NEGATIVE INVERSION: REAL LIFE EXAMPLES



Never before *have you bumped into such real examples!*

Read these excerpts from six (old!) songs. Choose the best alternative. Then, watch video 1 and check!

1. *Nowhere* in the world [there could be / could there be] a boy as true as you.
2. *Never again* [I will hear / will I hear] you, never again [I will miss / will I miss] you, never again [I will fall / will I fall] to you.
3. *Only* then [you can belong / can you belong] to me.
4. *Only* when I'm dancing [I can feel / can I feel] this free.
5. *Little* [you know / do you know] how I'm breaking while I fall asleep
6. *Never before* [someone has been / has someone been] more unforgettable.

Read the song lines above and underline the correct words to complete the rules.

1. You can put a negative or limiting adverb at the **[beginning / end]** of a sentence to emphasize what you are saying and sound more dramatic. (eg. *rarely, no sooner, under no circumstances, on no account, etc.*)
2. In this case, the subject and the auxiliary verb **[are / are not]** inverted.
3. If there is a clause immediately after *only*, it **[is / is not]** inverted.

Read these excerpts from different TV shows: Choose the correct alternative. Then, watch video 2 to check!

(Market analyst talking about Apple)

1 Rarely _____ back to Samsung or HTC.

A the iPhone user goes

B goes the iPhone user

C does the iPhone user go

(Talk show hostess playing a game)

2 Never _____ drunk before noon.

A I have ever been

B have I ever been

C I ever have been

(Politician talking about the economy)

3 Rarely __ when I don't hear from folks who are hurting.

A a day goes by

B does a day go by

C goes by a day

(Documentary about a journalist who was an undocumented immigrant)

4 Not only _____, he thrived.

A Jose Antonio Vargas survived

B survived Jose Antonio Vargas

C did Jose Antonio Vargas survive

(News report on Black Friday in the US)

5 No sooner _____ than the shoppers hit the stores.

A the Thanksgiving meals had digested

B had the Thanksgiving meals digested

C had digested the Thanksgiving meals

(Famous actor describing a movie scene)

6 Under no circumstances _____.

A you can publish

B publish can you

C can you publish

(News report about a space mission)

7 Only now _____ to reach the edge of the solar system.

A the voyagers are about

B are the voyagers about

C about are the voyagers

(Comedian talking about his son's fear of roller coasters)

8 _____ that, I would've felt terrible.

A I had known

B Had I known

C Known had I

Rewrite sentences 1-6 more dramatically beginning with the expressions in caps. Then, watch video 3 and check!

1*(Cartoon)* In my life, I have never needed something so much and never known until I received it.

NEVER IN MY LIFE...

2*(News report)* France has never before faced such a big danger when it comes to terrorism.

NEVER BEFORE...

3*(Tech review)* It not only lets you connect up to an external microphone, it also has its own microphones.

NOT ONLY...

4*(News report)* He only changed his mind after a phone call and assurances from Angela Merkel.

ONLY AFTER...

5*(Live footage from a war zone)* They must not be allowed to advance on any account..

ON NO ACCOUNT...

6*(Interview with movie star)* I didn't really know that soon after I would land this magnificent role.

LITTLE...

What would you say in situations 1-3? Use two examples of negative inversion in each case.

1 You've just watched a movie and you loved it. It's probably your favorite movie ever. You want to record a short review and post it on YouTube. (NEVER BEFORE… / NOT ONLY…)

2 You're going away for a few days and your 15-year-old will be home alone for the first time. You're worried. Speak to your son/daughter. (UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES… / ON NO ACCOUNT…)

3 You're giving a school presentation about regrets. Mention two things you regret (not) doing when you had the chance. (HAD I KNOWN…/ LITTLE DID I…)

(adapted from: http://www.luizotaviobarros.com/negative-inversion-examples/)