

*'Catastrophic change in current
English: Emergent
Double-be's and Free-be's'*

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AIATSIS
For CRLC Seminar ANU
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1.What I'm saying is is that we might have a Park like Swiss cheese (Director, ANPWS, 1985, ABC National Radio; origin Northern England)

2.The point is is I'm not in business to be loved (Jack Nicholson, playing Jake Giddes, in *Chinatown*, USA 1974)

3.The reason was was that the CIA knew that Whitlam was considering not renewing the leases on the joint defence bases (High school essay, Darwin, 1987 – not a typo)

4.The only question is is whether they can acquire funds (University teacher, origin USA)

5. The obvious question that arises is is to what extent is this a maltreatment issue or is it health issue? (College teacher, origin Australia)

6. My first impression of him was how extraordinarily young and good-looking he was (Former aide to Gen. MacArthur in a BBC documentary)

7. One of the things to do is to make sure the high risk groups use safe methods (College teacher, origin Australia)

8. What happened was it all worked out well (University teacher, origin Northern England)

9. The cruel facts of life are that not every person who teaches Art is a good artist himself (College teacher, origin Australia)

Double be extension? (Canberra radio diskjockey 2004)

10. The headline is is kinda cute

11a. What I mean is (that) he is crazy

b. What I mean is is (that) he is crazy.

c. *What I mean's (that) he is crazy.

d. What I mean is, that he is crazy

12a. The fact is that I'm leaving.

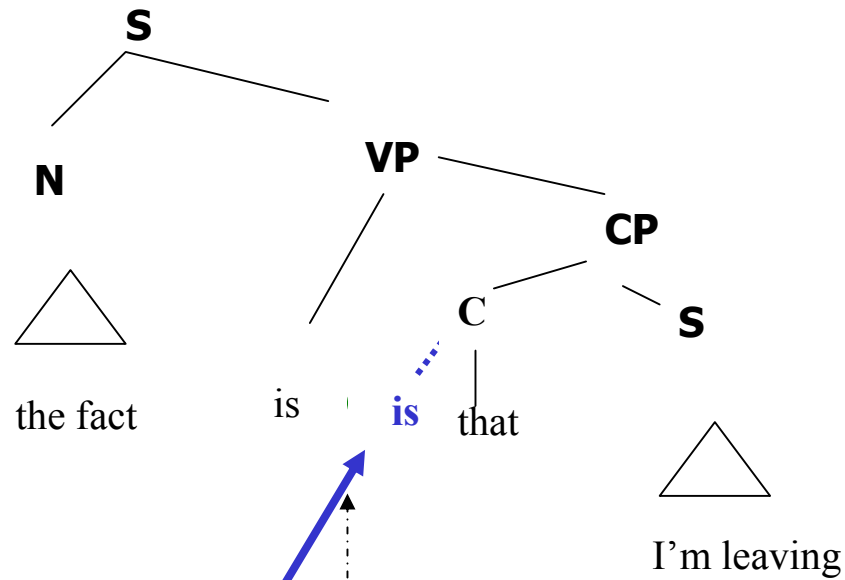
b. The fact is is that I'm leaving.

c. *The fact's that I'm leaving.

d. The fact is, I'm leaving

e. The only thing is though is will anyone be left out? (2003)

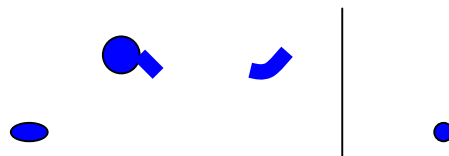
DOUBLE-BE:
SYNTAX-PROSODY
MISMATCH
CAUSES
REPETITION



Comma

contour

L+HLH*%**



L+H* *LH* %

Massam (1999): reduced pseudo-cleft

What the fact is is that I'm leaving

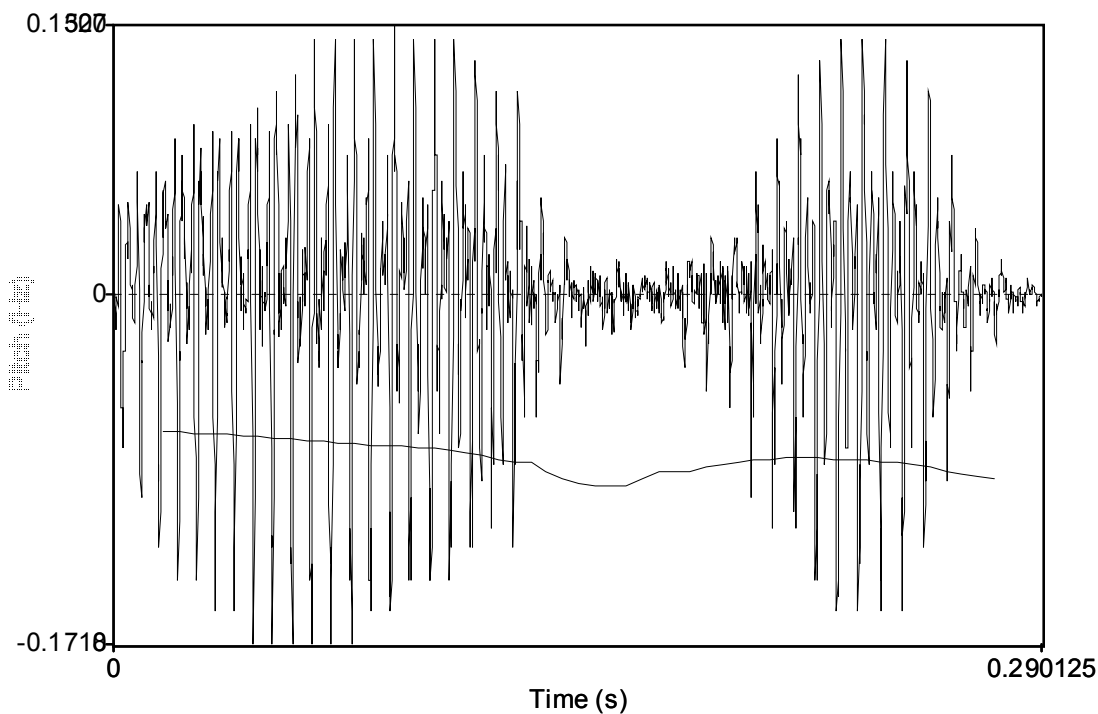
→ \emptyset the fact is is that I'm leaving

Brenier & Michaelis (2004): prosodic optimization

- Both Simplex and ISIS are suboptimal.
 - **ISIS** violates the economy constraint: it contains one more constituent than necessary.
 - **Simplex** violates the iconicity constraint that requires an intonationally unbroken VP
- In this account, the relative rarity of ISIS makes sense: ISIS is a repair strategy.
- Speakers use ISIS to avoid producing a Simplex token with a prosodically prominent copula.
- The ISIS-Simplex frequency asymmetry is not easily explained if ISIS is simply an analogical extension of, e.g., the Pseudocleft pattern

SWB at position 45024 C2B

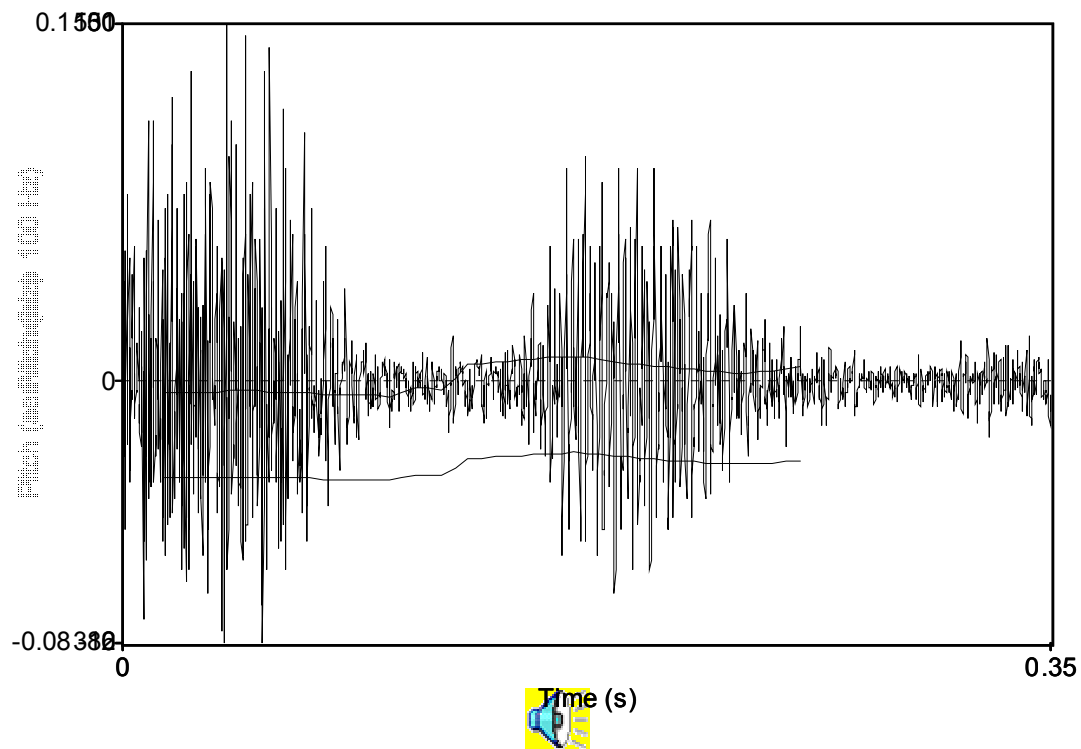
SPEAKER_B: yeah and and the question **is is** does the government
make a difference if they'll mostly leave him alone



SWB at position 52157 C2B

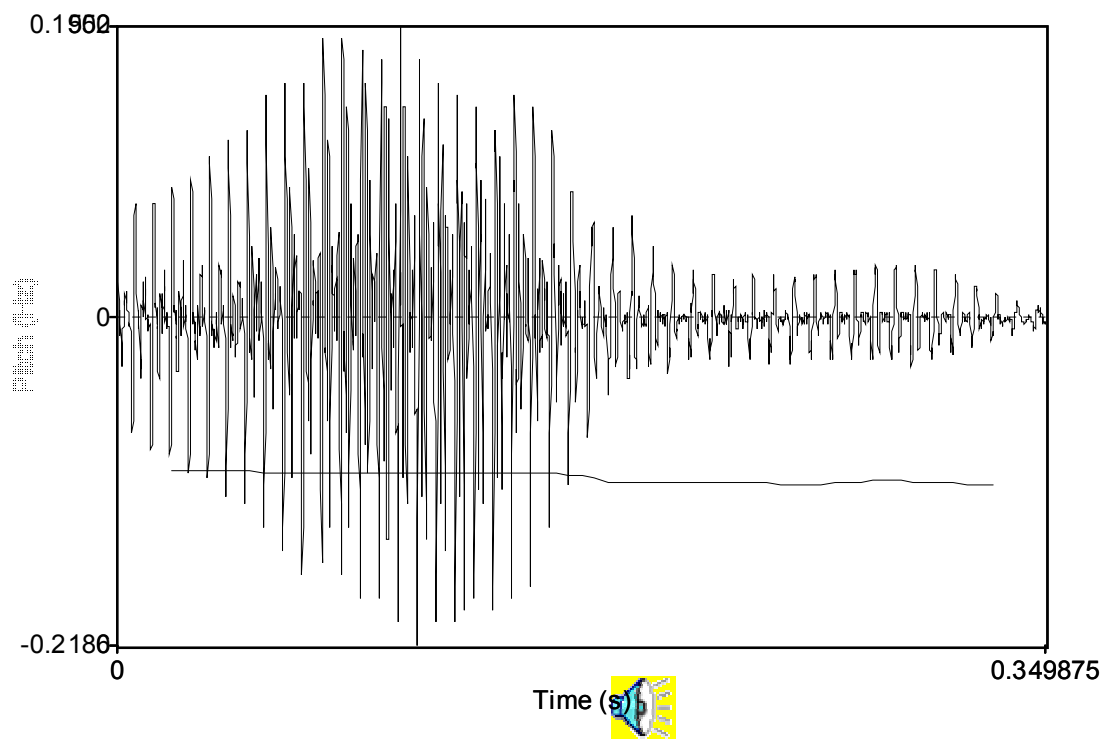
SPEAKER_A: the irony **is is** it's people in the cities in my experience
that are most oriented

SPEAKER_A: towards SPEAKER_A: doing the exercises



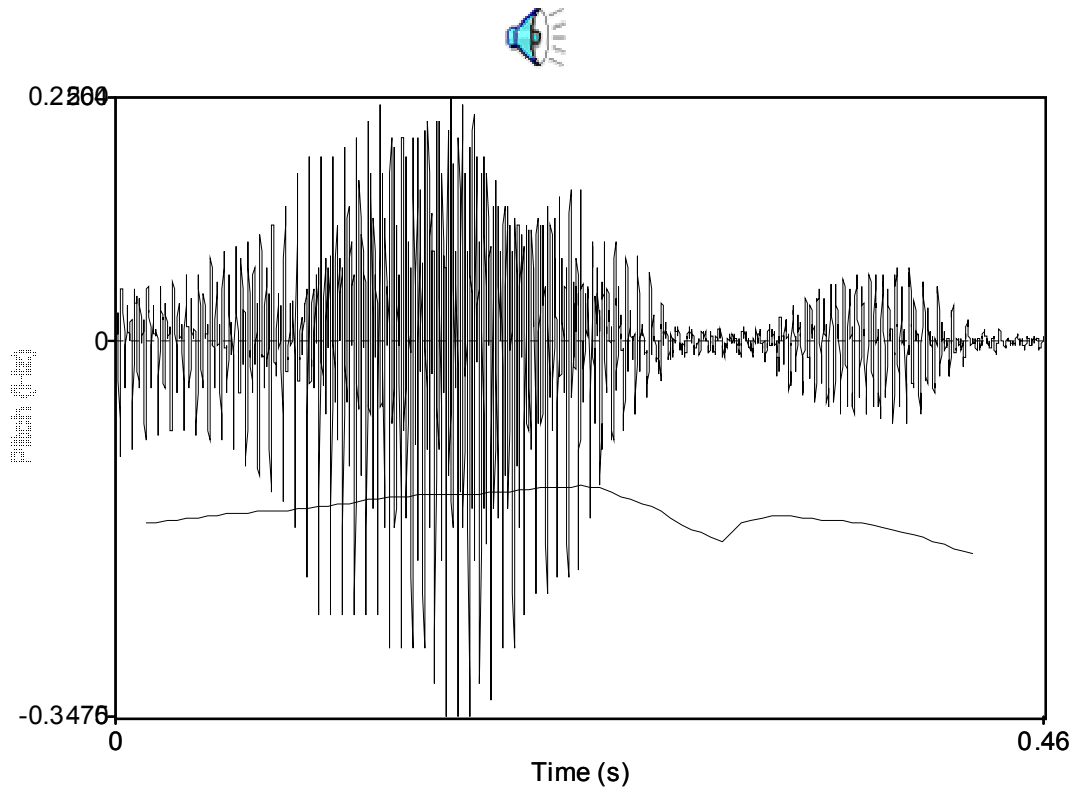
SWB at 10405 C2B

SPEAKER_B: well the interesting thing **was is** i had heard that and i- i- i
tend to i think overreact occasionally when somebody tells me it's that
great and and it was the thing is it was a it was a good story



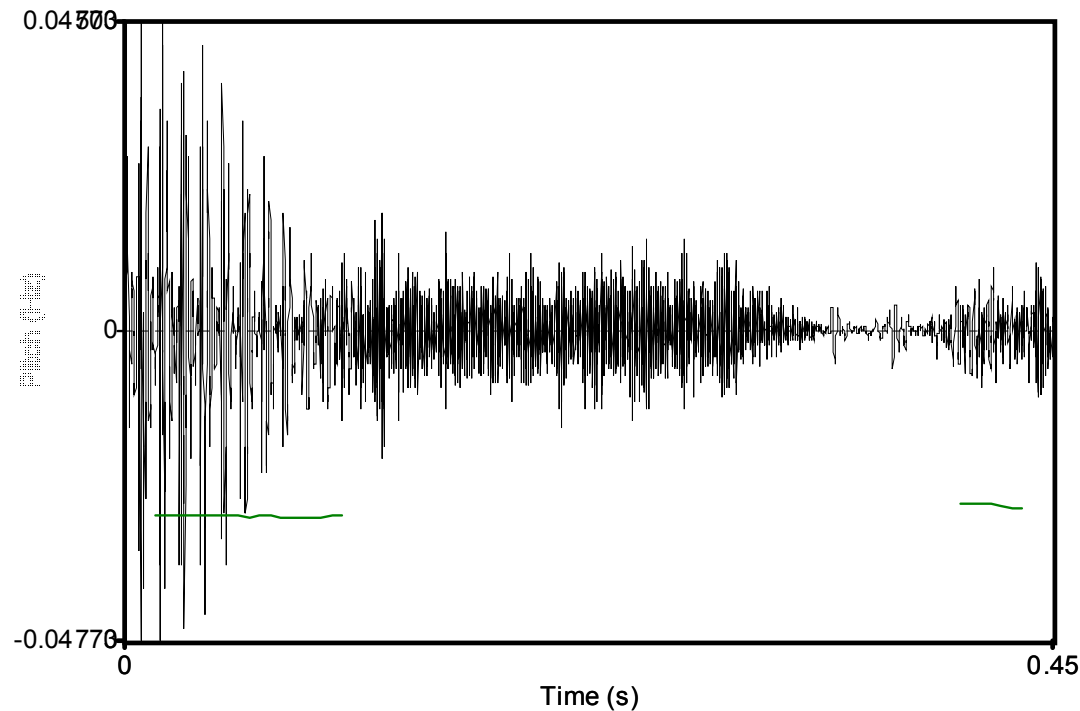
SWB at 1133624

SPEAKER_B: yeah but the idea **was is** that by with five fifths um they could uh they could uh they could sell five and and

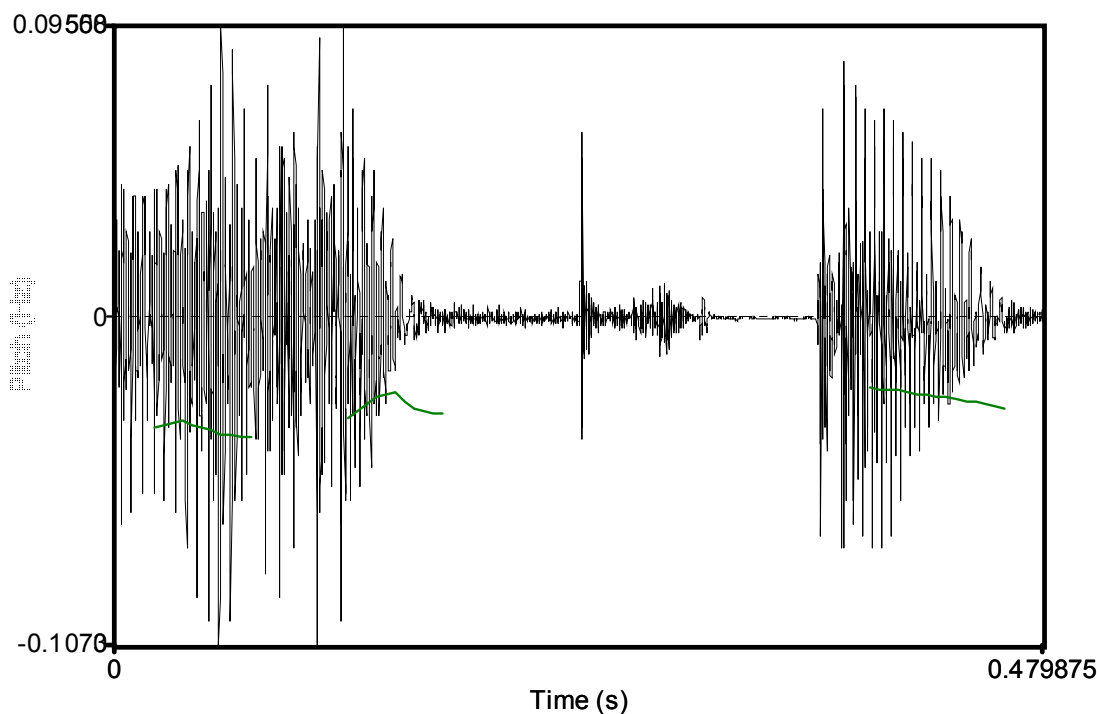


swb at 161194?N2B

SPEAKER_A: scenery is is very entertaining uh and what he does with
the with the scissors and uh

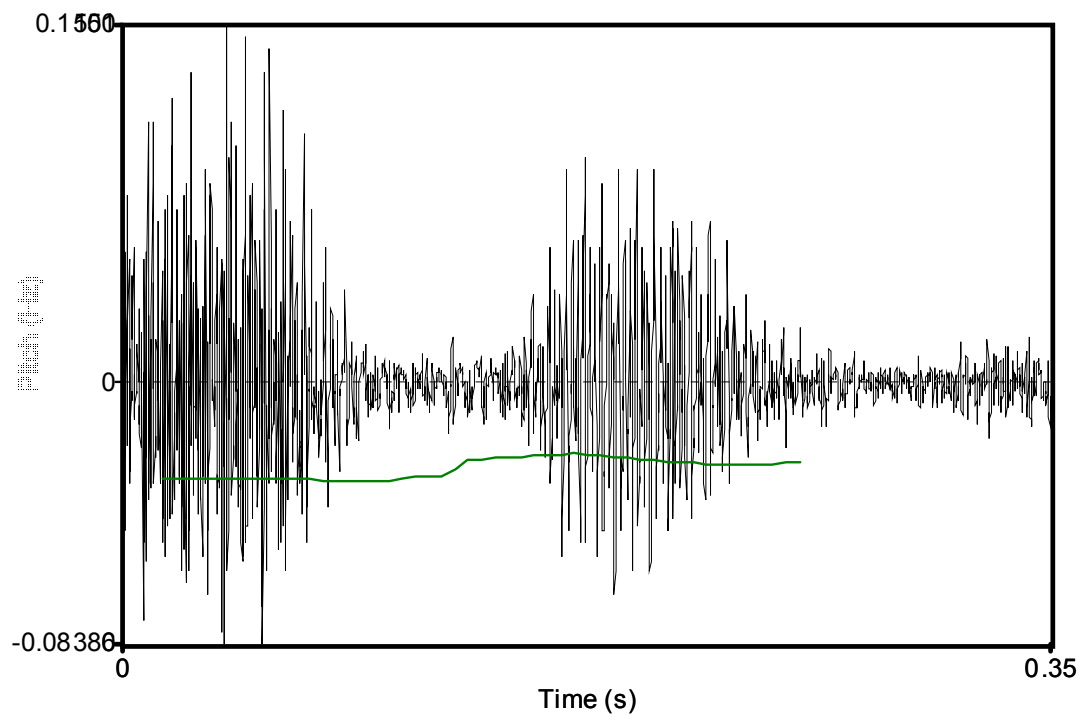


SPEAKER_B: huh well that's neat well um it was real funny i went to a seminar that was just it **was is** a satellite seminar it was really neat and it was just for women

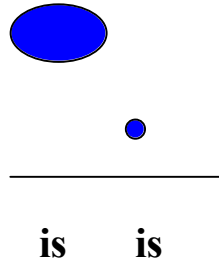


swb at position 315928 ?HR

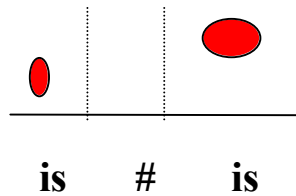
SPEAKER_A: well the problem we're having down here in public schools is is financing for one thing



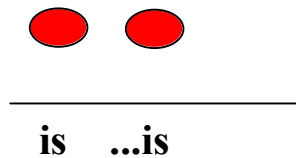
Double be (2B)



Disfluency-Repetition (broken) –DRB = Levelt/Cutler
‘marked repair’



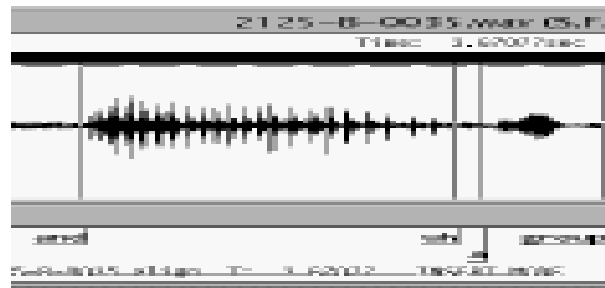
Disfluency-Repetition (unbroken)- DRU = Levelt/Cutler
‘unmarked repair’



DISFLUENCIES: PHONETIC EFFECTS IN THE REPERANDUM

- *Lengthening*
- *Creaky voice*
- *Word cutoff and laryngealisation*
- *No final coarticulation or not to following word*
- *Vowel quality*
- *Flat or falling intonation*
- *Diplophonia*

(last two usually in filled pauses but sometimes at edge of reperandum)



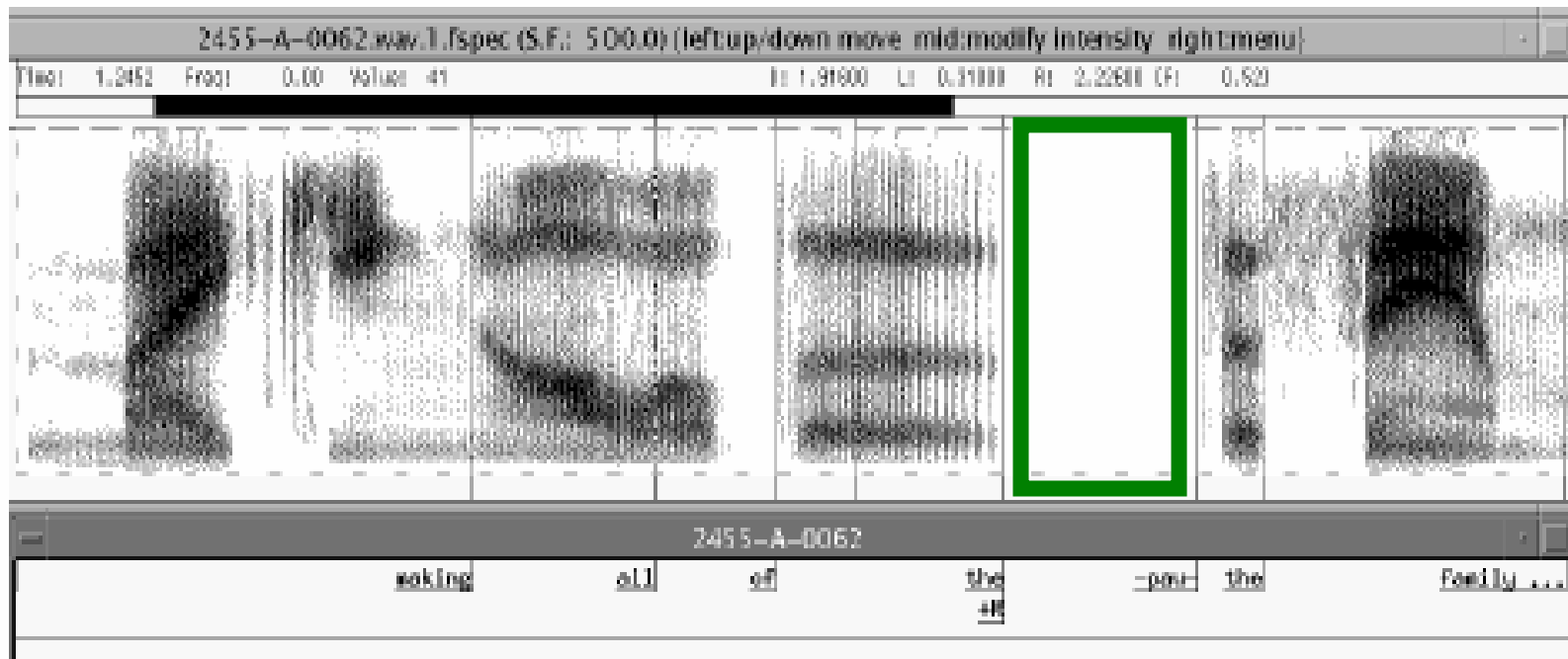


Figure 7 Example of a lengthened repairandum in a repetition of *the the*. Label '-pau-' = pause. Full sentence was *Uh and even those who may not do it seem to be spending more time with their kids and really trying harder at making all of the the family things work.*



Shriberg, Elizabeth (2001) 'To 'errr' is human: ecology and acoustics of speech disfluencies *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*. 31.1:161

‘Repair on the fly’

Levelt (1989:497) , sentence cited from Kroch & Hindle (1982)

14.That’s the only thing he does is fight.

‘Speakers are apparently willing to stretch or even distort their syntax to cope with local trouble, just to maintain fluent delivery of their speech’

Free-be’s

15.That can’t be a very welcome outcome, is that rates will now rise
(Political commentator, ABC)
McConvell (1988:302)

15.She was telling me, is they have to eat with the kids.
Massam (1999:345, Canada)

BLEND ANALYSIS

16a. I made the point once before, is that we have to *work* on this committee (Australian public servant)

b. I made the point once before, that we have to...

c. The point I made once before is that we have to...

17. Can I simply say this, is that the parliamentary process is difficult one (Western Australian politician giving a speech)

??BLEND ANALYSIS

Ross-Hagebaum (2004) ‘that’s X is Y’ construction

67.4 % have clauses as second predicate

That’s what I was about to say is that everyone needs to be tested.

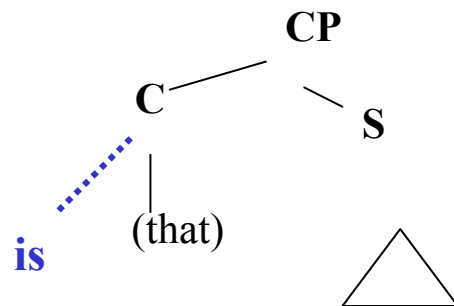
32.6% have NP’s & PP’s

18a. And that’s my big area of interest in linguistics is discourse.

b? *My big area of interest is is discourse

STAGE 1

ID COPULA
WITH FALL-
RISE



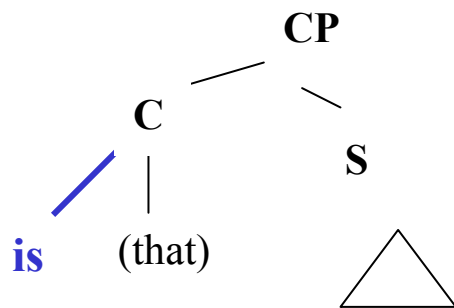
MAIN ASSERTION

**DOUBLE-BE: SYNTAX-PROSODY
MISMATCH CAUSES REPETITION;
LOW IS BECOMES RIGHT CLAUSE
MARKER**

STAGE 2

OTHER CLAUSES
WITH FALL-RISE

DOMINANCE OF
THAT'S...



?MAIN ASSERTION

FREE-BE

LOW IS MARKS RIGHT CLAUSE

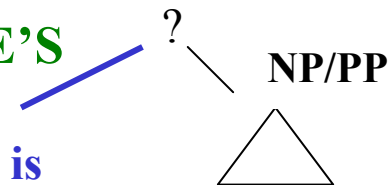
Transitional second predicates

?STAGE 4

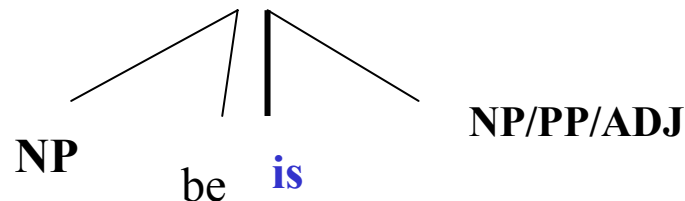
STAGE 3

EXTENDED FREE-BE'S

THAT'S...



?EXTENDED DOUBLE-BE'S



Future research

- Historical sociolinguistics of the spread
 - Child versus adult acquisition
 - The boundaries of disfluency
 - Mismatch as change motor