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## **TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD USING AI TOOLS SUCH AS CHATGPT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS IN UZBEKISTAN**

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### **Abstract**

The rapid advancement of artificial intelligence technologies has generated significant interest in their pedagogical potential, particularly in foreign language education. Among these technologies, generative AI tools such as ChatGPT have emerged as accessible resources capable of supporting language instruction, material development, assessment, and learner engagement. This study examines teachers' attitudes toward the use of AI tools, specifically ChatGPT, in English language classrooms within the context of higher education in Uzbekistan. The research is grounded in the understanding that teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and readiness play a decisive role in the successful integration of innovative technologies into educational practice. The abstract focuses on identifying prevailing attitudes, perceived benefits, concerns, and contextual factors influencing the adoption of AI-assisted tools in English language teaching. Drawing on empirical data collected from English language instructors at philological universities, the study explores how educators evaluate the pedagogical value of ChatGPT in relation to language skills development, lesson planning efficiency, learner autonomy, and academic integrity. Particular attention is given to the balance between perceived instructional support and apprehensions related to ethical use, overreliance on AI, and potential impacts on students' critical thinking and language production skills. The findings summarized in this abstract indicate that while many teachers demonstrate cautious optimism and recognize AI tools as supportive supplements to traditional instruction, their acceptance is mediated by factors such as digital competence, institutional support, prior experience with educational technologies, and clarity



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of methodological guidelines. The study contributes to the growing body of research on AI in language education by providing context-specific insights from Uzbekistan and by highlighting the importance of professional development and policy frameworks in shaping informed and responsible AI integration in English language classrooms.

**Keywords:** Artificial intelligence in education, ChatGPT, English language teaching, teachers' attitudes, digital pedagogy, higher education, educational technology adoption

### **Introduction**

The integration of artificial intelligence into educational practice has become one of the most influential trends shaping contemporary teaching and learning environments. In recent years, AI-driven applications have moved beyond experimental use and entered mainstream educational discourse, particularly in the field of foreign language education. English language teaching has proven to be especially receptive to technological innovation due to its reliance on communication, interaction, and access to authentic language input. Within this context, generative AI tools such as ChatGPT have attracted growing attention from educators as potential resources for enhancing instructional effectiveness, supporting language practice, and facilitating personalized learning experiences. The emergence of ChatGPT as a publicly accessible AI-powered language model has introduced new possibilities for English language classrooms. Its ability to generate coherent texts, simulate dialogues, provide explanations, and respond to user queries in real time positions it as a multifunctional pedagogical aid. Teachers can potentially use such tools for lesson preparation, creation of teaching materials, formative assessment, feedback provision, and support for learners with diverse proficiency levels. At the same time, the rapid diffusion of AI tools raises critical pedagogical, ethical, and methodological questions that directly influence teachers' attitudes toward their classroom use.

Teachers' attitudes are widely recognized as a key determinant of successful technology integration. Positive perceptions often encourage experimentation, sustained use, and pedagogically meaningful implementation, whereas negative



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or ambivalent attitudes may lead to resistance or superficial adoption. In the context of AI, these attitudes are shaped not only by perceived usefulness and ease of use, but also by concerns related to academic integrity, data privacy, learner dependency, and the potential erosion of fundamental language learning processes such as critical thinking, creativity, and independent production. As a result, understanding how teachers conceptualize and evaluate AI tools is essential for developing effective strategies for their integration into English language education.

In Uzbekistan, higher education is undergoing a period of active transformation characterized by digitalization, curriculum modernization, and increased attention to global educational standards. Philological universities, which play a central role in training future English teachers, translators, and linguists, are increasingly encouraged to incorporate digital technologies into teaching and learning processes. However, the adoption of advanced AI tools such as ChatGPT remains uneven and largely dependent on individual instructors' awareness, digital competence, and professional beliefs. While some educators view AI as an innovative support for language instruction, others express skepticism regarding its pedagogical value and long-term implications.

Despite the growing international literature on AI in education, empirical research focusing on teachers' attitudes toward generative AI tools in the specific socio-cultural and institutional context of Uzbekistan remains limited. Most existing studies are concentrated on students' perceptions or are conducted in technologically advanced educational systems, which may not fully reflect local realities. This gap highlights the need for context-sensitive research that captures the perspectives of English language teachers working in Uzbek higher education institutions.

The present study addresses this need by examining teachers' attitudes toward using ChatGPT in English language classrooms. It seeks to identify dominant perceptions, perceived benefits and challenges, and contextual factors influencing teachers' acceptance or resistance. By focusing on instructors at philological universities, the study aims to provide insights that can inform professional development initiatives, institutional policies, and methodological



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recommendations for the responsible and effective use of AI tools in English language education.

### **Methods**

The methodological framework of this study is based on a mixed-methods research design that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' attitudes toward the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in English language classrooms. This design was selected to capture both the measurable trends in teachers' perceptions and the deeper interpretative insights related to their experiences, concerns, and professional judgments. The integration of multiple data sources enhances the validity and reliability of the findings and allows for a more nuanced analysis of the research problem.

The participants of the study consisted of English language teachers working at philological universities and faculties in Uzbekistan. The sample included instructors with varying levels of teaching experience, academic qualifications, and familiarity with digital technologies. Such diversity was intentionally sought to reflect the heterogeneity of the teaching workforce and to examine how demographic and professional variables influence attitudes toward AI integration. Participation was voluntary, and ethical considerations such as informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality were strictly observed throughout the research process.

Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to assess teachers' attitudes toward ChatGPT and similar AI tools. The questionnaire included sections focusing on perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, pedagogical value, ethical concerns, and readiness for classroom implementation. Likert-scale items were used to measure the degree of agreement or disagreement with statements related to AI-supported teaching practices. The instrument was adapted from existing validated surveys on educational technology acceptance and was refined to suit the context of English language teaching. Prior to full administration, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small group of instructors to ensure clarity, relevance, and internal consistency.



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Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with a selected subgroup of participants. The interviews aimed to explore teachers' experiences with AI tools in greater depth, focusing on practical use cases, perceived benefits for language learning, challenges encountered, and reflections on the role of the teacher in AI-enhanced classrooms. Open-ended questions allowed participants to express their views freely and to elaborate on issues that were not fully captured by the questionnaire. The interviews were conducted in a format convenient for participants and were audio-recorded with permission for subsequent transcription and analysis.

Data analysis was carried out in several stages. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods to identify overall trends and relationships between variables such as teaching experience, digital competence, and attitude levels. Measures of central tendency and variability were calculated, and comparative analyses were performed to examine differences across subgroups. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved coding interview transcripts, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting patterns related to teachers' perceptions and practices. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled triangulation and provided a more holistic understanding of teachers' attitudes toward the use of ChatGPT in English language classrooms.

### **Results**

The analysis of quantitative data revealed generally positive but cautious attitudes among English language teachers toward the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in their classrooms. A substantial proportion of respondents indicated that they perceive ChatGPT as a useful supportive resource for English language teaching, particularly in relation to lesson planning, generation of instructional materials, and provision of language examples. Many teachers reported that AI tools could reduce the time required for routine preparatory tasks, allowing greater focus on pedagogical decision-making and interaction with students. These perceptions were reflected in high mean scores on items related to perceived usefulness and efficiency.



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At the same time, the results demonstrated a moderate level of uncertainty regarding the direct impact of ChatGPT on students' language development. While teachers acknowledged its potential to support vocabulary expansion, grammar explanation, and writing practice, they expressed reservations about its effectiveness in fostering communicative competence and spontaneous oral interaction. Several respondents emphasized that AI-generated language input should be carefully mediated by the teacher to ensure alignment with learning objectives and students' proficiency levels. This cautious stance was particularly evident among instructors with longer teaching experience, who tended to prioritize traditional communicative and learner-centered methodologies.

The findings also revealed significant variation in attitudes based on teachers' digital competence and prior experience with educational technologies. Teachers who reported higher levels of confidence in using digital tools demonstrated more favorable attitudes toward ChatGPT and greater willingness to experiment with its classroom integration. In contrast, instructors with limited technological experience expressed concerns about the complexity of AI tools and the additional cognitive and organizational demands they might impose. Statistical analysis indicated a positive correlation between self-reported digital competence and overall acceptance of AI-assisted teaching practices.

Ethical and academic integrity issues emerged as one of the most prominent areas of concern. A majority of respondents expressed apprehension about students' potential overreliance on ChatGPT for completing written assignments, which could undermine the development of independent thinking and original language production. Teachers also raised concerns about plagiarism, authorship ambiguity, and the difficulty of assessing students' authentic performance in the presence of AI-generated content. These concerns were reflected in lower agreement scores on items related to unrestricted classroom use of ChatGPT, suggesting that teachers favor controlled and transparent implementation rather than open-ended adoption.

Qualitative interview data complemented and deepened the quantitative findings. Teachers who had already experimented with ChatGPT described it primarily as a supplementary tool rather than a replacement for traditional teaching practices. They highlighted its usefulness for generating discussion prompts, providing



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alternative explanations, and supporting weaker students outside class time. However, interviewees consistently emphasized the irreplaceable role of the teacher in guiding learning, contextualizing content, and maintaining pedagogical and ethical standards. Overall, the results indicate that teachers' attitudes toward ChatGPT are characterized by pragmatic interest combined with critical awareness of its limitations and risks.

### **Discussion**

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' attitudes toward the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in English language classrooms are shaped by a complex interaction of perceived pedagogical benefits, professional values, and contextual constraints. The generally positive but cautious stance observed among participants aligns with broader international research on AI adoption in education, which suggests that teachers tend to recognize the instructional potential of AI while simultaneously expressing concern about its implications for learning quality and academic integrity. In the context of English language teaching, this ambivalence reflects the dual nature of ChatGPT as both a powerful linguistic resource and a disruptive technological influence.

One of the central discussion points emerging from the results is the perception of ChatGPT as a supplementary rather than transformative tool. Teachers largely view AI as an aid that can support existing pedagogical practices, particularly in areas such as material development, explanation of linguistic concepts, and individualized learner support. This perception suggests that educators are inclined to integrate AI within established methodological frameworks instead of radically restructuring their teaching approaches. From a pedagogical perspective, this cautious integration may be considered beneficial, as it preserves the central role of communicative interaction, scaffolding, and teacher mediation in language learning.

The influence of digital competence on teachers' attitudes deserves particular attention. The positive correlation between technological confidence and acceptance of AI tools highlights the importance of professional readiness in shaping innovation adoption. Teachers who feel competent in navigating digital environments are more likely to experiment with ChatGPT and to evaluate its



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pedagogical value critically rather than dismissing it due to uncertainty or fear. This finding underscores the need for targeted professional development initiatives that focus not only on technical skills but also on methodological strategies for integrating AI into English language instruction in a pedagogically sound manner.

Ethical concerns related to academic integrity and learner autonomy emerged as a dominant theme in both quantitative and qualitative data. Teachers' apprehension regarding plagiarism, overdependence on AI-generated content, and diminished student effort reflects deeply rooted professional commitments to authenticity and independent learning. These concerns are particularly salient in English language education, where the development of original language production and critical thinking is a core objective. The discussion suggests that without clear institutional guidelines and assessment strategies, teachers may remain reluctant to fully embrace AI tools, even when they acknowledge their instructional advantages.

Within the higher education context of Uzbekistan, these findings acquire additional significance. The ongoing digital transformation of the education system creates both opportunities and pressures for innovation, yet the absence of unified policies on AI use may contribute to inconsistent practices and uncertainty among educators. Teachers' cautious optimism can therefore be interpreted as a rational response to rapid technological change occurring in an environment where methodological guidance and ethical frameworks are still evolving. Addressing these gaps through policy development, training programs, and research-informed recommendations may enhance teachers' confidence and promote more consistent and responsible use of AI tools in English language classrooms.

### **Conclusion**

The present study has examined teachers' attitudes toward the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in English language classrooms within the higher education context of Uzbekistan. The findings demonstrate that teachers' perceptions are neither uniformly enthusiastic nor overtly resistant; rather, they reflect a balanced and reflective stance shaped by pedagogical experience, professional responsibility,



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and contextual realities. English language teachers largely recognize the potential of ChatGPT to support instructional processes, enhance efficiency, and provide additional learning resources, while simultaneously expressing justified concerns regarding ethical use, academic integrity, and the preservation of core language learning outcomes.

One of the key conclusions of the study is that teachers tend to conceptualize ChatGPT as a supportive pedagogical instrument rather than an autonomous teaching solution. This perspective reinforces the understanding that artificial intelligence, despite its advanced linguistic capabilities, does not diminish the central role of the teacher in guiding learning, fostering interaction, and ensuring meaningful educational experiences. Teachers' emphasis on mediation, control, and purposeful integration suggests that effective use of AI in English language education depends on informed pedagogical decision-making rather than on technological availability alone.

The study also highlights the critical role of digital competence in shaping teachers' attitudes and readiness to adopt AI tools. Instructors with higher levels of technological confidence demonstrate greater openness to experimentation and a more nuanced understanding of how ChatGPT can be aligned with learning objectives. Conversely, limited digital skills contribute to uncertainty and reluctance, indicating that disparities in professional readiness may widen gaps in technology integration across institutions. This finding underscores the importance of systematic professional development programs that address both technical literacy and methodological approaches to AI-assisted language teaching.

Ethical considerations emerge as a defining factor influencing teachers' acceptance of ChatGPT. Concerns about student overreliance on AI, reduced originality in language production, and challenges in assessment authenticity remain significant barriers to unrestricted use. These concerns reflect teachers' commitment to fostering independent thinking, creativity, and communicative competence, which are foundational goals of English language education. The conclusion drawn from these findings is that the successful integration of AI tools requires clear institutional policies, transparent assessment practices, and explicit guidance for both teachers and students on responsible and ethical use.



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In a broader sense, the study contributes context-specific insights into the ongoing discourse on artificial intelligence in education. By focusing on English language teachers in Uzbekistan, it highlights how global technological innovations are interpreted and negotiated within local educational cultures. The results suggest that teachers' cautious optimism represents a productive starting point for further development, provided that it is supported by policy frameworks, research-based guidance, and continuous professional learning. Ultimately, the effective use of ChatGPT in English language classrooms depends not on replacing traditional pedagogy, but on thoughtfully integrating AI in ways that enhance teaching quality, support learner development, and uphold the fundamental values of higher education.

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