



Transformation of Sentences

The word 'transform' means to change the form of. It is only changing the form but not changing the meaning. There are different grammatical forms of expressing the same sentence without changing its meaning.

Look at the following sentences :

Although he is rich, he is humble.

Rich though he is, he is humble.

Rich as he is, he is humble.

He is rich all the same he is humble.

He is rich at the same time he is humble.

He is rich none the less he is humble.

What an exercise in the niceties of the structural changes without changing the meaning :

Following are the ways to change a sentence from one grammatical form into another :

1. Change from active into passive voice and vice versa.
2. Interchange of affirmative to negative and vice versa.
3. Removal or use of the adverb 'too'.
4. Interchange of the degrees of comparison.
5. Interchange of assertive and interrogative sentences.
6. Interchange of assertive and exclamatory sentences.
7. Substitution of one part of speech for another.
8. Expressing a condition in different ways.
9. Expressing contrast or concession in different ways.
10. Conversion of simple to complex sentences and vice versa.
11. Conversion of simple to compound sentences and vice versa.
12. Conversion of compound to complex sentences and vice versa.

I. VOICE

Study the following examples :

"A"

1. I am playing hockey.
2. Ram killed a snake.

"B"

Hockey is being played by me.
A snake was killed by Ram.

From the above examples, it is clear that a verb has two voices the Active Voice and the Passive Voice. A verb is said to be in the active voice when its subject is shown as acting as in sentences in group "A". On the other hand a verb is said to be in the passive voice when the subject is shown as being acted upon as in sentences in group "B". The voice indicates whether the subject acts or is acted upon. There are different rules for conversion of different tenses from active into passive voice. Anyhow, it may be noted

that change is applicable only in the case of sentences which have transitive verbs because essentially in the conversion from active into the passive the "Subject" takes the place of "Object" and the "Object" takes the place of "Subject".

Example :

1. Mohan wrote a letter. (wrote-Transitive verb)

Passive voice : A letter was written by Mohan.

2. Mohan ran quickly. (ran-Intransitive verb)

No passive voice possible.

Conversion of different tenses of Active voice into Passive voice :

1. Present Indefinite Tense

Study the following examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. I take tea every morning.	Tea is taken by me every morning.
2. She sings a song.	A song is sung by her.
3. I do not like him.	He is not liked by me.
4. Ram does not tell a lie.	A lie is not told by Ram.
5. Do they learn their lessons ?	Are their lessons learnt by them ?
6. Does your father love you ?	Are you loved by your father ?
7. Where does he place his books ?	Where are his books placed by him ?
8. What do you do these days ?	What is done these days by you ?
9. I know him.	He is known to me.
10. This pot contains milk.	Milk is contained in this pot.

This change is affected by placing is, am, are, before the past participle (i.e. third form) of the verb, other things remaining equal as is clear from the above example. As explained earlier, the 'subject' has taken the place of 'object' and the 'object' has taken the place of the 'subject'.

2. Present Continuous Tense

Study the following examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. I am reading a book.	A book is being read by me.
2. You are writing a letter.	A letter is being written by you.
3. She is singing a song.	A song is being sung by her.
4. They are not wasting their time.	Their time is not being wasted by them.
5. Is Mohan flying a kite ?	Is a kite being flown by Mohan ?
6. Is she not cooking the food ?	Is food not being cooked by her ?
7. Why are you making a noise ?	Why is a noise being made by you ?
8. Who is calling you ?	By whom are you being called ?
9. When is he finishing his work ?	When is his work being finished by him ?
10. What are you looking for ?	What is being looked for by you ?

The change from active into passive voice in this tense is made by placing is, am, are preceded by being, before the past participle (third form) of the verb.

3. Present Perfect Tense

Study the following examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. I have finished the work.	The work has been finished by me.
2. You have helped them.	They have been helped by you.
3. The Principal has given away the prizes.	The prizes have been given away by the principal.
4. We have played the game.	The game has been played by us.
5. He has given me a book.	I have been given a book by him.
OR	
6. They have not committed the theft.	A book has been given to me by him.
7. Have you attended the class ?	The theft has not been committed by them.
8. Has the peon not locked the office ?	Has the class been attended by you ?
9. Why have you insulted your teacher ?	Has the office not been locked by the peon ?
10. Who has played this mischief ?	Why has your teacher been insulted by you ?
	By whom has this mischief been played ?

In this tense, has/have + been are placed before the past participle of the verb as above.

4. Present Perfect Continuous Tense

This tense is not changed from active into passive voice.

5. Past Indefinite Tense

Study the following examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. Usha won a race.	A race was won by Usha.
2. The thief stole a number of things.	A number of things were stolen by the thief.
3. We did not laugh at the beggar.	The beggar was not laughed at by us.
4. Did they play hockey ?	Was hockey played by them ?
5. How did you cross the road ?	How was the road crossed by you ?
6. Why did you beat him ?	Why was he beaten by you ?
7. When did you receive my letter ?	When was my letter received by you ?
8. Where did they see you ?	Where were you seen by them ?

Please note that in this tense was/were are placed before the past participle of the verb as above.

6. Past Continuous Tense

Study the following examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. I was taking my class.	My class was being taken by me.
2. They were digging the ground.	The ground was being dug by them.
3. The shop-keeper was closing his shop.	His shop was being closed by the shop-keeper.
4. The people were not raising slogans.	The slogans were not being raised by the people.
5. Were they misleading you ?	Were you being misled by them ?
6. Who was looking into the matter ?	By whom was the matter being looked into ?
7. What were they searching for ?	What was being searched for by them ?
8. Why were the people stoning the bus ?	Why was the bus being stoned by the people ?

In the above tense, the change into the passive voice is affected by placing was/were being before the past participle of the verb.

7. Past Perfect Tense

Study these sentences :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. He had bought a new car.	A new car had been bought by him.
2. She had passed the examination.	The examination had been passed by her.
3. You had not made the proper use of your time.	The proper use of your time had not been made by you.
4. Had he abused you ?	Had you been abused by him ?
5. Why had they disturbed us ?	Why had we been disturbed by them ?
6. Who had mentioned your name ?	By whom had your name been mentioned ?
7. When had you run me up ?	When had I been rung up by you ?
8. What had he lost ?	What had been lost by him ?

Please note in this tense change from active voice into passive voice is affected by placing had + been before past participle of the verb as is clear from the above examples.

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

No change of voice is possible in this tense.

Future Indefinite Tense

Study the following Examples :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. They will write letters.	Letters will be written by them.
2. We shall consult the committee.	The committee will be consulted by us.
3. Will they help you ?	Will you be helped by them ?
4. How will you pass the examination ?	How will the examination be passed by you ?
5. She will not obey you.	You will not be obeyed by her.
6. John will not run a race.	A race will not be run by John.
7. Why will you complain against me ?	Why shall I be complained against by you ?
8. When will he return your money ?	When will your money be returned by him ?

In this tense the change from active into passive is made by placing shall be/will be before past participle of verb.

Future Continuous Tense

This tense has no passive voice.

Future Perfect Tense

Study the following sentences :

Active Voice	Passive Voice
1. I shall have written a letter.	A letter will have been written by me.
2. Mohan will have bought a book.	A book will have been bought by Mohan.
3. He will not have opened the window.	The window will not have been opened by him.
4. Will you have brought him a gift ?	Will a gift have been brought to him by you ?
5. Where will you have spent your holidays ?	Where will your holidays have been spent by you ?
6. Who will have helped him ?	By whom will he have been helped ?

In this sentence, change from active into passive is made by placing shall have/will have + been before the past participle of the verb.

Future Perfect Continuous Tense

Change into passive from active voice is not possible in this tense.

Study the following sentences :

<i>Active Voice</i>	<i>Passive Voice</i>
1. He should change his habits.	His habits should be changed by him.
2. You must take exercise.	Exercise must be taken by you.
3. You could help him.	He could be helped by you.
4. You may take this pen.	This pen may be taken by you.
5. I can defeat him.	He can be defeated by me.
6. You should not waste your time.	Your time should not be wasted by you ?
7. Could you solve this sum ?	Could this sum be solved by you ?

1. Please note the sentences containing should, would, could, may, must, might, ought to are changed from active into passive voice by placing "be" after these words and before the past participle of the verb.

Study the following sentences :

<i>Active Voice</i>	<i>Passive Voice</i>
(a) You should have reminded your office.	Your officer should have been reminded by you.
(b) I would have helped you.	You would have been helped by me.
(c) He might have saved your life.	Your life might have been saved by him.
(d) You could have passed the examination.	The examination could have been passed by you.

In sentences having would have, should have, might have, could have, change from active into passive voice is made by placing 'been' after these words and before the past participle of verb.

Imperative Sentences

Study the following examples :

<i>Active Voice</i>	<i>Passive Voice</i>
1. Change your clothes.	Let your clothes be changed.
2. Summon the peon.	Let the peon be summoned.
3. Kindly call in the doctor.	You are requested to call in the doctor.
4. Please help him.	You are requested to help him.
5. Do not, waste your time.	Let your time not be wasted.
6. Never tell a lie.	Let a lie never be told.
7. Always speak the truth.	You are advised to always speak the truth.
8. Do not hate the poor.	You are advised not to hate the poor.

Imperative Sentences are changed from active into passive voice by using, "let" + be before the past participle. However, when a sentence begins with, 'please' or 'kindly' the sentence in the passive voice begins with "you are requested" followed by infinitive in active voice as in the sentences above. In the same way in the imperative negative sentences, the words "you are forbidden" followed by infinitive in the active voice may also be used.

It may be noted that English is a very unconventional language and everything cannot be reduced to formal rules. There are exceptions and exceptions which one has to reckon with.

Please note the following sentences in active and passive voice :

<i>Active Voice</i>	<i>Passive Voice</i>
1. It is time to take tea.	It is time for tea to be taken.
2. It is good to help the poor.	It is good for the poor to be helped.
3. One must do one's duty.	Duty must be done.
4. Quinine tastes bitter.	Quinine is bitter when tasted.
5. Rose smells sweet.	Rose is sweet when smelt.
6. People play cricket all over the world.	Cricket is played all over the world by people.
7. They found him unconscious.	He was found unconscious by them.
8. I know the doctor.	The doctor is known to me.
9. Somebody has stolen my pen.	My pen has been stolen.
10. How my friend's marriage was celebrated.	How my friend's marriage was celebrated.

My friend's marriage (celebrate) on 10th April. Many friends and relatives (invite). The home of my friend (decorate). A welcome gate (erect). All the guests (receive) at the gate. The band (play). Next day the bride (bring) and songs (sing).

My friend's marriage was celebrated on 10th April. Many friends and relatives were invited. The house of my friend was decorated. A welcome gate was erected. All the guests were received at the gate. The band was played. Next day the bridge was brought and songs were sung.

EXERCISE-XXVII

(a) Change the voice of the following sentences :

1. He objected to my proposal.
2. The headmaster has written a letter to my father.
3. My brother told me the story of a king.
4. This poem is written by Tagore.
5. Who has lent you these books.
6. Fortune favours the fools.
7. Who taught you English ?
8. Post this letter.
9. A picture is being drawn by him.
10. Do you know him ?
11. He spoils his clothes daily.

12. They laughed at you.
13. Never tell a lie.
14. Who stole your book ?
15. Did he insult you ?
16. Respect your elders.
17. Mangoes have been eaten by you.
18. Promises should be kept.
19. Whom are you waiting for ?
20. Sit down, please.
21. The news of his death had shocked me.
22. We should take exercise daily.
23. Some pick-pocket has picked my pocket.
24. Why are you wasting your time ?
25. Let this letter be posted.
26. It is time to close the shop.
27. It is necessary to save some money.
28. Tell him to observe silence.
29. We offered him breakfast.
30. Honey tastes sweet.
31. Flowers smell nice.
32. Sit down on the bench.
33. What is Dinesh writing ?
34. He has been arrested.
35. She hit the ball.

(Fill in the blanks with correct passive form of the verb given over each blank and rewrite the paragraph).

1. How rice is cooked

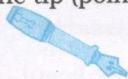
The rice is first (wash) in clean water. It (put) in a pot which is (fill) half with water. Then it (place) on fire and (allow) to boil. It (leave) for some time to cook. When all the water (go), it (take) off the fire. The rice is then ready to eat.

Solution

The rice is first washed in clean water. It is put in a pot which is filled half with water. Then it is placed on fire and is allowed to boil. It is left for some time to cook. When all the water is gone, it is taken off the fire. The rice is then ready to eat.

2. How a pencil is mended

The pencil is first (hold) in the right hand. It (put) into the Sharpener. Then either the pencil or the Sharpener (move). After sometime pencil (bring) out to see if it has (Sharpen). It (see) whether the tip (point). If the tip is not fine, process of sharpening (repeat) till the tip (point).



3. How a pen is filled



A pen is first (take) and (hold) in one hand. An inkpot (take) and its lid (open). The pen (dip) into the inkpot. The tube (press) and (leave) with a jerk. The pen (take) out. In this way a pen (fill).

II. TRANSFORMATION OF SENTENCES

From Affirmative to Negative and Vice Versa

Study the following examples :

<i>Affirmative</i>	<i>Negative</i>
1. He is too ill to come to meeting.	He is so ill that he cannot come to meeting.
2. This news is too good to be true.	This news is so good that it cannot be true.
3. Gandhi was the greatest leader of India.	No other leader of India was as great as Gandhi.
4. My eye sight is good.	My eye sight is not bad.
5. I am a fast reader.	I am not a slow reader.
6. As soon as the thief saw the policeman, he took to his heels.	No sooner did thief see the policeman than he took to his heels.
7. Only women are eligible for this post.	None but women are eligible for this post.
8. But for your help, I would have failed.	If you had not helped me, I would have failed.

These are some examples of transformation from affirmative to negative sentences.

III. INTERCHANGE OF ASSERTIVE AND INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES

Study the following sentences :

<i>Interrogative</i>	<i>Assertive</i>
1. When can their glory fade ?	Their glory can never fade.
2. Is this the way to treat your wife ?	This is not the way to treat your wife.
3. How can I thank you for your help ?	I can never thank you for your help.
4. Who would not love his country ?	Everyone would love his country.

IV. INTERCHANGE OF EXCLAMATORY AND ASSERTIVE SENTENCES

Study the following sentences :

<i>Exclamatory</i>	<i>Assertive</i>
1. How beautifully she writes !	She writes very beautifully.
2. Oh, that my friends were alive !	I wish my friends were alive.
3. What a lovely scene !	The scene is very lovely.
4. What a wonderful sight !	The sight is very wonderful.
5. How tragic the end was !	The end was very tragic.

V. SUBSTITUTION OF ONE PART OF SPEECH FOR ANOTHER

Study the following examples :

<i>Exclamatory</i>	<i>Assertive</i>
1. He did not select a good companion.	His selection of a companion was not good.
2. They gave us a warm reception.	They received us warmly.
3. I am proud of my country.	I take pride in my country.
4. His dress was neat.	He was dressed neatly.
5. We gave a prompt reply.	We replied promptly.

VI. BY EXPRESSING CONDITION

Study the following pairs of sentences :

Examples :

- (a) (i) If you had not advised him, he would have gone astray.
(ii) Had you not advised him, he would have gone astray.
- (b) (i) In case you had not advised him, he would have gone astray.
(ii) Supposing you had not advised him, he would have gone astray.

VII. BY CHANGING SIMPLE INTO COMPLEX SENTENCES

<i>Simple Sentence</i>	<i>Complex Sentence</i>
1. I know him to be a liar.	I know that he is a liar.
2. For all his riches, he is dishonest.	Although he is rich yet he is dishonest.
3. One man's meat is another man's poison.	What is meat to one man is poison to another.
4. He is too weak to walk.	He is so weak that he cannot walk.
5. You must work hard to get through.	You must work hard or you will not get through.
6. On account of his illness he could not come to school.	He was ill and could not come to school.
7. Taking off my shoes I went into the room.	I took off my shoes and went into the room.

EXERCISE-XXVIII

Rewrite, converting the sentence, as directed :

1. He is too weak to walk. (Remove too)
2. I tried every plan. (Change into negative)
3. Calcutta is the most populous city of India. (Change into negative)
4. He takes care of his health. (Use the verb form of "Care")
5. I am not only a writer but I am also a teacher. (Change into a simple sentence)
6. He had a narrow escape. (Change the adverb form, of "narrow")
7. Who taught you this lesson ? (Change the voice)
8. Sham is not as intelligent as Ram. (Change into affirmative)
9. Who does not love his country ? (Change into affirmative)
10. How beautiful the moon is ! (Change into an assertive sentence)