Writing Systems and Literacy Methods: Schooling Models in Western Curricula from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century

Anne-Marie Chartier

anne-marie.chartier0054@orange.fr | LARHRA/ENS-Lyon, France

ABSTRACT

This contribution sheds light on the interaction between print technology, social literacy and primary school pedagogy from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. The printing press opened up the possibility of a Christian education for all: psalters and catechisms became a vehicle for teaching both religious content and the writing system using the spelling method.

To move beyond this limited Christian literacy combining reading and memorization, and enable learners to read any text directly, textbooks separated the process into two stages: training beginners first to decipher, using the spelling method, and then to read different kinds of texts (informative, moral, civic). As many beginners failed at decoding, all subsequent "innovations" (word method, sentence method, look-say method, phonics, etc.) aimed to bridge the gap produced by this separation. This article will show how this common objective has been realized to varying degrees in different countries, especially in France and the United States (based on education policy, national language, teacher training, textbook publishing, etc).

KEY WORDS

Literacy; Primers; Reading method; Education policy; Teacher training.

Writing Systems and Literacy Methods: Schooling Models in Western Curricula from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century

Anne-Marie Chartier

INTRODUCTION: LEARNING TO READ IN SCHOOL, A COMPLICATED HISTORY

Numerous studies have been devoted to the history of writing. Historians were at first perplexed by the various forms and symbolic meanings of the signs they had to understand, such as cuneiforms, hieroglyphs, and alphabets (Robinson, 1995). They have also described the relationship between writing tools, writing materials and the writing itself: characters carved in wood, stone, or on clay tablets; writings on papyrus, parchment, rag paper or wood-pulp paper, handwritten with a reed, a quill pen, a metal pen, or a pencil, or typed on a keyboard; words printed on paper with a press, a typewriter, or a printer; and keyboard strokes as ordered characters across a screen (Breton-Gravereau & Thibault, 1998).

In 1454, Gutenberg and his press began a new era in Western countries (Eisenstein, 1983; Martin & Chartier, 1983, 1986). This technological innovation, which vastly multiplied the number of potential readers, produced unforeseeable social, political and religious effects. Indeed, the massive distribution of books, pamphlets, pictures and various other printed texts fueled religious conflicts, spurred the rise of vernacular languages, and expanded the reception areas for printed texts. It simultaneously changed the course of the history of literacy (with the beginning of mass literacy in Europe), the history of schools (necessary to provide basic religious instruction for boys and girls) and the history of education (as the goals of social, professional and religious education evolved along with the new tools).

Yet it was only in the 1980's that historians began to study the qualitative impact of technological innovations in writing on the reception of texts, that is to say on reading itself. We always knew that to be a reader was not an evenly shared cultural competence. This skill had slowly trickled down from the top to the bottom of the social scale, spreading from cities to the countryside, and had been mastered earlier by men than by women (Furet & Ozouf, 1977; Graff, 1981; Magalhães, 1994; Viñao, 1999). However, like anthropologists, psychologists and

pedagogues, historians had long assumed that a person who had mastered the rules of the alphabetical language "could read"; that is to say, could read anything (whether a Latin discourse or news on a screen). This immutable representation of reading has been questioned by recent research focused not on the production and dissemination of written texts, but on how texts were received by readers (Cavallo & Chartier, 1996). "Reading" was not a stable skill in time, it also had a history.

This is why it is not surprising that the history of reading as taught in school has not had time to incorporate these recent research trends. The history of the evolution of teaching methods traditionally referred to innovative pioneers: Comenius, La Salle, Locke, Pestalozzi, Lancaster, Montessori, Decroly, and Freinet, who transformed their experience working with children into comprehensive education projects that broke with the habits of their time. All these great educators were authors who published accounts of their experiments, criticized existing teaching methods, and justified their approaches theoretically, in written prescriptions. The history of pedagogy began by tracing the evolution of their educational ideas and showing the novelty of their outlooks. The innovations they had proposed for teaching reading mattered less than their general goals and their conceptions of the educator-student relationship. In contrast, the history of the teaching of reading focuses on empirical progress (Avanzini, 1981; Benton Smith, 1934; Guillaume, 1887).

Teachers working with beginning readers have sought to solve practical problems. They have used, modified, and improved upon the tools available to them. These anonymous "discoveries" accumulated over time, leading to the widely shared opinion that pedagogical practices necessarily progress throughout history. As James Guillaume wrote in his article on "Reading" in Ferdinand Buisson's famous *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie* (1887):

> From this picture of progress over three centuries in this area, which need not be formulated into a body of doctrine, teaching will flow naturally in the directions to be given to the teachers of today on this important topic. (p. 1535)

For contemporaries, the history of innovation stemmed both from the new knowledge (on children, language and learning), the development of tools (textbooks, teaching materials) and the political will that supported education, and from teacher training. Thus educational innovations appeared as "technical" inventions, ideologically neutral, since all were designed to enable more children to learn to read better and better, more and more quickly. The same belief comes through in Nila Banton Smith's pioneering study of the United States in 1934.

Nevertheless, for anyone familiar with the recent didactics of reading, such descriptions of "old ways of teaching" seem very surprising. The old methods appear to be based on absurd principles, illogical procedures, and often, to be aimed at preventing children from learning rather than helping them, which is difficult to believe. For example, why did children (both Catholic and Protestant) in earlier times learn to read prayers they already knew by heart, as if reading and reciting were the same thing? Was it possible to read other texts independently with this method? Why, then, did all students, whether princes' sons or farmers' daughters, have to learn to spell every word, letter by letter and syllable by syllable, before reading, which was "the ordinary way" (Monaghan, 2005) for almost all teachers, in all European languages? And what happened at school to explain how this "spelling method" (in French, épellation; in Italian, compitazione; in Spanish, deletreo; in Portuguese, soletração), used for centuries, disappeared within two generations before 1900? Why did one need to be able to read before starting to learn to write and count? And why did reading silently to oneself, a common practice since the late Middle Ages, become an explicit objective in primary school so late (in the 1960s and 70s) in Europe?

But the most puzzling issue has to do with the "skill of reading" iself, and with its collective representation. In the late nineteenth century, teaching reading and writing was considered a tiresome but easy task, that one could entrust to the teacher's wife, to beginning teachers, or to the elder students in the classroom. Any housewife was presumed capable of teaching her children to read. In the early twenty-first century, despite many years of university studies, new teachers seem not ready to succeed easily in the same task. What changed to explain such a gap? We find the same gap in expectations about the progress of literacy: the optimistic hope expressed in the *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie* (Buisson, 1887, p. 1316) that "the illiterate population, that is to say those who can neither read nor write, will get smaller year by year in France and (...) the nineteenth century will end with a population that can cross that word out of the dictionary" (article "Illettrés") contrasts sharply with recent findings on the stark reality of adult illiteracy (EFA Report Unesco, 2006). If we want to resolve these puzzles, we have to recognize first that we no longer understand what made the old tools efficient, because we have forgotten both the social goals of literacy in former times, and the usual forms of schooling.

Of course, the connection is neither direct nor immediate between social and school literacy. However, over time the changing "uses of literacy" (Hoggart, 1957) affected school standards and learning modalities. By studying curricula for beginning readers from the Reformation to the present, I have found that technologies of writing seemed to play a fundamental role in those redefinitions.

MODEL 1: LEARNING TO READ IN THE TIME OF PRAYERS AND CATECHISM

AIMS AND STAGES OF LEARNING

Let us recall the aims of teaching reading from early periods to the present. For Luther and Calvin (Cressy, 1980; Gilmond, 1996; Strauss, 1981), lay people, like clerics, had to read the translated Scriptures with their own eyes; that is, to read, not only listen. As Luther wrote, nothing should prevent believers from having direct access to the Scriptures, whatever their sex or age, "whether it be a poor maid or a nine year old child"[1]. The Council of Trent advised that early Catholic catechisms should be read "by the letter" to assure that no mistakes were made. As Jacques de Batencourt wrote: "It is much easier to instruct a child [in religion] when he knows how to read", because "books are like perpetual teachers to those who can read them"[2]. The goal of reading was obviously to make it easier to get a Christian education, which implied three things: first, intensive memorization of a religious corpus of texts including prayers, hymns for liturgical ceremonies, and the contents of catechisms; second, the practice of collective reading, because one who reads by himself is in great danger of error and maybe heresy; and third, the skill of reading without writing, because the art of writing, whether linked with Latin humanities or with commercial accounts, dealt with a social and cultural universe far from ordinary people.

If those were the goals, what were the means? (Chartier, 2007; Chartier, Compère & Julia, 1976; Hébrard, 1988; Roggero, 1999; Viñao, 1999). The most familiar and widespread model of instruction in Europe was the training of young clerks, as a result of both the secular and traditional omnipresence of the church. Even before they learned rudimentary skills, like recognition of letters, syllables, and words, novices first memorized the 150 psalms between daily religious services (the whole psalter was regularly recited each week). The novices also were trained to read Latin while collectively memorizing liturgical texts, aided by plainchant that articulated each syllable, even before they understood the texts word for word. Literacy in non-clerics followed the same means[3] but for lack of daily services, the corpus of texts to learn by

---

1   This "direct access" was not through individual reading. Luther did not encourage people or children to read alone but with the community. Martin Luther, M.L.O., IX, ed. Labor et Fides, Genève, p. 111.

2   This frequently cited sentence is from *L'Escole Paroissiale ou la manière de bien instruire les enfants*, Paris, Pierre Targe, 1654, p. 233. The anonymous author, Jacques de Batencour, is a Parisian priest of the parish of Saint-Nicolas du Chardonnet in the Latin Quarter.

3   Egil Johansson has shown the importance of the numerous hymnbooks in Swedish domestic life, especially for women: "Women and the tradition of reading around 1700. Examples from Sweden and Germany", in *Women and Literacy Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Symposium for Study of Education in Developing Countries*, Stockholm, June 1989, Stockholm: Svenska Unescorådets Skriftserie, Nr 1/1992, pp. 77-94.

heart was reduced to regular prayers and hymns, according to the Catholic or Reformed confession. In Catholic countries, the Lord's Prayer, the Hail Marys, the Creed, and the Confiteor were learned in Latin (and later in Latin and the vernacular). But what were the first tools to help children to read?

BATTLEDORES, PSALTERS (PRIMERS) AND CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTIONS (READERS)

Three main teaching tools could be found throughout Europe and the American colonies (Castañeda, 2004; Monagham, 2005), or nearly: hornbooks (in Italy *carta* or *tavola*; in France, *charte*; *carte*, *palette* or *tablette*; in England, *hornbook* or *battledore*), ABC's *(salterio, Instructions chrétiennes, primer, Crisscross)* and readers *(Donatello, Prayer Books, Books of Hours, Civilités, Catones)*. A late English engraving dating from 1622 shows how the first of these, the horn-book, was used in tutoring (Benton Smith, 1986). A young child is holding the handle of a wooden board in his left hand, while in his right hand he is holding a pin which he uses to point out the letters he is naming or maybe his tutor is naming. The tutor is looking over the shoulders of the child standing between his knees. This tool already existed in the Middle Ages. From the sixteenth century onwards, the alphabet was no longer written (and later printed) in columns but in two lines. The first one always began with a cross[4] and consisted of the alphabet in small letters, and the second line, in capital letters. The Gothic fonts were gradually replaced by new Roman or Italic ones. The list of vowels came below the alphabet, sometimes but not always followed by the list of consonants and a few examples of syllables set in columns for instance A, E, I, O, U associated with B, C, and D. Finally, there was a prayer formula (the sign of the Cross and a psalm verse) and/or a "longer text", like the Pater Noster in Latin or in the vernacular depending on the country and the denomination.

The second teaching tool, the ABC, was a very cheap booklet, sometimes illustrated with wood engravings. Whereas the hornbook often belonged to the family, the ABC was the first and sometimes the only schoolbook. It was called psalter more often than ABC or primer. But unlike the psalter printed for religious use only, the school primer included an alphabet and a table of syllables, as in the hornbook: the Cross, the alphabet in upper-case and lower-case letters and a list of syllables which presented the "consonant-vowel" and "vowel-consonant" combinations. It took one or two pages. Primers usually gave only two-letter syllables, but in more elaborate primers that were later copied in popular versions, three- or even four-letter syllables

---

4   Children had to make the sign of the Cross before reading letters as well as prayers. Hence the name of Santa Croce, Croix–de–par–Dieu or Criscross [Christ's cross] given to ABC's in Italy, France or England.

could be found. Then there were the prayers: the Lord's Prayer and the Creed in Latin or the vernacular, the Ten Commandments, and the Ave Maria in Catholic countries. The prayers were printed in separated syllables (emphasized with lines, dashes, or spaces) and in large letters on the first pages. The other prayers included the Confiteor, the seven psalms of Penance, and various religious hymns depending on the denomination (Hébrard, 1988; Monaghan, 2005; Roggero, 1999; Viñao, 2000).
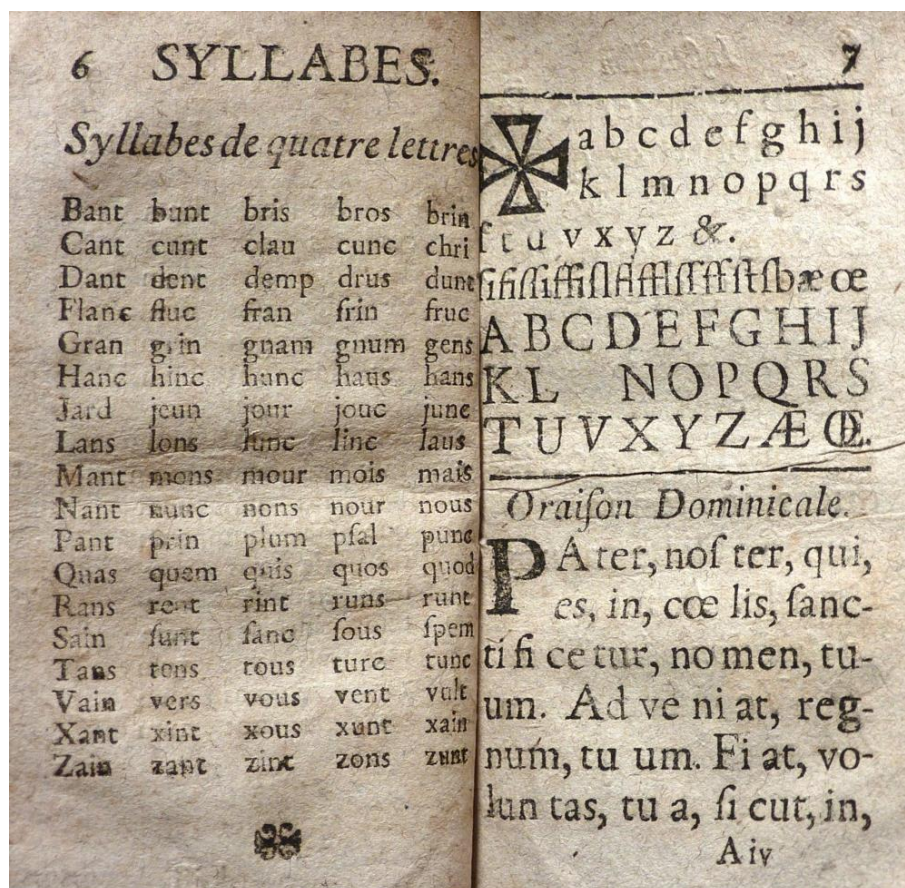

Figure 1. Le Gros ABC.

The third type of book introduced the pupils to longer texts. The opposition between primers and readers, still in use today in England and United States, reflects the difference between the two stages. The selected texts were not written especially for children. They were shortened versions of well-known texts. In Italy, the first reader imposed by tradition was the Donatello, a shortened Latin grammar. The other texts were used in the various religious services: Veni creator and the Vespers of the Virgin, translations of the Gospels and Psalms. All those texts were part of the common services in the community.

The psalter sometimes finished by a short catechism (in vernacular) where children might find a list of the truths that should be remembered (by questions and answers). The *Civilités*[5] which appeared during the Renaissance and dealt with good manners, were adapted in short versions for children. Printed in "civilité types" imitating cursive writing, for the Christian School of J-B de La Salle (Jimenes, 2011) they helped children to get used to reading manuscripts. They were the only booklets dealing with secular subjects.

THE READING MODEL: MEMORIZE TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND

Today it is difficult to understand how it was possible to learn to read with such materials. All becomes clearer if we keep in mind that learning to read was not, at the beginning, about understanding the meaning of an unknown text. The purpose of the spelling method was to show how a text one knew perfectly well orally was written, and how letters "transcoded" the sounds of a language (either Latin or the vernacular). As soon as they had learned the names of the letters of both alphabets, beginning readers could practice on their own by reciting the prayer *sotto voce* as they progressed, breaking it down into syllables. They had to coordinate their eyes (on the letters that formed the syllable), their finger (which followed the line), and their voice (which pronounced the word, syllable by syllable), without making any errors. The catechism was also memorized in a question–and–response conversation format (young students listened to older students' recitations) well before students had reviewed the text on the printed page. Once a student was able to spell and prononce the *Pater Noster* syllable by syllable (P-a Pa, t-e-r, ter, Pa-ter), he had to say it word by word, and finally sentence by sentence. He would do the same for other prayers. Then he would try to read unknown texts that were written in the same style (psalms, hymns, canticles). This is comparable to the way chorists today learn to read musical scores[6]: many are able to read the notes on a score only if they have memorized the melody and know it orally by heart, as did the young readers of psalters in the seventeenth century (Bisaro, 2010). The same technique could be used with non-religious texts that had been learned by heart, such as fables or songs. Indeed, some people did manage to teach themselves to read in this way, as shown in the well-known case of Valentin Jamerey-Duval[7] (Hébrard, 1985).

---

5   Erasmus wrote in 1530 *De Civilitate morum puerum*, translated or imitated in many vernacular versions, which had a great success in schools from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.
6   Xavier Bisaro recalls that the schoolmaster was also the "cantor" of the village and he learned the same method to teach Latin and plainchant, sung by his students with him during religious services.
7   Valentin Jamerey–Duval (1695–1775) was a young shepherd who learned to read via the Aesop's Fables he knew by heart. He finished his life as the librarian of the Duke of Lorraine. He recounts his life story in *Mémoires. Enfance et éducation d'un paysan au XVIIIe siècle,* Présentation par J-M Goulemot, Paris : Le Sycomore, 1981.

Many readers were never able to read any "new" text alone, but they knew enough to respond to questions in catechism and to be allowed to take communion: religious education did not demand any more than that. Exams to receive the right to take First Communion in Catholic countries, or to be confirmed in Protestant countries, existed in all of Europe. The tests were more or less difficult depending on the expectations of local clergy: indeed, some children were "held back" to repeat a year of schooling (Johansson, 1981; Julia, 1995). The tests could be considered the "PISA tests of the seventeenth century", since they evaluated the literacy of the time, which encompassed both scriptural (contained in Christian dogma) and procedural (how to recite and re-read a known text) knowledge. They were, essentially, the roots of later tests (Caspard, 2002). The difference between the age of communion (eleven or twelve years) and that of confirmation (fourteen or fifteen years) is three years. Those years of supplementary instruction are sufficient to explain the higher level of education in Northern Europe than in the Catholic South.

For the students who were able to read printed texts, further training was necessary to read manuscripts. These had secular content, but like prayers, they are texts of commitment (e.g. promises, testimonials, contracts, sales, purchasing, account statements, debt acknowledgment, loans, wills, testaments). Urban schools for the people taught the limited number of students able to read their catechism alone with ease how to read and write in cursive at the same time as they learned the arithmetic necessary to maintain accounts. This made the Brotherhood of Christian schools founded by La Salle very successful. They taught students to read, then write, then count (La Salle, 1706), but this form of reading, writing, and arithmetic (the Three R's) had little in common with the reading, writing, and arithmetic of the Third Republic in 1880. What made their definition "knowing how to read" so far removed from our understanding of the expression today?

MODEL 2: THE "REVOLUTION" AROUND 1750, FROM INTENSIVE TO EXTENSIVE READING

TWO MODELS OF READING IN CONFLICT: A PERFORMATIVE ACT VS. A RECEPTIVE STATE

Reading was not yet "how to deal with new information". For a long time, reading consisted of reviewing old knowledge, first acquired orally, and then rememorized from a book, as one would rehearse a piece of music with a score. At a time when "reading was learning", this sort of reading, far from being

reserved for children or people with little education, was the typical way in which medieval clerks read (Carruthers, 1990). Literal memory was considered the best way to master the meaning of a text (Jacob, 2003). Commentaries and interpretations were reserved for literate clerks, who were expert readers (Grafton, 1991, 1997). This "read-recite" literacy was the basis for both Protestant and Catholic catechism, and reading out loud or sotto voce, slowly and intensively, had a high performative value, just like that of all prayers. A person who reads a psalm is not trying to "understand" a text to comment on it or discuss it; on the contrary, the psalm he enunciates speaks for him, expressing on his behalf the praise, supplications, promise and forgiveness. To enunciate the text with confidence and respect was all that was needed.

This is why fiction, novels, pamphlets, and libels were seen as "bad and dangerous texts": the mouth that pronounced words and sentences could not be dissociated from their characterization as lies, blasphemy, or shameful obscenity. If the reader was always the mouthpiece of the written message (religious or not), he/she could be contaminated by any "bad" text. One can understand why religious and political authorities of the period so dreaded the influence of heretical or subversive texts, including the emotional draw of fiction (particularly sentimental or libertine novels), which were considered seductive lies. They did not imagine any style of reading other than that literal adhesion to text. Collective reading shielded readers against the potential dangers of solitary reading (Hall, 2011). Group recitations united a reader with the community, just as in a choral chant. The fervor of contemporary ritual celebrations shows that this "practical force" has not entirely disappeared.

This concept of reading has obviously become irrelevant, now that readers want to keep up with the latest texts published, which "engage only their authors", all to arouse the insatiable curiosity of readers. This type of reading became the norm with the success of gazettes and novels over the course of the eighteenth century. Faced with this new type of reading, which was avid, rapid, and solitary, contemporaries spoke of a "revolution in reading" (Wittmann, 1999). The model of reading then turned into our modern definition: to be a reader is to be in a receptive state. The strength attributed to a text now lay in the act of the person who uttered it to a third party and reading acquired the dangerous power to trigger the full range of existing emotions, making it very attractive. "Instead of being a method of educating toward independance, in the sense intended by Immanuel Kant in his definition of Enlightment, [reading novels] served merely in order to kill time and maintain a condition of etrenal dependancy" (Wittmann, 1999, p. 301) [8]. The reader discovers unknown stories, in new worlds far from himself, for better or for worse (Flint, 1993; Lyons, 1987).

---

8   According to the philosopher J. G. Fichte, the "reading mania" is a "narcotic".

What were the consequences for young readers of this new way of learning? In the late eighteenth century, to prepare their privileged students to read texts (which were as numerous as they were ephemeral), private tutors abandoned memorized prayers. They would force their beginning students to memorize all syllabic combinations, without relying on a significant text. The key to reading any unknown text was to master the whole code of graphemic to phonetic sign relationships. Proficiency at decoding required connecting the written signs, words and phrases to a previously mastered oral language (French, in this case): it was like learning to sight-read a score without any music. Pestalozzi gives an idea of the massive and vain effort to 'rationalize' learning of the grapheme-phonetic code:

> I began to bawl the ABC from morning to night (...) I accumulated without tired syllabic combinations; I filled entire books of syllables and number series; I sought by all means to simplify as much as possible the elements of spelling. (Guillaume, 1887, p. 2308)[9]

Rousseau rose up against the superhuman demands put on children to learn to read and the consequent failure rates when he wrote: "Reading is the scourge of childhood". His hero, Emile, would learn to read when he wanted to learn. He would succeed in learning to read, because he had the privilege of an attentive tutor, but would he have learned to read in a classroom community? Between 1750 and 1850, schoolmasters found themselves torn between the modest pedagogy of intensive religious readings, as practiced by the brethren in Christian schools with well-established methods for group teaching, and the excessive ambition of private tutors who encouraged the memorization of all syllables as a precondition for the modern notion of reading extensively. Many rural children, who did not even speak French, were unable to memorize the charts of syllables and remained illiterate. Others who managed to learn to read and recite their lessons (as in catechism) left school knowing "only how to read". In 1860, according to the Minister of Public Instruction, Victor Duruy, 40% of students left school "illiterate or almost".

Subsequent generations of teachers tried to invent procedures to reduce the gap between the mastering of graphical code (deciphering) and the ability

---

9   Pestalozzi's method was to have beginners (5–8 years) memorize five different combinations for each letter of the alphabet, successively joining the five vowels with all consonants, forward and backward (ab, ba, id, di, of, fo, ug, gu, etc). Then came combinations of two consonants and a vowel (bud, dub, bic, cib, gaf, fag), and finally he would spell long and difficult words. Pestalozzi later rejected the method as absurd and became a follower of Rousseau.

to understand texts (reading). So, the pedagogy of reading followed two paths: first, accelerating the mastery of graphic code, and second, inventing texts closer to what children were capable of understanding (Vincent, 1989). French beginners' textbooks[10] help us understand how the first of these pedagogical aims evolved. Between 1830 and 1880, the didactic and editorial characteristics of the texts increasingly reflected new scholarly objectives[11]. By the end of the period (1880-1900), the syllabic method had become the standard. Skill development happened over the course of a year (30-40 weeks), each lesson was one page long and presented the letter sound to be learned, with exercises that featured the syllables studied, and short sentences that mixed new and old lessons. The reading material was only to practice reading words or short phrases that used syllables that had already been learned or were currently being studied. Nothing like this had existed between 1800 and 1850, as we can see in a French and an American example.

The *Alphabet and First Reader* was widely distributed by the Ministry in 1832, spreading an idea of the kind of results ministerial authorities hoped schools would produce[12]. The book is written in the tradition of "rational" (raisonné) instruction, designed for novice learners (adults or children). It presents vowels, consonants, and the alphabet in three different typographies, with twelve pages of syllables and four pages of "exceptions" (muted or variable letters). The underlying idea is that the student, who has "studied" all of the relationships between letters and sounds and knows the graphic rules of writing (like capitalization, punctuation, and abbreviations), has acquired the principles that are the key to reading. The student is therefore ready to read any text: the second part *(Premier livre de lecture)* that follows the first *(Alphabet)* is a small encyclopedia that examines one theme per page (1. Children, 15. Fruits and Vegetables, 26. Calculations, 68. Volcanoes, etc.). In reading and re-reading the texts together with the teacher, the student will learn only that which school gives them: common ethics and science.

A comparison with the *Blue Back Speller*, the famous primer used in the United States, shows that the order Webster chose was exactly the same (Chartier, 2013). First came all the exercises involving "coding and decoding" (lists of syllables, from simple to complex; words of two, three, four

---

10   A synthesis of this research was presented in *L'école et la lecture obligatoire* [*School and Mandatory Reading*] Paris: Retz, 2007, 2014 (chapter 5). See also, *Teaching Reading: A Historical Approach*, In Nunes T. & Bryant P. (Eds.) (2004), *The Handbook of Children's Literacy*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, Boston, pp. 511–538 and "The Teaching of Literacy Skills in Western Europe An Historical Perspective", In Olson D. & Torrance N. (Eds.) (2009), *The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 449–467. I analyzed seven textbooks dating from before 1830, 20 textbooks from the period of 1830-1848, 130 from the period of 1850-1880, on which I focused, and 40 textbooks from 1880-1900.

11   The INRP library (now housed in the Bibliothèque Diderot at the ENS–Lyon) holds a particularly rich resource for the years 1840–1880, having inherited the private collection of General Inspector Rapet.

12   Written by Ambroise Rendu, councilor to the minister and the editor Louis Hachette, a million copies were purchased so they could be freely distributed to "indigent" students, and sold at a very low price to others (for the equivalent of one or two Euros).

syllables; and short sentences) and second, a number of instructive and moral texts. Textbooks at the time ranged from 20 to 200 pages. Sometimes they featured only a few tables of syllables combining vowels and consonants, but sometimes the tables spread over many pages, followed by long lists of words classified by length (one, two, or three syllables, separated by a hyphen), and then, in a second part, long texts on instructive, moral and civic texts.
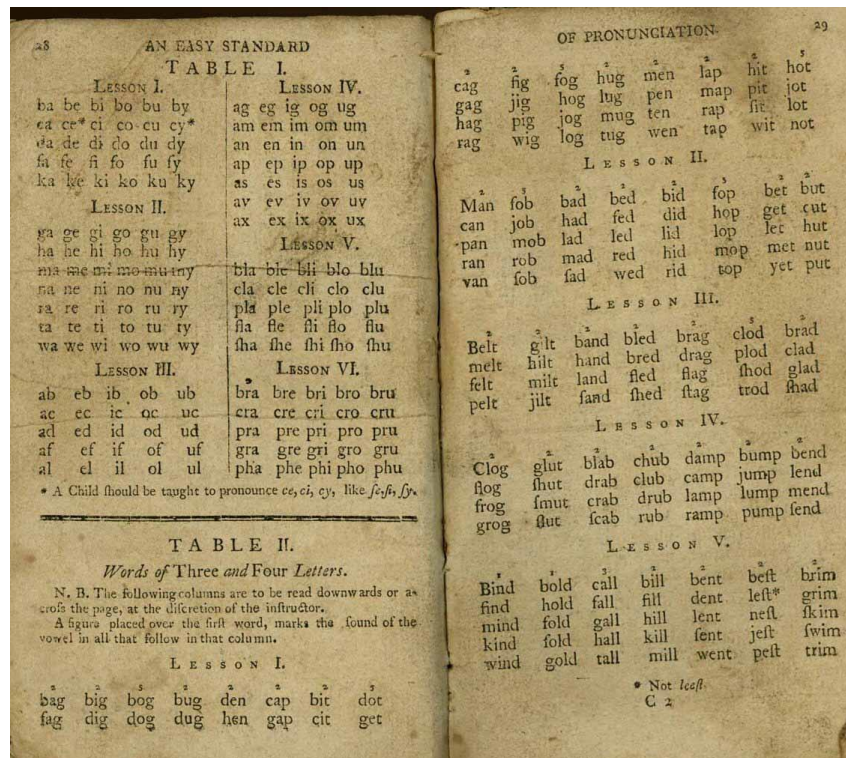

Figure 2. Webster's Blue Back Speller.

DEBATES ABOUT THE SPELLING METHOD BEFORE 1860

There is abundant evidence of pupils failing at school during the period: many "loitered in vain on the threshold of reading", which means that they never got beyond studying the syllable charts. Even though a seventeenth-century primary school student seemed capable of working on his or her own, as we have seen it was impossible for nineteenth-century grade school students to study independently. As General Inspector Rapet wrote in 1860[13]:

---

13   *Journal des Instituteurs* 34, 19 August 1860, 118, 119.

What can we make of a poor child who does not understand how to read or write? There is no way to work with him. To pretend that one will succeed in teaching him by putting his reader in his hands and telling him to study is a delusion, something even the most enlightened and experienced teachers are unable to achieve. He would be able to hold his reader in his hands, wiggle it around, gnaw on it, but he will never study it, because that is impossible for him. To study reading, when he has not achieved anything close to the appropriate reading level, it is absolutely necessary to have the assistance of a teacher. (pp. 118-119)

In the United States, the solution was found by the editors of McGuffey's primers[14]: to use regular monosyllabic words (ox, ax, pup, cat, dog) and images to connect meaning and word; any pupil could then pronounce the word. The typical sentences produced by these very strong lexical constraints followed this pattern: "Is it an ox? It is an ox. It is my ox" (*McGuffey Pictorial Primer*, 1853), or "Can a pup run? Yes, a pup can run. All the pups can run. But a pup can not run as fast as a dog". Those texts transmit no essential values, deal with only what the children already know and are not meant to teach anything else but how to encode and decode written language. In France, illustrated primers were too expensive for schools before the end of the nineteenth century. So, Peigné's way (137 editions between 1830 and 1898) was considered as the best: in the daily lesson, students discovered a new letter, made new syllables with it, and immediately, words combining new syllables with others already studied (*ma-ri, mû-ri, mu-ni*). Each sequence ended with summaries of what had been learned. As soon as possible, Peigné made students read short sentences of simple and regular words (*Médor a mordu la tartine ; l'activité mène à la fortune* : one sound / one letter) which were "meant to express something", he said, that grabs the attention and relieves the memory. The word "lesson" referred to a page in the book, content to be learned, and a short amount of time working as a group, guided by the teacher. In thirty or forty lessons, all of the sounds were heard, the sentences in the text had been read in sequence, and the year was complete. One can imagine how much it must have eased the burden of young teachers to have the year's work planned out entirely in advance.

---

14   Between 1836 and 1920, 132 million copies of *The McGuffey Readers* (one book for each level) were bought. (Mathews, 1966, p. 102).
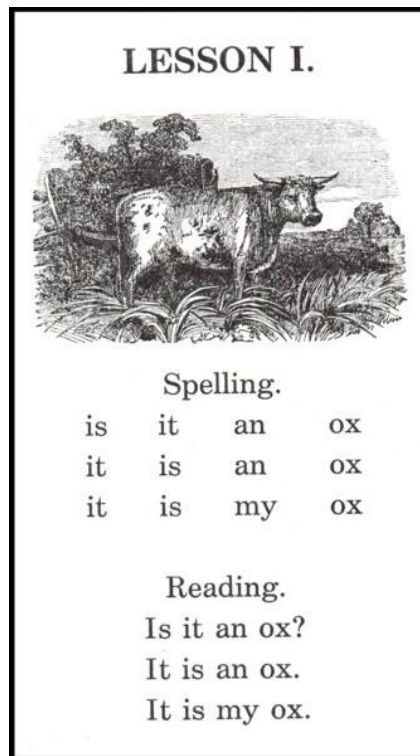
Figure 3. McGuffey Pictorial Primer.

THE END OF THE SPELLING METHOD FROM THE 1860s

This evolution in method followed longstanding efforts to speed up syllable reading and the transition from syllables to texts. In 1860, the instructor A. Lefèvre summarized the confusion in the field:

> Two processes, spelling and non-spelling, have fought for too long for practitioner approval, because neither of the two have any serious advantages or disadvantages… We unanimously and purposefully criticize the old spelling method for being ineffective at helping students discover the phonetic value of the syllable by enunciating the letters. (p. 6)

For reading without spelling, one must memorize syllables, but "*our language has them by the thousands*". However, from the 1860s on, "non-spelling methods" became "practical" and "speedy": all were methods that featured simultaneous reading and writing, with the help of new tools.

Schools could be equipped with slates, chalk, and notebooks (wood-pulp paper was ten times less expensive than rags paper) and wear-resistant

metal quills (to replace goose quills, which were difficult for children under the age of eight or nine to handle). These materials permitted beginners to get an early start learning writing, and would keep them quietly occupied. As progress in writing (which begins by tracing i, u, n, and m, because those are the easiest letters to draw) has nothing to do with progress in reading comprehension (which often begins with the letters *a* and *b* or *p*, too difficult for beginners to trace), these two learning tracks remained separate.

Everything changed when schoolteachers had the idea of supporting learning to read with learning to write. In reproducing lines of letters (n, i), then lines of syllables (ni), the students "learned them by heart". When the student saw *mu-ni* or *pu-ni*, he or she read *ni* without spelling it: the syllabic method was born. As the adjective "syllabic" indicates, this method makes students pronounce syllables directly and does away with sounding out the letters individually. The *Cuissart Method*[15], triumphant in 1881, was used widely for forty years. At the top of each page there is a drawing of, for example, an Ile (Island) for I or an Usine (Factory) for U, flanked by the letter I or U; then a line of syllables followed by words illustrating the "letter sound" in both cursive and print. This is followed by a short sentence in print and cursive. Each lesson concludes with a model letter in cursive to be copied in a student's notebook. Thus while learning to write, students learned to read much more quickly. An age-old order disappeared, the alphabetical order, replaced by a new sequential arrangement, based on a progression reflecting many criteria about writing (how easy or difficult letters are to draw) and reading (relationship between letters and sounds, regularity, encoding of sounds by one or several letters, etc.). We can observe the same debates, and with time lags, the same link between reading and writing in primers in Spanish, Italian and Portuguese[16]. In Chile, Claudio Matte wrote a new national method in 1884, *Nuevo Método (fonético, analítico-sintético) para la enseñanza simultánea de la lectura i escritura, compuesto para las escuelas de la República de Chile.* The model was German and the books were printed in Leipzig.

---

15 *Méthode Cuissart. Enseignement pratique et simultané de la lecture, de l'écriture et de l'orthographe*, by E. Cuissart, *1er livret. Étude des lettres et de leurs combinaisons simples*, 1882. This illustrated method book will serve as a prototype for the manuals created during 1900–1925 and it was republished repeatedly through 1938.
16 In *Histoire de l'éducation*, 138, 2013, see Mayorca, Martinez-Moctezuma, Roggero, Magalhães, Frade.
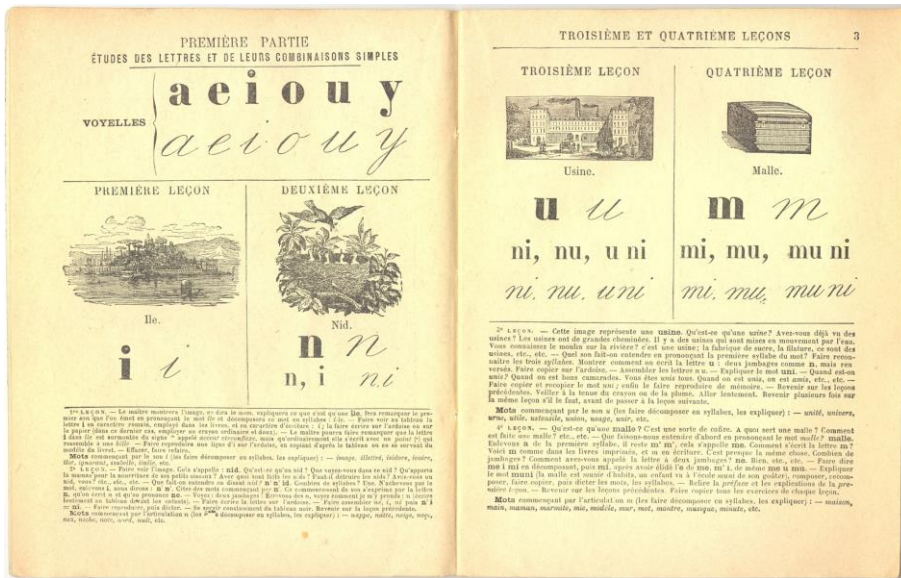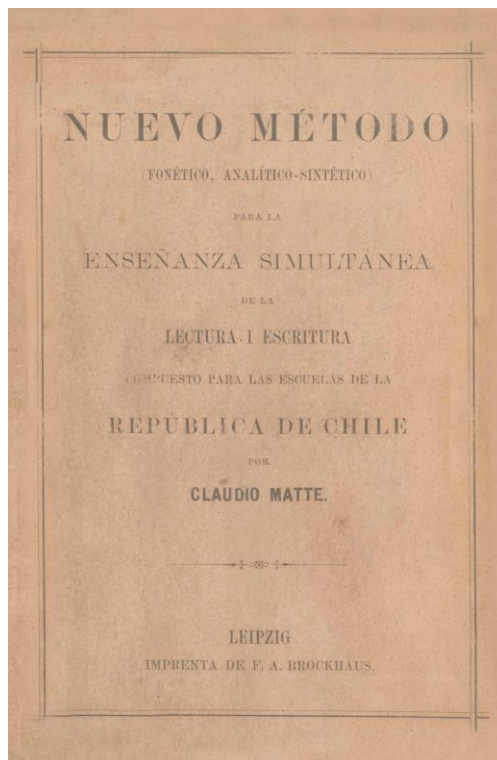
Figure 4. Méthode Cuissart.

Figure 5. Matte *Nuevo Método.*

MODEL 3: FROM READING WORDS TO INTERPRETING TEXTUAL SITUATIONS

TECHNICAL TOOLS AND THE NEW RELATIONSHIP TO "MODERN" READING

What conclusions can we draw about changing models for teaching reading in the nineteenth century? Our first finding concerns the link between reading didactics and technical progress in writing. New, easy-to-use writing tools enabled beginners to copy models by themselves, whereas previously they depended on guided oral exercises. Copying cursive letters trained the hand and helped students memorize letter combinations that were previously memorized orally. Thus, spelling remained important (to write syllables or words, it is necessary to proceed letter by letter), but it disappeared from reading lessons and was replaced by reading exercises based on writing exercises. Copied words would then be written from memory during dictations given by the teacher.

The second finding is about the time required for a didactic innovation to come into widespread use. In this case, writing resolved the principal difficulty in teaching a class of learners of varying levels, which explains the method's success. The beginners were now busy and quiet. They behaved in the same way as more advanced classmates, alternating between lessons and exercises, reading and writing. In France in 1886, the first stage of the primary school curriculum, the "cours préparatoire", devoted exclusively to decoding, became mandatory for younger pupils from six years old (and not seven as before). For teachers, the syllabic method maintained the progressive approach of the older textbooks, but broken down into daily lessons, bringing an entire group of beginning learners through at the same pace.

The third finding is about the link between intelligence and learning speed. In the textbooks of the 1830s, syllable charts never included information about how long they would take to learn: each child went at his own pace (and many remained there). That was no longer the case with the "modern" manuals divided into daily lessons. Teachers had to manage students who kept pace with the lessons and students who didn't. For teachers, a new manual would be judged easy to use if the progression of the lessons was appropriate for the average student, allowing most children to keep up with the lessons. The teachers observed the link between intelligence, speed, and mastery of scholarly learning, which Binet theorized in 1904 in his metric scale of intelligence (*échelle métrique de l'intelligence*). Between, on one end of the spectrum, children with "mental disabilities"

ANNE-MARIE CHARTIER

(who would never be able to speak, or who could speak but were unable to learn to read), and on the other, children who could read and write after one year of training, Binet detected children with "learning disabilities" (*anormaux d'école*): those who could learn to decode after a long period of training, but would never be able to read and understand texts autonomously.

With the advent of Binet's test, reading skills no longer appeared as an artifact of human technology, but became a feature of human normality and the best index of one's intelligence (Binet, 1973 [1904]). Binet saw a difference of degree and not a difference of kind between natural languages and literacy. The consequence of this rise of intelligence (conceived as a scale) was a stigmatisation of memory (Chartier, 2015) and the old goals of teaching based in memorization, particularly those related to religious model of reading. From 1830 on, memorization was challenged because it allowed students to recite texts "like parrots", without understanding what they were saying, as one might recite prayers or the catechism. At the time, people no longer saw the connection that Christian literacy had constructed between memory and learning how to read, inherited from the scholastic culture of the Middle Ages and adapted during the Reformation to help people become literate. The aim of the new pedagogy was not to construct a mental memory of texts, but to identify words. And that was the new issue: was identifying words sufficient for understanding texts?

WAYS TO IDENTIFY WORDS: THE SYLLABIC METHOD, THE WORD METHOD OR THE WHOLE WORD METHOD

Throughout the nineteenth century, philosophers debated about learning processes. The rationalist approach advocated learning from the parts to the whole, from the simple to the complex, whereas the empiricist approach favored learning analytically, with the simple abstracted from the whole. This debate, which informed all discussions about teaching reading, focused on the status of the word: whether it should be considered as the starting point or as the objective. For those who had supported the spelling or syllabic method, the word was the whole which had to be apprehended from the perception of its components (letters and syllables). But for those who supported the word-method, children should first understand the word as a whole and then proceed to the observation of its elements. Still other educators considered the word as an element of larger units, notably the sentence or the text, and believed children could proceed from the word to the sentence or from the sentence considered as the unit giving meaning to the words (sentence method).

By the end of the century, whether children spoke out names of letters as in the old spelling method or sounds as in the modern spelling method, whether they read syllables (syllabic method) or whole words first (whole-word method), had no impact on the practice of copying. Through writing, "phonological awareness" becomes slowly but permanently connected with "orthographic awareness", as cognitive psychologists would say to-day. Educators realized that, contrary to what they might have imagined, reading well did not necessarily ensure this link. Due to the lack of regularity in the written code, English, Nord-American and French teachers (more than German, Spanish, Italian or Portuguese teachers) were beginning to worry about students' spelling ability and not only their reading level[17]. This relationship between writing and learning to read, observed empirically in the United States, has nonetheless had no effect on theoretical conceptions of reading, which is still regarded as a basic skill, independent from writing.

READING IS UNDERSTANDING TEXTUAL SITUATIONS, AND NOT SERIES OF WORDS

A second way of teaching prevailed first in the USA, then in England, based on the whole-word method, which does not require any explicit analysis of sounds. With the irregular spelling characteristic of English, systematic learning of correspondences between graphemes and phonemes becomes impossible and discouraging and more children are likely to fail than to succeed. Experiments have shown that a child memorizes whole words very fast so that they can be used from the start of reading. Some oft-cited forerunners in this area are the German pedagogue Gedicke (1753-1804), the French educator Jacotot (1790-1840), and the American Pierce[18] who wrote in 1844: "When they are perfectly familiar with the first words chosen, and the sentence which they compose, select other words, and form other sentences; and so on indefinitely". He assumed that in the stock of well-known words, children will gradually discover recurring elements which will enable them, by analogy, to read new words without help. It is why the whole word method was also called global method or look-and-say. It leaves the codes out and focuses on units beyond words, i.e. on the understanding of texts.

The primers' obsession with phonology was also questioned by the first scientific research on adult reading processes. Then, psychological and

17   In 1880, in the USA, Walton observed in pupils' papers 108 different spellings of the word *whose*, 58 for the word *which*, and 208 for the word *scholar*. The French School Inspector Beuvain made similar observations in France in 1873. 77% of children spelled the word *tuyaux* correctly, but the remaining 23% produced 138 differents spellings. From those findings, associations of linguists tried (in vain) to impose a simplification of English or French spellings. See Matthews (1966) and Chervel (1989, 2006).
18   Pierce, 1844, On Reading, *American Institute of Instruction,* XIV, quoted by M. Mathews (1966), p. 87.

physiological investigations shifted the emphasis from oral reading to silent reading. Several reports defined expert reading as the individual, silent and quick processing of information. If reading is an ideo-visual process, is it really necessary to spend so much time training children to read aloud? The fluent reader is someone who can "see" directly the meaning of the word in the written form, without any oral medium. It is the way spontaneously chosen by the supporters of the whole word method, which can be called look-and-mean rather than look-and-say. Their choices were confirmed by the very fast progress of children when they began to read short texts. It thus seemed most urgent to create for children simple but interesting texts, where there is something to understand, and not just words to string together: stories involving situations, heroes, action. This is how the story of the Little Red Hen[19] was soon translated all over Europe and published in schoolbooks for beginning readers.

In 1908, when he examined the various methods in competition in schools, Huey (1908)[20] foresaw that the ABC method, still in use in some classes, would soon be shelved and outdated. He talked about the technical progress of the phonic method but concluded that in the near future the look-and-say method would be implemented more. The twentieth century was off to an optimistic start: schooling had become universal and the combination of school policies, pedagogical experiments and scientific discoveries had virtually eliminated illiteracy. They would certainly overcome reading disabilities and, in the short run, children would be able to read texts without suffering the pangs of decoding first.

TRAINING CHILDREN TO UNDERSTAND SHORT ILLUSTRATED TEXTS

After the First World War, the first surveys of adult illiteracy soon contradicted this optimism. The Alpha Test, designed for the military, revealed that despite normal schooling, 25% of soldiers and sailors were unable to understand simple newspaper articles, execute instructions or comprehend written communication. On that model, William S. Gray[21]

---

19   The story was written espacially for young readers, from an old russian tale. Judson, Harry Pratt and Ida Bender, *Graded Literature Readers*, First Book, Merill and Co, 1899.

20   Edmond Burke Huey (1870–1913), professor of psychology at the Normal School of Minnesota, and then at the University of Pittsburg, wrote a thesis on eye movements. He met Émile Javal and Alfred Binet in Paris in 1901, and Pierre Janet in 1908 when he directed his research on the mental deficiency. His book on reading enjoyed lasting success in the teacher training centers, where it guaranteed the scientific value of the whole-word method.

21   Under the direction of Thorndike, William S. Gray (1885–1960) wrote one of the first theses assessing the reading performance of children with standardized tests. Professor at the University of Chicago from 1916 to 1945, he proposed measures-equipped performance and objectified approach methods. As an expert for UNESCO he wrote *The Teaching of Reading and Writing, An International Survey*, UNESCO [1956, 1967], which was the benchmark for

created the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), administered for the first time in 1926. His priority was not to introduce literature, even American, to the masses but rather to get everyone to the functional reading level necessary in a society dominated by utilitarian communication. The result, in 1930, was his co-authorship with different authors of primers (W. H. Elson, M. H. Arbuthnot) and illustrators (Zerna Sharp, Keith Ward), of *Dick and Jane*, a very successful textbook series including a pre-reading book, pre-primer, primer and first reader [22]. Students first got to understand the plot via the illustrations: "What happened to Dick? What is Jane doing? What is going to happen? Why?". Once they understood these situations (through image analysis, discussion of the text image, interpretative assumptions, in a realistic way, based on childood experiment, not imagination), the teacher had to read short sentences under the image (*Run, run Dick!*), and each student would read again in turn those few written words (monosyllabic and regular) already heard in the previous step. Progressively, they tried to "guess" what was written, aided by images and recognizing whole words they have memorized. As Gray was a behaviorist, he thought it very important to maintain a positive relationship to learning, to enhance success and avoid putting students in a situation of failure (as indicated in the title *Fun with Dick and Jane!*). He therefore recommended that the individual's pace of learning be respected, so that teachers got used to dividing classes into three groups: fast, medium and slow. The comprehensive method of the *Dick and Jane* series made it possible to start out easy and progress fast so that, aided by their literal memory of texts (as with prayers in earlier times), many children discovered the rules of the graphic/phonic system of English by induction. The model was adapted in Spanish and Portuguese versions, and the "whole-word method" also enjoyed success in Brazil in the 1950s (Frade, 2013).

Come, Puff.
Come here.
Jump, little Puff.
Jump, jump.

9
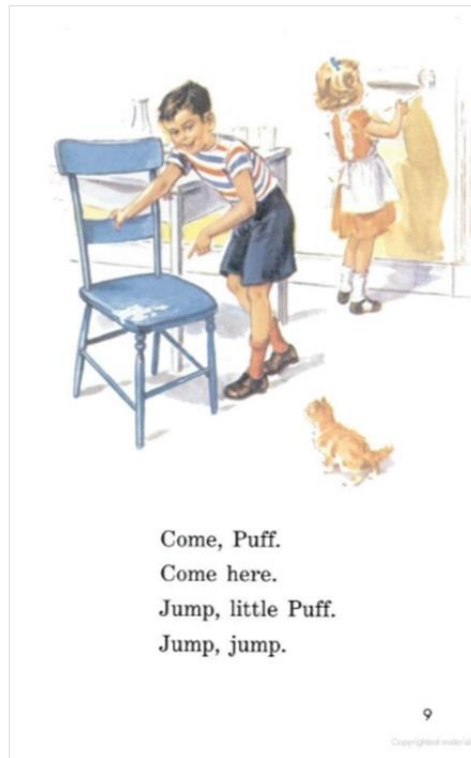
Figure 6. Dick and Jane: images 1 and 2.

Lili

Olhem para mim.
Eu me chamo Lili.
Eu comi muito doce!
Vocês gostam de doce?
Eu gosto tanto de doce!

Figure 7. O Livro de Lili.

In Europe, the "global method" was also successful, but with a different theoretical basis. The methods for teaching reading were called into question not by the functional illiteracy of adults, which was not discussed before 1970, but because educators discovered children who could not make it past the first stage of the curriculum. The pedagogy developed with success for "deficients" before 1914 by Montessori and Decroly proved capable of undermining the basis of ordinary schools by demonstrating that many activities beyond primer exercices could give meaning to written instructions to do something: for example, acting out written instructions from the teacher or a classmate (like "open the door", "take a chalk"), reading labels and names so as to be able to store and classify material in the classroom, or reading correspondence between schools to write a collective answer. Why not offer such activities to all children? Taking into consideration what Decroly called "children's interests" disrupted accepted educational modalities (time use, programs, scoring) and methods of reading and writing. Although Decroly thought of reading as an ideovisual process, the "Decroly Method" did not dissociate reading and writing[23]. Freinet recognized the influence of Decroly's conception of reading on his own, but to further the emancipatory aims of his "proletarian" pedagogical project, he chose to focus on writing rather than reading (free writing, letters between classes, daily printing of texts created by pupils etc).

In Europe, textbooks for beginning readers began to introduce color illustrations representing children in action only after World War II. In France, the first lessons required a "global memory" of a few words, before returning quickly to phonic/syllabic analysis. Writing in cursive with the reading lesson helped pupils work on the correspondence between letters and sounds (*Rémi et Colette*, 1954, *Daniel et Valérie*, 1964). Teachers seemed satisfied with such methods until the 1960s, but this was no longer the case with the introduction of secondary education for all: the level of reading was not advanced enough to enable teenagers to read alone and quickly in all secondary school subjects. The high proportion of students failing at school was attributed to the archaism of syllabic method (Chartier, 2013; Chartier & Hébrard, 1989, 1990). At the same time, in the US, the look-say method had been called into question for the same reasons (Chall, 1967; Flesh, 1955), but the causes of failure were not the same. In France, students were reading aloud too slowly, often awkwardly, and in trying to pronounce words, they neglected to pay sufficient attention to the meaning of the whole text. Meanwhile, American and

---

23   Amélie Hamaïde (1888–1970) wrote in 1922 *La Méthode Decroly* (Delachaux–Niestlé), translated into 13 languages. Daily exercises included writing of read words and reading of written words ("écrire les mots lus", "lire les mots écrits") as well as the daily training in copying ("mecanization: copy a sentence every day"). She described the "global approach" of reading–writing, but the term "global method" appears only in the 3rd edition, prefaced by the Swiss educator Roger Cousinet. The "global method" was the official method in Belgium from 1936 to 1957.

English students, using reduced vocabulary textbooks, made many interpretative errors by trying to "guess" the meaning of the texts, and as a result, phonics were reintroduced in the new primers.

Figure 8. Daniel et Valérie, 1964.

But in all countries, the failure of earlier methods could be attributed to theoretical or practical "errors" that scientific knowledge could correct. Sociologists had described in detail the selective results of reading codes and content for working-class students (Bernstein, 1971; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1964, 1980). Linguists demanded that all teachers have some knowledge of the graphophonic system of the national languages, as soon as speech sounds and grapheme stood for letters and sounds in textbooks. A number of psycholinguists found the oral language of many children insufficient to start training them to write and argued that reading is an interaction between reader, text and language (the theory of "whole language"–Goodman, 1982; Smith, 1975). According to other psychologists, those teachers who did not recognize the stages of children's progress in learning to write assigned exercises prematurely without result (Ferreiro & Gomez-Palacio, 1982). According to cognitive psychologists, teachers did not teach, or taught too little, to deal with formal signs of writing that contribute to its meaning as punctuation, syntax, discursive organization (Rieben & Perfetti, 1991; Zagar & Fayol, 1992).

MODEL 4: READING IS TREATING INFORMATION
IN ANY TYPE OF TEXT

The common idea which proceeds from all of these studies and debates defines "knowing how to read" on a progressive continuum, going from the lowest level of reading ability to the highest. This is the OECD's idea: as soon as writing becomes mandatory in social and economic circles, literacy and illiteracy are judged according to academic norms. The five levels of literacy reflect the five levels of professional qualifications (OECD, 1998), defined by levels of academic achievement[24]. This definition has the clear advantage of being compatible with formal academic frameworks for the quantitative evaluation of skills for adults as well as children (EFA, 2006).

Thus, the discourse about social illiteracy contributed to legitimizing a new ambition for teaching: that school must prepare students for functional reading. In school, functional writing is what students need to do their job: reading instructions, following evaluation protocols, and understanding performance evaluations written by their teachers. All of these various forms of information used to come from oral exchanges in class, but now they have to be read independently.

During the 1970s, when secondary schooling became compulsory for all adolescents in developed countries, the taste for reading ran concurrently with other cultural leisure activities (films, records, television) and the traditional function of literature (friendly exchanges of means of identification and cultural references) was taken over by the entertainment industry. The scientific instruction around which elites had united struggled with the line between academic achievement and commitment to reading: one could be good at math and physics, and recognized as a good student, without engaging in reading for pleasure (Singly, 1993). Finally, when it was obvious that reading was no longer a popular leisure activity, writing became extremely important at the workplace and in daily social exchanges, and it became clear that scholastic achievement was not enough to ensure the mastery of utilitarian reading. Reading was therefore not a skill so easily transferable as was once imagined. Schools have to take on even more responsibility for teaching the use of digital technologies that modify all social practices of reading at the turn of the twenty-first century.

The cultural breaches that spanned the years 1970-2000, more easily lamented than examined, destabilized all reading pedagogies, confronted with rates of failure that they would never be able to reduce. These cultural breaches allowed us to acknowledge, retrospectively, other revolutions in

---

24   The levels go from primary school (level 1) to vocational certifications (level 2), then the mandatory high school diploma (level 3) to the level of the general or technical *baccalauréat* (level 4), and the fifth level corresponds with higher-level technical or university degrees.

reading that resulted in great changes in pedagogies of the past. Reading methods for beginners, to keep up with the aims of the Reformation, were based on inherited traditional techniques (clerical training) and innovations that made instruction possible on a grand scale (the printing press). Thanks to Gutenberg, a reading pedagogy, founded on memorized texts, was passed from religious clerks to the people at large, at the cost of the ability to read and write cursive script. This pedagogy of "reading only" had a particular effect on the means of understanding texts: they were memorized and recited by heart. When "extensive reading" called into question this type of learning, the only way forward seemed to be exhaustive deciphering, which produced even more failure at school. That lasted until around 1850, when metal quills and cellulose paper made learning to read easier by facilitating the simultaneous practice of reading and writing. Yet, the move toward a pedagogy combining reading and writing perpetuated the separation of learning into two phases: one phase focused on accurately deciphering text (speaking syllables, words, and phrases) and the other focused on memorizing content (reading to understand and educate one's self). The era of reading and writing instruction thus began by separating teachers into those that examined methods of teaching (phase 1) from those that examined content (phase 2).

Curiously, comparing the more or less modernized syllabic method (dominant in France and countries with systems for spelling words) with diverse versions of phonic methods based on short sentences (dominant in the United States and England), "theoretical" debates continuously underestimated the role of writing in learning. We are still in this debate at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as new communication technologies appear that permit online interactions, both reading and writing, with a keyboard and screen. In the same way as at the beginning of the sixteenth century and in the middle of the nineteenth century, these technical innovations will lead to pedagogical innovations, based on new kinds of interaction underway during any reading and writing process. Undoubtedly, young educators who have learned to read and write in the era of the Internet are currently imagining new innovative pedagogical devices for future pupils.

REFERENCES

AVANZINI, G. (1981). *Histoire de la pédagogie du 17e siècle à nos jours*. Toulouse: Privat.

BALLET-BAZ, J. (1887). Illettrés. In F. BUISSON (Dir.), *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie et d'Instruction élémentaire* (pp. 1316–1319). Paris: Hachette.

BENTON SMITH, N. (1986). *American Reading Instruction [Colombia 1934]*. Newark: International Reading Association.

BERNSTEIN, B. (1971). *Class, Codes and Control. Volume 1: Theoretical Studies Towards a Sociology of Language*. London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

BINET, A. (1973 [1904]). *Les idées modernes sur les enfants*. Paris: Flammarion.

BISARO, X. (2010). *Chanter toujours. Plain-chant et religion villageoise dans la France moderne (XVIe-XIXe siècle)*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

BOURDIEU, P., & PASSERON, J-C. (1964). *Les Héritiers, Les étudiants et la culture*. Paris: Editions de Minuit ; (1980). *La Reproduction*. Paris: Editions de Minuit.

BRETON-GRAVEREAU, S., & THIBAULT, S. (Dirs.) (1998). *L'aventure des écritures: matières et forme*. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

BUISSON, F. (Dir.) (1887). *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie et d'Instruction primaire*. Paris: Hachette.

CARRUTHERS, M. (1990). *The Book of Memory, A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

CASPARD, P. (2002). Les trois âges de la première communion en Suisse. In J. P. BARDET, J. N. LUC, I. ROBIN-ROMERO & C. ROLLET (Dirs.), *Lorsque l'enfant grandit* (pp. 173-181). Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne.

CASTAÑEDA, C. (2004). Libros para la enseñanza de la lectura en la Nueva España, siglos XVIII y XIX: cartillas, silabarios, catones y catecismos. In C. CASTAÑEDA, L. E. GALVÁN & L. MARTÍNEZ MOCTEZUMA (Eds.), *Lecturas y lectores en la historia de México* (pp. 35-66). México: CIESAS.

CAVALLO, G., & CHARTIER, R. (Dirs.) (1996). *L'histoire de la lecture dans le monde occidental*. Paris: Seuil; English tr. (1999). *History of Reading in the West*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

CHALL, J. (1967). *Learning to Read, The Great Debate*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

CHARTIER, A-M. (2007). *L'école et la lecture obligatoire*. Paris: Retz.

CHARTIER, A-M. (2013). Faire lire les débutants: comparaison de manuels français et américains (1750-1950). *Histoire de l'éducation, 138*, 35-68.

CHARTIER, A-M. (2015). Interpretation in a historical approach to reading. In P. SMEYERS et al. (Eds.), *International Handbook of Interpretation in Educational Research* (pp. 933-954). Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media.

CHARTIER, A-M., & HÉBRARD, J. (1989). *Discours sur la lecture 1880-1980*. Paris: BPI. Red.

CHARTIER, A-M., & HÉBRARD, J. (1990). Méthode syllabique et méthode globale: quelques clarifications historiques. *Le Français aujourd'hui, 90*, 100-109.

CHARTIER, A-M., & HEBRARD, J. (2000). *Discours sur la lecture 1880-2000*. Paris: Fayard.

CHARTIER, R., COMPERE, M-M., & JULIA, D. (1976). *L'éducation en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: SEDES.

CHERVEL, A. (2006). *Histoire de l'enseignement du français du XVIIe au XXe siècle*. Paris: Éditions Retz.

CHERVEL, A., & MANESSE, D. (1989). *La dictée: les Français et l'orthographe (1873-1987)*. Paris: INRP & Calmann-Lévy.

CRESSY, D. (1980). *Literacy and the Social Order, Reading and Writing in Tudor & Stuart England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

EISENSTEIN, E. (1983). *The printing revolution in early modern Europe.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

EFA (2006). *Global Monitoring Report 2006, Literacy for life.* Paris: UNESCO.

FERREIRO, E., & GOMEZ-PALACIO, M. (Eds.) (1982). *Nuevas perspectivas sobre los procesos de lectura y escrita.* Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.

FLESH, R. (1955). *Why Johnny can't read, and what you can do about it.* New York: Harper.

FLINT, K. (1993). *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

FRADE, I. (2013). Des supports pédagogiques pour apprendre à lire dans le Brésil post-colonial: héritages et innovations (1840-1960). *Histoire de l'éducation, 138,* 69-94.

FURET. F., & OZOUF, J. (1977). *Lire et écrire. L'alphabétisation des. Français de Calvin à Jules Ferry.* 2 vol. Paris: Editions de Minuit.

GILMONT, J.-F. (1996). Réformes protestantes et lecture. In G. CAVALLO & R. CHARTIER (Dirs.), *L'histoire de la lecture dans le monde occidental* (pp. 249-178). Cambridge: Polity Press.

GOODMAN, K. (1982). *Language and Literacy.* Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan.

GRAFF, H. (Ed.) (1981). *Literacy and social development in the West. A Reader.* Cambridge US: Cambridge University Press.

GRAFTON, A. (1991). *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in the Age of Science, 1450-1800.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

GRAFTON, A. (1997). *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

GRAY, W. (1967). *The Teaching of Reading and Writing, An International Survey.* Paris/New-York: UNESCO [1956].

GUILLAUME, J. (1887). Lecture. In F. BUISSON (Dir.), *Dictionnaire de Pédagogie et d'Instruction primaire* (pp. 1534-1551). Paris: Hachette.

HALL, D. (2011). *A Reforming People: Puritanism and the Transformation of Public Life in New England.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

HEBRARD, J. (1985). Comment Valentin Jamerey-Duval apprit-il à lire? L'autodidaxie exemplaire. In R. CHARTIER (Dir.), *Pratiques de la lecture* (pp. 23-60). Marseille: Rivages.

HEBRARD, J. (1988). La scolarisation des savoirs élémentaires à l'époque moderne. *Histoire de l'éducation, 38,* 7-58.

HISTOIRE DE L'EDUCATION. (2013). *Apprendre à lire aux débutants dans les pays de langue romane (1750-1950), 138.*

HOGGART, R. (1957). *The Uses of Literacy: Aspects of Working Class Life.* London: Chatto and Windus; tr. (1970). *La culture du pauvre.* Paris: Editions de Minuit.

HUEY, E. B. (1908). *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading.* New York: The Macmillan Company.

JACOB, C. (Dir.) (2003). *Des Alexandries II. Les métamorphoses du lecteur.* Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

JIMENES, R. (2011). *Les caractères de civilité, Typographie & calligraphie sous l'Ancien Régime.* Atelier Perrousseaux éditeur, s. l.

JOHANSSON, E. (1981). The history of literacy in Sweden. In H. J. GRAFF (Ed.), *Literacy and social Development in the West: a Reader* (pp. 151-182). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

JULIA, D. (1995). La culture scolaire comme objet historique. *Paedagogica Historica, Supplementary Series, I,* Gand, 353-382.

LA SALLE, J-B. (1993 [1706]). Conduite des écoles chrétiennes. In *Œuvres complètes* (pp. 795-730). Rome: Éditions des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes.

LEFEVRE, A. (1860). *Méthode de lecture applicable à tous les modes d'enseignement. Syllabaire,* Paris: Librairie Colas.

LYONS, M. (1987). *Le Triomphe du Livre. Une histoire sociologique de la lecture dans la France du XIXe siècle.* Paris: Promodis.

MAGALHÃES, J. (1994). *Ler e Escrever no Mundo Rural do Antigo Regime, um contributo para a história da alfabetização e da escolarização em Portugal.* Braga: Universidade do Minho.

MARTIN, H.-J., & CHARTIER, R. (Dirs.) (1983-1986). *Histoire de l'édition française.* Paris: Promodis, 4 vol.

MATTHEWS, M. (1966). *Teaching to Read, Historically Considered.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

MONAGHAN, J. E. (2005). *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial America.* Amherst, M. A.: University of Massassuchets Press.

OEDC & STATISTICS CANADA. (1998). *Adult Literacy in OECD Countries: Technical Report on the First International Adult Literacy Survey.* Ottawa, Ca: U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

RIEBEN, L., & PERFETTI, C. A. (Eds.) (1991). *Learning to read: Basic research and its implications.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

ROBINSON, A. (1995). *The Story of writing.* London: Thames & Hudson.

ROGGERO, M. (1999). *L'Alfabeto conquistato. Apprendere e insegnare nell'Italia tra Sette e Ottocento.* Bologna: Il Mulino.

SINGLY (de), F. (1993). *Les jeunes et la lecture.* Les Dossiers d'éducation et formation, 24-25 janvier 1993. Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Culture, DEP.

SMITH, F. (1975). *Comprehension and Learning: A Conceptual Framework for Teachers.* Dumfries, NC: Holt McDougal.

STRAUSS, G. (1981). Techniques of Indoctrination: the German Reformation. In GRAFF (Ed.), *Literacy and social development in the West: a Reader* (pp. 96-104). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

VIÑAO FRAGO, A. (1999). *Leer y escribir. Historia de dos prácticas culturales.* México: Ed. Fundación Educación, voces y vuelos.

VIÑAO FRAGO, A. (2000). Notas para una tipología de las cartillas para aprender a leer (C.1496-1825). *El Libro y la educación. International Standing Conference for the History of Education.* ISCHE XXII, Alcalá de Henares: Universidad de Alcalá. Translated in *Paedagogica Historica, 18*(1), 2002, "Towards a Typology of the Primers for Learning to read (Spain, c. 1496-1825)," pp. 73-94.

VINCENT, D. (1989). *Literacy, Popular Culture, England 1750-1914.* Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

WITTMANN, R. (1999). Was there a Reading Revolution at the End of the Eighteenth Century? In G. CAVALLO & R. CHARTIER (Eds), *History of Reading in the West* (pp. 284-312). Cambridge: Polity Press.

ZAGAR, D., & FAYOL, M. et al. (1992). *Psychologie cognitive de la lecture.* Paris: PUF.

*