



English B2

(IM 259 Lingua Inglese Pari a Livello B2)

Lesson 1

Welcome to Lingua Inglese (Pari a Livello B2) IM259!

PART I

Definition of B2 Level and autoevaluation.

In the following you will find the goals of English Level B2 according to *The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)*.

B2 is one of the CEFR levels described by the Council of Europe.

English B2 entails “ The capacity to achieve most goals and express oneself on a range of topics”.

If you have reached level B2, you

1. Can show visitors around and **give a detailed description of a place.**
2. Can **understand the main ideas of complex text** on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation.
3. Can **interact** with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible **without strain for either party.**
4. Can **produce clear, detailed text** on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

In the following exercise you are invited to AUTOEVALUATE your actual capabilities.



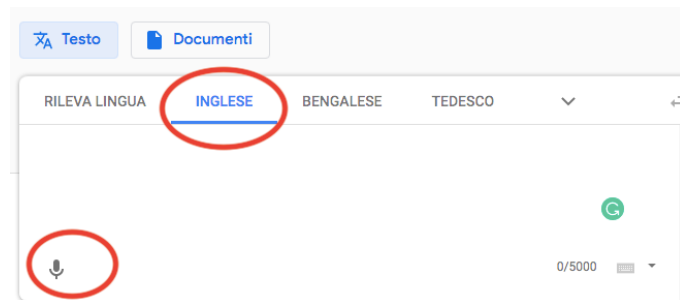
1. Imagine you are asked directions to go to Miramare Castle (or any other place you know in the city: a pub, a pharmacy, a square, your place, etc.). Elaborate a set of directions. Write them down.

Tip: Assign a number to each step

2. Try to dictate the set of directions you elaborated in (1) to your computer following the instructions in page 3.

2.1 Instructions:

- open **translate.google.com** in your computer, tablet or phone
- select **English** as you language
- activate the microphone clicking on the symbol that you see on your left. You will get a screen like the following:



- Start dictating your set of instructions and repeat until you get them correctly.

3. Open <https://www.bbc.com/news>

3.1 Read the first article that attracts you. See how much of it you understand.

3.2 Write down a summary of the article you've just read.

Part II

Brushing up on your sounds.

THE VOWELS

- Initial approach:

Italian vocalic system has (roughly) 5 sounds
English vocalic system has (roughly) 10 sounds

- Main difficulty for Italian speakers:

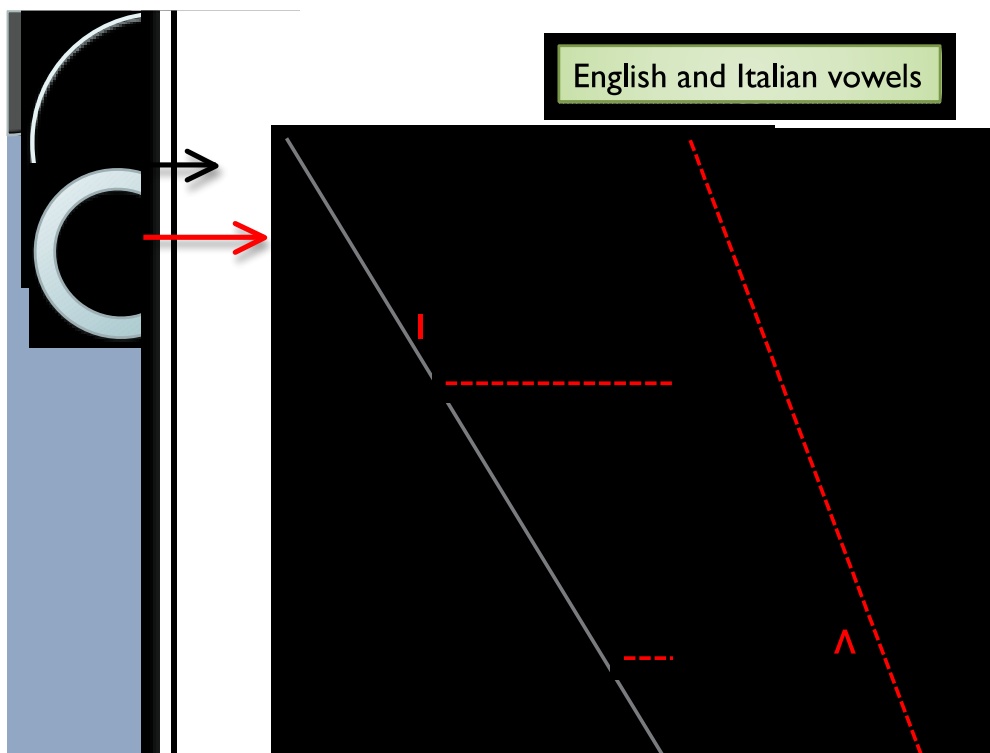
Their ear is not trained to perceive some English vowels
Their vocal tract and tongue are not trained to articulate some English vowels

- Result:

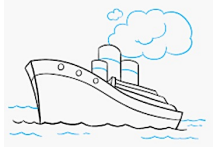
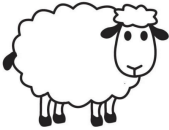
The Italian Speaker/Hearer ends up saying or understanding the wrong word(s)
causing interference in the communication with native speakers.

Activity:

Examine the following representation of the English and Italian vocalic system below. The vowels in **black** are the vowels both languages share. The ones in **red** are the English vowels inexistent in the Italian vocalic system.



Let's illustrate the differences starting with the sounds [i] and [i]

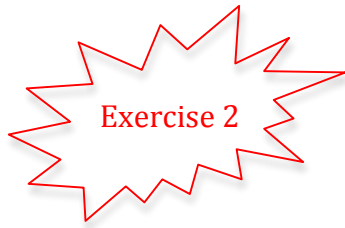
word	pronunciation	Italian	reference
ship	sh [i] p	nave	
sheep	sh [i] p	pecora	

Observation 1:

The sound [i] is represented in writing by the letter **-i-**
The sound [i] is represented in writing by the letters **-ee-**

Observation 2:

If you pronounce **sheep** and **ship** using the same vowel sound in both cases, you'll end up saying the wrong word. For example, if we pronounce **ship** using the Italian sound for **-i-** we end up talking about bleating animals instead of boats



Exercise 2

- a) Listen to the video linked below and practice the sounds [i] [ɪ] considered to pose difficulties to Italian, Spanish and French speakers.
- b) Repeat until you clearly perceive the difference between the two sounds.
- c) Take the suggested tests on line until you are satisfied with the results.
- d) Once you have completed satisfactorily the oral part of the test, write down the list of all the minimal pairs the author proposes in the exercise. This list contains pairs of words that differ in just one sound (i / ɪ), and are very common in everyday conversations. It would be useful to memorize this list.

Link: (if it doesn't open here, copy the link in a new window in you computer).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYI6Vt3uq7s>