

Questions Usage in Interrogation

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

The discourse in the interrogation process is one of the most interesting and valuable areas of language research. What creates the discourse of an interrogation is the sequence of questions and answers among the participants in an interrogation interaction. The interrogator, including the police, the interrogator, the judge, etc., uses the Q&A strategy to control the conversation and interact with respondents, including witnesses, defendants, informants, etc. This study sought to answer the following questions: 1. How many questions can be used in the interrogation process? What is the degree of control and the pragmatic role of each question?

Among the studies on the use of language in the judicial system, it seems that the discourse of interrogation and verbal interaction in this area has not been seriously discussed, and in this respect, the present study may provide insights into the interrogation process and the participants in the interaction which has not been investigated so far.

2. Review of Literature

In this study, the authors according to Woodbury (1994) divided the questions used by the interrogator in the interrogation process into six categories: 1) broad and narrow questions, 2) wh-questions, 3) optional questions, 4) yes/no questions, 5) declarative questions, and 6) tag questions and determining and discussing the pragmatic role of each questions by relying on the objective figure in data. In the (English) grammar, the question clauses are distinct from the other types of clauses (declarative, imperative) and are divided into five types according to Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad and Finegan (1999): Wh-questions (also called polar questions), yes/no questions, alternative questions, tag questions, declarative questions. Huddleston and Polem (2002) divided the questions into two categories of open and close, based on form and their expected answer. The open category includes wh-questions and the closed category includes yes/no questions, alternative

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questions, declarative questions, and tag questions (2002). Maley and Fahey (1991) also briefly divide the speaker's purpose of the question into two categories: 1) Information-seeking questions, and 2) Confirmation-seeking questions (1991). In fact, the purpose of asking information-seeking questions is to gain as much information as possible about the subject under discussion, and with the confirmation-seeking questions seeking to confirm the arguments or assumptions in the mind of the speaker. Hefer (2005) also considers the purpose of the information-seeking questions to be in two (implicit) requests from the interrogator: a request for narration and a request for transparency (2005). Among the major studies on the types of questioning strategies can also be mentioned Woodbury (1984), which examines the types of questioning strategies used in court and finally provides a continuum of the degree of control over the types of questions. Archer (2005) also presents a new version of the Woodbury Controller continuum while examining the different features of interrogation questions.

Haqbin and Najafi (in press) also examine a variety of verbal strategies for interrogating the interpreter, including verbal strategies such as question formulation, repeated questioning, quotation marks, contrasting, the use of the phrase "khob" as a marker of discourse. Haqbin, Najafi and Jamali (2016) proved that the genre of speech in the trial space in Iran is a hybrid genre consisting of two narrative and anti-narrative genres.

3. Method

The data was gathered from 21 criminal cases at the trial/interrogation phase in three criminal branches of Shiraz Public Prosecutor's Office. The authors analyzed a total of 558 question clauses. They first divided the types of questions into six categories of broad and narrow *wh*-questions, alternative questions, yes/no, declarative and tag questions, and then presented a distribution diagram of the types of questions mentioned in the interrogation discourse.

4. Results and Discussion

The authors analyzed a total of 558 question clauses. They first divided the types of questions into six categories of broad and narrow *wh*-questions, alternative questions, yes/no, declarative and tag questions. The point to be noted is that the division of questions is based on the speaker's usual expectation of the audience's response, and the audience, or in particular the defendant, may not answer the interrogator's expected response to the question and reformulate his or her answer, that is, implicitly seeks to divert the subject of discussion. Findings of the present study indicate that declarative questions are classified as open questions, which in many studies fall under the close questions, and consequently, the level of control is lower, which means less control than the other questions. Finally, the authors

provide ad categorization of the questions used in the interrogation process in the prosecution as well as the continuation of the level of control.

5. Conclusion

The authors have examined and divided the types of interrogation forms in the interrogation process and have also taken into account the pragmatic role of the "amount of control" in the investigations. The analysis confirms that the distribution of the types of questions in the interrogation discourse differs significantly from one another in that among the six types of question forms of broad wh-questions, narrow wh-questions, alternative questions, yes/no questions, declarative questions and affirmative questions, narrow wh-questions and broad wh-questions respectively are most frequently used and are the least controlling (questions).

The reason for this can be attributed to the context and the space of the interrogation phase, where the investigator intends to gain as much information and evidence as possible for the subsequent trial. Other findings of the present study also indicate that the declarative questions that generally fall into the category of close questions in most of the studies are classified as open questions.

Keywords: Broad And Narrow Wh-Question, Alternative Question, Yes/No Question, Declarative Question, Tag Question

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