

Bibliography for [Yiddish language description](#) by William F. Weigel,

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General

Weinreich, U. et al. (eds.). 1954-1993. *The Field of Yiddish: Studies in Yiddish Language, Folklore, and Literature*. New York: Linguistic Circle of New York. [Five important collections of papers about Yiddish.]

Goldsmith, E. S. 1976/1997. *Modern Yiddish Culture: The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement*. New York: Fordham University Press. [Important resource on the Czernovitz conference and four major Yiddishists.]

Bratkowsky, J. 1988. *Yiddish Linguistics: A Multilingual Bibliography*. New York: Garland. [One of the few useful annotated bibliographies on the subject.]

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. *גראַמאַטיק פֿון דער ייִדישער כלל-שפראַך*. 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.]

Jacobs, N. 2005. *Yiddish: A Linguistic Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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 פֿון דער ייִדישער שפּראַך. This is the standard reference work on the subject.]

Herzog, M., Weinreich, U. & Baviskar, V. 1992. *The Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry*. YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. [Especially useful in this work are numerous maps showing the distribution of linguistic and cultural phenomena.]

Katz, D. 2004. *Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish*. New York: Basic Books.

Katz, D. (ed.). 1988. *Dialects of the Yiddish Language*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Katz, D. (ed.). 1987. *Origins of the Yiddish Language*. Oxford: Pergamon Press. [These are collections of papers from two Oxford University symposia.]

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

Fishman, J. A. (ed.). 1981. *Never Say Die! A Thousand Years of Yiddish in Jewish Life and Letters*. The Hague: Mouton.

Fishman, J. A. 1991. *Yiddish: Turning to Life*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

2 Resources for Learners

2.1 Textbooks

Weinreich, U. 1971. *College Yiddish*. New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

[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.]

Schaechter, M. 2003. *Yiddish II*. New York: Yiddish Language Resource Center, League for Yiddish.

2.2 Dictionaries

Beinfeld, S. & Bochner, H. (eds.). 2013. *Comprehensive Yiddish-English Dictionary*.

Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [This is by far the best Yiddish dictionary for the English-speaking user.]

Schaechter-Viswanath, G. & Glasser, P. (eds.). 2016. *Comprehensive English-Yiddish Dictionary*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Weinreich, U. 1968. *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary*. New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

Harkavy, A. 19882 [1928]. *Yiddish-English-Hebrew Dictionary*. New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

Stutchkoff, N. 1950. *דער אוצר פון דער ייִדישער שפראך*. New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

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

Harshav, B. 1990. *The Meaning of Yiddish*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

[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.]

Rosten, L. 1968. *The Joys of Yiddish*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rosten, L. 2001. *The New Joys of Yiddish*. New York: Crown Publishers. [As its author admits, this very popular and entertaining book is not actually about Yiddish, but rather about the interaction of Yiddish and English in America. The updated version, published posthumously, provides extra information about many entries.]