

How 'tone of voice' can change meaning: intensification in everyday talk.

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What I want to do...

- Show how everyday language can be explored in empirical ways: 'tone of voice' needn't be (such a) slippery fish
- Illustrate with a phenomenon familiar everyday conversation

The phenomenon: intensification



Sooooo funny! (Watch until the end!!!)

TODAY Soooooo cute!

A dose of cute to get you through the day

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Puppy in the garden

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from TODAY
Cuteness overload! White lion triplets born in Poland - TODAY.com

65 likes 14 comments

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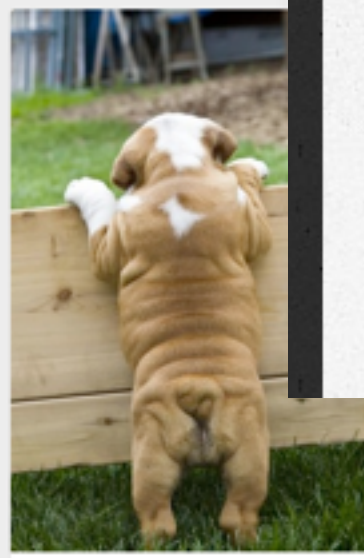


Rats! Photographer turns pet rodents cuddly

32 likes 11 comments 1 retweet

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Kathy C
OMG! This is adorable!



This one's got a dozen rolls

169 likes 42 comments 1 retweet

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DAMN YOU

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Thank You SOOOOO Much

By Lyndsey on June 4th 2013 1 Comments

PREV

Verizon 3G

20:07

45% battery

Messages (1)

Lissa

Edit

daaaaang!

This has been such an amazing day. I'm truly blessed! Thank you so much for giving me the chance to probe myself



DAMN YOUAUTOCORRECT.COM

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NEXT A
As Th
Goes

Share

Tweet

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Birch Run Photo: The HUUUUGE banana split and I



The HUUUUGE banana split and I (nanurarr, Nov 2008)
OHHH MY!



My Style Tooootally



The phenomenon: intensification

A few spoken examples

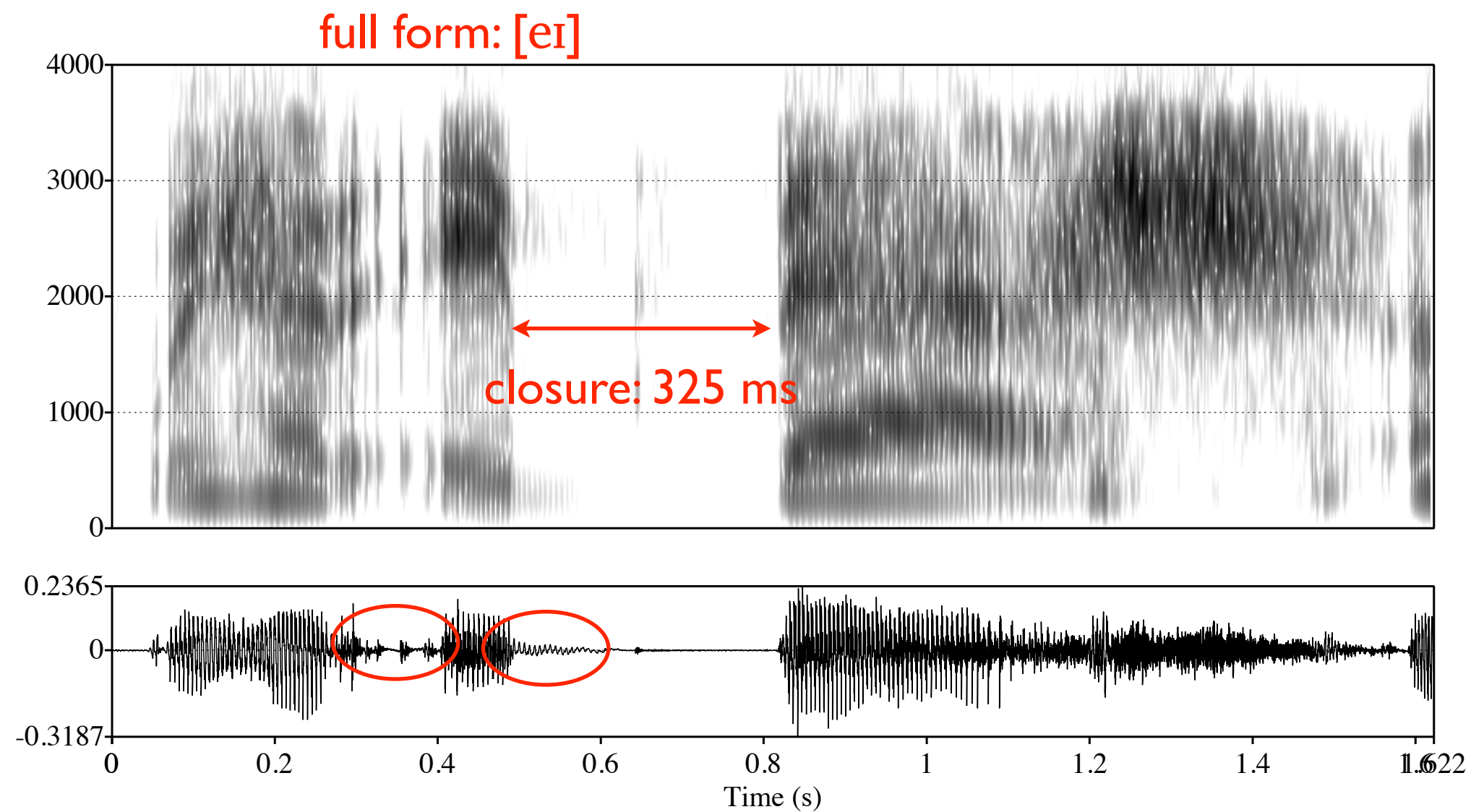
- I'd walk in there and like five people would say hello to me
- you'd be nuts if you went in
- well the traffic
- Joel then turned up the day after I arrived and drove us (.) mad

Data

- CallHome: American English data, 1980s
- Approximately 120 examples in 27 calls (about 540 minutes, 54 speakers)
- Intensified items marked as underlined in transcriptions

Phonetic description of intensification

en_4822.924-961: we had a *bash*



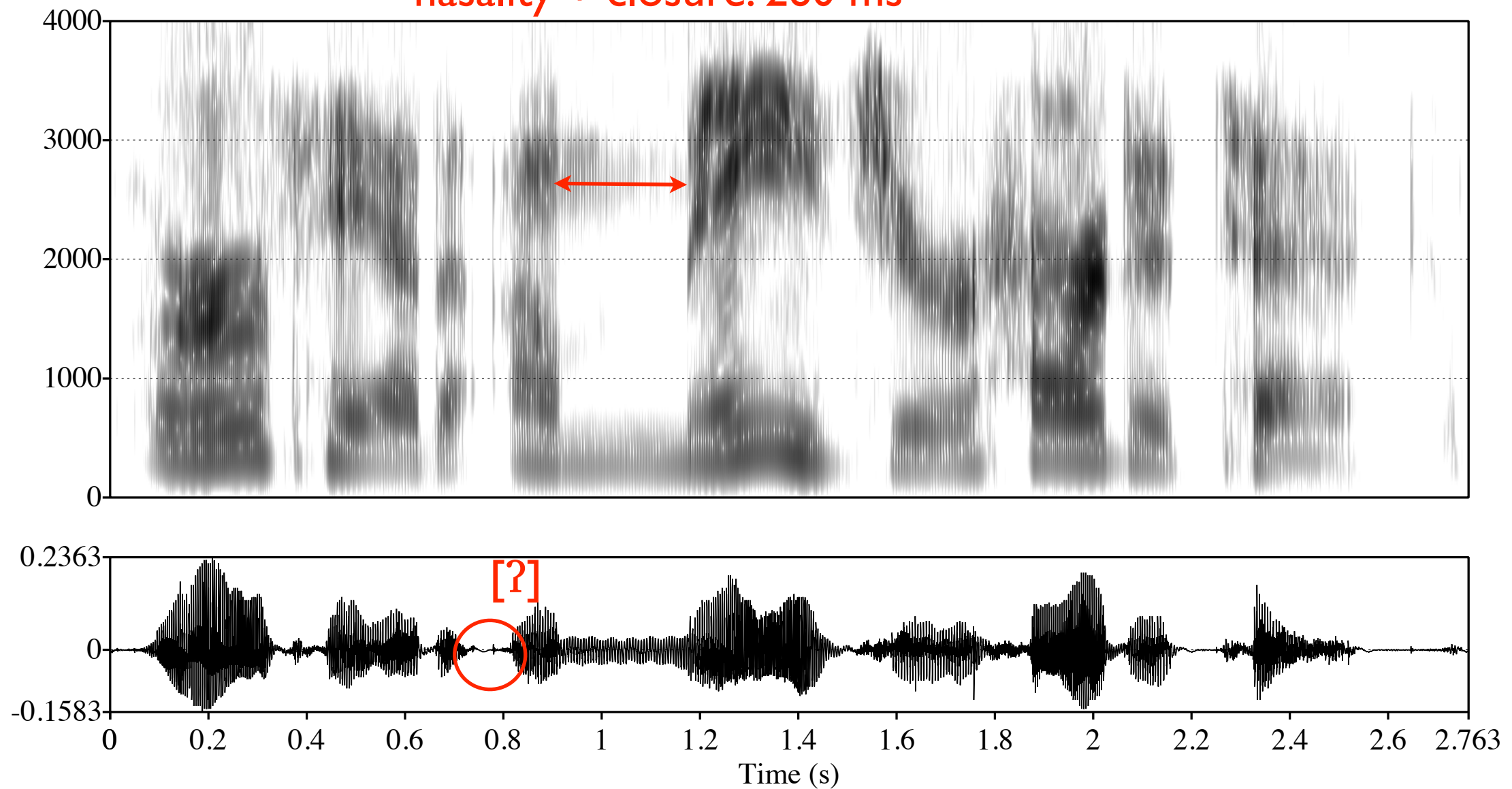
glottalisation voicing + closure: 85 ms

wɪ h a d eɪ b æ ʃ

faster slower

en_4569.272-328: (some years ago) I— had a major heart attack

sharp onset and release
nasality + closure: 260 ms



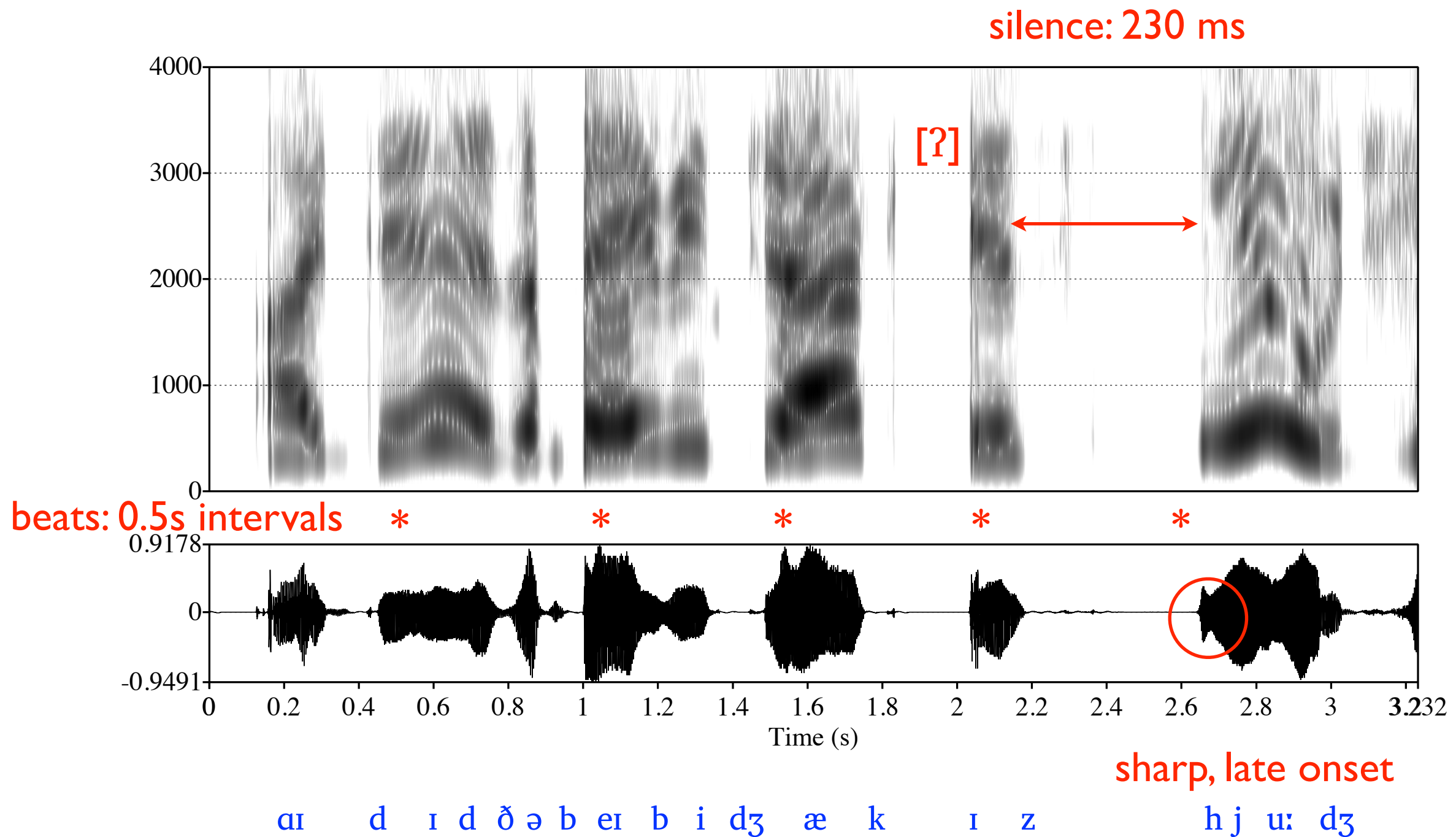
release into voicing

ə v h æ d ə m ei dʒ ə

faster

slower

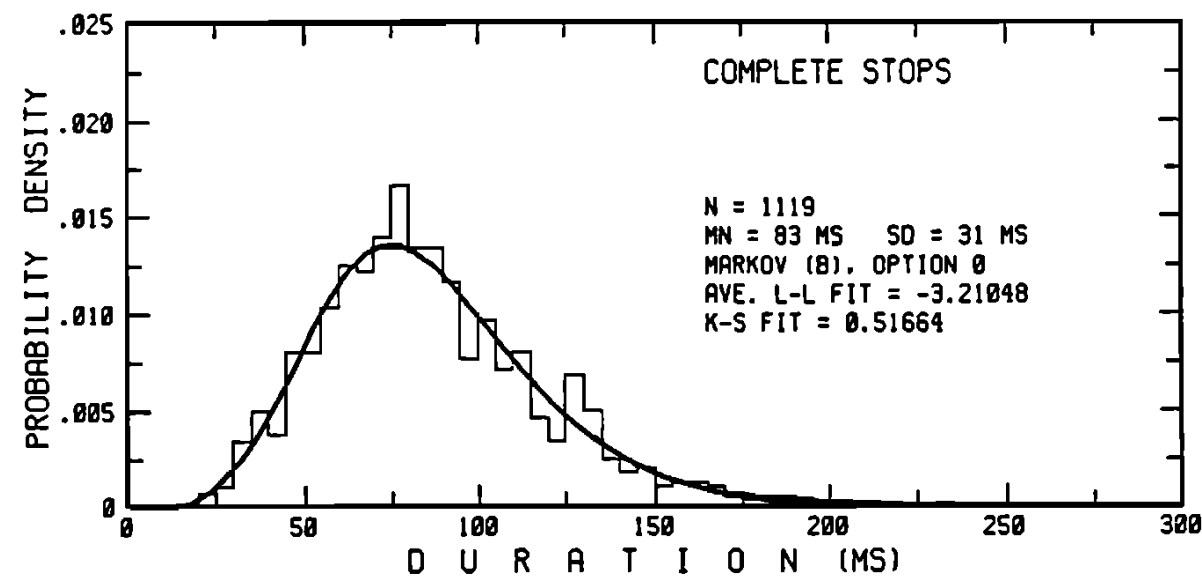
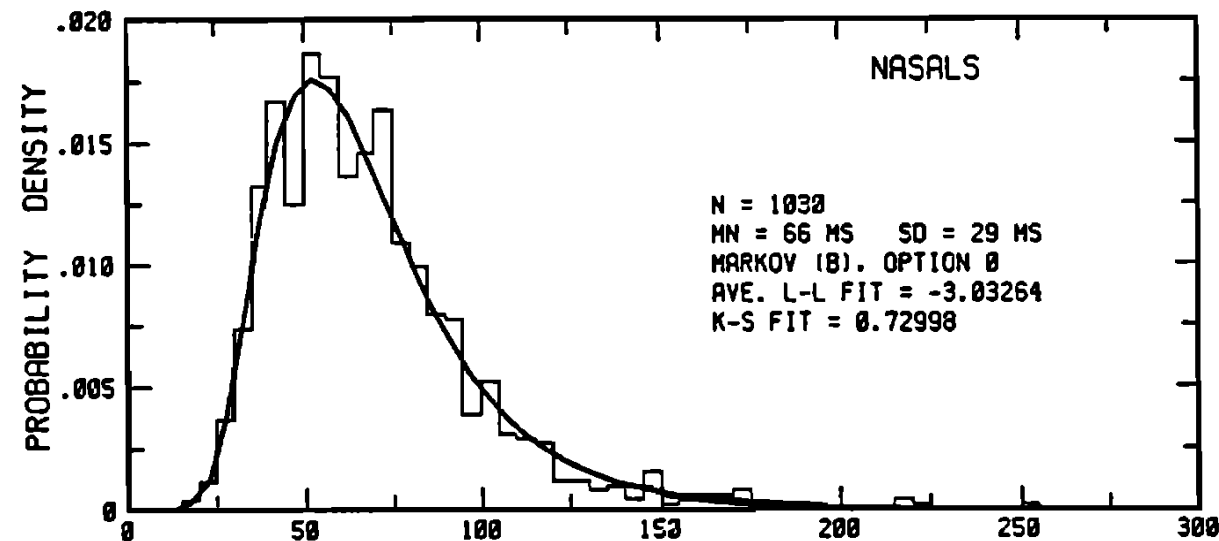
en_4145.658-672: *I did, the baby J— is huge*



How intensification is produced

- Intensified items are **intonationally prominent**
- They have a **tenser articulatory setting**
- They are produced **more slowly** with consonants and vowels typically **s t r e t c h e d**
- Before intensified item: **gaps and glottal stops; faster speech**

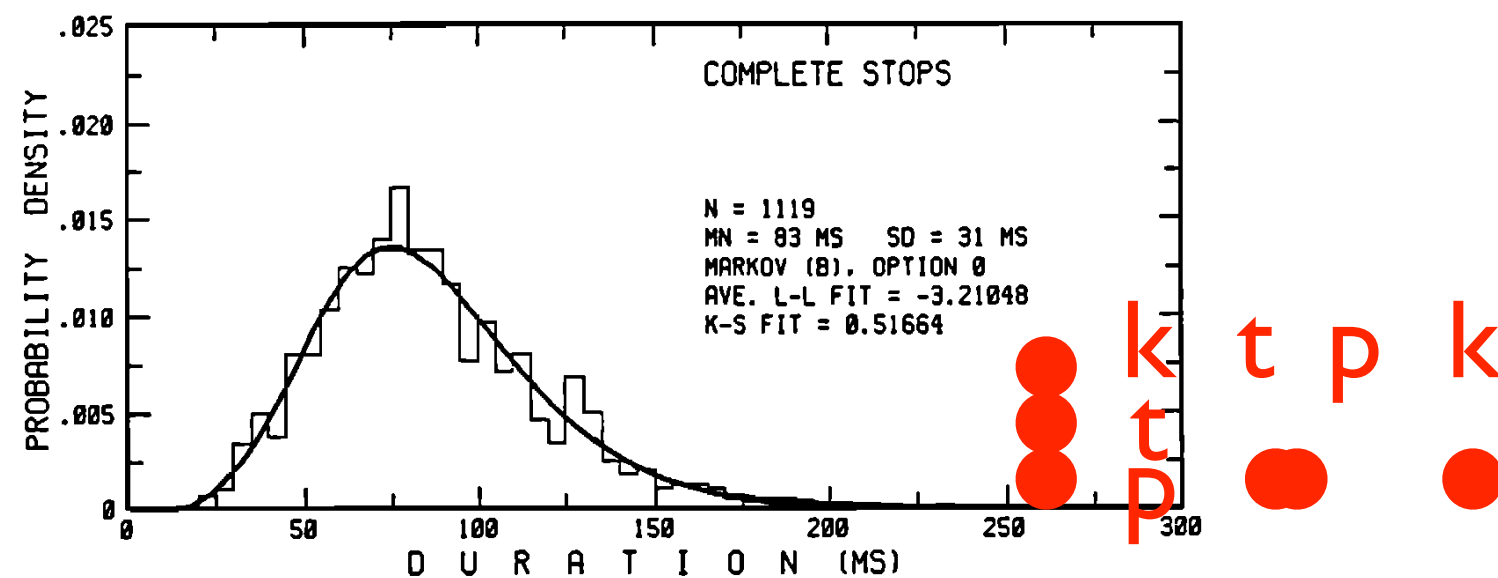
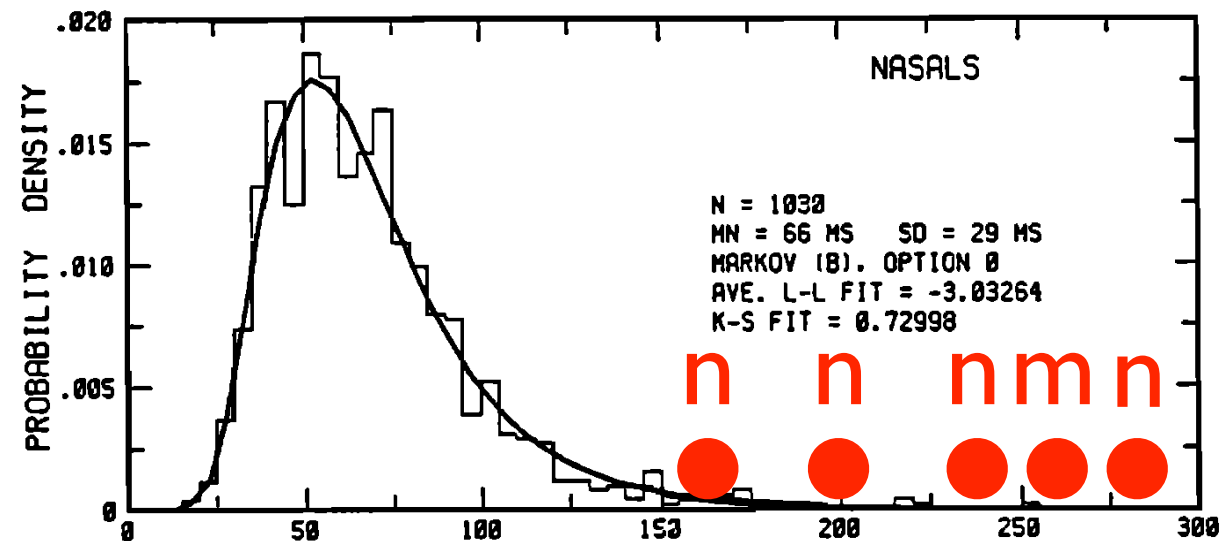
Typical durations of segments in (American) English speech



Durations of [m n] and [p t k]

Thomas H Crystal & Arthur S House (1988).

Segmental durations in connected speech signals: current results. JASA 83, 1553-1573.



Durations of [m n] and [p t k]

Thomas H Crystal & Arthur S House (1988).

Segmental durations in connected speech signals: current results. JASA 83, 1553-1573.



typical
sounds

intensified sounds

duration

What gets upgraded?

Word class	Percentage
Adjectives huge, intense, major, disastrous, cheap, alive, red, thin	33%
Modifiers and adverbs really, very, totally, so, completely, never, absolutely	35%
Nouns party, traffic, rocks, Maine	15%
Quantifiers and numbers none, no, all, five, fourth	12%
Verbs smell, believe	6%

Showing what intensification means

I. Other features in the same speaker's talk.

Upgrading

Saying the same thing again more strongly

- 1 A: makes an assessment
- 2 B: demonstrates resistance
- 3 A: a stronger, **upgraded**,
 intensified, assessment

1 CH en_4365.163-195

01 B <<all> I mean talk about a little bit th-> `RUDE;

B makes a negative assessment of A's friend, who has been staying with B.

1 CH en_4365.163-195

01 B <<all> I mean talk about a little bit th-> *`RUDE;
02 I'm <<p> SORry>
03 A [`wEl1.]

A could come in at * but doesn't.
A starts a response with *well*, which indicates upcoming trouble (disagreement).

1 CH en_4365.163-195

01 B <<all> I mean talk about a *little bit* th-> `RUDE;

02 I'm <<p> SORry>

03 A [*wEll.*]

04→ B [that's] `REA:lly 'rUde if you `Ask `mE;

B makes a stronger, upgraded
assessment and intensifies *really*

1 CH en_4365.163-195

01 B <<all> I mean talk about a little bit th-> `RUDE;

02 I'm <<p> SORry>

03 A [`wEll.]

04→ B [that's] `REA:lly 'rUde if you `Ask `mE;

2 CH en_4092.358-385

01 A mOm and dAd won't `HAVE blAck.

A is organising B's wedding for her.
B has told the bridesmaids to wear
black.
A reports their parents' reaction.

2 CH en_4092.358-385

01 A mOm and dAd won't `HAVE blAck.

02 B they don't 'WANT blAck?

B does an understanding check.

2 CH en_4092.358-385

01 A mOm and dAd won't `HAVE blAck.

02 B they don't 'WANT blAck?

03 → A they're `R:EALlY op`pOsed to it.

A confirms B's understanding, and upgrades B's and her own earlier formulations, with intensification.

2 CH en_4092.358-385

01 A mOm and dAd won't `HAVE blAck.

02 B they don't 'WANT blAck?

03 → A they're `R:EALly op`pOsed to it.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

B asks A for an update on what she's been doing.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

02 A [`OH `gOd it was `HORrible.

A responds with this update. It's a story launch. A story provides a speaker with an opportunity for a longer telling: here, some account for A's negative assessment.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

02 A [`OH `gOd it was `HORrible.

03 B <<laugh> 'rEAIlly?>

B's response provides A with a slot to continue; but by laughing, he displays a non-serious understanding of A's story-to-be.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

02 A [`OH `gOd it was `HORrible.

03 B <<laugh> 'rEAIlly?>

04 → A <<all> it was> <<f, len> `↑HO:Rrible>.

A makes the same assessment, but intensifies **horrible**: `↑HO:Rrible is something more than **horrible** in line 02.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

02 A [`OH `gOd it was `HORrible.

03 B <<laugh> 'rEAIlly?>

04 → A <<all> it was> <<f, len> `↑HO:Rrible>.

05 B `↑whY:.

B takes this version seriously and provides A with the go-ahead for her telling.

3 CH en_4610.1285-1311

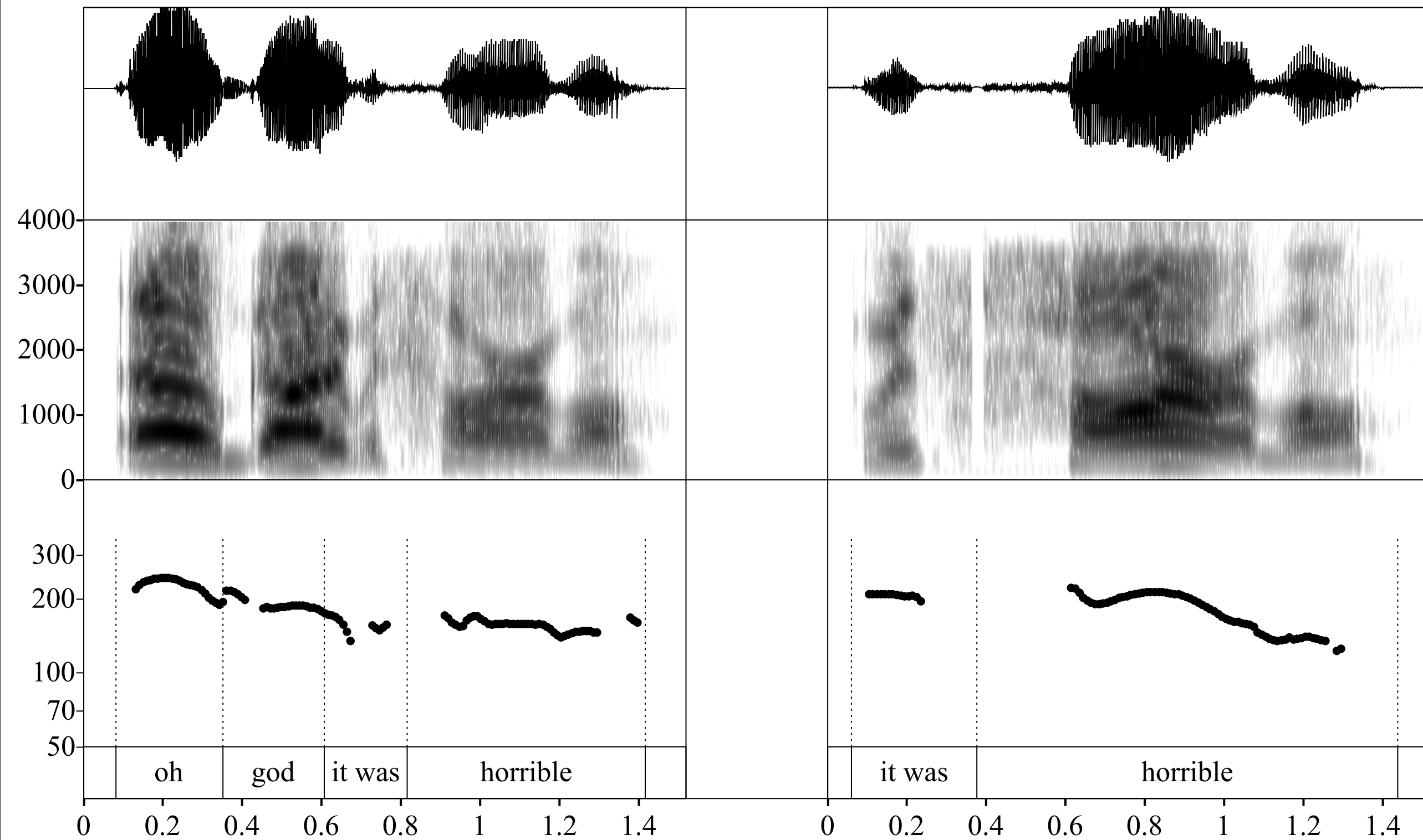
01 B whAt was the tIme in New `MExico lI[ke;

02 A [`OH `gOd it was `HORrible.

03 B <<laugh> 'rEAIlly?>

04 → A <<all> it was> <<f, len> `↑HO:Rrible>.

05 B `↑whY:.



first version

‘upgraded’

a bit rude	→	<u>really</u> rude
won't have black	→	are <u>really</u> opposed to it
horrible	→	↑ <u>horrible</u>

Intensification by itself is equivalent to a reformulation using words.

Intensifying nouns:
non-neutral versions of nouns.

When is a party more than a party?

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]

A invited some Russian students
round to a party.
She describes the quantity of alcohol
they drank.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.

B does a confirmation check.
A confirms her own evaluation of
how much drinking went on.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gIn?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.

She describes the kind of things they
drank: hard liquor.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gi[n?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.
10 B really, <<laugh> gi[n?>

B orients to the 'hard liquor'.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gIn?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.
10 B really, <<laugh> gi[n?>
11 A [they got
12 A <<len> `↑SCHNO::Ckere[d.=> =they they we had a]

A describes how drunk they were.

`↑SCHNO::Ckered is intensified; this ties in with the hard liquor.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gIn?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.
10 B really, <<laugh> gi[n?>
11 A [they got
12 A <<len> `↑SCHNO::Ckere[d.=> =they they we had a]
13 B [oh my god]
14 → A `↑P:A:R↑ty he[re.

She describes it as a `↑P:A:R↑ty
with intensification.

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gIn?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.
10 B really, <<laugh> gi[n?>
11 A [they got
12 A <<len> `↑SCHNO::Ckere[d.=> =they they we had a]
13 B [oh my god]
14 → A `↑P:A:R↑ty he[re.
15 B [<<breathy> wo::w::>
16 A -dAncing a-rOUnd; -spIlling stUff; still `stIcky EverywhEre...

B displays appreciation with **wow**.
A continues to describe the party: it's
wild, exuberant...

4 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A you have never seen so much alcohol consumed b[y a] (*) (*)
02 B [re-]
03 r- re[all]y
04 A [(*) (*)]
05 Unbelievable.
06 B o[:h
07 A [they brought all this gIn?
08 B he[hehe
09 A [and vOdkA.
10 B really, <<laugh> gi[n?>
11 A [they got
12 A <<len> `↑SCHNO::Ckere[d.=> =they they we had a]
13 B [oh my god]
14 → A `↑P:A:R↑ty he[re.
15 B [<<breathy> wo::w::>
16 A -dAncing a-rOUnd; -spIlling stUff; still `stIcky EverywhEre...

What is worse than traffic?

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `‘arrIved, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn’t kn]ow there was a game,

A arrived somewhere unfamiliar as a
ball game was starting.

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `‘arrIved, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn’t kn]ow there was a game,
03 B [‘Oh ^nO.]
04 A I mean I did[n’t even] knOw
05 B [<<cr>oh>]

B displays that she can see there’s
trouble brewing: *oh no; CLICK+oh.*

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `arrived, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn't kn]ow there was a game,
03 B ['Oh ^nO.]
04 A I mean I did[n't even] knOw
05 B [<<cr>oh >]
06 A where I was gOing.=you kn[ow I was just] `fOllowing
07 B [mhm]
08 A the `dirEction[s.]
09 B [mhm]

A describes her lack of familiarity
with the city.

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `arrived, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn't kn]ow there was a game,
03 B ['Oh ^nO.]
04 A I mean I did[n't even] knOw
05 B [<<cr>oh>]
06 A where I was gOing.=you kn[ow I was just] `fOllowing
07 B [mhm]
08 A the `dirEction[s.]
09 B [mhm]
10 → A <<all> well the> `↑TR:A:Ffic.

A mentions the `↑TR:A:Ffic., with intensification. This is in the context of having set it up as problematic.

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `arrived, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn't kn]ow there was a game,
03 B ['Oh ^nO.]
04 A I mean I did[n't even] knOw
05 B [<<cr>oh>]
06 A where I was gOing.=you kn[ow I was just] `fOllowing
07 B [mhm]
08 A the `dirEction[s.]
09 B [mhm]
10 → A <<all> well the> `↑TR:A:Ffic.
11 I was [beside myself
12 B [<<click>>
13 A I said ↑Oh h° my goodness

A describes her mental state, and a
(mild) profanity she used.
Traffic in this story is a problem.

5 CH en_4665.1274-1319

01 A well we `arrived, jUst as the trAffic was going In for the
02 gA[me? well ↑`I didn't kn]ow there was a game,
03 B ['Oh ^nO.]
04 A I mean I did[n't even] knOw
05 B [<<cr>oh >]
06 A where I was gOing.=you kn[ow I was just] `fOllowing
07 B [mhm]
08 A the `dirEction[s.]
09 B [mhm]
10 → A <<all> well the> `↑TR:A:Ffic.
11 I was [beside myself
12 B [<<click>>
13 A I said ↑Oh h° my goodness

‘plain’

intensified

party



traffic



Numbers

Extreme case formulations

Extreme case formulations

schnockered

a major heart attack

really opposed

don't smell at all

never seen so much alcohol

the baby Jack is huge

6 CH en_4576.394-414

01 B y'had pEcan 'pIE?
02 → A [mtk↓] `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 B °ptk
09 A `H[U:GE pieces.
10 B [uy uy
11 B <<p> ^wow.>

Extreme case formulation:
not just big: huge

Five pieces: they will be even
bigger than if there are six

Extreme case formulation:
not just busy: **overwhelming**.

7 CH en_4485.127-164

01 B `O:h `gOd this `COURse Joshua,
02 → was <<len> -SO: (.) ?Over>whElming this year. ha[haha
03 A [<<p> 'wO:w.
04 A .hhh I mean w- e- we were in -clAss; (.) ?about `sIx hOUrs a `dAY,
05 and then yOU `hAd to go `hO:me and `dO about twEnty five hOURrs
06 worth of `HOMEwork. to to get `rEAdy for the next dAY.

A long day: 6 hr + 35 hr = 31 hr.
No wonder it's **overwhelming**.

Numbers, quantifiers, extreme case formulations

- ‘External’, ‘objective’ evidence for assessment provided
- Present an assessment as reasonable, making it easier for someone else to go along with
- cf. Pomerantz 1986, Wilkinson & Kitinger 2006

2. How the recipient treats intensification.

8 CH en_4485.127-164

01 B `O:h `gOd this `COURse Joshua,
02 was <<len> -SO: (.) ?over>whElming this year. ha[haha
03 → A [<<p> 'wo:w.]

9 CH en_4665.1070-1116

01 B Mary JAne said she was ?EAten ?a`LI::VE
02 (0.3)
03 → A [<<p> `n[::O.>]
04 B [<<laughter> [the Other 'dAy,>
05 → A <<click>> <<C> ↑-o:::h;>

10 CH en_4807.203-251

01 A she's (.) had her `F:OURTH stro:ke an[d;
02 → B [<<p> oh `go:sh;>]

11 CH en_4822.681-722

01 B oh I ↑`THOUGHT he was kind of `cute'
02 <<all> but hE was like> ↑`T:Otally enAmoured of me.
03 → A <<click>> ^↑WO[W.
04 B [im`MEDiately. <<CR> which was vERY sUsp[ect.>
05 A [.hh
06 A Even [when you're- even thOUGH you're] 'Older and
07 B [I mean be`↑fORE he even `knEW me.]
08 A `Ev↑erything.

12 CH en_4822.924-961

01 A we had a `B:A::[sh.
02 → B [↑`Oh my `GO:D.
(10 seconds later)
11 A [they got
A <<len> `↑SCHNO::Ckere[d=> =they they we had a]
→ B [oh my god]
13 A `↑P:A:R↑ty he[re.
14 → B [<<breathy> wo::w::>
15 A dancing around spilling stuff still sticky everywhere

Done soon after
intensification.
Treats prior as in some
way **remarkable** or
beyond expectation.
Doesn't just treat it as
e.g. new information.

wow

oh my god

gosh

oh no

Responding

The normative way to respond to intensification

- 1 A: turn with intensification
- 2 B: demonstrates understanding:
remarkable, beyond expectation
not just news

More complex cases:
having enough evidence
knowing what we're talking about

Getting the evidence
To share someone else's point of view,
you need to share knowledge

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O`SKInny;

B makes a complaint about her
boyfriend's eating habits and how thin
he is.

↑-S:O`SKInny; is intensified.

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:0`SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>

A responds with a 'continuer'.
This displays no stance towards what
B has just said.
With this continuer, A positions
herself as a recipient of B's telling.

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>
04 B h. I mEA:n; .h the amount of cereal he eats like bet-wEEEn -mEAIs,
05 and 'After mEAIs?

B treats this as inadequate: **I mean**
prefaces a reformulation, so it treat
the prior as problematic.
B provides an account for what she
said in lines 01-02.

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>
04 B h. I mEA:n; .h the amount of cereal he eats like bet-wEEEn -mEAIs,
05 and 'After mEAIs?
06 A <<p> 'yeah,>
07 B and we gO through a box of cereal every two dA:Ys;

More numbers and quantifiers;
evidence for her complaint at lines
01-02.

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>
04 B h. I mEA:n; .h the amount of cereal he eats like bet-wEEEn -mEAIs,
05 and 'After mEAIs?
06 A <<p> 'yeah,>
07 B and we gO through a box of cereal every two dA:Ys;
08 A <<p> ^rEAIlly.>
09 B <<p> -yEAh;>

A does a 'confirmation check'.
B confirms.

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>
04 B h. I mEA:n; .h the amount of cereal he eats like bet-wEEEn -mEAIs,
05 and 'After mEAIs?
06 A <<p> 'yeah,>
07 B and we gO through a box of cereal every two dA:Ys;
08 A <<p> ^rEAIlly.>
09 B <<p> -yEAh;>
10 → A <<pp> wOw>

A displays 'surprise'.

This is the token that could also have come at line 02.

It takes a lot of negotiation to display 'surprise'!

(Wilkinson & Kitzinger 2006)

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;
03 → A <<p l> `mhm;>
04 B h. I mEA:n; .h the amount of cereal he eats like bet-wEEEn -mEAIs,
05 and 'After mEAIs?
06 A <<p> 'yeah,>
07 B and we gO through a box of cereal every two dA:Ys;
08 A <<p> ^rEAIlly.>
09 B <<p> -yEAh;>
10 → A <<pp> wOw>

13 CH en_4092.205-227

01 B `TRAcY; I've `NEver seen anybody eat as much as he does.=
02 =?and he's ↑-S:O `SKInny;

This sequence would have worked just as well.

10 → A <<pp> wOw>

What are we talking about?

To agree, you need to be sure you are both talking about the same thing.

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey

A produces the first turn on a new
topic.

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey

02 B oh yeah

B gives A the go-ahead to tell more
about the house

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey

02 B oh yeah

03 A <<all> it was> ↑`U:N:be`lievable

A makes a strong, intensified
assessment.

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey
02 B oh yeah
03 A <<all> it was> ↑`U:N:be`lievable
04 B frAnk lloyd 'WRI:GHT[s, huh,

B checks on which house he is referring to (**understanding check**): she can only go along with his assessment if she knows what he is assessing (**epistemic access**).

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey
02 B oh yeah
03 A <<all> it was> ↑`U:N:be`lievable
04 B frAnk lloyd 'WRI:GHT[s, huh,
05 A [<<p> `yEAh.>
06 → B aw

14 CH en_4807.542-557

01 A you would've loved this house we saw honey

02 B oh yeah

03 A <<all> it was> ↑`U:N:be`lievable

This sequence would have worked just as well.

06 → B aw

uh-huh

mhm

OK

really?

you mean...?

wow

oh my god

gosh

oh no

Responding

The normative way to respond to intensification

- 1 A: turn with intensification
- 2 B: demonstrates understanding:
remarkable, beyond expectation
wow, oh my god, oh my... etc.

Responding

Sometimes the response is delayed

1 A: turn with intensification

Insert sequence:

A/B: deal with problems with shared knowledge or evidence, make sure we are talking about the same thing

2 B: demonstrates understanding:
remarkable, beyond expectation
wow, oh my god, oh my... etc.

We negotiate the details of what we know, have access to, or what we're talking about.

Resisting the other person's line
or *being heard to resist*

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.

A makes a strong and intensified claim about babies' excrement if they are breast fed.

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.>

B's response accepts the claim but does not display any orientation to the extraordinariness of A's claim.

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>

A provides an even stronger version
of her claim

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>
08 it's like <<*sniff* *sniff*>>
09 <<h> it `↑lOOks like 'shIt

A enacts a mother's surprise at the
lack of smell

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAsT milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.]>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>
08 it's like <<*sniff* *sniff*>>
09 <<h> it `↑lOOks like 'shIt
10 but it doesn't 'smEl1 [like ↑↑`ANyth]i:ng;>

... and then makes her claim again at
very high pitch.

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.]>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>
08 it's like <<*sniff* *sniff*>>
09 <<h> it `↑lOOks like 'shIt
10 but it doesn't 'smEl1 [like ↑↑`ANyth]i:ng;>
11 B [`O:kay; <<click>>]

B's response is still not valenced; it does not orient to the extraordinary part of A's claim.

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>
08 it's like <<*sniff* *sniff*>>
09 <<h> it `↑lOOks like 'shIt
10 but it doesn't 'smEl1 [like ↑↑`ANyth]i:ng;>
11 B [`O:kay; <<click>>]
12 → B °hhh <<p> and did you 'pUmp or `NO[T>

B moves the talk on to the next
topic.

15 CH en_4248.297-340

01 A but if they're 'tOtally `brEAst milk;
02 for like the `fIRst `cOUple of ` 'mOnths,=
03 B =m`HM;=
04 A =they don't-
05 thei:r 'nUmber 'twOs don't smEl1 ?at `↑?ALL.
06 → B <<p l> `oh o`ka[y.>
07 A <<h>[↑-thEy don't ↑-smEl1 like ↑↑`?ANything;>
08 it's like <<*sniff* *sniff*>>
09 <<h> it `↑lOOks like 'shIt
10 but it doesn't 'smEl1 [like ↑↑`ANyth]i:ng;>
11 B [`O:kay; <<click>>]
12 → B °hhh <<p> and did you 'pUmp or `NO[T>
13 A [yeah I pumped

Responding

Resisting the other person's line

- 1 A: turn with intensification
- 2 B: resists aligning with A
- (3 A: turn with intensification)
- (4 B: resists aligning with A) ↩
- ... exit sequence

Evidence that turns with intensification are designed to get an aligning response from the recipient.

You say the right thing...
but it's not enough for the other person.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces

02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX

A describes a pecan pie she and her family ate at a restaurant. She uses a number to describe the size of the pieces.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>

B produces a response.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?

A pursues a further response; it's as if
oh my isn't adequate.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>

B produces a quiet, creaky **wow**.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.

A modifies her description: fewer
pieces means bigger pieces.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 → B °ptk

B opens her mouth and prepares to take a turn.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 → B °ptk
09 A `H[U:GE pieces.

A repeats her claim about the size of the pieces.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 → B °ptk
09 A `H[U:GE pieces.
10 → B [uy uy
11 → B <<p> ^wow.>

B takes the turn she started at line 08, and produces and appreciation of A's telling.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 → B °ptk
09 A `H[U:GE pieces.
10 → B [uy uy
11 → B <<p> ^wow.>
12 A so anyway that was fun

A closes the sequence down with a summarising assessment; **so anyway** marks the start of something disjunctive and new.

9 CH en_4576.394-414

01 A `↑HU::GE `pIEces
02 I thin[k <<all> the pie was probably] cut in> `SIX
03 B [<<-----laughter----->>]
04 → B <<all> ↑oh ^my.>
05 A you 'KNOW?
06 B <<C, p> w[o:w>
07 A [or `Even `FIVE.
08 → B °ptk
09 A `H[U:GE pieces.
10 → B [uy uy
11 → B <<p> ^wow.>
12 A so anyway that was fun

Conclusions

- We find intensification in many social activities: complaining, informing, story-telling
- Intensification involves more than just ‘tone of voice’: there’s a lot of other linguistic structure involved
- Intensification is used to solicit a response from someone else that aligns with the speaker’s stance: one device to persuade

‘The science of language’

- There are technical ways to describe speech, the organisation of language into units, and the organisation of linguistic units into conversations
- Everyday talk, despite our intuitions, is orderly: there is linguistic and social order, and we can find evidence for these levels of order by careful examination

Thank you!

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Talk based on:

Ogden, Richard. 2012. "Making Sense of Outliers." *Phonetica* 69 (1-2): 48–67.

