

Learning Italian in the United States and Italy

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After two trips to Italy about four or five years ago, I decided to try to learn the language, both because of its beauty (to my eye and ear! and as an exercise for my aging brain#

Unable to fit a traditional university language course into my work schedule, I started with grammar texts# I had heard of language software, such as *Luena* and *Rosetta Stone*, but these were unfamiliar to me and rather expensive# I was accustomed to grammar texts after 10 years of French in elementary and high school (grades 7-12, wherein I was taught by the *Translation Method*#

Eventually, I entered the 21st century and searched the internet for language classes, finding the *Pi Sleur* method (<https://www.pisleur.com>, see also this volume# I purchased their four levels of Italian language classes comprising (3, 4, 5, 6) - minute lessons# In general, *Pi Sleur* uses repetition and formulaic expressions as teaching tools# You are told what to say in English (so etics in Italian! and you repeat the phrase in Italian during a pause# Other lessons are all conversations between 2-3 people about everyday activities such as traveling, ordering in a restaurant, and conducting business#

Other *Pi Sleur* method has its benefits and drawbacks# Aspects of the repeated phrases and formulaic expressions proved valuable# For example, Italian articles and adjectives have to agree in number and gender with nouns, so learning a phrase as a unit by repeating it over and over

ly comfort & one, and can be closed any time I get tired or frustrated. Not so when one is forced to navigate daily life in a foreign language.

As I have proceeded through the 1A O2S=? program, learning more and more about second language acquisition, I have often seen myself reflected as a language learner in various theories. For example, I find that certain grammatical forms are too difficult at one point. Often, months, weeks, or even days later, they seem much easier, and I wonder why I ever saw them as challenging. I know now from my 1A O2S=? course readings that I was not yet ready to learn them. I had not yet reached that developmental stage in my interlanguage. Just as my course books say, my interlanguage evolves (so it eventually devolves) constantly along a continuum.