Students' and Lecturers' Perspectives on the Use of ChatGPT and Google Classroom within the Online Station of Critical Reading Lesson.

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Abstract: *Many EFL university students often struggle to develop critical reading skills because dependence on lecturers for explanations and weak self-regulation in reading which hinder their ability to evaluate and reflect on texts independently. This study examines how integrating ChatGPT and Google Classroom within an Online Station, a digital space in a blended learning instruction, can address these challenges. Using a mixed-methods design, data were collected from sixty-eight undergraduate students via questionnaires and from a subset of seven students and two lecturers through semi-structured interviews. Findings indicate that ChatGPT served as an effective metacognitive self-evaluation partner, prompting students to compare their interpretations with AI-generated outputs, identify gaps, and refine critical analytical reasoning. Google Classroom complemented this process by serving as a central, scaffolded hub for posting reading materials and task instructions, enabling students to access resources, compare interpretations, and engage in collaborative and transparent commenting activities. Students reported greater engagement and deeper reflection when comparing their responses with AI outputs. They also highlighted that providing comments and engaging in discussions through Google Classroom deepened their analysis of the reading materials. Lecturers, however, emphasized the need for continued guidance in prompting skills and in fostering critical questioning of textual arguments. Overall, these activities show strong potential to reduce lecturer dependences and self-regulation barriers that obstruct evaluation and reflection, though scaffolding remains essential to maximize their impact on critical reading.*

Keywords: *ChatGPT; Critical Reading; Google Classroom; Metacognitive Reflection; Online Station*

Submitted: November 2025 Reviewed: March 2026 Accepted: October 2026 Published: October 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, critical reading is increasingly recognized as an essential academic skill for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Beyond comprehension, critical reading require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, higher-order processes essential for developing critical literacy (Bloom et al., 1956). Moreover, the 21st century readers need strategies to judge the credibility of information in a media landscape that is increasingly polarized and persuasive (OECD, 2021). Similarly, PISA 2018 revealed that Indonesian students scored significantly lower than the OECD average in evaluating online information (OECD, 2020), underscoring a persistent national literacy challenge. More recent results from PISA 2022 indicate that Indonesia continues to rank among the lowest-performing countries in reading, with only about a quarter of students achieving minimum proficiency (Bilad et al., 2024; OECD, 2023).

These findings highlight that the majority of Indonesian adolescents still struggle with higher-order reading skills.

These challenges are also reflected in classroom context in Indonesia. In high school, classroom implementation tends to emphasize comprehension over deeper evaluation, with limited integration of analytical or inquiry-based tasks (Anggraeny & Khongput, 2022). In higher education contexts, by contrast, integrating critical literacy into EFL reading classes has been shown to help students move beyond surface comprehension (Setyaningsih, 2019). Yet, its impact remains uneven across cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social dimensions, indicating challenges in engaging with texts critically (Maab et al., 2024; Muniroh et al., 2024). In terms of self-regulated learning, EFL student teachers' readiness also remains limited and that classroom practice often remains teacher-centered (Fauzi et al., 2020). This condition reflects insufficient development of learners' self-regulatory processes, including goal setting, monitoring, and evaluation, which are central to self-regulated learning within an educational psychology framework (Yu, 2023). Despite these limitations, university students generally hold positive attitudes and perceptions toward mobile-app-based English learning (Atakuziev et al., 2024). However, preliminary insights from this study indicate that students' use of digital tools tends to remain largely utilitarian, with limited engagement in extended reading, critical evaluation of sources, and structured academic use. Therefore, more targeted strategies are required to foster deeper and more consistent engagement in critical reading practices.

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Critical reading in EFL contexts is increasingly supported by generative artificial intelligence (gen-AI), with evidence indicating its potential to extend learners' engagement beyond surface-level comprehension. ChatGPT, in particular, has been shown to support key sub-skills of critical reading, including identifying main ideas, evaluating arguments, recognizing bias and tone, generating counterarguments, and synthesizing ideas (Thongsan & Anderson, 2025), while simultaneously fostering metacognitive reflection and deeper comprehension processes (Deng et al., 2025; Hassan & Alsalwah, 2025). In the Indonesian context, selective integration of gen-AI has been found to reposition learners from passive recipients to active evaluators who verify sources and refine interpretations (Margono et al., 2024). This shift is further supported by classroom practices in which gen-AI is strategically situated at exploratory and organizational stages, while evaluative judgment and self-regulation remain learner-driven to sustain autonomy (Horn, 2024). As a result, such practices cultivate more reflective and collaborative engagement, strengthening learners' capacity to interrogate, refine, and negotiate meaning (Dewi et al., 2025). Although learners perceive the tool as motivating and efficient, concerns persist regarding overreliance and the risk of superficial engagement that may constrain critical depth (Mogavi et al., 2024). Consequently, pedagogical value is contingent upon structured facilitation and intentional instructional design (Law, 2024; Lee et al., 2025). However, no formal institutional guidelines on AI use were in place, which left its integration dependent on lecturers' regulation to ensure that ChatGPT supported reflection without replacing students' critical judgment.

Learning management systems (LMS) play a complementary role in facilitating collaboration, feedback, and organization. Google Classroom, in particular, has been widely adopted to support engagement in blended learning (Das, 2023; Rogers et al., 2025). Studies highlight its affordances for streamlining assignment submission, organizing tasks, and ensuring access to resources while also creating structured opportunities for lecturer - student and peer interaction (Solihin et al., 2024). In Indonesian context, Google Classroom can improve students' critical reading strategies, encouraging questioning, commenting, and collaborative meaning-making (Masbiran & Afriyeni, 2022). Such evidence underscores its potential as more than a facilitative tool for reading strategies, pointing directly to its wider role in nurturing motivation and higher-order reasoning.

Complementary findings indicate that the platform enhances learning motivation and critical thinking skills, with interactive features sustaining participation and reflection (Lestari & Nugraheni, 2022). Similar experimental evidence further confirms its effectiveness in strengthening students' problem-solving and analytical aspects of critical thinking, highlighting its role in developing higher-order reasoning when compared with more traditional approaches (Sombria et al., 2022). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that Google Classroom functions not merely as a managerial tool but as a pedagogical space that supports higher-order literacy, reasoning, and autonomy in EFL contexts.

To extend these affordances, integrating Google Classroom and Gen-AI therefore requires an instructional approach that can bring both tools together in a coherent and pedagogically meaningful way. The Online Station constitutes such a foundation, for by its very nature it is able to accommodate both strategies within a single coherent framework. A well-established model that provides a viable pathway is the Station Rotation Model (SRM), a blended learning framework in which students rotate through a set of stations combining face-to-face and digital activities (Tucker, 2015). What makes SRM distinctive compared to other station-based models is precisely this Online Station, which is intentionally designed as a digital arena for reflection, resource access, and interaction (Horn & Staker, 2015; Lee et al., 2025; Rogers et al., 2025). By embedding such a space, SRM responds to recurring challenges in EFL contexts, students' dependence on teachers, difficulty grasping implicit meaning, and limited higher-order reasoning, through structured yet flexible scaffolding. In practice, the Online Station enables learners to revisit texts, regulate their pace, and engage in collaborative dialogue with peers and lecturers. When enhanced by tools such as Google Classroom's organizational affordances and Gen-AI's feedback capacities, it evolves into a pedagogical hub where reflective independence and collaborative meaning-making converge to foster deeper critical reading. Nevertheless, empirical evidence remains limited on how AI and digital platforms can be systematically integrated within the Online Station to support critical reading practices in EFL classrooms.

This study addresses that gap by exploring student and lecturer perspectives on the integration of ChatGPT and Google Classroom within the Online Station of a critical reading lesson. It investigates how reflection through AI, comparison with AI outputs, and collaborative commenting in Google Classroom may contribute to students' critical reading development. Specifically, the study addressed the following research question: How do students and lecturers perceive the use of ChatGPT and Google Classroom in supporting reflection, comparison, and collaborative engagement within the Online Station of a critical reading lesson?

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods exploratory design to capture both student and lecturer perspectives on the use of ChatGPT and Google Classroom within the Online Station of a critical reading

lesson. Quantitative data were collected through a three-item questionnaire aligned with the instructional procedures, while qualitative insights were obtained through semi-structured interviews. This approach allowed survey patterns to be substantiated with explanatory details, providing a comprehensive understanding of technology-mediated learning in critical reading.

Table 1. Student and lecturer respondents

Group	Institution	Number	Data Contribution
Students	PBIHUM	18	Questionnaire & Interviews
Students	PBIKIP	50	Questionnaire & Interviews
Total students	-	68*	64 Valid questionnaire responses analyzed
Lecturers	PBIHUM & PBIKIP	2	Semi-structured interviews
Overall total	-	70*	Survey + interviews

This study involved sixty eight undergraduate students and two lecturers from two English Education programs in Indonesia. The inclusion of both groups ensured that student and lecturer perspectives were represented, allowing for triangulation of pedagogical and experiential insights. As shown in Table 1, students formed the majority of respondents, while lecturers contributed complementary viewpoints on the integration of ChatGPT and Google Classroom within critical reading lessons.

Procedures

The Online Station was implemented in two sequential stages, each corresponding to one of the survey items:

Reflection through AI: Students were first asked to respond to a critical reading task independently. After submitting their initial interpretations, they were instructed to enter prompts into ChatGPT related to one of the three levels of High Order Thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, or evaluation). The purpose of this stage was to encourage students to compare their reasoning with the AI-generated output as a form of reflective practice to recognize how their initial reasoning compared in general terms with the AI's. This step operationalized metacognitive reflection by enabling students to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their interpretations, to monitor how their reasoning aligned with the AI's, and to identify areas for clarification or refinement.

Comparison as a Stimulus for Critical Thinking: In the second stage, students were guided to conduct explicit comparisons between their own responses and the outputs generated by ChatGPT. They were asked to highlight similarities, differences, and missing elements across the two versions. This stage moved beyond reflection by requiring students to judge the adequacy, accuracy, and depth of their interpretations against the AI's, thereby functioning as an evaluative exercise that sharpened

comprehension and reasoning. Lecturers monitored this process and occasionally provided prompts or questions to deepen the comparative analysis.

Commenting and Collaborative Engagement in Google Classroom: Finally, students were required to post the results of their comparison in Google Classroom. Within this platform, they commented on their peers' postings by asking questions, giving examples, offering feedback, and making connections to the reading material. This commenting procedure was designed to promote collaborative learning and extend individual reflection into a shared, dialogic process. Google Classroom functioned not only as a repository of tasks but also as a discussion forum where students and lecturers could engage in structured feedback, thereby deepening the analytical engagement with the text.

Data Analysis

Questionnaire responses were analyzed descriptively, reporting percentages to capture the distribution of perceptions across the three Online Station stages. Interview transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis, involving familiarization with the data, coding, generating and reviewing themes, and refining final categories. The mixed-methods integration occurred at the interpretation stage, where questionnaire patterns were substantiated with illustrative insights from interviews. This combination provided a more holistic account how ChatGPT and Google Classroom shaped reflective practice, comparative reasoning, and collaborative engagement in critical reading.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Survey findings indicated that students generally valued the use of AI applications for reflecting on their critical reading responses. A majority of 53% reported *Very Positive* and 44% *Positive*, while only 3% selected *Negative* and none chose *Very Negative*. This overwhelmingly favorable pattern shows that students perceived AI as a constructive tool for self-reflection (see Table 2). Interview data confirmed these patterns. One student described their impression of ChatGPT's responses: *"Wow, the sentences are concise and clear."* Another emphasized its practical benefit: *"AI applications are very helpful in refining reading skills, especially in English texts, which is very beneficial."* Lecturers reinforced this view, noting that AI was *"appropriate to help students reflect on their work and interpretations by providing comparison and additional references."*

The second survey item revealed equally strong endorsement of comparison with AI outputs. Specifically, 34% rated the experience as *Very Positive* and 66% as *Positive*, while no students selected *Negative* or *Very Negative*. This unanimous positivity suggests that comparing responses with AI sharpened comprehension and analysis (see Table 2). In interviews, students explained that the comparison process made them aware of missing elements in their own work. One commented: *"ChatGPT's sentence was almost the same as mine, but there were some points I hadn't thought of that appeared in ChatGPT's output."* Another emphasized scope differences: *"In my group we only used part of the text, so the result was different."* At PBIKIP, a student highlighted the depth of AI responses: *"The sentences given by AI are easier to understand, more detailed, and broader in meaning."* A lecturer, however, cautioned that *"critical comparison with AI outputs, yes, but AI outputs are not the same as actual reading."*

Table 2. Student Perceptions of AI-Supported Reflection, Comparison, and Google Classroom Engagement

Survey Item	VP	P	N	VN	Combined Insight
AI-supported reflection	53%	44%	3%	0%	Strongly favorable; only a very small minority (3%) expressed negative views.
Comparison with AI improves comprehension /analysis	34%	66%	0%	0%	Unanimously positive (100% favorable)
Commenting on AI comparisons in Google Classroom deepens analysis	39%	55%	3%	3%	Predominantly positive (94%), with a small minority holding negative views

VP = Very Positive, P = Positive, N = Negative, VN = Very Negative

The third survey item asked whether commenting on AI comparisons in Google Classroom deepened students' analysis of reading materials. Results were again highly positive, with 39% *Very Positive* and 55% *Positive*. Only a small proportion expressed *Negative* (3%) and *Very Negative* (3%), suggesting that while most students benefitted, a minority found the activity less helpful (see Table 2). Student interviews illustrated how commenting encouraged deeper engagement. One student explained: *"Commenting on AI comparisons in Google Classroom involves asking questions, giving examples, making connections, and providing feedback. This deepens analysis."* Another student simply affirmed: *"It is very helpful."* Lecturers also highlighted efficiency, describing Google Classroom as *"very supportive and efficient in assisting with tasks."* These perspectives are synthesized in Table 3.

Table 3. Thematic Insights from Student and Lecturer Interviews

Theme	Student Perspectives	Lecturer Perspectives
AI-supported reflection	"Wow, the sentences are concise and clear." / "AI is very helpful in refining reading skills, especially in English texts."	AI appropriate for helping students reflect by offering comparisons and additional references.
Comparison with AI	"ChatGPT's sentence was almost the same as mine, but there were points I hadn't thought of." / "AI sentences are easier to understand, more detailed, and broader."	Reminder that AI outputs ≠ actual reading; critical comparison is required.
Commenting in Google Classroom	"Commenting involves asking questions, giving examples, making connections, and giving feedback-this deepens analysis."	Google Classroom is supportive and efficient for organizing and monitoring tasks.
Challenges & prompting skills	"Paraphrasing AI output is difficult and confusing."	Prompting skill matters; weak prompts risk shallow results.

Although survey responses were very positive, challenges emerged in interviews. Lecturers stressed the importance of prompting skills, remarking that *"creating prompts requires skill. If students are asked to figure it out by themselves, the result may be anti-climactic."* They further warned that poorly designed prompts could lead to *"shallow, superficial results."* These concerns illustrate that while AI and Google Classroom were widely perceived as supportive, their pedagogical impact depends on scaffolding and the cultivation of critical prompting practices.

Students' positive responses to AI-supported reflection align with growing evidence that generative AI functions effectively as a tutor, feedback provider, and facilitator of deeper engagement in language learning (Lee et al., 2025). Meta-analytical studies further confirm that ChatGPT exerts a strong effect on academic performance and a moderate effect on higher-order thinking (Deng et al., 2025; J. Wang & Fan, 2025). Within the context of this study, reflection tasks enabled students to use AI outputs as reference points for evaluating and refining their interpretations, thereby promoting metacognitive awareness (Deng et al., 2025). Features such as threaded commenting and transparent posting helped students share their ideas openly, revisit classmates' feedback, and build on each other's contributions, which encouraged more sustained engagement with texts (Zhu et al., 2020). These activities are crucial in contexts of lecturer dependence, as AI-supported self-reflection enabled students to take greater responsibility for their reasoning and begin reducing reliance on teacher explanations (Ng et al., 2024).

However, both students and lecturers noted the centrality of prompting skills, echoing evidence that poorly constructed prompts often yield shallow outcomes, whereas strategic and iterative prompts are linked to improved comprehension and performance (Deng et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2025). This tendency was manifested in students' use of prompts that directly followed the task instruction, such as "Create an analysis answer based on the question I made from the text I put here," which generated relevant responses and effectively guided their analysis, thereby fostering deeper critical engagement. This dependence on design and scaffolding is consistent with findings from mobile-learning contexts, where positive attitudes alone were insufficient to generate meaningful learning outcomes without structured guidance in using applications critically (Atakuziev et al., 2024). Importantly, while AI-supported activities enhanced reflection and analysis, the findings highlight that without structured guidance, reliance on AI-generated responses may displace direct engagement with texts and constrain the development of critical reading. Broader reviews also caution that without scaffolding, students may adopt uncritical or consumptive habits (Law, 2024; Lee et al., 2025; Mogavi et al., 2024). To counter this risk, teacher readiness is vital. A framework for generative AI literacy identifies knowledge, evaluation, design, and ethical awareness as essential capacities for sustainable integration into classroom practice (Wang & Fan, 2025). This indicates that structured AI tasks acted as scaffolds that helped students overcome self-regulation barriers, sustain reflection, and gradually build self-monitoring habits (Chiu, 2024).

The unanimous agreement that comparison with AI outputs enhanced comprehension resonates with meta-analytical findings that ChatGPT can stimulate higher-order thinking when incorporated into structured inquiry (Wang & Fan, 2025). In this study, students reported that comparison activities revealed gaps in their own analyses, indicating that such tasks help move learners from surface recall toward deeper interpretation and evaluation (Deng et al., 2025). In this sense, comparison worked as an exercise of evaluation, where students had to judge whether their responses and the AI's were complete, accurate, and sufficiently deep. Through comparison-based evaluation, students strengthened analytical reasoning while relying less on lecturers' corrective feedback, marking an early shift toward autonomous regulation of their reading strategies (Wang, 2023), which contrasts with earlier national evidence showing that Indonesian EFL student teachers generally display low readiness for learner autonomy and continue to rely heavily on teacher direction (Fauzi et al., 2020). This suggests that the Online Station design—through structured reflection, comparison, and commenting—effectively fosters self-regulated engagement and begins to address long-standing challenges in autonomy development observed in local EFL contexts.

Nevertheless, previous research highlights that these benefits are not automatic. While some interventions demonstrated substantial gains in writing and problem-solving, others observed limited or even negative outcomes when AI use was unscaffolded (Deng et al., 2025). Adoption studies also describe ambivalence, with users recognizing AI's efficiency yet expressing concern about overreliance and the attenuation of students' critical judgment (Mogavi et al., 2024). The present findings contribute to this debate by illustrating that when comparison is framed as a critical practice embedded within collaborative learning, it can foster interpretive depth and metacognitive reflection (Lee et al., 2025; Yang et al., 2025). Collaboration allowed students to go beyond private reflection, since interpretations were shared, debated, and refined through peer discussion, which encouraged accountability and more critical thinking.

The finding that commenting on AI comparisons through Google Classroom fostered deeper analysis reflects prior evidence that the platform supports motivation and critical thinking (Lestari & Nugraheni, 2022) and strengthens questioning and collaborative reading strategies (Masbiran & Afriyeni, 2022). Experimental research further shows that students exposed to Google Classroom performed better in problem-solving and analysis than those using self-learning modules (Sombria et al., 2022).

Although comparative studies suggest that other platforms such as Schoology sometimes yield higher scores for critical thinking, Google Classroom remains widely used due to its accessibility and ease of adoption (Sulisworo et al., 2020). Features such as threaded commenting and transparent posting helped students share their ideas openly, revisit classmates' feedback, and build on each other's contributions, which encouraged more sustained engagement with texts.

At the same time, the small proportion of negative responses in this study aligns with teacher reports that many educators require professional development to maximize the pedagogical rather than managerial use of Google Classroom (Martin, 2021). Studies of adoption further confirm that student engagement is strongly influenced by perceived usefulness, ease of use, and enjoyment (Das, 2023). More recent findings also show its effectiveness in improving writing skills by helping students manage tasks and assignments (Solihin et al., 2024). It also promotes structured interaction, timely feedback, and task organization, features that sustain participation in blended learning environments (Rogers et al., 2025). Research framed by the Community of Inquiry approach also highlights how Google tools can create cognitive, social, and teaching presence to support critical reading (Kannan, 2019). These findings explain why students in this study described commenting as involving questioning, connecting, and providing feedback, activities closely linked to higher-order reasoning (Masbiran & Afriyeni, 2022).

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined how ChatGPT and Google Classroom were integrated within the Online Station of a critical reading lesson in two Indonesian English Education programs. By adopting a mixed-methods exploratory design, the research captured both student and lecturer perspectives on three sequential stages: reflection through AI, comparison with AI outputs, and collaborative commenting in Google Classroom. Across all stages, students overwhelmingly reported positive perceptions, emphasizing that ChatGPT enhanced reflection and engagement, stimulated critical analysis through comparison, and that Google Classroom served as a central, scaffolded hub extending these insights into collaborative and structured engagement. Lecturers corroborated these findings, while also cautioning against uncritical reliance on AI outputs and highlighting the need for scaffolding in prompting skills and critical questioning of textual arguments.

The findings highlight three key contributions. First, ChatGPT functioned not only as a linguistic support tool but as a metacognitive partner that sharpened self-reflection in critical reading. Second, comparison with AI outputs emerged as a practical stimulus for higher-order thinking, enabling students to recognize gaps in reasoning and broaden their analytical scope. Third, collaborative commenting in Google Classroom created a structured space for peer feedback and dialogic learning, sustaining deeper engagement with texts. Together, these processes demonstrate the pedagogical value of embedding AI applications and digital platforms within designed learning stages, rather than leaving their use unstructured.

Despite these strengths, challenges in paraphrasing AI outputs and generating effective prompts underscore the necessity of guidance and scaffolding. Without explicit training, students risk superficial engagement or overreliance on AI. To address these challenges more systematically, institutions should adopt policies such as mandatory AI-use disclosure, guided prompting frameworks, and requirements for critical comparison with AI outputs to ensure ethical and reflective use.

Overall, these results highlight that integrating ChatGPT and Google Classroom within the Online Station has strong potential to reduce lecturer dependence and overcome self-regulation barriers that hinder critical reading. At the same time, both students and lecturers emphasized that scaffolding, especially in prompting skills and critical questioning, remains essential to maximize impact. Institutions

should therefore provide regular training for lecturers to design assessments that integrate AI in ways that support, rather than replace, students' critical thinking. With appropriate support, AI-supported reflection, structured comparison, and collaborative commenting can form a mutually reinforcing cycle that advances students' autonomy, evaluative ability, and collective inquiry in EFL critical reading contexts.

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How to cite: Hariawan, I. A. E., Margana, & Yulia, Y. (2026). Students' and lecturers' perspectives on the use of ChatGPT and Google Classroom within the online station of critical reading lesson. *Teknodika, 24*(2), 205-217. https://doi.org/10.20961/teknodika.v24i2.110798