

Sarah Bunin Benor - Hebrew Union College Jonathan Krasner - Brandeis University Sharon Avni - CUNY

FJC Leaders Assembly March 2016

OUR PERSONAL CAMP CONNECTIONS



Sharon: Sprout Lake (1982-1983,1986)

Tel Yehudah (1984-1990) Camp Judaea NC (1987)

Daughter: Sprout Lake





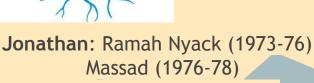


Sarah:

3 daughters, 3 Jewish camps



illage



Camp Raleigh (1980-1992)

Daughter: Eden Village Camp

THE STUDY

Study of Hebrew at North American Jewish camps (2012-2015)



FUNDING

- A project of the Mandel Center, Brandeis University
- Consortium for Applied Studies in Jewish Education (CASJE)
- Wexner Foundation Alumni Collaboration Grant
- HUC, CUNY



METHODS

- Historical research: archives, interviews
- Survey of camp directors (103/161: 64%)
- Camp observations (36 camps: 3 hours 10 days)
- Observations of trainings: Goodman, JAFI
- Interviews with camp directors, staff... (120+)
- Interviews/focus groups with campers (60+)
- Analysis of spoken and written language



CAMPS VISITED (TYPE)

```
Pluralistic/B'nai B'rith/JCC/Private (8)
Reform/URJ (6)
Conservative/Ramah (5)
Hebrew-Speaking/Hebrew Immersion Camps/Programs (4)
Modern Orthodox/Bnei Akiva (3)
Zionist/Young Judaea (2)
Progressive Zionist/Habonim Dror/Hashomer Hatzair (3)
Israeli-American (2)
Russian-American (2)
Sephardic (1)
Eco-Jewish (1)
Jews of Color (1)
Yeshivish Orthodox Girls (1)
Chabad Orthodox (1)
```

OUTLINE

- 1. Definitions
- 2. Diverse uses of Hebrew in Jewish camps historical and contemporary trends
- 3. Tensions surrounding Hebrew use
- Breakout sessions to discuss best practices and challenges

DEFINITIONS

Hebrew immersion vs. Hebrew infusion





HEBREW IMMERSION

An environment conducted all or primarily in Hebrew, in which participants are expected to speak all or mostly Hebrew.



A primarily English-speaking environment in which participants are exposed to fragments of Hebrew (words, songs, signs).

Register of English with a few or many Hebrew words.



HEBREW IMMERSION

Primary goal: Hebrew proficiency

Secondary goal: Identity formation, connection to Israelis, Jews



Primary goal:

Identity formation, connection to Hebrew, Jews, Israel, etc.

Secondary goal: proficiency in the Hebraized register of English



Why infusion?

The camp infuses a flavor of the language (berries) into the camp environment (water) and, potentially, into participants (drinkers).



Limited access:

Participants do not necessarily have access to the language itself (berries), only hints of it.



Distinct bits (pulp):
Participants tend to
recognize the Hebrew
elements as distinct.



Variation:

Just as there are gradations of infusion, some camps are more infused with Hebrew than others, as are some activities and sentences.



Variation:

In the Hebrew-infused register of camp English: "Campers go with your counselors to the <u>Bet</u> Keneset."



Variation:

In the Hebrew-infused register of camp English: "Chanichim go with your madrichim to the Bet Keneset."



Variation:

Camps have to decide how much Hebrew to infuse and how.



Intentional:

Just as a bartender can decide how much fruit to infuse, camp administration and staff can decide how much Hebrew to infuse and when to change the amount/type.



Intentional:

Intentional process of language socialization.



Inspired by Netta Avineri's notion: "metalinguistic community": A community centered around a language, but not necessarily having full competency (Yiddish clubs).



Immersion vs. Infusion

Both are used beyond Jewish summer camps.





Immersion vs. Infusion

Language immersion schools, camps, etc.





Hebrew Infusion

Other Jewish communal settings:

- Jewish day schools (in addition to Hebrew language instruction)
- religious schools
- synagogues
- youth groups



Immigrant/indigenous groups





Sri Lankan Tamils in Canada, US, UK:

Many children of immigrants have limited proficiency in Tamil but use loanwords and ritualized (non-comprehending) recitation of Tamil chants, prayers, and speeches.

(Canagarajah 2013)

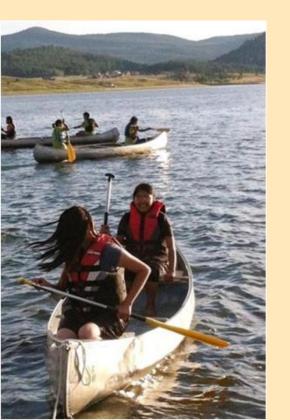




Elem Pomo Indians, California:

Ceremonies with songs, blessings, and greetings in Elem but main content in English (most participants don't understand Elem). (Ahlers 2006)





Paiute Camp Kwiyamuntsi, Utah: ('plateau'): "Building stewardship through cultural traditions... Elders and agency instructors teach wildlife, astronomy, archaeology, Paiute language, hiking, canoeing, and mountain biking."





Kamehameha Schools Hawaiian summer camp:

"Through learning experiences that include work in a lo'i kalo, fishpond restoration, mele, hula, and more, keiki learn about interdependence in the ahupua'a and how it sustains the Hawaiian people."

Immersion vs. Infusion

Both are common ways to strengthen individuals' connection to a group.

Immersion is often seen as the ideal way to learn a full language.

Infusion is often seen as a more fun but less complete, less authentic way to use language.





Immersion vs. Infusion

How does this debate play out in Jewish residential camps - past and present?

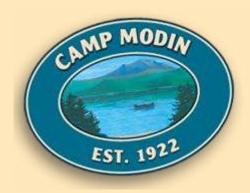




HISTORY

The Origins of Jewish Culture Camping











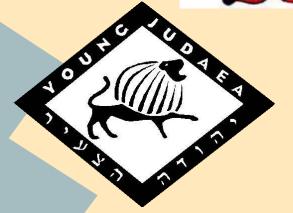










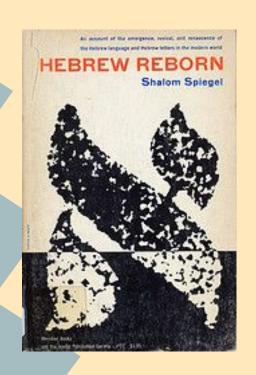








Shalom Spiegel, Hebrew Reborn (1930)

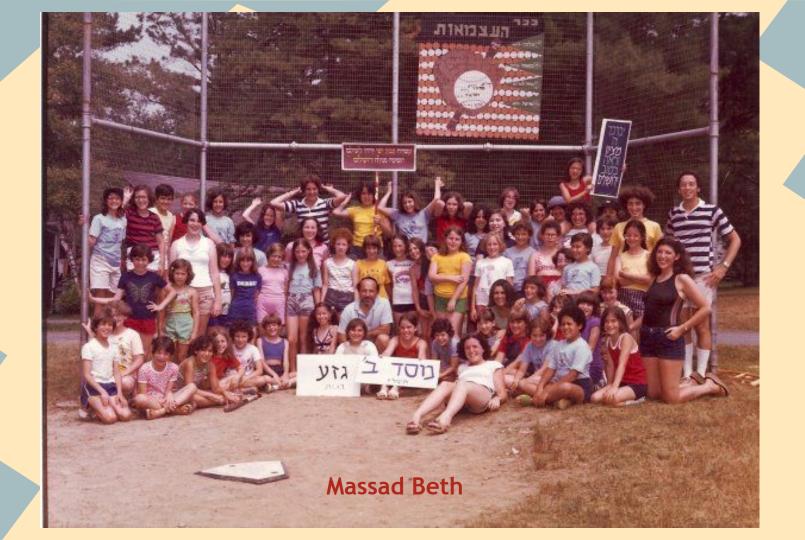


"Within language lie concealed magic forces of nature and of blood, lees of instinct and culture, a heritage of emotions, habits of thought, traditions of taste, inheritances of will -- the imperative of the

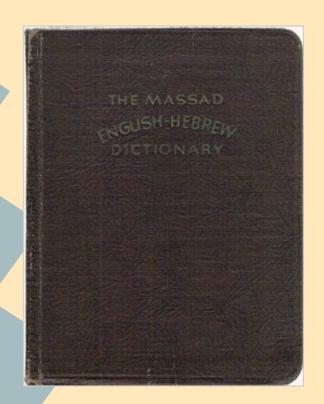
Shlomo Shulsinger, Massad Camps in the Poconos



"The spoken Hebrew language must of necessity be the keystone for the entire camp program and the center around which all cultural, educational and recreational programmatic efforts must revolve. ... If there is any hope of the American Jewish community preserving its identity as an ethnic sub-community, it must be through transmitting to the younger generation—or at the very least to a select portion of it—the key to the Jewish treasure house furnished by the Hebrew language."



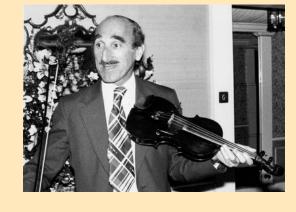
Massad English-Hebrew Dictionary, 1947





Moshe Davis on Hebrew at Ramah Interview with Shuly Schwartz, 1976

SRS: What I'm interested in knowing is, how did you with the mission of speaking Hebrew. You that you wanted to educate a "learned Jew."



MD: I might concede that this was one of my disappointments. I don't think that we got to the bottom of the Hebrew problem. It quickly became clear that we were unable to deal with this question at all. As a founding member of the Massad Camps, which were established some seven years earlier, and as one who was committed after all to Hebraist-Zionist ideals, I hoped that we would be able to cultivate a Hebrew-speaking camp, and not only a camp of Jewish studies. ... The source of the difficulty was that the children who came to us, although they underwent a strict screening, even the good among them knew very little. Therefore we deemphasized [the Hebrew]. We felt that it was much more efficient to give them basic Jewish knowledge than to focus on language and not reach the content.

Hebrew at Ramah

- "The were many campers who did not know any Hebrew at all, with the result that their influence was negative and retarding" (Henry Goldberg, Report on Camp Ramah, 1947)
- "The lack of Hebrew knowledge on the part of the campers who seem to be perfectly comfortable ultilizing camp vocabulary was embarrassing." (Zalman Schachter, Report Following Camp Ramah Visits," 1962)
- "The main problem with encouraging Hebrew usage at camp is that campers soon realize that if you come to camp not knowing Hebrew you really don't need to know it." (Peretz Rodman, 1995)

Camp Ramah Sylvia Ettenberg

"A number of us felt that although Hebrew should be the language [of camp], Hebrew was only a tool. It couldn't be the goal."



Hebrew Infusion at OSRUI (URJ) from ritual language to camp language

Hebrew Words and Terms (1959) examples:

- 1. Bracha
- 2. Ner Shel Shabbat
- 3. Magen David
- 4. Mezuzah
- 5. Mitzvah
- 6. HaMotzi

Hebrew Words and Terms (1964) examples:

- 1. Boker
- 2. Machaneh
- 3. Eytz
- 4. Bevakasha
- 5. Tzrif
- 6. Madrich

OSRUI Daily Schedule

1957

7:00 am Rise and Shine

7:30 am Worship Services

8:00 am Breakfast

8:40 am Cabin Cleanup

9:00 am Morning Study

10:10 am Work Projects

11:30 am Swimming and land sports

1966

7:00 am Boker Tov

7:30 am Avodat Hakodesh

8:00 am Aruchat Boker

8:45 am Nikayon K'lali

9:15 am Ivrit

10:00 am Shiur

11:00 am S'chiyah v'Sport

Changing Hebrew use - last 40 years

Increased a lot	15%
Increased somewhat	14%
Stayed about the same	22%
Decreased somewhat	14%
Decreased a lot	8%

Changing Hebrew use - last 10 years

Increased a lot	12%
Increased somewhat	27%
Stayed about the same	42%
Decreased somewhat	8%
Decreased a lot	0%

Diverse uses of Hebrew

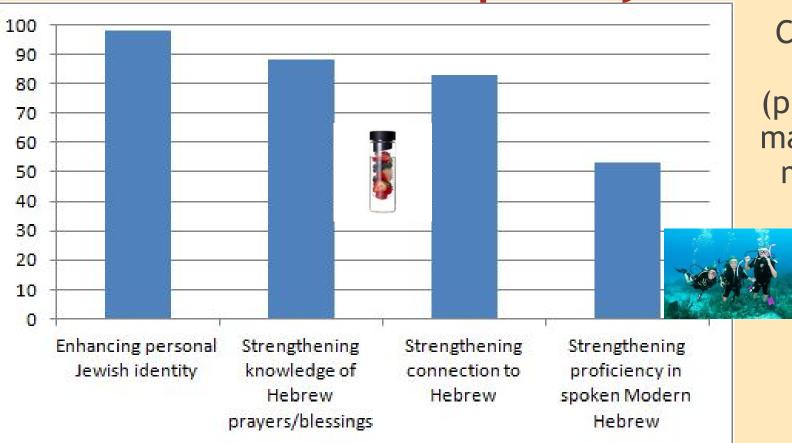
8%: Hebrew immersion.

20%: Hebrew classes.

73%: Hebrew names for units, activities, locations.

100%: Hebrew blessings or songs.





Camps'
goals
(primary,
major, or
minor)

"We don't formally teach *Ivrit* [Hebrew]... the goal is for us to infuse the day with Ivrit, from hodaot b'ivrit ['announcements in Hebrew'], and kol shelet b'ivrit ['every sign in Hebrew']... and to lehachnis milim po v' sham v'lilamed k'tzat ['insert words here and there and to teach a bit'] and to put words here and there in Hebrew, to give kids a good feel."



How do camps infuse the day with Hebrew?

Hebrew use at camp: Blessings, song, prayer



100%

Hebrew use at camp: Blessings, song, prayer







71%

Hebrew use at camp: Group names

Grade	Group	Meaning
3-4	Sabras	Israeli cactus
5	Tzofim	Scouts
6	Nachshonim	Initiators
7	Kochavim	Stars
8	Chalutzim	Pioneers
9	Seniors	





Hebrew use at camp: Activity names



Good morning

Gathering (Israeli army)

Breakfast

Clean-up

Elective

Lunch

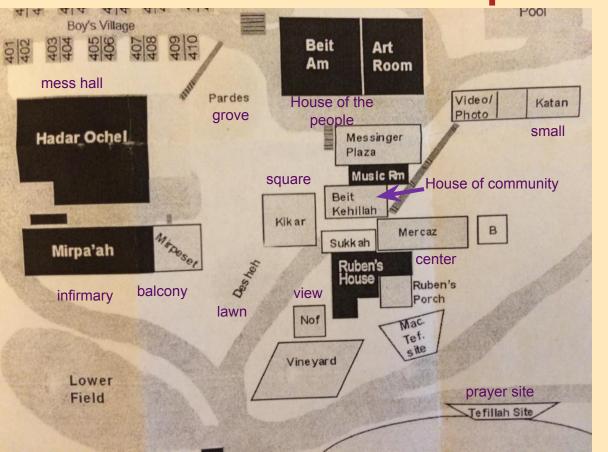
Rest





59%

Hebrew use at camp: Location names







Hebrew use at camp: Word use

- Jewish life words (used in other English-speaking Jewish communal settings)
- Camp words (used solely or almost solely at camp)

Hebrew use at camp: Jewish life loanwords

Shabbat

kosher

challah

Torah

bar/bat mitzvah

tikkun olam [community service]

ruach [spirit]

bima [synagogue platform]

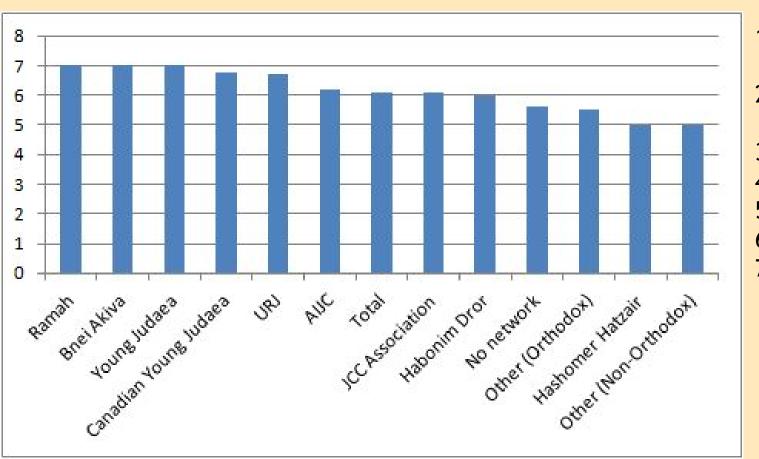
Havdalah [end of Shabbat ceremony]

parsha [weekly reading]

Tisha b'Av [summer mourning holiday]

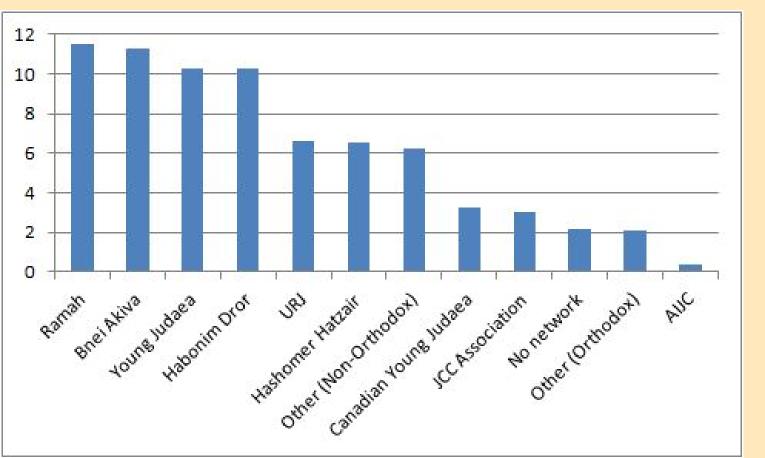


Hebrew use at camp: Jewish life words



- Shabbat shalom
- 2. Birkat Hamazon
- 3. boker tov
- 1. tikkun olam
- 5. ruach
 - . tefillah
- 7. sheket b'vakasha

Hebrew use at camp: Camp words

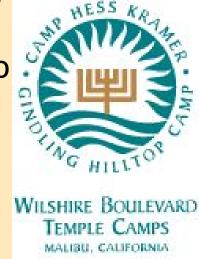


- 1. chadar ochel
- . nikayon . machaneh
- 4. mirpa'a
- 5. omanut6. hodaot
- 7. tzrif
- hakshivu
 schiyah
- 10. edah
- 11. marp
 - 2. zimriya
- 13. shekem

Hebrew use at camp: Word use

Register of English with many Hebrew loanwords (Jewish life and camp-specific):

"After Birkat Hamazon ['Grace After Meals'], chanichim ['campers'] and madrichim ['counselors'] go to the teatron ['theater'] fo peulat erev ['evening activity']."



Hebrew use at camp: Camp words, words for Schiyah



79. לשחות	to swim
80. מגבת	towel
81. בריכה	pool
82. אגם	lake
83. סירת שורה	row boat
84. משות	oar
85. סירת מפרש	sail boat
86. אזריאלי	Aquaglidel
97. חגורת הצלה	Life Jacket
משקפים .88	Goggles
89. nm	Dock
90. קרם שיזוף	Sun Tan Lotion

Words for Shirah/Rikkud

91. לשיר	to sing
92. לרקוד	to dance
93. ימין	right
94. שמאל	left
95. רגל	leg
96. להקה	band
97. מקהלה	choir
98. תווים	musical notes
99. סולם	scale
400 the	



Cubbies

Meah Milim

Hebrew use at camp: Signs

Liturgical, biblical quotes - artistic placards, murals





Hebrew use at camp: Signs

Locations at camp

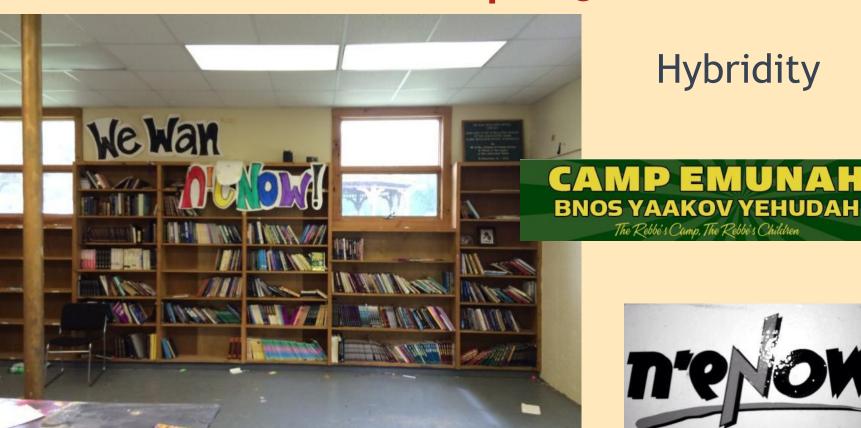






Chadar Ochel חדר אוכל

Hebrew use at camp: Signs





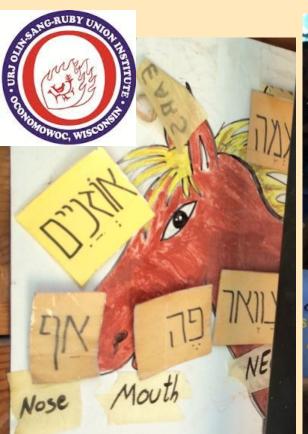
Hebrew use at camp

Pedagogical signs





Hebrew use at camp: Teaching words





Ritualized:
Games, skits, and songs, often by visiting Israeli staff



Hebrew use at camp: Teaching words 72%



Hebrew use at camp: Teaching words

Informal teaching:

Leader: "A big *ma'agal* with everybody in it!" (x3)

Counselor to new camper: "Let's make a big

circle ... ma'agal means circle."

Sandwich method:

"We're going to the agam, lake, agam (clap)."

Hebrew use at camp: Teaching words

Israeli counselor at top of water slide: Hebrew password





Hebrew use at camp: Informal Hebrew



Hebrew use at camp: Informal Hebrew

Majority of camps have at least a few Israeli-American campers (94%) and Israeli campers (80%):

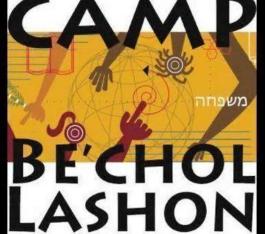
Resource for informal Hebrew use.



Hebrew use at camp: Call and response



Eyfo Eliyahu ba'olam? ('Where in the world is Elijah?')



Hebrew use at camp: Call and response

3 leaders: Shabbat shalom, Machane Gilboa. ('Good

Sabbath, Camp Gilboa')

Whole camp: Shabbat shalom, [Michael] v'[Jessica] v'

[Sarah]. ('... M and J and S')

3 leaders: Nitsanim, kulam po? ('Nitsanim [group], is

everyone here?')

Nitsanim: *Kulanu po.* ('We're all here.')

3 leaders: Sayalim, kulam po? ('Sayalim [group], is

everyone here?')

Sayalim: Kulanu po. ('We're all here.')



Hebrew use at camp: Announcements



Ritualized:

Safsalim al hashulchanot ('benches on the tables'). Gesher l'migrash kadur-sal, Nitzanim l'Gazebo banim, Adat Shalom l'makom t' filah... (Groups to locations)



Hebrew use at camp: Announcements



Productive:

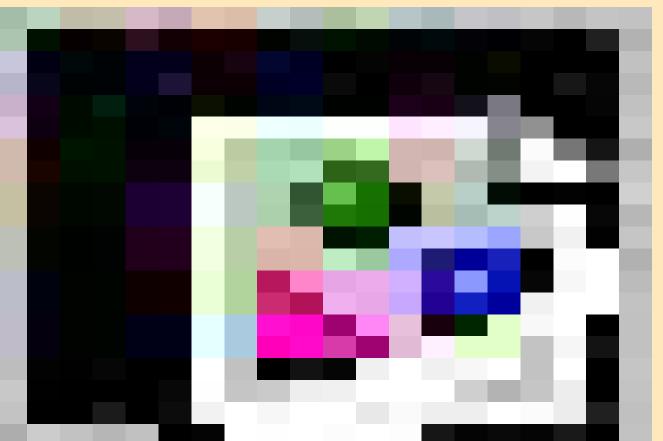
Novel sentences.

Requires more proficiency (productive, receptive).





Hebrew use at camp: Theatrical production





Hebrew use at camp: Hebrew classes









Hebrew use at camp: Immersion programs/camps



Experiential Hebrew education: Cafe Ramah



Hebrew use at camp: Immersion programs/camps



Winnipeg, Canada



Hebrew use at camp: Incentives





Hebrew use at camp: Immersion programs/camps



Camp Am Israel, Orlando



New Jersey



Southern California; New York

Why Hebrew?

Israel connection: 83%

Camp JRF - iCenter grant



Connection to Jews around the world: 79%

Camp Be'chol Lashon





Camp tradition: 76%





Ramah 1950s

Tel Yehudah, 2014

Access to religion/text: 71%

URJ Camp Kalsman

Chaveri nivarech:

Ye-hi shem Adonai mevorach me-atah v'ad olam.

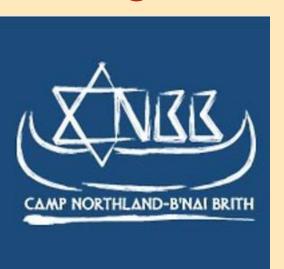
Ye-hi shem Adonai mevorach me-atah v'ad olam. Beirshoot chaveri, nivarech eloheinu she-achalnu mishelo.

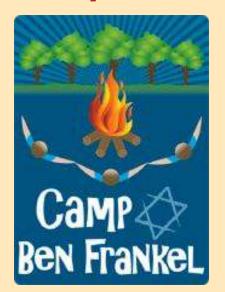
חבריי נברך יהי שם יי מבורך מעתה ועד עולם ברשות חבריי, נברך אלוהינו שאכלנו משלו

Moshava Malibu

ברוך אתה ה אלקנו הכל כלה וצל תניבת הסדה וצל ארצ חמפה שובה ורחבה שרציתה והנחפתה לאבתנו לאכל מהביה אובה רחם נא מו BY SUS SESE, ER THERE רושאים עירק ומלציון אשכן כבודב ושל אלבחק P. E61J. 3731 582. 11 881 שיר הקדש באהרה ביאנו וה אלינו פתובה ושתחנו ונשה אשוגה ונברכק Anagai aeinga a'st בי שותה ה שיב וועשיב לאורה לה של האוף של צא האחיה.

Distinguishes camp from outside world: 62%















Connection to other campers



Post-camp connection: pan-camp Hebrew

JDate commercial



Post-camp connection: pan-camp Hebrew

Camp Hebrew as a bond among camp alumni, exclusionary for others.

Woman who did not attend camp:

"When friends of mine who went to Ramah or Moshava talk about camp, I have no idea what they're talking about."

(Orthodox day school alumna, scholar of rabbinic literature)

Some camps: conflicting beliefs among staff about how Hebrew should be used.

Concern that innovative Hebrew loanwords, clippings, and blends are "incorrect":

- chadar ('dining hall,' lit. 'room of')
- marp ('infirmary,' vs. mirpa'ah)
- meltz ('wait tables' < meltzar 'waiter')
- Shabboptions ('Shabbat options')
- *t'floptions* ('tefillah options')
- *p-nik* ('personal nikayon')

Incorrect Hebrew?

Concern that innovative Hebrew loanwords, clippings, and blends are "incorrect":

- chadar ('dining hall,' lit. 'room of')
- marp ('infirmary,' vs. mirpa'ah)
- meltz ('wait tables' < meltzar 'waiter')
- Shabboptions ('Shabbat options')
- *t'floptions* ('tefillah options')
- *p-nik* ('personal nikayon')

Correct camp Jewish English.

Concern that innovative Hebrew loanwords, clippings, and blends are "incorrect":

- chadar ('dining hall,' lit. 'room of')
- marp ('infirmary,' vs. mirpa'ah)
- meltz ('wait tables' < meltzar 'waiter')
- Shabboptions ('Shabbat options')
- *t'floptions* ('tefillah options')
- *p-nik* ('personal nikayon')

Emphasize the connections between English and Hebrew. Ownership over Hebrew words.

Concern about language acquisition: OSRUI:

"I would much rather have a youngster say, 'Ani holech l'dining hall,' instead of, 'I'm walking to the chadar ochel'... If all you know is chadar ochel, you can't do much with that noun. 'Ani kotev michtav to my parents,' is more important to me than 'I'm writing a letter to my horim.'"



Hebrew educator - Daber program:

"a language is not just a noun;... you can only learn how it behaves...if you hear its flow, if you hear its intonation, if you hear its rhythm. And if you say, I'm going to the breicha ('pool'), what is that?... they're giving camp a flavor [of Hebrew]"

Hebrew infusion



Ramah Rockies:

Concern: comprehension of Hebrew announcements: "both our kids and counselors really did not know what the heck was going on, and were very often missing key announcements... So, we moved to a model where we [say]... repetitive phrases in Hebrew, but many of the key announcements are made in English."



Camp Solomon Schechter:

Concern about kids' reactions:

"Camp has got to be fun, and these words are fun. And it's fun to see kids getting into Judaism. If they're getting into Judaism because we made up some fun little word, and then that sparked their interest to go further, fine...To insist upon full sentences in Hebrew is going to cause some campers to retract... And then they could potentially say that *limmud* [Jewish learning] is not fun or *lvrit* [Hebrew] is not fun."



Camp Solomon Schechter: Concern about kids' reactions:

limmud => peulat sababa ('Judaic learning
session,' lit. 'activity of coolness')



URJ Camp Kalsman: "Jewish language" is "a really powerful tool" for community building, and counselors should use more Hebrew and Yiddish words.

"If you ever heard someone else say *shmutzy*, you know they're probably Jewish, right? So... then you have that connection."

How much Hebrew? Administrators vs. staff vs. campers

Camp staff at a few camps: Which variety of Hebrew?

Sephardic Adventure Camp

Sephardi vs. Ashkenazi Hebrew words and pronunciations:

mariv vs. arvit

[amidá] vs. [amída]

[bɛraxá] vs. [bɹʌxʌ]

[touá] vs. [tóua]

[sabát] vs. [sábəs]



URJ camps

When to use English vs. Hebrew words for Jewish values:

- tikkun olam
- kehila kedosha
- middot vs. values
- simcha vs. joy
- zerizut vs. zest/zeal



Eden Village Camp:

Textual vs. Israeli Hebrew



Eden Village Camp:

"earth-based spirituality"

"radical pluralist Judaism"

Avoid talk about Israel because of contentious political discourse



Eden Village Camp:

"if we are speaking Hebrew, because we're not focusing on Israel, it should be Biblical Hebrew"

"that's not helpful for communication"



Eden Village Camp: parent email:

"Yesod ['foundation' -group] went further into the Torah law of tzaar ba' alei chayim" "campers set out for the farm for 'Modeh Ani', literally 'I am grateful' in Hebrew:... traditional shacharit (morning prayer) service, yoga with daily intention, meditative weeding, prayerful singing and chanting, 'hitbodedut' (talking out loud, usually in nature, to G-d/life-force/the world/etc)"



Eden Village Camp:

uses Textual Hebrew in innovative ways:

"We're trying new ancient things."





Hebrew at camp is (mostly) not about teaching Hebrew. It's about fostering connection to the camp community, Israel, and the Jewish people through Hebrew.

English-Hebrew hybridity fosters an American Jewish identity and community

Each camp decides how much Hebrew to infuse and how, and camps change significantly over time.

Desire for future Hebrew use among survey respondents:

(More) Hebrew signs	85%
(More) Hebrew words	76%
(More) Hebrew songs	75 %
(More) Hebrew instruction	51%
A Hebrew-speaking unit/program	51%

Ripple effects of immersion programs.

How much?

How?

Depends on camp goals.

