

Tel Aviv University  
School of Philosophy, Linguistics and Science Studies,  
Department of Linguistics

## THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

Thursday 26/05/2022

16:15-17:45

Elinoar Ganani, Tel Aviv University

Frontal lecture in Webb 103

transmitted via ZOOM

### Phonological Reduction as a Marker for Modalization in Verbs in Israeli Hebrew

Many linguistic expressions that start off as conceptual expressions develop into grammatical expressions in a process called grammaticalization. In this process, the original conceptual role is changed so that the lexical meaning weakens and the expression becomes more functional. At the same time, a process of phonological reduction often occurs. Function words, including modal phrases and verbs, tend to be relatively short. *טאביח* is an example of a polysemic word, one of whose meanings is functional. As such, it allows us to compare the phonological behavior of a content word (primary verb) and the phonological behavior of a function word (modal verb). Based on recordings of spoken Hebrew, I assert that *טאביח* is going through a process of configuration differentiation that reflects the functional differentiation – a phonological reduction of the functional form and a full production of the conceptual form.

In this work, I argue that *טאביח* has two lexemes, and one of them, the functional one, causes its high reduction rate. That is, the process of modalization (becoming a modal), which *טאביח* is undergoing, is what causes the high rate of reduction observed. Therefore, and based on comparison to another verb - *ׁוּטֵׁ* 'want', I propose that the functionality of an expression is the significant factor in its reduction, and reduction is a testament and even a marker of a functional use of an expression.

Click [here](#) to see the colloquium program.