

Extension exercises

Chapter 21: Sentence constituents: major variants | Comments

Exploring English

Responses to these questions will depend on the texts chosen. The aim of the exercise is to raise awareness of how, how often and why we vary the order of sentence constituents rather than to make particular points about different kinds of text. The exercise is likely to show up how flexibly we choose the place of adverbials in clauses.

Course materials

- 1 Responses to this question will depend on the materials chosen.
 - Materials often concentrate on the forms of *there* as a dummy subject (for example, *There is a ...*, *There aren't any ...*, etc.) at beginners and elementary levels. However, if they pay any attention to meaning at all, they tend to focus on the existential use of this form (see Chapter 20, p305 and Chapter 21, p319).
 - On the whole, little attention is paid to the choices we can make. These 'variants' are often particularly neglected in the context of spoken English. Some people see this neglect as a 'problem'. Other people argue that if we teach the basic principles and patterns, learners will choose to make changes to these automatically when they become sufficiently confident.
 - Devices for spotlighting information are sometimes taught at upper intermediate and advanced levels, particularly in materials which aim to prepare learners for written examinations. They tend to focus on the form of the constructions rather than on reasons for choosing them.
- 2 Most materials introduce question forms tense by tense, and often they pay no attention to underlying patterns or principles.