

P R O J E C T

TEACHING OF HEBREW PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS
BY THE SIGHT RECOGNITION METHOD

by

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Bibliography

Articles of Interest on the Teaching of Hebrew
 in THE JEWISH TEACHER (UAHC)

Related Articles of Interest

Introduction

The January 1960 issue of THE JEWISH TEACHER was devoted to the subject of teaching Hebrew in the Reform religious school. In the opening article, Dr. Emanuel Gamoran, a pioneer in Reform religious education, reviews the general situation and notes that the majority of Reform religious schools have fallen far short of their goals as stated in their Hebrew curriculum.

But, "Why be discouraged?", asks Dr. Gamoran. 1/

He reaffirms his hopes that some day there will be a Hebrew speaking American youth, or at least a Bible reading American Jewry whose religious inspirations will be drawn from the original language of the Bible. His hopes are based on his observation that ... "Thousands of children in hundreds of schools were led to the study of simple passages from the Bible." 2/

However, a century of teaching of Hebrew in Reform religious schools has produced virtually no Hebrew speaking or Hebrew reading Americans.

The goal of this thesis is to analyse the causes which contribute to the situation as noted by Dr. Gamoran and to report on the use of new materials for teaching Hebrew prayers and blessings by sight-recognition.

Notes

1/ E. Camoran, Why be discouraged? THE JEWISH TEACHER,
January 1960 UANC

2/ idem

Chapter I

Historical Backgrounds of Hebrew Teaching in the Jewish Religious School

This section presents the general historical background essential to an understanding of the problems which have faced the teacher of Hebrew in the religious school.

An analysis of the educational program of many religious schools reveals a startling lack of clarity in guiding principles. Rabbi Leonard J. Mervis pointed out that modern religious educators have been misled by the successful transmission of Judaism in eras past, when the goals of religious education and policy making were inherent in the guiding principles of Judaism. Today, educators leap to make policy and establish goals on the basis of available texts, prejudices and nostalgic memories, - with only an occasional token nod toward guiding principles.

The most exciting textbook may be futile from the standpoint of principle. The most elaborate curriculum may breed emptiness; and the most endearing teacher may charm and captivate and teach little Judaism. ...

Are we to infer that methods and textbooks, well-trained staff and bountiful budget are useless, or are we to infer the existence of a vacuum in which they operate? We may have confidence that if we begin to communicate our principles to our goals and systems, the vacuum will disappear and a satisfactory productivity will emerge. 1/

In other words, unless an attempt is made to correlate goals and methods with principles, educational efforts will accomplish little.

In referring to Hebrew, Rabbi Mervin points out how easy it is to become lost in a maze of practical problems far removed from guiding principles.

Even our experts, our Jewish educators, frequently take us astray with their insistent attention to methodology without regard to basic purpose. ...

Until we arrive at more final solutions in first principles unrelated to linguistics, we shall be unable to build a satisfying linguistic curriculum. 2/

Hebrew in Jewish Life

In his book Hebrew : The Eternal Language, 3/ Dr. William Chomsky points to obscure communities in remote areas to prove that Hebrew was used as a daily language among Jews throughout the ages. However, scholars generally agree that, in essence if not in fact, Hebrew ceased to be a common tongue for Jews over two thousand years ago. 4/ It has remained a classic language for scholars, the literati and for special interest groups. Among the Jews it was used primarily for devotional purposes.

The history of the Jew shows that although he adopted or adapted the language of the people among whom he lived, he

reserved Biblical Hebrew as his LOSHON KODESH (sacred language) for communicating with his God. Because of this singular use, LOSHON KODESH acquired linguistic forms which are unsuitable for a language of daily communication in trade, commerce or social relations. The quality which makes a language live, - the ability to change and therefor reflect changes in the life of the people, are not found in this sacred tongue. It can be understood therefor, that without such major changes, LOSHON KODESH could not become LOSHON B'NAI ADAM, a language to be used by man in ordinary conversation.

Normally, the language of a people is the resultant expression of its history, its trials and vicissitudes, its problems, its culture and its literature. It comes to fruition slowly and gradually, with constant and continuous modification. Israel's modern Hebrew did not come into being in this manner. It was deliberately constructed out of the literary Hebrew which the scholars preserved. New words, forms and idioms were added and are still being added. Israel's academicians work assiduously to eliminate alien words and create new words with aboriginal roots. In a sense, Israel's Hebrew is a laboratory product.

Thus, while cognate with LOSHON KODESH, modern Hebrew cannot be considered a streamlined version of it. Yet, many schools attempt to treat both linguistic expressions as a single subject.

Dr. Chomsky questions,

What are we after? Ability to speak the language? to understand it? to read it with understanding? to participate in services? to write in Hebrew? to translate portions of the Bible or the prayerbook? All these abilities cannot be acquired simultaneously, and the acquisition of one ability does not necessarily entail the acquisition of another ability. Each of these abilities implies its own specific vocabulary and content, as well as its own distinct methodology. ^{2/}

The tenacity with which the Jew clung to sacred Hebrew, LOSHON KODESH, his reverence for it and the safeguards he invented for its protection against debasement, all contributed to his own preservation as a Jew. In instances when he discarded Hebrew and substituted the language of exile in his prayer, worship, and study, his identity as a Jew weakened rapidly.

His religious life was affected by the language of the Siddur, the Torah and the Talmud rather than the language of his day-to-day living; even if that language happened to be Aramaic or Hebrew.

Today, Israel's religious problems and tendency toward secularism are hardly lessened by the fact that its people are linguistically at home in the Bible. Actually, its most pious groups are the non-Hebrew speaking communities. These include the ultra-Orthodox who consider the use of Hebrew in ordinary conversation as a profanation of the language in which the Divine Will was revealed. When addressed in Hebrew, which most of them understand well, they reply in Yiddish or in the language of the country of their origin.

The Jew has always felt that communication with his God was achieved best through LOSHON KODESH. Even when not fully understood, the Hebrew of worship served as the shaliach (messenger) of his thoughts, emotions and his religious outreachings.

It was deeply felt that Israel could express his deepest emotions only in the language of his soul, in Hebrew. 6/ The resistance to include languages other than LOSHON KODESH is also evident in the Orthodox prayer books. Except for the mourner's prayer (kaddish) which is written in Aramaic, the Orthodox Siddur was written exclusively in Hebrew. English-Hebrew Orthodox prayer books are of comparatively recent publication, although special prayer books for women have been written in Yiddish.

The Jew measured his own piety and religiosity by his involvement in prayer, worship, and ceremonial observance. The first objective in the education of his child was the ability to read the Siddur. Prayer Hebrew, IVRI, was for centuries the core of all elementary Jewish education. Today, in many synagogue schools, the curriculum is still Siddur-centered or prayer-reading centered.

These facts were summarized by Dr. Sidney Hoenig at a New York Conference on Teaching Hebrew. 2/

We have come to the conclusion that if you want conversational Hebrew you have to go to an Ulpan, similar to those in Israel, but in this country this is not a primary aim of adult Jewish education.

The first important goal is that our people should know how to read Hebrew. Conversational Hebrew is a secondary matter. We are much more concerned with their ability to read the prayers.

The limited goal of teaching liturgical, ceremonial and Biblical Hebrew makes possible immediate student participation in worship services with a degree of comprehension and appreciation. It also lays the groundwork on which pupils with potential, time, and interest may be led to a fuller study of the Hebrew language and literature. It provides the pupil with a basic skill and builds up the

necessary favorable attitudes requisite for Jewish self-identification. It does this with the awareness that every step of the way contributes directly to the development of the pupil's religious life.

Rabbis and educators are disheartened when they observe the lack of participation by worshippers in the Hebrew portions of the service. Many of these worshippers are religious school students and confirmands. Their silence and the silence of their parents emphasize the need for a re-examination of the problem.

The problem has its roots in the goals of religious education rather than in its methodology.

Notes

- 1/ L. Mervis, Principles, Goals and Policy
The Jewish Teacher, UAHC Jan 1960
- 2/ - - - idem
- 3/ W. Chomsky, Hebrew: The Eternal Language, Ch.11
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- 4/ Teaching Hebrew to Adults
Summary of Proceedings of a Conference
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Prof. Scharfstein - "It is true that
Hebrew, during 2000 years of our
Galut, was not a spoken language
but a book language."
- 5/ Adult Jewish Leadership, Vol.II
- 6/ A. Z. Idelsohn, Jewish Liturgy and its Development
Sacred Music Press, HUC-JIR
- 7/ Teaching Hebrew to Adults
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Dep't of Education and Culture
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Chapter II

The Goals of Religious Education and Hebrew

In an analysis of the objectives of religious education with respect to Hebrew as stated in the Guiding Principles of the Commission on Jewish Education, Rabbi Mordecai I. Solooff lists the following aims: ^{1/}

- 1) to encourage those who have special language potential to the full mastery of the Hebrew language;
- 2) to develop the ability to read liturgical Hebrew;
- 3) to translate from both the prayer book and Bible;
- 4) to read and enjoy simple modern Hebrew literature; and
- 5) to develop familiarity with common Hebrew and Yiddish terms and expressions which have become part of Jewish folklore.

Approaching the problem with utmost candor and realism, Rabbi Solooff concludes that the objectives must be viewed in terms of immediate need and relative importance as applied to Jewish life in America. Reaching for goals which are not consistent with the Jewish environment, violates all basic principles of educational philosophy.

Rabbi Solooff concludes that most responsive to the immediate needs of our students is the mastery of sacred Hebrew, the Hebrew expressions needed to appreciate and to share in religious ceremonies and in religious worship, as well as a sufficient command of Hebrew to understand selected portions of the prayer book and Bible.

It would appear that more than guiding principles of Judaism have been overlooked in our Hebrew teaching programs. The teaching of Hebrew in our religious schools seems to violate basic principles of pedagogy and to disregard fundamentals in the learning process.

A distinct dichotomy in applying these principles and fundamentals is evident in the teaching of Hebrew and in teaching other subjects of the curriculum.

In the teaching of skills, the factors of readiness, relatedness, motivation, personal interest and the opportunity for application determine the methodology, the selection of students and the overall program. These elements are too often forgotten or disregarded in the teaching of Hebrew to children. All pupils are grouped together, given the same materials with little or no regard for individual differences, abilities or interests.

Since the teaching of reading of Hebrew prayers and blessings involves complicated rote learning, the next section will discuss various aspects of the learning process as viewed by different schools of educational psychology.

Notes

- 1/ M. I. Solooff, Hebrew in the Reform Religious School,
The Jewish Teacher (UAHC) Jan 1959

Chapter III

The Learning Process

Learning to read Hebrew involves many elements which are the subject of extensive research in educational psychology. It conforms to the definition cited for learning in general:

a process which brings about a change in the individual's way of responding as a result of practice or other experience. 1/

Learning is evident when some responses occur with increased frequency in a repeated situation. Lee J. Cronbach lists seven elements as aspects of learning: 2/

- a) GOAL The goal of the learner is some consequence he wishes to attain.
- b) READINESS A person's readiness consists of the sum-total of response-patterns and abilities he possesses at any time.
- c) SITUATION The situation consists of all the objects, persons, and symbols in the learner's environment.
- d) INTERPRETATION Interpretation is a process of directing attention to parts of the situation, relating them to past experience, and predicting what can be expected to happen if various responses are made.
- e) RESPONSE A response is an action or some internal change that prepares the person for action.
- f) CONSEQUENCE Confirmation or contradiction. Some events that follow the response are regarded by the learner as the consequence of the response.
- g) REACTION TO THWARTING Thwarting occurs when the person fails to attain his goals.

Once the teacher is fully aware of these seven aspects of the learning process, he is equipped to examine and plan educational experiences.

In learning Hebrew prayers and blessings, these elements may be identified as follows:

- a) Goal: to be able to read, recite and understand the specific prayer or blessing unit being taught.
- b) Readiness: the ability to distinguish configurations of words and letters, and, in the proposed method, an ability to sound letters of the English alphabet.
- c) Situation: the prayer book, the ritual, the classroom, the teacher and learning devices.
- d) Interpretation: applying the ability to sound English letters or the sound heard by the teacher's pronunciation, to the printed Hebrew word.
- e) Response: sounding the printed Hebrew word on sight.
- f) Consequence: confirmation or contradiction by teacher or by self upon checking with transliteration.
- g) Reaction to thwarting: if his first try is not confirmed, the student may make a new interpretation and response.

Theories of human learning

Among the numerous theories of human learning, the principal protagonists in the contemporary scene are Conditioning, Connectionism and the Field Theory. The proposed method, sight recognition of words, will be discussed in the light of all three theories although no one, nor any combination of these and/or other theories are rigid, final or complete.

In The Psychology of Learning, Forty-First Yearbook, Part II, National Society for the Study of Education, the theory of conditioning is discussed by E. R. Guthrie and Clark L. Hull; connectionism by Peter Sandiford and Arthur I. Gates; field theory by G. W. Hartmans and Kurt Lewin.

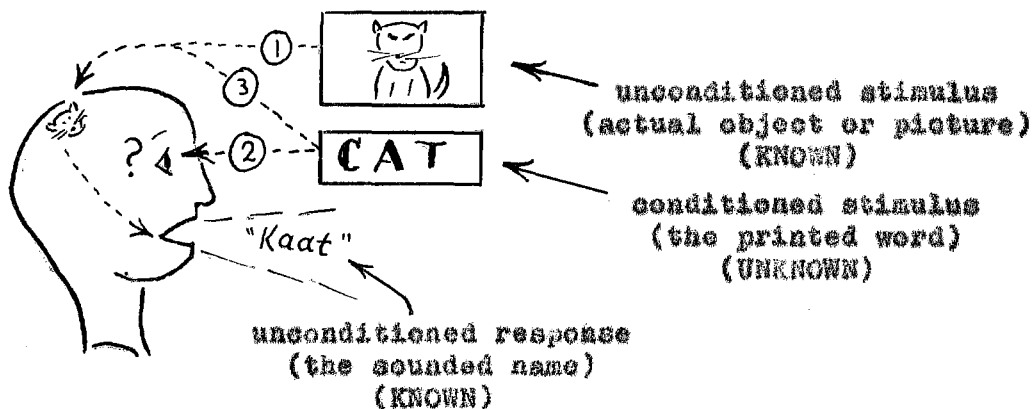
In the chapter devoted to reconciling the various learning theories, T. R. McConnell ^{2/} indicates that the surface differences which seem to distinguish one system from another often conceal rather striking examples of consistency in underlying observations and descriptions of learning behavior. The greatest differences lie in the broad general characteristics and in emphasis or degree.

Aspects of all three theories may be recognized in the proposed sight recognition method of teaching prayers and blessings.

Learning and conditioning

Most learning situations call for some degree of discovery of appropriate reaction or reactions. At one end of the scale is what is known as rote learning, such as memorizing a list of nonsense syllables. The element of discovery in this sort of task is at a minimum. The necessary features of this sort of conditioning have been outlined by E. R. Hilgard and D. G. Marquis ^{4/} as follows:

- 1) an unconditioned stimulus capable of eliciting a regular response,
- 2) a conditioned or substitute stimulus not originally capable of producing the unconditioned response, and
- 3) repeated presentation of the conditioned and unconditioned stimuli together in a certain manner until the substitute stimulus evokes the original unconditioned response without occurrence of the unconditioned stimulus.



In summarizing the chapter on conditioning ^{5/}

Prof. E. R. Guthrie defines the principle of association as follows: "Patterns of stimuli which are acting at the time of a response tend, on their recurrence, to occasion that response."

Corollary to this principle is that one learns to repeat and to respond only what one does. This includes errors and bad habits as well as success and good habits.

In association learning, it is response that is associated with new stimuli. In the illustration on the previous page, the response to the new (conditioned) stimulus which in this case is the printed word CAT, is the vocal "kaat". This response to the new stimulus was made possible by association to the unconditioned stimulus, the picture of the cat.

Learning and connectionism

Connectionism, or the bond theory of learning, states that all mental processes consist of the functioning of native and acquired connections between situation and response.

It states that learning is connecting and that this process has its physical basis in the nervous system, hence it is also known as the synaptic theory of learning. This concept of neurological atomism is disputed by Arthur I. Gates^{6//} of Columbia University who explains connectionism simply as a functional relationship between a situation and a response, - an observed phenomenon and this implies no neurological correlate.

In a problem situation, finding a solution becomes the prime objective. The discovery of the appropriate reaction pattern is the critical feature of the learning process. Here, the theory of connectionism is clearly seen as the learner is required to exercise insight, to select, reject, and organize the component elements and finally discover the appropriate reaction.

The printed word CAT may be used as an illustration. In solving the problem of reading (sounding) this printed word, the learner is required to exercise insight, and call upon his prerequisite knowledge of the letters of the alphabet as well as their sound values and the manner

of combining them. Scrutinization, selection, rejection and organization will require bonding operations or connections in multiple to achieve a solution.

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Possibilities</u>	<u>Connections or Combinations</u>	
C	s k	s*ay*t	k*ay*t
A	ay ah aa	s*ah*t	k*ah*t
T	t	s*aa*t	k*aa*t

When finally unified, and properly connected, the learner discovers the appropriate reaction, namely, "kaat".

Learning and the field theory 2/

In gestalt psychology, learning is said to proceed from whole to part, from general to particular. Instead of picking out one or another isolated element within a situation, the importance of which cannot be judged without consideration of the situation as a whole, field theory finds it advantageous, as a rule, to start with characterization of the situation as a whole.

... The apprehension of the whole is requisite before any detail can be properly interpreted.

... We can recognize another's face presumably because it contains a unique pattern of line and color even though we are often unable to specify whether a person we know quite well has brown or blue eyes. 8/

Recurring phrases and word combinations make possible the recognition of new words because of their position within the recognized phrase unit. Thus, a word like CAT leaps to cognition when the sentence is, "Hey diddle diddle, the CAT and the fiddle."

In most cases, the situation as a whole will evoke the reaction while separate parts of it will fail to do so. What really counts is the form quality and not specific elements. This applies to words in relation to their letters, as well as in relation to other words and to the phrase unit of which they are parts.




Configurationist principles are basic in the act of recognition. Even changes in style of print type often affect reading performance. The sight recognition of words and groups of words must be distinguished from the recognition of the letters which they contain. The field theory suggests that drill and exercise in letter recognition have little effect on acquiring word recognition. The last illustration with the letters C, A, and T appears to support this. General practice in elementary education employs the field theory when teaching the word before teaching the component letters. The letters C, A, and T take on greater meaning when recognized as parts of the known word CAT, than when learned as isolated and unrelated items.

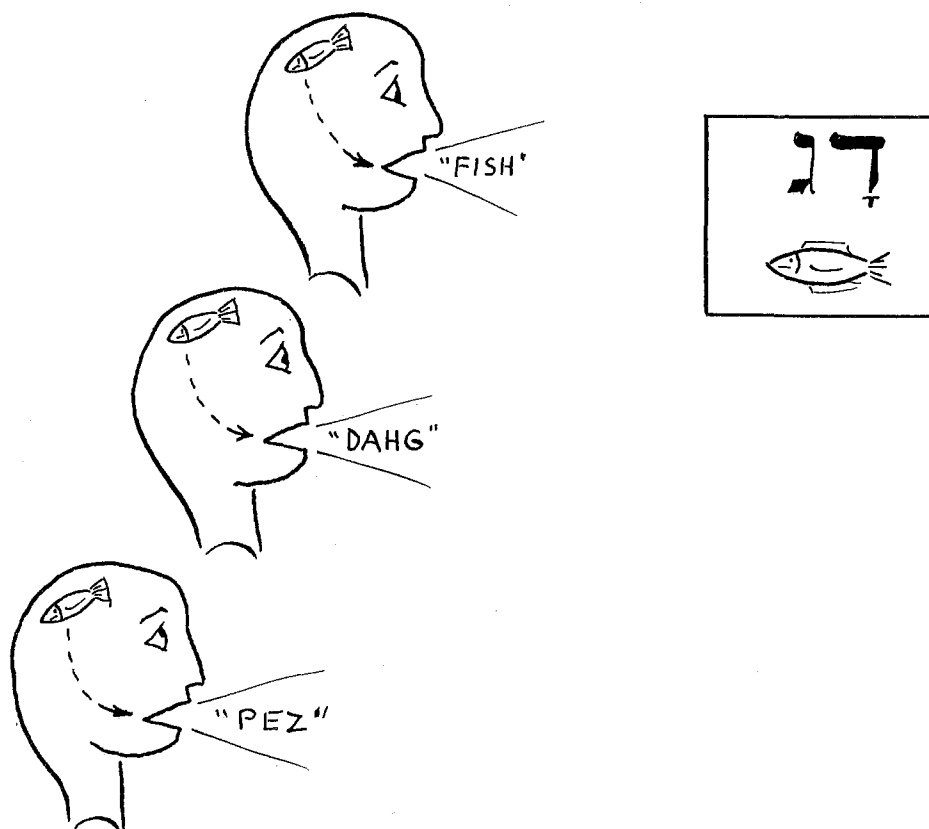
Human learning and the sight-recognition method

The various theories and psychologies are not mutually exclusive. Generally, a true learning experience is a combination of all methods.^{3/} The particular situation only varies the emphasis of the different methods which act in it, but does not really exclude any.

In mechanical reading, the objective is the production of a sound reaction to a printed word. It becomes necessary to find a means by which to create some mental image which

can help the reader make the desired sound. The problem of teaching IVRI, so-called mechanical reading, lies in the difficulty of creating this mental image.

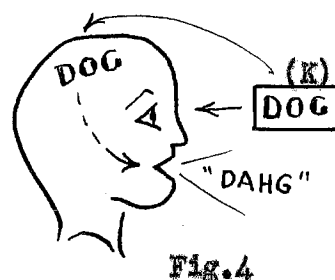
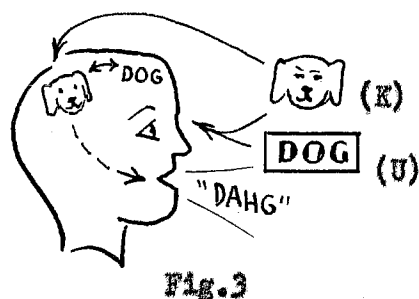
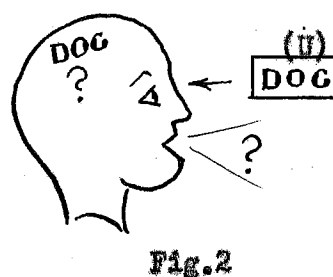
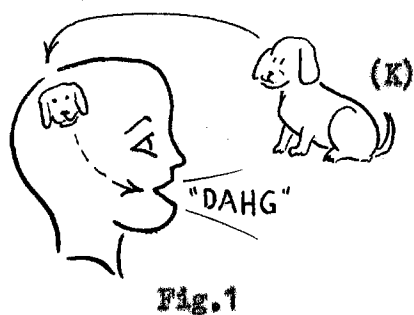
The image that is being sought is a sound image rather than a meaning image. In fact, a knowledge of the meaning may be even more confusing to the learner. His mental image  would suggest that he say "fish" when he sees  rather than "dahg". If the objective sought were meaning, then this procedure would be desirable and would then be similar to the reading of hieroglyphics, in which  would be "fish", "dahg", or "pez" to an Englishman, an Israeli, or a Spaniard respectively.




The only sound image which can be presented visually (other than musical notes for the musician, or diacritical and punctuation marks for the editor, orator, actor, etc.) are letters and groups of letters which can evoke in the reader a vocal reaction. The reader knows that letters and vowels of his own language represent certain specific sounds. The educator who fails to use this ability, rejects the most fundamental, and perhaps the only usable KNOWN which the learner can employ.


The learning situation consists of the introduction of the single UNKNOWN, the printed word, which creates a new mental image of configuration. (Fig.2) The objective in this learning situation is to substitute or identify the old mental image (Fig.1) with the new mental image (Fig.3).

KNOWN = (K) UNKNOWN = (U)



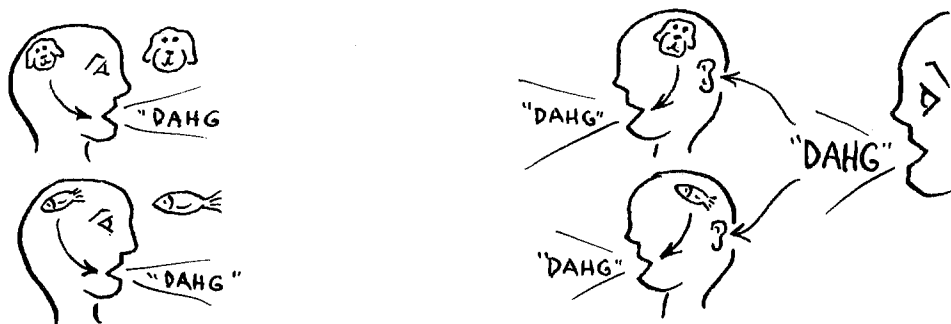
With a sufficient number of repetitions, drill and practice, the learner associates the new and the old mental images. His oral response to both images becomes one, namely "dahg". The original stimulator, the picture, may be eliminated gradually as the new mental image is absorbed by the old one. The printed word is said to be learned when it stimulates the same end result (vocalization) which the picture or object produced originally. (Fig.4)

What happens when the English speaking child is confronted with the unknown printed word $\lambda \overline{I}$? If unassociated, it creates no mental image. If it is accompanied by the illustrating picture , an immediate reaction to the pictorial mental image thus created, is a vocal "fish", which of course is correct for the meaning of $\lambda \overline{I}$ but not for its sound.

If the printed word $\lambda \overline{I}$ is accompanied by the sound "dahg", then the child may become further confused in the beginning by assuming the sound to be its meaning and thinks of the  when he sees $\lambda \overline{I}$. If the sound "dahg" is not in the vocabulary of the learner, it cannot create a pictorial mental image, and the learner is left with a mental blank.

The reading process, word recognition, therefor depends upon the use of a mental image which serves as the converter that changes the visual or aural stimulus into the oral reaction. But the stimulus and the response must both be known.

What happens when the printed word DOG is taught to an English speaking child, and the word דָּג to a Hebrew speaking child? If, in each case, the word "dahg" is a part of their regular vocabulary, the identical oral reaction will be given to either, (1) a different visual stimulus, or (2) the same aural stimulus.



It is important to note that the oral reaction "dahg" is a response to the mental image, rather than to the stimulus. Whether by seeing or hearing, the mental image is the result of the learner's experiences and not the introduction to a new experience.

The learning process, - recognizing the unknown word symbol of a known object or idea, - requires a transmutation in which a new mental image of the configuration of

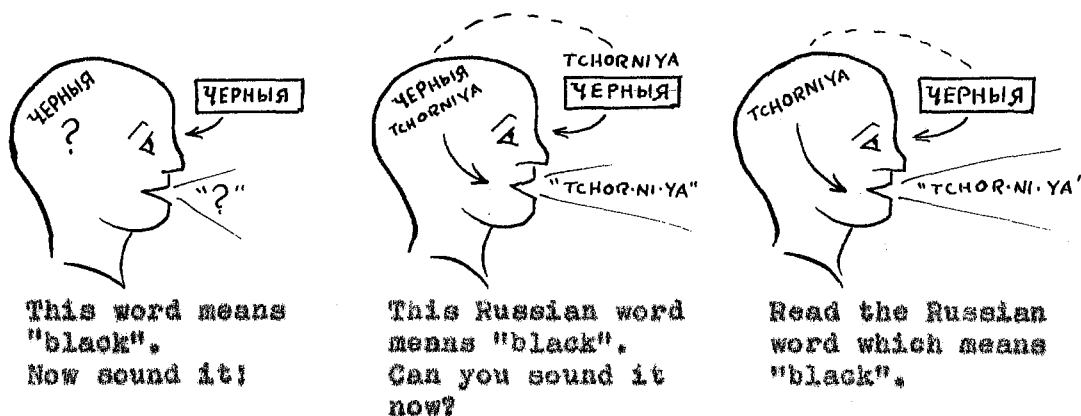
the unknown word is associated with and ultimately substituted for the mental image of the known object.

Relationship between the meaning
and the sound of a word

Except for some rare onomatopoeic words like "buzz", "cuckoo", and in Hebrew tzil-tzail (ring) and bak-buk (bottle - from the sound which is made when pouring from a water bottle), meaning and sound appear to have no inherent relationship. As already indicated, the sound "dahg" means different things in different tongues, and different things in the same tongue. For example, in English, it may mean a certain kind of animal, a certain type of person, a gripping device on a machine, an andiron, the act of following a person, etc.

The Russian word ЧЕРНЫЯ means "black", - but with a knowledge of the meaning only, the learner cannot pronounce the word. The Russian word ОЧИ means "eyes". The reader may learn to interpret ОЧИ ЧЕРНЫЯ as "black eyes", but he has no way of knowing how to sound them. Only when ЧЕРНЫЯ is sounded for him as tehorniya and ОЧИ as otchi, will he be able to reproduce the vocal Russian sounds. And, only as he sees the Russian words while making the Russian sounds, will he be able to learn to react to these Russian words properly.

Finally, when the proper response is obtained without the use of a transliteration device, the reader may be said to read the Russian words.



It may be seen then that comprehension (meaning) has no native relationship to sound. It is a learned association; one is learned in terms of the other. Until this association is established, one cannot produce the memory image ^{9/} of the other. As in the illustration with the Russian words **ОЧИ ЧЕРНЫЯ**, likewise the Hebrew word **בָּרַךְ** can evoke no Hebrew sound even when the meaning blessed be is known. If read for meaning by an English speaking student, the word **בָּרַךְ** will be sounded as "blesseed be"; an Italian student will vocalize the meaning as "sanctissimo".

It must be understood that no attempt is being made here to eliminate meaning from instruction in prayer and worship. Meaningful worship comes from a knowledge of the meaning of the prayers. Generally, an accompanying free

translation gives the sense of the prayer far better than a stilted literal translation.

At the moment, the first objective is to have the student say "boruch" when he sees $\overline{\text{ברוך}}$ besides or in addition to knowing its meaning. The two reactions, the meaning-image and the sound-image, are learned independently. These may later be associated in terms of each other (unknown vs known; or known vs known), but in the initial stages, the meaning and the sound are unrelated in the life experience of the student.

The teacher is faced with the question: what known ability does the student possess which can help him to learn how to sound the printed word $\overline{\text{ברוך}}$? Two general methods of word-sounding suggest themselves: (1) phonic reading, and (2) whole word recognition.

Notes

- 1/ F. L. Rush, Psychology and Life, p 269
Scott, Foresman & Co.
- 2/ L. J. Cronbach, Educational Psychology, Ch. 3
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- 3/ Nelson B. Henry, Ed. The Psychology of Learning,
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Chapter V by G. W. Hartmann
The Field Theory of Learning and
its Educational Consequences.
- 8/ - - - idem p. 176
Chapter V by G. W. Hartmann
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- 9/ - - - idem p. 105
Chapter III by P. Sandiford
Connectionism: Its Origin and
Major Features.
"The memory images of sensations,
according to Hartley, are produced
by the vibration on a small scale
of nerve tissue previously stimu-
lated more actively."

Chapter IV

Hebrew and the Learning Process

Phonic reading has long been the popular method for teaching mechanical reading. As commonly understood, mechanical reading in Hebrew is the vocalization of printed words according to the sound values assigned to letters and vowel signs. It assumes that a word may be sounded as a whole if it is sounded as the sum of its parts.

Letter by letter, or syllable by syllable reading

The difficulties involved in the process of combining many sounds to form a unified whole word become apparent immediately. Taking the word בֹּרוּחַ it is noted that it is composed of five elements:

1	2	3	4	5
ב	ו	ר	ו	ח
B	O	R	U	Ch

These are summed up in the mind of the student in a process usually referred to as the synthetic method. The word is built up or synthesized.

However, the principle of multiple unknowns appears to work against its success. Five unrelated items have to be consolidated in a strict sequential fashion, sound by sound. The five different sounds are drilled independently. No unifying factor exists to hold them together so that they can be treated as a unit. Multiple unknowns produce multiple confusion.

In addition, the factors in forgetting appear to argue against its success.

Forgetting usually seems to be most rapid immediately after the end of the learning period. As time goes on, the remaining knowledge becomes more and more stable. This fundamental fact - that most of what we forget is forgotten soon after it has been learned - was first discovered by the German psychologist Ebbinghaus and has been verified repeatedly (Ebbinghaus, 1885; Cain and Willey, 1939). 1/

Recall after practice ceases is referred to as reminiscence. The degree of reminiscence evidently depends on many factors, including the following: 2/

a) The meaningfulness of the material learned.

Research has shown that there is a greater degree of reminiscence with meaningful material than with nonsense material. Since we are dealing basically with "nonsense" material in Hebrew, the difficulty of reminiscence must be borne in mind.

b) Determination to recall.

Individuals who try hard to recall show a greater degree of reminiscence than those who give up more easily. This factor can be engendered in the teaching of reading Hebrew prayers and blessings. Real experiences via worship services and rituals will encourage the determination to recall.

c) Degree of mastery of the task.

Familiarity with recurring words and phrases will show a greater degree of reminiscence; and since blessings and prayers have many such recurring elements, recall can be obtained quite readily.

d) Length of time involved.

Fast learners show more reminiscence than slow learners do over short periods of time (a few days to a few weeks). But slow learners show more reminiscence than fast learners over periods of a few months. This is true both for nonsense syllables and for motor learning.

Mechanical reading

In learning to read a word mechanically, the learner endeavors to create a memory image of the total word and its total sound. The component parts have to be recognized for individual sound values and organized in proper order.

The learner's objective is to view the letters and vowels as an integrated whole and join their respective sounds to produce a whole-word sound.

The memory image of the word is built up gradually and with great effort. However, this difficulty in synthesizing often discourages the student because it is slow, meaningless and laborious. As a result, many people read

haltingly when they continue the practice of sounding individual letters.

This is especially true when the sound offers no clue to meaning. In reading words which are part of one's conversational vocabulary, the known meaning may serve as a self-corrective for proper sounding. For example:

"He read the book," and "He will read the book."
(rd) (reed)

Unfortunately, in mechanical reading of Hebrew,
no such self-help operates.

The memory image of the whole-word sound comes into being when all the component letter and vowel sounds coalesce into a single entity representing the total word as viewed.

when the student fails to achieve this objective by himself, it is the teacher who must supply the total sound. in either instance, whether self-created or acquired from the teacher, the word is learned at this point of total integration. Drill of the total word can be exercised only after total word-sound is achieved.

The difficulty of synthesizing words

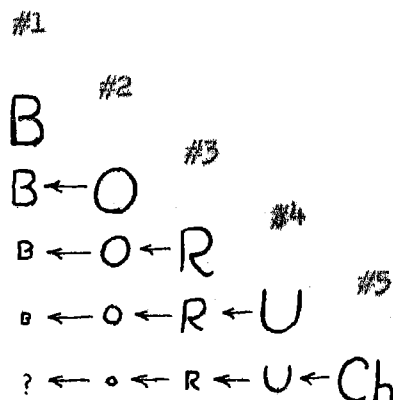
Taking the illustration BORUCH, the sound #1 (B) is drilled once and passed on to sound #2 (O) immediately. Without repetition, the reader proceeds to sound #3, then

#4 and finally #5. As he leaves the first letter, he begins to forget its sound. We have noted that forgetting usually seems to be most rapid immediately after the end of the learning period. The forgetting is further en-

couraged by the addition of the new unknowns. As the student approaches the last letter, the earlier sounds have faded away, and at the end of the word, these earlier sounds are vague or completely forgotten.

The same difficulties are present in reading English. Polysyllabic words are always the bane of the classroom teacher. After a student fails to sum up and unify the many elements into a single word, the teacher must supply the total word expressed as a unit. The student's struggle and failure contributes nothing to learning the word unit. The actual learning of the unit begins at the point when it is treated as a unit.

The preceding analysis may appear to argue against the use of transliteration as a means for learning to read Hebrew mechanically. It may be claimed that the syllabic reading of transliteration in the proposed method is not easier than letter-by-letter reading of Hebrew.



However, the difficulty in Hebrew is greater than in English because in the latter, the student's broad experience with his native tongue provides assistance through contextual comprehension and known vocabulary which he does not possess in Hebrew.

In learning Hebrew, except for the teacher's vocalization, transliteration is the only known skill which the student already has that he can use for drill and repetition. Transliteration uses English letters as sound symbols, not unlike stenography. Even those who reject the use of transliteration are compelled to use this device. Hebrew alphabet letters are generally introduced in primers together with related English letters representing the nearest sound; "a" like in father.

Knowledge of the alphabet.

The use of transliteration does not deny the usefulness of a knowledge of the sound values of Hebrew letters and vowels. They are valuable clues, hints and helpers, but they are not makers of words. The child who can read DOG will find that the known letters and sounds will help him learn to read DOGS and DOGGY. If he can read DOGS he will learn to read DOG with relative

ease. However, if he does not know DOG, he will have to go through the same process with the word DOGS as he would have with DOG. Knowing the alphabet and the names and values of D, O, and G, the student will learn to take a clue of the D-sound, but will receive no help from the O-sound nor from the GEE-sound. Neither the O-sound nor the GEE-sound appear in "dahg". According to alphabet letter pronunciation, the letters D'O'G should, more logically, make the reader say "d·oh·jh" rather than "d·ah·g".

In Hebrew, the phonics are more constant. But contextual comprehension is no help to the learner of blessings and prayers. He cannot rely upon native clues as he can in his native tongue. בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ will not help him to read בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ nor בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ nor any of the words of the family. Even if the initial letters are remembered in the process of synthesizing the word, and they don't fade out as the subsequent letters are sounded, we have, essentially, a compression process rather than a fusion process.

B O R U Ch
 B O R U Ch
 B O R U Ch
 B O R U Ch
 B ... O ... R ... U ... Ch
 B .. O .. R .. U .. Ch
 B . O . R . U . Ch
 B.O.R.U.Ch

The time element may be shortened continuously, but it will exist until the point of fusion is reached.

Actually, no fusion occurs until the teacher or the student finally sounds the word as a unit. Why not help the learner sound the word immediately upon seeing it?

Whole word recognition

Two procedures suggest themselves by which the whole word may be read:

- 1) The teacher provides the correct sound while the student looks at the word;
- 2) The student himself provides the correct sound by using known sound symbols.

The first procedure is proper and desirable in the student-teacher relationship. The teacher says "boruch" when the student looks at בִּרְכָּךְ and the student says "boruch" in response. A sufficient number of repetitions, with corrections by the teacher, will eventually establish the association. When overlearned, the student will conjure up the correct mental sound-image upon seeing בִּרְכָּךְ and will react by making the sound which he practices, namely, "boruch".

This procedure requires the continuous presence of the teacher, to sound the word and to approve the response or correct it if it is incorrect. The teacher's voice

as the causative of the mental image can be eliminated after the proper mental image will appear automatically upon seeing $\overline{\text{בּוּרֻךְ}}$, and the student will respond correctly with "boruch".

There are a few minor dangers. The student may not hear the teacher correctly and therefor will respond incorrectly. The teacher may not catch incorrect responses and thus fail to correct errors. When this happens, the mistake is practiced and the wrong practice will fix the wrong reaction.

The second procedure which may be employed, uses the student's own ability to create his own mental sound image. This he can do by means of certain symbols or signs or letters or combinations of letters which, because of his experience, i.e. his natural use of these causative factors, create the mental image which will bring about a desired specific vocal reaction. For example, his knowledge of the English alphabet and his experience in the sounding of combinations of letters, cause him to react automatically in certain specific ways when he sees them.

Generally, he will respond to seeing "B", "BIT", "BITE", and "BI-TE" with bee, bit, by-t, and by-ti. A little coaching will get the student to adjust to a system of syllabic pronunciation in which "BI-TE" would be pronounced as bi-tay.

NOTES

1/ F. L. Rush, Psychology and Life, p. 306
Scott, Foresman & Co.

2/ idem idem p. 307

Chapter V

The Proposed Method

Basic pedagogic practice suggests that the teacher take full advantage of the learner's known abilities, and by devices and new materials, eliminate obstacles which prevent or delay simple, quick learning.

For this purpose, a study was made of the Hebrew used in ceremonies and rituals as practices in Reform homes and synagogues. It showed that approximately 60 to 80 units of prayer are used in the Hebrew liturgy. The principal ones were graded and grouped to form a basic functional Hebrew curriculum for our religious schools. This curriculum was outlined in an article which appeared in the issue of June 1954 of the Journal of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. (Plates I and II)

The experimental curriculum in functional Hebrew covers grades kindergarten through 9 and is divided into units. Units A, B, and C contain the essentials for general synagogue and home usage covering primary blessings, the rudiments of worship and general home prayers and blessings. These units may be assigned to the middle grades in most schools. These are the grades which represent the high spots in the registration and attendance curves. Units D, E, F, and G cover more advanced elements

of synagogue and home ritual. The curriculum may be enlarged or reduced in scope depending upon instruction time and educational objectives; one or more units being covered each year.

The proposed method of teaching functional Hebrew makes use of English transliteration as the medium of learning. A series of individual Prayer Study Cards and Pocket Flash Cards have been prepared for this purpose and are illustrated on plates IV and VI. Units A, B, C, D, and E are included in the Prayer Study Cards (Plate III). Units F and G will be produced in a separate volume at a later date. The contents of the Pocket Flash Cards is given on plate V.

In the Prayer Study Cards, the learning unit (b'rocho or prayer) is printed in large Hebrew type on a card approximately 3" x 5". Over each Hebrew word, the English transliteration is printed in clear but small type. On the reverse side of this card is the prayer and its translation, or English counterpart, as they appear in the Union Prayer Book.

After initial instruction by the teacher about reading from right to left, special guttural sounds, etc., the pupil takes his card and studies it until he knows the prayer perfectly. He drills by himself. He tests himself by trying to read the prayer on the reverse side without the transliteration. If he forgets a word he can turn the card over and recall

the correct sound. There can never be any question as to correctness. When he can read the prayer in Hebrew without having to refer to the transliteration, then he has learned to read the unit.

Since the students study individually and independently of each other, each may proceed at his own rate of learning. Brighter students do not become bored by the snail's pace often adopted because of the slower students. The latter are not embarrassed nor discouraged by the more rapid progress of the brighter students. The method is based on individual study and achievement. Teachers can maintain individual records of students' achievements.

The Pocket Flash Cards (Plates V and VI) employ the same learning technique but cover smaller word or phrase units instead of full prayers. The flash cards supplement the prayer study cards in learning the assigned units.

The teacher may test the student by requiring him to read the prayer in the Union Prayer Book.

Three sample lesson plans employing these devices are included in chapter six.

Louis Lister A FUNCTIONAL HEBREW CURRICULUM*

In his article in the January 1954 *Journal*, Dr. Franzblau stated that a curriculum in Functional Hebrew, based on the use of Prayer Cards, was in process of preparation. This curriculum has now been completed and the Prayer Cards will be available for use in religious schools in the Fall. It is therefore deemed appropriate at this time to present the full details.

PRACTICAL OBJECTIVE NEEDED

The future of Hebrew instruction in our schools rests upon an objective re-evaluation of the place of Hebrew in the life of the American Jew.

To what extent is it an essential factor in Jewish adulthood? The answer lies in devotional services and in the cycle of Sabbaths and festivals, in the home and synagogue. These dictate what our broad aims should be.

We should teach, first and foremost, the prayers, responses, blessings and hymns most often used in our Sabbath and holiday services and in our home observances. This would give us a practical Hebrew curriculum which, though limited, is fully achievable.

* Louis Lister is Instructor in Education in the Long Island Branch of the Hebrew Union School of Education and Principal of the Religious School of Temple Sinai of Roslyn, L. I.

At most the curriculum would include between 50 and 60 such responses or blessings. These can be spread over the religious school curriculum beginning with grade 3. In any grade under this plan, the learned units would be used immediately in worship or at home. No artificial situations need be created, for synagogue services, holiday observances and the home rituals continually provide real participation.

FUNCTIONAL AND LITERARY
HEBREW POSSIBLE

Functional Hebrew thus conceived, should be taught as a study distinct and apart from Hebrew as a literature. Functional Hebrew is a tool for personal performance in worship and ceremonial observance. Language is a device for cultural intercourse. Neither is dependent upon the other; neither need interfere with the other.

FUNCTIONAL HEBREW CURRICULUM

An experimental curriculum in Functional Hebrew is printed on a following page. It covers grades 3 through 9 and is divided into "units" of instruction. Three of the units contain the essentials for general synagogue and home usage. These may be assigned to the middle grades (4-5, and 6), which in

most schools represent the high spots in the registration and attendance curves. The remaining units cover more advanced elements of synagogue and home ritual. The curriculum may be enlarged or reduced in scope, depending upon instruction time and educational policies, one or more units being covered each year.

TEACHING FUNCTIONAL HEBREW

This method of teaching functional Hebrew makes use of English transliteration on a series of individual "Prayer Cards." It was originally suggested by Dr. Franzblau as a means of putting to work English sound symbols which the children already know perfectly.

The learning unit (*b'rcho* or prayer) is printed in large Hebrew type on a Prayer Card, approximately 3" x 5". Over each Hebrew word, the English transliteration is printed in clear but small type. The prayer and its translation (as they appear in the Union Prayerbook) are printed on the reverse side of the card. After initial instruction by the teacher (about reading from right to left, special guttural sounds, etc.) the pupil takes his card and studies it until he knows the prayer perfectly.

The pupil drills by himself. He tests himself by trying to read the prayer on the reverse side of the card. If he forgets a word, he can turn the card over and recall the correct sound. *There can never be any question as to correctness!* When he can read the prayer in Hebrew without having to turn the card over to check any part of it, then he knows it!

The teacher tests the student by requesting him to read the prayer in the Union Prayerbook.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS POSSIBLE

When he has learned one card, he is given the next card. He need not wait for the class; — he can proceed at a rate determined by his own ability.

This is all there is to it!

Retention is facilitated by regular use of the learned prayer in services and by further classroom drill. Each repetition in practice, stamps it in deeper and deeper.

A regular portion of each session should be reserved for review. Where possible prayers should be sung as well, as this helps stamp them in mind. Large photo reproductions* of each prayer studied may be permanently mounted on the front wall of the classroom.

If the learned material is used and drilled regularly, as it must be in our congregational pattern, our children will accumulate a comprehensive store of functional Hebrew to serve them as Temple-going adults.

This is an attainable goal for Hebrew instruction in our religious schools. It would give Hebrew an aura of reality and enrich both synagogue and home immeasurably.

* All cards containing units listed in the suggested curriculum will be available in the Fall. Enlarged copies of these cards which will serve as wall charts, are also being produced. Experimentally, the sets are available through the Hebrew Union School of Education, 40 West 68th Street, New York 23, N. Y.

C C A R Journal
Number Six
June 1954

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SUGGESTED FUNCTIONAL HEBREW CURRICULUM

UNIT A

Primary Blessings

1. המוציא
2. בורא פרי הגפן
3. בורא פרי האדמה
4. בורא פרי העץ

UNIT B

Rudiments of Worship

1. שמע
2. ברוך שם
3. ברכו
4. ברוך יי
5. מי כמכה
6. יי ימלך
7. ואנחנו כרעים
8. ביום ההוא
9. קדוש קדוש
10. ברוך כבוד
11. ימלך יי

UNIT C

HOME PRAYERS & BLESSINGS

1. להדליק נר של שבת
2. להדליק נר של יום טוב
3. להדליק נר של חנוכה
4. שעשה נסים
5. שהחינו
6. הזן את הכל
7. בידו אפקיד רוחי
8. לישב בסכה
9. על נטילת לולב
10. על אכילת מצה
11. על אכילת מרור

UNIT D

The Torah Service

1. Torah Blessing
2. Haftarah Blessing
3. ברוך שנתן תורה
4. לך יי הגדולה
5. עץ חיים
6. הודו על ארץ
7. שאו שערים
8. וידבר משה את מועדי
9. כי מציון תצא תורה

UNIT E

Advanced Prayers (I)

1. ואהבת
2. ושמרו
3. רצה יי
4. אנה יי הושיעה־נא
5. הודו ליי כי־טוב
6. יברכך יי וישמרך
7. אין כאלהינו
8. מה נשתנה
9. קידוש לשבת

UNIT F

Advanced Prayers (II)

1. ישמחו
2. מודים אנחנו
3. אדון עולם
4. ינדל
5. שלום עליכם
6. מעון צור
7. אדיר הוא

UNIT G

Special Prayers

1. קידוש ליום טוב
2. אבות
3. אבינו מלכנו
4. על חטא
5. קדיש

Lister - Franzblau

PRAYER STUDY CARDS

**A PRACTICAL, FUNCTIONAL METHOD OF TEACHING
HEBREW PRAYERS AND BLESSINGS FOR HOME
AND SYNAGOGUE, FOR SABBATH,
FESTIVALS AND ALL
OCCASIONS.**

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CONTENTS

UNIT A - PRIMARY BLESSINGS

- A-1 Hamotsi
- A-2 Bore pri hagofen
- A-3 Bore pri hoets
- A-4 Bore pri ho-adomo

UNIT B - RUDIMENTS OF WORSHIP

- B-1 Sh'ma
- B-2 Bo-r'chu
- B-3 Mi chomocho
- B-4 Va-Anachnu
- B-5 Ba-yom ha-lu
- B-6 Kodosh Kodosh
- B-7 Yimloch

UNIT C - HOME PRAYERS & BLESSINGS

- C-1 Ner shel Shabos
- C-2 Ner shel yom tov
- C-3 Ner shel Chanuko
- C-4 She-oso nisim
- C-5 She-he-che-yonu
- C-6 Hazon es hakol
- C-7 B'yodo afkid ruch
- C-8 Leshev ba-suko
- C-9 Al n'tilas lulov
- C-10 Al achilas matzo
- C-11 Al achilas moror

UNIT D - THE TORAH SERVICE

- D-1 Torah Blessings (2)
- D-2 Haftarah Blessings (4)
- D-3 Boruch she-nosan
- D-4 Ets chayim
- D-5 L'cho Adonoi
- D-6 Hodo al erets
- D-7 S'u sh'o-rim (2)
- D-8 Va-y'daber Moshe
- D-9 Ki mi-tsi-yon

UNIT E - ADVANCED PRAYERS

- E-1 V'o-havto (4)
- E-2 V'shomru
- E-3 R'tse Adonoi (2)
- E-4 Ono Adonoi
- E-5 Hodo l'Adonoi
- E-6 Y'vo-re-ch'cho
- E-7 En Kelohenu (5)
- E-8 Ma Nishtano (4)
- E-9 Kiddush for Sabbath (3)

To the Teacher:

Read the Hebrew to the children
as they look at the English trans-
literation and make sure they get
the vowel values, the "CH" sound
and such points.

Directions

On one side, you will find the Hebrew and the English translation. Turn the card over and you will find the English pronunciation above each Hebrew word.

Study the pronunciation until you can read the Hebrew perfectly with out looking at the English pronunciation.

בָּרְכוּ אֶת־יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ:

Praise ye the Lord, to whom all praise is due.

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Praised be the Lord to whom all praise is due forever and ever.

B-2

HA-MI VO-ROCH A-DO-NOI ES BO-R' CHU
 הַמְּבָרָךְ אֶת־יְיָ בָּרְכוּ
 VO-ED L'OL-LOM HA-MI VO-ROCH A-DO-NOI BO-RUCH
 וָעֶד לְעוֹלָם הַמְּבָרָךְ יְיָ בָּרוּךְ

Lister - Franzblau POCKET FLASH CARDS

The colored cards contain the words of the blessings and prayers which are listed below as units. The cards which constitute each unit are shown by numbers in order. A whole unit should be studied at a time. Pupils should be assigned all the cards in a unit when it is taught in class.

Correct accent as well as sequence should be stressed from the start. While Hebrew is read phonetically, some assistance is required to "smooth out" the pronunciation and to learn the few exceptions such as the terminal ך and the forms for ADONOI (אדוני, אדני).

===== UNITS OF BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS =====

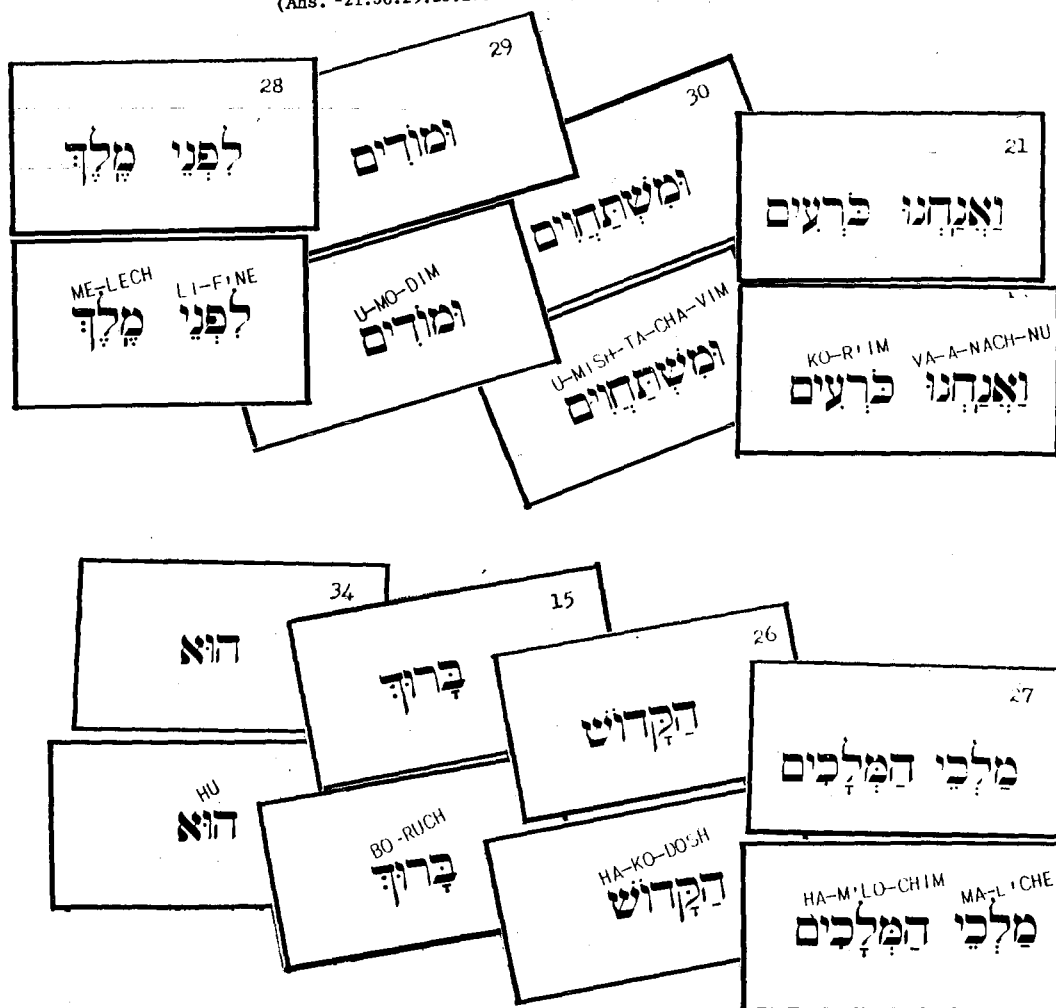
1. HAMOTSI 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 .
2. BORE PRI HAGOFEN 5 - 4 - 1 .
3. BORE PRI HO-ETS 5 - 4 - 10 .
4. BORE PRI HO-ADOMO 5 - 4 - 9 .
5. SH'MA 8 - 7 - 6 .
6. BORUCH SHEM 15 - 14 - 13 - 12 .
7. BO-R'CHU 11 - 20 - 15 - 19 - 20 - 12 .
8. MI CHO-MO-CHO 18 - 17 - 19; 16 - 25 - 24 - 23; 19 - 22 - 12 .
9. VA-ANACHNU 21 - 30 - 29 - 28 - 27 - 26 - 15 - 34 .
10. BA-YOM HA-HU 33 - 32 - 6 - 31 .
11. KODOSH KODOSH 39 - 19 - 38 - 37 - 36 - 35; 15 - 44 - 19 - 43 .
12. YIMLOCH 22 - 19 - 42 - 41 - 40 - 49 .
13. NER SHEL SHABOS..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 52 - 51 .
14. NER SHEL YOM TOV..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 52 - 50 .
15. NER SHEL CHANUKO 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 52 - 59 .
16. SHE-OSO NISIM 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 58 - 57 - 56 - 55 .
17. SHE-HE-CHE-YONU 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 64 - 63 - 62 - 61 .
18. HAZON ES HA-KOL 15 - 48 - 19 - 60 .
19. LESHEV BA-SUKO..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 68 .
20. AL N'TILAS LULOV..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 67 .
21. AL ACHILAS MATZO..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 66 .
22. AL ACHILAS MOROR..... 15 - 48 - 19 - 47 - 46 - 45 - 54 - 53 - 65 .

Lister - Franzblau POCKET FLASH CARDS

Individual desk games of "scrambled words" can be played by the pupils.
They can be tested by requesting them to write the card numbers of specified
units in correct sequence.

For example: "List in correct order the cards which form the prayer
VA'ANACHNU".

(Ans. -21.30.29.28.27.26.15.34)



The proposed method is essentially rote learning. It is the forming of mental associations between two unrelated entities and is held to be akin to the process of conditioning in laboratories, animals that associate the buzzer and the flow of saliva.

Dr. Irvin Rock, in describing his experiments on repetition and learning,^{1/} supports the theory that we form mental associations instantly. He asserts that the role of repetition is to help us retain what we have already learned.

The history of pedagogy has shown that most prominent among the theories of learning are the principles of contiguity and repetition. The first (contiguity) asserts that association rests upon the proximity in time and space of two things which are associated. The second (repetition) asserts that associations are formed through repeated experiences.

Contiguity is conceded to be the sine qua non of learning. Separation retards or prevents the formation of the association. Even a past experience is associated with a new one by the contiguity of the memory trace with the new experience.

In a classic monograph on the subject of learning, the pioneer German investigator Hermann Ebbinghaus in 1885, established that such associations when formed, are formed upon the instant. If this is so, then the question comes to mind: Why then does rote learning call for drill? Is repetition necessary?

Using random lists of nonsense syllables, Ebbinghaus explored the relationship between learning, and lengths of lists, number of repetitions, and rate of forgetting.

He considered repetition basic to rote learning. The accepted theory holds that a single experience of two contiguous items establishes only a partial connection between them in the nervous system, - one that the learner cannot as yet articulate.

Additional experience strengthens this connection to the point where the subject, upon exposure to one item, can respond with the other.

However, we are aware of the fact that many things are learned upon the first trial or association. While in a list of several items to be learned, all cannot be learned upon the first trial, some item or items are so learned.

Dr. Abraham N. Franzblau ^{2/} compared the association process to the process involved in color photography. Asserting that learning is an end result largely of unconscious, not conscious processes, he compared learning to the light effect upon the three-coating film used in color photography. The light striking these different layers of chemical composition produces the colors which blend in the final color print. It is the same light, but it affects the different layers differently.

In a similar manner, says Dr. Franzblau, learning is also a process involving three layers. There is first, the conscious layer. This is what we have been concentrating upon exclusively in educational research and it explains why we still know only a small part of the truth. The middle layer is the pre-conscious layer, from which newly learned knowledge can be easily recalled. The third is the unconscious layer, the reservoir of knowledge of which we are not aware. It has been demonstrated that we never really forget anything. However, circumstances must be created under which we can recall almost anything that we have ever learned or experienced.

A review of the factors in effective learning at this point will help clarify the classroom procedure and lesson outlines which appear at the end of this project.

Factors in effective learning and the proposed method

Intent to learn

One of the most important motivational factors influencing the learning performance is the conscious intent to learn. Experiments described by Ruch ^{3/} indicate a direct relationship between the will to learn and the learning performance. In the proposed method, the will to learn

is ever-present if the material to be learned is selected and made responsive to the learner's needs. Where the learner can see clearly the immediately application of his learning in worship, ritual, and generally in Jewish life, he is more likely to have a conscious intent to learn. On the other hand, when the student sees no opportunity for conversing in Hebrew or no immediate pleasure or gain in reading Hebrew, the intent to learn is minimal or completely absent.

Reward and punishment.

The reward or punishment which the student may derive from praise or non-praise are further incentives in effective learning. To be able to participate in worship with adults, in home ceremonies, and other religious ritual, is immediately rewarding. Such opportunities are ever-present in the home, in the temple and in the community. Parents and other adults are lavish with praise when a youngster is able to take part readily in the Hebrew portions of such rituals. It is interesting to note that no other aspect of Jewish living is commented upon with praise and respect as is the use of Hebrew in the home and synagogue.

Long-term goals and interests

Learning and performance are influenced not only by the learner's goals of the moment but also by the learner's long-range goals and interests. For this reason, students usually

do better in elective courses, in which they are presumably more interested, than in courses they are required to take. In this respect too, the far-off goal of being able to travel about in Israel and speak Hebrew, is no incentive to learning for most American youth. His needs are immediate and require fulfillment now. The proposed method seeks to satisfy his immediate needs rather than the long-term goals which in most instances may be no goals at all.

Characteristics of materials to be learned

The amount, familiarity and meaningfulness are basic characteristics of materials to be learned. The memory span of the learner determines the amount of learning he can master at any given time. For this reason, lessons are best planned with a limited number of ideas or units of information. The difficulty of learning increases with enormous geometric proportion as the number of items to be learned is increased. Ruch ^{4/} points out that telephone numbers, even in a large city exchange, do not exceed seven digits because beyond this number the difficulty of remembering or learning is too great for most people. For example, a person who is able to learn a list of seven nonsense syllables in a single presentation might require three or four repetitions to learn a nine-syllable list and nine or ten trials to learn ten syllables.

Learning is facilitated by the mere fact of prior familiarity with the materials even in the absence of specific set to learn. Skilled teachers try to lessen the unfamiliarity of new concepts by relating them to what the learner already knows.

Many studies employing both meaningful and nonsense materials have demonstrated clearly that the rate of verbal learning depends upon the meaningfulness of the materials. This is demonstrated by the table ^{5/} covering a study of a group of subjects who learned in succession 200 nonsense syllables, 200 single digits, 200 words of meaningful prose, and 200 words of meaningful poetry.

<u>Number of Items</u>	<u>Kind of Material</u>	<u>Minutes Needed to Learn (Average)</u>
200	nonsense syllables	93
200	digits	85
200	meaningful prose	24
200	meaningful poetry	10

Particular attention must be given to drill and practice since the proposed method involves rote learning of nonsense syllables. The question arises as to whether practice should be concentrated heavily at one time (massed practice) or to spread it over a longer period of time in smaller doses (distributed practice). The best application of practice was demonstrated in an experiment by Starch ^{6/}.

A classical experiment performed several decades ago and verified by other investigators compared four different methods of using two hours of time in memorizing a code. (nonsense syllables) One group of subjects practiced for ten minutes twice a day for six days; a second group practiced twenty minutes once a day for six days; a third group practiced forty minutes every other day for six days; and a fourth group practiced two hours at one sitting. The ten-minutes-twice-a-day and the twenty-minutes-once-a-day groups learned most effectively and were about equal in efficiency. The group which practiced two hours at one sitting was least efficient of the four, while the group which practiced forty minutes every other day was intermediate.

Meaningful material receives an advantage from previous experiences which implies that meaning itself is a product of learning. Unfortunately, very little of this operates in the teaching of prayer Hebrew, - at least at the outset. Since this cannot be relied upon, recourse must be sought in other factors of learning. Practice and drill and usage are the principal factors in the proposed method of sight-recognition of prayer Hebrew.

Efficient conditions of practice

Fortunately, the factors for effective learning through practice are present in our objectives for prayer Hebrew.

Knowledge of results

Knowledge of results provided through regular use by the student and the entire congregation of the prayers and blessings learned, add to the effectiveness of his learning.^{7/} The psychological feedback (knowing that the learned knowledge is correct) is ever-present in the proposed method, and can be further tested by group participation in the synagogue and at home. Such psychological feedback is not equally present, indeed almost absent, in all other methods of teaching Hebrew for worship or for communication, since the learner is not sure of the correctness of his learning.

For learning ideas and principles, the best procedure seems to be a period of massed learning followed by distributed learning. In logical reasoning problems, massed practice has been shown to be generally superior. However, with nonsense syllables, other experiments described by Ruch ^{8/} indicated that distributed practice is more efficient than massed practice in simple rote learning.

Amount of material

Because of the difficulty of rote learning, the factor of quantity suggests limited tasks. Short tasks are proportionately easier to learn than long tasks. Therefore a series of parts should be easier to learn than the whole which is made up of these parts. This is particularly true in the case of nonsense material.

In the part method as distinguished from whole learning, the subject receives knowledge of his progress sooner and is thus encouraged to try hard. In the proposed method of sight-recognition of Hebrew words, small units of prayers or blessings have to be presented at any given time. When units are of any length, they are taught in smaller but complete sections (full sentences).

Classroom procedure

In learning the assigned prayer units, the student is fed one card or unit after another. He need not wait for the class. His progress is noted by the teacher on a check-off chart which lists the names of the students and the year's assignment of prayer units.

By providing opportunities for worship services and rituals in school and class, the learning is stamped in deeper and deeper. A part of each class session should be reserved for review. Where possible, prayers should be sung as well. This helps to reinforce the learning. Large wall cards on which Prayer Study Cards units are reproduced, will be very helpful for class drill and review. These may be made by the teacher or capable students with the use of a stencil guide. (*)

(*) Stenso Guide No. H-54 Stenso Lettering Co., Balt. 18, Md.

If the learned material is used and drilled regularly, as it must be in our congregational pattern, then our students will accumulate a comprehensive store of functional Hebrew to serve them as Temple-going adults.

The proposed method is in harmony with the goals set forth in chapter II and is consistent with the basic principles of learning as described in chapter III.

Essentially, it rests upon the introduction of unknown factors commonly referred to as nonsense syllables. However, these unknowns are learned in terms of knowns which in the proposed method are English alphabet syllables. The latter can be read easily by the students.

To reinforce the learning, resort is made to practice and drill. One learns by practice what one practices. Here, provision is made for practice of the correct function and prevention of practice of a wrong habit.

Through the use of the materials discussed and the sample lessons in chapter VI illustrating their use, Hebrew instruction in many religious schools has been most successful. Participation in synagogue services and home rituals increase and take on added meaning, - and many students are inspired to pursue their studies in Hebrew literature and in modern Hebrew.

Notes

- 1/ Irvin Rock, Repetition and Learning
Scientific America, Vol. 199 No.2 Aug.1958
- 2/ A. N. Franzblau, The Contribution of Psychiatry to
the Principal's Task, The Jewish Teacher,
Vol. XXIII No.4
- 3/ F. L. Ruch, Psychology and Life, Foreman & Co. pp 289/290
- 4/ - - - idem
- 5/ - - - idem, p. 296
- 6/ - - - idem, p. 298
- 7/ - - - idem, p. 297
- 8/ - - - idem, p. 299

Sample Lesson 'A'

Teacher's Aim: To teach the basic word groups common to most blessings

so that the students will recognize these at sight, understand their meaning and learn to sound the component parts thereof.

Student's Objective: To learn to read and understand the blessing for wine.

Preparation: Pupil - from POCKET FLASH CARDS, cut cards 1, 15, 19, 46, 47, 48. have ready, card A-2 of PRAYER STUDY CARDS.

Teacher - flannelboard, cards bearing the words of the blessing for wine
(SEVEN ADDITIONAL PRAYERS, UAHG flannel-board materials)

Motivation: a kiddush cup, or a picture of a man reciting the kiddush.

Development

Hold up kiddush cup or picture.

What do you think this (cup) is?
What does the picture tell us?
When is it used? How? By whom?
Does the user do something special when he uses it?

(blackboard)

BB write THANKS →

What is a blessing?
Why do we give thanks? To whom?

BB write

BLESSED BE
PRAISED BE →

(Explain relationship between these)
Do we give thanks in any special way?
In a special language?

(Explain use of Hebrew in tradition)

How do we address God?

BB write

LORD
ADONOI →

We refer to God as the Lord;
in Hebrew we say ADONOI,

(flannelboard)

FB place word-card

We use a special symbol for the word ADONOI.

Place your flashcard #19 on the desk in front of you. Point to the card as we say "A-DO-NOI"

(drill in concert and individually)

77
77

ADONOI
77
77

BB write ^{BORUCH} ברוך

FB ברוך

drill

FB אתה

BB ^{ATO} אתה

drill

BB ^{EL} אל

FB אללהי

In Hebrew, there is a word for "blessed be", or "praised be" that is used in most blessings.

The word for blessed or praised is BORUCH. Let us all say it together: "boruch"

Place your flashcard #15 at the right of #19.

As I point to the flannelboard cards, let us all say the words together: "boruch adonoi"

Let's do it again, - but this time point to each of your flashcards as you say the word.

A very important word in all our prayers and blessings is the word which directs the blessing to God by using the word meaning YOU.

This word is ATO. Let us all say this word together: "ato" (repeat)

what does ATO mean?

(pupil: ATO means YOU)

Place your flashcard #48 between BORUCH and ADONOI with all three cards showing transliterations.

Who can read the three words starting with BORUCH?

(drill)

Now turn your cards over so that the three cards show only the Hebrew.

Let us all say BORUCH ATO ADONOI together and point to each word as we say them:

ברוך אתה יהוה

Point to your card which says ADONOI.

Who is ADONOI ?

In Hebrew, the word for God is EL.

Look at flashcard #47

Which part of this word is EL ?

The whole word means "our God".

אללהי

drill: students point
to each card as they
say "adonoi elohenu"

drill each line
repeat with meaning:
BORUCH ATO -
praised be thou;
ADONOI ELOHENU -
Lord our God.

BB HO'OLOM MELECH
 קְדוֹלָם מֶלֶךְ

drill

Place your ADONOI card beside the
card for ELOHENU

אֲדֹנָי יי

Both cards together mean "the Lord,
our God".

Who can read these together?

(a-do-noi e-lo-he-nu)

Rearrange the cards so that cards
#15 and #48 are above #19 and #47.

אתה¹⁵ ברוך¹⁵

אלהינו¹⁹ יי¹⁹

Just as the leader or ruler of a
country is referred to as the
president or king, ADONOI ELOHENU
is also referred to as the ruler
or king. We say ADONOI ELOHENU is
the King of the whole world, or
the Ruler of the universe.

The first word MELECH means king or
ruler. Let us say it together:

"melech"

The second word HO'OLOM means the
world or the universe. Let us say
it together:

"ho'olom"

When these words appear together like
this, MELECH HO'OLOM means what?

- (king of the world;)
- (king of the universe;)
- (ruler of the world;)
- (ruler of the universe.)

Let us read the two words together

"melech ho'olom"

FB

אתה	ברוך
אלהינו	י
העולם	מלך

drill:

boruch ato adonoi
 elohenu melech ho'olom

drill class in
 unison; also
 individual students

refer to
 kiddush cup

BB

HAOFEN
 הגפן

P'RI

פרי

BO-RE

בורא

drill

read blessing
 slowly; class
 repeats

Place flashcard #46 (melech ho'olom)
 with transliteration showing, just
 below ADONOI ELOHENU.

Now we have three lines. Let's read
 each line starting with BORUCH ATO at
 the top. Remember to point to each
 word as you read it.

Now arrange these cards in a single
 line as they appear in the prayer-
 book. Make sure you can see the
 little numbers in the upper right
 corners of the cards. The first
 card will be #15, then 48, 19, 47
 and 46.

46	47	19	48	15
----	----	----	----	----

As we read this line, starting with
 BORUCH, point to each word.

What we have read is the opening
 phrase of most blessings in which
 we praise the Lord our God, King
 of the universe.

What are some of the things for which
 we praise God?

What do we praise God for when we use
 this cup? For wine, because it is
 the symbol of the vineyards which
 represent God's blessings upon us.

Since wine is made from the fruit of
 the vine (grapes), we conclude our
 blessing by declaring God is the
 creator of the fruit of the vine.

In Hebrew, the creator of the fruit
 of the vine is said in three words.

Let us all say these words together
 as I point to them. (repeat)

At the end of your row of cards,
 place card #1, with the sound-words
 (transliteration) face up. Let us
 read the card:

"bo-re p'ri ha-go-fen"

I will read the entire blessing for
 you as you point to each word in
 the sentence.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם
 בורא פרי הגפן

show picture

raise cup and
chant slowly.

unison chant

class reads

class reads

class chants

drill: repeat by
different students

assignment

Here is a picture of a man saying this blessing. The blessing is called KIDDUSH. Many people sing the KIDDUSH.

I will sing it for you.

Now sing after me:

BORUCH ATO ADONOI (repeat)

ELOHENU MELECH HO'OLOM (repeat)

BO-RE P'RI HAGOFEN (repeat)

Let's sing it through together.

Open your PRAYER STUDY CARDS to
card A-2

Let us read the blessing in English.

Let us read the Hebrew on the back of
this card.

We shall now chant it.

Turn the card over again to show the
Hebrew without the English sounds.

As we chant it again, point to each
word.

For your homework, study card A-2

Next time, we will read this blessing
in the prayerbook.

Sample Lesson 'B'

Teacher's Aim: To teach students to recognize, read and chant the BOR'CHU blessing and to recognize similarities of word parts and their sounds.

Student's Objective: To learn the BOR'CHU blessing.

Motivation: Brief review of the blessing over the wine.

Preparation: Pupil - POCKET FLASH CARDS #11, 15, 19, 20, 46
PRAYER STUDY CARD B-2
Union Prayer Book (p. 29)

Teacher - flannelboard, cards bearing the words of the blessing (BOR'CHU)
(Selected Prayers for the Flannelboard,)
(UAMC)

Development

FB place cards for words of wine blessing in random order

remove all cards except

העולם

FB

העולם

לעולם

BB

ה

BB

עולם

Who can rearrange these cards so that we can sing this blessing correctly?

(class chants blessing for wine)-----

Who can recall how we say this word alone? (ho'olom)

You will find it on your flashcard #46. Let us all say it together: "ho'olom"

Look at these two words on the flannelboard. Do you see any difference between them?
Yes - the first letter.

How do you sound the first part of this word?

(point to ho'olom) "ho"

How is the rest of the word sounded?
"o-lom"

(drill O-LOM)

BB

עולם ?
ה

BB

VO-ED
עולVO-ED
עול
L'OLOM
לעולם

FB

העולם
העול
לעולם

BB

HA-M'VORUCH
המבורך

FB

המבורך
עול
לעולם
המבורך
יי
בורךבורך
המבורך

The new letter is sounded like the English letter "L". When we put it front of O-LOM, the whole word sound L'OLOM.

(drill: HO'OLOM and L'OLOM)

L'OLOM is hardly ever read alone. It is part of a phrase which has another new word. Together, they mean "forever and ever".

Let's read both words which I have written on the board.

(drill: L'OLOM VO-ED)

Look at flashcards #46 and #12. Do you recognize anything similar?

(drill: MELECH HO'OLOM and)
(L'OLOM VO-ED)

Place in a row, the following flashcards starting on the right with #15, the BOR'CHU card:

(12, 20, 19, 15)

Who can read these cards in order?

Which is the new card? (#20)

(drill: HA-M'VO-ROCH)

Now let us see if we can read these four cards?

(boruch adonai ha-m'voroch
l'olom vo-ed)

Can you see any similarity in the words BORUCH and HA-M'VORUCH ?

If you know the meaning of BORUCH, can you guess what HA-M'VORUCH might refer to?

(explain: "blessed" vs "one who is blessed")

FB

71102

71

7172

Can you think who is the one who is
to be praised? (God)

Let us read together as I point to
these words on the flannelboard.

(drill)

Now look at PRAYER STUDY CARD B-2.

I will read the lower line for you:

"Boruch Adonoi ha-m'voroch
l'olom vo-ed"

(drill in unison)

In the temple, it is often chanted
like this:

(teacher chants slowly, class)
(repeats; use Union Hymnal or)
(Union Songster.)

Using this card (B-2) I shall pretend
to be the cantor or rabbi and you
will be the congregation. I will
chant the first line and you will
respond by chanting the second
line:

(teacher chants: bo-r'chu es a-donoi,
(ha-m'vo-roch.

(class chants: bo-ruch a-donoi
(ha-m'vo-roch,
(l'olom vo-ed.

(repeat)

Look at the line which I chanted.

Which words are new?

(bor'chu and es)

PB

אֶת	בְּרַךְ
-----	---------

PB

בְּרַךְ
בְּרַךְ

BB

BORUCH

בְּ	רַ	ךְ	וֹ	חַ
Ch	U	R	o	h

BB

בְּ	וֹ
Ch	Ch

BB

CHU

בְּ

BOR'CHU

בְּרַךְ

The little word is simple; it is read as "es", but it is not translated.

How do you sound this word? (ES)

The other word should be somewhat familiar to you because it has some letters which we had in BORUCH.

Can you recognize the familiar letters?

בְּ רַ וֹ חַ

(analyse component parts of בְּרַךְ)

The letter וֹ has the same sound as the letter בְּ.

Who can sound the letter וֹ ?

Who can combine the וֹ with the בְּ ?
(Ch-ee)

Who will try to read the whole word?
(BOR'CHU)

Now we should be able to read both lines of card B-2.

Let's read both lines together.

(all read; teacher chants first
(and class repeats first line.

Now we can have a short service drill using the blessings we know.

We will use the Union Prayer Book.

We will have the opening part of the service and finish with the kiddush which you studied last week.

We will start on page 29 and then turn to page 93 for the Kiddush.

(do entire page 29 and lower part
(of page 93.

How many of you know the SH'MA?

(drill)

Turn to back of PRAYER STUDY CARD B-1.

How many words can you recognize on the second line?

(boruch, l'elom, vo-ed)

Now look at the English letters for the words on the first line. Do you see anything strange?

(ADONOI for יהוה)

FB

יי

יהוה

(explain that both words are read
(as ADONOI.

(drill card B-1 for correctness
(of sound.

Assignment

practice at home:

cards B-1, B-2 and A-2

Sample Lesson 'C'

Teacher's Aim: To teach the SH'MA, ADONOI YIMLOCH and word identification.

Student's Objective: To learn the SH'MA and identify words of the previously learned blessing.

Preparation: Pupil - POCKET FLASH CARDS 8, 7, 6, 15, 14, 13, 12, 19, 22
PRAYER STUDY CARDS B-1, B-2, B-3
Union Prayer Book

Teacher - flannelboard cards from Selected Hebrew Prayers for use with the Flannel Board, (UAHC) and Seven Additional Prayers for use with the Flannelboard (UAHC)

Flannelized Art Sheets (UAHC) for preparation of original transliteration cards.

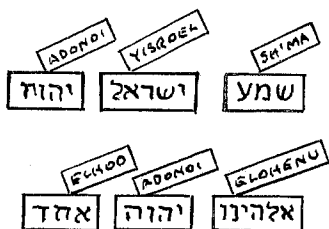
Motivation: Class Hebrew games.

Development

FB (flannelboard)

arrange cards of SH'MA prayer.

over each card place a corresponding transliteration card.*



* These cards can be prepared by the teacher, with heavy crayon on Flannelized Art Sheets

Sing and drill the SH'MA

Open your prayer book to page 51.
Point to each word as we sing the SH'MA again.

Now close your prayer book and we'll play a game.

[select 12 children; 6 to remove one transliteration card each, and 6 to remove one Hebrew card each.

Watch who your partner is by the card he removes.

[children remove cards alternately, Hebrew and transliteration.

Now we will sing the SH'MA very slowly.
As we sing each word, the two students
who have the cards will replace them
on the flannel board.

class repeats SH'MA when all the
cards are returned to the flannel
board.

FB arrange cards
(transl.) (Hebrew)

ADONAI	יְהוָה
ECHOD	אֶחָד
SH'MA	יְהוָה
ELOHEINU	יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
YISROEL	יִשְׂרָאֵל
ADONAI	יְהוָה

I have another game of "Match It".

arrange for teams of 2 or 3 to
match cards in turn; incorrect
matching loses turn.

after game, give all transliter-
ation cards to captain of one
team and the Hebrew cards to the
captain of the other team.

The first captain will place the trans-
literation cards in correct order, -
but starting at the right.

The second captain will match these
cards by placing the correct Hebrew
cards under them.

score the time and then give the
first captain an opportunity to
better his opponent's score.

FB arrange cards

KOVOD	שֵׁם	בִּרְכָּה
כְּבוֹד	שֵׁם	בִּרְכָּה
VO-ED	L'OLOM	MAL'CHUSO
וְעַד	לְעוֹלָם	מַלְכוּתוֹ

We will play the same game but with a
different set of cards.

Which words are old friends?

[וְעַד, לְעוֹלָם, בִּרְכָּה]

read prayer for class; chant it
using the same melody as was used
for the SH'MA.

call 3 children to remove the 3
sets of known cards: boruch,
l'olom, vo-ed.

the remaining cards are:
shem, koved, mal'chuso.

Now I will remove the top cards (translit.)
and give them to different children to
replace them in their proper places.

We will all recite the word as the card
is replaced:

"shem" "kovod" "mal'chuso"

[after all cards are replaced,
distribute the 6 Hebrew cards
to six children.

As we sing BORUCH SHEM, these children
will replace the proper Hebrew cards.

FB

SHEM	שֵׁם
L'OLOM	לְעוֹלָם
MAL'CHUSO	מַלְכוּתָהּ
VO-ED	וּמְבַרְכֵהָ
BORUCH	בָּרוּךְ
KOVOD	כְּבוֹד

We'll play another game of matching
with these cards. (on flannelboard)

[as before with the game with
SH'MA.

Now place your pocket flash cards to
form the SH'MA and the BORUCH SHEM.

[check for correctness by
calling off numbers:

	6	7	8
12	13	14	15

Point to each word as we chant both
parts of the SH'MA.

FB

שֵׁם בָּרוּךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ לְעוֹלָם

Turn to page 319 in the prayer book.
Can you find this prayer? (flannelboard)
What does it mean? (Eng. translation)

Which of the Hebrew words can you read?

[שֵׁם בָּרוּךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ לְעוֹלָם]

FB

[תלמי]

[תלמי]

BB

YIMLOCH

MELECH

תלמי

תלמי

FB

[תלמי]

[תלמי]

[תלמי]

[תלמי]

Look at the new word. (תלמי)

Does it remind you of a word we learned last week?

Do you remember what melech means? (king)

What does yimloch mean? Look at your prayer book again.

Let us read the sentence together. (drill)

Arrange your pocket flash cards to form this sentence. Point to each word as we recite the sentence together.

[also call on individual children

In the temple, this prayer is usually sung. In our temple it is sung like this. (chant)

Let us chant it together.

Now we can expand our worship service.

[select children to be readers;
all Hebrew parts are to be
repeated by the class, and
then sung.

BB

1) p 315 bor'ehu

2) 314

3) 317 sh'ma

4) 316

5) 318

6) 319 adonaiyimloch7) 93 kiddush

We will follow the order of the service as I have listed the pages on the blackboard.

I will assign parts. When we come to the Hebrew readings, the reader will read along first, then the class will repeat it and then we shall sing it.

We will conclude our service with the kiddush which we learned last week.

Assignment

review PRAYER STUDY CARDS B-1, B-2, A-2 and the lower part of B-3.

new work: study upper part of B-3

[go over the new work quickly to make sure the students can pronounce the transliteration and mark the syllables to be accented.

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