BERICHT
VAN EEN NIEUWE KONST,
genaamt
DE SPREECKONST:
ontdekt ende beschreven door
PETRUS MONTANUS van DELFT,
Bediener van Goos Woort inden Nieuwen Hoorn.

Vaer in verhandelt ende in't licht gebracht wort, den rechten en
tot nuu toe verborgen aert van alle uitspraec: als met naemen, vande
Oude ende veel Nieuwe Letteren, vande Woordleed, Woorden,
Reedenleed, Reedenleeden, ende Reeden:
Zeez nut ende dienstich voor alle Mensen, en in't byzonder voor alle gemeene School-
meesters, Taalmeesters, ende de Taal letter Dichters, die in de Leges en Physica wel hebben, Genees-
meesters, en Onder, als iede tolend wort getoont: daer in een een geene noodige Buchen
vande SPRAEK - MECKONST beschreuen lynn.

Letter op wat vreemde vruchten
Deez' gedeelchen Berch hier geeft:
Piectie, limaelie, wil met duchten
Dat daer aen quae naefmaec eelt.

Maer geliick de Paepegaeyen
Hier door crughen Menten-schijn:
Zoo zult gy ooc zeer versaeragen.
En Goos beelt geliïk zijn.

Tot Delft; Gedrukt by Jan Pieterse V'Vaalpos, by't Stadthys ende Druckery, 1635
This year we commemorate the publication of the first Dutch study on phonetics. In 1635 Petrus Montanus published his book entitled: Bericht van een Niewe Konst, genaemt De Spreeckonst etc., Delft 1635 (Communication about a New Art; the Art of Speaking).

In the Netherlands Montanus' book remained obscure for a long time. One reason is the fact that he presents his material as if it were a botanical flora by sticking to a rigorous system. International recognition was hampered, because of his book being written in Dutch instead of in Latin. A Dutch furthermore which is very difficult to read because of its many neologisms. Apart from this, even for Dutch readers Montanus' book is a hard nut to crack. Vos (1962) who devoted an up to now unpublished Ph.D. thesis at Edinburgh University to Montanus, indicated that Montanus introduced about 600 new terms in his book. However, Montanus writes in a period in which the language is groping for new terms. The mathematician Simon Stevin who began to publish his work about 400 years ago also made use of many neologisms. Many of these are still in use (Dijksterhuis, 1970), but the ones coined by Montanus are forgotten. Original thinker that he was, Montanus never got more than fleeting attention.

Montanus is the first Dutch phonetician. In his book we find a shift of view towards a description of articulation when compared with earlier Dutch grammarians. It is especially Montanus' careful scrutiny of the art of writing which causes this shift of attention. In Montanus' opinion it is essential to have a thorough knowledge of articulation in order to read and to write. To this end he conceived, among other things, a phonetic spelling. Some of the characters he used are reproduced on the title-page of his book. Montanus clearly mentions 'a new art'. Articulation is researched. There is a summing up of the muscles involved. Careful listening is recommended and feeling with the fingertips to find the place of articulation. He underlines
that in the process of speaking listening has a predominant role. What are now known as glides and transitions are already indicated. But he also sees the process of speaking as a continuous (dynamic) process.

The small engraving on the title-page of Montanus' book, showing two stone tables, reminiscent of the ten commandments, does not show the Mosaic law but a sort of phonetic alphabet. This engraving and some parts of the introduction of the book might suggest to us at least some measure of conceit. However, in the era the book was published a certain amount of playfulness was not uncommon however profane this seems to be in this instance in a 'reverend's' book.

And up to a certain degree Montanus had a right to be proud about his work, he designed a new art.

REFERENCES
