

R	P	-	Reading Primers International	No	10
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				Newsletter, published by the Reading Primers Special Interest Group of the International Society for Historical and Systematic Research on Schoolbooks	

□ Editorial

Dear readers,

in a chapter on literacy, published in *The Handbook of Language Socialization* (2011), Laura Sterponi reflects on the scholarly conceptualization of reading and writing. With reference to the paradigm of language socialization Sterponi highlights the historical and cultural nature of literacy practices, and she argues that "rather than conceiving of reading and writing as decoding and encoding skills, we are compelled to think of a literacy habitus, a set of historically contingent and culturally situated organizing principles that shape individual involvement with text".

In the perspective of the history of reading socialization, primers can be seen as valuable sources to identify principles that guide literacy practices under given circumstances. At the same time, the historical development of primers is part of broader sociocultural and economic processes, and the changing conditions during the last decades have in a number of countries led to a diminished role of the primer in literacy instruction and acquisition.

This is the starting point of a new series in *Reading Primers International*, devoted to modified roles of the primer and to the actual market of these textbooks in various countries and regions. This 10th issue of our newsletter includes an article on the situation in Estonia, provided by RP-SIG member Mare Mürsepp (Tallinn). Readers should feel encouraged to share with us their views on the actual role of primers in reading socialization.

Madrid/Essen/Wroclaw, December 22, 2013

Kira Mahamud Angulo
Wendelin Sroka
Joanna Wojdon

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□ RP-SIG News

□ Developments and plans

ISCHE in Riga 08/2013: Informal RP-SIG meeting

As part of this year's conference of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (ISCHE) 2013, August 21–24 in Riga, Latvia, RP-SIG arranged an informal meeting on August 21, hosted by Vitaly Bezrogov, Juris Cibuls, Wendelin Sroka and Joanna Wojdon, with members and guests from Latvia, Poland, Germany, Russia, Spain and Sweden. The focus of this meeting was on primers as sources for the study of the history of literacy, education, power and childhood.

Conference of the International Society for Historical and Systematic Schoolbook Research 09/2013 in Brno: RP-SIG meeting

The annual conference of RP-SIG's parent organisation, the International Society for Historical and Systematic Schoolbook Research, took place in September 27–29, 2013, at Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. RP-SIG held its meeting on September 27, hosted by Kira Mahamud and Wendelin Sroka, with participants from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Slovakia and Spain. Participants agreed that RP-SIG should continue to function as a virtual network as established four years ago.

RP-SIG to launch its own webpage in 2014

For four years now RP-SIG has provided information on its activities on the webpage "schulbuch-gesellschaft.de", a page functioning as the site of our parent organisation and edited until recently by Andreas R. K. Müller, Hannover (Germany). The editors of RP-SIG wish to thank Mr. Müller for all his efforts in taking care of the RP-SIG subpage, and we wish him all the best for his new projects.

By autumn 2014, RP-SIG will have its own webpage. This will allow us providing and gaining more detailed information about the network and its members.

□ Members' News

From December 9 – 19, 2013, **Vitaly Bezrogov**, Moscow (Russia), has spent a research stay at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research - Member of the Leibniz Association (GEI) in Braunschweig (Germany).

"Collect, care, share" is the title of a major exhibition at the *Uue Kunsti Muuseum Pärnus* [Museum of New Art in Pärnu], Estonia, open from November 25, 2013 to January 26, 2014 and devoted to rare collections from Estonia and abroad. The exhibition includes a considerable number of primers collected by **Juris Cibuls**, Riga (Latvia), thus having on display what the museum website describes as "one of the most unique collections". The exhibition encompasses, among others, ethnic hand-woven blankets, mittens and gloves, pictures by famous Estonian artists and a fine collection of cattle bells.

The integration of a book collection into an exhibition of collections of various items as organized by the Pärnu Museum of New Art can be seen as a convincing response to the general challenge of presenting textbooks to the public in the con-



Collect, Care, Share ... exhibition poster, Uue Kunsti Muuseum, Pärnu (Estonia) 2013/14

text of an exhibition. Those without a chance to visit the exhibition in Pärnu should feel encouraged to watch the film report by *Eesti Televisioon* about the opening of the exhibition (... and to enjoy the beautiful Estonian language spoken by the news presenters): <http://www.chaplin.ee/eesti/naitused.htm>

Kira Mahamud, UNED, Madrid (Spain) will with her colleague Ana María Badanelli participate in the XI Ibero-American Congress of History of Latino-American Education: *Sujetos, poder y disputas por la educación* [Subjects, Power and Disputes over Education], organized by La Sociedad Mexicana de Historia de la Educación A.C. and El Colegio Mexiquense A.C. The congress will take place in Toluca, México, May 6 – 9, 2014. The title of the accepted paper, to be jointly delivered by Mrs. Mahamud and Mrs. Badanelli is *El libro de lectura escolar en la escuela del tardofranquismo (1955-1975) como instrumento para la socialización política: entre la continuidad y la ruptura de esquemas socio-emocionales* [The reading book in the school of the late Francoism (1955-1975) as an instrument for political socialization: between continuity and rupture of socio-emotional schemes].

Moreover Mrs. Mahamud is a member of the team of Spanish university teachers, including Prof. Agustín Escolano (Coordinator), Miguel Somoza (UNED), Antonio Castillo and Verónica Sierra (University of Alcalá de Henares), who on behalf of the Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez are going to prepare an exhibition "*La isla del alfabeto: cómo aprendemos a leer*" [The island of the alphabet: how we learn to read] in the *Casa del Lector* [House of the Reader], a cultural institution in the centre of Madrid. The exhibition is planned for Autumn 2014 and will display a variety of elements (including primers) related to the process of learning to read, mainly but not exclusively, in Spain, from the 15th century to the present day.



Casa del lector [House of the Reader], Madrid (Spain)

Joanna Wojdon, Wroclaw (Poland), is going to spend the first half of 2014 in Chicago (USA) on Fulbright, mostly doing research on the history of the Polish Americans after WWII, but hoping also to find interesting material on American, Polish American and other ethnic American reading primers.

□ New Members

Dr. **Anna Maria Harbig** is a member of the academic staff at the Department for Modern Languages of the University of Białystok (Poland). She is head of the Centre of Foreign Languages and a teacher of German as a Second Language. She has a particular interest in the history of German as a foreign language in Poland. Her specific focus is on language and school policy of the Habsburg Monarchy in Austrian Galicia 1772-1918 and on didactical and methodical approaches of German as a taught subject in the 18th and 19th century. Currently, she is working on the monograph "*Die aufgezwungene Sprache - Deutsch in galizischen Schulen 1772-1848*" [The imposed language – German in Galician schools 1772-1848]. This study examines language textbooks for Galician elementary schools and discusses language policy and curriculum related aspects of plurilingualism – a guiding principle in institutionalised early foreign language acquisition. In the context of the challenge to coordinate bilingual literacy acquisition, special attention is being paid to the use of plurilingual primers.

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Mag. **Anna Havinga** is an assistant teacher at the University of Bristol (UK). As part of her PhD in the field of historical sociolinguistics, she is exploring the Austrian language reform in the mid to late 18th century to investigate how a top-down approach of norm transmission was ordered, implemented and how, or rather whether it was accepted in actual language use at the time. Reading primers and other educational media give an insight into which linguistic variants and varieties were disseminated. By analysing handwritten texts by 'ordinary people' (as opposed to the nobility) it will be established if these variants and varieties percolated into actual language use.

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Zdeňka Markovičová, Vyškov / Southern Moravia (Czech Republic) is a soldier by profession. In 2002 she started to collect primers and basal readers, and she has organized her first exhibition of primers from April 16th to May 26th, 2013, at the *Muzeum Vyškovska* [Vyškov Municipal Museum]. Mrs. Markovičová is the only Czech private collector of primers at present and a member of the *Klub sběratelů kuriozit* [Rare Items Collectors' Club]. She collaborates with Štefan Peteja, a well-known Slovak collector of primers, and they plan to combine their collections for a joint exhibition in 2014. Information in Czech language about the collection is available at www.slabikare.cz.

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□ **New institutional member**

In September 2013 RP-SIG had the pleasure to welcome as its third institutional member the

Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia (CESCOM) / Centre for documentation and research on the history of schoolbooks and children's literature.

CESCOM, founded by a group of scholars with prof. Roberto Sani in 2004 and directed today by Anna Ascenzi, Full Professor in History of Education, is part of the Department of Education, Cultural Heritage and Tourism) of the University of Macerata (Italy). The Centre aims to promote scientific collaboration with other organisations in Italy and abroad which have worked and are working in the history of education, with particular attention to the history of textbook publishing and children's literature. Researchers currently working at CESCOM include Dott.ssa Marta Brunelli, Dott.ssa Dorena Caroli, Dott. Juri Meda and Dott.ssa Elisabetta Patrizi.

Since February 2010, the newly founded *Paolo and Ornella Ricca School Museum* is connected with CESCOM. The museum preserves a broad variety of materials, ranging from writing instruments, drawing books, maps, school desks and numerous other furnishings to diaries, notebooks and school textbooks. It also houses the permanent exhibition '*Libro e moschetto, scolaro perfetto: ideologia e propaganda nella scuola elementare del periodo fascista (1922-1943)*' ['Book and musket, perfect schoolboy': ideology and propaganda in the primary school of the fascist period]. The museum offers a programme of educational activities both for university students and for primary school pupils.



HISTORY OF EDUCATION
& CHILDREN'S LITERATURE
VIII/2 2013



In 2005, members of the CESCOM team initiated the journal "History of Education & Children's Literature" (HECL), with Roberto Sani as editor-in-chief. Issue VIII / 2 (2013), published in December 2013, has provided a first occasion for the collaboration of CESCOM and RP-SIG: The international bibliography "History of Education and Children's Literature (2010-2012)" compiled by Dorena Caroli and Roberto Sani and contained in this issue, includes bibliographic information on all texts published in issues 2 – 8 of Reading Primers International.

Web CESCOM: <http://www.unimc.it/cescom/en>

Web HECL: <http://www.hecl.it/en/>

Dott.ssa **Dorena Caroli**, a member of the editorial office and of the international committee of referees of HECL, is CESCOM's main contact person of RP-SIG. The general field of Mrs. Caroli's studies is the history of childhood and education from the XVIth to the XXth century, the history of schooling and youth movement and the history of children's literature. She has earned a Master in East European languages at the University of Bologna in 1991 and a *Diplome d'Etudes Approfondies* (DEA) in history and civilization at the *Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales* [School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences] in Paris in 1993. In 1997 she has successfully defended her PhD at this *grand établissement*. Her dissertation on *L'enfance abandonnée et délinquante dans la Russie soviétique, 1917-1937* [Abandoned and delinquent children in Soviet Russia, 1917-1937] was published in Paris by L'Harmattan in 2004. Her publication record encompasses four books and a great number of articles, including studies on school textbooks and school exercise books in Soviet Russia and in Europe.

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Research

The stigmatisation of Austrian German in 18th- and 19th-century reading primers of the Habsburg Monarchy

Anna Havinga, University of Bristol (UK)

Formal education is one of the most prominent ways to disseminate language norms. The prescription of such language norms in schoolbooks and grammars usually results in the stigmatisation of 'other' linguistic varieties and variants. In the case of 18th-century Austria, it was the (non-Austrian) East Central German variety which was propagated, while Austrian German variants were regarded as 'inferior' or 'incorrect' (cf. Wiesinger 1995). This development was supported by Empress Maria Theresia (ruler of the Habsburg Empire from 1740 to 1780), who – with the help of the Prussian educationalist Johann Ignaz Felbiger – introduced compulsory elementary education and standardised curricula to her empire in December 1774 (cf. Allgemeine Schulordnung 1774).

This development can be traced by examining morphological variants in contemporary textbooks, such as e-apocope, i.e. the loss of word final -e, in nouns – a variant particularly characteristic of the Austrian German variety (cf. Rössler 2005), which to this day can still be encountered in spoken discourse (e.g. *die Sonn* instead of *die Sonne*). Indeed, Johann Christoph Gottsched, a Saxon grammarian and literary scholar, explicitly prescribed the suffix -e in his grammar *Grundlegung einer Deutschen Sprachkunst* first published in 1748. Gottsched was viewed as the language authority in the second half of the 18th century in Prussia, Saxony as well as the Habsburg Empire and propagated East Central German variants, including the use of the suffix -e in final word position. However, since Gottsched sought a clear distinction between feminine and masculine nouns, he only prescribed the ending -e for the former but not for weak masculine nouns:



Examples of e-apocope in a Catholic primer. Linz 1774, p. 27.

18 §. Wie also diejenigen unrecht thun, die den weiblichen Wörtern das Endungs=E rauben, wenn sie z.E. sprechen und schreiben, *die Kron'*, *die Lieb'*, *die Gnad'* u. f. w. als welches die Sprache ohne Noth hart und rauh machet: also fehlen andere dadurch eben so sehr, daß sie ohne Ursache den männlichen Wörtern am Ende ein e anflicken; indem sie sprechen, *der Franke*, *der Franzose*, *der Pohle*, *der Sachse*, *der Herre*, *der Narre*, *der Pfarre*, *der Poete*, und *der Prophete*. (Gottsched 1762: 212)

18 §. The same way as those are wrong who remove the ending -e in feminine nouns, when saying and writing, *die Kron'*, *die Lieb'*, *die Gnad'* etc., which makes the language unnecessarily hard and rough, others fail just as much by patching an e at the end of masculine words without cause by saying, *der Franke*, *der Franzose*, *der Pohle*, *der Sachse*, *der Herre*, *der Narre*, *der Pfarre*, *der Poete*, and *der Prophete*. (Gottsched 1762: 212)

The following analysis of 14 reading primers¹ published in the Habsburg Empire between the mid 18th and the early 19th century reveals to what extent Gottsched's prescription of the ending -e in feminine nouns disseminated in contemporary textbooks.

As the figure below shows, the loss of the final -e in feminine nouns was common in the reading primer printed in Vienna around 1750 and even dominated in the textbooks printed around 1770 and in 1774. From 1777 onwards, however, the ending -e clearly dominated in feminine nouns. In other words, the Austrian German variant was clearly stigmatised from 1777 onwards and almost completely supplanted by its East Central German counterpart by 1778.

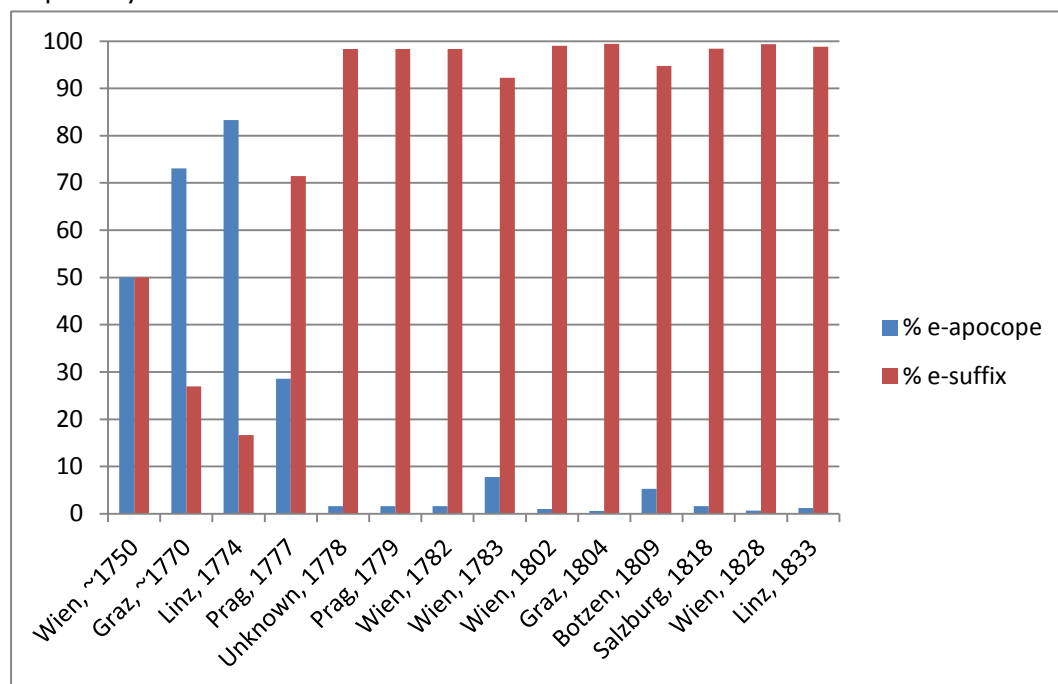


Figure 1: e-apocope versus using the suffix -e in feminine nouns

The declining use of e-apocope after 1774 coincides with the introduction of Felbiger's school policy published on 6th December 1774. Secondary sources from the Austrian State Archives² state that Felbiger himself not only chose which books had to be used in state schools but also authored most of the textbooks, created drafts for further books and edited others. Therefore, Felbiger wielded considerable influence on the content as well as the language used in schoolbooks. He was, on the other hand, strongly influenced by Gottsched (cf. Rössler 1997: 75). Consequently, it can be argued that Gottsched's norms penetrated 18th-century textbooks indirectly through the work of Johann Ignaz Felbiger. Indeed, it was Felbiger who provided the requirements necessary for the implementation of Gottsched's norms in the general public by introducing compulsory elementary education as well as standardised teaching and textbooks (cf. Rössler 1997: 76).

It is yet to be determined to what extent the language norms prescribed in the reading primers influenced actual language use in 18th-century Austria.

¹ All of these reading primers can be found in the textbook collection of the *Austrian Ministry for Education, the Arts and Culture (BMUKK)* in Vienna. Their complete titles are given in the list of primary sources below.

² Cf. a letter by the so-called *Böhmische und Österreichische Hofkanzlei* entitled *Vortrag über den Zustand der Normal-Schulen in den gesammten Kayl: Königl^{en}: Erbländern* to Empress Maria Theresia, dated 15. April 1775.

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- Böhmische und Österreichische Hofkanzlei. Vortrag über den Zustand der Normal-Schulen in den gesammten Kayl: Königl^{en}: Erbländern.* An die Majestät. Wien, 15. April 1775. Österreichisches Staatsarchiv. Signatur: AVA Unterricht StHK Teil 1, K. 87.
- Catholisches Namen-Büchl. Das ist: Ein sehr sonderbarer kurzer Weg / bald und leicht lesen zu lernen / sowohl für alte als junge Personen / welche nicht Zeit haben / lang gemeine Schulen zu besuchen.* 1774. Linz: Johann Adam Auinger. BMUKK: JH 41.
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- Neuestes A-B-C-Buch, oder Uebungen im Syllabiren oder Buchstabiren und im Lesen; sie bestehen aus Denk- und Sittensprüchen, aus moralischen Erzählungen und Schilderungen, Fabeln, Gebethen und Liedern.* 1802. Wien: In der Camesinischen Buchhandlung. BMUKK: JH 363.
- Teutsches Namen- oder Lehrbüchl. Der Lieben Jugend zum Besten auf solche Art eingerichtet / daß hierdurch im ersten Theil sie zum richtigen Grund des Buchstabiren / oder Sylben-theilen / recht aussprechen / und lesen: Im anderte aber zur Rechtschreib- und Wörterforschung angewiesen werden kan.* ~ 1750. Wien: Maria Eva Schilgin. BMUKK: JH 39.

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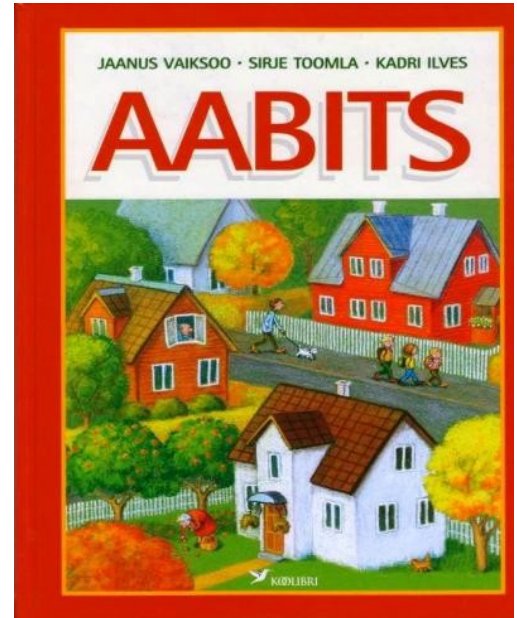
□ Discussion

The primer in Estonia – persistent and variable

Mare Mürsepp, Tallinn University (Estonia)

Childhood settings tend to change more and more thoroughly. There are new models in family relations, new brands, new toys and titles in children's culture; even new technological "nannies" – entertaining and educating displays – come to be replaced by newer ones sooner or later. These changes have to be reflected both in educational concepts and in learning materials.

In Estonia as in other countries, the primer (Estonian: *aabits*) is a phenomenon loaded by different functions. It has to carry a burden of traditions as the first school book in child's life, symbolising all supreme values which would be introduced at school, a message from the historical cultural space, and at the same time it has to be actual and intimate for the child of each next school year, to develop the child's abilities in cognitive, emotional, social and other spheres. The last decades in Estonian education have been very fruitful for the national "family" of primers, and a great number of new editions have been published. At the same time the meaning of the primer has diverged; there are many books called primers, but they are meant to serve very different functions.



Vaiksoo et al.: Aabits. Tallinn 2011, front cover

First, there is a range of Estonian primers whose authors – usually kindergarten or primary school teachers, researchers, speech therapists or special education teachers – have consciously followed the didactic principles to support the child's reading skills and speech development. These primers address kindergarten or first year pupils or children with special educational needs, like children with speech problems. A primer published only recently specifically addresses left-handed children (Kula 2013).

Second, several famous Estonian writers and artists have created so-called primers "for voluntary reading", usually used as non-official textbooks outside of school. These primers are compiled by the centuries-old mode introducing letters in alphabetical order and adding some funny words and a short text to each letter. A mandatory feature seems to be a tone of easy humour and passionate endeavour to be peculiar as much as possible. But the authors of these primers do not care very much about didactical issues.

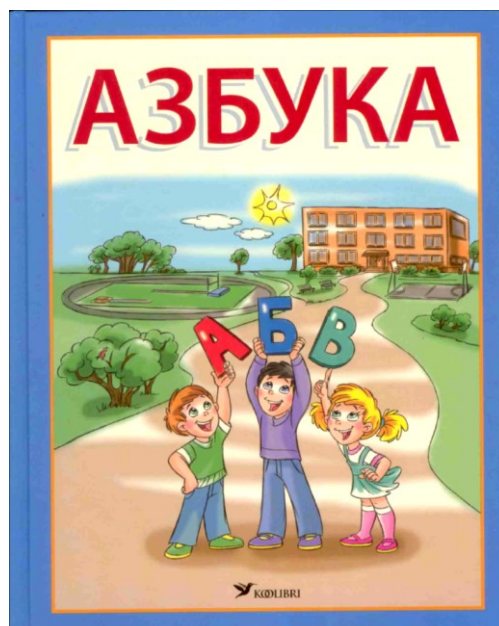
Third, there is a special market for Russian primers published in Estonia. At present teachers and parents may choose either a textbook by Russian authors (Gavrilova et al. 2012) or a primer translated from Estonian, adapted for literacy acquisition in Russian (Keller et al. 2011). And forth, various Estonian organisations aimed at preserving lesser used dialects and languages of the Uralic language family have recently published primers. These items include an *Aabets* in Kihnu, an *Aabits* in Seto and an *Ābēd* in Livonian (for a description and contextualisation of the Kihnu primer see Mürsepp 2011).

The most official and strict – and at the same time the most questionable – definition of a primer is presented in a document brought into parliament in 2010 by the Ministry of Education and Research and passed by parliament the same year: According to the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act "the textbook of Estonian language (and Russian language in schools with

Russian language) for the first half school year is called a primer" (Põhikooli- ja gümnaasiumiseadus 2010).

However, as indicated above, reality is more various and there is an amount of primers today which are not intended to be used systematically at school. In this context it is well worth looking back to the history of the primer in Estonia. This textbook has gone through a devious development path during the 20th century. Up to the 1970s, the phonics method was established and the instruction was given mostly in teacher's materials. There was a tradition to present in primers classical stories like fables, picture series to well-known fairy tales and other literary works in a wide choice.

In the 1970s the idea of phonological awareness was prioritized in Soviet reading teaching. There was even the suggestion not to look at the letters before the phonological structure of words is clear for the pupils. In the 1980s a primer was worked out where the pictures for speech development dominated, accompanied by the word schemes. The approach was based on Daniil Elkonin's study, which in turn was a part of John Downing's research on cognitive clarity theory. During the Soviet period there was a rule, that all schools (working in the same language) used the same primer and no alternatives were allowed. In the years of the re-establishment of independence many new ideas were applied in the primers, and beginning from the 1990s one can speak about competition on the primers' market.

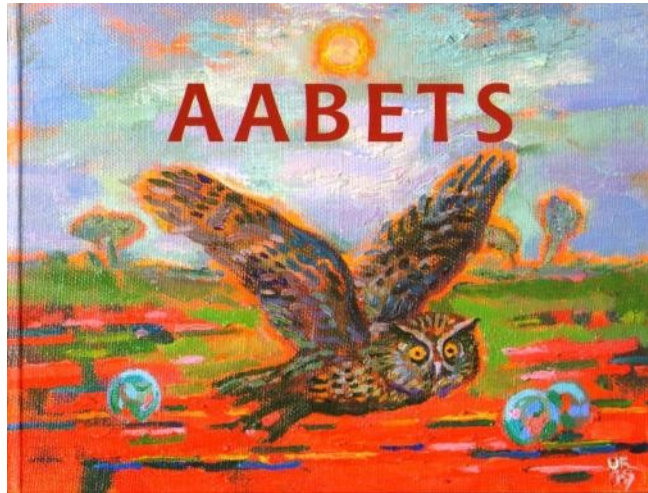


Gavrilova et al.: *Azbuka*. Tallinn 2012, front cover

There are very different functions reflected in contemporary primers. Some of the units follow very long historical traditions, and at the same time new sorts of exercises and texts have been added. Summarizing the results of the study of the content of the primers published during the last half century, there are the units like:

- alphabet,
- words to learn the letters,
- pictures to emphasize the shape of a letter,
- pictures of different events and emotions to introduce phonics instruction (sounds like oh!, ouch!, hey! expressing certain feelings),
- words for comparison of their phonic structure,
- series of pictures to develop narrative skills,
- groups of pictures to advance pupils' vocabulary,
- 'normal words' [*Normalwörter*] linking a picture of an item with the caption of its denotation,
- pictures for classifying of objects,
- rhythmical sentences like proverbs and riddles,
- rhymes and word games,
- abecedaries,
- short narratives about child's everyday life,
- folk tales (endless tales, nonsense fairy tales),
- stories about a family or fellowship specially created for a certain primer,
- classical texts presenting both national literature and world literature,

- non-fictional texts for example about national holidays or about traffic rules,
- exercises for language teaching (compiling of sentences, filling gaps),
- crosswords and other puzzles,
- exercises for learning to read different fonts,
- texts for everyday communication - invitation, list, greeting card -,
- elements of a calendar....
- rules of conduct (October-children's rules in Soviet times, now pictures of different situations to discuss people's relations).

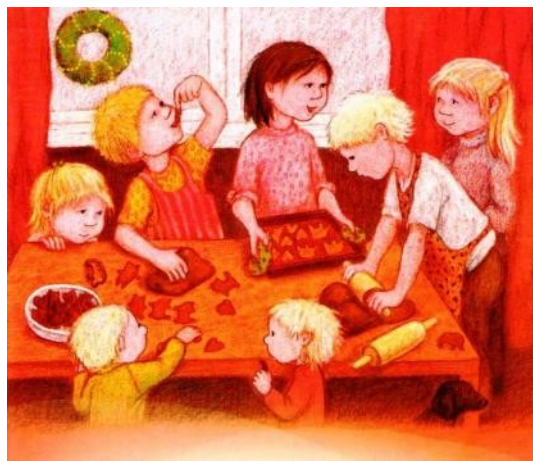


Laos et al.: *Aabets*. Pärnu 2009, title page

In the early days of the primer this item was obviously the only book addressed to beginning readers, but today, with myriads of different series about everything - what should be the unique and essential function of the primer? And when? The studies carried out since the 1990s have proved that nearly half of Estonian children learn to read at age 5-6, and coming to school they are able to read children's story-books.

At the same time, while pre-school education is not compulsory, there are children coming to school at the age of 7 without a firm knowledge of letters. Consequently the question of the primer is a question of educational management and also of social security, because many families try to send their child to school instead of kindergarten, because the school is at no cost ...

During the last decades publishers have taken the management of the primer's market in their own hands. Researchers have a position of critical commentators, but their



Vaiksoo et al.: *Aabets*. Illustrations by Kadri Ilves. Tallinn 2011, p. 43

knowledge of reading skills development cannot influence the primers' production noticeably. At the same time the most active part of primary school teachers confirm that they prefer to work following an eclectic approach, to use all kinds of reading material like all sorts of books contained in a children's library, magazines, exercises published on the web and pupils' own writings.

It seems that in contemporary Estonia a primer with a scope of materials as wide as possible might be necessary primarily for beginning teachers and perhaps for mediocre teachers. However, the primer is also a cultural symbol of school traditions, and it is an inseparable part of the public ceremonies of September 1 in every school to present a textbook for the pupils whose factual reading interests and abilities cannot be covered by primers any more.

Primers published in Estonia since 2004 – a selection

Estonian primers for use in primary schools

Vahur Keller, Airi Kuusk, Sirje Rattus, Catherine Zarip, Regina Lukk-Toompere: **Aabits**. Tallinn: Avita 2011, 160 p.

Leelo Tungal, Ene Hiiepuu, Edgar Valter: **Aabits**. Tallinn: Avita 2006, 152 p.

Jaanus Vaiksoo, Sirje Toomla, Kadri Ilves: **Ilus Emakeel. Aabits**. Illustrations: Kadri Ilves. Tallinn: Koolibri 2011, 136 p.

Estonian primers for pupils with special educational needs

Karl Karlep, Ana Kontor, Eha Vihm: **Aabits** [õpiraskustega lastele]. Illustrations Ülle Meister. Tartu: Studium 2010, 190 p.

Pilvi Kula: **Aabits**. Illustrations Joonas Sildre. Tallinn: Koolibri 2013, 91 p.

Kerli Altmart: **Täpitäheaabits**. Tallinn: Tänapäev 2010, 80 p.

Estonian primers for use in preschools

Heljo Mänd, Lilian Kivi, Milvi Roosleht: **Karu-aabits**. Tallinn: Koolibri, 11th edition 2010, 102 p. (1st edition 1971)

Tea Oll: **Aabits**. Tallinn: Ilo 2008, 68 p.

Estonian abc books (children's picture books with poems)

Urmas Nemvalts, Contra: **Poiste aabits**. Tallinn: Grenader 2010, 56 p.

Jürgen Rooste, Kirke Kangro: Tähesadu: **Jürgen ja Kirke aabits**. Tallinn: Koolibri 2012, 54 p.

Peeter Volkonski, Piret Raud: **Onu Volgi värsiaabits**. Tallinn: Eesti Entsüklopeediakirjastus 2004, 72 p.

Russian Primers

Marina Gavrilova, Viktorija Frolenkova, Svetlana Bezdomnikova: **Azbuka**. Tallinn: Koolibri 2012, 128 p.

Vahur Keller, Elena Timofejeva, Katherine Zarip, Regina Lukk-Toompere: **Azbuka**. Tallinn: Avita 2011, 47 p.

Primers in Kihnu

Küllli Laos, Reene Leas, Evi Vesik: **Aabets**. Illustrations: Uno Rossvalt. Pärnu: Kihnu Kultuuri Instituut 2009, 79 p.

Küllli Laos, Mark Soosaar: **Aett, eit ning mia**. Illustrations: Maria Kaarma. Pärnu: Kihnu Kultuuri Instituut 2011, 52 p.

Note: This primer was awarded the Special prize 2011 of the Estonian Children's Literature Centre and identified as one of the five most beautiful children's books in the 2011 book contest initiated by the Estonian Graphic Designers' Union, Estonian Publishers' Association and the National Library of Estonia. <http://www.nlib.ee/index.php?id=18273>

Primer in Seto

Hõrna Aarõ, Kauksi Ülle, Lillmaa Terje, Reimanni Nele, Riitsaarõ Evar: **Seto Aabits**. Setomaa Valdade Liit 2011, 52 p.

Primer in Livonian

Kõrli Stalte: Jelzi Sõnā. **Ābēd ja یرgandōks lugdōbrōntōz**. Tartu: Jemākīel seļtš, Līvō Kultūsidām 2011, 119 p.

References

Malceva-Zamkovaja, Natalja / Mürsepp, Mare / Muldma, Maia (2012). *Dialog kul'tur v učebnikah dlja načal'noj školy: komparativnoe issledovanie* [The dialogue of cultures in primary school textbooks: a comparative analysis]. // Problems of Education in the 21st Century. Vol. 44, pp. 113-122.

Mürsepp, Mare (2011): Art. "Küllli Laos, Reene Leas, Evi Vesik: Aabets. Kihnu 2009" // Gert Geißler, Wendelin Sroka, Joanna Wojdon (Hrsg): *Lesen lernen ... mehrsprachig! Fabeln und Lesebücher aus Europa und Amerika. Katalog zur Ausstellung der Arbeitsgruppe Fabeln (Reading Primers Special Interest Group) der Internationalen Gesellschaft für historische und systematische Schulbuchforschung im Rahmen der Tagung „Mehrsprachigkeit und Schulbuch“ vom 22. bis 24. 9.2011 an der Freien Universität Bozen in Brixen/ Bressanone*. Bonn/Essen, pp. 42-43.

Põhikooli- ja gümnaasiumiseadus (2010) [Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act.] <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/102072012014>

□ Country Notes

□ Italy

"Nineteenth- and twentieth-century schools as a laboratory for the promotion of national identity and citizenship education" – CfP by the Centro di documentazione e ricerca sulla storia del libro scolastico e della letteratura per l'infanzia (CESCOM) / Centre for documentation and research on the history of schoolbooks and children's literature, University of Macerata

Roberto Sani, University of Macerata (Italy)

In 2015, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of its foundation, the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature» aims to publish a special monographic issue in which authors are invited to address the theme: Nineteenth- and twentieth-century schools as a laboratory for the promotion of national identity and citizenship education.

Special attention will be paid, under this respect, to contributions that – on the base of the specific reality of each country and continent, and with reference to the political, social and cultural contexts that characterized the international scenario of the XIX and XX centuries – will deal with: school teaching programs in various domains (national literature and language, religion, history, geography, civics, law and so on); manuals and reading books for schools; school exercise books; finally, didactic aids used in the classroom (billboards, wall maps etc.); and all intended as sources and tools for promoting a sense of national identity as well as the concept of citizenship in pupils of schools of all levels. The call for papers is open to scholars and researchers from countries around the world, and particularly to historians of education and historians of schools who work in universities and specialised research centres in diverse continents. Individual proposals, describing original and previously unpublished work, will be reviewed by a Scientific Committee especially established for the purpose and chaired by the Editor-in-Chief of the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature»; at the end of the evaluation process, the selected papers will be published within the monographic section of a special issue which will go to print during the year 2015.

Proposal submission: Authors are invited to present via email a proposal (in form of an abstract) that should be submitted to the following email address: roberto.sani@unimc.it within the **deadline of February 28, 2014**. The abstract should not exceed 1,000 characters (spaces included) and can be written in one of the following languages: English, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and German. The proposals must be equipped with the personal data of authors, including the institutional affiliation (university, research centre etc.) and the position held, the personal email address and any other useful address for the purposes of the present Call for Papers. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision of acceptance or rejection of proposals by **March 31, 2014**.

Paper submission: Selected authors of accepted proposals are asked to submit the definitive and electronic version of their papers to the email address: roberto.sani@unimc.it **within the closing date December 31, 2014**. Regular papers – supplied with an abstract and with at least five keywords – **must be written in English** (texts in different languages will be rejected) and should not exceed 60,000 characters (spaces included).

Guidelines for Authors: As regards the formatting guidelines and the citation style, authors should strictly adhere to the Editorial Rules set out for authors and contributors of the journal «History of Education & Children's Literature», which can be downloaded from the web page *For Authors* in the journal's website: <<http://www.hecl.it/en>>. For further information regarding this call for papers please do not hesitate to contact the Editor-in-Chief of the journal (roberto.sani@unimc.it).

□ Russia

2013: Another successful year of research on the history of primers

Wendelin Sroka

For those who do – and for those who observe – research on the history of primers in an international comparative perspective, Russia is a particularly interesting country. From the days of the publication of the first East Slavic *Azbuka*, printed in 1574 by Ivan Fedorov, the history of primers in Russia both in Slavic and in non-Slavic languages is extraordinarily rich and complex. Moreover, up to the present day many people in Russia do attach a specific cultural value to this book, as expressed in common phrases like *bukvar' – načalo vseh načal'* [the primer is the beginning of all beginnings] or in school traditions like the *prazdnik bukvarya* [festive day of the primer].

Such factors may be beneficial for research on the history of primers in a given country, but they will not guarantee achievement of this particular area of research, and certainly not in times of high competition in the humanities. Factors influencing such achievement today will include (without being limited to)

- the existence of scholars from a variety of disciplines, keeping a sustained interest in this particular area,
- the embedding of this research in related research areas, e.g. history of educational media, history of schooling, history of literacy, history of childhood, cultural history,
- a good standing of the area within relevant academic disciplines,
- the backing of research efforts by the scholar's institutions,
- funding agencies willing and able to provide third-party funds for good quality projects,
- networks and meeting places for such networks (including conferences),
- possibilities for publications and systems of peer review.

While these conditions are lacking in many European countries, knowledge gained earlier through collaboration with colleagues in Russia within the RPSIG network and a brief "external" review of printed texts on the history of primers published in Russia in 2013 brings me to conclude that at least many of these conditions are given today in Russia. The review refers to four publications, three of them edited volumes and one an issue of an academic journal:

- A) Moshkova, L. V.; Bezrogov, Vitaly G. (red.) (2013). *Zapadnoevropejskaja i rossijskaja učebnaja literatura XIV – načala XX vv.: konfessional'nyj aspekt. Sbornik naučnyh trudov* [West European and Russian educational literature from the 16th to the early 20th century: denominational aspects. A collection of scholarly works]. Moskva: ITIP RAO, 336 p.
- B) Barannikova, N. B.; Bezrogov, Vitaly G.; Kozlova, M. A. (sost.) (2013). *'Kartinki v moem bukvare'. Pedagogičeskaja semantika ilustracij v učebnike dlja načal'noj školy. Sbornik naučnyh trudov i materialov* ['Pictures in my primer'. The pedagogical semantics of the illustration in the elementary school textbook. A collection of scholarly works and materials]. *Trudy seminara 'Kultura detstva: normy, cennosti, praktiki*, vyp. 15. Moskva: TehGrupp, 354 p.



'Kartinki v moem bukvare'. Moskva 2013, front cover

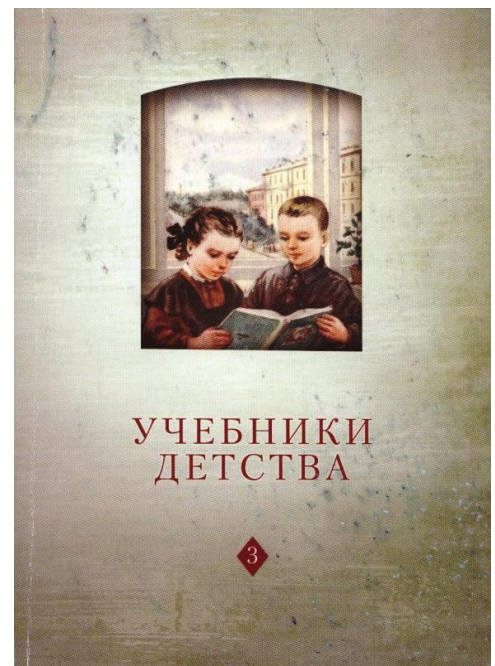
- C) Barannikova, N. B.; Bezrogov, Vitaly G.; Makarevich, Galina V. (sost.) (2013). *Učebniki detstva. Iz istorii škol'noj knigi VII – XXI vekov (Sbornik statej T. 3)* [Textbooks of the childhood. From the history of the schoolbook from the 7th to the 21st century (A collection of Essays, vol. 3)]. Moskva: Izdatel'skij centr Rossijskogo gosudarstvennogo gumanitarnogo universiteta, 411 p.
- D) *Otečestvennaja i zarubežnaja pedagogika* [Domestic and foreign pedagogy], no. 4 (13), 2013, 159 p.

Consideration of primers: While only one title (the title of item B) explicitly refers to primers, all these publications include a considerable number of articles devoted to this specific genre of educational text. This is certainly true for all articles which mention the term *bukvar'* or *azbuka* in the heading, but also for a number of articles on "school textbooks", "textbooks for elementary schools", "textbooks for elementary grades", "textbooks for reading instruction" or "school texts for small children".

Coverage of countries, historical periods and languages: The majority of articles focus on the history of primers in Russia, covering all periods of textbook history. At the same time it is worth a note that, in addition to studies on Russian primers, also the history of primers in non-Russian languages produced for use in the respective "national" schools and classes in Russia is considered, in this case of Karelian, Tatar and Udmurt primers. Another area of research is the study of primers in foreign countries, including developments in Belarus, China, Germany, Slovenia and the US. A considerable number of studies make use of a clear comparative approach. For example, an article on the denominational factor in the historical development of West European educational literature of the 16th and 17th century, written by N. B. Barannikova and V. G. Bezrogov, contained in publication A, pp. 42-73, starts by analysing the terms for "primer" in various European languages.

Research questions and methods: Studies published in 2013 range from detailed content analyses of individual textbooks and textbook series to methodological studies. All in all the coverage of topics and research approaches is enormous, with particular consideration of questions on the role of illustrations in primers and the role of religion in textbooks for elementary schools.

Research funding: Footnote 1 of many articles included in the publications mentioned above refers to a research grant provided for this particular work by the *Rossijskij gumanitarnyj naučnyj fond* [Russian Research Fund for the Humanities]. This demonstrates the importance assigned to research on the history of educational texts, including primers, by decision makers responsible for research funding in the Russian Federation.



Učebniki detstva. Moskva 2013, front cover

Authors: The study of primers involves a great number of scholars from research institutes and universities in Moscow as well as other cities of the Russian Federation. It is with great pleasure to note that Russian members of the RP-SIG network play a very visible role in these research activities: Vitaly Bezrogov, Moscow, co-initiator of our network and co-editor of publications A, B and C; Olga P. Ilyukha, Petrozavodsk (Karelia); Galina Makarevich, Moscow; Alla Salnikova, Kazan (Tatarstan) and Tatyana Vlasova, Izhevsk (Udmurtia). For a bibliography of articles published by Russian colleagues in 2013 see pp. 21-24 of this newsletter.

□ Spain

"The affective dimension of political socialization. Emotions and sentiments in school textbooks during the Spanish transition to democracy" – a research project of the MANES Research Centre, Madrid*Kira Mahamud*

This research project – in Spanish *La dimensión afectiva de la socialización política. Emociones y sentimientos en los manuales escolares de la Transición democrática española* – aims to explore the affective dimension of political socialization in Spain within the educational system during the *tardofranquismo* (late Francoism) and consolidation of democracy (from the late 60s until the early 80s), taking as main sources the national curriculum and its development in school textbooks.

Political socialization is understood as the set of processes by which members of a society learn and internalize principles, norms and values relevant to political phenomena. Hence the importance of the affective dimension is accepted because it is what makes possible a persistent commitment of the individual to his and her social, political and institutional environments. But the use of the affections with political purpose can pursue different objectives if the type of political regime that applies them is authoritarian (aiming at the uncritical acceptance of essentialist foundations of the established order) or democratic (aiming at the development of evaluative judgment and reasoned, as well as to the commitment to the principles of pluralism of opinions and values).

The main objectives of this research project are to identify types of emotions and sentiments in the curriculum and textbooks in the social sciences, linked to the political socialization. This would involve identifying linguistic and iconographic messages aimed at building affective political loyalties and will. Furthermore, the examination of the documents aims at identifying changes and continuities in the feelings transmitted, at studying the evolution of the affective domain as a strategy for the political socialization process.

Reference: EDU2012-32162

Main researcher: Miguel Somoza Rodríguez

Financing: Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad [Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness]. Plan Nacional de I+D+i 2008-2011.

Partners: Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED); Universidad de Cantabria; Universidad de Sevilla; Universidad de Granada; Universidad Europea Miguel de Cervantes

Duration: from 01/01/2013 to 31/12/2015

Number of researchers: 13

□ United Kingdom

A research stay at the Institute of Education, University of London*Kira Mahamud*

I had the enriching experience of spending the month of November 2013 at the Institute of Education, University of London, as a Visiting Fellow. Among my main activities I would like to highlight the consultation of extraordinary primary sources of two kinds: the special collection of school textbooks (Historical textbook collection) and the documents on the reconstruction of education in Germany after the II World War (German Education Collection). The objective was to reproduce documents from the 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s in order to see if there is an employment of metaphorical language and the transmission of emotions and sentiments as part of the learning program or as an instrument to teach specific knowledge.

Continuing the work done for my PhD and as a member of the RP-SIG, I paid particular attention to a number of primers and reading books. In Spain, during the 1940s and 50s, the reading book was a very popular and extensively used school textbook genre through which emotions and sentiments were trans-

mitted to children. Thus, I find that a comparative study could reveal how far this characteristic was unique of Spain during that historical period of time and perhaps due to the nature dictatorship, or, if, on the contrary, school reading books from all places and times, transmit, portray and aim at teaching certain emotions and sentiments linked to the social and political milieu. If this was the case, was it done through different or similar linguistic strategies?

Furthermore, I focused on the preliminaries of the books as a specific textual unit. Spanish textbooks include rich preliminaries in a variety of textual forms: letters, dedications, prologues, warnings, instructions or justifications. It is usually the space where the author pronounces him or herself and gives relevant information about his intentions or about the book. So far, I have not encountered preliminaries with the same emotional intensity, in content and language, as the ones from the Spanish Franco dictatorship and the hypothesis points to further explanations beyond the influence of Catholicism.

□ Finds

O livro da primeira classe - a Portuguese primer of the Salazar era

Wolfgang Fickert, Erlangen (Germany)

In a very commendable work published some years ago in Germany, Gisela Teistler assembled diverse papers on reading primers which had appeared under the dictators Hitler, Mussolini and Franco (Teistler 2006). In this context, an article about Portuguese primers of that time would have been an interesting addition. The following notes are intended to fill this gap partially, by providing some information on the situation of primary education and the prevalent primer during that era in Portugal.

For more than ten years, reprints of a reading primer have been distributed widely in Portugal, e.g. in post offices:

O livro da primeira classe / ensino primário elementar. Reprint. Porto: Editora a educação nacional n.d., 144 p.

This textbook has been edited for the first time in 1940, under the dictatorship of Salazar. For many years, it was the only primer in use in Portuguese primary schools (Carvalho 1996, p. 769). It experienced many re-editions – the 8th in 1958 – at least until 1964, possibly with slightly differing content. The reprint may easily be recognized as such because of the halfcloth cover being imitated by print – which holds true too for several other reprints of older Portuguese primers. The obvious commercial suc-

cess of the reprint is due to nostalgic feelings of many elder Portuguese people concerning their early youth, but definitely not concerning the late dictator. To understand the singularity of and the interest in this primer, one has to take a look at the situation of primary education and politics in Portugal in the first half of the 20th century (information on the history of education in Portugal provided here is based on Carvalho 1996).



O livro da primeira classe. Reprint. N. d., front cover

In 1900, 85% of the female population and 79% of the total population in Portugal were illiterate. A general lack of schools and educated teachers was prevailing. Private initiatives tried to help by founding their own schools, which made up for one quarter of all existing ones. "Decree No. 8" of December 12, 1901 brought structural alterations to primary instruction, which should comprise two steps: an examination after the third grade was designed to conclude the obligatory first step while the second step consisted of a fourth grade preparing for the admission to secondary school.

The First Republic (1910 – 1926) continued the attempts to improve the situation issuing decrees dated March 29, 1911 and May 10, 1919. The latter foresaw schooling in three steps: facultative instruction [*infantil*] for 4 to 7-year old children, followed by mandatory five grades [*primário geral*] for 7 to 12-year-olds and three grades [*superior*] for young people from 12 to 15. But during the following years, mandatory schooling obviously existed only on paper. Still in 1930 school attendance of 7-11 year-olds was only 27%, and only 42% of those between 10 and 14 could read.

In May 1926 the First Republic ended with a military coup. In the new authoritarian government, António de Oliveira Salazar (1889-1970) served initially as a minister, from 1932 to 1968 as Prime Minister. The dictatorship ended with a bloodless revolution, the so called "Carnation Revolution", in 1974. Salazar's doctrine was deeply rooted in Catholicism and embraced all aspects of individual and social behaviour. During an interview in 1933, Salazar expressed clearly the views of the new government: "I consider it more urgent to establish broad elites than teaching the people to read. The big problems of the nation must be resolved, not by the people, but with elites which surround the masses" (quoted in Carvalho 1996, p. 728). Consequently, several decrees reforming basic instruction reduced the level of education instead of raising it.

A government decree on primary education issued on December 29, 1936 declared: "Purpose of the present decree is to build up the idea, that primary instruction is betraying its mission by stacking up useless rationalist general knowledge, which is fatal for moral and physical health of the youth, against the practical and Christian ideal to teach well to read, write and count and to exercise



O livro da primeira classe. Reprint. N. d., p. 34



O livro da primeira classe. Reprint. N. d., p. 35

moral virtues and a vivid love of Portugal" [ibid., p. 761). To insure the successful education in the intentions of the New State [*Estado Nova*], article 15 of the mentioned decree declared "the immediate expiring of the official approval for all textbooks for primary education" (ibid.). A follow-up decree of July 21, 1937 demanded that text for a uniform book for primary schools be elaborated by means of a public competition between Portuguese authors. These verdicts confirm the impression one gets looking through school primers which were issued by several Portuguese publishers in the thirties: they were not (yet) directly influenced by politicians.

It remains unknown so far, which or how many Portuguese authors dared to tackle the difficult task participating in the competition. Obviously not only the grade of desired education had to be considered, but any possible excess had to be used to express categorically ones excessive nationalism and Christian spirit. No wonder that, almost three years later, a decree dated March 14, 1940 informed, that none of the entries had been worthy approval. Therefore, the elaboration of a textbook for primary instruction and its coloured illustrations should be entrusted to a commission of specialists, scholars with pedagogical, literary and artistic merits. The responsible for this work had to look for inspiration in the Italian textbooks of that time, which were in accordance with the fascist ideology of Mussolini's regime. During the same period, relations between Portugal and the Vatican were reinforced by signing a concordat in May 1940, which also treated education.

The new textbook for primary education fulfilling all political and theological demands was issued in 1940. It was entitled "The book of the first class / First basic instructions", emphasizing the new politics already by this name, since all reading primers preceding in the 1930s referred in their titles to reading instruction, e.g. "New system for the start of reading", "Reading and writing course", "Introduction to reading" or "Method to learn to read and write".

O livro da primeira classe consists of four parts: basic reading instructions are followed by a reader p. 54 to 90, a catechism p. 91 to 112 and "arithmetic" p. 113 to 144. Reading instruction starts with the five vowels. The other letters are introduced one by one, permitting the formation of more and more complicated syllables and words. But in the whole book no



"Portugal is our country. It is the most beautiful of all countries in the world!" *O livro da primeira classe*. Reprint. N. d., p. 39



"Alert, oh Portuguese people ...!" *O livro da primeira classe*. Reprint. N. d., p. 48

complete alphabet can be found. The illustrations show mostly very traditional technique (a donkey-operated well, a plough drawn by a pair of oxen) and scenes which may pretty well describe rural life in Portugal at that time. But also an airport for smaller aircraft is depicted. Finally, girls help their mother in the house (cooking, sweeping the floor, shining the shoes, washing etc.) while boys are occupied outdoors (gardening, fishing, picking apples, painting) and crafting. The catechism section starts with the prayers to be spoken when beginning and ending the lessons and includes the Lord's Prayer (p. 106) and the creed (p. 112). Further religious content can be found throughout the whole primer except the "arithmetic" section. In particular the adoration of Virgin Mary is emphasized (p. 27 and 35).

Not surprisingly, the nationalist content of this textbook is almost as extensive as the religious one - though Salazar himself is not depicted. But on p. 34 he is praised "Viva Salazar!". Already in the first illustration (p. 3) the Portuguese national flag fills a whole page. The map of Portugal is shown on p. 39, together with "Viva Portugal!" and "Portugal is our country, it's the most beautiful of all countries in the world!". Several pages (8, 21, 48 and 118) show children in the uniform of the fascist youth organisation *Mocidade Portuguesa*, founded in 1936, performing the fascist salute and singing "Alert, oh Portuguese people / Alert, alert, alert! / Alert that there be vigilance / which will save Portugal!" (p. 21). At the same time it has to be noted that the enforcement of compulsory schooling was successful: In 1955 only 1 % of children between 7 and 11 years were without instruction.

As mentioned before, *O livro da primeira classe* experienced new prints at least until 1964. The first follow-up reading primer, issued by the Ministry of National Education and a publisher in Lisbon, appeared in 1967:

Maria Luisa Torres Pires, Francisca Laura Batista, Glória N. Gusmão Moraes: *Livro de leitura da primeira classe*. Lisboa: Editora Educação nacional de Adolfo Machado 1967, 127 p.

In this textbook the religious content is reduced drastically. Instead of excessive nationalism we find a visit in Lisbon with a view over the river Tejo (pp. 114/5), and a teacher explaining that "the Portuguese were the first seafarers who discovered territories beyond the sea" (p. 117). A visit at the airport gives the teacher the opportunity to explain, that because of the speed of flight "now we can embrace our brothers living in Madeira,

the Azores, in Africa, in Asia". "Our brothers?" "Yes, many persons of different races who live in these territories and are Portuguese like us" (pp. 118/9). This was corresponding to the official doctrine that Portugal included overseas territories and had no colonies.

Portuguese bibliographies mention "ABC-book[s] for the use in schools", published since 1950, with 16 pages, an "ABC-book" of 39 pages in 1959 and several undated primers by Manuel António Janeiro Acabado. The latter books must have been intended for use in home instruction. Only one of them



Pires et al.: *Livro de leitura da primeira classe*, Lisboa 1967, front cover

them could be checked by the author of this text: it is rather simple and completely free of religious allusions, nationalism and politics.

Summing up all these facts, it can be said that Salazar and his regime were successfully infusing their ideology into the classrooms for primary instruction for more than two decades. This was achieved by approving only the one reading primer which had been worked out under their control.



Pires et al.: *Livro de leitura da primeira classe*, Lisboa 1967, pp. 118-119

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de Carvalho, Rómulo (1996). *História do ensino em Portugal desde a fundação da nacionalidade até ao fim de regime de Salazar-Gaetano* [The history of education in Portugal from the founding of the nation until the end of the Salazar-Gaetano regime]. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.

Teistler, Gisela (Hrsg.) (2006). *Lesen lernen in Diktaturen der 1930er und 1940er Jahre. Fabeln in Deutschland, Italien und Spanien* [Literacy acquisition in dictatorships of the 1930s and 1940s. Primers in Germany, Italy and Spain]. Studien zur internationalen Schulbuchforschung. Hannover: Hahn.

Publications

Publications 2013 and accepted papers on primers and related thematic fields by members of the RP-SIG network

This section of the newsletter, compiled by Wendelin Sroka, provides data on publications by RP-SIG members published either in 2013 or planned for publication in 2014. Information provided here is not intended as a complete list of all members' published works.

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