

# COMPARATIVE AND SUPERLATIVE

GM 18

# Content

- Review of adjectives.
- Comparative.
  - Paradigm.
- Superlative.
  - Paradigm.
- Exceptions.

# Adjectives in Latin

- Latin adjectives are divided into two groups:
  - adjectives that use 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> declension endings (*longus*, *a*, *um* type),
  - adjectives that use 3<sup>rd</sup> declension endings (*brevis*, *e* type).

# Comparatives and superlatives

- Adjectives express usually certain quality or property (long, short, new, old, acute, chronic, good, fatal, ...).
- The quality may differ depending on grade, which may be greater or lesser.
- Generally, there are three grades of quality:
  - **positive** (basic level),
  - **comparative** (something has higher level of quality than something else; we compare two things, therefore comparative),
  - **superlative** describes the highest level of quality.

# Examples

- Some adjectives create comparatives and superlatives using auxiliary modifier:
  - complex – **more** complex – the **most** complex,
  - difficult – **more** difficult – the **most** difficult.
- Other use regular system of endings:
  - new – **newer** – the **newest**,
  - strong – **stronger** – the **strongest**.
- While few are irregular:
  - good – better – the best,
  - bad – worse – the worst.

- The same system can be found in Latin.
- There are few adjectives which use auxiliary modifier, majority creates comparatives and superlatives regularly, and the rest is irregular.

# Augiliary modifier

- Adjectives that use auxiliary modifier to create comparatives and superlatives have to comply with two conditions:
  - they are from -us, -a, -um group (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> declension adjectives),
  - the stem ends with a vowel which is therefore directly before the ending.
- Example: *necessarius, a, um*; *dubius, a, um*.

- In these rare cases the comparative is created using word *magis* and for superlative *maxime*.
- Example:
  - necessary – more necessary – the most necessary
  - necessarius – magis necessarius – maxime necessarius.
  - dubious – more dubious – the most dubious,
  - dubius – magis dubius – maxime dubius.
- Words *magis* and *maxime* don't have inflection. They don't change endings. The adjective itself is inflected as usual.



# Regular comparative

- There are two groups of adjectives in Latin: 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> declension and 3<sup>rd</sup> declension.
- Both groups create comparative similarly.
- A regular comparative uses endings from paradigm *dolor* and *caput*.
- This means that even adjectives with positive from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> declension, like *longus*, *a*, *um* have comparative with grammar from the 3<sup>rd</sup> declension.

# Paradigm of comparative

	Singular		Plural	
	m./f.	n.	m./f.	n.
Nom.	<i>long -ior</i>	<i>long -ius</i>	<i>long -ior -es</i>	<i>long -ior -a</i>
Gen.	<i>long -ior -is</i>		<i>long -ior -um</i>	
Acc.	<i>long -ior -em</i>	<i>long -ius</i>	<i>long -ior -es</i>	<i>long -ior -a</i>
Abl.	<i>long -ior -e</i>		<i>long -ior -ibus</i>	

# Instruction for creating the comparative

- Take an adjective and extract its stem.
- Add *-ior-* after the stem.
- Add ending that you know from imparisyllabic paradigms *dolor* and *caput*.
- Note that Neutrals have in Nom. Sg. ending *-ius* (there is no *-ior-*) and that Nom. Sg. is copied into Acc. Sg. This is the only exception.

# Comments

- Note the difference between positive 3<sup>rd</sup> declension adjectives and comparative in the same group.
- Both will be according the 3<sup>rd</sup> declension but the positive uses parisyllabic endings and comparative uses imparisyllabic ones.
- See the comparison on the next slide:

# Positive and comparative difference

- short (m.) and shorter (m.)

*brevis et brevior*

*brevis et brevioris*

*brevem et breviorum*

*brevi et brevior*

*breves et breviores*

*brevium et breviorum*

*breves et breviores*

*brevibus et brevioribus*

# Superlative

- Superlative is created using *-issim-* and regular ending from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> declension (*-us, -a, -um*).
- Even adjectives which use in positive endings from the 3<sup>rd</sup> declension have superlatives with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> declension endings.
- Example: *brevis*, *e* turns into *brevissimus, a, um*.

# Paradigm of superlative

	m.	f.	n.
Nom.	<i>long -issim -us</i>	<i>long -issim -a</i>	<i>long -issim -um</i>
Gen.	<i>long -issim -i</i>	<i>long -issim -ae</i>	<i>long -issim -i</i>
Acc.	<i>long -issim -um</i>	<i>long -issim -am</i>	<i>long -issim -um</i>
Abl.	<i>long -issim -o</i>	<i>long -issim -a</i>	<i>long -issim -o</i>
Nom.	<i>long -issim -i</i>	<i>long -issim -ae</i>	<i>long -issim -a</i>
Gen.	<i>long -issim -orum</i>	<i>long -issim -arum</i>	<i>long -issim -orum</i>
Acc.	<i>long -issim -os</i>	<i>long -issim -as</i>	<i>long -issim -a</i>
Abl.	<i>long -issim -is</i>	<i>long -issim -is</i>	<i>long -issim -is</i>

# Exceptions

- There are three types of exceptions:
  - adjectives which have no positive (only comparative),
  - adjectives with irregular superlative,
  - adjectives which have completely irregular comparative and superlative.



# Adjectives without positive

- You already know this group from anatomy: *anterior, posterior, superior, inferior*.
- Note that they have regular comparative -ior-/-ius ending.
- There is nothing difficult about them from the grammatical point of view, only remember that their grammatical comparative (anterior) is usually translated using English positive (anterior, is frontal not “more” frontal).

# Irregular superlatives

- Adjectives which end in Nom. Sg. for masculine gender with *-r* create superlative with ending *-rrimus*, instead of *-issimus*.
  - Therefore *acer* has superlative *acerrimus* (not *acerissimus*).
- Four adjectives (*similis*, *dissimilis*, *facilis*, *difficilis*) have superlative *-llimus* instead of *-issimus*.
  - *similis* – *simillimus*, *a*, *um*,
  - *dissimilis* – *dissimillimus*, *a*, *um*,
  - *facilis* – *facillimus*, *a*, *um*,
  - *difficilis* – *difficillimus*, *a*, *um*.

# Completely irregular adjectives

- good: *bonus, a, um* – *melior, ius* – *optimus, a, um*,
- bad: *malus, a, um* – *peior, ius* – *pessimus, a, um*,
- big: *magnus, a, um* – *maior, maius* – *maximus, a, um*,
- small: *parvus, a, um* – *minor, minus* – *minimus, a, um*.

- Comparatives and superlatives of big, small, good and bad are **grammatically regular**, therefore they behave like ordinary superlatives and comparatives as described in previous slides.

# Test

- Create comparatives and superlatives from the following adjectives:
  - *profundus, integer, laesus, acutus, iuvenis, facilis, solubilis, degener.*
- Create all the grammatical cases from:
  - *musculus anterior, causa latentissima, intestinum laesius.*