Is it any way might you could tell me how come am I not a English speaker?:

Subject-auxiliary inversion and introspective methodologies in linguistics and anthropology

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1. Ozark English:
   a) *I don’t know whether John is working
   b) I don’t know whether John is working or not
   c) I don’t know where is John working.
   d) I don’t know whether John is working or does he have the day off.

2. Grammaticality judgments from introductory syntax assignment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected grammaticality judgments</th>
<th>My grammaticality judgments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I don’t know whether John is working.</td>
<td>*I don’t know whether John is working.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. *I don’t know is John working.</td>
<td>I don’t know is John working.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. *I don’t know where is John working.</td>
<td>I don’t know where is John working.</td>
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3. Inversion with embedded wh-questions in Ozark English:
   a) I’m going to look and see what do they sell in that store.
   b) I wonder why would that upset her so much.
   c) I don’t know who is she talking to.
   d) I wonder where is she taking us.
   e) Tell me how is your sister doing.

4. Examples of embedded inversion from literature/music
   a) Everytime I ask her does she need my help she sucks her teeth real loud and moves on up the aisle away from me… Nikky Finney, “Hurricane Beulah” (Finney 2003:40)
   b) …Mrs. Pike thought, just for the hell of it, see, to ask Lady Evangeline was he happy. Eudora Welty, “Petrified Man” (Welty 1980:22)
   c) It’s nice to think about it, maybe even visit, but I wonder could I live there anymore. Charley Pride “Wonder could I live there anymore” (Rice 1970)

5. Absence of inversion in wh-questions (South African Indian English)

   What I must do? If my father say I must go an plough today what I can do? (Mesthrie 1992:47)
6. Cross-dialectal variation in patterns of subject-auxiliary inversion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>yes-no</th>
<th>wh-questions</th>
<th>embedded yes-no</th>
<th>embedded wh</th>
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<tr>
<td>Indian English (basilectal)</td>
<td>optional</td>
<td>optional</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>Standard U.S. English</td>
<td>optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irish English</td>
<td>optional</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belfast English, Ozark English, African American English</td>
<td>optional</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Inversion following prepositions: Ozark English (OZE) vs. Bluegrass Black English (BBE, Watts 2008)

a) OZE/*BBE I’m concerned about do we have enough gas.
b) OZE/*BBE I’m gonna study up on where can we go for dinner.
c) OZE/*BBE He’s worried about who is he gonna talk to at that party.

8. Direct vs. indirect questions in Belfast English (Henry 1995:106)

a) She asked, “Are they leaving?”
b) She asked if they were leaving.
c) She asked were they leaving
d) They asked me, “Have you read War and Peace?”
e) They asked me had I read War and Peace.

9. Embedded questions with inversion in subject position (OZE)

a) Who were you with is what your parents wanted to know.
b) How does he treat his mother tells you a lot about a man.
c) Can you get a good job depends on who can help you. (Henry 1995:107)

10. Lack of inversion with overt complementizer

a) I don’t know is she going.
b) I don’t know if she is going.
c) *I don’t know if is she going.
d) I asked would she stay home.
e) I asked that she stay home.
f) *I asked that would she stay home.
g) I don’t know if how was she acting was the real problem.
10. Following *whether* inversion is ungrammatical in the first clause, but obligatory in the second (Ozark English):

a) I wonder whether it is going to rain soon or are the crops going to dry up.
b) *I wonder whether is it going to rain soon or are the crops going to dry up.
c) *I wonder whether it is going to rain soon or the crops are going to dry up.
d) I don’t know if John is coming or is he staying home.
e) *I don’t know if is John coming or is he staying home.
f) *I don’t know if John is coming or he is staying home.

11. Contraction of (inverted) embedded auxiliary is ungrammatical (as in Belfast English)

*I wonder’s the kids going to the party. (Henry 2005: 1612)

12. Parallel construction from Gaelic

a) Cé an áit a bhfaca tú é.
   where the place REL saw you it
   “Where did you see it?” (Mac Eoin 1993:122, cited in Filpulla 2000:448)

b) Churi sé ceist cé an áit a bhfaca tú é.
   put he question where the place REL saw you it
   ‘He asked where you saw it.’ (Mac Eoin 1993:122, cited in Filppula 2000: 449)

13. No T → C Movement in Embedded Clauses (Carnie 2007: 333)

In the main text, we’ve noticed that wh-movement and T → C movement often go hand in hand. One surprising fact about English is that this is not true of embedded wh-questions. When a wh-question is embedded the subject does not invert with the auxiliary (i.e., no T → C movement):

i. I wonder what he has done?
ii. *I wonder what has he done?

In other words, in embedded clauses there is no C[+Q +WH]. One simple explanation for this is that the theta grids simply can’t contain C[+Q].


(22) a. *I asked had you been working late.
b. *I wondered what had you been eating.
c. *I think that had I known the dangers I would have kept my distance
d. *I’m sure that so competent is Mary that she will get the promotion.
Footnote (Newmeyer 1998:45): “Interestingly, these forms (22a-d) appear to be grammatical in Belfast English, a fact that has been adduced in support of a parameter-setting approach to grammar (Henry 1995).”

15. Polarity in verbs subcategorizing for inversion (Ozark English)

a) I don’t know is she working./*I know is she working.
b) I didn’t hear is she working./*I heard is she working.
c) I don’t remember do she drink./*I remember do she drink.
d) I don’t understand what is she saying./*I understand what she is saying.
e) I haven’t learned what is the capital of Canada./*I learned what is….

cf. Belfast(*OZE) I know is he going or not, but I’m not letting on. (Henry 1995:107)

16. Inversion is unacceptable if the proposition within the wh-question is universally true.

a) I wonder where you are.
b) *I wonder where are you.
c) I wonder who he is.
d) *I wonder who is he.
e) I wonder what his name is.
f) *I wonder what is his name.

17. Semantic distinctions between inverted and non-inverted embedded clauses (Ozark)

a) I wonder what is it that made her mad. (implies that she may not be truly angry)
b) I wonder what it is that made her mad. (she is definitely mad)
c) I want to find out who is she cheating with. (might not be cheating)
d) I want to find out who she is cheating with. (it is certain she is cheating)

18. Tense distinctions in cases with inversion (Ozark)

a) I have no idea is she coming./*I have no idea she is coming.
b) I had no idea she was coming. (= I was surprised that she came)
c) ?I had no idea was she coming. (= At that time I did not know if she would arrive)

19. Inversion in comparatives (Merchant 2003: 56) is ungrammatical in Ozark English

Abby knows more languages than does her father. (*OZE)
Abby can play more instruments than can her father. (*OZE)
20. Shannon’s “On being a hillbilly”

I am a hillbilly because I was born, reared, and still live near a little village which nestles among the foothills of the beautiful Ozark Mountains, in North Arkansas. I enjoy being a hillbilly because I love to have neighbors for miles around, know everybody in the home town by the first name and know who to trust and how far. (Shannon 1932, my italics)

21. Arkansas Traveler (Currier and Ives, 1870)

![Arkansas Traveler (Currier and Ives, 1870)](http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/encyclopedia/entry-detail.aspx?search=1&entryID=505)

22. Arkansas Traveler (excerpt, original orthography from Masterson, 1976)

Traveler: How far is it to the next house?
Squatter: Stranger! I don’t know, I’ve never been thar.
Traveler: Well, do you know who lives there?
Squatter: Yes, zir!
Traveler: As I’m so bold, then, what might your name be?
Squatter: It might be Dick, and it might be Tom; but it lacks right smart uv it.
Traveler: Sir! will you tell me where this road goes to?
Squatter: It’s never gone any whar since I’ve lived here; It’s always thar when I git up in the mornin’.
Traveler: Well, how far is it to where it forks?
Squatter: It don’t fork at all; but it splits up like the devil.
23. Proverbs from early 20th century Ozark autograph albums: (Randolph and Kennedy McCord 1948: 190)

a) Love many, trust few,
Always paddle your own canoe.

b) What’s in your heart let know [sic] one know,
Nor to your friends your secrets show,
For when that friend becomes a foe
Then all the world your secrets know.

24. The pragmatics of epistemic marking in Ozark English

a) Do you know where might I borrow a wrench?
   (speaker denies knowing that borrowing a wrench is possible, cf Puckett 2000)

b) You stay in the car, just in case does he have a gun.

c) I don’t understand what is she saying (can’t understand a word she is saying)
d) I don’t understand what she is saying (her meaning/intention is unclear)

e) I wonder where does he work. (he might be unemployed)
f) I wonder where he works. (he is definitely working)

g) I wonder where she goes to church. (speaker assumes that she goes to church)
h) I wonder where does she go to church. (implies that she might not go to church)

i) I wonder where she buys her clothes. (compliment)
j) I wonder where does she buy her clothes. (insult)

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References:
Watts, Jenisha. 2008. Bluegrass Black English: A linguistic research project in Lexington, KY. Senior research project, Linguistics program, University of Kentucky.