

# From Passive Reception to Active Construction: Using AI-Powered ClassPoint to Develop Academic Literacies in University EAP

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## Abstract

ClassPoint, an interactive presentation tool, was integrated into a Year 1 university-level English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course in Hong Kong to foster real-time participation, boost critical engagement, and hone students' academic literacies during face-to-face classes. Students were asked to use their own devices to interact directly with PowerPoint slides, responding to quiz questions, submitting digital annotations, contributing to live word clouds, and participating in paraphrasing exercises. In this article, we explain the pedagogical rationale for adopting ClassPoint and the pedagogical implications of doing so. We aim to assist L2 teachers in leveraging in-class technology to enhance student engagement, provide immediate feedback, and create a more dynamic and responsive language learning environment.

**Keywords:** Academic Literacies, AI-powered ClassPoint, Critical Engagement, digital annotations, EAP

## 1. Teaching and Learning Context

This study explores the integration of AI-powered ClassPoint within a university-level English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course, specifically targeting the development of critical academic literacies among first-year undergraduate students. The EAP course focused on developing integrated academic and language skills, with a particular emphasis on improving paired presentations and academic writing abilities through content centered on either education or workplace contexts. The context demanded innovative technological solutions to bridge the gap between passive learning and active knowledge construction, aligning with the growing availability of AI applications in higher education that reshape teaching and learning paradigms (Ou et al., 2024). The competition mode provided by the Game-based Student Response System (GSRS) like Kahoot and Badaboom! was positively received by students, suggesting a considerable impact on their motivation. These findings demonstrate that GSRS has the potential to support EAP students of varying proficiency levels in achieving academic success at English-medium universities (Har, 2022). Barrot (2026) proposes CLARIFIES+, a contextualized prompting framework that systematizes ELT-relevant task conditions and boundaries for teaching, learning, and assessment. The CLARIFIES+ framework addresses this gap through nine core components—Context, Limitations, Audience, Role, Intent, Format, Inputs, End product, and Style—augmented by an adaptive "+" layer that provides process controls, follow-up clarification, tool use, and safeguards for accuracy, integrity, and learner safety, thereby fostering academic literacy. Specifically, the implementation of gamified AI tools like ClassPoint offers a prompt response to the challenges of fostering meaningful student engagement and critical thinking in the post-COVID-19 educational landscape, moving beyond conventional pedagogical approaches to use adaptive and interactive functionalities (Javier et al., 2026). This article will describe how teachers can increase students' engagement and help students understand the importance of paraphrasing, which is considered to be one of the most challenging tasks in EAP, by using ClassPoint to provide dynamics, boost students' learning engagement, and foster a deeper understanding of academic literacies through interactive participation and real-time feedback.

This innovation was applied in a 3-credit compulsory EAP course, English for University Studies, which is open to students from all disciplines in a public university in Hong Kong. The course aims to help L2 students study effectively in the university's English-medium learning environment, and to improve and develop their English language proficiency within a framework of university study contexts. Approximately 800 students enroll in each academic year. The course aims to help them to (1) refer to sources in written texts and oral presentations, (2) paraphrase and summarize materials from written and spoken sources, (3) plan, write and revise expository essays with references to sources and (4) deliver effective oral presentations. The course introduces problem-solution essays, focusing on the identification of an overview, effective topic sentence production, examination of academic language features of texts such as academic vocabulary items, hedging devices, paraphrasing and summarizing skills, academic referencing style and critical evaluation of academic sources. Moreover, a significant emphasis is placed on developing students' ability to synthesize information

from various academic sources, a crucial skill for both written assignments and oral presentations.

## **2. Rationale for Innovation**

The current pedagogical landscape within EAP often grapples with the challenge of transitioning students from passive knowledge assimilation to active, critical engagement with academic content (Starford & Ravlikj, 2024). From an academic literacies' perspective, learning in higher education is not merely the acquisition of discrete linguistic skills but a socially situated process in which students must negotiate disciplinary conventions, epistemologies, and power relations embedded in academic discourse (Roe et al., 2024). This view is underpinned by sociocultural theory, which conceptualizes learning as mediated through tools, interaction, and participation in authentic practices rather than through transmission-based instruction alone. However, traditional EAP pedagogies often struggle to operationalize these principles within time-constrained curricula, resulting in limited opportunities for students to actively engage with disciplinary discourse communities (Zhou & Preez, 2025).

In addition, fostering academic literacies increasingly requires students to engage with digital and multimodal resources, positioning EAP within a broader multiliteracies framework. This framework emphasizes meaning-making across modes, contexts, and technologies, and highlights the need for pedagogical designs that support exploration, dialogue, and iterative knowledge construction. Yet, conventional classroom practices frequently fail to provide the interactive and dialogic learning environments necessary for students to develop these complex competencies, particularly when instruction remains teacher-centered and assessment-driven (Roe et al., 2024).

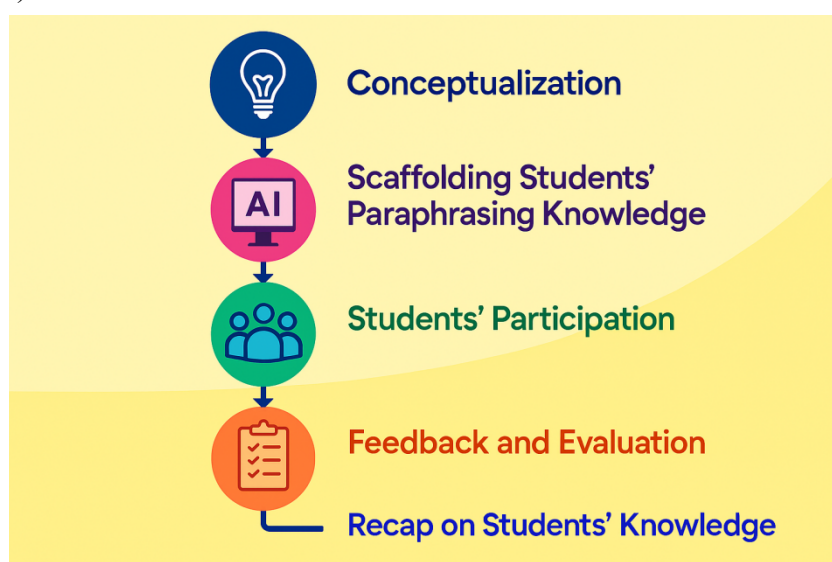
Student engagement further complicates this pedagogical challenge. Research grounded in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) suggests that learners are more likely to sustain engagement when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported. In many EAP contexts, however, motivation is undermined by the non-credit-bearing status of courses, exam-oriented cultures, and limited perceived relevance to students' disciplinary identities (Tam et al., 2024). As a result, students may adopt surface learning approaches, focusing on compliance rather than meaningful participation. This motivational deficit underscores the need for instructional innovations that can promote learner agency, provide immediate feedback, and create low-risk opportunities for interaction and experimentation (Tam et al., 2024).

Against this theoretical backdrop, the emergence of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools such as ChatGPT offers a compelling pedagogical response. Drawing on constructivist and interactionist learning theories, GenAI can function as a mediational tool that supports dialogic learning, scaffolding, and individualized feedback, thereby enabling students to actively construct knowledge rather than passively consume content (Du & Alm, 2024). When positioned as a learning partner rather than a shortcut, GenAI has the potential to enhance autonomy and competence, key drivers of engagement, by allowing students to test ideas, refine language choices, and receive contextualized support in real time.

More specifically, AI-powered classroom response systems such as ClassPoint operationalize these theoretical principles within the EAP classroom. By embedding interactive questioning, immediate feedback, and peer comparison into live instruction, such tools transform the classroom into a participatory learning space aligned with active learning and engagement theories (Har, 2022; Yaseen et al., 2025). This shift enables students to move beyond rote memorization toward higher-order cognitive processes such as analysis, evaluation, and application of academic language in authentic contexts (Chen, 2023). As AI-mediated interaction becomes increasingly embedded in higher education, these tools play an integral role in reshaping academic communication practices and supporting students' participation in disciplinary discourse communities (Ou et al., 2024). Building on this theoretical rationale, the next section describes the design and implementation of the proposed innovation, illustrating how ClassPoint was integrated to translate these principles into tangible EAP classroom practices.

### 3. Description of the Innovation

This section describes how ClassPoint was used in an L2 university-level EAP course (see Figure 1).



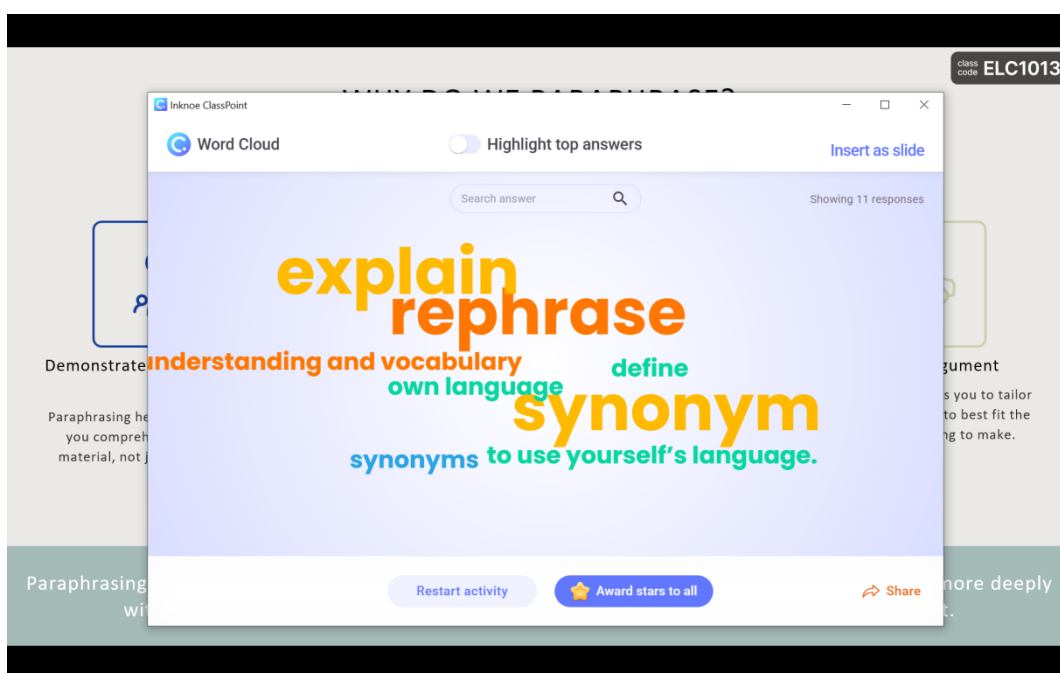
**Figure 1.** Conceptual model of our use of ClassPoint

We selected ClassPoint because it is designed to transform standard presentations into an interactive experience by seamlessly embedding quizzes, polls, and annotation activities directly into PowerPoint. We found that the tool facilitates participation from all students during live sessions, allowing for real-time feedback on comprehension. These functions help teachers quickly gauge student understanding and adjust their instructions responsively. Furthermore, ClassPoint is intuitive to integrate and allows us to enhance existing lecture materials by adding interactive elements directly onto our slides and facilitates the collection and export of student response data for review and grading.

#### Phase 1: Conceptualization

At the conceptual stage (see Figure 2), we introduced students to the concept of

paraphrasing by inviting them to participate in a word cloud activity using ClassPoint. Students were prompted to brainstorm and submit key words that came to mind immediately when they thought about paraphrasing. This interactive approach encouraged students to reflect on their prior knowledge, with the word cloud platform visually displaying a collective set of ideas such as “rephrase,” “synonyms,” “understanding and vocabulary,” and “use your(self)’s language”. By leveraging the word cloud, we fostered an engaging environment where students could actively construct meaning and begin to grasp the foundational aspects of paraphrasing in academic contexts.



**Figure 2.** Word Cloud System

### **Phase 2: Scaffolding Students' Paraphrasing Knowledge**

After discussing several common pitfalls of paraphrasing such as simply replacing a few words with synonyms, copying sentence structure too closely, or neglecting to represent the original meaning accurately, we asked students to apply their understanding by filling in the blanks and paraphrasing a single, carefully selected sentence from an academic text (see Figures 3 – 5). The original sentence was presented on a slide, and students were encouraged to focus on expressing the core idea in their own words while maintaining the intended meaning and academic tone. This exercise allowed students to put theory into practice immediately, highlighting both the challenges and strategies for effective paraphrasing in academic writing.

Scaffolding exercises through ClassPoint offers several benefits that enhance learning and engagement. By enabling differentiated instruction, teachers can provide tailored support for students at varying levels, while also offering opportunities for advanced learners to tackle more complex challenges. The platform's real-time feedback helps educators swiftly identify areas where students struggle and adjust their teaching accordingly. Interactive activities promote student agency and confidence, encouraging learners to reflect on their strategies and progress. Additionally, features like live polls

and collaborative word clouds foster peer-to-peer learning, allowing students to share and compare approaches. Data collected through ClassPoint supports data-driven instruction and helps teachers personalize future lessons. The digital format also reduces student anxiety, making participation less intimidating and boosting motivation (Abdelrady & Akram, 2022). ClassPoint integrates multimodal resources, namely visuals, text, and audio to accommodate diverse learning styles, and its flexible design is scalable for large groups and sustainable over time. Scaffolded activities can include reflective prompts and self-evaluations, thereby promoting metacognitive skills and preparing students for authentic academic tasks such as paraphrasing in essays and presentations (van der Graaf et al., 2023).

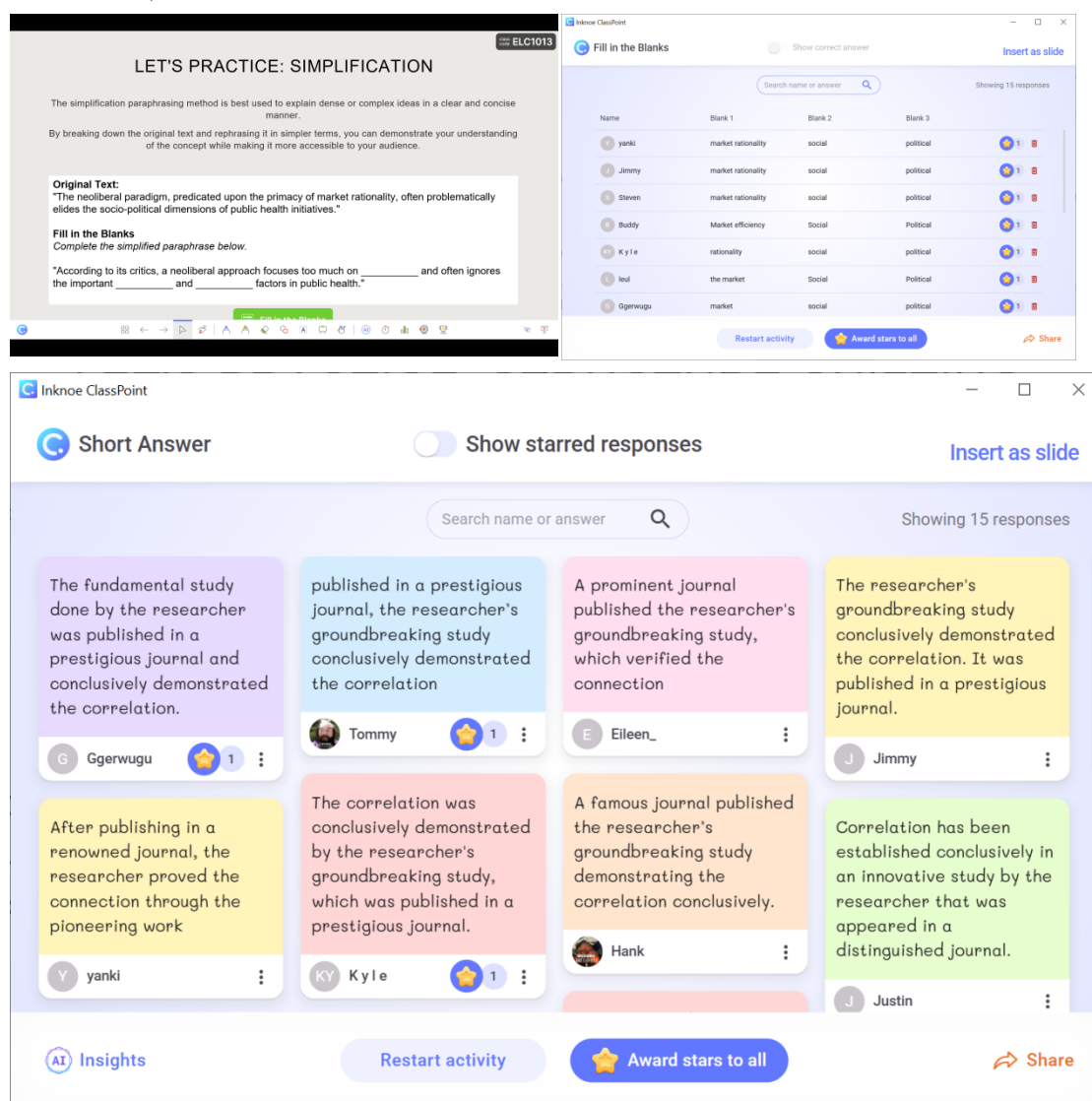


Figure 3-5. Scaffolding Students' Paraphrasing Knowledge

### Phase 3: Students' Participation

Following the teacher-led modelling and input, the lesson moved into a participation-focused phase in which students actively constructed meaning through AI-enhanced ClassPoint interactions. As illustrated in Figures 6–9, students engaged with the lesson content using their own mobile devices, responding directly to prompts

embedded in the presentation slides. These activities transformed students from passive recipients of information into active contributors, enabling real-time engagement with key academic literacy concepts.

During this phase, students were prompted to respond to higher-order questions, paraphrasing tasks, and short analytical prompts. Their responses were submitted simultaneously and displayed anonymously on the shared screen, fostering a low-anxiety environment that encouraged participation from a wider range of learners. The use of live word clouds and short-answer responses allowed students to visualize collective understanding, identify recurring patterns in language use, and notice differences in interpretation. This immediacy helped sustain attention and promoted peer learning, as students were able to compare their responses with those of their classmates.

Importantly, the AI-enhanced features of ClassPoint supported rapid aggregation and organization of student input, allowing participation to remain focused on meaning-making rather than on technical procedures. As shown in Figures 6–9, this phase emphasized interaction, collaboration, and exploratory thinking, all of which are central to the development of academic literacies in an EAP context.

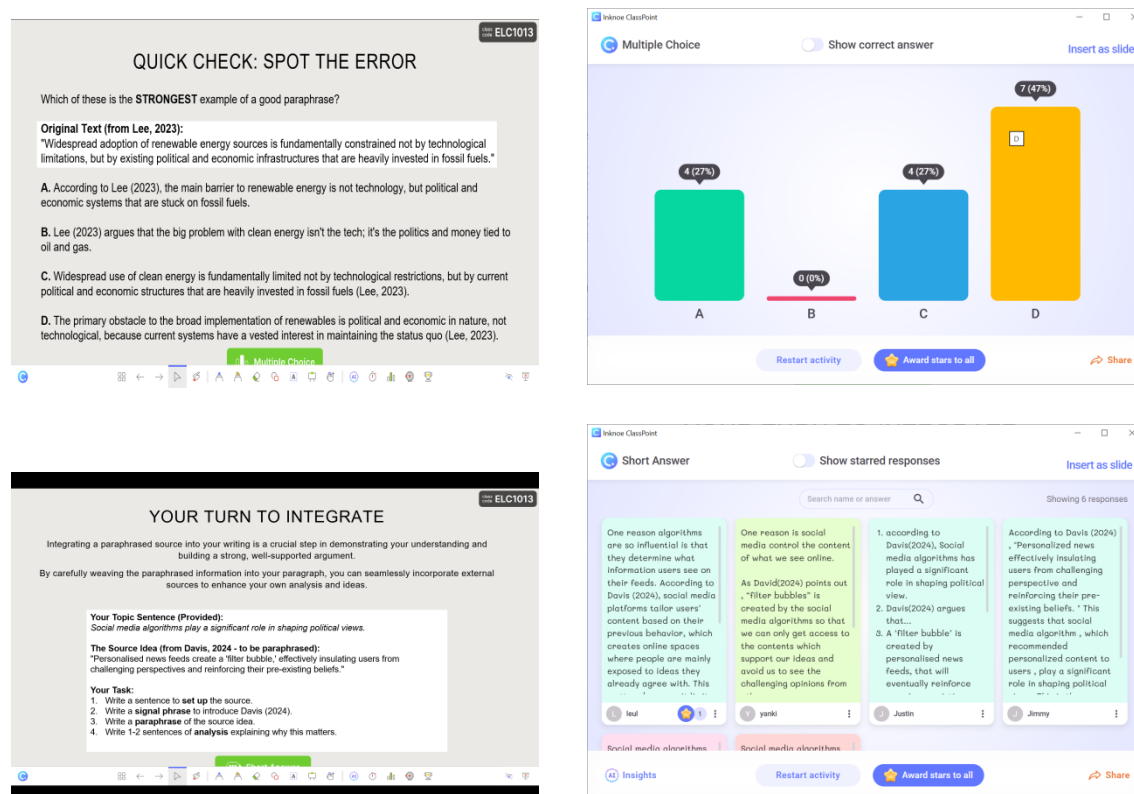


Figure 6-9. Student Participation in Diverse Activities

#### Phase 4: Feedback and Evaluation

Building on students' active participation, the subsequent phase focused on feedback and evaluation. Drawing on the responses generated in Phase 3, the instructor provided immediate, formative feedback by highlighting representative answers, addressing common misunderstandings, and drawing attention to effective language use (see Figures 10-11). The visual display of student responses enabled the teacher to make feedback concrete and contextualized, linking comments directly to authentic learner output rather

than hypothetical examples.

As reflected in the figures, feedback was dialogic rather than unidirectional. Students were invited to reflect on why certain responses were more effective, to refine their answers, or to suggest improvements collaboratively. This evaluative process supported the development of critical engagement, as students were encouraged to justify linguistic and rhetorical choices using academic criteria introduced earlier in the lesson. The anonymity of responses further allowed the teacher to discuss strengths and weaknesses openly without singling out individuals.

Through this feedback cycle, evaluation was embedded within the learning process itself, rather than positioned as a separate or summative activity. The integration of AI-powered ClassPoint thus enabled timely, targeted feedback that responded dynamically to students' emerging needs, reinforcing learning while maintaining momentum in the lesson.

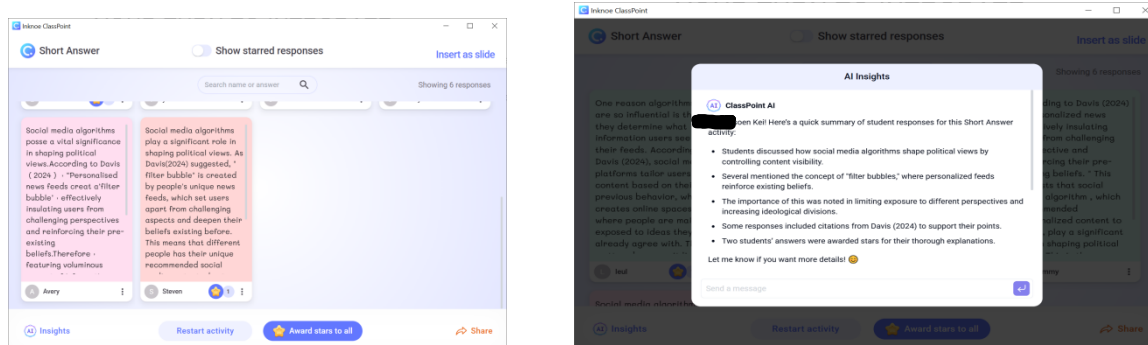


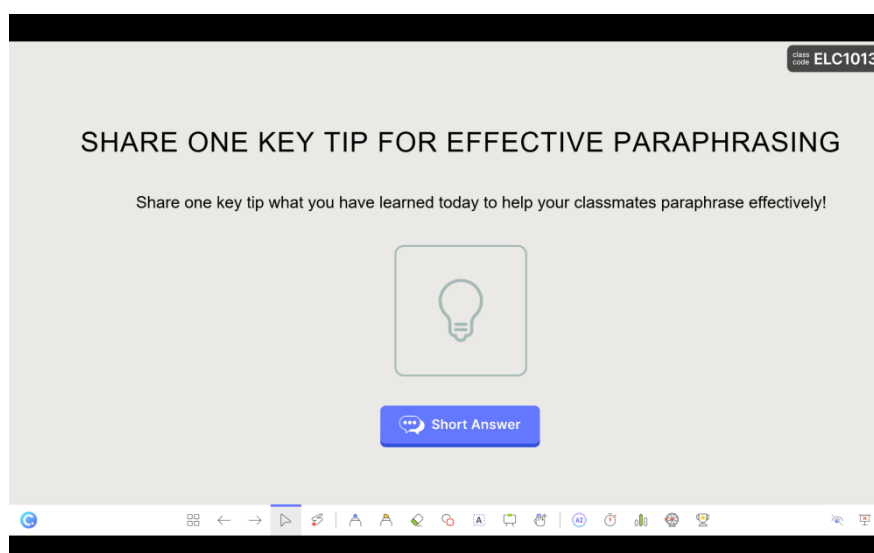
Figure 10-11. Reward Mechanism and dialogic AI Feedback

### Phase 5: Recap on Students' Knowledge

The final phase of the lesson involved a structured recap designed to consolidate students' understanding of the targeted academic literacy skills. As shown in Figure 12, this recap drew explicitly on the content generated earlier in the lesson, allowing students to revisit key concepts, terminology, and strategies through a brief review activity.

Using ClassPoint-enabled prompts, students were asked to summarize main takeaways, identify key features of effective academic language use, or reflect on how the lesson content could be applied to future tasks. This recap served both as a reinforcement of learning and as an opportunity for metacognitive reflection. By revisiting their own and their peers' contributions, students were able to see how their understanding had developed over the course of the lesson.

This final phase helped to close the learning loop by connecting participation, feedback, and reflection. Rather than relying solely on teacher summaries, the recap foregrounded students' constructed knowledge, reinforcing the shift from passive reception to active construction that underpins the overall pedagogical design of the lesson.



**Figure 12.** Recap on Students' Learning Experiences

#### **4. Reflection and Impact**

It is evident that introducing the ClassPoint add-on facilitated more active classroom participation, enabled immediate feedback, and empowered ownership of teaching and learning by increasing the visibility of student cognition. However, these benefits must be tempered by careful task design and learners' linguistic limitations, underscoring the need for cautious adaptation of AI tools to maintain sound pedagogical rationale.

Perhaps the most immediate impact of ClassPoint was the noticeable change in classroom participation. The utilisation of real-time polls, word clouds and short-answer format activities allowed for a broader scope of participation across learner groups simultaneously, preventing a narrow group of more confident students from dominating class discussion whilst enabling quieter and passive learners to share their thoughts more freely. This insight substantiates research on the advantages offered by digitally regulated participation in reducing learner classroom anxiety (Du & Alm, 2024; Wut & Wong, 2024) as well as reducing the barriers to collective learning, thereby broadening wider participation and engagement in the classroom (Li et al., 2025).

It is also evident that ClassPoint's functionality was a crucial factor in encouraging wider learner engagement. By displaying multiple contributions simultaneously, it enabled students to compare the structure, tone, and phrasing of their responses, often sparking impromptu class-wide discussions on linguistic features of their work. This visibility revealed students' cognitive processes, fostering further inter-learner dialogue and validating sociocultural interpretations of learning as negotiated, dialogic, and socially positioned (Jung & Jin, 2025; Vygotsky, 1978).

Viewed in relation to this work on AI-enhanced ClassPoint in university EAP classrooms, a clear conceptual pattern emerges: AI is most pedagogically productive when used to reconfigure participation and feedback, rather than to automate language production (Teng, 2024). In the tertiary EAP academic literacy context, AI serves not as a surrogate writer or assessor, but as a mediational layer that foregrounds learner-generated

language, peer comparison, and teacher-guided reflection.

In this study, the use of AI-enhanced ClassPoint supported a clear shift from passive reception of content toward more active construction of understanding (Teng, 2025). Through live polling, short written responses, and AI-supported paraphrasing activities, students engaged more directly with lesson content, articulating, testing, and refining their ideas in real-time (Teng & Huang, 2026). Classroom observations suggest that learning gains were strongest when these AI-supported activities were embedded within teacher-orchestrated cycles of participation, feedback, and recap, rather than treated as optional or individually driven interactions. Under such conditions, students demonstrated greater attentiveness to language choices, increased willingness to revise responses, and more explicit reasoning about why particular formulations were effective. This pattern aligns with emerging claims in CALL research that generative AI yields the greatest pedagogical value when situated within structured instructional routines that foreground noticing, explanation, and decision-making, rather than functioning as a stand-alone support tool (Chen et al., 2025; Li et al., 2025).

A key dimension of the observed impact concerned the use of contextually grounded linguistic resources. Students engaged more critically with AI-enhanced ClassPoint activities when prompts and examples were closely aligned with course-specific genres, task requirements, and disciplinary expectations, rather than generic academic language. This localization mitigated the sense of distance or alienation often reported with highly polished AI-generated prose, thereby supporting students' confidence by keeping language models within a plausible and attainable developmental range. As a result, students proved more willing to experiment with paraphrasing, reformulation, and clarification, viewing AI-supported input as a resource for learning rather than an authoritative model to replicate. These findings align with recent research emphasizing the role of near-peer and context-sensitive models in fostering engagement, agency, and self-efficacy in AI-assisted academic writing (Lee, 2024; Li et al., 2025).

At the same time, the study revealed important limitations that temper overly optimistic interpretations of AI-enhanced participation. Although students demonstrated clearer attention to language form and appropriacy, improvements were not always accompanied by deeper development of ideas or argumentation. Some responses reflected a tendency to prioritize surface-level reformulation over substantive rethinking, particularly when evaluative criteria were not made explicit. Thus, AI-supported activities, even when carefully localized, may privilege formal correctness unless paired with sustained teacher mediation that foregrounds purpose, audience, and rhetorical effectiveness. The findings therefore reinforce the need to integrate AI-enhanced tools within pedagogies that explicitly scaffold critical judgement, rather than assuming that engagement alone will lead to higher-order learning outcomes.

From the teacher's perspective, integrating AI-enhanced ClassPoint did not reduce professional workload so much as redistributing it. Teachers spent less time prompting participation or eliciting responses, but more time interpreting emerging patterns in student input, selecting responses for discussion, and guiding learners to articulate why certain formulations were more effective than others. Feedback became more dialogic and contingent on student contributions, requiring ongoing pedagogical judgement rather than

procedural oversight. This shift underscores how AI-enhanced classroom tools amplify the importance of teacher expertise in orchestration, interpretation, and facilitation—dimensions of labour often obscured in efficiency-oriented narratives of educational technology (Anthony, 2025; Jung & Jin, 2025).

Issues of acceptance and ethics also shaped the intervention's impact. Although most students responded positively to AI-enhanced participation, some expressed initial discomfort related to visibility, evaluation, or the perceived legitimacy of AI-supported reformulation. These reactions highlight that ethical understanding and AI literacy cannot be taken for granted, even in low-stakes classroom activities. Instead, norms surrounding proper use, authorship, and responsibility must be negotiated explicitly through modelling and discussion. Ultimately, this finding reinforces the view that AI-enhanced language learning is not merely a technical innovation, but a socio-pedagogical one that reshapes classroom relationships, authority, and participation.

To summarize, the findings suggest that the impact of AI-enhanced ClassPoint lies less in the technology itself than in how it reorganises classroom interaction. By embedding AI-supported activities within teacher-orchestrated cycles of participation, feedback and recap, the intervention supported more active engagement with language and more dialogic forms of feedback. Rather than asking whether AI improves academic writing in a narrow sense, this study reframes the question towards how AI reshapes the conditions under which students engage with content, language, and feedback. Such a shift in focus is essential for advancing research on generative AI in language education beyond short-term effectiveness of claims towards theoretically grounded and pedagogically sustainable practice.

## **5. Future Directions**

In this article, we have shared an innovative practice aimed at fostering real-time, whole-class participation and responsive teaching in a post-pandemic face-to-face university EAP classroom environment. The students' feedback was highly positive, and the integration of ClassPoint motivated them to engage more actively during lectures (e.g., responding to quizzes, submitting annotations, contributing to live discussions), improved their attentiveness and understanding, and promoted a dynamic, two-way learning flow. The software can be effectively used in traditional, hybrid, or flipped classroom settings. Although the innovation was applied in a university-level English for Academic Purposes course in Hong Kong, it could be employed in a wide variety of language learning contexts. For example, ClassPoint could be adopted for teaching presentation skills, conducting vocabulary reviews, or facilitating debate preparation. Since spontaneous communication and clarity are vital in academic and professional settings, using ClassPoint's quick-poll and word cloud features can help learners practice formulating and sharing ideas under time constraints, simulating real-world interactive scenarios.

The following recommendations are offered for teachers interested in using ClassPoint to enhance interactivity and assessment in their classrooms. First, strategically embed interactive slides within your presentation rather than adding them all at once, to maintain a clear pedagogical flow and avoid cognitive overload. Second, we recommend

using the data export feature to inform instruction but supplement automated grading with your professional judgment on the quality and thought behind open-ended responses. Third, introduce the tool's functions incrementally in early classes to ensure students are comfortable with the technology and understand its learning purpose. Fourth, prepare a bank of versatile, reusable activity templates (e.g., multiple-choice checks for understanding, short-answer reflection prompts) that can be quickly adapted for different lessons. Fifth, consider using the AI-powered Quiz function embedded in ClassPoint to efficiently generate question sets and provide instant, standardised feedback on objective content. Sixth, be mindful of the auditory environment; the default sound effects can enhance engagement but may become distracting. Turning off music or notification sounds sometimes helps maintain a focused learning atmosphere. Finally, ClassPoint is a tool to amplify teaching, not replace it; remember to provide verbal feedback on the results of activities, provide immediate collective feedback, and use the insights gained to clarify misconceptions or examine deeper challenging topics in the moment.

Fostering an engaged, responsive, and participatory classroom culture is of utmost importance in language development, particularly in L2 learning. This teaching innovation was well received by students overall, and we encourage language teachers to explore the pedagogical possibilities of ClassPoint to create more dynamic and inclusive learning experiences that cater to diverse learner needs.

### **Declaration of competing interest**

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