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**VARIATION OF INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES THAT PRODUCES TRUE, NEUTRAL  
AND APPROXIMATE SENTENCES WITHOUT PRONOUNS**

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**Key words:** Variations created by interrogative sentences without pronouns; question sentence types that convey approximation; neutral questions without pronouns; questions that express certainty without pronouns; variations created through inversion.

Interrogative sentences in modern English possess the capacity to generate variability and can create numerous variants by posing questions about the members of a simple sentence.

Pronoun-free interrogative sentences are used to elicit affirmative or negative responses. In modern English, such questions are formed in two main ways: a) through auxiliary and modal verbs; b) through intonation.

Pronoun-free interrogative sentences can also be classified based on the character and structure of the expected response. Let us now consider each of these separately.

a) Types of Pronoun-Free Interrogative Sentences Based on the Character of the Expected Answer:

Pronoun-free interrogative sentences vary in features depending on the degree of knowledge the speaker has regarding the matter in question.

In Russian linguistics, A.M. Peshkovsky identified two types of such questions [17. p.56]: 1. Pure Question: Он живёт в Москве? In this type, the interlocutor cannot predict whether the answer will be affirmative or negative.

2. Question-Narrative Sentence: Ведь ты вчера был в отъезде? Here, the questioner anticipates an affirmative answer.

Peshkovsky described such questions as transitional in nature, indicating a shift from inquiry toward providing information. Subsequent researchers have expanded this classification into three types based on the nature of the expected answer [17. p.61].

Relying on Russian data, V.Y. Shevyakova, and on English data, L.R. Reyngand and O.F. Pilipchenko (who also used Ukrainian material), proposed the following:

1. The questioner cannot predict the nature of the answer in advance—these are called neutral or pure questions.
2. The questioner can approximately predict the answer—these are clarifying questions.
3. The questioner is certain about the nature of the answer—these are confirmatory questions.

A similar classification is found in the work of P. Bekimbetov, who, analyzing the Karakalpak language, also identified three types of pronoun-free interrogative sentences according to the character of the expected response [13. p.106]: 1. Pure question ; 2. Probable question ; 3. Semi-question.

Based on Azerbaijani language data, C. Akhundov also classified pronoun-free questions into three types [1. p.13]: 1. Neutral pronoun-free questions ; 2. Approximation-expressing pronoun-free questions ; 3. Certainty-expressing pronoun-free questions

In neutral pronoun-free interrogative sentences, the speaker cannot determine in advance whether the interlocutor will answer affirmatively or negatively. Since there is no evidence to prefer one of the two possible answers (“yes” or “no”), the speaker considers both equally possible. For this reason, such questions are appropriately termed neutral.

In modern English, neutral pronoun-free questions typically require yes or no responses. These questions usually begin with auxiliary or modal verbs and are pronounced with a rising intonation, for example:

Are they still as afraid of the big bass with the red hair and beard?

“Am I pretty?” she asked eagerly.

“Did she wake you up to talk her nonsense?” his mother asked.

“Did you quarrel with Uncle Gert?” “No. He quarrelled with me.”

May I go now, Mr. Isaac?

Yes, you may go, Mrs. Snyder. Good night.

Can I go off for a little while now?

Must I go tonight?

Will you have a cigarette? asked Mrs. Strickland.

As seen from the examples, pronoun-free interrogative sentences differ structurally from declarative ones in terms of word order. In such sentences, the auxiliary or modal verb precedes the subject. Most researchers consider this an instance of inversion, or a deviation from standard word order. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that inversion constitutes a variant form in forming pronoun-free questions.

O. Musayev provides an intriguing perspective on this structure. He suggests that the word order typical of English interrogative sentences is not the result of inversion but rather reflects the sentence’s inherent syntactic pattern and logical purpose [3. p.243]. Thus, the placement of auxiliaries and modals before the subject in all types of interrogative sentences should be regarded as a standard structure—not a distortion but a syntactic variant.

#### Pronoun-Free Questions Expressing Approximation

These types of questions resemble declarative sentences in structure but differ in terms of conveyed information. This structural resemblance creates a new variant.

V.Y. Shevyakova notes that while these question-declarative sentences have long been studied in classical grammars, their functional features have not been thoroughly analyzed [19. p.11]. In her work, she distinguishes between:

Are you ready? (uncertain for the speaker)

You are ready? (speaker has a partial assumption)

Such sentences are known in English linguistics as “suggestive questions,” a term introduced by E. Krusinga [11. p.41]. They can be classified into:

1. Questions expressing approximation ;
2. Questions expressing certainty

In approximation-expressing questions, the speaker has a rough assumption about the nature of the answer based on prior discussion or observation, such as: That’s one of them?

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This sentence is used in a context where three white men mock Lenin at a station:

Lanny knew the three people were looking at him but he took no notice.

“Do you see what I see?” one of the men asked.

“I am not sure. It looks like an ape in a better Sunday suit than I have. But today is not Sunday so I am not sure.”

The second man rubbed his eyes and looked intently at Lanny.

“Eurafricans? It is a big word. What does it mean?” The first man grinned.

The second man nodded and pointed at Lanny:

“And that’s one of them?”

“Yes.”

In another example, a religious figure and Mrs. Swartz discuss Lanny:

“The young women have eyes only for your son, sister Swartz.”

“He is a fine boy,” she said.

“Yes, the young woman who gets him will be lucky... They tell me he’s brought a picture of a young woman from the Cape?”

“I hear she is very pretty,” the preacher said.

“Very pretty,” the old man said.

Here, the speaker’s prior assumption forces him to use a question-declarative sentence, expecting a certain kind of answer.

Such sentences sometimes include words expressing assumption or speculation, such as surely, perhaps, of course, I suppose, hope, imagine, trust, believe, understand, etc. For example:

Fowler – Surely it is unwise for a criminal to drink with a police officer?

June – You know Harold Blade, of course?

Patient – You know all about hay-fever, I suppose?

The use of such expressions enriches the language by generating meaningful variants.

In legal contexts, question-declarative sentences are often used to elicit affirmative or negative confirmation. For example:

Dawson – Hill, you see nothing to make you believe that Palariet faked any photograph at any time?

Nightingale – Of course, I don’t.

Dawson – You still believe that Howard was guilty?

Nightingale – I believe that as I believe anything.

Another example:

Honor – Doctor Manson, you believed no financial gain in respect of this alleged cooperation with Mr. Stillman?

Manson – Not a penny.

Honor – You had no ulterior motive, no base objective in doing as you did?

Manson – No.

As seen, question-declarative sentences are widely used during investigations. Prosecutors or investigators pose questions that imply prior knowledge, rendering denial ineffective.

In conclusion a certain group of question-declarative sentences differs from neutral questions due to the underlying cause prompting the question and the assumed nature of the answer. Since the expected

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answers in such cases are often based on assumptions or estimates, these can be classified as approximation-expressing interrogative variants.

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