Force shift as speech act anchoring

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Issue: Complex speech acts

• Layered force: Natural language has force-indicating devices that turn already force-bearing expressions to a variety of complex polar questions.

• Special attention to Cantonese and English.

• What kind of organization of force can compositionally integrate the contribution of multiple force-indicating devices to yield complex speech acts?

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Complex speech act
  /
Simplex speech act       Higher Force
  /
semantic content         Lower force
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Main takeaways

- **Speech Act → PolQ**: Speech acts can be turned into polar questions querying whether they are to be performed or not because speech acts are *partial* in nature.

- **Anchoring**: A speech act can be anchored to one or multiple participants in a variety of ways to yield a variety of complex speech acts.