

HEBREW PROFICIENCY

GUIDELINES

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Introduction

The Hebrew Proficiency Guidelines are based on the generic guidelines published in 1986 by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). ACTFL describes the guidelines as

a hierarchy of global characterizations of integrated performance in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Each description is a representative, not an exhaustive, sample of a particular range of ability, and each level subsumes all previous levels, moving from simple to complex in an "all-before-and-more" fashion.

Because these guidelines identify stages of proficiency, as opposed to achievement, they are not intended to measure what an individual has achieved through specific classroom instruction but rather to allow assessment of what an individual can and cannot do, regardless of where, when, or how the language has been learned or acquired; thus, the words "learned" and "acquired" are used in the broadest sense. These guidelines are not based on a particular linguistic theory or pedagogical method, since the guidelines are proficiency-based, as opposed to achievement-based, and are intended to be used for global assessment.

It is especially important to bear in mind that the levels in the Guidelines are only partial descriptions of the characteristics of a range of performance. Thus, they are neither goals for teaching or curricular sequencing, nor absolute criteria for measuring learner outcomes. The Guidelines can be helpful in curriculum and test development; however, such usage has to be guided by a thorough understanding of the learning goals underlying the Guidelines. The statements and examples included in each level can only capture a small part of the conceptual, partial and full control of various linguistic and socio-linguistic characteristic of that specific level.

The Hebrew Guidelines are the result of a two-year project funded by a grant from the United States Department of Education, which was carried out during 1988-1990 by a national committee based at Brandeis University. The members of the committee were:

Shmuel Bolozky, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
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 Ruth Gollan, Brandeis University (Project Director)
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The Hebrew Guidelines, like the other language-specific guidelines developed to date, exemplify the characteristics of each level of the generic guidelines in a specific language. The guidelines for each skill provide a description of the functional linguistic behavior of non-native users of Modern Hebrew ranging from the total beginner (Novice-Low) to the person with "full professional competence in the language" (Superior) or, in the receptive skills of listening and reading, an even higher level of competence (Distinguished).

All the examples included in the Hebrew Guidelines are from data collected specifically for this project. An extensive analysis of Oral Proficiency Interviews as well as writing samples and listening and reading comprehension samples was conducted by the Hebrew Guidelines Committee over the two-year period of the grant.

While the Guidelines emphasize functional ability, examples of typical errors characteristic of the samples examined have also been included. The more detailed description of both strengths and weaknesses which may characterize each level should be helpful to those who will use the Guidelines as a basis for further research, rating and instruction. The descriptions of the Intermediate-High and Advanced-High levels have generally been kept shorter, with fewer or no examples, since these levels incorporate many of the significant features of both the preceding and the following ranges. The prominent characteristic of these two levels is the unevenness and lack of consistency of the performance. Often the person's performance appears to be at the next higher level, but just as often it sinks back to the one before.

An effort was made to obtain as broad and diverse a sample as possible within the time constraints of the project. However, additional research and, in particular, test development will be necessary in order to confirm that the samples are indeed representative and to explore the properties of the proficiency scale in greater depth.

Since its inception, the development of proficiency guidelines has been an ongoing, interactive process. No version of the guidelines is considered final or definitive. This first version of the Hebrew Guidelines should serve as a basis for a more general and objective description of proficiency in the four skills than has been possible in the past, and should facilitate the creation of proficiency-based tests and curricula. However, since the Guidelines are intended to help describe the proficiency of any non-native who has learned Hebrew in any kind of setting, and since large numbers of people learn Hebrew outside of university settings, further research and discussion leading to the refinement and revision of the Guidelines is essential. It is hoped that these Guidelines will facilitate such research and lead to productive discussions among professors of Hebrew. They should also facilitate cross-fertilization between researchers and instructors of Hebrew and those teaching other languages for which guidelines have already been developed.

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The Generic Guidelines were revised and prepared by Heidi Byrnes; James Child; Nina Levinson; Pardee Lowe, Jr.; Seiichi Makino; Irene Thompson; and A. Ronald Walton.

For the convenience of those who do not read Hebrew, a set of the Hebrew Guidelines with the examples transliterated into Roman characters is available.

The sign * denotes an error.

SPEAKING

All the examples are taken from recorded oral interviews conducted for this project.

Novice

The Novice level is characterized by the ability to communicate minimally with learned material.

Novice-Low

Generic. Oral production consists of isolated words and perhaps a few high-frequency phrases. Essentially no functional communicative ability.

Hebrew. No functional ability to communicate in Hebrew. Oral production is limited to several isolated words or expressions, such as "hi," "I," "yes," "no," "thanks," and familiar loanwords from Jewish/Israeli culture such as "Shabbat," "chutzpa," "pita," "aliyah," "kibbutz."

Novice-Mid

Generic. Oral production continues to consist of isolated words and learned phrases within very predictable areas of need. Vocabulary is sufficient only for handling simple, elementary needs and expressing basic courtesies. Utterances rarely consist of more than two or three words and show frequent long pauses and repetition of interlocutor's words. Speaker may have some difficulty producing even the simplest utterances. Some Novice-Mid speakers may be understood only with great difficulty.

Hebrew. No significant functional ability to communicate in Hebrew. Primarily reactive; intelligible only to sympathetic listeners. Oral production is limited to repetition of interviewer's input or memorized utterances. Functions are limited to some courtesy formulas ("how are you?"; "pleased to meet you"), listing and enumerating, and simple, mostly memorized phrases and sentences ("I live in Boston"; "I like pizza"). Content may consist of common lexical items related to people ("father," "mother," "student,"

חדר "friend"); objects and places (כיסא "chair," שולחן "table," חדר "room," כיתה "class"); food (דג "fish," לחם "bread," תפוז "orange"); days of the week (יום ראשון "Sunday," יום שישי "Friday"); numbers 1-10; and loan words such as *universita, hamburger, kafe*.

Speech is characterized by long pauses, frequent groping for words, use of first language, few adjectives, lack of agreement between subject and verb and inaccurate use of personal pronouns. The Novice-Mid speaker may have a surprisingly large vocabulary of isolated words and phrases acquired through the study of Jewish culture. However, knowledge of these lexical items does not increase functional ability in the language.

Novice-High

Generic. Able to satisfy partially the requirements of basic communicative exchanges by relying heavily on learned utterances but occasionally expanding these through simple recombinations of their elements. Can ask questions or make statements involving learned material. Shows signs of spontaneity although this falls short of real autonomy of expression. Speech continues to consist of learned utterances rather than of personalized, situationally adapted ones. Vocabulary centers on areas such as basic objects, places, and most common kinship terms. Pronunciation may still be strongly influenced by first language. Errors are frequent and, in spite of repetition, some Novice-High speakers will have difficulty being understood even by sympathetic interlocutors.

Hebrew. Emerging, but not sustained, ability to engage in basic communicative exchanges, mainly through recombination or expansion of learned material (הם גם רוצים ללמוד אנגלית "They want to study English too"; אני עובדת באוניברסיטה "I work at the university"). Content is still usually limited to a few topics, concerning self and immediate surroundings such as food, the family, the classroom (... המשפחה שלי גרה ב... "My family lives in ..."; אני הולכת למוזאון "I am going to a museum"). Creativity is reflected in the emerging ability to ask some questions, cope with simple survival situations such as ordering a basic meal, inviting someone over, or buying a ticket. Most statements are in the present tense. Occasional use of simple adverbs of time (עכשיו "now," היום "today") and space (פה "here," שם "there") and partial control of

conjunctions (אני אוהב עברית גם אנגלית) "I like Hebrew, English too") add some detail to the Novice-High speaker's sentences.

However, errors are frequent and may include improper use of the infinitive (אני רוצה *כותבת סיפורים) "I want to *write stories") and lack of agreement in number (חברים *טוב, "good [sg.] *friends [pl.]") or gender (אמא *אומר, "Mother [f.] *says [m.]"). Speakers may have difficulty in producing sounds not found in the first language. Communication even with sympathetic interlocutors may be difficult.

Intermediate

The Intermediate level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- create with the language by combining and recombining learned elements, though primarily in a reactive mode;
- initiate, minimally sustain, and close in a simple way basic communicative tasks; and
- ask and answer questions.

Intermediate-Low

Generic. Able to handle successfully a limited number of interactive, task-oriented and social situations. Can ask and answer questions, initiate and respond to simple statements and maintain face-to-face conversation, although in a highly restricted manner and with much linguistic inaccuracy. Within these limitations, can perform such tasks as introducing self, ordering a meal, asking directions, and making purchases. Vocabulary is adequate to express only the most elementary needs. Strong interference from native language may occur. Misunderstanding frequently arise, but with repetition, the Intermediate-Low speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

Hebrew. Able to engage in some simple conversations such as introductions, greetings, invitations, expressions of likes and dislikes, and obtaining information in order to fulfill immediate needs. Uses a limited number of simple sentences, mostly one or two at a time; most are still reactive and repeat part of the question. Limited but sustained creativity is reflected in the ability to ask and answer simple questions (איפה את עובדת? "Where do you work?"; כמה זה? "How much does it cost?") and combine known elements to say things with a measure of spontaneity. Able to survive uncomplicated

The Intermediate-Low speaker attempts to carry on conversations, mostly on topics such as everyday activities (אני עובד כי אני, "I like to read and write"; אני אוהבת לקרוא ולכתוב, "I work because I want money"), the family, friends and other narrowly defined familiar topics.

Errors resulting in miscommunication frequently occur, but with repetition the speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, who would understand responses like the following: *אני לא שמח, כי אני רוצה שהשם שלי *עברית היה* "I (f.) am not happy (m.), because I want my Hebrew name (to be) Chaya"; *היא *למדה עברית גם, *למד עם *אני *למדה עם *me.*"

Intermediate-Mid

Generic. Able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated, basic and communicative tasks and social situations. Can talk simply about self and family members. Can ask and answer questions and participate in simple conversations on topics beyond the most immediate needs: e.g., personal history and leisure-time activities. Utterance length increases slightly, but speech may continue to be characterized by frequent long pauses, since the smooth incorporation of even basic conversational strategies is often hindered as the speaker struggles to create appropriate language forms. Pronunciation may continue to be strongly influenced by first language and fluency may still be strained. Although misunderstandings still arise, the Intermediate-Mid speaker can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors.

Hebrew. Able to maintain a variety of uncomplicated face-to-face conversations in highly predictable surroundings. More interactive and creative than the previous level. Produces strings or lists of sentences in sequence, though still not in utterances of paragraph length. Emerging ability to use the past tense. Topics are similar to those of the Intermediate-Low level, but with increased quantity and quality of speech. Examples: **יש הרבה אנשים שאומרים שושינגטון** "There are many people who say that Washington is a very good place"; **האמא שלי היא גם לא אוהבת את הנעלים שלי** "My mother does not like my shoes either"; **היום יפה מאוד, קצת קר, אבל**

יפה "It's a nice day today, a bit cold, but nice." Able to handle a variety of survival situations.

Can get information by asking simple questions such as בן כמה הילד "Why did you come to America?"; למה את באה לאמריקה? "What are you doing here?"; מה את עושה כאן? "How old is your son?"; שלך? "Where do you work?"; מתי באה? "When did you come to the university?"; מאין אתה בא? "Where do you come from?"

Errors may include lack of agreement and failure to use the construct state (אני לא הושבת שאני *קרוב *למשפחה הדורים) "I don't think that I am *close to the uncles' *family"); inaccuracies in verbal forms (פרופסור *מאחר "I *bought" קנהתי*); incorrect word order (אוניברסיטה "professor from *another university"); and incorrect use of the definite article. In responses to questions, often uses question markers as conjunctions (אני לא לומד *מתי אני הולך לעבודה) "I don't study *when I go to work").

Such mistakes usually do not prevent the Intermediate-Mid speaker from being understood by a sympathetic interlocutor.

Intermediate-High

Generic. Able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Can initiate, sustain, and close a general conversation with a number of strategies appropriate to a range of circumstances and topics, but errors are evident. Limited vocabulary still necessitates hesitation and may bring about slightly unexpected circumlocution. There is emerging evidence of connected discourse, particularly for simple narration and/or description. The Intermediate-High speaker can generally be understood even by interlocutors not accustomed to dealing with speakers at this level, but repetition may still be required.

Hebrew. Able to handle successfully most uncomplicated communicative tasks and social situations. Emerging but not sustained ability to narrate and describe simple activities and situations in connected speech using a variety of the more frequent conjunctions, such as "because," מפני ש- "but," אבל "and," ו "or," או "before," לפני "when," כש- "This is a difficult subject, but there are things to be done.... " לעשות ... Accuracy of expression is increased through correct use of

the infinitive and of common verbs in the past tense. Emerging ability to express future time (בחופש אני מתכוון לנסוע הביתה "I'm planning to go home during vacation"), with some difficulty in the use of morphological future forms. Can occasionally express opinions in simple terms and handle situations with some complications. Is becoming less dependent on sympathetic interlocutors.

Advanced

The Advanced level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- converse in a clearly participatory fashion;
- initiate, sustain and bring to closure a wide variety of communicative tasks, including those that require an increased ability to convey meaning with diverse language strategies due to a complication or an unforeseen turn of events;
- satisfy the requirements of school and work situations;
- narrate and describe with paragraph-length connected discourse.

Advanced

Generic. Able to satisfy the requirements of everyday situations and routine school and work requirements. Can handle with confidence but not with facility complicated tasks and social situations, such as elaborating, complaining, and apologizing. Can narrate and describe with some details, linking sentences together smoothly. Can communicate facts and talk casually about topics of current public and personal interest, using general vocabulary. Shortcomings can often be smoothed over by communicative strategies, such as pause fillers, stalling devices, and different rates of speech. Circumlocution which arises from vocabulary or syntactic limitations very often is quite successful, though some groping for words may still be evident. The Advanced-level speaker can be understood without difficulty by native interlocutors.

Hebrew. Able to satisfy routine social demands and school or work requirements. Increasing control of subordinate clauses as well as common verb patterns, gender, number, subject/verb and noun/adjective agreement permits the Advanced speaker to narrate, describe and compare in complete though simple paragraphs (אחר כך).

"If you come"; אם תבואי "; "afterwards I need to buy ..."; אני צריך לקנות ... "When I visited Israel"; כשביקרתי בישראל "He thinks that"; הוא חושב ש- ("). Can state an opinion--not yet fully supported--on topics of general interest such as current issues and events, politics, sports, the weather, social issues. Can handle situations with a complication, such as being stranded at the airport, losing documents, being late to work, or returning a purchase for a refund. Is often able to resort to circumlocution and other communication strategies when specific vocabulary fails.

Good control of most common prepositions, including those governed by frequently used verbs, and of inflected prepositions, leads to greater clarity: "says to"; אומר ל-; "speaks with"; מדבר עם; "a teacher of Hebrew"; מורה לעברית; "to me," לי; "with me," אחי; "next to me." Errors may be caused by interference from native language, e.g. "help * [+ direct object]"; עוזר * את; "on Sunday"; * על יום ראשון; "I lived *on a kibbutz." גרתי * על קבוץ; "speak *to"; מדבר * ל-.

Other errors may include occasional realization in the wrong verb pattern such as "we *dressed [trans.]" for "we got dressed" and "the store *closes [trans.]" instead of "closes [intrans.]"; gender/number errors (*hard words); "This is the land" (*זה הארץ). But such errors rarely lead to misunderstandings in communication with native speakers.

Advanced-High

Generic. Able to satisfy the requirements of a broad variety of everyday, school, and work situations. Can discuss concrete topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. There is emerging evidence of ability to support opinions, explain in detail, and hypothesize. The Advanced-High speaker often shows a well developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms with confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing and circumlocution. Differentiated vocabulary and intonation are effectively used to communicate fine shades of meaning. The Advanced-High speaker often shows remarkable fluency and ease of speech but under the demands of Superior-level, complex tasks language may break down or prove inadequate.

Hebrew. Able to converse in a clearly participatory fashion and to satisfy the requirements of a variety of everyday, school, work or social situations. Increase in quality and quantity of Advanced tasks

or functions. Greater accuracy in use of prepositions, subordinate clauses, verb forms and gender agreement. Partial but inconsistent ability to hypothesize (using *אולי* "if" and the appropriate verb tenses), support opinions, handle abstractions in extended discourse, and otherwise perform at the Superior level. Some groping for words and other mistakes still occur, especially when discussing unfamiliar topics or attempting to use more specific or sophisticated vocabulary (e.g., "veterinarian," "district attorney," "decline in the ability"; ... *אדם שמעשן אומר שזה פוגע *בהופשיות שלו* "a man who smokes says that it impinges on his *freedom ..."). Patterned errors also appear, but they are more likely to be idiosyncratic to the particular speaker than characteristic of Advanced-High speaking in general.

Superior

The superior level is characterized by the speaker's ability to:

- participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics; and
- support opinions and hypothesize using native-like discourse strategies.

Generic. Able to speak the language with sufficient accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, professional, and abstract topics. Can discuss special fields of competence and interest with ease. Can support opinions and hypothesize, but may not be able to tailor language to audience or discuss in depth highly abstract or unfamiliar topics. Usually the Superior-level speaker is only partially familiar with regional or other dialectical variants. The Superior-level speaker commands a wide variety of interactive strategies and shows good awareness of discourse strategies. The latter involves the ability to distinguish main ideas from supporting information through syntactic, lexical and suprasegmental features (pitch, stress, intonation). Sporadic errors may occur, particularly in low-frequency structures and some complex high-frequency structures more common to formal writing, but no patterns of errors are evident. Errors do not disturb the native speaker or interfere with communication.

Hebrew. Able to speak the language with sufficient accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on

practical, social and professional matters. Can discuss a broad range of concrete as well as abstract topics, including unfamiliar ones, in extended and connected discourse. Can handle unfamiliar situations, support opinions, and hypothesize, using *if* and *אלמלא* and *אילו* and the appropriate verb forms. Functional mastery of the verb and noun patterns (*binyanim* and *miškalim*). Some ability to shift registers appropriately (יש לנו בבית הספר ילדים יוצאים מן הכלל, ממש יוצאי). "We have some [idiomatic equivalent of] really extraordinary kids in our school". Uses idiomatic expressions (הסתכלתי בו שעה) "I looked at him for a long while"; היא שימשה בתפקידים "She held important jobs ...".

No patterned errors and no groping for words. Unpatterned errors may still occur (e. g., **forms*; **as* "כמו שאין לו בית"; **to get* "Would you like to get together and talk?"). Such errors may clearly distinguish the Superior speaker as a non-native, but they do not interfere with communication or disturb the native speaker.

LISTENING

The Hebrew Listening Guidelines are based on data collected by the Hebrew Guidelines Committee through a listening comprehension test, Oral Proficiency Interviews and classroom observation. The test was recorded on audio tape and it included both unmodified recordings of news broadcasts and simulated authentic dialogues. Additional research will be necessary in order to develop the test fully and to collect data based on a wider variety of listening tasks.

These guidelines assume that all the listening segments are delivered at a normal pace of speech with natural intonation and stress patterns. The ability of listeners at the lower end of the scale can be enhanced or hampered by the existence of different listening conditions such as slowed or rapid speech, repetition, a familiar or unfamiliar accent, visual cues, background noise, the age of the speaker, etc.

Novice

The Novice level is characterized by an ability to recognize learned material and isolated words and phrases when strongly supported by context.

Novice-Low

Generic. Understanding is limited to occasional isolated words, such as cognates, borrowed words, and high-frequency social conventions. Essentially no ability to comprehend even short utterances.

Hebrew. No practical understanding of spoken Hebrew. Understanding is limited to occasional familiar words, e.g.: borrowed words (אניברסיטה "university," קפה "coffee," קפטרִיה "cafeteria," מוזאון "museum"); social conventions (שלום "hello/goodbye," כן "yes," לא "no," תודה "thank you"); terminology acquired through religious or cultural contexts (שנה טובה "Happy New Year," שופר "shofar"); and occasional other isolated words or phrases. Even these terms are usually recognized only when heard in isolation and very clearly enunciated in fully specified contexts.

Novice-Mid

Generic. Able to understand some short, learned utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends some words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae about topics that refer to basic personal information or the immediate physical setting. The listener requires long pauses for assimilation and periodically requests repetition and/or a slower rate of speech.

Hebrew. Able to understand some memorized words and phrases or simple questions (אתה רוצה סוכר? "Do you want sugar?"; קפה או תה? "Coffee or tea?") when strongly supported by context and clearly enunciated. Understanding is limited to familiar context areas such as the family (אבא "father," אמא "mother," משפחה "family," אח "brother," אחות "sister"), home, food, school, some numbers (1-10), common courtesy formulae (בוקר טוב "good morning," נשמע? "What's up?"), please/you're welcome, נעים מאד "pleased to

meet you"), and high-frequency commands (תן "take," שב "sit," הן "give," בא "come," לך "go"). Familiar context or vocabulary facilitates comprehension of a surrounding phrase; e.g., "Does X live in New York?" may be understood because of the familiar names and/or the intonation.

The Novice-Mid listener may require frequent repetition or rewording even of most simple questions (מאין אתה? "Where are you from?"; מי זה? "Who is it?"; איפה הבית שלך? "Where is your home?"). Misunderstandings arise even with most common questions, such as confusion of מה שמך? "What is your name?" and מה שלומך? "How are you?" Listener may require long pauses for assimilation.

Novice-High

Generic. Able to understand short, learned utterances and some sentence-length utterances, particularly where context strongly supports understanding and speech is clearly audible. Comprehends words and phrases from simple questions, statements, high-frequency commands and courtesy formulae. May require repetition, rephrasing and/or a slowed rate of speech for comprehension.

Hebrew. Able to understand short, memorized phrases and some sentence-length utterances (אני חולה היום "I'm sick today") in face-to-face conversations, particularly when strongly supported by pictures, gestures, or other context, and when speech is very clear. Comprehends some basic questions (מתי השעור לעברית? "When is Hebrew class?"; מה אתה עושה? "What are you doing?"), statements (יש לי שעור עברית בבקר "I have Hebrew class in the morning") and high-frequency commands (תן לי ספר "Give me a book") found in daily behavior involving family, school, leisure time activities and other familiar areas. May require repetition, rephrasing and/or slow, careful speech for comprehension. Minor modifications caused by word inflection are enough to render a familiar word unrecognizable (small [m./f.], "small [m./f.]," כחול/כחולה "blue [m./f.]," etc.).

Intermediate

The Intermediate level is characterized by an ability to understand main ideas and some facts from interactive exchanges and simple connected aural texts.

The Intermediate level is characterized by the listener's ability to:

- understand complete sentences;
- understand compound sentences in familiar contexts;
- catch the gist of longer utterances in familiar contexts which allow for a high probability of correct guessing from a minimum of word clues.

Comprehension is degraded when the listener is pressured by the need to provide a spoken response or by listening to speech which cannot be repeated or altered (e.g., radio, telephone answering machine).

Intermediate-Low

Generic. Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned elements in a limited number of content areas, particularly if strongly supported by the situational context. Content refers to basic personal background and needs, social conventions and routine tasks, such as getting meals and receiving simple instructions and directions. Listening tasks pertain primarily to spontaneous face-to-face conversations. Understanding is often uneven; repetition and rewording may be necessary. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.

Hebrew. Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned/acquired elements in a limited number of context areas: school, restaurant (מה אתה רוצה לאכול?) "What would you like to eat?" home (יש ספה על-יד השלחן) "There is a sofa next to the table", lodging (יש כאן בית מלון?) "Is there a hotel here?", transportation, simple directions, time (מה השעה?) "What time is it?" and weather (היום קר מאוד) "It's really cold today". Understands the gist of simple face-to-face conversations and instructions given by a sympathetic speaker. Some repetition and rewording is still usually necessary for comprehension. Misunderstandings in both main ideas and details arise frequently.

Intermediate-Mid

Generic. Able to understand sentence-length utterances which consist of recombinations of learned utterances on a variety of topics. Content continues to refer primarily to basic personal background and needs, social conversations and somewhat more complex tasks,

such as lodging, transportation, and shopping. Additional content areas include some personal interests and activities, and a greater diversity of instructions and directions. Listening tasks not only pertain to spontaneous face-to-face conversations but also to short routine telephone conversations and some deliberate speech, such as simple announcements and reports over the media. Understanding continues to be uneven.

Hebrew. Sufficient comprehension to understand simple face-to-face and some overheard conversations about topics beyond basic survival needs (e.g., personal history, sports, social life, hobbies). Evidence of ability to recognize basic constructions which allow for discrimination between male and female, singular and plural, present and sometimes future and past. The Intermediate-Mid listener often understands questions such as "Do you like hot weather?" (האם אתה אוהב מזג אוויר חם?); "What will you do when you finish college?" (מה תעשה כשתגמור ללמוד באוניברסיטה?) if the question is anticipated. Able to comprehend short routine phone conversations and some deliberate speech on simple tape-recordings. Can sometimes get main idea, but no details, from a conversation on unfamiliar topics.

Understanding continues to be uneven; repetition and rewording may still be necessary. May sometimes have difficulty even with simple questions "What did you do during vacation?" (מה עשית בחופש?); "What will you do this summer?" (מה תעשה בקיץ?) when they are not set in a suitable context.

Intermediate-High

Generic. Able to sustain understanding over longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics pertaining to different times and places; however, understanding is inconsistent to due failure to grasp main ideas and/or details. Thus, while topics do not differ significantly from those of an Advanced-level listener, comprehension is less in quantity and poorer in quality.

Hebrew. Comprehends longer stretches of connected discourse on a number of topics which are not limited to a single context of time or place, e.g., narrative about what happened on a camping trip or about someone's future plans. Increasing ability to use contextual, lexical, grammatical and other clues to grasp partially understood sentences (e.g., the listener figures out "urban, urbanite" from עיר "city"). Greater understanding of conceptual words in general (טחור).

"pure," דמויות "characters," אפי "character, nature"). Topics do not differ significantly from those of the Advanced listener, but understanding is inconsistent due to failure to grasp all details.

Advanced

The Advanced level is characterized by an ability to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of factual topics beyond the immediacy of the situation, including some topics where comprehension is complicated due to an unexpected sequence of events.

Generic. Able to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of topics beyond the immediacy of the situation. Comprehension may be uneven due to a variety of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, among which topic familiarity is very prominent. These texts frequently involve description and narration in different time frames or aspects, such as present, nonpast, habitual, or imperfective. Texts may include interviews, short lectures on familiar topics, and news items and reports dealing primarily with factual information. Listener is aware of cohesive devices but may not be able to use them to follow the sequence of thought in an oral text.

Hebrew. Able to understand main ideas and most details of connected discourse on a variety of topics beyond the most concrete, factual situations. Able to anticipate the flow of the utterance sufficiently to fill in the speaker's pauses correctly. Can understand most face-to-face speech of a native speaker when spoken at a normal rate of speed. Can get the gist of a factual radio report on a familiar subject and of a television report even on a less familiar topic.

Listener is aware of some, but not all, cohesive devices (e.g., אלמלא "if only ... not," למרות ש- "although," אף על פי ש- "despite the fact that," לעומת זאת "on the other hand," קרוב לוודאי ש- "it's almost certain that," בהשוואה ל- "compared to") but may not be able to use them to follow the sequence of thought. Mostly unable to follow animated speech of two or more speakers who speak "on top" of each other or through background noise. Will not recognize known words in rapid speech when elided with preceding or succeeding words (e.g., ה for ה "the," את-ה for ה [direct object marker]).

Advanced-High

Generic. Able to understand the main ideas of most speech in a standard dialect; however, the listener may not be able to sustain comprehension in extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex. Listener shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meanings beyond the surface meanings of the text but may fail to grasp socio-cultural nuances of the message.

Hebrew. Can comprehend the formal speech in use on Israeli radio, despite the lack of visual clues. In face-to-face conversations, able to understand a more elevated or idiomatic style, e.g.: *יש בכך אי-צדק* "this constitutes a glaring injustice"; *לנקוט באמצעים* "to take steps"; *יש תחושה שהמצב עגום* "There is a feeling that the situation is gloomy." Word order and other syntactic features of written Hebrew (e.g., nouns with possessive endings, infinitive plus direct object suffix) do not cause breakdown.

Listener shows an emerging awareness of culturally implied meaning beyond the surface meaning of the text but may fail to grasp socio-cultural nuances of the message (e.g., *להסיק מסקנות*, literally "to draw conclusions," which in an Israeli political context is understood to mean that the one drawing the conclusions should resign his post). Can distinguish expressions in other registers (slang, biblical or rabbinic Hebrew) but may not always be able to comprehend them (e.g., *לנהוג איפה ואיפה* "to discriminate between").

Superior

The Superior level is characterized by an ability to understand concrete and abstract topics in extended discourse offered by speakers using native-like discourse strategies.

Generic. Able to understand the main ideas of all speech in a standard dialect, including technical discussion in a field of specialization. Can follow the essentials of extended discourse which is propositionally and linguistically complex, as in academic/professional settings, in lectures, speeches, and reports. Listener shows some appreciation of aesthetic norms of target language, of idioms, colloquialisms, and register shifting. Able to make inferences within the cultural framework of the target language. Understanding is aided by an awareness of the underlying organization structure of the oral text and includes sensitivity for its

social and cultural references and its affective overtones. Rarely misunderstands but may not understand excessively rapid, highly colloquial speech or speech that has strong cultural references.

Hebrew. Sufficient comprehension to understand the essentials of all standard speech, including telephone calls, radio broadcasts, films and theater plays, editorials and reports, academic and professional discussions and lectures within own area of expertise, non-technical public policy statements, some literary readings, and some jokes, puns and idioms.

May still have difficulty with technical language (especially outside own field of specialization), very formal high register, biblical expressions, slang (e.g., may take *יצאתם מזה?* literally as "Did you get out of it?" rather than colloquially as "Had you gotten out of the habit?") or very rapid speech. Sporadic, non-predictable failure to understand vocabulary, especially out of context, can still be expected.

Distinguished

The Distinguished level is characterized by an ability to understand most linguistic styles and forms from within the cultural framework of the language.

Generic. Able to understand all forms and styles of speech pertinent to personal, social and professional needs tailored to different audiences. Shows strong sensitivity to social and cultural references and aesthetic norms by processing language from within the cultural framework. Texts include theater plays, screen productions, editorials, symposia, academic debates, public policy statements, literary readings, and most jokes and puns. May have difficulty with some dialects and slang.

Hebrew. Able to understand with ease most forms and styles of speech related to personal, social and professional needs. Can understand and often identify the accents of immigrants from various countries. Is sensitive to mimicking, shifts in register, literary/religious references and nuance in general in forms as varied as cafe conversation, political speeches, and comedy routines. Will experience difficulty mainly when faced with rapid or emotionally charged speech or speech containing a relatively large proportion of unfamiliar slang or other in-group terms.

WRITING

The writing guidelines and all the examples given are based on samples of students' writing collected at the participating institutions. A variety of in-class and out-of-class, timed and untimed assignments were included in the analysis. No dictionaries were used in in-class assignments, and the question of the progressive development of dictionary use in writing was not investigated.

Samples at each of the levels described are appended to the Guidelines. It remains for future data gathering and analysis to confirm that the samples used are indeed representative.

The following criteria (not necessarily in order of importance) were considered in formulating the level descriptions:

- functional tasks
- topic and treatment
- length of sentences and length of the sample
- relationship between the sentences
- frequency of vocabulary lapses
- naturalness of idiom, style and register
- grammatical control
- syntax
- spelling.

Novice

The Novice level is characterized by an ability to produce isolated words and phrases.

Novice-Low

Generic. Able to form some letters in alphabetic system. In languages whose writing systems use syllabaries or characters, writer is able to both copy and produce the basic strokes. Can produce romanization of isolated characters, where applicable.

Hebrew. Able to copy parts of printed text into script. In some cases, also able to write own name and a few isolated memorized words such as שלום "shalom" and ישראל "Israel," but not always accurately. Many errors exist in formation of letters, e.g., פ may be inverted; letters that resemble each other (such as ו, י, ה; ת, ח, ה) are frequently confused.

Novice-Mid

Generic. Able to copy or transcribe familiar words or phrases and reproduce some from memory. No practical communicative writing skills.

Hebrew. Able to copy most letters from print to script accurately and can write (sometimes inaccurately) a small number of familiar words such as בית "house," ארוחת בקר "breakfast," חדש "new." Can produce simple sentences which consist of learned words and phrases. No practical communicative writing skills. Has fairly complete control of sound-symbol correlation, but without distinguishing between homophones (ס/ש, ת/ט, ו/ב). Writes words known from speech mostly phonetically (e.g. מה *שמה "What's your name?" with ה instead of ך; זאת *זאת "this").

Novice-High

Generic. Able to write simple fixed expressions and limited memorized material and some recombinations thereof. Can supply information on simple forms and documents. Can write names, numbers, dates, own nationality, and other simple autobiographical information as well as some short phrases and simple lists. Can write all the symbols in an alphabetic or syllabic system or 50-100 characters or compounds in a character writing system. Spelling and representation of symbols (letters, syllables, characters) may be partially correct.

Hebrew. The ability to communicate in writing begins to appear at this level. Can create short lists of words related to self and immediate environment, e.g., basic biographical information, shopping lists, lists of courses, etc. Can recombine memorized materials into simple statements, short descriptive sentences or basic questions. However, word order is frequently incorrect (אחת *מורה "a teacher"), and pronouns are often omitted in the present tense (מה *כותבת "what are you writing?").

Occasionally still mixes written and printed letters, particularly where the differences are slight (e.g., נ and ו). Some letters may be formed incorrectly (e.g., מ, פ, ף, ץ) or confused with each other (ח, כ; ה, ת). Non-final forms of the letters כ, מ, נ, פ and צ are sometimes used at the end of a word. Spelling errors are frequent, especially in

the case of homophones (e.g., קטן "little" with כ instead of ק or ח instead of ט) and representations of vowels (e.g., איפו* instead of איפה "where?").

Intermediate

The Intermediate level is characterized by an ability to meet practical writing needs by communicating simple facts and ideas in a loose collection of sentences.

Intermediate-Low

Generic. Able to meet limited practical writing needs. Can write short messages, postcards, and take down simple notes, such as telephone messages. Can create statements or questions within the scope of limited language experience. Material produced consists of recombinations of learned vocabulary and structures into simple sentences on very familiar topics. Language is inadequate to express in writing anything but elementary needs. Frequent errors in grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and in formation of nonalphabetic symbols, but writing can be understood by natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Hebrew. Able to meet limited practical writing needs. Some ability to recombine learned material creatively into short sentences on familiar topics. Some ability to create simple questions as well. Topics are specific and closely tied to limited language experience, e.g., daily life, things I like to do, objects in the immediate environment and their description by means of basic adjectives: nice, good, big, new. Verbs are usually in the present and occasionally the past, but not always used accurately.

Frequent errors in grammar, especially lack of gender/number agreement (מסעדה*טוב "a good restaurant"; אנשים*טוב "good people"), are characteristic of this level. There is regular use of English (in English or Hebrew characters) where vocabulary is lacking.

Intermediate-Mid

Generic. Able to meet a number of practical writing needs. Can write short, simple letters. Content involves personal preferences, daily routine, everyday events, and other topics grounded in

personal experience. Can express present time or at least one other time frame or aspect consistently, e.g., nonpast, habitual, imperfective. Evidence of control of the syntax of noncomplex sentences and basic inflectional morphology, such as declensions and verb patterns. Writing tends to be a loose collection of sentences or sentence fragments on a given topic and provides little evidence of conscious organization. Can be understood by natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Hebrew. Able to meet an increasing number of practical writing needs. Most writing tends to be a collection of sentences without complex subordinate clauses. The writer primarily uses the present tense and occasionally the past. The future is mostly expressed by use of adverbs (e.g., בשנה הבאה "next year"; מחר "tomorrow") with present tense verbs. There is emerging accuracy in spelling. In general, the writing reflects the writer's speaking ability and the subjects s/he is familiar with. Tasks may include notes, short letters and descriptions of personal activities and surroundings. Typical topics would be school, work, friends, the family, etc. Able to express feelings and desires, report on current activities, and ask for information in a very basic fashion. Writing at this level can be comprehended by a sympathetic reader who is used to the writing of non-natives. There is emerging use of circumlocution to overcome limitations in vocabulary (e.g., אני רוצה לכתוב לך תודה רבה "I want to write you 'many thanks' " instead of אני רוצה להודות לך "I want to thank you").

Word order is often incorrect; it is usually derived from the native language, e.g., *ארוך זמן "a long time"; *פסיכולוגיה חוג "Psychology Department." There are continued mistakes in gender and number agreement and in the use of the definite article (הכיתה). The writer may still sometimes resort to an English word, spelled in Hebrew characters, when Hebrew vocabulary fails: *פרנס for "France," *אקונומיקה for "economics." Under the influence of the native language, connectives may be kept separate from the words to which they should be attached (*ו הלכתי "and I went"; *כש באה "when she came").

Intermediate-High

Generic. Able to meet most practical writing needs and limited social demands. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics and respond in writing to personal questions. Can write simple letters, brief synopses and paraphrases, summaries of biographical data, work and school experience. In those languages relying primarily on content words and time expressions to express time, tense, or aspect, some precision is displayed; where tense and/or aspect is expressed through verbal inflection, forms are produced rather consistently, but not always accurately. An ability to describe and narrate in paragraphs is emerging. Rarely uses basic cohesive elements, such as pronominal substitutions or synonyms in written discourse. Writing, though faulty, is generally comprehensible to natives used to the writing of nonnatives.

Hebrew. Able to meet most practical and some social writing needs on topics related to the writer's immediate environment, such as biographical details, school and work. Some of the characteristics of the Intermediate-Mid level are still found at this level; however, both in the nature of functions and in the quality and quantity of the writer's output many of the characteristics of the Advanced level are already displayed. The Intermediate-High writer is able to take brief notes on familiar topics and to respond in writing to personal questions. Emerging ability to describe with some precision and to narrate in paragraphs. The writer demonstrates full control of simple sentences and uses more complex sentences linked by conjunctions, though the correct conjunction is not always chosen. Signs of better organizational ability begin to appear, but most writing still reflects the writer's speech.

Advanced

The Advanced level is characterized by an ability to write narratives and descriptions of a factual nature of at least several paragraphs in length on familiar topics.

Advanced

Generic. Able to write routine social correspondence and join sentences in simple discourse of at least several paragraphs in length on familiar topics. Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, write cohesive summaries and resumes, as well as narratives

and descriptions of a factual nature. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express self simply with some circumlocation. May still make errors in punctuation, spelling, or the formation of nonalphabetic symbols. Good control of the morphology and the most frequently used syntactic structures, e.g., common word order patterns, coordination, subordination, but makes frequent errors in producing complex sentences. Uses a limited number of cohesive devices, such as pronouns, accurately. Writing may resemble literal translations from the native language, but a sense of organization (rhetorical structure) is emerging. Writing is understandable to natives not used to the writing of nonnatives.

Hebrew. Able to write texts of several paragraphs in length, narrating, describing, and providing information on familiar, factual topics such as current events, social life, work and use of leisure time. Contexts include longer letters and short essays on personal experiences or personal reactions to events. The writer can perform more complex writing tasks such as expressing emotions and opinions (not yet fully supported), making comparisons, taking notes, writing summaries and the like. Organizational ability is evident, and vocabulary is sufficient for the writer to express self adequately with some circumlocation. There is good control of verb morphology in all tenses for common verbs, and the infinitive is correctly used. The writer also uses coordinate sentences with "and," או "or," and אבל "but." Use of subordination, though sometimes flawed, is also common. Future forms of the verb are used, but not always accurately, particularly in irregular verbs (e.g., אנסע *I will go"). Emerging ability to use אם and אלו ("if") + verbs to hypothesize.

The correct verbal root is sometimes used in the wrong verb pattern (רשמתי לקורסים * "I registered [trans.] for classes" instead of נרשמתי "I registered [intrans.]") or even in a pattern where that root is not found at all (נקיתי instead of נקיתי "I cleaned"). The Advanced writer still often misuses or omits some prepositions, the relative particle ש-, and conjunctions (especially כדי ש- "in order to"): אני הושב *אתה צודק "helped him"; אני חושב *אתה צודק "I think you are right." She/he sometimes fails to use subordinate clause when required after verbs such as רוצה "want" and מקווה "hope" (אני רוצה שאתה "I want you to go"). Circumlocation often results in a lack of precision (e.g., אלכוהול יכול לעשות הרבה דברים רעים לחיים "Alcohol

can do many bad things to life" instead of אלכוהול יכול להזיק "alcohol can damage").

A native reader has no difficulty understanding writing at this level.

Advanced-High

Generic. Able to write about a variety of topics with significant precision and in detail. Can write most social and informal business correspondence. Can describe and narrate personal experiences fully but has difficulty supporting points of view in written discourse. Can write about the concrete aspects of topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. Often shows remarkable fluency and ease of expression, but under time constraints and pressure writing may be inaccurate. Generally strong in either grammar or vocabulary, but not in both. Weakness and unevenness in one of the foregoing or in spelling or character writing formation may result in occasional miscommunication. Some misuse of vocabulary may still be evident. Style may still be obviously foreign.

Hebrew. Able to write about a variety of topics with precision and in detail. Can write most social and informal business correspondence, using conventional greetings, openings and closings. Can describe and narrate personal experiences well, but has difficulty supporting points of view in written discourse. Can write about the concrete aspects of topics relating to particular interests and special fields of competence. The writer has good control of a full range of grammatical structures and a fairly wide general vocabulary but cannot yet use them comfortably and naturally all of the time. Some misuse of vocabulary may still be evident, but even these errors are all made at a fairly sophisticated level of vocabulary and structure. Writing may still be influenced by the writer's native language. Does not yet have any clear style or ability to vary style according to different tasks and readers, but writing demonstrates a good sense of organization. Both in quality and quantity the writer at this level performs at the Superior level over half of the time.

Superior

The Superior level is characterized by an ability to write formally and informally on practical, social and professional topics.

Generic. Able to express self effectively in most formal and informal writing on practical, social and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos as well as social and business letters, and short research papers and statements of position in areas of special interest or in special fields. Good control of a full range of structures, spelling or nonalphabetic symbol production, and a wide general vocabulary allow the writer to hypothesize and present arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. An underlying organization, such as chronological ordering, logical ordering, cause and effect, comparison, and thematic development is strongly evident, although not thoroughly executed and/or not totally reflecting target language patterns. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely to a variety of purposes and/or readers. Errors in writing rarely disturb natives or cause miscommunication.

Hebrew. Able to express self effectively in most formal and informal writing on practical, social and professional topics. Can write most types of correspondence, such as memos, social and business letters, and short research papers in areas of special interest or in special fields. Good control of a full range of structures, spelling, and a wide general vocabulary allow the writer to present and support arguments or points of view accurately and effectively. An underlying organization, such as chronological ordering, logical ordering, cause and effect, comparison, and thematic development is strongly evident, although not thoroughly executed and/or not totally reflecting target language patterns. Although sensitive to differences in formal and informal style, still may not tailor writing precisely to a variety of purposes and/or readers. The length of writing at this level extends from a number or paragraphs up to a number of pages.

At this level the writer often employs the vocabulary of written Hebrew (הרי "is not," איננה "so," כה), some features of classical Hebrew (היינו "is") and Aramaicisms (זהו "that is") and shows general familiarity with the style and content of Hebrew writing as distinct from speech. The following features found in the writing of the educated native speaker can be expected to appear at this level: more extensive use of possessive suffixes and of the double genitive: נגעתי בידה "I touched her hand" instead of נגעתי לה "I touched her on the hand"; להחזיר אותו נא להחזירו instead of "please return it"; המיתרים של הגיטרה instead of מיתריה של הגיטרה "the strings of the guitar"; use of the "in which" construction: הבית

phrases: "the house in which I grew up"; use of adjectival construct phrases: "a short man"; use of "resumptive pronouns": "the subject I will discuss."

There is no evidence of patterned errors at this level. Mistakes may technically be the same as those at lower levels, but they occur only sporadically and at much higher levels of morphology, syntax and vocabulary. Some examples: slight mistakes in vocabulary: "unemotional" instead of "unemotional"; incorrect rendition of foreign names: "Plato" instead of "פלטון"; incorrect verb patterns: "A minority may not actualize its dream ..." instead of "להגשים"; occasional unpatterned spelling mistakes. Such errors rarely disturb natives or cause miscommunication.

READING

The Reading Guidelines are based on the analysis of data gathered by means of an experimental reading test developed specifically for this purpose. All texts included in the exam were authentic. Among them were personal notes, newspaper advertisements, items on current events and other articles from Hebrew newspapers, including *Ša'ar Lamathil* (a newspaper for immigrants to Israel), and unedited passages from non-fiction books.

Some of the questions which were not investigated and will require further research are: the reader's ability to read and understand texts including plene versus defective spelling, abbreviations and acronyms, sarcasm, irony and humor. The influence of the use of a dictionary on the reader's proficiency at all levels also needs to be further examined. The use of vowels or lack thereof was investigated, but the results were inconclusive.

Novice

The Novice level is characterized by an ability to

- identify isolated words and phrases when strongly supported by context; and
- identify learned material.

Novice-Low

Generic. Able occasionally to identify isolated words and/or major phrases when strongly supported by context.

Hebrew. No functional ability to read Hebrew, but able to recognize some isolated letters and occasional learned words such as names, greetings and other words that may have been frequently seen in Hebrew writing (e.g., חי, שלום).

Novice-Mid

Generic. Able to recognize the symbols of an alphabetic and/or syllabic writing system and/or a limited number of characters in a system that uses characters. The reader can identify an increasing number of highly contextualized words and/or phrases including cognates and borrowed words, where appropriate. Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase at a time, and rereading may be required.

Hebrew. Recognizes most consonants and understands that consonants in unpointed texts often stand for consonant + vowel. Able to recognize an increasing number of highly contextualized words and phrases, obvious loan words (סופרמרקט "supermarket," הונגריה "Hungary"), learned words and words known from cultural or religious background (פסח "Passover," שנה טובה "Happy New Year").

Novice-High

Generic. Has sufficient control of the writing system to interpret written language in areas of practical need. Where vocabulary has been learned, can read for instructional and directional purposes standardized messages, phrases or expressions, such as some items on menus, schedules, timetables, maps and signs. At times, but not on a consistent basis, the Novice-High level reader may be able to derive meaning from material at a slightly higher level where context and/or extralinguistic background knowledge are supportive.

Hebrew. Has complete knowledge of the Hebrew alphabetic system, but may still have difficulty distinguishing letters that resemble each other, such as ך and ך, ף and ף. With help from context, can identify

the topic and some items from simple lists (TV programs, days of the week, names of months and of foreign languages), as well as some basic words for foods, articles of furniture, place names, etc. But sometimes misinterprets even simple lists (e.g., a TV schedule may be misinterpreted as a bus schedule, trip itinerary, list of items in a TV store, etc.). Can recognize basic grammatical structures when vocabulary is known or supplied (e.g., understands זה הסיגנון שלי "this is my style" when סיגנון "style" is supplied) and even extract meaning from a string of simple, connected sentences when context or background knowledge are supportive.

Intermediate

The Intermediate level is characterized by an ability to understand main ideas and some facts from simple connected texts.

Intermediate-Low

Generic. Able to understand main ideas and/or some facts from the simplest connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs. Such texts are linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure, for example chronological sequencing. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make only minimal suppositions or to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples include messages with social purposes or information for the widest possible audience, such as public announcements and short, straightforward instructions dealing with public life. Some misunderstandings will occur.

Hebrew. Able to understand the main ideas and/or some details from simple connected texts on familiar topics. In letters, notes, dialogues and simple narratives, can identify the main topic, the main characters, and some of the details, mainly when verbs related to common daily functions are used (נסע "sit," ישב "write," כתב "travel," אכל "eat"). Fully understands simple sentences (4 מיליון "4,537,000 people live today in Israel"). Successfully identifies and understands basic structures and vocabulary in longer passages to get the gist of the text by ignoring unfamiliar material. While contextual clues are sometimes used successfully, overreliance on such clues may at other times mislead the reader.

Intermediate-Mid

Generic. Able to read consistently with increased understanding simple connected texts dealing with a variety of basic and social needs. Such texts are still linguistically noncomplex and have a clear underlying internal structure. They impart basic information about which the reader has to make minimal suppositions and to which the reader brings personal interest and/or knowledge. Examples may include short, straightforward descriptions of persons, places, and things written for a wide audience.

Hebrew. Good understanding of main idea and some details of simple advertisements and of short, factual, narrative texts (pointed, partially pointed, and unpointed) in familiar areas. Increasing comfort with Hebrew structure permits the reader to get meaning from unfamiliar expressions such as "every day," "more than," "favorite." The reader has a wider vocabulary ("key"; "U.S."; "Jews and Muslims") and greater ability to infer meaning from unknown vocabulary by relying on context (an Intermediate-Mid reader who does not know the word "jewelry" may understand from the phrase "money and jewelry" that refers to some kind of valuables). Can interpret present, past and sometimes future tense of most regular and some common irregular verbs ("we moved into our apartment"; "we invite"; "I will not return till evening"). Strong tendency to confuse cues with graphically similar but more familiar ones (reading "uncle" for "uncle").

Intermediate-High

Generic. Able to read consistently with full understanding simple connected texts dealing with basic personal and social needs about which the reader has personal interest and/or knowledge. Can get some main ideas and information from texts at the next higher level featuring description and narration. Structural complexity may interfere with comprehension; for example, basic grammatical relations may be misinterpreted and temporal references may rely primarily on lexical items. Has some difficulty with the cohesive factors in discourse, such as matching pronouns with referents. While texts do not differ significantly from those at the Advanced

level, comprehension is less consistent. May have to read material several times for understanding.

Hebrew. Usually able to identify Who, What, When and Where in short connected texts on basic subjects. Can often get the gist of even longer paragraphs when expectations cued by the text are fulfilled. Consistently comprehends most details of simple informative texts such as non-technical advertisements, personal notes and messages. The Intermediate-High reader can identify most past, present, and future tense forms of frequent verbs in all verb patterns, and so can grasp the chronological sequence of events. Emerging but inconsistent ability to understand Advanced-level texts featuring description and narration.

Advanced

The Advanced level is characterized by

- an ability to read with consistent understanding prose several paragraphs in length, dealing primarily with factual information and intended for the general reader; and
- in areas of special interest or knowledge, an increasing ability to understand parts of texts which are propositionally and linguistically more complex.

Advanced

Generic. Able to read somewhat longer prose of several paragraphs in length, particularly if presented with a clear underlying structure. The prose is predominantly in familiar sentence patterns. Reader gets the main ideas and facts and misses some details. Comprehension derives not only from situational and subject matter knowledge but from increasing control of the language. Texts at this level include descriptions and narrations such as simple short stories, news items, biographical information, social notices, personal correspondence, routinized business letters and simple technical material written for the general reader.

Hebrew. Can understand multi-paragraph materials which include descriptions and narrations, such as news items, short stories, biographical information, short feature articles and the like, when logical development (story line, chronological sequence, or other rhetorical structure) is straightforward and the subject matter is familiar. Able to combine information extracted from various parts

of the text and make inferences and comparisons, but may miss some details. Sometimes misinterprets colloquialisms that sound comprehensible (e.g., חזר הביתה בעשר אחת-עשרה "returns home around ten or eleven" may be interpreted as 10:11) and misreads cultural cues due to own background (e.g., an Advanced-level reader who sees בית-ספר חילוני "secular school" may understand it as "public school" because religious schools in America are all private).

Can fully comprehend the most important details of a wide range of advertisements (e.g., for a student organization, a language school, a hotel). Understands connective devices such as ולכן "therefore," אך "but," אך "although," עקב כך "as a result," "and thus misinterpret. Has a broader range of vocabulary (e.g., הסתגלות "adjustment"; מחקר "research"; נורמה "causes") and can comprehend texts containing nouns with possessive suffixes (תלמידיו "his students"; יכולתו "his ability") and other characteristics of a more formal style.

Advanced-High

Generic. Able to follow essential points of written discourse at the Superior level in areas of special interest or knowledge. Able to understand parts of texts which are conceptually abstract and linguistically complex, and/or texts which treat unfamiliar topics and situations, as well as some texts which involve aspects of target-language culture. Able to comprehend the facts to make appropriate inferences. A partial awareness of the aesthetic properties of language and of its literary styles permits comprehension of a wider variety of texts, including literary. Misunderstandings may occur.

Hebrew. Can understand multi-paragraph texts within an increasing range of factual and familiar topics and, with uneven comprehension, abstract, hypothetical or other Superior-level texts as well. Understands most of the finer points of texts containing a wide variety of grammatical structures, e.g., has increased awareness of semantic relationships between forms of the same root realized in different verb patterns, and has fully mastered subordinate clauses at all different levels of complexity. Shows emerging but

inconsistent ability to understand different registers in written materials.

Superior

The Superior level is characterized by an ability to read, for information or for pleasure with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed, a wide variety of texts on a wide variety of topics.

Generic. Able to read with almost complete comprehension and at normal speed expository prose on unfamiliar subjects and a variety of literary texts. Reading ability is not dependent on subject matter knowledge, although the reader is not expected to comprehend thoroughly texts which are highly dependent on knowledge of the target culture. Reads easily for pleasure. Superior-level texts feature hypotheses, argumentation and supported opinions and include grammatical patterns and vocabulary ordinarily encountered in academic/professional reading. At this level, due to the control of general vocabulary and structure, the reader is almost always able to match the meanings derived from extralinguistic knowledge with meanings derived from knowledge of the language, allowing for smooth and efficient reading of diverse texts. Occasional misunderstandings may still occur; for example, the reader may experience some difficulty with unusually complex structures and low-frequency idioms. At the Superior level the reader can match strategies, top-down or bottom-up, which are most appropriate to the text. (Top-down strategies rely on real-world knowledge and prediction based on genre and organizational scheme of the text. Bottom-up strategies rely on actual linguistic knowledge.) Material at this level will include a variety of literary texts, editorials, correspondence, general reports and technical material in professional fields. Rereading is rarely necessary, and misreading is rare.

Hebrew. Can read with close to full comprehension a wide array of texts, including a large selection of articles in Hebrew newspapers, which deal with abstract and unfamiliar topics. These texts may include hypothetical concepts and utilize argumentation and supported opinion. Able to understand selected unabridged and unadapted literary pieces with the help of a dictionary. Comfortable with a wider range of culture-specific material. Can read material which includes more sophisticated vocabulary, idioms, and metaphoric language (קביעות "tenure"; עזרת ישראל understood as

"betrayal/destroyer of Israel"; הקבוץ כמוהו כטיפת מים המשקפת "The kibbutz is like a drop of water that reflects in its structure everything that is found in the ocean").

Unfamiliarity with infrequent vocabulary, misreading due to lack of vowels, confusion about semantic indicators, and lack of familiarity with some culture-specific material may still cause occasional unpatterned misunderstandings.

Distinguished

The Distinguished level is characterized by the ability to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language within comprehension that is achieved from within the cultural framework of the language and that includes appreciation of nuance and subtlety.

Generic. Able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references by processing language from within the cultural framework. Able to understand a writer's use of nuance and subtlety. Can readily follow unpredictable turns of thought and author intent in such materials as sophisticated editorials, specialized journal articles, and literary texts such as novels, plays, poems, as well as in any subject matter area directed to the general reader.

Hebrew. Able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Understands most allusions in modern Hebrew literature from earlier sources. Sensitive to subtle nuances, and possesses sufficient knowledge of Israeli culture to follow virtually any colloquial or idiomatic usage intended for the general reader (e.g., ראש מועצה "council head" as roughly equivalent to small town mayor; ערבי כיתה "parties" rather than the apparent literal meaning of "night school"; מידת הדין and מידת ההסדר, terms from rabbinic literature referring to leniency or strictness).

"betrayal/betrayal of Israel"; however, the text also says that the Kibbutz is not a drop of water that reflects in its structure everything that is found in the ocean. Unfamiliarity with infrequent vocabulary, misunderstanding due to lack of vowel, confusion about semantic indicators, and lack of familiarity with some culture-specific material may still cause occasional unpatterned misunderstandings.

Distinguished

The Distinguished level is characterized by the ability to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language within comprehension that is a high level of appreciation of nuance and subtlety.

APPENDIX

WRITING SAMPLES

Generic. Able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Able to relate inferences in the text to real-world knowledge and understand almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references by processing language from within the cultural framework. Able to understand a writer's use of nuance and subtlety. Can readily follow unpredictable turns of thought and author intent in such materials as sophisticated editorials, specialized journal articles, and literary texts such as novels, plays, poems, as well as in any subject matter area directed to the general reader.

Hebrew. Able to read fluently and accurately most styles and forms of the language pertinent to academic and professional needs. Understands most allusions in modern Hebrew literature from earlier sources. Sensitive to subtle nuances, and possesses sufficient knowledge of Israeli culture to follow virtually any colloquial or idiomatic usage intended for the general reader (e.g., *ne'ar* and *ne'ara* "council head" as roughly equivalent to small town mayor; *not* "not" "parties" rather than the apparent literal meaning of "night school"; *ne'ar* and *ne'ara* terms from rabbinic literature referring to femininity or strictness).

Copy from print to script:

כשחזרתי הביתה ראיתי כל הדלת פתק קטן מיוסף. הוא כתב שיש לי מכתב רשום בדואר. נסכתי מיד לדואר ומצאתי שם איגרת מחוץ לארץ.

(א) לשחצתי הביתה ראיתי אל הדלת
פתק קטן מיוסף

(ב) הוא כתב שיש לי מכתב רשום בדואר.

(ג) נסאותי מ'ז' לדואר ומלאתי-
איגרת מחו-עאר-

Novice-Mid

Use each of the following words in a Hebrew sentence: "new," "dining room," etc.]

(א) אני have ארוחת-אורג + היראור

(ב) אני ועד מארש אתי מנו יורק.

Tell about your roommate.

(Dua) $\frac{2}{T} \cdot \frac{2}{T} \cdot \frac{2}{T} \cdot \frac{2}{T}$ (2)

• १८७२.१०० १८७२

(New York) . ע'ז' ל'N ל'ע'

(Brandeis). $\text{O}^{\flat} \underset{\cdot}{\text{J}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{Z}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{Z}} \underset{\cdot}{\text{Z}} \quad \text{H} \text{ H } \underline{\text{C}} \quad | \text{C}^{\flat}$

Write a note to your roommate, including questions.

2. 0.03100 0/c 2 0 0/c 1/c N 1 N 5 e 0

$\frac{1}{C} \cdot \frac{dQ}{dt} = \frac{1}{C} \cdot C \cdot \frac{dV}{dt}$

203 Nif

IN SE
71137

Complete:

In my refrigerator I have ...

0'C3
7172
0'680
7978

In my house there are _

(c) שמים
 נברא
 מים
 וברא

Write a note to your friend.

שלום ר' נח

שלום ר' נח. אני סטודנט
ההרצאות שלי. שומרת עמית
והסציה איפה אתה לראות?
מה אתה שומרת?

יוסף

Reply.

שלום יוסף -
כן כן/אני סטודנטית. אני
בן קקדנטיס ואתה? כן/אני?
אני מניו יורק. אני שומרת
עברית וקמס תר'!

נח

This year I want to ...

בשנה אני רוצה לעמוד
טוב בכתוב שלי. אני רוצה
להיות רכה ולא שמן. ~~אני~~ ^{אני} ~~אני~~
שמן ואני לא רוצה להיות כמו זה
עוד פעם!! בקשה אם אני רוצה
להיות חזקה טוב מאד לשמוע
כשנר אני צרכה מחברים שלי.

A postcard from abroad

שלום מימי
אני גפריס אכיל. אני עומד
באוניברסיטה. אני יכול קורא
צרפתית וכותב. מאין את? גפריס?
את סטודנטית או מורה? אני עובד
חזק.

שלום
יונתן

Self-description

אני אורלי אני סטודנטית בגנרליס אני ערה במחנה
 אני אומרת אבדים, ופסיכיאטריה הדגה כדאי
 אי אסאד, כי אני אדונה ~~אדונה~~ אדונה טובה
 איין אי חושב מה אעשות! אני חושבת אני
 דונה אעשות כאיניכא פסיכיאטריה
 אני אומרת בגנרליס ~~אני~~ אני חושבת נחמדים חרדים!
 אני חושב מלך אדונה ~~אני~~ אי משפחה גדולה
 אומרת גלים בניו הנפסיד ~~אני~~ ניו הנפסיד
 קרה אומרת גלגל שיה אדונה! אומרת גלגל
 אנדריס אדונה-יש ניו הנפסיד יפה עכשיו

A letter from Israel

שלום! מה נשמע? עכשיו את השיר עברת. אלסכן נחזור
 והשיר הזה הוא הנצח הסמוסטר. אני יודעת שלחזרת
 הרבה חילים באלסכן, אבל זה קשה לדעת כמה. לא
 יאמרת בני יום הששים חיים. אני והקוור שמסומסטר הזה
 שאני מומצת הרבה עברת. אני אוקרת לך עכשיו
 בחזרה העברת. אולי לך, כפי שאת חתם עם ישראלים
 הם לא רוצים לדבר העברת. אני חושבת שאין להם
 סבלנות, רק חפץ שאני לא העברת ואני צריכה
 לחשוב לפני את העברת. זה לא חשוב
 אני אוקרת את ישראלים. ישראלים, אני תמיד עם
 הבעיות האלה. אני לא יכולה לסבאמין שישאלם still
 exists. זה בחיבוקם (miracle) גדול! אף פעם חשבת
 שאולי אזור הארץ, אבל עכשיו אני לא חושבת זה
 אני לא יכולה לזכור אם עברת לך, אז אספר עכשיו.
 אני חושבת שאני רוצה להיות ... רב! וסבאמין, Yes
 איך אומרים ~~רב~~ רב. רב. אני יודעת שאת צריך לאמר
 רב. רב. כי את לא יפסית העברה

שלום. היום 26.3.90. אני וחזרת
 את זה חזרת. אני את הקלחת וחזרת חזרת?
 חשבת לכתוב לך, אבל עכשיו אני לא יודעת. אני
 מוצאת שאת שחזרת את החזרת. זה. אני לא זוכרת
 חזרת. אני והקוור שבתים שאת טוב
 לכתוב את

Response to a letter to the editor

... אֶרֶץ נִכְדָּהָה,
 קִרְאֹתֶי אֶת הַמֶּלֶךְ שֶׁלֹּא
 שָׁבוּ זְרוֹתָיו לֹא אֵין חֹשֶׁבֶת שֶׁל
 חֹשֶׁבֶת לְחֹמֶר שְׂפֹת זְרוֹת וְחֹשֶׁבֶת
 כְּהַמְאִיר שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה לוֹב מֵאֵל
 אֵין יֵאָדָּם מִכִּימָה לֹא זָר
 אֶתֶּם אֵין יֵאָדָּם חֹשֶׁבֶת שְׂאֵשׁ אֵין
 תְּהִמָּצִים מְדַבְּרִים אֲנֵלִיּוֹת יֵאָדָּם
 חֹשֶׁבֶת שֶׁלֹּא יִכְלִים לְעֹשֶׂת לֹא
 דֶּק ^{מִכְנֵס} שֶׁלֹּא מְדַבְּרִים שְׂפֹת זְרוֹת
 כִּי־וָא יִכְלִים לְגִסֵּץ לְשֹׁרֶם
 זָרָה כְּמוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְפֹשְׁעִים אֲנֵשׁ
 מְדַבְּרִים אֲנֵלִיּוֹת כִּמָּה סְטִיזָלִים
 זְרוֹכִים לְחֹמֶר אֲנֵלִיּוֹת הַיִּשְׂרָאֵלִי אֵלֶּה
 הָאֲרֻזֹּת הַזֵּהֶם דֶּק אֲחִיז קֵטֵן מִיָּנִים
 אֵין לְחֹמֶר עִיבֻרִית אֵל לֹא מְדַבְּרָה
 לְחֹמֶר עִיבֻרִית זֶה יִלְהֶב קֵץ לְחֹמֶר
 אֲנֵלִיּוֹת כִּי הַדְּבָרָה אֲרֻזֹּת הַתְּחִמָּצִים
 לְחֹמֶרִים אֲנֵלִיּוֹת -
 הַנְּקִוּוֹה שֶׁלֹּא לְחֹמֶרִים פְּרֻזִּים
 מִשְׁפֹּת זְרוֹת חֹשֶׁבֶת מֵאֵד וְאֵין
 מִכִּימָה
 הַכְּדוּר

I got back to school yesterday and -

אני שמח לחזור

ואניברסיטה אהל זה זמן רב

שזה רק ביתי בישראל. למדתי באוניברסיטה

פזמנים הידועים ואתרם ישאלו. הם

למדתי על מרחבם ישראלים ואתרם זה רק

שזהו, הם"ם שלי עליהם. אני באמריקה

ואתרם הם אמריקנים לצרכים ולפיתוח אמריקה.

אמריקנים חושבים על כסף וזהרים שם

יכולים לקנות שם כסף. ישראלים הם לא

כאשר הם הלכו, הם חושבים על כסף אהל

במחצית כסף כדי לא לא לברוא

יותר טוב וזה טוב מאוד אנשים. אני מציאות

שני כותבת זה רק זה רק קשה לפיו

באופן ממשתי וישראל

Response to a letter to the editor

ג'קרת נכדקה
 קראתי את המאמר שלך על
 שפות זרות. אני חושבת שזה
 חשוב למידע שפית זרה וחסבת
 שהמאמר שלך היה טוב מאוד.
 אני לא מסכימה על דבר
 אחד. אני לא חושבת שאנשים או
 תלמידים מדברים אנגלית לא
 חושבים שהם לא יכולים לעשות רצ
 רק ^{מכאן} שהם לא מדברים שפות זרות.
 כיום, יכולים לנסוע לארץ
 זרה כמו ישראל ופושטים אנשים
 מדברים אנגלית. כמה סטודנטים
 זריכים ולמד אנגלית. ה'נרשם' אהל
 הארצות הזרות. רק אחוז קטן מה'נים
 או לומדים עברית. אל לא מנכר
 להגין עברית. כל ילד קל ללמד
 אנגלית כי הרבה ארצות התלמידים
 לומדים אנגלית.
 הנקודה שלך על לומדים פרדות
 משפות זרות חשובה מאוד ואני
 מסכימה.
 תודה

אתחיל חכתי לקמחוס ...

אתחיל חכתי לקמחוס וכאיתי מכתב

מיוסד בתיבת-דואר שלי. בדקתי

את המעלפה, וכאיתי שכתוב בו *בואר

אוויר. בכלל לא ידעתי מי שלח את המכתב.

אז פתחתי אותו, ובמה תמונות נפלו מן

המעלפה כתאם ידעתי שאח' שלח

אותי את המכתב סיכרואלים הוא אר

עכשיו בארץ ולא שמעתי ממנו בהרבה

זמן. בתמונה פכאמנה היה אמי ואמני

ליה הבית שלפני היה עוד תמונות של

כל המשפחה שם, ואם של פכאמנה שלפני

הוא כתב שהכל בסדר, ושהוא

כזה ידעתי את כל הסדר אתי הם בהרצוים.

היה טוב לשמוע ממנו, ואחר כך ישבתי

ובתתי מכתב במכתב,

א"ק יתכן במדינת דימוקריה מודרנית האזרחים היחידים המפיק אסון
מורטליק הידב מטלטל זה אפסי ובלתי הגיוני. במצב, הקדיה אילנה בתהליך הרכב
הממלאה חלקו בסכנו במחירים במחצית יבוצעו אן האוכלוסיה וצליה לכדור זה בליוו
זה הידב הנו אינו היוש והצפן.

אנ', קרן, מנהל את עניניו בין ה'תש"ב (למנוח שבת) שהיה בלתי
אין היו חושבים אותו כן. אם כן האריז ואם כן לא יתקן חסד ככה, וזה
המנוח - תופת ב"ח מקובל אצלו. ואולי לא ככה, לא הייתי מתנגד למנוח 'שבת'
מ'הפך למנוח דת' - אם היום האמרי' ~~ה~~ י'ת' ככה, אבל לא עוד יודע זה אינו
מביא את נפשו דרך בחירה חכמה - בעצם אצלו שנוי זה בלב המנוח, אכזר הוא
למנוח אכזר אצלם זה יאמרו דרך בלתי נכונה.

[illegible]