

# CHAPTER 10

## MACEDONIAN ‘*DA NE*’-QUESTIONS AS DISTANCE MARKERS

LILJANA MITKOVSKA, ELENI  
BUŽAROVSKA AND MARIJA  
KUSEVSKA

### Abstract

This chapter looks into discourse functions of Macedonian constructions containing the modal particle *da* and the negative marker *ne*, such as: *Da ne imaš malku kafe?* ‘Do you happen to have some coffee?’ or *Da ne ti e lošo?* ‘You aren’t feeling very well, are you?’ The collocation of these two modal particles results in a fused interrogative epistemic marker *da ne*. It is used to form a specific type of biased polar questions that have a wide distribution in various speech acts such as requests, warnings, praise, concern, irony, etc. Because they do not impose anything directly these questions seem to evoke politeness. The aim of our paper is to investigate the distance expressed in such *da ne*-questions which we attribute to the semantics of bias and the pragmatics of common ground. The analysis shows that *da ne*-questions are used felicitously in situations where interlocutors understand the entailed discourse presuppositions. Characterized by solidarity and closeness *da ne*-questions are used as an indirect speech act strategy. Serving as markers of positive politeness they are employed by speakers to indicate small horizontal distance.

### 1. Introduction

In this paper we analyze the structure and function of independent *da ne*-questions in Macedonian. The modal particle *da* combines with the negative *ne* to produce an epistemic marker for a special type of biased questions as in *Da ne imaš malku kafe?* ‘You don’t happen to have some coffee, do you?’.

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