



DISSERTATIONES LINGUISTICAE UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS

1

**ESTONIAN YIDDISH AND  
ITS CONTACTS  
WITH COTERRITORIAL LANGUAGES**

**ANNA VERSCHIK**

TARTU 2000

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**ESTONIAN YIDDISH AND  
ITS CONTACTS  
WITH COTERRITORIAL LANGUAGES**

**Eesti jidiš ja  
selle kontaktid Eestis kõneldavate keeltega**

**ANNA VERSCHIK**



TARTU UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

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*...Yes, Ashkenazi Jews can live without Yiddish but I fail to see what the benefits thereof might be. (May God preserve us from having to live without all the things we c o u l d live without).*

J. Fishman (1985a: 216)

*[In Estland] gibt es heutzutage unter den Germanisten keinen Forscher, der sich ernst für das Jiddische interessiere, so daß die lokale jiddische Mundart vielleicht verschwinden wird, ohne daß man sie für die Wissenschaft fixiert hätte.*

P. Ariste (1970: 250)

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## THE TITLES OF THE ARTICLES

- I The Yiddish Dialect in Estonia (a description) — *Fenno-Ugristica* 22. *Indo-European-Uralic-Siberian Linguistic and Cultural Contacts*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 1999, 265–291.
- II On the Lexicon of Estonian Yiddish. — In press for *Studia Orientalia* 85, 1999.
- III Mõnda baltisaksa ja jidiši kontaktidest (On Baltic German — Yiddish contacts). — In press for *Keel ja Kirjandus* (in Estonian).
- IV Some aspects of Yiddish — Estonian language contacts. — In press for *Fenno-Ugristica* 23 (publication of the department of Uralistics, University of Tartu).
- V Mitmekeelsus kui juudi kogukonna elu norm (Multilingualism as a norm in a Jewish community's life). — *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1995, nr 6, 403–406 (in Estonian).
- VI Some Aspects of the Multilingualism of Estonian Jews. — Hennoste, T. (ed.), *Estonian Sociolinguistics. International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 139, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1999, 49–67.
- VII The Yiddish Language in Estonia: Past and Present. — *Journal of Baltic Studies* 1999, 30 (2), 117–128.
- VIII Estonian Jews: Integration and Language Choice. — paper presented at the conference *Ethnic Policy on the Road to Civil Society* (Riga, 15.–16.10.1998). Proceedings of the conference are to be published in 2000. See also <http://www.vm.ee/eng/index.html> (under the heading *Integration*).
- IX Jidiše kulturoitonomie in Estland (1926–1940). (Yiddish cultural autonomy in Estonia, 1926–1940) — *Di Pen*, 1998, 35 (Spring-Summer), 81–88 (in Yiddish).
- X Vegn einem in Estland gedruktn jidiš-špraxikn tekst (About one Yiddish-language text printed in Estonia). — in press for *Oksforder Tsaitšrift* (publication of Oxford University) (in Yiddish).

# INTRODUCTION

## 1. General characterization of the topic

The dialect of Yiddish spoken in Estonia (Estonian Yiddish) has received almost no scholarly attention; one can say that it has been ignored for too long because the number of the speakers is constantly decreasing. Being situated on the edge of Yiddish-speaking world and far from classical centers of Jewish traditional learning and modern Yiddishist culture, Estonia has been unjustly ignored by scholars (Mendelsohn 1983: 253). There exists some research on the history of Estonian Jewry (Amitan-Wilensky 1971, Lane 1995, Mendelsohn 1983, Nodel 1974, Parming 1979) but almost no study of dialects and languages spoken in the community. The small size of the community, its marginality in the Jewish and Yiddish-speaking world could have been the reason why such investigations have never been carried out by Jewish historians and Yiddish linguists. In Estonia itself, there is no tradition of Yiddish scholarship and only P. Ariste, a renowned polyglot, paid some attention to Yiddish (Ariste 1937, 1970, 1981), although he did not conduct any systematic research on the topic.

Estonian Yiddish belongs to North-Eastern Yiddish (NEY) dialects. Since Yiddish used to be a language spoken on the vast European territory, it is clear, that Estonian Yiddish should be viewed in a broader context of Yiddish dialects, or more precisely, in NEY context. Within NEY, Yiddish dialects spoken in the Baltic region, or Baltic Yiddish (Jacobs, ms.) are of special importance for our study. It will be demonstrated that, having developed on the basis of Courland Yiddish, an archaic dialect among NEY dialects, Estonian Yiddish has preserved some features vanished from other NEY dialects and characteristic of Courland Yiddish.

On the other hand, Yiddish in Estonia was one of the languages spoken by Estonian Jews. Jews in Estonia have always been a tiny, almost invisible and homogenous minority residing in cities and towns. It is clear that Yiddish monolingualism was / is impossible in such a situation. Therefore, one should consider Yiddish also in the linguistic context of Estonia: both from sociolinguistic point of view (language choice, language hierarchy, changes in language hierarchy etc., language policy) and from the point of view of language contacts theory (contact with coterritorial languages, borrowing, code-switching etc.). Here we deal with a unique combination of languages: Yiddish, Estonian, Baltic German, Standard German, Russian.

It was clearly indicated by Fishman (1991a: 308–309) that sociocultural history of almost any Jewish community is linked to multilingualism. Quite frequently the notion of multilingualism appears already in the title: for instance, T. Harviainen's (1991) paper on Finnish Jews is called *Jiddishiä ja venäjää, ruotsia ja suomea — juutalased Suomessa* (Yiddish and Russian, Swedish and



Finnish — Jews in Finland). There exist several macrosociolinguistic studies on various Jewish communities (Fishman 1965, Isaacs 1998, Spolsky and Cooper 1991 to name just few); however, more case-studies are needed, especially those of spoken Yiddish (Peltz 1998). In this connection we should mention a research project on Yiddish in Finland undertaken by S. Muir (Yiddish in Helsinki) and J. Hartikainen (Yiddish of former residents of Vyborg).

The current research is thus a case-study which could be important both for Yiddish linguistics and for Estonian linguistics. First of all, it will be demonstrated that multilingualism of Estonian Jews was different from that of traditional Jewish communities. Second, due to the Soviet national and language policy any objective non-biased study of minorities and minority languages was almost impossible and a serious research of Estonia's minorities is only beginning (Hennoste 1999).

Sociocultural history of Estonian Jews is quite unique in Eastern Europe (Mendelsohn 1983: 253–254, Parming 1979, Lane 1995). Unfortunately a comprehensive, up-to-date history of Estonian Jews has not been written yet. Jews appeared in Estonian history relatively late, in the 19th c. They arrived mostly from Courland and also from Lithuania. It should be emphasized that Estonia was outside of the Pale of Settlement and, thus, according to the laws of Russian Empire, closed for Jews. It was a rather urbanized, acculturated and secularized minority which differed both from the Western type (“Germans or Frenchmen of Mosaic persuasion”) and from the Eastern *štetl*-type of traditional Jews. The Jewish minority of Estonia combined features of Western Jewry (living in cities, social integration into coterritorial society, belonging to the middle-class, good command of non-Jewish languages, weakness of traditional rabbinical authority) and of Eastern Jewry (self-identification as Jews, use of Yiddish).

The period 1918–1940 in Estonian history (from the birth of the independent Republic of Estonia till the first Soviet occupation) can be described as a period of Jewish national revival: cultural autonomy gave unprecedented opportunities for minorities' life (Matsulevitš 1993). It is interesting that Jews in Estonia considered themselves rather as an ethnic minority, not as a religious group: according to the census of 1934, there were 4,302 Jews by religion and 4,434 Jews by ethnic origin from total 4,434 (*Teine rahvaloendus Eestis* 1935: 47–48, 120–121). The importance of Yiddish (and, in some circles, modern Hebrew) as Jewish languages and of Estonian as the official language of the state increased while Russian and German — the former being the official language of the Russian Empire and the latter of the powerful local nobility — became just minority languages. During this period secondary education in all these languages — Yiddish, Hebrew, Estonian, German, Russian — was available. Jewish population in Estonia before World War II was approximately 4,500 (0.4%).

Yiddish has always been an internally conflicted language and symbolized different things for its different speakers (Fishman 1991: 53, Kerler 1998). Despite of obvious unique features of Yiddishism, its growth took place and

should be considered in the context of national revival of East and Central European peoples. E. Goldsmith (1976: 261) claims justly that “at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> c., many minorities, including those of the Russian and Austrian empires, were asserting of their own national languages and cultures. Yiddish is not unique in this respect. Its achievements are similar to those of Finnish, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Flemish, Icelandic and Scottish-Gaelic”. Hebraism emerged simultaneously as a rival of Yiddishism. The conflict was accompanied every now and then by outbursts of emotions: for instance, the description of a Hebraist who burst into tears after M. Mieses had demonstrated the long history and vitality of Yiddish during Czernowitz conference in 1908 (Katz 1986: 33, King 1998: 42–43) became a classical example. Similar cases of internal struggle took place also among Estonian Jews and will be described in the current research.

The abolition of cultural autonomy in 1940 by the Soviet occupying authorities, mass deportations of 1941, Nazi occupation of Estonia, the Holocaust and — last but not least — reoccupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union and anti-minorities Soviet policy caused a disruption of normal development and a gradual decline of Yiddish. Today there are only around 500 Yiddish speakers in Estonia (total Jewish population is 3,000, of whom the indigenous minority is only 1,000). One can recall the prophetic words written by M. Laserson in 1941: “In the event that the annexed [Baltic] states should be subjected to the standard Soviet policy everything distinctive in the position of Baltic Jewry will disappear and they will be leveled down to the same status which has been the lot of millions of Russian Jews” (Laserson 1941: 284). It is evident that there is not much time left for a relevant research since the number of Yiddish speakers is rapidly decreasing.

## **2. Problems and goals**

As it was mentioned above, Estonian Yiddish should be placed in at least two contexts (that of NEY dialects and of coterritorial languages in Estonia). Taking this into consideration, we can outline the following problems.

1. Description of the dialect.
2. Within the NEY context, what general NEY features have been preserved? In what aspects does Estonian Yiddish differ from other Yiddish dialects spoken in the Baltic region (dialects of Lithuania proper and of Courland)?
3. The developments within the dialect which took place already in Estonia (contacts with coterritorial languages, e.g. Estonian and Baltic German, Russian). Mutual influences of Yiddish and coterritorial languages.
4. The realization of general processes undergoing in the Yiddishist world in Eastern Europe between the world wars (emerge of Standard Yiddish, emerge

of Yiddish-language school-system, struggle between Yiddishism and Hebraism).

5. The dynamics of the sociolinguistic situation in Estonia in 20th c. and how it affected language choice in the community.

Having accepted the above-mentioned as points of departure, we try to achieve in our research the following goals:

1. To give a detailed description of the dialect.
2. To consider the contacts between Yiddish and coterritorial languages.
3. To describe the changes in sociolinguistic situation.
4. To outline the future developments.

Before we turn to our data and methodology, there are several remarks to be made. First of all, we shall pay attention mostly to Yiddish-Estonian and Yiddish-Baltic German contacts, while contacts with Russian are described more generally. This is due to the fact that, in general, Yiddish-Russian contacts are a much larger topic which requires a separate research; besides, significant contacts between the two languages took place not in Estonia, but in other parts of Russian Empire and later in the Soviet Union. One should distinguish between the Slavic component in Yiddish and Russian loans. The latter entered the speech of Estonian Jews rather as Sovietisms in the form of momental borrowings.

The topic of Yiddishist and Hebraist struggle is mentioned frequently in the present study and some most illuminating examples of the conflict are described. However, the more detailed research of the conflict requires a profound knowledge of the Yiddishist world between the world wars in all three Baltic States and elsewhere in Eastern Europe (especially in Poland). Without such a general context the study of Yiddishist-Hebraist controversy would inevitably remain fragmentary. Thus, the detailed research of Yiddishist-Hebraist conflict in Estonia is beyond the range of our study.

Unfortunately we cannot compare samples of today's Estonian Yiddish with those of any earlier period. To our best knowledge, no field work has ever been conducted previously and, therefore, a lot of valuable data has been lost forever.

### **3. Data and methodology**

The present research is based on data obtained from recorded interviews of 28 informants (22 females and 6 males). All the informants except two were born in Estonia and have at least one parent born in Estonia. The story of the two informants (both females) born abroad is as follows. One was born in Romania where her parents worked temporarily (her parents were not born and brought up in Romania and were not speakers of Romanian Yiddish). The

family moved to Estonia when she was a little child. In the family Russian and German were spoken, and she picked up the kind of Yiddish spoken by Estonian Jews. Her German has also typical phonetic features characteristic of Baltic German. As for the second informant, she was born in Riga because her family had to stay there for some time. The informant's father was born in Estonia. The family moved back soon after the informant's birth. That are the reasons why we decided to include these informants into our study and consider them as representative of the indigenous minority and authentic speakers of Estonian Yiddish.

The interviews were carried out by the author in 1995–1998. Alongside with the interviews the author made her observations during the sessions of Tallinn Yiddish Club *Fraint fun jidiš* as well as in the process of everyday-life communication with Yiddish-speakers.

The informants were asked to tell their life story and to describe their experience as Yiddish-speakers. There was only one case when a Yiddish-speaker from Tallinn refused to be recorded; all others felt enthusiastic about the possibility to speak Yiddish and to make comments on various matters. It should be emphasized that all the informants are conscious of their multilingualism and, so to speak, have a high degree of linguistic awareness: they discuss such issues as language policy, Yiddish-Hebrew controversy, protection of the Estonian language, problems of linguistic integration of Russophones and even the language use of former Estonian émigrés who have returned to Estonia. All interviews were conducted in Yiddish, although sporadic code-switching did occur. However, sessions of the Yiddish Club gave a better opportunity to observe code-switching rather than recorded interviews.

How representative is the group of informants? In the present situation when Yiddish is a declining language in Estonia one cannot afford the luxury of choosing the most suitable informants (our youngest informant was born in 1963) and therefore we tried to record any Yiddish-speaker who agreed to give an interview.

The data obtained in the course of the interviews and observations was analyzed in the light of classical and contemporary descriptions of Courland Yiddish and NEY dialects (M. Weinreich 1923, Z. Kalmanovitsh 1926, J. Mark 1951, Jacobs 1990, 1998) and as well in the light of language contact theory (U. Weinreich 1953, Grosjean 1983, Lehiste 1988, Thomason and Kaufmann 1988) and Jewish / Yiddish sociolinguistics (Fishman 1985b, Gold 1981, 1985). It is clear that the present study cannot provide an equally thorough analysis of all aspects; however, we hope that placing the object of our research into more than one context (Yiddish dialectology, Estonian sociolinguistics, general language contacts theory etc.) allows, on one hand, to avoid fragmentation and isolation, and, on the other hand, to outline directions of further study.

#### 4. Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation consists of ten articles in three languages (English, Estonian and Yiddish), the summary where the most important conclusions will be presented, the list of informants and text samples. Two articles are dedicated to the description of the dialect (Estonian Yiddish) in the NEY context. Two articles focus on the contacts with the coterritorial languages (Estonian and Baltic German). The rest of the articles deal with the dynamic of the sociolinguistic situation (changes in the status of Yiddish in Estonia, language choice, general character of Jewish multilingualism and its particular manifestations in Estonia etc.).

We considered it necessary to present our topic to different groups of scholars, both in Estonia and abroad. This circumstance is connected with certain difficulties because the background knowledge of different scholarly audiences differs a lot. For instance, Yiddish linguistics is largely unknown to Estonian linguists and a serious study of minorities is just in its initial stage. On the contrary, for scholars who have a necessary background knowledge in Yiddish linguistics or in Jewish studies in general Estonia and its Jews are *terra incognita*. This is the reason why most of the articles in the present dissertation are provided with an introduction or with a description of the historical background.

## SISSEJUHATUS

Eestis elavate rahvusvähemuste kõneldavate keelte uurimine on alles lapsekingades. Võimalik, et niisugusel asjade seisul on mitu põhjust: nõukogude ideoloogia ja rahvuspoliitika, põlisvähemuste hääbumine Saksa ja Nõukogude okupatsioonide tagajärjel, hiljuti taasisesiseisvunud rahva loomulik huvi eelkõige omaenda probleemide ja ajaloo vastu, aga ka kahe suurema — eesti- ja venekeelse — keelekollektiivi/kogukonna olemasolu, mistõttu teised, palju väiksemad rühmad jäävad kahjuks varju.

Juudid on üks Eesti põlisvähemusi, kelle ajalugu ja keel on paraku nii Eesti kui ka välismaa uurijate tähelepanust ilma jäänud. Seda võib seletada järgmiselt: Euroopa juudi kultuuriloo seisukohalt on Eesti perifeeria, seal elanud/elav juudi kogukond on sotsiokultuurilises mõttes ebattüüpiline, juutide arv Eestis on alati olnud väike (suurim näitaja 0,4% Eesti rahvastikust enne Teist maailmasõda). Teiste, markantsemate vähemusgruppide taustal on juudid peaaegu nähtamatud. Võib siiski nentida, et Eesti juutide ajaloo uurimisel on vedanud rohkem kui nende keel(t)e uuringutel. Kui naabermaade — Läti ja eelkõige Leedu — jidiši murrete kohta on kas või mõningad ülevaated ja nüüdseks klassikaliseks muutunud kirjeldused, siis Eestis kõneldava jidiši e Eesti jidiši kohta need puuduvad. Välismaa teadlased pole seni Eesti jidiši vastu huvi tundnud ega teadvustanud selle olemasolu (erandiks on N. Jacobi tööd); Eestis on jidišiga mõneti tegelnud P. Ariste, kuid sellegipoolest süstemaatilisest uurimisest rääkida ei saa. Samas on juutide, iseäranis jidiši keele kõnelejate arv Eestis kogu aeg kahanemas, ja 15–20 aasta pärast ei ole enam võimalik saada mingit ettekujutust Eesti jidišist ja keelekasutusest juutide hulgas.

Käesolev väitekiri on katse päästa, mida veel päästa annab. Ühelt poolt on esitatud Eesti jidiši murde kirjeldus, teiselt poolt on käsitletud sotsiolingvistilist situatsiooni ja selle muutust läbi aegade. Antud olukorras on otstarbekas vaadelda Eesti jidišit mitmes kontekstis: 1) kogu kirdejidiši murrete (iseäranis Baltikumis kõneldud/kõneldavate jidiši murrete taustal) ja 2) Eesti sotsiolingvistilises kontekstis (keelte hierarhia, keelepoliitika, keelevalik, keelekontaktid).

Juudid asusid Eestisse peamiselt Kuramaalt 19. sajandi alguses. Olles võrsunud nn Kuramaa jidiši murde põhjal, on Eesti jidiš säilitanud tähelepanuväärseid arhailisi jooni, mis on muudelt kirdejidiši aladelt kadunud (mõnede diftongide realiseerimine, pikkade-lühikeste vokaalide opositsioon, osa sõnavarast). Tähelepanu on pööratud ka olulistele kirdejidiši joontele, on jälgitud nende säilimist/muutumist/kadu. Võrdlusmaterjaliks on “klassikalised” kirdejidiši murrete kirjeldused (Leedu jidiši kohta vt Mark 1951; Kuramaa jidiši kohta vt Kalmanovitsh 1926, Weinreich 1923; Baltikumis kõneldavate jidiši murrete üldpildi kohta vt Jacobs (käsikiri); leedu-jidiši kontaktidest vt Lemchen 1995).

Eesti jidiši ja teiste keelte kontaktid on samuti huvipakkuvad. Esiteks, erinevalt tüüpilisest Ida-Euroopa juutkonnast ei elanud Eesti ja Kuramaa juudid

slaavi keelte ja rahvaste ümbruses. Ajalooliselt mängis nendel aladel suurt rolli hoopis saksa keel. Samas ei toimunud aga Eestis ja Lätis kunagi täielikku keelelist assimilatsiooni nagu Lääne-Euroopas. Enamasti kõneldi (balti)saksa keelt jidiši kõrval, mitte selle asemel. Seetõttu leidub Eesti ja Kuramaa jidišis hulk alam- ja baltisaksa laene, mõjutusi foneetikas ja vähesel määral ka morfoloogias. Omakorda on jidiš avaldanud mõju baltisaksa sõnavarale. Baltisaksa ja jidiši kontaktid on tähtsad ka sellepärast, et jidiš on arenenud siiski keskülemsaksa murretest ning Kuramaa ja Eesti jidiš on ainsad kirdemurded, mis on alamsaksa murretega regulaarselt kokku puutunud. Jidiši laenudest baltisaksa keeles on kirjutanud V. Kiparsky (1936), kuid baltisaksa leksikonides leidub kas etümologiseerimata või valesti etümologiseeritud jidiši laene. Huvitav on ka tõsiasi, et tänini kõnelevad mõned Eesti juudid baltisaksa sugemetega saksa keelt või rohkete alamsaksa laenudega jidiši murret.

Eesti-jidiši keelekontaktide ajalugu ei ole kuigi pikk. Eesti kirjakeeles leidub vähene arv laene jidiši keelest (Ariste 1981: 158–159), kuid Eesti juutide eesti kõnekeeles on selliseid laene rohkem. Täiesti ootuspäraselt kõnelevad juudid omavahel mõnda mittejuudi keelt teisiti, kui selle keele tavakõnelejad (näiteks juutide inglise keele kohta vt Gold 1985). Eesti jidišis leidub teatud arv integreerunud laene eesti keelest, samuti juhulaene. Pidev koodivahetus on Eesti juutide seas suhtlemisnormiks, seetõttu vaatleme ka jidiši-eesti koodivahetuse näiteid.

Jidiši ja vene keelekontaktid on palju laialdasem teema, mida siinkohal sügavuti ei puudutata. Kõnealused kontaktid toimusid peamiselt mitte Eestis, vaid endise nn asustusvööndi territooriumil Vene impeeriumis, hiljem Venemaal ja mujal Nõukogude Liidus. Kindlasti tuleb eristada vanu laene slaavi keeltest (nn slaavi komponent jidišis) hilisematest vene laenudest ja sovetismidest. Viimased võivad figureerida Eesti juutide kõnes juhulaenudena, kui kõneldakse vastaval teemal, või hoopis koomilise efekti taotlemisel (ka venestunud juutide puuduliku jidiši keele matkimisel).

Mitmekeelsus on juudi kogukonnale omane ilming. Iga juudi kogukonna sotsiolingvistilisel uurimisel tuleb sellega arvestada (Fishman 1991a: 308–309). On terve hulk uurimusi Ameerika ja Iisraeli kogukondade kohta (vt näiteks Fishman 1965, Isaacs 1998, Spolsky and Cooper 1991), kuid kahjuks on Balti riikide juutide mitmekeelsus jäänud tähelepanuta. Konkreetselt Eestist rääkides peab rõhutama, et Eestis on juutide mitmekeelsuse põhjused teistsugused kui traditsioonilistes Ida-Euroopa juutide kogukondades, kus toimis triglossia (aramea ja heebrea keel kõrges ja jidiši keel madalas funktsioonis) või range funktsionaalne jaotus (heebrea keel liturgia keelena, jidiši keel rühmasisese ja asukohamaa keel rühmavälise kõnekeelena, mille oskus juutide hulgas varieerus olenevalt vajadustest, ühiskondlikust positsioonist jms). Kui mujal oli jidiši ükskeelsus võimalik (lihtrahva hulgas, kes heebrea keelt ei osanud ja suhtles asukohamaa rahvaga minimaalselt), siis Eestis oli see täiesti võimatu grupi väiksuse tõttu. Traditsiooniline rabiinlik judaism ja kogukondlik eluviis ei olnud

Eestis kunagi tugev ja arvestatav, seetõttu tavaskeem siin ei tööta ning mitmekeelsus on teistsuguse loomuga.

Et juudi vähemusrühm Eestis on olnud alati üsna väike, olid kontaktid ülejäänud rahvaga vältimatud. Eesti keele oskus oli hädavajalik kas või igapäevasuhtlemise tasemel. Vene impeeriumis tohtisid juudid elada ainult kindlal alal, nn asustusvööndis, kuhu Eesti ei kuulunud. Asustusvööndis kujunes välja juudi asunduse tüüp — *štetl* (< jidiši *štetl* 'väike linn'), kus juudid moodustasid tihti 50% elanikkonnast või isegi rohkem. Eesti ei kuulunud aga asustusvööndisse ja *štetl* oli siin tundmatu. Enamik Eesti juute elas Tallinnas ja Tartus. Enne Eesti iseseisvumist mängis *Kultursprache* rolli saksa, mõnes peres vene keel. Pärast Eesti Vabariigi sünni muutus olukord radikaalselt nii eestlaste kui ka kõigi vähemuste jaoks. Eesti keel muutus riigikeeleks, vähemused said aga kultuurautonoomia õiguse, mis andis võimaluse kujundada omakeelne haridussüsteem. Niisiis muutusid saksa ja vene keel vähemuskeelteks. Kultuurautonoomia ajendas juutide keskel midagi rahvusliku ärkamise taolist. Saksa ja vene keele tähtsus vähenes, eesti ja rahvuskeel(t)e oma suurenes.

Siinkohal olgu mainitud ilmingud, mis leidsid aset juudi maailmas 20. sajandi alguses ja mille mõju jätkus kuni Teise maailmasõjani. Jidiši sekulaarse natsionalismi areng, Tšernovtšõ konverents 1908. a, jidiši keele standardiseerimine, moodsa uusheebreakeelse sionistliku kultuuri teke, jidišismi ja hebraismi võitlus mõjutasid ka Eesti juute. Kahjuks puudub üldine uurimus jidišismi ja hebraismi võitluse kohta Ida-Euroopas, on vaid üksikuid kirjeldusi. Selge, et jidišismi ja hebraismi võitlust Eestis tuleb vaadelda kui osa Ida-Euroopa juutide hulgas toimunud. Samas peab arvestama tollaegse Eesti keelepoliitilise kontekstiga. Väitekirjas on seda teemat mõnevõrra puudutatud, esitatud näiteid ja fakte, kuid jidišismi ja hebraismi võitluse uurimine nõuab kogu Ida-Euroopa olukorra tundmist, seetõttu jääb selle teema üksikasjalik käsitus väitekirja raamidest väljapoole.

Väitekirjas pööratakse tähelepanu keelesituatsiooni muutumisele/muutmisele Eestis 20. sajandi jooksul. Eesti iseseisvuse ja juudi kultuurautonoomia järsk kaotamine, Saksa ja Nõukogude okupatsioon, holokaust, küüditamised ja Nõukogude rahvuspoliitika on põhjustanud järjepidevuse kaotuse, juudi omakeelse haridussüsteemi kao, isolatsiooni muust jidišikeelsest maailmast ja eesti- või venekeelse tuleviku sundvaliku. Pärast 1945. a on Eestisse ümber asunud juute mujalt Nõukogude Liidust, eelkõige Venemaalt. See rühm ei kuulu aga põlisvähemuse, vaid nn venekeelse elanikkonna hulka, tema ajalugu ja sotsiolingviline olukord erineb põlisvähemuse omadest ning seda siinkohal ei käsitleta.

Tuleb kurbusega nentida, et palju väärtuslikku materjali on igaveseks kaotsi läinud. Sellepärast ei saa tänapäeval lubada endale valida sobivamate ja vähem sobivate keelejuhtide vahel, vaid tuleb koguda materjali, mis koguda annab ja nii kaua, kui kogumine on veel võimalik. Keelejuhtide hulgas on ka selliseid, kes oskavad jidišit passiivselt (räägivad vähe, kuid saavad aru).

Materjali on kogutud 28 keelejuhilt (22 naist ja 6 meest) ajavahemikul 1995–1998. Keelejuhte paluti rääkida linti oma elust ja kogemustest (vabas vormis).



Igat keelejuhti on lindistatud 1–3 t. Peale selle on autor teinud märkmeid Tallinna jidiši klubis. Kahjuks oli lindistamine klubi istungitel võimatu ning tuli leppida pelga kirjapanekuga. Samuti on andmeid saadud igapäevasest suhtlemisest jidiši kõnelejatega.

Väitekiri koosneb kümnest artiklist. Osa (2) käsitleb Eesti jidišit kogu kirdejidiši kontekstis. Kaks artiklit on pühendatud Eesti jidiši kontaktidele ümbritsevate keeltega (vastavalt eesti ja baltisaksa keelele). Ülejäänud artiklite teemaks on juudi mitmekeelsuse eri aspektid (nii üldine ülevaade kui ka olukord Eestis), keelelise situatsiooni muutus, jidiš Eestis läbi aegade, jidiši kirjaoskuse langus. Tähtsamad järeldused on esitatud kokkuvõttes. Lisatud on keelejuhtide nimekiri ja murdetekstide näidised.

Artiklid on kolmes: inglise, jidiši ja eesti keeles. Autor on pidanud vajalikuks oma uurimisteema tutvustamist eri lugejaskondadele, seetõttu on enamik artikleid pikema sissejuhatava osaga, kus räägitakse Eesti juutide olukorra spetsiifikast. Materjali esitamise raskus seisneb selles, et eri lugejaskonnal on sootuks erisugused taustteadmised. Eesti keeleteadlased on teadlikud Eesti sotsiolingvistilisest olukorrast ja Eesti ajaloost, kuid vähesed neist tunnevad juudi üldajalugu ning Eesti juutide ja jidiši uurimusse puutuvaid seiku. Jidišistid ja muud huvitatud keeleteadlased välismaal tunnevad jidiši dialektoloogiat, juudi makrosotsiolingvistikat, on kursis jidiši mitmekeelsusega USA-s ja Iisraelis, kuid ei tunne Eesti ega Eesti juutide ajalugu. Sellest johtub artiklite sissejuhatavate osade mõningane kattuvus, kuid rõhuasetused eesti- ja muukeelsetes artiklites on erinevad.

Autor loodab, et uurimisteema paigutamine eri kontekstidesse (jidiši murrete kontekst, juudi sotsiolingvistika, jidiš Baltikumis, Eesti sotsiolingvistika, Eesti vähemused) lubab vältida isoleeritust ja killustatust ning samas määratleda tulevaste uurimisuundade perspektiive.

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## **PUBLICATIONS**



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## THE YIDDISH DIALECT IN ESTONIA (A DESCRIPTION)

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### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. General remarks<sup>1</sup>

The dialect of Yiddish spoken in Estonia (hereafter Estonian Yiddish = EstY) belongs to Northeastern Yiddish (NEY) group of Yiddish dialects. EstY is also a part of what Jacobs (ms.) calls Baltic Yiddish which includes Yiddish dialects of Courland and Lithuania. While all other dialects of NEY have received at least some scholarly attention, EstY has been practically neglected. Only two informants from Tartu (location no. 58265) have been interviewed for LCAAJ (Herzog et al. 1992). Estonia is usually absent from Yiddish dialectologic maps (with some rare exceptions such as Weinreich 1958 : 230). Due to historical and political circumstances (the Holocaust, the unavailability of sources in Eastern Europe for scholars from the West) the method "dialectology at a distance" has been the basis for research conducted for LCAAJ. However, it is still possible to do a valuable fieldwork *afn ort*. In our case it is also necessary: today EstY is on the verge of extinction and, as Ariste (1970 : 250) rendered it, it may disappear without having been investigated.

#### 1.2. Departure points and goals

The present article is an attempt of systematic description of the dialect. There are several reasons why EstY deserves scholarly attention:

- it is a declining dialect with 500–600 speakers only;
- EstY is a branch of Courland Yiddish (see discussion below) and has preserved Courland Yiddish (hereafter CourLY) archaic phonological features such as distinction between long and short vowels and quality of certain diphthongs;
- along with CourLY, it is the only NEY dialect which has been in contact with Baltic German and, differently from other Yiddish dialects, contains lexical items of Low German origin;
- EstY has developed in a unique socio-cultural setting outside of the Pale of Settlement in urban environment where Jews constituted a tiny, almost invisible, worldly and highly acculturated minority (Mendelsohn 1983 : 253–254; Lane 1995; Verschik 1997; Verschik 1998a);
- contacts with Slavic languages and cultures have been minimal, while contacts between EstY and other co-territorial languages (Baltic German and especially Estonian) have played a great role. These circumstances have definitely influenced the lexicon and, to some extent, phonology and morphology of EstY (see discussion below).

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Dr. Neil Jacobs (the Ohio State University) for making available his unpublished manuscript "Yiddish in the Baltic region". I also thank Prof. Tapani Harviainen, Prof. Jorma Koivulehto (University of Helsinki) and Dr. Jüri Viikberg (Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn) for their support and advice.

Thus, the goal of the present article is to outline the most important points in the dialect formation as well as to describe EstY phonology, morphology and lexicon. The dialect should be viewed, on the one hand, in the NEY context (with special reference to CourlY), and among co-territorial languages, on the other.

The present article is based on the data obtained by the author in the course of interviews conducted in 1995–1998 (28 informants) as well as on personal observation of speech behavior among Yiddish-speaking Jews and on the Yiddish-language press published in Estonia between the World Wars.

## 2. Dialect formation

### 2.1. Basis of discussion

Jews settled in Estonia relatively late at the beginning of the 19th c.<sup>2</sup>, mainly in the two largest cities Tallinn (Reval) and Tartu (Dorpat)<sup>3</sup>. Jews arrived from Courland and, to some extent, from Lithuania rather than from other traditional areas of Jewish residence, bringing their dialect along (Ariste 1970 : 250). During last 100–150 years it developed in contact with Estonian and was subject of its lexical (and, to lesser extent, phonological and morphological) influence (Verschik 1997). Thus EstY is a young sub-dialect.

Before we turn to the discussion of the dialect formation, it is important to take into account the following aspects:

- EstY is based on CourlY and has developed in similar socio-cultural environment; this is the reason why CourlY formation and features are of a great significance for the present study;
- CourlY stayed in a relative isolation from other dialects and thus has preserved archaic features (mainly in phonology);
- the impact of Baltic German on the lexicon of both dialects and, to some extent, to phonology is rather important;
- the contact with Slavic peoples, languages and cultures was much less than in case of Yiddish-speakers from other areas; this circumstance is reflected in the lexicon. Slavisms found in CourlY and in EstY are rather old. It is necessary to distinguish between Slavisms and more recent Russian loans, especially Sovietisms which are not to be discussed in the present study;
- Estonia has never been a land of traditional Jewish learning and strict observance; the Jews were acculturated, urban and multilingual. German *Kultursprache* played a major role in the Baltic region in general and in the urban setting, in particular. These are the reasons why many words of Semitic (Hebrew and Aramaic) origin have been substituted by items of Germanic origin (see section 5. Lexicon, also Verschik 1998b).

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<sup>2</sup> Some Jews are known to have settled in Tallinn as early as the 14th c. (Jokton 1993; Lane 1995 : 3) but these are individual cases and the community was not formed before 1829. The history of Estonian Jews is not to be discussed in the present article; for the history see Jokton (1992), Lane (1995), Mendelsohn (1983), Nodel (1974), Parming (1979), Verschik (1998a).

<sup>3</sup> To my best knowledge, the Jewish toponymics of Estonia has not been investigated; still some patterns can be outlined: in the beginning of the century German toponyms (e.g. Reval for Tallinn, Dorpat for Tartu, Valk for Valga etc.) were preferred, later in the 1920s and 1930s both variants were in use (it can be observed in Yiddish periodicals printed in Estonia). In some cases the use of Estonian toponym evoked transliteration problems since Yiddish has no equivalent of Estonian *ä*, *ö*, *ü*, *õ* and diphthongs. Today nobody says Reval for Tallinn but, interestingly, Dorpat for Tartu is still used.



## 2.2. Courland Yiddish and its status among NEY dialects

According to Katz (1983 : 1022) Eastern Yiddish group of dialects is subdivided into Southern Yiddish (SY) and NEY. SY is not relevant for the current discussion and therefore we shall focus on NEY only.

Bin-Nun (1973 : 104) gives a detailed scheme of Yiddish dialects and divides NEY further into Lithuanian-Byelorussian Yiddish (*Litauisch-weißrussisches Jiddisch*) and Courland Yiddish (*Kurländisches Jiddisch*). In his general characteristic of NEY (p. 98–99) Bin-Nun states that the differences between the NEY dialects are relatively young and three northern dialects (Yiddish of Estonia, Latvia and Kaunas), each in its own way, stand closer to CourlY than to any other dialects.

However, the division of NEY into Lithuanian-Byelorussian and Courland Yiddish poses certain questions. First of all, this scheme does not show genetic relations between the dialects: as it was demonstrated by Lemchen (1995, see discussion below), CourlY is a branch of a Yiddish dialect spoken in (ethnographic) Lithuania, so-called Zameter Yiddish (hereafter ZY). It is also important to stress that Jewish and non-Jewish geography do not coincide in many cases, i.e. Jewish *Lite* is not equal to *Lietuva*, *Litwa*, *Litauen* (see Jacobs ms.). Therefore, in order to avoid confusion it seems more convenient to follow Mark's (1951 : 440) classification of NEY dialects. According to Mark, NEY can be divided into Byelorussian Yiddish (*Suvalker*) and dialects of Lithuanian proper. The former is not relevant for the current discussion; as for the latter, there is an important difference between ZY (Yiddish *Zamet*, Lithuanian *Zemaitija*) and *Stam-Litviš* 'plain Lithuanian Yiddish'.

There is a cultural and linguistic difference between ZY and non-Zameter Yiddish. Mark (1951 : 442) shows that ZY contains more Semitisms than other NEY dialects, while *Stam-Litviš* contains more Slavisms than ZY. The most important distinctive feature of ZY is, however, the preservation of some original diphthongs and the opposition between short and long vowels. According to observations made by Jacobs (ms.), the more Yiddish approaches the Baltic region, the more we see the maintenance of the earlier state of affairs (vowel length, realization of diphthongs).

The status of CourlY within the NEY group has been a subject of scholarly discussion for some time. To my best knowledge, the first scholarly description of CourlY was completed by M. Weinreich (1923), in which he emphasized that the dialect was often ignored, regarded as insignificant or, due to the importance of German in the region, was often wrongly considered as a sort of German. Weinreich drew attention to distinctive features of CourlY and stressed its uniqueness and relative isolatedness.

On the contrary, Kalmanovitsh (1926) argued against the isolatedness of CourlY claiming that it contained some recent Slavisms. Mark (1951 : 440) refers to Kalmanovitsh and agrees that CourlY does not differ much from ZY and thus he tends to overlook the importance of CourlY for NEY group.

Lemchen's point of view (1995 : 19–20) seems to us more elaborated and systematic. He analyses the history of Courland Jews in the context of both Jewish and general history. Jewish presence in Courland dates back to the 17th c. (Lemchen 1995 : 19–20; Bin-Nun 1973 : 98; according to Ariste 1937, to the 16th c.). Some Lithuanianisms can be found both in ZY and in CourlY, which proves that there was a time when ZY and CourlY constituted linguistically an integral whole. Since 1829 Courland was closed for Jewish immigration which fact turned CourlY into a relatively isolated dialect. This integrity started to split gradually after 1829. Thus, Lithuanianisms found in CourlY date back to the 18th c. Later some of these

Lithuanianisms entered EstY via CourlY as an “inheritance” from previous times when CourlY and ZY had constituted the same dialect (Ariste 1970). Very few Lithuanianisms in EstY have survived to the present day (see Verschik 1998b).

Kalmanovitsh’s argument concerning Slavisms in CourlY, he continues, is not entirely convincing because a certain number of recent Slavisms is not a sufficient proof of constant contacts with other Yiddish dialects. It is not altogether clear which are the new Slavisms Kalmanovitsh means and, therefore, it is difficult to find out how these Slavisms entered the dialect.

Thus, CourlY is a branch of ZY, and EstY is a branch of the former. Ariste (1970 : 250) calls EstY “eine Spielart vom kurländischen Jiddisch”. It will be demonstrated below that EstY shares archaic phonologic features with CourlY and ZY, as well as a part of lexicon. For both EstY and CourlY the cultural and linguistic impact of Baltic German played a great role.

### 3. Phonology

#### 3.1. Vocalism: historical background <sup>4</sup>

##### 3.1.1. General remarks

The system of stressed vowels is crucial for Yiddish dialectology: the borders between Yiddish dialects are drawn according to distribution of certain monophthongs and diphthongs (so-called *u*-dialect and *o*-dialect, *ai*-dialect and *ei*-dialect). Now we turn to the vowel system of EstY.

The status of EstY among NEY dialects was explained above; thus, the vowel system has to be viewed in the NEY context with particular attention towards CourlY and ZY vocalism. That is the reason why the reconstruction of Proto-Eastern Yiddish (PEY) stressed vowel system as well as that of NEY and its various subtypes is relevant for our discussion.

##### 3.1.2. Two-digit symbols

The two-digit symbol system for stressed vowels was introduced by M. Weinreich (1960) and gained general acceptance in Yiddish dialectology. The system works in the following way (Herzog 1965 : 228):

1) The first digit (1–5) shows the quality of a sound in Proto-Yiddish (PY): 1 = *a*, 2 = *e*, 3 = *i*, 4 = *o*, 5 = *u*.

2) The second digit shows the following:

1 – originally a short monophthong;

2 – originally a long monophthong;

3 – an original short monophthong in an open syllable subjected to early lengthening;

4 – the nucleus of an original diphthong;

5 – in *e*-series only: an apparently closed *e* with special distribution.

Thus, *ai<sub>1</sub>* means that a PY diphthong with the nucleus *i* is realised in a certain variety as *ai*; *a<sub>1</sub>* means that the PY short *a* is realized as a short *a* etc. Since 02 and 03 series have merged in all known varieties of Yiddish, there is no need to distinguish between vowels 12 and 13 and so forth (Herzog 1965 : 161; Katz 1983 : 1021). In order to illustrate how the two-digit system works we list below the following examples of NEY stressed vowels (from Herzog 1965 : 161):

11                    *šabes* ‘sabbath’

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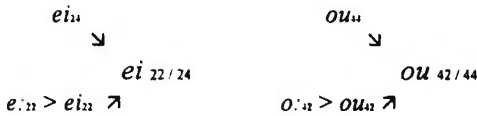
<sup>4</sup> The present discussion of historic vocalism is based on the methods elaborated by M. Weinreich (1960), U. Weinreich (1958), M. Herzog (1965) and generally used in Yiddish linguistics.

22, 23, 24	<i>gein</i> 'to go'
25	<i>betn</i> 'to request'
31	<i>bin</i> '(I) am'
32, 33	<i>tif</i> 'deep'
34	<i>vain</i> 'wine'
41	<i>kol</i> 'voice'
42, 43, 44	<i>heizn</i> 'trousers'
51	<i>fun</i> 'of'
52, 53	<i>hun</i> 'chicken'
54	<i>hoit</i> 'skin'

### 3.1.3. Proto-Northeastern Yiddish (PNEY)

The split between Proto-Western and Proto-Eastern Yiddish (PEY) is characterized by the following important changes in the stressed vowel system (Katz 1983 : 1024): diphthongization of *e:u* and *o:u* and their merge with *ei:u* and *ou:u*, respectively, i.e.:

**Table 1. Crucial changes in PEY stressed vowel system**



Western Yiddish is not relevant for the present discussion and will not be under our consideration.

According to Herzog (1965 : 164) in order to derive PEY from Proto-Yiddish (PY) it is necessary to take into account the following changes in addition to diphthongization and merge described above:

- half-lowering: *uu:u* > *au:u*; *ii:u* > *ai:u* (*\*huus* > *haus* 'house', *\*viin* > *vain* 'wine');
- raising: *a:u* > *o:u* (*\*ba:rd* > *bo:rd* 'beard');
- fronting: *ou:u/uu* > *öü:u/uu* (*\*hout* > *höüt* 'skin').

Herzog (1965 : 163–164) suggests that PEY and PNEY are identical and reconstructs the stressed vowel system of PNEY as follows (we present it with some modifications):

**Table 2. Stressed vowel system of PNEY**

<i>i:u</i>	<i>i:u</i>	<i>u:u</i>	<i>u:u</i>
<i>e:u</i>	<i>e:u</i>	<i>öü:u/uu</i>	<i>o:u/uu</i>
		<i>a:u</i>	
	<i>ei:u/uu</i>	<i>ai:u</i>	<i>au:u</i>

The reconstruction of 42/44 as *öü* in PNEY is necessary in order to account for *öü* in CourlY (and, as we see further, in EstY as well). U. Weinreich (1958 : 252)

assumes that the diphthong in PNEY could be *öü* or *öu*.<sup>5</sup> Herzog (1965 : 163) shows that the reconstruction of *oiu* would lead us to the assumption of a later sub-regional fronting-rounding in NEY (*oi* > *öü*), which is an unlikely development in the absence of front-rounding elsewhere in NEY; neither any connection with nor the influence of Baltic German *öü* has been discovered.

Now let us consider the changes which took place in NEY in general and in NEY varieties, in particular.

### 3.1.4. Stressed vowel system of NEY and NEY types

“Classical” NEY is usually characterized by the following changes:

- collapse of the opposition between long and short vowels and a later merge of vowels *e*<sub>11</sub> and *e*<sub>13</sub>, *i*<sub>11</sub> and *i*<sub>13</sub>, *u*<sub>11</sub> and *u*<sub>13</sub>, *o*<sub>11</sub> and *o*<sub>12/13</sub> (Katz 1983 : 1030);
- delabialization of *öü*<sub>11/14</sub> > *ei* and merge with *ei*<sub>12/13</sub>.

The following scheme demonstrates the “classical” NEY system of stressed vowels.

**Table 3. General stressed vowel system of NEY**

i <sub>11/13</sub>	u <sub>11/13</sub>
e <sub>11/13</sub>	o <sub>11/12/13</sub>
	a <sub>11</sub>
ei <sub>12/13/14</sub>	ai <sub>14</sub> öi <sub>14</sub>

However, it is necessary to consider various NEY types which can be distinguished on the basis of certain criteria, such as:

- whether the loss of length and merge of vowels 31–32, 21–25, 51–52, 41–12/13 occurred in a given variety;
- the fate of the vowel 42/44 (whether delabialization occurred, if yes, was it full or partial);
- the realization of the vowel 54 (in various types of NEY as *au*, *ou*, *oi*, *ui* etc.).

Using these criteria, U. Weinreich (1958 : 249 ff.) describes three main types of NEY: 1) the Vilna type (with the Vitebsk and Mogilev subtypes), 2) the Samogitian type and 3) the Courland type. The subtypes of the Vilna type are outside the territory under consideration and thus can be omitted.

Under the “classical” NEY description the Vilna type is usually meant. The Samogitian type (or, as it is called above, ZY) differs from the former in the realization of vowels 22/24, 42/44 and 54. The delabialization of 42/44 was only partial: *öü* (*öu*) > *eu*; thus, *ei*<sub>12/13</sub> did not merge with *eu*<sub>12/13</sub> in the Samogitian type: *heim* ‘home’, *breut* ‘bread’, cf. Vilna *heim* ‘home’, *breit* ‘bread’; the realization of vowel 54 is *ou*: *bowx* ‘stomach’, *moul* ‘mouth’, cf. Vilna *boix* ~ *buix* ‘stomach’, *moil* ~ *muil* ‘mouth’.

The Courland type is different from the others because the system of long-short vowels was preserved intact and the merge of long and short vowels did not occur. The vowel 42/44 was not subjected to delabialization and preserved its quality as *öü*: *öüg* ‘eye’, *bröüt* ‘bread; the vowel 54 is realized as *au*: *haus* ‘house’, *maul*

<sup>5</sup> The quality of the vowel 42/44 was a subject for argument between M. Weinreich (1923 : 200–201) and Kalmanovitsh (1926 : 167). According to the former, the diphthong sounds as *öi*, the latter disagrees categorically and insists on *öu*. It is possible, however, that there were (are) variations in the pronunciation of the diphthong ranging from *öü* (*öu*) to *öi*. In EstY it is pronounced as *öü* or *öu*. Note variations in pronunciation of the diphthong in Baltic German: *öi* or *öü* (Lehiste 1965 : 57; Deeters 1930 : 134).

'mouth'; the vowel 22/24 is realized as *äi*: *häim* 'home', *fläiṣ* 'meat'(M. Weinreich 1923; U. Weinreich 1958).

The diphthong *äi*<sub>22/24</sub> in the Courland type is explained differently by U. Weinreich (1958 : 254–255) and Bin-Nun (1973 : 98). The former explains the lowering \**e*<sub>12/13</sub> > *äi*<sub>22/24</sub> as a possible effect of a push-chain caused by the retention of *e*<sub>12/13</sub>, from which 22/24 was to remain distinct; the latter considers the feature as an influence of Baltic German. Indeed, the diphthong *äi* is one of the typical phonological features of Baltic German. However, Bin-Nun does not provide any proof of the influence, neither can such a proof be found in the relevant literature. The question if there is any connection between CourlY *äi* and Baltic German *äi* remains unanswered.

The preservation of length is a distinctive feature of the Courland type. Mark (1951 : 439) reports that in Zameter (Samogitian) Yiddish the distinction between long and short vowels "has remained to a greater extent than elsewhere" (in Lithuania). Jacobs (ms.) places ZY among length varieties; U. Weinreich (1958 : 254) mentions clearly CourlY to be the only variety of NEY where the distinction has remained. As it was shown above (section 2), CourlY, being a subtype of ZY, is the most conservative of all NEY varieties. It is reasonable to assume that in CourlY the length opposition was preserved to a greater degree than in Zameter Yiddish, the latter thus being a transitional area between length and non-length NEY varieties. On the basis of Mark's evidence it is clear that ZY used to be a length variety; however, it is not known exactly to what extent ZY has preserved long–short vowel opposition.

The Courland type distinguishes between the following long and short vowels (M. Weinreich 1923 : 199 ff; U. Weinreich 1958 : 251): *i*<sub>11</sub> – *i*<sub>12/13</sub> (*bin* 'am' – *bi*<sub>12/13</sub> 'bee'), *e*<sub>11</sub> – *e*<sub>12/13</sub> (*šem* 'reputation' – *še*<sub>12/13</sub> *m zax* 'be ashamed of yourself'), *u*<sub>11</sub> – *u*<sub>12/13</sub> (*zun* 'sun' – *zu*<sub>12/13</sub> 'son'), *o*<sub>11</sub> – *o*<sub>12/13</sub> (*korn* 'rye' – *ziko*<sub>12/13</sub> 'memory').

The status of the long *a* in CourlY has been a subject of discussion between scholars. M. Weinreich (1923 : 216) claims that *gra:pn* 'small pot' has *a*<sub>16</sub>. On the contrary, Kalmanovitsh (1926 : 174) believes that the word is pronounced with the short *a* as *grapn*. U. Weinreich (1991 : 19) presents the stressed vowels system of CourlY so that each vowel except *a* has a long counterpart and, quoting M. Weinreich and Kalmanovitsh, adds, that it is not altogether clear whether the opposition *a* – *a*<sub>16</sub> exists. It is believed that the long *a*<sub>16</sub> occurs only in lexical loans (*xapn* 'to catch' – *gra:pn* 'small pot') and cannot be derived from PNEY; thus, it requires a different designation (let us call it *a*<sub>16</sub>).<sup>6</sup>

**Table 4. Stressed vowel system of CourlY**

<i>i</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>i</i> <sub>12/13</sub>	<i>u</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>u</i> <sub>12/13</sub>
<i>e</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>e</i> <sub>12/13</sub>	öü <sub>12/13</sub>	o <sub>11</sub>
		<i>a</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>a</i> <sub>16</sub>
	<i>äi</i> <sub>22/24</sub>	<i>ai</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>au</i> <sub>11</sub>

<sup>6</sup> There exists only one (nearly) minimal pair *a*<sub>16</sub> – *a* within Yiddish lexicon proper, namely *gas* 'street' – *ka:s* 'anger' (< Hebrew *ka'as*).

The opposition of short–long vowels in CourlY is reported to be in the process of decline (M. Weinreich 1923; Bin-Nun 1973; U. Weinreich 1958, 1991; Jacobs 1994, ms.); the further development of CourlY vowel system will be discussed below.

The distinctions between various types of NEY are summarized in Table 5. Contemporary Standard Yiddish (StY) forms are added to provide a broader context.

**Table 5. Varieties of NEY (distinctions in stress vowel system)**

	Vowel 22/24	Vowel 42/44	Vowel 54	Preservation of long vowels
StY	<i>ei</i> <i>eibik</i> 'eternal', <i>fleis̄</i> 'meat'	<i>oi</i> <i>oig</i> 'eye', <i>broit</i> 'bread', <i>hoiz</i> 'house'		–
Vilna type ("classical")	<i>ei</i> <i>eibik</i> 'eternal', <i>fleis̄</i> 'meat', <i>eig</i> 'eye', <i>breit</i> 'bread'	<i>ei</i> <i>eig</i> 'eye', <i>breit</i> 'bread'	<i>oi / ui</i> <i>hoiz/huiz</i> 'house'	–
ZY (Samogitian)	<i>ei</i> <i>eibik</i> 'eternal', <i>fleis̄</i> 'meat'	<i>eu</i> <i>eug</i> 'eye', <i>breut</i> 'bread'	<i>ou</i> <i>houz</i> 'house'	partial preservation
CourlY (Courland type)	<i>äi</i> <i>äibik</i> 'eternal', <i>fläis̄</i> 'meat'	<i>öü</i> <i>öüg</i> 'eye', <i>bröüt</i> 'bread'	<i>au</i> <i>hauz</i> 'house'	+

### 3.2. Distinctive features of EstY stressed vowel system

The stressed vowel system of EstY is closest to the Courland type. However, there are certain specific features characteristic of EstY only.

#### 3.2.1. Front rounded vowels

Realization of vowels 31 and 32 is *ü* and *ü:*, respectively, in cases where German counterpart has *ü*: *fünf* 'five', cf. StY *finf*, *grün* 'green', cf. StY *grin*, *oncündn* 'to light', cf. StY *oncindn* etc. The front rounded vowel *ö* has been registered in *cvölf* 'twelve', cf. StY *cvelf*, German *zwölf*, and *rötlax* 'German measles', cf. German *Röteln*. Front rounded monophthongs are not present in any NEY dialect, neither can they be derived from PNEY or any other common ancestor. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to consider the existence of front rounded vowels in EstY rather as an influence from outside than a retention of an archaic feature.

However, it would be a mere simplification to ascribe the front rounded vowels exclusively to the German influence. It is known that CourlY (and later EstY) was co-territorial with Baltic German for 300 years, but, to my best knowledge, no front rounded monophthongs occur in any CourlY sources available.<sup>7</sup> In addition to that, there is a tendency of delabialization, or unrounding (*Entrundung*) in Baltic German. Mitzka (1923 : 21–22) reports that forms *fir* 'for', cf. *für*, *ti:r* 'door', cf. *Türe*, *be:se* 'wicked', cf. *böse* were typical and assumes that the feature could be a Latvian influence.

<sup>7</sup> We have no data on contemporary Yiddish in Latvia; nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the existence of front rounded monophthongs there is unlikely. Latvian lacks front rounded vowels. In German borrowings which have entered Estonian through the medium of Latvian front rounded vowels have been replaced (in Latvian) by non-rounded front vowels (Hinderling 1981 : 95).

According to Lehiste (1965 : 59) who refers to a variety of sources, the situation is much more complicated: unrounding could have been a common Low German feature, but still some MLG loanwords in Estonian have parallel forms (Estonian has *ü* and *ö*). Hinderling (1981 : 124) claims that unrounding of front rounded vowels *ü* and *ö* is a general tendency in Baltic German both in Latvia and in Estonia. In his description of Low German loans in Estonian Ariste (1981 : 102–103) mentions that as late as 1939 forms with *i* and *e* instead of *ü* and *ö* could be heard in Southern Estonia and Latvia “among uneducated speakers of High German”. He concludes that unrounding must have happened already in Low German and spread over the Baltic German area.

Whatever reasons of unrounding in Baltic German may be, one should take this tendency under consideration when dealing with language contacts in the Baltic region. In my opinion, Standard German is not the single factor of influence for the following reasons: no front rounded monophthongs are known to have existed in CourlY (co-territorial with German), nor all Yiddish speakers in Estonia are (were) necessarily fluent in German, yet the presence of *ü* and *ö* is a common feature among all Yiddish speakers in Estonia. Estonian adstratum and extensive multilingualism (including Estonian) could have been a source of influence. Older informants (born at the beginning of the century) never fail to produce correctly Estonian *ü* and *ö*, although this generation received elementary and high-school education in a language other than Estonian.<sup>8</sup>

### 3.2.2. Realization of vowels 42/44, 22/24 and 54

V o w e l 42 / 44. The CourlY diphthong *öü<sub>vu</sub>* can still be heard in EstY among older informants while younger informants substitute *öü* by *ei*: *farköüfn* ~ *farkeifn* ‘to sell’, *möude ani* ~ *meide ani* ‘I thank’ (a traditional Jewish prayer). This fits well into the picture given by M. Weinreich (1923), Bin-Nun (1973) and Jacobs (1994) concerning the influence of StY and other NEY dialects of CourlY.

V o w e l 22 / 24. It is noteworthy that CourlY *äi<sub>vu</sub>* is more stable in EstY than *öü<sub>vu</sub>*. Although the diphthong *äi* can be heard today along with *ei*, it is still frequent among all informants: *häim* ‘home’, *fläiš* ‘meat’, *mäinen* ‘to mean’, *häilik* ‘holy’.

V o w e l 54. In his research on the vowel 54 U. Weinreich (1958 : 230), referring to Mark (1951), designates Estonia as *au*-area. However, such a claim is not entirely correct. Estonia is a mixed area of *au* ~ *ou*: *hauz* ~ *houz* ‘house’, *baux* ~ *boux* ‘stomach’, *aus* ~ *ous* ‘out’. In many cases the diphthong is pronounced as an intermediate between *au* and *ou*: the first component is a vowel lower than *o* but higher than *a*.

It is interesting that the same phenomenon – existence of a diphthong intermediate between *au* and *ou* – has been registered in co-territorial Baltic German. Lehiste (1965 : 57) reports that at least in Tallinn of the interwar period “there was a tendency [in Baltic German] to produce *au* with a raised and labialized first component, close to *ou*”.

Realization of vowel 54 as *au* ~ *ou* in EstY is a stable feature and, interestingly, has not disappeared under an influence of StY or the Vilna type of NEY.

<sup>8</sup> Some older Yiddish speakers have difficulties with Estonian *ö* and pronounce it as *ö* or a sound close to *ö*. It should be noted that speakers of (Baltic) German have the same kind of “typical accent” in Estonian.

### 3.2.3. Long and short vowels

The opposition between long and short vowels has been preserved to a certain extent, as well as in CourlY. Unfortunately, to my best knowledge, the contemporary state of Yiddish in Courland (or in Latvia) has not been studied and therefore, it is hard to tell to what degree the opposition between long and short vowels has disappeared there. As for EstY, the difference between the pronunciation of short and long vowels is still audible. Since Estonian is a language which has even three quantities, lexical borrowing from Estonian “support” the opposition of long and short vowels.

Examples:

<i>i</i> <sub>31</sub> – <i>i</i> <sub>:31</sub>	(ix) <i>bin</i> ‘(I) am’ – <i>bi:n</i> ‘bee’;
<i>u</i> <sub>31</sub> – <i>u</i> <sub>:31</sub>	<i>zun</i> ‘sun’ – <i>zu:n</i> ‘son’;
<i>e</i> <sub>21</sub> – <i>e</i> <sub>:23</sub>	<i>bet</i> ‘bed’ – (ix) <i>be:t</i> ‘(I) beg’;
<i>o</i> <sub>41</sub> – <i>o</i> <sub>:12/13</sub>	<i>oder</i> ‘or’ – <i>o:der</i> ‘sinew’;
<i>a</i> <sub>11</sub> – <i>a</i> <sub>:16</sub>	<i>gas</i> ‘street’ – <i>ka:s</i> ‘anger’.

It is hard to find a minimal pair for *ü* – *ü:*, yet it is possible to find etymons which do not constitute a minimal pair but where the different pronunciation of *ü* and *ü:* is audible: *zülc/zült* ‘jelly’, *oncündn* ‘to light’, *tü:r* ‘door’, *grü:n* ‘green’. The quantity of *ö* is not clear since it was registered in two words only: *cvölf* ‘twelve’ and *rötlax* ‘rose rash’.

Thus, it can be claimed that, with minor differences, the stressed vowel system of EstY is closest to the Courland type. Realization of the vowel 54 as *ou* is a feature of ZY (the Samogitian type in U. Weinreich’s terminology); however, *ou* coexists with *au* and, as it was stated above, an intermediate diphthong (possibly under the Baltic German influence) has emerged. Realization of the vowel 42/44 as *öü* is an archaic feature which is rapidly giving ground to *ei*. However, it cannot be stated that realization of the vowel 22/24 as *äi* is not being substituted by *ei*. A gradual decline of *öü* is part of a general dialect levelling process which took place in CourlY at the beginning of the 20th century (see section 6).

**Table 6. Stressed vowel system of EstY**

<i>i</i> <sub>31</sub>	<i>i</i> <sub>:31</sub>		<i>u</i> <sub>31</sub>	<i>u</i> <sub>:31</sub>	<i>ü</i>	<i>ü:</i>
	<i>e</i> <sub>23</sub>	<i>e</i> <sub>:21</sub>	<i>öü</i> <sub>2/4</sub>	<i>o</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>o</i> <sub>:12/13</sub>	( <i>ö</i> )
		<i>a</i> <sub>11</sub>	<i>a</i> <sub>:16</sub>			
	<i>e</i> <sub>12/24</sub> ~ <i>ä</i> <sub>12/24</sub>	<i>ä</i> <sub>14</sub>	<i>ou</i> <sub>4</sub> ~ <i>au</i> <sub>4</sub>			
	<i>e</i> <sub>12/44</sub>					

As it is clear from Table 6, the front rounded monophthongs are a feature which makes the stressed vowel system of EstY different from all other types of NEY. Otherwise it is a system closest to CourlY; changes in realization of the vowel 42/44 (transition from *öü* to *ei*) are currently going on: both variants can be heard today, although *ei* is prevailing.

Thus, the stressed vowel system of EstY has preserved:

- long–short vowel opposition (including *a*), whereas lexical borrowings from Estonian support the preservation of the original opposition;
- initial realization of the vowel 54 with some later modifications under the Baltic German influence;



The changes in the original stressed vowel system are as follows:

- realization of the vowel 42/44 as *öü* is giving ground to *ei* (a general tendency in CourlY);
- the vowel 22/24 is realized both as *äi* and *ei*; it is hard to judge which of the two variants is prevailing.

### 3.3. Unstressed vowels

For Yiddish dialectology the stressed vowel system is of major importance, whereas in the unstressed vowel system there are few phenomena to be described as distinctive features.

**A p o k o p e.** Apokope – dropping the final *e* in words of German origin (for instance, *šul* ‘school’, cf. German *Schule*) – is claimed to be more consistent in CourlY than in other Yiddish dialects. M. Weinreich (1923 : 197–198) notes that in CourlY not only *blum* ‘flower’, *gas* ‘street’, *zait* ‘side’ are usual forms (cf. German counterparts *Blume*, *Gasse*, *Seite*), but also *bluz* ‘blouse’, *gurk* ‘cucumber’ etc. More generally, apokoped forms are typical of Baltic German (which might have stimulated the spread of such forms in CourlY), whereas EstY non-apokoped forms are probably a result of Standard German influence.

On the contrary, EstY has an opposite tendency of the final *e* retention. This is probably the only feature in EstY which is strikingly different from CourlY, otherwise a very close dialect. EstY has: *šule* ‘school’, *blume* ‘flower’, *ente* ‘duck’ which are in use along with apokoped forms. Retention of the final *e* can be ascribed to the influence of (Standard) German.

**V o w e l s i n d e m i n u t i v e f o r m s.** In this respect EstY follows CourlY pattern which was described by M. Weinreich (1923 : 205): deminutive suffixes have a clear *a*. Deminutive forms as *tišale* ‘table’ (2nd dem.), *meidale* ‘girl’ (2nd dem.), *meidlax* ‘girls’ (1st dem.), *meralax* ‘carrots’ (2nd dem.), *beimalax* ‘trees’ (2nd dem.) are typical of EstY. M. Weinreich (ibid.) claims that the so-called 2nd deminutive – i.e. forms like *tepalax*, *tepalax* ‘pot’, ‘pots’ (2nd dem.) – is very rare in CourlY. As it can be seen from the examples quoted above, both 1st and 2nd deminutive are used in EstY. The use of 1st deminutive plural suffix (*-lax*) and of 2nd deminutive (singular *-ale* and plural *-alax*) has no exceptions. According to Mark (1951 : 440), the presence of *a* in deminutive suffixes is also characteristic of ZY.

**A b s e n c e o f r e d u c t i o n i n p o s t - t o n i c p o s i t i o n.** Contrary to other Yiddish dialects where post-tonic vowels generally tend to reduce to shwa, all NEY types have preserved the initial vowel quality in post-tonic position (van der Auwera, Jacobs, Prince 1994 : 393; Mark 1951 : 436, 440). Thus, in *brenge* ‘to bring’, (*vuhin*) *geistu* ‘(where) are you going’, *foter* ‘father’, *öülem* ~ *eulem* ~ *eilem* ‘world, community’ post-tonic vowels are pronounced clearly. This feature is also valid in EstY.

**L e n g t h e n i n g o f p o s t - t o n i c v o w e l s.** The previously described tendency – retention of post-tonic vowel quality – is “supported” by Estonian phonology. Two-syllable Yiddish words are frequently interpreted according to the rules of Estonian phonology and treated as the so-called words of the 1st quantity, which means that a post-tonic vowel is subjected to lengthening. For instance, in Estonian *ema* ‘mother’, *lame* ‘flat’ *a* in the first and *e* in the second case are half-long. Standard Estonian does not know post-tonic reduction; such a reduction is perceived as a strong foreign accent. Such Yiddish words as *mame* ‘mother’, *bobe* ‘grandmother’, *kale* ‘bride’, *ale* ‘all’ are pronounced with half-long *e* according to Estonian pattern (phonological interference from Estonian). Re-interpretation of

Yiddish items in terms of Estonian quantity system is mostly characteristic of informants from Tartu where Estonian has always been a dominant co-territorial language.

### 3.4. Consonatism

The consonantal system of EstY is a subsystem of CourlY. Some features are common with ZY (see section 3.2.2.).

#### 3.4.1. Features shared with CourlY

The sonants *l*, *r* are pronounced identically in EstY and in CourlY. According to Kalmanovitsh (1926 : 168–169) these are “real Courland sounds” (*emese kurlendiše klängen*). Kalmanovitsh claims CourlY *l* to be identical to German *l*: soft, alveolar *l*. The pronunciation of *l* in CourlY can be ascribed to the contact with Baltic German (Jacobs, ms.).

To this we can add that Estonian *l* is also a soft, alveolar sonant identical to German *l*. The realization of *l* is a kind of *shibboleth*: speakers of other varieties of Yiddish are immediately recognized by the way they pronounce *l*. Lemchen (1995 : 33) claims that there exists a continuum in Lithuania: both Lithuanian and Yiddish *l* are realized progressively more velarly from west to east.

As for *r*, in CourlY it is a lingual, not uvular *R* (Kalmanovitsh 1926 : 169; Lemchen 1995 : 34). It is also an example of Baltic German influence. In EstY the rendition of *r* is the same (lingual, not uvular). As in the case of *l*, the realization of *r* immediately “betrays” a speaker of another variety.

“S a b e s d i k e r l o s n”. Confusion of hissing and hushing consonants, or *sabesdiker losn* ‘sabbath language’ is a feature characteristic of NEY. Thus, *šabes* ‘sabbath’ is realized as *sabes*, *lošn* ‘language’ as *losn*, *šlofn* ‘to sleep’ as *slofn* etc. The phenomenon has been extensively analyzed by U. Weinreich (1952). Differently from the rest of NEY, CourlY has developed a pattern of its own (M. Weinreich 1923 : 202; U. Weinreich 1952 : 376–377): the distinction of hissing and hushing sounds in the Germanic component of CourlY follows the German pattern; words of Slavic and Semitic origin, however, have always *š*: *kisn* ‘pillow’, cf. German *Kisen*, StY *kišn*; *mišn* ‘to mix’, cf. German *mischen*, StY *mišn*; *šeixl* ‘reason’, ‘intelligence’, cf. StY *seixl* (< Hebrew *sexal*); *kaše* ‘porridge’, cf. StY *kaše* (< Slavic *kaša*).

U. Weinreich (ibid.) states that the occurrence of *c* and *z* (*cepen* ‘to touch’, ‘to cling to smth.’; *zaleven* ‘to be stingy of’, cf. StY *čepen*, *žaleven*) may be explained as follows: *c* ~ *č* and *z* ~ *ž* opposition in German is “of low functional yield or virtually absent”, so the sounds were realized as a single pair of *c* and *z*. The phoneme *ž* is not known in CourlY. The dialect treats it in the following way: either *ž* > *z* (hushing substituted by hissing) or *ž* > *š* (devoicing).

It is noteworthy that certain lexical borrowings from Yiddish into Baltic German reflect the Courland pattern of the “sabesdiker losn”: *blondzen* ‘to wonder aimlessly’ > Baltic German *blondsen*.<sup>9</sup> Another example of the kind can be found in Nottbeck’s (1988) glossary of Baltic German words and expressions. The above-mentioned glossary cannot be considered a scholarly research in the strict sense: the author himself emphasizes that it is not a dictionary but rather “a collection of words and expressions characteristic of German spoken in the Baltic region” (Nottbeck 1988 : 5). The Baltic German etymon is *zeppern* ‘anecken, sich an etwas stossen’ (102).

<sup>9</sup> According to Ariste (1937 : 85), the change *dž* > *dz* indicates clearly CourlY origin of the word in Baltic German.

region" (Nottbeck 1988 : 5). The Baltic German etymon is *zeppern* 'anecken, sich an etwas stossen' (102). The author did not provide any etymology; however, it is reasonable to suppose CourlY origin *cepen* > *zeppern* 'to stick to, to cling to', cf. StY *čepen*.

EstY follows CourlY pattern of hissing-hushing sound distribution. This distribution is rather stable in the dialect, which fact can be confirmed by the following example. In the saying *vu men šloft af ein kish, tor men nit zix arainmišn* 'one should not interfere with somebody else's intimate life' (lit. 'where they sleep on the same pillow, one may not interfere') a rhyme would be expected: either *kišn* : *mišn* as in StY or *kish* : *mišn* as in the "classical" *sabesdiker losn*. Nevertheless, even in such a context where a rhyme seems most natural the general distribution rule (following German model in the words of Germanic stock) is not violated.

### 3.4.2. General NEY and ZY features in consonantism

W o r d - i n i t i a l *j*. In NEY generally and in Lithuanian Yiddish particularly, the initial combination *ji* > *i* (Mark 1951 : 434 ). The same feature has been preserved in EstY: *jid* 'Jew' > *id*; *jingl* 'boy' > *ingl*; *jinger* 'younger' > *inger*.

Glide *j* between *a*, *e* and a following velar nasal. However, general NEY insertion of *j* in the position between *a*, *e* and a following velar nasal (Mark 1951 : 434; Jacobs 1997) does not occur in EstY. Thus, such typical NEY forms as *brejngen* 'to bring', *krajnk* 'ill, sick' are always rendered in EstY as *brenge*, *krank*.

### 3.4.3. Features in consonantism specific to EstY

There are two features in the dialect which are clearly a result of Estonian influence. Though the dialect can be fairly recognized as homogeneous, there are some features more characteristic of a certain locality. For instance, the features to be described in this section are most prominent in the speech of informants born in Tartu. It is reasonable to assume that the impact of Estonian is stronger in Tartu and other cities where Estonian has always been dominating.

The third characteristic feature to be discussed in the current section can be ascribed to the impact of Baltic German.

G e m i n a t i o n o f c l u s t e r s *k*, *p*, *t* i n i n t e r v o c a l i c p o s i t i o n. A gemination of the kind is an integrate part of Estonian phonetics, for instance *kate* 'cover' (subst.) is pronounced as [*katte*] (2nd quantity); *paku* 'offer' (imperative 2nd pers. sg) as [*pakku*]; *lapi* 'rag' (Gen. sg) as [*lappi*]. Following this rule, Yiddish words containing clusters *k*, *p*, *t* in intervocalic position are reinterpreted in the terms of Estonian phonetics, for instance: *xuppe* 'wedding canopy', cf. StY *xupe*; *umettik* 'sad', cf. StY *umetik*; *bekker* 'baker', cf. StY *beker*.

A c q u i s i t i o n o f t h e 3 r d q u a n t i t y. This feature has the same basis as the one previously described. In Estonian phonology all one-syllable words have (stipulatedly) the 3rd quantity; if a Yiddish one-syllable word has two consonants at the end, it is rendered as if it were an Estonian word with the same phonetic structure: *val'd* 'wood', cf. Estonian [*val'D*] 'county'; *vor't* 'word', cf. Estonian [*sor't*] 'sort, kind'; *šir'm* 'umbrella', cf. Estonian [*šir'm*] 'fear'.

C h a n g e *e* > *ä* b e f o r e *r*. In EstY a more opened *e* (close to *ä*) before *r* can be heard in proper names only: *Berta*, *Perlman*, *Berner* are realized as [*bärta*], [*pärلمان*], [*bärner*] respectively. It can be explained as a rudiment of Baltic German (or, more generally, Low German) influence. According to Ariste, this was a general rule in Low German spoken in Estonia; its reflections can be observed in lexical

borrowings from LG into Estonian. This was also typical of Baltic German (Mitzka 1923 : 49).

### 3.5. Summary on phonology

#### Vocalism:

- The stressed vowel system is closest to that of CourlY;
- Front rounded monophthongs are unique features which may be explained as an influence of German and a high prestige of that language, and, to some extent, an impact of Estonian adstratum;
- Vowel 22/24 has parallel realizations as *äi* (Courland type) and *ei* (Vilna and Samogitian type);
- In the part of the vowel 42/44 a transition to Vilna type has occurred almost completely (*öü* > *ei*);
- Vowel 54 is realized as *au* (Courland type), *ou* (Samogitian type) or, most frequently, as an intermediate between *au* and *ou* (the same as in Baltic German); no transition to Vilna type has occurred in this case;
- Non-apokope forms are preferred to apokope (influence of Standard German);
- Vowels in diminutive forms follow CourlY and ZY pattern;
- Post-tonic vowel lengthening in words which can be re-interpreted in the terms of Estonian phonology as words of the 1st quantity.

#### Consonantism:

- Sonants *l* and *r* are realized as in CourlY and ZY (*l* – soft, alveolar, *r* – lingual, not uvular);
- Realization of hissing and hushing consonants follows CourlY model (distribution of hissing and hushing consonants in words of German stock follows the German pattern; *ʃ* in words of Slavic and Semitic stock);
- Initial *ji* > *i* as in ZY and in Lithuanian Yiddish in general;
- Estonian-influenced gemination of clusters *k*, *p*, *t* in an intervocalic position: re-interpretation of one-syllable Yiddish words in the terms of Estonian phonology as words of the 3rd quantity;
- *er* > *är* according to Baltic German model (in proper names only).

## 4. Morphology

Morphology of EstY has fewer specific features in the general NEY context than phonology. As it can be observed from the following description, EstY shares main morphological characteristics of NEY, for instance, two major developments in NEY morphology – the loss of neutrum and the merge of Dative and Accusative into one case.

To my best knowledge, there is no systematic description of CourlY morphology; thus, in our description we compare EstY morphology with that of Lithuanian Yiddish (given in Mark 1951).

### 4.1. Gender

According to Jacobs (1990, ms.), the loss of neutrum in NEY is internally motivated, although in some cases there is some parallelism between new gender assignment in NEY and languages in contact, for instance, Lithuanian (Mark 1944 : 90, quoted from Jacobs 1990). The picture is much more complex than a simple redistribution of neuter nouns between masculine and feminine genders.

The most recent study on neuter loss problem in NEY was completed by Jacobs (1990). In his paper he provides a summary of previous studies conducted by prominent Yiddish linguists (U. Weinreich 1961; Herzog 1965; Wolf 1969) and presents the pattern of gender assignment as a series of subsequent decisions.

According to U. Weinreich (1961, quoted from Jacobs 1990), in addition to masculine and feminine nouns it is reasonable to distinguish mass nouns (vs count nouns), for instance, *di gelt* 'money' (StY *dos gelt*), *di vaser* 'water' (StY *dos vaser*). Masculine and feminine nouns are subdivided into semantically marked/unmarked (*der man* 'man', *di froi* 'woman') and morphologically marked/unmarked (for instance, suffix *-ung* suggests feminine gender etc.). Nouns lacking both semantic and morphologic markedness belong to intermediate gender, either to intermediate masculine or intermediate feminine<sup>10</sup>. The system of gender assignment proposed by Jacobs (1990 : 97) is as follows:

1. Is the noun countable? If no, assign mass gender (*di vaser* 'water', *di gelt* 'money', *di broit* 'bread').
2. If yes, whether it is singular? If no, assign plural status.
3. If yes, is it marked semantically (*der zeide* 'grandfather', *di toxter* 'daughter'). If no, whether it has a morphological or phonological marker (for instance, suffixes *-er*, *-nik* suggest masculine, suffixes *-sajt*, *-ung* suggest feminine). If the noun lacks either morphological or semantic markedness, then it belongs to an empty category (intermediate masculine or intermediate feminine). In this group the gender assignment is *ad hoc* and open to regional variations.
4. If the noun is marked semantically, like *zeide* 'grandfather' or *švester* 'sister', the semantical markedness overrules the morphologic one, i.e. despite *-e* in the first and *-er* in the second case, the nouns belong to masculine and feminine gender respectively.

The patterns of gender assignment in empty nouns in EstY have not been studied systematically. However, it is possible to make the following empirical claim based on observations of the speech community: there is a lot of inconsistency concerning gender of empty nouns. The same speaker can assign a different gender to the same noun in the same utterance (see examples in Verschik 1997 : 753–754).

Although the loss of neutrum is an internal development in NEY morphology, contacts and a possible impact of co-territorial languages in this respect cannot be excluded altogether. Our case is another example where Estonian adstratum "supports" the internal development in Yiddish.

Estonian lacks the gender category and there is a certain problem concerning gender assignment of Estonian loans and momental borrowings. Due to long-term and extensive contacts with Slavic and Baltic languages Yiddish has a morphophonological integration mechanism of loans from these languages. However, there is no such mechanism (at least, not a completely established one) for Estonian loans. For instance, in Slavic and Semitic words there is a pattern where the stem vowel *-a* turns into *-e* (*-a > -e*): Ukrainian, Byelorussian *bulba* > Yiddish *bulbe* 'potato', Hebrew *matana* > Yiddish *matone* 'present' (noun). The same well-known pattern is not always valid in the case with (momental) borrowings from Estonian: consider *jöhvike* 'cranberry' < *jöhvikas* (stem *jöhvika-*) and *sö:kla* 'cafeteria' < *söökla*. If it is not clear how to integrate a borrowed noun, and if it is not marked semantically, it is not clear what the basis of gender assignment should be.

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<sup>10</sup> Intermediate feminine gender was added by Jacobs (1990).

In a lot of cases a speaker meets with difficulties in classifying Estonian nouns. This leads to the omission of a definite (or even indefinite) article before such nouns and, subsequently, even before Yiddish nouns: *nox (?) milxome zainen mir tsurik* 'after the war we returned', cf. StY *nox der milxome* and NEY *nox di milxome* 'after the war'; *er flegt gein in (?) jidiš šul* 'he used to attend a/the Jewish school', cf. StY *er flegt gein in a/der jidišer šul* and NEY *in a/di jidiše šul* 'in a/the Jewish school'. The second example demonstrates that the problems of gender assignment affect also adjectives (Verschik 1997 : 754).

#### 4.2. Case

The major difference between NEY and non-NEY case system is the merge of Accusative and Dative into one case, called by Mark (1951 : 454–455) the Objective case. According to him, the pronouns have preserved the Dative forms while the definite articles have preserved the Accusative forms: *mit di gute švester* 'with the good sister' (StY *mit der guter švester*), *far dem libn tatn* 'for dear father', *ix hob ir holt* 'I like her' (StY *ix hob zi holt*). From this it is clear that the feminine definite article does not change and is always *di*.

This circumstance affects adjectives, too: feminine adjectives remain unchanged in all forms: *di gute šul* 'the good school' (Nom.), *in di gute šul* 'in the good school' (StY Dat. *in der guter šul*), (*ix hob lib*) *di gute šul* 'I like the good school' (StY Acc., the same form).

Being a part of NEY, EstY has inherited the same tendency. However, as it was mentioned in the previous section, inconsistency and hesitation in gender assignment lead to the distortion of the article use and adjective declination (i.e. the omission of any article and sometimes even of any adjective endings), for instance: *Valga iz geven (?) klein (?) štot* 'Valga was a small town', cf. StY *Valga iz geven a kleine štot*.

#### 4.3. Conditional mood

The Conditional is formed in Lithuanian Yiddish as *volt* + the infinitive, not *volt* + the past participle as elsewhere, i.e. *volt zogn* 'would say', *volt ton* 'would do', not *volt gezogt*, *voit geton* (Mark 1951 : 459). In CourlY, according to M. Weinreich (1923 : 207), the Conditional is formed with the auxiliary *mext*. EstY follows the Lithuanian, not the Courland pattern. Unfortunately, in his description Weinreich concentrates on the auxiliary and from his examples it is not clear whether the past participle is used only or an infinitive is also possible. He quotes old Yiddish sources where both models *mext* + the past participle and *mext* + the infinitive are mentioned.

#### 4.4. Auxiliary in the past tense

According to Mark (1951 : 457) the auxiliary used in the past tense is mostly *hobn* 'to have' in Lithuanian Yiddish: *ix hob geštanen* 'I stood', *ix hob gegangen* 'I went', cf. StY *ix bin geštanen*, *gegangen*. Mark calls the substitution of *zain* by *hobn* a living process. On the contrary, this feature is unknown in EstY where the use of auxiliary in the past tense formation follows the StY pattern: *ix bin geštanen*, *gegangen* 'I stood, I went'.

#### 4.5. Past participle

Mark (1951 : 457) notes that most of past participles in Lithuanian Yiddish have an ending *-en* or *-n*: *gemolkn*, not *gemelkt* (< *melkn* 'to milk'), *gebakn*, not

*gebakt* (< *bakn* 'to bake'), *gezalcn*, not *gezalct* (< *zalcn* 'to salt') etc. This is especially characteristic of ZY.

EstY has the same pattern: *gešonken* 'gave as a present' (< *šenken*), *gezalcn* 'salted' (< *zalcn*), *gefifn* 'whistled' (< *faifn*). Although we do not have a systematic account on CourlY morphology, there are some sporadic remarks by M. Weinreich (1923 : 207) concerning past participles in CourlY. The past participle from *krign* 'to get' is *gekrogn* (as in Lithuanian Yiddish), from *veln* 'to want' is *gevelt* (not *gevolt*). The same forms are used in EstY.

Since Mark (1951) presents Suvalker Yiddish forms like *gelozt* 'let', *gebrenzt* 'brought', *gekriqn* 'got' as a contrast to ZY use (*gelozn*, *gebraxt*, *gekrogn*) and since there definitely exists a parallel between EstY and ZY (and, possibly, CourlY) past participles, there is an additional support to the view that ZY and CourlY (and EstY, as an offspring of the latter) constituted the same dialect in the past.

#### 4.6. Prefixes

The merge of two different prefixes *cu-* and *ce-* into one *cu-* was claimed by Mark (1951 : 435) to have been spread everywhere in Lithuanian Yiddish: the verbs *cugein* 'to come to' and *cegein* (*zix*) 'to leave, to go away in different directions; to dissolve' are both rendered as *cugein*. This occurs in EstY sporadically; from time to time one can hear such forms as *cubroxn* 'broken' instead of *cebroxn*.

The systematic use of the prefix *er-* instead of *der-* in EstY is a result of German influence. Prefix *der-* is always substituted by *er-*: *erci:en* 'to bring up', cf. StY *dercien*, German *erziehen*; *erceilung* 'story', cf. StY *derceilung*, German *Erzählung*; *erfa:rung* 'experience', cf. StY *derfarung*, German *Erfahrung*.

#### 4.7. Declination of proper names and nouns usually declinable in Yiddish

According to the rules of StY, proper names receive the ending *-(e)n* in Dative and Accusative. However, this rule is often violated in EstY: *ix gob geredt mit Mirjam, mit Volf* 'I spoke to Mirjam, to Volf', cf. StY *ix hob geredt mit Mirjamen, mit Volfn*. It is possible that such a deviation from Yiddish grammar rules is caused by changes in the tradition of naming.<sup>11</sup>

Nouns *id* 'Jew', *bobe* 'grandmother', *zeide* 'grandfather', *tate* 'father', *mame* 'mother' usually, but not always receive ending *-n* in Objective: *ix red mitn zeidn* 'I am talking to grandfather', also *ix hob geredt mitn tate* 'I talked to father'.

#### 4.8. Indefinite article

Indefinite article in EstY has the form *a* only, while StY has *an* before words with an initial vowel: *er iz a est* 'he is an Estonian', *dos iz a interesante zax* 'this is an interesting thing'. We have no data on such a feature in other NEY dialects and thus may consider it as a unique feature in EstY.

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<sup>11</sup> It is clear that certain changes have occurred in the Jewish naming tradition. The question has not been investigated. It was not unusual already at the beginning of the 20th c. that even in Yiddish-speaking families children's first names were not necessarily Jewish (*Eugenie, Helene, Netty, Dagmar, Harry* etc.). Certain names of biblical origin do not sound specifically Jewish in the Estonian context (i.e. people named *Ester, Mirjam, Jakob* may be non-Jewish Estonians); some names are modified (*Itty* < *Ita*, *Berta* < *Basie*). In some cases biblical names are rendered not according to Yiddish/Hebrew tradition but according to the Estonian tradition: *Saara, Rahel, Taavet* (cf. Yiddish *Sore, Roxl, Dovia*). It is interesting that Estonian name *Riina* is often used as an equivalent of Hebrew *Rina*, although these names have nothing in common etymologically and are just similar phonetically.

#### 4.9. The substitution of the preposition indicating direction

Mark (1951 : 459) states that Lithuanian Yiddish lacks the preposition *kein* 'to' and *in* is used instead: *ix for in Kovne* 'I am going to Kaunas/Kovne'. In EstY *kein* is also unknown and *in* is used in the same way as in Lithuanian Yiddish. More frequently the German-influenced *nox* (< German *nach*) is used with toponyms: *ix for nox Tallinn* 'I am going to Tallinn'.

#### 4.10. Summary on morphology

As it was claimed above, EstY shares main morphological features with the whole NEY group:

- Loss of neutrum;
- Merge of Dative and Accusative into Objective Case.

The features common with Lithuanian Yiddish are as follows:

- Conditional mood is formed according to the pattern *volt* + infinitive;
- Formation of the past participle with the ending *-(e)n* is a specific ZY (and probably also CourlY) feature;
- Merge of prefixes *ce-* and *cu-*;
- Lack of the preposition *kein* (however, see below on its substitute in EstY).

One feature (the use of auxiliary verbs in the past tense) is not congruent with Lithuanian Yiddish and follows Standard Yiddish.

Unique features in EstY:

- Indefinite article is *a* only;
- Prefix *der-* > *er-* (German influence);
- Equivalents of the preposition *kein* are *in* (as in Lithuanian Yiddish) and *nox* (< German *nach*), the latter is used with toponyms;
- Due to inconsistencies in gender assignment (initially in case of borrowings from Estonian) the normal use of the definite and even indefinite article is collapsing, which affects declination of adjectives in noun phrases;
- Proper names and nouns which are usually declined in Yiddish (receiving the ending *-(e)n*) are not always declined in EstY.

### 5. Lexicon

A detailed analysis of the lexicon components can be found in Verschik (1998b). Below we will provide a general classification of the lexical components in EstY and discuss some pan-Balticisms. The influence of Yiddish on lexicons of territorial languages is not to be analyzed in the present article.

#### 5.1. General remarks on the lexicon

As it is stated in Verschik (1997, 1998b), EstY lexicon has been subjected to a massive impact of varieties of German (Low German, Baltic German, Standard German). This is not surprising if we look at the socio-cultural history of Estonian Jewry. The same is true of Courland: a substantial influence of German on the lexicon of CourlY has been often mentioned by various scholars (M. Weinreich 1923; Jacobs 1994).

EstY and CourlY dialects are of a particular interest to scholars because no other Yiddish dialect has so many Low Germanisms (and Baltic Germanisms). It is



“migrated” to the North together with the speakers (see section 5.2.). At the same time, in comparison with ZY, the words of German stock clearly prevail in EstY (and CourlY), while ZY, because of long rabbinic traditions, contains more Semitisms than other Lithuanian Yiddish dialects (Lemchen 1995 : 12). We cannot judge on the number of Semitism in CourlY since there exists no study on the subject; nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the CourlY situation is close to that of EstY.

## 5.2. Components of EstY lexicon

The major groups in EstY lexicon are as follows: Courlandisms, Germanisms (Low, Baltic and Standard Germanisms), Lithuanianisms and Estonian loans (Verschik 1998b).

### 5.2.1. Courlandisms

These are lexical items of various origin registered in CourlY by M. Weinreich (1923) and Kalmanovitsh (1926), and are present in EstY as well. This means that a lexical item can belong to two groups simultaneously, i.e. being a Courlandism it can also be a Germanism: for instance, *redl* ‘ladder’ is known both in Courland and in Estonia (Courlandism), being at the same time a borrowing from Baltic German *Reddel* (Germanism).

### 5.2.2. Germanisms

Borrowings from Low and Baltic German are of a special interest. Quite often etymons of German origin in EstY correspond to Slavic loans in other Yiddish dialects (EstY *breks* ‘bream’, cf. StY *lještš*; EstY *dil* ‘dill’, cf. *(u)krop, krip* etc).

It is not clear whether Low-Germanisms entered CourlY directly or as remnants in High German (Jacobs 1994). In EstY it is possible to distinguish two groups of Low-Germanisms. The older ones have been brought along by the speakers of CourlY and / or borrowed from Baltic German already in Estonia; recent ones have entered EstY through the medium of Estonian.<sup>12</sup> Examples of older Low-Germanisms: *klade* ‘a big notepad’ < German or MLG *Kladde* (also in Baltic German, see Kobolt 1990 : 147), cf. Yiddish *heft, kaiet, bruijion* (Stuchkoff 1950 : 337), cf. Estonian *klade* < German *Kladde* (Mägiste 1982–1983 : 861); *trexter* ‘funnel’ (Kalmanovitsh 1926 : 177) < LG *trechter*, cf. Yiddish *leike, kreindl*; cf. Estonian (dial.) *tekter*, Latvian *tekteris* < LG *trechter* (Vaba 1996 : 111), Estonian *trehter* < MLG (Raag 1987 : 324).

An examples of more recent Low-Germanisms which have entered through the medium of Estonian:

*sült ~ zült* ‘jelly’ (?) < Estonian *sült* < MLG *sülte*, cf. other Yiddish varieties *putša, petše, xolodec* etc. (Stuchkoff 1950 : 225).

Besides lexical borrowings there are also some semantic borrowings from Baltic German: *lebn* ‘to live’ and ‘to reside’, i.e. *lebn* instead of *voinen* on Baltic German model *leben* instead of *wohnen*<sup>13</sup> (Nottbeck 1988 : 53); *zaft* ‘fruit preserves’ and ‘juice’ as in Baltic German *Saft*.<sup>14</sup> It can be claimed that connections and

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<sup>12</sup> According to Rätsep (1983 : 546), stems borrowed from Low German into Standard Estonian constitute 13.92–15.3 % of all stems and form the biggest group of loans in Estonian.

<sup>13</sup> It is also possible that the semantic borrowing was caused by a wish to avoid a classical ambiguity in the Vilna type between *veinen* ‘to reside’ and *veinen* ‘to weep’ (StY *voinen* and *veinen*, respectively). According to Ojansuu (1906 : 90), such a use of *leben* ‘to live’ and ‘to reside’ in Baltic German can be, in turn, a semantic borrowing from Estonian where there is one verb *elama* with both meanings.

parallels between Baltic German and Yiddish are a topic which deserves a separate research.

In some cases it is hard to distinguish between Low-Germanisms and Swedish loans. Jacobs (1994) brings CourlY *raut* 'windowpane' as a borrowing rather from Swedish *ruta* than from Low German. The same problem has to be dealt with also in Estonian: Raag (1997 : 188–189) calls it a classical problem. He claims that in some cases "it is impossible to settle the question of the source language on purely linguistic grounds". In certain situations the most reasonable solution would be to declare that the question cannot be settled.

A CourlY etymon *šnikern* 'to cut into small pieces without purpose' may be considered as such a case. M. Weinreich (1923 : 239) suggests a Low German origin and claims that the word is also present in Baltic German. According to Jacobs (1994) it would be hard to explain *k* if we compare *šnikern* with German *schneiden*, *schnitzen* 'to cut'. Therefore he links the etymon with the Swedish *snickare* 'carpenter'.

In our opinion this is exactly a situation described by Raag (1997) where it is hard to solve the classical question "Low German or Swedish?". Our claim is based on Finnic sources. Let us consider the Estonian *nikerdama* 'to cut', 'to carve', 'to whittle at' and the Finnish *nikartaa* 'to cut', 'to shape', 'to model' (slowly and with care), *nikertää* 'to cut', 'to carve', *nikkari* 'carpenter'.

According to Mägiste (1982–1983 : 1700), the Finnish *nikertää* and similar etymons in the other Finnic languages can be descriptive words while the meaning of Estonian *nikerdama* 'to cut' is probably a direct borrowing from (ML) German *schnikern*. SKES (1958 : 379–380) classifies the Finnish *nikertää* as a descriptive word, whereas *nikartaa*, *nikkaroida* is linked to *nikkari* 'carpenter' < Swedish *snickare*, cf. Old Swedish *snitkare* < MLG *sniddeker* 'carpenter'. Thus, purely on linguistic grounds, for CourlY *šnikern* both Low German and Swedish origins are possible.

As one can observe, the distribution of the etymon is beyond CourlY and Baltic German limits. The Finnish *nikertää* and the Estonian *nikerdama* are completely integrated phonologically and morphologically (note the avoidance of two consonants in the beginning: *sn-* > *n-*), which suggests an old, long established loan. This fact confirms a claim made by Jacobs (1994) that any investigation of any individual language or dialect in the Baltic region must be open to questions of pan-Balticisms. We shall return to this topic in section 5.3.

### 5.2.3. Lithuanianisms

Lithuanianisms (or borrowings from Lithuanian) are a part of ZY lexicon, some of them are spread also in Courland (Lemchen 1995). This is not surprising since CourlY is an offspring of ZY. Some Lithuanianisms have found their way into EstY (undoubtedly brought by speakers of CourlY). Lithuanianisms in EstY listed by Ariste (1970) were taken into consideration by Lemchen (1995).

However, the situation has changed since the time of Ariste's study. Only few Lithuanianisms are used and recognized by speakers of EstY: *bruknes* 'lingonberry

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<sup>14</sup> It is interesting to note that while *zafi* means 'preserves, jam', *aingemaxts* means in EstY 'kind of sweet dish made of raddish and honey' only. In Standard Yiddish *aingemaxts* has both meanings.

(used parallelly with Courlandism *bru:klenes*), *lupite* 'rag'<sup>15</sup>, *šnuke* ~ *šnutske* 'a little face' (to a child). Lithuanianisms are rapidly disappearing from EstY (Verschik 1998b).

#### 5.2.4. Borrowings from Estonian

Here we shall not discuss Estonian influence on EstY lexicon in detail (see Verschik 1997, 1998b). It was claimed in section 5.2.2. that Estonian serves as a mediator for Low Germanisms into EstY. To this one can add that Baltic German can be a mediator of Estonian loans into EstY. Numerous lexical items – borrowings from Estonian into Baltic German – registered by Nottbeck (1988) and Kiparsky (1936) can also be found in EstY: *lage* 'ceiling' < Baltic German *Lage* < Estonian *lagi* (Kiparsky 1936 : 50; Kobolt 1990 : 169); *luxt* 'waterside meadow' < BG *Lucht* < Estonian *luht* (Nottbeck 1988 : 53) etc.

#### 5.3. Pan-balticisms

The term was used by Jacobs (1994) in his study on CourLY. Examples of pan-balticisms suggested by Jacobs is *raut* 'windowpane' and *šnikern* 'to cut without purpose', which, in his opinion, may be remnants from Hanseatic times. There are more lexical items which are spread in several languages spoken in the region and in CourLY/EstY as well. Another example of the kind is *kadakas* ~ *kaddik* ~ *kadike* 'juniper' of Finnic origin (see discussion in Verschik 1998b).

The topic definitely deserves a careful study, whereas Yiddish spoken in the Baltic region should be included. There exist only a few studies such as Jacobs (1994, ms.), Ariste (1937, 1970), Kiparsky (1936), Lemchen (1995) which view Yiddish in the general Baltic context. It is a high time to remove the wall between Yiddish studies on the one hand and Baltic/Finnic studies on the other.

Table 7. Examples of pan-balticisms<sup>16</sup>

EstY	CourLY	LG / BG	Estonian	Latvian	Other languages	Source
<i>raut</i> ~ <i>rout</i> ~ <i>ru:t</i> 'windowpane'	<i>raut</i>	<i>rute</i>	<i>ruut</i>	–	Fi <i>ruutu</i> Sw <i>ruta</i>	Sc or LG
<i>šnikern</i> 'to cut'	<i>šnikern</i>	<i>schnickern</i>	<i>nikerdama</i>	–	Fi <i>nikartaa</i> ~ <i>nikkaroida</i> Sw <i>snickare</i>	Sc or LG
<i>redl</i> 'ladder'	<i>redl</i>	<i>Reddel</i>	<i>redel</i>	<i>redele</i>		BG or LG
<i>killo</i> ~ <i>kilu</i> 'sprat'	?	<i>Killo</i>	<i>kilu</i>	<i>ķiļis</i>	StY <i>kil'ke</i> < R <i>kil'ka</i>	F via BG
<i>šlure</i> (*) 'old shoe'	<i>šlure</i>	<i>Schiurre</i>	–	<i>šlura</i>	Li <i>šliure</i>	BG or Baltic

<sup>15</sup> Baltic German *Lupatt* 'rag' was registered by Nottbeck (1988 : 56). He considers it as a borrowing from Russian; however, Latvian *lupata* is a more probable source (on Lithuanian Yiddish *lupite* see Lemchen 1995 : 94).

<sup>16</sup> Abbreviations: BG = Baltic German, F = Finnic, Fi = Finnish, LG = Low German, Li = Lithuanian, R = Russian, Sc = Scandinavian, StY = Standard Yiddish, Sw = Swedish. A question mark (?) is used if there is no data on CourLY, i.e. an etymon is not registered by M. Weinreich (1923) or Kalmanovitsh (1926). With an asteric (\*) we designate items no more used in EstY. Under the 'source' we understand how an etymon has entered Yiddish.

<i>klade</i> 'a big notepad'	?	<i>Kladde</i>	<i>klade</i>	<i>klade</i>	–	BG or LG
<i>kadik</i> 'juniper'	<i>kadik</i>	<i>Kaddik</i>	<i>kadakas</i>	<i>kadikis</i>	Li <i>kadagys</i> Fi <i>kataja</i> ZY <i>kadagines</i>	F via BG or Baltic

#### 5.4. Summary

The main features of EstY lexicon are as follows:

- Presence of Low-Germanisms and Baltic-Germanisms (common with CourlY). Sometimes the difference between Low-Germanisms and Scandinavian borrowings is not clear.
- A considerable dominance of Germanic component in the lexicon and a smaller number of Semitisms and Slavisms than in other Yiddish dialects.
- Direct or indirect borrowings from Estonian.
- Decline of Lithuanianisms.

#### 6. Possible future developments of the dialect

The decline of CourlY through the shift to other varieties of Yiddish (Lithuanian or Standard Yiddish) and to non-Jewish languages was mentioned by M. Weinreich (1923), Bin-Nun (1973), Jacobs (1994) and other scholars. Given that, one may assume the same development in EstY. Below we will try to give a more detailed description of the situation.

Bin-Nun (1973 : 97) considers three ways of CourlY extinction: 1) the shift to another Yiddish dialect; 2) the formation of a mixed dialect; 3) the shift to a non-Jewish language. Unfortunately, he did not specify what kind of "mixed dialect" or "another dialect" is meant.

All these possibilities have to be analyzed in our case. We suggest that all the three developments may occur simultaneously, although perhaps not exactly in the way indicated by Bin-Nun. It was demonstrated by Jacobs (1994) that dialect levelling of CourlY occurred due to a high prestige of Lithuanian Yiddish and the spread of Standard Yiddish. However, in the case of EstY we do not know exactly what the impact of Standard Yiddish was.

Estonia has always been a peripheral place in the Jewish cultural geography. Though a kind of Jewish national awakening did take place in the independent Estonia, not all Yiddish speakers received their education in Yiddish or could read and write Yiddish (for more details see Verschik 1998a). The generation of Yiddish speakers whose socialization took place after World War II grew up without any Yiddish literacy. Thus it remains unclear what role Standard Yiddish played in the dialect extinction process. Our present-day observations show that speakers are often unaware of Standard Yiddish and believe that their native dialect is the standard language or, at least, that the standard language is based on their dialect.

The two other possibilities – the shift to other languages and/or a creation of a mixed variety – can be outlined more clearly than the first one. A mixed variety in our case is not based on EstY and other Yiddish dialects but rather on EstY, Estonian, Russian and, to some extent, German. Such a variety is just in the process of formation (Verschik 1999) which is possible due to extensive multilingualism of Yiddish-speakers. Nevertheless, it is not certain whether such a variety can be finally

developed in practice. The reasons for doubts are: 1) a small, constantly decreasing number of Yiddish-speakers and 2) the shift to non-Jewish languages (Estonian and Russian).

The shift to non-Jewish languages occurs constantly. For instance, our youngest informant was born in 1963, he has a passive command of Yiddish and no Yiddish literacy. The language used in the family most often is Estonian, Yiddish is used as a “secret language” only.

In these circumstances there exists another option, not mentioned by Bin-Nun, namely, a rise of a Jewish variety of a non-Jewish language (Jewish Estonian, Jewish Russian<sup>17</sup> etc.). Such a variety, in our case Jewish Estonian, is used as a means of communication within the group (see examples in Verschik 1995, 1997). This topic can be a subject for a separate study, however, it is beyond the range of our present description.

## 7. Conclusions

On the basis of the main phonological, morphological and lexical features described above it is reasonable to view the development of EstY in three stages:

1. Archaic features preserved in CourlY and, to some extent, in ZY, as well as certain common NEY features (from before the 19th c., i.e., before CourlY became an independent dialect).

- The stressed vowel system is closest to that of CourlY;
- The vowel 22/24 has parallel realizations as *äi* (Courland type) and *ei* (Vilna and Samogitian type);
- Realization of the vowel 54 as *au* (Courland type);
- The initial *ji* > *i* as in ZY and in Lithuanian Yiddish in general;
- Loss of neutrum;
- Merge of Dative and Accusative into Objective Case;
- Conditional mood is formed according to the pattern *volt* + infinitive;
- Formation of the past participle with the ending *-(e)n* is a specific ZY (and probably also CourlY) feature;
- Merge of prefixes *ce-* and *cu-*;
- Substitute of the preposition *kein* by *in* (as in Lithuanian Yiddish).

2. Features acquired by CourlY (mainly Baltic German influence during the 19th c.).

- Non-apokope forms are preferred to apokope (influence of Standard German);
- Sonants *l* and *r* are realized as in CourlY (*l* – soft, alveolar, *r* – lingual, not uvular);
- Realization of hissing and hushing consonants follows CourlY model (distribution of *s* and *š* in words of German stock according to German pattern, *š* in words of Slavic and Semitic stock);
- *er* > *är* according to Baltic German model (in proper names only);
- use of auxiliary verbs in the past tense according to Standard Yiddish / Standard German pattern;

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<sup>17</sup> Jewish Russian is a variety with many speakers. It is possible that there exist more than one variety of Jewish Russian. One of them, the so-called Odessa dialect is Russian with a heavy Yiddish and some Ukrainian substratum. To my best knowledge varieties of Jewish Russian have not been studied. Jewish English has enjoyed some scholarly attention (Gold 1985).

- Presence of Low-Germanisms and Baltic-Germanisms (common with CourlY). Sometimes the difference between Low-Germanisms and Scandinavian borrowings is not clear;
- A considerable dominance of Germanic component in the lexicon and a smaller number of Semitisms and Slavisms than in other Yiddish dialects.

3. Characteristics developed already in Estonia from the second half of the 19th c. to the present time (continuing influence of Baltic German, growing prestige and impact of Standard German, increasing role of Estonian both as a mediator of (Low) Germanisms and as a source of direct loans; decline of some CourlY features as a result of general Yiddish dialect levelling and spread of Standard Yiddish via school system, press etc; decline of Lithuanianisms).

- Front rounded monophthongs are unique features which may be explained as an influence of German and a high prestige of that language, and, to some extent, an impact of Estonian adstratum;
- In the part of the vowel 42/44 a transition to Vilna type has occurred almost completely (*öü* > *ei*);
- Realization of the vowel 54 as a diphthong intermediate between *au* and *ou* (possible Baltic German influence, especially in Tallinn), no transition to Vilna type in this case;
- Post-tonic vowel lengthening in words which can be re-interpreted in the terms of Estonian phonology as words of the 1st quantity;
- Estonian-influenced gemination of clusters *k*, *p*, *t* in an intervocalic position; re-interpretation of one-syllable Yiddish words in the terms of Estonian phonology as words of the 3rd quantity;
- Substitution of the preposition *kein* by *nox* with toponyms (borrowing from Standard German);
- The indefinite article is *a* only;
- Prefix *der-* > *er-* (German influence);
- Direct or indirect borrowings from Estonian;
- Decline of Lithuanianisms;
- Due to inconsistencies in gender assignment (initially in case of borrowings from Estonian) the normal use of the definite and even indefinite article is collapsing which affects declination of adjectives in noun phrases;
- Proper names and nouns which are usually declined in Yiddish (receiving the ending *-(e)n*) are not always declined in EstY.

More generally we can claim the following:

- The dialect is fairly homogeneous, innumerable territorial variations should be ascribed to a different degree of contact with Estonian rather than to differences in the internal development (for instance, the application of Estonian phonological rules to certain categories of Yiddish words is more frequent in Tartu than in Tallinn);
- Although some archaic features (for instance, realization of the vowel 42/44) have disappeared as a part of general dialect assimilation process, quite a number of archaic CourlY features in phonology and lexicon have been retained (opposition of short-long vowels, certain diphthongs, Low Germanisms from CourlY period). This makes EstY especially important for NEY dialectology;
- Unfortunately we are not able to compare EstY morphology to that of CourlY because, to my best knowledge, the latter has never been described systematically. However, it is reasonable to suppose that both EstY and CourlY have preserved such

essential NEY morphological features as a loss of neutrum and merge of Dative and Accusative into the Objective Case. Morphology is known to be the part of language most stable to contact-induced changes;

- Both EstY and CourlY are the only Yiddish dialects which have developed in contact with Baltic German. This circumstance makes these dialects extremely valuable for Yiddish dialectology and for Baltic German studies. Lexicon and, to some extent, phonology of CourlY and EstY have been influenced by Baltic German. On the other hand, Baltic German contains some lexical borrowings from Yiddish. Baltic German has served as a mediator of Estonian lexical and semantic borrowings into EstY. These contacts remain to be investigated in future;
- Yiddish should be considered among the languages of the Baltic region. This claim is supported by the existence of Pan-balticisms;
- EstY is a declining dialect; the shift to non-Jewish languages occurs constantly (due to socio-political circumstances such as the abolition of cultural autonomy and system of Jewish education, World War II, the Holocaust, Soviet occupation, massive displacement of Jewish population in the 1940s, mixed marriages). However, one should not ignore the possibility of a mixed variety (Yiddish-Estonian-Russian-German) developing on the basis of extensive multilingualism. Another option is the rise of a Jewish variety of a non-Jewish language (Jewish Estonian) as a means of inter-group communication. These possibilities of the future development remain to be investigated.

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On the Lexicon of Estonian Yiddish.  
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# ON THE LEXICON OF ESTONIAN YIDDISH

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## 1. General remarks

The dialect of Yiddish spoken by Estonian Jews (Estonian Yiddish) has hardly been a subject of research. It has only been mentioned by a few scholars (Bin-Nun 1973: 98; Lemchen 1995); however, Estonia is usually absent from the Yiddish language map (see e.g. Jofen 1988: 32, 33; Katz 1983: 1023; U. Weinreich 1962: 10, 12, 14, 16–20; Bin-Nun 1973 and U. Weinreich 1958: 230 are rare exceptions). Only two informants from Tartu (location no. 58265) have been interviewed for LCAAJ (Herzog 1998: personal communication); as will become clear later, the data from Estonia deserve a broader representation on dialectological maps of Yiddish.

Except for a few articles on Yiddish-Estonian language contact (Ariste 1981; Verschik 1997) and on general patterns of Jewish multilingualism in Estonia (Verschik 1995; 1999) there are no papers dedicated exclusively to the dialect. Yet the dialect is on the verge of extinction (500–600 speakers); one can fully agree with P. Ariste (1970: 250) on the matter:

[In Estland] gibt es heutzutage unter den Germanisten keinen Forscher, der sich ernst für das Jiddische interessierte, so daß die lokale jiddische Mundart vielleicht verschwinden wird, ohne daß man sie für die Wissenschaft fixiert hätte.

The aim of the present article is to outline the main components of the lexicon of Estonian Yiddish in the context of other North-eastern Yiddish dialects (Courland and Lithuanian Yiddish especially), as well as the impact of co-territorial languages (Estonian, Baltic German and Standard German); a systematic description of the phonology and morphology of Estonian Yiddish goes beyond the range of the present research.

The data have been obtained from interviews with 28 informants (conducted in 1995–98) and from the author's personal observations of the Yiddish-speaking community. Yiddish newspapers printed in Estonia in the period 1918–40 and the Yiddish folklore collection in the Museum of Literature (Tartu, Estonia) served as a source as well.

## 2. A brief history of the Estonian Jews

### 2.1. Jewish settlement in Estonia

Unlike elsewhere in the Baltics, Jews played no part in early Estonian history. Although some Jews are known to have settled in Tallinn in the 14th century, one can only speak of a Jewish presence as late as the beginning of the 19th century.

During Russian rule (1710–1918) Estonia did not belong to the Pale of Settlement, which fact has substantially affected the socio-cultural history of the Jews in Estonia. Jews migrated mainly from Courland and from parts of Lithuania (Ariste 1970: 250) bringing their dialect with them (on dialect formation see section 3). Unlike Jews in the

Pale, Estonian Jews were highly urbanized, living mainly in the two largest cities of Tallinn and Tartu and constituting a distinct minority. Orthodoxy and strict observance, as well as traditional Talmudic scholarship and rabbinical authority never played a significant role in the community. Being a minority meant automatic multilingualism: everybody knew Yiddish, but a knowledge of German — the language of education, culture and the local nobility — (or, in some cases, Russian) as well as Estonian — the language of the co-territorial majority — was necessary. The community is characterized as tiny, atypical, urbanized, modernized and acculturated (Lane 1995; Mendelsohn 1983: 253–254).

## **2.2. Life in independent Estonia and cultural autonomy**

In 1918 Estonia became an independent state for the first time in its history. Since 1925 the right of cultural autonomy for national minorities was enacted by law; of all the minorities living in Estonia at that period only the Jews and Baltic Germans claimed this right (for a detailed analysis of the law see Aun 1949; documents on activities of various minorities see Matsulevitš 1993).

Jewish cultural autonomy came into being in 1926 and existed till the Soviet occupation in 1940. During that period there occurred a kind of national awakening; the list of clubs, organizations, societies and activities is surprisingly long for such a small community (4300 persons according to the census of 1934). The Estonian Jews did not escape the struggle between Yiddishism and Hebraism (this topic is relevant both for Yiddish studies and for the general language policy context in Estonia; unfortunately, it has not been investigated at all).

The community has always been multilingual and remains so. The usual language combinations are Yiddish-Estonian-Russian-German, Yiddish-Estonian, Yiddish-Estonian-German or Yiddish-Estonian-Russian. Code-switching between these languages is the norm.

As is stated in Mendelsohn (1983: 254), the situation of the Jews in Estonia more closely approximated that so devotedly hoped for by Dubnow and other ideologues of extraterritorial autonomy than it did elsewhere in the diaspora.

## **2.3. Developments after 1940: the 1st Soviet occupation, the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust, the 2nd Soviet occupation**

After the occupation and annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union Jewish cultural autonomy was abolished, all Jewish institutions were closed, and many Jewish activists were arrested. The group of approx. 10,000 people deported from Estonia to the Soviet Union by the Soviet authorities also included 500 Estonian Jews, i.e. over 10 per cent of the total Jewish population. After the outbreak of war between Nazi Germany and the USSR, some 3000 Jews fled to Russia (the majority of them returned after the end of the war), while 1000 stayed in Estonia and were murdered by the Nazis in 1941.

For those who returned after 1944 continued life without cultural and linguistic identity under Soviet rule seemed meaningless, which led to the emigration of many Yiddish speakers, especially younger people.

After 1944 a substantial group of assimilated, Russian-speaking Jews from the USSR came to settle. They belong mainly to the Russian-speaking community and their culture is Russian; their identity differs a great deal from that of the indigenous Estonian Jews (on the conflict of the two Jewish identities see Lane 1995; Verschik 1999). These Jews today constitute a majority (appr. 2000), while Estonian Jews (1000) are a declining minority. Although Jewish life in Estonia has undergone a sort of revival since 1988, the number of Yiddish speakers is decreasing (500–600).

### **3. Key points in dialect formation**

#### **3.1. The importance of Courland Yiddish**

As is stated by Ariste (1970: 250), Jews migrated to Estonia from Courland and from parts of Lithuania, bringing their dialect with them. Afterwards it became subject to various changes and open to the influence of Estonian. Bin-Nun (1973: 98) claims that Estonian Yiddish is a relatively young dialect and such a statement is fully justified, since Jewish settlement in Estonia began to develop from the beginning of the 19th century. Thus, Estonian Yiddish is one of the North-eastern Yiddish dialects and should be studied in this context (with especial attention to Courland Yiddish).

However, Courland Yiddish and its status among North-eastern Yiddish dialects became a subject for discussion after the publication of M. Weinreich's now classical paper (1923). In his article M. Weinreich outlines the main features of the dialect, emphasizing its isolation from other Yiddish dialects and paying special attention to the impact of German and the peculiarities of the socio-cultural situation.

Z. Kalmanovitsh (1926) argues against the claim of isolation and insists that Courland Yiddish shares many features with Zameter Yiddish (Zamet, or װעמאײַטע, is a part of Lithuania) and should be considered as part of Zameter Yiddish, with which argument J. Mark (1951) is in agreement.

The discussion is continued in Ch. Lemchen (1995: 19), where the author takes an intermediate position. After 1829 Jewish migration to Courland was restricted and, according to Lemchen, one may speak of relative isolation. It is clear that in the past Courland and Zameter Yiddish had constituted a linguistic entity, which split after 1829. Due to numerous common features in both dialects Kalmanovitsh ignored the autonomy of Courland Yiddish. His argument against the autonomy of Courland Yiddish (the presence of some Slavisms) is not sufficient proof of contacts with other dialects. Since Kalmanovitsh does not mention any particular Slavisms, it is hard to draw any conclusions.

#### **3.2. Estonian Yiddish as a North-eastern dialect**

It is clear that Estonian Yiddish should be studied in the total context of NEY dialects. Its derivation from Courland Yiddish has already been mentioned above, but Zameter Yiddish connections cannot be ignored. Among all the Yiddish dialects of Lithuania the dialect of Zamet is the closest; the analysis of Lithuanian Yiddish dialects by J. Mark (1951) brings us to the conclusion that Estonian (and Courland) Yiddish share with it most of its morphological and phonological features (the preservation of long-short

vowel opposition, the merging of the Accusative and Dative, the use of certain prepositions, the loss of neuter gender etc.).

A number of loans from Lithuanian had entered co-territorial Yiddish dialects before the split of Zameter and Courland Yiddish; later on some of these loans were preserved in Courland Yiddish (for example *£pongalex* ‘cranberries’, Lemchen 1995: 21) and brought to Estonia. According to Ariste (1970), several dozen Lithuanianisms could still be heard in the speech of Estonian Jews. However, only a couple of Lithuanianisms can be registered today (see section 4.3).

The development of Estonian Yiddish took place in a socio-cultural setting similar to that of Courland, in relative isolation from other Yiddish dialects. The later aspect has led to the preservation of some Courlandisms in the lexicon as well as of certain features of phonology and morphology up to the present day (see section 3.3). Contacts with Estonian and Yiddish-Estonian bilingualism have induced changes exclusively characteristic of the dialect.

### 3.3. The Main features of Estonian Yiddish

A full description of the dialect is not the subject of the present article; however, some distinctive features of phonology and morphology must be mentioned.

The opposition of short and long vowels has survived up to now: (*ix*) *bin* ‘I am’ — *bi:n* ‘bee’ (vowels 31 and 32), *bet* ‘bed’ — (*ix*) *be:t* ‘I beg’ (vowels 21 and 25), *oder* ‘or’ — *o:der* ‘vein’ (vowels 41 and 12/13), (*di*) *zun* ‘sun’ — (*der*) *zu:n* ‘son’ (vowels 51 and 52). It has not been resolved whether there was an opposition of short *a* and long *a*: in Courland Yiddish — U. Weinreich (1991: 19) quotes Kalmanovitsh and M. Weinreich, who disagree about the length of *a* in *grapn*. In Estonian Yiddish *a*: occurs in loanwords: *ja*: ‘yes’ < German *ja*, Estonian *jaa*, *ka:like* ‘turnip’ < Estonian *kaalikas*. Typical Courland diphthongs *öu* (vowel 42/44) and *äi* (vowel 22/24) can still be heard, though the former has almost disappeared and is no longer present in the speech of informants born after 1920; the latter exists along with *ei*: *köufn* and *keifn* ‘to buy’, *möude ani* ‘I thank’ (the first line of a prayer), *ix gei ahäim* ‘I am going home’. Vowel 54 has two realizations: *ou* and *au*, both being in use: *maul* and *moul* ‘mouth’, *haus* and *hous* ‘house’. Thus, it is not entirely correct to consider Estonia as an *au*-area (the map in U. Weinreich 1958: 230, referring to Mark 1951). In Tallinn one can hear a diphthong intermediate between *au* and *ou*; the same is reported by Lehiste (1965: 57) concerning the variety of Baltic German spoken in Tallinn.

A unique feature of Estonian Yiddish is the presence of the front vowels *ö* and *ü* (and long *ü*). The former has been registered in only two words: *tsvölf* ‘twelve’ and *rötlax* ‘rose rash’; the latter appears in words like *fünf* ‘five’, *antsündn* ‘to light’, *tü:r* ‘door’, as well as in so-called internationalisms: *süstern* ‘system’, *kostü:m* ‘costume’ (on the realization of internationalisms see section 4.4.3). It is not clear whether the presence of *ö* and *ü* (in words of Germanic origin) is an internal development or due to the influence of German (with some influence of an Estonian adstratum where both vowels exist; no speaker of Yiddish in Estonia has any difficulty in producing these vowels in Estonian, while Estonian *õ* is often mispronounced by older speakers and substituted by *ö*). The question of the rounding and unrounding of front vowels in Baltic German, Low German, Estonian dialects and Standard Estonian is far from being solved (Lehiste 1965: 59; Ariste 1981: 102–103); the correlation of these vowels to the process which the Estonian Yiddish vocalic system has undergone needs further investigation.

The distribution of hissing and hushing consonants is identical to that of Courland Yiddish (M. Weinreich 1923: 238; U. Weinreich 1952: 376–377): *ʃ* in words of Slavic and Semitic origin, e.g., *kaʃe* ‘porridge’, *miʃtome* ‘perhaps’, *ʃimxe* ‘holiday, celebration’, *beiʃeilem* ‘cemetery’; in words of Germanic origin the distribution of *s* and *ʃ* follows the German pattern: *viʃn* ‘to know’, *naʃ* ‘wet’, *ʃtein* ‘stone’, *ʃuld* ‘guilt’.

The acquisition of phonological quantity (duration) under the influence of Estonian is characteristic of Yiddish speakers from Tartu. Estonian has three quantities (short, long and superlong). One-syllable words in Estonian usually have the third quantity; this rule is sometimes applied to one-syllable Yiddish words such as *vald* ‘forest’, *gold* ‘gold’, *lomp* ‘lamp’. It is interesting that the same phenomenon — the acquisition of duration — was registered by A. Weiss (1959: 52–53) in Baltic German.

### 3.4. Contacts with other languages and dialects

#### 3.4.1. Standard Yiddish and other Yiddish dialects

It needs to be investigated further whether Standard Yiddish has exercised any influence on Estonian Yiddish. Some speakers were exposed to Standard Yiddish through the press etc. as well as at school in the inter-war period. However, after cultural autonomy had been abolished and Yiddish excluded from several domains (the press, education, theatre etc.), contacts with the rest of the Yiddish-speaking (Yiddish-writing) world were disrupted. Many found it disturbing to read books and magazines in Soviet Yiddish spelling; it became difficult to buy a book in Yiddish etc. For these reasons proficiency in reading and writing Yiddish has drastically decreased.

Yiddish-speakers are very well aware of their dialect; they consider it beautiful and different from other dialects. It is usually emphasized that ‘we do not speak like Lithuanian Jews; Lithuanian Jews use many Russian words’. In other words, the speakers realize that the Slavic component (‘Russian words’) in Estonian Yiddish is quite small. None of the informants has a command of any Yiddish dialect other than their native one.

#### 3.4.2. Standard German, Baltic German

As was mentioned above, the German *Kultursprache* lost importance in the Baltic region after World War II; nevertheless, at least some Estonian Jews continue to read German books and to communicate in German. Nowadays one can subscribe to a German-language newspaper and watch German TV programmes. It is a paradox that after the *Umsiedlung* of Baltic Germans in 1939 and World War II the only (native) speakers of German in Estonia are Jews. The impact of German on the lexicon will be discussed in section 4.2.

#### 3.4.3. Standard Estonian and Estonian dialects

The Estonian language gained prestige after independence in 1918. It is hard to make any judgement as to the degree to which the generation born, say, in the second half of the 19th century was proficient in Estonian. All the informants, including the oldest (born in 1903) claimed that their parents spoke Estonian, but the extent of their fluency and ability to write and read still remains unclear.



However, the informants speak, read and write Estonian; for most of them Estonian is their first language. Yiddish newspapers published in Estonia between 1918 and 1940 contain quite a number of untranslated Estonian words or expressions, often not even transliterated (e.g. *Undzer Vort* 9, 1932). This fact suggests that at that period a good command of Estonian was not unusual.

Estonian dialects have not affected Estonian Yiddish and thus are excluded from the present discussion.

#### 3.4.4. Russian

It is important to distinguish between the Slavic element in the Yiddish lexicon and Russian loans of a later period. Some Slavisms are present in Estonian Yiddish: *kitke* 'challa', *bobe* 'grandmother', *zeide* 'grandfather', though words of Germanic origin prevail.

However, Russian was the official language of the Russian Empire as well as, later, of the Soviet Union; thus certain words and concepts connected with the administrative sphere were sporadically borrowed (Verschik 1997).

For many Yiddish speakers born in independent Estonia Russian was a foreign language, which they first learned during the period of evacuation. After World War II one had to choose between an Estonian or a Russian future, since education in Yiddish became impossible.

The informants frequently code-switch between Estonian, Russian and Yiddish, but the number of established borrowings from Russian needs to be investigated.

## 4. Components of the lexicon

### 4.1. Courlandisms

By 'Courlandisms' we mean lexical items (of various origin) registered in Courland Yiddish by U. Weinreich (1923) and Z. Kalmanovitsh (1926) which are also present in Estonian Yiddish. Since many Courlandisms are the result of Germanic influence on the lexicon, comments on most of the Courlandisms are to be found in section 4.2 in a discussion of Germanisms. The Estonian etymon (usually a Germanic loan) is mentioned for purposes of illustration, if relevant.

The list of Courlandisms in Estonian Yiddish is as follows:

*bru:klenes* 'lingonberries' (*Rhodococcum vitis-idaea*) < Latvian *bru#klene* (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 172), cf. Lithuanian Yiddish *bruknes* (Lemchen 1995: 70; see also section 4.3), other Yiddish varieties *brusnitses*, *bruslines*, *moxjagde*, *borovke*, *pianitses* (Stuchkoff 1950: 226).

*bu:d* 'store' (M. Weinreich 1923: 212); according to Kalmanovitsh (1926: 166) the word was spread far beyond the borders of Courland; one could hear it in the Kaunas district and in Poland. Estonian Yiddish has no other words for 'store' (cf. Estonian *pood* 'store' < MLG *bōde*, Mägiste 1982–83: 2131).

*gurk* 'cucumber' (*Cucumis*) (M. Weinreich 1923: 215); cf. Stuchkoff (1950: 226) *ugerke*, *ugerik*, *gurk*, *ugerok*.

*i:blen zix* 'to be nauseated' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 170) < MHG *übel* (?), cf. other Yiddish varieties *eklen*.

*kadik* 'juniper' (*Juniperus*) according to Kalmanovitsh (1926: 183), a loan from Latvian; however, see also Lemchen (1995: 102) and sections 4.3 and 4.5.

*kaneil* 'cinnamon' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 183), cf. other Yiddish varieties *tsimering*, *tsimerik*, *tsimt* (of MHG origin).

*mits* 'hat' (M. Weinreich 1923: 225), in Estonian Yiddish *müts*; Stuchkoff (1950: 522) also indicates *mits*, *mitsl*, *mitske*.

*proln zix* 'to boast' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 181), cf. other Yiddish varieties *barimen zix*; cf. Estonian *praalima* < MLG *pralen* (Mägiste 1982–83: 2157).

*raut* 'windowpane' (M. Weinreich 1923: 235), cf. Yiddish *loib*, see also Jacobs (1994) and section 4.5.

*redl* 'ladder' according to M. Weinreich (1923: 236) may be a loan from Estonian; however, see section 4.2.1.

*£i:ber* 'chimney flap' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 186), cf. *ju£ke*, cf. Estonian *siiber* < German *Schieber* (Mägiste 1982–83: 2780).

*£mant* 'cream' (M. Weinreich 1923: 239), cf. Yiddish *smetene*.

*£pongelax* 'cranberry' (Kalmanovits 1926: 186), cf. other Yiddish varieties *£uravines*, *£urexlines*, *kljukve*, *£erexlines*, *£pongeles* (Stuchkoff 1950: 226); in Estonian Yiddish it is remembered only by older informants; currently the Estonian loan *jõhvikeljõhvike* < Estonian *jõhvikas* 'cranberry' is used; see also Lemchen (1995: 21) and section 4.3.

*trexter* 'funnel' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 177), cf. *leike*, *kreindl* (U. Weinreich 1977: 226).

*u:r* 'watch, clock' (M. Weinreich 1923: 215), cf. *zeiger*.

## 4.2. Germanisms

Long-established German linguistic and cultural influence, on the one hand, and lack of a substantial co-territorial Slavic population, on the other, are the reasons why the Slavic constituent of Estonian Yiddish is so small. Etymons of Germanic origin often correspond to Slavic loans in other Eastern Yiddish dialects. The same claim can be made for Courland Yiddish (Jofen 1988: 35) for the same historical reasons.

Thus, where Standard Yiddish and other Yiddish dialects have:

*lje£t£* 'bream', *podloge* 'floor', *(u)krop/kriplkrop* 'dill', *kat£ke* 'duck', *bulbe* 'potato', *ju£ke* 'chimney flap',

Estonian Yiddish has:

*breks* 'bream', *di:l* 'floor', *dil* 'dill', *ente* 'duck', *kartofl* 'potato', *£i:ber* 'chimney flap'.

#### 4.2.1. Low German and Baltic German element

It is not entirely clear how Low German loans entered Courland Yiddish: whether Low Germanisms entered Courland Yiddish as remnants in High German, or from Low German directly (Jacobs 1994).

Whatever the history of Low Germanisms in Courland Yiddish may be, in Estonian Yiddish one can distinguish two groups of Low Germanisms: the first, older one, was probably brought along from Courland, whereas some Low Germanisms of that group may have entered Estonian Yiddish via contacts with Baltic German already in Estonia (according to Ariste 1981: 28, Low German was spoken in Tallinn as late as the beginning of the 19th century); the second group entered Estonian Yiddish later via Estonian, where these Low Germanisms are long-established loans (see section 4.4).

Examples of Low Germanisms and Baltic Germanisms of the first group:

*arist* 'doctor' (? < Estonian *arst*) < Low German *Artzte*, cf. Yiddish *dokter*.

*klade* 'a big notepad', 'writing book' (? < Estonian *klade*) < German *Kladde* (Mägiste 1982–83: 861) < MLG *kladde* (Kobolt 1990: 147), cf. Yiddish *heft*, *kaiet*, *bruiljon* (Stuchkoff 1950: 337).

*kaneil* 'cinnamon' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 183), also *kane:l* (cf. Estonian *kaneel*) < MLG *kan(n)êl*.

*leiz* 'free, mere, open' (Standard Yiddish *loiz* 'free, liquid'), *di tü:r iz leiz* 'the door is open', cf. Baltic German *die Tür ist los*, cf. Standard German *offen* (Nottbeck 1988: 55), cf. Estonian *lausa*, *laus-* < (?) Germanic, Gothic *laus* 'open' (Raun 1982: 71).

*proln zix* 'to boast' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 181), cf. Yiddish *barimen zix*, cf. Estonian *praalima* < MLG *pralen* (Mägiste 1982–83: 2157).

*redl* 'ladder' (M. Weinreich 1923: 236), cf. Yiddish *leiter*; Weinreich concludes that it might be a loan from Estonian (< *redel*); however, it is more probable that *redl* < Baltic German *Reddel*; Estonian *redel* < Baltic German *Reddel* (Mägiste 1982–83: 2437).

*sült/zült* 'jelly' < MLG *sült*, cf. Estonian *sült* < MLG *sülte*; cf. other Yiddish varieties *putfa*, *petfe*, *petsa*, *galjerte*, *xolodets*, *iłkes*, *łtuding*, *gegliverexts* etc. (Stuchkoff 1950: 225).

*trexter* 'funnel' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 177) < LG *trechter*, cf. *leike*, *kreindl* (U. Weinreich 1977: 131); cf. Estonian (dial.) *tektekter*, Latvian *tektekis* < LG *trechter* (Vaba 1996: 111); Estonian *trehter* < MLG (Raag 1987: 324).

#### 4.2.2. High German and Standard German influence

A great number of Germanisms mentioned by M. Weinreich (1923) and Kalmanovitsh (1926) in their survey of Courland Yiddish, have also been registered in Estonian Yiddish. Since a knowledge of German was a *conditio sine qua non* for more or less educated people in the Baltics, and the Estonian Jews, as a relatively modern and upwardly mobile group, often had a pro-German cultural orientation, the great influence of Standard German on the lexicon of Estonian Yiddish is not surprising.

Yiddish forms such as *ljarem* 'noise', *£turem* 'storm', *turem* 'tower', *£irem* 'umbrella' are not used; instead one can hear Standard German (or near Standard German) forms such as *larm*, *£turm*, *turm*, *£irm*.

Another example of Standard German influence is the substitution of apocopated Yiddish nouns by non-apocopated Standard German ones. Apocope, or the loss of a word-final vowel, already occurred in the pre-Yiddish period, while non-apocopated German component nouns are probably recent loans from NHG (Jacobs 1990: 48–49). Thus, instead of Yiddish *£ul* 'school', 'synagogue', *lip* 'lip', *blum* 'flower', *end* 'end' there is *£u:le*, *lipe*, *blume*, *ende* respectively. The same can be claimed concerning the preposition *on* 'without', cf. Estonian Yiddish *o:ne*, cf. German *ohne*.

The standard German prefix *er-* is substituted for the corresponding Yiddish *der-*, thus: *ertseiln* 'to tell', cf. Yiddish *dertseiln*; *ertsi:en* 'to bring up', cf. *dertsien*; *erloubeni£lerlauben£* 'permit' (noun) etc.

The Yiddish indefinite pronouns *emets* 'somebody', *ergets* 'somewhere', *epes* 'something' are used less frequently than German-influenced *jemand*, *irgendvu*, *etvos*. Some Germanisms in Estonian Yiddish were also used in Courland Yiddish (see 4.1). A list of some High and Standard Germanisms is as follows:

*befor* 'before' < German *bevor*, cf. Yiddish *eider*, *for*.

*boksbe:rn* 'blackcurrant' < German *Bocksbeere*, cf. Yiddish *vaimper*, *smorodine*, cf. Estonian (dial.) *sokumarjad* (loan-translation) < German *Bocksbeere* (Vilbaste 1993: 533).

*breks* 'bream' < German *Brachsen*, cf. Yiddish *lje£t£* (Stuchkoff 1950: 247).

*dil* 'dill' < German *Dill*, cf. Yiddish (*u*)*krop*, *krip* (Stuchkoff 1950: 250), cf. Estonian *till* < German *Dill* (Mägiste 1982–83: 3171).

*i:blen zix* 'to be nauseated' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 170) < MHG *übel* (?), cf. other Yiddish varieties *eklen*, cf. Estonian *iiveldama* < MHG *übel* (?).

*kafe* 'coffee' < German *Kaffee*, cf. Yiddish *kave*.

*klat£n* 'to gossip' < German *klatschen*, cf. Yiddish *rexiles traibn*, *motlen*, *baredn*, *jenteven*, *ploi£n* etc. (Stuchkoff 1950: 585), cf. Estonian *klat£ima* < German *klatschen* (Mägiste 1982–83: 864).

*onkel* 'uncle' < German *Onkel*, cf. Yiddish *feter*; Stuchkoff (1950: 174) finds *onkel* inappropriate in standard language but nevertheless mentions the item in his list. *feter* is unknown in Estonian Yiddish.

*ouserdem/auserde:m* 'besides' < German *außerdem*, cf. Yiddish *a xuts* (< Hebrew).

*£i:ber* 'chimney flap' (Kalmanovitsh 1926: 186), cf. *ju£ke* (U. Weinreich 1977: 587/206), cf. Estonian *siiber* < German *Schieber* (Mägiste 1982–83: 2780).

*sauer£mant/souer£mant* 'sour cream' (M. Weinreich 1923: 239) < German *Schmant*, cf. Yiddish *smetene*. According to Joffen (1988: 35), *£mant* came into Yiddish through German but is of Slavic origin; however, Vasmer (1971, IV: 686–687) warns that MHG *Schmant* and MLG *Schmant* are not to be linked with Russian and Ukrainian *smetana*, Polish •*metana*.

*tante* 'aunt' < German *Tante*, cf. Yiddish *mume*. U. Weinreich (1977: 191/602) lists it, but finds it inappropriate in the standard language.

*überhaupt/überhoupt* 'generally' < German *überhaupt*, cf. Yiddish *bixlal* (< Semitic).

*um* 'in order to' < German *um*, cf. Yiddish *kedei* (< Semitic).

*u:r* 'watch, clock' (M. Weinreich 1923: 215) < German *Uhr*, cf. *zeiger*.

### 4.3. Lithuanianisms

Ch. Lemchen's research (1995) on Lithuanian-Yiddish contact is — to my best knowledge — the only one of its kind. Yet contacts between Yiddish and co-territorial languages in the Baltic region deserve more scholarly attention (see section 4.5). Lemchen gives a short survey of the history of Jewish settlement in Lithuania and in Courland and compiles a substantial list of Lithuanianisms (loans from Lithuanian and its dialects) in Lithuanian Yiddish.

It is important that numerous Lithuanianisms, as Lemchen has demonstrated, were spread beyond the borders of Lithuania proper, but also in Courland and in Estonia. In the later Yiddish version of his paper Lemchen refers to P. Ariste's review (1970) of the earlier Lithuanian-language version, and indicates whether a loan from Lithuanian was also known in Estonia.

However, almost all Lithuanianisms recorded by Ariste as having been used in Estonian Yiddish and quoted by Lemchen, have disappeared and cannot be heard today. This fact demonstrates again how important a study of a small community may be.

Lexical items still used or remembered by informants are marked with an asterisk (\*) in the following list.

*babale* 'creeping insect', probably also in Latvia (Lemchen 1995: 65).

*bande* 'cattle' (Lemchen 1995: 66).

*baravik* 'boletus' < *baravykas* (Lemchen 1995: 67).

*birbenen* (*opbirbenen*) 'to weep (a long time)' < *birbti* (Lemchen 1995: 62, 69).

*blerenen* (*opblerenen*) 'to weep loudly' < *blerbti* (Lemchen 1995: 62, 69).

*bruknes* (\*) 'lingonberry' < *brukne*<sub>≥s</sub>, Courland Yiddish *bru:klenes* (Lemchen 1995: 70); see also section 4.1.

*ganikle* 'pasture' < *ganykla* (Lemchen 1995: 71).

*kadagines*, *kadeges* (*Juniperus*) 'juniper' (Lemchen 1995: 102), Courland Yiddish *kadik* (Kalmanovitch 1926: 183). According to Lemchen, the source might be LG *kaddik*; however, see section 4.5.

*kaleid* 'Christmas' (Lemchen 1995: 103); in Estonian Yiddish *vainaxt* < German *Weinacht*.

*lupite* (\*) 'rag', 'a person with a weak will' < Lithuanian *lupeta* or Latvian *lupata* (Lemchen 1995: 84), also mentioned by M. Weinreich (1923: 223); in Estonian Yiddish used in the meaning 'rag'.

*nuke* ‘a chunk of bread’ (M. Weinreich 1923: 226), according to Lemchen (1995: 88), ‘an opgebroxene £tik broit’ < Latvian *nuka*, Lithuanian *niukas* (from Slavic), apparently from Latvian. However, Lemchen does not mention any particular Slavic source; cf. Estonian *nukk* (Genitive *nuki*) meaning 1) ‘a chunk of bread’, 2) ‘knuckle’, and Estonian *nukk* (Genitive *nuka*) ‘corner’. Both Estonian words, *nukk: nuki* and *nukk: nuka* have close meanings, but are apparently of different origin: the *i*-stem suggests Low German origin and the *a*-stem Swedish. Mägiste (1982–83: 1738–1739) concludes that the stem might be of Balto-Finnic or of Swedish origin; SKES (1958: 397) lists *nukk: nuki* < LG *nok*, *nokke* and *nukk: nuka* < Swedish *nock*, *nocke*; the same is suggested in SSA (1995: 236). The etymology suggested in SKES and SSA is more likely; LG seems to be the source for Estonian (and probably Latvian). LG or Swedish was probably the source for Balto-Finnic and Latvian; thus, it is possible that Courland Yiddish *nuke* (? < Latvian) < LG *nok*, *noke*.

*pipke* ‘pipe’ < *pypke* (Lemchen 1995: 99).

*rupenen* ‘to worry’, *rupenen zix* (Ariste 1970: 251) < Lithuanian *ru#pe#ti* or Latvian *ru#pe#t*, may also be from Slavic (Lemchen 1995: 113).

*snuke* (\*) ‘snout’, dem. *snutske(le)* ‘a little face’, also in Courland (Kalmanovitsh 1926) < Lithuanian *snukis*, Latvian *snuk`is* (Lemchen 1995: 90); in Estonian Yiddish *£nuke*, *£nuts kale*.

*£l(j)ure* ‘old shoe’ (M. Weinreich 1923: 238) < Lithuanian *£liure*, Latvian *£l`ura* (Lemchen 1995: 118), according to P. Ariste (1970) originates from Baltic German.

*tupenen* ‘to sit’ (about birds), ‘to sit at home all the time’ < *tupe#ti* (Lemchen 1995: 79, M. Weinreich 1923: 219).

*tripenen* ‘to walk noisily, making loud steps’ < *trypti* (Lemchen 1995: 80).

#### 4.4. The impact of Estonian

The influence of Estonian upon Yiddish is a relatively recent phenomenon; nevertheless, the importance and prestige of Estonian for Yiddish speakers increased rapidly after Estonia gained her independence in 1918. All the informants (dates of birth ranging between 1903–63) have a native or, at least, relatively high proficiency in Estonian. The structural influence of Estonian upon Estonian Yiddish is not to be discussed in the present article; further analysis concerns the lexicon only.

Estonian influence on the lexicon is of two types: an indirect one, when Estonian loanwords have entered Yiddish via Baltic German in the Baltic languages, and a direct one, when items are borrowed directly from Estonian. Cases of mild interference from Estonian will be analyzed separately.

##### 4.4.1. Indirect influence

The case of *lage* ‘ceiling’ clearly illustrates the importance of Estonian sources, as will be argued below. Although plenty of words for ‘ceiling’ do exist in various Yiddish dialects (Stuchkoff 1950: 113 lists *stelje*, *sufit*, *pulap*, *polap*, *polep*, etc.), *lage* is the

only word for the concept used in Estonian Yiddish. The area of *lage* (in some localities *eiberlage*), however, is greater than the territory of Estonian Yiddish: it includes Courland and some localities of Lithuania. In our opinion, the etymon originates from Estonian *lagi* 'ceiling'; it might have been borrowed into Yiddish via Baltic German. The origin of Baltic German *Lage* < Estonian *lagi* is demonstrated by Kiparsky (1936: 50).

Estonian Yiddish *luxt* 'waterside meadow' is probably borrowed via Baltic German *Lucht*, which had previously been borrowed from Estonian *luht*. According to Nottbeck (1988: 53), Baltic German *Lucht* < Estonian *luht*; Ariste (1981: 32) claims that the borrowing from Estonian into Low German already existed in the Middle Ages as a result of extensive Estonian-Low German bilingualism in Tallinn.

#### 4.4.2. Direct influence

As the contacts between Yiddish and Estonian are recent and not so extensive (Ariste 1981: 158), the number of Yiddish loans in Standard Estonian is quite small. The same is true in the case of borrowings from Estonian into Yiddish.

Differentiation between borrowing and one-word code-switching poses problems in some cases (Andersson 1993: 249–250; Filppula 1991: 6–8; Lauttamus 1991; Poplack 1988: 219–221; Romaine 1989: 137–147; Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 50). As is argued by Andersson (1993), the differentiation is often possible on the theoretical level only, since in practice there is no agreement on reliable criteria for such a differentiation.

It is hard to distinguish between integrated and non-integrated borrowing because the process of integration is very gradual. The mechanisms of integration of Estonian loanwords into Yiddish are not entirely clear (Verschik 1997: 752–753). A continuum model (a gradual shift from code-switching via nonce-borrowing to integrated loans) was proposed by Lauttamus (quoted in Filppula 1991: 8). Nonce-borrowing and code-switching constantly occur due to Yiddish-Estonian bilingualism and high proficiency in both languages, and it is often hard to judge whether an item is an established loan or not.

Examples of borrowing:

*jōhvikeljōhvike* (fem.) 'cranberry' < Estonian *jōhvikas*, stem *jōhvika-*; according to long-established integrational pattern, the final *-a* > *-e* (*bulbe* 'potato', *simxe* 'joy', 'celebration'). *a*-stem Estonian words seem to fit the pattern.

*faier£odn* (masc.) 'fire' (loan-translation) < Estonian *tulekahju* (*tuli*, Gen. *tule* 'fire' + *kahju* 'damage'), cf. Yiddish *brand*, *faier*, *sreife*. The etymon was registered in Tartu at the end of the 1920s (ERA Juudi 2: 25) and was also heard there by the author in 1997.

*ka:like*, pl. *ka:likes* 'turnip' < Estonian *kaalikas*, stem *kaalika-*.

*kohvik* (masc., plural not heard) 'coffee shop' < Estonian *kohvik*. The word is also known to have been borrowed into the speech of the local Russians.

*sepik* (masc.) 'a kind of barley bread' < Estonian *sepik*.

Verbs are borrowed extremely seldom; borrowed stems usually end in *-a* or *-e*. Borrowed verbs have been registered in the Perfect only. The use of the auxiliary (*zain* or *hobn*) with participles formed from borrowed stems does not deviate from the rules: *er iz getulet aheim* 'he came home' (*getulet* < *tulema*, stem *tule-*); *a meser iz aropgelangen*

'a knife fell' (*gelangen* < *langema*, stem *lange-*); *zi hot geerastat di dire* 'she has privatized her apartment' (*geerastat* < *erastama*, stem *erasta-*).

#### 4.4.3. Mild interference from Estonian

According to U. Weinreich (1953: 50), mild interference is a change of the expression of a sign on the model of a cognate in a language in contact, without effect on the content (Yiddish *vakatsie* > American Yiddish *vakeifn*). To my best knowledge, the notion of mild interference has not been discussed much in relevant literature on language contacts. In our case, as will become clear from further examples, the concept can be helpful for description of certain lexical components.

Mild interference from Estonian in Estonian Yiddish occurs in two groups of lexical items: first, in so-called international words of Greek and Latin origin, and, second, in words which have their Germanic counterparts in Estonian (i.e., items borrowed into Estonian from Low, High, Baltic and Standard German).

Mild interference of the first type can be demonstrated by the following examples:

*intonatsió:n* 'intonation' < Estonian *intonatsiõon*, cf. Yiddish *intonátsie*; *kostü•:m* 'costume' < Estonian *kostü•üm*, cf. Yiddish *kostjúm*; *laborató:rium* 'laboratory' < Estonian *laboratóorium*, cf. Yiddish *laboratórje*; *matemá:tika* 'mathematics' < Estonian *matemáatika*, cf. Yiddish *matemátik*; *süsté:m* 'system' < Estonian *süstéem*, cf. Yiddish *sistém*.

The second type is of much more interest for contact linguistics, because one can expect mild interference in international words to occur in most contact situations. In order to understand why mild interference of the second type occurs (for instance, Estonian Yiddish *ket* 'chain' < Estonian *kett* < German *Kette*, cf. Yiddish *keit*), we shall employ the concept of linguistic neutrality.

The term *linguistic neutrality* was introduced by C. M. Scotton in 1976 (quoted from Appel & Muysken 1988: 129) and described in detail by Appel and Muysken (1988: 129–137). Linguistic neutrality, on the one hand, refers to similarities in the structures of two languages and, for example, makes code-switching possible; on the other hand, neutrality can be understood as a result of using auxiliary strategies when incorporating foreign items (Andersson 1993: 251–252). In our case, we shall use the term in the former meaning.

As was demonstrated by Andersson (1993) in her study of American and Finnish minorities in Gothenburg, the overlapping, or neutral area (in morphology, phonology or lexicon) facilitates code-switching, borrowing and incorporation of borrowed items, whereas the neutral area between typologically different languages such as Finnish and Swedish may be quite substantial due to long-established contacts.

Estonian, though typologically different from Yiddish, has a long history of contact with Germanic languages (Low German, High German, Baltic German, Standard German, Swedish); borrowings from these sources constitute a significant part of the Estonian lexicon. Some lexical items sound identical and have the same or a similar meaning in both languages:

Yiddish *hering* 'herring' and Estonian *heeringas* (< German *Hering*); Yiddish *laien* 'to lend' and Estonian *laenama* (stem *laen-* < Germanic); Yiddish *mon* 'poppy' and Estonian *moon* (< German *Mohn*); Yiddish *ring* 'ring' and Estonian *ring* 'circle' (<MLG or



German *Ring*); Yiddish *rixtn zix* 'to expect, to count on', 'to intend' and Estonian *rihtima* (stem *rihti-* < German *richten*).

Thus, an overlapping area in lexicon, on the one hand, and a high degree of bilingualism among Yiddish-speakers, on the other, make it possible to borrow words of German stock from Estonian. This is also a way for Low Germanisms to enter Estonian Yiddish. In the following cases original Yiddish lexical items have been replaced by Estonian counterparts of Low, High and Standard German origin:

*ingver* 'ginger' < Estonian *ingver* < MLG or Baltic German *Ingwer* (Mägiste 1982–1983: 511), cf. Yiddish *ingber, imber* (Stuchkoff 1950: 243).

*ka:rt* 1) 'card', 2) 'map', 3) 'playing card' < Estonian *kaart* < German *Karte*, ? LG *kaart* (Mägiste 1982–83: 526), LG *kaart* (Raun 1982: 25), cf. Yiddish *kartl, karte, kort*.

*kast* 'box' < Estonian *kast* < MLG *kast*, cf. Yiddish *kastn*.

*ket* 'chain' < Estonian *kett* < German *Kette* (Mägiste 1982–83: 791), cf. Yiddish *keit*.

*kru:s* 'mug' < Estonian *kruus* < MLG *kruus, krôs* (Mägiste 1982–83: 1001), cf. Yiddish *krug*.

*lamp* 'lamp' < Estonian *lamp* < MLG *lampe* (Raun 1982: 69), cf. Yiddish *lomp*.

*pa:r* 'pair', 'couple' < Estonian *paar* < MLG *pâr*, German *Paar* (Mägiste 1982–83: 1864–1865), cf. Yiddish *por*.

*vorst* 'sausage' < Estonian *vorst* < MLG *worst* (Mägiste 1982–83: 3921–3922), cf. Yiddish *vurft*.

An empirical constraint concerning words of Germanic origin, where mild interference from Estonian does not occur, can be formulated: a Yiddish word and its Estonian counterpart should not be very distant phonetically, i.e. \**se:p* 'soap' < Estonian *seep* (< MLG *sêpe*), cf. Yiddish *zeif*, or \**kri:t* 'chalk' < Estonian *kriit* (< MLG *krîte*), cf. Yiddish *kraid*.

#### 4.5. Pan-Balticisms

As is claimed by Jacobs (1994), a researcher of any language or dialect in the Baltic region must consider the question of pan-Balticisms, if not a Baltic *Sprachbund*. The importance of this statement for Baltic, Balto-Finnic and, last but not least, Yiddish linguistics becomes especially explicit in the light of research conducted by Ariste (1970), Lemchen (1995), Kiparsky (1936). It is also clear that when discussing the Baltic *Sprachbund*, North-eastern Yiddish dialects should be included.

The importance of Baltic German and Baltic sources for North-eastern Yiddish research was demonstrated above. In addition, it is necessary to stress the importance of Balto-Finnic sources.

Let us consider the following example: *kadigos, kadagines, kadik* 'juniper' was proposed by Kalmanovitsh (1926: 183) to be a loan from Latvian. Lemchen (1995: 102) found this unlikely and suggested a Baltic German origin for Courland Yiddish *kadik* (< Baltic German *Kaddik*).

However, this is an example of a pan-Balticism deriving from Balto-Finnic stock: according to Mägiste (1982–83: 635–636), Estonian *kadakas* ‘juniper’ corresponds to Finnish *kataja*, Livonian *kadaG*, Votic *kataga*, Karelian *kadaja* etc.; being a word of Proto-Balto-Finnic origin, it was later borrowed into the Baltic languages and into Baltic German as well. Evidently the etymon was borrowed, respectively, into Courland Yiddish via Baltic German and into Lithuanian Yiddish via Lithuanian. Its origin, however, is Balto-Finnic and not Baltic or Baltic German.

Another case of borrowing into several languages, including Courland Yiddish, was described by Jacobs (1994). Courland Yiddish for ‘windowpane’, *raut*, is argued as having been borrowed from Swedish *ruta* ‘square’, ‘windowpane’ as *ru:t* and later, when a shift from Low to High German occurred, as having been reinterpreted according to the pattern Low German *u:* > High German *au* (*hu:s* ‘house’ — *haus*). The example of Estonian *ruut* ‘windowpane’, ‘square’ < Swedish *ruta* strengthens the claim. We have to add that Estonian Yiddish has *raut* (*rout*) and *ru:t*, the latter being an interferential form from Estonian.

## 5. Conclusions

As was demonstrated, Estonian Yiddish, though with few speakers, is important for the study of North-eastern Yiddish dialects and should be considered in this context.

Being derived from Courland Yiddish, Estonian Yiddish has retained some typical Courland features in phonology, morphology and lexicon up to today. The presence of front rounded vowels in Estonian Yiddish, however, remains unexplained.

Contacts with Low German and Baltic German have left a significant trace in the lexicon, providing a contrast with other Yiddish dialects: *kaneil* ‘cinnamon’, cf. *tsimt*; *i:blen zix* ‘to be nauseated’, cf. *eklen*; *redel* ‘ladder’, cf. *leiter*. Low Germanisms can also have entered Estonian Yiddish also via Estonian: *kru:s* ‘mug’ < Estonian *kruus* < MLG *krûse*. This occurs due to the vast area of linguistic neutrality between Estonian and the typologically different Germanic languages, provided by long-established contacts and a high degree of bilingualism among Yiddish-speakers.

Due to the peculiarities of the socio-cultural situation in the Baltics, Estonian Yiddish has been a subject of heavy German (Baltic German, Standard German) influence on the lexicon. On the other hand, the number of Slavisms is small, though some old Slavisms (*zeide* ‘grandfather’, *kitke* ‘challa’) are a part of the lexicon.

Almost all Lithuanianisms registered in Estonian Yiddish by P. Ariste (1970) have disappeared, which fact explicitly illustrates the urgency of Yiddish dialect research. It was shown that the impact of Estonian is manifold and does not mean plain borrowings into Yiddish; Estonian acts as a mediator of Low Germanisms.

The origin of the etymon *kadik* ‘juniper’ was initially ascribed to Baltic German; however, the source of borrowing into Baltic German and into the Baltic languages was Balto-Finnic (probably Estonian). In the case of *nuke* ‘chunk of bread’ the source of borrowing into Estonian and into the Baltic languages (and later, into Yiddish) was Low German. Along with the example of *raut* ‘windowpane’ of Swedish origin, as was argued by Jacobs (1994), these cases show the importance of all the languages of the Baltic region for research into North-eastern Yiddish dialects.

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Mõnda baltisaksa ja jidiši kontaktidest  
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# MÕNDA BALTISAKSA JA JIDIŠI KONTAKTIDEST

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## 1. Sissejuhatus<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1. Üldmärkused

Baltisaksa ja jidiši kokkupuuteid on võrdlemisi vähe uuritud. Põhjuseks võib olla ehk kahe valdkonna — germanistika ja jidišistika — suhteline eraldatus. Kahjuks on saanud tavaks, et germanistika õpingutes minnakse jidiši keelest — ühest germaani keelest — täiesti mööda. Mis jidiši lingvistikasse ja dialektoloogiasse puutub, on Lätis ja Eestis kõneldavad jidiši murded olnud suhteliselt perifeersed teemad kuni viimase ajani. Samas just nendes maades levinud jidiši murded on ainsad selle keele murded, mis on baltisaksa keelega kokku puutunud. Vaid vähesed uurijad on vaadelnud jidiši kirde-murdeid kogu Baltikumi lingvistilises kontekstis.<sup>2</sup>

Ometi on jidiši-baltisaksa kontaktide uurimine igati põhjendatud. Niisuguste kontaktide olemasolule viitab H. P. Althaus.<sup>3</sup> R. Hinderling mainib jidišit kui ühte mõjutegurit oma baltisaksa keele kirjelduses.<sup>4</sup> Baltisaksa keeles leidub hulk jidiši laene, mida paraku ei osata alati ära tunda või õigesti etümologiseerida (vt allpool). Tänapäeval klassikaks muutunud töodes Leedus ja Lätis kõneldavate jidiši murrete kohta<sup>5</sup> peaaegu ei pöörata tähelepanu jidiši laenudele baltisaksa keeles. Terminit “baltisaksa keel” ei kasutata, selle asemel figureerib näiteks väljend *kurlender daitš* ‘Kuramaa saksa keel’ M. Weinreichi artiklis Kuramaa jidišist.<sup>6</sup>

Teiselt poolt on Kuramaa ja Eesti jidiš ainsad kirderühma murded, mis on välja kujunenud sellises sotsiokultuurilises olukorras, kus baltisaksa ja alamsaksa keel mängis suurt rolli. Samas on jidiši keel tervikuna arenenud keskülemsaksa murrete baasil ja ajalooliselt ei ole tal ulatuslikke kokkupuuteid alamsaksa murretega. Seda rohkem tähele-

<sup>1</sup> Autor tänab Neil Jacobsit tema *Yiddish in the Baltic region* artikli käsikirja eest.

<sup>2</sup> Vt näiteks P. Ariste, *Tsu der hašpoe fun jidiš oif nit-jidiše špraxn.* — YIVO bleter, 1937, 9. k., nr 1–2, lk 82–85; P. Ariste, Ch. Lemchenas, *Lietuvių kalbos įtaka Lietuvos židų tarnei.* — *Baltistica*, 1970, 6. k., nr 2, lk 250–252 (arvustus); N. Jacobs, *Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish.* — D. Lorenz, G. Weinberger (koost.), *Insiders and Outsiders. German-Jewish, Yiddish and German Literature and Culture in Contact.* Wayne State, 1994, lk 89–99; N. Jacobs, *Yiddish in the Baltic Region* (kk); V. Kiparsky, *Fremdes im Baltendeutsch.* — *Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique de Helsingfors*, 1936, nr 9, lk 197–198; Ch. Lemchen, *Di hašpoe fun litviš oif jidišn dialekt in Lite.* — *Oksforder jidiš*, 1995, 3. k., lk 6–130.

<sup>3</sup> H. P. Althaus, *Sprache der Nachbarn: zu Entdeckung und Rezeption eines kontaktsprachlichen Phänomen.* — *Germanistische Linguistic*, 1970, lk 720.

<sup>4</sup> R. Hinderling, *Baltisch/Deutsch.* — W. Besch jt (koost.), *Dialektologie. Ein Handbuch zur deutschen und allgemeinen Dialektforschung.* Berlin-New York, 1983, lk 908–918.

<sup>5</sup> Z. Kalmanovič, *Der jidišer dialekt in Kurland.* — *Šriftn fun jidišn visnšafflexn institut*, 1926, 1. k., lk 161–188; J. Mark, *Undzer litivišer jidiš.* — M. Sudarski (koost.), *Lite.* New York, 1951, lk 429–472; M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš.* — *Štaplen: fir etjudn tsu der jidišer špraxvisnšaft un literaturgešixte.* Berlin, 1923, lk 193–240.

<sup>6</sup> M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš*, lk 212.



panu tuleb pöörata balti- ja alamsaksa laenudele, mis Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis leiduvad. Baltisaksa keel on teatud määral mõjutanud kõne all olevate murrete foneetikat.

Nende kontaktide ajaloost ja baltisaksa-jidiši vastastikusest mõjust kõnelemegi allpool.

## 1.2. Lühiülevaade ajaloost

On alust oletada, et esimesed kontaktid baltisaksa ja jidiši keele kõnelejate vahel leidsid aset Kuramaal. Kuramaale asusid juudid 17.saj.<sup>7</sup> Oma põhjalikus ülevaates näitab Ch. Lemchenas, et nn Žemaitija jidiš (*zameter jidiš*) oli Kuramaa jidiši esivanem ja kuni 18. saj. lõpuni moodustasid mõlemad mured teatud terviku. Pärast Kuramaa haaramist Vene impeeriumi koosseisu 18. lõpul piirati juutide sisserännet sinna 1829. a. Nii kujunes välja suhteliselt isoleeritud murre. Ühelt poolt säilitas Kuramaa jidiš teistes kirdemurretes hääbunud jooni, millest tähtsamad on teatud diftongide realiseerimine ja lühikeste-pikkade vokaalide opositsioon.<sup>8</sup> Teiselt poolt avaldas mõju baltisaksa keel.

Juutide sotsiokultuuriline olukord Kuramaal ja hiljem ka Eestis erines tunduvalt tavalisest.<sup>9</sup> Kuramaa, Põhja-Läti ja Eesti ei kuulunud nn. asustusvööndisse, seetõttu oli seal juute üpris vähe. Suhteliselt väike juudi vähemus ei saanud olla ükskeelne. Täiesti erinevalt muudest juutide asumisaladest ei olnud Kuramaal märgatavat kokkupuudet slaavi keelte ja rahvastega, kusjuures saksa keel oli oluliseks kultuurikeeleks ka juutidele. Sellega on seletatav asjaolu, et Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis on slaavi komponent suhteliselt väike ja germaani komponent ulatuslikum kui mujal.

Eestisse asusid juudid põhiliselt Kuramaalt, väiksemal määral Leedust. Konservatiivne Kuramaa jidiši murre võeti Eestisse kaasa, kus jätkas (balti)saksa keele mõju ja hiljem lisandus eesti keele mõju.<sup>10</sup> Tänapäev kuulub saksa keel vanemate Eesti juutide kõneldavate keelte hulka. Teatud baltisaksa keelele iseloomulikud foneetilised jooned ja sõnavara on säilinud nende isikute kõnes tänini. Tundub paradoksaalne, et pärast *Umsiedlung*'it, 2.maailmasõda ja nõukogude okupatsiooni on juudid Eestis ainsad aktiivsed baltisaksa sugemetega saksa keele kõnelejad.

<sup>7</sup> Vt lähemalt: Ch. Lemchen, *Di hašpoe fun litviš oif jidišn dialekt in Lite*, lk 19 jj; P. Ariste peab võimalikuks ka 16. saj. oma artiklis "Tsu der hašpoe fun jidiš oif nit-jidiše špraxn" (lk 85).

<sup>8</sup> Jidiši keele murrete ajalugu ei ole antud uurimuse teema. Seda puudutatakse niivõrd, kui võrd see on oluline artikli põhiteema seisukohalt. Olulisemad seigid leiduvad järgmistes töödes: D. Katz, *Zur Dialektologie des Jiddischen*. — W. Besch jt (toim.), *Dialektologie: ein Handbuch zur deutschen und allgemeinen Dialektforschung*. — Berlin-New York, 1983, lk 1018–1041 (jidiši murrete klassifikatsioon ja arengu põhijooned); N. Jacobs, *Northeastern Yiddish Gender-Switch: Abstracting dialect features regionally*. — *Diachronica* 1990, 7. k., nr 1, 69–100 (kesksõo kadu kirdemurretes); U. Weinreich, *A retrograde sound shift in the guise of a survival: an aspect of Yiddish vowel development*. — D. Catalan (koost.), *Estructuralismo e historia: Miscellánea homenaje a André Martinet*. Biblioteca Filologica, Universidad de La Laguna, 1958, nr 2, lk 221–267 (vokalismist); M. Weinreich, *Di sistem jidiše kadmen-vokaln*. — *Jidiše šprax* 1960, nr 20, lk 65–71 (ajaloolisest vokalismist).

<sup>9</sup> Eesti juutide ajaloo eripära ja nende keelekasutuse põhijoontest vt A. Verschik, *Eesti ja jidiši kontaktidest*. — *Keel ja Kirjandus* 1997, nr 11, lk 748–749; A. Verschik, *The Yiddish Language in Estonia: Past and Present* *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 1999, 30(2), lk 117–128.

<sup>10</sup> Vt lähemalt P. Ariste, Ch. Lemchenas, *Lietuviu kalbos itaka Lietuvos židu tarmei*, lk 250; A. Verschik, *Yiddish dialect in Estonia (a description)*. *Fenno-Ugristika* 22. *Indo-European-Uralic-Siberian Linguistic and Cultural Contacts*. Tartu, 1999, lk 265–291.

### 1.3. Jidiš Baltikumis: lähtekohad

N. Jacobs pakub terminit “baltijidiš” (*Baltic Yiddish*) kirjeldamaks põhjapoolseid kirdejidiši murdeid (Leedus, Lätis ja Eestis kõneldav jidiš)<sup>11</sup>. Ta märgib, et tegemist ei ole jidiši murrete uue klassifikatsiooniga, vaid pigem abimõistega. Juba J. Mark konstateeris erinevusi Läänemere ääres kõneldavate murrete ja muude kirdejidiši murrete vahel<sup>12</sup>. Jacobs rõhutab, et uurides Läänemere regiooni keeli või koguni Läänemere *Sprachbund*’i, ei tohi jidiši murdeid välja jätta. Samuti on baltijidiš oluline, kui räägime panbaltitsismidest.<sup>13</sup>

Mille poolest on baltijidiš teistest kirdemurretest erinev? J. Mark näitab, et Žemaitija jidišis on selliseid jooni, mis puuduvad teistes Leedus ja Valgevene kõneldavates jidiši murretes. Näiteks semitismide arv on Žemaitija jidiši murdes suurem kui mujal Leedus, samuti on rohkem leedu laene. Samuti on mõningal määral säilinud vahe pikkade ja lühikeste vokaalide vahel.<sup>14</sup> Jacobsi sõnul võib väita, et Leedu jidiši ala võib kultuuriliselt jaotada kaheks: Žemaitija e. *Zamet* ja kõik muu. Jidiši keele seisukohalt on Žemaitija jidiš konservatiivsem kui muud Leedu jidiši murded.<sup>15</sup>

Mis Kuramaa jidišisse puutub, on oluline isoleeritus teistest jidiši murretest ja kontakt baltisaksa keelega. Leedus oli saksa keele kõnelejate arv väike ja ulatuslikke kontakte ei tekkinud. Huvitav, et Kuramaa juutidel oli tavaks nimetada kõikide muude murrete kõnelejaid *zameter*, s.o. Žemaitija juutideks<sup>16</sup>. Olgu mainitud, et ka eesti juudid, kelle jidiši murre on välja kujunenud Kuramaa jidiši baasil, teadvustavad erinevust Leedu jidiši ja oma murde vahel. Eesti jidišit nimetatakse kas *estniš jidiš* või *baltiš jidiš*, Leedu jidišit aga *litviš jidiš*. Mujal jidišikeelses maailmas on aga kogu kirderühma murrete rahvalikuks nimetuseks *litviš jidiš*.<sup>17</sup>

Ei ole teada, kas alamsaksa laenud sattusid Kuramaa jidišisse otse alamsaksa keele kõnelejatelt või substraadina juba baltiülemsaksa keele kõnelejatelt.<sup>18</sup> Igal juhul on Kuramaa ja Eesti jidiši sõnavaras tajutav nn. germaani komponendi ülekaal võrreldes slaavi ja semiidi omaga.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>11</sup> N. Jacobs, *Yiddish in the Baltic Region* (käsikiri).

<sup>12</sup> J. Mark, *Undzer litvišer jidiš*.

<sup>13</sup> Panbaltitsismide kohta vt N. Jacobs, *Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish*, lk 98–99; vt ka käsitlus allpool.

<sup>14</sup> J. Mark oma artiklis “Undzer litvišer jidiš” (lk 439) väidab, et vahe pikkade-lühikeste vokaalide vahel on säilinud, samas rõhutab U. Weinreich (*A retrograde sound shift in the guise of a survival*, lk 251–153), et Kuramaa jidiš on ainuke murre, kus see vahe on säilinud. Ilmselt moodustab Žemaitija jidiš selles suhtes üleminekuala.

<sup>15</sup> Vt N. Jacobs, *Yiddish in the Baltic Region* (kk).

<sup>16</sup> M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš*, lk 195: “Iga võõras juut on *zameter*, isegi kui ta tuleb Kišinjovist või Irkutskist”.

<sup>17</sup> Tegemist on just rahvapärase nimetusega. Kuna väljend “Leedu jidiš” ei ole päris täpne ja hõlmab tegelikkuses rohkem murdeid, kui üksnes Leedus kõneldavad, eelistatakse jidiši dialektoloogias murderühmade nimetusena mitte Leedu, vaid kirdejidiš.

<sup>18</sup> Selle kohta vt N. Jacobs, *Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish*.

<sup>19</sup> Selline olukord on seletatav Kuramaa ja Eesti juutide eripärase ajalooaga. Kontaktid slaavi rahvastega puudusid (kontakt vene keelega on hilisem nähtus, seda tuleb eristada traditsioonilistest jidiši-slaavi kontaktidest). Kuna nende alade juudid olid võrreldes oma Ida-Euroopa rahvuskaaslastega rohkem moderniseerunud ja sekulariseerunud, mängis pühade tekstide jms. uurimise kultuur siin vähem rolli, seetõttu on kõnekeeles täheldatud vähem semitisme kui teistes murretes. Selle kohta vt A. Verschik, *On the Lexicon of Estonian Yiddish* (käsikiri, ilmumas ajakirjas *Studia Orientalia* — Helsingi Ülikooli orientalistika seltsi väljaandes).

Selline olukord sõnavaras ei jäänud teiste murrete kõnelejatele märkamatuks; on levinud arvamus, et Kuramaa juudid ei räägi õigupoolest jidišit, vaid hoopis saksa keelt. Selle arvamuse ekslikkust demonstreeris M. Weinreich. Ta näitas, et nagu sugulaskeelte puhul ikka, eksisteerib ka siin teatud astmestik: saksa keel üksikute jidiši väljenditega, saksa keel tugevate jidiši sugemetega, jidiši keel saksa keele sugemetega jne. Samas on Kuramaa jidiši murdes palju arhailisi jooni; saksa komponendi ülekaal sõnavaras ei tee sellest murdest "saksa keelt".<sup>20</sup> Jidiši filoloogias nimetatakse saksapärasusi *daitšmerizmen*; autori arvates on *daitšmerizm*'ide kirjakeeles lubatavuse/lubamatuse küsimus ülearu ideologiseeritud. Tuleb arvestada asjaoluga, et germaani komponendi suur ja slaavi oma väike osatähtsus on antud murrete ajalooliselt väljakujunenud omapära, mitte aga "vigane keelekasutus" ega peenutsemise taotlus.

Kokkuvõtteks võib öelda, et Kuramaa ja Eesti jidiši murded moodustavad Baltikumis kõneldavate jidiši murrete hulgas erirühma, kuna neis on ühelt poolt säilinud arhailised jooned, teiselt poolt, need on ainsad murded, mis on arenenud kontaktis baltisaksa keelega.

#### 1.4. Allikad

Materjal Kuramaa jidiši kohta on pärit M. Weinreichi, Z. Kalmanovitši ja Ch. Lemcheni töödest.<sup>21</sup> Kahjuks ei ole keegi uurinud tänapäeval Lätis kõneldavat jidišit, sellepärast oleme sunnitud toetuma vaid ülalmainitud allikatele. Materjal Eesti jidiši kohta on suurelt jaolt pärit autori intervjuudest 28 murdekõnelejaga (1995–1998) ja keelekasutusealastest tähelepanekutest.

Baltisaksa keeles olevate jidiši laenude ainus süstemaatiline loetelu on pärit V. Kiparsky teosest *Fremdes im Baltendeutsch*. Olgu mainitud ka P. Ariste retsensioon kõnealuse uurimuse kohta (1937), kus on lisatud veel mõned jidiši laensõnad. Jidiši laene leidub ka mitmes hästituntud baltisaksa keele kirjelduses ja sõnastikus, kuigi neid laene ei suudeta alati identifitseerida ja / või õigesti etümologiseerida.<sup>22</sup>

## 2. Jidiši mõju baltisaksa keelele

Jidiši mõju baltisaksa keelele on täheldatav vaid sõnavaras. Mingeid mõjutusi fonetikas, morfoloogias ja süntaksis ei ole registreeritud. Thomasoni ja Kaufmanni skaala järgi on siis tegemist vaid pinnapealse kontaktiga.<sup>23</sup> Nagu näeme 3.osas, olukord ei ole sümmeetriline: baltisaksa mõju Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišile on pisut ulatuslikum kui pelk

<sup>20</sup> M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš*, lk 195.

<sup>21</sup> M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš*; Z. Kalmanovitš, *Der jidišer dialekt in Kurland*; Ch. Lemchen, *Di hašpoe fun litviš oif jidišn dialekt in Lite*.

<sup>22</sup> W.von Gutzeit, *Wörterschatz der Deutschen Sprache Livlands*, Riga, 1886; N.Seeman von Jesersky, *Dinakantsche Geschichten in Gedichten und Rigasches Wörterbuch*, Riga, 1913; B. von Nottbeck, *1001 wort Baltisch*, Köln, 1988; E. Kobolt, *Die deutsche Sprache in Estland am Beispiel der Stadt Pernau, Lüneburg*, 1990. Viitamise lihtsustamiseks kasutatakse edaspidi sõnavara kirjelduses järgmist süsteemi, v.a. esmakordse mainimise puhul: autor : aasta (kui samalt autorilt on mitu teost) : köide (kui vaja) : lehekülj, näiteks: Jesersky (103), Gutzeit (I : 85) jne.

<sup>23</sup> S. G. Tomasson, T. Kaufman, *Language Contact, Creolization and Genetic Linguistics*. Berkely, 1991, lk 74–76.

laenamine. Selline ebasümmeetrilisus on seletatav käsiteldavate keelte erineva staatus-ega: saksa keel oli tähtis kõigile Baltikumis elavatele rahvastele kui ametlik ja kultuuri-keel, jidiš oli parimal juhul vaid grupisisene keel. Olukord hakkas mõnevõrra muutuma pärast Balti riikide iseseisvumist: näiteks Eestis oli ametlikuks keeleks ainult eesti keel, muud keeled olid vaid rahvusvähemuste keelte staatusega. Sellegipoolest ei saa siiski võrrelda jidiši keele staatust saksa keele omaga.

Kuigi jidiši laenude arv baltisaksa keeles on suhteliselt väike, siiski vajame süsteemaatilist loetelu. Sissejuhatuses mainiti jidiši uurimise eraldatust ülejäänud germanistikast — seetõttu ei oska mitmed autorid jidiši laene ära tunda.

Baltisaksa keeles leidub hulk jidiši laene, mis on levinud ka teistes saksa murretes ja saksa ühiskeeles. Paistab, et selliste laenude rühm on ulatuslikum, kui vahetute jidiši laenude rühm. Kahe rühma olemasolule pööras tähelepanu P. Ariste.<sup>24</sup> Oma arvustuses V. Kiparsky teosele *Fremdes im Baltendeutsch* avaldas ta kiitust, et Kiparsky oli maininud vaid vahetult jidišist tulnud laene. Kuid samas ei ole alati selge, kuidas teha vahet kahe rühma vahel. P. Ariste ei paku mingit eralduskriteeriumi. Mõnel juhul on kriteeriumiks laenu foneetiline kuju, mille järgi võib väita, et laen on tulnud just Baltikumi jidiši murretest (vt allpool). Selliseid juhtumeid pole aga kuigi palju. On selge, et baltisaksa keele kõnelejad suhtlesid teiste saksa murrete kõnelejatega, samuti oli neil kontakt saksa ühiskeelelega.

Alljärgnevalt esitame jidiši laenude loetelu koos nende analüüsiga. Jidiši laenude kirjutusviis on edastatud niisugusel kujul, nagu baltisaksa allikates, e saksa ortograafia reeglite järgi (näiteks *Zorres* 'häda' tuleb lugeda [tsores], *Chaser* 'siga' [xazer] jne).

Tuleb mainida, et kui tegemist on jidiši laenuga, mis on ajalooliselt hebraism, kipuvad mitmed autorid märkima, et antud sõna on laen heebrea või koguni aramea keelest. Selline väide pole kuidagi õigustatud. Ajal, kui saksa mureded puutusid kokku jidiši murretega, oli heebrea keel kõnekeelena ammu hääbunud. Jidiši kõnelejad lugesid liturgias heebrea keelt nn aškenazi hääldusega. Hebraismide hääldamine jidiši keeles on lähedane aškenazi hääldamisele ja mõnel juhul langeb sellega kokku. Teoreetiliselt on muidugi võimalik, et hebraismid (aškenazi häälduses) sattusid saksa keelde heebrea keelest, kuid praktiliselt tundub see väheusutav. Kontaktid juutide ja mittejuutide vahel leidsid aset olmesfääris, mitte sünagoogis, seega on mõistlik oletada, et hebraismid võisid sattuda saksa murretesse just jidiši keele vahendusel. Võrdluseks toome erinevate häälduste näited: j *tsóres* 'mured', aškhbr *tsórois*, tänapäeva hbr *tsarót*.<sup>25</sup> Selliste laenude foneetiline kuju baltisaksa keeles näitab kindlalt, et tegemist on jidiši laenuga (bsks *Zorres* 'mure, häda').

*anzepfern* (Jesersky: 102), vt *zeppen* ~ *zeppern*.

*ausbaldowern* 'välja nuhkima', 'jälile saama'. Jesersky (103) peab seda varaste argoost (*Gaunersprache*) pärinevaks laenuks. Selline seletus võib olla üpris tõenäoline, tuleb vaid öelda mõni sõna saksa kurjategijate argoo spetsiifikast. H. Moser kirjeldab rubriigis *Etmische Gruppensprachen* saksa allilma salakeelt järgmiselt: sellel keelel on mitu nimetust, kõige levinum on *Rotwelsch* ja *Jenisch*. Struktuur on saksa keele oma,

<sup>24</sup> P. Ariste. *Tsu der hašpoe fun jidiš oif nit-jidiše špraxn*, lk 85.

<sup>25</sup> Edaspidi kasutame järgmisi lühendeid keelte ja murrete kohta: aškhbr = aškenazi heebrea, bsks = baltisaksa, e = eesti, hbr = heebrea, j = jidiš, jE = Eesti jidiš, jKi = kirdejidiš, jKu = Kuramaa jidiš, kaks = keskalamsaksa: küks = keskülemsaksa, ld = leedu, lmsm = läänemere-soome, lt = läti, rts = rootsi, ukr = ukraina, vn = vene, vvn = valgevene.

kuid leidub palju laene jidišist. Mõned sellised elemendid on säilinud tänapäevani saksa kõnekeeles.<sup>26</sup> Kõnealune sõna on sattunud allilma argoosse jidiši keelest, kus ta on omakorda hebraism: j *baldóver* 'kõnealune isik' < hbr *ba'al-davár*.<sup>27</sup>

*Baigel* 'rõngassai'. Jesersky (103): 'runde jüdische Wasserkringel', märgitud laenuna jidišist; Kiparsky (197): 'ringförmiges Gebäck' < jid *beigl*, hääldamine baltisaksapärane [bajel], kus *e* eel *g* > *j*.

*Balaboss* 'peremees', 'tähtis isik', 'suur nina'. Jesersky (104): 'Herr eines Unternehmens' < jid; j *balabós* < aškhbr *baal habájis* < hbr *ba'al-habájit*. Ariste (1937: 85) osutab, et Kiparsky eksib, arvates seda sõna valgevene või poola laenuks. Jidišis on see hebraism. Levinud ka teistes saksa murretes (näiteks preisi murdes).<sup>28</sup>

*blondsen* 'ekslema', 'sihitult kõndima'; *sich verblondsen* 'ära eksima'. Nagu eelmiseski näites arvab Ariste, et pole mingit alust pidada seda sõna slaavi laenuks, kuigi jidišisse on see sattunud poola keelest.<sup>29</sup> Ariste sõnul võib väita, et *blondzen* on laenatud baltisaksa keelde otse Kuramaa jidišist, kuna tavaline jidiši vorm on *blondžen* ning Kuramaa jidiši murdele on iseloomulik üleminek *dž* > *dz*. Tegemist on nähtusega, mida tuntakse nime all *sabesdiker losn* 'sabati keel'.<sup>30</sup> Kirdemurretele on iseloomulik kahe foneemi kokkulangemine (*š* > *s*): jKi *mishn* 'segama', vrd j *mišn*; jKi *sisl* 'kauss', vrd j *šisl* jne. Kuramaa (ja ka Eesti) jidiš on foneemide *s*, *š*, *z* ja *ž*, *ts*, *tš* saatus mõnevõrra erinev ülejäänud kirdemurretest: semiidi ja slaavi päritoluga sõnades esineb ainult *š*, germaani komponendis järgitakse aga saksa eeskju.<sup>31</sup> Näiteks: jKu, jE *mištome* 'vist' (< hbr), vrd j *mistame*; *kishn* 'padi', vrd sks *Kissen*, j *kišn*. Foneem *ž* on aga jKu murdes alles hilisem nähtus, see esineb vaid uemates laenudes. Sellest "saadakse lahti" kahel viisil: *ž* > *š* ja *ž* > *z* nagu sõnas *blondzen*. Analoogiliselt *tš* > *ts*.

*Brochen, Brochum, Brompfen* — Kiparsky (198), *Bramwin, Brochen* — Jesersky (107, 108) 'viin', 'naps' < j *bronfn* [bromfn]. Jidišis on toimunud vormi *Brantwein* kokkutõmbumine.

*Challe* 'palmiksai' < j *xále* < aškhbr *xálla* < hbr *xallá* (Kiparsky: 198).

*chappen* 'haarama', 'krahmama' — Kiparsky (198), Jesersky (110) < j *xapn* (vn *xapatj* 'krahmama'). Kiparsky ei välista, et sõna võib olla laenatud otse vene keelest.

<sup>26</sup> H. Moser, Die Entwicklung der deutschen Sprache seit 1945. — W. Besch jt (koost.), Sprachgesichte. Ein Handbuch zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und ihrer Erforschung. Berlin-New York, 1985, lk 1694.

<sup>27</sup> Hebraistikas eksisteerib mitu transkriptsiooni, kuid mitteesajatundjast lugejat silmas pidades on heebrea sõnade transkriptsioon esitatud lihtsustatult kujul ning järgib tänapäeva heebrea hääldamist. Kui tegemist on hebraismiga jidiši keeles, siis on tähistatud ka rõhk nii jidiši kui heebrea sõna puhul.

<sup>28</sup> Vt H. Frischbier, Preussisches Wörterbuch. Berlin, 1883, lk 51. Baltisaksa ja preisi sõnavara paralleelidest vt W. Laur, Ostpreussische Einflüsse im baltischen Deutsch. — Zeitschrift für Mundartforschung 1955, nr 23, lk 111–117.

<sup>29</sup> P. Ariste, Tsu der hašpoe fun jidiš oif nit-jidiše špraxn, lk 85.

<sup>30</sup> Selle nähtuse võimaliku päritolu kohta vt U. Weinreich, *Sabesdiker losn* in Yiddish: a problem of linguistic affinity. — Word, 1952, nr 8, lk 360–377.

<sup>31</sup> Selle kohta vt U. Weinreich, *Sabesdiker losn* in Yiddish: a problem of linguistic affinity, lk 377.

*chargeln* 'tapma' < j *xárgen*, *xárgenen*. Jesersky (110) mainib, et sõna on laenatud jidišist, kuid ei esita jidiši lähtevormi. Jidišisse on laenatud heebrea tüvi *harág*.

*Chaser* 'siga', 'sealiha' < j *xázer* < hbr *xazír* — Kiparsky (198), Jesersky (110). Jesersky järgi heebrea päritolu, kuid, nagu juba ülal mainitud, sel ja analoogsetel juhtudel ei ole tegemist otsese laenamisega heebrea keelest. Kiparsky kaldub arvama, et sõna oli kasutusel vaid juudisaksa ringkondades (*auf ganz bestimmte 'jüdisch-deutsche' Kreise beschränkt*).

*Dalles* 'vaesus', 'viletsus' < j *dáles* (aškhbr *dálus*, hbr *dalút*). Levinud ka saksa ühiskeeles (Ariste 1937: 85). Jesersky (110) eksib, esitades allikaks hbr *daláh*. Jidiši vorm *dales* on heebrea lähtevormi üpris reeglipärane areng: rõhk nihkub esimesele silbile, teise silbi vokaal redutseerub; hbr \**th* > aškenazi hbr *s*, j *s*, hbr \**th* > sefardi ja tänapäeva hbr *t* (vrd hbr *tsarót* 'mured', 'kitsikus', aškhbr *tsórois* > j *tsóres*).

*dibbern* 'vaikselt kõnelema', 'pomisema' < j *díbern* < aškhbr *díber* < hbr *dibbér* 'räa-kima'. Gutzeit (I: 211) annab ka vormi *dippern* ja teatab, et see on levinud ka Eestis. Päritolu Gutzeitil märkimata. Jesersky (111) peab laenuallikaks heebrea keelt. Kobolt (84) ei märgi päritolu, paralleeliks esitab Plattdeutsch *dibbern*. Nottbeck (27) ei märgi päritolu; tähendus on tema järgi 'kaua mõtisklema, pead murdma'. M.Weinreich (1923: 216) teatab oma Kuramaa jidiši sõnavara kirjelduses, et see sõna on "tuginud saksa keelde" (*araingedrungen in daitš arain*). Tegemist on väga laialt levinud sõnaga nii saksa ühiskeeles kui ka jidiši keeles. Kupperi järgi *dibbern* on pärit jidišist ja on levinud saksa ühiskeeles alates 1750. a.<sup>32</sup> Ei ole selge, miks M.Weinreich pidas vajalikuks märkida *dibbern* tüüpiliste kurlandismide hulka, kui sõna on levinud jidiši ühiskeeles.

*Ganef* 'varas' < j *gánef* < aškhbr *gánov* < hbr *gannáv*. Jesersky (119) peab allikaks heebrea keelt ja esitab heebrea vormi kahjuks arhaiseerivalt (*gannab*). Kobolt (110) esitab ka verbi *ganeffen* 'varastama' ja peab lähteallikaks *Rotwelsch*'i. Kobolti järgi olevat sõna levinud Eestis vaid Pärnus kõneldavas baltisaksa keeles — väide, mis nõuab kontrollimist.

*Geseires* '(range) kohtuotsus', 'ränk, ebaõiglane seadus' < j *g(e)zéire* < aškhbr *g(e)zéiro* < hbr *g(ə)zirá*. Baltisaksa keelde laenatud mitmuses (sg *gezeire* — pl *gezeires*). Nottbeckil (33) tähenduses 'rumal jutt' (*dummes Gerede*). Sõna levinud saksa ühiskeeles alates 19. sajandist, registreeritud ka vormis *Geseir* (Küpper : 108); esineb muudes saksa murretes.<sup>33</sup>

*Goi* 'mittejuut' < j *goi* < hbr *goi* 'rahvas'. Jesersky järgi (122) tähendus 'võõrad rahvad', lähteallikaks märgitud heebrea keel.

*Itzig* ~ *Itzik* ~ *Itzich* ~ *Itzke* 'juut' < j *Itsik* (mehe eesnimi, hbr *Jitsxák*). Kobolti järgi (131) sõbralikult irooniline. Eesti keeles *itske*, *itski* on halvustava tähendusega, murdeti tähendab ka 'kergats, kehkenpüks, vigurivänt'.<sup>34</sup>

*Jossel*, *Judenjossel* < j *Josl* (mehe nimi, deminutiiv vormist *Joisif* < aškhbr *Jóisef* < hbr *Joséf*). Kobolti järgi (133, 134) halvustav. Vrd e *joskel*, *poistjoskel* 'poisiklutt';

<sup>32</sup> Vt H. Küpper, *Handliches Wörterbuch der deutschen Alltagssprache*. Hamburg-Düsseldorf, 1968. lk 72.

<sup>33</sup> Vt näiteks H. P. Althaus, *Jüdisch-hessische Sprachbeziehungen*. — *Zeitschrift für Mundartforschung* 1963, nr 30, lk 125; samuti Frischbier (230).

<sup>34</sup> P. Ariste, *Keelekontaktid*. Tallinn, 1981, lk 158.

*jospel* 'saamatu noormees' < j *Joskele* (Ariste 1981: 159). Eesti keeles pejoratiivne varjund puudub.

*kapores* 'katki, läbi' < j *kapóres* < aškhbr *kapórois* < hbr *kapparáot* 'hüvitus'. Nottbeck (40) märgib jidiši päritolu. Jidiši sõnal *kapores* on mitu tähendust, üks neist — 'hüvitus' — on seotud usundiga (teatud rituaali nimetus), teine ilmneb idiomaatilises väljendist *toigt oif kapores* 'ei kõlba kuhugi', *ix darf es oif kapores* 'mul pole seda põrmugi vaja' jne. Tegemist on analüüsimatute komponentide ülevõtmisega, sest *kapores* on mitmuse vorm (vrd *Geseires*, *Zorres* jms). Saksa ühiskeeles on levinud fraseologismides *kapores gehen* 'surema' ja *kapores sein* 'surnud olema', aga ka 'pankrotti minema' (Küpper 146).

*Karben* 'rubla' < j *karb* < ukr *karbovanets* 'rubla' — Kiparsky (98), Jesersky (132).

*koscher* 'kõlblik', 'sobiv' < j *kóšer* (< aškhbr *kóšeir* < hbr *kašér*) 'rituaalselt puhas', 'söögiks kõlbav', 'kõlblik'. Jesersky (138) märgib heebrea päritolu. Tegemist on sõnaga, mis on laenatud paljudesse keeltesse; võimalik, et tulnud baltisaksa keelde saksa ühiskeele kaudu. Eesti keeles esineb vormides *kosser* ja *košer* (Ariste 1981: 159).

*Kitke* 'põimikсай' (sabatiks ja pühadeks) < j *kitke* < vn *kitka* — Kiparsky (98). Ilmselt on tegemist otselaenuga jidiši keelest, kuna *kitke* on iseloomulik põimikсайa nimetus Baltikumis ja üks vanu slavisme Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis (Eesti jidišis levinud ka tänapäeval).

*Meschpoche* ~ *Mischpoche* 'perekond', 'suguselts' < j *mišpóxe* < aškhbr *mišpóxo* < hbr *mišpaxá* (Jesersky : 148, Ariste 1937: 85). Ilmselt laenatud saksa ühiskeele kaudu.

*meschugge* 'hull' < j *mešúge* < aškhbr *mešúga* < hbr *məšuggá* (Jesersky 1913: 148). Ariste arvates (1937: 85) laenatud saksa ühiskeele kaudu.

*mies* 'kole', 'näotu', 'paha' < j *mis* < aškhbr *míus* < hbr *mi'ús* 'koledus, jälkus' — Gutzeit (II: 240), Nottbeck (59), Jesersky (148). Nottbeckil antud vorm *miespetrig* 'ebaõnnestunud', 'halb'; päritolu märkimata. Gutzeiti järgi kasutatakse halva ilma kohta; lähteallikaks peetud ekslikult pr *miserable* 'vilets', 'paha', 'sant'. Jesersky peab jidiši laenuks. Levinud ka saksa ühiskeeles.

*Parch* 'allakäinud isik', 'lurjus' < j *parx* 'kärn'; 'ihnur' < vn, vvn *parx* 'kärn'; 'juut' (äärmiselt halvustav). Kiparsky (198) arvab, et see laen võib olla pärit ka otse slaavi allikatest. Sõna esineb ka Jeserskyl (153).

*Poretz* ~ *Poritz* 'härä' < j *porits* 'mõisnik', 'tähtis härä' < aškhbr *pórits* < hbr *paríts* 'jõhker'. Kobolt (208) märgib jidiši päritolu ja pejoratiivset varjundit. Vt ka Jesersky (158) ja Gutzeit (II: 380), viimasel tähenduses 'rikas inimene', kusjuures päritolu eba-kindel ja mitte mingil juhul ei ole vene laen (*keineswegs ein russisches Wort*).

*Raibach* ~ *Rebbich* 'kasum', 'võit' — Nottbeck (75) < j *révex* < aškhbr, hbr *révax*. Saksa ühiskeeles alates 19.saj. (Küpper: 274).

*Rebbes* 'võit', 'profiit' < j *ribis* < aškhbr < *ribis* < hbr *ribbít* 'protsent', 'juurdekasv'. Gutzeit (III: 12) viitab Frischbieri sõnaraamatule (218), kus lähteallikaks peetakse aramea keelt. Nagu sissejuhatuses mainitud, taolistel juhtudel ei ole siiski tegemist otselaenuga heebrea (või aramea) keelest, sest häälikuline kuju osutab kindlalt jidiši keelele. Frischbier ei põhjenda, miks ta peab lähteallikaks just aramea keelt. Jesersky järgi (162) tähendus 'tulus äri'. Küpperi järgi (274) üpris vana laen, saksa kõnekeeles alates 17. saj.

*Schabbas* ~ *Schabbes* 'sabat' < j *šábes* < aškhbr *šábos* < hbr *šabbát*. Jesersky järgi (166) heebrea päritolu, mis ülalmainitud kaalutlustel ei ole päris korrektne väide.

*Schmonzes* 'meelitusjutt' — Nottbeck (82); 'rumal jutt' — Althaus (1963: 150). < j *šmontses* 'jama', 'lora'. Küpperi järgi (327) saksa ühiskeeles tähenduses 'lora' alates 19. saj., tähenduses 'juudi anekdoot' alates 20. saj; allikaks on pakutud j *šmuót* 'klatš', 'lorijutt', mis ei ole kuigi usutav, ja seda mitmel põhjusel. Esiteks ei eksisteeri jidišis vormi *šmuót*, vaid on olemas j *šmúes* 'vestlus', 'juttuajamine' < aškhbr *šmúos* < hbr *šamu'ót*; teiseks, kuna jidišis on olemas sõna *šmontses*, tundub loogiline otselaenamine j *šmontses* > sks *Schmonzes*.

*Schmuh* 'petmine', 'reetmine' < j *šmu* (Nottbeck: 82, Althaus 1963: 150). Gutzeit (3: 146) esitab verbi *schmullen* 'reetma', mida seostab nimega *Schmul* < j *Šmuel* (Saamuel) ja sõnaga *Schmu*. Võimalik, et tüüpiline juudi mehenimest on saanud pejoratiivne üldnimi. Sõna esineb ka allilmaargoos, teistes saksa murretes ja saksa ühiskeeles (Küpper: 327).

*schofel* ~ *schofelig* 'halvemat sorti', 'halb', 'alatu' < j *šófl* < aškhbr *šófol* < hbr *šáfál*. K. Sallmann<sup>35</sup> märgib heebrea päritolu, Nottbeck (83) jidiši päritolu. Sõna levinud laialt paljudes saksa murretes (vt näiteks Althaus 1963: 152) ning saksa ühiskeeles 18. saj. alates (Küpper : 335).

*schummeln* 'valetama', 'reetma' — Jeserskyl (170), etümoloogia puudub; levinud ka tähenduses 'kauplema'. Althaus oletab, et lähteallikaks on jidiši/heebrea lühend ŠUM, mis tähistab kolme väga olulist Saksa linna aškenazi (Põhja- ja Ida-Euroopa) juutide geograafias: Speyer, Worms, Mainz (W = U). Nimelt sinna tekkis oluline juudi asundus 9.–10. saj. Althausi arvates olid neis linnades elavad juudid enamasti kaupmehed, sellepärast ongi esimene tähendus 'kauplema'.<sup>36</sup> On samuti võimalik, et on toimunud metaetes *schmullen* > *schummeln*. Sõna registreeritud ka Eestis.<sup>37</sup>

Ssuss, vt Zosse

*Stuss* 'rumalus', 'mõttetus' < j *štus* < aškhbr *š(ə)ťíus* < hbr *šti'út* — Jesersky (177).

*Tate* 'isa' < j *tate* — Jesersky (178). Jidišis on sõna pärit ukraina või valgevene keelest.

*Tinef* 'väartusetu kraam', 'prügi', 'solk' — Nottbeck (92), Jesersky (179), mõlemal märgitud jidiši päritolu. < j *tinef* 'solk', 'saast' < aškhbr *tínuf* < hbr *tinnúf* 'solk', 'reostus', 'saast'. Saksa ühiskeeles kasutusel 19. saj. alates (Küpper : 404).

*Toches* ~ *Tochus* 'tagumik', 'taguots' — Gutzeit (III: 27), Kobolt (270), mõlemal märgitud jidiši päritolu. < j *toxes* < aškhbr *táxas* < hbr *táxat*. Saksa ühiskeeles alates 19. saj. (Küpper: 406).

*traif* 'kõlblmatu', 'roojane' < j *treif* 'rituaalselt kõlblmatu', 'roojane' < aškhbr *t(e)rěifo* < hbr *tərefá* — Jesersky (179).

*vermaseln* 'ebaõnnestuma', 'kihva keerama' (Nottbeck 1988: 98) < j *mazl* 'õnn' < aškhbr *mázol* < hbr *mazzál*. Levinud saksa ühiskeeles ka kujul *vermasseln* (Küpper: 436).

<sup>35</sup> K. Sallmann, Lexikalische Beiträge zur deutschen Mundart in Estland. — Leipzig, 1877, lk 18.

<sup>36</sup> H. P. Althaus, Zur Etymologie von *schummeln*, *beschummeln*. — Zeitschrift für Mundartforschung 1963, nr 30, lk 68.

<sup>37</sup> Hupel, Idiotikon der deutschen Sprache in Lief- und Estland. — Riga, 1795, lk 21.



*zeppern* 'külge jääma', 'kinni haarama', 'millestki kinni hakkama' — Nottbeck (102); Jesersky (187): *zeppen* 'tagasi tõmbuma'. Kumbki autor ei esita etümoloogiat. Oletavasti sõna laenatud vahetult baltijidišist. M. Weinreich (1923: 203) esitab jKu *tsepen*. Nagu ülal mainitud, on just Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišile omane tendents *tš > ts*, sellepärast (slaavi >) j *tšepen* > jKu, jE *tsepen*.<sup>38</sup> Ülalmainitud *blondsens* < jKu *blondzen* on sarnane juhtum. Variandis *zeppern* esinev liide *-r-* on aga produktiivne verbisufiks alamsaksa murretes üldse. Nagu O. Masing näitab, võib sellega moodustada verbe ka laenatud tüvedest, näiteks bsks *solkern* 'solkima' < e *solk*, bsks *tilkern* 'tilkuma' < e *tilk*.<sup>39</sup>

*Zorres* 'häda', 'mure' < j *tsóres* < aškhbr *tsórois* < hbr *tsarót* 'mured' (Nottbeck: 102, Jesersky : 188). Ka saksa ühiskeeles alates 19. saj. (Küpper: 479).

*Zosse* 'hobune' < (< Rotwelsch <) j *sus* < aškhbr, hbr *sus*. Nottbecki järgi (103) ka tähenduses 'kronu'. Jesersky (174): *Ssuss* < hbr. Küpper (479) arvab, et saksa ühiskeelde on sõna tulnud Rotwelsch'i vahendusel u. 18. saj. alguses.

Mitmes baltisaksa leksikonis esineb sõnu, mida peetakse ekslikult või põhjendamatu laenuks jidiši keelest. Vale-etümoloogiaid käesolevas artiklis ei puudutata, kuna see nõuab omaette uurimist. Samuti ei analüüsita baltisaksa sõnu, mis on seotud juutide ja juudi eluga, kuid pole jidišist laenatud (nt *Pagrom* 'pogromm' jms.).

### 3. Baltisaksa mõju jidiši keelele

Baltisaksa-jidiši kontaktidele ja teatud baltisaksa mõju Kuramaa jidišile mainitakse jidiši murdeid käsitlevas kirjanduses vaid sporaadiliselt. Autoril ei ole teada ühtegi uurimust, kus baltisaksa mõju Kuramaa (ja Eesti) jidiši foneetikale, morfoloogiale ja sõnavarale oleks süstemaatiliselt käsitletud. Kõige rohkem on viidatud mõjudele sõnavaras,<sup>40</sup> kuid seni puudub alam- ja baltisaksa laenude loetelu ja nende analüüs.

Baltisaksa keele mõju jidiši murretele oli ulatuslikum, kui jidiši oma baltisaksa keelele. Baltisaksa mõju ei piirdu vaid sõnavara laenamisega, vaid avaldub foneetikas ja vähesel määral morfoloogias.

#### 3.1. Foneetika

Kuramaa ja Eesti jidiši sonandid *l* ja *r* erinevad teiste jidiši murrete vastavatest häälikutest. Sonant *l* hääldub täpselt nagu vastav saksa häälik (ja nagu eesti *l*), samas kui teistes jidiši murretes on *l* velaarsem ja peale selle eksisteerib mitmeid palataliseeritud variante. Jidiši teistes murretes on uvulaarne *r*, kusjuures Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis on *r* mitte-uvulaarne, nagu baltisaksa keeleski. Nende häälikute eripära Kuramaa jidišis

<sup>38</sup> Vt U. Weinreich, *Sabesdiker losn* in Yiddish: a problem of linguistic affinity, lk 377.

<sup>39</sup> O. Masing, *Niederdeutsche Elemente in der Umgangssprache der baltischen Deutschen*. — *Abhandlungen des Herder-Institut, Riga 1926*, 2. k., nr 4, lk 30–31.

<sup>40</sup> Vt lähemalt ülal tsiteeritud tööd: M. Weinreich, *Dos kurlender jidiš*; Z. Kalmanovitš, *Der jidišer dialekt in Kurland*. Üldisem lähenemine baltisaksa mõjule Kuramaa jidišis on N. Jacobsi töös "Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish".

mainib Z. Kalmanovitš.<sup>41</sup> Ta nimetab neid “tõelisteks Kuramaa häälikuteks” (*emes kurlendiš*) ning lisab, et *l* on “tavaline saksa *l*” (*geveinlexer daitšer l*), kusjuures mittevulaarne *r* lubab eristada omi võõrastest. Nimetatud häälikute realiseerimine Kuramaa jidišis on arvatavasti baltisaksa mõju tulemus.<sup>42</sup> Võib lisada, et Eesti jidišis on nende häälikute hääldamine jäänud muutumatuks, mis on igati loogiline: ka Eestis oli teatav baltisaksa keele mõju jidišile, hiljem “toetasid” eesti keele vastavad häälikud selle omaduse säilitamist. Eesti jidiši kõnelejaskonna jälgimise põhjal võib väita, et ka siin on *l*-i ja *r*-i hääldamisviisi “omade” ja “võõraste” eristamise kriteeriumiks.

Mõningane baltisaksa mõju avaldub ka diftongide osas. Kirdejidiši diftongide tekkelugu nõuab seetõttu teatud süvenemist ajaloolisse vokalizmi.<sup>43</sup> Allpool käsitleme diftonge *au* ~ *ou*, *äi*, *öü*. Üks tähtsamaid muutusi, mis eristab proto-kirdejidišit teistest murderühmadest, oli üleminek *\*u:* > *au*; mõned keeleteadlased rekonstrueerivad siiski *\*u:* > *ou*.<sup>44</sup> Pilt muutub keerukamaks, kui võtame arvesse paralleelset üleminekut *\*o:* > *ou*. Kirdejidiši variantide eristamise üheks kriteeriumiks on *\*u:* realiseerumine: kas *au*, *ou*, *oi*, *ui* või mõnel muul kujul.<sup>45</sup> Teine oluline kriteerium — diftongi *öü* ~ *öi* saatus. Seda rekonstrueeritakse tavaliselt proto-kirdejidišis ja arvatakse, et see on säilinud vaid Kuramaa jidišis ning kadunud teistest kirdemurretest osalise või täieliku delabialiseerumise teel (*öü* > *eu* või *öü* > *ei*). U. Weinreich eristab kirdemurrete kolme põhivarianti: nn. Vilna, Samogitia (s.o. Žemaitija) ja Kuramaa tüüpi (vastavalt *Vilna type*, *Samogitian type*, *Courland type*). Kuramaa tüüp on kõige konservatiivsem, Vilna tüübis on kõige rohkem innovatsioone ja Žemaitija tüüp on nende kahe vahepealne. Selgitamiseks olgu toodud järgmine skeem:<sup>46</sup>

KÜSKS	*u:	*ou	*o:	*ei
Saksa kirjakeel	<i>au</i> <i>Haus</i> ‘maja’, <i>Auge</i> ‘silm’		<i>o</i> <i>Brot</i> ‘leib’	<i>ai</i> <i>Heim</i> ‘kodu’
Kuramaa tüüp	<i>au</i> <i>hauz</i> ‘maja’	<i>öü</i> ~ <i>öi</i> <i>öüg</i> ~ <i>öig</i> ‘silm’, <i>bröit</i> ‘leib’		<i>äi</i> <i>häim</i> ‘kodu’
Žemaitija tüüp	<i>ou</i> <i>houz</i> ‘maja’	<i>eu</i> <i>eug</i> ‘silm’, <i>breut</i> ‘leib’		<i>ei</i> <i>heim</i> ‘kodu’
Vilna tüüp	<i>ui</i> , <i>oi</i> <i>huiz</i> ~ <i>hoiz</i> ‘maja’		<i>ei</i> <i>eig</i> ‘silm’, <i>breit</i> ‘leib’, <i>heim</i> ‘kodu’	
Jidiši kirjakeel	<i>oi</i> <i>hoiz</i> ‘maja’, <i>oig</i> ‘silm’, <i>broit</i> ‘leib’			<i>ei</i> <i>heim</i> ‘kodu’

<sup>41</sup> Z. Kalmanovitš, Der jidišer dialekt in Kurland, lk 168–169. Vt ka Ch. Lemchen, Di hašpoe fun litviš oif jidišn dialekt in Lite, lk 26, 34.

<sup>42</sup> N. Jacobs, Yiddish in the Baltic Region (kk); J. Bin-Nun, Jiddisch und die deutschen Mundarten. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1973, lk 98.

<sup>43</sup> Kuna ajalooline vokalizmi ei ole antud artikli teema, on käesolev käsitus mõnevõrra lihtsustatud. Huviline võib leida põhjalikuma analüüsi järgmistest töödest: D. Katz, Zur Dialektologie des Jiddischen; U. Weinreich, Retrograde sound shift; M. Herzog, The Yiddish Language in Northern Poland: its Geography and History. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965.

<sup>44</sup> M. Herzog, The Yiddish Language, lk 164 (*au*); D. Katz, Zur Dialektologie, lk 1024 (*ou*).

<sup>45</sup> U. Weinreich, Retrograde sound shift, lk 249 jj.

<sup>46</sup> Skeemi aluseks on kasutatud järgmisi allikaid: M. Weinreich, Dos kurlender jidiš, lk 201; U. Weinreich, Retrograde sound shift, lk 249 jj.

Kuna Eesti jidiš on Kuramaa jidiši variant, on erinevusi diftongide osas väga vähe. Kirjakeele ja "klassikalise" e Vilna tüübi mõju tulemusena on traditsiooniline Kuramaa vokalism hakanud lagunema (nn. murde nivelleerumine).<sup>47</sup> Kuna Läti jidiši praeguse seisukorra kohta andmed puuduvad, oleme sunnitud piirduma vaid Eesti jidišis toimunud muutuste käsitlesega.

Ka siin on toimunud teatud muutus: diftong *öi* ~ *öü* esineb vaid kõige vanemate, sajandi alguses sündinud keelejuhtide kõnes ja on peaaegu täielikult asendatud *ei*-diftongiga (*keifn* 'ostma', *eig* 'silm'). Siamaani ei ole uuritud, kas kõnealune diftong on kuidagi seotud vastava baltisaksa diftongiga. Huvitaval kombel ei ole aga Eesti jidišist kadunud *äi*, vaid eksisteerib paralleelselt *ei*-ga: *fläiš* ~ *fleiš* 'liha', *äibik* ~ *eibik* 'igavene'. J. Bin-Nuni arvates on diftong *äi* tekkinud baltisaksa mõju all (baltisaksa keeles on olemas samasugune diftong).<sup>48</sup> Kahjuks aga ei esita Bin-Nun mingeid argumente selle seisukoha tõestuseks.<sup>49</sup> Selline mõju tundub üpris tõenäoline, kuid küsimus on senini põhjalikult uurimata.

Samuti on säilinud diftong *au*, kuid enamik hääldab seda pisut kõrgema esimese komponendiga, s.o. kõrgemalt kui *au*, kuid madalamalt kui *ou*. I. Lehiste järgi on kunagistele Tallinna baltisakslastele omane just selline *au*-diftongi hääldamine: esimene komponent mõnevõrra kõrgenenud ja labialiseerunud.<sup>50</sup> Võib oletada, et antud juhul on tegemist baltisaksa keele mõjuga. Selline hääldamisviis on valdav ja säilinud tänini. Diftongide käsitlese lõpetuseks olgu öeldud, et ka tänapäeval juudisoost saksa keele kõnelejalatel esineb baltisaksapärane diftongide hääldamine: *neu* 'uus' kõlab [nöü] või [noi], *Stein* 'kivi' kõlab [štäin] jne.

Veel üks baltisaksa mõju avaldus on apokoop e lõpukadu. M. Weinreich märkas, et Kuramaa jidišis on lõpukadu *e*-lõpulistest nimisõnades järjekindlam kui teistes murretes: öeldakse mitte ainult *blum* 'lill', *gas* 'tänav', *zait* 'külg', vaid ka *bluz* 'pluus', *gurk* 'kurk'. Sellised lõpukaolised vormid on baltisaksa keelele omased ja ilmselt on avaldanud mõju Kuramaa jidišile. Kõnealune joon ei ole säilinud eesti jidišis — ilmselt saksa kirja- ja ühiskeele mõju all on levinud just *e*-lõpulistest vormid ka seal, kus mujal jidišis on lõpukaoline vorm: *šule* 'kool', 'sünagoog' (vrd sks *Schule*, j *šul*), *bluze* 'pluus' (vrd sks *Bluse*, j *bluz*), *ende* 'lõpp' (vrd sks *Ende*, j *end*).

Lõpuks olgu mainitud tüüpiline baltisaksa (või isegi laiemalt alamsaksa) joon, mis on säilinud Eesti jidišis vaid piiratud, nimelt üleminek *e* > *ä* *r*-i eel. See omadus on säilinud Eesti jidišis vaid päris- ja kohanimede puhul: *Berta*, *Perlman*, *Berner*, *Berlin*, *Pernau* hääldatakse vastavalt [bärta], [pärlman], [bärner], [bärlin], [pärnau]. P. Ariste arvates oli see tavaline joon Eestis kõneldavas alamsaksakeeles.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Kuramaa jidiši traditsioonilise vokalismi kadumise kohta vt J. Bin-Nun, Jiddisch und die deutschen Mundarten, lk 97–98; N. Jacobs, Sturcture, Standardization and Diglossia, lk 98–99. Mõeldud on eelkõige põlisdiftongide asendumist Vilna tüübi ja kirjakeele eeskujul ning pikade-lühikeste vokaalide opositsiooni kadumist. Eesti jidišis on kõnealused jooned siiski mõnevõrra säilinud.

<sup>48</sup> Baltisaksa foneetika kohta vt W. Mitzka, Studien zum baltischen Deutsch. Deutsche Dialektgeographie, Marburg, 1923, nr 17; G. Deeters, Phonologische Bemerkungen zum baltischen Deutsch. — Travaux du cercle linguistique de Prague, 1930, nr 8. lk 130–137.

<sup>49</sup> J. Bin-Nun, Jiddisch und die deutschen Mundarten, lk 97.

<sup>50</sup> I. Lehiste, A Poem in Halbdeutsch and Some Questions Concerning Substratum. — Word, 1965, nr 21, lk 57.

<sup>51</sup> P. Ariste, Keelekontaktid, lk 103 jj. Vt ka W. Mitzka, Studien zum baltischen Deutsch. — Deutsche Dialektgeographie, 1923 (17), lk 49.

### 3.2. Morfoloogia

Kuna jidiši-baltisaksa kontaktid ei jõudnud areneda väga kaugele, on vastastikune mõju morfoloogiale peaaegu olematu (vt ülal). Siiski on Eesti (ja ilmselt ka Kuramaa) jidišis üks alamsaksa morfoloogiline joon, mis on laenatud baltisaksa keelest, nimelt kohanimedest moodustatud substantiveerunud adjektiivide sufiks *-sch* (> jE, jKu *-š*): *ix bin a revalše* 'olen tallinlane', *landše* 'maakas, maaelanik'.<sup>52</sup> Kohanimede kasutuses on Eesti jidišis viimase 60–70 aasta jooksul toimunud üleminek saksa traditsioonilistest kohanimedest eesti omadele — veel 1920-ndatel võis kohalikes jidiši lehtedes kohata *Reval*, *Dorpat*, *Pernau*, *Hungerburg* jne. Tänapäeval on kasutusel ainult *Tallinn*, *Pärnu*, *Narva-Jõesuu*, kuid huvitaval kombel eksisteerivad paralleelvariandid *Dorpat* ~ *Tartu*. See üleminek ei takistanud aga sufiksi *-š* edaspidist kasutust: nüüd moodustatakse vastavaid substantiveerunud adjektiive eesti kohanimede tüvedest (*tartušer* 'tartlane', 'Tartust pärit'; *valgašer* 'valgalane', 'Valgast pärit').<sup>53</sup>

### 3.3. Sõnavara

Nagu juba mainitud, on alam- ja baltisaksa laenude rohkus Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis üks silmatorkavamaid jooni. Nendes jidiši murretes leidub ka semantilisi laene baltisaksa keelest. Tihtilugu on mõni alamsaksa tüvi laenatud nii eesti keelde kui ka eesti jidišisse. Mõningad laenud eesti keelest on tulnud Eesti jidišisse just baltisaksa keele vahendusel, ja vastupidi, teatud alamsaksa päritoluga sõnad on tekkinud eesti keele vahendusel.<sup>54</sup>

*arst* 'arst' (? < e *arst*) (jE) < asks *Artzte*, vrd j *dokter*.

*boksbe:rn* 'mustusõtrad' (jE) < *Bucksbeere*, *Bocksbeere*. Nottbeck (21), Masing (42): 'schwarze Johannisbeere'; vrd j *smorodine*, *vaimper* jne.

*di:l* 'põrand' (jE, jKu) < asks, bsks *Diele* (Nottbeck: 27, Kobolt: 84 'Fussboden'); levinud ka teistes jidiši murretes. Eesti jidišis ainus variant, teistes jidiši murretes esineb ka slaavi päritoluga *podloge*.

*ditke* 'väikese väärtusega münt'. 'kolm kopikat' (jKu) — Kalmanovitš (175) märgib alamsaksa päritolu (< *Deut* 'väike hollandi münt'). < asks *Dittchen*, *Ditke* (Masing: 70, Kobolt: 85).

<sup>52</sup> O. Masing, *Niederdeutsche Elemente*. lk 29–30. See alamsaksa sufiks on baltisaksa keeles produktiivne ja moodustab ka naissoost tegijanimed, nagu *Aufpassersche* 'lapsehoidja', 'järelvalvaja', *Kochsche* 'köögitüdruk' jne. Jidišis selles funktsioonis ei esine, vaid ainult kohanimedest moodustatud substantiveerunud adjektiivides tähendusega 'teatud asula elanik' (*revalše* 'tallinlane', 'Tallinnast pärit').

<sup>53</sup> Juutide traditsioonilistel asustusaladel on väljakujunenud omakeelsete kohanimede süsteem: *Varše* 'Varssavi'. vrd poola *Warszawa*; *Molev* 'Mogilev'. vrd vvn *Mohiljou*; *Zamet*, vrd ld *Žemaitija* jne. Kuna Eesti ei kuulu traditsiooniliste juudi asustusalade hulka, ei tekkinud siin oma kohanimede süsteemi. Tundub loogiline, et esialgu võeti kasutusele saksapärased kohanimed (Reval, Dorpat, Weisenberg jne). Hiljem, u 1920-ndate lõpust alates, kui eesti keele ja kultuuri prestiiž oli juutide seas kasvanud, tekkisid paralleelvariandid. Muutus kohanimede kasutuses on väärt omaette uurimust.

<sup>54</sup> Eesti jidiši sõnavara põhikomponentidest vt A. Verschik, *On the Lexicon of Estonian Yiddish*.

*gra:pn* 'väike keedupott' (jKu) — M.Weinreichi järgi (1923: 216) < kasks *gropen*, *grapen*; Kalmanovitš (174) väidab, et õige variant oleks *grap* (lühikese *a*-ga ja ilma *n*-lõputa, viimane olevat saksapärase).<sup>55</sup> Vrd bsks *Grapen* < kasks *gropen*, *grapen* (Masing: 59–60), Nottbeck (35) *Grapen*.

*harberig* 'majatiib, juurdeehitus' (jKu) — M.Weinreich (1923: 217) ei seleta päritolu. Tõenäoliselt < bsks *Herberge* (Nottbeck: 36), vrd e *häärber*.

*ingver* 'ingver' (jE) (< ? e *ingver*) < kasks või bsks *Ingwer*, vrd j *ingber*, *imber*.<sup>56</sup>

*kaneil* ~ *kane:l* 'kaneel' (jKu, teine variant jE) — Kalmanovitš (183) ei seleta päritolu. < kasks *kannêl*, vrd e *kaneel* (< kasks); vrd j *tsimerik*, *tsimering*. Masing (42), Nottbeck (40): bsks *Kaneel* < asks.

*klade* 'klade', 'kaustik' (jE) < asks, bsks *Kladde* (Kobolt: 147; Frischbier: 367 — *kladern* 'schmieren, beschmieren'; Nottbeck: 42 — *kladdrig* 'unsicher', 'wackelig').

*kolk* 'sügav koht jões' (jKu) — M. Weinreichi järgi (1923: 131) < asks *Kolk*. Masing (21): bsks *Kolk* 'Wasserwirbel' < kasks *kolk*.

*lebn* 'elama' (jE) — üks verb kahe verbi asemel *lebn* ja *voinen*. Võimalik, et tegemist on semantilise laenuga baltisaksa keelest, kus see on omakorda semantiline laen eesti keelest.<sup>57</sup> Nottbeck (53): *In dieser Zeit lebte er bei seinem Onkel* 'sel ajal elas ta oma onu juures'.

*leiz* 'lahti', 'ripakil' (jE) < bsks *los* 'lahti'. Nottbeck (55): *Lass das Fenster los* 'jäta aken lahti', vrd sks *offen*; jE *di tü:r iz leiz* 'uks on lahti'. Ilmselt on tegemist semantilise laenuga baltisaksa keelest.

*nuke* 'suur leivatükk' (jKu) — M.Weireich (1923: 226) ei paku etümoloogiat; Lemchen (88) peab võimalikuks allikaks lt *nuka* ja ld *niukas*, kus need sõnad on omakorda slaavi päritolu. Kahjuks ei seleta Lemchen täpsemalt, mis slaavi allikat silmas peetakse. Võimalik tundub jKu *nuke* < asks *nok*, *nokke*; vrd e *nukk* : *nuki*.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Nii Weinreichil kui Kalmanovitšil võib olla õigus vokaali kvantiteedi suhtes: *gra:pn* ja *grapn* võisid eksisteerida paralleelvariantidena. Tuleb arvesse võtta, et pikk *a*: esineb Kuramaa ja Eesti jidišis vaid laenudes. Pikk *a*: täidab tühimikku muidu sümmeetrilises pikkade-lühikeste vokaalide süsteemis. Silmas tuleb pidada ka Kuramaa jidiši assimileerumistendentsi pärast 1. maailmasõda, jidiši kirjakeele mõju jne, mis peegeldub muuhulgas ebajärjekindluses vokaalide pikkuse suhtes. Lahkarvamust kõnealuse vokaali kvantiteedi suhtes võib põhjustada asjaolu, et tegemist on laenuga ja ainult laensõnades esineva foneemiga. Selle kohta vt N. Jacobs, *Sturcture, Standardization and Diglossia*, lk 94; U. Weinreich, *Rošei-prokim fun a deskriptiver jidišer dialektologie*. — YIVO bleter. Naie serie, 1991, I, lk 19.

<sup>56</sup> Teistes jidiši murretes levinud sõnavara kohta vt N. Stuchkoff, *Der oitser fun der jidišer šprax*. New York: YIVO, 1950, lk 243.

<sup>57</sup> Semantiliste laenude kohta eesti keelest baltisaksa keelde vt H. Ojansuu, *Über den Einfluss der Estnischen auf das Deutsche der Ostseeprovinzen*. Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 1906. nr 8. 89–90. Verbist *leben* vt lk 90. Ojansuu ei kasuta terminit 'semantiline laen', vaid *Übersetzung* 'tõlge'.

<sup>58</sup> *nukk* : *nuki* ja *nukk* : *nuka* etümoloogia ei ole päris selge. Selle kohta vt SKES, lk 397 ja J. Mägiste, *Estnisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*, lk 1738–1739; L.Vaba, *Uurimisi läti-eesti keelesuhetest*, Tallinn–Tampere, 1997, lk 142.

*proln zix* 'praalima' (jKu, jE) — Kalmanoviš (181), päritolu märkimata. Tõenäoliselt < bsks *pralen* (< kasks *pralen*), vrd j *barimen zix* 'praalima', 'kiitlema'.

*redl* 'redel' (jKu, jE) — M. Weinreich (1923: 236) oletab, et tegemist võib olla eesti laenuga. Tõenäolisem siiski *redl* < bsks *Reddel*; vrd j *leiter* 'redel'. J.Mägiste arvates on eesti keeles *redel* baltisaksa laen.<sup>59</sup>

*raut* 'aknaruut' (jKu, jE) — M. Weinreich (1923: 235) püüab seostada ülemsaksa keelega, kuid nendib, et ülemsaksa vaste puudub. N. Jacobs oletab, et tegemist võib olla vana rootsi laenuga, sest e *ruut* on laen rootsi keelest (selle kasuks räägib *u-tüvi*), samuti soome *ruutu*. Ka baltisaksa keeles võib see Jacobi arvates olla vana hansa-aegne laen rootsi keelest.<sup>60</sup> Samas tundub olevat võimalik, et antud juhul puutume kokku sama probleemiga, nagu mõne laenu puhul eesti keeleski: kas rootsi või alamsaksa? R. Raag nimetab seda probleemi klassikaliseks ja nendib, et mõnikord on selle lahendamine puht-keeleliste andmete varal võimatu.<sup>61</sup> Võib pakkuda ka järgmist stsenaariumi: baltisaksa keeles esineb *Rute* (Kobolt: 227, Jesersky: 165) ning on võimalik, et jidiši kõnelejad rakendasid reeglilt asks *u*: > *au* ja nõnda tekkis vorm *raut*. Lisaks võib mainida, et viimasel ajal on Eesti jidišis levinud vorm *ru:t*, mis on laenatud eesti keelest.

*sült* ~ *zült* (jE) < kasks *sulte*, vrd j *puša*, *galierte*, *iškes* jt.<sup>62</sup> Masing (68): *Sülz(e)* < kasks *sulte*; Kobolt (266): *Sülz* < kasks *sulte*. Eesti jidišis rohkem levinud vorm *sült* helitu *s*-iga (nagu eesti keeleski).

*šmant* 'koor' (jKu, jE) — M. Weinreich (1923: 239) ei esita etümoloogiat, samuti Nottbeck (84). Kobolt (240): *Schmant* < kasks *smant*, *schmant*. Jidišis levinud ka väljaspool Baltikumi.

*šlure* 'vana kulunud king, suss', 'räpakas inimene' — M. Weinreich (1923: 238–239) järgi alamsaksa päritolu. Leedu jidišis levinud palataliseeritud variant *šliure*. Lemchen (1995: 118) toob läti ja leedu paralleele (vastavalt *šjura* ja *šliure*). Ariste arvates (1970: 251) võimalik, et jE *šlure* < bsks *Schlurre*. Baltisaksa keeles eksisteerib ka verb *schlurren* 'jalgu lohistades kõndima' (Nottbeck: 81, Kobolt: 239).

*šnikern* 'ilma otstarbeta väikesteks tükkideks lõikama' (jKu) — M. Weinreich (1923: 239) seostab saksa verbidega *schneiden*, *schnitzeln* ja mainib, et vastav verb *schnickern* leidub ka baltisaksa keeles. Jacobs (1994: 93) arvab, et seostamine saksa verbidega ei ole loogiline, sest sellisel juhul ei saaks seletada jidiši variandis esinevat *k-d*. Tema arvates on võimalik skandinaavia päritolu (vrd rts *snickare* 'puusepp'). Autor kaldub arvama, et tegemist on sama probleemiga, nagu *raut* ~ *ru:t* etümoloogia puhul, nimelt jälle kerkib üles küsimus: kas rootsi või alamsaksa? Mägiste (1700) järgi on e *nikerdama* < (ka)sks *schnikern*; SKESi järgi on sm *nikartaa*, *nikkaroida* < rts *snickare*,

<sup>59</sup> J. Mägiste, *Etnisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Helsinki: Finno-Ugrische Gesellschaft, 1982–1983. lk 2437.

<sup>60</sup> Vt N. Jacobs, *Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish*, lk 93.

<sup>61</sup> R. Raag, *Criteria for Establishing Swedish Lexical Borrowings in Estonian*. — S.-L. Hahmo jt (koost.). *Finnisch-Ugrische Sprachen in Kontakt*. Maastricht: Shaker Publishing, 1997, lk 188–189.

<sup>62</sup> Jidiši teistes murretes leidub suur arv sõnu tähendusega 'sült', vt N. Stuchkoff, *Der oitser fun der jidišer šprax*, lk 225.

kusjuures vrts *snitkare* < kasks *sniddeker* 'puusepp'.<sup>63</sup> Kuna vastav verb eksisteerib ka baltisaksa keeles, võib oletada, et jKu *šnikern* < bsks *schnickern*; puht-keeleliselt on võimatu otsustada, kas tegemist on alamsaksa või rootsi laenuga.

*šnodern* 'tatt', *šnodernoz* 'tattnina', *šnodern-jung* 'tühine inimene', 'kollanokk' (jKu) — M. Weinreich (239) esitab paralleelina bsks *schnodern*.

*šnuke*, *šnutske* 'looma koon', 'näoke' (lapse kohta) (jKu, jE) — Kalmanovitš (186) annab keelendi *xazerše šnuke* 'sea koon' (sõimusõna), allikaks peab sks *Schnauze*; Lemchen (90) esitab lisaks Leedus levinud variandi *snuke* ja peab allikaks lt *snuķis* ja ld *snukis*; Ariste järgi (1970: 251) < *snukis*. Ka eesti murretes eksisteerib sõna *nukk* 'looma nina või koon, kärss' ? < lt *snuķis*.<sup>64</sup> Ei ole välistatud baltisaksa päritolu: Kobolti järgi (244) *Schnute* < kasks *snūt*.

*šsprutn* 'kaalikas' (jKu, jE) — Kalmanovitš (187) esitab teistes murretes esinevaid sõnu (*krutške*, *setenes* jne), kuid ei seleta päritolu. Masingu järgi (43) bsks *sprute* (pikk u:) < kasks *sprute* 'Spross'. Seega jKu, jE *šsprutn* < bsks *Sprute*.

*šstudentnblumen* 'peulilled' (jE) — ilmselt < bsks *Studentenblumen* (Masing: 43: *Studentenblume* 'Tagetes patula'; Frischbier: II: 384: 'spitzblättrige Malve, Malva alcea').

*trexter* 'lehter' (jKu, jE) — Kalmanovitš (177): < üks *trihter*, *trahter*; tõenäolisem tundub siiski alamsaksa päritolu, kuna naaberkeeltes (eesti, läti) on vastav sõna alamsaksa laen: vrd e *trehter* < kasks, e (murd.) *tehter*, lt *tekeris* < asks *trechter*.<sup>65</sup>

*zaft* 'moos' (jE) < bsks *Saft* 'moos'. Tegemist on semantilise laenuga. Kobolt (228): *Saft* 'Marmelade, Konfitüre, mit Zucker dick eingekochte Beeren'; Nottbeck (77): 'Marmelade, Konfitüre aus ganzen Früchten'. Teistes jidiši murretes ja kirjakeeles tähendab *zaft* ainult 'mahl', kusjuures *aingemaxts* on 1) 'moos' ja 2) 'meega keedetud rõigas' (eriline magustoit). Eestis on sõnal *aingemaxts* vaid teine tähendus.

Arusaadav, et antud alam- ja baltisaksa laenude nimekiri ei ole sugugi täielik. Tõenäoliselt leidub selliseid laene veelgi. Nagu nimekirjast näha, osa sõnadest on markeeritud vaid (jE), mis ei tähenda sugugi, et Kuramaa jidišis selline laen puudub, vaid pigem seda, et juba mainitud klassikalistes töödes selle murde kohta neid sõnu ei ole registreeritud ja Kuramaa jidiši kaasaegse olukorra kohta andmed puuduvad. Sellega seoses tuleb rõhutada, et tegemist on hääbuvate murretega ning ei ole välistatud, et hulk väärtuslikke andmeid on juba igaveseks kaotsi läinud.

<sup>63</sup> Vt SKES (Suomen kielen etymologinen eanikirja), Helsinki: Lexica Societatis Fenno-Ugricae XII, 1958, lk 379-380.

<sup>64</sup> Põhjalikum ülevaade vt L.Vaba, Uurimisi läti-eesti keelesuhetest, Tallinn-Tampere, 1997, lk 142.

<sup>65</sup> R. Raag, Mittelniederdeutsche und skandinavische Lehnwörter im Estnischen und Livischen. — P. Sture Ureland (koost.), Sprachkontakt in der Hanse. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1987, lk 324; L.Vaba, Die lettische Sprache als Vermittler deutschen Lehngutes ins Estnische. — G.Brandt (koost.), Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache im Baltikum. Stuttgart: Verlag Hans-Dieter Heinz, Akademischer Verlag Stuttgart, 1996, lk 111.

#### 4. Baltisaksa keel eesti laenude vahendajana. Eesti keele balti- ja alamsaksa laenude vahendajana

Kontaktid baltisaksa ja eesti keele vahel on sügavad ja ulatuslikud; igas arvestatavas baltisaksa sõnastikus leidub võrdlemisi suur hulk eesti laene. Balti- ja alamsaksa ulatuslik mõju eesti keelele on teada igale eesti keele uurijale ja ei vaja siinkohal rõhutamist.

Selgub, et teatud arv laene eesti keelest on tulnud Eesti (ja Kuramaa) jidišisse baltisaksa keele vahendusel. Olgu mainitud järgmised juhtumid:

*kadik* 'kadas' (jE, jKu) < bsks *Kaddik* < lmsm *kadakas, kataja* jne; vrd j *jalovets*, 'kadas'. Kalmanovitš (183) arvab läti laenuks, Lemchen (102) toob paralleele balti keeltest, kuid Kuramaa jidiši puhul peab allikaks bsks *Kaddik*. Mägiste (635–636) peab seda läänemeresoome tüveks. Võimalik, et läänemeresoome keeltest levis see sõna baltisaksa ja balti keeltesse. Tegemist on nn. panbaltitsismiga (vt allpool).

*kilo* 'kilu' (levinud ka kujul *kilu*, mis on laenatud otse eesti keelest) < bsks *Killo* < e *kilu*. Baltisaksa sõna leidub näiteks järgmistes allikates: Nottbeck (42), Kiparsky (42), Hoheisel (27).<sup>66</sup>

*lage* 'lagi' (jE, jKu) < bsks *Lage* < e *lagi*. Esineb mitmes baltisaksa leksikonis: Gutzeit (II: 131), Kiparsky (53), Hoheisel (29), Suolahti (113).<sup>67</sup> Jidišis levinud ka kujul *eiberlage*.

*luxt* 'luht' (jE) < bsks *Lucht* < e *luht*. Ariste (1981: 32) väidab, et laenamine alamsaksa keelde toimus juba keskajal Tallinnas asetleidva ulatusliku eesti-alamsaksa kakskeel- suse tulemusena. Baltisaksa leksikonides sageli esinev.<sup>68</sup>

Kuna eesti keele mõju Eesti jidišile on 20. saj. jooksul kasvanud ja kontaktid eestlastega lainenenud, on loogiline oodata Eesti jidišis laene eesti keelest ja ka teistel keel- tasanditel avalduvat mõju. Mõned sõnad on laenatud uuesti eesti keele vahendusel, näiteks: jE *pa:r* 'paar' < e *paar* < kasks *pâr*, vrd j *por*; jE *vorst* < e *vorst* < kasks *worst*, vrd j *vuršt* jne. Võime määrata potentsiaalsete laenude omadusi: alam- või baltisaksa tüvi võib olla laenatud eesti keele vahendusel siis, kui jidišis üldlevinud häälikuline pilt ei erine väga suurel määral alamsaksa sõna omast. See tähendab, et laenud nagu *\*kri:t* 'kriit < e *kriit* (< kasks) või *\*se:p* 'seep' < e *seep* (< kasks) on vähetõenäolised (vrd vastavalt j *kraid* ja *zeif*).<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup> C. Hoheisel, Einige Eigenümlichkeiten der deutschen Sprache Estlands. Reval. 1860. lk 27.

<sup>67</sup> Vt H. Suolahti, Die estnischen Wörter im Deutschen der baltischen Ostseeprovinzen. — Neuphilologische Mitteilungen. 1910. nr. 5–6 (12), lk 99–129.

<sup>68</sup> Vt näiteks Nottbeck (56). Gutzeit (II: 194), Masing (41), Kiparsky (56) jm.

<sup>69</sup> Eesti keele rollist balti- ja alamsaksa laenude vahendajana vt A. Verschik, On the lexicon of Estonian Yiddish. (ilmumas ajakirjas Studia Orientalia. Helsingi Ülikooli Orientalistika Seltsi väljaanne).



## 5. Laiem perspektiiv

Käesoleva artikli sissejuhatuses oli juba viidatud vajadusele kaasata baltijidiš kogu Baltikumi keelte konteksti. Sõnavara tasemel eksisteerib hulk tüvesid, mis on levinud mitmes selle regiooni keeles (N. Jacobs pakub terminit *panbaltitsismid*<sup>70</sup>). Üheks niisuguseks panbaltitsismiks on e *kadakas*, jE, jKu *kadik*, bsks *Kaddik*, lt *kadikis*, ld *kadagys*. Ka foneetika valdkonnas leidub mõndagi huvipakkuvat: näiteks küsimus, kas Eesti jidiši mõningate kõnelejate puhul levinud vältete süsteemi osaline rakendamine jidišis on eestimõjuline joon või on see osa nn. balti polütoonilisest keeleliidust?<sup>71</sup>

Teiselt poolt, baltisaksa keele uurijatele võiks huvi pakkuda tänapäeval Eestis ja Lätis elavate juutide saksa keel, mis sisaldab baltisaksa keele sugemeid. Saksa keele tähtsusest Eesti ja Läti juutidele oli juttu eespool; praegugi leidub Eesti ja Läti juutide hulgas aktiivseid saksa keele kõnelejaid. Jidiši keele uurimise seisukohalt väärivad Eesti ja Kuramaa jidiši murrete ainulaadsed jooned suuremat tähelepanu kui seni.

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<sup>70</sup> Vt N. Jacobs, *Structure, Standardization and Diglossia: the Case of Courland Yiddish*.

<sup>71</sup> U. Sutrop (Eesti keele välted ja balti polütooniline keeleliit, *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1999, nr 4, lk 235–238) näitab, et eesti kvantiteedisüsteemile sarnaseid leidub ka mujal, nt mitmesugustes saksa murretes. Küsimus on selles, kas Eesti jidiši kõnelejad on selle üle võtnud baltisaksa keelest või eesti keelest. Autori arvates on see joon pärit siiski eesti keelest, kuna on levinud eelkõige Tartus sündinud ja üleskasvanud keelejuhtide kõnes ja Tartus oli eesti keele mõju jidišile suurem. Teoreetiliselt on võimalik ka teistsugune vastus sellele küsimusele.



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# SOME ASPECTS OF ESTONIAN-YIDDISH LANGUAGE CONTACTS

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## 1. History

The history of Estonian-Yiddish language contacts is not long. Being a very tiny and a relatively recent minority (settled in Estonia in the beginning of the 19th century, constituted 0.4% of the population in 1934), Jewish (Yiddish) impact on coterritorial languages was minimal, merely lexical, which suggests a more superficial type of influence (Thomason and Kaufman 1988). However, extensive multilingualism and a high degree of linguistic awareness are the most striking features of the community: all Yiddish-speakers are at least bilingual (Yiddish-Estonian), but more often tri- or even quaterolingual (Yiddish-Estonian-Russian-German). The mutual impact was clearly asymmetrical: coterritorial languages have affected phonology and, to a very little extent, morphology of Yiddish dialects spoken in the Baltic region in general and in Estonia in particular (for instance, on Yiddish — Baltic German contacts see Verschik, in press).

The size of the minority group and the number of years lived in contact are not to be mistaken for the crucial factor in language contacts studies. This circumstance was emphasized by N. Jacobs (ms.) in his analysis of Latvian-Jewish contacts. In this connection it should be stressed that one has to distinguish between standard and spoken language: it will be demonstrated that Standard Estonian has very few borrowings from Yiddish, while Estonian spoken by Jews has plenty of them.

Yiddish-Estonian contacts have received very little scholarly attention. P. Ariste (1981: 158–159) focuses on Yiddish borrowings in standard Estonian; an overview of the contact situation can be found in Verschik 1997. However, both works are written in Estonian and our goal is to bring the topic to the attention of a wider circle of researchers.

## 2. Development of Yiddish dialect in Estonia (Estonian Yiddish)

The description of Estonian Yiddish is beyond the limits of the present article (see description in Verschik 1999). We are going to present here only the key points.

- Estonian Yiddish has developed on the basis of Courland Yiddish and preserved some typical archaic features: opposition between short and long vowels (*zun* 'sun' — *zu:n* 'son'), realization of certain diphthongs (*au*, *äi*, *öu*), distribution of hushing/hissing sounds according to Courland Yiddish pattern (in Germanic component it follows Standard German, *ʃ* in Semitic and Slavic component), some lexical items (on Courland Yiddish see M. Weinreich 1923, Kalmanovitsh 1926, Jacobs 1994; on historic vocalism see U. Weinreich 1958, on hissing/hushing sounds see U. Weinreich 1952).
- Unlike elsewhere in Eastern Europe, the influence of Slavic languages and cultures was minimal, while the prestige and impact of Baltic German in the region was ex-

tremely important for the development of the dialect. Words of Germanic origin are clearly preferred (for instance *di:l* 'floor', cf. Yiddish *podloge* and German *Diele*)

- Estonia was quite remote from the centers of traditional Jewish learning and religious life. This fact explains why many words of Semitic (Hebrew and Aramaic) origin have been substituted by items of Germanic origin (*überhaupt* 'in general' instead of *bixlal*, *gebet* 'prayer' instead of *tfile* 'Jewish prayer').
- Estonian Yiddish has preserved the main general morphologic features of Northeastern Yiddish (NEY) dialects, such as the merging of Accusative and Dative case into one single case (Objective) and the loss of the neuter gender (see Mark 1951 on general NEY features and Jacobs 1990 on gender issue).
- Estonian Yiddish has certain unique features: vowels *ü*, *ü:* and *ö* in some words of Germanic origin (probably under Standard German and Estonian impact): *fünf* 'five', cf. Yiddish *finf*; *tü:r* 'door', cf. Yiddish *tir*, *tsvölf* 'twelve', cf. Yiddish *tsvelf*; gemination of clusters *t* and *p* in intervocalic position (probably under the impact of Estonian): *umettik* 'sad', *xuppe* 'wedding canopy', as well as specific Estonian-influenced intonation patterns in some speakers. Lexical and semantic borrowings from Estonian is also one of the distinctive characteristic features.

### 3. Borrowings from Yiddish into Standard Estonian

Borrowings from Yiddish into Standard Estonian are only few (Ariste 1981: 158–159): *itske* 'Jew' (pejorative) < *Itsik* (man's name); *jidiš* 'Yiddish' < *jidiš* (the linguonym); *joskel* 'a small boy' < *Josl* (diminutive of man's name *Joisef* < Ashkenazic Hebrew *Jóisef* < Hebrew *Joséf*), *kosser* 'appropriate, kosher' < *košer* 'kosher, appropriate, suitable according to Jewish dietary laws' (< Ashkenazic Hebrew *kóšer* < Hebrew *kašér*), *matse* or *matske* 'unleavened bread' < *matse* (< Ashkenazic Hebrew *mátso* < Hebrew *matsá*), *pleite* 'bankrupt' < *pleite* (< Ashkenazic Hebrew *pléito* < Hebrew *peletá* 'deliverance'). Speech borrowings are more numerous and will be discussed below.

### 4. Borrowings from Estonian into Yiddish

Standard Yiddish has only one borrowing from Estonian which has entered through Russian: *kilke* 'sprat' < Russian *kil'ka* < Estonian *kilu*. However, Estonian Yiddish has more borrowings from Estonian. Estonian Jews use both the term *kilke* as well as *killo* (the latter was probably borrowed via Baltic German: according to Kiparsky 1936 : 43, Baltic German *Killo* < Estonian *kilu*). Some other loans have entered Estonian Yiddish via Baltic German: *luxt* < Baltic German *Lucht* < Estonian *luht* 'waterside meadow' (see Nottbeck 1988 : 56 for Baltic German *Lucht*); *lage* < Baltic German *Lage* < Estonian *lagi* 'ceiling' (see Kiparsky 1936 : 50 for Baltic German *Lage*). Some semantic loans have entered Yiddish also through the medium of Baltic German: *lebn* 'to live' and 'to reside' < Baltic German *leben* < Estonian *elama*, cf. Yiddish *lebn* and *voinen*, German *leben* and *wohnen*.

Certain items have been borrowed directly from Estonian: names of plants: *ka:like* 'turnip' < *kaalikas*; everyday-life lexicon: *sepik* 'a kind of barley bread' < Estonian *se-*

*pik*; *kohvik* ‘coffee shop’ < Estonian *kohvik*; *suskes* ‘slippers’ < Estonian *sussid* and the loan-translation *faieršodn* ‘fire’ < Estonian *tulekahju* (*tule-* ‘fire’, Genitive + *kahju* ‘damage’), cf. Yiddish *sreife* ‘fire’.

## 5. Mild interference from Estonian

The term was suggested by U. Weinreich (1953 : 50), his example is American Yiddish *vakeišn* < *vacation*, cf. Yiddish *vakatsie*. The phenomenon is quite common in Estonian Yiddish, it occurs in so-called international words of Greek and Latin origin and in lexical items which are established loans from varieties of German (Baltic or Low German, Standard German) in Estonian: *süste:m* < Estonian *süsteem* ‘system’, cf. Yiddish *sistem*; *intonatsio:n* < Estonian *intonatsioon* ‘intonation’, cf. Yiddish *intonatsie*; *kostü:m* < Estonian *kostüüm* ‘costume’, cf. Yiddish *kostium*; *ingver* < Estonian *ingver* ‘ginger’ (< Baltic German or MHG *Ingwer*), cf. Yiddish *ingber*; *pa:r* < Estonian *paar* ‘pair’ (< MLG *par*), cf. Yiddish *por*; *ket* < Estonian *kett* ‘chain’ (< German *Kette*), cf. Yiddish *keit* etc.

It is possible that varieties of German (especially Baltic German) can be a source of direct borrowing into Estonian Yiddish; nevertheless, even in this case the role of Estonian adstratum should not be underestimated: usually lexical items like *ket* ‘chain’, *pa:r* ‘pair’ etc. are ‘supported’ by Estonian counterparts of the same (German, Baltic German) origin. Therefore, there is a certain part of vocabulary shared by both Estonian and Estonian Yiddish.

## 6. Borrowings from Yiddish in the speech of Estonian Jews

As mentioned before, there are some Yiddish loans in Standard Estonian. However, there exist quite a number of Yiddish loans in the speech of Estonian Jews when they speak Estonian. Speech between two multilinguals differs from speech between monolinguals or between a monolingual and a multilingual (Grosjean 1982 : 292–310, Viikberg 1989 : 202–205). Code-switching and sporadic borrowing is a norm in a multilingual community.

Another reason for borrowing is the necessity to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish matters (Katz 1987 : 292–267, M. Weinreich 1980 : 187–197). When an Estonian Jew says *levaje* ‘funeral’, it is clear, that a Jewish funeral is meant: *kui oli levaje, noh, inimene surnud, siis toodi midagi ümmargust, muna näiteks, et elu jätkuks* ‘when there was a (Jewish) funeral — that is, when somebody died, they used to bring something round, an egg for example, so that life may continue’. Also descriptive and emotional markers are often borrowed (the phenomena are also common among Jews in Russia — Russian monolinguals, see Verschik 1995: 406): *šmontses* ‘rubbish’, *ruex veis vos* ‘devil knows what’, *blote* ‘destruction, damage’: *ärgu niisugust šmontses enam toogu* ‘he should not bring such kind of rubbish anymore’; *see oli ilus koht, aga vene sõjavägi tegi sellest ju blote* (< Yiddish *maxn blote* ‘to damage’) ‘it used to be a nice place but the Russian Army destroyed it’.

Translation of idiomatic expressions from Yiddish into Estonian and vice versa is very common. Such idioms sometimes remain unintelligible to non-Jewish Estonian monolinguals, or are understood in a different way because Estonian may have an idiom consisting of the same components but with another meaning: *nemen zix in kop* means in Yiddish 'to worry about something' while Estonian *endale pähe võtma* (exactly the same components, lit. 'to take in one's head') means 'to get something into one's head'. There are other examples of Yiddish idioms translated into Estonian: *ma tean väga < ix veis zeier* 'how should I know', lit. 'I know very much'; *pähe ronima < krixn oifn kop* 'to oppress, to exploit', lit. 'to climb on one's head', cf. Standard Estonian *pähe istuma* with the same meaning, lit. 'to sit down on one's head'. Estonian idioms in Yiddish: *haltn dem kind* 'to baby-sit' < Estonian *last hoidma*, lit. 'to keep/guard a child'; *forn afn land* 'to go to the country' < Estonian *maale sõitma*, lit. 'to go to the land' etc. It can be suggested that there are at least two varieties of Estonian: one for the in-group use and the other for use with Estonian monolinguals.

## 7. To integrate or not to integrate

The reason why one loan is integrated and another is not cannot be explained by linguistic factors only. The problem of integration of Estonian loans into Yiddish and Yiddish loans into Estonian has not received any study at all. It is clear that it is hard to integrate Yiddish loans morphologically since Estonian has a highly developed system of declination and conjugation types. Though it is always possible to add *-i* in Genitive and treat a loan as any foreign word in Estonian, it is not done regularly: *teen teiglax* 'I make *teiglax*' (no case marker). The lexical item *tsimes* 'kind of carrot stew' is sometimes integrated, sometimes not.

There are no obstacles for integration of Estonian loans into Yiddish if a loanword's stem ends with *-a* or *-e*: *kaalikas* 'turnip', stem *kaalika-* > *ka:like* (cf. Ukrainian *bulba* > Yiddish *bulbe* 'potato'). Such loans belong to feminine gender in Yiddish. Verbs are borrowed extremely seldom, only if the stem ends with *-e*: *er iz getulet* 'he came', < *tulema* 'to come', stem *tule-*; *a meser iz aropgelangen* 'a knife fell down', < *langema* 'to fall', stem *lange-*.

However, the rule *-a > -e* does not work in all cases: some loans from Estonian ending with *-a* remain so: *ix gei nit in kaubamaja* 'I don't go to the department-store' (< Estonian *kaubamaja* 'department-store'); *er flegt esn in sö:kla* 'he used to eat in a canteen' (< Estonian *söökla* 'canteen').

## 8. Contact phenomena in morphology

The loss of neuter gender is a distinctive feature of NEY. It influences the use of articles and declination of adjectives (Mark 1951 : 433–465, Jacobs 1990). It is likely that contact with Estonian, a language where the categories of article and gender do not exist, stimulates changes in the use of article and adjective declination.

Classification of Estonian loans according to genders often poses a problem. A general tendency is to treat all nouns which end with a vowel as feminine and consonant-

ending nouns as masculine. However, sometimes any article is omitted (also indefinite article): *in Tartu Ülikool hot zix gebildet üliõpilasedustus* 'a representative body of the students was organized in the University of Tartu'. Any article can be omitted not only before Estonian loans but also in the case of indigenous Yiddish lexicon (first of all in the so-called 'empty' category where morphological or semantic criteria for gender-assignment are lacking): *nox milxome* 'after the war'. Inconsistency in gender use can be registered in the speech of the same informant: *main mame štamt fun a idiše štot* 'my mother comes from a Jewish city' (indefinite article, feminine noun, Objective case, adjective ending *-e*), cf. *Valga iz geven klein štot* 'Valga was a small town' in the same conversation (no article, no adjective ending, gender assignment unclear); *avekforn hobn mir nit bavi:zn, vail špeter iz gekumen der kri:g* 'we did not have time to leave because later the war started' (masculine definite article, masculine noun, nominative case), cf. *in tsait fun di kri:g* 'during the war' (preposition, feminine definite article, feminine noun, objective case).

## 9. Code-switching

Code-switching is the most usual way of linguistic behavior in the community. According to the definition given by C. Pfaff (1997: 344), code-switching is "the use of more than one linguistic variety (language or dialect) by a single speaker in the course of a single conversation".

In this area there is a great variety of approaches, models of code-switching, interpretations etc., so that it seems to us that the following claim concerning code-switching research is appropriate: "...one may well ask whether code-switching researchers are exploring different parts of the same elephant or different elephants or different species altogether?" (Pfaff 1997: 340).

One of the central issues is the problem of code-switching constraints. In her now classical work Poplack (1980) proposed the following constraints: the free morpheme constraint (a switch does not occur between two bound morphemes) and equivalence constraint (code-switching occurs at points where juxtaposition of two languages does not violate syntactical rules of either language). However, there is some counter-evidence to the universality of these constraints, for instance, Boeschoten and Verhoeven (1985, quoted from Romaine 1989: 118) in their discussion of Dutch-Turkish code-switching demonstrate the clash between Dutch prepositions and Turkish postpositions. As it will be discussed below, in our data on Yiddish-Estonian code-switching such examples where the equivalence constraint is violated, are not unusual (Yiddish is a prepositional and Estonian is pre- and postpositional language).

Another intriguing question is that of so-called code-switching grammar, e.g. whether there is a special grammar of code-switching which differs from two separate grammars of the languages involved.

A new model of code-switching or a theoretical solution of these problems is not the goal of the present paper; rather, we assume that Yiddish-Estonian and Estonian-Yiddish code-switching can provide some useful data for the general discussion.

Let us consider the following examples of switches from Yiddish to Estonian (the slash shows the point of code-switching):



(1) *er iz gegangen / pööningule* 'he went / to the attic'; (2) *der unteršeid tsvišn tsvei erakonnad* 'the difference between (the) two / parties'. In (1) code-switching does not violate the equivalence constraint. In Yiddish there would be a prepositional phrase *er iz gegangen / oifn boidem*, in Estonian the noun has Allative case marker *-le*: *ta läks / pööningule*. However, (2) is a more complicated case which requires explanation of some contrasting points in Yiddish and in Estonian grammar.

In Yiddish, all prepositions require the Dative case. Yiddish has no case markers and as a rule, nouns do not change, only the definite article in the singular and adjectives have different forms in different cases. In the plural, all forms in all cases are identical:

Nom	<i>di gute bixer</i> 'the good books'
Dat	<i>(mit) di gute bixer</i> 'with the good books'
Acc	<i>(ix ze) di gute bixer</i> 'I see the good books'

An introduction of a numeral does not affect the declination of nouns. Numerals except *ein* 'one' require nouns in plural: *ein bux* 'one book', *tsvei bixer* 'two books' (Nom pl.), *in di tsvei bixer* 'in the two books' (Dat pl. in the prepositional phrase).

Estonian has, on the contrary, a highly developed system of cases (14). If Yiddish is a prepositional language, then Estonian has both pre- and postpositions. Pre- or postposition can require different cases (most frequently Genitive or Partitive). An introduction of a numeral affects the case and number of a noun: all numerals except *üks* 'one' require Partitive singular: *üks inimene* 'one person' (Nom sg.), *kaks inimest* 'two persons' (Part sg.).

The postposition *vahel* 'between' requires Genitive: *erakondade vahel* 'between parties' (Gen pl.). The situation becomes more complicated when a numeral is inserted, so that a noun has to be in singular. The phrase 'between the two parties' in Estonian is as follows: *kahe erakonna vahel* (numeral in Gen sg. + noun in Gen sg. + postposition). If we compare it with the Yiddish phrase *tsvišn tsvei partejen* (preposition + numeral + noun in Dat pl.), we notice the clash between the word order.

The solution lies in the use of a compromise form (see Romaine 1989: 140–141). As it was shown, in Yiddish nouns in different cases are identical, i.e., as in our example: *(di tsvei) partejen* 'the two parties' (Nom pl.) = *(tsvišn tsvei) partejen* 'between two parties' (Dat pl.). Thus, according to the Yiddish model, Estonian noun in the Nominative plural is being used:

Yiddish	Estonian
<i>(tsvišn tsvei) partejen</i>	<i>erakonnad</i>
Nom pl. = Dat pl.	Nom pl.
↓	↙
Convergent form	
<i>tsvišn tsvei / erakonnad</i>	

Such a compromise form in Yiddish-Estonian code-switching is apparently the standard solution; examples of the kind are quite numerous in our data: *šul far di kurt-tummad* 'school for deaf and mute'; *di fraindin hot es gezen in di "Postimehed"* 'the friend saw it in the issues of *Postimees* (the name of the newspaper *Postimees* in plural)'. This fact can suggest the possibility of the 'third grammar', or, as Romaine (1989: 146–147) calls it, a convergent grammar. Such a grammar may contain some categories or constructions not used in separate monolingual grammars.

To conclude this discussion, we can add that in the speech community there are also cases of code-switching between three or even four languages (Yiddish-Estonian-Russian or Yiddish-Estonian Russian-German). It is often hard to decide what is the base language.

## 10. Toponyms

Although Jewish toponymics of Estonia has not been investigated, some patterns can be outlined. Unlike areas of long-time Jewish settlement (Poland, Lithuania etc.) there is no established tradition of Jewish toponyms of Estonia. In areas of traditional Jewish presence the whole system of parallel toponyms was developed, for instance: Polish *Wilna* / Lithuanian *Vilnius* / Yiddish *Vilne*; Polish *Lubartow* / Yiddish *Levartev*; German *Königsberg* / Yiddish *Kinsberg*; Byelorussian *Mohiljou* / Yiddish *Molev* etc (see for instance Schechter 1999: 21 for the list of parallel Yiddish / non-Yiddish toponyms). Since Estonia does not belong to the area of traditional Jewish presence, no system of Yiddish toponyms has ever arisen. In general, if new Yiddish terms are required, German could be one of the sources for neologisms. Analogically, in this case German traditional toponyms provided a solution: cf. Estonian *Tallinn* / German *Rewal* / Yiddish *Reval*, Estonian *Tartu* / German *Dorpat* / Yiddish *Dorpat*, though the use of these toponyms in Yiddish was never standardized (on multilingual toponymics in Estonia see Jansen and Saari 1999: 245–248).

The change to this pattern occurred probably in the 1920s after Estonian had become the official language and more spread between minorities than previously. As a result of wide-spread Yiddish-Estonian bilingualism, on one hand, and, since local Yiddish-language press was relatively insignificant, the lack of standardization in Yiddish-language toponyms of Estonia, on the other, Estonian toponyms came to be used side by side: *Tallinn* and *Reval* (German *Rewal*), *Tartu* and *Dorpat* (German *Dorpat*), *Haapsalu* and *Hapsal* (German *Hapsal*), *Pärnu* and *Pernau* (German *Pernau*) etc. Today only few of traditional German toponyms are used by Yiddish-speakers: nobody uses *Reval* or *Wesenberg* (respectively *Tallinn* and *Rakvere*), but, interestingly, *Dorpat* is still used alongside with *Tartu*.

## 11. Conclusions

Despite their short history, Yiddish-Estonian language contacts deserve to be studied further. For instance, the study of code-switching between the two languages can provide valuable data for the general discussion in the field. In morphology the mutual influence is minimal and asymmetrical (lexical borrowings from Estonian affect gender assignment and article use). The existence of two different varieties of Estonian — one for in-group use with the Jews and the other for use with Estonian monolinguals — could be important for the research of ‘Non-Jewish Jewish languages’, i.e. non-Jewish languages used by Jews (see Fishman 1985, Gold 1981, 1985).

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V

Mitmekeelsus kui juudi kogukonna elu norm  
(Multilingualism as a norm in a Jewish community's life).  
*Keel ja Kirjandus*, 1995, nr 6, 403–406 (in Estonian).

# Mitmekeelsus kui juudi kogukonna elu norm

ANNA VERSCHIK

Eelkõige võime esitada küsimuse: kui mitu juudi keelt (peale heebrea) on üldse olemas? Sellele on raske täpselt vastata, sest diasporaas on juudi kõnekeel praktiliselt igal asukohamaal. Kõnekeeled on tekkinud vastava asukohamaa keele alusel, kuid neis on tugevad heebrea sagedad nii sõnavaras kui ka morfoloogias ja süntaksis. Kõige tuntumad juudi keeled on jidiš ja ladino (ehk espanjool ehk džudezmo), kuid peale nende võime nimetada veel mitut keelt:<sup>1</sup> 1) laaz — tugevalt hebraiseeritud ladina keele variant, mida kõneldi Põhja-Prantsusmaal (nimetus seotud kohanimeloga Lotring); 2) targumi keel — Kurdistani juutide keel, aramea keele variant (enne Teist maailmasõda umbes 20 000 kõnelejat); 3) javani keel — kreeka keele variant, mida kõnelesid juudid Kreekas, Balkanil, Lõuna-Itaalias; 4) džuhuuri e taadi keel — Aserbaidžaanis ja Dagestani juutide keel, kuulub iraani keelte rühma; 5) magrebi e ismaeli keel — Põhja-Aafrika juutide araabia keele murre; 6) buhaara e juudi-tadžiki keel — Kesk-Aasia juutide keel; 7) jahuudi e juudi-araabia keel — araabia keele murre, mida kõnelevad Jeemeni juudid; 8) aramea keel — heebrea keele sugulaskeel, laialt esindatud Talmudis ja rabiinlikus kirjanduses; 9) karaiimi keel — kuulub turki keelkonda, kõnelejaid on Türgis, Poolas, USA-s ja Leedus (eriti Trakai linnas).

Nagu näeme keelte loetelust, koosnevad kõik juudi keeled mitmest komponendist. Igat juudi keelt võib nimetada sulamkeeleks (*fusion language*), mis tekib mitmekeelsuse tulemusena. Sulami üheks koostisosaks on heebrea element, mis ei ole küll kvantitatiivselt kõige suurem, kuid kõige vanem ja tähtsam. Teiseks komponendiks on eelmise, kolmandaks praeguse asukohamaa keel. Teise komponendi roll on väga tähtis, ta peegeldab keele vahetuse järkjärgulisust.<sup>2</sup> Heebrea keel jäi uue kõnekeele kõrval raamatu-, liturgia-, kommentaaride, as-

jaajamis- ja kohtukeeleks. Seega kujunes välja olukord, kus diglossia muutus normiks. Võrreldes teiste juudi keeltega on jidiši saatus erinev. Omaette keeleks kujunes jidiš juba IX–X sajandil Reinimaa aladel. Jidišis on 70% germaani, 20% heebrea ja 10% slaavi sõnavara. Jidišist sai Euroopa juutide *lingua franca*. Enne Teist maailmasõda oli jidiš 12 miljoni juudi emakeel. On võimalik tuua näiteid, kus kõigi kolme allika — heebrea, germaani, slaavi — elementidele on kokku sulanud üheks sõnaks: *šlimazlnik* 'hädaline' = saksa *schlimm* 'halb' + heebrea *mazal* 'õnn' + slaavi tegijasufiks *-nik*. Alguses ei kasutatud jidišit kirjakeelena, erandiks vaid naiskirjandus, sest naistele polnud heebrea keele oskus kohustuslik. Kuid jidiš oli enamiku juutide tegelik emakeel; pole ime, et XVIII saj hakati kirjutama jidišis ka ilukirjandusteoseid, algas pikk võitlus nn jidišistide ja hebraistide vahel.

Juudid, kes suhtlesid kohalike elanikega, pidid oskama jidiši ja heebrea keele kõrval ka kohalikku keelt. Nii tekkis juutide kolmekeelsus, kusjuures igal keelel oli oma funktsioon: heebrea keel liturgia ja asjaajamise tarvis, jidiš kogukonnasiseks igapäevasuhtlemiseks, asukohamaa keel aga kohalike elanikega lävimiseks.

Koos juutide emantsipatsiooniga algas XIX saj algul assimilatsioon, mis kulges mait erinevalt. Assimileerunud juudid tahtsid olla nagu riigi kõik teisedki elanikud, aja jooksul muutusid nad ühekeelseks, näiteks Saksamaal või Prantsusmaal. Kuid siiski oli XX saj alguses valdav osa Euroopa juute vähemalt kakskeelne. Sajandivahetusel teravnes võitlus juudi rahvusliku arengu eri kontseptsioonide vahel, ka keeltevaheline võitlus oli sellega seotud. Sionistid nõudsid heebrea keele kõnekeelena taaselustamist. Kuigi nad ise olid jidiši kõnelejad, seostasid nad jidišit paguluse kui millegi kahetsus- ja häbiväärsega. Jidiš oli tõsine heebrea keele vastane, ta oleks võinud Palestiinas *lingua franca*ks saada. Jidišivastane kampaania oli kõikehõlmav, sionism ei tahtnud aktsepteerida diglossiat mitte mingil kujul. Teisel pool tek-

<sup>1</sup> M. We in re ich, History of the Yiddish Language. Chicago — London, 1980, lk 45—152.

<sup>2</sup> M. We in re ich, History of the Yiddish Language, lk 166.

kis jidišism kui sekulaarne natsionalism. Jidišistid mõistsid juutlust esmakordselt keele ja kultuuri kaudu nagu kõiki teisi rahvaid, mitte aga traditsioonilistest etnoreligioossetest terminitest lähtudes. Vasakpoolsed jidišistid olid heebrea kui usundikeele suhtes vaenulikud ja pidasid selle taaselustamist utopiaks. S. Dubnow, juudi kultuurautonoomia kontseptsiooni rajaja, arvas, et Juudi riigi loomine on positiivne, kuid ei lahenda kõikide juutide probleeme, sest sionistide unistustele vaatamata diasporaa ei kao. Tema valem oli: heebrea + jidiš + asukohamaa keel. Vaatame, kuidas arenes olukord eri riikides.

Eesti oli esimene riik, kus juudid said seaduslikult kultuurautonoomia (1926). Eesti juudid olid vähemalt kolmekeelsed (eesti, jidiš, vene), tihti lisandus ka saksa ja heebrea keele oskus. Nagu mujalgi Euroopas valitses Eestis lepitamatu vaen hebraistide ja jidišistide vahel. Eriti palju vaidlusi tekkis juudi kooli õppekeele üle (vt näiteks Undzer Veg 1929, nr 1). Jidišistid väitsid, et lapsed peavad õppima ainult emakeeles, s.o jidišis. Hebraistide hulgas oli levinud kaks seisukohta: 1) jidiš pole õige keel, vaid murak, žargon, vulgaarne ning primitiivne; 2) sionism võidab ja jidiš sureb välja kui geto ja paguluse keel. Kuid kumbki rühmitus ei olnud oma ühekeelsuse taotluses järjekindel. Lehitsedes jidišikeelseid perioodilisi väljaandeid, kohtame pidevalt vähemalt kakskeelseid reklaame. Artiklites võib kohata eesti laene, vene ja heebrea väljendeid. Jidiši ja heebrea keele võitlust õhutas Eestis ka tuntud juudi luuletaja, sionisti ja Iisraeli hümnisõnade autori Chaim Nachman Bialiku kõne "Juutide keeleküsimusest". Ta väitis, et heebrea keel on säilinud läbi aegade, samas niinimetatud juudi kõnekeeled aga hääbunud, et jidiš on oma rolli täitnud ja peab juudi Palestiina olemasolu ajastul välja surema. Kolmekeelsuse kohta ütles ta üsna teravalt: "On olemas dubnovistid ja folkistid (Dubnowi organiseeritud autonoomistide e *Folkspartei* liikmed), kes arvavad, et rahvas peab oskama kolme keelt: jidišit, heebrea keelt ja riigikeelt. Talmud jutustab, et Moosese ajal elas loom, ... kellel oli kaks selgroogu. Ma ei tea, mis loom see oli. Arheoloogid pole teda leidnud ja zooloogias teda ka ei esine.

See oli vaid ime, kahe selgrooga loom suri välja. Aga kolme selgrooga looma pole olnudki. Loodan, et heebrea keel jääb, nagu ta oli, juudi rahva ainsaks selgrooks".<sup>3</sup> Paradoksaalne on fakt, et selle kõne pidas Bialik jidišis.

Eesti vanad juudid on praegugi valdavalt kolmekeelsed, neid on u 1000 (Eestis elab u 3000 juuti, neist u 2000 on tulnud N. Liidust pärast 1940. aastat, nõukogude juudid on kõik assimileerunud, s.t venestunud). Heebrea keele oskus on Eesti juutide hulgas praegusel ajal väga vähe levinud, saksa keelel pole enam kunagist tähtsust, seega jäävad Eesti juutide keelteks eesti, jidiši ja vene keel. Koodivaheetus on nende kõne põhitunnuseks, üheainsa lause piires võime täheldada kõigi kolme keele elemente: "Na vsjaki slutšai, / in Tartu vet zain zejer heis, s'iz / Lõuna-Eesti" 'igaks juhuks, Tartus võib olla väga palav, see on Lõuna-Eesti'; "Ix hob nit kein koix tsu drukn / kutsekaarte / i vsjo" 'mul pole jõudu trükkida kutsekaarte ja kogu lugu'. Pideva koodivahetuse tõttu tekib kahemõttelisusi ja koomilisi situatsioone. Üks keelejuht tahtis öelda jidišis *kirjuta kava üles*. Ta otsustas kasutada eesti sõna *kava*. Jidiši foneetika reeglite järgi sõnalõpuline *a > e* (nt rahvusvaheline sõna *situatsie* 'situatsioon', *kale* 'pruut' < hbr *kallaa*, eesnimi *Leje* < *Lea* jne), nii et lause kõlas nõnda: "Šraib on di kave". Kuid sõna *kave* on jidišis juba olemas, see tähendab 'kohv', öeldud lause täpne tõlge oleks 'kirjuta kohv üles'. Eesti-jidiši-vene kolmekeelsus on levinud vanade ja keskealiste hulgas, Eesti juutide hulgas on noori väga vähe, enamik on emigreerinud USA-sse, Saksamaale ja Iisraeli.

Iisrael. Väliselt tundub, et hebraistide-sionistide unistus on täitunud: heebrea keel on taas saanud elavaks keeleks ja Iisraeli ametlikuks keeleks. Kuid Iisraeli ühiskonna ühekeelsus on vaid näiline. Praegusel nooremal põlvkonnal puudub emotsionaalne suhe oma emakeelega. Hoopis inglise keel muutub tänapäeva maailmas juutide *lingua franca*'ks. See ei tähenda, et heebrea keel on riigikeelena ohustatud, kuid inglise keele oskus on noortele prestiiži küsimus. Nagu märgib J. Fishman, "heebrea keelt ei kaitse kunagised emotsioonid.... Inglise keel

<sup>3</sup> Ch. N. Bialik, Špraxfrage bai jidn. — Tavei redes. Kaunas, lk 1—16.



ei ohusta Iisraeli, kuid juudi kakskeelsus jääb igapäevase elu laialt levinud nähtuseks".<sup>4</sup>

Peale selle leidub Iisraelis alati selliseid uusimmigrante, kes oskavad heebreakeelt puudulikult. Uusimmigrantide e repatriantide juurdevool on pidev, ja niikaua kui see jätkub, ei saa täituda sionistlik täieliku hebraiseerimise unistus. Iisraeli ühiskonna mitmekeelsuse tõestuseks olgu mainitud 1994. aasta suvel Tallinnas korraldatud Iisraeli filmide festivali, kus viiest filmist ei olnud ükski puhtalt heebreakeelne. Ühes filmis räägiti heebreakeele kõrval poola keelt ja jidišit, teine oli saksa juutidest ja saksa keelt kõlas rohkem kui heebreakeelt, kolmas film oli inglise- ja heebreakeelne, neljanda sündmustik arenes Iisraeli jidiši teatris (heebreakeele ja jidiši), viies oli Kuuepäevasest sõjast (kõneldi araabia, heebreakeele ja inglise keelt).

**USA.** Valdav osa Ameerika juutidest on keeleliselt assimileerunud, kuid jidiši mõju New Yorgi kõnekeelele on märkimisväärne. Sajandi alguses oli jidiš üks tähtsamaid immigrantide keeli, ameerika inglise keeles leidub suur hulk jidiši laene<sup>5</sup>: *shmaltzy* 'nõretav, sentimentaalne' < *šmalts* 'kanarasv'; *chutzpa* 'jultumus, nina' < *xutspe*; *mesnugga* 'hull, segane' < *mešuger*; *shlimazl* 'hädaline' < *šlimazl*; *to shmooze* 'lobisema, juttu ajama' < *šmuesn*; *to shmier* 'sodima' < *šmirn* 'määrima'. Võib rääkida ka jidiši-inglise segakeelest (*Yinglish*, irooniline nimetus *English-shminglish*). Segakeel tekkis siis, kui suur hulk jidiši kõnelejaid hakkas järk-järgult kasutama inglise keelt, kuid nende inglise keelt eristas normatiivsest keelest suur hulk tõlkelaene ja interferents, mis oli iseloomulik just jidiši kõnelejatele. Ameerikainglise fraseologismid nagu *I need it like a hole in the head* 'ma vajan seda nagu auku peas' (s.o. 'põrmugi ei vaja'); *go hit you head against the wall* 'mine (ja) peksta peaga vastu seinat' (vrd eesti väljendiga

*peaga vastu seinat / müüri jooksmat / tormama / peksmat*) on jidiši tõlkelaenuid — *ix darf dos vi a lox in kop; gei šlog zix kop in vant*.<sup>6</sup>

Pejoratiivse efekti saavutamiseks kasutatakse laialt eesliidet *shm-* (< jid *šm-*), mis asendab sõnaalgkonsonandi või eelneb algvokaalile; niisugune *shm-*algusega sõna järgneb sõna normaalkujule: *money-shmoney* 'raha või asi'; inglise-jidiši segakeele irooniline nimetus *English-shminglish*; vrd jid *libe-šmibe* 'armastus või asi'. Niisuguse segakeele tekkimise tähtsaks eelduseks on kõnelejate piisavalt suur arv.

**Venemaa.** Umbes samasugune protsess toimus Venemaal, kuigi põhjused on erinevad. Kui ortodoksne juudi elulaad lakkas eksisteerimast ja juudid said õiguse elada igal pool ilma eriloata, siirdus 1920-ndatel aastatel märgatav hulk jidiši kõnelejaid Venemaa suurtesse linnadesse, kus vene keele oskus osutus hädavajalikuks. Kuid tugev aktsent, jidišipärane lauseehitus, verbide ja eessõnade rektsioon ning palju juhulaene reetsid kõneleja päritolu. Olgu mainitud, et niinimetatud Odessa keel on läbi imibunud jidiši mõjust. Odessa või *blatnoi* (< jid *blat* 'korruptsioon') rahvalaulud on tegelikult juudi laulud, isegi kui nad on levinud vene keeles. Segakeelsed laulud on juudi rahvaluule tüüpiline nähtus, nt ungari-jidiši-heebreakeelne laulud. Leidub laule, kus vahelduvad erikeelsed salmid.<sup>7</sup>

Tuntud vene kirjanik Isaak Babel kirjutas oma "Odessa jutte" just jidiši-vene segakeeles. Formaalselt on need jutud venekeelsed, kuid laused on moodsustatud jidiši süntaksireeglite järgi: *tšto s etogo budet, Benja?*<sup>8</sup>, vrd jid *vos vet fun dem vern, Benje?*, vn kirjakeeles *tšto iz etogo võidet, Benja?* 'mis sellest saab, Benja?'. Praegu on vene juudid nõukogude juudi-vaenuliku poliitika tõttu täiesti assimileerunud, jidiši oskus piirdub 5—10 sõnaga. Kuid nendegagi võidakse võrdlemisi

<sup>4</sup> J. Fishman, Reversing Language Shift. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages. Multilingual Matters. Clevedon — Philadelphia — Adelaide, 1991, lk 309.

<sup>5</sup> J. Geipel, Mame Looshn. The Making of Yiddish. London — West Nyack, 1982, lk 59 j; L. Rosten, The Joy of Yiddish. New York — Toronto — London — Sydney, 1968, lk XII.

<sup>6</sup> L. Rosten, The Joy of Yiddish, lk XV.

<sup>7</sup> С. М. Гинзбург, П. С. Марек. Еврейские народные песни в России. Ст. Петербург, 1901, nr 118; *Folksongs in the East European Jewish Tradition from the Repertoire of Mariam Nirenberg*. Institute for Jewish Research. New York, YIVO Press, 1986 (kommentaaredega heliplaat).

<sup>8</sup> И. Бабель, Как это делалось в Одессе. Москва, 1990, lk 6.

edukalt opereerida, kui taotletakse koomilist efekti. Juhulaenud nagu *мелуха* 'värk' < jid *meluxe* 'riik, asutus, institutsioon', *мишпоха* 'perekond' < jid *mišpoxe*, *бебеху* 'kodinad, kraam' < jid *bebexes* esinevad sporaadiliselt venekeelsete juutide kõnes, rääkimata sõnadest, mis tähistavad vaid juutidele omaseid mõisteid, nagu *маца* 'hapnemata leib' < jid *matse*, hbr *matsaa*, *цумец* 'porgandihautise liik' < jid *tsimes* jne. Ka liide *šm-* on kasutusel, nagu Ameerika inglise kee-

les: *магазин-шмагазин* 'pood või asi'; *газета-шмазета* 'ajaleht või asi'. Vene-jidiši segakeel on tänapäevani uurimata nähtus.

Seega võime järeldada, et ühekeelsus on juutide puhul vaid näilikkus, illusioon. Juutluse etnoreligioosete, ideoloogiliste, filosoofiliste jm kriteeriumide kõrval paistab olevat võimalik lingvistilise kriteeriumi esitamine: juut on vähemalt kakskeelne isik, kusjuures vähemalt üks keeltest kuulub nn juudi keelte hulka.



Some Aspects of the Multilingualism of Estonian Jews. Hennoste, T. (ed.)  
*Estonian Sociolinguistics.*  
*International Journal of the Sociology of Language 139,*  
Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1999, 49–67.

# Some aspects of the multilingualism of Estonian Jews

ANNA VERSCHIK

## *Abstract*

*The topic of the present article is the socio-cultural history of Estonian Jews as well as main patterns of their linguistic behavior. This atypical Jewish community definitely deserves more scholarly attention than it has received. It is important to stress that not all Jews living in Estonia today are considered to be Estonian Jews. Only those who were born and/or whose socialization took place in independent Estonia (1918–1940) and their descendants are included in this group. Those who migrated to Estonia after 1940 belong socio-culturally and linguistically to a different community (Russian language and cultural orientation).*

*Estonian Jews are multilingual as a rule (Estonian, Yiddish, Russian, German); however, reasons for their multilingualism differ from those of a traditional Jewish community. In our case these reasons include: small size of the minority, high rate of urbanization, lack of strict orthodoxy, acculturation and modernization.*

*Yiddish dialect spoken in Estonia, or Estonian Yiddish, is highly valued by its speakers. The status of Yiddish among other co-territorial languages is discussed in this paper. Linguistic behavior is based largely on a high degree of linguistic awareness (speakers enjoy their multilingualism). However, the number of Yiddish speakers is constantly decreasing due to certain historical events (Soviet and Nazi occupation of Estonia, abolition of cultural autonomy, Soviet ethnic policy, etc). The possibilities of future developments — a shift to other languages, the emergence of a Yiddish-Estonian-Russian mixed variety, a new multilingualism of Yiddish-speaking immigrants — should all be taken into consideration.*

## **Introduction**

Although the Yiddish dialect in Estonia and its similarity to Kurland Yiddish have been mentioned by some researchers (Bin-Nun 1973: 98),

the dialect has never been described or studied systematically. There exists only one study of the contact between Yiddish and Estonian: in his book *Keelekontaktid* Ariste dedicates two pages to the Yiddish loans in Estonian (Ariste 1981: 158–159); in the same work he once mentions Estonian/Yiddish/Russian trilingualism (1981: 48). The aim of the present study is to analyze the tiny speech community in the contact situation, where typologically different languages — Yiddish, Estonian, Russian, German — are involved.

The difference between Estonian and Soviet (Russian-speaking) Jews is of great importance. By “Estonian Jews” I do not mean all Jews who live in Estonia today, but only those who were born and/or whose socialization took place in independent Estonia, as well as their descendants. The main features of Estonian Jews are the following: (1) multilingualism (including at least a passive knowledge of Yiddish and a substantial knowledge of Estonian); (2) national assertiveness (self-identification as Jews); (3) awareness and at least partial preservation of the Jewish tradition; (4) emphasis on the cultural-autonomy experience.

### **Historical background of Estonian Jews**

The Jewish community in Estonia was always considered to be a non-typical, marginal one (for a detailed history of Estonian Jews see Lane 1995: 3–16). There is some evidence that a few Jews could have settled in Estonia in the fourteenth century. During the Russian rule (1710–1917) Estonia did not belong to the Pale of Settlement. In 1820 there were only 36 Jewish residents; the community was organized in 1829. Since 1865, cantonists (Jews who had been conscripted to the Russian army in their childhood and had served 20 years) were allowed to settle in Estonia. The number of Jews kept increasing and reached 1,523 by 1918; in 1922 1,929 were registered and in 1934, 4,389 Jews (*Juudi* 1936: 9, 14). According to linguistic data, Jews migrated to Estonia mainly from Kurland and Lithuania. The Yiddish dialect of Estonia is a relatively young phenomenon that has developed on the basis of Kurland Yiddish.

In 1918 Estonia became an independent state for the first time in its history. The struggle of such a small people to become a nation helped to gain recognition for the similar needs of minorities: thus, in 1925 the right of every minority to cultural autonomy was enacted by law (for the detailed analysis of the law see Aun 1949: 240–245). Jews were free to organize schools, newspapers, and societies and were granted a right to secondary education in their mother tongue. As in other East European countries, a violent struggle between adherents of Yiddishism and Hebraism

took place in Estonia, sometimes accompanied by serious fightings (Nurmekund: personal communication). Despite optimistical claims made by the Hebraists, knowledge of Modern Hebrew was not widespread among the Estonian Jews, nor was knowledge of Classical Hebrew (*loshn-koidesh*) profound. There were no Hassidic or ultra-observant Jews, no tradition of studying in yeshivas, etc. Children who entered the Hebrew section of the Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn (there were two sets of classes, one with Yiddish and one with Hebrew as language of instruction) had to study in a totally foreign language. Estonian Jews were multilingual; they knew Yiddish, Estonian, German, and Russian.

After the occupation and annexation of Estonia by the Soviets in 1940, Jewish cultural autonomy was liquidated and all Jewish institutions — schools, clubs, organizations, ritual slaughterhouses, kosher shops — were forbidden. The group of approximately 20,000 people that was deported from Estonia to Siberia in 1941 by the Soviets included 500 Estonian Jews. After the beginning of the war between Germany and the USSR, some 3,000 of the Jews escaped to Russia; fewer than 1,000 stayed in Estonia and were killed by the Nazis. Out of 3,000 who had fled to Russia the majority returned after the end of World War II, yet their further life without a cultural and linguistical identity under Soviet rule led to the emigration of many younger people.

In the period 1945–1990 Russian-speaking, linguistically and culturally assimilated Jews from Russia, the Ukraine, and Moldova came to settle down in Estonia along with numerous Russians. One of the reasons for Jewish migration from Russia (especially in the 1950s and 1970s) was lack of official antisemitism in Estonia. However, the majority of Soviet Jews, or, as they are called by Estonian Jews, Union Jews (i.e. Jews from the USSR) associate themselves with Russia, the Russian language, and Russian culture. Many of them recognized or realized their Jewish identity only after 1988 when the Jewish Cultural Society, the first in the former Soviet Empire, was formed in Estonia.

The creation of the Jewish Cultural Society cannot be viewed separately from the context of the national liberation movement in Estonia — in 1988 the wish to restore independence was expressed aloud in the mass media and Estonian was proclaimed the official language and protected by law, while the right of each minority to develop its national culture in its national language was recognized (on the policy of Russification and the necessity to protect the Estonian language by law, see Rannut 1994: 179–208).

Since the liquidation of Jewish cultural autonomy in 1940 nobody had spoken about minorities' rights. In 1988, together with the general Estonian liberation movement many ethnic groups (Jews, Ukrainians,

Tatars, Armenians, Georgians, to name a few of them) felt a kind of national assertiveness and started to form national cultural societies, clubs, etc. The Jews in Estonia had had their experience of national self-government, school system, etc., which helped them in 1988. The first leader of the Society was Samuil Lazikin, at least a trilingual Estonian Jew, whose family had been living in Estonia for 150 years. He organized Hebrew language groups and periodically gave public lectures on Jewish customs, traditions, etc., in Estonian and in Russian. The Society published the monthly *Ha-Shakhar* in Estonian (appr. 500 copies) and in Russian (appr. 1,000 copies).

However, opinions concerning the current political issues varied within the Society: some Russian-speaking Jews implied that Estonian Jews, being a minority, want to speak Estonian and to govern, while they, Russian-speaking Jews, are a majority and real internationalists. The language problem and the attitude toward Estonian independence were the first manifestations of internal diversity. After Lazikin's emigration to Israel in 1990, the Russian Jew G. Gramberg was elected as leader. Since he is able to speak Estonian, it was thought that he would be suitable for both groups.

In 1990 the Jewish Gymnasium was reopened in its former building. However, the general policy of the Society became clearly anti-Estonian: it was decided that the language of instruction at the Jewish Gymnasium would be only Russian. The leaders stopped the publication of *Ha-Shakhar* in Estonian under the pretext that "everybody knows Russian anyway." The main topic of the remaining Russian version became antisemitism in general and the "antisemitism" of Estonian laws. According to the Estonian Citizenship Law, the main concept is continuity: thus, all who were Estonian citizens before 1940 and their descendants are Estonian citizens today; all others can obtain citizenship through naturalization. To become an Estonian citizen, one has to have lived in the country for at least two years and to pass a language test. Thus, the law is not based on racial or ethnic criteria; the accusations of antisemitism and general Estonianization of non-Estonians are absurd. The leaders of the Society made several official statements that did not help to create good relations with Estonians but, on the contrary, demonstrated hostility. Needless to say that many Estonian Jews felt rejected by the Society; many of my informants told that they do not take part in the Society's activities, celebrations, etc., because it is "a Russian club." The board, which consists of both Estonian and Russian (Soviet) Jews, tries to create an illusion of one Jewish people, Jewish solidarity in Estonia, etc.

The ideas of so-called "discrimination" of minorities and "anti-Jewish" policies in the Baltic states have been accepted even by scholars whose



subject is Jewish history and who are not experts on the “Baltic question.” In a recent collection of articles Gorlizki (1996: 449) dedicates one paragraph to Baltic Jewry, where he writes about Estonia, “The Jews in the Baltics have also suffered as an indirect result of the Baltic governments’ discriminatory policies towards their Russian minorities ... . Thus most of Estonia’s 5,000 Jews ... could not vote in the national elections of 1992.” First of all, there is no discrimination of Russian minorities; second, one cannot call Jews, or at least, all the Jews of Estonia “a Russian minority”; third, the number of Jews in Estonia is by no means 5,000; fourth, approximately 30–35 percent of the Jews of Estonia are Estonian citizens and were able to vote. Gorlizki refers to *The Jewish Chronicle* and to *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the last being a periodical remarkable for its anti-Estonian attitude. No sources written especially on Estonian history or published in Estonia are cited. However, there exists an informative article on Estonian Jewry by Lane (1995), and, in the same collection with Gorlizki’s paper one can find a detailed article on Estonian history and national policy written by the Estonian political scientists Kionka and Vetik (1996: 129–146).

Since 1993 the general policy of the Jewish Cultural Society has become more tolerant: the principal of the school, M. Beilinson, is trying to promote the teaching of Estonian; there is an attempt to gradually introduce Estonian as the language of instruction. Unfortunately, the teaching of Yiddish in the Jewish school has never been seriously discussed; in 1991 I had a conversation on the topic with the leader of the Society, whose answer was, “It is impractical. We teach Hebrew. Who needs Yiddish? Besides, the parents do not want it.” Today the number of Jews in Estonia is approximately 3,000, of which 1,000 are Estonian Jews. The important distinction between the two groups is based on self-identification and linguistic criteria: as stated in Diachkov (1992: 192–200), the Russian-speaking population is “not part and parcel of the local population in contrast to numerous ethnic minorities in Western countries ... it was partly de-ethnicized and many of them preferred to identify themselves with the ‘Soviet people.’” Estonian Jews are Estonian citizens, while Soviet Jews are not (with the minor exception of those who have passed the language test and become naturalized). Estonian Jews have their Jewish life experience from the past, while the Soviet Jews are highly assimilated in the linguistic and cultural sense. Estonian Jews clearly supported the Language Law and Estonian independence, while many Russian-speaking (Soviet) Jews did not differ in that respect from the numerous Russians; Estonian Jews are multilingual, while Soviet Jews are mainly Russian monolinguals. All my informants emphasized that there is a clear difference between the two groups. To speak today about

Jews in Estonia as a unified, homogeneous group means to create an illusion.

The difference between those groups can be easily overlooked by a researcher who obtains the data from Soviet censuses (like Haarman 1985: 151–176, who neglected the peculiarities of Baltic history). As was mentioned above, Estonian Jews are multilingual and speak or understand Yiddish. Unfortunately, the number of Yiddish speakers in Estonia has been decreasing progressively due to the emigration of young, nationally asserted Jews to Israel, the USA, and Germany (see Verschik 1995: 403–406).

### **Data and informants**

My linguistical data are based on interviews with and recordings of 19 informants (aged 30–91), born in Tallinn, Tartu, Võru, and Valga. The study of such a “marginal” Jewish community as that of Estonia can be relevant for research into sociolinguistical behavior and contacts between Yiddish and coterritorial languages (Estonian, Baltic German, Russian).

### **Estonian Yiddish among other dialects and languages**

In research in a multilingual community it should be taken into consideration that the status of different varieties — standard, nonstandard, sociolects, local varieties, etc. — is different in different speech communities. In the case of Estonian everybody can speak standard Estonian nowadays, yet there exist literature and poetry in dialects as well as a strong movement for the establishing of the South Estonian (Võru) standard and for using it as a language of instruction at schools in Võrumaa (see Pajusalu et al. in this issue). With Yiddish, the situation is very different: (1) Yiddish never has been and is not now an official language in any state; (2) Standard Yiddish is relatively young; (3) every speaker of Yiddish speaks a certain dialect; only a few can claim Standard Yiddish as their native variety; (4) contacts with standard Yiddish in Estonia are limited, even nonexistent for those informants who attended schools with a language of instruction other than Yiddish.

### *Estonian Yiddish and Standard Yiddish*

All the informants emphasized that they speak *undzer estniš/baltiš idiš* (which is quite close to Kurland Yiddish but, nevertheless, is not identical to it) and stress the difference between “our Baltic Yiddish” and

Lithuanian, Polish, and other Yiddish dialects. Though the majority of informants stated that they are aware of Standard Yiddish and have come across it (at school or when reading fiction), many of them are not able to identify the standard variety when it is spoken. During the meetings at the Yiddish Club I tried to speak Standard Yiddish, which seemed unusual to other participants and was labeled as “Polish Yiddish.” I explained that I was speaking Standard Yiddish. However, my statement caused some doubts: according to the common opinion “our” Yiddish and Standard Yiddish were identical, or, at least, the second was based on the first. Two patterns of linguistic behavior can be observed there: (1) identification of “our” variety with the standard language due to the high prestige of the first, and (2) inability to recognize other Yiddish dialects: all the other varieties are called “Lithuanian” or “Polish.” Kalmanovitsh (1926: 165) gives a similar example from Kurland Yiddish, where any other variety is called *ziameter jidiš* [Yiddish dialect of Žemaitija, part of Lithuania].

#### *Estonian Yiddish and other Yiddish dialects*

Most informants claimed that they had had no contact with other Yiddish dialects; only elderly informants reported some sporadic contact with Yiddish speakers from other areas (Bessarabia, the Ukraine, White Russia) during the evacuation to Russia. Among my informants nobody is able to speak any variety of Yiddish other than Estonian Yiddish. Only one woman, L.K. (b. 1922 in Tallinn), tried to assure me that speaking some other variety is not a matter of difficulty for her: “nu, vos iz, avade ix ken redn anders. Ven me zagt *o* onštót *a*, farvos ken ix eix nit zogn *o* onštót *a*?” ‘so what, sure I can speak other way. When one says *o* instead of *a*, why couldn’t I say *o* instead of *a* too?’ In fact, some varieties of Yiddish are so distant from each other that sometimes speakers of different dialects even have to choose another language for communication.

H.S. (b. 1919 in Tartu) said that she had become acquainted with her husband during the evacuation to Russia. Her husband’s mother tongue was the Bessarabian dialect of Yiddish, so they adopted Russian as their common language. At first, H.S. tried to speak Yiddish (her native variety) to her husband and her new relatives, but it led to many misunderstandings and comical situations: “Ix zog, tsum baišpil, az ix gei vašn di *dil*. Di kreive laxt: vos, vos geistu vašn? Ba ze *dil* batait mešugener” ‘for example, I say: I am going to wash the floor. The relative laughs: what, what are you going to wash? In their language *dil* means crazy’ (cf. northeastern Yiddish *dil* ‘floor’ and Southern Yiddish *dil* < *dul* < Hebrew *dul* ‘crazy’, which follows the general pattern *u* > *i* in Southern Yiddish).

*Standard Estonian and Estonian dialects*

All the informants have a good command of Standard Estonian: they learned it either at home or from neighborhood children. All the informants denied any knowledge of or any proficiency in any Estonian dialect. However, eight informants (all except one born in South Estonia) mentioned some contact with the dialects of South Estonia: in seven cases the Tartu, in five cases the Võru, and in one case the Setu dialect were mentioned. Self-reported data can be misleading — though no one considered himself or herself proficient in any dialect, five informants (all born in the 1920s in Tartu or living there permanently) speak Standard Estonian with some Tartu dialectal features. Two informants (one born in Tartu, the other in Valga) emphasized that they are fond of the Võru dialect and consider it beautiful.

*Russian*

For informants born between 1910 and 1940, Russian was a foreign language (except for those who were born in Narva, a city with a specific ethnic structure — see the example of M.M. below). Before 1930 instruction at the Tallinn Jewish Gymnasium was carried out in Russian and Hebrew (since 1930 in Yiddish and Hebrew). Almost all my informants mentioned that their parents had known some Russian, but after 1918 the status of that language changed radically and it was not so important as in the Russian Empire. According to the census of 1934, Russians constituted 92,000, or 8 percent of the entire population of Estonia (Rannut 1994: 195). In Tartu knowledge of Russian among Jews was less common than in Tallinn. All the informants born in the mentioned period learned Russian only during their stay during the evacuation. Their Russian is characterized by a high level of phonetic interference from Yiddish (absence of pre- and posttonic reduction, Yiddish intonation, etc.).

For informants born after 1940 knowledge of Russian became important due to changed political conditions and yet another alteration in the status of Estonian, Russian, and Yiddish. As for Yiddish, it maintained only the function of intragroup communication; the speakers were facing a problem: since Yiddish culture had become unavailable, they had to choose between the Russian and Estonian cultures. In the case of mixed marriages the shift occurred in favor of the language of the non-Jewish spouse (mainly Estonian); in other cases it was a conscious choice in favor of the Russian or Estonian future of the children. Even if the decision was made to send children to a Russian-language school, knowledge of

Estonian was considered inevitable among Estonian Jews, and children spent some time in an Estonian nursery school. The reverse version (Russian kindergarten and Estonian high school) was also used.

It is significant to stress that even in cases of almost total linguistic assimilation the identity of Estonian Jews is based on language: four informants out of five whose speaking abilities in Yiddish were ranged between “can manage” and “not at all” claimed Yiddish as their mother tongue. The most typical attitude among them was the following: Estonian (Russian) is the language of our home, education, friends, but we are Jews and Yiddish is our mother tongue. From this example one can see the ambiguity of the term “mother tongue” (Skutnabb-Kangas 1984: 12–18).

### *German*

Although after World War II German lost its former status in society, one cannot ignore it in the study of Estonian Jews. Thirteen out of the 19 informants mentioned their high level of proficiency in German; one informant considered it her mother tongue (a rather untypical claim, as we can see from the above-mentioned examples). Seven informants said that German was the first language they had ever learned (in some cases, along with Yiddish or Estonian). According to statistics (*Juudi* 1936: 89, Table 35), 26 Jewish children out of 126 in Tallinn and 32 out of 35 in Pärnu attended high schools with German as the language of instruction. Among the post-World War II generation a good command of German is not so frequent as it used to be in the past; at the same time, some informants from the older generation continue to speak/write letters in German to some of their friends.

### *Classical Hebrew (loshn-koidesh)*

Due to certain historical circumstances (absence of strict observancy, yeshiva traditions, small size of the community, extensive knowledge of coterritorial languages, social structure of Estonian Jewry — and, last but not least, being outside of the Pale) Hebrew never played such a role as in traditional East European Jewish communities. Jewish boys were taught Hebrew and prayers, but the learning of Torah was never an exclusive occupation. The Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn and the Jewish secondary school in Tartu were secular institutions, where Modern Hebrew was taught.

*Modern Hebrew*

With the rise of Zionism the idea of Hebrew as *the* Jewish language also found its adherents in Estonia; the Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn had two sets of classes: in Yiddish and in Hebrew. Estonian Jewry was not spared from the struggle between Yiddishists and Hebraists, so common everywhere in Eastern Europe. The main argument of Yiddishists was that children were taught in a completely foreign language, which contradicts the basic rules of pedagogical science (numerous arguments can be found in the Yiddish newspapers that were published in Estonia in 1920–1940; for example, *Undzer Veg*, April 1929; *IKUF*, March 1938; *Undzer Vort*, May 1937; etc.). Two informants (Siima S., b. 1920 in Tartu and Liia K., b. 1922 in Tallinn) graduated from the Hebrew class of the Gymnasium in Tallinn; however, they are not able to speak or read Hebrew. Hebrew was not mentioned by any informants even as a foreign language that they know. Thus, we can exclude Hebrew from the present study.

*Shift from Yiddish to other languages*

All the informants answered positively my question if there are two separate groups of Jews in Estonia today (Estonian Jews and so-called *Liidu juudid*, lit. ‘Union Jews’, i.e. Jews from the Soviet Union who settled down in Estonia after 1940) and stressed the difference of the two identities. Ita L. (born in Võru in 1927) managed to illustrate it in the clearest way by saying, “Estonian Jews are never ashamed of Yiddish, they are not afraid of speaking Yiddish in a public place, while Russian Jews have already forgotten the language. For them Yiddish is a jargon, provincial and vulgar.” Saara S. (born in Tallinn in 1920) says, “in di tsait fun di evakuatsioon in Rusland flegn rusiše idn fregn mir: zatsem vō govoritje na etom mjortvom jazōke? Far zei iz idiš geštorbn, heist es” ‘during the evacuation in Russia Russian Jews used to ask me: [NB! code-switching to Russian] why do you keep speaking this dead language? [switch back into Yiddish] For them Yiddish is dead, you see’.

The major shift from Yiddish to Estonian/Russian took place in the period 1940–1950 as a result of physical, demographic, and cultural dislocations of the Jewish population in Estonia: (1) deportation of 500 Jews in 1941 to Siberia by the Soviet authorities; (2) liquidation of Jewish Cultural autonomy and all Jewish organizations in Estonia in 1940; prohibition of Hebrew and any kind of Jewish education; (4) the Nazi occupation and the Holocaust; (3) evacuation of 3,000 Estonian Jews

to Russia during World War II. However, all this has not destroyed the self-identification of the Estonian Jews. According to Fishman's *general typology of threatened status* (Fishman 1991: 91) the contemporary situation with Yiddish corresponds to stage 7 on the GIDS (graded intergenerational disruption scale): most users are a socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population, but they are beyond child-bearing age.

In Russia many parents were confronted with the new reality: the lack of Yiddish or Jewish schools in Russia; so they had no choice but to send their children to Russian-language schools. Informants born in 1925 and later had to begin or continue their education in Russian, which was a totally unknown language for most of them, especially for those whose place of birth was Tartu, Rakvere, Viljandi, and other Estonian cities and towns with no considerable Russian-speaking populations. After their return to Estonia in 1944–1945 they continued their secondary education in Russian or in Estonian.

At that time Yiddish had already been pushed out of its official and cultural domains (education, press, theater) and turned into a group language with a very narrow sphere of use. The number of active Yiddish speakers born after 1940 is extremely small; several explanations of the fact can be proposed: (1) disruption of normal intergenerational continuity: parents failed to or deliberately did not teach/speak Yiddish to their children. When asked, "Why did you not speak Yiddish to your child?" some informants answered, our children had to speak at least two languages, Estonian and Russian, three languages would have been too much. Another answer, offered mainly by those informants whose spouse is not Jewish was as follows: "We wanted our child to be like others" or "We did not speak Yiddish at home at all because my husband/wife is non-Jewish and cannot speak the language." (2) Emigration of young Estonian Jews (in some cases even active Yiddish speakers) to Israel, the USA, Germany, etc., motivated either by support of Zionism or simply by a wish to marry somebody Jewish and to live among Jews, to follow Jewish traditions, etc.

Fishman (1991: 43) distinguishes four media of possible language shift: speaking, reading, writing, understanding, and stresses the importance of distinction between them. Though the ability to speak Yiddish among the younger generation has decreased, the ability to understand Yiddish has remained in cases where at least one generation (parents or grandparents) speaks Yiddish constantly in the presence of younger people. The use of Yiddish as a secret language of parents and grandparents is nothing unusual in many Jewish families; due to (or despite) this fact, younger people learn at least to understand elementary Yiddish. Three informants

referred to their children's knowledge of Yiddish by saying, *Reidn reidn zei nit, ober in idiš me ken zei nit farkeifn*, which means 'as for speaking, they don't speak, but one cannot sell them away in Yiddish'.

Practically all who can read and write Yiddish only a little or cannot do it at all were born in the middle of the 1930s, that is, they could not attend Jewish schools due to historical and political circumstances; only one informant, born in Tallinn in 1923, cannot write or read Yiddish at all because she had graduated from a school where the language of instruction was German.

### *Factors affecting language choice*

The choice to use or not to use a certain language is often dictated not only by the sociocultural setting but also by the speaker's proficiency in the four domains (understanding, speaking, reading, writing). As one can clearly see from Table 1 not all the informants who speak Yiddish as a native language are able to read or to write in it.

*Example.* Ruth L. (b. 1935 in Tartu) described her parents' language skills: her mother, M.M., was born in Narva in 1913, a city on the Estonian–Russian border with a substantial number of Russians (appr. 25–30% at that time) and Russian speakers. Her mother attended a Russian Gymnasium because in the city there was no Jewish high school

Table 1. *The informants' skills in the four media*

	Perfect	Sufficient	A little	Not at all
<b>Yiddish</b>				
understanding	18	1	–	–
speaking	14	2	2	1
reading	10	2	1	6
writing	9	2	2	7
<b>Estonian</b>				
understanding	19	–	–	–
speaking	18	1	–	–
reading	19	–	–	–
writing	17	2	–	–
<b>Russian</b>				
understanding	18	1	–	–
speaking	15	4	–	–
reading	17	1	1	–
writing	8	6	4	1



(either in Hebrew or in Yiddish), and she studied German as a foreign language. At home Yiddish, Russian, and Estonian were spoken. Her Russian was free from any Yiddish accent. M.M.'s husband, A.M., was born in Tartu in 1913 and did not know a word of Russian (quite typical of Tartu at that time). At home German was spoken. He learned Estonian in his childhood from house servants and from neighbors and entered an Estonian Gymnasium. He was fluent in Yiddish, too. Later A.M. entered the Tartu Jewish School (in Yiddish) and after graduation enrolled in the University of Tartu, where the language of instruction was Estonian. He spoke Estonian and German with his wife and wrote her letters in Estonian because she was not very fluent in spoken Yiddish and could not write it at all.

In a number of cases the decision to speak or not to speak Yiddish is often motivated by the age of the speaker: elderly people are usually addressed in Yiddish, even if the participants switch later to another language, many Yiddish words and phrases are regularly inserted. The ability of the younger generation (born after 1950) to speak Yiddish fluently is considered somewhat unusual. Yet, inserting some Yiddish words, expressions, and idioms, even by nonspeakers of Yiddish, is a part of the norm within the community. Older people are usually addressed by middle-aged people in Yiddish, or the switch into Yiddish occurs in the initial stage of a conversation.

*Example.* Nata R. (born 1936) calls a friend of her aunt, Mirjam A. (born in 1923): "Hallo! Tere õhtust, proua A. Pole ammu rääkinud ... Vi geit es aix? ... Minna hot mir šoin lang nit gešribn" [the conversation goes on in Yiddish] 'Hallo! Good evening, Mrs. A. We have not talked for a while ... How are you? ... Minna has not written me for a long time'.

### **Borrowing**

It is evident that Yiddish monolingualism has always been and is impossible in Estonia due to the small size of the Jewish community: multilingualism is an essential characteristic feature of Estonian Jews. As is generally believed, multilingualism can never mean equilingualism because each language acquires its set of functions, and there is no need to have several languages serving precisely the same function.

#### *Borrowing into Yiddish*

Yiddish functions as a group language, and it lacks many terms that are present in languages with official status (German, Russian and German,

Estonian [1918–1940], Russian [1940–1989], Estonian [since 1989]): terms connected with the state, authorities, power; terms referring to science and the legal system; names of plants (mainly borrowed from Estonian); names of schools, institutions, sports terms, etc. However, “lacks” does not mean “nonexistent in Standard Yiddish or in other dialects,” but rather “unknown to the Jews in Estonia.” Plenty of borrowings, nonce borrowings, and code-switches are caused by the necessity to refer to the above-mentioned topics: “er hot gearbet in Sovet Ministrov ergets” ‘he worked somewhere in the Council of Ministers’; “Ix bin gegangen in Julgeoleku Arhiiv, genumen zain toimik” ‘I went to the Security Archive [KGB], I took his file’; “dortn iz nit geven kein venemeelsed kommunistid” ‘there weren’t any pro-Russian communists’; “zi iz geven in Makabi un zi iz geven a korvpallimeister ‘She was in Maccabi and she was a champion in basketball’; “bai Kommer iz zi riiklik süüdistaja” ‘she is the Public Prosecutor at Kommer’s trial’.

Some borrowed terms were commonly accepted among Jews and appeared even in local Jewish periodicals (1918–1940): “valn in Riigikogu” ‘the elections of Riigikogu, Estonian parliament’ (*Juudi* 1936: 10); “di azoigerufene ‘keskkool’” ‘so-called high school’ (*Bjuleten* 1936: 6); “kamp tsviŝn di natsionale estn un di ‘kadaka saksad’” ‘fight between the Estonian nationalists and the Germanized Estonians’ (*Undzer Vort* 1937: 4). Very often Estonian borrowings were not transliterated with Yiddish characters but inserted in the original orthography.

### *Borrowing from Yiddish*

The necessity to distinguish between what is Jewish and non-Jewish is widely reflected in the Yiddish language (see Weinreich 1980: 188–197; Katz 1987: 262–267). Borrowings from Yiddish can be divided into two categories: (1) terms that are lacking in other languages, usually connected with the Jewish tradition and way of life (*šalaxmones* ‘present given on Purim’; *bar-mitsve* ‘ceremony held in a synagogue when a boy reaches the age of 13, symbolizes becoming an adult, a member of the congregation’) and (2) terms that signify the difference between Jewish and non-Jewish (*dajen* ‘rabbinical judge’ vs. *rixter*; *kaše* ‘question concerning Jewish law’ vs. *frage* ‘question’). Even those who claim not to be fluent in Yiddish constantly use some Yiddish words and expressions for the above-mentioned purposes: “Ma soovin sulle veel kord mazl-tov” ‘I wish you once more mazl-tov’, ‘I congratulate you once more’; “Peisaxi ajal, noh, kui küsitakse need kašed” ‘on Passover, er, when those questions [the traditional four questions] are asked’; “siis ma teen tsimes ja kneidlax” ‘then I make *zimmes* and *kneidlach* [names of traditional Jewish meals]’.

Another reason for borrowing from Yiddish is the wish to make one's speech more expressive. Many descriptive and expressive Yiddish words are already a part of American English (Geipel 1982: 59 ff.; Rosten 1968: xii); many Yiddish words of the same kind are frequent in the speech of Russian Jews who are Russian monolinguals (for more details see Verschik 1995: 405–406). There are some examples of such borrowing in our data: "kui oli levaje — noh, inimene surnud, siis toodi midagi ümmargust, muna, et elu jätkuks, aga torte ja niisugust šmontses — ei!" 'when there was a [Jewish] funeral — er, a person is dead, then something rounded was brought, an egg, so that life goes on, but cakes and such rubbish — no!'

### **Code-switching**

Grosjean (1982: 145) defines code-switching as the alternative use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation. It is a result of conscious or unconscious language choice. A monolingual speaker can choose between styles within one language, while a bilingual's decision to speak to another bilingual involves a two-stage choice: the choice of language and the choice whether to code-switch or not. Diglossia could be referred to as a case of restricted language choice.

Code-switching occurs when the degree of multilingualism is high. However, massive multilingualism and frequent code-switching do not necessarily mean language death (Romaine 1989: 111). As we have pointed out above, a Yiddish-speaking community cannot be entirely monolingual: in traditionalist communities there existed Hebrew–Yiddish diglossia and some knowledge of a coterritorial language, and in such a country as Estonia the small, relatively assimilated Jewish minority had to be multilingual. In both cases multilingualism was stable; multilingualism and code-switching alone, without consideration of extralinguistic factors (language policy, attitudes toward minorities, current political events, prestige of one or another variety, size of the minority, etc.) cannot serve as evidence of language death.

Code-switching between Yiddish, Estonian, and Russian is a subject for separate research; we mention here only that code-switching is a norm in the speech community and occurs constantly in informal situations.

### **Possible development of the multilingual situation**

There are three possible ways of further development: (1) gradual shift from trilingualism to bi- or monolingualism in the next generation

(decline of Yiddish); (2) a new multilingualism involving other languages due to the emigration of younger Estonian Jews to the USA, Israel, Germany, and Holland; (3) formation of a new Jewish language — a mixed (fusion) language with Yiddish, Estonian, and Russian components.

It is necessary to mention that one possibility does not exclude another; all three developments can take place simultaneously. A partial shift from Yiddish/Estonian/Russian trilingualism (or, in some cases, from Yiddish/Estonian/Russian/German quaterlingualism) has undoubtedly occurred in the past 40 years due to certain political and social events. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to ascribe the decline of Yiddish to multilingualism and code-switching only. It is true that a society does not need two or more languages for exactly identical functions, but a partial overlapping of functions is not impossible. There is a tendency to translate idioms from one language into another, such as Yiddish “ix veis zeier” ‘you think, I know?’ into Russian “ja znaju otšenj” and into Estonian “ma tean väga”; such translated idioms are not always understandable to monolingual speakers but are often used by the informants; there is no practical reason to have the set of all idioms in all three languages; however, the speakers wish to have all the possibilities at their disposal, though it might seem superfluous. Economy and superfluousness are two tendencies in the development of any language; we agree with Romaine (1989: 39), who claims that “although the existence of bilingualism, diglossia and code-switching are ... often cited as factors leading to language death, in some cases code-switching and diglossia are positive factors in maintaining bilingualism.”

The linguistic fate of Yiddish speakers who are emigrants to other countries could be relevant to the research of language shift/maintenance. How many speakers continue to speak Yiddish in their new countries? How quickly will they learn a new coterritorial language, and do they teach their children the language of their former country of residence? What are the effects of a new contact situation on the speakers’ previous languages? How many Yiddish/Estonian bilinguals are there in Israel, the USA, Germany? Today we have no answers to those questions.

As demonstrated above, the use of two or three different languages within one sentence is a norm in linguistic behavior. The high rate of metalinguistic commentaries like “kak govorjat po-russki” ‘as they say it in Russian’, “nagu eestlane ütleb” ‘as Estonians say’, “oif jidiš zogt men” ‘they say in Yiddish’ is evidence of conscious alternation of languages. Some informants suggested the term “mixed language” to characterize their constant code-switching: Chene S. (born in 1919 in Tartu) complained that it was difficult for her to answer the question, “Which

language do you speak at home at present?" because she was accustomed to constantly using Yiddish, Russian, and Estonian with her children. Lea M. (born 1920 in Tartu) said that she and her Jewish friends switch automatically from Yiddish to Estonian and back. Ita S. (born 1921 in Valga) mentioned that she speaks Estonian, Yiddish, and Russian with the same people. Malke V. (born 1920 in Tartu) described her speech manner (when speaking to Estonian Jews), "We speak a jumble of Yiddish and Estonian and add some Russian words." Ariel L. (born 1963 in Tallinn) tried to assure me that he does not switch from language to language; however, some time later he told me that he switches to Yiddish with his mother when they do not want their colleagues to understand them (both work in the same hospital).

Sentences like "na vsjaki slutšai, in Tartu vet zain zeier heis, s'iz Lōuna-Eesti" 'in any case [R], it will be very hot in Tartu, it is [Y] South Estonia [E]'; "zi vil forn nox Taitšland i vsjo, ajab kärbseid pähe, nagu eesti keeles öeldakse" 'she wants to go to Germany [Y] and that's it [R], she tries to fool people, as they say it in Estonian [E]' are a norm of informal conversation among Estonian Jews. Established or nonce loans have been created following the patterns of fusion that are so characteristic of Yiddish: one can register forms like *kalike* 'turnip' < Estonian *kaalikas*, genitive *kaalika*, final *-a* > *-e* according to the rules of integration into Yiddish (cf. numerous Yiddish words of Slavic origin such as *bulbe* 'potato', *katsške* 'duck'; Semitic words like *matone* 'present', *kavone* 'intention') or *suskes* 'slippers' < Estonian *suss* + Russian *-ki* (the final consonant and plural nominative ending) modified into *-ke* + Yiddish plural ending *-s*. The rise of new Jewish languages is analyzed in detail in Fishman (1985: 3–21) where a "Jewish" language is defined as "any language that is phonologically, morpho-syntactically, lexico-semantically or orthographically different from that of non-Jewish sociocultural networks and that has some demonstrably unique function in the role-repertoire of a Jewish socio-cultural network, which function is not normatively present in the role-repertoire of non-Jews and/or not normatively discharged via varieties identical with those utilized by non-Jews." Yiddish-colored English, or Yinglish, or English-shminglish, as well as other Jewish English languages have been studied relatively well (for instance Gold 1985: 280–298; Geipel 1982: 59 ff; Rayfield 1972). There exists a mixed variety of Russian and Yiddish that has never been an object of systematic research (for a more detailed characterization see Verschik 1995: 405–406). The blend of Estonian, Yiddish, and Russian, or the mixed language of the Estonian Jews, has not developed its norms as yet because the variety is relatively young. The question is, however, whether such a set of norms would ever be established due to the small

number of speakers (less than 1,000) and due to the lack/emigration of younger speakers. The number of speakers alone cannot serve as a stability criterium for a variety (Romaine 1989: 41); rather, the other one — absence of normal intergenerational transmission — is crucial for maintenance. Nevertheless, the mixed language/the new Jewish language based on Yiddish, Estonian, and Russian components should be taken under serious consideration as a future possibility for the Jewish speech community in Estonia.

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The Yiddish Language in Estonia: Past and Present.  
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## THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE IN ESTONIA: PAST AND PRESENT

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Estonia belonged in the past, and, to some extent, still belongs to an imaginary Yiddishland -- a vast area of Europe where Yiddish was spoken. As the *IKUF-bleter* newspaper wrote in 1938, "we all are citizens of Yiddishland and all the people must serve it piously and truly."<sup>1</sup>

However, the small and atypical Jewish community of Estonia has been almost totally ignored and only limited research has been conducted (e.g., Amitan-Wilensky 336-47, Kupovetski 127-30, Lane 3-16, Nodel 227-36, Parming 241-62). As E. Mendelsohn (253) describes it, "so small was it [the Jewish community of Estonia], and so far removed, spiritually at least, from the great Jewish centers of the Russian Pale of Settlement, that it has received virtually no scholarly attention."

The Yiddish language in Estonia is even less "fortunate" than the history of Estonian Jews. As a rule, Estonia is missing from dialect maps of Yiddishland. Only two informants from Estonia have been interviewed for the Language and Culture Atlas of Ashkenazic Jewry (M. Herzog, personal communication).<sup>2</sup> There are very few publications dedicated to the Yiddish dialect spoken in Estonia and to the contacts between Yiddish, Estonian and other co-territorial languages (Ariste, *Ch. Lemchenas* 250-2, Ariste, *Keelekontaktid* 48, 158-9, Verschik, *Mitmekeelsus* 403-6, Verschik, *Eesti* 748-54, Verschik, *Some Aspects*). Meanwhile the language is quickly declining: today the number of speakers is approximately 500-600.<sup>3</sup> Thus, it is high time to investigate the community while it is still possible.

The aim of the present article is to describe changes in language attitudes and language choice in the Jewish community during the twentieth century, with particular attention towards the period of Jewish cultural autonomy (1926-1940).

### A Brief History

Unlike elsewhere in the Baltics, Jews were not part of early Estonian history. Although some Jews are known to have settled in Tallinn in the fourteenth century, one can speak about the Jewish presence only as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century. During the Russian rule (1710-1918), Estonia did not belong to the Pale of Settlement, which substantially affected the socio-cultural history of the Jews in Estonia. Jews migrated mainly from Courland and some parts of Lithuania, bringing their dialect with them. Thus, Estonian Yiddish has developed on the basis of the Courland dialect of Yiddish, archaic and quite distinctive from other North-Eastern Yiddish dialects.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike Jews in the Pale, Estonian Jews were highly urbanized, living mainly in the two biggest cities of Tallinn and Tartu and constituting a

very tiny, almost invisible minority. Orthodoxy and strict observance, as well as traditional Talmudic scholarship and rabbinical authority never played a significant role in this community. The concept of *shtetl* (from Yiddish *štetl* 'a small town') -- that is, a town in the Pale with a considerable Jewish population and specific social structure -- was unknown in Estonia.

Being a tiny minority meant automatically multilingualism: everybody knew Yiddish, but knowledge of German -- the language of education, culture and the local nobility (or, in some cases, Russian, the official language of the Empire) -- as well as Estonian, the language of the region's majority -- was necessary. However, it has to be stressed that the causes and the character of Jewish multilingualism in Estonia are rather different from those of a traditional Jewish community.

Multilingualism within a traditional Jewish community included Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish. The first two are languages of liturgy and sacred text, the latter a vernacular. J. Fishman (*Reversing* 307) states that "triglossia [Aramaic, Hebrew and Yiddish] was the norm for at least many adult males, and women and children approached this norm as closely as their roles, age and personal history permitted."

In the case of Estonian Jews, the reasons of multilingualism (including Yiddish, Estonian, German, Russian and in some cases liturgical Hebrew) included: the small size of the minority, its social structure (occupations and professions which require contact with the co-territorial population), and the high rate of urbanization. The Estonian community is considered the most urbanized Jewish community in Europe (Mendelsohn 254) and the most urbanized ethnic group in Estonia between the World Wars (Parming 242).

Estonian Jewry cannot be classified either as a purely Western Jewish community, or as an Eastern one. It was highly urbanized, secularized and relatively well-to-do, which are clear Western features; on the other hand, Yiddish was spoken or, at least, understood, and, last but not least, Jews identified themselves as Jews, not as "Germans or Russians of Mosaic faith," as was typical for Western Jewish communities. The Estonian Jewish community is characterized by scholars as tiny, atypical, modernized and acculturated (Mendelsohn 254, Lane 6).

Before World War I and the subsequent independence of Estonia, German and Russian were highly prestigious languages, while attitudes towards Yiddish were often negative even among educated European Jews. Yiddish was pejoratively referred to as a "jargon." The Yiddishist language movement was at that time in its initial stage.<sup>5</sup> During the late Tsarist period, secondary education in Estonia was available in German or in Russian only, although the movement in favour of Estonian was rather strong. Jewish secular education (in Yiddish or in Hebrew) became available only after the establishment of the Republic of Estonia.

### **Cultural Autonomy: A General Characterization**

In 1918 Estonia became an independent state for the first time in its history. The 1920 Constitution guaranteed non-Estonians the right to

preserve their national identity and promote their culture. The declaration acknowledging minority rights was issued on September 17, 1923; a more differentiated Law of Cultural Self-government was enacted in 1925 (a detailed analysis of the Law can be found in Aun 240-45; for activities of various minorities see the collection of documents *Vähemusrahvuste kultuurielu Eesti Vabariigis 1918-1940* by A. Matsulevitš).

According to M. Laserson's observation, Jews were granted minority rights in the Baltic states in general and in Estonia in particular to a greater extent than in other parts of Europe. Laserson (274-5) notes that, unlike Poland and Rumania, the Baltic states were not juridically bound by the minority treaties but, nevertheless, took care of their minorities. He calls the fact an irony of history, since the Baltic states made their declarations of their own free will, while in Poland and Rumania, which under international pressure took upon themselves obligations towards their Jewish communities, life for Jews was far more complicated than in the Baltic states.

For the first time Yiddish and Hebrew were recognized officially as languages of the Jewish minority. E. Amitan-Wilensky (342) writes:

The statement issued by the Estonian government informing the Jews of their full cultural autonomy was issued at the celebration of the first decade of the country's independence and was published in both Hebrew and Yiddish. This document [...] is *sui generis*, being the first and only one of its kind issued during the two millennia of exile in which official use was made of both Hebrew, the national language, and Yiddish, the Jewish vernacular.

The situation in the sphere of Jewish education changed radically. If the general policy of the Russian Empire was clearly anti-Jewish, then after the establishment of independent Estonia, the minorities' education in national languages was supported and promoted by the government. E. Nodel (232) claims that the Law of Cultural Self-government for national minorities was a historic precedent, Estonia being the only European nation that fully supported all of its minorities.

Jewish cultural autonomy came into being in 1926 and existed till the Soviet occupation in 1940.<sup>6</sup> During that period there occurred a kind of national awakening: the list of clubs, organizations, societies and activities is impressively long for such a small community: 4,300 according to the census of 1934, constituting .4 % of the population (Parming 247-51).<sup>7</sup>

As it is stated by Mendelsohn (254), the situation of the Jews in Estonia "more closely approximated that so devotedly hoped for by Dubnov and other ideologues of extraterritorial autonomy than it did elsewhere in the Diaspora."

### Language Attitudes and Language Struggle

After 1918, attitudes towards language among Jews and in the society in general underwent considerable changes. If Estonian had previously been but a means of communication with and among the local

predominantly peasant majority, now it was the language of the state, education and administration. A good command of Estonian became essential, while the significance and status of Russian and German declined. Modern Jewish education in Jewish languages became possible for the first time in history. The Jews used opportunities provided by the Law of 1925 and experienced a kind of national revival.

Like the Jews elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Estonian Jewry did not escape the struggle between Yiddish and Hebrew, known in Yiddish and Hebrew respectively under the terms *špraxkamf* and *riv ha-lešonot*. The struggle of these two cultural ideologies is relevant to the present discussion, and should be described in some detail. The main argument of Yiddishists (both the left-wing *Bund* and the non-socialist autonomists) was that Jews are a nation like every other nation and, therefore, Yiddish is a language as all other languages (Goldsmith 266). The Yiddishist awakening took place along with the other national movements of minorities in Europe. The left-wing *Bund* opposed Hebrew as the language of liturgy (on Marxist and socialist grounds) and was skeptical of the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language as well as the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine. Autonomists, or populists (members of the *Folkspartei*), guided by Simon Dubnov, one of the greatest ideologues of the autonomist model for the Jewish people, did not consider the establishment of the Jewish State as a universal solution, but pointed out that, realistically, there will always be a Jewish Diaspora and one cannot ignore its needs and problems. Dubnov and his followers did not oppose the revival of Hebrew, but insisted on a trilingual model for Jewish communities in Europe. In their view, Jews should be granted equal rights, they should be full-fledged members of co-territorial societies, and have a good command of the official language(s), at the same time maintaining their Jewish identity (religious or secular) and their own languages: Yiddish (both as a vernacular and a language of modern culture) and Hebrew (as the language of liturgy, tradition etc.). As mentioned above, Estonia most closely approached Dubnov's model of non-territorial Jewish autonomy, and multilingualism (Yiddish, Estonian, German, Russian) was common in the community. Nevertheless, in Estonia there were Zionists (both socialist and revisionist) and Hebraists, who prevailed in the Cultural Council and struggled against Yiddishists.

The language issue was most important in terms of education. The first Jewish school was opened in Tallinn in 1923; the language of instruction was first Russian and later Hebrew. However, it was clear that the mother tongue of the majority was Yiddish (it is difficult to define what mother tongue is for multilinguals, but obviously nobody's mother tongue was Hebrew). At the initiative of the students' parents, a class with Yiddish as the language of instruction was opened in 1931. A Jewish secondary school in Tartu with Yiddish as the language of instruction was opened in 1926 (Hebrew was studied as a subject). An elementary school in Valga (with Hebrew as the language of instruction) was opened in 1928. Unfortunately, there are no studies dealing with Jewish schools in Estonia. As far as can be ascertained, the only brief description of the Jewish education system in Estonia can be found in

Mendel Mark (169-70). Mark was active as a Jewish (Yiddishist) educator in Latvia and had some contacts with Estonian Jews. However, the information presented by him is largely incorrect. Since Mark does not give any references, one can only guess at his sources. For instance, Mark states that Hebraists constituted the majority in the Cultural Council, but, according to him, they only called themselves Hebraists: in reality, he claims, they wanted Russian-language schools for Jewish children. Indeed, Hebraists prevailed in the Council, but their alleged Russian orientation is merely an exaggeration. Another statement that Yiddish was taught as a subject only and that teachers of Yiddish had a poor command of the language, is totally incorrect.

The dynamic of language attitudes can be demonstrated by the following table:

**Table 1: School choice in 1923-24 and 1934-35**  
(Source: Gurin, tab. 56, 59, 60)<sup>8</sup>

1934-24	Jewish	Estonian	Russian	German	All
Elementary	263 (50 %)	16 (3 %)	132 (24 %)	126 (23 %)	534
Secondary	43 (11 %)	10 (2.6 %)	284 (73.7 %)	48 (12.7 %)	385
All	306 (33 %)	26 (3 %)	416 (45 %)	174 (19 %)	919

1934-35	Jewish	Estonian	Russian	German	All
Elementary	229 (64 %)	45 (12 %)	31 (9 %)	53 (15 %)	358
Secondary	123 (44 %)	63 (23 %)	33 (11 %)	61 (22 %)	280
All	352 (56 %)	108 (17 %)	64 (10 %)	104 (16 %)	638

As indicated in Table 1, the prestige of the Estonian language and of Jewish languages was increasing. The polemic concerning the Jewish languages was conducted within the community and in the local Yiddish language press. However, occasionally the struggle went beyond the ranges of the community. Since the state was obliged to support minority education in the mother tongue only, the Ministry of Education became involved in the Yiddishist-Hebraist struggle. Thus, N. Kann, the leader of the Education Committee of the Ministry of Education, wrote in *Päevaleht* (2 February 1929):

If the Ministry of Education does not want to solve the question whether the mother tongue of Jews is Hebrew, that of Germans is Old Germanic and of Russians - Old Slavic, let the problem be handed over to the State Court to decide what languages are mother tongues of the minorities in Estonia... Personally I am quite sure that the mother tongue of Estonians is not the language of ancient Uralic peoples but Estonian, and the mother tongue of Jews is not Hebrew, the tongue of their ancestors, but the modern Jewish language which is called by some people here a jargon.

Finally, both Yiddish and Hebrew were recognized as national languages of the Jewish minority in Estonia, but the struggle continued. Local Yiddish-language newspapers, while few in number, contributed a great deal to the argument. Let us consider some examples.<sup>9</sup>

J.Gens (*Undzer Vort*, March 1937) notes in his article *Hebraistic Assimilation (Hebro-assimilatsie)* that the struggle within the Jewish community reminds one of a struggle within any national movement: the upper classes are assimilated into another language and culture. They despise the “folk-culture,” but then the national awakening gains ground and the situation changes. He compares Jews with Estonians:

[This was the case] 40-50 years ago when a part of Estonian intelligentsia and well-to-do people used German. [...] Nationally minded Estonians [...] spoke and cultivated Estonian, while assimilated Estonians were ashamed of their national language. [...] The struggle began between *kadaka saksad* and nationally minded Estonians. Now we can make the same observation concerning Jews. [...] The Jewish people speak mostly Yiddish. Hebraists are *outsiders* of the Jewish people.<sup>10</sup>

In 1931 Chaim Nachman Bialik, a great Hebrew poet and Zionist, visited Estonia. His ideas and views on Yiddish and Hebrew were known to the Jewish public. Bialik’s two speeches on the language problem had been published earlier in Kaunas (the brochure can be found today in the National Library in Tallinn). One of the speeches, *The Language question among Jews (Di špraxn frage bai jidn)* was directed against Dubnov’s idea of Jewish trilingualism and ended with the following words (Bialik 16):

There are some people, they might be called Dubnovists or Folkists, who think that the people should take on the burden of three languages: both Yiddish and Hebrew and the co-territorial language. The Talmud tells us that in the time of Moses there was an animal... which had two spinal cords. I don’t know what kind of animal it was. Archeologists have not discovered it and it is not known in zoology either. That was a miracle and the animal with two spinal cords has disappeared. But it is clear that there is no animal with three spinal cords. *I hope that Hebrew will remain, as it was, the only spinal cord of the Jewish people.*<sup>11</sup>

Considering Bialik’s stance, it is not surprising that his speeches during his visit to Estonia became a source of further polemics. An account of Bialik’s visit to Estonia can be found in *Undzer Vort* (23 December 1931), a local Yiddish newspaper. The article *Ch. N. Bialik in Reval* (Tallinn) covers the entire front page. During a press conference Bialik informed the local press that the goal of his visit is “to remind Estonian Jews that only through the means of modern Hebrew can they participate in the 4,000 year old Jewish culture.”

Later Bialik was invited to the Tallinn Jewish Gymnasium where he talked to the pupils about the importance of Hebrew. He pointed out that there is no place for German and Russian in a Jewish school and children should be very resolute on these matters at home and at school. The principal, Samuel Gurin, was upset by Bialik’s speech and stressed

that it is wrong to involve children in the “bitter language struggle.” Bialik answered that “the children may also hear the truth.” “We have two truths,” said the principal.

There were other incidents between Yiddishists and Hebraists; some of them actually involved fighting. Pent Nurmekund, a renowned Estonian polyglot who knew Yiddish, used to attend meetings of the club *Fraint fun jidiš* (*Friend of Yiddish*) in Tartu. In his personal letter to the author (29 February 1994) P. Nurmekund described such an incident; unfortunately, he did not remember the date and the year.<sup>12</sup> A meeting of the club was in progress when suddenly a gang of Revisionist Zionists in brown uniform shirts marched in:

People in brown shirts entered with a song and there was a fight. I stepped aside and started to look for Levenberg (the leader of the club). He had vanished. But not for long. Soon the door opened and there our Levenberg was standing on the threshold with a stout policeman. And soon it became quiet and order was restored.

This example reveals that despite the exhausting internal struggle between Yiddishists and Hebraists, the Jews in Estonia had sufficient opportunities for their national and cultural life.<sup>13</sup>

It is important to emphasize that the coup in the 1930s did not affect minority rights, including Jewish rights. Although there existed anti-Semitic feelings among the members of the League of Veterans, Estonia was not “obsessed with the Jewish question” and the life of the community went on.<sup>14</sup> The end came in 1940, the year of the Soviet occupation.

### **Yiddish and Jews under Soviet and Nazi Occupation**

After the occupation and annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union, Jewish cultural autonomy was abolished as “a product of the Jewish and Estonian bourgeoisie” (*Rahva Hääl*, 29 July 1940). The list of banned Jewish organizations can be found in the same issue of the newspaper. Jewish institutions closed and many Jewish activists were arrested. The approximately 10,000 people deported from Estonia to the Soviet Union by the Soviet authorities included some 500 Estonian Jews, that is, over ten percent of the total Jewish population.

The consequences of the first year of the Soviet occupation were devastating both for Estonians and for the Jews. Dov Levin’s conclusion that the Jews of Estonia suffered under the Soviet occupation less than other Jewish communities in the Baltics is inaccurate (Levin 53-8). All forms of Jewish national expression -- secular or religious, in Yiddish or in Hebrew, Zionist or anti-Zionist -- were banned in July 1940; many Jewish activists were imprisoned and later killed in Soviet prisons.<sup>15</sup> The Soviet policy towards the Jews took clear shape in the 1930s, and though it was not carried out with the methods and precision of the Nazis’ total extermination policy, and was not articulated explicitly, the general tendency was obvious. An Estonian intellectual and man of letters, Ants Oras, implies that because of the horrors of the first Soviet year, some 1,000 Jews refused to leave Estonia in 1941, thinking that things cannot



be worse during the Nazi occupation. The results of the Soviet occupation of 1940-41 must not be overlooked: as Gurin-Loov, the author of a book on the Holocaust of the Estonian Jews states: "It is possible to claim that together with the independence of Estonia also the development and autonomous existence of the Jewish community was interrupted" (Gurin-Loov, *Suur häving* 9).

After the beginning of the war between Nazi Germany and the USSR, some 3,000 Jews fled to Russia (the majority of them returned after the end of the war), while 1,000 stayed in Estonia and were killed by the Nazis in 1941. For those who returned after 1944, life under Soviet rule without a cultural and linguistic identity seemed meaningless and this led to the emigration of many Yiddish speakers, especially younger people. One must agree with Nodel (235) that under Soviet rule, Jews lived sterile lives. For her part, Gurin-Loov (*Juudina Eestis* 4) emphasizes, that the Soviet national policy can be identified with "spiritual genocide."

Those who returned to Estonia had to choose between a Russian or an Estonian future for their children, because no Jewish (Yiddish or Hebrew) national expression was possible. After 1944, a substantial group of assimilated, Russian-speaking Jews from the USSR came to settle in Estonia. Some Russian-speaking Jews were attracted to Estonia because, unlike elsewhere in the USSR, there was little anti-Jewish discrimination; however, most of these Jews arrived as a part of what is identified today as the Russian-speaking population. The newcomers belong to Russian culture and the Russian-speaking community: their identity differs considerably from that of indigenous Estonian Jews. This is not surprising if we consider the two different histories of the two groups (see Lane 14). It is inaccurate to speak of a homogeneous Jewish minority in Estonia today. As Kupovetski (130) states:

The Jewish population in [...] Estonia is rather visibly divided into two groups: the indigenous population (those who lived there before the war and their heirs) and migrants. Ethnic processes which take place in these two groups are notably different. There is a recognizable tendency [...] to marry within the group. In cases of mixed marriages the members of the indigenous minority are more often married to [...] Estonians than to the migrants [...]. For the indigenous minority Estonian is the mother tongue or a second language after Yiddish, for the new migrants it is Russian.

The conflict between the two identities hinders the solution of some essential problems within the community today.

### **The Present Situation**

Jewish cultural life was officially restored in 1988. Thus, Estonia was the first republic in the former Soviet empire where a Jewish cultural society was formed. Unfortunately, indigenous Jews who have a good command of Yiddish constitute a minority. Since no Soviet census distinguished between Estonian Jews and Russian-speaking Jews, we do not have any accurate statistics. According to some estimations, there are

approximately 1,000 Jews who belong to the indigenous minority out of a total number of 3,000.<sup>16</sup>

In 1991, Estonia regained independence. Various ethnic groups have received an opportunity to sustain their identity and to promote national cultures and languages. However, the language issue among Jews remains a problem, although, of course, it differs a lot from the struggle in the 1920s and 1930s. Due to contemporary realities (Soviet national policy, intermarriage, emigration) the number of Yiddish speakers is constantly declining and the establishment of a Jewish school with Yiddish as the language of instruction or, at least, a community newspaper in Yiddish was not even discussed. In 1988, the community paper *Ha-Šahar* had two parallel versions in Estonian and in Russian. In 1990, it was decided by some members of the community that there was no reason to have an Estonian version “because everybody speaks Russian.” After that, the paper came out in Russian only; however, circulation declined. Since 1996, due to the efforts of enthusiasts, a regular Estonian supplement to the paper has been published. Meanwhile, it was found that the community cannot financially afford even the Russian version of *Ha-Šahar*, and since 1997 only the Estonian version has existed, published as a monthly, thanks mainly to the enthusiasm of Elchonen Saks, who distributes the paper free of charge.

The school problem is even more serious than that of the newspaper. From the very beginning in 1990, the Jewish Gymnasium (secondary school) was opened in Tallinn with Russian as the language of instruction. The leaders of the community did not even consider the establishment of an Estonian-language class for those who speak Estonian at home, thus alienating potential students. Today it is hard to change the previously adopted policy although the need for Estonian-language classes has gradually become apparent.

As for Yiddish, there are no younger speakers: the community is a community of older people. The Russian-speaking Jews (who constitute the majority) have no sentiments towards Yiddish and find it useless to introduce it into the school curriculum even as a subject. The most common argument is that “in Israel they speak Hebrew;” however, Hebrew is taught as a subject only. On the other hand, Yiddish can still enjoy recognition as an academic discipline at university. The attitude of the University of Tartu is quite positive. A number of courses on Yiddish and Jewish culture have been taught at the Estonian Institute of Humanities. There also now exists a tradition of translating Yiddish literature into Estonian. But regrettably, as a living language, Yiddish has no future in Estonia.

#### Notes

1. Here and henceforth all quotations from Yiddish and from Estonian sources are translated by the author.
2. There are very few Yiddish linguists who mention Estonia among Yiddish-speaking regions (see for instance, Bin-Nun 97-9).
3. On the ambiguity of statistics see discussion below.

4. The limits of the present article do not allow a description of the process of the dialect formation and contacts with other Yiddish dialects and co-territorial languages. For more elaborated discussions on Courland and Estonian Yiddish see Ariste, *Ch. Lemchenas* 250-2; Jacobs 89-99; Kalmanovitsh 161-86; Verschik, *Eesti* 748-54; Weinreich 193-240.
5. On the formation and dynamic of the Yiddishist language movement in general see Fishman, *Yiddish: Turning to Life* and Goldsmith, *Architects of Yiddishism at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*.
6. Unfortunately there exists no systematic study of the autonomy.
7. The share of Jews in the ethnic composition of Estonia's population remained stable from 1881 through 1940 and constituted .4 % (Parming 242).
8. The source did not distinguish between Hebrew and Yiddish schools (classes), the data is presented under the heading "Jewish schools".
9. Examples described below have, to my best knowledge, never been published in scholarly papers or analyzed in the relevant literature.
10. *kadaka saksad* was an Estonian pejorative term to designate Estonians who tried to imitate Germans but spoke poor German. Gens chose not to transliterate the term but to insert it into the Yiddish text in the original Estonian. No translation for Yiddish readers was provided, which suggests that the Jews had a good command of Estonian and were aware of the Estonian national movement. The term *outsiders* was inserted in the original, not transliterated.
11. Stressed by Ch. Bialik.
12. Pent Nurmekund, personal letter to Anna Verschik, 29 February 1994.
13. Contacts between Estonian and Jewish (Yiddish and Hebrew) culture are not to be considered within the range of the present article, since it is a topic which deserves a separate study.
14. N. Lane (8) describes activities of the League and mentions that the attempt to boycott Jewish business failed because the organizers were unable to distinguish between Jewish and German stores.
15. The consequences of the Soviet occupation for the Jews are adequately described by T. Majafit in his interview to Jehudit Agratsheva, a journalist with the Russian-language Israeli periodical *Vesti*, 9 August 1995.
16. Personal interview with the leader of the Jewish community Cilja Laud, September 1995.

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# ESTONIAN JEWS: INTEGRATION AND LANGUAGE CHOICE

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Paper presented at the international conference “Ethnic Policy on the Road to the Civil Society”, Riga, 15–16 October 1998.

<http://www.vm.ee/eng/index.html> (under the heading *Integration*)

## 1. Introduction

The Jewish population of Estonia constitutes a tiny minority of appr. 3,000 individuals. Unlike in the other two Baltic countries, Jews have always been almost an invisible group of population whose share in the whole population structure has been stable throughout the first half of the century (0,4% from 1881 till 1941, see Parming 1979: 242).

No matter how small the group may be today and how insignificant problems of integration in comparison with those of more substantial groups of non-Estonians (especially Russians) may appear, the Jewish minority in Estonia deserves scholarly attention.

It will be argued further that:

- 1) there is no homogeneous Jewish community in Estonia;
- 2) there are two separate Jewish identities — indigenous (“Estonian”) and non-indigenous (“Russian” or “Soviet”) Jews, the fact often ignored both by scholars and by officials;
- 3) the problems on the way of integration into Estonian society are faced not by the whole community, but only by a part of it;
- 4) the problems faced by this part of the community have nothing to do with anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic attitudes and are bound entirely to the language issue;
- 5) Yiddish — the language of East European Jewry in general and of Estonian Jewry in particular — is declining and needs promotion and support.

## 2. Some history

The limits of the present article do not allow discussing at length the aspects of Jewish history in Estonia. However, some distinctive features and key points have to be drawn out.

- There was no significant Jewish presence in Estonia before the 19th century.
- Estonia was not a part of the Pale of Settlement during the Czarist rule (1709–1918).
- The Jewish population was tiny, almost invisible, highly urbanized (according to Mendlesohn 1983: 254 it was the most urbanized Jewish community in the world).



The occupational and social structure differed from that of the Pale. Estonia was never a land of traditional Jewish learning, Talmudic scholarship, piety or rabbinic authority. The concept of *shtetl* (< Yiddish *štetl* ‘a little town’), a typical form of Jewish settlement in Eastern Europe, was unknown here.

- Estonian Jewry was unique: it was neither of West European, nor of East European type. Urbanization, worldliness, extensive contacts with non-Jews, widely spread multilingualism are characteristic features of West European Jewries; on the other hand, Jews identified themselves as Jews and Yiddish was spoken or, at least, understood, while in the West Jews tended to identify themselves as “Germans (Frenchmen, Englishmen etc.) of Mosaic persuasion”.
- The small size of the minority made multilingualism (Yiddish, Estonian, German, Russian) necessary. The results of such a contact between the languages require a separate study. As J. Fishman (1991: 309) stresses, every sociolinguistic consideration of Yiddish is bound to be in the context of multilingualism.
- On the eve of World War I it was a secularized, atypical and small community consisting of craftsmen, traders, businessmen, doctors, lawyers and students.
- The establishment of independent Estonia and broad rights guaranteed to all the minorities triggered a kind of Jewish national revival (Mendelsohn 1983, Verschik 1999). The Jewish cultural autonomy in Estonia (1926–1940) approached more closely S. Dubnov’s model of autonomous development for Jews in the Diaspora (Laserson 1941, Amitan-Wilensky 1971, Mendelsohn 1983).
- Jewish (Yiddish and Hebrew) education was promoted, the prestige of the Jewish languages and of Estonian — now the official language — increased, while the importance of German and Russian decreased.
- The struggle between Yiddishists and Hebraists characteristic of the interwar period in Eastern Europe took place in Estonia as well (Verschik 1999).
- The range of clubs, organizations, societies were impressingly wide for such a small community. There existed student organizations, sport societies, cultural clubs, political movements. On the eve of World War II the Jewish population was appr. 4,000.
- With the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States in 1940 the cultural autonomy was abolished as “a product of Jewish and Estonian bourgeoisie” (*Rahva Hääl*, 29.07.1940). The deportations, which took place in 1941, affected also the Jews (more than 10%).
- During World War II some 3,000 Jews fled to Russia while 1,000 stayed in Germany-occupied Estonia and perished in the Holocaust.
- After the end of WWII those who were able returned to Estonia. However, naive hopes at least for some restoration of the cultural autonomy and Yiddish education (Hebrew was banned in the USSR) did not come true: Soviet policy was clearly anti-Jewish and anti-minorities. During the 2nd Soviet occupation (1944–1991) of Estonia Jews lived a sterile life (Nodel 1979), unable to manifest their identity officially.
- Since 1945 the settlement of non-Estonians (mainly ethnic Russians) to Estonia became a part of the Soviet Russianization policy (on the Soviet language policy see Rannut 1994). Some Jews from Russia, the Ukraine and elsewhere from the Soviet Union arrived as a part of what is called today Russian-speaking population. One of the reasons of Jewish migration in the 1950s and in the 1970s was the lack of antisemitism both on an official and on everyday level (Nodel 1979: 235). In many cases Estonia was a transit territory for further migration of Russian Jews to the West.

These two groups and their identities are to be discussed below.

### 3. Estonian and “Russian” Jews

The distinction between the 2 groups is often blurred, deliberately or not. However, it is clear that Jews born in independent Estonia where Jewish education and cultural activities were openly promoted, are different from those who grew up in the Soviet Union with its anti-Jewish policy, in an atmosphere of assimilationism (Russianization), in isolation from Jewish (Yiddish or Hebrew, religious or secular) world.

These differences are often overlooked by scholars who are not experts in the Baltic history (see for example Haarman 1985), or who use only Russian-language sources. Thus, Y. Gorlizki (1996: 449) claims that “the Jews in the Baltics have also suffered as an indirect result of the Baltic governments’ discriminatory policies towards their Russian minorities... Thus most of Estonia’s 5,000 Jews... could not vote in the national election of 1992”. The argument contains at least 4 inaccuracies: first, are Jews a Russian minority? Second, by no means was the number of Jews in Estonia 5,000. Third, approximately 30–35% of Jews is Estonian citizens and thus was able to vote. Fourth, the national policy of Baltic states is not discriminatory towards any ethnic group. It is noteworthy that Gorlizki’s sources are not scholarly papers but periodicals *The Jewish Crinkle* and *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the last being a notoriously anti-Estonian and anti-Baltic newspaper published in Moscow.

The distinctions between the two groups of Jews are ignored in all Soviet censuses. We do not possess any unambiguous statistics. According to 1989 census, there were 4,613 Jews in Estonia, of whom 12.3% considered Yiddish as their mother tongue. 108 respondents listed Yiddish as their second language. From the 1989 census figures K. Katus (1991: 25) concludes that only 15% of Jews belong to the indigenous minority. He possibly considers knowledge of Yiddish as a feature characteristic rather to the indigenous group whose many members have received their secondary education in Yiddish; however, the notion of mother tongue is somewhat unclear in a situation of wide-spread multilingualism (Skutnabb-Kangas 1984: 12, de Vries 1985), besides, knowledge of Yiddish is declining among the post-war generation of the indigenous minority (see below).

N. Lane’s (1995) estimate of the correlation between indigenous and non-indigenous group to be 1 : 2 seems more accurate; the same figure was given to me by the leader of the community (Cilja Laud, personal communication).

The existence of the two groups among Jews is a fact well-known to demographers. The research by K. Katus was mentioned above; M. Kupovetski (1986: 130) goes further and argues that ethnic processes go differently in the 2 groups:

“The Jewish population in ... Estonia is rather visibly divided into two groups: the indigenous population (those who lived there before the war and their heirs) and migrants... There is a recognizable tendency... to marry within the group. In cases of mixed marriages the members of the indigenous minority are more often married to ... Estonians than to the migrants... for the indigenous minority Estonian is the mother tongue or a second language after Yiddish, for the new migrants the mother tongue is Russian”.

It is remarkable that the paper was published in 1986 when the Soviet atmosphere still prevailed and the word combination “independent Estonia” was not acceptable, yet the message of the quotation is quite clear.

The two groups have different self-identification and cultural orientation. The command of Estonian among the indigenous minority is native-like, for most members of the group it is the language of home, education etc. “Russian” Jews associate them-

selves with the Russian language and culture and, with rare exceptions, are Russian monolinguals.

Silvi Vare (1996: 125) presents interesting data of the last Soviet census concerning the proficiency in Estonian among non-Russian minorities: 34.55% of Jews are able to speak Estonian (only Finns have a higher rate of Estonian-speakers — 75.08%). Unfortunately she fails to distinguish between the two groups; logically, most of the 34.55% belong to the indigenous Jewish minority.

The following table illustrates the differences between the two groups of Jews:

Indigenous minority (“Estonian Jews”)	Non-indigenous minority (“Russian Jews”)
Experience of cultural autonomy	No experience of the kind
In many cases Jewish secondary education	Education in Russian only
Good or native-like command of Estonian	Poor command of Estonian
Multilingualism	Russian monolingualism

#### 4. Russian-speaking Jews as a part of the Russian-speaking population

The term ‘Russian-speaking population’ assumes that we deal not with an ethnic but with a linguistic category. According to Diachkov (1992: 192–193) this group was encouraged by the USSR central authorities overtly or covertly to pay no heed to linguistic and cultural peculiarities of the local population. The notion of Russian-speaking population or ‘russophones’ cannot be defined as an ethnic minority since majority of the newcomers belongs mainly to the three largest Slavic ethnoses (Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians). This group should be considered separately from the indigenous minorities and is not part and parcel of the local population. Diachkov stresses that the most important feature is partial de-ethnicization and linguistic assimilation (i.e. use of Russian rather than a national language).

Thus, with some exceptions of highly educated Russian-speaking Jews who work in the academia and have mastered Estonian (Juri Lotman is probably the best-known example), most of Russian-speaking Jews in Estonia belonged until recently to the category of ‘passport Jews’ (see Chlenov 1994), that is, being Jews only ethnically, while Jewishness was a formal characteristic imposed by the state. When the Jewish Cultural Society was organized in 1988, they experienced a kind of national awakening (along with other minority groups in Estonia) and started identifying themselves as Jews, remaining however Russian monolinguals and, in some cases, even becoming militant fighters against the alleged discrimination of the Russian-speaking population.

#### 5. The language issue

*Yiddish.* Yiddish used to be at least one of the languages usually spoken by Jews in Estonia before 1940. According to the 1934 census, 2,381 Jews out of total 4,434 declared Yiddish as their usual language and 1,142 as the language used mostly after their usual language. The fact that 88 Jews claimed Hebrew as their usual tongue (*Teine rahva-loendus Eestis* 1935: 104–105, 110–111, table 8 and 9) should not be misleading: it was

merely an ideological statement relevant to the struggle between Yiddishists and Hebraists at that time.

Yiddish is vanishing due to political changes and socio-cultural dislocations (Soviet occupation, World War II, the Holocaust, Soviet national policy).

After WW II Jewish cultural autonomy was not restored and the indigenous Jewish minority had to choose between a Russian or Estonian future for their children. Whatever the results of such a choice could be, the self-identification as Jews remained and even if the choice was in favor of Russian the knowledge of Estonian was considered necessary. When it became possible for Jews to leave the Soviet Union at the end of the 1960s, many young Estonian Jews left the country.

The polarization of Russian-speaking and Estonian-speaking communities intensified the existing difference between indigenous Jews and newcomers. The split in the Jewish community is a reflection of the split between the two speech communities in the wider society.

Some Estonian Jews reported that they claimed Yiddish to be their mother tongue during the last census even if their knowledge of Yiddish was passive. Such a behavior expressed protest against the official policy.

Let us consider some examples of attitudes towards Yiddish. A Russian-speaking Jew who arrived in Estonia in the 1950s told me that she was surprised to hear two “educated ladies in fancy dresses” speaking Yiddish to each other in the center of Tallinn.

An Estonian Jew told that during her stay in Russia in 1941–1944 she was frequently reproached by some Soviet Jews for speaking Yiddish: why on earth do you speak this dead language? she was asked.

However, censuses do not measure literacy (questions concerning writing or reading skills are not asked). Although we do not possess exact figures, it is clear that the percentage of Jews who can read and write Yiddish is rather small, and it is not surprising. Yiddish-language education in Estonia was abolished in 1940, speakers became isolated from Yiddish press and literature. Soviet-Yiddish editions did not help much because the Yiddish spelling adopted in the Soviet Union in the 1920s differs from the rest of the world, besides there were some differences in syntax and lexicon (Birnbaum 1979, Estraikh 1993), which created difficulties for potential readers.

***Estonian and Russian.*** The Jewish Cultural Society was organized in 1988. It was the first Jewish society in the former Soviet empire. The Jewish Gymnasium was opened in Tallinn in 1990 and announced to be the legal successor of the Tallinn Jewish Gymnasium closed by the Soviets in 1940. The language of instruction in the new Gymnasium is Russian, Hebrew is taught as a subject. The reason was that “everybody understands Russian anyway”. The question of including Yiddish into the curriculum was not even discussed. Such a policy turned away some community members and potential students. In 1990 it was already clear that a good proficiency in Estonian is necessary. Some Jews are married to ethnic Estonians, some speak Estonian at home, thus, a Russian-language school (even if called “Jewish”) was not a suitable option for them. Today it is hard to change the once adopted policy though the need for Estonian-language class is being gradually recognized by community leaders.

## 6. Who needs to be integrated and where?

As it was shown above, a part of Jews living in Estonia today, the indigenous minority is fully integrated: they are fluent in Estonian, often educated in Estonian-language schools and universities, identify themselves with Estonia. Very often their self-identification consists of two words: Estonian Jew. The other part, the non-indigenous Jews, may face psychological and practical problems (language exams, citizenship etc.), which have nothing to do with Jewishness or with their being Jewish or not.

M. Chlenov (1994: 128) points out that after the disintegration of the Soviet Union “antisemitism was not a characteristic of all ethnic groups: rather, its emergence is dependent of specific political situation”. For many Estonians a Russian monolingual is a Russian even if he or she is ethnically Jewish, Ukrainian, Armenian etc.

Claims such as “Jews are leaving Estonia, it shows the climate in the society” have to be analyzed with caution: do they leave because the society does not tolerate Jews or do they leave because to do so it is more convenient for them than to learn the language of the country?

Therefore, the situation is as follows: Yiddish is unlikely to have any future in Estonia as a living language; actually, there is only one indispensable condition for the full-flavored participation in the Estonian society, and this condition can be met by anybody. It is the mastering of the Estonian language, or at least showing respect towards it. So, the question is whether the young Russian-speaking Jews are willing to carry on a Jewish life in their country as Estonian Jews or do they choose to continue to live here as foreigners, waiting perhaps for an opportunity to leave?

## 7. What can be done

- The attempts to open an Estonian-language class in the Tallinn Jewish school deserve a support from the Ministry of Education, even if such a class has few pupils. It would serve as an example for Jews who do not speak Estonian.
- Young Estonians in general know little about Jews. Some aspects of Jewish history should be taught at school; in the sphere of higher education various courses on Jewish languages, culture, history, religion can be offered. The Estonian Institute of Humanities is a good example: since 1991 Hebrew is being taught and lectures on Judaism and Yiddish culture are held regularly.
- It is clear that Yiddish cannot be today what it was once; however, the fact cannot be justified that the Jewish school does not offer any teaching of Yiddish. The reasons for anti-Yiddish policy are indifference and, to some extent, the traditional Zionist anti-Yiddishism. Yiddish is (was?) a language of Estonian Jews, it is a part and parcel of East European Jewish history and cannot be ignored altogether in the sphere of contemporary Jewish education.

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Jidiše kulturoitonomie in Estland (1926–1940).  
(Yiddish cultural autonomy in Estonia, 1926–1940)  
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# יידישע קולטור=אויטאָנאָמיע אין עסטלאַנד, 1926-1940

אַנא ווערשיק

וועגן יידישער געשיכטע אין עסטלאַנד און דער קולטור=אויטאָנאָמיע וואָס זיי האָבן געהאַט צווישן די וועלט-מלחמות האָט מען זייער ווייניק געשריבן. די וויכטיקסטע אַרבעטן זינען קאַפּל יאָקטאָנס (K. Jokton) „די געשיכטע פון יידן אין עסטי“ (טאַרטו 1992 [1926]). אַזראַ מענדעלסאָנס *The Jews of East Central* (E. Mendelsohn) בלומינגטאָן (1983). און ניקאָלאַס ליינס *Estonia and its Jews: Ethical Dilemma* (N. Lane) *European Jewish Affairs*, ב. 25, נ. 1, ז. 3-16.

די סיבה איז, אַפּנים, אַז עסטלאַנד איז קליין. ס'איז אויך תמיד געווען קליין איר יידישע באַפעלקערונג – אין די צאַרישע צייטן האָט עסטלאַנד ניט געהערט צום יידישן תּחום. דאָך אָט דער קאַפיטל פון יידישער געשיכטע איז אַוניקאַל, באַזונדערס וויל עסטלאַנד איז געווען די מדינה וווּ די יידישע קולטור=אויטאָנאָמיע האָט זיך געהאַלטן לענגער ווי אין אַנדערע לענדער.

דער דאָזיקער אַרטיקל איז ניט קיין סיסטעמאַטישע פאַרשונג פון דער קולטור=אויטאָנאָמיע אין עסטלאַנד, נאָר אַ פּרוּוו צו געבן אַן אַלגעמיינעם איבערבליק, מיט אַ פאַר אילוסטראַציעס פון דער תקופה.

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יידן האָבן אָנגעהויבן זיך באַזעצן אין עסטלאַנד אין אָנהייב פון

19טן יארהונדערט. ד.ה. שוין נאך דעם ווי עסטלאַנד איז געוואָרן אַ טייל פון דער רוסישער אימפעריע (1710). געקומען זײַנען זיי פון קורלאַנד. וועגן דעם זאָגן עדות די אייגנאַרטיקייטן פון דעם גערעדטן ייִדיש אין עסטלאַנד.<sup>1</sup> געלעבט האָבן זיי אין מאָלין (רעוועל) און טאַרטו (דאַרפאַט) — קיין שמעטלעך זײַנען דאָך אין עסטלאַנד ניט געווען. זיי האָבן זיך באַשעפטיקט מיט מסחר און האַנט־מלאכה. שפעטער האָבן זיך באַוווּזן אויך פאַרמעגלעכע פּאַבליסט. די ייִדן האָבן געלעבט צווישן אַנדערע פעלקער. דער עיקר עסטן און זײַטשן. וואָס האָט זיך אָפּגע־שפּיגלט אין זייער שפּראַך־רעפּערטואַר. אינדערהיים האָבן זיי גערעדט ייִדיש, אָבער זיי האָבן אויך געוויינטלעך געקענט זיך צונויפּרעדן אויף עסטיש. דיטש איז געווען די שפּראַך פון בילדונג און קולטור אין אַלע באַלטישע לענדער. אַ צאָל ייִדן האָט זיך געלערנט אין רוסישע שולן. ביים אָנהייב פון דער ערשטער וועלט־מלחמה, איז דאָס געווען אַ גאַנץ סעקוליאַריזירטער ישוב.

1. Paul Ariste, 'Ch. Lemchenas, *Kalbos itaka Lietuvos Zydutarme, Baltistica*, 6 (2), 1970; Anna Verschik, 'Eesti ja jidiši kontaktidest', *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 11, 1997.

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עסטלאַנד איז אומאָפּהענגיק געוואָרן אין 1918. ס'איז וויכטיק אַז דער מאַניפעסט פון אומאָפּהענגיקייט האָט זיך אָנגעהויבן מיט דער ווענדונג „זו אַלע פעלקער פון עסטלאַנד“. אין 1925, האָבן אַלע מינדערהייטן באַקומען די רעכט פון קולטור־אויטאָנאָמיע. אָבער בלויז ייִדן און דיטשן האָבן אויסגענוצט די רעכט און דער פולער מאָס. ס'איז פאַרשפּרייט אַ מיינונג אַז די „יונגע“ מדינות אין צפון און מזרח אייראָפּע האָבן פּראַקלאַמירט גלייכע רעכט פאַר זייערע מינדערהייטן נאָר צוליב דעם אויסערן דרוק און אַז שפעטער האָבן זיי אָפּגעשאַפן אַזאַ מעגלעכקייט. באַזונדערס פאַר ייִדן. אַזוי איז געווען, למשל, אין ליטע. אין עסטלאַנד, אָבער, האָט די ייִדישע אויטאָנאָמיע דערלעבט ביז דער צײַט ווען דאָס לאַנד איז אַקופּירט געוואָרן מצד דעם סאָוועטן־פאַרבאַנד.

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די ערשטע ייִדישע גימנאַזיע אין עסטלאַנד איז געעפנט געוואָרן אין מאָלין אין 1923. אין אָנהייב האָט מען געלערנט אויף רוסיש, כאַטש פאַר אַ סך קינדער איז דאָס געווען אַ פרעמדע שפּראַך. שפעטער זײַנען אַריבער אויף העברעיִש — ניט געקוקט אויף וואָס אַ היפשע צאָל עלטערן האָבן געפּאָדערט מוזאַל לערנען אויף ייִדיש. ניט ווייניק עלטערן האָבן, לויט דער אינערן, געשיקט זייערער קינדער אין רוסישע און דיטשישע שולן. אַ קליינע צאָל ייִדישע קינדער האָט זיך געלערנט אין עסטישע שולן.

אונטערן דרוק פון די עלטערן וואָס האָבן געפּאָדערט מיטאל לערנען אויף יידיש, איז זינט דעם לערניאָר 1930-1931 די גימנאַזיע אין טאַלין אַריבער אויף אַ סיסטעם פון פּאַראַלעלע קלאַסן פאַר יעדן עלטער: איין קלאַס האָט אַלץ געלערנט אויף יידיש, דער צווייטער — אויף העברעיִש. אין טאַרטו איז די יידישע שול, וואָס מ'האַט געעפנט אין 1926, שטענדיק גווען נאָר אויף יידיש. אַ העברעיִשע עלעמענטאַרע שול איז געווען און וואַרגאַ (וואַלק). קיין אַנדערע יידישע שולן זיינען אין עסטלאַנד ניט געווען.

די פּאָלגנדיקע טאַבלעלע ווייזט ווי ס'האַט זיך מיט דער צייט געביטן די באַצוינג פון די יידישע עלטערן אין עסטלאַנד צו דער שפּראַך פּראָגע.<sup>2</sup>

לערניאָר 1935-1934	לערניאָר 1924-1923	יידישע קינדער וואָס האַבן געלערנט אויף:
352	306	יידיש און העברעיִש
108	26	עסטיש
64	416	רוסיש
104	174	דייטש

2. ש. גורין, סטאַטיסטיק פון דער יידישער באַפעלקערונג אין עסטי (טאַלין 1936).

די שפּראַך-פּראָבלעם אין יידישע שולן איז געווען אַ קאָפּווייטיק ניט נאָר פאַר דער יידישער ועלכסט-פּאַרוואַלטונג, נאָר אויך פאַרן בילדונגס-מיניסטעריום. באַזונדעם שאַרף איז געשטאַנען די פּראָגע פון דעפינירן די מוטער-שפּראַך פון עסטישע יידן, מחמת די מלוכה איז מחויב געווען פינאַנציעל אונטערשטיצן בלויז די שולן וואָס האָבן געלערנט אויף מוטער-שפּראַך. אזוי אַרום, ס'איז געווען נאָר ניט קיין סכּאָלאַסטישע פּראָגע.

ס'רוב עסטישע יידן זיינען אויפגעוואַקסן מיט צוויי אָדער אַפילו מער שפּראַכן, נאָר יידיש האָט דאָמינירט, און העברעיִש האָט קיינער אינדערהיים ניט גערעדט. דערפאַר טאַקע האָט נ. קאַן (N. Kann), דער אָנפירער פון דער בילדונגס-קאָמיסיע ביים בילדונגס-מיניסטעריום, געשריבן אין דער צייטונג „געוואַלעכט“:

אויב דאָס בילדונגס-מיניסטעריום וויל זיך ניט ברעכן דעם קאַפּ אויף דער פּראָגע פון העברעיִש אַלס מוטער-שפּראַך ביי די יידן — און אורגערימאַניש ביי די דייטשן, און אַלטסלאַוויש ביי די רוסן — דאַן איז בעסער אַפילו ניט פרוּוון צו ענטפערן אויף אַט דער פּראָגע: וואָס פאַר אַ לשון איז ביי די מינדערהיטן די מוטער-שפּראַך . . . איך אַליין האַלט, אַז די מוטער-שפּראַך פון די עסטן איז ניט די אורשפּראַך פון אוראַלטע פעלקער, נאָר עסטיש, און ביי די יידן איז די מוטער-שפּראַך ניט

העברעיש — דאָס לשון פון וייערע אבות, נאָר יידיש, וואָס אייניקע רופן  
עס כּי אונדז „זשאַרגאָן“.

(Pävaleht, דעם 2טן פעברואַר 1929)

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די יידישע פרעסע אין עסטלאַנד איז געווען זייער ניט סטאַביל. מען  
האָט פּרוּבירט אַרויסגעבן צייטונגען אויף יידיש, אָבער די צאָל לייענער  
איז געווען צו קליין זיי וואָלן לעבן אַ לענגערע צייט. (אנב, אַלע יידישע  
צייטונגען, וועלכע מען האָט געדרוקט אין עסטלאַנד, האָבן זיך אָפּגעהיט  
אין דעם מוזיי פון ליטעראַטור אין טאַרטו.) ס'איז אינטערעסאַנט, אַז מען  
האָט אַפילו פּרוּבירט אַרויסצוגעבן איין צייטונג פאַר די יידישע קהילות  
אין עסטלאַנד און פינלאַנד. די צייטונג האָט געהייסן „גמע צייט“. אין איר  
ערשטן נומער, דעם 20טן סעפטעמבער 1933, לייענען מיר:

... די „גמע צייט“ האָט נאָך גענומען אויף זיך אַ קליינע „מיסיע“. אָדער  
אויב דאָס וואָרט איז כּי אַמך ניט אַזוי שטאַרק באַליבט, מאַ לאַמיר זאָגן  
„אַ קליינע שליחות“: מקרב זיין און דערנענטערן ביידע יידישע קיבוצים,  
אין עסטלאַנד און פינלאַנד, ווי דער דמש זאָגט, צו אַינאַנדערע... .

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אַחוץ דער פרעסע, זינען געווען אַ סך אַנדערע יידישע אינסטיטוטן  
מוציעס: קלובן, געזעלשאַפטן. פאַר אַ קליינער מדינה, מיט אַ קליינע  
יידישן קיבוץ (4.300 נפשות אין יאָר 1934) איז די צאָל פאַרשיידענע  
אַרגאַניזאַציעס געווען זייער גרויס: פון אַן אָפּטיילונג פון „השומר  
הצעיר“ ביז דעם ליטעראַריש-דראַמאַטישן פאַריין „ח.ג.ג. ביאַליק“, פון  
„מכבי“ ביז „טאַלינער יידישן ברידזש-קלוב“. אין טאַרטווער אוניווערסיטעט  
סיטעט זינען געווען עטלעכע יידישע אַרגאַניזאַציעס: „אַקאַדעמישער  
פאַריין“ (געגרינדעט אין 1884), קאַרפּאָראַציעס „לימווויאַ“ (1922),  
„השמונאַ“ (1923), אַ געזעלשאַפט פאַר סטודענטקעס, „הצפירה“  
(1924).

אין 1934 האָט מען — צום ערשטן מאל אין די באַלטישע און  
סקאַנדינאַווישע לענדער — געעפנט אַן אָפּטייל פון יודאַיק ביים  
טאַלינער אוניווערסיטעט. מיטן אָפּטייל האָט אָנגעפירט פּראָפ. לאַזאַר  
גולקאוויטש.

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ס'איז נימאָ קיין סיסטעמאַטישע פאַרשונג פון דעם קאַמף וואָס האָט

זיך געפירט אין עסטלאַנד צווישן די אָנחענגער פון ייִדיש און העברעיִש. אזוי אַז איך וועל זיך דאָ באַגרענעצן מיט אַ פּאַר עפּיזאָדן פון דעם קאַמף.

אין 1931 איז קיין עסטלאַנד געקומען ח.ג. ביאַליק, וועלכער איז דעמאָלט אַרומגעפאַרן מיט לעקציעס איבער אַ ריי אייראָפּעיִשע לענדער. ס'איז אַרגאַניזירט געוואָרן אַ באַגעגעניש מיטן דיכטער אין דער ייִדישער גימנאַזיע. ביאַליק האָט גערעדט אויף ייִדיש, אָבער ער האָט אונטערנעשטראָכן אַז העברעיִש און ניט ייִדיש מוז זיין די נאַציאָנאַלע שפּראַך פון ייִדן. דער דירעקטאָר פון דער גימנאַזיע, שלומה גורין, האָט ניט געוואָלט דערלאָזן אַז די שול זאָל פּאָליטיזירט ווערן. האָט ער געזאָגט אַז ס'איז ניט ריכטיק אַרענצוברענגען שפּראַך פּאָליטיק אין אַ שול. ביאַליק איז ברוגז געוואָרן און געזאָגט אַז אַפילו קינדער האָבן די רעכט צו וויסן דעם אמת. דער דירעקטאָר, גורין, האָט געענטפּערט: „מיר האָבן צוויי אמתן“. דער דאָזיקער אינצידענט איז באַשריבן אין דער ציטונג „אונדזער וואָרט“ (דעם 23טן דעצעמבער 1931).

אין דעם מוזיי פון ליטעראַטור, אין דער כתב־ידן אָפטיילונג, געפינען זיך בריוו פון פאַרשיידענע ייִדישע אַקטיוויסטן צו פּאָול אַריסטע (Paul Ariste), וועלכער איז געווען אַ קענער פון ייִדיש. אַ מעצענאַט און קונסט־קאָלעקציאָנער, נתן גענש, האָט אים געשריבן, דעם 19טן דעצעמבער 1932: „דער קאַמף צווישן ייִדישיסטן און העברעיִסטן קען ווערן פּאַטאַל פאַר אונדז“ (פּאַנד פון פ. אַריסטע, Fa00, 25:5). פענט נורמעקונד (Pent Nurmekund), אַ באַקאַנטער עסטישער מורח־קענער און אויך אַ קענער פון ייִדיש, האָט מיר דערציילט אין זיין בריוו, דעם 19טן דעצעמבער 1994, וועגן אַן אינצידענט וואָס ער האָט צוגעזען בעת אַ פאַרזאַמלונג פון דעם קלוב „פּרינט פון ייִדיש“, וווּ ער איז געווען אַ מיטגליד (כ'ברענג עס אין מיין איבערזעצונג פון עסטיש):

ס'שטייט מיר פאַר די אויגן דאָס געשעעניש בשעת אַ ייִדישיסטישער פאַרזאַמלונג, כאָטש איך געדענק ניט פינקטלעך ווען ס'איז געווען. מענטשן אין בריווע העמער זינען אַרפּין, זינגענדיק „אל ישראל“, און עס האָט זיך אָנגעהויבן אַ געשלעג: איך בין אָפּגעטראָטן אין אַ זיט און געזוכט מיט די אויגן לעווענבערגן [דעם פאַרזיצער פונעם קלוב]. נאָר יענער איז געלס געוואָרן. אָבער ניט אויף לאַנג. כאַלד האָט זיך די טיר געעפּנט, און אונדזער לעווענבערג איז געשטאַנען אויפן שוועל צוזאַמען מיט אַ געזונטן פּאָליציאַנט. און ס'איז זיכר געוואָרן רויק!

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די קולטורעלע פאַרכינדונגען צווישן ייִדן און עסטן האָבן זיך

אָנגעהויבן צו אַנמוויקלען ערשט אין דער צייט פון דער קולטור =  
 אויטאָנאָמיע. עסטישע איבערזעצונגען האָבן מיט זיך פאַרנעשמעלט די  
 הויפט־פּאַרס פון אַזלעכע קאַנטאַקטן. אסתר זשיטאַמירסקי האָט אין די  
 צוואַנציקער און דרייסיקער יאָרן איבערגעזעצט אויף עסטיש אַ צאָל  
 דערציילונגען פון שלום אָשן, שלום־עליכמען אין י.ל. פרצן, ס'רוב פון  
 זיי זינען אַרויס אין פאַרשיידענע עסטישע זשורנאַלן און צייטונגען.  
 בלויז פרצעס, „אדם און הווה“ איז אַרויסגעגעבן געוואָרן ווי אַ בוך אין  
 1923.

אין עסטיש זינען אויפגעפירט געוואָרן צוויי פיעסעס פון יידישע  
 מחברים: יעקב גאַרדינס, „מירעלע אפרת“ — אין דעם טעאטער  
 „וואַנעמוינע“ (1930) — און ה. לייזיקס, „שאַפ“ — אין דעם אַרבעטער־  
 טעאטער (1931). דער עסטישער טעקסט פון „שאַפ“ (איבערגעזעצט  
 פון דער זעלבער א. זשיטאַמירסקי) האָט זיך אָפּגעהיט אין דעם מוזיי  
 פון טעאטער און מוזיק אין מאָלין.  
 דער טעקסט פון „מירעלע אפרת“ האָט זיך ניט אָפּגעהיט. ס'איז  
 ניט אויסגעשלאָסן אז די איבערזעצונג האָט געמאַכט אָדער א.  
 זשיטאַמירסקי, אָדער דער אַקטיאָר ח. דרוי. כאַראַקטעריש אז דאָס  
 פראַגראַם־בלעטל פון „מירעלע אפרת“ ניט דערקלערונגען פון צדיק,  
 מלמד, ענונה און אנדערע ספעציפיש יידישע רעאליעס, וועלכע זינען  
 געוויינלעך ניט געווען באַקאַנטן דעם עסטישן עולם. בכלל, די פיעסע  
 איז געווען אויפגעפירט ווי אַ מיין עט נאַגראַפישע דראַמע. דער  
 רעזשיסער, וואָלדעמאַר מעטוס (Voldemar Mettus), האָט געוואָלט  
 איבערגעבן די אַטמאָספּער פון אַ שטעטל. ער האָט אַפילו פאַרבעטן מ.  
 דרוין, אַ חזן, יענער זאָל זאָגן „אל מלא רחמים“ בשעת דער פאַר־  
 שטעלונג. די ראָל פון מירעלע האָט געשפילט לייןאַ ריימאַן (Liina  
 Reiman), איינע פון די פירנדיקע עסטישע אַקטריסעס.  
 מהאָט אויך איבערגעזעצט פון עסטיש אויף יידיש. קיין  
 כיבלאַגראַפיע פון די דאָזיקע איבערזעצונגען איז ניטאָ. מיר איז  
 באַקאַנט דער נאָמען פון איינעם פון די איבערזעצער: הירש באַנד. ער  
 איז געווען אַ טוער אין דעם ליטעראַריש־דראַמאַטישן פאַרזיין „ח.ג.  
 ביאליק“ און פלעגט שרײַבן רעצענזיעס וועגן עסטישע ספּעקטאַקלען  
 און אַפּערעס פאַר די אַרטיקע יידיש־שפּראַכיקע צייטונגען. אין דער  
 צייטונג „נייע צייט“ (דעם 24טן דעצעמבער 1933) האָט ער פאַר־  
 עפנטלעכט זיין איבערזעצונג פון „ליד פון משוגעת“ פון דעם באַרימטן  
 עסטישן דיכטער און ליטעראַטור־פאַרשער נוסמאַוו סוויטס (Gustav  
 Suits).

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איך וויל אויך דערמאָנען די עסטן וואָס האָבן אויסגעלערנט יידיש

און האָבן זיך ערנסט פאַרנומען מיט וויסנשאַפֿטלעכער טעטיקייט אין הייליגות ייִדישע שפּראַך און קולטור.

פּאָל אַריסטע (1905-1990), אַ לינגוויסט אַ פּאָליגלאָט, האָט געזאַמלט ייִדישע פּאָלקלאָר אין טאַרטו, און נאָר אַדאַנק אים פאַרמאָגן מיר היינט אַזעלכע מאַטעריאַלן. זײַן אַרטיקל „עטלעכע ייִדישע פּאָלקסלידער אינעם לידער־רעפערטואַר פון די עסמײן“ איז געווען פאַרעפנטלעכט אין די ווילנער „ויוואָ־בלעטער“ (ב. 3, ג. 2, 1932, ז. 148-157). נאָך דער צווייטער וועלט־מלחמה זײַנען אַרויס אַנדערע זײַנע קורצע אָפּהאַנדלונגען וועגן ייִדן.<sup>3</sup> אַדאַנק אים זײַנען בעת דער צווייטער וועלט־מלחמה געראַמעוועט געוואָרן ספרים פון דעם טאַרטווער בית־מדרש.

פענט נורמעקונד (1907-1997) איז אויך געווען אַ שפּראַך־קענער. אין די צוואַנציקער יאָרן האָט ער שטודירט גערמאַניסטיק אין טאַרטו און דאָרטן זיך באַפּרײַנדעט מיט אליה לעווענבערגן, וואָס איז אויך געווען אַ סטודענט פונעם אוניווערסיטעט. לעווענבערג איז געוואָרן זײַן ערשטער לערער פון ייִדיש. דורך לעווענבערגן, דעם פאַרזיצער פון „פּרינט פון ייִדיש“ און ייִדישן לערער אין טאַרטווער ייִדישער שול, האָט זיך נורמעקונד באַקענט מיט אַ צאָל היגע ייִדן. ער פלעגט גיין אין ייִדישע קלובן און אויף פאַרשיידענע אַנדערע ייִדישע צונויפקומענישן. אַהויף דעם האָט ער איבערגעזעצט עטלעכע ייִדישע פּאָלקסלידער אויף עסטיש.<sup>4</sup> די טאַשמע מיט ייִדישע פּאָלקסלידער (נורעמקונד זינגט זיי אַליין) געפינט זיך אין דעם מוזיי פון ליטעראַור (RKM II Mgn. 3207). ס׳איז די איינציקע רעקאָרדירונג פון ייִדישע פּאָלקסלידער אין עסטלאַנד.

\*

דער סוף פון דער ייִדישער קולטור־אויטאָנאָמיע איז געקומען צוזאַמען מיט דער סאָוועטישער אַקפּאַציע אין 1940. מען האָט זי גלייך ליקוידירט „אַלס אַ בורזשאַווע דערשייַנונג“. שפּעטער האָט מען אַרעסטירט אַ סך ייִדישע מוער. (בסך־הכל האָט מען דעפּאַרטירט 500 ייִדן, מער ווי 10% פון די ייִדישע תושבים פון עסטלאַנד. און דערנאָך איז געווען די מלחמה וואָס האָט צוגענומען אַ מוזינט לעבנס פון עסטישע ייִדן.)

אַזוי איז פאַרשוונדן געוואָרן די נאָענטסטע — לויט א. מענדעלסאָנס מיינונג — רעאַליזירונג פון שמעון דוכנאָום הלום.

3. Paul Ariste, 'Ch. Lemchenas, *Kalbos itaka Lietuvos Zydu tarme; idem, Keelekontaktid* (Tallinn 1981), 158-9.

4. Anna Verschik, 'Pent Nurmekund as the translator of Yiddish folksongs into Estonian', *Nordisk Judaistik-Scandinavian Jewish Studies*, 15 (1-2), 1994.





Vegn einem in Estland gedruktn jidiš-špraxikn tekst  
(About one Yiddish-language text printed in Estonia).  
in press for *Oksforder Tsaitšrift*  
(publication of Oxford University) (in Yiddish).

## וועגן איינעם אין עסטלאנד געדרוקטן יידישן טעקסט

נאך 1940-טן יאר, וויפל איך ווייס, ס'איז געדרוקט געווארען נאר איין-איינציקער טעקסט אויף יידיש אין עסטלאנד. דאס איז א מערקווירדיקער פאל און דערפאר דוכט זיך, דארף מען אט דעם טעקסט געבן אכטונג.

דער טעקסט איז א בראשור וועגן דעם קאנצענטראציע-לאגער אין קלאָגאַ. אין 1994-טן יאר האט די עסטנישע רעגירונג באשלאסן, אז מען מוז אויפשטעלן א ריכטיקן מעמאריאל אויפן ארט פונעם לאגער, וואו אין די סאוועטישע צייטן איז געווען א שטיין מיט טיפיש-סאוועטישן טעקסט וועגען "אומשולדיקע סאוועטישע בירגער, קרבנות פון נאציזם". אגב, צווישן די קרבנות ס'איז ניט געווען קיין סאוועטישע בירגער. לכבד דעם עפענען פונעם מעמאריאל אין סעפטעמבער 1994 האט די יידישע געזעלשאפט אין עסטלאנד ארויסגעגעבען א בראשור "קלאָגאַ - 1944 KLOOGA - 1944". אט די בראשור איז אויף 4 שפראכן: עסטניש, יידיש, ענגליש און רוסיש. קיין נאמען פון דעם מחבר איז ניטא, כאטש מיר איז באקאנט, ווער ער איז. די צייטן זיינען ניט נומערירט. די בראשור קען מען באקומען נאר אלס א מתנה, אן געלט.

איצטער אינטערעסירט אונדז א לינגוויסטישער צוגאנג צו דעם טעקסט. נאר איידער מיר וועלן אנהויבן אונדזער באטראכטונג, דארף מען דערציילן א פאר ווערטער וועגן דער יידישער קולטור אין עסטלאנד פאר דער סאוועטישער אקופאציע פון באלטיקום אין 1940.

עסטישע יידן האבן געהאט א ברייטע קולטורעלע אויטאנאמיע: א קליינע קהילה פון 4000 מענטשן האט געהאט שולן, דראמאטישע געזעלשאפטן, סטודענטישע ארגאניזאציעס, קלובן א.א.וו. (פארמינג 1979, ליין 1995, מענדעלסאן 1983). אין 1927 האט קרן-קימת ארויסגעבן א דאנק-בריוו צו דער עסנישער רעגירונג פאר א גוטער און קארעקטער באציונג צו דער יידישער מינדערהייט.

די אומאפהענגיקע עסטלאנד האט באשאפן באדינגונגען פאר מינדערהייטס-אנטוויקלונג. עסטנישע יידן – מאדערנע, אורבאניזירטע, פילשפראכיקע, וועלטלעכע – האבן דורכגעלעבט א מין נאציאנאלע אויפוואכונג (מענדעלסאן 1983: 234, ווערשיק 1999a) אין דער תקופה פון קולטור-אויטאנאמיע (1940–1926) האט מען ארויסגעגעבן עטלעכע יידיש-שפראכיקע צייטונגען, וועלכע מען היט אויף אינעם ביבליאטעק פון דעם עסטנישן ליטערארישן מוזיי (KIRJANDUSMUSEUM). ס'איז זייער נייטיק פאר אונדזער טעקסט-באטראכטונג, אז מען קען פארגלייכן דעם דערמאנטן טעקסט מיט פריערדיקע עסטלאנדישע יידיש-שפראכיקע אויסגאבעס.

די קולטור-אויטאנאמיע איז געווארן ליקווידירט אין 1940 דורך דער סאוועטישער מאכט. פילע אקסיוויסטן פון דער אויטאנאמיע האט מען רעפרעסירט. די נאציס האבן געפירט צום לאגישן סוף וואס די סאוועטן האבן אנגעהויבן. נאך דער 2-טער וועלט-מלחמה אין "ווייטער באפרייטן" עסטלאנד קיין רייד וועגן קולטור-אויטאנאמיע אדער אפילו א יידישער שול איז ניט געווען. די, וואס האבן באוויזן צו ענדיקן א יידישע אדער א העברעיִשע שול צום 1940, זיינען געבוירן אין 1921–1922 אדער נאך פריער. ס'זיינען

פאראן אויך דאזיקע, וואס האבן אנגעהויבן זייער שול-וועג אין א יידישער שול, נאר האבן געמוזט ממשיך זיין אין אן אנדער שפראך (עסטניש אדער רוסיש). דאס קענטניש פון יידיש האט זיך זייער שטארק געמינדערט נאך דער מלחמה. היינט האבן מיר 500-600 יידיש-רעדערס (פון 3000, פון וועלכע די אריגינאלע מינדערהייט, "עסטנישע" יידן זיינען 1000). די פרטים וועגן סטאטיסטיק קען מען געפינען אין ווערשיק (1999a).

- דער טעקסט דערלויבט אונדז צו מאכן די פאלגנדיקע אויספירן:
- 1) וועגן דער אויסלייג, און וויפל איז ער געענדערט אין פריערדיקע יידישע טעקסטן, וואס זיינען ארויס אין עסטלאנד;
  - 2) וועגן דעם יידישן דיאלעקט, וואס מען רעדט אין עסטלאנד (עסטנישער יידיש);
  - 3) וועגן דעם מצב פון יידיש דעמאלט און היינטצוטאג;

#### 1. דער אויסלייג

דעם אויסלייג פון אודזער טעקסט דארף מען פארגלייכן מיט דעם אויסלייג פון פריערדיקע אויסגאבעס. לויט קאפ'ן (1987: 20-24) ס'איז פאראן 3 מינים פון אויסלייג (מיט עטלעכע מאדיפיקאציעס): דער מאדערנער סטאנדארטער אויסלייג, דער אויסלייג פון יווא און דער סאוועטישער אויסלייג. פארשטייט זיך, פראקטיש עקסיסטירן פארשידענע איבערגאנגס-וואריאנטן.

ווי עס ווייזט זיך אויס פון ליענען יידישע צייטונגען פון קולטור-אויטאנאמיע צייטן, קען מען ניט זאגן זיכער, אז מען באנוצט זיך מיט איינעם באזונדערן אויסלייג אין אלע אויסגאבעס: עס טרעפט זיך "ריינע" וואריאנטן און איבערגאנגס-וואריאנטן, נאר איין זאך איז גלייך קלאר: מיט דעם סאוועטישן אויסלייג באנוצט זיך קיין אויסגאבע.

לאמיר געבן אכטונג אס די וואריאנטן פון יווא-אויסלייג און פון דעם מאדערנעם סטאנדארטן אויסלייג.

#### דארפאטער שול-בלעטער. 1928.

אין אס דעם אויסגאבע איז שול, צן, און. דארטן וואו מען דארף פארמיידן צעמישטעניש, ד.ה. כדי ניט צו שרייבן דריי מאל ו, איז נון: באוונסט. ווען אויף איז א פרעפאזיטיווע, איז עס געשריבן ווי אף. און אלס א פרעפיקס איז עס אויף-: אויפלעבונגען. ניט אלעמאל איז דער אויסלייג לאגיש און קאנסעקווענט, ס'זיינען דא ביידע וואריאנטן בין און בא (טראדיציאנעל און פאנעטיש). בין אונדז איז פונקט פארקערט: אבער דאך בא דעם טייל. . . ס'איז ניט צו פארשטיין, פארוואס שרייבט מען וואן אי מיט אן א, אי מיט ן. אמאל שפילגס דער אויסלייג אויף אייניקע אייגנשאפטן פונעם דיאלעקט, ווי למשל, אך און דימינוטיוו: שטיקעלאך. אזא מין ענדונג אין דימינוטיוו איז פארשפרייט אין קורלאנד און זאמעט (מארק 1951: 440, מ. ווינרייך 1923: 502).

#### אונזער וועג. 1929.

אויך אין דעם אויסגאבע איז נון, און, שולדיק. אלס א פרעפאזיטיווע איז אומעטום אויף=אף (פאנעטיש), נאר בין איז אלעמאל געשריבן טראדיציאנעל.

עס זיינען פאראן אויך דאזיקע ביישפילן, וואו דער אויסלייג איז א "ריינער": יווא אדער מאדערנער סטאנדארטער. למשל, דער אנאנס פונעם "יידישן אקאדעמישן פאריין" (1935) איז געשריבן מיט יווא-אויסלייג, און אן אויפרוף פון 1938 באנוצט דעם ריינעם סטאנדארטן אויסלייג. אין גאנצן קען מען אבער זאגן, אז און פילע פאלן איז דער אויסלייג פון דעמאלטיקע אויסגאבעס ניט אלעמאל קאנסעקווענט (דאס זעלביקע ווארט איז געשריבן אמאל טראדיציאנעל, אמאל פאנעטיש). מען איז אבער קאנסעקווענט אין איין אספעקט: אלע ווערטער, וואס שטאמען פון העברעיִש, זיינען געשריבן טראדיציאנעל. קיין ביישפילן פונעם סאוועטישן אויסלייג איז ניטא.

דעם אויסלייג פון אונזער סעקסט (קלאָגאַ 1944) קען מען ניט גרינג קלאסיפצירן, ווייל ס'איז א קאמבינאציע פון אלע 3 אויסלייג־וואריאנטן. ווי עס ווערט געמאכט קלאר, איז די דאזיקע קאמבינאציע ניט קיין באוואוסטיגיקע, נאר א פעליצוא פון דער אונטערגעגאנגענער עברידיקייט.

### דער אויסלייג פון "קלאגא 1944".

- 1) אין דעם סעקסט שרייבט מען דריי 1 אדער דריי 2 נאכאנאנד און באנוצט זיך ניט מיט דעם שטומען אַ אדער מיט א פינטעלע: געצווונגן, געווסט.
- 2) אין דעם סעקסט ס'איז ניטא קיין רפה ("דעכעלע") אפילו איין איינציקן מאל.
- 3) אלס א פרעפאזיציע שרייבט מען כסדר אַפּ, אלס א פרעפיקס איז אלעמאל אַפּ- און אמאל אַיפּ-: אוועקגעלייגן אפּ די באלקעס און זיי אויפשטאפלען.
- 4) די פרעפאזיציע ביי איז אומעטום ביי: ביי די דארטיקע: ביי דער נאכט.
- 5) דער מחבר איז ניט זיכער, וואו מען דארף יא דעם טראפיקן 1 און וואו ניט: דייטשען; זעלונגן; געצווונגן. פונדעסטוועגן זיינען אייניקע פארמען געשריבן "צופעליק" ריכטיק: איבערלעבונגען; זעלען.
- 6) עס זיינען פאראן ביישפילן, וואו דער אויסלייג שפיגלט אויף אייניקע אייגנשאפטן פונעם דיאלעקט. וועגן דאזיקע פאלן זע דעם 2טן טייל.
- 7) דער אויסלייג פונעם סעמיטישן קאמפאנענט איז אמאל פאנעטיש, אמאל טראדיציאנעל. עסטנישע יידן זיינען באוואוסטזיניק וועגן דער עקזיסטענץ פונעם סאוועטישן אויסלייג. די סיבה, פארוואס איז די ארטאגראפיע פון סעמיטיש-אפשטאמיקע ווערטער ניט קאנסעקווענט, ליגט ניט אין דער כלומערשטיקער השפעה פון דער סאוועטישער ארטאגראפיע. א סברה, אז מען איז פשוט ניט זיכער, פונדערוועגן שטאמען אייניקע ווערטער אין יידיש: צי זיי געהערן צום סעמיטישן קאמפאנענט צי ניט. דאך געדענקט מען, אז סעמיטישע ווערטער דארף מען שרייבן טראדיציאנעל. דערפאר טרעפט זיך אין דעם סעקסא אזא צעמישעניש: פון איין זייט ס'איז דא קארבאנעס 'קרבנות'; זעהארגעט 'זעהרגעט' און פונעם אנדערן זייט אמת און א קאמבינאציע פון 2 אויסלייגן מלוכע 'מלוכה'.

דער לעצטער ביישפיל איז א באווייז, אז מען איז ניט זיכער, צום וואסער קאמפאנענט דאס ווארט געהערט. פאנעטיש און מארפאלאגיש זיינען די דאזיקע סובסטאנטיוון ווי מלוכה, משפחה א.א.וו. די זעלביקע ווי ניט סעמיטישע סובסטאנטיוון מאמע, בלבוע, קאשע ביידע גרופעס געהערן צו לשון-נקבה און מערצאל ענדיקט זיך מיט es- (-עס אדער -ת).  
2. דער דיאלעקט

עס איז גאנץ קלאר, אז עס איז ניט מעגלעך צו רעקאנסטרירן פונעם סעקסט אלע אייגנשאפטן פונעם יידישן דיאלעקט, וואס מען רעדט אין עסטלאנד (עסטנישער יידיש). למשל, קיין יידישער אויסלייג דערלויבט ניט צו מאכן אן אונטערשייד צווישן לאנגע און קורצע וואקאלן. אין עסטנישן יידיש, פונקט ווי אין קורלענדישן יידיש, עקזיסטירט אזא אונטערשייד: (איד) בין - בין; גאס - קאס; אדער (די קאניונקאציע) - אדער (וואו דאס כלום פליסט); (די) זון - (דער) זון א.א.וו. (ווערשיק b1999).

אויך ניט אלע דיפּטאגנען קען מען אפשפּיגלען אין דער ארטאגראפיע, למשל, די רעאליזאציע פונעם וואקאל 42/44 (öü). אין עסטנישן יידיש טרעפט זיך ספאראדיש דער וואקאל ü אין עטלעכע ווערטער, ווי צום ביישפיל, grün 'גריין'; oncündn 'אנצונדדן'; fünf 'פינף'. דאס קען מען ניט באווייזן אין אן ארטאגראפיע. דאך אייניקע אייגנשאפטן אין פאנעטיק, מארפאלאגיע און ווארט-אוצר זיינען יא פאראן אין אנדערע סעקסט.

## דיפטאנגען

עס איז ניט מעגלעך צו באשרייבן אלע פרטים פון דעם דיאלעקט אינעם דאזיקן ארטיקל. פונדעסטוועגן, קען מען דערנען עטלעכע אייגנשאפטן פון פאנעטיק. דער טעקסט דעמאנסטרירט, למשל, אז מיטן וואקאל 22/24 איז מען ניט זיכער. אין דעם אספעקט איז דער השפעה פון ליטעראטור-שפראך גאר שוואך. עס איז געשריבן: איינוויינערס 'איינוואוינערס' און דאך טרעפט זיך א היפעראקראעטע פורעם אנהויב 'אנהייב'. ס'איז אינטערעסאנט, אז מיט דעם וואקאל 54 ס'איז ניטא קיין דעוואיציעס פון דער סטאנדארט-ארטאגראפיע, אט דער דיפטאנג איז אין אלע פאלן וי. אין דעם דיאלעקט איז די רעאליזאציע פונעם וואקאל 54 אמאל au אמאל ou, נאר דער וואריאנט, וועלכער איז באזונדערש פארשפרייט, איז א צווישן-וואריאנט, וואו דער ערשטער וואקאל איז א קלאנג צווישן au און אמאל און ou. אט דער לעצטער דערמאנטער וואריאנט איז, א סברה, א השפעה פון באלטיש-דייטש - דעם דיאלעקט פון דייטש, וועלכע פלעגן רעדן די דייטשן אין עסטלאנד און לעטלאנד (וועגן דעם דיפטאנג אין באלטיש-דייטש זע לעהיסטע 1965: 57).

## בייגפאלן און ארטיקלען

פונעם שטאנדפונקט פון דער פאנעטיק איז דער עסטנישער יידיש דער נאענטסטער קורב פון קורלענדישן יידיש (אריסטע 1970, ווערשיק 1997). אין מארפאלאגיע אונטערשיידן זיך אלע צפון-מזרחדיקע דיאלעקטן ווייניקער ווי אין פאנעטיק אדער אין ווארט-אוצר.

די וויכטיקסטע אייגנשאפטן פון אט דער דיאלעקט-גרופע זיינען די פאלגענדיקע: (1) דער נייטראלער מין איז פארשוואונדן (זע די פרוטים אין דזשייקאבס 1990) און (2) אקוואטיוו און דאטיוו צונויפגעפאלן אין איין בייגפאל - אביעקטיוו (מארק 1951).

אין אזא קורצן טעקסט ווי אונדזערער ס'איז ניטא קיין ביישפילן וואו דער מין וואלט געווען אנדערש ווי אין דער ליטעראטור-שפראך. מסתמא איז דער מחבר געווען פארזיכטיק מיט סובסטאנטיוו, ווייל ער האט געוואוסט, אז די ליטעראטור-שפראך האט 3 מינים. נאר וועגן דעם צונויפפאל פון צוויי בייגפאלן אין איין קען מען טרעפן אינעם טעקסט א סך ביישפילן. למשל: פון די רייך; פון די שווערע און אונמענטשלעכע... פיזישע ארבעט א.א.וו. ווי עס ווייזט אויס פונעם צווייטן ביישפיל, איז אויך די דעקלינאציע פון אדיעקטיוו צעשטיצט.

אפטמאל פעלט עס וועלכער-ניט-איז ארטיקל דארטן וואו עס מוז זיין: אף דער טעריטאריע פון (?) לאגער. דא רעט מען אבער וועגן דעם באשטימטן און שוין דערמאנטן לאגער קלאַגאַ, וואס איז די טעמע פונעם טעקסט.

אומזיכערקייט און קווענקלענישן מיטן ארטיקל-געברויך זיינען כאראקטעריסטיש פאר אונדזער דיאלעקט. די סיבה איז ניט נאר אין דעם, אז ס'איז פאראן אזויגערופענע "פוסטע" קאטעגאריע פון סובסטאנטיוו (דזשייקאבס 1990), וועלכע געהערן צום נייטראלן מין אין אנדערע, ניט צפון-מזרחדיקע דיאלעקטן, און ניט נאר אין דעם, אז אנשטאט צוויי בייגפאלן ס'איז נאר איין. אונדזער אדער ווי די רעדערס רופן אים, אונדזער עסטנישער- (באלטישער) יידיש, האט זיך אנטוויקלט אינעם קאנטאקט מיט דער עסטנישער שפראך, וואו די קאטעגאריע פון ארטיקל עקזיסטירט בכלל ניט. די וויכטיקייט און די השפעה פון עסטניש אויף יידיש איז געוואקסן במשך פונעם צווייטן פערטל פון אונדזער יארהונדערט. און דער גערעטער שפראך טרעפט זיך אפטמאל, אז אפילו אין גאר קלארע פאלן, וואו א סובסטאנטיוו געהערט בכלל ניט צום נייטראלן מין; ס'איז דא אן אומזיכערקייט: דער זעלביקער רעדער קען זאגן למשל דער קריג אין די קריג; די שול און דער שול. ס'איז אויך א פראבלעם, צו וועלכן מין מוזן געהערן פארשיידענע עסטנישע אנטלענונגען (ווייל קיין מין איז אין עסטניש ניטא). דערפאר קען מען הערן סובסטאנטיוו אן שום ארטיקל, אדער מיט אן ארטיקל אן קיין שום סיסטעם (זע ביישפילן אין ווערשיק 1997).

## אנדערע מארפאלאגישע אייגנשאפטן

נאר עטלעכע פראטים וויזן זיך אויס פונעם טעקסט. אייניקע פרעפיקסן זיינען פונקט ווי אין דייטש, ניט ווי אין יידיש. דאס איז ניט צופעליק, ווייל דייטש פלעגט שפילן א וויכטיקע ראליע אין באלטיקום און אלע געבילדעטע מענטשן פלעגן קענען גוט דייטש פאר דער 2-טער וועלט-מלחמה. וועגן קורלענדישע יידן, למשל, איז פארשפרייט געווארן אזא מיינונג, אז זיי רעדן בעצם ניט קיין יידיש, נאר דייטש. דאך מ. וויינרייך (1923) האט באוויזן, אז דאס איז ניט דייטש, נאר א ספעציפישער יידישער דיאלעקט, וואס האט זיך אנטוויקלט אינעם נאענטן קאנטאקט מיט קורלענדער דייטש (ד.ה. באלטיש-דייטש). די השפעה פונעם באלטיש-דייטשן דיאלעקט אויף יידיש ווייזט זיך אויס זייער שטארק אין דעם ווארט-אוצר. דערפאר מוז מען זיך אפהיטן פון א פייראטיוון געברויך פונעם טערמין "דייטשמעריש" און "דייטשמעריזם". די זעלביקע השפעה האט באלטיש-דייטש געמאכט אויף עסטנישן יידיש. די סיבה, פארוואס עס איז געווען אזוי, איז גאר קלאר: אין עסטלאנד איז (באלטיש-)דייטש געווען זייער לאנג א *Kultursprache*, אבער קיין סלאווישן (סלאוויש-שפראכיקן) באפעלקערונג איז כמעט ניט געווען. דערפאר האט דער דיאלעקט גערמאניזמען דארטן, וואו אנדערע דיאלעקטן אדער די ליטעראטורשפראך האבן סלאוויזמען. אן ענלעכע מעשה האט פאסירט מיטן סעמיטישן קאמפאנענט: טראדיציאנעלע יידישקייט איז קיינמאל ניט געווען שטארק אין עסטלאנד און אנשטאט פילע העפראיזמען האט דער דיאלעקט ווערטער פונעם דייטשן אפשטאם; למשל: ענטל, ניט קאטשקע דיל, ניט קראפ אדער אוקראפ, איבערהויפט [überhaupt] ניט בלל, אומגעפער, ניט בערך א.א.וו.

אבער צוריק צו פרעפיקסן. אינעם טעקסט איז אנשטאט אונג- אומעטום אונ- ווי אין דייטש: אונגעפער 'אומגעפער', אונמעגלעך 'אוממעגלעך' א.א.וו. אין דער גערעדטער שפראך איז רעגלמעסיק ער- אנשטאט דער-: ערצייילונג 'דערצייילונג'; ערציען 'דערציען'; ערפארונג 'דערפארונג'. ס'איז אויך איין ווערב, וועלכער איז קאנסטרירט לויט דער דייטשער מאדעל מיט דעם דייטשן פרעפיקס פער-: פערארבייטן 'באארבעטן'.

אין איין פאל איז די מערצאל ניט אל-פירדיקדוק: לאגערס אנשטאט לאגערן.

#### דער ווארט-אוצר

פריער איז שוין געווען באשריבן און דערקלערט, פארוואס איז א השפעה פון דייטש געווען אזוי וויכטיק. אינעם ווארט-אוצר פונעם טעקסט זיינען פאראן ווערטער, וואס שטאמען זיכער פון דייטש. ארבעטסטרומען 'ווארשטאט'; פארארבייטונג 'באארבעטונג'; קולטורטרעגער 'קולטור-טוער'; שריפטשטעלער 'שרייבער'; ווידערהאלן 'איבערחזרן'. עטלעכע ווערטער, וואו דער אונטערשייד פון יידיש און דייטש איז ניט גרויס, שטייען אין דייטשער פורעם. דאס איז אזוי-גערופענע "ווייכע אינטערפערענץ", דער טערמין פון א. וויינרייך (1953: 50). למשל, עס שטייט געשריבן פינסטער אנשטאט פינצטער. קאנצענטראציאנאלאגער אנשטאט קאנצענטראציע-לאגער, רומעניע אנשטאט רומעניע.

#### 3. דער היינטיקער מצב

קוקנדיק אויף דעם טעקסט, ס'איז קלאר, אז עברידיקייט האט זיך געמינדערט זייט דער 2-טער וועלט-מלחמה. פאר דער סאוועטישער אקופאציע און פאר דער מלחמה איז די ליטעראטורשפראך ניט געווען זייער שטארק, ווייל עסטלאנד איז ניט געווען קיין יידישער קולטור-צענטרום, ווי למשל, לעטלאנד און ליטע. די ליטעראטורשפראך האט ניט באוויזן צו פארנעמען א זיכערע פאזיציע צווישן יידיש-רעדערס. די שול-סיסטעם איז ניט געווען זייער ברייטע, און ס'רוב פון רעדערס פלעגן רעדן דעם דיאלעקט.

ס'איז געווען 2 שולן מיט יידיש אלס אונטערריכטונגסשפראך: אין טארטו (TARTU) זייט 1926 און אין דער הויפט-שטאט טאלין (TALLINN) זייט 1931. די יידישע גימנאזיע אין טאלין האט געעפנט א יידישע קלאס פאראלעל מיט דעם פריער עקזיסטירטנדיקן העברעישן קלאס צוליב שטארקע פאדערונגען פון

עלטערן, וועלכע האבן געוואלט, די קינדער זאלן לערנען אויף מאמע-לשון.

אבער ניט אלע יידן פלעגן לערנען אויף יידיש אדער בכלל אין א יידישער שול. אין קלענערע שטעט ווי פערנו (PÄRNU), וויליאנדי (VILJANDI), ראקווערע (RAKVERE) קיין יידיש שולן זיינען ניט געווען. אפילו אין טאלין און טארטו האט זייער אפט פאסירט, אז א קינד גייט בכלל און א ניט-יידישער שול אדער גייט אריבער פון א יידישער שול אין א ניט-יידישער, אדער פארקערט. אט דא זיינען עטלעכע "שפראך-ביאגראפיעס".

איטא ס. איז געבארן אין וואלא אין 1921. די שטאט וואלא (VALGA) איז ניט קיין גרויסע, ס'איז געווען דארטן נאר א קליינער שול מיט 3 קלאסן אויף העברעיש. די יידישיסטישע עלטערן האבן באשלאסן, אז אויב ניט אויף יידיש, טא איז בעסער גאר אפצוגעבן דאס קינד אין א עסטנישער שול. די שפראך אין דער היים איז געווען יידיש.

דינא ס. איז געבארן געווארן אין 1921 אין האפסאלו (HAAPSALU), וואו עס איז געווען נאר 2 יידישע משפחות. די עלטערן זיינען איבערגעצאגן קיין טאלין. זיי האבן געוואלט, די מיידל זאל לערנען אין א דייטשער שול. נאר לויטן געזעץ א קינד האט געמוזט גיין אדער אין נאציאנאלער שול, אדער אין א עסטנישער. נאר אין די שטעט, וואו קיין יידיש שולן זיינען ניט געווען, ס'איז געווען מעגלעך צו גיין אין אן אנדער שול. די עלטערן האבן געשיקט דעם קינד צוריק אין האפסאלו, וואו זי האט אנגעהויבן אין א דייטשער שול. אין א צייט ארום איז דאס קינד צוריק אין טאלין, וואו די עלטערן האבן באקומען א דערלויבעניש פונעם בילדונגסמיניסטעריום: ממשיך זיין אויף דייטש אין א דייטשער שול, ווייל די מיידל האט שוין אנגעהויבן אויף דייטש אין האפסאלו. שפעטער איז די מיידל אריבער אין דער יידישער גימנאזיע אינעם יידישן קלאס. אינעם אוניווערסיטעט האט זי געלערנט, פארשטייט זיך, אויף עסטניש. יידיש קען זי רעדן נאר ניט שרייבן.

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בשעת דער מלחמה איז דאס רוב עסטנישע יידן געווען אין דער עוואקואציע אין רוסלאנד, וואו עס האט געפעלט א געלעגנהייט צו לערנען אויף יידיש. פילע קינדער זיינען געווען געצוואונגען צו לערנען אויף רוסיש, וואס איז געווען פאר א סך עסטנישע יידן א פרעמדע שפראך. נאך דער מלחמה איז מען אריינגעפאלן אין אן איזאלאציע פון דער רעשטער יידיש-שפראכיקער וועלט. ס'איז געווען מעגלעך צו לייענען סאוועטישע יידישע אויסגאבעס מיטן סאוועטישן אויסלייג. פאר א סך מענטשן עס איז געווען שווער צו לייענען אזא ארטאגראפיע, אי אידעאלאגיש, אי פראקטיש.

די איזאלאציע פון דער יידיש-שפראכיקער וועלט האט פאסירט מיט באלטישע יידן מיט 20 יאר שפעטער ווי אנדערשוואו אין סאוועטנפארבאנד. עסטנישע יידן האבן באהיטן זייער אידענטיטעט, נאר קיין מעגלעכקייטן זיך ארויסצורייסן פון דער איזאלאציע איז ניט געווען (א חוץ עמיגראציע).

אן אנדער אספעקט איז די באציונג "ליטעראטורשפראך - דיאלעקט". ווי עס איז דערמאנט פריער, האט די ליטעראטורשפראך ניט באוויזן ממלא-מקום צו זיין דעם דיאלעקט. היינטצוטאג קען ס'רוב פון יידיש-רעדערס ניט שרייבן אדער לייענען אויף יידיש, כאטש דער דיאלעקט רעדט מען גאר פריי. די פארזאמלונגען אין טאלינער יידישער קלוב (עקזירטירט זייט 1995) האבן דעמאנסטרירט, אז מען איז זייער שטאלץ פונעם אייגענעם דיאלעקט און טראכט אפטמאל, אז אט דער דיאלעקט איז טאקע די ליטעראטורשפראך. ווען דער אויטאר פון אט דעם ארטיקל האט פרובירט צו שמעסן אויף דער ליטעראטור שפראך, האבן די קלוב-מיטגלידער געפרעגט אויף וואסער דיאלעקט זי רעדט און פארוואס ניט עפעס אויף "אונדזערן". זיי האבן ניט געוואלט צו גלייבן, אז די ליטעראטורשפראך איז אייז זאך און דער דיאלעקט איז עפעס אנדערש. דערפאר איז

איצטער זייער שווער צו זאגן, וויפל איז די יידישע ליטעראטורשפראך משפיע געווען אויפן דיאלעקט.

צום סוף קען מען זאגן דאס פאלגנדיקע: ווי שרייבט מ. דראטשינסקי (1991: 48-247), האט די סאוועטישע אקופאציע פון באלטיקום פרובירט צו מאכן באלטישע פעלקער און באלטישע יידן "גלייך" צו דער רעשטן באפעלקערונג פונעם סאוועטנפארבאנד. עס איז כמעט געלונגען לגבי יידישע עברדיקייט און נאציאנאלע בילדונג, נאר צום מזל, ניט געלונגען לגבי נאציאנאלער באוואוסטזיניקייט און אידענטיטעט אלס עסטישע יידן.

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# CONCLUSIONS

## 1. The characteristic features of the dialect

The Yiddish dialect spoken in Estonia, or Estonian Yiddish, is a fairly homogeneous dialect with very little territorial variation. It has developed on the basis of Courland Yiddish and has preserved most of its archaic features. All the speakers value highly their dialect — *estniš idiš* ‘Estonian Yiddish’ or *baltiš idiš* ‘Baltic Yiddish’. They distinguish clearly between their dialect and Lithuanian Yiddish. It is commonly believed that “our” Yiddish is Standard Yiddish or that Standard Yiddish is based on “our” dialect. None of the speakers have had any contact with other Yiddish dialects. Many informants grew up without any knowledge of Standard Yiddish (in cases when education was received in a non-Jewish school).

The stressed **vowel system** is the closest to the so-called Courland type: the opposition between short and long vowels has survived (*dil* ‘dill’ — *di:l* ‘floor’, *zun* ‘sun’ — *zu:n* ‘son’), vowel 22/24 is often realized as *äi* (*äibik* ‘eternal’, *häim* ‘home’) and occasionally as *ei* (*eibik*, *heim*); vowel 42/44 is realized as *öi* in the speech of elderly informants (*bröit* ‘bread’, *köifn* ‘to buy’). The process of dialect leveling has affected Estonian Yiddish and vowel 42/44 is realized as *ei* (Vilna type) in the speech of younger informants. Vowel 54 has parallel realizations as *au* (Courland type) and, less frequently, as *ou* (Samogitian type), but most often as an intermediate between *au* and *ou*, which is also a feature present in Baltic German and can be considered as a Baltic German influence on Estonian Yiddish.

**Front rounded monophthongs** *ö* and *ü* (*fünf* ‘five’, *grü:n* ‘green’, *tsvölf* ‘twelve’) are unique features in the vowel system of Estonian Yiddish, which may be explained as an influence of German and, to some extent, an impact of Estonian adstratum.

Baltic German has also affected the realization of **sonants** *l* (soft alveolar) and *r* (lingual) in Courland Yiddish and in Estonian Yiddish.

The distribution of **hissing and hushing consonants** follows the pattern of Courland Yiddish: in the words of Germanic origin as in Standard German (*kisn* ‘pillow’, cf. German *Kissen*, *mišn* ‘to mix’, cf. German *mischen*) and *š* in words of Slavic and Semitic origin (*mištome* ‘probably’ < Hebrew, *kaše* ‘porridge’ < Slavic).

Morphology does not differ much from that of NEY: it contains the most typical NEY features such as the loss of neuter gender and the merger of Dative and Accusative into the Objective Case. Conditional mood is formed as in Courland and Lithuanian Yiddish according to the pattern *volt* + infinitive, not *volt* + participle.

Due to historical circumstances **lexical items** belonging to Germanic component are prevailing in the lexicon of Estonian Yiddish. Varieties of German (Baltic German, Standard German) have played an important role in Estonia and Latvia. The contact with Slavic peoples and languages was much weaker than in case of Yiddish-speakers from other areas. Slavisms found in Courland and in Estonian Yiddish are fairly old. Traditional Jewish orthodoxy and Jewish learning were rather weak in the area and this is the reason why many words of Semitic origin have been substituted by items of Germanic origin. Estonian Yiddish and Courland Yiddish have a relatively great number of lexical items of Low German origin (*boksbe:rn* 'black currant', *ditke* 'a small coin', *klade* 'a big notepad', *kolk* 'a deep place in a river', *redl* 'ladder' etc.). In some cases it is impossible to distinguish between Low Germanisms and Scandinavisms on purely linguistic criteria (cases like *raut* 'windowpane', *šnikern* 'to cut into small pieces without purpose').

Lithuanianisms (borrowings from Lithuanian into Lithuanian Yiddish which were also present in Courland Yiddish and later "migrated" together with speakers) have almost disappeared from Estonian Yiddish.

The **impact of Estonian** has increased during the last 70–80 years. Estonian influence is visible in lexicon and in phonology. Some informants apply Estonian intonation patterns to Yiddish and also re-interpret Yiddish words in the terms of Estonian phonology (gemination of clusters *k*, *p*, *t* in intervocalic position, application of Estonian quantity system).

## 2. Contacts with Baltic German and Estonian

The degree of mutual influence between Yiddish and the coterritorial languages is asymmetrical: the impact of Yiddish on these languages is limited to lexicon only, while Baltic German and Estonian have affected the lexicon, phonology and, to a smaller extent, morphology of Estonian Yiddish.

Such an asymmetry can be explained by sociolinguistic factors, such as the status of each language, number of speakers, in- and outgroup prestige etc. Until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century German enjoyed a high prestige as the language of local nobility, education and culture. Its impact on coterritorial languages was significant. Yiddish was only a language of in-group communication with no official status whatsoever.

However, some Yiddish lexical borrowings entered Baltic German either directly or via other German dialects (sometimes via *Rotwelsch*). Such loans as *Balaboss* 'master', *dibbern* 'to mutter', *meschugge* 'crazy', *Zorres* 'trouble' are known in many German dialects and are a part of contemporary colloquial German. Some Yiddish loans like *blondsén* 'to wander' and *zeppern* 'to touch', 'to stick', 'to annoy' were likely to be borrowed into Baltic German from coter-

ritorial Yiddish dialects (because the changes  $d\check{z} > dz$  and  $t\check{s} > ts$  are typical for Courland Yiddish).

As it was mentioned before, Baltic German has influenced the phonology and lexicon of Estonian Yiddish. The realization of *l* (soft, alveolar) and *r* (lingual, non-uvular), the diphthong intermediate between *au* and *ou* and, possibly, the diphthong *äi* can be ascribed to the impact of Baltic German. Some typical Baltic German influenced features have already disappeared. For instance, non-apocopated forms (often an impact of Standard German) as *bluze* 'blouse', *šū:le* 'school' are used instead apocopated forms *bluz*, *šū:l*. Lowering of *e* before *r*, a typical Low German feature, occurs only rudimentarily in proper names and toponyms (*Berta* [bärta], *Perlman* [pärlman], *Pernau* [pärnau]).

Baltic German has a very slight influence on Estonian Yiddish morphology. The only typical feature is the borrowing of the suffix *-sch* > *-š* in adjectives formed from toponyms: *ix bin a revalše* 'I am a resident of Tallinn/Reval' (fem.). Although today Estonian toponyms have almost completely replaced their German counterparts in the speech of Estonian Jews, the suffix is still used: *er iz aläin a talinšer* 'he (himself) is a resident of Tallinn'.

The number of Baltic and Low Germanisms in Estonian Yiddish is relatively high. Sometimes Estonian is a mediator of Baltic and Low Germanisms into Estonian Yiddish: Low German/Baltic German *Ingwer* 'ginger' > Estonian *ingver* > Estonian Yiddish *ingver*, cf. Yiddish *ingber*, *imber*. Baltic German could also serve as a mediator of borrowings from Estonian into Yiddish (see below).

The significance of Estonian for non-Estonians increased after the establishment of the Republic of Estonia in 1918. It is clear, however, that such a small minority as Jews had to have a certain command of the local majority's language. As it was already mentioned in part 1, there are certain phonological features which can be explained as an influence of Estonian. There exist established lexical borrowings into Yiddish (*ka:like* 'turnip < Estonian *kaalikas*, *kohvik* 'coffee-shop' < Estonian *kohvik*); although code-switching between Yiddish and Estonian is frequent and it is hard to distinguish between speech borrowings and single-word switches.

In morphology there is a tendency of article loss and collapse of adjective declination system. The loss of neuter in NEY has caused the redistribution of nouns and has created the so-called empty category, where gender assignment is not governed by semantic or morphological criteria. The same noun can receive a different gender in the same utterance by the same speaker (*in di tsait fun di kri:g* 'during the war' and *es hot zix ongeheibn der kri:g* 'the war began'). Introduction of borrowings from Estonian can lead to omission of any article, definite or indefinite (Estonian lacks the grammatical categories of gender and article): *es hot zix gebildet üliöpilasedustus* 'student representation body was formed'. Gender assignment becomes gradually problematic not only in the case of borrowings from Estonian but also in the case of Yiddish words. Inconsistencies in gender assignment lead to inconsistencies in adjective

declination. Thus, Yiddish internal tendency is intensified by coterritorial Estonian.

Standard Estonian has very few lexical borrowings from Yiddish. Nevertheless, the variety of Estonian used by Jews has a lot of borrowings from Yiddish (mainly cultural terms and expressive words: *peisax* 'passover', *šmontses* 'rubbish'). There is a tendency to translate idioms from Estonian into Yiddish and vice versa: *haltn dem kind* 'to baby-sit' < Estonian *last hoidma*; *võtma endale pähe* 'to take into heart' < Yiddish *nemen zix in kop* (whereas for monolingual Estonians the latter expression means 'to set one's heart on', 'to become obsessed').

Estonian-Yiddish code-switching gives an evidence of so-called compromise forms, e.g. forms not used in a separate monolingual grammar. Such forms arise in order to avoid the clash between the word order in the two languages. Compromise forms may be an evidence of a so-called third grammar, or convergent grammar, or code-switch grammar. Estonian-Yiddish data can be useful for general theoretical discussion of code-switching.

### 3. Sociolinguistic developments

Any linguistic study of a Jewish community has to include an analysis of multilingualism. However, reasons of multilingualism and hierarchy of languages can vary from community to community. In our case the model of traditional Jewish di- or triglossia (Aramaic, Hebrew, Yiddish) is not applicable, because the life of Estonian Jewry was governed by different sociocultural circumstances. The small size of the minority, high urbanization, acculturation and remoteness from great East European centers of traditional Jewish learning suggest another pattern: Yiddish monolingualism or traditional internal diglossia would be impossible here. Communication with coterritorial population is inevitable for such a tiny group and at least some competence in non-Jewish languages is needed.

All Estonian Jews are at least bilingual (Yiddish and Estonian), but also tri- or even quaterlingualism is not unusual (Yiddish, Estonian, Russian, German). In spite of abrupt social and political changes which took place in Estonia in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, multilingualism and a high degree of linguistic awareness persisted.

The distinction between indigenous and non-indigenous Jewish minority is crucial for our study. Multilingualism and self-identification as Jews are the features of the indigenous minority, while the non-indigenous minority consists of newcomers (after 1945) and is characterized mainly by Russian monolingualism.

The right for cultural autonomy guaranteed by the law of 1925 gave great opportunities to the Jewish minority. In independent Estonia it experienced a

kind of national revival and later this experience became extremely important for self-identification. School statistics demonstrates that in that period a number of pupils in German and Russian schools decreased in favor of Estonian or national (Yiddish or Hebrew) schools. The struggle between Yiddishism and Hebraism among Jews of Eastern Europe affected the local cultural life, too.

The Holocaust and the Soviet occupation of Estonia caused major social and cultural disruptions. Under the Soviet rule Jewish (Yiddish or Hebrew) education became impossible and one had to choose between Estonian or Russian education and culture. Although Jewish identity has been preserved among members of (the remnants of) the indigenous minority, Yiddish literacy has drastically decreased. Theoretically Soviet Yiddish periodicals were available, but those who could still read Yiddish were disturbed by Soviet Yiddish orthography, while non-Soviet Yiddish periodicals and fiction became extremely unavailable. The current state of Yiddish literacy can be demonstrated by the only Yiddish-language text printed in Estonia after World War II: it is a mixture of YIVO and modern standard spelling with occasional application of phonetic principle to the words of Semitic origin (in this respect the Soviet Yiddish spelling is used, although unconsciously).

The speakers of Yiddish are aware of their multilingualism and enjoy it. Their linguistic behavior is characterized by a high number of metalinguistic commentaries (“there is a proverb in German”, “as they say in Estonian” etc.). Code-switching is a norm for the speech community. There are no preferences of a particular code-switching type, both inter- and intrasentential code-switches are used.

An important object for future research is the use of non-Jewish languages by Jews and a rise of special Jewish varieties of these languages. Various varieties of Jewish English have been studied or at least outlined in the relevant literature; however, there are other “non-Jewish Jewish languages” which still remain ignored. It is possible that a variety of Jewish Estonian is under formation; at least there is evidence that Jews use Estonian with monolingual Estonians differently than within-group.

Unfortunately, Yiddish is a declining language. It is not promoted by the local Jewish Society. Non-indigenous Jews who have no sentiments for Yiddish constitute a majority (two thirds of the total Jewish population in Estonia). There are few younger Jews (both indigenous or non-indigenous). We hope that the present study helps to preserve at least some data concerning the declining language of Estonian indigenous Jewish minority to the attention of scholarly world.

## KOKKUVÕTE

Käesolev väitekiri käsitleb Eesti jidišit, selle kohta teiste kirdejidiši murrete hulgas, kontakte naaberkeeltega ja 20. sajandi jooksul toimunud sotsiolingvistilisi muutusi. Et tegemist on seni peaaegu tundmatu problemaatikaga, on väitekirjas peetud vajalikuks Eesti jidiši kirjeldamist. Eesti jidišit on vaadeldud nii teiste kirdejidiši murrete (esmajoones eelkäija — Kuramaa jidišiga võrreldes) kui ka üldises Baltikumini keelte kontekstis.

Järeldusi võib jagada kolme rühma: 1) murret puudutavad, 2) kontaktide kohta asukohamaa keeltega (eelkõige eesti ja baltisaksa keelega), 3) sotsiolingvistilise situatsiooni dünaamikat käsitlevad.

Eesti jidiš on välja kujunenud Kuramaa jidiši baasil ja säilitanud tänini palju arhailisi jooni, mis on teistes kirdemurretes hääbunud. Lühikeste ja pikkade vokaalide opositsioon on üldjoontes säilinud. Rõhulise vokalismi süsteem on kõige lähedasem Kuramaa jidiši omale, kuigi mõned arhailised jooned (näiteks diftong *öi*) esinevad harva ja enamasti vanemate keelejuhtide kõnes. Palju ühiseid jooni on ka mõlema murde konsonantismis. Ainulaadseks foneetiliseks jooneks on labialiseeritud eesvokaalide *ü*, *ü*: ja *ö* sporaadiline esinemine, mida võib seletada saksa kirjakeele ja eesti keele mõjuga. Selliseid vokaale ei leidu mitte üheski teises kirdejidiši murdes.

Võrreldes teiste jidiši murretega on germaani päritolu sõnavara selges ülekaalus. See seik on seletatav Eesti ja Läti juutide ajaloo omapäraga: kontakt slaavi keeltega oli minimaalne, saksa keele osatähtsus selles piirkonnas aga tohutu. Eesti jidiši sõnavaras leidub kurlandisme (paar laenu läti keelest ja suur hulk baltisaksa keelest laenatud sõnavara). Nii Eesti kui ka Kuramaa jidiši ainulaadseks jooneks on alamsaksa laenud. Kunagised lituanismid (leedu laenud), mis kunagi “rändasid” koos kõnelejatega põhja poole, on tänaseks peaaegu hääbunud. Semiidi (heebrea ja aramea) komponent on väiksem kui teistel jidiši aladel, sest traditsiooniline ortodoksia oli Eestis levinud üpris vähe. Viimase 70–80 aasta vältel on kasvanud eesti keele tähtsus ja toimunud laenamine eesti keelest.

Morfoloogias on säilinud põhilised kirdejidiši jooned: akusatiivi ja daativi kokkusulamine üheks käändeks — objektiiviks, ning kesksoo kadu.

Baltisaksa mõju jidišile ilmneb eelkõige sõnavaras (*redl* ‘redel’, *klade* ‘vihik, klade’, *kolk* ‘sügav koht jões’, *ditke* ‘väike münt’ jms.) ning foneetikas: traditsiooniliselt peetakse baltisaksamõjuliseks konsonantide *l* ja *r* realiseerumist (alveolaarne *l* ja mitteuvulaarne *r*). Võimalik, et diftong *äi* Eesti ja Kuramaa jidišis on samuti tekkinud baltisaksa mõjul. Jidiši mõju baltisaksa keelele piirdub vaid sõnavaraga. Võimalik, et osa jidiši laene on tunginud baltisaksa keelde saksa ühiskeele ja teiste saksa murrete kaudu. Osal juhtumitel võib laenu foneetilise kuju põhjal kindlalt väita, et laenatud on just baltijidišist (s.o. eelkõige Kuramaa jidišist), näiteks *zeppern* ‘haarama’, ‘kinni hakkama’ < Kuramaa, Eesti jidiš *tsepen*, vrd jidiš *tšepen*. Baltisaksa keel on mõjutanud jidišit rohkem kui jidiš baltisaksa keelt.

Eesti keele mõju paistab eelkõige sõnavaras (laenud nagu *kohvik* 'kohvik', *sepik* 'sepik' jms), mõningatel keelejuhtidel ka foneetikas. Eesti kvantitatiivset süsteemi rakendatakse jidiši puhul, igale sõnale antakse välde. Samuti esineb klusiilide *k, p, t* geminatsioon intervokaalses asendis. Mõningane kaudne mõju on täheldatav ka morfoloogias, nimelt artikli kadumine. Jidišist on eesti kirja-keelde laenatud vaid 5–6 sõna, kuid Eesti juutide eestikeelses kõnes leidub jidiši laene rohkem. Võib rääkida erilisest keelevariandist, juutide eesti keelest, mis on parajasti kujunemas. Selliseid juutide poolt kasutatavaid mittejuudi keelte variante on täheldatud näiteks Ameerika inglise keele puhul.

Eesti keel võib osutada (alam)saksa laenude vahendajaks jidišisse, samuti on baltisaksa keel toiminud eesti laenude vahendajana. Näiteks Eesti jidiši *ingver* < eesti *ingver* < baltisaksa *Ingwer*, vrd jidiši *ingber*. Eesti jidiši sõnad *luxt* 'luht', *lage* 'lagi' on nähtavasti pärit baltisaksa keelest, kuhu nad on omakorda laenatud eesti keelest.

Eesti-jidiši koodivahetus pakub huvitavaid näited kompromissvormidest, s.o vormidest, mis ei esine kummaski monolingvaalses grammatikas, kuid tekiavad kahe keele grammatikareeglite vastuolu vältimiseks.

Mitmekeelsus on aktuaalne iga juudi kogukonna uurimise puhul. Eesti juudid ei ole selles suhtes erand. Asukohamaa keelte oskust on alati peetud vajalikuks. Mitmekeelsust soodustavad tegurid on aga siin juhul teistsugused kui traditsioonilistes juudi kogukondades, nimelt sekulariseerumine ja rühma väga väike osatähtsus rahvastikus (0,4% enne Teist maailmasõda ja 0,1% tänapäeval). Kõik Eesti juudid on vähemalt kakskeelsed (eesti ja jidiš), levinud on ka kolm- ja neljakeelsus (jidiš, eesti, vene ja saksa keel). Mitmekeelsus on juudi põlisvähemuse põhiline tunnus, mis eristab teda Nõukogude okupatsiooni ajal Eestisse saabunud juutidest.

Kultuurautonoomia seadus (1925) andis juutidele võimaluse rahvuslikuks arenguks ja emakeelseks hariduseks. Ka Eestis leidis aset võitlus jidišistide ja hebraistide vahel. Oma keel(t)e ja eesti keele osatähtsus suurenes, saksa ja vene keele osatähtsus vähenes. Kultuurautonoomia vägivaldne likvideerimine nõukogude võimu poolt oli ränk löök. Järgnev küüditamine, Saksa okupatsioon, holokaust ja teine Nõukogude okupatsioon tegid edaspidise rahvusliku arengu võimatuks. Eesti juudid said teiste Nõukogude juutidega "võrdseks": eraldatus ülejäänud juudi maailmast oli täielik, kättesaadav oli vaid nõukogude jidiši kultuur (peamiselt mõned raamatud ja paar ajakirja). Varem Nõukogude Liidus korraldatud jidiši õigekirja reform suurendas Nõukogude juutide eraldatust veelgi, kusjuures paljud Eesti juudid ei suutnud uue ortograafiaga harjuda. Jidišikeelset haridust ei olnud enam võimalik saada ja jidiši kirjaoskus on katastroofiliselt langenud.

Kõnelejad on teadlikud oma mitmekeelsusest ja peavad seda loomulikuks. Nad peavad oma murret eriliseks ja nimetavad seda *undzer estniš/baltiš idiš* 'meie Eesti/Balti jidiš'. Kahjuks on aga tegemist hääbuva murdega. Autor loodab, et tal on õnnestunud esitada mõningaid andmeid hääbuva murde kohta ning juhtida sellele uurijate tähelepanu nii Eestis kui ka välismaal.



## LIST OF INFORMANTS

	Name	Date of birth	Place of birth	Place of residence when interviewed
1.	Etty Kahan	1903	Valga	Tallinn
2.	Jossif Goldberg	1904	Tartu	Tallinn
3.	Moiše Michelson	1914	Tartu	Tartu
4.	Meeri Tsehhovoi	1917	Tallinn•	Tallinn
5.	Lea Levartovski	1919	Tallinn	Tallinn
6.	Lea Sohatševski	1919	Tartu•	Tartu
7.	Chene Schagal	1919	Tartu	Tartu
8.	Malke (Maali) Valdre	1920	Tartu	Tartu
9.	Lea Muškat	1920	Tartu•	Tartu
10.	Siima Schkop	1920	Tartu•	Tallinn
11.	Saara Scher	1920	Tallinn•	Tallinn
12.	Dina Slutsk	1921	Riga*) •	Tallinn
13.	Ita Saks	1921	Valga	Tallinn
14.	Dora Feinman	1921	Tartu•	Tallinn
15.	Dagmar Normet	1921	Tallinn•	Tallinn
16.	Leo Gens	1922	Tartu•	Tallinn
17.	Eugenia Gurin-Loov	1922	Romania*)	Tallinn
18.	Liia Kaplan	1922	Tallinn	Tallinn
19.	Saalomon Sohatševski	1923	Tartu•	Pärnu
20.	Mirjam Arunurm	1922	Tallinn	Tallinn
21.	Elhonen Saks	1926	Valga	Tallinn
22.	Ita Levin	1927	Võru	Tallinn
23.	Rahel Randvee	1929	Tallinn•	Tallinn
24.	Nata Ring	1936	Tallinn•	Tallinn
25.	Cilja Laud	1936	Tallinn	Tallinn
26.	Rutt Laane	1936	Tartu	Tallinn
27.	Netty Žurakovskaja	1949	Tartu	Tartu
28.	Ariel Levin	1963	Tallinn	Tallinn

• At least one parent born in Estonia. The absence of any mark means that both parents were born in Estonia.

\*) These informants were born outside Estonia but arrived in their early childhood (see introduction). In the case of the informant born in Riga parents were living there temporarily (her father was born in Estonia). All informants except one born in Romania have at least one parent who was born in Estonia.

## TEXT SAMPLES

The reasons for choosing the following text samples are not limited to exclusively linguistic criteria (the representativeness, preservation of archaic forms, the most characteristic features of the dialect etc.). The following texts reflect also the facts of socio-cultural history and, we hope, are interesting not only from the purely linguistic point of view. The recording are currently in the possession of the author.

### On transcription

The text samples are given in a simplified transcription (Estonian influence, such as gemination of clusters in intervocalic position, application of quantity etc. is not marked). Translations of foreign items and necessary comments are given in footnotes. Insertions in Estonian and Russian are given according to Estonian and Russian orthography. The same applies to Estonian toponyms and proper names.

### 1. About Paul Ariste

*Saara Scher, born in Tallinn in 1920. Graduated from the Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn (Yiddish section). Lives currently in Tallinn. Speaks actively Yiddish, Estonian and German, understands Russian. Recorded by the author in 1995.*

Dos iz geve:n azei tsuneifgenumen fun ale šu:ln di:, velxe hobn ... men zogt ... gelernt in naintn klas. Dos hot me šein in fri:ling häist es ... ven me hot šein ale di: ... *noh*<sup>1</sup>, geendikt, hot me gemaxt undz ale a ekza:men. Tsuneifgerufn fun ale kinder fun naintn klas, ale šiler in klas, un me hot undz ekzamini:rt in a ... in a estniše šu:le ... a gröise šu:l. Dos iz jetst dortn af *Vabaduse väljak*.<sup>2</sup> *Vabaduse väljak*... *Reaalkool* iz es ... nein ... s'iz *Kommertsgümnaasium*,<sup>3</sup> ja:, a greise šu:l. Nu, dos iz geve:n ... jetst iz es geve:n, duxt zix, a *morexodke*,<sup>4</sup> nu, un häist es, drai ekzamen hobn mir gemuzt durxmaxn. Eins iz geve:n estniše šprax, idiš ... estniš, idiš ... un matema:tika<sup>5</sup>... matemati:k. Ja:, dos hobn mir gemaxt. Nu, dem erstn tog, az me hot undz gekli:bn dortn ... häist es, mir hobn dox nit

<sup>1</sup> Estonian *noh* (word expressing hesitation).

<sup>2</sup> The name of the central square in Tallinn.

<sup>3</sup> Well-known high-schools in Tallinn.

<sup>4</sup> *morexodke* < Russian 'navy school' (colloquial).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Estonian *matemaatika* 'mathematics'.

gevust, vu tsu gein un vos tsu maxn, zainen mir geštanen dortn un ... un hobn geret un getraxt, vi es vet altsding zain, un mit ein mo:l hot tsu undz tsugekumen einer ... un er hot azei ousgeze:n vi a est, nit kein id. Un mit amol häibt er mit undz re:dn af idiš. Hot zax arousgewi:zn, az dos iz geve:n Ariste ... häist dos, bekent mit undz un hot gezogt, az er muzt jetst undz kontroli:rn, undzer arbet, vos mir veln maxn ... un demox ... hot me undz tsuteilt ale tsuzamen, häist es, nit azei az mir zenen geve:n ale in ein šu:l, geve:n in dem klas. Ober me hot gemaxt azei tsumišť. Nu, den hot me gegeben di ekza:mens, un mir zainen häist es arain, den in tsentn klas, s'iz geve:n der erste(r) klas fun gümna:zium. For dem s'iz geve:n a eršťe mo:l, az me hot durxgefi:rt a šu:lreform mit tsvölf klasn. In zi:bn un draisikstn jo:r iz es geve:n.

## 2. Our friends

*Meeri Tsehovoi (1917–1996, Tallinn). Graduated from the Jewish Gymnasium in Tallinn (Hebrew section). Used to speak Estonian and Russian with her family and a mixture of German and Yiddish with her sister. Did not remember Hebrew. Recorded in 1995 by the author.*

Do bin ix geborn un dos iz azei tsu zogn ... Ix bin kein mo:l nit gevezn aza greiser onhenger fun avekforn ... efšer ob es vet zain aza min ... az me vet muzn löifn. Doz iz ander zax. Mir hofn, az ix vel do zain. Eib vet zain vi a mo:l, faršteit zax, me ken nit zogn, dos ale estn zainen glaix ... ober der mäisten teil fun estn ... Azei tsu zogn, dem *antisemitismus*<sup>6</sup> hobn mir do nit gefi:lt. Rixtik, ja: ... Mir hobn do hous gehat, idiše šu:le, hebreiše šu:le un idiše klub, klubn hobn mir nit eins gehat un faršeidene ... kindergortn. Mir hobn zax gefi:lt ... mir zainen ... mir zainen gevezn šťark ... un ale mo:l hobn mir ein dem tšveitn alemol geholfn. (...) Ix bin glaix in idiš šu:l gegangen. Onfang bin ix nit gegangen, onfang bin ix gegangen in daitšn kindergortn un špeter bin ix šöin in idiše šu:l, ja:. Ober ba undz iz geve:n azei, az main klass hot gelernt af rusiš, ober mir hobn gehat häist es idiš, hebreiš, estniš, daitš ... estniš iz zejer šťark geve:n. Ix hob fraindinen un fraint ... di bekante zainen genug un genug geve:n estn. Azei mir hobn farke:rt mit estn eix. Azei iz nit geve:n, az mir zenen nor mit idiše. Nein, dos iz nit gevezn. Gehat gute bekante un fraindinen dortn ouf dem gas, ouf di gas vu mir hobn gelebt, zainen geve:n azelxe ... azei alt vi mir, un mir flegn alemo:l tsuzamen špi:ln, un derfar hob ix estniš ... bin ix gants šťark geve:n.

— Ir hot ousgelernt estniš špilndik mit di kinder?

— Mit di kinder, ober in šu:le hobn mir gehat zejer a šťarkn le:rer, un afi:le ven mir hobn geendikt, hobn mir gehat eix di ekza:men ... estniš, i gramatiš, i

<sup>6</sup> < German *Antisemitismus* 'anti-Semitism'.

literatu:r. Ix gedenk nox *töde ja öigus*<sup>7</sup>. Hobn mir ale ... ale di estniše klassik, ale hobn mir gevust lejenen. In estniš iz mir genou azei laixt vi idiš. Tsum baišpil, tsaitungen lejen ix ale nor estniše, ja:. Nu, amo:l fleg ix hobn di idiše tsaitungen, hobn mir gehat ... *või*<sup>8</sup> main bru:der hot gekrogn fun Peiln, oder iz geve:n fun Pari:z. Di *Folksstim*, zeier interessant. Dos ... dos hobn mir geleint. Nu, baštelt eix dem ... vi häist es ... in Moskve, Vergelis ... *Sovetiš häimland*. Nu, den hobn mir bixer, hobn mir nox in der häim gehat faršäidene, un azei az ... dos iz, az es vilt zax nit fargesn. Ober tsu badouren s'iz veinik. Amo:l flegt men gein afn gas ... oi, do redt me idiš, azei geve:n, aber jetst kenstu gein afn gas, kenstu gein, ober me ret nit kein idiš ... un veiniker gevorn undzere ... estniše bakante. Dos vet zain ... alts tog tsu tog ... vet zain veiniker. Tsu badouren.

### 3. The deportation (June 14, 1941)

*Rahel Randvee, born in 1929 in Tallinn. Lives in Tallinn. Started her education in the Hebrew section of the Jewish Gymnasium. During World War II was evacuated to Russia and continued her education in a Russian-language school. After the war returned to Estonia and completed her secondary education in an Estonian-language school. Speaks actively four languages: Estonian, Yiddish, Russian and German. Can read Yiddish a little. The story describes the deportation conducted by the Soviet authorities. Recorded in 1997 by the author.*

Dem fertsntn ju:ni dem ein un fertsikstn jo:r hot... men iz gekumen un undz areti:rt. Un in dem... inem list zainen gevezn main foter un main švester. Main mame iz geve:n geštorbn axt un draisikstn jo:r, ober mir hobn gehat den zejer a greise di:re un main foter hot men šöin gehat gezogt, az me muzt jemandn tsune:men. (...) Me hot main foter avekgefi:rt. S'iz gevezn ouf Telliskivi, ba:n... ba:n... *ноезд*<sup>9</sup>, un dortn tsugekumen a mentš, gefregt main foter — mit vemen fo:rt di, di kind... Un ix bin damolt geve:n tsvölf jo:r alt. Zogt men, dos iz nit meglax. Az me hot šöin gevust, az di mener veln gein in la:ger un di frauen... *на поселение*.<sup>10</sup> Un azei iz er vi:der avek un in a kurtse tsait iz er gekumen tsurik un fregt, öub s'iz jemand gebli:bn do, vu me ken mir tsurik brengen. Un den hot main foter gezogt: main eltere toxtor iz do gebli:bn. Un den... undzer umglik iz geve:n, az unzere zaxn zainen geve:n tsuzamengepakt in ein gröisn... *korv*,<sup>11</sup> aza

<sup>7</sup> Estonian *Töde ja õigus* 'truth and justice', a novel by a 20<sup>th</sup> century Estonian classical writer A. H. Tammsaare. Pronunciation of *õ* instead of *õ* is characteristic for some older speakers in Tallinn. It is also considered to be a most typical feature in Estonian spoken by Baltic Germans.

<sup>8</sup> < Estonian *või* 'or'.

<sup>9</sup> 'train' (Russian).

<sup>10</sup> 'exile' (Russian).

<sup>11</sup> < Estonian *korv* 'basket' < German *Korb*, cf. Yiddish *korb*.

min raizekorv. Un main foter iz gebli:bn štendik o:n vareme kläider. Er iz gevezn zejer a gleibiker... in ix veis nit, ix hob aza gefi:l, az dortn hot der öiberšter geholfn. Nox aza fal, az men hot mir damolt tsurikgebraxt ahäim, hot me gefregt, hob ix gläix genumen tsu ertseiln, vemen ix hob dortn geze:n. A halb štund bin ix arous geve:n. Un ix hob ongeheibn glaix tsu zogn: der, der, der iz dortn geve:n. Un der menš, vos hot mir tsurikgebraxt, hot arousgenumen aza brauning un gerukt unter noz un gezogt: nox a vort un den bist mer nito. Un dos iz mir gebli:bn aza... aza bäin in haldz afn gantsn le:bn.

#### 4. Childhood in Valga

*Elhonen Saks, born in 1923 in Valga. Currently lives in Tallinn. Started his education in Valga Jewish Elementary School. His educational history is described in his story. Later received higher education in Tallinn Technical University (in Estonian) and worked as a construction engineer. In the beginning of 1990s became a publisher, published translations of Yiddish and Modern Hebrew literature into Estonian. Currenty publishes an Estonian-language newsletter of the Jewish community and plays an active part in Tallinn Yiddish Club. Speaks actively Yiddish and Estonian, some Russian and German and understands Latvian. Can read Yiddish. Recorded in 1996.*

Maine kinderjo:rn zainen gevezn... ix bin geborn gevorn in *zopod*<sup>12</sup> ... in Valk... in Valga štot<sup>13</sup>. Un dortn alts kind hob ix gehat fraint tsvišn... faršeidene mentšn... fun faršeidene felker. Mir zainen gevezn ingelax — idn, estn, letn, datsvišn etlaxe rusn, daitšn zainen geve:n. Un in kinderjo:rn gehat etlaxe fraint un ix hob glaix gekent drai šprax: idiš, estniš un letiš. Letiš ken ix derfar, vail le:bandik in Valk, zainen do zejer fi:l letn, hob ix fraint gehat eix tsvišn letn. Un tsveitns, main mame iz geštorbn glaix nox main geburt un mir hot ertsöign a letin. Derfar hob ix gekent letiš. Idiš hob ix gekent fun main foter un fun maine fraint un in šu:l šöin. Ober estniš hob ix gelernt afn gas. Gešpi:lt mit di estniše kinder. Mir hobn gelernt tsuzamen. Ix bin in šu:l avek tsu zeks jo:r. Zeksjo:riker bin ix geve:n. In šu:l... hobn mir eix in idiše šu:l... s'iz geve:n a idiše šu:l... hobn mir geret tsvišn zix idiš, ober di leršpraxe iz geve:n hebräiš. Un dortn hot men undz ongehöibn le:rnen hebräiš, vail di šu:l:lfarvaltung un di lerer zainen kimat ale geve:n tsionistn un hebräistn. (...) Un main mišpoxe iz geve:n nit tsionistiš un nit hebräistiš, main mišpoxe iz geve:n idišistiš. Un di mäistns fun valker idn. Dortn iz geve:n umgefer etlexe tsvei hundert mentšn... hobn gele:bt in di klein štetl, ammäistens geve:n idišistn.  
— Viazei iz den di šu:l geve:n hebräistiš?

<sup>12</sup> 'town' (Russian).

<sup>13</sup> Note the parallel use of the toponym: *Valk* (< German) and *Valga* (< Estonian)

— Di šu:l hot gegrindet undzer kultu:rfarvaltung. Un men hot vegn de:m zejefi:l geštritn, ober di mäisten junge, akti:ve idn der tsait zainen šöin geve:n mitgli:der fun tsionistiše organizatsio:n. Di ju:gnt iz geve:n in *Beitar*<sup>14</sup>, un a teil fun zei iz geve:n in *Ha-šomer ha-tsa'ir*.<sup>15</sup> Ober di eltere zainen gevezn... praktiše onhenger fun tsionistiše bave:gung. (...) Di junge... zainen gekumen fun Dorpat, fun universite:t, di le:rers, un letiše etlaxe zainen geve:n, vail in undzer šu:l, in idiše šu:l zainen geve:n šilers i fun estniše, i fun letiše teil štot... Un derfar kinder hobn eix ... mir hobn gehat etlaxe grupn. Eine grupe hot zix gehaltn zeier tsuzamen mit *Beitar*. *Beitar* iz geve:n a rechte organizatsio:n. Un zei hobn di kinder, bezonders kleine kinder alemen gelernt, az unzer eintsike tsi:l iz tsu fo:rn nox Erets Isroel, undzer foterland. Un mit ale mitlen gele:mt, un nit nor demokratiše, hobn gelernt un gezogt, az es ken zain, az mir veln muzn eix kri:g haltn. Hot men undz gelernt dertsu. Un afi:le di uniform zejere iz geve:n a brauner. Mir hobn gekrogn broune hemder. Di tsveite organizatsio:n iz geve:n linke, *Ha-šomer ha-tsa'ir*. Un zei zainen geve:n orienti:rt sotsialistiš. (...) Ix ken nit zogn, az mir hobn zix gekri:gt tsvišn zix, nein. Ober s'iz gekumen etlaxe proble:men mit dem, az di štetl, vu ix hob gele:bt, iz geve:n a kleine, un es iz nit geve:n kein arbet un di idn zainen fun dortn avekgeform. Der tso:l fun di idn in kleine štetlax hot zix di gantse tsait farklener, un ammäisten idn hobn zix kontsentri:rt in Tallinn un in Dorpat. Un derfar in šu:l iz geve:n azei veinik kinder, az in zeks un draisikstn jo:r iz geve:n zeks klasn, in etlaxe klasn šöin geve:n tsvei oder drai šilers. Un men hot nit gekent oufhaltu di šu:l. Un in axt un draisikstn jo:r hot men es likvidi:rt, un kinder zainen avek in di estniše šu:l, mäistns in estniše šu:l.

## 5. My education

*Ita Levin, born 1927 in Võru. Spent her childhood in Tartu. Parents spoke Yiddish with each other and German with the children. The story of her education as well as competence in various languages is described below. By now she has forgotten Chuvashian she had learned during the war. Worked in Tallinn in various hospitals, now retired. Recorded in 1995 by the author.*

Ix bin gegangen in *Eesti Noorsoo Kasvatuse Seltsi Tütarlaste Gümnaasium*.<sup>16</sup> Un ix hob geholfn maine mitšil:ler mit estniš. Ix hob gezogt vi darf es zain ouf estniš, azei oder azei. Un den hot zix ongehöibn der kri:g äin un fertsik. Den ix hob geendikt dem zi:bete klas un avek nox Rusland, in evakuatsio:n, un geve:n

<sup>14</sup> International Zionist-revisionist youth organization before World War II, had branches in several countries.

<sup>15</sup> Zionist-socialist youth organization (Hebrew for 'young guard').

<sup>16</sup> A well-known girls' high-school in Tartu before the Soviet occupation of 1940.

in *Tšuvašien*<sup>17</sup>. Dos iz geve:n fun got a farlozener ort. Dortn iz geve:n traxo:m un farši:dene krenk, vos überhopt zainen in irgend nito. (...) A švester flegt kumen jedn morgn in klas un azoi di eign gekukt, vos iz dortn untn. Nu, ober den hob ix... bin ix gegangen in a tšuvašiše šu:l, vail dortn iz nit geve:n käin rusiše šu:l, dort, vu ix bin geve:n. In dem kolho:z, vu ix hob gele:bt... in dem rajo:n s'iz nit geve:n. Hob ix gemuzt auslä:rnen di tšuvašiše šprax. Hob ix in a jo:r ousgelärnt. Ix hob gants frai geredt. Ix hob nit gelernt re:dn vegn politi:k un azelxe... *высокие материи*,<sup>18</sup> ober aza äinfaxe za:xn un dos, voz iz neitik geve:n in šu:l, in zi:bete klas, dos hob ix ales gekent redn in tšuvašiš. Azoi az ix hob zo:ga:r gekrogn a *muxtar-gramota* (?), dos iz a *kiituskiri*,<sup>19</sup> ix veis nit af idiš... Ja:, ir hot mir farštanen. Ober fremdšpraxe läider iz geve:n daitš. Daitš hob ix azei gevust, fun der häim, vail ba undz iz geve:n in der häim, di šprax iz geve:n... hot men geredt daitš. Mir hobn gehat a exte daitše fröiläin, voz iz gekumen un geredt mit mir un mit main bru:der nox mitog tsvei oder drai šo: daitš. Un mir hobn zejer gut damols daitš gere:dt. Obvo:l main foter iz geve:n... hot gehat zejer a minima:le bildung, ober er hot gevust, az bildung hot zejer a greise ve:rt un er't gevult az zain kinder zoln zain gebildet un farštein farši:dene špra:xn. Un geendikt hob ix... ja:, nox dem zi:bete klas... s'iz geve:n azei, s'iz geve:n dox elf klasn in Estland. Un in Rusland iz geve:n damols tse:n klasn. Alzo fun di zi:bete estniše klas bin ix arain in di zi:bte tšuvašiše klas. Un den hob ix geendikt di tšuvašiše un mir zainen gefo:m in Tšeboksari, dos iz di hauptštot fun Tšuvašien. Un in Tšeboksari bin ix gegangen šöin in rusiše šu:l. Mit rusiš s'iz geve:n zejer švax. Gut hob ix gekent daitš, gut hob ix gekent estniš, ober rusišs — überhopt nit. Un dan hob ix genumen rusiš lä:rnen, ober es iz eix geve:n gants gix. Un bald hob ix šöin geredt rusiš un ven mir zainen tsurik, alzo, tsurik zainen mir gekumen fi:r un fertsik in hä:rbst, hob ix nox gehat tsu le:rnen in šul anderthalbn semester, un ix bin gegangen in der zekste rusiše šu:l in Tallinn, vail in di estniše iz mir šöin geve:n šve:r, iber di terminologi:, füzi:k, ke:mia un zo vaiter. Un ven ix hob fünf un fertsik geendikt di rusiše šu:l un hob gegebn ekza:men in Tartu, um araintsukumen in meditsi:n, hob ix gebe:tn, der *fü:zik*<sup>20</sup> un di... *химичка*,<sup>21</sup> zeizoln zain azei net un erloubn mir dos optsugebn in rusiš... tsum araintretn, vail ix hob di terminologi: in estniš nit gevust (...) Azei zeizoln es erlaubt. Daitš iz geve:n daitš un estniš *kirjand*<sup>22</sup> iz geve:n *kirjand* un dos iz nit geve:n käin proble:m. Ix bin glaix araingekumen in estniš universite:t un den iz šöin ales geve:n in estniš. Un ix hob glaix di ale za:xn gelernt un ales farštanen gevis, un konspekti:rt af estniš

<sup>17</sup> < German *Tschuwaschien* 'Chuvashia'.

<sup>18</sup> 'high matters' (Russian).

<sup>19</sup> *muxtar-gramota* (?) < Chuvashian; the second part is a borrowing from Russian *грамота* 'certificate of honour'; *kiituskiri* < Estonian 'certificate of honour'.

<sup>20</sup> < Estonian *füüsik* 'teacher of physics'.

<sup>21</sup> 'teacher of chemistry' (Russian, colloquial).

<sup>22</sup> Estonian 'essay', 'composition'.

(...) Vail di ba:ze iz geve:n a gute fun main gümna:zium. Un azei iz gebli:bn un ix mäin, az estniš red ix mištome am bestn.

## 6. School-years

*Dina Slutsk, born in 1922 in Riga. Spent her childhood in Haapsalu. Started her education in German, later continued in Estonian and in Yiddish. Lives in Tallinn. Presently works as a lawyer. Recorded in 1998 by the author.*

Ix hob in Haapsalu gele:bt. Ix bin in Haapsalu in šu:l gegangen. Ix vel aix ertseiln farvos. Zejer interesant. Ix bin gegangen in Haapsalu in šu:le, un main foter un main muter zainen in Tallinn geve:n. Mit main tante... ja:, hob ix gele:bt (...) Main foter hot gevelt ix zol gäin in di daitše šu:l. Main bru:der *ging*<sup>23</sup> in idiše šu:l, a main foter hot gezogt: näin, ix vel dix ge:bn in di daitše šu:l. Azei, ix hob nit gekent gäin in di daitše šu:le, ix hob neitik gehat a erlaubnis fun dem... daitšn kultu:rfarvaltung un fun dem idišn kultu:rfarvaltung (...) Di daitše kultu:rfarvaltung un di idiše hobn nit gegeben di erlaubenis, az ix zol gäin in daitše šu:l. Dos iz geve:n in... nain... axt un tsvantsik, nain un tsvantsik.

— S'iz geve:n in Haapsalu?

— Näin, s'iz geve:n in Tallinn. Hot men nit erlobt. Un main foter hot gezogt: näin. Ix zol fo:rn nox Haapsalu, in Haapsalu gibt es käin idiše šu:l, daitše šu:le muz mir onnemen (...) Un ix hob gehat a dokument, az tsvei jo:r... drite un fi:рте klas, hob ix gelärnt do. Bin ix gekumen nox Tallinn, un di daitše šu:l hot mix ongenumen do (...) Ix bin gegangen nox Tallinn un gegangen do, un dan kumt der gezets, az di kinder muzn gäin oder in di mame-lošn šu:l, oder in estniše šu:le. Un dan bin ix gegangen in *Inglise Kolledž*<sup>24</sup>. *Inglise Kolledž* damolt zainen geve:n tsvei, einer — der šta:ts *Inglise Kolledž* un einer iz geve:n *Törvand-Tellman*<sup>25</sup>. Ix bin geve:n in *Törvand-Tellman*. Un dortn hob ix gelernt biz... fünf un draisik. Un dos iz geve:n... biz tsejtn-elftn klas un main muter hot gezogt: du vilst imer lernen? Zog ix: näin. Zogt zi: *тогда кончилось детство, надо работать*.<sup>26</sup> Azei bin ix gekumen in idiše šu:le (...).

— Af voser šprax hot ir zix gelernt?

— Idiš.

— S'iz geve:n šve:r?

— S'iz nit geve:n šve:r, ix veis nit. Idiš iz nit geve:n šve:r... Ix mäin, az idiš iz a... daitše lošn.

<sup>23</sup> German *ging* (Imperfect).

<sup>24</sup> 'English college' (Estonian), the name of a prestigious gymnasium in Tallinn.

<sup>25</sup> Anna Törvand-Tellman, the founder of the mentioned gymnasium.

<sup>26</sup> Russian 'then the childhood is over, you must work'.



— Ober šraibn?

— Ja:. Araingekumen in di idiše šu:le, hob ix gešribn azei, un geredt azei, un ix šraib azei, mit di daitše buxštabn.

## 7. Marriage

*Ita Saks, born in 1921 in Valga. Graduated from Estonian high-school in Valga and later from the University of Tartu where she studied Estonian language. Translates fictions from Latvian and from German into Estonian. Recorded in 1996 by the author.*

Mir zainen špeter geve:n in evakuatsio:n, ober mir zainen nit geve:n tsuzamen. Main foter hot zix evakui:rt aläin un Konny iz geve:n mit foter tsuzamen, mir hobn zix dort nit getrofn... Un špeter bin ix tsurik gekumen, gearbet ba der tsaitung in ix hob dan gehäiratet un badi:nt ouf main äigene le:bn (...) Ja:, in dos ken ix nox ertsäiln, s'iz zejer interesant, ix hob gehäiratet un vi main foter hot zix batsöign dertsu, az main man iz geve:n a est. Un az ix hob dos dem foter gezogt, un befo:r mir hobn zix registri:rt, un der foter iz geve:n azoi umetik... Er iz geve:n a mentš, vos hot überhaupt veinik geredt un iz nit geve:n emotsione:l (...) Er hot mir gezogt az mir veln mit em käin mo:l käin fraint nit zain. Azei hot er gezogt vegn dem. Er hot em überhaupt nit gekent, dem Juhan... Azei hot er gezogt. Ober špeter iz ausgekumen gor anders: der Juhan iz geve:n aza fraintlexer un er iz geve:n azei net tsu main foter un maine tantn, az ze zainen gevorn gute fraint, mit alemen iz er geve:n gut bafraindet, besonders mit tante Hanna (...) zainen geve:n... ze hobn zix zejer gut farštanen. Un main foter iz špeter tsufri:dn geve:n (...) Ober nit af lang, mir hobn zix šöin bald geši:dn. Un dos iz nox eix interesant, vi zaine farvandte, dem Juhans farvandte hobn tsu mir batseign. Auf Muhu zainen ze geve:n, auf inzl Muhu, un ze zainen geve:n tsu mir zejer net, zain... muter un zain švestern, un ze hobn zejer gern mir gehat, un di äinveiner afn inzl hobn käine proble:m gehat dermit (...) Überhaupt afn land zainen andere mentšn.

## 8. About Hebrew

*Eugenia Gurin-Loov, born in 1921 in Romania where her parents lived and worked temporarily. Her parentes moved to Estonia (Tallinn) when she was a little child. Her father was the principle of Tallinn Jewish Gymnasium. Speaks German, Estonian, Russian and Yiddish. Although she graduated from the Hebrew section of the Gymnasium, she does not remember Hebrew. Lives currently in Tallinn. Recorded in 1997 by the author.*

Ix ken nit šraibn.<sup>27</sup> Ix hob nit farzu:xt afile. Ober ix hob gelejent, ja:. Di letste tsäit hob ix gelejent.

— Vos?

— Ix hob gelejent dem... s'iz geve:n der jeivl fun der kultu:rautono:mie, hot men arousedelozt a ... álbum<sup>28</sup>, ja:. Un Bialik-farain.<sup>29</sup> Hob ix gelejent. Hob ix gelejent nox a sax. In anfang s'iz geve:n zejer šve:r. Ober me lejent. Es kumt tsurik, me hot es dox gelärnt in gümna:sie (...) Ix traxt, az... langzamer vi ix lejen in estniš, in daitš, in rusiš. Ober ix lejen (...) Ober ven me hot a mo:l gelärnt, es kumt tsurik. Ivrit kumt mir nit tsurik. (...) Ix väis nit, ix hob nit gevust... ix hob nit gevelt lä:rnen.

— Farvos?

— Farvos ix hob nit gevelt lä:rnen? Ix hob getraxt, az es iz a šprax, vos iz nit neitik. Nit neitik. Tsu vos? In Euro:pa<sup>30</sup> nit, vu ja:? Un di idn do, zei hobn dox geredt rusiš, estniš, daitš, idiš. Ober di ingere, vos zainen šöin geve:n in *Ha-Šomer ha-tsa'ir*, in *Beitar* un vos zainen geve:n tsionistn, zei hobn geredt... ivrit. Un zei gedenk nit eix. Maine... vos mir zainen gelärnt in äin klas, mit frau K., Liia K., zi gedenkt. Un zi zogt mir alemo:l. Her, vi ken ez zain? Du host gelärnt azei gut un i: bin geve:n äine fun di šlexstn (...) Ja:, zi hot nit gelärnt... un ertselt zi mir: du host gelärnt gants gut, ix hob gelärnt šlext, vi iz es gekumen, az ix red take ivrit un du nit?

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<sup>27</sup> Here writing Yiddish is meant.

<sup>28</sup> Pronounced with the stress on the first syllable (Estonian *album* 'album')

<sup>29</sup> Jewish society of drama and literature named after Ch. N. Bialik.

<sup>30</sup> Pronounced as in Estonian *Euroopa* 'Europe'.

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## ***ERRATA***

In the article no 2 *On the Lexicon of Estonian Yiddish* the following should be read:

š instead of £

p. 6     *brūklene*

p. 7     *žerexlines*

p.10    *bruknès*

p.11    *pypkè, rūpèti, rūpēt, tupèti, šnuķis, šliurè, šļura*

p.13    *kostüüm*

p.17    *Štaplen*