A MODERN GRAMMAR OF ACEHNENESE: SOME CRITICAL OBSERVATIONS


1. Acehnese, a language spoken in north Sumatra, is, according to the criteria formulated during the National Seminar on Vernacular Languages in Yogyakarta 1976, one of the major vernaculars of Indonesia. It counts over a million speakers and has its own literary tradition. The actual number of speakers ranges between 1.5 and 2 million. Some 40 years after the appearance of the well-known publications of Snouck Hurgronje and Hoessein Djajadiningrat, Cowan published a concise outline of the phonology and morphology of the so-called Banda dialect of Acehnese (Cowan 1981). Durie’s 1985 Ph.D. thesis is the first full-fledged grammar of the language. It contains, besides an introduction (pp. 1-8), chapters on phonology (pp. 9-28), morphology (pp. 29-45), verbs (pp. 47-105), nominals (pp. 107-149), epistemological classifiers (pp. 151-168), prepositions (pp. 169-177), clausal syntax (pp. 179-229), and syntax beyond the clause (pp. 231-271), as well as a list of references (pp. 273-278).

The author has chosen a dialect of north Aceh (that of the village of Côt Trieng in Bireuen) for his description, for the following reasons:

(1) this dialect has become something of a standard, because it is ‘the most uniform and numerous in speakers’ and it has ‘prestige and importance’;

(2) north Aceh people have the reputation of being haloh (‘refined, subtle’), which is reflected in the language by a set of status-conditioned pronominal forms;

(3) the dialect is syntactically the most complex; and

(4) other linguistic work on Acehnese has been done by scholars from north Aceh (Budiman Sulaiman and Abdul Gani Asyik).

Durie stresses the fact that in ‘Snouck Hurgronje’s days’ the dialect of Banda Aceh was the most prestigious one, but that today ‘Banda dialects’ are considered coarse (p. 7). This statement is quite at variance with what

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1 The other major vernaculars are Javanese, Sundanese, some Malay dialects, Madurese, Bugis/Makasarase, Minangkabau, Batak, Balinese and Sasak (see Nababan 1985:1-18).

2 Durie gives a figure of 1,500,000, Nababan 1985, quoting the 1971 census, 1,750,000, Akbar et al. 1985 conjectures 1,852,000 (i.e., 70.94% of all the inhabitants of the province of Aceh), Sulaiman 1979 mentions the figure 1,775,701, and Lawler 1977 arrives at an approximate total of two million.
Cowan says (Cowan 1981), where he indicates that the Banda dialect is 'more or less the standard dialect'. Durie’s remarks also seem to disagree with some Indonesian sources, e.g. Ali et al. (1984), whose views are quoted by Akbar et al. (1985), who state (admittedly quite vaguely) that ‘Bahasa Aceh yang berkembang di Banda Aceh sudah merupakan bahasa Aceh umum yang mengarah ke bahasa standar akibat hilangnya unsur-unsur dialektis bagi penutur bahasa Aceh yang telah menetap di kotamadya Banda Aceh’ (Akbar et al. 1985:9). Ismail (1983:7) also points to a ‘ragam yang umum di kalangannya [i.e., of the speakers living in Kodya Banda Aceh] yang sudah tidak memperlihatkan lagi ciri-ciri dan warna bahasa yang biasa digunakan di daerahnya masing-masing’.

On the other hand Sulaiman (1978/1979), one of Durie’s sources, chooses for his description the Peusangan dialect, which is probably not much different from that of Bireuen, because it is considered to be ‘lebih umum dan lebih banyak pemakainya jika dibandingkan dengan dialek lain’ (Sulaiman 1978/1979:4). Obviously no decision has so far been reached about which dialect should be established as standard variant: the National Center for Language Development and Cultivation (NCLD) at Jakarta has published works by authors with diametrically opposed opinions.

Since the language situation is not very transparent, and hardly any dialectal material is available, Durie might have provided his readers with a map showing the language area, the five main dialect areas, and some topographical features. Since not every user is in possession of Wurm and Hattori 1981-1983, such a map would have elucidated the introductory passages of the book considerably. More information on work done by Acehnese scholars would also have been useful. Apart from the two scholars already mentioned above, there are others, and although Durie is right in saying that their works are virtually unobtainable outside Indonesia, I believe that it is worthwhile to mention them in any case. In my own bibliography the titles are listed of works found both at the NCLD in

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3 T. Iskandar points to the pervasive influence of the Banda Aceh dialect due to the fact that most older sources, as well as the first textbooks by L. de Vries and Hadji Aboebakar (see Voorhoeve 1955), were written in this particular dialect (personal communication).

4 ‘The Acehnese which developed in Banda Aceh now constitutes a general, standard-like Acehnese because of the disappearance of dialectal elements from the speech of those Acehnese speakers who have settled in Banda Aceh.’

5 ‘A variety which is general among them, which no longer displays the features and characteristics of the speech which is normally used in their respective home regions.’

6 ‘More general, with more speakers in comparison with other dialects.’

7 The need to establish an official standard variant is particularly clear from Jusuf et al. (1986), who suggest that one of the reasons for the decreasing interest in the study of Acehnese in secondary schools is the lack of a standard language variant and of an official orthography (Jusuf et al. 1986:51).

8 Dialectal research has now commenced under the aegis of NCLD; see, e.g., Sulaiman et al. 1984/1985 and Faridan et al. 1985.
Jakarta and at the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology in Leiden.

2. Durie’s description centres on a few main, interrelated linguistic problems: subject assignment, semantic functions (especially those of Agent and Undergoer), active/passive and functional sentence perspective, and verb/adjective. Although it is claimed in par. 1.4. that no particular linguistic theory has been used as a guiding principle and that the approach is ‘eclectic’ – a laudable choice –, in paragraph 1.5. the author states that his work owes most theoretically to Wierzbicka’s semantics and to Foley and Van Valin’s Role and Reference Grammar. The influence of the latter is more evident than that of the former author. In general, universalistic tendencies are demonstrable. Since a detailed discussion of these problems demands a more extensive knowledge than that of the present reviewer and in addition many more data than Durie provides, I have selected for comment only some points which are of particular interest for the description of Austronesian languages.

3.1. Durie introduces sub-phonemically the parameters of glottal stricture (voicelessness-murmur-voice, e.g.: [p] vs. [b] vs. [b]) and voice onset time (aspirated - unaspirated, e.g.: [pʰ] vs. [p]) as descriptive features, which provides us with the familiar three-way contrast between voiced, voiceless aspirated and voiceless consonants on the one hand and murmured consonants (or consonants with murmured release) on the other. He thus stresses the familiar point of view that the latter sounds should not be considered as voiced consonants followed by aspiration and/or combined with a period of voicelessness. Taking the labial stops as an example, Durie’s analysis results in the following picture (table 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>voiceless</th>
<th>voiced</th>
<th>murmured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

The murmured stops are characterized by a ‘whispery’ voice, which predictably is clearly audible in the following vowel. The voiceless aspirated stops are said to have a voice onset lag (p. 10), which, as I understand it, implies that the vocal cords are in the voiceless position during the release. Durie also remarks that these sounds, just as in the case of the murmured stops, ‘have a noise source (at the glottis or place of articulation of the following vowel) during the period before the onset of modal voicing’ (p. 12).

It is well-known that Acehnese displays (vestiges of) certain areal features, which it shares with related mainland Austronesian (Chamic)
languages such as Western Cham and Haroi, as well as with languages of
the unrelated Mon-Khmer language group, e.g. Khmer and Rengao. Apart
from the often mentioned similarity in stress location, syllable patterning,
affixation and vocabulary, a most conspicuous shared feature is what
Henderson (1952) has called 'register' (voice register), i.e. a phonation type
conditioned by what Gregerson (1976 and 1978) has declared, quite
convincingly, to my mind, to be the position of the tongue root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voice quality</th>
<th>Vowel quality</th>
<th>Pitch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retracted tongue root (RTR)</td>
<td>clear tense</td>
<td>open unglided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced tongue root (ATR)</td>
<td>breathy relaxed</td>
<td>close, glided, i.e., centering diphthongs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

A combination of phenomena such as degree of vocalic openness, timbre,
pitch, consonant voicing and vowel harmony can be explained by the
position and movement of the tongue root in relation with the tongue tip.

Noise source and voice onset lag as attested in Acehnese may to my
mind be ascribed physiologically to tongue-root advancement, which
would present us with a set of correlations which are much closer to Durie's
phonemic interpretation. For the labial stops see table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+ voice</th>
<th>— voice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ ATR</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— ATR</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

I am aware that in most of the current literature aspiration is usually not
treated in terms of ± ATR. However, the presence of a noise source at the
glottis seems to me sufficient reason to take this analysis into considera-
tion.

Since ATR affects consonants and vowels alike, it is in fact necessary
to determine: (1) whether the absence of [...] in either [C] or [V] is sufficient
to distinguish [ČV] from [CV]; or (2) whether [...] should be present in both
segments. Elsewhere I have indicated how to do so (Stokhof 1979). Durie,
3.2. On page 12 it is said that aspirated labials and palatals are sometimes ‘articulated’ as fricatives. Unfortunately no information is given about when and where this occurs. There are four such complex sounds, viz.: [ph, bh, ch] and [jh], but only for the first aspirate is a fricative realization noted: [∅].

Why are we not informed about the realization and distribution of the other variants? In view of the conspicuous absence of [f], it would be interesting to know how loanwords from Indonesian such as *fakultas, fakta,* etc., are realized in Acehnese. If /f/ exists in loans, it forms part of the system and should be included in the phonemic inventory of the language. The (optional?) fricative substitutes should at least have been indicated in phonetic table 2-1 (syllable-initial consonant phones).

3.3. Durie employs the terms ‘plain nasals’, ‘nasal stops’ and ‘funny nasals’. He uses ‘nasal stops’, which ‘are characterized by an obstructed oral tract’ (p. 10), for what is usually termed nasals, i.e., sounds in which the oral passage is blocked and all air passes through the nose. Statements such as: ‘Where the initial consonant of a penultimate syllable is a nasal stop […] e.g.] [mawA] “rose”’ (p. 22) and ‘Nasal vowels occur in unstressed syllables if and only if there is an immediately preceding nasal stop’ (p. 21) confirm this. Somewhat confusingly, the author also uses the term ‘plain nasals’ for the same sounds ([m, n, n̩], table 2-1: syllable-initial consonant phones) and ventures the description ‘nasal stops’ for [m̩, n̩] and [r̩̩] (table 2-2: syllable-final consonant phones).

Now, [∅] is discussed in connection with stops, where it indicates glottalization (p. 15): [p̩], [t̩̩]. A glottal stop is said to coincide with oral closure, often followed by a glottal release and accompanied by a lowering of the velum. It is not clear whether [∅] in [N̩̩] symbolizes this phenomenon as well, or, for that matter, the reported nasal release attested in syllable-final [p] and [t] after nasal vowels: Whatever the case may be, the use of the term ‘nasal stops’ is of course correct, although it is not common practice and is confusing in view of the occurrence of syllable-final nasals (with an orally and glottally obstructed or/delayed? release).

3.4. Nasality in Acehnese is an extremely interesting phenomenon, and what the author says does not seem to me to be the last word on this subject. In disagreement with earlier interpretations, which assume an opposition between ‘funny’ and ‘plain’ nasals (e.g., [mr̩] → /mba/ or /ma/ vs. [m̩] → /ma/), Durie opts for complementary distribution.

The literature is vague about ‘funny’ nasals, and I have not been able
to find an informant from Durie's research area in Leiden. I therefore refrain from any comment on the phonetic aspects of the description. [m̩]-type nasals are acoustically longer (p. 15) than plain nasals / nasal stops. They occur only in stressed syllables and are characterized by the explicit absence of nasality in the following vowel (p. 20). By 'stressed' syllables is meant here 'accentuable' syllables, i.e. word-final syllables that 'can bear stress' (p. 21, p. 30), as opposed to unstressed syllables, which can never bear stress. Funny nasals are said to be in complementary distribution with syllable-initial plain nasals, 'which always precede nasal vowels', and syllable-final nasals.

The difference between, say, [m̩] and [m] is consequently interpreted in terms of the presence or absence of nasality in the following stressed vowel, viz. [m̩] \rightarrow /ma'/, [m̩] \rightarrow /m̩a'/, and, in addition, [am̩] \rightarrow /am̩/. Elsewhere (Stokhof 1979) I have indicated how a decision may be reached in these cases, namely by determining whether the pertinent feature is to be assigned to the consonantal or to the vocalic segment. Needless to say, one should first check whether [a] is opposed to sequences such as [a^n], [a^n], [a^n]. This is indeed the case in Acehnese. Next one should compare [m̩a'] with [ba'] and [m̩ba', m̩ba'], and then, depending on the results, oppose [m̩a'] to [ma'], [m̩a'], and *[m̩a'], and [ma'] to [ma'] and *[m̩a']. It is conceivable that we are confronted here with a case of joint features (see Kortlandt 1972), in the sense that a single relevant feature, 'nasality', is present in a number of successive phonemes simultaneously, e.g. [m̩a'] as compared to, e.g., [ba']. In this context 'syllabic denasalization' should probably be taken into account as being attested in doublets ('freely varying pairs') such as /bandrêêt ~ mânôdîêt/ 'type of spicy drink'. Durie mentions a following (tautosyllabic) nasal 'stop' or an adjacent nasalized segment in the following syllable as conditioning environment (p. 35).

Since we also find independent nasal vowels, e.g. [p̩a'] and [p̩a'], I accept an oral-nasal opposition in the vowel phonemes: /p̩a'/ vs. /p̩a'/. Differently from Durie, who writes /m̩a'/ for [m̩a'], I suggest neutralization of [ma'] (not mentioned by Durie) and [m̩a'], symbolized as /mA'/. The difference between /ma'/ \leftarrow [m̩a'] and /mA'/ would then be: oral/nasal opposition in the first form vs. absence of this distinction in the latter.

In unstressed syllables, nasal vowels are said to occur after an immediately preceding nasal stop (p. 25). Summarizing Durie's data on 'funny' and plain nasals in the following table, we find that, as in the case of stressed syllables, the information is quite limited about the appearance of an initial [m]-type sound followed by an unstressed non-nasal vowel: [ma].

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On p. 20 it is said that syllable-initial plain nasals always precede nasal vowels. Does this imply that they never occur with a following non-nasal vowel in that position?
Stressed +
—
Presence of nasality in
subsequent vowel
+
ma'
ma
—
ma'

Table 4

Durie states, probably quite rightly, that the oral-nasal contrast in unstressed syllables is ‘phonemically redundant’ because of the preceding nasal. I suggest neutralization of [ma] and ? [ma]. Below I offer Durie’s analysis (I) alongside my own (II):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ma']</td>
<td>/ma/</td>
<td>/ma'/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[mã'], [mã]</td>
<td>/mã'/, /mã/²</td>
<td>/mA', /mA/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ma']³, [ma]³</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>'redundant'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[pa'], [pa]</td>
<td>/pa'/, /pa/</td>
<td>/pa'/, /pA/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[pã'], [pã]</td>
<td>/pã'/, —</td>
<td>/pã'/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

Needless to say, the II analysis hinges on the neutralization between /ā'/ and /a'/ and /ā/ and /a/ respectively. Defective distribution would yield quite a different picture here.

3.5. Durie posits neutralization of /b/ and /p/, /d/ and /t/ in syllable-final position, but does not mention the velars /g/ vs. /k/ (p. 20). Since they are not included in the list of consonants which may close syllables, I presume that they have not been attested. Durie rejects Lawler’s statement that final [?] may morphophonemically be regarded as /k/ on the basis of the fact that a [? ~ k] alternation such as Malay [pende ?], kependekan, is absent in Acehnese.

In a phonemic analysis, where distinctiveness is decisive, morphemic alternation is not a conclusive argument. Neither is the non-occurrence of certain phonemes in a given position: a distinctiveness test should decide whether [g], [k] and [?] are neutralized in final position.

3.6. Durie distinguishes a series of oral and nasal diphthongs: ĵ, ţ, ū², ê², ē² and i, uĩ, ū, ê and 5. They only occur in stressed position: syncope of the centering glide is automatic, its presence being conditioned by stress. However, since we find minimal pairs in /V'/ vs. /V's/ (or better: /V's/), the author correctly posits an opposition /V'/ vs. /V'a/, which, I would add,
is neutralized in unstressed syllables: e.g. /i'ɑ/ 'water', but /i-mandrêt/ 'type of spicy drink'.

If this analysis is correct, then it yields the following picture for the stressed and unstressed nasalized diphthongs following a nasal consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stressed</th>
<th>Unstressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[mə']</td>
<td>/mǎ/</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[mə']</td>
<td>/ma'/</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[mə']</td>
<td>/mǍ/</td>
<td>/mA'/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6

Here /Δ/ symbolizes the neutralization between the following oppositions: /a/ vs. /ɑ̌/, /ǎ/ vs. /ɑ̌/ and /Ǎ/ vs. /A/.

Durie treats these centering diphthongs as unit phonemes because of their syntagmatic and paradigmatic substitutability with monophthongs. I would suggest a biphonemic treatment of these sound complexes. The author does not include [a] in his table of monophthongs (2-3), although the sound seems also to occur independently in stressed position. Below I cite some instances from Durie’s book where e stands for [ə] (see p. 27, where /ə/ is written as ě):

- p. 52, p. 96 tēt, teumentēt ‘to burn’
- p. 99 lē ‘much’, and p. 42 lē-lē ‘really a lot’
- p. 100 kuēt ‘to cackle (hen)’
- p. 102 rhēt ‘to fall’
- p. 104 trēn ‘to descend’
- p. 145 hèy ‘to call out’
  - neuhēy ‘the act of calling out’
- p. 268,9 bēh illocutionary marker.

Unless ě stands for /asion, and /ə/ (p. 27) is consequently a printing error, I am not sure about the status of this ě in the above-mentioned cases. And what about ě in aē (?[ǎ]) in baē and mubae ‘to howl’ (p. 94), as opposed to complexes such as oe (=[ǒ]), where the schwa-ending of the diphthong is indicated by e? A possible [ǎ] is not indicated in the table of diphthongs (2-4). If phonemics is taken to be the study of distinctiveness of speech sounds – a view which Durie seems to share with me – then not substitutability, but rather the question of whether the realization of a glided vowel, say [ǐ] or [ǐ], is functionally distinct from a realization [ǐ], must be regarded as the correct parameter for either a biphonemic or a monophonemic interpretation. No clear information is available concerning the duration of the second component, but Durie does not consider it as a syllable-constituting element. See, for instance, p. 33, where /publɔ/ ‘to
sell' is given as an example of a non-trisyllabic word. Another possibility is that [i'ə] is confined to the elliptic sub-code and [i'ə] to the explicit sub-code. In any case, if an informant does not object to [i'ə] as a possible realization alongside [i'ə] or [i'ə], and where, moreover, /ə/ is attested, I would unburden the phonemic system of 5 oral diphthongs and 5 nasal diphthongs.

Durie's second argument against a biphonemic interpretation is that it would complicate the description of the syllable structure. But I cannot see any problem here. What is complicated about a statement that a stressed syllable has a structure /C(C)V(C)/ and an unstressed one /CV(C)/, where /V/ symbolizes any vowel and /V'/ stands for any vowel or two-place vowel sequence ending in /ə/?

3.7. In citation forms stress falls on the word-final syllable, in phrases (stress groups) 'usually [...] on the final or penultimate word' (but see example (3-11) below). All the other words within the phrase are unstressed, i.e., they are 'cliticized words'. Durie uses several kinds of transcription: phonetic, phonemic, morphophonemic, and, mostly, 'orthographic'. The sign '=' in the orthographic transcription is written between words which together constitute a single phrase/stress group. A phrase may consist of just one word (p. 30). In Durie's notation system there is no difference made between monosyllabic words which are never stressed (clitics) and monosyllabic words which are accentuable but which in a given case are not actually bearing a stress, e.g.,

(3-11) asee=nyan hana =lön=poh'=ji=lê

'I won't hit that dog that not I hit 3 any more dog any more',

where =ji is a clitic and lê is said to be a cliticized word (p. 37).

Unfortunately, the author does not provide us with an exhaustive list of clitics, although they are said to form a closed set (p. 30). This would be most desirable, since not only pronouns and prepositions but also 'clitic verbs', conjunctions and 'illocutionary markers' appear as clitics.

So we cannot tell from Durie's description whether lôn in (3-11) is a cliticized word or a clitic. The word here is enclitic and proclitic at the same time, but exact rules about the position of such unstressed monosyllables relative to the stressed word are not given. Nor is much information offered about their relative positions.

The sentence of example (3-12), asee=nyan hana =lön=poh'=lê=jih, seems to have the same meaning as (3-11) and to be equally acceptable (p. 37).

The difference between a clitic and a cliticized monosyllabic word becomes even more complicated where Durie says that lê 'now, immediately' is 'optionally a clitic' (p. 226), e.g.,

(8-286) keu=lôn hana =galak'=geuh(=)lê

'DAT I NEG BE like 3 anymore me anymore',

whereas on p. 37 it is referred to as a cliticized word.
The 'orthographic' transcription sometimes presents the reader with complicated problems. For example, stress is not indicated unless it falls on a non-final syllable:

\[(7-5) \text{cuda} \quad \text{ka} = \text{rumoh} = \text{geu}\]

elder sister IN to house 3

Orthographic transcription

\[\text{Elder sister has gone home}.\]

In cuda the stress falls on the final syllable, but what about ka? Does the absence of '=' before or after ka indicate that it is not cliticized? In other words, does Durie consider ka as stressed and consequently as a stress group, i.e. a phrase, on its own? 10

3.8. For pronouns two basic forms are given: (a) independent forms (which I interpret as accentuable forms), and (b) clitics. It is not clear to me why Durie does not treat the (b) category as cliticized words, being the unstressed alternants of (a). A possible reason for this may be provided by certain formal differences between (a) and (b), but then reduction phenomena are attested everywhere in the language, e.g. diphthong reduction (p. 36), vowel alternation/reduction (p. 38) in cliticized words, loss of initial syllable (p. 37), and possible neutralization of '/i,u/ and '/u/ in unstressed position (p. 38).

Durie probably decided to treat all unstressed person markers as clitics partly because most of them (=ku, =keu, =teu, =neu, =ji, =geu, =meu) take the positionally conditioned /h/ which is reported to occur with phrase-final clitics ending in a vowel (but not with cliticized words!).

If I understand Durie’s rules and notation conventions correctly, then,

\[(3-30) \text{jih } \text{ji=} \text{duek} \quad \text{jeuoh} \quad \text{jeuoh} \]

He 3 sit far far

is a one-word phrase carrying stress. Consequently, it is not a clitic but a word that can be cliticized. However, unstressed cliticized jih = does not occur at all (neither does kah = ‘you’, for that matter): *jih = jak but ji = jak ‘he, she goes’ (p. 206). This implies that the categories stressed/unstressed should be redefined in the sense that there exist: (1) words which may be stressed as well as unstressed, (2) words which can only be stressed (jih), and (3) words which can only be unstressed (clitics). I prefer to describe the unstressed elements =ji and =jih # as cliticized forms of jih’, and ji= as an inflectional affix (see 3.9. below).

The objection that in that case a small group of cliticized words would acquire a paragogic /h/ does not seem to me insurmountable. The whole

10 Compare the following:

\[(4-5) \text{ka} \quad \text{uroe} \quad \text{already day} \quad \text{‘It is already day’},\]

where ka is treated as an independent verb, and

\[(4-1) \text{gopnyan} \quad \text{ka=} \text{geu}=\text{jak} \quad \text{u=} \text{keude} \quad \text{He went to market},\]

where ka is analyzed as a complement-taking verb (p. 47).
question needs further investigation; Durie's 'inner phrase' concept as a possible explanation for the appearance of /h/ in droe = neuh = nyan' (p. 37) 'he, she' may be worth considering here.

The information I obtained (which admittedly is limited) contains evidence that in some dialects this /h/ is, in fact, optional rather than obligatory and that here it is often absent where no pause is realized, whereas in other dialects the omission of /h/ is considered incorrect.

3.9. I agree with Durie that the postpositive unstressed personal markers possess clitic-like characteristics. These unstressed person markers are found to be dependent on almost all types of words: nouns, verbs and even interjections and exclamations. See, for example, =teuh 'you' in:

E =teuh peuejipeugot nyan
     'Hey, what is he doing'

However, prepositive personal markers (signalling 'number', 'person' and 'status') are 'used to cross-reference an Agent argument of a verb', and they are 'directly attached to the verb' (p. 125).

The inseparability of the prepositive person marker and the verb led Cowan to describe this phenomenon in terms of inflectional affixation, and I agree with the latter rather than with Durie in this case. I fail to see why Durie here opts for a 'derivational morphology' and states that Acehnese does not mark gender, case, person or number (p. 29, p. 47). In this review, however, I shall adhere to his terminology.

4. In his discussion of Acehnese reduplication, the author employs the confusing and opaque concept 'emphatic' without any further elucidation. All single-stressed words can be reduplicated for 'emphatic stress' or 'emphatic effect' (p. 38). Following this (p. 39), Durie reformulates this statement as: 'Any word can be reduplicated (except those that are reduplicated in their root form)'. Must we conclude, then, that clitics can be reduplicated too? Durie offers examples such as lam-lam (lam 'in'), bak-bak (bak 'at'), and le-le (le 'many'), but does not discuss their status as regards stress. What about words such as pi 'contrast-marker' or si (p. 128) 'k.o. title'? Ali et al. (1984:16) give as an example of the latter:

si-si Hasan taseuroh lam buet nyo
     'Hasan too, we put on to this job'.

Durie (p. 39) reports that reduplication [in Acehnese] is:
[i] a way of emphasising words;
[ii] a structural feature of some word roots [e.g., bang'-bang' 'butterfly'];
[iii] a means of word formation [e.g., g'eng'-g'ong' 'jew's harp', compare g'ong 'sound of jew's harp']. Durie's (? semantically invariant) 'emphasis' seems also to cover interpretations such as 'every, all, more than we might think' or 'without the usual exceptions' (p. 40). There are, however, several instances of reduplication which I would not at all describe as emphatic, but where it signifies:
(1) **[plurality]**


'at this cooperative they sell writing-materials' ('plural, indefinite');

(2) **[collective distribution]**


'those people were sitting in rows of five';

(3) **[similarity]**


'the colour of his jacket is (a bit) green (greenish)'.

One wonders why these semantic variants are left unmentioned. Moreover, it would be interesting to know if Acehnese possesses instances such as Indonesian:

(i) *anak kami nakal-nakal*

'our children are naughty (indeed)',

where the reduplicated predicate points to a plural interpretation of *anak*; compare also *anak (yang) pintar-pintar* 'different kinds of clever children' or 'rather clever children', and *anak-anak (yang) pintar* 'children who are clever; clever children';

(ii) *hanya kami-kami ini (yang) tidak pernah diperhatikan*

'it's only poor us who never get attention',

where it has a depreciative connotation; and

(iii) *tua-tua, tapi masih main perempuan*

'he may be old, but he is still a womanizer',

where it has a concessive meaning. Reduplication in Acehnese awaits further detailed investigation.  

5. Morphophonemic {ui} is realized as /u/ in the environment of two labial consonants in unstressed syllables (p. 34). This happens in prefixes {pu} and {mu} and in the infix [um], e.g., *{mu} + boh* ➔ /muboh/ 'to serve' (intr.). Durie does not inform us whether two {u} may co-occur between labials, although he states on p. 35 that the rounding is optional if the vowel in the next, non-final, syllable is {u}. The example on p. 80, *eumpung* 'nest' + {pu} yielding *peuumpung* (and apparently also optionally *peueumpung*, according to p. 35) 'to place in nest', suggests that the

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11 The reduplicated adjective (in Durie's terms 'non-controlled verb' with preposed *si* (Durie's superlative) may probably be interpreted as such:

(8-269) *Si = rayeuk-rayeuk keh =ngön= rukok, nyang= rayeuk buku*

one big big match box with cigarette REL big book

'As big as the match box and the cigarette may be, the book is the biggest'.
above rule should be amended/re-stated in terms of prefix and initial open verb (noun) stem. Is *pueumpung* also allowed? 12

6. Durie describes Acehnese in terms of categorial as well as functional properties. Words are said to be nouns, clitics, verbs, etc. (the existence of adjectives is denied for Acehnese). On the other hand, their relations within a given construction are described in terms of semantic functions (the verbal arguments: Agent, Undergoer, Dative), syntactic functions (only subject, said to occur in non-verbal clauses) and pragmatic functions (Core topic). I infer that A, U and Dative are semantic functions from statements on p. 188, where A is said to correspond to the 'deep subject', a notion that is 'close to the semantic level of representation, corresponding at least partly to what is often called the AGENT semantic role', and from Durie's description of the respective meanings of A, U and Dative. A is the 'wanting/ causing participant', U 'the ultimately affected participant', and the Dative 'the goal of a transitive verb or the object of emotion of an intransitive verb' (p. 62). What strikes the reader here is the quite vague definition of the semantic functions, and one wonders whether they are defined in concord with the semantics of the verbs with which they appear or completely independently.

Durie notes certain formal characteristics of these semantic functions: A is (always) marked by proclitic pronominals (which I would term pronominal prefixes) attached to the verb, U can optionally be represented by enclitic pronominals, while the Dative is either indicated by the preposition *keu* or not marked at all. In addition, verbs are classified as either transitive or intransitive. According to Durie, transitive verbs are those which take both A and U: e.g. *ji = kap’ = keuh*,

\[3 \text{ bite you}\]

while intransitive verbs occur with: (1) only A, e.g., *lôn = jak* ‘I go’; (2) only U (which is optional), e.g., *sakêt (= geuh) ‘he is ill’; or (3) either A or U, but not both simultaneously, e.g., *ji = galak, galak’ = jih*

\[3(A) \text{ like like } 3(U)\]

‘he likes’ (no information is provided about whether in the latter case the enclitic is optional or obligatory).

Foley and Van Valin 1984 tried to solve the friction between ‘the inherent lexical content’ of the ‘actor NP’ (i.e., the meaning ascribed to Actor (Durie’s Agent) as notion) and the inherent lexical content of the predicate itself, through lexical decomposition and the attribution of semantic relations derived from the decomposed predicate structures. They categorize verbs according to a limited set of logical structures (and concomitant semantic relations): I. state verbs (IA. locative, IB. non-locative), and II. activity verbs (IIA. potentially controllable, IIB. motion-

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12 The *eu ~ u* alternation in *peusuuem* 'to heat' (p. 81), from \{pu\} + *seuuem* 'hot', has not been described by Durie.
al). Depending on the logical structure decided upon for a given verb, Actor may be agent, effector, or locative. So in

(a) *Fred broke the vase with the rock*
(b) *the rock broke the vase*

the Actor is an agent in (a) and an effector in (b) (Foley and Van Valin 1984:54). To my mind, this analysis does not serve any purpose: the forced simplification into 'logical structures' causes the linguist to do away with all kinds of relevant semantic details. Moreover, the assignment of a logical structure to a given predicate is often somewhat arbitrary and referent-oriented, as can be seen from the following example from Foley and Van Valin (1984:51):

(c) *Max instinctively smiled at the laughing baby,* and
(d) *Max intentionally smiled at the comely lass.*

Here, in the logical structure of the predicate, the argument *Max* is assigned agent status in (d) but effector status in (c), but obviously not by virtue of the meaning of *smile.*

In Foley and Van Valin's work, Agent status apparently is not part of the semantics of the verb per se, as we would expect, but is inferable by reference to other nominal or pronominal elements co-occurring in the pertinent clause, sentence, or (probably) paragraph, and/or conditionable by the frame of reference.

Dürie has allowed himself to be guided by formal characteristics, but has not ventured upon lexical decomposition: in his view, the presence of a pronominal proclitic automatically signals A, and the (optional) presence of a pronominal enclitic U. Needless to say, this leads to a rather awkward subcategorization of his intransitive verbs (see the list on pp. 63 ff.). For instance, *èk* (with optional encliticization) 'to feel the urge to, feel up to, like' (not given in the lists) is said to take an argument with U status, whereas *îm* 'to want to, choose to' (with obligatory procliticization), 'which contrasts minimally with *èk*’, takes an A argument. Dürie concedes that his decisive criterion for A, 'control, intention', is not very effectual, but more convincing parameters are not provided.

To my mind, the mechanical way in which A and U are distributed over these intransitive verbs, according to whether they are marked by obligatory procliticization or optional encliticization respectively, does not warrant the positing of A and U as semantic functions at all. Only perhaps for the sub-set of 'variable controlled/non-controlled verbs' such as *jaga* 'to be awake, alert' and *inseueh* 'to have sympathy' may a possible interpretation of a semantic feature |volition| be justified (although even this is doubtful for all the listed instances). This would then result in, for instance (translation mine, W.S.):

*inseueh* = *geuh*  *keu = lôn*  'he was driven by sympathy towards me'
feel compassion 3(U) DAT I (- |volition|)

vs. *geu = inseueh  keu = lôn*  'he cultivated a sympathy towards me'.
3(A) feel compassion DAT I (+ |volition|)
It is precisely the absence of such an opposition in the case of other (in)transitive verbs which in my opinion makes the A - U dichotomy look rather far-fetched.

My main objection to Durie's method, however, is that his description of A, U and Dative does not always accord with that of the co-occurring verb, which obviously obliges him from time to time to reformulate the semantic content of the words concerned. In other words, Durie’s A, U and Dative do not have an invariant/constant semantic content, as is testified by examples 6.1.-6.6. below.

6.1. In connection with the ‘intransitive’ verb *keunöng* 'to happen, to strike, to occur, to coincide', the Undergoer argument *ujeuen* is stated to have the (to my mind Agent-like) meaning ‘the thing that strikes or occurs’ (p. 53): 

(4·37) *ujeuen* ka=keunöng bak=lön  ‘The rain (U) came in on me’.

Apart from the fact that we are not informed about possible cliticization (my informant rejected, e.g., *ujeuen* ka = keunöng = jih bak = lön, but not *ujeuen* ka = ji = keunöng bak = lön!), it is quite clear that the notion wanting/cause| ascribed to Agents by Durie implies consciousness or at least animacy, features which are considered absent in *ujeuen*, for: ‘All Acehnese Agents must be animate’ (p. 53). Consequently, ‘rain’ must be U, and the verb must be termed intransitive (i.e., ‘taking only one argument’, p. 48).

6.2. The incompatibility between Durie’s semantics and his formal criteria is especially apparent where the former force him to ignore the latter. In (4·101) and (4·102) the Agent *ji=* is said to be in ‘non-agentive use’:

(4·101) parang=tumpöy ta=teumeutak h'an—ji=pajöh
durkin blunt 1INC chop NEG 3 eat
‘A blunt parang won’t cut (no matter how much) you chop away’

(4·102) breueh=nyoe ji=theun peuet=uroe treuk
rice this 3 endure four day more
‘This rice will last four days more’.

6.3. It was demonstrated above (6·1.) that in cases such as *keunöng* the argument is analysed as U, but simultaneously endowed by the author with agent-like characteristics. In other instances, a proclitic is stripped of its agency/animacy/volition or whatever other characteristics and asserted to be used in a ‘non-agentive way’. A considerable number of ‘exceptions’ are explained away as being ‘metaphorical in a natural way’ (p. 67). Durie distinguishes at least five different types of metaphor. They concern: (1) human organizations; (2) a body of teachings, an argument for something, or something said; (3) moving vehicles controlled by humans; (4) natural processes involving natural phenomena such as water, wind, rain, etc.; and (5) certain expressions of ability involving non-Agentive use of the third
person familiar clitic ji= (2 cases) and cases involving the verbs têm 'to want' and theun 'to endure' (pp. 67-9). These cases may take ji= and geu=, the reduced forms of jih and gopnyan 'he/she' respectively, e.g.:

(4-94) ji -beudoh sagöp
3 stand up mist

I fail to see why Durie allows himself to be forced into this cumbersome description by his semantics. On the one hand he explicitly states that all Acehnese pronouns refer to animate referents (p. 70), and that they are typically human (p. 116), and that A is always animate; on the other, obviously the proclitic forms ji= and geu= occur in a non-animate, non-volitive Agent sense, often even in explicit combination with lê ‘by’, an element which is ‘normally possible for transitive Agents which follow the verb’ (p. 51, also p. 60), and whose ‘main function is to disambiguate the Agent from the Undergoer’ (p. 194):

(4-95) buluoen ka=ji=töp lê=awan 'The moon has been covered
4 stand up IN 3 cover by cloud by cloud'.

Even within his semantic framework, Durie could have posited a neutralization of the category ‘animacy’ for third person (singular) proclitic forms, especially since he does accept inanimate reference for the third person enclitic =jih, e.g.:

(5-70) rumoh=nyan bintêh'=jih semen 'That house’s walls are
house that wall 3 cement made of cement'.

This would have allowed him to avoid the cumbersome and unnecessary notion of ‘metaphorical animacy’ in cases such as:

(4-103) h’an=ji=têm =masak boh =drien =nyan
NEG 3 want ripe fruit durian that

'(It) doesn’t want that durian fruit to ripen: i.e. the durian won’t ripen'.

About ji= in (4-104) lôn h’an=ji=têm =teungeut
I NEG 3 want sleep

'I can’t get to sleep',

Durie ventures the opinion that ‘there is no argument corresponding to the wánter of têm’ (p. 69) ‘which in any sense corresponds to the Agent’ (p. 70). This remark leaves the reader wondering what is gained by the introduction of the notion ‘metaphorical agency’.

Comparing this with h’an = lôn = têm = teungeut
NEG I want sleep

'It doesn’t want to sleep', it is evident that we are dealing with a dummy subject the meaning of which in these cases must be described as ‘an x whose referent in the real or imaginary world is unspecified’ (provided Durie’s translation of têm is correct). This is contrary to Durie’s contention (p. 180) that ‘Acehnese has no dummy subject comparable to the English it which appears in . . . translations’ of examples such as:

(8-4) di=si =noe mangat=that
at place this nice very

'It is very nice here', and
6.4. How can one account for the fact that the agent of a lè-phrase (lè being described by Durie as an ‘agent marker’) can occur in cross-reference with the U alternant (sic!) of so-called variable controlled/non-controlled verbs?

In (8-71) A gopnyan is cross-referenced with U geuh, in (8-72) A kah with (U) keuh:

(8-71) lön hana =galak'=geuh (lè=)gopnyan
         I(Dat) not like 3(U) (by) he(A)

(8-72) buku=nyan göt =that galak'=keuh (lè=)kah
         book that(Dat) good very like 2(U) (by) you(A)

‘He doesn’t like me’

‘You like that book a lot’.

Durie suggests that: ‘the function [of lè] could perhaps involve disambiguating the [...] Undergoer from the Dative’.13

6.5. In the case of teu-nieng’, an ‘accidental derivative’ of ngieng ‘to see’, the agreement, Durie reports, ‘gets all mixed up’. ‘The see-er is cross-referenced as Undergoer, supplanting the cross-referencing of the see-ee, but the noun phrases themselves are marked as for normal seeing. [...] the see-er noun phrase is marked by [the normal marker for Agents of transitive verbs] lè’ (p. 60, also p. 77):

(4-78) na=teu-ngieng'=teuh ureueng=nyan lè=gata baroe
         BE DC - see 2 person that by you yesterday

‘You accidentally saw that person yesterday’.

Durie here is confronted with two alternatives: either (1) A’s also occur as verbal enclitics, or (2) lè also marks U’s. Neither possibility fits his description.

6.6. The contended animacy of A also results in unnecessary complications for the analysis in other areas. For instance, in section 4.7., keumeukoh ‘to harvest’ is said to be a nominalized verb used attributively in sadeuep=keumeukoh ‘harvesting knife’. Durie adds that ‘This attributive usage is quite distinct from normal attributive use of verbs in a relative clause structure, which is based upon their predicate relations, e.g. ureueng=keumeukoh “a person who is harvesting”, where ureueng is the Agent of keumeukoh’ (p. 104). The author concedes (p. 103) that ‘there is no

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13 It is superfluous to add here that it is the mechanicalness of Durie’s analysis which forces him to assign Dative status to lön and buku nyan (so-called Datives of emotion). Compare also

(8-202) gopnyan ka=jeuet'=geuh basa =aceh
         he IN can 3(U) language Aceh

‘He can [speak] Acehnese’, where basa Aceh is described as an adjunct NP.
formal marking to indicate the nominal function of these verbs', apart from the fact that they 'can be used to head NP’s'. This is obviously not the case in the examples given above. Since the linear and (probably) prosodic arrangements of sadeuep=keumeukoh and ureueng=keumeukoh are the same, I suggest that the same relation obtains between both complexes. The way in which this relation between the respective constituents is to be interpreted is a matter of context and/or real world knowledge.

7.1. Although on p. 47 Durie states that verbs, when they are used predicatively, characteristically 'support pronominal clitics referring to verbal arguments', it turns out that there are cases of such verbs occurring without any co-referencing clitic whatsoever. Since word order is said not to be diagnostic in determining the 'grammatical relations' between constituents (p. 191), and since each argument may freely occur before a predicate in the so-called Core Topic position (p. 180), how does the Addressee know what is meant by the Speaker? Durie's information on cases of this kind is rather scanty. I would add here that, in my view, it is a mistake to use ontological and/or truth-conditional considerations to decide about intended argument status in a semantic description. In a clause with no preferred order between more than one N, say, N₁ (dog) N₂ (man) V (bite), either referent may be taken to bite the other. Context and frame of reference will probably disambiguate the utterance and yield the correct interpretation, but semantically both alternatives are possible.

*Mutatis mutandis*, this also holds good for cases such as teungieng 'accidental seeing', where Durie reports that a preference is demonstrable for interpreting participants in the speech event as see-ers and non-participants as see-ees:

(4-147) geutanyoe na=teu-ngieng baroe
\[ \text{we INC BE DC see yesterday} \]
'Vewe saw (something) yesterday (not "we were seen")' 

(4-149) ureueng=nyan na=teu-ngieng baroe
\[ \text{person that BE DC - see yesterday} \]
'\text{That person was seen yesterday (not "that person saw something")}'.

7.2. In the footsteps of Foley and Van Valin, who doubt the universality of the notion of Subject, Durie has decided that Acehnese is, in fact, subjectless, i.e. a language that does not have a surface subject category, or, in Foley and Van Valin's terminology, a syntactic pivot. The main reason for this decision is that from a typological point of view the familiar ergative-accusative dichotomy does not obtain: the intransitive Subject

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14 Unless we are dealing here with a case of 'usage', i.e. an intermediate level between linguistic system and realizations, whereby two different meanings are available, but only one is realized (Ebeling 1981).
with some verbs is marked by procliticization, in the same way as the A of transitive verbs (nom./acc. system), while in the case of other verbs it is signalled (through optional encliticization) in the same way as the U of transitive verbs (absol./ergative system), whereas a limited set of verbs shows fluid-S characteristics (geu=galak as well as galak=geuh). Durie mentions control vs. non-control and active vs. stative as 'the two main bases for splits', but from a synchronic, descriptive point of view this is difficult to maintain. In Acehnese S's these notions are formally absent; nor is it possible to use them unambiguously as diagnostic categories in the pertinent set of intransitive verbs.

For further elucidation of the notion of Subject and the related concept of pivot and their viability Durie refers his readers to Foley and Van Valin 1984. The latter reject Subject as a 'primitive' in this context because it is not a universal category, and divide its properties between the (quite vague) notion of actor and that of pivot, i.e. the NP which is crucially involved in the build-up of the construction in which it participates. Two pivots are distinguished: the pragmatic and the semantic pivot. The former is identified on the basis of its role in syntactic operations such as complementation, switch-reference, equi-deletion, promotion/demotion, (anti-)passivization, etc. Since the attribution of pivot status to A or U according to the authors is primarily conditioned by pragmatic considerations of cross-clause co-reference and discourse topicality (Foley and Van Valin 1984:115), this pivot is termed 'pragmatic pivot', and the languages which possess it are termed reference-dominated languages.

In the case of the semantic pivot the selection of U or A is determined on a strictly semantic and lexical basis (p. 117). Languages which have semantic pivot (and those which are pivotless(!)) are designated role-dominated languages. Most regrettably, Acehnese appears to lack both types of pivot, and 'There is no intermediary abstract notion of pivot,'
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semantic or pragmatic, with an important function in syntax’ (Foley and Van Valin 1984:121). Durie informs us, moreover, that ‘all better diagnostic tests prove quite fruitless’ (there being no switch reference marking, no syntactic passive or antipassive, etc.)16 (p. 190), and further remarks that ‘The existence of languages with mixed typological characteristics raises the question of how to define Subject within such languages, and if we have a universal definition [.....], how are we to determine what is the subject in any given language?’ (p. 188). He only allows subjects for non-verbal clauses (lôn guru ‘I am a teacher’) and describes all other clauses in terms of A and U.

I agree with Perlmutter (1982) that Foley and Van Valin (and consequently Durie, too) start from the false assumption that linguistic theory must provide a sort of discovery procedure which will automatically yield the right decisions about categorizations in all languages. It would seem to me that a notion such as Subject should semantically be defined universally, whereas its discovery criteria, at least at this stage of our knowledge, must remain partly language-specific. Of course, as Durie rightly states, everything depends on how we define the meaning of subject, or, more correctly, the relation between subject and predicate.

I personally wish to define Subject as: ‘the element x selected by the Speaker as the starting-point for his (lingual) reconstruction of the projection in his mind of a situation or situations in the real and/or imaginary world’. Consequently, it is the central element of the situations/events or states of affairs which are the appropriate referents of the meaning as expressed by the pertinent (co-occurring) predicate.

For Acehnese, I would suggest the rehabilitation of the old-fashioned notion of subject, or, as Ebeling (1978, 1981) terms it, ‘first nexus number’. The relation between subject and predicate is invariant, and the meaning of a whole sentence is also an invariant, being a constellation of semantic particles kept together by invariant interrelationships (Ebeling 1978, 1981). The number of these relations is limited. What particular relationships are operative in a given sentence must be determined on the basis of the valence of the predicate and its diatheses.

7.3. To determine what constituent functions as subject in my sense, we must look for three different types of coding in Acehnese: (1) word order and intonation phenomena, (2) agreement (cross-referencing), and (3) NP marking.

Ad (1). About word order Durie notes that it is free in the sense that it

16 I do not fully understand the use of denying the universality of the notion of subject if, of its two replacing notions (introduced to cope with this lack of universality), one, namely that of pivot, appears to be absent in a number of languages, whereas the other (actor) is defined in a somewhat arbitrary, reference-oriented way.
is not used to encode grammatical relations. The main single constraint on the ordering of grammatical relations is that a clause has only one Core Topic (p. 191; and see below). This statement invites two comments:

1.1. The culminative function of prosodic phenomena enables us to delimit stress-units / sentence segments. These units are, in fact, relatively free as to order within the clause, but there is a fixed internal cohesion within the respective units/segments, viz.:

keu = jih  ka = lón = publoe  leumo
keu = jih  leumo  ka = lón = publoe
ka = lón = publoe  leumo  ke = jih
leumo  ka = lón = publoe  keu = jih

leumo  keu = jih  ka = lón = publoe
cow  to  3 IN  1 sell

'I sell a cow to him'.

1.2. The examples given by Durie to demonstrate that word order is not diagnostic for grammatical relations are less illustrative of this, viz.:

(8-53) ka = lón = poh  lè = lón  ureueng = nyan
IN  1  hit by  1 man  that

(8-54) ka = lón = poh  ureueng = nyan  lè = lón
'I hit that man'.

Two of the three constituent segments here are marked for subjecthood: lön= signals subject before the verb, lè is a subject marker (A-marker, in Durie's terms). In cases where such coding is absent, prosodic phenomena are probably decisive for subject and predicate function assignment. Compare, for instance, Indonesian NP1 - NP2 clauses such as:

a. dok'ter (-lah) wanita (itu) 'the woman is a doc'tor'
b. dokter (itu) (adalah) wani'ta 'the doctor is a woman'
c. wani'ta (-lah) dokter (itu) 'the doctor is a wo'man'
d. wanita (itu) (adalah) dok'ter 'the woman is a doctor'17,

where, in the absence of the various optional markers, only the sentence stress indicates the predicate function and signals the comment as well, linear ordering not being distinctive.

In Acehnese the situation is not altogether clear. Durie introduces the notion of Core Topic where Core (from Core Role or Core Constituent) 'can be loosely characterised as including NP arguments of verbal clauses and subjects of non-verbal clauses. In other words, they are predicated NP's' (p. 180). The Core Topic position is said to be 'the most salient' and to be 'used to foreground participants whose identity is already known (old information)' (p. 191). Core Topics are described as being definite (p. 192) and marked by (1) their position, i.e., before the predicate, (2) a rise or peak on the stressed syllable, and (3) (although this is not mentioned by Durie) an optional pause. However, adjunct phrases may also occur in pre-

17 This particular set of examples was suggested to me by D.J. Prentice.
predicative position with a prosodic pattern 'like that for a CT' (p. 198), but 'this happens quite independently of Core Topicalisation and more than one peripheral constituent can be proposed' (p. 181). Most verbal clauses are said to have no CT (p. 191). On the basis of Durie's information and my own, admittedly restricted, observations, I have formed the impression that there is no reason to ascribe A, U or Dative status to constituents occurring in (Core) Topic position. Durie agrees that there is no 'nexus' between such an element and any particular transitive verbal argument and that no special case marking a verb agreement occurs (p. 191). It is my contention that a constituent (x) marked by the three formal features mentioned above enters into a 'Topicalization' relation with the rest of the sentence (y), which I define as: 'THE x which is in an unspecified relation with y', where 'THE' signals Durie's 'old information, salience, givenness' (p. 192), making x 'an x which occupies a more central position in the frame of reference of the speech situation than all other possible x's' (Ebeling 1978, 1981).

From this definition, which concerns the functional sentence perspective, it should be clear that the notion of Topic must be distinguished from that of Subject - both may occur in one and the same sentence, e.g.:

(8-11) $gopnyan$ (T) $ka=ji$ (S) $=poh$ $le=jih$ (S)

he polite IN 3 fa hit by he fa 'He (polite) was hit by him (fa)'

(4-29) $gopnyan$ (T) $ka=lön$ (S) $=tēr$ $rumoh'=$geuh

he IN 1 burn house 3 'I burnt this house'

(8-18) $gopnyan$ (T) $ka=lön$ (S) $=bi$ $peng$ (O)

he IN 1 give money 'I have given him some money'

(4-101) $parang$tumpöy (T) $ta$teumeutak $h'an=ji(S)=pajoh$

machete blunt 1 INC chop NEG 3 eat 'A blunt machete won't cut no matter how much you chop away'

(4-134) $lon$ (T) $ka=teu-sie=jaroe$ (S)

I IN DC cut hand 'I cut my hand'.

For NP$_1$ - NP$_2$ clauses NP$_1$ is T when marked by the above-described suprasegmental features. Needless to say, much more information is needed before we may arrive at a meaningful description of communicative strategy in Acehnese - but then, such a description is lacking for Indonesian and many other world languages. Prosodic and word order phenomena should be studied in connection with segments such as 'the focus marker $df$' (p. 76, elsewhere, on p. 235, however, described as a marker of strong topicality), Durie's Agent marker (my subject marker) $lé$, the emphasis marker $pi$ ($h$), and the word-clustering rules (argument cliticization, p. 205 ff.) and 'floating' (p. 143 ff.), e.g.:
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(5-121) \[ lë T \ ka=ji=kap \ lë=asee (S) \ ureueng \]
many IN 3 bite by dog person

'Many people were bitten by dogs'.

Prosodic and linear arrangements are also responsible for well-known patterns such as:

(a) \[ L \ gopnyan \ ka \ gi - com \ lon \]
(she IN 3politekissl She (already) kissed me

(b) \[ L \ lon \ ka \ gi - com \ le - gopnyan \] 'I've already been kissed by her',

quoted by me in the notation and translation of Lawler (1977), and subsequently adopted by Perlmutter 1982. Both authors ascribe the active voice to (a) and passive voice to (b), conceding, however, that agreement in (b) is 'with underlying subject' and that 'the workings of Acehnese agreement are unusual' (Lawler).

Durie does not introduce the category of voice at all; he treats the clause-initial elements \[ L \ gopnyan \] and \[ L \ lon \] as Agent and Undergoer respectively: which are said to be in Core Topic position. \[ L \ le \] is a disambiguating agent marker in agreement with the verbal proclitic in two-place predicates. Although I do not accept the A - U dichotomy, and consequently also reject \[ L \ le \] as a mere agent marker (see note 15), I am inclined to go along with Durie's interpretation here.

In pairs such as (a) and (b), where the referents are the same but the meanings different, it is extremely difficult to see the distinction between phenomena belonging to functional sentence perspective (Topic, Focus) and those of diathesis. If we accept Durie's formal marking for \[ gopnyan \] and \[ lon \], signalling a T relation, then there is no doubt about the predicate function of \[ -com \] and the subject function of \[ gi \]. Depending on the way the Speaker chooses to link his message to the context and situation of the speech moment, either the independent pronoun \[ gopnyan \] is placed clause-initially in a T function with \[ lon \] as object necessarily following the predicate, or \[ lon \] is placed in a T function and \[ gopnyan \] (in this dialect in complementary distribution?) preceded by \[ le \] is placed after the verb; what remains formally and semantically unchanged is the 'agent proclitic' attached to the verb.

It is conceivable, however, that, with a different prosodic arrangement, different interpretations will be possible. Again, more information about prominence organization is needed, especially in connection with those cases where argument cliticization is manifest. What relationship, for instance, does (c) \[ L \ lon \ ka=gopnyan=com \] bear to (a) and (b)? Durie is not very generous with data here (p. 205 ff.) and speaks of 'focus on the verb'. Interestingly, both Asyik (1982) and Lawler (1977) talk about 'emphasizing the Agent', the former translating such clauses into English using passive constructions. Another problem which invites further investigation is the relationship between such hypothetically possible cases as (?) \[ lë = gopnyan \ lön \ ka \ = \ geu-com \] or (?) \[ lë = gopnyan \ ka \ = \ geu-com \ lön \] and (a), (b) and (c) (cf. Sulaiman et al. 1978/1979:70).
Apart from the special case (8-76), I have not encountered any clause-initial lê constructions in Durie's book: were they not attested?

Ad (2). Agreement in Acehnese is evidently much more complex than is suggested either by Dik 1978 ('the verb agrees with the agent') or Lawler 1977 and Perlmutter 1982 (the verb of a clause b agrees with the first (initial?) 1 of the clause, which amounts to saying that the verb agrees with the NP preceding it, without differentiating between Topic and Subject).\(^\text{18}\)

I would suggest that the predicate agrees with the subject in number, person, hearer-inclusion and status. S is signalled in two different ways, viz.:

(1) proclitically (or, in my terms, by prefixes - see section 3.9. above):

1.1. bivalent verbs

\(ji = kap' = geuh\)

3 fa bite 3 polite

'He'll bite him'

1.2. a set of monovalent verbs

\(lon=jak\)

1 go

'I go'\(^\text{19}\)

(2) enclitically (optional):

2.1. a set of monovalent verbs

\(sakêt=geuh\)

sick 3 polite

'He is ill'

(obligatory?):

2.2. a set of special constructions, e.g.,

2.2.1. subject of measure

\((5-58) \ lông \ si =droe'=lông\)

I one CLASS 1

'I am alone'

2.2.2. subject of prepositional predicate

\((5-59) \ abang \ di=keude'=geuh\)

elder brother in town 3 polite

'Elder brother is in the town'.

Members of sets 1.2. and 2.1. should be indicated as such in the dictionary:

\(^{18}\) My definition of 'subject' is quite different from that of Perlmutter (1982). In his approach, the term subject is meaningless, being a mere cover term for a set of different concepts (initial 1, final 1, first 1, etc.), which are based on different types of agreement (rules), as attested in various languages. Thus, for Acehnese, verb agreement is stated in terms of initial subjecthood: 'the verb of a clause b agrees with the initial 1 of the clause' (Perlmutter 1982:293), where 'initial 1' stands for the subject of bivalent verbs.

\(^{19}\) Cases of intransitive verbs having simultaneously a corresponding proclitic and enclitic are also attested in Durie's book, viz.:

\((3-2) \ ka=geu=jak'=geuh\)

IN 3 go 3

'He has gone'

\((5-62) \ bah \ geu=meuwakên'=geuh\)

let! 3 marry 3

'Let him go and get married'.

They should be differentiated from reflexive forms such as:

\((8-223) \ ji=rhah \ . \ droe'=jih\)

3 wash self 3

'He washes himself'.

Durie ascribes 'illocutionary force' to these constructions (p. 266). Further research is needed.
no specific diagnostic features have as yet been discovered. Verbs of the
type \textit{geu} = \textit{galak} \sim \textit{galak} = \textit{geuh}
3 polite like like 3 polite
‘to like’ form a special category in that many of them are actually bivalent
(the preposition \textit{keu} is often optional).
Ad (3). NP marking occurs through \textit{lê}. Differently from Durie, I consider
instances such as (8-71) and (8-72) (see section 6.4), where \textit{lê} marks \textit{U}
as well as \textit{A} roles, indicative for its function as subject marker (but see also
note 15). Further evidence is perhaps the hapax (8-75) where \textit{lê} is used
with an intransitive verb:
\[(8-75) \text{geu}=\text{jeuet}=\text{jak} \quad \text{lam}=\text{uteuen} \quad (\text{lê}=) \quad \text{gopnyan} \]
\[3 \quad \text{able go in forest (by) he} \]
‘He dares to go into the forest’.
Compare also Snouck Hurgronje 1900:250 \textit{hana lônja c lê lôn}
\[\text{NEG 1 go by I} \]
‘ik ga (er) niet heen’.

8. I have selected but a few out of the many interesting topics dealt with
in Durie’s book, which I read with much pleasure. The author has tried to
describe the language by putting it in somewhat ill-fitting attire, but I
consider his work nevertheless to be a valuable contribution to the study
of Austronesian languages.

As far as the technical presentation of the book is concerned, the Royal
Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology might have offered its readers
a more \textit{soigné} product than the one discussed here. The letter-type is
vaguely reminiscent of that of a reduced anastatic reprint of a nineteenth-
century Russian scientific journal. The number of printing-errors, howe-
ver, is limited.\footnote{The ones I have been able to detect are:
p. 10 ‘An Acehnese’ instead of ‘Acehnese’
p. 27 [ix] /a/ instead of /a/ (?)
p. 34 /bunūb3/ instead of /bunūb3/
pp.57 and 73 ‘teu=jak teu=döng’ instead of ‘teu-jak teu-döng’.
p. 85 ‘directs’ instead of ‘direct’
p. 93 ‘to hang’ instead of ‘to turn’
p.108 (5-3) ‘his’ instead of ‘your’
p.120 ‘bruèk’ instead of ‘bruèk=u’
p.120 ‘coconut shell’ instead of ‘shell coconut’
p.124 ‘the king’s assistant’ instead of ‘an assistant by the king’
p.125 ‘that’ instead of ‘Japan’
p.135 ‘is’ instead of ‘it is’
p.164 ‘2’ instead of ‘3’
p.167 ‘be /[Arked]’ instead of ‘be marked’
p.168 ‘=kuh’ instead of ‘=keuh’
p.182 ‘a book’ instead of ‘that book’
p.220 ‘you’ instead of ‘me’
p.255 ‘1’ instead of ‘2’}
by the author in the text are absent: Niemann 1891 and Lee 1974. Snouck Hurgronje 1892 (passim) should moreover be 1893.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

A : Agent
BE : 'to be, exist'
BSOAS : Bulletin School of Oriental and African Studies
C : consonant
CLASS : classifier
CT : Core Topic
DAT : Dative
DC : de-controlled (see Durie xiii)
EXCL : exclusive
fa : familiar
IN : inchoative
INC : inclusive
intr. : intransitive
KITLV : Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Leiden
L : Lawler
N : nasal/noun
NCLD : National Center for Language Development, Jakarta
NEG : negation/negative
NP : noun phrase
O : object
PPPB : Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Jakarta
REL : relative (clause marker)
S : subject
T : topic
tr. : transitive
U : Undergoer
V : verb/vowel

~ : alternating with
← : 'is the realization of'
→ : 'is realized as'
# : phrase boundary
- (Durie) : morpheme boundary
-(Lawler) : word boundary
=(Durie) : word boundary
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1: first person
3: third person
C: murmured consonant
C°N°: nasal stop
CV: 'orthographic' transcription as used by the authors cited
CV*: nasalized vowel in 'orthographic' transcription
'CV': English translation
|CV|: semantic transcription
/CV/: phonemic transcription
{CV}: phonetic transcription
N: 'funny' nasal
V: murmured vowel
V*: nasalized vowel
V(C)': stressed syllable

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