

COMPREHEND LANGUAGES

1st-level divination (ritual)

...LANGUAGE IS THE SOURCE OF MOST MISUNDERSTANDINGS...

(Minrothadan Merchant-Prince addressing a class of students on Traders Isle, Minrothad Guilds)

History: This spell is a derivative of an older and more powerful spell, *Comprehendere Linguam*. The spell Comprehend Languages was originally created for simple use for merchant men, low-ranking wizard translators and for general legal use for contracts and the like.

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Duration: 1 hour

Components: V, S, M (A pinch of soot and a few grains of salt)

Effect: For the duration of the spell, you understand the literal meaning of spoken languages that you hear and of written languages that you can see, provided you are touching the surface on which the words are written or touching the creature you are attempting to understand.

It takes about 1 minute to read one page (250 words) of text.

You do not have to identify the language spoken or written that you are trying to comprehend.

The base version of the spell may be used to comprehend all humanoid, sylvan, monstrous (such as giantkin) as well as draconic languages.

Limitations:

- The spell enables you to understand or read an unknown language, not speak or write it;
- The spell does not impart insight into the material read/heard neither does it reveal secret messages that are concealed in a text;
- The spell does not allow you to read/decipher magical writing or inscriptions, as if you are proficient in Arcana;
- By 'touching the creature' you are limited to comprehend one creature at a time, on a first touch first comprehend basis. A similar limitation exists on the translation of texts;
- Clothing such as gloves (thick or thin) do not hamper the effect of this spell, however a force field as in the instance of a *Mage Armour* spell being in effect (whether on the you or the creature) may hamper the effect of the Comprehend Languages;
- This spell has difficulty in deciphering archaic texts or translating archaic languages. Pushing the limits of the spell by forcing it to decipher or translate the archaic texts or languages could bring about headaches, intense fatigue and even nausea on yourself. It could even reduce the duration of the spell as the energies of the spell are utilised elsewhere.
- This spell can be foiled by certain warding magic (such as the *Secret Page* and *Illusory Script* spells);

Iterations: Because of the way *Comprehend Languages* has been designed, when this spell is cast only modern day lexicons of the specified languages may be comprehended. Scholars may find old versions of *Comprehend Languages* quite useful for translating older texts.

It is almost as if these older versions of the spell have a 'time stamp' through the magical incantations, linking them to languages/lexicons of their time.

Therefore casters may learn multiple versions of the spell, although older iterations of the spell are rare and expensive and fairly difficult to learn due to the changes in arcana over the ages. A caster learning multiple versions generally identifies the base spell as *Modern Comprehend Languages* and labels other iterations with the century they're from, such as *Comprehend Languages 400 AC*.

Glantrian – version: Instead of Self, the Range is Touch, which therefore allows someone else to benefit from the spell's effects instead of the caster. Glantrian wizards fiercely guard this iteration of the spell which is gifted to students upon their graduation at the Great School of Magic.

Hearsay: A reverse version of the spell, Confuse Languages is rumoured to exist, which is believed to prevent comprehension or negate the effect of a Comprehend Languages spell.

Service Costs - *Comprehend Languages*:

This service may cost anything from 10 - 50 gold coins depending on the caster/institution performing the service, the length of the text being translated as well as the uniqueness of the language. The above fees usually include scribing costs.

The cost of the service may more than double if the language or text being translated is particularly archaic, and increases even further if it is of a planar nature.

Spell Scroll - *Comprehend Languages*:

A spell scroll with this spell may easily cost over 50 gold coins.

Expanded Knowledge: *Comprehendere Linguam* is an advanced and difficult to obtain spell. It provides the user the ability able to reduce some of the limitations placed on its simplistic derivative, Comprehend Languages.

Firstly, it allows you to decipher and translate archaic texts and languages with no added effort or side effects.

Secondly the elegant design of the spell allows for it to be updated with modern lexicons permitting you to learn only this one spell rather than the various dated Comprehend Languages which exist.

Furthermore you gain the ability to read/decipher magical writing or inscriptions, as if you were proficient with Arcana.

Verdant Salt: When this Alphatian component, which is available in the markets of Sundsvall, is utilised in place of normal salt, the duration of the spell is doubled.

BENEFITS OF LINGUISTICS

- Gain additional languages permanently without the need to expend resources;
- Provides insight into the languages etymology of words, grammar/conjugation as well as slang;
- Allows one to make sense of idioms;
- Permits possible two-way communication;
- Assists in detecting and creating forgeries, as well as deciphering encrypted messages;
- Is a non-magical solution, which may be a positive in a location where the casting of magic could result in negative consequences;
- May assist when reading the lips of speaking creatures within 10 feet, in normal lighting conditions. A lip reader may only understand spoken words in a language they know.