

Intercomprehension and mediation for Specific Purposes: Business, Commerce and Tourism

General information

Objectives and Description:

Among the range of BIP proposals carried out at UNITA, there have been proposals with either general or specific objectives relating to economics and tourism; however, the topic of intercultural communication in intercomprehension in the field of trade is missing. From an economic and business perspective, mutual understanding is fundamental in the field of trade, as highlighted in recent research (F. Grin, 2012; Petersen 2014).

This BIP module is based on the assumption that there is a close connection between linguistic competence and intercultural skills. Drawing on the work of François Grin (2012, 2013, 2024), intercomprehension is understood as a pedagogical approach that goes beyond the mere promotion of receptive multilingualism and simultaneously addresses key dimensions of intercultural competence, particularly openness, cultural empathy, and social initiative.

Against the backdrop of increasingly multilingual and culturally diverse work contexts—particularly in the fields of business and tourism—the module aims to combine communicative efficiency with intercultural sensitivity. Intercomprehension is positioned as a resource-efficient and practice-oriented approach that enables learners to remain capable of acting in multilingual interactions without relying on complete productive language proficiency.

The objectives of this BIP proposal are as follows:

- to promote UNITA and ERASMUS mobility
- to provide training in IC CL to participating students
- to apply IC to specific fields: Business, Commerce and Tourism (primarily in French, Italian and Spanish)
- to understand the history and current situation of the business sector in Pamplona-Navarre

Bibliography

Grin, F. and Masiero, I. (2024) Avantages du plurilinguisme en Suisse pour les individus et la société.

Rapport du Centre scientifique de compétence sur le plurilinguisme. Fribourg: Institut de plurilinguisme, <https://folia.unifr.ch/global/documents/328040>.

Grin, F. (2012) Multilingualism in Economic Activity, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0808>.

Grin, F. (2013) 'Plurilinguisme et multilinguisme au travail: le regard de l'économie des langues', Repères Dorif, 4, pp. 29-43.

Petersen, J.M. (2014). Choix linguistiques au sein d'un réseau social d'entreprise internationale, et enjeux de l'Intercompréhension. Thèse, Université Paris 8, Français, <https://theses.hal.science/tel-01589808v1>.

Methods and outcomes:

The BIP will be delivered in both face-to-face and online formats. In both cases, the teaching approach will be primarily practical, focusing on language exercises and activities: comprehension, production, interaction and linguistic mediation. Two modules will be covered: a) intercomprehension (French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian, Portuguese) and b) specific purposes (French, Italian, Spanish).

In addition, there will be lectures and visits to institutions related to history and commerce in Pamplona.

Field of Education:

Intercomprehension, Interculturalism, Languages for Specific Purposes: Business, Commerce/trade and Tourism, Language Acquisition

Target audience / Participants profile:

Bachelor/Master/PhD students of disciplines related to commerce, business and tourism who are interested in multilingual and multicultural aspects and in intercultural understanding: primarily in Spanish, French and Italian.

No of ECTS issued: 3

Language of instruction and requirements:

Bachelor/Master/PhD students of disciplines related to commerce, business, tourism and languages

Mother tongue in one romance language or knowledge at least at level B2 of one of the romance languages

Dates for physical activity:

14-18 June 2027

Location of physical activity: UPNA, Pamplona

Dates for virtual component: 7/06/2027-11/06/2027

Virtual Component Description:

The virtual component will include 2 types of activities:

- **A set of IC activities.** Various activities for the discovery of IC strategies will be carried out autonomously by the students, based on the plurilingual online course “Elementi di Intercomprensione”, freely available on the Start@unito platform.
- **Three online meetings.** A first meeting will be organized to explain the syllabus of the course, its goals and requirements. Two other online meetings will help students acquire IC strategies, will check students’ progress and propose collaborative tasks and exercises based on intercomprehension and intercultural activities for multilingual and multicultural communicative situations, with a focus on specific purposes: business, tourism and commerce.

Organizing Board

Receiving/Host university:

Public University of Navarra; Responsable: Alazne CIARRA-TEJADA, alazne.ciarra@unavarra.es

Sending/Partner universities:

University of HEVS (Switzerland) Contact: HEVS: Sonja Schreiner sonja.schreiner@hevs.ch

University of Turin (Italy) Contact: UNITO: Sandra Garbarino sandra.garbarino@unito.it

Detailed programme

1. Planned activities during virtual component:

A meeting will be first organized to explain the syllabus of the course, its goals and requirements. Two other online meetings will check students' progress and propose collaborative tasks and exercises.

2. Planned activities during physical component: (Preliminary Information on classrooms and teachers)

June 2027	Monday 14	Tuesday 15	Wednesday 16	Thursday 17	Friday 18
9h	Welcome session Room: Visit to the UPNA Campus Key-speaker:	IC and Spanish for Specific Purposes: Activity of Commerce and Tourism Teacher Subject-Specific Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension Classroom	IC and Spanish for Specific Purposes: Listening Comprehension Oral Expression Classroom	Project Group Work Classrooms Supervision	Visit to Cein Navarra El Sario Startup Lab in Pamplona
10h	IC Activity Comprehension and production (all languages) Classroom: Key speaker: Alazne CIARRA-TEJADA	Presentation on the Mediation and Training Project for Class Groups	Presentation by our partner from Switzerland Key speaker: Sonja SCHREINER Room Online or in person	Presentation by our partner from Torino, Italy Key speaker: Sandra GABARINO Room Online or in person	Presentation of Mediation Projects Classroom: El Sario
11:15h	Coffee Break UPNA	Break	Break	Break	Break
12h	Guided tour of Pamplona in Spanish	Visit to the Museum of Navarre 12:00h–14:00h Theme: Cultural and historical	Visit to Cámara de Comptos or Archivo de Navarra Theme: History	Visit to the Chamber of Commerce Topic: Starting a Business in Navarre	Erasmus Course Presentations Classroom and Farewell

13h	Tapas in Plaza del Castillo		Lunch together in a lovely restaurant in Pamplona		final evaluation surveys
14h-17h	Group work for the project	Group work for the project	Group work for the project	Group work for the project	UPNA Complimentary Farewell Reception
17h	End of the academic day	End of the academic day	End of the academic day	End of the academic day	End of the academic course-BIP

Detailed description of the activities required to earn 3 credits:

INTERCOMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES

- reading and listening comprehension of texts on tourism and economics,
- written and oral expression in interlanguage production (to be understood by speakers of other languages whilst speaking one's own)
- linguistic mediation for mutual understanding, in interaction, in writing (emails, correspondence) and orally (meetings, conferences, etc.)

SPECIFIC BUSINESS SPANISH ACTIVITIES

- lecture accessible to all speakers of different languages and all levels of Spanish (A1-B2) and Q&A session

ACTIVITIES FOR TOURISM SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

- Keynote lecture and Q&A session

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

PROJECT: preparation (market research, business model and creation of a logo and slogan) and presentation in multilingual groups

Outings and excursions: Archives of Navarre / Court of Auditors / Chamber of Commerce / Hirugarrena Centre (start-up companies) / Guided tour of the city of Pamplona

Online activities (on start@unito): exploration of the main strategies for written and oral intercomprehension and interproduction, and activities to identify comprehension strategies and processes.

Website: <https://start.unito.it/course/view.php?id=135>

Further details will be provided to students during the first online session

Face-to-face online sessions: three online sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes each, held prior to the BIP, to form the international working group and to trial the initial strategies for intercomprehension.

Application procedure

Deadline for receiving list of participants at unita@unavarra.es: April 2027