Strategies of Question-Asking in D.H. Lawrence's" Odour of Chrysanthemums": A Taxonomical Stylistic Analysis

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the significance of questions in the fictional dialogue. D.H. Lawrence wrote "Odour of Chrysanthemums" to reveal indifference and alienation in family relations, especially that between wife and husband (Nash,1982:101). A reader could not neglect the number of questions scattered here and there in the story. These operate to help progress the plot of the story. Most of the questions are short answer questions that call for a yes / no answer. And , thus involve little interaction between participants. All questions were analyzed according to Graesser, Huber, and Person's model of question asking to measure to which extent the writer succeeds in using questions as a technique to help identifying that picture.

1- Introduction :

Both critics, including Leech and Short (1981), and common readers have often agreed in finding the fictional dialogues

especially interesting and memorable. Hence, Page (1973:1) states that the fiction – reader tends to recall with particular vividness the final version of exchanges between characters. Question– asking stems its significance from fictional dialogue since it is an essential part of it. It is important to understand the mechanisms that trigger questions when someone is genuinely seeking information.

2- Graesser, Huber, and Person's Model of Question- Asking.

The scheme, abbreviated to GHP henceforth, is a three folded model. It examines the quality as well as the quantity of questions through the inspection of the types or categories of question content , question - generation mechanisms , and degree of specification.

Graesser et al (1992: 169) make a clear-cut distinction between interrogatives and inquiries in that the latter are defined conceptually rather than syntactically. An interrogative ends with a question mark (?) if it were captured in print, whereas an inquiry is an expression which is either a speech act or an utterance in which the speaker seeks information. The question in the model is an inquiry rather than an interrogative. By virtue of the inquiry the speaker requests the listener to supply relevant information about something he does not know. An inquiry comes in different syntactic forms and with different pragmatic categories of speech act.

For example all the following expressions constitute inquiries:

- *What are you doing? (interrogative , question)*
- *Tell me what stylistics is? (imperative , directive)*
- *I don't understand what this is. (declarative , assertion)*

So, inquiries are sometimes but not always interrogative expressions. Interrogatives, on the other hand, are not always inquiries. All the following expressions are interrogatives, but only the first is an inquiry.

- *Why did you stop writing? (inquiry)*
- *Why don't we go by bus? (request)*
- *Why do I always have bad luck? (gripe)*

Thus, a question may either be an inquiry, an interrogative expression, or both.

2.1 Question- Content Categories :

In the proposed scheme, question types are defined according to their meaning- content- rather than form. That is, we don't have one category for each question stem (e.g., why, how, when, etc.) because most of the above stems are polysemous lexical items. A 'how' stem, for instance, occurs in both quantification questions (e.g., *"How many countries are there in Africa?"*), and procedural questions (e.g. "*How does a person change a flat tire?*"). Such conceptual contrasts are important in the proposed scheme, while the wording of the question is unimportant (Graesser et al., 1992: 170). In addition, questions are divided into two types: long- answer question and short – answer questions. The former "***tend to impose a burden on the answerer because lengthy coherent answers are e****xpected*" (Person et al, 1994: 209). While short answer questions "***place fewer cognitive demands on the answerer because a satisfactory answer requires only a word or a short phrase*" (Ibid.).

Long answer questions sometimes imply "deep reasoning" since they estimate reasoning in "***logical, causal, or goal oriented system*"** (Haleem, 1998: 44). The answer in logical reasoning

expresses conclusions and "premises" adopted after making a choice between two ideas or statements. For example:

- *What can you conclude out of the story ?*

In causal-reasoning, on the other hand, the answer conveys events and states in causal chains, for instance:

- *What is the reason behind his denial?*

The answer in goal- oriented questions must show the goals and plans of the agent, for example:

- *Why does John go to London ?*

Thus, questions that require deep-reasoning are: antecedent, consequence, goal-orientation, instrumental/ procedural, enablement, and expectational.

Content-questions can be classified into 18 categories where the questions bear a clear relation to three speech acts, viz; questions (equivalent to interrogatives), assertions and requests or directives because they are " ***the only categories that provide genuine inquires***" (Graesser et al., 1992: 170). It is noteworthy that some of these categories are not wholly independent, i.e. monothetic, rather they are "***hybrids of two or more question categories***", i.e. polythetic (Graesser and Person, 1994: 112; Person et al., 1994: 211). For instance, each of the following questions belong to more than one category:

- *Did the wind cause a damage to the garden? (verification+ causal consequence)*
- *What are the consequences of joining the army rather than going to college? (Comparison + consequence) .*

In such examples the priority of assigning a question to only one category depends on the question- category that elicits longer-answer. Table (1) presents the (18) subcategories .

Table(1):Question–Categories in GHP Scheme

Question–Category	Abstract specification
Short - Answer	
1. Verification	Is a fact true? Did an event occur?
2. Disjunctive	Is x or y the case? Is x, y, or z the case?
3. Concept – completion	Who? What? What is the referent of a noun or argument slot?
4. Feature – specification	What qualitative attributes does entity x have?
5. Quantification	What is the value of quantitative variable? How many?
Long – Answer	
6. Definition	What does x mean?
7. Example	What is an example label or instance of the category?
8. Comparison	Is x similar to or different from y?
9. Interpretation	What concept or claim can be inferred from a static or active pattern of data?
10. Causal – antecedent	What state event causally lead to an event or state?
11. Causal – consequence	What are the consequences of an event or state?
12. Goal – orientation	What are the motives or goals behind an agent's action?
13. Instrumental / procedural	What instrument or plan allows an agent to accomplish a goal?
14. Enablement	What object or resource allows an agent to perform an action?
15. Expectational	Why did some expected event not occur?
16. Judgmental	What value does the answerer place on an idea or advice?
17. Assertion	The speaker makes a statement indicating that he lacks knowledge or does not understand an idea.
18. Request – Directive	The speaker wants the listener to perform an action?

Coming to the next component of the scheme, the following section identifies the question – generation mechanisms.

2.2 Question-Generation Mechanisms

The GHP scheme of question asking identifies four major mechanisms that generate questions in naturalistic conversation. These mechanisms are orthogonal to the content-category scheme, that is, a question could be motivated by any of the four major question-generation mechanisms (Graesser and Person, 1994: 112).

The four major mechanisms are:
1. **Correction of knowledge deficits**
2. **Monitoring common ground.**
3. **Social coordination of action.**
4. **Control of conversation and attention**.

2.2.1 Correction of knowledge-deficits

This mechanism comes into action when the speaker realizes that his knowledge base about a certain topic is either incomplete or in error. So, he generates a question in order to fill in the gap or to correct the knowledge deficit. The question is addressed to a person who is believed to be more fully and adequately informed.

Alternatively, the answerer may be a computerized information system, or, sometimes, the questioner is also the answerer, in that after asking the question, the questioner observes the environment or executes cognitive strategies in search of an answer (Graesser et al., 1992: 175-77; Graesser and Person, 1994: 112-13; Person et al., 1994: 212 and Graesser et al., 1996 :21). This mechanism works when there is:

1- An obstacle in planning or problem solving.

An individual may face an obstacle during planning or problem solving. So he asks a question to get information to circumvent the obstacle. For example, when someone gets lost a question may be asked to ask for direction:

- *Would you please tell me where the cultural center is?*

2- Deciding among alternatives that are equally attractive.

This subtype works when an individual has a set of options to decide which one to choose. All the options are equally attractive so additional information is needed to break the tie. Thus, the individual asks a question to obtain the new information. For example, when an individual enters a shop and cannot decide which suit to buy, he may ask about the origin or price of each one.

3- Gap in knowledge that is needed for comprehension.

While attempting to comprehend a written message, an event in the world, or a conversation, an individual may discover a critical gap in his knowledge. So, he asks a question to fill in the gap. For instance, when a speaker uses a rare word in a conversation, the listener asks the speaker about the meaning of the word.

4- Glitch in an explanation of an event.

This subtype activates when an individual has trouble in explaining an event in the context or situation under consideration. Thus, the person asks a question in search for an explanation. For example, when someone meets a person who is so exited, the former asks the latter why he is in frenzy.

5- Contradiction

When an individual identifies a contradiction in the information he is exposed to, he asks a question in an effort to resolve the contradiction. This mechanism often occurs in arguments and debates.

2.2.2 Monitoring common ground

Successful conversation requires that all participants share common-ground knowledge (Graesser et al., 1992: 177-179; and Graesser and Person, 1994: 113-114). Common-ground means the information that the speech participants deal with in the ongoing interaction or the previous one. Almost all the members of a speech culture have in common such knowledge that reflects the roles in a society, profession, and interest. Common-ground questions are asked for:

1- Estimating or establishing common-ground.

The speaker asks a question to estimate the amount of knowledge the answerer has about a topic, e.g.,

- *Have you seen the play of <u>king Lear</u> ?*

Sometimes, the questioner needs to verify whether his knowledge of a certain topic is in close synchrony with the answerers, e.g.

- *Is there anything that I need to know about the topic?*

2- Confirmation of a belief

The individual asks a question to confirm that the answerer's belief about something is the same as his, e.g.

- *Is that Mr. Brown ?*

Sometimes, the person does a certain action and then asks the other whether the action is correct, sloppy, or incorrect.

3- Accumulating additional knowledge about a topic

The questioner in such situations asks many questions about a topic in order to get more information and expand his knowledge about that topic, e.g.

- *Is it an up to date novel ? ...Is it written by a man or a woman ? ... etc.*

4- Comprehension gauging

The questioner, here, wants to know whether the listener is comprehending some information or line of reasoning. The frequently used comprehension-gauging question is   "*do you understand it?*". The questioner may sometimes know less than the answerer. Thus, the questioner may ask whether he is understanding the material, i.e.

- *Am I understanding this ?*

5- Questioner's assessment of answerer's knowledge.

In this case, the questioner knows more about a topic than the answerer. The questioner asks the respondent whether he knows something about a particular topic. There is a sensitive difference between this mechanism and that of comprehension gauging in that the former calls for lengthy answers while the latter includes verification questions, i.e. questions that require a yes or no answer. The questions initiated by this mechanism are called "open-ended" questions (Graesser et al., 1992: 179-80).

6- Questioner's attempt to have answerer generate a particular inference.

Once more, the questioner is more knowledgeable than the answerer. He wants the answerer to arrive at a particular conclusion by inference, so he asks one or more leading questions.

2.2.3 Social coordination of action

Graesser et al. (1992: 180- 181; Graesser and Person, 1994: 114; and Person et al., 1994: 213) agree that this mechanism initiates questions to coordinate actions performed by speech participants. In this section, the question-generation mechanism is organized around actions that are significant in a social context.

1- Indirect request

The questioner, here, wants the answerer to do something for either the questioner, the answerer, or a third party. The questioner often uses an indirect request in the form of question because it sounds more polite than a command. Commands are rude and presumptuous, especially when there is a large difference in rank between questioner and answerer, e.g.,

- *Could you tell me the way to the youth center ?*

2- Indirect advice

The speaker indirectly advices the listener to perform a particular action, e.g.

- *Don't you think it is better to write down a letter to your brother ?*

3- Asking permission

The questioner seeks permission from the answerer to do a certain thing, e.g.,

- *Can I use your pen ?*

4- Offer

The questioner wants to do something for the answerer, so he asks a question to know whether this is acceptable or not, e.g.,

- *Would you like me to help you lifting these boxes*

5- Negotiation

Questions are often generated in negotiation where the questioner is ready to do something if the other person does another, e.g.

- *Would you study hard if I teach you ?*

Alternatively, Person A will do something for Person B if A gets to do something for A, e.g.

- *If I help you lifting these boxes, can I go to the party ?*

2.2.4 Control of conversation and attention

This mechanism generates questions to monitor the flow of conversation among speech participants and maintain the participant's attention or change speaker. There is an element of conversational control whenever a question is asked because the answerer is obliged to reply and it is also a way of shifting attention into the answerer. The mechanism includes:

1- Greeting

A speaker may initiate a conversation by a gesture. These greetings are sometimes expressed as questions, e.g.

- *How do you do ?*

2- Reply to summons

When a speaker summons another, the second may answer with a question. This often occurs when two individuals first address each other, e.g.,

- *Person A: Hey Alice.*
- *Person B: Yeah?*

3- Change speaker

A conversation would sound boring if one participant controls the floor and not gives the chance for others to contribute. Therefore, an individual may ask a question to change the attention into another speaker, e.g.,

- *John: bla bla bla bla….*
- *Tom: Excuse me John. Peter, did you join the club last week ?*
- *Peter: yes, I did. Bla bla bla bla ….*

4- Focus on agent's actions

In order to maintain the conversational spotlight, a person asks a question of the following type, e.g.

- *Person A: Do you know what I am writing ?*
- *Person B: No, what ?*
- *Person A: I am writing bla bla bla bla…*

5- Rhetorical questions

In this type of questions, the speaker does not expect or desire an answer from his speech participants. A question of this type is generated to transmit a particular idea to the listener.

- *Do you imagine her accepting your friendship if you do such things ?*

6- Gripe

Gripes are sometimes formulated as questions. As in the case of rhetorical questions, an answer is not expected, e.g.

- *Why does this always happen to me ?*

2.3 Degree of specification

Questions differ in the degree to which they specify the linguistic items (words and phrases) in the question which distinguish the information requested. Questions could be of a high, medium, or

low degree of specification (Graesser et al., 1992: 169). Questions with high specification consist of words and phrases referring to the elements of the desired information and relevant presupposed information

Questions with low specification have few words and phrases. So they need the answerer to depend on the dialogue context and world knowledge to identify the meaning of the question (Graesser and Person, 1994: 115). Common ground knowledge is crucial here because when the speech participants have a rich common ground they can tolerate a low degree of specification. But when there is a minimum common ground there should be a higher degree of specification to prevent misinterpretation of questions.

3- Question –Asking in "Odour of Chrysanthemums"

This study is an investigation of the questions present in "Odour of Chrysanthemums"*. The questions are analyzed according to a three folded model that examines question-content categories, question-generation mechanisms and degree of specification. Each of these folds will be tackled respectively.

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*D.H. Lawrence wrote his short story "Odour of Chrysanthemums" to reveal the real psychological relationship between the wife and husband in their married life. (Nash, 1982: 101). The main character is Elizabeth or Mrs. Bates. The minor characters are Mrs. Bates' daughter and son, the grandfather or Mrs. Bates' father, the grandmother, or Mr. Bates' mother and neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Rigley . Mr.Bates was absent , he was only mentioned by his wife , relations , and neighbours .

3.1- Analysis of Questions

After collecting the questions included in "Odour of Chrysanthemums", an analysis is made of each question according to the model under discussion. The following is a discussion of the results of each fold in the model.

3-1-1 Question-Content Categories

After classifying the questions, we come up with the following numbers: there are thirty one short answer questions, whereas long answer questions are twenty five only.

Verification questions constitute twenty of the thirty one short answer questions. These questions are normally answered by 'yes' or 'no' alone or sometimes followed by a completion. Some of the verification questions are followed by another type of questions by the questioner himself. And at other times the addressee leaves the question without answer.

"Odour of Chrysanthemums" includes ten concept-completion questions. These questions ask for time, place, or the identity of a certain character. And there is only one disjunctive question. So short answer questions constitute 55.4 percent of questions in this short story.

As for Long-answer questions, the majority were judgmental questions. Six of the nine judgmental questions were asked by Mrs. Bates to judge on her relation with her husband. These were asked when she knew about her husband's injury then death. She thought deeply of the way she behaved with him. The other three judgmental questions were asked by the grandfather to ask Mrs. Bates, his daughter, about her opinion on his marriage. He asked his questions with 'dangerous coldness' so that Mrs. Bates did not reply though this type of questions calls for a long answer. This technique adds to the

tension of the story since the daughter feels uneasy to express herself. She already knows that her disapproval won't change her father's decision.

In addition to the nine judgmental questions, there are eight goal-oriented questions. Five of these were asked by the mother to inquire about the behaviours of her children and especially when her daughter asked about the noise happening downstairs. And three goal-oriented questions were about the mother and these inquire about the motives and goals behind her actions.

There are four interpretation questions. Two of these were raised when Elizabeth asked the grandmother of the children about the matter why she is crying. Another question was asked by the daughter when she inquired about the flowers in her mother's apron. The other question was by the girl asking about the noise downstairs.

Two of the long-answer questions were requests, one asked by the father directing Elizabeth to bring him a cup of tea, and the other is by Elizabeth's daughter to suggest drinking tea. There is only one causal-antecedent question which was asked by Elizabeth to inquire how her husband was dead.

Long-answer questions form 44.6 percent of the total number of questions.

Table (2) The Question-Categories of the questions asked in
"Odour of Chrysanthemums"

No.	Questin-Categoreis	Total	Perce.
	Short-answer questions		
1	Verification (calling for yes/no answer)	20	35.7
2	Disjunctive (A or B ?)	1	1.8
3	Concept-completion (who ? what ?....)	10	17.9
4	Feature-specification	0	0
5	Quantification (How many ?)	0	0
	Total	**31**	**55.4**
	Long-answer questions		
6	Definition	0	0
7	Comparison	0	0
8	Example	0	0
9	Interpretation	5	8.9
10	Judgmental	9	16.1
11	Causal-antecedent	1	1.9
12	Causal-consequence	0	0
13	Goal-orientation	8	14.3
14	Enablement	0	0
15	Instrumental/ procedural	0	0
16	Expectational	0	0
17	Assertion	0	0
18	Request/ Directive	2	3.6
	Total	**25**	**44.6**

2.1.2 Question-Generation Mechanisms

The collected questions were analyzed according to their question-generation mechanisms. The following table illustrates the number and percentage of questions in each mechanism.

Table (3) The Question-generation mechanisms of the questions asked in "Odour of Chrysanthemums"

No.	The Question-Generation Mechanism	Total	Percentage
1	Correction of knowledge deficits	17	30.4
2	Monitoring common ground	20	35.7
3	Social coordination of action	2	3.6
4	Control of conversation and attention	17	30.4

The following is an investigation of each mechanism:

1. Correction of knowledge deficits

Seventeen questions were asked in both correction of knowledge deficits and control of conversation and attention. Nine of these questions were asked by Mrs. Bates: three addressed to the grandmother when she came crying, two addressed to the boy and the grandfather, and one to each the daughter and the man bringing the news of Elizabeth's husband's death. Four questions were asked by Mrs. Bates daughter, and all were addressed to her mother. These questions were asked when the men brought the dead man, i.e. Mr. Bates, to his house. The questions were around the noise downstairs and one about the time. The grandmother asked two questions to the man bringing the news of her son's death. She didn't understand the words he pronounced on the way her son was "smothered". She also

asked one question to Mrs. Bates about the period Mr. Bates was away. And one question was asked by the manager inquiring about the place where to put the corpse.

Eleven questions were of gap in knowledge that is needed for comprehension. Eight of these were answered whereas three were not, two of the latter were asked by Mrs. Bates and one by the grandmother. The unanswered questions of Mrs. Bates were around the reason why the grandmother was weeping. Whereas that of the grandmother was on the period her son was away from his house.

Obstacle in planning and problem solving and glitch in an explanation of an event receive three questions for each. The first subtype has two questions by Mrs. Bates who asked about the place where her son was hiding and were answered by the boy showing himself before the raspberry-canes. The other answered question was asked by the manager to inquire about the place where to put the corpse of Mr. Bates.

The other subtype, i.e. glitch in an explanation of an event, receives three questions. The answered questions were asked one by Mrs. Bates and the other by the daughter. Mrs. Bates was surprised at her daughter's words when she tried to tell her of the flowers in her, i.e. Mrs. Bates's , apron. The other answered question, on the other hand, was asked to reflect the daughter's surprise at the noise happening downstairs. Whereas the unanswered question was asked by Mrs. Bates who was surprised at the grandmother's moaning.

2. Monitoring common ground

This mechanism receives the most number of questions. Nineteen of the twenty questions are of the confirmation of a belief subtype that calls for a yes/ no answer. The other question estimates

common ground, this was asked by Mrs. Bastes when she asked her daughter if she knew anything about her father's absence .

Six of the confirmations of a belief subtype were asked by Mrs. Bates. Four of these questions were around her husband and two concerned the type of relation between them. Five questions were asked by the daughter and four of them were about her father. In addition, the neighbours of Mrs. Bates asked six questions in the story, four of them were asked by Mrs. Rigley and two by her husband. All of these six questions call for a yes/ no answer. The grandmother asked only one question in concern with this mechanism.

3. Control of conversation and attention

The control of conversation and attention mechanism generates seventeen questions in the story under discussion. Eleven of these are of the focus on agent's actions subtype. These concentrate on the addressee, on his motives, ideas, goals,…etc. Nine of these were asked by Mrs. Bates: six addressed to her daughter and three to herself. Four of the questions addressed to the daughter were around her behaviours; why she shouted and bothered herself about the noise downstairs. The other two questions inquire why she didn't like to look in the fire. The three questions Mrs. Bates addressed to herself reflect her confused thoughts on herself and on her relation with her husband. She asked herself why she behaved the way she did with her husband. The other two questions were asked one by the grandfather and the other by the daughter, and both were addressed to Mrs. Bates. The first asked about Elizabeth's thoughts on her father's marriage, and the latter seeks the motives why Mrs. Bates was asking her daughter whether she saw her father or not.

The mechanism under discussion generates six rhetorical questions. These questions do not need an answer because they convey a message by themselves. Mrs. Bates asked four questions of this subtype. The first question reflects Mrs. Bates resentment and vexation at her husband's carelessness. So the question was said with a tone of anger, resentment, self-pity, and anguish, while the family awaits the return of the miner. (Jalal, 1975: 43). Then, the other rhetorical questions were asked after the miner's death. She asked herself "*who am I ?*" "*what was that I have been living with*" and "*what had he suffered ?*". At the critical moment of the news of Mr. Bates death, the reader is taken directly into Elizabeth's mind through the free indirect speech. While Mrs. Bates and the grandmother were preparing the dead body, she realized her husband's remoteness in death as the final statement of what he has always been to her (Ibid.). She thought of her husband with grief and pity, so she asked herself some questions to think back of their relation. She realized how far they were from each other. She knew at that moment that she had never understood him or how he thought. They met in dark and departed in dark.

The other two rhetorical questions were asked by Mrs. Bates' father. In the dialogue with his daughter, he spoke of his marriage and asked her opinion on the subject. She seemed unhappy with the news. So he said "*what's a man to do ? ... What does it matter to anybody ?*". He does not wait an answer for these questions but, rather, he conveyed a message by telling that it is not the concern of anybody whether he wants to marry or not. The matter is up to him.

4. Social coordination of action

This mechanism receives the least number of questions . There are only two questions. The first was asked by the grandfather to ask

his daughter to make him a cup of tea. The other question was asked by Mrs. Bates's daughter to suggest drinking tea. This adds to the tension of the story since there is little interaction between participants; everyone lives in his own world.

2.1.3 Degree of specification

The collected questions were analyzed according to their degree of specification. The following table shows the total number and percentage of questions according to their degree of specification.

Table (4) the degree of specification of the questions in "Odour of chrysanthemums"

No	Degree of specification	Total	Percentage
1	High degree of specification	13	23.2
2	Medium degree of specification	7	12.5
3	Low degree of specification	36	64.3

It is obvious that most of the questions are of a low degree of specification. Most of these questions include pronouns instead of proper names. For example, '*where are you?*', '*Is he drunk?*', '*Did you want him ?*, ...etc.* This doesn't affect the meaning of the sentences because the reference of the pronoun is already mentioned in the passage. Other questions seem mysterious because they miss certain information to be understood. For instance, '*Oh, have you heard then*' , '*how long is it, six months-or is it five, Lizzie?*', '*How was it*'...,*etc.* And some other questions consist of one or two words only. For example, '*when?*' '*Why ?*', '*Do you ?*' …etc .The story is well-connected in its parts, so these questions are understood in the

context of the situation. The participants can tolerate the low degree of specification because they share common ground knowledge.

High degree of specification comes next according to the number of questions. Questions of this type use proper names and 1st or 2nd person pronouns, i.e. ' I ' or ' we ' and ' you ' respectively. Place, time, and the information needed are also specified. For instance, '*Is it Mrs. Bates ?*', '*Are ter comin, Walt ? 'Let's have our teas, mother, should we ?*'. Mrs. Bates asked herself some questions of this type at the critical time of knowing her husband's death. For instance, '*who am I ?*', '*what have I been doing?*', '*what wrong have I done ?*'.

Medium degree of specification receives the least number of questions. These questions specify certain elements and leave others unspecified. Sometimes there is a specification of place, time or thought but, still, pronouns are present. For example '*Are you at that brooke ?*', ' *Has he come up an gone past, to Old Brinsley ?*'... *etc*. Or proper names are mentioned but still the utterance is of a medium degree of specification. For instance, '*Mr. Rigley ?*' means , according to its situation , '*do you want Mr. Rigley ?*'.

Conclusions

The ultimate conclusions that can be drawn from the findings of the study are the following:

1- The story is about indifference in family relations, especially that between wife and husband. The wife is not quite satisfied with her married life that's why she asks herself many questions about her husband and the way they deal with each other .

2- It is not a story of action and Table No.2 gives a very clear evidence on this since the least number of questions are those coordinating actions between participants. They are only two out of fifty six questions. This reinforces the idea of indifference.

3-   Nearly half of the questions are verification questions that call for a yes/no answer. This reinforces the first statement since such questions call for a little interaction between people. On the other hand, such questions imply a heavy burden on the addressee and then help increase the tension of the story. The addressee has one choice only, i.e. either to say yes or no.

4-   More than half of the questions are of a low degree of specification. Such questions do not make any problem in the understanding of the story since the passage is treated as a whole and one part completes the other.

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