

# Analysis of “Critical” Approach in Media Literacy

– Comparative Studies between Japan and Canada –

by Kuniomi SHIBATA\*

## Introduction

Recently, the idea of media literacy has provoked a great deal of controversy both in studies of the media and in its practices. In Japan, it spread rapidly during the 1990s and was extensively applied to education and the production of media. More recently, the Japanese Government has been encouraging its introduction. In spite of the speed of its diffusion, however, the concept of “media literacy” and the context in which it was born have never been examined. Through a comparative analysis between Japan and Canada, this paper’s purpose is to consider the characteristics of media literacy in Japan which has been modeled after Canada’s theory of media literacy by Japanese scholars.

## Attention to media literacy

### *Increasing Attention to media literacy in Japan*

Although “media literacy” has come to be widely known quite rapidly in Japan, it has been only for the past few years that it has been receiving as much attention as it currently does. Though the term was mentioned in some studies made in the 1980s, the descriptions were brief and not detailed enough to adequately define its concepts and content (Sakamoto, 1978: 5-14). Media literacy itself was first brought to attention in 1992 after “Media Literacy” was published in Japan. This book is a Japanese version of “Media Literacy” developed by the Ontario Ministry of Education (MOE), Canada, and translated into Japanese by the Forum for Citizen’s Television and Media (FCT). Inspired

\* Kuniomi SHIBATA: Research Fellow, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS); Graduate School Student of Arts and Literature, Tohoku University.

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by this publication, the number of theoretical studies on media literacy and practices using the approaches introduced in the book increased. A number of attempts have been made to show that media literacy has the potential to be an effective tool for solving various problems that the media are facing.

Media literacy has been spreading widely with an increasing rate with the help of TV and newspaper coverage. Recently the media industries and the Japanese government have been showing a great deal of interest in it as well. The National Association of Commercial Broadcasters in Japan started producing media literacy programs for children last year.<sup>1</sup> The Government has also started media literacy projects. The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) formulated a system for media literacy by initiating “The Research Council on Media Literacy in Broadcasting” in 1999 (MPT, 2000: 156). In addition, there have been a large number of attempts to associate media literacy with digital media such as the Internet, and with the Millennium Project.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, numerous arguments have been made to include media literacy in such subjects as “Comprehensive Learning” and “Information”, in the new school curriculums in 2002.

### *Canada's Definition of Media Literacy*

As mentioned above, many studies and uses for media literacy have been made in Japan. But we should note that Canada provides the model for media literacy in Japan. Canada, a pioneer who has met with “success,” is mentioned in every study and practice of media literacy. First of all, we will focus on *Media Literacy*, a textbook published by the MOE, which is most often referred to in this paper. Following is the definition of media literacy given in the textbook.

“The ultimate aim of media literacy is not simply a better awareness and understanding; it is critical autonomy.” (MOE, 1989: 7)

Before turning to the content, we must draw attention once again to the fact that this textbook is published by the MOE. In the Province of Ontario, media literacy was officially adopted in school curriculums in 1987 and the textbook was developed. Ontario, is the first place in the world to teach media literacy in publicly funded schools. As stated so far, in Canada, media literacy is accepted and incorporated in the public educational system. Therefore, Canada is regarded, by not only Japan but also other countries, as an advanced model of “success” in media literacy. In the guideline about media literacy that the MOE made, it is described as follows.

“By working in the various media to communicate their own ideas, students will develop critical thinking skills and understand at first hand how media works are designed to influence audiences and reflect the perspectives of their creators. (MOE, 2000: 8)

As defined in these quotations above, the definition of media literacy in Canada is one which emphasizes the “critical use of the media”. As will be discussed in a later section, the definition of media literacy in Japan is consistent with that of Canada as the model. We will investigate the “critical use of media” through my research in Canada.

## Media Literacy in Toronto, Canada

### *Media Literacy in Toronto*

Toronto, Ontario was the first city to employ media literacy and is therefore called “the sacred place” for those who are engaged in media literacy. I researched the current status and situation of media literacy in Toronto. The following is an overview of media literacy in Canada observed through this research.

Media literacy in Toronto was primarily introduced by an organization called the Association for Media Literacy (AML). The AML, organized in 1978, is a voluntary organization composed of high school teachers and researchers at universities, and to date, has been taking a leadership role in media literacy in Toronto as well as in Canada. The most significant achievement of the AML is that they succeeded in having media literacy officially adopted by the school education system in the Province of Ontario.<sup>3</sup>

The content of the program is based on the guidelines for media education by the MOE, and the textbook entitled *Media Literacy* published by the ministry in 1989. Although the textbook is published by the MOE, the AML was deeply involved in its compilation. It is the first textbook on media literacy developed in this manner.

### *Some aspects of media literacy*

It is not widely known that there is no “media literacy” curriculum, although media literacy is officially adopted in public school education in Ontario. In fact, media literacy is usually taught in the “English” curriculum by teachers of English.<sup>4</sup> Thus, media education including media literacy is taught within the class hours allotted to English curriculum, along with other things required to be taught (MOE, 2000: 3). The length of time assigned to media literacy education, as well as what is taught, is at the discretion of the English teachers.

This means that the extent of media literacy taught in class depends considerably on how much the teacher who teaches the class is committed to media literacy. Some teachers are enthusiastic about teaching media literacy while others are not so eager or hardly ever do so. Teaching content also varies widely, and ranges from teaching media materials with applications of advanced approaches based on theoretical research of media literacy, to merely substituting videotapes and newspapers for traditional teaching materials.

Even after the official adoption of media literacy in Canada, this diversity still remains mainly due to the broad range of discretion given to the teachers in Canada. In the Province of Ontario, while the guidelines for media literacy regulate how media literacy education should be given, how to and what to teach students is up to individual teachers. In practice, it is more like an “objective the teachers would endeavor to attain.” Therefore, a large difference is observed in the level of their engagement.<sup>5</sup>

Another important aspect of media literacy to discuss is the field in which media literacy in Toronto have been developed. In recent years, media literacy has been referred to in various ways in Canadian media environment. However, there appears to be a clear trend among the fields in that the people are positive and enthusiastic about media literacy. The members of the AML, who have led the media literacy movement in Canada, can be divided into three groups. The first group includes the schoolteachers who attained the official adoption of media literacy in public education, the most important achievement. The second group consists of scholars at universities and research institutes. But the second group is a minority in the AML. The third group, who have been more active in recent years in particular, are the people who are engaged in the media industries such as those who work for TV station companies and production companies.<sup>6</sup> For instance, CHUM TV, a local TV in Ontario has been increasing its involvement in media literacy, and has been vigorously producing programs such as “Media Television”, “Much Music’s” and “Scanning the Movies” (Pungente, 2000: 29). Similar eagerness is seen more clearly with the CBC, a public broadcasting corporation, and other major TV stations including TV Ontario.<sup>7</sup> The movement of media literacy was initiated by the educators, who were concerned with the recipient audiences of the mass media. But it has recently been increasingly attracting those who produce TV programs, people who deliver mass media.

Media literacy in Canada with the characteristics and tendencies described above, still can still be seen as successful. For example, recently, the AML has been expanding its activities in all areas ranging from providing advice to teachers and makers of media programs who try practical application of media literacy to attending international symposiums and cooperative work.<sup>8</sup> Above all, the successful introduction of media literacy into public education has secured the established reputation of Toronto, Canada and the AML.

### *“Critical Use” in Media Literacy*

Media literacy activities in Toronto, which have met with success, were, at their early stages, carried out voluntarily by high school teachers and scholars. Mr. Barry Duncan, one of the original founders of the AML states that the media literacy movement itself began in the 1960s. According to him, the initial work started to discuss the influence of the screen by a voluntary teachers’ group. The group and its activities expanded as scholars and those who were involved with media production joined.<sup>9</sup>

Also, according to Mr. Anthony D’Andrea, who taught high school media literacy during its early stages, media literacy education in Toronto actually was initiated in the 1960s by some enthusiastic teachers. Later, English teachers at individual schools voluntarily started teaching media literacy.<sup>10</sup>

In this way, the principal activities of the early AML included media literacy study meetings of volunteers, and lobbying. We should note that the AML at this early stage had already developed the concept of the “critical use of the media” as a key aspect of media literacy. The reason for this can be found in the theoretical backbone they relied upon. First of all, it should be pointed out that they are, to some degree, acquainted with British media studies which concentrate on “Cultural Studies”. To the members of the AML who live in the Province of Ontario, which used to be a colony of the Great Britain, Britain and its culture are very familiar. When the AML was first established, media studies were starting to develop in Britain as well. It is not difficult to imagine that they also were influenced by the critical viewpoint of “Cultural Studies” in Britain.<sup>11</sup>

Another point to note is that many of the original members of the AML were influenced by Marshall McLuhan. For example, Mr. Duncan was actually instructed by him at the University of Toronto, and Mr. Duncan’s idea of the media is based on that of Marshall McLuhan’s. Because of his strong image as a media “optimist”, it might seem that Marshall McLuhan’s idea is incompatible with the “critical” nature of media literacy. However, according to Mr. Duncan, McLuhan’s media theory does not contradict the “critical” nature of media literacy, but rather compensates for its weaknesses. In Duncan’s opinion, the defects in McLuhan’s theory are derived from his oversight of the aspect of the control by the media industries.<sup>12</sup>

As seen from his opinion above, Mr. Duncan stresses the significance of the potential to “control” which the media industries possess over the recipients of their products, i.e. audience and readers. And the tool enabling us to cope with this “control” is “critical use” of media literacy.

In the understanding of McLuhan’s theory described above, there lies a thinking of a critical audience of movies, a popular mass medium, which is consistent with the “critical” approach toward the existing systems and social disparity in societies and nations.

## The substance of “Critical” approach in Canada

### *“Critical” approach in Media Literacy*

Pursuing these aspects of media literacy, we almost reach the core of the “critical use of media” in it. Such “critical use of the media” cannot be taken at face value, since there is always some impetus behind the “critical” approach.

The “critical” approach can only be taken when there is something “to be criticized”. Naturally, if media literacy is to take the idea of “critical use”, it has as its target “what is criticized”. Similarly, one should be reminded that “criticizing” is meaningless for the people who criticize unless they have “something to defend”, i.e., reasons to criticize. If there is nothing “to defend,” it is not convincing, and loses its continuity. That means that behind the act of “criticizing” there is always “what is criticized” and some reasons “why it is criticized”.

While the advanced state of media literacy in Canada and the importance of the “critical” approach it takes have been extensively discussed, only a few attempts have so far been made to address the substance of “what is criticized” and “why it is criticized”. What are the targets of and reasons for “critical use” in media literacy in Canada?

### *The Target – What to Criticize*

What generated such a way of thinking that values “critical” approach so much? It is important to note that the AML has active members which consist of high school teachers of English and those associated with mass media production.

As a matter of fact, there is a specific problem in English education and media production in Canada: the influence of American culture. In my research, most of the interviewees answered that they thought the influx of American culture into Canada had been increasing rapidly since the 1950s.<sup>13</sup> Canada was a colony of Great Britain and had the strong ties with the English culture until early in the 20th century. However, as the next-door neighbor America underwent economic growth and became an exporter of its culture, Canada, who shares long borders with the U.S., turned into the recipient of it.

The main Canadian gateway for this influx was the Province of Ontario, a border province which is located on the opposite side of the Great Lakes from the U.S. Unlike another border province Quebec, which is French-speaking more under the influence of French culture, Ontario was an area which shared the same “English” language as America, and had been a window of various interchanges. Its capital Toronto, in particular, was the center of English culture in Canada, as well as a window for the influx of American culture. With such an

influx, as the economic exchange with the U.S. expanded, most of the residents around Toronto were forced to face the issues of how to distinguish themselves culturally from Americans. One of the most difficult issues which arise in this process is the impact of American culture on Canadian nationals, especially the children, upon whose shoulders the future of their culture rests.<sup>14</sup>

It is not difficult to imagine that the Canadian media industries had to bear the brunt of the incoming American culture. The similar things were observed in English education. Because in English education, it is very important to decide what teaching materials are used, the English teachers are always had to faced with the issue of whether the books, magazines, radio programs and movies used in their classes were “Made in America” or “Made in Canada”. Media literacy in Canada was born and developed in these circumstances in Ontario. Currently in media literacy in Canada, the first and prime target of the “critical” approach is still American culture.

As stated so far, once it is known that American culture is the target of the “critical” approach, it is easier and clearer to see why there are two members, teachers and media producers, who are involved in activities. The area in which media literacy activities are active overlap English language education, where the influence of American culture is strong, and the types of people who are most eagerly engaged in media literacy are those who are forced to face the influx of American culture.

### *Reasons for the “critical” approach – What to defend*

So, what does media literacy in Canada intend to defend by criticizing American culture? The fact that media literacy was born and has developed in the educational circle is responsible not only its “target of criticism” but also its “reasons to criticize”. They can be seen when the characteristics of English education are considered as well.

English education in Canada is not merely a language education. It is widely known that Canada is a nation who advocates “multiculturalism” and acts based on that principle. Canada was founded as an immigrant nation and has a wide variety of people with many different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. We can say with fair certainty that English education is given the role of integrating the people of Canada and making people in various ethnic groups become Canadian nationals (MOE, 2000: 1-3).

Language education in Canada is prepared in such a complicated and deliberate way that it is difficult for those living in Japan to comprehend. For example, in English education, aside from the usual curriculums which aim to develop literacy skills and reading comprehension skills of literature, there are other multiple curriculums as well. One of the most well-known programs is an English as a Second Language (ESL) program. It is a program designed to provide

English language classes for Canadian citizens whose native language is not English, especially newcomers,<sup>15</sup> and it aims to enable them to make their living in Canada with acquired English communication skills (MOE, 1999: 1-3). Also, for those who are not native speakers of English but able to speak the language a little better, there is an English Literacy Development (ELD) program (MOE, 1999: 2-3)

Why has English language education been considered so important? There are two reasons. The first reason is a practical one: English is the only socially integrated tool for communication in the multi-ethnic nation of Canada. In other words, English is a tool that the Government can use to integrate Canadian citizens.

In addition, it should not be overlooked that English is the language spoken by the majority, the social and economic center of Canada, and is the tool used to pass their cultural heritage on to following generations. To speak the “Queen’s English” is to maintain an ethnic tradition dating back to the colonial days, and it leads to the cultural stability of the majority in Canada. This is the second reason why English education is regarded essential.

Therefore, English education in Canada has two purposes. The first one is to integrate newcomers or ethnic minorities using the language of Canadian citizens. The other is, though controversial, to preserve the language of the traditional majority in Canada.<sup>16</sup> It should be emphasized that English education plays an important role in integrating the nation in Canada both for the majority to whom English is their native language, and for the minorities and newcomers.

It should be noted that media literacy has been developed by the English education system, as previously described. Media literacy, which was adopted in English education, must take a part of the important role of integrating Canada. Media literacy was adopted because it can fulfill that responsibility.

In fact, media literacy has the substance to live up to this expectation. The textbook *Media Literacy* has a chapter entitled “Canadian identity and ownership” in which the identity of Canadian citizens and the impact of the media on it, are discussed. The following is clearly written in that chapter as an objective.

“Through a comparative study of media texts, students can be motivated to evaluate the Canadian sense of identity.” (MOE, 1989: 211)

It can be seen from the series of questions given in the example below, that in discussing the identity of Canadians, the impact of American culture is one of the main factors to be focused in class.

“Ask students to search for examples of Canadianism in media images and then answer the following question: How are Canadians portrayed and reacted to by others? How do Hollywood representations of Canada compare

to Canadian ones? Are there any stereotypes of Canadians that consistently appear?” (MOE, 1989: 212)

Also in the textbook, the following proposal is made, and materials are given as well.

“ Use the following quotation as the basis of a discussion of the issue of Canadian identity both in films and on television:

If we are Nationalists and believe in ourselves as Canadians, the American product really is the enemy - both in the cinemas and on television: not because it is bad in itself (which it obviously isn't) but because by monopolizing our screens it has colonized our imaginations, offering its product as if it were our own. Without ever being aware of it, we have been so conditioned to respond to the kinaesthetic excitements of fast-moving action, to glamour of stars, and to the over-riding mythology of power, of big money, of the glamorous life, that when we don't find those qualities in our films, we tend to think of them as inferior. *Peter Harcourt, Movies and Mythologies (Toronto: CBC Publications, 1977), page 165 ”*

(MOE, 1989: 213)

From my interviews in Canada, it was clearly observed that the teachers who teach media literacy classes intend to keep the foundation of the existence of Canada by criticizing America. For example, Mr. D'Andrea, a teacher of English who teaches media literacy in class, answered that the objectives of media literacy are how to defend the children from American culture and how to preserve Canadian culture.<sup>17</sup>

### *The Substance of the “Critical” approach in media literacy in Canada*

We are now able to see the substance of “critical use” in media literacy in Canada. The “target of criticism” is American culture. Through this criticism “Canada is defend”. This means that media literacy aims to contribute to the construction of Canadian culture by criticizing American culture. In order to achieve this goal, the concept of “nationalism” is accepted without distaste, as opposed to the Japanese. For instance, Mr. Duncan asserts that “nationalism” has to be constructed, and that the media is useful for that purpose.<sup>18</sup> Mr. D'Andrea also states that “nationalism” is used to avoid the influence of U. S. culture.<sup>19</sup> It is considered from this, that “nationalism” is regarded to as defensive a cultural wall in Canada. Therefore, in Canada, the “critical” aspects of media literacy can play the same role as “nationalism”.

“Critical use” in media literacy in Canada exhibits a unique character: “preserving Canadian culture by criticizing American culture”. “Critical use of

the media” in Canada has these characteristics described above and the advocates of media literacy are fully aware of them. However, it should be noted that the relationship between media literacy and “nationalism” in Canada is optimistically accepted, and therefore can not be introduced directly to Japan since this could give rise to complicated issues.<sup>20</sup>

## Media literacy in Japan

### *Arguments in Japan*

In the preceding chapter, the “critical” approach of media literacy in Canada is described by outlining the situations and circumstances in Canada. In this chapter, let us devote some space to discussing media literacy in Japan.

Arguments on media literacy, when it was first introduced to Japan was mainly focused on the aspect of learning only media techniques. However, the focus has been shifted to the approaches by which media literacy is considered in a broader scope, rather than merely a way to learn techniques. For example, Midori Suzuki, one of the first advocates of media literacy, defines media literacy as a tool to “empower citizens to critically analyze and evaluate the media in a social context, and access the media, and create various forms of communication (Suzuki, 1997: 8)” and “establish a critical subject (Suzuki, 1997: 39)”. Sin Mizukosi, a leading expert in media literacy studies, defines it as “multiple abilities with which people receive and interpret information critically through the media, express their opinions and what they feel (Mizukosi, 1999: 52)” and the ability “to subjective design the media as their own (Mizukosi, 1999: 121)”. Akiko Sugaya, a journalist and another leading expert, defines it as the ability “to critically read the “reality” created by the media as well as to express oneself using the media (Sugaya, 2000: v)” and “to subjective deal with all sorts of information (Sugaya, 2000: x)”. Katsumi Ichikawa, former media producer, defines it as multiple abilities with which people can read information critically through the media, such as TV, newspapers and the Internet, and to express themselves creatively (Ichikawa, 1999: 30).

It can be clearly seen from their opinions, their different perspective on media literacy from those of the conventional media. The first distinctive point is that the word “critically” is used in all the definitions. That is, “critical use of the media” is the same as in the AML in Canada. Another point is that the media is considered from both the sender and receiver’s ends, and the “subjective, multiple and creative” use of them are pursued. This is called “subjective use of the media” since “restoration of the subjective” is aimed at by examining the media not only from the receiving end but also from the sending end.

For example, “critical use of the media” is expected to strengthen the democratic structure in society without “making the audiences passive and

isolated by believing all any information provided by the media (Suzuki, 1997: 20-21)". Mizukoshi writes that it is expected with critical and subjective use of the media that "the fixed situation in which people are divided into senders and receivers by the mass media is overcome, and unity and positive social interaction of people are restored (Mizukoshi, 1999: 121)".

### *Media Literacy except "critical" approach*

The understanding of media literacy in Japan at present is classified into two categories: "critical use of the media" and "subjective use of the media". However, media literacy in Japan can exist except "critical use of the media".

Prior to the arguments of media literacy, there used to be arguments known as "information education". The leading advocate of them was a committee prepared by the Ministry of Education in Japan (ME). The Central Education Council issued a statement in 1983 that proposed "that abilities and attitudes in subjective thinking people should be developed so that they don't lose themselves by a flood of information (ME, 1991: 15)". Also, the Extraordinary Council on Education in 1985 proposed developing "a basic resource for individuals to subjectively select and utilize information and means of information (ME, 1991: 17)", using the phrase "ability to utilize information" = "information literacy". Then, in response to the report submitted by the Extraordinary Council on Education, the Information Cooperation Conference in the same year set, as its future objectives, the development of "multiple abilities to understand and use the media correctly and to express oneself using it (ME, 1991: 16)" and "the ability to utilize information in social and vocational activities (ME, 1991: 18)".

Most of us would accept that these proposals are very similar in wording and meaning to "autonomous use of the media" in the arguments of media literacy. It is seen that a part of the characteristic terminology of media literacy is consistent with that used in the statements issued from the framework of "information education".

We should not overlook this peculiar similarity. In "information education" which shares the same aspect of the "subjective use" with media literacy, the definition of "critical" is excluded while the definition of "information literacy" and "ability to utilize information in social and vocational activities" (ME, 1991: 18) is added. It is obvious that the "subjective use" assumed in this refers "to citizens who can deal with information effectively". In fact, the arguments of media literacy can be valid when such a "subjective use" is assumed. For example, media literacy proposed in the communication white paper issued in the fiscal year 2000 is defined as "the ability to subjectively select and comprehend the media and to send one's own information through the media" (MPT, 2000: 367) and the arguments associated with "critical" approach are completely excluded.

### *The Characteristic of Media Literacy in Japan*

Now we can see that media literacy in Japan can be divided into two characteristics. The first one includes the idea that media literacy is an extension of “information education”. One of the major advocates of this is the MPT (2000). Although this stresses “subjective use of the media,” it almost never reflects on the “critical use of media”, the most important theoretical foundation of media literacy in Canada. According to “information education”, the “subjective use of media” is useful for the formation of ability in social and vocational activities. This will be “a perfect citizen” image in the National of Japan, without the “critical” approach.

However, in the ideas of Suzuki, Mizukosi and others, “critical use of the media” is regarded as essential and similar to the Canadian idea of media literacy. This is only natural since their idea of media literacy is modeled after that of Canada. But, while their arguments emphasize the act of criticism itself, they seldom discuss the actual substance of the “critical” approach, i.e. “what to criticize” and “why criticize”. By such arguments, the “critical use of media” is not only looked down upon but also has changed the target and reason of “critical” approach, while receiving the influence of “subjective use”. Especially in recent years, a new definition is more accepted in regards to the way media literacy is viewed “in multiple, subjective ways”. And “critical use” is intentionally ignored.

### Conclusion

Thus we see, media literacy in Japan is very different from that of Canada in the treatment of “the critical use of the media”. It should be pointed out, in particular, that the actual substance of the “critical” approach, i.e., “what to criticize” and “why criticize,” is not recognized at all in media literacy in Japan. However, it is extremely doubtful that media literacy has meanings with such a definition.

As pointed out earlier, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, the regulatory body which regulates the media in Japan (former MPT) intends to actively introduce media literacy into the school education system, and has developed teaching materials for media literacy education and started releasing them this year.<sup>21</sup> This active attempt to encourage incorporation of media literacy into education appears similar to that seen in the introduction of media literacy into education in publicly funded schools in Canada. However, considering the facts that the introduction of media literacy into publicly funded school curriculums in Canada was led by the AML, and that the development of teaching materials for media literacy education was also proposed and led by the AML, it seems likely that the Japanese counterpart of

media literacy, whose introduction to official Japanese school education has been led by the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, will change the nature and substance, of media literacy in Japan.

Unlike Canada, the educational system in Japan tends to be further removed from the Japanese public and the Government has greater control over it. When media literacy is introduced into the school education system under such circumstances, its most significant idea of “critical use of the media” has to be more precisely comprehended. Otherwise, it is feared that the National authorities could use the citizens to criticize the media. The “critical use of the media”, which is valued in media literacy, should not be challenged. What is important is to be aware of the true meaning of “the critical” approach, i.e., “what is criticized” and “why it is criticized”.

## NOTES

1. See *Asahi shinbun* (2001.2.23), the MPT (2000: 156-157).
2. The former is found in Muranoi (1999: 37-57), Kato and Ishizaka (2000: 37), and the latter in the Information Processing Promotion Division in the MITI (2000: 10-16).
3. Unlike that in either Japan or the United States, the public education system in Ontario includes elementary education and secondary education (MOE, 1993:1-5). While media literacy is taught in both, it is more actively treated in the latter, i.e., high schools (according to Mr. D’Andrea in his interviews), which is thus discussed mainly in this article.
4. In introducing media literacy to Japan, it is often incorporated in “Kokugo”, whereas “Kokugo”, one of the official languages in Canada, is “English”. Therefore, the courses in which media literacy are taught are in the English curriculum. Controversial issues similar to those concerning “Japanese language education” in the nation of Japan are also observed in “English language education” in Canada. In discussing media literacy, it is extremely important to reflect on those issues, though not much discussion has been made, which is truly one of the subjects treated in this paper. Thus, those issues are discussed in this paper in order to understand the fundamental elements of “English” education in Canada, referring to language education in Canada as “English” education.
5. From an interview with Mr. D’Andrea.
6. From an interview with Mr. Hirsh, a new media director of the McLuhan Program.
7. The Conference Chair is from the CBC at Summit 2000, an international media literacy conference held in Toronto. CHUM TV, CBC, and

- TVOntario are among the major sponsors. As it is seen from this fact that each TV broadcasting company is not only engaged in media literacy but also an active sponsor of it (Summit 2000 Conference Program, 2000: 1).
8. From the AML (1999: 14; 2000: 1). The AML was one of the host organizations of an international media literacy conference (Summit 2000) held in Toronto in May 2000 (Summit 2000 Conference Program, 2000:1-3).
  9. From an interview with Mr. Duncan.
  10. From an interview with Mr. D'Andrea.
  11. The relationship between Canada and UK is not discussed in detail in this article. It is briefly described in literature including the Media Literacy Society in Japan (1997: 37-39). More detailed description is yet to come.
  12. From an interview with Mr. Duncan.
  13. From interviews with Mr. D'Andrea and Mr. Hirsh.
  14. From an interview with Mr. Livesly, a member of the AML.
  15. Partially due to it being the center of economy in Canada, there are a large number of newcomers of Chinese origin in the Province of Ontario, and the Canadian economy depends on them for their labor force (MCCR, 1996: 30-31).
  16. Securing the two things represents fundamental features and difficulties which the Canadian society has. However, only brief outlines of these issues are given since it is difficult to discuss them more thoroughly. A historical review of controversial issues that the Nation of Canada has is given in detail by Kimura, Buckner & Hillmer, Norman (1997).
  17. From an interview with Mr. D'Andrea.
  18. From an interview with Mr. Duncan.
  19. From an interview with Mr. D'Andrea.
  20. We must take care in treating the national (Nation) and a community founded on a common language as an entity (Sakai, 1996: 166-169). Nationality in Canada involves more complicated issues than what is briefly described in this paper, and is not to be treated casually. More detailed descriptions of these issues are given by Sekine (2000: 197-215).
  21. From the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications (2001).

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