# The embeddability of illocutionary force
**Rebecca Woods, University of Huddersfield/University of York (r.woods@hud.ac.uk)**

**Summary:** Building on Krifka (2014), a unified examination of a range of *quasi-quotational* embedded clauses—optional alternative methods for representing speech and thought which are interpretively and syntactically intermediate between direct and indirect reports—shows that illocutionary force is to some degree embeddable. It is postulated that a functional Illocutionary Act (IA) projection above embedded CP nominalises these clauses into utterances and introduces a local perspectival index according to which shiftable elements in the embedded clause are interpreted. Loci for inter- and intra-language variation are also discussed.

**Data:** Embedded inverted questions (EIQs) in English dialects (as in 1), recomplementation in Spanish (in 2) and Germanic EV2 (in 3) share a wide range of syntactic characteristics: highly restricted distribution with respect to matrix verbs they can combine with; sensitivity to matrix negation, modality and interrogation; lack of indexical shift; sequence of tense; unavailability of fronting the embedded clause; availability of speech act adverbs, discourse markers scoping within the embedded clause as in (3) and hanging topics; root-like word order (V-to-C) or other overt marking in the C-domain:

(1) a. You asked Jack **was she** in his class (cf. You asked Jack if **she was** in his class)
    b. *I remember was she in Jack's class
    c. I don't remember was she in Jack's class.          (*Irish, Liverpool, Indian Englishes, AAE*)
(2) Pedro dice **que con ella, que** no van a venir (cf. *Pedro dice **que con ella,** no van a venir)
    "Pedro says that they are not going to come with her."                    *(Spanish)*
(3) (Mia miassn ned in'd Schui,) wei do **san** scho Ferien **gä**? (cf. wei do scho Ferien **san *gä**?)
    "(We don't have to go to school) because we're already on holidays then, I think?" *(Bavarian)*

No analysis accounting for both the syntax and distribution of these constructions has been found for them severally or as a group; most accounts rely on some definition of "assertion" which cannot be the whole story based on the data in (1) and evidence for EV2 under semifactives in Swedish. They are not selected by the matrix verb, else modality in the matrix clause would not affect their distribution, yet they are clearly subordinate to the matrix clause because the bound reading in (4) is available. Also, not all root phenomena are permitted: in (5b) "huh", which expresses the speaker's demand for an immediate answer, is unavailable.

(4) Everyone$_i$ wondered would Jack take her$_i$ to the dance.
(5) a. Why can't you come to the party, huh? → Tell me immediately why you can't come
    b. He asked me why couldn't I come to the party, (*huh)?

These constructions, which I term *quasi-quotes*, also share a wide range of semantic and pragmatic characteristics which are intermediate between indirect and direct speech reports (ISRs and DSRs). Unlike ISRs, they all give rise to the presupposition that the proposition or question contained in the embedded clause was discussed in the original discourse—they are referential in that they must refer to an extant prior speech act. Also, both their form *and* content may be questioned, as in (6)—note that B' is not possible in response to the equivalent ISR:

(6) A: You asked me could I cook tea for you.      B: No, I asked could you cook lunch.
                                                    B': No, I asked more politely than that!

Quasi-quotes disambiguate between perspectives in a way that ISRs do not (ISRs allow both subject and speaker readings), but here the group of constructions diverges. English EIQs and Spanish recomplementation clauses must be interpreted with respect to the original speaker (the matrix subject), whereas German/Mainland Scandinavian (MSc) EV2 clauses reassert the perspective of the current speaker. This split is also seen in the interpretation of embedded imperatives: the subject of an embedded imperative is interpreted as the original addressee in English/Spanish but the current addressee in German/Swedish (cf. also Kaufmann 2015).

The data show that quasi-quotes are embedded representations of speech acts which feature root-like syntax (verb movement and the availability of (some) left-peripheral material) and the disambiguation of perspectives. However, they are not independent speech acts themselves; there is

no obligation for the addressee in the reporting context to answer an EIQ and root phenomena which necessitate a response from the addressee are blocked.

**Proposal:** In the spirit of McCloskey's (2006) split-CP analysis of EIQs, quasi-quotes contain an Illocutionary Act Projection (IAP) above CP which is absent in ISRs. The IA head is a nominalising head, selecting the embedded question to produce a referential nominal-like utterance (cf. Kastner 2015 on factives, which also share many key characteristics with quasi-quotational constructions). The presence of the IAP permits movement of verbs and other elements into the left periphery because, unlike a selecting matrix verb, the functional IA head does not itself satisfy the relevant features on C°. However, the DP-like structure of IAPs accounts for the islandhood of quasi-quotes, the fact that they must refer to an equivalent extant utterance in the relevant original discourse and the fact they can directly modify overt content nouns. It is also proposed that the IAP contains in its specifier a syntactic representation of the original discourse participants and their relationship which is analogous to the possessor DP in a possessive construction. This is reminiscent of Portner's (2005) proposal that embedded contexts affect selection and semantic composition of non-speaker-oriented embedded clauses, but postulating a syntactically present perspectival index to which attitudinal elements in quasi-quotes can orient avoids the complexity and some of the stipulations of Portner's account with respect to the disambiguation of perspectives, as well as accounting for the differences in the syntax of quasi-quotes versus ISRs and DSRs. The effect of the syntactic presence of this perspectival index is that covert arguments and attitudinal elements in its scope must shift uniformly to the relevant speech context, hence quasi-quotes are not ambiguous in the way that ISRs can be. As with 'typical' indexical shifting triggered by monster operators (cf. Shlovsky & Sudo 2014), languages vary as to the type of perspectival index available: in English/Spanish the perspectival index represents the original discourse participants. German/MSc perspectival indices represent and so reinforce the current speaker's perspective.

(7) [$_{IAP}$ [ CENTRE OF EVALUATION ] [$_{IAP'}$ [$_{IA}$ *please* ] [$_{CP}$ [$_C$ would ] [$_{TP}$ you help me]]]]]

The Centre of Evaluation is obligatorily null in English but it may be pronounced, e.g. as a Vocative phrase, in other languages which have both quasi-quotes *and* shifting of second-person indexicals in embedded clauses, such as Akɔɔse (Bantu, cf. Aikhenvald 2008) or which have logophoric pronouns, such as Mupun (Chadic, cf. Frajzyngier 1985). Hence, root phenomena which pertain to the attitudes of the interlocutors are embeddable in English, Spanish etc. as they can be shifted, but discourse particles expressing calls to respond (such as *huh*) cannot because a clash in interpretation occurs: the current addressee is not expected to respond to the EIQ but *huh* requires her to.

How then do quasi-quotes attach to the matrix clause? It is proposed that a linker head like that of den Dikken and Singhapreecha (D&S; 2004) selects for an IAP (nothing larger) and identifies the IAP as the content and shape of the true complement to the matrix verb, a (usually null) content nominal such as 'question'. The linker head is shown in (8) and is named ToWit° to reflect one possible overt instantiation of it (in 9):

(8) [$_{TP}$ [$_{DP}$ Jo][$_{T'}$[$_T$ ][$_{VP}$ [$_v$ asked][$_{DP}$ [$_{D°}$][$_{ToWitP}$ [$_{NP}$ *question*][$_{ToWit'}$ [$_{ToWit°}$ *link*][$_{IAP}$ could she come]]]]]]]]

(9) The gentleman$_i$ asked a question, **namely/to wit**, what could he$_i$ do to assist?

Like D&S's linker, ToWit° facilitates the interpretation of the EIQ as presupposed and shifted; this structure also explains why EIQs cannot be fronted as they are referential entities identified with the nominal complement rather than predicational. Dialectal variation in quasi-quotes rests on the availability of a null ToWit°; EIQ dialects like AAE can leave functional heads like ToWit° unpronounced where standard Englishes cannot.

**Conclusion:** Illocutionary force when understood as the encoding of perspective and attitude is embeddable but calls for response are not. Languages vary on whether ToWit° may be overt (Swedish) or covert (English EIQs), which can affect the distribution of IAP, and whether perspective markers are fixed indexicals (e.g. Cuzco Quechua) or shiftable (languages with quasi-quotes).

**Selected references:** den Dikken & Singhapreecha (2004). *Complex Noun Phrases and Linkers*. Kastner (2015). *Factivity mirrors interpretation*. Krifka (2014). *Embedding illocutionary acts*. Portner (2005). *Instructions for Interpretation as Separate Performatives*.