

Intercomprehension activities:

Oral Production

**Eu& I – Training course for teachers and
trainers**

Document n° 9

Margareta Strasser
University of Salzburg, Language Center

Why oral production in intercomprehension?

- Intercomprehension is a form of communication in which each person uses his or her own language and understands that of the other.

→ Why oral production?

In intercomprehension, native speakers have to make themselves understood by non-native speakers

Strategies of production/interaction can facilitate understanding

Which strategies can native speakers adopt?

- Previous research has mainly concentrated on malfunctioning communication – e.g. “foreigner talk” (the simplified, often incorrect version of a language native speakers use when addressing non-native speakers)
- → Before designing the activities, it was necessary to carry out research in order to identify potentially successful strategies

Research done

Analysis of videos – different situations:

- Workshops:
 - So. tells a story to an audience in a language they have not learnt
 - Role-playing: A „director“ gives instructions to an „actor“ who has to follow these instructions
- Foreign language teacher in a multinational classroom (beginners' level)
- Interviews and questionnaires about the strategies used and about what helped the audience to understand

Design of the activities: aims

- Users shall learn more about the role of the native speaker in intercomprehension
- Users shall find out about useful strategies
- Users shall be made aware of the importance of both verbal and non-verbal strategies

Activities

Now go through the 3 activities:

- A story in Swedish
- A story in Portuguese
- An interaction in the street

Activity I

- Go through the first activity (a story in Swedish)
- Did you understand? If yes, what helped you to understand?
 - The drag and drop exercise
 - The language?
 - The non-verbal strategies used by the presenter (e.g. body language, showing objects, speech sounds)

Activity 2

- Watch the video („First step“)
- What did you understand?
 - Some details or
 - The gist of the story
- What helped you to understand?
 - Similarities to other languages
 - The non-verbal strategies

Activity 2, second step

Non-verbal strategies

- Click on the + symbol to get a more detailed analysis of each sequence!
- Do you think that these strategies adopted by the presenter enhanced your understanding of the story?

Activity 2, second step

Verbal strategies

- Did the sequences help you to identify possible strategies?
- What did you learn about the importance of non-verbal and verbal strategies?

Verbal and non-verbal strategies

- Have a look at the list of verbal and non-verbal strategies provided on the next screen
- Which strategies are more efficient in your opinion?
- Which role do the situation and the context play?
- Do you understand the Portuguese story better now? If not, the following exercises might help you (drag and drop exercise with key words, scrambled text)

Verbal and non-verbal strategies

- Now have a look at the additional exercises and our analysis! Click on the + symbol!
- Try to concentrate on both verbal and non-verbal strategies!
- Do you recognise any of the strategies listed before?
- Please note that verbal and non-verbal strategies are very often combined
- Please note that there are various combinations of verbal and non-verbal strategies

Verbal and non-verbal strategies

- What have you learnt about verbal and non-verbal strategies in intercomprehension?
- What was more helpful in your opinion?
 - Watching the videos
 - The analysis of the videos
 - The list of strategies provided

Activity 3: Intercomprehension in practice

- Watch the three videos in which an Austrian visiting Italy asks a native for the way
- Compare the three videos!
- Which version did you understand best and why?

Activity 3: Intercomprehension in practice

- What can you do if your interaction partner obviously does not understand? How would you react?
- Read the options
- Then watch the video: it shows one possible reaction

Your feedback

- Do you find the activities attractive? What would have to be changed to make them more attractive?
- Do you think you have become more aware of strategies in intercomprehension?

- Composition of the thematic group:
Chiara Amoruso (Italy)
Eva Brandauer (Austria)
Rea Delveroudi (Greece)
Margareta Strasser (Austria)