American Reading Forum (ARF) Annual Conference 2023

Teaching Beyond Silos-

Transdisciplinary Perspectives of Theory, Research, and Pedagogy.

Theme

Teaching Beyond Silos-Transdisciplinary Perspectives of Theory, Research, and Pedagogy.

Program Chair/Co-Chairs & Bios

- *Dr. Victoria Cardullo, Auburn University*
  Vicky Cardullo is an Associate Professor of Literacy at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. She is the program coordinator for elementary education and teaches courses on literacy and literacy education for undergraduate and graduate students. She has been a member of ARF since 2011 and served on multiple boards, including past chair (2017-2019), associate editor (2013-2017), and previous board member (2013-2017). Her research interests focus on digital literacies, teacher preparation, STEM research, STEM identity, and the transdisciplinary perspectives of literacy and technology.

- *Dr. Nance Wilson, SUNY Cortland*
  Nance S. Wilson is a Professor of Literacy at SUNY Cortland, Cortland, NY. She was awarded the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities in 2021. She has been a member of ARF since 2007 and has served in multiple roles in the organization, including being a board member from 2008 to 2013 and Chair from 2011 to 2013. In addition, she was a conference Co-Chair in 2010 and 2015. She is presently the Parliamentarian, Co-Membership Chair, and Coordinator of the Graduate Student Scholarship for the American Reading Forum. Her research interests focus on building anti-racist literacy teachers, digital literacies, and the intersections between critical digital literacy and comprehension.

Rationale & Research Base for Theme with References

Societal issues of the twenty-first century have highlighted the need for innovation, cooperation, and intentionality. In 2022, the American Reading Forum examined those who profit from literacy curriculum, research, policy, and practice. This year, we seek to push back against curriculums that maintain the status quo to discuss how literacy instruction and schools can build critical and global citizens who embrace diversity. These schools must move beyond the traditional notion of a classroom incorporating technologies, learning, real-world inquiry, and relevance (Puig & Froelich, 2022) rather than scripted curriculums. In doing so, we will ensure that our students have the power to solve the multifaceted problems of the world. If literacy is to be a tool for solving the world's problems, we need to expand our notions about literacy and literacy teaching and learning beyond the silos (Cambourne, 2001). We see the move beyond silos as a call to engage more with a transdisciplinary approach to literacy.

A transdisciplinary approach requires a comprehensive literacy framework moving the curriculum beyond content-area literacy and interdisciplinary literacies. A transdisciplinary approach aligns with local, state, and national initiatives. Transdisciplinary learning is the exploration of relevant concepts, issues, and problems through collaboration between disciplines to cohesively engage with material with intentionality. It requires a critical look at the curriculum, the materials used within the classroom, the content, and the intentionality of the text. Transdisciplinary literacy takes us beyond literacy in the content areas or disciplinary literacy to literacy as the backbone of teaching and learning to provide students with a curriculum where they collaborate to solve the issues of our world. This process shifts students from rote learning to learning with a clear purpose in mind, essentially learning how to apply what they already know and understanding what they do not understand through collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, and problem-solving. According to Vygotsky's (Moreno & Park, 2010) constructivism theory states, students must actively build their knowledge through personal experience with others and the environment; these are critical skills for our global future. Vygotsky (Slavin, 2019) further positions that social interaction encourages students to construct knowledge and develop skills.

In 2020 the Future Work Skills report noted, "Many of today's global problems are just too complex to be solved by one specialized discipline (think global warming or overpopulation). These multifaceted problems require transdisciplinary solutions" (Davies, Fidler, & Gorbis, 2011, p.11). The transdisciplinary teaching approach revolves around real-world experiences, without regard for discipline-specific understandings. Global citizens will need to become adept at recognizing the type of thought process different tasks require. They will need to be apt at adjusting to enhance their ability to accomplish a task and developing their techniques for taking a problem of cognitive overload while utilizing new tools and skills. Government policymakers, leaders, and businesses will need to respond to the changing landscape by taking a leadership role and making education a national priority.

Cambourne, B. (2001). Conditions for literacy learning. *The Reading Teacher*, *54*(8), 784-786.

Davies, A., Fidler, D., & Gorbis, M. (2011). Future work skills 2020—Institute *for the Future for University of Phoenix Research Institute*, *540*.

Manak, J.A & Puig, E.A. (2021). Enhancing the STEM framework: Combining science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with stamina, transdisciplinary engagement, and mindfulness prepares students for real-world problems. *Science and Children*. 58(6). National Science Teaching Association.

Moreno, R. E., & Park, B. (2010). Cognitive load theory: Historical development and relation to other theories.

Puig, E.A. & Froelich, K.S. (2022). *Teaching K–12 transdisciplinary literacy: A comprehensive instructional framework for learning and leading*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

Slavin, R. E. (2019). *Educational psychology: Theory and practice*.

Relevance of the Topic to Current Events/Climate

Changes in social, economic, physical, digital, and political environments require that we move beyond the acceptance of literacy as interdisciplinary to understand the transdisciplinary nature of teaching and learning. The transdisciplinary approach has been identified as key to the teaching of technological literacy (Shenton, & Hay-Gibson, 2011), multimodal literacy (Unsworth et al., 2022), and the sciences (Sunarti, Wasis, Madlazin, & Suyidno, 2020). Transdisciplinary approaches to literacy are central to the current climate because it involves the application of metacognitive literacy engagement across different subjects, involves collaboration, involves centering literacy around phenomena that cross traditional subject area lines (such as climate change), and have the inclination to think beyond the silos. Cambourne (2022) shares that researchers who seek partnerships have done some of the most compelling scientific work of the twenty-first century. Our goal in preparing for the 2023 conference is to provide a forum for ARF literacy researchers to create partnerships that will amplify the implementation of a transdisciplinary literacy framework.

Cambourne, B. (2022). Forward. In Puig, E.A. & Froelich, K.S. (2022). *Teaching K–12 transdisciplinary literacy: A comprehensive instructional framework for learning and leading*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

Shenton, A. K., & Hay-Gibson, N. V. (2011). Information behavior and information literacy: The ultimate in transdisciplinary phenomena? *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, *43*(3), 166–175.

Sunarti, T., Wasis, W., Madlazin, M., & Suyidno, S. (2020, March). Multidisciplinary, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary Approaches in Literacy Learning Model. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1491, No. 1, p. 012054). IOP Publishing

Unsworth, L., Tytler, R., Fenwick, L., Humphrey, S., Chandler, P., Herrington, M., & Pham, L. (2022). *Multimodal Literacy in School Science: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* (p. 286). Taylor & Francis.

Vision & Focus for Conference
At the American Reading Forum 2023, we seek to create spaces for discussion among educators, researchers, policymakers, and students. We intend to develop transdisciplinary conversations beyond the open forums, keynote speakers, and other standard conference guidelines. Discussion should not happen in isolation but rather across multiple forums. We intend to offer multiple opportunities for collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The conference chairs and keynote speakers will provide opportunities to reflect and collaborate to build on the discussions taking place and encourage participants to continue the conversations and collaborations beyond the forum.

Themes and Subthemes
- Transdisciplinary Literacy
- Transdisciplinary Digital Literacy
- Policy
- Teacher Preparation
- Critical Literacy
- Disciplinary Literacies
- Professional Development
- Critical Pedagogies
- Theory
- STEM/STEAM
- Funds of Knowledge
- Arts-based literacy

- Classroom design
- Learner disposition
- School/ Curricular changes
- Socio-emotional learning w/literacy*
- Inquiry and project-based learning

Possible Keynote Speakers & Bios

Our opening speaker (Wednesday morning) will be **Dr. April Baker Bell**. Dr. Baker-Bell is an Associate Professor of Language, Literacy, and English Education at Michigan State University and the author of *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Dr. Baker-Bell is a transdisciplinary teacher-researcher-activist. A national leader in conversations on Black Language education, her research interrogates the intersections of Black language and literacies, anti-Black racism, and antiracist pedagogies and is concerned with antiracist writing, critical media literacies, Black feminist-womanist storytelling, and self-preservation for Black women in academia, with an emphasis on early career Black women.

Our Thursday morning Keynote will be **Dr. Mary McVee**. Dr. McVee is a Professor and the Director of the Center for Literacy and Reading Instruction at the University at Buffalo. Dr. McVee is an organizing committee member for the 2020 Positioning Theory Conference whose research focuses on curriculum and instruction, immigrant issues: race, inequality, and education, linguistic discourse, sociocultural context, multimodality, embodiment, and digital literacy.

Our closing keynote speaker will be **Dr. Enrique A. Puig**. Dr. Puig is the director of the Morgridge International Reading Center in the College of Community Innovation and Education at the University of Central Florida. He started his teaching career in Orlando, Florida, teaching first grade and maintains his Florida teacher certification with experiences varying from K-12 classroom teaching, literacy coaching, and Literacy Collaborative trainer to Reading Recovery®. The Florida Department of Education recognized him as a Title I Distinguished Educator. Currently, he continues to learn while working with elementary and secondary teacher leaders, teacher colleagues, and teacher candidates. He teaches undergraduate/graduate K 12 Content Area Reading and Diagnostic Reading courses. Enrique is the co-author of *The Literacy Coach: Guiding in the Right Direction* (2nd Ed.), T*he Literacy Leadership Team: Sustaining and Expanding Success*, and *Teaching K-12 Transdisciplinary Literacy: A Comprehensive Instructional Framework for Learning and Leading*.

Important Dates-
August 1, 2023 – Deadline for session proposals
September 1, 2023 – Feedback on proposals will be sent out via email
October 1, 2023 – Deadline for graduate student proposals
October 15, 2023 – Early bird conference registration ends
November 1, 2023 – Feedback on graduate student proposals will be sent out
November 15, 2023 – Graduate Student early bird conference registration ends
December 7-9, 2023 – Conference @ Sundial Resort, Sanibel Island, FL (Bylaws state that the conference will always be held the first full week of December in south Florida).

Session Types – *The following are standard session formats and descriptions that have been historically present at ARF conferences. If you would like to propose a non-standard session format unique to your theme, provide a title, description, and rationale.*

   Paper Sessions

The program committee will schedule two to four papers on related topics in a session. Suppose individuals submitting the proposal have yet to name a discussant. In that case, the program committee may appoint a discussant who will start the session and facilitate a 15-minute discussion about the papers, including comments and questions from the audience. The timing of sessions may be adjusted based on the number of presentations scheduled for the session.

Symposia
Those proposing a symposium should assemble a session on one topic or multiple but related topics focused on the conference theme. Symposium proposers should name their chairs, discussants, and others who may have a specific role in the program. Novel approaches, ways of presenting, and/or ways of involving the audience are welcome in the symposium sessions. Please request additional time on the proposal cover sheet if additional time is needed.

Problems Court
In the first 20-30 minutes of an open forum, the presenters should pose a persistent problem of practice or opportunity for growth in literacy research and instruction, supported by theoretical and/or empirical evidence and connected to the conference theme. The following 20-30 minutes should be reserved for a facilitated, critical conversation with the audience about the ways in which this problem or opportunity has been treated in the past, what has advanced our progress, and what has hindered it. In the final 20-30 minutes, the emphasis of the discussion should move toward developing concrete action items that individuals or small groups can continue to pursue in their contexts. These might include directions for research, research-practice partnerships, or other steps to be initiated once the conference is completed.
The session should close with a 5–10-minute wrap-up of the discussion by the presenters. Problem Court proposals should identify how many presenters will be involved in the session and their specific roles (e.g., presenters, discussion facilitators, timekeepers).

Advancing Literacy
Advancing Literacy presentations should describe an ongoing study, work in the planning stages, or theoretical work. The program committee will organize the papers into groups of three so that related topics will share a space. Presenters will share for 15 minutes with 10 minutes for follow-up discussion.