ABSTRACT

Inverted Word Order is the reversal of the normal order of words in a sentence. In languages which are distinctive in morphological features, this is easily identified. However, in Mandarin Chinese, word order is a comparatively important issue not only because the language lacks morphological changes but also because of its parataxis by nature. And it is this parataxis that complicated the inversion of word order in Mandarin Chinese in the sense that it affects the sentence both semantically and syntactically. In this respect, Inversion cannot be analysed solely on the basis of the meaning or structure of a sentence but must take both into consideration.

This academic exercise explores the existence of sentences with Inverted Word Order, differentiating between the genuine and non-genuine ones and hence formulate from the discussion of different schools of opinions, the principle of Inverted Word Order as found in Mandarin Chinese.

Viewed from the development of the theories of Inversion, Chapter One outlines the role of word order in Mandarin Chinese and the varied conceptions of Inversion raised by linguistic scholars. Chapter Two defines and traces the origin of Inverted Word Order in Mandarin Chinese and thereupon categorizes the various types of Inversion. Through the deliberative examination of representative schools of perspectives, Chapter Three refutes as well as dismisses some less substantive theories and inappropriate examples illustrated and argues for the case shown in Chapter Two.
Chapter Four further expounds the characteristics of Inversion in Chinese in comparison with that in English. Chapter Five studies the rhetorical function of Inversion in which the technique of Hyperbaton or Anastrophe is involved. The concluding chapter emphasizes the basis for the establishment of Inversion and highlights the significance of the present study.