

The RYS Daily 5/1/07 - Knowing the Language of the Land

From The Mussar Movement, Volume 1, Part 1, page 311.

It is common knowledge that R. Israel advised his star pupils to learn Russian, since it was the need of the hour. When R. David Tevel left the Yeshivah, R. Israel said to him: "Knowing you, I am sure that you will be a rabbi in Israel, so you must learn Russian." Similarly, he directed R. Isaac Blazer and R. Naftali Amsterdam, also, to learn Russian. R. Isaac Blazer was to attain sufficient proficiency to converse with a provincial governor, since he was certainly destined to be the rabbi of a large city, while R. Naftali needed less expertise, only enough to be able to address a less prominent official.

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