


Chapter 14

Leveraging AI and Pluralistic Approaches for Language Teaching: A Focus on Inter-Comprehension Between Related Languages

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ABSTRACT

This chapter introduces the pluralistic teaching approach of inter-comprehension utilizing the AI tool ChatGPT. Its objective is to heighten inter-comprehensive awareness among native English speakers studying Spanish and facilitate the comprehension of structurally asymmetrical grammatical phenomena between Romance languages and English. Specifically tailored to the British educational context, where the typical language sequence comprises L1 English, L2 French, and L3 Spanish, this chapter draws support from L3 acquisition literature. Focused on the aspectual contrast perfective/imperfective, less prominent in English compared to Romance languages, the author showcases how to generate parallel contrastive analyses of Spanish/French/English translations through ChatGPT.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter advocates the integration of the Pluralistic Approach of Inter-Comprehension Between Related Languages into language classrooms, leveraging ChatGPT as a facilitative tool. Our primary focus is on assisting teachers instructing Spanish as a third language (L3) in the UK, a linguistic trend increasingly observed among British learners of Foreign Languages (FL). Specifically, we delve into the implementation within Scotland's Pluralistic 1+2 Approach and the incorporation of Spanish as an L3 within the English curriculum. In these contexts, Spanish is introduced as

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0872-1.ch014

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the L3 after English, which acts as a first language (L1), and French, which is taught as a second language (L2). Moreover, the applicability of this model extends beyond the UK, potentially benefiting countries like the US, where English is the L1, Spanish the L2, and French L3 in their FL curricula (Lusin et al., 2023).

The focus of this chapter is to recommend the integration of ChatGPT as a tool to create engaging classroom activities that enhance students' understanding of how languages work together. We focus particularly on tackling challenging grammar concepts that lack direct equivalence or clarity in a student's native language or their previously learned languages. By employing ChatGPT for translation and developing side-by-side comparisons, students can grasp how different languages handle specific grammar rules. This approach nurtures students' ability to recognize similarities and differences between languages, a skill crucial not only for mastering an L3 like Spanish but also for learning additional languages (L_n).

By comparing complex grammar rules in Spanish and languages students already know, they can identify the most helpful prior language to aid their learning of the new language. In the UK, students commonly know English as their L1 and French as an L2. Since students learn these languages sequentially, our goal is to take advantage of the similarities between French L2 and Spanish L3 to assist English-speaking learners in understanding broader grammatical concepts common to Romance languages. Specifically, we focus on the 'imperfective aspect,' expressed as *imparfait* in French and *imperfecto* in Spanish, a past tense that lacks a morphological equivalent in English, thus requiring English to employ different grammatical structures to convey a similar concept.

This chapter accentuates the pedagogical utilization of ChatGPT, specifically within the British FL education setting, aiming to enhance the comprehension of language as a universal concept. Rather than focusing solely on teaching a single language in isolation, as traditional methods often do, this approach advocates a pluralistic methodology that embraces the incorporation of two or more languages within the classroom. This method embraces the integration of multiple languages in the teaching of the target language, acknowledging language as a universal concept that manifests in diverse forms across different languages. By leveraging ChatGPT for translation, this approach promotes plurilingualism by highlighting shared linguistic patterns across different languages and, thus, promoting a more holistic approach to language acquisition. Teachers can utilize ChatGPT as a translation tool to create reflective in-class tasks. These tasks, employing parallel contrastive analysis across two or three translations, are valuable for introducing or reinforcing new grammatical elements and assessing students' progress.

The application of ChatGPT explored in this chapter primarily focuses on its value from a teacher's standpoint, aiding in planning and resource development through ChatGPT's translation tool. However, beyond its role in teaching, we argue that ChatGPT can also be harnessed for independent and self-directed learning from a student's perspective. As pluralistic approaches, especially the concept of Inter-Comprehension Between Related Languages, remain less widely understood in educational settings, the initial sections of this chapter aim to clarify these approaches and discuss the reasoning behind our interest in adopting this innovative teaching methodology.

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