



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

Gentili Ascoltatori, Dear Listeners,

Here's a transcript of "Casting Call and Screen Test," our recent show on expressing likes and dislikes in the compound tenses, like the *passato prossimo*. You can hear this podcast by accessing the following URL: <https://coerll.utexas.edu/ra/episode/ep17.html>

Buon divertimento!

Hanno partecipato

Simone Sessolo

Marco De Risi

Michael Heidenreich

Sean Neesley

Featured in this broadcast:

*as Pantalone*

*as the Security Guard, whose lines are transcribed so as to reflect his Roman dialect.*

*for Miracle Pictures*

Ann Marie Burnett, Wilfredo Cerrato, Emily Esposito, Bridget Green, Scott Gregoire, Stefani Langehennig, Tyler Levy, François Lux, Arnulfo Manriquez, Maranda Moody, Paige Normand, Ashley Park, Diana Shen, Paula Swindle, Erica Weaver, Andrea White

*as the Pleased Movie-Goers*

### **Transcript : Arlecchina e il suo provino a *Spettacolo Stasera***

**Antonella:** Buona sera a tutti e benvenuti a *Spettacolo Stasera!* Ormai gli appassionati di cinema non parlano che di questo film! Da sempre stelle teatrali, adesso Arlecchino e colleghi stanno raggiungendo somme vette nella scalata al successo.

**Eric:** E io sono stato il primo radiogiornalista ad intervistare l'affascinante *co-star* del nostro amico.

**Antonella:** Ogni Dario ha la sua Franca

### **Arlecchina and her Screen Test on *Spettacolo Stasera***

**Antonella:** Good evening, everybody and welcome to *Spettacolo Stasera!* By now movie fans are talking about nothing but this film! They've always been stars of the stage, and now Arlecchino and his colleagues are reaching dizzying heights on the ladder to success.

**Eric:** And I was the first radio reporter to interview our friend's charming co-star.

**Antonella:** Every Dario has his Franca

**Eric:** Ogni Roberto la sua Nicoletta

**Antonella:** e ogni Arlecchino la sua

**Eric:** Arlecchina! Esclusivamente a *Spettacolo Stasera!*

**Antonella:** Sentiamo!

**Eric:** Prima di tutto, congratulazioni vivissime! Il film sta ottenendo un gran successo sia di critica che di pubblico, ma detto inter nos: Lei, Arlecchina, è senza alcun dubbio la ragione principale del successo di quest'opera.

**Arlecchina:** Grazie mille, ma per cortesia, mi dia del tu, anzi dammi del tu...

**Eric:** Io sono un suo, cioè, un *tuo* grande fan. Dicci alcuni retroscena del film...

**Arlecchina:** Posso dire che era da parecchio tempo che Arlecchino aveva in mente questa storia intricatissima e piena di surrealismo magico.

**Eric:** **È piaciuta** subito a tutti i protagonisti la trama?

**Arlecchina:** No, per carità, questo non succede mai a teatro, figuriamoci al cinema! Ci **ha emozionato** la parte avventurosa del progetto, ma ad alcuni **ha dato fastidio** l'ambizione sfrenata di Arlecchino...

**Eric:** E qual è stata la tua prima reazione?

**Arlecchina:** Oh, a me **ha affascinato** tutto subito. E poi sai, mi è così **simpatico** Arlecchino...

**Eric:** Ho saputo che sul set hai fatto una

**Eric:** Every Roberto his Nicoletta

**Antonella:** And every Arlecchino his--

**Eric:** Arlecchina! Exclusively on *Spettacolo Stasera!*

**Antonella:** Let's listen!

**Eric:** First of all, warmest congratulations! The film is enjoying a great success, among both critics and the general public, but just between us, you, Arlecchina, are without a doubt the main reason for the success of this opus.

**Arlecchina:** Thank you so much, but please, address me informally (as "tu").

**Eric:** I'm one of your biggest fans. Give us some background on the movie.

**Arlecchina:** I can tell you that Arlecchino had this intricate story in mind for a long time... so full of magical surrealism.

**Eric:** Did everybody like the plot right away?

**Arlecchina:** Heavens no! That never happens in the theatre, much less in the movies! We were excited about the daring of the project, but some were put off by Arlecchino's unbridled ambition.

**Eric:** And what was your first reaction?

**Arlecchina:** Oh, it all charmed me right away. And of course you know how much I like Arlecchino...

**Eric:** I understand you made a new friend

nuova amicizia.

**Arlecchina:** Eh sì, ormai ne parlano tutti, la Signora Balanzone mi **sta simpaticissima**. Non hai idea le risate che ci siamo fatte a vedere il marito ballare la square dance. Mi **piace** da morire il suo accento bolognese, e poi... che cuoca meravigliosa!

**Eric:** E che ruolo ha avuto Pantalone, visto che ha investito, pare, tanti soldi nel film.

**Arlecchina:** Veramente preferirei cambiare argomento...

**Eric:** Sembra che ti **ripugni** solo il nome di questa persona...

**Arlecchina:** Appena hai nominato il suo nome, ho fatto un tuffo in un passato che vorrei dimenticare.

**Pantalone:** **Ho voglia** di brindare, tra breve Arlecchina sarà tra le mie braccia, qui nel famoso studio 5 di Cinecittà... Appena finiremo il provino per la parte principale del film di Arlecchino, metterò nella bevanda di Arlecchina il filtro d'amore preparato dalla mia bisnonna. Lei berrà e si innamorerà della prima persona che vedrà, cioè me! L'idea mi **emoziona**.

**Arlecchina:** Permesso, posso entrare?

**Pantalone:** Ma prego, carissima, accomodati!

**Arlecchina:** Buon giorno. Che caldo bestiale fuori, ma anche qui dentro non si respira!

**Pantalone:** E allora, bando alle ciance! Va' dietro al separè, spogliati ed indossa il

on the set.

**Arlecchina:** Oh yes, everybody's talking about it by now, I like Mrs Balanzone so much. You can't imagine what a laugh we had seeing her husband do his square dance. I adore her Bolognese accent, and then... what a marvelous cook!

**Eric:** And what was Pantalone's role, seeing that he invested, it seems, quite a bit of money in the movie.

**Arlecchina:** Actually I would prefer to change the subject.

**Eric:** It seems that the mere mention of his name repulses you...

**Arlecchina:** The moment you spoke his name, I was plunged into a past that I would rather forget.

**Pantalone:** I feel like drinking a toast, soon Arlecchina will be in my arms, here on the famous Soundstage 5 at Cinecittà... As soon as we finish the screen test for the lead female role in Arlecchino's movie, I'll place my great-grandmother's love potion in Arlecchina's drink. She will drink--and fall in love with the first person she sees, to wit, me! The idea excites me.

**Arlecchina:** Excuse me, may I come in?

**Pantalone:** Of course, my dear! Make yourself at home!

**Arlecchina:** Hello. It's so frightfully hot outside, but even in here one can barely breathe!

**Pantalone:** Well then, so much for idle chat! Go behind the screen, undress, and

costume di scena, mentre io ti preparo una bella bevanda fresca.

**Arlecchina:** Scusa, ma il film di Arlecchino non è mica su Tarzan.. perché dovrei indossare quel bikini striminzito di finta pelle di giaguaro? Mi **fa schifo**.

**Pantalone:** Mia cara, non m'interessa che ti **faccia schifo**; se vuoi la parte devi recitare ora davanti a me con questo costume. Ti **conviene** non fare i capricci.

**Arlecchina:** Mi **deludi**, Pantalone. Pensi che sia stupida e non abbia capito cosa vuoi veramente?

**Pantalone:** Ma ti sbagli. Io voglio solo essere sicuro di fare la scelta giusta per la protagonista di quello che diventerà il più grande film dell'ultimo decennio...

**Arlecchina:** D'accordo. Mi metterò questo costume ridicolo e reciterò per te, ma esigo che ci sia un'altra persona in questa stanza.

**Pantalone:** Va bene, per dimostrarti che è solo la passione per l'arte a spingermi, chiamerò la guardia. Sbrigati, su, va' a metterti il costume.

**L'altoparlante:** Una guardia con urgenza al Teatro 5. Una guardia con urgenza al Teatro 5, grazie.

**Pantalone:** Ora metto il filtro nella sua aranciata. Sei pronta?

**Arlecchina:** Mamma mia, quanto mi **dà fastidio** l'atteggiamento di Pantalone... Pronto? Eccomi!

**Pantalone:** Che visione! Prego, rinfrescati con questa bibita prima di cominciare il provino.

put on this costume, while I make you a nice refreshment!

**Arlecchina:** Say, this movie of Arlecchino's isn't about Tarzan... why should I wear this skimpy, phoney leopard-skin bikini? It's disgusting.

**Pantalone:** My dear, I don't care if it disgusts you. If you want the part you've got to perform for me with this costume. It will behoove you not to be capricious.

**Arlecchina:** You disappoint me, Pantalone. Do you think I'm stupid, that I don't understand what you're really after?

**Pantalone:** But you're wrong. I only want to be sure I'm making the right choice for the heroine of what's going to be the biggest film of the last ten years.

**Arlecchina:** Fine. I'll put on this ridiculous costume, and I'll read for you. But I insist there be someone else in the room.

**Pantalone:** Very well, to show you that it's merely a passion for art that drives me, I'll buzz for the guard. Come on, hurry up, go put on the costume.

**P.A. System:** Security to Soundstage 5, urgently. Security to Soundstage 5, urgently, thank you.

**Pantalone:** Now I'll put that potion in her orangeade. Are you ready?

**Arlecchina:** Mercy, how tiresome this attitude of Pantalone's is! Ready? Here I am!

**Pantalone:** What a sight! Please, refresh yourself with this drink before starting your audition.

**Guardia:** Signo', che m'avete fatto chiama'? Io stavo a dormi' alla granne, ma poi m'hanno detto che c'era n'attrice famosa allo Studio 5 e so' venuto de corsa...

**Pantalone:** Guardia, maledizione, ma perché è già qui, di solito arriva sempre un'ora dopo, se ne vada!

**Arlecchina:** Oh, mi gira la testa, Signore, chi è Lei, mi **affascinano** i suoi baffi, mi **emozionano** le sue basette, mi ... mi sento tremare tutta, svengo...

**Guardia:** Ma ccomm'è bbella, ppooverina... Ma un momento, allora, vuol di' che fate 'nna pellicola de Tarzan...? Fico!

**Pantalone:** Maledizione!

### ***Pubblicità per Arlecchino e l'ordine della pietra filosofale***

#### **Alcuni spettatori reagiscono:**

Mi **hanno** sempre **affascinato** i film che parlano della magia...

Mi **sono piaciuti** i tucani che gli portavano la posta.

Mi **ha affascinato** il negozio dove Arlecchino ha comprato la bacchetta!

Mi **interessa** molto quel treno che li ha portati a Verruchesuine...

Alla mia ragazza **hanno fatto schifo** le scimmie, ma a me **sono state simpatiche!**

Mi **importa** molto che un film comunichi un messaggio serio ai giovani.

**Guard:** Sir, you called for me? I was having a fine snooze when they told me there was a famous actress on Soundstage 5 and I came running...

**Pantalone:** Guard! Curses, what are you doing here already? You usually show up an hour later! Get out of here!

**Arlecchina:** Oh, my head is spinning, Sir... Who are you? Your moustache fascinates me... Your sideburns excite me.... I.... I feel myself trembling... I'm going to faint...

**Guardia:** How beautiful she is, poor thing... Wait a minute--so you guys are making a Tarzan picture...? Awesome!

**Pantalone:** Curses!

### ***Ad for Arlecchino and the Order of the Philosopher's Stone***

#### **Some movie-goers respond:**

Movies about magic have always fascinated me.

I liked the toucans that brought them the mail.

The store where Arlecchino bought the wand, I found it charming!

The train that took them to Verruchesuine interests me a lot...

The monkeys disgusted my girlfriend, but I liked them!

It's important to me that a movie send a serious message to young people.

Mi **è piaciuta** moltissimo la serenata che quel ragazzo ha cantato sotto il mare!  
Come si chia—ah, Pulcinella! Ci **è** tanto **simpatico** quel Pulcinella!

I really liked the serenade that that guy sang under the sea! What's his na—ah, Pulcinella! We love that Pulcinella!

Mi **sono piaciuti** i ritratti che parlavano e si muovevano!

I liked the portraits that talked and moved!

Mi **ha fatto paura** il cappello che ha parlato quando Pulcinella se lo è messo sulla testa!

The hat that talked when Pulcinella put it on his head scared me!

Adesso **abbiamo voglia** di vedere il sequel!

Now we feel like seeing the sequel!

Mi **ha commosso** il coraggio di Colombina quando è andata da Kulala per trovare il sonno di Arlecchina!

I was moved by Colombina's courage when she went to Kulala to find Arlecchina's sleep!

Ci **ha emozionato** molto la battaglia con i draghi!

We were very excited about the battle with the dragons!

Mi **sarebbero piaciute** più esplosioni!

I would have liked more explosions!

Mi **ha dato** un po' **fastidio** l'accento dei texani...

I was annoyed a bit by the Texans' accent...

Ci **ha fatto venire la pelle d'oca** la macchina che volava!

The car that flew gave me goose-bumps!

Ci **ha deluso** un po' la scena con i furetti parlanti...

The scene with the talking ferrets disappointed us a little.

Mi **è piaciuta** molto la square dance dei Balanzone!

I loved the Balanzones' square dance!

A me **è piaciuto** il popcorn!

I liked the popcorn!

## Nota Grammaticale

First of all, if you missed Episode 16, “The Red Carpet Treatment,” you’ll want to take a look and a listen at it now so you’ll be acquainted with those all-important Pleasure Points!

In today's episode, you'll notice how with *piacere* the auxiliary verb in compound tenses (like the *passato prossimo*) is always *essere*. Antonella says: "Il Panino Piacere è piaciuto a tutti!"--that is, everybody liked the Pleasure Sandwich.

You might also notice that she didn't follow the famous recipe exactly. The recipe calls for the preposition first, then the indirect object, then the verb, and then the thing that somebody likes. In this case, Antonella starts out with the thing that everybody likes, then we get the verb, and finally the preposition and the indirect object. There's no cause for alarm, though, because normal word order--subject, verb, complement--is always grammatically acceptable. Although a sentence with *piacere* almost always follows the recipe, this variation is common when a departure from the usual routine can add some desired emphasis.

Now, whenever a verb takes *essere* as its auxiliary, as *piacere* does, there's always two other important things that we know about it.

First of all, it's an intransitive verb. That means no direct object. So we won't ever be using a direct object pronoun directly with *piacere*.

--Ti piace il film di Arlecchino? --Si, mi piace (il film di Arlecchino).

--Do you like Arlecchino's movie? --Yes I like it (Arlecchino's movie).

The "it" in the English version is the direct object of "like," but in Italian, it's the **subject** of *piacere*. We already know what "it" is, so we can just omit it, but we won't replace it with a direct object pronoun!

--Ti piace vedere i film avventurosi? --Si, mi piace vederli.

--Do you like seeing adventure movies? --Yes, I like seeing them.

The direct object pronoun *li* is the direct object of *vedere*, NOT of *piacere*.

Secondly, the past participle of *piacere* will have to agree in number and gender with its subject. The trick here is to remember that the subject is the thing that somebody likes and NOT the somebody who likes it.

Antonella and Eric pointed out these four examples to show *piacere* in the *passato prossimo* with masculine, feminine, singular and plural subjects:

**masculine singular subject:**

Al pubblico è piaciuto lo spettacolo.

**masculine plural subject:**

A Colombina sono piaciuti i nuovi lazzi.

**feminine singular subject:**

Agli attori è piaciuta la scena romantica.

**feminine plural subject:**



Persino a Pantalone sono piaciute **le canzoni di Pulcinella**.

You see that the gender and number of the people who like the thing is irrelevant. The past participle of **piacere** agrees with the thing(s) that they like.

This will be true even when you put your Pleasure Sandwich together backwards, for emphasis or variety:

**La scena romantica** è piaciuta agli attori.

And leave it to Eric to illustrate a sentence with **piacere** that starts with **the verb**--as can often happen in a yes-or-no question:

È piaciuta subito a tutti i protagonisti **la trama**?

Of course it's also true in all the other compound tenses as well, not just **passato prossimo**. Just two examples:

#### **condizionale passato**

Mi sarebbero piaciute **più esplosioni**.

#### **congiuntivo passato**

Dubito che ad Arlecchina siano piaciuti **i regali che Pantalone le ha fatto**.

#### **Other verbs expressing likes and dislikes**

**Piacere** and its negative form, **non piacere**, are far from being the only ones. The tricky part is that some of them follow the pattern we've established in the *Panino Piacere* recipe and others don't. You just have to make note of how each one works as you encounter it. The loquacious bunch of movie-goers illustrated several of them as they commented on Arlecchino's new film.

**convenire** - to be a good idea, to behoove

subject: the thing that is a good idea

direct object: none

indirect object: the person for whom it is a good idea

auxiliary: **essere**

This expression gets translated in several different ways in English, very often with the conditional even when the Italian is not.

Ti conviene non fare capricci.

*It would be a good idea for you not to be capricious. It would behoove you...*

*You would be better off not to... etc.*

**affascinare** - to charm, to fascinate

subject: the person or thing that is charming or fascinating

direct object: the person who is charmed or fascinated



indirect object: none  
auxiliary: *avere*

**interessare** - this one is a rather limber verb. Meaning “to be of interest”...

subject: the thing that is of interest, the thing that is interesting

direct object: none

indirect object: the person to whom something is interesting, the person to whom something is of interest

auxiliary: *avere* or *essere*

A Pantalone ha interessato molto vedere Arlecchina nel costume che le aveva dato.

*Pantalone was very interested to see Arlecchina in the costume he had given her.*

**interessare** - Meaning “to concern, to affect”...

subject: the thing that concerns, the thing that affects

direct object: the persons or things concerned or affected

indirect object: none

auxiliary: *avere*

I risultati dei provini interessano tutti gli attori della compagnia.

*The results of the auditions concern all the actors of the company.*

Italians don't always make a careful distinction between these two subtle differences in the meaning of *interessare*, so you can usually use it safely either way. Then there is the pronominal (reflexive) version:

**interessarsi a** – to demonstrate or to take an interest in something; to be concerned about something.

subject: the person who takes an interest, the person concerned

direct object: none

object of the preposition *a*: the thing in which someone takes interest or about which someone is concerned

auxiliary: *essere*

Pantalone non si è interessato molto all'opinione che Arlecchina ha espresso sul costume.

*Pantalone didn't show much interest in Arlecchina's opinion of the costume.*

**fare schifo** - to be disgusting, to cause disgust

subject: the disgusting thing

direct object: “built in”: *schifo*

indirect object: the person who is disgusted

auxiliary: *avere*

**importare** - to be important

subject: the thing that is important

direct object: none

indirect object: the person to whom something is important

auxiliary: *essere*

**essere simpatico/a / stare simpatico/a** - to like. This verb is a very handy alternative to *piacere* because it can be used to make the distinction between “just liking” and, you know, “like liking” somebody. This expression has no implication of the sexual or romantic attraction that *piacere* sometimes (but certainly not always) has. The expression is often used with *stare* rather than *essere* and sounds much more informal that way.

subject: the person who is likeable

direct object: none

indirect object: the person who just likes somebody

auxiliary: *essere*

### Concerning liking and loving...

“Hey, if you love Radio Arlecchino so much, why don’t you marry it?!”

There’s really no Italian equivalent for this particular wisecrack, since, as Antonella points out, Italians just don’t use the verb *amare* as a casual exaggeration of *piacere* the way English speakers use “to love” as a hyperbolic substitute for “to like.”

*Amare* is reserved for expressions of serious, romantic love. The force of *piacere* is often boosted in different ways, such as

Mi piacciono **moltissimo** le frittate di Pulcinella.

Ci è piaciuta **un sacco** la *square dance* dei Balanzone.

Al pubblico è piaciuto **da morire** il nuovo film di Arlecchino.

What’s more, Italians use yet another expression to describe the kind of deep affection and caring that exists among relatives and close friends. In English, we most often use the verb “to love” for this also, whereas in Italian, *volere bene* is the preferred expression.

**volere bene** - to love, to care for someone

subject: the person who loves someone

direct object: none

indirect object: the object of someone’s affection; the person loved

auxiliary: *avere*

Arlecchina might say: “Pulcinella, ti voglio tanto bene, ma non ti amo.”

“*Pulcinella, I care for you a great deal, but I do not love you.*”

**fare paura** - to frighten, to scare, to cause fear

subject: the thing that is frightening

direct object: “built in”: *paura*

indirect object: the person who is frightened

auxiliary: *avere*

**avere voglia** - to feel like (having or doing something)

subject: the person who feels like...

direct object: “built in”: *voglia*

indirect object: none

auxiliary: *avere*

NOTE: what someone feels like having is expressed as a noun following the preposition *di*; what someone feels like doing is expressed as a verb in the infinitive following the preposition *di*.

Abbiamo voglia di vedere il sequel.

Hai voglia di un po' di popcorn?

*Do you feel like [having] some popcorn?*

**commuovere** - to move (emotionally)

subject: the thing that is moving

direct object: the person who is moved

indirect object: none

auxiliary: *avere*

**emozionare** - to excite

subject: the thing that is exciting

direct object: the person who is excited

indirect object: none

auxiliary: *avere*

**dare fastidio** - to annoy, to be bothersome

subject: the thing that is annoying or bothersome

direct object: “built in”: *fastidio*

indirect object: the person who is annoyed or “bugged”

auxiliary: *avere*

**fare venire la pelle d’oca** - to give goosebumps

subject: the thing that gives somebody goosebumps

direct object: “built in”: *venire la pelle d’oca*

indirect object: the person who gets goosebumps

auxiliary: *avere*

**deludere** - to disappoint

subject: the thing that is disappointing

direct object: the person who is disappointed

indirect object: none

auxiliary: *avere*

Although the issues of direct versus indirect object and *avere* versus *essere* may seem daunting at first, it will be helpful for you to remember one important thing. In all of these Italian expressions, the person whose emotions, whose likes or dislikes we are talking about, is always the **object** of the expression, not the subject, as is so often the case in English. (The three exceptions to this are *amare*, *avere voglia*, and *volere bene*)

Of course, if you're using first- or second-person object pronouns (*mi, ti, ci, vi*) with these expressions--and that will happen a lot--the indirect vs direct object problem is really no problem at all since nobody will ever know if you're using the wrong pronoun. They're both the same! In the big wide world of grammar, we're grateful for small favors!

## Nota Culturale

For those who are wondering about Dario, Franca, Roberto and Nicoletta mentioned in this episode, let's explain who they are! Dario Fo and his wife Franca Rame are a well-known and popular couple who have been together on stage and in real life since the early 50's. When, in 1997, Dario Fo received the Nobel Prize for Literature for dedicating his life to theatre, he shared it with his wife, co-author, and muse Franca. Similarly, a few months later, when Roberto Benigni won three Oscars with his movie *La vita è bella*, he shared with the world his infinite love for Nicoletta Braschi, his wife and actress in all of his movies.

What do you think Cinecittà means?

Cine = cinema, città = city, city of movies, *la città dei film!* And this is exactly what Cinecittà is. Cinecittà--also called *la Hollywood sul Tevere*--is indeed a stage, backstage, pre-production/production/full production studio in one lot, offering everything imaginable object or service required to make a movie. As Alberto Sordi, one of the most beloved Italian actors, once said, a movie director could walk into Cinecittà with just a script and an idea and leave Cinecittà with his or her vision on a reel of film. Nowadays, Cinecittà is used mainly by TV productions such as talk and game shows, fiction series, and advertising spots.

Studio 5 is still particularly famous because it was the "home" so to speak of one of the greatest Italian directors, Federico Fellini (Rimini, 1920 - Rome, 1993), called by many "Il Maestro." He made most of his movies in Cinecittà's Studio 5.

Cinecittà was one of the very few positive projects created by the Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini (Predappio, 1883 - Giulino di Mezzegra, 1945). He founded it in 1937 on the southeastern outskirts of Rome to produce propaganda films. Cinecittà studios were later bombed by the Western Allies during World War II, but were rebuilt in 1947. Since then, they have hosted film productions of renowned Italian directors (Rossellini, Fellini, De Sica, Visconti, Pasolini, Leone, Cavani, Bertolucci, etc.) as well as foreigners (Annaud, Coppola, Campion, Minghella, Scorsese, Gibson, Soderbergh, Abrams, etc.). If in Rome during the months of June and September, you should visit the studios of Cinecittà, *la fabbrica dei sogni*: it has "fabricated" more than 3,000 so far!

Our lovely guard from Cinecittà featured in this episode, belongs to the new reality of Cinecittà, which is now a private institution, no longer open to the public.

Did you understand his lines without checking the transcript? If you had difficulties, don't blame yourself! He is speaking a dialect. Remember Signora Balanzone in Episode 16? She has a

very strong accent, *cadenza*, from Bologna. In the guard's speech, however, you can detect more than just an accent; in fact some of the words he uses are in Roman dialect.

Italian dialects are a rich source of endless fascination for many linguists and intellectuals. Linguists can drown in the myriad of Italian dialects: in each of the 20 Italian regions, people speak more than one (two, five, ten...) variety of dialect. Often, dialects are not just a variation on the Italian standard, but distinct languages with their own grammar and lexicon, such as the ones spoken in Sardinia and Friuli. Three of the main reasons for such a linguistic reality are the habit of ancient Romans not to impose Latin on the people they conquered, the geographical constitution of the Italian peninsula, and last but not least, the foreign dominations that occupied the Italian territory until the unification of Italy, made complete between 1861 and 1871 by Italians who fought for it during *il Risorgimento* (The Resurgence).

It was Alessandro Manzoni (Milano, 1785 – Milano, 1873), author of one of the major works of Italian literature, the historic novel *I promessi sposi* (*The Betrothed*) who, in a sense, decided that the language of the new and unified Italy be the Tuscan dialect; he would go to “sciacquare i panni nell’Arno”: do his verbal laundry in the Tuscan river of Arno. The language of the great thirteenth-century Tuscan writers Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio would constitute the standard Italian with a pinch of Roman dialect (since Rome became the capital of the new Italy in 1871). Now what about those intellectuals who were mentioned earlier? They’re a potentially controversial bunch, so stay tuned to Radio Arlecchino as we consider their place in Italy’s rich linguistic treasure trove...

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

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Antonella Olson & Eric Edwards  
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