Empowering Teachers' Pragmatic Competence with AI Tools

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Abstract:

According to Minh and Cahn (2021:1), learners' knowledge of language rules and words will not enable them to communicate effectively in their L2. Pragmatic competences, reflected in students' ability to express their intentions, feelings, ideas and thoughts to other people, and interpret those expressed by these people, are required. Morkus (2018:2) previously stressed that "pragmatic competence failure is more than harmful than linguistic mistakes of learners as native speakers forgive linguistic errors, but they are very sensitive to pragmatic failure." Minh and Cahn further added that although students' pragmatic competence can be improved through classroom instruction, "teachers may either not be fully aware of the important role played by pragmatics in language teaching and learning, or they may not be adequately trained to do this job effectively."

Thus, the present study aims to provide language teachers with strategies to enable them to introduce certain pragmatic devices effectively in L2 classrooms. Focus is on face-saving and face-threatening as appearing in the Arabic spoken discourse.

To conduct this study, I aim to use ChatGPT as an AI tool to take language teachers from theory to practice. In other words, through ChatGPT, teachers will be familiarized with the pragmatic definitions of face-saving and face-threatening, accompanied by dialogues and or scenarios generated by ChatGPT illustrating the appropriate use of these pragmatic devices in contexts. This will pave the way for language teachers to extract these specific pragmatic devices or other pragmatic ones whenever presented in authentic spoken discourse among native speakers, and then introduce these pragmatic devices in the language classroom.

During the presentation, I will give a detailed explanation of how I used ChatGPT to provide both the pragmatic definitions and the generated scenarios. I will also provide samples of face-saving and face-threatening strategies which I extracted from a number of Arabic talk shows addressing social, political, and cultural topics.

I believe that findings of this research would help demonstrate a useful framework and methodology that other language teachers can use to teach various pragmatic devices more effectively, given that, "textbooks rarely include pragmatic information", O'Keeffe et. al (2011:139).