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MATTERS

ALL ABOUT

IN VER SION 21014

DODATEK

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All about Inversion

No matter how scary the word inversion seems, it is a term that we name quite a lot of structures with. In this guide, we will go through everything you need to know about inversion, beginning with basics and finishing with more advanced grammatical structures. Let's kick off!

no matter | nieważne

to seem | wydawać się

term | termin, pojęcie

to go through sth | przejść przez coś, przeciwyczyć coś

advanced əd'vɑ:nst / əd'vænst | zaawansowany

to kick off | tu: zaczynać

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Inversion to make questions

The most basic use of the inversion is making question forms, which means putting the verb before the subject. Look at the examples with the verb *to be* in the simple and continuous tenses:

■ Present Simple / Present Continuous

Positive statement:

- *You are really furious. / You are hiding the truth unnecessarily.*

Question:

- *Are you really furious? / Are you hiding the truth?*

■ Past Simple / Past Continuous

Positive statement:

- *They were totally exhausted because of the difficult situation in the company. / They were working for many hours yesterday until they could call it a day.*

Question:

- *Were they exhausted because of the difficult situation in the company? / Were they working many hours yesterday until they could call it a day?*

■ Future Simple / Future Continuous

Positive statement:

- *I will be truly happy to pass this exam. / I will be visiting New York next month for a couple of days.*

Question:

- *Will you be happy to pass this exam? / Will you be visiting New York next month?*

furious 'fjʊəriəs / 'fjəriəs | rozwścieczony, wściekły
to hide the truth | ukrywać prawdę
unnecessarily | niepotrzebnie

exhausted ɪg'zɔ:stɪd | wyczerpany
call it a day | zakończyć pracę
to pass an exam | zdać egzamin
for a couple of days | na kilka dni

■ Future Perfect / Future Perfect Continuous

Positive statement:

- *He will have been living in London for six months by the end of this year. / He will have been working as a project manager for three years by the end of summer.*

Question:

- *Will he have been living in London for six months by the end of this year? / For how many years will he have been working as a project manager by the end of summer?*

■ Present Perfect / Present Perfect Continuous

Positive statement:

- *She has been down in the dumps since she found out about her mum's accident. / She has been feeling like a whole new woman since she got married.*

Question:

- *Has she been down in the dumps since she found out about her mum's accident? / How has she been feeling since she got married?*

■ Past Perfect / Past Perfect Continuous

Positive statement:

- *He had been broke before he landed the new job. / He had been grieving a long time before he found a new partner.*

Question:

- *Had he been broke before he landed the new job? / How long had he been grieving before he found a new partner?*

to be down in the dumps | mieć chandrę
to find out about sth | dowiedzieć się o czymś
accident | wypadek
whole | tu: całkowicie

to get married | pobrać się
broke | splukany
to land a job | znaleźć pracę
to grieve | rozpaczć
to learn the ropes | nauczyć się fachu

Inversion is also used in the following tenses, when the main verb is not to be:

Future Simple

- Will you need a lot of time to learn the ropes in a new position? (You will need...)

Future Perfect

- Will she have collected all the necessary certificates by tomorrow? (She will have collected...)

Present Perfect

- Has he taken up the challenge and accepted the new role? (He has taken up...)

Past Perfect

- Had he tried bungee jumping before he did it with his wife? (He had never tried bungee jumping before he...)

There are two tenses, Present Simple and Past Simple, where we need to add *do* / *does* / *did* to make the question form. We also need to change the main verb back to the infinitive. This is usually called inversion as well. Mind you: the main verb is not *to be*.

Present Simple

- They usually focus on budgeting in December. – What do they usually focus on in December?
- She absolutely loves playing tennis. – What does she absolutely love doing?

Past Simple

- He gave up playing after the first round – Did he give up playing after the first round?

Inversion in the Passive Voice

As the Passive Voice is structured with the verb *to be*, the rule to follow is exactly the one described at the beginning of this guide, e.g.

- Was it mentioned in the talk that we have to cut expenses?

to collect sth | zgromadzić coś, zebrać coś

to take up a challenge | podjąć wyzwanie

to mind sth | *tu*: mieć coś na uwadze, uważać

to focus on sth | skupiać się, koncentrować

się na czymś

to give up | poddać się

passive voice | strona bierna

to cut expenses | ciąć wydatki

to award a pay rise | przyznać podwyżkę

- *Has she been awarded a pay rise?*
- *When will the results be announced?*

Inversion with modal verbs

Modal verbs in the present and in the past invert directly with the subject, for example:

- *May I open the window?*
- *Can he start looking for a new job?*
- *Should I have called you earlier?*
- *Could you have moved there without your parents?*

announced | ogłoszony

to look for sth | szukać czegoś

to move | tu: wyprowadzić się

without sb | bez kogoś



Exercise 1

Make questions to the following statements:

1. You were mad last night.

Why mad last night?

2. She has been struggling to make ends meet since last year.

What to do since last year?

3. They will have been living for 10 years in Spain by the end of this year.

How many years living in Spain for by the end of this year?

4. He was running to catch a bus when he sprained his ankle.

What when he sprained his ankle?

5. I have never been sure if I want to study engineering.

..... if you want to study engineering?

6. She keeps telling me I should gain new qualifications.

What ?

7. I fell in love with Maria while I was taking a gap year and travelling the world.

Who with?

8. She should have apologised to John a long time ago.

What a long time ago?

9. They had been developing this business for 5 years before they finally got successful.

What before they finally got successful?

10. Tomorrow at this time I will be sitting on a train to London.

What tomorrow at this time?

to struggle to do sth | zмагаć się by coś zrobić

to make ends meet | związać koniec z końcem

to sprain an ankle | skręcić kostkę u nogi

to gain sth | zdobyć, uzyskać coś

to fall in love with sb | zakochać się w kimś

to take a gap year | zrobić rok przerwy

to apologise to sb | przeprosić kogoś

Answer key:
1 were you 2 has she been struggling 3 will they have been 4 was he doing 5 have you ever been doing 6 does she keep telling you 7 did you fall in love 8 should John have done 9 had they been doing 10

Inversion for emphasis and formality

Apart from its basic function to form questions, inversion is also used for emphasis, especially when we want to make our sentence sound more surprising, but also more formal, depending on the context. Inversion takes place once we put a negative adverb or adverb phrase at the beginning of the sentence to emphasise what we're saying.

- *Seldom have I seen such a beautiful sunset.*

(The adverb *seldom* is placed at the beginning of the sentence, followed by the inversion *have I seen*. This sentence emphasises what a beautiful sunset it is.)

Of course, we can say this sentence in a normal word order with no special emphasis:

- *I have seldom seen such a beautiful sunset.*

Mind you, we only use inversion when the adverb modifies the whole phrase and not when it modifies the noun: Hardly anyone was present in the meeting with our line manager.

Let's look at other examples of inversion:

- Hardly: *Hardly had I come back home when my girlfriend split up with me.*
- Never: *Never had she been so cheerful before.*
- Seldom: *Seldom do we see such amazing theatre performances.*
- Rarely: *Rarely will you experience so many unforgettable moments.*
- Only then: *Only then did I understand what a terrible mistake I had made.*
- Not only ... but: *Not only does he love cooking, but he also bakes very well.*
- No sooner: *No sooner had we arrived at work than my boss asked me to come to his office.*
- Scarcely: *Scarcely had I left the car when I saw him talking on the phone angrily.*

emphasis 'emfəsis | nacisk,
podkreślenie

apart from sth | oprócz
czegoś

depending on sth | w
zależności od czegoś

to take place | mieć miejsce
once | gdy

to emphasise sth | podkreślić
coś

seldom | rzadko

sunset | zachód słońca

hardly | tu: prawie

hardly | ledwo

to split up with sb | zerwać
z kimś

cheerful | radosny, wesoły
performance | przedstawienie
only then | dopiero później
unforgettable ,ʌnfə'getəbl
/ ,ʌnfər'getəbl
| niezapomniany
scarcely | ledwo, zaledwie
angrily | ze złością

- **Only later:** Only later did she truly realise that was her last day working as a CEO.
- **Nowhere:** Nowhere have I seen such wastefulness.
- **Little:** Little did he know, but he had failed the exam!
- **Only in this way:** Only in this way could Kate persuade him to stay with her one more month.
- **In no way:** In no way can I agree to sign this contract.
- **On no account :** On no account should you make decisions on your own.

In the above sentences inversion is used right after the adverb phrase in a sentence, but there are also expressions that move the inversion towards the second part of the sentence:

- **Not until:** Not until I saw my children arguing fiercely did I lose my temper.
- **Not since:** Not since Lucy graduated from university had she had such an amazing time.
- **Only after:** Only after I'd seen my blood test results, did I understand why it is so important to take care of one's health.
- **Only when:** Only when the weekend had started did I feel relaxed.
- **Only by:** Only by working extremely hard could we afford to live in a big house.

only later | dopiero później

to realise sth | zdać sobie z czegoś sprawę

CEO = Chief Executive Officer | dyrektor

zarządzający

wastefulness | marnotrawstwo

to fail an exam | nie zdać egzaminu, oblać egzamin

in no way | w żadnym razie

to agree | zgodzić się

on no account | pod żadnym warunkiem, w żadnym razie

on your own | na własną rękę, samodzielnie

not until | dopiero (gdy)

to argue | kłócić się

fiercely | zaciekle

to lose one's temper | stracić panowanie nad sobą

not since | od, od czasu (gdy)

to graduate from university | ukończyć uniwersytet

only after | dopiero po

blood test results | wyniki krwi

to take care of sth | dbać o coś

only when | dopiero gdy, dopiero kiedy

only by | tylko dzięki, tylko przez

extremely | wyjątkowo

to afford sth | móc pozwolić sobie na coś finansowo

In cases where the tense does not use an auxiliary verb in the affirmative, such as the present simple or the past simple, one must be added.

Present Simple:

- *I rarely go to the cinema – Rarely do I go to the cinema.*
- *They don't ever know what to do – Never do they know what to do.*

Past Simple: (pay attention to how the verb changes from past tense to infinitive)

- *She seldom studied at the last moment. – Seldom did she study at the last moment.*
- *We never went on holidays when we were young. – At no time did we go on holidays when we were young.*

auxiliary verb | czasownik posiłkowy

affirmative | twierdzenie

to pay attention to sth | zwrócić na coś uwagę



Exercise 2

Rewrite the following sentences using the adverb first:

1. The concert had scarcely started when she fainted in the crowd.

.....

2. I had hardly reached the holiday destination when it started raining cats and dogs.

.....

3. I had never experienced so much stress on a single day at work.

.....

4. I have seldom heard such devastating news.

.....

5. He knew little about his career goals at that time.

.....

6. She didn't realise the consequences of her actions until she saw a girl bursting into tears.

.....

to faint | zemdleć

crowd | tłum

to rain cats and dogs | padać jak z cebra, lać

to experience sth | doświadczyć czegoś

devastating | załamujący

to burst into tears | wybuchnąć płaczem

Answer key:
1 Scarcely had the concert started when she fainted in the crowd. 2 Hardly had I reached the holiday destination when it started raining cats and dogs. 3 Never had I experienced so much stress on a single day at work. 4 Seldom have I heard such devastating news. 5 Little did he know about his career goals at that time. 6 Not until she saw a girl bursting into tears did she realise the consequences of her actions.

Inversion in Conditional sentences

We can use inversion instead of if in conditionals, using *had* in the third conditional, *were* in the second conditional and *should* in the first conditional at the beginning of a sentence. This is quite formal:

■ First conditional:

- If you receive an answer, let me know, please.

Inversion: Should you receive an answer, let me know, please.

- If Josh doesn't come, we're in big trouble.

Inversion: Should Josh not come, we're in big trouble.

■ Second conditional:

- If John were not intelligent, he wouldn't work for Google.

Inversion: Were John not intelligent, he wouldn't work for Google.

- If he were to offer you a business trip, what would you say?

Inversion: Were he to offer you a business trip, what would you say?

■ Third conditional:

- If I had helped her, this problem wouldn't have happened.

Inversion: Had I helped her, this problem wouldn't have happened.

- If it hadn't been for your recklessness, we wouldn't have got lost.

Inversion: Had it not been for your recklessness, we wouldn't have got lost.

instead of sth | zamiast czegoś

recklessness | lekkomyślność, nieostrożność

to get lost | zgubić się

Exercise 3

Invert the conditional sentences:

If I had met him earlier, I would have warned him

.....

If it weren't for Michael, we wouldn't know what to do.

.....

If I hadn't been late for the exam, I would have completed all the tasks.

.....

If he calls back, tell him to come to the office urgently.

.....

If it hadn't been for them losing the match, everyone would be more joyful now.

.....

to warn sb | ostrzec kogoś

to complete sth | ukończyć, skończyć coś

urgently | pilnie

joyful | radosny

Answer key:
1 Had I met him earlier, I would have warned him. 2 Were it not for Michael, we wouldn't know what to do. 3 Had I not been late for the exam, I would have completed all the tasks. 4 Should he call back, tell him to come to the office urgently. 5 Had it not been for them losing the match, everyone would be more joyful now.

Inversion with an Adverb or Adverbial Expression of Place

We can use inversion if we put an adverb or adverbial expression of place at the beginning of the sentence. This is formal and literary, as well as often serves as a rhetorical device:

- *All the things that we needed were on the table*
- Inversion: *On the table were all the things that we needed.*
- *Tom came round the corner.*
- Inversion: *Round the corner came Tom.*

However, this inversion also functions in phrases people use on a daily basis, e.g.

- *Here comes the bus.*
- *There goes Kera.*
- *Here's my e-mail address.*

Note that if the subject is a personal pronoun, there is no inversion:

- *Here it comes.*
- *There she goes.*
- *Here it is*

■ Inversion with so and such

Again for the purpose of emphasis, we use inversion, putting the words so and such at the beginning of the sentence:

- *She was so exhausted that she fell asleep immediately.*
- Inversion: *So exhausted was she that fell asleep immediately.*
- *He wrote the essay so badly that his teacher didn't even mark it.*
- Inversion: *So badly did he write the essay that his teacher didn't even mark it.*

adverbial expression of place | wyrażenie przysłówkowe określające miejsce
 rhetorical device | figura retoryczna
 however | jednak/że
 on a daily basis | codziennie

personal pronoun | zaimek osobowy
 exhausted **ig'zɔ:stɪd** | wyczerpany
 to fall asleep | zasnąć
 to mark sth | ocenić coś

As + auxiliary / subject inversion

The last inversion structure to look at is the following: **as + auxiliary (or be)** in the second clause of the sentence. It is used to say that somebody does the same thing as somebody already mentioned:

- *Italy won a lot of Olympic medals, and Spain did, too.*
- Inversion: *Italy won a lot of Olympic medals, as did Spain.*
- *France is a strong member of the EU. Germany is a strong member, too.*
- Inversion: *France is a strong member of the EU, as is Germany.*

Note – there is no inversion when the subjects of the two clauses are the same:

- *The German football team won all the matches in the tournament. It wins it every year.*
- *The German football team won all the matches in the tournament, as it does every year.*

to look at sth | przyrzeć się czemuś
clause | zdanie składowe

mentioned | wspomniany

Exercise 4

Rewrite the sentences using the inversion:

He was so excited that he could hardly sleep.

.....

His experience was such that he knew what to say at the right time.

.....

She performed it so well that critics paid her respect the following day.

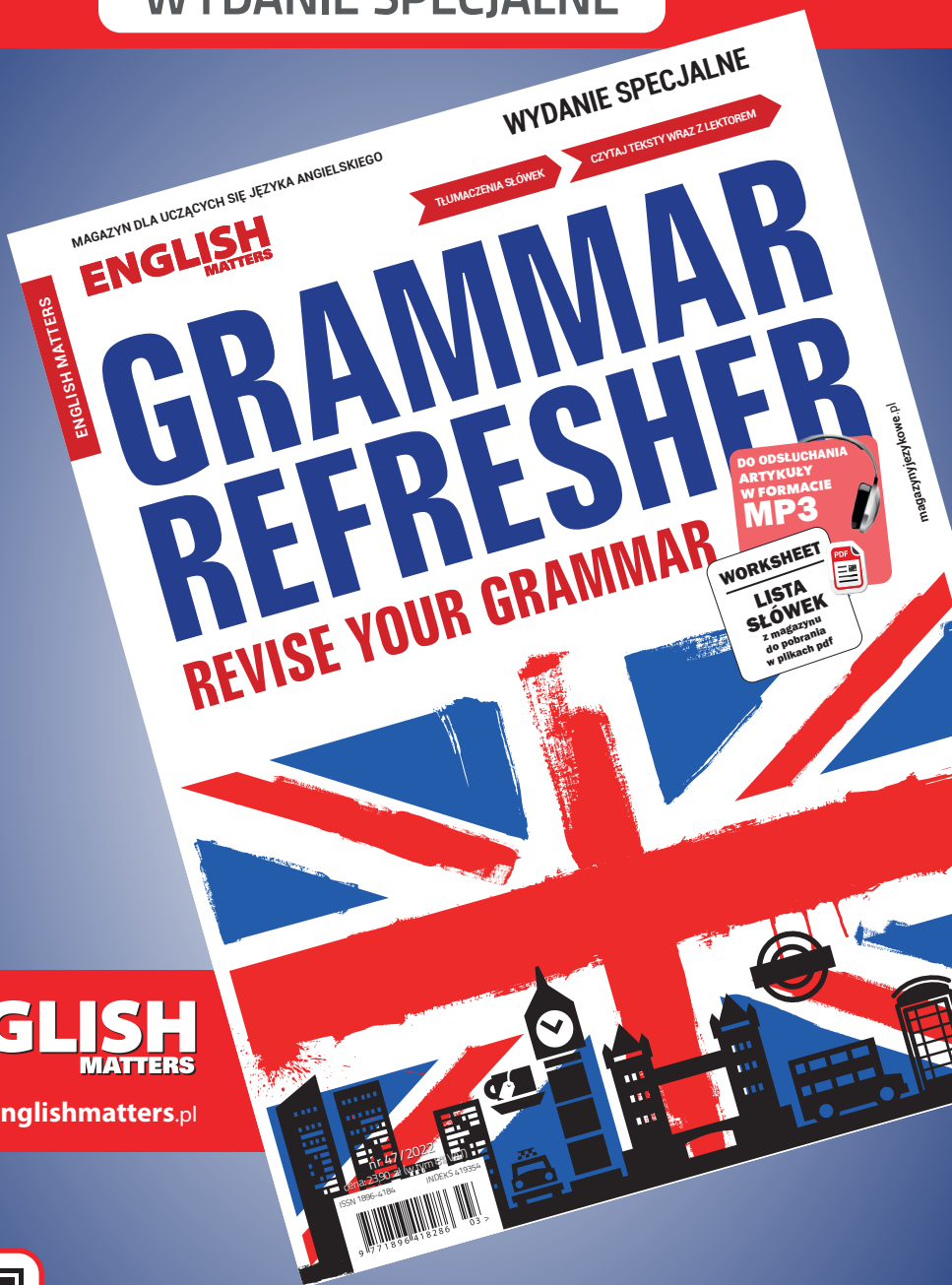
.....

He became so furious that he suddenly started shouting.

.....

Answer key:
1 So excited was he that he could hardly sleep. 2 Such was his experience that he knew what to say at the right time. 3 So well did she perform it that the critics paid her respect the following day. 4 So furious did he become that he suddenly started shouting.

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