

7.4 Communication Strategies

Candidates cannot be expected to have met and mastered all the linguistic elements they will meet when reading and listening to authentic Italian. This leads to the need to develop communication strategies that can be used to cope successfully with some familiar words without having to refer constantly to a dictionary. There are two main types of strategy: those that relate to understanding (reading and listening) and those that relate to production (speaking and writing).

These strategies will greatly increase the candidate's ability to cope when they meet, or need to use, language which they have not previously met or have forgotten.

Strategies for Understanding

- (a) Ignoring words which are not necessary for a successful completion of the task set.
Many tasks contain words which are not essential for an understanding of the main points of the text. Students should learn to look only for the information they need to answer questions and to complete tasks.
- (b) Using the visual and verbal context
The student can find many clues as to the purpose and content of a text from the layout, title(s) and any related pictures. In addition they can infer the meaning from a verbal context. A student who does not know a word can, with some appropriate practice, be expected to understand it in the context.
- (c) Making use of grammatical markers and categories.
Students should learn when reading or listening to use such clues as the plural forms of nouns, adjectives or verbs and the formation of tenses, in order to help them decide to which category (verb, noun, adjective etc.) an unknown word belongs.
- (d) Making use of the social and cultural context.
Good use can be made of the social and cultural context of a passage e.g. a description of the New Year festivities in Italy.
- (e) Using common patterns within Italian.
Students should be able to recognise familiar patterns which link nouns and adjectives and verbs and nouns, e.g. the verb *creare* and the noun *creazione*.
- (f) Using common patterns between Italian and English.

There are thousands of words in Italian, which can be easily understood without the use of a bilingual dictionary, but with the application of a few simple strategies.

Nouns

1. Using cognates and near cognates.
Some nouns ending in -a or -o are spelled the same in both Italian and English, although the pronunciation differs :
e.g. **area, aroma, enigma, idea**
contralto, manifesto, albino, radio

2. Abstract nouns ending in -ty in English end in -tà in Italian
e.g. ability - **abilità**, quality- **qualità**
3. Nouns ending in -ion in English end in -ione in Italian
e.g. creation - **creazione**, confusion- **confusione**, decision - **decisione**
4. Nouns ending in -nce and -ncy in English end in -nza in Italian
e.g. ambulance - **ambulanza**, emergency - **emergenza**

Nouns and Adjectives

5. Nouns and adjectives ending in -id in English end in -ido in Italian
e.g. acid - **acido**, invalid - **invalido**
6. Nouns and adjectives ending in -ive in English end in -ivo in Italian
e.g. native - **nativo**, positive - **positivo**
7. Nouns and adjectives ending in -ry preceded by a vowel in English end in -rio in Italian
e.g. Anniversary - **anniversario**, ordinary - **ordinario**
8. Nouns and adjectives ending in -al in English end in -ale in Italian
e.g. Central - **centrale**, annual - **annuale**
9. Nouns and adjectives ending in -te after a vowel in English end in -to in Italian
e.g. Certificate - **certificato**, moderate - **moderato**
10. Nouns and adjectives ending in -or in English end in -ore in Italian
e.g. motor - **motore**, editor - **editore**
11. Nouns and adjectives ending in -nt in English end in -nte in Italian
e.g. elephant - **elefante**, elegant - **elegante**

Adjectives

12. Adjectives ending in -ble in English end in -bile in Italian
e.g. incredible - **incredibile**, adorable - **adorabile**
13. Adjectives ending in -ic in English end in -ico in Italian
e.g. aromatic - **aromatico**, scientific - **scientifico**

Verbs

14. Verbs ending in -ate in English end in -are in Italian
e.g. communicate - **comunicare**, celebrate - **celebrare**
15. Verbs ending in -ise/ize or -yse/yze in English end in -izzare in Italian
e.g. organise/organize - **organizzare**, paralyse/paralyze - **paralizzare**

16. Verbs ending in -e (other than -ate and -ize) in English end in -are in Italian
e.g. adore - **adorare**, cause - **causare**
17. Verbs ending in -ify in English end in -ificare in Italian
e.g. notify - **notificare**, clarify - **chiarificare**
18. Verbs ending in two consonants in English end in -are in Italian
e.g. confess - **confessare**, calm - **calmare**

Spelling Changes

Other spelling changes can be noticed when we change English to Italian.

- bs- in English changes to -ss- in Italian when followed by a vowel
e.g. absurd - **assurdo**, absent - **assente**
- bs- in English changes to -s- in Italian when followed by a consonant
e.g. abstain - **astenersi**, abstract - **astratto**
- dv- in English changes to -vv- in Italian
e.g. adversary - **avversario**, advocate - **avvocato**
- dm- in English changes to -mm- in Italian
e.g. administration - **amministrazione**, admirable - **ammirabile**
- ct- and -pt- in English changes to -tt- in Italian
e.g. actor - **attore**, active - **attivo**
- ph- in English changes to -f- in Italian
e.g. telephone - **telefono**, photo - **foto**
- y- in English changes to -i- in Italian except at the end of a word
e.g. style - **stile**, stupidity - **stupidità**
- y- in English at the end of a word often changes to -ia- in Italian
e.g. geography - **geografia**, pharmacy - **farmacia**
- h- is not used in Italian except to maintain a hard -c or -g sound.
e.g. theatre - **teatro**, character - **carattere**
chemical - **chimico**, ghetto - **ghetto**