


Worldview literacy in complementing Media Education

Heidi Rautionmaa
Tapio Varis

University of Helsinki

 0009-0007-0341-9818; heidi.rautionmaa@helsinki.fi
ptvaris@gmail.com



© the authors

Submission date: October 2024

Accepted date: October 2025

Published in: December 2025

Recommended citation: RAUTIONMAA, H., & VARIS, T. (2025). "Worldview literacy in complementing Media Education". *Ànàlisi: Quaderns de Comunicació i Cultura*, 73, 1-16. <<https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/analisi.3786>>

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to suggest how media literacy might be developed if worldview literacy is added as a needed complementarity. How do we promote more positive encounters among people of differing perspectives in today's diverse media world where there are disagreements not only about the Ultimate Truth but also about basic facts of news? Worldview literacy education should be an integral part of media literacy training. Beyond understanding how media content is constructed and what purposes it serves, combining media literacy with worldview literacy can support complexity awareness and enable a more effective transformational learning process toward a more just world. In a polarizing society, disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation in the media, as well as populism and hate speech, also target religions and worldviews (Valaskivi et al., 2023). These different literacies together are important for gaining powerful knowledge that means systematically conceptual understanding which enables the student's worldview to expand and to enlarge the mind. Even though human beings are not necessarily peaceful they are still capable of making peace which has been the UNESCO objective of building peace in the minds of men and women.

Keywords: media education; media literacy; worldview literacy; dialogue

Resum. *L'alfabetització en visió del món com a complement de l'educació mediàtica*

L'objectiu d'aquest article és suggerir com es podria desenvolupar l'alfabetització mediàtica si s'hi afegís l'alfabetització en visió del món com a complement necessari. Com podem promoure trobades més positives entre persones amb perspectives diferents en el divers món mediàtic actual, en el qual existeixen desacords no sols sobre la veritat última, sinó

també sobre fets bàsics de les notícies? L'alfabetització en visió del món és necessària com a part de la formació en alfabetització mediàtica. Per exemple, no sols aprendre a veure la complexitat i comprendre-la, sinó també aprendre com es va crear el contingut dels mitjans i quin és el propòsit profund al qual apunta i serveix, i no sols com es pot construir un món més just. L'alfabetització mediàtica també ha d'acompanyar l'alfabetització en visió del món per permetre un procés d'aprenentatge transformacional més eficient. En una societat polaritzada, la desinformació, la informació errònia i la informació maliciosa en els mitjans de comunicació, el populisme i el discurs d'odi també es dirigeixen contra les religions i les visions del món (Valaskivi et al., 2023). Aquestes diferents alfabetitzacions són importants per adquirir un coneixement poderós, és a dir, una comprensió conceptual sistemàtica que permeti ampliar la visió del món de l'estudiant i eixamplar la seva ment. Encara que els éssers humans no són necessàriament pacífics, continuen sent capaçs de construir la pau, la qual cosa ha estat l'objectiu de la UNESCO.

Paraules clau: educació mediàtica; alfabetització mediàtica; alfabetització en visió; diàleg

Resumen. *La alfabetización en visión del mundo como complemento de la educación mediática*

El objetivo de este artículo es sugerir cómo se podría desarrollar la alfabetización mediática si se añadiera la alfabetización en visión del mundo como complemento necesario. ¿Cómo podemos promover encuentros más positivos entre personas con perspectivas diferentes en el diverso mundo mediático actual, en el que existen desacuerdos no solo sobre la verdad última, sino también sobre hechos básicos de las noticias? La alfabetización en visión del mundo es necesaria como parte de la formación en alfabetización mediática. Por ejemplo, no solo aprender a ver la complejidad y comprenderla, sino también aprender cómo se creó el contenido de los medios y cuál es el propósito profundo al que apunta y sirve, y no solo cómo se puede construir un mundo más justo. La alfabetización mediática también debe ir de la mano de la alfabetización en visión del mundo para permitir un proceso de aprendizaje transformacional más eficiente. En una sociedad polarizada, la desinformación, la información errónea y la información maliciosa en los medios de comunicación, el populismo y el discurso de odio también se dirigen contra las religiones y las visiones del mundo (Valaskivi et al., 2023). Estas diferentes alfabetizaciones son importantes para adquirir un conocimiento poderoso, es decir, una comprensión conceptual sistemática que permita ampliar la visión del mundo del estudiante y ensanchar su mente. Aunque los seres humanos no son necesariamente pacíficos, siguen siendo capaces de construir la paz, lo que ha sido el objetivo de la UNESCO.

Palabras clave: educación mediática; alfabetización mediática; alfabetización en visión; diálogo

Several factors make media literacy and worldview literacy very important now. These include the global challenges as climate literacy and planetary limits, security concerns, polarization, digitalization and artificial intelligence, as well as the changing role of the media and changes on the field of religions and other worldviews. Worldview landscape of Western and Northern Europe has changed enormously that is seen a decrease in institutionalized Christianity and increased religious and other worldview diversity (Shaw,

2022). Part of the increased global diversification and interaction, identities have become more hybrid, fluid and complex (Modood, 2019; Shaw, 2023) and religion or other worldview is often an important part of the daily life. (Moulin-Stožek & Schirr, 2017). Religions and other worldviews remain important in individuals' meaning making. A worldview encompasses both religious and secular perspectives, and it can be either organized or personal. Existential questions play a central role in shaping any worldview (van der Kooij et al., 2017). For many, previously salient worldviews have diminished in significance amid the continued secularization of Western societies. Notably, secularization has not eliminated religion but has instead contributed to the emergence of greater religious diversity (Talmont-Kaminski & Shults, 2023).

The media has a huge impact to us shaping our identities, our worldviews and our values. Media is also a strong tool of socialization (Kupiainen & Sintonen, 2009) good and bad. Some scholars have argued that it is under the media's responsibility, that there is the lack of religious literacy among individuals and groups in today's Europe (Dinham, 2017), which is seen in negative attitudes and misconceptions and ways of talking about religion and especially about Islam (Wrammert, 2021; Toft & Broberg, 2018). Also, some other worldviews have been introduced in a media, especially in digital media, incorrectly and in a very narrow way. For example, atheists strongly against religions, rather than relatively moderate or indifferent non-religious people, provide a public voice for all non-religious people, perpetuating the public image of non-religious people as aggressive men of science (Taira, 2014). This confrontation, that is going on between people and their world views, is fuelled by both traditional and social media (Malkki et al., 2021) and a variety of narratives describe the world through different incompatibilities are many times linked to cultures and worldviews (Benjamin et al., 2023).

Throughout the ages, the fear of religious and other worldviews otherness has been present in various religions and societies. New to the situation is the transformation of the media world, which also affects the exchange of opinions on religions and other worldviews. It has brought with it real-time news coverage and greater civil discourse in democratic societies, as well as the supranationalism of the debates. As a result, religious themes are rarely local or even national but tend to have some connection to similar debates in other countries (Linjakumpu et al., 2023).

This article examines how worldview literacy can contribute to media literacy competence and its development in an increasingly religious and other worldview-diverse world. We argue that without considering both media literacy and worldview literacy as interconnected competencies, educational approaches remain insufficient for addressing the complexities of meaning-making and critical engagement in culturally and worldview-diverse societies. This question and argument are framed by a reflection on the role of the media in global education and in cultural diversities at this unique turning point in history, characterized by increasingly uncertain and complex

developments that are changing at an unbelievable rapidity. The role of the media in the world depends on several things that education plays a big part. Media literacy and in a larger scale multiliteracy in education, have a great deal of influence here.

According to the Finnish national core curricula, multiliteracy is defined as the competence to interpret, produce, and make a value judgement across a range of different texts. The aim is to help pupils in understanding different forms of cultural communication and to help in building their personal identity (FNBE, 2014). It is essential to note that multiliteracy is not just a matter of learning something only technically and rationally, because in addition to the technical and content-based thinking of the text, multiliteracy can also include the communal, social and cultural dimension of the text (Grünthal, 2020; Kupiainen & Sintonen, 2009) and it has been also pointed out that multiliteracy is also activity and participation (Sintonen & Kumpulainen, 2017).

Finnish teachers have taken into use the concept of multiliteracy in a positive way (Paksuniemi & Keskitalo, 2019) but despite of this, the teachers have been confused about its large scope (Kupiainen, 2017). It might be good to see how the different aspects of multiliteracy are related and how these sub-multiliteracies complement each other promoting transversal learning, such as media and worldview literacies?

It is known that media needs skills for safe and successful use of media that comes from how individuals experience media and interact with content of media and technology when navigating their environments and incorporate media into their decisions. More attention should be given to the diversity of media cultures and the co-existence of different religions and other worldviews.

The interaction between media and worldviews is a complex and constantly evolving process. The understanding of the interaction between media and worldviews is a key when considering the impact of the media on democracy development and how people navigate the field of worldviews with the influences of the media (Taira, 2020).

1. Creating a better world and future for all

Media literacy aims to develop both critical understanding and active participation in the old and new media to create such competences that would allow the use of modern technology. Different terms were used for media education: “media competence” in Germany, “social competence” in Spain, “media pedagogy” or “media literacy” in the Scandinavian countries. In all cases, this was a continuous process which needed to be developed by practice and education. It was also a multidimensional concept including cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and moral aspects. It could be described as “the ability to communicate competently in all media, print and electronic, as well as to access, analyse and evaluate the powerful images, words and sounds

that make up our contemporary mass media culture. These skills of media literacy are essential for our future as individuals and as members of a democratic society (Varis, 2000).

There has been also a discussion about world media environment and a term called multicivilizational literacy (Varis & Celot, 2024). While the world media is increasingly broadened by new international media actors but is continuously dominated by the Western approach. The demands of independent and critical media challenge both American and European journalistic culture. On another note, military operations and new non-state actors also characterize the content and flow of international information. War propaganda has been known for centuries but the new world order includes also civilizational challenges. In this context, the need for multicultural communication broadens into multicivilizational literacy.

A holistic vision of human communication and the future is needed for the new literacies and communication competences. UNESCO has been promoting the credo of New Humanism which is not only theoretical but also practical approach needed for building global education and media for the global civic society (Perez Tornero & Varis, 2010).

Traditional humanism is challenged by transhumanism that aims to transform the human condition by developing and creating widely available sophisticated technologies to enhance human intellectual, physical, and psychological capacities. Science and technology are becoming the credo of the new order and new 21st century literacies are needed. However, as observed by an East Asian Daisaku Ikeda and Westerner Arnold Toynbee in their dialogue already in 1976, “today people are compelled to serve intellectual knowledge and technological skill, which are in turn controlled by politics and economies”. Instead, education should emphasize the inherent dignity and independence of learning (Ikeda & Toynbee, 1976).

UNESCO envisions education that supports everyone’s inclusion and cooperation in overcoming abject problems. Education should be transformative (UNESCO, 2021). Central to transformative learning is the critical review of past thinking and operating models and the development of critical thinking (Freire, 2005). The goal of transformative learning is to crystallize creating a better world and future for all. This is also strongly related to Media Education.

Media and information literacy, communication and digital skills: the ability to effectively search, access, critically evaluate, ethically produce, use and disseminate information and knowledge through various channels and technologies. It also implies to be resilient, to be able to detect and to combat disinformation and misinformation, hate speech, all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, harmful content and online abuse and exploitation, understanding one’s rights and responsibilities on- and off-line and engaging in digital environments in a safe, effective, discerning and respectful way that enhances digital security and protects privacy. (UNESCO, 2023)

2. Media literacy to meet topical challenges

Through media literacy people learn how to access, analyse, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication to be empowered to be critical thinkers and makers at the intrapersonal and social levels, effective communicators, and active citizens (NAMLE, 2024). It has been a goal already that teaching media literacy should be seen as part of a more fundamental rethinking of how we teach about culture and communication in a world increasingly sated by commercial media (Buckingham, 2011). If the users are empowered and intrinsically motivated to think critically about the sources and traces of other sources, they are not to be easily manipulated or coerced based on data they meet (Weintraub Austin & Domgaard, 2024). Media literacy is seen as developing a worldview grounded in continuous inquiry and once that is open to regular exploration (Butler, 2019). It is embracing a critical way of looking of the world and evaluation and questioning systems of power, that is the task of especially critical media literacy (Share & Gambino, 2022), that assists to take media in a more informed way and consider alternative ways of thinking about the media they use (Yousman, 2016) in order to draw attention to its larger context and to think beyond the content of dominant mainstream media choices (Butler, 2019).

Critical media literacy has emerged to engage in criticism of ideology, and includes also analyses of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, sexuality and other forms of identity and encourage analysis of the prevailing ideology and questioning of the means of production (Kellner & Share, 2007) and challenging media messages that reproduce oppression and discrimination (Share & Gambino, 2022). Criticality also refers to an action orientated culture meaning that people are encouraged to take action to make a difference in their communities.

Media Literacy Theory of Change is there to bring agency. It has conceptualized media literacy not as an outcome but as a process, recognizing that individuals can reach diverse conclusions based on their interpretations of messages in accordance with constructivist approaches to media literacy education (Sperry et al., 2022). Media analysis is realized through the decoding of messages, in which case their creation is co-construction. The meaning of the message therefore becomes dynamic in a sense that meaning includes both an understanding of what the source of the message is trying to communicate and how the perspective of the receiver of the message shapes their interpretation of it (Weintraub Austin & Domgaard, 2024). It is a dialogical process for social and environmental justice (Share & Gambino, 2022).

3. Religious and Worldview literacies offer participation in dialogue and personal formation

It has been claimed that one of the essential effects of mediatization is that main elements of social or cultural activity take media form and when it is a

question of religion, it means a move from religious institutions to media institutions as the prime mediators of religion in society. It follows that religions are increasingly visible in public discourse (Lövheim & Axner, 2014). Herbert (2012) argues that religion has re-emerged in public spheres in new ways in contemporary societies, particularly due to changes in media and public discourse. According to the former research in the Nordic countries religion today is incessantly present in the news (Wrämmert, 2024).

It is not the same how religions are interpreted in the media, for example, to take a stand on the role and position of religions in society. In some cases, religions and their place in society are distorted unintentionally and in others deliberately. Religions are set in a field of discursive struggles, with a wide range of opposing and competing intentions, ways of understanding, and political goals. Religions and other worldviews are not a neutral dimension of social existence but involve and channel many social tensions and conflicts (Linjakumpu et al., 2023) and can also play the role of Faith-based Diplomacy (Leirvik, 2014).

Media shapes views of religions and the media and popular culture in media affect religion and religious practice. Also, today's mass media environment has grown into a constantly more important resource and site for learning religious and other worldview ideas and building the religious and other worldview identities (Hoover, 2006). To be media literate person is to be also a religious literate.

Religion is increasingly seen not only as a field for public discussion but also for public learning (Lähnemann, 2017). There have been a pioneering group of scholars that have argued a long time for the need for interreligious dialogue and religious literacy for learning (Beverluis, 2000; Braybrooke, 1998; Patel et al., 2018). However it did not happen until after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that a broader sense of urgency about religious literacy began to take more place (Lähnemann, 2017; Seiple & Hoover, 2022). Religious literacy is argued to constitute a key civic competence that fosters understanding, dialogue, and social cohesion, and its development should be strengthened both within the education system and across wider societal practices (Linjakumpu et al., 2023).

Religious literacy consists of knowledge of religions and the ability to understand the specific nature of religious language; the moral imagination that helps to find the constructive purpose of the text and to open the many hidden dimensions of its symbols and theoretical analytical skills, including knowledge of the rules of dialogue, which can be used to prevent insults and build a climate of trust. One needed dimension is also about ethical readiness and commitment to understand the motives and thinking of the other. For example, to manage and implement the rules of dialogue, a person must have social capabilities, including empathy, sensitivity and an ethical basis, to act with respect towards another (Heinonen, 2010).

Religious literacy is seen as a matter of civic responsibility (Heinonen, 2010; Seiple & Hoover, 2022) and a civic attempt rather than a religious

one, even a seeking to support a strong multi-faith society that includes people from all faith traditions and none, in a context that is largely suspicious and concerned about religion and belief. It is therefore a stretchy, fluid concept and context-dependent meaning that it is formulated and applied differently depending on what surroundings and situations it occurs (Dinham & Francis, 2015). Thus, it is suggested to contextualize the field where religious literacy is used. People, situations and environments vary.

Religious and other worldview literacy needs a multi-level and multi-directional understanding of the situation and place, as well as relationships with oneself and others as it is related to relationships. Therefore, discretion and flexibility are important qualities (Seiple & Hoover, 2022) and understanding the complexity among religions meaning that differences must not be isolated from other relevant differences such as gender, socioeconomic background and culture so that we take into account of the complex differences and complex attitudes as a challenge (Leirvik, 2014). Could media literacy methods and experiences be guiding here?

4. Why worldview literacy instead of religious literacy?

Some terms such as interfaith dialogue and religious literacy have rooted into the discourse more and more, although there have already emerged new terms since the field of religions and other world views are in big change and there has been this request to find current, more inclusive terms. Western societies have been marked by increasing secularization, which is reflected not only in the functioning of society but also in individual's everyday life, behaviour and beliefs. However, it has been pointed out that if this development continues, the status of religion changes even more. For example, among young people in Finland, non-religiousness is more common and normal than religiosity (Ketola & Salomäki, 2024). Therefore, the term worldview literacy is replacing the religious literacy being used in the more diverse context. It has also been argued that everybody owns a worldview (Stenmark, 2021).

A worldview gives a person understanding of their place in the world and the nature of reality. It is a way of life that everyone develops to a greater or lesser degree of complexity as they go through life. The media in its various forms, the people we connect with, and the communities we belong to all influence our perceptions of the world in turn (Valk, 2017).

Worldview literacy is understood as a practical in which interpretation and application are intertwined, worldview literacy impresses interdependence substantive, disciplinary and personal knowledge in a process of critical, reflexive interpretation inseparable from skill development and personal formation (Shaw, 2022). It is the personal formation and development that is in change that makes the worldview literacy important as a tool for gaining Powerful knowledge. It is in Powerful knowledge, that will teach students to make decisions and become empowered and competent to act in a way that

impacts on supporting their lives in a positive way (Müller & Young, 2019; Shaw, 2023). Powerful knowledge gives a closer look at the truth of the world we live in and what it is to be human. It is the knowledge that people become and not just something that people know (Deng, 2018) in meaning that it does not only give tools to observe how religions and other worldviews are reflected in the burning questions of the day, but to promote diversity of thinking and mutual co-operation. A person is guided to think what it means to have their own worldview in praxis and how to live constructively with others, in everyday life that media is a part of.

Worldview literacy is understood as a transformational process, where in relation a person is undergoing transformation through a reflexive encounter with the subject and in relation to the public sphere because it is the process of commitment. Worldview literacy as a dialogical and educational practice makes the student better understand the diversity and dynamism of world views, as well as themselves as its social actors in plurality (Shaw, 2022) inheriting instructions from Paolo Freire's thinking of reflection and action upon the world to transform it (Share & Gambino, 2022).

The secret is in a process of engagement where interpretability, reflexivity and transformative encounter take place. Worldviews are understood as being in a constant process of change through human interaction. (Shaw, 2023). And the process where this can happen is dialogue (Rautionmaa, 2010; Patel et al., 2018). Interfaith and inter-worldview dialogue is a practical tool and goal within the worldview literacy is gained and practiced. It is not only about learning content but also about cultivating skills and dispositions through encounters, with personal storytelling playing a key role in fostering respectful relationships (Rautionmaa, 2017).

It is necessary to develop an appreciative understanding of other traditions, where "appreciative" denotes both a general orientation and substantive knowledge. Such an orientation seeks what is beautiful, admirable, and life-affirming, rather than focusing primarily on deficits or problems. It resists deriving its understanding of other religions mainly from media representations, recognizing that these offer only a partial account. This orientation supports the development of a sensitivity to religious diversity (Patel, 2016).

Some scholars welcome these relational aspects in focusing on the development of skills and qualities in the person and talk about expanded imagination (Heinonen, 2010). This knowledge creates a new language for engaging in political, moral, and other kinds of debates (Young, 2008). People can go beyond their specific experiences and imagine alternatives and new possibilities (Young & Müller, 2016).

We argue that media literacy could learn from religious and other worldview literacy and vice versa. They have lots in common and there are elements in both to learn from, about and within. These literacies are also interconnected, and they also complement each other. For example, a teacher in a partially integrated worldview education might raise examples from the media in using media literacy to show the importance of religious and other

worldview literacies and need for dialogue or some topics found in media are thematic content and dialogical boost in a process of inter-worldview dialogue (Rautionmaa et al., forthcoming).

5. Empathy in needed to go beyond criticism

Interfaith Studies promote the disposition of reflexivity, empathy and humility with the critical inquiry. Humility is very relevant in recognizing that our perspective or knowledge is limited and empathy brings on the possibility to imagine oneself in the shoes of others that help to understand others more fully like their background and development of interpretations. This is an important step to awaken to one's tendency to assume that one owns the overall view of truth that would be ultimate. Empathy assists to reason from other than our own starting points, assumptions and thoughts (Hickey & Suárez, 2018) that is needed to complement criticality.

Not everything that passes on critical thinking is equally wished for as they did not lead to more positive encounters. Skills for critical thinking are not so much needed when creating a culture of fruitful encounter. It is more a matter of forming authentic subjects that are attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving (Manning, 2018), which refers the Powerful Knowledge.

Dialogue requires, promotes and stands also for those virtues. This means that interfaith and inter-worldview dialogue among people of differing perspectives is very needed in cooperation with media education. An important way to learn is to learn in encounters in listening and sharing with the open mind. This is what the power of dialogue is based on, and this is also the basis on which worldview literacy gains. People are witnessing each other's lives, and they become as Martin Buber has said the caretakers of each other's stories and new possibilities emerge. Storytelling challenges seeing from someone else's point of views and to think and to act together (Rautionmaa & Kallioniemi, 2017). Dialogue is about thinking together. Less is brought up by thinking alone (Isaacs, 2001). In dialogue, people learn to notice how multi-point of view is needed when creating a common minimum ethos to work for the common good (Rautionmaa, 2010).

In media literacy and media education we may have had too much bias in the modern industrial societies with their cognitive/technical approach while traditional societies often emphasize moral/practical rationality and learning.

Mythological ambiguities don't necessarily contradict but complement theological certitudes and scientific scepticism. Through its own experiences and sufferings, every generation must relearn and regenerate the moral learning of all previous generations (Tehrani, 1990), that can be learned if people are world view literate.

Already a hundred years ago John Dewey wrote that it is in communication that society is born and nurtured. It is through communication that we make our shared experience meaningful. It is no wonder, then, that Dewey

would conclude *The Public and Its Problems* with this provocative statement: Democracy “will have its consummation when free social inquiry is indissolubly wedded to the art of full and moving communication” (Crick, 2005). Therefore, communication and education are inseparable. Media communication means sharing. At best, we want to be close to others, share their presence and, with modern virtual technology, also the telepresence, feeling of being present in some distant physical location, or at least being in communication through distances in time and space.

The conclusions of the eminent peace educator Elise M. Boulding from the late 1980s are still valid for the objectives of world view and media education. She noted that despite the biological underpinnings of human behaviour the humans are not predestined to violence. Some significant parts of today’s media act as a distorting mirror making humans think we are more violent than we really are. We need better mental maps of the world and a more complete description of the great diversity of actors in the world scene. Human beings cannot work for goals they cannot even imagine. We need a major exploration of positive images of the future from different cultural traditions in each region (Boulding, 1988), that world view literate person is capable to notice.

What is required is an education that not only highlights the need for structural change in society and the world, but also a request for individuals to change (Reardon, 2015). Critical thinking is not enough; compassion, among other things, is needed (UNESCO, 2023), where the connection with others is embedded. Compassion brings a meaningfulness that gives hope amidst restlessness. Compassion is also a way to live in a more interdependent society and world.

Research has shown that focusing on supposed differences deepens stereotypes and harms the pursuit of social cohesion and equality, which in turn increases otherness and exclusion (Powell & Menendian, 2016). Appreciative encounters practiced in inter-world view dialogue and gaining world view literacy, emphasize positive opportunities rather than negative ones. This is a needed transformative element that could be added also more to Media Education.

From a community perspective people are encouraged to look together for dreams and strengths. A shared understanding of a positive foundation helps build the future based on the things that they are already working well and are worth strengthening. It is in these types of approaches that people can be connected with one another and acknowledge their potential role in changing the systems for better. The theory of collaborative change takes away the paradigm of winning or losing in favour of coordinated actions (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2011).

In this article, worldview literacy and media literacy are examined from the perspective of both literacies and in terms of how these two approaches complement one another in the field of education. Worldview literacy introduces a new dimension to media literacy by opening the rich and diverse

world of religions and other worldviews – a domain whose significance, for example in politics and communication and people's way of lives, is increasingly evident and more diverse.

This article highlights the interdependence between media literacy and worldview literacy, suggesting that a comprehensive understanding of media messages and representations requires the ability to critically interpret the underlying worldviews, values, and belief systems. Moreover, worldview literacy both requires and fosters critical compassion that is also needed in media literacy to create a more just world. Compassion generates meaning and hope amid experiences of restlessness and uncertainty. This can also be understood as an ethical orientation that enables responsible and connected ways of living in an increasingly interdependent world. The practice of compassion strengthens the capacity to engage in worldview dialogue and vice versa and to encounter others with respect regardless of their beliefs, to engage in mutual learning, and to cultivate a shared minimal understanding and ethos within diversity. This promotes action oriented towards the common good, which, from this perspective, enhances media literacy as a more active and critical capacity. Together with worldview literacy, media literacy further encompasses the ability to better evaluate what is ethically and socially significant, participate responsibly in media, and ensure the ethical production of content.

The development of critical compassion through the joint cultivation of media literacy and worldview literacy supports the ability to recognize and critically interpret the values, messages, and assumptions embedded in various forms of communication and worldviews. It encourages responses that are critical, compassionate, constructive, and oriented toward transformative social action. Through these interrelated competencies, individuals and communities can enhance social cohesion and promote peaceful coexistence in a complex global media and worldview environment.

Bibliographical references

- BENJAMIN, S., KOIRIKIVI, P., ELLIOTT, K., GEARON, L., NAMDAR, C., & KUUSISTO, A. (2023). "Anchors of belonging and the logics of othering of young Finns". *Journal of Youth Studies*, 1-19.
<<https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2023.2271851>>
- BEVERSLUIS, J. (2000). *Sourcebook of the World's Religions, An interfaith Guide to Religions and Spirituality*. California: New World Library.
- BOULDING, E. (1988). *Building a Global Civic Culture - Education for an Interdependent World*. Columbia University.
- BRAYBROOKE, M. (1998). *Faith and interfaith in the Global Age*. Oxford CoNexus Press and Braybrooke Press.
- BUCKINGHAM, D. (2011). *The material child: Growing up in consumer culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- BUTLER, A.T. (2019). *Educating Media Literacy: The Need for Critical Media Literacy in Teacher Education*. Leiden: Brill.

- COOPERRIDER, D., & WHITNEY, D. (2011). *Appreciative Inquiry: A Positive Revolution in Change*. ReadHowYouWant.com.
- CRICK, B. (2005). "Populism, politics and democracy". *Democratization*, 12(5), 625-632.
<<https://doi.org/10.1080/13510340500321985>>
- DENG, Z. (2018). "Rethinking teaching and teachers: Bringing content back into conversation". *London Review of Education*, 16(3), 371-383.
<<https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.16.3.02>>
- DINHAM, A. (2017). "Religious Literacy and Public and Professional Settings". In: CRISP, B. (Ed.). *Routledge International Handbook of Religion, Spirituality and Social Work*. Melbourne: Routledge.
- DINHAM, A., & FRANCIS, M. (Eds.). (2015). "Religious literacy in policy and practice". Bristol: Policy Press.
- FNBE (2014). *Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet*. Finnish National Agency for Education. Helsinki.
- FREIRE, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc. Retrieved from <<https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf>>
- GRÜNTAL, S. (2020). Lukutaito ja lukeminen. (165-206). Teoksessa Suomen kieli ja kirjallisuus koulussa. Toim. M. Ahlholm, S. Grünthal, S. Happonen, R. Juvenen, U. Karvonen, S. Routarinne & L. Tainio. Suomen ainedidaktinen tutkimusseura. Helsingin yliopisto.
- HEINONEN, R.E. (2010). Uskonnollinen lukutaito – dialogi edellytys. (28-29). Kirjassa Uskontodialogi – kasvatusta kulttuurien kohtaamiseen. Toim. Rautionmaa, H. Kulttuuri- ja uskontofoorumi FOKUS. Art Print Oy.
- HERBERT, D. (2012). "Why has religion gone public again? Towards a theory of media and religious re-publicization". In: HJARVARD, J. (Ed.). *Religion, media and culture: A reader* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- HICKEY, W.S., & SUÁREZ, M.M.W. (2018). "Meeting Others, Seeing Myself". In: PATEL, E., PEACE, J.H., & SILVERMAN, N. (Eds.). *Interreligious/Interfaith Studies*. Boston: Beacon, 108-121.
- HOOVER, S.M. (2006). *Religion in the Media Age*. London and New York: Routledge.
- IKEDA, D., & TOYNBEE, A. (1976). *Choose life A Dialogue*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ISAACS, W. (2001). *Dialogi ja yhdessä ajattelemisen taito*. Kauppakaari. Helsinki.
- KELLNER, D., & SHARE, J. (2007). "Critical media literacy, democracy, and the reconstruction of education". In: MACEDO, D., & STEINBERG, S. (Eds.). *Media literacy: A reader*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 3- 23.
- KETOLA, K., & SALOMÄKI, H. (2024). Uskonnollisia, uskonnottomia, vai vähän molempia? Nuorten suhde uskontoon maallistuvassa yhteiskunnassa. (101–124). Teoksessa: Tomi Kiilakoski (toim.), Katsomusaiheita: Nuorisobarometri 2023. Helsinki: Valtion nuorisoneuvosto, Nuorisotutkimusseura/ Nuorisotutkimusverkosto, Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö.
- KUPIAINEN, R. (2017). Lukutaidon jälkeen? Artikkelit [6140]. Tampereen yliopisto. Retrieved from <<https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:uta-201709082399>>
- KUPIAINEN, R., & SINTONEN, S. (2009). *Medialukutaidot, osallisuus, mediakasvatus*. Helsinki: Palmenia Helsinki University Press.
- LEIRVIK, O. (2014). *Interreligious Studies – A Relational Approach to Religious Activism and the Study of Religion*. London, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

- LINJAKUMPU, A., SAKARANAHU, T., KONTTORI, J., RISSANEN, I., ILLMAN, R., UBANI, M., & TIILIKAINEN, M. (2023). *Uskontolukutaito suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa*. Gaudeamus. Tallinna.
- LÄHNEMANN, J. (2017). "Interreligious Education". In: WIELZEN, D., & TER AVEST, I. (Eds.). *Interfaith Education for All – Theoretical Perspectives and Best Practices for Transformative Action*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 31-43.
- LÖVHEIM, M., & AXNER, M. (2014). "Mediatized religion and public spheres: Current approaches and new questions". In: GRANHOLM, K., MOBERG, M., & SJÖ, S. (Eds.). *Religion, Media, and Social Change*. London: Routledge, 38-53.
- MALKKI, L., SALLAMAA, D., SAARINEN, J., & EEROLA S. (2021). *Extremist Speech Online and in the Finnish News Media*. Publications of the Government's analysis, assessment, and research activities, 72. Finnish Government.
- MANNING, P. (2018). "Mediating Fruitful Encounter with Truth, Transcendence, and Difference by Teaching Critical Thinking". *Religious Education*, 113(4), 380-391. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2018.1456107>>
- MODOOD, T. (2019). "A multicultural nationalism". *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, XXV(II), 233-246.
- MOULIN-STOŽEK, D., & SCHIRR, BJ. (2017). "Identification and disidentification in reported schooling experiences of adolescent Muslims in England". *Oxford Review of Education*, 43, 580-595.
- MÜLLER, J., & YOUNG, M.F.D. (2019). "Knowledge, power and powerful knowledge re-visited". *Curriculum Journal*, 30(2), 196-214.
- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION (2024). *Media literacy defined*. Retrieved from <<https://namle.org/resources/media-literacy-defined/>>
- PAKSUNIELMI, M., & KESKITALO, P. (2019). *Introduction to the Finnish educational system*. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- PATEL, E. (2016). *Interfaith Leadership: A Primer*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- PATEL, E., PEACE, J.H., & SILVERMAN, N.J. (2018). *Interreligious/Interfaiths Studies – Defining a new field*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- PEREZ TORNERO, J.M., & VARIS, T. (2010). *Media literacy and New Humanism*. UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education. Retrieved from <<https://iite.unesco.org/pics/publications/en/files/3214678.pdf>>
- POWELL, J., & MENENDIAN, S. (2016). "The Problem of Othering: Towards Inclusiveness and Belonging". *Othering and Belonging: Expanding the Circle of Human Concern*, 2, 14-39.
- RAUTIONMAA, H. (2010). *Uskontodialogi – kasvatusta kulttuurien kohtaamiseen, Kulttuuri- ja uskontofoorumi FOKUS*, Art Print Oy.
- (2017). *Uskontodialogi ruohonjuuritasolla: Kokemukselliset tarinat ja yhdessä toiminen kirjassa Uudistuva uskonnon opetus*. Toim. Iivonen, R. ja Paulanto, V. Kirjapaja.
- RAUTIONMAA, H., FISKAALI, V., & KALLIONIEMI, A. (forthcoming). "Teachers' need for dialogue skills in partially integrated Worldview Education in superdiverse classrooms".
- RAUTIONMAA, H., & KALLIONIEMI, A. (2017). "Integrated Religious Education to Promote Dialogue in Inter-worldview Education". In: WIELZEN, D., & TER AVEST, I. (Eds.). *Interfaith Education for All – Theoretical Perspectives and Best Practices for Transformative Action*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 147-158.
- REARDON, B.A. (2015). "Toward a paradigm of peace". In: REARDON, B.A., & SNAUWAERT, D.T. (Eds.). *Betty A. Reardon: A pioneer in education for peace and human rights*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.

- SEIPLE, C., & HOOVER, D.R. (2022). *The Routledge Handbook of Religious Literacy, Pluralism, and Global Engagement*. Taylor & Francis Group.
<<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003036555>>
- SHARE, J., & GAMBINO, A. (2022). "A Framework disposition and pedagogy for teaching critical media literacy". In: KIST, W., & CHRISTEL, M.T. (Eds.). *Bringing Critical Media Literacy Into ELA Classrooms*. National Council of Teachers of English, 14-21.
- SHAW, M. (2022). "Worldview literacy as intercultural citizenship education: A framework for critical, reflexive engagement in plural democracy". *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 18(2), 197-213.
<<https://doi.org/10.1177/17461979211062125>>
- (2023). "Worldview Literacy as Transformative Knowledge". In: FRANCK, O., & THALÉN, P. (Eds.). *Powerful Knowledge in Religious Education: Exploring Paths to A Knowledge-Based Education on Religions*. Springer International Publishing, 195-216.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-23186-5_10>
- SINTONEN, S., & KUMPULAINEN, K. (2017). Monilukutaito moninaisuutena, toimintana ja osallisuutena. Oppimateriaalit. AV-arkki. Retrieved from <<https://researchportal.helsinki.fi/fi/publications/monilukutaito-moninaisuutena-toimintana-ja-osallisuutena>>
- SPERRY, C., SYDNOR, R., & FLORES-KOULISH, S. (2022). *Media Literacy: A position statement of the National Council for the Social Studies*. National Council for the Social Studies. Retrieved from <https://www.projectlooksharp.org/Articles/NCS_SPositionStatementMediaLiteracy22.pdf>
- STENMARK, M. (2021). "Worldview Studies". *Religious Studies*, 58(3), 564-582.
<<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034412521000135>>
- TAIRA, T. (2014). "Media and the Nonreligious". In: GRANHOLM, K., MOBERG, M., & SJÖ, S. (Eds.). *Religion, Media, and Social Change*. London: Routledge, 110-125.
- (2020). Media. Julkaisussa Uskontotieteen ilmiöitä ja näkökulmia. Toim. Pesonen, H. and Sakaranaho, T. Gaudeamus: Helsinki.
- TALMONT-KAMINSKI, K., & SHULTS, F.L. (2023). "Modern religion as vestigial structure: An evolutionary account of secularization". *Religion*, 54(3), 1-13.
<<https://doi.org/10.1080/0048721X.2023.2289421>>
- TEHRANIAN, M. (1990). *Technologies of power*. Ablex.
- TOFT, A., & BROBERG, M. (2018). "Perspectives: Mediatized Religious Education". In: LUNDBY, K. (Ed.). *Contesting religion: the media dynamics of cultural conflicts in Scandinavia*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 225-242.
<<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110502060-018>>
- UNESCO (2021). *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Progress update of the international commission on the futures of education*. Meeting document: ED-2021/FoE-OD/1. Retrieved from <<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000375746>>
- (2023). *Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development*. UNESCO General Conference 42 C, 42nd Session, Paris 2023.
- VALASKIVI, K., SUMIALA, J., & PYRHÖNEN, N. (2023). "Conceptualizing Populism about/in/as Religion: illustrations from Nordic Media Sphere". *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 36(2), 69-80.
<<https://doi.org/10.18261/njrs.36.2.2>>

- VALK, J. (2017). "Worldview Education". In: WIELZEN, D., & TER AVEST, I. (Eds.). *Interfaith Education for All – Theoretical Perspectives and Best Practices for Transformative Action*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 227-242.
- VAN DER KOOIJ, J.C., DE RUYTER, D.J., & MIEDEMA, S. (2017). "The Merits of Using 'Worldview' in Religious Education". *Religious Education*, 112(2), 172-184. <<https://doi.org/10.1080/00344087.2016.1191410>>
- VARIS, T. (2000). Doc. 8753 – 14 June 2000: Parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe. Report Doc. 8753 - 6 June 2000 Media education (Rapporteur: Mrs Isohookana-Asunmaa. Finland, Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group).
- VARIS, T., & CELOT, P. (2024). Tapio Varis | UNESCO Chair in Global E-learning in a conversation with Paolo Celot. Retrieved from <<https://voicesfestival.eu/conference-event/multicivilizational-literacy/>>
- WEINTRAUB AUSTIN, E., & DOMGAARD, S. (2024). "The media literacy theory of change and the message interpretation process model". *Communication Theory*, 34(4), 167-177. <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ct/qtae018>>
- WRAMMERT, A. (2021). *Med(ie)vetenhet, motstånd och engagemang: Gymnaseungdomars tal om och erfarenheter av religion*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet.
- (2024). "Religious Media Literacy as Agency in Student's Talk About Religion". In: ENSTEDT, D., GLENSNER, K., & WILHEML, K. (Eds.). *Religious Literacy in Secular Religious Education, Nordic Perspectives and Beyond*. Münster, New York: Waxmann, 55-69.
- YOUNG, M.F.D. (2008). *Bringing knowledge back in: From social constructivism to social realism in the sociology of education*. London and New York: Routledge.
- YOUNG, M., & MÜLLER, J. (2016). *Curriculum and the specialization of knowledge: Studies in the sociology of education*. London and New York: Routledge.
- YOUSMAN, B. (2016). "Who's afraid of critical media literacy?". In: HUFF, M., & LEE ROTH, A. (Eds.). *Censored 2017*. New York, NY: Seven Stories Press, 369-416.