

Re: Natural Language Praised

Source: <http://sci.tech--archive.net/Archive/sci.lang/2005-12/msg00888.html>

- *From:* leuwarden@xxxxxxxxxx
 - *Date:* 7 Dec 2005 23:45:57 -0800
-

Peter T. Daniels wrote:

> leuwarden@xxxxxxxxxx wrote:

>>

>>>>

>>>> but that would have been more or less voluntary, whereas Latin was
>>>> obligatory only for the very few who could afford a university degree.

>>>>

>>> Your contrast is inapt. Hebrew was all but compulsory for every boy of
>>> whatever station (have you seen *Fiddler on the Roof*?)

>>

>> No. My ideas are from what I read in Golda Meir's autobiography, where
>> this problem is sometimes mentioned

>

> Golda Meir grew to adulthood in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I don't know what
> she could have told you in her autobiography.

As a young woman she went to Israel, when it did not yet exist as such.
The idea to create a state there existed, but maybe as a distant possibility, for there was nothing there, no industry and certainly no official language. She spoke Yiddish. As her political influence grew, she met the people who became the founders of the new State and those who had to decide what the official language would be.

>

>>> and even

>>> available for some girls (have you seen *Yentl*?).

>>

>> No. (I had better admit that I do not like film)

>

> Then read stories by I. B. Singer. (They've just (all?) been collected
> in three Library of America volumes, some newly translated.)

>

>>>

>>> Of course Hebrew is the everyday language in Israel! Where could you

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>>> have gotten any other idea?

>>

>> !!!

>> I thought it was impossible to revive. I thought people would learn it
>> to pass some exam, but that each would privately continue speaking in
>> his own language.

>

> "Way back" in the late 19th century, children were brought up speaking
> nothing else; by 1925, the language had prevailed throughout the
> immigrant Jewish community. European and American immigrants went to
> school to learn Hebrew to replace their native Yiddish (and other
> languages).

Does this refer to US or to Israeli immigration?

>

>> The Russians tried to impose Russian all over, but had to give up.

>

> The Russians weren't exactly welcome in most of the Empire/Soviet Union,
> but they were remarkably successful in many places. Most of the 'stans
> use Russian rather than their native Turkic languages for most of their
> business.

I read that Moscow had to give up on the idea to make Russian
obligatory, when they were afraid that people would not watch TV except
in their own languages.

>

>

> Neither Basque nor Catalan suffered major declines under Franco. (Unlike
> Breton in France, which succumbed in just a few decades to "benign
> neglect.")

>

>>> However, the influence of Biblical Hebrew is
>>> minimal, because Israel is aggressively secular; the only people who
>>> study Scripture seriously are the various stripes of Ultra-Orthodox, who
>>> don't speak Hebrew

>>

>> !!?? then what do they speak?

>

> Yiddish. Pay attention!

> --

> Peter T. Daniels grammatim@xxxxxxx

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• *References:*

◆ *Re: Natural Language Praised*

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◇ *From:* leuwarden

◆ ***Re: Natural Language Praised***

◇ *From:* Joachim Pense

◆ ***Re: Natural Language Praised***

◇ *From:* leuwarden

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