INVERSION

WE USE INVERSION:

1. For emphasis, using a negative adverb beginning of the sentence or adverbial phrase at the

Hardly, never, seldom, rarely, only then, not only…..but, no sooner, scarcely, only later, nowhere, little, only this way, in no way, on no account

Examples:

Hardly had I got into bed when the telephone rang.

Only then did I understand why the tragedy had happened.

No sooner had we arrived home than the police rang the doorbell.

Little did he know!

In the following expressions, the inversion comes in the 2nd part of the sentence.

Not until: Not until I saw John with my own eyes did I really believe he was safe.

Not since Lucy left college had she had such a wonderful time.

Only after I had seen her flat did I understand why she wanted to live there.

Only when we had all arrived home did I feel calm.

Only by working hard could we afford to eat.

We use inversion when the adverb modifies the whole phrase and not the noun.

Hardly anyone passed the exam. (no inversion)

2. Instead of ‘if’ in conditionals with ‘had’, ‘were’, ‘should’. (Formal)

Normal: If I had been there, this problem wouldn’t have happened.

Inversion: Had I been there, this problem wouldn’t have happened.

3. If we put an adverbial expression of place at the beginning of the sentence (Formal or literary).

**EX.** On the table was all the money we had lost.

**Normal**: All the money we had lost was on the table.

**EX**. Round the corner came all the knights.

**Normal**: All the knights came round the corner.

4. After ‘so + adjective ……. that’

**Ex.** So beautiful was the girl that nobody could talk of anything else.

**Normal:** The girl was so beautiful that nobody could talk of anything else.

**EXERCISE**

1. John had never been to such a fantastic restaurant.

2. I in no way want to be associated with this project.

3. They had o sooner eaten dinner than the ceiling crashed into the dining table.

4. I had scarcely finished writing my essay when the examiner announced the end of the exam.

5. I seldom leave my house so early.

6. People rarely appreciate this musician’s talent.

7. We would understand what had happened that night only later.

8. He understood little about the situation.

9. They had met such rude people nowhere before.

10. The children should on no account go on their own.