



## Peculiarities of Forming Rhetorical Questions by Adverbs in Chinese Language

Madina Abdiravubovna Suvonova

Deputy General Director of “Jiu Peng International Pharmaceutical”, Uzbekistan

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### Abstract

The process of expression of rhetorical interrogative sentences in the current Chinese language and its root essence reflect the discrepancy of the two types of completion. Not only foreign students studying the Chinese language, but also the Chinese people themselves do not pay full attention to these concepts – a big mistake in the entire language system leads to the fact that they are overlooked. As for the sphere of influence of rhetorical interrogations in society, the methods that people often use in their speech when using such sentences, today serve to increase speech sensitivity. In this article, we consider it appropriate to examine the extent to which rhetorical interrogative pronouns are used.

**Keywords:** *Rhetorical Interrogative Sentence; Pragmatics; Adverb, Semantic Meaning; Interrogative Pronoun, Tone; 不 Bù – “No”; 就 Jiù – “Immediately”; “Only”; “Already”; 难道 Nándào – “Really/ Indeed/If?”; 何 Hé – “Who?”; 岂 Qǐ – “How?”; “Really?”; 还 Hái – “Yet”; “Still”; 又 Yòu “Again”.*

### Introduction

Rhetorical interrogative sentences as a specific type of linguistics – have a feature that indicates a comparative language phenomenon. From this point of view, the Chinese language has established strict rules for distinguishing rhetorical interrogative sentences from ordinary types of interrogative sentences, in which the emphasis on the participation in rhetorical, rhetorical interrogative sentences is considered the main issue, and through the results of these description hypotheses are put forward.

The key words in the Chinese category are 不 bù – “no”, 就 jiù – “immediately”, “only”, “already”, “as soon as it happens”, 难道 nándào – “really/ indeed/if?”, 何 hé – “Who?”, 岂 qǐ – “How?”, “really?”, 还 hái – “yet”, “still”, 又 yòu – “again”. These forms serve to convey a level of emphasis on a sentence. We can add all the interrogative pronouns expressed in this way to the rhetorical interrogative pronouns, and it helps a lot to distinguish between the rhetorical interrogative and the non-rhetorical words in the vernacular.

## The Main Findings and Results

### Rhetorical questions about 不 bù “no”

不 bù – “no” can be used in 不是 bùshì, 不也是 bù yěshì, 不都是 bù dōu shì, 不就是 bù jiùshì and other forms, except for the singular. In addition, the number of rhetorical questions expressed in 不是 forms is much larger, and in normal cases, often 吗 ma “is it” comes with a question mark. However, 不 bù (也/都就 yě/dōu jiù) 是... ..吗shì... ..ma? It is part of the construction (is it like that?).

For example:

1. “北京现在条件这么好，你再不好好学习对得起谁？” (于天昱: 2007, p. 10)  
*Běijīng xiànzài tiáojiàn zhème hǎo, nǐ zàibu hǎo hào xuéxí duìdégǐ shéi?*

Conditions in Beijing are so good now, what kind of person are you if you don't study well anymore?

2. “别折腾了，你现在不是很好吗？” (于天昱: 2007, p. 10)  
*bié zhētengle, nǐ xiànzài bùshì hěn hǎo ma?*

Do not give birth to problems, is not it good for you now?

3. “凭着崇高的理想，豪迈的气概，乐观的志趣，克服困难不也是一种享受吗？” (于天昱: 2007, p. 10)

*Píngzhe chónggāo de lǐxiǎng, háomài de qìgài, lèguān de zhìqù, kèfú kùnnàn bù yěshì yī zhǒng xiǎngshòu ma?*

Isn't it great to have great ideas, heroic spirit, and optimistic aspirations, to overcome difficulties?

4. “不论德国还是中国，欧洲还是亚洲，法兰克福，科隆，柏林，还是北京，大连。乌鲁木齐，不都是在同一个地球上吗？” (于天昱: 2007, p. 10)

*bùlùn déguó háishì zhōngguó, ōuzhōu háishì yàzhōu, fǎlánkèfú, kēlóng, bólin, háishì běijīng, dàlián. Wūlǔmùqí, bù dōu shì zài tóng yīgè dìqiú shàng ma?*

Be it Germany, China, Europe or Asia, Frankfurt, Cologne, Berlin, Beijing or Dalian. Urumqi, isn't it all on the same planet?

### The following table shows the addition of 不 bù forms:

不 ( ) 是...吗 bù ( ) shì...ma (is it?)	The semantic meaning of the expression	Examples
不也是...吗 bù yěshì...ma (is it?)	In the form of emphasis	有人说，书本上的文艺作品，古代的和外国的文艺作品，不也是源泉叫？ <i>Yǒurén shuō, shūběn shàng de wényì zuòpǐn, gǔdài de hé wàiguó de wényì zuòpǐn, bù yěshì yuánquán jiào?</i> Someone said that the work of art in the book, both ancient and foreign works of art, in fact, is not the original source?
不都是...吗 bù dōu shì...ma (is it?)	In the form of generalization	... ...人家的孩子这样，咱们的孩子那样，孩子不

		都是将来的国民吗? ... <i>rénjiā de háizi zhèyàng, zánmen de háizi nàyàng, háizi bù dōu shì jiānglái de guómín ma?</i> ...such a child of other people, like our mother, after all, our children are not all future owners?
不就是...吗 <b>jiùshì...ma</b> (is it?)	In the form of confirmation	不就是没给他送礼吗? <i>bù jiùshì méi gěi tā sònglǐ ma?</i> ... on the contrary, didn't you give her a present?

Rhetorical interrogative pronouns in the form of **就jiù** “immediately, then”

The form “immediately” and “then”, representing the adverb, is not used in an independent and singular case, but is used with other types of adverbs, interrogative pronouns, words denoting the interrogative tone, verbs.

For example:

“我哪回不是掉完眼泪，就拼命去干活儿？”(刘芳: 2016, p. 12)

*Wǒ nǎ huí bùshì diào wán yǎnlèi, jiù pīnmìng qù gàn huó er?*

When did I immediately throw into labor with all my strength, even if my tears did not stop?

“考不上大学就没有前途吗？”(刘芳: 2016, p. 12)

*Kǎo bù shàng dàxué jiù méiyǒu qiántú ma?*

If you cannot check into the nobility, then your future will not fail?

### **Rhetorical interrogative statements about the adverb 难道 nándào “really/ indeed/if”**

This adverb is usually used in rhetorical interrogative sentences, but we cannot include all of the words that come with **难道 nándào** “really/ indeed/if” in the system of rhetorical interrogative sentences. For example,

- a) “难道你们闹矛盾了？”(刘芳: 2016, p. 12)  
*nándào nǐmen nào máodùnle?*

“What if you have a conflict?”, there is a firm decision in the sentence. In different cases, this adverb can become a rhetorical interrogative sentence or a simple interrogative sentence. In rhetorical interrogative sentences, sentences that end in **难道 nándào** “really/ indeed/if” are followed by 11 “is it”; interrogative pronouns or words that mean interrogative. For example,

- b) “你说我痴人说梦，一个人难道就不能有自己的梦想吗？”(于天昱: 2007, p. 12)

*nǐ shuō wǒ chīrénshuōmèng, yīgè rén nándào jiù bùnéng yǒu zìjǐ de mèngxiǎng ma?*

Do you think that I have a disease of lust, if a person does not have a dream of his own?

**何hé** “what?”, When? ” how?” rhetorical question

This form of rhetorical questioning is not used alone in formal sentences. All forms related to adverb **何hé** “what?”, when? ” how?” **何妨héfáng** “What harm? (does not cause harm), what prevents? (does not interfere) ”, **何不hébù** “why, “why ... not?”, **何尝hécháng** “when?”, **何必hébi**

“why?”, 何苦 *hékǔ* “what is a reason?”, 何曾 *hécéng* “When, when?” with or without components 何 *hé* “*nima?*”, “when?” “how?” comes with words that mean. Almost all of the sentences we have researched provide a rhetorical style:

- a) “你叫我忘了你，而你又何尝能忘得了我呢？” (刘芳: 2016, p. 14)  
*nǐ jiào wǒ wàngle nǐ, ér nǐ yòu hécháng néng wàng déliǎo wǒ ne?*

You made me forget, but when could you forget me?

- b) “何必老是想不开：苦了自己？” (刘芳: 2016, p. 14)  
*hébì lǎo shì xiǎngbùkāi: Kǔle zìjǐ?*

Why do we always suffer and think about it?

### *何hé "What?", When? "How?" Semantic and pragmatic table of forms*

Forms related to adverb 何hé “What?”, When?” “How?”	Expressive meaning in semantics	Expressive meaning in pragmatics
何妨 <i>héfáng</i> “how can it harm?”	Represents necessity	Emphasizes
何不 <i>hébù</i> “why ..., why not?”	Represents an obligation or opportunity	It represents persuasion to a job, motivation (consent) or motivation of one's own capacity.
何尝 <i>hécháng</i> “when?”	Represent confirmation or denial	Self-defense means justification, emphasis.
何必 <i>hébì</i> “why?”	Expresses that the necessity does not exist	Expresses the necessity in the dative case
何苦 <i>hékǔ</i> “nima sababdan?”	Refers to the fact that the person or phenomenon is worthwhile.	Means persuasion, motivation (consent) to a job
何曾 <i>hécéng</i> “qay payt, qay mahal?”	The highlighted event points to the fact that it never happened.	Indicates the state of coming to a decision.

### *Rhetorical interrogative sentences on 岂qǐ “maybe” rhetoric*

Forms of this type are also not used in the singular; on the contrary, they can be used with other types of adverbs. For example, 11– 12 through the adverb “no” – “maybe it has not happened, there is no need?” status can be legalized. It can also be accompanied by a number of verbs, 121 to cases that denote the form 13 “again...is not it?”, 14 “how?“, 15 “maybe (if it were possible)”, 16 “maybe (after all)” can also be added to the adverbs, denoting the form 17 in the form of”. For example,

Forms of this type are not used in isolation, but can be used in other ways. For example, 不是 *bùshì* – “no” 岂不是 *qǐ bùshì* – “maybe not done, no need?” mode can be made. It can also come with a number of verbs, in cases where the form 岂 *qǐ* means 岂不是 *qǐ bù* “... isn't it?”, 岂可 *qǐkě* “how?”, 岂止 *qǐzhǐ* “maybe (if possible)” 岂但 *qǐdàn* “maybe (really)” can be added in the form of 岂 *qǐ*.

- a) “万一过几天“和平”解决了，岂不是多此一举？” (刘松江: 1993, p. 16)  
*wàn yīguò jǐ tiān “héping” jiějuéle, qǐ bùshì duōcǐyījǔ?*

If "peace" is achieved in a few days, maybe there is no need to fight?

- b) “写在纸上的话和事实岂不矛盾？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)  
*Xiě zài zhǐ shàng de huà hé shìshí qǐ bù máodùn?*

Are not the facts written on paper contradict reality?

- c) “终身大事岂可马马虎虎？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)  
*zhōngshēn dàshì qǐ kě mǎmǎhǔhǔ?*

How to be indifferent to life problems?

- d) “巾帼不让须眉，妇女岂止能撑半边天？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)  
*jīnguó bù ràng xūméi, fùnǚ qǐzhǐ néng chēng bànbiāntiān?*

Can women not be compared to men with a crown on their head, but are they able to hold half of the sky?

- e) “岂但我一个人知道？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)  
*qǐdàn wǒ yīgè rén zhīdào?*

Maybe I'm the only one who knows?

Rhetorical interrogation in the form of *zhai* “again, still, then, yet”

Forms of this type are not used in isolation, but can be used in other ways. The rhetorical interrogative pronouns *zhai* “again, still, then, yet” can also be dropped. However, in this case, the tone of speech also weakens a bit. We can compare this situation in the following examples.

For example:

- 1a) “她让孩子一个人玩水，自己睡觉或者看电视，孩子还能有个不感冒的？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)

*Tā ràng háizi yīgè rén wán shuǐ, zìjǐ shuìjiào huòzhě kàn diàn shì, hái zǐ hái néng yǒu gè bù gǎnmào de?*

He lets the child play in the water alone, and he sleeps or watches TV, **so that** the child does not catch a cold?

- 1b) “她让孩子一个人玩水，自己睡觉或者看电视，孩子能有个不感冒的？”(刘松江: 1993, p. 16)

*“Tā ràng háizi yīgè rén wán shuǐ, zìjǐ shuìjiào huòzhě kàn diàn shì, hái zǐ néng yǒu gè bù gǎnmào de?”*

He allows the child to play one by one in the water, and he himself sleeps or watches TV, can the child not wind?

- 3a) “你还能不了解他的脾气秉性吗？”

*“Nǐ hái néng bù liǎojiě tā de píqì bǐngxìng ma?”*

If you are still not familiar with its nature?

3b) “你能不了解他的脾气秉性吗？”(吕明臣张玥: 2011, p. 7)

“*Nǐ néng bù liǎojiě tā de píqì bǐngxìng ma?*”

If you are not familiar with its nature?

In the above three examples, rhetorical questions were also reflected, and the comparative difference between them is significant because the tone of speech in sentences with 还*hái* “still/yet” adverbs is higher, and the tone in sentences without these adverbs is weaker.

### **Rhetorical questions about 又*yòu* “again”**

The terms 又*yòu* “again” and 还*hái* “still” are the same. Like the 还*hái* “yet” and “again” above, this form can also be omitted in Chinese rhetorical interrogative pronouns. This does not affect the meaning of the sentence. However, the tone of voice and the firmness of the speaker's speech may be weakened.

Here are three examples.

Here we observe that the speakers in case (a) are more likely to ask questions than those in case (b).

1a) “...再说，香港又有什么了不起的？”(郭继懋: 1997, p. 18)

“...*Zàishuō, xiānggǎng yòu yǒu shé me liǎobùqǐ de?*”

... **and** what was so special about Hong Kong?

1b) “再说，香港有什么了不起的？”(郭继懋: 1997, p. 18)

“*Zàishuō, xiānggǎng yǒu shé me liǎobùqǐ de?*”

...what kind of originality did Hong Kong have?

2a)

“一个人如果不是像一块海绵吸水似的，积蓄起大量的词汇，他的语言，又怎么能够生动和丰富起来呢？”(郭继懋: 1997, p. 18)

“*Yīgè rén rúguǒ bùshì xiàng yīkuài hǎimián xīshuǐ shì de, jīxù qǐ dàliàng de cíhuì, tā de yǔyán, yòu zěnmé nénggòu shēngdòng hé fēngfù qǐlái ne?*”

If a person does not enrich his dictionary wealth, like a sponge (a cloth or a sponge intended for absorbing water), how else can his language be rich?

2b)

“一个人如果不是像一块海绵吸水似的，积蓄起大量的词汇，他的语言，怎么能够生动和丰富起来呢？”

“*Yīgè rén rúguǒ bùzú xiàng yīkuài hǎimián xīshuǐ shì de, jīxù qǐ dàliàng de cíhuì, tā de yǔyán, zěnmé nénggòu shēngdòng hé fēngfù qǐlái ne?*”

If a person does not enrich his dictionary wealth, like a sponge (a cloth or a sponge intended for absorbing water), how can his language be rich?

3a) “她是朕的亲妈妈，又是太后，于忠于孝，朕又能怎样？”(朱姝: 2004, p. 49)

“*Tā shì zhèn de qīn māmā, yòu shì tài hòu, yú zhōngyú xiào, zhèn yòu néng zěnyàng?*”

He is my real mother, the emperor's mother, a respected person, what kind of relationship should I have with him (her) again?

3b) “她是朕的亲妈妈，又是太后，于忠于孝，朕能怎样？”

“*Tā shì zhèn de qīn māmā, yòu shì tài hòu, yú zhōngyú xiào, zhèn néng zěnyàng?*”

She was my real mother, and also the mother of the emperor, a man of honor, how should I treat her?

## Conclusion

The study of this topic led to the following conclusions:

1. The forms 还*hái* “yet/still”, “again” and 又 “again” are not used to distinguish a definite meaning. By using them, only the tone of the sentence is amplified, not using these forms does not transfer the rhetorical form of the sentence to another form; The forms 还*hái* “yet/ still”, “again” and 又 “again” are the means of tone that reflect the spoken state of rhetorical interrogative pronouns, and we can classify these two forms as syntactic definite forms.

2. In fact, all 不也是*bù yěshì*, 不都是*bù dōu shì*, 不就是*bù jiùshì* words are an extended version of the 不是*bùshì* “no” option. The forms 也*yě* “both”, 都*dōu* “all”, 就*jiù* “exactly, immediately, immediately” come between the 不*bù* “no” and the hieroglyphs 是*shì*. The above forms can be abbreviated. However, after a shortening, the tone will not be as strong.

3. The rhetorical interrogative tone of the Chinese language is slightly softened by the 难道*nándào* “really/indeed” form. The 难道*nándào* “really/indeed” form can be placed before the possessive or after the possessive. The difference between the sentences with 难道*nándào* “really/indeed” is understood only in the pragmatic sense. If the possessive is preceded by the form *nándào* “really/indeed”, then it indicates that it is possessed in this form, and if it is preceded by the cut, then it refers to the cut.

4. In rhetorical interrogative sentences 何*hé* “What?”, “When?”, “How?” although forms of adverbs are encountered in very rare cases, in fact, the sentences in which the adverb is involved are sentences that denote the original rhetorical methodologies.

5. 何必*hébi* “Why?” and 何苦*hékǔ* “for what reason?” all components indicate that there is no need, that the person or event is worthwhile. Sometimes they can be used instead. The differences in this case are: 1) 何苦*hékǔ* “for what reason?” component 何必*hébi* is a little deeper in meaning than “why?”, so 何苦*hékǔ* “for what reason?” at the end of the sentences used it is allowed to put the question load 呢*ne* – “modal load that conveys the status of the speaker through the sentence”. After 何必*hébi* “why?”, 呢*ne* – “there is no need to put the question load” modal load that delivers the status of the speaker through the sentence”.

6. The expressions 还*hái* “yet/still”, “again” and 又 “again” are not the same as in other forms. They are not used to distinguish a specific meaning. Because it is possible to use or not use 还*hái* “yet/still”, “again” and 又 “again” forms in Chinese rhetorical questions. By using them, you only increase the tone of the sentence - not using these forms does not change the rhetorical form of the sentence. On the contrary, there are other elements that give it a rhetorical character. In other words, the

forms 还 *hái* “yet/still”, “again” and 又 “again” are the means of tone that reflect the state of the speaker speaking the rhetorical question, and we can classify these two forms as syntactic definite forms.

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