

Professor Higgins introduction.

“*Professor Higgins*® – English without accent”

This course takes its name from Henry Higgins, a well-known teacher and experienced in phonetics, in fact, he dedicated his life to the phonetics' study and to the teaching of the English language.

It is a complete tool that the student will use for the pronunciation's exercise and grammatical rules of the English language.

With this program “Professor Higgins” the student will be able to speak English clearly and understand it in a short time.

This educational method uses “BBC pronunciation” which is the standard way of speaking on BBC radio and on television. All sections of phonetics have been recorded with the voice of William Shephard, who was for a long time coordinator at UCLES (University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate).



This is an excellent tool that will help the student achieve your desired result on your own.

The main difference between «Professor Higgins» and other language teaching program is that the students do not only hear the correct pronunciation, but they can also compare visually, their own speech with the visual

sound patterns using the specially developed graphic representation and then the students obtain an individual evaluation, based on the confrontation Audio-Visual on own pronunciation, so the students can understand in an exactly way the parts that contain mistakes or the pronunciation's imperfections.

Professor Higgins also includes, a lot of exercises of Listening, Conversation and Grammar that will have a final evaluation

“Professor Higgins” course is divided into:

1. **Sounds**with **183 exercises**
2. **Pronunciation** with **162 exercises**
3. **Listening** with **68 exercises**
4. **Conversations** with **282 exercises**
5. **Grammar** with **720 exercises**
6. **Dictionaries** with **52 exercises**

every exercise includes about 15 examples for a total of **22.000** examples. So a teacher have a various quantity of exercises to organiser the educational methodology that he prefers.

1) SOUNDS

These sub section starts with the presentation of the vocal organs.



Picture 2°

It is known that learning a pronunciation depends on many factors, including age, ability to groups and reproduce of sounds, quality of memory, and thinking etc ...

The difficulties in learning to speak the English is due to the difficult in recognition of sounds by ear, most of which are very different to the majority of other languages, as well as its different rhythm resulting in a different articulation.

These difficulty is heightened when trying to read a text due to the fact that most of the 26 letters of the English alphabet are pronounced differently in different languages, and in different combinations and positions within the words.

One of the most usual ways to learn the pronunciation of a word, is by individual training in recognising and reproducing sounds separately and in combinations. Usually the assessment of progress is carried out by a teacher or a student, by recording his own speech and then comparing it with a pre recorded example.

The unique method of the "Professor Higgins" program will help the students attain a good, clear and correct grammatical pronunciation.

The section "Sounds" suggest some exercises of pronunciation of:

- **Vowels**
- **Consonants**
- **Alphabet**

Vowel

This theme comprises practical sections and theory reference concerned with pronunciation practice in vowel English sounds.

The theory section contains the phonetics' definition, full of sounds classification and the scheme of Organs of speech (Picture 2- A)

Vowels

[u:] [u:i] [u:d]

La lingua è rientrata. La parte posteriore della lingua è sollevata nella direzione del palato più alto rispetto al [u:]. All'inizio del [u:] le labbra sono rotonde, verso la fine sono maggiormente rotonde. L'apertura formata dalle labbra è più piccola rispetto al [u]. Il suono [u:] è un rintro vocalico alto contratte ed esteso. Alcuni passaggi da un suono vocalico ad un altro [əu:] (parallelo al [i]-[i:]) nella lingua standard.

[u:]

Vocali
Consonanti
Alfabeto

I: I e æ a: ɔ
ɔ: ʌ u u: ə: ə
eɪ aɪ ɔɪ ou au ɪə
eə uə aɪə auə

Alphabet

[aɪ]

Ii

Lettera maiuscola I - i - lettera minuscola. La pronuncia dei suoni [aɪ].

Vocali
Consonanti
Alfabeto

A B C D E F
G H I J K L
M N O P Q R
S T U V W X
Y Z

Here an example of evaluation of Sounds/Alphabet of the letter "i".

The students will be able to see specific mistakes and they will have the possibility to correct these mistakes.

Here are represented many examples of pronunciation of the word "cache", selected from the DICTIONARY.

The screenshot displays the 'Suoni Pronuncia' (Sounds Pronunciation) window of the Professor Higgins software. The word 'cache' is highlighted in yellow in a list of words. A phonetic transcription [kæʃ] is shown at the top. Below it, a bar chart compares the pronunciation of 'cache' by a 'Modello' (Model) and a 'Utente' (User). The x-axis represents time in milliseconds (250-350, 400-500, 415-540, 550-870, 700-1200, 1000-1700, 1500-2500, 2300-3400, 3400-4000). The y-axis represents amplitude. The word 'cache' is broken down into segments: 'c', 'a', 'c', 'h', 'e'. The 'Modello' pronunciation is shown in red and the 'Utente' pronunciation in blue. The word 'sufficiente' is also visible in the background. A 'Mark' window is overlaid on the right, showing a similar bar chart for the word 'cache' and displaying the score 'Eccellente' (Excellent) in green. The interface includes a keyboard, a search bar, and a list of words.

2) PRONUNCIATION

This section is intended for studying rules and training in the pronunciation of letters in words, their combinations and rules of and stress. It covers practically all rules of a pronunciation of modern English.

In this section, the pronunciation rules associated with the English letters and their various combinations are presented together with pronunciation rules for the letters in varying positions in a word.

There are letters in the English language which denote two sounds or two letters may have the same sound.

There are also letters whose pronunciation depends on other letters around them. In the English language there are such letters which do not designate any sound, but only indicate the quality of the previous sound.

The words shown as examples in this section are not necessarily frequently used words, but are valid illustration of the appropriate pronunciation rules.

What is Phonetics?

Phonetics is a science, which gives a description of sounds in human speech and deals with the study of these sounds.

On a pronunciation of borrowed words make the big influence their sounding in their "native" language.

The purpose of phonetics is to compose a system of rules and laws of pronunciation , so that the sounds of speech are put in logical order and makes it easier to learn the pronunciation these sounds.

The section "PRONUNCIATION " suggest some exercises of:

- Vowels
- Consonants
- Combinations
- Accent

Vowels

In this section, the pronunciation rules associated with the English vowel letters and their various combinations are presented, together with pronunciation rules for the letters in varying position in a word.



Consonants

The screenshot shows the 'Professor Higgins' software interface for learning consonants. The main window is titled 'Consonants in words' and features a navigation bar with 'Suoni', 'Ascolto', and 'Grammatica'. Below this, there are tabs for 'Pronuncia', 'Conversazione', and 'Dizionario'. The central area displays the text 'La lettera B è pronunciata [b].', a list of words (beauty, ebb, table, sobbed, boom, boy, boast, lab), and a transcription box showing 'Trascrizione: [sɒbd]' and 'Translation: singhiozzato'. A waveform visualization is at the bottom. The interface includes a left sidebar with 'Vocali', 'Consonanti', 'Combinazioni', and 'Accenti' buttons, and a right sidebar with similar buttons and a list of consonant combinations. A keyboard layout is also visible on the left.

Consonants here are all the existing rules of pronunciation, letters in words and exceptions IPA.

The student can practice the correct pronunciation of letters and combination of letters in words of different lengths and phrases.

All the exercises are accompanied by explanations and examples

This helps to learn the correct pronunciation and at the same time, save the words along side their translation.

These sub topics reinforce the rules of pronunciation, practical exercises are provided, to practice different types of phrases.

Phrases are grouped by basic sounds, and help master the correct pronunciation and simultaneously remember the language construction with their translation. For training in pronunciation and listening skills to recognise sounds which are difficult to distinguish between sounds of speech are provided in the group of contrasting exercises.

Combinations



This section presents the most frequently used combinations of letters and their specific pronunciations.

Here are some very common letter combinations isolated, because they don't follow general pronunciation rules.

Example of an exercise:

Le combinazioni **SI**, **CI**, **TI** + **UNA VOCALE** equivalgono al suono [ʃ]. Nota: la combinazione **UNA VOCALE + SION** equivale al suono [ʒən].

- **ʃ**
- **special**
- **efficient**
- **social**
- **Russia**
- **specialist**
- **mission**
- **nation**
- **direction**
- **injunction**
- **question**
- **corrosion**
- **erosion**
- **explosion**

Accent

The stressed syllable



The syllable stress is a way of placing an emphasis on a syllable or a word by force of voice or raising the tone. A special sign is used to show such an emphasis. In the system of signs of the English transcription accepted for this program the stress is denoted by the sign ['] put before a stressed syllable. There exist languages in which the stress falls on a certain syllable, for example, it falls in French on the last syllable, and on the penultimate syllable in Polish.

In English the accent is free, that is it may fall on any syllable within a word.



Moreover there is a tendency in English to subordinate the speech to the rhythm of short bars. In polysyllables a second accent may occur from time to time, and a word is thereby cut into two parts. In the transcription this second stress is designated by the sign [,] preceding the second stressed syllable.

It is hardly possible to formulate the general principle of the English stress, but all the English words may be divided into three classes:

- 2-syllable
- 3-syllable
- polysyllables

3) LISTENING

In this section there are exercises that will train the students to understand the language, by hearing it.

With "Professor Higgins" method, it is possible to practice any words or phrases that are included in this program. It is possible to choose groups of words, or phrases, within that rule group.

After listening the word or phrase, the students can give a written solution, (the student could have a written suggestion in Italian or English language)

obtaining an immediately evaluation with a statistic of the wrong, correct and suggested answer,



DICTIONARY

This teaches recognition of the spoken sounds and how they are written correctly. This can also help with learning to read texts, as there is a difference between the written and spoken sounds in the English language.

TRANSLATION

This is a sub section that teaches understanding of spoken words, by the recognising the spoken words or phrases, and then finding the corresponding translation in the offered list of words and phrases.

Example of Listening, Phrases and Statistics:

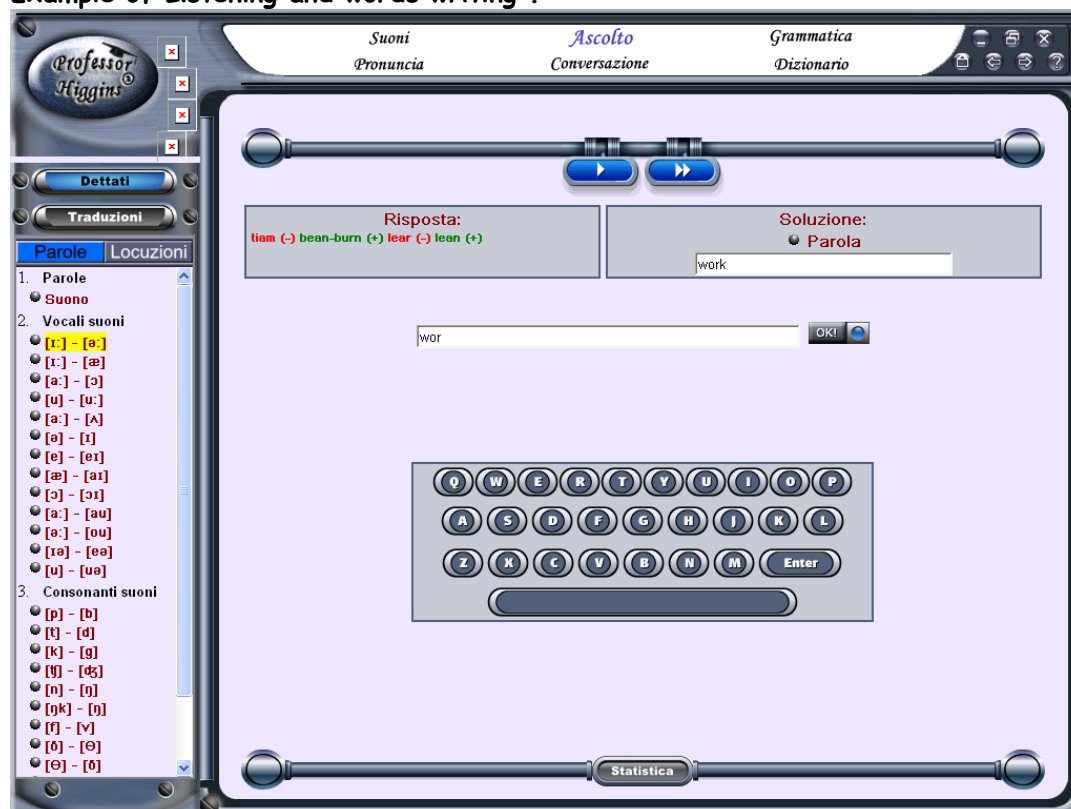
The screenshot shows the 'Ascolto' (Listening) section of the software. The interface includes a navigation bar with 'Suoni Pronuncia', 'Ascolto Conversazione', and 'Grammatica Dizionario'. A sidebar on the left lists 'Dettati', 'Traduzioni', and 'Parole Locuzioni'. The main area displays a progress bar and a statistics table:

STATISTICA:	
Tentativi rimanenti:	7
Esatte 10 su 10 :	1
Totali Risposte Date :	12
Esatte:	11
Sbagliate:	1
Suggerimenti:	3

Below the statistics, there are two columns of suggestions:

- SUGGERIMENTI:**
 - Scrivi in Inglese: Scrivi in Italiano:
 -
- SUGGERIMENTI:**
 - Bertie è l'osservatore di tutti gli osservatori .
 - La ragazza il prossimo compleanno avrà tredici anni .
 - Percy certamente preferirà cominciare.
 - Ripeti il verso parola per parola .
 - Il lavoro non porterà a nessuno scopo .
 - Vieni a pranzare, Bunny.
 - Cerca di migliorare.
 - Penso che lì sotto ci sia Mary .
 - Kate è soprattutto da biasimare.

Example of Listening and words writing .



TRANSLATION



This is a sub section that teaches understanding of spoken words, by the recognising the spoken words or phrases, and then finding the corresponding translation in the offered list of words and phrases by mouse click.

The computer selecting 10 random words and the students can see it translate form.

The students could push Play button and could listen the word step by step, at the same time, in the computer compare 10 possible written answer and the students must push their choose.



the students recognise the word by ear and select its correct translation from the list. To select the word by double clicking mouse.

- magro-imparare
- abete
- erbaccia-parola
- termine
- anguilla-conte

For a correct answer, the indicator to the right of the dialogue box flashes green.

For a mistake, the indicator flashes red.

It will compare to the computer that the students have typed their answer and are ready to get the computer response.

Statistica:	
Quantità esercizi rimanenti:	1
Esatte 10/10:	0
Risposta:	8
Risposte Esatte:	3
Risposte Errate:	5
Suggerimenti:	1

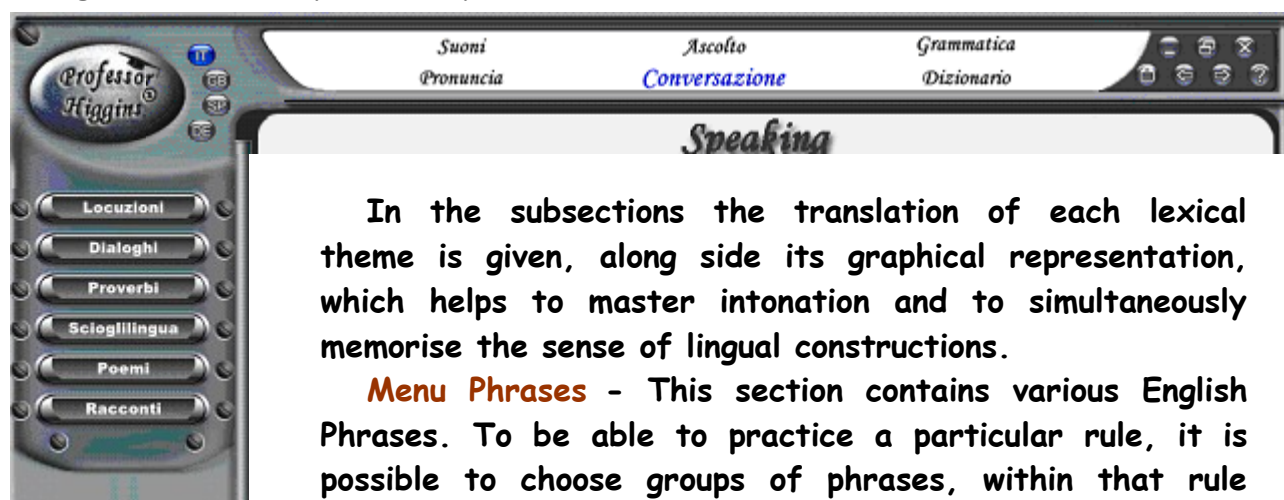
4) CONVERSATIONS

This section is intended to help develop a new skill in the practical use of lexical-grammatical models, preparing the students for effective communication.

In this section there are practical exercises to improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, increase rate of speech and develop the skill of understanding phrase constructions that are difficult to distinguish for a non-English speaker.

The exercises in this section develop the ability to recognise the sound of the language and they also help to master rhythm and intonations in the English sentences.

The aim of these subsections is to provide the vocal models at any vocal rate, any level of loudness and clearness of pronunciation, to learn to recognise and to reproduce speech.



In the subsections the translation of each lexical theme is given, along side its graphical representation, which helps to master intonation and to simultaneously memorise the sense of lingual constructions.

Menu Phrases - This section contains various English Phrases. To be able to practice a particular rule, it is possible to choose groups of phrases, within that rule group.

Menu Dialogues - contains these topics: meeting, acquaintance, farewell, compliment, request, proposals, suggestion, restaurant, food, purchase, transport, road, telephone, house, family, hobbies, holiday, the earth, apology, time, journey, etc..

Menu Proverbs - This section contains various English proverbs, sayings and poems.

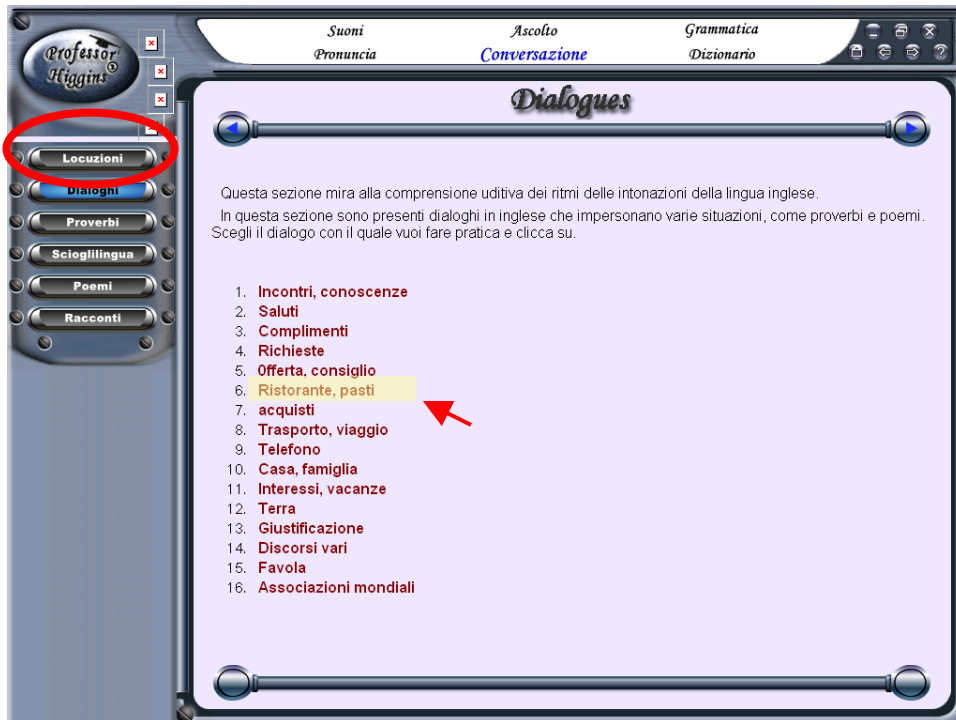
Menu Tong twister - The students will find the English tongue twisters, which help to you to improve the rate of the pronunciation of speech.

Tongue twisters can be listened to at three speeds. The students can regulate the speed of what they are listening to until it reaches the level of natural English speech. This can also serve as an indicator of the success in the student's study of language.

Menu Poems - This section contains various English poems. To be able to practice a particular rule, it is possible to choose groups of poems, within that rule group.

Menu Stories - This section contains various stories which to help the students listing American English.

Examples of Conversation in the Dialogues sub section.



Selectioning with the mouse, for example, the exercises "Transport , journey ", it will appear another page where it will proposes 8 series of Listening and Pronunciation exercises about the

selected topic

In the following picture there is an example of 5 series of exercises of listening and pronunciation about Transport and journey topic.



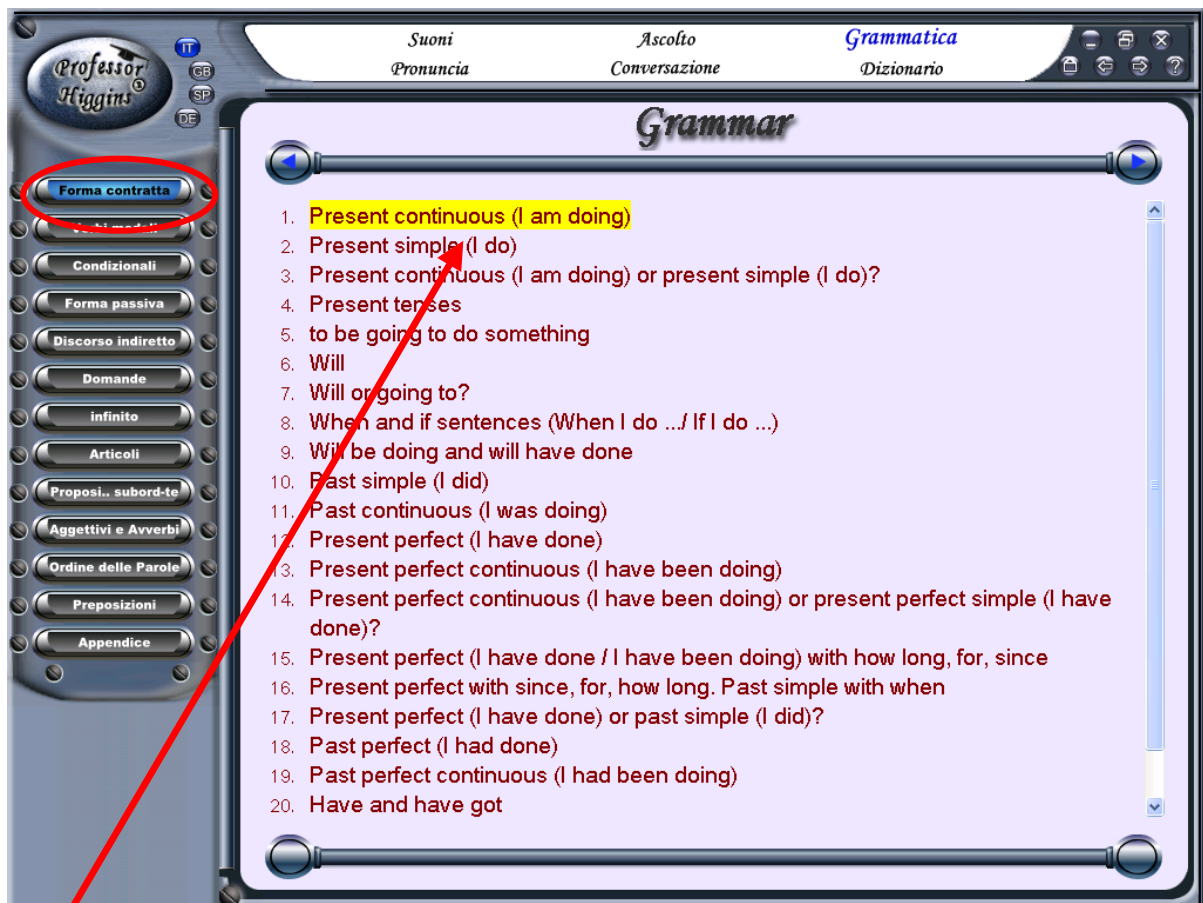
5) GRAMMAR

This section is intended for studying rules and training of English grammar. This course can be used for independent study as well as with a teacher, and also as reference book. The numerous examples and explanations allow students to understand and to remember a wide range of grammatical structures.

The section includes independent lessons, each lesson devoted to one topic of grammar.

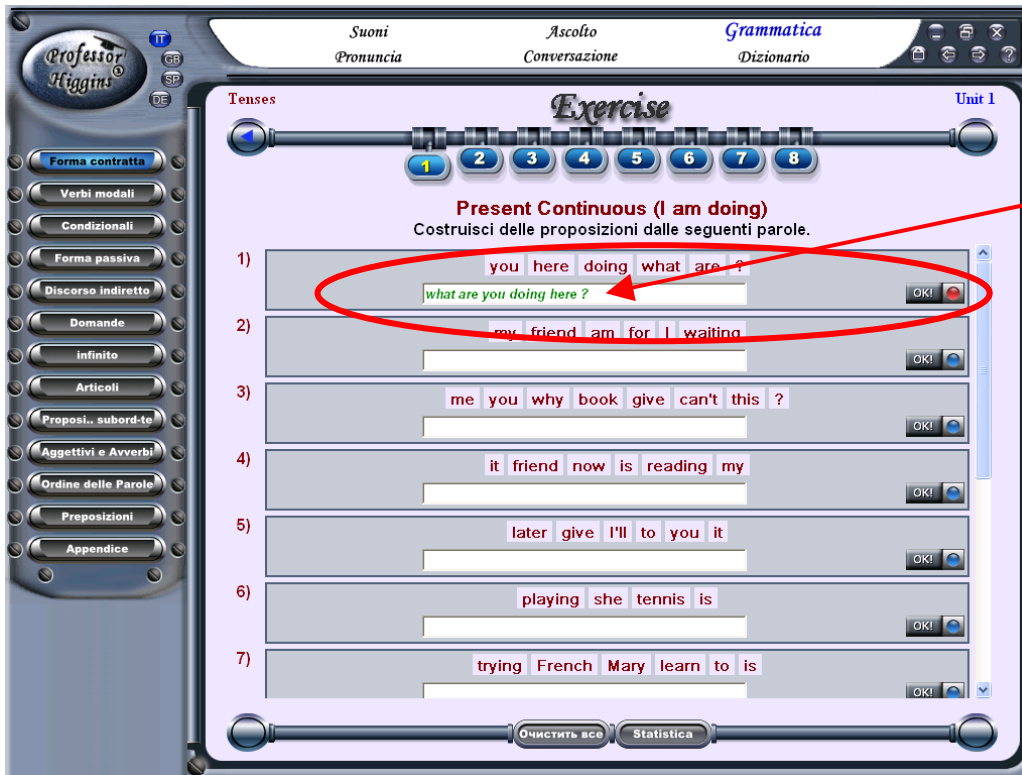
In this section there are 720 different exercises with 10.800 grammatical examples.

In the following picture there are an example take from menù Grammar, **Tenses**, where the students can find 21 exercises.



Example of exercises menu list of Present continuous (I am doing).

Then, it will appear another page where it will propose 8 series about Present Continuous :



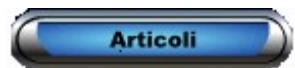
This system proposes three attempts for each answer, if the phrases it will insert in a wrong way, the system suggests the correct answer, but your answer it will sign like a wrong answer.

For a correct answer, the indicator to the right of the dialogue box flashes green. 🟢

For a mistake, the indicator flashes red. 🟡



In the same way the students could proceed with the others exercises, selecting with the mouse the others option of Grammar menu:



For example: if the students will select option, it will appear an exercises' list, as following :

1. **Uncountable nouns**
2. Countable nouns with a/an and some
3. A/an and the
4. The
5. Plural and uncountable nouns with and without the
6. Hospital / the hospital, school / the school etc.
7. Geographical names with and without the
8. Names of streets, buildings etc. with and without the
9. Singular or plural?
10. ...'s (apostrophe s) and ... of ...
11. 'A friend of mine', 'my own house' On my own / by myself
12. Reflexive pronouns (myself/yourself etc.)
13. All / all of, no / none of, most / most of etc.
14. Both / both of, neither / neither of, either / either of
15. Some and any Some/any + -one/-body/-thing/-where
16. No/none/any No/any + -one/-body/-where
17. Much, many, little, few, a lot, plenty
18. All, every and whole

6) DICTIONARIES

In this section the student is given the possibility to select a word and look at the translation. The student can then hear the selected word and then repeat it, to conduct the acoustic and visual comparison of its own pronunciation with the example. The student can then estimate the correctness of their pronunciation and to practice the pronunciation .

Dictionary

It consists in the English-Italian dictionary, with all English words, from the example of this course. You can look at the translation of the selected word, pronounce it and practice the pronunciation.

The student should click on the menu of the letter that he prefers, then the button will take colour.

The student can also choose the word that he prefers learn, then he should click on it.

The screenshot displays the 'Professor Higgins' software interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Suoni Pronuncia', 'Ascolto Conversazione', and 'Grammatica Dizionario'. The 'Dizionario' tab is active. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with buttons for 'Dizionario' and 'Omofoni', and a keyboard layout with letters A-Z and Numerals. Below the keyboard is a search bar labeled 'Поиск:'. The main area is titled 'Vocabulary' and features a list of words in three columns. The word 'alligators' is highlighted in yellow. Below the list, there is a transcription field showing '[ælgertəz]' and a translation field showing 'alligatori'. At the bottom, there is a waveform visualization of the word 'alligators' with phonetic symbols (æ, l, g, et, t, a, z) above it. The interface also includes a microphone icon and volume controls.

Dictionary Homonyms

where the student can find the groups of homonyms, the words which have identical pronunciation, but different spelling and translation. You can choose an homonym from the selection, and see the different spelling and meaning, pronounce it and then practice the pronunciation.

This is the group of words pronounced in the same way but differing in meaning or spelling or both.

Choose the letter of the dictionary, which you want to learn and click on it.

The working window with the list of words on this letter will open.

The screenshot displays the 'Professor Higgins' software interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: 'Suoni Pronuncia', 'Ascolto Conversazione', and 'Grammatica Dizionario'. The 'Dizionario' tab is active. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with 'Dizionario' and 'Omofoni' buttons, and a keyboard layout where the letter 'C' is highlighted. The main window is titled 'Homonyms' and features a list of words and phrases starting with 'c'. The word 'cache cash' is highlighted in yellow. Below the list, there is a transcription field showing '[kæʃ]' and a translation field showing 'soldi nascondiglio'. At the bottom, there is a waveform visualization of the word 'cache' with phonetic markers 'k', 'æ', and 'ʃ'.

Homonyms

- c sea see
- c's seas sees seize
- **cache cash**
- cached cashed
- caches cashes
- caching cashing
- calk caulk Cork cork
- calked caulked corked
- calking caulking corking
- calke caulke corke
- chutes shoots
- cite sight site
- cited sighted sited
- cites sights sites
- citing sighting siting
- citrous citrus
- clanger clangour
- Claude clawed
- clause claws
- climb clime

Trascrizione : [kæʃ]
Translation : soldi nascondiglio

Finestra di visualizzazione e controllo di una pronuncia

The area of visualisation has two windows: Model and trained pronunciation with elements of management of the image.

Top windows in which the graph of a model pronunciation of sounds, words and sentence. The graph is marked by symbols of transcription.

Active buttons of navigation in these windows are:



The button of pronouncing of the model. Click the icon of speaker at the right side of the render window for reproducing model pronunciation.



The button of a microphone. Click the icon of a microphone located at the left side of the render window. The microphone on the icon changes the colour into red. And in the middle of the render window the red line appears. While the line reaches the end you should pronounce the word which the speaker said. Then click the icon of a microphone again. In the lower render window you can see the graph of the word pronounced by you.



The button of pronouncing trained. For reproducing you own pronunciation click your graph Or the icon of speaker at the right side of the render window. Pointing to cursor on the graph model or own pronounce and click on it for reproducing pronunciation.

In the bottom window, in which to be graph of a pronunciation of the pupil there are buttons of management of the graph trained, allowing to move the diagram in the bottom window, so that it(he) became under the diagram of the standard.

Moves the graph to the left.

Moves the graph to the right.

If you said something faster or slower than the example graph shows and the graph of your voice is shortened or can not seat in the window,

You can change its time scale by using the buttons located in the graph of your pronunciation so that the graph in the beginning and in the end coincides with the example one.

Squeeze the graph of your pronunciation if you said slower than the speaker.


Stretches the graph of your pronunciation if you said faster than the speaker.

Open the window of marks of articulation. If button is it in window that you can received of articulate marks

How to compare the words diagrams

Compare the shape of the model to the recording of your voice, note the similarity in the shape of the outer envelope.


The outer envelope indicates how your pronunciation of the word is similar to the model. The frequency of the vertical lines shows voice timbre, this is individual to each person, and is not significant for purposes of comparison.

If the graph of your voice is shifted to the side, The students can move it to the original position by using the buttons  located in the window of their graph.

Moves the graph to the left.

Moves the graph to the right.

If a word was said faster or slower than the example, and the graph of your voice is too short or is too long and does not fit in the window, You can adjust the time scale by using

the buttons  located in the graph, so that the graph is equal in length to the example.

Condense the graph to the desired length, if you spoke too slowly.

Stretch your graph if you said faster than the speaker.

To receive a mark for the correctness of your pronunciation, click the button .

Once the window is open there should be a button that will give the students their marks for their pronunciation. This window will also have a diagram which will help to identify their mistake in their pronunciation.



Examples of evaluation of the word "WAIF"

The screenshot shows the 'Professor Higgins' software interface. On the left, there is a menu with categories: 'Vocali', 'Consonanti', 'Combinazioni', and 'Accenti'. Below these are buttons for vowels 'A', 'E', 'I', 'O', 'U' and an 'Esercizi' section with five numbered items. The main window is titled 'Suoni Pronuncia' and 'Ascolto Conversazione'. It features a 'Markcommon' window showing the phonetic breakdown 'w ei f' with counts '0 0 10' and a large blue number '3' with the word 'Buono' below it. To the right, there is a list of words: 'main', 'pay', 'pain', 'bay', 'mail', 'nay', 'waif', 'say', 'sail', 'said', 'ail', and 'day'. The transcription is given as [weɪf]. Below the text are two waveforms: a green one for the correct pronunciation and a red one for an incorrect pronunciation where 'w' and 'ei' are pronounced as 'w' and 'ei' respectively, instead of 'f'.

Note how the read line shows the wrong pronunciation of the words **w** and **ei**, instead of the letter **f** that is pronounced in a correct way.

Practice single words

When practicing it is important to watch out that the sound is present and clear, as well as being the relative timing for the separate sounds.

For example, it is possible to see on the graph that you have either missed out a sound or pronounced it incorrectly.

The graphic analysis:

The student said the word "take"

The initial <phonem>[t]</phonem> sound has been pronounced incorrectly. There is syllabic stress which can be clearly seen on the graph. The student should therefore go to the Sounds section to practice and learn the correct pronunciation of the sound.

The frequency of the vertical lines only shows voice timbre, which is individual for every one. This example shows that the timbre of the student is higher than that of the one in the sample.

The sound <phonem>[ei]</phonem> has been pronounced without a stress. The student should go to the Sounds section to practice and learn the correct pronunciation of this sound.

Example 2. Graphic analysis:

The student said the word "take"

In this example the student pronounced the word correctly. The similarity of the graphs is good. The relative timings of all the sounds is very good.

Example 3. Graphic analysis:

The student said the word "take"

In this example the word was pronounced somewhat slower than in the sample. However the relative timing of the sounds is still correct therefore similar to the general shape of the graph.

You can change its time scale by using the buttons located in the graph so that your graph coincides with the beginning and end of the example.

Compact the graph of your pronunciation if you spoke slower than the model.

Stretch the graph of your pronunciation if you said faster than the model