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The Core Vocabulary of Romance Plurilingualism: the CVRP-project

Abstract: The Core Vocabulary of Romance Plurilingualism is a data base comprising four Romance target languages, English and German. Its scope is fostering plurilingual reading skills. Often, reading is the first step to developing an overall performance profile including listening, writing and speaking.[1] Starting from some explanations about frequency word lists and intercomprehension related foreign language learning theory, the paper presents the CVRP database and the learning apps. The main benchmarks are, aside from the electronic architecture: (1) the identification of a partially shared common Romance core vocabulary of French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, (2) the construction of interlingual series grouping words according to their semantic adequacy, (3) categorizations pertaining to relevant pedagogical criteria: (3a) frequency range, (3b) didactic expertise, (3c) interlingual transparency or opacity, (3d) supplementary information about synonyms, (3e) additionally to the target vocabulary, its equivalents in English, German and the etyma (mostly Latin), (3f) a list of Romance interligalexes.[2] The app structure triggers word-learning strategies through interlingually comparing forms, significations and functions. Aspects of potential linguistic and educational research and of usage are not excluded.[3]

Keywords: intercomprehension; learning efficiency; learning foreign languages; plurilingualism; Romance core vocabulary.

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1   Speaking of pedagogical frequency word lists

It is common knowledge that for more than a century, teachers and learners have been trying to speed up the acquisition of foreign languages by identifying and listing the most useful words; focussing on three fundamental criteria: «frequency», «register coverage» («written/spoken, regional, social, semantic inclusion») and just «usefulness» (Christ 1970; Raasch 1972; Benett 2010). Whereas the elicitation methods for frequency and coverage are controllable, the definition of usefulness depends on subjective variables, i.e. the foreign language speakers' supposed «linguistic needs». The umbrella term encompasses innumerable potential communicative situations. Mathematically speaking, the combination

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[1]   In conformance with most EU documents, this paper uses the term «plurilingualism» to express the individual's ability to use more than two languages. Whereas «plurilingualism» applies to an individual phenomenon amenable to language planning, «multilingualism» is an effect of migration. Seeing the great number of immigrant languages on a state's territory, multilingualism is not accessible to language planning.

[2]   The term «Interligalex» is coined from the simplex «ligalex». For Josette Rey-Debove (2004, IX), *ligalex* originates from «la morphologie dérivationnelle (qui) travaille sur des mots et des affixes, [...]. Les ligalexes sont faits : (1) de radicaux (ex. *technocrates*), (2) de radicaux et d'affixes *man/oir, scol/aire, naut/ique* [...]». The interlinguistic view has broadened the scope. Thus, the nucleus of fr. *SCOL/aire* does not only reappear in *école* (*escole*) and *écolier, scolarité, scolastique, scolariser, scolarisation* but in it. *scuola, scuolabus, scuolaguida, età scolare, scholastic, scolaresco* [...], eng. *scholar, scholarship* [...], germ. *Schule, Schulstreik, schulisch* [...], sp. *escolarización* [...]. In other words, interligalexes are elements that materialize interlingual bases of transfer identification.

[3]   More detailed information can be found in Meißner (2016).

of the implied and interacting variables of any such situation – in its minimal three factorial modelling «here, now, I» (Origo) – leads to an exponential term (cf. Meißner 1992). No way to avoid the weaknesses of subjective choice.

Nevertheless, despite the high reliability of electronically collected and controlled data collected lexical data, the expertise of experienced foreign language teachers continues to be considered as a valuable factor in developing pedagogical word-lists. In general, the assessment is restricted to very special settings like classroom activities, youth culture or everyday situations (at the doctor's office, shopping, clothing, holidays etc.). Thus, the authors of the «Threshold Level» lists (van Ek 1976; Coste et al. 1976; Raasch 1978) composed their inventories as issue- and situation focused lists. Of course, critical remarks denouncing learners' manipulation were not long in coming (cf. Richterich 1980, 55).[4]

A profound change in lexicography was initiated by computer-supported data gathering and the creation of huge data bases comprising millions of tokens located in a wide spread of linguistic registers and sources – including the oral varieties neglected for so long. Mark Davies, author and *spiritus rector* of the Routledge frequency dictionaries (FDS; FDF; FDP), counters the critics: «Sometimes words are so infrequent in actual texts [i.e. learning materials, F.-J. M.] that the student may never encounter them in the ‹real world›» (FDS 2006, 1).

2 Intercomprehension related learning theory

«Intercomprehension» means the ability to understand a foreign language without having acquired it in its natural social context (interacting with native speakers) nor by learning it formally (taking lessons, autonomous learning, etc.). In all cases, language acquisition originates from language use.

In the German context, empirical findings stress that the most widespread errors in traditional language learning guiding has been a lack of sensitiveness to the individual learner's cognitive factors (Meißner/Schröder-Sura 2009; Beckmann 2016, 354). The failure was due to several variables, including the deficiency of a catchy competence model bundling together the domains of «knowledge» («savoir», «Wissen»), «can-do» («savoir-faire», «Können») and «attitudes» («savoir-être», «Einstellungen»).[5] This especially concerns cognitive schemes related to languages, intercultural communication, language learning and self-guidance. As competences cannot be enhanced without the activation of their corresponding resources, procedural vocabulary knowledge is, of course, crucial for improving TL performance.

One of the turning points was the conception of «interlanguage» in the beginning of the 1970s (cf. Selinker 1972). The terms «interlanguage» or «interim language» refer to a construct made up by following features: (1) systematicity, (2) idiosyncrasy, (3) instability, dynamics or ephemerality, (4) variability, (5) independency vis-à-vis the learner's bridging languages. In other words, the «separate linguistic system of the learner» (as Selinker put it in 1972, 214) bears traces of the mother tongue, the bridge languages[6] (a keyword in in-

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4   «1. Au niveau du langage: I don't have needs, but need many things! Analyser, définir, identifier les besoins ne peut conduire à fixer, figer, isoler quelque chose qui, par essence, ne peut être perçue par rapport aux circonstances changeantes du temps et de l'espace. 2. Au niveau idéologique: Le fait même de vouloir révéler et connaître les besoins d'un individu est déjà, en soi, un moyen de le manipuler. 3. Au niveau méthodologique: [...] toute méthode de définition ne peut que conduire à des résultats contraires à ceux escomptés. La définition des besoins reflète forcément la prise en compte des individus et des institutions à propos des besoins langagiers» (Richterich 1980, 55).
5   A competence model was delivered by the FRePA (2007).
6   The term signifies the language whose features (words, grammatical phenomena, etc.) deliver the cognitive scheme(s) wherefrom inferencing can start, so that a transfer of identification can be initiated.

tercomprehension didactics[7]) as well as of the TL. In contrast to the research status of the time, Corder stressed the fundamental role of hypothesis testing as a constitutive part of language acquisition processes in 1967. The underlying theory of the intercomprehension approach resonates with these findings. But furthermore, it owes its origins to the learners' and teachers' practical experiences with the acquisition of cognate languages (cf. Dabène 2002; Blanche-Benveniste 2008; as it is validated by learning materials for Romance languages over centuries, cf. Meißner 2012a). Precisely these experiences led to systematic input analyses regarding the interlingual lexical, morphological and grammatical transparency. Referring to Romance languages, Klein/Stegmann (1999) used several filters to separate transparent from opaque lexical, morphologic and phonologic tokens. The idea gave birth to the *EuroComRom* project – *The Seven Sieves, how to read all the Romance languages right away*.[8]

From an didactological standpoint, the intercomprehension focused linguistic descriptions of the *Seven Sieves* asked for empirical evidence concerning intercomprehension based learning and teaching. During the last decades and in the German context, various case studies with different learning groups (secondary school; children, adult independent learners, novice and expert learners, etc.; to name but a few studies: Caparelli 2003; Reissner 2007; Martinez 2008; Bär 2009; Meißner 2010; Strathmann 2010; Morkötter 2016) have documented the feasibility of the intercomprehension approach. With very few exceptions, the results are very encouraging. They confirm numerous findings from Romance contexts.

As already mentioned, intercomprehensive language learning demands the identification of forms, meanings and functions of a TL as well as of the correspondences between the bridge language(s) and a TL. These identifications give rise to a hypothetical or ephemeral grammar containing elements of the languages involved. Its effects still go far beyond that. Thus, nearly all empirical studies in the field give evidence that the necessary comparison between mentally accessible linguistic schemes of the bridging languages and TL-forms and functions triggers awareness raising procedures, which connect linguistic with language learning related knowledge. That is why the intercomprehension method increases language learning competency in general (cf. Bär 2010; Martinez 2010; Meißner 2012b).

Intercomprehension extends awareness to transfer processing and strategy use. Since Selinker (1972), we find the terms «language transfer», «transfer of training», «strategies of second language learning», «transfer of second language communication», «overgeneralization of target language linguistic material» and «fossilization». The intercomprehension method broadened the spectrum. It comprises

– transfer of identification (listening and reading comprehension) vs. production (speaking, writing);
– direction of transferring:
  (a) proactive: from a previously known language to a «new» one;
  (b) from a new one to a previously known language;
– transfer coverage:

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7 «La notion d'intercompréhension est, au départ, une notion technique utilisée par les linguistes et les anthropologues qui déterminent [...] en Afrique ou en Amérique latine [...] les limites entre parlers, dialectes et langues. Pour mesurer le degré de ressemblance [...] entre les parlers voisins, ils ont pris l'habitude d'évaluer ce ‹qui était mutuellement intelligible› sur la base de listes de mots soumis aux locuteurs. Au-dessus de 80% des mots connus, ils estiment que ce sont des dialectes mutuellement intelligibles [...]» (Blanche-Benveniste 2008, 41).
8 For an English version, cf. McCann/Klein/Stegmann (1999). A didactic introduction can be found in Meißner et al. (2004).

    (a) transfer within the TL system (intralingual);

    (b) within the bridge language system (intralingual);

    (c) transfer between a bridge and a TL (interlingual);

    (d) didactic transfer (cf. below);

– transfer areas of the languages involved:

    (a) lexical transfer;

    (b) phonologic;

    (c) morphosyntactic;

    (d) pragmatic;

– didactic transfer or transfer of self-guidance. Concerning: motivation (attitude and volition), saliency, learning arrangement, setting pedagogic objectives, general current media and dictionary literacy, etc.

Even if the CVRP is directly linked to interlingual identification competence, this does not mean that it is completely disconnected from other basic skills. We must keep in mind that competence activation always needs the recourse to the competence-building domains' interplay of «knowledge», «can-do», «volition» and, of course, to their respective micro-competences or resources as well (cf. FRePA 2007).

3   What is a core vocabulary?

The lexicographic discourse uses different terms to characterize frequency based pedagogical word lists. The project presented on the following pages takes up the terms «core vocabulary» («vocabulaire fondamental*,* «Kernwortschatz») and «basic vocabulary» («vocabulaire de base», «Grundwortschatz»)*.* In this paper, the designation «core vocabulary» is inspired by the Routledge *Frequency Dictionaries*, compiled under the direction of Mark Davies. The Spanish dictionary provides «the 5000 most frequently used words in the language. Based on a 20-million-word corpus which is evenly divided between spoken, fiction and non-fiction texts from both Spain and Latin America» (FDS, Preliminary remark). The range-mark of 5,000 largely corresponds to the definition given by traditional pedagogical frequency lists. In German speaking contexts, we find the term «Aufbauwortschatz» («advanced vocabulary», 2,500 words) in addition to «Grundwortschatz» («basic vocabulary», 2,000) (cf. Nickolaus 1967, 11).

    Whereas Routledge frequency dictionaries exist for French, Portuguese and Spanish and for some languages more, a more or less comparable inventory for Italian was provided by Tullio de Mauro and his team (1993). The *Lessico di frequenza dell'italiano parlato* (LFIP) refers to the very heterogeneous status of the oral registers. It even reflects the question of the existence of an «Italiano parlato unitario» (Ernst 1981). Although the LFIP is compiled from «spoken Italian» sources, this does not mean that written language is systematically excluded. Comparisons between the LFIP-inventory and those of written corpora leave no doubt that especially in the frequency-range interval of <5,000, discrepancies do not go too far (cf. Juilland/Traversa/Beltramo 1973). That is why in addition to the Routledge lists, the *Lessico* represents another source of the CVRP-project.

    Even if computer based lexicography provides high reliability, it does not always meet the learner's communicative needs a hundred percent. Obviously, the lack affects words and collocations used for communicating in some everyday situations. This is the case for classroom-words like «blackboard», «chalk», «homework», «group work», the finely nuanced

expressions of «admonishing», «commending», etc. That is why the CVRP-inventory's composition starts from the Klett's Basic Vocabulary Lists (cf. Heupel 1966; Nickolaus 1967; Giovannelli 1971; Amorim-Braun 1996 with the frequency-range of <2,000. In addition to the Routledge frequency counting (for <2,000), this selection criterion was decisive for the composition of the «Basic Vocabulary of Romance Plurilingualism» (BVRP). The complementarity between the basic- and the core-list allows a more targeted allocation to the potential users' skill levels and interests.

4 Presentation of the CVRP-project

The CVRP-project encompasses two sections: (1) the electronic plurilingual word-list, arranged by series and completed by various selection criteria and inter-serial references as well, (2) learning apps for French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. As relevant previous knowledge is always involved in learning, the presentation of the TLs is completed by two disambiguating languages, currently German and English. As etymological references can be a learning aid, they are not excluded.

4.1 The word list: structure and contents

The CVRP-project mainly promotes reading skills in one or even in the four TLs. The choice will be made by the user. That is why, the CVRP-word lists do not meet the various challenges of production dictionaries (fostering writing and/or speaking). Instead, the CVRP-structure contents with providing the lemmas' equivalents in the four TLs and in the disambiguating languages as well (cf. fig. 1).

ID	Fr	It	Pt	Sp	En	De	ETYMA
3	ABANDONNER	ABBANDONARE	ABANDONAR	ABANDONAR	abandon, leave	aufgeben, verlassen	<germ. BAND
4	abattre	abbattere	abater	abatir	bring down	niederschlagen, betrüben, schlachten	BATTUERE
5	abimer	guastare	ESTRAGAR	ESTROPEAR	break	kaputtmachen	ABYSSUS (jeder dans l™); vl STRAGARE; vl STROPPIARE<DISTURPIARE
6	ABONDER	abbondare	abundar	ABUNDAR	abound	im Überfluss h.	ABUNDARE
7	ABORD (D™)	DAPPRIMA	PRIMEIRO	PRIMERO	first of all	zuerst	fränz. BORD; PRIMUS
8	ABOUTIR	sboccare	desembocar	desembocar	lead into	führen zu, enden	fränz. BUTTON (frapper); < BUCA
9	ABRI	RIPARO	abrigo	abrigo	shelter, cover, refuge	Schutz	ABRICARE (se m. au soleil); <REPARARE
10	ABSENCE	assenza	ausência	AUSENCIA	absence	Abwesenheit, Absenz	ABSENTIA

Figure 1: Extract of the CRPL-data base.

The CVPR-lists benefit from the numerous advantages of electronic architectures:

–   openness to improvements (data addition, controlling and correction; usability based on users' comments and annotations);
–   flexibility allowing a varied and diversified displaying of lemmas and series in accordance to the users' choice (TLs: special contrasts between lemmas belonging to different target and bridge languages or different classifications by frequency range);
–   lemma and series categorization and visualization regarding
    •   relevant information concerning frequency-range;
    •   relevant information concerning the bridge-languages;

- • graded interlingual transparency/opacity between the TLs building a series;
- • false friends between different combinations;
- • number of lemmas differing from those of the series. The difference is due to the lack of interlingual synonymy and frequency (which demands the construction of further disambiguating series);
- • word-class categorization (nouns and gender, pronouns, verbs, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions);
- – a basic overall language and semantic network (synonyms, indications to semantically neighboring series concerning the TLs) linking different series and giving hints to non-listed words;
- • a list of interligalexes (cf. below and footnote 2).

The general fuzziness which characterizes thesauri in general, is also obvious regarding forms, significations and frequency range of serial equivalents. A total congruency between equivalents of different languages («intersynonymy») does not exist. According to Schaeder (1990), this would demand a total identicalness concerning denotation, connotation and diatopic, diastratic, diaphasic and diafrequent variations.[9] Only if these conditions are fulfilled, a hundred per cent intersynonymy would be given. Apart from some varieties benefitting from monosemation, it is evident that Schaeder's definition of semantic adequacy does not fit for foreign language learning.

But how does the CVRP meet the challenges ensuing from infra-serial polysemy and homomorphy? The answer consists of two steps: (1) to multiply the number of series, so that semantic differences between corresponding equivalents can be disambiguated; (2) to give specific supplementary information about synonyms belonging to other series in the column (NOTIZ).

This strategy explains why the number of series is higher than that of the lemmas. Thus, 7,635 different French lemmas appear in the CVRP 9,553 series, whereas we find only 7,590 Spanish lemmas.[10]

4.2 Composition guidelines

As aforementioned, the CVRP-inventory is compiled from the Klett basic-vocabularies, the Routledge-lists and the LFIP. The glossary-making compassed the following steps:[11]

1. construction of a relational database (Microsoft Access; Microsoft Excel);
2. fixing the rules justifying the insertion of a series: One TL lemma must cover a frequency range below 2,000 concerning the BVRP, respectively below 5,000 (CVRP);
3. inserting of the lemmas of the Klett's basic lists (frequency range <2,000);
4. inserting of the lemmas of the Routledge lists regarding the frequency-range of <2,000, respectively of >5,000, concerning Italian of >7,000;[12]

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9   The equivalents show clear differences concerning frequency.
10   All morphological differences are counted, fr. *abandonner* and *abandon* give two different lemmas.
11   We apologize for possible redundancies concerning the descriptions of the advantages of electronic lexicography and the composition guidelines.
12   The «exception» is due to the selection criteria of the LFIP.

5. constructing the series. This follows three main criteria: (1) «adequacy of meaning («Bedeutungsadäquanz»), (2) «frequency-range»; a (3) «graded transparency / opacity» giving attention to the importance of the users' previous plurilingual knowledge. – A series is compounded by (a) the ID, (b) the seven language columns (TLs, bridge languages, etyma), (c) various transparency indicators, (d) markers of semantic distances; (e) notes (NOTIZEN) and (f-i) four TL REFERENCE-fields allowing the construction of an association network, grammatical classification of the TL lemmas;

6. listing of the TL headwords and final construction of the series;

7. filling the column ETYMA;

8. inserting and tagging different meta-lexicographic markers in accordance to pedagogically relevant criteria (cf. 3b-3e);

9. constructing the interligalexes;

10. overall final controlling;

11. listing of «irregularities» of verbs.

4.3 Transparency and opacity in verbs

Much more than nouns, adjectives or other word classes, verbs are characterized by morphological variation («irregularities»). Therefore, the CVPR-lists need to be supplemented by an inventory whose contents facilitate the identification of form related verbal divergences (*aller*: *vais, vont, allons*; *querer*: *quiero, quiso, querría*; *dizer*: *digo, dissera, direi, dito*). This list comprehends the headwords, followed by the stem-forms and the different irregular forms. The verb lists are presented separately for each TL.

5 Learning and teaching with the CVPR-software

Before we go to the CVRP-learning software, it seems appropriate to remember what has been said about transfer, transferring and the psychological implications for language learning. Empirical studies investigating interlingual transfer processing unanimously emphasize the crucial role of motivation, resilience and saliency (inter alia Lutjeharms 2002; Lutjeharms 2007; Bär 2009; Meißner 2010). The question whether an interlingual identification transfer succeeds or not is largely due to at least three interacting variables: (1) the actual degree of similarity between a basis of transfer and its TL-correspondence – this affects formal congruency and semantic adequacy as well, (2) the learner's momentary and individual disposition (motivation, experience, resilience, the supposed psychotypological proximity[13] or similarity between a transfer basis and its corresponding TL-form) and last but not least (3) the situation in which transferring attempts take place – this concerns salience formation triggered by the most recent words, texts and issues a student has received. Whereas these variables are individual or ephemeral, other factors intersubjectively impact on positive effects of lexical identification transferring. Considering the salience factor, the time span during which a lemma is visualized is, of course, relevant. Ineffective zapping effects must be avoided.

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13 Psychotypological proximity reflects a learner's hypothesis about the appropriateness of a special bridge language in regard to a special TL. Of course, the hypothesis does not necessarily be accurate and in accordance to what can be measured by linguistic analyses.

5.1 Pedagogic guidance and exercise formats

The CVRP-learning application is automatically fed und continually refreshed by the CVRP-data base contents. An algorithm identifies the user allowing her/him to interrupt a learning session and to take it up again at a later point in time.

As the app's underlying learning theory emphasizes the importance of the students' prior knowledge, a kind of presentation seems recommended that interconnects the ‹unknown› or dormant TL-forms with their potential bases of transfer. Given the semantic adequacy of a word, the user discovers its morphological transparency or opacity in comparison with its serial equivalents. The mental processing is bi- or even pluridirectional, fostering pro and retroactive transferring as well. It goes without saying that the structure-triggered proceeding supports plurilingual comparisons and multilingual awareness.

Interlingual comparisons initiate deep mental processing of language data. The didactic intercomprehension approach has provided essential criteria for exercise formats that support this processing. They are based on the students devising a «Plurilingual Hypothetical Grammar» whose elements demand subsequent verification provided by the learners themselves or by external assistance. With respect to vocabulary learning and interlingual identification transferring, the Hypothetical Grammar mainly affects phonological, morphological and semantic correspondences between the languages involved (cf. fig. 2).

deutsch	english	français	español	português	italiano
Tropfen	drop	goutte	gota	gota	
Gedächtnis	memory	mémoire	memoria		memoria
Vorrat	stock	provision		provisão	provvista
vermuten, verdächtigen,	distrust	défier		desconfiar	diffidare
dritte	third	troisième		terceiro	terzo

Figure 2: Exercise fostering plurilingual reading competence.

Differently to figure 3, figure 2 demands filling the blanks concerning the three Southern Romance languages. French as well as the disambiguating idioms, English and German, visualize potential bases of transfer.

deutsch	english	français	español	português	italiano
Lastwagen	van, truck	camion	camión	camião	camion
solide, fest	solid, strong	solide	sólido	sólido	solido
Sieg	victory	victoire	victoria	vit _vitória_	vittoria
gegen (Uhrzeit)	toward	vers	hacia	(por ~	circa
Analyse	analyse	analyse	análisis		analisi

Figure 3: Exercise fostering reading competence in Portuguese: «errors» are indicated by the correct form. Figure 3 is filtered by the operator SELECT FORM CONGRUENCES (App 2).

Attention. A corrected form (like _vitória_) does not necessarily indicate an error. Instead, it only hints that the inserted form is not expected by the app. The bias is due to the asymmetrical

distribution of polysemies within the series. The semantic interconnectedness between the series can ease the disadvantage to some extent.

It is imperative to instruct the user not to interpret these corrections as real language errors. Instead, they give occasion to look for further information about the lemma concerned. The inter-serial semantic connectedness as well as special dictionary use can be helpful.

5.2   From word to words

Figure 4: The app provides clues for learning.

Figure 5: The entrance: the user makes his/her choice concerning a special TL or the plurilingual program.

Figures 5, 6 and 7 explain the inter-serial semantic connectedness. Thus, the field SEM_CONN regularly provides synonyms in regard to the equivalents of the series. A field NOTE gives further information, if necessary.

121 anneau	anello	ANEL	ANILLO	fr bague
79 AIMER	AMARE	AMAR	AMAR	sp QUERER

Figure 6: Semantic interconnectedness: the cases of *anneau* and *aimer.*

To provide an example: The equivalent fr. *bague* is neither incorporated in the Lonsdale/Le Bras list (FDF 2009) nor in the Nickolaus inventory (1967). Nevertheless, *bague* appears in Gougenheim's «Français fondamental»-Corpus (1958) and in Matoré's «Vocabulaire essentiel» (1963) as well. Both articles give reason to mention the noun in the SEM-CONN-field, so that the user is invited to consult external sources for supplementary information about *bague* and its synonyms in different languages.

Series 79 in figure 6 lists the form-congruent equivalents of fr. *aimer.* Here, sp. *amar* demands a reference to *querer* because its frequency position is quite lower (the FDS list gives 57 to 1,486).

1237 LEÇON	LEZIONE	CLASSE	CLASE	lesson
2273 CLASSE	CLASSE	CLASSE	CLASE	class
2013 SORTE	SORTA	ESPÉCIE	CLASE	sort
467 CLASSE	CLASSE	AULA (DAR ~)	clase (impartir)	class
2274 LEÇON (donner des ~)	LEZIONE (impartire lezioni)	LIÇÃO	LECCIÓN	sp CLASE
3072 style	STILE	ESTILO	ESTILO	
3482 amphithéâtre	aula	AULA	aula	assembly hall, classroom

Figure 7: Semantic interconnectedness: the case of it. *classe, lezione* and *stile.*

As aforementioned, serial polysemy demands opening a series for each relevant signification. In the case of the italian headword *classe* (‹classroom› and ‹style›)*,* polysemy affects the four valent it. *classe* and *stile, lezione, aula* and *sorta.*

Whereas the shown formats hitherto explicated lead the learner's mental activities from previously known transfer schemes to new TL schemes, another guiding type runs from the unknown TL-word to the bases of transfer. In these cases, the blanks remain unfulfilled.

5.3   From texts to words

Parallel listing provides the advantage of visualizing the TL words and their German and English equivalents side by side. This kind of display immediately triggers mental representations about each word concerned and the interrelation between the whole series as well (at least as far as it meets users' attention). The structure is appropriate for developing plurilingual reading skill. But it does not train what is called *intelligent guessing* (Burkhardt 1995), which means identifying words' meaning and grammatical features out of a given co-text.

5.4   Verbs

Verbs are separately listed (TL after TL) visualizing only stems and irregular forms.

5.5   The apps

In accordance to the user's choice, the electronic data base architecture allows the automatic composition of new learning- or teaching related apps (cf. tab. 1):

Learning apps fed by …	addressees / pedagogic objectives
1. Acquiring the **Romance Core-Vocabulary (RCV)**	Students trying to improve their **plurilingual reading skill in the four TL** (in combination with the *Seven Sieves*)
2. Knowing the inventory of the **pan-Romance Cognates List (RcogL)**	Developing **sensitiveness to Romance phonology** and fixing the common vocabulary.
3. Acquiring the total **Opaque Core-Vocabulary of Romance languages (ORCV)**	For users interested in an **overall Romance languages reading competence;** especially for **native speakers of a Romance language** and users of MIRIADI.
4. Acquiring the **Italian Core-Vocabulary** with reference to French, Portuguese, Spanish, English and German **(ICV)**	Sorting the list by Italian headwords. The interlingual contrast can also be specified regarding different TLs (show me the Italian words that can be identi-fied on the basis of their French […] equivalents). In this case: **Learners interested in developing reading competence of Italian.**
5. Acquiring the total **Opaque Italian Core-Vocabulary (OICV)** with reference to English and German; French and/or Portuguese and/or Spanish	Sorting by Italian headwords. **Learners with operative knowledge in at least one Romance language and/or English wishing to develop reading skill in Italian.**
6. Acquiring the **French Core-Vocabulary (FCV)** with previous knowledge of Italian and/or Portuguese and/or Spanish with reference to English and/or German	Sorting the list by French headwords. **Learners with operative knowledge in at least one Romance language and/or English wishing to develop reading skill of French.**
7. Acquiring the total **Opaque French Core-Vocabulary (OFCV)** with previous knowledge of Italian and/or Portuguese and/or Spanish with reference to English and/or German	Listed by French headwords. **Learners with large knowledge in at least one Romance language and/or English wishing to develop reading skill of French.**
8. Acquiring the **Core-Vocabulary of Portuguese (PCV)** in contrast with Spanish and previous knowledge of French and/or Italian with further reference to English and/or German	**Same as 4 or 6.** Listed by Portuguese headwords. As in the French, German or other contexts, most learners of Portuguese master Spanish to a certain degree, this contrast is particularly promising.
9. Visualizing **Portuguese cognates** in contrast with Spanish, English and German for example **(PcogCV)**	The respective items foster **general Romance interphono-logical competence with special regard to Portuguese.**
10. Acquiring the total **Opaque Core-Vocabulary** of **Portuguese (OPCV)** with reference to English and German and other Romance languages	This item will only show all the Spanish words whose form diverge from their Portuguese equivalents, even If they are not part of the list of opaque forms (F≠I≠P≠S).
11. Acquiring the **Core-Vocabulary of Spanish (SCV)** in contrast with Italian, French, Portuguese, English and German	Same as 4, 6, 8. Listed by Spanish headwords.
12. Visualizing **Spanish cognates** in contrast with French, Italian, Portuguese, English and German **(ScogCV)**	Same as 10. Listed by Spanish headwords.
13. Acquiring the total **Opaque Core-Vocabulary of Spanish (OSCV)**	cf. 5, 7, 10, 13. Listed by Spanish headwords.

14. Learning to identify the **minimal lexical elements constituting Romance thesauri**	assignment of **interligalexes.**
15. **False friends lists** for special lingual contrasts	
16. The CVPR-glossary	The glossary can be consulted independently or in combination with an app.

Table 1: List of CVRP-Apps.

6   The CVRP-learning software as a research tool

It seems that the CVRP is the first educational plurilingual frequency based word-list.[14] Its nearly 9,600 series and more than 8,000 TL related lemmas constitute the nucleus of the Romance lexicon. It does not come as a surprise that the CVRP-corpus and the CVRP-learning-apps invite a lot of questions which demand empirically founded answers.

In the linguistic field, the CVRP inventory lays the groundwork to explore the Romance core vocabularies on different aspects, especially on comparative ones. In a quantitative view, this concerns form congruencies/discongruencies (type: *continue, continuare* [...]) in regard to the word stems as to word formation as well (type: fr. *avortement,* it./pt./sp. *aborto,* eng. *abortion*; fr. *éclaircissement*, it. *schiarimento*, pt. *esclarecimento*, sp. *aclaración*). In principle, all the questions about word formation that can be asked considering one Romance language can be raised in reference to plurilingual settings too[15].

Another innovation concerns what we call «interligalexes» (Meißner 2016; cf. footnote 2). What are the learning benefits of interligalexes? As interligalexes allow identifying the minimal lexical elements our languages have in common, their potential efficiency improvement in plurilingual reading achievement is considerable. The potential positive effects on learning economy result from the reduction of a very great pedagogically uncontrollable number of different morphosemantic elements, which are present in various languages, to a manageable inventory. The positive effects on teachability and learnability are obvious.

Helping to make Romance languages more transparent, such a list supports the Europeans' ability to understand each other, even if the interlocutor speaks an «unknown» (European) language. It is in the interest of applied linguistics to know more about interligalexes and their potential efficiency increase for plurilingual learning.

As e-learning platforms in general, the CVRP-apps require usability-research. That is why a module will be implemented that invites users to share their respective experiences with the authors of the apps. Unlike what is said about software related usability, this kind of research interest focuses on linguistic data. Protocolling the learners' activities will teach us what the CVRP-users need to improve their foreign language skills. This puts the question of the appropriateness of constructing a special data base.

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14   Eaton's (1961) frequency dictionary follows criteria quite different from those of the CVRP.
15   Further lingering questions will be discussed in a special monograph.

6.1   Aspects concerning production and use of CVRP-corpus and its e-learning programs

The starting point of the CVRP was given by the EU financed MIRIADI-project (2012–2015).[16] MIRIADI – *Mutualisation et Innovation pour un Réseau de l'Intercompréhension à Distance* – tries to open the door to plurilingualism for the widest audience possible. MIRIADI is in line with other EU-projects fostering European plurilingualism through intercomprehension (RED-INTER, GALANET, GALAPRO). In the German speaking countries, the EUROCOM-group supported the intercomprehension approach both in the linguistic and in the didactic area.

6.2   Access to the e-learning-software

The University of Giessen took part in several intercomprehension projects. In MIRIADI, its task was to develop a frequency based word list of the «interlingually non-transparent share of Romance vocabulary» and a corresponding learning app.[17] Soon, it became clear that the task demanded the existence of a suitable plurilingual frequency based corpus (<5,000) which then was not available.

Figure 8: Portal of the e-learning course BVRP.

Time and personal resources which had to be invested for constructing the CVRP-corpus and the learning apps exceeded by far the frame established by MIRIADI. Thus, external support and private funding was needed.

The stepwise development allowed to respect the MIRIADI time planning; i.e. to achieve the *CVRP*-list and a beta-version including of course the opaque inventory share. The «Basic Vocabulary of Romance Plurilingualism» was online between October 2015 and January 2017. An updated version will be available in 2017. Currently, the beta version of the «Opaque

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16   Miriadi is the acronym of Mutualisation et Innovation pour un Réseau de l'Intercompréhension à Distance.
17   Such a corpus is particularly useful for native Romanophones and users who have a good command of at least one Romance language (and English and other languages).

Core-Vocabulary of Romance languages» (OCVRL), fed by 9,548 series, is online. Both apps will remain free of charge.

The construction of apps and their putting on the market will follow as soon as possible. It is intended to get the distribution done by the Microsoft and Google-stores. Access and use rights can be acquired by purchasing a license. An updated list of all CVRP-apps will be available on eurocomdidact.eu. All apps will run under Windows and Android on desktop computers, tablets and smartphones as well.

Interested persons will find further detailed instructions for the different apps' use and apps assisted vocabulary learning on eurocomdidact.eu.[18]

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18   Cf. the homepage http://www.eurocomdidact.de/.

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