Codebook Question Tags across Englishes

Definition Question Tags:

Question Tags (QTs) are a specific set of discourse pragmatic features, which means that they are syntactically optional and speakers use them to express stance, to guide utterance interpretation, or to structure the discourse. This multifunctionality also applies to the particular pragmatic functions of QTs: speakers append QTs to statements in order to receive a confirmation from their interlocutors, to integrate other participants in the conversations, or to emphasize their statements. QTs can thus be hearer- or speaker-centered. There is a wide range of different forms which can function as QTs. On the one hand there are variant/canonical QTs, such as in I told you I got my ticket *did I?/didn't I?*, whose form depends on the main clause they are attached to. On the other hand, there is a wide range of invariant QTs, such as *right*, *yeah*, *eh*, or *OK*, which have a fixed form. Variant and invariant QTs can fulfill the same pragmatic function but certain invariant tags carry higher indexical loading and also function as characteristic features of specific varieties.

QTs are: discourse markers; attached to utterances; syntactically optional; tend to be in utterance final position; fulfill one of the three functions (see functions)

QTs are NOT: fillers (surrounded by repetitions and other fillers, such as *uh* or *uhm*); or not entire utterances on their own (such as backchanels) – however sometimes they are coded this way incorrectly; items used in their full literal sense (e.g. the right choice) also as part of fixed expressions (e.g. right now)

Variable	Codes for variants	Description	Examples *Explanations*
Form I	**OK, you know, right, alright, eh, etc.**	There is a wide range of different forms which can function as QTs. Form I, defines the exact form of the QT in the text. Most frequent forms include: *OK* (1), *you know* (2), *right* (3), *isn't it* (4), and *eh* (5).	(1) <#>And so although there is an objective norm violated the two examples I gave you are not guilty of any sin *OK* (ICE Phi; S1B-011) (2) <$A><#>That's such a sad part in of life *you know* <$B><#>Yeah <O>laughter</O> (ICE Phi; S1A-048) (3) <#>Notice I didn't put an arrow *right*<,> because if you put an arrow that mean there is a change (ICE T&T;S1B013) (4) <#>I think it's a very deep or enriching kind of book *isn't it* (ICE Phi; S1A-062) (5) <#>Remember now is the time to steal some good points from people *eh*<O>laughter</O> (ICE T&T;S1B020)

Form II	**variant**	Variant QTs consist of an operator (i.e. auxiliary) and a personal pronoun, there, or one. All QTs with this form are coded as variant forms. All polarity types are included: (1) and (2). If the operator does not agree with the verb in the main clause the QTs is still coded as a variant form: (3)	(1) <#>I told you I got my ticket<,> *did I* (ICE T&T; S1A040) (2) <#>Hey what can you do you know exactly you can't please them all *can you* (ICE Phi; S1A026) (3) <#><indig>Kasi</indig> very often you listen to music when you want to forget your problems problems of your stomach the problems of your practical everyday life *isn't it* (ICE Phi; S1B005)
	invariant	Invariant QTs have fixed forms, which do not change according to the syntax of the main clause. They can be single words (1), phonological sequences (2), or fixed phrases (3)	(1) <#>Everybody have the same dictionary Shian has *right* (ICE T&T; S1B003) (2) <#>She supposed to be a model student *eh* (ICE T&T; S1B011) (3) <#>Okay that 's interesting *you know* (ICE Phi; S1A099)
Function	**INFO**	QTs fulfil an informative function when speakers want a confirmation of information (1) or new information (2) from their interlocutors. There is no full security of the content of the statement the QT is attached to. Informative QTs are not stylistic. A verbal answer is expected.	(1) <$A><#>Cara's your bridesmaid *no* <$B><#>Uh uhm she's my bridesmaid (ICE Phi; S1A070) *Speaker A wants a confirmation whether Cara is really the bridesmaid of speaker B.* (2) <$A><#>Oh what happen party *or what* <$B><#>No birthday <}><<->two</-> <=>two</=></}> birthdays Renee and uhm<,,> Kevin son <$A><#>Oh all right so (ICE T&T; S1A094) *Speaker A wants know from speaker B whether there was a party.*
	PUNC	Speakers use QTs with a punctuational function to add emphasis to their statements. Speakers do not seek any information but they are secure about the content of their statement. Punctuational QTs are stylistic. No verbal answer is expected. Punctuational QTs can be emphatic (1), humorous (2) or aggressive (3).	(1) <#>What we don't have we don't have a Standard English in Trinidad *you know* (ICE T&T; S1A007) *The speaker uses the QT you know to emphasize his opinion that there is no Standard English in Trinidad.* (2) <$A><#>Oh you're sentimental fool *ha* <O> laughter </O> <$B><#>Of course <$A><#><O>laughter</O> (ICE Phi; S1A028) *Speaker A uses the QT to emphasize the humorous intention, which is accepted by speaker B.*

			(3) <#>It was you putting it to me *you know* <#>That is your job to put it to me (ICE T&T; S1B067) *In this excerpt from a legal cross-examination, the witness is in an argument with the attorney. He clarifies their roles and uses you know to underline his antagonism toward the attorney.*
	FACI	Speakers use facilitative QT to integrate their interlocutors into the discourse either by inviting a change in speaker turn, inviting backchanneling or checking for understanding. Speakers do not seek information as they are sure about the content of their utterance. Facilitative QTs are not emphatic. A reaction from the interlocutors, whether verbal or non-verbal, signals a successful integration by means of a facilitative QT.	(1) <#>I am asking you *right* (ICE T&T; S1B007) *A teacher uses the facilitative QT right to encourage students to answer* (2) <$A><#>I mean you can't say when someone falls in love <{><[>*di ba*</[> <$B><#><[>Uh huh</[></{> <#>That's true yeah well that's true that's true <O> laughs </O> (ICEPhi;SB006) *Speaker A uses di ba to invite backchanneling and hands over the turn to B.* (3) <#>I will describe some of the methodologies used *'no* so that you have an idea of what kind of research goes into these types of topics *OK* (ICEPhi;SB001) *A lecturer uses no and OK in a facilitative way to check whether the students are still following her explanations.*
Prime tag	**see – Form I**	tag form preceding the current form: Form I; first QT in text: NA	
Utter-ance position	**mid**	The QT is not in final position of an utterance. Both initial and middle positions are coded as mid.	<#>But you can having these simple ideas you are able then to combine them *'no* into complex ideas which you may not have experienced before *'no* because of the imagination (ICEPhi;SB008) *The QTs no are inserted in the middle of the utterance.*
	final	The QT is in final position of an utterance.	<$A><#>But I mean <}><->that</-> <=>that</=></}> a real issue *nah* <#>That real political *nah* <$B><#>So <}><->what do you think James</-> <=>what do you think James</=></}> about uhm a Creole-based curriculum (ICE T&T; S1A014) *Speaker a uses nah in final utterance position to emphasize his or her opinion about the issue.*

Turn position	**mid**	The QT is not in final position of an utterance. The speaker continues their turn after the QT.	<#>OK let us add some more input <#>These were the things shared last time *'no* <#>Let us add some some other leading interests and concerns and maybe you can check it out whether this really was a concern of yours <#>Uh primary and foremost is appearance *isn't it* <#>OK adolescents are very concerned about appearance because from experience you know that it is a major factor in what in being accepted by others (ICEPhi;SB014) *A Filipino teacher uses QTs 'no and isn't it in the middle of his turns without a change in speaker turn.*
	final	The QT is at the end of a turn.	<$A><#>You said it was a long drive <#>You have to go through many streets and so on not so <#>You have the different streets you have the traffic lights whatever *not so* <$B><#>Yes Sir<,,> (ICE T&T; S1B066) *The attorney A uses the QT not so in an informative way in turn final position and hands over the turn to the witness B.*
Verbal response	**yes**	After a QT is used by a speaker another speaker gives a verbal response to the statement the QT was added to. Responses can either be entire turns (1) or backchannels (2).	(1) <$A><#>And uh in that Corporate Department uh it is uh usual practice to prepare Articles of Incorporation in which members of the firm are named as incorporators and as members of the Board *is it not* <$B><#>Yes Your Honor <$A><#>And uh so what you did in this particular case is uh usual practice in that firm (ICEPhi;S1B069) *Witness B responds to attorney A with a full turn* (2) <$A><#>Correct me if I'm wrong here<,> <#>I believe years ago when I started teaching<,> uhm I was informed by our then principal that the language that we speak in the classroom is supposed to be Standard English<,> *OK* <{1><[1><,></[1> <#>But here now you explaining to me that is not always<{2><[2><,></[2> possible <$B><#><[1>Mhm</[1></{1> <$B><#><[2>The case</[2></{2> (ICE T&T;S1A014) *Speaker B backchannels and supports speaker A in the statement that Standard English is supposed to be the medium of education*
	no	There is no verbal response by a listener to a QT, which was added to a statement by the speaker.	<#>And before we go further into that uh we have to talk about <,> development and growth first as contrasted with one another *OK* <#>So I think in the in the quiz I gave you I asked the question about development *right* <#>So what do you think is development (ICE Phi; S1B-020) *A teacher uses the QTs OK and right without a response from the students*

Coding scheme in text

<QT/formI/text/function/prime_tag/utterance_position/turn_position/response>

e.g.   <$A><#>Now<,> so the cars have left <#>From South to Bourg Mulatresse is a long drive *not so*<QT/not so/S1B-066/INFO/NA/final/final/yes>

<$B><#>Yes Sir

<$A><#>You are at the front or at the back<{><[><,> of the</[> car he was in

<$B><#><[>Behind</[></{>

<$B><#>The back Sir<,,>

<$A><#>You said it was a long drive <#>You have to go through many streets and so on not so<,> <#>You have the different streets you have the traffic lights whatever *not so*<QT/not so/S1B-066/INFO/not so/final/final/yes>

<$B><#>Yes Sir<,,>

International Corpus of English (ICE) markup

The examples were transcribed with the ICE markup conventions for spoken texts (Nelson 2002): <#> marks the beginning of a new utterance; <$A> is the speaker ID symbol and marks the beginning of a speaker turn; <,> and <,,> mark pauses <?> and </?> mark uncertain transcriptions; <indig> and <indig> mark indigenous words <{><[>…</[>   <[>…</[> </{> mark overlaps <quote> and </quote> mark quotations;

<}><-></-> <=>…</=></}> mark repetitions. The code in brackets indicates the source text of the example in the ICE corpora.