

## Dedication

- All Praise to Allah, today we fold the day's tiredness and the errand summing up between the cover of this humble work.
- To my instructor with love and respect.
- To my Parents who taught me the Principles of life.

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## Section one

## 1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with Fronting as one of the English highlighting devices. Fronting means a term we apply to achievement of marked theme by moving into initial position an item which is frequently an entire sentence element. The reason for such process may be to echo thematically what has been contextually given. The effect of Fronting is usually that the fronted element receives special emphasis, often because it contrasts with something mentioned earlier.

In certain cases fronting is accompanied by inversion. Fronting may occur with negative or restrictive elements, such as object(s), complement(s) and adverbials.



This research Paper is divided into three sections. The first deals with the concept of fronting and the information structure. The second presents the fronting elements. The third shows the means of structure highlighting in English among which is the fronting and the relation between fronting and inversion. This paper ends with several conclusions.

## 1-2 Fronting: Definition

Siber et al (1999: 900) state that Fronting refers to the initial Placement of core elements which are normally in Post verbal Position

Quirk et al (1985: 1377) add "Fronting is the term we apply by moving the achievement of marked theme into initial Position item which

otherwise unusual there.

Strunph and Douglas (ND: 299) explain that "Fronting shifts emphasis from the subject to the Fronted element in the sentence for example:

① At the beach, I always fell content

In Spoken English we sometimes want to make a strong contrast with something in previous. This can be accomplished by Fronting some elements of the sentence like object or complement, which makes them turn emphatic.

(Foley and Hall (2003: 322))

For emphasis as Alexander (1988:1) says "Items in a sentence can be put at the front for special emphasis also for conveying new information for example:

② A fine mess you've made of this.

Expressing contrast as of Baker (1992:134) shows that "the effect of thematizing on object or complement in English is to provide contrast and to emphasize the speaker's attitude to the message" for example:

③ Some thing you forget, other things you never do

### 1.3 Fronting and Information Structure

There is a need to understand the normal word order in English, before studying its variations. Bibbe et al (1999: 899) state that there are four ways word order is used as a grammatical signal in English. The first way is that the elements of the clause appear in an arranged order in relation to each other: Subject, verb and its complement



The second way when the independent interrogative clauses are signalled through subject-operator inversion.

There is exception with wh- words as subject.

The third way in which the wh- words are used in initial position, the last way when phrases are normally continuous i.e. the regular word order subject + verb + object.

When the speaker introduces a message in a sentence, this is important to both the speaker and listener to know and understand this point clearly. This is called Focus.

Quirk et al (1973: 408) confirm that focus is related to the difference between given and new information.

Dowling and Locke (1992: 249) claim that each information unit contains obligatory "New" element and optional "given" elements of information. "given" element is concerned with information that has been said before or it can be taken as "known" from context of situation or the context

of culture for example:

U - A - what's new then?

B - Well Jim's bought a new car.

In this example "Jim's" given information "a new car"

New information.

Baker (1992: ) states that, like thematic structure, information structure is feature of the context rather than of the language system. It can only decide what part is new and what part is given within a linguistic or situational context. For example the same message may be segmented differently in response to different questions such as in this example:

③ What's happening tomorrow?

We're climbing Ben Nevis (New)

② What are we doing tomorrow?

We're climbing Ben Nevis.  
given      New



## Section Two

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### 2.1 Fronting element

#### 2.1.1 Fronting objects and complements

Quirk et al (1985: 727-8) and Steedman (2000: 445-483) express some environments which are related to the indirect object

A - Speakers vary in their acceptance of wh-questions in which the wh-interrogative

Pronoun replaces an indirect object - The corresponding Prepositional Phrase is fully acceptable:

- (8) ? Who did the detective show his badge ?
- (9) Who did the detective show his badge to ?
- (10) To whom did the detective show his badge ?  
<informal>

B - Similar variation applies to relative clauses as in:

- (11) ? The person I sent the book has not acknowledged receiving it.

(12) The person to whom I sent the book has not acknowledged receiving it. < informal >

C- It also applies to retained indirect objects in passive clauses as in:

(13) No reply has been given to me.

D- Retained indirect objects are generally restricted to pronouns.

All these constructions have been exemplified by indirect objects with corresponding are less acceptable with other correspondences (e.g. for-phrase) or no correspondences (ibid)

In instances where the passive is inapplicable because the object is a coordinate clause a coordinate clause with a pro-form and making the second clause passive.

what (ed) does (op) the buzzer(s) signal?

(Quirk 1985:230)

(14) Very good lesson we had yesterday (Fronting object)

(15) Strange people they are (Fronting subject)

Complement)

(16) The question we have already discussed at some length (Fronting object)

(17) What I am going to do next I just don't know

(Fronting object)

(Ibid).

Detached Fronted objects is common in informal

speech, we put the object at the front of a

sentence, and then repeat it with a pronoun as in these two sentences:

(18) The couple we met in Berlin, we don't want

to send them a card. do we?

(19) One of my brothers, his wife's a singer, he says.

(PoS Va 1986:6)



(20) I asked whether he was there and his Parents asked too.

(21) Whether he was there, that was asked by his Parents.

The identification of the direct object can be tested in an independent declarative clause through a wh-question with WHO or WHAT.

FRONTING of the wh-item and subject-operator inversion are required.

(22) The buzzer signals the end of the game.

## 2.1.2 Fronting adjectives and verbs

These are possible in a structure with as or though.

For example:

(23) Fast as though she drove, she couldn't catch them.

(24) Try as she might, she simply couldn't open the Jam Jar.

(Popova, 2006: 6)

Concerning Phrasal verbs, Quirk et al (1985: 1163-6) and Steedman (2000: 33) state that in this process (Fronting) we are concerned with Phrasal verbs such as call on, put up with. How are we to choose between the two analyses of the criteria of question

forms that of SVO (with a Prepositional phrase may be fronted as a question for example:

(25) He called on the dean  
on whom did he call? (Ibid 1166).

An additional remark of Phrasal verbs is our unwillingness to have the Prepositional cut off from the lexical verb by fronting the whole Prepositional phrase in wh-question and relative clauses for example:

(26) A: ? \* After whom did she look?

A: who(m) did she look after? } B - she  
looked after Jim

(27) A: with whom did she agree? } B - she  
who(m) did she agree with?

agreed with Jim

(Ibid)

We can sometimes Front a verb phrase by turning it in to a Participle and adding the verb 'be' with the original subject coming after be. This often happens with Prepositional Phrases of Place and movement. It is often used to set the scene in narratives. So 'be' is usually in Past Simple  
For example:

(28) Parked in the drive way was a large car.

The first important thing that a fronted element could not be headed by auxiliary For example:

(29) They swore that Lee might have using heroin, and

A - Using heroin he might have been.

B - Been using heroin he might have.

C - Have been using heroin he might.

It is possible to place in front of the subject the main verb



Biber et al (1999: 905) say that there are three types of non-finite verb forms. The first type have infinitive, ing participle and ed-participle.

When the main verb moved to the beginning of the sentence, infinitive may be moved to the beginning of the clause when the speaker repeat a previous verb for example:

③⑦ I had said he would come down and come down he did.

Fronted infinitive predicates may be explicitly cohesive and emphasize and not provide new information.

In other situation fronted infinitive not repeat a previous verb for example:

③⑧ work I must and for money.

Fronted-ed predicates.

Fronting of ed- and ing predicates is accompanied by inversion of the subject and the non-fronted portion of the verb phrase

For example:

(32) A closed is a card for our Permanent Signature File which we request you to sign and return to us.

Fronted - Predicates regularly.

ends with new information and open with given information.

Fronted ing - Predicates.

As with Fronted ed - Predicates Fronted ing - Predicates

Open with given information and ends with new information.

(Biber et al., 1999: 906)

2.1.3 Fronting Adverbial.

Quirk et al. (1985: 251-2) state that there is

another factor conditioning the placement

of adverbials which is similar to

the subject attachment rule and

hence affects especially those

adverbials that have a close

elliptically expressed relation to a particular element of clause structure. The following sentences illustrate the statement above ?

In search of a new house, the evening papers turned out to be of little use to Patricia and her husband

To Patricia and her husband, in search of a new house, the evening paper turned out to be of little use.

The misplacement of adverbials is particularly serious where the result happens to be a perfectly acceptable and comprehensible sentence, but not with the meaning that was intended.

Entirely in the spirit of the protective support,

③ Could I suggest you pass on an appropriate

③ Comment to the person concerned ?



Enquiry showed that the writer had not intend  
a suggestion that might protect and support either  
her or the addressee! She was suggesting that  
the addressee extend his "Protective support" to  
the 'Personal concerned'

As in the previous sentence, misplacement often  
occurs where the originator is actually taking  
some care to achieve a certain balance in a  
complicated sentence. The following sentence is  
another illustration of this!

Along with Aristotle, Shaw, and William  
Golding, Bob Dixon finds it impossible to  
approve writers like Leon Garfield, in my view  
one of the best children's authors.

Although the syntax suggests quite  
otherwise, what the reviewer apparently intended

was!

Bob Dixon Finds it impossible to approve writers like Leon Garfield along with Aristotle, Shaw and William Golding. Yet in my view, Garfield is one of the best children's authors.

It is easy to understand why the writer would have found this version less satisfying than his own, which seeks to achieve a fine irony by fronting the list of great writers who are apparently the writer's hope to append his own opinion neatly, economically, and even climactically after the first (and by this device, the only) mention of Garfield.

(Quirk et al, 1985: 651-2)

There's two types of opening adverbials that are used in dramatic narration to emphasise a sudden change or event!

A - opening place adverbial such as:-

②④ [Here] 's the boy  
[Here] comes the first question

[There] 's the dog. Call the dog.

13. Opening time adverbial such as:

③⑤ [Then] came the turning point of the match [Now]  
Most of these adverbials imply reference back to  
preceding, given, information.

There's another type of opening adverbial in  
academic prose, where there is less scope for  
place description and narration for example;

③⑥ [Within the general waste type shown  
in these figures] exists a wide variation  
(ACAD).

2.1.4 Fronting comparative clauses

Quirk et al (1985: 1111) state that

proportional clauses involve a kind

of comparison. They express



a proportionality or equivalence or tendency or degree between two situations introduced by *as*, with or without correlative *the*... *the* followed by comparative forms:

- ③⑦ As he grew disheartened, (so) his work deteriorated.
- ③⑧ The more she thought about it, the less she liked it.
- ③⑨ The harder he worked, the happier he felt.

Quirk et al (1985:1111)

The fronting of the comparative elements results in the kind of syntactic ordering found in relative and interrogative clauses.

## 3-1 Grammatical Highlighting.

There are grammatical devices for highlighting

specific elements in the sentence like Fronting, cleft sentence and extra position.

## 3-1-2 Fronting.

This process involves moving an object or complement

or another's elements from its usual position to the initial

position, the speaker gives prominence to this part of the

message, i.e. he instructs the listener to pay attention to it,

Highlighting by means of fronting, fronting is common

if the speaker can establish direct linkage with the

preceding part of a conversation or of his own message

(Bach and Davidson-Nielsen (1997: 114)).

The elements that can be moved to the front

of sentence are object or complement for example;

① "Object" A great deal of publicity the book

received in China.

② "Complement" A well publicized the book was

(Baker 1992: 133).

### 3-1-2 Clefting.

The effect of cleft-structure is to focus on one element, Downing and Locke (1992: 219) explain that "In clefting, the speaker organizes the content of a clause to two related parts

There are two types of cleft sentence, It cleft and wh cleft.

#### a- It cleft

Special construction of its form, the subject pronoun 'it' as an empty theme followed by the verb 'be' then a clause begins with a relative pronoun such as who, that and what. For example

① It's money (that) they want.

Quirk et al (1973: 415) show that it is possible to derive four cleft sentences, each highlighting a particular element of the clause  
Subject as focus.



For example

(43) It was JOHN who that wore his best suit to the DANCE last night.

Direct object as Focus

(44) It was his best suit (that) John wore to the DANCE last night.

Adverb of time as Focus

(45) It was last night (that) John wore his best suit to the DANCE

Adverb of Place as Focus

(46) It was to the DANCE that John wore his best suit Last night.

Indirect object as Focus.

(47) It was John (that) he gave the book

Object complement as Focus

(48) It's dark green that we've painted the kitchen

B. PSEUDO - cleft sentence

wh - cleft. This type of sentence makes clear the division between two parts, given and new parts.

Quirk et al (1973:418) state that Pseudo-cleft sentence like sentence proper. This type of sentence occurs with wh-clause as subject for example:  
what you need most is good rest.

In wh clause of the Pseudo-cleft sentence (Ibid: 418) Progressive or Perfective aspect in the original sentence is regularly represented for

example:

(49) They are ruining the economy

- what they are doing is ruining the economy

Both types gives certain elements strong focus for

example:

(50) It's money (that) they want → (it cleft)

what they need is money (wh-cleft)

In previous example the two sentences give money

strong focus in It cleft sentence has the focus near

the beginning of the first unit while wh-cleft

Sentence has the Focus at the end of First unit.

### 3.1.3 ExtraPosition.

Quirk et al (1973: 423) state that "the term ExtraPosition

ExtraPosition is used for Post Ponement which involves

the Placement of the Post Poned element especially a

nominal clause by a substitute"

There are certain types of Subject usually moved to

the end of Sentence as Downing and Locke (1992: 260)

Say Finite that clauses, wh-nominal clauses can

all be shifted to the end of the Sentence and replaced

by 'anticipatory' it in subject Position For example:

(51) To interfere would be unwise.

It would be unwise to interfere.

ExtraPosition Serve the two principles of end-Focus

and end-weight. Hark the effect of moving an element

From its Position to the end of Sentence, therefore



different types for example:

### 3-2 Fronting and Inversion

The term inversion from Latin *inversio*, 'inversion' 'turning around' is used in grammar to refer to a reversal, of syntactic constituents. This may be illustrated by an interrogative sentence like 'was it disappointing in which the predicator precedes'.

(Bache and Davidson-Nielsen (1995:116))

Hewings (2005:198) explain that "In statements, it is usual, for the verb to follow the subject, but sometimes this word order is reversed, we can refer to this as inversion".

There are two main types of inversion when the verb before, the subject inversion is often optional and when the auxiliary comes before the subject and the rest of the verb phrase follows the subject inversion is necessary for example:

③② Her Father stood in the doorway.

- In the doorway stood her father.

③③ He had rarely seen such a sunset.

Rarely had he seen such a sunset.

Inversion brings about Fronting, the re-ordering of information to give emphasis to a particular place (Hewings, 2005: 198)

Also we put the verb before the subject when we use adverb of direction of movement such along, back, down. This type is found in narrative, to mark change in events. For example:

③④ The door opened and in came the doctor.

Bach and David sen - Nielsen (1993: 118) state that depending on whether it is the entire Predicator or only part of it (the operator) which changes place with the subject we distinguish between full inversion

and Partial inversion.

a. Full inversion, which is often optional and it can be illustrated by the following example.

(35) In rhyme and rhythm resides a certain magic power.

b. Partial inversion, which is usually obligatory for

example

(36) Only with difficulty had Lily explained her conduct to her parents.



#### 4. Conclusions.

The research has come up with the following

conclusions:

- 1- Fronting is restricted to declarative main clauses.
- 2- The main discourse functions of Fronting is organizing information flow to achieve cohesion and shed emphasis to a particular elements in sentences
- 3- In some cases fronting is accompanied by inversion
- 4- Fronting adverbials is commonly used in academic prose, specifically those called opening adverbials. For place description and narration
- 5- Fronting serves the purpose of establishing narrative continuity that makes it very common in texts which recounts series of events like literary texts

2. Fronting is used for emphasizing a sudden change of events that's why it is desirable in dramatic narration as in news cast and novels.

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