

# Pronominal Forms in Central Cagayan Agta: Clitics or Agreement Features?

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The forms of the first and second person singular genitive pronouns exhibit alternation in a number of Austronesian languages, including all but a few of the Cordilleran languages of the Northern Philippines (Dyen 1974; Tharp 1974; Blust 1977; Reid 1978, 1981, 2001; etc.). In general, the alternation is phonologically conditioned: the full forms, typically *=ku* '1S' and *=mu* '2S', occur postconsonantly, whereas the short forms *=k* '1S' and *=m* '2S' occur postvocally. However, in the Central Cordilleran languages, as well as in Ilokano, the short forms can also occur on transitive verbs containing a reflex of either *\*-en* or *\*-an*, by replacing the final *-n* of the verb ending (Reid 2001:235–237). In each of these languages (but not in Ilokano), the final *-n* of a transitive verb is also replaced when the third person singular form *=na* occurs.

To explain the occurrence of the postvocalic variants on transitive verbs that otherwise would end in a consonant, Reid (2001) reexamines the status of these forms, that is, whether they are full words, clitics, affixes, or none of the above. Applying the clitic tests provided by Zwicky and Pullum (1983:503–504), he concludes that the so-called short form first and second person singular “genitive pronouns” as well as the so-called third person singular “genitive pronoun” *-na* that replace the final *-n* of transitive verbs are NOT clitics, but agreement features that have been incorporated as a part of transitive verbs.

A similar kind of alternation is observed in Central Cagayan Agta, a Northern Cordilleran language. In Central Cagayan Agta, as in other Cordilleran languages, the alternation in the forms of the first and second person singular genitive pronouns is also phonologically conditioned. That is, the full forms *=ku* '1S' and *=mu* '2S' occur after a consonant-final stem, whereas the short forms *=k* '1S' and *=m* '2S' occur after a vowel-final stem. However, when the second person singular genitive pronoun *=mu* occurs with stems ending with an alveolar nasal, formal irregularities occur. The morphophonological idiosyncrasies exhibited by the combination of the second person singular genitive pronoun with a stem ending with an alveolar nasal pose the question as to whether all assumed “clitic pronouns” are clitics or agreement features. In this study, I reconsider the morphological status of genitive pronouns (or their probably related forms) and see whether ALL these forms are clitics in Central Cagayan Agta.