THE VARIATIONS OF YIDDISH ORTHOGRAPHICAL SYSTEMS IN THE PRESENT HASIDIC NEWSPAPERS*

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1. Background

1.1. YIVO Orthography and the Previous Studies

The Yiddish standard orthography of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (introduced in 1936)\(^1\) is not followed by all writers, and there are variations in the spelling systems. For example in 1992, Dovid Katz introduced another writing system.\(^2\) Aronson\(^3\) clarified the writing system and showed some of the common spelling variations in comparison with YIVO orthography\(^4\) whereas Schaechter discussed the history of the YIVO standard.\(^5\) These studies focus on YIVO orthography and do not investigate the varieties. These studies focus on YIVO orthography and do not thoroughly discuss the varieties which exist outside the major academic society.

My paper looks in depth at the variations of spelling systems which are not based on YIVO orthography.

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\(^1\) Hereafter called YIVO orthography.
\(^4\) Aronson, “Yiddish”, 735–742.
1.2. Variations of Spellings in Different Times and Different Newspapers

The spelling systems vary depending on times and communities. In New York, five Yiddish newspapers are published. *Der Yid*, *Di Tsaytung* and *Der Blatt* are mainly for Hasidic people, whereas *The Algemeiner Journal* is for Hasidic people and others, and *Forverts* is mainly for a non-Hasidic readership.

Comparing a *Forverts* article on June 16, 2006 (Figure 1) and a *Forverts* article on January 1, 1960 (Figure 2), the spellings of Yiddish are different. In 1960, for instance, *yidish* was written אידיש, in 2006 יידיש. The *Forverts* is known as the newspaper which follows YIVO orthography but it did so only after the official change of its orthographical system (see figure 3).^6

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^6 Figure 3 is the announcement of the official change to YIVO orthography in the *Forverts* from 1997; see Schaechter, *The Standardized Yiddish Orthography*, 109.