



Piazza della Grammatica 1 • Antonella Olson & Eric Edwards, Presentatori e Capocomici

Gentili Ascoltatori, Dear Listeners,

Here's a transcript of *Just Look at Yourself*, our recent show on **reflexive** and **double object pronouns**. You can hear this podcast at <https://coerll.utexas.edu/ra/episode/ep12.html>

Buon divertimento!

Ha partecipato  
Esmeralda Moscatelli

*Featured in this broadcast*  
*Colombina*

## Il Dottore, per i Verbi Pronominali

**Dottore:** Salve, gentili ascoltatori! Mi trovo qui nello studio oggi per svolgere un compito molto piacevole: quello di sottolineare quanto vi divertirete, quando vi sarete impadroniti dei Verbi Pronominali. Infatti, è quasi impossibile esprimersi bene nella nostra favella senza di essi. Non fermatevi ora! Continuate ad imparare, a coniugare... soprattutto questi bei Verbi Pronominali che si offrono ora alla vostra riflessione. Guardatevi allo specchio e ditevi: "Proprio oggi mi metto a parlare con tutto il potere dei Verbi Pronominali! Me lo raccomanda il bravo Dottore, che si specializza in queste cose, *ergo*, devono essere buoni!" *In speculo non pulchritas -- sed veritas!*

=====

## The Dottore, for Pronominal Verbs

**Dottore:** Hail, kind listeners! I'm here in the studio today to perform a very pleasant task: that of emphasizing how much fun you will have when you have mastered the Pronominal Verbs. In fact, it is almost impossible to express oneself well in our tongue without them. Don't stop now! Continue to learn, to conjugate... above all these fine Pronominal Verbs which are offered now for your reflexion. Look at yourselves in the mirror and say to yourselves: "This very day I shall begin to speak with the full power of the Pronominal Verbs! The good Dottore recommends it, the Dottore who specializes in these matters, *ergo*, they must be good!" *In speculo non pulchritas -- sed veritas!*

=====

## Il Dottore, per il Caffè Chiarezza

**Dottore:** Signori e Signore! Studenti e studentesse! Alti e bassi, belli e brutti, venite, ascoltate, imparate! Eccola, eccola, eccola! La sostanza quasi magica, senz'altro deliziosissima, che rende ogni mattina più che tollerabile! Chi di voi mi aiuterà a fare la prova? Lei, signore? No? Lei, signorina?

**Colombina:** Dottore! Buon giorno, Dottore! Ma Lei che cosa sta facendo qui?

**Dottore:** Sssshhhhh... Colombina, ti prego, fai finta di non conoscermi! Dai, aiutami... Brava, signorina, mi dica, per favore, come comincia la sua giornata tipica?

**Colombina:** Beh, insomma, prima di tutto, **mi** sveglio...

**Dottore:** Si sveglia! Ottimo! La signorina **si** sveglia. E **si** alza, non è così?

**Colombina:** No, cioè non **mi** alzo subito... preferisco dormire ancora qualche minutino... **mi** piglio ancora dieci, quindici minuti di pace e riposo prima di alzarmi.

**Dottore:** **Si** piglia ancora un quarto d'ora di beato sonno! Brava! E poi...

**Colombina:** **Mi** alzo, sì. **Mi** metto l'accappatoio, **mi** lavo la faccia.

**Dottore:** La signorina **si** alza, **si** veste e **si** lava! Brava, brava...

**Colombina:** **Mi** guardo allo specchio, e... e...

## The Dottore, for Caffè Chiarezza

**Dottore:** Ladies and gentlemen! Students! Tall and short, handsome and homely, come, listen, learn! Here it is, here it is, here it is! The almost magical substance, certainly scrumptious, that makes every morning more than tolerable! Who among you will help me to prove it? You, sir? No? You, miss?

**Colombina:** Dottore! Good day to you, Dottore! But what are you doing here?

**Dottore:** Sssshhhhh... Colombina, I beg of you, pretend not to know me! Come on, help me... Fine, miss, tell me, please, how does your typical day begin?

**Colombina:** Well, I mean, first of all, I wake up...

**Dottore:** You wake up! Excellent! The young lady wakes up! And then you get up, don't you?

**Colombina:** No, that is, I don't get up right away... I prefer to sleep for another little minute or two... I grab myself another ten, fifteen minutes of peace and rest before I get up.

**Dottore:** You grab yourself another quarter hour of blessed sleep! Fine! And then...

**Colombina:** I get up, yes. I put on my robe, I wash my face.

**Dottore:** The young lady gets up, she gets dressed, she washes up! Fine, fine...

**Colombina:** I look at myself in the mirror and... and...

**Dottore:** **Si** guarda allo specchio e.. come **si** sente?

**Colombina:** **Mi** sento... **mi** sento come se avessi una nebbia densa intorno alla testa...

**Dottore:** Ho capito! Tutti ci siamo sentiti così, la mattina presto, non è vero? E ci dica, signorina, come **si** libera da questa nebbia mattutina?

**Colombina:** Bene, io, come tanti altri, **mi** preparo un buon caffè...

**Dottore:** **Si** prepara un buon caffè! Brava, brava! E quale caffè usa Lei, signorina?

**Colombina:** Io? Beh, io, a casa, c'ho il caffè Valazza.

**Dottore:** Ah-ha! Il caffè Valazza ce l'ho anch'io, qui! Vediamo adesso se sa riconoscere il caffè che, secondo Lei, lei beve ogni mattina!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Ecco tre caffè diversi. Uno, e solo uno, è il suo caffè Valazza. Lo saprà distinguere dagli altri? Venga, signorina, li assaggi e ci dica, qual è il caffè che secondo Lei, è quello più delizioso, più profumato, più capace di distruggere quella nebbia mattutina!

**Colombina:** Eh... volentieri...

**Dottore:** Ecco la prima tazzina! Coraggio, assaggi pure. Come lo trova?

**Colombina:** Oh! Questo caffè è troppo forte!

**Dottore:** You look at yourself in the mirror... and how do you feel?

**Colombina:** I feel... I feel as though I had a dense fog about my head...

**Dottore:** I understand! We have all felt that way, early in the morning, isn't it true? And tell us, miss, how do you free yourself of that morning fog?

**Colombina:** Well, I, like so many others, I make myself a good cup of coffee.

**Dottore:** You make yourself a good cup of coffee! Fine, fine! And what coffee do you use, miss?

**Colombina:** Me? Well, me, at home, I have Caffè Valazza.

**Dottore:** Ah-ha! I too have Caffè Valazza right here! Let's see now if you can recognize the coffee that you say you drink every morning!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Here are three different coffees. One, and only one, is your own Caffè Lavazza. Will you be able to distinguish it from the others? Come, miss, try them and tell us, which is the coffee that according to you, is the most delicious, the most capable of destroying that morning fog!

**Colombina:** Eh... gladly...

**Dottore:** Here's the first little cup! Now then, go ahead and try it! How is it?

**Colombina:** Oh! This coffee is too strong!

**Dottore:** Avete sentito? Questo caffè è troppo forte! Forza, avanti! Prego, signorina, ecco la seconda tazzina! Assaggi! Come lo trova?

**Colombina:** Oh! Questo caffè è troppo debole!

**Dottore:** Avete sentito? Questo caffè è troppo debole! Ora ci resta solo questo, l'ultima tazzina! Assaggi! Come lo trova?

**Colombina:** Oh! Mmmmmmm... Aaaaaahhhh... Questo è il caffè che fa per me! È perfetto!

**Dottore:** Avete sentito? Questo è il caffè che fa per lei! Il caffè perfetto! Signorina, crede che questo sia il Suo caffè Valazza?

**Colombina:** Non lo so, ma è squisito! Me ne offre ancora un pochino, Dottore?

**Dottore:** Ha, ha! Pazienza, signorina. Vediamo prima quale caffè è stato troppo forte.... Ecco.... Caffè Valazza! Troppo forte il Caffè Valazza!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Vediamo ora quale caffè è stato troppo debole... Ecco... Caffè Valazza Light! Troppo forte il Caffè Valazza Light!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Vediamo ora quale caffè è stato per - fet - to! Ecco... Caffè Chiarezza! Il Caffè Chiarezza è il caffè che fa proprio per lei! Il caffè perfetto che distrugge la nebbia mattutina!

Caffè Chiarezza -- chiaramente il migliore -

**Dottore:** Did you hear? This coffee is too strong! Onward, now! Here, miss, the second little cup! Try it! How is it?

**Colombina:** Oh! This coffee is too weak!

**Dottore:** Did you hear? This coffee is too weak! Now we have but one left, the last little cup! Try it! How is it?

**Colombina:** Oh! Mmmmm..... Aaaahhh... This is just the coffee for me! It's perfect!

**Dottore:** Did you hear? This is just the coffee for her! The perfect coffee? Miss, do you believe that this is your Caffè Valazza?

**Colombina:** I don't know, but it's exquisite! Won't you offer me a little bit more, Dottore?

**Dottore:** Ha, ha! Patience, Miss. Let's first see which coffee was too strong... Behold... Caffè Valazza! Too strong: Caffè Valazza!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Let's see now which coffee was too weak... Behold... Caffè Valazza Light! Too weak: Caffè Valazza Light!

**Colombina:** Oh!

**Dottore:** Let's see now which coffee was perfect! Behold... Caffè Chiarezza! Caffè Chiarezza is just the coffee for her! The perfect coffee that destroys the morning fog!

Caffè Chiarezza – clearly the best – the

- ve lo dice il Dottore!  
Grazie, Colombina, mi hai proprio  
salvato...

Dottore says so!  
Thank you, Colombina, you've really  
saved me...

**Colombina:** Mi rallegro, Dottore!

**Colombina:** I'm glad, Dottore!

=====

=====

## Nota Grammaticale

### Reflexive pronouns: pronomi riflessivi Reflexive pronouns and double pronouns

These are pronouns that replace either a direct or an indirect object. What sets them apart and makes them special is that the **object they replace** and the **subject of the verb** are the **same person or thing**. The subject performs an action that directly or indirectly affects the subject himself, herself or itself. Because the action is thought of as being reflected back onto the subject, these verbs, and these object pronouns, are called **reflexive**.

The **first and second-person reflexive pronouns** are exactly the same as the **first and second-person indirect object pronouns**, which are in turn exactly the same as the **first- and second-person direct object pronouns**. Again, it is the third-person pronouns of this group that differ:

|               |                                                                                                            |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>mi</b>     | myself, to (or for) myself                                                                                 |
| <b>ti</b>     | yourself, to (or for) yourself (informal)                                                                  |
| <b>si; Si</b> | himself, herself, itself, to (or for) himself, herself, itself;<br>yourself, to (or for) yourself (formal) |
| <b>ci</b>     | ourselves, to (or for) ourselves                                                                           |
| <b>vi</b>     | yourselves, to (or for) yourselves (informal)                                                              |
| <b>si; Si</b> | themselves, to (or for) themselves; yourselves to (or for)<br>yourselves (formal)                          |

Verbs that are conjugated along with these reflexive pronouns are called **Pronominal Verbs** and they can be divided into three categories.

First you have the verbs that are truly **reflexive**, that is, verbs whose actions are, in fact, performed by the subject on the subject. Examples of such actions:

**guardarsi allo specchio, farsi male, lavarsi, vestirsi, alzarsi, ecc.**  
to see oneself in the mirror, to hurt oneself, to wash oneself, to dress oneself, to get up (to get oneself up), etc.

Secondly, you have the **reciprocal construction**. The action of the verb goes back and forth between the subject and the object. This reciprocity is most often expressed with the phrase

“each other” in English. It takes at least two to reciprocate, so these verbs are always in the plural.

**conoscersi, vedersi, incontrarsi, innamorarsi, ecc.**

to make each other’s acquaintance, to see each other, to meet each other, to fall in love with each other, etc.

Thirdly, we have those verbs that are conjugated pronominally because... well, **just because**. There’s nothing inherently reflexive or reciprocal about them, so their being conjugated with a reflexive pronoun is simply **idiomatic**.

But they do have something in common. Most of them refer to an action of “**becoming**.” In fact, their English equivalents are often expressed as “to become” or “to get” plus an adjective.

**annoiarsi, divertirsi, arrabbiarsi, ecc.**

to get bored, to have fun, to get mad, etc.

**All pronominal verbs (verbs conjugated with a reflexive pronoun) have *essere* as their auxiliary in compound tenses.**

It’s important to pay attention to the form of verbs in compound tenses when they begin using reflexive pronouns. Even a transitive verb used in compound tenses with a reflexive pronoun is conjugated with *essere*; therefore the past participle must agree with the subject of the verb. So you’ll have:

**La mamma ha svegliato i ragazzi alle sette.**

Mom woke up the kids at seven.

But:

I ragazzi **si** sono svegliati alle sette.

The kids woke up at seven.

**Beware the power of the direct object pronoun!** Even when a verb is being used pronominally, a third-person direct object pronoun trumps all other rules of past participle agreement. (Agreement with first- and second-person direct object pronouns is optional.) Observe:

Le attrici **si** sono messe i costumi?

Sì, **se** li sono messi e sono pronte ad andare in scena!

Have the actresses put on their costumes?

Yes, they’ve put them on and they’re ready to go on stage!

Beware of the strange behavior of modal verbs in relation to reflexive pronouns. The auxiliary **essere** is used only if the reflexive pronoun precedes the verb; otherwise **avere** is used.

Ieri eravamo stanchi e non **ci** siamo potuti divertire  
or we could also say  
Ieri eravamo stanchi e non abbiamo potuto divertirci.  
Yesterday we were tired and we couldn't enjoy ourselves.

## Double object pronouns: pronomi doppi

Many times a verb has not just a **direct** or an **indirect object**, but **both** at the same time. Pulcinella sings a song to Arlecchina. Pantalone opens the door for Colombina. Important changes occur when two pronouns are associated with one verb. First of all, we want to remember that when there are two pronouns associated with one verb, one of the pronouns will be a **direct object pronoun**, and the other will be an **indirect object pronoun**. And one thing that will always happen is that the **indirect object pronoun will be the first** of the two to appear in the sentence.

Pulcinella, cantami una canzone romantica!  
Pulcinella, sing me a romantic song! (sing a romantic song to me!)

Va bene, **te la** canto stasera sotto il tuo balcone.  
All right, I'll sing it to you tonight under your balcony.

When you have a pair of object pronouns, the **first** of the two, the **indirect object pronoun**, always undergoes a **spelling/pronunciation change**, as you saw in the previous example: we said "**te la**" instead of "**ti la**". So when you have double object pronouns, the indirect pronoun changes this way:

**me**  
**te**  
**glie**  
**ce**  
**ve**  
**glie**

Then when you add the **direct object pronoun**, or the particle **ne**, you will have:

**me lo, me la, me li, me le, me ne**  
**te lo, te la, te li, te le, te ne**  
**glielo, gliela, glieli, gliele, gliene**  
**ce lo, ce la, ce li, ce le, ce ne**  
**ve lo, ve la, ve li, ve le, ve ne**  
**glielo, gliela, glieli, gliele, gliene**

Please note that the third-persons indirect object pronoun “**glie**” has the **direct object pronoun directly attached** to it: **glielo, gliela, glieli, gliele, gliene**. In the other pronoun pairs, the two pronouns are spelled separately.

### The maverick pronoun: *loro*

It seems that the pronoun *loro*, which functions in many different ways, is always the exception to the rule, somehow...

As the third-person plural indirect object pronoun, it is **never attached to any verb form** and it always follows the verb.

If you think you might have trouble remembering this, just use *gli* instead, as it will always follow the rules we have given you above.

## Nota Culturale

### Venezia e Bellini

Whether you are strolling along Piazza San Marco, visiting the church of San Zaccaria, walking on the Ponte di Rialto or snoozing on a gondola, Venice will remind you of her greatness and pride. The history of the city is long and complex. From its origin, Venice expanded to become one of the most powerful Republics of all times (it remained an independent and proud Republic for over 1100 years). For centuries it dominated the eastern commercial routes with its monopoly in spices and precious textiles.

Of all the great masterpieces in Venice, there is one that is quite recent but world-renowned: Harry's Bar. Giuseppe Cipriani and Harry Pickering opened the bar in May 1931. And there, in the midst of wonderful aperitifs and liquors, the Bellini cocktail was first invented in 1948. Giuseppe had a passion for white peaches and he worked hard trying to develop a perfect cocktail that would use them as a base. When he combined the pureed white peaches with prosecco (an Italian sparkling wine), he knew he had created something extraordinary. After a couple of Bellinis, you must pay homage to the great painter the cocktail is named after. Many churches in Venice have altars adorned with the beautiful colors and sensuous humanity of Giovanni Bellini's paintings.

During your visit you might say ‘**ciao**’ to passersby. After all, Venetians invented this form of salutation and it means “I am your slave.” Will you still use it so lightheartedly?

Feeling stressed out by pronouns? Wait! Lucky Episode 13 will be just for you! We'll talk about what happens to pronouns when *they* get stressed!

Thanks for listening! And be sure to tell your friends that you heard it here on **Radio Arlecchino!**

Your hosts with the most – grammar,  
Antonella Olson & Eric Edwards  
*“Out of our minds ... into your ears”*