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HEBREW AND YIDDISH IN CANADA: A LINGUISTIC TRANSITION COMPLETED

This study explores the ongoing evolution of Jewish language use in Canada, by closely examining Census statistics regarding Yiddish and Hebrew (or Ivrit) especially during the past generation or so. Telling only the story of (recent) Canadian Yiddish would be one-sided, so I also discuss Hebrew in Canada.

What has been happening with Yiddish and Hebrew? Have they been retained as living languages anywhere in Canada, or are they fading throughout the country? Who does speak these languages in Canada today? These are some of the major questions that are addressed below, using Canadian census population counts on Yiddish and Hebrew to find the factual answers, summarizing what the census data will reveal.

My plan herein is to list our scientific questions or issues before presenting and examining data on Ivrit and Yiddish in Canada. We shall also consider the significance of such language data, i.e. justify this study in connection with concerns about ethnic identity and group survival. This brief theoretical discussion will bring the later quantitative analyses into focus for the reader, showing why these numbers have utility for scholars who study Diasporae, and in particular the long-term survival of Jewish communities in liberal, modern societies such as Canada.

Furthermore, the statistics presented later need to be preceded by a clear explanation of where our data came from, what they actually count and mean. Thus, I shall try to provide

a context for interpreting and evaluating our statistical information by identifying the precise census questions which we focus on, and just what the respondents are telling researchers when they answer these questions. The limitations of census analysis, and this study, will also be touched upon here and there; not every scholar may agree with how quantitative data are handled here (and in similar studies) nor with all the conclusions reached.

Another preliminary subtopic to be dealt with is a brief, general depiction of Jewish and Israeli immigration to Canada, in the recent period. Are Canada's Yiddish and Ivrit (Hebrew) speakers long-time residents, or have they come just in the past few years or decades? Are these languages surviving in Canada by dint of promotion and preservation activities here, or have their current speakers recently immigrated, bringing with them what they learned far from here? This is why one must also discuss immigration of Yiddish speakers and Israelis, as context for understanding the Jewish language scene in Canada—in relation to anxieties about Jewish cultural survival in the long term.

Thereafter, our tables and attached discussion will first present historical language-change data for Canada's Yiddish evolution, then move on to some detailed scrutiny of recent census data on both Hebrew and Yiddish. Using variables such as community of residence and age groupings, we shall show (at least in gross terms) who are Canada's speakers of Yiddish and Ivrit nowadays. This allows some near-future forecasting of where these two languages will probably be in the next decade or two.

To begin this essay, what major questions or issues will we be confronting? The focus of our analysis is the current fate of the two main "Jewish languages" in Canada, where English and French reign supreme. Can these two minority tongues survive here, based on their recent evolution? More specifically, what are the recent population trends for Yiddish and Hebrew? Have they been retained as living languages (in some places) in Canada, or are they fading throughout the

country? Are only older people speaking Yiddish and Hebrew, or do we find younger populations using either or both in the most recent decade? Following from these language demographics, what are the (near future) prospects for our Jewish tongues in Canada? These are the major questions to address below, using Canadian census data plus some on-the-ground, ethnographic information.

Now, one may ask about the significance of such language data: what do they really teach us, potentially? The connection between ethnic (identity) survival on the one hand and language retention on the other is discussed in a number of works, and it is certainly useful for the reader to be aware of the survival linkage that many minority groups make in regard to their ancestral language.[1] Suffice it to say that this paper assumes that the retention of Hebrew or Yiddish among Canadian Jews is at least a gross or approximate measure of their identity retention in general, despite the fact that a vigorous Jewish life is being maintained in Canada using English predominantly. The religion of Judaism—in any tongue—is a "going concern" in Canada!

We know that many immigrant groups believed that surrendering their ancestral language by replacing it with English would cause their group to disintegrate and disappear, but it is quite clear that Jewish public life in Canada is now de facto conducted entirely in English—although there is considerable use of Hebrew in synagogue and educational contexts, and there is even some ongoing use of Yiddish, as will be discussed below.[2] Herein, we are studying just the language situation, leaving the identity, etc. issues for elsewhere.

The shifts among immigrant children from their "foreign" mother tongue to the dominant language(s) in the new society have been amply documented and discussed in other work, and one can certainly review the pressures towards linguistic assimilation and concomitant shift in one's identity or self perception in specialized works dealing with such situations.[3] Jewish children are not exempt from these cultural processes, regardless of

the fact that a religious identity tends to be retained much longer than a merely ethno-national one, in Canada.[4]

Language loss by shift to English mother tongue—from one's ethnic language—is documented by DeVries and Vallee, later by Harrison and Lachapelle as well, who found a great deal of ethnic mother tongue abandonment (in the 1971 Census) for most groups in Canada, including those of Yiddish mother tongue; this tendency was especially strong among Canadian-born Jews.[5]

Generally speaking, Jews in North America are distinct from the larger society in terms of religion, but sometimes only in a vestigial way, and are also often distinguishable in terms of in-group friendship patterns, organizational and philanthropic activity, etc.[6] However, the old linguistic marker that actually did distinguish Jews from others in the immigrant days prior to World War II is long gone, and Jews—as was pointed out earlier—operate communally as well as individually in the English language. Furthermore, studies in Montreal have found a high degree of French ability among Jews in the French-speaking milieu, but that is not our concern here.[7]

So, Jewish identity today is not particularly marked by or dependent on a special Jewish language, but is based on religious, social and associational ties.[8] Yet only a short few decades ago, many Jews in Canada were not usually using English to talk to each other—for "internal" purposes.

Although discussions about language trends are often based on impressionistic data or even wishful thinking, social scientists must deal with facts as they really are. These facts are to a large extent conveniently available through analysis of the language data on the Canadian census, especially since 1981, when the full computerization of Statistics Canada's work made it possible to produce detailed and nuanced data on languages which was not possible earlier.

Certainly, those studying the Jewish community and Jewish identity today usually ignore the state of Yiddish as part of that, but here and there writers interested in these issues do point out

that the retention of a capacity to speak Yiddish (or Hebrew) is a strong indication of a community that has a vigorous internal life and shows good prospects for carrying on its distinct functions and identity transmission to future generations.[9]

Our Data Base: The Canadian Census

We now have to review some relevant information regarding the Canadian census, its counting of Jews as an ethnic group versus as a religious denomination, the language questions, and related matters. This background or context also is available in other places, which the reader may consult to save us repeating much of that in this paper.[10]

Currently, a Census is conducted across Canada every five years (e.g. 2001, then 2006 and next 2011). Each Census asks all respondents to report their date of birth (=age), marital status, and other standard questions; this is recorded for each member of the household, thus covering the entire population. Of more interest to us, each Census also ascertains Canadians' knowledge of English and French (the "official languages"), mother tongue (to be explained shortly), home language (since 1981, at each Census), ethnic origin, and other key variables. Many of these variables are based on a 20% sample of all households ("the long form") rather than every person in Canada ("the short form").

Religious affiliation (i.e. which 'denomination' one belongs to) is only asked every second Census—not each time. So, we have religious counts from 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001, but this question was *not* asked in 1976, 1986, 1996, and 2006. Since 1991, there is also a question regarding all tongues *other* than English and French ("unofficial languages") in which the respondent can converse.[11]

Thus, anyone focusing on language dynamics in Canada, e.g. the growth or shrinkage of Canadians who speak language X, now has ample time-series statistics available. So, it is not difficult to study the recent fate of Yiddish and Hebrew in Canada in this way. However, the Harper government's

decision to make the 2011 long-form census voluntary (vs. the legally-compulsory short form) brings these time series studies into question for the future. No one knows yet how credible the data from a voluntary survey will be; comparability of 2011 responses with those from earlier censi is very questionable now.

A good overview of the relevant language questions that are part of the Canadian census, for those who are interested in the history of Canadian linguistic data and a fuller picture of the way that Statistics Canada has built the relevant database, is the earlier-cited discussions by DeVries and in the Census Dictionaries.[12] I shall very briefly go over the census questions regarding language in the next few sentences, so that the reader will understand the way language data provided by the census are structured.

The Canadian census (in 1991 and since) has three separate questions which facilitate the monitoring of languages other than English and French: 1) Mother tongue, which means the first language that a person learned in childhood and still understands; 2) [Usual] Home language, which means the tongue which is most commonly spoken in the family setting; 3) Any language that the census respondent (or people who are in the same household, who are reported on the same form) knows well enough to carry on a conversation in. Thus, one can look separately or comparatively at the various population counts under these three headings for any language that is listed in the Canadian census. Most of these are also presented by age groups and gender.

This makes gauging the demographic strength of any language possible. Any language that has a very small population, or that has a small proportion of those who know the language using it at home and thereby passing it on to the next generation, or whose Canadian speakers are practically all seniors—with very few children and youth using it, is in a weak position from the standpoint of that language's future in Canada. On the other hand, where census data indicate that

those who are able to converse in a particular language are numerous; where those speakers are concentrated in particular localities rather than diffused throughout the country; where a high percentage of those who know a language are actually using it at home and thereby teaching it to their children, that language is in a stronger position to survive—in Canada—into the future.

Later, I return to discuss factors in heritage language retention, which help to explain the strength of some non-official languages as opposed to the weakness of others. Of course, demographers of language and sociolinguists have produced a substantial literature on all this, and I have earlier provided some references relating to that discussion.[13]

One of the major developments in language data as provided through the Canadian census is the availability, in recent decades, of answers which can be either single response ("SR") or multiple response ("MR"). This means that someone can answer a census language question, for example "what is the person's mother tongue?" by naming a single language, so this particular language is presumably the only childhood tongue first learned by that person. On the other hand, the respondent may give a multiple response, in which two non-official languages were both used as childhood languages on an approximately equal basis, or may report that the person's ancestral language was used during his childhood years along with English. Thus, the multiple response option gives scholars complications or richer data, depending on your point of view.

In all censi prior to 1986, only one language could be identified as mother tongue or home language, whereas today we have multiple response options. This makes it more difficult to carry forward a time series analysis, since new definitions or arrangements raise legitimate doubts about the comparability of earlier and later data. Note that researchers now can choose between the answers which name only one language (SR) and those which may identify several (MR), including the particular tongues which that scholar is examining.

Let me now briefly clarify the well-known "Who is a Jew?" question—in its Canadian census variant. Since the usual context for minority-language data is the population of those who do or might speak that particular tongue, we need to define those who are potentially speakers of Yiddish or Ivrit—i.e., Jews in Canada.

For those not familiar with these census data, here is a quick picture. There are two quite separate questions relevant here:[14]

> Question 17—"Ethnic Origin": This inquires about ancestral national/cultural group. It is a completely *historical* datum, which may or may not be relevant/correct in regard to identity (self-labelling) for this respondent today. Up to four origins can be reported in the write-in spaces provided.
>
> Question 22—"Religion": This inquires about one's Denomination or system of belief. It ascertains the respondents' spiritual affiliation *to-day*, regardless of their history or ancestry. One can check off "No Religion" or specify something like 'Agnostic', 'Baptist', or 'Islam'.

In general, traditional Jews in Canada appear under both headings—as ethnic Jews (historically, by origin) *and* as Judaists (adherents of the Jewish religion now). However, many Canadians may be "Jewish" on one measure, but not the other. For example:

1) A convert to Judaism retains his/her original ancestry, but now is counted as a 'Judaist';
2) Disaffected and/or secularist Jews likely acknowledge their ethnic ancestry, but may declare their religion as 'Atheist', 'Agnostic' or whatever;
3) Those born to intermarried couples (one Jewish parent only) would report "Jewish" among multiple ancestries, but may or may not be 'Judaists' themselves.[15]

I try to avoid confusion about what/whom we're counting in our tables, by specifying "Jews by Religion", or Judaists. It is almost time to examine data tables which present specific Yiddish and Hebrew counts from various Canadian censuses. It may be noted that the language Yiddish is abbreviated in our table headings as "Y", while the language Hebrew is herein indicated by the initial "I" for Ivrit. The use of I for Hebrew is to avoid confusion with the H which refers to Home Language (HL), so we use "I" to refer unambiguously to Ivrit (Hebrew).

The tables before us will look first at the history of Yiddish in Canada since 1931, so that we see the way it was evolving during the past eighty years. Hebrew data in Canada are not available so far back, but can only be found for the past thirty years, i.e., since 1981. Subsequently, we shall look at the most recent census years, i.e. 2001 and 2006.

Our later tables will not be focusing often on mother tongue, which is available for the longest period of time, but on the more important variables for predicting our linguistic future, namely: ability to converse (which tells us the current strength of a language in Canada), and home language (which indicates the language's potential for transmission into the future, since today's home language is the mother tongue of the next generation).

Table I

Canada's Jewish* Population and Yiddish Mother Tongue Population, 1931-1991

YEAR	JUDAISTS, ALL CANADA	YMT(SR)	YMT/JEWISH POPULATION
1931	▷155,750 /156,700△	149,500	96%
1951	204,850	103,600	51%
1971	276,000	49,900	18%
1991	318,100	26,500 (SR & MR) or 21,400 (SR only)	8% [with MR] or 6.7% [without MR]

*Jews by Religion/Denomination
YMT = Yiddish Mother Tongue
SR = Single Response (Yiddish only)
MR = Multiple Response (Yiddish among others)
Sources: Dominion Bureau of Statistics /Statistics Canada, Census Reports
▷R. Klein & F. Dimant, ed's, *From Immigration to Integration*, Toronto: B'nai Brith Canada 2001, p.263 (T.1)
△Louis Rosenberg *Canada's Jews* (ed. by Morton Weinfeld, reissued in 1993) Montreal: McGill—Queen's U. Press, 1993—p.4 (Table 4)

Table II

Jewish Population and YMT* Counts in Four Major Canadian Communities, 1951

	TOTAL JEWS△	YIDDISH MOTHER TONGUE	YMT AS % OF JEWISH POPULATION
Montreal	77,450	42,650	55%
Toronto	44,950	28,050	62%
Winnipeg	15,950	10,750	67%
Vancouver	5,000	1,370	27%

△By Religion/Denomination
*YMT= Yiddish Mother Tongue
Source: Statistics Canada, 1951 Census—Vol. II: Tables 9, 23

Table III

All Canada Yiddish Mother Tongue and Home Language, 1971-2001
(slightly rounded counts)

	1971	1981	1991	2001
Jewish△ Population	276,000	296,400	318,100	330,000
Yiddish Mother Tongue*	49,900	32,800	21,400	19,300
Yiddish Home Language*	26,300	10,650	6,600	6,580
Yiddish Home Language/ Yiddish Mother Tongue	53%	32%	31%	34%
Yiddish Home Language/ Jewish Population	9.5%	3.6%	2.1%	2.0%

*Single Response counts, i.e., *only* Yiddish was reported as Home Language or Mother Tongue for these people.
△Those of Jewish Religion/Denomination.
Sources: Leo Davids, *Canadian Ethnic Studies* vol. XVI, no.2, 1984 (Table 3); Statistics Canada language data, Censi of 1991 & 2001—Internet

Canadian Yiddish History, to 1981

What has changed, as shown on these tables, regarding Yiddish in Canada over the past 70-80 years? Then, what are the early indications for any forecast of what the Yiddish language population will be in the next few years? We shall try to summarize the evolution of Yiddish in Canada over much of the past century, and later discuss the comparison between Hebrew and Yiddish, with the implicit competition between them for younger speakers.

The time series for Canadian Hebrew is shorter, as it was not counted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics—later renamed "Statistics Canada"—before 1981; I would guess there were not many Ivrit Mother Tongue people in Canada back then!

Looking at the evidence that earlier census counts of Yiddish provide for us,[16] it is clear that before World War II the vast majority of Canadian Jews were Yiddish speakers. In the earlier part of last century, Yiddish was not only the common mother tongue of those who declared themselves of the Jewish religious denomination, but was actively spoken at home and in

the community, certainly among traditional or recent newcomer Jews, and therefore usually was at least somewhat transmitted to the next generation.

After World War II, however, the tables demonstrate a great weakening of Yiddish transmission. The actual count of YMT Canadians in 1971 was just one-third as large as the 1931 count, while the Jewish population had almost doubled! The percentage of Yiddish mother tongue declined greatly, showing that a second and third generation of Jews were growing up with English as their home language as well as the very powerful language that they heard at school and on the streets.

In regarding the pre-Holocaust years as the "golden age" of Canadian Yiddish, one important scholar states that we must exercise some caution. Louis Rosenberg, writing during that very era in his master work *Canada's Jews*, casts doubt on this 'universal' use of Yiddish at that time. He writes:

> It would be incorrect to assume … that 95.74% of all Jews in Canada in 1931 … could speak Yiddish, for it is well known that many Canadian-born Jews know only a smattering of a few Yiddish words.
>
> It does indicate, however, that an overwhelming majority of the Jews of Canada, although they speak English, have no desire to disassociate themselves from Yiddish and Jewish culture, and are proud to record their mother tongue as Yiddish, although they may have little actual knowledge of that language.[17]

My own reaction is that Rosenberg may have had an assimilationist axe to grind here, since fluent English was 'politically' so important to his generation. Perhaps the 1931 mother tongue data which he apparently dismisses or challenges actually mean what they seem to say, i.e. that Yiddish was indeed that strong in that historical period. In the context of his Chapter XXVII, one may be suspicious that his discussion is overshadowed by a pro-Canadianization bias, such that actually speaking Yiddish is too 'foreign'!

In 1951, the majority of Canadian Jews still reported Yiddish as their mother tongue (Table II), and younger Jews had a passive mastery of Yiddish—although they didn't speak it very often, they understood it fully and had no problem receiving communication from older Jews who would speak to their children and grandchildren in Yiddish. Winnipeg had relatively more Yiddish speakers (its YMT was 67% of all Jews) than Montreal or Vancouver (there, only 27% of Jews reported YMT), but overall Yiddish was still very familiar to most Canadian Jews in 1951.

However, during the 1950's and later, it is apparent that the home use of Yiddish was increasingly mixed with English, and therefore the mother tongue of Jews whose childhood occurred in the period shortly after World War II would have combined English and Yiddish in most cases. This has been going on everywhere that Yiddish was spoken.[18]

The census' evidence indicates that during the 1960's and 1970's, the daily use of Yiddish among Canadian Jews was decreasing rapidly. Whereas in 1951 the Yiddish mother tongue total in Canada amounted to 51% of all those reporting the Jewish religion, by 1971 we find that the Yiddish mother tongue population was only 18% as large as the total number of those reported to be of the Jewish denomination (Table I). This indicates that in the decades after World War II English quickly became the predominant language at home for Jews, so the number of Yiddish mother tongue people in Canada was declining. Nevertheless, use of Yiddish at home was still common among those who were of Yiddish mother tongue (Table III), so that those who had been brought up with Yiddish were usually, at that time (around 1971), still speaking Yiddish in their homes.

One should not forget, either, the thousands of North African Jews who settled in Canada after 1956; none of them came with Yiddish—which was unknown in that part of the world. (We have no data on Judaeo-Arabic or Ladino, their equivalents). The 1951 to 1971 period is particularly impacted by this

migration, probably involving over 20,000 arrivals, plus their offspring born in Canada.

Obviously, those who were not of Yiddish mother tongue were most unlikely to be using Yiddish at home, although in those years there was still considerable education in Yiddish among the secular, usually socialist circles who provided Yiddish supplementary schooling for their children so that the language and culture of Eastern Europe would be preserved.[19] On the other hand, a (growing) Jewish Day School population was, and continues today, learning Hebrew—whether Biblical or modern.[20]

After 1971, it becomes obvious that Yiddish is no longer in general use among Canadian Jews. According to the 1971 census, the total Yiddish mother tongue population in the country was below 50,000 people. Less than 1 Jew in 5 (18%) was of Yiddish Mother Tongue then. Bear in mind that, even in 1971, Statistics Canada did not make any distinction between Yiddish and Hebrew, so while we find no count for those of Hebrew mother tongue in 1971, the "Yiddish" total actually included those who had reported their mother tongue as Hebrew.[21]

Thus, as one reviews the 1960's and 1970's, we recognize that the Yiddish schools were not attracting any significant numbers of students, nor was the transmission of Yiddish at home doing very well. By 1971, there is essentially no Yiddish mother tongue population left in the Maritime Provinces, but Toronto and Montreal still had large groups of Yiddish mother tongue and small groups of Yiddish home language.[22]

Finally, Table III shows that the ratio between those of Yiddish home language and the entire population of Jewish denomination had become really tiny by 1981. In that year, the entire Yiddish home language population of Canada amounted to under 4% of all those reported as being of the Jewish religion. Furthermore, the 1981 census indicated that the majority of Yiddish mother tongue respondents were no longer reporting Yiddish home language; these were people who had been raised with Yiddish as children, but were not speaking the language at home and therefore not transmitting it to *their* children.

Recent Immigration and Jewish Languages

Regarding language reinforcement through immigration, data from earlier censi indicate that very few Yiddish speakers arrived in Canada after 1981; a few came from the United States, Israel or Russia but the number of Yiddish mother tongue immigrants to Canada was quite small. On the other hand, the immigration of Ivrit mother tongue persons has been significant, as our 2006 data will show.[23] These would overwhelmingly be people who came to Canada from Israel and have brought their language with them.

The 2006 Census has tables showing Mother Tongues by "Period of Immigration", i.e., when did this or that language group arrive in Canada. This 2006 information shows that, among all Canadians of Yiddish Mother Tongue (YMT), 56% were 'non-immigrants', which means that they were born in Canada (or born abroad to Canadian parents; very few such cases are found in our Yiddish Mother Tongue population). Among the 'immigrant' YMT population, the vast majority have been living in Canada since at least prior to the 1991 Census; these long-ago immigrants were over 6,000 speakers, 38% of all Canadian YMT people in 2006.

As to the immigrants since 1991 who were YMT, only 825 such were found throughout Canada, most of them living in greater Montreal (in 2006). Those who brought Yiddish to Canada between 2001 and 2006 were just 250 people in the whole country, a very small group indeed. Just 5% of all YMT Canadians had immigrated during the 1991—2006 period, i.e., 825 speakers.

On the other hand, just 18% of all Ivrit Mother Tongue (IMT) Canadians were born here—'non-immigrants'. The other 82% of IMT residents were either immigrants (13,200 of those), or "Non-Permanent Residents" in Canada (1,260 people). They are not Canadians but Israelis spending a few years in Canada to represent Israel, or teach Hebrew, to protect Consulates or the Embassy, and so on. By period of immigration, 45% of IMT Canadians had arrived before 1991 vs. 30% since then. These

IMT immigrants during 1991-2006 numbered 5,300; contrast that with just 825 who brought Yiddish during those very same years!

Recent immigration statistics on Israel as a "source country" for new "Permanent Residents" in Canada show between 2,000 and 3,000 Israelis per year arriving here during the years 2000 through 2008. Additionally, close to 2,000 Israeli "foreign workers" resided in Canada on December 1, 2008, increasing year by year from 418 such temporary residents in December 1999. Thus, new Hebrew speakers are landing in Canada every year, amounting to many thousands just in the past decade.[24] (Some later return to Israel or go elsewhere, of course).

Thus, it is clear that the Ivrit-speaking population in Canada is augmented both through immigration and through education in the large and successful day school systems of Toronto and Montreal, while the Yiddish language receives almost no demographic reinforcement. In other words, the immigrants who brought Yiddish to Canada came a long time ago, and are now old people; Israeli immigrants (and even temporary residents) who have brought Hebrew to Canada have come more recently, and far more of them are still in the younger age brackets.

Contemporary Yiddish and Ivrit Populations

By now, the fate of Yiddish in Canada is quite clear, and its 'miraculous' survival in/around Montreal will be shown and explained later. Is this picture valid for Hebrew, as well? In the remainder of this study, we will be turning our attention fully to that old-new Jewish tongue, describing its rise in Canada during the past generation.

Table IV

Hebrew (Ivrit) & Yiddish Mother Tongue, Home Language and Able-to-Converse Populations, Canada 1986-2001
(nearest 25 cases)

	1986	1991	1996	2001
Yiddish Mother Tongue (Single Response)	22,475	21,400	21,400	19,300
Ivrit Mother Tongue (Single Response)	7,375	11,525	13,125	12,425
Yiddish Able to Converse	…….△	53,400	46,650	37,000
Ivrit Able to Converse	…….△	52,450	60,750	63,675
Yiddish Home Language▷	12,550	8,025	8,000	10,680*
Ivrit Home Language▷	6,425	8,750	8,250	15,650*

▷Single Response and Multiple Response together, thus all home speakers.
△Not asked in 1986; this question started to be asked in 1991
*Due to changes made by Statistics Canada in their Home Language categories, the 2001 counts are not directly comparable with those of 1996; i.e., we have a discontinuous time series on this variable.

Table V

Home Language, Mother Tongue and Able to Speak For All Canada vs. Montreal vs. Toronto

	2001 CANADA		2006 CANADA	
	YIDDISH	HEBREW	YIDDISH	HEBREW
Able to Converse	37,000	63,675	27,600	67,390
Home Language*	6,575	5,650	3,130	6,935
Home Language / Conversant	18%	9%	11.3%	10.3%
Mother Tongue*	19,300	12,425	16,300	17,625

	2001 CMA MONTREAL		2006 CMA MONTREAL	
	YIDDISH	HEBREW	YIDDISH	HEBREW
Able to Converse	17,050	18,050	13,515	18,550
Home Language*	1,300	1,075	1,470	725
Home Language / Conversant	7%	7%	7.9%	7.0%
Mother Tongue*	9,275	2,950	4,075	6,075

Table V (cont'd)

	2001 CMA TORONTO		2006 CMA TORONTO	
	YIDDISH	HEBREW	YIDDISH	HEBREW
Able to Converse	14,425	33,950	10,350	35,240
Home Language*	1,075	3,500	725	4,330
Home Language / Conversant	7%	10%	7%	12.3%
Mother Tongue*	7,200	7,400	6,075	9,875

* Showing Single Response (SR) only
CMA = Census Metropolitan Area

Table VI

Able to Converse in Yiddish & Ivrit (Hebrew) in Canada Showing CMA Montreal & Toronto Separately & Child Speakers (Age 0 - 14) Separately

	MONTREAL		TORONTO	
YIDDISH	2001	2006	2001	2006
Total Speakers	17,050 (46%)	13,515 (49%)	14,415 (39%)	10,350 (37.5%)
Child (0-14)Speakers	3,250 (85.5%)	3,030 (85.7%)	500 (13.2%)	415 (11.7%)
Children as % of All Speakers	19	22.4	3.5	4.0

	REST OF COUNTRY		TOTAL CANADA	
YIDDISH	2001	2006	2001	2006
Total Speakers	5,500 (15%)	3,735 13.5%	37,010 100%	27,600 100%
Child (0-14) Speakers	50 (1.3%)	90 (2.5%)	3,800 100%	3,535 100%
Children as % of All Speakers	1	2.4	10	12.8

Table VI (cont'd)

IVRIT	MONTREAL 2001	MONTREAL 2006	TORONTO 2001	TORONTO 2006
Total Speakers	18,050 (28%)	18,550 (27.5%)	33,950 (53%)	35,240 (52.3%)
Child (0-14) Speakers	2,775 (33.4%)	2,700 (32.2%)	4,050 (48.6%)	4,050 (48.3%)
Children as % of All Speakers	15.4	14.6	12	11.5

IVRIT	REST OF COUNTRY 2001	REST OF COUNTRY 2006	TOTAL CANADA 2001	TOTAL CANADA 2006
Total Speakers	11,675 (18%)	13,600 (20.2%)	63,675 (100%)	67,400 (100%)
Child (0-14) Speakers	1,500 (18.0%)	1,640 (19.5%)	8,325 (100%)	8,390 (100%)
Children as % of All Speakers	12.8	12.1	13	12.4

( ) = Percentages within row, thus comparing the 2 grand cities and rest of Canada

In 2001, there were over 63,000 people across Canada able to converse in Ivrit (of which quite a few must be former Israeli Arabs), versus a total population of 37,000 who were able to converse in Yiddish—which shows Yiddish to be just 58% as large as Ivrit on this measure (of ability to converse). Comparing the two tongues with regard to their home language populations, we find them in the 1990's very close, in that both Yiddish and Hebrew had a home language population in 1996 of about 8,000 people (combining the single and multiple responses). In fact, Ivrit home language had lost a little ground between 1991 and 1996, while the number of Yiddish at-home speakers had not changed its total at all between 1991 and 1996. This would suggest that Yiddish home language had stabilized (at this 8,000 level), as the strong Ultra-Orthodox home language group was able then to fill in for the constantly decreasing number of non-Hasidic Yiddish home language seniors, who are lost in the natural course of events.

Thus, one would expect a fairly quiet scene with regard to Yiddish home language in the coming years, as the Montreal Ultra-Orthodox population which we shall be discussing later continues to use Yiddish consistently within their own communities, and thus maintains the Yiddish home language population in Canada at about its current levels in the near future.

The final data tables here look in detail at the excellent language data available to us for 2001 and 2006.

Table V relates Home Language to Able-to-speak counts for both Yiddish and Hebrew, as well as to Mother Tongue. Once can see that home language is much smaller than mother tongue, and is a tiny fraction of the Conversant totals—except for Yiddish in Montreal in 2001; the HL population was 31% as large as the count for all those able to speak. However, the 2006 ratio (17%) was far weaker, as the Montreal Yiddish Home Language count shrank so quickly in only five years—losing 56%.

Comparing Yiddish and Hebrew for Montreal and Toronto, later considering age groupings, what does this census evidence tell us? Briefly, Greater Montreal is today the sole stronghold of Yiddish home language in Canada, while Toronto is the centre for Ivrit. What are the relevant numbers?

As of 2006, both Montreal and Toronto have more residents who can converse in Ivrit than in Yiddish. For Montreal, it was (Table VI) 13,515 Yiddish speakers vs. 18,550 Ivrit Speakers. For Toronto, the Ivrit conversant population of 35,240 dwarfed the Yiddish-speaking total of 10,350 by a ratio of more than 3 to 1. In all the rest of Canada, Ivrit had 13,600 speakers, compared to only 3,735 for Yiddish. Remember that CMA Toronto has approximately twice as many Jews as CMA Montreal; that Yiddish count in Montreal looks strong in this light, vs. the low number in Toronto. However, the Ivrit counts for the two metropoli are in line with the population differences: there are twice as many Ivrit speakers in Toronto as in Montreal.

Table VI also deals with the proportion of child speakers (age 0-14 years) for Ivrit and Yiddish, Montreal vs. Toronto. Clear differences appear now. In 2001 we find 19% of all Yiddish-

conversant Montrealers to be under age 15, vs. 3.5% of all Toronto's Yiddish speakers being in the child age category. For Ivrit, the 2001 child speaking populations were not so far apart—15% in Montreal vs. 12% in Toronto. By 2006, young Yiddish speakers (under 15) in Montreal rose to 22% of all, vs. 4% for Toronto. Again, the Ivrit differences in child speakers were rather small—14.6% in Montreal vs. 11.5% in Toronto. Both metropoli have about the same Ivrit dynamics, just that Toronto is twice as large.

However, the two communities—as our further tables will show in detail—are very different on the Yiddish side. The child speakers are a growing part of Montreal's overall Yiddish-conversant population, which on the whole is shrinking (from 17,050 in 2001 to 13,515 in 2006). But Toronto's tiny proportion of Yiddish-speaking children is staying constant, in a likewise declining city total (14,415 in 2001 became 10,350 in 2006).

Comparing 2001 with 2006 data (Tables V and VI), we discover that Yiddish continued its decline—between 2001 and 2006—in regard to both Mother Tongue and Able to Converse populations; in only five years, the YMT (Yiddish Mother Tongue) loss was 15.5% while the shrinkage in Able to Converse totals for Yiddish came to 25.4%. During the 1990's, losses for Yiddish were limited likely because increases in Hasidic speakers more or less compensated for the Yiddish-speaking seniors who emigrated or passed away. However, such replenishment has not been continuing in this decade, as the steep declines between 2001 and 2006 indicate. Perhaps more Yiddish-speaking seniors left for warmer locations during this period than had in the previous decade; we do not have statistics on emigration.

On the other hand, Ivrit speakers increased during the 2001—2006 interval. No doubt due to high immigration from Israel, the single-response Hebrew Mother Tongue population increased by over 5,000 souls, which is 42% of the 2001 count. Looking at Ivrit Able to Converse totals, the increase was far

less dramatic. Almost 4,000 speakers were added in those five years, 5.8% of the 2001 national total. This is puzzling: The entry of many *sabras* (Israeli-born Hebrew speakers) should have bumped up both counts. Was there significant *aliyah* (Jewish immigration to Israel) from Canada during this time, to dampen the rise in Ivrit-conversant Canadians? Probably, the percentage of IMT Canadians reflects immigration from Israel closely, as that is the only substantial source for "native speakers." However, our able to speak population is often Canadian-educated or has immigrated from other strong Jewish communities, not just from Israel. Thus, that count is not so directly linked to the number of Israelis arriving here.

Studying Tables V and VI further, which examine greater Montreal vs. greater Toronto (vs. rest of Canada) separately, we find important differences. For one, again it is evident that Montreal is the 'home' for Yiddish, while Toronto is central in regard to Ivrit. For 2001, 46% of all Canada's Yiddish Able to Converse population is in CMA Montreal (greater Montreal), but by 2006 that rose to 49%. In other words, just under half of all Canadians able to speak Yiddish live in (or around) Montreal vs. under 40% in much-larger CMA Toronto. The rest of Canada counted just 15% of all Yiddish speakers in 2001, and shrank a little further to 13.5% in 2006.

When we examine Hebrew in Canada, Montreal has about 28% of all its Canadian speakers, while Toronto has over 50%; 2006 was not very different from 2001 on this. The rest of Canada increased its Ivrit speakers from 18% in 2001 to 20% in 2006. Some de-concentration of Hebrew speakers has been occurring, so that not just Toronto and Montreal but other cities have some Hebrew-speaking population. This suggests successful Jewish Day Schools in many Canadian large cities, churning out Hebrew speakers from the classroom (not from homes);as well, Israeli immigrants are not just choosing Toronto or Montreal to live in.

Now consider the child (age 0—14 years) Yiddish and Hebrew populations. Here, Montreal holds virtually a monopoly

for future Yiddish, as 85-86% of all Canada's Yiddish speakers (both in 2001 and 2006) under age 15 live in CMA Montreal. Toronto's child Yiddish speakers are just 13% (in 2001) and then 11.7% (in 2006) of the national total, while all the rest of Canada constitutes only 1—2.5% of child-age Yiddish speakers. Clearly, only Montreal will have any Yiddish-speaking population in fifty years; as there are no child speakers elsewhere, so no future conversants. Yiddish-speaking immigrants are rare now, so they won't change anything.

Hebrew works quite differently. Toronto's child Ivrit speakers were 48.6% of Canada's total (in 2001) and 48.3% in 2006. Montreal's counts come to 33.4% (in 2001) and then 32.2% (in 2006); there are certainly Hebrew schools there! The rest of Canada contained 18% of all the child speakers (as exactly that proportion of all Ivrit speakers) in 2001, rising somewhat (to 19.5%) in 2006. Unlike Yiddish, Hebrew-speaking children do appear in Vancouver, Ottawa and so on. Not much changed regarding Ivrit from 2001 to 2006; Toronto is still the great Canadian centre for Hebrew speech, whether the people involved were actually born in Russia or the Ukraine, in Israel, or in Canada. Many Russian-born immigrants to Canada spent some years in Israel, then journeyed on to Toronto, etc.; they can speak Hebrew, but it is not their mother tongue.

The future is likely to show significant continuing use of Hebrew in Canada, based on a 2006 national total of over 67,000 able to converse, with about 12.5% of these being under 15 years of age. Even if further immigration from Israel were to "dry up," Hebrew currently is in robust condition in Canada, and will persist in the foreseeable future.

Detailed Age Groups

Our next task is to look closely at age groups in the data, with an eye to forecasting what will be happening with Yiddish and Hebrew in the coming years. As the literature makes clear,[25] when a language has a very small percentage of young speakers, then its days are numbered. However, a strong child population carrying a language forward means that there are speakers who

will be using that tongue (at least sometimes) for many decades to come. What, then, is the situation with regard to children versus seniors as speakers of Yiddish and/or Hebrew in the two Canadian cities where there is anything meaningful to analyze, i.e. Montreal and Toronto?

Table VII

Hebrew-Conversant Children, Adolescents and Seniors* Greater Montreal vs. Toronto 2001 & 2006

	MONTREAL			
AGE GROUP	**2001**		**2006**	
0-4	290	1.6%	450	2.4%
5-9	800	4.4%	875	4.7%
10-14▷	1,685	9.3%	1,380	7.4%
15-19	1,890	10.5%	1,880	10.1%
0-19 Subtotals	**4,665**	**25.8%**	**4,585**	**24.7%**
65 Years & Over	1,820	10.1%	1,750	9.4%
All Ages Grand Total	**18,050**	**100%**	**18,550**	**100%**

	TORONTO			
AGE GROUP	**2001**		**2006**	
0-4	460	1.4%	690	2.0%
5-9	985	2.9%	1,215	3.4%
10-14▷	2,600	7.7%	2,140	6.1%
15-19	3,280	9.7%	2,810	8.0%
0-19 Subtotals	**7,325**	**21.6%**	**6,850**	**19.4%**
65 Years & Over	2,760	8.1%	2,750	7.8%
All Ages Grand Total	**33,950**	**100%**	**35,240**	**100%**

*Not shown here, therefore, are Speakers age 20 through 64 years.

▷This is the Bar- and Bat-Mitzvah cohort, when Hebrew studies are very popular.

Table VIII

Yiddish-Conversant Children, Adolescents and Seniors* Greater Montreal vs. Toronto 2001 & 2006

	MONTREAL			
AGE GROUP	**2001**		**2006**	
0-4	1,210	7.1%	1,180	8.7%
5-9	1,000	5.9%	900	6.7%
10-14▷	1,040	6.1%	950	7.0%
15-19	930	5.4%	830	6.1%
0-19 Subtotals	**4,180**	**24.5%**	**3,860**	**28.6%**
65 Years & Over	7,440	43.6%	4,965	36.7%
All Ages Grand Total	**17,050**	**100%**	**13,515**	**100%**

	TORONTO			
AGE GROUP	**2001**		**2006**	
0-4	140	1.0%	140	1.35%
5-9	160	1.1%	140	1.35%
10-14▷	205	1.4%	135	1.3%
15-19	210	1.5%	240	2.3%
0-19 Subtotals	**715**	**5.0%**	**650**	**6.3%**
65 Years & Over	8,310	57.6%	6,010	58%
All Ages Grand Total	**14,415**	**100%**	**10,350**	**100%**

*Not shown here, therefore, are Speakers age 20 through 64 years.
▷This is the Bar- and Bat-Mitzvah cohort, when Hebrew studies are very popular.

In order to really benefit from age-group detail as shown in Tables VII and VIII, one should have a sociolinguistic preamble to guide the reader in making legitimate inferences from this kind of language data. So let me provide these key postulates: The youngest cohort shown in our able-to-converse by age tables is the 0 through 4 years group. These little children know languages from their homes, not schools; they are pre-schoolers. Thus any tongues they can speak are "mother tongues," whether one only (SR) or several (MR). This self-evident sourcing in

parents, not teachers, fades with the passing years, as educational settings play an increasing role in students' language repertoire.

With regard to most Jewish children in their pre-pubescent years, the approaching Bar Mitzvah (for boys) or Bat Mitzvah (for girls) requires some proficiency in Hebrew, which leads to almost universal teaching of some Hebrew to these children in the 10-14 years cohort, with significant carry-through into the next age group, i.e. age 15-19.[26] Some fraction of that population studies conversational/modern Hebrew to the point where it is believed—whether validly or not—that this student can now speak Ivrit. Thus, children who were not conversant as 4 year olds become speakers (or are judged to have) by age 11, 12 or so. This "community pressure" norm weighing on the parents of Jewish children, at least in the stronger communities (e.g. Toronto), leads to sharp increases in Hebrew conversation ability with rising age, such that the little under fives only can speak Hebrew in formerly Israel-resident families, but our Day Schools later produce many more Ivrit speakers. These show up as the much larger numbers for age 10 and up conversers, as the Tables show. For Yiddish as well, a few new speakers are added in this way.

The 2006 data show that, for all of Canada, 12-13% of those who are able to converse in Hebrew are children under the age of 15. Seniors who speak Ivrit are a somewhat smaller group, just 8% of the over 67,000 people who can converse in Hebrew. On this basis, one may view Hebrew as a "young" language in Canada. The national situation is quite different with regard to those who are able to converse in Yiddish; 48% of those people are age 65 and over, so Yiddish is an "older" language now.

We shall learn more by examining Montreal and Toronto separately. In Toronto, the 2006 Ivrit-speaking population numbers over 35,000; Greater Toronto contains over 50% of all Canadians who are able to converse in the Hebrew language, in 2006. Of these, around 12% are children age 0 to 14, versus about 8% seniors (age 65 and over). However, a clear preponderance of seniors appears among Torontonians who are able

to converse in Yiddish; 58% of those in Toronto who know the Yiddish language are age 65 and up, while only 4% are children under the age of 15.

Looking at Montreal, however, one finds that the preponderance of seniors is certainly not as strong in Toronto. Among all Montrealers who can converse in Yiddish, 37% are age 65 and over versus 22% who are children. In fact, the 3,000 Montreal children who know Yiddish are almost all of the children who can speak Yiddish in all of Canada, whose 2006 total amounts to 3,500 cases.

The strength of Montreal in regard to Yiddish use is also shown plainly when we compare Montreal to Toronto with regard to home language Yiddish (Table Vb). Here, we saw that 2006 Yiddish home language in Toronto involved a total of 725 people (down from 1,075 in 2001). However, for Montreal there were 2,300 persons reporting Yiddish as home language in 2006, about triple the Toronto count.

Why are we finding so many children who speak Yiddish in Montreal, but not elsewhere? Who are these kids?

The literature today is unanimous in suggesting that it is precisely the Ultra-Orthodox/Hasidic population which maintains fidelity to Yiddish, as has been remarked many times.[27] More direct evidence of ongoing Yiddish utilization by our Montreal Ultra-Orthodox community is provided in a major survey carried out by Shahar, Weinfeld and Schnoor.[28] Their study of the Hasidic population in Outremont and surrounding areas indicates that Yiddish is in fact still the day-to-day normal language in this sector of the Jewish community. Shahar and associates report that 75% of their respondents are totally fluent in Yiddish (versus 84% being totally fluent in English, and not quite 10% totally fluent in French), while an additional 12% of their respondents can speak Yiddish but not that fluently.[29]

Furthermore, Yiddish is the mother tongue of a majority of their respondents, who reported Yiddish as their sole mother tongue (51% of the respondents) while another 7% reported both Yiddish and English as joint mother tongues. It is interesting to

note that their data show strongest Yiddish fluency among the youngest age cohort in their survey, people between 17 and 24 years. Whereas just over 90% of those young people reported full fluency in Yiddish, those who were in the 25 to 64 years age bracket reported fluency in Yiddish at the level of 69%. The seniors in their survey (65 years and up) reported Yiddish fluency at the level of 81%, which is less than the fluency among youth below age 25.[30]

Additional light is shed on the Yiddish transmission and retention patterns among these Ultra-Orthodox speakers by unpublished tables (kindly transmitted by Charles Shahar). In these, both age and gender groupings are shown for questions on mother tongue and on language proficiency ("Totally Fluent" vs. "Can Speak", etc.). These further data show us that male respondents were more likely than female to be of Yiddish mother tongue in the over-45 age groups, and to currently report full fluency in Yiddish (for all age groups). Females were somewhat more likely to report Hungarian mother tongue, especially in the 65 plus age group, while more male respondents were of Hebrew mother tongue. Obviously, both Yiddish and Hebrew have much current value (among Jews in Canada) as languages to transmit to one's children, but Hungarian is not so cherished.

Trying to explain the stronger male than female Yiddish mother tongue showing (in the older age groups) and the greater male fluency in Yiddish (for all ages), it seems reasonable to see the cause in the *Bes Medresh*[31] where Yiddish lectures, sermons and announcements (which females are often absent from) reinforce that language constantly. Since women do not spend much time there, they are less "bathed" in that linguistic milieu, although they use Yiddish at home and in the "ghetto" streets.

The more "domains" in which one uses a language, the stronger is one's knowledge of it and commitment to it.[32] Male Hasidic Yiddish use is, thus, more constant than female, giving us the basis for higher proficiency among male speakers.

All of this clearly supports the idea that Yiddish is very much alive in that community in CMA Montreal, so that they can state unequivocally:

> It appears that although use of Yiddish is significantly waning in the Jewish community at large, as primarily a language spoken by its elderly members, it is vigorously used in the Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox communities.[33]

However, this does *not* mean retention/linkage with the pre-Holocaust artistic/literary Yiddish culture. Ultra-Orthodox Jews (at least, males) do not read novels or modern poetry in any language, so they are not connected with the creative expressions of that "world" but just with its vernacular, and whatever echoes of its past are contained in today's spoken language. Katz writes that they are now re-inventing a "kosher" Yiddish literature (for their own women and children).[34]

What can one learn from Tables VII and VIII, showing age groups? The less-complicated picture is that for Hebrew in Canada. One should remember that the Israeli immigrants (who are of Hebrew mother tongue) constitute a fairly small minority of all Canada's Hebrew speakers. Most Canadians who can converse in Hebrew have learned it in school or by a sojourn in Israel, rather than knowing Hebrew from their early childhood. This fact becomes visible in our Table VII, where ability to speak Hebrew rises with age; the youngest age group (0—4) is a very small part of all Hebrew speakers, both in Montreal and in Toronto. Table VII shows, for both 2001 and 2006, a great jump in the count of Ivrit-speaking children—which was explained earlier—when one moves from the age groups 0—4 and 5—9 up to those over 10 years of age. This big increase can only be due to school-based acquisition of Hebrew.

Furthermore, Hebrew-speaking seniors are a small group, although the over-65 population is a considerable part of the entire Jewish population in Canada; 22% of Montreal Jews and 16% of Toronto Jews were, in 2001, seniors[35] but they were

only 10% of Montreal's Hebrew speakers, and just 8% of those in Toronto (Table VI).

However, when one looks at the Yiddish-speaking children in Montreal, the trend for the four cohorts runs the other way. That is, the youngest cohort is the largest able-to-converse group, while the older children are somewhat fewer in number. (If one looks at the adolescents, age 15—19, we likewise find that they are a smaller group than the cohorts younger than theirs.) So, the ability to speak Yiddish is not primarily gained through schooling, in Montreal, but comes from homes. After all, the youngest group of children are all preschoolers, who have not yet been exposed to education at all, except for some nursery or kindergarten involvement—which is unlikely to have made a large impact on their linguistic abilities. Therefore, the Montreal child speakers of Yiddish come from very traditional, high fertility families; as stated earlier, Yiddish in Montreal lives within the Ultra-Orthodox community in and around that city, and they are already well-known to be a high fertility group with many children.[36] Unlike the picture for Toronto, with its much smaller Ultra-Orthodox sector, these children with their *payelekh* (little earlocks) assure a future for Yiddish in greater Montreal.

Is this Yiddish-friendly population enduring or fading? The "Montreal Jewish Demographic Projections" recently issued by UIA (United Israel Appeal) Federations Canada indicate continuing strong growth of Montreal's Ultra-Orthodox population. From about 12% of all Montreal Jews in 2001, these estimates show the Ultra-Orthodox as 19.5% in 2011; thus, about one Jew in every five is likely to be a Yiddish speaker there, by now.

Summary and Conclusion

Those not familiar with the linguistic realities regarding Hebrew and Yiddish in Canada might assume that their population dynamics and trends are generally similar—as Jewish languages, one would think that they are carried by the same

population and that their growth or shrinkage would probably be similar over time. As our tables demonstrate, such is not at all the case. There are vast differences between the populations speaking Hebrew and those speaking Yiddish in contemporary Canada, as shown in the data tables; the future prospects for the two languages in Canada also differ greatly.

Among the major contrasts between the two tongues is the age structure of the respective speaking groups. We found Yiddish to be spoken by very few children (but many seniors) outside of Montreal, while Hebrew is a relatively young language which has few speakers age 65 and over. Another major difference is, again, the predominance of Toronto as a Hebrew centre for Canada, vs. the strength of Montreal in regard to Yiddish. (Census data from 1991 and 1996 already showed this dichotomy). However, Montreal Jews have high levels of knowledge for both Hebrew and Yiddish.[37]

Hebrew is spoken in a number of Canada's largest cities, not just in Toronto (Table VI). The number of Hebrew speakers was growing strongly during the 1980s and early 1990s (Table IV), but that growth slowed down considerably between 1996 and 2001. From 2001 to 2006, the Ivrit-conversant count grew by almost 6%. As context, the overall Jewish population of Canada is now growing very slowly, and Jewish school enrollments likewise are not increasing, overall.[38] Thus, Hebrew language numbers may be approaching a plateau state, matching the demographic reality for Jewish Canada. For the near future, one would not expect much change in the counts for Hebrew in Canada, since neither immigration nor educational increase are likely to greatly raise the number of Hebrew speakers within the next few years.

What about Yiddish? As found clearly in previous work, and fully corroborated in the studies done by Shahar and associates, there is a substantial Yiddish-speaking sub-community of Ultra-Orthodox Jews in and around Montreal which has linguistic practices very different from those of the general Jewish community. It is this Ultra-Orthodox population which consis-

tently uses Yiddish at home and in its own public spaces, thus assuring a (child) population in Canada which will continue to be of Yiddish mother tongue, etc. into the future.

Few Canadian Jewish seniors studied Hebrew seriously (or visited Israel for long) in their younger years. Therefore, few Canadian seniors today can speak Ivrit. On the other hand, there are still many seniors of Yiddish mother tongue in various cities currently, but unfortunately that population sector will gradually disappear over the next decades. Unless one is aware of these two quite distinct population groups—the general Jewish seniors vs. today's Ultra-Orthodox sub-community—our numerical data on Yiddish would be very difficult to interpret.

Approaching the conclusion of this study, it is very useful to re-focus our attention on the child speakers of Yiddish and Hebrew in Toronto and Montreal. In Tables VII and VIII, the child and adolescent speaking populations for both languages are presented by five-year age groups, i.e. age zero through 4, 5 through 9, 10 through 14, and 15 through 19, which makes it possible to see whether the language abilities in question increase or decrease during these four cohorts. Here one finds a very significant difference between the two languages.

The ability to speak Hebrew increases with age, as seen earlier; that applies to younger speakers, not to Jews age 65 plus. For both Montreal and Toronto, the preschool children (0—4 years) are the smallest group able to converse in Hebrew, the next cohorts being about double in size, while the oldest children (10—14) and the older adolescents (age 15—19) are the largest groups of Hebrew speakers. A similar trend appears when we look at the Toronto children who are able to speak Yiddish; here again, the youngest group is the smallest, while adolescents are somewhat more likely to speak that language. This indicates clearly that Hebrew everywhere (in Canada) and Yiddish in some places are usually acquired as a second or third language at school, while speakers due to Hebrew mother tongue (and Yiddish mother tongue in Toronto) are quite few in number. It is the Jewish educational system—not a large number of Hebrew

and Yiddish speaking homes—that generates this population of child speakers, for both these languages, in Toronto.

The analysis of Montreal's age groups for Yiddish, however, showed that its strength is "bottom up"—i.e. the largest group of speakers is the youngest. That means a growing Ultra-Orthodox sector, steadfastly speaking Yiddish at home—which generates a population of Yiddish Mother Tongue preschoolers. Why so few adolescents (age 15—19), though? Probably, many of them study (at Yeshiva or Beth Jacob) outside Montreal, e.g. in Brooklyn or Israel; others, with a tradition of early marriage, may have already married out of Montreal during this age.[39]

Again, earlier studies have already taught us that the future of Yiddish in Canada rests entirely in the hands, or rather the mouths, of Montreal's Ultra-Orthodox children. Since that community has high fertility and speaks little English or French internally, it contains many children who are of Yiddish mother tongue and will be visible in the census of Canada during the coming decades. Throughout the rest of Canada, however, all measures regarding the Yiddish language are likely to dwindle towards the zero level, despite the valiant efforts of enthusiasts such as the "Friends of Yiddish."

These "fans" gather in Toronto and Vancouver as folk choirs, reading circles, lunch and talk groups etc., usually every week. They carry out these activities in Yiddish, for the preservation of Yiddish and the cultural world it represents.

Checking the Internet, one can quickly see that *Yidishistn* (boosters of Yiddish language and culture, for Jewry today) are still active in Canada. From Toronto's "Friends of Yiddish" to Montreal's Segal Centre (at the Bronfman JCC), Winnipeg's "Klezmer Shack" to many other events—readings, concerts, lectures, and *shmues* (speaking) circles—it's quite *lebedik* (alive, active) across Canada.[40] Other writers will speak to all that. In the long run, however, these efforts are unlikely to change the "big picture" shown by these census data.

On the other hand, Hebrew enthusiasts have nothing to fear so long as the Jewish schools in Canada's big cities continue

to succeed in generating well-educated young Jews, which our data show has been happening for many years. The numbers of Canadian Yiddish speakers are, by all measures, much smaller now than for Ivrit. The transition from Yiddish to Hebrew as Canada's "normal" Jewish language, therefore, has already occurred.

Endnotes

[1] Joshua Fishman, *In Praise of the Beloved Language* (Berlin: Mouton DeGruyter, 1997), esp. Chapter 2; ed. Joshua A. Fishman, *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Brook S. Pigott and Madeline Kalbach, "Language Effects on Ethnic Identity in Canada," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 37 (2005): 3-18; Martin Turcotte, "Passing on the Ancestral Language," *Canadian Social Trends* 80 (Spring 2006): 20-26.

[2] John Myhill, *Language in Jewish Society* (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2004), 23-27, 42-53. See also Janet Hadda, "Yiddish in Contemporary American Culture" in *Yiddish in the Contemporary World* ed. Gennady Estraikh and Mikhail Krutikov (Oxford, UK: Legenda--European Humanities Research Centre, 1999), 93-105.

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[4] Robert J. Brym, "The Rise and Decline of Canadian Jewry? A Socio-Demographic Profile" in *The Jews In Canada* ed. Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir, Morton Weinfeld (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 22-38; Dovid Katz, *Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish* (New York: Basic Books, 2004), 225-228.

[5] John DeVries & Frank G. Vallee, *Language Use In Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1980) [Cat. No. 99-762E], Chapter 5; Brian Harrison and Rejean Lachapelle, *Measures of Mother Tongue Vitality for Non-Official Languages in Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1990).

[6] Jay Brodbar-Nemzer, et al. "An Overview of the Canadian Jewish Community" in *The Jews in Canada* ed. Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir,

Morton Weinfeld (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 39-71; Louise Mullany, "Speech Communities," in *The Routledge Companion to Sociolinguistics* ed. Carmen Llamas, Louise Mullany, Peter Stockwell (London/ NewYork: Routledge, 2007), 84-91. In a recent book on Jewish peoplehood, Yiddish is barely mentioned and has no entry in the index, but Hebrew is touched on frequently. *Jewish Peoplehood* ed. Menachem Revivi and Ezra Kopelowitz (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2008).

[7] Charles Shahar, *Survey of Jewish Life in Montreal* Part I (Montreal: CJA Federation, 1996), 6-7. See also Charles Shahar and Howard Magonet *The Jewish Community of Canada—Part V: Immigration and Language* (Toronto: UIA Federations Canada, 2005), 24-29.

[8] Sylvia B. Fishman, *The Way Into the Varieties of Jewishness* (Woodstock, Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007), 211-216; John Myhill, *Language in Jewish Society*, 210-212.

[9] Brodbar-Nemzer et al. "Overview of the Canadian Jewish Community," 46-47, 68-70; Leo Davids, "Yiddish in Canada: Picture and Prospects" in *The Jews in Canada* ed. Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir, Morton Weinfeld (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 153-165; Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture*, Chap. 11.

[10] Leo Davids, "The Jewish Population of Canada, 1991" in *Papers in Jewish Demography 1993* ed. Sergio Della Pergola and Judith Even (Jerusalem: Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry—Hebrew University, 1997), 311-323; Leo Davids, "Ethnic Jewishness in Canada and our 2001 Census Data," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 35 (2003): 116-122; Charles Shahar, *The Jewish Community of Canada* Part VI: Issues of Jewish Identity (Toronto: UIA Federations Canada, 2006); James S. Torczyner and Shari Brotman, "The Jews of Canada: A Profile from the Census," *American Jewish Year Book 95* (New York: American Jewish Committee, 1995), 227-260.

[11] Statistics Canada, *2001 Census Dictionary* (Ottawa: Canada - Minister of Industry, 2002) [Cat. No. 92-378 XPE], 77-81, 112, 269-270.

[12] John DeVries, "Ethnic Language Maintenance and Shift"; Statistics Canada *1996 Census Dictionary* (Ottawa: Canada—Minister of Industry, 1997) [Cat. no. 92-351], 68-72.

[13] DeVries and Vallee, *Language Use In Canada*; Holmes, *Introduction to Sociolinguistics*; Myhill, *Language in Jewish Society*; Wardhaugh, *Languages in Competition.*

[14] Statistics Canada, *2001 Census Dictionary*, 15-17, 112. See Morton Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else …but Different* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001), 53-56, 367-370.

[15] See Sylvia B. Fishman *The Way*…, 187-191; Leo Davids, "Jewish Ethnicity in Canada: Measurement and Meanings" (Paper presented at the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies, Ottawa, Canada, May 25, 2009); Jack Jedwab "The Rise of the Unmeltable Canadians? Ethnic and National Belonging in Canada's Second Generation," *Canadian Diversity* 6 (2008): 25-34; Shahar, *Jewish Community …Issues of Jewish Identity*. In regard to the fading/obsolescence of ethnic origins in later generations, see also M. Boyd, "Who are the 'Canadians'? Changing Census Responses, 1986-1996," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 33 (2001): 1-24; M.A. Kalbach and Warren E. Kalbach, "Becoming Canadian: Problems of an Emerging Identity," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 31 (1991): 1-16.

[16] Leo Davids, "Yiddish in Canada: Picture and Prospects"; Leo Davids, "Yiddish and Hebrew in Canada: The Current Situation," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 32 (2000): 95-104.

[17] Louis Rosenberg, *Canada's Jews*, ed. Morton Weinfeld (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 256-257.

[18] J. Biehl, "Problems of Status and Status Change of Yiddish" in *Status Change of Languages*, ed. Ulrich Ammon and Marlis Hellinger (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1992), 332-354; Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture*, 152-154, 253; Benjamin Harshav, *The Meaning of Yiddish* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 84-87, 127-133; Mark Tolts, "Yiddish in the Former Soviet Union Since 1989: A Statistical-Demographic Analysis" in *Yiddish in the Contemporary World (Papers of the First Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish)* ed. Gennady Estraikh and Mikhail Krutikov (Oxford, UK: Legenda—European Humanities Research Centre, 1999), 133-146.

[19] Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture,* Chapter 10. See the invaluable comments on this by Dovid Katz in *Words on Fire*, 339-342, 352-354.

[20] Montreal Jewish Day Schools (at all levels) have a population total of some 7,000 students, while Toronto totals are around the 12,000 mark. See Leo Davids, "Enrolment Trends in Canadian Jewish Day Schools: What and Why?" *Journal of Jewish Education* 69 (2003): 63-68.

[21] Statistics Canada, *1981 Census Dictionary* (Ottawa: Canada—Minister of Supply and Services, 1982) [Cat. no. 99-901], 114.

[22] Leo Davids, "Yiddish in Canada: Picture and Prospects", Table 2, 155-157.

[23] All these Statistics Canada reports, from each census, are published on the web--not in printed volumes, as was done through 1991. For data on "Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration and Place of Birth …" in 2001, see http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products (table97F0009X-CCB2001002). Israeli-born immigrants to Canada numbered just 16,000 people in 2001. In 2006, however, that count rose to 21,320; this means that about 1,000 Israeli-born immigrants (net) arrived per year, in that 2001-2006 period. See "http://www12.statcom.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd…" for our 2006 source, cross-tabulating Place of Birth by Period of Immigration.

[24] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Facts and Figures 2008—Immigration Overview: Permanent and Temporary Residents", http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2008/.

[25] Brian Harrison and Louise Marmen, *Languages in Canada* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1994) [Cat. no. 96-313E], 58-61; Holmes, *Introduction to Sociolinguistics,* 61-70; Wardhaugh, *Languages in Competition,* 19-20, 28-30.

[26] See Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 478, 686-687.

[27] Mark Abley, *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 222-228; Biehl, "Status", 350, 352; Myhill, *Language in Jewish Society*, 141-143; William Shaffir, "Still Separated from the Mainstream: A Hassidic Community Revisited" *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 39 (1997): 46-62.

[28] Charles Shahar, Morton Weinfeld and Randal F. Schnoor, *Survey of the Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox Communities in Outremont and Surrounding Areas* (Montreal: Coalition of Outremont Hassidic Organizations, 1997), 10-12.

[29] Shahar *et al. Hassidic and Ultra Orthodox Communities,* 11.

[30] *Ibid.*, 12.

[31] The Ultra-Orthodox place for Torah study and prayer—women rarely enter. Usually, each Hasidic sect has its own "Bes Medresh", wherever their numbers and financial support allow this.

[32] Holmes, *Introduction to Sociolinguistics*; Mullany, "Speech Communities."

[33] Shahar *et al. Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox Communities*, 11.

[34] Dovid Katz, *Words on Fire*, 381-384.

[35] Randal F. Schnoor and Leo Davids "The 2001 Jewish Population of Canada: A First Look" (Paper presented at the Association of Canadian Jewish Studies, Halifax, N.S., Canada, June 1, 2003), Table II; Leo Davids, "Taking a Closer Look at Canada's Jewish Seniors" in *Centre for Jewish Studies Annual* 7 (Toronto: Centre for Jewish Studies—York University, 2005), 31-38, at Table II (b).

[36] Charles Shahar, *A Comprehensive Study of the Frum Community of Greater Montreal* (Montreal: Federation CJA & Ahavas Chesed, 2003), 11-20; Shahar *et al.*, *Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox Communities,* 7-10; Leo Davids, "Marital Status and Fertility among Sub-groups of Canadian Jews" in *The Jews of Canada*, ed. Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir and Morton Weinfeld (Toronto: Oxford U. Press, 1993), 315-327, at 319-321; Dovid Katz, *Words on Fire*, 375-388.

[37] Charles Shahar, *A Survey of Jewish Life in Montreal* Part I (Montreal: Federation CJA, 1996), 6-7; Charles Shahar and Randal F. Schnoor, Part II *Ibid.* (Montreal: Federation CJA, 1997), 26-33.

[38] Randal F. Schnoor and Leo Davids, "The 2001 Jewish Population …"; Leo Davids "Ethnic Jewishness …"; Charles Shahar and Susan Karpman *The Jewish Community of Canada* Part VII: The Jewish Family (Toronto: UIA Federations Canada, 2006), 1-3, 23-25.

[39] Charles Shahar, Morton Weinfeld, Randal F. Schnoor "Hassidic and Ultra-Orthodox …", 9, 15-16; Charles Shahar, *Survey of Jewish Life in Montreal* Part I, 38-40.

[40] http://www.derbay.org/calendars/Toronto lists relevant events and activities from The Friends of Yiddish, Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir, Toronto Jewish Folk Choir, Jewish Public Library of Montreal, etc.; also see http://klezmershack.com (Winnipeg), http://www.yiddishtheatre.org (Montreal), and programming by New York's *Yugntruf* (Youth for Yiddish). Weekly meetings to talk Yiddish are held in Toronto's B'nai Brith building and other venues, as are weekly story readings, singing rehearsals, and so on. Check your nearest "Canadian Yiddish Calendar" listings. To reach Friends of Yiddish, dial (416) 781-8331.