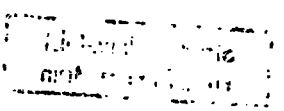
Two-tiered Relexification in Yiddish

Jews, Sorbs, Khazars, and the Kiev-Polessian Dialect

by

Paul Wexler

Mouton de Gruyter
Berlin · New York 2002



Contents

Abbreviations and symbols ix
Introduction 1
Chapter 1 The Relexification Hypothesis in Yiddish 9
Chapter 2 Approaches to the study of Yiddish and other Jewish languages 63
Chapter 3 Criteria for selecting German and Hebrew-Aramaic and for retaining Slavic elements in Yiddish 79
3.1. Component blending in Yiddish 116
3.2. The status of synonyms in Yiddish 131
3.3. Constructing an etymological dictionary for a relexified language 137
Chapter 4 Evidence for the two-tiered relexification hypothesis in Yiddish: From Upper Sorbian to German and from Kiev-Polessian to Yiddish 145
4.1. Sixteen observations about the relexification hypothesis in Yiddish 148
4.2. German morphemes and morpheme sets fully accepted by Yiddish 176
4.3. German morpheme sets blocked fully or in part in Yiddish by the Slavic substrata 181
4.4. The status of individual German morphemes and semantically related sets in Yiddish 349
4.5. Slavic gender and markers of plural and dual in Yiddish 391
4.5.1. The assignment of gender in Yiddish nouns 393
4.5.2. The gender of Yiddish simplex nouns in compound constructions 419
4.5.3. The assignment of plural suffixes in Yiddish 430
4.5.4. The Slavic "pseudo-dual" category in Yiddish 447
4.6. Unrelexified Upper Sorbian and Kiev-Polessian elements in Yiddish 488

4.7. The Khazar component in the language and ethnogenesis of the Ashkenazic Jews 513
Chapter 5 Future challenges 543
References 555
Index of names 631
Index of examples 638
Index of subjects 692