



Two kinds of 'repeat' questions: evidence from German and Spanish

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German and Spanish offer two non-interchangeable strategies for repeating a question: asking an embedded question with no embedding clause (**Type 1**); uttering an identical question with emphatic intonation (**Type 2**).

Type 1

S(ue): Are you coming?
A(lfred): Nice weather!

German:
(1a) S: Ob du kommst
whether you come
'Whether you are coming.'

Spanish:
(1b). S: Que si vas a venir.
that if you-are to come
'That if you are coming.'

Type 2

S(ue): Are you coming?
A(lfred): Nice weather!

German:
(2a). S: KOMMST du?
come you.
'ARE you coming?'

Spanish:
(2b). S: VAS a venir?
you-are to come
ARE you coming?'

Empirical differences

Difference 1

If A notices the original question act and explicitly asks for its content to be repeated, Type1 is considerably more natural than Type2

S: Are you coming?
A: Sorry, what?

(3a) S: ✓ Ob du kommst
whether you come
'Whether you are coming.'

(3b) S: ✓ Que si vas a venir.
that if you-are to come
'That if you are coming.'

(4a) S: # KOMMST du?
come you.
'ARE you coming?'

(4b) S: #?? VAS a venir?
you-are to come
ARE you coming?'

Difference 2

If S wants to repeat the question without making it obvious that A missed the original questioning act Type 2 is felicitous, while Type 1 is not.

A: ... And these are your keys. Would you like breakfast in your room?
S: Is it for free?

A: Our customers love it. It's a great service!

(5a) S: # Ob es gratis is.
Whether it free is
'Whether it's free.'

(5b) # S: Que si es gratis.
That if is.3sg free
'That if it is free.'

(6a) S: ✓ IST es GRATIS?
Is it GRATIS?
'Is it FREE?'

(6b) S: Es GRATIS?
Is.3sg FREE
'Is it FREE?'

Difference 3

If the original question performed a non-canonical illocutionary act, Type2 forms reiterate that illocutionary act, whereas the Type1 forms don't. This can be seen with invitations: Type2 form intuitively re-issues the invitation while the Type1 form simply clarifies what the content of the original invitation was (cf. Altmann 1987, Oppenrieder 1989, Truckenbrodt 2013).

S: Would you like some coffee?
A: Your kitchen is very nice.

Type 1: clarifies content

(7a). Ob du Kaffee möchtest.
Whether you coffee want
'Whether you want coffee.'

(7b). Que si quieres café.
That if want.2sg coffee
'That if you want coffee.'

Type 2: re-issues invite

(8a) S: Möchtest du KAffee?
want you coffee
'Do you want COffee?'

(8b) S: Quieres caFÉ?
Want.2sg COFfee?
'Do you want COFfee?'

The generalization: T2 introduces a new questioning speech act. T1 is anaphoric to the original question speech act

Towards an analysis

- Farkas and Bruce (2010): distinction between actual and projected Common Ground –CG and CG*– and actual and projected discourse commitments – DC_{Sp/Ad} and DC*_{Sp/Ad}– (Malamud & Stephenson 2015),
- Crucial novel distinction between actual Table and Projected Table: **T** vs **T***. Two-step account:

- When S utters an interrogative, the corresponding question is added to T*;
- When the utterance is accepted by A, the question is added to the actual table T.

Type 1: clarifies the propositional content {p, ¬p} of the original speech act Q1: add <Q1, {p, ¬p}> to T*

Type 2: performs a new speech act Q2 with the propositional content {p, ¬p}: add <Q2, {p, ¬p}> to T*

The upshot: T1 is anaphoric to the original speech act. T2 re-iterates the illocutionary act

DC _s	T	DC _A
DC* _s	T*: <Q1, {p, ¬p}>	DC* _A
	CG	
	CG*	

The broader picture: Repeat Question as a window onto two phenomena

Expressive meaning/Conventional Implicatures

With T2, both expressive and appositives can be repeated. With T1, by contrast, only the appositive can be repeated, with the expressive infelicitous / somewhat deviant.

S: Has Lena, the new secretary, arrived?
A: Man! I keep getting all these emails ...

S: Is the goddamn cat in the garden?
A: The landlord called.

(9a) S: ✓ Ob Lena die neue Sekretärin angekommen ist.
whether Lena the new secretary arrived aux.
'Whether Lena, the new secretary, arrived.'

(10a) S: Ob die (*verdammte) Katze im Garten ist.
whether the goddamn cat in.the garden is
'Whether the goddamn cat is in the garden.'

(9b) S: ✓ Que si Lena, la nueva secretaria, ha llegado.
That if Lena, the new secretary, has.3sg arrived
'That if Lena, the ew secretary, has arrived.'

(10b) S: Que si el (?? maldito) gato está en el jardín.
That if the (goddamn) cat is in the garden
'That if the (goddamn) cat is in the garden.'

Possible distinction between two kinds of CI-content:

- Appositives contribute to the representational content (at-issue plus clarificational CI-content);
- Expressives contribute directly to the characterization of the illocutionary act.

Hypothesis: Since T1 provides the representational content but does not reiterate the original speech act, appositives are allowed but expressives are blocked

Biased Questions

T1 questions preserve the bias in the original question, if present

S: I'm getting hungry. Isn't there some restaurant around?
A: Huh?

(11a) S: Ob es hier nicht ein Restaurant gibt.
whether it here not some restaurant give.
'Whether there isn't some vegetarian restaurant here.'

(11b) S: Que si no hay algún restaurant vegetariano.
That if not there-is some restaurant vegetarian
'That if there isn't some vegetarian restaurant.'

Potential evidence supporting *internal* theories of question bias (Romero & Han 2004, Repp 2013) vs. *external* models of question bias (Asher and Reese 2007, Krifka 2012)