3. Italian

3.0.1. This chapter will analyze modern neutral Italian pronunciation, keeping it separate from traditional pronunciation, which will be looked at later, in order to demonstrate the accepted and shared difference between them. However, this difference is not evident in dictionaries and grammar books, which is hardly surprising given the inertia and lack of dynamism shown by schools and obviously dictionaries and grammar books. They continue to perpetuate conventional convictions, a legacy from grammar books and dictionaries from the 1800’s, without even doubting that things may have changed in the meantime... Endless plagiarizing, with very few innovations as far as orthoepy (ie pronunciation) is concerned. This can be seen in the way càsa for casa, ie /kasa/ is still given. This is the traditional pronunciation, while the modern one has /'kaza/. Evidently, this shows a lack of attention for the phonic aspect of the language. It is also true that this kind of notation can, almost systematically, escape non-attentive dictionary-users, who can thus presume that when a dictionary reads (-s-) it means /z/. This case is not so serious as it coincides exactly with modern pronunciation; but what would happen for -asi in qualsiasi?

In the Zingarelli dictionary (carrying the year 1997), the present writer has given two variants, indicated as càsa (= /kaza, -sa/), and many other words, increasing the double possibilities for /e, e; o, ò; ts, dz/ as well, though not reaching the variety of pronunciation in DiPI, with its modern, traditional, acceptable, tolerated, slovenly, intentional and lofty variants (explained in MèPI, as well).

However, before we even begin to deal with these subtleties, we will have to discredit a good few beliefs which are part of common culture, especially upheld by teachers (even language teachers, abroad too), perpetuated by society and schools worthy of the first millennium of our era...

Earlier we mentioned the pronunciation shown in dictionaries and grammar books, which, instead of depicting the actual reality, as can be perceived by merely paying attention with open ears, they are easily satisfied with using and reusing what has always been printed, without checking to verify if it is still in current use.

Unfortunately, the same happens in various brief guides to diction and pronunciation, that continue to proliferate, regardless of objective change (that one should be able to perceive or, above all, want to perceive). Even in books about linguistics, glottology, dialectology and in historical grammar books or text books or —even— descriptive grammars, one can find a continual perpetration, as if it were real, of what is unproposable as far as both vowels and consonants, or word-stress and co-gemination are concerned.
3.0.2. That brings us to the sore points. Writing is (erroneously) considered a faithful indication of pronunciation; if pronunciation is looked at—at all—in teaching. More often than not it is spelling that is dealt with, relegating pronunciation to quite a secondary position or else, it is even considered bothersome. Indeed, very few people have a real perception of what exactly Italian pronunciation is (the same goes for any other language). The most common belief amongst language workers, ie language teachers, is that dealing with pronunciation is not part of their duties, as if it were an unrelated aspect, or just an added complication to their work.

Nevertheless, the first manifestation of language is exactly through sound, therefore through pronunciation. Only telepathy could possibly make pronunciation superfluous. Despite this, for the whole of the third millennium we will have to face this problem whether we like it or not... This being the case we should finally begin to look at it properly; no more pushing the problem aside, finding all kinds of excuses.

What is actually lacking here, is a friendly approach, one which is not misleading. As pronunciation is inevitable, at least for us common mortals, we have to learn to accept it for what it is: the objective and perceptible manifestation of language.

It is neither, therefore, a wicked invention, nor a task comparable to Sisyphus’ efforts; it is merely a part of the teaching-learning process of any language. In some languages spelling is (still) quite close to pronunciation, in others the gap is wider, to greater or lesser extents, due to natural linguistic evolution, which is unstoppable, whereas the written word is always left behind, like an eternal defeat, it never comes first.

However, schools and society consider it—instead—to be the real indication of pronunciation, when it is only a rough and poor way to render pronunciation. Indeed, its aim is not to indicate pronunciation, but more modestly, to permit the conservation of written documents independently from its pronunciation, so as to allow people, who know the language, to find the contents put in writing.

3.0.3. The very act of confusing spelling with pronunciation, inevitably leads to interpretations and deductions which often have little to do with pronunciation. Let us now look at the concrete facts. When a person with no adequate reading into pronunciation is asked how many vowel phonemes there are in Italian, the answer is, inevitably (from teachers themselves onwards), five: a, e, i, o, u. This erroneous answer, results from the examination of the wrong object. For the Italian language the following procedure was undertaken: starting with the alphabet and excluding all consonants, obviously leaving only the five letters: a, e, i, o, u.

Clearly, the result is erroneous, because the calculation was reckoned on entities which have very little to do with pronunciation. Letters are not sounds! In neutral Italian, the letters: e and o, each indicate two phonemes, that are—respectively—/e/ and /o/, which are closed and open e and o, like in (se) corresse (più velocemente) (if she ran faster) with /e/ (‘é’), which is different from (lei) cor-
resse (i compiti) she corrected the homework, with /ɛ/ (‘è’), or in (se) fosse (vero) if it were true with /o/ (‘ò’), which differs from (le) fosse (scavate) the dug graves, with /ɔ/ (‘ò’). Therefore, there are seven Italian vowel phonemes: /i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u/.

Let us continue our search for the number of phonemes, looking at consonant phonemes. The automatic answer (from a person with normal schooling, without appropriate reading or consideration) is sixteen: b, c, d, f, g, h, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, z. The very order of letters inevitably betrays the fact that the incredible figure of sixteen was reached by means of an arithmetical operation, using the alphabet, instead of actual sounds.

Hence, if you take the Latin alphabet, take away the five Italian vowels and the five non-Italian consonants (j, k, w, x, y), it seems logical to get to the sad list given above.

The number of phonemes in a language, however, cannot be obtained through spelling, but through the distinctive sounds of that language. Just to begin with, the list contains two letters which have nothing to do with Italian sounds: q is practically useless; and h is only a diacritic, it is necessary to distinguish ha from a, ho from o, hanno from anno, and also chi /ki* from ci /tʃí/, ghiro /giro/ from giro /dʒíro/; there is even a vowel difference between ho /ɔ* and o /o*. Incidentally, we can but disapprove of the method used by those teachers who, worried only and exclusively about spelling (and not really understanding anything about the pronunciation of the language!) dictate things such as */has’kritto, hannostudjato/ to students, for ha scritto, hanno studiato (he/she has written, they have studied). The poor (selfish and dishonest) result of managing to obtain correct written tests – to show them off shamelessly – produces, instead, a much worse (and absurd) error in making pupils believe that above all, in formal situations, you really should say such obscenities as */hOs’kritto, ho’ritto/ instead of the only possible and admissible version: /Os’kritto/.

3.0.4. For the moment, let us say that there are 23 consonant phonemes in Italian and they are certainly not in alphabetical order, but in a phonic order, according to places and manners of articulation and phonation type, after having discovered them, not by graphic deduction, but by looking for opposites in minimal pairs, that contain two similar words, but with one different phoneme, which makes the meaning of the two words change, as seen with /ki*, tʃí/ and /giro, dʒíro/ (respectively chi and ci, ghiro and giro).

Furthermore, in the number of phonemes, we must bear in mind that the two graphemes s and z each have (as do e, o) two different phonemic values, as in presento (una persona I introduce a person), /pre’zento/, from presentare) and presente (un avvenimento I have a presentiment of an event), /pre’zenteto/, from presentare, i.e. pre-sentare) – in the same way we have razza (‘ray, spoke: /radzja/) and razza (‘race, breed: /ratstsa/)...

We must not forget other spelling problems that derive from the fact that Italian represents a transformation and evolution of Latin, which had a certain number of phonemes (obviously different from Italian, both phonically and numerical-
ly speaking, as can be seen in the phonosyntheses of NPT/HPh, 22.1-4 or from §18 of M*PI [from 1999 onwards]).

As a matter of fact, classical Latin did not have /tʃ, ðʃ/, which are still expressed by ci, gi in Italian (because Latin /ki, gi/ were transformed in time using the palatal [ci, ji] of imperial Latin, to [tʃi, ðʃi] of medieval Latin [as well as clerical and academic Latin in Italy]). Therefore, Italian has to then render /ki, gi/ with chi, ghi. Similarly, Latin did not have /ç, ðç/, which are still expressed by ci, gi in Italian (because Latin /ki, gi/ were transformed in time using the palatal (çi, ái) of imperial Latin, to (ci, Gi) of medieval Latin {as well as clerical and academic Latin in Italy}). Therefore, Italian has to then render /ki, gi/ with çì, giçì.

Similarly, Latin did not have /S, N, L/ or even /q, Q/, so in Latin, amicitia was /ami'kItIå/ (ami'kkja) as in Italian, and in Italian clerical and academic Latin (whereas in [clerical and academic] Latin in other countries, the phonic result—obviously—depends on the pronunciation of their national languages); hence, Italian spelling resorts to (i), (i) for /q, Q/ as they are new phonemes, foreign to classical Latin.

Furthermore, one must not believe everything that is—unfortunately—published; as a matter of fact, neutral Italian does not have vowels reduced to schwa, not even in unstressed syllables, [ə] (or [ə], § 11.19 of NPT/HPh; nor to [i, ɔ, a, ɔ, o, u], that are—all—regional pronunciations), nor assimilations such as /ss/—actually, [sg]—for /st/ (like in questo), and /CC/ for /rC/ (giorno), that are very regional; nor /Cw/V/ like «CuvV» (continuiamo), which is not even Italian (although some Italian (!) authors tried to pass it off as Italian). Obviously, in spontaneous speech, one can stammer or muffle some sounds, but we certainly do not get [ə, ə], &c; the only real possibilities for a neutral (reduction) of vocoids are explained in fig 10.11 of NPT/HPh (since in neutral pronunciation, one never has a full [ə], not even in cases such as /sum, frak/ (Lat.), frac (Fr.), which are /frak±, sum±/, where [±] at the most, stands for [ə]; while, most coarticulation for /wJ/ can consist of /w/ (provelar rounded + postpalatal approximants, instead of canonical velar rounded + palatal approximants, [wJ]).

Vowels

3.1.1. As examined in § 3.0.3., for the five graphemes a, e, i, o, u, neutral Italian has seven vowel phonemes, /i, e, e, o, u/, realized by nine taxophones, /i, e, e, a, ɔ, o, u/, as can be seen in fig 3.1. Before presenting the examples, we will analyze the two taxophones which are seemingly foreign to the (harmony) of the seven phonemes, ie: [e, ɔ].

The most (intriguing) aspect is that it deals with the pronunciation on the basis of different principles of both /e, œ/ and /e, o/. In the first case we have the manifestation of half-closing, in fact, starting with /e, œ/ we get to [e, o], when there is no longer a primary—or strong—stress, as is the case for the first elements of compound words from independent lexemes: /prendì'sole/ /prendì'sole/ prendisole, /benke/ /beŋke*/ benché, /kopri'letto/ /kopri'letto/ coprietto, [po'iķe] /po'iķe* poîché.

The other case regards the manifestation of half-opening, because starting with /e, o/ we—again—get to [e, o]. This happens in /e, o/ endings after stressed syllables, when the stressed vowel is /i, u/, as in: [vivè, 'viva] /vive, 'vivo/ vive, vivo, [kutʃe, kutʃɔ] /kutʃe, kʊτʃo/ cuce, cucio. Moreover, in an intoneme, the same can
also occur for /e-o/: [vedo, -do] /vedo/ vedo (but not for /o-e/: [dove] /dove/ dove). What remains to be said, as can be guessed (and confirmation is always precious), is that this happens with a final C too: [ri:der, 'ridon] /'rider/ rider(e), ri-

don(o), [ipsilon, suutor] /ipsilon, suotor/ ipson, sutor (Lat.). There are however, other less regular cases which are dealt with in § 3.3 of MaPI. Let us take a look at some examples of the seven vowel phonemes: [vi:ni] /'vini/ vini˚ (se:te) /'sete/ sete˚ (sEt:te) /'sEtte/ sette˚ (ra:na) /'rana/ rana˚ (Ot:to) /'Otto/ otto˚ (sot:to) /'sotto/ sotto˚ (kul'tu:Ra) /kul'tura/ cultura. Clearly, /j, w/ are not vowels, but (approximant) consonants, as in: [pjE:no] /'pjEno/ pieno˚ [gwan:to] /'gwanto/ guanto˚ [fai] /'fai/ fai˚ [pa'ura] /pa'a/ pausa˚ [pauroso] /'paurozo/ pauroso, a real diphthong. Hence, one cannot believe literature that only uses two categories (ie diphthong and hiatus) and, what is more, they dangerously mix them up to a point where they include –in diphthongs– the heterophonic sequences ([V, V, V], [V, V]) and –in hiatuses– the real diphthongs (as in [mai, ciao, boa] /mai, 'ciao, 'boaa/ mai, ciao, boa... – cf § 1.4.4).
3.1.3. Thus, in languages like Italian, diphthongs are vowel sequences, which are more or less common, formed by a combination of the seven vowel phonemes and nine taxophones \([i, e, a, o, u, \varepsilon, o, u]\), that writing tidily reproposes without the problems presented—for example—by Germanic languages. These really do have monophonemic diphthongs, because, in different accents they vary as to their realizations, independently from monophthongs (and more than monophthongs do), and also because they have varied historical spellings.

Therefore for Italian, it seems pointless—in this chapter—to make a list of diphthongs, of very different frequency; it would be appropriate however, to look at § 8.26 of NPT/HPb (as well as § 5.1.2-3 of MaPI).

By forcing (and violating) reality, grammar and metrics continue to call, above all, /je, wɔ/ <ascendant diphthongs>, because they derive from the Latin /ε, ο/ (è, ò), and they find they need to have to <invent> (as the best lawyer for the worst criminals) fictitious realities, like <semi-consonants> and <semi-vowels>.

These seem to be nearly cinematographic special effects, that make one believe one is facing something real, but which is completely invented! If phantaphonetics—or virtual phonetics—is not our aim, then sequences like [jV, wV] are—naturally— part of /C.CV/ groups, as in /fjanko, 'franko/; /gwado, 'grado/; /twɔnø, trɔnø/; /'gjande, 'grande/; /fianco, franco/; /guado, grado/; /tuono, trono/; /ghiande, grande/; /glande/. Paradigmatically, /j, w/ are in opposition with /C/, clearly not with /V/ and can under no circumstance belong to vowel groups.

Even /ia/ is a—monosyllabic—diphthong, as in [mi:a] /mia/ mia. It is evident, in the same way as the Earth is round and rotates around the Sun; and yet, it has not been at all easy for it to be accepted...! The diphthong, hiatus, and /CV/-sequence matter, is much simpler: one does not have to be a scientist; all it takes is observation and thought (using both ears)! Yet... there is no change! Let us trustingly refer to § 5.1.2-3 of MaPI as well.

**Consonants**

3.2.0. fig 3.2 shows the table of the neutral Italian consonant articulations, including their taxophones ([m, n, ð; r; l]), which are necessary for satisfactory pronunciation.

Instead, fig 1.9-15 gives orograms, grouped by manners of articulation of all conoids given in the chapters of this volume, even as secondary, occasional or regional variants of the 12 languages dealt with.
3.2.1. There are three nasal phonemes, /m, n, p/ [m, n, p], and four taxophones, for /n/, that can be rendered by three supplementary symbols [m, n, η] (a fourth symbol, [η], in front of /t, d, ts, dz, s/), can be useful to bring attention to the assimilation, from alveolar to dental, even if the difference, though real, is less important than in other cases): [mam:ma] /mamma/, [ma:ma] /mama/, [nOn:no] /nonno/, [nO:n:O] /nono/, [baip:no] /bapno/ bagno, [perpokki] /perpokki/ per gnocchi, [tonf:o] /tonfo/ tonfo, [dente] /dente/ dente, [franGa] /frangia/ frangia, [fan:go] /fango/ fango.

In neutral Italian, /p/ is self-geminant (cf § 3.3.1.5.): [sop:no, loŋ:jmo] /soppo, loppjmo/ sogno, lo gno mo. We can observe that the self-geminant /p/ is in opposition to geminates, as in [sop:no] /soppo/ sogno and [son:no] /sonno/ sonno, but not simple C ([sou:no] /sou: sone/); the minimal pair is between the first two examples, not the third.

In order to closely examine the manifestation of nasal assimilation in neutral Italian, a whole series of nouns could be shown (beginning with all possible C, cf § 3.4 of MaPI), preceded by [kon] /kon/ con ‘with’, but we will limit ourselves to [kom'marko] /kom'marko/ con Marco and to the improbable [kop'êco] /kopêco/ con Gneo (a rare male name, even in ancient Rome).

Various problems (not only with consonants, but with vowels and intonation, too) deriving from various regional pronunciations are examined in some chapters of MaPI, as well. We can now briefly mention the fact that, very often, in the north of Italy, the sequences of /nC/ are not homorganic by assimilation, but have a velar articulation, [η], or semi-prevelar (without full contact), [ŋ], as in [umba'bìno] /umbxbín/ un bambino] (concentrating, here, only on the nasals, because the actual regional differences, doubtless, also regard other C, many V, the type of phonation, the syllabic structure and the intonation), for neutral [umbambíno] /umbambìno/ un bambino.

In the same way, in the north, /p/ is very often not self-geminant: [soppo, sop:no;
lo’Nomo); but, generally, /n, nj/ are confused with something intermediate, which we show quite generally here: [kaŋpaŋja, kaŋ_] which stands both for /kam'panja/ Campania and for /kam'panŋa/ campagna. In central areas, /nj/ becomes [ŋ] (but in this case not self-geminant): [an'tɔŋo] /an'tonjo/ Antonio, [aŋ'nɛnto] /an'njento/ anniento.

Stops

3.2.2. Italian has three diphonic pairs of stops, /p, b; t, d; k, g/ [p, b; t, d; k, g]: [per'bene] /per'bene/ per bene, [ti'dɔ] /ti'dɔ*/ ti do, [koŋ'gwal'jo] /kon'gwal'lo/ conguaglio. Although before a front V—and in front of /j/—/k, g/ are realized as prevelar, it is not necessary to systematically use the special symbols [k, g]: [kjakkje'ra:re] /kjakkje'rare/ chiacchiare, [kikko] /kikko/ chicco, [gɛŋ'ɡa] /gɛnɡa/ gen-nga.

The greatest regional problem concerning stops is provided in the (gorgia toscana) (ie (Tuscan throat)) and in the (central-southern voicing) which will be examined in general terms (also because there are differences between areas; but for more precise details, various chapters of M.PI can be consulted). Therefore, the following gives just a general idea: [ihaf'i:taNi] /ikapi'tani/ i capitani and [tʃinɡwe ip'bungdo] /tʃinkwe im'punto/ cinque in punto.

Stopstrictives


The main regional problems regarding the north concern the sequential realizations of /ts, ðs/, as: [duntsa, -za, -ţa, 'daq; 'pa(t)tsa, -sa, -ţa; d'zsna, d'ţs, d'ţ; ad'ʣ:zto, ad'ţ-, ad'ţ-] (or, in broader accents, simply as constrictive: [dan'sa, -sa, -ţa, 'dan; 'pja(t)sa, -şsa, -ţşa; 'ţsna, 'ţŞa, -ţŞ; 'ţz:ţto, a'ţŞ, a'ţŞ]), instead of real stopstrictive phones, [ts, ðs]. For almost the whole center and many parts of the south, without going into too much detail, the most obvious characteristic is given by the change of /VtV/ to its corresponding constrictive, [VʃV]: [peʃe] /peʃe/ pece, [difešilja] /diʃeʃilja/ di Cecilia, [kaʃo] /kaʃo/ cacio. In Tuscany the same goes for /VʤV/ → [VʃV]: [azile, la'zakka] /a'dʒile, la'ʣakka/ agile, la giacca.

It is important to focus on the fact that we are dealing with single postvocalic /ʃs, ʒs/ (and hence, in this case, intervocalic too), thus avoiding ridiculous imitations which have, unfortunately ended up amongst examples shown in books about linguistics, dialectology, language history, language teaching and sometimes even in... phonetics and phonology!

Therefore, it is legitimate to give [la'zị:ța] /la'dʒita/ la gita, as an example (although the official symbol [θ] is hardly recommendable), but not simply *[^zi:ța]
a handbook of pronunciation

Gita, because after silence or after C, it stays for [dz], [dz:i:θa], as does, obviously, [a:dz:i:na] /a:dz:i:na/ a Gina (because of co-gemination, cf § 3.3.2.1-3; certainly not *[a:ζ:i:na]). Naturally, the same is true of [la:ζena] /la:ζena/ la cena, while we can only have: [per:ζena, at:ζena] /per:ζena, at:ζena/ per cena, a cena (absolutely not *[pre:ζena, at:ζena])!

Apart from Tuscany (and some northern parts of Umbria and the Marches), in the center and south (still generalizing the area and the precision in transcription, too), we have /Vdz/V → [Vdz:V]: [a:dz:i:le, la:dz:i:da]...

Constrictives


As far as VsV is concerned, modern neutral pronunciation resolves the problem of the traditional one (cf § 3.3.5.2.); actually, every postvocalic intralexemic -s- (ie in simple words, not compound) is voiced, /z/ [z]: [ka:za, ri:zo, preza, ʧi:neze, ʧe:lozo] /ka:za, ri:zo, preza, ʧi:neze, ʧe:lozo/ casa, riso, presa, cineze, geloso. Only in compounding, is the initial -s- of lexeme or grammeme /s/ [s]: [prendisole, sotto-segre'tarjo, presa'la:ʃjo, kwa:lariasi, rısalto] /prendisole, sotto-segre'tarjo, presa'la:ʃjo, kwa:lariasi, rısalto/ prendisole, sottosegretario, presalario, Qualsiasi, risalto. The last example means «I jump again»; whereas, the noun means «to stand out» and is [rızalto] /rızalto/... Forms such as prosieguo, whose composition —nowadays— is heard in a less definite way, vary: [pro'sieɡu:o, -zu] /pro'sieɡu:o, -zu/.

For /s, z/, in the north, an alveolar instead of dental articulation is frequent; [so:zza] /so:zza/ sosia (be warned that, too often, neutral Italian articulation, which is dental [with lowered tip], is defined «alveolar», even in phonetic books!).

In central-southern regional pronunciations (except in Tuscany), for VsV (even if with an approximant inserted after s), we do not have /z/, but /s/: [tʁɛ:se, ˈa:ʃja] /tʁɛ:se, ˈa:ʃja/ rose, Asia. However, the prestige of voiced pronunciation, with /z/, is such that, many speakers try to go from /s/ to /z/; but from a regional situation without /z/ (and with no help from the written word), the substitution often generalizes [z] (or [z]), even in words like: * [laza:lute, ˈla:ʃa] /laza:lute/ la salute, that is [laza:lute].

In the center (except Florence and Prato) we find the typical change /s/ → [s] after /n, r, l/: /pɛnso, ˈpɛrso, ˈfa:so/ /pen:tsɔ, ˈper:tsɔ, ˈfa:tsɔ/ penso, perso, falso. The same happens in Tessin and in northern and easter Lombardy. It is very frequent also in some areas of southern Italy, including its partial or complete voicing: [dz,
the defective r produce [pɛwso, ˈpɛwso, ˈpɛwso] (not a stopstricive).

In the center and south of Italy, above all, there are areas in which preconsonantal /s, z/ are seen to be prepalatal, [ʃ, ʒ]: [ˈviʃta, ˈʒbatto] /ˈvista, ˈzbatto/ vista, sbatto (i.e. in the south-eastern parts of the Marches, Umbria, and Latium; and in western Sicily, and southern Calabria and Salento; as well as in northern Lombardy). In Campania, /ʃ, z/ are typically realized as postalveopalatal protruded constrictives, [ʃ, ʒ], but only in front of non-apical C; thus, for instance: [ʃpaˈraro, ʒgarˈvo] /ˈsparo, ˈzgarro/ sparo, zgarro. We cannot but reveal that too many third-rate imitators (even in books!) show absurd pronunciations, for example in Neapolitan, eg: *ˈtare [ˈstare] stare, for [ˈstare].

In the north, /ʃ/ is often without lip protrusion, but, above all, it is not self-geminant: [peʃe, loʃame, (la)ʃena] pece, lo sciame, la scena; so, the first and third examples are closer to the central-southern pronunciation of [peʃe, laʃena] /peʃe, laʃena/ pece, la cena!

We can see how self-geminant /ʃ/ opposes geminates, as in [faʃʃe] /fassʃe/ fasce and [faʃʃe] /fassʃe/ facce, but not single, as in [faʃe] /fassʃe/ face (a literary word), which in central Italian pronunciation (and very often in southern ones) is [fassʃe]; however, the minimal pair is between the first two examples, not the third.

### Approximants


In central-southern pronunciation, we sometimes find /ʃ/ → [ʃ]: [paʃʃo, paʃʃo] for [paʃʃo] /pajʃo/ paio. In the south we often have even [iʃʃe, uˈɔvɔ] for /ʃʃe, ˈwɔˈvɔ/ ieri, uovo (simplifying a little).

### Trills

#### 3.2.6. There is only one trill phoneme, /r/, with two important taxophones, [r, ɾ], which depend on the strength of the syllables; in stressed syllables, before or after the syllabic nucleus we find a trill, [ɾ] (lengthened, [ɾi]), if in a checked syllable of an intoneme); whereas in unstressed (or half-stressed) syllables we have a tap: [ɾaro] /raro/ raro, [pɔrta] /pɔrta/ porta, [riˈprendere] /riprendere/ riprendere, [prepaɾˈarsi] /prepaɾˈarsi/ prepararsi, [karɾo] /karɾo/ carro, [arriˈvo] /arrivˈvo/ arrivˈvo, [arrivˈare] /arrivˈare/ arrivˈare. As one can see, even for /rr/, the choice between [ɾ, ɾ], depends on the position of the stress.

There are various types of accents with a French r, in Italian, that range from uvular, like [ɾ, ɾ, ɾ, ɾ], to labiodental (with or without uvularization), [u, ɾ].

For regional pronunciations (as shown in MaPI), we could have a generalized
[r] or [r], independently of the stress; we could also have uvularization, [r̚, r̚]; or in Venice, [r̚, r̚, r̚, r̚].

Let us take a detailed look at the Sicilian type (in Sicily, of course, and in southern Calabria and the Salentina Peninsula as well) for /tr, rr, tr, dr, str, sdr/. Indeed, simplifying a little (even the transcriptions) for /tr, rr/, we have the voiced slit alveolar constrictive, [x], self-geminant if postvocalic: [(lax)xadjo] /(la)radjo/ (la) radio, [(kax xo)] /kar ro/ carro. It is clearly not the postalveolar trill phone ([r̚], < cacuminal), (r̚), as it has been described for generations, without proof.

Relative to this, we also have the bizarre pair «tr, dr» which is persistently presented as [(t̚, d̚)], without listening carefully. In fact the most normal articulation is given, simply, by the stopstrictives which correspond to [x], ie [tz, dx] (slit alveolar): [tzav e] /trave/ trave, [dzaqo] /draqo/ drago.

Lastly, the /str/ sequence (lexically quite common), is more often rendered by the voiceless postalveo-prevolar constrictive (self-geminant, if postvocalic) [j]: [na:jz-] /nastro/ nastro, [(la)jxada] /lastrada/ (la) strada; instead, the (less common) sequence /zdr/ is more often rendered by a voiced (grooved + slit) alveolar sequence, [zd]: [(la)zxdaqo] /(la)z'drajo/ (la) s'draio (much less commonly by [la(g)- zajo]).

We will conclude by indicating the assimilation of /rC/, which is more typical of eastern Sicily: [partt̚o] /parto/ parto.

Laters

3.2.7. Italian has two lateral phonemes, /l, l̷/, alveolar and palatal (this last is quite rare in languages, and – in neutral Italian – it is self-geminant, as well): [lal a] /lala/ lala, [lal̷a] /lal̷a/ Lalla, [dir:xi] /dirxi/ dirgli, [fɔl̷a] /fɔl̷a/ foglia.

We can observe how the self-geminant /l̷/ opposes to geminates, as in [pa:k̷a] /pa:k̷a/ paglia and [pal a] /pala/ palla, not to ([pa]da) /pala/ pala; the minimum pair is between the first two examples not the third, which is a single consonant.


Structures

3.3. We will now look at the characteristics which go beyond simple segments, those with syllable, length, stress, and intonation relevance.

The intermediate vocoids, [r̚, s̷], were mentioned in § 3.1.1; for assimilations and consonant taxophones, the relevant characteristics are shown, including the most common regional peculiarities, in their respective paragraphs.
It has already been stated that in Italian, diphthongs are biphonemic and are formed by joining two vocalic phonemes/phones, retaining their normal typical realizations, with no modification, in particular of the second element, that is always distinct, even in the case of /ai, au/ [ai, au], contrarily to many languages, above all Germanic (cf § 8.26-8 of NPT/HPh).

Taxophonics

3.3.1.1. It is necessary and useful to speak out against the widespread practice, led by journalists and unrefined publishers, of yielding to laziness of various forms regarding the spelling of grammemes, eg: *la, una, della...,-re (in infinitives) —we refer to the linguistic convention, that places an asterisk (*) in front of undesirable forms, which report a decidedly inaccurate use— like in *la esattezza, *una opportunità, *della università, *voltare pagina... for the more usual and definitely more harmonious: [lezattetstsa, unopportunista, dell’università, voltarpadžina] /lezattetstsa, unopportunista, dell’universita*, voltarpadžina/ l’esattezza, un’opportunità, dell’università, voltare pagina...

As a matter of fact, Italian is a real native language only in central Italy (where local dialects present substantially, the same structure as the Italian language, only with differences of register); ie in Tuscany, Umbria, the Marches and Latium (although their linguistic borders do not coincide exactly with administrative borders, but are a little less widespread, for the four regions and above all for the Marches, as even the whole province of Pesaro and Urbino do not come into the linguistic Center).

In the center, the dropping of grammeme endings (-i˚ -e˚ -a˚ -o˚ in clear phonic order), even for nouns, adjectives, conjunctions, adverbs and verbs, is a normal and natural procedure, as seen in: ancor indietro˚ sempr’avanti˚ er’andato˚ quant’altri mai˚ cinqu’anni˚ or’ott’e trenta (o&Røttet’trenta), Dant’Alighieri, &c.

For words in connected speech (unless there are particular reasons, such as highlighting, or emphasis, which should be present or risk lacking expressiveness), neutral pronunciation resorts to elision, ie the dropping of one of two identical V (including the dropping of the final V of the articles and some pronouns [considered by grammar, in front of even different V]): [latteza, unattivita, lezertjetats’tsjoni, aʌ’italajani, sunargomento; lamika, unaltra, un’inse’tro, liin’seppo] /latteza, unativita*, lezertjetats’tsion, aʌ’italajani, sunargomento; lamika, unaltra, lin’seppo/ l’attesa, un’attività, lescerzitazioni, agli italiani, s’un argomento; l’amica, un’altra, l’inseggno.

If one is not influenced by spelling without elision, and one is, at the same time, free from non-central and non-neutral sounds, one can easily see that normal pronunciation really is not: *[laat’teza, unaat’tiviita, leezertjetats’tsjoni, aʌ’italajani, sunargomento; laamika, unaaltra, liin’seppo], even for the words written as: le esercitazioni, agli italiani, su un argomento, li inseggno.

For this reason, it is more advisable to use writing which accurately considers these facts, explicitly showing how closely linked genuine pronunciation and spell-
ing elision is (indicated by an apostrophe; whereas, it is defined as truncation, if there is no apostrophe). The following is by no means a counterexample: [sa'peres krivere] /sa'peres krivere/ sapere scrivere, with no vocalic omissions, as it falls perfectly, into the genuine Italian structure (based on the use of central Italy), which barely tolerates things such as [sa'peres krivere] /sa'peres krivere/ saper scrive(re), but prefers: [sapes'kriv(er)e] /sapes'krive( re)/ sapé write(re), which are of local/dialectal use.

3.3.1.2. Amongst the bad habits we have just examined, unfortunately we can find, propagated by schools, the (humiliatingly mechanical, without the slightest consideration, resulting in a damaging conditioned reflex) use of the notorious euphonic d –ie (well-sounding d), however, the only euphonic part of it is its high-sounding name– as in: *ad Emilia, *ed anche, *od altro, (not to mention: *ed educazione, *ad Adele, *od odore!)

Once more, the central way of speaking, which is not ruined by schools or journalism, spontaneously and correctly, gives: [ae'milja, e'anke, o'altro] /ae'milja, e-anke, o'altro/ a Emilia, e anche, o altro, and even: e educazione, a Adele, o odore (not including the really cacophonous d), forming sequences such as */VdVdV*/.

Contrarily, neutral language, prefers cases such as: [ad'an'kona, ede'velina, o'dolfatto] /ad'an'kona, ede'velina, odolfatto/ ad Ancona, ed Evelina, odolfatto. However, we obviously have: [e'e:va, o'ot:to] /e'e:va, o'otto/ e Eva, o otto, as the V, in these cases are not the same at all (phonically speaking!)

The cases of the preposition da and of pronouns una and uno as well followed by an adjective are clearly different. They must never be elided (or truncated) for uno, as they are necessary to maintain an important distinction between the preposition di and the articles (written una, uno as well): [dan'dare] /dan'dare/ d'andare is only di andare, not da andare; in the same way, [unita'ljana, unan'tikø] /unita'ljana, unan'tiko/ una italiana, un antico are nouns; hence, different from: [un'italjana, unan'tikø] /un'italjana, unan'tikø/ una italiana, uno antico, as in: ne cerco… (for instance: canzone, mobile) I'm looking for an Italian song/piece of furniture.

A last reflection, linked to spelling and school wrongdoings, has to be cast regarding the absurd complication of insisting on teaching the exception to the rule, where the pronoun sé is written with an acute (accent) in order to differ from se (conjunctive and also allomorph, or variant, of sé in front of other weak pronouns or ne): [se'verrai, sela'ride, sene'va] /se'verrai, sela'ride, sene'va/ se verrai, se la ride, se ne va.

It is not at all clear why, once the spelling rule is formulated, to distinguish sé from the other se, one must rack one's brains to excogitate the exception to sé stesso, sé medesimo… which some grammars—and many pedants—would rather we wrote *se stesso and *se medesimo, with no good reason to do so. Indeed, we cannot exclude the possibility of finding (even in an ambiguous initial position) sentences such as: Se stessi male, non potrei venire (If I were ill, I couldn't come), which is different from: Sé stessi malediranno gli azzccagarbugli della grammatica (The pettifogging lawyers of grammar will curse themselves); or: Se medesime compagn
di gioco perdono, vengono escluse... (If equal playmates lose, they are excluded), different from: Sé medesime comparano a tutte le altre (They compare themselves to all the others).

Therefore, eliminating the accent from sé is not only utterly pointless, but causes awkward ambiguity, as well as undue analogies that lead to many people writing *a se stante, instead of the only form possible: a sé stante (separate, apart).

Let us briefly turn our attention to the improper use (decidedly incorrect – proudly lead by a fair number of intellectuals) of *e non, *o non, as in: *italiani e non. In Italian, the negative non /non/ <not> has to be followed by the term which is denied, as in: giallo, non verde; cotto, non crudo; un chilo, non due (chili); coscia, non petto; essere, o non essere? Instead, the absolute negation (hence, final in the sentence) is only no /no/ (Eng. /ˈnəʊ/) [ˈnɔː(o), ˈnɔː(o)] – even if the given term is not expressed or repeated. Therefore, logically, we must even have: italiani e no. Is it possible to imagine an Italic Hamlet saying *Essere, o non? – or, *Io ti amo, ma tu non! (for correct English *To be, or not to be?, of course, and *I love you, but you don’t). Such usage is much worse than English cases like: *I don’t want no bread, *We ain’t going (no more), *She don’t love you (no more).

Syllabification and length

3.3.1.3. Distinctively, in Italian, length (or quantity) only concerns consonants not vowels. First and foremost, we must firmly repeat that this is about true gemination, not length or lengthening; hence, the only suitable way of rendering the length of Italian C, consists – even phonologically – of the gemination (or doubling) of the symbol in question: [affatto] /affatto/ affatto, [koreggesse] /koreggesse/ correggesse; certainly not: *[a′fatto, kore′gesse] */a′fatto, kore′gesse/ (even */kor′e′gesse!), which have no reason or justification (neither theoretical nor acoustic), and rather pose problems for the syllabification, which is: [af′atto, kore′gesse] /af′atto, kore′gesse/.

On the subject of syllabification, apart from unsatisfactory modern phonological modes, one must recall that even traditional grammars are not the most objective – quite the opposite, in fact! As well as the absurd graphic syllabic division of /sC/ (which, despite its obvious flaws, has been entrusted to computers too, so, unfortunately there is no hope of changing it), from a phonetic point of view, the only real division (and natural: just listen to it!) for /sC/ is after /s/, not before (as for other sequences, which are heterosyllabic; therefore, different from /Cj, Cw, Cr, Cl/, which are all tautosyllabic, in neutral Italian): [pas:ta] /pas-ta/ pasta (pa-sta), [par-te] /par-te/ parte (par-te), [al-to] /al-to/ alto (al-to), [pas-so] /pas-so/ passo (pas-so) (but: [ma-rjo] /ma-rjo/ Mario (Mar-rio), [a-kwi-la] /a-kwi-la/ aquila (a-qui-la), [a-pro] /a-pro/ apro (a-pro), [du-pli-tʃe] /du-pli-tʃe/ duplicate (du-pli-ce).

It is also true that in northern Italian, especially in the more typical, broader regional accents, the structures /Cj, Cw, Cr, Cl/, after a stressed V, are very often heterosyllabic: [a′kwi-la] for [a′kwi-la] /a′kwi-la/ aquila, [ap-ro] for [a-pro] /a-pro/ apro, [ma-r-jo] for [ma-r-jo] /ma-r-jo/ Mario, [du′p-li-tʃe] for [du-pli-tʃe] /du-pli-tʃe/ duplicate.
This aspect can be hard to grasp, especially if accurate transcriptions are not availed of (and obviously, if no keen listening is made); so it is quite a common problem for many actors, dubbers and presenters of northern descent, who—as voice professionals—are somewhat lacking; unfortunately they are more like semi-professionals...

As seen, phonically we have (bas-ta-re) /'bas-ta-re/ bastare, but also (las-ta-rja) /las-'tO-rja/ la storia; therefore, likewise [st-ta-ra] /stɔrja/ storia, with [st] /st/, as when there is a V in front— the phono-syllabification is [s-t] /s-t/, as in the second example (la storia). Even acoustic data confirm the fact that [stV] /stV/ (after a pause, or [silence]) is part of the same syllable (a little particular, possibly, on the scale of syllability, but nothing really surprising) whereas, obviously, [VstV] /VstV/ constitute two phono-syllables bordering between two C (cf § 12.2-6 of NPT/HPh).


We must be careful not to misunderstand the meaning of in an intoneme, which should be understood as in a prominent position in a sentence; this does not mean only at the end of a sentence, but—every time there is an intoneme even in the middle of syntactic sentences, which—after all—has very little to do with phonic sentences, which are decidedly richer and more variable than traditional-grammar sentences (and even generative-grammar ones).

The exception (to the rule of phonetic length) is made up of a single final stressed V, which is always short (except for possible emphatic or communicative reasons): [ko'zi] /ko'zi/ cosi, [kaf'fE] /kaf'fE/ caffe; however: [por-tai] /por-tai/ portai, [paratia] /paratia/ paratia, as in the middle of the word as well: [ka'uzu] /kauza/ causa, [in'trOito] /in'trOito/ introito.

A partial exception is formed by the final stressed /Vr/ sequence in an intoneme: [farr(e)] /far(e)/ far(e), [rive'der(e)] /rive'der(e)/ riveder(e); in other contexts, we have: [pe'ora, pe'dire] /pe'ora, pe'dire/ per ora, per dire. The other final C, in an intoneme, are lengthened as they are in stressed checked syllables within a word: [per'don:, pe'dono] /per'don(o)/ perdon(o), [ka'nal; ka'nale] /ka'nal(e)/ canal(e).

Even geminate C in an intoneme have the first element lengthened: [sasso] /sasso/ sasso, [vettar/ vetta/ vettar, [sonno] /sonno/ sonno, [bra'tsjo] /bra'tsjo/ braccio, [dat'sjjo] /dat'sjjo/ dazio, [peSjo] /peSjo/ pesce. In any other position, eg before the stress, there is no further lengthening: [sas'setto, vet'tore, son'nambulo, peS'solino] /sas'setto, vet'tore, son'nambulo, peS'solino/ sassetto, vettore, sonnambulo, pesciolino, or in a preintoneme: [sasso pe'zante, vetta ele'vata, sonno profon-do, bra'tsjo lungo, dat'sjjo obbligatori-o, peSjo frito] /sasso pe'zante, vetta e-le'vata, sonno profondo, bra'tsjo lungo, dat'sjjo obbligatori-o, peSjo frito/ sasso pesante, vetta elevata, sonno profondo, braccio lungo, dazio obbligatorio, pesce fritto.
In a different position from that in an intoneme, as also in a preintoneme, even the vowel lengths change, dropping the semichrone ([:]). [kau'zare] /kau'zare/ causare, [kau'ze,natu'rali] /kauze naturali/ cause naturali (cf [kauza] /kauza/ causa).

3.3.1.5. However, in neutral Italian, not all C are geminable; in fact, /z, j, w/ are always single (ie non-geminable, as also the xenophoneme /ʒ/, which has been integrated into the Italian phonological system for centuries now): [pO:za] /pOza/ posa˚ ('kwO:jo) /kwOjo/ cuoio˚ (a'Zu:r) /a'Zur/ à jour. Nevertheless, phonetically, in the appropriate contexts, /z/ is lengthened: [riz:ma] /rizma/ risma.

There are also five self-geminant C (/p, f, t, s, z/), which, in a postvocalic position, are necessarily geminated; but with no chance of phonological opposition with a single C: [ban:no] /banno/ bagno, [la:sso] /laSSo/ lascio, [nu:kljo]/nu:kkjo/ voglio, [vits:tsi]/vits:tsi/ vizi, [vits:tso]/vits:tso/ vizio, [ok'dz:nnɔ]/ok'dz:nnɔ/ ozono. The reason for this is to be found in Latin; as a matter of fact, these five phonemes were not part of that language, and generally derive from two or more C (or from other languages); therefore, by assimilation, the result is a geminate C (cf § 5.6.1-7 of MaPI & § 1.6 of DlPI).

We can observe that (only) phonetics can supply explanations about the grammar rules (which are troublesomes) for foreigners and for northern Italians, as the articles [uno, lo, ki] /uno, lo, ki/ uno, lo, gli must be used in cases such as: [unoʃe'mo, loʃe'mo, kiʃe'kkjɔ]/unoʃe'mo, loʃe'mo, kiʃe'kkjɔ/ uno scemo, lo zaino, gli zii, gli gnocchi (as also [unoʃtraʃʃjɔ, loskʃpjɔ, ɔiskɔ'kjɔ]/unoʃtraʃʃjɔ, loskʃpjɔ, ɔiskɔ'kjɔ/ uno straccio, lo scoppio, gli scogli). In fact, it is a question of two –heterosyllabic– consonants, whereby the neutral Italian structure could not tolerate more complicated sequences, as they would make these syllables too heavy to pronounce.

The remaining 15 C, /m, n; p, b, t, d, k, g; tj, dz; f, v, s; r; l/, in a postvocalic position, can be single or geminate, distinctively, as shown in the example chosen: [vano] /vano/ vano and [vanno] /vanno/ vanno, [faʃʃo] /faʃʃo/ facto and [faʃʃo] /faʃʃo/ fatto, [mɔʃʃo]/mɔʃʃo/ mogio and [mɔʃʃo]/mɔʃʃo/ moggio, [beʃʃo]/beʃʃo/ beve and [beʃʃo]/beʃʃo/ beve, [karo]/karo/ caro and [karo]/karo/ caro, [paʃʃo]/paʃʃo/ pala and [paʃʃo]/paʃʃo/ palla. We can see that [kaʃʃa]/kaʃʃa/ casa and [kaʃʃa]/kaʃʃa/ cassa do not constitute a minimal pair, in modern neutral pronunciation (but only in traditional pronunciation or... as far as spelling is concerned).

3.3.1.6. In regional pronunciations in the whole of Italy, in checked syllables in an intoneme, it is quite frequent to find a length shifting from the consonant to the vowel element: [pas:o, paʃʃo] /passo/ passo, [paʃʃa, paʃʃa] /pasta/ pasta, [kaʃʃo, kaʃʃo, kaʃʃo, kaʃʃo]/kanto, canto, [diʃʃi, diʃʃi] /dirti, dirti/ /dirti/ /dirti/ /moltʃo, moltoʃ]/moltʃo/ molto, for the neutral [pas:o, pasta, kanto, dirti, molto].

Above all in the south, it is typical to find diphthongization, or doubling, of the vocoid (in checked syllables and in a preintoneme as well), but over all in un-checked syllables (which are shown here generally; but can be seen in G 9-15 of MaPI and in the dialect phonosyntheses in G 16 of NPT/HPb): [paʃʃane, paʃʃane]
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/pane/ pane, [veːdo, veɛdo] /vedo/ vedo, [dʊʋɛ, dɔˈve] /dovə/ dove, for the neutral [pɑːne, veːdo, dɔːve]...

In the north, geminates, do not often have sufficient length, even where vowel length does not present the lengthening mentioned at the beginning of this section: [ɑfˈfatto, aʃˈfatto] /affatto/ affatto.

In the central-southern areas, there can be other self-geminant consonants (cf § 3.3.1.5.); which takes place more widely for /b, dʒ/ – in parts of the centre for /j/ too: [rɔˈbbba, rɔˈbbba] /rɔbaʃ/ roba, [labˈbarka, labˈbarka] /laˈbarka/ la barca, [vɪˈdʒːile, ˈviːdʒːile] /vidʒile/ vigile, [laːdʒakka, laːdʒakka] /laˈdʒakka/ la giacca, [ˈnɔjjja, ˈnɔjja] /ˈnɔja/ noia, [dajˈjeɾi] /daˈjeɾi/ da ieri, for the neutral [rɔːba, laˈbarːka, ˈviːdʒːile, laːdʒakka, ˈnɔja, daˈjeɾi].

In Rome (and other central areas), instead, we can find the degemination of /r/, in broad and typical accents: [kɔrˈreːre] /korrere/ correre, [eɾˈroːre] /erˈrore/ errore, [aˈɾomə] /arˈroma/ a Roma (with co-gemination, cf § 3.3.2.1.), for the neutral [kɔrˈrere, eɾˈroːre, arˈroma].

Co-gemination

3.3.2.1. We will now briefly introduce an example of interlexical consonant gemination, choosing the most significant from other similar types, occurring in neutral Italian. Traditionally it is (widely) known as rafforzamento sintattico (syntactic strengthening) or raddoppiamento fonosintattico (phonosyntactic doubling), but it is best defined as CO-GEMINATION, the occurrence of which, in neutral pronunciation, gives us: [aˈkkaza] /akˈkaza/ a casa, [faˈfreddo] /faˈfreddo/ fa freddo, [ˈɛvrɛrɔ] /ɛvˈvero/ è vero.

In order to explain this, it is worth first considering examples such as [dʒakke, treppjɛde] /dʒakke*, treppjɛde/ giacché, treppiede, which do not pose any problems as the pronunciation and the spelling correspond.

However, we can also find cases such as [dʒakˈkjesto, treppjɛdi] /dʒakˈkjesto, treppjɛdi/ già chiesto, tre piedi. Furthermore, we also have: [amˈmetto] /amˈmetto/ ammetto and [amˈme] /amˈme/* a me as well, which both derive from the Latin sequences /dm/ –admitto, ad me– giving /mm/, by assimilation, which operated within words and between them.

Therefore, one or more of the final consonants assimilated to the first consonant of the following word, as the assimilation of certain different consonants in a word occurred; indeed, even septem and octo gave sette and otto in Italian (/pt, kt/ → /tt/). Hence, as we have had /amˈme/* from ad me, also /trekˈkapre/ comes from tres capræ. Even /ɛ*/ è (from Lat. est) causes co-gemination as in è vero, as seen above.

Separately, in phonemic transcriptions, these words are indicated, as just seen, by */: /tɛ*, ɛ*/* (here tre thrree) has the phonic stress marked, because generally it is stressed, as in [sonotre] /sonotre*/ sono tre (they’re three), unless it immediately precedes another stress, as in tre capre (three goats) /trekˈkapre/ (from a theoretical structure /tɛ ˈkapre/, unlike English /θərˈgaʊts/); whereas è /ɛ/ is given with no */, because it is not usually stressed in sentences (as in English).
Not all Italian monosyllables have this characteristic as far as co-gemination is concerned. For example the preposition di (of) does not co-geminate (and is not stressed), /di/, whereas the noun di (day) co-geminates, /di/: [di'kwes:ta] /di'kwes:ta/ di questa of this (f). [dik kwalun:kwe] /dik kwalunkwe/ (un) di qualunque (just any day), [di kwal:kəza, 'dik k-] /di kwal:kəza, ‘dik k- di’ qualcosa (say something).

3.3.2.2. Amongst the most frequent co-geminant monosyllables (ie activating), we find a /a/, è /e/, e /e/, né /ne/, se (conj.) /se/, già /dʒa/, piú /piuj/, là /la/, li /li/, qua /kwa/, qui /kwii/, chi /ki/, che /ke/, tre /tre/,: [ammi'lan/o a Milano, /ek'kjaro/ è chia(lo), /ep'p:o/ e poi, /neːtun nell'li/ né tu né lui, /sep'par:ti se parti, /dʒad'detto/ già detto, /pjut'tempo/ più tempo, /las'sopra/ là sopra, /kwikkon'lei/ qui con lei, /kikko'no]/j/ chi conosco, /kettene'pare/ che te ne pare, /trep puntini/ tre puntini.

The preposition da does not co-geminate in modern pronunciation: /dai'rɛntʃe/ da Firenze (contrary to traditional [and Tuscan] pronunciation: /dai'rɛntʃe/).

The following also co-geminate dà, do, fa, fu, ha, ho, può, sa, so, sta, sto, va: /mi'dar'æ:sone/ mi dà ragione, /ˈfamːmale/ fa male, /ˈppa'ura/ ho paura, /ˈpɔːsaːlɪr̩/ può salire, /ˈsattuttʊ/ sa tutto, /ˈstv veneːndʊ/ sto venendo, /ˈvʌsolo/ va solo.

Amongst non-geminant monosyllables (ie inactivating), the following must undoubtedly be included di /dɪ/, de' /de/, i /i/, la /la/, le /le/, li /li/, lo /lo/, gli /ˈgli/, glie /ˈgli/, mi/me /mi/, me' /me/, ti/te /ti/, te' /te/, si/se /si/, se' /se/, ci/ci /çi/, ci/e /çi/, vi/vi /vi/, ve', ne /ne/, sta /sta/, ‘sto /sto/, ‘ste /ste/, ‘sti /sti/, as well as the Latin monosyllables (a, de, pro, quo, si, tu, vae): /ˈdɪnɔtːtɛ di notte, /ˈdɛmædidiʃi de Medi- ci, /ˈɡattɪ / i gatti, /ˈlalana/ la lana, /ˈlɛretɪ / le reti, /ˈlɪprendo / li prendo, /ˈlɔsaˈpevo / lo sapevo, /ˈärakˈkʊnta / gli racconta, /ˈtɪʃeneːrɛndɛ konto/ ci se ne rende conto, /ˈstaˈsɛrə/ /ˈsta sɛrə; /ˈkwɔvadɪs / quo vadis, /ˈveːviktiʃ / vae victis.

Final-stressed polysyllables (ie with stress on the last syllable, or tronchi «truncated» co-geminate, even if they lose their stress (for rhythmic reasons): [kaʃ植被 kołombjano, sarapar'titto, tornɔt'tardi] /kaf'kɛl kołombjano, sarappar'tito, tornɔt'tardi/ caf'e colombiano, sarà partito, tornò tardi.

The systematic description of this phenomenon (and other similar ones, linked, but different, often confused with co-gemination, in many previous treatments [or in all those which uncritically perpetuate the hypothetical state of things]) is given in § 5.6-9 (and § 4.8.1.) of M4PI, and also —entry by entry— in DIPI.

3.3.2.3. Co-gemination is part of neutral pronunciation, exactly as lexical gemination, which is marked in spelling, as in: /ˈɔtto/ /ɔtto/ otto. However, this is not the case in the north (natively, except in some common, set expressions, as è vero, ha detto, used by young people raised with high levels of exposure to the television). Too often, it is erroneously considered as if it were a regional characteristic of the central-southern areas.

This opinion, but above all the fact that co-gemination does not figure in writing (apart from crystallized forms, such as giacché, davvero, soprattutto), is often
believed—even by Italians from the central-southern areas—that it is to be avoided; in that case, one should consider even normal lexical gemination (which is distinctive, cf § 3.3.1.5.) abnormal and unsuitable.

Clearly, in the central-southern areas, there are regional differences which are contrary to neutral use. In particular, the most systematic and widespread use is met in Tuscany (which, however, is not totally homogeneous), followed by Rome; the other central-southern areas follow, all of them with local, more or less strong differences.

The most normal type of co-gemination, in modern neutral pronunciation, is generally represented by a sort of compromise or of average, based on Roman use (including the cases of de-gemination of articles and pronouns, formed by /lV/: la, lo, le, li, l’), with further simplifications. The kind of co-gemination which is more similar to traditional pronunciation (cf § 3.3.5.3), follows Tuscan usage.

A few other examples follow, including one of de-gemination (given as the last one): /pjuf’forte/ piú forte, /提起kost’tjepra/ città costiera, /trenta’trek korri’dori/ trentatre corridori, /èl’lana/ è lana, /èlostessso/ è lo stesso.

In modern neutral pronunciation, come (appositive and comparative with nouns and pronouns) is co-geminant, as well: /komek’kani, komev’veri kani, komet’te/ come cani, come veri cani, come te.

Stress

3.3.3.1. Generally, in Italian, stress is assigned to rhythm groups, according to (lexical) word stresses. Rhythm groups are stress groups (cf § 3.2.7, 6.4.2, 12.1, 13.2-3 of NPT/HPh) made up of a syllable with strong—or primary—stress, and others with weak—or secondary—stress, as in: /perfetta’mente/ perfettamente, /in’treno/ in treno, /per il cane/ per il cane, /versola’fine del’mese/ verso la fine del mese.

The last example shows that, according to the prominence given to certain parts of sentences, the number of rhythm groups can change, as in /nnwovo’libro/ un nuovo libro (a new book), compared to /nnwovo ‘libro/ a book (which is) new, written in the same way (un nuovo libro), but with different prominence, corresponding to a semantic gradation, where in the second case, nuovo takes on greater importance.

The communicative importance given to nuovo can be even greater, in an utterance that, in its written form, remains—once more—the same (given the considerable deficiency of current punctuation): /nnwovo ‘libro/ un nuovo libro.

The introduction of the post-stress syllables of the continuative (/[.] /,) and conclusive ([.] /.) intonemes were necessary here, because the new greater prominence is given, in this case, by the presence of two intonemes, for a single utterance. (Let us also note the presence of the full chrone, even in the first rhythm group, bear-
ing a continuative intoneme, [ɔ:].

On the other hand, the communicative prominence would still increase, by using a conclusive intoneme, for the first rhythm group too: [un'nwɔvo, 'librɔ./

/ un'nwɔvo. 'libro./

3.3.3.2. Going back to the examples of the rhythm groups given above, we can observe that unstressed syllables (or rather, with weak stress), and those with half-stress (ie with mid or secondary stress), alternate in such a way as to have one or two weak phono-syllables amongst others with secondary (or primary) stress.

Secondary stress is assigned rhythmically, bearing in mind –as far as possible– the position of the stress in the original forms (ie fundamental forms, from which they derived [certainly not in an evolutive sense, from Latin]), as occurs in lexical compounds: [porto'sapone] /porto'sapone/ portasapone, [polis'karpe] /poli'skarpe/ pulisciscarpe.

In derivatives, instead, the origin counts for less than rhythmic reasons, even if, in case of a double possibility (rhythmic or original), the stress of the original form can exert a decisive influence: [patatine] /patatine/ patatine (notwithstanding [patata] /patata/ patata), [atten'sjone] /atten'sjone/ attenzione (notwithstanding [atten'to] /atten'to/ attento).

For syllables that follow a stressed syllable of a word, furthermore, they behave as follows: [fab'bro] fabbro, [fab'rika] fabbrica, [fab'brika'no, 'fab'brika'mi] fabbricano, fabbricami, [fabbricamo'lo] fabbricamelo (let us also add a rather improbable [fabbrika,mitʃ'e]lo) fabbricamicelo – cf the end of § 6.4.2 in NPT/HPb).

3.3.3.3. As regards the syllables of a word that precedes a stressed syllable, the spontaneous formation of a rhythmic alternation of weak and half-strong stresses is formed, going back towards the beginning of the word, starting from the strong syllable, of this kind: [($)$(^$^$$)]. However, given that polysyllabic words are generally derivatives or compounds, there is a clear and agreed tendency to place secondary stresses on the same syllables of the simple forms of the lexeme which are originally stressed.

The only exception, so to speak, is made up of the rhythmic tendency that interrupts both sequences of weak syllables that are too long, introducing some secondary stresses, and sequences of stressed syllables (ie strong and half-strong), suppressing some secondary stresses or shifting them one or two syllables.


3.3.3.4. Considering isolated words, normal (ie neutral, spontaneous) secondary stressing complies to the rules of lexical composition and derivation. However, obviously, there are also differences in the distribution of secondary stresses, due to the rhythmic context in which the words are placed at any given moment. Therefore, if –in isolation– a form like *partitocrazia* is [parti\texttt{t}otokrats\texttt{ts}\texttt{i}ra] –whereas [parti\texttt{o}tocrakrats\texttt{ts}\texttt{i}ra] is a ‘false note’, deriving from the lack of compound analysis– in actual sentences, there is some alternation: [laparti\texttt{k}otokrats\texttt{ts}\texttt{i}ra] *la partitocrazia*, [molto a\texttt{s}tuta\texttt{men}t\texttt{e}] molto astutamente, [pro\texttt{t}e\texttt{c}edere \texttt{as}tuta\texttt{men}t\texttt{e}] procedere astutamente, [\texttt{v}en\texttt{g}o \texttt{m}erkol\texttt{e}d\texttt{i}] vengo mercoled\texttt{i}, [\texttt{t}an\texttt{d}r\texttt{m} mer Kol\texttt{e}d\texttt{i}] ci andr\texttt{o} mercoled\texttt{i}.

We will not broach the subject of two possible stress patterns for some words, ie: [di\texttt{atri}bra ~ di\texttt{atri}ba], *diatriba*, [\texttt{sk}\texttt{le}\texttt{r}oz\texttt{i} ~ \texttt{sk}\texttt{le}\texttt{r}ozi], *sclerosis*, [\texttt{te}\texttt{ze}o ~ \texttt{te}\texttt{ze}o], *Teseo*, *[\texttt{e}d\texttt{ipo} ~ \texttt{e}d\texttt{ipo}]*, *Edipo*; the interested reader is referred to *DiPI*.

3.3.3.5. Neutral Italian does not in any way accept strong stress on two contiguous syllables (in an intoneme), but attenuates the first, even by shifting it or, if necessary, it shifts it (without attenuation), as in the third (and fourth) variants given, which are possible, but less common: *[\texttt{fa}R\texttt{øk} 'kw\texttt{e}sto ~ \texttt{fa}R\texttt{øk}k\texttt{we}sto] [\texttt{fa}R\texttt{øk}k\texttt{we}sto], [\texttt{fa}R\texttt{øk}k\texttt{we}sto] \texttt{far\texttt{o} questo}, [skoperkJ\texttt{o} il\texttt{t}etto \texttt{skoperk\texttt{j}o il\texttt{t}etto}, [skoperkJ\texttt{o} il\texttt{t}etto, [skoperkJ\texttt{o} il\texttt{t}etto] scoperch\texttt{i}o il\texttt{t}etto], [nonnopote\texttt{p} 'pj\texttt{u} ~ nonnopote\texttt{p} 'pj\texttt{u}] [nonnopote\texttt{p} 'pj\texttt{u}], [nonnopote\texttt{p} 'pj\texttt{u}].

One aspect of attenuation, owing to rhythmic reasons, can concern the moving back of the reduced stress too, as seen in the following examples: *[\texttt{ven}g\texttt{o} 'dopo di\texttt{te} ~ \texttt{ven}go dopod\texttt{i}t\texttt{e}]* [\texttt{ven}g\texttt{o} dopod\texttt{i}t\texttt{e}], [\texttt{ven}g\texttt{o} dopod\texttt{i}t\texttt{e}] vengo dopo di te, *[\texttt{kar}o pa'pa' ~ \texttt{kar}opa'pa]* [\texttt{kar}o pa'pa'], [\texttt{kar}opa'pa], [\texttt{kar}opa'pa] caro pa\texttt{p}a, [lof\texttt{a}t\texttt{f}\texttt{\i}o 'anke perte* ~ l\texttt{of}a\texttt{t}\texttt{f}\texttt{\i}o ankep\texttt{e}r\texttt{t}e], [lof\texttt{a}t\texttt{f}\texttt{\i}o ankep\texttt{e}r\texttt{t}e] lo f\texttt{acc}io anche per te, [sik\texttt{j}ama for\texttt{se}ko'z\texttt{i} ~ s\texttt{i}kjama for\texttt{se}ko\texttt{z}i], [sik\texttt{j}ama for\texttt{se}ko'z\texttt{i}], *si chiama forse così?*

3.3.3.6. In the case of syntagms like *[\texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o} ~ \texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o}; \texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o}]* *fuggi svelto* ‘he ran away quickly’, compared to similar expressions as *[\texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o} ~ \texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o}]* *fuggi svelto* ‘run away quickly!’, there are slight phonetic and prosodic differences, which alone, however, are not always able to maintain the distinction, as even in the case of *fuggi svelto*, attenuation of the first stress is possible, above all in fast pronunciation *[\texttt{fu}d\texttt{h}\texttt{\i}z'v\texttt{el}t\texttt{o}]*. Co-gemination does not apply with syllable structures like *[\texttt{V}\texttt{N}\texttt{SC}]*, which actually are syllabified *[\texttt{V}\texttt{N}\texttt{SC}]*.

Intonation

3.3.4. Fig 3.3 shows the preintonemes and intonemes in neutral Italian (both modern and traditional), which we will illustrate with simple examples:

/./: [ripartono ‘tutti sabato.] /ripartono ‘tutti ‘sabato./ Ripartono tutti sabato.

/¿/: [¿ripartono ‘tutti sabato:] ¿ripartono ‘tutti sabato? ¿ Ripartono tutti sabato?

/¿/: [serri’partono ‘tutti ‘sabato:] ,mene’vado an’kio. /serri’partono ‘tutti ‘sabato; mene’vado an’kio./ Se ripartono tutti sabato, me ne vado anch’io.

In the north, regional intonation has consistent and varied shifts; in the south they are rather repetitive; while, in the center, they are more contained (and, generally, more similar to neutral patterns). The major differences are found in the suspensive intoneme, /¿/, as can also be seen in the phonosyntheses of 16 of NPT/HPb (and of 10-15 of M0PI).

fig 3.3. Italian preintonemes and intonemes.

Traditional neutral pronunciation

3.3.5.1. As already mentioned (in § 3.0.1), 〈traditional neutral pronunciation〉 mainly follows Tuscan use, in particular Florentine, and dates back to the unification of Italy; therefore to about a century and a half ago, as quoted in dictionaries
which, at that time were defined as of Tuscan language, more often than of Italian.

The peculiarities of traditional pronunciation, therefore, are more rigid than those of modern pronunciation (having less variations [and here, we relate above all the strangest] and—at the same time—most capricious). The forms followed by * are found only in some dictionaries or specific lists.

As regards the vowel phonemes /e, e; o, ə/, some examples of words and endings follow. The more bizarre forms are marked with simple (orthoeptical) written accents: Agrìse, annèssos, auróra*, Bertólдо*, çèffo, cócca < corner, notch>, collètta, connétfó, crèsima, enòrmme, ésòso, fólla, Giórgio, gòttà, gróppó, lèttera, mòccolo, nèso, nórmma*, órgano*, rócca < distaff>, Rómolo, sgómino, siete, stòrpio, strènna, tèschio; as well as the endings: amaróngolo, stètti, stètterò...

As far as the vowel phonemes /e, E; o, O/ are concerned, some examples of words and endings follow. The most bizarre forms are marked with simple (orthoeptical) written accents: A√èse˚ annèso˚ auróra*˚ Bertóldo*˚ cè‡o˚ cócca*˚ corner, notch*˚, collètta˚ connètto˚ crèsima˚ enórme˚ esòso˚ fólla˚ Giórgio˚ gótta˚ gróppo˚ lèttera˚ mòccolo˚ nèsso˚ nórma*˚ órgano*˚ rócca˚ distaff˚, Rómolo˚ sgómino˚ siete˚ stòrpio˚ strènna˚ tèschio*˚, as well as the endings: amaróngolo, stètti˚, stètterò...

As far as the distribution of /tʃ, ʣ/ is concerned, the major traditional characteristic regards initial /tʃ/ for many words like: zampa˚ zio˚ zoppo˚ zucço˚ and internal /ʣ/, in cases such as: aguzzino˚ amazzone˚ brezza˚ ghiribizzo˚ intirizzito˚ lazzi˚ lezzo˚ olezzo˚ pettegolezzo˚ ribrezzo˚ rubizzo˚ scorza˚ sfarza*˚, sozzo*˚.

3.3.5.2. The greatest difference, however, concerns the use of single /s/ within a word, between V (even if with /j, w/ before the second). The most significant cases (including derivatives) are: asino˚ casa˚ chiesi˚ chiuso˚ cosa˚ così˚ desidero˚ desiderio˚ (il) fuso˚ mese˚ naso˚ peso˚ Pisa˚ posa˚ raso˚ riposo˚ riso˚ and adjective endings -ese˚ -oso˚ and verb endings -esi˚ -osi˚: /inglese/ inglesè (but /françese/ francese!); /tjinesèria/ cinesèria (but /borgèzia/ borghèzia!); /goloso/ goloso˚ /cellulosa/ cellulosa˚ /curiosità* curiosità˚ /presi˚ presero˚ preso˚ /lesi˚ -zero˚ -zo˚ lesio˚ lesori˚ lesoro˚ lesoso˚ /impresarijo/ impresario˚ /rosi˚ -sero˚ -so˚ rosi˚ rosero˚ roso˚ /risposi˚ risposero˚ rosicchio˚ (but /erosìjone/ erosìone!).

However, in traditional pronunciation, we find /z/ in cases such as: bisogno˚ caso˚ chiesa˚ muso˚ paese˚ quasi˚ sposa˚ viso˚ misi˚ misero˚ (io) fusi˚ fusero˚ (ho) fusoo˚ incisi˚ inciserò, inciso˚ inciso...

3.3.5.3. Traditional co-gemination is more systematic and more widespread than modern co-gemination; indeed, it has a higher number of activating forms (as da: da Milano /damiļano/; for the modern: /damiļano/), and does not provide for de-gemination è la mia /Il'mia/; modern: /Il'mia/); what is more, the following are always co-geminant, too, come˚ dove˚ quale‰ sopra (unless they are used as nouns): come si fa? dove vai? quale‰ volta˚ sopra quel tavolo /komesiťa, dovey'vai, kwalkev'volta˚ soprakhkek'tavolo/ (but: *il sopra del tavolo /Il'sopra del'tavolo/); modern: /komesiťa*, dovev'vai, kwalkev'volta˚ soprakhkek'tavolo/)

As far as accentuation is concerned, there are no particular peculiarities; any differences are due to the fact that generations have passed, and, as one knows, the accentuation of learned terms and classical nouns are subject to trends of preference, which can be agreed upon to a greater or lesser extent, but are not under discussion: they are merely documentable (cf the end of § 3.3.3.4).

Intonation does not change, except for the possible adoption (by some) of Tuscan-type preintonemes (cf the relative phonosyntheses in غو16).
3.3.5.4. All characteristics of traditional pronunciation may be found, however, in MaPI and DiPI; this pronouncing dictionary shows the variants of the center (the linguistic center; but Abruzzo belongs to the upper south) regarding the distribution of /e, e; o, o; s, z; ts, dz/ (including some peculiar stress patterns), indicating Tuscany, Umbria, the Marches, Latium and Rome respectively with: t, u, m, l, r (in square brackets).

Traditional variants are identified, in DiPI, by a full-stop which appears before them, and which separates them from modern variants, given first (if different, otherwise they coincide), as, for example: «lettera /lettera. -et/ [t e, umlr e]», ie /lettera/ in Tuscany and /lettera/ in the rest of the center.

There are at times more intricate variants, eg: «storpio /storpio. -œ/ [t œ/o, u o/œ, mlr o]». However, there is full agreement throughout the center for <bene /bene/>.

Text

3.4.0. The story *The North Wind and the Sun* follows, given in eight different <normalized> versions. We start with the (neutral) Italian pronunciations of (neutral British) English – this is the first step of the phonetic method (the written text is given in § 2.5.2.0). The Italian translation follows, in its neutral modern and traditional versions. Three further accents are given: two are mediatic (respectively northern and central – of Milan and Rome), which, for segmental and intonational aspects, are not as broad as those presented –with vocograms and tonograms– in Ch 10 & Ch 12 of MaPI (in which there are 23 regional versions, in Ch10-14).

The respective (dialectal) phonosyntheses in Ch 16 of NPT/HPh (looking at Milanese, § 16.15, and Roman, § 16.42) can also provide useful preliminary information. In northern mediatic pronunciation, stopstrictives often occur as sequences: [ts, dz; ſ, ſ] (special symbols would be better: [ʃʃ, ſʃ]).

Lastly, the affected accent (snobbish, § 3.4.9) is examined, as well, with a <French r> (generally, an approximant: labiodental, [v], or uvular, [u], or uvularized labiodental, [ʊ], which has been chosen as a representative type, having both components) and other characteristics linked to that kind of pronunciation, as <tenser> but also <laxer> V, at the same time (cf fig 3.4).

They are realized –basically– by higher and more advanced vocoids than normal, which, in stressed syllables (and in preintonemes as well), are diphthongized, but with second elements rather central in their vocogram boxes, therefore, ending in different –opposite– positions from the initial ones.

Furthermore, /tʃ, dʒ; ſ, ſ/ are postalveo-palatal over-rounded, [tʃ, dʒ, ſ, ſ]; there is also <drawing> and splitting of the tonic –in the real tonetic sense– and posttonic syllables (sometimes even of the previous ones), in particular before a pause, and above all for intonemes when they are different from the conclusive ones.

Lastly, we note a bigger pitch extension (which we will indicate paraphonically, with ([ⱡ])), at the beginning of each paragraph) and creaky voice in intonemes (ie tonic and posttonic syllables), which is represented by the specific diacritic: [γ].
3.4.1. At the end, as always, there is the version which gives the English pronunciation of Italian, by neutral British speakers, fluent in Italian (after prolonged contact with native speakers, but with no help from the phonetic method), who have adequately learned the relative prominences, but who substantially use segmental and intonation elements which are typical of neutral British English (for reference purposes, although, of course, a neutral accent is not so common). Obviously, the same principle is valid for the foreign pronunciation of English, given first.

Speakers of American English could prepare their own version of the Italian pronunciation of American English, with /a/ even for English /ɒ/ (as [æ] instead of [ə]) for shot) and so on, as an excellent exercise, by listening to native speakers, best of all after recording them. Of course, speakers of other languages could prepare both their own pronunciation of Italian and the foreign Italian accent of their language, as well. The author would be happy to receive their transcriptions and recordings, both in case of help –should they need it– and to make their contribution known to others (possibly in our website on canIPA Natural Phonetics – cf § 0.12).

**Italian pronunciation (of English)**

3.4.2. [denɔrtwin dendeʃanə, wɛrdɪʃˈpjuːtɪŋə wɪtʃɔz dɛstrɔŋər ˈwɛ nɛ troʊvələr ˈkæɪmaˈlɒŋˌɡə ˈtɛpˌti nəˈwɔrəm ˈklɒklə ˈdɛəˈɡridər ˈdɛtdiˈwa nɒfər(t) səkiːsidiːdər ɪmˈmeɪkɪn dɛtˌrɛvələr ˈtɛi kɪsklɒkˈkæfər ˈjuːdəbi kɔnˈsidərəd ˈstrɔŋər ˈdəndi ˈædər]]

ˈdɛmː dɛnɔrtwində ˈbluː ɛˈzɔr dɛzɪkudə ˈbætə dɛmɔːri ˈbluː ˈdɛmɔːr ˈklɒzlɪ ˈdɪd dɛtˌrɛvələr ˈfɔl dɪsklɒk ˈkærəʊndɪmˌ ˈɛndəˌlæstˌ dɛnɔrtwində ˈɡɛvəpˌ dʒætˈtempˌtəːr ˈdɛn deʃən ˈʃɔnəutˌ wəˈmərlɪˌ ˈɛndimˈmɪdʒətˌlɪː dɛtˌrɛvələr ˈtʊkəf fɪʃˈklɒkˌ ˈendəˌsɔ ˈdɛnɔrtwində wɔzoˈblaiðədə ˈtʊkənˌfɛs ˈdɛtde ˈsanˌ wɔzdestrɔŋə ɬɔvdətə ˈdɪdˌdʒuˈlɛikˌ ˈdɛstɔri ɬɛduˈwɔn tuˈrɪ taˈɛnəˌ]]
3.4.3. Si bisticciavano un giorno il vento di tramontana e il sole, l’uno pretendendo d’esser più forte dell’altro, quando videro un viaggiatore, che veniva innanzi, avvoltò nel mantello. I due litiganti decisero allora che sarebbe stato più forte chi fosse riuscito a levare il mantello al viaggiatore.

Il vento di tramontana cominciò a soffiare con violenza; ma, più soffiava, più il viaggiatore si stringeva nel mantello; tanto che alla fine il povero vento dovette destere dal suo proposito. Il sole allora si mostrò nel cielo, e poco dopo il viaggiatore, che sentiva caldo, si tolse il mantello. E la tramontana fu costretta così a riconoscere che il sole era più forte di lei.

T’è piaciuta la storiella? La vogliamo ripetere?

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Modern neutral pronunciation

3.4.4. [sibistitjo:va:no ʼu:mʼduorno] ilʼvEnto diʼtramonʼtana ʼe ilʼsole, ʼluːnoːprenˈtendo dësæʁpjʊfʃˈfɔrtɛ dëllʼalˈtrakwaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ ʼkevveˈnива ʼnĭnantsiː aʼvˈvoltø ʼnɛlmanteˈllo] iˈduelitîʼganˈtɭ ʼdetʃizɛrø ʼaˈlloːraːj ʼkessaˈrebbeʃtø pjuˈfʃɔrteːj kɪfʃosseriʃ[iːtø ʼaˈlɛvɛrɛ ilˈmanteˈllo ʼalviˈaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ]\[ilʼvEnto diʼtramonʼtana kɔmɪŋtʃ ʼasoffʃˈjærɛ kʊmviˈoːlɛnʦːaːj ʼmæpʃjus sofˈʃjæːvæ ʼpjuˈlviˈaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ sɪstrɪpˈʃɛvə ʼnɛlmanteˈllo ʼtǎnto keˈaːlə ʼfìneː ʼɪlˈpʊverɔ ʼvEnto ʼdɔvɛtɛ dɛʃɪstɛːrɛ ʼdælˈsuːprɒpɔˈzɪtɔ ʼɪlˈsoːl ʼaˈlloːraːj ʼsɪmostrɔn ʼnɛlˈtʃɛːlɔ ʼɛpˈpʊkɔdɔpɔ ʼilˈvɪaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ ʼkɛssɛntʃɪvə ʼkaˈkdoːj ʼsɪtɔlʃɛ ʼilˈmanteˈllo ʼeˈləˈtramonˈtana ʼfʊkkoʃˈʃɛtʃə koˈziː ʼaˈrɪkə ʼnɔʃʃɛrɛ ʼkɛilˈʃoːl ʼɛrəpʃʊʃˈfɔrtɛ ʼdiˈlɛːriːj[steppjaˈʃuːtaː ˈlastoˈrʃɛlːaː ˈləvoˌlɔːmɔ riˈpeːtɛːrɛ]]

Traditional neutral pronunciation

3.4.5. [sibistitjo:va:no ʼu:mʼduorno] ilʼvEnto diʼtramonʼtana ʼe ilʼsole, ʼluːnoːprenˈtendo dësæʁpjʊfʃˈfɔrtɛ dëllʼalˈtrakwaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ ʼkevveˈnива ʼnĭnantsiː aʼvˈvoltø ʼnɛlmanteˈllo] iˈduelitîʼganˈtɭ ʼdetʃizɛrø ʼaˈlloːraːj ʼkessaˈrebbeʃtø pjuˈfʃɔrteːj kɪfʃosseriʃ[iːtø ʼaˈlɛvɛrɛ ilˈmanteˈllo ʼalviˈaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ]\[ilʼvEnto diʼtramonʼtana kɔmɪŋtʃ ʼasoffʃˈjærɛ kʊmviˈoːlɛnʦːaːj ʼmæpʃjus sofˈʃjæːvæ ʼpjuˈlviˈaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ sɪstrɪpˈʃɛvə ʼnɛlmanteˈllo ʼtǎnto keˈaːlə ʼfìneː ʼɪlˈpʊverɔ ʼvEnto ʼdɔvɛtɛ dɛʃɪstɛːrɛ ʼdælˈsuːprɒpɔˈzɪtɔ ʼɪlˈsoːl ʼaˈlloːraːj ʼsɪmostrɔn ʼnɛlˈtʃɛːlɔ ʼɛpˈpʊkɔdɔpɔ ʼilˈvɪaːdʒʃɔˈtɔrɛ ʼkɛssɛntʃɪvə ʼkaˈkdoːj ʼsɪtɔlʃɛ ʼilˈmanteˈllo ʼeˈləˈtramonˈtana ʼfʊkkoʃˈʃɛtʃə koˈziː ʼaˈrɪkə ʼnɔʃʃɛrɛ ʼkɛilˈʃoːl ʼɛrəpʃʊʃˈfɔrtɛ ʼdiˈlɛːriːj[steppjaˈʃuːtaː ˈlastoˈrʃɛlːaː ˈləvoˌlɔːmɔ riˈpeːtɛːrɛ]]
Northern mediatic pronunciation (Milanese)

3.4.6. [sibistiπjɔ́vano- unʤɔ́rno-] il'vɛnto di'tramɔ́ntana- eil'sode-. [luno-]
preteŋ,deŋdo djesserpjufɔ́rte- del,laltr-. kwando,vı́rako unvjaďfaďa, tore-.. keve-
nıva in'naŋtsi- av,vı́lto ,nelman.tel-lo,|| i dueliti.gaŋti- deʃį́zero- alloza, kesa-
rebɛstaʃato pjuf,ʃorťe-.. kifosṣeriiʃʃito- ale'vare ilman'tel-lo- alvjaďa, tore-.||

il'vɛnto di'tramɔ́ntana- kominjį́̄q sof,fjare-. [konjy,leŋtsa-] map'pjų sof,fjava-.
jpuilvjaďfaďa,tore- sisirn,ʃevva ,nelman, tel-lo-. 'tàŋto- kealla,ʃine- il,pıkvero 
'vento- do'vette de'zistere-.. dal'suopro,ɔ́xito-.|| il'sode- alloza, simoʃtrɔ nelʃʃlo-.
enpokoďʃko- ilvjaďfaďa,tore-. ikeʃen,tıva kal'do,ʃi,ʃto'le-.. ilman'tel-lo,|| ela-
tramon,tana- fukos'trešta-'ko'zi- ariko, noʃjere-.. kei'sode- erpjuf,ʃorťe-. ||

Central mediatic pronunciation (Roman)

3.4.7. [sibistiπjɔ́vano- unʤɔ́rno-] il'vɛnto didramɔ́ntana- eiltsode-. [luno-
breden'dendo desserpjufɔ́rte- delaltr-. ʃwando,vı́rako unvjaďaďaďa, tore-. ʃjevve-
nıva in'naŋtsi- av,vı́lto ,nelman tel-lo,|| i duelidi'gaŋti- deʃǐzero- alloza, ʃ Jessaeb-
bestarʃop pjuf,ʃorťe-.. kifosṣeriiʃʃito- alle'vare ilman'tel-lo- alvjaďaďa, tore-.||

il'vɛnto di'tramɔ́ntana- ʃjomip'tò asoffʃaje-. [ʃjomיוλεντςa-] map'pjų sof-
fʃja-.. jpuilvjaďfaďaďa, tore- sisirn,ʃevva ,nelman tel-lo-. 'tàŋto- keala,ʃine- il,pık-
vero 'vento- do'vette de'sistere-.. dal'suopro,ɔ́xido-..|| il'sode- alloza, simoʃtrɔ nel-
ʃʃlo-.. eppokoďʃko- ilvjaďfaďa ʃورة-.. ʃjesenti'va 'kal'do,ʃi,ʃto'le-.. ilman tel-lo-.
eladramontana- fukos'trešta-'goʊści- ariko ʃnoʃjere-.. geiltsode-.. erappjufɔ́rte-. ||

Affected pronunciation (cf § 3.4.0)

3.4.8. (14) [sibistiπjɔ́vano- unʤɔ́rno-] il'vɛnto di'tramɔ́nt'ana- eil'soʃ-
le-. [luno- preten'dendo desserpjufɔ́rte- delaltr-. kwando,vı́rako unvja-
ďaďaďa, tore-.. keve'nıva in'naŋtsi- av,vı́lto ,nelman tel-lo,|| i dueliti'gaŋtį- de-
ʃį́zero- alloza, kessaebestasto pjuf,ʃzɔ́rťe-.. kifosṣeriiʃʃito- alle'vare ilman-
tel-lo- alvjaďaďa, tore-.||

(14) il'vɛnto di'tramɔ́nt'ana- kominjį̄q asoffʃja-.. [komיוλεντςa-] map-
p'pjų sof,fja-.. jpuilvjaďfaďaďa, tore- sisirn,ʃevva ,nelman tel-lo-. 'tàŋto- ke-
alla,ʃine- il,pıkvero 'vento- do'vette de'sistęʃe-.||

[148] A HANDBOOK OF PRONUNCIATION
British pronunciation (of Italian)


American pronunciation (of Italian)


Italian dictionaries & grammars and their (non) care for pronunciation

3.5.0. It is important to see how Italian dictionaries indicate pronunciation and whether they are accurate and provide variants or not. In addition, a sure clue to ascertain whether they care for pronunciation or assign it to hasty incompetents (who follow different criteria do not take the trouble to verify what they are doing) consists in looking up the entry *gliommero/*ˈʝɒmmero/ (a kind of poem in endecasyllabics originally written in the Neapolitan dialect). There are three kinds of dictionaries: those which do not include the word or do not take care to distinguish between /ʎ/ and /gli/, for the trigraph gli, as in glioma/*gliˈoːma/; then come those which, because of false philological and etymological deductions, *invent* /ˈʝommero/, or copy it from some mistaken previous sources; lastly, there are the dictionaries whose pronunciation characteristics are assigned to true experts, who —obviously— give /ˈʝommero/. In the dialect of Naples, a ball (of wool)/*skein* (of cotton) is a gliòmmero/*ˈʝommaːro/, although it comes from Latin glomerum, with /gl/, as —on the other hand— gland is gliànnola/*ɡjannəла/, from Latin glandulam (in Italian they are gomitolo and ghiandola, respectively, /ˈgoːmitolo, ˈɡjan-dələ/, with /ˈq/).

Even most grammars are not to be trusted excessively: it is sufficient to thumb through them with critical eyes. Besides, our judgment should not in any way be influenced by the fact that these texts are very widely used and well-known, even abroad. However, when they deal with phonology and phonetics only because they feel duty bound to do so, unfortunately we cannot be too optimistic. In fact, some of them tend to invent nonexistent possibilities, which are frankly absurd, as happens with some supposed differences for such first-person plural forms as alleviamo or spariamo. In actual fact, their pronunciation is identical, although they belong to different verbs: allevare (to breed) or alleviare (to alleviate), and sparare (to shoot) or sparire (to disappear), ie always /alleˈvjamo, sparˈjamo/ (whereas certain authors try to argue that the second words in each pair are pronounced as *alleviamo, spariamo*).

It would be equally absurd to follow those who hypothesize the existence of different pronunciations for the numbers sei, sette, Otto (six, seven, eight), if compared to (tu) sei (you are), (le) sette (religiose) (the religious sects), and Otto (a male name)…