



Rhetoric and Communications, Issue 4, July 2012

Todor Shopov

Intercomprehension Analysis

Abstract: The paper explores the topic of Intercomprehension Analysis as the theoretical study of the phenomenon or basic research on receptive language behavior. The practical applications of the inquiry into Intercomprehension are referred to as *Applied Intercomprehension* research and development.

Keywords: Intercomprehension, Modular Intercomprehension Model, communicative language competence.

Acknowledgement: This paper is a revised version of Chapter 11 in "Understanding Babel": an Essay in Intercomprehension Analysis" available at <http://www.amazon.com/Understanding-Babel-Essay-Intercomprehending-Analysis/dp/9540717787>.

INTRODUCTION

The study of the phenomenon of Intercomprehension may take either a theoretical or a practical orientation. We must make this distinction because Intercomprehension Analysis is a discipline in its own right. In the area of languages, it can be compared, and contrasted for that matter with Language Teaching Methodology, Translation and Interpreting, Language Typology, etc.

I shall take the term *Intercomprehension Analysis* to denote the theoretical study of the phenomenon or basic research. The practical applications of the inquiry into Intercomprehension will be referred to as *Applied Intercomprehension* research and development. In fact, Franz-Joseph Meißner has established the “didactics of multilingualism” (Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik) as an independent discipline, (<http://www.uni-giessen.de/~gb1041/institutpersonen/meissner>) [1]. So I shall consider all issues related to the teaching, studying and learning of Intercomprehension as belonging to the field of Applied Intercomprehension. For example, the study of the methods of raising language learners awareness of Intercomprehension will be regarded as a type of applied research (the ILTE project for example deems awareness-raising as “the most essential facet of Intercomprehension”) [7]. In the same way, I shall consider aspects of intercultural communication by means of Intercomprehension as types of applied research.

In short, the theoretical findings and the description of the Intercomprehension phenomenon need to be rendered into a new teaching and learning paradigm, that is, a specific methodology should be designed. Moreover, language teacher training (pre-service and in-service) should take a new orientation. I think it is Applied Intercomprehension that is to undertake these somewhat Olympian tasks [32].

ON DEFINING INTERCOMPREHENSION

English dictionaries do not include the word *intercomprehension*. It has been coined to describe the perspective, which stresses the legitimacy of the universality of a language user’s receptive proficiency. The word is related to terms like *interlanguage* suggested by Selinker (1972/1992) [2], which in turn was adapted from Weinreich’s term *interlingual* used in his well-known book *Languages in Contact* (1953). In fact, John Reinecke (1969) [3] first used the term *interlanguage* to refer to non-standard varieties of L1 or L2 in a study of the language and dialect in Hawaii. The notion of Intercomprehension is associated also with the concepts of *intercultural communication*,

interdiscourse communication, intercultural discourse, intercultural competence, interpersonal communication across cultures, intergroup communication.

The etymology of the term *comprehend* (*comprehend* < Fr < L com- + *prehendere* ‘seize’, ‘get’) is quite intriguing. If the recipient “seizes”, “grasps” or “gets” the meanings of texts in a foreign or unfamiliar language, do these meanings stay with him “for keeps” or flit away immediately after the end of the act of communication? The second presumption will mean unwanted lavishness in use and waste of constructive and interpretative resources in the acquisition of language. What really happens, however, is that the “seized” meaning leaves its imprints in the linguistic competence of the recipient and builds up structures that will aid future comprehension processes?

“Comprehension” has two main senses. In its narrow sense, it denotes the mental process by which listeners take in the sounds uttered by a speaker and use them to construct an interpretation of what they think the speaker intended to convey. More simply, it is the building of meanings from sounds (called “construction process”). “Comprehension” in its broader sense, however, rarely ends here, for listeners normally put the interpretation they have built to work. On hearing an assertion, they normally extract the new information it conveys. For this, they must have at their disposal additional mental processes that make use of the interpretation they have constructed so far. The second area of study of comprehension is called “utilization”. It is concerned with how listeners utilize this interpretation for further purposes – imparting and seeking factual information, answering questions, following orders, and the like.

The first issue of the first European journal for the study of Intercomprehension, “*Intercompreensão*”, <http://www.redinter.eu/web/revistas/>, gives the following definitions (2012) [4]:

- “le fait de comprendre les langues sans les parler” (Blanche-Benveniste 1997) [5];
- “receptive language behavior (listening and reading comprehension) in a language which has not been studied by the individual” (Shopov 2009) [6];
- “capacité de comprendre une langue étrangère sans l’avoir apprise” (Meissner 2004) [1].

The ILTE project defines Intercomprehension with respect to Applied Intercomprehension: “A broad approach to language teaching and language learning which embraces a positive view of linguistic and cultural diversity and which aims to motivate pupils to recognize and activate their explicit and implicit linguistic and cultural knowledge, skills and experience in order to develop their general language and culture awareness.” (ILTE Report – 5.0, p. 6) [7]. Further analysis of definitions is available at Redinter's website or at https://docs.google.com/presentation/edit?id=0AY4FTY_gGkZ0ZGhyajM4MzRfMzVnN2Jod2pjbQ&pli=1.

Filomena Capucho offers a standard, widely accepted, definition: “the capacity to understand and to be understood in an unknown language by means of different communicative modes or strategies” (Capucho, *ibid*, p. 17) [9]. While this definition is straightforward enough and has been used for research and development purposes on a number of occasions (e.g. Shopov, Pencheva and Köksal 2003) [10], some qualifications are in order.

Firstly, I claim that the phenomenon is part of man’s natural faculty for language. In other words, the universal language instinct is the source of both receptive language proficiency (comprehension) in familiar language media and of Intercomprehension in unfamiliar language media. Comprehension, and Intercomprehension for that matter, has a unitary nature – it is not different for L1, L2 or L_x (unfamiliar language). Hence, it cannot be represented by a Venn diagram. Cognitive scientist Steven Pinker maintains: “Knowing about the ubiquity of complex language across individuals and cultures and the single mental design underlying them all, no speech seems foreign to me, even when I cannot understand a word. The banter among New Guinean highlanders in the film of their first contact with the rest of the world, the motions of a sign language interpreter, the prattle of little girls in a Tokyo playground – I imagine seeing through the rhythms to the structures underneath, and sense that we all have the same minds.” (Pinker 1994, p. 430) [11].

Therefore, Intercomprehension strategies should not differ from standard communication strategies in familiar language media. In relation to Applied Intercomprehension though, we must specify the strategies, which have proved to be effective in unfamiliar language media and can be

taught/learned. Intercomprehension is to be thought of as the possession of an ability to interpret and/or negotiate meaning under specific circumstances. In the EuroCom project, the strategies, which “enable multilingual receptive competence among Europeans”, are called “transfer-based deduction strategies”. They are related to “reading competence in language groups”, namely Romance, Slavonic and Germanic (<http://www.eurocomresearch.net/>) [12].

Communication between non-native speakers is often characterized by errors and problems of understanding. One way of dealing with errors and problems is through the use of “repair” mechanisms. They encompass the concept of “correction”, i.e. repair is generally a self-righting mechanism, i.e. we must also include the speaker as an important figure in Intercomprehension. To deal with errors users have two resources for communication: linguistic and extra-linguistic behaviour. Various techniques are used to signal self-repair. These include lexical means, such as *I mean, you know*; non-lexical means, such as cut-offs and interjections used as gap-fillers. Word search is another repair operation. Verbal strategies include synonyms, definitions, examples, etc.

Here is an example: M. and H. (both learners of English) have problems with lexical items, witnessed in their word search. H. does not understand a word M. uses and initiates repair on it by asking what it meant. M. tries to repair it, using a variety of strategies to help H. – giving examples, definitions, signals, understanding by nodding, saying “yeah” and making appropriate comments.

H.: Do you – do you spend u-h some drugs...

M.: mmhm

H.: in your food?

M.: hm yeis

H.: like saffron, or salt, or pepper, something like that?

M.: Oh, I see, yes mm Japanese?

H.: Yes, in Japanese food

M.: o-h in Japanese food. Mm Japanese food not spi-cy

H.: what does it mean? Spicy

M.: Spicy means wh mm mm not – do you know spice? Spicy meaning wh sometimes with tree seeds or wh nuts

H.: Yes

M.: Example um tabasko? And wh mustard um and pepper; yes I got it (Larsen-Freeman 1980) [13].

Secondly, I believe that Intercomprehension is a quality of any intercultural communication – how people understand each other across various group boundaries, including linguistic, social, ethnic, etc. Educator Eleanor Orr has documented “...the difficulties experienced by inner-city black youngsters whose use of language often does not align closely with the precise uses prescribed in mathematics textbooks. For example, such students often say *twice as less*, which cannot simply be equaled with *half as much*; since students do not distinguish between a location (as customarily represented by a point) and a distance (represented as a line segment) and therefore will say things like [*The town of Aurora equals the distance from Cleveland to Washington*]; some conflate the words *any* and *some* as well as *at* and *to*, or *for* and *of*. Although these distinctions may not matter in ordinary, context-rich discussion, they can collide with usages in textbooks where a single denotation – and no other – has been intended” (Orr 1987, cited in Gardner 1991, p. 163) [14].

Hence, we need a description of the salient features of Intercomprehension in general, not only within language families or language types. Those universal features are available to be used but are not automatically used in all instances. Those features constitute the system of core receptive proficiency, which has an Intercomprehension potential – Intercomprehension may or may not “spill out” of the boundary of the language in which the core receptive proficiency has been formed. Which are they? What are the barriers to their application? Researchers believe comprehension should be seen as the realization of a general interpretative process, which underlies all communicative activity. I believe that receptive proficiency has a universal aspect, i.e. Intercomprehension, which should be described and explained.

The last point to make here is that Intercomprehension is maximally dependent on context and other extra-linguistic cues (such as repetition, exaggeration, gesture, etc.). Knowledge of language (e.g.

syntax and semantics) is necessary for understanding linguistic messages that do not refer to the contexts in which they occur. In such utterances, the “meaning” is in the linguistic message alone. But when a sentence is redundant with respect to the context in which it occurs, the amount of information, which the user needs to get from the linguistic message, is probably negligible.

Successful comprehension of discourse depends largely on the activity of the recipient. In communication the listener tries to understand what the speaker means by activating various types of knowledge, and applying what he already knows to what he hears. Comprehension is seen as a process during which the recipient is actively constructing a coherent interpretation of the input information. This construction process is based on the recipient’s linguistic and other (social, cultural, world) knowledge, and contextual information from the situational context and the linguistic context. Comprehension problems often depend on different background knowledge and different experiences rather than linguistic proficiency. In professional communication, for instance, the participants use terminology and syntax, which are supposed to be understandable and clear. The effect of the communication is determined by the code, the channel, and the other situational factors, and last but not least by the participants with their personal abilities, backgrounds, and actual constitutions. In this connection, factors influenced by cultural constraints and determinants are most influential. We have thus to separate between *langue* and *parole* of professional communication. The *langue* is mainly a matter of terminology, the *parole* the matter of use. There is, however, also a mutual process between *langue* and *parole* if the professional communication is supposed to be an effective vehicle. Characteristics usually overlooked are the cultural constraints of professional communication. Culture determines how we understand the world, how we perceive things, what we notice and how we react. Strategies applied in a certain situation in our own culture are not effective in another culture.

COMPOSITIONALITY PRINCIPLE

A conceptual framework or a theoretical system – what do you base your analysis on? That is a colleague’s favorite question. But whether we use a certain type of theory is beside the point here; we need not go again into the methodology of our tentative theory. Our object of investigation, the abstract construct of Intercomprehension, is complex, composed by components, which are also complex (compare Ferdinand de Saussure’s contrary claim that “language is a well-defined object”). I claim that differences in communication capabilities are best thought of as stemming from the differential development of a number of discrete mental faculties and not from differences in a single, underlying intellectual factor. Consequently, Intercomprehension is to be thought of as a modular device, each of whose modules has evolved to serve a specific function in its own unique and specialized way.

In addition, Intercomprehension Analysis is part of human science (as opposed to natural science), which rules out conceptual monism. Therefore, this study requires a conceptual apparatus based on conceptual pluralism, which will engender an adequate description of the object. For the purpose, the model I propose is based on the principle of compositionality, according to which a definition of a composite object is built up from the definitions of its components. So all the procedures and tools of the theory complement each other; the aim is constructing a multidimensional description. The theory may encompass seemingly incompatible facts in an attempt to account for all aspects of the complex object. Its interdisciplinary character enhances its robustness because it integrates overlapping facts. The redundancy of facts, having common ground, increases the descriptive and explanatory power of the theory. Also, the interdisciplinary base correlates with the humanistic nature of the Intercomprehension phenomenon.

As is known, the notion that is being defined may not be implicitly contained in the definition, or the term to be defined, *definiendum*, may not reappear in the defining sentence, *definiens*. A viciously circular definition would be that Intercomprehension is comprehension in conditions of an unfamiliar language medium. That is why I shall use concepts other than Intercomprehension in order to define and explain the Intercomprehension phenomenon.

The compositionality principle allows us to construct a Modular Intercomprehension Model (MIM) for analysis with many descriptive dimensions, each of which is made by many components. The latter stand in for latent sources of Intercomprehension. Which are the necessary and sufficient dimensions of the MIM? And which are its components? Below, I shall specify them and examine their salient features.

RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Receptive proficiency is part of general communicative proficiency. Psycholinguists and cognitive psychologists have offered numerous theories of language production and language reception. Ignoring the historical side of the development of the notion of communicative proficiency here, I shall set it apart from the notion of communicative proficiency. That is quite necessary because our investigation is focusing on the actual performance of language in acts of communication, i.e. on the *parole* aspect of language, and not on the underlying knowledge of the linguistic system (the *langue* aspect). As is known, Ferdinand de Saussure distinguished between those two aspects of language. J.P.B. Allen (1975, p. 37) defines de Saussure's terms succinctly, "*Parole* is the actualized language, the realization of *langue* in speech, which is idiosyncratic and specific to the situation in which it occurs." [15].

Therefore, I shall define actual language behavior as a social product by means of the communicative properties of language – as communicative proficiency rather than communicative competence. Indeed, the “executive side” of language use or the functioning of language in social contexts is the user's realization of his or her communicative competence in actual speech events. In other words, I shall not be trying to abstract communicative competence from instances of actual communicative proficiency. I shall analyze communicative proficiency as the user's *ability* to use and understand, in general, ordered sequences of utterances.

Receptive proficiency, or language comprehension, is thought of as involving basically two processes: (a) bottom-up processing: attention is focused on the oral or written text, words are identified and propositions are created on the basis of the information present in the input and (b) top-down processing: propositions are connected with cognitive schemata, existing in long term memory; new information is assimilated into existing schemata.

So the “higher level”, non-sensory information is used to interpret the “lower level”, sensory information that is present in the data. The former is also referred to as *utilization or elaboration* and the latter, as *perceptual processing and parsing* of information (LDOLT&AL 2002, p. 286) [16]. This is, of course, a psycholinguistic definition).

Lyle Bachman has schematized what he calls “language competence” or “language use”. His taxonomy serves our purposes here. Only, I shall modify it so that it matches our object of investigation – receptive proficiency in an unfamiliar language medium.

The taxonomy has components of three levels of generality. The first, “highest” level includes two nodes: formal competence and pragmatic competence. The second level includes four nodes: grammatical competence and discourse competence (components of formal competence) and illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence (components of pragmatic competence). The third, “lowest” level includes four components: (a) vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology/graphology, (b) cohesion, coherence, (c) functions: instrumental, regulatory, representational, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative, (d) sensitivity to dialect or variety, sensitivity to register, sensitivity to style, cultural references and figures of speech (see Table 1).

Table 1: Components of receptive language competence

RECEPTIVE COMPETENCE			
Formal competence		Pragmatic competence	
Grammatical	Discourse	Illocutionary	Sociolinguistic
Vocabulary	Cohesion	Commissive	Dialect
Morphology	Coherence	Declarative	Variety

Syntax Phonology Graphology		Directive Expressive Representative	Register Style Cultural References/Figures of speech
-----------------------------------	--	---	--

In the taxonomy, the use of the notion of “level” is completely arbitrary. It has merely a classificatory function. There is no suggestion of hierarchical ranging of units. The taxonomy is based on empirical observation of the system of language. Formal competence includes the rules that govern the use of language forms at and below the level of the sentence, i.e. phonology/phonetics, lexis and morphosyntax (grammatical competence) and above the sentence level, i.e. intersentential relationships (discourse competence). It “organizes” linguistic units in an act of language communication. Pragmatic competence refers to the purposive nature of language communication, including the grasp of intended meaning (illocutionary competence) and of social context (sociolinguistic competence). Here, I use Searle’s outline of the five categories of illocutionary acts. Sociolinguistic competence “requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share and the function of the interaction. Only in a full context of this kind can judgments be made on the appropriateness of a particular utterance” (Savignon 1983, p. 37) [17]. That is why it includes issues of sensitivity to language varieties, styles (degrees of formality: oratorical or “frozen”, deliberative or formal, consultative, casual and intimate), registers (occupational or social factors) and culture.

I must state explicitly that the special role that context plays in utterance interpretation needs to be distinguished from the background knowledge that plays a role in the analysis of meaning. Background assumptions are very general shared knowledge, which is not part of meaning but is an essential instrument in comprehension. Background knowledge has a crucial role in understanding linguistic expressions since it provides the foundation for determining “what the utterance actually means”.

Proponents of the traditional view of understanding sentence meaning argue that there should be two distinct theories of linguistic meaning: one, dealing with the structurally determined meanings of sentence types, and the other, dealing with the extra-linguistic information participants in communication use in interpretation. This view sharply distinguishes between linguistic competence, i.e., meaning, and performance, i.e., use. It is important to maintain in this connection that some of the sources of information in understanding structural meaning are themselves products of interpretative acts. For example, people will judge a sentence as having a direct or “literal” meaning simply because it is isomorphic with the situation in which the sentence is interpreted. In the same way, the conventional interpretation of utterances, which greatly enhances the process of Intercomprehension, always presupposes some context of use. Therefore, meaning cannot be uniquely determined, since our understanding of situations will always influence our understanding of sentences. For example, the meaning of the utterance *Can you pass the salt* presupposes a typical context of use since its actual meaning is ‘pass the salt’ and not questioning one’s ability to pass the salt. The use of the English phrase *How do you do* is an even more striking example of this contention.

Let us take another example. Two strangers are standing shivering at a bus stop in the piercing wind. One turns to the other and says: *It is cold*. This is an instance of sharing a common point of view in a prototypically phatic (also interactional) function of language. The context of phatic communication is highly favourable for Intercomprehension since the utterance is perfectly isomorphic with the extra-linguistic situation and possible body language cues, e.g. jokes, politeness expectations, fixed scenarios and other means of keeping channels of communication open.

Understanding written texts differs from comprehension of verbal speech because written language is more decontextualized. Oral language conveys meaning that is largely drawn from extra-linguistic sources found in the surrounding context. In both cases, however, comprehension resorts to background knowledge. Thus, a more precise wording will be to speak of varying degrees of contextualization.

I believe that people understand language not through the mere application of linguistic rules but via certain presuppositions about “texts” as being composed by intentional agents, that is, people. The mere fact that human beings, who are assumed to have communicative intentions, produce language affects the meanings ascribed to texts. This entails a general conception of thinking, cognition and language use (production and reception) as being figurative.

I am fully aware that some students of foreign language acquisition and comprehension will immediately come up with the objection regarding the postulate about the general metaphorical principle of language production and language comprehension. They will probably counter with the argument that different kinds of meaning are recovered during the interpretation of figurative and of non-figurative language. I must say that this is an invalid argument because they are confusing the *processes* and the *products* of comprehension. Although people might on some occasions be able to distinguish figurative language as distinct from literal use, this judgment is based on the *product* of linguistic interpretation. It should not be taken as evidence of the *process* by which figurative language is comprehended.

All language interpretation takes place in time and this temporal continuum can be roughly divided into “moments” corresponding to *Recognition*, *Interpretation* and *Comprehension*.

- *Recognition* refers to the immediate process of creating meanings for utterances. This process involves analysis of varying linguistic information (phonology, lexis, syntax).
- *Interpretation* refers to analysis and identification of particular type of text or utterance as having a particular content or meaning.
- *Comprehension* refers to the conscious identification of the product. This is achieved in combination with context and real-world knowledge.

As was said, comprehension involves a construction process and a utilization process. The latter means that successful comprehension is judged by appropriate responsive action be it linguistic or not.

Strategic competence is not included in the taxonomy (Table 1) because it is of a different order. It relates to the semantic-pragmatic component but also it underlies all other components of the realization of receptive language competence in actual speech events (Fig. 3). Hence, it is a separate subsystem of our model of receptive language proficiency. It is an adaptation of Bachman’s model of “communicative language ability in communicative language use” in which strategic competence is the core of receptive proficiency. It controls the speech event on the basis of existing receptive competence and the user’s general knowledge of the world, on the one hand, and by means of psychophysiological mechanisms and the context of situation, on the other (see Figure 3). Strategic competence includes verbal and nonverbal communication strategies. Merrill Swain describes their two functions: (a) “to enhance the effectiveness of communication” and (b) “to compensate for breakdowns in communication” (1984, p. 189) [18]. One cause for miscommunication is of course insufficient or lacking competence, as is the case of interaction in unfamiliar language media. For example, communication strategies may be paraphrasing, repetition, avoidance, gesture and mime, body language, accommodation (style shift in convergence and divergence), foreigner talk (simplification and topic fronting), etc.

Examples of miscommunication abound in interactions involving native speakers and non-native speakers. We must go beyond an analysis of purely linguistic features and consider the pragmatic and/or socio-cultural dimensions of the communicative event. Speech events consider the relationships of class, status, power and solidarity, and a linguistic theory that includes culturally specific rules of discourse, politeness, conversational maxims, conversational inferences, and patterns of interpretation. A common cultural background greatly facilitates interpretation of an utterance. When interlocutors do not share the same socio-cultural rules of discourse, multiple possibilities of misunderstanding exist. I distinguish between two major types: (a) non-communication and (b) miscommunication. The latter is further subdivided into misunderstanding and negotiated communication.

In effect, users have learnt how to solve the problem of understanding each other because speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is said is comprehended by another person. The internal program or executive control structure by which they do so might be represented as

follows: problem situation with its setting, events, etc. entails objective as communication goal entails strategy as plan of action or reaction (Fig. 2).

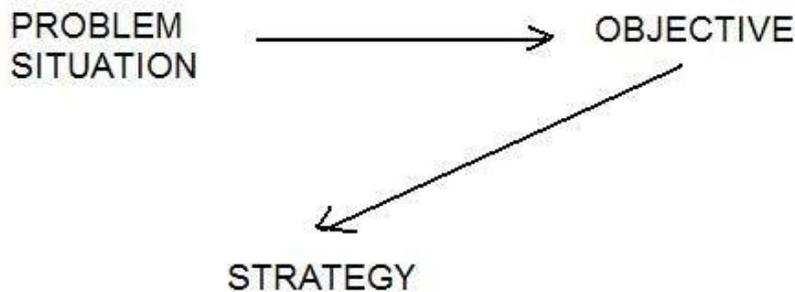


Figure 2: The executive control structure of language use

Here is a list of communication strategies offered by Larsen-Freeman and Long (1990, p. 145) [19]:

- Exact repetition,
- Semantic repetition question,
- Self-repetition,
- Other-repetition,
- Confirmation check,
- Comprehension check,
- Clarification request,
- Or-choice question,
- Decomposition,
- Acceptance of an unintentional topic-switch,
- (Impressionistically) abrupt topic-change,
- Repair of *wh* to *yes/no* question,
- (Impressionistically) marked use of a quotation for topic-initiating move,
- Left dislocation,
- Question-and-answer,
- Acceptance of ambiguity,
- Lexical switch,
- Stress for topic saliency,
- Expansion.

As is no doubt apparent, the abstract control structure contains (a) a representation of a current state, (b) a representation of a target state, and (c) a representation of a communication strategy for effecting a change from one of these states to the other. For example, we learn from early childhood that the lexicon can be used creatively. Creativity means also learning the conventions on uses. Observations on spontaneous innovations suggest that in filling the lexical gaps people rely on certain principles that guide their acquisition of a repertoire of word-formation devices. The following seem to be most outstanding:

- Reducing to general, highly productive forms and inferring from particulars and exceptional forms;
- Semantic transparency (which results in preference for innovations where there are one-to-one matches of meaning with forms);
- The principle of symmetry in linguistic systems, which accounts for beliefs that (i) each singular form has its plural form and vice versa; (ii) each positive form has its negative counterpart, etc.



Figure 3: Components of receptive language proficiency

Norman Fairclough (1989, p. 11) discusses the process of comprehension as a process of interpretation: "... you arrive at an interpretation through an active process of matching features of the utterance at various levels with representations you have stored in your long-term memory. These representations are prototypes for a very diverse collection of things – the shapes of words, the grammatical forms of sentences, the typical structure of narrative, the properties of types of object and person, the expected sequence of events in a particular situation type, and so forth" [20].

Thus, we see that the process of comprehension is based on the use of communication strategies, determined by "knowledge of language", "mental representations" and "context of situation".

Situational context includes various domains such as setting (where and when the speech event occurs), participants (interlocutors) and their role relationships (social and psychological), message (topics, concepts, predications, etc.), channel (verbal and non-verbal or visual ways of conveying meaning – spoken or written language, gesticulation, wink, posture, movement, etc.) and key (serious, mocking, etc.). Educational documentation abounds in specifications of situational contexts to which one might be exposed. Here is, for example, a random list of situations of "real-life listening":

- listening to the news on the radio;
- discussing work problems with family or colleagues;
- making arrangements with acquaintances;
- making exchanging news over the telephone;
- chatting at a party;
- hearing announcements over the loudspeaker (at a railway station);
- receiving instructions on how to get somewhere;
- attending a lesson;
- being interviewed;
- watching a television program;
- hearing a lecture;
- listening to broadcast songs;
- attending a formal occasion (wedding);
- getting professional advice (from a lawyer).

Also, the process of comprehension is determined by the imperatives of the Co-operative Principle: the maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner (Grice 1975, p. 45) [21] and the Territorial Principle: the maxims of negative face and positive face (Widdowson 1983, p. 78) [22]. Broadly speaking, the effects of these opposing principles are conditioned by the nature of the situation (whether it involves problem solving, conflict resolution, etc.).

The traditional view about the meanings of utterances, originating from Frege's principle of compositionality (compare with our use of the term), is that sentences can be understood without knowing who said the sentence, where it was said, or when or why. The meanings of sentences are entirely determined by the meanings of their components and the syntactical rules. This implies that the interpretation is independent of knowledge of extra-linguistic context. By contrast, I claim that sentence meaning can only be determined relative to a set of background assumptions, which shall be here called by the cover term "background knowledge", which is part of the "picture of the world". The main point is that comprehension is the outcome of contact between the utterance being interpreted and the prototype in the user's mind.

MODULAR INTERCOMPREHENSION MODEL

Let me begin with some theoretical assumptions. I believe that cognitive structures are supposed to be universal in their form, if not in their content, and all human beings are supposed to acquire them in the same chronological order and in a very similar manner. Thus, meaning means knowing.

Metaphor, metonymy, etc. are basic schemes by which people conceptualize their experience and the external world. This entails the refutation of the long-standing assumption that language is independent of cognition. I claim that metaphoric schemes underlie thinking processes and processes of understanding. This naturally means that our conceptualization of experience is metaphorical, which both motivates and *constrains* the way we mean and interpret meaning. It may seem strange that metaphor constrains creativity but if we make one step further in the same direction, we must say that we conceive of creativity in conceptualization as a fundamental (if not the fundamental) operational mechanism. Conventionality of metaphorical schemes enhances the process of understanding and communication in general. What relates this ground postulate to Intercomprehension is the assumption about the universality of these cognitive schemes. To put it differently, we take it for granted that constraints on communication and understanding, if any, are, by definition, not imposed by the limits of language but by the ways we actually think of our experience. There is ample evidence from linguistic research that the meanings of words have live metaphorical roots. For instance, in Indo-European languages, various words meaning 'see' regularly acquire the meaning 'know' at some point of their development. This fact can be very easily explained with the conceptual metaphor "knowing is seeing". Because this metaphor exists in the conceptual systems of Indo-European speakers, the conceptual mapping between seeing and knowing defines a pathway for understanding so that any word or phrase for seeing can extend its meaning to knowing. The metaphor "knowing is seeing" also demonstrates how words acquire multiple meanings that make sense to us. Lewis Carroll explains this issue by this well-known exchange:

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on. "I do," Alice hastily replied, "at least I mean what I say – that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see'!"

The understanding of polysemy is grounded in our metaphorical structuring of experience. Exploring the ubiquity of metaphorical thought can be a powerful instrument for explaining the use of language both by the speaker and the recipient in communication. Clark and Malt (1984, p. 191) assert: "It is highly likely that most language universals are a result not of linguistically autonomous constraints but of constraints general to other cognitive functions. It is therefore appropriate a priori to assume that language universals are derived from general cognitive constraints..." [23].

Lexical representations of words are related to a general-purpose conceptual system in which the meanings of words are retrieved and combined using both linguistics and non-linguistic information.

The prototype and exemplar models of understanding both rely on the same similarity principle. That is, category membership and hence interpretation and understanding are determined by whether or not some object is sufficiently similar to the prototype, the ideal, or to a set of examples. At the same time, however, real-world knowledge is used to reason about or to understand meanings. One important consequence of the cognitivist idea that categories are not necessarily pre-existing but arise from the results of various cognitive structures is that categories must be viewed as dynamic and context-dependent. This greatly alleviates the process of comprehension since it is thus not dependent on pre-acquired and memorized knowledge of concrete language elements or structures.

My observations of the world are “theory” based. By “theory” I mean the pictures of the world, which are operative in conceiving of the world, in speaking about the world and understanding the meanings of the speaker. One way of explaining the understanding of meanings of unfamiliar words in communication is to think of such meanings as reflecting different kinds of knowledge or “pictures”, or “theories” which George Lakoff calls Idealized Cognitive Models. An Idealized Cognitive Model is a prototypical “folk” or cultural model that people create to organize their knowledge. In this way the conceptual structure regularly used in understanding is experientially meaningful *as a whole*. Analyzing language meanings in terms of idealized cognitive models provides for a more accurate and more flexible description of our intuitions about meanings of linguistic elements.

In summary, the Modular Intercomprehension Model is based on the definition of receptive proficiency as an aspect of general communicative proficiency. I am not suggesting that Intercomprehension is just a matter of language. On the contrary, it exists in various modalities stemming from discrete mental faculties. It is based on the compositionality principle, which means that the MIM is interdisciplinary and multidimensional. Hence, six modules constitute it (fig. 4). I shall list them in alphabetical order below:

- The cognitive base,
- The linguistic base,
- The physiological base,
- The pragmatic base,
- The psycholinguistic base,
- The sociolinguistic base.

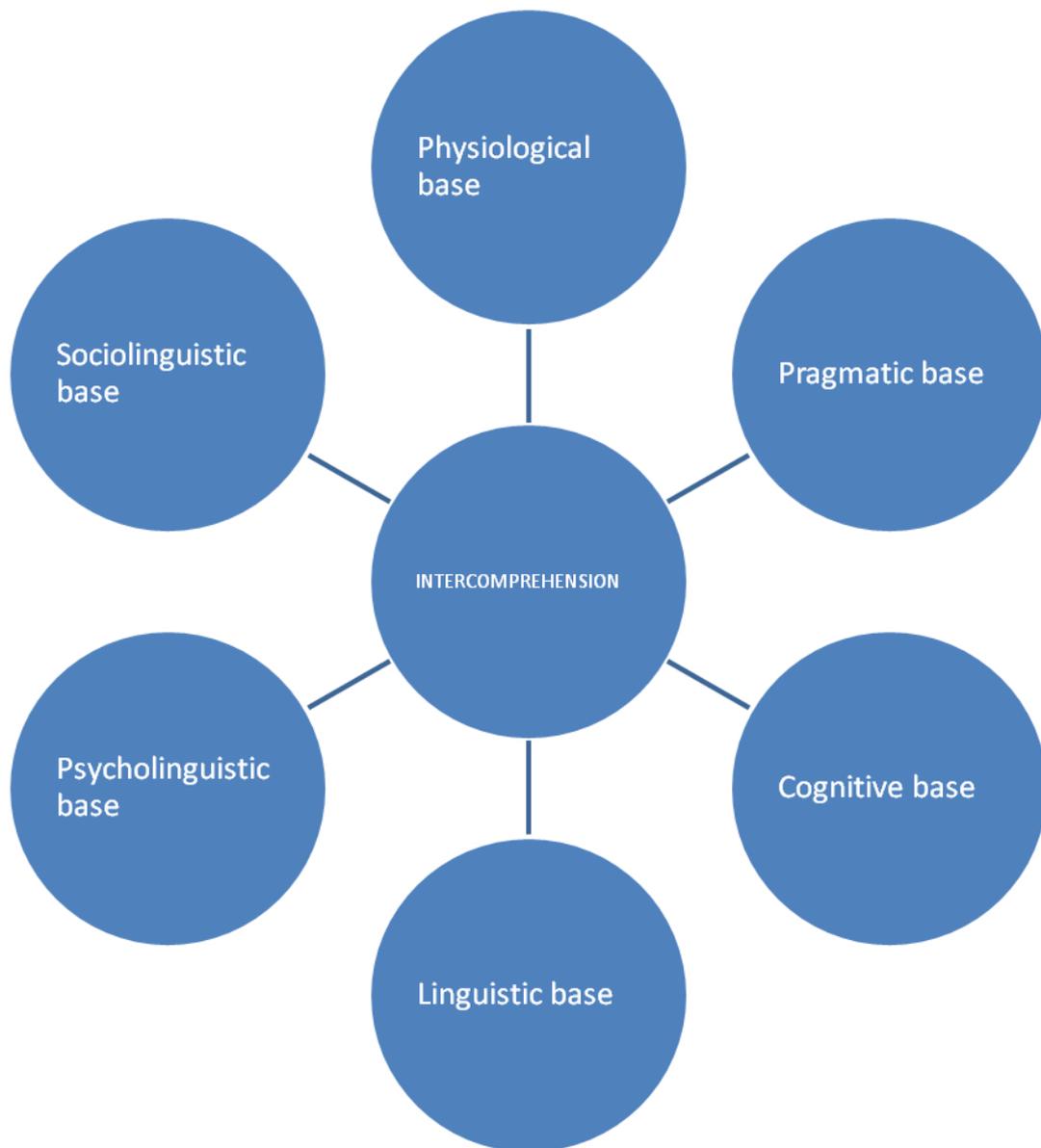


Fig. 4: Components of the Modular Intercomprehension Model

The MIM includes the necessary and sufficient modules for an adequate description of Intercomprehension. But the finite number of modules does not imply that the model is exhaustive. Quite the opposite, it is hardly possible to account for all aspects of the complex object in an exhaustive and comprehensive way. I am doubtful about the possibility of constructing such a theory. However, the MIM enriches the theoretical study of Intercomprehension so as to contribute to the foundation of the discipline of Intercomprehension Analysis.

LINGUISTIC BASE

Everyone has an “informal theory” about language. The theory is informal because it is not explicit. Language is a very complex phenomenon and cannot be fully accounted within one theory. When asked *What is language?* the linguist would often reply by asking *Why do you want to know?*

The linguistic study of language is the most “objectivised” approach: it is concerned with language as a system. In the most general sense it is concerned with the relation between meanings and sounds. To explain this relation it has set up various “levels of description” which account for different sorts of

entities and the different sorts of relations it finds between them. These levels bear familiar names as syntax, morphology, phonology, and lexis. But language is not, after all, a thing with real existence. By abstracting in this way, the linguistic study of language tends to lose its connections with man and society.

If, when discussing language, we talk about skills, such as speaking or comprehending speech, we are adopting a psychological view of language. We are considering it as an aspect of behavior. However, when we talk about acceptable and unacceptable behavior or appropriate and inappropriate language, or of unachieved Intercomprehension, we are taking a view of language as a social institution, a body of socially conditioned or culturally determined ways of behaving.

When someone is learning a language and another person is teaching a language, they usually have a certain social objective, which entails strategies and degrees of Intercomprehension. The range of roles, which a learner wishes to achieve vary. Few will wish to be poets in a new language community; some may wish to be husbands or wives. Most will be content to be “foreigners”. We teach and learn *a* language, not just *language*.

We shall go further into the communicative function of language. First, we must make a distinction between intentional and unintentional communication. All our behavior is in some measure communicative, in the sense that the recipient learns something he did not know before, even though the speaker has no special intention of informing him of anything. We shall refer to this aspect of behavior as *informative*, keeping the term *communicative* for behavior, which is used with the intention of communicating information. This does not however mean that the recipient can always “read” the signs. To be informed or communicated to we need a certain amount of general knowledge of a set of conventions. The distinction between intentional and non-intentional communication lies in the mind of the speaker. The distinction between being informed and not being informed, or communicated to or not being communicated to, lies in the mind of the recipient.

Intention necessarily presupposes choice. But when we have a choice, we have the possibility of using it for communication and interpretation/comprehension. Choice implies a range of distinct alternatives, which form a conventional system. It implies meaning.

The second distinction we must make is between the *attitudinal* and *cognitive* functions of linguistic behaviour. The attitudinal function of linguistic behaviour is the use of this behaviour to express our state of mind and emotions, to establish rapport with our recipients and to create feeling of solidarity, confidence. The cognitive function is to express our perceptions, imaginings and beliefs about state of affairs. Human communicative behavior, both linguistic and non-linguistic, may have an attitudinal function, but only linguistic behavior has a cognitive function. It is possible to have utterances, which have only attitudinal function. These are the so-called *phatic* phrases like *Hello*, *Good-bye*, *How do you do*. Their occurrence is fairly predictable: they are formulaic in structure. But the majority of utterances are not of this formulaic sort and do contain a propositional element in them.

In order to comprehend successfully the recipient must know the system of conventions, which the speaker follows.

People from different parts of the world obviously do not always understand each other when they speak. If there were anything common to all their means of linguistic communication one might at least expect some degree of *mutual intelligibility*. This expectation is reasonable since people know that they can make themselves understood for fairly basic purposes by means of gestures and facial expressions when they go abroad. They also know that there are many people with whom they cannot communicate with through language.

There is however no clear, simple relation between linguistic similarity and mutual intelligibility. There seem to exist some *subjective* social-psychological dimension in Intercomprehension. We seem to understand those we are prepared to or expect to understand. Intercomprehension depends, in part at least, on the *attitudes* we have towards our own and others' manner of communication. Thus, linguistic similarity and Intercomprehension are connected, but not directly.

A very peculiar case of Intercomprehension potential is presented by Areal Linguistics in the phenomenon of the *Sprachbund*. It illustrates language similarity and hence increased potential for successful Intercomprehension, which is not the result of common origin (like language families). In

other words, similarities among languages in the Sprachbund are not inherited but acquired through geographical proximity. The contact of several languages belonging to different language types and language families implies also similarities and overlaps in way of life, culture, and beliefs, i.e. close pictures of the world. The infiltration of a set of features in all the languages of a given geographical area, forming thus the zone of overlap, often goes contrary to inherited features and even leads to their disappearance.

I shall demonstrate the effect of really acquired similarities in conceptualization, grammar and vocabulary with examples from the Balkan language area. The Balkan Sprachbund includes Bulgarian (a South Slavic language), Romanian (a Romance language), Albanian (forming a language family by itself within the Indo-European group), Modern Greek (Hellenic), and Serbian (a West Slavic language).

Being genetically diverse and representing different language typology, these languages contain zones of overlap. These zones are of course the object of our interest since they create a high potential for Intercomprehension between speakers of these languages.

In the first place, there are systematic similarities in their phonological systems – dynamic stress, no distinction between long and short vowels, lack of nasality and open/closed syllables; the presence of the vowel [ɤ].

Secondly, the Balkan languages are all typical representatives of the so-called “verbal” type, i.e. they have extremely complicated temporal and aspectual systems. This complexity is compensated by the nominal system, which demonstrates strong analyticity. A second marked feature is the syncretism of the Accusative and the Dative, preserving the formal marker of the Dative. A third one is the use of the short Dative forms of personal and reflexive pronouns in the function of possessive ones. In the fourth place we can mention analytical degrees of comparison with adjectives.

Probably the most popular Balkanisms in morphology are the post-positional article and the lack of an infinitive. In syntax, one of the most prominent features is the doubling of the object by means of the short form of the personal pronoun. The most transparent zone of overlap among Balkan languages is that of lexical Balkanisms. The common lexical core, which is enormous, consists of words of Thracian, Latin, Greek, Turkic and Slavic origin. Let’s have an example: Albanian *kopile* “illegitimate child”, Bulgarian *кoпилe* “illegitimate child”, Greek *κοπέλλι* “boy; boy servant”, Romanian *copil* “child”. In addition to separate lexemes, the Balkan linguistic area is marked by common semantic fields, which represent common way of life. An example can be the field of shepherd terminology.

A thought-provoking zone of similarity and even identity are phraseological units, idioms and proverbs. The similarities concern semantic fields (e.g. performative phrases), lexical units, syntactic structure and associations. Here are some examples:

(a) Bulgarian *слагам ръка на* (lit. put one’s hand on, “acquire by force”),

Albanian *vë dorën,*

Greek *βΰάζωχέρι,*

Romanian *prune mina,*

(b) Bulgarian *пъхам си носа в* (lit. poke one’s nose into, “interfere”),

Albanian *fut hundën,*

Greek *χώνει τη μύτη του.*

Due to the complexity of human language, linguists have always found it necessary to break down this complexity into a number of stages. The stages, or levels of analysis that linguists have agreed about have varied from time to time and from one theoretical orientation to another. What all analysts of language have agreed about, however, not always explicitly, is that at least two stages are necessary. All linguists agree on at least one fundamental type of organization in language – the *double articulation* of language. The terms that we commonly use – phoneme, morpheme, lexeme, grammatical category, and sentence – refer to different types of patterning in language for which linguists apply different levels of analysis to relate *meaning to sounds*.

In analyzing Intercomprehension, the analyst is principally concerned with *language acquisition* and *language performance*. These so-called skills are categories of more or less overt linguistic behavior. They classify observable physical acts but neither describes nor explains what is going on in

the mind of the language user during language comprehension. For our purposes it will be much more precise to distinguish between *productive* and *receptive* performance and then look for the component abilities involved in them.

In order to comprehend a piece of communication one must be able to “hear” it first. The next set of operations involved in processing the speech product is *recognition*, which occupies the midfield between linguistics and psychology of perception. It very much resembles the task of problem solving. Problem solving involves the making of hypotheses against which the evidence is tested. These hypotheses are known in psychology as “perceptual schemata”. They are a sort of a “model” of entities from the outside world. Such schemata are learned and stored. We recognize a piece of speech production by performing some kind of matching between our schema and the incoming information. Recognition then is an active cognitive process. When we listen to a foreign language, we can distinguish variations of pitch, intensity, and quality of the sounds we hear but we cannot recognize them as *the phonemes of a particular language*. We hear foreign speech usually in terms of the perceptual schemata of our native language. The process of recognition normally extends to groups of sounds or lexical words. We also store hypotheses of words and groups of words, which habitually occur together. Utterance recognition probably proceeds by different means for it cannot involve a process of matching incoming data with stored schema. Our strategy for recognizing utterances must consist of some economical procedure, which rests on rules and not on lists. Miller (1964, pp. 29-37) [24] has shown that to utter all the acceptable twenty-word utterances of a language would take 10¹² centuries. Our strategy to recognize utterances must be through an equally “economical” procedure, i.e. taking up the least possible mental storage space. In other words, we postulate that in comprehending utterances we do not match the incoming data against an infinite set of hypotheses, but rather match the rules.

An objection might immediately arise that the well-known rules that linguists use to describe the sentences of a language don’t have a psychological character. But we must not confuse the description of the process with that of the product. The account of the process of utterance identification, which we formulated, can be called with the happy term “analysis by synthesis”, used in different contexts for different processes.

The process of utterance identification thus described might raise some doubts since it somehow suggests that in order to “identify” an utterance, one must first analyze it completely and then judge if the structure can be “generated” by the internalized rules. The fact is that we normally don’t wait for the whole utterance to “process” it but we sample the incoming data and relying on the sample, we predict the structure of the utterance and act accordingly, i.e. enter into performing ourselves. This is a heuristic model par excellence. This easily accounts for the facts that both native speakers and FL learners do make mistakes in receptive processing of utterances and have to backtrack to do a more complete analysis of incoming data. This model, which we shall call *heuristic*, presupposes prediction (or anticipation), which is so common in cognitive accounts of processes of perception and explains the common saying “we hear what we expect to hear”. The ability to anticipate is an absolutely fundamental skill in language use, language learning and comprehension. It works on all levels of comprehension – anticipating what a person is going to talk about in a situation, anticipating what a person’s next utterance will be, etc. This is large part of what we, after Chomsky, call “linguistic competence”. The ability to anticipate and predict is based on the knowledge of rules, on the knowledge that rules exist and on conventions and shared knowledge.

The big problem of comprehension and Intercomprehension is that it is not sufficient to identify utterances as “grammatical”, i.e. meaningful within this particular language. In order to comprehend in the proper sense of this term we need to internalize also the lexical rules. Comprehension then involves recognizing utterances grammatically and semantically. The common speaker usually summarizes this fundamental problem of communication in the phrase “I understand what you say, but I don’t know what you mean”. We can phrase it in more “scientific” terms as “I identify your utterance as belonging to this language, but I do not understand it.” You must have noticed that we used the term “understand” differently in the two phrases. In the first, it is equal to “identify”, and in the second it is equal to “know what is meant”. In discussing Intercomprehension we shall be dealing with the

second meaning, which could be also paraphrased as “perceiving the function of the utterance in its context”, or “perceiving the intentions of the speaker”. The process of *understanding*, in this sense, involves understanding the situation as well, and this relates the understanding of language to understanding the world.

What is not at all clear, and I shall leave it open for now, is the extent to which the process of understanding is a specifically linguistic part of Intercomprehension.

Given two parties in a conversation, A and B, we can distinguish “A events” as things that A knows but B does not; and “B events” as the things that B knows but A does not... The rule then states: If A makes a statement about a B event, it is heard as a request for confirmation.

This rule contains the social construct of “shared knowledge”, which is not normally a linguistic rule. This is merely one of the many rules of interpretation, which relate “what is said” to “what is done”... There are no simple one-to-one relations between actions and utterances.

Everything said so far throws light on the connection between the psychological processes we have called *understanding* with the notions of *communicative competence*, *speaking rules*, and *appropriateness*, just as on the connection between the psychological process of *identification* with *grammatical/semantic competence*. Ensuing from this model is a hierarchical model of comprehension, such that *identification* presupposes *recognition*, whilst *understanding* presupposes *identification*. In the same time this model also tries to answer the question formulated before in the following way: part of the process of comprehension is not specifically of linguistic nature. The disentangling of linguistic and cognitive process is simply impossible. It also rules out of court that language learning, comprehension and Intercomprehension are merely a question of memorizing the set of associations or rules possible in the language. On the other hand, there is an obvious sense in which the learning and the understanding of a language and language in general must be related to the learning and knowledge of the world.

By formulating the above and standing by it we are actually taking a stand in the controversy about language learning. We, in this way, confirm with conviction one of the theories of language learning, sometimes referred to as *deductive learning*. Deductive learning simply means the discovering of the linguistic information by a process of applying to the data some inborn “theory” about language, i.e. some set of “ready-made” categories or concepts common to all human languages (linguistic universals). This interpretation of language productive and receptive proficiency is also known as the Nativist Hypothesis. The nativist perspective assumes that language is peculiar to human beings and they are born with a specific “program” for acquiring it, it is learned and comprehended through a specific data-processing device, proceeding by heuristic processes of forming hypotheses. What we learn is not the language products and their meanings but rules and conventions for producing and understanding them.

The enormous task, which confronts the language producer and the language recipient and the surprising uniformity of results and ease in their proficiency leads to the presumption that a certain amount of knowledge about language must be genetically “wired” into the human mind.

The FL learner, being a speaker of his native language, has full information about “how language works.” He knows not only what language is like, but also the rules of particular manifestations of language – his native language. If the FL learner knows some other second language, the grammar of it will also be incorporated into the “device” for performing in and comprehending the foreign language. The assumption is that this will make the task of learning the foreign language easier, that is, the learner will possess a larger number of useful hypotheses to work with.

Human language is not a code in which auditory or visual signals are converted on one-to-one basis into cognitive structures – or vice versa. Instead, when used normally, language provides a set of underspecified clues that need to be expanded by semantic and pragmatic inferences based on knowledge of the lexicon and grammar but heavily reliant upon encyclopedic knowledge and awareness of the conventions for language use.

Psycholinguistics investigates people’s knowledge of sentences as linguistic categories belonging to hierarchies. The most common unit of analysis for linguists and psycholinguists is the sentence. But very little is known about how people view sentences as categories. We must examine sentence

categories to see whether their structure is similar to that of other cognitive categories. We might start with the assumption that categories are not discrete, all-or-none entities. Instead, categories are seen to result when a number of characteristics usually occur. When we use similar kinds of sentences in similar ways, we have expectations about what features of sentences should occur together. For example, sentences with animate agents as subjects are most likely to contain verbs that are high in intentionality. Sentences with animate agents, typical verbs and animate patients are judged as most prototypical.

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC BASE

We have viewed the psycholinguistic base under a number of different rubrics. In summary, it is founded on the *framing* operation: the formation of expectations as to the meaning, in general, being conveyed. The *hypothesis is tested and revised* through the operation of successive approximation. Thus meaning, in general, is *inferred* from the actual discourse and is *checked* against the originally activated cognitive *schema*.

Here, we shall discuss Intercomprehension as an aspect of speech of native speakers (NSs) addressed to non-native speakers (NNSs). What are the linguistic and/or conversational adjustments to NNSs? In other words, which communication strategies do interlocutors use in order to ensure understanding?

Larsen-Freeman and Long (1990, p. 125) [19] summarize the ways in which NS-NS and NS-NNS conversations have been found to differ. For example, conversational topics are treated simply and briefly in foreigner talk discourse (FTD). The very nature of the topics preferred in FTD differs, too. A much narrower range of topics is used. FTD is oriented to the “here and now” reference. NSs use significantly more “alternative questions”. NSs accept unintentional topic switches by NNSs when a communication breakdown occurs. NSs prefer questions to statements in topic-initiating moves. NSs use stress and/or pauses before topic words when they introduce topics or make them more salient (Table 5).

Table 5: Linguistic and Conversational Adjustments to NNSs in FTD

- Linguistic Adjustments

- Phonology

- Slower rate of delivery

- More use of stress and pauses

- More careful articulation

- Wider pitch range/exaggerated intonation

- More use of full forms/avoidance of contractions

- Morphology and Syntax

- More well formed utterances

- Shorter utterances

- Less complex utterances

- More regularity

- More repetition of optional constituents

- More overt marking of grammatical relations

- More verbs marked for present/fewer for non-present temporal reference

- More questions

- More *yes-no* and intonation questions/ fewer *wh* questions

- Semantics

- More overt marking of semantic relations

- Lower type-token ratio

- Fewer idiomatic expressions

- Higher average lexical frequency of nouns and verbs

- Higher proportion of copulas to total number of verbs

Marked use of lexical items

Fewer opaque forms

- Conversational Adjustments

Content

More predictable/narrower range of topics

More here-and-now orientation

Briefer treatment of topics

Interactional Structure

More abrupt topic-shifts

More willing relinquishment of topic-choice to interlocutor

More acceptances of unintentional topic-switches

More use of questions for topic-initiating moves

More repetition

More comprehension checks

More confirmation checks

More clarification requests

More expansions

More question-and-answer strings

More decomposition

As has been shown, receptive language proficiency has at its core the communication strategies component. Table 6 lists some of the communication strategies language users employ. Communication strategies differ in their efficacy. Some of them facilitate Intercomprehension more than others. So this is a promising area for future research.

Table 6: Typology of Communication Strategies

Paraphrase
Approximation
Word coinage
Circumlocution
Transfer
Literal translation
Language switch
Appeal for assistance
Mime
Avoidance
Topic avoidance
Message abandonment

SOCIOLINGUISTIC BASE

We all know what is supposed to happen in the stereotypical situation when two Englishmen who have never met before come face to face in a railway compartment. They will start talking about the weather. Quite a few people however are actually interested in discussing climatic conditions. So there must be some other reason for conversations of this kind. They are a perfect example of the importance of the social function fulfilled by language. Language is not simply, and often not at all, a means of communicating new information. It is a major channel for establishing and maintaining social relationships or “keeping the channel open”, as linguists like to say. The most important thing in the conversation between the two English gentlemen is not the words used, but the fact that they are talking at all. The interlocutor will learn many things about the other person not so much from what that man says as from *how he says it*.

These two aspects of language behavior are very important from a social point of view. The inter-relationships between language and society are usually associated with the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, the hypothesis that a speaker's native language sets up categories, which serve as a "grid" through which he perceives the world. This constrains the way in which he categorizes and conceptualises the world. The language can affect a community by influencing or even controlling the world-view of the speakers. Most languages in Europe are very similar in this respect. This is usually attributed to their common origin and the long cultural contact between their speakers. The world-views of these speakers are for that reason not dissimilar.

The relationship that works in the opposite direction is not controversial within the cognitive frame and is even presupposed by it – the effect of society on language. This influence of society on language is most visibly reflected on the structure of the vocabulary. We can say, for example, that the important family-relation in a society is always reflected in the existence of a separate lexical item for it.

What has been stated so far has decisive implications for Intercomprehension Analysis and Applied Intercomprehension. Relating social experience and thus the scope of knowledge and experience to linguistic competence has an important implication for the FL learners' proficiency. The FL learner does not have access to the "elaborate code" (i.e. the full system of the foreign language) and this necessarily leads to cognitive deficiencies and clogs. The linguistic characteristics of the "restricted code" will produce constraints on his interpretations of the world, or his ability to organize his experience in the new communicative situation. Since, moreover, the "restricted code" is less adequate to deal with concepts and modes of thinking, the differences in pictures of the world mean that FL learners are to some extent cognitively deprived. This apprehension is, however, free of any real ground within the cognitive frame. It refers only to the distinction between "acquiring the code" and "being able to communicate and to comprehend in this code".

When the recipient in an act of communication is a FL learner we are dealing with a different "context" of communication. Thus speech between speakers of unequal "rank" tends to be less relaxed and more formal than that between equals. It excludes servicing the whole range of communicative varieties or registers and expressing all nuances of social and individual meanings.

In Intercomprehension, it is communication between people that is central, that is, its social function is most important. Language is, of course, not the only form of human behaviour that communicates. Perhaps all overt behaviour communicates. On the other hand, language is not the only sort of behaviour whose principal function is communication. We point, wave, raise our eyebrows, clear our throat and avert our eyes.

Language or verbal behaviour is a special sort of communicative behaviour. A speaker behaves as he does because his audience is as it is. We cannot explain what happens in speaking and comprehending without taking into account the characteristics and the behavior of the hearer. Both are "performing" linguistically. An act of communication can be fully described if we know all about the people involved, their personalities, attitudes, knowledge of the world, their relationships to each other, their social status, why they are talking at all, what has gone before, linguistically and non-linguistically, etc.

If communication is to take place, the participants must share the same knowledge and the same conventions. We can communicate with people only because they share with us a set of "agreed" ways of behaving. The study of language as a social phenomenon must be consonant with theories of social structure, social behavior and human culture.

The members of a language community share sets of beliefs, political or ethical, they share to a large extent the way they construe the world, the way they classify objective phenomena, what meaning they give to this classification. Communities share a common history and agree about what is or is not important to them, a common value system. All these things are "their culture". They also possess a distinctive way of communicating through language. What is the connection between language and culture? May communities with different cultures use the same language? Sapir (1921, p. 214) states: "Most of us would readily admit, I believe, that the community of language between Great Britain and the United States is far from arguing a like community of culture. A common language

cannot indefinitely set the seal on a common culture when the geographical, political and economic determinants of the culture are no longer the same..." [25].

Thus, we can say that language mediates between the individual and the culture. But to do this it must possess certain specific properties, which qualify it for this task. It must be capable of codifying objects and events.

So far we have been considering the relations between a language, an individual and a culture. But in the context of the learning a foreign language we must also consider the problem inter-linguistically and cross-culturally. This means asking the question: do the evident differences between the cultures of language communities make it difficult or impossible for people to learn the language of another society and make Intercomprehension impossible? Or to put it differently: is the difficulty of learning another language or at least achieving some degree of Intercomprehension directly related to the degree of difference to be found between the two cultures with which they are associated?

In this sense, the language of a community will reflect the culture and serve the needs of that community by making it easy for it to realize distinctions where these are important and useful, while disregarding or distinctions where they are not important or socially relevant. The structure of a language is very often said to "mirror" the structure of the world as it is seen by a particular community.

Obviously languages do differ in the way they symbolise the world, that is, in the way they *categorize* or *codify the experience* of their speakers. Then we would expect to, and do, find differences in the vocabularies of different languages. Where one language has a single name for some phenomenon, another language has no such word and has to resort to periphrasis to express the same notion. Their semantic content, however, is equivalent. We must also point out that what is lexically coded in one language may be coded both by lexical and grammatical means in another.

Therefore we must say that the difficulty of learning and Intercomprehension in a foreign language is related to the degree of difference between two cultures. But this is not necessarily the final answer. So far we have been dealing with cases where the speakers of one language have to find an equivalent expression for the *same conceptualization* in the second language. But can we have the case in which the conceptualization itself is not available in the culture of the second language? To answer this question it is necessary to check how people behave non-linguistically, i.e. to study indirectly their capacity to conceptualize when there is no symbol available in their language. The best-known experiments in psycholinguistics and cognitive science indicate that while the semantic structures of language do exercise some effect on concept formation, they do not have a totally determining effect. We can say tentatively, then, that there is yet no evidence that difference between cultures are such that they *preclude* Intercomprehension. The differences between cultures are ones of degree not of kind. The members of different cultures live in "the same world" but they categorize it differently: "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. The fact of the matter is that the "real world" is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group...We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation." (Sapir, *ibid.*, p. 27) [25].

Whorf extended the argument to grammatical structure. The grammatical categories, too, codify experience. The difference is not essentially one of kind, but rather in the degree of abstraction involved.

The degrees to which cultures resemble each other are reflected in language as similarities of semantic and syntactic structure. The learning of a second language does involve some degree of re-categorization or learning to see the world as the speakers of that language habitually see it, learning their culture. But this is not an impossible task, only more or less difficult.

The inclusion of this component emerges from a unified conception of language organization characterized by means of cognitive processing. Central to this conception is the view of grammatical structure, consisting of three related claims. Semantic structure is not universal; it is language-specific to a considerable degree. Semantic structure is based on conventional imagery and is characterized relative to knowledge structures.

Grammar does not constitute an autonomous formal level of representation. Instead, grammar is symbolic in nature, consisting in the conventional symbolization of semantic structure. There is no meaningful distinction between grammar and lexicon. Lexicon, morphology, and syntax form a continuum of symbolic structures, which differ along various parameters. We take it for granted then that meaning is a cognitive phenomenon, which equates meaning with conceptualization.

The observation that categorization processes are a fundamental, ever-present and indispensable part of human activity has been with us for centuries. However, only relatively recently, with the advent of prototype theory, has categorization been rediscovered as a complex phenomenon. We are dealing with a kind of cognitive categorization, namely, linguistic systematization. The term itself might seem ambiguous: on the one hand, it may refer to the process by which people use language to categorize the world around them; on the other hand, it may mean linguistic taxonomy, with the help of which linguists classify and describe language data. It is the reflective sense that is our main concern.

What is categorization? Very simply, it is the ability to see similarity in diversity. Why do we need categorization? The underlying principle of the model expanded here is that natural language is a pivotal aspect of human cognition and therefore cannot be studied in isolation from other human cognitive capacities. Essential to categorization are attributes, which do not reflect the inherent properties of the object itself inasmuch as they have to do with the role an entity plays in a particular culture and the dimensions along which entities are regarded similar. This functional-interactional model of categorization is the connection with linguistic semantics. Meaning is considered to be encyclopedic in scope, with word meanings characterized against cognitive domains, which together form a frame or knowledge network associated with a given linguistic form.

And another question: What exactly are prototypes? And why do we need them to communicate and understand? "Prototypically organized categories are particularly well-suited to fulfil the double demand for flexible adaptability and structural stability... Categories have a dynamic ability to cope with changing conditions and changing expressive needs. Besides, these categories have a tendency to maintain themselves as holistic entities... New facts are interpreted in terms of information that is already at the disposal of the individual" (Geeraerts 1988, p. 23) [26]. The underlying assumption is that categories of linguistic entities are structured along the same lines as the more familiar (non-linguistic) categories. Thus we can postulate a family resemblance structure adopted from Wittgenstein as a model for description of both extra-linguistic objects and linguistic phenomena. We suggest that linguistic phenomena at every level of linguistic analysis can be dealt with in terms of such a model.

As regards grammatical categories, we claim that they too exhibit prototype effects: some members of the category "noun", for example, are better examples of nounhood than others. Graded membership manifests itself also with syntactic constructions.

But how do we arrive at a prototypical characterization of a given grammatical category or syntactic construction? What kind of data can the analyst invoke to justify such a claim? Obviously no test as that of selecting chips of colors or artifacts can be devised here. Although speakers of a language do have knowledge of both, the epistemological status of these two kinds of knowledge is quite different. We cannot offer any comment or explanation at this stage.

Another problem is category extension beyond certain limits, which will hamper cognition, identification and understanding. For the moment we shall limit ourselves to quoting the founder of cognitive grammar: "No abrupt transition is expected between what is possible linguistically and what is impossible.... We cannot necessarily assume any specific cut-off point..." (Langacker, p. 52) [27]. Language is an integral part of human cognition. A linguistic description therefore should incorporate

what is known about cognitive processes, regardless of whether the analyst postulates a special “module” for language or a “language instinct”. It follows then that we cannot expect a dichotomy between linguistic ability and other cognitive processes. This stand has another crucial implication for our concept of language. A cognitive theory of language implies a model of categorization, which differs entirely from the classical criteria-attribute model. It excludes the existence of sharp dichotomies and hence disregards well-established distinctions like: grammar vs. lexicon; morphology vs. syntax; semantics vs. pragmatics; grammatical vs. ungrammatical sentences; literal vs. figurative meaning, etc.

Now we can define the *grammar* of a language as its psychological representation/description. This “internal” grammar, conceiving it dynamically, is the object of description in this model. The speaker’s “knowledge” of a language is a matter of processes and not of statements, i.e. grammar, in our view, is equal with certain linguistic abilities. To put these abilities to work speakers rely on established linguistic conventions. Conventionality implies that something is shared and recognized as being shared by the speakers of a language.

The mental lexicon is a store of the linguistic knowledge of the language user. In cognitive psychology the mental lexicon is considered an integrated part of semantic memory. The hypothesis of mental lexicon and semantic memory as distinct structures or processes is borne by a number of experimental and developmental findings. The ease of plurilingualism supports the theory of a common semantic core – different subsystems in the mental lexicon.

The above interpretation of the grammar of language in a cognitive frame contrasts with the widely spread generative theory but preserves creativity as an attribute of language. In our cognitive frame grammar is not considered a constructive device, i.e. the grammar is not instrumental in producing new structures and new utterances out of an inventory of component parts. Putting together novel expressions and understanding novel expressions is something that *speakers* do, not grammars. What enables speakers to do so is their ability to symbolize linguistic convention and put it to use in specific circumstances. It is in this interface between convention and use that we must look for the explanation of creativity and Intercomprehension.

A sharp distinction is often made between two kinds of creativity: (1) rule-governed creativity – production of new expressions by the “correct” application of grammatical rules; (2) in a more general sense, phenomena like figurative language, willful violation of grammatical rules and the like. The cognitive approach does not see this distinction as useful at all since it conceives of the whole cognitive (linguistic included) activity as creative or “metaphorical” in nature.

Our experience as represented in mental structures is coherent because we tend to impose structures on it. The pivotal aspect of this structuring capacity is our ability to interpret new experience by making reference to old experience.

Many scholars note the importance of the perspective taken on an event for the ease in the processes of understanding and Intercomprehension in particular. What we called with the cover term *perspective* actually consists of different aspects like: figure/ground; viewpoint; deixis; subjectivity/objectivity. For example:

- Figure and Ground. Cognitive linguistics takes it as established that the figure/ground principle is one of the fundamental features of the organization of cognitive structures and by implication of semantic and grammatical structures as well. Putting it in simple words, the figure within a situation is perceived as “standing out” from the remaining part (the ground) and is attributed special prominence in linguistic expression (sometimes called “markedness” in linguistics).
- Viewpoint. We can look at a given object or situation from different sides and what we actually “see” in it varies accordingly. Figurative language is understood without being perceived as violating communicative norms.

Thus, the present theoretical framework assumes grammar to be constituted by two orthogonally related types of networks of mapping relations: that of *derivations*, and that of *level interlinkages*. There is an iconic relation between structure and conceptual content. We maintain that syntactic and conceptual factors intersect in a very intimate way. This view is manifested in the postulation of a

mental unit we call a *gestalt*, composed of both structural (syntactic) and conceptual factors. The gestalt of a construction represents a combination of factors from two levels – a “concrete” level defined in terms of constituent order, case relations, etc. (morphosyntactic structure – MSS), and a level representing conceptual units (Conceptual Structure – CS). From MSS we abstract the topology of the gestalt, and features from CS define the conceptual value of the gestalt. The gestalt of the construction thus represents both the conceptual content of the situation referred to by a sentence and the perspective that the syntax imposes on the various parts of the situation.

The use of the notion of gestalt is motivated by its being a “blend” of factors that work organically together, and by being seen as a “whole”.

PRAGMATIC BASE

The pragmatics of Intercomprehension encompasses two domains of receptive proficiency: (i) performing illocutionary acts and (ii) organizing discourse. These include the linguistic means used to accomplish pragmatic ends (pragmalinguistics) and the social factors determining the achievement of pragmatic ends (sociopragmatics). In general, the system of rules ensuring that the speaker’s intent is well understood by the listener governs communication and, hence, critical for Intercomprehension.

I shall discuss the domains of receptive proficiency, which relate to the task of comprehending communicative intent.

Illocutionary Acts. In language teaching methodology, these are often referred to as “language functions”; in linguistic philosophy, they are defined as “speech acts”. John Searle classifies illocutionary acts into five categories: commissive (e.g. a promise, a threat), declarative, directive (e.g. a command, a suggestion), expressive (e.g. an apology, a complaint), representative (e.g. an assertion, a claim).

Michael Halliday (1975) [28] outlines seven different functions of language:

- Instrumental: “I want”
- Regulatory: “do as I tell you”
- Interactional: “me and you”
- Personal: “here I come”
- Heuristic: “tell me why”
- Imaginative: “let’s pretend”
- Informative: “I’ve got something to tell you”

The suggested set of functions determines the initial development of language in all cultures. Halliday hypothesizes that, ontogenetically, these functions would emerge approximately in the order listed.

The *Threshold Level 1990* makes use of an extended taxonomy of “micro functions”, defined as “categories for the functional use of single (usually short) utterances, usually as turns in an interaction” [29]:

- Imparting and seeking factual information (5 microfunctions),
- Expressing and finding out attitudes (5 sets of microfunctions),
- Persuasion (8 microfunctions),
- Socializing (6 microfunctions),
- Structuring discourse (28 microfunctions),
- Communication repair (16 microfunctions).

The *Common European Framework of Reference* specifies 10 “macro functions”, defined as “categories for the functional use of spoken discourse or written text consisting of a (sometimes extended) sequence of sentences”. They are as follows:

1. Description,
2. Narration,
3. Commentary,
4. Exposition,

5. Exegesis,
6. Explanation,
7. Demonstration,
8. Instruction,
9. Argumentation and
10. Persuasion.

Whatever the description of an illocutionary act, its conditions of satisfaction are dependent on the mode of achievement of the discursive purpose, the thematic conditions, the background conditions and the sincerity conditions. These constraints involved are infinite in number and impossible to describe comprehensively. However they are critical for Intercomprehension and need to be considered.

Discourse. The pragmatics of discourse describes the relations across utterances. Cross-utterance connections, as is known, are described as the properties of cohesion and coherence of discourse. They have a linguistic and a cognitive base and are, generally, determined by the discursive goals of the familiar, physically present interlocutors or the unfamiliar, physically distant interlocutors.

Daniel Vanderveken (2001, p. 8) [30] points out that there are only four possible discursive goals that speakers/hearers attempt to achieve in communication: descriptive, deliberative, declaratory and expressive goals. They distinguish the four basic types of discourse:

1. Discourses with the words-to-things direction of fit. These have the descriptive goal, for example reports, stories, public statements;
2. Discourses with the things-to-words direction of fit. They have the deliberative goal, e.g. negotiations, consultations, research programs;
3. Discourses with the double direction of fit. They have the declaratory goal, e.g. juridical codes, regulations, licenses;
4. Discourses with the empty direction of fit. They have the expressive goal, e.g. greetings, congratulations.

Commissive and directive illocutionary acts have the same direction of fit (things-to-words). Therefore they characterize one and the same discourse type – the descriptive one. The declarative, expressive and representative points set apart the other three discourse types. All other types of discourse are obtained by combining features of the four basic ones. Vanderveken notes: “Discursive purposes and illocutionary points are logically related by their direction of fit. In order to achieve a discursive goal on a theme in a conversation, speakers must achieve illocutionary points with the same direction of fit on propositions about the objects under consideration” (Vanderveken, *ibid.* p. 10) [30].

In summary, the pragmatic base is a latent source of Intercomprehension. The pragmatic potential of Intercomprehension is one of the six sets of conditions of successful language communication.

PHYSIOLOGICAL BASE

Finally, we shall examine the physiological base on which the language user operates. What is the physiological substrate of receptive oral/written language behavior? We shall attempt to account for the general organization of the speech process.

In a speech event, the listener extracts a message from an extremely complex acoustic signal. There are three types of difficulties for the listener in comprehending a message in L1: (i) acoustically different sound, (ii) source and signal characteristics, (iii) segmenting. In Intercomprehension, that is, comprehending a message in Lx, a fourth type of difficulty supersedes the first three: in perception the listener analyses an *unfamiliar* acoustic signal.

The first type of analysis, which the listener makes, is the normalization and recognition of the acoustically different signal. That is necessary because, in production, the signal depends on the size and shape of the vocal tract, which produces it. The listener infers the invariance regardless of whether the speaker is an adult or a child and a female or a male.

Secondly, the listener analyses the acoustic signal in terms of its physiological characteristics. The *source characteristics* refer to the action of the larynx and the lungs. The *signal characteristics* can be

consigned to the upper articulators – the muscles, which act on the jaw, on the hyoid bone, on the pharynx and on the tongue.

Thirdly, the listener makes a division of the acoustic signal into units, which can be described as *segmenting*. Physiologically, speech production is a continuous flow of activity without any clear units. But language is heard as a succession of unitary sounds. So the listener is segmenting the acoustic signal into segmental (vowels, consonants) and suprasegmental items (intonation, accent, tone) by performing some complex analysis and synthesis. That process is based on the phenomenon of coarticulation but its nature is unclear and that is the reason why digitalized speech (e.g. automatic speech recognition) has been making a very slow progress in the last two decades. Empirical work on coarticulation shows that coarticulatory fields of a given phone vary with its feature components and their compatibility. But obviously further physiological speech studies are needed. Katherine Harris (1973, p. 18) maintains that “at the level of understanding the organization of speech as the listener operates upon it, we have not advanced very much since the time of Daniel Jones” [31].

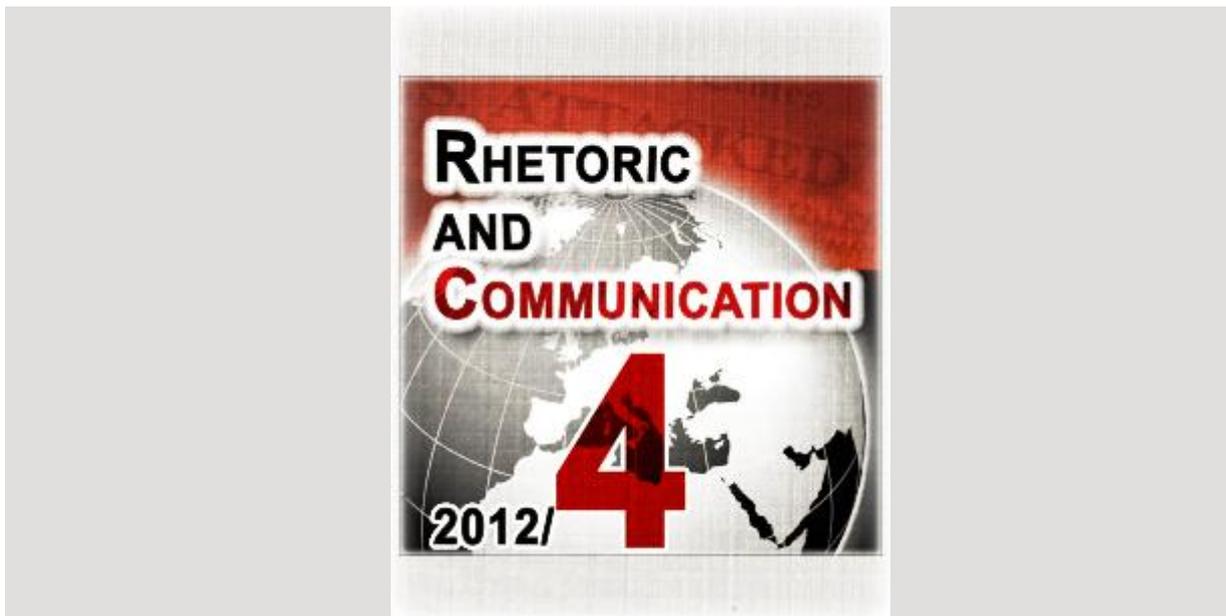
CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I shall quote Franz-Joseph Meißner on Intercomprehension and language teaching: "There are very strong indices that Intercomprehension-teaching and learning as a multilanguage and learning awareness raising strategy leads to a deeper and broader processing of foreign language data as well as to better learning. Its integration in school and in adult education is therefore of general interest and must be analyzed in contexts of quality development. Fostering plurilingualism by Intercomprehension and learner autonomy through Intercomprehension are two sides of the same coin" [1].

REFERENCES

1. Meißner, F.-J., Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik, http://www.uni-giessen.de/cms/fbz/fb05/romanistik/didaktik/Mitarbeiter/mitarbeiter_meissner/meissner, 2012.
2. Selinker, L., 1972/1992, Rediscovering Interlanguage, London: Longman.
3. Reinecke, J., 1969, Language and Dialect in Hawaii, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
4. Redinter Intercompreensão, 2012, <http://www.redinter.eu/web/revistas/>
5. Blanche-Benveniste, C., 1997, Approches de la Langue Parlee, Paris: Ophrys.
6. Shopov, T., 2009, Modern languages: approaches, designs, procedures (in Bulgarian), International Business School Press.
7. ILTE Report – 2.0, http://www.kleven.org/ilte/report/report_part2.html, 2012.
8. Capucho, F., 2002, The Role of Intercomprehension in the Construction of European Citizenship, Sofia: FLT Journal 4.
9. Shopov, T., M. Pencheva and D. Köksal, 2003, Intercomprehension strategies, http://www.logincee.org/remote_libraryitem/5852?lang=bg.
10. Pinker, S., 1994, The Language Instinct, London: Penguin.
11. EuroCom, <http://www.eurocomresearch.net/>.
12. Larsen-Freeman, D., 1980, Discourse Analysis, Rowley: Newbury House.
13. Orr, E.W., 1987, Twice as Less, cited in H. Gardner, 1991, The Undiscovered Mind, NY: Basic Books.
14. Allen, J.P.B., 1975, Grammar in Language Teaching, in The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics 2, Oxford: OUP.
15. LDOLT&AL, 2002, Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 3rd edition, London: Longman.
16. Savignon, S., 1983, Communicative Competence, California: Addison Publishing Company.
17. Merrill, D., 1984,
18. Larsen-Freeman, D. and M. Long, 1990, An Introduction to SLA Research, London: Longman.
19. Fairclough, N., 1989, Language and Power, London: Longman.

20. Grice, H.P., 1975, Logic and Conversation, in Cole, P. and J. Morgan, Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts, NY: Academic Press.
21. Widdowson, H., 1983, Learning Purpose and Learning Use, Oxford: OUP.
22. Clark, H. and B. Malt, 1984, Psychological constraints on language: A commentary on Bresnan and Kaplan and on Givon. In W. Kintsch, J. R. Miller, and P. Polson (Eds.), Method and tactics in cognitive science (pp. 191-214). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
23. Miller, G. 1964, Psycholinguistics, Encounter 23.
24. Sapir, E., 1921, Language, NY: Harcourt, Brace and World.
25. Geeraerts, D., 1988, On Necessary and Sufficient Conditions, Journal of Semantics 5.
26. Langacker, R.W., 1987, Foundations of Cognitive Grammar, Stanford: SUP.
27. Halliday, M., 1975, Learning How to Mean, London: Edward Arnold.
28. CEFR 2000, http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre_en.asp.
29. Vanderveken, D., 2001, Illocutionary Logic and Discourse Typology, Revue internationale de philosophie 55.
30. Harris, K., 1973, The Physiological Substrate of Speaking, in Wolfe and Goulding, Articulation and Learning, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher.
31. Bibliographie REDINTER, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Ao4FTY_gGkZ0cDJHSm5TUmhfVIM2dnNOZGw3ako3VHc#gid=0.
32. IC training courses, <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?key=0Aro3pzVUj41ockppQ1I3azJMakICYXRuZHJRaDRHMkE#gid=0>.



Rhetoric and Communication – 4/2012

CONTENTS

Editors' Foreword

Communication and Education

Todor Shopov – „Intercomprehension Analysis“

Yoana Yankulova, Donka Petrova – “Specific manifestations of stereotypes in the process of interpersonal communication”

Maria Stoicheva, Ivanka Mavrodieva and Nikolina Tsvetkova – “Social Media and Social Networks – What’s in for Tertiary Education”

Ivo Piperkov – „Educational projects for learners and teaching strategies for analyzing social media (from the perspective of human rights)”

Ekaterina Sofronieva – „Empathy and Communication“

Communication, Media and Policies

Stoitsova, Tolya., Pollio, R. Haward and Pollio, Marilyn – „Then and Now: Reflections and Implications in concern of 9/11”

Assia Assenova – „Bioethics and gender the case of in vitro fertilization in Bulgaria”

Communication, Marketing and Business

Maria Sivenkova – “Storytelling in Marketing: On some initiating events in stories of companies, products and brands” Storytelling in Marketing”

Vance Bojkov – „Engeneers and Oral Buisness Communication,,

Plamen Pavlov – „Hyperlocal communication as a function of globalistion”

Communication and Languages

Ellie Boyadzhieva, Irena Vassileva – On Some Recent Tendencies Toward Analyticity in Modern Bulgarian

Mariya Bagasheva-Koleva – „Emotive tools in target audienceoriented translation“

Yana Manova–Georgieva – Socio-Cultural Aspects of Name Transformation In Translation

Rhetoric

Gergana Apostolova – “A Rhetoric of Meanings: The outlines of translated existence”

Ivanka Mavrodieva – „Rhetorical features of academic presentations”

Ivan Cvetanovic – The Listening Skills and Their Influence on Public Speaking Style in the Age of Mass Media

Velitcko Roumentchev – „On the Authenticity of a Speech by Czar Asen II”

Review

Simeonova, Y. - „Speaking Other Languages“ – review of the book