

Disinformation and MIL Movements in Japan

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- Situation of Disinformation (Fake News) in Japan
- Educational Practices with the CRAPP test and the 5 key question of Media Literacy
- Video Letter Exchange Project for making relationship of trust

I would like to present the situation of the so-called "fake news", in other words disinformation problem situation and our practices in Japan. After the U.S. presidential election in



FactCheck Initiative Japan co-founder Yoichiro Tateiwa (center) speaks at a news conference in Tokyo on Feb. 8, as FU representatives Hitomi Yamai (left) and Keiko Kanai look on. | YOSHIAKI MIURA

Japan lags in fact-checking initiatives, media watchers say

Japan lags behind other countries in fact-checking initiatives and still has low awareness of their importance, according to FactCheck Initiative Japan (FIJ), a Tokyo-based nonprofit organization that encourages fact-verifying activities.

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ARTICLE HISTORY
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2016, the Japanese media covered stories about "fake news" in the US and Europe. At the beginning, the Japanese media and even researchers looked at this situation with indifference.

Gradually, they are paying attention to the problems of disinformation on the social media in Japan. The motivation behind it came from the establishment of the non profit organization on fact checking "the Fact check Initiative Japan" in June last year.

There would be reason that the Japanese media is not paying enough attention to problems of "Fake news" in Japan. It

is not only that most of the Japanese "fake news" come from politician's lies and often they spread them by themselves, but also the main stream media tend to surmise government's intent and are lenient in criticizing them. For example, during the okinawa gubernatorial election last month, some politicians who belong to ruling parties intentionally spread "fake news" or hate speech to injure the opposing candidate. One of the politicians who are involved in it denied his responsibility of reality checking. And many "fake news" sites on that election appeared and spread disinformation. In the background, the Abe administration lies blatantly to the public many times and attempts to cover them up by controlling bureaucrats and ordering to falsify official documents if it's necessary.



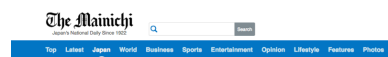
Finance Ministry disciplines 20 over falsified Moritomo files

THE ASAHI SHIMBUN
June 4, 2018 at 18:15 JST



Finance Minister Taro Aso responds to questions at a June 4 news conference after the Finance Ministry released the results of its investigation into the falsification of documents related to the sale of state-owned land to Moritomo Gakuen. (Shinnoke Ito)

Mainstream media such as NHK and



Okinawa Gov.'s 'China connection' nothing but 'fake news,' but spreads via internet

June 18, 2017 (Mainichi Japan)



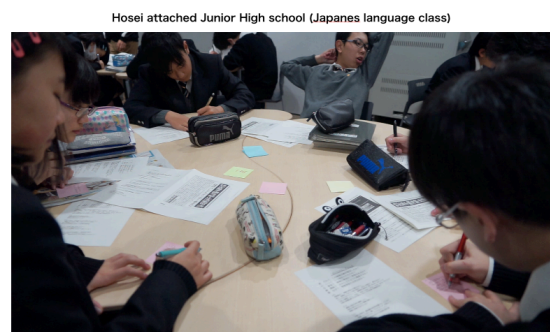
With the self-explanatory phrase "fake news" recently entering the public's consciousness across the world, the Mainichi Shimbun decided to look at an apparent case of fake news in Japan -- which reveals a darker side of the world wide web.

Yomiuri Newspaper, which are close to the administration, avoid criticism of them. And online far-right racist groups provide them support on the social media as provocateurs.

Nevertheless, most of the educators, administrators and researchers including librarians and media literacy fields don't have an interest in this serious problem. Especially in the librarian's field, they think it doesn't have anything to do with them at all. In the media literacy world, teachers and researchers are rather interested in programming education. Many of them consider the concept of media as non-human agents but devices. Therefore, they always focus on how to use media devices such as tablet computers in schools. I surveyed a sampling of online news and hate speech checking skills at some secondary schools and my college students last year. And I wrote a article about it for MILID yearbook 2017. As I expected, students don't have enough skills to evaluate online information and they are very susceptible to hate speech. The most serious problem is that teachers and librarians, researchers ignore it. But ignoring a problem doesn't make it go away.

Many of Japanese teachers and administrators don't consider children's behavior on social media as the issue of citizenship but just moral issue. They haven't addressed this problematic situation outside of schools. The policies that they adopted were just about prohibiting bringing smart phones in to schools or asking parents not to allow children to use them at home. But it doesn't seem to have an effect.

In such a situation, I tried to introduce fact-checking practices in to a librarian and librarian teachers training classes in my University last year. And I did a spotting "fake news" workshop at a junior high school adapting the Japanese version of the CRAAP test as information literacy education, which is popular in the US for spotting "fake news" in schools. That test is come from the American Librarian Association. In March, I had another workshop about almost same topics with not only the



CRAAP test (Information Literacy)

- Currency: The timeliness of the information.
- Relevance: The importance of the information for your needs.
- Authority: The source of the information.
- Accuracy: The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.
- Purpose: The reason the information exists.

Five key Questions (Media Literacy)

- Key Question #1: **Who** created this message?
- Key Question #2: **What creative techniques** are used to attract my attention?
- Key Question #3: **How might different people understand** this message differently from me?
- Key Question #4: **What lifestyles, values and points of view** are represented in - or omitted from - this message?
- Key Question #5: **Why** is this message being sent?

CRAPP test but also the five key questions of Media literacy in Japanese, which come from the Center for Media Literacy in the US.

I think it is good way to use the CRRAP test to judge truth or falsity. But it is not enough to teach students media literacy skills such as a question how different people understand the message differently or what lifestyles, values and points of view are represented in the message. These questions are important for cultivating critical media literacy skills. We might well be able to claim that it is called the simple way of the Media and Information Literacy education.

This month, we had a lecture and symposium titled "Media Education in the Age of Digital Capitalism" inviting Professor David Buckingham from the UK as an event of UNESCO Global MIL Week in Japan. He pointed out that we must think about not only promoting media education but also changing media, which is based on digital capitalism. I agree with him. In the era of disinformation, we must engage in not only creating Media and Information Literacy practices but also changing the media that is based on digital capitalism with journalists, fact checking organizations and citizens. That would be a huge project. Big social media companies such as Google, Amazon Facebook and Apple are adapting AI and virtual reality technologies to strengthen their power. We need to have critical thinking skill and abilities to counter them.



In addition, we are engaged in a plan to have a multilateral exchange video letter project with schools in Nepal, Cambodia, Indonesia, China, Vietnam and the US using a video sharing server. We believe that we need a relationship of trust and intercultural dialogue as MIL projects, now more than ever.

Documentary Video "Get our yell across the sea - from Fukushima to the world"
Please watch! <https://youtu.be/XTdhPKVFEuk>



Video Letter Exchange Project
"Culture Quest"

