

Effectiveness of Media Literacy Education Using Newspapers

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The purpose of this study was to elucidate the effect of newspaper analysis in developing media literacy skills. Media literacy is a multiple-meaning word, this study focused on "critical viewing skills" which were considered mainstream of education in the western society. The methods used were action research using a questionnaire survey. Classroom practice was focused on "newspaper comparing activity" and was designed to develop "critical viewing" of the media. "critical viewing" was defined as "viewing media with critical thinking skills in this study. The questionnaire survey based on an Scale created by Kotera(2016) and 20 question items related to "newspapers" and "news" were extracted. The questionnaire survey was conducted in two high school in Osaka city. In this study, the class was taught once in each class. It has followed that the effect of using newspaper for developing media literacy skills was not observed in this study. The outlook for the future of research is to reveal the effects of long-term classes using news-papers and digital tools

Keywords: critical viewing skills, developing media literacy, media literacy, newspaper in education

Introduction

Background of this Study

Globalization and advanced information technology have made it possible for people to obtain large amounts of information instantaneously. However, misinformation and disinformation also spread throughout society. A prime example is the 2016 U.S. presidential election. This is a situation that shakes the principle of a democratic society in which the people make decisions and govern themselves based on information. We have become a society in which those who participate in politics are tested on their knowledge of and judgment about information as a means of self-defense to protect the society to which they belong. In such a society, we believe it is important to develop the ability to verify the information by oneself and to receive accurate information, in other words, media literacy education.

Media Literacy in this Study

Media literacy is generally defined as the ability to read and understand the media, the underlying ideas and concepts vary from country to country and research context to research context. In this study puts its focus on "critical viewing skills," which are considered mainstream of education in the western society.

Using Newspapers in this Study

In media literacy education, that use of newspapers is expected to "cultivate the ability to discern the truth" and "develop ways of reading information presented as a reconstruction of reality" (Hiraiwa 2003). In particular, in the "newspaper comparison activity," in which students read and compare articles from different newspapers reporting the same events, it is said to be possible to compare the differences in the way different newspapers handle facts and the nuances of expression.

Research Design & Methods

Scale

This study extracted and used a portion of Kodera's (2016) media literacy scale. It has 54 items into six components: "Constructiveness of media messages," "Media's ability to construct 'social reality,'" "Commercial nature of media,"

"Ideology and value transmission of media," and "Media style and language," "Nonuniform interpretability by recipients," and is based on a four-point scale ranging from "Not at all disagree (1 point)" to "Very much agree (4 points). In this study, 20 items related to "newspapers" and "news" were extracted from the 54 items (Table 1), and a questionnaire was created using Google Forms.

Table 1

Constructiveness of media messages	1. All accidents and incidents that occur in society are reported as news (reversal item). 2. Newspapers tell only the facts (reversal item) 3. No matter which newspaper you read, what it says is the same (reversal item) 4. Newspaper is neutral and objective in its reporting (reversal item)
Compositional power of "social realization" by media	5. What people think is important becomes news that is covered by the media (reversal item) 6. Media reports may create public opinion, such as Cabinet approval ratings 7. Society, as portrayed in the media is not necessarily a reflection of the real society. 8. We learn more about society through the media than what we see or hear directly. 9. Newspapers have their political positions, which influence the way readers think.
Media ideology and value transmission	10. Media provide viewers with values like what is "good" and "bad" 11. Media messages also include norms of age-appropriate behavior. 12. "Beautiful people" in the media have a consistent appearance regardless of the period (reversal item) 13. Media encourages people to participate in events such as Christmas and the Olympics 14. Media has an active role in changing traditional values (reversal item) 15. The media presents a model of what a "good way of life" looks like 16. Media tends to emphasize "male" and "female" roles
Media Styles and Languages	17. The same newspaper article will give the same impression even if the pictures used are different (reversal item). 18. Different headlines can change the impression of a newspaper article.
recipient's non-uniform	19. If the news is easy to understand, it is understood equally by all people (reversal item) 20. If it is the same news, the parts that many people pay attention to should coincide (reversal items)

Survey Method

The study samples of Fifty-four first- and second-year high school students enrolled in a private high school in Osaka were gathered. The survey was conducted in September 2021. It can be divided into three phases: "pre-survey," "classroom teaching," and "post-survey. To measure the effectiveness of the "class," the same questions are used in the "pre-survey" and "post-survey. The "pre-survey" was conducted two to three days before the class. "post-survey" was conducted three to five days after the class, the student had opportunity to interact with the media after the class. The duration of the practice was 50 minutes in each class. The details of the class are shown in (Table 2). This time the focus was on "newspaper reading and comparison activities," and the class was designed to aim able to "critical viewing" of the media. The class used in prepared articles from the Asahi Shimbun, Sankei Shimbun, and Nikkei Shimbun on the closing ceremony of the Tokyo Paralympics.

Table 2
The Flow of Classes

Time (min.)	Content	Student Movement
3	1. Introduction • Giving an overview of this class • Communicating the general flow	• Hearing the explanation
20	2. Activity 1 • Finding out how each company reports on the facts.	• Transcribing what happened from the list onto sticky notes and categorizing the sticky notes using
15	3. Activity 2 • Learning and realizing that different newspapers perceive the same content differently	• Thinking about what differences are there between newspapers found in Activity 2 mean.
10	4. Activity 3 & Summary • Thinking about how to engage with the media	• Being aware of getting information from multiple sources, not just one

Results

Results of Pre-Post Questionnaire

The subject in the study after excluding those with incomplete responses to either the pre-or post- questionnaire were Fifty-three participants. Paired-samples t-tests were used to compare means between pre- and post-survey. (significance level 0.05) The results (Table 3) showed no significant differences in all questions, although large changes in means were observed in Q10 and Q20.

Table 3

result of paired-samples t-test

question	Average		t-value	df	p-value
	Pre	Post			
1 *	2.19	2.17	0.163	53	0.87
2 *	1.91	2.04	-1.224	53	0.23
3 *	2.02	2.04	-0.191	53	0.85
4 *	2.02	2.11	-0.896	53	0.37
5 *	2.61	2.56	0.490	53	0.63
6	2.65	2.69	-0.292	53	0.77
7	2.83	2.76	0.504	53	0.62
8	2.93	2.76	1.054	53	0.30
9	2.85	2.65	1.750	53	0.09
10	2.80	2.59	1.848	53	0.07
11	2.48	2.39	0.759	53	0.45
12 *	2.35	2.26	0.683	53	0.50
13	2.89	2.72	0.683	53	0.13
14 *	2.59	2.46	1.358	53	0.18
15	2.54	2.39	1.211	53	0.23
16	2.48	2.52	-0.331	53	0.74
17 *	2.26	2.19	0.586	53	0.56
18	3.09	2.94	1.033	53	0.31
19 *	2.43	2.22	1.561	53	0.13
20	2.43	2.39	0.306	53	0.76

Student's reaction

We observed the students' reactions during this class and asked for their feedback after the class. It can be classified into two categories: "dissatisfaction with printed media" and "how to read a newspaper". Complaints about printed media included "It is troublesome to read the text," "The characters are too small to read," and "I don't understand the meaning of kanji and phrase". Regarding how to read the newspaper, some respondents commented that they "did not know where to find the rest of the text" and "did not understand why the newspaper was in such a complicated form."

Discussion

Discussion of result of Pre- and Post-Questionnaire

The result from this survey indicates that the effect of using newspaper for developing media literacy skills was not observed. It can be presumed that the reasons for this result are "newspaper use," "inadequate class content," "Insufficient understanding of students," and "insufficient use of scales". what is to be noted is " Insufficient understanding of students".

Discussion of Student's Responses

As noted above, students were most likely to respond to "dissatisfaction with printed media" and "how to read a newspaper". These with regard a supervisor at the subject school suggest, "Many of the students have little experience in reading and may not be accustomed to reading the written word." These responses and suggests leads us to presume that dissatisfaction with paper and print media may stem from a lack of daily contact with print media and a lack of knowledge of kanji characters and phrases. In response to complaints about font size, one student commented, "It would be easier to enlarge and read on a PC or tablet. Regarding their reactions to the reading of newspapers, students at the practicing schools received their first newspaper-based lessons in this class, so it is possible that confusion arose due to their experiences contact with the newspaper-specific "layout". It can be presumed that to effectively use newspapers effectively in classes that aim to develop media literacy skills, it is necessary for students to have "the ability and experience to read the printed word" and "an understanding of basic newspaper reading skills.

Conclusion and Future Issues

Therefore, it can be said that this study did not find any effect of using newspapers in the development of media literacy skills. However, since this is a study of short-term class effectiveness, we believe that further investigation and research is needed to clarify the long-term effects of the classes. In addition, based on the students' reactions during the class, we believe that further research is needed on the use of digital tools in classes with newspapers. In addition, we believe that it is necessary to once again examine precedence research and further deepen our understanding of media literacy for future research.

References

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