

## A Contrastive study of 'Inversion' in Modern English and Modern Arabic Poetry

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### **Abstract:**

The present paper respects 'inversion' as a habit of arranging the language of modern English and Arabic poetry. Inversion is a significant phenomenon generally in modern literature and particularly in poetry that it treats poetic text as it is a violator to the ordinary text.

The paper displays the common patterns and functions of inversion which are spotted in modern English and Arabic poetry in order to show aspects of similarities and differences in both languages. It concludes that inversion is most commonly used in English and Arabic poetry in which it may both satisfy the demands of sound correspondence and emphasis.

English and Arabic poetic languages vary in extent to their manipulation of inverted styles as they show changeable frequencies of inversion.

Finally, it is notable to mention other significant complementary roles of inversion in this paper as: to shape the aesthetic and the semantic indication, to add ambiguity and lay out to the poems, to represent the state of the poet in writing, and to modify the context. The manipulation of inversion as an information – packaging mechanism (end focus and new information) is also another compatible aspect of inversion in both languages.

Key words: inversion, English poetry, Arabic poetry, phonic, emphatic

### **-Introduction:**

Crystal (1980:184) believes that "the process or result of a syntactic change in which a specific sequence of constituents is seen as the reverse of another is 'inversion'. Accordingly, Penhallurik (1984:47) points out that the function of the sentence –initial position –usually reversed for the subject – which is used in English to mark that something is 'in focus' invariably is then ascribed to another sentence constituent, that is fronted and marked to be the pivot of the attention of the speaker.

In poetry, language is put to be used for its semantic and aesthetic qualities. Furthermore, poetry is categorized from prose, but such forms as prose, poetry and poetic prose reside in the interstices between the two.

Taking into consideration the poetic language in serious , it is possible to be explained as a language in which the sound of the words is implied to an important equal according to their meaning and according to their importance of grammar. When regarding the Arabic language , what seems noteworthy is the fact that Arabic has certain occasions in which certain grammatical elements are inverted owing to some syntactic restrictions (الرازي، 1997:189).

Finally, it is possible to say that 'inversion' is a compelling category in the language of poetry in specific , and in literature in general . To the best knowledge of the researcher , no paper has tackled this topic under this domain before . So it is time to pay attention to this category and to treat it as an eventful aspect in poetry.

In this respect , The paper tries to respond to the following :

- 1- Does inversion represent the significant category in Modern English and Modern Arabic poetic languages?
- 2- What are the common patterns and functions which are illuminated in both Modern English and Modern Arabic ?
- 3-What are the similar and different aspects of patterns and functions which are occupied by Modern English and Modern Arabic poetic languages?

### **1-Inversion in English:**

Thakur (1997:88) states that "English relies heavily on word order and word-class membership as the markers of syntactic relationship between the word in a sentence". Nevertheless , word order can be reversed depending on certain restrictions governed by rules to form a phenomenon known as 'inversion'.

The most common word order of the basic parts of a sentence in English is subject + verb + object (S + V + O). This means that the subject comes before the verb in all but a few special situations the word order of the basic parts is inverted and results that the verb is placed before the subject (King, 1996:244). On Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary," inversion is defined as a reversal of position, order, form, or relationship: as a change in normal word order; the placement of a verb before its subjects" (Webster, 1993:Int.).

Galperin ( 1977:203) in his book "Stylistics" makes a very clear definition of stylistic inversion is that: "Unlike grammatical inversion, stylistic inversion does not change the structural meaning of the sentence, that is, the change in the juxtaposition of the members of the sentence does not indicate structural meaning but has some superstructural fun action". He (Ibid.) adds that stylistic inversion aims at attaching additional emotion coloring to the surface meaning of the utterance or attaching logical stress. Accordingly , a specific intonation pattern requires the inevitable satellite of inversion.

**2-Kinds of Inversion in English:**

Based on Michael Swan's book (1995) *Practical English Usage*, there are two kinds of inversion:

**1-Subject-Operator Inversion:**

**a**-Inversion in Questions: the possible inversion is only on direct question. In indirect question, normal word order (Subject +verb +object) is required as follows:

1. The reports want to know when *the president will give his address*.

On the other hand, Greenbaum and Quirk (1990:34) affirm that interrogatives are always formed by means of placing the verb initially before the subject :

2. His brothers have arrived. *Have his brothers arrived?*

**b**-Exclamations: exclamations often have the same structure as a negative question( Swan ,1996:288)

3. *Isn't it* cold? (negative question)

4. *Isn't it* cold! (exclamation). Inversion is sometimes found in exclamation after 'how' and 'what', in an old fashioned literary style :

5. How beautiful *are the flowers!*

**c**-With 'may':

6. *May he* rot in hell!

**d**-After 'so', 'neither /nor':

7. I am hungry. So *am I*.

8. I do not like opera. Neither *do I*

The structure is used also with non-auxiliary 'be' and 'have',

9. I was confused, and so *were the others*.

**e**-After negative and restrictive : "if a negative adverb or adverbial expressions is put at the beginning of a clause for emphasis, it is usually followed by verb +subject." These are structure are rather formal (Swan :288).

10. At no time *was he aware* of what was happening there.

After restricted word like (hardly, little, seldom, and never) and after expression containing 'only', inversion is also used. Those structures are formal or literary :

11. Hardly *had they* arrived when trouble started.

12. Only then *did I* understand what you mean.

Quirk et al., (1985:1382) point out that inversion usually happens when an object phrase is fronted preceded by 'only':

13. Only one more point *will I* make.

**f**- In informal and literary conditional clauses : subject- operator inversion is typical in a literary and elevated style of persuasion (Ibid. :1006).

14. If *she were* my friend, I would help her. (Were she my friend, I would help her).

The verbs that permit the inversion are 'had' , 'subjunctive were' , 'could' , 'might'. In such cases 'if' is omitted .Consider the following :

15. **Had I** been less forthright, I would have acquired more support.

(If I had been less...).

**g-** Inversion is used when 'not' and 'object' are put at the beginning of the sentence for emphasis(Quirk et al.,1985 :289)

16. Not a single word **did she** say.

**h.** After 'so' (emphasizing 'so' in a literary style) and after 'as' , and 'than'.

17. So ridiculous **did she** look that everybody burst out laughing.

**i.** With 'may' in wishes:

18.**May he** rot in hell.

## **2-Subject-Main verb Inversion:**

**a-**When an adverb like 'in' , 'down' , 'out' and 'up' is situated at the beginning of a sentence for focus (emphasis) , the verb is placed before the subject. Swan(1996: 289) points out that "when an adverbial expressions of place or direction comes at the beginning of a sentence , intransitive verbs are often put before their subjects " :

19. On the grass , **sat an enormous frog**.

**b-** The subject often comes after reporting verbs like 'said' , 'asked' 'suggested' etc . This happens in story telling as follows:

20. What do you mean ? **Asked Henry**.

**c-**Inversion after adverbial of time: adverbials of time are followed by subject-main verb inversion in which case the main verb is 'be'. This type also forms a link with point (a) before. This is illustrated in this example:

21. That was the final installment. Next **is the news**.

In general , 'adverbial fronting' which is an adverb or phrase with an adverbial meaning is put in initial position . This pattern puts a little more emphasis on the word or the phrase which was fronted. It also provides a logical transition from one sentence to another.

**d-**Directional and locative prepositional phrases :

22. Into the room **ran a king penguin**.

23. In the garden **stands an oak tree**.

24. Upon the ceiling **was found a strange stain**.

"With such prepositions , the subject-verb inversion occurs if the locational or directional phrase occurs first in the sentence , and it indicates existence of the subject with respect to the speaker's point of view". (Swan, 1996:138 ; Quirk et.al ,1985:62-63).

## **3 -The Phonic function of inversion in literary texts and poetry :**

To emphasize certain words just like in common speech , authors employ inversion in their works. This explains that the reader takes more notice when the natural flow of language is formed. It is also

more familiar to find inversion in poetry than in prose because there the unnaturalness of inversion lends itself well to creating a poetic lilt. In order to create a rhyme or to upload a meter which would not work with the syntactically correct word order of words, poets might also choose to use inversion. Consider the following poem by Dylan Thomas:

**25. *Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright***

The frail deeds might have danced in a green bay.

Rage rage against the dying of the light.

Thomas in this first line has inverted the whole order of the line for the purpose of both emphasizing and meeting the demand of rhyme: 'how bright good men crying by the last wave.

**26. *I think I hear beyond the walls***

*The sound of late birds singing*

*Ah, what a sadness those dim calls*

*To city streets are bringing*

This is another case of inversion by Wallace Stevens, 'A Window in the Slums'. Stevens traces in this stanza the inversion of subject-verb for the purpose of rhyme: the sound singing of the late bird. This is employed to correspond with 'bringing' in the last line of this stanza: ABAB.

**4-Emphatic inversion in English:**

"Emphatic inversion is a syntactic stylistic device consisting in the placing of a word or a phrase in an unusual position in a sentence" (Lehtsalu et al., 1973:58-60). Emphatic inversion differs from grammatical inversion, i.e., from inversion required by the grammatical structure of a given type of sentence. It (grammatical inversion) has no stylistic function. Consider the following example that the predicate may be inverted:

27. Nice kind of visitor I am, ***aren't I?***

28. Strange is ***the heart of woman.*** (inversion is in the whole compound predicate)

The inversion of the simple verbal predicate also serves to lay the emphatic stress on the subject as in this example:

29. ***Came frightful*** days of snow and rain.

If the subject is a personal pronoun no inversion of the predicate takes place:

30. Nearer and nearer they came.

In this respect, Gray (1975:9) believes that emphatic inversion occurs frequently in imaginative writings as poetry and to a lesser extent in publicistic style. But it is not significant in scientific prose or official style.

31. Some of them are very beautiful, but most important ***are their*** fascinating detail and accuracy. (Inversion after Preposed Adjective

Phrase) The inversion exemplified in (31) is "emphatic" as well , but basic of this emphaticness appear to lie more in the structure of the sentence than in structure of the discourse.( Green , 1978:24)

We often use inversion for general emphasis with phrases that use 'only':

32. Only in this way *do we* stand any chance of success.

The object of the sentence is frequently inverted :

33. Not *one word did she* say and not one word would she say.

Inversion brings about 'fronting', the re-ordering of information in a sentence to give emphasis in a particular place. Often this causes an element to be postponed until later in the sentence, focusing attention on it. Generally , "a word may become emphatic when it occurs in any unusual position. A prepositive attribute being turned to a postpositive one can also be emphatic inversion in the boarder sense of the word" as follows: ( Lehtsalu et al., 1973:60)

34. *A lady so graceful* ... will look leniently on the deficiencies here.

### 5-Inversion in Arabic Language:

One characteristic of Arabic language is the possibility of inverting sentence elements. It enables a speaker or writer to invert whatever he/she wishes for purposes of meaning, or order of importance, or chronological order. However, there are cases where inversion does not occur. That is, the normal position of a sentence element is retained. Inversion is found in both grammar and rhetoric; with differences of meaning in each separate area.

لاشين (1980) points out that since Arabic language has this freedom within the frame of the sentence , this has resulted in a variety of Arabic statements and arts. One of the rhetorical means Arab poets have employed is the inversion where it has been used by both poets and authors to move their audience feelings by communicating meaning in a distinguished structure and short way as well.

" inversion is not used for attracting attention or taking care of , but to release meaning and control semantics". Inversion plays artistic and semantic functions because by changing the sentence structure , the semantics of the sentence changes also ( Ibid.) .

### 6-Kinds of Inversion in Arabic :

صادق (1998:115) believes that :

**a.** Subject-verb inversion is resort to change the statement from verbal to nominal as follows ( قباني ، 1982:46-48) :

1. *والشعر .. يسأل عن قصيدتها التي لم تكتمل كلماتها..*

And poetry is asking about her poem whose words are not yet completed

2. *أشكو لنفسي من همٍّ يُورِّقني.. والنَّاسُ في ليلهم هاموا بأفراح.*

To myself I complain of a care that makes me sleepless,  
whereas people overjoyed in their night.

**b.** Subject – object inversion : القزويني (1989:207) states that the object is fronting on the subject because of its importance and cared for" (fronting the object to show that the action is done on the verb of the subject not the subject itself)" as in the following :

3. **وقلب إذا سيم الأذى شب وقده ... أبت لي حمل الضيم نفس أبية**

A Heart if inflicted with torture, then inflamed with fury,  
A dignified soul made me abstain surrender

4. **انا جلبت الهوى حتى بليت به وخاض بحر الهوى قلبي وجثماني**

I brought love till I was inflicted with it,  
Then my heart and body roamed the sea of love!

In the example (4) , the poet indicates to separate between the verb and the object is to make dullness in producing the words.

**c.**Inversion of the adverbial phrases(place and time) and the prepositional phrases (fronting the prepositional phrase on the rest of the sentences for concentration and to avoid dullness as follows (صادق، 1998:115)

5. **من /جاءك قدمت** For you I came

6. **في كل ركن .. انت حمامة كعصفور** In all corners, you are a sparrow-like dove .

7. **هناك .. كنت تطالعين ..** As the poet says:

There. . . you were looking

There. . . you were like a palm-tree, combing your hair

**هناك .. كنت كنخلة تتمشطين**

In example (6) , the poet made from this fronting a new phase of the poem . This explains his care of the place and the time in his poetic construction ( قباني ، 1982:35-36) .

**d.** Fronting prepositional phrase on the verb and the subject as follows(شوقي، 1993:76)

8. **بهن يباهي بطن حواء ، واحتوى عليهن بطن الارض وهو فخور.**

With them, Eve's womb brags, and

The Earth's womb proudly carries [contains] them

**e.** Fronting the 'adjective' on the 'described' in order to highlight the meaning and to attract the attention (الطرابلسي، 1981:287) . The described is fronted for the sake of rhyme .Consider the following example:

9. **ذكروك بالمئة السنين وانها عمر لمثلك في النجوم قصير.**

They reminded you with the one hundred years, though they are

Too short a lifetime for the likes of you

**f.**Fronting the predicate on the subject : when the subject is an indefinite element having its predicate and adverb (prepositional phrase) preceding ( الواسطي ، 1979:14-15) . Consider the following example:

10. **في القلب كنز شباب لانفاذ له يعطي ويزداد مازدادت عطاياه**

In the heart, an everlasting treasure of youth is there... It gives and increases, so long as his gifts increase!

**g.** When the sentence is negated , the subject occurs normally before the predicate:

11. **لاحق لك في هذا.** You have no right in this

**h.** Inversion in exclamatory construction( Ibid.)

12. **ياجمال هذه الزهرة !** How beautiful this flower!

**i.** Verb- object inversion: the object is fronted on the verb for the sake of itemization as follows: (كسار: 2012:49)

13. **وماؤك يستغيث ... الفراغ** your water is calling for help. The place.

**j.** Verb- adverb inversion for the sake of specification if the verb is acting: : Consider the following example. (Ibid.) .

14. **مخلصا زيد دعا :**

Faithfully , calls Zayd.

### 7-The Phonic Function of Inversion in Arabic Poetic Texts :

Poetic license can be illustrated in the study of various sentence structures such as inversion which means a contextual movement , therefore it becomes a significant feature of poetry . Structure movement depends upon the relations among words which may contribute to the poetic –license generating (ابن منظور ,1997:299-300)

Inversion according to Jean Cohen, is based on the moving away from the base which affects words order in a way that the poet deliberating moves the words from their original positions to new ones. Here, he inverts what should be delayed to the beginning as the complement or the object , and delays what should be put to the beginning such as the noun or verb. The aim behind this inversion is to achieve artistic or aesthetic purposes(الرواشده ,2004:186-188) .Moving the words horizontally , upwards , or downwards helps greatly to show the creative aspect of the language rather than the pragmatic one as follows:

15. **صفات بلغتك ذرى المعالي** كذلك ترفع الرجل الصفات

Traits that crowned you at the peaks of peaks

As such man is raised by the Traits

There is subject – object inversion : (ترفع الصفات الرجل) . The poet by this inversion tries to keep the subject (الصفات) at the beginning and the end of this section in this stanza and keeps it prominent by repeating it ( شوقي :1993,44).

Arab critics have been aware that rhythm results from inversion , and realized that it is a means an artist (a poet) uses to give his text beauty, rhythm , and attraction in order to move feelings. This could be achieved by placing the suitable word in its suitable position where words mix together to gain aesthetic values . Consider the following examples (Ibid:16) .

16. *تسمع الارض قيصر ا حين تدعو وعقيم من اهل مصر الدعاء*

The land may hear Caesar when he cries

But the Call from the people of Egypt is barren

17. *لما اناخت على تامورك انفجرت ازكى من الورد، او من مائة الورد*

When it kneeled down at your overflowing fountain

It bursts with (water) sweeter than the flowers, flowers' and nectar .

In example (16) , the poet has postponed the subject (الدعاء) to create rhyme. Example (17) indicates the inversion of the subject (الورد) to rhyme with (مائة الورد) and to produce end – focus of the stanza.

Grammarians believe that the object is postponed on the verb for keeping speech system . ( مكرم ، 1992 :9-10 )

### 8- English Data Analysis :

The researcher has gathered 15 English Modern Poems to be analyzed in terms of the forms and functions of inversion :

#### 1- "At Grass" by Philip Larkin

Summer by summer all stole away,

The starting –gate , the crowd and cries-

All but the un molesting meadows,

**Almanacked , their names live ;they**

The inverted syntax which is in the last line here is part of the subdued and delaying echo of the verse. The bold types of this poem indicate the inversion in the order of the words to show that the change in meter makes us hear and see it. It is clear that how aspects of meaning in poetry are indicated through metrical effects.

#### 2- " Any one Lived in a Pretty How Town " by E. E. Cummings

**anyone lived in a pretty how town**

(with up so floating many bells down)

spring summer autumn winter

**he sang his didn't he danced his did.**

Women and men(both little and small)

cared for anyone not at all

**they sowed their isn't they reaped their same**

sun moon stars rain

Cummings plays on word –order of this poem . The readers are reminded that the normal linear word order in English locks our thinking about time and space into a mode which past. Syntactical inversion in which Cummings first became famous is evident throughout 'anyone lived in a pretty how town' . Inverted style by Cummings stated from the title itself that he delayed 'how' to the end of the sentence and then continued inversion to achieve rhyme scheme of the poem till the rest of the stanza.

#### 3-'Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening' by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are **I think I know**.

His house is in the village **though**;

He will not see me stopping here

To watch his woods fill up with snow.

Consider the first two lines of this stanza. Frost has inverted the words to make the two lines rhyme. Although , the inverted word order does not change much , it does establish some of this meaning by putting things 'off-kilter' to begin with. The poet has delayed 'I think I know' (verbal clause) to create the internal rhyme that is kind of sleepy , lulling the reader in .

#### 4- '*Absence*' by **Walter De La Mare**

Absence will meet you anywhere

Mute lips , dark eyes , and phantom brow.

I warned you not to invite in ghost;

No power **have I** to evict them now.

De La Mare has fronted the verb 'have' on the subject as unusual structure of English sentence. As a result, the poet is giving emphasis to himself as the doer of the action in this poem . All in all, there is a self reflexive view that De La Mare is trying to depict by inversion. Looking thoroughly to the whole poem , the reader is easily to realize the juxtaposition of the ideas in this poem that it is accomplished with inversion. .

#### 5- '*All That's Past*' by **Walter De La Mare**

Very old **are the woods**;

And the buds that break

Out of the brier's boughs,

Very old **are we** men;

Our dreams are tales

Told in dim Eden

By Eve's nightingales

This is a another poem by De La Mare, that the inverted words subject/verb are existed in these two stanzas. This poem inhabits a mysterious world where ideas are transformed into a dreamy landscape of the imagination. The poet utilizes two kinds of inversion in this poem . So, the poem talks about many aging things and here when everything gets old, it holds value, but it's also tainted through experience, and just as all things live, they must also die. This is why the poet has inverted 'the woods' 'we' and has fronted the adjective 'very old' to achieve this purpose. In any case, the richly evocative voice, the metrical inventiveness and syntactical inversion , the lovely imaginative power and slightly dated locutions, the archaic charm of a world steeped in mystery, are to be encountered in the first, enchanting stanza of "All That's Past".

**6- 'The Dead Crab' by Andrew Young**

A rosy shield upon its black,  
 That **not** the hardest storm could crack,  
 From whose sharp edge projected out  
 Ban pin-point eyes staring about;  
 Beneath, the well-knit cote-armure  
 That gave to its weak belly **power**;  
 The clustered legs with plated joints  
 That ended in stiletto points;

Line two of this poem has a syntactic manipulation through the inversion of the word 'not'. It should be written as 'that the hardest storm could not crack'. The poet's inversion here makes it obvious that he uses linguistic exploitation in order to achieve stress i.e., as his manipulation does make the line sound more emphatic. . Another manipulation of syntactic inversion is seen in line six of this poem with the word 'power'. Syntactically, the line should be written as 'that gave power to its weak belly'. However, the inversion makes the word 'power' the emphasis of that line, employing the principle of end-focus. Inverted words effectively illustrate the stress, especially when coupled with a corresponding rhyme in the other line of the poem.

**7-'Dream Forest' by Donald Davie**

Classic, romantic, realist,  
 These **have I** set up,  
 These **have I** set, and a few trees,  
 When will a grove grow over this mile upon mile of moor?

Out of classic, romantic, realist, the poet has set up 'a few trees' like smoothness, order, and simplicity which are required in the present generation. Inversion here is stated as new information which is given by postponed subject 'I'. This is subject-verb inversion.

**8- 'Do not go gentle into that good night' by Dylan Thomas**

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,  
 Because their words had forked no lightning **they**  
 Do not go gentle that good night.  
 And you, my father, there on the sad height,  
 Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, **I pray**.

Many years later when the father lay on his deathbed, Dylan Thomas wrote a poem that captures the profound sense of empathy he felt for the dying old man. The poet here reverses the usual order and shifts the emphasis to the more important words. In these lines he calls attention to the swiftness of his knowledge and the power of his certainty. There are two syntactic manipulation in these lines: 'they, pray'. They are inverted to employ end focus in one and rhyming in

the other.

**9- 'An August Midnight' by Thomas Hardy**

Thus *meet we* five, in this still place,  
At this point of time, at this point in space.  
My guests parade my new-penned ink,  
Or bang at the lamp-glass, whirl, and sink.  
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. Yet why?  
They know Earth-secrets that know not I

As this is a reflective stanza , Hardy goes as far as to mock people who consider them 'God's humblest'. He explains his reverence for them in the last line "'they know earth- secrets that know not I'. Two inversions are occurred in this stanza . The first line indicates subject-verb inversion for emphasis , whereas the last line shows subject- verb inversion is manipulated for the sake of rhyming : 'why/ I'.

**10- 'Winter' by Walter De La Mare**

Thick *draws the dark*,  
And spark by spark,  
The frost-fires kindle, and soon  
Over that sea of frozen foam  
Floats the white moon.

The poet here simply explains 'winter' . Every word is so simplified to explain itself. What concerns this stanza is that the poet inverted subject- verb by fronting the adjective 'thick' to give double emphasis to the night as it was profound dark not light. From a thorough investigation of De La Mare poems , he relinquishes his authority to impose word play as a kind of stylistic inversion which is related to speech sounds.

**11- 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' by T. S. Eliot**

And through the spaces of the dark  
Midnight *shakes the memory*  
As a madman shakes a dead geranium

The whole poem is coring about time . Eliot has provided the readers here to a complete type of inversion which is subject-verb. But the pivot in this stanza is time , so he has fronted the adverb of time (midnight) to result this kind of inversion . The source structure here is (the memory shakes midnight).Thee effect is appeared to be organized according to the hours of night i.e., time is undeniably associated with notions of present and past, and it plays a significant role in 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night'. This is inverted for phonic purpose as follows:

Dissolve the floors of *memory*

**12- 'Musee de Beaux Arts' by W.H. Auden**

About suffering *they were never wrong*  
The old masters: *how well they understood*

Auden slammed us with chaotic word order inversion here . In this poem , the poet uses ekphrastic description (verbal description of images). But if we look deeply to this poem , we notice that the whole order is messed to bring out this artistic poem . In general , the poet has inverted the syntax of the first and second opening lines : (they were never wrong about suffering) and ( how well they understood) in order to balance the end of this stanza with the rest of the poem : 'wrong'- 'along'/ 'understood-wood' as follows:

While someone else is eating or opening a window  
or just walking dully *along*;  
children who did not specially want it to happen,  
skating on a pond at the edge of the *wood*.

**13- 'All in Green went my Love Riding' by E.E. Cummings**

**1- All in green went my love riding**

on a great horse of gold  
into the silver dawn.

four lean hounds crouched low and smiling

Cummings engaged the attention of inversion (subject- verb) here in the first line of this stanza : all in green went my love riding / my love went riding all in green for the purpose of dramatic effect especially for the purpose to achieve rhyme as in riding/ smiling .

2-The sheer peaks ran before.

Paler be they than daunting death

The poet again employed inversion of subject-verb by the end of the poem to achieve emphasis on the subject 'they' which denoted the 'sheer peaks' in the previous line .

**14- 'The Sad Shepherd' by W.B. Yeats**

And thought, I will *my* heavy *story tell*

Till my own words , re-echoing shall send

Their sadness through a hollow pearly heart

In this poem, the poet establishes his relationship to the poetry of the past and asserted that the role of poetry would have to change in the modern world. So he created this part of inversion : verb-object . There is a needless inversion in this line of the poem , thus admitting the addition of two sensuous epithets 'heavy' and 'pearly'. This change in the position of the words that Yeats found necessary when he reexamined the larger pattern of the poem i.e., its skeletal structure. These changes modify the context and the weight (end weight) of the individual line . Yeats tried to give his poem more referential power by the addition of inversion.

**15- 'One Foot in Eden ' by Edwin Muir**

What had Eden ever to say

Of hope and faith and pity and love

Until *was buried* all *its day*

1-In this poem , the poet invokes inversion of subject-verb. It seems that the purpose here is to create phonic action with the first line which ends with 'say'.

One foot in Eden , I stand

And *look* across *the other land*

2-Another utilization of inversion is in the second line of the opening poem which the poet tried to depict in order to familiarize and engage the attention to rhyming .This is another type of subject-verb inversion . Muir was anxious to create balance in the style of the poem so he manipulated a kind of sinewy inverted style.

### 9-Arabic Data Analysis:

The followings are the collections of Arabic Modern Poems of 15 to be analyzed in reflection to their forms and functions of inversion:

#### 1- 'Balqees' by Nazar Qubani

البحر في بيروت .. بعد رحيل عينيك استقال  
والشعر .. يسأل عن قصيدتها التي لم تكتمل كلماتها

The sea in Beirut, after your eyes' departure, has resigned .

And poetry is asking about her poem whose words are not yet completed

In this poem , the poet has fronted the subject(البحر) on the verb(استقال) ,so the sentence is changed from verbal to nominal . The reason behind this inversion is to focus on the subject for permanence and consistency and not for the action of the verb .

Another fantastic example of inversion is also stated in this poem by Qubani . The poet has postponed the object (احلى) from the verb(تلبس)and its subject . The poet has fronted the prepositional phrase (في الربيع) in deep inspiration. This inversion shapes special aesthetic and semantic indication as follows:

يا امواج دجلة .. تلبس في الربيع بساقها/حلى الخلاخل...

O waves of Tigris which wear in Spring, the best anklet in her leg.

#### 2- 'Every day we end up' by Mahmood Darwesh

يا ابي خفف القول عني!  
تركت النوافذ مفتوحة  
لهديل الحمام

O Father! Never blame me much!

I left the window wide open For the pigeon's cooing!

In this stanza , the poet has fronted the subject and this makes inversion in the structure of this sentence. The actual structure is (خفف) (يا ابي القول عني). The purpose of this inversion is to provide emphasis to the subject as it is the core of the meaning.

#### 3- 'Sketches of Ibn Zuraiq Al- Baghdadi' by Al- A laq

وساده وجهي "  
وغصن ماء  
احمل في نعاسه وجوهكم"

The pillow of my face  
A bough of water On whose drowsiness I carry your faces.

In this stanza, the poet has inverted subject-predicate here : وجهي :  
احمل في نعاسة وجوهكم in the first line in order not to give importance to the predicate rather than to involve rhetorical effect. The poet here has not stated with the predicate to that reason but to reach and to rearrange the structure of the rest of this stanza and to change / renewal in the poetic image. So that the inversion here caused to change the structure of the last sentence from nominal to verbal as :

4- *An Elegy: 'To Manshawi Basha' by Ahmed Shawqi*

ابا يوسف في ناد مناحة ارامل تبكي او عوائل تلطم

Aba Yousif is in a mourning gathering;

With crying widows and (face-) slapping families

In this line of the poem , the poet has inverted subject- verb in the second part of the verbal clause as un usual : (تبكي ارامل) and تلطم (عوائل). Shawqi here has allocated and regarded attentively phonic rhyme to end this line of poetry.

5- *'To See it' by Amal Al-Sa'iy*

وهل تجدي السخرية ملهاة

تضح سمعك

انا الوحل وهذا الحوض لي

وماءك يستغيث ... الفراغ

فجوه تصحو في ليلك ... امرأة

Does this sarcasm avail as a comedy

That annoys your ear

I am the mire, and this pool is mine

Your water is calling for help. . . The space

Is a gap that wakes in your night . . . like a mirror.

The poet here has inverted verb-object ( يستغيث الفراغ ماءك ) in order to itemize the object and to add layout to the structure of this poem.

6- *'My Road' by Sameeh Al- Qasim*

رسمت على الرمل حدا

وفي الصخر وعدا

وفي الطين ردا

I drew on the sands a borderline

On the rocks a promise

On clay a reply

In this stanza , the poet has lessened the role of the object and has postponed it from the verb and illustrated the role of the prepositional phrase ( على الرمل ). The actual structure of this sentence is : رسمت حدا (على الرمل) as if the poet wanted to focus that the verb 'drew' is on the sand and not any other thing else. The intention here is for the purpose of rhyming.

7- 'An Elegy' by **Ali Ahmed Asbar** called ( Adonis)

ايها الميت فوق الخشبة

ياصديقي

رسمت ازهار الطريق وجهك

ومشت خلف خطاياك العتبة

O Dead One on stage

O my friend

The road's flowers drew your face

And the house threshold followed your steps

The poet has inverted the structure of the sentences here and has fronted the object on the subject as in (رسمت ازهار الطريق وجهك) and (مشت العتبة خلف خطاياك) in order to show the standing and significance of the objects . There is an arousal of emotion to the mind of the reader here to provide defamiliarization in this structure of the sentences.

8 -' Dullness of the Four Seasons ' by **Nazik Al-Malaika**

نحن نحيا في عالم كله دمع وعمر يفيض ياسا وحزنا

تتشقى عناصر الزمن القاسي باهاتنا وتسخر منها

We are living in a world that is replete with tears

An age overflowing with sorrow and sadness

The cruel Time's elements gloat for our sighs

And ridicule

us.

There is subject-verb inversion in this poem. The poet herself is living joyless life and this is reflected in her words indication. The purpose behind this inversion is to focus on the subject (نحن) and not the action of the verb. She wanted to depict the idea that she is not the only person who is frustrated but the whole world i.e., The poet is addressing the whole people to enter her community of sadness and frustration.

9- ' I Don't want this poem to end' by **Mahmoud Darwish**

تركض الاشجار والافكار والامواج والابراج

تركض خلفنا

ورائحة الليمون تركض

والهواء وسائر الاشياء تركض

والحنين الى البعيد

غامض ، والقلب يركض

The trees, ideas, waves and towers

Run after us

The lemon scent runs after us

The air, and the other things run

Longing to the far off

Is rather ambiguous

And the heart is running!

The creativity of the poet is dissolved in the harmony between the standard structure of Arabic sentences and the inverted structure of the sentence in this stanza at the same time.

Looking deep to the structure of this stanza, one can realize that the poet has started the poem by verbal clause using the verb (يركض) and then he has postponed the verb (تركض) to the end of each line for emphasis. In the last line of this stanza, there is an inversion of the subject-verb (يركض القلب) to create rhyme and to focus on the idea of life which starts and ends by 'running'. Generally, the poet has rearranged the whole stanza in order to have correspondence in the terminal sounds of the lines.

**10- 'The Waves Destroyed my Dreams' by Badar Shakir Al- Sayab**

وفي غمرة اوهامي  
وفي يقظة الامي  
بكي محبوبة القلب  
عزاء قلبي الدامي

In the midst of my illusion  
In the wake of my pains  
My bleeding heart  
Mournfully cried for its Love.

In this stanza, Al-Sayab has fronted the clause (بكي محبوبة القلب) and postponed (عزاء قلبي الدامي) to concentrate on the suffering of the poet which is represented by (البكاء). But the poet here did not neglect the indication of his bloody heart (القلب الدامي) that posits the spiritual suffering of the poet. Inversion of the structure of the clauses here is for the sake of rhyme correspondence between the lines.

**11- 'A Man from Dust' by Ashoor Fani**

كان ينظر في كاسه  
موجة الشط كاذبة  
والمدى لا يحب العصافير  
لم تعد الارض دائره  
والخطوط استقامت الى اخر العمر  
والقلب اوشك ان يسقط في المنحني!

He was looking in his cup  
The shore's wave is fake  
The horizon does not bring forth sparrows  
Earth is no more revolving  
Lines became straight for the rest of life  
The heart is about to fall in the curve.

The poet has fronted the subject (الخطوط) on the verb here in this scene of this poem. The poet has manipulated playing in the linguistic classes of words by inversion. The focus here is on the subject not the verb in order to depict on the unknown world and to look into his future. There is a trick here that the poet wanted to state by referring

to these lines (والخطوط) and the curve (المنحني) in the last line which are the lines of his hands to foresee his future and not the lines of the earth and what is related to geography. In general the poet has utilized inversion to hide the exact meaning of his vision.

**12-'Dear Sleepless' by Mohamed Mahdi Al- Jawahiri**

خففت من حولي السرج في الربى والسوح تختلج  
ومشى في الظلمة البلح وقطار راح يعتلج  
بضرام صدره الحرج فهو في القضبان ينزلج

The saddles flapped around me  
On the hills as the fields were quivering  
In the darkness, the daybreak walks  
A train began its uproar  
With the flames of its chest  
As it slides on its rails.

There is an extensive variation of inversion in this stanza that Al-Jawahiri tried to state in order to make harmony in each line of this stanza. The poet was anxious to invert the subject (السرج) in the first line, to invert the verb (تختلج), to invert the subject (البلح) in the second line, and to invert the verb (ينزلج) in the last line of this stanza in order to control phonic system and rhyme of this poem. This displays the care of the poet in manifestation of excitable and passionate situation in his life.

**13-' A Mother's Heart' by Abo Al-Qasim Al- Shabi**

1- كلُّ نسوِكٍ ولم يعودوا يذكرونك في الحياة  
والدهرُ يدفنُ في ظلام الموتِ حتى الذكرياتُ  
إلا فؤاداً ظلَّ يخفقُ في الوجودِ إلى لقاءك  
ويؤدُّ لو بذل الحياة إلى المنيةِ وافتدائكُ

They all forgot you, never remembering you again;  
Time buries, even memories, in the gloom of death.  
Yes, all forgot, save one lonely heart;  
That never ceased to throb in hopes of meeting you again.  
A heart that so often wished to have sacrificed its own life,  
As an offering to death, so that your life may be spared

There are fantastic inversions in this poem in various stanzas that Al-Shabi wanted to depict. The poet first has inverted subject – verb here in order to focus on the subject. (الدهر)

2- أيها الطفلُ الذي، قد كان كاللحن الجميلِ  
والوردةِ البيضاءِ تعبقُ في غيابات الأصيلِ  
يا أيها الطفلُ الذي، قد كان في هذا الوجودِ  
فرحاً يناجي فتنة الدنيا بمعسولِ النشيدِ

O dear child, whose life was a charming melody,  
A pure white rose, wafting its fragrance at colorful sunsets!

O dear child, who so happily lived in this world;  
Celebrating life's beauty with your sweet songs.

In this second stanza of the same poem , the poet utilized two inversions again : he has centered his sight on the inversion of subject-verb as in (تعبق الورد البيضاء ) to emphasize the action of the subject which was the white flower and not black . In the last line of this stanza , inversion was on the type of verb-adjective as in ( يباحي ) (فرحا) to show the state of the writer which was happily .

#### 14- 'The clay' by **Elia Abu Madi**

انت مثلي يبش وجهك للنعمى وفي حالة المصيبة يكمد  
ادموعي خل ودمك شهد؟ وبكائي ذل ونوحك سوؤدد؟

You are like me, your face smiles in bliss  
And frowns for misfortunes

Are my tears vinegar and yours honey?  
Is my crying humiliation and your wailing glory?

In this poem , the poet is trying to give the meaning of the verb(يكمد) its importance to change the realities of this clay and to keep musical harmony in this stanza , so he inverted subject-object as in( في يكمد ) ( حالة المصيبة ) .

فلك واحد يضل كلينا حار طرفي به وطرفك ارمدم  
قمر واحد يطل علينا وعلى الكوخ والبناء الموطد

One sphere overlooks both of us  
My sight is bewildered by it and your sight is blurred  
One moon shines on both of us  
on the huts ,and on the grand palaces

In the same poem , the writer here focused upon the inversion of subject-verb as in( يضل فلك واحد ) and ( يطل قمر واحد ) also to witness the importance of the subjects and not the verbs . All in all , inversion here is for internal rhyme i.e., it is employed for the specific purpose of rendering a pleasing effect to a poem which makes its recital an enjoyable experience.

#### 15- 'A Mother's Heart' \* by **Ibrahim Al- Munthir**

فمضى وأغمد خنجراً في صدرها  
والقلب أخرجته وعاد على الأثر  
قال : انتني بفؤاد أمك يافتى  
ولك الدراهم والجواهر والدرر  
لكنه من برق سرعته هوى  
فتدحرج القلب المعقر إذا عثر

He went and puts a dagger on her chest  
He took out the heart and went back  
“Bring me your mother's heart O lad”, he said,  
“ And you shall have the money, the gems and pearls!”  
But due to his speed, stumbled and fell

And the heart rolled down as he fell.

In this poem , the poet has provided two types of inversion. The first inversion is exemplified by verb-object as in (اخرج هو القلب) in order to emphasize the importance of the object as it is the pivot of the whole action here in this stanza. Another fantastic example of inversion that Al-Munthir drew is to create a kind of balance in this poem which was the postponing of the verb (هوى) to the rest structure of the last line of this poem as in ( لكنه هوى من برق... ). This was a result of the phonic function of inversion to provide rhyme with (فتى، هوى).

\* This is another poem in this data carrying the same title ( A Mother's Heart) and different poet.

### 10-Results Analysis and Concluding Remarks:

1- Based on the analysis of the sample data including 30 inversion poetic examples extracted from modern English and modern Arabic poetry ( *Classical* and *Free Arabic verse* ) divided into 15 samples per each . On one hand , the results show that :the total number of inversion appeared in Modern English Poems is 26. English function of inversion varies from being phonic to emphatic . This suggests that for the purpose of phonic , English poems read 17 frequencies from the total number which is 26 , whereas , they (English poems) shape 13 times from the total 26. This includes the percentage of 65% to meet the requirement of rhyme and 50% to meet the requirement of emphasis.

On the other hand , the total inversion emerged in Arabic modern poems show 27 inverted patterns . Results show that Modern Arabic poems for phonic requirement shapes 16 frequencies from the total 27 and it denotes 59%. For emphasis requirement , it reads 21 frequencies from 27 inverted patterns and it pins 78% . See the table 1 below :

Modern English Poems				Modern Arabic Poems			
<i>Function of inversion</i>	<i>Total Inversion</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Function of inversion</i>	<i>Total inversion</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Phonic	26	17	65	Phonic	27	16	59
Emphatic	26	13	50	Emphatic	27	21	78

**Table 1 : Functions of English and Arabic Inversion in Modern Poetry**

2-Another manipulation of inversion for the purpose of both emphasizing and meeting the requirements of rhymes / tones is shown in table 2 :

2.1 The frequent occurrence of English poems is 7 times from the total number 15 . This reads 47%.

2.2 The frequent occurrence of Arabic poems is 6 times from the total 15. This reads 40%.

### 3-Similarities :

Inversion in Modern English and Arabic poems have many patterns in common:

**3.1 Subject -Verb inversion :** English poetry utilizes subject-verb inversion for 13 times from the total 26 inverted patterns. This indicates 50% .

Arabic poetry utilizes subject-verb inversion for 17 times from the total inverted patterns 27 . It reads 63%.

**3.2 Verb-Object inversion:** This is rarely used in both English and Arabic poetic languages. It reads once in English poems from the total 26 . It measures 3% , in English , whereas in Arabic poems , it shapes 4 times from the whole 27. This indicates 15%

Inversion Type	Similarities in English			Similarities in Arabic		
	Frequency	%	Total	Frequency	%	Total
S-V	13	50	26	17	63	27
V-O	1	3	26	4	15	27

**Table 2 : Similarities in Inversion between English and Arabic Poetry**

### 4- Differences:

**4.1 Subject –Predicate inversion :** This inversion is not found in English data since it refers to the nominal sentence. Arabic poems include only 1 time of this pattern from the total 27. It rates 3% as in the following : *وسادة وجهي . . . . . احمل في نعاسه وجوهكم*

**4.2 Subject- Object inversion:** This inversion does not exist in English data but it reads twice from the total 27 inverted patterns in Arabic poetry . It measures 7%. only.

**4.3 Verb-Adjective inversion:** This pattern is only found in Arabic data and reads once from the total 27 types of inversion. It just rates 3% as follows: *فرحا ينجي . . . . .*

**4.4 'Not' - Auxiliary inversion:** This inversion is found only once in English data . It reads 4% as follows: 'that *not* the hardest storm *could* crack' .

Inversion Type	Differences in English			Differences in Arabic		
	Frequency	%	Total	Frequency	%	Total
S-Predicate	None	None	26	1	3	27
S-O	None	None	26	2	7	27
V-Adjective	None	None	26	1	3	27
'Not'-Aux.	1	4	26	None	None	27

**Table 3 : Differences in Inversion between English and Arabic Poetry**

### 11-Conclusions:

The paper reveals the following remarks:

- 1- Inversion represents significant category in modern English and Arabic poetic languages . This reads that inversion varies in extent from being phonic and from being emphatic . It resembles a higher rate in Arabic for emphasis and represents 78% , whereas it reads 50% in English. On the contrary , English inversion includes a high percentage of 65% for the requirement of phone , whereas it represents 59% for the same requirement in Arabic modern poetry.
- 2- Another manifestation of inversion in this paper which the results achieved for both emphasizing and carrying out rhyme has been shown close to the percentages in both poetic languages signifies 47% for English poems , 40% for Arabic ones . This represents its internal variation of functions.
- 3- As companion to the requirement of emphasis and sounds correspondence , this paper represents these significant characteristics of inversion in English poetry :
  - 3.1- The principle of end focus to get 'new information' about a certain category in poetic language and to emphasize a subject or the action of the verb instead of the object or the subject .  
Examples from modern English poetry in this paper as: " that gave to its weak belly *power*" , where the word 'power ' is inverted to gain new information . Another example is by Davie "Dream Forest" ,that the poet postponed the subject on the verb to provide new information
  - 3.2-Another utilization of inversion in English modern poetry is to the requirement of 'internal rhyme' and not only to the correspondence of sounds as in poem point (3) page ( 10 )in this paper: "whose woods these are *I think I know* / his house is in the village *though*".
  - 3.3-Inverted word order in English data has also been also accomplished for the modification of the context and the weight as in Yeats poem " The Sad Shepherd " : "And thought , I will *my* heavy

*story tell*". Here , Yeats has tried to give more referential power by this inversion.

3.4- Modern English poems comprise inverted word order for the service of metrical effects . In this paper ,this is very categorized in Philip Larkin poem in this paper "At Grass", where the indication of meter is dominant by inversion in the arrangement of the words in most of the poem.

4-In Arabic modern poems , on the other side , another significant purposes of inversion are shared :

4.1-To shape special aesthetic and semantic indication as in Qubani poem : *يامواج دجلة .. تلبس في الربيع احدى الخلاخل* . This justifies that inversion is a feature signifies in specific modern Arabic poetry and then literature in general because it is pleasing to look at the reader's attention and to control its feeling in order to get the message that the poem depicts.

4.2-To change the structure of the sentence form nominal to verbal as in Al- Alaq poem : *احمل في نعاسه وجوهكم* and Al-Sayab poem : *عزاء قلبي الدامي / بكى محبوبة القلب* that the poet here inverted the structure of the clauses to corresponding the lines.

4.3-To add ambiguity and lay out to the poems as shown in : *وماءك والخطوط استقامت الى اخر العمر* and *يستغيث الفراغ*

4.4-Some other inversions figured out in this paper are to show the state of the poet as being happy or sad or to pretend an enjoyable experience of the poet.

4.5-In general , the reader reads a poem that appeals to him and he finds that the reason behind this appealing is that the poet has shifted something in the poem or has changed the pronunciation from place to place in sentences . This is why inversion happens.

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#### دراسة مقارنة لاسلوب "التقديم والتأخير" في الشعر الانكليزي الحديث والشعر العربي الحديث

الاستاذ المساعد نادية خيرى محمد سعيد

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- قسم اللغة الانكليزية

المستخلص :

تعنى الدراسة الحالية بـ"التقديم والتأخير" بوصفه طريقة لترتيب اللغة في الشعر الإنجليزي والعربي الحديث. ويعد 'التقديم والتأخير' ظاهرة كبيرة في الأدب الحديث عموماً، ولا سيما في الشعر حيث أنه يعامل النص الشعري على أنه خروج عن النصوص الاعتيادية. توضح الدراسة الحالية للأنماط الشائعة من 'التقديم والتأخير' ووظائفه التي رُصدت في الشعر الحديث، الإنجليزي والعربي، بغية تبيان أوجه الشبه والاختلاف في كلا اللغتين. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن أسلوب 'التقديم والتأخير' شائع جداً في الشعر الإنجليزي والعربي، وأنه يستخدم لأجل الإيفاء بمتطلبات التناغم الصوتي (الإيقاع)، ولأجل التأكيد على المعنى، على حد سواء. تختلف اللغتان الشعريتان الإنجليزية والعربية على قدر تعلق الأمر بمدى استخدامهما لأساليب التقديم والتأخير، كما أنهما يظهران تبايناً في مدى تكرار التقديم والتأخير. وأخيراً، من الجدير بالذكر أن هناك أدواراً ووظائف هامة أخرى للتقديم والتأخير توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة، مثل: صياغة الدلالات الجمالية والمعنوية، واضفاء بعض الغموض والتشكيل للقصيدة، وتمثيل حالة الشاعر لدى الكتابة، وتعديل السياق أو تحويره. كما أن استخدام 'التقديم والتأخير' بوصفه آلية لتوحيد المعلومات (التركيز النهائي والمعلومة الجديدة) لجانب هام آخر من جوانب هذا الأسلوب في كلا اللغتين.

كلمات البحث : التقديم والتأخير، الشعر الإنجليزي، الشعر العربي، الصوتي، التوكيدي.