

Error Analysis On Inverted Subject And Verb

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Abstract. *This study focused on investigating the grammatical error, especially inverted subject and verb in English language learning. Moreover, the aim of this study was to investigate the errors and the dominant error of types of inverted subject and verb found based on the students' test. The data were collected through quantitative design using survey research method that being tested from non-English department students. The participant of this study are 20 students of the first year of soil science department. The result of this survey shows that almost all of the students makes an error in inverted subject and verb. Most of them get 50% of questions that were answered correctly. Few of them answered correctly more than 50%.*

Keywords: *Error analysis, Inverted subject and verb, grammar.*

Introduction

Nowadays, TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is popular on the students college. This test is used to measure the level of students' understanding in mastering English. In some departments of university, TOEFL is a basic requirement for new students college. The students have to get TOEFL score at least 450. Due to the standard score, some students are bend over backwards to pass the score by keep learning and practicing TOEFL.

Many students make error of grammar because they think that grammar is very difficult one. In line with this, Soskey (2013) stated that grammar is obviously believed that it becomes the most common error. That is why, inverted subject and verb is probably one of the hardest part of the topic in TOEFL and it is said that almost everyone makes error of inverted subject and verb.

Based on the description above, this paper focused on investigating the grammatical error, especially inverted subject and verb. Moreover, the data were collected through the survey that being tested from some non-English department students. The participant are 20 students of the first year of soil science department. Therefore, this paper is conducted to know the errors and the dominant error of types of inverted subject and verb found based on the students' test.

Related Theory

SENTENCES WITH INVERTED SUBJECTS AND VERBS

Subjects and verbs are inverted in a variety of situations in English. Inverted subjects and verbs occur most often in the formation of question. To form a question with a helping verb (be, have, can, could, will, would, etc), the subject and helping verb are inverted.

He can go to the movie.

Can He go to the movie?

To form a question when there is no helping verb in the sentence, the helping verb do/es used.

He goes to the movie.

Does he go to the movies?

There are many other situations in English when subjects and verbs are inverted, but if you just remember this method of inverting subjects and verbs, you will be able to handle the other situations. The most common problems with inverted subjects and verbs on the TOEFL test occur in the following situations:

- 1) with question words such as what, when, where, why, and how.
- 2) after some place expressions.
- 3) after negative expression.
- 4) in some conditionals, and

5) after some comparisons.

INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB WITH QUESTION WORDS

There is some confusion about when to invert the subject and verb after question words, such as *what, when, where, why, and how*. These words can have two different functions in sentence. First, they can introduce a question, and in this case the subject and verb that follow are inverted.

What is the homework ?

When can I leave?

Where are you going?

Also, those words can join together two clauses, and in this case the subject and verb that follow are not inverted.

I do not know what the homework is.

When I can leave, I will take the first train.

Do you know where you are going?

In each of these examples there are two clauses joined by a question word. Notice that the subjects and verbs that follow the question words *what, when, and where* are not inverted in this case.

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in the structure section of the TOEFL test.

Example:

The lawyer asked the client why it.

- a. did he do
- b. did he
- c. he did
- d. did

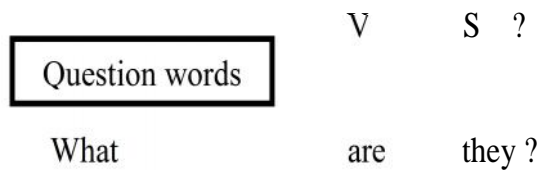
In this example the question word *why* is used to connect the two clauses, so a subject and verb are needed after this connector, this is not

a question, so the subject and verb would not be inverted. The best answer is therefore answer (c).

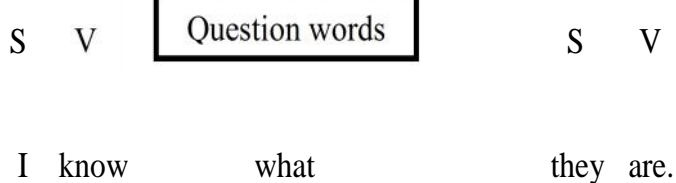
The following chart lists the question words and their sentence patterns:

INVERTED SUBJECT AND VERBS WITH QUESTION WORDS

When the question word introduces a question, the subject and verb are inverted



When the question word connects two clauses, the subject and verb that follow are not inverted.



INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB
WITH PLACE EXPRESSIONS

After ideas expressing place, the subject and the verb sometimes invert in English. This can happen with single words expressing place, such as here, there, or nowhere.

Here is the book that you lent me
There are the keys that I thought I lost

In the first example the place word here causes the subject *book* to come after the verb *is*. In the second example the place word there causes the subject *keys* to come after the verb *are*. In the last example the place word nowhere causes the subject *I* to come after the verb *have*.

The subject and the verb can also be inverted after prepositional phrases expressing place.
In the closet are the clothes that you want
Around the corner is Sam's house
Beyond the mountains lies the town where you will live

In the first example the prepositional phrase of place *in the closet* causes the subject *clothes* to come after the verb *are*. In the

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in the structure section of the TOEFL test.

second example the prepositional phrase of place *around the corner* causes the subject *house* to come after the verb *is*. In the last example the prepositional phrase of place *beyond the mountains* causes the subject *town* to come after the verb *lies*.

It is important (and a bit difficult) to understand that the subject and verb will invert after place expressions at the beginning of a sentence only when the place expression is necessary to complete the sentence. Study the following examples:

In the forest *are* many exotic *birds*.
In the forest I walked for many hours.

In the first example the subject *birds* and verb *are* are inverted because the place expression *in the forest* is needed to complete the idea *many exotic birds are* In the second example the subject *I* and the verb *walked* are not inverted because the idea *I walked for many hours* is complete without the place expression *in the forest*; the place expression is therefore not needed to complete the sentence.

Example:	On the second level of the parking lot
	A) is empty
	B) are empty
	C) some empty stalls are
	D) are some empty stalls

This example begin with the place expression *on the second level of the parking lot* which consists of two prepositional phrases, *on the second level* and *the parking lot*. This sentence needs a subject and a verb to be complete, and the two answers that contain

both a subject *stalls* and verb *are* are answers (c) and (d). The subject and verb should be inverted because the place expression is necessary to complete the idea *some empty stalls are* . The best answer is therefore answer (d).

 INVERTED SUBJECT AND VERB WITH PLACE EXPRESSIONS

When a place expression at the front of the sentence is necessary to complete the sentence. The subject and verb that following are inverted.

PLACE (necessary)	V	S
In the classroom	were	some old desks

When a place expression at the front of the sentence contains extra information that is not needed to complete the sentence, the subject and verb that follow are not inverted.

PLACE	S	V
In the classroom	I	studied very hard

INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB WITH NEGATIVES

The subject and verb can also be inverted after certain negatives and related expressions. When negative expressions, such as no, not, or never, come at the beginning of a sentence, the subject and verb are inverted. Not once did I miss a question.

Never has Mr. Jones taken a vacation.

In the first example the negative expression not once causes the subject *I* to come after the helping verb *did*. In the second example the negative word *never* causes the subject *Mr. Jones* to come after the helping verb *has*. In the last example the negative expression *at no time* causes the subject woman to come after the helping verb *can*.

Certain words in English, such as hardly, barely, scarcely, and only, act like negatives. If one of these words comes at the beginning of a sentence, the subject and verb are also inverted.

Hardly ever does he take time off.

(This means that he almost never takes time off.)

Only once did the manager issue overtime paychecks.

(This means that the manager almost never issued overtime paychecks.)

In the first example the “almost negative” expression hardly ever causes the subject he to come after the helping verb does. In the second example the “almost negative” expression only once causes the subject manager to come after helping verb did.

When a negative expression appears in front of a subject and verb in the middle of the sentence, the subject and verb are also inverted. This happens often with the negative words neither and nor.

I do not want to go, and neither does Tom.

The secretary is not attending the meeting, nor is her boss.

In the first example the negative neither causes the subject Tom to come after the helping verb does. In the second example the negative nor causes the subject boss to come after the verb is.

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in the structure section of the TOEFL test.

Example

Only in extremely dangerous situations _____
stopped.

- a) will be the printing presses
 - b) the printing presses will be
 - c) that the printing presses will be
 - d) will the printing presses be
-

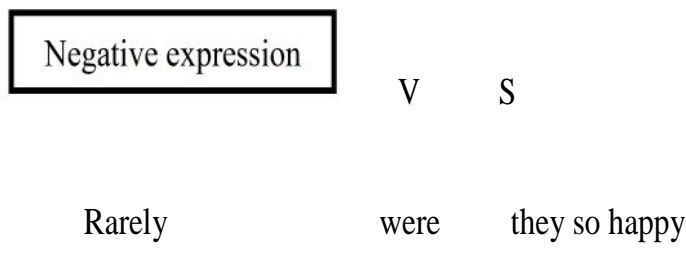
In this example you should notice that the sentence begins with negative only, so the inverted subject and verb are needed. Answer (d) contains a correctly inverted subject and

verb, with the helping verb *will*, the subject *printing process*, and the main verb *be*. So answer (d) is the best answer.

The following chart lists the negative expressions and the sentence pattern used.

INVERTED SUBJECTS AND VERBS WITH NEGATIVES					
no	not	never	neither	nor	
barely	hardly	only	rarely	scarcely	seldom

When a negative expression appears in front of a subject and verb (at the beginning of a sentence or in the middle of a sentence) the subject and verb are inverted.



INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB WITH CONDITIONALS

In certain conditional structures, the subject and verb may also be inverted. This can occur when the helping verb in the conditional clause is *had*, *should*, or *were*, and the conditional connector *if* is omitted. If he had taken more time, the results would have been better. Had he taken more time, the results would have been better. I would help you if I were in a position to help.

I would help you were I in a position to help. If you should arrive before 06:00, just give me a call. Should you arrive before 06:00, just give me a call. In each of these examples you can see that when *if* is included, the subject and verb are in the regular order (*if he had taken, if I were, if you should arrive*). It is also possible to omit *if*; in this case, the subject and verb are inverted (*had he taken, were I, should you arrive*).

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in the structure section of the TOEFL test.

Example: The report would have been accepted _____ in checking its accuracy.

- a) if more care
 - b) more care had been taken
 - c) had taken more care
 - d) had more care been taken
-

In this example a connector (*if*) and a subject and verb are needed, but *if* could be omitted and the subject and verb are inverted. Answer (a) is incorrect because it contains the connector *if* and the subject *more care* but no verb. Answer (b) is incorrect because it contains the

subject *care* and the verb *had been taken* but does not have a connector. In answer (c) and (d), *if* has been omitted. Because it is correct to invert the subject *more care* and the helping verb *had*, answer (d) is correct.

The following chart lists the conditional verbs that may invert and the sentence patterns used with them:

INVERTED SUBJECT AND VERB WITH CONDITIONAL		
had	should	were

When the verb in the conditional clause is had, should, or were, it is possible to omit *if* and invert the subject and verb. (omitted *if*)

Omitted <i>if</i>	S	
Were	he	here, he would help

It is also possible to keep *if*. Then subject and verb are not inverted

If	s v	
If	he were	here, he would help

INVERT THE SUBJECT AND VERB WITH COMPARISONS

An inverted subject and verb may occur also after a comparison. The inversion of a subject and verb after a comparison is optional, rather than required, and it is rather formal structure. There have been a number of inverted comparisons on recent TOEFL tests, so you should be familiar with this structure.

My sister spends more hours in the office *than* John.

My sister spends more hours in the office *than* John does.

My sister spends more hours in the office *than* does John.

All three of these examples contain the comparison more ... than, and all three are correct in English. It is possible to have the noun John alone, as in the first example, it is possible that the comparison is followed by the subject and verb John does, as in the second example; it is also possible that the comparison is followed by the inverted subject and verb does John, as in the third example.

The following example shows how this sentence pattern could be tested in the structure section of TOEFL test.

Example:

The results of the current experiment appear to be more consistent than _____ the results of any previous tests.

- (a) them
- (b) were
- (c) they were
- (d) were they

In this example you should notice the comparison more consistent than, and you should also understand that *the results of the current experiment* is being compared with *the results of any previous tests*. Because *the results of any previous tests* is the subject, only

a verb is needed; the best answer to this question is therefore answer (b). We know that it is possible for a subject and a verb to be inverted after a comparison, and in this case the subject *the results of any previous tests* comes after the verb were.

The following chart lists the sentence patterns used with comparisons:

INVERTED SUBJECT AND VERB WITH COMPARISONS

The subject and verb may invert after a comparisons. The following structure are both possible.

S	V	comparison	S	V
We	were	more prepared than	the other performers	were

S	V	comparison	V	S
We	were	more prepared than	were	the other performers

Analysis

1. Inversion with question words

No	Sentence	Correct answer
1.	Do you know where ... going?	Do you know where <u>you are</u> going?
2.	I do not know where....	I do not know where <u>the book is</u>
3.	There are geographic, economic, and cultural reasons why around the world.	There are geographic, economic, and cultural reasons why <u>diets differ</u> around the world.
4.	How long since you arrived in Indonesia?	How long <u>has it been</u> since you arrived in Indonesia.

In the first sentence, the result of the test showed that in the question number 1, all of the students' answer is incorrect. There are four optional answers for this question; a. you are, b. are you, c. you, d. did you. However, most of the students answer is b, and only one student choose c. The correct answer is a, because *where* here as a question word with function as a connector to join two clauses, so the following sentence is no need to be inverted in this case.

Moreover, in the second sentence the result of the test showed that out of 20 students, only 9 students answer correct. There are four optional answer; a. is the book, b. does the book, c. the book is, d. will the book. Whereas, most of the students answer are a. In this situation, the question word are placed between two clauses. Therefore, the subjects and verbs that follow the question word *where* are not inverted.

In addition, in the third sentence there are two clauses joined by a question word *why*.

It causes the verb *differ* to come after the subject *diets*. In this case only two students answer correct. There are four optional answer; a. diets differ, b. do diets differ, c. are diets different, d. to differ a diet. However, most of the students answer are b.

In the last sentence, the result of the test showed that only 5 students answer incorrect. There are four optional answer; a. has it been, b. does it, c. it has, d. it was. The correct answer is a and most of the students answer the same. In this situation, the word *how* is found at the beginning of a question. That is why, it causes the subject *it* to come after the auxiliary verb *has*.

Based on the data above, most of the students do not know how to distinguish the pattern of inversion after question word. They confuse when to invert the subject and verb after question word such as when, where, why, what, and how. That is why, most of them still doing error in inverted subject and verb after question word.

2. Inversion after places expressions

No	Sentence	Correct answer
5.	There on the corner.	There <u>is a big house</u> on the corner.
6.	In the closet that you want.	In the closet <u>are the clothes</u> that you want.
7.	In the U.S approximately 4 million miles of roads, streets, and highways.	In the U.S <u>there are</u> approximately 4 million miles of roads, streets, and highways.

The test is given to 20 students then the result of the test showed that question number 5 the correct answers consist of 15 students. There are four optional answers for this question; a. a big house, b. is a big house, c. the book is, d. was a big house. The correct answer is b because the inversion is a single word expressing place *there*.

The correct answers of the question number 6 consist of 13 students from 20 students. There are four optional answers for this question; a. is the clothes, b. the clothes are, c. are the clothes, d. that clothes. The correct answer is c, because after prepositional phrases expressing place *in the closet* the subject and the verb are inverted.

3. Inversion after negatives

No	Sentence	Correct answer
8.	Not once..... miss a question.	Not once <u>did I</u> miss a question.
9.	I do not want to go, and neither.....	I do not want to go, and neither <u>does Tom</u> .
10.	Rarely located near city lights.	Rarely <u>are observatories</u> located near city lights.

The question for number 8 is about inversion of subject and verb after negatives. The correct answers consist of 3 students from 20 students in a class. There are four optional answers for this question; a. did I, b. I did, c. I do, d. I does. The correct answer is *d*, it shows that negative expression *not* come at the beginning of the sentence then the subject and the verb are inverted.

The correct answers of the question number 9 consist of 9 students from 20 students. There are four optional answers for this question; a. Tom, b. Tom does, c. which tom, d. does Tom. The correct answer is d, because the words *neither* is found in the middle of a sentence then the subject and the verb that followed them are inverted.

The result of the test showed that the question number 10, the correct answers

The correct answers of the question number 7 consist of 16 students of 20 students. There are four optional answers for this question; a. there, b. is, c. because of, d. there are. The correct answer is d because the question shows the inversion with single words expressing place *there*.

In this situation, more than 15 students are understood about the question of inversion after place expression. They learnt the pattern when they were students at senior high school. However, some students do not understand the question of inversion after place expression. Basically, it is because they do not like English lesson especially grammatical rules such as inversion.

consist of 3 students from 20 students. There are four optional answers for this question; a. observatories are, b. are, c. in the observation, d. are observatories. The correct answer is d, it is because the inversion situation is a single word *rarely* comes at the beginning of a sentence then the subject and the verb are inverted.

The inversion after negatives becomes a problem for the students. It is a difficult question when use this situation for inversion. Less than 10 students cannot answer the questions correctly. The students did not understand how to invert subject and verb after negative expression such as no, not, neither, rarely because their less comprehension about grammatical rules.

There are several problems that make them trouble completing the test. There are

also things that make them easier to solve problems. It is as follows:

a. difficulty:

· They know the pattern of a sentence. However, in the case of an inverted subject and verb, they make the mistake of forgetting the pattern that they already know.

· They are also confused where the supposed position of the subject and the verb, especially after the place Expression and Negatives.

· Confusion also occurs when they encounter problems with Question word. This error occurs because they cannot distinguish Question word as an interrogative sentence or as a conjunction.

b. Ease:

Based on our interviews with correspondents, some of the test questions was easily resolved. They say that they are familiar with the test questions. In addition to ever complete the TOEFL test, some students often encounter a similar sentence. For example, a sentence that contains Place Expression "There is". They can finish it easily without knowing how the rules and patterns of the sentence.

Conclusion

The result of this survey shows that almost all of the students makes an error in inverted subject and verb. Most of them get 50% of questions that were answered correctly. Few of them answered correctly more than 50%. In conclusion, many students of non-English department are still difficult to solve the problems of Inverted Subject and Verb. Most of Them, forgot and not knowing the rules of the pattern should be. Although the answer they give is correct. However, they do not really know the actual sentence patterns just because it sounds familiar with them.

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