Chapter 15, Problem 3: AAVE Invariant *Be*

A. Our theory provides no way to represent the special meaning of invariant *be* except by giving it a separate lexical entry, with its own semantics.

B. Since stand-alone sentences in AAVE are finite on our analysis, they will have a finite verb, except for imperatives. Examples like *Pat be sleeping* are clearly not imperatives. Thus, invariant *be* seems to be finite.

C. Examples (ii)–(v) show that none of the NICE lexical rules apply to invariant *be*. Since the ADV$_{pol}$-Addition, Inversion, and Contraction rules apply to finite auxiliaries, and since we concluded in part B that invariant *be* is finite, it must be [AUX –]. This conclusion is supported by (v). The Ellipsis LR applies to (both finite and non-finite) [AUX +] elements. The unacceptability of (v) indicates that invariant *be* is not [AUX +].