# Some Phenomena on Negative Inversion Constructions

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We examine the characteristics of NDI (negative degree inversion) and its relation with other inversion phenomena such as SVI (subject-verb inversion) and SAI (subject-auxiliary inversion)[1]. The negative element in the NDI construction may be *not*, a negative adverbial, or a negative verb. In this respect, NDI has similar licensing environments to those of negative polarity items (NPIs). NPIs are licensed only in a negative environment. Borroff (2006) deals with characteristics of NDI in detail, but she does not explain the relation between NDI and other inversion phenomena in English. Therefore, she fails to capture the generality of the two. I argue that NDI is related to other ICs such as SVI and SAI, focusing on the very nature of these constructions. In English, degree-modified adjectives typically follow the determiner, but they may precede the article in NDI constructions. I argue that this noncanonical word order is related to a specific function, i.e., Green's (1980) emphatic function. I also argue that the NDI shares this same function with other ICs, such as the SVI and SAI constructions. In this respect, the nature of the NDI will be more clearly revealed when we examine these inversion phenomena together, not respectively. Therefore, further studies should be focused on why a speaker uses this noncanonical word order instead of the canonical word order.

**Key Words**: negative degree inversion, subject-verb inversion, subject-auxiliary inversion, emphatic funcion

## 1 Introduction

This paper examines negative degree inversion (NDI) in English, investigating how it may be licensed, capturing similarities and dissimilarities of NDI and other functional phrases, and finding out the relation between NDI and other inversions. Borroff (2006) deals with characteristics of NDI in detail, but she does not explain the relation between NDI and other inversion phenomena in English. In this respect, she fails to capture the generality of the two. This is why I wish to try to explain the characteristics of NDI, in

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[1] Here the term 'subject-auxiliary Inversion' is generally used, including all types of inversions that happen in NDI's as well as in interrogative sentences.

relation to the very nature of inversion constructions (ICs) in general. It will be argued that NDI is related to other ICs such as subject-verb inversion (SVI) and subject-auxiliary verb inversion (SAI). In English, degree-modified adjectives typically follow the determiner. On the contrary, they may precede the article in NDI constructions. This noncanonical word order seems to be related to a specific function, i.e., Green's (1980) emphatic function, and this same function seems to have a close relation to some IC. Consequently, the reason for the occurrence of NDI and its characteristics can be explained in terms of its function in a sentence.

## 2 The Licensing of Negative Degree Inversion

Borroff (2006, p. 514) calls the following (1b) negative degree inversion[2], which occurs in certain dialects in the context of negation.

(1) a. John is not [a very good student].
    b. John is not [very good a student].

The normal ordering (1a) and its inverted form (1b) are all acceptable. In other words, the inversion in (1b) is optional. These facts make us examine how the inversion in (1b) is licensed. As seen above, NDI is optional and requires the presence of a negative element.

(2) a. John is not [a very good student].
    b. John is not [very good a student].
    c. *John is [very good a student].

As the following show, the negative element in this construction may be *not*, a negative adverbial, or a negative verb.

(3) a. Mugsy Boags wasn't/*was [very tall a basketball player].
    b. She never/*always was [very good a dancer].
    c. I doubt/*think that this will be [real interesting a class].

The facts observed in (3) above show that NDI has similar licensing environments to those of negative polarity items (NPIs). NPIs are licensed only in a negative environment as shown by the following examples of Borroff (2006, p. 515).

(4) a. Daisy isn't/*is anyone I know.

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[2] Borroff (2006, p. 514) states that NDI involves movement of DegPs headed by *very*, *real*, *that*, and *too*. She points out that forms with *that* and *too* both participate in inversions in positive environments as well.

b. She never/*always was any good a dancer.
c. I doubt/*think you can do anything about poverty.

In connection with NPIs, Giannakidou (1997) shows a construction in which a DegP is licensed only in the presence of negation.

(5) a. He wasn't/*was all that intelligent.
  b. He wasn't/*was all that intelligent a man.
  c. John didn't make/*made all that good (of) an impression.

(5a) shows that *all that Adj* does not occur in positive sentences, and (5b-c) show that *all that Adj* constructions can also occur in NDI. To explain the distribution of *all that Adj*, Giannakidou proposes that it is an NPI.

Despite their similar licensing environments, NDI and NPIs do not have identical licensing environments. Giannakidou (1997, 1998, 1999) points out that NPIs may occur only in environments that exhibit nonveridicality. According to her, negative polarity licensing is sensitive to nonveridicality. Borroff (2006) defines an operator to be nonveridical if it does not entail the truth of its complement and is veridical otherwise.

(6)   An operator *Op* is veridical just in case *Op p → p* is logically
      valid. Otherwise, *Op* is nonveridical.

It seems that both NDI and NPIs are sensitive to nonveridicality, but their licensing environments differ. NDI is not licensed in all nonveridical environments. As illustrated in the following (7) and (8) of Borroff (2006, p. 516), respectively, NPIs are licensed in the antecedent of a conditional, the scope of *before*, and the restrictive term of a universal quantifier, but NDI is not.

 (7)  a.  If you were anyone famous, who would you be?
      b.  Before anyone arrives at my party, I will have cleaned the
          house.
      c.  Everyone who is anyone will be at my party.
(8)  a. *If John were [very diligent a student], he wouldn't party all the
         time.
     b. *Before he became [very good a student], John was a very bad
        student.
     c. *Everyone who is [very good a student] should pass the final.

The examples in (2)-(4) and (7)-(8) have the same characteristic 'nonveridicality' as their environments. However, they differ in that the former are antiveridical as well. This means that the operators in (2)-(4) not only fail to entail the truth of their complement, but also entail the falsity of

their complement. Borroff (2006) gives the definition of *antiveridicality* as shown in (9).

(9)  An operator *Op* is antiveridical just in case *Op p* → ¬ *p* is logically valid.

This licensing condition on NDI tells us that it is grammatical only under negation and *without*, since these two are antiveridical operators. *Any*-NPIs and NDI show difference with respect to licensing environments as (7) and (8) above show. In other words, unlike *any*-NPIs, instances of NDI cannot be licensed by the broader group of nonveridical operators such as the antecedent of a conditional, the scope of nonveridical *before*, and the restrictive term of a universal quantifier, as illustrated by the ungrammatical (8a-c).

The distribution of elements that take part in NDI in English is similar to that of another set of elements that are sensitive to antiveridicality, that is, minimizers in Greek. Borroff (2006, p. 516) points out that while the distribution of NDI in English parallels that of Greek minimizers, the distribution of English minimizers is broader.

(10)  a.  I regret saying a word to him about it.
      b. *I regret John's being very bad a dancer.

As shown by the examples in (10) above, NDI is not licensed by factive environments where English minimizers are.

Giannakidou (1998) discusses the distribution of minimizers in Greek. They are limited to appearing in the scope of negation and in 'without'-clauses.

(11) a. *(Dhen) ipe      LEKSI oli mera.
         not    said.3SG word   all day
        'She/He didn't say a word all day.'
    b.  . . . *(xhoris) na   pi     LEKSI oli mera.
         without SUBJ say.3SG word   all day
        '. . . without saying a word all day.'
                              [Giannakidou, 1998, (120a), (121b)]

Another characteristic of NDI is that it is licensed by certain indirectly antiveridical environments as Greek minimizers are. In short, it is licensed not only by overt antiveridical environments exemplified by negation and *without*, but also by certain indirectly antiveridical ones. Rhetorical questions belong to the latter, because they have a negative implicature. Positive rhetorical questions entail negative responses.

(12) a. Pjos dhini    DHEKARA ja to ti    th'apojino?
     who give.3SG dime    for the what FUT.become.1SG
     'Who gives a damn about what will happen to me?'
                    [Giannakidou, 1998, (123c)]
    b. Who says John's very good a student?

(12a) and (12b) above show that both minimizers in Greek and NDI in English are licensed by rhetorical questions, respectively.

Borroff (2006, p. 517) introduces one additional characteristic of NDI. The following examples in (13) differ from normal instances of NDI, since they have the word *of* between the moved degree phrase and the determiner. Borroff explains that all English speakers she has encountered who accept NDI think sentences like (13a-c) at least as good as those shown in (3). She adds that of those who do not accept plain NDI, many allow NDI with *of*.

(13) a. John is not [very good *of* a student].
    b. That's not [that big *of* a deal].
    c. Buy a Neon without paying [very big *of* a price].

After examining the distribution of NDI, Borroff (2006) concludes that (anti)- veridicality can license not only lexical elements, but also a construction exhibiting inversion.

## 3 Negative Degree Inversion and Other Functional Phrases

To understand the structure of NDI, we have to explain why the DegP appears in the atypical initial position of the phrase. We may think of two possibilities. One possibility is that it is base-generated there. In this case, the surface word order of *very good of a student* is equivalent to a structure in which the adjective phrase [AP good] takes the prepositional phrase [pp of [DP a [NP student]]] as its complement. This structure would make NDI analogous to the DegP P DP, such as [*not very good as a student*], [*not very good for a student*], and [*not very envious of his brother*]. However, these differ from NDI in some respects. First, they are felicitous in positive contexts. Second, they do not require an overt degree word. Third, they require an overt preposition. Finally, other DegP P DP constructions cannot appear in subject position, a canonical position for nominals, though NDI can.

(14) a. Not very good a student walked in.
    b. *Not very good as a student walked in.

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The examples in (14) illustrate that the DegP P DP constructions are adjectival in nature, but that the NDI examples are essentially nominal.

The other possibility is that the DegP in NDI is derived rather than base-generated. Borroff (2006) proposes to take the approach that the predeterminer position of the DegP in NDI is derived. I agree with Borroff (2006) that it is derived rather than base- generated. This approach does not conflict with my later argument in section 4 that this noncanonical word order is related to a specific function. In this respect, any argument that this position is base-generated will not fit IC phenomena in general. Borroff assumes that the predeterminer DegP in NDI examples has moved there from a DP-internal position in an attempt to preserve uniformity of structure between NDI and the noninverted examples.

Kennedy and Merchant (2000) note that the moved degree phrases in questions and comparatives may also precede an *of* element. Consider the following examples in (15).

   (15) a. [How interesting (*of*) a play] did Brio write?
       b. [How tall (*of*) a forward] did the Lakers hire?
       c. Bob didn't write [as detailed (*of*) a proposal] as Sheila did.
       d. He took [so big (*of*) a piece of cake] that he couldn't finish it.

Kennedy and Merchant (2000) take the optional presence of *of* to signal the existence of a functional phrase FP dominating DP. They suggest that Spec,FP is the landing site for inverted degree phrases in questions and comparatives. The existence of such a phrase was initially proposed by Bennis, Corver, and Den Dikken (1998) as the landing site of moved NPs in nominal predicate ICs.

   (16)  een beer van een vent  (Dutch)
       a  bear of  a   man

We have seen the similarity among the NDI, question, and comparative data so far. It reminds us that they should be analyzed under the same general principle. In this respect, the possibility of the presence of *of* between the moved degree phrase and the determiner indicates that the DegP has moved into the specifier position of FP in all cases. If we take all these facts into account, we have the structure of NDI of Borroff (2006: 519) shown in (17).

(17)  a.  John is not [very good (of) a student].
      b.

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                        FP
                    /        \
               DegPi          F'
                  |          /    \
            very good     F        DP
                          |      /    \
                         of    D       NP
                               |      /    \
                               a     ti     NP
                                             |
                                          student
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On an early minimalist account of movement, inversion would be caused by the need to check strong features. However, in more recent versions of the theory, different limitations are placed on the motivations for movement. In other words, movement is not a requirement for feature checking. Borroff (2006) claims that if we accept these limitations, the movement exhibited by NDI may be caused by an EPP feature on the head of FP. This argument does not seem to conflict with my functional analysis of NDI that I will make in section 4.

Borroff (2006) follows Kennedy and Merchant (2000) and diverges from Bennis, Corver, and Den Dikken (1998), who assume that FP is the complement of DP. I also agree with Borroff (2006) on the argument that FP is not the complement of DP. Borroff supports the approach that FP selects DP as its complement by the fact that the former imposes selectional restrictions on the latter. The DP in NDI must always be indefinite.[3]

(18) a. John is not [very good a student].
     b. *John is not [very good the student].

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[3]  Borroff (2006) adds that this observation can be traced to Bresnan's (1973) discussion of the syntax of comparatives. Matushansky (2002) also discusses degree movement, as well as the related requirement that movement of the entire DegP to a DP-peripheral position is only possible with an overt indefinite determiner.

c. *John and Mary are not [very good some/both/two students].

Above all, this condition is not restricted to the NDI construction, but it holds of every construction where we expect FP to play a role. Inversion in questions and comparatives is also possible only when a DP is headed by *a*, as shown in the following examples of Borroff (2006).

(19) a. [How fast a/*the/*some/*Ø car(s)] do you want to buy?
     b. John is [as good a/*the student] as Mary.

Borroff gives another option available to comparatives. It is to use a null operator just in case the indefinite determiner *a* is not possible because of feature mismatch, as shown in (20). However, this option is not available in questions, English nominal predicate inversion, or NDI, as shown in (21).

(20) John and Mary are [as good students] as Kevin and Elaine.
(21) a. ?John and Mary want [HOW FAST cars]?
     b. *those idiots of men
     c. John and Mary are not very good students.  (no NDI reading)

NDI has similarities in linear order with other phenomena involving movement within the nominal projection. However, it differs from the others in that it requires a c-commanding antiveridical licenser. The next thing to do is to answer the question why inversion is possible only in this environment.

Borroff (2006) tries to answer this question by positing two things. One is that the negative licenser acts to make the presence of FP possible. The other is that FP is impossible outside of negation. In this approach, negation does not license movement, but it licenses the landing site for movement. The fact that movement goes hand in hand with FP follows from this approach. If FP enters the derivation, its features must be checked. In this respect, any derivation in which FP is present will necessarily exhibit DegP-movement. If we claim that FP is possible only in the presence of negation, the conditions on its presence seem to be exactly those on the presence of NPIs. Borroff (2006) argues that the environments in which inversion is possible are a subset of those in which NPIs are possible. To capture this intuition, she proposes to analyze the head of FP as an NPI itself. She adds that we can reflect the fact that NDI is possible only in a subset of the canonical licensing environments for NPIs by characterizing F° as sensitive to the presence of a c-commanding antiveridical operator. As a result, FP in NDI differs from FP in other constructions in that only the former has features that make it sensitive to licensing by negation.

In connection with DegP-movement, Borroff (2006) raises the question of how to explain that the presence of FP, and by extension, DegP-movement, is obligatory in echo questions and comparatives, as shown in (22) and (23), respectively.

(22)  a. John is [HOW GOOD a student]?
       b. *John is [a HOW GOOD student]?

[Borroff, 2006 (1c-d)]

(23)  a. Kevin is [as good a student] as Elaine.
       b. *Kevin is [an as good a student] as Elaine.

[Borroff, 2006, (2a-b)]

Borroff assumes that in these constructions the moved DegP itself has a feature that forces movement to Spec,FP, and that derivations in which FP is not present will crash because this movement is unavailable. Another possibility she thinks of is that the DegP moves to Spec,FP to get to the left edge of an FP-induced phase, in order to remain available for subsequent checking of its features (e.g., [+wh] on the part of echo questions).

Taking all the above facts into account, Borroff (2006) concludes that, while all constructions with FP share surface similarities, for instance, inversion of DegP and presence of *of*, only in NDI is the distribution of FP limited to negative environments.

## 4 Negative Degree Inversion and Other Inversion Constructions

In the preceding chapter, we saw the similarities and dissimilarities between NDI and other functional phrases. In this chapter, subject-verb inversion (SVI) and subject- auxiliary inversion (SAI) constructions will be investigated with respect to NDI. Besides, to capture common characteristics of ICs in general, the relation between NDI, SVI, and SAI will be examined, and a possible way to solve some problems with respect to NDI will be proposed. In section 4.1., SVI will be discussed, in section 4.2., SAI will be discussed, and in section 4.3., the relation between NDI, SVI, and SAI will be discussed.

### 4.1 Subject-verb inversion

Bolinger (1977) tries to reaffirm the old principle that a natural condition for a language is to preserve one form for one meaning and one meaning for one form. He argues that 'there' in the existential 'there' construction is neither empty nor redundant, but is a fully functional word that contrasts with its

absence. To illustrate this argument, he gives the following 'presentative' construction.[4]

    (24) Across the street is a grocery.
    (25) Across the street there's a grocery.

Bolinger (1977) differentiates these two presentative constructions though they look similar. Sentence (24), which does not have *there* (the IC), presents something on the immediate stage (brings something literally or figuratively before our presence), while sentence (25), which has *there*, presents something to our minds (brings a piece of knowledge into consciousness). These explanatory notions play an important role in explaining ICs.

    (26) *As I recall, across the street is a grocery.
    (27)   As I recall, across the street there's a grocery.
    (28)   As you can see, across the street is a grocery.
    (29) *I can see that across the street is a grocery.
    (30)   I can see that across the street there's a grocery.

Sentence (28), which contains an IC, is deictic, whereas (27) and (30), which have *there*, deal with a piece of information. According to Bolinger, sentence (26) is ungrammatical, because the main clause *across the street is a grocery* does not agree with the subordinate clause *As I recall* in meaning. The former presents something on the immediate stage, while the latter does not. This asymmetry in meaning between the main clause and the subordinate clause makes the sentence ungrammatical. In this respect, the ungrammaticality does not result from the main clause itself, i.e., the IC. The ungrammaticality of (29), which has an embedded IC, also results from the same reason as in (26).

       ICs do some function that their uninverted ones do not, and it changes depending on the context in which they occur. Green (1974) emphasizes that the acceptability of a certain syntactic construction depends not on a syntactic environment but on a speaker's intention for communication. Green explains that not all ICs occur in the asserted clauses as Hooper and Thompson (1973) (hereafter H&T) argue. ICs may occur in the context that H&T treat as presupposed as true or false, as shown in (31b) and (32b).

    (31) a. *I realize that in came the milkman.

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[4] Bolinger (1977) explains that the tendency to put presentative expressions first. He attributes the reason to 'natural' word order, as uncomplicated as the temporal sequencing as *She* (1) *came in and* (2) *sat down*. Besides, he relates the tendency to the natural order vocative + locative + spectacle, as in *Look! On your leg! A tarantula!*

b. I realize that very important to the Japanese is the amount of mercury being pumped into their bays.

(32) a. *I pretended that in came the milkman.

b. I pretended that very important to the Japanese was the amount of mercury being pumped into their bays.

In addition, ICs are very clumsy in the context that is defined as asserted by H&T.

(33) a. ??I think that in came the milkman.

b. I think that very important to the Japanese is the amount of mercury being pumped into their bays.

Green refuses H&T's assertion theory as inappropriate. Instead, she claims that in order to find out a principle that determines how and where ICs are used, it is necessary to refer to both the fact that a speaker may use the syntactically subordinate form (such as *I think* or *John says*) and his intention when he introduces the new proposition. She proposes that we should take pragmatic factors into account to account for embeddability of ICs.

Above all, Green's idea seems to contribute greatly to the explanation of ICs in that they may rely on pragmatic factors. This same explanation may also apply to NDI, since this inversion occurs in certain dialects and is optional, as shown in (1-2), that is, depending on speakers. In this respect, it is necessary that we should capture the relationship between NDI, Bolinger's IC as shown in (24), and Green's (1974) idea.

## 4.2 Subject-auxiliary inversion

In English, the subject and auxiliary are inverted when a negative constituent is preposed to the sentence-initial position. This is illustrated by the following examples discussed in Yang (1986, p. 8).

(34) a. They may leave the area under no conditions.

b. *Under no conditions they may leave the area.

c. Under no conditions may they leave the area.

The negative constituent *under no conditions* in (34a) does not trigger SAI in its normal position. However, it triggers the SAI [5]when it is preposed to the front of the sentence as in (34c). Above all, this inversion is obligatory,

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[5] I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer, who has pointed out that the SAI and SVI need not be separated from each other, since both involve the movement of an auxiliary, if we adopt a wider definition of the class of auxiliaries. For now, I will leave the issue for later discussion.

unlike the SVI triggered by the preposing of locational or directional adverbs, as the ungrammatical (34b) shows.

These phenomena may also be observed in the following examples discussed in Yang (1986, p. 8).

> (35) a. Not only did they read through the entire manuscript and offer detailed comments on both substance and manner of presentation; they lent much-needed encouragement during those blackest days when it seemed the book would never be possible.
> b. He claimed that not only is the use of meaning a convenient practical procedure but it is a necessity on the theoretical plane as well and that, in fact, his critics themselves did allow facts other than distribution to influence their phonological analyses.

In (35a), the negative constituent *not only* is preposed to the front of the sentence, and thus the auxiliary verb *did*, which is normally unnecessary to appear, comes before the subject *they*. These phenomena are not restricted only to the main sentence, but they may occur in the embedded sentence as shown in (35b).

It is noteworthy that all negative constituents do not always trigger SAI, as shown in Yang (1986, p. 9).

> (36) a. Not long ago {there was, *was there} a rainstorm.
> b. Not much later {they arrived, *did they arrive}.
> c. In no time at all {they had, *had they} routed the enemy.

All the examples in (36) have negative constituents preposed to the front of each sentence. Nevertheless, these sentences become ungrammatical if we invert the subject and auxiliary. This is related to the scope of negation. In other words, negation may have its scope either over the whole sentence or over a local part of the sentence. The former is called clausal negation and the latter local negation. In clausal negation, the subject and auxiliary are inverted, while they are not in local negation. All the negative constituents in (36) belong to local negation, thus not triggering the SAI. They do not trigger the SAI, because their meanings turn into positive ones, rather than negative ones, within their own constituents. At any rate, it is only natural that the local negation does not lead to the major change of the word order, that is, the subject and auxiliary, since it does not have an effect on the whole sentence.

This fact related to negation leads us to assume that the major change of word order, such as SAI, is used only when a speaker needs to give his hearer the information that he is using some constituents differently from

their normal uses.  We may also extend this assumption to the SVI and NDI discussed previously.

## 4.3 The relation between NDI, subject-verb inversion, and subject-auxiliary inversion

 At first glance, NDI, SVI and SAI appear to be separate phenomena. However, if we take a close look at them, we may find that they are closely related to each other. NDI requires the context of negation to be present.  SAI also requires negative constituents to be present.  In this respect, NDI and SAI are very similar. Their major differences are that the former is optional and occurs only in certain dialects, while the latter is obligatory and is not restricted to certain dialects or contexts. In this respect, the latter is a more general rule than the former.

Despite these seeming differences, NDI and SAI have some characteristics in common. First of all, it seems clear that the speaker uses NDI constructions instead of uninverted ones to give special emphasis on particular constituents. In this respect, I think that a speaker who uses both constructions in (37) is likely to prefer the NDI construction (37b) to its uninverted counterpart (37a) when he intends to negate and emphasize the noun phrase following the negative element *not*.

> (37) a. John is not [a very good student].   (=(1a))
>        b. John is not [very good a student].   (=(1b))

In other words, this noncanonical word order in NDI seems to be closely related to a specific function, i.e., Green's (1980) emphatic function. I agree with Green (1980) in that a speaker may take advantage of this noncanonical word order such as NDI to make the sentence do a particular function.

As for the SAI construction, the negative constituent is moved to the front of the sentence from its normal position. This movement occurs only when the speaker intends the sentence to do a special function, and this function seems to be the very function that the NDI does. In other words, the SAI construction shares the emphatic function with the NDI construction. A major difference between these two is that the SAI is obligatory, while the NDI is optional. At any rate, note that the SAI and NDI have different degrees of emphasis on negation. So to speak, the negation in the SAI is stronger than that of the NDI.  This is supported by the fact that the negation in the former triggers SAI, while the negation in the latter does not.

Next, let us examine the relation between the NDI and SVI. These two inversion phenomena are similar in that in the former, the inversion is triggered by the negative element before the noun phrase, whereas in the latter, the inversion is triggered by the preposed locational or directional

adverbial. Another similarity is that the inversion is optional not only in the NDI but also in the SVI.

A major difference is that the former focuses on the negative element, but the latter focuses on the locational or directional adverbial. Another difference is that in the NDI, the inversion has nothing to do with movement. In other words, it takes place not as a result of any movement, but as the effect of the negative element that negates the noun phrase following it. On the contrary, in the case of the SVI, the inversion occurs as a result of the movement of the locational or directional adverbial to the front of the sentence.

## 5 Conclusion

So far, we have examined the characteristics of NDI and its relation with other inversion phenomena such as SVI and SAI. The negative element in the NDI construction may be *not*, a negative adverbial, or a negative verb. In this respect, NDI has similar licensing environments to those of negative polarity items (NPIs). NPIs are licensed only in a negative environment. Borroff (2006) deals with characteristics of NDI in detail, but she does not explain the relation between NDI and other inversion phenomena in English. Therefore, she fails to capture the generality of the two. I have argued that NDI is related to other ICs such as SVI and SAI, focusing on the very nature of these constructions. In English, degree-modified adjectives typically follow the determiner, but they may precede the article in NDI constructions. I have argued that this noncanonical word order is related to a specific function, i.e., Green's (1980) emphatic function. I have also argued that the NDI shares this same function with other ICs, such as the SVI and SAI constructions.  In this respect, the nature of the NDI will be more clearly revealed when we examine these inversion phenomena together, not respectively. Therefore, further studies should be focused on why a speaker uses this noncanonical word order instead of the canonical word order.

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