

Lesson 203: The noun, la notizia, in Italian | Il sostantivo, la notizia, in italiano

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Recently, on my other blog, PdG, I used the word, *la notizia*, as an example to show how its usage differed from that of its English translation. After I posted it, there was some confusion and discussion about this noun. In the lesson/post below, I just wanted to discuss the differences in English and Italian between this noun.

In English, *news* is a noncount noun, much like the nouns *milk*, *water*, *air*, etc.

In English, a noncount noun might refer to:

1. a group or collection of certain things:
mail, equipment, machinery, furniture, makeup, money, change
2. an item made up of smaller parts that cannot be counted:
hair, sugar, rice, salt, sand, coffee, tea
3. an activity or abstraction that is comprised of other individual activities or attributes:
work, housework, homework, advice, information, news, music
4. certain liquids:
water, milk, soup, juice, coffee, tea

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5. certain foods: *bread, meat, chicken, fish, cheese, cotton, wool, cooper, glass*

6. some nouns relating to the environment
air, land, oxygen, smoke, steam, wind, heat

In English, the noun, *news*, is part of the "family" of noncount nouns that, while plural in its construction, is always used with verbs in the singular:

The news that you gave **surprises** me.

The news **continues** at 11:00 PM.

In Italian, these types of nouns are called **i nomi non numerabili**, and many of the same nouns above are also non numerabili in Italian. However, in Italian, **la notizia** (which translates as "news" in English) is a **nome numerabile** and can be counted.

Often you will see the noun, **la notizia**, used in the plural with connection to the news reported by a newspaper or on television. It is often used in journalism to refer to many news stories in a specific category of news, such as **ultime notizie, notizie sportive, notizie politiche**, etc. In this context, it refers to not a specific story but a group of stories that make up a particular area or genre of journalism.

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When *le notizie* is used (in or outside of journalism), it is used to indicate more than one story or more than one piece of news:

Devo darti **delle belle notizie**: a maggio mi sposo e Arianna aspetta un bambino.

I have to tell you some wonderful news: in May I am getting married, and Arianna is expecting a baby.

As you see in the example above, **la notizia** is used in the plural (**le notizie**), because there are two pieces of news: the impending wedding in May and the expectant Arianna. If the news being relayed was just one of those two, then the singular is used:

Devo darti una notizia importante: a maggio mi sposo!

I have to give you some important news: in May I am getting married.

In Italian, **la notizia** is used to refer to a single, specific event, whereas the plural is used to describe multiple stories or events or when news is being used in a general journalistic sense with the implication that more than one story is involved. Look at some other examples below:

La caduta del governo Berlusconi è **una notizia** che mi rende felice! Finalmente!

The fall of the Berlusconi government is news that makes me happy! Finally!

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Non posso leggere **le notizie** su La Repubblica! La mia connessione alla rete non funziona!

I can't read the news on La Repubblica. My internet connection is not working.

La giornalista, Lucia Annunziata, ha riportato **la notizia** della caduta del governo di centro-destra.

The journalist, Lucia Annunziata, reported the news of the fall of the center-right government.

Oggi è morta la nonna di Federico ed è nato mio nipote. **Due notizie** così diverse eppure così importanti!

Today Federico's grandmother died and my nephew was born. Two pieces of news so different yet so important!

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