

# Perceptions and Influences: ChatGPT in Secondary English Instruction

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*Summary:* This study examines the perceptions and attitudes of high school English teachers in the United States regarding the integration of ChatGPT into their instructional practices. With the rapid adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in education, understanding the factors influencing teachers' acceptance or reluctance is critical. A nationwide survey was conducted, utilizing a quantitative approach to collect data from 119 teachers across 37 states. The findings reveal a general openness to ChatGPT, especially among less experienced teachers who value its potential to reduce workload and streamline administrative tasks. However, concerns about accuracy, ethical implications, and the potential erosion of pedagogical quality temper these positive attitudes. The study highlights a perspective where AI's ability to enhance educational practices is weighed against apprehensions about its long-term impact on teaching. Addressing these concerns through targeted professional development and ethical guidelines can support teachers in leveraging AI effectively for improved educational outcomes.

*Keywords:* Teacher Workload; Instructional Technology; AI Integration; Professional Development; Secondary Education

## Introduction

ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence (AI) tool developed by OpenAI, enables human-like interaction using natural language processing (NLP). Since its release in November 2022, it has sparked discussions on AI's role in education (Miller, 2023). ChatGPT serves as a versatile platform for generating text, offering potential benefits for teaching and administrative tasks. Due to the prevalence of technological advancements and gaps in academic research regarding the integration of ChatGPT in education, there is a critical need to evaluate the teacher's perceptions of ChatGPT. With the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), there is a growing emphasis on integrating these tools into education. While there are studies on incorporating technology in classrooms for student use, there is a lack of teacher-centric research. Despite its potential to ease teacher workloads and streamline tasks, concerns about accuracy, ethics, and autonomy remain significant. This study examines high school English teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT integration, addressing both its potential benefits and educators' concerns to provide insights that inform its effective implementation in classrooms.

## Possible uses of ChatGPT

ChatGPT can be used by educators to answer inquiries related to academics, develop curricula, prepare lessons, or enhance instructional techniques. Examples include: assisting in grading tasks and providing student feedback,

enabling personalized instruction through data assessment and tailored lesson recommendation, assisting in creating and customizing assessments, conducting administrative tasks, including organization and communication, and offering language translation services, particularly beneficial in multilingual educational contexts (Hashem et al., 2023).

ChatGPT can assist teachers with language translation (Ali, 2020; Lo, 2023). Oftentimes, there is a disconnect between the language used by the instructor and that of the student, even when both speak the same language. AI technology can assist in overcoming these language barriers by providing "students with additional explanations and examples, enhancing their understanding of complex concepts" (Alneyadi, 2023, p. 10). Additionally, Jeon and Lee conducted a study of 11 English elementary teachers in South Korea that implemented ChatGPT into their practice (2023). Jeon and Lee found that teachers used ChatGPT to bridge gaps in cultural knowledge when teaching about foreign countries (2023). This could be particularly helpful for English Language Learners (ELL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) educators. ChatGPT's use in education complements the teacher's role, as teachers remain the orchestrators of resources, making key pedagogical decisions while ensuring students are engaged and ethically aware of AI's influence.

## Perceived Benefits of AI

AI could be used to drastically reduce the amount of time educators devote to instructional planning (Miller, 2023). AI could be used to generate basic content for lessons (Çelik et.

al., 2022; Lo 2023; Jeon and Lee, 2023) allowing educators to spend more time developing higher order thinking tasks (Miller, 2023). AI summarizes and aggregates information across numerous websites, drastically reducing the amount of time teachers spend planning content (Halaweh, 2023). ChatGPT can also be used to quickly create “dialogue scripts, short stories, and sample words or sentences” (Jeon and Lee, 2023, p.9). Additionally, ChatGPT can be used to create assessments (Lo, 2023; Jeon and Lee 2023). Outsourcing these tasks to ChatGPT will reduce educators’ workload, reducing tasks to minutes instead of hours.

ChatGPT supports differentiation by enabling instructors to rapidly create and adapt content to meet the needs of diverse learners (Alneyadi, 2023; Huang et al., 2023; Jeon and Lee, 2023). AI technology provides insights into student strengths and weaknesses, allowing instructors to tailor learning activities and curriculum to specific student needs.(Alneyadi, 2023). AI can provide targeted feedback on student essays, significantly reducing the time required for this task (Çelik et al., 2022; Lo, 2023). By inputting a rubric and expectations, ChatGPT can provide an initial grade for written work (Jeon and Lee, 2023).

Prior to submitting written works for grading, students can submit work to ChatGPT for grammar corrections, drastically reducing teacher time on this task (Jeon and Lee, 2023). ChatGPT also provides general drafting assistance to students (Lo, 2023). ChatGPT can act as a virtual teacher assistance, providing immediate feedback to students in real time (Alneyadi, 2023; Huang et al., 2023; Jeon and Lee, 2023). This is especially helpful for instructors with large class sizes in which it is unrealistic to spend individual time daily with each student. Flipped classrooms that utilize AI technology have been found to be effective in the teaching of English language (Ali, 2020).

## Methodology

This study aims at answering these research questions:

1. How do high school English teachers in the United States perceive the integration of ChatGPT in their instructional practices?
2. What factors influence teachers’ acceptance or reluctance towards the use of ChatGPT?

## Design and Procedure

A nationwide digital survey was conducted to explore the perceptions and attitudes of high school English teachers towards ChatGPT integration. The survey included 10 closed-ended questions designed to capture quantitative data on teachers’ experiences, motivations, and concerns related to ChatGPT use in their instructional practices. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling in targeted social media groups.

## Data Collection Tools and Procedures

The data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended questions. The survey aimed to gather information on the following:

- Demographics (state of employment, years of teaching experience)
- Integration and use of ChatGPT in teaching practices
- Factors motivating the use of ChatGPT
- Concerns and barriers to ChatGPT integration
- Perceptions of ChatGPT’s advantages and long-term impacts

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Cross-tabulation analysis was used to examine the relationship between years of teaching experience and perceptions of ChatGPT.

## Participants and the Context

As shown in Figure 1, participants were 119 high school English teachers from 37 different states in the United States, with Hawaii having the highest number of participants. The participants represented a range of teaching experience from less than five years to over 20 years.

Figures 1 and 2 correspond with the demographic questions on the survey:

Question 1: Location – Please select the state you currently teach in.

Question 2: Teaching Experience – How many years have you been teaching English at the high school level?

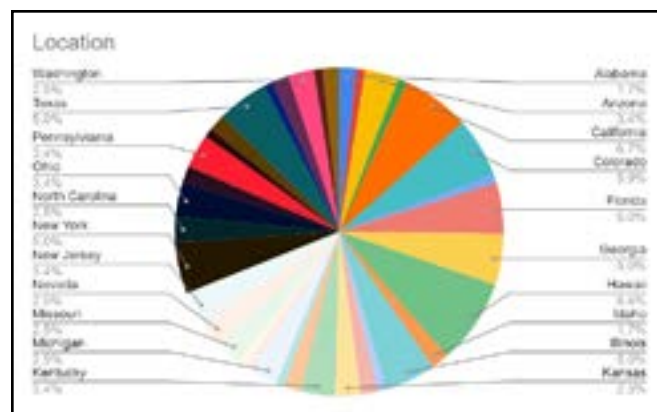


Figure 1. Participants by State

Note. The following states only had a single participant and are not represented in Figure 1: Utah, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and Mississippi.

As shown in Figure 2, the participants represented an equitable cross section of experience, with 28 participants reporting teaching 5-10 years of teaching experience. The second largest demographic of participants were teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience, with 27 participants. Next, 25 participants reported 11-15 years of teaching experience. Additionally, 20 respondents reported 16-20 years of experience. Lastly, 19 respondents with 16-20

years of experience participated in the study.

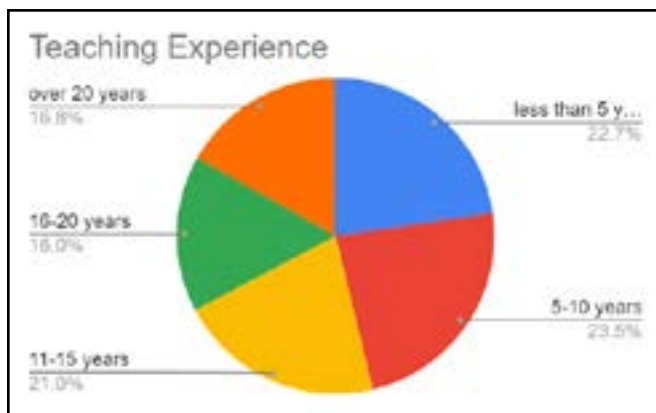


Figure 2. Participants by Teaching Experience

## Results

### Q3: Have you ever integrated ChatGPT into your teaching practices for your personal use?

Of the 119 participants, 78.2% reported integrating ChatGPT into their teaching practice. Newer teachers were the most likely to adopt the tool: 89% of those with less than five years of experience (24 of 27) reported use. Teachers with 11–15 years of experience followed closely at 88% (22 of 25), while 82% of those with 5–10 years (23 of 28) reported use. Integration declined among those with 16–20 years of experience (74%, or 14 of 19) and dropped sharply among those with over 20 years, with only 50% (10 of 20) reporting use.

### Q4: If you have used ChatGPT, how have you used it?

Respondents were presented with eight options and asked to select all that applied. Among the 119 participants, 59% reported using ChatGPT for curriculum development or lesson planning, 47% for generating course materials, 41% for assessment tasks, and 37% each for administrative duties and differentiation. Additionally, 17% used it for providing student feedback, 10% as a virtual assistant, while 21.8% indicated they had never used ChatGPT.

### Q5: What factors would motivate you to use ChatGPT?

Participants were presented with nine options and instructed to select all that apply. Approximately 71% of total participants selected time savings in creating lesson plans, assessments, and instructional materials as a motivating factor. Moreover, assistance in differentiating instructional materials emerged as the second most preferred option, chosen by 53% of respondents, with the highest interest (63%) among teachers with less than 5 years. The third most selected option, reducing time spent on student feedback, was chosen by 44% of respondents, with the highest interest (53%) among teachers with 5–10 years and 16–20 years of experience. Only 39% of participants selected automating administrative tasks, including 52% of teachers with less than five years of experience and 20% with over 20 years. Teacher assistant was the least (21%) selected option, however, it was most used (32%) by teachers with 16–20 years of experience. Only 10% of respondents reported no motivating factors for using

ChatGPT, with the highest lack of interest (25%) among teachers with 16–20 years of experience.

### Q6: What factors would make you reluctant to use ChatGPT?

Concerns about accuracy and reliability were the most frequently reported issue, with 94 respondents (79%) selecting this option. This concern was noted across all experience levels, ranging from 72% of educators with 11–15 years of experience to 95% of those with over 20 years in the field. The second most selected option, ethical concerns about preserving teaching authenticity, was chosen by 65% of respondents (78 participants). Concern was highest among teachers with less than five years of experience (74%) and lowest among those with over 20 years (55%). The third most selected option, concerns about the quality and relevance of ChatGPT-generated feedback, was chosen by 56% of respondents (67 participants). Concern was highest among teachers with less than five years of experience (74%) and lowest among those with 16–20 years (37%).

### Q7: What advantages might teachers gain from utilizing ChatGPT?

The option most frequently chosen was “Time Management: By automating certain tasks, teachers can better manage their time and strike a balance between teaching and other responsibilities,” with 82 respondents selecting it, representing approximately 69% of the participants, with highest interest among teachers with 11–15 years of experience (84%). “Lessening cognitive load” was selected by 67% (80 respondents) and most common among teachers with less than 5 years (81%). Furthermore, 63% (76 respondents) reported increased productivity, with highest interest among teachers with 5–10 years (79%). Improved organization and structuring of materials was identified by 50% of respondents, most commonly among those with 11–15 years of experience (68%). Only 8% of respondents saw no advantages to using ChatGPT, with this sentiment most common among teachers with over 20 years of experience (15%).

### Q8: What advantages might teachers gain from utilizing ChatGPT? What specific concerns do you have about the long-term use of ChatGPT for teacher instructional use?

Among the 119 respondents, the most common concern about ChatGPT was over-reliance on the tool potentially diminishing teaching skills, selected by 70% of participants, with the highest concern among teachers with less than five years of experience (78%). Other major concerns included bias in generated material (56%) and privacy or data security issues (53%), both cited most frequently by newer teachers. Lack of up-to-date information was noted by 51%, particularly among those with 5–10 years of experience (57%). The least cited concern was AI displacing human teachers, selected by 44% of respondents, with the highest concern in the 16–20 years experience group (58%).

### Q9: What is your general perception of ChatGPT use for teacher related tasks for high school English teachers?

Teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT were largely positive, with the majority falling under the Positive Perception category, led by educators with 5–10 years of experience (54%). Very Positive Perception was strongest among teachers with 11–15 years of experience (32%) but dropped to just 10% among those with over 20 years. Negative Perception was most common among the newest teachers (33%) and seasoned educators with 20+ years (25%). Very Negative Perception was rare among early-career teachers (7%) but peaked at 32% among those with 16–20 years of experience

### Q10: How do you currently perceive the integration of ChatGPT in your high school English classroom regarding student use versus teacher use?

The majority of educators (41%) view ChatGPT primarily as a tool for teachers, a perspective strongest among those with less than five years of experience (67%). A smaller group (37%) sees ChatGPT as equally beneficial for both teachers and students, particularly among teachers with 5–10 years (54%) and over 20 years of experience (50%). Very few respondents (6%) believe it should be used mainly by students, with no support from early-career teachers. Meanwhile, 16% oppose ChatGPT use altogether, with the highest resistance among teachers with 16–20 years of experience (37%).

## Discussion

The findings reveal a generally positive perception of ChatGPT, particularly among younger and less experienced teachers, who are more likely to view it as a time-saving and productivity-enhancing tool. However, experienced educators expressed skepticism, citing concerns about accuracy, ethical considerations, and the potential for over-reliance. These mixed perceptions suggest that while ChatGPT has clear potential to support teaching practices, its adoption requires careful consideration of individual educators' needs and contexts. These findings highlight the dual nature of ChatGPT as both a valuable tool and a potential source of apprehension, emphasizing the need for professional development and ethical guidelines.

Teachers' perceptions of ChatGPT revealed a general optimism about its potential. However, a generational divide was evident: teachers with over 20 years of experience were more likely to have negative or very negative perceptions (50%), while younger educators were more open to integrating ChatGPT into their practices.

While educators appreciate the practical benefits of ChatGPT, their apprehensions about reliability, ethical considerations, and potential dependency must be addressed through targeted training and clear policies. While ChatGPT offers potential benefits, the integration of this tool in education also brings up significant ethical concerns for teachers, such as issues related to privacy, bias, and trustworthiness. These

concerns align with the feedback shared by those surveyed. Educators who use ChatGPT should be aware of this pitfall and trained on how to properly protect sensitive student data.

## ChatGPT in the Classroom

While the majority of educators reported using the tool, it is primarily viewed as a teacher-centric platform with limited student use. However, AI technologies can be used to assist in the teaching of reading, writing, grammar, speaking, and listening (Huang et.al., 2023). AI technology uses natural language to communicate, resulting in a tool educators can use to assess speech and language use (Ali, 2020). When instructed to “act like a person”, ChatGPT can be used to engage in conversations with students, serving as an “interactive role-playing partner” (Jeon and Lee, 2023, p.9). While this method was initially used in elementary classrooms, it could easily be adapted for high school students, especially those with specific linguistic needs. Using AI technology can alleviate pressure students face when interacting with teachers, allowing students to explore weaknesses in a low stakes manner that is conducive to learning (Qin et al., 2020). When implemented intentionally and effectively, ChatGPT has the potential to positively impact education by enhancing performance, motivation, organizational skills, and collaborative learning among students. By limiting ChatGPT use to only teachers, students miss vital opportunities to interact with a critical piece of technology.

## Implications for Educators and Policymakers

The study highlights the need for professional development programs that address:

- **Advanced AI Integration:** Training on applications such as student feedback, data analysis, and administrative automation.
- **Ethical Awareness:** Guidance on identifying and mitigating bias in AI-generated content.
- **Data Privacy Protections:** Strategies for safeguarding sensitive student information.
- **ChatGPT Classroom Integration:** Teachers need guidance as to how to effectively use ChatGPT as a student tool, particularly for individuals with diverse language needs, such as ELL and ESL students.

Policymakers must also establish clear frameworks to ensure equitable access to AI technologies and protect teacher autonomy in the classroom.

## Limitations and Challenges

This study has several limitations. The reliance on self-reported data may have introduced response bias, as participants may have given socially desirable answers. The sample

size, though geographically diverse, was limited to digitally active educators, potentially excluding perspectives from teachers with limited internet access or digital literacy. Finally, the study's focus on high school English teachers limits generalizability to other subjects and educational levels.

Addressing these limitations in future research will provide a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' perceptions and the broader implications of AI technologies in education. The findings align with previous studies, such as Woodruff et al. (2023), which reported higher AI adoption rates among younger teachers. Similarly, the findings echo Mercader and Gairín (2020), who identified generational gaps as a key factor in technology adoption. Notably, while younger teachers embraced ChatGPT for its efficiency, experienced educators expressed greater concern about ethical and reliability issues.

Future research should explore demographic factors like gender, race, and school setting to better understand their influence on ChatGPT adoption. Additionally, the differential impact of ChatGPT across subjects such as STEM and the perspectives of school administrators on AI integration warrant further study.

## Conclusion

AI technology will persist in shaping the education landscape, impacting both instructional delivery and student expectations. To adequately equip and guide students for future workforce requirements, it is imperative for educators to embrace and adapt instructional methods incorporating AI technology. The utilization and perception of ChatGPT by educators are pivotal aspects of AI technology integration in K-12 education. Educators will bear the responsibility of instructing the upcoming generation on the proper and efficient utilization of AI technology.

Although educators have started to integrate ChatGPT into their teaching methods, many teachers don't view it as a student tool. For successful integration, educators need to recognize AI's potential as a tool for both teachers and students. Despite legitimate worries about plagiarism and cheating, upcoming job markets will likely demand proficiency in engaging with AI technologies. Instead of shielding students due to concerns about cheating, educators should focus on teaching ethical and responsible usage.

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