

YIDDISH

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL
DEVOTED TO YIDDISH AND YIDDISH LITERATURE

Volume 10, No. 2-3 1996

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UNIVERBALIZATION: WORD FORMATION IN YIDDISH - SOVIET SPEAK

Gennady Estrai kh

It was perceived that in[. . .]abbreviating a name one narrowed and subtly altered its meaning, by cutting out most of the associations that would otherwise cling to it.

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-four*

The most comprehensive study of the peculiarities of Soviet Yiddish was entitled *New Word-Formation*. [1] Indeed, besides the lexicon proper, Yiddish in the Soviet Union gained distinct features due to a range of word-formation models either non-existent or dormant before 1917.

A few word-formation models which became especially prolific in Soviet Yiddish are associated with morpho-syntactic processes called *univerbalization* (from the Latin *in unum verbum* "in one word"). [2] Univerbalization manifests itself in different ways (e.g., abbreviations, ellipsis). However, all of the cases share one common trait: the modification of a collocation by being compressed into one word — a univerb. In other formulations, a new word-designation, or univerb challenges its begetter — a stable syntactic phrase-description which synchronically exists in the language; if the univerb has completely ousted the homosemantic collocation, than it, strictly speaking, stops to be a univerb and its relation with the collocation transfers into the sphere of etymology.

Stump-compounds

One of the hall-marks of Soviet Yiddish is the wide (especially in periodicals) use of a specific type of compounds, namely the so-called "stump-compounds" [3], which consist of contractions, or "stumps" (often syllables) of full words. In the ten years after the Revolution, Aysik Zaretski, the pioneer Soviet Yiddish linguist, extracted scores of stump-compounds common in Soviet Yiddish publications, e.g.: *arbkor* = *arbeter-korespondent* "worker correspondent", *fabkom* = *fabrik-komitet* "factory committee",

folkom = *folks-komisar* "People's Commissar", *komyug* = *komunistisher yugnt-farband* "Komsomol, Young Communist League". [4] If Hershl Shklyar's list of about 1,500 neologisms [5] is typical of the Soviet Yiddish lexicon, then more than three per cent of these coinages are stump-compounds.

These innovations in Soviet Yiddish copied the new morpho-syntactic models which boomed in post-Revolutionary Russian. Among the main inducements engendering that new class of words was the necessity to designate numerous institutions and positions in the hierarchial Soviet state machinery. The bureaucratic denotations contained "codes" which usually reflected the function as well as the level of subordination. Thus, the monster word *gub|erd|opt|gezerd*, listed among Zaretski's examples, was a concentrate of a long name which apparently described

the department [. . . *opteyl* . . .] that performed functions of the OZET (Association for the Rural Placement of Jewish Labourers) [. . . *gezerd*] in the agricultural [. . . *erdarbeterisher* . . .] administration of a province [*gubernye* . . .].

(Zaretsky did not decipher the full name of this institution, which could be, for example, *der opteyl fun gezerd ba der erdarbeterisher farvaltung fun gubernye*).

The constituent *gez|erd* disguised a stump-compound in its own right, that is: *gezelshaft* "association, society" + *erdarbet* "agriculture", which is, according to Zalucky's classification, an "incomplete-consecutive stump-compound", because its constituent fragments were picked out selectively.

In either case, an initiated person, who knew the "codes" of Soviet life and its associated language, might understand or at least "diagnose" [6] meanings of the Newspeak vocabulary. While the codes-stumps disguised themselves only as constituent fragments of original words, they contained the full material meaning of their "normal"

equivalents. Thus, in *guberdoptgezerd*, the semantic code of *opteyl* "department" remained recognizable thanks to the fact that the word was not apocopated along its morphological stitch: *op=teyl*. *Op-* is just a prefix with a rather stable meaning "off; away; from", whereas the stump *opt-*, due to its onomatopoeic proximity to *opteyl*, might be easier associated with the full word. In fact, during the 1920s and 1930s, there was a natural selection among chaotically coined stump-compounds and, as a result, mostly words with semantically motivated stumps survived in the Soviet languages. [7] Yiddish was not an exception to the rule. A nomenclature of motivated stumps became widely used. For example:

agit = *agitatsye* "agitation";
bild = *bildung(s)* "educational";
fin = *finants* "financial";
yid = *yidish* "Yiddish, Jewish";
kol = *kolektiv* "collective";
k o m = *komunistish* "communist"; *komandir*
 "commander"; *komitet* "committee";
kult = *kultur* "culture";
lit = *literarish* "literary";
med = *meditsinish* "medical";
nats = *natsional* "national";
org = *organizator* "organizer"; *organizatsyonel*
 "organizational";
part = *partey(ish)* "(usually Communist) Party";
ped = *pedagogish* "pedagogic(al)";
polit = *politish* "political";
prof = *prof(f)areynish* (< *profesyoneler fareyn*)
 "belonging or pertaining to the trade union";
profesyonel "professional";
ray = *rayon* "district";
spets = *spetsyel* "special";
virt = *virtshaft(lekh)* "farm; economy/economic".

Instances abound. At the same time, paradoxically, there is no room found for stump-compounds in Yiddish grammar. And not only because, as observed by Yudel Mark, "a compound can contain only two components [otherwise]

it's a sin against Yiddish", or because "word-buildings with two separate accents cannot be regarded as compounds" (in many cases, each of the components of a stump-compound does possess a separate accent). [8] According to standard definitions, a compound is a lexical item which should not contain stumps, but two or more free morphemes (lexemes) proper. [9] True, some of the stumps may delusively look like lexemes. For example, *spets* — the clipping of the noun *spetsyalist* "specialist, professional" and *spets* — the stump of the adjective *spetsyel* "special" in such stump-compounds as *spetskleydung* "working clothers, overalls" [10] or *spetsopteyl* "special department".

Soviet linguists could not, of course, ignore the "words with non-full words as components" [11], they attributed the stump-compound to a Soviet and proletarian innovation resulting in "significant economy in the language" [12]. At the same time, they did not offer a sufficient description of the new word-formation model.

Both semantically and structurally, the stump-compounds have agglutinative features, i.e. some morphological marks of agglutinative languages in which "a word may consist of more than one morpheme, but the boundaries between morphemes in the word are always clear-cut; moreover, a given morpheme has at least a reasonably invariant shape, so that identification of morphemes in terms of their phonetic shape is also straightforward". [13] From the stock of agglutinative stumps it was very convenient to thread names for such interrelated objects as

folkomatn "People's Commissariats", e.g.:
folkombild "People's Commissariat of Education";
folkomnats "People's Commissariat of Nationalities"; *folkomfin* "People's Commissariat of Finance";
 or *komitetn* "committees", e.g.: *fabkom* "factory committee"; *profkom* "trade-union committee";
raykom "district committee".

Presumably, words of such endocentric groups, which

add "details" to the main denotation (in our examples *folkom-* and *-kom*), are prone to be long. Although, here it is not just a laconicism that is at stake but, rather, a compromise between two quantitative characteristics: (1) the length of the words (preferably two or, at the worst, three short stumps), and (2) the general number of recognizable semantic units in the terminological system. [14] It is likely, that not only is such an optimal rationality attainable for some closed endocentric groups of words, but also for all lexical items of a language which are formed using a certain number of semantically transparent stumps.

The close likeness to their Russian equivalents played an important role in deciphering the Yiddish stumps. Given the fact that the language behaviour of Soviet Jews showed almost everywhere distinct signs of unstable bilingualism associated with language change, from Yiddish to Russian, an analogy between Yiddish and Russian stumps (as well as neologisms and their components in general) was one of the most decisive factors to assist Yiddish language-planners in implementing Sovietisms. Therefore, the problem of semantic motivation was even more pronounced in Yiddish than in Russian: the ideal would be a double, namely Yiddish-Russian, motivation. (Importantly, the decision did not rest so much with the linguists; frequently it depended upon the "practical workers" who translated countless numbers of texts from Russian into Yiddish.)

Unlike the stump-compounds with motivated forms, there were also those rooted in so-called "internationalisms" without any motivation, or etymological association. In fact, the proportion of this kind of borrowing prevailed (e.g., *partorg* "Party organizer", *partkom* "Party committee"), especially as a substantial part of Russian stumps proper stemmed from international words. (It should be noted, that when referring to the term "internationalisms" I mean such Soviet Yiddish lexical items loaned from Russian or German which Soviet Yiddish-speakers usually did not mark as

Russianisms or *daytshmerisms*.)

The Soviet Yiddish Establishment gave a hostile reception to large-scale borrowing of overt Russianisms. [15] Aesthetical purity of the language was but one of the Establishment's reasons. Another was more political. The Establishment feared that too many Russian borrowings might displease the Ukrainian and Belorussian leaders and be interpreted as a slight to their national languages. Thus, stump-compounds formed from "international" lexemes also appeared to be ideologically more acceptable.

In addition to the "international" stump-compounds, there was one more tried and approved way to disguise direct borrowings — that is, "stump-for-stump" loan translation. Clearly, such calqued stump-compounds like *kolvirt* "collective farm" appeared to be a compromise settlement at the cross-roads of competing co-territorial dominant idioms: neither *kolkhoz* (Russian) nor *kolhosp* (Ukrainian) nor *kolhaz* (Belorussian). [16]

All in all, the most widespread algorithm, according to which Yiddish borrowed stumps and stump-compounds from Russian, was the following

internationalism in Russian > internationalism in Yiddish

(e.g., *partkom* > *partkom*)

if not than

"Russianism" in Russian > loan translation (calque) in Yiddish

(e.g., *kolkhoz* > *kolvirt*):

The processes which created stump-compounds in Yiddish were essentially of a different nature than the processes in Russian. The new, Soviet, social setting was favourable to the tendency of such word formation in Russian, which proved its immanence as far back as the turn of the century. [17] As for the Soviet Yiddish stump-compounds, the case was different: the language became "infected" with the Russian univerbs.

Thus, *kolvirt* might seem to be a possible example of univerbalization, based on the collocation *kolektive*

virtshaft. In reality, though, the univerbalization took place not in Yiddish but in Russian, where the word *kolkhoz* condensed the collocation *kollektivnoe khozjajstvo*. Importantly, Soviet Yiddish did not adopt that type of univerbalization in itself; rather, it was just an *imitation* of the process that produced such Russian words as *kolhoz*. Ber Slutski, for example, indicated Russian prototypes for all Yiddish stump-compounds compiled in his voluminous *Lexicon of Political and Foreign Words*. [18] In other words, we do not actually deal with a normal compounding but, rather, with the formation of learned borrowings which resemble compounding. [19]

At the same time it would be idle to deny that some of the stump-compounds did become more or less naturalized in Soviet Yiddish, at least in the written language as well as in some other domains of Soviet Yiddish — among the social or professional groups with a specific register range of the language. For the majority of Yiddish speakers, though, these innovations appeared to be artificial or even incomprehensible. Nonetheless, Soviet Yiddish publications were full of calques from Russian Sovietisms, especially as it was mostly political and educational literature. Some of the stump-compounds and their derivatives appeared even in poetic texts. The examples cited below are taken from Soviet Yiddish dailies.

*bin ikh es un kh'vel es zayn — ba "shreklekhe" yidsekn
vifl kh'vel di frayhayt libn; libn kh'vel zi eybik!
un deriber shrayb ikh itst mayn lid af vayte shtrekn.
un zol dos lid an entfere zayn dem vaysn dikhter Leyvik!
(Moyshe Pintshevski, *Der shtern*, Kharkov, 3 January 1930)*

*... tsit iber veg zikh a langer tsug:
— shik "nit-gedayget" aroys dayn komyug!*

(Peretz Markish, *Der emes*, Moscow, 16 February 1930)

*... un es veln vaksn
un es veln blitsn
hunderter kolvirtn,
toyznter zavodn.*

(Izik Fefer, *Der stern*, Kharkov, 1 April 1930)

in kolvirt ba undz iz gut,
mir esn bulbes, teyglekh,
opgearbet a yor mit mut,
lebn mir farmeglekh.

(Chastooshka, *Der emes*, Moscow, 30 March 1937)

zaynen di kolvirtnikes
ruike un feste,
zaynen di kolvirtnitses
shloglerns di beste.

(Chastooshka, *Oktyaber*, Minsk, 4 June 1937)

Quite often, Yiddish could borrow stump-compounds easier than other lexical items, because stump-compounds were devoid of one of the most alien elements, namely the Slavonic endings. [20] For all that, the Soviet Yiddish ability to imitate was far from perfect, considering that only a fraction of all Russian stump-compounds acquired a Yiddish "counterfeit". Presumably, that can be explained by the following factors:

(1) In Yiddish, where the "regular" compounds were much more inherent and widespread than in Russian, many Russian stump-compounds were calqued by Yiddish compounds, e.g. in the lexical items for "Province Soviet" and "Town Soviet"

(Russian) *oblsovet* > (Yiddish) *gegnttrat /gegntsovet*,

(Russian) *gorsovet* > (Yiddish) *shtottrat /shtotsovet*.

Some of the Russian stump-compounds were calqued by hybrids, or semi-abbreviations (see below), with the substitution of a Russian stump for a full Yiddish lexem, e.g. in the lexical items for "Province Committee" and "Town Committee"

(Russian) *obkom* > (Yiddish) *gegntkom*,

(Russian) *gorkom* > (Yiddish) *shtotkom*.

(2) Not every Russian stump-compound could be calqued by a Yiddish stump-compound. For example, a Yiddish

**politonf* < *politisher onfirer* for the Russian *politruk* < *politicheskij rukovoditel'* "political instructor" would sound rather nonsensical. For that reason Yiddish imported the loanword *politruk* (which is fortuitously similar to Yiddish diminutives formed by the suffixation *-uk*), as well as many other loaned stump-compounds.

(3) As long as Russian stump-compounds were coined before their Yiddish calques, the Yiddish stump-compounds should compete with their prototypes. In the first years after the Revolution, Yiddish periodicals in the Soviet Union used mostly the Russian stump-compounds. Since 1918, such Russianisms as *sovnarkhoz* "Council of national economy", *voyenkomat* "military registration and enlistment office", *ispolkom* "executive committee", and many other replicas of Russian innovations began appearing in Yiddish newspapers. Even happier innovations like *kolvirt* and *komyug* could not evade their Russian prototypes *kolkhoz* and *komsomol*. To name but one example, in an issue of the Kharkov daily *Der shtern* (29 March 1930) the combination of words "new *kolkhozes*" was used in two items published on the same page. In a poem of Khana Levin it was *naye kolkhozn*:

*a grus aykh
fun arbeter-poyerishe ratn,
fun taykhn bafrishte,
pionerishe lider,
a grus aykh a nayem
fun naye kolkhozn...*

However, in an adjacent notice we read: *naye kolvirtn*. Seemingly, in such cases one or another nomination oscillated as a stochastic variable. [21] What is more, some language-planners argued that Sovietisms of that kind had already become so separated from the original Russian collocation that they should be appreciated as independent international words, which Yiddish might borrow without translation. [22] A number of stump-compounds in Soviet Yiddish indeed do have two forms, both the original Russianism and its Yiddish imitation.

Stump-compounds represent a curious stage in the

development of modern Yiddish. It shows how a language can react to specific social needs creating special means of word formation in order to imitate morpho-syntactic processes in a dominant language. At the same time, standard Yiddish in the West remains principally unreceptive to such models of word formation. In Western publications the use of stump-compounds is, as a rule, limited to a few "slips of the pen" by Yiddish authors from the former Soviet Union.

Semi-abbreviations

To be sure, direct borrowings of Russian stump-compounds might also be found equally in many other languages, especially in translations of Soviet texts. This does not mean, however, that all of the languages of the Soviet realm developed a system of imitating the stump-compound. Such a system did not appear, for example, in Soviet German. Even such a vogue-word as *kolkhoz* did not initiate a corresponding German stump-compound, but was translated as *Kollektivwirtschaft*. At the same time, Soviet German together with Soviet Yiddish welcomed, for example, another model of word formation, which also became very productive in post-Revolutionary Russian. This was the formation of semi-abbreviations consisting of (1) a stump of an adjective and (2) a full lexeme, e.g. German *Pädinstitut* /Yiddish *pedinstitut* "pedagogical/teachers' training institute".

In general, the frequency of stump-compounds in Soviet Yiddish was much lower than the frequency of semi-abbreviations. For example, in Shklyar's list of Yiddish Sovietisms, [23] which is the most extensive of the lot, the stump *agit-* is the first constituent of one stump-compound and the same of nine semi-abbreviations (the ratio 1:9); the ratio for the stump *gid-* is 2:11; for *kult-* — 0:11; for *nats-* — 1:10; for *polit-* — 0:23; *prof-* — 1:17; *spets-* — 0:4.

In all probability Yiddish could more easily adopt semi-abbreviations than stump-compounds (true, semi-abbreviations were more prolific in Russian too). Especially as this type of word formation is very similar to the so-called "neo-classical compounding" with initial

combining forms (or affixoids), like *hyper-*, *pseudo-*, *super-*. It is especially noteworthy that Yiddish language planners in the West, where the stump-compounding was flatly rejected, did accept some semi-abbreviations, like *proffareyn* < *profesyonele fareyn* "trade union" and *redkolegye* < *redaktir/redagir-kolegye* "editorial board" which were current in leftist periodicals. Moreover, we even find an "American Yiddish" semi-abbreviation (though, it is doubtful whether it has ever been in vogue), namely *medfarzorg* — for the American-English "medicare". [24]

Acronyms

Apart from stump-compounds and semi-abbreviations, Soviet Yiddish borrowed from Russian scores of acronyms. Originally, they were Russian acronyms, transliterated with Yiddish letters, denoting different parties, organizations, institutions, etc. However, in the 1920s some Yiddish newspapers (first the Moscow *Der emes*) began to introduce the Yiddish equivalents of the Russian acronyms; for example:

f.s.s.r. (*farband fun sovetishe sotsialistishe republikn*) < *S.S.S.R.* "USSR";
a.ts.r.p.f. (*alfarbandisher tsentraler rat fun profesyonele fareynen*) < *V.Ts.S.P.S.* "All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions";
ts.a.k. (*tsentraler oysfir-komitet*) < *Ts.I.K.* "Central Executive Committee". [25]

Importantly, the traditional names of Yiddish letters were not used in the pronunciation of Soviet Yiddish acronyms, even in those formed from the initial letters of Yiddish words. In fact, in Soviet Yiddish publications the names of Yiddish letters were as a rule given, if given at all, as historic information, analogous, for example, to the old names of the Cyrillic alphabet. (Incidentally, the methods of ABC-teaching in Soviet Yiddish schools were based on Leo Tolstoy's approach, that is, on pronunciation of graphemes rather than on their names. [26]) In a sense, the non-alphabetical pronunciation of Soviet acronyms recalls the centuries-long tradition of reading Jewish acronymic surnames using rather arbitrary rules of phonetic

interpretation. [27] However, the phonetization of Soviet Yiddish acronyms had its peculiar feature: the initial letters were often pronounced according to the names of their Russian counterpart, even if an acronym was comprised of the initial letters of a Yiddish phrase. For instance:

f.s.s.r. — ef-es-es-er "U.S.S.R.";
m.t.s. (*mashin-traktorische stantsye*)— em-te-es
 "machine and tractor station";
f.z.sh. (*fabrik-zavodishe shul*) — fe-ze-sha
 "factory (vocational) school". [28]

Two types of acronyms are used in Soviet Yiddish:

(1) Alphabetic initialisms — combinations of initial letters pronounced by their Russian alphabetical names (see the above examples). Some of the alphabetic initialisms were not only pronounced but also spelled by the Russian letter names, like *tseka* (from Russian *tsentral'nyj komitet*) "Central Committee", *tsheka* (from Russian *Chrezvychajnaja Komissija*) "Extraordinary Commission [for struggle against counter-revolution, sabotage and speculation]". A number of Russian acronyms (like *tseka*) could be reinterpreted as Yiddish acronyms; Zaretski called such coincidental blends "Yiddish-Russian abbreviations". [29]

(2) Phonetic initialisms — combinations of initial letters pronounced like "normal" words, e.g., *mopr* (from Russian *Mezhdunarodnaja organizatsija pomoshchi revoljutsioneram*) "International Organization for Aid to Fighters for Revolution", *vuz* (from Russian *vysshee uchebnoe zavedenie*) "higher educational institution".

In the 1930s, some acronyms even became part of Soviet Yiddish idiomatic expressions. For example:

Me vet mikh oysshlihn fun mopr.

"So what!? They cannot cause me any harm" (literally "[So] I'll be expelled from MOPR").

[Er iz geven a tshlen tseka, itst iz er] a tsekakter tshlen.

"[He used to be a member of the Central Committee, now he is] a nonentity" (literally "a spoiled or defiled member").

In general, acronyms were much less used in Soviet

Yiddish than stump-compounds and semi-abbreviations. The latter were by far more welcome innovations than acronyms, which became "a thorn in the Soviet Yiddish press's flesh" [30] since in Yiddish there are no capital letters nor are there (in the Soviet orthography) double apostrophes which style acronyms in Hebrew and in non-Soviet Yiddish spellings. Zaretski also argued that since Yiddish Sovietisms were often shorter than the corresponding Russian ones, Yiddish acronyms were more or less dispensable. [31]

Univerbs with the Suffix *-ke*

This interesting type of univerb represents nouns formed, as a rule, from the combination of adjective+noun. [32] Shklyar [33] and Gitlits [34] listed the following examples:

<u>Yiddish univerb</u>	<u>Russian model</u>	
<i>agitke</i>	<i>agitka</i>	"propaganda piece"
<i>anonimke</i>	1) <i>anonimka</i>	"anonymous letter"
	<i>Zobezlichka</i>	"undefined /anonymous responsibility"
<i>grindlke</i>	<i>uchredilovk</i>	"Constituent Assembly"
<i>falshivke</i>	<i>fal'shivka</i>	"forged/fake document, fraud"
<i>filtirazhke</i>	<i>mnogotirazhka</i>	"factory (or kolkhoz etc. newspaper"
<i>funktionalke</i>	<i>funktionalka</i>	"organization of production according to functional/ operational principle"
<i>mayovke</i>	<i>maevka</i>	"(pre-Revolution illegal) May Day meeting"
<i>pilotke</i>	<i>pilotka</i>	"forage cap"

The above Yiddish words are formed by transmorphemization (the Russian suffix *-ka* is domesticated as the Yiddish

-ke) or by transmorphemization+loan translation (*grindlke*; *filtirazhke*).

The origin of the blend *anonimke* (= *anonimka* and *obezlichka*) remains unexplained. Hypothetically, it could be a pure coincidence of two independent borrowings, one of them by transmorphemization (*anonimke* = *anonimka*) and another by loan translation (*anonimke* = *obezlichka*). In Shklyar's 1934 list *anonimke* means evidently only "undefined/anonymous responsibility", since *onperzonikayt* — the bracketed Yiddish synonym in the list — has no other meanings. In the 1941 Yiddish-Russian dictionary, however, we find both meanings. [35]

The list of the *ke*-univerbs can be expanded. For example:

<u>Yiddish univerb</u>	<u>Russian model</u>	
<i>gazirovke</i>	<i>gazirovka</i>	"soda water"
<i>kerosinke</i>	<i>kerosinka</i>	"kerosene/oil stove"
<i>kopirke</i>	<i>kopirka</i>	"carbon/copying paper"
<i>leninke</i>	<i>Leninka</i>	"Lenin Library(the State Library in Moscow)"
<i>masovke</i>	<i>masovka</i>	"mass meeting"
<i>spirtovke</i>	<i>spirtovka</i>	"spirit lamp"
<i>tushonke</i>	<i>ushenka</i>	"stewed meat"
<i>zenitke</i>	<i>zenitka</i>	"ack-ack (anti aircraft) gun"
-		

Some words combine two types of univerbalization. For example, the word *politmasovke* (from the Russian *politmasovka* "political mass meeting") is, on the one hand, a semi-abbreviation containing the stump *polit-* and the full lexeme *masovke*. On the other hand, *masovke* itself is a univerb with the suffix *-ke*.

Like in the case of stump-compounding, all the Yiddish *ke*-univerbs imitate univerbalization which originally took place in Russian — especially since the suffix *-ke* had long since become a universal means of domesticating Slavonic nouns with the suffix *-ka*.

To my knowledge, the word *mayrevke* < *mayrev-*

universitet "the University for the National Minorities of the West" (especially its Jewish Department) [36] is the sole example of independent Yiddish univerbalization with the suffix *-ke*.

Conclusion

Deprived of important traditional functions (e.g., traditional socio-cultural milieu and religious life) and subjected to new social roles in new social surroundings at an overwhelming pace, Yiddish in the Soviet Union underwent significant changes. These were, as a rule, externally induced: it was Russian (and — far less tangibly — Ukrainian and Belorussian) that became the principal force bearing on the restructuring of the Yiddish vocabulary and its morpho-syntactic and semantic make-up.

Under the influence of Russian, Soviet Yiddish adopted a number of peculiar word-formation models. Some of them — especially the formation of stump-compounds, semi-abbreviations, and acronyms — were mostly characteristic of the political lexicon and, except for direct Russian borrowings, they usually did not intrude into the spoken language. In fact, the Soviet Yiddish political and special terminology was often regarded as an artificial part of the written language, possibly because this stock of words described "something" that — in real life — had nothing to do with Yiddish as a means of communication.

Importantly, Soviet Yiddish produced very few words without the direct influence of Russian, Ukrainian or Belorussian. Clearly, this phenomenon can be attributed to the denationalization of Jewish life. Soviet Jewry had no national objective to which they could channel their culture. It is illuminating that *mayrevke* — a term associated with a "quasi-Jewish" institution — is among the few examples of somewhat independent coinages. There is no doubt that if the nomenclature of specifically Jewish institutions, etc. had been more extensive, such unprecedented Soviet Yiddish innovations would have been more numerous as well.

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NOTES

- [1] Elye Spivak, *Naye vortshafung* (Kiev, 1939).
- [2] For a comprehensive history of the term see A. I. Shumager, "K probleme univerbatsii v lingvistike", in *Lingvisticheskie kategorii: Na materiale nemetskogoazyka* (Kalinin, 1984), 132-142.
- [3] For the classification used in this study see Henry K. Zalucky, *Compressed Russian: Russian-English Dictionary of Acronyms, Semi-acronyms and Other Abbreviations Used in Contemporary Standard Russian* (Amsterdam, 1991), xix-xx.
- [4] Ayzik Zaretski, "Oktyaber un yidish", *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul*, no 7-8 (Moscow, 1927), 25.
- [5] Hershl Shklyar, "Di sovetishe naybildungen in yidish", *Lingvistishe zamlung*, no 2 (Minsk, 1934), 46-90.
- [6] Cf. Françoise Thom, *Newspeak: The Language of Soviet Communism* (London and Lexington, 1989), 102.
- [7] Astrid Baecklund, *Die univerbierenden Verkürzungen der heutigen russischen Sprache* (Uppsala, 1940), 124-125.
- [8] Yudel Mark, *Gramatik fun der yidisher klal-shprakh* (New York, 1978), 207.
- [9] Stanley Starosta, *The Case for Lexicase* (London, 1988), 98.
- [10] This Sovietism as well as the clipping *spets* were even included in Uriel Weinreich, *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary* (New York, 1968).
- [11] Elye Falkovitsh, *Yidish. Fonetik, grafik, leksik un gramatik* (Moscow, 1940), 70.
- [12] Khayim Kahan, *Shprakhkentenish* (part 1) (Moscow, Kharkov, and Minsk, 1930), 40.
- [13] Bernard Comrie, *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology* (Oxford, 1989), 43.
- [14] B. A. Serebrennikov, *Rol' chelovecheskogo faktora v jazyke: Jazyk i myshlenie* (Moscow, 1988), 86.
- [15] Gennady Estraiikh, "Pyrrhic Victories of Soviet Yiddish Language Planners", *East European Jewish Affairs*, Vol. 23, no 2 (London, 1993), 25-37.
- [16] Gennady Estraiikh, "Ukrainian Jews' Language Behaviour in the 1920s: An Index of Ukrainian Status", *The Ukrainian Review*, Vol. 40, no 3 (London, 1993), 40-44.
- [17] See, for example, Leonid Borovoj, *Put' slova* (Moscow, 1974),

- 452-455.
- [18] Ber Slutski, *Leksikon fun politishe un fremd-verter* (Kiev, 1929).
- [19] Cf. Starosta 1988, op. cit, p. 99.
- [20] Ayzik Zaretski, "Tsu der shprakh-diskusye", *Der emes*, 8 and 9 May (Moscow, 1934).
- [21] Cf. A. B. Dolgopol'skij, "Kategorija vida v rusском jazyke i verojatnostnyj kharakter svjazi oznachaemogo s oznachajushchim", in *Problemy strukturnoj lingvistiki* (Moscow, 1963), 266.
- [22] M. Shulman, "Vegn sovetizmen in der yidisher shprakh", *Der emes*, 9 April (Moscow, 1937).
- [23] Sklyar 1934, op. cit.
- [24] Weinreich 1968, op. cit.
- [25] Zaretski 1927, op. cit., p. 26.
- [26] See Elye Spivak, *Metodik fun shprakh un literatur in shul. Eshter teyl — ivre* (Kiev, 1928), 126-133.
- [27] See Elye Falkovitsh 1940, op. cit., p. 71; Alexander Beider, *A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Russian Empire* (Teaneck, NJ, 1993), 57-59.
- [28] Aysik Zaretski, *Metodik fun yidish: baylage tsu di lernbikher far der onfang-shul* (Moscow, 1935), 99.
- [29] Zaretski 1934, op. cit.
- [30] Moyshe Itkovitsh, "Nokhamol vegn opshay farn loshn", *Sovetish heymland*, no 1 (Moscow, 1977), 155.
- [31] Zaretski 1927, op. cit.; Zaretski 1934, op. cit.
- [32] Cf. L. I. Osipova, "Suffiks'al'nye univerby s neopredelennoj semantikoj v rusском jazyke", *Filologicheskie nauki*, no 5 (Moscow, 1991), 61-69.
- [33] Shklyar 1934, op. cit.
- [34] Mordkhe Gitlits, "Tsvey tendentsn in der vortbildung fun yidish", in Viner, M. and Zaretski, A. (eds.), *Fragn fun yidisher shprakh [=Visnshaftlekhe zamlbikher fun der katedre far yidisher shprakh un literatur, Vol. 1]* (Moscow, 1938), 87-121.
- [35] Shprintsa Rokhkind and Hershl Shklyar, *Yidish-rusisher verterbukh* (Minsk, 1941), 98; the dictionary appeared in 1941, though the title page indicates 1940 — see Sh. Rokhkind, "Dray shtet fun mayn lebn", *Di pen*, no 6 (Oxford, 1995), 35. Later, the two meanings of *anonimke* were listed in Yudel Mark (ed.), *Groyser verterbukh fun der yidisher shprakh*, Vol. III (New York and Jerusalem, 1971) and in Moyshe Shapiro et al. (eds.) *Rusish-yidisher verterbukh* (Moscow, 1984).
- [36] About this university see, for example, Gennady Estraiikh, "Vos di materyaln inem gevezenem partey-arkhiv dertseyln", *Kultur un lebn* (New York, Summer 1992), 23-24.