

TRANSFORMATION OF SENTENCES

A. Look at the following pairs of sentences:

- (1) This news is **too good to** be true.
This news is **so good that it cannot** be true.
- (2) He is **too honest to** accept a bribe.
He is **so honest that he will not** accept a bribe.
- (3) He is **tall enough to** touch the ceiling.
He is **so tall that he can** touch the ceiling.
- (4) If you work hard, you will succeed.
Work hard, and you will succeed.
- (5) I will buy the house **if** it is cheap.
I will buy the house **provided** that it is cheap.
- (6) She won't come **if you don't** invite her.
She won't come **unless** you invite her.

The meaning of both the sentences in each pair is the same. The sentence structure, however, is different. The rules of English syntax allow us to carry out such operations that are known as transformation or conversion. What we mean by transformation of sentences is changing the form of the sentence, without changing its meaning.

The grammatical form of a sentence can be altered in many ways. The important thing to be kept in mind in the exercise of this option is that the meaning of the sentence should not change. Let's examine some of the ways in which it is possible for us to change the structure but retain the meaning of sentences in English.

B. You have seen above that sentences with the adverbs **too** and **enough** can be rewritten in at least one more way. There are sentences that can be written in several ways. In each case there is a change in form but no change in meaning. Some more examples are given below for you.

(a) This soup is too hot for me to drink.

- This soup is very hot, so I cannot drink it.
- This soup is so hot that I cannot drink it.



(b) He is rich enough to buy a car.

- He is rich, so he can buy a car.
- He is so rich that he can buy a car.



Exercise 1

Can you transform the following sentences so as to remove the adverb 'too'?

1. She is too proud to apologize.
2. He is too honest to accept a bribe.
3. The sun is too hot for us to go out at present.
4. It is too hot to work.
5. This coffee is too hot to drink.



Now rewrite these sentences using 'too'

1. This tree is very high, so I can't climb it.
2. As it is very cold, we can't go out.
3. It is very dark, so we can't see anything.
4. This question is difficult, so I can't answer it.
5. Since I am very ill, I can't go to work.



Now, here are some sentences with the adverb 'enough'. Change the form of the sentences, removing 'enough':

1. This book is easy enough for me to read.
2. Reena is working hard enough to pass the examination.
3. He was kind enough to give us a lift in his car.



4. This novel is so short that it can be read in a few hours.
5. It was cold enough to freeze our fingers.

C. Different ways of expressing conditionality:

There are different ways to form '**conditional**' sentences in English. The sentence given below is a **conditional** sentence, because it expresses a 'condition':

1. If you work hard, you will succeed.

This can be rewritten or **transformed** in many ways. Look at the following changed versions:

2. Work hard and you will succeed.
3. Unless you work hard, you will not succeed.
4. Were you to work hard, you would succeed.
5. You will succeed provided you work hard.

Sentence 1 has undergone several **transformations**. Sentences 2-5 are transformed versions of sentence 1. The 'condition' that is expressed in sentence 1 remains the same in sentences 2-5. The meaning has not undergone a change. The change is in the grammatical structure of the sentence or the form of the sentence.

Exercise - 2

Rewrite the following sentences, without changing their meaning. Use the words that are given in the brackets:

1. Work diligently, and you will pass. (if)
2. Avoid bad company and you will be happy in life. (if)
3. I will buy the car if it is cheap. (provided that)
4. She will not come if you don't invite her. (unless)
5. If I had been wise, I would have accepted the offer. (had)

D. Transforming Degrees of Comparison

In English, it is possible to change the degree of comparison of an adjective without changing the meaning of the sentences. Such changes are also **transformations** since they change the form and not the meaning of the sentence.

1. Ram is as tall as Shyam. (Positive)

Shyam is not taller than Ram. (Comparative)

2. America is the richest country in the world. (Superlative)

America is richer than any other country in the world. (Comparative)

No other country in the world is as rich as America. (Positive)

Exercise - 3

Change the Degree of Comparison as suggested in the bracket in each of the following sentences, without changing the meaning:

1. Ashoka was one of the greatest of kings. (Positive)
2. Few flowers are as beautiful as the rose. (Comparative)
3. Iron is one of the most useful of all metals. (Positive)
4. Bombay is the biggest city in India. (Comparative)
5. Rahul is more intelligent than Rohit. (Positive)

E. Negative, Interrogative and Exclamatory Transformations

In English, the simple, affirmative and declarative sentences can be transformed into **negative**, **interrogative** and **exclamatory** sentences.

From affirmative to negative

1. Everyone present there cheered. (affirmative)
There was no one present who did not cheer. (negative)
2. He tried every plan. (affirmative)
He left no plan untried. (negative)
3. He is the richest man in the city. (affirmative)
No man in the city is as rich as he. (negative)
4. The gate is sometimes closed. (affirmative)
The gate is not open at all times. (negative)

5. Can I ever forget your kindness? (affirmative)
I can never forget your kindness. (negative)

From declarative to interrogative (Changing Statements into Questions)

1. No one can bear such an insult. (declarative)
Can anyone bear such an insult? (interrogative)
2. We waste time in reading comics. (declarative)
Do we not waste time in reading comics? (interrogative)
3. Everyone loves his country. (declarative)
Who does not love his country? (interrogative)
4. A tiger cannot change its nature. (declarative)
Can a tiger change its nature? (interrogative)
5. This is not the way to talk to your mother. (declarative)
Is this the way to talk to your mother? (interrogative)

From affirmative to exclamatory

1. She sings very sweetly. (affirmative)
How sweetly she sings! (exclamatory)
2. This is a very beautiful scene. (affirmative)
What a beautiful scene this is! (exclamatory)
3. A lamb is a very gentle creature. (affirmative)
What a gentle creature a lamb is! (exclamatory)
4. I wish I had the wings of a dove. (affirmative)
O! that I had wings of a dove! (exclamatory)
5. These flowers are lovely. (affirmative)
How lovely these flowers are! (exclamatory)

Exercise - 4

Transform the following sentences in the ways suggested in brackets:

1. There is no smoke without fire. (negative to affirmative)
2. Ajai is the strongest boy in the class. (affirmative to negative)
3. There is nothing greater than love. (declarative to interrogative)
4. How intelligent the students of our school are! (exclamatory to affirmative)
5. What a lame excuse! (exclamatory to declarative)
6. You are very careless. (declarative to exclamatory)
7. Prevention is better than cure. (declarative to interrogative)
8. As soon as the thief saw the policeman he ran away. (affirmative to negative)
9. Can anyone be more faithful than a true friend? (interrogative to declarative)
10. Blood is thicker than water. (declarative to interrogative)