

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S3 #20

Making Comparisons in Spanish

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FORMAL SPANISH

1. ASHLEY: ¿Cuál tequila es más caro - el añejo o el blanco?
2. ATTENDANT: El tequila añejo es más caro que el blanco.
3. ASHLEY: ¿Y cuál tequila es más rico?
4. ATTENDANT: El añejo es más rico, pero menos popular.

ENGLISH

1. ASHLEY: What tequila is more expensive...the aged one or the white one?
2. ATTENDANT: Aged tequila is more expensive than white tequila.
3. ASHLEY: And which tequila is tastier?
4. ATTENDANT: Aged tequila is tastier but less popular.

VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
popular	popular, well known	adjective	masculine and feminine
blanco	white	noun	masculine
que	than	preposition	
añejo	aged	adjective	
más	more, plus	adverb, adjective	

cual	which	pronoun, adjective, adverb
pero	but	conjunction
caro(-a)	expensive	adjective
rico (a)	tasty, delicious, rich	adjective
menos	minus, less	adverb, preposition, conjunction, masc. noun

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Esta canción fue muy popular el año pasado.</p> <p>"This song was very popular last year."</p>	<p>Esta canción es muy popular en la actualidad y es la número uno en las listas.</p> <p>"This song is very popular right now and is number one in the charts."</p>
<p>La actriz es muy popular por su talento y encanto.</p> <p>"The actress is popular because of her talent and charm."</p>	<p>Blanco es por mucho mi color favorito.</p> <p>"White is by far my favorite color."</p>
<p>Lo más atractivo de esa playa es su arena blanca.</p> <p>"What's most attractive about that beach is its white sand."</p>	<p>Las personas valen más que las cosas.</p> <p>"People are worth more than things."</p>

<p>El tequila añejo es más caro. "Aged tequila is more expensive."</p>	<p>Mi cita más romántica fue en la playa. "My most romantic date was on the beach."</p>
<p>Ella quiere más comida. "She wants more food."</p>	<p>¿Cuáles son tus comidas favoritas? "What are your favorite foods?"</p>
<p>Tengo sueño pero tengo que terminar este reporte esta noche. "I'm sleepy but I have to finish this report tonight."</p>	<p>Yo sé que estás ocupado. Pero ¿Puedes llamar a mi abogado? "I know you are busy. But can you call my lawyer?"</p>
<p>Quiero ir, pero no puedo. "I want to go, but I can't."</p>	<p>Ayer Mónica se compró unos aretes muy caros. "Yesterday, Monica bought really expensive earrings."</p>
<p>Si yo fuera rico, viajaría todo el año. "If I were rich, I would travel all year long."</p>	<p>El pollo está muy rico. "The chicken is very tasty."</p>
<p>Diez menos seis es igual a cuatro. "Ten minus six equals four."</p>	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

más ("more")

Más is a word denoting an increase in volume or quantity. It is followed by a noun, adjective, or adverb.

For Example:

<i>Spanish</i>	"English"
<i>más tortillas</i>	"more tortillas"
<i>más sabroso</i>	"tastier"
<i>más duro</i>	"harder"

The opposite of *más* is *menos*.

***menos* ("less")**

Menos is a word denoting a decrease in volume or quantity. It is followed by a noun, adjective, or adverb.

For Example:

<i>Spanish</i>	"English"
<i>menos tortillas</i>	"fewer tortillas"
<i>menos sabroso</i>	"less tasty"
<i>menos mal</i>	"less bad"

The opposite of *menos* is *más*.

***rico* ("tasty")**

We use *rico* mainly for food but also for sensations.

For Example:

1. *un masaje muy rico*
"a delicious massage"

Synonyms include *sabroso* (only for food) and *delicioso*. It can also mean "rich" or "wealthy."

For Example:

1. *un hombre muy rico*
"a very rich man"

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is to Teach You Comparative Statements Using *Más Que* ("More Than") and *Menos Que...* ("Less Than...").

¿Cuál tequila es más caro? El tequila añejo es más caro que el blanco.

"Which tequila is more expensive? Aged tequila is more expensive than white tequila."

Making comparisons in Spanish can help you communicate more clearly. If, for example, you want to know which post office is closer to you, which restaurant is better, or which museum is bigger, you will need to use the words *más* ("more") and *menos* ("less") followed by an adjective. The formula is simple: just place the adverb *más* or *menos* before the adjective, keeping its gender and number:

***más* + adjective or *menos* + adjective.** See the following table.

For Example:

Adjective	Gender	+/-	Spanish	"English"
<i>bueno</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>más bueno</i>	Literal: "more good" ("better"))
<i>buena</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>menos</i>	<i>menos buena</i>	Literal: "less good" ("worse"))
<i>grande</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>más grande</i>	Literal: "more big" ("bigger")
<i>bonito</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>menos</i>	<i>menos bonito</i>	Literal: "less pretty" ("uglier"))

<i>bonita</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>más bonita</i>	Literal: "more pretty" ("prettier")
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Now let's review this formula using some examples.

Question	Verb	+/-	Adjective	"English"
<i>¿Cuál correo*</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>cercano?</i>	"Which post office is closer?"
<i>¿Cuál restaurante</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>bueno?</i>	"Which restaurant is better?"
<i>¿Cuál museo</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>más</i>	<i>grande?</i>	"Which museum is bigger?"

* We may substitute *¿cuál...?* for *¿qué...?* if we are forming an open question and not comparing two given options.

Now that we know how to ask the questions, we need to understand the answers we will get. Note that we use the preposition *que* ("than") to set up a structure that contrasts Object 1 and Object 2. Here are some examples.

For Example:

Object 1	Verb	+/- Adjective	Prep.	Object 2
<i>Este correo</i> "This post office"	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>más cercano</i> "closer"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>ese correo.</i> "that post office."
<i>Ese correo</i> "That post office"	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>menos cercano</i> "less close"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>este correo.</i> "this post office."

<i>La Olla</i> "La Olla" (restaurant)	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>más bueno</i> "better"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>Doña Gabriela.</i> "Doña Gabriela."
<i>Doña Gabriela</i> "Doña Gabriela" (restaurant)	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>menos bueno</i> "less good*"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>La Olla.</i> "La Olla."
<i>El Museo Tamayo</i> "Tamayo Museum"	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>más grande</i> "larger"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>el Ma.m..</i> "Ma.m.."
<i>El Ma.m.</i> "Ma.m."	<i>es</i> "is"	<i>menos grande</i> "less large"	<i>que</i> "than"	<i>el Tamayo.</i> "Tamayo."

* This is a literal translation. In Spanish, you can say *menos bueno* ("less good"), *menos grande* ("less large"), etc., but you can also say *El Ma.m. es más chico que el Tamayo* ("Ma.m. is smaller than Tamayo"), depending on what you want to emphasize. Ma.m. = Modern Art Museum.

In the dialogue, Ashley asked two questions: what tequila is more expensive, and what tequila is tastier. The store attendant answered by saying that aged tequila is both more expensive and tastier (of course!) but he added a third comment: aged tequila is not so popular.

For Example:

1. Attendant: *El añejo es más rico, pero menos popular.*
"Aged tequila is tastier but less popular."

You can say the same thing using a formal grammatical structure.

For Example:

1. *El tequila añejo es más rico que el tequila blanco.*
"Aged tequila is tastier than white tequila."

2. *El tequila añejo es menos popular que el tequila blanco.*
"Aged tequila is less popular than white tequila."

For Example:

1. *El vino es más caro que la cerveza.*
"Wine is more expensive than beer."
2. *El rojo es más bonito que el azul.*
"Red is nicer than blue."

Examples From This Dialogue

1. *El tequila añejo es más caro que el blanco.*
"Aged tequila is more expensive than white tequila."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Are You Drinking Genuine Tequila?

Around the world, tequila is known for being a heavy spirit good for knocking you out, and it is especially popular among young spring breakers. However, tequila in its original tradition from Jalisco is an expensive spirit and should be consumed slowly in a glass cup, not in a *caballito* ("shot glass"), especially if aged or a special reserve. This culture is slowly changing, as a growing number of tequilas have appeared in the market, and it is now protected by law as a certified product that, in order to be genuine, must be produced from the blue agave of certain areas of Mexico, mostly near Guadalajara.