Chapter 13, Problem 6: The Interaction of Ellipsis with Negation and Inversion

A. Yes, our grammar predicts that the sentences in (i)–(iv) will be well formed. To see how, first note that the Ellipsis Lexical Rule is a derivational rule, while the ADV$_{pol}$-Addition Lexical Rule is a post-inflectional rule. The lexical entry for a verb like *could* has two things on its ARG-ST. When such a lexeme undergoes the Ellipsis Lexical Rule, the output will only have one element (the subject) on its ARG-ST. That output can then undergo the appropriate inflectional lexical rule, which gives a *word* with exactly one thing on its ARG-ST. That *word* can then undergo the ADV$_{pol}$-Addition Lexical Rule, which gives an ARG-ST on the output that includes an ADV$_{pol}$ in second position. As it happens, in this case, the ADV$_{pol}$ will also be the last thing on the ARG-ST list, that is, the list tagged A in the lexical rule will be empty.

B. Yes, our grammar predicts that the sentences in (v)–(vi) will be well formed. The Inversion Lexical Rule (like the ADV$_{pol}$-Addition Lexical Rule) is a post-inflectional rule. As above, *word*s that are the result of applying the Ellipsis Lexical Rule and then an appopriate inflectional rule to an auxiliary are compatible with the INPUT value of the Inversion Lexical Rule. This rule doesn't change the ARG-ST, so such words will still have just one ARG-ST element. On the other hand, the Inversion Lexical Rule constrains the SPR of its output to be the empty list, so the sole ARG-ST element will appear as a complement, giving examples like (v) and (vi).