

การเสริมสร้างการรู้เท่าทันสื่อในการเรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็น  
ภาษาต่างประเทศผ่านการเรียนรู้เชิงรุกที่ผสมผสานแนวคิด NAMLE  
และวาทกรรมวิเคราะห์เชิงวิพากษ์  
Enhancing EFL Media Literacy through an Integrated  
NAMLE-CDA Active Learning Model

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บทคัดย่อ

ในยุคดิจิทัลปัจจุบัน ที่ผู้คนต่างได้รับข้อมูลจากสื่อที่หลากหลายและมักมีอคติแฝง ส่งผลให้ผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ (EFL) ต้องเผชิญความท้าทายสองประการควบคู่กัน นั่นก็คือ การพัฒนาทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ และความสามารถในการรู้เท่าทันสื่อเชิงวิพากษ์ งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาว่าการบูรณาการการเรียนรู้แบบกิจกรรมเป็นฐาน (Activity-Based Learning: ABL) และโครงงานเป็นฐาน (Project-Based Learning: PBL) เข้ากับกรอบแนวคิด NAMLE-CDA จะสามารถเปลี่ยนนิสิตเอกภาษาอังกฤษชาวไทยจากการเป็นผู้บริโภคสื่อเพียงอย่างเดียวสู่นักวิเคราะห์และผู้ผลิตสื่อเชิงวิพากษ์ได้อย่างไร การวิจัยนี้ดำเนินการภายใต้รายวิชาภาษาอังกฤษสำหรับกรู้เท่าทันสื่อ โดยมีนิสิตเอกภาษาอังกฤษ ชั้นปีที่ 3 จำนวน 19 คนเป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่าง ดำเนินการวิจัยตามกรอบการวิจัยสี่ขั้นของมารุต พัฒนา (2563) และระเบียบวิธีวิจัยแบบผสมผสาน โดยเก็บข้อมูลเชิงคุณภาพและเชิงปริมาณจากเอกสารประกอบการสอนและเครื่องมือประเมินต่าง ๆ ผลการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพสะท้อนพัฒนาการของผู้เรียนในสามด้านหลัก ได้แก่ (1) การวิเคราะห์ภาษาและพหุสื่อ (2) การตระหนักรู้ด้านบริบททางสังคม และ (3) การสื่อสารเชิงกลยุทธ์ ซึ่งสอดคล้องกับผลเชิงปริมาณที่แสดงถึงความพึงพอใจระดับสูงของผู้เรียน (M

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= 4.35, SD = 0.81) โดยเฉพาะด้านการมีส่วนร่วมและความครอบคลุมของเนื้อหา ( $M = 4.69$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ) นอกจากนี้ การวิเคราะห์แบบผสมผสานยังชี้ให้เห็นว่าความสำเร็จของการจัดการเรียนรู้เกิดจาก (1) กรอบการวิเคราะห์ภาษาและพหูส่อที่ชัดเจน (2) การจัดลำดับกิจกรรมการเรียนรู้อย่างเป็นขั้นตอน (3) การทำงานกลุ่มที่ช่วยเสริมแรงสนับสนุนระหว่างผู้เรียน และ (4) การวัดและประเมินผลที่สอดคล้องกับผลลัพธ์การเรียนรู้ งานวิจัยนี้จึงให้หลักฐานเชิงประจักษ์ในการเชื่อมโยงทฤษฎีสื่อกับการเรียนรู้ภาษาอังกฤษที่ตอบโจทย์บริบทของผู้เรียน EFL อีกทั้งยังให้แนวปฏิบัติสำหรับหลักสูตรที่มุ่งพัฒนาผู้เรียนให้มีทั้งความสามารถทางภาษาและความรู้เท่าทันสื่อในฐานะพลเมืองโลก

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## Abstract

In today's digital landscape, where individuals are constantly exposed to diverse and often biased media, EFL learners face a dual challenge: enhancing their English proficiency while developing critical media literacy skills, a combination that is rarely addressed in traditional curricula. This study investigates how combining Activity-Based Learning (ABL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) with the NAMLE-CDA framework can transform Thai English major undergraduates from passive media consumers into critical analysts and producers, despite struggles with English language development alongside analytical thinking. Implemented in an English for Media Literacy course with 19 third-year students, the research followed Patphol's (2020) four-step model and adopted a mixed-methods design. Multiple instruments were employed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data sets, including teaching and learning materials and evaluations. Qualitative findings revealed progressive student development in three key areas: linguistic and multimodal analysis, contextual awareness, and strategic communication. Quantitative data supported these results, indicating high levels of student

satisfaction ( $M=4.35$ ,  $SD=0.81$ ), with particularly strong ratings in student engagement and content coverage (both  $M=4.69$ ,  $SD=0.48$ ). Integration of the two data sets suggested that the approach's effectiveness stemmed from (i) a structured analytical framework, (ii) sequenced learning progression to manage cognitive load, (iii) collaborative group tasks that facilitated peer support, and (iv) alignment between assessment methods and intended learning outcomes. By translating theoretical frameworks into scaffolded classroom practices, the approach bridged the gap between media theory and language acquisition, addressing a significant research need in EFL contexts. This study provides empirical evidence on integrating critical discourse analysis with media literacy education in language learning, offering a practical framework for similar programs aiming to cultivate competent language users and media-literate global citizens.

**Keywords:** Media Literacy, Critical Discourse Analysis, Activity-based Learning, Project-based Learning

## Introduction

Media literacy is a crucial skill in today's digital age, especially for language learners who engage with media in a foreign language. The National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) defines it as "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in a variety of forms" (n.d.), emphasizing its importance in modern education. Language learners must critically evaluate sources, identify misinformation, and interpret media messages—skills vital not just for language acquisition but also for global citizenship. For first language (L1) learners, integrating media literacy frameworks enhances critical analysis (Hobbs, 2010; Kellner & Share, 2007). However, for English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, the challenge is greater as they must process both linguistic and cultural nuances while

analyzing media messages (Brocca, Masia, & Garassino, 2024; Kalantzis et al., 2016).

According to Bonwell and Eison (1991), traditional lecture-based approaches often fail to engage students and may hinder their ability to critique media effectively. This is especially problematic in an English for Media Literacy course, where students are required to develop both language proficiency and media analysis skills. Active learning methods, such as activity-based learning (ABL) and project-based learning (PBL), offer promising alternatives. Specifically, while ABL promotes engagement through focused tasks, PBL encourages deeper learning through collaborative, real-world projects. Not only do these approaches (ABL and PBL) enhance media literacy education by allowing students to practice critical analysis, but they also support the development of language skills in contexts.

This study thus introduces an innovative teaching approach that combines ABL, PBL, the NAMLE framework, and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to address these challenges. Drawing on Patphol's (2020) four-step model for educational innovation, this approach was designed, implemented, and evaluated using a mixed-methods approach. The NAMLE framework guides students in engaging critically with media, while CDA helps uncover hidden ideologies and social meanings embedded in texts. Together, they foster both language development and critical thinking, making the approach ideal for EFL settings. This model offers a structured approach to developing and testing pedagogical innovations, filling a gap in the integration of media literacy and CDA in EFL education. Specifically, it aims to answer: (1) To what extent can an integrated NAMLE-CDA active learning model transform EFL students from passive media consumers into critical media analysts and producers? and (2) What learning outcomes emerge when evaluating this integrated approach through both quantitative and qualitative methods?

## Literature Review

### Media Literacy Education and frameworks

Thus far, various media literacy frameworks have shaped instructional approaches, demonstrating their effectiveness in fostering critical engagement with media texts (Brocca, Masia, & Garassino, 2024; Higdon, 2022; Hobbs, 2010; Kellner & Share, 2007; McNelly & Harvey, 2021). One widely recognized framework in media literacy education is NAMLE, which provides both conceptual understanding and practical guidance through key questions revolving around authorship, purpose, content, techniques, representation, audience, context, and interpretation. These structured questions help learners better understand how media messages are constructed, reflect values and perspectives, employ specific techniques to capture attention, and are interpreted differently by different audiences. In language education contexts, research has highlighted the benefits of integrating media literacy frameworks. For example, McNelly and Harvey (2021) found that incorporating media literacy instruction into language learning enhanced L1 students' comprehension and analytical abilities, emphasizing the importance of such frameworks in fostering students' critical engagement with media texts. Furthermore, Higdon (2022) expanded on media literacy frameworks by examining the ethical considerations and the role of structured reflection in understanding the impact of media on college students in the U.S. In EFL contexts, media literacy frameworks, including NAMLE, are widely applied to enhance students' critical engagement with media. For instance, Brocca, Masia, & Garassino (2024) examined how integrated media literacy frameworks support the development of critical digital literacy skills. Similarly, a study by Kalantzis et al. (2016) emphasized the need for a pedagogy of multiliteracies, highlighting how multimodal approaches help EFL learners integrate language learning with critical analysis. However, despite these benefits, both studies have found that EFL learners often struggle with the cognitive demands of

simultaneously processing language and performing critical analysis (Brocca, Masia, & Garassino, 2024; Kalantzis et al., 2016). This suggests that effective implementation requires scaffolding and explicit language support—key considerations that inform this study’s approach

### **Critical Discourse Analysis in Educational Settings**

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been applied as an analytical tool in various educational contexts to enhance critical awareness of language use. While the NAMLE framework establishes the overall structure for media literacy education, CDA provides specific analytical tools for discovering how language constructs and reinforces meaning in media texts (Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 2015). As a well-known CDA theorist, Fairclough (2013) developed a three-dimensional framework for the linguistic analysis of artifacts, such as media messages. This framework allows analysts to examine texts on three interconnected levels: (1) the textual level, which focuses on linguistic features, including vocabulary, grammar, and text structure; (2) the discursive level, which examines the processes of production, distribution, and consumption; and (3) the societal level, which connects textual analysis to broader social practices and power relationships. These three levels of CDA offer systematic analytical tools for analyzing media texts. The textual level analysis helps students identify linguistic patterns and features used in media contents; the discursive level analysis allows them to understand how media messages are created and distributed to specific audiences; while the societal level analysis encourages them to connect media texts to broader social contexts and power relations, important skills for developing comprehensive media literacy. In language teaching, research has examined the application of CDA principles in ESL/EFL contexts. For instance, Oroujlou and Sadeghi (2023) confirmed that incorporating CDA approaches into language instruction enhanced both linguistic knowledge and critical thinking among university students. Although Machin and Mayr (2012) do not explicitly address student

outcomes or pedagogical applications, their research emphasizes the importance of systematic training in CDA as a method to uncover ideologies, power relations, and social practices in language and multimodal resources (e.g., images, videos, etc.). Similarly, Flowerdew and Richardson (2018) emphasized the need for scaffolded instruction when introducing complex linguistic analysis to language learners, suggesting that structured analytical frameworks and guided practice are essential for effective implementation. This finding supports the current study's approach of developing a blended framework that systematically integrates CDA principles with media literacy concepts in an accessible and applicable format for EFL students.

### **Active Learning in Language and Media Education**

Research into activity-based or task-based learning demonstrates its effectiveness in language education contexts. Lambert and Oliver (2020) emphasized that task-based approaches yield improved language retention and application compared to traditional methods. Moreover, previous studies have also shown that structured group activities facilitate deeper engagement with language content and develop metacognitive awareness of language features (e.g., Ellis et al., 2020; Lambert & Oliver, 2020; Sato & Dussuel Lam, 2021). Similarly, project-based learning, another form of active learning, has shown positive outcomes in language education. For example, Kokotsaki, Menzies, & Wiggins (2016) found that project-based approaches enhanced language acquisition by providing meaningful contexts for language use, leading to improvements across all language skills while developing critical thinking abilities. For media literacy education specifically, Buckingham (2013) has stressed the importance of active learning approaches, highlighting that media production activities significantly enhanced students' critical understanding of media conventions and techniques. The study also suggests that creating media texts leads to a deeper understanding of how media constructs meaning.

### **Integrated Approaches in EFL Media Literacy Education**

As mentioned earlier, while previous studies have explored media literacy education, CDA, and active learning separately, research integrating these approaches in EFL contexts remains limited. Van Laar et al. (2017) identified several challenges in implementing media literacy education with EFL students, including language barriers, cultural differences in critical thinking traditions, and limited access to diverse media resources. Despite these challenges, positive outcomes from integrating these approaches have been evident. For example, previous research has argued that media literacy education provides opportunities for authentic language use and meaningful cultural engagement in EFL contexts (Redmond, 2012; Tour, 2020). Additionally, Kellner and Share (2007) emphasize the importance of critical media literacy by highlighting the need for students to understand the socio-political contexts of media production and consumption, claiming that this understanding is crucial for fostering critical thinking and empowering students to analyze and challenge media messages effectively.

Building upon these findings and addressing the previously identified research gap, the present study introduces an integrated approach that combines the NAMLE framework, CDA analytical tools, and active learning methodologies—specifically, ABL and PBL. The NAMLE framework is applied for its provision of practical, inquiry-based questions that guide media analysis. Subsequently, CDA is employed as a framework that offers systematic tools for examining the linguistic and multimodal features of media texts. To further enhance learning outcomes and classroom engagement, active learning approaches, namely ABL and PBL, are integrated as student-centered pedagogical methods.

## Methodology

### Population and samples

The study population comprised third-year undergraduate English major students enrolled in the English for Media Literacy course, a compulsory component of the Bachelor of Arts in English program, during the second semester of the 2024 academic year. All 19 students registered for the course were intentionally selected as participants using a purposive sampling method. While the small sample size may limit generalizability, it accurately reflects the actual course enrollment. Given this constraint, a mixed-methods approach was employed to enhance the depth and reliability of the outcomes (Creswell, 2009).

### Research instruments

Multiple research instruments can be grouped into two main categories: (1) teaching and learning materials, and (2) teaching and learning evaluation.

**(1) Teaching and learning materials:** including the course syllabus, instructional materials, multimodal resources, and worksheets. All materials were content validated by three experts, each representing one of the following areas: (i) English language teaching, (ii) media literacy, and (iii) critical discourse analysis. Table 1 presents a summary of the key materials, their intended purposes, validation processes, and examples of items, types of questions, or criteria.

**Table 1** Key Teaching and Learning Materials

Tool	Purpose	Validation	Example questions/items/criteria
<b>1. The Blended NAMLE-CDA Framework</b>	Integrates NAMLE and CDA for a solid analytical framework.	Adapted from NAMLE key questions based on George Mason University for the Online Professional English Network (OPEN) program (2022) and Fairclough (2013); content validated by three experts.	Who created this message? (NAMLE)Who holds power in the message? What pronouns are used? (CDA)

Tool	Purpose	Validation	Example questions/items/criteria
<b>2. Student Self-Assessment Forms</b>	Tracks progress with 5-point Likert scales and open responses.	Content reviewed and validated by three experts.	We can explain how the media influences people and why critical analysis is important; We used visuals effectively to support our analysis
<b>3. Structured Reflection Templates</b>	Guides the evaluation of learning based on course outcomes.	Content reviewed and validated by three experts.	What has changed in your understanding of...? How might this analysis influence....?
<b>4. Instructor Assessment Rubrics</b>	Measures analysis and production skills across four performance levels.	Content reviewed and validated by three experts.	4 levels: Beginning – Developing – Proficient – Exemplary
<b>5. Written Examinations</b>	Assesses skills from basic to complex (CLO1–CLO2).	Content reviewed and validated by three experts.	(1) MEQ: scenario-based; (2) CRQ: use the Blended Framework; (3) SAQ: key terms and concepts

## (2) Teaching and Learning Evaluation

A standardized university-administered questionnaire was employed to assess students' feedback and satisfaction levels regarding the teaching and learning of each course. The instrument utilizes a 5-point Likert scale and has been validated for both reliability and validity by the university. While this instrument primarily focuses on teaching performance, it also includes several items relevant to course design and learning effectiveness. To address this limitation, supplementary course-specific questions were incorporated into students' self-assessment forms, reflection templates, and the instructor

assessment rubric. These additions were designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the integrated teaching approach, particularly in relation to student engagement, skill development, and learning transfer.

### Data collection

Following Patphol's (2020) four-step model for developing educational innovations (1 needs analysis, 2 innovation design, 3 implementation, and 4 evaluation), the research implementation and data collection were designed to address the four key CLOs, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

**Table 2** Implementation Procedure for Integrating the Teaching Approach

<b>Step 1: Situational Analysis and Needs Assessment (Weeks 0-2)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Analysis of course content and learning objectives</li><li>- Integration of NAMLE framework and CDA principles with ABL and PBL approaches</li><li>- Development of the Blended Model Framework for media analysis</li><li>- Creation of teaching plans, learning activities, and assessment tools</li></ul> <p><b>*CLOs alignment:</b> All, with a primary focus on CLO1 understanding media literacy principles</p>
<b>Step 2: Design of Learning Activities (Weeks 2-3)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Development of Activity-Based Learning (ABL) modules focusing on media analysis using the Blended Model Framework</li><li>- Creation of Project-Based Learning (PBL) modules focusing on media production informed by critical analysis</li><li>- Design of assessment rubrics and reflection templates</li><li>- Preparation of instructional materials and resources</li></ul> <p><b>*CLOs alignment:</b> CLO1 (ABL activities for understanding principles), CLO2 (Analysis activities), CLO3 (Production projects), CLO4 (Collaborative components)</p>
<b>Step 3: Implementation and Ongoing Assessment (Weeks 2-15)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Implementation of the integrated approach throughout the semester</li><li>- Facilitation of activity-based learning through structured analysis exercises, group discussions, and case studies</li><li>- Guidance of project-based learning through media production assignments with clear objectives and criteria</li><li>- Collection of qualitative data through student self-assessments and reflections</li><li>- Continuous assessment of learning outcomes through instructor evaluation</li></ul> <p><b>*CLOs alignment:</b> CLO1 (Lectures and discussions), CLO2 (Analysis activities), CLO3 (Media production), CLO4 (Group work and collaboration)</p>

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**Step 4: Comprehensive Evaluation (Weeks 16-18)**

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- Collection of quantitative data through the university's teaching evaluation
- Analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the integrated approach
- Development of conclusions and recommendations for future applications

\*CLOs alignment: Overall evaluation of achievement across all CLOs

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From Table 2, the course implementation included several key activities designed to develop students' English language and critical media literacy through the integrated approach, grounded in CLO-specific assessments: CLO1 – Written examinations on media literacy principles, CLO2 – Structured analysis projects based on the blended framework, CLO3 – Media production projects evaluated with assessment rubrics, and CLO4 – Peer evaluations, participation records, and reflective assignments for collaborative skills.

### **Data analysis**

To ensure triangulation and a comprehensive understanding of student development, both qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed as follows. Qualitative data analysis followed a three-phase content analysis approach applied to four data components: student reflections, instructor observations, media analysis products, and media production projects. The process involved (1) initial coding based on course learning outcomes (CLOs) and emergent categories, (2) pattern identification across data sources, and (3) thematic synthesis aligning findings with research objectives and CLOs.

Data from the university-administered evaluation questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The system automatically calculated mean scores and standard deviations based on a five-point rating scale (1.00–5.00) with the following interpretation criteria: 4.50–5.00 = Highest level of implementation; 3.50–4.49 = High level of implementation; 2.50–3.49 = Moderate level of implementation; 1.50–2.49 = Low level of implementation; 1.00–1.49 = Lowest level of implementation

## Results and Discussion

The analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data strongly supports the effectiveness of integrating ABL-PBL with the NAMLE-CDA framework in enhancing the English media literacy competencies of Thai English major undergraduates. The findings below are organized to demonstrate how this integrated approach addresses the research questions.

**RQ1: To what extent can an integrated NAMLE-CDA active learning model transform EFL students from passive media consumers into critical media analysts and producers?**

### 1.1 Transformation from Passive Consumers to Critical Analysts

Students demonstrated significant growth in their critical media analysis capabilities, as evidenced by both qualitative and quantitative data sources. Qualitative data from student reflections collected during weeks 3-15 revealed a transformation in analytical approach. This shift aligns with Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Among all, one reflection noted: *"Before taking this course, I only considered whether I liked media content or not. Now, I automatically analyze who created it, why, and what techniques they're using to influence audiences"*. This transformation from passive consumption to active inquiry reflects the core objectives of the NAMLE framework (NAMLE, n.d.) and aligns with Kellner and Share's (2007) call for critical engagement with media. This finding is reinforced by quantitative results, where students rated *"Uses teaching methods that encourage students to think, analyze, and find answers on their own"* with a mean score of 4.54 (SD=0.52) (see Table 3 for further reference).

Instructor observations from weeks 4, 8, and 12 documented in teaching journals further support this, indicating a steady improvement in students' use of analytical language during class discussions. Notably, by week 8, 16 out of 19 students consistently used analytical terminology from the NAMLE-CDA model without instructor prompting. This multidimensional development was

further evidenced through class discussions, student reflections, and written examinations, which collectively revealed students' enhanced analytical skills across three areas:

**1.1.1 Linguistic/Multimodal Analysis Skills:** Students progressed from surface observations to nuanced linguistic analysis, as exemplified in Group 3's news media analysis: *"The article consistently uses military terms [metaphors] like 'battle', 'strategy', and 'victory' when talking about environmental policies, framing climate change as an enemy rather than a [collaborative] challenge."* This analytical depth reflects Fairclough's (2013) textual dimension of CDA and demonstrates how students successfully applied linguistic tools to uncover implicit meanings in media texts. This finding aligns with Machin and Mayr's (2012) research, suggesting that explicit instruction in linguistic analysis tools leads to more nuanced interpretations of media.

**1.1.2 Contextual Awareness:** Students demonstrated increased awareness of how social, historical, and cultural contexts shape media messages. Group 1's advertisement analysis illustrated this development: *"Western hospital advertisements typically feature white male doctors in lab coats conveying authority, while Thai advertisements showcase diverse medical staff emphasizing warmth and family connections."* This cultural analysis aligns with Van Dijk's (2015) emphasis on sociocultural contexts in CDA and confirms Kalantzis et al.'s (2016) assertion that media literacy for EFL students requires cultural contextualization. This finding also supports Tour's (2020) argument that media literacy education offers valuable opportunities for authentic cultural engagement in EFL contexts.

**1.1.3 Multimodal Interpretation:** Students moved beyond linguistic analysis to examine how visual, spatial, and typographic resources contribute to meaning. Group 4's film poster analysis demonstrated this capacity: *"The film poster positions the viewer to look up at the protagonist, establishing*

*power dynamics through angle. The red suit creates visual intensity, enhancing his menacing characterization.”* This multimodal analysis demonstrates students’ application of the NAMLE-CDA framework across semiotic modes, addressing Brocca, Masia, & Garassino’s (2024) (2024) concern about the need for comprehensive analysis tools for EFL learners engaging with multimodal texts.

## **1.2 Transformation from Analysts to Producers**

The research explored not only how students analyzed media but also how they became producers, addressing the first research question regarding the transformation from passive consumers to active producers. Both qualitative and quantitative data provide insights into the specific competencies that have been developed.

**1.2.1 Strategic Communication Skills:** Students made deliberate media choices informed by their analytical understanding. Group 2’s promotional video clip project rationale qualitatively demonstrated this development: *“We used diverse camera angles and lighting effects to create a cozy and warm atmosphere, representing a long-term relationship among ‘old college friends’ who become ‘family members’ even after graduation”*. This strategic application of media techniques validates Buckingham’s (2013) finding that production activities enhance students’ understanding of media conventions. It also supports Kokotsaki, Menzies, & Wiggins’ (2016) assertion that project-based approaches provide meaningful contexts for language application.

**1.2.2 Audience Consideration:** Students demonstrated a deeper understanding of tailoring messages for specific audiences. Group 5’s tourism project rationale exemplified this skill: *“We researched target tourists’ media habits and created a digital brochure with QR codes linking to interactive content, rather than a traditional paper brochure”*. This audience-centered approach reflects the NAMLE framework’s emphasis on purposeful

communication. It aligns with Ellis et al.'s (2020) findings on the effectiveness of task-based approaches in developing metacognitive awareness in language learners.

Quantitative data with high student rating for the following item: *“Provides guidance on how to apply the knowledge from this course to daily life”* ( $M=4.62$ ,  $SD=0.65$ ) further validates students' ability to transfer analytical skills to practical production contexts.

**RQ2: What learning outcomes emerge when evaluating this integrated approach through both quantitative and qualitative methods?**

### **2.1 Emergent Learning Outcomes**

This section addresses the second research question by identifying specific learning outcomes that emerged through the integrated quantitative and qualitative evaluation approach.

**2.1.1 Responsibility and accountability:** Students consistently fulfilled individual responsibilities within group contexts, meeting deadlines and completing assigned tasks. This finding supports Lambert and Oliver's (2020) research on how task-based approaches develop both language proficiency and learning autonomy.

**2.1.2 Respect for diverse perspectives:** Group discussions revealed students' increasing capability to consider multiple viewpoints, aligning with Kokotsaki, Menzies, & Wiggins' (2016) findings that project-based learning enhances perspective-taking abilities as well as language skills. This also reflects Kellner and Share's (2007) emphasis on multiple perspectives in media analysis.

**2.1.3 Effective communication:** A noticeable progress from initial difficulties expressing complex analytical ideas in English to more confident articulation was observed. This development supports Ellis et al.'s (2020) research on how structured group activities facilitate deeper engagement with language content while developing metacognitive awareness.

**2.1.4 Collaborative problem-solving:** Students effectively applied analytical frameworks to their own decision-making processes, as illustrated in one group reflection: *“When we had different ideas about our project, we evaluated each option based on the key questions focusing on our audience’s needs. This helped us decide on the final approach”*.

Instructor observations (documented in weeks 3-15) confirmed the value of peer collaboration, particularly for lower-proficiency learners. One entry stated: *“Students struggling with individual assignments articulated complex ideas more confidently when supported by peers modeling analytical language.”* This finding supports Flowerdew and Richardson’s (2018) emphasis on scaffolded peer learning in complex analytical tasks.

Quantitative evidence aligns with this, with the item *“Provides opportunities for students to ask questions in class”* scoring 4.69 (SD = 0.48). Collectively, these outcomes confirm that the integrated approach addressed both analytical competencies and the collaborative, communicative skills necessary for EFL students’ meaningful media engagement, echoing Tour’s (2020) emphasis on real-world language use in media literacy.

## **2.2 Teaching and Learning Evaluation**

Quantitative data collected through the university’s standardized teaching evaluation system revealed high levels of student satisfaction with the integrated teaching approach (See Table 3 for reference). Of the 19 students enrolled in the course, 13 (68.42%) completed the questionnaire. This response rate is considered effective and valid, as a response rate above 60% is typically deemed sufficient to ensure reliability and representativeness of the data (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). As shown in Table 3, the overall mean score across all evaluation items was 4.35 (SD = 0.81), indicating that the majority of students perceived the integrated approach as highly effective.

**Table 3** Mean Scores by Evaluation Category (n=13)

Category	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Teaching Practices	4.32	0.80	High
Assessment & Evaluation	4.42	0.82	High
<b>Overall Average</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>High</b>

Moreover, analysis of individual evaluation items revealed particularly high ratings for several aspects of the teaching approach. Table 4 presents all the highest-rated evaluation items, showing multiple criteria that received equally high ratings.

**Table 4** Top Highest-Rated Evaluation Items and Their Relationship to Research Constructs (n=13)

Rank	Evaluation Item	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Related Research Constructs
1	Covers all content according to the 15-week course plan	4.69	0.48	Highest	Sequential Learning Progression
1	Provides opportunities for students to ask questions in class.	4.69	0.48	Highest	Collaborative Learning
3	Provides guidance on how to apply the knowledge from this course to daily life.	4.62	0.65	Highest	Transfer of Analysis to Production
4	Uses teaching methods that encourage students to think, analyze, and find answers on their own.	4.54	0.52	Highest	Structured Critical Analysis Framework
5	Clearly states the course objectives, learning outcomes, and lesson plans for each session.	4.38	0.87	High	Sequential Learning Progression
5	Clearly explains the key concepts of each lesson.	4.38	0.77	High	Structured Critical Analysis Framework
5	Uses a variety of teaching methods and effectively conveys knowledge to students.	4.38	0.65	High	Activity-Based Learning Implementation

Rank	Evaluation Item	Mean	SD	Interpretation	Related Research Constructs
5	Organizes learning activities that facilitate students to achieve the course's learning outcomes.	4.38	0.77	High	Project-Based Learning Implementation
5	Clearly informs students about assessment methods and grading criteria.	4.38	0.96	High	Assessment Alignment
5	Provides clear guidance and feedback on assignments.	4.38	0.77	High	Assessment Alignment

Notably, the highest ratings were for content coverage ( $M=4.69$ ), providing opportunities for student questions ( $M=4.69$ ), real-world application of knowledge ( $M=4.62$ ), and encouragement of critical thinking ( $M=4.54$ ). Six additional criteria were rated with the mean score of 4.38, indicating consistent satisfaction across multiple aspects of the teaching approach. These results demonstrate that the integrated approach effectively fostered engagement, participation, critical thinking, and practical application, supporting Bonwell and Eison's (1991) findings on the benefits of active learning over lecture-based methods, particularly in terms of its positive impact on student engagement. The lowest-rated item was 'Encourages students to research resources and information at the University Library' ( $M=3.77$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ), suggesting an area for potential improvement in future implementations (Note: Due to space limitations, this data is not included in Table 2). In sum, the quantitative data reflect a broadly positive student response to the integrated ABL-PBL instructional design. However, it also highlights certain challenges in implementing critical literacy-based instruction in EFL settings.

Overall, the combination of qualitative and quantitative findings demonstrates that the integrated ABL-PBL approach, utilizing the NAMLE-CDA framework, successfully enhanced students' media literacy skills in an EFL context, despite the significant challenges students faced in balancing English

language development with critical analysis skills. That said, it is worth noting that developing EFL students' English proficiency while simultaneously enhancing their critical thinking abilities is not an easy task. Throughout the course, many students struggled to express complex analytical thoughts in English, as evidenced by their oral discussions and written tests. Despite these challenges, the data reveals a remarkable shift. That is, all students developed media critical and analytical skills through the activity-based and project-based approaches implemented. The collaborative nature of the learning environment, particularly group work, appeared to be instrumental in helping students overcome linguistic barriers to develop analytical capacities. To better understand how this development occurred despite linguistic and cognitive challenges, the data points to four key instructional elements that supported student learning:

### **1. Structured Critical Analysis Framework**

The integration of qualitative evidence (student analytical products) with quantitative data (high ratings for critical thinking development,  $M=4.54$ ) demonstrates that providing students with explicit analytical frameworks from CDA and NAMLE principles created an effective scaffold for analyzing complex media texts. This aligns with Flowerdew and Richardson's (2018) emphasis on scaffolded instruction when introducing complex linguistic analysis to language learners. The blended framework operationalized this approach by connecting broader critical questions with specific linguistic and multimodal analysis techniques, addressing what Oroujlou and Sadeghi (2023) identified as essential for enhancing both linguistic knowledge and critical thinking among university students.

### **2. Sequential Learning Progression**

The strong performance reflected in consistently high student ratings for "*Provides opportunities for student questions*" ( $M=4.69$ ), "*Clearly explains concepts*" ( $M=4.38$ ), and "*Organizes learning activities effectively*" ( $M=4.38$ )

suggests that the course's structured progression effectively built competencies. This progression addressed the dual challenges of language processing and critical thinking development by Brocca, Masia, & Garassino (2024):

- Weeks 1-3: Introduction to media literacy concepts and the NAMELE-CDA framework
- Weeks 4-9: Guided application of the framework to various media texts
- Weeks 10-15: Independent media production projects applying principles learned

This sequential approach aligns with Lambert and Oliver's (2020) findings on the effectiveness of task-based approaches in improving language retention and application, while addressing the obstacles identified by Van Laar et al. (2017) in implementing media literacy education with EFL students.

### **3. Collaborative Learning Environment**

The triangulation of data sources—including student reflections, instructor observations, and quantitative ratings—confirms the central role of collaboration in student development. The high ratings for student participation opportunities (M=4.69) and organization of learning activities (M=4.38) validate qualitative observations of peer support and collaborative problem-solving. Specifically, group work emerged as a particularly crucial element in helping students overcome the dual challenge of developing English proficiency while enhancing critical media analysis skills. To illustrate, in collaborative settings, students who struggled with individual oral and written tasks were able to contribute to group analyses and projects, with peer support scaffolding both language and analytical development. As one student noted in their reflection: *“When I work alone, I [feel] confused about both English and media analysis. But in our group, we help each other find the right words to express [our] ideas about the media we analyzed.”*. This finding strongly supports Sato and Dussuel Lam's (2021) research on how structured group activities facilitate deeper engagement with language

content and develop metacognitive awareness, while also addressing the specific challenges faced by EFL learners engaging with complex analytical frameworks.

#### **4. Assessment Alignment**

The high student satisfaction with assessment methods (category average  $M=4.42$ ) highlights the importance of aligning evaluation practices with learning outcomes through: (i) Traditional assessments (exams, quizzes) for content knowledge, (ii) Project-based assessments for analytical and production skills, and (iii) Process-oriented assessments for collaborative skills. Instructor observations further supported this finding, noting in teaching journal entries (weeks 9 and 14) that “the variety of assessment methods allowed students with different strengths to demonstrate their understanding, particularly benefiting those whose written expression in English was still developing but who could demonstrate analytical skills through multimodal projects.”

The NAMLE-CDA blended framework was particularly effective in helping students develop analytical skills by providing a systematic approach to examining both broader critical questions (NAMLE) and specific linguistic/multimodal features (CDA). For EFL students, this structured approach provided concrete analytical tools that helped overcome the dual challenges of language processing and critical thinking identified by Kalantzis et al. (2016). For example, when analyzing advertisements, students would systematically examine: Authorship and purpose (who created this message? why?), Linguistic features (modal verbs, pronouns), Visual elements (color, placement, layout, symbolism), Representation patterns (inclusion, exclusion, stereotyping), Ideological positioning (Implicit values and assumptions). This comprehensive analytical approach facilitated students to move beyond surface-level interpretations to identify specific strategies used to construct media messages, developing both critical thinking skills and linguistic

awareness simultaneously. This finding directly addresses Higdon's (2022) emphasis on structured reflection for media impact analysis and supports Brocca, Masia, & Garassino (2024) findings on developing critical digital literacy skills in EFL contexts.

## Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of an integrated ABL-PBL approach with the NAMLE-CDA framework for developing English media literacy among Thai undergraduates. The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings provides insights into pedagogical practices for implementing media literacy in EFL contexts, contributing to a broader scholarly understanding of media literacy pedagogy in language learning environments. More specifically, the study demonstrates that the success of this integrated approach can be attributed to several key factors: (1) Providing structured critical analysis framework, (2) Sequencing learning activities to build competencies, (3) Creating collaborative learning environments that foster both language development and media literacy, (4) Aligning assessment methods with learning outcomes. The convergence of high student evaluation scores, particularly in areas such as “*providing opportunities for student questions*,” “*clearly explaining concepts*,” and “*organizing learning activities effectively*”, alongside the quality of students' media projects and reflections, reinforces the effectiveness of the integrated approach. Furthermore, positive teaching evaluations suggest that the blended NAMLE-CDA framework provides a robust foundation for media literacy education in language learning contexts. This supports the argument put forward by scholars that media literacy education can offer opportunities for authentic language use and meaningful cultural engagement in EFL settings (Redmond, 2012; Tour, 2020).

Despite the limitation of a relatively small sample size ( $n = 19$ ), which is inherent to the specific course enrollment, the triangulated evaluation strategy and the consistency of findings across multiple assessment instruments enhance the reliability and generalizability of the results within similar contexts. The study demonstrates the effectiveness of this integrated approach in a specific educational context, providing insights for similar EFL programs that seek to enhance both media literacy and language proficiency simultaneously, offering replicable strategies for EFL programs aiming to develop language proficiency and media literacy concurrently.

These findings contribute to addressing the research gap by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of an integrated approach that combines media literacy frameworks, CDA analytical tools, and active learning methodologies in an EFL context. This research responds to Tour's (2020) argument that media literacy education offers opportunities for authentic language use and meaningful cultural engagement, while addressing the challenges identified by Van Laar et al. (2017) in implementing media literacy education with EFL students. Future research could employ quasi-experimental designs comparing the integrated NAMLE-CDA active learning model with traditional approaches, thereby providing stronger evidence of its effectiveness. Moreover, studies could examine the long-term impact of this integrated approach on students' media consumption habits and critical thinking skills beyond the academic context. Investigating adaptations of the framework for different educational levels and language proficiency backgrounds is also recommended.

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