

Nordic AI Meet 2026

O5. AI in Culture & Creativity (Thu 11:15-12:15)

1. AI-Mediated but Student-Authored: What Carries from a Question-Only Chatbot into Student Writing?

Authors: Anne Katrine Westbye¹

Affiliations: 1. Department of Education, OsloMet, Norway

Abstract: Most research on generative AI and writing asks what happens when AI generates, revises, or evaluates text. This study examines a different configuration: a chatbot that could ask questions but was explicitly prohibited from writing for the student. We trace what, if anything, from this AI-mediated prewriting dialogue can later be identified in students' own texts.

The material consists of 15 final texts written by Norwegian eighth-graders and 14 corresponding dialogue records. The chatbot activity drew on the prewriting guidance for an existing Norwegian writing assessment task, Hjemstedet ("The hometown"). For about 45 minutes, students explored what was distinctive about their hometown through questions about places, experiences, memories and sensory impressions. Only afterwards did they receive the full writing task, which asked them to describe their hometown for a family who had never been there. The phases were closely aligned in topic and content development, while the explicit audience was introduced only at the writing stage.

The final texts were segmented into 544 content units and compared with the preceding dialogues. Of these, 236 (43.4%) had an identifiable counterpart in student-articulated dialogue, while only three units (0.6%) were traceable to propositions or distinctive wording first supplied by the chatbot. More than half, 305 units (56.1%), had no identifiable dialogue counterpart. Traceable content was not simply carried across: 71 of 236 units (30.1%) changed substantively in scope, referent, causality, evaluation, or related aspects of meaning. In the reverse direction, 159 of 365 dialogue-to-text comparisons (43.6%) had no identifiable counterpart in the final text.

The analysis draws on Spivey's (1990) account of composing as selecting, organizing and connecting available material. Halliday and Hasan's (1985) account of language in context helps frame the move from exploratory, experience-oriented dialogue to a written task with an explicit purpose and audience. These perspectives are used to interpret relations between the two artefacts, not to infer students' intentions or cognitive processes.

For AI research, the key point is that AI participation need not take the form of AI-authored text. Here, the chatbot participated mainly as an interlocutor: it sustained an eliciting dialogue in which students articulated material, but direct chatbot-origin uptake was exceptional. The dialogue also neither determined nor delimited the final product. Looking only for AI-generated language in finished artefacts would miss this form of participation. Understanding AI's role in human production may require tracing where AI enters the process, not only what it contributes to the final product.