A Corpus-based Study of Rhetorical Questions in Monologic Genres in the Framework of Relevance Theory

by

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Abstract

This thesis takes the form of a pragmatic study of Rhetorical Questions (RQs) in the environment of monologue within the theoretical framework of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986).

Two main research questions are involved. The first is how an addressee manages to identify the rhetorical nature of a question, and infer the possible intended assumptions of the addresser. I aim to show that the Code Model, which holds that communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages in words, is not sufficient in interpreting RQs. In contrast, I shall show that implicatures (implied propositions) conveyed by an RQ can only be interpreted by an inferential model. The second question is how different types of RQ are used to achieve the addresser's persuasive intention in monologic environments.

My study consists not only of theoretical argumentation but also of a qualitative analysis of corpus data, in an attempt to extend corpus study to rhetoric and pragmatics, beyond the recent concentration (Sinclair, 1991; Biber et al., 1999; Stubbs, 2001a; Hunston, 2002; Renouf, 2013 etc.) on the lexical, semantic, and syntactic domains. The corpora consulted are the BNC and FLOB, complemented by two self-compiled textual corpora, comprising the genres of political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons.

In the first part of the study, I propose a procedure for identifying an RQ based mainly on the concepts of 'implicature', 'mutual manifestness' and 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory. In the second part, the proposed criteria are applied to the identification and interpretation of RQs in three monologic genres to analyse their uses, which display both common and distinctive features.

The results of the current study achieve a number of goals. The study endorses Sperber and

Wilson (1986)'s arguments about the Code Model and the inferential model. It verifies their claim about the principle of relevance, proving that Relevance Theory is more suitable than Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) and Grice's Principle and Maxims (1967) for the study of RQs. It extends the application of Relevance Theory to the new field of RQs in the context of monologue, further endorsing the explanatory power of Relevance Theory.

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Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research background

According to definitions in established dictionaries, such as The Oxford English Dictionary (volume Viii) (Murray, 1933: 627), Webster's New World Dictionary (third college edition) (Neufeldt, 1988: 1151), Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (Sinclair et al., 1995: 1427), and the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Summer, 2003: 1817), it is agreed that an Rhetorical Question (RQ) is an utterance, in the form of an interrogative, posed to achieve stylistic effect. It functions as a statement, and does not require an explicit answer from the addressee.

I developed an interest in an investigation of RQs as a result of two observations. Firstly, I observed that failed communication and exchange dilemmas arise in daily conversation if the recipient fails to perceive the rhetorical status of a question, and instead provides an unexpected answer. An example of this phenomenon is exemplified in (1)

(1) "[1]a. <u>How high will taxes be when my kids are my age?</u>

b. Well, that's a great question! Let me tell you, based on the current trajectory of income tax valuation along with the growing number of Americans on social security and Greenspan's waning confidence in the dollar, I'd say taxes are likely to increase drastically over the next thirty to thirty-five years."

(Rohde, 2006: 162)

Even in formal political contexts, it may happen that politicians fail to recognise the rhetorical

[1] Throughout the thesis, I use double quotation marks when directly quoting words, phrases, chunks, or sentences from literature. Single quotation mark is used for linguistic terminology. Classes of words or the interpreted propositions are italicised for the sake of emphasis and easy reading.

intent of a question and thus cause a dilemma or become a laughing stock, as shown in (2):

(2) “But this time the executive had come up with a compromise of sterling dimness. OK, there should be an affiliated ‘socialist society’ for blacks and Asians, but whites could join too […] It was an insult: they didn't need white nannies - did more than two black people in a room constitute a riot? - were they to step back to the old plantation days? - had Kinnock and Hattersley been drunk when they drafted the proposal? At which poor Jack Rogers - a former bricklayer and union leader, and the member of the executive taking the can back as he replied to the debate - innocently protested they hadn't been drunk, they hadn't even had a cup of tea.”

(Cited from “Making the change with body talk”, by Terry Coleman, the *Independent*, May 10, 1989.)

In (2), what the speaker challenging the proposal intends when uttering a rhetorical question is not to query whether Kinnock and Hattersley were drunk, but to express sarcasm at the inappropriateness of the proposal wording, namely, “an affiliated socialist society for Blacks and Asians”. So the response of the reported hearer, Jack Rogers, when he interprets the question as a genuine one reveals a misunderstanding of the RQ.

It is therefore of great practical significance to find a criterion for identifying an RQ, to avoid misunderstandings or exchange dilemmas, and thus guarantee smooth communication. This problem could be solved if there existed a way of signalling an RQ by ‘irony punctuation’. If that were so, the Code Model, which holds that “communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages” in words, like Morse code (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 2), would be sufficient to account for the identification of an RQ.

In the past, the sign "⸮ " did in fact exist as a marker for RQs.[2] Unfortunately, its use died out in the 17th century.

[2] According to Wikipedia, “The percontation point, a reversed question mark later referred to as a rhetorical question mark, was proposed by Henry Denham in the 1580s and was used at the end of a question that does not require an answer—a rhetorical question.”

Theoretically, it is possible that a language could always signal an RQ with an overt marker. The nearest I can find is the signal 'nonne' in Latin, which means *Isn't it the case that?,* signalling an RQ expecting an answer 'yes'.

If all other languages were just like Latin, that would be the end of the story. But do other languages, such as English, have the same marker guaranteeing the rhetorical reading of a question?

According to the research literature, the rhetorical reading of a question can be signalled (Ilie, 1983; Slot, 1993; Rohde, 2006; Kleinke, 2012) by the existing introductory phrases *after all, you know, etc.* so that the addressee can easily infer the rhetorical intention of the addresser, as in (3) and (4) or by the existing emphasising particles *really, actually, the hell, for God's sake*, etc. as in (5).

(3) "Why, after all, would you not choose to make the most of all the tax-benefits your insurer has to offer?"

(Slot, 1993)

(4) "So it's like, what are you going to do, you know?"

(Rode, 2006: 154)

(5) "With all the suffering humans in the world do we really need to spend money on animals?"

(Kleinke, 2012: 190)

Some words in the question may be endowed with strong semantic prosody, serving as loaded words, and helping to indicate the question's rhetorical reading. Slot (1993: 146) identifies the words "rashly" and "whatever" which "represent the implicit negative element" in the example (6), thus labeling the rhetorical reading of this question.

(6) "Is it the task of a good newspaper to rashly take over whatever information the authorities give?"

(Slot, 1993: 146)

However, do these expressions guarantee a question's rhetorical reading, or are they just indicators[3] increasing chances of its being an RQ? Let us consider (7) - (9). The previous literature has not discussed the contexts in which such indicators fail to mark an RQ.

(7) Do you **really** want to spend that money?

(8) Who **the hell** are you?

(9) How did she, **such a beautiful** girl survive in such a **filthy** environment?

Questions containing the emphatic adverbial "really" are not necessarily RQs, as in (7). It may express a sense of disapproval and criticism when uttered in a rising intonation by a mother, in which case it should be taken as an RQ. Alternatively, in a falling intonation, it may serve as a genuine question, giving the hearer a chance to decide whether to spend the money or not, even if the speaker has expressed his/her preference to disagree with the spending of all the money.

The same goes for the exclamatory particle "the hell". Example (8) may serve as a genuine question although with strong emotion of surprise or censure when uttered by a man opening his door at midnight, only to see a stranger standing outside. It may also work as an RQ when uttered in the context where a man shouts at his roommate who accuses him of not washing his socks for days, showing that *you are in no position to say that to me*.

Semantic indicators cannot guarantee the rhetorical reading of a question, but only increase chances. In different contexts, (9) may either serve as an informational question, inquiring about the girl's past experience, or as an RQ, showing sympathy of the speaker.

As above analysed, the existence of linguistic indicators supports the general theory of

[3] I employ the term 'indicator' in the current study to mean a weaker sense of a signal: not being a full marker, just an indication or a pointer to the rhetorical reading of a sentence.

communication known as the Code Model. However, the Code Model alone is not sufficient to explain the identification of RQs, since linguistic indicators are not a total guarantee of the rhetorical nature of a question. There still exist large numbers of RQs without indicators. Most importantly, the Code Model is unable to help infer the possible intention of the addresser beyond the linguistic expression. As shown in (2), the intention of the speaker has nothing to do with 'drunk' or 'not drunk' but with his disapproval of the proposal. Similarly, in the question *Do you know what time it is?,* the intention of the speaker may actually be to suggest that it is time to go to sleep.

It is therefore the main task of the current study, which is how to identify an RQ and interpret it to infer the possible intended assumptions of the addresser beyond a linguistic expression, that calls for an inferential model, which holds that communication is achieved by producing and interpreting evidence of an addresser's intention. In this inferential process, we need to keep in mind that we can never be certain about addressers' intentions and we can only speculate and infer them.

My second observation for the thesis is that RQs are often used by politicians in monologic political speeches, as shown in (10) and (11).

(10) The Obama "engagement" policy in Syria led the Administration to call Bashar al Assad a "reformer." Even as Assad's regime was shooting hundreds of protesters dead in the street, President Obama announced his plan to give Assad "an alternative vision of himself." <u>Does anyone outside a therapist's office have any idea what that means?</u> This is what passes for moral clarity in the Obama Administration.
(Tim Pawlenty, Republican Candidate, Remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, June 28, 2011)

(11) <u>Are we going to double-down on the top-down economic policies that helped to get us into this mess? Or do we embrace a new economic patriotism that says America does best when the middle class does best?</u>

(Barack Obama, the 1st TV debate with Mitt Romney, 2012)

These two observations lead to the research questions in the current study, which are:

1. Why does an addresser still employ different kinds of RQ in a monologic context (where only one person speaks or writes), when s/he cannot expect an answer to be provided?
2. Why does an addresser employ an indirect expression, which requires more interpreting effort from the addressee, rather than a direct assertion?
3. What meanings might an addresser convey in addition to the proposition entailed in an RQ?
4. How do the addressees identify the rhetorical nature of a question and successfully infer the possible intended assumption(s) of the addresser?

1.2 Research objectives

This thesis addresses the research problems by presenting a pragmatic discoursal analysis of Rhetorical Questions (RQs) in terms of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986; see Chapter 3). The purpose is to implement a new methodology of combining theoretical argument with corpus analysis. The thesis provides new insights into the distinction between RQs and other question types, and into the inferential process of implicatures beyond the linguistic structure of an RQ, with particular references to major fields of monologic context, namely political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons.

It should be noted that this is not psycholinguistic experimental research into what people are actually doing in real time. When I discuss the communicative intention of the addresser and the interpretation of the addressee, I am discussing an idealised model hypothesising the psycholinguistic process in terms of Relevance Theory, stating how the interpreting process occurs in its model. Therefore, in the current study, the interpretations are not real-time psycholinguistic analyses of what is actually going on in people's mind, but instead explain how communication works, using a Relevance Theory based model.

To summarise, the thesis has the following objectives:

- To shed light on the distinction between RQs and other question types and their identification and interpretation in terms of Relevance Theory;
- To find typical features and functions of RQs in the genres of political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons;
- To discover how the addresser in the above genres uses RQs to persuade the audience;
- To demonstrate whether Relevance Theory accounts for the way the addresser persuades the audience by RQs in these persuasive genres.

The purpose of the current study is thus twofold. The first part takes a theoretical perspective, in which I attempt to find a criterion which explains how an addressee distinguishes RQs from other question types. I show that previous distinctions are not sufficient and the Code Model which holds that communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages in words is not sufficient in interpreting RQs. In addition, I provide a theoretical account of the process undertaken by the addressee in inferring the implicature (or implied proposition) in the RQ and inferring the addresser's intended assumptions, beyond the linguistic expression.

In the second part of the thesis, I apply the criterion to three monologic genres in order to discover how an addresser employs different kinds of RQ to achieve his/her communicative intention, and how the addressee is persuaded in the inferential process.

The significance of the current study lies in the fact that no complete pragmatic theory of how persuasive language works has previously been established. The study focuses on explaining in the light of Relevance Theory how linguistic and non-linguistic information serves as the persuasive tool of the addresser, allowing inferences of an RQ to be drawn by the addressee, and how this helps us to understand more clearly the features of an RQ.

1.3 Outlines of the current study

This thesis is organised in nine chapters. Chapter 2 opens by reflecting conflicting opinions in the previous claims centring around whether answers to RQs are expected, or uninformative or obvious, whether RQs observe the rule of polarity shift, and whether shared knowledge is indispensable in defining an RQ. Chapter 2 shows that all these claims leave many uncertainties in regard to central concepts. In this thesis, I attempt to introduce some clarity. The chapter then offers a review of studies on key issues in the field of RQs, in a theme-based approach. The first issue concerns how RQs can be distinguished from information questions or other sub-types. The second issue concerns whether we can identify an RQ by overt markers. Finally, Chapter 2 summarises the main findings in the previous studies of the three genres targeted by the current study.

Chapter 3 discusses the fact that Relevance Theory can be seen as more economical and suitable for dealing with RQs, since RQs convey implicatures and embody a mismatch between form and illocutionary force. The chapter conducts a contrastive study of Relevance Theory and two other main pragmatic theories. It demonstrates that Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) fails to account for the contextual implicatures of non-literal utterances, as well as the mismatch between grammatical structure and illocutionary force, especially in figures of speech.

Chapter 3 also demonstrates how the Gricean Cooperative Principle and four Maxims (Grice, 1967) fail to account for how the precise implicature intended by the speaker is inferred in the face of many possible implicatures. The main concepts in the Maxims, such as the Maxim of Relation, are not clearly defined. There exist cases where Maxims are not followed, but still no implicature is indicated. Chapter 3 then provides an introduction to the main concepts in Relevance Theory, as well as a summary of its main claims. It proposes an overview of the interpretation of interrogatives and of the process in which an utterance is interpreted in Relevance Theory, as a basis for the data analysis in the current research.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the establishment of methodology in the current study. To address the research problems of identifying an RQ and discovering how RQs are indirectly used in monologue to persuade people, I discuss the problems yielded by the empirical corpus data in three monologic genres. Firstly, the methodological procedure is presented. The chapter then gives a brief introduction to corpus linguistics, describing the corpora used in the current research and explaining how questions are extracted from the three genres. Finally, the chapter presents the methodology adopted in the current study to identify and interpret an RQ, based on the concepts of "contextual implicature" and "mutual manifestness" in Relevance Theory. It also describes the relevance-based inferential process by an addressee in interpreting the implicatures conveyed by an RQ.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to applying the methodology established in Chapter 4 to distinguish RQs from other question types in the data. The first part of the chapter lists the divergent cases excluded from the current study. The second part deals with the issue of distinguishing RQs from the other four question types, including expository questions, 'inviting involvement questions', speculative questions and information questions, by applying the criteria established in Chapter 4.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 form the second part of the current study. They are the applications of the established methodology, criteria and theoretical approaches to the stated research questions: of how an addresser employs different kinds of RQ in monologue to achieve persuasion and how the addressee identifies and interprets an RQ to infer the possible intended assumptions of the addresser. These chapters are dedicated respectively to investigations of RQs in political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons. They are structured in similar ways: firstly, they discuss how RQs with linguistic indicators are identified and interpreted, to prove that the Code Model is not sufficient in accounting for the identification and interpretation of an RQ. Then they discuss RQs without linguistic indicators, showing that context is crucial in the interpreting process. These investigations are followed by a discussion of three different types of RQ, those with explicit answers provided, those not observing the rule of polarity shift and those containing other rhetorical devices. These three types of RQ are analysed in the light of the concept of 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory, to show how addressers use them to save the addressee's effort[4] and increase cognitive effects, in the inferential process of the addresser's possible intended assumptions. The patterns these three types of RQ display in the three genres are discussed. In addition, Chapters 7 and 8 conduct a contrastive analysis of the similarities and differences between features displayed by RQs in the three genres, and present an explanation for these variations.

The thesis ends with a summary of the major arguments in the current study. It describes the theoretical contributions in the form of an expansion of the application of Relevance Theory to the field of RQs, its practical contributions to the study of RQs in persuasive genres, and its methodological contributions in the form of a combination of theoretical argument with corpus analysis. The thesis predicts the implications and applications of the research in a number of communicative settings, such as pedagogical research, parent-child language analysis, TV debate, doctor-patient conversations and a cross-linguistic contrastive study of RQs in English and Chinese.

[4] The terms 'processing effort' and 'cognitive effect' belong to Relevance Theory, and are used in the current study as part of a theoretical approach to describing the nature of the inferential process of an addressee. Basically, they refer to a degree or type of response or effort which is inferred but not observable in the data itself. It should be noted that I do not take these terms directly from psychology, where the processing time and effects can be measured physically. Both the actual effect on addressees and the cognitive effort saved need other kinds of evidence including psycholinguistic experiments to prove them.

Chapter 2 Literature review

Considering research questions in the current study, I carry out an investigation of previous research on RQs in this Chapter, which centres around five points:

1) how previous researchers define RQs, including features of RQs such as answerhood[5], the rule of polarity shift, shared knowledge and the existing incongruence;
2) what criteria they use to distinguish RQs from other question types and insufficiency in the criteria;
3) how they discuss the roles linguistic indicators and context play in identifying an RQ;
4) how they analyse the functions of RQs, or in other words, why the speaker utters an RQ;
5) which data they use in their study of RQs.

The subsequent analytical chapters in the current study are carried out on the basis of these five points, aiming to introduce clarification, make new contributions to the above aspects, and to provide satisfactory answers to the current research questions.

2.1 Previous definitions and features of RQs

This section will show that previous definitions have revealed some features of RQs, but have failed to provide an operational criterion for identifying an RQ. To fill this gap, criteria to identify an RQ in terms of Relevance Theory will be discussed later in the methodology chapter.

Since the major commentators on RQs tend to be literary stylisticians, their definitions of RQs are drawn on first. The following four main features of RQs have been mentioned:

[5] The term 'answerhood' is used by Ilie (1994: 66). In the current study, it is employed to mean the answer type and states of answers to questions, such as: whether an answer is expected; whether the answer is explicit or implicit, overt or covert, negative or positive, null set or with varied versions, the proposition delivered by the answer and the distinguishing of answers from responses or replies; and whether the answer is already known by the addresser or the addressee.

i) The status of answers to RQs (henceforth, 'answerhood'): not expecting to receive an answer or not eliciting an answer (Cuddon, 1977; Yelland, Jones and Easton, 1983; Abrams and Harpham, 2012); the answer being obvious and so not expected (Shaw, 1972; Baldick, 2008); or the answer being self-evident (Shipley, 1955; Cuddon, 1977);

ii) The effects RQs achieve, i.e. for emphasis or for persuasion (discussed by Shipley, 1955; Shaw, 1972; Cuddon, 1977; Yelland, Jones and Easton, 1983; Baldick, 2008; Abrams and Harpham, 2012);

iii) Their function as an assertion[6] (Shipley, 1955; Yelland, Jones and Easton, 1983; Abrams and Harpham, 2012).

iv) The fact that they do not elicit information (Yelland, Jones and Easton, 1983; Baldick, 2008)

Although we are made aware of some features of RQs by these definitions, we are still left with questions. For example, in (1), how can we judge whether this question works as one expecting an answer, for instance when it is uttered by a manager towards the staff as an inquiry; or as one not expecting an answer, for instance when it is uttered as an excuse for punishing the employee who is late for work?

(1) Who showed up late to work today?

Hence, how can we determine the occasion as making an assertion rather than an inquiry? For the same reason, the second feature relating to the effects an RQ achieves cannot be decided before the rhetorical nature is determined.

With these puzzles unsolved, the current study turns to non-lexicographic researchers of RQs, in the hope of finding more operational criteria to help judge the rhetorical nature of a

[6] Even this commonly agreed belief has been challenged by Goto (2011). Goto maintains that some RQs do not assert anything, such as in "Do you know what time it is?" but provide clues to assumptions like *It's too late. You should go to bed.* I believe that for those researchers who claim that RQs function as assertions, assertions mean the same as 'intended assumptions'.

question.

The current study finds that some or all of the features in the above-cited definitions in stylistic dictionaries are echoed by individual researchers in defining an RQ as they see it, as follows:

<u>i) Not expecting an answer:</u> RQs are those questions that do not expect an overt answer/seek a reply/elicit an answer (Benjamin, 1972; Hudson, 1975; Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Frank, 1990; Rudanko, 1993; Han, 1998b; Taiwo, 2009) or in Zillmann's words (1972: 159), "an overt response of an 'opponent' is not possible, or, at least, not expected by the speaker." See Benjamin's example:

(2) "Is it later than we think?"
(Benjamin, 1972: 2)

Benjamin claims that very few contexts can be devised in which this addresser genuinely wants to know the answer to this question.

<u>ii) Implicit answer or response:</u> Some researchers define an RQ from the standpoint of the hearer, as a question that, in itself, implies a certain response. In other words, the answer is implicit within the question (Howard, 1991: 398), as in (3).

(3) Isn't it true that Germany was defeated in the Second World War?
(Made-up example based on Howard's structure "Isn't it true that…")

Some other researchers discuss an RQ from the point of view of the speaker, who they believe invites at least a mental response from the addressee (Anzilotti, 1982; Ilie, 1994; Rohde, 2006).

iii) Obviousness of the answer: Researchers (e.g. Rohde, 2006) also use obviousness of the answer to define an RQ, as is illustrated by Taiwo (2009: 2)

"…the writer is ready to tell his readers the answer, the answer is already known, or nobody, not even the writer, knows the answer."

iv) Disparity between form and function: RQs are interrogative in structure, but have the force of an assertion. In other words, they have the syntactic form of a question, but the semantic value of a declarative (Sadock, 1971; Benjamin, 1972; Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Quirk et al., 1985; Ilie, 1994; Han, 2002; Blankenship and Craig, 2006; Rohde, 2006; Sprouse, 2007; Taiwo, 2009; Badarneh, 2009; Kleinke, 2012;). In Blankenship and Craig's words (2006: 111), RQs are sentences:

> "Presenting a statement with a question stem at the beginning" e.g. *"Wouldn't you agree that the education system could benefit from increased funding from the state?"*

and in Rohde's words (2006: 153),

> "Properties of both questions and assertions influence the behaviour of RQs".

v) Relationship with negation: As with a yes-no question, a positive RQ is one that expresses a strong negative proposition, while a negative question is one that expresses a strong positive proposition (Quirk et al., 1972; Pope, 1976; Han, 2002; Koshik, 2002). As with the wh-rhetorical question, an implicit answer may replace the wh-word with a negative quantifier or by adding negation (Rudanko, 1993; Sprouse, 2007), as shown in (4a) and (4b):

(4a) "After all, does John ever help?"
implies "John doesn't ever help."
(4b) "After all, what does John know?"
implies "John knows nothing."
(Sprouse, 2007: 572)

We can see that, compared with definitions in dictionaries, RQs are defined by individual researchers in a more detailed way, involving more features of RQs. But there are two main problems in their definitions.

Firstly, individual researchers still fail to provide an operational criterion for distinguishing an RQ from a non-rhetorical one. For example, it is hard to say, without taking context into consideration, whether (5) expects an answer or not.

(5) Who told you this?

Example (5) may serve as a genuine question posed by someone trying to establish the source of the previous speaker's information; or it may serve as an RQ, which need not be answered but which expresses shock or disapproval either of the fact that the previous speaker has acquired the information, or of the nature of the information acquired.

So in different contexts, the interpretation of the question differs according to what sort of response, if any, has been suggested in the question. In other words, whether an utterance is a genuine question requiring an answer cannot be decided by judging the linguistic form of the interrogative alone.

Secondly, conflicting opinions exist concerning the above-mentioned features, especially when 'answerhood' to RQs is involved, which I will explain in the following sections.

2.1.1 Conflicting views on the claim that 'RQs do not expect an answer'

Some researchers believe that RQs do not seek/have an answer, as is claimed by Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 377) "...rhetorical questions do not have an answer (because they are not questions)". Others believe that RQs expect a specific and obvious answer, just as Pope (1976: 59) states, "negative rhetorical questions expect positive answers and positive rhetorical questions expect negative answers." (also see Benjamin, 1972: 1; Han, 2002: 218;

Rohde, 2006). In contrast, Ilie (1994: 94) made a much clearer and unambiguous claim (shared by Kleinke, 2012) that RQs elicit a mental response from the addressee. She believes the claim that RQs are non-answer eliciting questions is a misconception.

My own belief is that answer types of RQs should be divided into two kinds: the verbalised, explicit answer, and the non-verbalised, implied answer. This follows the claims by Ilie (1994: 102; made the same point by Zillmann, 1972: 2-3) that

> "Consequently, rhetorical questions are associated with two types of answer, namely an implicit rhetorical answer and an explicit answer. The implicit rhetorical answer is implied by the addresser and elicited from the addressee as an obligatory mental response. The explicit answer can be a verbalized response self-supplied by the addresser or an un-elicited optional verbalized response supplied by the addressee."

This distinction between explicit answers and implicit answers is quite useful in explaining why there exist sharply contrasted claims in the literature when discussing whether an answer is expected in an RQ.

I argue that although the claims of Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977) and Pope (1976) form a sharp contrast, they are not contradictory in nature. What Schmidt-Radefeldt actually means is that RQs do not expect a verbalised and explicit answer, while what Pope refers to is an implicit and non-verbalised answer. Since both authors fail to point out whether the answers mean "explicit" answers or "implicit" answers, both their claims are confusing.

Regarding implicit, non-verbalised answers, Rohde's analysis (2006: 134) is the most representative, to be verified by data in the current study. Rohde disagrees with the confining by Krifka (1995) and Han (1998b) of the implicit answers of RQs to negative answers - "Standard analyses typically associate RQs with single negative answers" (Rohde, 2006: 134). She observes counter-examples in her data from the Switchboard corpus, which contain a wide range of implicit answer types, to be demonstrated to have credibility, later in my study:

- implicit negative answer: *"Who lifted a finger to help?"* – implying 'Nobody';

- implicit positive answer: *"Has the educational system been so watered down that anybody who' s above average is now gifted?"* – implying 'Yes'.
- Non-null answer: *"Who always shows up late to class?"* – implying *Some specific person everybody knows*;
- Multiple answers: *"What's going to happen to these kids when they grow up?"* – implying various possibilities.

The fact that RQs do not expect an explicit answer does not mean that no explicit answer will be provided for an RQ. Cases of RQs with explicit answers provided are observed by previous researchers. Regarding explicit answers to RQs, the largest controversy is whether questions with explicit and verbalised answers belong to the family of RQs. Some researchers have excluded questions with overt answers from the scope of RQs. Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 379) maintains that RQs do not have an answer. He names RQs with answers as "the rhetorical question-answer sequences". Beekman and Callow (1974: 4) accept questions with answers provided by the addresser as RQs, and reject those with answers provided by the addressee. However, most researchers have not made such a distinction. Sprouse (2007) believes that RQs with answers provided are evidence showing that RQs are semantically the same as ordinary questions, in that they can both have answers and only differ pragmatically. To Sprouse, RQs with overt answers provided by different sides are one variety of RQ and studies on them are undoubtedly instrumental in helping to gain a fuller picture of the family of RQs, a viewpoint which I agree with in the current study. These RQs may involve those with answers provided overtly by the addresser or by the addressee; sometimes answers may be provided by both sides.

<u>i) Answers provided overtly by the addresser:</u> some previous researchers focus on investigating functions of RQs with answers provided overtly by the addresser. Lee-Goldman (2006b) finds that these answers have displayed a feature of "continuations", as in (6) given by him. The answer provided is an obvious one, functioning as a repetition, emphasis and continuation of the proposition delivered in the interrogative - *No one is going to marry such a man*.

(6) “Who is gonna marry him? <u>No one, obviously</u>!”

(Lee-Goldman, 2006b: ppt)

Lee-Goldman also finds that “wrong-opinioned RQs allow incorrect-answer continuation”, in (7) and (8). By deliberately providing an incorrect answer, the speaker stresses the absurdity of the question, making more apparent the rhetorical nature of the interrogative. In this way, s/he can strengthen the argumentative force of his/her utterance and consolidate his/her standpoint. A continuation of the speakers’ intention to criticise expressed in the RQs has been resumed in their answers - “your father” “some kind of entertainer”, which are apparently untrue.

(7) “Who do you think I am, <u>your father</u>?”

(8) “What doe he think I am, <u>some kind of entertainer</u>?”

(Lee-Goldman, 2006b: ppt)

In the analysis of how RQs in Arabic editorials help establish a political and ideological stance in political situations, Badarneh (2009: 654-655) addresses those RQs with answers immediately provided by the addresser (with the term ‘rogatio’ in his description, following Kertzer, 1987 and Volosinov, 1973). Badarneh argues that, as in (9), the editor “stands in for” the reader, by providing an answer which should be the job of the reader. In this way, “the voices of the newspaper and the reader merge.” Badarneh believes that this is a strategy to suggest that “a complete solidarity in assumptions and values exists between the editorial and the reader”.

(9) “Can any country in the world invade, for example, a European country, overthrow its government, and execute its rulers without accountability or resistance for [sic: to] this action by European countries? <u>The answer is definitely ‘No!’</u>”

(Badarneh, 2009: 655)

In the current study, I argue what Badarneh (2009) emphasises is actually only one kind of answer overtly provided to RQs by the addresser - the answer provided is in conformity with that of the implied answer. However, Badarneh says nothing about other RQs whose answers provided are deviant from expected answers, a point Ilie (1994: 109) has discussed. Ilie discusses this phenomenon as an RQ being "recontextualized by cancelling the implicit answer". The current study will investigate this type of RQ to reveal their functions and discuss their roles in the ultimate goal of persuading the addressee.

Lauerbach (2007: 1390) points out another function of those RQs answered by "orators and authors", as "building their arguments around anticipating possible objections from a projected audience or readership." In this manner, the orators and authors can hold the joystick in their hands and turn the argument in the direction in their interests.

The researchers discussed so far analyse in detail features of RQs with answers provided by the addresser but they have not attempted to make a comparison between RQs and expository questions, failing to realise that questions with answers supplied may also be expository questions. The current study, in the following analytical chapters, will employ important concepts of 'implicature' and 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory to make a distinction between RQs and expository questions.

<u>ii) Answers/replies provided overtly by the addressee:</u> Answers provided by an addressee to RQs can serve as proof that the addressee has recognised the rhetorical reading of the question and has accepted the proposition thus conveyed, just as shown by the reply in (10) in one broadcast interview (cited from Koshik, 2002: 1855). Koshik points out that the response *"I disagree with that"* indicates that the interviewee considers this negative question as an assertion which he can agree or disagree with. This demonstrates RQs functioning as an assertion.

(10) "The interviewer: didn't you put the Vice President and Maggie and all the others in your administration top side in a very vulnerable position?"

"The interviewee: <u>I disagree with that.</u> How are we vulnerable because…"

(Koshik, 2002: 1855)

Similar opinions are held by Ilie (1994: 57). She finds that the addressee's replies of agreement/disagreement "you are right" or "you are wrong" can follow RQs but not genuine questions. These replies support "the addresser-commitment to the implicit answer." and "confirm the addressees' inference of the indirect statement derived from the implicit answer to the RQ." See her example of utterance exchanges in (11).

(11) "Winfrey: Not only that, you grew up with Bananza and Pa and-

Landon: That's right.

Winfrey: Yeah, I mean, what could be better than that?

<u>Landon: That's right.</u>"

(Ilie, 1994: 50)

Rohde (2006: 142) recognises that confirmations and backchannels after RQs, like *"uh, huh, right, mmhmm"*, align more closely with statements, thus supporting the claims that RQs do not function like regular questions.

Koshik (2002: 1851) investigates how teachers use rhetorical positive questions (RPQs), which convey negative assertions in order to point out the errors existing in their students' second-language writing assignments. Koshik claims that both the student's answer 'huh uh, heh' and the teacher's response to the student's answer 'yeah' "display a preference for agreement with the stance displayed in the RPQ."

The current study will investigate why, in some cases, the addresser provides an answer to the RQ s/he utters, how this is related to his/her ultimate purpose of persuading the addressee and how this phenomenon can be interpreted in Relevance Theory, together with a distinction between RQs and expository questions (each sharing the feature of having answers following them).

2.1.2 Conflicting views on the belief that 'answers to RQs are uninformative'

As to the question whether the answer to an RQ is uninformative, Van Rooy's opinion (2003) is that answers to RQs are informative and cannot be predicted; while Rohde (2006: 139) disagrees with him and claims that answers to RQs are un-informative. The current study would like to clarify the concepts of 'implied answer' (mentioned by Ene, 1983; Frank, 1990; Ilie, 1994; Badarneh, 2009; Kleinke, 2012) and 'implied proposition' expressed as "implied statements" in Benjamin's terms (1972) or "implied assertion" in Koshik's terms (2002), by arguing that implied proposition is one special kind of implied answer.

This classification helps explain the above two conflicting claims. What Van Rooy means is the implied proposition of an RQ, which is informative and unpredictable; while what Rohde means is an implied answer, which is mutually known and uninformative. This is illustrated in the following question (12) (a made-up one). The implicit answer 'Mike' is uninformative in that it is known to all participants in the conference, but the implied proposition *Mike delivered the most boring lecture this afternoon* is informative. In addition, the concept of 'informative' and 'information seeking' should also be distinguished. The current study maintains that RQs are not information-seeking but they are informative; explicit and verbalised answers to RQs are not expected but the addressee is expected to infer the implied proposition of the question.

(12) Who delivered the most boring lecture this afternoon?

This classification also helps to explain the existence of the so-called 'answerless RQs', what Anzilotti (1982: 299) names "unanswered desperate questions". Anzilotti believes that it is difficult to find a corresponding and appropriate answer to questions like: *"How do we protect…?" "When the government cannot…?" "My god, what's going to happen?" "What words are there to describe the pain of a loved one's death in such a brutal fashion?"* The current study believes that these RQs are actually not answerless, since although they may not deliver specific implied answers, they do convey implied propositions: *It's difficult for the* *individual power to protect…; The government needs to shoulder its responsibility; Terrible things may happen; and the pain of a loved one's death in such a brutal fashion is beyond words/unbearable*.

Regarding the scope of 'answers to RQs', Ilie (1994: 102-129) makes a clear distinction between answers, replies and responses which is also shared by Kleinke (2012: 184-185):

i. Those answers responding to the wh-element in the questions, for example (13).

ii. Those replies responding to "the statement derived from the implicit answer conveyed by the rhetorical question". In (14), the inferrable implied answer is *There is nothing wrong with calling a sex line*. So the reply is a response to the implicit answer: *Being able to call a sex line is what I call freedom*.

iii. Those non-verbalised responses, such as gestures, laughter, applause.

(13) "…And when they get there, are they likely to be the slightest bit interested in what he is wearing while making that mousetrap? Of course not."

(Ilie, 1994: 103)

(14) "…So, if somebody willingly calls a sex line, what's wrong with it? That's called freedom."

(Ilie, 1994: 116)

In the current study, henceforth, 'answers to RQs' are defined as any of the above-discussed responses, answers or replies, explicit or implicit, verbalised or non-verbalised; or implied proposition; in other words, the term 'answer' is used in the current study to represent all these kinds.

2.1.3 Conflicting views on the claim that 'answers to RQs are obvious'

The previous researchers touch upon the obviousness of answers to RQs (Shipley, 1955; Shaw, 1972; Pope, 1976; Cuddon, 1977; Ilie, 1994; Koshik, 2002; Baldick, 2008; Badarneh, 2009; Taiwo, 2009; Goto, 2011 etc.). Special significance is attached here to the controversies existing in their arguments, since I believe that 'obviousness' is closely related to 'mutual manifestness', an important concept to be applied in the current study.

Based upon the notion of 'obviousness' proposed by Althusser (1984), Badarneh (2009: 654) gives a detailed description of the concept of 'obviousness' and how it is used to lead the reader into adopting the position of the editorial. According to him, 'obviousness' mainly means "common ground inviting agreement in discourse" and "self-evident assumptions automatically accepted". Barthes (1975: 20) points out that 'obviousness' is closely related to "cultural code" with a sense of "we all know".

Most previous researchers have no dispute over the belief that the speakers already know the answer when uttering an RQ, just as Koshik (2002: 1854) points out "The questioner's known state of knowledge decides that RPQs (reversed polarity questions) are heard as epistemic stance displays rather than as information-seeking questions."

Pope (1976: 36) maintains that answers to RQs are obvious to both speaker and hearer and hence they "do not need to be expressed" (an opinion shared by Rudanko, 1993; Rohde, 2006: 135). However, Ilie (1994: 86) believes that the answer to an RQ "is not necessarily known beforehand to the addressee, but that it is inferrable from the pragmatic factors involved in the contextual configuration". Actually, the answer can be "either known (partially or completely) or not known to the addressee." The addressee infers the answer only after the utterance has been completed, not before. I agree with Ilie's opinion in the current study.

In contrast, Goto (2011: 5) holds a contrary opinion and believes that answers to RQs may not be obvious, not only to the addressee, but also to the addresser. She cites Sperber and Wilson's example (15).

(15) Watching a news story about a child who had been murdered, the speaker utters to her husband

"What monster would dare to harm a sleeping child?"

(Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 247)

Goto argues that the answer to this RQ is not obvious, since the hearer cannot arrive at the answer by simply changing the wh-question element into a negative one: *No monster would dare to harm a sleeping child*, which is contrary to the reality that the sleeping baby got murdered. Nor has a specific and obvious answer such as *the monster is a certain individual X* been conveyed. Instead, it is the implicit assumption of the speaker that *the murderer is a monstrous person* or that *the news is terrible,* rather than an obvious answer, that is conveyed.

I disagree with Goto's claim and believe that whether the answer is obvious or not depends on the definition and scope of 'answer'. As was discussed in 2.1.2, in the current study an answer to an RQ is not confined to a specific answer to the wh-word, or a 'yes' or 'no' to a 'yes or no' question. It should be as broad as including the intended assumption implied by the addresser. I believe that when previous researchers claim that answers to RQs are obvious or self-evident, what they actually mean is either 'an answer' or the intended assumption, not confined to the literal-sense of 'answer.' An answer in a limited sense may not be obvious, but an intended assumption must be obvious (already known or can be inferred; 'mutually manifest' in terms of Relevance Theory) to both the speaker and the hearer, in the case of a successfully communicated RQ. I will argue that this is the sufficient and necessary condition for a question to be successfully intended by the addresser and interpreted by the addressee as an RQ. If the underlying proposition is not mutually manifest, it will lead to failed communication: either the addressee mistakes a genuine question for a rhetorical one when the proposition interpreted by her as being 'mutually manifest' is not the one intended by the addresser; or the addressee mistakes an RQ for a genuine one when the proposition intended by the addresser is not mutually manifest to her.

2.1.4 Conflicting views on the argument that ‘RQs observe the rule of polarity shift’

Polarity shift, which refers to the rule that those questions negative in form actually indicate positive assertions, and those positive in form indicate negative assertions, has been discussed widely as a feature of RQs in the literature. Generally, an RQ has the illocutionary force of the opposite polarity from what is asked (Sadock, 1971,1974; Quirk et al., 1972: 826; Pope, 1976; Ene, 1983; Rudanko, 1993: 29-30; Slot, 1993; Ilie, 1994; Han, 2002; Koshik, 2002; Schaffer, 2005; Egg, 2007; Moshavi, 2011). However, Lee-Goldman (2006a: 9) argues that the class of RQs is not monolithic in the sense that they cannot all be analysed as asserting “the opposite constructions”. Exceptions in all four types of RQ - rhetorical yes-no questions, rhetorical wh-questions, rhetorical alternative questions and RQs serving as answers - have been observed by previous researchers as follows.

Slot (1993: 100) notices exceptions to polarity shift in yes-no RQs, as shown in her examples *“Are you crazy?” “Is that ever beautiful?” and “Have I got news for you?”,* and sums up the tendency for polarity shift not to occur by saying: “negatively phrased questions always presuppose a positive answer, positively phrased questions allow the possibility of either a negative or positive answer.” However, Slot (1993: 63) is quite cautious in her claim, by adding that the rule is not always applicable: “we can only say that it ‘often’ seems to be the case that these patterns apply.”

Pope (1976: 59) claims that, for rhetorical wh-questions, positive question forms may allow positive answers, when those answers are self-evident in context (her view shared by Rudanko, 1993). Consider Pope’s example in (16).

(16) “Who brought you into this world, anyway? Who taught you everything you know, took care of you, worked her fingers to the bone for you?”
“You, Mama”.
(Pope, 1976: 59)

Kleinke (2012: 178) makes a comparison of features of RQs appearing in English and German chat rooms and forums and observes in her data other "deviating cases" concerning "a lack of polarity shift" in alternative questions/disjunctive questions, such as her example (17). She finds that "the alternatives imply answers with contrasting polarities". In (17), the answer is "No, not Muslims, but yes, selected people with their opinion".

(17) "<u>Muslims or selected people with there [sic] opinion?</u> Please stop making such generalizing comments. Muslims are not one entity. They are different people with different points of views and personality [sic], good and bad, kind and evil， ..."
(Kleinke, 2012： 178)

Schaffer (2005: 440) points out another exception to polarity shift in the form of RQs serving as answers. Schaffer believes that RQs serving as answers need to reflect and agree with features of genuine questions in their syntactic structures and in their polarity. Therefore, exceptions to polarity shift can be seen in this type of RQ. This is illustrated in (18), the RQ *"Does an art student know Picasso?"* indicates a positive answer *Certainly, I know you.*, rather than a negative shift. Schaffer's view is shared by Norrick (1984, 1993); Han (1998b, footnote 4, p9); Lee-Goldman (2006a); Rohde (2006: 137); Goto (2011) etc.

(18) "Do you know me?"
"Do I know you? Does an art student know Picasso?"
(Schaffer, 2005: 440)

I agree that polarity shift is one important feature of an RQ, but will not use it as a defining feature, since an RQ can also show a matched polarity with a positive form of question expressing a positive implicature. We move to a brief review of the literature centring on negativity, polarity items, negative polarity items (henceforth, NPIs), and NPI licensing.

i) Negativity: Anzilotti (1982: 295) maintains that "the majority of RQs contains a strong negative component, either explicitly or implicitly. Opposition to something positive is usually the rule."

ii) Polarity items and negative polarity items: Ene (1983a: 48) investigates the uses of polarity items, pointing out "polarity items are semantic items that carry either an affirmative or a negative implication"; She points out *pretty,* and *would rather* as instances of affirmative polarity items, generally appearing in affirmative contexts; she also discusses the use of 'negative polarity items', which generally appear only in negative contexts, such as *bat an eye*, *lift a finger to help, to be worth beans,* and *drink a drop* in her examples (19)-(22).

(19) "Who bats an eye when the boss comes around?"

(20) "Who lifted a finger to help when I needed it?"

(21) "What metropolitan newspaper is worth beans?"

(22) "Who drank a drop of your brandy?"

(Ene, 1983: 48)

iii) NPI licensing: Han (1998b: 3) shows that NPI licensing in ordinary questions and RQs is not the same. Ordinary yes-no questions license weak NPIs, such as *any, ever, still,* and *yet* (Ladusaw, 1980; Linebarger, 1987; Progovac, 1993; Higginbotham, 1993, cited in Han, 1998b: 3-4; shared by Borkin, 1971, Lawler, 1971 and Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998: 145) as in *Has anyone finished the work?*. However, strong NPIs, such as *lift a finger, budge an inch, until, at all, a bit,* and *in weeks*, are licensed only in RQs, as in the examples (23) - (26).

(23) "Who has seen Harriet in years?"

(24) "Does John read anything at all?"

(25) "Did a single person read Barriers?"

(Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998: 145)

(26) "Did John budge an inch when Sam was in trouble?"

(Han, 1998b: 3)

iv) NPI licensing in negative rhetorical questions: Conflicting opinions exist regarding whether NPIs are licensed in negative RQs. Han (1998b: 4) states in her research, but without sound evidence or a convincing analysis, that weak NPI cannot be licensed in negative RQs, when she claims "While an ordinary negative question can contain a weak NPI, a rhetorical negative question cannot." Han believes questions (27) - (29) cannot be interpreted rhetorically as *John visited someone* or *Everybody has been to Seoul* or *Everyone said something interesting at the seminar*. The questions, in Han's understanding, are not RQs but genuine questions.

(27) "Didn't John visit anyone?"

(28) "Who hasn't ever been to Seoul?"

(29) "Who didn't say anything interesting at the seminar?"

(Han, 1998b: 4)

Gutierrez-Rexach (1998: 148-149), in contrast, regards (30), having the same structure as (28), as a typical example of a negative RQ, suggesting a positive assertion "*Everybody has been to New York sometime.*"

(30) "Who hasn't ever been to New York?"

(Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998: 148-149)

2.1.5 Conflicting views on the belief that 'shared knowledge is required in defining an RQ'

Conflicting opinions also exist in the literature concerning whether shared knowledge is indispensable in defining an RQ. Slot (1993: 78) points out that the degree of shared knowledge determines the rhetorical reading of a question (mentioned also by Badarneh, 2009). To her, shared knowledge can mean shared information among the community of language user; or "commonplace expressions-idiomatic expression", such as *"Are you out of your mind?"* or *"Who died and made you god?"*. She believes that if the speaker is quite creative and invents some expressions that no one has tried before, s/he will run the risk of being misunderstood and “left at the mercy of individual readers and personal assessment about what is asked genuinely as a question and what not.” Rohde (2006) employs Gunlogson’s model of ‘Common Ground’ (2001) to argue that, to understand an RQ, participants need to have shared commitment to the implied answer, such as ‘the high tax rate’ in (32). As to the similarity of the answers, divisions have been made between “singleton answers type” as in (31) “Dallas Cowboys” example and “the multiple answers type” as in (32) “the tax rate” example. In the singleton answer type, “direct comparison” can be made between answers of the speaker and the addressee. If the implied answers of the addresser and addressee are similar, the rhetorical reading will be recognised and accepted; if not, the rhetorical reading will fail. In the multiple answer types, although different answers might be provided covertly by different participants, such as “very high!”, “unimaginable” and “should be ridiculous”, according to Rohde, they need to fall “at the same end of a contextually relevant scale”, here, the high end, not the low or medium end, of the tax rate.

(31) “A: So, who’s your favorite team?

B: Who do you think? The Dallas Cowboys!’”

(Rohde, 2006: 135)

(32) “How high are taxes going to be when my kids are my age?”

(Rohde, 2006: 135)

Although most researchers admit that shared knowledge of the answer is one distinctive feature of RQs, some researchers challenge the view, claiming that mutual knowledge of the answer is not a necessity. Goto (2011: 6) points out that in her example (33), it could be possible that only after Sue’s utterance is made can John access Sue’s assumption that *it is his fault,* and not before the utterance is made.

(33) “Sue and John are friends. John feels depressed when his girlfriend is leaving him.

“John: Finally, she is leaving.

Sue: Whose fault is that?’

Speaker’s assumption (i.e., answer): It is John’s fault.”

(Goto, 2011: 6)

In the current study, I consider that mutual knowledge of the answer (the intended assumption) is a necessary and sufficient condition for the ‘felicity’ of an RQ. In Goto’s example, without mutual knowledge, *“Whose fault is that?”* will serve as a genuine question raised by Sue to inquire into the reason why John split with his girlfriend. Although I align myself with Goto’s claim that it is not necessary for this mutual knowledge to be a presupposition before the utterance is made, I believe that the intended assumption must be mutually manifest at the moment the question is interpreted by the hearer. In other words, it must be known by the speaker and can be inferred by the hearer. In addition, Goto (2011: 6-7) says, citing Clark (1996: 100), the term ‘mutual knowledge’ has its defects, of an “infinitely iterated” nature: “B knows that A knows that B knows that p (p=iterated proposition) and so on ad infinitum”. So the current study, like Goto, adopts Sperber and Wilson’s term ‘mutual manifestness’ to take the place of ‘mutual knowledge’ (see 3.3.5 for the definition of ‘mutual manifestness’ in Relevance Theory).

Some of these problems and the complexity in defining an RQ have been noticed by previous researchers (Schemidit-Radefeldt, 1977; Frank, 1990; Lee-Goldman, 2006a; Goto, 2011). For example, Frank (1990) has a concern about the validity of defining an RQ as a question asked without intention of receiving an answer, and claims that it is impossible for the analyst to know the intention of the speaker based only on form, which is subjective. See Frank’s assertion (1990: 737) “because RQ’s [sic: RQs] rely on analysts’ subjective judgments regarding speakers’ true intent, something which cannot be ascertained on the basis of form alone…”. When attempting to decide the exact number of RQs in his data, Frank (1990: 728) is quite tentative in claiming that no more than 10-15 “clearly identifiable, non-ambiguous” examples have been found and calls this “a number which must be considered approximate, given its basis, in the analyst’s judgment.”

So far we can see there exist no unanimous opinions on the above-discussed features of RQs in the literature. The absence of an operational criterion for defining an RQ poses a serious problem for the study of RQs. As a result, disparities are frequently seen in the literature, with cases of RQs used by some researchers unacceptable to others.

(34) "It is not Ophelia??"

(Kleinke, 2012: 177)

(35) "Can we make it? If so, will it work? Where can we market it? Where can we market it cheaply?"

(Cuddon, 1977)

In the current study, (34) is considered invalid as an RQ in that it is not even in the form of an interrogative. The questions in (35) may also be rejected as RQs, although Cuddon considers them as a series of RQs in succession for emphasis, since they do not conform to the commonly held criterion that answers to an RQ are self-evident. It is hard for the hearers to know the answers from these questions.

After researchers notice the difficulty in the identification and interpretation of an RQ and become aware that linguistic form alone cannot be a sufficient criterion to identify an RQ, they often resort to 'context', which is a step forward, just as Kleinke (2012: 177) claims "The addresser's intention to imply an answer in order to make a point in the discussion is clearly derivable from the context".

However, even those researchers (Schaffer, 2005; Badarneh, 2009; Kleinke, 2012) who discuss the role 'context' plays in identifying RQs fail to commit to a criterion for how RQs are extracted. They illustrate the features of RQs in those questions' respective contexts by directly declaring how many RQs they find and what these RQs are, avoiding a detailed description of how RQs are distinguished from non-rhetorical questions or even avoiding a definition of RQs (Zillmann and Cantor, 1974; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998; Blankenship and

Craig, 2006). To investigate the features of RQs, this uncertainty in identifying RQs must first be resolved, which is one of the main objectives of the current study.

2.2 Previous distinction between RQs and other question types

Any analyst studying RQs based on authentic data will unavoidably face a problem: Is this question an RQ? S/he can judge the rhetorical nature of a question by taking one of two approaches, either by distinguishing it from other question types, or by seeing whether it matches the generally agreed definition of an RQ (see 1.1). The distinction is mainly from two aspects: its linguistic indicators and its context. This naturally leads to another two questions: what are the other question types and how do we tell them apart? The following two sections will be devoted respectively to how these two approaches have been discussed in previous literature.

We begin with the approach taken to distinguishing RQs from other question types by previous researchers. A review of the literature shows that researchers either use invented RQs (Pope, 1976; Han, 1998a; Han, 1998b; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998; Lee-Goldman, 2006a, etc.) or, even if they have corpus data, they do not state how to distinguish RQs from other question types in the context by directly claiming the number of RQs and discussing their features.

Even for those linguists attempting to make a distinction, most confine themselves to a simple dichotomy, distinguishing RQs from information questions (another name for genuine questions). Some researchers (Llewelyn, 1964; Benjamin, 1972; Sadock, 1974; Schimidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Howard, 1991; Slot, 1993; Kleinke, 2012) distinguish RQs from information questions by using linguistic indicators, e.g. introductory phrases such as *after all* and *you know*, emphasising particles such as *really* and *actually* and exclamatory particles such as *the hell* and *for God's sake*. Some judge an RQ by the co-occurrence of a Negative Polarity Item (NPI) (Frank, 1990; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998; Han, 1998a; Han, 1998b; Taiwo, 2009). Others resort to context to distinguish an RQ from a genuine question (Frank, 1990; Ilie, 1994; Schaffer, 2005; Rohde, 2006).

A distinction between RQs and other question types, other than information questions is even rarer. Among these other question types, the following eight question types have been mentioned by previous researchers, although they have not provided a unified distinguishing criterion.

2.2.1 Expository questions

Since both RQs and expository questions have answers following them, the situation becomes messy when it comes to the distinguishing between these two types of question. No agreed distinction has been reached, and contradictory cases are frequently observed in the previous research.

Cuddon (1977: 572) identifies what he calls "another fundamental form of rhetorical question": one followed by an answer provided by the speaker himself. His example is Falstaff's disquisition on "honor" in King Henry IV, (Part I, ii, 131) *"Who? I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith"* Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 380) refers to wh-questions embedded in matrix-sentences introduced by "Do you know" as "the rhetorical question-answer sequences" and she points out that this type is distinct from other types of RQ. Consider her example (36). However, these linguists both fail to point out which kinds of question with answers provided are RQs, and which are not.

(36) "Do you know how many people live in that flat? A group of six adults, ten children, two dogs and one tortoise."
(Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977: 380)

In contrast, Sperber and Wilson (1986: 251) claim that questions with similar linguistic patterns, like (37), are expository questions rather than RQs. Pope (1976: 45) excludes (38) from her consideration of RQs, since although answers are obvious to the speaker, they are not necessarily obvious to the hearer. But these researchers too have not provided a clear criterion for distinguishing between these two question types.

(37) “What are the main objections to this approach? First…”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 251)

(38) “Who do I support for President? Why, Ralph Nader, of course!”

(Pope, 1976: 45)

Ilie’s elaboration (1994: 4) on the answer of expository questions as being “not normally inferable” and her claim that in an expository question, the speaker is not to imply the answer but to “spell it out explicitly and to add further supporting evidence for it”, is enlightening for the current study. The concepts of ‘mutual manifestness’ and ‘implicature’ in Relevance Theory will be used in the current study to distinguish RQs and expository questions, a point to be further illustrated in Chapter 5.

2.2.2 ‘Inviting involvement’ questions

Ilie (1994: 1-3) notices that utterances such as *“would you like to join us for dinner?”* do not function as genuine questions, because they do not elicit an informative answer but work as a token of acceptance or refusal of an invitation. She calls this type “invitations in the form of interrogative”. Similar questions are found in the current study to involve the audience in an action. I, therefore, identify them as ‘inviting involvement’ questions.

2.2.3 Self-addressed questions

As is pointed out by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 251), self-addressed questions, like (39), are “produced in the absence of any audience, as pure intellectual speculations or musings”. The addresser poses the question to himself/herself and it is a self-introspective process in his/her inner world.

(39) “Why do the leaves of different trees go different colors in autumn?”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 251)

2.2.4 Leading questions

Conflicting opinions exist in the literature regarding leading questions, like (40), which are commonly seen in cross-examinations in the court. Taiwo (2009: 5) maintains that leading questions belong to the family of RQs, since they suggest “what the answer should be”. Ilie (1994: 91) and Kleinke (2012: 176) hold opinions contradictory to Taiwo, that a leading question differs from an RQ in that although both the judge and the defendant know the answer, the judge who raises such a question expects an answer, either for the purpose of inviting a confirmation from the defendant or providing a chance for the defendant to make a self-defence, as shown by Ilie’s example (41). As will be demonstrated later in the analysis category chapter, my study proves to be in line with Ilie’s argument.

(40) “You saw the accused at the scene of the crime, didn’t you?”

(Taiwo, 2009: 5)

(41) “Did you ever discover where Cain got his wife?”

(Ilie, 1994: 91)

2.2.5 Examination questions

Ilie (1994: 80), Kleinke (2012: 176) and Sperber and Wilson (1986: 251) discuss examination questions, like (42), which are frequently observed in classroom discourse. Their answers are uninformative in that the teacher knows the answer but s/he expects it to be provided by the students to test whether they know the answer.

(42) The teacher: “What were the causes of the First World War?”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 251)

2.2.6 Guess questions

Goto (2011: 7) illustrates guess questions by citing an example (43) from Wilson and Sperber (1988). Guess questions are those raised for the purpose of eliciting a guess from the addressee, when the addresser already knows the answer.

(43) "[A mother, hiding a chocolate in her hand, utters to her child] Which hand is it in?"
(Originally Sperber and Wilson's example, cited from Goto, 2011: 7)

2.2.7 Formulaic questions

Ilie (1994: 1-3) has argued that although considered by native speakers as RQs, formulaic questions, including the greeting idioms *"How do you do?"* and *"Are you all right?"* are actually not members of the RQ family. They are not "self-answered", nor do they imply the answer the same way as an RQ, although they share one feature with RQs, in that none of them "elicits an information–supplying answer". As a formulaic way of greeting, these types of question elicit a response by set syntactic structures without exception. Such questions are recognised as one specific type of question, separate from other question types (Ene, 1983; Ilie, 1994; Kleinke, 2012).

2.2.8 Philosophical (speculative) questions

Kleinke (2012: 176), following Ilie (1994: 2), names questions like *"to be or not to be…"* as philosophical questions. Kleinke believes that a typical feature which distinguishes these philosophical questions from RQs is that a philosophical question is 'unanswerable'; in other words, neither the question-raiser nor the hearer knows the answer. The purpose of posing this kind of question is to elicit deep thinking over some perplexing answerless social or philosophical phenomenon. In contrast, an RQ is 'self-answered' and its answer can be easily inferred from the question. Goto (2011: 7) calls these kinds of question 'speculative questions', and illustrates them by citing an example (44) from Blakemore (1992: 115), which highlights the fact that the addresser does not know the answer and expects nobody to provide the answer.

(44) "Now, who is going to win the by-election tomorrow?"
(Blakemore, 1992: 115)

These eight question types are those discussed in the literature on RQs, some of which I expect to see in my data. As we can see from the above analysis, previous researchers distinguish RQs from non-RQs mostly from the point of view of whether and to whom an answer is known, and the functions of questions, but their studies only cover one or two question types. They have not provided a unified criterion to distinguish between major question types.

Ilie (1994, 81-83; followed by Kleinke, 2012) uses information-eliciting and answer-eliciting to tell RQs apart from examination questions and information questions. She claims that examination questions are not information-eliciting but answer-eliciting; information questions are both information-eliciting and answer-eliciting. In contrast, RQs are neither information-eliciting nor answer-eliciting. They are mental-response-eliciting. Ilie's classification by using 'answerhood' as a criterion is enlightening to the current study. However, it is still too subjective to judge whether a mental response has been elicited by a question.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 252; followed by Goto, 2011) make an initial attempt to provide a comprehensive distinction between the major question types. They distinguish different questions by the criterion that "the hearer must always make some assumption about who the speaker thinks its answer would be relevant to": RQs are relevant to the hearer, in that an RQ is always "prompting the retrieval of information" relevant to the hearer. The same goes for expository questions since the speaker offers the information to the hearer. Genuine questions are speaker-relevant, since the speaker believes the hearer can supply him/her with the answer. Speculative questions are also speaker-relevant, in that the speaker expects the answer although the hearer is not in a position to answer it. The speaker intends to test how the hearers master the subject by raising an examination question, so examination questions are speaker-relevant. Sperber and Wilson's question types are generalised in the following table:

Table 2.1 Sperber and Wilson's distinction between different question types

	Answer relevant to addresser	Answer relevant to addressee	Examples (by Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 251)
1. genuine question	√		When will you be arriving this evening? (invented example by current study)
2. self-addressed question	√		Why do the leaves of different trees go different colours in autumn?
3. exam question	√		What were the causes of the First World war?
4. guess question	√		[A mother, hiding a chocolate in her hand, utters to her child] Which hand is it in? (W&S, 1988)
5. expository question		√	What are the main objections to this approach? First…
6. rhetorical question		√	When did you say you were going to give up smoking?

However, as can be seen, relevance alone can only help to distinguish questions into two types: addresser-relevant and addressee-relevant. Nor is it sufficient for distinguishing further the questions within these two types. As will be shown in the analysis category chapter, in the data of the current study, there exist a large number of questions with answers provided, just as in *"What are the main objections to this approach? First…"* It can be judged by Sperber and Wilson's criterion that this question is relevant to the hearer, in that the information provided is in the interest of the hearer. Are they then RQs with answers provided or expository questions? It is a pity that Sperber and Wilson have not made more attempts to make a further classification of these questions. Sperber and Wilson's approach is therefore insufficient to meet the demand of distinguishing RQs from other question types in the current study. However, the previous research enlightens me in using 'answerhood' as a unified distinguishing criterion, and the current study will take a step further in the distinction between more types of question, by applying the concept of 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory to analyse a question's 'answerhood', which will be discussed in the analysis category chapter.

The following section will turn to the second approach discussed in the literature when identifying an RQ, which is judged from the perspective of a question's linguistic indicators and context, and the corresponding explanatory models: the Code Model and the inferential model.

2.3 Previous identification of RQs by linguistic indicators and context

2.3.1 Linguistic indicators

The above analysis has shown how previous researchers distinguish RQs from non-RQs. An identification of linguistic indicators can also be instructive for the addressee to judge correctly the nature of an RQ, just as Slot (1993: 89) claims,
"it is important for a writer to signal in some way that the information that is seemingly asked for in fact is already available to him and that the answer is not really wanted."…and "actively steer the reader in the identification of the indirectness."

Which indicators are frequently employed by the speaker to communicate his/her rhetorical intention to the hearers and help the hearers to avoid misunderstandings by providing an unintended answer? Are they decisive or just instructive? The following sections will investigate the literature on linguistic indicators influencing the rhetorical reading of a question.

Conflicting opinions exist regarding whether the linguistic form can serve to decide the rhetorical reading of a question. Howard (1991: 403; shared by Slot, 1993) holds a positive opinion that the form of the question implies the answer and thus defines an RQ: "RQs were defined as those which suggested a certain response, where the answer was implied by the form of the question. All questions not fitting this definition were defined as non-rhetorical." Howard mainly discusses the syntactic structures. Three forms of RQ have been discussed by him: rhetorical-agreement questions (negative RQs in the current study), in the form of 'Isn't/shouldn't…'; rhetorical-concession questions, in the form of 'why/how/what good…if/when…'; and rhetorical-doubt questions, in the form of 'Do you really…', 'Are you sure…?' as in *"Isn't there more to choosing a phone system than just choosing a phone?"*

Other researchers hold similar positions but go into more detail. Kleinke (2012: 180) calls lexical and syntactic patterns indicating the rhetorical reading of a question "structural contextualization clues", claiming that "structural contextualisation clues were used in addition to the analysis of the immediate context". In her analysis, structural contextualisation clues include

"modal particles: (*just, schon, doch*)…", "chains of question marks (and sometimes subsequent exclamation marks), weak polarity items (*any, ever, still*), formulaic expressions (*since when? Who knows? What's the point? Who do you think you are? What do you mean?*), deontic as well as epistemic modal verbs[7], and politeness markers."

Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 381) claims that

"RQs generally contain certain formal indications by which they are to be interpreted as 'rhetorical': intonation pattern, special particles (adverbials), non-deontic modal verbs, and verbal mood (conjunctive [sic: subjunctive] or conditional) are to be regarded as the main linguistic indicators for whether a sentence is to be regarded as rhetorical (assertive) or not." In the case of deletion or absence of these indicators, "the rhetorical speech act can fail". He refers to "other than, (else) if not" as "expressions of exclusive absoluteness" to indicate the sole rhetorical reading of a question as in

(45) "Who else burns a cheque if not an idiot?"

7 Epistemic modality is concerned with the theoretical possibility of prepositions being true or not true (including likelihood and certainty); deontic modality, is concerned with possibility and necessity in terms of freedom to act (including permission and duty).

(Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977: 382)

Sadock (1974) believes that, unlike lexical indicators *after all* and *yet*, *by any chance* can only be used in information questions. Gutierrez-Rexach (1998: 142) cites Sadock's research and yet seems to have misunderstood Sadock's claims, on the assumption that *by any chance* can only be used in an RQ. See his words:
"The parenthetical expression 'by any chance' may be used in rhetorical question, but not in an information question. The question in (10) [example 46 in my sequence] tends to be not interpreted as a request for information".

(46) "Is John coming, by any chance?"
(Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998: 142)

The present study, in agreement with Sadock, assumes that this question is an information question. *By any chance* is not a rhetorical indicator in the same way as *after all* or *yet.*

However, some researchers hold contrary negative opinions towards the decisive role of linguistic indicators in RQs. Hudson (1975: 736) expresses a negative attitude that "…there is nothing in the form of an RQ that makes it clear to the hearer that he is not expected to give an answer"; "a question is recognised as rhetorical from its context or from the kind of knowledge that a hearer has" (Llewelyn, 1964: 78 holds a similar view). In contrast with Howard's view (1991) that the rhetorical reading of a question is determined by its syntactic form, Frank (1990: 736) denies the decisive role of syntactic forms and maintains that the "assessment of performative intent" in Speech Act Theory cannot determine the rhetorical reading of a question, which is, otherwise, decided by "the clues provided by speakers", combined with hearers' responses. Examples (47) and (48) are his supporting examples, which can either be information questions or RQs when isolated from their contexts.

(47) "Where did you get that from?"
(48) "Now, who can understand that?"

(Frank, 1990: 736)

However, previous researchers have not discussed in detail under what circumstances questions with the above-discussed indicators are comprehended rhetorically, and under what circumstances the same questions are interpreted as other question types. To fill the gap, the current study will carry out a detailed discussion on this point in the data analysis chapters. But first, it needs to discover how the uses of lexical indicators and semantic indicators are elaborated in the previous research.

Previous researchers believe that the addresser may employ specific lexical phrases as indications to make it easier for the addressee to make a judgment about the nature of a question. These lexical phrases include both the supposed added ones and the existing ones.

i) The supposed added lexical indicators: Some researchers believe that the rhetorical reading of a question can be tested by whether it allows the addition of some specific introductory phrases. For Ene (1983a: 45), RQs, unlike genuine questions, do not allow the addition of performative verb including *I ask, I wonder* or *I'd like to know* to their utterance. Questions (49a) and (49b) are not valid as RQs, but RQs can be initiated with phrases, *I mean* and *I say*, as shown in (50a) and (50b):

(49a) "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day, I'd like to know?"
(49b) "Who else but Mary did it, I'd like to know?"

(50a) "I mean, shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"
(50b) "I say, who else but Mary did it?"
(Ene, 1983: 45)

Ene believes that we can distinguish RQs from genuine questions by trying them with different initiating phrases.

ii) The existing lexical indicators: Apart from the method of testing a question with supposed added particles, other researchers have explored whether some specific existing lexical phrases in the question help the addressee to perceive the rhetorical reading of a question. The kinds of existing lexical phrase discussed in the literature mainly include the following three types: the existing introductory phrases, emphasising particles, and exclamatory particles.

Slot (1993: 155) finds that phrases like *for instance, after all, because, so, therefore, however, on the contrary, but,* and *although* introducing a question are symbols indicating the assertive nature of a question. This is illustrated in her example (51). Slot suggests that a tone of warning and criticism has been delivered in this question, performing the function of an assertion.

(51) "Why, after all, would you not choose to make the most of all the tax-benefits your insurer has to offer?"
(Slot, 1993: 155)

The study by Rohde (2006: 154) is based on the annotated Switchboard corpus, which "contains 1155 discourse-annotated conversations". She observes that 26% of RQs in her data contain the filler "you know?". This, she believes, indicates a prior joint commitment to a shared answer inherent to RQs, in contrast with only 4% of all genuine yes-no questions and 1% of all wh-genuine questions containing "you know". See her example (52) of an RQ with the context about the futility of asking people to buy only American-made products.

(52) "So it's like, what are you going to do, you know?"
(Rohde, 2006: 155)

As for emphasising particles, Slot (1993: 147) argues that in (53), the word "really" contains negative indications, which can change the question into a loaded one.

(53) “But will it really continue to do so when grant-maintained schools become the norm rather than the exception and the bribes cease?”

(Slot, 1993: 147)

Kleinke (2012: 190) agrees with Slot’s view and claims that the intensifier “really” signalls the rhetorical force of a question, as in 54.

(54) “With all the suffering humans in the world do we really need to spend money on animals?”

(Kleinke , 2012: 190)

Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 383) notices the rhetorical signifying role of exclamatory particles such as *the hell* and *for God’s sake*. He points out that “the exclamatory nature” of an RQ has been “underlined by the possible insertion of exclamatory particles” but does so without further exemplified illustration.

Apart from examining functions of lexical indicators, some researchers also focus on the role of semantic indicators. They find that some words in a question may be endowed with strong semantic prosody, serving as loaded words, and helping to indicate the question’s rhetorical reading. Slot (1993: 146) identifies that the words *rashly and whatever* “represent the implicit negative element” in example 55, which determine the rhetorical reading of the question.

(55) “Is it the task of a good newspaper to rashly take over whatever information the authorities give?”

(Slot, 1993: 146)

The concept of syntactic indicator is rarely discussed in previous research, except for Kleinke (2012: 180), who points out the role of the following set syntactic patterns in indicating RQs without attempting a detailed analysis of them: ‘*since when…? Who knows..? What’s the point…? Who do you think you are? What do you mean?’* (and also Howard, 1991: 403, discussed in the early parts of 2.3.1). However, as we can see, all these syntactic forms may work as information questions in certain contexts.

As is discussed in the above literature, lexical indicators and semantic indicators may be deliberately employed by the addresser to show his/her preferences and intention. But researchers have not analysed whether these indicators guarantee a question's rhetorical reading, or just increase the chances of its rhetorical reading in specific contexts, which will be investigated in the current study.

2.3.2 Context

In cases where the question lacks a linguistic indicator, or the linguistic form fails to mark the rhetorical reading of a question, researchers explore other factors which they believe may function and be decisive in the distinguishing process. In creating a typology of RQs based on functions and discussing uses of RQs in Nigerian newspaper media, Taiwo (2009: 3) analyses two kinds of contextual situation: the one where texts are written; and the variables constituting "the extralinguistic contexts of the text", including the writer and the readers' social, cultural, religious, political and ideological backgrounds which may determine choices of words, ways of expressions, and styles of writing. Frank（1990: 736）advocates an application of the discourse analysis approach to resolve the problems in identifying RQs and he claims that "analysis was not driven by the syntactic form of the question, nor by assessment of performative intent. Rather, determinations were based on clues provided by speakers, in combination with hearers' responses."

Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 378) maintains that a synthesis of linguistic indicators and context will eventually work to mark a rhetorical reading of an utterance. This is also the view shared by Kleinke (2012: 180) and held by the current study.

2.3.3 The Code Model and the inferential model

Sperber and Wilson (1986) invented the term 'the Code Model' to describe the approach used in other people's work. In other words, 'the Code Model' is not a technical term other researchers used before Sperber and Wilson. Sperber and Wilson use it to describe a theory they do not follow, represented by Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969) - looking for expressions in English as a code for achieving some communicative acts. 'The Code Model' is a term used both by Sperber and Wilson and the current study, which mainly refers to Speech Act Theory.

As Sperber and Wilson (1986: 2-9) highlight, theories of communication are mainly based on two models:

i) The Code Model (an approach used by Chomsky, 1957; Saussure, 1974; Leach, 1976; Todorov, 1977; see Sperber and Wilson's discussion, 1986), was popular "from Aristotle to modern semiotics", according to which "communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages" in "a system of signal-message pairs".
ii) The inferential model is proposed by modern philosophers (Grice, 1967; Lewis, 1969; Sperber and Wilson, 1986; Blakemore, 1992; Clark, 2013 and so on.), according to which, communication is achieved by producing and interpreting evidence in "a process of inferential recognition of the communicator's intentions" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986)

When applied to the study of RQs, some researchers (Sadock, 1974; Howard, 1991; Slot, 1993; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998) believe that lexical and syntactic indicators are decisive in a question's rhetorical reading, so they are actually in favor of the Code Model. Other researchers (Llewelyn, 1964; Hudson, 1975; Frank, 1990) believe lexical and syntactic indicators are not decisive in a question's rhetorical reading, so to them, the Code Model is not sufficient to study RQs.

The current study believes that the Code Model has only limited explanatory power for those questions with linguistic indicators because: firstly, these indicators may be redundant. As shown in (56), when the emphatic adverbial *really* is taken away, the rhetorical reading of the question still stands; secondly, even in the presence of an indicator, the question may still allow different readings in different contexts. Example (57), although containing an exclamatory particle, *the hell*, may serve as a genuine question with a strong emotion of surprise or criticism when uttered by a man opening his door at midnight only to see a stranger standing outside. It may also work as an RQ when uttered in a context when a man shouts at his roommate who blames him for not washing his socks for days, showing that *you are in no position to say that to me.*

(56) Do we really want to lead such a miserable life?

(57) Who the hell are you?

Thirdly, the Code Model is also insufficient to help infer the possible intention of the speaker beyond the linguistic form of a question; for example, attitudes of censure and discontent in (57). This calls for an inferential model, especially for those questions without linguistic indicators, as claimed by Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 381) that in the case of deletion or absence of an indicator, “the rhetorical speech act can fail”. In other words, the identification and interpretation of an RQ primarily involve an inferential model, with the Code Model being subservient to it.

I now turn to an investigation of how the Code Model and inferential model are applied by previous researchers in their study of RQs, and discuss how the current approach differs from theirs.

Speech Act Theory proposed by Austin (1962) and developed by Searle (1969) resorts to performative verbs as one way of identifying speech acts, thus falling into the Code Model’s category. Some researchers (Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Ene, 1983a; Ilie, 1994 and so on.) have since attempted to investigate RQs using the speech act approach. I agree with Frank’s belief (1990: 728) that Speech Act Theory is inadequate to identify or interpret RQs, a view which will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

Frank, instead, employs in his study the concept of violating the Maxim of Quality - Grice's approach, which is an inferential model combined with a discourse analysis approach. Slot (1993) combines conversational implicature from Grice (1967), with indirect speech acts from Searle (1969) and Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984). She examines how RQs violate efficiency, sincerity, comprehensibility and relevancy rules, and reconstructs indirect speech acts delivered by RQs. The current study will argue in the theoretical framework chapter that Grice's Cooperative Principle and four Maxims need not be observed or violated when the speaker communicates an implicature.

Relevance Theory, proposed by Sperber and Wilson as an alternative inferential approach, has attracted the attention of some recent researchers. The current study expects it to have a larger explanatory power. Gutierrez-Rexach (1998: 143) distinguishes an information question from an RQ, based on the claims of Sperber and Wilson and their concept of 'desirable answer': to whom the answer is relevant (a similar approach taken by Goto, 2011). See Sperber and Wilson's argument (1986: 251): "An interrogative utterance achieves relevance by representing its answer as desirable."… "In the case of an information question, optimal relevance is achieved in the direction of the speaker." and "In the case of rhetorical questions… the speaker indicates that he regards the answer as relevant to the hearer."

The current study will demonstrate that the concept of 'desirable answer' alone can distinguish an RQ from a genuine question, but not from other question types, such as an expository question. It will employ the concept of 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory to distinguish the major question types in English language. In addition, the current study will go further to explain the reason why a speaker uses different kinds of RQ, and the interpretative process of an addressee. This will be achieved by applying the concept of 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory, which Gutierrez-Rexach and Goto have not touched upon.

A question neither current nor previous studies of RQs can avoid answering is why an RQ rather than its corresponding assertion is used, although an RQ apparently involves more processing effort. This leads to an investigation into functions of RQs, in other words, their rhetorical effects.

2.4 Previous studies on functions of RQs

An investigation of the literature reveals that functions of RQs are mainly analysed by researchers from the pragmatic perspective, where RQs serve as a persuasive ploy, for expressing emotions, as a face-threatening or face-saving tool, as an approach to involve readers, or to perform different speech acts such as warning, requesting and informing. The range of pragmatic effects of RQs discussed in the previous literature includes:

<u>i) Persuasive function:</u> Slot (1993) sums up the functions of RQs as evasive ploys and persuasive ploys (a view also held by Benjamin, 1972; Anzilotti, 1982; Frank, 1990; Taiwo, 2009). As Frank (1990: 737) observes, "the primary function of RQ's is to persuade"… "They were most frequently found in those conversations where conflict was predominant." RQs serve as a means of drawing attention, evoking judgment, emphasising common ground and livening up the text.

To test the persuasive power of RQs, investigations of the persuasive functions of RQs are always experimental (e.g. Zillmann and Cantor, 1973; Munch, 1983; Burnkrant and Howard, 1984; Petty et al., 1981), so they are confined to the interpretation of RQs in a controlled setting. Frank (1990: 738) points out: "Although research in cognitive psychology (e.g., Zillmann, 1972; Petty et al., 1981) supports the claim that RQs strengthen arguments, these studies do not address the important questions raised in this [i.e. Zillmann's] paper; issues which are related to the forms and functions of language in naturalistic rather than controlled settings."

To avoid this problem, the current study is based on natural data in the corpora. It discusses how RQs are used to achieve persuasion from pragmatic and cognitive perspectives rather than to prove the existence of RQ's persuasive power based only on an experimental basis.

ii) Expressing emotions and attitudes: The function of RQs as an effective tool to express emotions and attitudes has been discussed by previous researchers (Benjamin, 1972; Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Brown and Levinson, 1978; Anzilotti, 1982; Ilie, 1994; Taiwo, 2009; Kleinke, 2012). They will be looked at respectively in the following paragraphs.

Benjamin (1972: 2) argues that RQs can perform directive acts, as shown in (58), or function as "expressors", which express different emotions as in (59).

(58) "Are we going to let them get away with this?"
(59) "Why was I born?"
(Benjamin, 1972: 2)

Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977: 389) points out that RQs not only highlight "certitude" but also "incertitude", which means that they can be used to communicate "doubt, perplexity, uncertainty, contingency, or deliberation", or "contain an evaluation"; RQs may also express different propositional attitudes on the part of the addresser, e.g. "reproach, indignation, protest, wonder, perplexity, dismay or emphasis". They can also convey personal engagement or concern, as shown in the utterance (60).

(60) "Who do you think I am?"
(Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977: 389)

Anzilotti (1982: 298) discusses the function of sarcasm, as shown in (61). She concludes "It's difficult to find a more magnificent vehicle for sarcasm than the question." She also points out that, when used at the end of a text, RQs will "thrust for thought." Consider her example (62).

(61) "When will they grow up?"
(62) "Do you also pull wings off flies?"
(Anzilotti, 1982: 298)

iii) Face-threatening vs face-saving: Ilie (1994: 54) states that RQs can serve as "amplifiers and mitigators" in different contexts (a similar view is held by Frank, 1990). As shown in her example (63), Ilie believes that, when the corresponding statements are not sufficiently strong, RQs will be employed to perform face-threatening acts (a term mainly argued in Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory in 1987). When the statements are too strong, RQs will be employed to perform face-saving acts, as shown in (64). Ilie (1994: 46) states that in addition to the primary function being a challenge, an RQ can also be "a reproach, a warning, an objection, a promise, a self exculpation, or an accusation." However, it should be pointed out that the criterion Ilie takes to judge whether an RQ performs a face-threatening act or a face-saving act, which is "whether the corresponding statements are strong enough", is too subjective to be effectively operated.

(63) "How on earth can any responsible Government tolerate that?"
(64) "Who can say that we were wrong?"
(Ilie, 1994: 54-55)

iv) Involving the addressee: Anzilotti (1982) discusses functions of RQs in terms of "attention-rousers", invitations for cooperation, and addressee-involvement. She points out (1982: 299) that the strongest type of communication is an oral one, so that an editorial writer "makes a speech as much as he can to use oral strategies", including using RQs, in order to improve reader involvement, which is an important way to "gain intimacy".

Badarneh (2009: 645) points out the "fictive dialogue" nature of RQs, which means the editor, in the form of an interrogative, not only suggests "an implied interaction" with readers but also presents to the reader "several voices in a dialogic state." This is illustrated in utterance (65), where four voices have been delivered which indicate different standpoints and represent different interests: on one hand, the voice of the US and the voice of the Pope; on the other hand, the voice of the newspaper and the voice of the UN in its fact-based report.

(65) “How can the US administration win the hearts and minds of the Arabs when its president describes Muslims as fascists and one of his prominent allies, the Pope, flagrantly assaults Islam, and when UN reports confirm that torture and killing in Iraq are far worse than they were under the former regime?”
(Badarneh, 2009: 645)

So the function of RQs in the genre of newspaper editorials discussed by Badarneh (2009: 646) is “to bring the voice of the other into the text.” According to him, this function is unique to the genre of newspaper editorials in that they are “internally persuasive discourse”. In this genre, the readers are allowed to “take sides with one of two rival and hostile discourses”. He contends that this is different from religious and political discourses, which are “authoritative” discourses, where no space is left for the addresser to interact with the addressee. His comparisons between the three genres are highly relevant to the current study, and deserve our special attention.

2.5 Previous studies on the three genres involved in the current study

The three genres of political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons are considered in the current study on the assumption that they are all monologic and persuasive genres and they might contain a larger proportion of RQs than other types of text. As will be presented in detail in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, RQs are more frequently observed in political speeches and newspaper editorials in my corpus than in daily conversations in the Switchboard corpus (Rohde, 2006). What should also be noted is that although the percentage of direct RQs in sermons in the current study is not high, the percentage of all RQs including quoted RQs is larger than that in Switchboard (see 8.1).

It is observed that previous researchers have attempted to carry out some studies although not many, of RQs in newspaper editorials (Anzilotti, 1982; Ilie, 1994; Badarneh, 2009), political oratory (Frank, 1990; Rudanko, 1993; Ilie, 1994), and sermons (Ene, 1983a; RQs in the Bible by Taiwo, 2009). It will be demonstrated in later chapters that although the current study focuses on the persuasive monologues of political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons, my investigation is different from previous studies in that it applies Relevance Theory to account for how an addresser uses an RQ to persuade the addressee, and how the addressee successfully infers the implicatures conveyed by an RQ, even if the addresser has not uttered explicitly the proposition s/he intends. This has never been explored in depth in previous studies.

2.6 Summary

In this literature review chapter, I have pointed out that some previous authors discuss RQs assuming the readers already know what RQs are, without offering a definition (Zillmann and Cantor, 1974; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998; Blankenship and Craig, 2006); for those who offer a definition of RQs, some features which they discuss such as 'overt answers are not expected', 'RQs function as assertions', or 'RQs achieve special effects', are shared and accepted, but not others, such as that 'RQs do not expect an answer', 'answers to RQs are uninformative or obvious', 'polarity shifts are always observed in RQs', or 'shared knowledge is a must in defining an RQ'. Conflicting opinions exist on these aspects.

A distinction between explicit answers and implicit answers made in the current study, following Ilie's (1994) claim, can explain why some researchers hold that RQs expect a specific and obvious answer (Benjamin, 1972; Pope, 1976; Han, 2002; Rodhe, 2006), which actually means an implicit answer; while others believe that RQs do not seek an answer (Hudson, 1975; Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977; Rudanko, 1993), which actually means an explicit answer. RQs containing implied answers or explicit answers or both have been observed in the current study. Implicit answers are in different forms, as Rohde (2006) states: negative answers, positive ones, specific ones or multiple ones. The current study will investigate why, in some cases, the addresser provides an answer to the RQ s/he utters, what the relationship this has to his/her ultimate purpose of persuading the audience and how this can be interpreted in Relevance Theory, together with a distinction between RQs and expository questions, both having answers following them.

A distinction between an implied answer and an implied proposition helps to clarify why Van Rooy (2003) claims that answers to RQs are informative; while Rohde (2006) claims that answers to RQs are uninformative. It is because answers as meant by Van Rooy are implied propositions while those as meant by Rohde are implied answers to the question stems. The implied proposition is an important concept in the identification and interpretation of RQs in the current study.

When it comes to obviousness of answers to RQs, Pope (1976), Rudanko (1993) and Rohde (2006) believe that answers are obvious to both speaker and hearer. I agree with Ilie's opinion that answers to RQs are not necessarily known beforehand to the addressee but they are inferrable based on the context. I disagree with Goto's argument (2011) that answers to RQs may not be obvious either to the hearer or to the speaker, since the current study maintains that an implied proposition is also one kind of answer to RQs, and it is a mutually manifest implied proposition that validates the status of an RQ.

In contrast with the claim that an RQ has the illocutionary force of its opposite polarity (Sadock, 1971), researchers (Pope, 1976; Rudanko, 1993; Slot, 1993; Schaffer, 2005; Lee-Goldman, 2006a; Kleinke, 2012) observe exceptions in different types of RQ. The present study will test with the aid of corpora whether the opposite polarity feature is observed in all RQs in the data, with the aim of finding an explanation about how an addressee interprets an RQ as one with matched polarity or with reversed polarity in terms of Relevance Theory.

As to whether shared knowledge is indispensable in defining an RQ, Goto (2011) claims that mutual knowledge of the answer is not a necessity, a claim with which most other researchers would disagree (Slot, 1993: 78; Rohde, 2006; Badarneh, 2009). The current study argues that mutual manifestness of the implied answer, including the implied proposition, is a necessary and sufficient condition to identify an RQ.

Conflicting opinions exist concerning whether linguistic form decides the rhetorical reading of a question. Some researchers (Sadock, 1974; Schmidt-Radefeldt, 1977) believe that lexical indicators, including particular adverbial particles, non-deontic modal verbs, and verbal mood help to determine the rhetorical reading of a question; while semantic indicators, those loaded words in a question endowed with strong semantic prosody, determine the question's rhetorical reading (Slot, 1993). Some particular syntactic patterns, such as *Isn't/shouldn't…* or *why/how/what good…if/when…* play the same role. Other researchers (Llewelyn, 1964; Frank, 1990 and so on.) deny the decisive roles of linguistic forms. It will be demonstrated in the current study that linguistic indicators play a role but they are not decisive. Only when they are combined with the role of context can they help decide the rhetorical nature of a question. The study of RQs needs the combination of the Code Model with an inferential theory: Relevance Theory.

In addition to the above conflicting claims, previous researchers use only invented RQs (Pope, 1976; Han, 1998a; Han, 1998b; Gutierrez-Rexach, 1998; Lee-Goldman, 2006a) or they completely avoid the problem about how to distinguish RQs from other question types in their corpus data, by directly stating the number of RQs (Schaffer, 2005; Rohde, 2006; Badarneh, 2009). Most previous researchers fail to provide an operational criterion for distinguishing RQs from other question types.

Ilie (1994: 81-83) uses the concepts of information-eliciting and answer-eliciting to classify questions. RQs belong to mental response-eliciting type. Ilie's using of 'answerhood' as a criterion for distinguishing different question types enlightens the current study. However, I find it too subjective to judge whether a mental response has been elicited by a question.

Sperber and Wilson (1986) attempt to use the criterion of 'to whom the answer to the question is relevant' to classify questions. However, based on their criterion, questions have been classified into two kinds, 'addresser-relevant' questions and 'addressee-relevant' ones. RQs are still not able to be distinguished from expository questions, since both of them are addressee-relevant.

The current study will make an initial attempt to employ the concept of 'mutual manifestness' and 'implicatures' in Relevance Theory to define an RQ and distinguish RQs from other question types.

In summary, a review of definitions of RQs by stylisticians and non-lexicographic researchers shows that no operational criterion to identify an RQ has been discussed, and there exist disparities in definitions and features of RQs which pose problems for studying RQs. Concepts of 'answer' to RQs in the literature are messy and confusing, leading to many conflicted claims. The current study has therefore specifically re-defined the concept of 'answer' to RQs. Previous researchers (Cuddon, 1977; Sperber and Wilson, 1986; Ilie, 1994) attempt but fail to provide a satisfactory criterion for distinguishing major question types, a problem the current study will attempt to solve. Conflicting opinions concerning whether linguistic forms decide the rhetorical reading of a question have been discussed. After that, previous investigations into functions of RQs are summarised. The weakness of previous studies concerning the persuasive function of RQs has been highlighted, as they are mostly experimental tests in controlled settings. To avoid this problem, the current study is based on natural data in corpora and attempts to provide a theoretical and discourse analysis account of how RQs are used to achieve persuasion. Finally, previous studies on the three genres involved in the current study have also been briefly reviewed.

It can be seen that previous investigations of definitions, features, distinctions, and functions of RQs leave many uncertainties in their central concepts. The current study will attempt to introduce some clarity in the theoretical framework of Relevance Theory, which I will turn to in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 Theoretical framework - Relevance Theory

In the literature review chapter, it has been shown that the Code Model is not sufficient in explaining RQs and that context is indispensable in their identification and comprehension (see 2.3.3). The current study needs a pragmatic theory to serve as a theoretical framework to account for RQs. Like many other non-literal utterances, an RQ conveys implicatures, so that there exists a mismatch between its form and the illocutionary force[8] it conveys.

In this chapter, comparison among Austin, Searle and Grice's approaches with Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory is carried out, to determine whether Relevance Theory accounts for the following two phenomena better than other pragmatic theories.

i) implicatures of non-literal utterances

ii) a mismatch between grammatical structure and an illocutionary force which is not encoded

This discussion justifies my view that Relevance Theory is the most suitable theoretical framework for the current study.

3.1 Speech Act Theory

The main claim of Speech Act Theory, as introduced by Austin (1962) and developed by Searle (1969), is that "to say is to do things"; that is, they believe that language is used to perform actions within a framework of a social institution. For example, the uttering of a particular performative verb, such as "name" in (1), changes social reality, here performing the naming of a ship.

(1) " I name this ship Elizabeth 1."

[8] Austin (1962:108) defines 'illocutionary acts' as utterances having a certain conventional force, e.g. informing, ordering, warning, undertaking and so on.

(Austin, 1962: 5)

I argue that although Speech Act Theory highlights the purpose of an utterance as performing an action, it does poorly in explaining the above-mentioned aspects:

i) It explains nothing about the contextual implicatures of utterances. In (2), it fails to explain the contextual implicature *If DB does not lend me her French dictionary, then I am entitled to reprimand her* embedded in the utterance except claiming that it performs the act of promising.

(2) “DB is promising to lend me her French dictionary.”
(Blakemore, 1992: 49)

Searle (1969) builds on the early work of Austin, which is confined to the truth-conditional value of an utterance. Searle agrees with Grice’s claim about ‘indirect speech acts’ and inferences involved in figuring out meanings beyond linguistic expression. He points out the utterance *“Can you post this letter for me?”* is not an inquiry about the hearer’s ability but serves as an inquiry whether the hearer can offer help. This indirect speech act is a conventional implicature, not a contextual (conversational) implicature. He discussed about the conventional implicature, but failed to account for the existence of contextual implicature.

ii) It does not explain cases when different speech acts are expressed in the same syntactic structure. For example, an interrogative is never just a request for information as is claimed in Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969: 69). It may be a prohibition, as in (3), a suggestion, as in (4), a condemnation, as in (5), or an endorsement, as in (6).

(3) Who told you to do that?
(4) What could be nicer than spending a holiday in Hawaii?
(5) Did he lift a finger to help?
(6) Could she do better in such a terrible state?

iii) It fails to explain utterances where there exists a mismatch between a grammatical structure and an illocutionary force, which is not encoded. Austin (1962: 149) classifies speech acts into five categories (verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives and expositives)[9] mainly by the use of around 1000 "explicit performative verbs", which are actually codes, signifying the acts the utterances are expressed to perform. He explains a very limited class of explicit performative utterances,[10] whose illocutionary forces are either encoded or can be extended into those encoded, e.g. to extend *"Close the door"* to *"I order that you close the door"*.

On the other hand, Speech Act Theory leaves those utterances with un-encoded illocutionary forces unsatisfactorily accounted for. Austin (1962: 74) does mention that 'tone of voice, cadence, emphasis' and gestures help convey illocutionary force, but these are present only in spoken language. He also mentions that use of adverbial phrases may help identify the force but it should be noted that those utterances with adverbial phrases are minority cases. He (1962: 32, 72-77) points out but leaves unanswered the question of how to recognise illocutionary forces in contexts where there is no explicit performative verb as a marker. For example, utterance (7) is not clear as to whether it is a statement or warning or a protest.

(7) "It is going to charge (of a bull)."
(Austin, 1962: 32.)

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 248), utterance (8) in different contexts can be a metaphorical one, one reporting the speech of the bus driver, irony, or the acknowledgement of a mistake in the context of betting that the bus is not leaving.

(8) "The bus is leaving."
(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 248)

[9] Austin (1962) originally classifies utterances into performative and constative ones but later finds it hard to distinguish these two types, so abandons this dichotomy.
[10] Blakemore (1992: 92) points out that speech acts naming ships, baptising babies and so on have nothing to do with communication, since they may be successfully performed without the presence of any audience.

So no single fixed illocutionary force can be assigned to an un-encoded syntactic structure. How the addresser can convey such a range of illocutionary forces by using the same un-encoded linguistic form, and how the addressee can infer the speaker's possible intention and act accordingly are still left unanswered in Speech Act Theory.

iv) Figures of speech pose problems to Speech Act Theory due to their embodying a mismatch between grammatical form and illocutionary force. Austin (1962: 76; 104) admits that 'uses of language' triggered by the circumstances of the utterance e.g. the joking in "Go and catch a falling star" are not covered by his illocutionary and perlocutionary acts approach. Sperber and Wilson (1986) point out that metaphorical expression (9) poses problems for the explanation of the concept of 'saying' as an assertion in speech-act theory, since an assertion is typically one which commits the speaker to the truth of the propositional form of the utterance.

(9) "Robert is a bulldozer."
(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 236)

Ironic imperatives like (10) pose problems for the concept of 'telling' as an 'action-requesting' act.

(10) "Go ahead and ruin my carpet."
(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 247).

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 251) point out that an RQ is not a genuine request for information and an RQ, together with exam questions, expository questions, self-addressed questions and indirect questions, poses problems for defining questions as information-requesting act in Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969: 69). In addition, Frank (1990: 725) disagrees with some speech act linguists (Anzilotti, 1982) in explaining an RQ by transforming it into one statement "containing a declarative or imperative performative verb" (e.g. I criticise you by saying *"who told you to do that?"*). He points out that this way of explanation still depends on a definition of RQ by “presuming speaker intent”, which is no more than a way of mind reading.

3.2 Gricean Maxims vs. neo-Griceans and post-Griceans

To explain the nature of successful communication, Grice (1967: 307; 1991: 26) claims that in communication, participants need to observe the Cooperative Principle: that is to make a contribution to successful communication and help the talk exchange in the right direction. He also claims that four main Maxims need to be observed, as follows:

i) Maxim of Quantity: provide information as required but not to be over-informative.
ii) Maxim of Quality: only say what you believe is true or have adequate evidence.
iii) Maxim of Relation: be relevant.
iv) Maxim of Manner: be brief and orderly. Avoid obscurity and ambiguity.

Grice (1991: 30) lists four cases where these four Maxims are not fulfilled: in the case of a lie; when publicly declaring a lack of cooperation by saying “my lips are sealed”; when facing a clash in observing two Maxims; or when blatantly flouting a Maxim to give rise to a conversational implicature.

Grice (1975; 1991) has classified implicatures into conventional implicature, as in (11); and conversational implicature, the latter being further divided into generalised conversational implicature, as in (12) (“A house” implies *not the speaker’s house*) and particularised conversational implicature, as in the utterance (13) about a friend’s work in a bank.

(11) “He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave.”
(Grice, 1975: 44)
(12) “X went into a house yesterday and found a tortoise inside the front door.”
(Grice, 1991: 37)

(13) “Oh quite well, I think: he likes his colleagues, and he hasn’t been to prison yet.”
(Grice, 1991: 24)

Based on Grice’s classification, (11) conveys a conventional implicature, since “*therefore*” can be decoded into a causal relationship between being an Englishman and being brave. This shows that Grice supports the Code Model in explaining conventional implicature. By flouting the Maxim of Relation, (13) suggests many particularised conversational implicatures including that *his friend is easy to yield to the temptation of money*, or that *his friend’s colleagues are unpleasant and “treacherous”*.

Grice makes an important contribution by introducing the concept of ‘implicature’, which influences greatly later pragmatists. Three cases where particularised conversational implicatures are conveyed have been summed up by Grice (1991: 32):

i) Implicatures are conveyed, although no Maxim is violated, as in (14)

(14) “A: Smith doesn’t seem to have a girlfriend these days.
B: He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.”
(Grice, 1991: 32)

Grice believes that an implicature of *Smith may have a girlfriend in New York* is conveyed since B’s reply obeys the Maxim of Relation. Conflicting opinions exist concerning this example. Opinions also exist that an implicature is inferred here ‘on the basis that it makes what looks like a violation of a Gricean maxim not a real violation at all.’ (Asher and Lascarides, 2003). In the current study, I agree that this example may look like a violation of the Maxim of Relation but actually it obeys the Maxim. Any implicature created by a violation of the Maxim of Relation is actually obeying relevance, which is exactly what Relevance Theory is about.

ii) Implicatures are conveyed when there is a clash in observing two Maxims, as in (15)

(15) “A: where does C live?

B: Somewhere in the South of France."

(Grice, 1991: 32)

Grice (1991: 32) argues that an implicature that *B does not know the exact town where C lives* is conveyed since the speaker violates the Maxim of Quantity to avoid giving information s/he is not sure of; in other words, to avoid flouting the Maxim of Quality.

iii) Implicatures are conveyed when the speaker deliberately flouts a Maxim. In the following examples:

(16) "Dear Sir, Mr. X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, and so on."

(17) "You are the cream in my coffee."

(18) "A: Let's get the kids something.

B: Okay, but I veto C-H-O-C-O-L-A-T-E."

(Grice, 1991: 36-37)

(16) is a teacher's testimonial letter for a student who is applying for a philosophy job. The insufficient information provided by the teacher conveys the implicature that *the student is not good at philosophy*; (17), as a metaphor, violates the Maxim of Quality, conveying implicatures, such as *you are my pride and source of joy*; (18) violates the Maxim of Manner: avoid obscurity, delivering the implicature that *I don't want the kids to comprehend what I am saying.*

As is pointed out by Clark (2013: 84-89), two main directions are developed from Grice's work, 'neo-Griceans' and 'post-Griceans', with the first one retaining "some of the key ideas proposed by Grice while developing accounts which differ in their details" represented by Horn (1984, 1988, 1989, 2004) and Levinson (1987a, 1987b, 1995, 2000) and the other moving "further away from Gricean assumptions" represented by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1990, 1995). In the words of Wayne (2014: 1), "Relevance theories replace them with a principle of communicative efficiency." Both Horn and Levinson reduce the four Maxims to a smaller number of principles. Horn proposes a 'Quality Principle' emphasising sufficient information should be given by the speaker and a 'Relation Principle' stating *Don't say information more than necessary.* Levinson proposes three principles, namely a 'Q Principle', an 'I Principle' (these two echo Horn's two principles) and an 'M Principle' focusing on the abnormal formulation of an utterance.

Shortcomings in Grice's approach will be enumerated below, which indicate that Grice's approach is not sufficient to account for the above two phenomena, namely, implicatures of non-literal utterances and those utterances with a mismatch between their grammatical structures and illocutionary forces.

Firstly, "Essential concepts mentioned in the Maxims are left entirely undefined" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 36), such as what the Maxim of Relation actually is, something which Grice (1991: 27) himself considers "exceedingly difficult" to deal with. Many questions remain unanswered, such as: What is relevance? How can we judge whether an utterance is relevant or not? In what way is an utterance relevant? Since there may be many assumptions relevant to an utterance, why and how do hearers identify one of them as the possible intention of the speaker? In contrast, Relevance Theory defines clearly the principle of relevance and illustrates in detail how relevance works in the communication process.

Secondly, although Grice (1991: 24) characterises the notion of 'implicature', he fails to account for how the hearer is able to infer the implicature intended by the speaker out of the many possible implicatures the hearer may assume, as in (13). This, instead, can be explained by the notion of 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory.

When it comes to cases where syntactic form does not agree with illocutionary force, Grice (1991: 34) claims that these happen when the speaker either observes the Cooperative Principle, or deliberately violates the four Maxims. For instance, Grice describes the irony of (19) as deliberately violating the Maxim of Quality and succeeding in implicating the contrary of what the speaker intends to put forward.

(19) “X is a fine friend.”

(Grice, 1991: 34)

In response to Grice’s approach, Sperber and Wilson (1986: 201) argue that “looking around for some related assumption which the speaker might have wanted to convey does not count as an inference process”, and they believe Grice fails to explain why an opposite implicature is conveyed in irony.

Thirdly, in Grice’s approach, communicators must know and conform to the norms; but in Relevance Theory, the communicators need not know, or follow the Principle and Maxims. The following case cited by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 233), that you are more prone to give an approximate reply (20) than a strictly literal and truthful answer, such as (21), to your friend’s inquiry, shows that the Maxim of Quality proposed by Grice might not always be observed. This cannot be explained by saying that the speaker deliberately violates the Maxim of Quantity to convey an implicature, since no more implicature is conveyed in (20) than in (21). Besides, compared with the complexity of the four Maxims, Relevance Theory is more economical and more explicit, since one principle is preferable to four principles, if it can do the same work.

(20) “I earn £800 a month.”

(21) “I earn £797.32 pence a month.”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 233)

It is relevance that determines which utterance is used, rather than the four Maxims. Sperber and Wilson reject the idea that all four Maxims are needed, but hold that the principle of ‘relevance’ is the only one needed to explain all communication phenomena. The current study holds that the main gap left behind by the speech act approach and Grice’s Principle is that they focus only on the addresser’s behaviours and ignore those of the addressee.

Relevance Theory works better to account for the addressee's inferential processes in inferring the intended assumptions.

Sperber and Wilson's theory improves on Grice's approach, but they do not reject Grice's approach completely. Relevance Theory is in fact a kind of Gricean approach. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 21; 25) follow Grice's direction of 'an inferential model of communication' (Grice, 1957; 1967; 1969; 1991), and describe communication in terms of intentions and inferences, holding that "the inferential abilities that humans ordinarily use in attributing intentions to each other should make communication possible even in the absence of a code." Unlike some theorists, e.g. John Searle (cited in Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 25), who believe that Grice's approach is just an amendment to the Code Model, Sperber and Wilson view Grice's approach as an independent model.

The following section will demonstrate that Sperber and Wilson are more successful in explaining the above-mentioned phenomena. The questions left remaining by Speech Act Theory and Grice's approaches are successfully addressed in Relevance Theory, which can be seen in its major concepts and claims. Therefore, Relevance Theory will be employed in the current study to the research of RQs.

3.3 The major concepts in Relevance Theory

As is held in the current study, if an assumption is

a. intended by the question and drawn from the mutual cognitive environment, and

b. mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee when the question is uttered,

the question is then an RQ.

The cognitive environment is the set of assumptions that an addressee can form in a certain context (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 41). Sperber and Wilson (1986: 38) claim that the notion of "mutual knowledge" and "shared information" are either "empirically inadequate" or “conceptually vague”. They, hence, adopt the concept of “mutual manifestness”, which the current study follows.

The next question is how the addressee knows which assumption is the one intended by the addresser. I will show how important concepts in Relevance Theory can help in this regard.

3.3.1 The concept of ‘relevance’

Wayne (2014: 30) gives an interpretation of ‘relevance’ which is adopted by the current study. He says “‘Relevance’ is given a highly technical sense, roughly meaning ‘communicative efficiency.’” Wilson and Sperber (1986: 382) state that “The relevance of a proposition increases with the number of contextual implications it yields and decreases as the amount of processing needed to obtain them increases”. They later replace “contextual implication” with the more general notion of a “contextual effect”. In the current study, I hold that the relevance of RQs is that they can achieve more contextual implicatures than a statement.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 48; 139) claim that when old information serves as a premise, working together with new information, this gives rise to “a multiplication effect”: an improvement to the hearer’s representation of the world – “a stock of factual assumptions with some internal organization.” (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 104) This is what is meant by ‘relevant’. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 122) define ‘relevance’ as “an assumption [which] is relevant in a context if and only if it has some contextual effect in that context.”

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 109; 119) argue that having a contextual effect includes producing contextual implication, strengthening old assumptions or abandoning old assumptions. A contextual effect is not only a necessary but also a sufficient condition for achieving relevance. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 120) identify three cases lacking contextual effects:

a. The new assumptions are not connected to the context.

b. The new assumptions are repetitive and so uninformative.

c. The new assumptions are inconsistent with the context.

To exemplify this, let us imagine that when you are reading this chapter, utterances (22)-(24) are directed at you. These utterances will be considered to have no relevance to you because they produce no contextual effect.

(22) “5 May 1881 was a sunny day in Kabul.”

(23) “You are now reading a book.”

(24) “You are fast asleep.”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 120)

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 124) claim that relevance is a “matter of degree” and “a comparative concept” rather than a quantitative one - there are two factors determining the degree of relevance: processing effort and contextual effect.

Processing effort on the part of the addressee is a negative factor: “other things being equal, the greater the processing effort, the lower the relevance”. Processing effort involves the “conceptual material”, the number of deductive rules and the “complexity of the processing procedure”. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 127) compare the following two examples, in order to show how the processing effort differs.

(25) “Bill, who has thalassemia, is getting married to Susan.”

(26) “Bill, who has thalassemia, is getting married to Susan, and 1967 was a great year for French wines.”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 127)

Example (26) introduces more conceptual material, and hence involves more deductive rules and its processing procedure is more complex, thus demanding more effort to interpret. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 131) state that “processing more information in the same context, or the same information in a larger context, involves a greater effort.”

Contextual effect is a positive factor “other things being equal, the greater the contextual effect, the larger the relevance”. The announcement that a train will be one minute late is less relevant to an individual than the announcement that a train will be half an hour late, since the latter will have more influence and even force the hearer to reorganise his schedule.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 131) suggest that “People can take advantage of these comparative abilities in trying to maximize the relevance of the information they process.”

In the case of an RQ, the premise is provided by its preceding context, which is part of the mutual cognitive environment, and the new information is the assumption intended by the RQ. When they are combined, ‘a multiplication effect’ will be achieved, which is what the addresser expects to make mutually manifest. This is shown in the following example:

(27) “With all the suffering humans in the world do we really need to spend money on animals?”
(Kleinke, 2012: 190)

In (27), the mutual cognitive environment is that the utterance occurs in a discussion about whether expenditure on animals is appropriate; the encyclopaedic information is that if humans themselves suffer from starvation, they should save money to alleviate the suffering of human beings. Thus, these two factors work together making manifest the relevance of the question: a negative attitude towards the extravagant spending on animals. This question achieves its relevance by enhancing the supporters’ belief that they are right in having a negative attitude towards spending money on animals.

The concepts of ‘contextual effects’ and ‘processing effort’ will be employed in later chapters to explain the existence of linguistic indicators and functions of RQs.

3.3.2 The concept of ‘context’

‘Context’ as an important concept used in all pragmatic theories, including in Relevance Theory, has been described by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 132) as "a subset of the individual's[11] old assumptions, with which the new assumptions combine to yield a variety of contextual effects."

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 15) point out that 'context' is not confined to the immediate physical environment or the preceding utterances. It also contains "expectations about the future, scientific hypotheses or religious beliefs, anecdotal memories, general cultural assumptions, beliefs about the mental state of the speaker." The components of 'context' include not only "the assumptions expressed and implicated by preceding utterances", as is often assumed, but also "the encyclopaedic entries attached to any concepts used in these assumptions and in the utterance itself", as well as the encyclopaedic entries attached to any previous concepts already added to the previous utterances.

In addition, Sperber and Wilson (1986: 142) argue that context is chosen rather than set. It is the criterion of "search for relevance" that guides the communicators to choose "an actual context" from a range of "potential contexts".

In Sperber and Wilson's analysis (1986: 145), "encyclopaedic memory", "the short-term memory store" and "the environment" form a range of contexts which will then be chosen according to the criterion of "search for relevance", as can be shown in (28):

(28) "Mary: What I would like to eat tonight is an osso-bucco.

Peter: I had a long day. I'm tired."

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 145)

The encyclopaedic memory recalls that osso-bucco is a main course, and that a main course and a dessert compose a dinner; the short memory store recalls that Peter is tired, so that Mary should make the dinner; and the mutually manifest environment is that there is a dessert – a Chocolate mousse in the refrigerator. These memory stores together form the optimally relevant context, although other contexts may also be there. Other contexts might include the

[11] 'Individual' here means either the addresser or the addressee.

reason why Peter is so tired, or the fact that Peter needs a massage to relax. In this multi-factorial context, Mary will draw an implicated conclusion that *she has to make a main course that night*, after considering the relevance of Peter's answer in the chosen context in accordance with the principle of optimal relevance.

Furthermore, Sperber and Wilson mention that "A mismatch between the context envisaged by the speaker and the one actually used by the hearer may result in a misunderstanding." This is exemplified in (29):

(29) "Peter: Do you want some coffee?

Mary: Coffee would keep me awake."

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 34)

In the context that Mary wants to sit up late, her intention of having one cup of coffee to stay awake may be wrongly interpreted as a refusal[12].

The current study believes that this may explain why, in some cases, RQs fail to be correctly recognised and interpreted by the hearers, which may be that the context used by the hearer to comprehend the utterance is different from that used by the speaker.

3.3.3 The concepts of 'implicature' and 'explicature'

An important concept employed by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 181) is 'implicature', which is also used by the current study to distinguish different question types and to discover if an utterance is an RQ or not. The concept of 'implicature' is coined by Grice (1975) to refer to the linguistic phenomenon that what the speaker means differs from what the speaker says.

Wayne (2014: 38) points out that "Through implicature we express two or more thoughts by

[12] I depart from Sperber and Wilson's judgment here, in so far as Mary's response would not be ambiguous or understood by Peter either because he knows her habit or because her intonation pattern will indicate her positive or negative attitude.

uttering just one sentence" Therefore, implicatures are important to convey the addresser's thoughts. We need to know what thought the addresser intends to convey by inferring and recognising implicatures.

Huang (2017: 2; 22) points out that Grice has divided implicatures into different categories: conventional implicature, which "arises solely because of the conventional features attached to particular lexical items and/or linguistic constructions" such as an implicature of "contrast" in 'but' and "unexpectedness, surprise or unlikeness" in 'even'; conversational implicature, which is "part of what a speaker means, though not part of what a sentence means".

Conventional implicatures, semantic implicatures in Grice's view, exist "because of the conventions that give individual words or syntactic structures their meanings" (Wayne, 2014: 41). They can either be generated lexically or syntactically, such as the appositive construction "Ravel, a Spaniard, wrote music reminiscent of Spain" which implies "Ravel was a Spaniard.". Conventional implicatures are "part of the linguistic meaning of a sentence". (Wayne, 2014: 3).

Conversational implicatures can be further categorised into generalised conversational implicatures which do not require "any particular contextual conditions" and particularised conversational implicatures, which require "particular contextual conditions" (Huang, 2017: 4). Implicatures in the current study indicated in different question types are particularised conversational implicatures since they require particular contextual conditions.

When it comes to the relationship between "implicatures' and "implications", Clark (2013: 216) points out that "implicatures are intentionally communicated implications" while "implications are conclusions which follow logically from one or more premises". It is "the interaction of implicated premises with other assumptions, including explicatures of the utterance" that leads to "implicated conclusions".

As Wayne (2014: 44) states, "the literature on implicature is enormous and growing".

However, it should be noted that the increasingly varied categories of implicatures are beyond the scope of the current study, which focuses solely on the particularised conversational implicatures of questions inferred only in specific contexts.

The parallel term ‘explicature’, introduced by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 184), is a propositional form, an assumption schema, formed by a logical form encoded in an utterance, added to contextual information. Grice focuses only on ‘implicatures’, leaving ‘explicature’ obscure. He holds that only implicatures involve inferences, which is opposite to Sperber and Wilson’s emphasising of both ‘explicature’ and ‘implicature’. Sperber and Wilson believe that ‘enrichment of meaning’ is in the process of working out explicatures not in the process of working out conventional implicature as Grice claims, and inferences are needed in both processes of ‘explicature’ and ‘implicature’.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 185-186) argue that there are three sub-tasks involved in the identification of propositional form: disambiguation, reference assignment and enrichment. As shown in *“The beaches were crowded and the hotel was full of bugs.”* (Blakemore, 1992: 58), when combined with contextual information, the utterance will develop into a proposition after reference assignment and disambiguation, which is *The beaches at the holiday resort that the speaker went to were crowded with people and the hotel where he stayed was full of insects.* When attached to an attitude, this proposition will be developed into the explicature of the utterance *The speaker regrets that the beaches at the holiday resort that the speaker went to were crowded with people and the hotel where he stayed was full of insects.*

The propositional form the hearer recovers is the one consistent with the principle of relevance. The explicature of the utterance (30) conforming to the principle of relevance can be inferred by the hearer as *Mary believes that the dinner will get cold very soon,* after the process of reference assignment of “it” as *the dinner*, enrichment of “will” as *very soon* and identification of propositional attitude as *Mary believes that it will get cold*.

(30) “It will get cold.”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 181)

In disambiguation, the hearer should “choose the solution involving the least effort”, considering ‘contextual information’ especially ‘general encyclopaedic information’, as shown in (31):

(31) “The child left the straw in the glass.”

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 186)

The knowledge chunk that *a child drinks from a glass with a straw* is stored in memory, constituting “a highly accessible encyclopaedic context”, in which the drinking tube interpretation rather than the cereal-stalk interpretation can be processed at a minimal cost.

In the reference assignment process, given the principle of relevance, the hearer first considers the immediate context, to see if a propositional form can be yielded which is consistent with the principle of relevance; if not, s/he will extend the context and repeat the procedure, e.g. as inferring the reference of “it” as *the food* in (30).

As to enrichment, Sperber and Wilson (186: 188) point out the problem of semantic incompleteness. See their examples:

(32) “Peter’s bat is grey.”

(33) “The bat is too grey.”

(34) “The bat is big.”

(Sperber and Wilson 186: 188)

The genitive “Peter’s” is incomplete as it may refer to one bat owned, bought or killed by Peter; the adverb “too” is incomplete in expressing *too grey for what,* and the adjective “big” is incomplete in expressing *big as a pet or big for its age,* etc. So the identification of propositional form needs an enrichment in semantic representation.

After these three processes of disambiguation, reference assignment and semantic enrichment, a propositional form will be identified, which when attached with the speaker's attitude, in (30) as *the speaker believes*, will form the explicature of the utterance.

On the other hand, the assumption schemas not provided by logical forms are implicatures. According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 195), an implicature is the result of interaction between old information coming from encyclopaedic knowledge and new information coming from linguistic decoding, including 'implicated premise' and 'implicated conclusion'.

Implicated premises are supplied by the hearer, "who must either retrieve them from memory or construct them by developing assumption schemas retrieved from memory"; "Implicated conclusions are deduced from the explicatures of the utterance and the context." There are either "wholly determinate, specifically intended inferences" or "indeterminate, wholly unintended inferences." (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 197) This is shown in their example:

(35) "Peter: Would you drive a Mercedes?

Mary: I wouldn't drive ANY expensive car."

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 197)

Peter has a determinate premise that *a Mercedes is an expensive car* and a determinate conclusion that *Mary wouldn't drive a Mercedes,* which "reflects the speaker's [here Mary's] thoughts". He can also have an indeterminate conclusion that *Mary disapproves of displays of wealth*, based on the indeterminate premise that *people who refuse to drive expensive cars disapprove of displays of wealth*. These implicated conclusions, including strong and weak implicatures, are exactly the cognitive effects intended by this indirect assertion, which will offset the extra processing effort.

What pragmatics should study is not just those explicitly expressed implicatures but also the weak implicatures the hearers are relied on to infer, which will bring more cognitive effects. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 222) call the effect achieved through a wide array of weak implicatures of the utterance ‘the poetic effect’. The poetic effect is not only the feature of all figures of style like parallelism, hyperbole, irony, metaphor etc. (e.g. the implicatures of Robert’s persistence, obstinacy, insensitivity and refusal in the metaphor “Robert is a bulldozer”) but also the feature of any ‘implicit verbal communication’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 236). As is argued by Sperber and Wilson (1986: 56), any paraphrase of “implicit verbal communication” will be inadequate in expressing the “poetic effects” conveyed by an implicature.

In the case of an RQ, when the thoughts are conveyed not in the form of an RQ but in the form of an assertion, the rhetorical effects will be dramatically limited. The strong emotions of blaming and warning involved in the question (36) will be lost if expressed in an assertion *It’s time to go to bed.*

(36) “Do you know what time it is now?”
(Example adapted from Huddleston and Pullum, 2002: 861, cited in Goto, 2011: 10. The background is that a mother shouts at her child, who is still playing at 11 pm.)

3.3.4 The concepts of ‘ostensive-inferential communication’ and ‘ostensive stimuli’

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 155) define ‘ostensive-inferential communication’ as an act of communication in which the shared inferences of communicative intentions are made mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee. As they see it, this is achieved as follows:
“The communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions.”

A stimulus in Relevance Theory means (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 153) “a phenomenon designed to achieve cognitive effects”. This includes not only linguistic expressions, but also intended body movements, gestures, signs, etc. They point out that “the processing of a stimulus… is geared to the maximisation relevance”.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 153), an ostensive stimulus must satisfy two conditions. Firstly, it should attract the audience’s attention; secondly, it must focus on the communicator’s intentions. An ostensive stimulus “guarantees the relevance”.

An RQ is a typical case of ‘ostensive-inferential communication’. The question itself is a stimulus, which makes manifest to the audience a set of assumptions mentally represented by the speaker, for instance, example (36) *“Do you know what time it is now?”* may serve as an inquiry of time; a puzzle when one guest has not arrived on time; or a criticism of a child’s getting late to bed. The most relevant assumption, considering the context in which it is uttered by a mother to her child, can only be the one of criticism. The implicature is that the mother’s urging the child to go to bed can modify the child’s cognitive environment and improve his/her knowledge. The inference process goes like this: first, upon hearing the question, the child has confidence in the guarantee of relevance – s/he will infer that some of the information in the question made manifest to him/her is indeed relevant to him/her. Then s/he will realise the assumption that *it is so late that s/he must go to bed* is the only manifest one relevant enough to be worth his/her attention. Any other assumption will be inconsistent with the guarantee of relevance the question carries.

3.3.5 The concept of ‘mutual manifestness’

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 19) challenge the ‘mutual knowledge hypothesis’ held by Schiffer (1972) and also other pragmatists. The three paradoxes they see in the ‘mutual knowledge hypothesis’ comprise:

i). “The assumption of mutual knowledge may always be mistaken” since “they may impose different interpretations on information that they are jointly given”

ii). The paradox that "mutual knowledge must be certain, or else it does not exist; and since it can never be certain, it can never exist."
iii). It says nothing about how an actual context is selected, nor about the role of context in comprehension although "it defines potential contexts for use in utterance interpretation".

Sperber and Wilson (1986) take exception to the hypothesis that "every item of contextual information used in interpreting the utterance must be not only known by the speaker and hearer, but mutually known" and propose their concept of 'mutual manifestness' as follows.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 39), "A fact is manifest to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representations as true or probably true." They continue, "To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable." 'Cognitive environment' according to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 151) is "the set of all facts which are manifest" to an individual, including one's narrower physical environments, cognitive abilities, perceptual abilities and inferential abilities, which may vary with individuals and a "shared cognitive environment" is one in which every manifest assumption will be mutually manifest.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 48) give an example to illustrate the above concepts. Peter leans back on the park bench to make manifest to Mary the approach of their acquaintance William who is "a dreadful bore". Peter's behaviour is only manifest to Mary if, and only if, she is capable of representing Peter's intention in her mind. The mutual cognitive environment is that Peter knows that Mary knows that both of them know William is "a dreadful bore" and he intends to leave immediately to avoid talking to William. Only in this mutual cognitive environment can Peter's behaviour be mutually manifest. Peter's communicative behaviour is then 'relevant' to achieve his communicative intention - Peter and Mary will leave the bench before being seen by William.

Mutual manifestness is an essential component of Relevance Theory in the current study since it determines how to identify an RQ. I use 'mutual manifestness' as an operational criterion for testing the validity of an RQ, by claiming that only when the corresponding assertion expressed via a question is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee can that question be judged as an RQ.

3.4 Summary of claims in Relevance Theory

With these main concepts in mind, it is easier for us to understand the major claims in Relevance Theory. Relevance Theory as proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986) serves as a powerful complement to Grice's theory (1967，1991), revealing the cognitive process of an addresser when delivering an utterance and the inferential process to be attributed to an addressee when perceiving that utterance. As pointed out by Blakemore (1992: 47), it is a psychological approach to the pragmatic comprehension of human communication. Its application is mainly in the field of semantics, phonology, pragmatics, rhetoric and language change (Blakemore, 1987, 2002; Sperber and Wilson, 1990; Clark, 1996, 2012, 2013, 2016; Wilson and Sperber, 2002, 2012a, 2012b; Carston and Powell, 2006; Carston and Wearing, 2011; Scott, 2013a; Wilson, 2013, 2014; Ifantidou, 2014), with some researchers combining corpus study with Relevance Theory (De Klerk, 2005; Jary, 2008; Kolaiti and Wilson, 2014; Andersen, 2015)

Relevance Theory is based on a definition of relevance: the utterance achieves relevance when "its processing in a context of available assumptions of an input yields a positive cognitive effect" (Wilson and Sperber, 2004: 608); and a principle of relevance: "every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of optimal relevance" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 158). Sperber and Wilson (1986: 158) explicate that "the set of assumptions which the communicator intends to make manifest to the addressee is relevant enough to make it worth the addressee's while to process the ostensive stimulus" and that "the ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one the communicator could have used to communicate." In other words, in verbal communication, the addressee will take it for granted that the utterance is the most relevant one (by using the least effort to achieve the adequate effects), which is guaranteed by the addresser, so that the information is made worth processing.

This principle can be further divided into two sub-principles: a Cognitive Principle that upon hearing an utterance, an addressee's cognition is geared to the maximisation of relevance and a Communicative Principle that "every ostensive stimulus conveys a presumption of its own optimal relevance" (Wilson and Sperber, 2004: 610; 612). According to Relevance Theory, the correct interpretation of an ostensive stimulus is "the first accessible interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 178).

The main argument in my study is based on the claim in Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: preface) that "…the principle of relevance is enough on its own to account for the interaction of linguistic meaning and contextual factors in utterance interpretation." The principle of relevance makes manifest the communicator's possible intention behind the ostensive behaviour. It is this principle of relevance that makes the inferential model of communication explanatory.

As to the degree of relevance, Wilson and Sperber (2004:609) state that "other things being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater its relevance will be"; and "the greater the processing effort required, the less relevant the input will be". The concepts of cognitive effects and processing effort will be employed in my study to illustrate the features of RQs and how they are comprehended.

3.5 Interpretation of interrogatives in Relevance Theory

Relevance Theory has been used to analyse rhetorical questions (Sperber and Wilson, 1986； Blakemore, 1994; Escandell Vidal, 1998). As to the interpretation of interrogatives, Sperber and Wilson (1986: 252) claim that "interrogative utterances are interpretations of answers that the speaker would regard as relevant if true." To interpret a question, the hearer must make an assumption about "who the speaker thinks its answer would be relevant to".

An RQ (37), as a reminder, is relevant to the hearer to "prompt the retrieval of information"; the answer to an expository question as (38) is relevant to the hearer since it offers information; answers to regular questions are relevant to the speaker because s/he needs the information; answers to speculative questions are relevant to the speaker although no answer will be provided; answers to exam questions are relevant to the speaker for s/he can know how the hearer masters the subject from the answer provided by the hearers. (see Table 2.1 in Chapter 2)

(37) “When did you say you were going to give up smoking?”
(38) “What are the main objections to this approach? First…?”
(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 251)

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 253) distinguish and interpret different question types by judging to whom an interrogative is relevant. They thereby distance themselves from speech-act theory, claiming that “There is no need to analyse all questions as requests for information, no need to set up special speech-act categories to handle offers of information, rhetorical questions, expository questions and so on.”

3.6 Interpretation of ‘figurative’ language in Relevance Theory

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 235) discuss figurative language in the form of ‘hyperbole’, ‘metaphor’ and ‘irony’, making the following points. Firstly, figurative language conveys more than its corresponding direct assertion. “The element of indirectness in an utterance must be offset by some increase in contextual effects.” Secondly, the addressee must take responsibility for deriving the weaker implicatures in figurative language. The addressee is encouraged to develop his/her understanding which ‘overlaps to some extent’ with that of the addresser. Thirdly, “the wider the range of potential implicatures and the greater the hearer’s responsibility for constructing them, the more poetic the effect, the more creative the metaphor.” This point can be expanded to the uses of other figurative language types. Finally, figurative language cannot be paraphrased without loss of meaning or effect.

Consider example (39) of a metaphor by Sperber and Wilson (1986):

(39) Robert is a bulldozer.

(Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 236)

The addressee takes more responsibility in comprehending this metaphor to infer weak implicatures than a direct assertion that *Robert is persistent*. The weak implicatures include, for example, the images of "Robert's obstinacy, insensitivity and refusal to be deflected". These "wide range of acceptable weak implicatures" form the poetic effects, which will offset the extra cognitive effort. Since this metaphor reflects better the thoughts of the speaker, as compared with a direct assertion, it can help to achieve optimal relevance. Sperber and Wilson (1986: 237) also point out that understanding figurative language such as metaphor "requires no special interpretive abilities or procedures: it is a natural outcome of some very general abilities and procedures used in verbal communication".

These main arguments for interpreting 'figurative' language in Relevance Theory will be employed in the current study to discuss the uses of RQs, especially those RQs containing other rhetorical devices.

3.7 Interpretation process of an utterance in Relevance Theory

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986: 73, 179), the process of interpreting an utterance is as follows: the linguistic input system automatically decodes the utterance into its logical form(s), which the hearers then complete into a fully propositional form on the basis of the contextual information. Then the inferred intention of the speaker lies in the implicatures, which can be inferred from the propositional form with the aid of the principle of relevance. These implicatures involve propositional attitudes, which are entailed in the factual assumptions. Consider Mary's reply in the following example:

(40) "Peter: Did John pay back the money he owed you?

Mary: No. He forgot to go to the bank.”

(Wilson and Sperber, 2004: 616)

The logical form automatically decoded from Mary’s utterance is:

X forgot to go to the bank 1/Bank 2

(X=uninterpreted pronoun; Bank 1=financial institution; Bank 2=river bank)

With the contextual information and an expectation of the relevance in Mary’s reply, an explanation why John has not repaid the money he owed Mary, Peter can infer the fully propositional form after reference assignment and disambiguation, an explicature of Mary’s utterance:

John forgot to go to the Bank 1.

With the implicated premise:

Forgetting to go to the Bank 1 will make one unable to repay the money one owes.

Peter can then reach the implicated conclusion:

John was unable to repay Mary the money he owes because he forgot to go to the Bank 1.

Weaker implicatures can also be inferred, such as:

John may repay Mary the money he owes when he next goes to the Bank 1.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 86-89) characterise the way that information is stored in memory in three formats: logical entry, encyclopaedic entry and lexical entry. “A logical entry consists of a set of deductive rules” describing premises and conclusions, which determines “content of information”.[13]

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[13] The deductive rules typically include:
i) ‘and elimination’, such as: Input (P and Q) Output: P;
ii) ‘if conditioning’, such as: Input (i) p (ii) If P then Q, output: Q;
iii) ‘or disjunction’, such as: input (i) P or Q (ii) (not P) output: Q.

An encyclopaedic entry "contains information about its extension and/or denotation: the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate a concept and determine the context of an utterance", e.g. the concept *Bank 1* contains a set of schematic and stereotypical encyclopaedic information about 'what you do in banks' such as *you can get money from banks*.

A lexical entry is a "representation with linguistic forms" including syntactic and phonological information, which serves as linguistic input to interpret an utterance. The inferential process involves (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 179):

1. assigning the utterance a unique propositional form, including disambiguating the sentence; selecting a semantic sense; assigning reference and defining vague terms such as "will". This first step of enriching logical forms is an inferential process, which means that even the explicature of an utterance involves inference.

2. identifying the propositional attitude of the propositional form, which is also inferential, with the help of contextual assumptions (implicated premises).

3. introducing the implicatures consistent with the principle of relevance.

I again take (36) as an example, repeated here as (41).

(41) *Do you know what time it is?*

Firstly, get its logical form:

Q X <u>KNOW</u> P

(X=somebody; P=*what time it is).*

Then, assign a unique propositional form by disambiguating, reference resolution and selecting one of the semantic representations assigned to it by grammar. With the help of the context, the logical form will be enriched into a propositional form:

The mother believes the child does not know the time.

This is the contextual information, retrieved from encyclopaedic memory of the child:

It's late. S/he should have gone to bed.

The implicated contextual assumption (premise) is:

If the child knows it is already 11pm and then s/he knows s/he should be in bed.

The encyclopeadic knowledge is:

The mother is responsible for the child's going to bed on time.

And the bridging implicature:

The mother wants him/her to be in bed.

Then the implicated conclusion is:

The mother is urging the child to go to bed.

It is this implicature that makes the whole utterance relevant enough to be worth the hearer's attention to process.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 234) point out that an 'item by item test strategy' is employed by hearers in the process of inferring implicatures of relevance, such that "all the hearer has to do is start computing, in order of those implications which might be relevant to him and continue to add them to the overall interpretation of the utterance until it is relevant enough to be consistent with the principle of relevance."

In this chapter, I have compared Relevance Theory with Speech Act Theory and Grice's approaches, pointing out that, to interpret the implicatures conveyed by RQs and explain the mismatch between grammatical form and illocutionary forces, Relevance Theory is a better choice. The key concepts of 'relevance', 'context' 'implicatures' and 'mutual manifestness' are essential in explaining the features and uses of an RQ, which is one form of ‘ostensive-inferential communication’. Brief introductions have been made concerning how interrogatives are comprehended in Relevance Theory and how Relevance Theory explains the interpretation of an utterance, which are highly relevant to the theme of the current study.

I will then, in the data analysis chapters, apply this inferential procedure in Relevance Theory to investigate my research problem, which is why different types of RQ are used in persuasive genres.

In the following chapter, the methodological procedure will be presented, as well as an introduction to the corpora used in the current study, the approach employed to extract questions from the three target genres and an operational practice in how to identify an RQ from all those questions extracted and how to interpret it in terms of Relevance Theory.

Chapter 4 Methodology in the current study

The research problems identified in Chapter 1 need to be solved through the observation of real data. The previous discussion of the literature review leaves us with interesting issues to be investigated in relation to RQs. In order to progress, I need to discuss the problems posed by the empirical corpus data, to see how the Relevance Theoretical approach I am taking helps to clarify the nature of the data and address the research problems.

In this chapter, firstly, the methodological procedure is presented, followed by a brief introduction to corpus linguistics and the corpora used in the current study, and the way in which questions are extracted from the three genres. Finally, the manner in which an RQ is identified and comprehended in the current research is exemplified, to serve as the foundation for the subsequent data analysis chapters.

4.1 Methodological procedure of the current study

Based on the definitions elaborated in previous literature, the methodological procedure is designed to reveal the use of RQs in authentic English speaking environments, and to provide answers to the current research questions, which are as follows: firstly, the way in which an addressee manages to identify the rhetorical nature of a question, infers the implicature embodied in the question, and the addresser's intended assumptions; secondly, the reason why an addresser in the monologic context employs an RQ rather than a direct assertion to convey his/her communicative intention beyond linguistic forms. This involves consideration of the different types of RQ which are used in influencing the addressee's thoughts and the way in which these two questions are accounted for in terms of Relevance Theory.

The current study, unlike some previous research based on contrived and decontextualised examples, is based on an empirical observation of authentic data collected from corpora, taking a qualitative approach. In terms of quantitative analysis, the approach here deals with the frequency of RQ types, but it does not go into the study of statistical significance, or use statistical analysis software. The reason for this is that my approach has Relevance Theory as its starting point, so is not fully corpus linguistic. In addition, the BNC editorial sub-corpus includes readers' letters to the editor, and is thus not qualitatively comparable with the editorial genre component of my self-built corpus, which consists exclusively of editor comments.

Dialogic genres are beyond the scope of this study. Instead, the current study is carried out mainly in three monologic genres: campaign speeches, newspaper editorials, and religious sermons. It is believed that they form a cohesive object of study, since they are all persuasive.

The methodological procedure is as follows:

(i) At the first stage, all questions are extracted from the corpora of three persuasive genres: namely, campaign speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons. RQs are distinguished and extracted manually, via the criterion of distinguishing different question types, which I set in Chapter 5; and through the identification of RQs by their own linguistic indicators and context, applying the concepts of 'mutual manifestation' and 'implicature' from Relevance Theory, which are discussed in detail in this Chapter at sub-section 4.4;

(ii) At the second stage, a qualitative approach is employed, to analyse features and functions of RQs, as well as answer questions about how certain factors influence the utterance of an RQ by an addresser, and the interpretation of an RQ in different genres by an addressee, in terms of Relevance Theory;

(iii) At the third stage, the question of how addressers in the above genres use RQs to persuade their audience is discussed; and the way in which Relevance Theory accounts for the way addressers persuade their audience with the use of RQs is demonstrated.

4.2 Brief introduction to corpus linguistics and the corpora used in the current study

4.2.1 Corpus linguistics and its application to the study of RQs

Corpora, which provide an abundance of examples representing naturally-occurring language phenomena, when combined with the intuition and interpretative skills of the analyst will lead to more accurate, representative and convincing findings. A brief review of the definition of corpus, corpus linguistics, their classification and application is carried out in the following section.

Meyer (2002: xii) defines a corpus as “a body of text made available in computer-readable form for purposes of linguistic analysis”. Kennedy (1998: 1-3) concurs, and expands on Meyer’s words by saying, “In the language sciences a corpus is ‘a body of written text or transcribed speech which can serve as a basis for linguistic analysis and description’”, adding that “Historically, it is not...the case that corpora are necessarily stored electronically...although this is nowadays the norm.”

Concerning the definition of ‘corpus linguistics’, according to Renouf (forthcoming), corpus linguistics, as an umbrella term, comprises “the physical observation of corpus text, the quantification, analysis and description of textual features, the observation of derived analytical databases, the discovery of new linguistic facts and explanatory principles, and the cyclical development of hypotheses”. She also points out that “a text corpus is simply a passive collection of digitised texts. What renders it usable is the software which stores, analyses and presents it to the linguist”. McEnery and Hardie (2012: 1) endorse this view by saying “We could reasonably define corpus linguistics as dealing with some set of machine-readable texts which is deemed an appropriate basis on which to study a specific set of research questions”, while Kennedy (1998: 3) describes corpus linguistics as “the compilation and analysis of corpora stored in computerized databases”. Meanwhile, Leech (1992: 105) branches into the next level of specification, defining corpus linguistics as “a methodological basis for pursuing linguistic research”.

Corpora can be classified into various categories according to different criteria:

- With regard to text-length, there exist corpora composed of full texts or text extracts. Starting from the early closed corpus (the static sample corpus) of hundreds of thousands of word tokens, corpora evolved into those containing millions of words, e.g. the BNC (Aston and Burnard, 1997) with 100 million words covering the period from 1980s to 1994 and Bank of English (Sinclair, 1987) with 455 million words from 1960 to 2005. Monitor corpora have appeared more recently, e.g. The Corpus of Contemporary American English (Davies, 2008-) and WebCorp (Kehoe and Renouf, 2002), which are updated on a regular basis.

- With regard to the time dimension, corpora can be divided into synchronic and diachronic resources. The former reveals the features of a particular language variety at a point in time, while the latter offers the possibility of studying language changes over time.

- As far as genres are concerned, there exist written corpora and spoken corpora. The Brown corpus (Kucera and Francis, 1967), which contains 1 million words, consisting of 500 American English texts across 15 genres, was published in 1961. The Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen corpus, abbreviated as LOB (Johansson et al., 1978), established with the purpose of being a British English (BrE) equivalent of Brown, contains the same number of texts published in Britain in 1961. Frown and FLOB are the two subsequent corpora following Brown and LOB, respectively containing 1 million words of American and British texts published in 1991-2 (Hundt & Mair, 1998). These four corpora of the Brown 'family' are examples of written corpora. Spoken corpora are represented by London-Lund Corpus (Svartvik, 1990), a corpus of c. 500,000 words of spoken English covering 30 years since 1959 and Corpus of London Teenage English (Stenström et al., 2002), collected in 1993 and consisting of the spoken language of 13 to 17-year-old teenagers from different boroughs of London with half a million words. Corpora can also be classified into 'general' covering a wide range of genre e.g. British National Corpus, Bank of English, American National Corpus (Ide et al., 2002); and specialised ones focussing on one particular genre for special investigation: e.g. JDEST: Jiao Da English for Science and Technology (Yang, 1985a and b, 1986).

- With reference to the number of languages involved, multi-lingual corpora, parallel corpora and monolingual corpora can be found. Using multi-lingual corpora, contrastive studies about linguistic phenomena in different linguistic and cultural backgrounds can be carried out; parallel corpora are now quite popular in the interdisciplinary study of translation and language teaching; and monolingual corpora focus on text sources from one particular language. The International Corpus of English (ICE) is one example of a multi-lingual corpus project, containing matching corpora from around eighteen English-speaking countries and regions throughout the world, each with a million words of spoken and written data produced after 1989 (see Greenbaum, 1996 for an introduction to ICE).

- Corpora can be further divided into those containing raw material and those which are annotated, with the latter being invaluable in the analysis of languages from a grammatical perspective.

- Besides the above-mentioned classifications, other types of corpora have been compiled for specific research purposes: e.g. CHILDES (MacWhinney and Snow, 1985), specialising in children's language acquisition; and historical corpora, e.g. The Helsinki Corpus (Rissanen and Kytö, 1991) from 730 to 1710, and ARCHER (Biber et al., 1994) from 1650 to 1990.

With the proliferation of corpora, the past fifty years has witnessed a growing application of corpus-based and corpus-driven research in a variety of fields (in chronological order: Sinclair, 1991; Fillmore, 1992; Leech, 1992; Biber et al., 1999; Widdowson, 2000; Stubbs, 2001; Hunston, 2002; Adolphs, 2008; Adolphs and Lin, 2010; Adolphs and Carter, 2013, 2015; Renouf, 2013; Xiao and McEnery, 2013; Brezina, McEnery and Wattam, 2015). This includes both the mainstream of linguistic study in lexicology, grammar, morphology, semantics and phonology and in applied fields including literary study, lexicography, translation and language teaching. Corpus methods have also been applied to pragmatics (Romero-Trillo, 2008; Aijmer and Ruhlemann, 2015)

The current study is corpus–based in that it uses textual corpora for a linguistic study in a specific field: the analysis of RQs. Corpora have been used previously to study RQs. Rohde (2006), for example, introduces data from the annotated Switchboard corpus, which contains 1155 discourse-annotated conversations made up of 205,000 utterances and 1.4 million words, from which 583 RQs were extracted and tagged automatically. Ilie (1994) examines a corpus containing 200 RQs in keynote speeches of leaders of the three major British parties during the 1992 general election campaign. The corpus of Schaffer (2005: 438) is mainly composed of "the dialogue of novels, short stories, and scripted films and TV shows dating from 1932 to 1995" and also some personal conversations, print cartoons, greeting cards and non-fiction magazine articles. She claims that her corpus consists of 169 RQs used as retorts to information-eliciting questions.

4.2.2 Corpora used in the current study

Similarly, the current corpus-based study takes advantage of the available sources of authentic data, thereby avoiding unnatural and artificial examples frequently found in previous resource.

In the current research, small corpora from the newest data available have been assembled including 2012 American presidential campaign speeches, 2010 British general election speeches, and news editorials collected from six leading British and American newspaper and news magazines during the time period July - October 2013. The relevant sub-corpora of FLOB (editorial section) and the BNC (editorials and sermon sections) are also studied. By taking advantage of all these corpora, I shall attempt to reveal the features of RQs in the three persuasive genres in authentic text.

The corpora represent three different genres: campaign speeches, newspaper editorials, and religious sermons. They are listed in the table below:

Table 4.1 Data source

Sources	Date	Language varieties	Genre	Corpus size (number of words)	Number of texts	Number of questions	Question frequency （per 1000 words）
BNC	1980s-1993	BrE	news editorial	100,659	Not shown in the BNC	289	2.87
	1980s-1993	BrE	sermon	80,135	Not shown in the BNC	291	3.63
FLOB	1991-1996	BrE	news editorial	67,407	27 texts	132	1.96
Self-built	2013	AmE	news editorial	8,849	9 texts	43	4.86
	2013	BrE	news editorial	13,995	19 texts	48	3.43
	2011-2012	AmE	(general election） political speeches	67,541	28 texts	116	1.72
	2010	BrE	(general election） political speeches	55,907	33 texts	117	2.09
Total				394,493		1036	

It is well documented that British and American varieties of English differ in many respects. These differences exist at linguistic, pragmatic and other levels. However, they also share many features, and my observation is that the similarities are the salient features in the context of analyzing RQs. My focus in this thesis is to examine discourse strategies across textual genres of which RQs are a fundamental feature, with a view to compiling as wide-ranging a classification as possible. My analysis therefore sits above inter-lingual differences. Accordingly, while I shall, in the course of the thesis, identify relevant linguistic and pragmatic differences emerging between the two varieties of English, these differences are not of the kind that will require, in the first instance, an explicitly contrastive study of UK and US English varieties.

It should also be noted that in a speech, intonation may be as important as context in identifying a question as rhetorical and as a criticism. Of these three genres listed in Table 4.1, campaign speeches and religious sermons obviously belong to the spoken medium. However, my data are held only in written format, no access to intonational or prosodic information being available.

4.3 Extracting questions from the three genres

4.3.1 Extracting questions from political speeches

Political speeches are first considered, as they are more likely to contain large numbers of RQs, in that they are monologic and persuasive; while the addressers, delivering speeches in public before large audiences, generally do not expect any answer to be provided by any addressee. The 2012 American presidential campaign[14] and the 2010 British General campaign[15] are the two most recent large-scale political campaigns (prior to the 2015 UK general election). From the first, a total of 67541 word tokens from 28 events were selected, and from the second, 55,907 word tokens from 33 events were downloaded, to form a small text corpus.

Starting in May 2011, the 57th American presidential campaign witnessed fierce debates, attacks and defences, both inside and between the main political parties in USA. The Democratic Party, was led by Barack Obama, and the opposition Republican Party was represented mainly by eight presidential candidates. Sources of American campaign speeches are shown in the Table 4.2:

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14 Available at http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/2012_election.php.
15 Available at http://www.totalpolitics.com/speeches/elections/.

Table 4.2 Data sources of American campaign speeches

Question Nos.	Addresser	Sources
1-3	Barack Obama	Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Parma, Ohio, July 5, 2012
4	Barack Obama	Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Urbandale, Iowa, September 1, 2012
5-9	Barack Obama	Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin, November 5, 2012
10-22	Herman Cain	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Atlanta, Georgia，May 21, 2011
23-24	Jon Huntsman	Address at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, October 10, 2011
25-31	Jon Huntsman	Remarks in Manchester Following the New Hampshire Primary, January 10, 2012.txt
32-33	Michele Bachmann	Remarks in West Des Moines Following the Iowa, Caucus, January 3, 2012.txt
34-35	Mitt Romney	Remarks at the 134th National Guard Association of the United States General Conference and Exhibition in Reno, Nevada, September 11, 2012.txt
36-37	Mitt Romney	Remarks at the NAACP Convention in Houston, Texas, July 11, 2012.txt
38-48	Newt Gingrich	Remarks in Atlanta, Georgia Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012.txt
49-50	Newt Gingrich	Remarks in Des Moines Following the Iowa Caucuses, January 3, 2012.txt
51-57	Rick Perry	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Charleston, South Carolina, August 13, 2011.txt
58	Rick Perry	Remarks Announcing the End of Presidential Campaign Activities, January 19, 2012.txt
59-74	Rick Santorum	Remarks in Colorado Following the Nevada Caucuses, February 4, 2012.txt
75-85	Rick Santorum	Remarks in Johnston Following the Iowa Caucuses, January 3, 2012.txt
86	Rick Santorum	Remarks in Steubenville, Ohio Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012.txt
87-91	Ron Paul	Remarks in Ankeny Following the Iowa Caucus, January 3, 2012.txt
92-101	Ron Paul	Remarks in Arden Hills, Minnesota Following the Nevada Caucuses, February 4, 2012.txt
102-108	Ron Paul	Remarks in Fargo, North Dakota Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012.txt

109-110	Tim Pawlenty	Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Des Moines, Iowa, A Time for Truth, May 23, 2011.txt
111-114	Tim Pawlenty	Remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, June 28, 2011.txt
115-116	Tim Pawlenty	Remarks on the Economy at the University of Chicago, June 7, 2011.txt

The British campaign speeches are those given between April 13, 2010 and May 11, 2010 by seven politicians from the three main political parties in Britain: David Cameron, MP and leader of the Conservative Party; Gorden Brown, the then Prime Minister and leader of the Labour Party; Douglas Alexander, Labour's General Election Coordinator; Nick Clegg, MP and leader of the Liberal Democrats; George Osborne, Shadow Chancellor; David Miliband, Foreign secretary; and Vince Cable, deputy leader of the Liberal Democratic party. Sources of the 2010 British campaign speeches are shown in Table 4.3:

Table 4.3 Data sources of British campaign speeches

Question Nos.	Addresser and event
1-7	David Cameron MP, Leader of the Conservative Party, speech at the launch of the Conservative's 2010 General Election Manifesto.
	David Cameron, 13/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010, Conservative Politics (General)
8-20	David Cameron launches the Conservative Party's 'Contract for Jobs'
	David Cameron, 02/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
	David Cameron speaks on "A New Welfare Contract" at a rally in Burton
	David Cameron, 20/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
21-26	David Cameron speaks on "A New Welfare Contract" at a rally in Burton
	David Cameron, 20/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
27-48	David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government"
	David Cameron, 19/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
49-50	David Cameron, Leader of the Conservative Party, speaking at a rally in East Renfrewshire
	David Cameron, 04/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010

51-57	David Cameron, Leader of the Conservative Party, speaking at a rally in East Renfrewshire
	David Cameron, 04/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
58-66	David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaking in South London
	David Cameron, 27/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
67-78	David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaks at the Citizens UK General Election assembly in Westminster
	David Cameron, 03/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
79-81	Douglas Alexander, Labour"s General Election Coordinator, speaks to activists and staff at London Labour Headquarters
	Danny Alexander, 16/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
80-81	Gordon Brown MP, speaking at Labour Party HQ following his resignation as Prime Minister and Party leader, 11052010.txt
82-85	Gordon Brown, Prime Minister and Labour Party Leader, speaking at the National Glass Centre in Sunderland to launch Labour's culture and creative industries manifesto
	Gordon Brown, 01/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
86-95	Gordon Brown, Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party, speaking at Bradford University:
	Gordon Brown, 05/05/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
96-103	Gordon Brown, Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party, speaking today at the RCN Conference in Bournemouth
	Gordon Brown, 26/04/2010
	Category: General Election 2010
104-105	Nick Clegg MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, speech on the Liberal Democrat manifesto, 14042010.txt
106-112	Shadow Chancellor George Osborne launches Change for the better in Financial Services, 28042010.txt
113	Rt Hon David Miliband, Foreign Secretary, speaking at Gloucester College on 'Labour's approach to the European Union', 22042010.txt
114-116	Rt Hon David Miliband, Foreign Secretary, speaking at Gloucester College on 'Labour's approach to the European Union', 22042010.txt
117	Vince Cable's speech to the Institute of Directors, 28042010.txt

To extract all questions from the speeches, Wordsmith 6.0 software was applied to the self-built corpus. The search term [*"?"] extracts every word immediately followed by a question mark, and thus every direct question form, rhetorical and non-rhetorical, in the corpora. In response to this search string, 116 concordance lines in American Campaign Speeches and 117 concordance lines in British ones were produced.

4.3.2 Extracting questions from newspaper editorials

The newspaper editorial, another monologic type, is expected to contain a relatively high number of RQs. In the current study, I consider the question whether RQs have the same features as those in political speeches, or whether they contain features unique to the genre of the newspaper editorial.

To reveal the features of those RQs in newspaper editorials and to illustrate them within the theoretical framework of Relevance Theory, I shall attempt to analyse data from three text sources with a total frequency of 19,0910 word tokens, as shown in Table 4.1. These include:

i) A small self-collected textual corpus from four mainstream British and American newspapers: namely the *Guardian*; the *Independent*; the *Telegraph*; and the *New York Times*, and two news magazines, namely *Newsweek* and *Time*, covering the time-span July 2013 to October 2013, downloaded from their respective websites;
ii) Sub-corpus of news editorials in FLOB; and
iii) Sub-corpus of news editorials in the BNC.

All three sources have full texts available[16], which satisfy the requirement that identifying and analysing RQs should take 'context'[17] into account.

i) Extracting questions from the self-built editorial corpus

To extract all questions from the self-built editorial corpus, Wordsmith 6.0 software was

[16] Special thanks are owed to The Oxford Text Archive for providing me with the XML edition of British National Corpus after my email inquiry.
[17] As to the meaning of 'context' in the current study, see Chapter 3.3.2. Also note that textual context is one part of the meanings of 'context', which contain the immediate context (microstructure), made up of a span of words to left and right of a node word, and the total textual macro-structure (see Phillips, 1989)

adopted. In response to the search term [*“?”], 91 concordance lines were produced. From these, RQs are sorted manually, according to the criteria set out in the current study.

Unlike the data in FLOB and the BNC, which contain letters from readers, those in my self-built corpus are all comments from editors, consisting of 28 editorials, with 19 containing questions. The data cover topics including education; religion; finance; political issues such as elections, foreign policy, NHS reform, war, immigration issues and female roles in the political world; aspects of social life including driving tests in UK, diet, mobile phone use on flights and children upbringing; crimes, including domestic violence, invasion of privacy, information leaking, female slavery and drug use.

ii) Extracting questions from the FLOB[18] corpus

FLOB, contains 1 million words, and covers the time period 1991-1996. It is part of the ‘Brown family’ of corpora. Work on the compilation of FLOB and its counterpart, the Freiburg-Brown corpus of American English (Frown), began in 1991, created by Mair. “Both corpora were intended to match Brown (representative of American written English in 1961) and LOB (the corresponding representative of British written English in 1961) as closely as possible in size and composition, with the only difference being that they should represent the language of the early 1990s, thus providing linguists with an empirical basis to study language change in progress” (see *Freiburg-LOB corpus manual*, Hundt et al., 1998)[19] Like the original Brown and LOB corpora, FLOB contains 500 texts of around 2000 words each, distributed across 15 text categories, of which Press Editorial was one.

To extract all questions from FLOB-B (editorials), a similar procedure was taken to that in processing the self-built corpus: Wordsmith 6.0 software was applied and in response to the search term [*“?”], concordance lines were produced, numbering 132. From these, RQs are sorted manually, according to the criteria set out in the current study.

[18] FLOB was created by Christian Mair, at Freiburg University (later tagged by Geoffrey Leech). Its original version was released in 1999 and POS-tagged version in 2007.
[19] Available at http://clu.uni.no/icame/manuals/FLOB/INDEX.HTM.

FLOB-B editorials are generally written by editors, making comments on current political and economic issues such as the impact of inflation and recession, entry into the EU, bank loans, and the currency to be used in Scotland. FLOB sub-corpus also contains letters written by readers to the editors, which are not confined to political or economic issues but cover various fields; social issues such as the replacement of priests in one Scottish church, impolite behaviour in theatres, unfair treatment to dogs accidentally biting men, and chaos in bus parking. The data topics are far from homogeneous.

iii) Extracting questions from the BNC-editorials

The BNC (British National Corpus), is a 100 million-word corpus of British English, created by Oxford University Press, with texts covering the time period of 1980s to 1993.

The BNC is a sample corpus, composed of text samples no longer than 55,000 words; it is a general corpus, covering various subject fields, registers and genres; it is a monolingual British English corpus and also a mixed-media corpus, containing examples of both spoken and written language.

Amongst other places, the BNC is available at the website of http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/. To find all questions in the BNC editorials, in response to the search form ? in its sub-corpus the BNC 'w-news-edits', 289 concordance lines were produced. I turn to the XML version of the BNC for more contexts, when the expanded context of around 170 word tokens at the BYU website is not sufficient to decide the nature of a question.

4.3.3 Extracting questions from sermons

Sermons are one of my research targets because they share features with political speeches and newspaper editorials in being monologic and persuasive texts, but might display unique features due to their particular genre.

The BNC contains a sub-corpus specialising in sermons. In response to the search term ? in the BNC sub-corpus of 'ss-sermon' at the website: http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/, 290 concordance lines were generated.

With these 1036 questions extracted from the three genres, RQs still need to be sorted manually. I then need to find an operational criterion.

4.4 Criterion for identifying and interpreting an RQ in the current study

4.4.1 How the Code Model helps to explain the identification of RQs

The issue is how the addressee decides the rhetorical nature of a question. What role do lexical indicators and semantic indicators play? Are they just indicative, or are they decisive? In other words, can a 'Code Model' (see 2.3.3 for a definition) account for the identification of RQs?

Can a rhetorical reading of a question be determined by lexical indicators?

What I shall argue is that the emphatic articles, "really", "ever", "on earth", and so on are indicators but not definite markers of an RQ. When they are taken away, the rhetorical reading may still stand (see 1); if the question contains them, it may still work as an information question (see 2).

(1) Do we really want to go over to a system where all you ever get is another hung parliament, politicians sitting around and arguing and haggling? Politicians love doing that. We'd have a great time.
(David Cameron launches the Conservative Party's 'Contract for Jobs'; May 2, 2010)

(2) Newman's central idea, both as a Catholic and as an Anglican, was that one holy Catholic

and apostolic Church exists. This may seem meaningless to non-churchgoers and trivial to churchgoers, since it is part of the Athanasian Creed recited every Sunday. But if you admit the existence of this supernatural body, the question then becomes, <u>where on earth can it be found?</u> Newman came to the answer Rome; the former friends he left behind in the Church of England replied that the early undivided Church had been the only one wholly to contain this supernatural essence…
(Andrew Brown, English pragmatism and patronising the papacy, the *Independent*, October 3, 1989)

Emphatic adverbial "really" in (1) is semantically, though not pragmatically, redundant, in that when "really" is taken away, the rhetorical reading of the question *"Do we want to go over to a system where all you ever get is another hung parliament, politicians sitting around and arguing and haggling?"* still stands.

In (2), the lexical indicator "on earth" does not determine the rhetorical reading of the question. What determines the nature of the question is whether an implicature can be inferred in the previous context. The previous text argues that Newman and his like believe that there exists only one holy Catholic Church. However, the readers cannot determine where this supernatural body can be found. So this question is an expository one, consisting of a question with an answer provided by the addresser himself.

<u>Can rhetorical reading of a question be determined by the use of semantic indicators?</u>

I also observe that semantic indicators are similar to lexical indicators in that they do not guarantee the rhetorical reading of a question, only increasing the chances of rhetorical reading.

(3) … Washington's created 17 debt and entitlement commissions in 30 years, but the fact of the matter is they just didn't have the courage to make the decisions to allow you to have the future that you actually deserve? [...] <u>How can the wealthiest nation in the history of</u>

civilization fail so miserably to pay its bills? How does that happen?
Well, Mr. President, let us tell you something: you can't win the future by selling America off to foreign creditors.
(Rick Perry, Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Charleston, South Carolina, August 13, 2011)

In (3), the sharp contrast between "the wealthiest nation" and "so miserably" in the question guides the addressee to the intended implicature incorporated in the question, that *The current government should be blamed for the current chaotic situation*. But these two prominent loaded words, "wealthiest" and "miserably", are not responsible for the question's rhetorical reading. When they are taken away, the question *How can the nation fail to pay its bills?* may still be acceptable as an RQ in specific contexts. It is the context that determines the rhetorical reading of (3). The immediately previous context, that due to the depressed economy and high inflation, all kinds of crises lurk in America and the hint of ridiculousness embodied in the comparison between a prosperous America in the past and a miserable one at present, make the implicature mutually manifest. The mutual cognitive environment that this is a political speech attacking the opponent also ensures this question as one not expecting an answer but delivering an implicature. If we changed the context into a news conference, this question could serve as an information question raised by a journalist to the premier demanding an explanation for the poor economy.

In the light of the three introductory examples above, we might already draw two tentative conclusions:

Conclusion (i): The existence of linguistic indicators supports the partial explanatory power of the general theory of communication - the Code Model.

Conclusion (ii): The Code Model alone is not sufficient to help explain the identification of RQs in that: linguistic indicators are not a 100% guarantee of the rhetorical reading of a question; there still exist large numbers of RQs without indicators; and the Code Model is not sufficient to help infer the possible intention of the addresser beyond its linguistic expression. Accordingly, we need an inferential model which takes into account the role of context and which helps infer the intended assumptions of the addresser.

I will demonstrate here and in the following chapters that the identification of an RQ, whether containing a linguistic indicator or not, involves the same inferential process; and the implicatures conveyed by an RQ can only be inferred by an inferential model as by Relevance Theory.

4.4.2 How Relevance Theory helps to identify and interpret RQs

Identification of an RQ in the current study

In the current study, an RQ is identified by interpreting the linguistic indicators and contexts of the question by applying the concepts of "mutual manifestness" and "contextual implicature", as promulgated by Wilson and Sperber (2004: 608). The operational procedure for identifying an RQ is as follows: firstly a question is selected. The preceding context is then studied. If an implied proposition can be identified by combining the linguistic form of that question and its context, in Relevance Theory terms, if an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, and no answer is expected, then that question can be judged an RQ. If no implied proposition can be recovered, it is not an RQ.

'Implicature' in the current study to distinguish RQs with other question types

As can be seen in the above claim, whether an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee is a decisive factor in identifying an RQ. It should be noted that 'implicature' in the current study is the type of particularised conversational implicature which is conveyed in the context, as discussed in 3.3.3. Based on the analysis of categories of 'implicatures' in 3.3.3., I acknowledge that the other three types of questions found in the current data, namely, expository questions, speculative questions and information questions, also convey their particularised conversation implicatures, with expository questions indicating that 'the addresser will tell the addressee the answer', speculative questions indicating that 'the addresser expects the addressees to think rather than infer an answer or provide an answer' and information questions indicating that 'the addresser expects an answer to be provided by the addressee'. However, the current study hereafter will use 'implicature' in a narrower sense, excluding the kinds of implicature indicating expecting an answer or not, but referring to the attitudes of the addresser and other implied propositions.

I will demonstrate with examples showing that the implicature may be a corresponding statement directly transformed from the interrogative form in some cases, but also may be an implied proposition not directly transformed from the interrogative in other cases.

<u>Case 1: the implicature is a corresponding statement directly transformed from the interrogative</u>

Let us consider one question, uttered by A to his divorced friend B
(4) Isn't it your fault for quarrelling with your wife?

If both A and B acknowledge the fact that *It is B's fault for quarrelling with his wife* or that *The quarrels between B and his ex-wife were always caused by B* and if the fact is mutually manifest to both A and B, this question will work as a rhetorical one, to express A's criticism and recrimination, and to evoke B's regret for his past behaviour. But if this fact is manifest only to A, this question will serve as a genuine question, inviting a self-defence from B.

The procedure which I have so far used in the current study to judge the rhetorical reading of a question is: firstly, to turn the question into a declarative proposition based on the mutual cognitive environment; then, to see whether the declarative form is an assumption mutually manifest to the addresser and the addressee and no answer is expected; and lastly, to make a judgment of its rhetorical nature based on mutual manifestness. Following this procedure, whether a question is a rhetorical one can be determined.

Case 2: the implicature is an implied proposition not directly transformed from the interrogative

The above example is a type where the addresser communicates one specific assumption literally expressed in the question. In such examples the declarative proposition is one transformed directly and literally from the question.

However, as Sperber and Wilson (1986: 59) point out, in most cases of human communication, "what the communicator intends to make manifest is partly precise and partly vague". Their division of 'meaning' into "informative intention" and "communicative intention" makes it possible to explain the vague implicatures extended by an RQ. Informative intention is to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions. Communicative intention is to make mutually manifest the informative intention (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 58). These assumptions are either strong or weak. When the communicator makes manifest a particular assumption, the assumption is strongly communicated. When the communicator makes manifest a wide range of assumptions, then the assumptions are weakly communicated. For most RQs, the assumptions intended to be expressed are weak implicatures. Besides the assumptions made manifest directly by the question, the informative intention also contains "all the further assumptions that this initial assumption makes mutually manifest"; in that case, the declarative proposition may be one drawn from the mutual cognitive environment, rather than one changed directly from the question, as shown in (5):

(5) Background: Watching a news story about a child who had been murdered, the addresser utters to her husband
"what monster would dare to harm a sleeping child?"
(Goto, 2011: 6)

What is mutually manifest to the addresser and addressee in (5) is that *the murderer is a monstrous person and the news is terrible*, rather than a negative assertion that *No monster* *would dare to harm a sleeping child,* or an obvious answer that *the monster is a certain individual X.*

We can see that the implied proposition of an RQ can be one directly transformed from the interrogative or one drawn from the question from a mutual cognitive environment, not directly transformed from the linguistic form of the interrogative. As long as the implied proposition is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee when the question is interpreted, the question will be judged as an RQ. With this criterion, a total of 330 RQs are identified in the current data, out of a total of 1036 questions.

<u>Comprehension of an RQ in the current study</u>

As has been proved above, with the concept of 'mutual manifestness' an RQ can be successfully identified. After that, the addressee still needs to discern the addresser's intention. In most cases, the intention the addresser attempts to convey is beyond the declarative assumption expressed by the question, and actually expressed by the implicature（s） embodied in the question.

The inferential process to be attributed to the addressee in terms of Relevance Theory is:

Upon hearing/reading an RQ, the addressee first decodes the logical form directly from the linguistic structure of the RQ. Then they transform the logical form into a propositional form by reference resolution, disambiguation and semantic enrichment with the help of the context. After that, based on the implied premise, which is usually encyclopaedic knowledge and with the contextual information as a bridge, the addressee will draw the implied conclusion, which is the implicature of that RQ. Hence, they can infer the intended assumptions of the addresser. Consider (6):

(6) So, Wisconsin, our ideas have been tested. We've tried them: They worked. The other side's ideas have also been tested. They didn't work so well. After Bill Clinton left office,

during most of the last decade, we tried giving big tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. We tried giving insurance companies and oil companies and Wall Street free rein to do whatever they pleased. And what did we get? Falling incomes, record deficits, the slowest job growth in half a century, an economic crisis that we've been cleaning up after ever since.
(Barack Obama's Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin. in November 5, 2012.)

The mutual cognitive environment includes: the American economic situation - a prosperous one in Bill Clinton's time and an economic downfall in George W Bush's time, the campaign competition between the then President, Barack Obama, and the Republican candidate, Mitt Romney, and also the background of the co-text, which is Barack Obama's attacking of Republican administration.

After reference resolution of the utterances in the preceding context *"We've tried them: They worked. The other side's ideas have also been tested. They didn't work so well.",* the hearers can perceive the information that *We, the Democratic, have tried our ideas and our ideas worked. The ideas of the Republicans have been tested and their ideas have failed.* This old information, when combined with the new information conveyed by the RQ *"what did we, the American people get after eight years' Republican administration?"* helps to achieve 'a multiplication' effect – the relevance of this RQ, which is a satire and attack by Barack Obama upon his campaign opponent, Mitt Romney. Obama implies that if Romney becomes the president, the American people will continue to suffer from economic gloom, while if Obama is re-elected, he will maintain the prosperity of Clinton era.

The inferential process of the implicatures conveyed by this RQ in terms of Relevance Theory is:

Its logical form:
What X get (X=American people)

With the help of the context, the logical form will be enriched into the following propositional form:

The American people get X.

The implicated premise is:

If the policy fails, people will suffer from economic gloom.

The contextual information, as a bridge, is:

Democratic ideas worked and Republican ideas failed.

Then the implicated conclusion is:

American people suffered economic miseries in the past eight years of Republican's administration.

Therefore, the audience can infer the speaker's intended assumption as *The Republican administration is a failure.*

The criterion for identifying an RQ and the inferential process of the addresser's possible intended assumption(s) in terms of Relevance Theory established in the current study will be applied to the analysis of data in political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons in later chapters to find how different types of RQ are used to influence the addressee's mind in these three monologic and persuasive genres.

4.4.3 How Relevance Theory accounts for failed cases of RQs

The above-established criterion for identifying an RQ can be applied to account for failed cases of RQs. If no mutual manifestness exists, which means it is not manifest to B that the statement is already manifest to A, then an RQ may be mistaken as a genuine question, answers will be provided and failed communication will occur, as shown in (7).

(7) "A: How high will taxes be when my kids are my age?

B: Well, that's a great question! Let me tell you, based on the current trajectory of income tax valuation along with the growing number of Americans on social security and Greenspan's waning confidence in the dollar, I'd say taxes are likely to increase drastically over the next thirty to thirty-five years."

(Rohde, 2006: 162)

B may deliberately change the mutually manifest status of the question to create a special humorous or amusing effect. See (8):

(8) "A: Who would steal a newspaper?

B: Well, actually, a very shy nudist might steal a newspaper.

B!: Well, actually, I once stole a newspaper to read on the train."

(Rohde, 2006: 162)

A introduces a question, not expecting any answer to be provided, since s/he believes it is mutually manifest that nobody would steal a newspaper. When an answer is provided here, it is unexpected by A; however, in the view of B, it has other functions. It may be B's method to deliberately ignore A's intention to show his wit and have fun, since we can see that A's intention is manifest to him from his response "Well, actually"; or it may be a method for B! to share some personal confidential experience in order to bring intimacy to the relationship with A; or it may be a way for B! to start a story.

4.5 Summary

In this methodology chapter, I have briefly introduced the background of corpus linguistics as well as the corpora used. I have also outlined the methodological procedure in the current study and demonstrated the way in which questions are extracted. Finally, I have conducted a discussion about the limited explanatory power of the Code Model and the necessity of employing an inferential theory, providing an illustration of how an RQ is identified and comprehended in terms of Relevance Theory, which will serve as the foundation for the following data analysis chapters.

I will argue in the current study that the reason why an RQ is employed, rather than a corresponding assertion, is because the addresser assumes that it can express optimal relevance. The addresser believes that an RQ can achieve more contextual effects and convey more contextual implicatures than an assertion, including expressing attitudes of criticism, irony, anger or disagreement, or the intention of suggesting or praising or forbidding others to perform a certain act. It will also be argued that the use of linguistic indicators, i.e. lexical indicators and semantic indicators, is one means employed by the addresser to reduce the processing effort of the addressee, thus helping to maximise relevance, and guiding the addressee to infer the intention of the addresser more easily.

My argument, therefore, will be pursued mainly in two directions: Firstly, I will use 'mutual manifestness' to illustrate how an RQ is identified and to use 'implicatures' and 'optimal relevance' to illustrate how an RQ is comprehended. Secondly, I will interpret the addresser's communicative intention in using different types of RQ, which is to influence the mind of the addressee. In the next chapter, an attempt will be made to apply this criterion to the identification of RQs from other question types in the data and in the next three chapters following that, to the interpretation of different types of RQ in the data.

Chapter 5 Applying analysis categories: question types for inclusion or exclusion

This chapter is dedicated to an application of the methodology described in the last chapter as achieving a distinction between RQs and other question types in the data. RQs can then be identified, and an analysis of them can be carried out in later chapters.

Based on the procedure described in the last methodology chapter, as has been stated in 4.3.3, a total of 1036 questions have been extracted from the current data. In this chapter, I firstly make clear those cases which are excluded from the current study, which do not conform to my criteria, and so will not come to analysis; then I look at what is left and consider which of them are RQs. A distinction between RQs and the other four question types existing in the data is made, by applying the criteria established in Chapter 4.

5.1 Cases excluded from the current study

It should be noted that deviant cases are found in the data, which are excluded from my consideration. I have confined the current study to the following: directly addressed questions in the form of an interrogative, with a complete clausal form and a finite verb in the main clause, whose answer or implicated proposition is known by the addresser, and can be inferred and mutually known by the addressee, based on the context. Cases excluded from the current study are shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1 Cases excluded from the current study

	American political speeches	British political speeches	Self-built editorial corpus	FLOB-B	The BNC -editorial	The BNC -sermons	Total No.
1.tag questions	1	0	2	4	3	11	21
2.quoted questions	12	14	5	36	97	114	278
3.tone marker for some words	3	4	26	0	0	0	33
4. not in the main clause	5	1	0	1	2	0	9
5. reduced questions: not a complete proposition: either with a subject or without a main verb	14	3	12	19	24	10	82
6.assertion with question mark	17	3	0	4	2	9	35
Total	52	25	45	64	128	144	458

5.1.1 Tag questions

Tag questions, such as (1), are excluded from the current study, because their particular syntactic pattern, an assertion followed by an abbreviated interrogative with the same subject and verb but shifting in polarity, is in no way similar to that of a typical RQ, and thus fails to meet the current criterion to study an RQ as taking the form of an interrogative.

(1) <u>And we are not going to let that happen, are we?</u>

(Jon Huntsman, Remarks in Manchester Following the New Hampshire Primary, January 10, 2012)

5.1.2 Quoted/reported questions

The current study also excludes quoted/reported questions, if they are not questions directly addressed by politicians, editors or priests, featured either with a quotation mark (2) or with reporting words used explicitly in the text, such as *X said, say to X, ask X or ask a question* (3).

(2) “The doctors say he will need dozens of operations,” said his father. “Is that a life for a child?” There was silence in the tent because there was no comfort to give.
(Janine di Giovanni, The War Against Syria’s Children, Newsweek, December 2, 2013)

(3) I’ve lost count of the times that people come to my constituency surgery, or businessmen or farmers or others say to me: why can’t I challenge this regulation, why can’t I find out this bit of information, why can’t I employ this particular person? Why can’t I set up a business in the front room of my council house, why can’t I clear this ditch to stop the field plumbing? And the answer? It is a quango. A quango has made the decision, and in all too many cases, there is nothing you can do about it. I say step four, it is time to end the quango state.
(David Cameron, Launches the Conservative Party’s ‘Contract for Jobs’, May 2, 2010)

5.1.3 Tone markers for words or rising tone of a clause

Expressions like (4) are shown in the concordance lines not because they are questions but because they serve as tone markers of words or clauses, especially numbers. They are actually imitations of tones of the speaker, so they are excluded from the current study.

(4) Now, this—these past 3? years have made it tough on everybody.
(Barack Obama, Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Parma, Ohio, July 5, 2012)

5.1.4 Incomplete propositions/reduced questions

Expressions like (5) are excluded from the current study, since they are not complete propositions, either lacking a subject or the main verb, or both.

(5) What about protecting the infrastructure, protecting those states and parts of the country

that need money for, you know, ports and inter-coastal canals, and flood projects?

(Ron Paul, Remarks in Fargo, North Dakota Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012)

The reduced question forms appear typically in the titles of editorials. 19 reduced expressions are observed in FLOB-B, containing only a noun or adjective or interrogative adverb, either without a subject or a main verb, or lacking both. Five of these appear in titles. Copular 'Be', the subject, the definite article or demonstrative pronoun are frequently omitted from the title of an editorial. Consider (6).

(6) Eighth time lucky?

(A title in FLOB)

For the same reason, reduced expressions in the body, such as *Why? Why not? Remember them? Where else?* are also excluded from the current study.

5.1.5 An assertion with a question mark

This type of expression is excluded because it is an assertion in its form, but ends with a question mark, usually presented in the structure "You + verb" or "You know + an interrogative/noun" or "Anybody + verb" as in *"You know what I'm talking about?", "Anybody here remember what it was?", or "You hear me?"…*

5.1.6 Expressions not in the main clause

Expressions like the one in (7), have questions appearing in the object clause and organised in a narrative sequence. They function as reported questions, with questions in the sub-clause following *say, ask or wonder,* changed in tense and sequence of auxiliary verb from a direct question. They are excluded from consideration since they are different from RQs in syntactic structure.

(7) …Today there was a national poll that came out and they were talking about <u>how many people supported the gold standard</u>? How long has it been since they've taken a national poll on the gold standard?
(Ron Paul, Remarks in Ankeny Following the Iowa Caucus, January 3, 2012)

Apart from these 458 divergent cases, 578 questions (including various question types), out of the total of 1036 in the three genres remain to be examined.

Are these 578 questions all RQs? If not, what are they? How can we distinguish them from RQs? The following section will apply the criteria of identifying an RQ established in Chapter 4 to distinguish RQs from other question types in the data.

5.2 Distinguishing RQs from other question types in the data

In the previous chapter, I have established the principle that an RQ can be identified by the following characteristic: as long as the corresponding assertion, either one directly transformed from the interrogative or an implied proposition inferred from the question based on the context (see 3.3.2 for definition of context in the current study), is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee when the question is interpreted, the question will be judged as an RQ.

According to Relevance Theory, "to be manifest, is to be perceptible or inferable" (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 39). The hearers need not be mind readers. If the context, including immediate physical environment, encyclopaedic knowledge, and linguistic decoding of the utterance itself produce reasonable assumptions, making the implied proposition inferrable to both the speaker and hearers, and the speaker knows that the hearers know that the proposition is inferrable to both of them, it can be said to be 'mutually manifest'. 'A mutual cognitive environment' is one that both speaker and hearers are aware that they share.

I will apply this criterion to identify the nature of the following questions chosen respectively from the three genres to see how it works:

(8) Now I want to ask you a few questions. <u>Is America ready for real results?</u> [crowd...yes] Is America ready for common sense solutions? [crowd...yes] Is America ready to rekindle the spirit of America? [crowd...yes] And Is America ready for a real leader, not a reader? [crowd...yes] [applause] Do you want a leader? Or you want a reader? [applause]
(Herman Cain: Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Atlanta, Georgia, May 21, 2011)

The immediate physical environment of a presidential campaign involves an American presidential candidate addressing an American audience; the 'encyclopaedic entries' (Sperber and Wilson's term, 1986: 134) of a presidential campaign form a mutual cognitive environment for both the speaker and the participants, so the speaker as an American presidential candidate is aware of an American voter's needs, which include "a real result". The proposition that *America is ready for real results* is already included in the shared knowledge, which can then be expressed in the following logical steps:

Any American citizen is ready for a real result from politicians.
The hearers in this conference are American citizens.
So the hearers are ready for a real result.

In other words, we can identify the proposition delivered by this question as being mutually manifest to both the speaker and the audience, based on these immediate physical environment, encyclopaedic knowledge and linguistic decoding of the question itself. This question can therefore be judged as an RQ.

(9) <u>Does Mr Baker really believe that such dishonesty and repression provide a 'strong family background'?</u> Adoption is hard, and everyone involved has disappointments, longings and anger that cannot easily be dealt with.

(The BNC-Editorials: No room for fantasy, by Ruth Valentine, the *Independent*, October 13, 1989)

The lexical indicator "really" in (9), working together with the semantic contrast between the strong negative sense of "dishonesty and repression", and the positive sense of "strong family background", guides the readers to an implicature, *dishonesty and repression cannot provide a strong family background*. The preceding context, which is a discussion of the problems existing in adoptive families, also helps the derivation of this implicature. With the aid of these linguistic features of the question and the preceding context, the implicature is mutually manifest to the readers when they read the question, and they can successfully identify the question's rhetorical nature.

（10） He he's already opened hi up his heart to the Lord, there's a lot that he's gotta learn, there's a lot he's gotta let go of, there's a lot of his old life still there, but <u>isn't that true of every one us?</u> It doesn't all disappear over night.

（The BNC-sermons）

Upon hearing the question, the audiences need to make a judgment as to whether the implied answer is affirmative or not. After reference resolution of "that" as *part of our old life will still be there even when we decide to make a new change* and with the encyclopaedic knowledge that *it is always the case that in our daily life, old life will not disappear immediately even when you decide to change*, the hearer will perceive the implicature delivered by the question as *it is true that we will still have part of our old life there even when we decide to make a new change.* With the implicature manifest to them, the hearer can decide the rhetorical reading of the question. Considering the context, s/he can then further infer the intended assumption of the speaker, i.e. *although Simon is wrong in buying the gift of God with money yet he opens his soul to God and so he deserves a chance to receive the Holy Spirit.*

Now we have a clear idea how the "mutual manifestness" criterion works in the current data to identify the rhetorical reading of a question. In the following part, I will continue to apply it to the distinction between RQs with other question types, to see how the criterion works in the distinguishing process.

5.2.1 Type one: Expository questions

In 2.2.1, it has been explained that an expository question is one with its answer provided by the addresser him/herself shortly after s/he raises a question, with the aim of provoking thinking and delivering information. This makes the mission of distinguishing expository questions from RQs tricky, since RQs may also have answers explicitly provided by addresser, addressee or both.

I hold that an implicature can be derived from an RQ, and it is inferrable from the context. In other words, its implicature is mutually manifest to the addresser and the addressee. In contrast, no implicature is delivered by an expository question judged by the context, and its answer is not inferrable. Before uttering an RQ, to help the addressee successfully infer his/her communicative intention, the addresser will leave indications of implicature in the preceding context; the addressee is expected to infer that implicature to find the question's optimal relevance; whereas in the case of an expository question, no such indications exist. The addresser himself/herself must provide the answer after this kind of question is uttered. A close observation of my data reveals that if after a question is uttered, the addressee searches thoroughly in the question and its preceding context and finds no clue to infer an implicature to the utterance, then the answer is not 'mutually manifest' and this question will fail to conform to my criterion of RQs. When this question is followed by an answer, it will work as an expository question. Let us consider (11a) and (11b) in the data to see how this criterion works.

(11a) So, Wisconsin, our ideas have been tested. We've tried them: They worked. The other side's ideas have also been tested. They didn't work so well. After Bill Clinton left office, during most of the last decade, we tried giving big tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. We

tried giving insurance companies and oil companies and Wall Street free rein to do whatever they pleased. And what did we get? Falling incomes, record deficits, the slowest job growth in half a century, an economic crisis that we've been cleaning up after ever since.
(Barack Obama: Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin, November 5, 2012)

(11b) We will establish a foreign policy doctrine that reflects our modern world. Simply advocating more ships, more troops, and more weapons is not a viable path forward. We need more agility, more intelligence, and more economic engagement with the world.
How will we do this?
In short, erase the old map. End nation-building, engage our allies, and fix our core. This is how we will fight the enemy we have, and renew American exceptionalism.
(Jon Huntsman: Address at Southern New Hampshire University in Manchester, October 10, 2011)

The previous context of (11a), namely *"The other side's ideas have also been tested. They didn't work so well"* delivers a message that *Romney's idea didn't work very well* after the reference resolution of "they" as *the other sides' ideas*. The hearer is then able to recognise the implicature that *We are leading a poorer life where Romney's idea is implemented*. The hearer can find that this question is uttered as an attack from the speaker Barack Obama on his opponent Mitt Romney's policy. However, in (11b), no implicature is likely to be inferred. The hearer expects an answer to be provided by the speaker, so that they can be informed and know more, in the same way as a pedagogical question is used by a teacher in class discourse to arouse students' attention and instill knowledge. Therefore, we can see (11a) and (11b) belong respectively to the classes of RQ and expository question, although they have similar syntactic patterns.

So far, it has been shown how expository questions are distinguished from RQs in terms of the concepts of 'implicature' and 'mutual manifestness'.

One special case of expository questions deserves our attention, which are those appearing in title position.

Title questions

One difficulty I have come across in distinguishing RQs from expository questions lies in those questions appearing in the title of an editorial. They may function either as an expository question or as an RQ, as shown in the following pair of questions:

(12a) Why do the French hate us so much?
A FRIEND had her car transported by train across France to Nice. It was the takeoff point of the summer holiday. Twenty cars were vandalised. All with British number plates. Nothing much was stolen. But one mother was distraught over the loss of her child's birthday presents.
(FLOB-B)

(12b) What on earth is David Cameron's China junket for?
Such ‘trade missions’ are a costly waste of time. Why doesn’t he do something useful, such as making it easier for Chinese tourists to visit Britain?
(Simon Jenkins, the *Guardian*, December 2, 2013)

As regards a title in the newspaper editorials, I have observed that there exist two cases, exemplified by (12a) and (12b). As a default, (12a) cannot be an RQ since there is no previous relevant context. It is the first sentence the readers come to, out of the blue. Therefore, nothing previous can be relevant. In this case, only when the mutually manifest knowledge is relevant to an existing context, will there then be an implicature. When that implicature is mutually manifest to both parties, the question will be an RQ. On the other hand, in (12b), the default is overridden. Some questions in the title do not need a preceding context to be qualified as RQs, since they themselves contain linguistic indicators, e.g. “on earth” in (12b), to hint at the implicature: a negation of the proposition in the question that *David Cameron did nothing he should have done in his trip to China*, which is mutually manifest to the readers when they come to the title. Therefore, (12b) is an RQ.

I believe that an RQ is where an implicature arises only if a certain condition is satisfied because of the relevant mutually manifest background knowledge. As a title, if the question itself does not contain any indicator to make manifest an implicature, that question will serve as an expository question.

In (12a), by describing a story about how cars with British number plates have been vandalised in France, the writer himself answers the question as to *why French hate British so much* in the body of the article: the writer blames French's vandalising behaviour, satirises French's surrender to Hitler in WWII, and hints that they hate British because they feel indignation about British's victory after France's surrender. No implicature can be inferred just by looking at this title. British people may have some idea of the thousand-year poor French-British relationship. However, throughout history, there are lots of reasons why French hate British. Just by judging the title, it is impossible for the hearers to infer what will be argued in the body of the editorial. The writer already has a specific idea in his/her mind when s/he writes this title, but this idea is not mutually manifest to the readers. When the readers come to the title, they may have wide arrays of assumptions and guesses about reasons for the hatred. In other words, the answer to the question is not mutually manifest to the readers when the question is raised.

However, in (12b), the lexical indicator "on earth" and the semantic indicator "junket" have indicated, and made mutually manifest to the readers, the relevance of this question, which is to express criticism and sarcasm that *Cameron's trip to China achieves nothing fruitful*, and claim that *it is no more than personal travel to China at the cost of tax payers' money*. The answer in the subtitle, "Such trade missions are a costly waste of time", has confirmed the rhetorical sense of the question. The other negative RQ following this answer places further criticism on Cameron, saying that he failed to perform, as he should have done.

We can see that the criterion of whether an implicature exists, and whether it is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, is valid when judging whether a question used as a title is an expository question (12a) or an RQ (12b). By applying this analytical criterion, 201 expository questions have been distinguished from 330 rhetorical ones in my data.

5.2.2 Type Two: 'Inviting involvement' questions

Examples like (13) are called 'inviting involvement' questions in the current study (see 2.2.2), observed in American presidential campaigns, which are not seen in British General Election campaigns, or the other two genres. They may be uttered solely to invite the audience's involvement, to serve as a reminder, or to deepen the audience's impression and heat up the atmosphere.

(13) <u>The President. Hello, Wisconsin! Are you fired up?</u>
Audience members. Yes!
The President. Are you ready to go?
Audience members. Yes!
(Barack Obama: Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin, November 5, 2012)

How do we then distinguish these "inviting involvement" questions from RQs, considering that in both cases the speaker already knows the answer when uttering the question, in (13) a 'yes' answer from the audience? Consider (14a) and (14b).

(14a) PAUL: Thank you, thank you. What a delight!
Thank you very much for that very nice reception.
<u>Is everybody going to vote tonight?</u>
AUDIENCE: [cheering] Yeah!
PAUL: Are we gonna win?
AUDIENCE: [cheering] Yeah!
(Ron Paul: Remarks in Fargo, North Dakota Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012)

(14b) So let's say to the whole of the country we know what we need, it's the change we need, <u>are you going to vote for change? Are you going to do it</u>? Don't stay at home and let the old guard in, don't vote for the Liberal Democrats and let Gordon Brown back in…
(David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government"; April 19, 2010)

In (14a), no implicature is conveyed, and the speaker knowingly leaves a pause, waiting for hearers to supply a positive answer. However, in (14b), the encyclopaedic knowledge that *when in bad times, people tend to hope for changes which can bring new hope* has suggested and made mutually manifest an implicature, *Do not vote for Gordon Brown since he cannot bring any change*. By conveying such an implicature, it indicates a rhetorical reading of the question.

Accordingly, I argue that an 'inviting involvement' question is uttered for the sole aim of involving the audience in the speech, expecting an answer to be provided explicitly from the hearers, either to heat up the atmosphere at the beginning of the speech, or to lift the audience's spirits in the middle, when they are tired; or expecting a coordinated action from the hearers as a way of responding, such as by giving applause. No implicature is entailed in the proposition of an 'inviting involvement' question.

In contrast, RQs do not expect any answer to be provided from the hearers; in exceptional cases when an answer is indeed provided by the audience, the answer is a redundant one and is not within the expectation of the speaker; in addition, the hearers are expected to derive an implicature intended by the speaker, entailed in an RQ.

5.2.3 Type three: Speculative questions

I argue that speculative questions are distinguished from RQs in that they do not convey any implicatures and their answers are not manifest to either the addresser or the addressee. Speculative questions in sermons are employed to help fulfil the mission of using sermons as a tool to teach and enlighten Christians. They are raised for the purpose not to seek an answer (a genuine question) nor to entail an implicature (an RQ), but to evoke introspection and soul-searching. Let us consider the nature of the following two questions.

(15a) Perhaps, what is more common is that, we may have spent time with someone who was dying, their last few hours, their few minutes. If they were not unconscious, I wonder what sort of conversation would be going on between us and them. <u>What sort of things would we, would we have been saying? What would we be asking them?</u> Well, in this passage that we've been reading, we have just such a conversation, two men who are on the verge of death.
(The BNC-sermons)

(15b) You see God is th ,i i is a God of order he's not a God of disorder, it's not a case of anybody doing what they like, he works according to his pattern. <u>And who are you and I to tell God what his purpose is, and his pattern's gonna be?</u> He is sovereign and he will work according to his will. And he's used Philip and now he i ,i i in his purpose he brings down Peter a a and John to to, to have their part i in his will and his purpose at this time.
(The BNC-sermons)

No answer or implicature can be inferred in (15a), which distinguishes it from (15b), an RQ. The priest uses the subject "we" as a way to reach common ground with the addressee, to show his attitude that *we are of the same group*, and also to provoke speculation in the audience. By contrast, the encyclopaedic knowledge of *God is almighty* in (15b) conveys an implicature that *you and I are in no position to tell God what to do* and this implicature is mutually manifest to the priest and the hearers.

5.2.4 Type four: Information questions

Information questions, which convey no implicature and whose answers are only manifest to the addressee, but not to the addresser, are found in my data of the BNC-sermons. They appear in interludes, unrelated in content to the Bible teaching. See (16).

(16) Has somebody got Matthew twenty eight, verses nineteen and twenty? Go there all people, every where and make them and teach them to obey every thing that I've commanded you …

(The BNC-sermons)

In summary, so far, it has been shown that an RQ conveys an implicature which is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee. This sets it apart from the other four question types observed in the data of the current study, namely: expository questions, 'inviting involvement' questions, speculative questions and information questions, as shown in the Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Five question types in the data

Qu. Types	No.in American Speeches	No.in British speeches	No. in self-built American editorial corpus	No. in self-built British editorial corpus	No. in FLOB-B	No. in the BNC-editorials	No. in the BNC-Sermons	Total No.
1.Rhetorical questions	40	81	20	15	44	110	20	330
2.Expository questions	18	11	4	7	23	48	90	201
3.Inviting involvement questions	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
4.Speculative questions	0	0	0	0	1	3	33	37
5.Information questions	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Total number	64	92	24	22	69	161	147	578

Now, we are clear that in the current study, there are a total of 1036 questions, 458 deviant cases are excluded, with 578 questions to be analysed, among which, by applying the criterion established in Chapter 4, 330 RQs are identified.

5.3 Analysis of RQ categories

A closer look at these 330 RQs reveals that linguistic indicators are often found embedded in RQs in the current data to indicate the nature of a rhetorical question. Based on definitions and ranges of lexical indicators mentioned in previous literature (see 2.3.1), I have found 14 types of lexical indicator exist in the current data including *any, ever, just, really, whatever, still, so, on earth, seriously, actually, even, after all, at the very least, in any case.* Apart from these lexical indicators, semantic indicators, which are words or phrases with strong semantic preference and semantic prosody are also found in the data. They serve as effective inputs which, when combined with contextual information, will make the implied proposition manifest and achieve the rhetorical function of the question.

Analytical procedures stated in 5.2 give us 330 RQs, which can be broken down into the following categories, shown in Table 5.3: those used with overt lexical indicators; those used with semantic indicators (with some containing both lexical indicators and semantic indicators); the rest are not recognisable by form or word choices as RQs.

Table 5.3 Analysis categories of RQs

Genres	RQs with lexical indicators	RQs with semantic indicators	RQs without linguistic indicators
political speeches	21	29	74
newspaper editorials	34	27	137
sermons	5	0	15

From Table 5.3, we can see that the vast majority of the RQs have no indicators to suggest that they are RQs. In other words, the Code Model is not sufficient to identify the majority of RQs. We therefore need an inferential approach to analyse the data of RQs in the current study.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, firstly, an itemised explanation of why some divergent cases existing in concordance lines have been excluded from the current study has been stated. Then RQs have been distinguished from four other question types appearing in the data, expository questions, 'inviting involvement questions', speculative questions and information questions, by applying the concepts of 'mutual manifestness' and 'intended implicature' from Relevance Theory. In the following chapters, a qualitative investigation of how different types of RQ are employed by the addressers in political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons, recognised and comprehended by the addressee will be carried out; and an account of how persuasion is achieved by RQs in these three genres in the framework of Relevance Theory will also be discussed.

Chapter 6 Analysis of RQs in American and British campaign speeches

This chapter aims to analyse the features and functions of RQs in political speeches in terms of Relevance Theory showing how political RQs are identified by the audience and how politicians employ different types of RQ to persuade the audience. I plan to analyse groups of rhetorical utterances in American and British general election campaigns. Discovering the precise nature of RQs, then providing a satisfactory description and explanation of this communicative behaviour, in order to avoid possible misunderstandings and communication barriers when RQs are involved, are the primary goals of studying this special type of rhetoricity.

A detailed analysis in terms of Relevance Theory is made in the following sections:

- Section 6.1 in a discussion of how Speech Act Theory and Grice's Principles fail to account for the interpretation of political RQs;
- Section 6.2 on the reason why a high proportion of RQs occur in political speeches;
- Section 6.3 and 6.4 on the identification of political RQs, with 6.3 explaining how RQs with linguistic indicators are identified and interpreted, going on to show that the Code Model is not sufficient in identifying political RQs; section 6.4 on how RQs without linguistic indicators are identified and interpreted in terms of Relevance Theory showing that context, including common sense assumption, is crucial in the process;
- Section 6.5 - 6.7 on the interpretation of different types of political RQ, with 6.5 on those with explicit answers provided; 6.6 on political RQs observing the rule of polarity shift and those not observing the rule; 6.7 on RQs containing other rhetorical devices, with the aim of explaining how politicians use these features and functions of RQs to persuade the audience.

6.1 Theoretical considerations of Speech Act Theory and Gricean Principle in accounting for political RQs

As has been heralded in Chapter 3, I will show in this section how Speech Act Theory, a major representative of the Code Model in Sperber and Wilson's argument (1986) is not sufficient to interpret political RQs for the following reasons.

i) Speech Act Theory fails to explain different speech acts expressed in the same syntactic structure.

An interrogative is never just a request for information as is claimed in Speech Act Theory. This is evident in the following example:

(1) <u>How can the wealthiest nation in the history of civilization fail so miserably to pay its bills?</u> How does that happen?
(Rick Perry, Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Charleston, South Carolina, August 13, 2011)

It is apparent that (1) is not a request for an explanation as to why Americans fail to pay off their debts, which might turn out to be a long list containing complicated financial terms. Neither can we tell what act the speaker is intending to express, which can only be confirmed after we deduce the speaker's communicative intention. The possible speech acts conveyed by this RQ may be either that *I hereby inform you that Obama's government made our country a mess*, or it may be *I hereby criticise Obama's government for making our country a mess*. But these possible acts can only be confirmed after we identify this question as an RQ based on the criterion established in the current study: an implicature (s) has been made mutually manifest via the context. (see 4.4.2 for a detailed analysis).

ii) Speech Act Theory does not provide a solution for how to judge whether a contextual implicature is conveyed, or how to infer a contextual implicature.

(2) I knew the basic Wall Street technique, which was to come in and spend lots of - how many of you have noticed negative ads?
How many of you have noticed the - the Reagan negative ad that is a total lie, OK? I mean, that's - that's what we're up against. It's one thing to have lots of money; it's another thing to lie with the money.
(Newt Gingrich, Remarks in Atlanta, Georgia Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012)

In (2), the general context of a political speech addressed to a mass audience, decides that the speaker cannot rely on the hearers to answer the "how many" question and then to calculate the exact number. So this question is not a request for information, as stated in Speech Act Theory. It does not work to give any explanation why an implied proposition that *my opponent spends money on negative ads but I will play fair* is conveyed in this question. The process of how this implicature is inferred can only be accounted for in an inferential theory.

iii) Speech Act Theory cannot successfully account for figures of speech. Consider (3)

(3) I was told he had a moral compass, where's this moral compass been for the last four weeks? I reckon when he finds it will be spinning round so fast he could put it on the roof and it could be a ceiling fan. That's the sort of moral compass our Prime Minister has got, it's been the most disgraceful campaign.
(David Cameron, Leader of the Conservative Party, speaking at a rally in East Renfrewshire, May 4, 2010)

Speech Act Theory cannot explain why this argument is about the fact that *Gordon Brown has no firm political standpoints* and not about a compass, which I will argue in detail in 6.7.2.

As regards Grice's Principles and Maxims, as argued in 3.2, Grice also fails to explain the inferential processes of the addresser's contextual implicature and possible communicative intention.

(4) Now, Madison, here's the thing. For 8 years, we had a President who shared these beliefs. His name was Bill Clinton. And when he first came into office, his economic plan asked the wealthiest Americans to pay a little bit more so we could reduce our deficit and still invest in the skills and ideas of our people. And at the time, the Republican Congress — and a certain Senate candidate by the name of Mitt Romney — said Bill Clinton's plan would hurt the economy, would kill jobs, would hurt the job creators. <u>Does this sound familiar?</u> [Laughter]
(Barack Obama, Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin, November 5, 2012)

Although Grice (1991:32) claims that the violation of the four Maxims will produce implicatures, as in (4) the speaker violates the Maxim of Quality because the speaker knows the answer but still raises a question. In this way, Grice may predict that an implicature is conveyed by the RQ, but his approach cannot help to explain what the implicature is, or, how the hearers infer the possible communicative intention of the speaker. (see 6.6.1 for a Relevance Theory account of the inferential process of the implicature in this example)

Meanwhile, Relevance Theory, as an inferential theory, is expected to better explain utterances involving contextual implicature than the other two approaches. I will explain in the following sections how Relevance Theory successfully accounts for the uses of political RQs.

6.2 Use of RQs rather than direct assertions in political speeches

As shown in Table 6.1, in my data of political speeches, a total of 121 RQs have been observed in the 233 questions extracted from a text size of 123,448 words. In the literature, the only research found mentioning the proportion of RQs is the study of Rohde (2006: 135).

‘The Switchboard corpus’ used in Rohde’s study contains 583 RQs in 1.4 million words of telephone recording conversations, composed of 205,000 utterances. A comparison with Rohde’s data (2006: 135) reveals that RQs in political speeches in the current study are more frequently observed, with 0.98 RQ per 1000 words against 0.42 RQ per 1000 words in daily conversations of Switchboard.

Table 6.1 RQs in political speeches

	Words	All questions	RQs	Frequency (RQs per 1000 words)
American campaign speeches	67,541	116	40	0.592
British campaign speeches	55,907	117	81	1.449
Total	123,448	233	121	0.980

These 121 RQs in my data of political speeches can be broken down into the following categories: 21 are used with overt lexical indicators; 29 are used with semantic indicators (with 3 also containing lexical indicators); the rest are not recognisable by form or word choices as RQs (see Table 6.2). As have been mentioned in Chapter 5, due to the fact that RQs with linguistic indicators do not account for the majority of RQs, the Code Model is not sufficient to identify and interpret RQs. My data analysis has therefore been carried out in the theoretical framework of Relevance Theory.

Table 6.2 Types of RQ in political speeches

	Political speeches	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in speeches
RQs with lexical indicators	21	0.170
RQs with semantic indicators	29 (with 3 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	0.235
RQs without any indicators	74	0.599

I wonder, in the context of political speeches, where the politicians talk and the audience mostly listen in silence, why there should appear such a high proportion of RQs. In other words, why RQs, which expect no answer, are used by politicians at all in delivering a political speech rather than using an assertion.

I maintain, in terms of Relevance Theory that RQs rather than a direct assertion are used in political speeches, for two reasons: Firstly, they can threaten the positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1987) of the opponent whom the politician is attacking; secondly, they can achieve more cognitive effects by involving the audience in the process of inferring the implicatures embodied in the corresponding proposition form of the question, thus leading the audience to infer the deeper communicative intention of the speaker. See (5):

(5) The Obama "engagement" policy in Syria led the Administration to call Bashar al Assad a "reformer." Even as Assad's regime was shooting hundreds of protesters dead in the street, President Obama announced his plan to give Assad "an alternative vision of himself." <u>Does anyone outside a therapist's office have any idea what that means?</u> This is what passes for moral clarity in the Obama Administration.
(Tim Pawlenty, Remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, June 28, 2011)

In (5), the speaker, who intends his utterances to achieve optimal relevance, provides enough clues in the preceding text to help revive old assumptions in the minds of the hearers, which are about Obama's "engagement" policy in Syria and Obama's attitude towards Assad's shooting protesters dead. These old assumptions, when combined with new information delivered in the RQ, will produce sets of implicatures, of attitudes of criticism and sarcasm towards Obama's policy in Syria. This extreme negativity will threaten the positive face of Barack Obama.

In addition, the contextual effects achieved by this RQ may not be gained by uttering a direct assertion that *Obama is mad to adopt such a policy in Syria.* To comprehend the possible communicative intention of the speaker, the audience needs to expend more effort, but these efforts will be offset by the extra effects (the implicatures) achieved. The more effort the audience spends in the process of inferring the implicature entailed in the RQ, the more they are involved in the argument of the speaker and the more firmly they believe the speaker's viewpoints. Once inferred, the implicatures will be rooted deeply in the audience's minds. In this manner, an RQ achieves more persuasive power compared with its corresponding assertion in political context. The face-threatening function, the implicatures entailed in an RQ and an RQ's persuasive power explain the high proportion of RQs used in political speeches.

6.3 Identification and interpretation of political RQs with linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

As shown in Table 6.2, 21 out of 121 political RQs are found to contain lexical indicators and around 29 are found to contain semantic indicators in my data of political speeches, whose existence suggests the rhetorical nature of a question. I argue that linguistic indicators are used in political RQs to save the processing effort of the hearers and help the speaker achieve optimal relevance.

According to Relevance Theory, the speaker needs to have confidence in the hearers to access the required information upon hearing the utterance to infer his/her intention, so the speaker will provide all aids and hints in the preceding discourse or in the utterance itself to make manifest the implied proposition to the hearers, thus guaranteeing successful communication. In other words, the speaker needs to decide what is to be made explicit and what implicit to maximise the cognitive effects and minimise the processing effort to achieve optimal relevance. I argue that the use of linguistic indicators is one case in point. Let us discuss respectively the uses of lexical indicators and semantic indicators in political RQs.

6.3.1 The role of lexical indicators

Lexical indicators *ever, really, any, just, still, so, whatever* are found in the current political speech data. I choose three of them as examples to show how they work to indicate the rhetorical readings of the questions.

Use of "ever"

(6) And they were doing great and the houses kept going up in prices. It's like a perpetual money machine.

How could it ever go wrong? The people could keep borrowing against the rising prices.

Except for one thing - the Austrian free markets knew exactly what was going on. They understood it clearly and say it will not last. This is an artificial bubble created by the Federal Reserve and the U.S. Congress and it would collapse and it did. [applause]

(Ron Paul, Remarks in Arden Hills, Minnesota Following the Nevada Caucuses, February 4, 2012.txt)

When this RQ is uttered, the cognitive environment has already been mutually manifest to both the speaker and the audience: Ron Paul is blaming the current government since he claims that the government is driven by political interests, working only for the benefits of special interest groups, creating house price bubble, causing inflation by printing extra cash, and bringing misery to the ordinary people, while the special interest groups instead will be bailed out and survive the trouble. Based on this mutually manifest cognitive environment, it is much easier for the hearers to spot the rhetorical reading of the question, with the aid of the emphatic adverbial "ever", which passes on a strong sense of ridicule and criticism. The utterance following it, "*The people could keep borrowing against the rising prices*" indicates further the implicature that *the crisis should not have occurred*, conveying the blaming attitude of the speaker on the malpractice and dysfunction of the current government. As stated in Relevance Theory, an utterance achieves relevance when it produces contextual effects, including delivering implicatures, strengthening old assumptions or contradicting old assumptions. This implicature that *the government should be responsible for this crisis, which shouldn't have occurred,* is a new message conveyed by the speaker to the audience, so it indicates the relevance of this RQ. The emphatic adverbial “ever” makes it hard for the hearers to refute the view of the speaker.

Use of “really”

Emphatic adverb “really” is found to be used in political RQs, as shown in (7):

(7) Do we really want to go over to a system where all you ever get is another hung parliament, politicians sitting around and arguing and haggling? Politicians love doing that. (David Cameron launches the Conservative Party’s ‘Contract for Jobs’, May 2, 2010)

The negative image of inefficiency and bureaucracy described via lexical expressions “hung parliament” “sitting around and arguing and haggling”, together with the emphatic adverb “really”, serves as multiple indicators to save the most processing effort of the audience when they infer the intention of the speaker and emphasise the implicature of the question, *Nobody can bear to have another five years of this inefficient government.* The inferential process to be attributed to the hearers should be as follows based on Relevance Theory: *if the parliament is hung and the politicians sit around all-day, arguing and haggling, the government is inefficient. Nobody wants an inefficient government. So we do not want to go over to a system where all you ever get is another hung parliament, politicians sitting around and arguing and haggling*.

Sometimes in an attempt to help reduce the audience’s processing effort as much as possible, to make the speaker’s intention apparent and easily recognisable, the speaker will use both *ever and really* in his/her question, which simultaneously doubles its effect both on increasing emphasis and on reducing processing effort. Consider (8):

(8) …And the really big change I think we need in Britain is actually all about responsibility because, when you think of the Big Society we want to build, when you think of the problems we want to tackle, we won’t do it unless people take more responsibility for themselves, for their families, for their neighbours, for their communities. We pour money into the National

Health Service, and it's good that we do, but <u>will it ever really get better if we have such a massive problem of childhood obesity?</u> That's about responsibility.

(David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government", April 19, 2010)

The intended assumption of David Cameron that *if people don't take responsibilities for themselves and their families, then the NHS system will not get any better regardless of how much money has been poured into it* can be inferred based on the implied premise that *if we allow childhood obesity to develop, we are not taking responsibility for ourselves and our families.* This implicature becomes much easier to be deduced with the help of both "ever" and "really".

<u>Use of "any"</u>

Let us have a look at (5) *"Does anyone outside a therapist's office have any idea what that means?"* in 6.2.

In this question, "anyone" and "any idea", these two weak 'negative polarity items' have strengthened the negative tone of the question. These lexical indicators, together with the encyclopaedic knowledge that *anybody inside a therapist's office is abnormal,* help the audience to extract the new information - the interpretive hypothesis that *the speaker's attitude towards Obama's policy in Syria is condemnatory*. The negative semantic prosody in the preceding context of the expression *"shooting hundreds of protesters dead"* also helps to stir negative emotions. This question achieves its relevance, since when old information and new information are combined, a positive cognitive effect is achieved, which is an improvement on the audience's representation of the world. In other words, the audience's mental states are affected, since they are informed of the new information about *Tim Pawlenty's sarcastic attitude towards Obama's policy in Syria*.

The relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure of this RQ is as follows:

Upon hearing the question *"Does anyone outside a therapist's office have any idea what that* *means?"*, by disambiguation of *"anyone outside a therapist's office"* as *anybody thinking normally* and reference resolution "that" of "*what that means"* as *Obama's policy in Syria*, the audience is expected to recover the proposition with the attitude that *The speaker doubts whether anyone normal has any idea what Obama's policy in Syria means*. Then they can infer the implicated conclusion that *Obama is mad in holding this policy on Syria*, which is entailed in the proposition *Only mad people understand Obama's policy in Syria*. Only then the implicature entailed in the question becomes mutually manifest to the hearers and the hearers can successfully identify the rhetorical reading of the question, and know the communicative intention of the speaker as sarcasm towards Obama. This process can be shown as below:

The logical form decoded from the linguistic input system is:
X has idea Y (Question)

With the help of the context, the logical form will be enriched into a propositional form:
People outside a therapist's office have idea what Obama's policy in Syria is. (Question)

Then the contextual information, retrieved from encyclopaedic knowledge:
Those who practise such a ridiculous policy in Syria are mad.

The implicated contextual assumption (premise) is:
If people practise such a ridiculous policy in Syria, they are mad.

The encyclopaedic knowledge is:
Those who go into a therapist's office are those who have mental health problems.

And the bridging implicature:
Only someone going into a therapist's office understands what Obama's policy in Syria means.

With this serving as a bridge …

The implicated conclusion is: *Obama is mad in holding this policy in Syria. (Obama is talking nonsense.)*

When this implicature is inferred, the hearers can identify the rhetorical reading of the question and discover successfully the intended assumption of the speaker.

In the above analysis, I have shown the inferential process of an RQ containing lexical indicators in the light of Relevance Theory. Thus, we can see how lexical indicators are used as reminders of the rhetorical reading of a question, helping to save the processing effort of the audience in seeking the relevance of the sentence, inferring the implicature contained in the proposition and then discerning the speaker's communicative intention.

6.3.2 The role of semantic indicators

Words with strong indication of emotions or attitudes may be employed by the speaker. By deliberately using loaded words or phrases, thus foregrounding specific attitudes or strong emotions, the speaker not only reduces the effort needed by the audience to infer the intended implicature, thus helping to achieve optimal relevance in a easier way, but also lessens the possibility of an RQ being mistaken for other question types. The prominence of the loaded words attracts the audience's attention. With attention specifically drawn to these words, the audience will have a longer lasting memory of the proposition expressed and will accept the attitudes and political standing of the speaker more easily. In this way, their thoughts are imperceptibly influenced and the speaker may then accomplish his/her mission of attacking the opponent, and establishing his/her idea firmly in the minds of the audience.

As observed in the data, I find that semantic indicators are used by the speakers in four ways: in the form of semantic contrast in an "or"/alternative structure; in the form of semantic contrast in non-alternative structure; with positive semantic prosody and with negative semantic prosody. Consider respectively (9) - (12):

(9) First of all, are we going to have real leadership that will bring change in our country, or are we going to have uncertainty, fudge and division? And we need real leadership.
(David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government", April 19, 2010)

(10) How can the wealthiest nation in the history of civilization fail so miserably to pay its bills? How does that happen?
(Rick Perry, Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Charleston, South Carolina, August 13, 2011)

(11) Now I want to ask you a few questions. Is America ready for real results? [crowd...yes] Is America ready for common sense solutions? [crowd...yes] Is America ready to rekindle the spirit of America? [crowd...yes] And Is America ready for a real leader, not a reader? [crowd...yes] [applause]
(Herman Cain, Remarks Announcing Candidacy for President in Atlanta, Georgia, May 21, 2011)

(12) Does anyone think that we're going to get out of this economic hole without real, decisive leadership? We've got big problems with our deficit, we've got to get on and start cutting the government waste and getting value for money in government.
Are we going to get that with some fudge decision at the election? Never. We are only going to get it with a decisive Conservative government that gets moving on this […] Are we going to stop that with some sort of indecisive result, and a lot of haggling and negotiation? Of course not. We are only going to get that with a decisive Conservative government that starts cutting the waste and says no, we don't want that jobs tax.
(David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government", April 19, 2010)

Political RQs containing semantic indicators display a strong feature, which is that they rely less on the preceding context. The semantic prosodies conveyed by the loaded expressions are efficient making the implicated proposition manifest to the hearers in a political speech context.

In (9), the sharp contrast of the negative semantic prosody entailed in “uncertainty, fudge and division” on one hand and the positive semantic prosody entailed in “real leadership” on the other hand is designed deliberately by the speaker to reduce the hearers’ processing effort and make more apparent the speaker’s communicative intention. The encyclopaedic knowledge and common sense, serve as the implied premise, that *between a divided, uncertain and fudge government and a real leadership, one will definitely choose the real leadership*. This premise helps the hearers to draw the implicated conclusion easily that *we need real leadership*. So the speaker’s intended assumption that *Vote for us, because only we can bring you real leadership* is thus inferred.

Although (10) (repeated from 1) is not an alternative question like (9), the lexical expressions still form a sharp contrast in their senses. The images of *a prosperous America in the past* described in the expression “the wealthiest nation” and *a miserable country with all kinds of crises, depressed economy and high inflation, where people fail to make ends meet* described in the expression “so miserably” make people nostalgic for the past and hostile to the current chaotic situation. Thus the wording guides the hearer to the intended implicature incorporated in the question and made available in the context: *The current government should be blamed for whatever the American people are suffering*.

In (11), the apparently positive semantic prosodies deliberately devised by the speaker have been conveyed in the lexical expressions “real results”, “common sense solutions” and “rekindle the spirit of America”. This parallel structure causes the hearers no effort to infer the implied conclusion that *America is ready for the change of a new president who can bring real results, common sense solutions and rekindle the spirit of America*. Due to this transparency of positive semantic prosody, the hearers will find it hard to refuse the implicature contained in this question.

In (12), firstly the hearers need to resolve the references of two instances of "that": resolving the first "that" in "*Are we going to <u>get that</u> with some fudge decision at the election?*" as the proposition conveyed in the preceding text *"start cutting the government waste and getting value for money in government"* and resolving the second "that" in "*Are we going to <u>stop that</u> with some sort of indecisive result, and a lot of haggling and negotiation?*" as "Labour's job tax". Then the apparently negative semantic prosodies entailed in "fudge decisions", "indecisive result" and "a lot of haggling and negotiation" can help the hearers to access easily the implied conclusion that *the problems will only be solved if you vote Conservative at the election.*

We should note that the speakers employ a commonly seen trick in political speeches, which is to substitute secretly an apparently acceptable entailment with their own argument. This is illustrated in (9), the common sense entailment of *people need real leadership* has been secretly expanded into *people need the real leadership brought by us*. In (12), the common sense entailment that *people will not accept fudge decisions* has been secretly changed into *every other possibility apart from a decisive Conservative government will lead to fudge decisions*.

In summary, we can see semantic indicators, just like lexical indicators, can save the processing effort of the audience and then help them to achieve optimal relevance. That is the reason why semantic indicators are seen in RQs.

6.4 Identification and interpretation of political RQs without linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

Apart from the above-analysed 47 RQs with linguistic indicators (with 3 having both lexical and semantic indicators), we have 74 RQs, the majority in the political data, without any linguistic indicators. How do they work? As has been argued in Chapter 4.4 and will be further illustrated in this chapter, RQs, with or without indicators, are identified or interpreted in the same inferential process, apart from the fact that an RQ with indicators may help reduce the processing effort of the addressee. The concepts of 'implicatures' and 'mutual manifestness' are essential in the identification and interpretation process in both cases. Consider (13):

(13) You cannot equip Britain for the 21st century by turning the clock back on educational opportunity and denying the next generation the 21st century education skills they need to compete and win on a global stage. And you cannot prepare Britain for the 2030s if your only policies are a throwback to the 1930s.

<u>And what sort of time has it been?</u>

We have lived through two years in which right wing dogma has not been exonerated but been exposed, when the failures of banks show free market fundamentalism has not succeeded but failed.

And so I tell you this is not a Conservative moment.

(Gordon Brown, Prime Minister and Leader of the Labour Party, speaking at Bradford University, May 5, 2010)

According to Relevance Theory, the hearers expect the question to be the most relevant one guaranteed by the speaker, so that it is worth uttering. Therefore, upon hearing the question, the audience's cognition is geared to find the maximisation of relevance. Based on the contextual factors and the question's linguistic meaning, the audience is able to perceive the interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance: rather than a real question, Gordon Brown delivers an implied proposition and attacks the Conservative Party's administration.

Here in (13), the speaker depicts in the immediate co-texts a negative picture, using expressions like "turning the clock back on educational opportunity", "denying…educational skills" and "a throw back to the 1930s" to help make mutually manifest his implicature to the hearers. The encyclopaedic knowledge of the hearers include the historical information that "the 1930" was the time of The Great Depression. After resolving the reference "it" as *the administration period of the Conservative party in the past two years* and based on the contextual premises such as *the 1930s was a bad time* and *The Conservative administration is* *like 1930s* etc., the hearers can then infer the implicature that *The Conservative administration is a bad time*. Hearers may also infer a wide array of implicatures such as *It has been a time of miserable life; It has been a time of overwhelming economic recession; It has been a time with high unemployment and low income; It has been a time with less disposable income.* These weak implicatures, may vary with different individuals. When these implicatures are inferred by the hearers, the hearers can successfully identify the question's rhetorical reading and thus infer the communicative intention of the speaker as *Don't vote for the Conservative Party.* This RQ achieves optimal relevance by the array of weak implicatures it produces.

We can see that, whether a question contains a linguistic indicator or not, as long as based on the context, it conveys an implicature(s) and that implicature(s) is mutually manifest to the hearers, a question will be successfully interpreted by the hearers as an RQ.

I also argue that the cognitive environment must be mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee for the successful communication of an RQ. Cognitive environment, as an important part of the context, includes real-world knowledge, as in (14):

(14) The president said, we have to be practical; drilling won't solve it. And then he offered his practical solution. Anybody here remember what it was?

AUDIENCE: Algae!

GINGRICH: Algae. [laughter] Algae. I mean, I think this summer, as gas prices keep going up, one of our campaign techniques should be have people go to gas stations with a jar of algae...[laughter]... and say to people, <u>would you rather have the Gingrich solution of drilling and having more oil? Or would you like to try to put this in your gas tank? [laughter]</u>

I mean, you can't - I'm amazed that 'Saturday Night Live" hasn't taken that speech and turned it into a skit. I mean, you can't make this stuff up. [laughter]

(Newt Gingrich, Remarks in Atlanta, Georgia Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012)

If the cognitive environment that *Obama has adopted a new energy programme of turning Algae into renewable resources, as one way of applying new technology to resource development* is not manifest to the hearer and if the hearer fails to know the real world knowledge, such as *Drilling can produce oil or It is absurd to put algae in gas tank to produce oil*, it will be impossible for them to infer the implicature intended by Newt Gingrich that *Obama's policy to solve the energy crisis is absurd* and the hearers will also fail to interpret the speaker's sarcastic attitude towards Obama. If so, the hearers will not give off the laughter indicating sarcasm. As has been mentioned in 4.2.2, intonation of the speaker will show his/her attitude, but the corpus sources have failed to get access to the intonation patterns of the speeches, so intonation is not analysed in the current study.

In the following sections, I will discuss features of RQs used by politicians (shown in Table 6.3), how they help to achieve optimal relevance and how they are interpreted by the hearers.

Table 6.3 Features of RQs in political speeches

	Political speeches	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in political speeches
Total No of RQs	121	0.980
Total word tokens	123,448	
RQs with answers provided	49	0.397
RQs without polarity shift	44	0.356
Parallel RQs	18 groups (60 RQs)	0.486
RQs containing metaphor	1	0.008

6.5 RQs with explicit answers provided in political speeches

One feature observed in the data is that there exist 49 RQs with explicit answers provided. As was discussed in the literature review chapter (2.1), an RQ, as its implied answer is self-evident, does not expect an answer explicitly provided in most cases, despite the fact that indeed RQs require a mental response from the audience. However, cases of RQs with answers overtly provided do exist in my data. There are 31 answers to the direct wh-elements, including 1 provided by the audience; 9 replies serving as explanations to the implied answers and 9 non-verbalised responses such as laughter and applause[20]. This unavoidably raises the questions as to why answers are provided in RQs and whether they are redundant. I argue that explicit answers provided to RQs, although redundant in the semantic sense, are not redundant in pragmatic sense, since they not only save the audience's effort to infer the intended implicature but also strengthen the cognitive effects, thus helping the speaker to achieve optimal relevance and succeed in influencing the audience's minds. In the current study, three types of RQ with answers provided in the current study are discussed as follows.

6.5.1 Answers explicitly provided by the speaker to strengthen the implicature of a political RQ

One kind of answer overtly provided by the speaker himself/herself is to make apparent the implicature entailed in the question, thus emphasising the communicative intention of the speaker. See the following example (6 in Chapter 4, repeated here as 15):

(15) So, Wisconsin, our ideas have been tested. We've tried them: They worked. The other side's ideas have also been tested. They didn't work so well. After Bill Clinton left office, during most of the last decade, we tried giving big tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans. We tried giving insurance companies and oil companies and Wall Street free rein to do whatever they pleased. <u>And what did we get? Falling incomes, record deficits, the slowest job growth in half a century, an economic crisis that we've been cleaning up after ever since.</u>
(Barack Obama's Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin. in November 5, 2012.)

As discussed in 4.4.2, the implicatures of this RQ are inferred not by the answer following it. Based on the mutual cognitive environment that this speech is delivered by Obama to

[20] These non- verbalised responses are all found in American political speeches, since the non-verbalised responses are not marked in British political speeches.

American citizens who are clear about their economic and social situations and the purpose of the speech is to attack the Republican's policy, even if no answer is provided to this RQ, the audience can still infer the implicatures in the form of a set of possible assumptions: *we got a high unemployment rate, cuts in pay, reduced expenditure, less money disposable* and so on. These wide arrays of weak implicatures are effects achieved by this RQ. Although the propositions may vary with people, whatever implicatures the audience may infer will always fall at the same end of a 'contextually relevant scale', (a term employed by Rohde (2006), discussed in the literature review Chapter 2.1.5), here meaning the things we got fall at the 'getting worse' end rather than the 'getting better' end. If the answers formed in the minds of the speaker and audience are at the same end, the rhetorical reading will be recognised and accepted; if not, the rhetorical reading will fail.

So why should the speaker provide a redundant answer when the audience have already been capable of inferring the implicature? The observation of the data reveals that optimal relevance is achieved by the addresser in three approaches: either by saving the addressee's processing effort or increasing the utterance's positive cognitive effects or both. In (15), by providing an answer to the RQ, on one hand, the speaker saves the audience's effort to wonder whether their inference of the implicature is right or wrong; on the other hand, a positive cognitive effect can be increased in that the implicature inferred has been strengthened after the answer is explicitly stated. In this way, the speaker achieves optimal relevance. He changes the audience's mental state and its representation of the world, increasing his chances of achieving perusasion and winning the audience over to his side. I argue that in (15), by providing an explicit answer, Barack Obama aims to save the audience's effort to infer the implicature that *Romney's plan didn't work* and strengthen it in the minds of the audience. His idea of attacking Romney will be further revealed in the answer. In this pragmatic sense, the answer following this question is not redundant.

6.5.2 Answers explicitly provided by the speaker different from the implicature of a political RQ

There exist other cases with an answer provided deviant from the expected answer. This calls for more deductive rules and more complicated procedures in processing more information conveyed by the utterances. Consider the following example:

(16) We have always been about being on the cutting edge leading the world in new ideas and innovations. Steve Jobs represented that ideal at its best. Who could have imagined just a few years ago that you could have all of your music, a camera, video camera, your photos, your phone, an encyclopedia all connected to the world at your fingertips? Steve Jobs could. He and his team changed our world for the better.
The Steve Jobs spirit still exists in the imaginations of young entrepreneurs today…
(Michele Bachmann, Remarks in West Des Moines Following the Iowa Caucus, January 3, 2012)

Without context, when hearing the question *"Who could have imagined just a few years ago that you could have all of your music, a camera, video camera, your photos, your phone, an encyclopedia all connected to the world at your fingertips?",* the audience are expected to recognise the proposition implicated as being *Nobody would have imagined all the music, camera, video camera, photos etc. at their fingertips just a few years ago*.

The implicated premise in the question is:
Given just a few years, no dramatic changes will happen.

The encyclopaedic knowledge mutually manifest to both the speaker and the audience is:
To have all of your music, a camera, video camera, your photos, your phones, an encyclopedia all connected to the world at your fingertips in just a few years are unbelievable dramatic changes.

Then the implicated conclusion is:
Nobody could have imagined just a few years ago that you could have all of your music, a camera, video, your photos, an encyclopedia all connected to the world at your fingertips.

But rather than a negative '*Nobody'* assertion hinted in the above analysis, the answer provided by Michele Bachmann is an unexpected one: "Steve Jobs". How does Michele Bachmann achieve relevance by using this type of RQ? The mutual cognitive environment includes the cutting-edge advantage of America over the other countries in its technology. The message made mutually manifest in the preceding context is that *Steve Jobs represented the cutting edge of America in new ideas and innovation* after reference assignment of "that ideal" in "Steve Jobs represented that ideal at its best." This environment makes mutually manifest the relevance of the question - a further argument for Steve Jobs' innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. With an answer provided different from the superficially hinted-at answer, the implicature that *Only Steve Jobs spirit can lead the cutting edge of America* will be successfully conveyed.

Why does Michele Bachmann provide an answer different from the one he hints in the RQ? Interpreting (16) involves more processing effort than interpreting a direct assertion *Steve Jobs could have imagined just a few years ago that you could have all of your music, a camera, video camera, your photos, your phone, an encyclopedia all connected to the world at your fingertips*. However, this extra processing effort has been offset by more stylistic effects this kind of RQ produces, such as: being more impressive by breaking the usual thinking pattern, and achieving a deeper and longer lasting impression. The speaker achieves optimal relevance by creating more contextual effects to offset the more processing effort.

How is persuasion achieved in such a case where an unexpected answer is supplied? According to Relevance Theory, the universal cognitive tendency to maximise relevance makes it possible, at least to some extent, to predict and influence the mental state of others. Wilson and Sperber (2002: 255) describe this in the following terms: "Knowing of your tendency to pick out the most relevant stimuli in your environment and process them so as to maximise their relevance, I may be able to produce a stimulus which is likely to attract your attention, to prompt the retrieval of certain contextual assumptions and to point you towards an intended conclusion." By producing an RQ with an unexpected answer as a stimulus, Michele Bachmann guides the audience to retrieve the intended assumption *that the* *entrepreneurship represented by Steve Jobs is the very reason to account for America's technological leadership in the world.* Following this RQ, when Michele Bachmann argues further in the following text that Obama's policy is discouraging such an entrepreneurship, which will damage the country, while Michele Bachmann's policy is in favor of the leverage effect of free market and innovation, which will help maintain the cutting edge of American economy, Bachmann then successfully leads the audience to the conclusion *Don't vote for Obama. Vote for me.*

6.5.3 Paralinguistic answers provided by the audience

Paralinguistic answers such as laughter, applause, and whistles have been observed in the data provided by the hearers, serving as a way to show the hearers' assumed attitudes and confirm that the audience has understood the rhetorical nature of the question.

(17) PAUL: We've had one here recently, in the last month or so, because there was a bill floating around, Stop Online Piracy Act. And this was an effort for the federal government to take over and control the Internet.
But a lot of people like you got word of it and sent a message. And Washington, even if it had majority votes in both the House and the Senate, once they heard from the people, they withdrew those bills, they took 'em off, and they are no longer pushing through the Congress. But - so the people have to be heard!
AUDIENCE: [cheering]
PAUL: And besides, <u>how are we gonna spread our message without the Internet?</u>
AUDIENCE: <u>[laughter and cheering]</u>
(Ron Paul, Remarks in Fargo, North Dakota Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses，March 6, 2012)

In the context, aiming to instill in the audience's mind an idea that liberty is what American citizens most yearn for, which the Obama Administration disturbs and even strips away, Ron Paul recalls a recent event where people sent messages online against the passing of the 'stop

Online Piracy Act' - an act which will seriously undermine people's freedom of speech since the federal government uses this chance to take over and control the Internet. Their voices were so powerfully delivered via the internet that the bill was withdrawn. Based on this context, the implicature *We need to have Internet freedom* has been conveyed, and the audience can easily infer that *it would have been wrong if the senate had passed the 'stop Online Piracy Act'*.

So here, the paralinguistic answers "laughter and cheering" as well as in some cases, the "yes" answer from the audience are, exactly the signs to show that the audience have, as expected, interpreted and accepted the rhetorical sense of the question and they have recognised and agreed with the emotions conveyed by the speaker.

In summary, a closer look at (15) - (17) has shed light on varied functions performed by different answer types: answers overtly uttered by the speaker may either hint at the implicatures of the proposition or may be different from the intended implicatures; paralinguistic answers including laughter and applause from the audience indicate that they have successfully inferred the implicatures and recognised the rhetorical reading of the question. We argue that except for the case as (16), where the answer provided is different from the intended implicature, answers in the other two cases are both redundant in the semantic sense, because without them, the rhetorical reading still stands. But they are not redundant in the pragmatic sense.

Let us compare them with (18), which has no overtly uttered answer, to argue that to provide an answer or not are different styles and choices of the speaker to achieve different cognitive effects. They achieve optimal relevance in different ways.

(18) And we will insist on rigour at the heart of the curriculum in our schools […] Indeed, <u>what sort of country have we become in which authors are not allowed to go into our schools and inspire children with a love of books without first going through criminal vetting?</u>

(David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaking in South London, April 27,2010)

In (18), by the strong negative sense and real-world knowledge of "going through criminal vetting", the hearers can successfully infer the implicatures of this question, such as *our country has become an imprisoned country, a country without freedom, a derailed country.* These are arrays of weak implicatures, varying with different individuals, not in a specific and fixed range. Upon hearing this RQ, the hearers assume more responsibility for inferring the weak implictures, and getting close to the intention of the speaker, than when hearing an RQ with an explicit answer provided. It allows for a much richer imagining of the hearers. This type of RQ achieves optimal relevance by increasing cognitive effects it brings forth, in other words, in the array of weak implicatures produced by the RQ. On the contrary, in (15), an implicature is overtly uttered via the explicit answer provided. These overtly expressed answers save the audience's processing effort in inferring the implicature, and increase their cognitive effects by strengthening the implicature in their minds. RQs like (15) achieve optimal relevance by both saving processing effort and increasing cognitive effect.

In this section, I have discussed RQs with answers explicitly provided, showing that this is also an approach used by the speaker to seek optimal relevance and persuade his/her audience. We now turn to another prominent feature of political RQs, which is some RQs do not show polarity shift.

6.6 RQs not observing polarity shift in political speeches

Typically, a rhetorical question will see polarity shift in its answer: the underlying proposition will show opposite polarity to the surface structure in the question. A positive question expresses a negative proposition, while a negative question expresses a positive proposition. A wh-question is expected to deliver a negative proposition. This is illustrated in (19):

(19) When our police officers, those who are there to protect us, are encouraged to steer clear of the most difficult cases, when parents can be rewarded for splitting up, when professionals are told to follow rules rather than do what they think is best, when the kind-hearted are discouraged from doing good in their community, <u>is it any wonder our society is broken?</u>

(David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaking in South London, April 27, 2010)

David Cameron assumes his hearers will infer his intention which is to blame the current government for the broken society, by entailing the wrong doings of 'big government' in encouraging moral cowardice while discouraging strength of character in the preceding adverbial clauses. The hearers identify the negative proposition, *It is no wonder our society is broken* as a contextual effect of the apparent negative semantic prosody in the parallel four preceding conjuncts. A shift in polarity is observed here.

But there do exist some exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in both yes-no questions and wh-questions. The question arises as to how the hearers interpret the RQ as one either observing the rule of polarity shift or not observing the rule of polarity shift. I argue that the mutually manifest context, including the political background, the immediately preceding text and encyclopaedic knowledge allows the hearers, who assume the speaker utters an optimally relevant question, to derive the implied proposition of the utterance, regardless of whether it obeys the polarity shift or not, and then infer the speaker's communicative intention.

6.6.1 Exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in yes-no political RQs

Cases of exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in yes-no RQs are both observed in American and British campaign speeches. Consider (20, repeated from example 4):

(20) Now, Madison, here's the thing. For 8 years, we had a President who shared these beliefs. His name was Bill Clinton. And when he first came into office, his economic plan asked the wealthiest Americans to pay a little bit more so we could reduce our deficit and still invest in the skills and ideas of our people. And at the time, the Republican Congress— and a certain Senate candidate by the name of Mitt Romney— said Bill Clinton's plan would hurt the economy, would kill jobs, would hurt the job creators. <u>Does this sound familiar? [Laughter]</u>
(Barack Obama, Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Madison, Wisconsin, November 5, 2012)

In (20), upon hearing this rhetorical question, after a process of reference assignment, the hearers can get access to an explicature of this utterance, which is *the speaker asks whether Mitt Romney's words sound familiar*. The hearers then need to decide whether it delivers a positive assertion – *It sounds familiar* or a negative assertion – *It does not sound familiar*. The expectation that the speaker aims to produce an optimally relevant utterance guides the hearers to determine why the speaker utters such a question here. The hearers resort to the preceding text for clues deliberately left by the speaker, which argues that Mitt Romney's attacking of Obama's economic plan is nothing new but a twice-told story. Mitt Romney's view proved to be wrong eight years ago when he used the same tactic to fight Bill Clinton's economic plan. Obama, therefore, predicts Mitt Romney's failure in 2010's presidential campaign and satirises him by hinting that his tactics are exhausted. With the contextual premises that *if one uses the same tactic eight years ago, it will sound familiar* and *if the tactic failed eight years ago, it would fail this time*, the audience can successfully infer the implied conclusion as being positive, i.e. *Mitt Romney's words sound familiar, which means that Romney will fail again since his old tactic has been proven to be wrong in the past.*

6.6.2 Exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in wh-political RQs

Apart from those wh-RQs observing the rule of polarity shift, there are three kinds of exception to the rule of polarity shift, as illustrated in the examples below.

<u>Case 1: wh-political RQs indicating a self-evident specific answer</u>

There are wh-political RQs, which indicate a self-evident specific answer rather than a negative proposition. As shown in:

(21) And you've got to make a tough decision. And the decision has to come down to really two things - <u>who's the best person to do what must be done for this country first?</u> And that's to defeat Barack Obama, right? [applause] And, secondly, <u>who do you trust? Who do you trust that's going to have the conviction, the principles, the courage to go out and do the job in</u>

a town that doesn't want change, in a town and in a world that likes to go along to get along?
(Rick Santorum, Remarks in Colorado Following the Nevada Caucuses, February 4, 2012)

The contextual background of (21) is a speech delivered by a Republican presidential candidate Rick Santorum intended to defeat his rivals both inside his party and the then president Barack Obama. This determines the specific answer to the wh-word, which can only be 'me'. It is this contextual background that allows the hearers to identify the implicature that *I am the man who is most suitable and whom you should vote for*.

Case 2: wh-political RQs indicating multiple answers hinting at the same end of contextually relevant scale

There are also wh-political RQs to which the answers are not specific but various, that fall at the same end of a contextually relevant scale. Let us consider (18), repeated here as (22):

(22) And we will insist on rigour at the heart of the curriculum in our schools […] Indeed, what sort of country have we become in which authors are not allowed to go into our schools and inspire children with a love of books without first going through criminal vetting?
(David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaking in South London, April 27,2010)

As was discussed in 6.5.3, the strong negative sense and real-world knowledge of "going through criminal vetting" invite the hearers to infer the contextual assumptions, which serve as implied premises that *Going through criminal vetting is a negative and complicated procedure; If the procedure is too complicated, the authors will be reluctant to go into schools to inspire children; and a country where children loving books are not inspired cannot be said to be a good country.* Therefore, different answers will be provided by different participants as a contextual effect of these implied premises, such as *an imprisoned country, a country without freedom, a derailed country.* All of these will fall at the same end of a contextually relevant scale, as being negative and unwelcomed.

Case 3: wh-political RQs indicating an implied proposition

There are also other RQs to which the answers are neither specific nor multiple, but in the form of an implied proposition. Let us consider example (2, repeated here as 23)

(23) I knew the basic Wall Street technique, which was to come in and spend lots of - how many of you have noticed negative ads?
How many of you have noticed negative ads? How many of you have noticed the - the Reagan negative ad that is a total lie, OK?
(Newt Gingrich, Remarks in Atlanta, Georgia Following the Super Tuesday Primaries and Caucuses, March 6, 2012)

Based on the encyclopaedic knowledge and strong negative sense of “negative ads”, upon hearing the question, the hearers will derive an implied proposition that *many negative ads, a tactic exploited by the opponent to attack others, have been created* and then identify the speaker’s intention as an attack on his rival’s spending money on negative ads and an implicature that *the party he represents, instead, will play fair*.

We can see that different types of answer may be indicated by wh-political RQs, with some displaying reversed polarity from the surface structure, and others displaying matched polarity from the same surface structure. The inferential process to be attributed to the hearers in identifying the implicatures is the same, regardless of whether they observe the rule of polarity shift or not, which is a process to find an implicature optimally relevant in the context.

6.7 RQs containing other rhetorical devices in political speeches

Another way of influencing the audience’s mind observed in political RQs is to employ various rhetorical devices in the question, such as parallelism and metaphor. These rhetorical devices are found accompanying RQs to achieve a coordinated rhetorical effect, which point has not been touched upon in the previous literature on RQs. They achieve optimal relevance in different ways. The rhetorical device parallelism achieves optimal relevance in two ways. It can save the hearers' processing effort due to the fact that each question delivers similar implicature. It can also increase the utterance's cognitive effects through its emphatic power, its more shocking effect, its ability to evoke anger and so on. The rhetorical device metaphor, once employed, may make it harder for the audience to retrieve the contextual assumption, but the extra effort will be offset by the extra effect it achieves: for instance, in the whole array of weak implicatures it triggers (see 3.6). These rhetorical devices exert more influence on the audience, leaving more lasting effects, and making optimal relevance possible.

6.7.1 Parallelism

In my data of political speeches, 18 groups of parallel RQs, including 60 individual questions, are found (see Table 6.3), with the majority (12 groups including 46 individual RQs) found in British speeches. What are their features and functions? Why do they enjoy such a high frequency of occurrence, accounting for 46 out of the total of 81 RQs in British political speeches? I argue that the application of parallelism is an important measure taken by the speaker to increase the audience's cognitive effects and simultaneously reduce the audience's effort to infer the intended implicature and access the possible intention of the speaker. In written genres, the readers have plenty time to digest and take in the writer's opinions; in political speeches, politicians need to convince the audience in a very limited time. So the more powerful and comprehensible their speech is, the more likely it is that they will succeed in persuading the audience to support them.

Since the parallel questions convey similar implicated propositions, once the hearers infer successfully the implicature in the first RQ, it will be effortless for them to infer implicatures in the following RQs. In this way, the audience's processing effort will have been greatly saved; also, with parallel questions uttered one after another, the linguistic forces will be gradually strengthened, until they reach a peak; and the underlying proposition will be consolidated once again. In this way, the cognitive effect and persuasive power will have been greatly increased. It has been observed in the current data that RQs with parallelism have been presented in different forms.

Some parallel RQs are found to contain the rhetorical device of 'climax'. These questions usually express the same meaning, and demonstrate the same argument with changed wording. The senses of the changed parts in the objects show the tendency of gaining in power, escalating in degree, or accelerating in its typicality. Consider (12) in section 6.3.2, repeated here as (24).

(24) Are we going to get that with some fudge decision at the election? Never. We are only going to get it with a decisive Conservative government that gets moving on this. How are we going to stop Labour's jobs tax? The idea of putting up National Insurance on every job in our country, it's a crazy idea as you are coming out of recession and into recovery. Are we going to stop that with some sort of indecisive result, and a lot of haggling and negotiation? Of course not. We are only going to get that with a decisive Conservative government that starts cutting the waste and says no, we don't want that jobs tax.

Think of getting business moving and how we're going to help small businesses. Are we going to do that spending weeks haggling about a government? What we need is a decisive government that says we are going to have a budget that will help small businesses like the ones here with a cut in Corporation Tax…

(David Cameron's speaking on "Big Society versus Big Government", April 19, 2010)

The strong negative semantic prosody embodied in "fudge decision" reminds the hearers of the implied proposition, *we cannot solve the problems with a fudge decision at the election*. The answer *"Never"* and the further explanation of the underlying proposition expressed in the reply, *"we are only going to get it with a decisive Conservative government that gets moving on this"* confirm the hearers' inference. So when the hearers get to the second RQ with only slightly changed wording, *"indecisive result, and a lot of haggling and negotiation"*, followed by exactly the same pattern of answer and further explanation as a reply, the hearers can easily infer the same implied proposition, as *we cannot solve the* *problems with a fudge decision at the election*. The same inferential process goes on with the third RQ. So with parallel RQs, the hearers are saved processing effort on the one hand, and increased in cognitive effects on the other, due to being exposed to a repetitive and increasingly powerful argument.

Some RQs do not involve the rhetorical device of climax, with each component of the clusters being equal in its force. The questions are on a par with each other rather than gaining power gradually, and in most cases, they develop and elaborate the same ideas from different aspects or angles. Some may closely attach to each other, as in (25), and others may have descriptions, elaborations or exemplification in between, as can be seen in (26):

(25) We can build the Big Society because we know that in the end, people want change for the better and they know they don't get that just from the Government. Does anyone think we're going to tackle poverty and make our society fairer just through more tax credits and government schemes? Does anyone think we're going to fight crime and make our communities safer just through more laws and initiatives from the Home Office? Does anyone think we're going to reduce our carbon emissions and shape a green future just by issuing edicts from on high for people and companies to change their behaviour? Does anyone think we're going to improve school standards and make opportunity more equal just through more targets and directives from the Department of Children, Schools and Families? Of course not.
(David Cameron, leader of the Conservative Party, speaks at the Citizens UK General Election assembly in Westminster, May 3, 2010)

(26) And you've got to make a tough decision. And the decision has to come down to really two things – who's the best person to do what must be done for this country first? And that's to defeat Barack Obama, right? [applause]
And, secondly, who do you trust? Who do you trust that's going to have the conviction, the principles, the courage to go out and do the job in a town that doesn't want change, in a town and in a world that likes to go along to get along?
Who do you trust that's going to go there with the strong moral convictions, with the strong

ethical convictions, with the strong convictions about what is right for this country, to do the job that is necessary, to shrink the size of government back to its constitutional framework, to stand up for the values of this country, of faith and family, and to make sure that America is again respected by our allies and trusted by our allies and in fact feared by our enemies? [applause]

This is the job you have. And in a few days you're going to step through a step in the process to let America know what Colorado thinks.

Who shares Colorado's values? A lot has been said about winning this election, and the first thing we have to do is win this election. I agree. But a lot of people have said, well, you know, we have to go with the guy that has the most money or is the most moderate in order to win the election.

(Rick Santorum, Remarks in Colorado Following the Nevada Caucuses, February 4, 2012)

In (26), the first who-question stresses the quality of 'doing what needs to be done', the second highlights the need to 'bring about reforms or changes', the third emphasises the remolding of America into a prosperous and powerful country, and the fourth emphasises a sharing of Colorado's values. By stressing different aspects, the speaker skillfully delivers the message, an implicature that *it is **he** who will lead American people to accomplish all these challenging missions successfully and it is **he** who deserves a vote.*

In this section, I have discussed why the speaker uses parallelism in RQs. I claim that the use of parallelism not only saves the audience's processing effort to infer the intended implicature but also evokes more cognitive effects, such as emphasis, stronger censure, and an overwhelmingly propelling force to agree. In this approach, optimal relevance will be achieved with ease, and the implicature will be guaranteed to be inferred by the audience.

6.7.2 Metaphor

Besides the rhetorical device of parallelism, metaphor is also observed as accompanying political RQs to help achieve greater cognitive effect. Consider (3, repeated here as 27):

(27) <u>I was told he had a moral compass, where's this moral compass been for the last four weeks?</u> I reckon when he finds it will be spinning round so fast he could put it on the roof and it could be a ceiling fan.

(David Cameron, Leader of the Conservative Party, speaking at a rally in East Renfrewshire, May 4, 2010)

"Moral compass", a metaphor meaning 'a person's sticking to an ethical code despite all discouragement', is used here by the speaker to satirise Gordon Brown's vacillation on his political standpoints, and the paradoxes in Brown's behaviour.

According to the explanation in Relevance Theory about how implicature is produced, upon hearing the speaker's utterance of *"where's this moral compass been for the last four weeks?"* the hearers first need to decipher what "moral compass" means. The hearers will resort to the encyclopaedic knowledge of the function of a "compass" as a tool to help people to find the right direction. They can then interpret "this moral compass" as *Gordon Brown's morality principles and political standpoints.* A proposition can be constructed as *Gordon Brown's moral principles are missing.* After that, in combination with the contextually available proposition they have constructed, the hearers can access the implicature conveyed by this RQ as being *Gordon Brown has no firm standpoints and he has been too changeable in his behaviour in the past four weeks*.

So why does the speaker utter such an RQ containing a metaphor rather than the direct assertion, *Gordon Brown has no firm standpoints*? Based on Relevance Theory, I argue firstly that the metaphorical expression "moral compass" conveys several lines of weak implicatures, such as a strong sense of sarcasm, the connotation that Gordon Brown needs a compass to confirm his standpoints and the wider implication that he lacks political direction and judgment of right and wrong. The indirectness and indeterminacy of these weak implicatures are exactly the reason why these metaphorical expressions are used. They are the best means of representing the speaker's mind and producing more cognitive effects. Once this RQ is paraphrased into an assertion, these weak implicatures will be lost. Secondly, I argue that compared with an interpretation of a direct assertion, the hearers will take more effort and assume more responsibility in selecting the contextual assumptions and inferring the weak implicatures embodied in the question. In other words, the hearers can be more relied on to infer the speaker's intention and to get more involved in the interpretative process, and thus more easily persuaded.

In summary, based on the concept of processing effort and cognitive effect in Relevance Theory, metaphor is employed in an RQ, as an indirect way of communication, making it more challenging for the hearers to decipher. However, the extra effort taken in the cognitive processing is offset by the extra effect these two rhetorical devices (metaphor and RQ) evoke, since people's psychology tends to memorise longer those things taking more energy to interpret. The extra effects include more implicatures, vivid pictures, subtle feelings and charisma the metaphorical languages bring forth, such as cutting sarcasm, and a vivid depiction of a man lacking morality in (27). The speaker assumes optimal relevance can be successfully achieved by using this kind of vivid expression.

6.8 Summary

In this chapter, I have first discussed how Speech Act Theory and Grice's principle fail to account for political RQs in that they are insufficient in interpreting the multiple functions expressed by a single syntactic structure, the figures of speech and the contextual implicatures.

Then I have argued that a politician employs an RQ in his/her speech for two main aims: first is to threaten his opponent's face; the second is to produce more cognitive effects by creating more implicatures. The ultimate purpose is to achieve optimal relevance, as compared with a directly stated assertion. The hearers' mental state will be changed more easily since they are more involved in understanding an RQ than in understanding a direct assertion.

I have then discussed how RQs with overt lexical indicators, or non-overt semantic prosodies are identified and interpreted in terms of Relevance Theory. I have argued that the Code Model is not sufficient to explain the identification and interpretation of RQs, which job can only be accomplished by Relevance Theory. An RQ, whether containing linguistic indicators or not, is identified in the same procedure by the criteria whether an implicature has been conveyed and whether that implicature is mutually manifest to a hearer. Mutually manifest cognitive environment including real-world knowledge is crucial to the successful communication of a political RQ.

Linguistic indicators, which suggest the rhetorical reading of a question, including lexical and semantic indicators, are used in political RQs. By using them, the speaker can deliberately make explicit the clues to save his/her audience's processing effort and thus help the hearers to infer his/her intention. This is a method employed by the speaker to achieve optimal relevance and ultimately persuade the audience. The functions of the lexical indicators *ever*, *really* and *any* have been discussed, and the process by which they work in a political RQ has been demonstrated. The mutually manifest cognitive environment, with the aid of emphatic adverbials such as *ever, really, any* which deliver a strong sense of emotion, allows the hearers to identify the rhetorical reading of the question and the intended assumption of the speaker more easily. Semantic indicators, which are words with a strong indication of emotions or attitudes are used by the speaker for the same purpose. They are presented in the form of semantic contrast in either an alternative structure, or a non-alternative structure, with positive semantic prosody or with negative semantic prosody. With these prominent semantic indicators attracting the audience's attention, the hearers will accept more easily the attitudes of the speaker.

I have discussed how different types of political RQ are employed by the politician to achieve the persuasive intention. Political RQs with explicit answers provided in the data have been discussed, including three cases. The first case are those with answers provided by the speaker, to make apparent and then strengthen the implicature, helping to reveal the intention of the speaker and saving the processing effort of the hearers. The second case are those with answers provided by the speaker different from the implicature of the RQ, which require more processing effort but achieve more cognitive effects in that they break the usual thinking pattern and are more impressive and memorable. The third case is paralinguistic answers provided by the audience, such as laughter, cheering, and applause, which help to confirm that the audience has successfully interpreted and accepted the rhetorical nature of the question. It has also been argued that explicit answers to political RQs can be said to be redundant semantically in that they repeat the implicature already inferred by the hearers, but on the other hand, the answers are not redundant pragmatically, in that they help to achieve optimal relevance by saving processing effort. I have then argued that political RQs with an answer provided or without an answer provided achieve optimal relevance in different ways, by respectively saving processing effort or increasing cognitive effects.

Some political RQs observe the rule of polarity shift while others do not. Exceptions to the rule of polarity shift have been observed not only in yes-no political RQs but also in wh-political RQs. I have observed that answers to wh-political RQs fall into three categories: a self-evident specific answer, or multiple answers at the same end of a contextually relevant scale, and an implied proposition. This chapter has also discussed what propositions the hearers interpret, one with matched polarity or one without matched polarity. I have argued that it is the presumption that an RQ conveys its own optimal relevance, which means it yields a positive cognitive effect - producing implicatures, that determines its interpretation, regardless of whether it obeys the polarity shift or not. The hearers get access to contextual assumptions in the mutually manifest cognitive environment composed of either the preceding text or the general political background, or the encyclopaedic knowledge, which allow them to derive the implicatures.

Political RQs containing rhetorical devices have been discussed, including parallelism and metaphor. They help to achieve optimal relevance from the perspective of saving processing effort and increasing cognitive effect. It has been argued that parallelism is one important device to help both save the processing effort and increase the cognitive effect. These groups of RQs may have a climax or may not have a climax. Metaphor is used in an RQ so that it can deliver arrays of weak implicatures.

A similar investigation will be carried out, centring on these aspects in newspaper editorials and sermons in the following chapters to see whether similar findings can be made.

Chapter 7 Analysis of RQs in newspaper editorials

This chapter aims to analyse features and functions of RQs in newspaper editorials in terms of Relevance Theory. It shows how editorial RQs are identified by arguing that Speech Act Theory and Grice's Principle are insufficient and the criteria based on the main concepts of 'implicature'[21] and 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory need to be applied.[22] It also addresses how different types of RQ are employed in editorials to influence and persuade the readers, based on the concept of 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory.

This chapter is mainly composed of four parts:

- In section 7.1, I argue that to interpret different types of RQ, Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory, and Grice's approach are not suitable. Relevance Theory can better account for the uses of RQs.
- In section 7.2, I will discuss the mode-related differences between the genres of political speeches and newspaper editorials and explain these differences in terms of Relevance Theory.
- In section 7.3 and 7.4, I show further that the Code Model is not sufficient to distinguish an RQ, in that linguistic indicators, including lexical indicators and semantic indicators, cannot guarantee the rhetorical reading of a question. To identify an RQ, the Code Model should be subservient to Relevance Theory.
- In 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and 7.8, I explain how a writer employs different types of RQ to convey his/her communicative intention and influence the readers' minds: with 7.5 focusing on editorial RQs with explicit answers provided; 7.6 focusing on editorial RQs observing and not observing the rule of polarity shift; 7.7 focusing on editorial RQs containing other rhetorical devices; and 7.8 focusing on editorial RQs serving as titles or subtitles.

[21] See 3.3.3: an implicature is the result of interaction between old information coming from encyclopaedic knowledge and new information coming from linguistic decoding, including 'implicated premise' and 'implicated conclusion'.
[22] See 3.3.5: "To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable." A "shared cognitive environment" is "one in which every manifest assumption will be mutually manifest".

7.1 Theoretical considerations of Speech Act Theory and Gricean Principle in accounting for editorial RQs

As has been discussed in Chapter 6, I maintain that Speech Act Theory is not sufficient in studying editorial RQs for the following reasons.

i) Editorial RQs are of the same interrogative syntactic structure, but they may express different speech acts, which Speech Act Theory fails to explain. The following two examples show that an interrogative is never just a request for information as is claimed in Speech Act Theory.

(1) …The estimated cost of the Channel tunnel continues to rise at an alarming rate, to the distress of both shareholders and the company's bankers. The initial forecast was 4.7bn. The last published estimate was 5.4bn. Only weeks ago speculation was that a further 1bn might be needed. Now Eurotunnel says that 7bn could be nearer the mark, while the banks and the consortium involved in the construction work believe that far bigger sums will be necessary. The tunnel is due to open in 1993. <u>Who knows what the costs will look like by then?</u> …
(The BNC-editorials)

(2) What Happened To Just Being Hungry?
[…] I don't want to be there, but I want to have already been there - for example, at the dinner when Goodyear ate bugs, which she says "have a lot to recommend them" from an ecological standpoint. I have no doubt they do, <u>but can someone pass the onion rings?</u>
(Alexander Nazaryan, November 9, 2013, *Newsweek*)

It is apparent that (1) is not an enquiry for a specific person's name but a condemnation of the accelerating expenditures. Example (2) is not a request for people's help but to express the writer's attitude to eating (see 7.4 for a detailed analysis). Whether an interrogative performs an act of condemnation or declaration cannot be decided before the writer's intended assumption is inferred.

ii) Figures of speech pose problem to the explanatory power of Speech Act Theory. Consider (3). Speech Act Theory cannot explain that this is not a discussion about whether people can turn a Lada into a Mercedes but about whether the German model of administration fits Poland's national situation.

(3) … Almost as soon as he was nominated, Mr Mazowiecki said 'I am looking for my Ludwig Erhard'. The German model […] No one has tried to do this before. No one knows whether it can be done. <u>How do you turn a clapped-out Lada into a Mercedes while driving down the motorway?</u> …
(The BNC-editorials)

iii) Speech Act Theory fails to account for the contextual implicatures of utterances.

Example (4) is not expecting a yes or no answer, but is to protest that what Kinnock and Hattersley have done is a form of racial discrimination.

(4) … OK, there should be an affiliated 'socialist society' for blacks and Asians, but whites could join too […] It was an insult: they didn't need white nannies - did more than two black people in a room constitute a riot? - <u>were they to step back to the old plantation days?</u> - had Kinnock and Hattersley been drunk when they drafted the proposal ? …
(The BNC-editorials)

Grice's Principles and Maxims also fail to explain the inferential processes of the addresser's implicature(s) and possible communicative intention. I will argue later in this chapter that Relevance Theory can successfully account for the identification and interpretation of editorial RQs.

7.2 Mode-related differences between RQs in political speeches and newspaper editorials

Based on the methodology described in Chapter 4, with the aid of linguistic indicators and applying the concepts of 'implicature' and 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory, 189 RQs have been identified in the four sources of editorial data in the current study (Table 7.1). These data compose a self-built American editorial corpus, a self-built British editorial corpus, FLOB-B (editorial part) and the BNC (editorial part) (see Table 4.1 for a brief introduction).

Table 7.1 RQs in newspaper editorials

	Words	All questions	RQs	Frequency (RQs per 1000 words)
Self-built American editorial corpus	8,849	43	17	1.921
Self-built British editorial corpus	13,995	48	18	1.215
FLOB (editorial part)	67,407	132	44	0.653
The BNC (editorial part)	100,659	289	110	1.093
Total	190,910	512	189	0.989 (with 1.921 RQs per 1000 words in American editorials; 0.939 RQs per 1000 words in British editorials)

Table 7.2 is drawn to compare the features of RQs in the genre of political speeches and newspaper editorials.

Table 7.2 Comparison between features of RQs in political speeches and in newspaper editorials

	Political speeches	Newspaper editorials	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in speeches	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in editorials
No of RQs	121	189	**0.980**	**0.989**
Total word tokens	123,448	190,910		
RQs with answers provided	49	28	0.397	0.146
Parallel RQs	18 groups (60 RQs)	11 groups (34 RQs)	0.486	0.178
RQs with other rhetorical devices	1	7	0.008	0.037

Table 7.2 reveals that, on the one hand, the frequency of RQs in the genre of newspaper editorials per 1,000 words is similar to that in campaign speeches, so modes of communication, oral or written, make little difference to frequencies of RQs as a whole; on the other hand, there are interesting differences in the particular features of RQs in these two genres. The concepts of processing effort and cognitive effect in Relevance Theory are used to account for why difference between speech and writing produces different features of RQs. The mode difference is handled in terms of Relevance Theory. The differences are as below:

It is generally known that political speeches are face-to-face oral communication, allowing very limited time for the hearers to ponder and reflect on the implicatures embodied in an RQ. In contrast, newspaper editorials are a form of written communication, where the readers have sufficient time and greater freedom to carry out a complicated inferential process, sufficient to infer even the weakest implicatures.

This fact accounts for the higher frequency of RQs with answers provided in political speeches than in newspaper editorials. In terms of Relevance Theory, by providing an explicit answer, the addresser saves the addressee's processing effort and strengthens his/her assumptions about potential implicatures.

This also explains the higher frequency of RQs in parallel structure in political speeches than in newspaper editorials. Due to the similar grammatical structure of parallel RQs, each RQ conveys similar implicatures. After successfully inferring the implicature conveyed by the first RQ, the addressee can easily infer similar implicatures conveyed by other parallel RQs. In this manner, the processing effort of the addressee can be greatly saved. Moreover, with repetition and duplication of questions after questions, the tone of the addresser will be strengthened and cognitive effects will be increased. It is a way to lighten the atmosphere of a political conference.

This also provides an explanation for the more frequent uses of other rhetorical devices in newspaper editorials. Rhetorical devices, such as metaphor, pun, and analogy, require more processing effort to infer the wide array of weak implicatures. Although the use of rhetorical devices will greatly increase the cognitive effects of RQs, due to the limited time allowed by an oral presentation, they are less frequently used in a political speech than in a newspaper editorial, where the readers will have more time at their disposal.

The following sections will address questions about how editorial RQs are identified and interpreted in terms of Relevance Theory, and how different features of editorial RQs (see Appendix 1) are employed to achieve the writer's purpose of shaping readers' opinions.

7.3 Identification and interpretation of editorial RQs with linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

This section shows that on the one hand, to avoid an editorial RQ from being mistaken for another question type, the writer avoids running the risk of using an RQ whose inference relies solely on the context, by employing various indicators to indicate the question's rhetorical reading. These indicators include lexical indicators and semantic indicators, as shown in Table 7.3, 34 out of 189 editorial RQs contain emphatic and concession particles including *any, ever, just,* so, *whatever, on earth, really, seriously, actually, even, after all, at the very least* and *in any case*. This helps the readers to reduce processing effort in real time and seek successfully the optimal relevance, thus achieving successful communication. On the other hand, I will show that the majority of RQs both in political speeches and newspaper editorials lack any indicators of their rhetorical nature. In addition, indicators cannot guarantee rhetorical reading of a question. Context is an essential guide to consider when the readers infer the communicative intention of the writer. The identification of editorial RQs needs linguistic indicators and the context to work together, in other words, an amalgamated work of the Code Model and an inferential model.

Table 7.3 Types of RQs in newspaper editorials

	Political speeches	Newspaper editorials	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in political speeches	Normalised figure (per 1000 words) in newspaper editorials
No of RQs	121	189	**0.980**	**0.989**
RQs with lexical indicators	21	34	0.170	0.178
RQs with semantic indicators	29 (with 3 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	27(with 9 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	0.235	0.141
RQs without any indicators	74	137	0.599	0.718

The writer[23], considering the relevance of his writing, which is in the context of a newspaper editorial, is conscious that his readers will have more time to understand his article, so he will deliberately make his wording more varied and design more ways to help readers infer his intention. That explains the occurrence of more forms of lexical indicators in newspaper editorials than in political speeches, such as emphatic particles, including *whatever, ever, so, on earth, really, seriously, actually*; concession particles, including *even, just, after all* and *at the very least*; and negative polarity items, including *any* and *in any case*.

[23] It should be noted that, as pointed out in 4.3.2, apart from comments from editors, sub-corpora of news editorials in FLOB and the BNC contain letters written by readers to the editors. Therefore, 'the writer' rather than 'the editor' has been used here.

As with the previous chapter, although the Code Model predicts that overt markers are important in identifying an RQ, at the same time, it is insufficient to account for RQs. I will argue this point further in the following section when interpreting how the readers identify the rhetorical reading of a question and infer the implicature of the editors.

7.3.1 The role lexical indicators play in the identification and comprehension of editorial RQs

The lexical indicators in newspaper editorials can be classified into three types: emphatic particles, including *whatever, ever, so, on earth, really, seriously, and actually*; concession particles, including *even, just, after all* and *at the very least*; negative polarity items *any* and *in any case*. The uses of these tree main types are now considered:

<u>Emphatic particles in editorial RQs</u>

(5) <u>Whatever happened to the British sense of justice and fair play, and love of dogs?</u> To condemn and slaughter thousands of innocent dogs just because one or two of their breed get out of hand suggests a killer lust in those who bay for the mass extermination. （FLOB-editorials）

In (5), the emphatic particle *whatever* in this question indicates its rhetorical reading due to its emphatic tone, helping the readers to infer the implicated proposition that *something must have happened to the British sense of justice and fair play, and love of dogs*. Thus the readers can infer the communicative intention of the writer as being to attribute a blame for the unwarranted large-scale extermination of innocent dogs. The preceding and following context also helps the readers to identify and confirm the implicature intended by the question. The only difference from these RQs and RQs without linguistic indicators is that readers can rely less on the context. By using these indicators, the writer guides readers to his/her communicative intention behind the form of an interrogative. These RQs are used because they have stronger persuasive power than does a direct assertion, in that the writer invites readers to carry out an inferential process. Theoretically speaking, the more the readers get involved in this inferential process, the deeper impressions they will have of the implied proposition, and the more easily they may be convinced. The other six emphatic particles *ever, so, really, on earth, seriously* and *actually* are found to have the same function.

Concession particles in editorial RQs

The lexical indicators *even, just, after all* and *at the very least* deliver a sense of concession, shown in (6), with the use of *even* as a representative.

(6) It is surely significant that, in a recent poll of trades union leaders - who ought to be his strongest supporters - he was rated only seventh in the Shadow Cabinet. How can the voters trust a man in whom even the party's stalwarts are losing faith?
(FLOB-editorials)

With the aid of a sense of 'concession' in *even*, readers are more easily led to interpret the interrogative as an RQ. After resolving the reference "a man" as Neil Kinnock and based on the implied premise that *if the party's stalwarts are losing faith in Neil Kinnock, there is no way for the voters to trust him*, the readers can infer the implicature that *Neil Kinnock has lost the voter's trust and is bound to fail in this election campaign*. In this inferential process, which is made easier due to the lexical indicator *even*, the readers are more easily convinced and accept the writer's opinion. This implicature has been confirmed by the established message presented in the preceding context (omitted for space consideration) that the editor predicts victory for John Major in the 1992 campaign after analyzing the political situation from the perspectives of economic status, personal appeal and people's instinct. The writer implants the implicature deeply in the readers' minds that *John Major is gaining popularity while the opposition leader Neil Kinnock is losing favour and is destined to be a loser*.

Compared with a direct assertion that *voters will not trust Neil Kinnock* which does not involve the readers in an inferential process, the readers, when interpreting the interrogative

"How can the voters trust a man in whom even the party's stalwarts are losing faith?" will undergo a series of inferential processes. The inferential processes call for more processing effort from the readers. The readers are more involved in inferring the writer's communicative intention, so they are more deeply impressed by the implicature. In this sense, they are better persuaded by an interrogative rather than its corresponding direct assertion.

<u>Negative polarity item of *any* and *in any case* in editorial RQs</u>

Negative polarity items are used in editorial RQs to emphasise the tone, helping to make manifest the implicature of the writer. Consider (7).

(7) …But absent other indicators of dangerous and antisocial behavior - like driving while intoxicated - <u>why should snorting coke be treated any differently than, say, drinking a beer</u> […] Nearly 50% of people have tried an illegal drug at least once, yet most don't repeat the experience. With cocaine, most who have tried it not only don't go on to became addicts under even the most expansive possible definition of the term, they don't even go on to become regular users…
(Nick Gillespie, November 21, 2013, *Time*)

The lexical indicator *any*, here serving as a negative polarity item, guides the hearer towards the interpretation of a rhetorical reading of the question. Its implicature, the negative assertion that *snorting coke should not be treated any differently than drinking a beer* is the theme of the editorial. This implicature has been supported by the description in the following co-text where the writer argues that casual drug use such as snorting coke will not hurt society and will not lead to addiction; regular drug users can also live well, so snorting coke should not be treated any differently from drinking a beer.

It should be noted that when 'whatever' in (5), 'even' in (6) and 'any' in (7) are taken away, rhetorical readings of the questions are still valid. Therefore, lexical indicators are semantically redundant but pragmatically non-redundant. This suggests that the Code Model is not necessarily needed when an RQ is identified.

In this section, uses of lexical indicators in editorial RQs, such as why they are used and how they function in the context have been illustrated. I have argued that they are semantically redundant, in that when they are taken away, the rhetorical reading of the question will still be valid. However, they are pragmatically important since with the aid of these lexical indicators, readers can infer the implicature intended by the writer more easily. By involving readers in such an inferential process rather than stating directly his/her intention, the writer implants that implicature deep in the readers' minds. Thus, the readers are more easily convinced.

7.3.2 The role semantic indicators play in the identification and comprehension of editorial RQs

The writer in a newspaper editorial may also employ expressions with strong semantic indications, in order to enhance the cognitive effects of the readers by saving comprehension effort, guiding them in the quickest way to the intended implicature of the writer. Two types of semantic indicator of RQs based on senses are primarily found in newspaper editorials.

<u>Type 1: Indicators with a semantic synonym</u>

In the first type, groups of loaded phrases, such as pejorative words, are used to convey similar semantic indications, with each one emphasising its sense, and gradually revealing the writer's intended implicatures.

(8) …Unless you are in business or first class, flying has become increasingly dreadful […] <u>Why would anyone want to add overcaffeinated road warriors jabbering away on their phones to this already foul environment?</u>...
(Vikas Bajaj, November 23, 2013, the *New York Times*)

In (8), after reference resolution of "this already foul environment" as *the foul environment on the plane* based on the context, the strong negative semantic prosody embodied in the expressions "overcaffeinated road warriors" "jabbering away" and "already foul environment" allows the readers to infer the implied proposition that *we should not add overcaffeinated road warriors jabbering away on their phones to the already foul environment on the plane*. These loaded expressions increase in force with each phrase, helping to save greatly the processing effort of the readers to infer the negative attitude of the writer towards the possible measure to allow phone call use on the planes. The prominence of negative senses in these expressions make the writer's opinion irrefutable, so that the readers will be easily persuaded and accept the writer's opinion imperceptibly. Therefore, this RQ is much more effective in convincing and influencing the readers' minds than a direct assertion, such as *Don't allow mobile phone calls on planes.*

<u>Type 2: Indicators with semantic contrast</u>

In the second type, two groups of phrases form a sharp contrast with strikingly different semantic indications. One group of phrases are apparently absurd and weird, thus making the choice clear enough for the readers, and helping them to infer the implicated intention more effortlessly. Consider (9):

(9) The birth parents, adoptive parents and the child itself are at present all encouraged by the law, the professionals and common prejudice to deny the reality of their situation [...] <u>Does Mr Baker really believe that such dishonesty and repression provide a 'strong family background'?</u> …
(The BNC-editorials)

The lexical indicator "really" working together with the sharp semantic contrast between the strongly negative sense of "dishonesty and repression" and the positive sense of "strong family background", combined with the context being a discussion of problems existing in adoptive families, helps the readers to judge the question as a rhetorical one and easily derive the implicature that *dishonesty and repression cannot provide a strong family background.*

Although (8) and (9) are still valid as RQs without the negative prosody delivered by these loaded expressions, which suggest the insufficiency of the Code Model in identifying RQs, these expressions are significant in both saving the processing effort of the readers when inferring the implicatures of the writer, and in increasing cognitive effects of the utterance due to their augmented senses and strengthened tones.

7.3.3 Combined uses of lexical and semantic indicators in editorial RQs

It should be noted that the writer helps the readers to different degrees. In other words, the readers will assume different responsibilities in inferring the implicatures intended in an RQ depending on the assumption of the writer about how easily his/her readers can infer his/her intention and the indicators s/he thus leaves to help readers to save their processing effort. In some RQs, writers will provide more than one indicator to help the readers to save their processing effort, for example, by using lexical indicators, combined with loaded words or phrases. In this case, the readers will have less responsibility in the selection of contextual assumptions and inferences of implicatures. In other RQs, writers will provide fewer indicators or even no indicators, so that the readers will take greater responsibility, to infer the implicatures only based on the context. How many indicators the writer will provide depends on how and when the writer assumes his/her question has achieved its optimal relevance. If s/he assumes his/her question has already helped the readers to achieve optimal relevance, s/he will stop providing any more indicators. This explains why some RQs contain more than one indicator, while other RQs contain no indicator at all. This also explains the cases where the writer assumes that s/he has provided sufficient indications in the context or in the linguistic expressions of the question, while the readers fail to live up to his/her expectation and then fail to infer the implicature and intention of the writer.

(10) …This week he [David Cameron] announced that he would stop the benefits of new arrivals after six months if they had no chance of "realistic employment". It is this, and

various other not very terrifying threats, that provoked Mr Andor to call us nasty.

Are we? Are we, at the very least, hypocritical, happily buying our second homes in foreign countries, happily employing cheap foreign workers for domestic or service-industry tasks, but then getting angry when the latest wave from the poorest nations hits our island?

(Charles Moore, November 29, 2013, the *Telegraph*)

In this RQ, the writer not only uses a lexical indicator “at the very least” to emphasise the rhetorical tone, but also forms a sharp semantic contrast by using “buying homes in foreign countries”, “employing cheap foreign workers” on one hand and “getting angry” on the other hand, to show that they just enjoy the privileges of other countries but not take the corresponding responsibility. Based on real-world knowledge that *if you just enjoy the privilege but not assume any responsibility, you are hypocritical*, the readers can then draw an implicated conclusion, which is a positive assertion transformed from the interrogative - *we are hypocritical, happily buying…* Then the intended assumption of the writer will become manifest as *we British people should not ban the free movements of European people*. The writer employs both lexical indicator and semantic indicators in this question to help the readers to achieve optimal relevance.

We can see that even if some RQs contain linguistic indicators, these indicators can only function as a suggestion for a rhetorical reading. These indicators are just optional extras: on one hand, a question will still be interpreted as an RQ without them. They are just like smiling when we say nice things, helpful but not essential for the meaning to be conveyed. They are therefore semantically redundant. This verifies the limited explanatory power of the Code Model. On the other hand, their existences save the processing effort of the readers and increase the cognitive effect of the expression. They are therefore pragmatically non-redundant. The identification of these kinds of RQ is still decided by the criterion I have established in terms of Relevance Theory: whether an implicature has been made mutually manifest to both the writer and the readers. Inferences of their implicatures and of the possible communicative intention of the writer are also of the same process as I have described in terms of Relevance Theory (see 4.4.2).

As shown in Table 7.3, the majority of RQs (72%, or 137 out of 189) contain no linguistic indicators. So an account of how the criteria established in the framework of Relevance Theory help to identify these majority of RQs is essential in the current study.

7.4 Identification and interpretation of editorial RQs without linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

For those RQs without linguistic indicators, their identification by the researcher is the same as those with linguistic indicators, decided by whether an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, based on the context. The interpretation of these RQs involves the inferential process of the implicatures intended by these RQs, and the communicative intention of the addresser. Their implicatures can be classified into three types, as shown in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4 Classification of implicatures conveyed by editorial RQs

	Types of implicature	Examples
Type 1	Expressing an assumption directly transformed from the interrogative with reversed polarity.	(11) … thus they had no choice save to vote for John Major about whom little was known. He was not rich and he certainly was not grand: could he then be safely relied upon to carry the sacred flame? Apparently not. John Major has, not unreasonably, striven to be his own man… (FLOB-editorials)
Type 2	Expressing a mutually manifest implied proposition based on the linguistic expression in the interrogative without reversed polarity.	(12) …there was, as it turned out, a lot of body talk about Neil Kinnock. For him to blow a kiss to the gallery was one thing. But when last did a politician make such copious use of a handsome wife? Taking his curtain calls after a successful speech, he drew her to him by the hand and entwined his arms with hers until she gently shook him off … (The BNC-editorials)
Type 3	Expressing a mutually manifest implied proposition totally unrelated to the linguistic form of the interrogative.	(13) What Happened To Just Being Hungry? […] I don't want to be there, but I want to have already been there - for example, at the dinner when Goodyear ate bugs, which she says "have a lot to recommend them" from an ecological standpoint. I have no doubt they do, but can someone pass the onion rings? (Alexander Nazaryan, November 9, 2013, *Newsweek*)

Type 1: Expressing an assumption directly transformed from the interrogative with reversed polarity

As was discussed in 4.4.2, when an addresser utters an RQ, s/he may communicate an assumption in the form of the corresponding statement directly transformed from the interrogative. What the addressee needs to do after s/he recognises the rhetorical nature of the question is simply to transform the interrogative into the corresponding statement, which displays a reversed polarity.

When reading the question in (11), the readers first resolve the reference of “he” as John Major and infer the metaphor in the expression “carry the sacred flame” as meaning “resume the sacred mission”, then the interrogative can be construed as meaning *Could John Major then be safely relied upon by the right wing of the Conservative Party to resume the mission of the Conservative Party?* Based on the semantic indicators in the preceding assertion “had no choice but to vote for John Major”, “about whom little was known” and “not rich…not grand”, the readers can infer a negative assertion transformed directly from the interrogative as the implicature of the question that *John Major could not be safely replied upon to resume the mission of the Conservative Party*. This implicature has been doubly confirmed by the answer ‘apparently not’ and the following detailed analysis of the unpromising situation John Major is faced with. These preceding and following contexts work together to make the communicative intention of the writer clear, i.e.: *The right wing of the Conservative Party has no confidence in John Major’s being a successful prime minister.*

Type 2: Expressing a mutually manifest implied proposition based on the linguistic expression in the interrogative without reversed polarity

However, what the speaker intends to convey may not be the transformed assertion of the interrogative, but an implied proposition made mutually manifest in the mutual cognitive environment based on the linguistic expression in the interrogative. In this case, RQs will not observe the rule of polarity shift.

In (12), rather than a genuine inquiry about when was the last time for a politician to make use of a handsome wife, this question appears in a place where the writer should make a comment on Neil Kinnock’s behaviour. Guided by the rule of optimal relevance, the writer can infer the implicature as pointing out the nature of Kinnock’s behaviour- *he is making copious use of his wife*. So the communicative intention of the writer to satirise and criticise Neil Kinnock’s behaviour at the Labour conference as *using his wife to show he is* *approachable* becomes mutually manifest to the readers. The relevance of this question is not to seek for an answer but to serve as a way of drawing the readers' attention to the purpose of Neil Kinnock's body language.

<u>Type 3: Expressing a mutually manifest implied proposition totally unrelated to the linguistic form of the interrogative</u>

The assertion an editorial RQ expresses may be totally unrelated to the transformed assertion of the interrogative. At first sight, the question in (13) is quite abruptly presented, in the context of a description of people who eat bizarre bug food for ecological reasons. Guided by the principle of finding optimal relevance, the readers may wonder why such a question is used in such a context where the writer should air his attitude towards those bizarre eating habits. Based on encyclopaedic knowledge that *onion rings are traditional food for* '*pure self-indulgence' described by the people who are eating them* and the implied premise that *if you ask others to pass you the onion rings, it means that you want to eat them*, hence comes the implied conclusion that *the writer wants to eat the onion rings for the sake of 'self-indulgence'*. Therefore, the implicature that *people have the right to eat their favorite food not for the sake of ecological reasons but also for 'self-indulgence'* will become mutually manifest to the readers. This question is asked aiming not to invite others to pass him the onion rings but to express the writer's eating attitude.

It should be noted that real-world knowledge and common-sense assumptions are essential in identifying a question's rhetorical nature. In example (14), it is the common sense that *it is ridiculous for you to judge whether a person is a potential terrorist by his/her accent, dress or skin color* that helps convey the implicature. This absurdity reveals the rhetorical reading of the question and makes manifest the writer's implied proposition as a negative assertion that *a person's accent, dress or skin colour can not indicate the potential terrorist or, for that matter, football hooligan or drug pusher*. It then discloses the writer's intention to express his worry at the policy of checking immigrants on the trains linking European countries. Without such common sense, the readers will fail to identify this question as an RQ.

(14) …What criteria would police and immigration officials use in their search for 'potential terrorists' on a train that they could not use at a static checkpoint or airport? […] Will a person's accent, dress or skin colour indicate the potential terrorist or, for that matter, football hooligan or drug pusher? This is a recipe for fear and anxiety. It may mean the detention of innocent people and indeed their imprisonment.
(The BNC-editorials)

In the above section, I have discussed respectively how the readers identify and interpret editorial RQs with linguistic indicators and without linguistic indicators. I have demonstrated that the Code Model is not sufficient in identifying an editorial RQ although the writers save the processing effort of the readers in inferring the implicatures by providing lexical or semantic indicators. I have then shown that the identification and interpretation of editorial RQs with indicators or without indicators are the same, with their identification both decided by the same criteria established in the framework of Relevance Theory (see 4.4.2), and their interpretation both in the same process described in the light of Relevance Theory (see 4.4.3). I have also argued that RQs without linguistic indicators may express propositions，not constrained by their forms. They may either be directly transformed from their interrogative form or not transformed from their interrogative forms. In other words, they may either state a new message conveyed in the interrogative form or an implicated proposition irrelevant to the linguistic form of the question.

In the next section, we will look at how a writer in editorials uses different types of RQ to convey his/her communicative intention and to achieve optimal relevance, including editorial RQs with explicit answers provided, RQs not observing polarity shift, RQs containing other rhetorical devices and RQs serving as titles or subtitles.

7.5 RQs with explicit answers provided in editorials

Although editorial RQs in most cases do not expect an answer, there do exist exceptions, where the writer provides an answer to a question, or provides a further explanation to the question, as a reply. What is the reason for the existence of explicit answers following editorial RQs? What are their functions? I argue that in this respect, editorial RQs work the same way as those in political speeches: the writer provides an answer to an RQ, aiming both to save the processing effort of the readers, since the implicature has been pointed out clearly and directly; and to increase the cognitive effects, since the implicatures have been repeated. These answers fall into the following two categories:

i) Answers provided to strengthen the implicature of an editorial RQ

Explicit answers may be provided to confirm and strengthen the intended implicature of an editorial RQ.

(15) Second, what about that feeling of being passed around like a human pass-the-parcel inside the health service – of not being in control, from the inability to see the same GP, to the cluster of medical students at the foot of the bed? […] Third and finally, <u>how many of us want to be institutionalised?</u> Hands up? <u>No, almost all of us prefer to stay at home for as long as that is safe and possible.</u> We don't want to end up lying in a hospital bed or a care home.
(Jackie Ashley, 2 December 2013, The *Guardian*)

The loaded phrases in the preceding text such as "being passed around like a human pass-the-parcel", "medical students at the foot of the bed" and also the negative semantic prosody in "institutionalised" all make the implicature of the question self-evident as *No one wants to be institutionalised.* The answer and explanation provided by the writer *"No, almost all of us prefer to stay at home for as long as that is safe and possible"* further support this implicature, saving the readers' processing effort and clarifying the writer's intention.

ii) Answers provided different from the implicature of an editorial RQ

Cases of explicit answers provided which are different from the hinted implicature of an editorial RQ are observed in the data. I argue, in the light of Relevance Theory, that by providing an answer different from the intended implicature, the writer calls for readers to make more processing effort in their cognitive process. This effort will be offset by the effects, achieved by the unexpected answer, such as surprise, novelty and so on. In this manner, the readers are more actively involved in the inferential process. Let us consider (16):

(16) The virtues born during the millennia of delusion before everybody saw the importance and inevitability of becoming American will be replaced by 'economic calculations, the endless solving of technical problems, environmental concerns and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands'. Was it for this that earth grew tall? Confronted with the evaporation of virtue, heroism, art and philosophy, does Fukuyama feel rage, despair or at any rate some doubt about whether such an ordering of life can really be the ‘final, rational form of society’? None of these. He acknowledges that 'the end of history will be a sad time', he admits the 'spiritual vacuity of liberal consumerist societies', but, in the face of their inevitable triumph, feels, and notices in his friends, only 'ambivalence (and) a powerful nostalgia' for a world that has passed away…
(The BNC-editorials)

Two possible readings exist in (16): it may serve as an expository question in that the following can be further descriptions and explanation about Fukuyama's feelings. Even with the answer 'none of these', this question may still work as an expository question. The identification of the question's nature relies on the preceding textual context. It is the preceding textual context that helps the analysts to infer the interpreting process of the addressee rather than the analyst's instinct.

The negative senses in the preceding textual expressions "calculations", "endless solving of technical problems", "environmental concerns", and "sophisticated", together with the apparent negative semantic prosody in "evaporation of virtue, heroism, art and philosophy" in the question itself and the lexical indicator "really", work to depict an unpleasant picture of capitalism and make manifest the implicature of the question as *Fukuyama will doubt that* *such an ordering of life can be the final, rational form of society.*

But the answer *"None of these"* is different from this intended implicature. By deliberately providing an unanticipated answer, the writer aims to make a deeper impression on the readers since people are prone to notice irregular, unconventional, or eccentric matters: an unexpected answer in this case. The optimal relevance of this question is thus achieved by this increased cognitive effect to show the ambivalent feelings of Fukuyama: *the imperialism is not as beautiful as people have imagined but he does not feel rage but only a little nostalgia towards the lost time.* In this way, the writer successfully catches the attention of the readers and entices them to read on until they infer his/her communicative intention.

7.6 RQs not observing polarity shift in editorials

Editorial RQs display similar patterns to political RQs as far as observing polarity shift is concerned. In most cases, an editorial RQ expresses a proposition with reversed polarity to its interrogative form. I will discuss in this section those RQs not observing polarity shift including: RQs implying a specific answer (in 17); RQs implying a range of answers in one semantic field (in 18); and RQs expressing implied propositions (in 19). I will show the process through which readers interpret these exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in the light of Relevance Theory.

Some editorial RQs imply a specific answer as in (17). The title of this editorial "a leg up for the teachers" hints that the context is the teachers' poor status, and the measures taken to help them. So the readers can infer the implicature conveyed by the question as being that *teachers' pay has suffered most in the last 15 years.* The implied answer is a specific one: 'teachers'. The reply following the question, "Correct", demonstrates that the writer takes it for granted that everyone understands the implicature and the answer is self-evident. The title and the reply following the question determine that this question should be interpreted as an RQ rather than an introductory expository question.

(17) A leg up for the teachers

WHOSE pay has suffered the worst decline in the last 15 years: nurses, doctors, dentists, senior civil servants, judges or teachers? Correct, the biggest group of all, the 450,000 teachers…

(FLOB-editorials)

Some editorial RQs actually indicate a range of implicit answers, but this range of answers is of similar semantic prosodies, falling at the same end of a single semantic field, as shown in (18). This kind of RQ, thus, delivers much richer implicatures than when they are expressed in the form of an assertion, helping the readers to achieve optimal relevance by creating stronger cognitive effects.

(18) …What is it like to be a child in Syria? What is it like to wake up knowing you are not safe? That you cannot go to school? That your fathers, brothers, uncles, and cousins may be killed in battle, or executed simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time?...

(Janine di Giovanni, December 2, 2013, *Newsweek*)

The preceding co-text is a description of a Syrian child who has been seriously injured and is suffering from hunger and fear in the war. The strong negative semantic prosody of the expressions, "not safe", "cannot go to school", "be killed", and "be executed", makes manifest the implicatures in the questions. The readers will automatically provide the answers *'It is painful' 'suffering', 'fearful', 'hell-like'* and so on. Although the answers are not specific, they will inevitably fall into the same category of semantic prosody of negativity and misery.

In other cases, an implied proposition rather than a specific answer(s) may be entailed in a wh-question, as in the following example:

(19) …He [William Rees-Mogg] normally takes great care to keep us informed of the central part he plays in the worlds of affairs and ideas. I was therefore surprised to see that he excluded his own name from the list. What can have occasioned this sudden lapse into

modesty?

(The BNC-editorials)

The immediately preceding context, saying that *"He normally takes great care to keep us informed of the central part he plays in the worlds of affairs and ideas"* makes manifest to the readers the implicature entailed in the question, as being *It is strange for him to become so modest since he is always so arrogant and boastful* rather than *Nothing can have occasioned this sudden lapse into modesty.* The communicative intention of the writer to express sarcasm about William Rees-Mogg, hinting that he always boasts, whether in his field of expertise or not, thus being inferrable by the readers. Example (13) in 7.4 is also a case in point.

In this section, I have discussed cases of editorial RQs with exceptions to the rule of polarity shift, illustrating how readers judge whether there is an exception, and how the implicatures and intentions of the writer are inferred and interpreted in the light of Relevance Theory.

7.7 RQs containing other rhetorical devices in editorials

Other rhetorical devices include parallelism, pun, metaphor, phonetic reduplication, metonymy and analogy are observed in the current editorial data. I will argue in this section the reason why editors employ multiple rhetoric devices in editorial RQs is to minimise readers' processing effort or to increase their cognitive effects, thus achieving optimal relevance and contributing towards creating the desired interpretation.

I will argue that different rhetorical devices help readers to achieve optimal relevance in different ways. Parallelism and analogy are used for the dual purposes of reducing processing effort and increasing cognitive effects; pun and metaphor are used by the writer for the sole aim of increasing cognitive effects. Once employed, they will make it harder for the addressee to retrieve the contextually available assumption, but they may create extra effects such as greater emphatic power, more shocking effects, innovative and creative types of statement, satisfaction of the readers in detecting the tricks used by the speaker, expressing sarcasm and so on. These additional cognitive effects exert more influence on the readers and leave a more lasting effect on them than otherwise. They will offset the extra effort needed, making optimal relevance possible and convincing the readers to believe the writer's opinion more easily.

Case 1: puns used in editorial RQs

The phenomenon of playing with multiple meanings or sounds of words is found in editorial RQs. By interpreting the implicature conveyed in this innovative way of rhetorical writing, the readers will expend more processing effort. But they will appreciate the creativity and wisdom embedded in the surprise and gain more satisfaction when they infer the specialty of the expressions. So by using a pun in an RQ, the writer will increase the cognitive effects for the readers, thus helping them to achieve optimal relevance.

(20) … it was terrible to see the situation being exploited for a joke by your advertisement: 'Just the thing now the evenings are drawing in. The added coverage is exactly what I wanted'. How much 'independence' do you suppose a person has who exists on the no-fixed-abode Giro of 34.90 a week?
(The BNC-editorials)

Example (20) appears in a letter from a reader to The *Independent*, pointing out that it is improper for the *Independent* to make use of the homeless to advertise its added 10 pages of news and features. "Independence" in the question has a double meaning, referring to the name of the newspaper and also meaning economic and mental independence. Real-world knowledge allows the readers to infer the implied premise that *if a person lives on the no-fixed-abode Giro of 34.90 a week, he should not have much economic and mental independence.* The readers can then infer the implicature of the writer, which is to blame the *Independent* newspaper for exploiting the increasingly serious social phenomena of homelessness to promote its newspaper, pointing out that the homeless are unlikely to achieve 'independence'. Compared to a direct assertion, this pun is more witty and convincing. The common sense premise makes the writer's argument irresistible.

Case 2: phonetic reduplication and metonymy used in editorial RQs

Rhetorical devices of 'reduplication' and 'metonymy' are found used in editorial RQs to help the readers to increase the cognitive effects. Since these devices are an innovative and novel way of expressing the implicatures of the writer, they are more striking and impressive.

(21) The privacy of ordinary Australians is under serious threat
Intelligence representatives offered to share the confidential data of law-abiding Australians with international partners. In this Orwellian climate, who will guard the guardians?
(Geoffrey Robertson, December 2, 2013, the *Guardian*)

In (21), 'Orwellian climate' refers to the writer George Orwell's famous novelistic depiction of a highly controlling society like the former Soviet Union. Using the phrase 'Orwellian climate' is a case of metonymy - a kind of figure of speech in which something very closely associated with a thing is used to stand for that thing. Here Orwell's book has been used to evoke the climate of secret monitoring in Australian. The expression "guard the guardians" is a phonetic reduplication - which is a phonetic means that people employ to embellish and improve their conversation. These two rhetorical devices are quite creative. Their interpretations require more processing effort from the readers. The readers should assume more responsibility in inferring the writer's possible communicative intention. However, these processing efforts will be offset by the novelty of these expressions and deepened impression they bring forth.

Case 3: metaphor used in editorial RQs

Metaphor is used in editorial RQs to trigger a wide array of weak implicatures, which require more involvement of the readers, inviting their vivid imagination to infer the intention of the writer. Consider (example 3, repeated as example 22).

(22) …Almost as soon as he was nominated, Mr Mazowiecki said 'I am looking for my Ludwig Erhard'. The German model […] No one has tried to do this before. No one knows whether it can be done. <u>How do you turn a clapped-out Lada into a Mercedes while driving down the motorway?</u>…

(The BNC-editorials)

The preceding context is about the crisis facing Poland and Germany in 1989: a political crisis in Germany and an economic crisis in Poland. The West provides various aids to Poland to accelerate its political reform, which is also in the interests of Germany. By using this metaphor, a wide array of weak implicatures will be formed by the readers, such as *'Lada is a backward model of car'*, so *'The Polish economy is a backward one'*; *'Mercedes is a far advanced model'*, so *'market economy is a far advanced economic type*'; *'to turn a Lada into a Mercedes is hard'*, so *'to reform Poland's economy into a market one is difficult'*; *'to turn a Lada into a Mercedes needs expert engineering'*, so *'the reform of Polish economy needs specialist skills'*; *'while driving down the motorway means it is more difficult to make changes without stopping, when things are constantly moving'*, so *'it is more difficult to make good changes to Poland's economy when it is constantly moving downwards'*… All these wide implicatures are intended by the writer, relying on the readers to infer them. When spelled out in a direct assertion, these implicatures will be lost. That is why the writer uses a metaphor in this RQ.

<u>Case 4 analogy used in editorial RQs</u>

Analogy is used to accompany RQs, to make the argument more vivid and save the readers' processing effort, thus helping RQs to achieve optimal relevance. A complicated concept or idea will be compared to a more easily imagined phenomenon or object. In this approach, the writer's opinion will become readily accepted and the readers will be convinced. Let us see (23):

(23) …It was absurd for Britain to interfere, even allusively, in China's internal politics when

craving its inward investment. What would Cameron say if Beijing met Ed Miliband and issued stern injunctions against the bedroom tax?

(Simon Jenkins, December 2, 2013, the *Guardian*)

This RQ is uttered to support the idea in the preceding context, that *It was absurd for Britain to interfere, even allusively, in China's internal politics when craving its inward investment.* What was the reaction of Chinese government when Cameron met the Dalai Lama? It is hard for English people to imagine the reaction of Chinese people, due to their different political situations. The writer thus resorts to an analogy, relevant to English culture, to help save the readers' processing effort in inferring the Chinese government's attitude. Every educated English person is familiar with the opposition party leader Ed Miliband. The implied premise that *if The Chinese government supports Ed Miliband, Cameron will get very upset and angry* is then easily inferred. The political background that *Ed Miliband in Britain is the counterpart to the Dalai Lama in China* allows the readers to infer the implicature that *Cameron's meeting with Dalai Lama will upset and anger the Chinese government*.

Case 5: Parallelism used in editorial RQs

Parallel RQs are not seen as frequently in editorials (34 parallel RQs) as in political speeches (60 parallel RQs) since a speech calls more for a build-up in linguistic power. However, as a written genre, editorials are expected to rely more on other rhetorical devices, which require effort but increase effects. Parallel RQs are used mainly for saving the processing effort of the readers, due to their similar grammar. When the implicature in the first RQ is successfully inferred by the readers, they can easily infer the similar implicatures intended in parallel RQs. At the same time, cognitive effects can be enhanced due to the repetition of a similar grammatical structure.

(24) …They claim to have carefully identified those that they wanted to arrest. Why then did they seal off an area of Tottenham more than one mile across? Why were a woman and her 10-month-old baby strip-searched, and other mothers separated from their terrified children?

Why are more than one-third of those charged accused of public order offences? Why were the offices of the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign illegally searched, and why were Defence Campaign staff arrested practically on site as they tried to enter the estate? Why, in short, was it necessary to criminalise and terrorise our entire community? …
(The BNC-editorials)

Strong accusations have increased in their power with these "why" questions appearing in parallel, to hint at the writer's criticism of the police's motives behind the costly operation on the Broadwater Farm Estate: searching mothers and babies, sealing off a wide area, forbidding staff to enter the estate, and so on, just to recover a small quantity of drugs. From the context, the police carried out the operation to demonstrate their power, and to be reported on the six o'clock news. The six parallel RQs used have not only reduced the readers' processing effort, in that all parallel questions have the same implicature- *a censorious attitude towards the police's operation*, but have also increased in cognitive effect and gained in argumentative power.

In this section, I have shown that the several rhetorical devices accompanying editorial RQs function differently, helping the writer to persuade the readers and help them to achieve optimal relevance.

In the next two sections, I will discuss one type of RQ unique to the genre of editorials, those serving as titles or subtitles, in order to see how positioning affects their rhetorical reading and their interpretations in terms of Relevance Theory.

7.8 RQs serving as titles or subtitles in newspaper editorials

The 28 texts in the self-built American and British editorial corpus all contain a title. A closer look at the titles reveals a striking feature that 10 out of these 28 titles contain questions. I argue that, unlike questions appearing in other positionings, where the implicatures can be made mutually manifest by relying on the context, a question in the title position is valid as an RQ only when it contains a linguistic indicator to make the intended implicature mutually manifest to the readers.

Except for 4 editorials in *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*, the other 24 in the *Guardian*; the *Independent*; the *Telegraph*; and *Time* have both a title and a subtitle[24]. When a question appears in the subtitle position, I will argue that both the title and the text preceding the question within the subtitle form a context, providing an implicated premise, based on which a question's rhetorical nature can be judged.

With this criterion, 7 RQs are identified, with 5 observed in the titles and 2 in the subtitles. Consider (25-26).

(25) Title: What on earth is David Cameron's China junket for?
Sub-title: Such 'trade missions' are a costly waste of time. Why doesn't he do something useful, such as making it easier for Chinese tourists to visit Britain?
(Simon Jenkins, December 2, 2013, the *Guardian*)

(26) Title: The privacy of ordinary Australians is under serious threat
Subtitle: Intelligence representatives offered to share the confidential data of law-abiding Australians with international partners. In this Orwellian climate, who will guard the guardians?
(Geoffrey Robertson, December 2, 2013, the *Guardian*)

I argue that the reason why RQs are used in the title is that an RQ can perform a role better than an assertion in that it triggers various implicatures, arouses the readers' thinking and involves them more in the argument the writer plans to unfold, thus helping him to achieve far greater cognitive effect. In addition, the implicatures conveyed by RQs in the title (subtitle)

[24] Since no ending punctuation is annotated in titles of the BNC-editorials and titles of FLOB-editorials are in abbreviated forms, no RQs in complete form have been found in the title position in these two sources. Neither contains subtitles. The possible reason is that the compilers have not included subtitles in the corpora.

highlight the theme of the editorial, serving as guidelines based on which the writer develops his/her main text. By inferring the implicatures in these RQs, readers will begin to understand the main idea of an editorial. It will save them processing effort to catch up with the writer's ideas and infer his/her communicative intention.

Subtitles are used since they can help the readers to save effort and time in finding the theme and then decide whether to carry on reading or not. In (25)-(26), the titles highlight the main themes, as being *David Cameron's China trip achieves nothing* and *The privacy of ordinary Australians is under threat*. The subtitles are further explanations of the themes conveyed in the titles. They introduce the general background, so that readers can have a clearer idea about what has happened. If there is an RQ contained in the subtitle, that RQ might serve as a suggestion as to how to solve the problem, as shown in (25) *Cameron should promote tourism in China* and (26) *the intelligence representatives need also an institution to supervise them.* The next question is how readers recognise the rhetorical reading of the title questions and infer the implicatures conveyed in these title/subtitle questions.

Case one: Lexical or semantic indicators suggest the rhetorical reading of the question in the title and help the readers to infer the communicative intention of the writer. In (25), when the readers come to the title, the emphasising tone of "on earth" and the negative semantic prosody in "junket" make the implicature that *David Cameron's China trip achieves nothing important* manifest. The expression "a costly waste of time" in the subtitle confirms this implicature. The RQ in the subtitle further emphasises what Cameron should have done but failed to achieve. After reading this title, the readers have a clear prediction about what will be argued in the main body of the editorial. This has been proved right by the main content, which states that Cameron's trip to China is his personal trip to China at the cost of the taxpayers' money, achieving nothing fruitful.

Case two: The title and preceding texts form a context to help the readers to identify the rhetorical reading of a question appearing in the subtitle, and infer the communicative intention of the writer. In (26), the theme of the article has already been highlighted by the assertion in the title "The privacy of ordinary Australians is under serious threat" and the assertion in the subtitle provides a further explanation. So when the readers come to the question "In this Orwellian climate, who will guard the guardians?", after disambiguation of "the guardians" as *intelligence representatives*, the readers can make a general inference that the writer utters this question not to seek ways to guard the guardian, but to express an implicature that *the intelligence representatives should be seriously reproached for their leaking the confidential data of ordinary Australians to their international partners but no current organisations have inspected its abusing power*. The main body of the editorial is developed by centring upon this implicature.

We have analysed the patterns of RQs serving as titles or subtitles of a newspaper editorial and discussed how their rhetorical readings are recognised and how the writer's communicative intentions conveyed by these RQs are inferred by the readers.

7.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have argued that Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory is not suitable in current study. Grice's approach fails to account for the inferential process of the implicature conveyed by the writer. Relevance Theory is sufficient to account for the uses of RQs. I have tried to show that Relevance Theory provides a better framework analysis for editorial RQs, in allowing me to carry out two investigations:

Firstly, I can identify editorial RQs by applying a criterion established in the framework of Relevance Theory: that is, if the addressee can recognise an implied proposition by connecting the linguistic form of that question with its context, or, in Relevance Theoretical terms, if an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, that question can be judged to be an RQ. I have shown that the Code Model is not sufficient to identify an RQ, in that linguistic indicators alone increase the chances of, while not guaranteeing, the rhetorical reading of a question. The majority of types of editorial RQ are indeed those without linguistic indicators.

The findings also include the classification of implicatures conveyed by an editorial RQ: one being an assumption directly transformed from the interrogative with reversed polarity; another being a mutually manifest implied proposition, based on the linguistic expression in the interrogative, without reversed polarity; and the third, being a mutually manifest implied proposition totally unrelated to the linguistic form of the interrogative.

Secondly, I have explained how a writer employs different types of RQ to convey his/her communicative intention and influence readers' minds. Editorial RQs with an explicit answer provided are analysed in the Relevance Theoretical approach. I have argued that by providing an explicit answer, the writer not only saves the readers' processing effort but also helps to increase the cognitive effect. Answers may be provided, to confirm the implicature intended by the RQ, in which case, the answer is semantically but not pragmatically redundant; or they may be different from the intended implicature to achieve larger cognitive effects, which is not redundant either semantically or pragmatically.

Then editorial RQs without polarity shift have been investigated to show that the inferential processes of the implicatures conveyed in an RQ by the readers are the same regardless of whether the rule of polarity shift has been observed or not. An editorial RQ may not observe the rule of polarity shift by indicating a specific answer or a range of answers or one implied proposition, which is decided by the context.

Editorial RQs containing other rhetorical devices have been discussed. I have shown that different devices help to achieve optimal relevance in different ways. Parallelism and analogy may reduce processing effort as well as increase cognitive effect. Pun, metaphor and metonymy can increase the cognitive effect by triggering a wide array of weak implicatures.

The last section is devoted to one unique type of RQ in editorials: RQs serving as titles or subtitles. Due to their specialty, questions in titles can only be identified as an RQ if they contain linguistic indicators. Questions in subtitles, like those in the main text, can rely on the title and the preceding text formed as context to identify their rhetorical nature.

Chapter 8 Analysis of RQs in sermons

Sermons[25] are chosen as one of my research targets since they share features with political speeches and newspaper editorials in that they are all monologic and persuasive texts. However, they are also expected to display unique features. This chapter aims to analyse features and functions of RQs in sermons in terms of Relevance Theory, organised in the following parts:

- Section 8.1 discusses mode-related differences between questions in the BNC sermons and those in the other two genres which pose difficulty to an explanation in the Code Model represented by Speech Act Theory.
- Section 8.2 focuses on further analyzing why the Code Model fails to identify sermon RQs, since linguistic indicators are much less significant in signalling a sermon RQs than in the other two genres. Linguistic indicators are more frequently seen in an expository question than in an RQ in sermons.
- Section 8.3 focuses on how sermon RQs are identified with the previously established Relevance Theory criterion of making an implicature mutually manifest, pointing out that their recognition is based more on context than in the other two genres.
- Section 8.4 discusses the two reasons why an RQ is used rather than a direct assertion which are unique to the genre of sermons.
- Sections 8.5-8.7 are devoted to showing how different types of RQ are employed in sermons to influence and persuade the congregation based on the concept of 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory. These include sermon RQs with explicit answers provided, those without polarity shift, and those containing other rhetorical devices.

[25] All examples in this chapter are from the BNC-sermons.

8.1 Mode-related differences of questions between the BNC sermons and those in the other two genres

As was discussed in Chapter 4.3.3, a total of 291 questions were extracted from the BNC sermon sub-corpus[26], among which 20 direct RQs have been identified, based on the criterion established in Chapter 4: that is, where an implicature has been made mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee in the context.

Sermons are expected to share some features with political speeches because they are both oral-mode, and the speaker tries different means to save the processing effort of the hearers due to the limited response time of an oral genre. This explains why, in sermon RQs, only two rhetorical devices are found: parallelism and exemplification, compared with the two rhetorical devices, parallelism and metaphor, in political speeches, and eight varied rhetorical devices in newspaper editorials (see Appendix 2). This can be explained by the fact that hearers have less response time to infer the weak implicatures of most rhetorical devices in an oral genre, which can increase the cognitive effect but require more processing effort. Both parallelism and exemplification devices in sermons save the hearers processing effort.

As can be seen in Table 8.1, only 0.249 direct RQs per 1000 words are found in sermons, a far lower frequency than the 0.980 in political speeches and 0.989 in editorials. I argue that the lower occurrence of direct RQs in sermons is due to the mission of the priest, which is to spread God's belief to Christians. To enlighten the congregation, a much higher frequency of other question types are used in sermons, including expository questions, speculative questions and quoted questions from Bible stories (see Table 8.1).

[26] The BNC sermon sub-corpus is a collection of sermons given mostly by the same priest. Except for one sermon given in April of 1993 by Strathclyde, a minister in Glasgow Church, all other sermons were given by Albert Gunter in different months of 1989. So we need to take the minister's personal style into consideration. I acknowledge that features discussed here may vary when RQs are observed in a larger data.

Table 8.1 Comparisons of main question types in three genres

	Political speeches (123,448 word tokens)	Newspaper editorials (190,910 word tokens)	Sermons (80,135 word tokens)	Normalised figure (per 1000 words in speeches	Normalised figure (per 1000 words in editorials)	Normalised figure (per 1000 words in sermons)
Total No. of questions	233	512	291	1.887	2.682	3.631
RQs	121	189	20	0.980	0.989	**0.249**
Quoted/ reported questions	26	138	114	0.211	0.723	**1.423**
Expository questions	29	82	90	0.235	0.429	**1.123**
Speculative questions (quoted and direct)	0	4	62 (with 33 direct ones)	0	0.021	**0.774**

The distinctions between sermon RQs and expository questions or speculative questions pose problems for Speech Act Theory. It fails to tell whether a question is aiming to deliver an implicature in the case of an RQ (1), ushering in its answers in the case of an expository question (2), or speculating on a phenomenon in the case of a speculative question (3).

(1) He [Simon] he's already opened hi up his heart to the Lord, there's a lot that he's gotta learn, there's a lot he's gotta let go of, there's a lot of his old life still there, <u>but isn't that true of every one of us?</u> It doesn't all disappear over night. We grow in grace, we grow as we learn what God teaches us. And we're all at different stages in our pilgrimage.

(2) <u>So what are the challenges of Jesus Christ?</u> Well one of them is to show that there is something different about us. To show that we do live distinctive lives, and that we try sincerely, however imperfectly, but try sincerely to refrain from the seamier side of life, and to concentrate on everything that's wholesome.

(3) <u>As a Christian do you feel that you've been changed? Can others see Jesus Christ in you?</u>

Or in me for that matter?

To solve this problem, in the following part of this chapter, I will analyse how sermons RQs are identified in terms of Relevance Theory, including those with and without linguistic indicators. This will further confirm that the Code Model has a weaker explanatory power in sermon RQs than in the other two genres, since linguistic indicators are weaker in marking the rhetorical reading of a question in sermons.

8.2 Identification and interpretation of sermon RQs with linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

RQs are distinguished from other question types based on the criterion set up in Chapter 4: Upon hearing or reading a question, the addressee is assumed to look at the preceding context. If an implied proposition can be identified by combining the linguistic form of that question and its context, in Relevance Theory terms, if an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, then that question can be judged as an RQ.

As has been analysed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, lexical indicators such as *any, really, ever, just, whatever, so, even, after all, on earth, at the very least* have been observed used in the genre of political speeches and newspaper editorials, as indicators of RQs in that they make the implicature mutually manifest and the speaker's intention possible to infer. Do these emphatic particles have the same force in indicating the rhetorical reading of a question in sermons?

In the current study, it has been found that unlike RQs in political speeches and newspaper editorials containing semantic indicators (strongly loaded expressions), the 20 RQs in my sermon data are not found to contain strongly loaded words or phrases to indicate the question's rhetorical reading. This is possibly due to the limited size of the current sermon data.

I will argue in the following examples that emphatic particles in sermons are found frequently in expository questions[27]（9 in expository questions, 5 in direct RQs and 2 in quoted RQs）, so they are weak in indicating an RQ in sermons. Examples (4a) and (4b) are uses of 'on earth'; example (5) is the use of 'after all' and example (6) the use of 'really'. The Code Model therefore plays an even weaker role in identification and interpretation of sermon RQs than in the other two genres.

(4a) And in the middle of the night Boaz wakes up and he turns and he startled to find this woman, lying at his feet and he says, who are you? And Ruth, she'd been primed well what to say she doesn't say a lot, but she says the right things. She says, I am Ruth, your very near relative. <u>But what on earth is Boaz gonna do?</u> So what! That could have been his response. What is his response gonna be? And so, she waits eagerly to hear, is she gonna be rebuffed or is she gonna be accepted?

(4b) <u>Now, why on earth did Jesus rebuke them?</u> Now let's be honest here put yourself in their situation, the obvious thing in the storm and th the water comes crashing over, well you don't really want to fill the boat with water so you start bailing the water out, when you realise you're not gonna be successful cos more is coming in than you can get out and the storm is not abating, you would naturally get agitated and if for nothing else, at least you can come and help us to bail out! Even if we're not gonna succeed it must have stuck in their throat that there was Jesus lying asleep. Why should he be lying asleep when I'm working to try and save us?

In total, there exist seven questions containing *on earth* in the data of sermons, among which four are identified as expository questions and two as direct RQs and one as indirect RQ.

[27] There are very rare cases of expository questions with lexical indicators in political speeches and newspaper editorials, except for 4.4.1 Example (2) "Where on earth can it be found?" and four instances of 'so +adjective' such as in "why does he look so happy as a result" (BNC-editorials), which I judge to be expository questions rather than RQs based on the criteria established in the current study.

The preceding context of (4a) is that the minister tells the story of Ruth, a Moabitess, an outsider and widow who later remarried Boaz to show that only God can forgive, cleanse and end the sin of an individual, and that great changes will happen after God's redemption. Upon hearing the question, the disciples cannot infer any plausible implicature. It can only work as a real question raised by the priest to guide them to find the answer, in other words, working as an expository question. The phrase *on earth* is used here simply to arouse a deeper curiosity of Christians about the destiny of Ruth.

To identify the nature of (4b), both the preceding context and the following context need to be taken into account to help the audience to decide whether an implicature has been intended. In the preceding context, the disciples were worried and dissatisfied with Jesus when they were trapped in the storm but Jesus slept in the boat rather than helped them out. Then Jesus rebuked the disciplines for their behavior. The following context gives a description of a disastrous and desperate situation the disciples were facing, which explains their insecurity and loss of confidence in God. Therefore, the implicature that *Jesus should not rebuke them, because it is natural for human beings to lose their minds in such an urgent situation*[28] is made explicit, supporting the rhetorical nature of this question.

As has been analysed above, the emphatic particle *on earth* may appear in either an expository question (4a) or an RQ (4b). It does not alone provide enough evidence to allow us to flag the question as an RQ. This proves the insufficiency in the explanatory power of the Code Model, which holds that linguistic form alone can signal a question's rhetorical reading.

(5) God had deposited his faith and his confidence in Paul. You see, faith's always a two way traffic, it's not just me believing God, but it's God believing me. It's not just me trusting in God, but it's God trusting in me. <u>After all, what have you and I committed to him?</u> But, to take it in it's totality, like Paul we can say, we've committed our life to him. Our eternal future we've committed to him. Now for you and for me, that's a lot, in fact it's everything

[28] However, this does not mean the priest is criticising Jesus for rebuking his disciples. In 8.4 and 8.7, I will demonstrate that this is a technique frequently employed by a priest to usher in God's gospel; here the disciples should have had faith in God.

we've got, but what has God committed to you and to me? He has committed himself.

Only two cases of another emphatic particle *after all* have been observed in sermons and both of them are RQs. Neither of them has been found in an expository question, which calls for a further investigation in a larger sermon corpus in the future to find whether *after all* only appears in an RQ or whether it may also exist in an expository question. The emphatic particle "after all" in (5) suggests that a negative proposition has been intended by this question. Based on the real-world knowledge of the disciples' belief in God, an implicature can be inferred, as being *we have not committed ourselves enough to God.* This validates the question as an RQ. After that, this implicature is rejected by the expression following the question that *"we've committed our life to him"*. This thereafter is contrasted with another question, "*but what has God committed to you and to me?",* which serves as an expository question, followed by the priest's own answer, *"He has committed himself."* With these contrasts, the priest's intention to convince the audience that *God committed to us far more than we disciples committed to God. Therefore, we need to commit more to God* has been made mutually manifest.

To enlighten and provoke more thinking in Christians, the priest often employs *really* in an expository question, so that they can be induced to think twice and ponder more deeply. Consider (6):

(6) <u>But what actually was Jesus **really** saying here?</u> Notice what it says in verse four, what man among you if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness? In the open pasture. He leaves them in the open pasture says Jesus…

Judging from the preceding context, the reference *"here"* refers to the speech by God about *"the lost sheep"*, he says *"what man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety and nine in the open pasture and go out to the one which is lost until he finds it".* With no implicature made mutually manifest, this question leads the audience to the answer provided by the minister himself in the following context, which is that "*Actually the 99 are the ones in danger, since they are in the wilderness but they do not realise the danger due to their pride. The lost one instead was saved because it realised the danger and the fact that it was lost. Only when you realise you are lost can you be saved by God."* So this question works as an expository question even if it contains emphatic particles *actually* and *really*.

Based on the above discussion, some linguistic indicators appear in expository questions, while others appear in RQs in sermons. I, therefore, claim that although linguistic indicators still play some role in the identification and interpretation process of a sermon RQ, the majority of RQs in sermons depend more on the contexts, which I will argue in the following section. Sermons require the priest to design a convincing speech carefully, with contexts provided for the audience to infer his communicative intention.

8.3 Identification and interpretation of sermon RQs without linguistic indicators in terms of Relevance Theory

As discussed in 8.2, emphatic particles indicate strongly a question's rhetorical reading in political speeches and newspaper editorials. In contrast, emphatic particles in sermons appear frequently in expository questions. Therefore, context is crucial in recognising an RQ in sermons, especially in questions containing emphatic particles: (7a) and (7b) which have the same syntactic structure but belong respectively to RQs and expository questions. I will also argue with example 8 that common sense assumption, also known as 'the encyclopedic knowledge' in Relevance Theory, an important component of context, will decide the rhetorical nature of a question.

(7a) But Jesus, you're [sic: your] need is as great as anybody else's, your pain, your suffering, your physical suffering was every bit as great as those around you, <u>why have you bothered with others?</u> Isn't that so often our story? When we are in need we can forget all about other people. It doesn't matter their need it's poor me! What about me? What about my need? What about my requirements? What about my suffering? But we see here how Jesus, apart from anything else, deals with his own suffering, he deals with it by ministering to the needs of other people.

(7b) But shall, we've been thinking we started last week and we're gonna be thinking over the next few weeks, er some of the people that Jesus met, some of those who confronted him who's lives came into contact with Jesus Christ and what difference it made to them? Why he ever bothered with them? And this, incident that we have, we've had read for us by er the two Pats earlier on in, from John chapter four, it's a, it's a very beautiful account of our Lord's dealings with this particular lady, this samaritan woman.

In (7a), the immediately preceding context highlights the pain and suffering of Jesus, making the implicature *when you are suffering, you will not bother with others* manifest to the audience, which is further supported by the following context which illustrates a common sense knowledge that *people will become self-pitying when they are in misery*. So although this question lacks an emphatic particle, it still serves as an RQ.

On the contrary, although (7b) contains an emphatic article *ever*, it still functions as an expository question. Unlike in (7a), the description in the immediately preceding context makes no hints about a negative proposition that *he should not bother with them*. The emphatic particle *ever* is used to arouse the curiosity of the audience towards the purposes of Jesus's behaviour and to guide them to the theme, which is also the answer to this expository question. The following text illustrates the story of how Jesus saves the Samaritan woman to show that *Jesus loves every individual in the world. Individuals are sinners by nature. Only God can forgive, cleanse and break the power of the sin of the individuals.*

We can see that a question in sermons can work as an RQ even if it does not contain an emphatic particle; equally, it can work as an expository question even if it contains an emphatic particle. It is not the linguistic indicator but the context that determines a question's rhetorical reading. Let us consider one example to see how common sense knowledge helps to identify and interpret the implicature of an RQ.

(8) He [Simon] he's already opened hi up his heart to the Lord, there's a lot that he's gotta learn, there's a lot he's gotta let go of, there's a lot of his old life still there, <u>but isn't that true of every one of us?</u> It doesn't all disappear over night. We grow in grace, we grow as we learn what God teaches us. And we're all at different stages in our pilgrimage.

In (8), based on the preceding context, the audience can resolve the reference of "that" as being when a man decides to make a change, a lot of his old life may still be there for some time. Common sense knowledge that changes need time and do not happen suddenly makes manifest to the audience the implicature of this question as being that is true of every one of us. So the audience will be convinced that this question serves as an RQ to show that although Simon is wrong in buying the gift of God with money, he opens his soul to God and so he deserves a chance to start his pilgrimage and receive the Holy Spirit.

As for example (2) and example (3) in 8.1, with the criterion established in terms of Relevance Theory, no implicature can be inferred in either case based on the context, therefore they can be distinguished from RQs, while Speech Act Theory and Grice's Principle and Maxims fail to distinguish them.

In this section, I have demonstrated how context is crucial to both the identification and the interpretation of a sermon RQ. In the next part, I will discuss why an RQ rather than an on-the-record assertion is used in sermons and examine how the priest uses different types of RQ to achieve optimal relevance, communicate his communicative intention and encourage the audience to establish their faith in God.

8.4 Use of RQs rather than direct assertions in sermons

Apart from the reason as discussed in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 that an RQ is used to achieve more cognitive effects since it involves the addressee in the inferential process of an implicature, I observe two unique features of sermon RQs which account for why RQs are used rather than a direct on-the-record assertion.

Firstly, some sermon RQs are used to save the face of the congregation, as in (5) "*After all, what have you and I committed to him?".* This feature of sermon RQs is different from those in political speeches where RQs may be raised to threaten the face of the politician's opponent. Nor is it like those in editorials, where RQs are not raised for the purpose of face threatening or face-saving. Rather than a face-threatening assertion *you have committed nothing to God,* which the congregation may feel unfair since they may wonder how the speaker knows s/he is not a loyal follower to God, an RQ will save the positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1987) of the congregation. By using an RQ, the priest invites thinking from the congregation by avoiding challenging their positive face directly.

Secondly, there exist some other sermon RQs which are used by the priest to reiterate what the congregation take for granted. After these RQs, the priest will introduce an opposing opinion, either by directly quoting Jesus's words (9) or by repeating that question (10), this time serving as an expository question. The answer to this expository question will form a contrast with the implied proposition intended by the previous RQ. In this way, the priest clarifies the congregation's misunderstanding and changes their mental state by contradicting their old assumptions, thus achieving the purpose of spreading God's gospel and influencing the audience's mind. See (9):

(9) In verse four, how can a man be born when he's old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? To this question Jesus answers, yes Nicodemus, you can be born again!

The common sense assumption provides an inferential premise that *after a man is born, it is impossible for him to be reborn,* so an implied conclusion can be drawn that *when a man is* *old, it is impossible for him to be born*. This implicature has been confirmed by the following expression, "*He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"*. But then the priest quotes directly from Jesus, in the words "*To this question Jesus answers, yes Nicodemus, you can be born again!"* which forms a sharp contrast with the congregation's convictions. So the congregation can become aware of mistakes in their assumptions and God's message has been expressed in this efficient way. In the case of those regular church-goers who already hold the belief that it is possible to be born again, the purpose of influencing them is also achieved, since the priest is not challenging their beliefs but is reinforcing them.

(10) Now, why on earth did Jesus rebuke them? Now let's be honest here put yourself in their situation, the obvious thing in the storm and th the water comes crashing over, well you don't really want to fill the boat with water so you start bailing the water out, when you realise you're not gonna be successful cos more is coming in than you can get out and the storm is not abating, you would naturally get agitated and if for nothing else, at least you can come and help us to bail out! Even if we're not gonna succeed it must have stuck in their throat that there was Jesus lying asleep. Why should he be lying asleep when I'm working to try and save us?
Now why should he rebuke them? Why is it that they should have had more faith? After all they had never seen a storm being still before. They had never witnessed a man get up and say to the wind and to the wave be muzzled! And the wind stopped and seas stopped tossing. They had never ever seen that in all their lives before […] So why should Jesus rebuke them? Surely the reason for the rebuke, why he said that they were timid and they'd no faith was because they had lost sight of the fact, or the, the importance of the fact that he was there with them.

In (10), the same question is repeated three times, slightly changed in wording, with the first two being RQs, delivering negative assertions that *Jesus should not rebuke his disciples since it is natural for people to be mad in such a tough situation.* This negative implicature is supported by the following detailed explanations, which turn out to deal with a common misunderstanding held by the congregation. But the last question serves as an expository question, with an answer provided by the minister himself shortly after: that *Jesus says that the disciples should be rebuked because they have lost sight of the fact that Jesus is with them, and they have lost faith in Jesus.* Jesus's message is opposite in meaning to the implied negative assertion of the first two RQs. In this way, the priest clarifies misunderstandings of the congregation and spreads God's gospel.

The ultimate purpose for the addresser in using RQs rather than direct assertions in sermons is to achieve optimal relevance, which is to convey implicatures and realise better his persuasive intention.

I will now analyse different types of sermon RQ to see how different groups of RQs help the priest to achieve optimal relevance and help the audience to infer the priest's communicative intention.

8.5 RQs with explicit answers provided in sermons

As was discussed in the previous Chapters, RQs, which do not necessarily expect an answer to be provided, may have explicit answers provided on occasions. This also happens in the genre of sermons. There are two types of sermon RQ provided with explicit answers:

i) A sermon RQ may be provided with an explicit answer to confirm the implied proposition in the same way as those in other genres. In this case, it helps the priest to achieve optimal relevance in that it saves the audience processing effort to infer the implicature and it also increases cognitive effects in that the implicature has been both inferred in the minds of the audience and spelt out by the priest. For the congregation, the implicature therefore has been repeated and strengthened. Consider (11):

(11) And you get a bit fed up of it, I mean, after all, unless you're into sort of veteran cars,

who wants to, who wants to drive around in an old Ford Poplar of of twenty, twenty five, thirty years ago? Nobody! Because what is produced today is so much better. But the thing is, what's gonna be produced next year will be better still!

The encyclopaedic knowledge that *nobody is willing to drive around in an old Ford Poplar made around 30 years ago* makes manifest the rhetorical reading of the question to the addressee, further confirmed by the answer '*Nobody*' provided by the priest immediately after the question. Processing effort has been saved and cognitive effects increased with this answer provided. Considering the context, the addressee may then infer the intended assumption of the priest as expressing that *it is the inner satisfaction rather than the external satisfaction that is eternal. The inner satisfaction comes solely by putting faith in God.* Then the congregation will be imperceptibly persuaded by the minister in being loyal to God.

ii) In the second case, a sermon RQ may be provided with an answer different from the implied proposition. In other words, bias in a sermon RQ can be removed on purpose by the priest either to correct those, as s/he sees it, commonly-held misunderstandings towards Jesus or to emphasise and spread the right understanding of Jesus's behaviour and his thoughts the congregation may already hold. See (9), repeated here as (12):

(12) In verse four, how can a man be born when he's old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he? To this question Jesus answers, yes Nicodemus, you can be born again!

Here, the implied answer to this RQ is self-evident to the addressee, based on their real-world knowledge. A sense of unlikelihood has been delivered to make mutually manifest the contextually available assumption that *when a man is old, there's no way for him to be reborn,* which is further emphasised by its following tag question. The priest provides an answer opposite in meaning as a way of spreading the creed in the Bible –*Any person, regardless of their age, can and must be reborn spiritually*. This pattern of providing an explicit answer different from the implicature achieves optimal relevance by increasing the cognitive effect –

the novelty of the pattern, the surprise aroused or the power of reinforcement leave a deeper impression on the audience.

In this section, sermon RQs with explicit answers have been discussed. The two patterns achieve their optimal relevance in different ways: they may emphasise the intended implicature in the RQ or they may differ from the implicature, in order to spread Jesus's message in a more impressive way.

8.6 RQs not observing polarity shift in sermons

Like RQs in other genres, most RQs in sermons observe the feature of polarity shift. But there do exist cases where the minister raises an RQ with its implied answer displaying a matched polarity. How do the congregation identify the implied proposition as one with matched polarity or reversed polarity? Exceptions to the rule of polarity shift in the data of sermons mainly fall into the following categories.

i) In the first case, a positive sermon RQ is used to express a positive implicature.

(13) It can make me feel like doubting, it can bring me to the place where I question it, but it doesn't alter the fact we can be totally sured, totally certain of our salvation, because God has said it. If you believe in me you shall be saved! <u>Have we heard his word? Is that what our confidence is based on?</u> The authority of his word, and we can be quite sure that we possess eternal life.

When the audience hears this question, they need to make a judgment about whether the question conveys a positive proposition or a negative one. Considering expressions in the immediately preceding context that *"God has said it" and "if you believe in me you shall be saved",* it will be easy for Christians to interpret the implicatures as *we heard God's word. God makes it clear. Our confidence is based on God's words.* The positive questions are firmer in delivering these affirmative assertions than the corresponding negative questions *haven't we heard his word? Isn't that what our confidence is based on?* But they run a risk of being mistaken as expressing a negative proposition. This pattern therefore is used only when the priest states clearly the affirmative proposition of the question in the preceding context.

ii) In the second case, rather than conveying a corresponding positive or negative assertion, some RQs convey a specific proposition. Consider (14):

(14) They had, they had witnessed him casting out demons, they had heard his teaching, they were familiar with Jesus, they had every reason to be, to have faith in him, he says, <u>what has happened to your faith?</u> And very soon they were, he said a moment ago they had taken it from Jesus, they were no longer trusting in him, and they started to trust in themselves in their own ability.

Based on the preceding context which argues that *the disciples should have every reason to have faith in Jesus*, the audience can infer the implicature of this question as a strong emotion of rebuke in a specific proposition such as *you have lost your faith but you should not lose it,* rather than a negative proposition, *nothing has happened to your faith*. This was a means employed by Jesus to teach his disciples.

We can see that context is essential in helping the audience to judge whether a proposition with matched polarity or reversed polarity is intended by a sermon RQ.

8.7 RQs containing other rhetorical devices in sermons

As was pointed out in 8.1, only two types of rhetorical device have been observed in sermon RQs: parallelism and exemplification. I will examine whether they display the same feature as those in the other two genres, and analyse why they are used in sermons rather than other rhetorical devices.

8.7.1 Parallel RQs in sermons

Parallel RQs are employed by the priest in sermons, mainly in two kinds:

In the first case, parallel RQs deliver similar implicatures, thus reducing the audience's processing effort and increasing their cognitive effects. They are used as a tool for emphasis, mostly when the context is about Jesus rebuking his disciples or the disciples showing disgruntlement towards Jesus. See (15):

(15) You see if that's how we're to judge blessing then what are we to say to people, to men like C T Stard who sacrificed an inheritance that in today's value, just in the early part of this century, but in today's value be worth millions of pounds to go to the Congo, and to China, and to India? In later le li years leaving his wife behind him cos she was unable to go, and going to serve his God therein, where is the blessing in that if this is how we take God's blessing? Or what are we gonna say to men like Hudson Taylor there in China buried his wife, and buried his daughter, and son. And Judson in Burma burying his whole family within a few short years of getting there. Men like Jim Elliott who in seek of the taking of good news of the gospel to the Indians becomes, as a young man, a martyr. To men like Teddy Hobson who in his whole life serving the the of the Congolese ends up as a martyr. He was cannibalized. Where is God's blessing in that?...

In (15), this parallelism is composed of four RQs, with the pattern of 'one what RQ + one where RQ' followed by 'another what RQ + another where RQ', with almost the same wording as the first pair. Firstly, this parallel pattern saves processing effort for the audience, in that the parallel questions convey the same implicature. The preceding context describes *CT Stard's* massive sacrifice to serve God. The implied premise is that *sacrificing millions of pounds worth of inheritance is not a blessing in material sense.* Therefore, an implicature can be inferred that *if God's blessing lies in good material things, we cannot explain God's blessing in CT Stard's experience*. The congregation can then infer the intended assumption of the priest as *God's blessing is not in material things but in the eternal life he gives to you.*

Similar inferential processes take place in interpreting the other three RQs. Therefore, the audience can easily infer the same implicature(s). On the other hand, by conveying four times the same implicature(s) and quoting six different people's sacrificing stories, the priest greatly emphasises his communicative intention by increasing cognitive effects, so the audience are more easily convinced and firmly believe the priest's teaching.

In the second case, the parallel group of RQs achieves optimal relevance not by saving processing effort but by increasing cognitive effects. They may be formed by an RQ(s) plus an expository question(s), as shown in (10), repeated here as (16).

(16) Now, why on earth did Jesus rebuke them? [...] Why should he be lying asleep when I'm working to try and save us?
Now why should he rebuke them? Why is it that they should have had more faith? After all they had never seen a storm being still before. They had never witnessed a man get up and say to the wind and to the wave be muzzled! And the wind stopped and seas stopped tossing. They had never ever seen that in all their lives before […] So why should Jesus rebuke them? Surely the reason for the rebuke, why he said that they were timid and they'd no faith was because they had lost sight of the fact, or the, the importance of the fact that he was there with them.

The same questions repeated three times are respectively RQs of the first two and expository question of the last one. The first two RQs achieve optimal relevance by saving processing effort and the third question helps to increase cognitive effect. At the very beginning, the audience is led to believe in the implcatures of the first two RQs such as *the disciples should not be rebuked since they had no such experience before.* But then a sudden change has been created by the expository question with the priest's own explanation which suggests that *the disciples should be rebuked because they lost faith in God.* This change in idea is quite innovative and striking, therefore producing a deeper impression in the audience.

In this part, I have analysed the two patterns shown by parallel RQs in sermons and how they work to help the priest to achieve optimal relevance, and convince the congregation. I will come next to the other rhetorical device found in sermon RQs: the exemplification.

8.7.2. Sermon RQs containing exemplification

To make his mission easier to understand and accept, the priest employs exemplification in his sermon RQs. Consider the following example:

(17) There's nothing wrong with them as such but he says the real satisfaction isn't to be found in them, it's within you. It's not in an external thing. Because, after all, what happens that last year's model it wears, y y , you're a bit fed up with it! And a new model comes out and you want that! And you get a bit fed up of it, I mean, after all, <u>unless you're into sort of veteran cars, who wants to, who wants to drive around in an old Ford Poplar of of twenty, twenty five, thirty years ago?</u> Nobody! Because what is produced today is so much better.

In (17), to save cognitive effort, the priest uses an RQ containing the rhetorical device of exemplification, conveying an abstract implicature that *real satisfaction does not lie in external things but lies within,* based on the corresponding assertion delivered by the question that *nobody wants to drive an old and out-of-fashion car and there will be new and better ones produced everyday.* This RQ contains a concrete *'old Ford car'* example. Since it is close to daily life so its intended implicature is easier to be inferred, compared with its corresponding abstract version of the RQ that *Does real satisfaction lie in external things*?, The rhetorical device of exemplification therefore helps to achieve optimal relevance mainly in that it can reduce the audience's processing effort.

In this section, I have argued that the two rhetorical devices of parallelism and exemplification found in sermon RQs are both used to save processing effort and to help the audience infer the priest's communicative intention more easily.

8.8 Summary

In this chapter, we aimed to discover how RQs are used in sermons by the priest to convey Christian teaching indirectly and eventually convince the congregation to believe in Jesus. I have shown that a higher frequency of expository questions and speculative questions are used in sermons than in the other two genres. This has posed problems for Speech Act Theory which fails to tell different question types apart.

Then, in discussing how a sermon RQ is identified, I have further shown that the Code Model performs poorly. Sermon RQs containing linguistic indicators, such as *on earth, after all and really* have been investigated. It has been found that linguistic indicators are not as significant in signalling the rhetorical reading of a question in sermons as they are in the other two genres since they are also frequently found in expository questions. This further proves that the Code Model is not sufficient in identifying and interpreting sermon RQs, which calls for an involvement of an inferential theory: Relevance Theory in the current study. I have then shown that in sermons, context, including common sense assumption, plays a much more important role in the addressees' recognition and comprehension of an RQ.

The two reasons why an RQ is used in sermons rather than a direct assertion have been analysed. One is to save the face of the congregation. The other is that the priest first uses an RQ to express the congregation's misunderstanding, and then repeats that question, but uses it as an expository question, followed by an answer different from the proposition entailed in the RQ. In this way, the priest spreads God's gospel. The ultimate reason for a priest to use an RQ is to achieve optimal relevance, deliver implicatures, and realise his persuasive intention in a more effective way.

Following that, three different types of RQ used by the priest to communicate his intention and convince the audience to have faith in God have been discussed. First are those provided with explicit answers. The explicit answers provided to sermon RQs can be divided into two kinds, with almost the same uses as those in the other two genres. One is to confirm the implicature intended by the RQ, to save processing effort and increase the cognitive effects; the other is to provide an answer different from the implicature of the RQ. This type achieves optimal relevance by increasing the cognitive effects of the utterance. Second are sermon RQs with exceptions to the rule of polarity shift. They are also similar to those in political speeches and newspaper editorials. They can be a positive RQ which expresses a positive implicature, or they can be an RQ which conveys a specific proposition. The interpretations of them are the same as for other types of RQ, guided by inferring implicatures based on the context.

Finally, sermon RQs containing rhetorical devices, namely parallelism and exemplification, have been discussed. Some parallel RQs display the same features as those in the other two genres, in that they both save processing effort and increase cognitive effects; but another type of parallel RQ is typical of the genre of sermons: they are formed by parallel RQs, followed by an expository question(s). They achieve optimal relevance not by saving processing effort, but by increasing cognitive effects. God's message, different from the implicatures intended by the RQs, has been conveyed as answers to those expository questions. In this way, the audience can be convinced by God's gospel. Exemplification has been used by the priest to make a sermon RQ easy to understand, to reduce the audience's processing effort and help the audience to infer the implicatures more easily.

Chapter 9 Conclusions

Situated in the research area of pragmatics, the current work is a cross-disciplinary study of rhetorical devices, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis and Relevance Theory. In this chapter, firstly I give a brief re-cap of the background to the thesis, followed by a summary of the discussion throughout the current study. I then list the main theoretical and descriptive contributions, concluding with a discussion of implicatures and proposals for future research.

9.1 Background to the current study

The idea of choosing RQs as the topic in the current study came from my observation that in daily communication, an addressee may fail to recognise the rhetorical intent of a question and instead provide an informative response, causing an exchange dilemma or a total failure in communication. The problem of why we are mostly successful but sometimes unsuccessful in identifying questions as rhetorical and how an addressee distinguishes between two possible readings: rhetorical or non-rhetorical, aroused my interest.

My initial objective was to explore uses of RQs in both monologue and dialogue genres. After trial studies, however, it became clear that this mission was too ambitious for a PhD project. Therefore, I decided to divide my study into two parts. In the first part, I discovered an operational criterion for the identification of an RQ and an inferential process of the addresser's communicative intentions. In the second part, I applied these findings to three monologic persuasive genres to discover how different kinds of RQ are used in manpulating addressee's minds in these genres. I omitted the investigation of features of RQs in dialogue contexts and left a comparative study of RQs in both monologue and dialogue to future research.

9.2 Summary of the discussion throughout the current study

9.2.1 Aim of study

The major aim of this dissertation was to shed light on the identification and interpretation of RQs in a monologic environment through the application of an inferential theory - Relevance Theory. This involved a cognitive and inferential account of why an addresser in political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons employs an RQ rather than a direct assertion to accomplish his/her communicative intention and how s/he uses different types of RQ to persuade the addressee. It also involved a cognitive and inferential account of how an addressee identifies the rhetorical nature of a question, infers the implicature(s) embodied in the question, and thereby, discerns the addresser's communicative intention.

9.2.2 Data in the current study

The corpora used in the current study comprised self-compiled campaign speeches, self-compiled newspaper editorials, editorials in FLOB and the BNC, and sermons in the BNC. These three genres were chosen because they were all persuasive, so formed a coherent object of study. The data included both British and American sources. However, the current study did not carry out a contrastive study of these two language variants, but just providing a range of rhetorical opportunities. Neither was it a diachronic study of historical changes of RQs. Instead, it was a theoretical argumentation, as well as an analysis of corpus data, concerning the features and types of RQ employed by an addresser in a monologic environment to achieve persuasion.

9.2.3 Main achievements

Two main achievements in the current study have been made by my study. Firstly, my study has proposed a novel, linguistically sensitive procedure for identifying an RQ: after hearing or reading a question and then looking at its preceding context, if the addressee can discover an implied proposition by interpreting the linguistic form of the question in the light of the context, and infer that no answer is expected, then that question can be judged as an RQ. This criterion is mainly based on the concepts of 'implicature', 'mutual manifestness' and 'optimal relevance' in Relevance Theory.

Secondly, my study has clearly demonstrated the inferential process to be attributed to the addressee in discovering the implicature(s) in an RQ in terms of Relevance Theory: upon hearing/reading an RQ, the addressee first decodes the logical form directly from the linguistic structure of the RQ. Then s/he transforms the logical form by processes of reference resolution, disambiguation and semantic enrichment and with the help of the context into a propositional form. Then taking the implied premise, which is usually encyclopaedic knowledge and again using contextual information as a bridge, the addressee will draw the implied conclusion, which is the implicature(s) of that RQ. In this way, s/he can infer the communicative intention of the addresser.

9.2.4 Responding to work in the field

The literature review in the current study showed that previous investigations of the definitions, features, distinctions, and functions of RQs leave many uncertainties in their central concepts.

To clarify these uncertainties, my study has made several clear distinctions. Firstly, I have distinguished between 'explicit answer' and 'implicit answer', to address the conflicting opinions in previous studies that 'RQs expect a specific and obvious answer' (which actually means an implicit answer) and 'RQs do not seek an answer' (which actually means an explicit answer). Furthermore, my distinction between implied answer and implied proposition has helped to clarify why Van Rooy (2003) claims that answers to RQs are informative (which actually means 'implied', of propositions); while Rohde (2006) claims that answers to RQs are uninformative (which actually means 'implied', of answers). As to the conflicting claims regarding the ‘obviousness of answers’, I agree with Ilie’s opinion (1994) that answers to RQs are not necessarily known beforehand to the addressee but they are inferrable based on the context and disagree with the belief held by Rudanko (1993) and Rohde (2006) that answers are obvious to both speaker and hearer. RQs with answers provided have been given special attention in the current study, as has the distinction between RQs and expository questions, which is hard to make because they are both followed by answers.

Regarding the conflicting claims that an RQ has an illocutionary force of reversed polarity (for example, Sadock, 1971) and that an RQ may express a proposition with matched polarity (e.g. Pope, 1976; Rudanko, 1993), I have provided clear proof in all three genres to show that the rule of polarity shift does not occur in all RQs. I have then discussed, in terms of Relevance Theory, how an addressee judges an RQ as one expressing a proposition with matched polarity or as one expressing a proposition with reversed polarity.

In regard to whether shared knowledge is necessary in defining an RQ, whilst the majority of researchers believe that this is necessary (Slot, 1993; Badarneh, 2009; and so on), Goto (2011) believes it is not. I have argued that mutual manifestness of the implied answer is a necessary and sufficient condition to define an RQ.

My study has provided substantial evidence that linguistic indicators, including lexical indicators and semantic prosodies of loaded expressions, play a role in suggesting the rhetorical reading, therefore saving the addressee’s processing effort. However, their role is quite limited. On the one hand, they cannot guarantee a question’s rhetorical reading, since even if a question contains a linguistic indicator, it may still also serve as an information question or an expository question. This happens in all three genres in the current study, especially in sermons. On the other hand, there still exist a large number of RQs without any linguistic indicators. My study, therefore, has clarified the conflicting views in the literature concerning the question of whether linguistic indicators play decisive roles. Sadock (1974) and Schmidt-Radefeldt (1977) hold positive views, while Llewelyn (1964) holds negative views. Based on my clarification, I have argued that the Code Model, which holds that communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages in words, like Morse code, is not sufficient in explaining the identification of an RQ.

Unlike the previous researchers who adopted Speech Act Theory (Radefeldt, 1977; Ene, 1983a; Ilie, 1994) or Grice's Principle (Frank, 1990; Slot, 1993) to investigate RQs, I have argued in Chapter 3 that Relevance Theory is the most suitable pragmatic theory to provide a satisfactory account for the above research problems in the current study. My main argument was that although Speech Act Theory held by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) highlights the purpose of an utterance as performing an action, it fails to explain the contextual implicature of utterances and the inferential processes of an addressee. The phenomenon that one syntactic structure such as an interrogative may express different speech acts poses a problem for speech act theorists. Speech Act Theory also fails to account for the wide range of possible illocutionary forces used by an un-encoded linguistic form. Metaphorical expressions, ironical imperatives, and RQs, all challenge the explanatory power of Speech Act Theory.

I have argued that although Grice (1967, 1991) notices and explains how a conversational implicature is created, his Principle and Maxims have not accounted for how the precise implicature intended by the speaker is inferred in the wide range of possible implicatures the hearers may assume, such as in the case of irony. In addition, Grice has not successfully defined the Maxim of Relation, and has not accounted for the inferential processes of an addressee of the contextual implicature. In contrast, I claimed that Relevance Theory, originated and developed around Grice's concepts, is more economical and more explicit in inferring the implicatures, and thence the communicative intentions of the addresser.

My study is novel in providing an operational criterion to distinguish between varieties of question type, which the previous studies fail to do. A reference to the literature review suggested that previous researchers either use invented RQs (Pope, 1976; Han, 1998a; etc.) or completely avoid the problem of how to distinguish RQs from other question types in their corpus data, by simply pre-selecting examples of RQs. Most previous researchers fail to provide an operational criterion for distinguishing RQs from other question types (e.g.

Schaffer, 2005; Rohde, 2006). The distinctions made by Ilie (1994) and Sperber and Wilson (1986) have enlightened my current study. Based on their work, a further distinction and a unitary criterion have been explored.

The current study has redefined the concept of RQ and has found a unitary criterion that successfully distinguishes RQs from other question types by employing the concepts of 'mutual manifestness' and 'implicature' in Relevance Theory. An RQ is identified by considering both the linguistic indicators and the contexts of the question. The procedure for identifying an RQ is: after hearing or reading a question and then looking at the preceding context, if the addressee can discover an implied proposition by combining the linguistic form of that question and its context, in terms of Relevance Theory, if an implicature is mutually manifest to both the addresser and the addressee, and no answer is expected, then that question can be judged as an RQ. If no implied proposition can be recovered, it is not an RQ. The inferential process to be attributed to an addressee in discovering the implicature of an RQ and the possible communicative intention of the addresser in terms of Relevance Theory was illustrated in Chapter 4.

My findings also included a classification of implicature conveyed by an RQ. An implicature can be a corresponding assertion directly transformed from the interrogative, as in 4.1 *'Isn't it your fault for quarrelling with your wife'* or it can be an implied proposition not directly transformed from the interrogative, as in 4.2 *'What monster could dare to harm a sleeping child?'*.

My study has revealed that the issue of whether the implicature is mutually manifest to the addresser and the addressee or not can account for different cases of failed communication. When the implicature is only manifest to the addresser, the question will be mistaken as a genuine question; when there is no implicature, but the addressee mistakenly believes there is an implicature, then communication will fail since the addresser expects an answer but the addressee will not provide one, as in the example
"Why do you include this part here?"(- a comment from your supervisor).

It is also clear from the current study that the reason why RQs are used in these three genres is to change the mental state of the addressee by involving him/her more in the process of deriving the addresser's implicatures embodied in the RQ. This process calls for more cognitive effort, but this effort will be offset by the implicatures produced by the RQ.

The discussion of RQs in the three genres was then carried out mainly on two aspects: the identification of RQs, categorised into two types: those with linguistic indicators and those without; and the interpretation of RQs, categorised into three types: RQs with explicit answers provided, RQs not observing the rule of polarity shift, and RQs containing other rhetorical devices. The main arguments and findings will be summed up in the next section of contributions.

9.3 Summary of contributions to the field of RQ study

My current study has made contributions to the application of pragmatic theories, to the identification and interpretation of RQs in three monologic genres, and to the methodology of studying RQs.

9.3.1 Theoretical contributions to the study of RQs

I have made a comparative analysis of the three pragmatic theories to show that Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory and Grice's approaches are not sufficient to account for the inferential processes of an addressee of implicatures in non-literal utterances or a mismatch between grammatical structure and an illocutionary force which is not encoded. In the case of RQs, since the addresser's communicative intention is beyond the linguistic form of the question, Austin and Searle's Speech Act Theory, which is confined to the truth-conditional value of an utterance, is not suitable for the current study. Meanwhile, Grice's approach fails to account for how the implicature conveyed by the addresser is inferred by the addressee among a wide range of possible implicatures. I therefore have demonstrated that only

Relevance Theory can satisfactorily account for uses of RQs.

Relevance Theory, as an inferential theory to reveal the mystery of human thought processes, was proposed by Sperber and Wilson in 1986. Since then, researchers have attempted to apply it to many fields of human communication, mainly in the fields of semantics and pragmatics. The current study verified Sperber and Wilson's claim (1986: preface) that "the principle of relevance is enough on its own to account for the interaction of linguistic meaning and contextual factors in utterance interpretation", and it is novel in extending the application of Relevance Theory to the new field of rhetorical question, further endorsing its explanatory power.

I am the first researcher to have used Relevance Theory notion of 'mutual manifestness' to distinguish RQs from other question types, by identifying intended implicatures, and by judging whether they are mutually manifest to both the addresser and addressee. In contrast, for example, Gutierrez-Rexach (1998) and Goto (2011) attempted to identify an RQ based on another concept in Relevance Theory, one of 'desirable answer' (i.e. relevant answer). In the current study, I have also been the first to apply the concept of 'optimal relevance' (by which an optimally relevant utterance saves on processing effort and increases cognitive effects), in order to interpret why the addresser uses different kinds of RQ. These include RQs with linguistic indicators, RQs with answers provided, and RQs employing other rhetorical devices. My study is the first to focus on the inferential process which the addressee of an RQ undergoes in order to infer the implicatures, (i.e. the relevance of using an RQ), and thence the communicative intention of the addresser.

The current study is unique in adopting the dichotomy of "two different modes of communication: the coding-decoding mode and inferential mode" in Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986:27), endorsing Sperber and Wilson's idea that "a coding-decoding process is subservient to an inferential process", and that the Code Model and the inferential model should be amalgamated.

The main concepts employed are within the four aspects which make up the framework of Relevance Theory: communication, inference, relevance and verbal communication. In communication, the concepts are "cognitive environments", "mutual manifestness", "the informative intention" and "the communicative intention". In the inferential process, these are "logical forms", "propositional attitudes", "factual assumptions" and "deductive rules". In relevance, these are "degrees of relevance: effect and effort", "choice of contexts" and "two principles of relevance". Finally, in aspects of verbal communication, these are "explicature" and "implicature", "identification of propositional form", "identification of implicature" and "poetic effects".

It should be noted that the current study has not applied Relevance Theory in its entirety. Relevance Theory is not confined to linguistic communication. It is a theory of ostensive-inferential communication. This includes intentional gestures, facial expressions and ostensive behaviours. As long as the communicator has the intention to make his/her purpose mutually manifest, his/her behaviour will fall into the field of Relevance Theory. The current study focuses on linguistic expressions but disregards extra-linguistic expressions. In addition, although the current study touches on the deductive rules and deductive concepts of Relevance Theory, these are not the focus of the study, so they have not been explored in detail.

9.3.2 Methodological contributions to the study of RQs

My study is of particular significance in combining corpus work with theoretical discussion, providing a new light to study RQs. As is pointed out in the literature review chapter, corpus data are rarely used in the study of RQs and most researchers use invented examples, which are inauthentic and unnatural, and lessen the practical significance of those studies. The current study has relied on corpus data to meet its descriptive and theoretical objectives. It was based on an empirical observation of data collected from corpora, mainly with a qualitative approach. Firstly, these corpora provided natural data to study, so findings in the current study are more fact-based and convincing. Secondly, these corpora provided frequencies for different types of RQ used in three different genres, making possible a comparison of features of RQs across genres, which is important for learning the nature of RQs in specific cases.

9.3.3 Analytical contributions to the study of RQs

Making use of the abundant corpus data which I have gathered from various sources, the current study has revealed how RQs are used and interpreted in monologue, the similarities and differences among the three different genres, and the way in which RQs are used to persuade people, in a theoretical perspective. It focuses on the processes through which an addressee interprets an RQ, which has not been explored in depth in previous literature. The study elucidated the nature of RQs in three important genres: political speeches, newspaper editorials and sermons. With detailed illustration, the current study has offered new cognitive insight into the interpretation of RQs in these complex and intriguing genres.

9.3.3.1 General analytical contributions

In the current study, I have made ten general contributions to the analysis of RQs. My study is the first:

1. to use Relevance Theory to analyse corpus RQ data from a cognitive perspective, investigating why an addresser uses an RQ to achieve his/her communicative intention in monologue, and revealing the inferential process by which an addressee interprets the implicature(s) of an RQ in terms of Relevance Theory.
2. to analyse the manner in which persuasive power is achieved by RQ, from a theoretical perspective.
3. to establish that the Code Model is not sufficient in analysing an RQ, but that the Code Model combined with an inferential theory is needed. The interpretation of an RQ involves the application of both Code Model and inferential model, the Code Model being subservient to the inferential model, taking into account the role which linguistic indicators

(lexical indicator, and semantic indicator) and context play in inferring the intention of the addresser.

4. to find the discrepancies and confusions in the previous literature and provides solutions to these discrepancies by making distinctions between 'explicit answers' and 'implicit answers', and between 'implied answers' and 'implied propositions'.
5. to redefine RQs according to an empirically operational criterion built on the concepts of ' implicature' and 'mutual manifestness' in Relevance Theory. It also took these two concepts as criteria to account for the way in which various failed communications take place.
6. to establish an operational criterion for distinguishing RQs from other main question types, particularly expository questions, which share the characteristic of being followed up by answers.
7. to investigate in detail to what degree linguistic indicators help to identify an RQ, and gives a theoretical account of the reason for their use.
8. to analyse the way in which an addressee interprets an RQ as expressing the proposition of 'matched' or 'reversed' polarity shift.
9. to reveal that RQs in political speeches may be used to threaten the faces of the politician's opponent. RQs in sermons may be used to save the faces of the congregation.
10. to discuss the other rhetorical devices used in RQs and establish why and how they are used.

9.3.3.2 Analytical contributions relating to specific genres

In addition to these general achievements, I have made further discoveries within specific genres. I believe they are all new findings, which have not been explored in previous studies. I shall now briefly present these.

In the genre of political speeches, I have revealed the proportion of RQs with and without linguistic indicators. I have given an explanation as to why a linguistic indicator is used by politicians, and also argued that the audience perceives RQs with and without linguistic indicators by using the same inferential process. The patterns of semantic indicators used by politicians were found to be presented in four ways: in the form of semantic contrast in an "or"/alternative structure, or in the form of semantic contrast in non-alternative structure, with positive semantic prosody or with negative semantic prosody.

I have also found that although explicit answers provided to RQs may be redundant in semantic sense, they are not redundant in pragmatic sense. In addition, three patterns of answers provided to an RQ have been discovered: those to strengthen the implicature; those different from the implicature; and those paralinguistic answers such as laughter and applause provided by the audience. I discussed the patterns of those cases which do not observe the rule of polarity shift. A positive yes/ no RQ may have a positive implicit answer. A wh-RQ may have either a self-evident specific answer or multiple answers hinting at the same end of a contextually relevant scale. It may also indicate an implied proposition. I have further underlined that whatever type, the inferential process of the implicature is the same.

Finally, my study has identified with numerical evidence the existence of two other rhetorical devices in political RQs: parallel RQs and RQs with metaphor. I discovered that these devices help to achieve optimal relevance in different ways. Patterns of parallel political RQs have been found: those with climax and those without climax.

In the genre of newspaper editorials, my study provides valuable information that normalised frequency of RQs in newspaper editorials is similar to that in political speeches, which indicates that mode of communication does not make a difference to the frequency of RQs. However, there exist differences in particular types of RQ in newspaper editorials and political speeches: a larger proportion of RQs with explicit answers provided and parallel RQs are found in political speeches; a larger proportion of RQs containing other rhetorical devices are found in newspaper editorials.

It has been demonstrated that the identification of different types of editorial RQ is the same, regardless of whether these RQs contain a linguistic indicator or not. These different types of

RQ also include editorial RQs with/without an explicit answer provided, observing/not observing the rule of polarity shift, and those containing different rhetorical devices. I have found that newspaper editorials contain more varieties of lexical indicator than those in the other two genres and have classified them into 'emphatic particles' 'concession particles' and 'negative polarity items'.

RQs in editorials have been observed in my study to contain more varied rhetorical devices, such as analogy, pun and metonymy than RQs in political speeches. They help to achieve optimal relevance in the same way as those in political speeches. Finally, my study has clearly illustrated how textual positioning affects the rhetorical reading of one unique type of RQ existing in editorials and how they are identified and interpreted: RQs serving as titles or subtitles.

In the genre of sermons, particular attention has been paid to similarities and differences between RQs in political speeches and sermons, both oral genres. Similarities include the fact that they both have a large proportion of questions with answers provided, and they both have a low number of RQs containing rhetorical devices. Differences include a much higher percentage of quoted questions, expository questions and speculative questions in sermons. The distinction of these question types poses problems for Speech Act Theory. My study has brought to light that emphatic particles are not so significant in signalling the rhetorical reading of a sermon question as in the other two genres since these emphatic particles also frequently appear in expository questions. I have clearly argued that context, including common sense assumption, plays a much more important role in recognising and comprehending a sermon RQ.

This study has shown that two reasons account for why an RQ is used in sermons rather than a direct assertion: one is to save the positive face of the congregation; the other is that the priest first uses an RQ to express a proposition, then repeats that question, but uses it as an expository question by providing a different answer, to clear the misunderstanding entailed in the RQ and spread God's message expressed in the answer of that expository question.

My study has also served to highlight the two rhetorical devices in sermon RQs. One device is a type of parallel RQ typical of the genre of sermons: formed by a parallel of RQs followed by an expository question(s). God's message, different from the implicatures intended by the RQs, is conveyed in the form of answers to these expository questions. The other device is exemplification. Exemplification is used by a priest to give examples close to daily life to reduce the audience's processing effort and help the audience to infer the implicatures more easily.

9.4 Limitations, applications and avenues for future research

In view of the small size of the BNC-sermons and the constraints that the BNC-sermons are mainly given by the same priest, the current study does not claim to reveal exhaustively and definitively the features of sermon RQs. The features discussed in Chapter 8 should be treated as indicative, deserving attention in future research on RQs in sermons in a larger and speaker-diversified database. In addition, the current study is mainly a qualitative analysis of corpus data, combined with a theoretical discussion. A future study can be carried out of more genres in a quantitative approach.

In the current study, processing effort is a theoretical construct to describe the addressee's responses to the language presented. Cognitive effects are discussed from a psychological and cognitive perspective. They are theoretically and intuitively assumed effects. Neither processing effort nor cognitive effect within Relevance Theory is measurable textually. Gibbs and Tendahl (2006) have noted this weakness of Relevance Theory. They attempt to overcome it by carrying out psycholinguistic experiments to measure the effort an addressee takes in the inferential process of an utterance and the effects s/he achieves. It can be seen that experimental tests as a direction of future study will stand out as a stimulating and fruitful field of research, which will attract more attention from more researchers. In the future, I plan to make an evaluation of Relevance Theory in light of psycholinguistic by carrying out experiments to test the above-mentioned initial findings and answer research questions, such as

(1) Do all kinds of RQ call for more cognitive effort than literal utterance?

(2) Is there systematic relationship between cognitive effort and cognitive effects in RQ comprehension? In other words, will more cognitive effort necessarily lead to more cognitive effects?

(3) Do different types of RQ achieve optimal relevance in different ways, some reducing the cognitive effort and some increasing the cognitive effect, as theoretically argued in the current study?

The most significant contribution of the current study is that it has provided an operational criterion to distinguish an RQ from other question types, and shed light on the inferential process according to which an addressee interprets different types of RQ. This contribution not only helps us with a better understanding of the nature of RQs in monologue; it also provides a basis for future research in the context of dialogue.

My research results can be further applied to pedagogical research such as teachers' talk in classroom discourse. With the criteria established in the current study for distinguishing different question types, my study has paved the way for research into different types of question used by teachers to address research problems, such as what types of RQ have been used in classroom discourse, and how frequently they are used to achieve which functions. With the inferential process of the interpretation of RQs described in the current study, investigations can also be conducted into how students perceive RQs, and whether these RQs help or hinder the students' acceptance of their teacher's instruction. Such studies will provide useful implications for classroom teaching, on which occasion teachers can decide where to use RQs and where to avoid using them. Focus can be put on the interaction characteristics of conversations between teachers and students to find how the two parties repair their speech strategies when RQs are interpreted in their turn-taking sequence. Similar studies can also be carried out to find the frequency of RQs and their functions by investigating the linguistic characteristics of advanced English (L2) learners when they participate in an English speech contest, or attend an English debate.

As has been said, findings in this study about monologic genres may also have wider implications for genres in dialogue. Firstly, in a dialogue context, an RQ can serve both as a question and as an answer. Research can be carried out to identify the features of answers given to RQs by the hearers in dialogues, which rarely happens in a monologic context. These answers may show the uncertainty or misunderstanding of the hearers, and help to reveal how the interaction between the speaker and the hearer propels the communication forward.

Secondly, in a dialogue context, an addressee may misjudge the rhetorical/information-seeking status of a question. I have discussed cases of failed communication in Chapter 4, pointing out that "if no mutual manifestness exists, which means it is not manifest to B that the statement is already manifest to A, then an RQ may be mistaken as a genuine question, answers will be provided and failed communication will occur". I have also mentioned cases of the hearers deliberately misunderstanding an RQ to achieve humorous effects or bring about intimacy. These failed cases deserve further attention in a future study. More possibilities of the hearers' deliberately misunderstanding an RQ are expected to be found.

The results of the current study will also be applicable to other fields. Analysis can be carried out in parent-child dialogues to find under what circumstances parents use RQs to achieve their purposes, and to test from the child's side whether the parent's purposes have been achieved and what effect RQs have accomplished. TV debate is also a genre where RQs may display unique features. Future research on TV debates can be carried out based on findings of the current study, to find how one side in the debate reacts to different kinds of RQ raised by the other side. The inappropriateness of using RQs in the medical context may serve as another avenue of enquiry. The hypothesis that RQs in doctor - patient conversations, in a challenging tone and with an accusatory attitude are one of the reasons leading to conflicts in the doctor-patient relationship, can be tested in future research. The above genres are expected to be the focus of attention in coming years.

The current study has also laid the foundations for a cross-linguistic contrastive study of RQs in English and Chinese. Problems such as what cultural factors affect the utterance and interpretation of RQs; whether the conditions for uttering an RQ in Chinese are the same as those in English; whether there are corresponding specific modal adverbs or modal auxiliary words in Chinese which can serve as indicators to suggest an RQ as in English; what specific functions are performed by specific syntactic structures in Chinese and their similarities and differences with those in English; and whether there are types of RQ unique to Chinese or English will be of practical significance not only to Chinese and English learners, but also to bilingual translation.

RQs, as an important aspect of eloquence, were used in antiquity by orators and are still widely used in all contemporary social contexts. In contrast to the popularity of their uses and the significance in their functions, it is curious that very few researchers seemed to have an interest in studying RQs. Previous studies have mainly used inauthentic examples, and analysing them in a decontextualised manner leaves lots of uncertainties and puzzles in this field. I joyfully took up this topic and addressed these problems by proposing an operational criterion to identify an RQ and an inferential process in terms of Relevance Theory in a corpus-based discoursal analysis approach. I hope that my study will foster more interests in this neglected area and bring new insight to work in a wide variety of fields including corpus study, rhetorical devices, discourse analysis and pragmatic theories.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Features of RQs in the four sources of newspaper editorials

	Self-built American editorial corpus	Self-built British editorial corpus	FLOB-editorials	BNC-editorials	Total number
No of RQs	17	18	44	110	189
RQs with lexical indicators	6	3	8	17	34
RQs with semantic indicators	5 (with 1 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	8 (with 2 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	4 (with 2 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators)	10 (with 4 having both lexical and semantic indicators)	27
RQs without any indicators	8	8	34	87	137
RQs with answers provided	2	2	11 (answer 2; reply 5; answer + reply 4)	13(reply 12; answer 1)	28
RQs without polarity shift	4	5	14	24	47
Parallel RQs	0	4 groups (11 questions)	2 groups (7 questions)	5 groups (16 questions)	34
RQs with other rhetorical devices	1 (analogue)	0	1 (pun)	5 (pun 2; metaphor 2; irony 1)	7
Appearing in the title	3	2	0	0	5
Appearing in the subtitle	2	0	0	0	2

Appendix 2 Comparisons of main features of direct RQs in three genres

	Political speeches (with normalised figures per 1000 words in the bracket)	Newspaper editorials (with normalised figures per 1000 words in the bracket)	Sermons in the BNC (with normalised figures per 1000 words in the bracket)
Total No of Questions	233 (1.887)	512 (2.682)	291 (3.631)
Total No of direct RQs	121 (0.980)	189 (0.989)	20 (0.249)
Total word tokens	123,448	190,910	80,135
RQs with answers provided	49 (0.397)	28 (0.146)	10 (0.125)
RQs without polarity shift	44 (0.356)	47 (0.246)	3 (0.037)
Parallel RQs	18 groups (60 RQs) (0.486)	11 groups (34 RQs) (0.178)	3 groups (4 RQs; 2 groups with the structure of one RQ+ one EQ) (0.050)
RQs with other rhetorical devices besides parallelism	1 (0.008)	7 (0.037)	1(0.012)
RQs with lexical indicators	21 (0.170)	34 (0.178)	5 (1 with so, 2 with on earth; 2 with after all) (0.062)
RQs with semantic indicators	29 (with 3 having both lexical indicators and semantic indicators) (0.235)	27 (0.141)	0
RQs without any indicators	74 (0.599)	137 (0.718)	15 (0.187)