

## LESSON NOTES

# Lower Intermediate S3 #1

## Meeting Your New Italian Coworker

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# DIALOGUE - FORMAL ITALIAN

## MAIN

1. Maria : Salve...
2. Sig.ra Roveri : Buongiorno!
3. Maria : Sono la nuova rappresentante della filiale americana.
4. Sig.ra Roveri : Ah, piacere! la stavamo aspettando! Sono Giada Roveri, la direttrice di questo reparto.
5. Maria : Piacere mio, mi chiamo Maria Smith.
6. Sig.ra Roveri : Qual è la sua specializzazione?
7. Maria : Ho studiato ingegneria meccanica all'università e poi mi sono specializzata in legge per il settore del packaging, mentre lavoravo.
8. Sig.ra Roveri : Interessante. Come mai ingegneria meccanica?
9. Maria : Volevo una formazione di base scientifica...
10. Sig.ra Roveri : Bene! Spero si trovi bene qui da noi. Comunque parla un ottimo italiano!

## ENGLISH

1. Maria : Hello...
2. Mrs. Roveri : Good morning!
3. Maria : I'm the new delegate from the American branch.
4. Mrs. Roveri : Oh, nice to meet you! We were waiting for you! I'm Giada Roveri, this department's manager.
5. Maria : The pleasure is mine; my name is Maria Smith.
6. Mrs. Roveri : What's your specialization?
7. Maria : I studied mechanical engineering at university, and then I specialized in law for the packaging industry while I was working.
8. Mrs. Roveri : Interesting. Why mechanical engineering?
9. Maria : I wanted training with a scientific basis...
10. Mrs. Roveri : Good! I hope you'll be comfortable here. By the way, you speak excellent Italian!

## VOCABULARY

Italian	English	Class	Gender
specializzazione	specialization	noun	feminine
rappresentante	representative; delegate	noun	masculine
ingegneria	engineering	noun	feminine
legge	law	noun	feminine
specializzarsi	to specialize	reflexive verb	
settore	area, zone, sector	noun	masculine

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

Mauro ha una specializzazione in geriatria. "Mauro has a specialization in geriatrics."	Il rappresentante è arrivato in ritardo. "The delegate arrived late."
Studi ingegneria? "Do you study engineering?"	Molti studenti in Italia scelgono di studiare Legge. "Many students in Italy choose to study Law."
Molti miei amici studiano legge. "Many friends of mine study law."	Mi sono specializzata in antropologia. "I specialized in anthropology."
Lavoro nel tuo stesso settore. "I work in the same area as you."	

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

### ***Specializzarsi* - "to specialize (literally, to specialize oneself)"**

*Specializzarsi* is formed by the verb *specializzare*, "to specialize," and the pronoun *si*. It's a reflexive verb, meaning that it refers to an action that the speaker does for himself or herself. The verb will always be combined with a personal pronoun.

This verb is used when you want to talk about your professional or educational specialization. It can also be used referring to things, such as a company or a department, where real people are involved. You can't use it in reference to animals or other non-human entities; people must be involved in some way.

This verb is typically used in the past, future, or present continuous tense; it's rarely used in the simple present tense.

For example:

1. *L'azienda ABC si è specializzata nella produzione di macchine per il caffè.*  
"The ABC company is specialized in the production of coffee machines."

### ***Formazione di base* - "basic education" or "basic training"**

*Formazione* is a noun meaning "education," "formation," or "training." When combined with the preposition *di*, meaning "of," and *base*, a noun meaning "basis," it means "basic education," "basic training," or "educational basis." The phrase *di base* is an adjectival phrase modifying *formazione*.

You can use this term when referring to the basis of an educational or professional training process. However, be careful to not confuse this with the term *formazione-base*, which is used to talk about a sport team's main formation or line-up. It looks similar, but it doesn't have the same meaning.

For example:

1. *Filippo ha una formazione di base umanistica.*  
"Filippo has an education with a focus in humanities."
2. *Il corso di formazione di base per i nuovi impiegati inizia a novembre.*  
"The basic training course for the new employees starts in November."

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of this Lesson is the Present Perfect Tense, or *passato prossimo*, and the Imperfect Tense, or *imperfetto*, which are Used to Discuss Events in the Past.**

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

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

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The *passato prossimo* tense is used to express a completed action that occurred in the past. We can describe that point in time with a date, month, or other specific expression of time (e.g., in 1994; in August; in the summer of 2003; last winter; on Thursday; or last week). For example:

1. *Mercoledì scorso sono andato al cinema con Francesco.*  
"Last Wednesday, I went to the cinema with Francesco."

The *imperfetto* tense is the equivalent of "used to" in English, and expresses an action that occurred for an indefinite period of time. It has three main functions, described below.

### 1. Description of a Past Situation:

1. *Era la casa dei miei nonni.*  
"It used to be my grandparents' house."

### 2. Description of a Repeated or Habitual Past Action:

1. *Billo mi accompagnava ogni giorno a scuola e al mio ritorno mi aspettava dietro il portone di casa.*  
"Billo used to go to school with me, and when I went back home, he was always waiting for me behind the main entrance."
2. *Da bambino, andavo in montagna tutti gli anni.*  
"When I was a child, I used to go to the mountains every year."

### 3. Description of a Continuing Past Action (with a stress on the duration):

1. *Mi fissava con paura.*  
"He was staring at me with fear."

#### Contrasting the *Passato Prossimo* with the *Imperfetto*

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The *passato prossimo* refers to completed actions that took place at a specific point in the past. In contrast, the *imperfetto* focuses on the duration of an action rather than its completeness. This contrast is particularly evident when we use the tenses in combination, as in the following examples.

1. *Quando ero piccolo abitavo in campagna, ma a 13 anni mi sono trasferito in città.*  
"When I was little, I used to live in the countryside, but when I was thirteen, I moved to the city."
2. *Prima di sposarmi andavo in palestra tutte le sere, poi ho smesso di fare sport.*  
"Before getting married, I used to go to the gym every night, and then I stopped doing any sports."

*Passato prossimo* can be imagined as a specific point on a timeline.

1. *Mi sono trasferito*  
"I moved."
2. *Ho smesso*  
"I stopped."

*Imperfetto* can be imagined as a continuous action on a timeline.

1. *Ero*  
"I was..." or "I used to be..."
2. *Abitavo*  
"I lived..." or "I used to live..."
3. *Andavo*  
"I went..." or "I used to go..."

One more tip about the *passato prossimo*: in compound tenses like the *passato prossimo*, reflexive verbs take *essere*, "to be," as an auxiliary verb. Consequently, the past participle of the main verb always agrees in gender and number with the subject. When conjugating reflexive verbs in the *passato prossimo*, we place the reflexive pronoun before the auxiliary verb. In negative statements, *non* always precedes the reflexive pronoun.

For example, *mi sono specializzata in legge*, means, "I specialized in law." Here the subject is singular and feminine, and that's why the past participle is *specializzata*, ending with *-a*.

#### Example from the Dialogue:

1. *Volevo una formazione di base scientifica...*  
"I wanted an education with a scientific basis..."

## Sample Sentences

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1. *Quando ero bambina, sono andata in Svizzera tre volte.*  
"When I was a child, I went to Switzerland three times."
2. *Mentre il sole tramontava, ha iniziato a piovere.*  
"While the sun was going down, it started raining."

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

### The Italian University System

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The most characteristic thing about the Italian university system is that the most universities are public schools. In general, if the course of study is not scientific, such as medicine or mathematics, there isn't an entrance examination for students. On the other hand, completing all of the exams and graduating is considered to be very difficult.