Chapter 11
ChatGPT Use:
Drivers and Barriers in English for Academic Purposes Among Migrant Students With Learning Disabilities

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ABSTRACT

This work employs intersectionality and capital theory as theoretical and interpretive lenses for exploring ChatGPT use drivers and barriers in English for academic purposes among students whose voice is downplayed in relevant literature. Data were drawn from in-depth interviews with 11 second-generation migrant engineering students with learning disabilities at three higher education institutions in Greece. Thematic analysis revealed three intersectional driver themes: a) fear failure, b) fast help, and c) non-judgmental friend and teacher. Barrier themes included a) plagiarism and paraphrasing struggles, b) low marks, and c) ChatGPT addiction. Findings unveil the overt and covert drivers and barriers of using ChatGPT in EAP courses through the eyes of marginalized students and provide insight that may help EAP practitioners design inclusive courses utilizing ChatGPT.

INTRODUCTION

Despite still being in its infancy phase, findings suggest ChatGPT has penetrated multiple higher education facets and now constitutes a daily routine for educators and students alike offering immediate, low-cost, and personalized support across

academic disciplines and subjects (Gill et al., 2024;Parker et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024). Pessimistic education experts believe this rapidly escalating informal reliance of higher education systems on AI may in the long run jeopardize academic integrity, formal educational qualifications and threaten the mere existence of university degrees, awards, and scientific research (Strzelecki, 2023). EFL scholarship exploring potential drawbacks and advantages of ChatGPT use within the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) field is scarce and has mainly focused on teachers' perspectives (Gao et al., 2024; Kasneci et al., 2023; Kohnke et al., 2023; Mohamed, 2023; Ulla et al., 2023). These works suggest ChatGPT can be effective in fostering university students' engagement in conversational interactions in English, and has the potential to grow into a widespread teaching strategy for vocabulary, grammar, and all four language skills both in and out of classroom walls. For overwhelmed EAP teachers with large classes and long teaching hours, these findings suggest ChatGPT can function as a valuable assistant generating diverse content, templates, and language tasks, creating feedback on students' assignments, and timed lesson plans. It can further help EAP practitioners assess their learners' performance data quickly and efficiently identify language deficits and create tailor-made activities and resources based on students' abilities (Kasneci et al., 2023). The few EFL/ EAP empirical works focusing on students also suggest there are several ChatGPT affordances as it can be used as an academic writing tool and function as a patient, tireless teacher answering inquiries related to academic English (Dai & Liu, 2024; Darwin et al., 2024; Liu & Ma, 2023;Shen 2024; Yan, 2023).

While EFL research has examined the drawbacks and benefits of ChatGPT use from the perspectives of educators and students, no works to date have focused on students with multiple marginalized identities such as low-income migrant students with learning disabilities. This means, that once again, their perspectives and learning experiences within the mainstream EFL/EAP research are overlooked and unheard.

To fill this gap, in this chapter I employ intersectionality (Collins, 2020; Crenshaw,1989) and capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986), as theoretical and interpretive lenses for exploring ChatGPT use drivers and barriers by students whose voice is consistently downplayed in EFL/EAP literature. More specifically, I share findings from a qualitative interview-based study I conducted with eleven second-generation migrant EFL engineering students with learning disabilities at three higher education institutions at the island of Crete, Greece.

The Greek higher education system constitutes an interesting case for investigating the use of ChatGPT by EAP minority students such as disabled low-income migrants. Although higher education is -at least on papers-free, essentially, social class and cultural capital play a determining role in entering university and successfully graduating. Entrance to universities is based on the results obtained in the "Panhellenic Exams", i.e. nationwide examinations at the end of the 12th grade. The number of

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