

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

THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

**Thursday 12.11.2020
16:15-17:45**

**Daniella Yariv
Tel Aviv University**

**“THE MARKEDNESS-OVER-FAITHFULNESS BIAS
Coda moraicity in the acquisition of Hebrew”**

There are two opposing, though partially overlapping approaches to language acquisition: One approach holds that language learning is entirely experience-dependent, where learning is made by general cognitive capacities (Tomassello 2003). The other approach holds that in addition to the experience-dependent elements of the learning mechanism, there are also experience-independent universal principles (Chomsky 1959, 1968, 1986).

These two approaches make different predictions with respect to the moraic structure of CVC syllables in early Hebrew speech – whether they are monomoraic or bimoraic; i.e. whether codas are moraic. Hebrew is considered a quantity insensitive language, as it does not provide evidence for moraic codas (Bat-El 1993, Adam & Bat-El 2009, Bat-El et al. 2019). Thus, the experience-dependent approach predicts non-moraic codas in the early speech of Hebrew-acquiring children. In contrast, the experience-independent approach predicts moraic codas, assuming the MARKEDNESS » FAITHFULNESS bias (Tesar & Smolensky 2000), according to which markedness constraints outrank faithfulness constraints in the initial state of acquisition.

Based on corpus-based data drawn from the natural speech of Hebrew acquiring children, I will argue that during the early stages of phonological development, Hebrew-acquiring children analyze word final CVC syllables as bimoraic. These findings support the experience-independent approach, as the children assign a mora to codas, despite the absence of data that support this structure. What allows them to do so is the universal principle WEIGHT-BY-POSITION (Hayes 1994) and the MARKEDNESS » FAITHFULNESS bias during early speech.

YOU ARE ALL INVITED

Click [here](#) to see the colloquium program for the fall semester