

Optional Datives in Arabic as Applicative Adjuncts and Cyclic vs. Counter-Cyclic Merge
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Overview: It has been argued that adjunction as pair merge, unlike substitution or set merge, may or even must occur counter-cyclically. I present evidence from optional datives in Levantine Arabic (aka Attitude Datives), a category of pronouns that merge as applicative adjuncts, to show that adjunction may behave on a par with set merge and give priority to cyclicity. More specifically, I show that Levantine Arabic Attitude Datives as applicative adjuncts must merge cyclically and that they only opt for counter-cyclic merge as a last resort.

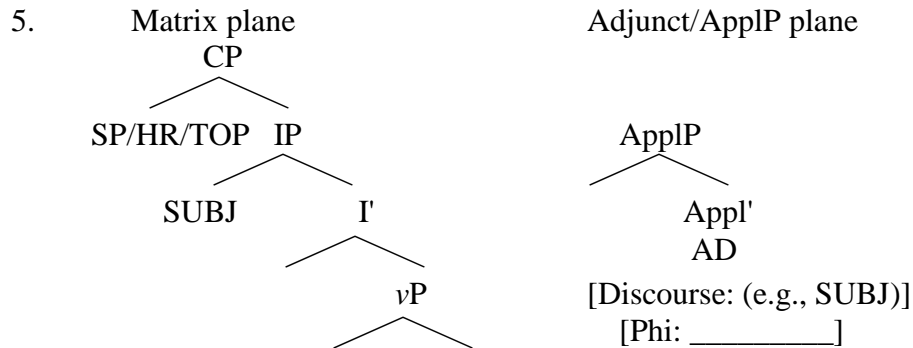
Attitude Datives: Levantine Arabic varieties (Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, and Syrian) license a category of optional dative pronominal enclitics known as Attitude Datives or ADs (Haddad 2014). These datives are interpersonal pragmatic markers that may be added to utterances without altering their truth conditions. Four types of ADs are licensed in Levantine Arabic. These are Speaker-Oriented Attitude Datives or SP-ADs as in (1), Hearer-Oriented Attitude Datives or HR-ADs as in (2), Topic/Affectee Attitude Datives or TOP/AFF-ADs as in (3), and Subject-Oriented Attitude Datives or SUBJ-ADs as (4). All ADs are in red boldface. All examples are attested utterances from TV shows and plays.

1. Context: A mother learns from her daughter that her son, Raad, uses Facebook. She says:
yaʕni: ha:da: raʕed , ga:ʕed biʕamʕim-**li:** ʔaxba:r l-na:s mitl l-nasa:wi:n ʔ!
this.mean this Raad , sitting sniff-**me.D** news the-people like the-women ʔ!
‘Do you mean to tell me that this Raad of mine spends his time sniffing **[me]** other people’s news the way women do?’
2. Context: A police officer brags to his superior about splashing a suspect with water while the suspect was sleeping as a technique to get him to confess to a robbery.
w-safaht-**illak** ʕle-e saʕel mayy ba:rde , baʕed ma: ka:n ya:tʕetʕ bi-l-no:me
and-I.splashed-**you.D** on-him bucket water cold , after that he.was deep in-the-sleep
‘And I splashed **[you]** him with a bucket of water while he was fast asleep.’
3. Context: A neighbor comments on the effect of a recent burglary on the victim:
sirʔet ha-l-dahaba:t raʕ tiksir-**lo** dʕahr-o .
stealing this-the-gold.coins will break-**him.D** back-his .
‘The theft of his gold coins will break **[him]** his back.’
4. Context: Two men are gossiping about a rich acquaintance who keeps on buying houses for women he intends to seduce. Eventually, one of them says:
law byiftaħ-**lo** ʕi be:t laʔil-i w-laʔil-ak , ʕu: ke:n ʕa-be:l-na !
if.only he.open-**him.D** some house for-me and-for-you , what was on-mind-our !
‘If only he bought **[him]** a house for me and a house for you, that would be wonderful!’

Problem: Each type of the above ADs makes distinct pragmatic contributions. And while the same AD may serve multiple or alternative functions (e.g., the same AD may be a SP-AD or a TOP/AFF AD or both depending on the context), if an AD refers to the subject, it may only be interpreted as a SUBJ-AD; no additional or alternative interpretation is possible. That is, if the subject happens to coincide with the speaker or hearer, an AD that refers to the subject may not receive an additional or alternative interpretation as a SP-AD or a HR-AD. The SUBJ-AD reading is the only one available. The question is why?

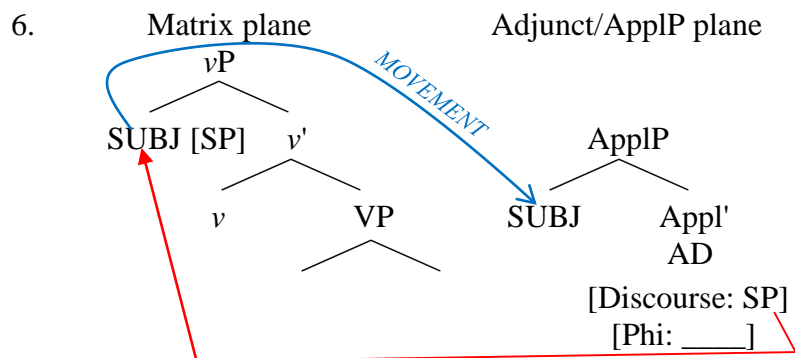
Previous Analysis: In Haddad (2014), I analyze ADs as high applicatives that merge above vP, taking the whole vP event as their argument (see McGinnis, 2001). Drawing on Uriagereka (2003),

I argue there that ADs as applicatives start out as adjuncts in a separate plane as in (5). According to this analysis, ADs enter the computation with a valued discourse feature (SP, HR, TOP, or SUB) and unvalued phi features. This is followed by sideward movement (e.g., Nunes 2004) of a syntactic object with a matching discourse feature from the matrix clause to Spec,ApplP. Movement values the phi features of the AD. After structure building is complete, the two planes collapse. Importantly, the adjunct merges counter-cyclically.



The advantage of this approach, is that it allows a higher element (e.g., a topic) to value the features on an AD without the intervention of a lower element (e.g., the subject). However, it still needs to answer an important question: why is it that in constructions in which the subject is coreferential with another element (e.g., the speaker), an AD that references the subject must be interpreted as a SUBJ-AD and may not be interpreted as a SP-AD additionally or alternatively?

Solution: I posit that applicative adjuncts give priority to cyclic merge in accordance with the Extension Condition and opt for counter-cyclic merge only as a last resort. Consider (6). The AD in the adjunct plane has a discourse feature valued as [SP] and phi features that need to be valued. Unlike in Haddad’s (2014) analysis, the AD does not wait till all structure building takes place in the matrix plane in order to undergo merge. Instead, the AD starts scanning the computational workspace the moment matrix vP is complete and the ApplP is eligible for merge. This is so because ADs are non-argument participants that are not eligible for merge in the thematic domain. Once a matching discourse feature (in this case, SP) is detected, sideward movement takes place, the AD’s phi features are valued, and ApplP merges cyclically. An AD merges counter-cyclically only if it is not able to find a matching discourse feature early enough in the derivation to merge cyclically.



Haddad, Y.A. 2014. Attitude datives in Lebanese Arabic and the interplay of syntax and pragmatics. *Lingua* 145, 65–103. **McGinnis, M. 2001.** Phases and the syntax of applicatives. *Proceedings of NELS 31*, 333–349. **Nunes, J. 2004.** *Linearization of chains and sideward movement*. MIT Press. **Uriagereka, J. 2003.** Pure adjuncts. Ms., University of Maryland.