

The national language of Italy is a Romance language spoken by approximately sixty million citizens. Significant communities of speakers exist in Canada (0.5 million), the U.S. (4 million), Switzerland (250,000), Brazil (0.5 million), Argentina (1.5 million) and Australia (0.5 million).

Within Italy, itself, there is a great deal of regional variation in the language - some dialects are mutually unintelligible. Dialects are broadly categorized into three groups: 1) Northern, 2) Tuscan, and 3) Central/Southern. However, these distinctions are becoming less and less prominent as through education and the media, Standard Italian becomes the norm. The standard dialect is based on the Italian spoken in Florence although, as other cultural centers (such as Milan) gain prestige, the standard is affected. Most Italians are fluent in both their regional dialect and the standard and seldom have difficulty switching between the two. The speaker here is a male from Udine in N.E. Italy.

Italian Consonant Phonemes:

Stops:	p (p')	t (t')	k (k')
	b (b')	d (d')	g (g')
Affricates:	ts	tʃ	
	dz	dʒ	
Fricatives:	f	s	ʃ
	v	(z)	ʒ
Nasals:	m	n	ɲ
Liquids:		l	ʎ
		r	

In most Italian dialects, there is no distinction between /s/ and /z/. In the North the preference is towards [z], and in the South, [s] is preferred. As well, in some areas, /ts/ and /dz/ are neutralizing. In some dialects, intervocalic voiceless stops become fricated or aspirated. /ts, dz, ʃ, ɲ, ʎ/ are lengthened intervocalically; otherwise, length is contrastive.

Italian Vowel Phonemes:

i	u
e	o
ɛ	ɔ
a	

Stressed vowels are long unless they are word final or are followed by a consonant in the coda of the stressed syllable. The glides /j, w/ are allophones of /i, u/ respectively. No allophones of the above phonemes were observed.

I. Spontaneous Speech

II. Word Lists

Plosives:

1.	[pala]	pala	'shovel'
2.	[pal:a]	palla	'ball'
3.	[piŋa]	pina	'pine-cone'
4.	[pin:a]	pinna	'fin'
5.	[bara]	bara	'coffin'
6.	[bar:a]	barra	'bar'
7.	[baʔba]	baba	'baba cake'
8.	[bab:o]	babbo	'babbo'
9.	[topo]	topo	'mouse'
10.	[tɔp:o]	toppo	'stump'
11.	[trota]	trota	'trout'
12.	[trɔt:o]	trotto	'trot'
13.	[dɔpɔ]	dopo	'after'
14.	[dɔp:ɔ]	doppio	'double'
15.	[dilatare]	dilatare	'to dilate'
16.	[dilet:are]	dilettare	'to delight'
17.	[(h)adat:o]	adatto	'suitable'
18.	[ad:ɛt:o]	addetto	'assigned'
19.	[kapel:o]	capello	'hair'
20.	[kap:el:o]	cappello	'hat'
21.	[kane]	cane	'dog'
22.	[kan:a]	canna	'cane'
23.	[kamino]	camino	'chimney'
24.	[kam:i:no]	cammino	'path'
25.	[gala]	gala	'frill'
26.	[gal:a]	galla	'gall'
27.	[gota]	gota	'cheek'
28.	[got:a]	gotta	'gout'
29.	[ak:a]	acca	'straw'
30.	[ag:watɔ]	agguato	'ambush'

Fricatives:

1.	[fat:fa]	faccia	'face'
2.	[vat:fino]	vaccina	'cow'
3.	[fin:tɔ]	finto	'simulation'
4.	[vintɔ]	vinto	'conquered'
5.	[rifarɔ]	rifare	'remake'
6.	[rif:a]	riffa	'raffle'
7.	[riva]	riva	'bank, shore'
8.	[dove]	dove	'where'
9.	[ɔv:jɔ]	ovvio	'obvious'
10.	[ufitʃɔ]	ufficio	'office'

Italian (Undine)

- 3

11. [skjafare]	schiaffare	'to dump'
12. [skjiavɔ]	schiaivo	'enslaved'
13. [uɔɔ]	uscio	'door'
14. [kas:a]	cassa	'case'
15. [kaza]	casa	'house'
16. [posente]	possente	'might, power'
17. [poza]	posa	'rest, peace'

Affricates:

1. [zukɛro]	zana	'sugar'
2. [zo:na]	zona	'zone'
3. [zan:a]	zanna	'tusk'
4. [zelare]	zelare	'be zealous'
5. [patsijente]	paziente	'be patient'
6. [pat:sija]	pazzia	'insanity'
7. [vitsijɔ]	vizio	'vice'
8. [vit:'ɔ]	vizzio	'withered'
9. [ratsa]	razza	'race'
10. [ratsa]	razza	'spoke (wheel)'
11. [medzɔ]	mezzo	'half'
12. [tʃelare]	celare	'to conceal'
13. [dʒelare]	gelare	'to freeze'
14. [dʒa]	gia	'already'
15. [tʃaw]	ciao	'greeting'
16. [vitʃinɔ]	vicino	'nearby'
17. [vijadʒɔ]	viaggio	'journey'
18. [ɔkkɔ]	occhio	'eye'
19. [ɔdʒi]	oggi	'today'

Palatal consonants:

1. [li]	li	'there'
2. [ʎi]	gli	'to him'
3. [fi:ɔ]	filo	'thread'
4. [fiʎɔ]	figlio	'son'
5. [valʎɔ]	valido	'valid'
6. [vaʎɔ]	vaglio	'sieve'
7. [nɔk:a]	nocca	'knuckle'
8. [nɔk:ɔ]	gnocca	'blockhead'
9. [nole:nte]	nolente	'gnaulare'
10. [nomo]	gnomo	'gnome'
11. [rana]	rana	'frog'
12. [rapa]	ragna	'bird's nest'
13. [rene]	rene	'kidney'
14. [reɔ]	regno	'kingdom'

Onsets:

1.	[ʃbat:ere]	sbattere	'to toss'
2.	[ʃbrɪgarsi]	sbrìgarsi	'to hurry up'
3.	[ʃteɲarsi]	sdegnarsi	'be irritated'
4.	[ʃdrajare]	sdraiare	'stretch out'
5.	[ʃfatʃelo]	sfacelo	'ruin, decay'
6.	[ʃfredzare]	sfregiare	'to deface'
7.	[ʃgomen:to]	sgomento	'alarm, fright'
8.	[ʃkraf:jo]	sgraffio	'scratch'
9.	[ʒvijato]	sviato	'misguided'
10.	[ʃvenire]	svenire	'to faint'

Vowels:

1.	[rito]	rito	'rite'
2.	[rit:ɔ]	ritto	'right side'
3.	[fine]	fine	'end'
4.	[afit:ɔ]	affitto	'rent'
5.	[velɔ]	velo	'veil'
6.	[vel:ɔ]	vello	'fleece'
7.	[sera]	sera	'evening'
8.	[ser:a]	serra	'greenhouse'
9.	[tuta]	tuta	'overalls'
10.	[tut:ɔ]	tutto	'all'
11.	[pɔbɔ]	polo	'north pole'
12.	[pol:ɔ]	pollo	'fowl, chicken'
13.	[koma]	coma	'coma'
14.	[kom:a]	comma	'paragraph'
15.	[karɔ]	cara	'dear'
16.	[kar:ɔ]	carro	'cart'
17.	[dit:a]	ditta	'firm'
18.	[det:a]	də-tta	'according to'
19.	[ven:ti]	venti	'20'
20.	[venti]	venti	'winds'
21.	[dʒet:ɔ]	getto	'throw'
22.	[dʒente]	gente	'people'
23.	[poza]	posa	'rest'
24.	[pɔsta]	posta	'mail'
25.	[la:tɔ]	lato	'side'
26.	[fine]	fine	'end'
27.	[fune]note:this n sounds lateral	fune	'rope'
28.	[rut:ɔ]	rutto	'belch'
29.	[rot:ɔ]	rotto	'broken'
30.	[nudo]	nudo	'bare'
31.	[nɔdo]	nodo	'knot'
32.	[bjega]	piega	'fold'
33.	[pedʒɔ]	peggio	'worse'
34.	[paʒɔ]	peio	'pair'

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|
| 35. [majale] | maiale | 'pig' |
| 36. [bene] | bene | 'well' |
| 37. [benedet:o] | benedetto | 'blessed' |

References:

Bright, William. (ed.) 1992. International Encyclopedia of Linguistics. New York: Oxford University Press. 2:236