The rebirth of Spoken Hebrew

The rebirth of Hebrew as a mother tongue after two millennia is an event unique in sociolinguistic history. It happened through a constellation of radical political and ethnic aspirations, dire economic forces, and educational circumstances that may never be repeated, but none of which are in any way 'miraculous'. This course examines how it happened, through the eyes of those who made it happen and contemporary sociolinguists and historians, and draws conclusions for language policy in other developing societies. No knowledge of Hebrew is required.

Books referred to in this syllabus:


**Syllabus**

1: Hebrew on the eve of the Revival

Elon, 41-56

Chomsky, 207-244

Harshav, pp vii-16

Stampfer 'What did "knowing Hebrew" mean in E. Europe?' in Glinert, 129-140


Shavit, J. Hebrew in the Berlin Haskalah, in Glinert, 111-40


2: Nationalism, Zionism, and anti-Yiddishism

Fishman, part 2

Bartal, I. From traditional bilingualism to national monolingualism. In Glinert, 141-50
3: First a modern literature

Alter, 1-22, 40-61


4: Ben-Yehuda -- 'Father of Modern Hebrew?'

Elon, The Israelis, 82-105

Fellman, The Revival of a Classical Tongue


Mandel, G. 'Why did Ben-Yehuda suggest the revival of spoken Hebrew?' In Glinert, 193-207

Glinert, 'Lexicographic function and the relation between supply and demand International Journal of Lexicography', 11(2), 111-124

The Wordmaker  (VHS recording, 1992)

5: How native spoken Hebrew emerged in Eretz-Israel


Harshav, 81-152


6: Which Hebrew?

Shelomo Morag, ‘The emergence of Modern Hebrew’. In Glinert, Hebrew in Ashkenaz, 208-221

Harshav, 153-166

Bar-Adon, The Rise and Decline of a Dialect


7: Was Hebrew planned?

Chomsky, Hebrew, 184-205

Glinert, LH. ‘The first conference for Modern Hebrew, or when is a congress not a congress?’ in Fishman, 85-115.


Morag, Shelomo 'Planned and unplanned development in Modern Hebrew', Lingua 8, 247-263, 1959

Nahir, Moshe 'Lexical modernization in Hebrew and the extra-Academy contribution', Word, 30(1-2), 105-116, 1979


8: Hebrew Politics under the British Mandate


Spolsky, ch. 1-3