

The Ethical Dilemma with Open AI ChatGPT: Is it Right or Wrong to prohibit it?

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Digitalisation and innovation in learning and research are rapidly becoming crucial drivers of society's sustainable and progressive growth. AI's technological advancements and landscapes have significant strengths, and their diversity and quality have grown in recent years. This has facilitated the impressive development of AI apps and software, such as ChatGPT, which has become popular around the world. ChatGPT is an OpenAI access to users in education to generate essays, song lyrics and stories. It is an AI language model that can understand and generate human-like responses to text inputs, making it a valuable tool for various economic and cultural applications. This study examines the ethical dilemma of banning ChatGPT. Using a range of argumentative examples, I address the concept of moral obligations to OpenAI access but also its limitations. Some possible ethical issues that may arise in the use of AI-powered chatbots include concerns about data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the potential for chatbots to replace human interaction and support. Can OpenAI's cutting-edge technology and tools truly help corporate operations and institutions, and improve decision-making? Can it also give students and researchers significant resources to help them develop their knowledge, critical thinking skills and understanding in a variety of fields? Allowing ChatGPT to operate freely could lead to unintended consequences, but it could also promote innovation in the field of AI. Ultimately, finding a balance between regulation and innovation is key to maximising the benefits of ChatGPT while minimising its potential harms. AI software has the potential to degrade and debase our ethics, which are fundamentally different from our critical thinking. Chomsky, Roberts & Watumull¹ concern is that AI software lacks the ability to understand and apply ethical principles in the same way that humans do, which could lead to unintended consequences and ethical dilemmas.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking; Ethical dilemma; Right or Wrong; ChatGPT*

Introduction

The development of Open AI ChatGPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer) and GPT-4 has brought about significant advancements in the field of natural language processing, business, educational and research settings. ChatGPT can generate human-like text, making it one of the most remarkable AI tools in recent years. However, with this new change in digitalisation some ethical concerns need

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¹Chomsky, Roberts & Watumull (2023).

to be addressed. This paper will explore the ethical dilemmas with GPT and how we might face them today. I will also investigate a variety of philosophical arguments for and against GPT. The Socratic Method will be primarily explored as part of a critical thinking consideration in this AI ChatGPT debate. Conversing with people in a forum, asking them questions, and supporting them in discovering solutions are part of our analytical skills. This dialectical approach is an effective way to challenge assumptions and promote critical thinking by asking thought-provoking questions. We may increase our awareness of the subject and participate in a meaningful debate by using this Socratic method in the AI GPT debate. This innovation encourages us to reflect critically and carefully on GPT and its influence on both current and future generations. This is not an important step in "super intelligent" AI. We will not be replaced by robots. However, it is crucial to understand the potential consequences and ethical implications of AI technology. As we continue to develop and integrate AI into our daily lives, it is necessary to approach the subject with caution and consideration for its impact on education, the economy and social integrity.

How significant is ChatGPT as a moral guide in a clear and open argument, and how can we rely upon it? Is it appropriate for the government sector and higher education to consider banning the use of AI, including in teaching, learning and research? This can be considered as a pause for reflection for a wide community that invests time in making sure AI's effects on the educational sector are positive and that its risks are controllable. While it may be tempting to stop using AI in these fields, it is important to understand that it has the potential to significantly advance both research and education. Instead, we should be focused on creating ethical AI policies or guidelines and making sure that AI's potential benefits are maximised while its risks are minimised.

Think Critically

It is crucial to think about the possibility of living honestly and acting appropriately when considering whether to ban ChatGPT. If GPT is in line with human nature and the ethical path, we can then decide which choices and actions are in tune with our morality and sense of responsibility. This implies that GPT cannot make decisions, that its activities or human-like words are determined by our decisions rather than its own, and that they are consequently ethically good or bad/right or wrong. Therefore, the decision to ban or not ban GPT should be based on whether its use aligns with our moral values, and whether it can be used responsibly without causing harm to individuals or society as a whole. Ultimately, it is up to us as humans to make the right choices and take responsibility for our actions, including those involving technology such as ChatGPT. One of the analogies that came up in recent Higher Education UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) webinars conducted by academics and practitioners was that AI is "the fast food or machine vendor"² without a soul or emotional intelligence.

²Quality Assurance Agency – QAA (2023).

This metaphor emphasises the danger of AI tools depersonalising academic achievement and diminishing the role of human connection³ in the learning process, resulting in a lack of empathy and understanding of individual needs. The analogy suggests that ChatGPT implementation should be carefully and critically considered, to avoid negative impacts on the quality of creative practice, critical analysis and intellectual growth.

Those who support AI, on the other hand, argue that it can improve the learning experience by providing personalised support and input, allowing educators and students, such as non-native speakers with special needs, to focus on higher-level tasks. There are several enthusiastic educators who welcome this rapid digital change. They believe that technology can enhance the learning experience and provide students with new opportunities to engage with course material. These educators see technology as a valuable tool that can help prepare students for the demands of the modern workforce.

Reflecting critically on my own experience and in my foundation classes⁴ with a wide student demographic, I was able to explore that ChatGPT can be used to improve students' learning approaches, and give them more confidence in their assignments, and English language for non-native speakers. Embedding ChatGPT in my lessons for students with special needs has increased student engagement, teamwork, digital literacy, and cultural diversity approaches. This has enabled me to redesign assessments and gain a better understanding of ethical policies "in the presence of generative AI tools".⁵ In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals⁶ there are new schools of thought that see LLM models as a counter-narrative for the intersectionality of various forms of oppression and exclusion. Professors and instructors all over the world are discovering how AI ChatGPT can improve their sense of belonging and create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment. However, there is a downside to this AI access, which cannot be made available to everyone for free when most Latinos, Black communities, and Eastern Europeans are financially disadvantaged.⁷ As a result, governments and educational institutions must address these inequalities and ensure that access to AI technology is not negatively impacted by financial limitations. It is also necessary to provide educators with the training and resources they need to effectively integrate AI technology into their teaching.

ChatGPT provides personalised and immediate feedback to students, allowing them to address their weaknesses and improve their skills.⁸ However,

³Arendt (1998) at 7-17.

⁴Arden University in 2023. The Institute of Foundation Studies. I teach blended learning classes to a wide range of students from different backgrounds and with learning and language barriers. It is important for me as an educator to establish a welcoming, inclusive classroom setting that meets each student's specific needs. To ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed, I work to incorporate a variety of teaching strategies and digital support.

⁵D'Agostino (2023).

⁶United Nations (2015) – SDGs 10 and 16.

⁷D'Agostino (2023).

⁸Bozkurt, Xiao, Lambert, Pazurek, Crompton, Koseoglu, Farrow, Bond, Nerantzi, Honeychurch, Bali, Dron, Mir, Stewart, Costello, Mason, Stracke, Romero-Hall, Koutropoulos, Toquero, Singh, Tlili, Lee, Nichols, Ossiannilsson, Brown, Irvine, Raffaghelli, Santos-Hermosa, Farrell, Adam, Thong, Sani-Bozkurt, Sharma, Hrastinski & Jandrić (2023).

there are some vulnerabilities and fallibilities. The nature of critical thinking is not to be judgemental and opinionated, but to examine what is going on with an open mind and without bias or prejudice. Critical thinking is a skill we learned from Socrates in the *forum* of Athens, that allows us to evaluate information objectively and not rely on a single opinion. Thinking is always related to who we are, to what we experience and feel. But when we think, we become aware of our beliefs, alongside other ideas and knowledge, to help us understand claims and the way things actually are.

1. What are the issues with using ChatGPT in a variety of fields, including research and education? Why should I trust it?
2. What are the most common judgments or assumptions about it?
3. Have you ever tried it?
4. What do you enjoy and why?
5. What are the disadvantages of ChatGPT? What are the positive aspects?
6. What unconscious biases are there?
7. Is there any human that can be misled and replaced by ChatGPT?

In a heuristic approach, given the following information about banning ChatGPT, people may choose between two options, A (for) or B (against) due to news, emotions, something that conforms to us and external influences. Several considerations are now examined before determining whether OpenAI may be classified as ethical. In evaluating whether ChatGPT is ethical, two perspectives emerge. The first is characterised by the utilitarian approach, which states that an action is ethical if the benefit is probably greater than the damage. The deontological viewpoint emphasises the importance of moral behaviour. From this standpoint, information suppression or user manipulation can never be viewed as ethical.⁹

By citing Singer's book *Expanding the Circle*, computer scientist Dan Hendryck argues that all humans have evolved to expand their knowledge, and empirical senses, in other forms of learning, and places, and thus they progress as the same AI evolves to create new science and technology frameworks and new moral values like humans. This AI evolution may have certain ethical utilitarian, deontological and virtue ethics implications. How can we build new relationships with AI if AI technology produces, writes, and creates images, articles, protein synthesis, and games that surpass us? Are they becoming self-sufficient and replacing humans? Are they benevolent or malevolent conscious agents?¹⁰

Maieutic Art of Socrates: “What if Socrates couldn't write but GPT could?”

Socrates was a philosopher who emphasised the value of critical thinking and the acquisition of information via debate and questioning. He thought that human

⁹Aguinis & Henle (2002) at 34–56.

¹⁰Hendrycks (2023) at 19.

interaction and the exchange of ideas were important components of an open society – democracy.

Socrates did not write any books or texts himself, but his ideas and teachings were preserved and disseminated through the writings of his students and followers, such as Plato and Xenophon. In this sense, the written word played an important role in the propagation and preservation of Socrates' ideas.

In modern times, Socrates, as a challenging thinker, could have the potential to create new pathways for youths. He could have engaged in debates and arguments to uncover the truth about the digital era and AI information in the *agora* of Athens and the realm of critical thinking. His teaching style involved asking thought-provoking questions to stimulate critical thinking and self-reflection, which helped his students develop their own philosophical perspectives and ideas. Socrates believed that the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom was essential for personal growth and societal progress.¹¹

Had Socrates been alive today, he might have recognised the value of technology including the pros and cons of OpenAI platforms as a tool for “the unexamined life”. So, it is possible that he would have applied in the *forum* a maieutic dialogue regarding AI software and generator language machine. The ChatGPT could be the potential tool to generate complex questions and stimulate critical thinking in our audience, interlocutors, and students. Indeed, Socrates advocated for the use of new techniques to know what is still uncertain and unexplored through the "method of elenchus" to challenge and enhance his listeners and investigate what is right or wrong. In this sense, Socrates could be interested in ChatGPT as a tool that can generate complex questions and stimulate curiosity in future generations. It can be argued that from the perspective of the Socratic "maieutic" dialogue, our human development and potential¹² through communication and knowledge seek their position on OpenAI platforms. In Greek, the word maieutic means "to process," which is literally translated as "helper at birth and delivery." The term was famously used by Socrates to describe his method of questioning, which he believed helped people "give birth" to their own ideas and understanding. The Socratic philosophical tradition, which consists of questions, answers, reflections, and recognition in turn, has its roots in exploratory dialogue. The maieutic of Socrates is the way by which the philosopher or the critical thinker has assisted individuals in seeking answers to the questions "What is knowledge?" and "What is the reality around us?" through an open dialogue. Using this strategy, it is possible to find a path to the light of truth and critical skills. It does, however, need regular practice and a willingness to challenge one's own beliefs and biases. This Socratic mode of inquiry consists of the concept “I know I do not know”. Individuals can gain a better understanding of the world around them and make more informed decisions as a result.

In the Platonic dialogue of Theaetetus, Socrates says:

"My maieutic art is similar to that of midwives, but it differs in that it assists in the birth of men rather than women, and it provides for the generation of souls rather

¹¹Offor (2012).

¹²Stober & Grant (2006).

than bodies. [...] This is what I share with midwives: I am also sterile, sterile in wisdom" (Plato, pp. 151d-186e).¹³

This passage also highlights the famous Socratic "I know I don't know." That is the Socratic technique of challenging the certainty, often erroneous/fallacious, of one's participants and proclaiming one's ignorance of the subject matter.

As a result of the philosopher's questions and answers, a creative debate proceeds, with open rebuttals of the initial premises. In the case of OpenAI platforms' benefits and drawbacks, we could say that they can provide learning materials, but they can also provide inappropriate and inaccurate information to a wide range of participants. The value of human connection and conversation needs to be safeguarded in an open process where human relationships provide the *agora* through creativity, cultural exchange, critical thinking, empathy, and values that technology cannot replace.

Ethical Dilemmas in Data Protection since Italy has banned ChatGPT

The problem of privacy is a crucial consideration for ChatGPT. Gathering highly personal information about participants may jeopardise their privacy and lead to identification.

On 1 April 2023, ChatGPT was banned in Italy¹⁴ due to ethical concerns. The Italian data protection authority's ban could be a significant step towards ensuring the safety and privacy of users, particularly children.

The main concerns were how the data collected by OpenAI ChatGPT could be presented to and inspected by users, as well as the answers and conclusions reached. OpenAI's data collection methods were also scrutinised to ensure that they were ethical and did not infringe on users' privacy. Additionally, the company had to address concerns about the potential biases in their data sets and algorithms. The fact that the Italian government has temporarily stopped ChatGPT raises questions about the inappropriate response to minors and the lack of safeguards. While it is vital to protect personal information, the prohibition of a platform that allows people to discuss mental health difficulties can be a cause for concern. On 5 April 2023, the Italian Data Protection representatives and the OpenAI conducted a video meeting to comply with European privacy standards, and establish a collaborative approach to resolving data protection issues. Germany, France and the Republic of Ireland are considering following Italy. The UK Taskforce, the US Center for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP),¹⁵ UNESCO's AI regulations, the EU's AI Act, and the African Union are all working to establish a data policy and ethical standards framework. Finally, China has been taking significant steps in data protection. These initiatives reflect the global recognition of the importance of data governance and ethical standards in AI development.

¹³Plato (360 BCE) and Chappell (Summer 2022).

¹⁴GPDP (2023).

¹⁵CAIDP (2023).

What is wrong with ChatGPT, and how can we ensure that it is put right? What can we expect from ChatGPT in terms of quality, integrity, inclusiveness, diversity and gender equality? The goal is to create a code of ethics for OpenAI businesses.

The ethical dilemma and consequent governmental intervention with ChatGPT are to guarantee the privacy and security of user data, as well as to prevent the spread of disinformation or harmful content. This entails creating strong data security and management guidelines, as well as promoting transparency and responsibility in how user information is used and shared.

The data set for GPT models is derived from a variety of sources, including books, journals, and internet sources. Biases, stereotypes, and discriminatory elements in this information may be repeated in the generated writing. To address this problem, researchers and developers should ensure that the training data is varied and inclusive and that GPT models are inspected for bias regularly. Including ethical concerns throughout the development process can also aid in mitigating the possible harm caused by prejudiced text created by GPT.¹⁶ Furthermore, it is important to involve diverse groups of people in the development and testing of GPT models to ensure that the technology is inclusive and respectful of all individuals. By doing so, we can work towards creating more ethical and responsible AI systems that are sustainable for all societies. For example, if the learning algorithm used for GPT models contains homophobic, racist, or sexist content.

Another issue is that GPT algorithms are often used in applications such as chatbots, customer service, and content creation, where the generated hallucinations and falsification of reality with “fabricated news/made-up articles” have a direct impact on readers, followers, and people's behaviour.¹⁷ Any unconscious biases or prejudice in the generated text, from a utilitarian viewpoint, might cause individuals to inflict harm, spread negative beliefs, and encourage discrimination.

Introducing new data sets is an alternative to the ethical debate of data security, hallucinations, factual distortions, fake news and discrimination in GPT-generated text. By using more diverse data sources and codes of ethics, GPT systems can better represent society's diversity and eliminate discrimination and bias. Therefore, it is important to continue improving GPT systems to ensure that they are ethical and inclusive. A further option is to improve transparency and accountability in the application of GPT models. This could include providing clear guidelines on the ethical use of GPT models and ensuring that users are aware of the technology's potential biases and limitations. In addition, collaborations between experts in AI and ethicists could lead to the development of more responsible GPT models. This would involve incorporating ethical considerations into the design and development process of GPT models.

¹⁶Federal Office for Information Security (2023).

¹⁷Moran (2023).

Disadvantages and Advantages of Employing ChatGPT in the Educational and Research Sectors

A reason for concern is the possibility of GPT replacing teaching staff, thereby reducing human communication and teamwork in education and research. Understanding ways to prevent deceptive, Machiavellian, and other unethical behaviour in AIs, with an emphasis on huge language models, is vital to future generations. This can also help with the creation of more ethical and trustworthy AI systems for the benefit of society. Furthermore, it is crucial to assess the potential implications of immoral AI activity, such as privacy violations and prejudice, and work to reduce these risks.

Despite the ethical concerns associated with the use of ChatGPT in education, this technology has several benefits. As previously stated, one such advantage is the ability to create focused and personalised learning materials for students and researchers. This can help to improve student engagement and learning outcomes while also reducing teacher workload and increasing the variety of research topics.

According to a recent online survey conducted by *Varsity*, 47.3% of Cambridge students have used ChatGPT or other AI chatbots to finish their university work, with more than a fifth saying they do so "frequently" or "always". Students in the STEM fields were more likely to use ChatGPT than students in the humanities, with a rate of 53% versus 43%, respectively.¹⁸ The survey also revealed that time savings and increased productivity were the most frequent justifications for using AI chatbots. However, some students voiced doubts about the dependability and accuracy of the data this AI-generated chat box provides. During his interview with *Varsity*, the pro-vice chancellor cited a *Guardian* article¹⁹ in which John Naughton claimed that text generators like ChatGPT would become "as mundane as Excel."²⁰

These AI systems could significantly decrease response delay and enhance accessibility for students who may not have instant access to academic experts or personal tutors. Another significant benefit is the opportunity to give free online digital access to people who would not normally have it. GPT may be used to develop educational materials in several languages and is adaptable to individuals with diverse learning requirements, including those from underprivileged backgrounds, making it accessible, equitable, and inclusive.²¹

A Critical View from Chomsky on AI Technologies

Noam Chomsky, the prominent linguist, philosopher and political commentator, has expressed critical views on AI and its potential impact on society. In his view, AI is often used as a tool to serve the interests of powerful

¹⁸Hennessey (2023).

¹⁹Naughton. (2023).

²⁰Olsson (2023).

²¹United Nations – SDGs (2015).

institutions, such as corporations and governments, rather than to serve the broader public good.

Chomsky has argued that OpenAI ChatGPT, Google's Bard and Microsoft's Sydney use of AI in education and other areas of society should be approached with caution, as it can lead to the commodification of knowledge and the devaluation of critical thinking skills. He wrote, "This machine learning will degrade our science and debase our ethics by incorporating into our technology a fundamentally flawed conception of language and knowledge."²²

Chomsky has claimed that our human mind is not like a machine, but rather more elegant and creative, and that using grammar and language and engaging with events and experiences around us is part of human and child development. Similarly, in Arendt's view, there are no better human relationships than the presence of other humans. We are linked to one another, and all human actions take place because we live together.²³ A machine's activity cannot be imagined without the ability to communicate with humans. The learning machine is a process that always requires the presence of beings. The Aristotelian theory of *zōon politikon*, derived from Aquinas, explains how a man is a political animal: "*homo est naturaliter politicus, id est, socialis*" [by nature man is political and therefore social].²⁴ As Arendt described it, "that affects the existence of all, since without such provisions, communal life would be impossible".²⁵

Moreover, Chomsky discusses the potential for AI to be used for monitoring and control. He has stated that the advancement of AI technology, particularly when used for face recognition and other types of monitoring, endangers civil liberties and individual privacy.

In general, Chomsky analyses the benefits and drawbacks of developing AI technology in human communication and relationships. It is critical that companies establish standards and guidelines that are ethically accountable to the greatest number of people rather than the interests of organisations.

Conclusion

The AI-powered ChatGPT is reinventing our lifestyle, workload and workplace. With its versatility and potential, ChatGPT is revolutionising the way we interact with technology and enhancing our daily lives in various ways. It has already facilitated professional writing and has passed Bar and MBA exams.²⁶ It is being used to make up bedtime stories, plan family vacations, make grocery lists and plan meals. The chatbot is also being used to assist in mental health therapy sessions and provide emotional support to individuals. The ethical dilemma of bias and discrimination in OpenAI's ChatGPT-generated text requires a multifaceted approach. To address this, it is important to increase the diversity of training data,

²²Chomsky, Roberts & Watumull (2023).

²³Arendt (1998) at 23.

²⁴Arendt (1998) at 23 and Owens (2012) at 553.

²⁵Arendt (2005) at 115 and Owens (2012) at 552.

²⁶Cray (2023).

develop algorithms to identify misinformation or fallacies and involve individuals from diverse backgrounds in the development and testing of AI platforms. Additionally, strict regulations and guidelines for the use of AI-ChatGPT can help diminish potential ethical issues.

From a philosophical perspective, the use of GPT can be seen as part of the broader tendency of human progression, but it is essential to maintain a balance between technological advancements, human interaction, and creative or critical information.

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- the Italian SA Personal data is collected unlawfully, and no age verification system is in place for children.* <https://www.garanteprivacy.it/web/guest/home/docweb/-/docweb-display/docweb/9870847>. See also <https://www.garanteprivacy.it/web/guest/home/docweb/-/docweb-display/docweb/9881490>
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