

Infra Language

An outline of its principles and some philosophical influences on its development

What is Infra Language?

Infra Language is a framework for understanding how people think, communicate, and behave. It is based on the five most significant structures that people use when communicating. The importance of structure is emphasized because it is caused by and expresses purpose. Just as, in turn, purpose causes and expresses structure.

Why is Infra Language called a language?

The modes that make up the grammar of Infra Language arise from communication structures and their related purposes. Individuals use these modes to understand others, to identify with groups and to communicate both simple and complex messages. “Language” refers to a system of communication. Therefore, in this case, “language” relates to the usual methods of communicating, such as writing and speaking, but also the other non-verbal communication forms such as “body language”. Further, the term “language” is used to suggest a pattern of thinking that creates this foundation language.

Infra means below or next. In the sense it is used in Infra Language, the term infra refers to a language that is the foundation of all forms of communication.

How did Infra Language come about?

Infra Language has been created by Francis Walsh after a life-long study of human communication, particularly writing, negotiation, meetings, learning and cooperation within small and medium groups, as well as within large assemblages, such as government organizations and commercial corporations. Further, the Infra Language concept has arisen from a plethora of philosophical influences which, taken as a whole, support its tenet that structures in communication are entwined with purpose and that, together, they form a sequence that creates the foundation of human thought, communication and behavior.

How can Infra Language be understood?

Communication structures can be identified through analysis, particularly of written and spoken forms. There are five significant structures in communication. They involve provision of information, rational analysis, and judgment against pre-existing knowledge, as well as emotional and physical reactions. Each structured message is individualized to suit particular circumstances with many variants, patterns and expressions.

The five communication structures, when aligned in logical succession, emulate the sequence that individuals follow as they receive, assess, appraise, emotionalize and react to information. When the five related purposes and structures operate in sequence, they are called modes.

These five modes of communication create an impression and expression sequence that arises from the mind and finds full manifestation in action.

As each individual and each group has preferences that emphasize some modes and de-emphasize others, identifiable proclivities in thinking, communicating and behaving are apparent.

What are Infra Language's component modes?

There are five modes that relate to the five communication structures.

The first is called info mode. It is concerned with receiving information through the senses. It is influenced through individual preferences as well as other stimuli that determine the hierarchy of importance of the senses. As this is the significant receptor mode, information received is typically prioritized on the basis of intensity and proximity.

The second mode is called infer. This mode involves assessing information by measurement, comparison, or contrast. This is the mode of rational thinking and it is characterized by the use of inductive or deductive reasoning. Most importantly, conclusions will be drawn about the characteristics of the information that has been assessed.

The third, and last of the first three impressive modes, is called infix. Judgment is made on the conclusions drawn in infer mode. This judgment is based on knowledge, which will include values, understandings, beliefs, and faith. This judgment is not necessarily entirely rational. It is created from an accumulation of conclusions, so the reasoning could properly be identified as abductive. That is, a judgment based on the 'most likely'. This mode is influenced not only by a readiness to refer to it but also the level of flexibility or rigidity in acceptance of new information.

The next mode is both impressive (receiving information) and expressive (reacting to information). It is the emotionalizing mode called infeel. To some extent, this is the mode in which a conclusion is summarized and is, sometimes, summarily expressed. Negative or positive emotions arise based on the extent

to which the information suits the individual's infix mode sense of knowledge.

The final mode of the sequence is called inforce: the mode of action. An individual's action may take many forms, such as running, walking, or sitting. It may involve the self-discipline of deciding to take no action. The action may also be transferred to

other people or things and expressed through giving orders or dominating others emotionally.

That action, whatever it may be, then manifests itself through the senses of those who perceive it as they receive the information, assess, judge, emotionalize, and take action in response.

Individuals move through these modes at various paces and with various emphases. Some may become habitualized to one mode (say, infer mode) and ignore or de-emphasize another (say, infeel mode). It is, therefore, reasonable to say that, in this example, an individual emphasizes their infer mode and that this emphasis is often displayed through their thinking and their communication styles and forms. In addition, their behaviors, including gestures and facial expressions, will tend to focus the infer mode and de-emphasize other modes.

Does Infra Language have a hierarchy of practice?

Infra Language does not concern itself with measures of individual modes except in relation to other modes. Therefore, IQ testing, for example, of itself, is not particularly relevant. An individual with a high IQ score may, in fact, be dominated by their infeel mode. From an Infra Language perspective, that is more significant.

It is often difficult to quantify precisely the strength of each mode against another other than through testing procedures, which are often, although not exclusively, based on self-awareness. However, it is the strength of each mode in relation to each other that is of primary concern.

If there is a hierarchy of practice in Infra Language, it may be used to identify those who use (knowingly or unknowingly) the personal and social power that Infra Language makes available.

Is Infra Language the only way to understand thinking, communicating and behaving?

Infra Language does not offer arguments for or against other schools of thought, philosophies or religions. On the contrary, Infra Language provides a universal framework for understanding these perceptions and provides a communication-based context into how and why they may have arisen. Further, it offers a framework to provide insight and utility, personally, socially, politically, historically and culturally.

For example, the popular conception of “body language” appears to be influenced by an understanding of the link between infeel and inforce modes. Within this context, a “body language” action, expression or gesture is typically perceived as a covert expression of an emotion or intent.

However, the Infra Language understanding of body language provides a wider insight that suggests that all physical expressions are a product and an expression of one of the five modes.

How does Infra Language fit into schools of thought, philosophies and religions?

While some people understand that Infra Language is based on communication structures, they wrongly assume that it is related, in some way, to structuralism (and its related supportive and non-supportive schools of thought).

This is not the case.

The early work of Ferdinand de Saussure in linguistics, which broadened during the twentieth century through the work of

Claude Levi-Strauss, and others, to include anthropology, cultural studies, psychology, literary studies and politics, was characterised

by a search for signifiers: those underlying messages that provide a covert or deeper meaning beneath the surface “text”.

This is not the goal of Infra Language.

Receiving

Those studying critical realism will recognize some of the characteristics of info mode in relation to the senses capturing external information. From a critical realism perspective, arising from the work of Descartes (and, to some extent, Locke), the accuracy of information is significant. However, the precision of the sense receptors and the consequent accuracy of understanding that arises in relation to the external world are of little import to those developing an understanding of the world from an Infra Language perspective.

Carl Gustav Jung’s notion, in its most simplistic form, of a perceptive personality, does have resonance within Infra Language although the parallels are fewer than seems immediately apparent.

Further, it is interesting to note and obviously requires more study to understand the significance of the tradition of mediation in Christianity and Buddhism (among others), in which the senses are disregarded or “turned off” to achieve an apparent sense of separation from the physical world.

Reasoning

Philosophers and thinkers in Ancient Greece provided profound insights and new ways of applying rational thought that are highly relevant to Infra Language’s infer mode. Pythagoras stated that “all things are numbers”, indicating a profound understanding of infer mode in which measurement and calculation predominate.

However, the great breakthrough arising from the thinkers of Ancient Greece in recognizing deductive reasoning is highly significant in understanding infer mode. Deductive reasoning suggests a protocol involving cutting short the labors of infer mode by leaping to infix mode. From infix mode, an abductive conclusion is applied to simplify, to hasten or even to predetermine the calculations of infer mode.

Of course, reference to Francis Bacon, in Elizabethan England, who argued the efficacy of induction (particularly in mathematics), provides the balance of rational thinking found within Infra Language's infer mode.

Individuals' powerful abilities to think can dominate perceptions of humanity and the universe. To some, the antithesis of the rational mind is the religious mind. However, it is important to understand that individuals who experience a powerful infer mode do not always lack religious faith. Thomas Aquinas saw no contradiction between reason and faith and, in fact, he worked comfortably with Aristotle's philosophical stance while proclaiming his Christian faith. The, sometimes, contradictory or counterbalancing effect that operates between infer and infix mode is still a matter of concern and contention in Christian religious studies to this day.

However, that is not the only indication of the counteracting forces operating between modes. Infra Language clearly identifies a relationship between infer and infeel modes, for example. Both Freud and Jung noted the relationship between the rational and emotional mind, although they expressed it through the psychological perspective of "personality".

Understanding

Infix mode, the center of knowledge, beliefs, or values, has been at the heart of much of the thinking of philosophers in Ancient Greece. The notion of axioms (self-evident theories) provides a salient example in which an axiom presents a sense of perfection that can never be fully realised in the tangible world. Essentially,

such axioms arise from deductive reasoning but they exist in the realm of knowledge: infix mode. Plato's concept of pure mathematics well suits this ideal.

Socrates saw little difference between virtue and knowledge. Both concepts may be placed within the realms of the infix mode. However, Aristotle took this theory further in identifying the two most significant virtues as being intellectual and moral. From an Infra Language perspective, this is an entwining of infer and infix modes.

In some ways, religious fundamentalists' understanding can be found within the rigidities of a Socratic notion of infix mode.

However, as suggested earlier, developments by Plato and Aristotle added rational thought, which is nowadays expressed, for example, in Christian perceptions of understanding Christ both emotionally and rationally.

From a Hindu perspective, searching for freedom from ignorance and reaching for true knowledge is central to achieving Moksa. This tenet is, from Infra Language's perspective, a movement through the first two modes (info and infer) to experiencing the perfection of infix mode.

In more recent times, Hobbes clarified the significance of infix mode, particularly through his argument that thinking is dominated by laws and purpose.

Emotionalizing

Infra Language indicates that there is another mode beyond the calculations of the rational and the certainties of belief: it is called infeel. Even in Ancient Greece, there was a reaction against the coldness of thinking and knowledge: the Greek tragedies provided the examination of character through a crescendo of emotionalism to climax and denouement.

Even though the tragedies were serious in intent, they sought their audience's emotional reaction or, more likely, emotional understanding. The notion that life involves endless suffering was shared with ascetic perceptions (including non-Greek philosophies, such as Buddhism) but the tragedies allowed for a transformation from suffering to positive renewal.

Interestingly, Hobbes and Spinoza incorporated emotion and passion into their philosophical frameworks. Moreover, both argued that there was a link between those feelings and motion directed at fulfilling desires.

Infra Language puts neither positive nor negative values on emotions: they are neither good nor bad. Rather, Infra Language places emotion in the role of summarizing the previous three modes while, simultaneously, providing a non-physical expression to be used with or without action (inforce mode).

Behaving

It is interesting to note that, although Socrates provided a signal insight into deductive reasoning, his personal life indicated something about his personal attributes that should not be ignored. A powerful exponent of inforce mode, in its self-discipline form, he famously wore no shoes in the snow when he was a soldier and he would go without sleep and food, even in extremely harsh conditions. This was not simply an indication of the power of a dominating infix mode for it also shows an extreme form of inforce mode in operation.

Heraclitus was also concerned with the self-disciplinary form of inforce mode. As someone who focused his attention in human action (even ambition), he saw emotions (the infeel mode) as a dangerous distracter.

Hinduism, of course, tackles the contradiction of infix perfection (in perfect, universal stasis) and inforce activity (in endless

activity). Shiva, the cosmic dancer, personifies this through his expression of dynamic unity.

Hobbes identified will power as underpinning desire and aversion. He believed that each human action arises from a cause and, thus, understood the relevance of actions in creating a dynamic framework within which individuals operated.

Further, Carl Gustav Jung understood the need to place dynamic action within his philosophical framework but, rather than indicating an individual personality type associated with activity, he argued that all individuals were introverted or extraverted in that their interaction with others could be characterised as stepping away from or stepping forward to others.

It could be argued that critical realism also expresses an understanding of dynamism, the central tenet of inforce mode, because of its insistence on proving the real through the perception of mechanisms that can be manipulated to produce particular outcomes.

Sequencing

A significant element in understanding Infra Language relates to the sequence of the modes and the dynamic associated with the impression and expression stages. Although imbalances between the modes highlight the character of individuals, the achievement of a balance across the modes is an ideal shared with many schools of thought, philosophies and religions. Some Christian thinkers argue that the ideal of Jesus Christ is the personification of the perfectly balanced modes. A similar argument could be presented in relation Buddhism's Nirvana and Hindu's Moksa.

Interestingly, Confucius' (K'ung-fu-tzu's) *Doctrine of the Mean* seems to relate to the same notion of attempting to achieve a balance, from which, Master K'ung argued, all human actions arise. In the *Analects*, there is a famous quote that captures some

of the nature of Infra Language: “Men’s natures are alike. It is there habits that carry them far apart”. In this, we can see that all humans share the same five-mode sequence but different emphases on each mode creates different individuals.

Conclusion

Infra Language provides a framework for understanding human communication. Each mode is based on one of the five significant structures individual’s use to express and manifest intent. When the five modes operate in sequence, they form the five stages of receiving, assessing, judging, emotionalizing, and acting. The final two expressive modes create new information that is perceivable, thus triggering the sequence in others.

However, as this brief analysis and exploration suggests, the modes, their internal characteristics and their sequential placement provides a framework for the development of further understanding of individuals, small and large groups, organization, political groupings, communities and cultures. Many of the significant elements of Infra Language have been identified, defined and explored by some of the great thinkers, philosophers and religious figures. Consequently, a knowledge of Infra Language may open new and profound insights into experience, understanding and meaning in our own lives.