

Modern Hebrew (Israel)

Modern Hebrew (or Ivrit) belongs to the Semito-Hamitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic phylum (Central Semitic). Modern Hebrew is a nineteenth century revival of the literary Hebrew used from c. 1200 BCE to C 1200 CE. It was officially adopted as a national language in Israel in 1948. There are least 2 million native speakers in Israel. It is also spoken widely there as a second language.

Hebrew Consonant Phonemes (there is some divergence in different dialects)

Stops	p	t		k		ʔ
	b	d		g		
Affricate		ts				
Fricatives	f	s	ʃ	x ~ χ	h	(h)
	v	z		ʁ		(ʁ)
Nasals	m	n				
Liquids		l		ʀ		
Glides			j	~	ʁ	

Voiceless stops are slightly aspirated when preceding a stressed vowel, but not as strongly as in English.

Hebrew Vowel Phonemes

Phones likely to be heard

i	u	i	u
		ɪ	
e	o	e	ə/ʌ
			o
a			ɔ
		a	

17.		sha'alti	'I asked'
18.		shafxu	'they spilled'
19.		xashav	'he thought'
20.		shesh	'six'
21.		cura	'form'
22.		ciru	'drew'
23.		nican	'grass, herb'
24.		esev	'grass, herb'
25.		ecev	'pain, grief'
26.		nes	'miracle'
27.		ec	'tree'
28.		kiter	'he crowned'
29.		kicer	'he shortened'
30.		xen	'gracefulness'
31.		hen	'they' (f.)
32.		shaxut	'subservience, humility'
33.		shahut	'while, time'
34.	[daxʃov]	daxshov	'you will think'
35.	[xam]	xam	'hot, warm'
36.	[rahm]	ram	'high'
37.	[ʃaxam]	shaxam	'granite'
38.	[ʃoham]	shoham	'precious stone'
39.	[baxa]	baxa	'he wept'
40.	[bara]	bara	'he created'
41.	[maxat]	maxat	'needle'
42.	[mered]	mered	'rebellion'
43.	[kax]	kax	'so'
44.	[k'ar]	kar	'cold'
45.	[rak]	rak	'only'
46.	[rax]	rax	'soft, tender'
47.	[xavrim]	xavrim	'friends'
48.	[b'xira]	bxira	'election'

Liquids:

1.	ra	'bad'
2.	hahevra	'the company'
3.	ha'ir	'the town'
4.	ba'arets	'in Israel'
5.	darom	'south'
6.	erets	'country'
7.	kara	'it happened'
8.	kala	'light, easy' (f.sg.)
9.	ruah	'wind'
10.	luah	'blackboard'
11.	leat-leat	'little-by-little'
12.	lahamshix	'to continue'
13.	shalosh	'three'
14.	ze lobabe hesbon	'it's out of the question'

Nasals:

1.	mora	'teacher'
2.	ma'aruu	'west'
3.	te'lima	'flavourful'
4.	ro'lim	'regard'
5.	'am	'nation'
6.	shivi'im	'seventy'
7.	ne'ima	'intonation'
8.	na'ar	'adolescent'
9.	'ayin	'eye'
10.	shama	'she is putting'
11.	shana	'year'
12.	kam	'he got up'
13.	kan	'here'

Vowels:

1.	ir	'city'
2.	ani	'I'
3.	nimshaxti	'I continued'
4.	anashim	'people'
5.	dvorim	'things'
6.	tikva	'hope'
7.	er	'awake'
8.	ben	'between'
9.	axare	'after'
10.	betsefer	'school'
11.	shmone	'eight'
12.	ken	'yes'
13.	sheela	'question'
14.	ad	'until'
15.	gam	'also'
16.	meshuna	'strange'
17.	natati	'I planted'
18.	natati	'I gave'
19.	ledaati	'in my opinion'
20.	baaya	'problem'
21.	or	'light'
22.	lavo	'to come'
23.	gadol	'large'
24.	ur	'fire, flame'
25.	mul	'opposite'
26.	nfluxa	'inflated'
27.	bidjuk	'exactly'
28.	v'shmone	'and eight'
29.	kmora	'as a teacher'
30.	sh'ar	'the rest'

31.	l'olam	'forever'
32.	gvina	'cheese'
33.	talmidej	'pupils of'
34.	mictajnim	'excellent'
35.	axarej	'after'
36.	cijru	'they drew'
37.	panuj	'vacant'
38.	goj	'nation'

III. Reading Sample

References:

- Campbell, George L. 1991. *Compendium of the World's Languages*. New York: Routledge Press.
- Glinert, Lewis. 1989. *The Grammar of Modern Hebrew*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.