Bibliography for Yiddish language description by William F. Weigel, HUC-JIR Jewish Language Project

General

1 Reference Resources

1.1 Grammar
Katz, D. 1987. Grammar of the Yiddish Language. London: Duckworth. [This is an excellent short reference grammar. Unfortunately the print quality is low, making the (mostly untransliterated) Yiddish material difficult to read.]
Birnbaum, S. A. 2016 [1979]. Yiddish: A Survey and a Grammar. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [This book includes samples of Yiddish from various times and places, including (unlike most modern works) a substantial treatment of Western Yiddish. The 2016 edition includes additional essays and corrected and expanded material.]
Mark, Y. 1973. גַּרְַֽמְַֽאֶּשִּׁיְּצִיָּן יוֹדּוֹור ייִדישער דַּּלְלַשְׁפִּרְאָך. New York: Congress for Jewish Culture. [This grammar of Yiddish in Yiddish is more comprehensive than any
available in English. The learner who has completed an intermediate Yiddish course should be able to work through this grammar with the aid of a dictionary.


1.2 History and Dialectology

Weinreich, M. 2008. *History of the Yiddish Language*. Translated by S. Noble. New Haven: Yale University Press. [This is a translation of Weinreich’s four-volume געשיכטע פון דער ידישער שפּראַך. This is the standard reference work on the subject.]


Wexler, P. 1993. *The Ashkenazic Jews: A Slavo-Turkic People in Search of a Jewish Identity*. Columbus, OH: Slavica. [This book presents the linguistic arguments for the author’s controversial views about the origins of Ashkenazic Jewry and Yiddish. It is an interesting collection of philological and ethnographic details even if one does not buy the conclusions.]
1.3 Sociology of Language


2 Resources for Learners

2.1 Textbooks


[This has long been the standard introductory Yiddish textbook. It also contains lots of material on Jewish culture and history.]

Zucker, S. 1994-2003. *Yiddish: An Introduction to the Language, Literature and Culture 1-2*. New York: Workmen's Circle. [This textbook may be more user-friendly than College Yiddish, especially for one trying to learn without a regular teacher. A set of 8 accompanying audiocassettes is also available, one of which includes samples of various Yiddish dialects.]


2.2 Dictionaries


### 2.3 Language Courses

Yiddish courses are offered at many universities and colleges. Especially noteworthy are the intensive summer courses at various levels that are offered in New York City by the Uriel Weinreich Program in Yiddish Language, Literature and Culture. In addition, there are summer courses in Tel Aviv, Paris, Vilna, London, and Warsaw. A list of courses can be found here, and a list of summer programs can be found here.

### 3 Some Other Books


[This is a good source for anyone who wants to learn about Yiddish. Especially noteworthy is its treatment of literary and poetic uses of the language.]

Matisoff, J. A. 20002. *Blessings, Curses, Hopes, and Fears: Psycho-Ostensive Expressions in Yiddish*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. [This fascinating book about Yiddish formulaic expressions of emotion is unusual in being accessible to the casual reader but also of interest to linguists and other scholars.]