

Interchange of the degrees of comparison

It is possible to change the degree of comparison without changing the meaning of a sentence. Study the following examples.

Positive: I am as strong as him.

Comparative: He is not stronger than me.

As you can probably see, both sentences mean the same.

Positive: No other girl in the class is as tall as Alice.

In the sentence given above a comparison is made between Alice and other girls in her class using the positive adjective tall. The same idea can be expressed using the comparative adjective taller and the superlative adjective tallest.

Comparative: Alice is taller than any other girl in the class.

superlative: Alice is the tallest girl in the class.

More examples are given below:

Positive: No other metal is as precious as gold.

Comparative: Gold is more precious than any other metal.

Superlative: Gold is the most precious of all metals.

Superlative: India is the largest democracy in the world.

Comparative: India is larger than any other democracy in the world.

Positive: No other democracy in the world is as large as India.

Superlative: Susie is one of the cleverest girls in the class.

Comparative: Susie is cleverer than most other girls in the class.

Positive: Few girls in the class are as clever as Susie.

Notes

We use the comparative to compare one person, thing or group with another person, thing etc. Therefore, the thing that is compared must be excluded from the group of things with which it is compared. This is usually done by

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using the word 'other'.