TAG QUESTIONS, TRANSFORMATIONAL GRAMMAR AND PRAGMATICS

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1. Tag questions (TQ) are used to express the speaker's attitudes, expectations and suppositions concerning the content of his utterance, the speech-situation and the hearer.[1] They are a typical and characteristic feature of the English language differing from added questions in a number of related languages. In French and German, to name but two, appended questions have been reduced to single negative or affirmative particles (or a combination of these) in the course of the history of the language, whereas the process of reduction in English has not gone that far.[2] TQ consist of a predicate, a subject (in inversion) and an optional negative particle. The choice of the predicate depends on the preceding verb: a full verb is taken up by a corresponding form of the periphrastic verb *do* ("He *likes* her, *doesn't* he?"), a helping verb, no matter if it has been deleted or not, is repeated in the TQ ("He *couldn't* see me, *could* he?", "Going, *are* you?"). The subject consists of a personal pronoun which refers anaphorically to the preceding subject.

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[1] The expression *tag question* is often used to refer to a whole utterance, i.e., to $(X+Y)$ in (It's your birthday today)$_x$—(isn't it)$_y$, whereas in this paper I will distinguish between the declarative sentence (=X) and the appended tag question (=Y).

[2] Consider the appended questions *ja, oder, nicht, was, wie, nein, nicht wahr* in German and *oui, si, non, n'est-ce pas* in French (cf. Morin (1973) for the latter). H. Wunderlich cites an interesting example of a non-reduced appended question in German:

> "Der Pfarrer würde in diesem Falle sagen: Wenn die Gottesgabe uns nicht freut, so müssen wir wenigstens sorgen, dass andre daran Freude haben. Würd' er das nicht sagen?" (1894 : 180).

The structural similarity between "Würd' er das nicht sagen?" and the corresponding TQ "..., wouldn't he (say so)?" is striking. (Cf. Bublitz (1975b : 169ff) for a more extensive treatment of the German *Zusatz-* or *Vergewisserungsfragen*. Oleksy (1977) investigates the question of tagged sentences in Polish).

The confusing variety of TQ makes it difficult to set up a transparent and systematic classification. Roughly, one can distinguish between two types of TQ, those with a preceding declarative sentence and those with a preceding imperative sentence. In this paper I am not going to say anything about the latter type ("Hand me that towel, will you?", "Put the television on, can you?").[3] TQ following declarative sentences may be distinguished according to intonation and polarity. Both help the hearer to recognize the speaker's attitudes and expectations, or — from the speaker's point of view — they are a means by which he is enabled to signal what kind of speech act he is performing. There are utterances with and without the same polarity in declarative sentence and TQ; consider (1) and (2):[4]

(1) (a) "A perhaps you could · yòu'd ¹look # at the original of ¹that for a
             :mínute #
        C I don't ¹know who's gòt it # (...) àll ¹right # yèah #
        A well nōw # this ——— is the létter # which you ·wore ásked
             about yésterday # That's your :mother's hànd writing # *isn't
             ¹it* #
        B yes it ís #
        A fair śample ¹of it #
        B yés #" (S. 11.1.61)

(1) (b) "(B) are you ¹doìng ·two or, òne ·paper this ·year #
        A only :òne #
        B yès # but that's a ¹main "¹line ¹paper # *isn't ¹it* # so probably
             :you will ¹have "¹more scrípts # than I shall
        A yès #
        (B) ¹have in :two ¹special ¹sùbjects # (S. 1.4.57)

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[3] Neither am I going to deal with lexical TQ such as *right, okay, what, understand* or the "intonational tag" (Bolinger 1957 : 18) *eh* which are used in utterances like "Let's assume that A and B are two triangles, *right*?", "So, you managed to track him at last, *eh*?" (cf. Avis (1972) for a thorough investigation of different kinds of *eh*). Also I won't consider TQ which are introduced by the conjunction *or*: "Because, after all, we are married. *Or aren't we?*" (cf. Erades 1943 : 42); "Where babies come from is a question our children can answer, *or can they?*" (Cf. Erades (1943); Kirchner (1950); Bublitz (1975a : 208ff), (1975b : 121ff) for a more extensive treatment of *alternative appended tag questions*.
Arbini's (1969) analysis of TQ appended to imperatives is dismissed by Huddleston (1970 : 216ff) who lists a number of convincing counter-arguments.

[4] The following examples are taken from the material of "The Survey of English Usage", University College London (I am grateful to Prof. R. Quirk for the permission to use it) apart from a few utterances which are my own; the number at the end of some of the examples refers to the slip in the Survey files. I have omitted all those citational features which are not relevant to this paper, the others should be self-explaining. Example (2) is taken from P. G. Wodehouse (1971 : 9).

(1) (c) "A wèll # Captain and Mrs Káy # lived in a ¹flàt # on their òwn #
        B yēs #
        A and "they didn't cóme ¹down # until ¹after ¹tèa # *did ¹they* #
        B nó #
        A some time be¹tween # ¹tea and ¹chùrch #
        B yēs #" (S. 11.1.42)

(2) "(...) the telephone rang and I went into the hall to answer it. 'Bertie?' — 'Oh, hullo. Aunt Dahlia.' (...) 'So you're up and abòut, *àre you?*' she boomed. 'I thought you'd be in bed, snoring your head off.'"

Utterances with identical polarity as in (2) refer back to verbal and non-verbal actions performed by the hearer; this is not the case in (1) with differing polarity (cf. O'Connor 1955 : 101f). In (1) and (2) all nuclear tones are simple falls. Falling intonation usually indicates a marked degree of certainty. The speaker wants the hearer to confirm the truth of the propositional content expressed in the declarative sentence and at the same time he wants to make sure that the hearer shares the speaker's knowledge, attitudes and expectations. I will have more to say about the pragmatics of TQ later on in this paper. To return to the intonation contours in (1) and (2): The simple fall indicates a very strong belief on the part of the speaker that the proposition in question is part of the knowledge he and the hearer share. In accordance with this is the fact that there is no distinct interrogative force of (1) and (2) although they are strongly conducive (or orientated).[5] Following Bolinger (1957 : 39), I believe that all utterances containing TQ are conducive due only to the presence of those TQ. Note that the change of conducive force is partly subject to intonation. In (3)

(3) (a) "A well you see ¹I was al : lăwed # only ¹rather only # "twò ¹hundred
             ¹lines of Aristòphanes # I thínk # and three ¹hundred ¹Sèneca
             wásn't it #
        B sòmething like thát # yès # I forgèt # ¹how múch # not very
             mùch cèrtainly #
        A wèll # when I fìrst did # Aristóphanes # so I thòught # well
             I'll ¹just ¹take the Clòuds #" (S. 1.4.18)

(3) (b) "You are wanted on the phone." — "It's not that man Smith agáin,
             is ìt?" — "I'm afraid it ¹is Mr Smìth".

(3) (c) "RA wéll # it's up to :these two nów # to — rescue Éngland # (...)
             here comes McKènzie # his first ball to ¹Párfitt # and Parfitt
             has ¹scored one rún # very nearly fōur # "not, fóur # he's

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[5] Cf. Bolinger (1957 : 10f; 97ff) for a detailed discussion of conduciveness; Quirk et al. (1972 : 388ff) talk about a positive and a negative orientation with regard to the speaker's expectation of a positive or negative answer to his question.

góne # for a sécond one # a véry !chēeky 'one # by # Jòve #
he was jolly nearly òut # fine throw ín # from the boundary
théro # (...) who's hè # in the dìstance #

Y　Còrling I think it is :*isn't it* #

RA　oh Còrling yès # " (S. 2.76—43)

the rise causes the hearer to interpret those utterances as near yes-no questions
with very little orientation. Nevertheless they still have to be regarded as
requests for confirmation rather than for information.

These few introductory remarks should be sufficient to outline the object
of the following investigations. My first aim is to find an answer to the question:
Has generative transformational grammar been able to provide an adequate
account for the derivation of utterances with TQ?

2.0. Within transformational grammar two main treatments of TQ have been
considered. First, TQ have been introduced by a transformational copy rule
and second, TQ have been derived from the underlying structures of yes-no
questions that is to say, their deep structure is generated in the base compo-
nent by phrase-structure rules.

2.1. Starting with the transformational approach I will first turn to Klima
(1964 : 264; 319) who proposes for a sentence like

(4) John didn't meet Bill, did he?

the following underlying structure:

(5) WH-NEG (not)-NP_1 (John)-AUX (Tense : Past)-V (meet)-NP_2 (Bill)

(5) may serve as an underlying string for yes—no questions and for utterances
containing TQ. The derivational process following the generation of (5) is
specified by Klima (1964 : 319):

"The string underlying a simple yes-no question can have its initial interrogative
marker postponed and included in a tag that carries *neg* if the source is without
neg. If the source contains *neg*, then the tag is without it."

The optional *tag question formation transformation* (T-tq) copies certain consti-
tuents of (5) after the end of that string. For negative declarative sentences
it has the following structural description and change:

(6) wh-neg-Nominal-aux1-X ⇒ 2,3,4,5,1, Pro-| 3,4
　　1　2　　3　　4　　5

The question morphem *WH*, needed as a trigger element for the question
transformation, is moved onto the end of string (5); *neg*, *NP1*, *aux*, *V* and *NP2*
are kept in this order and constitute the declarative sentence preceding *WH*,

which is followed by the copied nodes *NP1* (plus the feature [+PRO]) and
aux; V and *NP2* are not copied. The application of T-tq results in the simpli-
fied string (7):

(7) NEG (not)-NP_1 (John)-AUX (Tense : Past)-V (meet)—NP_2 (Bill) — WH-
[PRO]+NP1-AUX (Tense : Past) [6]

According to Klima's analysis a TQ is derived from its preceding declara-
tive sentence to whose underlying structure a question morpheme has been
added. Thus, a TQ is not treated as a reduced form of an independent full
sentence. But there are a number of arguments in favour of the view that
TQ are in fact reduced forms of interrogative sentences added to indepen-
dently generated declarative sentences:

(a) TQ are spoken with sentence intonation which is independent of the in-
tonation of the preceding sentence.

(b) TQ and declarative sentence may be divided by a pause which is tpyical
for sentence boundaries (cf. Armagost (1972 : 26) for a further treatment of
these two arguments).

(c) TQ and their preceding sentences have two distinct grammatical struc-
tures, interrogative and declarative.

(d) Armagost (1972 : 50) points out that the question transformation can
only operate on sentence phrase-markers. Since only the copied structure
undergoes inversion in Klima's analysis the application of T-tq would be simpli-
fied extremely if instead of a copying process a TQ would be derived from
an independent sentence structure.

In addition there are a number of further counter-arguments to Klima's
proposal:

(e) It remains unclear how T-tq is able to fulfil two functions simultaneously,
copying nodes and assigning features. Instead of T-tq introducing [+PRO]
one could think of applying the well known pronominalization transformation
which demands identity of the *NP* involved. But there is another unsolved
problem. Klima in (6) takes into consideration only structures with a nega-
tive particle in the declarative sentence. It is not entirely clear in which way
after the application of T-tq *NEG* may be introduced into the TQ in case the
declarative sentence is affirmative. The problem is twofold, first of all trans-
formations are often regarded as being meaning-preserving (at least within

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[6] The following derivational process is mainly constituted by a number of trans-
formations which I want to mention briefly in the order of their application: Pre-verbal
particle or adverb placement (*NEG* is moved behind *AUX*, cf. Klima (1964 : 265; 320));
neg-contraction (Klima 1964 : 320); WH-attraction (corresponding to the well-known
subject-aux-inversion transformation for interrogative sentences, Klima (1964 : 265; 321));
do-support (Klima 1964 : 321) and WH-deletion (Klima 1964 : 265; 321).

the Standard Theory, though not in Klima's framework) and second, the choice of the polarity of the TQ is not necessarily dependent on the polarity of the preceding sentence but has to do with pragmatic conditions of use instead. Both utterances, "It's hòt in here, ìsn't it?" and "It's hòt in here, ìs it?" are perfectly acceptable, their polarity being dependent on the speaker's attitudes and expectations and on the circumstances of the speech situation.

(f) There is a further difficulty in applying T-tq. According to Klima (1964 : 251) only some elements of the *AUX*-constituent may be copied. He rewrites *AUX* as "Tense (Modal) (have—PP) (be—PrP)". Considering "Jim has been telling you the old story again, hasn't he?" it becomes apparent that the first two elements of AUX (=PRES — HAVE+EN — BE+ING) only may be copied. It is for this reason that Klima (1964 : 264) splits the *AUX*-complex into two separate constituents, *AUX 1* ("consisting of Tense and the next helping verb if there is one, or Tense—be") and *AUX 2* ("further constituents of the AUX"). The postulation of two distinct *AUX*-constituents for the purposes of one transformation only is not acceptable as long as there is no further independent syntactic motivation.[7]

(g) As Huddleston (1970 : 216) points out Klima's analysis does not work for TQ following embedded sentences (e.g. "I think we've had enough vodka, haven't we?.")

In the light of the above mentioned shortcomings Klima's transformational approach to the derivation of TQ has to be rejected (or at least substantially modified).

Stockwell et al. (1973 : 623f) propose a transformational analysis for TQ, too, differing from Klima in a number of ways. The copied elements (subject and parts of *AUX*) are immediately dominated by an adverb constituent

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[7] Armagost (1972 : 4) says in this connection:

"... why [T-tq] (...) may be allowed to copy the subject NP, Tense and *have* (...) is a question that general theory must concern itself with. Not only do those elements not form a constituent, but part of the constituent have+en, namely *en*, is ignored in the copying operation."

Stockwell et al. (1973 : 620) mention another syntactic restriction (already dealt with in Katz/Postal (1964:88)) which is not met by Klima's analysis. Sentence adverbs, e.g. *certainly, probably,* are ungrammatical in yes—no questions but not in utterances with TQ: *"Have you probably seen him before?" vs. "You have probably seen him before, haven't you?" In my view this co-occurrence restriction underlies the supposition that both the declarative sentence and the TQ have to be dominated by independent S-nodes. Stockwell et al. claim that Klima's account cannot cope with the fact that a yes—no question and a corresponding utterance with a TQ share the same underlying structure but that only in the former a sentence adverb is ungramatical. But here again a declarative sentence plus a TQ is mixed up with a TQ alone. The presence of *probably* is sensitive to the absence of a question element. In Stockwell's et al. example the sentence adverb is placed in the declarative sentence and not in the TQ where it would be as ungrammatical as in a yes—no question.

and are co-constituents of a conjunction constituent with the feature [+WH]; furthermore there is no relation of subordination between the declarative sentence and the TQ since *ADV* and the *S*-node immediately dominating the constituents of the declarative sentence are co-constituents embedded into a higher *S*-node. After the application of T-tq the following phrase-structure tree for

(8) Nobby has married, hasn't he?

can be reconstructed (cf. Stockwell et al. 1973 : 623):

(9)
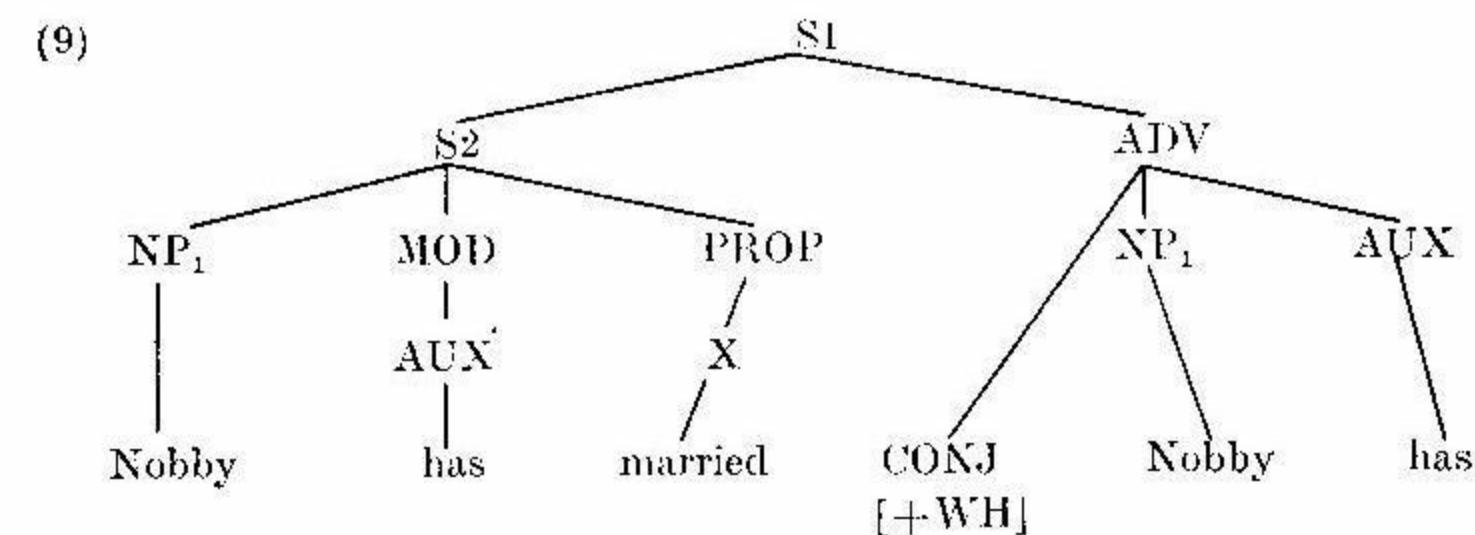
(9) is not meant to be the underlying structure of a tagged sentence and a yes—no question (the latter is represented by the authors as an alternative question). Apart from counter-arguments mentioned by Stockwell et al. (1973 : 624) themselves, most of the above points which were brought up against Klima's procedure still hold true.

Finally I would like to mention briefly a modified version of Klima's analysis which involves performative verbs. (For a couple of years now, these have been introduced into transformational models to handle syntactic phenomena which so far have only been explained in an uninteresting and ad hoc way; cf. e.g. personal pronouns and their treatment in Ross (1970).) R. Lakoff (1969b) accepting Klima's copy rule[8] inserts as a trigger element not the question morphem *WH* but the performative verb *suppose*. "Billy won, didn't he?" may thus be paraphrased by "I suppose (that) Billy won, didn't he?".[9] According to R. Lakoff utterances (10)—(11) support her theory:

(10) (a) I suppose Peter is dating Diane, isn't he?
　　 (b)* I suppose Peter is dating Diane, aren't I?

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[8] She does not specify the T-tq she mentions but from her explicit allusion to Klima (cf. R. Lakoff 1969b : 142; 146) I conclude that she adopts his T-tq.

[9] Note that Jespersen (1940:481) points out the parallel between TQ and sentences with *suppose*; he treats as equivalent "You wouldn't do it, would you?" and "I suppose you won't do that".

(11) (a)   Peter is dating Diane, isn't he?

     (b) * Peter is dating Diane, aren't I?

(12) (a)   Peter said he would meet me at six, didn't he?

     (b) * Peter said he would meet me at six, wouldn't he?

Regarding these pairs the following restriction can be stated. TQ refer back to the matrix sentence as in (12) (a) (or in case of multiple embedding to the highest sentence) unless the verb of the matrix sentence is a performative verb as in (10) (b). It is well known that performative verbs do not fall within the scope of interrogation (and negation).[10] Apart from the fact that again TQ are not derived from an independent underlying sentence structure R. Lakoff's proposal completely disregards the fact that TQ are interrogatives. The trigger verb *suppose* has no interrogative connotations and may be used to account for the declarative sentence but not for the TQ (cf. Armagost 1972 : 24).[11]

2.2. Advocating a generative approach to the derivation of TQ one can argue with Stockwell et al. (1973) and Katz (1972 : 208) that declarative sentence plus TQ can be derived from an underlying complex sentence structure which consists of a declarative sentence as main sentence and an alternative question as subordinate sentence. According to Stockwell et al. (1973 : 622) the underlying structure of (8) can be represented by (13):

(13)
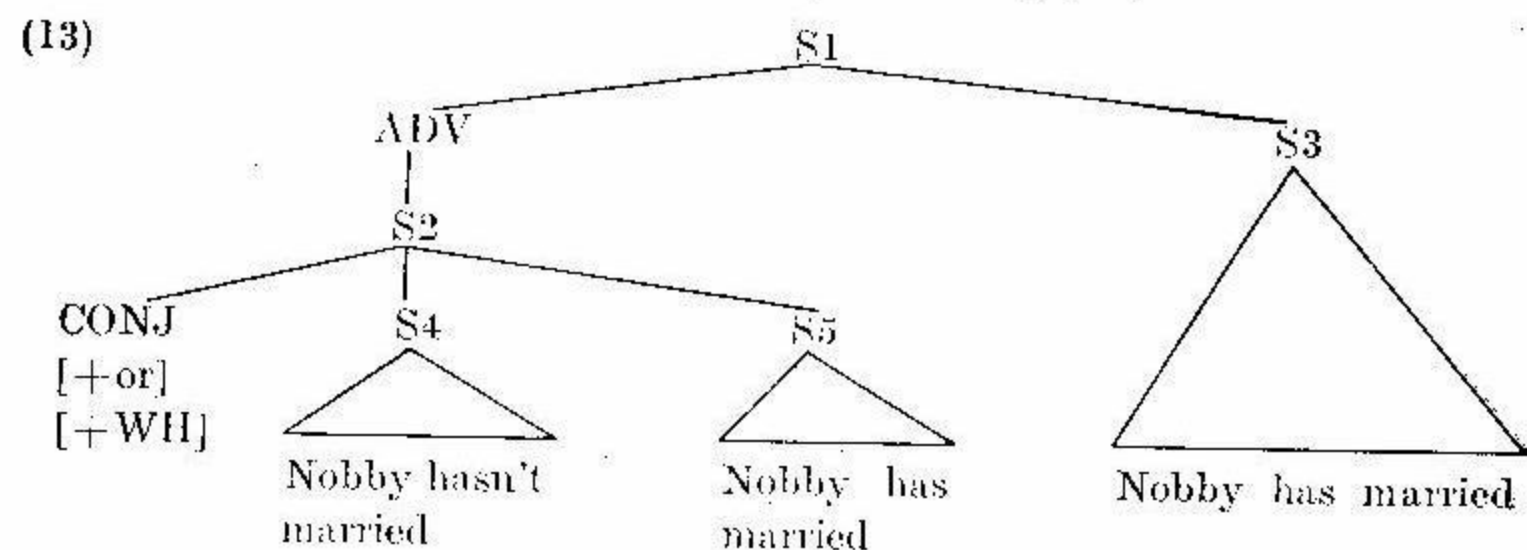
This phrase-structure tree differs from a corresponding Katzean representation (cf. Katz 1972 : 209) of simple yes-no questions only in one respect, the

[10] In this connection R. Lakoff (1969b: 140) only mentions non-factive verbs like *think, suppose, believe, guess, want* which refer to the speaker's mental state. But of course TQ may not be preceded by any other performative verb either. It is doubtful whether *suppose* may be used as a performative verb at all (cf. Armagost 1972 : 30f). One can argue that the action of supposing is not performed in saying the sentence in question but before doing so — and that *suppose* is no *verbum dicendi*. Austin (1971 : 152ff) does not regard *suppose* as a performative verb and includes it in his list of doubtful verbs instead. Note that *suppose* used in first person singular active present tense may **not** be accompanied by the particle *hereby* which normally serves as a useful test to single

question—morpheme Q has been replaced by the feature [+WH] which belongs to the feature matrix of the conjunction constituent. After the application of a number of well-known transformations[12] and T-tq the following phrase-structure marker results:

(14)
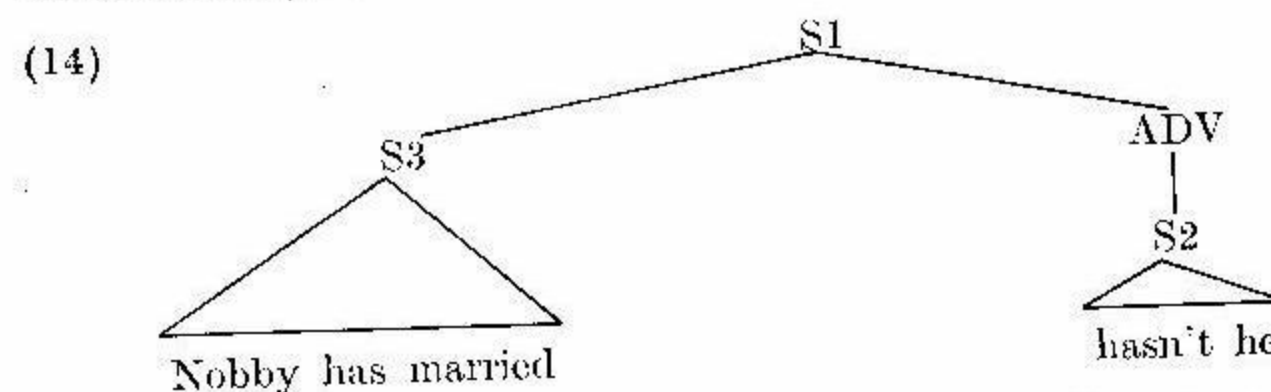
In the structural change of T-tq it is specified that *ADV* is moved onto the end of the phrase-structure and S2 is reduced to *hasn't he*. One of the difficulties which arise is the fact that subject—aux—inversion ordered before T-tq has only been applied to S2 and not to S3. Consequently S2 and S3 are no longer formally identical. This is a severe handicap as far as the structural descriptions of those transformations are concerned which are ordered after subject-aux-inversion since all deletion and substitution transformations depend on identity relations (cf. Stockwell et al. 1973 : 623).

It is widely acknowledged that yes—no questions can be derived from underlying alternative questions — or to be more precise from underlying exclusive disjunctions (cf. Katz/Postal (1964 : 95ff), Katz (1972 : 204ff), Stockwell et al. (1973 : 608). Bierwisch (1971 : 169ff) among others). But is has been pointed out that there are a number of severe difficulties which arise especially with respect to negative conducive yes—no questions which I

out performative utterances: *"I hereby suppose that Peter is dating Diane". (cf. in this connection Cattell (1973 : 621)).

[11] Armagost (1972) dealing with declarative tags ("Plushbottom bit me, he did.") (and utterances with declarative sentences plus TQ and the same polarity) introduces a copying transformation which copies a whole sentence and adjoins it (under a new higher sentence node) to the right of the generated sentence (Armagost 1972 : 1; 6). His analysis is worth mentioning because he himself points out a number of unsolved problems which render the transformational derivation of declarative tags questionable — not to speak of TQ with variable polarity. Among them are two which I have not mentioned yet: contraction and intonation assignment. Contraction of helping verb and negative particle is obligatory in negative TQ appended to negative declarative sentences, optional in negative TQ following affirmative declarative sentences. But — more complicated still — contraction has to take place not only in negative TQ but in the preceding negative sentences as well. Note the ungrammaticality of *"These are not your matches, aren't they?".

[12] In addition to transformations used for the derivation of TQ there are a few others, e.g., the alternative question reduction transformation which deletes one of the generated disjuncts.

cannot go into in this paper.[13] The derivation of TQ from exclusive disjunctions can be questioned on the same grounds since there is a strong affinity between TQ and yes-no questions which does not only concern the fact that both are conducive (e.g. they share the same set of possible answers, *yes*, *no*, *perhaps*, etc.).[14] For reasons already discussed it seems to be desirable to rank S2 and S3 as co-constituents in the hierarchy of the phrase-structure tree (14) thus avoiding the consequence that S2 is subordinately related to S3. Armagost (1972 : 8) presents an alternative solution concerning the derivation of declarative tags ("Plushbottom bit me, he did."), though, which considers coordination of the two sentence structures in the base component, proposing the following rewriting rules:

(15) $S \rightarrow (\begin{Bmatrix} and \\ or \end{Bmatrix})\ S^n$ (where $n \geqslant 2$)

$S \rightarrow$ (WH) (NEG) NP Aux VP

Leaving aside conjunction the application of the first rule can result in tree (16):

(16)
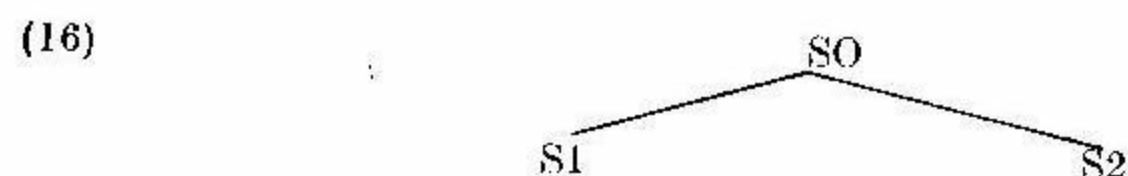
Finally, a number of transformations has to operate among them an ellipsis-transformation. Again there is the problem of missing identity of S1 and S2 since it is not possible to include a condition in the base that both sentences have to be identical. But this objection, discussed by Armagost (1972 : 9) does not strike me as severe. Non-identity would result in the filtering out of the two sentence structures by those transformations which demand identical structures in their structural descriptions; only identical tree-configurations would not be blocked according to this principle. But there is another point: Armagost's analysis has been worked out for declarative and not for interrogative tags — and the coordination of two sentences with different grammatical mood structures (declarative, interrogative, imperative) is quite uncommon.[15]

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[13] Cf. Stockwell et al. (1973 : 618); Bublitz and v. Roncador (1975 : 174f) for further discussion.

[14] Cf. Armagost (1972 : 15f) for further arguments — and R. Lakoff (1969b : 142f) who notes that certain verbs denoting mental state like *worry* cannot be used in the first person singular in the interrogative mood. This restriction concerns yes—no questions (unless used as echo-questions) and utterances with TQ alike: *"Am I worried?", *"I'm worried, aren't I?".

[15] There are exceptions, e.g., Sadock's (1970 : 228) example "Would you give me a drink and give John one, too." The problem is that with declarative sentence plus TQ we are confronted with identical structures, negation, interrogation and reduction left

There is a way out which Sadock (1971 : 229) examines assuming the coordination of the two hypersentences by which S1 and S2 are dominated (in his model). (17) has to be derived from (18):

(17) Peter wasn't dating Diane, was he?

(18)
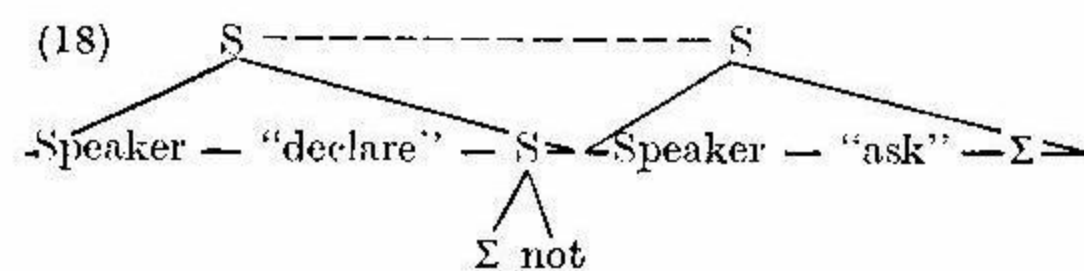
Considering that the performative analysis is better known and more widely accepted than Sadock's theory I will rather deal with the corresponding performative structure (19) (cf. for declarative sentences Ross 1970):

(19)
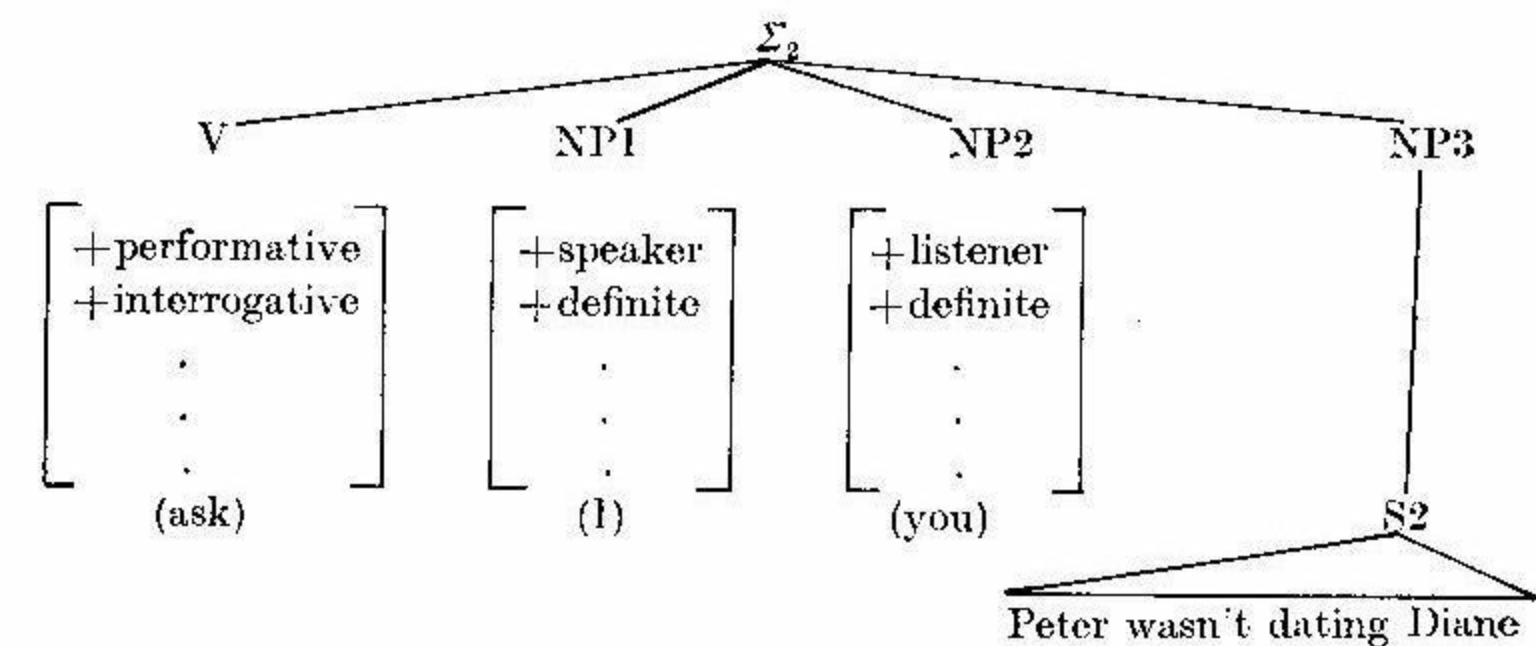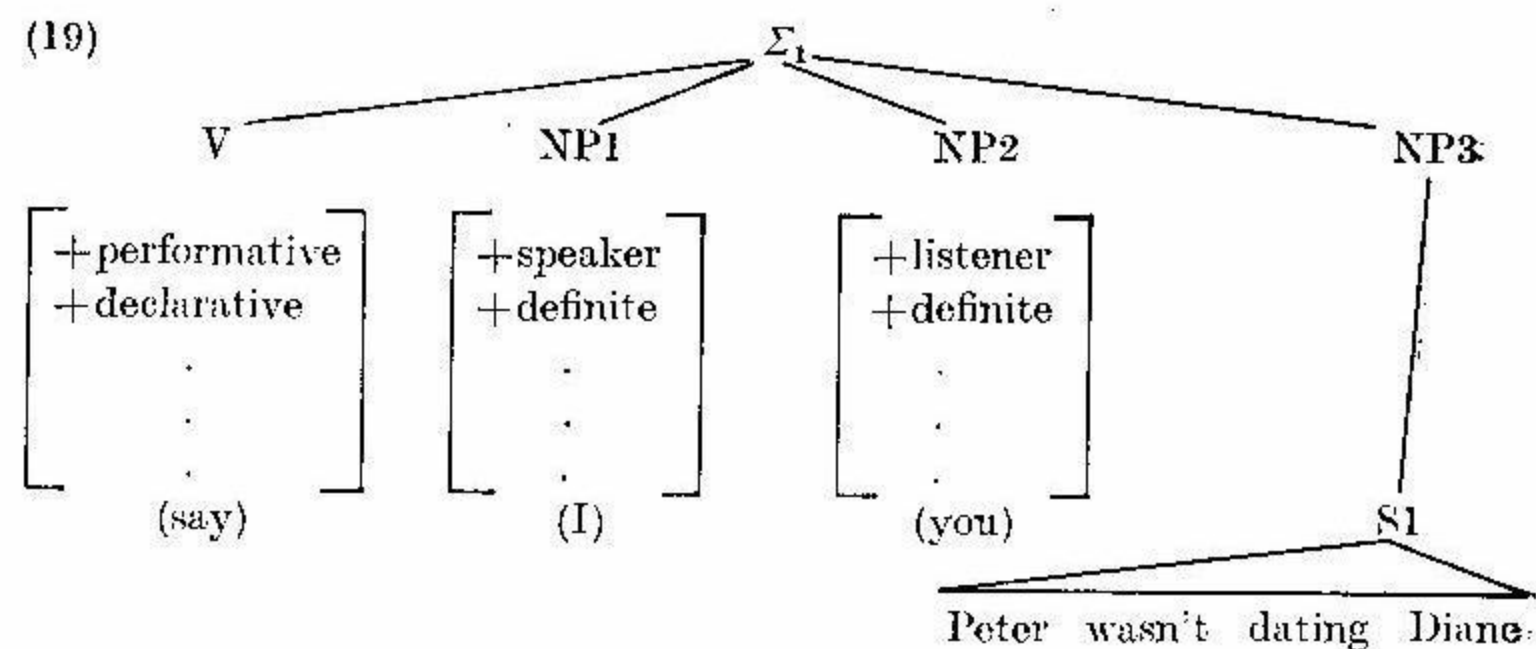
aside, which usually cannot be conjoined in one speech-act: *"Peter was dating Diane and wasn't he dating Diane?".

According to (19) TQ are derived from independent underlying sentence structures. Σ1 and Σ2 have to be conjoined to enable certain transformations to operate; coordination instead of subordination (by an embedding process) seems to be adequate. This view is supported by Huddleston (1970) who argues in favour of an underlying paratactic construction for tagged sentences deriving the TQ from an interrogative sentence. R. Lakoff (1971 : 14) considers coordination of two performative sentences; according to her coordination in general can only take place when there is a common topic shared by both conjuncts or to be more precise: "at least one set of paired constituents must be reducible to partial or complete identity" (R. Lakoff 1971 : 122). The conjunction reduction transformation is then followed by a number of transformations such as equi-NP-deletion, pronominalization, subject-aux-inversion. (The latter has to be applied before the performative deletion rule, cf. Ross (1970 : 249), unless one assumes non-segmental constituents in the highest performative sentence, in that case there is no deletion problem. It is not possible to go into details here).

The performative analysis presented here provides us with the means to cope with a number of otherwise unsolvable problems.[16] The utterance "She has probably left some time ago, hasn't she?" meets the restriction that both sentences have to be identical because — as is well known — the sentence adverb *probably* can be derived from an own underlying sentence structure thus not being a constituent of the declarative sentence into which it is eventually embedded. Of all the proposals to derive TQ by a transformational or generative process within the framework of transformational grammar the analysis that postulates coordination of two underlying independent sentence structures and explains the TQ as a reduced form of a yes—no question using performative sentences seems to have the greatest explanatory force.[17]

But still, there are numerous problems which cannot be dealt with adequately by this approach either. Among them negation (polarity) and inton-

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[16] Oleksy (1977), too, argues in favour of a performative analysis of tagged sentences.

[17] I would like to mention a proposal by G. Lakoff who suggests that "(...) tag questions are really reduced forms of real questions, which have been amalgamated onto the end of the sentence" (Lakoff 1974 : 339f). By a syntactic amalgam he means "a sentence which has within it chunks of lexical material that do not correspond to anything in the logical structure of the sentence" (1974 : 321). In the process of amalgamation certain rules embed or copy in "portions of another derivation" (1974 : 342) when certain syntactic or semantic conditions are met which — for TQ — are not specified by Lakoff. Amalgamation — as he mentions himself (Lakoff 1974 : 343) — reminds the reader of those double-based or generalized transformations typical for the early transformational grammar as specified in Chomsky's *Syntactic structures* (1957). It is a process not investigated enough to advocate its application for TQ in this paper.

ation have to be mentioned in the first place.[18] As has been shown all syntactic rules fail to predict whether e.g. the TQ is negative or affirmative, whether is has to be uttered with a fall, a rise or a level tone. But the interpretation of a declarative sentence with following TQ is dependent on intonation contours and polarity; they signal the speaker's attitudes. It is **my** opinion that TQ have to be explained within a pragmatic theory. In this respect their treatment is similar to that of such controversial problems as polarity items and the *some—any* distinction. Borkin (1971) for the former and R. Lakoff (1969a) for the latter have also argued against the adequacy of syntactic rules in this connection.[19] In the final section of this paper I therefore would like to consider a pragmatic approach to TQ.

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[18] For negation Armagost (1972 : 42ff) has demonstrated convincingly that TQ cannot be said to be always negative when the preceding sentence is positive and vice versa — even regular distribution of polarity provided. His argumentation runs as follows (slightly simplified): Sensitive to the negation in the declarative sentence you have affirmation in the TQ in "Hardly anybody likes Diane, do they?", but this does not hold for "Diane is liked by hardly anybody, isn't she?" where the declarative sentence has been passivized. From these examples you can deduce the rule: "If NEG occurs within or before the Aux when TAG FORMATION applies, then the tag is affirmative. Otherwise, the tag is negative" (1972 : 44) — which has to be revised in the light of an utterance like "Peter has no car, has he?" to: "If when TAG FORMATION applies NEG occurs within the Aux, before the Aux, or after the Aux under certain conditions, then the tag is affirmative. Otherwise the tag is negative" (1972 : 44). These "conditions" refer to lexems such as *few* (derived from *NEG+many* according to Klima (1964 : 276)) and *little* (*NEG+much* (Klima; 1964 : 276)). In addition the passive transformation has to be ordered before T-tq to account for negation. But even though, the grammaticality of the following utterances is not predicted by those rules: "Plush left not half an hour ago, didn't he?"; "No less than six people saw Plush, did they?"; "Plush was seen by no less than six people, wasn't he?"; "No more than six people saw Plush did they?"; "Plush was seen by no more than six people, was he?". These irregularities make Armagost draw the conclusion: "Tag polarity is clearly not the result of the simple process that has most often been mentioned. Even when Klima's account of NEG originating either as sentence negation or constituent negation is taken into consideration, certain irregularities remain" (1972 : 45).
Cf. Huddleston (1970 : 220f) for more arguments against the analysis adopted here.

[19] Briefly, Borkin (1971) observes that interrogative sentences with negative polarity items are only acceptable when the intonation expresses that a negative answer is expected: "Does he do a *goddamned thing* around the house?" (Borkin 1971 : 54); in *wh*-questions the choice of the polarity item depends on the expected answer which again is mirrored in the intonation: "Who drank *a drop of* your cognac?" (1971 : 56); the utterance: 'Won't you sit down?' can be interpreted in one of the following ways according to the particular presupposition: as a means "to question the truth of the sentence "You will not sit down"', as "a disguised order of an invitation", as "an expression of surprise at what appears to be the fact that someone won't sit down" and as "a request for confirmation of the sentence 'You will not sit down'" (1971 : 58). R. Lakoff, too, shows that *some* and *any* are not dependent on interrogation or negation but rather on the speaker's presuppositions, his expectations and attitudes: any rule which is only syntactically motivated cannot take this into account (cf. R. Lakoff 1969a : 612).

3. To my opinion the function which a TQ fulfils in the process of communication is twofold: The speaker seeks confirmation of the truth of his sentence and he wants agreement with his attitudes and beliefs concerning that sentence. Grice (1975 : 45) developing a pragmatic theory of language use and trying to find out what general principles there are that regulate talk exchanges, formulates a cooperative principle which all participants are expected to follow:

"Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged."

Grice (1975 : 45) then sets up a number of conversational maxims which fall under this general cooperative principle. Of special interest for the purposes of this paper is his maxim of quantity:

"1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required."

Kempson (1975 : 162) adds further specific sub-maxims:

"(i) the requirement that one answer questions appropriately, (ii) the requirement of presenting sufficient information in questions and imperatives to enable one's requests to be successfully carried out, (iii) the general requirement of not saying what is familiar."

In order to clarify the Gricean maxim of quantity Kempson (1975 : 167) chooses the expression *pragmatic universe of discourse* to characterize

"a body of facts which both speaker and hearer believe they agree on and which is therefore not in dispute: this set of propositions constitute their shared knowledge—knowledge which they believe they share."

The assumption that there is a pragmatic universe of discourse which the participants of the discourse can rely on and which is not static but subject to frequent changes in the course of conversation is a necessary prior condition for any talk exchange. The "set of propositions" which speaker and hearer believe they share must meet the following conditions Kempson (1975 : 167):

(1) S believes Pi
(2) S believes H knows Pi
(3) S believes H knows S believes Pi
(3) S believes H knows S believes H knows Pi

In the light of this new concept the maxim of quantity can now be reformulated (Kempson 1975 : 169):

Do not assert any proposition p which is a member of the Pragmatic Universe of Discourse. Now, consider example (1) (a): The uttering of "That's your mother's handwriting" in the given context would obviously constitute a breach of the maxim of quantity, namely the sub-maxim of "not saying what is familiar".

By adding a TQ the speaker signals that he knows that the content of his sentence is familiar but that he nevertheless wants to ascertain that it really is part of the pragmatic universe of discourse. The uttering of "That's your mother's handwriting." (=X) would indeed be pointless if the speaker a) believed that X, b) believed that the hearer knew that X, c) believed that the hearer knew that the speaker believed that X and finally d) believed that the hearer knew that the speaker believed that the hearer knew that X. But as soon as the speaker is of the opinion that one of these conditions is not met he can utter X and add a TQ, thus making sure that X belonged to the commonly shared knowledge. This view is supported by Kempson's (1975:170) verdict that only those propositions become part of the pragmatic universe of discourse "which are explicitly agreed by the hearer to be true".

With a TQ the speaker wants to confirm that the hearer knows a certain fact, but when using a question he presupposes that the hearer knows it — or rather, one of the sincerity conditions for the use of questions states that one should ask a question only if one assumes that the hearer knows the answer (cf. for similar sincerity conditions Gordon/Lakoff 1971). I am going to try to disentangle the different functions TQ (with reversed polarity and appended to simple declarative sentences) may fulfil in talk exchanges. I claimed that TQ such as (1) with *falling* intonation and uttered in appropriate contexts can preferably be used to make sure that a certain fact belongs to the pragmatic universe of discourse; they are not used to convey new information. In this respect they seem to be similar to analytic and other non-informative sentences which are known to be frequent in conversation (cf. Larkin /O'Malley 1973). They are typically used to introduce an argument. Although in (1) (b) B knows that A knows that "that's a main line paper" he/she nevertheless utters it because he/she needs that fact as a necessary prerequisite for the following reasoning. It is thus recalled to the hearer's mind; and although B uses a TQ he/she does not even wait for a verbal reply in (1) (b) before he/she proceeds. So, taken literally, the declarative sentences in (1) constitute a breach of the maxim of quantity since they do not convey any new information. But a hearer who assumes that the speaker has no intention to disregard the cooperative principle will — due to the presence of a TQ with a certain intonation and an affirmative or negative particle and due to the particular circumstances of the speech-situation — interpret (1) as conversationally implicating that the speaker wishes to make sure that the proposition in question is part of the pragmatic universe of discourse and that the hearer recalls it for the purposes of the following statements. [20]

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[20] The same holds for tautological statements such as "Women are women" which Grice (1975 : 52) explains in the same way. Cf. for a similar view Bublitz and v. Roncador (1975 : 144f) (with respect to the German modal particle *ja*) and Hudson (1975 : 26).

Although TQ with *rising* intonation as in (3) may be used in the same way they usually convey a certain degree of uncertainty as to the truth of the proposition; they are more strongly or less strongly conducive depending on polarity, intonation and context. It is possible to set up a hierarchy of sentences with interrogative force which includes e.g. (3) (b) with a negative declarative sentence, a positive TQ and rising intonation:

"Is it Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones?"
"Is it Mr. Smith?"
"Isn't it Mr. Smith?"
"It's not Mr. Smith, is it?"
"It's not Mr. Smith, is it?"
"It's Mr. Smith, isn't it?"
"It's Mr. Smith, isn't it?"
"It 'is Mr. Smith?"

(A wider range of variation is of course conceivable.) It seems to be safe to say — even without stating appropriate contexts — that there is a growing degree of certainty as to the truth of the proposition "It is Mr. Smith." and in accordance with that an increasing degree of conduciveness.

To my opinion making a statement and making a request for the confirmation of the truth of the statement is the primary function a speaker performs when uttering a declarative sentence and adding a (reduced) question. Depending on intonation, polarity and context these utterances typically give rise to occasion-specific conversational implicatures concerning the pragmatic universe of discourse and the status of the statement in the process of argumentation (or just conversation).

The strictly syntactic transformational or generative proposals for the derivation of utterances with TQ discussed in section 2 of this paper are unsatisfactory as long as they are situated within a theoretical framework in which it is not possible to explain their implicated meanings. Only a grammatical theory which either includes a pragmatic component or is completed by a pragmatic theory has the explanatory power to do so. As far as the literal meaning of a statement and an appended question is concerned a generative approach to the derivation of the corresponding sentences which derives a TQ from an own underlying interrogative sentence structure is acceptable as long as there is a pragmatic theory (as developed by Grice, Kempson and Gordon/Lakoff).

The claim that utterances with TQ are primarily used to convey the literal meaning, as in (3), or a derived, implicated meaning, as in (1), depending on intonation and polarity rather regularly is supported by corresponding utterances in German. Leaving aside minor details and pragmatic functions such as expressing politeness, surprise, etc. (often signs of idiosyncratic use)

one can say that *Vergewisserungsfragen* (tagged questions) may be used with respect to both functions — but that the German modal particle *ja* always gives rise to implicatures and is used in utterances corresponding to (1) rather than to (3). Thus, in German the different functions TQ fulfil are not only expressed by intonation and polarity but by lexical means as well (which have nothing to do with the truth of the utterance in question). I am convinced that pragmatic considerations help to simplify contrasting especially those linguistic phenomena of two languages which so far have not been described adequately within transformational grammar and which often have no counterparts in the target language (as is true with respect to German modal particles and English).

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