

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

# Lower Intermediate S3 #1

## Meeting Your New Italian Coworker

---

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION  
DIALOGUE  
POST CONVERSATION BANTER  
VOCAB LIST  
KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES  
LESSON FOCUS  
MARKETING PIECE  
OUTRO

#1

# INTRODUCTION

Brandon: Hi everyone! Welcome to ItalianPod101.com! This is Lower Intermediate Season 3, Lesson 1, Meeting Your New Italian Coworker! I'm Brandon!

Ofelia: Ciao. I'm Ofelia.

Brandon: Ofelia, what are we going to learn in this lesson?

Ofelia: In this lesson, you'll learn how to talk about your past choices and explain why you made them.

Brandon: The conversation takes place in an office building in front of the manager's office.

Ofelia: It's between Maria Smith, the new representative of the main branch of an American multinational food packaging company, and Giada Roveri, the manager of the department of the Italian branch.

Brandon: The speakers are co-workers, they have just met, so they'll be speaking formal Italian. Okay, let's listen to the conversation.

## DIALOGUE

Maria: Salve...

Sig.ra Roveri: Buongiorno!

Maria: Sono la nuova rappresentante della filiale americana.

Sig.ra Roveri: Ah, piacere! la stavamo aspettando! Sono Giada Roveri, la direttrice di questo reparto.

Maria: Piacere mio, mi chiamo Maria Smith.

Sig.ra Roveri: Qual è la sua specializzazione?

Maria: Ho studiato ingegneria meccanica all'università e poi mi sono specializzata in legge per il settore del packaging, mentre lavoravo.

Sig.ra Roveri: Interessante. Come mai ingegneria meccanica?

Maria: Volevo una formazione di base scientifica...

Sig.ra Roveri: Bene! Spero si trovi bene qui da noi. Comunque parla un ottimo italiano!

Brandon: Now, let's listen to the conversation with the English translation.

Maria: Salve...

Maria: Hello...

Sig.ra Roveri: Buongiorno!

Mrs. Roveri: Good morning!

Maria: Sono la nuova rappresentante della filiale americana.

Maria: I'm the new delegate from the American branch.

Sig.ra Roveri: Ah, piacere! la stavamo aspettando! Sono Giada Roveri, la direttrice di questo reparto.

Mrs. Roveri: Oh, nice to meet you! We were waiting for you! I'm Giada Roveri, this department's manager.

Maria: Piacere mio, mi chiamo Maria Smith.

Maria: The pleasure is mine; my name is Maria Smith.

Sig.ra Roveri: Qual è la sua specializzazione?

Mrs. Roveri: What's your specialization?

Maria: Ho studiato ingegneria meccanica all'università e poi mi sono specializzata in legge per il settore del packaging, mentre lavoravo.

Maria: I studied mechanical engineering at university, and then I specialized in law for the packaging industry while I was working.

Sig.ra Roveri: Interessante. Come mai ingegneria meccanica?

Mrs. Roveri: Interesting. Why mechanical engineering?

Maria: Volevo una formazione di base scientifica...

Maria: I wanted training with a scientific basis...

Sig.ra Roveri: Bene! Spero si trovi bene qui da noi. Comunque parla un ottimo italiano!

Mrs. Roveri: Good! I hope you'll be comfortable here. By the way, you speak excellent Italian!

## POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Brandon: Maria seems to have a highly specialized education—mechanical engineering and law! She must have studied hard during her university years. Ofelia, what can you tell us about Italian universities?

Ofelia: Well, one interesting thing about Italian universities is that most of them are public schools. We don't have many private colleges.

Brandon: Is it difficult to gain admittance?

Ofelia: In general, if you're not planning to study medicine or math, or another science-related major, then there isn't an entrance exam. So it's not that hard to get in.

Brandon: Then, is it difficult to graduate?

Ofelia: It's definitely not easy! You have to pass all of the exams.

Brandon: What has changed since you were a student?

Ofelia: Well, the Italian education system has been considered rather weak and has been reorganized several times within the past ten years. Before the reorganization, students in the old system always had difficulty finishing exams and graduating. Now, it's somewhat better.

Brandon: It's good to hear the improved the system. Okay, let's move on to the vocabulary.

## VOCAB LIST

Brandon: We're going to review all of the vocabulary words for this lesson. The first word is...

Ofelia: ...rappresentante. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "Representative" or "delegate."

Ofelia: Rappresentante. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Rappresentante. [natural native speed]

Brandon: Next we have...

Ofelia: ...specializzazione. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "Specialization."

Ofelia: Specializzazione. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Specializzazione. [natural native speed]

Brandon: Our next word is...

Ofelia: ...ingegneria. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "Engineering."

Ofelia: Ingegneria. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Ingegneria. [natural native speed]

Brandon: Next...

Ofelia: ...specializzarsi. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "To specialize."

Ofelia: Specializzarsi. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Specializzarsi. [natural native speed]

Brandon: Next we have...

Ofelia: ...legge. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "Law."

Ofelia: Legge. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Legge. [natural native speed]

Brandon: and our last word is...

Ofelia: ...settore. [natural native speed]

Brandon: "Area, zone, or sector."

Ofelia: Settore. [slowly - broken down by syllable] Settore. [natural native speed]

## KEY VOCAB AND PHRASES

Brandon: Let's have a closer look at some of the words and phrases from this lesson. The first word is...

Ofelia: ...specializzarsi.

Brandon: Meaning "to specialize," or literally, "to specialize oneself."

Ofelia: This word is a combination of the verb specializzare and the pronoun si. It's a reflexive verb, so the verb will always be combined with a personal pronoun.

Brandon: When can we use this phrase?

Ofelia: We can use it when we want to talk about our professional or educational specialization. It can also be used when referring to things, such as a company or a department, where real people are involved.

Brandon: Then, when can we not use this expression?

Ofelia: You can not use it when you're talking about animals or other non-human entities. You have to use it when you're referring to people.

Brandon: Can you give us an example of how to use it properly?

Ofelia: Sure! L'azienda ABC si è specializzata nella produzione di macchine per il caffè.

Brandon: "The ABC company is specialized in the production of coffee machines." Again, using the verb in this way is ok, because you are talking about a company or department involving real people.

Ofelia: Also, be sure to note that this verb is almost never used in the simple present tense. It's usually used in the past, future, or present continuous tense.

Brandon: Okay, next we have...

Ofelia: ...formazione di base.

Brandon: This means "basic education" or "basic training."

Ofelia: This phrase is made up of the noun formazione, meaning "education" or "formation;" the preposition di meaning "of;" and base, a noun meaning "basis." The phrase di base is an adjectival phrase.

Brandon: Can you give us an example with this phrase?

Ofelia: Sure! Filippo ha una formazione di base umanistica.

Brandon: meaning something like "Filippo has an education with a focus in humanities." You'll notice that with this sentence we split up the term to make it sound more natural in English. But translated literally, it's "Filippo has a humanistic basic education."

Ofelia: Here's another example: il corso di formazione di base per i nuovi impiegati inizia a novembre.

Brandon: Meaning, "The basic training course for the new employees starts in November."

Ofelia: Listeners, be careful when using this phrase because it sounds similar to another phrase: formazione-base. We use formazione-base when talking about a sport team's main formation or line-up. It sounds similar to our key phrase, but doesn't share the same meaning.

Brandon: That's a very important distinction. Okay, now on to the lesson focus.

## LESSON FOCUS

Brandon: In this lesson, you'll learn how to talk about things done in the past using two verb tenses.

Ofelia: Yes, the *passato prossimo*, or present perfect tense, and the *imperfetto*, or imperfect tense. In the dialogue, Maria talked about her prior education and said, *ho studiato ingegneria meccanica all'università e poi mi sono specializzata in legge per il settore del packaging, mentre lavoravo.*

Brandon: Meaning, "I studied mechanical engineering at the university, and then I specialized in law for the packaging industry while I was working." Let's look at some examples of how we can talk about things in the past.

Ofelia: We'll start with the *passato prossimo*, or present perfect tense. The *passato prossimo* is used when you're talking about an action that's been completed and occurred at a specific time or point in the past. For example, in 1994, in the summer of 2003, or on Thursday. We often tie this specific time to the action in the sentence.

Brandon: Ofelia, can you give us an example?

Ofelia: Of course. *Mercoledì scorso sono andato al cinema con Francesco.*

Brandon: Meaning, "Last Wednesday, I went to the cinema with Francesco." So you can see that this example meets the two conditions for the present perfect tense: one, the action has been completed, and two, it occurred at a specific time, on Wednesday. This seems simple enough!

Ofelia: Now let's look at the *imperfetto*, or imperfect tense.

Brandon: The imperfect tense has three main functions, and we'll go through each one of them.

Ofelia: The first function is used to describe a past situation. For example, *era la casa dei miei nonni.*

Brandon: Meaning, "It used to be my grandparents' house." So we can assume that in the past, this house was the speaker's grandparents house, but now that has changed.

Ofelia: The second function is used to describe a repeated or habitual action in the past. For example, *Billo mi accompagnava ogni giorno a scuola e al mio ritorno mi aspettava dietro il portone di casa.*

Brandon: Meaning, "Billo used to go to school with me, and when I went back home, he was always waiting for me behind the main entrance."

Ofelia: And the third function is used to describe a continuing past action, with a stress on the duration of this action. For example, *mi fissava con paura.*

Brandon: Meaning, "He was staring at me with fear." As you can tell from the sentence, this action continued for some time. Ofelia, We're using both tenses mentioned in this lesson to describe things in the past, so what's the main difference between the present perfect tense and the imperfect tense?

Ofelia: Well, the main difference is that the *passato prossimo* refers to specific actions that took place at a specific time, and the *imperfetto* refers to past actions that continued or took place in general in the past.

Brandon: So, the imperfect tense focuses on the duration of the action, instead of its completeness?

Ofelia: That's right. You can picture this on a timeline. The *passato prossimo* is a specific point on that line.

Brandon: Can you give us an example?

Ofelia: Sure. *Mi sono trasferito*, meaning, "I moved." And *ho smesso*, meaning "I stopped."

Brandon: And then what about the imperfect tense?

Ofelia: Well, the *imperfetto* is a continuous action on that timeline. For example, *ero*, which is translated as "I used to be," or *abitavo*, meaning "I used to live." You can see this contrast is especially evident when we use these tenses in the same sentence. Here's an example: *quando ero piccolo abitavo in campagna, ma a 13 anni mi sono trasferito in città.*

Brandon: "When I was little, I used to live in the countryside, but when I was thirteen, I moved to the city." So you can see in the first phrase, we use the imperfect tense because it doesn't have a specified point in time and focuses on the duration of the action. But the second phrase using "when I was thirteen," does have a specific time and is a completed action. Ofelia, can you give us another example?

Ofelia: *Prima di sposarmi andavo in palestra tutte le sere, poi ho smesso di fare sport.*

Brandon: "Before getting married, I used to go to the gym every night, and then I stopped doing any sports." Okay, I think I've got it.

Ofelia: Listeners, here's one more tip about the *passato prossimo*. In compound tenses like the *passato prossimo*, reflexive verbs take *essere*, meaning "to be," as an auxiliary verb. The past participle of the main verb always agrees in gender and number with the subject. For example, *mi sono specializzata in legge.*

Brandon: Meaning, "I specialized in law." Here the subject is singular and feminine...

Ofelia: ...and that's why the past participle is *specializzata*, ending with -a. When conjugating reflexive verbs in the *passato prossimo*, be sure to place the reflexive pronoun before the auxiliary verb. And in a negative statement, *non* should always precede the reflexive pronoun.

Brandon: Well, I think that about wraps up our first lesson! Listeners, be sure to check out the lesson notes for more details and examples on these two verb tenses.

## MARKETING PIECE

Ofelia: Get instant access to all of our language learning lessons.

Brandon: With any subscription, instantly access our entire library of audio and video lessons!

Ofelia: Download the lessons or listen or watch online...

Brandon: Put them on your phone or another mobile device, and listen, watch, and learn anywhere.

Ofelia: Lessons are organized by level, so progress in order, one level at a time...

Brandon: ...or skip around to different levels. It's up to you!

Ofelia: Instantly access them all right now at [ItalianPod101.com](http://ItalianPod101.com)

## OUTRO

Brandon: Thank you for listening, everyone. See you next time!

Ofelia: A presto.