Preface

Scholars in the field of media literacy education have reviewed the influence of new media and technologies in our lives and the role of media literacy education (Buckingham, 2010; De Abreu & Mihailidis, 2014; Jenkins, 2014). In this handbook, we argue that the Media literacy education in the digital age is not just a good idea but central especially in a globally connected world. As Elizabeth Thoman (1997), the founder of the Center for Media Literacy says, “Media Literacy is not a new subject to teach, but a new way to teach all subjects.”

In addition to academic researchers and scholars, organizations, such as, UNESCO provides Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers and outlines the components of Media Literacy as follows:

- Understand the role and functions of media
- Understand the conditions under which media fulfill their functions
- Critically analyze and evaluate media content
- Use of media for democratic participation, intercultural dialogue and learning
- Produce user-generated content
- ICT and other media skills (UNESCO, 2011)

The following eight concepts by Duncan (1989) provide the foundation and development of media literacy education.

**Eight Key Concepts for Media Literacy**

1. **All media are constructions.** The media do not present simple reflections of external reality, nor are they a clear window to the world. Rather, they present carefully crafted constructions that have been selected. Media literacy works towards deconstructing these constructions and taking them apart to show how they are made.

2. **The media construct reality.** The media are responsible for the majority of the observations and experiences from which we build up our personal understandings of the world and how it works. Much of our view of reality is based on media messages that have been pre-constructed and have attitudes, interpretations, and conclusions already built in. Thus, the media, to a great extent, give us our sense of reality.
3. **Audiences negotiate meaning in media.** If the media provide us with much of the material upon which we build our picture of reality, each of us finds or “negotiates” meaning according to individual factors: faith perspectives; personal needs and anxieties; the pleasures or troubles of the day; racial and sexual attitudes; family and cultural background; gender; and so forth. At the same time, this negotiation is limiting because it happens on both the sub-conscious and conscious levels.

4. **Media have commercial implications.** Media literacy aims to encourage an awareness of how the media are influenced by commercial considerations, and how they impinge on content, technique, and distribution. Most of media production is a business, and therefore media often operate to make a profit for some. Questions of ownership and control are central: a relatively small number of individuals control what a relatively large number of people watch, read, and hear in the media.

5. **Media contain ideological and value messages.** There is no such thing as objective reporting. Everything has a bias because it is written or stated from a person’s (or group of persons’) perspectives. Much of mainstream media is advertising, and much of media proclaims values and ways of life. The mainstream media convey, explicitly or implicitly, ideological messages about issues such as the virtue of consumerism, the role of women, the acceptance of authority, and unquestioning patriotism.

6. **Media have social and political implications.** The media have a great influence in politics and informing social change. Television can greatly influence the election of a national leader on the basis of image. The media involve us in concerns such as civil rights issues, famines in Africa, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. They give us an intimate sense of national issues and global concerns so that we have become what media expert Marshall McLuhan calls the “global village.” However, the mainstream media often fail to involve us in certain major world events, such that significant occurrences take place with little notice from the media.

7. **Form and content are closely related in the media.** As Marshall McLuhan noted, each medium has its own grammar and codifies reality in its own particular way. Different media will report the same event, but create different impressions and messages, depending on who is reporting.

8. **Each medium has a unique aesthetic form.** Just as we notice the pleasing rhythms of certain pieces of poetry or prose, so we ought to be able to enjoy the pleasing forms and effects of the different media. People of different backgrounds and ages may be more attracted to one form of media over another. Duncan (1989)

This handbook addresses some of these concerns while considering questions such as: What messages and stories are often omitted from media? How do the media portray different cultures and perspectives? How can we integrate media literacy in interdisciplinary and globally connected projects that connect our students to the world?

In the United States, the Center for Media Literacy has established a set of framework to help focus the learning and understanding of media literacy education. The concepts and key questions are:

- **Who created this message?**
  - All media messages are constructed.
- **What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?**
  - Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
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- How might different people understand this message differently?
  - Different people experience the same media message differently.
- What values, lifestyles and points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
  - Media have embedded values and points of view.
- Why is this message being sent?
  - Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power

The emergence of new media and technologies brings new challenges and opportunities for educators around the world and requirement for new curriculum to prepare the next generation of learners for the 21st century. To that end, Handbook of Research on Media Literacy in the Digital Age brings together researchers, practitioners and professionals to highlight the contemporary media literacy projects, paradigms, perspectives, insights, and practices for the 21st century classrooms.

This handbook promotes social justice education, global competencies and 21st Century Skills in P-20 education, outlines research in the field of media education that describes pre- and in-service teachers’ reactions, discoveries, and experiences with transdisciplinary and inclusive project-based learning activities that integrate new media and technologies, highlights the transformative research projects in media education; and showcases best practices in teacher education and their multilingual multicultural multimedia projects. The authors explore the role of media literacy in education as a means of developing P-20 students media literacy skills, global competencies and transformative leadership skills while sharing innovative transdisciplinary research around the globe.

Chapter 1 titled “Critical Media Literacy as Transformative Pedagogy” provides a theoretical framework of critical media literacy (CML) pedagogy and examples of practical implementation in K-12 and teacher education. It begins with a brief discussion of literature indicating the need for educators to use a critical approach to media. The subjective and ubiquitous nature of media is highlighted to underscore the transformative potential of CML to use media tools for promoting critical thinking and social justice in the classroom.

Chapter 2 titled “Learning to Teach the Media: Pre-Service Teachers Articulate the Value of Media Literacy Education” reports a qualitative study that aims to examine how pre-service teachers (PSTs) articulate the value of MLE for 21st century teaching and learning while enrolled in a core education course that encompasses media literacy. The results indicate that PSTs value MLE as a pedagogy that promotes effective media integration, fosters critical thinking, and develops curriculum connections.

Chapter 3 titled “Pedagogical Approaches to Media Literacy Education in the United States” offers a glimpse to the current status and pedagogical approaches of the media literacy education in the Unites States. This chapter is intended to provide the foundational and delineated information about the media literacy education so that it can be a helpful reference to understanding and developing media literacy in K-12 educators’ curricular.

Chapter 4 titled “Educating English Language Learners for Success in the 21st Century: Facilitating Their Acquisition of Multiliteracies” is intended to: (a) to highlight the importance of teaching and learning multiliteracies for today’s students to succeed in the 21st century, (b) to discuss the literature about multiliteracies and new technologies for teaching and student learning, and (c) to provide strategies for integrating technology effectively in teaching multiliteracies to English language learners (ELLs), the fastest growing segment of public student population in the USA.
Chapter 5 titled “Developing English Language Teachers’ Professional Capacities through Digital and Media Literacies” demonstrates how a group of educators from a southern Brazilian state university designed and implemented formative workshops to sustain English language teachers’ professional development through digital and media literacies. The chapter maps important changes that have happened in language teacher education in Brazil.

Chapter 6 titled “Terms of the Digital Age: Realities and Cultural Paradigms” defines terms of the digital age as they relate to digital media literacy. The changing landscape of society is demonstrated through the recalibration occurring in media processes and the cultural forms they generate.

Chapter 7 titled “Developing Digital Empathy: A Holistic Approach to Media Literacy Research Methods” introduces digital empathy as a holistic framework combining empathic design and empathic listening to bridge the traditional protectionist and empowerment approaches in media literacy research. In the Digital Age, when technology offers many solutions and distractions at the same time, we should use media literacy research to address these advantages and challenges through a holistic approach.

Chapter 8 titled “Transforming Digital Literacy with Culturally Diverse, Personalized Learning” reports on the research and efforts of two faculty members in an Instructional Technologies (ITEC) Master’s program to transform their undergraduate and graduate courses into culturally sensitive personalized learning experiences in media literacy education. Researchers found that introducing techniques of gamification, heutagological methods, and universal design for learning principles into their online and blended-learning courses provided a way to help students personalize their learning experience and interact more engagingly with each other, and to master the media literacy skills being taught.

Chapter 9 titled “Creating Global Classrooms Using Universal Design for Learning” demonstrates how the form of learning compliments the technology used to expand the children’s world beyond the classroom walls. In this chapter, a description of universal design is provided, how to use the digital and media content to create a classroom that honors diversity, and how to use universal design for teaching different languages.

Chapter 10 titled “The Freedom of Critical Thinking: Examining Efforts to Teach American News Literacy Principles in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia” examines how college educators in Hong Kong, Vietnam, and Malaysia adopted and adapted lessons gleaned from a news literacy curriculum developed by journalism instructors at Stony Brook University in New York. In doing so, the chapter situates the emerging field of news literacy within parameters of its parent field, media literacy, and current trends in digitization, globalization, and information freedom.

Chapter 11 titled “Media Literacy Organizations” explores organizations in the field of media literacy education. The organizations identified in this chapter endorse media literacy not only to the real users but also to the virtual users residing in different parts of the world. This chapter is an attempt to explore, identify and highlight various organizations that offer media literacy platform to their users globally.

Chapter 12 titled “Media Literacy in the Digital Age: Literacy Projects and Organizations” examines the media literacy programs working across the world to equip citizens to analyze and evaluate incoming information. In addition, the chapter provides some specific recommendations to bring digital and media literacy education into formal and informal settings.

Chapter 13 titled “Media Ecology and the 21st Century Classroom” uses media ecology theory to examine educational technology and provide tools for educators to think critically about how to positively affect the learning climate through media choices. Specifically, the chapter considers online, hybrid and flipped classrooms as part of the educational media ecology. The chapter provides researchers and
educators specific guidelines to use media ecology in order to think critically about decisions regarding educational media in the classroom.

Chapter 14 titled “Using Media Literacy to Teach and Learn the English Language Arts/Literacy Common Core State Standards” discusses how the goals of digital media literacy are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, how resources can be used to teach teachers and school district personnel about the Common Core State Standards, and finally how digital media can aid in helping students learn the standards and can aid in helping community members learn and then teach these standards.

Chapter 15 titled “21st Century Skills and Digital Storytelling in the Classroom” examines the PoliCultura collaborative digital storytelling initiative in Italy. By presenting in detail the initiative and the evaluation data, this chapter makes a case for collaborative digital storytelling as a way to foster the acquisition of 21st century skills: creativity, collaboration, media literacy, life, and career skills.

Chapter 16 titled “Pedagogical Guidelines to Introduce Transmedia Learning into the Classroom: The Brazilian Context” presents some pedagogical guidelines for introducing transmedia learning into Brazilian classrooms and discussed the technologies and media available in Brazilian public schools, the media literacy of students and teachers, as well as the rules derived from the management team.

Chapter 17 titled “Cognitive Approach to Improve Media Literacy: Mind Puzzles” presents a city-wide activity done in Bayburt, Turkey. Their study asserts that cognitive and metacognitive skills play a significant role in developing the media literacy and the skills for 21st century.

Chapter 18 titled “Media Literacy, Co-Innovation and Productivity: Examples from European Countries” analyzes the connections between media literacy and context of the knowledge economy, establishing a relationship between so-called co-innovative sources (ICT, organizational innovation and qualifications of employees) of the business environment and media literacy. It seeks to verify the behavior of media literacy as a co-innovative source, as fundamental as the three other ones to the viability and sustainability of companies.

Chapter 19 titled “Bring the Media Literacy of Turkish Pre-Service Teachers to the Table” is based on a study conducted among pre-service teachers at Istanbul University. The research focused on a computer-aided application as a training material, investigated how the target audience responded to these course materials and put forth teacher candidates’ media literacy ability during their preparing phase of course materials as well as preparing the assessment using qualitative and quantitative studies.

Chapter 20 titled “How to Use Parody and Humour to Teach Digital Literacy” provides insight in the role of ‘fake news’—something difficult to define in an age where the line between accurate and fabricated information has become blurred—and how entertainment industry intrigues audiences and, in a way, they need to have a sense of what was the reality in order fully to understand the comedy of the story.

Chapter 21 titled “Mobile Phone Use during Class at a Japanese Women’s College” shares the result of the survey conducted in Japan that investigated: (1) whether students put their mobile phone on their desk during the lecture, (2) the reasons why students put their phone on their desk during the lecture, (3) responses to incoming calls during the lecture, and (4) the psychological impact on students of setting rules regarding the use of mobile phones during the lecture.

Chapter 22 titled “Methods and Strategies in Using Digital Literacy in Media and the Arts” posits that digital literacy has gone from a virtually non-existent entity to an incredibly useful, and sometimes absolutely essential, skill set. In various settings, it has changed the way artists both inside and outside the digital realm work, collaborate, teach and train educators.
In conclusion, this handbook draws on the connections between media and education, and their crucial role in preparing our students for the global economy. The handbook explores the role of multiple literacies (e.g. information, technology, geography, media literacy) in developing media literacy and 21st century skills among P-20 students; introduces the Universal Design of Learning (UDL) model for developing lessons across content areas (e.g. math, geography, cultural studies, physical education) in P-20 curriculum; and demonstrate creative strategies and possibilities for engaging learners in project-based media literacy activities while integrating new technologies.

Melda N. Yildiz  
Walden University, USA & Unite to Educate, USA

Jared Keengwe  
University of North Dakota, USA

REFERENCES


ENDNOTES

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2  http://www.p21.org