

Early New High German language

The **Early New High German language** , or **Early New High German** for short (abbr. *Fnhd.* or *Frnhd.*), is the name given to the oldest level of New High German , which is located between medieval and modern German . The period of the Early New High German language is estimated to be around 1350-1650. Examples of texts from this language level are the writings of Paracelsus from 1529 and Luther's translation of the Bible from 1545.

The vocabulary of Early New High German is recorded and described in the *Early New High German Dictionary* , specific to a southwest German variety in the Swiss Idiotikon .

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Characteristic

Early New High German is characterized by a series of sound transformation processes that separate Middle High German from New High German and that had already begun in Early New High German but were not yet complete. (These include, for example, the "stretching in an open tone syllable", the "New High German monophthongization " and the "New High German diphthongization ".) For example, the "ei", which is still pronounced [ɛi] in Middle High German, begins at this time became (similar to 'ay' [eɪ] in English 'to say') to be pronounced as [aɪ] and 'sl' becomes 'schl' (e.g. 'slafen' becomes 'sleep').

However, how far the respective sound change had already progressed and how reliably it had already been reflected in the spelling (which was not yet orthographically regulated at the time) varied greatly from region to region. The fact that a phonologically ambiguous and inconsistent language state is still categorized as an independent language level is mainly due to the fact that the Early New High German period is an important cultural epoch that had a major impact on the history of the German language . For example, the vocabulary of German was shaped by Luther's translation of the Bible, his poems and the extensive literature on the Reformationenormously expanded. Due to the influence of humanism , a number of Latin loanwords were added to the German language and the grammar was partially restructured on the model of the Latin language. In particular, the grammaticalization of the analytical verb forms (e.g. the future tense with auxiliary verb *werden* + infinitive) followed the example of Latin , whereas the simple present tense is usually still used to express future-ness in Middle High German – as then in contemporary German has been used).

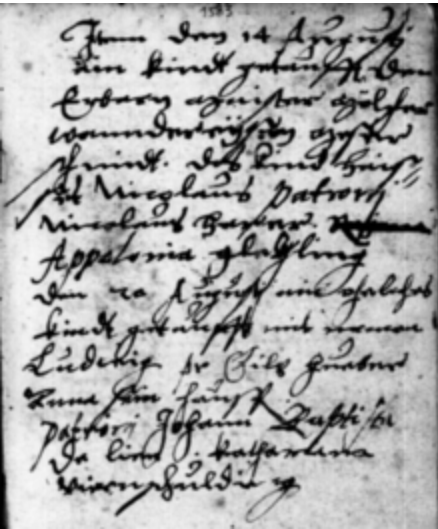
Early New High German is distinguished from Middle High German, which preceded it, and New High German, which followed, by a particular variety and tolerance of variants with the occurrence of individual phenomena ^[1] . In the 15th century in particular, the normative ideal of a uniform German language is not tangible; only in the

16th century, for example with Fabian Frangk , did tendencies become recognizable for the first time after the demise of the Middle High German language ideal , a certain variety , now e.g. B. the language of the imperial chancellery, the Augsburg printers of Johann Schönsperger or Martin Luther, as a leading variety.

Spatial layout

While handwritten and location-based texts show great regional differences, several more or less uniform *printer languages* have emerged during this time, which modern German studies usually divide into six writing regions. These regions are named after the most important centers of early book printing: [2]

- Upper German printer languages
 - the Bavarian-Austrian with Ingolstadt and Vienna (as well as South Bohemia [3])
 - the Swabian with Augsburg, Ulm and Tübingen
 - the Alemannic with Basel, Zurich and Strasbourg
 - the East Franconian with Nuremberg, Bamberg and Würzburg
- Central German printer languages
 - the West Central German with Frankfurt, Mainz, Worms and Cologne
 - the East Central German with Wittenberg, Erfurt and Leipzig



The church register of the parish of Bozen from 1583–1589, written in Early New High German , fol. 1

However, this is based on a teleological point of view directed towards the later emergence of the New High German written language. For example, contemporary linguists understood the word “German” to mean all continental West Germanic idioms, including Low German and Dutch , with Ripuarian around the printer location of Cologne often not being counted among the High German varieties, for example with Sebastian Helber (1530–1598), who still makes this classification in his *Teutschen Syllabierbüchlein* (1593).

The printer language in the Netherlands, however, went its own way as early as the 15th century and no longer took part in the linguistic standardization process, which resulted in the formation of an independent written language there, today's Dutch. The subsequent Low German-speaking area, on the other hand, was linguistically so strongly influenced by Martin Luther’s translation of the Bible that Low German was abandoned as a written language at the end of the 16th century and East-Central German Luther German was adopted, first in printed publications and a few decades later also in handwritten texts. while living on in the spoken language.

In southern Germany, on the other hand, the language of the Luther Bible initially had less influence. After all, Luther's New Testament in German, the so-called September Testament , was immediately reprinted here, first in December 1522 in Basel by Adam Petri in 4° format. Luther's text was adopted verbatim, but not phonetically or to the letter, in order to make it easier to read and understand in southern Germany and the Confederation. The same printer published the following year, 1523, an octave edition of the New Testament in Luther's translation, complete with a glossary that translated, in alphabetical order, over 200 of Luther's uncommon or incomprehensible words into Upper German. [4]With this translation aid, on the basis of Luther German, Upper German began to be included in the Early New High German language and in its further development.

In the imperial chanceries, the Bavarian-Austrian based Maximilian chancellery language or *southern German imperial language* was used until the 17th century . In the course of the 17th century, the Upper German written language developed in literature and non-Latin texts of science and theology in the south . Due to the denominational contrast between the Protestant north and the Catholic south in Bavaria, Swabia and Austria, it was the binding main variety until around 1750 of printed works. It was only afterwards that New High German, which was mainly based on East Central German and East Franconian, also became established in the south.

In German-speaking Switzerland, until well into the 16th century and to some extent still into the 17th century, a chancery language based on Alemannic Late Middle High German was written, the *Eidgenössische Landsprach* . On the one hand politically, on the other hand with its independent reformation by Ulrich Zwingli and Heinrich Bullinger and – admittedly only received in eastern German-speaking Switzerland – the Zurich Bible , it found itself in a different situation than southern Germany. The gradual adoption of common German in German-speaking Switzerland over the course of the 16th to 18th centuries ^[5] was nevertheless very closely linked to the efforts of book printing to also have a market outside of Switzerland - the Frankfurt Book Fair was also a central economic factor for Switzerland. ^[6] In the everyday language of Switzerland, however, the Early New High German sound shift never prevailed: modern Swiss German has – to put it simply – a Middle High German sound level.

See also

- Historical Linguistics
- Reflexive pronouns#Historical development (for a detail from the grammar of the Fnhd.)

Literature

Introductions and grammars

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- Virgil Moser: *Early New High German Grammar, I* , Part 1 and 3. Heidelberg 1929-1951 (= *Germanic Library, I.: Collection of Germanic Elementary and Handbooks, I, XVII, I* , 1 and 3).
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- Oskar Reichmann: *On the Edition of Early New High German Texts: Linguistic-Historical Perspectives*. In: *Journal for German Philology* 97, 1978, pp. 337-361.
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- Peter Wiesinger (ed.): *Studies on Early New High German: Emil Skála on his 60th birthday*. With the collaboration of F. Patocka, H. Reisinger, E. Weissenböck and P. Ernst. Kümmerle Verlag, Göppingen 1988 (= *Göppinger works on German studies* . Volume 474), ISBN 3-87452-712-3 .

Web Links

 **Wikisource: Early New High German Texts** - Sources and Full Texts

 **Wiktionary: Early New High German** – explanations of meaning, word origin, synonyms, translations

 **Wiktionary: Early New High German** – explanations of meaning, word origin, synonyms, translations

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- The Bonn Early New High German Corpus (<https://korpora.zim.uni-duisburg-essen.de/FnhdC/>)
- Munich Corpus for Early New High German (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110722074421/http://demo.fruehneuhochdeutsch.is.guad.de/cgi-bin/fruehneuhochdeutsch/search.cgi?lang=de>) ([Memento](#) of 22 July 2011 at the *Internet Archive*)

Itemizations

1. Hugo Stopp: *Been - been - been. On the treatment of individual phenomena in an early New High German inflectional morphology*. In: *Journal for German Philology* 86, 1977, Special Issue Language, pp. 1-34.
2. Wilhelm Schmidt: *History of the German language. A textbook for German Studies*, 10th edition, Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 2007, ISBN 978-3-7776-1432-8 , Chapter 4.1.2 Early New High German - spatial structure.
3. Rainer Rudolf: *Studies on the early New High German written language in southern Bohemia*. Vienna 1973 (= *Austrian Academy of Sciences: Studies on Austrian-Bavarian dialect studies* , 8).
4. Heimo Reinitzer : *Biblia German, Luther's translation of the Bible and its tradition* (= *exhibition catalogs of the Herzog August Library*. Volume 40). Wolfenbüttel 1983, ISBN 3-88373-037-8 (with list of glossary by Adam Petri pp. 210–213). - Ernst Erhard Müller: *Who was the author of the Petri Glossary?* In: *Standard and Dialect, Studies in Spoken and Written Contemporary Language*. Festschrift for Heinz Rupp. Edited by Heinrich Löffler, Karl Pestalozzi, Martin Stern. Francke, Bern/Munich 1979, ISBN 3-7720-1466-6 ; esp. pp. 177–192.
5. Renward Brandstetter : *The reception of the New High German written language in the city and landscape of Lucerne 1600-1830*. In: *History Friend* 46, 1891, 193-282; Christian Erni: *The transition of the writings of the city of Bern to the New High German written language*. Bern dissertation. Thusis 1949; Albert Gessler: *Contributions to the history of the development of the New High German written language in Basel*. Basel dissertation. Basel 1888; Edwin Sager: *The recording of the New High German written language in the office of St. Gallen*. Zurich dissertation. Zurich 1949; Hans Wanner : *The recording of the New High German written language in the city of Schaffhausen*. Zurich dissertation. Immensee (Schwyz) 1931; Jakob Zollinger: *Zurich's transition to the New High German written language under the guidance of the Zurich Bible*. Zurich dissertation. Freiburg i. Br. 1920.
6. See, for example, Frédéric Hartweg: *The role of the printing press in early New High German language history*. In: Werner Besch , Anne Betten, Oskar Reichmann, Stefan Sonderegger (eds.): *History of Language. A handbook on the history of the German language and its research*. 2nd, completely revised and expanded edition 2nd half volume. Berlin / New York (Handbooks on Linguistics and Communication Science; 2), pp. 1682–1705, according to which the Swiss prints switched back and forth between non-diphthongized and

diphthongized versions depending on the target audience (p. 1689). See also Adolf Bach: *History of the German language*. 8th edition Heidelberg 1965, according to which Straßburg and Basel printers used the new diphthongs from the 1520s, “not only in contrast to the local dialect, but also in contradiction to the handwritten templates supplied to them by the authors” (p. 255) . The role of the Zurich Bible, both in the area of preserving the Swiss national language and in the area of adopting the local language in Zurich, was viewed too one-sidedly in older research and was heavily overweighted; Werner Besch wrote a more differentiated presentation: *Factors promoting and preventing convergence. June 2nd: Switzerland.* (https://books.google.at/books?id=CdPqTR8RbHYC&pg=PA15&vq=schweiz&dq=Die+deutsche+Schriftsprache+und+die+Regionen&source=gbs_search_s&sig=ACfU3U3nkAhZi2D-4BH7XLaXTEq2cPL_fg&hl=de#PPA15,M1) In: Raphael Berthele, Helen Christen , Sibylle Germann, Ingrid Hove: *The written German language and the regions*. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin 2003, ISBN 978-3-11-017497-7 , pp. 15–20.

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