

## DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN CLITICS AND WORDS IN DEGEMA, NIGERIA

Ethelbert E. KARI

*Graduate School of Language, Area and Culture Studies,  
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies*

**ABSTRACT** Defining clitics has been attempted in the literature. Similarities between clitics, affixes, and words have been pointed out. Kari concluded that clitics are not affixes.

The question then is if Degema clitics are not affixes, are they words? This paper attempts to distinguish between clitics and words through their similarities and differences. In showing their differences, some criteria that have been discussed in the literature, especially those discussed in Zwicky (1985) will be highlighted.

**Key Words:** Clitics; Words; Degema; Sandhi; Morphosyntax.

### INTRODUCTION

Degema is spoken by the peoples of Usokun-Degema and Degema Town in Degema Local Government Area of Rivers State of Nigeria. There are two mutually intelligible dialects of Degema-Usokun and Degema Town (Atala). The people of Usokun-Degema speak Usokun, while those of Degema Town speak Degema Town (Atala). There is no standard variety of Degema yet. The examples in this paper are based on the Usokun dialect.

### PREVIOUS STUDIES

Part of the definition of the clitic is that it is similar to the affix on the one hand and to the word on the other (see Spencer, 1991: 350; Zwicky, 1992: 269). Kari (1995a) first broached the discussion on clitics in Degema. In that work, the primary concern was the distinction between clitics and affixes. The conclusion is that clitics are not synchronic affixes (see Kari, 1995a; 1995b; 2002c). Although the similarity between clitics and words was pointed out numerous times, no distinction has been made between clitics and words, not even in subsequent work on Degema such as Kari (1995c, 1997, 2001). In Kari (2002c), an elaborate discussion on the distinction between clitics and affixes in Degema was presented in preparation for a detailed discussion on the distinction between clitics and words in the language. Table 1 shows the forms of two types of clitics that have featured in the literature on clitics in Degema.

I shall postpone the definitions of the clitic and word in Degema until their similarities and differences have been discussed.

**Table 1.** Forms of Degema Clitics\*.

Proclitics (subject clitics)		
Number	Person	Forms
Singular	1st	mE/E, mI/I
	2nd	mU/U, E
	3rd	mO/O
Plural	1st	mE/E
	2nd	mA/A
	3rd	mE/E, mI/I

  

Enclitics (non-subject clitics)	
factive	Vn
perfect	tE
negative imperative	tU
discontinuation	mUnU
excessive	βIrE
request	AnI

\*Capital letters in the forms of clitics represent two phonological alternants as follows:

A=ə/a, E=e/ε, I=i/i, O=o/ɔ, U=u/u.

‘V’ in the underlying form of the factative enclitic is an underspecified vowel.

## FEATURES COMMON TO CLITICS AND WORDS

Part of the definition of Degema clitics is that they have a greater degree of freedom by attaching to a variety of morphosyntactic categories. This implies that like words, clitics are not restricted, to some extent, in their occurrence with other words that are adjacent to them. This similarity with words was pointed out in Kari (2001: 180). I will discuss the similarity between clitics and words under two headings — ‘freedom of attachment’ and ‘subcategorization.’

### I. Freedom of Attachment of Clitics

Clitics are less restricted in their attachment, as they can attach to more than one morphosyntactic category. Consider the following examples:

- (1) **mó**=kpéjɪ ɪsama.<sup>(1)</sup>  
3SgPCL=wash shirts  
‘S/he washes shirts’
- (2) **mí**=kú jɪ ə.  
3SgPCL=EPAUX come CM  
‘I did come’

- (3)  $\acute{e}=s\acute{r}$  ta.  
3PIPCL.NEG=still go  
'They still did not go'
- (4a) o=mí=<sup>4</sup>**in**.  
3SgPCL=become wet=FE  
'It became wet/It is wet'
- (4b)  $\text{ɔ}=k\acute{u}^{(2)}$  m $\acute{e}$ =<sup>4</sup>**én**.  
3SgPCL=give me=FE  
'S/he gave me'
- (5a)  $\text{ɔ}=d\check{e}$  kú m $\acute{e}$ =<sup>4</sup>**té**.  
3SgPCL=buy give me=PE  
'S/he has bought it for me'
- (5b) o=kpe $\beta$ =**té** ígbú<sup>4</sup>ró.  
3SgPCL=plant=PE yams  
'S/he has planted yams'
- (6a)  $\acute{e}=d\acute{e}$  kú m $\acute{e}$ =**tu**.  
2SgPCL=buy give me=NIE  
'Don't buy (sth.) for me!'
- (6b)  $\acute{e}=kpe\beta$ =**tu** ígbúro.  
2SgPCL=plant=NIE yams  
'Don't plant yams!'
- (7a)  $\acute{a}=ji$ =**munu**.  
2PIPCL=come DE  
'You (pl.) are not coming again'
- (7b)  $\acute{a}=g\acute{e}n$  w $\text{ɔ}$ =**monu**.  
3SgPCL=look you=DE  
'S/he is not looking at you (sg.) again'
- (8a) e=dúw=**βiré**=té éni.  
3PIPCL=follow=EE=PE us  
'They have followed us too much'
- (8b) o=kótú w $\text{ɔ}$ =**βiré**=<sup>4</sup>té.  
3SgPCL=call you=EE=PE  
'S/he has called you (sg.) too much'

(9a) *krje=ani óji.*  
 give=RE him  
 ‘Please give him’

(9b) *ku me=aní.*  
 give me=RE  
 ‘Please give me’

[The symbol ‘=’ between a clitic and its host is used to indicate that the clitic does not form a morphological unit with its host]

In (1), the proclitic attaches to a verb; in (2) it attaches to an auxiliary, while in (3) it attaches to a preverbal adverb. In (7a)-(9a), for instance, enclitics attach to verbs, whereas in (7b)-(9b) they attach to pronouns. In this regard, clitics are similar to words than to affixes. Affixes do not have even the least freedom, since a particular affix cannot attach to more than one morphosyntactic category.

## II. Clitics and Subcategorization

Clitics, like words, which head phrases, satisfy the subcategorization requirements of predicates. This is particularly so with Degema subject clitics. In the absence of full-fledged subject NPs at surface structure, subject clitics become the sole bearer of nominative case as the external argument of the verb. Consider the following representations of the sentence in example (10) meaning ‘Binyen saw him’:

(10a) [<sub>S</sub>[<sub>NP</sub>[<sub>N</sub> Binyen<sub>i</sub>]] [[<sub>PCL</sub> ə<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>VP</sub>[<sub>V</sub> món] [<sub>NP</sub>[<sub>PRON</sub> óji<sub>j</sub>]]]]]

(10b) [<sub>S</sub>[<sub>NP</sub>[e<sub>i</sub>]] [[<sub>PCL</sub> ə<sub>i</sub>] [<sub>VP</sub>[<sub>V</sub> món] [<sub>NP</sub>[<sub>PRON</sub> óji<sub>j</sub>]]]]]

An examination of (10b) 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, such as person, number, and the semantic features of the NP, so that the grammaticality of the sentence is not affected when the subject NP is deleted. By the absorption of features, Degema subject clitics act as pseudo-subjects in the absence of overt subject NPs, and thus satisfy the argument structure of predicates (see Hale, 1973; Jaeggli, 1986; Wehrli, 1986; Borer, 1992; Halpern, 2001 for some related discussion).

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLITICS AND WORDS

Zwicky (1985) discussed tests/criteria that distinguish clitics from words. The

six principles discussed in Zwicky (1977) also form part of the tests, though with some refinement as a result of work done by other scholars. He categorized these tests into ‘phonological tests’, ‘accentual tests’, ‘tests using similarities between clitics and inflectional affixes’, ‘syntactic tests’, and ‘test derived from interface assumptions’. I will evaluate these tests to see how they distinguish clitics from words in Degema. I begin with the phonological tests.

## I. Phonological Tests

Clitics are assumed to form phonological units with adjacent words. However, non-clitic words are also noted as forming phonological units with adjacent words. In this regard, Zwicky (1985: 286) distinguished clitics and non-clitic words in terms of ‘phonological words’ and ‘phonological phrases’, i.e. clitic-word combination constitutes a phonological word, whereas word-word combination constitutes a phonological phrase.

In Degema, I observe that the clitic forms a phonological unit with the word it attaches itself to in terms of vowel harmony and tone assignment (see Kari, 2002c). Similarly, I observe that some non-clitic words, like object pronouns and some post-verbal adverbs also form a phonological unit with the preceding word. Like Zwicky, I distinguish these cases in terms of phonological words and phonological phrases. That is to say clitic+word (clitic+verb, clitic+auxiliary, clitic+preverbal adverb, and clitic+pronoun) constitutes a phonological word, whereas word+word (verb+object pronoun, and verb+post-verbal adverb) constitutes a phonological phrase.

### 1. *Internal/External Sandhi*

Internal sandhi rules apply between clitic and host<sup>(3)</sup> in the phonological word, while external sandhi rules apply between word and word in the phonological phrase. Words that are affected by external sandhi rules belong to established word classes. They are independent. The clitic is not independent and so has to depend on a word that provides phonological support. Consider the following examples:

- (11) o=síré=’én.  
3SgPCL=run=FE  
‘S/he ran’
- (12) ɔ=kíjé=’én.  
3SgPCL=gave=FE  
‘S/he gave (sth. to sb./sth.)’
- (13) mí=ma sire.  
1SgPCL.NEG=IM AUX run  
‘I have not run yet’

- (14) mí=gidi bǎǎw.<sup>(4)</sup>  
 1SgPCL.NEG=look for them  
 ‘I am not looking for them’
- (15) mí=mǎn bǎaw.  
 1SgPCL.NEG=see them  
 ‘I did not see them’
- (16) dúw bǎǎ.<sup>(5)</sup>  
 follow there  
 ‘Take that way!’
- (17) ta bǎa.  
 go there  
 ‘Go there!’

Examples (11)-(15) illustrate cases where clitics form phonological words with their hosts. Examples (14) and (17) are instances where non-clitic words form phonological phrases with adjacent words.

## 2. Word/Phrase Domains in Prosodic Phonology

Degema clitics count as belonging to the phonological word, not only because they are affected by rules of internal sandhi but also because they do so for the purpose of tone assignment (Kari, 2002c). Clitics are inherently toneless, and do not constitute independent prosodic domains. For this reason, they must become part of the host for the purpose of tone assignment. They must be prosodically integrated within the host to constitute a valid utterance. Consider the following examples:

- (18a) ǎ=kpor=**munu**.  
 2PIPCL.NEG=sing=DE  
 ‘You (pl.) will not sing again’  
 \*ǎ=  
 \*=**munu**
- (18b) e=kótú=**té** éni.  
 3PIPCL=call=PE us  
 ‘They have called us’  
 \*e=  
 \*=**té**
- (18c) ǎ=ma kotu wǎ.  
 3SgPCL=IMAX call you  
 ‘S/he has not called you (sg.) yet’  
 \*ǎ=

- (18d) **mó**=món mé.  
 3SgPCL=see me  
 ‘S/he will see me’  
 \***mó**=

The starred forms in (18) are ungrammatical because (a) the clitics are assumed to be independent of their hosts (b) the clitics are assumed as bearing tone<sup>(1)</sup>, which is possible only when they are attached to their hosts. As an illustration of the inherent tonelessness of clitics, observe that in (18a) and (18c) the subject clitics and their hosts are, as a combination, assigned a high-low tone pattern in negative sentences<sup>(6)</sup>, and then the low tone on the verb **kpor** ‘sing’ in (18a) spreads to the non-subject clitic=**munu**. In (18b), the high tone on the verb **kótú** ‘call’ spreads to the non-subject clitic=**te** in perfect sentences. These examples show that the clitics are indeed toneless outside words or phrases.

Non-clitic<sup>(6)</sup> words in Degema such as some object pronouns, in addition to having their segmental features determined by adjacent words, also have their tones altered by forming a phonological phrase with adjacent words as the following examples show (cf. the tones of pronouns in (19)-(22) with those in Table 2):

- (19) **faw** mé=gídí mé.  
 they 3PIPCL=look for me  
 ‘They are looking for me’
- (20) **ɔji** mó=món mé.  
 s/he 3SgPCL=see me  
 ‘S/he will see me’
- (21) **eni** mé=kótú mán ú’dě.  
 we 1PIPCL=call you tomorrow  
 ‘We will call you (pl.) tomorrow’
- (22) **eni** mé=wólé mán íkpoki.  
 we 1PIPCL=lend you money  
 ‘We will lend you (pl.) money’

In example (19), the 1sg. object pronoun occurs after a morpheme whose vowel is expanded and so its vowel agrees with that of the preceding morpheme in expandedness. And in (20), the same pronoun occurs after a morpheme whose vowel is non-expanded and so its vowel is also non-expanded. In (21), the vowel of the 2pl. object pronoun is expanded because those of the preceding morpheme are expanded, whereas in (22) the vowel of the pronoun is non-expanded because the vowels of the preceding morpheme are non-expanded (see Table 2 for the forms of object pronouns).

**Table 2.** Forms of Object Pronouns.

Number	Person	Object Pronoun
Singular	1st	mé <sup>+</sup> é/mé <sup>+</sup> é 'me'
	2nd	wó <sup>+</sup> ó 'you'
	3rd	ǒjǐ 'her/him/it'
Plural	1st	ení 'us'
	2nd	má <sup>+</sup> áj/má <sup>+</sup> áj 'you'
	3rd	bá <sup>+</sup> áw/bá <sup>+</sup> áw 'them'

Post-verbal adverbs have independent tones that appear not to be affected by tones of adjacent words, even though the paired forms of these adverbs are affected by external sandhi rules. In this regard, they form phonological phrases with adjacent words only in respect of their segmental features.

### 3. Word/Phrase Domains in Segmental Phonology

Whereas Degema clitics count as belonging to a phonological word under vowel harmony rules, non-clitics words count as belonging to a phonological phrase under such rules (see examples in 1. *Internal/External Sandhi*).

## II. An Accentual Test

Lack of independent accent has often been associated with clitics, whereas full words are considered as bearing accent. Degema clitics have no independent tone, i.e. underlying tone, unlike full words such as nouns, verbs, etc. However, they bear tone in the phonological word, since no syllable is toneless in such a word. Consider example (23):

(23a) mɔ= +tá mú ekí

(23b) mɔ=tá mú éki  
 3SgPCL=go to market  
 'He is going to market'

[The symbol '+' between two morphemes indicates morpheme boundary.]

In the example above, the subject clitic that is toneless in (23a) bears a tone in (23b) as the verb forms a complex with it in the surface structure.

## III. Tests Using Similarities Between Clitics and Inflectional Affixes

These tests include binding, closure, construction, ordering, distribution, and complexity.



1. *Binding*

Clitics, like affixes, are bound morphemes because they cannot occur in complete isolation. They are, therefore, different from independent words as these can occur in isolation. Consider examples (24) and (25).

- (24) ɔ=gén=dé ʒji.  
3SgPCL=look=PE him/her  
'S/he has looked at him'

- (25) ɓaw mé=síré ísí+ré.  
they 3PIPCL=run race  
'They are running'

In these examples the clitics **ɔ=**, **dɛ=**, and **me=** are bound to their hosts. In contrast, the words **gen**, **ɔji**, **ɓaw**, **sire**, and **isire** are free.

2. *Closure*

It is widely believed that inflection closes words to further affixation, while derivation does not. However, the discussion in Stump (2001) shows that the closure criterion does not apply universally. In Degema, no verbal extension (suffix) can occur after the perfect enclitic, for instance. Compare the grammatical (26) and the ungrammatical (27), where **-ɛsɛ** is a suffix.

- (26) ɔ=tá-sé='tɛ.  
3SgPCL=go-CAS=PE  
'S/he has caused (sb./sth.) to go'

- (27) \*ɔ=tá='tɛ-sɛ.  
3SgPCL=go=PE-CAS

[The symbol '-' between an affix and its stem is used to indicate that the affix forms a morphological unit with the stem.]

Nevertheless, the utility of the 'closure' criterion in establishing clitic-hood in Degema may not be absolute when (28) is considered.

- (28) o=gím-éné='é-j.  
3SgPCL=pin-RES=FE-HAB  
'S/he pinned himself/herself (with a pointed object) many times'

In (28) I observe that the factative enclitic occurs after the reflexive suffix but followed by the habitual suffix. For a detailed discussion on how the factative enclitic comes to be located in this position, see Kari (2002b).

### 3. *Construction*

Degema clitics, like words, combine with multi-word phrases. Although they attach phonologically to single words, they have a bearing on the whole phrase or sentence, like words. This test, therefore, does not distinguish Degema clitics from words.

### 4. *Ordering*

By this criterion clitics and affixes are considered as being strictly ordered with respect to adjacent morphemes, whereas free word order is associated with independent words. Within a clitic cluster, the ordering possibilities are fixed but with respect to adjacent morphemes Degema clitics, especially non-subject clitics, are not strictly ordered, as they can swap positions with an adjacent morpheme that meets certain syntactic and phonological requirements. For instance, non-subject clitics occur after a verb but when the verb is followed by an object pronoun that begins with a consonant, the clitic swaps positions with the pronoun (see examples (4)-(9)). Thus alternative order may not be a reliable test to distinguish words from clitics in Degema.

### 5. *Distribution*

Degema clitics, like affixes, have single principles governing their distribution. For instance, subject clitics combine with verbs (auxiliary and main) and adverbs, and non-subject clitics with main verbs and pronouns. Thus their distribution can only be stated with reference to these elements. Independent words in contrast have complex distributions. Nouns, for instance, can occur after verbs (29), after prepositions (30), after pronouns (31), before and after different sorts of modifiers (32), etc. There is no single principle governing their distribution, as they can be found in diverse positions in a sentence.

- (29a) ɔ=gén úʔβáj.  
3SgPCL=look house  
'S/he looked at a house'
- (30) ómó jɔ ɔ=tá=n mú éki.  
child DEF 3SgPCL=go=FE to market  
'The child went to market'
- (31) mɔ=kú mé íkpoki.  
3SgPCL=give me money  
'S/he will give me money'
- (32a) ó=ɓol ítóŋ<sup>w</sup> bibi.  
3SgPCL.NEG=hold cloth black  
'S/he is not holding a black cloth'

- (32b)  $\acute{o}$ =fija  $\text{ɔte}\beta\text{te}\beta$   $\acute{u}$ taŋ.  
 3SgPCL.NEG=cut short tree  
 ‘S/he did not cut a short tree’

#### 6. Complexity

It is believed that clitics, like affixes, are not morphologically complex, whereas words are. Unless morphological complexity is to be understood in terms of isolatability (Zwicky, 1985 did not specify), i.e. the possibility of isolating two or more morphemes that make up a word, Degema clitics (especially subject clitics), like words, are morphologically complex. Forms of subject clitics are complex in terms of having more than one morpheme. For instance, the subject clitic **mU** is composed of ‘2nd person’ (person) morpheme and ‘singular’ (number) morpheme. These morphemes are, however, fused such that it is impossible to say where one begins and where the other ends. Complexity, therefore, may also not be a reliable test as far as the distinction between clitics and words in Degema is concerned.

### IV. Syntactic Tests

It is believed that syntactic processes apply to words (because they serve as syntactic constituents) but not clitics (because they are only ‘a proper part of a word-like construct’). Processes such as deletion, replacement, and movement are used to test the wordness or cliticness of an element. I will examine how these tests distinguish clitics from words in Degema.

#### 1. Deletion

Zwicky (1985: 288) noted that ‘[p]roper parts of words<sup>(7)</sup> are not subject to deletion under identity; whole words may ... undergo such deletions’. Here I consider only subject clitics, as these are co-referential to nominals that serve as subject, unlike the non-subject clitics. Degema subject clitics are not subject to deletion under identity, unlike words. Consider example (33):

- (33a)  $\text{ɔji}$   $\text{m}\acute{o}$ = $\text{t}\acute{a}$   $\text{m}\acute{u}$   $\acute{e}$ ki.  
 S/he 3SgPCL=go to market  
 ‘S/he is going to market’
- (33b) —  $\text{m}\acute{o}$ = $\text{t}\acute{a}$   $\text{m}\acute{u}$   $\acute{e}$ ki.  
 3SgPCL=go to market  
 ‘S/he is going to market’
- (33c) \* $\text{ɔji}$  —  $\text{t}\acute{a}$   $\text{m}\acute{u}$   $\acute{e}$ ki.

[The symbol ‘—’ is used to indicate the position of a missing linguistic element]

Whereas the subject pronoun **ɔji** in (33a) undergoes deletion in (33b), the

subject clitic, which is coreferential to the pronoun, does not delete under identity, as the ungrammatical (33c) shows. This indicates that the clitic is not a word but the pronoun is. Thus words and clitics are distinguished by this test.

### 2. Replacement

I claim that proper parts of words cannot be replaced by a proform under identity but whole words can. Consider example (34):

- (34a) tatané mǝ=máǰíné ínúm.  
 tatané 3SgPCL=learn something  
 ‘Tatane is studying’
- (34b) ɔʝi mǝ=máǰíné ínúm.  
 she 3SgPCL=learn something  
 ‘She is studying’
- (34c) \*tatané ɔʝi máǰíné ínúm.  
 tatané she learn something

**tatané** in (34a) is replaced by a proform in (34b) without loss of grammaticality but the replacement of the subject clitic **mǝ=** with a proform in (34c) results in ungrammaticality. This shows that whereas **tatané** is a word the subject clitic is not. This test also distinguishes the clitic from whole words in Degema.

### 3. Movement

Movement rules are considered not to apply to any of the parts of a host clitic [X+Y] combination. If they do, then both X and Y are words. Full words are believed to yield to movement rules. Consider the example (35).

- (35a) o=méné wǝ=n imo.  
 3SgPCL=do you=FE what  
 ‘What did s/he do to you (sg.)?’
- (35b) wǝ nú o=méné — =n imo.  
 you FOC 3SgPCL=do — =FE what  
 ‘It is you (sg.) that s/he did what to?’
- (35c) \*wǝ=n nú o=méné — imo.  
 you=FE FOC 3SgPCL=do — what

In (35a) the pronoun and the factative enclitic constitute X and Y. It is interesting to note that the pronoun X is moved to the front of the sentence without the enclitic Y in (35b) yet the sentence is grammatical. In (35c) where the pronoun-enclitic [X and Y] sequence is moved, the sentence is ungrammatical.

Does this suggest that both the pronoun and the enclitic are full words? I don't think so. In using this test to distinguish clitics from words, I would rather say that in Degema clitics cannot be extracted in a host-clitic combination by movement rules but full words may be extracted by such rules (see Kari, 2002c for a parallel discussion involving affix-stem combination and syntactic rules, and Kari, 2002a for a discussion on cliticization and movement).

## V. A Test Derived from Interface Assumptions

It is believed that the component where cliticization takes place is ordered after syntactic rules apply, i.e. syntactic rules apply before cliticization (see also Zwicky & Pullum, 1983). Investigations reveal that this ordering holds for cliticization in Degema. It appears that the sequence  $X+Y$  in Degema, where  $Y$  is a dependent of  $X$  forming a unit  $Z$ , is not available before the application of syntactic rules. Since this sequence appears to be possible only after the application of syntactic rules, I assume that  $Y$  is a clitic (see Kari, 2002a for some discussion).

## VI. Defining the Clitic and Word

On the basis of the differences I noted as existing between clitics and words, I propose the following definitions for these elements in Degema. I will combine a number of criteria in defining the clitic and word in Degema. The reason for combining criteria is to ensure that what I am defining as clitics are not affixes, as affixes can as well be distinguished from words by applying some of these criteria.

### 1. *Defining the Clitic*

I define the clitic in Degema in relation to the word as an element that has no tone in isolation, that cannot occur in complete isolation, that has single principles in distribution, that cannot be deleted, replaced, or moved in a host-clitic combination, and which forms a unit with its host only after the application of syntactic rules.

### 2. *Defining the Word*

I define the independent word in Degema in relation to the clitic as an element that bears tone in isolation, that can occur in complete isolation, that has a complex distribution, that can be deleted, replaced, or moved, and which must be specified by a syntactic rule.

## CONCLUSION

I have examined a number of tests as discussed in Zwicky (1985) and seen the extent to which they distinguish or fail to distinguish clitics from words in

Degema. Whereas not all the tests are reliable in making the distinction, some distinguished the two elements under consideration quite clearly. Of these test, the ones I find more reliable are ‘accentual,’ ‘binding,’ ‘distribution,’ ‘deletion,’ ‘replacement,’ and ‘test deriving from interface assumptions.’ The ‘movement’ test is reliable only with modification. The less reliable tests are so considered because clitics and full words share some of the features by which they are assumed to be distinguished. For instance, sandhi and prosodic rules seem to apply to words and clitics. Again, clitics and words combine with multi-word phrases (cf. construction test).

The discussion on the distinction between clitics and words has shown that the elements I call clitics in Degema are not independent words despite the properties that they have in common with independent words. The similarities between Degema clitics and words support the claim that clitics are word-like, and partly make the distinction between clitics and words unclear in many languages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT I am grateful to Dr. Shigeki Kaji and the anonymous ASM reviewer for their comments.

#### NOTES

- (1) Degema has two tones — high and low, plus a downstepped high. In this paper, only the high tone and the downstepped high are marked.
- (2) This is an allomorph of the verb **kije** ‘give’, which occurs before object pronouns that begin with a consonant.
- (3) Although Zwicky refers to clitics forming phonological units with independent words, I refer to the words with which they form phonological units as ‘hosts’ rather than ‘independent words’. Some of the words (verbs and pronouns) with which clitics form phonological units are indeed independent but others (auxiliaries and pre-verbal adverbs) are not independent. This dependence of auxiliaries and pre-verbal adverbs is not in terms of phonology but in terms of syntactic context because unlike clitics, they are phonologically independent to the extent that the quality of their vowels is not determined by that of the adjacent morphemes. Auxiliaries and pre-verbal adverbs are grammatical words and so they depend on other independent words for the realization of their function and meaning.
- (4/5) Kari (1998) considered pronouns and adverbs in examples (14), (16) as clitics because of their being influenced by the phonology of a preceding word. Although ‘phonological dependence’ is a strong criterion in the definition of clitics in Degema, it is by no means the sole criterion. A stronger criterion is ‘syntactic freedom’. To qualify as a clitic in Degema, such an element should be characterized by the two criteria of ‘phonological dependence’ and ‘syntactic freedom’. Because these pronouns and adverbs do not have any syntactic freedom, I exclude them from the elements I consider as clitics in Degema. It is clear that these pronouns and adverbs form phonological phrases with adjacent words, as they are affected by rules of external sandhi.
- (6) I note that auxiliaries and preverbal adverbs are independent by not being affected by rules of external sandhi yet they are dependent in terms of tone assignment. The question is on what do they depend for tone assignment? I assume here that clitics and aux-

iliaries, and clitics and preverbal adverbs count as belonging to a phonological word but that auxiliaries and preverbal adverbs and verbs count as belonging to the phonological phrase for the purpose of tone assignment.

- (7) Whereas affixes are truly ‘proper parts of words’, as they are morphologically bound to the stem, clitics are not proper parts of words, since they are not morphologically bound to the host. I, therefore, use the phrase ‘proper parts of words’ loosely.

## ABBREVIATIONS

1SgPCL=1st person singular proclitic  
 2SgPCL=2nd person singular proclitic  
 3SgPCL=3rd person singular proclitic  
 1PlPCL=1st person plural proclitic  
 2PlPCL=2nd person plural proclitic  
 3PlPCL=3rd person plural proclitic  
 1sg=1st person singular  
 2pl=2nd person plural  
 CAS=causative suffix  
 CM=compensatory morpheme  
 DE=discontinuation enclitic  
 DEF=definite article  
 EE=excessive enclitic  
 EPAUX=emphatic past auxiliary  
 FE=factative enclitic  
 FOC=focus marker  
 HAB=habitual suffix  
 IMAUX=imperfective auxiliary  
 NEG=negative  
 NIE=negative, imperative enclitic  
 NP=noun phrase  
 PCL=proclitic  
 PE=perfect enclitic  
 PRON=pronoun  
 RE=request enclitic  
 RES=reflexive suffix  
 S=sentence  
 V=verb  
 VP=verb phrase

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- Accepted September 1, 2002

Author's Name and Address: Ethelbert E. KARI, *Dai-ni Sengenso 201, Shinmachi 2-61-3, Fuchu-shi, Tokyo 183-0052, JAPAN.*  
*E-mail: kari@aa.tufs.ac.jp*