

second edition

A Reference GRAMMAR OF MODERN ITALIAN

MARTIN MAIDEN &
CECILIA ROBUSTELLI



A Reference Grammar of Modern Italian
Second Edition



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

A Reference Grammar of Modern Italian Second Edition

Martin Maiden

Professor of the Romance Languages, University of Oxford, UK

Cecilia Robustelli

*Professor of Italian Linguistics, University of Modena and
Reggio Emilia, Italy*

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2000 by Hodder Education
Second edition published 2007 by Hodder Education

Published 2013 by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 4RN
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY, 10017, USA

First issued in hardback 2015

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 2007 Martin Maiden and Cecilia Robustelli

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

The advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of going to press, but neither the authors nor the publisher can accept any legal responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 13: 978-1-138-17087-2 (hbk)

ISBN 13: 978-0-340-91339-0 (pbk)

DOI: 10.4324/9780203783504

Contents

Abbreviations and symbols	xxiii
Glossary of key terms	xxv
1 Introduction	1
2 Spelling and pronunciation	4
2.1 The relationship between letters and sounds	4
2.2 The letters <i>c, (q), g, h, i, u</i>	4
2.3 The letters <i>e</i> and <i>o</i>	7
2.4 The letters <i>s</i> and <i>z</i>	9
2.5 Spelling and pronunciation of ‘double’ consonants	10
2.6 Lengthening of consonants at the beginning of words: <i>rafforzamento</i> (<i>fono</i>) <i>sintattico</i>	10
2.7 The type <i>Isvizzera</i> for <i>Svizzera</i>	13
2.8 Optional removal of final unstressed vowels: <i>aver fatto</i> vs. <i>avere fatto</i> , etc.	13
2.9 Primary stress	14
2.10 Variable primary stress	17
2.11 Secondary stress: ‘regular’ and ‘autonomous’	17
2.12 Written accents	18
2.13 Punctuation	19
2.14 Hyphens and syllabification	19
2.15 Capital letters	20
2.16 Names of letters of the alphabet	20
3 Nouns and adjectives	21
3.1 Three general principles for plural formation	21
3.2 Spelling of plurals	23
3.3 Exceptions to the general principles: nouns and adjectives with irregular plural endings	23
3.4 Nouns in masculine singular <i>-o</i> , and feminine plural <i>-a</i>	25
3.5 Other nouns which differ in gender between singular and plural	28
3.6 Irregularities in the plural root: <i>porco – porci, amico – amici, dio – dei,</i> <i>uomo – uomini</i> , etc.	29
3.7 Forming the plural of compound nouns: <i>il capogruppo – i capigruppo</i> , etc.	31

3.8	Number mismatches between languages: English plurals for Italian singulars, and vice versa	33
3.9	Three principles for predicting the gender of nouns	34
3.10	Nouns (notably those in <i>-e</i>) whose gender is not predictable from the three general principles for gender	35
3.11	Nouns which contradict the general principles for gender (feminine gender for males; masculine gender for females; masculines in <i>-a</i> ; feminines in <i>-o</i>)	35
3.12	Other clues to the gender of nouns (endings and suffixes)	38
3.13	Gender of compound nouns	39
3.14	Gender of acronyms (<i>sigle</i>)	40
3.15	Gender of parts of speech other than nouns	40
3.16	Gender of names of cities, cars, rivers, valleys and wines	41
3.17	Other meaning differences associated with gender (trees vs. fruits; size)	42
3.18	Other pairs of words differentiated by gender	43
3.19	Sex: ways of expressing 'male' and 'female' in nouns denoting living beings	43
3.20	Apparent anomalies of gender where a noun is understood but not expressed	45
3.21	Masculine plurals of nouns denoting relatives may refer to both sexes	46
3.22	Gender and adjectives	46
3.23	Agreement patterns with nouns of different gender: <i>Aveva le mani e i piedi legati</i> 'His hands and feet were bound'	47
3.24	Gender strictly determined by the noun	48
3.25	The position of the adjective	48
3.26	Adjectives are next to the noun they modify	52
3.27	The order of adjectives in combination: <i>molti bei libri</i> 'many fine books', <i>tavole rotonde verniciate</i> or <i>tavole rotonde e verniciate</i> 'round painted tables', etc.	53
3.28	The forms of preposed adjectives <i>bello, buono, grande</i> (and <i>santo</i>)	54
3.29	The position of specificational adjectives: <i>diverse idee</i> (vs. <i>idee diverse</i>), etc.	55
3.30	The type <i>la povera donna</i> (vs. <i>la donna povera</i>)	57
3.31	The type <i>Trovo questo libro interessante</i> 'I find this book interesting' (vs. <i>Trovo interessante questo libro</i>)	57
3.32	The 'present participle'	58
3.33	The type 'I'm a slow eater' <i>Sono uno che mangia lentamente</i> , etc.	60
4	The articles	61
4.1	The forms of the definite and indefinite articles	61
4.2	Combinations of preposition + definite article	63
4.3	Uses of the definite article	64
4.4	The definite article with nouns having 'generic', 'universal' reference: <i>Il vino fa male alla salute</i> 'Wine is bad for your health', etc.	64

4.5	The article with names of body parts and other 'inherent attributes'	65
4.6	The article with names of places, countries and islands	66
4.7	The article with names of cities, towns, villages, streets, rivers, lakes and mountains	68
4.8	The article with names of persons	68
4.9	The article with names of languages	69
4.10	Omission of articles in verbal expressions: <i>aver sonno, far piacere</i> , etc.	70
4.11	The type <i>Faccio il falegname</i> = 'I'm a carpenter': the construction <i>fare</i> + definite article + noun	70
4.12	English genitive -'s and the Italian article: the type <i>la casa del professore</i> 'the teacher's house'	71
4.13	Italian <i>quello, questo</i> = English 'the'	71
4.14	Omission of the article in appositive and predicative constructions: the type <i>È studente</i> 'He's a student'	72
4.15	Omission of the article in exclamations	73
4.16	Omission of the article in lists and conjoined expressions	73
4.17	Omission of the article in book and chapter titles	74
4.18	Omission of the article after prepositions: the type <i>in ufficio</i> 'at the office'	74
4.19	The articles frequently absent in proverbial expressions	75
4.20	The 'partitive' type <i>Voglio del vino, Porto dei fiori</i> with <i>di</i> + article + noun and the 'zero article' type <i>Voglio vino, Porto fiori</i>	76
4.21	The partitive construction <i>di</i> + noun phrase: the type <i>Di rose ne ho colte tante</i>	79
4.22	The indefinite article	79
5	Demonstratives	81
5.1	Forms of the demonstrative adjectives and pronouns: <i>questo</i> (and <i>sto</i>), <i>quello</i> , etc.	81
5.2	Meaning of <i>questo</i> vs. <i>quello</i>	82
5.3	<i>Codesto</i>	83
5.4	The demonstratives <i>questo</i> and <i>quello</i> as personal pronouns	83
5.5	The pronouns <i>questi</i> 'he', 'the last mentioned [person]', 'the latter', <i>quegli</i> 'he', 'the former'	84
5.6	The type <i>quelli del municipio</i> = 'the town hall people'	84
5.7	The pronouns <i>questo, quello, ciò</i> 'this', 'that', referring to assertions/propositions	85
5.8	The type <i>La situazione è sempre quella</i> 'The situation is still the same'	85
5.9	Pronominalization of adjectives: the type <i>quello francese</i> = 'the French one'	86
5.10	'Verbless' uses of <i>questo</i>	86
5.11	Some idioms and expressions with <i>questo</i> and <i>quello</i>	87
5.12	The demonstrative pronoun <i>costui</i> (and <i>colui</i>), etc.	87
5.13	Demonstratives of kind and manner: <i>così, tale</i>	88
5.14	'Text-internal' demonstratives: <i>suddetto</i> 'above mentioned', etc.	88
5.15	Demonstratives of place: <i>qua, là</i> , etc.	89

5.16	<i>Qui, qua, lì, là</i> + locative term: <i>lì vicino</i> 'near there', etc. <i>Laggiù/quaggiù</i> 'down there/here'	90
5.17	Demonstratives of identity: <i>l'albero stesso</i> 'the very tree', 'the tree itself'	90
5.18	What is the difference between <i>stesso</i> and reflexives?	90
5.19	<i>Stesso</i> not equivalent to English '-self', where '-self' means 'as far as X is concerned' or 'on his/her/its own'	91
5.20	The difference between <i>stesso</i> and <i>uguale</i>	92
6	Personal pronouns	93
6.1	The differences between stressed and clitic ('unstressed') pronouns	93
6.2	Forms of the clitics: <i>mi, ti, gli</i> , etc., vs. <i>me, te, glie</i> , etc.; elision; avoidance of repetition	95
6.3	Position of clitics in relation to their verb	98
6.4	Position of clitics in relation to constructions comprising more than one verb: <i>L'ho lavato, Lo devo lavare, Devo lavarlo</i> , etc.	99
6.5	<i>Ecco</i> + clitic	100
6.6	Order of combinations of clitics	100
6.7	The 'semi-clitic' <i>loro</i> : <i>Do loro il libro</i> vs. <i>Gli do il libro</i> 'I give them the book'	102
6.8	<i>Lo</i> standing for clauses and phrases: <i>Lui è italiano e lo sono anch'io</i> = 'He's Italian and I am too'	103
6.9	Idioms with feminine <i>la</i>	103
6.10	'Locative' <i>ci</i> and <i>vi</i> '(t)here'	104
6.11	The type <i>Ci camminava sopra</i> 'He was walking on it'	105
6.12	The types <i>c'è</i> 'there is', <i>ci vuole</i> 'is necessary', <i>ci ha</i> 'he has'	105
6.13	The functions of <i>ne</i> and restrictions on its use	106
6.14	Some idioms with <i>ne</i>	110
6.15	The reflexive clitic as an inherent part of some intransitive verbs: the type <i>alzarsi</i> 'to get up'	110
6.16	Special use of reflexive clitics with transitive verbs: the type <i>leggersi un libro</i> 'to read a book'	113
6.17	Post-verbal clitics in archaic uses and set phrases: the type <i>Vendesi</i>	113
6.18	The non-standard type <i>A me mi piace</i>	113
6.19	Forms of the stressed pronouns	114
6.20	Uses of the 'oblique' forms	114
6.21	'It's me' = <i>Sono io</i> , 'It was them' = <i>Erano loro</i> , etc.	115
6.22	Position of <i>io</i> combined with other subject pronouns: <i>io e lui</i> and <i>lui e io</i> = 'he and I'	115
6.23	Use of oblique <i>te</i> as subject	116
6.24	<i>Noialtri</i> and <i>voialtri</i>	116
6.25	The type <i>Dicevamo con Giulio</i> 'Giulio and I were saying'	116
6.26	<i>Egli, esso, ella, essa, essi, esse</i> vs. <i>lui, lei, loro</i>	116
6.27	'Reciprocal' pronouns: 'They look at each other' <i>Si guardano</i> (<i>l'un l'altro</i>)	118
6.28	<i>Tra sé, tra di loro; fra me e me</i> 'to himself', 'amongst themselves'; 'to myself'	119

6.29	Indefinite personal <i>si</i> : <i>Oggi si va al ristorante più spesso che in passato</i> 'Today people go to the restaurant more often than in the past'	120
6.30	The differences between indefinite personal <i>si</i> and passive <i>si</i>	121
6.31	Three peculiarities of indefinite personal <i>si</i> in combination with other clitic pronouns: the types <i>Si vuole farlo</i> 'One wants to do it', <i>Ci si lava</i> 'One washes oneself', and <i>Lo si prepara</i> 'One prepares it'	123
6.32	Indefinite personal <i>si</i> , the auxiliary verb, and agreement of the past participle: <i>Si è viaggiato</i> 'One has travelled' vs. <i>Si è partiti</i> 'One has left'	124
6.33	Plural predicates of verbs with indefinite personal <i>si</i> : <i>Si è allegri</i> 'One is cheerful' (or where <i>si</i> is implicit: <i>È meglio viaggiare</i> <i>armati</i> 'It's better to travel armed')	125
6.34	Other indefinite personal forms: second person forms, and third person plural forms and <i>uno</i>	127
6.35	An indefinite personal as object of a verb: the type <i>L'alcool rende</i> <i>tristi</i> 'Alcohol makes one sad'	128
6.36	<i>Si</i> as first person plural 'we': the type <i>Si va</i> 'We go'	128
6.37	Authorial and majestic <i>noi</i>	129
6.38	'All of' + pronoun: the type 'They gave it to all of us' <i>Ce l'hanno</i> <i>dato a tutti</i>	129
7	Relative structures	130
7.1	Forms of the relative pronouns	130
7.2	Impossibility of omitting relative pronouns	130
7.3	The type <i>Il medico di cui ti avevo parlato</i> 'The doctor who I talked to you about'	130
7.4	Uses and functions of relative <i>che</i>	131
7.5	<i>Il che</i> : A relative referring to a whole clause	131
7.6	The phrase <i>di che</i>	132
7.7	<i>Che</i> as generic, 'all purpose' relative form	132
7.8	Functions of <i>cui</i>	133
7.9	<i>Di cui</i> = 'including', 'mentioned'	133
7.10	Restrictions on 'preposition + <i>cui</i> '	134
7.11	The possessive relative <i>il/la/i/le cui</i> = 'whose', 'of which'	134
7.12	Functions of relative <i>il quale</i>	134
7.13	Article + <i>quale</i> + noun = 'the said'	135
7.14	<i>Quale</i> as relative adjective = 'of such a kind as'	135
7.15	The type 'What/That which you say is true', 'I believe what/that which you say', 'All [that] I do is read', 'Everything [that] you say is a lie', 'He who hesitates is lost', etc.	136
7.16	<i>Quanto</i> = 'what', 'all [that]'	136
7.17	'He, she, those who ...', 'anybody who ...': masc. <i>colui che</i> , femin. <i>colei che</i> , pl. <i>coloro che</i> ; <i>quello che</i> , <i>quella che</i> , <i>quelli che</i> ; <i>chi</i> ; <i>Chi ...</i> 'if anybody ...'	136
7.18	'No matter who', 'whoever', 'no matter what', 'whatever' <i>chiunque</i> , <i>qualunque cosa</i> , <i>qualsiasi cosa</i>	137

7.19	<i>Quanti</i> = 'all those who', 'as many as ...'	138
7.20	Relatives referring to expressions of time, space and manner (<i>'the day when I was born' / 'the day I was born', 'the place where I live' / 'the place I live', 'the way that you walk' / 'the way you walk', etc.</i>)	138
7.21	Italian clauses with relative pronouns equivalent to English verbs in '-ing' (<i>un progetto che offre molte possibilità</i> = 'a project offering many possibilities')	138
7.22	The type <i>una lettera arrivata stamattina</i> = <i>una lettera che è arrivata stamattina</i>	139
7.23	The present participle as relative clause: <i>le note riferentisi al suo caso</i> = <i>le note che si riferiscono al suo caso</i>	139
7.24	The type <i>un amico che non mi ricordo dove abita</i>	140
7.25	The type <i>un libro affascinante e che solleva molti problemi</i>	140
7.26	Repetition of the noun as a relative device	141
7.27	'Infinitival relatives': the types <i>Cerco un libro da leggere</i> 'I'm looking for a book to read'; <i>Non è un uomo da abbandonare i suoi amici</i> 'He's not a man to abandon his friends'; <i>Cercavo (un posto) dove mettere il libro</i> 'I was looking for somewhere to put the book'	141
8	Interrogative structures	143
8.1	Forms of the interrogative pronouns, adjectives and adverbs	143
8.2	<i>Chi?</i> 'who?'	143
8.3	<i>Che cosa?</i> , <i>che?</i> , <i>cosa?</i> 'what?'	144
8.4	<i>Perché?</i> 'why?'	144
8.5	<i>Quale?</i> and <i>che?</i>	144
8.6	<i>Come?</i> 'how?', 'of what kind?'	145
8.7	<i>Dove?</i> 'where?' and <i>quando?</i> 'when?'	145
8.8	<i>Quanto?</i> 'how much?', 'to what extent?'	146
8.9	Reinforcement of question words: '... on earth?', '... ever?', '... else?'	146
8.10	Interrogative <i>niente</i> 'anything?', <i>nessuno</i> 'anybody?'	146
8.11	The type <i>E Mario?</i> 'What about Mario?'	147
8.12	Structure of interrogative sentences	147
8.13	Interrogative <i>se</i> in exclamations	148
9	Indefinite, quantifier and negative pronouns and adjectives	149
9.1	<i>Uno</i> 'one'; <i>Ne ho uno bianco</i> 'I have a white one'	149
9.2	<i>Qualcuno</i> (more rarely <i>qualcheduno</i>) 'somebody', 'someone' (or 'some ones')	149
9.3	<i>Un tale</i> 'somebody or other', and similar expressions	150
9.4	<i>Qualcosa</i> , <i>qualche cosa</i> , and other expressions meaning 'something'	150
9.5	<i>Qualcos'altro</i> or <i>altro</i> 'something else', <i>qualcun altro</i> or <i>altri</i> 'somebody else', 'another [person]'	151
9.6	<i>Chi ... chi ...</i> 'some people ... others ...'	152

9.7	<i>Qualche</i> ‘some’, ‘a few’	152
9.8	<i>Alcun, alcuno</i> ‘some’, ‘a few’, ‘a certain number of’, ‘some (of them)’, ‘some people’	152
9.9	<i>Chiunque</i> ‘anybody’; <i>qualunque cosa, qualsiasi cosa</i> ‘anything’, ‘whatever’; <i>qualunque, qualsiasi, quale si sia, quale che sia</i> ‘any’, ‘whichever’; <i>tutto</i> ‘whichever’, ‘any’	154
9.10	<i>Da qualche parte</i> ‘somewhere’; <i>da un’altra parte</i> or <i>altrove</i> ‘somewhere else’	154
9.11	Negative pronouns and adjectives: <i>nessuno</i> ‘nobody’, ‘(not) anybody’ and <i>niente, nulla</i> ‘nothing’, ‘(not) anything’, ‘(not) a thing’; <i>nessun</i> ‘no’, ‘not one’, ‘(not) any’ (adjective); <i>niente</i> ‘nothing’, ‘(not) a thing’	155
9.12	<i>Ogni, ciascun/ciascuno</i> ‘each’, ‘every’; <i>ognuno, ciascuno</i> (rare <i>ciascheduno</i>) ‘each one’, ‘each person’, ‘everybody’	157
9.13	Distributive <i>ciascuno, l’uno, cadauno</i> ‘for each one’	157
10	Possessives and related constructions	158
10.1	The types ‘noun + <i>di</i> + noun’: <i>le idee di Einstein</i> = ‘the ideas of Einstein’/‘Einstein’s ideas’	158
10.2	Non-use of the possessive adjective: the type <i>Ho perso l’orologio</i> ‘I’ve lost my watch’	158
10.3	The type ‘John’s eyes are green’ <i>Giovanni ha gli occhi verdi</i> , etc.	159
10.4	Forms of the possessive adjective	159
10.5	The ambiguity of <i>suo</i> and <i>loro</i>	161
10.6	Possessive adjective + nouns denoting close relatives: ‘my father’ = <i>mio padre</i>	162
10.7	Possessive pronouns: ‘It’s his’ = <i>È il suo</i> ; ‘It’s Maria’s’ = <i>È quello di Maria</i>	163
10.8	The types <i>Quella valigia è mia</i> vs. <i>Quella valigia è la mia</i>	164
10.9	Some idioms with possessive pronouns	164
10.10	What is the difference between <i>ne</i> and the possessive adjectives? <i>Ammira la sua intelligenza</i> vs. <i>Ne ammira l’intelligenza</i>	164
10.11	<i>Proprio</i> , ‘own’	165
10.12	<i>Altrui</i> = ‘someone else’s’, ‘other people’s’	165
10.13	The ‘possessor’ expressed as indirect object: <i>Morde la mano al professore</i> ‘He bites the teacher’s hand’; <i>Gli morde la mano</i> ‘He bites his hand’	166
10.14	The types <i>Mi lavo le mani</i> = ‘I wash my hands’ and <i>Chiude gli occhi</i> = ‘He closes his eyes’	168
10.15	A special use of the indirect object with verbs of perception and acknowledgement: <i>Gli sentivo la voce rauca</i> ‘I could hear that his voice was hoarse’, etc.	169
11	Prepositions	170
11.1	Structure and syntax of prepositions: <i>a(d), di</i> , etc.; <i>davanti alla scuola, verso di te</i> , etc.	170

11.2	'Stranding' of prepositions: <i>A chi ti sei seduto accanto?</i> 'Who did you sit next to?', etc.	171
11.3	Obligatory repetition of prepositions: <i>Mando un libro a Paolo e a Giorgio</i> 'I send a book to Paolo and Giorgio'	172
11.4	The type <i>un cassetto con dentro una penna/un cassetto con una penna dentro</i> 'a drawer with a pen in it'	173
11.5	The multivalent preposition <i>di</i>	173
11.6	Location 'at' or 'in': <i>in, a, dentro</i>	174
11.7	'Between', 'among' = <i>fra</i> or <i>tra</i>	175
11.8	<i>Da</i> + noun/adjective = 'at the time when X was', 'as a ...'	176
11.9	<i>Da</i> as 'to' or 'at' the place where somebody works, lives or is (often equivalent to French <i>chez</i>)	176
11.10	'On the one side/hand' <i>Da un lato/una parte</i> ; 'everywhere', <i>da ogni parte</i>	176
11.11	'At', 'near', 'next to', 'chez': <i>vicino, a fianco, presso</i>	176
11.12	'Under', 'over'/'above', 'around', 'on', 'beyond', 'in the middle of', etc.: <i>sotto, sopra, intorno a, su, al di là di, in mezzo a</i> , etc.	176
11.13	Motion 'to', 'towards': <i>a, da, verso, in, fino a</i> , etc.	177
11.14	Motion 'through', 'across': <i>attraverso, per, lungo, rasente, da</i>	178
11.15	Motion 'from', 'source' (place, time or state from which; origin): <i>da, di, dentro</i>	178
11.16	Spatial or temporal separation/distance from some point ('from', 'since'): <i>da</i>	179
11.17	Accompaniment: (<i>insieme</i>) <i>con</i>	179
11.18	'Recipient' or 'beneficiary' (including the 'indirect object' of verbs): <i>a, per</i>	179
11.19	Exclusion: <i>tranne</i> or <i>tranne che, meno</i> or <i>meno che, salvo, eccetto, fuorché, al di fuori di</i> 'except'; <i>a parte</i> 'apart from'	180
11.20	'Concessive' prepositions: <i>malgrado, nonostante</i> 'despite'	180
11.21	Cause, aim, purpose: <i>a causa di, per via di, grazie a, per</i> , etc.	180
11.22	Agency, means: <i>da, da parte di, di, tramite, mediante</i>	181
11.23	Content, composition, substance, smell, taste: <i>di</i>	182
11.24	'By way of', 'as a' <i>in, come</i> ; 'for' <i>per</i>	182
11.25	Manner, style, decoration: <i>a</i>	182
11.26	'About', 'concerning' <i>su, riguardo a</i> , etc.; 'according to' <i>secondo</i>	183
11.27	'On behalf of' <i>dalla parte di</i>	183
11.28	<i>Da</i> with complements of characteristic ('typical of', 'characteristic of', 'associated with', 'characterized by'), or purpose ('intended for', 'to be -ed')	184
11.29	An important distinction between <i>a, di</i> and <i>da</i>	185
11.30	<i>Da</i> in expressions of value	185
11.31	Adjective (or noun) + <i>da</i> = 'to such a degree that', 'to the extent that', 'such as to ...'	185
11.32	Time prepositions: duration <i>per, durante</i> ; 'since' <i>da</i> ; 'for as long as' <i>finché/fino a che</i> ; 'in' <i>in, tra</i> ; 'within', 'by' <i>entro</i> ; 'before' <i>prima di</i> ; 'after' <i>dopo</i>	185
12	Numerals and related expressions	188
12.1	The cardinal numerals	188

12.2	Variant forms of the cardinals	189
12.3	General properties of the cardinals	189
12.4	<i>Uno</i> and numerals ending in <i>-uno</i>	190
12.5	<i>Uno, zero, tre, mille, milione</i>	191
12.6	'Both', 'all three', 'all ten', etc.; 'another three', etc.	191
12.7	Conventions for writing numerals	192
12.8	Ordinal numerals	192
12.9	Special ordinals: <i>undecimo, decimottavo</i> , etc.	193
12.10	Collective and approximative numerals: 'about twenty', 'scores', 'hundreds', etc.	194
12.11	Idiomatic <i>quattro</i> and <i>due</i> 'an indeterminate small number', <i>mille</i> an 'indeterminate large number'	195
12.12	Multiplicatives: 'double', 'triple', etc.	195
12.13	Percentages and other fractions	196
12.14	Distributives	197
12.15	Groups and sets: 'There are three of them', etc.	197
12.16	Mathematical expressions	198
12.17	Dimensions and measurements	198
12.18	Telephone numbers	199
13	Adverbs and adverbial constructions	200
13.1	Adverbs in <i>-mente</i>	200
13.2	Adverbs may be identical to masculine singular adjectives: <i>parlare chiaro</i> , etc.	201
13.3	'Lexical adverbs': forms not predictable from the corresponding adjective (<i>bene, male</i> , etc.) or independent of adjectives (<i>abbastanza, sempre</i> , etc.)	202
13.4	Adverb-like expressions denoting physical manner/posture ending in <i>-oni</i>	203
13.5	Phrasal (especially prepositional) adverbs	203
13.6	Other ways of forming adverbial expressions	205
13.7	Interrogative and exclamative forms of adverbs ('How well does he sing?', 'How well he sings!', etc.)	206
13.8	Meaning and function of adverbs	206
13.9	Adverbs immediately precede any adjective or other adverb they modify: <i>Canta troppo poco</i> 'He sings too little', etc.	207
13.10	<i>-mente</i> adverbs cannot be combined with each other	207
13.11	Adverbs follow verbs	207
13.12	Sentence adverbial expressions	209
13.13	Adverbial uses of adjectives	210
13.14	Adverbial phrases using imperative forms (<i>corri corri</i> 'at a run', etc.)	211
13.15	Phrasal verbs with adverbs of place: <i>andare via</i> 'to go away', <i>venire fuori</i> 'to come out', etc.	211
13.16	Time adverbs	212

13.17	Position and function of negative adverbs and adverbial phrases: <i>mai</i> 'never'; <i>mica</i> '(certainly) not' (colloquial); <i>neanche, nemmeno,</i> <i>neppure</i> '(not) even' (also 'and nor', 'and not')	215
14	Forms of the verb	219
14.1	Some descriptive terms	219
14.2	Conjugations	219
14.3	Major irregular verbs	222
14.4	How to deduce the conjugation of other irregular verbs from their infinitives	240
14.5	'Mixed' conjugation verbs: <i>compiere</i> and verbs in <i>-fare</i>	242
14.6	The desinences of the present tense	243
14.7	The present tense root (vowel alternations; 'mobile diphthongs'; verbs in <i>-gere, -cere, -scere, -gliere</i> , etc.)	245
14.8	Regular imperatives	246
14.9	Special imperative forms	248
14.10	Future and conditional	249
14.11	Imperfect tense forms	251
14.12	Forms of the <i>passato remoto</i>	252
14.13	Verbs that lack a <i>passato remoto</i>	255
14.14	The past participle of first and third conjugation verbs: <i>-ato</i> and <i>-ito</i>	256
14.15	The past participle of second conjugation verbs	256
14.16	Verbs that lack a past participle	258
14.17	The gerund	258
14.18	Agreement of the verb with its subject: <i>La gente canta</i> 'People sing'; <i>Io e Giulio andavamo a scuola</i> 'Giulio and I went to school'; <i>Tu ed io lo faremo</i> 'You and I will do it'	259
14.19	Analytic verb forms: 'auxiliary <i>avere</i> or <i>essere</i> + past participle'	260
14.20	Which auxiliary: <i>avere</i> or <i>essere</i> ? Auxiliary selection in transitive, reflexive and intransitive verbs	261
14.21	<i>Ho voluto partire</i> or <i>Sono voluto partire</i> ? Selection of auxiliaries with modal verbs (<i>volere, sapere, potere, dovere</i>) and aspectual verbs (<i>cominciare a, continuare a, finire di</i>) followed by an infinitive, and related phenomena of clitic placement and word-order	269
14.22	Agreement of the past participle: <i>Le ragazze sono arrivate ma non le</i> <i>ho viste</i> , etc.	271
14.23	Agreement of the past participle with object pronouns	271
14.24	A special case of past participle agreement: the type <i>I ragazzi se</i> <i>le sono prese</i>	273
14.25	Causative structures: <i>Faccio cantare Gianni</i> 'I make G sing', <i>Faccio cantare la canzone a/da Gianni</i> 'I make G sing the song', <i>Faccio cantare la canzone</i> 'I have the song sung', etc.	274
14.26	The infinitive in causative structures	274
14.27	The subject and object of the infinitive in causatives: <i>Faccio cantare</i> <i>Gianni</i> 'I make G sing', and <i>Faccio cantare la canzone a Gianni</i> 'I make G sing the song'; and <i>Faccio cantare la canzone da Gianni</i> 'I have the song sung by Gianni'	275

14.28	The use of <i>da</i> instead of <i>a</i> to express the subject in causatives: <i>Faccio cantare la canzone da Gianni</i> 'I have the song sung by G'	277
14.29	Causatives with <i>lasciare</i>	278
14.30	Reflexive verbs and causatives	279
14.31	The passive	280
14.32	<i>Da</i> and <i>da parte di</i> expressing the agent in passives	281
14.33	Only direct objects can be passivized in Italian: why a passive of the type 'The student was promised a book' is impossible in Italian (and other ways in which one might say it)	281
14.34	The passive auxiliaries <i>essere</i> , <i>andare</i> and <i>venire</i>	282
14.35	<i>Venire</i> + past participle signalling involuntary occurrence to somebody: <i>Mi venne fatto di ...</i> 'I chanced to ...'	285
14.36	Third person verbs with reflexive <i>si</i> as passives: the type <i>Si riparano ombrelli</i> 'Umbrellas are repaired'	285
15	Uses of the verb forms	288
15.1	Future tense to express future time	288
15.2	The future-in-the-past and the (past) conditional: 'She said he would come' = <i>Disse che sarebbe venuto</i>	288
15.3	Future after <i>quando</i> 'when', <i>finché (non)</i> 'until', <i>(non) appena</i> 'as soon as', <i>dopo che</i> 'after', <i>una /ogni volta che</i> 'once', <i>subito che</i> 'immediately', <i>mentre</i> 'while'	289
15.4	The present and imperfect tenses as expression of future time	290
15.5	The 'conjectural' use of future tense forms: <i>Saranno le otto</i> 'It must be 8', 'It's probably 8', etc.	290
15.6	The 'historic future'	291
15.7	Equivalents of the English types 'I'm going to do it (next week)' and 'I'm doing it (next week)'	292
15.8	<i>Stare per</i> + infinitive = 'to be about to ...'	292
15.9	The future vs. the subjunctive: <i>Non credo che venga</i> 'I don't think he's coming' vs. 'I don't think he'll come'	293
15.10	Present and imperfect tenses after <i>da</i> (<i>Canta/Cantava da tre ore</i> 'He has/had sung for three hours')	293
15.11	The use of the pluperfect (<i>trapassato prossimo</i>) and the <i>trapassato remoto</i>	295
15.12	Imperfect vs. <i>passato remoto</i> and <i>passato prossimo</i>	297
15.13	The 'narrative imperfect': uses of the imperfect where the <i>passato remoto/prossimo</i> would be expected	300
15.14	The 'polite' imperfect	301
15.15	The 'ludic imperfect'	301
15.16	The <i>passato remoto</i> vs. the <i>passato prossimo</i>	301
15.17	The 'progressive': <i>Sta leggendo, Va leggendo, Viene leggendo</i> 'She's reading'	304
15.18	The type <i>stare a fare</i> 'to be doing', 'to be engaged in doing', <i>trovarsi a fare</i> 'to find oneself doing', etc.	306
15.19	Verbal expressions of physical stance: <i>essere seduto, essere in piedi</i> 'to be sitting, standing', etc.	307

15.20	Meaning of the gerund	307
15.21	Syntax of the gerund: why <i>Vidi il ragazzo uscendo dalla chiesa</i> does NOT mean 'I saw the boy as he left the church', etc.	310
15.22	'Clausal' uses of the past participle: the types <i>Arrivati andarono a mangiare</i> 'Having arrived they went to eat', <i>Conclusa l'inchiesta, andarono a mangiare</i> 'Having concluded the inquiry they went to eat' and <i>Fattolo andarono a mangiare</i> 'Having done it they went to eat'	311
15.23	The type <i>Ti credevo già partita</i> = <i>Credevo che fossi già partita</i>	312
15.24	The infinitive as noun: the type <i>Il partire è sempre triste</i> 'Leaving is always sad'	313
15.25	What is the subjunctive?	315
15.26	Contexts selecting the subjunctive	315
15.27	English structures equivalent to the Italian subjunctive	316
15.28	The subjunctive as 'notion'/'idea': in subordinate clauses introduced by expressions of wanting, requiring, intending, ordering, fearing, permitting, preventing, hoping, etc.	317
15.29	The subjunctive after conjunctions expressing purpose, intention	319
15.30	The subjunctive after expressions such as <i>purché</i> 'provided that', <i>a meno che</i> 'unless', and other constructions introducing hypotheses (e.g., <i>mettiamo che</i> 'let's suppose')	320
15.31	The subjunctive in an apparent main clause: the types <i>Venga domani</i> , <i>Magari venisse domani</i> , etc.	320
15.32	The type <i>L'idea che non lo sappia è assurda</i> or <i>Che non lo sappia è assurdo</i>	321
15.33	The subjunctive in relative clauses: <i>Cercava uno studente che sapesse il giapponese</i> 'He was looking for a student who knew Japanese', etc.	322
15.34	The subjunctive after indefinite relatives: <i>chiunque venga</i> 'whoever comes', etc.	323
15.35	The set phrase <i>Che io sappia</i> 'As far as I know'	323
15.36	The subjunctive with negated relatives	324
15.37	The subjunctive in relative clauses after superlatives and other 'exclusive' structures: <i>Era la più bella/la prima città che avesse mai visto</i> 'It was the most beautiful/the first city he had ever seen'	324
15.38	The subjunctive (vs. indicative) after adjective + <i>che</i> . The types <i>È ridicolo che lo dica</i> and <i>Che lo dica è ridicolo</i>	325
15.39	The subjunctive after <i>può darsi che</i>	327
15.40	The subjunctive after expressions of 'belief/opinion/mental impression/seeming/doubting that . . .': <i>Credo che venga; la convinzione che debbano essere fatti; Mi pare che sia vero; l'opinione che possa esistere; Dubito che sia vero</i> , etc.	327
15.41	The subjunctive after expressions of 'mental reaction': <i>Temo che venga; la paura che possa soffrire; Sono contento che l'abbia fatto</i> , etc.	329
15.42	The subjunctive in contexts where the main clause 'does not assert as a fact': <i>Non dice che sia vero; Nega che sia vero; Sono uscita senza che mi vedessero; Non che mi abbiano visto</i> , etc.	330

15.43	The subjunctive after expressions that imply that factual reality is 'immaterial': <i>Benché sia un ladro, lo ammiro</i> 'Although he's a thief, I admire him'; <i>Che venga o no, non lo aspetterò</i> 'Whether he's coming or not, I won't wait for him', etc. The type <i>per bello che fosse</i> ... 'however beautiful it was ...'	331
15.44	The subjunctive after 'noun + <i>che</i> ': <i>è una vergogna che, il fatto che</i> , etc.	332
15.45	The subjunctive in indirect questions: the type <i>Non so se siano qua, Chiedeva chi fosse</i> , etc.	333
15.46	The subjunctive after time conjunctions: <i>quando, prima che, finché</i> , etc.	334
15.47	The subjunctive after verbs of happening: <i>Succede/Capita/Avviene/Accade che venga</i> , etc.	335
15.48	Tense and the subjunctive: <i>Voglio che venga; Vorrei che venisse; Volevo che venisse</i> , etc.	335
15.49	Equivalents of English 'will', 'would', 'shall', 'should'	336
15.50	Equivalents of 'must', 'must have'; 'should', 'should have'; 'ought to', 'ought to have', etc.	337
15.51	Equivalents of 'can'/'could', 'may'/'might'	338
15.52	'May not', 'might not' and 'cannot'	339
15.53	The tense ambiguity of 'could' and 'might'	339
15.54	Different functions of 'might have', 'could have' and 'may have', 'can have'	340
15.55	'Can', 'could' ambiguous between 'be possible' <i>potere</i> , and 'know how' <i>sapere</i>	341
15.56	'Can' in verbs of perception, understanding, finding: <i>Non lo vedo</i> 'I can't see it'	341
15.57	'Can' = 'succeed in', 'manage to'	342
16	Comparative, superlative and related constructions	343
16.1	Forming the comparative and superlative of adjectives and adverbs: 'more', 'most' = <i>più</i> , 'less', 'least' = <i>meno</i>	343
16.2	Special forms of comparatives and superlatives: <i>migliore, meglio</i> 'better'/'best', <i>peggiore, peggio</i> 'worse'/'worst', etc.	344
16.3	Comparative quantifiers: <i>più/meno mele</i> 'more/fewer apples', etc.; <i>Le mele costano (di) più/(di) meno</i> 'Apples cost more/less', etc.	345
16.4	The type <i>otto euro in più</i> '8 euros more'/'an extra 8 euros'	345
16.5	The type <i>cambiare in meglio/peggio</i> 'to change for the better/worse'	345
16.6	How to say 'I had better ...', etc.	345
16.7	'Than' in comparatives: the comparators <i>che</i> and <i>di</i> before nouns, adjectives, adverbs and prepositions	346
16.8	Comparatives where the second element is a verb phrase (1): 'New York is bigger <u>than I thought</u> ' = <i>New York è più grande di quanto pensassi</i> , etc.	348
16.9	Comparatives where the second element is a verb phrase (2): 'New York is bigger than I thought' = <i>New York è più grande che non pensassi</i> , etc.	349

16.10	More about redundant <i>non</i> in comparative constructions: <i>Era più alto di quanto non credessi</i> 'He was taller than I thought', <i>È più rosso che (non) marrone</i> 'It's more red than brown'	349
16.11	'Rather than' = <i>più che (non)</i> or <i>piuttosto che (non)</i>	349
16.12	How to say 'I'd rather', etc.	350
16.13	The expression of 'in' in superlative structures: <i>l'edificio più alto del mondo</i> = 'the tallest building in the world', etc.	350
16.14	The type <i>un edificio dei più splendidi</i> = 'a most splendid building'	350
16.15	Adjectives with the 'elative' ending <i>-issimo</i> : 'very', 'extremely', 'highly', 'most'...; and <i>pessimo</i> 'very bad', <i>ottimo</i> 'very good', <i>minimo</i> 'minimal', 'very small'; <i>massimo</i> 'maximum'	350
16.16	Adverbs with <i>-issimo</i> : <i>benissimo</i> , etc.	352
16.17	Nouns with <i>-issimo</i> : <i>la finalissima</i> , etc.	352
16.18	Comparisons of equality ('as ... as'; 'as much ... as'; 'as many ... as')	353
16.19	'The same as ...' = <i>lo stesso di/che</i>	354
16.20	'The more ... , the more'; 'the less ... , the less'	354
16.21	'More and more ... /less and less ...' = <i>sempre più/meno ...</i>	354
16.22	Repetition (reduplication) of the adjective or adverb as an intensifier: the type <i>rosso rosso</i> 'very very /really/ ever so/ extremely red'	355
17	Aspects of sentence structure	356
17.1	Basic organization of declarative sentences: <i>Paolo mangia la carne</i> 'P eats the meat', <i>È arrivato Paolo</i> 'P has arrived', etc.	356
17.2	Left-marked word order: <i>Un caffè lo prenderei proprio volentieri!</i> 'A coffee I'd just love', etc.	359
17.3	Cleft sentences: <i>È stato Paolo a dirlo</i> 'It was Paul who said it'; <i>È a Roma che andrei proprio volentieri!</i> 'It's Rome I'd really like to go to!'	362
17.4	The 'hanging theme' (<i>Il nostro professore, gli dobbiamo moltissimo</i> '[As for] our teacher, we owe him a lot')	364
17.5	The type <i>Dormire, dormo poco</i>	365
17.6	Right-marked word order: <i>Lo prenderei proprio volentieri, un caffè</i> 'I'd really like to have a coffee'	365
17.7	Subordinate clauses: the subordination marker <i>che</i> . <i>So che viene</i> 'I know that he's coming', etc.	365
17.8	Infinitives in subordinate clauses: <i>Voglio partire</i> 'I want to leave', <i>Gli ordino di partire</i> 'I order him to leave'	366
17.9	Verbs taking the infinitive without a preposition: <i>Devo farlo</i> 'I must do it', etc.	367
17.10	Verbs which take <i>di</i> + infinitive in the subordinate clause, when the subject of main verb and subordinate verb are coreferential. The type <i>Dice di essere stanco</i> 'He says he's tired' vs. <i>Dice che sua sorella è stanca</i> 'He says that his sister's tired'	369
17.11	Verbs of asking, permitting, ordering, forbidding, preventing with <i>di</i> + infinitive: the type <i>Chiedo di entrare</i> 'I ask to come in' vs. <i>Chiedo che entri</i> 'I ask him to come in'	372

17.12 Verbs of stopping/ceasing some activity usually take <i>di</i> + infinitive: <i>Smette di fumare</i> 'He stops smoking', etc.	374
17.13 Verbs taking <i>a</i> + infinitive: the type <i>Continua a fumare</i> 'He continues to smoke', etc.	375
17.14 A special use of <i>a</i> + infinitive: the type <i>e Mario a cantare</i> 'and then Mario started singing'	378
17.15 Verbs taking <i>dal</i> or <i>nel</i> + infinitive: <i>Lo scoraggia dal farlo</i> 'He discourages him from doing it', <i>Il problema sta nel trovarlo</i> 'The problem lies in finding him', etc.	379
17.16 Purpose and consecutive clauses introduced by <i>per</i> and <i>da</i> + infinitive: the types <i>L'ha fatto per avvertirti</i> 'He did it (in order) to warn you', <i>Beve tanto da ubriacarsi</i> 'He drank so much that he got drunk'	379
17.17 Subordination with verbs of seeming and appearing: <i>Sembra che cada</i> , <i>Sembra cadere</i> , <i>Gli sembra di cadere</i> , etc.	381
17.18. The bare infinitive with subject noun after verbs of asserting and believing: <i>Crede essere il Barolo superiore a tutti gli altri vini</i> 'He believes Barolo to be superior to all other wines', etc.	382
17.19 Adjectives as subordinate clauses: the type 'I believed him innocent' <i>Lo credevo innocente</i>	382
17.20 Adjectives as subordinate clauses: the type 'He made the document public' <i>Ha reso pubblico il documento</i> and 'He dyed the sheet red' <i>Ha tinto il lenzuolo di rosso</i> , etc.	382
17.21 Adjective + preposition + infinitive: the type <i>Sono felice di vederti</i> 'I'm happy to see you', <i>Sono fortunata a incontrarti</i> 'I'm lucky to meet you', etc.	384
17.22 Adjectives taking <i>di</i> + infinitive in the subordinate clause	384
17.23 Adjectives taking <i>a/in/per/da</i> + infinitive	386
17.24 The type <i>bello da vedere/a vedersi/a vedere</i> 'beautiful to see', <i>facile da dire/a dirsi/a dire</i> 'easy to say'	389
17.25 Other expressions with <i>da</i> + infinitive: <i>avere da</i> , <i>esserci da</i>	390
17.26 <i>Di sì</i> and <i>di no</i> as subordinate clauses: <i>Penso di sì</i> 'I think so' and <i>Penso di no</i> 'I don't think so'	390
17.27 Forms of the infinitive in subordinate clauses: <i>Credo di farlo</i> vs. <i>Credo di averlo fatto</i>	390
17.28 Perceptual structures: the types <i>Vedo Gianni scendere dal treno</i> 'I see G get off the train', <i>Sento Chiara chiamare Riccardo</i> 'I hear C call R', <i>Guardo aprire il regalo a Maria</i> 'I watch M open the parcel', <i>Sento criticare il professore</i> 'I hear the teacher criticized', <i>Sento Gianni a cantare</i> 'I hear G singing', etc.	391
17.29 Perception verbs + finite structure: the 'pseudo-relative' type <i>Vedo Gianni che gioca a tennis</i> 'I see G playing tennis' (vs. <i>Vedo che Gianni gioca a tennis</i> 'I see that G is playing tennis')	395
17.30 The type <i>Ecco arrivare Gianni</i> or <i>Ecco Gianni che arriva</i> 'Here's G arriving'	397
17.31 The major types of 'conditional' sentences: <i>Se viene lo vedrai</i> 'If he comes you'll see him', <i>Se fosse venuto lo avresti visto</i> 'If he had come you would have seen him', etc.	397

17.32	<i>Come se</i> 'as if'	399
17.33	The type <i>Se venivi lo vedevi</i> 'If you had come, you would have seen him'; <i>Bastava dirlo</i> 'It would have been enough to say so'	400
17.34	<i>Se</i> = 'despite the fact that', 'even though', 'whenever': the type <i>Se lo vide, non me l'ha detto</i> 'If he saw him, he never told me', etc.	400
17.35	The type <i>Se fosse venuto, lo avrebbe visto</i> as a 'future-in-the-past': <i>Sapevo che se fosse venuto, lo avrebbe visto</i> 'I knew that if he came, he would see it'	401
17.36	Counterfactual expressions without <i>se</i> : <i>venisse domani</i> , etc.	401
17.37	The type <i>a pensarci</i> 'if you think about it'	401
17.38	Conditional sentences using the imperative + <i>e</i> or <i>o</i> : the type <i>Stai zitto o ti picchio</i> 'Shut up or I'll hit you'	402
18	Negative constructions	403
18.1	Simple negation with <i>non</i>	403
18.2	The types <i>Vieni o no?</i> 'Are you coming or not?', <i>Studenti o no/non</i> 'Students or non-students', etc.	404
18.3	The uses and position of the colloquial negator <i>mica</i> (and <i>punto</i>)	405
18.4	<i>Non</i> as a reinforcing element in exclamations and questions	407
18.5	The type <i>Nessuno viene</i> vs. <i>Non viene nessuno</i> , etc. Negative pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions <i>before</i> the verb vs. negative pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and conjunctions <i>after</i> the verb	407
18.6	'No longer' <i>non ... più</i>	408
19	Conjunctions and discourse markers	410
19.1	'And' <i>e</i>	410
19.2	'Both ... and' <i>e ... e</i> , etc.	411
19.3	'Also', 'too', 'as well', 'even' <i>anche</i> and <i>pure</i>	411
19.4	'Not to mention' <i>nonché</i>	412
19.5	'Neither ... nor' <i>né ... né</i> (<i>neppure</i>)	412
19.6	'Or' <i>o, oppure, ovvero</i> , etc.	413
19.7	'Either ... or' <i>o ... o</i>	414
19.8	Adversative conjunctions: <i>ma</i> 'but', <i>eppure</i> 'yet', <i>bensi</i> 'but', <i>invece</i> 'however', <i>nondimeno</i> 'none the less', <i>peraltro</i> 'however', <i>mentre</i> 'while', <i>piuttosto</i> 'rather', <i>sen(n)onché</i> 'except that', <i>tuttavia</i> 'however', <i>anzi</i> 'rather', <i>però</i> 'but' / 'however'	414
19.9	Declarative conjunctions: <i>cioè, vale a dire, infatti, invero</i>	417
19.10	Conclusive conjunctions: <i>dunque, quindi, perciò, pertanto, per cui</i> 'therefore'; <i>ebbene</i> 'so'; <i>ora</i> 'now'; <i>allora</i> 'then'; <i>ecco che</i> 'and so'	419
19.11	Alternative expressions for <i>se</i> 'if': <i>posto che, supponendo/supposto che, ammesso che, casomai, nel caso che/in cui, nell'eventualità che, qualora</i>	422
19.12	Restrictive conditional conjunctions: <i>purché</i> 'provided', <i>a condizione che, a patto che</i> , 'on condition that', <i>sempre che</i> 'always assuming'	425
19.13	Causal conjunctions: <i>perché, poiché, giacché, siccome, in quanto, che, considerato/visto/dato/dal momento che, per il fatto/motivo/la ragione che</i> , etc.	426

19.14	Purpose conjunctions: <i>perché, acciocché, affinché</i> (<i>per</i> or <i>a</i> + infinitive)	428
19.15	Consecutive <i>per</i> and <i>salvo</i> + infinitive '(only) to': the type <i>Ricevette il premio Nobel, per morire tre giorni dopo</i> . 'He received the Nobel prize, only to die three days later'.	429
19.16	Concessive conjunctions and phrases: <i>benché, sebbene, ancorché, per quanto, quantunque, malgrado che, nonostante che, pur</i> 'although', 'despite the fact that', <i>seppure, anche se</i> , 'even if', etc.	430
19.17	Result conjunctions and phrases: <i>da</i> + infinitive, <i>così ... che, tanto ... che, di maniera (di modo) ... che, al punto, a tal punto ... che, talmente ... che</i> + indicative	431
19.18	Time conjunctions: 'when' <i>quando</i> , 'whenever' <i>ogni volta che, se</i> , 'while', 'as' <i>mentre, man mano che</i> , 'until' <i>finché/fino a che</i> , 'before' <i>prima che/di</i> , 'after' <i>dopo che/(di)</i> , 'as soon as' <i>appena, subito che</i> , 'since' <i>da quando</i>	433
19.19	Discourse markers	434
19.20	Interjections	438
20	Word derivation	441
20.1	Word derivation: compounds and conversion	441
20.2	Affixation: prefixes and suffixes	442
20.3	Feminine past participles in noun-formation, and the suffix <i>-ata</i>	445
20.4	Evaluative suffixes	445
20.5	Verb suffixes	449
21	Time expressions	450
21.1	Telling the time	450
21.2	Periods of the day, days, months, seasons, years and centuries	451
21.3	Expressions of duration in <i>-ata</i> : <i>giornata, serata</i> , etc.	453
21.4	Dates	454
21.5	Ages	454
21.6	Expressions of frequency: 'twice a day', 'every five minutes', etc.	455
21.7	Time adjectives: 'last' <i>scorso</i> , 'next' <i>prossimo</i> , etc.; 'the late ...' <i>il fu</i> ; 'the then' <i>l'allora</i>	456
22	Forms of address	458
22.1	Importance of selecting the correct address form	458
22.2	Forms and syntax of pronouns and verb forms used in address	458
22.3	Uses of the address forms <i>tu/Lei/voi/Ella</i>	460
22.4	Singular <i>voi</i>	462
22.5	<i>Voi</i> and <i>Loro</i> as plural address forms	463
22.6	Other address forms: <i>la Signoria Vostra</i> , etc.	464
22.7	Salutations, titles and address forms: <i>Ciao, bello!</i> vs. <i>Buonasera, signore</i>	464

23	Register differences in modern Italian grammar	466
23.1	Written and formal constructions	467
23.2	Spoken and informal constructions	469
24	Bibliography and references	471
	Index	473

Abbreviations and symbols

Most abbreviations used in this book should be transparent (masc. = 'masculine', fem. = 'feminine', sg. = 'singular', pl. = 'plural', pres. = 'present', etc.). 'Lit.' is the abbreviation for 'literally' (*not* literary). The symbol * placed in front of an example means that what follows is *ungrammatical*; in the relatively few cases where examples preceded by * are used, we have tried to be careful to make it clear in words, as well, that the relevant example is not grammatical. Sources for the examples, where given, are abbreviated as follows:

- www = website www.alice.it (a database of contemporary Italian literature, including interviews with authors)
- Cal. I. Calvino 1964. *Il sentiero dei nidi di ragno*. Turin: Einaudi.
- Cas. C. Cassola 1960. *La ragazza di Bube*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Chia. R. Chiaberge 1999. *Navigatori del sapere*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina.
- Dur1. F. Duranti 1988. *Effetti personali*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Dur2. F. Duranti 1996. *Sogni mancini*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Esp. *L'Espresso* (magazine) 8 March 1996
- Gal. E. Galli della Loggia 1998. *L'identità italiana*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Gin. C. Ginzburg 1976. *Il formaggio e i vermi*. Turin: Einaudi.
- Gua. G. Guareschi 1948. *Mondo piccolo don Camillo*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Lam. G. Lampedusa 1957. *Il Gattopardo*. Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Mar. D. Maraini 1990. *La lunga vita di Marianna Ucrìa*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Ogg. *Oggi* (magazine) 13 March 1996
- Pan. *Panorama* (magazine) 15 March 1996
- Rep. *La Repubblica* (newspaper) 19 June 1997
- Rio1. G. Riotta 1991. *Cambio di stagione*. Milan: Feltrinelli.
- Rio2. G. Riotta 1995. *Ombra*. Milan: Rizzoli.
- Tut. *Tuttosport* (newspaper) 25 September 1995



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Glossary of key terms

Items given in bold in the definitions are also defined in this glossary. Where a particular term is defined in the text of this grammar, the appropriate reference is supplied.

What follows are merely working definitions of the relevant notions, as far as they are relevant to users of Italian. As an aid to using grammars in Italian, the equivalent Italian grammatical expressions are provided.

Accent (*accento*) – The written accents of Italian are the marks ´ ('acute accent', *accento acuto*) and ` ('grave accent', *accento grave*), over vowels (as well as the very rare ^ ('circumflex', *accento circonflesso*)); for their use see 2.2, 2.9, 2.12. It is beyond the scope of this book to deal with accents in the sense of 'characteristic ways of pronouncing the language' (usually associated with a particular region), but some information on this is to be found in chapter 2. Note that Italian *accento* can also mean **stress**.

Agent (*agente*) – An 'agent' is the person or thing which by virtue of some activity brings about some state of affairs. *Giovanni* and *il vento* are agent **subjects** in *Giovanni nuota* 'Giovanni swims' and *Il vento ha aperto la porta* 'The wind opened the door'.

Analytic (*analitico*) (see 14.1)

Adjectival phrase – See **phrase**

Adjective (*aggettivo*) – (see also **phrase**) A class of words whose characteristic function is to modify a noun, expressing some property of that **noun**. E.g., the underlined elements in *la ragazza intelligente* 'the intelligent girl', *il tempo era bello* 'the weather was nice'.

Adverb (*avverbio*) – A class of words whose characteristic function is to modify a **verb** or **verb phrase**. Often, but by no means always, ending in *-mente* in Italian and *'-ly'* in English. E.g., the underlined elements in *canta sempre* 'he's always singing', *mangia lentamente* 'she eats slowly'. An adverb which modifies a verb phrase is sometimes called a 'sentence adverbial' (see 13.12): e.g., *Finalmente, ti vediamo* 'At last, we can see you.'

Adversative (*avversativo*) – An adversative **conjunction** is one which introduces an assertion contrary to what has already been asserted. Expressions such as 'but' *ma*, 'however' *però*.

Agreement (*accordo*) – The phenomenon whereby adjectives (and also articles and demonstratives) vary in form according to the gender and number of the noun they modify, and verbs vary in form according to the person, number

(and sometimes the gender – see 6.32) of their subject. E.g., *Il gatto nero mangia* ‘The black [male] cat eats’ (masculine third person singular), *I gatti neri mangiano* ‘The black[male] cats eat’ (masculine third person plural), *La gatta nera mangia* ‘The black[female] cat eats’ (feminine third person singular), *Le gatte nere mangiano* ‘The black [female] cats eat’ (feminine third person plural). Pronouns also agree in gender and number with the noun they stand for: *Lei* = *Viene la maestra*.

Animate (*animato*) – Any entity that can be perceived as acting, or being capable of acting, of its own will, is ‘animate’. Typically, human beings, but sometimes also animals.

Antecedent (*antecedente*) – Typically, an element already mentioned to which a **pronoun** (and especially a **relative pronoun**) ‘refers back’. E.g., *Vidi molte cose quel giorno, le quali non ti posso raccontare* ‘I saw many things that day, which I cannot tell you about’, where *molte cose* / ‘many things’ is the antecedent of *le quali* / ‘which’.

Apodosis (*apodosi*) – In a conditional construction, the apodosis is the clause that expresses what will happen if the condition expressed in the **protasis** (*protasi*) is fulfilled. The protasis is the ‘if’ clause, which stipulates the condition that needs to be fulfilled for something to come about. In *Se viene, lo vedremo* ‘If he comes, we’ll see him’, *Se viene* is the protasis and *lo vedremo* the apodosis.

Article – Words equivalent to English ‘the’ (the ‘definite article’ *articolo determinativo*: Italian *il/lo/l’, la/le, i/gli*) and ‘a/an’ (the ‘indefinite article’ *articolo indeterminativo*: Italian *un/uno/un’/una*).

Attenuative – Form tending to attenuate or ‘play down’ the full meaning of some word. Like ‘a bit...’, ‘rather...’, ‘...ish’.

Augmentative (*accrescitivo*) – A form that typically indicates large size relative to the norm (e.g., *un sassone* ‘a big stone’ – cf. *sasso* ‘stone’). See 20.2.

Auxiliary verb (*verbo ausiliare*) – A verb such as *avere*, *essere*, *stare* (see 14.19–21, 31, 34; 15.17) used in combination with a **past participle** or a **gerund**. The auxiliary does most of the grammatical ‘work’, indicating person and number of the subject, mood (i.e., subjunctive or indicative) and to some extent tense, whereas the accompanying past participle or gerund signals the basic meaning of the verb. E.g., (with auxiliaries underlined) *Ho cantato* ‘I’ve sung’, *Sono arrivato* ‘I’ve arrived’, *Sono visto* ‘I’m seen’, *Sto cantando* ‘I’m singing’.

Cardinal number (*numero cardinale*) – a number in the series *uno* (1), *due* (2), *tre* (3), etc.

Causative (*causativo*) (see 14.25)

Clause (*proposizione*) – Any string of words seen as constituting, or corresponding to, a sentence. A ‘subordinate clause’ is such an element within a larger sentence (and is often introduced by *che*). E.g., in *Dico che Mario canta* ‘I say that M. sings’, the subordinate clause is *che Mario canta* (corresponding to *Mario canta*). But in *Ti dico di cantare* ‘I tell you to sing’, the subordinate clause is *di cantare* (corresponding to *Tu canti*), and in *Gianni comincia a cantare* ‘G. starts to sing’ it is *a cantare* (corresponding to *Gianni canta*).

Cleft sentence (*frase scissa*) – Type of construction involving a **relative** clause in which attention is directed to the subject of a sentence by saying, for example, ‘It was Peter who sang’, *È stato Pietro che ha cantato*, instead of, ‘Peter sang’

Pietro ha cantato. See 17.3.

Clitics – Italian clitics (*clitici*) are monosyllabic, unstressed forms of pronouns (and of adverbs of place) which cannot be used in isolation but must always be adjacent to a verb (either before, in what is called *proclitic* position, or after, in *enclitic* position); they are also found after *ecco*. The Italian clitics are *mi, ti, lo, la, li, le, gli, si, ci, vi* and *ne* (with their individual variant forms). See 6.1–6.18.

Comparative (*comparativo*) – Comparative constructions involve modifications of adjectives or adverbs to indicate, for example, ‘more’ or ‘less’ than. . . , or ‘as much as. . .’ (the latter are called ‘comparisons of equality’).

Complement (*complemento*) – (see 17.1)

Collective (*collettivo*) – A collective expression refers specifically to a group or set of entities. For example the collective numeral *una ventina* ‘a group of about 20’.

Compound – A compound word (*parola composta*) is a single word which is made up of two or more other words, such as *grattaciello* ‘skyscraper’ (= *gratta* ‘scratch’ + *cielo* ‘sky’).

Concessive (*concessivo*) (see 19.16)

Conjugation – The conjugations (*coniugazioni*) of Italian are the major classes of verb (primarily defined by the nature of the vowel preceding the *-re* ending of the infinitive) to one of which virtually every Italian verb belongs (see 14.2–14.5). Conjugations do not have any inherent ‘meaning’: the membership of a verb in a particular conjugational class is just a matter of convention (although newly created verbs are always assigned to the first conjugation).

Conjunction (*connettivo*) – any word or expression which joins together two elements in an utterance. Typical examples are *e* ‘and’, *ma* ‘but’, *benché* ‘although’, etc.

Consonant (*consonante*) – The most useful definition of a consonant for our purposes is that it is a speech sound involving audible restriction of the flow of air at some point in the mouth or throat. The Italian letters with consonantal value are: *b, c, d, f, g, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, t, v, w, x, z* (and *j* in some foreign words, such as *jazz*).

Consecutive clause (*proposizione consecutiva*) – A consecutive clause indicates a consequence or a result of some action: ‘I came to see you’, ‘He was so tired that he fell asleep.’

Coreferent(ial) (*coreferenziale*) – Referring to the same person or entity. Used especially in describing the relation between the subject of a main clause and that of a **subordinate clause**. In *Gianni ha detto che cantava* ‘G. said he was singing’, the subjects of *ha detto* and *cantava* are ‘coreferent’ if they both refer to the same individual, *Gianni*, but not coreferent if the subject of *cantava* is a different individual, say *Paolo*.

Counterfactual – Contrary to fact, unreal. For example, in ‘If I were rich, I wouldn’t work.’

Demonstrative (*dimostrativo*) – A word whose basic function is to locate something in relation to the speaker or addressee. E.g, *questo* ‘this’ vs. *quello* ‘that’, *qua* ‘here’ vs. *là* ‘there’.

Desinence (*desinenza*) (see ‘ending’)

Determiner (*determinante*) – Word, such as the **articles** and the **demonstratives**

which limit the range of entities a noun phrase refers to.

Diminutive (*diminutivo*) – Form typically indicating relative smallness. The suffixes *-ino* and *-etto* are often described as ‘diminutives’ (e.g., *ragazzino* ‘little boy’ from *ragazzo*).

Direct Object (*oggetto diretto*) – (see Object)

Discourse marker – Any element whose function is to indicate the relationship between sentences forming part of a coherent, linked succession of sentences. Such things as *dunque*, or *però*: *Non ha visto nessuno. Dunque ha deciso di partire.* ‘He saw nobody. So he decided to leave’; *Mangia molto. Però non ingrassa mai.* ‘He eats a lot. Yet he never puts on weight.’

Dislocation (*dislocazione*) – Moving some element of a sentence out of the position it would normally be expected to occupy. For example the position to the left of the verb of the direct object *Gianni* in *Gianni non lo vedo mai* ‘I never see Gianni’ (a case of ‘left-dislocation’) as opposed to the more ‘normal’ *Non vedo mai Gianni*, with the object to the right of the verb.

Durative (*durativo*) – A durative form of the verb expresses a process normally viewed as unfolding over an appreciable stretch of time.

Elative (*elativo*) – Form indicating ‘very...’, ‘highly...’, ‘extremely...’ or ‘most...’. E.g., the ending *-issimo* in *Era altissimo* ‘He was extremely tall’.

Elision (*elisione*) – The phenomenon whereby the vowel at the end of the word is dropped before a following word beginning with a vowel: e.g., *quest’idea* for *questa idea*.

Ending (*desinenza*) – The final part (also known as an ‘inflection’ or ‘desinence’) of a noun, adjective or verb, containing grammatical information. In the adjective *negri* the *-i* is an ending signalling ‘masculine plural’; in the verb-form *canto*, *-o* signals ‘first person singular present indicative’.

Feminine (see **gender**)

Finite (*finito*) – A finite verb-form is one which contains specifications of person, number and tense unlike, say, an infinitive. *Cantate* is finite (2nd person plural present indicative) in *Sento che cantate* ‘I can hear that you’re singing’, but *cantare* is not finite, as in *Vi sento cantare* ‘I hear you sing’.

First person (see ‘Person’)

Gender (*genere*) – Every Italian noun has either masculine or feminine gender, manifested in the form of the **determiner** that a noun takes, the form of the pronouns that represent it, and frequently in the form of modifying adjectives. Although nouns denoting females are usually feminine and those denoting males usually masculine, there is often no way of predicting gender from the meaning of a word, and the gender of each noun needs to be learned individually. See 3.9–24.

Gerund (*gerundio*) – see 14.17, 15.20.

Imperative (*imperativo*) – Form of the verb used for giving commands, orders, instructions. E.g., *Sii bravo!* ‘Be good!’, *State attenti* ‘Be careful’.

Imperfective (*imperfettivo*) – In broad terms, the difference between what is known as the imperfective and the perfective ‘aspect’ of verbs is that which, in Italian, is particularly salient in the distinction between the imperfect tense on the one hand, and the *passato remoto* with the *passato prossimo*, on the other, for which see 15.12.

Inalienable (*inalienabile*) – An ‘inalienable’ possession is an inherent part of some

entity, without which that entity may be viewed as incomplete, e.g., *gli occhi* in *Paola apre gli occhi* 'P opens her eyes', as opposed to *il libro che le avevo mandato* in *Paola apre il libro che le avevo mandato in regalo* 'P opens the book I had sent her as a present.'

Indicative (*indicativo*) – see 15.25

Indirect Object (*oggetto indiretto*) – see **Object**

Infinitive (*infinito*) – non-**finite** form of the verb, ending in Italian in *-re*, and used in dictionaries, etc., as the 'name' or 'citation form' of the verb.

Inflection (see 'Ending')

Interjections (*interiezioni*) – Forms that express 'states of mind', and do not form part of larger grammatical constructions. E.g., *Eh?* 'Eh?', 'What?'.

Interrogative (*interrogativo*) – Concerned with asking questions, for example the interrogative **pronoun** *chi?* 'who?', or interrogative sentences such as *Viene Paolo?* 'Is P coming?'

Intransitive (*intransitivo*) (and **transitive** *transitivo*) – A 'transitive' verb is one which is associated with two **nouns** or **noun phrases** one of which is the **direct object**, typically undergoing the action or process expressed by the verb, while the other is the **subject**, which typically expresses the agent, controller or causer of the action or process expressed by the verb. Some typical transitive sentences are: *Il cane* [subject] *morde il gatto* [direct object] 'The dog bites the cat', *Mario* [subject] *apre la porta* [direct object] 'M. opens the door', *Tu* [subject] *guardavi la partita* [direct object] 'You were watching the match'. An 'intransitive' verb, in contrast, is one that has no direct object, and is associated with a single noun which is always the verb's subject: e.g., *Il gatto* [subject] *muore* 'The cat dies', *Paolo* [subject] *piange* 'P is crying', *Le ragazze* [subject] *stavano giocando* 'The girls were playing'.

Invariant (*invariante*) – Having exactly the same form regardless of grammatical properties. In Italian the most prominent cases of invariance are those nouns and adjectives that show no change between singular and plural and between masculine and plural (e.g., *bar* is the same in the plural as the singular, and the adjective *rosa* 'pink' is the same, regardless of whether the noun it modifies is singular, plural, masculine or feminine).

Irregular (*irregolare*) – Some grammatical form or structure is said to be 'irregular' when it deviates from otherwise general grammatical rules. The term is especially used of verbs, such as *essere* or *potere* or *fare*, many of whose forms are such that they seem idiosyncratic, and cannot be predicted by general rule. Irregular verbs generally require learning by rote.

Length (*lunghezza*) – A 'long' vowel or consonant has longer duration in time than a short one. In Italian, length is especially important in consonants, because it can express the difference of meaning between pairs of words: e.g., *pala* 'shovel' vs. *palla* 'ball'. In general (but see 2.5), long consonants are written as 'double' consonant letters (*consonanti doppie*).

Locative (*locativo*) – Locative expressions indicate some point or location in space (e.g., *là* 'there').

Masculine (see **gender**)

Modal (*modale*) – Modal verbs are those such as English 'can', 'must', 'want', or Italian *potere*, *sapere* 'know how to', *dovere*, *volere*, which indicate ability, obligation, or desire to implement what is expressed by the following

infinitive (e.g., *Dobbiamo pagare le tasse* 'We have to pay our taxes'), or that it is possible or necessary that what is expressed by the infinitive should happen (e.g., *Ogni essere umano deve morire* 'Every human being must die').

Monosyllable (*monosillabo*) – A word is 'monosyllabic' if it consists of just one syllable.

Negation (*negazione*) – Asserting that something is not the case. A *negative* form or construction (such as *non*, *nessuno*, *mai*) is one having this function.

Noun (*sostantivo*) – A class of words characteristically denoting 'things' or 'notions', and capable of appearing as the subject or object of the verb. E.g., the underlined elements in *Il cane/Il vapore/La linguistica non fa male* 'The dog/The steam/Linguistics doesn't hurt', or *Odio il cane/il vapore/la linguistica* 'I hate the dog/the steam/linguistics'.

Noun Phrase – see *Phrase*

Object (*oggetto*) – A **noun**, **noun phrase** or **pronoun**, other than the **subject**, which is involved in or undergoes the state or action expressed by a verb. E.g., the underlined elements in *Paolo vede Gianni* 'P. sees G.', *Gianni adora la matematica* 'G. adores mathematics', *Non li voglio* 'I don't want them'. The preceding examples illustrate 'direct objects'; the 'indirect object' (preceded by the preposition *a*, or represented by the pronouns *gli*, *le*, *loro*), typically represents the 'recipient' of some action, to whom/which or to for whom/which the action of the verb takes place. E.g., the underlined elements in *Do il libro a Gianni* 'I give the book to G.', *Lo dico ai ragazzi* 'I say it to the boys', *Le duole un dente* 'A tooth is hurting (to) her'.

Ordinal number (*numero ordinale*) – Number in the series *primo* (1st), *secondo* (2nd), *terzo* (3rd), etc.

Participle (*participio*) – name for certain non-**finite** forms of the verb. The past participle is a form of the verb occurring in a variety of constructions with **auxiliary** verbs, and characterized by the endings *-to* or *-so* (see 14.14,15) in the masculine singular. For the so-called 'present participle', see 3.32.

Partitive (*partitivo*) – Partitive constructions (*costruzioni partitive*) make reference to some part of a whole. E.g., '*dei libri*' in *Ho comprato dei libri* 'I've bought some books', or *del miele* in *Mangia del miele* 'He eats some honey'.

Passive (*passivo*) – See 14.31.

Pejorative (*spregiativo*) – A pejorative form is one used to refer to someone or something unfavourably. E.g., the suffix *-accio* in *vinaccio* 'bad, unpleasant wine'.

Perfective (*perfettivo*) (see 'imperfective').

Person (*persona*) – Category of verbs (and pronouns) indicating speaker or speakers (1st person: e.g., *io parlo*, *noi parliamo*), addressee or addressees (2nd person: e.g., *tu parli*, *voi parlate*) or neither (3rd person: e.g., *lui parla*, *loro parlano*).

Phrase (*sintagma*) – A 'noun phrase' (*sintagma nominale*) is a noun taken together with the elements (**articles**, **demonstratives**, **adjectives**, **relative clauses**) which modify it: e.g., the underlined element in *I turisti sono già partiti* 'The tourists have already left', *I turisti svedesi sono già partiti* 'The Swedish tourists have already left', *I turisti svedesi di cui mi hai parlato sono già partiti* 'The Swedish tourists you spoke to me about have already left', *I turisti svedesi simpatici di cui mi hai parlato sono già partiti* 'The nice Swedish tourists you spoke to me about have already left'. Similarly, an adjectival phrase comprises an adjective and its

modifiers (usually adverbs): *Era ancora più bello di quanto pensassi* 'It was even more beautiful than I thought.' A 'verb phrase' comprises a verb, together with any or all of auxiliaries, modifying adverbs, and the verb's **complement**. E.g., the underlined elements in *Mario ha cantato bene* 'M. sang well', *Mario ha sempre cantato bene questa canzone* 'M. has always sung this song well.'

Plural (*plurale*) – The plural refers to more than one of something, in opposition to the singular (*singolare*) indicating just one. In *I gatti miagolano* 'The cats miaow', *gatti* 'cats' refers to more than one cat, and the modifying definite article *i* and the verb-form *miagolano* are also plural forms, agreeing with *gatti*.

Possessive (*possessivo*) – Form which indicates the relation between a possessor and the thing possessed. See 10.1–7.

Postposed (*postposto*) – Placed after (in opposition to 'preposed' (*preposto*), placed before). In *Viene Mario* the subject, *Mario*, is postposed to the verb; in *una triste storia*, the adjective *triste* is preposed to the noun.

Predicate (*predicato*) – That which is said about the subject of a sentence, e.g. *triste* or *l'unico che non avesse il passaporto* in *Mario era triste* 'M. was sad', *Mario era l'unico che non avesse il passaporto* 'Mario was the only one who didn't have a passport'. A 'predicative adjective' represents that property which is asserted about some noun, and is usually introduced by a verb such as *essere*, *diventare*, *sembrare*. E.g., *Il ragazzo è intelligente* 'The boy is intelligent', *Diventavano stanchi* 'They were becoming tired'.

Prefix (*prefisso*) – An element added to the beginning of one word and forming another word: e.g., *anti* in *anticomunista*.

Preposed (see 'postposed')

Preposition (*preposizione*) – A word that precedes a noun or noun phrase and which typically expresses spatial relations, e.g., *su*, *con*, *sotto*, *senza*, *contro*. Prominent among prepositions are also *di*, *a*, *per*.

Privative (*privativo*) – Indicating absence or removal. E.g., the prefix *s-* in *sdentato* 'toothless'.

Productive (*produttivo*) – The property of permitting the creation of new forms, not heard or written before.

Progressive (*progressivo*) – A progressive form expresses an activity viewed as being in progress, or unfolding over time. See 15.17.

Pronominal (*pronominale*) – Pertaining to pronouns, having the status of a pronoun.

Pronoun (*pronome*) – A form used to stand for a noun or noun phrase (e.g., *lui*, *lei*, *loro*), or to stand for the participants in discourse (e.g., *io* *noi* *tu* *voi*). The pronominal elements are underlined in *Giorgio vede spesso suo nipote ma noi non lo vediamo mai e non ne parliamo mai* 'G. often sees his grandson but we never see him and never speak about him'. There are also pronouns which stand for a preposition + noun (e.g., *Va spesso a Roma ma noi non ci andiamo mai* 'He often goes to Rome but we never go there'), or for whole clauses (e.g., *Dice di essere stato a Roma, ma ciò mi pare poco probabile* 'He says he's been to Rome but that strikes me as unlikely.'). See Chapter 6.

Proper name (*nome proprio*) – Name of person or place, e.g., *Paolo*, *Milano*.

Protasis – See 'apodosis'

Purposive clause (see 19.14)

Quantifier (*quantificatore*) – Any word or expression indicating quantity. E.g.,

tutto, poco, alcuni.

Reciprocal (*reciproco*) – Constructions of the type ‘each other’, ‘one another’: E.g., *Si rispettano l’un l’altro* ‘They respect each other’.

Reflexive (*riflessivo*) – Construction in which the **subject** of the verb is seen as carrying out some action on or to itself (e.g., *Mario si lava* ‘M. washes himself’). The ‘reflexive pronouns’ are *si* and *sé*.

Register (*registro*) – Set of linguistic features deliberately used for speaking or writing for particular purposes or in particular contexts. Features pertaining to ‘formal’ registers might be used in making an official public announcement, an academic address, addressing the President of the Republic, etc., etc.

Relative (*relativo*) – A ‘relative clause’ is a subordinate **clause** which modifies a noun **phrase** or a **pronoun**. It is usually introduced by a ‘relative’ pronoun, such as *che* ‘who/which/that’, *il quale*, etc. E.g., *Ho visto entrare l’uomo che conosci* ‘I saw the man whom you know come in’. For the distinction between ‘restrictive’ and ‘non-restrictive’ relatives, see 7.4.

Rheme (*rema*) – See 17.1

Root (*radice, radicale*) – That part of a verb, noun or adjective, minus grammatical endings, which indicates its basic meaning. So the ‘roots’ of *vedevate*, *cani* and *giallo* are *ved-*, *can-* and *giall-*, those parts of the word that carry the meanings ‘see’, ‘dog’ and ‘yellow’.

Second person (see ‘Person’)

Semivowel (*semivocale*) – In Italian the sounds [j] or [i] and [w] or [u], involving greater constriction of the airflow than the vowels [i] and [u], but less constriction than is involved in the articulation of consonants, and not forming the nucleus of a syllable (see ‘syllable’, and 2.2).

Singular (see ‘plural’)

Stranding – The phenomenon of ‘preposition stranding’ is a peculiarity of *English* relative constructions such that prepositions can remain ‘stranded’ on the right of the relative pronoun which they apply to (e.g., the preposition ‘to’ in the foregoing sentence, an ‘unstranded’ version of which would be ‘...the relative pronoun to which they apply’). Stranding is strictly ungrammatical in Italian (but see 11.2).

Subordinate clause (*proposizione retta*) – See ‘Clause’

Subject (*soggetto*) – Noun or noun phrase with which the verb **agrees in person** and number. In a **transitive** sentence the subject is typically the agent, causer or controller of the action expressed by the verb. See ‘intransitive’ above.

Subjunctive (*congiuntivo*) – See 15.25.

Suffix (*suffisso*) – An element added usually to the **root** of one word forming another word. E.g., *giallastro* ‘yellowish’ from *giallo*.

Superlative (*superlativo*) – Grammatical form expressing ‘the most...’, ‘the ...est’: *Mario è il più alto* ‘M. is the tallest.’

Stress (see 2.9–2.11). Note that Italian *accento* indicates both written ‘accent’ and ‘stress’. Although under certain conditions written accents indicate stress, ‘accent’ and ‘stress’ are normally quite distinct.

Syllable (*sillaba*) – The syllable is a notion which is intuitively clear to most people, but of which it is surprisingly hard to give a simple abstract definition. Anyone can hear that a word such as *amato* is made up of three ‘chunks’, that *automaticamente* is made up of seven, and so forth: these are syllables. The

syllable is basically a linear unit of sound having as its 'nucleus' a vowel, which may be flanked on either side by consonants (or semiconsonants). The syllables of *amato* are a - ma - to; those of *automaticamente* are aʉ - to - ma - ti - ka - men - te. Determining where one syllable ends and another begins is a complex matter, which is relevant to the placement of hyphens (*trattini*) in writing; see 2.14.

Syntax (*sintassi*) – Syntax is concerned with the grammatical relations between words and other units within sentences. For example, the **agreement** of adjectives with their nouns is a matter of syntax, as are issues of ordering of elements within phrases (e.g., the position of **clitics** in relation to verbs).

Synthetic (*sintetico*) (see 14.1).

Temporal (*temporale*) – Pertaining to the expression of time (e.g., 'future', 'past').

Tense (*tempo verbale*) – The tenses are forms of the **verb** associated with the time, in relation to the time of speaking, at which the event expressed by the verb occurs. E.g., 'present tense' *parlo* 'I'm speaking', 'past tense' *ho parlato*, 'future tense' *parlerò*. It is perfectly possible, however, for tense-forms to indicate times other than those suggested by their grammatical label. So 'present tense' *dico* in *Te lo dico domani* 'I'll tell you tomorrow' actually refers to future time.

Theme (*tema*) – See 'Rheme'

Third person (see 'Person')

Transitive – See 'intransitive'

Unstressed (*atono*) (see 'stress')

Verb (*verbo*) – A class of words typically indicating actions, states or processes (e.g., *cantare* 'to sing', *rimanere* 'to remain', *dormire* 'to sleep', *invecchiare* 'to grow old'), with forms indicating **tense**, **person** and so forth. Italian verbs are normally cited in dictionaries, etc., in the **infinitive** form, ending in *-re*.

Verb phrase (*sintagma verbale*) – See 'Phrase'

Vowel (*vocale*) – A vowel is a sound produced with minimal constriction of the airflow during speech. Vowels are represented in Italian by the letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*. Note that *i* and *u* are, under certain circumstances, pronounced as **semi-vowels** (see 2.2).



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>



Introduction

This book aims to provide a comprehensive work of reference for learners of Italian whose native language is English, or who possess a very good knowledge of English. It is not intended as a course in Italian grammar, but it is meant to be accessible to all learners of Italian, whatever their level of knowledge of the language. So a beginner who needs to check the distinction between the forms of the article *il* and *lo* should find this book as useful as an advanced learner who is interested, say, in the finer points of use of the subjunctive. The fact that we are aiming at English-speaking learners means that we do not usually comment on those aspects of Italian grammar which happen to be identical to English, and over which an English-speaking learner is unlikely ever to make a mistake; thus, for example, while we mention that it is possible in Italian, unlike English, to form adverbs from certain adjectives of nationality (e.g., *italianamente*), we do not bother to state that in Italian one cannot form adverbs from adjectives of colour (**giallamente*) – for no more can one say ‘yellowly’ in English.

A ‘reference grammar’ should, precisely, facilitate ‘reference’, so this grammar has a detailed index and list of contents. In the latter, section headings are designed, as far as possible, to give the user a clear idea of what the section deals with, often including brief examples of the type of structure involved, with English translation where appropriate. On the whole, the meaning of grammatical terminology, if unfamiliar, should be obvious from the illustrative examples but, where necessary, explanatory notes have been given. There is also extensive cross-referencing within the text, a fact which should help obviate some of the problems of organization which can affect works of this kind: it is debatable, for example, whether a section on ‘negative adverbs’ should appear in the chapter on adverbs or in the chapter on negatives, but this should matter little so long as there is good cross-referencing between the two.

We have tried to give ample exemplification of the grammatical points discussed and, to avoid the monotony of invented examples in the ‘*plume de ma tante*’ tradition, we have taken as many as possible from current newspapers, magazines, from novels, political, historical, sociological and scientific works and from radio and television broadcasts. We have also made use of the database of contemporary Italian literature available on the Internet at www.alice.it. We have not, however, felt it necessary to give the source of each example, except for cases where we believe that the source may have some real bearing on the grammatical structure at issue, and for passages which constitute substantial quotations from literary works or whose content is, taken out of context, so striking that readers might actually wish to see the original. Virtually all examples have been

translated (by Maiden) into English, in as natural and idiomatic a way as is compatible with illustrating the grammatical point in question.¹

There are some 'grey areas' between what should be contained in a dictionary and what should be contained in a grammar. A good example of this appears in Chapter 20, on word formation: a comprehensive account of the semantic and structural idiosyncrasies of word formation is beyond the scope of a reference grammar, and one can do little more than indicate some of the problems and structures associated with word formation. Arguably, Chapters 12 (on numerals) and 21 (on time expressions), barely belong in a 'grammar' at all, but the inclusion of such things (apparently on the grounds that, like morphological paradigms, they often constitute closed sets of forms) is a time-honoured tradition, and we make no exception here.

As far as we have been able, we have attempted to bear in mind potentially significant differences at least between United States English and British English. We apologize in advance to readers in other parts of the Anglophone world, if we have labelled as 'British', or 'United States', usages which are actually more widespread, or have neglected to mention features of English in other parts of the world which might be relevant to learners of Italian in those places.

The differences between varieties of English are much less dramatic than those between varieties of Italian. The 'Italian language' (based on a late-medieval form of just one of the dialects of Italy, that of Florence) was for many centuries primarily a written language and chiefly the preserve of intellectuals. The adoption of Italian as a versatile everyday language by the mass of the population is really a phenomenon of the twentieth century. The dialects which until recently were the native speech of Italians were often so profoundly different from Italian (and from each other) as to constitute 'different languages', and these differences have left their mark on the way in which the Italian language is used in different regions of Italy.² This reference grammar makes no attempt at a systematic account of the regional varieties of Italian but points out some of the more salient regional differences which might be encountered in the speech or writing of educated speakers of Italian. There are also considerable differences of register between the kind of Italian used in formal discourse (such as making a public address, academic or bureaucratic writing, etc.) and informal (particularly spoken) usage. It is simply beyond the scope of this book to give a detailed characterization of such differences, but we have attempted where possible to point out major differences between formal and informal discourse, as far as they impinge on grammatical structure, and have summarized these differences in chapter 23. The books by Moss and Motta (2000) and Kinder and Savini

¹In translating Italian third person singular verb-forms (which frequently do not indicate the gender of the subject) we have used indifferently both 'he' and 'she' in English, but make no guarantee that we have distributed the sexes equally!

²Brief accounts of the historical and dialect background (with suggestions for further reading) appear in Part One of Lepschy and Lepschy (1988), Maiden (1995, Chapters 1 and 3), and the articles under 'Italy' variously by Benincà, Maiden, Parry and Vanelli, in Price (1998: 251–76). Lepschy and Tosi (2002) provides a useful overview of the linguistic situation in Italy, past and present, particularly the chapters by Maiden, by Parry and by Lepschy.

(2004), which have appeared since the first edition of this book, provide an excellent complement to it where information about lexical and register distinctions is concerned.

This book is the joint work of both authors. However, Martin Maiden is principally responsible for Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (1–28, 37–38), 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (1–24), 15 (1–11, 17–57), 16, 20, 21 and 23 and the glossary, and Cecilia Robustelli for Chapters 6 (29–36), 14 (25–36), 15 (12–17), 17, 18, 19 and 22.

Many native speakers and/or specialists in Italian linguistics were consulted – some of them will have felt that they were pestered – in the preparation of this book. A complete list of names would be lengthy, but our thanks go to all of them (and to a number of readers who sent us extremely useful comments on, and corrections to, the first edition of this Grammar). Among those who particularly went out of their way to be helpful in the preparation of the first edition, we should like to mention Michela Cennamo, Roberta Middleton, Anna Morpurgo Davies and Nigel Vincent; Francesco Sabatini, Barbara Wehr and Paola Tite made some very helpful suggestions for the second edition. But our greatest debt of gratitude goes to Giulio Lepschy, who patiently and painstakingly commented on a large part of this book, making countless acute suggestions for improving it. The authors alone are responsible for the defects of this grammar, but many of its strengths are due to Giulio.

Martin Maiden
Cecilia Robustelli

e-mail: martin.maiden@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
crobustelli@unimore.it

2

Spelling and pronunciation

2.1 The relationship between letters and sounds

The relationship between Italian letters and the sounds they represent is relatively straightforward. By and large, one letter corresponds to one sound, and vice versa. But there are also respects in which this relationship is less transparent and, in certain cases, highly unpredictable. Sections 2 to 6 throw some light on these more problematic areas. Pronunciation, and especially that part of pronunciation which is not unambiguously indicated by spelling, is a domain in which standardization of Italian is at its weakest and most fluid: even educated speakers vary considerably from region to region and deviation from a norm which is based, historically, on Tuscan, and particularly Florentine, pronunciation, is widespread and often perfectly acceptable. After all, only a minority of Italians are Tuscan, leave alone Florentine (and there are differences in the pronunciation of standard Italian even within Tuscany), and although some general rules can be supplied for the pronunciation of the notoriously ambiguous letters *e*, *o*, *s* and *z*, to know the notionally ‘correct’ pronunciations of these one often has to learn them word-by-word from a good dictionary, or ask a Tuscan. One may agree with the many Italians who feel that there is no reason to insist rigidly on a model of pronunciation based historically on Florentine, but for the benefit of those who feel that they want a model to imitate, we give in what follows some guidelines reflecting that model (while also giving some general indications about other regional variations). For further information on regional variation see particularly Lepschy and Lepschy (1988: Chapter 4), Maiden (1995: 229–57).

2.2 The letters *c*, (*q*), *g*, *h*, *i*, *u*

C and g are pronounced [k] and [g] except when immediately followed by *i* or *e*, in which case they are pronounced [tʃ] and [dʒ] (*cc* and *gg* are correspondingly pronounced [tʃʃ] and [dʒʒ]). In the same circumstances, the combination *sc* is pronounced [ʃ] ([ʃʃ] between two vowels).

<i>caro</i> ['karo]	‘dear’	<i>pago</i> ['pago]	‘I pay’
<i>dica</i> ['dika]	‘let him say’	<i>fugga</i> ['fugga]	‘let him flee’
<i>lacuna</i> [la'kuna]	‘lacuna’	<i>anguria</i> [aŋ'gurja]	‘water melon’
<i>nasco</i> ['nasko]	‘I am born’	<i>sguardo</i> ['zgwardo]	‘look’
<i>scuro</i> ['skuro]	‘dark’	<i>sgarbo</i> ['zgarbo]	‘discourtesy’
etc.			

<i>cito</i> ['tʃito]	'I cite'	<i>giro</i> ['dʒiro]	'tour'
<i>dice</i> ['diʃe]	'he says'	<i>fugge</i> ['fudʒe]	'he flees'
<i>concedi</i> [kon'tʃɛdi]	'you concede'	<i>argilla</i> [ar'dʒilla]	'clay'
<i>nasce</i> ['nafʃe]	'she is born'		
<i>scemo</i> ['ʃemo]	'silly'	<i>sgelo</i> ['zɛʒelo]	'thaw'
etc.			

The sound [kw] is usually written *qu* (*quando, quiete, quota*, etc.), but note *cuore* ['kwɔre], *cuoco* ['kwɔko], *scuola* ['skwɔla]. Long [kkw] is always spelled *cqu* (*acqua, piacquè*), with the sole exception of *soqqadro* (in *mettere a soqqadro* 'to turn upside down', 'make chaotic').

How does one write the *sounds* [ki], [ke] and [gi], [ge], given that *ci, ce, gi, ge* have a different value? The solution is to add *h* after *c* and *g*. This *h* is a 'diacritic' letter, having no pronunciation of its own, but simply serving to indicate that preceding *c, g* are pronounced [k], [g]. Note that the letter *k* is rarely used, and restricted to a few words borrowed from other languages (e.g. *kepi, karaoke, karaokista*): one does occasionally encounter spellings such as *kilo, kilometro, kerosene*, but *chilo, chilometro, cherosene* are preferred.

<i>chilo</i> ['kilo]	'kilo'
<i>stanchi</i> ['stanʃi]	'tired' (pl. of <i>stanco</i>)
<i>pescherò</i> [peske'rɔ]	'I'll fish' (future of <i>pescare</i>)
<i>scherzo</i> ['skɛrtʃo]	'joke'
<i>bianchiccio</i> [bjaŋ'kitʃo]	'whitish' (from <i>bianco</i>)
<i>ghiro</i> ['giro]	'dormouse'
<i>paghi</i> ['pagi]	'you pay' (2sg. of <i>pagare</i>)
<i>pagherò</i> [page'rɔ]	'I'll pay' (future of <i>pagare</i>)
<i>sghignazzare</i> [zgiɲnat'tsare]	'sneer'
<i>laghetto</i> [la'getto]	'little lake' (from <i>lago</i>)
etc.	

The letter *h* has three other uses: it is written (but not pronounced) in the singular and third person plural present indicative of *avere*: *ho, hai, ha, hanno*, and thereby serves to distinguish these words from *o* 'or', *ai* 'to the', *a* 'to', *anno* 'year'. It appears in certain exclamations, such as *ehi! ahi!, mah!*, where the *h* corresponds to a frequently audible glottal catch or a slight aspiration (approximately [maʔ] to express surprise, and [mah] or [ma:] for casual indifference), also *boh!* [bɔʔ] for surprise or indifference); laughter is conventionally written *ah ah!* but pronounced [ha ha]. *H* also appears in words imported from foreign languages (particularly English, e.g., *hobby, handicap, hacker*), where it may be pronounced if speakers attempt to reproduce the pronunciation of the source language, but usually is not.

The combination *gn* is pronounced [ɲ] ([ɲɲ] between vowels): *gnomo* ['ɲɔmo] 'gnome', *ragno* ['raɲno] 'spider'; the combination *gn* + unstressed *i* (for example in the subjunctive *sogniate* vs. indicative *sognate*) is also pronounced [ɲɲ]. *Gl*, when followed by the letter *i*, is pronounced [ʎ] ([ʎʎ] between vowels): *gli* [ʎi] 'to him', *figlia* ['fiʎʎa] 'daughter', except that it is always [gl] at the *beginning* of a word (apart from the pronoun *gli*):¹

¹Another exception is *gliommero* ['ʎɔmmɛro], an archaic type of verse form. But the word is so little used (and so little known) that even highly educated speakers, on seeing the written form, tend to say ['gliɔmmɛro].

6 Spelling and punctuation

<i>glicine</i> ['gliʦine]	'wisteria'
<i>glicerina</i> [gliʦe'rina]	'glycerine'
<i>glissando</i> [glis'sando]	'glissando'

Gl is also pronounced [gl] inside a few other words, e.g.:

<i>anglicano</i> [anɡli'kano]	'Anglican'
<i>geroglifico</i> [ʤero'ɡlifiko]	'hieroglyphic'
<i>ganglio</i> ['ɡaŋɡljɔ]	'ganglion'

The letter *i* is always [i], except when it *does not represent a stressed vowel and is immediately followed by a vowel*. In this case, unstressed *i* is usually pronounced [j] (but see below), but is generally *not pronounced at all* if it is immediately preceded by *c, g, sc, gl* (where *gl* = [ʎ] – see above):

<i>odiavo</i> [o'djavo]	'I hated'	<i>più</i> [pju]	'more'
<i>siamo</i> ['sjamo]	'we are'	<i>chiaro</i> ['kjarɔ]	'clear'
etc.			
<i>già</i> [ʤa]	'already'	<i>scià</i> [ʃa]	'shah'
<i>faccio</i> ['fatʃɔ]	'I do'	<i>aglio</i> ['aʎʎɔ]	'garlic'
etc.			

Likewise, the sequences *gi, gni, and gli* which appear in first person plural present and second person plural present subjunctive verb forms such as *mangiamo, mangiate; sogniamo, sogniate; cogliamo, cogliate* are usually pronounced, respectively, [ʤ, ɲɲ, ʎʎ]: thus [man'ʤamo, man'ʤate; soɲ'ɲamo, soɲ'ɲate; koʎ'ʎamo, koʎ'ʎate], even though the relevant endings are pronounced ['jamo, 'jate] in other verbs. In all these cases, *i* is simply another 'diacritic' letter, which serves to indicate that the preceding *g, c, sc, gl* are pronounced [ʤ, ʧ, ʃ, ʎ].

In some words an *i* followed by a vowel may occur both stressed and unstressed, for example when the *i* is part of the root of a verb, and carries stress in the singular persons and third person plural of the present, but not elsewhere. In such cases, the unstressed *i* tends also to be pronounced [i] (i.e., it retains the same vowel quality as when it is stressed).

<i>scio</i> ['ʃio]	'I ski'	<i>spio</i> ['spio]	'I spy'
<i>scii</i> ['ʃii]		<i>spii</i> ['spii]	
<i>scia</i> ['ʃia]		<i>spia</i> ['spia]	
<i>sciano</i> ['ʃiano]		<i>spiano</i> ['spiano]	
<i>sciavo</i> [ʃi'avo]	'I skied'	<i>spiavo</i> [spi'avo]	'I spied'
<i>scierò</i> [ʃie'rɔ]	'I'll ski'	<i>spierò</i> [spie'rɔ]	'I'll spy'
<i>sciando</i> [ʃi'ando]	'skiing'	<i>spiando</i> [spi'ando]	'spying'
etc.			

The same principle sometimes applies to nouns, where *i* becomes unstressed as the result of adding a stressed suffix:

<i>via</i> ['via]	'road'	<i>viuzza</i> [vi'uttsa]	'alley'
<i>Pio</i> ['pio]	'(Pope) Pius'	<i>piano</i> [pi'ano]	(pertaining to Pius)
etc.			

Prefixes ending in unstressed *-i* normally retain [i], even when a vowel follows:

<i>antiaerea</i> [antia'erea]	'anti-aircraft'
<i>semiaperto</i> [semia'pɛrto]	'half open'

If *i* is preceded by *sc-*, *c-* or *g-*, and followed by an *e* which is part of an inflectional ending (such as feminine plural *-e* or future and conditional tense *-er-*), then the *i* must be omitted in verbs, and may be omitted in nouns and adjectives:

<i>baciare</i>	<i>bacerò</i>	'I shall kiss'
<i>mangiare</i>	<i>mangerei</i>	'I would eat'
<i>lancia</i>	<i>lance</i> (or <i>lancie</i>)	'lances'
<i>valigia</i>	<i>valigie</i> (or <i>valige</i>)	'suitcases'

The plural spellings *-cie* and *-gie* are preferred after a vowel, while *-ce* and *-ge* are strongly preferred after a consonant. The *i* is never written after *c* and *g* before the suffixes *-etto* and *-ese*:

<i>lancia</i>	<i>lancetta</i>	'small lance', 'hand of clock'
<i>Francia</i>	<i>francese</i>	'French'
etc.		

A particular problem arises where unstressed *i* is followed by another unstressed *i*. This is a situation which potentially occurs 'across morpheme boundaries', e.g., where the root of a word ends in unstressed *i* and a following inflection begins with unstressed *i*. One might predict that the result would be pronounced [ji], but *[ji] does not exist in Italian, and the actual pronunciation is [i]. The spelling is therefore normally a single *i* so that the plural of *studio* (plural ending *i*) and the second person singular/present subjunctive of *studiare* (inflection *i*) are usually spelled: *gli studi*, *tu studi*, *che studi*, *che studino*, *studiamo*, *che studiate*. In more old-fashioned spellings one may however encounter, in the plural of nouns and adjectives, the types *studii*, *studî* (the only case where one finds a circumflex accent in Italian spelling) or the now extremely rare *studj* or *studij*. Note that if the first *i* is stressed, the pronunciation is [iⁱⁱ] and the spelling is accordingly *ii*: *scii* ['fii], *sciino* ['fiino]; but in those verbs (see above) where *i* remains [i] even when unstressed and followed by a vowel, the pronunciation is [i], and the spelling is always a single *i*: *sciamo* [fi'amo], *spiate* [spi'ate], (combined with the 2sg. present subjunctive ending *-iate*), etc.

Some of what is said here for *i* is also true for the letter *u*, which is usually pronounced [w] when unstressed and followed by a vowel: *suora* ['swɔra] 'nun', *sguardo* ['zgwardo] 'look', *quale?* ['kwale] 'which?', etc. But in certain words the *u* is often pronounced [u]: e.g., *lacuale* [laku'ale], 'pertaining to lakes', *arcuato* [arku'ato] 'arch shaped', *acuità* [akui'ta] 'acuity'.

2.3 The letters e and o

E and *o* present few problems in unstressed syllables, where they are generally [e] and [o] (but see 2.11). A difficulty arises in stressed syllables, where they may have either the value [e], [o] ('closed mid vowels') or [ɛ], [ɔ] ('open mid vowels'). This distinction is not indicated in spelling (e.g., *venti* ['venti] '20', *botte* ['botte] 'barrel' vs. *venti* ['venti] 'winds', *botte* ['botte] 'blows'), except for *e* [e] 'and' vs. *è* [ɛ] 'is'. Very many native speakers of Italian do not systematically make the distinctions between these vowels (except *e* vs. *è*) as prescribed by more conservative grammars, and based on central Italian (particularly Florentine) pronunciation. Indeed it has been argued² that learners should not be required to

²See Lepschy (1964); also Lepschy and Lepschy (1988: 90).

acquire these distinctions, and the foreign learner is hardly ever likely to be misunderstood for using the ‘wrong’ vowel. But a problem for those who aim to achieve an authentically ‘native speaker’ pronunciation of Italian is that it is not the case that outside Tuscany and central Italy the closed-mid and open-mid vowel qualities can simply be used indifferently. Some areas prefer the open value (e.g., Sicily), but in most both vowel qualities exist yet are distributed according to different criteria from Florentine: for example, in many northern varieties the open vowels tend to occur in syllables which end in a consonant, and the closed vowels in other stressed syllables (this especially where [e] and [ɛ] are concerned); in Sardinia we have [ɔ] and [ɛ], except that [o] and [e] occur if and only if the following syllable contains the vowel [i]. For the benefit of those who would like to conform to the Florentine-based model, the following are some general guidelines. It should be borne in mind that, for the most part, there is no way of knowing which pronunciation these vowels have, short of consulting a good dictionary, asking a Tuscan, or consulting a manual such as Canepari (1992: 100–8).

- If *o* is followed by a nasal consonant *n* or *m* which is followed in turn by another consonant, it will always be [o]: *ponte* ['ponte] ‘bridge’, *compra* ['kom↓pra] ‘s/he buys’, *vongola* ['vɔŋgola] ‘clam’ (*nn* is an exception: *donna* ['dɔnna] ‘woman’, *gonna* ['gɔnna] or ['gonna] ‘skirt’).
- Stressed -ò at the end of a word is always pronounced [ɔ]: *porterò* [porte'ɾɔ] ‘I’ll carry’, *oblò* [o'blo] ‘porthole’.
- In the stressed diphthongs *ie* and *uo* the *e* and *o* are *usually* open: *viene* ['vjene] ‘s/he comes’, *fiero* ['fjɛro] ‘proud’, *vuole* ['vwɔle] ‘s/he wants’, *cuore* ['kwɔre] ‘the heart’, etc.
- As a broad generalization, *e* and *o* will be pronounced *open* in words which belong to the sphere of ‘learned’, ‘religious’, ‘scientific’, ‘technical’, ‘intellectual’ vocabulary. The relevant words frequently have easily recognizable counterparts in other languages, such as English: *elettrico* [e'lettɾiko] ‘electric’, *filosofo* [fi'lozɔfo] ‘philosopher’, *il credo* [il 'krɛdo] ‘the creed’, *elicottero* [eli'kɔttero] ‘helicopter’, *eccetera* [et'ʃɛtera] ‘etcetera’, etc. The fact that stressed *e* and *o* are pronounced [ɛ] and [ɔ] when followed by ‘single consonant + unstressed *i* + vowel’: *Antonio* [an'tɔnjo], *astemio* [as'tɛmjo] ‘abstemious’, etc., arises because ‘single consonant + unstressed *i* + vowel’ happens characteristically to belong to ‘erudite’ vocabulary.
- A clue that the pronunciation is [e] or [o] may also be available from related English and modern Italian words, originally ‘borrowed’ from Latin,³ which contain *i* and *u* respectively:

<i>vetro</i> ['vetro]	<i>vitr</i> eous	<i>molto</i> ['molto]	<i>mult</i> itude
	<i>vitr</i> eo		
<i>capello</i> [ka'pello]	<i>cap</i> illary	<i>corrotto</i> [kor'rotto]	<i>corr</i> upt
	<i>cap</i> illare		<i>corr</i> uzione
<i>legno</i> ['leŋno]	<i>lign</i> eous	<i>corro</i> ['korro]	<i>curre</i> nt
	<i>lign</i> eo		

³A knowledge of Latin itself is helpful, since Latin words containing stressed short *i* and *u*, or long *e* and *o*, generally show closed mid vowels [e] and [o] in Italian, whilst Latin words in short *e* and *o* usually have [ɛ] and [ɔ] in Italian. For details see, for example, Maiden (1995: 28–30).

<i>meno</i> ['meno]	<i>minus</i>	<i>prodotto</i> [pro'dotto]	<i>production</i> <i>produzione</i>
etc.			

In compound words made up of two independent words, or whose first element has 'autonomous secondary stress' (see 2.11), the vowels [ɛ] and [ɔ] may occur, even if they are not part of the primary stressed element:

<i>perditempo</i> [ˌperdi'tempo]	'time-waster'
<i>portachiavi</i> [ˌpɔrta'kjavɪ]	'key ring'
<i>elettromagnetico</i> [e.lɛttromaɲ'netiko]	'electromagnetic'
<i>eterosessuale</i> [ˌeteroses'swale]	'heterosexual'
<i>tossicodipendente</i> [ˌtɔssikodipen'dente]	'drug addict'

2.4 The letters s and z

The letter *s* has two pronunciations, [s] and [z]. With two kinds of exception, *s* is pronounced [s] (e.g., *sano* ['sano] 'healthy', *spacco* ['spakko] 'I split'). Immediately before a voiced consonant, however, it is always [z]: *smetto* ['zmetto] 'I stop', *slitta* ['zlitta] 'sled', *snervato* [zner'vato] 'nerveless', *sbudellare* [zbudel'lare] 'disembowel', *sdentato* [zden'tato] 'toothless', *svenire* [zve'nire] 'faint', *sregolato* [zrego'lato] 'unruly'. The pronunciation of *s* inside a word and flanked on either side by vowels, is more problematic, at least for learners wishing to reproduce the Florentine-based model of pronunciation prescribed by conservative grammars. In this pronunciation, *s* between vowels usually stands for [s] (e.g., *naso* ['nasɔ] 'nose', *cosa* ['kɔsa] 'thing', *chiese* ['kjesɛ] 's/he asked', *inglese* [in'glese] 'English' and most words in *-ese*, *fuso* ['fuso] 'spindle'), but in certain, unpredictable, cases, it may be [z]: e.g., *fuso* ['fuzɔ] 'melted', *chiese* ['kjesɛzɛ] 'churches', *francese* [fran'ʃɛzɛ] 'French'. There is little alternative to consulting a good dictionary or a native Tuscan to establish the correct pronunciation but, as a rule of thumb, (cf. 2.3), it is the sphere of 'learned', 'scientific', 'technical', 'intellectual', and religious, vocabulary in which [z]-pronunciations tend to prevail: e.g., *psicosi* [psi'kɔzi] 'psychosis', *filosofo* [fi'lɔzɔfo] 'philosopher', *quaresima* [kwa'rezima] 'Lent', *Gesù* [dʒɛ'zu] 'Jesus', *crisi* ['krizi] 'crisis'. Alternatively, word-internal *s* between vowels may be pronounced [z] in all cases (normal in northern Italy, and generally gaining ground as a prestigious pronunciation), or [s] in all cases (normal in southern Italy, but less prestigious). *S* should be pronounced [s] in compound words where it is the first letter of the second element: e.g., *semiserio* [semi'sɛrjo] 'half serious', *risalutare* [risalu'tare] 'to greet again'. See further Canepari (1992: 109–11).

The letter *z* also has two pronunciations, [ts] and [dʒ]. There is a strong and growing tendency to pronounce *z* as [dʒ] at the beginning of a word, even where the traditional Tuscan pronunciation would be [ts] (e.g., *zio* ['dʒio] 'uncle', *zuppa* ['dʒuppa] 'soup'). But, inside the word, pronunciation is highly unpredictable. The usual pronunciation is [ts], but [dʒ] is often found, especially in words which belong to the sphere of 'learned', 'religious', 'scientific', 'technical', 'intellectual' vocabulary. Thus: *azoto* [ad'dʒɔto] 'nitrogen', *romanzo* [ro'mandʒo] 'novel', *zebra*

[ˈdʒɛbra], *zoologo* [dzoˈɔlogo] ‘zoologist’, all verbs⁴ in *-izzare* (e.g., [realidˈdʒare]). Note also *pranzo* [ˈprandʒo] ‘lunch’, *mezzo* [ˈmɛddʒo] ‘half’.

2.5 Spelling and pronunciation of ‘double’ consonants

In general, written double consonants stand for phonologically long pronunciations: *pala* [ˈpala] ‘spade’ vs. *palla* [ˈpalla] ‘ball’, *cane* [ˈkane] ‘dog’ vs. *canne* [ˈkanne] ‘reeds’, etc. But certain letters and combinations of letters always represent long consonants when they occur between two vowels; this applies both inside words and at the beginnings of words:

- Both *z* and *zz* represent a long consonant (each can be either [tʃ] or [dʒ]) when written between vowels: there is no distinction of pronunciation between them, and single [tʃ] or [dʒ] never occur between vowels: *spazzi* [ˈspattʃi] ‘you sweep’, *spazi* [ˈspattʃi] ‘spaces’, *realizzazione* [realiddʒatˈʃjone] ‘realization’, etc. Also *la zebra* [la dˈdʒɛbra] ‘the zebra’, *lo zoologo* [lo dʒoˈɔlogo] ‘the zoologist’, *la zia* [la tˈʃia] ‘the aunt’.
- *gn* is always [ɲ] between vowels: *ragno* [ˈraɲno] ‘spider’, *lo gnomo* [lo ɲˈno] ‘the gnome’.
- *gli* is [ʎ] between vowels (but see 2.2 for the pronunciation [ɡl]): *aglio* [ˈaʎlo] ‘garlic’, *sceglieva* [ʃeˈʎeva] ‘she chose’.
- *sc + e/i* is always [ʃ] between vowels: *pesce* [ˈpeʃʃe] ‘fish’, *la sceglie* [la ʃˈʃeʎe] ‘he chooses it’, *lascia* [ˈlaʃʃa] ‘he leaves’.

2.6 Lengthening of consonants at the beginning of words: *rafforzamento (fono)sintattico*

There is a major and systematic feature of Italian pronunciation which is almost never represented in writing, and tends therefore to be neglected by non-natives. This is so-called ‘syntactic doubling’, variously known in Italian as *raddoppiamento sintattico*, *rafforzamento sintattico*, *rafforzamento fonosintattico*. *Rafforzamento fonosintattico* (henceforth RF) is a phenomenon whereby a consonant at the beginning of a word receives a ‘double’, or a little more accurately a ‘lengthened’, pronunciation when preceded by certain other words within the same phrase. This occurs principally when the immediately preceding word (including all monosyllabic verb forms, monosyllabic nouns, monosyllabic adverbs, monosyllabic numerals and monosyllabic pronouns of all kinds other than clitics) *ends in a stressed vowel*:

<i>città persa</i> [tʃitˈta pˈpersa]	‘lost city’
<i>Sarà bello.</i> [saˈra bˈbello]	‘It’ll be nice.’
<i>Che fai?</i> [ke fˈfai]	‘What are you doing?’
<i>Chi sei?</i> [ˈki sˈsei]	‘Who are you?’
<i>Ciò ti piace.</i> [ˈtʃɔ tti ˈpjaʃʃe]	‘You like that.’
<i>A me la mandi?</i> [a mˈme lˈla ˈmandi]	‘Are you sending it to <u>me</u> ?’
<i>le cose che fai</i> [le ˈkɔse ke fˈfai]	‘the things that you are doing’
<i>lunedì prossimo</i> [luneˈdi pˈprɔssimo]	‘next Monday’

⁴Except *rizzare* [ritˈtsare] ‘to stand up, on end’.

<i>colibrì blu</i> [koli'bri b'blu]	'blue humming bird'
<i>già preparato</i> ['dʒa pprepa'rato]	'already prepared'
<i>oblò chiuso</i> [o'blo k'kjuʃo]	'closed porthole'
<i>Parlò forte.</i> [par'lɔ f'fɔrte]	'He talked loudly.'
<i>caffè turco</i> [kaf'fɛ t'turko]	'Turkish coffee'
<i>virtù naturale</i> [vir'tu nnatu'rale]	'natural virtue'
<i>gnu selvatico</i> ['ɲu ssel'vatiko]	'wild gnu'
<i>più grosso</i> ['pju g'grɔsso]	'larger'
<i>qui sotto</i> ['kwi s'sotto]	'down here'
<i>scià morto</i> ['ʃa m'mɔrto]	'dead shah'
<i>tre giorni</i> ['tre d'ɔɹni]	'three days'
<i>Va bene.</i> ['va b'bɛne]	'It goes well.'
<i>Ho fame.</i> ['ɔ f'fame]	'I'm hungry.'
<i>È vero.</i> ['ɛ v'vero]	'It's true.'

Note that RF does NOT operate in the following circumstances:

- At the beginning of words where a consonant is immediately followed by another consonant (e.g., *ho studiato* ['ɔ stu'djato] 'I've studied'; *a psicologi* [a psi'kolodʒi] 'to psychologists'); but if the second consonant is [r] or [l], RF applies (e.g., *è troppo* ['ɛ t'trɔppo] 'it's too much', *è fluido* ['ɛ f'fluido] 'it's fluid').
- After the stressed diphthongs *ai, au, ei, eu, oi, ui* (e.g., *lui viene* ['lui 'vjene] 'he comes', *poi parto* ['poi 'parto] 'then I leave').
- After words ending in stressed vowel + apostrophe (e.g., *un po' caldo* [um 'po 'kaldo] 'a bit hot'); this category includes notably those monosyllabic second person singular imperatives⁵ written with an apostrophe (see 14.9) (e.g., *sta' fermo* ['sta 'fermo] 'stand still', *va' sotto* ['va 'sotto] 'go under', *di' la parola* ['di la pa'rɔla] 'say the word').

RF is further caused by the prepositions and conjunctions *a, come, da, dove, e, fra/tra, ma, né, o, sopra, su*, and by the words *se* ('if'), *che* 'that' (complementizer) and *qualche* 'some':

<i>a me</i> [a m'me]	'to me'
<i>Vedo che vieni.</i> ['vedo ke v'vjɛni]	'I see that you are coming.'
<i>come lui</i> ['kome l'lui]	'like him'
<i>da capo</i> [da k'kapo]	'from the start'
<i>Dove vai?</i> ['dove v'vai]	'Where are you going?'
<i>io e te</i> ['io e tte]	'I and you'
<i>ma sai</i> [ma s'sai]	'but you know'
<i>né Mario né Luigi</i> [ne m'marjo ne l'lwidʒi]	'neither M nor L'
<i>me o lui</i> ['me o l'lui]	'me or him'
<i>qualche volta</i> ['kwalke v'vɔlta]	'sometimes'
<i>Se canti.</i> [se k'kanti]	'If you sing.'
<i>sopra Milano</i> ['sopra mmi'lano]	'over Milan'

Note that *come* meaning 'like', 'as' causes RF when followed by a noun phrase or a pronoun or an adjective, but not when followed by a verb phrase, an adverb phrase or a conjunction:

⁵It is a nice object lesson in the extent to which the rules of RF can vary regionally that one of the authors of this book (Robustelli, herself a Tuscan) reports that in her speech RF *does* occur after these imperatives (as it also does after *come*) regardless of what follows. In contrast, RF does not occur for her after *sopra*.

12 Spelling and punctuation

<i>come me</i> ['kome m'me]	'like me'
<i>come sindaco</i> ['kome s'sindako]	'as mayor'
<i>come tanti altri</i> ['kome t'tanti'altri]	'like so many others'

but

<i>come fai</i> ['kome 'fai]	'as you do'
<i>come se fosse</i> ['kome se f'fosse]	'as if it were'
<i>come già ti dissi</i> ['kome 'dʒa tti 'dissi]	'as I already told you'

The word *Dio*, with its plural *dei* (see 3.6) and feminine *dea*, *dee*, undergoes RF whenever it is preceded by a vowel, stressed or unstressed. The double consonant appears to have its origin in *Iddio*, a Tuscan form (also sometimes encountered in the standard language) derived historically from *il Dio*.

<i>Parla di Dio.</i> ['parla di d'dio]	'He speaks of God.'
<i>gli dei</i> [ʎi d'dei]	'the gods'
<i>queste dee</i> ['kweste d'dee]	'these goddesses'

Note also *Spirito Santo* often pronounced ['spirito s'santo] 'Holy Spirit'. For many speakers, monosyllabic names of letters of the alphabet also trigger RF: e.g., *la P* [la p'pi], *due C* ['due t'ʃi].

RF may impinge upon spelling if a word triggering RF and the following word undergoing it are written as a single word. In this case, the long consonant generally appears as a double consonant in spelling. Included here are certain prefixes (*contra-*, *sovra-*), and monosyllabic second person singular imperatives followed by clitic pronouns (see 6.3):

<i>contraddire</i>	'contradict'
<i>dappoco</i>	'worthless'
<i>daccapo</i>	'from the beginning'
<i>frapporre</i>	'interpose'
<i>giacché</i>	'since', 'because' (<i>già + che</i>)
<i>il daffarsi</i>	'what is to be done' (<i>da + farsi</i>)
<i>piucchepperfetto</i>	'pluperfect' (<i>più + che + perfetto</i>)
<i>sebbene</i>	'although'
<i>sennò</i>	'if not', 'otherwise'
<i>soprattutto</i>	'above all'
<i>sovrapporre</i>	'superimpose'
<i>sovrapprezzo</i>	'surcharge'
<i>vabbene</i>	'OK'
<i>Fallo.</i>	'Do it.'
<i>Vattene.</i>	'Go away.'
<i>Dimmi.</i>	'Say to me.'
<i>Stacci.</i>	'Stay there.'
etc.	

Exceptions are *tremila* '3000' and *trecento* '300' which show RF neither in spelling nor in pronunciation. The spellings *piucchepperfetto*, *soprattutto*, *sovrapprezzo* are also possible.

For a more detailed account of RF and its regional variants, see Canepari (1992: 138f.).

Mention should also be made of lengthening at the *end* of words. Words (usually borrowed from foreign languages) which end in a consonant, especially if they are stressed on the final syllable, often lengthen their final consonant when the following word begins with a vowel: e.g., *tram elettrico* ['tramm

e'lettriko] 'electric tram', *radar egiziano* ['radarr edʒit'ʃjano] 'Egyptian radar', *ras etiopico* ['rass e'tjɔpiko] 'Ethiopian chieftain'.

2.7 The type *Isvizzera* for *Svizzera*

In old Italian, words beginning with *s* + consonant sometimes developed an *i* in front of the *s* (e.g., *istrada*, *ispalla*, *iscuola*, *Isvizzera*). Such pronunciations are now considered archaic, but are sometimes still encountered in phrases such as *in Isvizzera* 'in Switzerland', *per isbaglio* 'by mistake', etc.

2.8 Optional removal of final unstressed vowels: *aver fatto* vs. *avere fatto*, etc.

Unstressed vowels at the ends of words may optionally be omitted if (a) they are preceded by a vowel + the consonants *r*, *n*, *l* and sometimes *m* and (b) they are not at the end of a sentence or followed by a pause. It is difficult to give precise rules for such omission of the vowel (for the obligatory deletion of the final vowel of infinitives followed by clitics, see 6.3), but it tends to occur particularly in the following circumstances:

- In infinitives of auxiliary verbs followed by participles or infinitives:

*Mi esprimeva infinita gratitudine
per aver cantato il dramma del suo
popolo.
Non ti far vedere.*

'He expressed infinite gratitude to me
for having sung the drama of his
people.'
'Don't show yourself.'

The following example is interesting because although the final *-e* is omitted before the first two participles it is not before the third, probably because the words *nato cristiano* are a quotation and are therefore preceded by a slight pause:

*Dopo aver ammesso di aver detto in
passato di essere «nato cristiano . . .»*

'After having admitted having said in
the past that he had been "born a
Christian . . ."'

- Where the infinitive forms a 'set phrase' with the element that follows it. What constitutes a 'set phrase' is a little difficult to define, but they are frequently combinations of infinitive and its complement which are potentially expressible by a single word in English, such as *dar lavoro* 'employ', *far finta* 'pretend', *portar via* 'remove', and cases where the complement is very frequently encountered after the infinitive in question:

*Sono serviti a dar lavoro a centinaia
di persone.
Ma non si può far finta che non sia
successo nulla.
Senza pronunciar parola, diede ai
ragazzi ciò che avevano chiesto.
Difatti Pin faticava a tener gli occhi
aperti.
Mi voleva portar via anche i mobili.*

'They served to employ hundreds of
people.'
'But we can't pretend nothing's
happened.'
'Without saying a word, he gave the
boys what they'd asked for.'
'Indeed P was having trouble keeping
his eyes open.'
'He even wanted to take away my
furniture.'

14 Spelling and punctuation

- Virtually always in titles in *-re*, when they are followed by a name: *signore*, *professore*, *ingegnere*, but *il signor Rossi* ‘Mr Rossi’ (*signore*), *il professor Coletti* ‘Professor Coletti’ (*professore*), *l’ingegner Prodi* ‘engineer Prodi’. But the final vowel is often retained in the usage of southern Italians (*il professore Coletti*, etc.).
- The *-o* of the third person plural verb forms is always deleted in the (nowadays rare) circumstances in which they are followed by a clitic (e.g., *Vendonsi libri* ‘Books for sale’ – see also 6.17). In other cases, such deletion is now restricted almost entirely to poetic or deliberately archaizing language. But deletion of the final *-o* of *hanno* and *sono* is characteristic, also, of informal spoken language (e.g., *Han detto di no* ‘They said not’, *Son tutti rossi* ‘They are all red’, etc.).

In general, deletion of the final vowel tends to convey an elevated and somewhat old-fashioned tone:

È stata la maggior tragedia di tutta questa storia.
Intanto l’attenzione del mondo politico
[...] è tutta concentrata sulla figura di
Vittorio Cecchi Gori, [...] protagonista di
questa vicenda che profuma molto, par
[= pare] di capire, di intrighi all’italiana.
Siam tutti tuoi servitori.

‘It was the greatest tragedy of all this story.’
‘Meanwhile the attention of the political world is all concentrated on the figure of VCG, the protagonist of this affair which, so it would seem, has a distinct whiff of Italian-style intrigue about it.’
‘We are all your servants.’

Deletion is particularly common in some set phrases, such as *vita natural durante* ‘throughout one’s natural life’, *amor proprio* ‘amour propre’, etc. For deletion of the final vowel of *quale* (*qual*), see 8.5.

2.9 Primary stress

The primary stressed syllable of an Italian word may be defined as the syllable whose vowel is loudest or most prominent within a word (indicated below by underlining the vowel). In certain cases, differences of primary stress may distinguish the meaning of two words:

<i>ancora</i>	‘anchor’	<i>ancora</i>	‘still’
<i>subito</i>	‘immediately’	<i>subito</i>	‘undergone’
<i>principi</i>	‘princes’	<i>principi</i>	‘principles’
<i>volano</i>	‘they fly’	<i>volano</i>	‘flywheel’
<i>impari</i>	‘odd’ (number)	<i>impari</i>	‘you learn’
<i>altero</i>	‘I alter’	<i>altero</i>	‘haughty’
<i>tendine</i>	‘tendon’	<i>tendine</i>	‘curtains’
<i>capitano</i>	‘they turn up’	<i>capitano</i>	‘captain’

As a rule, main stress may fall on any one of the last three syllables of a word. Italian has special names for each of these stress positions: words stressed on the final syllable (e.g., *tribù* ‘tribe’) are called ‘parole tronche’; those stressed on the last syllable but one (e.g., *amante* ‘lover’) ‘parole piane’, and those stressed on the last syllable but two (e.g., *logico* ‘logical’) ‘parole sdruciole’. How far is it possible to predict where main stress falls? Spelling helps us only in the case of those ‘parole tronche’ which comprise more than one syllable and end in a vowel; here the stressed vowel of the final syllable always carries a written accent:

<i>amerà</i>	'she will love'	<i>penserò</i>	'I shall think'
<i>caffè</i>	'coffee'	<i>pensò</i>	'she thought'
<i>caribù</i>	'caribu'	<i>poté</i>	'she could'
<i>casinò</i>	'casino'	<i>scimpanzé</i>	'chimpanzee'
<i>città</i>	'city'	<i>sentì</i>	'she felt'
<i>colibrì</i>	'humming bird'		

In non-final syllables, the position of main stress is predictable, but only up to a point. Main stress almost *never* falls more than three syllables from the end of a word:

<i>acrobata</i>	'acrobat'	<i>inimitabile</i>	'inimitable'
<i>aeroporto</i>	'airport'	<i>lacrimogeno</i>	'tear gas'
<i>caratterizzo</i>	'I characterize'	<i>ninfomane</i>	'nymphomaniac'
<i>centrifugo</i>	'centrifugal'	<i>reduce</i>	'veteran'
<i>diagnosi</i>	'diagnosis'	<i>reputo</i>	'I think'
<i>etanolo</i>	'ethanol'	<i>stereotipo</i>	'stereotype'
<i>geometra</i>	'surveyor'	<i>termostato</i>	'thermostat'

The sole exception to this rule concerns the third person plural of certain first conjugation verbs, which are *parole bisdrucchiole* (stressed on the last syllable but three). This occurs in verbs whose third person *singular* is a 'parola sdrucchiola'. The result:

Third person singular	Third person plural	
<i>brontola</i>	<i>brontolano</i>	'grumble'
<i>litiga</i>	<i>litigano</i>	'argue'
<i>manipola</i>	<i>manipolano</i>	'manipulate'
<i>predica</i>	<i>predicano</i>	'preach'
<i>provoca</i>	<i>provocano</i>	'provoke'
<i>regola</i>	<i>regolano</i>	'regulate'
<i>rotola</i>	<i>rotolano</i>	'roll'
<i>scivola</i>	<i>scivolano</i>	'slip'
<i>telefona</i>	<i>telefonano</i>	'telephone'

The second major principle for the prediction of primary stress concerns the structure of the penultimate syllable of a word. In words whose penultimate syllable ends in a consonant (see rules for syllabification in 2.14), if primary stress does not fall on the final syllable then it must fall on the penultimate:

<i>cammello</i>	'camel'	<i>entusiasta</i>	'enthusiast'
<i>elefante</i>	'elephant'	<i>palinsesto</i>	'palimpsest'
<i>bastardo</i>	'bastard'	<i>inchiesta</i>	'inquiry'

There are just a handful of exceptions to this principle, namely certain 'parole sdrucchiole' in which the penultimate syllable none the less ends in a consonant. These are the place names *Taranto*, *Otranto*, *Lepanto*, *Agordo*, *Agosta* (in Lazio), the surname *Albizzi*, and the nouns *polizza* '(insurance) policy', *arista* 'chine of pork', *mandorla* 'almond', *mandorlo* 'almond tree', *coriz(z)a* 'coryza'.

Clitic pronouns (6.3) following the verb are irrelevant to the rules of stress placement. In (theoretically possible) forms such as *fabbricamicene* 'make me some of them there', or *appiccicaticelo* 'stick it to yourself there', the stress may appear to be six syllables from the end, but it is only three syllables from the end of the 'host' words (*fabbrica* and *appiccica*) to which the clitics are attached.

In words ending in a consonant – usually, 'loans' from foreign languages – it

16 Spelling and punctuation

is much more difficult to predict the position of stress (note that stress on the final syllable is not obligatorily indicated by an accent). Sometimes, but not always, Italian preserves the stress pattern of the source language; in a number of cases, stress is variable:

tronche: *agitprop*, *Aldebaran*, *bazar*, *boutique*, *Interpol*, *Intersind*, *samisdat*
 piane: *amburger*, *babysitter*, *Niagara*, *pirex*, *pullman*, *pullover*, *Volkswagen*
 sdrucciole: *Aldebaran*, *amburger*, *festival*, *Interpol*, *permafrost*

A number of surnames (especially from the Veneto) have final stress, without written accent: e.g., *Marin*, *Manin*, *Padoan*.

There are also various morphological clues as to primary stress placement. Most noun and adjective suffixes (e.g., *-one*, *-ino*, *-ano*, *-oso*, *-ese*, *-iere*, *-aio*, *-uolo*) have penultimate stress, as do most two-syllable inflectional endings on verbs, such as *-avo*, *-iamo*, *-ate*, *-ete*, *-ite*.

<i>minestrone</i>	'minestrone'	<i>irlandese</i>	'Irish'
<i>ragazzino</i>	'little boy'	<i>forestiero</i>	'stranger'
<i>americano</i>	'American'	<i>macellaio</i>	'butcher'
<i>favoloso</i>	'fabulous'	<i>faccend<u>u</u>ola</i>	'little business'
etc.			
<i>amavo</i>	'I loved'	<i>fin<u>i</u>te</i>	'you finish'
<i>canti<u>a</u>mo</i>	'we sing'	<i>amav<u>a</u>mo</i>	'we loved'
<i>pensat<u>e</u></i>	'you think'	<i>finiv<u>a</u>te</i>	'you finished'
etc.			

However, third person plurals in *-ano*, *-ono*, *-ino*, *-ero*, and first person plural imperfect subjunctive forms in *-ssimo* are 'parole sdrucciole'.

<i>amano</i>	'they love'	<i>facevano</i>	'they did'
<i>vendono</i>	'they sell'	<i>amassimo</i>	'we loved (subj.)'
<i>pensino</i>	'they think (subj.)'	<i>facessimo</i>	'we did (subj.)'
<i>tacquero</i>	'they fell silent'		

Words ending in three-syllable suffixes (e.g. *-issimo*, *-errimo*, *-evole*, *-abile*, *-ognolo*, *-icolo*, *-ag(g)ine*, *-ologo*) are typically 'sdrucciole':

<i>bellissimo</i>	'most beautiful'	<i>verdognolo</i>	'greenish'
<i>simpaticissimo</i>	'extremely nice'	<i>ridicolo</i>	'ridiculous'
<i>miserrimo</i>	'most wretched'	<i>stupidaggine</i>	'idiocy'
<i>deplorabile</i>	'deplorable'	<i>geologo</i>	'geologist'
<i>probabile</i>	'probable'	etc.	

Words ending in *-ico*, *-ica* are predominantly 'sdrucciole':

<i>scientifico</i>	'scientific'	<i>panico</i>	'panic'
<i>medico</i>	'doctor'	<i>manica</i>	'sleeve'
<i>matematica</i>	'mathematics'		

A few of them are, however, 'piane':

<i>lombrico</i>	'earthworm'	<i>mollica</i>	'soft part of bread'
<i>pudico</i>	'modest'	etc.	

The suffix *-olo* and plural *-oli* can be problematic. It is usually *unstressed* (e.g., *spiccioli* 'small change', *mostriciattolo* 'little monster', etc.), but it is also a variant of stressed *-uolo* often found after 'consonant + i' (e.g., *bracciolo* 'armrest', *figliolo* or *figliuolo* 'son').

2.10 Variable primary stress

There are a number of cases in which native speakers hesitate over the positioning of main stress. Some of these variants can be labelled (following the judgements of Canepari [1992]) as ‘deliberate’ and used to display one’s education, or archaic or literary (both classes are grouped together below with the symbol †). There is variant stress in all singular and in third person plural forms of some first conjugation verbs, e.g.:

<i>ad<u>u</u>la</i>	<i>ad<u>u</u>la[†]</i>	‘adulates’
<i>evap<u>o</u>ra</i>	<i>evap<u>o</u>ra[†]</i>	‘evaporates’
<i>separ<u>a</u></i>	<i>separ<u>a</u>[†]</i>	‘separates’
<i>trav<u>i</u>a</i>	<i>trav<u>i</u>a[†]</i>	‘strays’
<i>val<u>u</u>ta</i>	<i>val<u>u</u>ta[†]</i>	‘evaluates’

also

<i>diat<u>ri</u>ba</i>	<i>diat<u>ri</u>ba</i>	‘diatribe’
<i>ed<u>i</u>le</i>	<i>ed<u>i</u>le</i>	‘building’ (adj.)
<i>incav<u>o</u></i>	<i>incav<u>o</u></i>	‘hollow’
<i>leccorn<u>i</u>a</i>	<i>leccorn<u>i</u>a[†]</i>	‘titbit’
<i>mol<u>l</u>ica</i> (esp. in the Veneto)	<i>mol<u>l</u>ica</i>	‘soft part of bread’
<i>salub<u>r</u>e</i>	<i>salub<u>r</u>e</i>	‘salubrious’
<i>sanscr<u>i</u>to</i>	<i>sanscr<u>i</u>to[†]</i>	‘Sanskrit’
<i>scandinav<u>o</u></i>	<i>scandinav<u>o</u>[†]</i>	‘Scandinavian’
<i>utensil<u>e</u></i>	<i>utensil<u>e</u></i>	‘utensil’

Some placenames and personal names have variant stresses:

<i>N<u>u</u>oro</i>	<i>Nu<u>g</u>ro[†]</i>
<i>Salgari</i>	<i>Salgari[†]</i>

2.11 Secondary stress: ‘regular’ and ‘autonomous’

In words of three or more syllables, certain syllables carry a ‘secondary’ stress. The position of ‘regular’ secondary stress is predictable in terms of three simple principles (the effect of which is to confer a kind of undulating rhythm on the word):

- (a) No two stresses (be they ‘primary’ or ‘secondary’) may be adjacent.
- (b) No two stresses (‘primary’ or ‘secondary’) may be more than two syllables apart.
- (c) When the primary stressed vowel is preceded by two or more syllables, the initial syllable of the word usually receives a secondary stress.

Within these constraints, the position of secondary stress is free. Therefore, certain words may have variable secondary stress patterns (secondary stress is here indicated by double underlining):

<i>car<u>at</u>terizzabile</i>	OR	<i>car<u>at</u>terizzabile</i>	‘characterizable’
<i>encefalogram<u>ma</u></i>	OR	<i>encefalogram<u>ma</u></i>	‘encephalogram’
<i>claustr<u>o</u>fobia</i>	OR	<i>claustr<u>o</u>fobia</i>	‘claustrophobia’
<i>dipsoman<u>i</u>a</i>	OR	<i>dipsoman<u>i</u>a</i>	‘dipsomania’

However, these principles are overridden in compound words whose elements also exist as independent words. In such compounds, the last element