced. We encounter multi-figure illustrations that had the potential to perform educational and regulatory functions, allowing the teacher to conduct conversations with students; in some cases, visual elements (pictures, illustrations) become the main sources of information, not only complementing and explaining, but even replacing the text.

All in all, the methodological equipping of visual elements in the ABC books and primers of the period under consideration was weak. Often, by placing a lot of pictures and illustrations on the pages, thus creating a wide "visual space", authors did not specify in the text or context special ways of working with images, leaving this layer of educational work open for free creative comprehension on the part of the educators.

The work on the project will continue throughout 2018, and the outcomes will be published in a monograph.

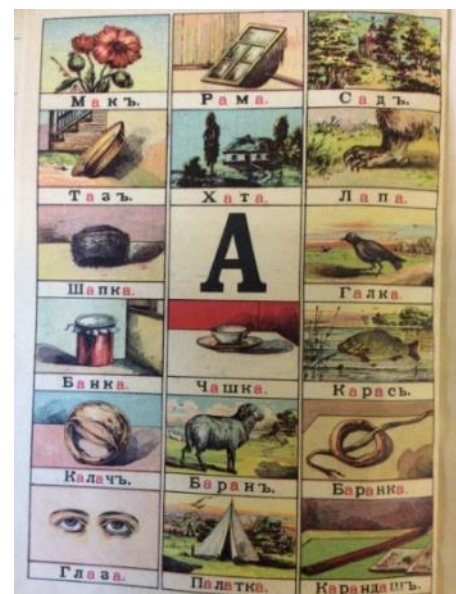


Image 6 – N. V. Tulupov: *Azbuka v kartinkakh* [Alphabet in pictures]. Moscow 1918, p. 8.

□ Uruguay

CIHELA 2018 Panel Addresses Methodological Issues of Historical Research on Textbooks

Kira Mahamud, Madrid (Spain)

The XIII Ibero-American Congress of History of Education (CIHELA) took place from 28th February to 3rd March 2018 in Montevideo, Uruguay. The congress was organised by the *Sociedad Uruguaya de Historia de la Educación*, a very young Society, founded in 2009, with members from the *Institutos Normales* ["Normal Institutes", i.e. Teacher Training Colleges] and the Faculty of Humanities and Education Sciences of the University of the Republic. They all made a great effort to organise the meeting. The congress gathered representatives of the Societies of History of Education of all the countries of Latin America (with an astonishing number of participants from Brazil), Italy, Portugal and Spain. The next CIHELA will be held in Lisbon in 2020. The presence of so many representatives of Latin America makes sense and responds to the fact that the congress was dedicated to 100 years of the university reform of Córdoba-Argentina, in 1918, explicitly embracing the topic with the title: "Politics, public space and disputes in the history of education in Latin America. 100 years after the Cordoba reform".

As part of the congress, *Kira Mahamud Angulo* and *Ana Badanelli Rubio* (both UNED, Spain) coordinated the panel titled "Methodological advances in historical-educational research with textbooks". The panel was framed within the thematic section "School Culture, Practices and Knowledge in History of Education", and, with panellists from Argentina, Brazil and Spain, it held an international dimension. The panel included the presentation and discussion of five papers:

Teresa Laura Artieda (Universidad Nacional del Nordeste, Argentina): *Aportes de la antropología visual al análisis de lecturas sobre pueblos indígenas. O de cómo disminuir los riesgos de un estudio 'insular' de los textos escolares* [Contributions of visual anthropology to the analysis of readings about indigenous peoples. Or how to reduce the risks of an 'insular' study of school textbooks].

Ana María Badanelli (UNED, Spain): *Las imágenes y sus interpretaciones en los textos escolares españoles. Una propuesta metodológica* [Images and their interpretations in Spanish school texts. A methodological proposal].

Marcelo Cigales (Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brasil): *A Sociología do manual escolar: aspectos metodológicos* [The Sociology of the School textbook: methodological aspects].

Kira Mahamud Angulo (UNED, Spain): *Propuesta metodológica multimodal e interdisciplinar en investigación manualística* [Multimodal and interdisciplinary methodological proposal in textbook research].

Simone Meucci (Universidade Federal do Paraná, Brasil): *Uma sociologia do conhecimento a partir dos livros didáticos* [A Sociology of knowledge from textbooks].

Acting as commentator of the panel, prof. *Gabriela Ossenbach Sauter* (UNED, Spain), pointed out the difficulties of textbook research to record the way in which school books were used, and the type of influence exerted on readers/students. She also highlighted the relevance of textbook studies and their authors to construct a history of school disciplines (for the case of the two works on sociology). Textbook research methodology constitutes one of the main concerns of researchers who employ textbooks as their core primary sources. MANES Research Centre has been working on the issue since 2012 in various funded research projects, readjusting methodological approaches to the changing editorial and didactic characteristics of textbooks in different historical periods. The centre receives a large number of visiting researchers every year from Latin America. The opportunity arose to discuss and share different methodologies applied by researchers in Argentina, Brazil and Spain, discove-

▣ Uruguay (continued)

ring a shared concern for the authorship of textbooks and how secondary education texts on sociology contributed to the conformation of scientific disciplines, such as sociology.

The conference programme included, among others, a dialogue between prof. *Agustín Escolano Benito* (CEINCE, Berlanga de Duero, Spain) and prof. *Elsie Rockwell* (Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados del Instituto Politécnico Nacional (Cinvestav), Departamento de Investigaciones Educativas, México, D.F.) on school cultures as part of public patrimony in Spain and in Latin America. *Agustín Escolano* set forth his thesis of how educational heritage has been historically constituted as a good with public value since universal expositions and nationalisms, up to our time, as a result of the fusion between academic and citizens practices, but also due to the empirical approaches of ethnohistory and to the revival of an interest in memory and identities. He illustrated his presentation with the experiences carried out in the CEINCE. *Elsie Rockwell* contributed to the idea of school culture as part of public patrimony stating that the verification of the existence of diverse cultures disputes, in anthropological and historical terms, the possible pretension of building a general culture of the school, of universal validity, as well as the legitimation of educational historical heritage, which is really generated from diversity, as it is reflected in the testimonies of the school experience in different historical and current communities.

Moreover the congress participants visited the Pedagogical Museum "José Pedro Varela" in Montevideo, founded in 1889, and the Pedagogical Library. The museum houses an important collection of educational resources and materials for the teaching of reading, writing and other school disciplines.



Visit of congress participants to the Pedagogical Museum and Pedagogical Library in Montevideo, Uruguay. From left to right: Gabriel Scagliola, president of the Sociedad Uruguaya de Historia de la Educación, Montevideo, Gabriela Ossenbach Sauter, Madrid (Spain), Agapo Louis Palomeque, Montevideo (Uruguay) and Agustín Escolano Benito, Berlanga de Duero (Spain).

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□ About RPI

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