

MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION (MLE) IN THE CLASSROOM: A DESCRIPTIVE CASE STUDY OF ONE EXEMPLARY JAPANESE TEACHER'S MLE PRACTICES, ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION

HESSEL ANNE N. DOMINGO^{*1}

NORIFUMI MASHIKO^{*2}

This study aimed to find out the media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and perception of students' media skills and understanding of one exemplary Japanese teacher. This research utilized a case study approach. The method of data collection included an open-ended interview, a survey questionnaire and an observation of a videotaped lesson. Results showed that the teacher used a curriculum-driven approach to teach media literacy in the subjects of Art, Japanese Language and Integrated Study. He also used popular culture as a learning resource to create an inquiry-based culture in the classroom. The teacher felt confident in his skills of teaching media literacy. He believed in the effectiveness of teaching media literacy from the third grade. Although he thinks that students in the third grade and fourth grade are competent in using computers, they still lack the skill to distinguish the difference of one media from another.

Key words: media literacy, case study, curriculum development, lesson design, teacher research

I. THE PROBLEM AND A REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this digital age, children have access to digital media devices and social network sites. Children are exposed to different kinds of information from media. They are becoming heavy media users and they hardly do recreational activities outdoors. They spend more time sharing information online, playing online games and sending messages from their cellphones. According to Gutnick et al. (2010), children have access to increasing types of media and consume more electronic media than ever before. Children ages 8 to 10 use multiple media simultaneously and are exposed to almost 8 hours of media everyday.

Media shapes the children's understanding of the world, thus, there is a need to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding to use media effectively. According to the Center for Media Literacy (2002), media literacy is a 21st century approach to education which provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate using messages in a variety of forms. Media may present many risks and opportunities but with media literacy, children will be able to make sense of the messages that they receive. They will be able to think for themselves. By introducing media literacy education in schools, teachers can help the students become critical

*1 Teacher Training Student in 2012 Academic year

*2 Information & Multimedia Center, Gifu University

thinkers and express themselves using different forms of media. Children will not be passive consumers of media but also active creators.

In countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada, media education has become part of the school curriculum for many years. These countries are considered the most advanced in terms of media literacy. In Australia, media teaching is included in the curriculum for Arts and English. The emphasis is on the analysis of media texts and the practical application of media skills. These media skills include reading and writing different types of media texts, operating cameras and using radio equipment. Only qualified teachers are eligible to teach media education which is considered a compulsory subject in public schools (Barnes, et al., 2007). In New Zealand, Media Studies is part of the Social Sciences domain. Learning objectives include exploring how the media operates within societal contexts and how they themselves can understand the place of media in society. Students also study, and apply, media language and media texts. Students are also expected to make media products that can entertain, inform, and challenge. In Canada, media literacy is taught from kindergarten to grade 12. In 2006, the state of Ontario in Canada introduced a new Language curriculum for Grades 1-8. The new curriculum includes a new expectation strand: Media Literacy. The Media Literacy strand gives media education the same focus as the traditional strands included in the curriculum: Oral Communications, Reading, and Writing (MediaSmarts, 2012).

In other parts of the world, media literacy education is still a developing field. Although it is not included in the school curriculum, there is a growing interest among educators to engage in media literacy education. Some teachers find ways to introduce it in their classrooms but available resources are not enough. It is within this context that a descriptive case study of a Japanese teacher's media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and perception of students' media skills and understanding was conducted. This research hopes to enable teachers to develop an awareness of the practices in integrating information and media literacy in individual subjects.

The researcher is inspired to pursue this study because there are few researches that deal with media-related practices, attitudes and perceptions of teachers who engage in media literacy education. Furthermore, the researcher is concerned about the issues and problems faced by the teachers in integrating media literacy education in the school curriculum. It is hoped that this research can serve as an inspirational guide for educators, researchers and policymakers to respond to the growing need of media literacy education in the school environment.

1. A Review of Related Literature

This section deals with the literature and studies that are relevant to the topic under investigation. The readings are organized under the following headings: 1) media literacy education practices; 2) teachers' attitudes towards media literacy education; and 3) teachers' perception of students' media skills and understanding.

i. Media Literacy Education Practices

From Parola and Ranieri's (2011) analysis of the media education practices across Europe,

media practices related to media writing and reading skills were the most frequently used while media consumption related skills are the least used. Classic media education topics such as stereotyping and the study of media-like cinema are not discussed as attested by the collection of lesson plans gathered for the study. Media education activities in the classroom are also hardly documented. From the collected experiences, there was no tool explicitly and consciously aimed at assessing students' learning.

Lange (2010) examined how a classroom procedure known as Plan/Go-through/Evaluate (PGE) worked in integrating formal and non formal media experiences and practices into classroom-based media learning at the upper secondary level in Norway. PGE is a group work which involves students and teachers working together in planning, execution and evaluation of classroom-based media projects. In PGE, students are able to present their views on digital tools and give suggestions on how to structure classroom work. The interaction analysis in PGE also suggests that students also question teachers' decisions.

A study on Instructional Practices in Media Literacy Education And Their Impact On Students' Learning by Hobbs and Frost (1998) revealed that students who have knowledge in analyzing media and have experiences in media production performed better in an activity on media analysis which involved deconstructing part of a television news program. These students did not just rely on the prepared media literacy curriculum, but also made use of the film and video frequently in the classroom. Results also showed that students develop higher levels of information processing skills when teachers make use of extensive and comprehensive approaches to integrating media literacy skills in the existing curriculum.

In Japan, the Media, Expression, Learning and Literacy Project (MELL) established by Tokyo University, makes media production the focus of media education. It also emphasizes the importance of media application and media access. The media education courses in the MELL Project encourage students to work with media organizations to hone whatever skills they have in communication technology. This enhances the students' skills in media production and media participation. Thus, they are transformed from being passive media consumers into media producers. (Cheung, 2008)

ii. Teachers' Attitudes Towards Media Literacy Education

A study on Russian teachers' attitudes to the problem of media education of pupils and university students shows that the majority of teachers find it necessary to have media education either as a mandatory subject or as an elective for both pupils and elementary students. More than half of the teachers believe that media education should be introduced in the universities as an area of expertise.

M.A. Lauri et al. (2010) made a study on the attitudes of a sample of English, Maltese and German teachers towards media education. It was revealed that teachers who took part in the study did not feel sufficiently prepared to teach media education because they did not receive training or any training at all in teaching the subject. It was suggested in the study that media education should become part of the initial and advance teacher training courses for teachers.

In a research regarding the attitude of teachers about educational media, Nazari et al. (2009)

revealed that teachers' approaches were positive to the use of educational media as study aids. They view television as the best medium and educational journals as the least important. 74% of the teachers believed that educational programs are necessary in improving students' scores.

In a media literacy forum for teachers in Bhutan, more than half of the teachers said that the forum on media literacy was very relevant. Many teachers said that they had never discussed media literacy related issues as a group before. They found the forum was most useful especially in understanding the importance of using media in daily classroom discussions. Most teachers felt that the newspaper is the most important form of media that they should understand because it provides different types of news in detail and helps create awareness about countries around the world.

iii. Teachers' Perception of Students' Media Skills and Understanding

Yates (2000) conducted a survey on public and private elementary and secondary school teachers in a small southeastern city to assess their perspectives on media education. It was revealed in the survey that although teachers agree that their students have sufficient knowledge when it comes to operating media equipment, students lack the skill in understanding what is produced by the media. The results also indicated that teachers in public school believe their students have significantly lower media understanding competencies than do private schools. This finding might be attributed to traditional differences in public and private education like class size, freedom in adapting a curriculum and socio-economic status of students.

iv. Synthesis

The most commonly used media education approach is the inquiry process. It includes critical analysis skills and creative communication skills. Based on research studies, pedagogical practices that are student-centered and inquiry-oriented are mostly used. Teaching children to ask questions help build the foundation for a lifetime of critical thinking. Besides the focus on the analysis of media, much emphasis is also given to the production process. Most teachers require their students to produce their own media. Researches strongly recommend a pedagogy of teaching critical media literacy through project-based media production. However, the limited resources in assessing student learning in media education is considered a problem.

The teacher's attitude toward media is considered an important aspect in incorporating media literacy in the classroom. Teachers have positive attitudes toward media literacy. They believe in the importance of media education. They search for ways to effectively teach media literacy in the classroom. However, most of them lack formal training. They feel inadequate about their skills. They want media education to be included in teacher training courses and workshops. Other problems that teachers face include lack of time and lack of materials.

Students have practical access to a variety of media both at home and in school. Teachers perceive that students are competent in using media equipment but they are not as competent at understanding what is produced by the media.

2. Statement of the Problem and Objectives

This study seeks to find out the media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and perception of students' media skills and understanding of the selected teacher. Specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the media literacy education practices of the selected teacher?
2. What is the attitude towards media literacy education of the selected teacher?
3. What is the teacher's perception of the students' media skills and understanding?

This study has the following objectives:

1. To know the media literacy education practices of the selected teacher
2. To find out the attitude towards media literacy education of the selected teacher
3. To determine the teacher's perception of students' media skills and understanding

This study sought to determine the media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and perception of students' media skills and understanding of the selected Japanese teacher. The researcher had an open-ended interview with the teacher and an observation of a videotaped lesson. A survey questionnaire was also given.

The teacher in the case study involved a former teacher in elementary and middle school. The results of this study cannot generalize the media literacy practices of all exemplary teachers in Japan.

The result of this research hopes to provide information regarding the media literacy practices of a teacher in Japan who integrated media literacy in his lesson. There is a need to disseminate information among educators regarding the ways in which media literacy can be taught in the classroom especially in countries where media literacy education is not part of the school curriculum. The researcher wants to help develop an awareness of the importance of teaching media literacy to children.

II. METHOD

This chapter describes the research design, the case selection, the process of data collection and data analysis.

1. Research Design

A case study approach was utilized in this research. A case study is the study of a phenomenon or a process as it develops within one case (Swanborn, 2010). This research utilized a descriptive case study which involved starting with a descriptive theory. The information gathered from the subject was then compared to the pre-existing theory.

One advantage of a case study is that it provides a great amount of description and detail. Researchers can learn a lot from one case. This volume of details suggests many future research questions to follow up in other studies. A case study also allows a researcher to present data collected from a number of methods such as surveys, interviews, document review, and observation (Boyce et. al, 2006).

2. Case Selection

In identifying the respondent, snowball sampling was used. Snowball sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is used by researchers to identify potential subjects in studies where subjects are hard to locate. The respondent in the study is Yasuhiro Maeda who is a former elementary and middle school teacher who has 25 years of teaching experience. He worked in a Kumamoto university-attached elementary school as a media education specialist teacher for about 10 years. He also researched and developed a media literacy curriculum for children. His developed subject matters received recognition for best performance in educational media contests. Yasuhiro Maeda is currently working as supervisor for in-service teachers at Kumamoto-city educational center.

3. Data Collection

The researcher utilized an open-ended interview, observation of a videotaped lesson and a survey questionnaire.

Interview. The researcher and the teacher engaged in an open-ended interview. Since the teacher lives in a distant place, the researcher conducted an on-line interview using Skype. The teacher received a copy of the interview questionnaire through e-mail days before the scheduled interview. The open-ended interview questionnaire consisted of four parts.

Part I asked questions regarding the teacher's perception of media literacy such as how he defined media literacy and how he learned about media literacy.

Part II was about media literacy education practices such as the ways on how he used media in the classroom, how he chose which media documents to use in class, and how often he integrated media literacy in his lessons.

Part III consisted of questions regarding the respondent's attitude towards media literacy education such as his view on who should be responsible in teaching media literacy, on what makes media literacy education hard to implement and on what grade level is it appropriate or effective to teach media literacy.

Part IV was about the respondent's perception of students' media skills and understanding like how competent did he think his students were in using media equipment, how competent were they in understanding media and on what he thinks make a student media literate.

The interview, conducted on the 7th day of October 2012, was recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed for analysis.

Observation. The researcher observed a videotaped lesson of the teacher. The videotaped lesson was set in a public elementary school. It showed 4th graders in a Japanese language class learning a unit entitled "APPU TO RUZU DE TSUTAERU (Report through "UP" and "LOOSE")". The children were required to read and understand a passage. This lesson was recorded in two angles using a video camera. The first angle focused on the teacher's behaviour and the other one focused on the children's behaviour.

Questionnaire. A questionnaire was sent through email to find out the teacher's motivation for

integrating literacy education to his work with students. The questionnaire was from media education expert Renee Hobbs' book *Digital and Media Literacy: Connecting Culture and Classroom* (Hobbs, 2011). In the questionnaire, the teacher was made to rank in order the top five that most closely relate to his goals and motives in integrating media and technology to his work.

4. Data Analysis

In analyzing the data gathered from the teacher, the researcher used content analysis. Content analysis is a research method that uses a set of procedures to make valid inferences from the text. These inferences are about the sender(s) of the message, the message itself, or the audience of the message (Weber, 1990).

The data collected were analyzed in order to describe and explain the media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and the teacher's perception of students' media skills and understanding. A theory was developed to explain the meaning of the data.

III. RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the study. This section is divided into three parts. The first part is about the media literacy education practices of the teacher. The second part focuses on the attitude towards media literacy education. The third part is about the perception of students' media skills and understanding of the selected Japanese teacher.

Yasuhiro Maeda defines media literacy as the ability of reading media critically and the ability to express one's self using media. Reading media critically and expressing one's self using media are both important skills that children should learn. Maeda got his knowledge on the subject from reading books about media literacy. Most of them were written by Akiko Sugaya and other teachers. He also learned from watching videos and television. Maeda was an Art teacher in junior high school for twenty years. In Art class, teaching art appreciation to students was essential thus he started to use media when teaching it.

Maeda finds the skill of utilizing media as an important skill for teachers in order to build media literacy. His motivations for integrating media and technology into his lesson include: 1. To improve students' writing and communication skills by enabling them to use a wide range of message forms, symbol systems, and technologies 2. To promote creativity and self-expression and 3. To build students' ability to be active, thoughtful 'readers' or interpreters of the media messages in their cultural environment.

i. Media Education Practice

In one lesson, Maeda used a curriculum-driven approach in which he integrated media literacy into his Japanese lesson on "*Appu to Ruzu de Tsutaeru*". The main activity of the lesson was to compare photos of different newspaper articles. The students in the classroom formed a group and they each had to choose an interesting article from the morning newspaper of the previous day. The

students had to paste their chosen article in a worksheet. In that worksheet, they also had to write the title of the article, the contents, their own opinion, and the reason why they chose the article. They also had to present their work in front of the class. The goal of the activity was to enable the students to understand as many articles as possible in the newspaper. As 4th grade students, they don't have enough skills to understand everything that is written in the newspaper. But in the activity of having their classmates present the news, they get to comprehend many articles in a newspaper.

In another class, Maeda had used projector and digital television. He used those media in showing artworks to children. In Art class, Maeda had integrated popular culture. He was able to use tv news, manga and comics. With his Art class in the sixth graders, he used cartoons from newspapers. He discussed in class why a particular drawing was used to represent a particular historical event. In his Japanese Language class and Integrated Study class, he was able to use animation. Students also had to create news program. For example in Integrated Study class, students learned about English. The students had to use English for the introduction of Japanese culture to foreigners. In so doing, they had to use examples of Japanese popular culture such as animation, cartoon and Japanese popular food. The students also had to make video news. So before that, they had to watch an example of a Japanese TV news program. The fifth grade learners of Japanese language class had to make a news program. The news was about the introduction of school events and of their school teachers to their parents. When it comes to how often he integrated media literacy in his lessons, he integrated it once every term. For every term, he integrated it once in a subject matter unit.

ii. Attitude Towards Media Education

Maeda feels confident in teaching media literacy. He finds the skill of utilizing media as an important skill for teachers. Teachers should be capable in making media such as videos, slide show presentations, newspapers, leaflet or pamphlets. Media literacy education is hard to implement because teachers don't have the medium to make media. Most teachers didn't have an experience to learn about media literacy and make media for education so these maybe are some of the reasons that they didn't adopt media literacy in their lessons. According to Maeda, the experience of making media is an important thing because it makes the teachers more confident in designing their own lesson and integrating media literacy. The opportunity to make media can help better equip teachers to integrate media literacy in their classes. Experience makes the teachers more confident in designing their own lesson. In his own opinion, third graders should start engaging in media literacy-related activities like taking photographs and adding captions based on their own opinion of what the photographs suggest. Meanwhile, the teachers can start training the fourth graders to think about media critically. On the other hand, the fifth grade students can start producing their own media which can give them opportunities to input their own thoughts and understanding.

In his own opinion, the media library specialist or the information technology coordinator should be responsible in teaching media literacy. In places such as America, Europe and

Australia, there are many library specialists. However, due to the lack of media specialists in the library and information technology coordinators in Japanese schools, he directs the responsibility of teaching media literacy to the regular classroom teacher.

iii. Perception of Students' Media Skills and Understanding

In using media equipment, Maeda thinks that his students have confidence in using computers. The third and fourth graders are competent in using computers and creating media. Maeda started teaching media literacy to third and fourth graders because students at this age can represent and express their will. These students are being recognized in digital storytelling competition. Joining in competition helps children have confidence in themselves.

Maeda teaches students how to create media. In his own opinion, they have confidence to make media but they have no confidence to distinguish the difference of each media. The experience of creating media makes the students more confident but understanding may be more difficult. Children perhaps read each other's output but he doesn't think that children can distinguish one media from another. It might also be difficult for children to talk about the effects of media and give their own opinion about certain media.

Maeda thinks that reflection is very important. Children have to reflect on what they have learned from the experience of making media. They also need to reflect on what they learned from other students' opinion. When children watch television in their house, they become aware of the tv program. The next day they bring that awareness in class. Maeda thinks that it is important to be aware of ordinary things in life. A hands-on experience in making media and a group discussion are important. To reflect on one's experience perhaps is the most important. He thinks that reflection of one's own experience is nearly equal to critical thinking. Through experience, children learn about critical thinking and reflection is one method to develop media literacy.

IV. DISCUSSION

This chapter provides the discussion of data gathered from the selected teacher, the interpretation of the results and the personal insights that the researcher gained through the process of conducting the study.

i. Media Literacy Practice

Yasuhiro Maeda uses a curriculum-driven approach to teach media literacy. Curriculum-driven means teachers continue to teach the course of study and the contents of what they are expected to teach. But at the same time, they help students develop media literacy skills by integrating concepts and activities in their classes.

Maeda was able to integrate media literacy in teaching Art, Japanese language and Integrated study. According to a research by Buckingham and Dornelle (2001), media education is often taught as an elective. It is not considered as a required subject in school. That is why media education only makes a progress in school if there are committed teachers willing to incorporate it

in their classes. These teachers mostly work alone and don't receive much support. Many countries are still not certain whether to make media education as a separate subject or to integrate it within existing subjects.

One of the ways in which Maeda teaches media literacy is by using popular culture as a learning resource. According to Hobbs (2008), teachers who are involved in teaching media literacy often use movies and television shows in which learners are currently immersed in. Learning is meaningful for students when they see the connection of the new information they are studying with the contemporary culture in which they are a part of. In Maeda's class, he encouraged the students to notice the content of a newspaper document. The students brought in articles from the morning newspaper which caught their attention. The Knight Commission's 2009 Report *Informing Communities Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age* highlighted the importance of news literacy. According to the report, digital and media literacy are critical elements and should be integrated in all levels. Learning how to analyze news stories is clearly essential to help students become prepared to be active citizens.

Maeda's use of popular culture is one strategy toward the goal of creating an inquiry-based culture in the classroom. According to Greenway (2001), it is important for teachers especially those who are teaching media studies to have an understanding of popular culture. In connection with analyzing media documents, the making of media texts is also considered a key element. In one of Maeda's lessons, the students were able to make video news. This was an activity that allowed the kids to create a media message about news and current events that reflect their own experiences. Based on the research done by undergraduate and graduate students from Temple University who work with classroom teachers to integrate digital and media literacy into the elementary school curriculum, hands-on activity can help kids understand how news is told.

ii. Attitude Towards Media Literacy Education

Maeda has a positive attitude towards media literacy education as characterized by his confidence in teaching the subject. According to Share and Thoman (2007), the teacher's attitude toward media is an important component in incorporating media literacy in the classroom. Educators need to have an optimistic attitude so they can readily embrace media culture in their teaching.

Teachers who have become competent and confident in producing and using media and information for instructional purposes serve as leaders in promoting media and information literacy within the school environment. As in the literature found in Wilson et. al (2011), when teachers' proficiency in teaching media and information literacy (MIL) increases, they become advocates and highly supportive of MIL in their school system and in the wider society. For Maeda, experience in making media is important to better equip teachers to integrate media literacy in their classes. Experience makes the teachers more confident in designing their own lesson. Findings from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (2009) suggest that the ability to experiment can often increase a person's confidence. Experimenting is considered a

useful and informal means of learning. People's perceived motivation to become more engaged with digital media also affects their attitudes and behavior. It is an individual's own motivation to want to use the technology that is the key driver to increasing their digital media literacy.

Maeda believes that one of the reasons why media literacy education is hard to implement is because most teachers don't have experiences to learn about media literacy and produce media for education. Moreover, he thinks that media literacy should be included in the teacher training program. This supports the study of Robertson and Hughes (2011) which highlights the importance of having classroom teachers and pre-service teachers receive guidance on critical media literacy teaching and learning by teaching critical media literacy skills in faculties of education.

Maeda believes that it is effective to teach media literacy from the third grade. Third graders should start to take pictures or add texts to express their own opinion. Fourth grade students should start to analyze media critically. Meanwhile, the fifth graders can start to produce their own media. In an article *Media Education in Canada: An Overview*, a media education expert sees media education as an excellent curriculum in elementary because children in this grade level have the motivation to write, analyze and organize information, and express themselves orally.

In his own opinion, Maeda thinks that library specialists should be responsible in teaching media literacy. A study by Hobbs (2001) revealed that school library and media professionals can have a powerful impact on teaching and student performance. The school library/media professionals support teachers as they begin to integrate digital media and technology tools into the curriculum.

iii. Perception of Students' Media Skills and Understanding

Kolkin and Tyner (1988) identified two components of media literacy: 1) competency in equipment use and 2) competency in understanding media. Regarding these two components, Maeda believes that his students are confident in using media especially those who are in the third and fourth grade. However, they are not so competent in understanding media such as to differentiate fictional content from reality, program content from advertising or realizing the appropriate amount of time to spend with media. In terms of developmental stages, students' ability to reason and analyze develops more slowly than their ability to use motor skills to operate equipment. Although some students may be frequent users of email, internet, mobile phone and texting, they are not as competent at understanding what is produced by the media.

A study by Fisherkeller (2011) on students' everyday media revealed that children in her study already understood a great deal about media agencies, categories, technologies and languages. However, they were not as knowledgeable about the effects of media. Even if some students have knowledge about these aspects, there is still a need for a careful assessment of what students actually know about media.

When media teachers listen to their students, they may discover not only areas of media expertise but also needs. Students may need specific kinds of media skills and knowledge, or they may need to understand relationships between themselves, the media, and society. Most children and youth are more involved than ever with media technologies and content. It is important for teachers to become aware of the students' choices and amount of time spent with television, videos,

and other print media forms. Information on the levels of media literacy and perceived confidence young students possess before entering a formal media education is helpful for media literacy teachers.

iv. Synthesis

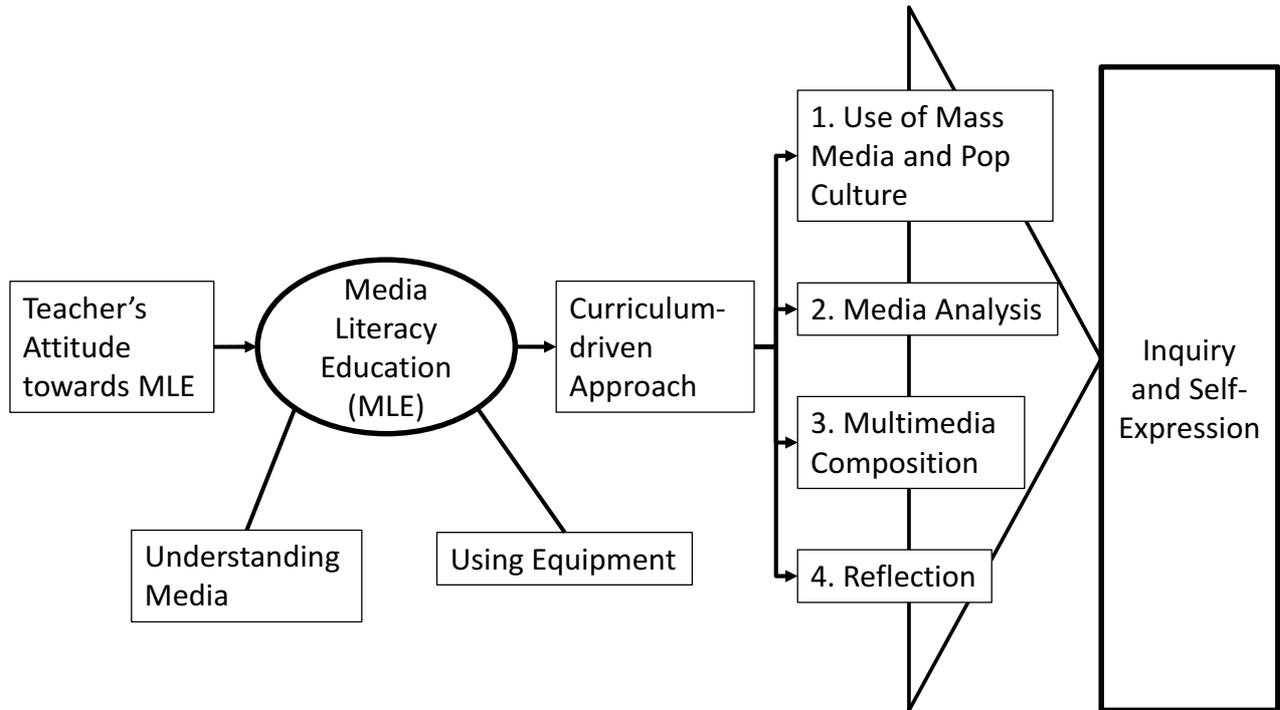


Figure 1. A Conceptual Model of the Teacher's MLE Practices, Attitude and Perception

As shown in the conceptual model, a teacher’s attitude affects his behaviour of integrating media literacy education practices in the classroom. A teacher who has a positive attitude towards media literacy is more likely to practice it in the classroom setting. When it comes to teaching media literacy, it is important to have an assessment of the students’ skills in understanding media and using digital equipment so that teachers may guide them properly.

One of the practices in teaching media literacy is the curriculum-driven approach. Since media literacy is not yet part of the school curriculum, it is best to integrate it across multiple subject areas. In this approach, the teacher can use mass media and pop culture. Teachers can use examples in mass media and pop culture that reflect the curriculum content. These forms of media have major influence on the learning experiences of students because they are related to their everyday interests. The next step after the integration of mass media and pop culture in the class lesson is for students to learn how to analyze these forms of media. Students should be taught to ask the specific types of questions that will allow them to gain a deeper understanding of media messages. Being media literate also includes the ability to produce media. Media production gives the students an opportunity to put theory into practice. Lastly, at the end of every lesson, reflection is essential in promoting independent thought. The process of reflection aids in critical thinking. The act of reflecting causes students to make sense of what they’ve

learned, how they've learned it and how learning took place.

The goal of media literacy education is to develop the habits of inquiry and skills of self-expression. Students need to develop the ability to communicate using different types of media. They should also be given the opportunity to examine the information they're receiving and explore why this information is being created.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was undertaken to answer the following questions: (1) What are the media literacy education practices of the selected teacher in Japan? (2) What is the attitude towards media literacy education of the selected teacher In Japan? (3) What are the perceptions of students' media skills and understanding of the selected teacher in Japan?

A case study approach using an in-depth interview, a survey questionnaire and observation of the teacher's videotaped lesson was used to find out the media literacy education practices, attitude towards media literacy education and the teacher's perception of students 'media skills and understanding.

The summary of the results is in order:

1. Curriculum-driven media literacy education is a promising strategy to use in integrating media literacy. Media literacy activities are distinguished from general integration of technology or pop culture by their emphasis on inquiry and student reflection.
2. A teacher's positive attitude towards media literacy education can open up possibilities for their students to critically use, analyze, and create media in the school setting. An important step in achieving this vision of education is the professional development that supports educators in their role of facilitators of learning.
3. Although children may spend a huge amount of time with technology and media, they still need guidance in understanding media and in determining what is effective and appropriate in using technology.

Although media literacy has been gaining worldwide attention, . The most effective way to teach media literacy is by integrating media literacy concepts into existing subject areas without adding new courses to the curriculum. The most common practices include analyzing media documents such as newspapers and photographs and producing media. A teacher's positive attitude towards media literacy education (MLE) is important in the success of introducing media literacy inside the classroom. Teachers who practice MLE are potential leaders in its widespread success in the school curriculum. Even if students know how to use media, students don't have the skills to critically evaluate and analyze media. Students need to develop basic skills to critically analyze the process of media making from different perspectives. Students need to gain an

understanding into the complex role of mass media in our culture's development, and most importantly our lives.

REFERENCES

- Australian Communications and Media Authority (2009). Adult digital media literacy needs: qualitative research report. [On-line]. Retrieved from: http://www.acma.gov.au/webwr/_assets/main/lib310665/adult_digital_media_literacy_needs_research.pdf [2013, January 19].
- Barnes, C., Corcoran, F., Flanagan, B., O'Neill, B. (2007) Critical media literacy in Ireland . [On-line]. Retrieved from : http://www.dublincity.ie/Community/childrenservicesunit/Documents/Critical%20Media%20Literacy%20in%20Ireland%20DIT%202007_sml.pdf[2013, January 19].
- Barros, S., Elia, M. (1997). Physics teacher's attitudes: How do they affect the reality of the classroom and models for change? [On-line]. Retrieved from:<http://pluslucis.univie.ac.at/Archiv/ICPE/D2.html> [2013, January19].
- Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy (2010). Media literacy for teachers. [On-line]. Retrieved from: <http://bcmd.bt/bcmd-home/bcmd-reports/2010.html?download=11:media-literacy-forum-for-teachers> [2012, March 26].
- Boyce,C., Neale, P., & Thapa S. (2006). Conducting a case study for evaluation input. [On-line]. Retrieved from: http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_case_study.pdf [2013, January19].
- Buckingham, D., Domaille, K. (2001) Where are we going and how can we get there? General findings from the UNESCO youth media education survey 2001.[On-line]. Retrieved from: http://www.europeanmediaculture.org/fileadmin/bibliothek/english/buckingham_where/buckingham_where.pdf [2013, January 19].
- Center for Media Literacy. (2002). What is Media Literacy? A Definition...and More. [On-line]. Retrieved from: <http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/what-media-literacy-definition-and-more> [March 27, 2012].
- Cheung, C. (2009). Media education across four asian societies: issues and themes. *International Review of Education* 55:39-58
- De Lange, T. (2010). Formal and non-formal digital practices: institutionalizing transactional learning spaces in a media classroom. [On-line]. Retrieved from http://infojustice.org/download/gcongress/methodologies_for_studying_digital_media_practices/de%20lange%20article.pdf [March 27, 2012].
- FisherKeller, J. (2011) *International perspectives on youth media: cultures of production and education*. New York, USA: Peter Lang Publishers
- Greenaway, P. (1997). Media and arts education: a global view from australia. In R. Kuby (Ed.), *Media literacy in the information age. Current perspectives: Information and*

- behavior (Vol.6, pp.187-198). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction
- Gutnick, A. L., Robb, M., Takeuchi, L., & Kotler, J. (2010). Always connected: The new digital media habits of young children. New York: The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop
- Hobbs, R. (2008). Comment before the U.S. Copyright office library of congress. [On-line]. Retrieved from: <http://www.copyright.gov/1201/2008/comments/hobbs-renee.pdf> [August 20, 2013].
- Hobbs, R. (2011). Digital and media literacy: connecting culture and classroom. USA: Corwin
- Hobbs, R. & Frost, R (1998). Instructional practices in media literacy education and their impact on students' learning. [On-line] Retrieved from <http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/instructional-practices-media-literacy-education-and-their-impact-students-learning#bio> [March 26, 2012]
- Hobbs, R., Ebrahimi, A., Cabral, N., Yoon, J., & AlHumaidan, R. (2011). Online Digital Media in Elementary School: Promoting Cultural Understanding. [On-line]. Retrieved from: http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwaus/Hobbs_etal2.pdf [August 20, 2013].
- Hughes, J., Robertson, L. (2011). Investigating pre-service teachers' understandings of critical media literacy. *Language and Literacy*13:2, 39
- Knight Commission (2009) On the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, Informing Communities: Sustaining Democracy in the Digital Age, Washington, D.C.: The Aspen Institute, October.
- Lauri, M.A., Borg, J., Gunnell, T., Gillum, R. (2010). Attitudes of a sample of English, Maltese and German teachers towards media education. Retrieved from http://www.crosstalk-online.de/output_material/other_materials/malta_buch.pdf [March 26, 2012]
- Lloyd-Kolkin, D. Tyner, K. (1988). Media literacy education needs for elementary schools: a survey. USA: Educational Technology Publications
- Media Smarts. (2012). Media Education in Ontario. [On-line]. Retrieved from: <http://media-smarts.ca/teacher-resources/media-education-outcomes-province/ontario> [March 27, 2012]
- National Association for Media Literacy Education. (2008). Media literacy defined. [On-line]. Retrieved from: <http://namle.net/publications/media-literacy-definitions/> [2013, January 19].
- Nazari M., Hasbullah, A., & Parhizkar, S. (2009). Determining educational curriculum priorities and the role of media in education from the teachers' points of view. Retrieved from [http://idosi.org/wasj/wasj6\(4\)/5.pdf](http://idosi.org/wasj/wasj6(4)/5.pdf) [March 26, 2012]
- Parola, A., Ranieri, M.(2011). The practice of media education: international research on six European countries. *Journal of Media Literacy Education* 3:2, 90–100
- Rogow, F., Scheibe, C.(2012). The Teacher's Guide to Media Literacy: Critical Thinking in a Multimedia World. USA: Corwin
- Share, J., Thoman, E. (2007). Teaching democracy: a media literacy approach. California,

- USA: The National Center for Preservation of Democracy
- Swanborn, P. (2010). Case Study Research: What, Why and How? [On-line]. Retrieved from: http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/33607_Swanborn.pdf [2013, January 19].
- Weber, R. P. (1990). Basic content analysis. Sage University Paper Series on Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences. Newbury Park, California: Sage
- Wilson et. al, (2011). Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers. UNESCO. [On- line]. Retrieved from: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001929/192971e.pdf> [August 20, 2013].
- Yates, B. L. (2000). Media education's present and future: a survey of teachers. Retrieved from <http://www.westga.edu/~byates/teacher.htm> [March 27, 2012]

APPENDIX A

I. Perception of Media Literacy

1. What is your definition of media literacy?
2. How did you learn about media literacy? What resources did you use to learn about media literacy?

II. Media Education Practice

1. Have you used media in the classroom? Did you use it as a purely instructional tool? Or, did you use it as a way to educate students about the media and their effects?
2. Have you ever used popular culture as a learning resource?
3. In which subjects and grade levels were you able to integrate media literacy? What kind of approach did you use? How long did it take? What resources did you use?
4. How often did you integrate media literacy in your lessons?
5. What was your reason why you integrated media literacy in your lesson?

III. Attitude Towards Media Education

1. Do you feel competent in teaching media literacy?
2. What skills do teachers need to have in order to build media literacy?
3. What makes media literacy education hard to implement?
4. What could be done to better equip teachers to integrate media literacy in their classes?
5. In which grade level is it appropriate or effective to teach media literacy?
6. Should media literacy be part of the school curriculum? Or should it be offered as an elective class?

7. Who do you think should be responsible in teaching media literacy? (for example: library-media specialists, technology coordinators, teachers)

IV. Perception of Students' Media Skills and Understanding

1. How competent were your students in using media equipment? (for example: television, radio, computer, internet)
2. How competent were your students in understanding media? (for example: distinguishing fictional content and reality, distinguishing program content and ads, realizing need to limit media use, creating media content)
3. What makes a student media literate?