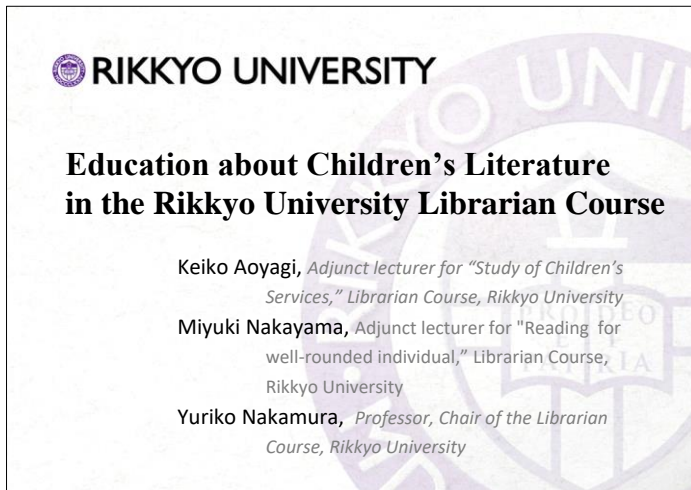


Education about Children's Literature in the Rikkyo University Librarian Course

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Miyuki Nakayama (Adjunct lecturer, Rikkyo University)
Yuriko Nakamura (Professor, Rikkyo University)



RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

**Education about Children's Literature
in the Rikkyo University Librarian Course**

Keiko Aoyagi, *Adjunct lecturer for "Study of Children's Services," Librarian Course, Rikkyo University*
Miyuki Nakayama, *Adjunct lecturer for "Reading for well-rounded individual," Librarian Course, Rikkyo University*
Yuriko Nakamura, *Professor, Chair of the Librarian Course, Rikkyo University*

Hello. My name is Keiko Aoyagi. I am an adjunct lecturer at Rikkyo University and have been teaching the "Study of Children's Services" course for three years. Today, I will talk about what and how we, the three of us presenting today, are teaching in the Librarian Course at Rikkyo University.



**Librarian Course
at Rikkyo University** **RIKKYO UNIVERSITY**

- Librarian Course established in 1967
- Has only two faculty members: Nakamura & Komaki
- Consists of two non-degree programs, each based on national certification
 - Certificate program for *shisho*, librarians
 - Certificate program for *shisho kyoyu*, librarian-teachers
- Not a professional school
 - Most of the registered students are undergraduates.
 - It is difficult to find employment as a librarian or a librarian-teacher.

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In 2019, at the symposium held in Sapporo, Dr. Nakamura talked about the Librarian Course at Rikkyo University, so I will not talk about that again today. Please find more information about our course from the link Yuriko is sending by chat now.

https://rikkyo.repo.nii.ac.jp/?action=pages_view_main&active_action=repository_view_main_item_detail&item_id=19337&item_no=1&page_id=13&block_id=49

The Librarian Course consists of two programs for national certification: *shisho*, meaning librarian and *shisho-kyoyu*, meaning librarian-teacher. Our course is not a professional library school like those in North America. Most of the registered students are undergraduates and only a few will work as librarians or librarian-teachers when they graduate. We know that the primary goal for these students is to receive national certification as librarians or teacher-librarians.

As an adjunct lecturer, I have taught this course since 2019. I am a librarian in a public library in Yamanashi Prefecture located west of Tokyo. Koshu City

Katsunuma library is a middle-sized local library and offers various children's services: Bookstart, story times for babies and toddlers, library guided tours for school children, author/Illustrator visits, children's book club, etc. Among these activities, the children's book club, called the "Come Come Club" has been active for about 20 years.


The course "Study of children's services" is one of the required courses for the national librarian certification and it is categorized under the group of courses on library services. The two classes consist of about 20 students per class.

When I started to teach the course, I was surprised that students knew almost nothing about children's services in public libraries, even though they were children just several years ago. Almost all of the students used the public library not for reading but for studying for university entrance exams; that is, they used only public library spaces. So, it is hard for the students to imagine actual children's services. They need to visit a public library children's corner, and need to know about children, materials, services, and the current environment.


MEXT, which stands for the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology issued a report, "The list of subjects related to libraries in the university" in 2009. Japanese universities are supposed to follow this set of guidelines in offering the librarian course.

For the "Study of Children's Services" course, 10 topics to be covered in the course are listed in the guideline. Considering the guideline, I designed my class based on the following three policies. For topic numbers 1 and 2, I give reading assignments and lectures on basic philosophy.


For topic numbers 3 to 7, I have my students engage with as many resources as they can, through three practical assignments. One assignment is to have them go to a children's corner in a public library and give a report about their visit. The other two assignments are doing reading aloud and bibliobattles. Bibliobattle is a

Course overview: "Study of Children's Services" 


- Adjunct lecturer: Keiko Aoyagi




Activities of the children's book club



Kosho City Katsunuma Library



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Course overview: "Study of Children's Services" 

	Required courses	Credits
Introductory courses	Introduction to Lifelong Learning	2
	Introduction to the Library	2
	Library Management and Systems	2
	Library Information Technology	2
Courses on library services	Introduction to Library Services	2
	Study of Information Services	2
	Study of Children's Services	2
	Practice of information Retrieval	2
Courses on information resources	Practice of information Service	2
	Introduction to Library Information Resources	2
	Study of Organization of Information Resources	2
	Practice on Metadata	2
	Practice on Information Architecture	2
	Library Practicum (Librarian Course)	2
	Required number of credit	28

- The two classes consist of about 20 students per class
- Most of the students have only a little experience in using the local public library, surprisingly.

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social book review game which was developed in Japan. I intend for the students to understand both the methods for providing good library services and the nature of good reading materials for children.


For 8 to 10, as well as for all topics I introduce good examples of such library programs from in and outside of Japan, and I give students a few reading assignments, as well as opportunities for class discussion. In the spring of 2021, the course was offered online.

The guideline by MEXT:
“Study of Children’s Services”  RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

1. The role of reading at developmental stages and in learning
2. The significance of children’s **services** (including philosophy and history)
3. **Materials** for children (Picture books)
4. **Materials** for children (**fiction**, **oral literature**, non-fiction books)
5. Practice in children’s **services** (selection and provision of **materials**, storytelling, reading aloud, book talks, etc.)
6. **Services** for babies (Bookstart) and infants ; **Materials** for them
7. **Services** and **Materials** for young adults
8. Support for learning (instruction in the use of libraries, reference **service**)
9. School and school library activities (including how they differ from public library activities)
10. Alignment and cooperation with schools, homes, and local communities

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Now I will introduce another Rikkyo course, “Reading for Well-rounded individuals.” This course is one of the required courses for the national librarian-teacher certification. Here is the list of required courses in the Librarian-teacher Program at Rikkyo University. Courses with a pound sign (#) are NOT courses required by MEXT. The adjunct lecturer, Ms. Nakayama, is teaching this course. She has worked in private and public school libraries in the Tokyo area for about 25 years.

Course overview, “Reading for Well-rounded Individuals”  RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

Required courses	Credits
Introduction to the Library #	2
Study of Library Services #	2
School Management and School Libraries	2
Instruction and the School Library	2
Reading for Well-rounded individuals	2
Utilization of Information Media	2
Introduction to Library Information Resources	2
Introduction to Organization of Information Resources	2
Required number of credit	16

- Adjunct lecturer: Ms. Miyuki Nakayama

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The guideline from MEXT:
“Reading for Well-rounded individuals”  RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- **Aim of the course:**
Students understand the philosophy and methods of reading education at each developmental stage.
- **Contents of the course:**
 - 1 Significance and purposes of reading
 - 2 Reading and education of the mind (including nurturing the habit of reading)
 - 3 Reading guidance according to developmental stages and guidance planning ?
 - 4 Types of books for students and their utilization (including the use of manga etc.)
 - 5 Methods for reading guidance (reading aloud, storytelling, and book talks, etc.)?
 - 6 Cooperation and collaboration with homes, local communities, and public libraries etc.

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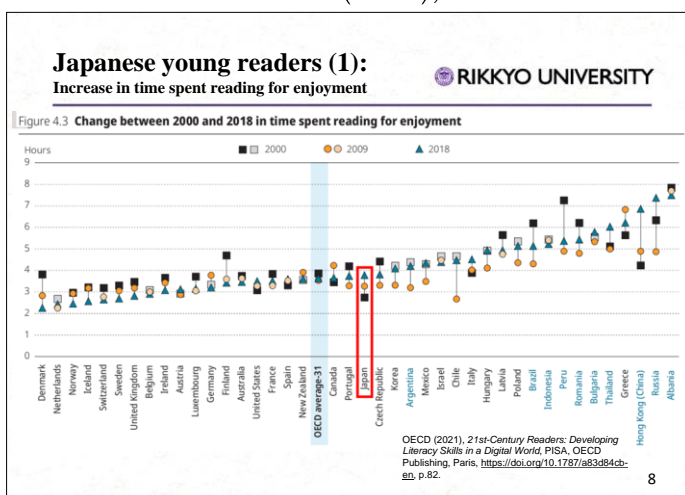
ified as librarian-teachers as well as classroom or subject teachers. Few students register for the Librarian-teacher Program. This means that it is not really necessary for Ms. Nakayama and me to coordinate our course content. In the fall of 2021, the course was offered on campus, face-to-face.

There is also a set of guidelines by MEXT for the education

of the Librarian-teacher. The set of guidelines is based on the School Library Law and regarded as government guidance to follow. The guidelines say: The aim of the course is for students to understand the philosophy and methods of reading education at each developmental stage.

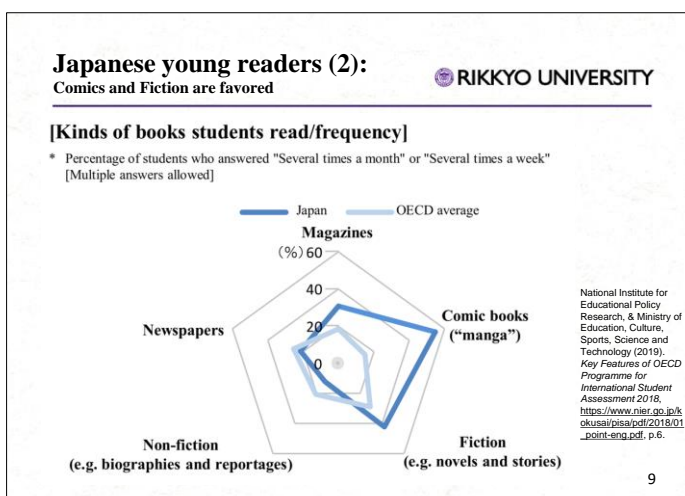
The course is supposed to cover the themes you see in this slide. Among these, Ms. Nakayama focuses especially on No. 3 and No. 5. That is because she considers the nature of the students' past reading experiences as it relates to these areas.

In the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), we observed that Japanese students of 15 years of age were spending more time in reading for enjoyment than two decades ago, although the average across OECD countries declined over the last decade. Here, the word "reading" includes various reading materials, such as books and websites; it also includes reading on digital devices.



This is an examination of the PISA 2018 results on the frequency of reading by material type from the Japanese National Institute for Educational Policy Research and MEXT.

- According to this study, the percentages of students who read comic books (*manga*) and fiction are high in Japan, compared to the OECD average.



Over half of the young people surveyed read comic books at least several times a month, and nearly the same result is seen for fiction. However, the data on the reading of non-fiction books, newspapers, and magazines shows that Japanese young people read these materials much less than comic books and fiction.

University students in Japan have experienced reading promotion in schools. In elementary schools, they experienced at least being read to aloud. In junior/senior high schools, reading in class is very popular as it is in elementary schools. When they are senior high school students, it is likely they have been exposed to Bibliobattles, which have been booming nation-wide. Generally, current university students have more experience of reading than before, and the students in the class

of “Reading for Well-rounded Individuals” say “I’m a book lover.”

But—as Ms. Nakayama has been teaching at Japanese universities for 15 years and has therefore been continuously observing student reading behaviors, she thinks the reading experience of current university students is limited to their favorites, such as favorite authors,

and favorite series, and a few specific genres, such as easy-reading light novels for young adults, or best sellers, or award-winning books. They don’t read classics, non-fiction, or newspapers. They read all news on the Internet.

Classics are barely touched. They have some knowledge about classics, but they have not actually read them. They might know of Anne Frank, but they have not read *The Diary of Anne Frank*. However, they still say, “I’m a book lover,” and they are registered for the program to be nationally certified librarian-teachers.

These three points are the focus of the course designed by Ms. Nakayama. First, Ms. Nakayama wants students to discuss and contemplate “reading” throughout the course: What is reading; reading what; reading how; why and how to promote reading, etc.

Another point is that Ms. Nakayama wants students to understand laws, the

national policies, and the plans and practices for reading in school education. For example, the Course of Study by MEXT is the national curriculum in Japan and it is seen as having legally binding power. Therefore, to become a school teacher in Japan, students need to understand this document. Many, various kinds of books are introduced in the nationally ap-

proved textbooks for Japanese language. As you may know, textbook publishing is also supervised by MEXT in Japan.

Probably, the most important focus of the course is that Ms. Nakayama creates and uses a unified pedagogical style. She lets her students practice several methods for reading education and has them encounter a broad range of reading materials at the same time.

The reading experience of current university students

RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- They have experienced reading promotion in schools
 - Elementary Schools: Reading aloud
 - Junior/Senior High Schools: Reading in class
 - High schools: Bibliobattles

They are reading more and students in the class say “I’m a book lover.” but...

- Their reading seems very limited to their favorites (authors, series...) and one or a few specific genres (light novels, popular books...).
- Classics are barely touched.

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Focus of the course: “Reading for Well-rounded Individuals” at Rikkyo

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- Discuss and analyze “reading”
- Understand laws and national policies about reading in school education
 - Courses of study and the nationally approved textbooks for Japanese language
- Practice methods for reading education and engagement with a broad range of reading materials
 - Techniques for reading aloud
 - *Shinsho kaiten sushi* (paperbacks-go-round)
 - Writing assignment on YA literature
 - Book talks



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One assignment is for learning techniques for reading aloud and, through this, becoming familiar with classic, popular, and important picture books. Ms. Nakayama's another assignment is *Shinsho kaiten sushi*. *Shinsho* is a Japanese style paperback and an introductory book written about various academic fields. So, the meaning of the assignment is "paperbacks-go-round" Ms. Nakayama has her students learn about this genre of books on academic and popular subjects through this assignment.

One more assignment is writing about YA literature. Students need to read YA literature translated from other languages for this assignment. The final assignment is designing and giving a book talk. Students need to utilize all knowledge about different kinds of books to design the book talk.


As I mentioned before, the course called "Seminar on Library and Information Resources" is offered at Rikkyo University as one of the compulsory elective courses for the national certificate as Librarian. Under the course name, "Seminar on Library and Information Resources," the International Children's Literature course was offered in the fall semester 2021

for the first time. Fifteen students registered for the class.

The course lecturer, Yuriko Nakamura, is the chair of the Librarian Course at Rikkyo University. She is also leading the research project, "Approaching to the global standard in education for professional librarians in schools."

The course objective was set as understanding the international trends in and significance of children's literature and other media for children. The main contents of the course are as follows.


- Students understand the present status of children's literature and other media for children in several languages, such as those in English, Spanish, Japanese, and one other language that the registered students want to explore. Chinese

Course overview: "International Children's Literature"  RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- Offered as one of the compulsory elective courses for the librarian certificate
- Guidelines for these courses by MEXT are short: the courses can be original
- Trial offer of the ICL course, in 2021 Fall
- Lecturer: Dr. Nakamura

Compulsory elective courses of the Library Program	Credits
Seminar on Library Basics	2
- The Basics of Archives	
Seminar on Library Services	2
Seminar on Library Information Resources	2
- International Children's Literature	
History of Books and Libraries	2
Library Building and Facilities	2
Comprehensive Seminar on Libraries	2
Required number of credit	4

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Course syllabi: "International Children's Literature"  RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- **Course objective:**
Understanding the international trends in and significance of children's literature and other media for children.
- **Contents of the course:**
 - Students understand the present status of children's literature and other media for children in several languages, such as those in English, Spanish, Japanese, and one other language that the registered students want to explore.
 - Students learn how to analyze, evaluate and appreciate literature and other materials in terms of authors, texts/illustrations, and readers.
 - Students get familiar with the current status of international communication of children's literature.

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was the choice decided on through discussion in the the first class.

- Students learn how to analyze, evaluate and appreciate literature and other materials in terms of authors, texts/illustrations, and readers.
- Students get familiar with the current status of international communication of children's literature.

There are three major assignment in the course. In addition, students often receive reading materials in Japanese and English through the learning management system called Blackboard and they are asked to respond with reaction essays via the system. The first assignment is to visit virtually libraries and organizations specializing in children's literature

Three major assignments for “International Children’s Literature” RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- Virtually visiting libraries and organizations specializing in children’s literature; in addition, an actual class visit to the International Library of Children’s Literature
 - to be familiar with the organizations that promote the culture of children’s literature
- Visiting bookstores specializing in children’s books and choosing a few good materials for introduction to the class.
 - to encounter more materials for children/young people
 - to prepare for their personal use in the future
- Writing two critical book/media reviews
 - to enhance knowledge of and exercise skills in analyzing international children’s literature.

in Japan and other areas of the world. We also do a field trip to the International Library of Children’s Literature, part of the National Diet Library. The aim of these visits is to be familiar with the specialized institutions and organizations that promote the preservation and use of children’s literature.

The second assignment is to visit and analyze bookstores specializing in children’s books and media for children in the Tokyo area. This is for engaging with more materials designed for children and young people and to encourage the students to use the bookstores in the future. Pairs of students visit a bookstore and give reports in the class. The final assignment is to write two critical book/media reviews to enhance knowledge of and practice skills involving the analysis of international children’s literature. Students read other students’ reviews and vote for the materials they think are the best.

Here, I would like to sum up teaching at Rikkyo University that somehow relates to children’s literature. In short, most of the library education programs in Japan, as you see in the case of Rikkyo, do not have enough space for children’s librarianship. Japan’s Library Law stipulates the courses and credits for the national certification as Librarian and MEXT’s

Summing up: Children’s literature in library education in Japan RIKKYO UNIVERSITY

- Most of the library education programs in Japan do not have room in the curriculum to offer courses on librarianship for children.
 - Most programs offer only “Study of Children’s Services” as a required course; this was also true at Rikkyo University in most years.
 - Japan’s Library Law stipulates the courses and credits for national certification as a librarian and the MEXT’s guideline govern course contents.
- The three of us teaching in the Rikkyo Librarian Course have our students engage with as many resources as they can, through practical assignments of library programs for children and young adults.

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guideline governs the course contents.

Even though MEXT allows each university to offer more courses than those required for the certification, administrators in Japanese universities allow few additional courses. Most programs offer only “Study of Children’s Services” as a required course. This has been the case at Rikkyo in most years. The three of us teaching in the Rikkyo Librarian Course have our students engage with as many resources as they can, through practical assignments of library programs for children and young adults.

Through a trial course on International Children’s Literature Course offered at Rikkyo University, the following observations and needs were confirmed by Nakamura. Most students don’t have even basic knowledge about children’s literature or international publishing, so we have to teach from the basics.


To be really “international,” guest lecturers from other countries are effective. Even if they are offered in the style of lectures, students pay great attention to the lectures by international guests. Only a few

students ask questions in regular classes, but in reaction essays submitted online, some students write questions to the guest lecturers. At the same time, most students show they understood the main points conveyed by the lecturers who spoke to them in English.

We, lecturers in the Rikkyo Librarian Course, think nurturing students to turn a critical eye on the quality of children’s literature is not an easy task. We believe our students need to encounter many more materials in order to gain the ability to critically review materials for children. Until now, we have not tried to provide students with any lists of canonical books for children. However, we wonder if a canon or book lists should be introduced. A question arises here. How can knowledge about materials for children be gained efficiently and correctly by students: by lectures or through any other pedagogical methods?

This is the end of our presentation. Thank you for listening.

Acknowledgement. This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP18K02592.

Trial offer of the course on International Children’s Literature  **RIKKYO UNIVERSITY**

- **Final thoughts about current needs.**
 - Need to teach basic knowledge and concepts related to children’s literature and international publishing.
 - To be really “international,” guest lecturers from other countries are needed.
- **Questions**
 - Nurturing students who can turn a critical eye on the quality of children’s literature is not an easy task. How can we best do this? One answer is that students need to encounter more materials.
 - Should basic knowledge on the canon and/or book lists of children’s literature in the world be taught or not? If we should, then how can this knowledge be gained efficiently and correctly by the students?

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