

## UNITÀ 6 A cena fuori

### I PRONOMI POSSESSIVI - POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

- The possessive pronouns, just like the possessive adjectives, express possession and ownership. Possessive adjectives (my, your, etc.) precede nouns, whereas possessive pronouns (mine, yours, etc.) can stand alone in place of nouns. The Italian forms *il mio, il tuo, il suo*, etc., act as both adjectives and pronouns.
- What is important for choosing a possessive pronoun is the gender of the possessed thing and not that of the possessor. Both Italian adjectives and pronouns must agree in gender and number with the noun they modify, the thing or person possessed: *il libro di Luigi > il suo libro = Luigi's book > his book, il libro di Maria > il suo libro = Maria's book > her book*.
- The possessives are always combined with the definite article which precedes them, unless there is a family relationship in the singular: *mio padre = my father, mia madre = my mother, mio fratello = my brother*. A definite article must be used when the possessive determiner is **loro**: *la loro figlia = their daughter*. If the degree of relationship is in a nickname or if it is qualified by another adjective in addition to the possessive, then a definite article is compulsory: *la mia mamma = my mom, la mia sorella minore = my younger sister*.
- Between the possessive and the noun, all kinds of adjectives can be used: *la mia bella casa = my beautiful house*.
- Generally, the possessives go before the noun: *la mia casa = my house*. Sometimes, however, the possessive can follow the noun when we want to place some emphasis on the possessive. In that case, it takes no article: *Andiamo a casa mia! = Let's go to my house!*

### VORREI - THE EXPRESSION "I WOULD LIKE"

**Vorrei** is the first person of the verb **volere** in the *condizionale semplice* (the conditional). It is translated as *I would like* and it is used very often in order to ask for something politely. In other words, its use is imperative when we need to ask for something (details in unit 11).

Example: *Vorrei un menù per favore = I would like a menu, please.*

### PIACERE - THE VERB "TO LIKE"

The verb **piacere** (*to like*) has a different construction than English. It is used to express the idea of *to like*. It takes *pronomi indiretti* (indirect object pronouns: **mi, ti, gli/le, ci, vi, gli/loro**) which we will meet analytically in unit 10. The noun or action that is 'pleasing to a person' is the subject, whereas the person to whom it is pleasing is the indirect object. Example: *Mi piace mangiare (I like eating)*. Despite having all the forms, it is mostly used in the third person singular (**piace**) and in the third person plural (**piacciono**), depending on whether what we like (the subject) is singular or plural.

Examples: <i>Mi piace il gelato = I like ice cream.</i>	vs.	<i>Mi piacciono gli animali = I like animals.</i>
<i>Ti piace la scuola = Do you like school?</i>	vs.	<i>Ti piacciono i gatti? = Do you like cats?</i>

### QUELLO E BELLO - "THAT" AND "BEAUTIFUL"

The adjectives **quello** (that) and **bello** (beautiful), when preceding the noun, change the suffix according to the article that the noun takes. So we have the forms:

- **quel - bel** (for nouns that take the definite article **il**):  
*Quel bel vestito = That beautiful dress.*
- **quello - bello** (for nouns that take the definite article **lo**):  
*Quello studente = That student; Il bello scrittoio = The beautiful desk.*
- **quell' - bell'** (for nouns that take the definite article **l'**):  
*Quell'estate = That summer; Il bell'artista = The beautiful artist.*
- **quei - bei** (for nouns that take the definite article **i**):  
*Quei ragazzi = Those boys; I bei monumenti = The beautiful monuments.*
- **quegli - begli** (for nouns that take the definite article **gli**):  
*Quegli scaffali = Those shelves; I begli appartamenti = The beautiful apartments.*

This rule is not valid if the adjective follows the noun: *L'uomo bello = The beautiful man.*

## VOLerci E METTERCI - "TO TAKE" OR "TO BE NECESSARY"

The verbs **volere** and **mettere** when combined with the particle **ci** change their meaning, creating the following expressions:

- **ci vuole** (singular) / **ci vogliono** (plural): *it takes* or *it is necessary*.  
*Ci vuole molto tempo per finire questo lavoro* = *It takes a long time to finish this job.*  
*Ci vogliono molte ore per finire questo lavoro* = *It takes many hours to finish this job.*  
*Per andare in Francia, ci vuole il passaporto?* = *It is necessary to have a passport to go to France?*
- With the verb **mettere** and the particle **ci**, we state the time someone takes to do something.  
*Per andare a scuola ci metto dieci minuti* = *It takes me ten minutes to go to school.*

## UNITÀ 7 Al cinema

## L'IMPERFETTO - THE IMPERFECT

- The imperfect is a past tense used to show the duration of an action in the past. In other words, it expresses a continuous, repetitive action in the past. Unlike the *passato prossimo*, with the imperfect, there is no clear indication of the beginning or end of an action.
- We form the imperfect by removing the *-are*, *-ere* or *-ire* from the infinitive, and adding the following endings.  
*-are* > *-avo*, *-avi*, *-ava*, *-avamo*, *-avate*, *-avano*  
*-ere* > *-evo*, *-evi*, *-eva*, *-evamo*, *-evate*, *-evano*  
*-ire* > *-ivo*, *-ivi*, *-iva*, *-ivamo*, *-ivate*, *-ivano*
- It is the tense we use for:
  - a. Habitual, repeated actions in the past:  
*Da piccolo, andavo spesso dalla nonna* = *When I was little, I used to go visit my grandmother often.*
  - b. Descriptions of persons, situations, feelings, things:  
*Mio zio era bello, alto e forte* = *My uncle was handsome, tall and strong.*  
*Era imbarazzante vederlo così* = *It was embarrassing to see him like that.*  
*Mi sentivo felice quando andavamo in campagna* = *I felt happy when we went to the countryside.*
  - c. Descriptions of weather, age, time:  
*Faceva un tempaccio quando siamo usciti* = *It was bad weather when we went out.*  
*Fabrizio aveva dieci anni quando ha finito le elementari* = *Fabrizio was ten years old when he finished elementary school.*  
*Erano le nove circa quando sono arrivati* = *It was about nine o'clock when they arrived.*
- Only **essere** (to be) is irregular in the imperfect: *io ero, tu eri, lui/lei/Lei era, noi eravamo, voi eravate, loro erano*.
- Some other verbs are not considered to be irregular, if we just look upon their Latin infinitive. So we have: **bere** (bere) > *bevevo*, **dire** (dicere) > *dicevo*, **fare** (facere) > *facevo*, **porre** (ponere) > *ponevo*, **tradurre** (traducere) > *traducevo*, **trarre** (trahere) > *traevo*.

IMPERFETTO O PASSATO PROSSIMO?  
IMPERFECT OR PRESENT PERFECT?

A common difficulty for students is that of choosing the right tense between *imperfetto* and *passato prossimo*. If we go through the definitions of both tenses, we will see that:

- a. The **passato prossimo** is used in order to express an action that happened and was completed in the past:  
*Ieri pomeriggio siamo stati all'agenzia di viaggi* = *Yesterday afternoon we went to the travel agency.*
- b. If we want to state that we did something in the past as a habit we use **imperfetto**:  
*Ogni domenica andavo dai miei genitori* = *I used to visit my parents every Sunday.*
- c. With the **passato prossimo** we examine the action in all its duration:  
*Ieri dalle nove alle dieci sono stato da Carla* = *Yesterday I was at Carla's from nine to ten.*
- d. The **imperfetto** is used in order to express an incomplete action which we examine at a specific point of its development:  
*Alle dieci meno dieci ero ancora da Carla* = *At ten to ten I was still at Carla's.*
- e. The **passato prossimo** expresses two or more actions that take place one after the other:  
*Prima ho mangiato e poi ho guardato la TV* = *First I ate and then I watched TV.*