

**INTERROGATIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN FRENCH: SYNTAX, VARIANTS AND  
SPEECH USES**

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**Abstract**

This scientific article is devoted to the study of the syntactic system of the formation of interrogative sentences in the French language, their stylistic variants and the features of their use in various speech situations. The study analyzes the general classification of interrogative sentences in the French language, the role of inversion, interrogative phrases (est-ce que, n'est-ce pas), interrogative words and intonation in their formation. It also examines the stylistic features of interrogative constructions in oral and written speech, as well as the differences in their use in formal and informal situations. The results of the study reveal the complexity and flexibility of the syntactic structure of interrogative sentences in the French language, which reflects the language's ability to fully and accurately implement politeness.

**Keywords**

French language, interrogative construction, syntax, inversion, est-ce que, intonation, interrogative words, level of formality, oral speech, written speech.

**Introduction.** Interrogative sentences occupy an important place in the politeness system of any language, as they are one of the main means of obtaining information, managing communication and establishing interaction. The French language, with its clear grammatical rules and rich stylistic possibilities, has a number of unique tools for creating interrogative forms. These tools include inversion, interrogative phrases (for example, est-ce que), interrogative words and intonation, each of which corresponds to certain syntactic, semantic and pragmatic conditions.

Studying interrogative constructions in French is important not only for understanding the internal grammatical laws of the language, but also for understanding the cultural and social practices of French speakers. The use of interrogative forms can vary depending on the speech situation, the relationship between the interlocutors and the nuances of the intended meaning. The purpose of this article is to systematically analyze the syntactic structure, formation options, and use of interrogative sentences in French in various speech contexts. The study seeks to answer the following main questions: what syntactic means can be used to form interrogative sentences in French? What stylistic and pragmatic factors determine the use of these means? How does the use of interrogative constructions differ in oral and written speech?

**Literature analysis and methodology.** The theoretical basis of the study is the work in the field of functional grammar, syntax theory and pragmalinguistics. The article uses descriptive-analytical and contrastive methods. As the object of the study, oral and written speech samples of the modern literary norm of the French language (literary works, press publications, film dialogues, etc.) were selected. Using examples from these sources, syntactic models of interrogative sentences, their frequency of use and stylistic features were studied.

The methodological approach was based on the analysis of language units in terms of their structural structure, function and practical application. In the course of the study, interrogative sentences in the French language were divided into the following groups according to their method of formation:

Interrogative sentences formed using the phrase Est-ce que.

Interrogative sentences formed using interrogative words.

The syntactic features of each group are examined in detail, and their use in different speech situations (formal/informal, oral/written) is analyzed. In addition, cultural and pragmatic factors that influence interrogative sentences in French (e.g., the social status of the interlocutors, the level of formality of the communicative situation) are also taken into account.

**Discussion and results.** The results of the study show that the formation of interrogative sentences in French is carried out on the basis of several syntactic means, each of which has certain functional and stylistic characteristics.

The main feature of an interrogative sentence in French is its syntactic structure. There are the following main methods of forming an interrogative sentence:

**Interrogative sentences formed on the basis of intonation:** This is the simplest method, which is carried out by raising the tone at the end of the sentence. Syntactically, these sentences are identical to affirmative sentences, differing only in intonation. For example: Tu viens? (Are you coming?). This method is mainly used in informal oral speech.

**Interrogative sentences formed using the phrase Est-ce que:** In this method, the interrogative sentence begins with the phrase est-ce que, followed by the structure of the affirmative sentence. For example: Est-ce que tu viens? (Are you coming?). This method is quite common and is used in various styles of oral and written speech. The phrase Est-ce que serves to express the question more precisely.

**Interrogative sentences formed by inversion:** In this method, the verb and its subject (personal pronoun) are replaced. For example: Viens-tu? (Are you coming?). The inversion method is often used in formal written speech and literary language. However, in some cases (for example, in the third person in the form a-t-il?), this method may be less used in modern oral speech.

**Interrogative sentences formed using interrogative words:** In interrogative sentences formed using interrogative words (qui, que, quand, où, comment, pourquoi, combien, etc.), these words are placed at the beginning of the sentence, and then one of the above methods is used. For example: Où vas-tu? (Where are you going?), Quand est-ce qu'il arrive? (When will he arrive?), Comment ça va? (How are things?).

The use of interrogative constructions can vary significantly depending on the speech situation. The table below lists the main features of the methods of forming interrogatives and their areas of application:

Question formation method	Syntactic feature	Level of formality	of	Scope (type of speech)	Note
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Question formation method	Syntactic feature	Level of formality	of Scope (type of speech)	Note
<b>Intonation</b>	Affirmative sentence structure + rising tone	Informal	Oral speech	Often used for short questions.
<b>Est-ce que</b>	<i>Est-ce que</i> + affirmation	Moderately formal	Oral and written speech (intermediate level)	The most common and universal method.
<b>Intersection (Inversion)</b>	Verb + throw (or <i>t-il/t-elle</i> suffix)	Formal	Written speech, formal speech, literary language	Traditional and grammatically complete method.
<b>Interrogative word+ <i>est-ce que</i></b>	Interrogative word + <i>est-ce que</i> + affirmation	Moderately formal	Oral and written speech (intermediate level)	Provides clarity and comprehensibility.
<b>Interrogative word + inversion</b>	Interrogative word + verb + throw	Formal	Written speech, official documents	Grammatically accurate and formal method.

In spoken language, especially in informal situations, intonation and *est-ce que* are dominant. In written language, especially in formal texts, inversion and interrogative inversion are more common. In addition, rhetorical questions, requests for confirmation (e.g., *n'est-ce pas?*), and other special types of interrogatives also have their own syntactic and pragmatic features.

Different variants of interrogative constructions can differ not only syntactically, but also semantically and pragmatically. For example, an interrogative sentence formed with inversion (*Viens-tu?*) can often have a more formal or specific meaning than an interrogative sentence formed with *est-ce que* (*Est-ce que tu viens?*). Also, some interrogative forms may be preferred in certain cultural or social contexts (e.g., at school, in formal meetings).

In sentences formed with interrogative words, the place of the interrogative word and its subsequent syntactic structure are regulated by certain rules. For example, after the word *que*, inversion or *est-ce que* is usually used (*Que fais-tu?* or *Qu'est-ce que tu fais?*). Such strict rules demonstrate the syntactic complexity of the French language.

**Conclusion.** The formation of interrogative sentences in French constitutes a syntactically complex and diverse system. This system includes various means such as intonation, the est-ce que phrase, inversion, and interrogative words, each of which performs certain syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic functions.

The use of interrogative constructions is determined by the level of formality of the speech situation, the type of communication medium (oral or written), and the purpose of communication. In oral speech, intonation and est-ce que methods prevail, while in written and formal speech, the inversion method is more widely used. In sentences formed with interrogative words, the place of the interrogative word and its subsequent structure are regulated by strict grammatical rules.

The complexity and flexibility of interrogative constructions in French reflect the language's ability to carry out complete and precise communication. Studying this system is important not only for understanding the grammatical laws of the French language, but also for understanding the cultural and social practices of French speakers. In the future, it may be useful to analyze the use of interrogative sentences in French in different speech genres, as well as conduct comparative studies with other languages.

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