The course adopts the assumption that the Computational System (CS) underlies both the production and the processing of sentences. In other words, we will assume that the same computational tools are used in production and processing. Thus, we can use typical instances of processing breakdown to shed light on the workings of the CS. We will focus on sentences that involve processing breakdown referred to as Garden Path (e.g. ‘Below the stairs collapsed’). In the first part of the course we will examine the constraints that underlie the processing of a sentence, and define in syntactic terms the processing difficulty that arises in the Garden Path sentences, namely why the processing of these sentences does not proceed automatically (as witnessed by the fact that we are aware of the difficulty).

In the second part of the course we will discuss the consequences of the processing theory and its applications in the study of language acquisition, and in the study of individuals suffering from aphasia (language impairment resulting from brain damage). Finally, we will attempt to define the principles of the CS that are operative in the production and processing phenomena examined in the course.
1. Introduction: Background, central terms in the study of language processing, processing limitations (center-embedded and Garden Path sentences).
2. Previous processing theories and their problems.
3. The processing guideline and the definition of difficult reanalysis, TRC (Pritchett 1992)
4. Various types of GPs and the revision of the TRC.
5. The consequences of the processing theory and its implications: Comprehension of relative clauses in language acquisition; GP in conductive aphasia.
7. The psychological reality of syntactic movement.
8. Summary of the course: The principles of the CS operative in the production and processing phenomena examined in the course.

7-8 assignments (20%) (P/F)
Midterm (50%)
Final assignment (30%)

Prerequisite
Introduction to Linguistics; Syntax 1


Friedmann, N. and A. Gvion. 2007. As far as individuals with conduction aphasia understood these sentences were ungrammatical: Garden path in conduction aphasia.


Siloni, T. 2004. ”Garden Path: Illicit Movement”.

Additional reading
Botwinik, I. and A. Meltzer-Asscher. While they were studying the GP effects occurred: What processing data (in Hebrew) tell us about the merger of adjuncts (in the grammar), ms., Tel Aviv University, North Western University.


