

EMPHATIC NEGATIVE SENTENCES + AUXILIARY AND MODAL VERBS

In English, we often need to emphasize a given prompt in a long sentence. One of the grammatical resources to do so is the inversion of the auxiliary or the modal verb. In the majority of the cases, these emphasis are on the negative aspect of something. We can use some set expressions before the auxiliary and the modal verbs to reinforce this emphasis. Some of these expression slightly change the meaning of the sentence. This entails, in every case, a formal style of stressing emphasis.

Sentences to express disagreement

- **Under no/any circumstances** would I go to your party, unless you tell me the truth.
 - **By no means** do I support you thesis.
 - **In no way** can he be held responsible.
 - **At no point** was the price mentioned.
- **Under no circumstances** should I go to the beach without putting cream on.

Sentences to express little frequency on a given action

- **Hardly (ever)** has he come to our place without calling first.
- **Seldom** does he come without bringing some wine with him.
 - **Rarely** is the time when Jack fails a subject.

Sentences to express time sequences that are interrupted by other ones

- **Scarcely** had I began to explain the task **when** the students started to shout.
 - **Barely** had they finished the match **when** the rain started to fall.
 - **Hardly** had I begun to speak **when** I was interrupted.
 - **No sooner** had I arrived **than** they all started to argue.

Sentences to express superlative facts

- **Never** had I felt so happy.
- **Little** did he imagine how dangerous it would be.

Sentences to express addition

- **Not only** was the car slow, **but also** it was also very uncomfortable.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE INVERSIONS

These type of inversions can have two meanings that we have to deduce from the context. In the case of being something 'after' what we did something else, it is better to use the present perfect participle. These need a comma in the middle of the sentence for there are consecutive sentences.

- *(While)* **Doing** my homework, I remembered I had to tidy up my room.
- *(After)* **Doing** my homework, I went to the park with my dog.
 - *(After)* **Having done** my homework, I went to the part with my dog.

GERUND INVERSIONS

These inversions can often be mistaken with the above ones because of their graphical form, but they have nothing to do in meaning. We can use both, the gerund and the gerund perfect, and the difference, obviously, comes in the meaning. These sentences don't need a comma in the middle of the sentence, for the gerund becomes the subject of the clause.

- *(The fact of)* **Doing** my homework makes me feel stressed.
 - *(The fact of)* **Ironing** all those shirts drives my mad.
- *(The fact of)* **Having ironed** all those shirts makes me feel really proud.

INVERTED zero, 2nd and 3rd CONDITIONALS

As the rest of the above simple clauses, we can also invert some conditional clauses.

This also gives emphasis to the condition and, together with that, makes our style become more formal. In zero conditional, it needs to be the case that the condition entails a modal clause, which is the one inverted. When we invert the condition, we no longer need an 'if' particle. We cannot invert the first conditional, and the most typical ones to apply inversion are the third and zero-modal ones.

- **Had** I known you were coming, I wouldn't have come. (3rd conditional)
 - **Were** I you, I wouldn't go to Melissa's party (2nd conditional)
- **Were** the negotiations to fall through, it would bring about unforeseen problems (2nd conditional)
- **Should** you require any further information, please do not hesitate to call (Zero conditional with modal verb)
- **May** you come to our party, please inform beforehand (Zero conditional with modal verb)
- **Might** you have some problems, please use the guide (Zero conditional with modal verb)
- **Would** you like some more tea, please ask for it (Zero conditional with modal verb)