

Reshaping Language Dynamics: Italian Verb Tenses and their Consecutio Temporum in Contemporary Communication

Piermauro Catarinella^{1*}, Suhardi Kram², Omar Colombo³, Muhammad Alhakeem Husain⁴

¹Academy of Language Studies, UiTM Shah Alam, Malaysia

²Faculty of Sports Science & Recreation, Samarahan, UiTM Sarawak, Malaysia

³Language Centre, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

⁴College of Creative Arts, UiTM Selangor, Malaysia

*Corresponding Author's

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.903SEDU0136>

Received: 18 February 2025; Accepted: 03 March 2025; Published: 03 April 2025

ABSTRACT

The Italian language employs a plethora of verb tenses, with the temporal context of an action bearing significance in both written and spoken communication. The grammatical framework governing verb tenses and their consecutio temporum plays a pivotal role in achieving correctness, clarity, and linguistic excellence in Italian. Derived from Latin, the sequence of tenses entails a set of stringent rules that facilitate seamless coordination between main and subordinate clauses, thereby fostering coherent discourse. Through an analytical approach, this research aims to investigate the grammatical structure of Italian verb tenses and their consecutio temporum in contemporary communication. It seeks to explore whether these conventions retain their significance among Italians or if they have diminished in importance over time. Findings suggest that while consecutio temporum remains crucial in formal writing, adherence to this rule often falters due to the Italian educational system's recent prioritization of subjects other than grammar. However, in specific instances, deviating from verb tenses and their sequence does not alter the overall discourse clarity, while in others, it leads to linguistic ambiguity. This study not only highlights the proficiency gap among many high school and university graduates in Italian grammar - an inadequacy that frequently impedes their suitability for high-ranking positions - but also underscores the adverse effects of diminishing emphasis on grammatical education in Italian schools. By revealing how neglecting verb tenses and their consecutio temporum impacts linguistic proficiency and cultural development, this research paper emphasizes the necessity of prioritizing grammar to foster well-prepared and culturally enriched citizens.

Keywords: Consecutio temporum, Grammar rules, Italian language, Italian verb tenses

INTRODUCTION

The concept of consecutio temporum, or sequence of tenses, constitutes a fundamental grammatical principle that entails maintaining consistent verb tenses within a sentence or clause, particularly concerning the primary verb. This practice is indispensable for ensuring clarity and precision in delineating temporal relationships among various actions or events. In Latin, the progenitor of Italian and other Romance languages, consecutio temporum assumes paramount importance in conveying nuanced meanings. In essence, when the main verb of a sentence is cast in a specific tense, subordinate verbs reliant upon it should correspondingly adopt tenses logically aligned with the principal action. For example, if the main verb is expressed in the past tense, subordinate verbs ought to similarly manifest in past tense forms, signifying actions that unfolded concurrently, sequentially, or antecedently. Such an approach mitigates confusion and establishes a lucid chronology of events. In Italian, adherence to the consecutio temporum remains pivotal for grammatical accuracy. It facilitates the construction of coherent and logically structured sentences, thereby enhancing communicative efficacy. Whether recounting past occurrences, addressing present situations, or envisaging future scenarios, adherence to the

sequence of tenses is indispensable for articulating ideas with precision. Italian boasts a rich array of tense formations that enable subtle distinctions and precise articulation of various temporal relationships. The present tense, for instance, can be articulated in five distinct forms, the past tense in six, and the future in four. Moreover, each verb is characterized by seven distinct verbal forms, which convey the speaker's disposition towards the content expressed in the sentence (Velli, 2022).

Consecutio temporum serves to convey meticulous and accurate temporal information within a sentence, ensuring coherence and lucidity in narrative construction. It enables listeners or readers to grasp the chronological interplay among different actions. In Italian, the selection of a particular tense in one segment of a sentence can significantly influence the interpretation of others. Neglecting or misapplying the sequence of tenses may engender confusion or ambiguity in depicting temporal relationships within a narrative. Ultimately, adherence to consecutio temporum constitutes a cornerstone of precision and clarity in communication, which is indispensable for effective language usage across diverse contexts.

Hence, the relevance of consecutio temporum persists in both written and spoken Italian for several compelling reasons (Daniel, 2020).

- 1) **Temporal Precision:** It is indispensable not only for ensuring clear and accurate communication but also for enabling listeners or readers to comprehend the temporal relationships among different actions or occurrences.
- 2) **Clarity and Understanding:** Correct utilization of tenses enhances the clarity of communication. Misuse of tense can confuse by implying a different temporal context than intended. Matching the tense with the context is crucial to ensure an accurate understanding of messages.
- 3) **Conveying Nuances:** Through the utilization of various tenses, Italian speakers can convey subtle nuances of meaning. For instance, choosing between the *passato prossimo* (present perfect tense) and *imperfetto* (past continuous tense) can signify whether an action was completed or ongoing in the past, respectively.
- 4) **Expressing Sequence of Events:** Tenses play a vital role in establishing the sequence of events in a narrative or conversation. Italian relies on specific tenses to denote the chronological order of actions. Employing the correct tense enables listeners or readers to follow the progression of events in the intended sequence.
- 5) **Politeness and Formality:** The selection of tense can also convey politeness and formality. For instance, the conditional tense is often employed in polite requests. Understanding and employing these nuances is essential in diverse social and professional settings.
- 6) **Grammatical Accuracy:** Employing the appropriate tense is a fundamental aspect of grammatical accuracy, showcasing proficiency in the language and adherence to its grammatical conventions. This aspect holds particular significance in written communication, where errors in tense usage can be more conspicuous.
- 7) **Cultural Competence:** Proper application of tenses reflects a deeper comprehension of the Italian language and culture, demonstrating respect for linguistic norms and facilitating effective communication within Italian-speaking communities.
- 8) **Cultural and Linguistic Tradition:** The usage of consecutio temporum is deeply rooted in the linguistic and cultural tradition of Romance languages, including Italian. It embodies the historical evolution of the language and contributes to its cultural identity.

Regrettably, these essential grammar rules have experienced a decline in their prominence in recent years due to the following factors (Panno, 2021).

- 1) Numerous sudden reforms, often disjointed from one another, have significantly impacted the educational system from the post-war period to the present day. Teachers have been challenged to adapt to new programs amidst successive reforms. Since the fall of the Mussolini regime, Italy has undergone extensive educational reforms, with modifications occurring eleven times between 1945 (Bottai reform) and 1990. Subsequent changes were introduced by various Ministers of Education, including D'Onofrio in 1995, Berlinguer in 1997, and Fioroni in 2006. Further transformations took place under Gelmini in

2008, Moratti in 2012, Renzi in 2015, and Draghi in 2020

- 2) The abolition of the study of Latin in middle schools in 1978 occurred under the premise that the language, perceived as antiquated, lacked relevance for modern education. However, the structured nature of Latin serves to enhance students' intellectual capacities, fostering analytical skills and critical thinking essential for comprehending various subjects.
- 3) In classrooms where up to 60% of the students are non-EU citizens or second-generation immigrants, challenges arise in the study of the Italian language, including grammar. Many of these individuals often lack adequate proficiency in the official Italian language, which impedes their ability to engage with approved academic curricula. The current Minister of Education has proposed the introduction of specialized enhancement classes to support these students in bridging the knowledge gap and aligning with their Italian native-speaker counterparts. Unfortunately, this proposal faces resistance from several political factions in Parliament, driven by ideological considerations (De Gregorio, 2024).
- 4) Classical and humanistic studies are increasingly perceived as outdated in the context of advancements in new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI). The latest reforms emphasize the role of modern education not in transmitting cultural heritage but rather in preparing students for entry into the workforce (Bonsanto, 2023).
- 5) Contemporary trends in Italian schooling, echoing those observed in other EU states, emphasize subjects endorsed by influential LGBTQIA+ lobbies, such as eco-feminism, gender reassignment, gender dysphoria, and transgender rights. Nonetheless, these subjects have faced criticism primarily from specific political factions and pedagogues for their perceived focus on indoctrination rather than the dissemination of authentic cultural knowledge. It is worth noting that despite such criticisms, these subjects enjoy support from EU institutions (Grossi, 2023).

Problem Statement and Novelty

Prior studies, as outlined in the Literature Review, have predominantly addressed students' proficiency in employing verb tenses and *consecutio temporum*. However, this research endeavors to delve into two underexplored facets: the adherence of professionals, such as journalists or politicians, to these grammar conventions in their written and oral communications, and the instances where linguistic clarity is maintained despite deviations from these rules. The novelty of this study lies in its examination of written and oral discourses produced by professionals, who are expected to uphold elevated standards of language usage, rather than focusing solely on student samples.

Research Objectives

This study seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of Italian verb tenses and their application in both written and spoken communication. Specifically, the research aims to:

- 1) Examine the proper use of Italian verb tenses, including their standard grammatical structures and the numerous exceptions that arise in expressing concepts across present, past, and future timeframes.
- 2) Investigate the extent to which sentence clarity is preserved when verb tenses are employed outside their conventional grammatical framework, assessing the potential impact on comprehension and coherence.
- 3) Evaluate the proficiency of individuals presumed to have an advanced mastery of Italian grammar - such as journalists, educators, and politicians - in applying the principles of *consecutio temporum* in their discourse.

Furthermore, this study aims to explore the broader linguistic and communicative implications of deviations from grammatical norms. By analyzing real-world language use, it seeks to determine whether non-standard

applications of verb tenses contribute to linguistic evolution or hinder effective communication. Through this investigation, the research intends to provide valuable insights into contemporary language dynamics and their impact on the intelligibility and precision of discourse in professional and public domains.

Research Questions

Maintaining *consecutio temporum* is crucial for grammatical precision and coherence in communication. It ensures the construction of logically structured sentences, which are essential for effective discourse. In contemporary Italian, however, linguistic shifts and evolving communication styles may influence how these grammatical principles are applied. Whether referring to past, present, or future events, adherence to the correct sequence of tenses remains indispensable for accurately conveying ideas.

This study aims to address the following research questions concerning the application of *consecutio temporum*:

- 1) Do individuals considered linguistically proficient, such as journalists and politicians, consistently employ verb tenses and their *consecutio temporum* accurately in both spoken and written discourse?
- 2) What are the consequences of disregarding grammatical conventions when constructing sentences? Does the clarity of communication deteriorate when verb tenses and their *consecutio temporum* are misused?

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a qualitative approach, focusing on the observation and interpretation of the grammatical rules governing tense usage in the Italian language. The key components of this study include:

- 1) **Examination of Grammar Rules:** A thorough review of the current rules governing the sequence of tenses in Italian will be conducted. This will involve analyzing primary grammar textbooks and authoritative linguistic sources to establish a baseline understanding of the standard usage of verb tenses in different contexts.
- 2) **Analysis of Deviations:** Specific instances where the *consecutio temporum* deviates from its prescribed rules will be identified. This will include analyzing both written and spoken texts, such as interviews, public speeches, and broadcasts, to identify patterns of deviation and to understand the contexts in which these deviations occur.
- 3) **Critical Review of Media Texts:** A detailed review of contemporary Italian newspaper articles and public speeches from various media platforms will be undertaken. These sources will be examined to assess how frequently verb tenses are used without strict adherence to the *consecutio temporum* and whether such deviations affect the clarity and coherence of the communication. Special attention will be given to contexts where these deviations may be intentional for stylistic or rhetorical effect.
- 4) **Data Collection and Analysis:** Data will be collected through a combination of text and discourse analysis. Relevant sources will be selected, ensuring a diverse range of contexts (e.g., political speeches, journalistic articles, and public debates). These materials will be examined for examples of tense usage and for the clarity of communication, despite the potential misapplication of tense rules.
- 5) **Significance and Limitations:** The methodology will also consider the broader social and linguistic implications of *consecutio temporum* in public discourse, particularly in the context of its diminished importance in contemporary Italian communication. Additionally, potential limitations of the study, such as the subjectivity inherent in qualitative analysis and the scope of media sources available, will be acknowledged.

The references cited in the Literature Review section provide further insights into why this crucial grammatical

rule has diminished in importance over time, allowing readers to explore the issue in greater depth.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section underscores the significance of revisiting prior research in two principal domains closely intertwined with the essence of our study: Italian verb tenses, their temporal sequence, the significance of these grammatical principles, and the potential jeopardy to their instruction and comprehension. On one front, it is essential to scrutinize the successive reforms within the Italian education system spanning from 1945 to the present. On the other front, attention must be directed towards the contemporary landscape of Italian primary and secondary schools, particularly amidst profound socio-cultural shifts catalyzed by immigration dynamics. In delving into the first aspect, it is imperative to analyze the series of educational reforms implemented in Italy since 1945. Turning to the latter, a thorough examination of the present circumstances within Italian elementary and secondary educational institutions is warranted, especially given the escalating proportions of non-Italian students, often reaching peak levels of 30 to 40%. These individuals typically lack proficiency in the Italian language due to limited exposure or absence of prior instruction. This substantial demographic encompasses those holding Italian citizenship (commonly referred to as second-generation citizens) yet whose mother tongue diverges from Italian, owing to their parents' migrant status, resulting in the prioritization of languages other than Italian within their familial and recreational spheres.

2022, Eva Luna Mascolino's guide, *Come funziona la consecutio temporum? La guida* (A Guide to Understanding the Italian Sequence of Tenses), offers comprehensive insights into the utilization of Italian *consecutio temporum*, presenting both theoretical underpinnings and practical applications. This book serves as a valuable resource for individuals seeking to enhance their proficiency in the Italian language. Through numerous illustrative examples, the author elucidates the implementation of this rule across diverse contexts, drawing comparisons between the Latin and Italian *consecutio temporum* as frameworks governing the usage of verb tenses within main and subordinate clauses.

Fabrizio Dal Passo (2020) authored a notable research paper titled *La scuola italiana, le riforme del sistema scolastico dal 1848 ad Oggi* (The Italian school and the Educational System's Reforms from 1848 until today) wherein he meticulously traces the pivotal transformations within the educational system from the inception of the unitary state to the recent Gelmini reform. Dal Passo argues that one of the most detrimental reforms to the Italian educational system occurred in 1978 with the removal of Latin from the compulsory curriculum. He emphasizes that the elimination of Latin instruction for students aged 12-15 constituted a regressive step, leading to a decline in comprehension of the Italian language and its grammatical structures. From a methodological standpoint, Dal Passo contends that Latin serves not only as an ancient language but also as a cognitive exercise akin to mathematics or chess. He asserts that the study of Latin fosters the development of students' critical thinking abilities. Moreover, Latin remains foundational in legal and scientific domains, such as zoological nomenclature, and serves as a key tool for comprehending the rich cultural, artistic, literary, philosophical, and scientific heritage of Western Europe. Contrary to common misconception labeling Latin as an obsolete language devoid of contemporary relevance, Dal Passo argues that the study of classical languages should catalyze interpreting the classical world through a modern lens. Analyzing the thoughts of ancient scholars enables a deeper understanding of cultural comparisons and the ongoing societal shifts encountered in daily life.

Ali's 2021 research, titled *Difficoltà nell'apprendimento del sistema verbale italiano da parte di student egiziani* (The difficulties in mastering the Italian verbal system by Egyptian students), sheds light on the tendency of students holding Egyptian nationality to construct sentences without including the verb. Despite attending Italian public schools, these students encounter challenges in recognizing the verb as a crucial and intricate linguistic component, both morphosyntactically and semantically, serving as the nucleus around which other sentence elements orbit. One potential explanation for the struggle with correct verb tense usage may lie in the disparities between the structure and forms of verb tenses in Italian and Arabic. While Italian encompasses three primary tenses - present, past, and future - with further subdivisions such as present perfect, past perfect, imperfect, and remote past perfect within the past tense, and simple future and future perfect within the future tense, Arabic only features two fundamental verb tenses. As a consequence, the teaching of Italian grammar in classrooms with a high proportion of foreign students (or second-generation Italians) often falls short. This deficiency poses

a tangible risk of hindering the language acquisition progress of foreign students, potentially leading to adverse repercussions for their future endeavors.

Silvia Scolaro's 2021 research, titled *I docenti di Italiano a studenti cinesi* (Teachers of Italian Language for Students from China), argues that Chinese-background students require additional exercises to grasp the correct usage of Italian verb tenses and *consecutio temporum*, as Chinese grammar is comparatively simpler than the Italian one. For Chinese foreign students, particularly those intending to establish permanent residency in Italy, understanding grammar is imperative for attaining a proficient command of the Italian language and integrating into the workforce after completing their education. The author supports the Italian Education Minister's suggestion to introduce supplementary classes for students from other countries attending Italian public schools. This initiative is deemed essential to bridge the gap between native Italian speakers and those with different mother tongues. Mastery of the language, including grammar, is regarded as the primary tool for achieving full societal integration.

Caggiano's 2023 study, *Lingua-cultura italiana per studenti stranieri* (Italian Language and Culture for Foreign Students), highlights the inadequacy of the allotted hours for teaching Italian to foreign students residing in Italy, whose parents migrated to the country. These students attend public schools ranging from elementary to high school levels with a limited command of the Italian language. Given their constrained linguistic proficiency, it becomes impractical to impart the Italian language and its grammatical intricacies to these students within the existing timeframe. The author proposes that foreign students should participate in extracurricular classes to attain a certain level of proficiency on par with that of native Italian-speaking students. Implementing mandatory enhancement classes aimed at fostering the inclusion of foreign students becomes imperative to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all. However, the politicization of these issues hampers the attainment of tangible and effective outcomes.

In 2023, Biancarosa Biagioli conducted a study titled *Il tempo verbale nel testo: tempo e tempus* (Verb Tenses in Written Compositions: Indicating Time in Italian and Latin Language), wherein she examined written assignments of high school students who are native Italian speakers to assess their proficiency in using verb tenses and *consecutio temporum*. The analysis revealed a prevalent lack of understanding of these grammatical rules among many students. Rather than employing verb tenses to denote the timing of actions, students often rely on adverbs and conjunctions to convey temporal information. For instance, consider the sentence: *Domani vieni a trovarmi. Quando arrivi, possiamo giocare un po' col subbuteo, poi vediamo la televisione. Nel frattempo mia madre ci prepara qualche panino, così si mangia in pace. Alla fine, ad ora di cena, ognuno a casa sua* (Tomorrow, you come to visit me. When you arrive, we can play together, and after we watch TV. In the meanwhile, my mum can cook something for us. When dinner time comes, you go back home). Notably, the entire sentence is composed solely in the present tense. While such discourse construction might be deemed acceptable in informal conversations, it should be rejected in written form as it disregards verb tenses. Biagioli argues that this tendency is partly influenced by the writing style prevalent in social media platforms, which negatively impacts Italian students' writing skills.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in linguistic and educational theories that elucidate the evolving role of Italian verb tenses and their *consecutio temporum* in modern communication. The framework integrates insights from past research on grammatical structures, language instruction, and sociolinguistic shifts, particularly in light of educational reforms and increasing linguistic diversity within Italian classrooms.

Mascolino's (2022) guide on *consecutio temporum* serves as a foundational reference, offering a structured approach to understanding the sequence of tenses in Italian. Her work highlights how verb tenses function as interdependent elements rather than isolated forms, reinforcing the argument that proper mastery of *consecutio temporum* is crucial for maintaining coherence in both written and spoken Italian. This aligns with our study's aim of assessing how contemporary speakers apply these grammatical principles in real-world communication.

Dal Passo's (2020) research on educational reforms in Italy provides a historical perspective on how structural

changes in the curriculum have impacted students' grammatical proficiency. His argument that the removal of Latin from the middle and high school curriculum weakened students' grasp of Italian grammar is particularly relevant. Since Latin follows strict rules governing tense sequences, its exclusion may have contributed to a decline in explicit grammatical knowledge, affecting the ability of Italian speakers to use verb tenses accurately. This aspect of educational policy is crucial in understanding potential gaps in contemporary language competence.

Ali's (2021) study on Egyptian students' challenges with Italian verb tenses illustrates how linguistic background influences tense acquisition. The difficulties these learners face - such as omitting verbs entirely or misusing tenses due to structural differences between Arabic and Italian - mirror broader trends among second-generation immigrants and foreign students in Italy. Given the increasing presence of multilingual speakers in Italian society, Ali's findings raise pertinent questions about how tense usage is evolving in diverse linguistic contexts. Our research builds on this by examining whether native speakers are also experiencing shifts in their application of *consecutio temporum*.

Scolaro's (2021) findings on Chinese students' struggles with Italian grammar further emphasize the need for explicit grammatical instruction. Her advocacy for additional support classes to help non-native speakers master verb tenses aligns with our investigation into whether contemporary Italian speakers, regardless of their linguistic background, are adequately applying traditional grammatical rules in communication. If even native speakers exhibit inconsistencies in tense usage, this would indicate a broader trend affecting language dynamics beyond foreign learners.

Caggiano's (2023) study on the insufficient classroom time allocated for teaching Italian grammar highlights another crucial factor in language proficiency. If native and non-native students alike receive minimal formal instruction in tense usage, their ability to internalize the rules of *consecutio temporum* is likely compromised. This is particularly relevant when considering modern communication styles, where digital discourse tends to favor simplified sentence structures and informal syntax.

Finally, Biagioli's (2023) research on high school students' written compositions provides empirical evidence of a shift in how verb tenses are used in contemporary Italian. Her observation that students increasingly rely on adverbs and conjunctions rather than verb tense changes to indicate time suggests a decline in the traditional application of *consecutio temporum*. She attributes this trend, at least in part, to the influence of social media and informal digital communication. This directly aligns with the core concern of our study: whether Italian speakers, especially younger generations, are reshaping the use of verb tenses in response to changing linguistic habits.

By synthesizing these perspectives, this study aims to assess whether *consecutio temporum* remains a stable feature of contemporary Italian or if it is undergoing a transformation influenced by educational policies, multilingualism, and evolving communication practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following excerpts are invaluable for understanding the coordination of tenses between primary and subordinate clauses. A main (or independent) clause conveys a complete meaning and is not reliant on another sentence. Conversely, a subordinate clause is always contingent upon a preceding one. If it depends on the main proposition, the subordinate clause is considered of the first degree. Should it hinge on another subordinate clause, it attains the second degree, and so forth, creating a hierarchical structure (Cataldo, 2022). This study exclusively concentrates on clauses utilizing indicative verbs (present, past, or future) for analysis. The focus lies on the utilization of tenses in the Italian language and their interconnectedness among various clauses.

When tasked with selecting the appropriate tense for the subordinate clause, it is imperative to clarify the timing of the action or event with that of the main clause - whether it occurs before, after, or concurrently. Discerning the relationship of contemporaneity, precedence, or posteriority between the subordinate and main clause establishes the groundwork for comprehending the Italian *consecutio temporum* and employing it accurately.

Concordanze dei tempi dell'indicativo

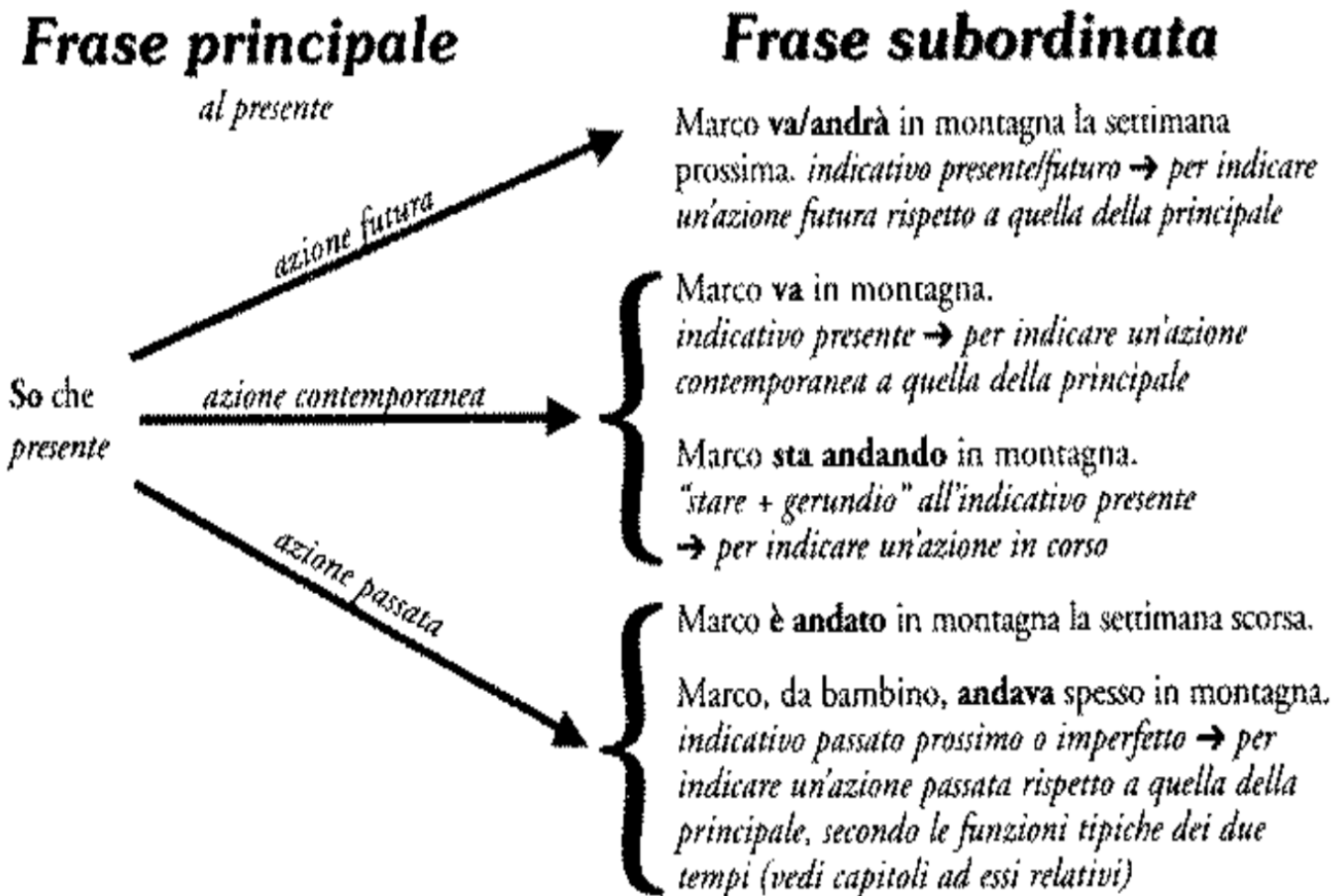


Figure 1. It illustrates the alignment between primary (Frase principale) and subordinate (Frase subordinata) clauses. (Source: <http://grammatica.impariamoitaliano.com/2014/06/concordanza-dei-tempi-dellindicativo.html>)

In this representation, the primary clause employs the present tense, while the subordinate clause may utilize various tenses to convey distinct temporal relationships between the actions or events described in both clauses. The first arrow signifies that the action articulated in the subordinate clause will occur subsequent to the one expressed in the primary clause. The second arrow indicates simultaneous unfolding of actions delineated in the main and subordinate clauses. Lastly, the third arrow suggests that the action outlined in the subordinate clause precedes the one stated in the main clause.

When the primary clause is in the present tense, the subordinate clause may employ:

A) The present indicative or future tense to denote that the action or event will take place at a future moment relative to the one expressed in the primary sentence. For instance: So che il tuo carissimo amico Marco va (or andrà) in montagna la settimana prossima (I know that your dear friend Mark is going or will go to the mountains next week). In this context, the present and future tenses are interchangeable.

B) The present indicative exclusively to indicate that the action or event is contemporaneous with the one expressed in the primary clause. For example: So che il tuo carissimo amico Marco va in montagna (I know that your beloved friend Mark is going to the mountains).

C) The present perfect or imperfect tense to signify a past action compared to the one expressed in the primary clause. For example: So che il tuo carissimo amico Marco è andato (or andava) in montagna (I know that your dear friend Mark has gone or went to the mountains).

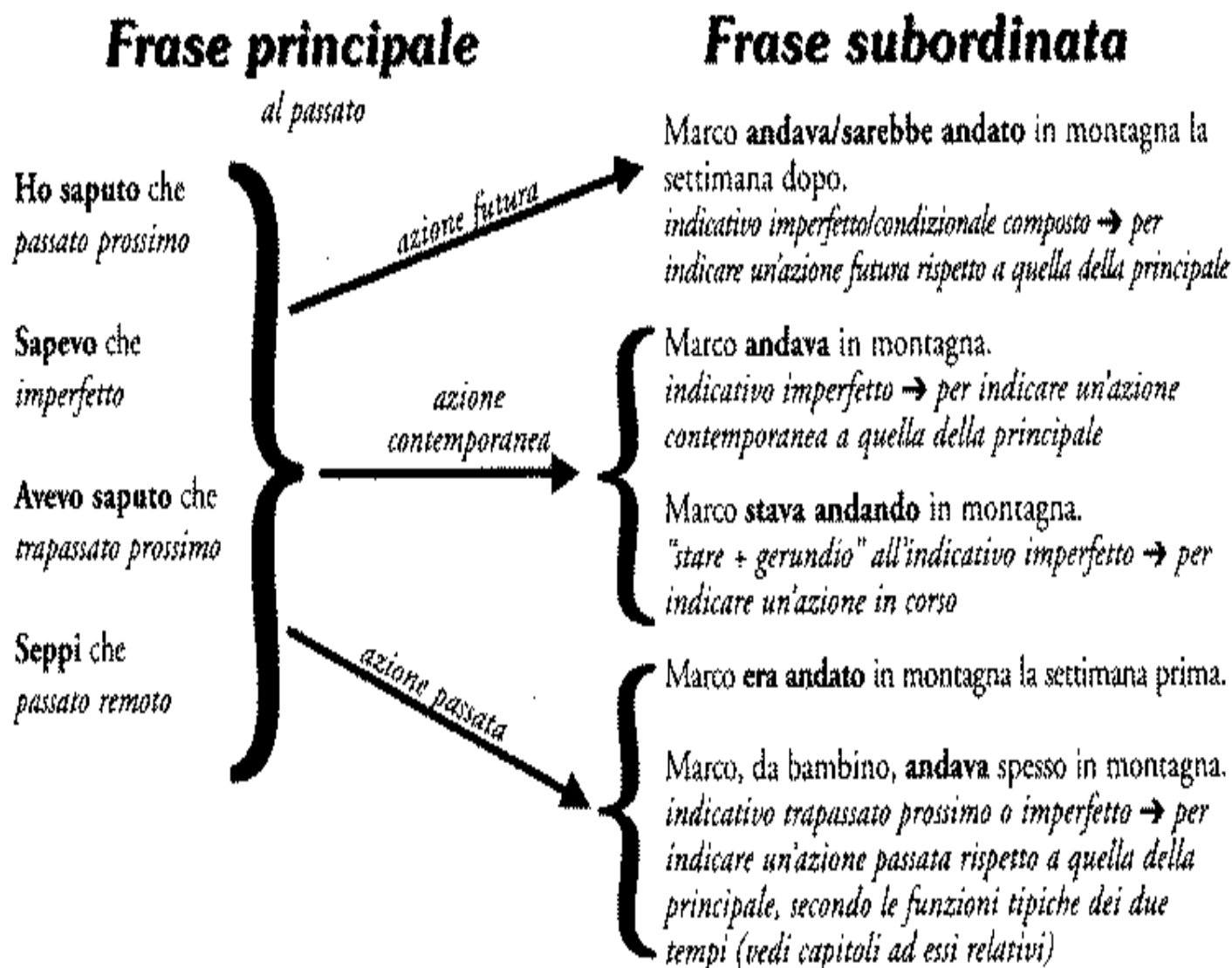


Figure 2. Demonstration of tense concordance between the main (Frase principale) and subordinate (Frase subordinate) clauses. (Source: <http://grammatica.impariamoitaliano.com/2014/06/concordanza-dei-tempi-dellindicativo.html>)

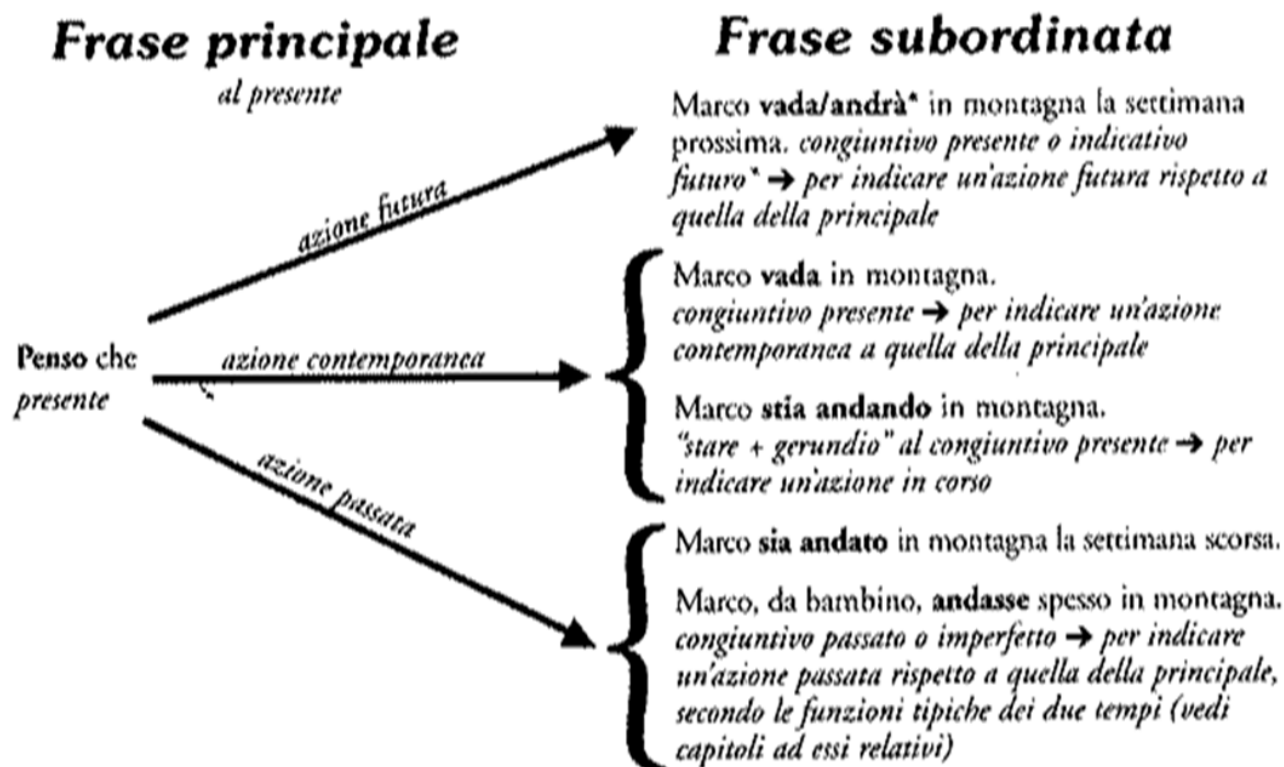
In this illustration, the main clause is presented in the past tense, while the subordinate clause may adopt various tenses depending on the temporal relationship between the actions or events described in both sentences. The arrows in this secondary representation serve the same purpose as those in Figure 1. When the main clause is articulated in the past tense, the subordinate clause may employ:

A) The imperfect or the composed conditional to signify an action or event intended to occur in the future relative to the one described in the main sentence. For example: Ho saputo o Sapevo, Avevo Saputo, Seppi che Marco andava or sarebbe andato in montagna la settimana dopo (I knew or I have/had known that Mark would go to the mountain the following week).

B) The imperfect alone to indicate an action or event concurrent with the one conveyed in the main sentence. For instance: Ho saputo o Sapevo, Avevo Saputo, Seppi che Marco stava andando or andava in montagna (I knew or I have/had known that Mark was going to the mountain).

C) The past perfect or the imperfect to denote an action or event preceding the one recounted in the main sentence. For example: Ho saputo o Sapevo, Avevo Saputo, Seppi che Marco era andato in montagna (I knew or I have/had known that Mark had gone to the mountain)

Concordanze dei tempi del congiuntivo



*Il futuro si può usare solo con i verbi di opinione, speranza e dubbio.

Figure 3. It illustrates the concordance in tenses between the main (Frase principale) and subordinate (Frase subordinata) sentences when the latter necessitates the subjunctive form. (Source: <https://www.studocu.com/it/document/universita-degli-studi-mediterranea-di-reggio-calabria/scienze-della-formazione-primaria/consecutio-temporum-terze/72181805>)

The subjunctive is utilized as the verbal tense to establish a connection between the subordinate sentence and the main one, particularly with verbs expressing opinions, desires, hopes, expectations, emotions, feelings, doubts, hypotheses, etc. Essentially, the subjunctive emphasizes any subjective and personal approach. Moreover, in Italian, the subjunctive is mandatory in sentences introduced by the following words or expressions: A condizione che, ammesso che, a patto che, affinché, benché, malgrado, nonostante, quantunque, sebbene (provided that, assuming that, in case, although, despite that, so that, as if, unless). In this figure, the main clause employs the present tense (I think that), while the subordinate clause may adopt different tenses to convey various temporal relationships between the actions/events depicted in the main and subordinate sentences. The first arrow signifies that the action indicated in the subordinate clause will occur after the one expressed in the main clause. For example: Penso che Marco vada or andrà (I think that Mark will go). The second arrow indicates that the two actions described in the main and subordinate clauses happen simultaneously (e.g., Penso che Marco vada or stia andando - I think that Mark goes or is going), while the third arrow suggests that the action detailed in the subordinate clause precedes the one stated in the main clause. For example: Penso che Marco sia andato or andasse (I think that Mark has gone or went).

It is now pertinent to examine situations where the rules governing verb tenses and their consecutio temporum are not strictly adhered to, particularly in informal conversations (Lo Duca, 2022).

Present Perfect vs. Imperfect

Native Italian speakers often comprehend the intended meaning even if the tense is slightly incorrect, especially in casual or conversational settings where the focus is on communication rather than strict adherence to grammar

rules. Consider the following examples:

Incorrect Italian: Ieri, ho giocato a tennis quando pioveva. (Yesterday, I played tennis when it was raining)

Correct sentence: Ieri, mentre giocavo a tennis ha cominciato a piovere. (Yesterday, while I was playing tennis, it started raining)

In this instance, using the present perfect form *ho giocato* instead of the imperfect *giocavo* (both translated into English as “I played”) does not precisely align with the temporal sequence because it began raining while I was playing tennis. However, in oral and informal conversations, the context clarifies that playing tennis and the onset of rain occurred almost simultaneously in the past. While these sentences may be understood in casual conversation, it remains important to strive for grammatical accuracy, particularly in more formal or written communication.

Present Tense Instead of Past

Incorrect utilization of tenses in Italian may result in ambiguity or obscure the clarity of sentences. This is exemplified in the following instances:

Present tense: Ogni giorno vado al cinema (Every day I go to the cinema)

Imperfect tense: Ogni giorno andavo al cinema (I used to go to the cinema every day)

Utilizing a different tense imparts a distinct meaning, elucidating the temporal circumstances of actions and events. Choosing the present tense *vado* (I go) instead of the past tense *andavo* (I used to go) may engender confusion by suggesting an ongoing or habitual action rather than a past routine.

Another example illustrates the use of the present tense by a journalist (Lo Nostro, 2023) when referring to events that occurred nine days ago: *La guerra in Medio Oriente raggiunge il suo nono giorno* (The war in the Middle East reaches its ninth day). Similarly, the present tense is employed in a sentence (Chiapparino, 2023) referencing events from 2014: *Le leggi della giungla della competizione international non sono cambiate, dichiara Xi ai militari nel 2014* (The laws governing international competition among states did not change, declares Xi to the military armed forces in 2014).

Using the present tense to recount past events can evoke a vivid or narrative effect, emphasizing and recollecting an event even though it transpired in the past. For instance (Franceschini, 2023): *Il giorno 9 Novembre del 1989 cade il Muro di Berlino e c'è un'atmosfera eccitante nell'aria* (On November 9th, 1989, the Berlin Wall falls, and there is an exciting atmosphere in the air). Similarly (Falcinella, 2022), *Nel 1954 esce il film Due notti con Cleopatra ed inizia la strepitosa carriera cinematografica di Sofia Loren* (In 1954, the film *Two Nights with Cleopatra* is released, marking the commencement of Sophia Loren's remarkable career). Alternatively, (Zurlo, 2023), *Prisley scappa dallo Sri Lanka nel 2002, forse proprio a seguito del terribile fatto di sangue* (Prisley, an illegal migrant, escapes from Sri Lanka in 2002, following a heinous crime). In another instance (Fazzo, 2023) *Il gambiano Sillah diventa ieri il 712esimo immigrato espulso in base alla legge per ragioni di sicurezza nazionale* (Gambian Sillah yesterday becomes - not became - the 712th immigrant expelled under the Homeland Security law for national security reasons). Utilizing the present tense creates a sense of immediacy, as if the past events of 1954, 1989, and 2002 are unfolding in the present moment. Again: *La giornata di ieri rappresenta un antipasto di quello che potrebbe succedere nei prossimi mesi* (Yesterday represents an anticipation of what could happen in the next months). If the journalist refers to yesterday, he should have used the form of the past tense instead of the present (Basile, 2024). Among the numerous tenses employed by the Italian language, the present is the one adopted most of the times when the speaker faces uncertainty with the correct use of the consecution temporum.

Sentences without stating the tense

In Italian, constructing a clear sentence without employing any tense (referred to as nominal phrases) can pose a challenge. Tenses play a pivotal role in indicating the timing of actions and events. While certain contexts may

permit a more ambiguous expression of time, completely omitting tense can result in ambiguity and hinder the comprehension of the temporal relationship between different elements in a sentence for listeners or readers. Tense serves to establish a timeline and offers clarity in communication. Therefore, although it is technically feasible to formulate a sentence without explicitly stating the tense, it may not effectively convey the intended meaning, and the absence of temporal information could render the sentence unclear or ambiguous. Nevertheless, in some instances, it is feasible to construct sentences without explicitly indicating the tense when making general statements. For example, it is grammatically correct to assert *Mangiare la pizza è delizioso* (Eating pizza is delicious). While the verb *mangiare* (to eat) implies an action, the specific tense is not specified, resulting in a more generalized statement about the act of eating pizza. Expressing preferences does not inherently necessitate the use of a tense. For instance, stating *Guardare un bel film è piacevole* (Watching movies is enjoyable) indicates an activity without specifying when it occurs, conveying a more timeless or habitual action. When providing instructions or commands, the inclusion of tenses can be omitted. For example, the sentence *Studia per l'esame* (Study for the exam) does not denote any specific tense, as it concentrates on the action to be undertaken rather than its temporal aspect. While these sentences may be suitable in particular contexts, it is essential to recognize that in more intricate or narrative scenarios, specifying the tense becomes imperative for clarity and precision (Mormile, 2023).

The use of past tense to describe present events

The use of the past tense to depict ongoing events can introduce a sense of detachment or contemplation. This phenomenon is evident in several instances:

- 1) *Oggi è iniziato lo sciopero dei lavoratori addetti al settore marittimo* (The strike of workers in the maritime sector commenced today).
- 2) *Nel 2023 l'Europa ha subito una paurosa immigrazione illegale* (Europe experienced a daunting influx of illegal immigration in 2023).
- 3) *Quest'anno, ho incontrato persone straordinarie che hanno cambiato la mia prospettiva sulla vita* (Throughout this year, I encountered exceptional individuals who significantly altered my outlook on life).
- 4) *Giorno numero cinque. Tel Aviv schiera 300mila soldati. Nel quinto giorno di guerra contro Hamas, Israele ha bombardato la casa di Mohammed Deif* (On the fifth day of the conflict with Hamas, Tel Aviv deployed 300 thousand soldiers and carried out airstrikes on Mohammed Deif's residence). This sentence effectively conveys the timing of events, allowing readers to comprehend when they occur. However, the journalist's narrative appears somewhat imprecise as he transitions (Lo Nostro, 2023) from the present tense (Tel Aviv deploys) to the past tense (Israel bombed) within the same sentence.
- 5) *Nicola Gratteri, oggi procuratore a Napoli, ha puntato il dito contro i politici proponendo per loro i test attitudinali e pure quelli per rilevare consumo di alcol e droga. Forse, Gratteri non sapeva che proprio in Calabria, la regione dove è rimasto a lungo, c'era un suo collega positivo a tutte le analisi da lui suggerite* (Presently serving as chief prosecutor in Naples, Nicola Gratteri criticized politicians by suggesting tests to identify alcohol and drug use. It is possible Gratteri was unaware that one of his colleagues in Calabria, where he previously resided, tested positive for all recommended screenings. According to the grammatical rule governing verb tenses, the appropriate choice for these sentences would be the present tense - Gratteri criticizes and Gratteri is - as both events mentioned are ongoing (Zurlo, 2024).

However, despite the grammatical rule, all the aforementioned sentences employ the past tense to impart a sense of reflection or to narrate events that remain relevant to the speaker's current experience. This choice adds a layer of storytelling or contemplation to the depiction of present circumstances.

The use of present tense to refer to future events

The utilization of the present tense to indicate future events is a common stylistic choice. Several examples illustrate this practice:

- 1) *Domani parto per le mie vacanze. Sono così emozionato!* (Tomorrow, I leave for my vacation. I am so excited!)

- 2) La settimana prossima inizio un nuovo lavoro. Non vedo l'ora! (Next week, I start a new job. I cannot wait!).
- 3) Questo fine settimana vedo i miei amici ed insieme organizziamo una cena speciale (This weekend I see my friends and together we organize a special dinner).

On October 28, 2023, journalist Francesco Severini wrote: Esce il 31 ottobre il nuovo libro di Vittorio Feltri (On October 31, Vittorio Feltri's new book is available at bookstores). While a more conventional choice might have been the future tense ("will be available"), the clarity of the written sentence remains unaffected.

In these instances, the present tense is employed to indicate future actions, imbuing a sense of immediacy and personal involvement in the forthcoming events. This stylistic choice contributes to a dynamic and vibrant tone in the descriptions of future plans.

The use of future tense to refer to the present time

Using the future tense to refer to the present time can convey a sense of prediction, intention, or planning. Consider the following examples:

- 1) Tra venti minuti arriverò a casa tua (In twenty minutes, I will reach your house).
- 2) Questa sera leggerò il nuovo libro fino a tarda notte (Tonight, I will read the new book until late at night).

In these instances, the future tense is employed to express planned or intended actions in the present, instilling a sense of anticipation or expectation. This linguistic choice effectively conveys the speaker's intention or prediction regarding imminent events. The utilization of verb tenses in Italian is marked by a myriad of exceptions. Discrepancies arise not only between written and spoken language but also between formal and informal contexts. Moreover, specific groups of individuals, such as singers, artists, journalists, and writers, are inclined to create captivating and dreamlike language, intentionally diverging from conventional grammar rules (Di Mari, 2023). In Italian, expressing the temporal aspect of events or actions is not solely reliant on verb tenses. Italian utilizes a combination of adjectives, adverbs, and context to convey temporal information, allowing for a more nuanced and adaptable representation of time. While Italian encompasses various verb tenses, relying solely on them may not always provide a comprehensive depiction of when an event occurred.

Additional elements are often employed to enhance temporal precision. Adjectives, for instance, can impart a sense of time. Words such as *vecchio* (old) or *nuovo* (new) can describe the age of an action or event, introducing an additional layer of detail to the temporal context. Adverbs also play a pivotal role in articulating the timing of an action. Terms such as *spesso* (often), *mai* (never), or *presto* (soon) contribute to temporal nuances in Italian. Context is equally significant in Italian communication, influencing the interpretation of when an action takes place. The context of the conversation, along with additional details, helps determine whether the action is unfolding in the present or alluding to the past. Participants often rely on contextual cues to accurately interpret the timing of actions, fostering a dynamic and nuanced expression of time in conversations (Balzano, 2023).

The use of the present tense to refer to past and future events

The present tense in Italian exhibits remarkable flexibility beyond merely describing current actions or situations (Calandra, 2020). Its versatile nature allows it to convey facts, actions, and events of both the past and the future, contingent on the context. For instance: *Il sole sorge ad est* (The sun rises in the east) or *L'acqua bolle a 100 gradi Celsius* (Water boils at 100 degrees Celsius). In such cases, the present tense serves as a timeless conduit for articulating enduring truths, imparting a sense of permanence and universality to the conveyed information. It is akin to stating, *Le cose stanno così* (This is how things are), without being tethered to a specific moment in time - past, present, or future. This introduces a layer of timelessness to the language, capturing the enduring essence of certain statements. It is fascinating how language can adapt to convey not only the immediate present but also enduring truths and narratives, enhancing storytelling. This phenomenon is known as the historical present. For example: *Napoleone invia una lettera al suo generale* (Napoleon sends a letter to his general). The use of the present tense in this context infuses immediacy into the narrative, making it more engaging and dynamic. Moreover, the present tense can also denote future events, particularly in colloquial speech. This is

often achieved by combining the present tense with time expressions indicating the future (Meloni, 2023). For instance: *L'Italia storicamente svolge un ruolo di ponte tra Europa e Medio Oriente. Così parla Giorgia Meloni al Senato il giorno 25 ottobre, in vista del Consiglio Europeo del 26 e 27 Ottobre 2023* (Historically, Italy plays a bridge role between Europe and the Middle East. Thus speaks Giorgia Meloni to the Italian Senate on October 25, 2023, in anticipation of the European Council on October 26 and 27, 2023). In essence, the present tense in Italian transcends actions occurring at the exact moment of speaking. Its usage extends to encompass general truths, historical narratives, and even future events, rendering it a versatile tool for expressing a wide range of temporal concepts. Understanding the specific context and intention behind the use of the present tense is crucial for accurate interpretation in Italian discourse.

Major errors in verb tenses and temporal coherence

Here are some sentences containing grammar mistakes, made by individuals with a certain level of cultural background, related to the use of verb tenses and their *consecutio temporum* that should not be condoned in written Italian.

- 1) On December 23, 2023, journalist Enrico Tata wrote: *Il personale della sicurezza ha chiamato il 118 alle 14.54 ma alle 18.10 ancora non è arrivata nessuna ambulanza* (Security officers called the emergency service at 2.54 pm but at 6.10 pm the ambulance does not arrive). The verb tenses used in the first and second phrases are not interconnected correctly, generating an ambiguity about the temporal occurrence of the events. The correct grammatical use of verb tenses would require the sentence to be written as follows: *Il personale della sicurezza chiamò il 118 alle 14.54, ma alle 18.10 ancora non era arrivata nessuna ambulanza* (Security officers called the emergency services at 2:54 pm, but by 6:10 pm, no ambulance had arrived).
- 2) On December 8, 2023, reporter Matteo Castellucci wrote: *L'esercito israeliano in passato ha sostenuto di far spogliare i detenuti per assicurarsi che non abbiano esplosivi nascosti* (In the past, Israel army forced prisoners to undress to make sure they do not have hidden weapons). The second sentence fails to employ the subjunctive form (*non avessero*, instead of *non abbiano*), indicating a lack of understanding of the grammar rule of *consecutio temporum*. Consequently, the writing appears to be marred by a significant error. A grammatically correct sentence should be written in this way: *L'esercito israeliano in passato ha sostenuto di far spogliare i detenuti per assicurarsi che non avessero esplosivi nascosti* (In the past, the Israeli army claimed to have forced prisoners to undress to ensure they did not have hidden explosives). Now, the sentence follows the appropriate grammar rules, specifically the *consecutio temporum*. It uses the subjunctive form *avessero* to maintain consistency in the temporal relationship between the main clause (*ha sostenuto* - claimed) and the subordinate clause (*non avessero* - did not have). This ensures grammatical accuracy and clarity in expressing past actions and their consequences.
- 3) During a televised debate on March 18, 2024, political scientist Edward Luttwak stated: *L'occidente avrebbe dovuto accorgersi prima del pericolo che rappresenta lo zar* (the West should have understood a long time ago that President Putin is a danger). Although Mr. Luttwak, being a US citizen and not a native Italian speaker, might be given some leniency in this instance, the incorrect usage of verb tenses in both segments of his brief speech remains apparent. A proper application of *consecutio temporum* necessitates the following formulation: *L'occidente avrebbe dovuto accorgersi prima del pericolo rappresentato dallo zar* (the West should have realized earlier the danger represented by Mr. Putin).
- 4) On March 19, 2024, journalist Vittorio Feltri wrote: *Mi stupisco di determinati commenti, magari sarebbe stato preferibile fossero più miti e moderati* (I am suprised by such harsh comments: it would have been better if they were milder and more moderate). The sentence exhibits an incorrect use of *consecutio temporum* as the subordinate clause fails to employ the past perfect tense, as it should. An accurate formulation would be: *Sarebbe stato preferibile fossero stati più miti e moderati* (it would have been better if they had been milder and more moderate). This adjustment is necessary because the comments preceded the journalist's observation, necessitating the use of the subjunctive form in the past tense.
- 5) On 21 March 2024, pollster Renato Mannheimer, during a talk show, said: *Mi sembra difficile che Matteo*

Salvini cambia linea perché ha un suo carattere (It seems unlikely to me that Italian Deputy Prime Minister Matteo Salvini changes his stance because he has his own character). He was supposed to use the subjunctive form *cambi* in the subordinate clause because he expresses just an opinion in the main clause and not a proven fact; instead, he employs the present indicative *cambia*, thus rendering his speech inaccurate and lacking refinement.

- 6) On March 24, 2024, journalist Francesco Storace wrote: *La UE ci fa morire di burocrazia. La rivendicazione è per una politica che decide e non lascia marcire i problemi dei popoli* (the EU is killing us with its bureaucracy. The demand is for a policy that actively addresses and prevents the festering of people's issues. However, Storace's use of the present indicative *che decide* (which decides) instead of the subjunctive form *che decida* alters the intended meaning of the sentence. The present indicative implies the fulfillment of a certain fact, whereas the subjunctive conveys the hope or possibility of a certain action. By using the present indicative, Storace inadvertently suggests that EU institutions promptly resolve citizens' problems, contrary to his intended message.
- 7) On April 2, 2024, journalist Andrea Vivaldi wrote: *Negli ultimi 10 anni c'è una fetta di popolazione che ha fatto coming out nel contesto lavorativo* (in the past 10 years there is a large number of people who declared their homosexuality in their workplaces). Adhering strictly to grammatical rules necessitates the use of the past tense "there was" instead of the present tense "there is". The sentence's clear expression of the temporal context, "10 years ago", helps the reader understand its intended meaning despite the departure from traditional grammar rules regarding verb tenses.
- 8) On April 4, 2024, reporter Antonio Frascilla wrote: *Ieri il consiglio di amministrazione che doveva approvare il contratto e le deleghe della nuova direttrice generale è stato rinviato* (yesterday the board of directors which had to approve the contract and the functions of the new general director was postponed). A more precise use of verb tenses would entail writing *avrebbe dovuto approvare il contratto* = should have approved the contract, rather than *doveva approvare il contratto* = had to approve the contract.
- 9) While participating in a talk show on December 15, 2023, the Mayor of Pesaro, Matteo Ricci, remarked, *Nessuno di noi sa come reagirebbe se si trova davanti dei rapinatori* (none of us knows how we would react if we are faced with robbers). An Italian politician should steer clear of committing such egregious grammatical errors in a public speech. It is an elementary rule that calls for the use of the subjunctive form after the word *se* (if) because it denotes a hypothetical possibility. *Nessuno di noi sa come reagirebbe se si trovasse davanti dei rapinatori* (none of us knows how we would react if we were faced with robbers) represents the correct form for both written and spoken language.
- 10) During a televised public debate on March 26, 2024, spectators were presented with the following statements: 1) MP Elisabetta Piccolotti stated: *Io credo che il problema sorge allorquando parliamo di un ministro in carica* (I believe that the problem arises when we talk about an incumbent minister). In Italian, when verbs expressing personal thoughts, such as "to believe", are utilized, the subordinate sentence requires the subjunctive form *sorga* rather than the indicative *sorge*. 2) Former MP Alessandro Di Battista expressed, *Io ritengo che il presidente del Senato è indegno di ricoprire quella carica* (I believe that the President of the Senate is unfit to hold that position). After expressing a personal belief, the subordinate sentence necessitates the subjunctive form *sia* (is) instead of the indicative *è* (is) because the latter denotes an objective fact rather than an opinion. 3) Journalist Federico Rampini stated, *La mossa del presidente francese Macron, che gli esperti militari definiscono ambiguità strategica, mira ad indurre Putin ad avere un certo timore per la Nato, timore che fino ad oggi non ha* (French President Macron's move, which military experts define as strategic ambiguity, aims to induce Putin to have a certain fear for NATO, a fear that he has not to date). In this case, the utilization of the past tense is required (a fear that he has not had to date) because, according to Rampini's statement, Putin has never feared NATO. 4) MP Stefano Graziano remarked: *La vicenda che riguarda Salvini e la Le Pen chiama in causa la Meloni che non risponde e si copra la faccia con la giacca* (the affair involving Mr. Salvini and Mrs. Le Pen involves Italian Prime Minister Meloni who does not respond and covers her face with her jacket). He wrongly

uses the subjunctive form (*copra* = covers) when he refers to Mrs. Meloni and her action of covering the face. Graziano incorrectly uses the subjunctive form *copra* (covers) when referring to Mrs. Meloni. In this context, the present indicative *copre* (covers) must be used because it is a certain fact, not simply hypothesized, that Italian Prime Minister Meloni covered her face with her jacket during a parliamentary debate.

- 11) On April 4, 2024 journalist Lorenzo De Cicco wrote: *Santanchè non c'è. No, alla Camera non vado, ha risposto di prima mattina. Sono già in viaggio per Napoli* (Tourism Minister Santanchè is not here. I do not attend the debate, she replied in the morning. I am on the way to Naples). A more accurate connection of verb tenses between the interconnected sentences would require the present tense to be used consistently; the use of the present perfect (*ha risposto di prima mattina* = she replied in the morning) in only one instance is unwarranted.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underscore the troubling reality that the Italian education system is failing to impart essential grammatical principles integral to the Italian language. It is disheartening to observe that individuals occupying prominent positions in the realm of communication, such as journalists and politicians, frequently exhibit deficiencies in written and oral expressions. A stark example of this deficiency is evidenced in the January 2022 public examination for the recruitment of 310 new magistrates, where a mere 5.7% of candidates successfully passed the written component. Many candidates demonstrated poor command of Italian, committing errors in spelling, syntax, logical analysis, and verb tense agreement. Notably, eligibility for such examinations extends beyond a mere undergraduate degree in law, requiring additional qualifications such as licensure, doctoral research, or completion of specialized postgraduate programs in legal studies (Frosina, 2022). The educational landscape appears to have veered away from its fundamental mission of instilling comprehensive language proficiency, including a thorough grasp of grammar. The literary luminaries of yesteryears, such as Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca, Pietro Bembo, Alessandro Manzoni, and Italo Calvino, are regrettably absent from contemporary middle and high school curricula, paralleled by the waning emphasis on written Italian composition. Despite the efficacy of manual writing in nurturing linguistic competence, its practice has dwindled in educational institutions, supplanted by the dominance of keyboard usage (Barattelli, 2023).

A pivotal misstep occurred in 1978 with the abolition of Latin studies in middle schools. The indispensability of Latin in fostering not only logical reasoning but also holistic cognitive development, including visual and musical faculties, cannot be overstated. Latin's interdisciplinary nature engenders a deeper understanding of subjects and fosters interactive learning experiences. Incumbent Education Minister Giuseppe Valditara's expressed intent to reintegrate Latin into the national curriculum offers a promising prospect for enhancing students' linguistic proficiency and intellectual engagement (Ianniello, 2024).

Lastly, the Italian education system faces the urgent task of addressing the plight of students, particularly children of migrants, who, despite being mandated to attend public schools, lack proficiency in the country's official language. This deficiency impedes their ability to receive a quality education, hindering the effective implementation of school programs even for those with a strong command of Italian. Failing to address this issue could exacerbate societal divisions (Amabile, 2024). The alarming rate of school dropout among students with migrant backgrounds in Italy, currently at 35.4%, is three times higher than that of native Italian pupils (9.8%). Given its profound impact on both education and broader societal issues, this topic warrants deeper investigation and will be a central focus of future research endeavors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors did not receive any financial support for conducting, writing, and publishing this study.

Conflict Of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

REFERENCES

1. Ali, M. (2021). Difficoltà nell'apprendimento dei verbi italiani da parte di studenti egiziani. Vol. 10, N. 2. Luglio 2021. Ain Shams University, Egypt. E-ISSN 2280-6792. <https://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/media/pdf/article/elle/2021/2/art-10.14277-10.30687-ELLE-2280-6792-2021-02-006.pdf>
2. Amabile, F. (2024, January 17). Quasi un milione di ragazzi frequentano le scuole senza avere la cittadinanza italiana. I minori stranieri abbandonano gli studi. La Stampa. https://www.lastampa.it/cronaca/2024/01/17/news/quasi_un_milione_di_ragazzi_frequentano_le_scuole_e_senza_avere_la_cittadinanza_italiana-14001117/
3. Balzano, V. (2023, October 9). Quali sono le parole del tempo. Parole del tempo e grammatica. Quali sono. <https://qualisono.com/quali-sono-le-parole-del-tempo-della-lingua-italiana/>
4. Barattelli, B. (2023, June 14). Insegnare grammatica: come, quando e perché. Spunti formativi. Pearson. <https://it.pearson.com/aree-disciplinari/italiano/approfondimenti-disciplinari/insegnare-grammatica-come-quando-perche.html>
5. Basile, M. (2024, January 18). Trump show. Rischia l'espulsione dall'aula e attacca il giudice Kaplan: "Non accettare la prova dell'abito in stile Lewinsky è un atto di ostilità". Donald Trump si è scontrato in aula con l'ennesimo giudice. La Repubblica. https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2024/01/18/news/trump_processo_carroll_diffamazione_giudice_kaplan-421905466/?ref=RHLF-BG-P3-S1-T1
6. Biagioli, B. (2023). Il tempo verbale nel testo: tempo e tempus. Giscel. https://giscel.it/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Biagioli-Deon-Il-tempo-verbale-nel-testo_tempo-e-tempus.pdf
7. Bonsanto, M. (2023, August 23). La nuova riforma scolastica sarà la fine della scuola italiana. I valori attribuiti all'istruzione dalla Costituzione saranno stravolti dalla nuova riforma scolastica proposta da Draghi e portata avanti da Meloni, che metterà la scuola a servizio del lavoro e non più della formazione dell'individuo. Micro Mega. <https://www.micromega.net/la-nuova-riforma-scolastica-sara-la-fine-della-scuola-italiana/>
8. Caggiano, G. (2023). Lingua-cultura italiana per studenti stranieri. Università Roma Tre. Fondo Europeo per l'integrazione. <https://romatrepress.uniroma3.it/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Lingua-cultura-italiana-per-stranieri.pdf>
9. Calandra, G. (2020, September 21). Presente Indicativo: perché è difficile, come fare per non dimenticarlo! Impara l'italiano con Giulia. Lezioni di Italiano. <https://imparalitalianocongiulia.com/2020/09/21/presente-indicativo-perche-e-difficile-e-come-fare-per-non-dimenticarlo/>
10. Castellucci, M. (2023, December 8). Cosa sappiamo sulla foto dei prigionieri senza vestiti a Gaza. Corriere della Sera. https://www.corriere.it/esteri/23_dicembre_08/foto-prigionieri-ammanettati-senza-vestiti-gaza-6c81d8c4-95d0-11ee-af56-7295451e31b5.shtml
11. Cataldo, S. (2022, July 24). Come distinguere le coordinate dalle subordinate? Italiano Go Student. <https://insights.gostudent.org/it/come-distinguere-le-coordinate-dalle-subordinate>
12. Chiapparino, V. (2023, November 14). "Conta solo la forza". Le inquietanti parole di Xi Jinping. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica-estera/xi-jinping-vede-futuro-delle-relazioni-stati-uniti-2240903.html>
13. Dal Passo, F. (2020). La scuola italiana e le riforme del sistema scolastico. Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza". <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335749761>
14. Daniel, E. (2020, March 3). Consecutio temporum: cos'è e come si usa. L'espressione consecutio temporum, mutuata dalla grammatica latina, si usa per indicare il sistema che regola la concordanza dei tempi verbali tra proposizione principale e proposizione subordinata. Solo Libri. <https://www.sololibri.net/Consecutio-temporum-come-si-usa.html>
15. De Cicco, L. (2024, April 4). Bocciata la mozione di sfiducia a Santanchè. La ministra assente alla Camera: Ho cose più importanti da fare. Non fuggo, sono una combattente. La Repubblica. https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2024/04/04/news/santanche_mozione_sfiducia_camera-422421303/?ref=RHLF-BG-P8-S1-T1
16. De Gregorio, C. (2024, March 3). Scuola, ecco perché quelle classi separate per stranieri non sono di destra. Possiamo insegnare l'italiano a chi non lo parla, ci sono le risorse? La Repubblica.

- https://www.repubblica.it/commenti/2024/03/03/news/classi_separate_stranieri_scuola_valditara_destr-a-422242556/
17. Di Mari, M. (2023, May 6). Il linguaggio onirico (e femminile) nelle superfici tessili viste alla Milano Design Week. Decor. <https://www.elledector.com/it/design/a43802973/il-linguaggio-onirico-e-femminile-nelle-superfici-tessili-viste-alla-milano-design-week/>
 18. Falcinella, N. (2022, September 26). Due notti con Cleopatra. My Movies. Il Cinema dalla parte del pubblico. <https://www.mymovies.it/film/1954/due-notti-con-cleopatra/>
 19. Fazzo, L. (2023, October 19). Sbarco continuo di “fighter”. Espulso gambiano dell'Isis. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/reietto-giro-leuropa-perch-killer-non-fu-espulso-2228010.html>
 20. Feltri, V. (2024, March 19). Putin, la pace e le elezioni russe. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica-estera/putin-pace-e-elezioni-russe-2298508.html>
 21. Franceschini, E. (2023, November 9). Muro di Berlino, il 9 novembre 1989 la caduta. La Repubblica. https://www.repubblica.it/esteri/2023/11/09/news/caduta_muro_berlino_9_novembre_1989-419930207/
 22. Frascilla, A. (2024, April 4). Gelo tra Meloni e Santanchè per le nomine all'Enit. Il blitz della ministra fallisce. La premier impone la scelta della nuova presidente Priante. La Repubblica. https://www.repubblica.it/politica/2024/04/04/news/enit_meloni_santanche_nomine-422418777/?ref=RHLF-BG-P1-S1-T1
 23. Frosina, P. (2022, May 22). Linguaggio primitivo e logica assente: 95% di bocciati alla prova scritta in magistratura. Il commissario: “Centinaia i temi imbarazzanti”. Il Fatto Quotidiano. <https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2022/05/22/linguaggio-primitivo-e-zero-logica-record-di-posti-scoperti-al-concorso-in-magistratura-il-commissario-centinaia-i-temi-imbarazzanti/6600161/>
 24. Grossi, L. (2023, December 15). “Propaganda gender con i soldi pubblici”. Bufera sul progetto della sinistra toscana. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/cronaca-locale/propaganda-gender-i-soldi-pubblici-bufera-sul-progetto-2256039.html>
 25. Ianniello, M. (2024, March 14). Valditara: “reintrodurre il latino alle medie”. E perché no? Cultura e Identità. <https://culturaidentita.it/valditara-latino-scuola-media/>
 26. Lo Duca, M.G. (2022, February 2). Riflessioni sul paradigma verbale dell'italiano. Pearson. Idee per insegnare. <https://it.pearson.com/aree-disciplinari/italiano/idee-per-insegnare/riflessioni-sul-paradigma-verbale-italiano.html>
 27. Lo Nostro, G. (2023, October 11). Israele spegne Gaza. Netanyahu: "Ogni membro di Hamas è un uomo morto". La diretta. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/guerra/notte-raid-su-gaza-colpita-casa-capo-militare-hamas-1200-i-2224259.html>
 28. Lo Nostro, G. (2023, October 15). Razzo contro la base Unifil. L'Iran minaccia gli Usa: “Riceverete danni significativi”. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/guerra/gaza-assediata-israele-grandi-operazioni-evacuazione-civili-2226253.html>
 29. Luttwak, E. (2024, March 18). Quarta Repubblica, puntata andata in onda il giorno 18 marzo 2024. Mediaset. https://mediasetinfinity.mediaset.it/video/quartarepubblica/puntata-del-18-marzo_F312803301002701
 30. Mannahimer, R. (2024, March 21). Programma televisivo Piazza Pulita, puntata del 21 marzo 2024. La7. <https://www.la7.it/piazzapulita/rivedila7/piazzapulita-21032024-22-03-2024-532920>
 31. Mascolino, E. L. (2022, February 5). Come funziona la consecutio temporum? La guida. Che tempo verbale usare in una subordinata, se nella frase principale c'è un verbo al presente che descrive un'azione avvenuta in seguito? Il Libraio. <https://www.illibraio.it/news/grammatica/consecutio-temporum-guida-1410435/>
 32. Meloni, G. (2023, October 25). Il discorso di Giorgia Meloni a palazzo Madama del giorno 25 Ottobre 2023 in vista del Consiglio Europeo, programmato per i giorni seguenti, e cioè il 26 e 27 Ottobre 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiEFUQFkpU8>
 33. Mormile, G. (2023, June 1). Come si chiama una frase senza verbo? Analisi logica. Sostegno 2.0. <https://sostegno20.it/frase-nominale-scuola-primaria/>
 34. Panno, P. (2021, September 20). L'evoluzione del sistema scolastico in Italia. Editor: Le Penseur. ISBN-13:978-8895315799. <https://www.libraccio.it/libro/9788895315799/pietro-biagio-panno/evoluzione-del-sistema-scolastico-in-italia-con-uno-sguardo-al-domani.html>
 35. Piccolotti, E. et al. (2024, March 26). Di Martedì, condotto da Giovanni Floris, puntata del 26 marzo

2024. La7. <https://www.la7.it/dimartedi/rivedila7/dimartedi-puntata-del-2632024-27-03-2024-533842>
36. Ricci, M. (2023, December 15). Programma televisivo Di Martedì, puntata del 15 dicembre 2023. La7. <https://www.la7.it/dimartedi/rivedila7/dimartedi-puntata-del-5122023-06-12-2023-517385>
37. Scolaro, S. (2021, May 7). I docenti di Italiano a studenti sinofoni afferenti ai programmi Marco Polo e Turandot fra Italia e Cina. Italiano Lingue Due. Vol. 13, N. 1. Università Ca' Foscari Venezia. <https://riviste.unimi.it/index.php/promoitals/article/view/15859>
38. Severini, F. (2023, October 28). Feltri all'attacco del totalitarismo semantico: "Io uso tutte le parole proibite e me ne vanto". Secolo d'Italia. <https://www.secoloditalia.it/2023/10/feltri-allattacco-del-totalitarismo-semantico-io-uso-tutte-le-parole-proibite-e-me-ne-vanto/>
39. Storace, F. (2024, March 24). Matteo Salvini, il retroscena: così tenta la spallata contro Ursula von der Leyen. Gli uccelli del malaugurio cambino mestiere. Libero Quotidiano. <https://www.liberoquotidiano.it/news/politica/38846095/matteo-salvini-retroscena-spallata-ursula-von-der-leyen.html>
40. Tata, E. (2023, December 28). Cade dalle scale alla stazione Anagnina e resta a terra: l'ambulanza arriva dopo tre ore. Fanpage. <https://www.fanpage.it/roma/cade-dalle-scale-alla-stazione-anagnina-e-resta-a-terra-lambulanza-arriva-dopo-tre-ore/>
41. Velli, M. (2022, January 20). Lingua Italiana, i verbi: cosa sono e quali sono i vari tipi. Il Portale Italiano. https://www.wecanjob.it/archivio21_lingua-italiana-verbi-cosa-sono-quali-sono-vari-tipi_0_754.html
42. Vivaldi, A. (2024, April 2). Comunica all'azienda di voler iniziare il percorso per l'affermazione di genere: viene subito licenziata. La denuncia di una ragazza toscana. La Repubblica. https://firenze.repubblica.it/cronaca/2024/05/02/news/cambia_genere_trans_licenziata_pisa_causa_lega-le-422404778/?ref=RHLF-BG-P12-S3-T1
43. Zurlo, S. (2023, October 11). L'assassino reo confesso chiede asilo e resta libero. Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/l-assassino-reo-confesso-chiede-asilo-e-resta-libero-2224207.html>
44. Zurlo, S. (2024, March 30). Il giudice che si droga? Scoperto e "graziato". Il Giornale. <https://www.ilgiornale.it/news/politica/giudice-che-si-droga-scoperto-e-graziato-2303149.html>