

COMMUNICATION

Adding emphasis

LEVEL

Intermediate (B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_3091X

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

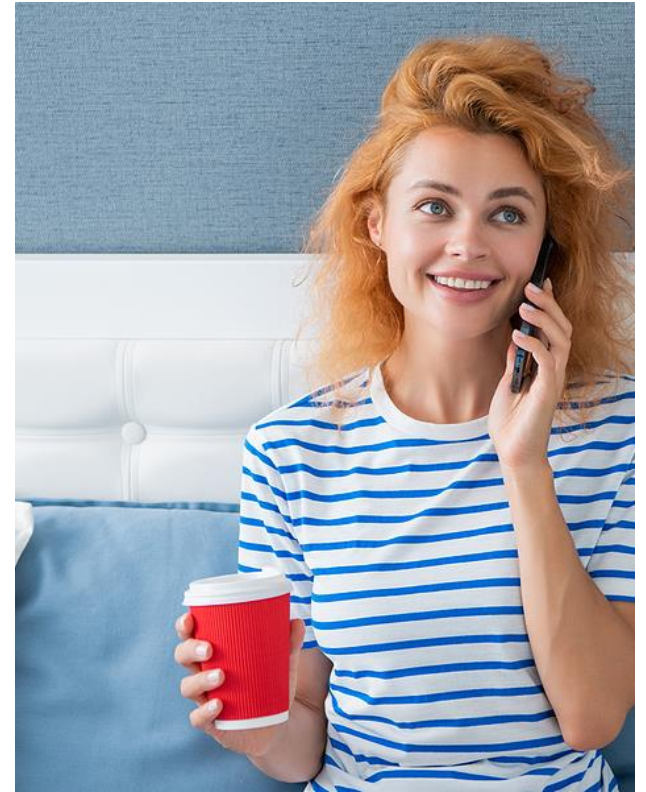
- I can identify and discuss a variety of ways to add emphasis.
- I can practise adding emphasis in a range of contexts.



Warm-up

What are some ways we can add emphasis when speaking?

Brainstorm ideas as a class!



Adding emphasis

Adding emphasis means showing that certain words or ideas are more important than others.

What does it mean to **add emphasis** when speaking?

In this lesson, we will look at both **intonation** (the way the voice rises and falls when speaking) and **sentence structure**.



We will look at:

word stress, use of **auxiliary verbs** and **inversion**



Word stress

- **Read** the dialogue out loud with a classmate (*italics* indicate the word to be stressed).
- Why do you think the speaker stresses this word?



What time is your doctor's appointment tomorrow? Maybe we could have lunch afterwards.

My doctor's appointment isn't *tomorrow*. It's next Tuesday.





Word stress: changing the emphasis

Match the sentences (1-3) with the most likely follow-up sentence (a-c).

Discuss: How does the stressed word **change the emphasis** in each example? You can do this part in breakout rooms. Share your ideas afterwards.

1 My *doctor's* appointment isn't tomorrow.

a I'm just going there to pick up a prescription.

2 My *appointment* isn't tomorrow.

b They've postponed it until next week, unfortunately.

3 My doctor's appointment *isn't* tomorrow, after all.

c I'm going to the *hairdresser's*!



Word stress: changing the emphasis

We often emphasise to **contrast** what someone has said, or to **clarify** a misunderstanding.

Emphasis on when
the appointment is

My doctor's appointment isn't *tomorrow*.

Emphasis on the
type of
appointment

My *doctor's* appointment isn't tomorrow.

Emphasis on the
reason for visiting
the doctor

My *appointment* isn't tomorrow.

Emphasis on a
change of plan

My doctor's appointment *isn't* tomorrow, after all.

Adding emphasis with auxiliary verbs (1)

You can add emphasis simply by *stressing* the auxiliary verb in a sentence.

Discuss: What is being emphasised in each of these sentences?

1



I *am* going to the concert, but I'll be a bit late.

2



You *can* bring a partner or friend to the wedding, as long as you tell us in advance.

3



I *will* do it, I promise. I'm just too tired this evening.

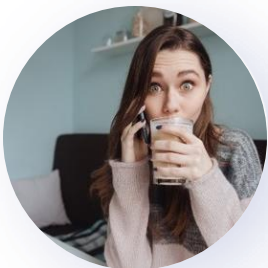
4



Well, they *have* been a bit stressed lately. Maybe there's something going on.

Adding emphasis with auxiliary verbs (2)

- You can also add emphasis by **adding an auxiliary verb** to a **positive statement**.
- Can you identify the auxiliary verb that has been added to the examples below?



Yes, that's true. They *did* say something about keeping noise down after 11pm. Maybe that's why the neighbour looked so annoyed this morning.

I *do* think you should go for the green paint. It's much more relaxing than the purple, in my opinion. Though I *did* also like the grey one you showed me yesterday.



Do this only in the **present simple** and **past simple**.



Transform the sentences

Add emphasis to the sentences using **auxiliary verbs**.

If there is more than one option, discuss your answers as a class.

1 She sings really well.



She does sing really well.

2 We danced all night, so it's not surprising I'm so tired today.



3 I'm not the best cook in the world, but I make a great lasagne.



4 It's true, I hate watching football. Maybe I'll make an excuse not to come.



5 They went a bit overboard with the decoration.



6 No, I'm coming. I'll just be a bit late.





I'm not the best singer in the world, but I do enjoy a karaoke night!



What does the highlighted phrase indicate about a person's ability to do a particular activity?

Complete the sentence

Complete these sentences so they are true for you.

I'm not the best
_____ in the
world, but I...



I haven't done it in a
while, but I do love...



Ex.

*I haven't done it in a
while, but I do love to
spend a whole weekend in
the outdoors!*

Inversion: *At no point* and *Never*

- Which sentence emphasises that this is the **first time something has happened**?
- Which sentence emphasises that **something didn't happen**, over a period of time?



At no point did I question your commitment to the project. In fact, you went above and beyond what was expected of you to make sure it was a success.

I tripped and spilt the drinks all over the customers. They were so angry. **Never have I been** so embarrassed.



Inversion: *Little and Not only... (but) also*

Read the example. Complete the blue box.

Little did I know that she was a really famous actor.
Not only did she leave a large tip, **but she also** gave us a five-star review.

- Which sentence emphasises...

*that the speaker was **unaware** of something?*

*an **additional** piece of information?*

How to use inversion

Invert the example sentences using the instructions below.

She paid for our meal, and she got the taxi home.



Not only did she pay... (but) she also got...

I've never seen a crowd get so excited before the start of a show.



Never have I seen...

- Place an **adverb/adverbial phrase** at the start of the sentence.
- Then **invert** the order of the auxiliary and main verbs.



Not only ~~paid she...~~ →
When using *Not only... but also*, an auxiliary verb must be added.



Transform the sentences

Transform the sentences using the adverb or adverbial phrase given. The first one has been started for you.

- 1 I didn't say I wanted to go to the party.
(**At no point**)



At no point did I say I wanted to go to the party.

- 2 I haven't seen a sunset like this before.
(**Never**)



- 3 She helped me with my thesis and offered to proofread it when I'm done. (**Not only... but also**)



- 4 They didn't realise how their decisions would impact future generations. (**Little**)



- 5 I had no idea that my life was about to change forever. (**Little**)



- 6 He won the election and he broke records for being the youngest candidate ever. (**Not only... but also**)





Practise emphasising

Choose a prompt below. Think of an example from your life. **Describe** the situation to the class. Use **at least one** of the phrases for inversion below. Ask follow up questions.

*At no point...
Never...*

*Not only... (but) also...
Little did I know...*

An embarrassing experience

Something nice a friend did

A surprising discovery

A time when hard work paid off



End of the lesson

Idiom

to drive (a point) home

Meaning: to emphasise something very strongly and make sure it is understood

Example: The teacher used lots of examples to drive the point home.



Additional practice



Review: ways to add emphasis

Categorise the sentences.

1

My doctor's appointment isn't *tomorrow*. It's next week.

2

Little did I know that she was a really famous actor.

3

I *am* going to the concert, but I'll be a bit late.

4

They *did* say something about keeping noise down after 11pm.

5

Not only did she pay for the meal, but she also got the taxi home.

Intonation

Sentence structure





Role-play: a miscommunication

Role-play this situation. Take turns, coming up with as many different potential conversations as possible. **Use** techniques to emphasise!



Student 1

**You arrive at
your friend's
apartment for
a dinner.**



Student 2

**Your friend is
very surprised
when you show
up at the door.**

Word stress

*Stressing auxiliary
verbs*

*Adding auxiliary
verbs*

Inversion



Discuss



Have you ever had a noise complaint from a neighbour?



**When was the last time you painted a room?
What colour did you choose and why?**

Answer key

P.6: 1. c 2. a 3. b

P.10:

2. We did dance all night, so it's not surprising I'm so tired today.
3. I'm not the best cook in the world, but I do make a great lasagna.
4. It's true, I do hate watching soccer. Maybe I'll make an excuse not to come. /
It's true, I hate watching soccer. Maybe I will make an excuse not to come.
5. They did go a bit overboard with the decoration.
6. No, I am coming. I'll just be a little bit late, though. /
No, I'm coming. I will just be a little bit late, though.

P.11: (Real-life language)

I'm not the best singer in the world, but I do enjoy a karaoke night! – In this example, the speaker is emphasizing the fact that they are an average singer, or perhaps not very good at all.



Answer key

P.13:

Sentence 2 emphasises that this is the **first time something has happened** (*Never...*)

Sentence 1 emphasises that **something didn't happen**, over a period of time (*At no point...*)

P.14:

Sentence 1 emphasises the speaker was **unaware** of something (*Little...*)

Sentence 2 emphasises an **additional** piece of information (*Not only... but also...*)

P.16:

2. Never have I seen a sunset like this before

3. Not only did she help me with my thesis, but she also offered to proofread it when I'm done. 4. Little did they realise how their decisions would impact future generations.

5. Little did I know that my life was about to change forever.

6. Not only did he win the election, but he also broke records for being the youngest candidate ever.



Summary

Adding emphasis

- Adding emphasis means showing that certain words or ideas are more important than others.
- We often emphasise to **contrast** what someone has said, or to **clarify** a misunderstanding, as well as to make our point **stronger**.

Different ways of adding emphasis

- Word stress → stressing a particular word or phrase in a sentence
- Auxiliary verbs → adding an auxiliary verb to a positive statement
- Sentence structure → Using phrases and inversion

Inversion – phrases

- *At no point*
- *Never*
- *Not only..., but also...*
- *Little*

How to use inversion

- Place an **adverb/adverbial phrase** at the start of the sentence. Then **invert** the order of the auxiliary and main verbs.



Vocabulary

At no point

Never

Not only..., (but) also

Little

