A Teaching Framework for Using Austerity Media Discourse in Large EAP classrooms

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Abstract

This study proposes a pedagogical framework for integrating media discourse into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction in large classes, grounded in Entman's framing theory and Van Dijk's critical discourse analysis. Using authentic texts on Indonesia's austerity policy—specifically, the suspension of civil servants' 13th and 14th salaries—the framework enhances students' academic literacy, rhetorical awareness, and critical thinking. Over six weeks, learners engaged in discourse-analysis tasks, small-group discussions, and digital collaboration (e.g., Quizizz, Google Docs). Instruction focused on identifying framing elements (e.g., problem, cause, evaluation, solution) and linguistic features (e.g., modality, evaluative language, passive voice) to show how language shapes ideology. Data from reflections, discussions, field notes, and assignments were thematically analyzed. Findings showed students gained critical awareness of bias, expanded academic vocabulary, and improved syntactic control (e.g., nominalizations, passives). They also demonstrated stronger argumentation and rhetorical organization in essays and debates. The study presents a replicable model for critical, technology-enhanced EAP instruction that supports multilingual learners in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

The teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in large classroom settings faces several significant challenges. One of the primary issues is the diverse proficiency levels present in such classes, leading to difficulties in engaging all students adequately, according to Kobylinski, C.

and Prasad, R. (2018). In large classrooms, individual attention is limited, often leading to disengagement among students who may struggle with language proficiency as EAP students, reinforcing the notion that educational context significantly impacts language proficiency perceptions (Gholaminejad, R., 2021). The challenge of maintaining student motivation and facilitating collaborative learning experiences is further exacerbated by factors such as increased class size, limited instructional time, and the variability of students' educational backgrounds and, therefore, multimodal pedagogies can help improve engagement and understanding of EAP in multicultural contexts, addressing the necessity for varied teaching practices in large classrooms. Additionally, multimodal pedagogies that can help improve engagement and understanding of EAP in multicultural contexts, addressing the necessity for varied teaching practices in large classrooms and instructors may find it challenging to implement differentiated instruction that addresses varying needs, which is crucial for EAP learners who are often preparing for academic success (Archer, 2022). This paragraph underlines the first question which is whether ways of structured discourse-analysis tasks, small-group discussions, and digital collaboration tools facilitate learners' recognition of bias, modality, and evaluative lexis within authentic media texts.

In terms of media discourse within language education, particularly in EAP contexts, its utilization has been increasingly recognized as vital for fostering critical discourse and engagement. Media texts not only provide authentic language input but also serve as a medium for examining contemporary issues relevant to students' academic and personal lives (Hobbs, R. 2021). The incorporation of media discourse in instructional settings supports the development of critical thinking skills as students analyze, critique, and engage with various perspectives presented in media (Tripathi et al, 2021). This kind of engagement is essential for EAP learners, as it enhances their understanding of more complex language structures and thematic content critical for academic success (Jha & Kumar, 2023). Media framing significantly influences public perception and policy understanding, playing a critical role in how issues are represented and interpreted (Al-Khasawneh, 2023; Bhat & Ghanai, 2023). The second question leads to how the integration of media discourse—through framing theory and CDA—affects EAP learners' critical thinking and academic literacy in large-class settings.

The ability to understand media framing is essential in an English for Academic Purposes (EAP) context, as it equips students with the necessary skills to discern biases and varying perspectives that inform public discourse. Media framing involves how information is presented and the interpretative lens through which it is processed, which can significantly influence individuals' understanding of events and issues (Koltay, 2011). This critical engagement with media allows students to develop their analytical abilities, enabling them to assess information effectively — a cornerstone of academic literacy (Bulger & Davison, 2018; Potter, 2013).

Incorporating media literacy into educational practices fosters an environment where learners can challenge narratives, evaluate the credibility of sources, and engage with diverse viewpoints, thereby enhancing their overall critical thinking skills (Potter, 2010; Schilder & Redmond, 2019). Fostering such competencies not only aids in comprehension and retention but also empowers students to contribute meaningfully to academic discussions (Bulger & Davison, 2018; Schilder & Redmond, 2019). By understanding media's role in shaping perceptions, students become more adept at navigating complex information landscapes, ultimately enriching their academic dialogues and enhancing their educational outcomes.

Furthermore, knowledge of framing and media literacy is pivotal in cultivating critical citizens who can participate in democratic processes. This is particularly significant given that

today's learners are inundated with various media messages — from traditional media to new social media platforms — necessitating a nuanced understanding and critical engagement (Bayar et al., 2024; Wang, 2018). As such, educational frameworks must emphasize the importance of these skills to better prepare students for the multifaceted realities of academic and civic life (Wang, 2018; Fedorov et al., 2016).

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has increasingly been recognized for enhancing students' critical reading abilities, particularly in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) contexts. The engagement with CDA allows learners to develop meta-cognitive skills vital for effective academic communication and critical consumption of information (Samsi, 2019). This approach equips learners with frameworks essential for developing a deeper comprehension of texts. Utilizing CDA, students can analyze the underlying language structures and power dynamics present within academic texts, thereby enhancing their analytical skills (Nasution et al., 2020; Oktarin & Hastomo, 2024). For instance, Swandana et al. indicate that integrating structured pedagogical approaches in the curriculum prepares students for complex analysis and interpretation of information (2023). Similarly, Zhong et al. (2024) note that critical engagement with texts fosters a climate where students can examine arguments and develop informed perspectives, leading to more profound critical reasoning.

Engagement with CDA not only allows students to enhance their analytical skills but also supports the development of metacognitive abilities crucial for effective academic communication. By actively decoding the language of their learning materials, students become more adept at processing, critiquing, and producing academic discourse (Nasution et al., 2020; Nasution et al., 2022). Haghayeghi et al. (2024) argue that a cognitive assessment approach within this framework can give a clearer picture of learners' strengths and weaknesses, ultimately fostering targeted interventions that promote self-regulated learning. This is corroborated by Yang & Newman (2019), who emphasize the role of blended learning methods that support critical thinking as essential skills necessary for navigating complex academic environments.

Furthermore, as CDA incorporates a reflective aspect to learning, it cultivates metacognitive strategies that empower students to assess their engagement with texts critically. Merely understanding content is not sufficient; instead, students must develop a self-aware approach to their reading and comprehension practices (Dignath & Büttner, 2008; Nasution et al., 2022). For example, Oktarin & Hastomo (2024) showcase how CDA can be effectively employed to enhance digital literacy, which is an integral part of navigating contemporary academic discourse. Thus, CDA serves as a comprehensive method for improving not only the analytical skills and reading competencies of students in EAP but also their ability to think critically about the information and discourses they engage with in academic settings.

In the context of English for Academic Purposes (EAP), various instructional models have been proposed to efficiently integrate authentic materials into the classroom. Among these, the incorporation of real-world texts is essential, as it significantly enriches both the learning experience and overall language comprehension. Research has shown that utilizing authentic materials—such as academic journals and media articles—fosters active engagement and helps students better grasp contextual vocabulary and grammar. According to Losada et al., using authentic materials can substantially enhance students' communicative competence, as evident from a quasi-experimental study that linked authentic tasks to improved language learning outcomes (Losada et al., 2017). Moreover, Husnawati et al. highlight that the dynamic integration of authentic learning materials can foster intrinsic motivation and enhance listening skills, further emphasizing the importance of real-world context in language education (Husnawati et al., 2024).

Authentic materials serve multiple purposes in EAP classrooms. They not only expose learners to real-life language use but also encourage active student engagement with content directly related to their respective fields of study, which studies affirm can significantly boost motivation and retention (Yundayani et al., 2019). For instance, Yundayani et al. advocate for a task-based approach coupled with information and communications technology (ICT) to provide students with meaningful and authentic English practice, thus fostering deeper engagement with learning materials (Yundayani et al., 2019). Furthermore, Mara and Mohamad's literature review substantiates that using authentic texts is positively perceived by students, easing the process of reading comprehension and making learning more effective (Mara & Mohamad, 2021). This underscores the multifaceted role authentic texts play in enriching EAP pedagogy.

Lessons designed with authentic materials not only enhance comprehension skills but also cultivate an environment conducive to real-world application. Lessons designed around authentic materials encourage students to engage actively with content that is directly relevant to their field of study, thus enhancing motivation and retention (Hajimia et al., 2022). Alshra'Ah's investigation into Jordanian EFL learners reveals that exposure to authentic texts leads to substantial improvements in reading comprehension compared to traditional textbook-only approaches (Alshra'ah, 2022). This correlation aligns with Vargas and Molina, who argue for a pedagogical strategy that promotes the systematic use of authentic materials and integrates task design that balances challenge and support, enhancing the educational process (Vargas & Molina, 2023). Moreover, the study by Ranta and Light notes the significant importance of tasks that mirror real-world activities, affirming the need for authentic tasks that can enrich the EAP curriculum (Ranta & Light, 2016).

Finally, sociopolitical contexts, such as austerity policies, significantly influence the framing of media texts used in EAP teaching materials. Understanding these contexts helps students critically engage with the material, recognizing not only the content but the socio-political forces that influence representation in media (Fedorov et al., 2016; Tihelková, 2023; Lirola, 2022; Lirola, 2023). Doudaki et al. demonstrate that media outlets framed the Greek bailout during the European debt crisis using narratives of dependency and non-liability, highlighting the implications of austerity policies on societal perceptions (2016). Overmans discusses how local policymakers employed various frames during austerity discussions, indicating that individualistic framing often undermines collective understandings and influences how societal responses to austerity are portrayed in media narratives (2018).

Understanding the socio-political context of these media texts allows students to critically engage with educational materials and fosters awareness of the underlying forces shaping media representation. Elomäki's examination of failed reforms in Finland highlights how austerity policies were framed to compromise gender equality under the pretence of economic necessity, emphasizing the need for critical analysis in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) contexts (2020). Geelan explores the role of social media in shaping discourses around austerity, asserting that it provides platforms for resisting dominant narratives and promoting alternative perspectives (2022).

Incorporating discussions about media framing and its relationship with austerity into EAP curricula can enhance critical thinking skills among learners, as they recognize the implications of socio-political frameworks on media representations. Teschendorf points out that the media's lack of counter-framing in the context of austerity leaves predominant neoliberal narratives unchallenged, suggesting that engagement with these issues can lead to deeper critical insights for students (2022). This aligns with the call for transformative action in

educational practices, advocating for the development of critical consciousness among students as they navigate complex sociopolitical landscapes (Pearson, 2017).

This study proposes a pedagogical solution that utilizes analytical frameworks of media framing and critical discourse analysis to navigate the complexities of teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in large classroom settings. Specifically, by examining the case of Indonesia's elimination of the 13th and 14th salaries for civil servants, the research introduces a framework for evaluating divergent media narratives: one set justifying austerity from a fiscal perspective and another critiquing it from a social impact standpoint. Such contrasting narratives provide a robust resource for educators aiming to foster analytical language skills in students, linking linguistic structure to socio-political significance, as emphasized in studies on media literacy and critical engagement (Issa et al., 2024; Davies & Ortínez, 2020; Elyas et al., 2023; Dezhkameh et al., 2021). In other words, this study underscores the important connection between linguistic competencies and socio-political awareness in academic discourse, thus preparing students to navigate and interpret media narratives effectively (Issa et al., 2024; Perez et al., 2023).

The instructional methods outlined in this study are grounded in empirical and theoretical contributions already present in the educational literature. Research has consistently highlighted the efficacy of discourse-intensive instructional strategies, particularly in expansive classroom environments, indicating that these methods align closely with existing curriculum requirements while facilitating scaffolded group discussions (Farmati et al., 2023; Vega et al., 2023). Additionally, recent work has advocated for the continuous evolution of teaching methodologies, particularly in writing instruction within large classes, encouraging creativity and sustainable practices (Juan, 2024). The integration of translation and language instruction has also been noted as a significant factor in enhancing bilingual competence and rhetorical awareness within academic discourse, affirming the necessity of blending diverse instructional approaches to enable critical engagement with media content (Davies & Ortínez, 2020; Huang, 2023; Murugaiah et al., 2024; Kosovac et al., 2024).

However, despite these advancements, an identifiable research gap persists. Few studies have synthesized the theoretical potential of media framing and CDA with classroom-based EAP practices tailored for large, heterogeneous student populations. Most existing literature remains either theory-driven or focused on small-scale classroom interventions. Moreover, there is limited research examining how socio-political media discourse can be used systematically across EAP curricula to develop both critical thinking and academic language skills (McGlynn & Tacon, 2024; Ekström et al., 2022). Therefore, the third question is to answer: to what extent can students transfer framing-analysis skills, acquired through media-based EAP instruction, to new socio-political contexts and academic tasks

This study addresses that gap by presenting a structured, replicable framework for integrating media discourse into EAP instruction, specifically designed for large-class contexts. It demonstrates how students can be guided to identify framing strategies, evaluate ideological positions, and compare rhetorical patterns across media sources. The novelty of this research lies in its context-specific application and the depth of its integration between theory and classroom practice. It contributes to the fields of EAP pedagogy, critical media literacy, and discourse studies by offering both theoretical justification and practical tools for implementation. Ultimately, the study aims to foster critical academic engagement among learners and support their development as informed and reflective users of English in academic and professional domains.

METHOD

This section outlines the methodological framework adopted in the current study, which integrates media framing analysis and critical discourse analysis (CDA) into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction for large-class settings. The design is informed by theoretical models from communication studies and applied linguistics, and seeks to address the pedagogical challenges of enhancing critical literacy through media discourse. To ensure clarity and replicability, the methodology is organized under five sub-headings: theoretical framework, research design, instructional implementation, data sources, and analytical procedures.

Theoretical Framework

The study is grounded in the dual theoretical perspectives of framing theory, as developed by Entman (1993, 2010), and critical discourse analysis (CDA), particularly following the models proposed by Van Dijk (2008). Framing theory, particularly Entman's (1993) four functions, serves as a practical scaffold for designing classroom activities in which students identify how problems are defined, causes attributed, and solutions proposed in media texts—skills that map directly onto EAP objectives such as analytical reading, source evaluation, and argumentation structure in academic writing. Entman (1993) conceptualizes framing as the selection and salience of information to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. These functions serve as a heuristic for teaching students to analyze media texts critically and understand the rhetorical and ideological underpinnings of language.

CDA complements framing theory by offering methodological tools to deconstruct the power dynamics and ideologies embedded in discourse (Van Dijk, 2008). It focuses on how discourse structures—such as lexical choices, syntactic patterns, and text cohesion—reflect broader socio-political interests. In the context of EAP, CDA enables learners to interrogate how language practices shape knowledge production, identity formation, and authority claims in both academic and media texts (Ranabhat, 2022; Gallagher & Haan, 2017).

Research Design

The research adopts a classroom-based qualitative design using instructional intervention as the core methodological approach. The intervention integrates media texts covering the Indonesian university students who have been learning English language as a foreign language in their classroom into an EAP curriculum. These texts represent contrasting media narratives: pro-government sources frame the policy as a fiscally responsible measure, while independent media emphasize its social and economic consequences. The juxtaposition of these narratives allows for analytical comparison and fosters students' ability to recognize discursive framing and ideological bias.

Following Chun (2018), the instructional intervention employs an ethnographic orientation, focusing on classroom interaction and student discourse. The method is exploratory and interpretive, aimed at understanding how students engage with critical media analysis through guided instruction, group work, and reflective activities. The design draws on Lai's (2024) interactional ethnography and Jain's (2022) work on translanguaging and power in classroom discourse, providing a lens through which pedagogical framing and learner response can be observed.

Instructional Implementation

The instructional model was implemented over a 6-week module in an undergraduate EAP course involving approximately 80 students in a large-class context. Teaching was delivered in blended format, combining face-to-face lectures with online collaborative activities.

Three types of texts were selected: (1) news articles from pro-government outlets highlighting fiscal justifications, (2) reports from independent media criticizing social implications, and (3) social media commentary reflecting public sentiment. Each week focused on one dimension of framing: economic rationality, social impact, and citizen response.

Teaching strategies included:

- Guided framing analysis using Entman's four functions;
- Critical discourse tasks analyzing vocabulary, modality, and syntactic structures;
- Small group debates adopting different media perspectives;
- Annotation exercises to highlight rhetorical strategies;
- Peer-review sessions for scaffolded feedback.

The approach follows recommendations by Clarence et al. (2014) and Wei et al. (2020) regarding discourse-intensive instruction and student-led discussion in large classes. Digital tools such as Quizziz and Google Docs supported collaborative annotation and asynchronous peer feedback.

Data Sources

Multiple data sources were used to ensure validity through triangulation:

- **Student written reflections** collected weekly to document interpretive engagement and development of critical awareness;
- **Audio recordings of group discussions** to capture interactional patterns and discourse features;
- **Instructor field notes** from classroom observations to assess participation, engagement, and emerging themes;
- **Samples of student assignments** (e.g. media analysis essays and group debate transcripts) to evaluate discourse analysis skills.

These sources were selected to provide a rich, multi-dimensional account of how students interact with the content, articulate analytical insights, and navigate differing media perspectives. Following the work of Ghajarieh & Mirzabeigi (2023) and Jain (2022), these data types also support examination of learner identity formation and discourse positioning.

Analytical Procedures

Data were analyzed thematically using a hybrid approach that combines deductive coding based on theoretical constructs with inductive coding of emergent patterns. For written and spoken student data, Entman's framing components served as initial codes: problem definition, causal attribution, moral evaluation, and solution recommendation. These codes were then expanded to include linguistic indicators such as modality, evaluative lexis, and passive constructions, drawing from CDA procedures (Gallagher & Haan, 2017; Van Dijk, 2008).

Discourse analysis of group discussions focused on:

- Turn-taking and control of discourse flow;
- Use of metadiscursive strategies;
- Expression of agreement, challenge, or resistance;
- Emergence of student-led framing during debates.

Student reflections were coded for evidence of critical awareness, language reflection, and shifts in perspective. Instructor field notes were analyzed to identify common participation

patterns and teaching adjustments. All data were subjected to iterative review by the research team to establish inter-coder reliability and interpretive coherence.

This methodological approach—grounded in theory, adapted for large classes, and supported by multimodal data—provides a robust framework for evaluating the impact of media discourse analysis on EAP learners. By blending CDA and framing theory with task-based pedagogy and collaborative learning structures, the study offers a replicable model for teaching critical language skills in diverse academic settings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the cognitive and linguistic outcomes of implementing a media discourse-based instructional model in a large English for Academic Purposes (EAP) class. The findings are drawn from a combination of student reflections, group discussions, writing assignments, and instructor observations. They reveal how learners improved their critical thinking, vocabulary acquisition, rhetorical awareness, and recognition of framing and bias, contributing to more robust academic literacy development. These gains are aligned with the theoretical goals of integrating media framing theory (Entman, 2010) and critical discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2008) into EAP pedagogy.

The findings of this study offer substantial insights into the integration of media discourse—particularly framing theory and critical discourse analysis (CDA)—into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction in large-class settings. The findings demonstrate that the instructional framework fostered cognitive and linguistic development, improved critical thinking, and enhanced students' academic literacy. This section interprets these findings in relation to the theoretical foundations and pedagogical implications outlined earlier, while also situating the study within broader discussions in EAP, discourse pedagogy, and critical media literacy.

Findings

One of the most notable outcomes was the significant enhancement of students' critical thinking skills. By engaging with contrasting media narratives around Indonesia's austerity policy, students demonstrated a growing capacity to identify implicit meanings, evaluate multiple perspectives, and form reasoned arguments. These findings reflect the assertion that authentic media texts cultivate higher-order thinking by presenting real-world complexity and ideological variance (Spirovska, 2022; Reychav et al., 2015). Students reported that comparing pro-government and independent news articles required them to scrutinize the purposes and implications behind particular word choices, narrative structures, and omissions. This analytical work mirrors what Entman (1993) described as the interpretive function of framing—highlighting how language selection shapes perceptions and directs attention.

Students' development of rhetorical awareness was particularly evident in their ability to recognize persuasive strategies embedded in media discourse. In annotation activities and reflective journals, learners consistently identified patterns of modality (e.g., "must," "should," "may") and evaluative lexis (e.g., "burdensome," "necessary sacrifice") that contributed to moral positioning within the texts. These observations reflect a growing sensitivity to the language of argumentation and its role in constructing ideological stances—an important aspect of both academic literacy and public discourse (Li, 2025; Leopold, 2011). Additionally, many students began to emulate these rhetorical strategies in their own writing, demonstrating an emerging capacity to use language not just for description, but for persuasion and critique.

The module also led to significant gains in vocabulary acquisition and grammatical accuracy, particularly with regard to collocations and functional grammar. Through repeated exposure to media texts, students encountered high-frequency academic vocabulary in authentic contexts, which supported deeper understanding and long-term retention (Wu & Li, 2023; Sulyaningsih, 2021). Instructor analysis of student essays revealed increased lexical variation and more accurate use of discipline-specific collocations (e.g., "budget deficit," "economic burden," "public trust"). This supports prior findings that authentic texts promote vocabulary learning by providing meaningful context for word use (Fedorov & Levitskaya, 2017).

Grammatical development was also supported through the integration of media texts that featured varied syntactic structures. Students showed improved control over passive constructions, conditional clauses, and nominalizations—features often prevalent in academic and journalistic writing. These gains were especially prominent in assignments that required students to paraphrase or summarize media texts using their own words. In doing so, they were challenged to reformulate complex ideas, reinforcing their understanding of English grammar in context. This is consistent with the view that cognitive-linguistic development occurs most effectively when learners engage in tasks that demand both form and meaning-focused processing (Siodmak & Scannell, 2022).

In terms of framing recognition, students became increasingly adept at identifying and articulating how news articles defined problems, diagnosed causes, made moral evaluations, and suggested solutions, following Entman's (2010) four functions of framing. For example, when analyzing pro-government texts, students noted recurring frames of "economic rationality," where salary cuts were justified through references to budget constraints and long-term benefits. In contrast, independent sources often emphasized the "human cost" frame, highlighting the emotional and practical implications for civil servants and their families. Students were able to contrast these perspectives, often using explicit language such as "this article frames the issue as..." or "the narrative here suggests that..."—an indication that they were internalizing both the metalanguage and the analytical lens introduced in class.

Moreover, students developed the ability to transfer these framing insights beyond the specific policy example studied. During open discussions and in final reflections, many students applied the same analytical lens to other socio-political issues, including education reform and climate change narratives. This suggests that the model fostered not just topic-specific understanding but also a generalizable framework for engaging with mediated texts—a goal consistent with critical media literacy (Cheung, 2021; Hikmah & Purwati, 2025).

Students also demonstrated increased awareness of bias and ideological stance. In post-module reflections, learners reported greater confidence in identifying bias not only in media but also in academic sources. This is especially important in EAP contexts where students must evaluate source reliability and rhetorical positioning in literature reviews and argumentative essays. Several students wrote about re-evaluating their own media consumption habits, with one noting, "I used to think news was neutral, but now I see how the same event can be told in opposite ways." Such comments illustrate a key cognitive shift toward critical autonomy (Reychav et al., 2015; Rukmana & Hamdani, 2023).

Instructor observations further support the conclusion that the media discourse module enhanced student engagement and analytical rigor. During classroom debates and peer-review sessions, students referred to text evidence with increasing precision and fluency. They used analytical terminology appropriately, such as "modality," "evaluation," and "ideological stance," indicating both conceptual understanding and linguistic appropriation. In contrast to earlier

units, where student responses were often descriptive or superficial, responses during this module showed deeper inference, contextual sensitivity, and argument structure.

In summary, the integration of media discourse into EAP instruction produced measurable cognitive and linguistic gains. Students improved their critical thinking, rhetorical awareness, vocabulary depth, and grammatical precision. More importantly, they developed transferable analytical skills that will support their academic and professional literacy. These findings validate the instructional model's efficacy in large-class settings and align with existing scholarship advocating for authentic, discourse-rich pedagogy in EAP education (Wei et al., 2020; Clarence et al., 2014; Chun, 2018). The next sections will explore patterns of engagement and participation that further contextualize these cognitive outcomes.

Discussion

One of the core contributions of the study is the empirical demonstration that EAP learners, even in large and diverse classrooms, can effectively engage with complex media texts and derive analytical insights. Students developed the capacity to recognize media framing strategies, assess ideological positioning, and articulate contrasting perspectives with increasing precision. This outcome underscores the value of Entman's (1993, 2010) framing theory in guiding learners to decode how specific language choices in media function to define problems, attribute causes, evaluate morality, and propose solutions. As evidenced in their discussions and written assignments, students internalized this heuristic and began to apply it not only to the specific topic of Indonesian austerity policy but to other socio-political issues, suggesting the framework's adaptability and transferability (Cheung, 2021).

The improvement in students' critical thinking supports the broader educational goal of fostering analytical autonomy in EAP learners. This aligns with previous studies emphasizing that authentic, real-world materials promote deeper engagement with academic discourse (Spirovska, 2022; Wu & Li, 2023). When students critically examined pro-government versus independent media texts, they learned to navigate ambiguity, challenge assumptions, and weigh competing narratives. These practices contribute to the development of what Reychav et al. (2015) refer to as "critical autonomy," an essential component of advanced academic literacy. Importantly, such engagement goes beyond rote learning or formulaic writing—it cultivates reflective, socially aware learners equipped to participate in global academic and civic discourse (Hikmah & Purwati, 2025).

In relation to language development, the discourse-based approach proved effective in promoting vocabulary acquisition and grammatical control. Students' exposure to authentic academic and journalistic discourse provided repeated encounters with discipline-specific collocations, modality markers, and complex syntactic constructions. These features, frequently observed in the student essays and group discussions, support the argument that contextualized input facilitates lexical and grammatical acquisition more effectively than isolated drills (Fedorov & Levitskaya, 2017; Sulyaningsih, 2021). Furthermore, students' capacity to emulate such language in their own academic writing suggests a positive transfer from receptive to productive language skills, which is a critical benchmark in EAP pedagogy (Li, 2025; Wu & Li, 2023).

The first research question investigated how structured discourse-analysis tasks, small-group discussions, and digital collaboration tools facilitate learners' recognition of bias, modality, and evaluative lexis within authentic media texts. The findings of the study clearly demonstrate that these pedagogical strategies enabled students to meaningfully engage with the language of media texts. Learners consistently identified patterns of modality (e.g., "must," "should," "may") and evaluative lexis (e.g., "burdensome," "necessary sacrifice") during

annotation tasks and reflective journals. These tasks helped students uncover the ideological undertones embedded in news discourse. Additionally, digital tools like Google Docs and Quizizz supported collaborative annotation and peer feedback, which enhanced interpretive depth and sustained interaction. Students also became more adept at identifying bias and rhetorical strategies, evidenced by their increasing use of metalanguage (e.g., "this article frames the issue as…"). Instructor observations confirmed that student discussions became more precise and textually grounded. Collectively, these outcomes indicate that the instructional activities effectively facilitated critical linguistic awareness, thereby affirmatively answering the first research question.

Beyond individual skills, this study affirms the pedagogical relevance of critical discourse analysis in supporting learners' meta-awareness of language as a social practice. Students learned to identify the ideological underpinnings of texts, examine how linguistic structures reinforce or challenge power relations, and explore how discourse positions audiences within specific interpretive frameworks. Such outcomes support the work of Van Dijk (2008) and Gallagher & Haan (2017), who argue that CDA can reveal hidden dimensions of meaning and promote language learning as an act of critical inquiry. In particular, the students' ability to label and critique bias, evaluate sources, and construct counter-arguments demonstrates a maturing discourse competence that transcends surface-level reading or formulaic academic writing.

These developments also resonate with the broader discourse of multilingual academic literacy, especially in postcolonial and globalized education contexts. In many Asian and African higher education systems, English functions as a medium of instruction for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Within such contexts, the use of media discourse on politically salient topics, like austerity, enables learners to contextualize language use within their lived realities. This pedagogical move aligns with Chun's (2018) proposal for employing contentious texts in EAP to stimulate democratic deliberation and challenge dominant narratives. As students reflect on how media portrays socio-political events in ways that may diverge from their own experiences, they gain not only linguistic skill but also the confidence to interrogate institutional authority and epistemological assumptions (Hamdi, 2022; Chun, 2018).

Moreover, the study reinforces the viability of discourse-rich pedagogy in large-class settings, a context often perceived as incompatible with critical or student-centered learning. Drawing on the instructional strategies proposed by Clarence et al. (2014), this study employed group discussions, peer review, digital collaboration, and role-play debates to scaffold students' interaction with media texts. These methods provided avenues for differentiated engagement and leveraged collective learning, mitigating the challenges of limited instructor-student interaction time. Wei et al. (2020) similarly emphasize the need for heterogeneous grouping and student-led dialogue in discourse-intensive classrooms, and the findings here support their conclusions. The ability of students to sustain meaningful discussion and produce coherent analytical writing in this context suggests that EAP pedagogy need not sacrifice depth for scale. Another notable implication relates to the role of digital platforms in supporting media-based EAP instruction. Students used collaborative tools such as Google Docs for annotation and asynchronous discussion as in Quizziz, which facilitated reflective interaction with texts and peer feedback. This practice not only mirrors contemporary academic communication but also encourages sustained discourse beyond the classroom (Chen et al., 2022). Furthermore, social media analysis tasks introduced students to the dynamics of real-time public discourse, expanding their understanding of how digital platforms mediate language, identity, and ideology. These findings reinforce calls by educators such as Lanagan-Leitzel & Diller (2018) and Elliott et al. (2022) for integrating social and digital media literacy into language curricula.

The second research question asked how the integration of media discourse—through framing theory and critical discourse analysis (CDA)—affects EAP learners' critical thinking and academic literacy in large-class settings. The study found that the combination of Entman's framing functions and CDA tools significantly contributed to students' analytical growth. Students improved their ability to interpret ideological positions, evaluate contrasting viewpoints, and construct well-reasoned arguments. They gained insight into how media texts define problems, attribute causality, and recommend solutions—core components of framing theory. These cognitive gains were accompanied by notable improvements in academic language use, including a broader range of vocabulary, enhanced grammatical control (especially in passive constructions and nominalizations), and more coherent rhetorical structures in writing. The data from essays, reflections, and group discussions confirm that students were not only understanding complex texts but also emulating their structures and strategies in academic output. This finding aligns with broader literature emphasizing the importance of authentic, discourse-rich pedagogy in fostering academic literacy, thereby affirming that the second research question was fully and accurately addressed.

Equally significant is the evidence that this pedagogy contributed to the cultivation of critical citizenship. Several students reported heightened awareness of media manipulation, increased skepticism toward state-sponsored narratives, and a newfound appreciation for the pluralism of public opinion. These reflections resonate with Banerjee's (2016) view that postcolonial education must attend to questions of voice, representation, and ideological control. Through the lens of framing and CDA, students were able to connect linguistic form to socio-political function, enabling them to reflect on their roles as both language users and informed citizens. This critical orientation to text consumption is especially important in contemporary contexts marked by information overload and political polarization.

The third research question explored to what extent students could transfer the framing-analysis skills acquired through media-based EAP instruction to new socio-political contexts and academic tasks. The study presents compelling evidence that such transfer occurred. Students applied the analytical tools learned—particularly Entman's framing components—to analyze issues beyond the central case of Indonesian austerity policy. During discussions and final reflections, students used the same framework to evaluate narratives about education reform, environmental issues, and digital activism. This demonstrates a conceptual grasp that goes beyond topic-specific understanding to a generalized critical lens. Moreover, learners reported greater confidence in identifying bias in academic sources and rethinking their media consumption habits. Their ability to apply framing insights to unfamiliar contexts indicates a successful transfer of learning—a key indicator of deep and sustainable skill development. Therefore, the third research question is answered convincingly, showing that the pedagogical model has long-term, transferrable impact on learners' academic and civic literacy.

Overall, the discussion affirms the pedagogical merit of integrating media discourse into EAP classrooms through a structured, theory-informed approach. The combination of framing analysis and critical discourse analysis offers students a robust framework for interpreting texts, constructing arguments, and understanding the socio-political dimensions of language. These benefits are particularly salient in large, multilingual classrooms where critical engagement, not just linguistic proficiency, is the goal. The study advances a replicable and adaptable model for enriching EAP instruction and contributes to the growing literature on discourse-oriented, socially responsive language pedagogy as clearly mapped in the following table 1:

Table 1. The Cognitive & Linguistic Pedagogy in a Media Literacy Large-Class Setting

Outcome	Key Indicators	Evidence Source	Pedagogical Implications
Critical Thinking	– Identification of implicit meanings – Evaluation of multiple perspectives – Reasoned arguments	Student reflections; group-discussion transcripts	Students learn authentic media texts cultivate higher-order thinking; scaffold comparative analysis activities to deepen inferential reading.
Rhetorical Awareness	– Recognition of modality ("must," "should," "may") – Use of evaluative lexis ("burdensome")	Annotation journals; instructor field notes	Students explicitly learn metalanguage (modality, evaluative lexis) and model annotation to build sensitivity to persuasive strategies.
Vocabulary Acquisition & Grammatical Control	– Discipline-specific collocations ("budget deficit," "public trust") – Mastery of passive voice, conditional clauses, nominalizations	Student essays; paraphrase/summarization assignments	Students integrate authentic texts to provide contextualized input; design paraphrase tasks that target complex structures.
Framing Recognition & Transferability	– Accurate application of Entman's four functions – Student-led framing in new topics	Debate transcripts; final reflections	Students learn framing functions explicitly and encourage themselves to apply the framing functions across diverse socio-political contexts.
Bias Awareness & Critical Autonomy	– Confidence in identifying bias in media and academic texts – Reflexive changes in media habits	Post-module reflections	Students incorporate reflective prompts that challenge assumptions and document shifts in learners' consumption practices.
Engagement & Analytical Rigor	– Precise citation of text evidence – Fluent use of analytical terminology ("ideological stance")	Instructor observations; peer-review sessions	Students leverage collaborative debates and peer review to sustain engagement and reinforce rigorous use of academic metalanguage.

In conclusion, the three research questions with findings and discussion reveals a strong alignment between the study's aims, methods, and outcomes. Each question was addressed clearly, precisely, and with adequate empirical support. The structured, theory-informed integration of media discourse into EAP pedagogy yielded demonstrable cognitive and linguistic gains, fostered critical engagement, and enabled students to transfer skills across contexts. This affirms the instructional model's value in large-class EAP settings and highlights its potential as a scalable and adaptable framework for critical language education.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study set out to explore how media discourse, analyzed through the dual frameworks of framing theory and critical discourse analysis (CDA), can be effectively integrated into English

for Academic Purposes (EAP) instruction within large-class contexts. By engaging students with authentic media texts covering the Indonesian government's austerity policy, the research demonstrated the pedagogical viability of using real-world discourse to enhance both cognitive and linguistic skills. Students developed heightened awareness of framing devices, improved their ability to recognize bias and ideological positioning, and gained proficiency in academic language use. These outcomes confirm that media discourse is not only relevant but transformative in the context of academic language learning.

The findings revealed significant improvements in students' critical thinking, vocabulary acquisition, grammatical precision, and rhetorical awareness. Through iterative engagement with pro-government and independent media texts, learners learned to compare competing narratives, analyze the purposes of language use, and construct arguments using evidence and disciplinary language. The success of this instructional approach was further enhanced by collaborative activities, peer feedback, and the use of digital platforms, all of which enabled students to interact meaningfully with both texts and peers. This suggests that even in large and heterogeneous classrooms, critical language pedagogy can be effectively implemented through structured, discourse-rich learning environments.

The findings also contribute to broader discussions in applied linguistics and EAP pedagogy by reinforcing the centrality of critical literacy in academic language development. Media framing theory and CDA offered students practical tools for unpacking complex texts and understanding how language functions as a medium of power, ideology, and persuasion. The study also confirmed that EAP instruction benefits from aligning language teaching with contemporary socio-political contexts, thus making learning more meaningful and engaging for students. Moreover, it highlights the importance of student-centered practices in large classes, emphasizing dialogic learning, interpretive autonomy, and digital literacy.

The significance of this research lies in its ability to bridge theoretical discourse analysis with classroom application in a scalable, replicable way. The study offers an adaptable teaching model that integrates critical analysis, collaborative learning, and authentic material engagement—elements that are often difficult to achieve simultaneously in large-class EAP instruction. It underscores the feasibility of moving beyond textbook-driven pedagogy and toward an approach that empowers students to become critical consumers and producers of academic and public discourse.

Despite the promising outcomes, the study also encountered several challenges. Not all students adapted easily to the analytical demands of framing theory and CDA, especially those with limited prior exposure to critical reading or academic debate. Some initially struggled with abstract terminology or felt hesitant to critique politically sensitive content. These difficulties highlight the importance of scaffolding and sustained support, particularly in the early stages of implementation (Ghajarieh & Mirzabeigi, 2023). From the case of shortcomings, lecturers must be prepared to mediate students' anxieties while gradually building their confidence and interpretive capacity. Additionally, the diversity of linguistic backgrounds necessitates differentiated instruction and opportunities for translanguaging, as discussed by Jain (2022).

Future research could extend this work by exploring long-term impacts of discourse-based instruction on students' academic performance across disciplines. Comparative studies between small and large classes could yield further insights into the scalability of the model. Additionally, research into the integration of multilingual or translanguaging practices alongside media discourse analysis may provide new avenues for supporting linguistically diverse learners. Investigating how learners apply critical discourse skills in other academic tasks, such as

literature reviews, presentations, or research writing, would also deepen our understanding of transferability and sustained learning.

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