

## The Grammar of Clitics in Degema<sup>1</sup>

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It has been observed that clitics play a significant role in the grammar of Degema. This is noted and discussed in Kari (1995a; 1995b; 1997). However, the extent of their participation in the grammar has not yet been fully investigated. This paper goes beyond what has been done so far on clitics, and discusses such grammatical properties of clitics as their interaction with argument structure of verbs, agreement, and their combination with tone to distinguish certain types of sentences. The paper is divided into three sections. Section 1 is the introduction, where some definitions of clitics are provided and discussed; section 2, which is the main thrust of the paper, discusses the grammar of clitics – proclitics and enclitics, while section 3 is the conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Degema is a Delta Edoid language spoken by the autonomous communities of Usokun-Degema and Degema Town in the Degema Local Government Area of Rivers State of Nigeria. The communities each speak a variety of Degema that is highly mutually intelligible with the other. These varieties, Usokun and Degema Town (Atala), are derived from the names of the communities.

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## 1. Introduction

In this introduction we shall examine definitions of 'clitics'<sup>2</sup>, as given by different authors, with a view to highlighting those properties that are associated with the elements we shall be considering as clitics in Degema.

Nida sees clitics as 'bound roots' (allomorphs of free forms). According to her, '[t]hese bound allomorphs of free forms never occur in isolation, but they do not necessarily form morphological constructions with the constituents with which they are phonologically bound' (Nida 1949:97). This definition considers the phonological, morphological and syntactic properties of clitics. First, clitics are seen as elements that have some phonological relationship with an adjacent word or constituent. Second, they are considered part of constituents but are not morphologically part of such constituents. Her examples to illustrate these features of clitics include the English indefinite article 'a' in 'a bored person' which, though 'leans' on the word 'bored', forms an immediate constituent with 'a bored person'.

For Spencer, '[c]litics are elements which share certain properties of fully fledged words, but which lack the independence usually associated with words. In particular, they can't stand alone, but have to be attached phonologically to a host. This makes them look a little like affixes, in particular, inflectional affixes' (Spencer 1991:350). Spencer's definition, like Nida's, also remarks on the phonological association of clitics to other words. In addition, it appreciates the fact that clitics look like inflectional morphemes.

In Zwicky's view, "[c]litics' is a term commonly applied to elements with some properties of inflectional morphology and some of independent words' (Zwicky 1992:269). Based on phonological, morphological and syntactic considerations, he establishes nine criteria which distinguish inflections from words, and against which the elements considered as clitics in human language can be examined.

Phonologically, most of the elements we consider as clitics in Degema are characterised by his criteria (a) – (c). For instance, most clitics in the language have no independent accent, and their vowels are determined by those of an adjacent element. In this regard, they have the property of inflectional morphemes. Morphologically, clitics in Degema, like words, are not constrained with regards to the word classes that occur adjacent to them unlike the inflectional morphemes (affixes) which are so constrained (see criterion (f)). Clitics, like words, can be found in the environment of adjacent words such as verbs, pronouns and particles, unlike affixes which are found to occur only before nouns, as in the case of prefixes, and only after verbs, as in the case of suffixes. Syntactically, it is problematic to assign clitics in Degema, like inflectional morphemes, to lexical categories (see criterion (d)).

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<sup>2</sup> The data for our discussion, in this paper, are drawn from the Usokun variety.

According to Borer (1992:271), '[t]he term 'clitics' is commonly used to denote elements which serve as syntactic constituents, but which are not phonologically independent words'. She cites such elements as the pronominal clitics found in Romance, Slavic, and Semitic languages. The part of her definition which pertains to the phonological dependence of these elements is very crucial in the definition of clitics in Degema. In other words, all the elements that are considered as clitics in the language are characterised by this phonological dependence, as their vowels are observed to agree with the  $\pm$ A(dvanced) T(ongue) R(oot) quality of the adjacent morphemes, i.e. hosts.

There seems to be a convergence of opinion in the definitions of the different authors as regards the properties of clitics. For instance, all the definitions point to the phonological dependence of clitics, and their morphological and syntactic properties.

Although the term 'clitics' has been in use for long (See Nida 1949.), its use in Degema linguistics is quite recent. The first use of the term to designate elements which have hitherto been classified as inflectional suffixes in Degema is contained in Kari (1995a:68ff), where the so-called inflectional suffixes (See Thomas 1966:190.) are, on the basis of observed phonological, morphological and syntactic behaviour, reclassified as clitics.

Two types of clitics – proclitics and enclitics - are attested in human language on the basis of their position in relation to the host. Proclitics occur before their host, while enclitics occur after their host. Both types of clitics are attested in Degema.

The treatment of clitics in Kari (1995a and 1995b) is restricted only to enclitics. In Kari (1997), however, the discussion of clitics includes proclitics as well. This is not to say that before 1997, nothing was said about proclitics in Degema. Proclitics, before Kari (1997), were variously referred to as 'auxiliary', 'subject', and 'tense/person' prefix (cf. Thomas 1966). This is probably because they act as pseudo-subjects when the real subjects are dropped, or because they indicate person and combine with tones to make time reference. Kari (1991) refers to them as 'concord markers' because they agree in number and person with overt or covert subjects. In Kari (1995a:68), the term 'proclitics' is used to characterise those elements which occur before the verb and function principally as indicators of number and person. Proclitics in Degema were seen as taking the form of resumptive pronouns in Kari (1995a) but further research has shown that they are not resumptive pronouns (See Kari 1997:57.).

## 2. The grammar of clitics

It has been observed that clitics play a crucial role in the grammar of Degema. In what follows, we shall discuss the two types of clitics attested in the language, paying particular attention to their role in the grammar of this language.

## 2.1 Proclitics

In Degema, proclitics occur basically before verbs. However, when particles (words in Degema but which do not fit into a standard classification of parts of speech) also occur in the clause, they may occur before the particle and the verb or before the particle only. Phonologically, proclitics have three interesting properties. First, their vowels are determined by the  $\pm$ ATR quality of those of the verb or particle. In other words, their vowels become expanded if those of the verb or particle are expanded and vice versa. Second, they have two shapes, CV and V which are in complementary distribution, i.e. the CV forms and the V forms are not found before the same host at the same time. This complementarity is strictly determined by the type of sentence in which they occur (cf. Kari 1997:54). Third, they have no tones of their own. In other words, they acquire their tones from the syntactic context in which they occur. The different forms<sup>3</sup> of proclitics are presented in table 1.

Syntactically, proclitics in Degema occupy position 2, which is known in the literature as the Wackernagel's position, in clauses that have an overt subject noun phrase (See 2.1.1.2 and 2.1.1.3).

Table 1. Forms of proclitics

Number	Person	Forms
Singular	1st	mE, mI
	2nd	mU, U, E
	3rd	mO, O, mI, I
Plural	1st	mE, E
	2nd	mA, A
	3rd	mE, mI <sup>4</sup> , E, I

There are cases where both phonological shapes of proclitics occur in the same clause. Given this situation, the CV forms occur before the verb, while the V forms occur before the particle. The V forms appear to be reduced forms of the CV forms. It seems that the syntactic category of the host imposes a restriction on the forms of proclitics when both forms occur in the same clause so that the CV forms must always occur before a verb, while the V forms must always occur before a particle. Consider examples (1) – (3).

- (1) ɔ-dǎ                      ʰmó-tá<sup>5</sup>.  
3SgPROCL-INIPRT 3SgPROCL- go  
'S/he is about to go'

3 The archiphonemes in the forms of proclitics, and in the forms of enclitics as we shall see, represent two phonological variants which are conditioned by the  $\pm$ ATR quality of the vowels of the host. Thus, A = a/a, E = e/ε, I = i/i, O = o/o, and U = u/u.

4 To the list of the 3rd person plural proclitics we add the form **mI** ( See 2.1.1.5.).

5 Dégema displays a two tone system, high and low plus a downstep. As is the practice in most of my writings, the low tone is unmarked for the sake of convenience.

- (2)    ʊ-gá                      mú-dér                      ídɪjom.  
          3SgPROCL Q-EPRT 3SgPROCL-cook food  
          'Do you actually cook food?'
- (3)    ɛ-dǎ                      mé-gbó                      ɛdʒí jo.  
          3PIPROCL-INIPRT 3PIPROCL-cut bush the  
          'They are about to clear the bush'

### 2.1.1. The grammar of proclitics

Proclitics in Degema display interesting grammatical properties, especially at the syntactic level. Some such properties are (1) interaction with argument structure of verbs (2) agreement (3) combining with the non-segmental feature of tone to distinguish certain types of sentences. At the semantic level, some proclitics have the semantic property [ $\pm$ HUMAN] that they appear to have copied from the subject noun phrase.

We shall discuss these grammatical properties one by one, under specific headings.

#### 2.1.1.2. Proclitics and argument structure

Proclitics take the place of full-fledged subject N(oun) P(hrases) which enter into the argument structure of verbs. In the absence of full-fledged subject NPs, proclitics become the sole bearer of the nominative case as the external argument of the verb. Consider the following representations of the sentence in example (4) meaning 'Binyen saw him':

- (4a)    [[NP[N Binyen<sub>i</sub> ] [PROCL ɔ<sub>i</sub> ] ] [VP[V mɔ́n] [NP[PRON ɔ́jɪ<sub>j</sub> ] ] ] ] ]

- (b)    [[NP[<sub>e<sub>i</sub></sub> ] [PROCL ɔ<sub>i</sub> ] ] [VP[V mɔ́n] [NP[PRON ɔ́jɪ<sub>j</sub> ] ] ] ] ]

An examination of (4b) reveals that even when the subject NP, Binyen is deleted, the sentence remains grammatical. This results from the fact that the proclitic absorbs all the grammatical features of the subject NP so that the grammaticality of the sentence is not affected when the subject NP is deleted. It is interesting to note that whereas the subject NP may delete in overt syntax, as a result of pragmatic factors such as 'common knowledge between speaker and hearer about the subject NP', 'monotony in having to mention the subject NP over and over again in discourse', etc., proclitics usually do not delete. Thus, they act as pseudo-subjects in the absence of overt subject NPs.

A point that is worth noting about proclitics is that contrary to the remark by Borer (1992:271) that pronominal clitics '... normally occur in complementary distribution with the syntactic category which their host predicate selects...', proclitics in Degema are not in complementary distribution with the subject NPs, unless complementary distribution is to be seen in terms of emphatic (5a) vs. non-emphatic (5b), whereby

subject pronominal NP feature in emphatic constructions or constructions where the identity of the subject is required. Even in this situation proclitics, and the syntactic category which the host predicate selects can co-occur in the same clause, as in (5a).

- (5a) mée mɛ-tá                      mú éki.  
 I    1SgPROCL-go to market  
 'I am going to market' (emphatic)
- (b)    □mɛ-tá                      mú éki.  
          1SgPROCL-go to market  
 'I am going to market' (non-emphatic)

As mentioned in 2.1, proclitics occupy position 2 – the Wackernagel's position - in clauses that have an overt subject NP (cf. (4a and b) and (5a and b)).

#### 2.1.1.3. Proclitics and agreement

Ndimele and Kari (1998:2) note that 'Degema has an impoverished verb-agreement morphology. The paucity in verb-agreement paradigms in Degema is, however, augmented by subject clitics which encode features of agreement'. It has been observed in this language that proclitics agree with overt or covert subject NPs in person, number, and case (cf. Kari 1997; Ndimele and Kari 1998). These agreement features encoded in the proclitic results in the deletion of the personal pronoun in subject position, since it appears to be redundant. Consider examples (6 a and b) and (7a and b).

- (6a) ɔʝi mó-kpén                      ɛ́tótɔ̃ʷ.  
 s/he 3SgPROCL-wash clothes  
 'S/he is washing clothes'
- (b)    □mó-kpén                      ɛ́tótɔ̃ʷ.  
          3SgPROCL-wash clothes  
 'S/he is washing clothes'
- (7a) ɓaw mé-kpén                      ɛ́tótɔ̃ʷ.  
 they 3PlPROCL-wash clothes  
 'They are washing clothes'
- (b)    □mé-kpén                      ɛ́tótɔ̃ʷ.  
          3PlPROCL-wash clothes  
 'They are washing clothes'

Example (6a) shows that the proclitic is 3rd person and singular because the subject pronoun ɔʝi 's/he' which receives nominative case from the verb is 3rd person and singular, while (7a) shows that the proclitic is 3rd person and plural because the subject

pronoun **ɓaw**<sup>6</sup> 'they' is 3rd person and plural. Examples (6b) and (7b) remain grammatical even with the dropping of the subject pronoun because of the agreement feature encoded in the proclitic. Given this situation, one wonders what becomes of Degema without proclitics? The conclusion is that there may be no Degema, as (6) and (7) repeated below as (8) and (9), without the associated proclitic, are ungrammatical.

(8a) \*ɔjɪ □kpéɲ ɛ́tɔ́ŋ<sup>w</sup>.

(9a) \*ɓaw □kpéɲ ɛ́tɔ́ŋ<sup>w</sup>.

#### 2.1.1.4. Proclitics and sentence types

As mentioned in 2.1.1., one of the features of proclitics is that they combine with tone to distinguish different types of sentences. We shall illustrate this with straightforward cases of sentences involving some pairs of negative/positive, and statement/question. Consider the following pairs of sentences:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>(10a) mó-síré.<br/>3SgPROCL-run<br/>'S/he is running' (positive)</p> | <p>(b) ó-sire.<br/>3SgPROCL NEG-run<br/>'S/he is not running' (negative)</p> |
| <p>(11a) mó-tá.<br/>2SgPROCL-go<br/>'You will go' (positive)</p>        | <p>(b) ú-ta.<br/>2SgPROCL NEG-go<br/>'You will not go' (negative)</p>        |

A comparison of (10) and (11) shows that proclitics combine with tone to distinguish the positive sentences (a) from the negative (b) – a distinction which is also seen in the forms of proclitics. Their forms also play a crucial role in distinguishing these sentences. Whereas the positive sentences have the CV form of proclitics, their negative counterparts have the V forms.

The interaction between proclitics and tone without a change in the forms of the proclitics is illustrated in (12) and (13). Both the statement and question pairs of (12) and (13) have the CV form of the proclitic. What distinguishes (12a and b) is the presence of the extra-high tone<sup>7</sup> on the proclitic in (b), and what distinguishes (13a and b) is that the proclitic in (a) has a high tone whereas that in (b) has a low tone.

- (12a) mó-dʒó                      ɛ́kpé ɛ́suwon mó ɓána.  
2SgPROCL-stay years five      at here  
'You will stay here for five years' (statement)

<sup>6</sup> For the forms of these pronouns, see (Kari 1997:34).

<sup>7</sup> The extra-high tone is an allotone of the high tone which associates itself with the proclitic to distinguish pairs of sentences such as (12a and b).

- (b) mǔ-dʒá ákpé ésuwon mú bána.  
 2SgPROCL Q-stay years five at here  
 'Will you stay here for five years?' (question)
- (13a) mó-sól á.  
 3SgPROCL-jump CM  
 'S/he will jump' (statement)
- (b) mɔ-sól a.  
 3SgPROCL-jump CM  
 'Will s/he jump?' (question)

#### 2.1.1.5. Proclitics and semantic properties

It has been observed that, like the agreement features of person, number and case encoded in proclitics, the semantic property of human/non-human is also encoded in some proclitics, especially the **mE**, **mI**, **E**, and **I** of the 3rd person plural. Consider examples (14) and (15).

- (14a) ewéj jɔ mé-món mé.  
 people the 3PIPROCL-see me  
 'The people will see me' (human)
- (b) mám jɔ mí-món mé.  
 animals the 3PIPROCL-see me  
 'The animals will see me' (non-human)
- (15a) ímo nóɔŋ<sup>w</sup> ɛ-sín-dé útáŋ jɔ.  
 children his 3PIPROCL-climb-PE tree the  
 'His children have climbed the tree' (human)
- (b) íŋ<sup>w</sup>en nóɔŋ<sup>w</sup> ɪ-sín-dé útáŋ jɔ.  
 monkeys his 3PIPROCL-climb-PE tree the  
 'His monkeys have climbed the tree' (non-human)

The proclitics in (14a and b), and (15a and b) differ in form as a result of a difference in the semantic property of the subject NP. In both (14a) and (15a), the choice of the proclitics depends on the [+HUMAN] property of the subject NP, while in (14b) and (15b) the choice of the proclitics depends on the [-HUMAN] property of the subject NP. Thus, the proclitic agrees with the subject NP in humanness or non-humanness. This is like the agreement we discussed in 2.1.1.3.

This phenomenon appears to be one of the relics of the noun class system of Degema. This kind of agreement is still very operative in Bantu languages, as seen in their concordial noun class prefixes.



## 2.2. Enclitics

The hosts to enclitics in Degema are either verbs or pronouns, which occur as the object of transitive verbs, and have a CV(C) structure. Like proclitics, the vowels of enclitics are phonologically determined by the  $\pm$ ATR quality of those of the hosts.

### 1.2.1. The grammar of enclitics

Like proclitics, enclitics combine with tone, and contribute significantly to the grammar of Degema. But unlike proclitics the features of agreement, such as we discussed in 2.1.1.3., are not encoded in them. The syntactic and semantic notions expressed by the enclitics that have so far been identified are factative, perfect, negative imperative, discontinuation, excessive, inceptive and request. The enclitics that express these notions, except that which denotes request listed in Kari (1997:57), are discussed elaborately in Kari (1995a; 1995b). However, we shall briefly discuss the different enclitics for the purpose of this paper. The different forms of enclitics are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Forms of enclitics

factative	$^{\text{h}}\tilde{\text{V}}\text{n}^8$
perfect	$^{\text{h}}\text{tÉ}$
negative imperative	tU
discontinuation	mUnU
excessive	$\beta\text{IrE}$
inceptive	A <sup>9</sup>
request	AnI <sup>10</sup>

#### 2.2.1.1. The factative enclitic (FACT)

This enclitic is used to denote a fact, which may be a dynamic situation that has already been completed or a state that once existed or still exists at the present time. Its underlying form (UF) is  $^{\text{h}}\tilde{\text{V}}\text{n}$ .

(16) o-mí- $^{\text{h}}\text{in}$ .  
3SgPROCL-be wet-FACT  
'It is wet'

(17) ɔ-kú<sup>11</sup> mé- $^{\text{h}}\text{én}$ .  
3SgPROCL-give me-FACT  
'S/he gave me'

<sup>8</sup> The behaviour of the vowel of the factative enclitic is discussed in Kari (1997:42f).

<sup>9</sup> The inceptive enclitic has an inherent low tone.

<sup>10</sup> It is not certain whether the vowels of the request enclitic have expanded forms because the enclitic has always been found to occur with the verb **kije** 'give', which has non-expanded vowels, or with the 1st person singular object pronoun **me** 'me', whose vowel itself is conditioned by the verb phonologically.

<sup>11</sup> This is an allomorph of the verb **kije** 'give', which occurs before object pronouns that begin with a consonant.

In (16), the factative enclitic is hosted by the verb **mi** 'be wet', while in (17) it is hosted by the 1st person singular object pronoun **me** 'me'. We shall comment only here on this freedom of association that is characteristic of the enclitics, since the other enclitics, except the inceptive which occurs only as the final element of the sentence, exhibit the same behaviour.

#### 2.2.1.2. The perfect enclitic (PE)

The perfect enclitic marks completion, and has the UF **<sup>h</sup>tÉ**. It has eight phonologically conditioned allomorphs: **<sup>h</sup>dé/<sup>h</sup>dé**, **<sup>h</sup>ré/<sup>h</sup>ré**, **<sup>h</sup>lé/<sup>h</sup>lé**, **<sup>h</sup>té/<sup>h</sup>té**.

The form **<sup>h</sup>dé/<sup>h</sup>dé** occurs after a host that ends with a nasal consonant:

- |      |  |      |   |
|------|--|------|---|
| (18) | o-gbóm- <sup>h</sup> dé.<br>3SgPROCL-bite-PE<br>'S/he has bitten (sth.)' | (19) | o-6óm                      máp- <sup>h</sup> dé.<br>3SgPROCL-beat you-PE<br>'S/he has beaten you (pl.)' |
|------|--|------|---|

The form **<sup>h</sup>ré/<sup>h</sup>ré** occurs after a host that ends with /r/:

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| (20) | mí-fár- <sup>h</sup> ré.<br>1SgPROCL-tie-PE<br>'I have tied (sth.)' | (21) | o-dér- <sup>h</sup> ré.<br>3SgPROCL-cook-PE<br>'S/he has cooked (sth.)' |
|------|---|------|---|

The form **<sup>h</sup>lé/<sup>h</sup>lé** occurs after a host that ends with /l/:

- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| (22) | ε-sól- <sup>h</sup> lé.<br>3PIPROCL-jump-PE<br>'They have jumped' | (23) | ə-túl- <sup>h</sup> lé.<br>2PIPROCL-reach-PE<br>'You (pl.) have reached' |
|------|---|------|--|

The form **<sup>h</sup>té/<sup>h</sup>té** occurs after a host that ends with a vowel or a consonant that is not nasal or coronal:

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| (24) | o-dě kú                      mé-té.<br>3SgPROCL-buy give me-PE<br>'S/he has bought it for me' | (25) | o-kpéβ-té                      ígbú <sup>h</sup> ró.<br>3SgPROCL-plant-PE yams<br>'S/he has planted yams' |
|------|---|------|---|

#### 2.2.1.3. The negative imperative enclitic (NIE)

This enclitic, with the UF **tU**, suggests that somebody is prohibited from doing something. Like the perfect, it has eight phonologically conditioned allomorphs: **du/du**, **ru/ru**, **lu/lu**, **tu/tu**.

The form **du/du** occurs after a host that ends with a nasal consonant:

- |      |  |      |  |
|------|--|------|--|
| (26) | é- <i>gbom</i> -du!<br>2SgPROCL-bite-NIE<br>'Don't bite (sth.)!' | (27) | é- <i>gen</i> -du                      éni!<br>2SgPROCL-look-NIE us<br>'Don't look at us!' |
|------|--|------|--|

The form **ru/ro** occurs after a host that ends with /r/:

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| (28) | é- <i>kor</i> -ru!<br>2SgPROCL-scoop-NIE<br>'Don't scoop (sth.)!' | (29) | é- <i>far</i> -ru!<br>2SgPROCL-tie-NIE<br>'Don't tie (sth.)!' |
|------|---|------|---|

The form **lu/lo** occurs after a host that ends with /l/:

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| (30) | é- <i>kɔl</i> -lu!<br>2SgPROCL-sew-NIE<br>'Don't sew (sth.)!' | (31) | é- <i>kpol</i> -lu!<br>2SgPROCL-heap-NIE<br>'Don't heap (sth.) up!' |
|------|---|------|---|

The form **tu/to** occurs after a host that ends with a vowel or a consonant that is not nasal or coronal:

- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| (32) | é- <i>dɛ</i> ku                      mɛ-tu!<br>2SgPROCL-buy give me-NIE<br>'Don't buy (sth.) for me!' | (33) | é- <i>kpeβ</i> -tu                      ígbúro!<br>2SgPROCL-plant-NIE yams<br>'Don't plant yams!' |
|------|---|------|---|

Similar to the Portuguese pronominal clitics discussed in Spencer (1991:363), the perfect and negative imperative enclitics in Degema trigger certain allomorphic changes both in the enclitics themselves and in the host to which they attach. After a host that ends with a nasal consonant, the consonant of the enclitic becomes [d]. After one that ends with an /r/ or /l/ the consonant of the enclitic becomes [r] and [l] respectively. (The /r/ and /l/ alternants of the enclitic and those of the host, however, are pronounced as single short consonants instead of long consonants). And after a host that ends with a vowel or a consonant that is not nasal or coronal, the consonant of the enclitic becomes [t].

#### 2.2.1.4. The discontinuation enclitic (DE)

The discontinuation has the UF **mUnU**, and suggests that somebody/something will stop or has stopped doing something.

- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| (34) | é- <i>ji</i> -munu.<br>2PIPROCL-come DE<br>'You are not coming again' | (35) | é- <i>gen</i> wɔ-munu.<br>3SgPROCL-look you-DE<br>'S/he is not looking at you again' |
|------|---|------|--|

#### 2.2.1.5. The excessive enclitic (EE)

This enclitic denotes excessiveness, and has the UF **βIrE**.

- (36) e-dúw-βíré-té éni.  
 3PIPROCL-follow-EE-PE us  
 'They have followed us too much'

- (37) o-kótú wó-βíré-<sup>h</sup>té.  
 3SgPROCL-call you-EE-PE  
 'S/he has called you too much'

#### 2.2.1.6. The inceptive enclitic (IE)

The use of this enclitic implies that somebody is implored to begin to do something. It's UF is **A**. It also implies that somebody is dared to do something and see the consequence. It occurs only in imperative and affirmative sentences, as the final element of the sentence.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (38) jí-ə!<br>come-IE<br>'Begin to come!' | (39) sa báw-a!<br>kick them-IE<br>'Begin to kick them!' |
|---|---|

#### 2.2.1.7. The request enclitic (RE)

The constructions in which this enclitic occurs denote request. This enclitic has the form **AnI**.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (40) kɪjɛ-anɪ ɔ́jɪ.<br>give-RE him<br>'Please give him' | (41) ku mɛ-aní.<br>Give me-RE<br>'Please give me' |
|---|---|

### 3. Conclusion

Much has been said, in this paper, about the grammatical elements referred to as clitics. It is established that clitics play a crucial role in the grammar of Degema. Proclitics are observed to enter into the argument structure of verbs. Also noted is the fact that they can co-occur with the subject NPs and not necessarily in complementary distribution with them. Proclitics are also found to have the agreement features of the subject NPs, such as person, number, case, and even [ $\pm$ HUMAN] feature of the subject NPs encoded in them. This results, in most cases, to the redundancy and subsequent dropping of the subject NP. In addition, proclitics combine with tone to distinguish certain types of statement/question and positive/negative pairs of sentences. Enclitics, like proclitics, combine with tone and contribute significantly to the grammar of Degema but unlike proclitics it is noted that the features of agreement are not encoded in them. Some of the syntactic and semantic notions expressed by enclitics include factative, perfect,

inceptive, negative imperative, discontinuation, excessive, and request. Furthermore, encliticisation is observed to trigger allomorphic changes.

Some abbreviations used in this paper:

ATR= advanced tongue root  
CM= compensatory morpheme  
DE= discontinuation enclitic  
EE= excessive enclitic  
EPRT= emphatic particle  
FACT= factative enclitic  
IMPRT= imperfective particle  
INIPRT= inceptive non-imperative particle  
NEG= negative  
NIE= negative imperative enclitic  
PE= perfect enclitic  
PRON= pronoun  
Q= question morpheme  
RE= request enclitic  
1SgPROCL= 1st person singular proclitic  
2SgPROCL= 2nd person singular proclitic  
2PlPROCL= 2nd person plural proclitic  
3SgPROCL= 3rd person singular proclitic  
3PlPROCL= 3rd person plural proclitic

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