Lesson 20: Errors with Adjectives and Adverbs

Today we'll focus on mistakes with adjectives and adverbs. The first one involves the word "enough":

Error #72

Don't say:

• This box isn't **enough big** for all the books.

Say:

• This box isn't **big enough** for all the books.

Enough goes after adjectives, adverbs, and verbs:

- Are you old enough to see this movie?
- She's **smart enough** to take the advanced class.
- You sing **well enough** to be a professional!
- The teacher speaks **slowly enough** for me to understand.
- I play the piano, but I don't practice enough.
- Make sure you **eat enough** now so that you're not hungry later.

Enough goes before nouns:

- There are **enough chairs** for everybody to sit down.
- There isn't **enough information** in this report; I need more details.
- We don't have **enough people** to form a soccer team.
- Do you have enough money to buy that motorcycle?

Error #73

Don't say:

• I can't believe how much stubborn he is.

Say:

• I can't believe how stubborn he is.

We only use **how much** and **how many** before nouns.

With adjectives and adverbs, we use only **how**:

- How tall are you?
- I want to see **how comfortable** the couch is before buying it.
- How quickly can they finish the project?
- This software measures **how efficiently** the employees are working.

Error #74

Don't say:

• These are my favorites shoes.

Say:

- These are my favorite shoes.
- These shoes are my **favorites.**

Adjectives before nouns are always singular in English, even if the noun is plural!

- Our house has three small rooms.
- The forest is filled with giant trees.
- I have a couple of **friendly dogs.**

• I've finished this book, now I'll read the **other ones** I borrowed from the library.

Some adjectives - especially "others" - can be used in plural form, if the noun was mentioned earlier (and is not directly after the adjective). Here are two examples:

- I have many pairs of shoes, but these red shoes are my favorites.
 (= favorite shoes)
- The boss gave raises to some employees but not others.
 (= other employees)
- Some of the shows on this channel are great, and others are terrible.
 (= other shows on this channel)

Error #75

Don't say:

• Last night I was a lot tired.

Say:

• Last night I was so/very/really tired.

The words **so, very, really,** are all used before adjectives and adverbs to add emphasis or describe something that is intense:

- This book is **so/very/really** interesting.
- She plays the piano so/very/really well!
- They moved here **so/very/really** recently.

A lot of / lots of are used before nouns to describe a large quantity:

- I ate a lot of / lots of pizza last night.
- There were a lot of / lots of kids at the playground.

Note that it's always **a lot** and never **alot**.

We can also use **a lot** after verbs to describe something we do frequently/often:

- I read a lot.
- Do you exercise a lot?

Error #76

Don't say:

• My new computer is **more better** than my old one.

Say:

- My computer is **better** than my old one.
- My computer is **much better** than my old one.

Let's review how we form comparative adjectives:

- 1 syllable: fast → faster
- Words ending in Y: easy → easier
- 2+ syllables: popular → more popular
- Irregular: good/bad → better/worse

We only use "more" to make comparisons using adjectives of 2+ syllables: more popular, more interesting, more efficient, more comfortable, etc. The word "better" is *already* a comparative, so we shouldn't add "more."

If you want to add extra emphasis to a comparative, you can add "much":

My new computer is much better than my old one.
 (not just a little bit better... MUCH better)

- This lesson is much easier than yesterday's.
- My sister is **much** more popular than me.
- The problem is **much** worse than we imagined.

Error #77

Don't say:

• My apartment is ten miles **far** from here.

Say:

• My apartment is ten miles **away** from here.

When talking about *general* long distances, we can say **far from** or **far away from**:

• My apartment is far (away) from here.

However, when talking about a *specific* distance, we say **away from** or **simply from**:

- My apartment is ten miles **away from** here.
- My apartment is ten miles from here.

This is confusing because the question might ask "How far...?" but we don't use the word "far" when giving an answer with a specific distance:

- How far is the nearest gas station? / Where is the nearest gas station?
 It's about two blocks away.
- How far is the museum from here?
 At least five miles you should probably take the bus.

You can only use "far" in the answer when speaking in general terms:

- It's not far. (it's a short distance away)
- It's pretty/quite/very far. (it's a long distance away)

That's all for now. The next lesson is our last one in the grammar section, and I'll teach you about a number of mistakes that I've found in my students' written English, which they've sent in for correction in other courses. See you next time!

THIS IS A FREE SAMPLE LESSON FROM THE

200 COMMON ERRORS IN ENGLISH COURSE:



Quiz – Lesson 20

Mark each sentence correct or incorrect, and fix any mistakes.

- 1. The next exit is about five miles far.
- 2. Do you know how many people are in the program?
- 3. He has lots of great ideas.
- 4. His work isn't excellent, but it's enough good.
- 5. How much beer did you drink?
- 6. I grabbed one book and put the others away.
- 7. The symptoms of the disease are getting more worse.
- 8. I love how much friendly Brazilians are.
- 9. If you don't succeed, you'll have many other chances in the future.
- 10. Is there enough space in the house for all our stuff?
- 11. She's a lot good at her job.
- 12. The class is much more interesting than the last one I took.
- 13. The portions at that restaurant are more smaller than I expected.
- 14.I wonder how close the hotel is to the city center.
- 15. There weren't customers enough to sustain the business.
- 16. They set up their tent twenty feet away from the trail.
- 17. This neighborhood is much nicer than where I lived before.
- 18.I have a gym membership, but I don't go enough.
- 19. Bob is married, but all my others friends are single.
- 20. Both my parents always worked a lot.

Answers – Quiz – Lesson 20

- 1. Incorrect (Correct: The next exit is about five miles away.)
- 2. Correct
- 3. Correct
- 4. Incorrect (Correct: His work isn't excellent, but it's good enough.)
- 5. Correct
- 6. Correct
- 7. Incorrect (Correct: The symptoms of the disease are getting worse.)
- 8. Incorrect (Correct: I love how friendly Brazilians are.)
- 9. Correct
- 10.Correct
- 11. Incorrect (Correct: She's so/very/really good at her job.)
- 12.Correct
- 13.Incorrect (Correct: The portions at that restaurant are smaller / much smaller than I expected.)
- 14.Correct
- 15.Incorrect (Correct: There weren't enough customers to sustain the business.)
- 16.Correct
- 17.Correct
- 18.Correct
- 19. Incorrect (Correct: Bob is married, but all my other friends are single.)
- 20.Correct