

## Pronominal datives

### The royal road to argument status

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Based on a large corpus of dative constructions in Hebrew, we propose that dative-marked pronominals manifest a facilitated path from adjunct to argument. Since datives tend to be pronominal, adding them onto existing argument structures avoids a clash with the Preferred Argument Structure (PAS) Quantity constraint against more than one lexical noun phrase per clause. Supporting a more fluid adjunct/argument distinction, our first claim is that different Hebrew datives are grammaticized as arguments to different degrees. We then demonstrate a correlation between the degree of grammaticization of the dative as an argument and pronoun/lexical ratios. We show that incipient grammaticization phases involve virtually exclusive use of pronominal datives, but deeper grammaticization phases allow increased use of lexical nouns, within the constraints of PAS. Thus, it is pronouns that blaze the path from adjunct to argument status.