

CRITICAL METHODOLOGY OF MEDIA LITERACY: A Kantian Analysis

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Abstract: The objective of this study is to analyze critical methodology of media literacy presented by Center for Media Literacy (CML) and James Potter, and derive the meaning of reflection connoted in it. This study proposes three principles of reflection based on Kant's concept of reflective judgment: logical plurality of information, ethical value of practice, and possibility of realizing common good. A reflective literacy based on this basic framework is ultimately directed to the thought process of establishing ourselves a coherent and universal principle about arbitrary and variable information. This study complements the individualized and strategized method of information interpretation by restoring the reflective meaning and principles that is excluded from CML's and Porter's media literacy model.

Keywords: Center for Media Literacy, Critical Literacy, Kant's Reflective Judgment, Potter's Media Literacy, Reflective Literacy, Reflective Thinking, Viewpoint Formation Method.

1. Introduction

Literacy is basically the ability to interpret information in the process of communication. Before the advent of New Media, literacy in general meant the ability to read and write, or the ability to understand meanings in context and to use the information from the text. Even when typewriters were commercialized in the 1870s and electronic rapid-speed copying machines were developed in 1959, the concept of literacy was not much of a concern for people. However, the advent of television has socially imprinted the need for

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literacy on audio-visual information. With merits of television, the term Media Literacy appeared for the first time in 1955, along with growing concerns for harmful effects of television.¹ Although, the first definition of media literacy came in 1992, after computers became widespread in offices and homes. At that time, media literacy meant “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create and use media using all forms of communication.”²

Since the appearance of Internet-based New Media, the concept of media literacy has diversified into terms that include social and cultural understanding of information as well as the ability to use the media technically. Recently, the conceptual scope is enhanced to the extent that it is difficult to define, including Social Media Literacy, Software Literacy, Digital Literacy, Media Information Literacy, Information and Communication Technology Literacy, Visual Literacy, Game Literacy, Content Literacy, Cultural Literacy, Multi Literacy, Meta Literacy, Critical Literacy, News Literacy, Youtube Literacy, Messenger Literacy, and so on. The concept of literacy is being used in diverse ways according to its characteristic and socio-cultural value, its emphasis and educational purposes in which academic field or format is used, and the necessity of integrating and synthesizing different terms.

Although there are various kinds of media literacy, their conceptual use has a common undertone. In other words, the concept of media literacy implies ‘critical thinking’. So, what kind of meaning did critical thinking have when it was interpreted in the preceding studies of media literacy? To be specific, this study carries out an analysis of Center for Media

¹The term, mentioned by the American Council for Better Broadcasts, a group of media education papers, was an emphasis on the need for qualitative interpretation and the selection of TV programs.

²Patricia Aufderheide and Charles M. Firestone, “Media Literacy: A Report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy,” Aspen Institute, Queenstown Maryland: Communications and Society Program, 1993.

Literacy's Core Concepts for Media Literacy and Potter's Media Literacy to determine whether the questioning methodology about critical thinking applied in these two models is fundamentally based on critical thinking and whether the fundamental logic of reflection is retroactive to 'Why do we question?'

This paper then defines reflective meaning of literacy based on the concept of Kant's "the reflecting power of judgement."³ In this study, three questions and three principles of reflection are presented as methodologies of literacy based on reflective thinking:

- i. Logical plurality of information: Why do we have to do critical reading and comprehending from the perspective of information determination?
- ii. Ethical value of practice: Why do we need reflection or insight about different values from an ethical perspective?
- iii. Possibility of realizing common good: Why is confronting and participating in media environmental changes important from a futuristic perspective on media literacy?

These three principles must be universally considered in all information-understanding activities regardless of the nature of information we interpret and the kind of questions raised. As long as we recognize that I and others are equal as human beings and that knowledge is incomplete, information reading cannot take place at a level of individual pieces of knowledge or in a dimension of individuals' experiences. When all possible experiences and knowledge are in principle taken into consideration along with information accessed from a viewpoint of universal interpretation, the decoding of information can serve as a milestone to uplift our lives in general.

³Immanuel Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, trans. Paul Guyer and Eric Matthews, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, 67.

2. Center for Media Literacy and Critical Thinking

Media literacy has so far been classified into several categories in various contexts and viewpoints of communication for the purpose of improving our ability to understand and utilize technical information. As a methodology to achieve such purpose, critical thinking is implicit in previous studies.⁴ Critical thinking was needed for individuals to establish their own unique values and develop their own identities. In its concreteness, critical thinking is an attempt to break away from all too familiar social conventions and customs, undeniable traditional ideas, mainstream social conventional wisdom, and various opinions of the majority of people as well as individuals' habits and familiar lifestyles to find a cleft in existing way of thinking and to pursue such self-consciousness persistently.

The model of CML in the U.S. is a representative study that applies critical thinking training methods to media literacy. According to CML, media literacy is defined by five core concepts, i.e., content or message, authorship, format, audience, and purpose.⁵ These five core concepts can induce the core of information to be taken into consideration from a producer's or consumer's viewpoint, along with major propositions.⁶ These five concepts and their corresponding propositions can be reconstituted of critical questions that

⁴Mastermann, a pioneer of media literacy, emphasized that information users can raise diverse questions about the attributes of the world represented by media bias, values, omissions, authors, points of view, lifestyle, power, etc. Len Mastermann, *Teaching the Media*, Abingdon, Oxford: Comedia Publishing Group, 1985.

⁵Tessa Jolls and Elizabeth Thoman, "Literacy for the 21st Century," An Overview & Orientation Guide to Media Literacy Education," Los Angeles: Center for Media Literacy, 2008, 14.

⁶'Content' or 'message' means the value and perspective of information. 'Authorship' refers to who the creator of the message is and what components the message is designed with. 'Format' refers to the creative technology of the message. 'Audience' implies various experiences of the interpreter. 'Purpose' refers to the motivation of the message produced.

should be considered from a viewpoint of each party while securing a neutral position between consumer and producer.⁷

For instance, the concept of content or message can be turned into a proposition: Media have embedded values and points of view.⁸ In this case, it is important to evaluate the possibility of a message to be biased by distinguishing facts from opinions. Consumer can ask the following question in consideration of this proposition: What kinds of values, lifestyles, and points of view are represented in or omitted from this message? The producer also can ask the following question: Have the media content that I produced clearly and consistently framed my own values, lifestyles, and points of view in my content? In relation to this, the consumer and producer can check whether an idea is being sold or not and determine what ideas and viewpoints are omitted.

The concept of audience highlights the diversity of critical thinking: Different people experience the same media message differently. From the consumer's viewpoint, this proposition leads to the following question: Is my message engaging and compelling for my target audience? From the producer's viewpoint, it leads to the following questions: How might different people understand this message differently? People's accumulated experiences can be different. Thus, the resulting interpretation can be different. These questions can continue to be subdivided into logical and analytical questions: Have you had any experience related to the situation or message that appears in media text? If so, how similar is it to what you really experienced in real life? What have you learned from this media text? How diverse interpretations can be made from a single media text? Can you explain why different people show different responses to the same message? In this way, the remaining four core concepts can also be evaluated by asking questions.

⁷Jolls and Thoman, "Literacy for the 21st Century," 14.

⁸I am using CML's Guidebook "Literacy for the 21st Century" without paginations or quotation marks.

CML's media literacy model places great importance on a question-type critical thinking methodology. This model naturally turns a core concept and a proposition into a question type. It is very hard to find out a part in which critical thinking is not applied in the question-raising type methodology related to the five concepts. CML's core concepts and core questions become intelligence criteria about all types of media experiences. Based on such criteria, people can apply media information that they experience in everyday life, regardless of its type. And as a result, it proves the following fact: It is possible to apply critical thinking methodology to all actual activities including access to media, analysis, and evaluation of messages and subsequent production and participation.

3. Reflective Thinking Premised on CML's Media Literacy

Characteristics of media literacy analyzed through the five core concepts of CML are as follows. First, these arguments are commonly embedded with critical thinking. Second, CML's model places great importance on raising questions from diverse points of views. Third, this model strategically formulates methods for decoding information through core concepts. Fourth, as long as that is the case, the meaning of media literacy can be understood as a kind of critical literacy as pointed out by Buckingham. To emphasize his explanation, critical literacy, "including analysis, evaluation and critical reflection, is related to understanding of a wider range of social, economic, and institutional contexts of communications. It is also related to understanding of what influence that these contexts have on people's experiences and practices."⁹

Media literacy is not just content interpretation, evaluation, analysis of simply processed information and the process of producing new information. Media Literacy can be achieved through critical thinking, which looks for convincing reasons

⁹David Buckingham, *Media Education*, trans. Sun Jung Ki and Ami Kim, Seoul: Jn Book, 2004, 72.

about what we should accept or reject and what we should argue from a universal point of view. Critical thinking takes place by distancing itself from the bias contained in the information. Moreover, the sceptical thinking process of distorted meaning arises in the form of reflection. The same is true for self-centric and groupthink tendency of misunderstanding that possibly occurs in individual and social communication process through media. Critical thinking that opens up a cleft between judgements is premised on reflective thinking.

When we realize what we have thought of as something self-evident might turn out to be something completely different in the reflective form and understand it together with other available values, critical literacy functions as reflective literacy. Reflective literacy is an ability to keep a certain distance from existing knowledge when we face with the facts that we have already known before. Reflective literacy is an ability to make active efforts to reflect on ourselves in a level-headed way about the values of our own desires, beliefs, freedom, and actions in order to find out whether there might be any logical and psychological fallacy in the decoding and judgement of information, and the reproduction process of information.

However, strategies of CML's media literacy are lopsidedly focused on training about core concepts and propositions with standards of questions. Guidelines of media literacy function as technical criteria for information decoding. The scope of information decoding is not limited merely to the critical analysis of messages in a given situation or a piece of information. What is important is that its purpose does not lie in the technology acquisition or mechanical utilization and the standardized comprehension of a message.

According to analytic methodologies proposed by CML, the questions raised have to be dealt with in detail again during or after the process of information analysis. This means an endless series of questions. The basic purpose of literacy is to comprehend the structure of perception and semantic

interpretation of thinking patterns of one's own. Furthermore, its ultimate purpose is to look back on what kinds of criteria we have followed to form our thinking and living in the process of information interpretation. However, the rules and formulated decoding ways of the CML are not sufficient enough to change one's own intelligence structure that has long been accumulated and further function as the principle of self-interpretation involved in one's life.

Therefore, in the next section, this paper further examines the model of media scholar James Potter who appears to have already recognized these problems. He proposed the so-called Viewpoint Formation Method as necessary for information acquisition. The following analysis of this leads us to ponder the strengths and limits of his methodology and whether it is an adequate alternative to achieve better the purpose of media literacy.

4. Potter's CML for Formation of Viewpoint

According to James Potter's definition, "Media literacy is a set of viewpoints that we actively use when we interpret the meaning of messages we encounter and experience from media. ... [And the scope is] multi-dimensional."¹⁰ In his book titled *Media Literacy*, he has tried to remind us of the fact that today people are exposed to media at a level beyond our imagination. Media message "formulates our beliefs" and drives us into an "automatically controlled state."¹¹

The purpose of Potter's media literacy is not a simple interpretation of a message, but to consciously develop knowledge structure from the experience of media and build up one's own viewpoint. For this reason, Potter also actively reflects and applies technical methodology of critical thinking in the concept of media literacy. His critical interest does not lie in whether a media message is true to a certain level or not. For him, question should be raised with an in-depth

¹⁰James Potter, *Media Literacy*, trans. Dae Hee Kim and Yoon Kyung Lim, Seoul: Sotong, 2016.

¹¹Potter, *Media Literacy*, 9, 16.

viewpoint like "What element of this message reflects reality? And what element hurts reality?"¹² Potter places importance on modifying and complementing the knowledge system of information through clear viewpoints of questions.

Potter's approach toward media information is structured to lead us toward methods to develop media literacy step by step in this book. For instance, if media information is about 'content' (Chapter 8), the viewpoint of information decoding can be expanded through the following phases:

i. An information decipherer raises core questions containing viewpoints. "What is the formula that makes people accept media message in such a light way? What is the compensation for the delivery of other types of media messages to the public?"¹³

ii. The information decipherer understands core details of the content.

iii. After reading the details of the content presented based on the first question, he actively analyzes information by shaping up his own questions.

iv. He summarizes details of the content and reviews his own knowledge structure.

v. If he wants, he looks for more things to read and visits updated archives.

vi. Lastly, he raises a viewpoint to be asked again through 'actual activities' and internalizes information. The big frame of these questions for internalization is as follows. "How can I relate new information to something I already know? Is there any example appropriately related to this information in my life? How can I apply this, when I deal with media?"¹⁴

Potter's segmentation of the ability to interpret information by viewpoint, question, and stage subdivides the level of literacy and clearly shows what technology can improve decoding ability. What stands out from his model is that his literacy training method newly highlights the critical thinking

¹²Potter, *Media Literacy*, 171.

¹³Potter, *Media Literacy*, 159.

¹⁴Potter, *Media Literacy*, 159.

process in a technical dimension. Of course, Potter himself did not use the term 'critical thinking.' However, it is assumed that his methodology is already premised on it. Question raising a viewpoint and subsequent review of one's own understanding structure as well as the resulting practical exercise are all based on reflection accompanied by self-directed thinking. As Potter pointed out, remembering content of a material or facts does not really help improve one's media literacy. What is important is self-awareness of interpreting information and formation of viewpoints. Such methodology of Potter is helpful for comprehending and controlling the type and pattern of information acceptance by oneself.

Above all, the main point of Potter's model lies in the internalization stage of information among various stages of literacy. The final 'activity' is the guideline for application and use of viewpoint-oriented thinking to information activities of everyday life. For instance, if one intends to form a viewpoint of reality of content, he or she has to proceed as follows:

i. Divide information into 'reality' and 'virtual' and analyze them.

ii. Make a list of items (if there are two items of reality contents and eight items of virtual contents, the ratio will be 20% vs. 80%).

iii. Check one's own items (no program can be completely a reality or fantasy). Therefore, Potter proposes from this point of view that one should review one's own items and strengthen literacy ability.¹⁵

The execution of activities proposed by him can help us understand information more clearly. Also, the phase-specific question training method can lead receivers to the formation of a contextual interpretation about the information they access. The process of forming the frame of content through comprehensive understanding of elements that constitute certain information and through self-questioning is effective when one reflects on his or her own information processing

¹⁵Potter, *Media Literacy*, 175.

method. It can lead one toward improving the structure of knowledge technically by bringing up chains of inappropriate details that one encounters in the process of understanding information to the surface of consciousness.

However, the viewpoint-oriented questioning method proposed by Potter is based on the method of free association and the number of access information is countless. In addition, they are provided in a sporadic and disorderly way. For this reason, the reflection of thinking through viewpoint can be useful for classification and perception of information, although in essence it seems difficult to secure the horizon of macroscopic thinking that can provide a deep insight into the information of various media. This raises a problem about the systematic structure of those principles that support various viewpoints. If any thinking detail or viewpoint is possible only with fragmentary thinking technique, the effect may be temporary. Acquisition and perception of decoding methods based on pre-defined guidelines might have limited the effect in ever-changing circumstances. They are only good for individual cases. However, the scope of human understanding of information is practically unlimited to acquired knowledge or secondary techniques.

5. Multi- and Meta-perspectives and Potter's Model

In Potter's model, reflective thinking is done by objectifying the information the reader encounters, raising questions about it, and then modifying and supplementing the organized knowledge structure. Especially, reflective thinking is implied by his definition that media literacy is multidimensional, and he divides the domain of media literacy into cognitive, emotional, ethical and aesthetic domains. He argues that in these four areas, we can find our own ladders to refine our knowledge structures, build our perspectives multi-dimensionally and improve media literacy. Main points regarding contents of these domains are:

- i. Cognitive domain relates to facts of information. This area requires the ability to analyze perspectives, to understand

the relevance of information, to assess the truth of information through comparison and contrast, to group or contextualize information, and to evaluate the message between producers and consumers with balance.

ii. Emotional domain is concerned with feelings of information such as love, anger, sadness, joy, and happiness. To analyze other people's feelings, think from others' perspectives, and empathize with others a deep level literacy ladder (e.g., actors, directors, writers) is needed.

iii. Aesthetic domain is concerned with the amplification of enjoyment, understanding, and emotion of media content. At a deep level, media content can be perceived as letters, visual effects, media-related techniques (action and editing in the play), and author's character (producer's/director's style).

iv. Ethical domain is related to the value of information. If a character can be separated from an act during a play, people can follow common values even if they dislike the character.¹⁶ They can, then, empathize with many characters and experience consequences of various actions indirectly.

Potter has dimensionalized characteristics of each domain and stepped the ability to interpret messages in each domain. Accordingly, the level of interpretation varies depending on the message type and mood. Depending on when and how much they are exposed to the media, people can perceive their position at some time with a low level or a high level of information reading. Potter thought that he could perceive his vulnerability as well if he could determine his position. Therefore, Potter said, "individuals are more likely to develop into [higher levels] if they have strong energy and desire."¹⁷

However, some important questions arise here. According to Potter's methodology, variously generated questions are categorized. The grounds that make up the answer to the question should be thought of as bound in some arbitrary view. However, even those views can lead to advanced further

¹⁶Potter, *Media Literacy*, 36, 471, 207.

¹⁷Potter, *Media Literacy*, 55.

question in the ongoing process of information analysis and activity. Thus, Potter's media literacy model faces the problem of endless perspective formation.

Of course, in-depth views of the question for media literacy development include cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and ethical domains. Even when accumulating knowledge by watching a Youtube video, analytical questions can be raised not only in the cognitive domain, but also in emotional, aesthetic, and ethical domains. However, if the grounds of judgment on something are re-categorized in a fluid manner and the questions belonging to one perspective are transferred to some other perspectives by newly given information, this cannot be a criterion of consistent judgment. In order to keep the scope of a point of view constant and multidimensional, there must be a basis for forming a point of view and criteria for determining their relationship. Otherwise, the internal correlation between perspectives is problematic.

Several questions will be raised to build a perspective. However, questions about what is irrelevant, and the criteria for proving it are directly related to the integration of experience and knowledge. Attempts to set up or reset perspective are perfunctorily repeated as long as questions and grounds are relative. Arbitrary points of view continue to arise due to similar or endless questioning. If the evidence is relative, then the question-type viewpoint setting is repeated perfunctorily. Thus, if no fundamental question is given as a criterion to determine the rationale for a more relevant or less relevant view, Potter's methodology seems to have difficulty to escape from the dilemma of a multi- or meta-perspective.

The act of understanding the specific characteristics of different objects is to determine the relation between them and to consistently categorize certain objects. However, in order for the categorized perspective not to be simply a collection of relevant questions, an integrated recognition process is required. In other words, it is urged to think about categories that the information is related to, not the information content

itself, and what are the principles of comprehensive judgment on its relevance.

6. Reflective Meaning *vis-à-vis* Kantian 'Power of Judgment'

We are exposed to too much information without arguments, specific views, or conclusions. Although we search and read information with some keywords, much information is provided to us without limiting its scope. Thus, even when the problems are intertwined so that the authenticity of the information cannot be easily masked, the information recipients need to autonomously define the scope of the subject in any situation and find consistent principles to apply.

If the initial information is gathered into the whole world based on one's own knowledge and media experiences accumulated so far, and the problem spots one finds are considered collectively throughout one's life, such information grasping is based on the following problem consciousness: What is the universal law of understanding that can penetrate a variety of individual pieces of information, rather than decoding technique of information or individual laws that are limited in some cases? This approach to understanding information leads us to think about the fundamental logic of reflection. In this context, Kant's view on power of judgement is pertinent:

If universal rules, principles or laws are given, then the power of judgment, under which subordinate the particular [or individuals] is the [faculty for thinking] that determines (*bestimmend*) the particular. But if only the particular is given and the power of judgment must find a universal one for it, then that the power of judgment is purely the [faculty for thinking] that reflects (*reflektierend*) them.¹⁸

¹⁸Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment: Kant's Complete Works*, ed. The Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences (and its successor), Vol. 5, Berlin: Berlin Printing and Publishing by Georg Reimer, 1913, 179(XXVI-XXVII). I translate Kant's German concept or sentences into

According to Kant's perspective, the judgment we seek for its universality, considering the possibility of not-given or given rules, as well as the laws not presented, is reflective thinking. This thinking goes beyond the ability to learn the technical part of knowledge. Thoughts based on the power of reflective judgment are not limited to fragmented combinations of quantitative knowledge, or to their categorization, classification, analysis, or repetitive recombination. If it is a thinking process that discovers one law that encompasses individual information or particular cases, it is the reflective thinking in the Kantian sense. According to Kant's distinction, "the determining power of judgment does not have to devise its own law to subordinate the particular [under] the universal."¹⁹ Determining thinking moves within given boundaries and laws. The reflecting power of judgment, however, is a grasping ability to explore what universal laws can be applied to different individual cases without given principles or laws.

Kant's consideration of human comprehension has significant implications for the methodology of critical literacy. In the earlier part of this paper, media literacy models of CML and Potter were analyzed. These models apply open questioning, self-questioning, re-questioning, and question with a given perspective to media literacy. But we must think of these methodologies in the universal dimension. In these methodologies, essential questions like, "Why do we ask?" "Why should we filter information through a bunch of questions?" are missing.

The methodologies of two models analyzed earlier overlook this fundamental discussion of 'why'. The question of 'why' is a question about human communication in general, including socio-cultural. 'Why' is related to the ability to interpret and think about the meaning of messages in the light of all their experiences, knowledge, and community. If the

English in my own words, in order to convey Kant's intended meaning as closely as possible according to the context.

¹⁹Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 179(XXVI).

scope of reading information is limited merely to a given situation, specific information, personal disposition, or questions according to some guidelines, media literacy can only be partially improved in terms of individual and private judgment.

7. Reflective Media Literacy: A Methodological Proposal

The argument in this paper is that Kant's consideration of the "reflecting power of judgment" is sufficient to bring strategic media literacy to the level of universal reading information. According to Kant,

The reflecting power of judgment with the obligation of ascending from the special in nature to the universal requires a principle, so the reflecting power of judgment cannot borrow from experience. For this principle is empirical, just like all empirical principles, but it supposed to ground the unity under the higher principles and to ground the possibility of the systematic subordination of empirical principles under one another (*die Möglichkeit der systematischen Unterordnung*).²⁰

Kant's concept of the reflective power of judgment focuses on the 'why' question. It means the ability to think with the principle, problem consciousness, covering all areas of interpretation of information. We can read information with a problem consciousness, such as, 'If the interpretation of information does not remain in message analysis or limited knowledge, how can we establish the grounds for it in a unification?' The problem awareness focused on 'why' lays the foundation for the process in which we raise various questions about messages, and lead them to perspectives.

Therefore, from Kant's concept, the new term Reflective Media Literacy is introduced in the area of information interpretation. Reflective thinking is the ability to make ground understanding with experience, what the overall law corresponding to the information or message being dealt with. The read-activity based on this comprehension is intended to

²⁰Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 180(BXXVII).

provide insights into uniform principles that can encompass a variety of different content that has not yet been experienced, including newly acquired knowledge. And that universal "establishing law on oneself" is the literacy based on the reflective thinking.²¹ From the meanings of the various messages in the world we experience and live in, and from their reasons, the thinking of the principle that makes ground of systematic possibilities between mutuals, i.e., the thinking of discovering connected links between principles, the judgement based on these things characterizes the uniqueness of reflective literacy in the end.

But the approach of reflective literacy is missing. Specific questions may be raised about how such a universal judgment is possible. Accordingly, the following three compositions are proposed in this paper. These are questions to awaken the problem consciousness of 'why' as an information approach to find the universal law for oneself and the principles of reflection associated with each question:

i. Why do we have to do critical reading and comprehending from the perspective of information determination? (Logical plurality of information)

ii. Why do we need reflection or insight about different values from an ethical perspective? (Ethical value of practice)

iii. Why is confronting and participating in media environmental changes important from a futuristic perspective on media literacy? (Possibility of realizing common good)

Reflective literacy based on this basic frame is directed to the thinking process that establishes to itself a universal law of uniformity for arbitrary and variable information.

7.1. Logical Plurality of Information

To explain concretely, first, Logical Plurality of Information is the reason why we should perform critical reading and understanding in the judgment of information. This becomes the principle of judgment of reflective literacy. Because

²¹Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 181(XXVIII).

reflective thinking is basically open thinking, it proceeds with all the complex possibilities open. There is no complete fallacy in us humans, as much as there is no complete knowledge for the finite man. Reflective thinking cannot be any fixed point of view. Accumulated knowledge and new knowledge always include the possibilities of logical fallacy. This is why we have no choice but to understand information diversely.

Reflective literacy takes as the objects of information interpretation, that include not only any relevant views or knowledge, but also things that cannot be given from experience and fallacy of judgment. Without this incomplete premise, we cannot secure the possibility of freely analyzing the meaning of the message, or of limiting its content to something else and re-developing it again. In short, the starting point and the end of reflective literacy is that no view or knowledge can be set in a fixed category.

7.2. Ethical Value of Practice

Ethical Value of Practice is the reason why we need to reflect on ethical values and the principle of reflective literacy. Life is intertwined with countless encounters. In other words, the world is intertwined with countless values. There are so many different ideas and different values as there are many people in the world. And this sometimes leads to conflicts in life. Thus, it is important to look deep into where our own differences in ideas come from through logical and objective reviews of information. What different moral principles are applied among people, so that it makes a difference in values? What value orientation can be universally ethical information that can be shared with everyone? When these questions are considered together in analytical information interpretation, message reading can only be improved to subjective judgment. Subjectivity of judgment is justified not from dogmatism, but when others and I are recognized as equal human beings.

In this regard, Kant's Categorical Imperative places a foundation stone on our path to neutral value choice. "Always

treat man, including own himself, for a purpose itself and never with one means."²² "Motivate and act to ensure that the rules of your will conform to universal laws at the same time."²³ These two statements make clear what the value criteria for information use and application are decisive, and reflect on their validity and legitimacy. Therefore, the second principle of reflection on reflective literacy can be a review of the regulatory ethical principle of value in Kant's philosophical sense.

7.3. Possibility of Realizing Common Good

Possibility of Realizing Common Good is the principle of judging; why response or participation is important in changing the social environment of media in terms of the orientation of literacy? Information understanding is the understanding of ourselves, and of the age and society in which we belong. From an analytical perspective, the process of examining one's and the other's thinking from various angles lays the foundation for rational understanding of information. However, even if different value judgments meet the reasons for practice, not all of them can remain under the name of diversity. Efforts should be made to achieve a balance between different information and judgments and self-supporting principles.

In view of this response, dialogue or discussion on the cyber space is a process of sharing the intention of each other. It is a participatory communication process that coordinates common opinion. When one understands, persuades and agrees, and seeks harmonious creation toward better ideas, communication with each other can be expanded and

²²Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason: Kant's Complete Works*, ed. The Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences (and its successor), Vol. 5, Berlin: Berlin Printing and Publishing by Georg Reimer, 1913, 31.

²³Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysic of Morals: Kant's Complete Works*, ed. The Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences (and its successor), Vol. 4, Berlin: Berlin Printing and Publishing by Georg Reimer, 1911, 429.

developed not by heteronomy, but by autonomy. The thinking process that can be a public good, trying to make different people live in harmony toward a better world, this is the third reflection principle of criticism that should be accompanied.

Reflective media literacy applying these three basic principles establishes a complementary system. Each reflective principle is not exclusively distinguished from each other. One reflection principle exists by implicit assumption of the other two principles. At the same time, however, these three principles also exclude each other in terms of forming distinct areas of reflective literacy. The logical reflection area of information based on the totality and the limitation of the thinking is a different dimension from the private and universal problem of information value, and the problem of finding and determining the desired message between knowing and practicing in the community belongs to that other area. Also, each reflection principle is systematic in that it constitutes each other's territory. This is because if one of the domains of intellectual, ethical, and public reflection is lacking, the other domains cannot be fully explained. Therefore, the three domains of reflective literacy can exist organically only by the mutual premise of the principles.

8. Conclusion

Of course, these principles proposed as methodologies for reading information should be followed by more detailed accounts. In this regard, this reflection's frame proposal has a follow-up research task. In terms of each principle alone, the realm of reflection corresponding to it has different characteristics. But, each of those principles of reflection is constructive and also practical in that it provides a clear framework for the process of judging messages without complex considerations. Based on the reflective frame of the literacy, the judge can check the meaning of his or her own knowledge at any time without difficulty, regardless of the variable information content given arbitrarily or in individual cases. When discerning and evaluating messages, the judge

can also be self-conscious about where the point of self-thinking lies now, and which side the central axis of information understanding is located.

This approach of decoding information evenly enhances the logical, ethical, and practical aspects that have not been systematically addressed in previous studies of media literacy. The existing CML's Model is useful for viewing personally, commercially, socially, and politically biased information from the perspective of consumers and producers. In Potter's *Media Literacy* also, 12 guidelines and four-field ladders are presented in the final chapter of his book on issues of matching behaviour and beliefs, habitual exposure to the media and personal responsibility for information recognition, etc.²⁴ These literacy manuals have the advantage of reminding us specifically of the practical effects and potential impact of information utilization.

But, the fundamental questions about 'why' and 'how' in the macro and universal dimensions are overlooked in information analysis methods of CML and Potter. If the practicalized decoding methods of information are applied only on a microscopic and individual level, it is limited in moving towards discovering and correcting the possibility of social conventional preconceptions or fallacy in information comprehension. Formalized and strategized decoding methods of messages can reduce and hinder human plural and autonomous ability to interpret information. As Judith Williamson has pointed out, if 'why' and 'how' are excluded from the methodology of the information analysis, there is a risk that the meaning of the interpretation depends on the given circumstances of the media information and on the people who accept it.²⁵ Then, ideological bias is not eliminated from information reading, but rather it can have the adverse effect of being consolidated by wrong criticism.

²⁴Potter, *Media Literacy*, 463-492.

²⁵Judith Williamson, "How Does Girl Number Twenty Understand Ideology?" *Screen Education* 40, 2 (1981), 80-87.

In this regard, the principles of reflection presented in this paper apply to itself as a process of interpreting information. The Logical Plurality of Information functions as the principle that awakens the limits of knowing and not knowing. The Ethical Value of Practice and the Possibility of Realizing Common good are also the principles of self-awareness to awaken to what are the autonomous choices and what are the ways of participation in information for the better development of humankind. The media literacy based on these principles lays the universal foundation of balanced judgment and interpretation in macroscopic dimensions that may not be biased toward to logic-centric, self-centred or partisanship.