THE DISCOURSE FUNCTION OF QUESTIONS*

Angeliki Athanasiadou

1. Introduction

One basis for classifying questions is in terms of the intentions of their speakers (Ch. Fillmore, On Grammatical Constructions, 1986 ms). At the outset of a question, contextual and/or pragmatic information is present in the speaker's mind. The aim of the paper is first to examine four categories of questions of interrogative structure and their function in semantic and/or pragmatic level. I will then turn to their use in real discourse, utilizing data from three types of oral corpus of English. It is observed that not only the different types of questions are characterized by different functions, but the use of the different modes of questioning indicate the relationship that exists between the questioner and the respondent (intimacy, social distance , authority). I shall therefore concentrate on the relationship between the various functions questions perform and the roles of the speakers involved in the question act.

2. Modes of questioning

Questioning is a speech act which affects the way information is organized. Since there is more than one kind of meaning conveyed by a speech act and verbal forms alone are not sufficient as a basis for determining meaning, then the meaning of questions must be partly dependent on rules governing social relationships. In the framework which will enable me to explain the functions questions may fulfil, I account for speech situations in which there is a speaker and a hearer

* This is a revised edition of a paper presented in the 9th world congress of Applied Linguistics, April 15-21, 1990, Halkidiki, Greece.

who are engaged in a cooperative conversation. For effective interaction each must be able to predict the behaviour of the other. Prediction is partly secured by norms which specify how friends, colleagues, academics... behave. Such norms set up models of other friends, colleagues, or academics...

But the standardization of roles is not enough. One must also know what others' intentions are. Understanding others' intentions is central for the successful planning of interaction. Intentions are identified through the speech context as well as the speakers' attitude towards what is said. We thus judge how something is said and by whom. In other words, the meanings given to questions are determined by the status of the speakers involved in the question act and the way they convey intention. Modes of questioning are strategies for conveying certain kinds of intentions and not others. Question situations, according to speakers' intentions, can be classified in many different ways, but in the present study I restrict myself to four types of question situation:

The first thing anyone thinks of when reflecting on the purpose and function of a question is that it is a means of requesting information. The chief motivation for information questions is to be found in a desire for knowledge; the speaker wants to know something and assumes that the hearer knows it. Questioning for information is the traditional perspective which considers that a question is a request to supply unknown information, and that what is linked to a question, i.e. a response, is the utterance which provides this information. For example:

- (1) What do you know about him?
- (2) What goes into that paper now?

In contrast to the information-seeking questions, there are rhetorical questions which are intended to provide information. For example:

- (3) Do you know that it is 12.30 ?

There are various kinds of rhetorical questions. First of all, the communicative function of do-you-know introductions, of the above example, consists in capturing the interest of the hearer. The intention of the speaker is to give emphasis to some particular point.

Secondly, in a rhetorical question, the speaker considers the propositional content he is going to utter to be trivial or well-known. For example:

- (4) Who else burns a cheque if not an idiot?

Thirdly, in a rhetorical question a constituent is given emphatic prominence and gets a universally valid touch. For example:

(5) What could be more wonderful than the universe?

Fourthly, rhetorical questions express wonder in an exclamative way, as:

(6) Isn't she pretty?

(J.Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977, On so-called Rhetorical Questions).

Generally, in rhetorical questions the speaker does not expect an answer from the hearer, since the answer is given by the speaker himself. In certain cases even, the hearer is prevented from answering because of social or institutional conventions. For example:

(7) I ask you, can such a man be innocent?

So, rhetorical questions require no answer, but even if they do the information channel is empty. Which means that, in contradistinction with the requesting information questions, they minimize the emphasis on the information channel and stress the social relationships involved (E.N.Goody, Questions and Politeness, p.30). From this point of view, I consider rhetorical questions as opposites to information questions, since the former minimize the emphasis on information, while the latter stress the securing of information.

If requesting or giving information is a parameter that distinguishes the previous two modes of questioning, then dominance of questioner or respondent is another parameter that distinguishes the following two types of questions.

The third type of questions, according to speakers' intentions, is examination questions. In this type, one asks a question not because he assumes that you have some information that he needs, but because he wants to find out whether you know the answer. For example:

(8) What time is it? (the big hand is on twelve and
the little hand is on three)

Here, the speaker knows the answer but he is not sure if the hearer knows it or not. So, the questioner is testing the knowledge of the respondent. There are two kinds of examination questions. First, they are used for didactic purposes by teachers or teaching-inclined parents and superiors. For example:

(9) How many syllables does the word Y contain?

Secondly, for interrogation purposes, where questioning aims at establishing a fact and pinning down responsibilities. Used in this sense to question is to test, to challenge and to control. Some interrogation questions may be conducive to a positive (10a) or to a negative answer (10b). For example:

(10a) Weren't you at the scene of the crime at 10 o'clock?

(10b) You weren't at the scene of the crime, were you?

Although exam and interrogation questions imply the dominance of the speaker when requiring an answer, there is a crucial difference between them in that in exam questions the questioner knows the answer, whereas in interrogation questions the questioner doesn't always know it. But in both cases, the one who asks the question implies the authority to require an appropriate answer. He is thus in a dominant position, whereas the respondent is at a disadvantage, since he is presumed to deserve sanctions of a sort if it turns out that his answer is not appropriate. In this type of questions, we have stress on the command function of questions on the part of the questioner.

In contradistinction to examination questions we have indirect requests characterized by ignorance by the questioner of the answer and his avoidance taking the dominant role. In indirect requests the questioner is asking a question to induce the respondent to act, in other words, they are requests for action (that is why sometimes no verbal response is required). They are polite requests

(11) Could you comment on my paper?

(12) Can you help me?

indirect suggestions

(13) Would you mind not making so much noise?

invitations

(14) Would you like to come and have some wine?

All questions of indirect requests leave the initiative with the respondent. They are utilized to place the respondent, not the questioner, at an advantage, since the questioner emphasizes the respondent's power to choose and wishes his agreement to what is being asked. So, the dominant role is transferred to the respondent,

since he doesn't deserve any sanctions for his answer, but on the contrary he is induced by the questioner to make a decision.

Therefore, what the speaker intends to do when an especially polite form is chosen for the request to agree is to deem a specific answer. His purpose is not to have his knowledge confirmed but to get the hearer's explicit agreement to the assumption expressed. One could argue that acts of this type of questioning express the questioner's dependence on the answerer. The speaker behaves as if he is inferior to the hearer, since he expresses his doubt as to the feasibility of his assumption; the hearer is apparently granted an option because he is induced to make a decision.

I assume that the speech situations in which the above four modes of questioning, according to speakers' intentions, are uttered, are sufficiently specified. However, other speech situations are equally possible. Notice that I by no means want to suggest that the list is exhaustive. Nor do I want to claim that the categories are distinctive; overlappings are quite possible (for example, examination and rhetorical questions are known information questions). What is important is to recall that questions may have various functions and that information asking and giving, as well as dominance of questioner or respondent, are only two of them.

3. The Use of the Four Modes of Questioning

I have so far tried to examine the conditions under which various modes of questioning in English are possible. The classification of questions was based on the speakers' intentions when uttering a question and on the functions that questions perform. I have tried to show that questioning involves not only asking for and giving information but it also carries a dominance function on the part of the questioner or the respondent. As it will be seen from the analysis of corpus, different modes of questioning exist in the types of corpus, due to different functions questions perform but also due to different kinds of relationships between the speakers.

Thus, on the one hand, I am concerned with the functions questions perform and, on the other hand, with the effect of social status (in the sense of hierarchy or position in a social system) on the meaning assigned to the act of asking a question. I also examine the constraints imposed by status on the use of questions. So, the demand for an answer has quite different implications from an academic to a prospective student, between friends or between colleagues. These modes of questioning constitute a list of available interrogative strategies.

My conclusions are based on the results of an analysis of authentic conversations taken from A Corpus of English Conversation

by J.Svartvik and R.Quirk 1980. The major advantage of such corpus is natural language dialogues. It has also the main virtue of dealing with longer pragmatic units than utterances. Three specimens of the corpus of this edition were selected, each of 5000 words of genuine face-to-face conversation by native British speakers. The three specimens under investigation were selected, because they presented different relationships between the speakers involved in the conversation (between male colleagues, female friends and between an academic and a prospective undergraduate).

In each corpus, the four main modes of questioning are identified as well as the functions they perform; finally the relationship between these functions and the roles of the speakers.

Starting with examination questions, of corpus S.3.5., where we have an official academic interview of a male prospective undergraduate of 18 years old by two members of faculty; they are both male academics of 40 years old. Out of 550 propositions, 41 are questions. 34 of them are examination questions, 4 are information seeking questions and 3 are rhetorical questions.

The academics' role (or generally the teachers') in our society, in cases of official interviews, carries the right to test the students' knowledge, and to eventually impose sanctions or advise them in cases of inappropriate responses. Communication with people in such roles is structured by controlling intentions. It is this control factor which determines the meanings of their questions. The questions from the academics to the student are perceived as "examination" questions, because they hold the student responsible for knowing the correct answer.

The use of questions in this situation is characterized by the different roles speakers play. The intentions of the two academics are to test the undergraduate's knowledge, seeking to control him. The conversational goal is to check if his knowledge is appropriate for entering the course. Indeed, in the specific corpus, they put him on trial asking mainly examination questions one after the other. There are two information questions in the beginning of the corpus which are used to manipulate the student into accepting a view:

(1) Is that your favourite form for modern reading
or modern entertainment in English literature?

(8) And what do you like reading novels or poetry
most?

They seem to be pure information seeking questions but in reality they are also control oriented. They introduce the examination questions that follow. The other two information questions are on

general matters, and are found in the end of the corpus, a way of somehow ending the interview.

(510) Are there any questions you want to ask?

(518) Do people have to see the tutor?

The academics-student relationship is defined in terms of status inequality with superiority to the academics' role; they are the ones who possess knowledge and to possess knowledge is to have power. The power and the superiority of the role of the two academics to the undergraduate are shown by the heavy command load carried by their questions. For example:

(140) Have you any comment to make upon
the conclusion?

(152) Can you remember what the officer says?

(166) Why do you praise this book so highly, not
just because of its structure?

(187) What do you mean by dramatic?

We have, though, two instances of an inversion of the relationship. The prospective undergraduate student asks two rhetorical questions, holding the instructor responsible for the difficulty or the ambiguity of the question.

(45) Well, after *Murder in the Cathedral*
he wrote a preface, didn't he?

(470) He's using the the word figuratively, isn't he?

Here, the question itself implies the student's right to hold the academics responsible in respect to the information content of the question - an inversion of the prescribed status relationship. One can also see how very cautious he is on the mode of his questioning, thinking obviously of the implications of his questioning.

Terms like "authority", "power" or "dominance" of the questioner on the respondent underlie the planning of a social interaction like the one represented in this corpus. Dominance, which is the ability to control others, is closely linked to hierarchy and status. That is why the academics are recognized to have the right to control the students through their questions. One has the impression that a high control component persists, regardless of the mode adopted. The two

academics who are in high-status roles use several modes of questioning to send messages about their authority. They open the interview with two information questions on very general matters in which the student answers with no difficulty. Then they become more specific asking detailed descriptions and criticism. This high control mode runs the greatest part of the interaction in which many times the student needs to defend himself or to admit he doesn't know. In this part, the social distance between the academics and the student is evident.

As it is known linked to "authority" is "degrees of distance" imposed by the questioner to the respondent. It is this fact which does not allow the student to ask but a very limited number of questions in interactions like the above.

The next corpus (S.2.12.) is between a female EFL teacher of 25 years and a female medical nurse of 23 years old. Out of 1144 propositions 33 questions are identified. 14 of them are information questions, 11 are indirect requests, 5 are rhetorical and 3 are examination questions.

The intimacy factor, the cooperation and the informal character of the discussion are evident; there is no status inequality as in the previous corpus, but an intimate relationship between two female friends. They discuss practically everything (personal problems, work related problems,...). Much is left unspoken in their discussion because familiarity allows each person to anticipate what the other means by allusive phrases. So, parts of their speech can be unintelligible. But the interesting thing about this corpus is when one of the speakers narrates a specific experience of her own. It's an interaction between herself, who is looking for a part-time job and an employer. However, the narration of the event itself which is a transition to another situation, is characterized by formality. In these cases, questions of indirect requests are used more readily than asking directly for information.

The conversational goal of the narrated event is to mock the situation experienced by one of the speakers. The dialogue between one of the girls and the eventual employer is vividly presented with a lot of details. Questions of indirect requests are asked from both parts, the employer's part as well as the employee's, but from a different perspective. The employer, who is in a superior status, uses mainly questions of indirect requests, as

(588) Would you like to come and meet us?

(684) Would that be possible?

(732) What about uniform?

(836) Would I start the next day?

This elaborate questioning is employed to mask his power in order to allow the employee to interact effectively. So, he masks his power and places the respondent at an advantage because he seeks her agreement to what is being asked. In all these cases, the questioner (the employer) leaves the decision for certain actions to be taken by the respondent. Although they seem to ask for information, in reality they are requests for action. The questioner wants the respondent to do something and this is asked in a formal way as it is seen in the corpus. The prospective employee, on the other hand, uses a question of indirect request to ask politely about the nature of the job:

(649) Could you tell me what the job is?

but for the same purpose she also uses an information question:

(701) What does the nursing involve?

Since she is given by the questioner the advantage to choose, she asks a question of indirect request whose function is to make suggestions to the employer, because she disagrees with his proposals:

(876) Why didn't you have a district nurse in
and get a proper domestic in?

Something that should be emphasized is the distance between indirect questions, which is due to intermediate comments of the speakers or to other types of questions which intervene. So it takes a long time for the speaker to finish the narration of her experience.

It has been maintained that the purpose of questions is to elicit information (we ask questions to get answers). However, the implicit meaning of a sentence may be quite different from that conveyed by its overt form. Thus, in asking questions with certain kinds of intentions, a person intends not only to communicate meaning but also to actively influence the hearer in some way. Here, the employer intends to secure the employee's agreement and cooperation to what he asks. The employee, on the other hand, who rejects the employer's proposals intends to make suggestions and possibly to annoy him by using questions of indirect requests.

The next corpus (S.1.1) is between two male academics of 44 and 60 years old. They are colleagues in the same institution and discuss every possible topic concerning the organization of the department (examinations, undergraduate and postgraduate students, other colleagues). The setting is very cooperative. It is neither friendly, since no personal matters are discussed, nor competitive, as one would

expect to be between colleagues. The rhetorical questions of this corpus are all questions asked with no intention of obtaining an answer. Namely, the conversational goal is to provide each other with the indicated information and to secure cooperation in future enterprises.

Out of 1210 propositions, 31 questions are identified. 17 of them are information questions, 10 are rhetorical, 3 are indirect requests and 1 is examination question. The rhetorical questions of this corpus (just as the examination questions of the first corpus) are not considered genuine questions, because the questioner in any case knows the answer. The function of these questions is to hold the attention of the listener. Sometimes the intention of the speaker is to give prominence to a particular argument, as:

(545) Was it, did you say you were going to B?

(856) Wouldn't advertising be just as good or or
testing these people with lexical sets and
semantic fields?

The above rhetorical questions are used to emphasize the particular nature of the message, the main intention being to enhance the interest and attention of the hearer. In (856) an obvious conclusion is drawn from the co-participant's previous utterances without ever having been doubted by both the speaker and hearer.

Rhetorical questions may express reproach or wonder, as:

(354) And he might say well why does he want
to come from LN. to B?

(356) What advantage does he get?

(360) And if he's not happy there, is there any
chance that he'd be any happier at B?

In (360) as well as in (856) the propositional content is presented for ratification in a negatively formulated sentence. The negation draws attention to the speaker's affirmative attitude towards the propositional content and to his expectation of ratification by the hearer.

Rhetorical questions may also express an immediate concern, in other words the questioner is personally engaged or concerned with the situation:

(998) Why should we test the two things together?

(1000) Then why introduce paraphrase?

Thus, the speaker of a rhetorical question does not expect the hearer to answer, and what is more, he would in certain situations not even want the hearer to answer for fear of not getting the answer that is in accordance with the presupposed truth of the opposite proposition of his question [(856), (354), (356), (998), (1000)]. These questions no longer demand the hearer to agree to or contradict the truth of the proposition, but are confirmation-seeking questions. The speaker intends to ascertain that the proposition is known, familiar and present to the hearer's mind.

When they function as exclamations [(545), (1000)], they also set up or ascertain a state of agreement between speaker and hearer. The surprise exhibited in exclamations is a result of the discrepancy between the speaker's expectations and the actual occurrence. This may indicate as well a change from the old to the new assumption. In exclamations, the assumptions do not concern the event or state itself (its content or truth-value) but the extent and degree of its change or modification.

As a general remark one could say that in rhetorical questions the speaker is unmistakably affirmative towards the proposition, i.e. the sentence is assertory. Semantically, the rhetorical question is "a question which functions as a forceful statement" (Quirk et al 1973, p.200). Accordingly, a speaker using a rhetorical question anticipates ratification by the hearer, and thus, also anticipates consensus between himself and the hearer.

Finally, information seeking questions, often named genuine questions since the intention of the speaker is to elicit information. The questioner does not know the answer to his question and he assumes that his interlocutor knows the answer. For this mode of questioning, no extra corpus was analysed. My observations are based on the information seeking questions of the three previous types of corpus, where in total we have 2904 propositions from which 105 are questions. 35 of them are information questions. Through this mode of questioning, information is secured and organized; questioning is about information:

S.1.1.1. (487) How much are they?

(501) How do I take them?

(503) Do I take them in a glass of water?

Requests for information also express an immediate concern (as rhetorical questions):

S.1.1. (88) But how are you going to be placed?

(1040) How do you get on with this fellow?

S.2.1.2. (496) What was the interview?

(1089) So what sort's this flat you're in
at the moment?

Seeking to extract rules for the use of information questions in the three types of corpus, it is the status which is significant. Information is most readily obtained from persons in an equivalent status (the two male academics, the two female friends). That is, people ask information questions most readily of those in a similar status. So, information questions carry the least power when they are addressed to status equals. According to the results of the corpora investigated, information is rarely obtained from persons of different status, and if it is, it is obtained only indirectly:

S.3.5. (510) – Right well, are there any questions you want
to ask us Mr Blake?
– No, I don't think so, no.

Although the prospective undergraduate student is urged by one of the academics to ask questions, he denies to do so.

Apart from hierarchy of status based on age, sex, position, there are also other factors which intervene between status and questioning for information. Firstly, necessity to secure information quickly in cases of intimacy. This factor is met in corpus S.2.1.2 (between the two female friends) which consists of two parts. In the first part, where they discuss various personal matters, most of the information questions are identified. In the second part, where one of the speakers narrates her conversation with a stranger (prospective employer), we have the use of questions of indirect requests than asking directly for information. So, the contrast between the two parts of the parts is due to different status relationships.

Secondly, cooperation in a process between colleagues met in corpus S.1.1. In this case, the two academics may not be close friends but they need cooperation, since they work together and face the same problems – parameters which justify the use of information questions (apart from rhetorical). This dimension might be described as intimacy / cooperativity at one extreme, and casual public relations / formality at the other.

4. Concluding Remarks

Questions are not only about information. Looking at different types of corpus (different from the point of view of people involved in it and the kinds of interaction), one is led to wonder about the complex nature of questions. This led me to set out the multiplicity of meanings attached to questions and to show how closely status relations are linked to meanings of questions. I thus concentrated on setting out the multiplicity of meanings attached to questioning in terms of speakers' intentions, under four main kinds of questions. In asking a question, a speaker intends not only to get information or to communicate an experience or an event, but also to impose his influence on his hearer or to undergo the hearer's influence.

Questions have a number of functions. According to the data of the specific corpora, when information is requested we have the expression of immediate concern, when giving of information is performed by rhetorical questions, we have emphasis and prominence to a particular message in order to hold the attention of the hearer.

The function of examination questions is to control the respondent's knowledge, while questions of indirect requests function as requests for action taken by the respondent.

Any of the above functional features may motivate questioning. But questions carry messages about relationships (about status, i.e. assertions of status and challenges to status). So, questioning carries a command function apart from asking for information. What is then the relationship between the messages questions carry in a given corpus and constraints on questioning. Examining the relationship between the modes of questions and the status of the speakers involved in the question act, one sees that the different modes of questioning are not equally available to everyone. Information is easily obtained by friends or by speakers of equal status, while it is rarely or indirectly obtained by a student to an academic for example. On the other hand, the social distance between an academic and a student is functional for testing or challenging purposes, although the authority of the questioner is heavily imposed on the respondent. Formality characterizes the use of questions of indirect requests and social relationships the use of rhetorical questions.

REFERENCES

- Baumert, M. (1977) Classification of English Question-Answer Structures. Journal of Pragmatics 1: 85-92.
- Bublitz, W. (1981) Conducive yes-no questions in English. Linguistics 19: 851-70
- Engdahl, E. (1985) Interpreting questions. In D.R.Dowty, L.Karttunen and A.M.Zwicky (eds), Natural language parsing. CUP.
- Fauconnier, G. (1980) Pragmatic entailment and questions. In J.R.Searle, F.Kiefer and M.Bierwisch (eds), Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics. D.Reidel Publishing Company.
- Fillmore, Ch. (1986 ms) On Grammatical Constructions. Department of Linguistics, University of California, Berkeley.
- Goody, E.N. (1978) Questions and Politeness. CUP.
- Harris, A. (1982) Towards the universals of Q-word question formation. In R.Schneider, K.Tuite, R.Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Hintikka, J. (1982) Questions with outside quantifiers. In R.Schneider, K.Tuite, R.Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Hiz, H. (1978) Questions. D.Reidel Publishing Company.
- Hudson, R.A. (1975) The meaning of questions. Language 51, 1.
- Hu11, R.D. (1975) A semantics for superficial and embedded questions in natural language. In E.L.Keenan (ed), Formal semantics of natural language. CUP.
- Huntley, M. (1982) Imperatives and infinitival embedded questions. In R.Schneider, K.Tuite, R.Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Keenan, E.L., R.D.Hu11 (1973) The logical presuppositions of questions and answers. In J.S.Petöfi, D.Franck (ed), Präsuppositionen in

Philosophie und Linguistik. Athenäum Vorlag.

- Kiefer, F. (1980) Yes-no questions as wh-questions. In J.R. Searle, F. Kiefer and M. Bierwisch (eds), Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics. D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Kiefer, F. (1981) Questions and Attitudes. In W. Klein and W. J. M. Levelt (eds), Crossing the Boundaries in Linguistics. D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Kiefer, F. (1983) Questions and Answers. D. Reidel Publishing Company.
- Kiefer, F. (1987) Two studies on Questions. In Studies in Language. 11-2, 459-68.
- Kim, A. H. (1982) A universal of wh-questions and its parametric variants. In R. Schneider, K. Tuite, R. Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Kuno, S. (1982) The focus of the question and the focus of the answer. In R. Schneider, K. Tuite, R. Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Lakoff, R. (1973) Questionable answers and answerable questions. In B. B. Kachru, R. Lees, Y. Malkiel, A. Pietrangeli and S. Saporta (eds), Issues in Linguistics. Papers in Honor of H. and R. Kahane. University of Illinois Press.
- Lyons, J. (1977) Semantics II. CUP. 745-68.
- Mathiot, M. (1982) Book review, E. N. Goody (ed) Questions and Politeness. Journal of Pragmatics 6, 1.
- Mittwoch, A. (1979) Final parentheticals with English questions - their illocutionary function and grammar. Journal of Pragmatics 3, 401-412.
- Moeschler, J. (1986) Review article. Answers to questions about questions and answers. Journal of Pragmatics 10, 227-253.
- Paduceva, E. V. (1986) Question-answer correspondence and the semantics of questions. In J. L. Mey (ed), Linguistic and literary studies in eastern Europe, vol. 19. Language and discourse. Test and protest. A Festschrift for Petr Sgall. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

- Pavlidou, Th. (1986) Shall I ask something? Questions in the subjunctive. Studies in Greek Linguistics, 233-249.
- Quirk, R. and S.Greenbaum (1973). A University Grammar of English. Longman.
- Rakic, S. (1984) Serbo-croatian yes/no questions and speech acts. Journal of Pragmatics 8, 693-713.
- Schmidt-Radefeldt, J. (1977) On so-called rhetorical questions. Journal of Pragmatics 1, 375-392.
- Schmidt-Radefeldt, J., Gunter Todt (1981) Book review. N.D.Belnap, Jr and Th.B. Steel, Jr. The logic of questions and answers. Journal of Pragmatics 5, 1.
- Scotton, C. and H.Owsley (1982) What about powerful questions. In R.Schneider, K.Tuite, R.Chametzky (eds), Papers from the Parasession on Nondeclaratives. Chicago Linguistic Society.
- Wunderlich, D. (1981) Questions about questions. In W.Klein and W.M. Levelt (eds), Crossing the Boundaries in Linguistics. D.Reidel Publishing Company.
- Yadugiri, M.A. (1986) Some pragmatic implications of the use of YES and NO in response to YES-NO questions. Journal of Pragmatics 10, 199-210.