

KEY WORD: SENTENCE STRUCTURE/ INTONATION/ YES-NO QUESTION/ SPEECH ACT/ FRENCH  
ORATHAI TADARATANAKUL : A STUDY OF SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND INTONATION  
OF THE YES-NO QUESTION SPEECH ACT IN FRENCH. THESIS ADVISOR : ASST. PROF.  
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This is a study of the sentence structures and the intonation patterns of the Yes-No Question Speech Act in French. The data are from two motion pictures: "Pleure pas la bouche pleine" in 1973 and "Dossier 51" in 1979. Three semantic criteria: (1) the presupposed belief of the speakers (2) given or new information and (3) the attitude of the speakers that the proposition is true or not true are used to analyze all the question forms in the corpus. The relationship between the sentence structures, the intonation patterns in French Y-N Questions and the semantic criteria aforementioned are studied.

The result of the analyses can be summed up as follows.

1. The most common type of Y-N Question found in conversational French is the proposition with rising intonation [P+?+In(R)]. The proposition is marked with a question marker in the written form.

2. Y-N Questions which do not show the speakers' attitude towards the belief of the proposition are represented mostly by propositions with question markers and propositions with the word order inversion and question markers. The speakers use these types of Y-N Question to express their real need for answers.

These two types of Y-N Question are also used to express the speakers' politeness. They help to show that the speakers want to give opportunities to the hearer to freely show his opinion.

Rising intonation appears mostly in both question forms.

3. Y-N Question with Question parts [(QP)+P+(QP)+(C)] is used mostly to express the speakers' presupposed belief. They reveal the speakers' conflict towards the proposition.

The convolution intonation is used mostly with this question form.

4. The propositions in Y-N Questions with proposition and word order inversion followed by question markers [P+WI+?] are all new information. It can be concluded that this question form is a Real Question.