

## SYNTACTIC PECULIARITIES OF IDÒMÀ RELATIVE CLAUSES

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### ABSTRACT

The paper studies the syntax of Idòmà relative clause constructions. The motivation for the choice of the study was because of the central role relative clauses play as the nucleus of complex sentences in languages. The study examines relative clauses in Idòmà by describing the principles for realising them in the language. Both primary and secondary sources reveal that Idòmà relative clauses are introduced by the relative pronoun |n| ‘who’, ‘which’, ‘whom’, which is realised as a high nasal /n/ [+ pronoun] feature. The following sound is determined by the initial sound of the vowel of the succeeding word. Ónyẹ, which also means ‘who’ is used in situations where a relative clause introducer occurs at the beginning of the clause. In other words, /n/ and ónyẹ are in complementary distribution. As in other languages Idòmà relative clauses are adjectival modifiers subordinated to an NP. In Idòmà the pronoun is at the NP position as the head of the clause. That is, the relative pronoun is always the first member of a relative clause, no matter its position in the deep structure of the sentence in which it is found. Also, as in other languages, Idòmà relative clauses are embedded in the main clause, which, in effect, modifies the subject NP. Relative clauses in Idòmà are not sensitive to number distinction, as in Hausa and English, for example. They are however characterized by time adverbials. Idòmà relative clauses are sensitive to mood and aspect, post-nominal as well as benefactive and are amenable to adjunction, complementation and coordination. Idòmà relative clauses have the following accessibility hierarchy and structure: subject, direct object, indirect object, genitive and object of comparison.

**Keywords:** Syntax, Idòmà, Relative Clauses.