



## FUNCTIONAL TYPES OF INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES: A LINGUISTIC AND PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

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**Abstract.** *Interrogative sentences are central to human communication, enabling speakers to request information, confirm assumptions, and negotiate meaning. This paper examines the functional types of interrogative sentences in English – yes/no questions, wh-questions, alternative questions, tag questions, and indirect questions – through a linguistic and pragmatic lens. Using descriptive and contextual analysis, the study highlights their syntactic structures, communicative roles, and discourse functions. Findings suggest that interrogatives extend beyond mere information-seeking, serving pragmatic functions such as politeness, persuasion, and rhetorical effect.*

**Keywords:** *interrogative sentences, yes/no questions, wh-questions, alternative questions, tag questions, indirect questions, pragmatics, syntax.*

### Introduction

Interrogative sentences represent one of the most studied categories in linguistics due to their dual role in syntax and pragmatics. While structurally defined by inversion or interrogative markers, their communicative functions vary widely depending on context. Previous studies emphasize that interrogatives are not limited to eliciting responses but also perform functions such as expressing doubt, irony, or politeness. This paper aims to provide a systematic overview of functional types of interrogative sentences, situating them within discourse analysis and applied linguistics.

### Methodology

The study employs a **qualitative descriptive approach** combined with **contextual analysis**:

- **Corpus Selection:** Examples were drawn from academic texts, conversational transcripts, and media discourse.

- **Analytical Framework:** Following Quirk et al. (1985) and Huddleston & Pullum (2002), interrogatives were classified into five functional types.

- **Contextual Analysis:** Pragmatic functions were examined using discourse samples, focusing on speaker intent, politeness strategies, and rhetorical effect.

- **Comparative Dimension:** Cross-references were made with findings from Saidova (2025) and Normamatova (2022), who highlight contextual and semantic features of interrogatives.

### Functional Types of Interrogative Sentences

#### 1. Yes/No Questions

- **Structure:** Auxiliary verb precedes subject.

- **Example:** *Is the hypothesis valid?*



- **Function:** Seeks confirmation or denial. In scientific discourse, often used to test assumptions.

### 2. Wh-Questions

- **Structure:** Introduced by interrogative pronouns (who, what, where, when, why, how).

- **Example:** *Why did the experiment fail?*

- **Function:** Requests specific information, essential in research and inquiry.

### 3. Alternative Questions

- **Structure:** Present options linked by *or*.

- **Example:** *Should the sample be heated or cooled?*

- **Function:** Directs respondent toward a choice, useful in decision-making.

### 4. Tag Questions

- **Structure:** Declarative statement followed by a short interrogative tag.

- **Example:** *The results are consistent, aren't they?*

- **Function:** Seeks agreement or reassurance, common in collaborative discussions.

### 5. Indirect Questions

- **Structure:** Embedded within another clause, often introduced by polite expressions.

- **Example:** *Could you explain how the data were processed?*

- **Function:** Softens inquiry, maintaining politeness in academic and professional contexts.

### Discussion

The analysis reveals that interrogatives are multifunctional:

- **Information-seeking:** Yes/no and wh-questions dominate in everyday and academic discourse.

- **Decision-making:** Alternative questions guide choices in structured contexts.

- **Politeness and reassurance:** Tag and indirect questions reflect sociolinguistic norms, mitigating face-threatening acts.

- **Rhetorical use:** Interrogatives may function without expecting answers, serving persuasive or stylistic purposes.

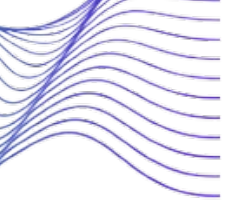
This multifunctionality underscores the importance of interrogatives in both linguistic theory and applied communication. Their pragmatic roles highlight how syntax interacts with discourse context to shape meaning.

### Conclusion

Interrogative sentences, classified into five functional types, are indispensable tools for communication. Beyond their syntactic structures, they perform pragmatic functions that enrich discourse. Understanding these types enhances linguistic competence and has practical applications in education, research, and artificial intelligence. Future studies may expand to cross-linguistic comparisons, exploring how interrogatives function across languages and cultures.

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