Lack of inversion with preposed adverbials in German is consistent with the input. The learner may note "Gestern sah ich den Mann" as either:

1. [Adverbial [ S+inv ]], or as
   [Adverbial [ S ]]

   (1) S-inv (prototype)
   S
   S+inv

   (2) S-inv (prototype)
   S
   S+inv

   (3) S-inv (prototype)
   S
   S+inv
Inversion of embedded wh-questions:

Kinds (instances) of $S$:

(for example)

$S_{\text{+inv}}$  
$\text{did John eat } \_ \_ \$

$S_{\text{-inv}}$  
$\text{John ate } \_ \_ \$

$S/XP$  
$\text{did John eat the cake}$

$S_{\text{no hole}}$  
$\text{John ate the cake}$

Kinds (instances) of Questions:

IQ  
$\text{what John ate } \_ \_ \$  
$[\text{XP}_Q \text{ S/XP-} \text{inv}]$

DQ  
$\text{what did John eat } \_ \_ \$  
$[\text{XP}_Q \text{ S/XP+} \text{inv}]$

$+\text{wh}$  
$\text{whether John ate the cake}$  
$[\text{whether S/XP-} \text{inv}]$

$-\text{wh}$  
$\text{did John eat the cake}$  
$[S_{+\text{inv}}]$

The learner encounters the $+\text{wh}$ IQ: "I know what John ate ___"  

The learner could notice that this is of the form  
$[\text{XP}_Q [\text{S/XP-} \text{inv}]]$, or merely  
$[\text{XP}_Q [\text{S/XP}]]$  
(or, sometimes notice the inversion and sometimes not)
Higher-level links may also enter in. If the learner makes a link to inversion at the wh-question level, based on direct wh-questions, then both direct and indirect questions will "inherit" inversion. A link to inversion may also be made at the level of question itself (based on inversion in both +wh and –wh DQs). Then all questions will inherit inversion.