

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 in this recording is a twenty-three year-old female from the Abruzzi region of Italy.

Standard Italian Consonant Phonemes:

Stops:	p	t		k
	b	d		g
Affricates:		ts	tʃ	
		dz	dʒ	
Fricatives:	f	s	ʃ	
	v	z		
Nasals:	m	n		ɲ
Liquids:		l		ʎ
		r		
Glides:			j	w

In Standard Italian /s/ and /z/ are contrastive in intervocalic position, however, 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.

Standard 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. /e, ɛ/ and /o, ɔ/ are only contrastive in stressed positions.

I. Spontaneous SpeechII. Word ListsPlosives:

1.	/pala/	pala	'shovel'
2.	/topo/	topo	'mouse'
3.	/dɔp:ɔ/	doppio	'double'
4.	/bara/	bara	'coffin'
5.	/baba/	baba	'baba cake'
6.	/bab:ɔ/	babbo	'babbo'
7.	/tuta/	tuta	'overalls'
8.	/rito/	rito	'rite'
9.	/trɔt:ɔ/	trotto	'trot'
10.	/dovɛ/	dove	'where'
11.	/nudɔ/	nudo	'bare'
12.	/ad:ɛt:ɔ/	addetto	'assigned'
13.	/kasa/	casa	'house'
14.	/eko/	eco	'echo'
15.	/ak:a/	acca	'straw'
16.	/gala/	gala	'frill'
17.	/bjega/	piega	'fold'
18.	/ag:watɔ/	agguato	'ambush'

Fricatives:

1.	/fat:ʃa/	faccia	'face'
2.	/rifarɔ/	rifare	'remake'
3.	/rif:a/	riffa	'raffle'
4.	/vat:ʃino/	vaccina	'cow'
5.	/riva/	riva	'bank, shore'
6.	/ɔv:jɔ/	ovvio	'obvious'
7.	/sera/	sera	'evening'

8.	/kasa/	casa	'house'
9.	/kas:a/	cassa	'case'
10.	/fuso/	fuso	'spindle'
11.	/kiese/	chiese	'he asked'
12.	/zmet:o/	smetto	'I stop'
13.	/koza/	causa	'cause'
14.	/fuzo/	fuso	'fused'
15.	/kieze/	chiese	'churches'
16.	/femo/	scemo	'stupid'
17.	/kɔnfo/	conscio	'conscious'
18.	/pef:o/	pescio	'fish' (collective)

Affricates:

1.	/tsio/	zio	'uncle'
2.	/vit:si/	vizi	'vices'
3.	/vit:si/	vizzi	'withered'
4.	/altsa/	alza	'he lifts'
5.	/tsan:ata/	zannata	'a bite'
6.	/rat:sa/	razza	'race'
7.	/dzero/	zero	'zero'
8.	/ɔrdzo/	orzo	'barley'
9.	/med:zɔ/	mezzo	'half'
10.	/dzan:ata/	zannata	'clowning'
11.	/rad:za/	razza	'ray' (fish)
12.	/ʃaw/	ciao	'greeting'
13.	/vitʃinɔ/	vicino	'nearby'
14.	/lut:ʃi/	lucci	'pikes'
15.	/dʒa/	gia	'already'
16.	/modʒo/	moglio	'downcast'
17.	/ɔd:ʒi/	oggi	'today'

Sonorants:

1.	/li/	li	'there'
2.	/filɔ/	filo	'thread'
3.	/mol:e/	molle	'soft'
4.	/ljeve/	lieve	'slight, light'
5.	/ki/	gli	'to him'
6.	/farʎi/	fargli	'to do to him'
7.	/fiʎ:ɔ/	figlio	'son'
8.	/medzɔ/	mezzo	'half'
9.	/koma/	coma	'coma'
10.	/kom:a/	comma	'paragraph'
11.	/nɔk:a/	nocca	'knuckle'
12.	/rana/	rana	'frog'
13.	/kan:e/	canne	'reeds'
14.	/pɔk:a/	gnocca	'blockhead'
15.	/rap:a/	ragna	'bird's nest'

16.	/re/	re	'king'
17.	/sera/	sera	'evening'
18.	/ser:a/	serra	'greenhouse'
19.	/jeri/	ieri	'yesterday'
20.	/bujo/	buio	'dark'
21.	/womo/	uomo	'man'
22.	/bwono/	buono	'good'

Vowels:

1.	/ɪntimo/	intimo	'intimate'
2.	/fine/	fine	'end'
3.	/venti/	venti	'twenty'
4.	/e:ɹa/	ella	'she'
5.	/pe:ɹa/	pesca	'fishing'
6.	/re/	re	'king'
7.	/elika/	elica	'propellor'
8.	/pe:ɹa/	pesca	'peach'
9.	/re/	re	'D' (musical note)
10.	/afit:ɔ/	affitto	'rent'
11.	/karɔ/	cara	'dear'
12.	/sera/	sera	'evening'
13.	/uʃɔ/	uscio	'door'
14.	/tuta/	tuta	'overalls'
15.	/gru/	gru	'crane'
16.	/onda/	onda	'wave'
17.	/poza/	pɔsa	'rest'
18.	/pol:ɔ/	pollo	'chicken'
19.	/ɔv:jɔ/	ovvio	'obvious'
20.	/pɔbɔ/	polo	'north pole'
21.	/tut:ɔ/	tutto	'all'

Length Contrasts:

1.	/rupe/	rupe	'rock'
2.	/rup:e/	ruppe	'he broke'
3.	/libra/	libra	'he poises'
4.	/lib:ra/	libbra	'pound'
5.	/grato/	grato	'grateful'
6.	/grat:ɔ/	gratto	'I scratch'
7.	/eko/	eco	'echo'
8.	/ek:ɔ/	ecco	'here is'
9.	/fuga/	fuga	'flight'
10.	/fug:a/	fugga	'may he flee'
11.	/lutʃi/	luci	'lights'
12.	/lut:ʃi/	lucci	'pikes'
13.	/modʒɔ/	moggio	'downcast'
14.	/mod:ʒɔ/	moggio	'bushel'
15.	/tufo/	tufɔ	'tufa'

16.	/tuf:ɔ/	tuffo	'plunge'
17.	/avito/	avito	'ancestral'
18.	/av:ito/	avvito	'I screw'
19.	/kasa/	casa	'house'
20.	/kas:a/	cassa	'box'
21.	/gramo/	gramo	'wretched'
22.	/gram:ɔ/	grammo	'gram'
23.	/kane/	cane	'dog'
24.	/kan:e/	canne	'reeds'
25.	/mole/	mole	'mass'
26.	/mol:e/	molle	'soft'
27.	/karo/	caro	'dear'
28.	/kar:ɔ/	carro	'cart'

Onsets:

1.	/ʃbat:ere/	sbattere	'to toss'
2.	/ʃbrɪgarsi/	sbrigarsi	'to hurry up'
3.	/ʃdrajare/	sdraiare	'stretch out'
4.	/ʃfredʒare/	sfregiare	'to deface'
5.	/ʃgomen:to/	sgomento	'alarm, fright'
6.	/ʒvijato/	sviato	'misguided'
7.	/ʃvenire/	svenire	'to faint'

Stress Contrasts:

1.	/ˈambito/	ambito	'context'
2.	/amˈbito/	ambito	'desires'
3.	/batˈfino/	bacino	'let them kiss'
4.	/batˈfino/	bacino	'basin'
5.	/kaˈpita/	capita	'it happens'
6.	/kaˈpita/	capita	'understood'
7.	/komˈpito/	compito	'task'
8.	/komˈpito/	compito	'courteous'
9.	/komˈpito/	compitò	'he spelled out'
10.	/ˈintimo/	intimo	'intimate'
11.	/ˈintimo/	intimo	'I order'
12.	/ˈintimo/	intimò	'he ordered'
13.	/pũntino/	puntino	'let them point'
14.	/pũntino/	puntino	'dot'
15.	/rubino/	rubino	'let them steal'
16.	/rubino/	rubino	'ruby'

Reduction and Syntactic Doubling:

1.	/di hasa/	di casa	'of the house'
2.	/per kasa/	per casa	'for the house'
3.	/a k:asa/	a casa	'at the house'
4.	/di ʒorno/	di giorno	'of the day'

5.	/per dzorno/	per giorno	'for the day'
6.	/a d:zorno/	a giorno	'at the day'
7.	/di fena/	di cena	'of supper'
8.	/per tʃena/	per cena	'for supper'
9.	/a tʃena/	a cena	'at supper'
10.	/di f:ena/	di scena	'of the scene'
11.	/per fena/	per scena	'for the scene'
12.	/a f:ena/	a scena	'at the scene'

III. Sample Text

Abruzzi¹: Bbella, chell'altra notte me te 'sunave
 Parè ch'a lu mio late te tenav.
 Me revutave, ca nen fu lu var!
 Piajo' 'na nott'e'na jurnata 'ndire

Standard Italian: Bella, l'altra notte ti sognai:
 mi pareva che al mio fianco ti tenevo.
 Mi rivoltai, e non era vero.
 Piansi una notte ed un giorno intero.

English: Fair one, the other night I dreamt of you:
 I felt I had you at my side.
 I turned, it was not true.
 I wept a whole night and day.

References:

- Bright, William. (ed.) 1992. International Encyclopedia of Linguistics. New York: Oxford University Press. 2:236
 Lepschy, Anna Laura and Lepschy Giulio. 1988. The Italian Language Today. London: Century Hutchinson Ltd.
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