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## FRONTING AND INVERSION TO STRUCTURE INFORMATION: INFORMATIONALLY PROMINENT POSITION IN ENGLISH CLAUSE

The paper aims to investigate the grammatical aspects of fronting and inversion in an English clause to determine the informationally prominent position. The criteria to develop a sentence structure are old and new information, context, modality, communicative dynamism, the relation between the Subject and the Predicate, a link with what has gone before, highlighting a constituent, and contrast between constituents. The information value of a lexical unit affects its position within a clause: the constituent with the highest information value occupies an informationally prominent position. Fronting is typically regulated by the Given-Before-New Principle. The informationally prominent position in fronting is the clause-initial position, followed by the Subject. The grammatical functions of fronted units are Direct Object, Indirect Object, Complement, Adjunct, and Subject. The rationale behind optional inversion is to highlight constituents. The Subject can be placed in the final position to make it informationally prominent. A long Subject is moved to the end of the clause in concord with the Principle of End Weight. The dynamics of other information processing concerns can override the Principle of End Weight and the Given-Before-New Principle. Fronting and inversion contribute to the non-propositional meaning.

**Keywords:** clause structure, fronting, grammatical function, grammatical aspect, inversion, information structure, informationally prominent position.

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## СТРУКТУРУВАННЯ ІНФОРМАЦІЇ ЧЕРЕЗ ФРОНТИНГ ТА ІНВЕРСІЮ: ІНФОРМАЦІЙНО-НАЙВИРАЗНІША ПОЗИЦІЯ В АНГЛІЙСЬКОМУ РЕЧЕННІ

У цій роботі досліджуються такі граматичні аспекти як фронтінг та інверсія в англійській мові. Предметом дослідження є інформаційно-найвиразніша позиція в структурі простого речення. Критеріями побудови речення є стара та нова інформація, контекст, модальність, комунікативний динамізм, зв'язок між підметом і предикатом, зв'язок з попередньою інформацією, виділення окремого компонента та контраст між компонентами висловлення. Інформаційна цінність лексичної одиниці впливає на її позицію в реченні: найбільш інформаційно цінний компонент займає інформаційно-найвиразнішу позицію. Фронтінг регулюється принципом «відоме передє новому». Інформаційно-найвиразнішою позицією в реченні, що характеризується граматичним аспектом фронтінгу, є початок речення. Винесені наперед компоненти речення виконують граматичні функції прямого і непрямого додатка, доповнення, обставини й підмету. Інверсія використовується для виділення окремого компонента пропозиції. Підмет може займати кінцеву позицію, що поліщує його інформаційну виразність. Довгий за кількістю слів підмет переміщується в кінець речення відповідно до принципу «кінцевої ваги». Принципи «кінцевої ваги» та «відоме передє новому» можуть ігноруватися, коли цього вимагає динаміка інформаційного потоку. Фронтінг та інверсія збагачують непропозиційне значення речення.

**Ключові слова:** структура простого речення, фронтінг, граматична функція, граматичний аспект, інверсія, інформаційно-найвиразніша позиція, структурування інформації.

This paper explores the grammatical aspects of fronting and inversion that give prominence to displaced language items in contrast to their canonical position within a clause. The subject of this research is the informationally prominent position in an English clause. The research object is the grammatical aspects of fronting and optional inversion that focus not on what the speaker must do but on what the speaker can do to enhance communicative dynamism.

The significance of fronting and optional inversion for information structuring, whether at the clausal or sentential level, lies in the need to keep new information focused in accordance with the writer's intention. Information structuring is the way in which a writer can highlight certain parts of the content of a clause (Aarts, 2011, p. 314). The research methodology is based on the distributional analysis: attention is paid to the company words keep.

This research involves the twentieth and the early twenty-first century scholarly works of Dwight Bolinger (1972), Randolph Quirk et al. (1985), John Eastwood (2002), Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum (2002), Bas Aarts (2011), and others. The



investigation is preceded by the analysis of an information unit, propositional and non-propositional meaning, topic, the point of interest, theme, focus, accent, communicative dynamism, and the principles of information structuring.

Every clause has at least one information unit, coextensive with grammatical and tone units. The latter is defined as a stretch of speech containing one intonation nucleus that serves to highlight a piece of information (Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 1356–1357). An information unit, which is longer than a syllable, has high information value. Commonly, a linear presentation of information in a declarative clause evolves from low to high information value. So the lexical unit with high information value is supposed to be in the final position. The entire context determines the semantic weight of linguistic items.

The meaning of a clause can be described as the sum total of propositional and non-propositional meanings. The propositional meaning is “a semantic notion, concerned with what is expressed by the verb and its arguments, as well as any Adjuncts, abstracting away from a particular context of use” (Aarts, 2011, p. 315). In the clause *Pete married a clever woman*, the propositional meaning is ‘*x* marry *y* (at some point *t* in the past)’, where the values for *x* and *y* are ‘Pete’ and ‘a clever woman’ respectively. The non-propositional meaning results from changing the word order during information structuring. The utterances *Pete married a clever woman* and *A clever woman Pete married* have the same propositional meaning. In addition, the latter clause has a layer of non-propositional meaning resulting from displacing and accenting the Direct Object. Both clauses have the same information unit with high value (*a clever woman*). However, the informationally prominent position occurs when the phrase *a clever woman* is transposed from the final (regular) to the initial position. So fronting contributes to the non-propositional meaning.

Dwight Bolinger (1972, p. 633), analysing an accent in a sentence, emphasises that “accent should be viewed as independent, directly reflecting the speaker’s intent and only indirectly the syntax. Accented words are points of information focus”. In the examples below, accented words are in bold.

- *The end of this chapter is reserved for various **problems**.*
- *They centre around the sacrament of **baptism**.*

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2015, p. 7), an accent is a special importance given to something. Bolinger differentiates an accent from a stress, a lexical abstraction (Bolinger, 1972, p. 644). The researcher states that syntax or morphology cannot explain the location of sentence accents. What item has a stronger accent in the intonational pattern is a matter of information rather than structure (Bolinger, 1972, p. 633). A semantically poorer word would be less likely to emphasise than a richer word; less predictable verbs are less likely to be de-accented. The speaker adjusts the accents to suit the meaning (Bolinger, 1972, p. 635). It is the speaker who decides which word is accented and de-accented. “The distribution of sentence accents is not determined by syntactic structure but by semantic and emotional highlighting” (Bolinger, 1972, p. 644). So, Bolinger argues that accent placement in a sentence depends on the speaker’s intent, information focus, context, semantics, meaning, the predictability of words, and emotional highlighting, rather than being dictated by syntax, structure, or morphology.

The first phrase in each statement below is the topic, usually the Subject, which is known (given or old) information in the situation. When a sentence starts with something known, it is usually easier to understand.

- *This computer is a **high-performance device**.*
- *The purpose of this study is to **identify entropy reduction**.*
- *This dissertation is **organised into chapters**.*

The new information about the topic – the phrases *high-performance device*, *identify entropy reduction*, and *into chapters* – comes at or near the end of the sentence. These phrases are the points of interest. Their best position is at the end of the sentence. In a clause, given or old information usually comes first, and new information comes later. The new information can be anything from a syllable to an entire clause.

In contrast to ‘given’ and ‘new’, which are contextually established and to that extent extralinguistic, the theme and the focus are linguistically defined, in terms of position and prosody. The initial part of a lexical structure, the theme, is often ‘given’ information. The term ‘theme’ is applied to the first element of a clause, the Subject (Quirk et al., 1985, pp. 1361–1362). In clause structure, the initial position is important for thematic presentation. The theme’s relative lack of stress mimes its status as ‘given’ and therefore is in no need of emphasis. The theme and the focus are the two communicatively significant parts of a clause.

To convey a true message about a particular state of affairs, it is customary to use a declarative clause, as in this example.

- *The writer has **insufficient confidence at this stage**.*

The constituent order of grammatical functions is Subject – Predicator – Direct Object – Adjunct. This is a regular clause structure where no item occurs in an informationally prominent position. The definite article is thematic together with a noun phrase. The theme *The writer* lacks stress, the portion *has* is given slight prosodic prominence, the phrase *insufficient confidence* is given more prosodic prominence, and the last portion *at this stage* has the most considerable prosodic prominence. If the information conveyed in the original clause is reordered by displacing the Direct Object from its original position following the verb *has* to a clause-initial position, the constituent order is Direct Object (in bold) – Subject – Predicator – Adjunct.

- ***Insufficient confidence** the writer has at this stage.*

In this pattern, the phrase *insufficient confidence* is in a focus position. The focus indicates where the new information lies, and the intonation nucleus occurs on the last appropriate syllable as determined by the prosodic rule (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1363). The theme and focus will always coincide in one-word utterances, whether these are replies, questions, or military commands. For example, *Thanks* and the military order *Attention!*

The variation in communicative value between different parts of an utterance is communicative dynamism (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1356). Consider the two clauses – a question and an answer.

- *When will Mary decide? – She will decide **next week**.*

In the answer, the Subject, verb, and Adjunct are being uttered with sequentially increasing prominence, with the Subject conveying the least information, the verb rather more, and the Adjunct (*next week*) most since it conveys the information sought by the *wh*-element of the question (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1356). The communicative dynamism ranges from low (corresponding to weak stress, as with the Subject *she*), through medium (corresponding to non-nuclear stress, as with the verb phrase *will decide*), to high



stress (corresponding to intonation nucleus, as with the adverbial *next week*). So the structure of information should be dynamic in terms of communication.

Information structuring conforms to the Given-Before-New Principle, the Principle of End Weight, and the Principle of End-Focus. The Given-Before-New Principle tends to place given information before new information. The information given can be available from a previous situational or linguistic context. The Principle of End-Weight places the constituent containing several words (relatively long constituent) at the end of a sentence (Aarts, 2011, pp. 315–316). The principle of End-Focus tends to achieve a linear presentation of information from low to high information value (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1357). For example, the Principle of End-Focus entails that a reader will interpret *blue* as the focal item in the sentence *I am painting my living room blue*. The degree of communicative dynamism increases from *painting* to *blue*. However, when special emphasis is required, we move the focus from its predictable word (*blue*) to another word (*I, am, painting, my, living*) to highlight a marked focus. The clausal word order is commonly arranged so that the end focus falls on the most important part of a sentence. Sometimes, we want to put nuclear focus on two items in an information unit. Compare *He is fairly clever* and *He is **fairly clever***. The implications differ between these clauses. Semantically, the former implies a positive estimate, while the latter calls into question the estimate of cleverness. So, the focus makes the speaker's intent clear.

To structure information, the English language has several syntactic options: fronting, leftward and rightward movement, preposing, postposing, displacement, inversion, clefting and pseudo-clefting, postponement, extraposition, paraphrase, discontinuity, correlative item in comparative sentence, structural compensation, existential and presentational constructions, extraposition, the empty Subjects *there* and *it*, passivisation, heavy noun phrase shift, Complement alternation, and marked focus. We will use syntactic options and grammatical aspects interchangeably in this research.

The syntax of clauses depends on the context in which they are used as direct and indirect speech acts. The clauses in this paper are declaratives and exclamatives. The distributional analysis of clauses will be conducted on two criteria: the phrase in the front position and the position of the Subject. The informationally prominent position will be analysed at the level of grammatical functions.

The displacement of phrases to the left is called fronting (Quirk et al., 1985), movement to the front position (Eastwood, 2002, pp. 52–53), or leftward movement (Bas Aarts, 2011). Fronting is the term applied to moving into the initial position of an item that is otherwise unusual there. Displaced phrases, according to Bas Aarts (2011, pp. 317–319), represent given information and often establish a link with the preceding text. John Eastwood (2002) states that the clausal word order is motivated by the need to emphasise some lexical units and deal with old and new information.

Fronting is common both in speech and conventional written material. Compare the phrases in bold with reasons for fronting, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Clauses with phrases in the front position and reasons for fronting

Clause	Reason to use phrase in front position
<b>This latter topic</b> <u>we</u> have examined in Chapter 3.	The Direct Object in the front position links the clause with the preceding text.
The scheme has many good points. <b>An advantage</b> is <u>the low cost</u> .	The Complement in the front position links the clause with the preceding text.
<b>On the table</b> lay <u>a newspaper</u> .	The Adjunct in the front position links the clause with the preceding text.
You should take up swimming for relaxation. – <b>Relaxation</b> <u>you</u> call it.	The Complement in the front position echoes thematically what has been contextually given.
<b>Wilson</b> <u>his name</u> is.	The fronted item is contextually most demanded.
They spent the morning sightseeing. <b>In the afternoon</b> , <u>they</u> resumed their journey south.	The fronted item contrasts with another phrase ( <i>the morning</i> ).
I love dogs, but <u>cats</u> <b>I</b> cannot stand.	The fronted item contrasts with what has gone before ( <i>dogs</i> ).
<b>Here</b> <u>we</u> find information.	The fronted item draws attention to something.
I buy paperbacks, read them, and lend them. <b>Hardbacks</b> <u>I</u> wouldn't lend to anyone.	The fronted item establishes a link with a phrase ( <i>paperbacks</i> ) earlier in the discourse.
<b>How hard</b> <u>people</u> actually work!	The fronted item in an exclamative clause.
<b>Your mother</b> , <u>she</u> was just misunderstood.	The copy (in bold) of the Subject ( <i>she</i> ) is made to create discourse cohesion.
<b>The colleague I mentioned to you</b> , <u>I</u> married her.	The copy (in bold) of the Object ( <i>her</i> ) is made to create discourse cohesion.

**Note.** The phrases in the front position are in bold. Subjects are underlined.

Fronting serves the function of arranging the clausal word order to provide direct linkage with the previous text.

- **Most of these problems** a computer could take in its stride.

- **This latter topic** we have examined in Chapter 3.

In these patterns, the definite items *these* and *this* in Direct Objects identify given information.

It is common to find the *-ing* participle fronted, providing a direct link with what has preceded. Witness the inversion of the verb and the Subject.

- **Sitting at her desk in deep concentration** was my sister Flora.

The reason for fronting can be to echo the contextually given thematically.

- You should take up swimming for relaxation. – **Relaxation** you call it.

The item fronted may be the one contextually most demanded.



- **Wilson** his name is.
- **Really good meals** they serve at that hotel.

The thematic element in the initial position provides the addressee with the most important information; the rest of the clause is an afterthought. The items fronted can sometimes ensure communicative dynamism on their own, without other linguistic items.

When some phrases come in the front position, before the Subject, it emphasises them or contrasts with another phrase.

- *They spent the morning sightseeing. **In the afternoon**, they resumed their journey south.*
- *I've read the book. **The film** I haven't yet seen.*

The phrase in the front position (*In the afternoon, The film*) is more prominent than in its regular position. The prominent position is created in the process of information structuring.

We can put an Object in the front position to link or contrast it with what has gone before.

- *I love dogs, but **cats** I can't stand.*
- *Jason deals with the post every morning. **The routine letters** he answers himself. **The rest** he passes on to the boss.*

We can put a Complement in the front position.

- *They enjoyed the holiday. **Best of all** was the constant sunshine.*
- *The scheme has many good points. **An advantage** is the low cost.*

The Subject (*the low cost*) is the old information that comes at the end. This declarative clause contains Subject-auxiliary inversion.

In the clause *A furniture van was outside the house*, the word order is traditional, but new information in the front position should be justified somehow. The front position of new information does not conform to the Given-Before-New Principle. We can put the Adjunct in the front position to link with what has gone before; there is inversion of the Subject and the verb *to be*.

- **Outside the house** was a furniture van.
- The same can be done with other verbs of place and movement: *come, go, lie, sit, and stand*.

- **On the table** lay a newspaper.

With these verbs, a pattern without inversion is possible but less usual.

- *On the table a newspaper lay.*

So if a noun phrase preceded by the indefinite article is in the front position, it can describe certain situations. To increase situational choices, the fronting, which contains an informationally prominent position and motivates inversion, can be implemented.

The adverbs *there* and *here* in the front position draw attention to something or put new information into the final position.

- **And there** goes Williams!
- **Here** is an announcement for passengers on flight WHR75 to Kharkiv.

In this pattern, we can use *be, go, and come* in the present simple with Subject-verb inversion. The noun phrase, which is new information, goes near the end.

When the Subject is a pronoun, there is no inversion.

- *And there goes Williams. There **he goes**, look!*
- *Where are my keys? Oh, **here they are**.*

The displacement to the left can be motivated by the desire of the speaker to establish a contrast between constituents in different clauses (Bas Aarts, 2011, p. 316). There are two types of leftward movement: preposing and left dislocation. Consider the preposing in the following fragment from a conversation.

• *I go to Bristol and buy paperbacks and read them and probably cast them aside or give them or lend them to someone else. **But hardbacks** I wouldn't lend to anyone.*

Notice that the Direct Object (*hardbacks*) is not placed in its canonical position after the verb. The preposed phrase establishes a link with a similar phrase (*paperbacks*) earlier in the discourse. The noun phrase *hardbacks* represents given information about books (Aarts, 2011, p. 317). This type of preposing is called topicalization because the first slot in a clause is occupied by the topic, a string of words specifying what the clause is about. The topic position characteristically contains given information.

Although rare, Indirect Objects can also be preposed, as in the pattern below (Aarts, 2011, p. 318).

- **Everybody that cooks** I ask how they make pastry.

The clause introduced by *how* functions as a Direct Object.

Here is the displacement of a Complement, an adjective phrase, from inside a *though*-clause to the left.

- **Excellent though they both are**, they may not be enough.

The version of this pattern without displacement is shown below.

- *Though they both are excellent, they may not be enough.*

Preposing is typically used to make exclamative statements (Aarts, 2011, p. 172). In writing, an exclamation mark is often used. There is no Subject-auxiliary inversion in exclamative clauses.

- **What a worrying man** he is!

The phrase *what a worrying man* functions as a preposed Subject-related Predicative Complement.

In the clause below, the Direct Object is fronted.

- **What shameful decisions** they took!

In the following clauses, an Adjunct is fronted.

- **How hard** people actually work!
- **How** he laughed.

Consider the patterns shown in (1) and (2) that demonstrate left dislocation.

- **The colleague I mentioned to you**, I married her.
- **Your mother**, she was just misunderstood.

In both sentences, a noun phrase is preposed, but the 'copy' of it in the shape of a pronoun is in the regular position of the NP (Aarts, 2011, pp. 319–320). In (1), the Direct Object is copied; in (2), the Subject is copied. In speech, there is often a short pause



after the left-dislocated phrase. The pragmatic effect of left dislocation is that it creates discourse or textual cohesion. In (1), the dislocated NP conveys given information, witness the presence of the definite article *the*, which signals that the colleague in question is identifiable from the preceding discourse or represents shared knowledge. Given information precedes new information.

Therefore, fronting is regulated by the Given-Before-New Principle. The grammatical aspect of fronting actualises the informationally prominent position as the clause-initial position, followed by the Subject and possible Subject-verb/operator inversion. The prominent position is reason-based. The reasons to put a phrase in the front position are as follows: to establish a link with the previous text, to make a contrast with what has gone before, to echo thematically what has been contextually given, to front the most demanded item, to draw attention to something, to create discourse cohesion, and to make an exclamative statement. The grammatical functions of fronted units are Direct Object, Indirect Object, Complement, Adjunct, and Subject, in case the Subject's copy in the form of a pronoun takes the position of the Subject in a clause.

The grammatical aspect of inversion means changing the regular word order in a clause (Eastwood, 2002, p. 400), namely the Subject and a verb, the Subject and an operator. Inversion involves minor syntactic adjustments. We distinguish obligatory inversion from optional inversion. The former occurs in open and closed interrogative clauses, where the speaker has no choice about whether to apply inversion. By contrast, inversion applied for information structuring is optional, with some exceptions (Aarts, 2011, p. 329).

The sentences in Table 2 contain inversion. Compare the phrases in bold with reasons for optional inversion.

Table 2

Clauses with optional inversion and reasons for inversion

Clause with inversion	Reason to use inversion
<i>Imperative too <b>is the need to economise at the academic board.</b></i>	The preposed expression ( <i>Imperative too</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Principle of End Weight – the Subject is long.
<i>Here <b>comes the Northern Line.</b></i>	The preposed locative expression ( <i>Here</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Principle of End Weight – the Subject is long.
<i>There <b>is the book.</b></i>	The preposed locative ( <i>There</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Principle of End Weight – the Subject is long.
<i>Then <b>came Alexander Popov's radio.</b></i>	The preposed temporal expression ( <i>Then</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Principle of End Weight – the Subject is long.
<i>Below <b>is suggested a more sophisticated approach to the problem.</b></i>	The preposed phrase ( <i>Below</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Given-Before-New Principle. Witness the indefinite article.
<i>Backing it <b>was a massive 6-speed gearbox.</b></i>	The preposed expression ( <i>Backing it</i> ) initiates inversion to satisfy the Given-Before-New Principle and the Principle of End Weight.
<i>At no time <b>must this door be left unlocked.</b></i>	A phrase of negative form or meaning is fronted, initiating Subject-operator inversion.
<i><b>Were she not so handicapped, we would take her to the Alps.</b></i>	Subordinate clause of condition or concession initiates Subject-operator inversion.
<i>She was angry and so <b>was I.</b></i>	Elliptical clause with Subject-operator inversion preceded by initial <i>so</i> .
<i>John didn't see the accident and neither <b>did Mary.</b></i>	Elliptical clause with Subject-operator inversion preceded by the negatives <i>neither</i> or <i>nor</i> .
<i>"Whatever shall I do now?" <b>wondered Fred.</b></i>	A convention in literary speech.
<i>[Far <b>be it from me</b>] to condemn him in any way.</i>	The inverted expression (in square brackets) is idiomatic.

**Note.** Inverted phrases are in bold. Subjects are underlined.

There are two significant types of inversion: the reversal of the Subject and the verb, and the Subject and the operator. The verb *to be* as a copula can be simultaneously regarded as a verb and an operator.

The clause patterns Subject-verb-Complement and Subject-verb-Adjunct have their obligatory third element because any verb is commonly lacking in communicative dynamism. Where information processing makes it desirable to front the third element concerned, the result would tend to be misleading if regular word order were preserved with the Subject-verb, suggesting that a nuclear focus be placed, inappropriately, on the verb. Such fronting naturally carries the inversion that puts the Subject in the final position to achieve the end-focus.

- *Especially remarkable was **his dissertation.***

In the instances with *here/there + be*, inversion is not a matter of stylistic choice. There is a difference in meaning between sentences.

- *Here **is the milkman** – he has come at last.*
- *There **is the book** – I have been looking for it all week.*

Compare:

- *The milkman is here: shall I get two pints?*
- *The book is there – by the computer.*

Subject-verb inversion in literary speech is a convention (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1381).

- *"Whatever shall I do now?" **wondered Fred.***
- *"Please go away," **said one child.***

There are four cases with Subject-operator inversion.

a) In elliptical clauses, Subject-operator inversion is preceded by initial *so* or the corresponding negatives *neither* or *nor*.

- *John saw the accident, and **so did Mary.***
- *John didn't see the accident, and **neither did Mary.***
- *The researcher hasn't seen the results before, **nor have I.***

b) Subject-operator inversion in clauses where a phrase of negative form or meaning is fronted.



- *At no time must this door be left unlocked.*
- *Not a single book had he read that month.*
- c) Subject-operator inversion in comparative clauses when the Subject is not a personal pronoun.
  - *Oil costs less than would atomic energy.*
- d) Subject-operator inversion in subordinate clauses of condition and concession, especially in formal usage.
  - *Had I known, I would have gone to her.*
  - *Should you change your plans, please let me know.*

It is to be noted that with negative clauses of this form, we do not find contraction:

- *Were she not so handicapped, we would take her to the Alps.*

There are a few examples in common use where the inverted expression is frozen and idiomatic (Quirk et al., 1985, pp.1381–1383).

- *Far be it from me to condemn him in any way.*

Consider the examples in (1) and (2), and their uninverted counterparts in (3) and (4). AdjP stands for Adjective Phrase; NP stands for Noun Phrase.

- 1 [<sub>AdjP</sub> Imperative too] is [<sub>NP</sub> *the need to economise at the academic board*].
- 2 [<sub>AdjP</sub> Most relevant] was [<sub>NP</sub> *a dramatised version of how the news of the Battle of Trafalgar was brought to London*].
- 3 The need to economise at the academic board is imperative too.
- 4 A dramatised version of how the news of the Battle of Trafalgar was brought to London was most relevant.

In (1) and (2), the Subject noun phrases have been inverted with the adjective phrases, which function as Subject-related Predicative Complements. (3) and (4) display the unmarked constituent order. The motivation for the inversion is the length of the Subjects: moving them to the end of the clause satisfies the Principle of End Weight. In addition, in both cases, the adjective phrases supply old information, witness the presence of the words *too* and *most*, and hence, placing them in clause-initial position satisfies the Given-Before-New Principle. In (1) and (2), the italicised Subjects are heavy.

In the examples in (5)–(9), the inversion is motivated by a preposed locative or temporal expression.

- 5 And [here] comes [*the Northern Line*].
- 6 [Then] came [*Alan Smith's equaliser*].
- 7 And then suddenly [from the bottom] appears [*a motor car*].
- 8 [Below] is suggested [*a more sophisticated approach to this problem*].
- 9 [Backing it] was [*a massive 6-speed gearbox*].

In (9), the Complement of *be* (*backing it*) has been preposed, accompanied by the postponement of the Subject. An NP carrying new information occurs in clause-final position following the Given-Before-New Principle.

Therefore, optional inversion involves transposition of the Subject and the operator or verb in a clause. The writer alters the meaning of an utterance by putting the Subject in the final position for informational purposes, not for stylistic reasons. The rationale behind this inversion is to highlight the Subject by giving it an end-focus position. One motivation for inversion is the length of the Subject: a long Subject is moved to the end of the clause to adhere to the Principle of End Weight. Other reasons for using inversion include positioning old information at the beginning of the clause to align with the Given-Before-New Principle, maintaining communicative dynamism by avoiding the verb in the final position, preposing locative and temporal expressions *Here! There! Then*, preposing adverbials, fronting the phrases of negative form or meaning, using subordinate clauses of condition and concession formally, using elliptical clauses with Subject-operator or Subject-verb inversion preceded by *so*, *neither* and *nor*, conventions in literary speech, and inverted idiomatic expressions.

Thus, the clause word order should make the text flow better. In a canonical clause, a linear presentation of information is arranged from low to high information value. The lexical unit containing new information has the highest information value. The position of the Subject can be initial, middle, or final.

Fronting and optional inversion contribute to the non-propositional meaning. Fronting is typically regulated by the Given-Before-New Principle. In fronting, the informationally prominent position is the clause-initial, followed by the Subject or the verb in case of inversion. The prominent position is engendered in the course of information structuring, possibly reflecting the processes in the mind. The grammatical functions of fronted units are Direct Object, Indirect Object, Complement, Adjunct, and Subject.

Optional inversion allows the speaker to alter the clausal structure for informational purposes to highlight some components. Subject-verb inversion is a tool to put old or new information in the final position. It is expedient to avoid a verb in the final position. The Subject can be placed in the final position to make it informationally prominent. A long Subject is moved to the end of the clause in concord with the Principle of End Weight. The Principle of End Weight and the Given-Before-New Principle can be overridden by the dynamics of other information processing concerns.

Further research in clausal information structuring will determine the criteria and motivation for implementing grammatical aspects.

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