Media Education:
Definitions, Approaches and Development around the Globe

Alice Y. L. LEE

Hong Kong Baptist University

Abstract

Background: Media education is the study of the media with the aim of cultivating people's media literacy. In the past four decades, media education has rapidly developed in school systems and communities all over the world. Each country has its own developmental trajectory. With the rise of the interactive new media, media education is going to have a paradigm shift, bringing media education study into a new era.

Goals: This paper discusses the rationales, definitions and approaches of media education. It also provides an overview about the global development of media literacy training.

Results: Although different countries define media education in different ways, they share the common goal of training media literate people to deal with the media in an intelligent and responsible way. Media education has been well developed in the West but in recent years Asia regions such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mainland China and Japan are gaining their momentum. With the emergence of various new media devices, media education is regarded as playing a more important role in cultivating wise pro-sumers in the 21st century.

Key Words: media education, media literacy, Web 2.0, paradigm shift, new media, networking model

傳媒教育：定義、教學取向及環球發展

李月蓮
香港浸會大學

摘要

背景：傳媒教育以傳媒為研習對象，目的是培養人們的媒介素養。過去四十年，傳媒教育在全球的學校及社區迅速發展，每一個國家都有它獨特的發展軌跡。隨著互動新媒體的興起，傳媒教育也進行範式轉移，將媒介素養的研習帶進新紀元。

目標：這篇文章的目的是介紹傳媒教育的重要性、定義及教學取向，它更為傳媒教育在全球各地的發展提供總覽。

結果：雖然不同國家對傳媒教育有不同的定義，但其實它們都有共同的目標，就是培育具有媒介素養的人，讓他們能精明及負責任地和傳媒打交道。傳媒教育在西方發展得很好，近年它在亞洲地區如香港、台灣、中國大陸及日本都有蓬勃的發展。由於各種新媒體不斷湧現，傳媒教育比以往更有迫切性去培養二十一世紀的「傳媒消費製作人」。

關鍵詞：傳媒教育、媒介素養、網絡2.0、範式轉移、新媒體、網絡模式

Media Education: Definitions, Approaches and Development around the Globe

Since the 1960s, a new school subject, "media education" has emerged which is the study of theories, criticisms and debates about the mass media with the goal of promoting media literacy (Lusted, 1991). In 1973 the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) posited the following introduction:

Media education is the study, learning and teaching of, and about, the modern media of communication and expression as a specific and autonomous area of knowledge within education theory and practice, distinct from their use as aids for the teaching and learning of other areas of knowledge, such as mathematics, science and geography (IFTC, 1977, p.3).

The purpose of this paper is to introduce the rationales, definitions and approaches of media education. It also provides an overview about the development of media literacy training around the globe.

Why Do We Need Media Education?

In the past 40 years, media education has developed from a fringe concern to a global movement. Teaching and learning about the mass media have rapidly been introduced to school and college curricula in many countries. Over the years, media education has been related to one central question: "What do people, particularly the young people, learn from the media?"

With the advancement of communication technologies, the rapid development of the mass media as major information distribution channels and influential socialization agents threatened the role of traditional schooling. Some media educators described the mass media as a sort of "parallel school" or "second educator" (Jospin, 1992; Roncagliolo, 1992; Schaeffer, 1984). Morsy (1984) from the UN said that people in contemporary society are embedded in a tight web of information of diverse origins. The mass media are not mere vehicles of communication but they constitute a real environment which conditions thought and determines behavior. The education system must, therefore, respond to the "invisible curriculum" of the mass media. Therefore, media education is regarded as importance to train independent and critical media consumers.

Marching into the Web 2.0 age, young people are living in a highly media saturated world. They spent large amount of time on the media. Their values and social actions are further influenced by the media in a significant way. With the rise of the Internet, media content is not only produced by media professionals, but also by ordinary people. From YouTube to blogs, information is being circulated without filtering and verification. Traditional media are also transforming their ways of delivering news and information. Therefore, being media literate becomes vital for young people to wisely interact with the changing society. In the new age, media education is going to have a paradigm shift. The connection between media education and the use of new communication technologies becomes the central concern of media educators around the world.

What is Media Education?

Media education is the process of teaching and learning about the media (Buckingham, 2003). There are many versions of the definition of media education. In Canada, the Media Literacy Week (2010, p.1) has the following definition: "Media education is the process through which individuals

become media literate–able to critically understand the nature, techniques and impacts of media messages and productions." Some of the key concepts put forward by Canadian media educators are: (1) Media are constructions; (2) Audiences negotiate meaning; (3) Media have commercial implications; (4) Ideological messages underpin all media.

In UK, Ofcom (2010a, p.1) defines media literacy as:"The ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts." In the US, according to the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE, 2010), media literacy consists of a series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms.

Media education advocates in Hong Kong have tried to synthesize the above definitions. In Hong Kong media literacy is defined as a life skill which enables young people to critically understand, analyze, use and influence the media. In this article, it is proposed that a media literate person is expected to have the following competences in the 21st century:

1. Critical awareness of the media impact: To be aware of the influence of the media on individual's life and on the society as a whole
2. Understand the operation of the media and the techniques used by the media
3. Media analytical skills: Master the skills to analyze various kinds of media messages (particularly the hidden messages)
4. Critical appreciation of the media: Use a critical standard to evaluate media performance and appreciate those outstanding media products
5. Learn through the media
6. Creative expression
7. Monitor and influence the media: To be able to voice out one's opinion about the performance of

the media and ask for improvement
8. Practice media ethics as responsible prosumer: People in the age of Web 2.0 are both media producers and consumers so they need to practice media ethics when they are engaged in media production
9. Wisely and constructively apply what has learned from the media to everyday life

Media education is very similar in content to Media Studies. The latter is an academic discipline that deals with the theory and knowledge about various media, in particular the mass media. Three phases of the communication process have traditionally made up the core part of Media Studies (Watson and Hill, 1993): Source system (the production of the media), message system (form and content of the media) and receiver system (media effects and audience studies). Media education is a younger field of study with emphasis on knowledge application. It is not only to guide the public how to understand and analyze the media but also how to better use and influence the media.

Approaches of Practicing Media Education

How do we conduct media education? This question has raised heated debates in the field of media education. Since different media educators have different assumptions about the impact of the media, there are at least five approaches currently used by media literacy teachers.

The first one is the approach of inoculation. This protective approach originates from pessimistic "technological determination" (Czitrom, 1982; Williams, 1974). Media educators who follow the assumptions and concerns of technological determinism have a negative view of media effects. For example, television programs are regarded

as plug-in drugs. The popular media are always viewed as sources of sex and violent content. These educators' justification for media education is to limit the damage mass media imposed on the society. They also emphasize the need to protect young people by arousing their awareness of the potential danger of and influence from the negative media messages. Young people are guided not to consume certain media products as well.

Critical analytical approach teaches young people to deconstruct the hidden ideology of the media messages. This approach is based on a view of "determined technology" (Herman & Chomsky, 1988; Williams, 1974). It adopts the arguments from critical communication theorists and political economists to place questions of politics and power at its center. Mainstream media are generally regarded as being manipulated by the establishment. The ultimate goal of media education for this approach is to achieve "critical autonomy" (Masterman, 1985, 1992). That means media consumers have their independent judgment about the values and ideologies hidden in the media messages and they are not easily misled by the media. Masterman's media education theory is a good example.

The third one is a creative media approach. With the rise of the interactive digital media, media educators in the West are very interested in teaching media literacy through media production. This approach is related to the concept of "technological empowerment" concept. The new technology breaks the monopoly of the mainstream media so that the audience can enjoy the autonomy of media production. This approach leads students to reflect on how "objective reality" is shaped into "media reality" through the production process.

The emergence of new communication technology leads to great socio-cultural changes. There is a need for media education to provide guidance for personal response and choice. Yet this is not enough. As Williams (1974) suggests, institutions should be changed and legislations amended to ensure that the media industry is responsible to the society. The social participatory approach of media education is put forward to address the issue of how human agency can play a constructive role in media democracy. The direction of this approach is to develop students' ability in and awareness of participating in the construction of a democratic media system (Lee, 1996). The approach is built upon the theory of "socially constructed technology" (Franklin, 1990).

The fifth one is a media fun approach which is related to "techno-culturalism". This approach emphasizes the enjoyment of the media. Media productions are regarded as creative, interesting and highly related to our life styles. Taking pleasure from the media from a subjective perspective is encouraged. This approach is well received by young people due to its characteristics, and it may have something to do with cultural studies becoming prevalent in the academic field.

Many people may hold the view that the above-mentioned media education curriculum approaches are evolutionary paradigms. Masterman pointed out that the inoculation paradigm is the earliest. In the 1990s he wrote, "The current practice (the ideological approach) has evolved out of earlier, less satisfactory paradigms of media education" (Masterman, 1993, p.5). Evolution implies that the new paradigm replaces the old. However, this paper argues that these various approaches to media education do not correspond to any evolutionary stages. They do not "evolve" one after the other but stem from different

assumptions and concerns about mass media impact. For example, although the protective approach of media education is under severe criticism, in many places where media environment is undesirable it is still popular among teachers and parents.

Media Education Worldwide

In the 21st century, media education has become a worldwide phenomenon. Yet, it is still more developed in industrialized and technologically advanced countries. Globally, the development of media education can be divided into several categories. The first category consists of countries in an advanced stage of media education development such as Australia, Britain, Canada (especially Ontario), Finland, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, France and Switzerland (Butts, 1992). In these countries, media education has gained a firm foothold in either national or regional curricula. Some of the media education programs are a mandatory part of the school curriculum while others are offered as an option. The second category includes countries where media education is quite well developed. However, it depends largely on individual teacher initiatives or agency support. The United States and Germany are two examples. The third category refers to those countries and regions which have small-scale initiatives in media education. Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Mainland China, the Philippines, India, Russia and some Latin American countries belong to this group.

Australia is a pioneer in the field of media education. Media is studied as a broad subject in most of the states in Australia. In the early 1960s, Media Studies was already developed as an area of study in universities in the state of Victoria. Today, all Australian universities teach media studies. Media

education in Australia schools started with Film Studies. In the 1970s, Media Studies was taught in secondary schools and had become a part of the senior secondary curriculum. Robyn Quin and Barrie McMahon are well-known media education scholars in Australia who published a number of Media Studies textbooks such as *Teaching Viewing and Visual Texts: Secondary English Curriculum and Teaching Program* (Quin, McMahon, and Quin, 1995). At the organizational level, the Australian Teachers of Media Queensland Incorporated (ATOM, Qld) advocates for media education in Queensland by providing professional development opportunities for teachers and advising education authorities on policy and curriculum development. Members of ATOM, Qld have been involved in major development in media education in Queensland. These include the several versions of the Senior Film and Television syllabus, the publication of Education Queensland's Media Curriculum Guide in 1994 and the development of the Queensland Studies Authority's Media strand of the Years 1 to 10 Arts Syllabus. With media educator's lobbying, media education will be formally recognized within the Arts in the Australian curriculum (AMTO, Qld, 2010).

Britain has a long history in media education. Its development can be traced back to the 1930s when F. R. Leavis and Denys Thompson (1933) wrote the book *Culture and Environment: The Training of Critical Awareness*. Media education in the UK in the early years was mainly in the form of inoculation approach. Significant development was seen in the 1980s when Len Masterman (1980, 1985) promoted an analytical approach which aims at revealing the constructed nature of media text and deconstructing the ideologies of the dominant groups within society. However, in the past two decades, media education

in the UK has moved towards a new paradigm (Buckingham, 2003). It adopts a more student-centered perspective which begins from young people's existing knowledge and experience of media rather than from teachers' instruction. It recognizes the importance of students' enjoyment of and pleasure from the media. It also emphasizes the development of young people's creativity and their participation in media production. In the UK, the move to a National Curriculum provided the space available for media education in primary schools and secondary schools. There are requirements for teaching about the media as part of English or Art. Besides, Media Studies has become a course for public examination. Every year, many students are assessed on intermediate course (GCSE or equivalent) in Media Studies (Stafford, 2001). In 2006, the Associate Parliamentary Media Literacy Group was established within the Parliament (Ofcom, 2010b). The aim is to promote greater understanding of the importance of media literacy and encourage the UK Government to develop and implement policies that strengthen media literacy in the population. Ofcom, the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries, provides support to the group and plays a significant role in promoting media literacy as an alternative of media regulation.

Canada is also one of the leading countries in media education. Media education in Canadian schools originates from "screen education" in the late 1960s. The emergence of media education in Canada was related to the concern that "Canadians would want to take a more analytical and reflective approach to the pervasive media culture imported from the United States" (Media Awareness Network, 2010). The formation of the Ontario-based Association for Media Literacy (AML) in 1978 is considered as the cornerstone of the development of media education in this country. The AML members, including Barry Duncan, John Pungente and Neil Anderson, co-authored the well-known media education textbook *Media Literacy Resource Guide* for the Ontario Ministry of Education (1989). Subsequently, media education was mandated as one of the "strands" of English Language Arts in Ontario, and Canada became the first country in North America to require media literacy in the school curriculum (Lee, 1997). Currently, every province in Canada has mandated media education in its curriculum. Media education is mainly attached to English Language Arts. In addition, the cross-curricular potential of media education also has been recognized. Over the years, media education has penetrated into school subjects such as Social Studies, Health, Citizenship, and Careers and Personal Planning curricula. Media Awareness Network, a Canadian non-profit media education organization, provides enormous amount of free lesson plans online to help teachers bring media literacy training into the classroom.

In the United States, media education is commonly called media literacy education. Its origin has a close relationship with media and technology use in education (Hope, Hobbs, and Jensen, 2009). In the early 20th century, film emerged as a tool for teaching and learning and American school teachers used motion pictures as a means to teach writing to young students. By the second half of the 20th century, while Marshall McLuhan's work rose to popularity in the US, high school textbooks were developed for exploring advertising, popular music and film. In the early stage, media literacy education was also understood as a "cognitive defense" against the disturbing forms of sensationalism and propaganda. Later on, this attitude changed and media educators

turned to more analytical inquiry. Media literacy education began to be recognized as a critical practice of citizenship (Hobbs and Jensen, 2009). It is reported that the characteristic of the American model of media education is the combination of the three approaches of media literacy education, namely the protectionism, preparation (training the ability of processing and producing media messages) and media enjoyment (Chen, 2007). In recent years, nearly all 50 states include media literacy in their state curriculum standards. Media literacy education is commonly attached to Language Arts, Social Sciences or Health Education curriculum. The Media Literacy Clearinghouse, an online site, provides rich media literacy materials. There are a number of organizations contributing to the promotion of media literacy education in the US. They include the Center for Media Literacy, Media Education Foundation, the Action Coalition for Media Education, the Center for Digital Literacy at Syracuse University, Project Look Sharp at Ithaca College, and the Media Education Lab at Temple University. In the past decade, the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) was well developed. Apart from hosting a bi-annual conference, it also published a scholarly journal *Journal of media Literacy Education* with the aim to support the work of scholars and practitioners in the field.

Media Education in Hong Kong

Media education in Hong Kong only developed after 1997, the year when its sovereignty was handed back to China. However, in the past decade, a lot of media education initiatives emerged and media education has already established a firm foothold in this former British colony.

The emergence of media education was very much related to the deteriorating of the public sphere after the political handover and the worsening of the media environment. Public sphere refers to the news media which serve as important spaces for formation of public opinion. As self-censorship becomes severe, the news media are less open. Hong Kong is unique in its development of media education. The development of media education in Hong Kong takes the form of a "networking model." It is essentially a bottom-up new social movement (Lee, 2002).

Media education initiatives come from different sectors of the society. Institutions which promote media education include youth organizations, religious organizations, universities, primary and secondary schools, government education department, media organizations, social welfare organizations and media concern groups. The media education social movement stresses informal networking and grassroots participation. Most of the media education advocates and interested organizations interact with one another and have formed an informal network of media education, like casting a net. Each individual or organization serves as one of the nodes in the net. For those organizations that are richer in media education experience or resources, they become the hubs of the network and give support to other smaller organizations. The Hong Kong Association of Media Education (HKAME) was established in 2000 and it serves as one of the hubs to work together with other organizations in launching media education programs.

The practice of media education in Hong Kong has great diversity and different organizations adopt different approaches. In the early years, the inoculation approach and critical analytical approach were popular. In recent years, the social participatory approach, creative media approach and media fun

approach are more prevalent (Lee, 2005).

The social participation approach puts emphasis on social participation and social monitoring. In Hong Kong, most of the media education advocates have the belief that media education can cultivate critical citizens and improve media institutions. As a result, the public sphere of Hong Kong is expected to be enhanced and the city's democratic system will be strengthened (Lee, 2007). Besides, with the advance of new media technology, using digital media is very convenient. Many schools in Hong Kong have setup their campus radio and TV stations. Students enjoy participating in media production. They also take pleasure in consuming media products in an emancipated sense. In this city, the creative media approach and media fun approach are also used to cultivate informed and critical citizens.

Over the years, the media education network in Hong Kong has expanded in several ways. Firstly, it expanded from secondary schools to primary schools. In recent years the Hong Kong Christian Service has held various media education projects for primary school students.

Media education is no longer only conducted in schools or communities. It is also carried out at home. *Yellow Bus,* a local children magazine, promotes family media education. Education Bureau's Committee on Home-School Co-operation also supports the launch of the family media education campaign in the city.

Media education has penetrated into the formal school curriculum. In the early stage, media education programs were mostly conducted in the community. Even when they were conducted in schools, they were treated as extra-curricula activities or experimental courses initiated by individual teachers. However, media education has got a stronger foothold in the formal school curriculum recently as the education system in Hong Kong has been under reform. Starting from 2009, a new school subject of Liberal Studies has been included as a core subject in the senior secondary school curriculum, with the aim of broadening students' knowledge base and enhancing their social awareness (Curriculum Development Council, 2005). In the Liberal Studies curriculum, all students are required to conduct an Independent Enquiry Study (IES) which aims at providing an opportunity for students to learn to become self-directed learners. Six themes were put forward for students to develop their IES titles, and "media" is one of the elective themes (Curriculum Development Council, 2007). Media education has become an elective component of this new school subject. Moreover, the curriculum document of Liberal Studies encourages the cultivation of media literacy for all secondary school students.

With the rapid development of the Internet technology, human society has entered the age of Web 2.0. In Hong Kong, under the participatory media environment, media education is undergoing a paradigm extension from the stage of Media Education 1.0 (1997-2006) to the stage of Media Education 2.0 (2007-present). In the new stage, The basic assumptions, tasks, goals, curriculum and pedagogy of media education are experiencing sea change in Hong Kong. In the stage of Media Education 1.0 stage, the task of media education mainly focused on educating the young people to become critical media consumers. In Media Education 2.0, Hong Kong media educators have to deal with an interactive and participatory media environment. As everybody can become a producer, reporter, social problem monitor and advertiser in the public space, young people are no longer only receivers of

media messages but are also active communicators. Therefore, media education has to cultivate both critical media consumers and responsible media producers. In terms of media education curriculum content, the focus is now on the new media. Media educators are busy working together with school teachers and parents on developing guidance for the young people to teach them how to wisely deal with the new media. For example, the Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School and Good Counsel Catholic Primary School in Hong Kong are conducting a media education project which integrates with information technology. The project is entitled "The 21st Century Skills Learning: Creative Information Technology Education Project" (Tsang, 2009).

In the stage of Media Education 1.0, media education in Hong Kong concentrated on answering the questions of "why" and "what". Media education advocates put most of their efforts on explaining why it is important to introduce media education and what is media literacy. While in Media Education 2.0, the focus has shifted to "how" - how to conduct media education in an effective way and how media literacy can better benefit individuals and the society as a whole. Therefore, the challenge is to conduct empirical media literacy research with the aim of developing new media education theories and strategies.

In recent years media educators in Hong Kong have engaged in a various kinds of research projects. Media education research in Hong Kong has the following characteristics: (1) diversified; (2) integrated with practice; (3) exploring the relationship between media education and active citizenship; (4) linking with studies on new media and the "Net Generation". Media educators in Hong Kong take a

view that media education is a field of study which emphasizes knowledge application (Lee, 2007). Media education research in Hong Kong therefore puts emphasis on making connection between media phenomena and media education practice.

Media Education in Taiwan and Mainland China

Compared with other Asian regions (with the exception of Australia), media education has flourished in Taiwan for a longer time. Media educators in Taiwan published journal articles on media literacy in the early 1990s. Its development is quite different from that of Hong Kong. Media education is advocated by one or two enthusiastic organizations and its development pattern resembles a "spoke wheel" in Taiwan, which means that media education programs are generated and promoted by one or two powerful center(s).

The Centre for Media Literacy in Taiwan at the National Chengchi University plays a key role in the development of media education in Taiwan. The Center conducts media education seminars, designs media education courses and develops media literacy curriculum materials (Wu and Chen, 2007). It provides great support to schools and parents' groups to launch media education programs all over Taiwan. Another institution which is devoted to the promotion of media education is Shih Hsin University. The University also develops media education textbooks and media literacy teaching guides for school teachers (Cheng & Lo, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2009). In 2002 the education authority in Taiwan announced the official "White Paper on Media Literacy Education." With the encouragement from the Ministry of Education, many secondary and primary schools in Taiwan have launched their media

education curricula. In Taiwan, a number of tertiary institutions have also included media literacy as a general education course for university students.

The rapid development of media education in Taiwan and Hong Kong stimulated the development of media education in Mainland China. Media education in the latter gradually picked up its momentum in the early 2000s. In the past decade, a number of media literacy conferences were held (Bu, 2008). International media education experts, such as David Buckingham and Barry Duncan, were invited to China to share their media education concepts and practices. In the first few years, media education was studied as an academic field and few media education activities were conducted in communities or schools. A number of media education research bases were established in universities such as Communication University of China, Fudan University, Zhejiang University of Media and Communication, and Northeast Normal University (Young Chinese Communist, 2010). However, in recent years, media education has begun to penetrate into the school curriculum and teacher training programs. In Beijing, Zhejiang and Guangdong, media education was conducted in some primary and secondary schools as innovative courses (Peng & Wang, 2010). The media education program at Hei Zhi Ma School in Beijing is an outstanding showcase (Zhang, Mao & Xu, 2008).

In Mainland China, media education has the endorsement from the authorities of government and education. The education authority offers huge research grant for media literacy studies. The State Administration of Radio film and Television gives full support to the launch of media education programs in China (Peng and Wang, 2008). In fact, the goals of media education in China are different from those in other countries. Apart from cultivating wise media consumers and good citizens, media education programs are also expected to train ethical media professionals. It is believed that media education can contribute to the building of a healthy media environment.

Media education in Mainland China has developed rapidly. In a few years' time, a large number of publications related to media education have been published. More and more communication scholars are interested in studying media literacy. They also teach about media literacy in universities. Media education has already become a popular area of academic research and an innovative education initiative in schools.

Future Development

Looking around the globe, we can see that the development of media education is encouraging. It is widely agreed that being media literate becomes more important in the new media age. Although the rationale and definition of media education vary in different countries, it seems that there is a consensus about the purpose of media education. It is to cultivate media literacy citizens who are able to deal with the media in an intelligent and responsible way.

Media education is always regarded as dealing with the instructional methods and pedagogy of media literacy. However, after 40 years of development, media education has gradually grown into a field of study in the academic world. Firstly, the nature of media education is well-defined. Key concepts and teaching approaches are well developed. Secondly, a body of knowledge about media literacy has been accumulated. Numerous books and curriculum materials have been published. Peer-reviewed journals were launched in recent years. University courses were established. Thirdly,

the number of people with clear media education professional identity is growing. Media education teachers in schools and researchers and scholars in universities identify themselves as members of the media literacy field. More and more media education professional institutions, such as NAMLE in the US and HKAME in Hong Kong have been set up and played an important role in promoting media education in their countries and regions. Fourth, media education academic activities flourish all over the world. As indicated above, teaching and researching on media education grow rapidly in schools and tertiary institutions. Moreover, every year international seminars and conferences on media education are held. Although it is still a long way for media education to evolve into a mature and independent discipline in the global academic world, it seems that the development of media education is proceeding in this direction.

Concluding Remarks

This paper has reviewed media education development in many countries around the global and has the following conclusions. First of all, in the age of Web 2.0, the assumptions, curricula and tasks of media education are going to have a sea change. Media education has already started a new paradigm. With the age of Web 3.0 around the corner, media education will face new challenges. The educational response to new media technologies will certainly become a major concern of media literacy programs in many countries. Future research of media education will definitely weave around the use and consumption of the new media. Training media literate prosumers is an urgent task.

Being a diversified field, media education has many faces. It is worth paying attention to different kinds of social use of media literacy. In UK, media education aims at cultivating critical and creative media users who are able to enjoy the media. In Canada, media education is associated with building up Canadian cultural identity. While in Taiwan media education is employed to educate good citizens, in Mainland China it is also used to train ethical media practitioners. In Hong Kong, apart from cultivating critical citizenship, media education proposes the wisely application of what has learned from the media to everyday life. As every region has its unique media education characteristics, media education research should be contextualized. This paper suggests that we should put media education in social, political, economic, technological and media regulatory contexts for scrutiny.

Lastly, as media education is very socio-cultural specific, some media educators in Asia, such as those in Japan, are thinking about the Asian way of media education. When we look back at history, we can see that media education originated in western countries. Most of the Asian regions have been adopting the theory and practice of media education developed in America, Britain and Canada. Perhaps it is time for Asian scholars and media education practitioners to learn how to independently theorize and domesticate their media education practices. If media educators from the East and the West can inform each other and work together, they will contribute greatly to the growth of this emerging academic field of media education.

References

ATOM Qld (2010). Media in the Australia curriculum. *Atomqld.org*. Retrieved September 17, 2010, from http://sites.google.com/a/qut.edu.au/atom-qld-inc/Home

Bu, W. (2008). Reflection on media literacy education and its research. In S. J. Peng (Ed.), *Chinese media literacy report 2008* (pp.3-27). Beijing: China Broadcast

Publication International.

Buckingham, D. (2003). *Media education: Literacy, learning and contemporary culture.* Cambridge: Polity.

Butts, D.(1992). Strategies for media education. In C. Bazalgette, E.Bevort, & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide* (pp.224-229). London: British Film Institute/Paris: CLEMI.

Czitrom, D. J. (1982). *Media and the American mind: From Morse to McLuhan.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Chen, W. J. (2007, October 12). The characteristic and experience of the American media literacy education. *cjr. com.cn.* Retrieved September 17, 2010, from http://cjr. zjol.com.cn/05cjr/system/2007/10/12/008874214.shtml.

Cheng, L. Q., & Lo, S. N ((2009) (Ed.). *Critical media literacy.* Taipei: Cheng Chung Book Co. Ltd.

Curriculum Development Council (2005). *Proposed new senior secondary curriculum and assessment framework.* Hong Kong: education and manpower Bureau.

Curriculum Development Council (2007). *Liberal studies: Curriculum and assessment guide (Secondary 4-6).* Hong Kong: Education and manpower Bureau.

Franklin,U. (1990).*The real world of technology.* Concord, Ontario: Anansi.

Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N.(1988). *Manufacturing consent: The political economy of the mass media.* New York: Pantheon.

Hobbs, R., & Jensen, A. (2009). The past, present, and future of media literacy education. *Journal of Media Literacy Education, 1*, 1-11.

Hope, S., Hobbs, R., & Jensen, A. (2009). United States. *imlrf. org* (website for International Media Literacy Research Forum). Retrieved September 14, 2010, from http://www.imlrf.org/united-states

IFTC (International Film and Television Council) (1977). Preface. In Internation Film and Television Council (Ed.), *Media studies in education* (p.3). Paris: UNESCO.

James, W. and Hill A. (1993). *A dictionary of communication and media studies.* London: Edward Arnold.

Jospin, L. (1992). Media education and democracy. In C. Bazalgette, E.Bevort, & J.,Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide* (pp. 212-215). London: British Film Institute/Paris: CLEMI.

Leavis, F., & Thompson, D. (1933). *Culture and environment: The training of critical awareness.* London: Chatto and Windus.

Lee, A. Y. L. (1996). Media technology perspectives and their curriculum implications for media education. *Canadian Journal of Educational Communication, 25* (3), 209-234.

Lee, A. Y. L. (1997). Legitimating media education: From social movement to the formation of a new social curriculum. Unpublished doctorial thesis, the University of British Columbia, Canada.

Lee, A. Y. L. (2002). Media education movement in Hong Kong: A networking model. *Mass Communication Research, 71*, 107-131.

Lee, A. Y. L. (2005). Media education in Hong Kong: Taking a exploring, diversified and open path. Paper presented at the second Summit Forum of School Principals

from Hong Kong and Shenzhen, December 3-4, 2005, Shenzhen.

Lee, A. Y. L. (2007). Media education, critical citizenship and public sphere: The ideal and practice of media education in Hong Kong. *The Chinese Journal of Communication and Society, 3,* 134-155.

Lusted, D. (1991). Introduction. In D. Lusted (Ed.), *The media studies book: A guide for teachers* (pp.1-11). London: Comedia Book.

Masterman, L. (1980). *Teaching about television.* London: MacMillan.

Masterman, L. (1985). *Teaching the media.* London: Comedia.

Masterman, L. (1992). A distinctive mode of enquiry: Towards critical autonomy. In M. Alvarado & O. B. Barrett (Eds.), *Media education: An introduction* (pp.102-103). London: British Film Institute.

Masterman, L. (1993). The media education revolution. *Canadian Journal of Educational Communication, 22* (1), 5-14.

Media Awareness Network (2010). Media education in Canada: An overview. *media-awareness.ca* (website for Media Awareness Network). Retrieved September 14, 2010, from http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_education/

Media Literacy Week (2010, November). What is Media Education? *medialiteracy.ca* (Website for Media Literacy Week). Retrieved September 19, 2010, from http://www.medialiteracyweek.ca/en/101_whatis.htm

Ministry of Education, Taiwan (2009). *Media literacy: Teacher's guide.* Taipei: Ministry of Education.

Morsy, Z. (1984). Preface. In Z. Morsy (Ed.), *Media education* (pp.5-12). Paris: UNESCO.

NAMLE (2010). Media literacy defined. *Namle.net* (website for National Association for media Literacy Education). Retrieved September 11, 2010, from http://namle.net/publications/media-literacy-definitions

Ofcom (2010a). What is media literacy - Ofcom's definition. *Ofcom.org.uk* (website for Ofcom). Retrieved September 15, 2010, from http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/media-literacy/about/

Ofcom (2010b). New Chair of the Associate Parliamentary Media Literacy Group. *Media Literacy e-bulletin, 35*, July, p.5.

Ontario Ministry of Education (1989). *Media literacy resource guide.* Toronto: Queen's Printer for Ontario.

Peng, S. J. & Wang, T. D. (2008). Introduction. In S. J. Peng (Ed.), *Chinese media literacy report 2008* (pp.1-2). Beijing: China Broadcast Publication International.

Peng, S. J. & Wang, T. D. (2010). Introduction. In S. J. Peng (Ed.), *Chinese media literacy report 2010* (pp.1-2). Beijing: China Broadcast Publication International.

Quin, R., McMahon, B., & Quin, R. (1995). *Teaching viewing and visual texts: Secondary English curriculum and teaching program.* Carlton, Australia: Curriculum Corporation.

Roncagliolo, R. (1992). An agenda for the future. In C. Bazalgette, E. Bevort, & J. Savino (Eds.), *New directions: Media education worldwide* (pp.208-221). London: British Film Institute/Paris: CLEMI.

Schaeffer, P. (1984). Mass media and the school: Descartes or McLuhan? In Z. Morsy (Ed.), *Media education* (pp.44-72). Paris: UNESCO.

Stafford, R.(2001). Media education in the UK.*MediaEd.org.uk* (the UK media and moving image education site). Retrieved September 14, 2010, from http://www.mediaed.org.uk/content/view/85/115/

Tsang, S. S. (2009). *21st century skills learning: Creative information education project.* Hong Kong: Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School.

Williams, R. (1974). *Television: Technology and cultural form*. London: Fontana.

Wu, S. & Chen, C. M. (2007). *Media literacy education.* Taipei: Chuliu Publisher.

Young Chinese Communist (2010, June 25). Background information on media literacy. Young Chinese Communist website. Retrieved September 10, 2010, from http://12355.gqt.org.cn/wlsy/201006/t20100625_382921.htm.

Zhang, J., Mao, D. Y., & Xu, W. J. (2008). Studying the practice of media literacy education: A case of the Hei Zhi Ma School in Beijing. In S. J. Peng (Ed.), *Chinese media literacy report 2008* (pp.175-181). Beijing: China Broadcast Publication International.

Author:

Alice Y. L. Lee, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Department of Journalism, Hong Kong Baptist University, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Vice-chairperson, Hong Kong Association of Media Education
[alicelee@hkbu.edu.hk]