

About the *DOP: Dizionario d'Ortografia e di Pronunzia* 'Dictionary of Italian Pronunciation'

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A comment by Luciano Canepari

DOP (1981², 1969¹) – non-IPA: [*i, ì; e, é, e, è; a, à; o, ó, o, ò; u, ù*] for /i, i; e, 'e, ɛ, 'ɛ; a, 'a; o, 'o, ɔ, 'ɔ; u, 'u/, [*m, n, ñ, ñ*] for /m, n, ɲ/ and [ŋ], [*p, b; t, d; k, ġ*] for /p, b; t, d; k, g/, [*z, z; ċ, ġ*] for /ts, dz; tʃ, dʒ/, [*f, v; s, f; š, ř*] for /f, v; s, z; ʃ, ʒ/, [*ǰ, ǰ*] for /j, w/, [r] for /r/, [*l, l'*] for /l, ʎ/; uses † for co-gemination and pre-gemination, ie consonant lengthening between words in phrases; unhappily even, [*fi, fl, ff, ffi, ffl*] phonically absurd, for /fi, fl, ff, ffi, ffl/).

*DOP*³ (2010³) – still with *I* and *J* mixed together, even standing out on the cover of the first of two volumes: 'A-I/J'; still non-IPA. Unfortunately, this new edition, although updated and expanded, remains an example of anachronistic publishing: more 'second-millennium-like'. In fact its criterion and method are not at all updated; even its phonic notation remains 'provincial-like', as it used to be until the first part of 1900, with italic symbols and an endless number of diacritics, as obvious false illusions to facilitate interpretation. The following 'symbols' are clearly worsened in comparison with previous editions: [*i, ì; e, é, e, è; a, à; o, ó, o, ò; u, ù*] for /i, i; e, 'e, ɛ, 'ɛ; a, 'a; o, 'o, ɔ, 'ɔ; u, 'u/, [*m, n, ñ, ñ*] for /m, n, ɲ/ and [ŋ], [*p, b; t, d; k, ġk*] for /p, b; t, d; k, g/, [*z, z; ċ, ġ*] for /ts, dz; tʃ, dʒ/, [*f, v; s, f; š, ř*] for /f, v; s, z; ʃ, ʒ/, [*ǰ, ǰ*] for /j, w/, [r] for /r/, [*l, l'*] for /l, ʎ/; with three different symbol sizes, as shown above; with † for co-gemination and pre-gemination; but, more satisfyingly, [*fi, fl, ff, ffi, ffl*]).

A further –even more negative– aspect of its updated 'provincialism' consists in providing not only old-fashioned symbols, but also the kind of pronunciation which was peculiar until the first part of 1900. As if professional speakers were still bound to use the the old-fashioned 'traditional' kind of pronunciation, instead of of the 'modern' one, by this time, widely –and legitimately– recognized and easy to identify and acquire, simply by listening, even with no particular attention. Therefore, sadly, it is a dictionary of the *pronunciation of the past century*, not of the present one.

There is a website (www.dizionario.rai.it) with the possibility of listening to some entries, with rigorously traditional realizations. In addition of being little lively, those realizations also have some problems, like for *Pannain* /pan'nain/ which sounds as */panna'in/. The sound files also include passages, but with intonations and segments sometimes too *Tuscan*, thus actually *neither neutral nor traditional*.

Furthermore, they are transcribed in a banal way, in addition to the already criticized symbols, as for instance on p. CXXIX: *Siamo i posteri di noi stessi. A forza di ripetere che il futuro è già cominciato, perfino la parola « moderno » ci sembra vecchietta, tant'è vero che abbiamo coniato il « post-moderno »,* che appare come: *sɪàmo i pòsteri di noi stéssi. a ffòrza di ripètere ke il futùro ɛ ġġà kkomincàto, perfìno la paròla « modèrno » ċi sémbra vekkiòtta, tant ɛ vvéro ke abbiàmo koniàto il « pòst modèrno ».*

All this, instead of something more natural and useful, like: [sja'moi'pɔs:teri di nois-'tes:si.ɔ] affɔrtsa di'ri:pɛ:tere ke'iflu'turo ɛ dʒdʒakkomin'ʧa:to ɔ per'fino la'pa:rɔ:la 'mo-'dɛ:rno'ɔ tʃi'sem:bra vek'kjɔ:ta ɔ tantɛv've:rɔ keab,bjarmoko'nja:to ɔ il'pɔst mo'dɛ:rno'ɔ].

In conclusion, it would have been decidedly better not to produce this 'new' edition. The preceding version should have been left as a mere testimony of the kind of pronunciation used in its time, or 'era'.