

# Verbal Doubts

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<sup>1</sup> Davies wrote this research report (sporadically, in August and December of 2021 and in January of 2022) and collected examples from English (in May and June of 2021) and German (in early July of 2021). Zanella collected examples from English, Italian, and Spanish (in May and June of 2021). All errors and shortcomings are the responsibility of Davies. Since collecting the examples, relevant work came to the attention of Davies: first, a paper by White “On believing and hoping whether” (2021); second, a work in progress by Uegaki “The *doubt-whether* puzzle” (2021). These papers are discussed, but only briefly.

# Introduction

This is a research report in which we present examples which should be of interest to those working on clausal embedding and dubitative verbs.

In (Karttunen 1977), Karttunen presents several arguments for conclusions about the English verb ‘doubt’. Those arguments are sound only if

- (A) there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are some form of the verb ‘doubt’ and an interrogative ‘who’-, ‘what’-, ‘where’-, ‘when’-, ‘why’-, ‘how’-, or ‘which’-clause; and
- (B) there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are some form of the verb ‘doubt’ and a disjunctive interrogative ‘whether’-clause.

In §1.2 we present examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (A)<sup>2</sup>. In §1.3 we present examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (B).

In (Uegaki 2021), Uegaki claims that the English verb ‘doubt’ is incompatible with interrogative ‘who’-, ‘what’-, ‘where’-, ‘when’-, ‘why’-, ‘how’-, and ‘which’-clauses (Uegaki 2021: 1, 2–3, 3 fn. 2, 4, 6, 12, 13, 19, 22–23, 24, 29). In showing that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (A), we will be showing that there are reasons for believing that Uegaki’s claim is false.

In (Huddleston 1994: 417), Huddleston claims that “[p]redicates such as *doubt*, *doubtful*, *questionable* take polar questions as argument, but not alternative (or variable) ones”. Huddleston’s claim is true only if (A) and (B). Additionally, Huddleston’s claim is true only if

- (C) there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are ‘doubtful’ and a disjunctive interrogative ‘whether’-clause.

In §1.4 we present examples to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (C).

In (Biezma & Rawlins 2012), Biezma & Rawlins cite both (Karttunen 1977) and (Huddleston 1994) in support of their assertion that “[t]he English facts are that “doubt” allows as complements “that”-clauses, polar interrogative clauses, but not alternative or constituent interrogatives” (Biezma & Rawlins 2012: 395). Naturally, in showing that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (A) and that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (B) we will be showing that there are reasons for believing that Biezma & Rawlins’ assertion is false.

In addition to making that assertion Biezma & Rawlins also imply (Biezma & Rawlins 2012: 395 fn.33) that

- (D) there are many languages (of many different types) in which there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are a dubitative verb and a disjunctive interrogative clause.

In §§1.3, 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 we present examples from English, Spanish, Italian, and German in order to show that there are reasons for believing that the languages of English, Spanish, Italian, and German should not be taken to be evidence that (D).

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2 ‘(A)’, ‘(B)’, ‘(C)’ etc. are used as abbreviations.

In (Roelofsen; Herbstritt; & Aloni 2019: 173 fn.1), Roelofsen et al. claim that “Italian *dubitare* only licenses *that*-complements, no *whether*- or *wh*-complements”. Their claim is true only if

(E) there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are some form of the verb ‘*dubitare*’ and a ‘*se*’-clause.

In §2.1 we present examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (E).

In (Suñer 1993), Suñer makes a claim about the Spanish verb ‘*dudar*’. She claims that it is one of the verbs which “select for propositional *that*-clauses to the exclusion of [+Wh] complements” (Suñer 1993: 63). Suñer speaks of ‘*whether*’-complements as “Wh-complements” (Suñer 1993: 45–47) and her descriptions of ‘*si*’-complements (Suñer 1993: 52–54) show that she thinks of ‘*si*’-complements as “Wh-complements” too. Suñer’s claim is true only if

(F) there are no grammatical phrases the immediate constituents of which are some form of the verb ‘*dudar*’ and a ‘*si*’-clause.

In §2.2 we present examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (F).

In (Rawlins 2008: 53 fn.22), Rawlins remarks that “[i]nterestingly, in many languages, e.g. Romance languages, only a declarative clause is allowed as the complement of a dubitative”. If there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (E) and there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (F), then there are reasons for believing that the languages of Italian and Spanish should not be taken to be evidence for the truth of Rawlins’ remark.

## §1 English doubts

### §1.1 The selection of the examples

We searched in three corpora of the English language to find examples: the British National Corpus (Davies 2004), the Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies 2008-), and the Corpus of Historical American English (Davies 2010). Henceforth, in accordance with the citation recommendations for these corpora<sup>3</sup>, we will refer to these as the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA respectively and we will omit further (Name Date) citations.

In May and June of 2021, examples which were deemed to be relevant were manually selected and recorded. During the writing of this paper, examples were selected for presentation from those which were recorded and links to internet resources were sought to enable readers to examine the sources of the examples.

Understandably, some might object that presenting the examples which we found using the COHA and the examples of Middle English which we found using the Oxford English Dictionary does not help in showing that there are reasons for believing that there *are* grammatical phrases of

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3 <https://www.english-corpora.org/faq.asp#cite> [Accessed 2021.08.12].

any kind, only that there *were* grammatical phrases of certain kinds. We think the examples should be of interest even if this objection is valid.<sup>4</sup>

For each of the examples we present from the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA

- we can explain the meaning of it;
- we can paraphrase it;
- - it is likely that the source of it was the product of an editorial process involving a person who was not an author or co-author of it
- or
- it is likely that every author or utterer of it chose their words carefully in writing it or uttering it; and
- it is likely that at least one author or utterer of it started learning English in infancy and spoke or wrote English competently ever since they were able to speak or write a language competently.

We have chosen examples of this kind because we think it is unlikely for an example of this kind to be the result of an error in speech or writing and because we think contributors to the literature on clausal embedding would think so too.<sup>5</sup> We overlooked sources which were unlikely to be sources of suitable examples e.g. comment sections on websites, blogs which were not part of commercial websites. We tended to avoid academic sources as well because we found that academic sources frequently contained quotations from other authors which we would have had to track down and frequently contained jargon which, we thought, would have made examples difficult to paraphrase.

## §1.2 to doubt who, what, where, when, why, how, or which

We present the following examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (A).

### §1.2.1 to doubt who

We used the search term ‘[doubt] who’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA.

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4 Similar objections could be raised against some of the examples presented in §2. Even if those objections would be valid, we still think the examples should be of interest.

5 It is possible that someone would judge some of the examples presented in section 4.2 of (White 2021) to be the result of errors in writing for the following reasons: in the source text for the example labelled ‘(25) b.’ (a comment on a website for car parts) the sentence is followed by “Oxygen sensor are usually...” suggesting that the commenter was not choosing their words carefully (which is only natural, given the context); the source text for the example labelled ‘(25) d.’ seems to have been written by a Dutch man who might not have started learning English in infancy.

To be clear: we think that for a given language, examples of that language taken from the considered writing or speech of a competent speaker who did not start learning that language in infancy are admissible; we suspect that some people would consider them inadmissible; we want that our examples should not be judged to be the result of errors in speech or writing; hence, we have only taken examples which we think are likely to have come from the writing or speech of someone who started learning the language in infancy.

## BNC

[1]

She said, “You are wondering about our child, too. If you think it right, I want you to take him.” He couldn’t stop himself showing what he felt. Then he didn’t try to stop it. Katelina said, “I hadn’t forgotten.” There was so little time. He got back half his control, and then all of it. He said, “We spoke of this. No. Simon must never doubt who his son is. Katelina, who would care for him? ...

[*Race of Scorpions* published in 1989 written by Dame Dorothy Dunnett]

It seems that the man speaking is the father of a boy who Simon believes to be his own (biological) son. The man speaking is speaking to Katelina, who seems to be the (biological) mother of said boy. It seems that the man speaking is using ‘his son’<sup>6</sup> to refer to his own (biological) son and Simon’s (non-biological) son. If we are right, then at least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “Simon must never doubt that he [our son] is his son.”,
- “Simon must never doubt that the boy which he thinks of as his [biological] son is his son.”,
- “Simon must never think that he [our son] might not be his son.”.

## COCA

[2]

In Amman, Jordan, as three American-owned hotels mopped blood off their floors and hospitals tallied 57 dead from the country’s worst terrorist outrage, no one doubted who was to blame: the same Qaeda bigwig. It wasn’t Osama bin Laden who had everyone’s attention. It was the leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi.

[An article published in *Newsweek* in 2005 written by Rod Nordland]<sup>7</sup>

A suitable paraphrase would be:

- “...no one doubted that Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi was to blame.”.

[3]

He was quiet for so long that she thought he might not speak again. Finally, he said “What did they offer you to find out about her?” “What do you mean?” “Maybe you’re Arista Essendon, or maybe you’re an Imperialist trying to get secrets from me.” “How do I know any different about you?” she asked. “You supposedly came to free me, and now you doubt who I am?”

[*Heir of Novron* published in 2012 written by Michael J. Sullivan]

It seems that the man went to free Arista Essendon (whether the woman’s being Arista Essendon would be sufficient for him to have gone to free her is an interesting question). If we are right, then at least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

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6 Or whatever expression ‘his son’ is supposed to stand for, perhaps he isn’t supposed to be speaking English.

7 <https://www.newsweek.com/terror-export-115199> [Accessed 2021.08.20].

- “You supposedly came to free me, and now you doubt whether I am the person whom you came here to free?”
- “You supposedly came to free me, and now you doubt whether I am Arista Essendon?”
- “You supposedly came to free me, and now you wonder who I am?”
- “You supposedly came to free me, and now you question who I am?”
- “You supposedly came to free me, and now you think I might not be the person whom you came here to free?”

[4]

Once I was pulling up just as Gail was pulling out and though I wasn't planning on it, I followed her. ...I could see that there was someone in the passenger seat, though I couldn't be entirely sure it was Sarah. ...When the car turned onto the Interstate, I turned too. I followed it for forty-five minutes south and then took the nearest highway exit, finally doubting who it was I'd been following.

[A story published in the *Southwest Review* in 2013 written by Samar Farah Fitzgerald]<sup>8</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...finally doubting whether it was Gail that I'd been following.”
- “...finally wondering whether it was Gail that I'd been following.”
- “...finally wondering who it was that I'd been following.”
- “...finally thinking that it might not have been Gail that I'd been following.”

[5]

Fourteen countries have agreed to send weapons to the effort, and 29 have offered humanitarian aid. Just seven will provide military personnel. No one doubts who will handle the bulk of the work. “When we've got a big problem in the world, it falls on our shoulders,” Obama said on Sept. 14. “There just aren't a lot of other folks who can perform in the same way.”

[An article published in *TIME* in 2014 written by Michael Crowley]<sup>9</sup>

It is clear from reading the previous paragraphs of the article (entitled “John Kerry's Wary Coalition”), even before reading the quote from then President Barack Obama, that the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “No one doubts that the U.S. will handle the bulk of the work.”

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8 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43473327> [Accessed 2021.08.20].

9 <https://time.com/3397086/john-kerry-coalition-against-isis/> [Accessed 2021.08.21].

## COHA

[6]

Topsy was cited, and had up before all the domestic judicatories, time and again; but always sustained her examinations with most edifying innocence and gravity of appearance. Nobody in the world ever doubted who did the things; but not a scrap of any direct evidence could be found to establish the suppositions, and Miss Ophelia was too just to feel at liberty to proceed to any length without it.

[*Uncle Tom's Cabin* published in 1852 written by Harriet Beecher Stowe]<sup>10</sup>

From the context it seems as if the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “Nobody in the world ever doubted that Topsy did the things; ...”.

[7]

But the general demoralization which prevailed throughout the South [in the early period of the American Civil War] caused the Navy Department, and for that matter every branch of the Government, to hesitate and doubt who that belonged to that section could be trusted. So general was the defection that confidence in all was impaired. Such was the uncertainty in regard to men, and so sectional the conflict, that the Navy Department felt it a duty at the commencement of difficulties to supersede every Southern officer in command of a vessel on a foreign station.

[An article published in *The Galaxy* in 1871 written by Gideon Welles]<sup>11</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...caused the Navy Department...to hesitate and doubt, for every man who belonged to that section, whether he could be trusted.”,
- “...caused the Navy Department...to hesitate and doubt whether anyone who belonged to that section could be trusted.”,
- “...caused the Navy Department...to hesitate and question who that belonged to that section could be trusted.”,
- “...caused the Navy Department...to hesitate and think of every man who belonged to that section that they might not be able to trust him.”.

## §1.2.2 to doubt what

We used the search term ‘[doubt] what’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. Many of the examples presented here might be phrases the immediate constituents of which are some form of the verb ‘doubt’ and a ‘what’- relative clause. The meaning of such a phrase seems to be related to doubting the truth, genuineness, existence, reality, suitability, goodness etc. of something. Examples which we think might be of this kind have been marked: an inverted exclamation mark (‘¡’) is written after the number of the example. We have included examples which we think might

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10 <https://archive.org/details/uncletomscabin1853/Uncle%20Tom%27s%20Cabin%20%281852%29%20London%20Edition/page/n272/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.16].

11 [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_galaxy\\_1871-11\\_12\\_5/page/679/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/sim_galaxy_1871-11_12_5/page/679/mode/1up) [Accessed 2021.08.22].

be of this kind because we think that regardless of whether they are or not it would be useful to consider them alongside the other examples we have presented.

## BNC

[8]i

“It’s the road that joins us and the Prussians. If the French cut it, we’re on our own, so if we lose these crossroads, the Crapauds have won the damned campaign.” Sharpe spurred down to the crossroads, touched his hat to the old ladies who were staring with alarm at the two horsemen, then he turned to gaze down the long southwards road that led to Charleroi. The highway stretched pale and deserted in the evening sun, yet this was the very same road on which Sharpe had seen a French corps marching that morning. That sighting had been only twelve miles south of this crossroads, yet now there was no sign of any Frenchmen. Had they stopped? Had they retreated? Sharpe felt a sudden fear that he had raised a false alarm and the force he had seen had been nothing but a feint. Or maybe the French had marched past this crossroads and were already nearing Brussels? No. He dismissed that fear instantly, because there was no sign of an army’s passing. The tall rye in the fields either side of the road was untrampled, and the road’s crude paving of cobbles on impacted chalk and flint had no deep ruts like those made by the passage of heavy guns. So where the hell were the French?

“Let’s go and find the bastards,” Sharpe grunted, ...

The evening was warm; a gentle quiet dusk in which the only sounds were the rippling water and the slight clatter of the rye stalks moving in the breeze. It seemed impossible that this might become a battlefield, and perhaps it would not, for Sharpe was already beginning to doubt what he had seen that same morning. Where the hell had the French gone?

[*Sharpe’s Waterloo* published in 1990 written by Bernard Cornwell]<sup>12</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...Sharpe was already beginning to doubt whether he had really seen a French corps that same morning.”,
- “...Sharpe was already beginning to doubt whether what he had seen that same morning was real.”,
- “...Sharpe was already beginning to think that he might not have seen what he thought he had seen that same morning.”.

## COCA

[9]

Then, as the Redskins beat the Rams, Cardinals, Cowboys, Giants and Eagles by a combined score of 142–69, the Redskins abandoned any pretense of subtlety. Their two primary running backs carried the ball 174 times while Washington quarterbacks threw only 112

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<sup>12</sup> There are transcription errors in the corpus entry (e.g. ‘ripping’ rather than ‘rippling’). This is corrected using a digital copy of the book.



passes. That isn't balance. It's intimidation, time of possession and emphasis on minimal mistakes.

When the team talked about playing "Redskin football," nobody doubted what the cliché meant.

[A sports report in the Washington Post published in 2006 written by Thomas Boswell]<sup>13</sup>

We don't know a lot about American football, but we gather from this passage that at the time spoken of, the team meant playing physically—attacking football. Further remarks are made on this in the report, but it is unnecessary to repeat them here. We assume that at least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- "...nobody doubted that the cliché meant playing attacking football.”,
- "...nobody wondered what the cliché meant.”.

[10]i

Through the spyglass he found Frears kneeling in the crack and saw him drop what appeared to be the copper funnel he was using to fill the small kegs. ...A red flash appeared at the sailor's back. Red jaws seemed to lunge from the twilight and close over Frears's chest and head from each side, jerking him backwards. ...Eaton tried to steady the scope as the deck rolled. Between waves he saw another man in the longboat catch hold of the lip of the fissure and scramble up into the shadow of the crack. ...As the deck rose, Eaton barely caught the image of the second man leaping out of the crevasse into the sea. "He's jumped out, sir, next to the boat!" "What in blazes is going on, Mister Eaton?" Captain Henders lifted a midshipman's scope to his eye. "The men are hauling him into the boat. They're coming back, sir, with some haste!" Eaton lowered the glass, still staring at the fissure, now doubting what he had seen.

[*Fragment* published in 2009 written by Warren Fahy]<sup>14</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- "Eaton lowered the glass, still staring at the fissure, now doubting whether he had really seen red jaws close over Frears, whether he had really seen a second man go through the crack, and whether he had really seen the second man leap into the sea shortly afterwards.”,
- "Eaton lowered the glass, still staring at the fissure, now doubting whether what he had seen was real.”,
- "Eaton lowered the glass, still staring at the fissure, now wondering what he had seen.”,
- "Eaton lowered the glass, still staring at the fissure, now thinking that he might not have seen what he thought he had seen.”.

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13 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/15/AR2006101501094.html>  
[Accessed 2021.12.14].

14 <https://www.google.com/books/edition/Fragment/iB9oxNZ21G4C> [Accessed 2021.12.13]. This example can also be found in the COHA.

[11]i

It was true that even if we doubted what we were doing in Iraq we still got treated to all kinds of praise and honor at home.

[A short story published in *The Antioch Review* in 2009 written by Elizabeth Kadetsky]<sup>15</sup>

The narrator is a veteran. Earlier “disillusionment about whether we were actually doing the right thing there [in Iraq], as an army” is mentioned. The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...even though we doubted whether what we were doing in Iraq was right...”.

[12]i

Despite the bruise on my hip, the increased pain and difficulty moving ..., I half expected Chris to walk in the front door as usual the following night. It wasn't that I doubted what had happened – I was in too much discomfort – it was more that I couldn't believe its finality.

[A short story published in *Fantasy and Science Fiction* in 2010 written by John Langan]<sup>16</sup>

The narrator hurts their hip running away after witnessing some sort of ritual or sacrifice during which the character Chris dies (or seems to). The bruise and pain are evidence of the narrator's having hurt themselves running away. At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “It wasn't that I doubted the reality of what had happened...”,
- “It wasn't that I doubted whether what had happened really happened...”,
- “It wasn't that I thought that the things which had happened might not have happened...”.

## COHA

[13]

I was talking the other day with a lady who was doubting what sort of an education to give her daughter, a young girl of exceedingly fine mental capacity.

[*Some Causes of the Prevailing Discontent* from 1902 written by Charles Dudley Warner]<sup>17</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...a lady who was wondering what sort of an education to give her daughter, ...”.

[14]

He had essayed a game with Destiny; he had lost and must pay penalty—and he never doubted what that penalty would be with Richard Plantagenet his judge.

[*Beatrice of Clare* from 1907 written by John Reed Scott]<sup>18</sup>

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15 <https://elizabethkadetsky.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/geography-antioch-review.pdf> [Accessed 2021.12.13]; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40607126> [Accessed 2021.12.13].

16 <https://fandsf.com/toc1001.htm> [Accessed 2021.12.13].

17 <https://archive.org/details/cu31924022208791/page/n209/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.12]. The collection was first published in 1881.

18 <https://archive.org/details/beatriceofclare00scotiala/page/358/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.12]. It seems that parts of this book were written to sound old-fashioned to the readers of the time.

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...he never doubted that the penalty would be death with Richard Plantagenet his judge.”.

[15]

Once he was convinced that Eddy was concerned in this new outrage [the buying of smuggled brandy, or the smuggling of brandy], all that he had suffered on account of Lucy Evans swelled like a flood behind his determination to denounce his father; and he did so in a sermon on the text: “Whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.” We learned of this from the young groom who rode with us, a devout attendant at the Porteven chapel. Even Wesley in the mood that held him could not bring himself to mention his father by name, but no one doubted what was in the young preacher’s mind or that the little ones who had been caused to stumble were Lucy Evans, Sally and myself. What Eddy Rodda’s thoughts were on hearing himself denounced, I can not say, but what happened a little later made it clear that at any rate the sermon did not “convert” him.

[*The Houses in Between* published in 1951 written by Howard Spring]<sup>19</sup>

From what we can tell, no one doubted that Eddy Rodda’s buying of smuggled brandy or smuggling of brandy was in the young preacher’s mind. The ‘stumbling’ referred to is presumably a stumbling from the path to/of God on account of Rodda’s activities. We are not sure of the details. If we are on the right track, the following would probably be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...no one doubted that Eddy Rodda’s buying of smuggled brandy was in the young preacher’s mind or that the little ones...”.

### §1.2.3 to doubt where

We used the search term ‘[doubt] where’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb ‘doubt’ in the BNC.

#### COCA

[16]

The front of the terminal will be a curtain of glass and aluminium. No one will doubt where they are — the words “San Francisco International Airport” will be etched in the glass, in back-lit nine-foot-high letters.

[An article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1997 written by various authors]<sup>20</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

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19 The bibliographic information given in the COHA is wrong. The source is listed as being *The Cruel Sea* by Nicholas Monsarrat.

20 <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/SFO-REACHES-FOR-THE-SKY-Traffic-from-Asia-and-2812442.php>  
[Accessed 2021.12.14].

- “No one will doubt that they are at San Francisco International Airport...”.

[17]

He is Señor Alvaro but he is not Señor Alvaro. He is Señor Alvaro to the children. He is Señor Alvaro to the agent who sometimes contacts him...He is Señor Alvaro to his sometime partner, Cruz. ...he is Señor Alvaro to his neighbors. ...Only Doctor Martínez at the clinic, months ago now, called him by his name. The very sound of his name made him doubt where he was. It made him afraid this city would disappear.

In his other city, before he was Señor Alvaro the clown, he was a carpenter.

[A short story published in *The Literary Review* in 2002 written by H. E. Francis]

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “The very sound of his name made him doubt whether he was in this city.”,
- “The very sound of his name made him doubt whether he was in the city in which he is known as Señor Alvaro.”,
- “The very sound of his name made him wonder where he was.”,
- “The very sound of his name made him question where he was.”,
- “The very sound of his name made him doubt whether he was in this city or his other city.”,
- “The very sound of his name made him think that he might not be in the city in which he is known as Señor Alvaro.”.

## COHA

[18]

“Arrange your force so that it is rigidly tied to one particular point, and that the enemy can not doubt where you will be.”

[An article published in the *North American Review* in 1889 written by General Wolseley]<sup>21</sup>

If we understand correctly, General Wolseley puts this sentence (and others) between quotation marks because he claims to be describing the orders which were given to General McClellan by the Washington Administration during the American Civil War. He claims not to be exaggerating, but it seems that he is. Regardless, the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...that wherever you will be the enemy can not doubt that you will be there.”.

[19]

Though she [the Queen] could not shower gold upon many, she could reward a few grandly. These in turn – especially if young and ambitious – were compelled to spend also, to distribute wealth, to build up a following, to gain support. They must make a show of affluence commensurate with her favor. For most had nothing else except the favor of the Queen. This being true, they never doubted where their wealth and power came from. They must be both loyal and grateful out of necessity.

[*Death of the Fox* published in 1971 written by George P. Garrett]

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

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21 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25101818> [Accessed 2021.12.29].

- “This being true, they never doubted that their wealth and power came from the Queen.”

## §1.2.4 to doubt when

We used the search term ‘[doubt] when’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb ‘doubt’.

## §1.2.5 to doubt why

We used the search term ‘[doubt] why’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb ‘doubt’.

## §1.2.6 to doubt how

We used the search term ‘[doubt] how’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb ‘doubt’ in the BNC.

### COCA

[20]

They [The Washington Redskins] had the Dolphins and Bears coming up, they were a team in disarray, and for one of the few times in the Joe Gibbs era seemed to doubt how good they might actually be.

[An article published in the Washington Post in 1990 written by Richard Justice]<sup>22</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...seemed to doubt whether they were as good as they in fact were.”
- “...seemed to doubt whether they were actually as good as they thought they were.”
- “...seemed to doubt whether they were actually as good as people thought they were.”
- “...seemed to question how good they actually were.”
- “...seemed to think that they might not actually be that good.”

[21]

Growing up during the 1940s in New Iberia, down on the Gulf Coast, I never doubted how the world worked.

[*Jolie Blon’s Bounce* published in 2003 written by James Lee Burke]

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22 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/sports/1990/12/11/out-a-big-tackle-redskins-on-guard/162263a7-3bba-48bb-9ee2-3bb2a1ef362a/> [Accessed 2021.08.20].

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...I never doubted that the world worked the way it in fact worked.”,
- “...I never doubted that the world worked the way I thought it did.”,
- “...I never wondered whether the world worked the way I thought it did.”,
- “...I was never uncertain how the world worked.”,
- “...I never questioned how the world worked.”.

[22]

And if you ever doubt how much she [Courtney Love] influenced Kurt Cobain, listen to Nirvana’s Nevermind and In Utero back to back and note the vowel-shredding Courtney snarl he picked up in between.

[An article published in *Rolling Stone* in 2010 written by Rob Sheffield]<sup>23</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...if you ever doubt whether Courtney Love influenced Kurt Cobain as much as she in fact did, ...”,
- “...if you ever wonder how much Courtney Love influenced Kurt Cobain, ...”,
- “...if you ever question how much Courtney Love influenced Kurt Cobain, ...”,
- “...if you ever think that Courtney Love might not have influenced Kurt Cobain that much, ...”.

[23]

Petroleum revenues, if they are large, exercise curious and malign effects on their recipients. In 1959, the Netherlands found petroleum on the shores of the North Sea. Money gurgled into the country. ...The windfall led to stagnation—a phenomenon that petroleum cognoscenti now call “Dutch disease.”

Some scholars today doubt how much the Netherlands was actually affected by Dutch disease.

[An article published in *The Atlantic* in 2013 written by Charles C. Mann]<sup>24</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...Some scholars today doubt that the Netherlands was actually affected as much as previously thought by Dutch disease.”,
- “...Some scholars today think that the Netherlands might not have actually been affected as much as previously thought by Dutch disease.”.

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23 <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-album-reviews/nobodys-daughter-188223/> [Accessed 2021.08.20].

24 <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2013/05/what-if-we-never-run-out-of-oil/309294/> [Accessed 2021.08.12].

## COHA

[24]

The example of fifty-four years of devotion to her people's welfare has deepened and intensified the hold she [Queen Victoria] has always maintained over their affections, and no one who was fortunate enough to witness the grand procession on her Jubilee day can doubt how deep and lasting is the sentiment of loyalty to the Queen.

[An article published in the *North American Review* in 1892]<sup>25</sup>

This would be a suitable paraphrase:

- "...no one who...can doubt that the sentiment of loyalty to the Queen is very deep and long-lasting."

[25]

Granting that the son of Arnold of Rugby was more troubled over the decay of Christian dogma than we are, it should be remembered that that decay symbolized for him [Matthew Arnold] a fact of equal gravity to ourselves—the loss of a rational universe in which to be at home. But he never doubted how a new world was to be built—by justice and by reason, not by claptrap and myth.

[An editorial published in *The Nation* in 1922]<sup>26</sup>

Obviously this would be a suitable paraphrase:

- "...he never doubted that a new world was to be built by justice and by reason, not by claptrap and myth."

## §1.2.7 to doubt which

We used the search term '[doubt] which' to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb 'doubt' in the BNC.

## COCA

[26]

The boy wanted to give up and set his father down and whimper that this had gotten to be very unfair; and he wanted to reach the far trees. He did not doubt which he would do. He walked. He saw trees.

[A short story published in *Triquarterly* in 1990 written by David Quammen]<sup>27</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

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25 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25102460> [Accessed 2021.08.19].

26 [https://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/draw\\_pdf.php?filename=Arnold+RIP.pdf](https://www.oldmagazinearticles.com/draw_pdf.php?filename=Arnold+RIP.pdf) [Accessed 2021.08.19].

27 <https://www.triquarterly.org/issue-viewer#/56391> [Accessed 2022.01.03].

- “He did not doubt that he would keep walking.”,
- “He did not doubt that he would reach the far trees.”.

## COHA

[27]

‘Yet it must be acknowledged that there are higher duties than those which we owe to the state, even as there is a higher sovereign to whom we owe allegiance than the head of the state, whether that head be king, senate, or emperor. Man is not only a subject and a citizen, he is first of all the creature of God, and amenable to his laws. When therefore there is a conflict between the laws of God and the king, who can doubt which are to be obeyed? —’ ... ‘...I say, when the law of God and the law of man are opposite the one to the other, we are not to hesitate which to obey and which to break; our first allegiance is due to Heaven. ...’

[*Aurelian* published in 1848 written by William Ware]<sup>28</sup>

In the O.E.D.<sup>29</sup>, sense 3 of the verb ‘doubt’ is “To hesitate, scruple, delay: with *infinitive*.”. However, we think that the sense of ‘doubt’ here is not sense 3. That is, we think that the character of Probus is not simply repeating himself. At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...who can doubt whether it is the law of God or the law of man which is to be obeyed?”,
- “...who can doubt whether they should obey the law of God?”,
- “...who can think that it is either the law of God or the law of man which is to be obeyed and that it might be the law of God and that it might be the law of man.”,
- “...no one can doubt that they should obey the law of God.”.

[28]

It is no part of my plan or business to discuss this question of slavery [whether it is right]: I will simply say, to avoid misapprehension, that, while recognizing the profound good sense of much that Carlyle has said on this and cognate matters, my own instinct of right and habits of opinion rebel against the pro-slavery theory, and never allowed me to doubt which side I was on, when the question came to its supreme practical issue in the [American] civil war.

[An article published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1866 written by W. M. Rossetti]<sup>30</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...never allowed me to doubt that I was on the side of the North.”,
- “...never allowed me to doubt that I was on the side of the abolitionists.”,
- “...never allowed me to question which side I was on.”.

28 <https://archive.org/details/aurelianrome00warerich/page/160/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.04]; this version is from 1874.

29 <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/57078> [Accessed 2022.01.05].

30 [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_atlantic\\_1866-02\\_17\\_100/page/137/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/sim_atlantic_1866-02_17_100/page/137/mode/1up) [Accessed 2022.01.04].



[29]

He [Hudson] appeared so perfectly rational and calm, that the magistrate was perfectly dumbfounded, and for the moment thought him sane; and even we commenced to reproach ourselves, and doubt which was the insane party.

[*The Story of a Summer* published in 1874 written by Cecilia Pauline Cleveland]<sup>31</sup>

This is difficult to paraphrase because of the use of the first person plural. At least one of the following should be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...doubt whether it was he who was insane or whether it was we who were insane.”,
- “...doubt whether it was him who was insane or whether it was us who were insane.”,
- “...doubt whether the insane party be him or us.”,
- “...wonder which of us was insane.”,
- “...question which was the insane party.”.

[30]

It does not matter which leg you put into your breeches first, said Dr. Johnson, but don't stand there getting cold while you are doubting which leg it shall be.

[An article published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1893 written by Sir Edward Strachey]<sup>32</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...don't stand there getting cold while you are wondering which leg it shall be.”,
- “...don't stand there getting cold while you are deciding which leg it shall be.”.

[31]

It may be doubted which the working population enjoy more when fortune sends them a ride in some old car:<sup>33</sup> the crashing of the axles against the body or the horrible uproar of the horn assailing their ears.

[An article in *Harper's Magazine* published in 1925 by William McFee]<sup>34</sup>

This is sarcastic. Nevertheless, the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “It may be doubted whether the working population enjoy the crashing of the axles against the body more or the horrible uproar of the horn assailing their ears, when fortune sends them a ride in some old car.”.

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31 <https://archive.org/details/storyofsummerorj00clev/page/44/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.04].

32 [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_atlantic\\_1893-07\\_72\\_429/page/56/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/sim_atlantic_1893-07_72_429/page/56/mode/1up) [Accessed 2022.01.03].

33 We have guessed that there is a colon here in the article, the corpus entry contains transcription errors and we do not have access to the article itself.

34 <https://harpers.org/archive/1925/08/by-air-to-the-high-plateau/> [Accessed 2022.01.04].

## §1.3 to doubt whether ... or —

We present the following examples in order to show that there are reasons for believing that it is not the case that (B).

In (Fischer 2003: 18), Fischer presents an example found using a corpus:

To Donne's celebrated image of the compasses it may be doubted whether absurdity or ingenuity has the better claim.

We believe the source of this example is the book *A History of Literary Criticism* by Harry Blamires published by Macmillan in 1991.<sup>35</sup>

To Donne's celebrated image of the compasses 'it may be doubted whether absurdity or ingenuity has the better claim'.

The source of the quoted 'whether'-clause is the first volume of Samuel Johnson's *The Lives of The English Poets*:

[32]

To the following comparison [made by John Donne] of a man that travels and his wife that stays at home, with a pair of compasses, it may be doubted whether absurdity or ingenuity has better claim ...

[*The Lives of The English Poets* published in 1826 written by Samuel Johnson]<sup>36</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- "...it may be wondered whether absurdity or ingenuity has better claim...".
- "...it may be thought that it might be more accurate to call it absurd rather than ingenius, and that it might be more accurate to call it ingenius rather than absurd...".
- "...one is entitled to think that it might be more accurate to call it absurd rather than ingenius...".

The following two examples of Middle English were found while looking at the O.E.D. online entry for the verb 'doubt'<sup>37</sup>:

[33]

þe saule...þat doutes whethir he sal be dampned or save

[Lines 2964–2965 of *The Pricke of Conscience* by Richard Rolle of Hampole]<sup>38</sup>

(It is probable that 'save' rather than 'saved' was used to make the words fit the rhyme scheme, although 'save' was supposed to rhyme with 'have' so perhaps it didn't fit the rhyme scheme

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35 Found by searching Google Books for the example, which led us to a preview page of the book. The book itself can be found at:

[https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/A\\_History\\_of\\_Literary\\_Criticism/3kddDwAAQBAJ](https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/A_History_of_Literary_Criticism/3kddDwAAQBAJ)

[Accessed 2021.08.03].

36 <https://archive.org/details/livesofenglishpo01john/page/28/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.08.03].

37 <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/57078> [Accessed 2021.05.27].

38 <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/BAU1376.0001.001/1:7?rgn=div1;view=fulltext> [Accessed 2021.05.27].

anyway.) We think the modern English equivalent would be “the soul...that doubts whether he shall be damned or saved”. At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “the soul...that wonders whether he shall be damned or saved”,
- “the soul...that thinks that he might be damned and that he might be saved”,
- “the soul...that thinks that he might be damned”.

[34]

Hys dyscyplys doutede echoun Wheper he shulde ryse or noun

[Lines 857–858 of *Handlyng Synne* by Robert Mannyng of Brunne]<sup>39</sup>

We are not sure what the modern English equivalent would be, because Mannyng seems to have been twisting the words to get them to fit the rhyme scheme. There are two possibilities: “His disciples doubted each-one whether he should rise or not” (“Each of his [Jesus’] disciples doubted whether he [Jesus] would rise or not”); “His disciples doubted each-one whether he should rise or no-one” (“Each of his [Jesus’] disciples doubted whether he [Jesus] would rise or no-one [would rise]”).<sup>40</sup> At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase of the first:

- “Each of his disciples wondered whether he would rise or not.”,
- “Each of his disciples thought that he might rise and that he might not rise.”,
- “Each of his disciples doubted whether he would rise.”.

The rest of the examples were found while searching corpora. We used the search term ‘[doubt] whether’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. There were no suitable examples for the verb ‘doubt’ in the BNC.

## COCA

[35]

[M]y job as the president is to lead this nation into making the world a better place. And that’s exactly what we’re doing. Weeks such as [those] we’ve had in Iraq make some doubt whether or not we’re making progress. I understand that. It was a tough, tough period. But we are making progress...

[Transcript of a speech by George W. Bush printed in the NYTimes in 2004]<sup>41</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...make some wonder whether or not we’re making progress.”,
- “...make some question whether or not we’re making progress.”,
- “...make some think that we might be making progress but also that we might not be.”,
- “...make some think that we might not be making progress.”.

39 <https://archive.org/details/p1robertofbrunne00mannuoft/page/31/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.05.27].

40 These are the possibilities suggested by footnotes 31 and 32 of the page we have given a URL for.

41 <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/14/politics/transcript-of-bushs-remarks-on-iraq-we-will-finish-the-work-of-the.html> [Accessed 2021.08.03]. We acknowledge this might be a Bushism <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bushism> [Accessed 2022.01.16].

[36]

Waking the screen up is so slow you doubt whether or not you hit the button.

[A review of a tablet published on Gizmodo.com in 2012]<sup>42</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...you wonder whether or not you hit the button.”,
- “...you question whether you hit the button or not.”,
- “...you think that you might have pressed the button but also that you might not have.”,
- “...you think that you might not have pressed the button.”.

[37]

She took the car that her husband left to a trailhead at the edge of the wilderness. She followed the main trail, but there were too many people for her liking. She soon spotted an overgrown path that seemed to curl toward the river. Thorns stuck into her arms as she pushed back limbs growing in dense layers. The earth was muddy and sticky under her shoes, which were soon also wet and muddy. She paused to look at tufts of white and black fur that clung to the lower limbs of several bushes. Now she doubted whether it was a trail after all, or just a place where a few large animals had been.

[A short story published in *The Literary Review* in 2019 written by Elizabeth Urschel]<sup>43</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “Now she wondered whether it was a trail after all, or just a place where a few large animals had been.”,
- “Now she thought that it might be a trail, but also that it might not be trail, that it might just be a place where a few large animals had been.”,
- “Now she thought that it might not be a trail after all, that it might just be a place where a few large animals had been.”.

## COHA

[38]

Harold held him by the throat, with the strength of a lion, till the torches were gleaming again upon the bright barrels of the musquetry, and blazing upon the countenance of the stranger—who looked, as if doubting whether he were alive or dead, and wondering what was next to happen.

[*Logan: A Family History* published in 1822 written by John Neal]<sup>44</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...as if wondering whether he were alive or dead...”,
- “...as if thinking that he might be alive and that he might be dead...”,
- “...as if he thought that he might be alive and that he might be dead...”.

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42 <https://gizmodo.com/sony-xperia-tablet-s-review-better-but-still-broken-5944938> [Accessed 2021.08.03].

43 <https://www.theliteraryreview.org/issue/feverish/> [Accessed 2021.08.03].

44 <https://archive.org/details/logan00unkngoog/page/n40/mode/2up> [Accessed 2022.01.06].

[39]

I thought it must be all a dream; but a second thought showed that it was real, for in a dream we never doubt whether we are dreaming or not.

[*Ambrose Fecit; or, The Peer and the Printer* published in 1867 written by Thomas Dunn]<sup>45</sup>

(“never”!?) At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...for in a dream we never wonder whether we are dreaming or not.”,
- “...for in a dream we never think that we might be dreaming and that we might not be dreaming.”,
- “...for in a dream we never question whether we are dreaming.”.

[40]

I was certain of nothing; didn't know what to believe, and half the time really doubted whether I was asleep or awake.

[A story in *The Wigwam and the Cabin* from 1882 written by William Gilmore Simms]<sup>46</sup>

At least one of the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...and half the time really wondered whether I was asleep or awake.”,
- “...and half the time really thought that I might be asleep and that I might be awake.”,
- “...and half the time really thought that I might be asleep.”.

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45 <https://archive.org/details/ambrosefecitorp00englgoog/page/n85/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.06].

46 <https://archive.org/details/cu31924022165132/page/n121/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.06]; this is a “new and revised” edition from 1882, it was originally published in 1845.

## §1.4 doubtful whether ... or —

We think that the possible clausal complements of non-verbal dubitative words and phrases should be of interest to those trying to explain the possible clausal complements of dubitative verbs. In another research report, we will present the vast majority of the non-verbal dubitative examples which we found while searching the corpora.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, in this subsection we present examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe it is not the case that (C).

We used the search term ‘doubtful whether’ to search the BNC, the COCA, and the COHA. We manually looked through the results for phrases the immediate constituents of which were ‘doubtful’ and a disjunctive interrogative ‘whether’-clause. There were no suitable examples in the COCA.

### BNC

[41]

There is no evidence that reductions in public spending, as opposed to private consumption, would lead to increases in investment. If less money was taken by the public sector it is doubtful whether people would invest in British industry or continue to spend more on foreign consumer goods.

[*Introduction to social administration in Britain* from 1990 by Payne & Brown]<sup>48</sup>

We think this is a disjunctive interrogative ‘whether’-clause. It seems that what was being considered was whether a reduction in public spending would have coincided with or resulted in an increase in (the British public’s) investment in British industry and a cessation of the increase in (the British public’s) spending on foreign consumer goods. It seems that the authors thought that it was not certain whether a reduction in public spending would have coincided with an increase in investment in British industry, and it seems that the authors thought that without a cessation of the increase in spending on foreign consumer goods there would be no increase in investment in British industry. (Perhaps they also thought that if there were to have been a cessation of the increase in spending on foreign consumer goods, then there would have been an increase in investment in British industry.) We thus think that the following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “It is doubtful whether people would invest in British industry or just continue to spend more on foreign consumer goods, if there were to be a reduction in public spending.”.

[42]

The preliminary problem was that neither William I nor William Rufus had recognized any pope since the death of Gregory VII in 1085, and it was still doubtful whether England would follow Germany in recognizing Clement III, or France in recognizing Urban II.

[*St. Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* from 1990 by Richard W. Southern]<sup>49</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

<sup>47</sup> If Davies finds the time to write it.

<sup>48</sup> The first edition of this book was published in 1969.

<sup>49</sup> [https://www.google.com/books/edition/St\\_Anselm/lxf-LvQvwIC](https://www.google.com/books/edition/St_Anselm/lxf-LvQvwIC) [Accessed 2022.01.09]; this passage is on page 268. The book is incorrectly subtitled “A portrait of a landscape” in the BNC.

- “...it was still uncertain whether England would follow Germany in recognizing Clement III, or France in recognizing Urban II.”.

## COHA

[43]

This invitation, delivered in a tone which left it doubtful whether a compliment or menace were meant, augmented Mervyn’s confusion.

[*Arthur Mervyn* published in 1799 written by Charles Brockden Brown]<sup>50</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...which left it uncertain whether a compliment or menace were meant, ...”.

[44]

Full though it is of information, all is abrupt and broken, as if the mass lay undigested, and nothing had found its place in his mind; his words, entirely unacquainted with their neighbours, seem doubtful whether to laugh or cry at the positions in which they stand, and at the novelty of the service which they are expected to perform.

[A review of Carlyle’s *Letters of Cromwell* in the *North American Review* in 1846]<sup>51</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “his words... seem to doubt whether to laugh or cry at the positions in which they stand, and at the novelty of the service which they are expected to perform.”.

[45]

Soon after their return, Mrs. Cameron said, in speaking of Fanny, “that ‘twas quite doubtful whether Frank would marry her or not.”

[*Tempest and Sunshine* published in 1854 written by Mary Jane Holmes]<sup>52</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...’twas quite uncertain whether Frank would marry her or not.”.

[46]

New difficulties [for the librarian] arise when the title-page leaves it doubtful whether the name upon it is that of the author, or that of an editor or compiler.

[An article published in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1876 written by John Fiske]<sup>53</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

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50 <https://archive.org/details/arthurmervynorme01brow/page/8/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.09].

51 [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_north-american-review\\_1846-04\\_62\\_131/page/382/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/sim_north-american-review_1846-04_62_131/page/382/mode/1up) [Accessed 2022.01.10]; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25099860> [Accessed 2022.01.10].

52 <https://archive.org/details/tempestandsunsh00holmgoog/page/n133/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.10].

53 [https://archive.org/details/sim\\_atlantic\\_1876-10\\_38\\_228/page/486/mode/1up](https://archive.org/details/sim_atlantic_1876-10_38_228/page/486/mode/1up) [Accessed 2022.01.11].

- “New difficulties arise when the title page leaves it uncertain whether the name upon it is that of the author, or that of an editor or compiler.”

[47]

She cocked the weapon, thrust it toward him with all the manner of one determined upon its use, and with the ease and air of one to whom the use of the weapon is familiar.

There was a pause of a single instant, in which it was doubtful whether she would draw the trigger or not—doubtful even to Sharpe himself.

[*Beauchampe* from 1888 written by William Gilmore Simms]<sup>54</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “There was a pause of a single instant, in which it was uncertain whether she would draw the trigger or not—uncertain even to Sharpe himself.”

[48]

“You know, A W,” he observed enthusiastically—he always called me “A W” with just enough of a curious intonation to make it doubtful whether the use of the initials was respectful or satirical—“you know, A W, I understand those fellows who went and chucked themselves into the grass.”

[*Greener Than You Think* published in 1947 written by Ward Moore]<sup>55</sup>

The following would be a suitable paraphrase:

- “...he always called me “A W” with just enough of a curious intonation to make it uncertain whether the use of the initials was respectful or satirical...”

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54 <https://archive.org/details/beauchampeorkent00simm/page/265/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.11]; this is a “new and revised edition”, it was originally published in 1842.

55 <https://archive.org/details/GreenerThanYouThink/page/n215/mode/1up> [Accessed 2022.01.11].



## §2 ‘dubitare’, ‘dudar’, and ‘zweifeln’

### §2.1 dubitare se

The examples presented in this section were found by using Google’s search engine, by looking on various newspaper websites, and by consulting the works of influential Italian writers. We present these examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe that it is not the case that (E).<sup>56</sup> We also present some of these examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe that the language of Italian should not be taken to be evidence that (D).

The following six examples are from sources written after the unification of Italy.

[49]

**dubitare** v. intr. [dal lat. *dubitare*, der. di *dubius*: v. dubbio<sup>1</sup>] (*io dūbito*, ecc.; aus. *avere*). –  
1. a. Essere in dubbio, avere dubbî intorno a qualche cosa: *dubito se accettare o rifiutare l’offerta* (più com. *sono in dubbio se* ecc.); ...

[Vocabolario Treccani]<sup>57</sup>

*Vocabolario Treccani* is an online dictionary of the Istituto dell’Enciclopedia Italiana. The subordinate clause of ‘dubito’ in the example phrase is a disjunctive interrogative ‘se’-clause. It is not clear which of the following two things is meant by ‘più com. *sono in dubbio se* ecc.’:

- ‘se’-clauses occur more frequently as complements of ‘in dubbio’ than as complements of forms of the verb ‘dubitare’; or
- disjunctive ‘se’-clauses occur more frequently as complements of ‘in dubbio’ than as complements of forms of the verb ‘dubitare’.

[50]

Si dubita se nel suo nome vada premesso *Claudius* o *Rutilius*.

[An entry in the *Enciclopedia Italiana* from 1936 by Massimo Lechantin De Gubernatis]<sup>58</sup>

The subordinate clause of ‘[si] dubita’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘se’-clause.

[51]

[I] magistrato di controllo si chiede se sia stato corretto lasciare ai valutatori la scelta dei criteri di valutazione senza precise e preliminari indicazioni di metodi e di punti di riferimento da parte della Giunta o del Presidente. Una questione, questa, legata a doppio filo a quella relativa al premio di maggioranza, la cui determinazione Ristuccia dubita se debba considerarsi corretta e appropriata.

[An article published in *la Repubblica* in 1991]<sup>59</sup>

*la Repubblica* is a famous Italian newspaper.

56 Uegaki, in section 2.2.2 of (Uegaki 2021), acknowledges that it might not be the case that (E).

57 <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/dubitare/> [Accessed 2021.05.31].

58 [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/rutilio-namaziano\\_\(Enciclopedia-Italiana\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/rutilio-namaziano_(Enciclopedia-Italiana)/) [Accessed 2021.05.31].

59 <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/1991/02/17/affare-enimont-ecco-capi-accusa.html> [Accessed 2021.05.31].

[52]

Io sto analizzando la sua salute, ma non ci riesco perché mi accorgo che, analizzandola, la converto in malattia. E, scrivendone, comincio a dubitare se quella salute non avesse avuto bisogno di cura o d'istruzione per guarire. Ma vivendole accanto per tanti anni, mai ebbi tale dubbio.

[*La coscienza di Zeno* XV Edition from 2008 written by Italo Svevo]<sup>60</sup>

Italo Svevo is a famous Italian writer and *La coscienza di Zeno* is his most famous work.

[53]

Intorno al padre putativo della modernità [Goya], sfila una folta schiera di figli: ben 45. E qui comincia il dibattito. Perché alcuni gli somigliano, altri meno, di qualcuno è perfino lecito dubitare se sia legittimo.

[An article published in *la Repubblica* in 2010]<sup>61</sup>

[54]

Questo il parere dell'ex capitano giallorosso [Totti], che dubita se ci sarà domenica all'Olimpico.

[An article published in *Citta Celeste* in 2019 and modified in 2021]<sup>62</sup>

*Citta Celeste* is a news outlet dedicated to S.S. Lazio which is affiliated with or related to *La Gazzetta dello Sport* which is a famous Italian newspaper dedicated to sport.

The remaining examples are from sources written in Italian or Tuscan before the unification of Italy.

[55]

Latto dogni gentil pietate adorno,  
El dolce amaro lamentar chiudiua,  
Facean dubbiar, fe mortal donna o diua,  
Folfe chel ciel rasserenaui intorno

[*Canzoniere e Trionfi* from 1473 by Petrarca]<sup>63</sup>

The subordinate clause of 'dubbiar' is a disjunctive interrogative 'se'-clause ('fe'-clause).

[56]

FABRITIO. Ma perche io fo, che uoi potete dubitare, se questa occasione è uenuta, ò no, uoglio io largaméte (quádo uoi uogliate con pazienza ascoltarmi) difcorrere quali preparamenti sono necessari, prima à fare, quale occasione bifogna nafca, quale difficoltà impedifce, che i preparaméti non giouano, & che l'occasione non uenga, & come questa cofa à un tratto, che paiano termini contrarii, è difficiliffima, & faciliffima à fare.

[*Dell'Arte della Guerra* from 1540 by Niccolò Machiavelli]<sup>64</sup>

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60 This edition was published by Feltrinelli; the passage is on page 132. *La coscienza di Zeno* was originally published in 1923.

61 <https://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/2010/03/20/goya-orreri-del-mondo-ritratti-impietosi-cosi.html> [Accessed 2021.05.31].

62 <https://www.cittaceleste.it/gazzanet/totti-lazio-temibile-ma-roma-sulla-carta-piu-forte/> [Accessed 2021.05.31].

63 <https://mazarinum.bibliotheque-mazarine.fr/records/item/1797-redirection> [Accessed 2021.06.03]. Page numbers have been written in the top right corner of the right-hand side pages, the passage is on the rear side of page 66.

64 <https://archive.org/details/librodellartedel00mach/page/n19/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.06.01].

The subordinate clause of ‘dubitare’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘se’-clause (‘fe’-clause).

[57]

Quale è dunque il diritto, se non quello della forza, che dia la potestà ad un giudice di dare una pena ad un cittadino, mentre si dubita se sia reo o innocente?

[*Dei Delitti E Delle Pene* from 1780 written by Cesare Beccaria]<sup>65</sup>

The subordinate clause of ‘dubita’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘se’-clause.

[58]

Anche materialmente m'è accaduto più volte di dubitare se alcuni miei sforzi corporali avrebbero potuto ottenere un fine che mi premeva e perciò raddoppiarli impazientemente

[*Pensieri di Varia Filosofia e di Bella Letteratua* v.1 from 1898 by Leopardi]<sup>66</sup>

Giacomo Leopardi died in 1837, hence these writings are from 1837 or earlier.

[59]

Non solo della ragione, ma anche del sapere, della dottrina, della eudizione, della cognizioni umane, si può dubitare se facciano progressi reali.

[*Pensieri di Varia Filosofia e di Bella Letteratua*, v.7 from 1900 by Leopardi]<sup>67</sup>

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65 <https://archive.org/details/deidelittiedelle00becc/page/45/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.05.31].

66 <https://archive.org/details/ScansioneGVIII264MiscellaneaOpal/page/422/mode/2up>  
[Accessed 2021.06.03]; see pages 423 and 424.

67 <https://archive.org/details/ScansioneGVIII264affiMiscellaneaOpal/page/n452/mode/2up>  
[Accessed 2021.06.03]; see pages 442 and 443.

## §2.2 *dudar si*

We present these examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe that it is not the case that (F).<sup>68</sup> We also present some of these examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe that the language of Spanish should not be taken to be evidence that (D).

The following four examples were found using the *Corpus del Español: NOW* (Davies 2018) [NOWE].

[60]

Las víctimas dudaron si la intervención era real o no y, al día siguiente, decidieron avisar a la policía para denunciar los hechos.

[An article published in *El País* in 2012]<sup>69</sup>

*El País* is a famous Spanish newspaper. The subordinate clause of ‘dudaron’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘si’-clause.

[61]

En cuanto al **mechón de pelo** -que, según Osenat, podría ser muy interesante para aquellos que dudan si fue envenenado o no-, el precio estimado era de **3.000-5.000 euros**.

[An article published in *El Mundo* in 2014]<sup>70</sup>

*El Mundo* is a famous Spanish newspaper. The subordinate clause of ‘dudan’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘si’-clause.

[62]

*El Divis* [David Martínez] dudaba si asistir a un torneo que se celebraba en Parla (Madrid).

[An article published in *El Mundo* in 2017]<sup>71</sup>

[63]

A tal punto llegó la situación que el técnico llegó a dudar si el jugador volvería a entrenarse.

[An article published in *El Bernabéu/El Español* in 2018]<sup>72</sup>

*El Bernabéu* is a news outlet dedicated to Real Madrid CF which is affiliated with or related to *El Español* which is a famous online Spanish newspaper.

The following three examples are precedents taken from older Spanish. We looked for examples in volumes I and II of *Don Quijote* because we thought that if there were examples to be taken from Early Modern Spanish, the two volumes of *Don Quijote* were more likely to contain at least one of them (due to their combined length) than many other texts. The other two examples are from the same history book published in 1856: the first of which was found using the *Corpus del Español*:

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68 Uegaki, in section 2.2.2 of (Uegaki 2021), acknowledges that it might not be the case that (F).

69 [https://elpais.com/ccaa/2012/06/16/madrid/1339857687\\_230579.html](https://elpais.com/ccaa/2012/06/16/madrid/1339857687_230579.html) [Accessed 2021.05.30].

70 <https://www.elmundo.es/cultura/2014/03/23/532ed1c6268e3e5f1e8b456f.html> [Accessed 2021.05.30].

71 <https://www.elmundo.es/papel/lideres/2017/03/28/58d916d1268e3e89758b4782.html> [Accessed 2021.05.30].

72 [https://www.lespanol.com/elbernabeu/real-madrid/futbol/20180810/manchester-united-ofrecio-kilos-mbappe-ultimo-mercado/329217810\\_0.html](https://www.lespanol.com/elbernabeu/real-madrid/futbol/20180810/manchester-united-ofrecio-kilos-mbappe-ultimo-mercado/329217810_0.html) [Accessed 2021.05.30].

*Genre / Historical* (Davies 2001)<sup>73</sup> [GHE]; the second of which was found while looking through the corpus source.

[64]

—Eso se parece, Sancho, dijo don Quijote, á lo que sucedió á un famoso poeta destos tiempos, el cual, habiendo hecho una maliciosa sátira contra todas las damas cortesanias, no puso ni nombró en ella á una dama, que se podía dudar si lo era ó no; la cual, viendo que no estaba en la lista de las demás, se quejó al poeta diciéndole que ¿qué había visto en ella para no ponerla en el número de las otras? y que alargase la sátira, y la pusiese en el ensanche; si no, que mirase para lo que había nacido.

[*Don Quijote* Tomo II Capítulo VIII from 1905 by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra]<sup>74</sup>

The original publication date is 1615. The subordinate clause of ‘dudar’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘si’-clause.

[65]

De esta suerte, y desentonando el rezo á coro, siguieron la misma carrera que habían aprendido á llevar sublevados y amenazadores; por frente de Palacio pasaron unos detras de otros, tardando más de una hora el desfile; y aunque no se abrieron puertas ni ventanas, dentro de la Real mansion penetraron los acentos de la canturía, y no sorprende que se dudara si la ceremonia aquella significaba humilde señal de agradecimiento ó alarde ostentoso de victoria.

[*Historia del Reinado de Carlos III en España* Tomo II from 1856 Antonio Ferrer del Río]<sup>75</sup>

The subordinate clause of ‘dudara’ is a disjunctive interrogative ‘si’-clause.

[66]

Sin embargo, aun los cardenales más adictos á los jesuitas opinaban que su extincion no se podía evitar de ningun modo, pues al cabo serian estériles todos los subterfugios; mas por de pronto hasta se dudaba si contestaria el Papa sin otros trámites á los ministros de las cortes, ó si formaria una congregacion que examinara la demanda, ó si juntaria á los cardenales en consistorio para resolver lo más acertado.

[*Historia del Reinado de Carlos III en España* Tomo II from 1856 Antonio Ferrer del Río]<sup>76</sup>

The subordinate clause of ‘dudaba’ is a disjunction of ‘si’-clauses and a disjunctive interrogative ‘si’-clause.

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73 <https://www.corpusdelespanol.org/hist-gen/> [Accessed 2021.05.30]. We have cited the dates of the *creation* of the NOWE and the GHE (<https://www.corpusdelespanol.org/> [Accessed 2022.01.07]) because there isn't a recommended citation for the NOWE at <https://www.english-corpora.org/faq.asp#cite> [Accessed 2022.01.07].

74 <https://archive.org/details/elingenioso02cervguat/page/68/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.05.30]. No date is given for the publication of this version on the Internet Archive, but among the illustrated editions on the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes the 1905 Barcelona edition is the only plausible candidate: [http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/quijote\\_banco\\_imagenes\\_qbi/imagenes/?edicion=78](http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/portales/quijote_banco_imagenes_qbi/imagenes/?edicion=78) [Accessed 2021.05.30].

75 <https://archive.org/details/historiadelrein00rogoog/page/n35/mode/1up> [Accessed 2021.05.30]. This digital copy was scanned by Google from a physical copy in a library of the University of Oxford. The relevant source of this passage in the corpus is: <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaObra.html?Ref=1059> [Accessed 2021.05.30]. The accent placement in our representation of this passage and the subsequent passage is consistent with the digital copy which was scanned from the physical copy, but is inconsistent with the corpus source.

76 <https://archive.org/details/historiadelrein00rogoog/page/253/mode/2up> [Accessed 2021.05.30].

## §2.3 zweifeln ob ... oder —

In this section we present examples in order to show that there are reasons to believe that the language of German should not be taken to be evidence that (D).

The first example was found by searching a German news corpus<sup>77</sup> which is contained within the Corpora Collection of the University of Leipzig. We searched for ‘zweifelt’<sup>78</sup> and looked for an example of a phrase the immediate constituents of which were ‘zweifelt’ and a disjunctive interrogative ‘ob’-clause.

[67]

Manch ein Projektgegner zweifelt zudem, ob die Allianz am Ende tatsächlich selbst in die neuen Gebäude zieht oder ob das Unternehmen die Büros nur baut und dann vermietet.

[An article published in *Stuttgarter Nachrichten* in 2020 written by Alexandra Kratz]<sup>79</sup>

The subordinate clause of ‘zweifelt’ is a disjunction of ‘ob’-clauses and a disjunctive interrogative ‘ob’-clause.

The remaining examples were found by searching the IDS corpora.<sup>80</sup> Specifically, we searched all public corpora of W (an archive of the written language)<sup>81</sup> and all public corpora of HIST (an archive of historical corpora)<sup>82</sup> with COSMAS II.<sup>83</sup> We followed Fischer in using the search term ‘&zweifeln /s0 ob’ (Fischer 2003: 4 fn.7) to find sentences which contained ‘ob’ and a form of ‘zweifeln’. After selecting the forms of the words we were interested in, we manually looked through the results to find examples of phrases the immediate constituents of which were a form of ‘zweifeln’ and a disjunctive interrogative ‘ob’-clause.

The following five examples are from newspaper articles in W. We found a URL for the first example, but not for the other four; for those four we have instead cited the information given about the source and the name given to the source in the corpora.

[68]

Gibt es nicht auch einen Konflikt zwischen Effektivität und Wahrheit, zwischen Agitation und Aufklärung? Bei der Brent Spar<sup>84</sup> konnte man ja zweifeln, ob die Versenkung oder die Entsorgung an Land weniger bedenklich ist. Aber wenn man gegen Shell antreten will, muß man die Probleme aufs äußerste vereinfachen.

[An article published in *Die Zeit* in 1995 written by Robert Leicht]<sup>85</sup>

[69]

Viele Menschen zweifeln noch immer, ob sie es unterschreiben sollen oder nicht.

[X97/APR.11867 *Oberösterreichische Nachrichten*, 12.04.1997]

77 [https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en?corpusId=deu\\_news\\_2020](https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en?corpusId=deu_news_2020) [Accessed 2021.07.01].

78 [https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en/res?corpusId=deu\\_news\\_2020&word=zweifelt](https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en/res?corpusId=deu_news_2020&word=zweifelt) [Accessed 2021.07.01].

79 <https://www.stuttgarter-nachrichten.de/inhalt.kritik-am-grossprojekt-in-stuttgart-vaihingen-haette-die-allianz-doch-woanders-bauen-koennen.759625ec-e51e-47f4-9bbd-6e0c1c4e6ba3.html> [Accessed 2021.06.08].

80 Full citation information can be found in the ‘Corpora’ section at the end.

81 “W-öffentlich - alle öffentlichen Korpora des Archivs W (mit Neuakquisitionen)”.

82 “HIST-öffentlich - alle öffentlichen Korpora des Archivs HIST”.

83 <https://www2.ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2/> [Accessed 2021.07.08]; <https://cosmas2.ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2-web/> [Accessed 2021.07.08].

84 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brent\\_Spar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brent_Spar) [Accessed 2021.07.08].

85 [https://www.zeit.de/1995/36/Wir\\_machen\\_politische\\_Kunst](https://www.zeit.de/1995/36/Wir_machen_politische_Kunst) [Accessed 2021.07.08].

[70]

Doch es geht um mehr als um die Frage, wie unabhängig die Ortskirchen sind. Es geht um Frauen, die zweifeln, ob sie abtreiben sollen oder nicht.

[U98/JAN.05319 *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26.01.1998]

[71]

So zweifelt der Kirchenrat des Kantons Zürich noch immer, ob die Stiftung in dieser Form überlebensfähig ist oder nicht.

[E05/FEB.01275 *Tages-Anzeiger*, 11.02.2005]

[72]

Der Geschäftsführer des Hotel- und Gaststättenverbandes im Land, Uwe Bartsewitz, berichtete gestern von Anrufen irritierter Hoteliers, die zweifeln, ob sie geplante Investitionen oder Neueinstellungen nun durchziehen sollen oder nicht.

[NKU10/JUN.09551 *Nordkurier*, 30.06.2010]

This last example is from a play in HIST. We have presented it as it is presented in the corpora and not as it is printed in the source (in Fraktur).

[73]

Man kann zweifeln, ob die Naivetät des Einsenders komisch oder traurig ist, jedenfalls hat er kein Recht mitzusprechen.

[*Die Journalisten* published in 1853 written by Gustav Freytag]<sup>86</sup>

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86 [https://archive.org/details/bub\\_gb\\_elsrAAAAYAAJ/page/n14/mode/lup](https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_elsrAAAAYAAJ/page/n14/mode/lup) [Accessed 2022.01.08]; see pages 12 and 13. During the writing of this report a discrepancy was found regarding the publication date: the information given by the corpora suggests that the original publication date was 1854; however, a link to a digital version on the Internet Archive was found, and that digital version was created using a book in the collections of Harvard University the publication date of which is 1853. On this page 1854 is given <https://www.projekt-gutenberg.org/autoren/namen/freytag.html> [Accessed 2022.01.08] but on this page 1853 is given <https://www.projekt-gutenberg.org/freytag/journal/journal.html> [Accessed 2022.01.08].

# Corpora

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## German

A German news corpus based on material from 2020, part of the Corpora Collection of the University of Leipzig [https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en?corpusId=deu\\_news\\_2020](https://corpora.uni-leipzig.de/en?corpusId=deu_news_2020) [LGNC]

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