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Machine generated contents note: List of Tables & Figures -- List of Abbreviations and Conventions -- List of Data Transcription Conventions -- Romanization of Japanese -- Acknowledgements -- 1. Introduction -- 2. Japanese Questions and Interrogativity -- 3. Establishing Topics and Eliciting Talk: Questions in Television Interviews -- 4. Information Collection and Footing: Questions in Radio Phone-in Programs -- 5. Nourishing the Friendship: Questions in Friends' Talk -- 6. Categorizing, Introducing and Maintaining Topical Talk: Questions in Unacquainted Interactions -- 7. Questions in Japanese Discourse: Discussion and Conclusion -- References -- Index.

Sommario/riassunto

"Questions and interrogatives in Japanese discourse have attracted considerable interest from grammarians, but the communicative aspect has received little attention. This book fills this gap. Through detailed analyses of formal and informal interactions, it demonstrates that the inherent multi-functional and polysemous aspect of language can also be observed in the use of questions. The book shows how questions are used to perform a wide range of social actions and how varied in form they are. Similarly, it demonstrates the importance of the context on the speakers' choice of question types, which, in turn, contribute to creating a particular stance that characterizes those interactions. The data used in the book shows that speakers prefer questions that are not canonical. When speakers do use canonical questions, they are overwhelmingly accompanied by some mollifiers. This phenomenon suggests that in Japanese communication the illocutionary force of canonical questions is too strong. To soften the interaction, speakers tend to use other types of interrogative forms such as statements with rising intonation, or at least, leave questions grammatically unfinished. The findings in this book contribute to the understanding of how Japanese speakers use questions in different communicative interactions and provide new evidence of the gap between prescriptive grammar and actual communication."--Bloomsbury Publishing.