

### Week 3 – QUESTIONS; QUESTION TAGS

The seminar is based on Murphy: English Grammar in Use, U 48 – 51

#### QUESTIONS

**1) Inversion** – we change the word order – the auxiliary comes before the subject – be, modals (can, must, may), will, have (present perfect or have got structure):

e.g.

Are you happy?  
Where are the keys?  
Were you at the concert?  
Are you going on holiday?  
Are stamps sold here?  
What are you going to study?  
When is breakfast served?  
Can you help me?  
May I open the window?  
Have you finished the project?  
Have you got much free time?  
Will he be there?  
What will you do?

**2) Adding auxiliaries** – in present (do, does) and past simple (did)

e.g.

He lives in London. - Where does he live?  
I want to study English. - What do you want to study?  
They play tennis at weekends. - When do they play tennis?  
He came at 4. - Did he come alone?  
She helped me. What did she do?

#### 3) Object v. subject question

- positive subject question doesn't have an auxiliary

e.g. What happened? (~~did~~)  
Who knows it? (~~does~~)  
What begins at 7? (~~does~~)  
Who told you? (~~did~~)  
Which tram goes to the station? (~~does~~)

- negative subject question – the auxiliary expresses the negative

e.g. Who doesn't know it?  
Who didn't come?

#### 4) Negative question – shows surprise

e.g. Didn't you hear it?  
Don't you have a pen?

- or we expect the listener to agree with us:

e.g. Isn't it wonderful?  
Haven't we met before?

- questions such as "Why don't we go out?" – may express suggestion = What about going out?

#### DIRECT V. INDIRECT QUESTIONS

- are no longer questions, so they don't have the word order of a question, but a positive statement

e.g. D: *Where is the station?*  
I: Can you tell me *where the station is*?

D: *When does he finish* work?  
I: I wonder *when he finishes* work.

D: *What did he tell* you?  
I: I wonder *what he told* you.

D: **Will he come?**  
I: I have no idea *if (whether) he will come*.

Indirect / reported questions are common after:

e.g. Do you know...  
Can you tell me...  
Could you tell me...  
Tell me...  
I have no idea...  
I wonder ...  
I would like to know..  
He asks ...  
I don't know ...  
I can't remember...

If the first verb is in the past (He asked..., She told me...) – we need to make changes in verb tenses (=back shifting) D: **What are you doing?**

I: He asked **what I was doing**.

## SHORT ANSWERS + auxiliary on its own

### a) short answers

- e.g. Do you know him? – Yes, I **do**.  
He doesn't like it but I **do**.  
I will come but she **won't**.

### b) showing surprise or interest

- e.g. I am getting married next week. – **Are you?**  
I've won 1,000,000 crowns. – **Have you?**  
She broke her leg. – **Did she?**

### c) agreement - So do I. / Neither (Nor) do I.

- e.g. I like coffee. – **So do I.**  
I am happy. – **So am I.**  
I was there. – **So was I.**  
I saw it. – **So did I.**  
I will buy it. – **So will I.**
- or **Me too.**

- I don't know her. - **Neither do I.**  
I didn't meet him. – **Neither did I.**  
We won't come. - **Neither will I.**  
We haven't seen it. - **Neither have we.**
- or **Me neither.**

## QUESTION TAGS

- normally: a positive sentence + negative tag  
a negative sentence + positive tag

- e.g. It's a nice day, **isn't?**  
He can speak French, **can't he?**  
They live near here, **don't they?**  
I am right, **aren't I? !!!**
- They aren't friends, **are they?**  
You don't know her, **do you?**  
It wasn't easy, **was it?**