

NYU Tel Aviv
HBRJD-UA 9140, MEIS-UA 9150
The Languages of Israel

Instructor Information

- Prof. Benjamin Hary; Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00am–12:00pm and by appointment
- Prof. Noa David; Office Hours: Mondays, 4:30–5:00pm and by appointment

Course Information

- HBRJD-UA 9140, MEIS-UA 9150
- The Languages of Israel
- Is Israel a multilingual or a monolingual country? This is a question with which many educators, linguists, politicians and laypeople have been struggling. Students will be introduced to basic concepts of sociolinguistics as well as descriptive linguistics (What is language? What is dialect? What is “correct” language? What is language change?). Furthermore, students will learn the orthographies (spelling systems) of Hebrew and Arabic and practice them through the methodology of Linguistic Landscape. We will tour Tel Aviv-Jaffa and other places and study public and private signs and their use in Hebrew and Arabic as well as in other languages. We will look at signs, advertisements, instructions, buildings, streets, billboards, etc. This exercise will teach us much about the public space; who controls it and what cultural and political messages it sends us.

We will then study basic lexicon of Hebrew and Arabic and also review their basic grammatical structure as well as their historical background. In reviewing the language policies of Israel, we will refer to decisions regarding language use in education and in society in general. Some language policies are explicit, others are not; some are top down, others are bottom-up; yet, policies are always derivatives of the groups that make up political entities (e.g., majority elites, minorities, immigrants, indigenous) interacting with a variety of political, ideological, social and economic factors. We will pay special attention to the mechanisms used to determine language policies on the ground.

- Prerequisites: None
- Mondays, 5:00-6:15pm and Thursdays, 11:45am-1:00pm
- NYUTA Academic Center, 17 Brandeis Street, Room 104

Course Overview and Goals

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to understand:

- The basics of descriptive linguistics and sociolinguistics

- The orthographies (spelling systems) of Hebrew and Arabic
- The basic vocabulary of Hebrew and Arabic
- The basic grammatical structure of Hebrew and Arabic
- The respective historical developments of Hebrew and Arabic
- The language use in public space in Israel (Linguistic Landscape)
- The use of Hebrew as a mother tongue and as an acquired language in Israel
- The practice and ideology behind the use of Arabic in Israel
- The use of English, everybody's second language in Israel
- The use of languages in earlier and recent immigrations
- The use of Jewish language varieties in Israel
- Religiolinguistics: The connection between Language and Religion

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class regularly and arrive on time. Students must complete all assigned readings before the class meeting and be prepared to participate actively in discussions of the readings and current events. Regular attendance and participation are essential for the creation of a stable, stimulating learning environment. Each unexcused absence will result in a reduction of your final grade. You will be held responsible for all material presented in class, as well as all reading assignments. Because class Page 3 discussion will revolve around the readings, you will be expected to complete all of the reading in a thoughtful way before each class.

Notice that prepared class participation is worth 37% of your grade. This is how the participation grade is determined:

- Quantity (regular participation in classroom discussions)
- Quality (comments show understanding of and engagement with the material)
- Overall contribution to class discussions (not overbearing, not distracted, no inappropriate use of electronics, contributes positively to the class vibe) and written discussions in classes. [a; b; and c – 10%]
- Evidence of preparation: reading in an engaged way and answering study questions on the readings in writing: Each week, a set of study questions pertaining to that week's readings are posed. These questions are designed to assist students with the weekly reading assignments. Students are required to submit short answers to these questions 5 times throughout the semester. [15%]
- Evidence of preparation: Hebrew and Arabic language assignments [12%]

Assignments and Tests

- Two writing assignments; specific instructions will be posted in Classes.
- Five (out of nine) study question assignments on the readings (to be submitted before each relevant class).

- Short Hebrew and Arabic assignments.
- Two short quizzes on Hebrew and Arabic.
- Take home test consists of open questions and terms concerning issues taught in class as well as questions based upon your critical reading. The test also includes an exercise in linguistic interview. In this exam the student is required to demonstrate the knowledge and tools acquired during the course through several selected case studies.

Composition of Grading The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula: Assignments/Activities % of Final Grade Class participation (see above) 10% Hebrew and Arabic Language Assignments 10% 6 Study Questions 16% Linguistic Autobiography Writing Assignment, Including Linguistic Interview 14% Linguistic Landscape Writing Assignment 18% Quiz 1 (Hebrew) + Quiz 2 (Hebrew & Arabic) 14% Take Home Test 18% Failure to submit or fulfill any one of the required course component results in failure of the class.

Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to the following formula:

| Assignments/Activities | % of Final Grade |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Class participation | 10% |
| Language assignments | 10% |
| Study Questions | 16% |
| Linguistic Autobiography | 14% |
| Linguistic Landscape | 18% |
| Quizzes | 32% |
| Take home test | 18% |

Failure to submit or fulfill any one of the required course component results in failure of the class.

Letter Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

| Letter Grade | Percent |
|---------------------|----------------|
| A | 94-100% |
| A- | 90-93% |
| B+ | 87-89% |
| B | 84-86% |
| B- | 80-83% |
| C+ | 77-79% |
| C | 74-76% |
| C- | 70-73% |
| D+ | 67-69% |
| D | 65-66% |
| F | below 65% |

Course Schedule

Topics and Assignments

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|--|---|---|
| 1 | What is <i>Linguistics</i> and what is <i>Sociolinguistics</i> ? What is “correct” language? | | |
| 2 | What are <i>languages, dialects, regiolects and ethnolects</i> ? Speech varieties Linguistic Landscape | Yule, 2017, chapters 18–19 (Regional Variation and Social Variation in Language); Ben-Rafael et al, pp. 7–30; Gorter, pp. 1–6 | <i>Study Questions:</i> 1. What is the difference between an accent and a dialect? 2. How would you define <i>speech community</i> ? 3. What is Linguistic Landscape and what are the main findings of Ben-Rafael et al in relation to linguistic landscape in Israel? |
| 3 | Hebrew letters ;ה; ר; ש; ל; א; ו; ג; ק; Hebrew: conversation I (<i>Myself</i>) | | |
| 4 | Hebrew: ;ה; פ; ס; ג; ד; Hebrew: conversation II (<i>Myself</i>) | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Hebrew work sheet (1) |
| 5 | The History of the Hebrew Language | Spolsky and Shohamy, chapter 3, pp. 65–93 | <i>Study Questions:</i> 1. Why and how did ideologic motives help the success of Modern Hebrew? 2. How did the Israeli education system help maintain and develop the |

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|--|--------------------------|---|
| | | | <p>use of Hebrew during the 20th century?</p> <p>3. What was the role of the army in Hebrew teaching?</p> |
| 6 | <p>Hebrew: א; מ; מ; מ; מ; מ; ת; ז; ט; ע; כ; ג</p> <p>Hebrew: conversation III (The Dorms and My Room)</p> | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Hebrew work sheet (2) |
| 7 | Review and Hebrew conversation IV | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Hebrew work sheet (3) |
| 8 | <p>Arabic: ب؛ ت؛ ث؛ و؛ ا</p> <p>Arabic: conversation I (<i>Myself</i>)</p> | | Quiz 1 – Hebrew alphabet |
| 9 | <p>Arabic: د؛ ذ؛ ر؛ ز؛ ي</p> <p>Arabic conversation II (<i>Myself</i>)</p> | | <p><i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Arabic work sheet (4)</p> <p>Discussion of assignments (Linguistic Autobiography)</p> <p>Writing Assignment 1 Due: Linguistic Autobiography</p> |
| 10 | <p>Arabic: ن؛ ل؛ ك؛ م؛ س؛ ش</p> <p>Arabic conversation III (The Dorms & My Room)</p> | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Arabic work sheet (5) |
| 11 | Arabic Diglossia and Continuglossia | Ferguson 1959; Hary 1996 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <p>1. Please describe varieties H and L and the features of Diglossia, according to Ferguson.</p> |

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>2. Why is the use of a continuum needed in Arabic, according to Hary 1996?</p> <p>3. What are the variables that affect one's location on the Arabic language continuum?</p> |
| 12 | Judeo-Arabic: The Language of the Jews of Islam | Hary 2009, chapter 2 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <p>1. Describe the five periods of the history of the religiolect and the major changes.</p> <p>2. What is the current state of the religiolect?</p> |
| 13 | Arabic: ه؛ ف؛ ق؛ ص؛ ض Arabic conversation IV (The Street) | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Arabic work sheet (6) |
| 14 | Arabic: ج؛ ح؛ خ؛ ع؛ غ؛ ط؛ ظ Arabic conversation V (The Street) | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Arabic work sheet (7) |
| 15 | Review of Arabic alphabet | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Arabic work sheet (8) |
| 16 | Review of Hebrew and Arabic alphabet | | |
| 17 | Language Policy | Elana Shohamy, 2006, <i>Language Policy: Hidden Agenda and New Approaches</i> , pp. 135–166; Muchnik, Malka et al. 2016, Introduction, pp. 1–15; Recommended: Spolsky & Shohamy, chapter 2, pp. 31–64 | <p>Quiz 2 – Arabic and Hebrew alphabet</p> <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <p>1. Please explain language policy in relation to democracy and inclusion, as it is discussed by Shoahamy 2006.</p> |

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|---|--|--|
| | | | <p>2. What is the status of English in Israel, according to Muchnik, Malka et al?</p> <p>Is there a language policy in Israel today, according to Muchnik, Malka et al? Please explain.</p> |
| 18 | Arabic as a minority language in Israel | Spolsky and Shohamy, chapter 5 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is the status of Arabic in Israel different than in other countries in the Middle East and Africa? 2. What is the difference between the status of Arabic during the Ottoman Period and the British Mandate in Palestine? 3. What is the status of Druze in Israel and how does it affect their language competence? |
| 19 | Lexicon: Hebrew and Arabic | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Lexicon sheet (9) |
| 20 | Language and Immigration | Spolsky and Shohamy, chapter 8 and 10; Rajiiman, Semyonov, and Geffer 2015; Muchnik, Malka et al. 2016, chapter 2, pp. 17–60 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please describe Russian II in comparison to Russian I, according to Spolsky and Shohamy. 2. What are the consequences of proficiency in the host country's language among immigrants, according to Rejiiman, Semyonov and Geffer. 3. What is the status of Russian, Amharic, |

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|--|--|---|
| | | | Spanish and French in Israel, according to Muchnik et al? |
| 21 | Jewish English: The most widely used Jewish religiolect in present time | Benor 2009 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please describe the model of <i>distinctiveness</i> according to Benor 2009. 2. What are the social and linguistic traits of the Jews in pre-modern time according to Benor 2009? |
| 22 | Language and Religion: Religiolinguistics; The Jewish Linguistic Spectrum | Hary 2009, chapter 1; Hary and Wein 2013 | <p><i>Study Questions:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Please cite examples of crossing religious boundaries among Jewish language use. 2. Name some characteristics of a Jewish religiolect. 3. Cite some examples of characteristics of Christian and Muslim religiolects. |
| 23 | Lexicon/Phrase/Sentence II: Hebrew and Arabic | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Lexicon sheet (11) |
| 24 | Asylum Seekers in Israel: Background, terminology and LL in South Tel Aviv | | Discussion of assignments (Linguistic Landscape) <i>Writing Assignment 2 Due:</i> Linguistic Landscape |
| 25 | Lexicon/Phrase/Sentence I: | | <i>Language Assignment Due:</i> Lexicon sheet (10) |

| Week/Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment Due |
|-----------|--------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| | Hebrew and Arabic | | |
| 26 | Overview & Summary | | |
| 27 | | | Due: Take Home test |

Course Materials

Required Textbooks & Materials

All readings are available on NYU Classes

Optional Textbooks & Materials

N/A

Resources

- Access your course materials: [NYU Classes](https://nyu.edu/its/classes)(nyu.edu/its/classes)
- Databases, journal articles, and more: [Bobst Library](https://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- Assistance with strengthening your writing: [NYU Writing Center](https://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:[IT Help Desk](https://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

Course Policies

Attendance and Tardiness

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is mandatory, and **unexcused absences will be penalized with a two percent deduction from the student's final course grade**. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

All medical-based absence requests MUST be presented to the Manager of Student Life and Housing (MSLH). In the case of illness, contact the MSLH within seven (7) days of the absence or as soon as practicable and provide medical documentation. Non-medical requests should be made to the Assistant Director for Academics (AD/Academics) and in advance of the intended absence. Your instructors will be informed of any excused absence; they are not authorized to approve your absence, and they are

required to report any absences to the AD/Academics.

NYU Policy on Religious Holidays

- Students who anticipate being absent because of any religious observance should, whenever possible, notify faculty and the AD/Academics in advance of such anticipated absence.
- Whenever feasible, examinations and assignment deadlines should not be scheduled on religious holidays. Any student absent from class because of his/her religious beliefs shall not be penalized for any class, examination, or assignment deadline missed on that day or days. In the event that examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on a religious holiday, any student who is unable to attend class shall be permitted the opportunity to make up any examination or to extend any assignment deadline missed on that day or days.
- No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student who avails him/ herself of the provisions of the resolution.
- A violation of these policies and principles shall permit any aggrieved student to bring forward a grievance, provided under the University Grievance Procedure.

Late Assignments

All works must be submitted on time unless you have received an explicit extension. Any late submission may result in grade deduction at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Plagiarism constitutes an academic offence for which you can be disciplined. Punishment may include a failing grade, suspension or expulsion. In all confirmed cases, a report will be sent to the student's Dean at NYU or, in the case of a non-NYU student, to the home institution.

Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Instructor Bio

Benjamin Hary

I am the Director of NYU Tel Aviv and Professor at the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies. Up until 2014 I was the Winship Professor of Hebrew, Arabic, and Linguistics and the Director of the Program in Linguistics at Emory University. I am the author and editor (and co-editor) of *Multiglossia in Judeo-Arabic* (1992); *Judaism and Islam* (2000); *Corpus Linguistics and Modern Hebrew* (2003); *Esoteric and Exoteric Aspects in Judeo-Arabic Culture* in 2006; *Translating Religion* (2009); *Daily Life in Israel* (2012); and *Languages in Jewish Communities, Past and Present* (2018). My Sacred Texts in Egyptian Judeo-Arabic will appear in the near future with Brill. I also published over 50 articles Judeo-Arabic, Arabic and Hebrew linguistics. My research interests include Jewish languages in general and Judeo-Arabic in particular, Jews in the Islamic world, the politics of Arabic language use in Israeli society, corpus linguistics, Language and Religion, dialectology, and sociolinguistics. I have recently focused my research on issues such as why and how Jews (and for that matter, Christians and Muslims as well) speak and write differently from people who are not Jews or Christians and Muslims.

Noa David

I have completed my advanced studies at Emory University, Atlanta GA. My research focused on sociolinguistic aspects of Judeo-Arabic manuscripts from the Cairo Genizah. I have completed my undergraduate studies at Tel Aviv University, majoring in political science and Arabic language and literature and I have also completed a teaching certification studies specializing in teaching languages. My academic teaching experience includes teaching language courses and seminars at Emory University and NYU Center in Tel Aviv. I have been involved in the field of global education for over a decade. During those years I have been involved in governmental projects to promote Israel as a study abroad destination and develop more relevant academic programs as well as in the establishment of an international office in one of the largest colleges in Israel. Prior to this while at Emory I was involved in leading a Sephardi tour where students explored on location the study of pre- and post-1492 expulsion of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula. Finally, I myself studied abroad in Cairo, Egypt for a semester while at doing my graduate work at Emory.