THE ROLE OF GENAI IN WRITING CLASSROOMS: COMPARATIVE STUDY IN FINLAND & CROATIA

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This study explores the integration of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools in writing classrooms in two contrasting European contexts—Finland and Croatia. As GenAI technologies like Microsoft Copilot become increasingly prevalent, understanding their impact on students' academic writing practices is essential. This research examines how students in higher education engage with GenAI during structured paragraph-writing tasks and how their interactions reveal differences in prompting strategies, content adaptation, and metacognitive reflection. Employing a qualitative-comparative methodology, the study conducted parallel classroom interventions in both countries. Students followed a guided writing sequence: generating content using Copilot, critically evaluating the output, editing for coherence and accuracy, and submitting both versions along with reflective commentaries. These materials are being analyzed to uncover patterns in AI literacy, levels of critical engagement, and perceptions of usefulness. Initial findings point to variations in students' confidence and autonomy in interacting with AI, shaped by local pedagogical cultures. Notably, Finnish students demonstrated more experimental use of prompts, while Croatian students focused on correctness and caution. The study also probes issues of academic integrity and student responsibility in AI-assisted writing. Rather than presenting GenAI as either a threat or a shortcut, the authors argue for its considered integration into pedagogy—emphasizing scaffolding, transparency, and ethical engagement. The comparative dimension underscores how cultural and institutional factors mediate GenAI's educational potential. This work contributes to emerging pedagogical frameworks for responsible GenAI use in writing instruction and offers practical insights for educators seeking to foster critical AI literacy without undermining core academic values.