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Some comments on my visit of the Ulpan

In the Ulpan of *Kibbutz Regavim* I participated in the time from 8.9.1989 until 19.3.1990 (we covered in this time levels Alef and Beit).

I had decided to attend an Ulpan, because I wanted to get a solid basis of Hebrew, to enable me to go further from there. I was surprised, how fast we got actually into talking the language (inspite of the fact, that me and most others weren't particularly "natural talents" in learning languages).

We had the luck, that our teachers took into account the individually different "speeds" of learning, the different ability to grasp the content of the lectures, the different strong motivations. In the Ulpan nobody was left aside, even on difficult pupils our teachers never gave up.

When I succeeded three years later in doing the final level of the students' Ulpan, I am convinced, that I was only able to do so, because of the visit of the Ulpan in *Regavim*.

I may add, that we not only learned the language. I was particularly glad, that we also learned quite a lot on history and culture during the lessons.

Especially the mix of "indoor"- and "outdoor"-lessons was fun.

At first, I was quite sceptical, if there would be enough time to do the homework, to learn the vocabulary, the grammar; after all, a Kibbutz is no "Robinson Club." But even with doing all these hours manual labour, there was plenty of time left to get on with the studies. Additionally, I had also on work the possibility to try my "Beginner- Hebrew" on the fellow workers.

The work- organisation was very good. Not, that I liked *all* the different kinds of jobs. Far from it. But it was always taken care, that between the "tough" jobs we had easy jobs as well. So even the work in the Plastic-Factory, with the different shifts, never became a burden. The work-schedule was so outbalanced, that I never hated to go to work.

I was lucky, that during my time in the Kibbutz we had a very good group of Ulpan-students and volunteers. This was a very important reason, that I enjoyed myself. It helped a lot of course that we had our own library, our own clubhouse and even our own TV. Everyone is responsible for his own entertainment, but it was important to have a proper "leisure-framework."

(I shouldn't forget to mention the trips, which were organized for us. They were really something one shouldn't take for granted.)

I am aware of the simple fact, that a Kibbutz isn't the "right place" for everyone. Some may have problems to adapt to a volunteer's way of life. But lifewise and studywise (and otherwise-wise) I never regretted one moment to have come to the Kibbutz.