

Phonology

The following is an outline of the Hasidic Hebrew tale authors' phonological system as reflected in their orthography. This system is consistent with the Ukrainian and Polish varieties of Ashkenazi Hebrew phonology as discussed in detail in U. Weinreich (1965) and Katz (1993). More specifically, it corresponds most closely to 'popular Ashkenazic' Hebrew, i.e. casual Yiddish-influenced Hebrew pronunciation, in contrast to 'formal Ashkenazic', the pronunciation used for Torah recitation and in other ritualized settings (see Katz 1993: 76–78 for details). While this volume does not provide an in-depth discussion of Hasidic Hebrew phonology, in subsequent sections it will address those aspects that have a direct relationship with the tales' orthography and morphosyntax.

2.1 Consonants

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental/ Alveolar	Palato- alveolar	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stops							
<i>voiceless</i>	פ		ת, ט		כ, ק		
<i>voiced</i>	ב		ד		ג		
Fricatives							
<i>voiceless</i>		פ	ס, ש	ש	ח, כ		ה
<i>voiced</i>		ב, ג, ו, וו	ז	ז, שז, ז		ר	
Affricates							
<i>voiceless</i>			צ	טש			
<i>voiced</i>							
Nasals							
	מ		נ				
Approximants							
			ל	י, ײ			

Notes:

- The voiced palato-alveolar fricative [ʒ] and the voiceless alveolar and palato-alveolar affricates [ts] and [tʃ] are found only in Yiddish loanwords and proper nouns (see 3.5.1 for details).
- ך may be realized as an alveolar trill [r] or tap [ɾ] or a uvular trill [ʀ] in addition to a voiced uvular fricative [ʁ] depending on each individual author's variety of spoken Yiddish (and by extension Hebrew).

2.2 Vowels

Monophthongs						
	Front		Central	Back		
Close	i	י, י, -		u	ו, ו, -	
Close-mid			ə	י, ץ, ם, ן, -		
Open-mid	ɛ	ץ, -		ɔ	ו, ם, -	
Open		a	א, -			
Diphthongs						
	ej	י, וי, יי, י	aj	יי, י	ɔj	וי, ו

Notes:

- Stress is typically on the penult.
- Unstressed ו, י, א, and ן are all realized as [ə].
- וי and ו are pronounced as [ɔj] in Southeastern (Ukrainian/Bessarabian/Romanian) and Mideastern (Polish) Yiddish and Ashkenazi Hebrew and Yiddish, but [ej] in Northeastern (Lithuanian/Latvian/Belarussian) Yiddish and Ashkenazi Hebrew (see Katz 1993: 51 for details).

Vocalization markers are only rarely indicated in the Hasidic Hebrew tales, but when attested are pronounced as follows:

Long (stressed)	Short (stressed)	Reduced (stressed)	With <i>mater lectionis</i>
וּ - ו, u	א - a	א - a	
עַ - ej	ע - ε	ע - ε	
	י - i		
וּ - ו, וַ, eַj	וּ - ו, u	וּ - ו, u	י - ו, וַ, eַj
	וּ - u, i		י - u, i

Notes:

- The pronunciation of וּ, עַ, וּ, י, and י varies according to region; see U. Weinreich (1965), Altbauer (1968), and Katz (1993) for details.
- Vocalization markers in unstressed syllables typically indicate a pronunciation of [ə].

See sections 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5.2 for further details of the orthographic conventions relating to Hasidic Hebrew vowels and diphthongs.