

## TYPES AND STRUCTURES OF INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES IN MODERN ENGLISH

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*Annotation: This article deals with discussing the issues related to the classification of interrogative sentences and the structures of different types of questions. Examples for various kinds of interrogative sentences have been taken from authentic materials such as Pride and Prejudice, The Time Machine , Oxford Idioms Dictionary, Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary as well as from some grammar reference books as Grammarway 4 , English Grammar in Use and Oxford Guide to English Grammar to illustrate the stated point regarding question types.*

*Key words: interrogative sentence, special question, general question, alternative question, disjunctive question, indirect question, echo question and echo tags, explicit alternative question, implicit alternative question, information question, positive tag, negative tag, negative question*

## ВИДЫ И СТРУКТУРЫ ВОПРОСИТЕЛЬНЫХ ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЙ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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*Аннотация: В данной статье рассматриваются вопросы, связанные с классификацией вопросительных предложений и структурами разных типов вопросов. Примеры различных видов вопросительных предложений были взяты из аутентичных материалов, таких как Pride and Prejudice, The Time Machine, Oxford Idioms Dictionary, Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, а также из некоторых справочников по грамматике, таких как Grammarway 4, English Grammar in Use и Oxford Guide. к английской грамматике, чтобы проиллюстрировать заявленную точку зрения относительно типов вопросов.*

*Ключевые слова: вопросительное предложение, специальный вопрос, общий вопрос, альтернативный вопрос, разделительный вопрос, косвенный вопрос, эхо-вопрос и эхо-метки, явный альтернативный вопрос, неявный альтернативный вопрос, информационный вопрос, положительный признак, отрицательный признак, отрицательный вопрос.*

## ZAMONAVIY INGLIZ TILIDA SOROQ GAPLARNING TURLARI VA TUZILISHI

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*Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada so'roq gaplarning tasnifi va turli turdagi savollarning tuzilishi bilan bog'liq masalalar muhokama qilinadi. Har xil turdagi so'roq gaplarga misollar Mag'rurlik va xurofot, Vaqt mashinasi, Oksford Idioms Dictionary,*

*Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionary, shuningdek Grammarway 4, English Grammar in Use va Oxford Guide kabi ba'zi grammatik ma'lumotnomalardan olingan. Savol turlari bo'yicha ko'rsatilgan fikrni ko'rsatish uchun ingliz grammatikasiga.*

*Tayanch so'zlar: so'roq gap, maxsus savol, umumiy savol, muqobil savol, ayiruvchi savol, bilvosita savol, aks-sado savol va aks-sado teglari, aniq muqobil savol, yashirin muqobil savol, axborot savol, ijobiy teg, inkor teg, inkor savol*

Introduction. Language is a system by which human beings communicate with one another using such linguistic units as sentences, clauses, phrases, and so forth. 'Sentence is the minimal syntactic structure used in speech communication, distinguished by predication and build up of words according to a definite syntactic pattern.' [4, 66] 'According to E.A. Vikulova, there exist three cardinal communicative sentence types, namely the declarative sentence, the imperative sentence, the interrogative sentence.' [4, 67] The focus of this article is to define the interrogative sentence.

Literature review. 'The interrogative sentence is a type of a sentence that is used to ask for information as well as to express requests, suggestions, offers and so on.' [7, 25] The classification of interrogative sentences in English is still a subject of debate. 'Iriskulov, for example, distinguishes two structural types of interrogative sentences in Modern English - general (yes-no) questions and special (wh-questions) questions. Characteristic feature of both of them is that they are partially inverted.' [1, 46]

'Do our family affairs jar your sense of niceness?' [5, 34]

This sentence is an example of general questions, which have a rising intonation pattern. 'The second type of the interrogative sentence (wh-question) is characterised by having question words; however, its intonation pattern is identical with that of the affirmative sentences.' [1, 46] This can be exemplified by the following sentence.

'What's all this crying in aid of?' [3, 5]

The next classification of interrogative sentences, which will be discussed herein, belongs to M. Y. Blokh. 'According to him, pronominal (special) and non-pronominal types of questions can be distinguished.' [11, 259-261] 'He also differentiated alternative questions, which can be expressed with the use of interrogative pronouns or without question words.' [11, 260]

Pronominal question: 'What is the game?' said the Journalist.

Non-pronominal question: 'Has he been doing the Amateur Cadger?' [6, 18]

Alternative question with interrogative pronouns: 'When will we go to Tashkent tomorrow or the day after tomorrow?'

Alternative question without question words: 'Are you for or against the death penalty?' [13, 8]

M.Y.Blokh suggests that: 'In the pronominal (special) questions, the nucleus of inquiry is expressed by an interrogative pronoun, which is immediately linked to the part of the sentence that denotes the object or phenomenon about which the inquiry (condensed in the pronoun) is made. The gaping pronominal meaning is to be replaced in the answer by the wanted actual information. Therefore, the rheme of the answer is the reverse substitute of the interrogative pronoun, the two make up a rhematic unity in the broader question-answer construction. As for the thematic part of the answer, it is already expressed in the question.' [11, 259] The sentences below are a case in point.

‘ When is your next ball to be , Lizzy ? ‘ ‘ Tomorrow fortnight . ’ [ 8, 7 ]

‘ And what sort of young lady is she ? Is she handsome ? ‘

‘ She is a most charming young lady indeed. ‘ [ 8, 83 ]

‘ The rheme of non-pronominal questions differs slightly from that of pronominal questions. Although it is open , its openness consists in at least two semantic suggestions provided for choice to the listener. It is in the response that the choice is effected; in other words , the suggested alternative is closed by the answer according to the interrogative-rhematic program inherent in it. ‘ [ 11 , 260 ]

‘ Did Charlotte dine with you ? ‘

‘ No , she would go home. ‘ [ 8, 54 ]

M.Y.Blokh also states that : ‘ The non-pronominal questions requiring either confirmation or negation ( general question of yes-no response type) is thereby implicitly alternative, though the inquiry inherent in it concerns not the choice between some suggested facts , but the choice between the existence or non-existence of an indicated fact. In other words , it is a question of realised rhematic substitution ( or of ‘ no substitution choice ‘ ) , but with an open existence factor ( true to life or not true to life ? ) , which makes up its implicitly expressed alternative. This can easily be indicated by a superposition: ‘ [ 11, 260 ]

‘ Does she live near you , sir ? > She lives - near you , not near you ? ‘ [ 8, 83 ]

‘ The implicit alternative question can be changed into an explicit one , which is normally very emphatic, stylistically « forced « . The negation in the implied alternative part is usually referred to the verb. ‘ [11, 261]

Does she live near you, or does she not live near you ?

Discussion. As outlined above , M.Y.Blokh distinguished the main two types of interrogative sentences: pronominal interrogative sentences and non-pronominal interrogative sentences . He further divided the non-pronominal interrogative sentences into two types , namely explicit alternative questions ( those that contain the word « or «) and implicit alternative questions ( general questions which require yes-no answers).

According to Blokh : ‘ In general terms of meaning, normal explicit alternative question should be classed as the alternative question of fact ( since a choice between two or more facts is required by it ) , while the implicit alternative question ought to be classed as the alternative question of truth, since it requires the statement of truth or non-truth of the indicated fact. In terms of actual division, ordinary explicit alternative questions should be classed as the polyperspective alternative question ( biperspective , triperspective , etc. ) because it presents more than one informative perspectives ( more than one actual divisions for the listener’s choice, whereas the question of the second type ( implicit alternative question) , as opposed to the polyperspective , should be classed as the monoperspective alternative question because its both varieties ( implicit and stylistically forced explicit ) express only one informative perspective , which is presented to the listener for the existential yes-no appraisal. ‘ [11, 261]

‘ Betty Azar Schramper’s classification of interrogative sentences is simple and different from that of M.Y.Blokh’s. In his book « Fundamentals of English Grammar « he distinguishes 3 types of questions: yes - no questions, information questions and tag questions. ‘ [2, 120] ‘ A yes-no question is a question that can be answered by yes or no . ‘ [2, 121]

‘ Has Mr. - gone out that way ? ‘ said I . No , sir . No one has come out this way . I was expecting to find him here. ‘ [6, 115]

A short answer to a yes-no question usually consists of yes/no ( depending on the

type of an answer: confirmation or negation), followed by a comma, subject pronoun that corresponds to the subject of the interrogative sentence and an auxiliary verb, although this is not a fixed pattern.

Does your mother work in hospital?

Yes, she does / No, she doesn't.

In an affirmative short answer, a helping verb (an auxiliary verb) is not contracted with the subject.

'Have you finished? Yes, I have' [9, 180]

'The spoken emphasis in a short answer is on the verb.' [2, 121]

'An information question is a question that asks for information by using a question word: where, when, why, who, whom, what, which, whose, how' [2, 123]

'What is that you are saying, Fitzwilliam? What is it you are talking of?' [8, 217]

'The same subject-verb word order is used in both yes-no and information questions.' [2, 123]

The following sentences are a good example of this.

Yes-no question: 'Have you seen any pleasant men? Have you had any flirting?' [8, 274]

Information question: 'What are you telling Miss Bennet? Let me hear what it is.' [8, 217]

In both types of questions auxiliary verbs (in this case « have » and « are ») precede the subjects of the sentence and main verbs follow the subjects. However, when the question word functions as the subject of the interrogative sentence, a usual question word order is not used. Question word is immediately followed by a main verb. For example,

'Then, who taught you? who attended to you? Without a governess, you must have been neglected.' [8, 207]

John Eastwood, in his book entitled « Oxford Guide to English Grammar », gives detailed information on the types and structures of interrogative sentences. 'In this book, such types of interrogative sentences as yes-no questions, wh-questions, negative questions (can be a kind of both yes-no and wh-question), questions with the word « or » (alternative questions), questions without inversion, indirect questions, question tags, echo questions and echo tags are explained.' [7, pp 25-41]

'A yes-no question can be answered yes or no, which begins with an auxiliary verb (do, have, be, will, etc.), while a wh-question begins with a question word. According to John Eastwood, there are nine question words: who, whom, what, which, why, when, whose, where and how.' [7, 28] Negative questions can be the same as either yes-no or wh-questions in structure, but the particle « not » comes with auxiliary verbs in abbreviated form of the question, whilst in full form of sentences « not » goes after the subject of the sentence. This can be exemplified by the following sentences.

'Didn't I tell you not to talk to strangers?' [9, 183]

'Why should they not go on to Scotland if that had been the case?' [8, 346]

'A question can contain two or more alternative answers. The word « or » comes before the last alternative.' [7, 36] This type of questions is called alternative questions. First alternative has a rising intonation whereas there is falling intonation after or.

'Is he married or single?

Oh, single, my dear, to be sure!' [8, 3]

The word « or » can link two clauses.

‘Was it merely to ride to Longbourn and be embarrassed or had you intended any more serious consequence ? ‘ [ 8, 470 ]

Another type of interrogative sentence , which John Eastwood explains , is indirect questions. A question can be asked indirectly by putting it into a sub clause which commences with a question word or if/whether. This way , a question can be made less abrupt , more tentative. The sentences below are a case in point.

‘Have you any idea, Lizzy, who this gentleman is ? ‘ [8, 446]

‘I must ask whether you were surprised? ‘ said Elizabeth. ‘ [8, 457]

‘John Eastwood points out that : ‘ There is no inversion of the subject and auxiliary in the sub clause. If the main clause is a statement ( We need to know , I don’t know, I wonder , etc.) , then there is no question mark.’ [7, 37]

‘I want to be told whether I ought, or ought not, to make our acquaintances in general understand Wickham’s character. ‘ [8, 281]

The next kind of question which will be discussed is tag ( disjunctive) questions. ‘ A tag relates to the subject and auxiliary of the main clause. The structure of a negative tag is Auxiliary + n’t + pronoun .’ [7, 38]

‘I’ve got a new job , but keep it dark , won’t you ? ‘ [3, 81]

‘A positive tag is like a negative one , but without n’t. ‘ [7, 38]

‘Mr. Darcy is not so well worth listening to as his friend, is he ? - poor Eliza ! - to be only just tolerable . ‘ [8, 22]

There are three patterns with question tags.

	Statement	Tag	Example
Pattern A	Positive	Negative	You study English, don't you?
Pattern B	Negative	Positive	You aren't a criminal, are you?
Pattern C	Positive	Positive	You work at University, do you ?

Pattern A : positive statement + negative tag

‘ This kind of tag asks the hearer to agree that the main clause is true. It is sometimes obvious that the statement is true. ‘ [7, 39]

‘ Well, but now for my news; it is about dear Wickham; too good for the waiter , is it not ? ‘ [8, 273]

When the statement is clearly true , then the speaker uses a falling intonation on the tag.

It is cold today, isn’t it?

‘ On the other hand , when the speaker is not sure if the statement is true , then the tag is more like a real question, a request for information. In this case , the speaker’s voice rises in the tag:

‘ We’re going the right way, aren’t we? ~ I hope so. ‘ [ 7, 39 ]

It is obvious from the context that the speaker is not sure whether the statement they are making is true. That is why the rising intonation is used on the tag « aren’t we « .

Pattern B: negative statement + positive tag

The use of the Pattern B is mostly the same as for Pattern A.

It is not warm , is it ?

‘ As in Pattern A the voice falls or rises depending on how sure the speaker is that the statement is true .’ [7, 39]

Pattern C : positive statement + positive tag

‘ Pattern C also asks the hearer to agree that the statement is true. It also suggests that the speaker has just learnt, realised or remembered the information. ‘ [7, 40]

The following sentence is a good example of the point that has been mentioned

here.

‘ Oh ! Your uncle ! He keeps a man-servant, does he ? ‘ [8, 264]

‘ As for echo questions, they can be used when we do not understand what someone says to us , or we find it hard to believe.

I often eat bits of wood. What do you eat?/You eat what ?

Did you see the naked lady ? ~ Did I see the what ? ‘

In these situations the second speaker is asking the first to repeat the important information . ‘ [ 7, 40 ]

‘ When it comes to echo tags , it can be said that they are formed like an ordinary question tag , but a positive statement has a positive tag and a negative statement has a negative tag. ‘ [7, 41] This is exemplified by the sentences below.

~ ‘ I’ve just seen Steven. ‘

~ ‘ Oh, have you ? How is he ? ‘

~ ‘ Lisa isn’t very well today ‘

~ ‘ Isn’t she ? What’s wrong with her ? ‘ [12, 102]

‘ These tags express interest in what the speakers have just said. The voice usually rises , but if the voice falls, this means that the speaker is not interested. ‘ [7, 41]

‘ M.I.Rasulova , Z.I.Shukurova in their book « Comparative Typology of English, Uzbek and Russian Languages « state that there are four types of interrogative sentences in Modern English: general questions , special questions, alternative questions and disjunctive (tag) questions. ‘ [ 10,120 ] Based on what has been covered above, we suggest there exist 5 types of structurally distinguishable interrogative sentences as general (yes-no) questions, special (wh-questions) questions, alternative questions, disjunctive( tag) questions and indirect questions. Below will be introduced structures of above mentioned question types along with information on negative questions, questions without inversion, echo questions and echo tags.

Special questions begin with a question word and obeys the following structure.

‘ Question word + helping(auxiliary)verb + subject + adverbs of frequency + main verb + rest of sentence ? ‘ [2, 123]

This can be illustrated by the following sentence.

‘ Why did the Forsters ever let her go out of their sight ? ‘ [8, 352]

Special questions usually require detailed answers.

‘Oh! my dear Lydia, ‘ she cried, ‘ when shall we meet again? ‘

‘Oh, lord ! I don’t know. Not these two or three years, perhaps. ‘ [8, 406]

‘ When the question word is the subject of the interrogative sentence, auxiliary verbs are not used , a question word is followed by a main verb . ‘ [9, 182]

Who let you play on the ice in such cold weather?

Similarly, yes-no questions have the same structure as wh-questions, albeit with the absence of questions words.

Helping ( auxiliary) verb + subject + adverbs of frequency + main verb +rest of sentence?

Yes-no questions can normally be answered by yes/no , personal pronoun and (negative ) auxiliary verb.

Does he usually go to theatre in your free time?

Yes , he does/ No , he doesn’t.

Result. Alternative questions are characterised by having the word « or « within the sentence . This type of interrogative sentences can be expressed via the structures of general and special questions. This can be exemplified with the following sentences:

‘ Is he married or single?

‘ Oh! Single, my dear, to be sure ! ‘ [ 8, 3 ]

‘ If you thought someone was trying to cheat you , would you challenge him or try to beat him at his own game? ‘ [ 3, 20 ]

‘ How’d you like your eggs - scrambled or sunny-sideup ? ‘ [ 3, 391 ]

Or sometimes can serve as a linking word between clauses.

‘ Are you consulting your own feelings in the present case, or do you imagine that you are gratifying mine ? ‘ [ 8, 115 ]

‘ Questions tags are types of questions which require the listener to agree or confirm what the speaker is saying. A tag relates to the subject and auxiliary of the main clause. The structure of a negative tag is auxiliary + n’t + pronoun . Positive statements precede this kind of tags. ‘ [ 7, 38 ]

‘ It’s very quiet, isn’t it? ‘ [ 3, 92 ]

A positive tag is similar to a negative one, albeit without n’t. This type of tags normally follow negative statements and orders.

‘ Keep an eye on my bag while I go and make a phone call, will you? ‘ [ 3, 112 ]

‘ He doesn’t have much going for him , does he ? ‘ [ 3, 150 ]

‘ According to Jenny Dooley and Virginia Evans, when the verb of the sentence is in the present or past simple, the corresponding question tag is formed with do , does or did and the subject pronoun.’ [ 9, 185 ]

The following sentences are a case in point.

‘ The men shan’t come and part us , I am determined. We want none of them; do we ? ‘ [ 8, 420 ]

They spent their summer holiday in the US , didn’t they?

‘ As for indirect questions, they can be asked indirectly by putting it into a sub clause which begins with a question word or with if /whether. Indirect questions sound less abrupt, more tentative.’ [ 7, 37 ]

The structure for an indirect question is as follows:

Statement/Question + if/whether/question word + subject + verb?

This can be illustrated by the following sentences.

‘ At times I wonder whether he’ll ever get a job . ‘ [ 3, 413 ]

Direct question: Will he ever get a job ?

Indirect question: At times I wonder whether he’ll ever get a job.

‘ Have you any idea, Lizzy, who this gentleman is? ‘ [ 8, 446 ]

Direct question: Who is this gentleman?

Indirect question: Have you any idea, Lizzy, who this gentleman is?

‘ Jenny Dooley and Virginia Evans point out that: ‘ Indirect questions are usually used after the following expressions: I don’t know.../I’d like to know .../I wonder .../ We need to find out...as well as : Do you know.../?Can you tell me.../?Could you tell me.../?Could you explain.../?Have you any idea...? If the direct question is part of a question, we put a question mark at the end of the sentence. If it is part of a statement, a full stop is used . ‘ [ 9, 183 ] The sentences below are a case in point.

‘ I wonder what he can be doing there. ‘ [ 8, 404 ]

Direct question: What can he be doing there?

Indirect question: I wonder what he can be doing there.

‘ Miss Bennet , do you know who I am ? I have not been accustomed to such language as this . ‘ [ 8, 436 ]

Direct question: Who am I ?

Indirect question: Do you know who I am ?

Other types of questions which exist within the frames of above mentioned

interrogative sentences include negative questions, questions without inversion, echo questions and echo tags. As far as negative questions are concerned, they are formed with not, but there is a difference in the word order between the full form and the short form. Here is the structure of negative questions for the full form.

Full form : Auxiliary + subject + not + verb ?

The following sentence is a good example of this structure.

‘ Do you not want to know who has taken it ? ‘ cried his wife impatiently. [ 8, 2 ]

Short form: Auxiliary + n’t + subject + verb ?

‘ Can’t you speak the Queen’s English? ‘ [ 3, 108 ]

Negative questions are used to ask for confirmation as well as to express surprise, admiration and annoyance. This can be exemplified by the following sentences.

Asking for information: ‘ Perhaps you mean what I overheard between him and Mr. Robinson; did not I mention it to you? ‘ [ 8, 22 ]

Surprise: ‘ Good Lord ! Sir William, how can you tell such a story? Do not you know that Mr. Collins wants to marry Lizzy ? ‘ [ 8, 160 ]

Admiration: ‘ After welcoming their sisters, they triumphantly displayed a table set out with such cold meat as an inn larder usually affords, exclaiming, ‘ I’d not this nice ? Is not this an agreeable surprise? ‘

Annoyance: You are making so much noise, can’t you be quiet for a moment?

‘ When answering negative questions, the answer « no » agrees that the negative is true, while the answer « yes » means that the positive is true ‘ [ 7, 36 ]

Can’t you speak the Queen’s English?

No, I can’t speak the Queen’s English.

Yes, I can speak the Queen’s English.

‘ In informal conversation a question can sometimes have the same word order as in a statement. ‘ [ 7, 37 ] This type of questions can be characterised by having a rising intonation.

‘ You never go out after dark? That’s taking being careful to extremes, isn’t it? ‘ [ 3, 111 ]

Moving on to echo questions, it can be stated that an echo question is used when we do not understand what someone says to us, or when it is hard to believe something. It is used to confirm or clarify another speaker’s utterance through repeating it back in some form. This can be exemplified by the following sentences.

I have been to White House ~ You have been where ?

Where have you been?

My dog usually drinks vodka when it’s thirsty.

Your dog usually drinks what ?

What does your dog usually drink?

‘ The second speaker is asking the first to repeat the important information. [ 7, 40 ]

An echo tag is formed in a similar way to an ordinary question tag. However, a positive statement is followed by a positive tag, whereas a negative statement precedes a negative tag.

‘ Lisa isn’t very well today. ‘

‘ Isn’t she ? What’s wrong with her? ‘

‘ It rained every day during our holiday. ‘

‘ Did it ? What a shame ! ‘ [ 12, 102 ]

‘ These tags express interest in what someone has just said. ‘ [ 7, 41 ]

‘ A negative tag can be used in response to a positive statement to express



agreement.

Max played the part brilliantly. ~ Yes, didn't he?

That was fun . ~ Yes, wasn't it ?

The information is already known; both speakers saw Max playing the part. ‘ [ 7, 41 ].

Conclusion. Taking everything into consideration, it can be concluded that although a great deal of research has been done on the nature of interrogative sentences in Modern English, there are still covert features of them waiting to be discovered. I hope this article has managed to play a part in discovering these hidden characteristics of interrogatives by suggesting the existence of 5 types of structurally distinct interrogative sentences.

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