

Module :English

Level :3rd year LMD

Branch :Accounting and taxing

Lecture Four : Positive, comparative, and superlative degrees of comparison

1) Introduction :

Adjectives and adverbs not only describe things, they also compare them. Adjectives and adverbs have different forms to show degrees of comparison. There are three degrees of comparison : positive, comparative, and superlative.

2) The following list summarizes the three degrees of comparison :

- **Positive** : the base form of the adjective or adverb not being used in a comparison.
- **Comparative** : the form of the adjective or adverb being used to compare two things.
- **Superlative** : the form of the adjective or adverb being used to compare three or more things.

Degree of comparison	Number of things	Compared example
Positive degree	None	Donald is rich
Comparative degree	Two	Rose is richer than Donald
Superlative degree	Three or more	Bill is the richest of all

3) Guidelines of how to form comparative, and superlative degrees of adjectives and adverbs.

- Adjectives and adverbs with one, and two syllables, you use « adj+er+than » for comparative, and use « adj+est » for superlative.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Poor	Poorer	The poorest

Low	Lower	The lowest
High	Higher	The highest

- Adjectives and adverbs has three or more syllables, you use « more+adj+than » for the comparative, and use « The most+adj » or « The least+adj » for superlative.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Uncommon	More uncommon	The most common
Unusual	More unusual	The most unusual
Adorable	More adorable	The most adorable
Delightful	More delightful	The most delightful

- All adverbs that end with « ly », you form their comparative, and superlative degree with « more » and « the most ».

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Smoothly	More smoothly	The most smoothly
Easily	More easily	The most easily
calmly	More calmly	The most calmly
Gracefully	More gracefully	The most gracefully

- Some adjectives and adverbs have irregular forms. A few adjectives and adverbs do not follow these rules when they form the comparative and superlative degree. Unfortunately, they are among the most commonly used modifiers in English, so you are apt to need them virtually everyday.

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Bad	worse	The worst
badly	worse	The worst
Far (distance)	farther	The farthest
Far	further	The furthest
good	better	The best
ill	worse	The worst

late	later	The latest
Little (amount)	less	The least
Many -much- some	More	The most

Remarks :

- Never use both « er » and « more », or « est » and « most » with the same modifier. Never use double comparison for instance : you never say « the most furthest » .

- Adjectives with one syllable, with one vowel and one consonant at the end with comparatives. Double the consonant, and add « er » ;however, the superlative you double the consonant and add « est » ➤ Eg : hot ~~hotter~~ than the hottest

Big ~~bigger than~~
the biggest

Fat ~~fatter than~~
the fattest

- Adjectives with two syllables ending with « y » with comparative change « y » to « i » then add « er » ;however, the superlative you change « y » to « i » then add « est » .

Eg : happy ~~happier than~~ the happiest

Eg :silly ~~sillier than~~ the silliest

Eg : lonely ~~lonlier than~~ the loneliest

- **Good and well :**

- **« Good » and « will » are especially tricky.you should follow these guidelines :**

- 1) Good is always adjective : Eg : you should read this novel ; it has a good plot.
- 2) Well is an adjective used to describe good health : Eg : you look well in that suit

Well is an adverb used to describe anything but health :Eg : chef big hat cooks well.
As a result, everyone in his house no doubts eats well.