



Functional English I

Lecture 7

Comparison of adjectives

- What is an adjective?

Comparison of adjectives

- Read these sentences
 - Saad's mango is sweet
 - Aamir's mango is sweeter than Saad's
 - Humayun's mango is sweetest of all

Comparison of adjectives

- In sentence 1, the adjective sweet merely tells us that Saad's mango has the quality of sweetness, without saying how much of this quality it has

Comparison of adjectives

- In sentence 2, the adjective sweeter tells us that Aamir's mango, compared with Saad's, has more of the quality of sweetness

Comparison of adjectives

- In sentence 3, the adjective sweetest tells us that of all these mangoes Humayun's mango has the greatest amount or highest degree of the quality of sweetness

Comparison of adjectives

- We thus see that adjectives change in form (sweet, sweeter, sweetest) to show comparison
- These are called the three Degrees of Comparison

Comparison of adjectives

- The adjective sweet is said to be in the Positive degree
- The adjective sweeter is said to be in the Comparative degree
- The adjective sweetest is said to be in the Superlative degree

Comparison of adjectives

- The positive degree of an adjective is the adjective in its simple form
- It is used to denote the mere existence of some quality of what we speak about
- It is used when no comparison is made

Comparison of adjectives

- The comparative degree of an adjective denotes a higher degree of the quality than the positive and is used when two things (or set of things) are compared
- For example,
 - This boy is stronger than that
 - Apples are dearer than oranges

Comparison of adjectives

- The superlative degree of an adjective denotes the highest degree of the quality and is used when more than two things (or sets of things) are compared
- For example,
 - This boy is the brightest in the class

Comparison of adjectives

- There is another way in which we can compare things
- Instead of saying Saad is stronger than Aamir, we can say, 'Aamir is less strong than Saad'

Comparison of adjectives

- The superlative with most is sometimes used where there is no idea of comparison, but merely a desire to indicate the possession of a quality in a very high degree
- For example,
 - This is most unfortunate
 - It was a most eloquent speech
- This usage has been called the Superlative of Eminence or the Absolute Superlative

Formation of comparative and superlative

- Most adjectives of one syllable and some of more than one form the comparative by adding *er* and the superlative by adding *est* to the positive

Formation of comparative and superlative

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Sweet	Sweeter	Sweetest
Small	Smaller	Smallest
Tall	Taller	Tallest
Kind	Kinder	Kindest
Great	Greater	Greatest

Formation of comparative and superlative

- When the positive ends in *e*, only *r* and *st* are added

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Brave	Braver	Bravest
Noble	Nobler	Noblest
Wise	Wiser	Wisest

Formation of comparative and superlative

- When the positive ends in *j*, preceded by a consonant, the *y* is changed into *i* before adding *er* and *est*

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Happy	Happier	Happiest
Easy	Easier	Easiest
Merry	Merrier	Merriest

Formation of comparative and superlative

- When the positive is a word of one syllable and ends in a single consonant, preceded by a short vowel, this consonant is double before adding *er* and *est*

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Thin	Thinner	Thinnest
Fat	Fatter	Fattest
Sad	Sadder	Saddest

Formation of comparative and superlative

- Adjectives of more than two syllables form the comparative and superlative by putting *more* and *most* before the positive

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Difficult	More difficult	Most difficult
Courageous	More courageous	Most courageous
Industrious	More industrious	Most industrious

Irregular comparison

- The following adjectives are compound irregularly, that is, their comparative and superlative are not formed from the positive

Positive	Comparative	Superlative
Good/well	Better	Best
Bad,/evil/ill	Worse	Worst
Little	Less/lesser	Least
Much	More	Most