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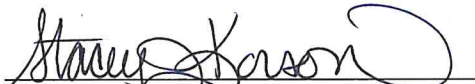
INVESTIGATING A STATE-FUNDED DISCIPLINARY LITERACY PROGRAM IN
KENTUCKY FOR EDUCATORS OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

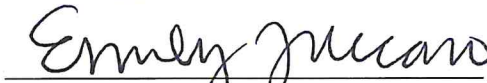
BY


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INVESTIGATING A STATE-FUNDED DISCIPLINARY LITERACY PROGRAM IN
KENTUCKY FOR EDUCATORS OF ADOLESCENT STUDENTS

BY

KEVIN PRESNELL

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

2022

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all those educators who show up every single day and work relentlessly to make a difference in the lives of their students. Your efforts matter!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the help and support of the following people. I thank my chair, Dr. Todd McCardle, for his friendship, support, counseling, advocacy, and patience. It is no small task to guide someone like me through this process, and his guidance has been invaluable. I thank both Dr. Stacey Korson and Dr. Emily Zuccaro for their feedback, expertise, and friendship. Further, I thank Erin Powell for her support with the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers (LAT) and for making this study possible. I thank Diana Porter for igniting a love of literacy in my life. I thank my family for being the foundation I needed when I was stressing out over this dissertation. I thank all my friends for lifting me when I needed a distraction. I thank all my colleagues in Madison County for supporting my work both in our school system and within this graduate program. I get better as an educator with each passing day because I have the fortune of working with such colleagues. I thank Paco for laying at my feet for every word that was typed and taking me on walks when I needed to step away. I am blessed to be surrounded by a support system that drives me to get better, and this product is a testament to all the individuals in my life who are always there when I need them.

ABSTRACT

This case study describes a professional learning opportunity for educators of adolescents, namely the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers (LAT), at a regional midsize university in Kentucky. The LAT is a year-long experience that enrollees undertake to grow professionally by gaining specific literacy skills. This study focuses specifically on participant experience with the disciplinary literacy content, strategies, and resources presented at the summer program. This investigation sought to understand if participation in the disciplinary literacy program impacted the participants' perceptions of literacy and their dispositional attitudes toward integrating literacy into their professional practice. The data revealed that participants in the LAT joined the program with a text-based perception of literacy, which also impacted how they viewed the integration of literacy in their practice. By the end of the program, the participants gained a broader perception of literacy, which shifted their understanding of how literacy was integrated into their instruction.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Early in my career, I joined several social studies teachers in a collaborative meeting, and I was surprised when I participated in one of their conversations surrounding the teaching of reading skills in social studies. As someone passionate about both social studies and literacy, I was excited to listen and, maybe, contribute to a conversation that seemed so pertinent to my areas of interest. The conversation took a negative turn quickly when “every teacher is a reading teacher” was uttered. This sentence seemed to annoy many of the teachers in the room, as many vented their frustration about former administrators and initiatives that they claimed would force them to change their instructional practice, which they felt was not truly part of their discipline. Unfortunately, as a relatively new teacher at the time, I did not speak up during this meeting; however, this meeting has prompted many reflections throughout my professional career.

The idea that every teacher is a reading teacher has been used in education to encourage all teachers to adapt literacy strategies into their regular classroom practice. While the push to use literacy strategies in all classrooms predates the advent of the Common Core State Standards, the high-stakes accountability culture on reading and writing that accompanied these new standards revved up the pressure on all teachers to adjust their practice. The group of social studies teachers in the meeting most definitely had a negative view of literacy instruction, but I could not understand the reason behind their opinion. History and the social science disciplines are built on the analysis of primary and secondary texts while also including the communication of arguments and

counterarguments regarding those sources. This idea and their general disposition towards literacy seem to run oppositional, and the source of this disconnect has fueled my self-inquiries. What seems to be the breakdown between literacy research and classroom practice? Is there a resistance to literacy practices in content area classrooms, and if so, why?

Literacy development in students is crucial to every student's success, no matter the grade level. In fact, literacy skills are not only crucial to develop in the language arts, but they are also integral to student learning in a student's entire academic program. According to Howard (2016), "If literacy is defined as the 'ability to read, write, understand and interpret, and discuss multiple texts across multiple contexts, then there is no question that literacy instruction should be integrated into content area classrooms" (p. 26). The importance of teaching literacy skills in every class cannot be underplayed; however, social studies, science, math, related arts, and even some language arts educators do not share this belief (Alexander-Shea, 2015; Barry, 2013; Topping et al., 2007). Teachers in the content areas use a variety of literacy strategies, although they still dislike the idea of teaching reading and other critical literacy skills.

This study aimed to examine a disciplinary literacy teacher program called the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers (LAT) conducted as a partnership between a regional midsize university in Kentucky and the University Partnership for Literacy Growth (UPLG). The LAT is funded by the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a way to boost literacy development among Kentucky's kids. The LAT aims to train teachers of adolescents in literacy strategies that they can implement in their classrooms. Through this case study of the LAT, I highlight the participants' perceptions of literacy before

and after undertaking the program, while also examining any shift in the participants' dispositional attitudes toward literacy.

Background, Context, and Theoretical Framework

Across the US, there is a clear need for teachers of adolescents to execute literacy skills in their classrooms. As Sprague (2014) noted, less than half the seniors in the US are fully proficient in reading skills when they graduate. This is a disturbing statistic and one that requires innovative approaches to literacy integration and implementation to remedy. While in recent years more emphasis has been placed on literacy at the middle and secondary levels, many practicing educators and teachers do not receive adequate preparation to teach literacy practices in their classrooms (Ingram et al., 2016; Mpofu & Maphalala, 2020; Sprague, 2014; Wood et al., 2009). In Kentucky, state law tasks the UPLG with developing a program to help educators to learn the best literacy practices and implement them in the classrooms.

The UPLG, enshrined in Kentucky statute (Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood–Duties–Report, 2020), forms a partnership with all of Kentucky's state universities to focus on literacy development from birth to adulthood and uses literacy faculty from across the state to provide a variety of professional growth opportunities. As part of their statutorily mandated work to help teachers increase their literacy practices in middle and secondary classrooms, the UPLG forms a partnership with higher education institutions in Kentucky to take advantage of the state, federal, and private funds, as well as changed systems, to support adolescent literacy (Bates et al., 2009). This combined effort partners with multiple regional teacher preparation programs and enrolls teachers in a variety of

literacy programs to empower them with research-proven literacy instructional strategies in hopes that they use those practices in their classrooms more frequently. One such program, the LAT, specifically works with middle- and high-school teachers and strives to provide their participants with the strategies needed to be successful in teaching adolescent students.

As part of their efforts to prepare teachers, a regional midsize university in Kentucky's LAT program focuses specifically on disciplinary literacy to engage teachers in the literacy strategies that are a natural part of each discipline. LAT is a year-long cohort professional learning experience that begins at a teacher program during the summer, involving a personal literacy action plan completed by each educator after their enrollment in the summer program, follow-up coaching visits by the LAT leaders to support the educators' implementation of their action plan, and a share fair conference experience that allows the educator to share the results of their action plans. LAT, like other literacy learning cohorts, supports educators for an entire year as they work to develop their knowledge of literacy practices that work best in their classroom (Brownell et al., 2017). While the LAT experience is yearlong, the summer teacher program is the focus of this research study.

LAT's summer teacher program focuses on exposing the educators enrolled in the program to the concept of disciplinary literacy. Disciplinary literacy is the idea that every content area has literacy skills that are innate and naturally part of its discipline (Carney & Indrisano, 2013; Dyches, 2018; Hannant & Jetnikoff, 2015; Ingram et al., 2016; Kok-Sing Tang, 2016; Liashenko et al., 2020; Paul, 2018; Seah & Chan, 2021; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014). It forms the overarching conceptual theory that grounds

the research of this research study. Disciplinary literacy, as a concept, roots itself pretty solidly in the discourse theory (Goldman et al., 2016). These theories serve as the foundation for the research in this study as they form the foundation for disciplinary literacy and the ideas that are promoted in a regional midsize university's LAT program.

Problem Statement

As a social studies teacher that valued literacy in the classroom, I could not understand the negative disposition that my colleagues demonstrated towards literacy. If there are literacy skills that are innate and natural to every content area, it is unclear why there is a resistance to instructional literacy practices in the content areas (Ingram et al., 2016; Topping et al., 2007; Warren-Kring & Warren, 2013; Wood et al., 2009). There are subject-specific literacy skills that are part of every discipline, and educators must be prepared and trained to help their students develop those specific skills. Overcoming the resistance and preparing literacy teachers to build on the disciplinary literacy skills in their subject forms the basis for the LAT program and is the problem that this study investigates.

Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

The breakdown between teachers' content disciplinary practice and literacy integration in their classrooms is broader than just social studies classrooms and can be seen in many of the content areas. Understanding the resistance to literacy integration in classrooms requires a deeper understanding of teachers' understanding of literacy, dispositional attitudes towards literacy, and their preparation to utilize literacy instructional strategies. This study analyzes a regional midsize university's LAT work

toward training teachers to utilize disciplinary literacy strategies in their classrooms.

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Research Question 1: How do participants of a regional midsize university's LAT perceive literacy before and after the program?
- Research Question 2: How do the participants' dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies change during the program?

These research questions are predicated on understanding the participants' perceptions of literacy before and after the program, as well as how these perceptions, or their dispositional attitudes, shift following the program. Since the program experience is based on disciplinary literacy and helping the teacher to bring out the literacy skills in their subject area, the research questions focus on how teachers react to the observation that literacy can naturally be part of their class and if this changes their perception of literacy integration.

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

Rationale of the Study

The Commonwealth of Kentucky has charged the UPLG with the specific task of organizing a literacy program that supports teachers of adolescents with best literacy practices in their classrooms. In addition to the statutory mandate, the Commonwealth of Kentucky uses funds to support and invest in these initiatives. This study investigates the ability of a regional midsize university's LAT to change the perception of their participants to implement literacy instructional practices into their classrooms more naturally and effectively. Notably, many educators are wary of fully investing in

literacy in their classrooms. This study investigates if the regional midsize university's LAT can shift the perception that teachers have about literacy in their classrooms. This case study investigation demonstrates if the goals of the regional midsize university's LAT are being achieved, in order to conclude that the model is a worthy investment from the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Significance of the Study

This study helps people in the field of literacy to understand the breakdown in literacy instruction. Research has demonstrated a clear need for literacy strategies to be implemented across content areas. This research study hopes to demonstrate to content area teachers the necessity and ease of implementing literacy strategies into their discipline, as well as the success of teachers adapting their instructional plans and mindset when exposed to disciplinary literacy ideals. In addition to these goals, this research study also provides insight for educator preparation institutions to understand how literacy is being implemented, how their current methodology is impacting the educational community, and how adopting a disciplinary literacy approach can have an impact on educator mindset and the use of literacy practices in their classes.

While teacher training and preparation will most definitely be informed by the outcomes of this study, this research will also help to inform educators of the benefit of using a disciplinary literacy mindset in their classrooms and how schools and districts can help shift to this specific mindset. The Kentucky Academic Standards integrate many of the disciplinary literacy skills throughout their standards documents. These standards, much like the Common Core and academic standards across the US, are assessed in terms of accountability. Disciplinary literacy skills form the foundation of

accountability for each content area and the basis of their specific assessment. This study can help to inform those individuals that help to train teachers on effective means for preparing their educators to impart these specific skills into their classrooms.

Nature of the Study

This research study is a case study program evaluation of the LAT summer teacher program. Throughout the program, participants were surveyed with open-ended questions, and at the end, the participants were asked to voluntarily participate in a focus group interview. To fully investigate the research questions and understand the program, data were collected at multiple points throughout the study: prior, during, and after. This protocol demonstrates how these research questions are answered at different points in the study. Participants were selected for the study based on their applications and interest to participate in the program.

Before Program (RQ 1)

Before the study, all the participants were sent a Google Forms survey that asked open-ended questions. This survey aimed to set the baseline for Research Question 1. This survey was not anonymous to me, the researcher, but it will be kept so for the presentation of research findings. The survey included the following questions:

1. Why are you interested in the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers?
2. What is literacy to you?
3. How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom?
4. Would you say you felt prepared to teach literacy in your classroom? What makes you say this?

5. What would you like to learn during the program? What support do you need to grow your implementation of literacy practices in your classroom?

All of these questions were designed to inform the design of the LAT program, as well as allow me and the leaders of LAT to tailor a program to meet the needs of the participants. In addition to informing the program, these questions also aimed to gauge the participants' comfort with literacy concepts in their classroom, work to understand the participants' perception of literacy, and help me to understand the knowledge of disciplinary literacy in the participants' classes.

During Program (RQ 2)

The participants were surveyed every day using a Google Form survey with open-ended questions. Much like the survey administered before the program, this survey aimed to serve two purposes: to help inform the continuous improvement and my ability, as well as the leaders', to adjust the program to meet the needs of the participants. This survey is not anonymous to me, but it will be kept so for the presentation of research findings. The survey included the following questions:

1. What went well today? What activities did you like? What is one thing that changed or confirmed your thinking?
2. What needs improvement? What suggestions do you have for our next meeting?
3. How has the work today changed your thinking about literacy application in your classroom?

In addition to the survey, I collected evidence throughout the program from the activities carried out. Throughout the program, the participants were made to work in both groups and as individuals. I collected the data from each session. However, most

substantially, at the end of the program, each participant was expected to create their personal action plan for implementation of the idea(s) presented during the program. I These personal action plans demonstrate a concept that the participant is taking back to their classroom to implement directly. The researcher is able to pair the action plan with the participant survey data to analyze the development of the participant.

After Program (RQ 1 and 2)

After the completion of the program, I conducted another survey that was administered to all the participants of the program. This survey was not anonymous to me, but it will be kept so for the presentation of research findings. This survey was targeted at answering both research questions. It included the following questions:

1. What is literacy to you?
2. How did the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers shift your perception of literacy?
3. How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom?
4. Do you feel that the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers helped to prepare you to teach literacy in your classroom? Why?
5. If you could change something about the teacher program, what would it be and why?

In addition to the post-program survey, I also invited voluntary participation in a focus group within two weeks after the culmination of the program. The focus group interview was recorded and transcribed. The participants' names were kept hidden when the findings were shared. The participants were asked the following questions:

1. What was your perception of literacy before and after the program, and did the program help to shift this perception?
2. What do you think was effective about the program?
3. What do you think needs to improve about the program?
4. What were some key takeaways from the program?
5. How do you think the program will change your practice?

Definition of Terms

To understand concepts, some prior knowledge of the subject is important. Discipline-specific literacy instruction can be used by literacy teachers to address the unique literacy demands and habits of mind related to specific disciplines (Fang, 2014). Content area reading focuses on generic strategies that students can use to better understand the texts that they come across in their content area classes (LaDuke et al., 2016). Disciplinary literacy is a specific way of talking, reading, writing, and thinking valued and used by people in a discipline to successfully access and construct knowledge in that discipline (Kok-Sing, 2016).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The LAT summer program is designed to accept applicants based on their interest and desire to grow their literacy practices. Since the teacher participants of this study are attending the program voluntarily, it was assumed that they want to learn new literacy practices and grow their practice. This could also be seen as a limitation, as not all educators always want to attend professional development programs or seek new literacy strategies to improve their professional practice. Additionally, this study focuses only on the LAT group and not any other initiative of the UPLG, nor can it be

compared to other disciplinary literacy professional learning opportunities. This limits the generalizability of this study. Every university that conducts an LAT program through UPLG uses different parameters to guide their work, and while it could most definitely inform their work, it cannot be used to analyze anything other than the LAT program under investigation.

While discussing limitations, it cannot be omitted that I am helping to lead the LAT project that is under review. As a person who cares passionately about literacy implementation in the classroom and wants to help empower educators to implement literacy in their classrooms, I am biased toward the role of disciplinary literacy in helping to improve the implementation of literacy practices. While I may be a leader of the LAT project and currently investigating it, I feel strongly that the rigorous work of this study will help to inform the work of LAT and will help it to build on the parts of the program that are successful in informing the components that should be changed.

As a leader of the LAT program, the validity and reliability of this study will inform the structure and success of this program and ensure that it meets the needs of the participants in years to come. Although I am a leader of the program, the quality of this data matters to me as a researcher. It also helps me to truly understand the impact of the summer program on teachers' perceptions of literacy and their attitudes toward integrating it into their classrooms. As the leader conducting the study and the researcher conducting the focus group interview, it introduces another limitation of the data collected from the focus group interview. It is imperative that the participants feel at ease as they answer questions regarding the program so that the data obtained are

meaningful and valid. This dynamic can be achieved through conversations and the reception of feedback.

Summary and Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Previous literature demonstrates a negative disposition that many educators of adolescents feel towards literacy implementation in their classroom. Irrespective of the reason, it is noted that many share a negative connotation of using their classroom for literacy. However, the concept of disciplinary literacy shifts this mindset and celebrates the literacy skills that are organic components of every discipline. Scientists, historians, mathematicians, and all other disciplines have natural literacy skills that do not have to be forced to be included in each subject area. The LAT works to train teachers in how to build on these skills in each discipline and promote literacy in their classrooms while still achieving the goals of their specific discipline. This study aimed to investigate the perceptions of literacy among LAT teachers before and after the summer program and how the dispositional attitudes shift during the program.

The remainder of this study is organized into chapters that provide structured and detailed insights. Chapter Two, the literature review, acts as the theoretical and conceptual lens guiding this study, in addition to investigating and highlighting the previous studies that have explored teachers' dispositions towards literacy, implementation of disciplinary literacy and content literacy mindsets, teacher preparation, and adolescent literacy initiatives. Chapter Three, the methodology, outlines the detailed steps and procedures followed in this study and organizes the process for collecting data from the study participants. Chapter Four, on analysis, precisely details the analysis steps and findings of the study and organizes the results in

thematic ways to arrive at appropriate conclusions. Chapter Five provides a discussion and interpretation of the findings, relevance, and limitations, as well as helps to provide insights into the shifting perceptions of the participants of the LAT program.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Innate to each academic discipline is the content and skills needed to successfully engage as a practitioner. Disciplinary literacy theorists build on the fact that each content area has specific literacy practices that are authentic to the execution of their discipline and form the base skills needed to engage in the discipline. “Disciplinary literacy strategies pay explicit attention to discipline-specific cognitive strategies, language skills, literate practices, and habits of mind. In other words, disciplinary literacy theorists assume that these disciplinary processes are distinct, identifiable, and teachable to students” (Cisco, 2020, p. 75). The ideas of disciplinary literacy are fundamental to forming the connection between the content areas and literacy practices. So, in place of the competition between literacy skills and content objectives, disciplinary literacy aligns the objectives of both. Grounded in the discourse theory, disciplinary literacy shows how experts in their field communicate (Hillman, 2014). Discourse theory is built on the analysis of communication, and disciplinary literacy is built on this theory because disciplinary literacy is the skill that experts use to communicate.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

While disciplinary literacy, rooted in the discourse theory, is the main theory and concept guiding this study, two more theories and practices are interwoven into this study of the resistance to disciplinary literacy in content area classrooms. The reader response theory is built on the idea that readers should react to their texts. Some researchers expand on this idea and note that readers should be responsive, responsible,

and compassionate with the materials that they read (Beers & Probst, 2017). This is highly connected to disciplinary literacy, as readers question and analyze the materials that they consume. Disciplinary readers look to the texts to use evidence and then communicate their conclusions based on their reading. This is at the core of the reader response theory and comprises important skills that readers develop through disciplinary literacy.

Additionally, any discussion of practices and skills in the content areas is hinged on the inclusion of inquiry-based learning practices. Questioning, investigating concepts, using evidence, and communicating conclusions are crucial skills that make up the inquiry arc, as well as important disciplinary skills included in the content areas. Since these are the skills that embody many of the content disciplines, by nature, they parallel the disciplinary literacy skills that students should develop. As students refine those disciplinary practices, they further develop their literacy practices as well. However, as disciplinary literacy establishes, many students may not be ready to acquire those complex skills.

Disciplinary literacy skills form the most complex literacy skills that students must develop to become productive citizens of society. However, these skills are built upon more basic and intermediate literacy skills, such as comprehension strategies and vocabulary skills (Cisco, 2020). While many secondary teachers receive explicit training in the skills important to their disciplines, much of what encompasses disciplinary literacy skills, they do not receive the preparation necessary to develop the intermediate and basic literacy skills that disciplinary literacy is built upon. In the age of high-stakes testing, teachers are being asked to develop their students' literacy skills

without the preparation they need to adequately achieve that goal. Consequently, teachers become frustrated with the skills they are asked to develop and resist its implementation.

To establish the disciplinary literacy theoretical frame and demonstrate the connection between content area teachers' frustration and the theories that underpin this problem, it is crucial to understand the context and importance. For students to be adequately prepared for our everchanging society, they need a variety of literacy skills to be able to research, use evidence, and communicate. However, more and more students who graduate are not adequately prepared to exit their high school experience and engage with complex texts. Disciplinary literacy, the literacy skills that are innate to each disciplinary, form the most complex literacy skills that students need to become active and engaged citizens. However, disciplinary literacy skills are built upon intermediate and basic literacy skills that many content area teachers are not properly trained to address in their classrooms. As more and more schools combat high-stakes testing, administrators expect content area teachers to implement literacy practices in their classrooms. Content area teachers resist disciplinary literacy practices because they lack the necessary preparation to adequately meet the needs of their students.

Literature Review

Societal Need for Critical Reading Skills

As our country and society advances, more and more jobs now require specialization and are reliant on the ability to read and write proficiently. Additionally, with the advent of social media and the expansion of the news media, the need is greater than ever for people to critically read information and decide for themselves the factual

backing of information. As our world and country continuously evolve, the definition and expectations of productive citizens change, as do the literacy demands needed to be productive citizens (Goldman et al., 2016, p. 220). Therefore, it is important to understand how schools prepare students to meet the evolving needs of our society. “High schools in the United States are graduating more than one in four students who cannot read at even a basic level; overall, less than half of U.S. graduates are fully proficient in literacy skills” (Sprague, 2014, p. 2). This indicates that schools often fail to meet the expectations of our evolving society.

More and more frequently, during a student’s K-12 schooling experience, the reading skills that they develop are more focused on scoring well on tests and less so on engaging with a text and reading for understanding or engaging in evidence-based argumentation with multiple sources of information situated within the three distinct disciplines of literary reading, science, and history (Goldman et al., 2016). Our changing society needs students to not only read for understanding but to learn to question what they read as well. “For kids to become the readers our ever-changing society needs—our democracy needs—they must become responsive readers” (Beers & Probst, 2017, p. 25). This mindset that critical readers are responsive, responsible, and compassionate, something that is a crucial part of basic literacy instruction, but even more important to the development of disciplinary literacy practices.

Social Inequities in Literacy: Poverty and Race

Literacy teaching and learning are interwoven with culture, societal beliefs, and values that can hold important implications for students. Since the majority of teachers in the US are White females from the middle class, their cultural beliefs may not always

represent every student who walks into a classroom (McVee, 2014). Literacy teachers have a strong role in transmitting culture and must be very cognizant of their histories and biases lest they perpetuate social inequities further. Poverty is a well-documented and heavily researched social inequity that plagues literacy achievement and student reading attainment. Whether it is access to texts or family support, students in poverty face a significant disadvantage in terms of literacy development throughout their life. In addition to poverty, race is a significant factor that impacts a student's literacy development. America's history has many examples of being a society that is not built on an equal footing for every race. This history forms the foundation for every part of American society, including student reading development and literacy performance. While several social inequities can be demonstrated through literacy achievement and reading development, these two represent a significant barrier for many students.

Socioeconomic Status

Analyzing social inequities in literacy performance, one of the most distinct and pronounced social inequities, centers on those who live in poverty. Societal poverty is a relative term and can be defined both locally and globally (Kelly, 2015). Those who live in poverty have unique stories that do not necessarily transition from setting to setting. The stories and histories of those living in poverty can be shaped by the environment, by their culture, and can continue to impact family members from generation to generation. When analyzing literacy scores, those who live in poverty traditionally tend to perform worse than their peers (Comber, 2014a). Literacy skills are crucial not only for students' growth, but they enable individuals to build on and develop several other skills that could break the cycle of generational poverty. Being raised in poverty is not a

genetic disposition that equates to lower performance on achievement testing. So what accounts for the gap between them and their peers?

Many researchers have searched for the causation of the scores that impoverished students achieve on literacy assessments. While there is not a definite answer, researchers have identified several factors that seem to identify where the achievement gap first starts developing. “Access to high quality books in homes, schools, and communities is typically lower in impoverished communities when compared to more middle-income neighborhoods” (Skibbe & Foster, 2019, p. 363). Children raised in poverty have insufficient access to texts and other resources that can help expose them to different words and expressions that children from the middle and upper classes experience.

When a parent has the time and ability to sit and read aloud to their child, the kid begins learning many different phrases and starts to associate reading and learning with positive connotations. As Figure 1 depicts, as a child moves up in social class, it becomes statistically more likely that they get exposed to even more words. As children grow up and are exposed to more words, their background knowledge and vocabulary deepen, and they engage with more texts once they enter an educational setting. Students raised in poverty are forced to catch up as their peers begin moving forward.

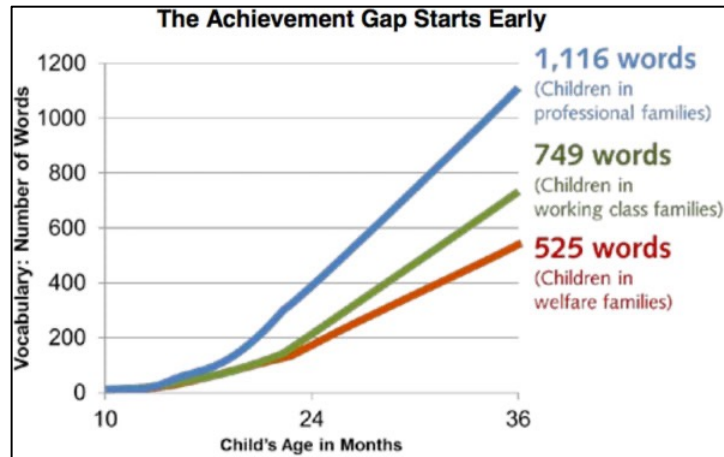


Figure 1. The Word Gap (Willis, 2015, p. 32)

Exposure to words, a variety of texts, and the simple act of reading with a child regularly have a significant impact on the child’s language growth. “Children who have regular opportunities to read with their parents are more likely to have higher language and literacy skills in a variety of areas, including vocabulary, phonological awareness, print knowledge, and letter knowledge” (p. 350). All of these language skills are crucial to kickstarting a child’s language development, and when families have less access to resources, fewer opportunities, or less time in the day, or in some cases they themselves lack the skills needed to read with their child, children begin the educational journey at drastically different levels. When students fall behind in their language development, the resources required to get students back on track with their peers become more cumbersome, specialized, and costly.

Perpetuating the problem further, schools and communities with high poverty rates often lack the resources they need to purchase important resources for the classroom. In addition, whether because of work or other circumstances, families in impoverished areas often find it difficult to support classroom instruction thinking that they also do not have the appropriate resources, education, or experiences to further

develop at home. Even if families wanted to attempt to support their students' academic endeavors, access to literacy facilities such as libraries, bookstores, or other book-lending sources may not be accessible to children and families of poverty (Sennette et al., 2019, p. 23). Communities without the time, skills, or resources to support students enter the dangerous cyclical tailspin that perpetuates the achievement gap and the generational poverty plaguing so many. So, with all of the investment in education, where is the funding needed to support the literacy efforts to help move communities forward?

When looking at schools in the working class and high-poverty areas, it is common to come across remediation techniques such as literacy blocks, a variety of literacy programs, whole school literacy plans, literacy coaches, and pretty much every strategy that can be partially tied to a literacy strategy. "It seems the *literacisation*, or that literacy becomes both the problem and the solution to educational inequities, has developed with the need to jigsaw solutions to answering the problem" (Comber, 2014b, p. 360). However, this mindset negates the root societal problems. People in poverty are treated as if they are a problem to fix and not the system itself. If governments blame family practices instead of looking at their budgets and policy, then policymakers would not come up with the investments necessary to remedy the problem.

Racial Disparity

America has a dark history when it comes to equality in terms of access and preparation for all races to learn basic literacy skills. Literacy, one of the great equalizers, has been a tool to push forward many social equity causes. Books and

written words have the power to change hearts and minds while inspiring others to stand up. Therefore, throughout history, access to literacy preparation has been heavily regulated and even restricted. At times in America's history, state laws prohibited the teaching of reading and writing to those who were enslaved (Willis, 2015, p. 29). Similar policies restricting access to adequate literacy preparation continued in different forms throughout the Reconstruction Era, manifesting themselves through the Jim Crow laws that gripped the South. While these examples of racial inequity are from the past, our country's history establishes the foundation for the systemic policies that many still grapple with in the modern age. Telling this story is important because it demonstrates that there are striking precedents to several current education practices in our country.

While policies can be changed, many of the deeper cultural components embedded not only in our society but in much of our country's curriculum perpetuate the racial inequities built on our nation's systemic inequalities. "Through a narrow curriculum, American schools historically reinforce perspectives and experiences of those who are privileged in U.S. and European societies" (Bryce, 2019, p. 66). These ideals are reinforced by who the teacher identifies as the victors portrayed in history classes, by the rules and discipline practices schools build into their policies, and by the race and culture of the main character in the text that the teacher chooses for the class to read. In literacy practices, racial inequity can be seen in many ways, but one of the most prevalent is the ability of students to see themselves in the material they read.

Interest and motivation are crucial to helping kids develop their literacy skills. Interest and motivation can be built around topics, genres, and storylines, but one of the most powerful ways to get a child interested in a text is for them to build a connection

with the story, for them to be able to relate to the text. Often, many of the stories' teachers select stories that do not tell the stories of many of their students. "The voices, histories, and perspectives of people of color, women, and other historically marginalized groups are often missing and/or silenced in many of the texts that are used in schools" (Husband & Grace Kang, 2020, p. 7). When kids fail to relate to a text, they develop the idea that their story is not important or relatable, and they do not develop connections with the material. When students look around a classroom and do not see anyone like them in the materials that hang on the walls, in the classroom library, or in the texts they read, they develop the sense that their stories, their image, is not valued or is not appreciated—that they are lesser because of their appearance.

The underrepresentation of minority groups in curriculum and materials seems like an easy problem to fix—by adding more diversity to the curriculum. However, many teachers are unaware of the lack of representation in their classroom, or even the need to ensure that all groups can identify with the materials they cover. Not only are they unaware, but conversations around race and privilege can be difficult for individuals, ones that require much self-reflection. "For many White teachers, explorations of race, class and culture seem to come at too high a price, prompting students to turn away from considerations of their own identities and positions" (McVee, 2014, p. 3). Having conversations about race can be challenging for many individuals, and without specific and targeted conversations, much of the inequities in classrooms will go unchecked. Many of the pre-service teachers entering the profession are White, from middle-class backgrounds, and often do not acknowledge their privilege or their misconceptions about race and inclusion in the classroom (Ticknor et

al., 2020). They are not challenged with the conversation about inclusion and access, and this leaves them unprepared to develop an inclusive classroom that is necessary for ensuring that every student feels valued and accepted.

Discourse Theory

At the core of this research project and any project that looks to understand literacy education is the desire to understand best practices used for building those crucial communication skills in students. For this study, the discourse theory provides the best frame and path for understanding the effect of a disciplinary literacy program on middle and high school teachers. The discourse theory has been long anchored in literacy research and forms the foundation for understanding how different groups communicate and the nuances of communication within groups and societies. The discourse theory, or the in-depth analysis of language and, more broadly, communication, can first be traced to Harris' (1952) thesis, *Discourse Analysis*.

Since 1952, many other researchers have further developed and refined the study of discourse, and it has been used to study several academic fields in addition to framing a variety of public policies (Blunt, 2004; Kettle, 2011; Lewis, 2006; Liasidou, 2016; Rogers et al., 2005). To understand the discourse theory, it is important to first begin with the definition of discourses.

Discourses are ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing, that are accepted as instantiations of particular identities by specific groups.... They are socially situated identities. They are, thus, always and everywhere social products of social histories (Gee, 2015, p. 3).

This definition highlights why the discourse theory is aligned with the research questions of this study. This specific definition is built upon Gee's "Big D" Discourse

theory which “captures the ways in which people enact and recognize socially and historically significant identities or “kinds of people” through well-integrated combinations of language, actions, interactions, objects, tools, technologies, beliefs, and values” (Gee, 2015). Investigating how teachers are prepared to teach different literacy components in their classroom requires a deep understanding of the language being communicated and how to meet the needs of their students who may be at a variety of levels in terms of their use of formal language and their ability to engage in specific discourse.

Encompassing in the idea that social groups have unique discourses is the idea that social hierarchies and power imbalances can be reflected through discourses (Liasidou, 2016). Interwoven with the idea that social groups develop and utilize specific discourses highlights the reflection that specific discourses limit the access to acquire, learn, and join those discourses, which can form a barrier to social mobility and overall inclusion in specific social groups (Blunt, 2004; Harris, 1952; Iversen, 2014; Lewis, 2006; Liasidou, 2016; Rex et al., 2010; Rogers et al., 2005). This line of analysis led researchers to develop varying ways to utilize a critical discourse analysis lens to analyze public policies and curriculums, as well as establish a framework when they develop programs that intend to best provide access to common discourses.

Further building on Harris’ theory, Gee (2015) reshaped the discourse theory to also encompass a variety of social contexts, including academic disciplines, as specific discourses that could be analyzed. Gee’s evolved discourse theory supported teaching students to think like social scientists, mathematicians, scientists, or whatever academic discipline they may be engaged in. Reframing the mindset that each academic discipline

is built by its discourse and that students should be engaged in the acts of the discipline is the essential perspective of disciplinary literacy. “Disciplinary literacy as communication among experts is grounded in discourse theory” (Hillman, 2014, p. 398). The understanding is that different groups communicate in different ways, and this can apply to how students learn the language unique to academic disciplines, which is the heart of this research project and why it is important to train teachers to adopt this mindset as they return to teach their students.

Evolving Philosophies of Literacy

As previously discussed, the central tenet of discourse theory is that different groups have specific discourses, whether academic, social, or other areas that require specialized thought or language. Understanding the shifts in literacy instruction and research helps to define how literacy instruction can serve as a vehicle for entry into specific discourse and how students are prepared to read, write, think, and communicate more broadly. The literacy education research community experiences different waves of development that impact the community and often result in monumental shifts in literacy instruction. Tierney and Pearson (2021) captured many of these major shifts in

A History of Literacy Education: Waves of Research and Practice, including

the shift from behaviorism to cognitive and psycholinguistic perspectives; the advent of research on reading comprehension and especially learning to learn and metacognition; the connecting of reading with writing and the unfolding of literacy; increased attention and growing awareness of the social and cultural processes involved in literacy; the rise of critical traditions especially tied to post-structuralism, feminism, racism, etc.; shifts in assessment paradigms; reading reforms; digital developments; and global shifts, especially related to epistemologies, decolonization, and indigeneity (p. vii).

This list illustrates how dynamic the field of literacy education is, and this begins to set the foundations for moving into the modern world. These waves of development have been substantial in shifting the thinking, ideals, perspectives, and mindsets of the researchers and practitioners of the literacy community.

Disciplinary Literacy and Content Area Literacy

As students navigate the academic disciplines either at university or frequently as part of their secondary programming, they are thrust into various communities of practice that attempt to engage them with the skills of the discipline (Goldman et al., 2016). History classes try to teach students to be historians, science classes attempt to create scientists, and math has its own rules for teaching students to be mathematicians. When stepping into each of these classrooms, teachers in these content areas want to connect students with the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful. “Connecting the knowledge that students need to engage with, think, read, and write about, with the disciplinary conventions that they need to follow makes these conventions seem less arbitrary” (Clarence & McKenna, 2017, p. 46). Teaching disciplinary content and skills does not have to run contrary to a teacher or school’s literacy objective.

Disciplinary literacy forms the connection between content skills and the literacy practices needed to practice the discipline effectively. Each discipline has specific skills inherent to their discipline that are the natural literacy skills necessary to succeed in practice. For example, historians read and analyze primary sources, while scientists analyze charts and write conclusions. Content area literacy skills, while similar, are more general skills that transition across all disciplines (Cisco, 2020).

Almost like a step, content area literacy skills are the intermediate literacy skills that can be used to access the more complex disciplinary literacy skills.

LaDuke et al. (2016) builds on the definition of both disciplinary and content area literacy to demonstrate the importance of using them during social studies instruction, an interpretation that can be applied in other content areas as well.

By teaching content area reading strategies such as summarization, teachers ensure students comprehend the texts they read. Providing students, the scaffolding questions from the [Library of Congress] tool encourages students to comprehend the sources from the disciplinary perspective of a historian as well. Disciplinary literacy strategies should be taught within the context of social studies instruction to ensure that the skills are authentic and purposefully used. (LaDuke et al., 2016, p. 96)

Social studies, like the other content areas, has specific content and skills that are authentic to the content area. Similarly, the students' ability to engage in relevant scientific discourse and to use empirical evidence to evaluate claims, support inferences, and develop conclusions is a central tenet of science education (Hardy et al., 2010). When the skills are taught authentically in each discipline, students develop the important skills that they need to authentically engage with the text. How students engage with the text forms the major connection with the reader response theory (Goldman et al., 2016). Disciplinary literacy prepares students to engage with a text in a specific way to help ensure that they are ready to have the give-and-take relationship that they need to become successful readers in their discipline.

The mindset that different academic disciplines utilize different discourses to engage within the discipline is a central tenet of Gee's (2015) evolved discourse theory. This can be seen in all of the disciplines but very broadly so throughout the mathematics discipline. When engaging in math classes, we hope that students "are able

to analyze, reason, and communicate ideas effectively as they pose, formulate, solve and interpret mathematical problems in a variety of situation” (Hillman, 2014, p. 399). However, to produce deeper learning and engage with math in meaningful ways, students must be able to understand four broad text features: mathematical words, narratives, visual mediators, and routine. These text features form the discourse that the mathematics insiders use to communicate and engage with mathematics.

Need for Disciplinary Literacy

To understand the resistance and the dispositional attitudes of content area teachers towards literacy instructional practices, it is vital to demonstrate the value of integrating literacy into content area classes and highlighting the appropriate disciplinary skills. As we adopt and reform national and state standards, like the Common Core State Standards, the need for disciplinary literacy keeps expanding. Disciplinary literacy is an organic part of many of the disciplines, and without purposeful inclusion, students’ education lacks authentic experiences and will fail to appropriately engage and excite students in the content areas (LaDuke et al., 2016). More specifically, the Common Core State Standards require teachers of science, literature, and history to teach literacy throughout their classes, whereas state standards like the Kentucky Academic Standards for Social Studies incorporate part of the C3 Framework and use authentic disciplinary literacy practices as the skills they require (The National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). These same disciplinary literacy practices promote an acceptance of content as the teacher and the focus on teaching their disciplinary content through the literacy strategies are inherent in their content area (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014). While not all states have adopted and implemented the

Common Core State Standards, many states have adopted similar standards requiring teachers in all content areas and technical subjects to teach literacy skills. While standards may require compliance, much of the research demonstrates the crucial benefits of implementing disciplinary literacy practices.

Educational reformers within their specific disciplines are calling for the development of discipline-specific literacy skills as a way to get the students involved more directly with the content of the disciplines. If students do not use the important disciplinary skills or engage with the important disciplinary practices, they find subjects such as social studies to be boring (Bennett, 2011).

Disciplinary instruction is attractive from a literacy education perspective because it supports students' fluency in the literacies necessary for participation in the disciplinary practices in which knowledge is produced, thus granting students access to learning content. Content area education reformers can also buy into this type of literacy instruction because it enables and supports students' engagement in the disciplinary practices they value. (Siebert et al., 2016, p. 38)

Reformers within the disciplines can get behind teaching discipline-specific literacy because it relies on teaching specific learning objectives through disciplinary structures necessary in a content area classroom.

Heavy reliance on the disciplinary learning structure required to teach the literacy skills that make up disciplinary literacy also helps to promote a deeper engagement and understanding of the content goals. "New studies of disciplinary literacy are emerging all the time, especially in history. On the whole, these studies are showing the benefits of disciplinary perspectives on student writing, motivation, reading comprehension, and critical thinking" (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2014, p. 631). The nature of disciplinary literacy intertwines the instruction of literacy with the instruction of the

content area (Spires et al., 2016). Literacy goals and content goals support each other and thrive when teachers utilize discipline-specific literacy instructional techniques in their classrooms.

When analyzing the investments in literacy at each level of the government and those made by private or non-profit entities, it is not hard to see the unequaled investment in early literacy in comparison to adolescent literacy initiatives. One such example can be seen through previous grant initiatives such as Reading First and Striving Readers (Tierney & Pearson, 2021). Running parallel to each other, Reading First was a five-billion-dollar national investment in early literacy efforts in comparison to the thirty-million-dollar investment in the Striving Readers grant that funded adolescent literacy initiatives (Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008).

Literacy levels of adolescent students have languished in recent years, despite clear improvements in the reading performance of younger students. Although schools have managed to maintain the same levels of literacy attainment in the adolescent population that have been accomplished since the early 1970s, schools have not improved adolescent literacy levels since that time. This is unfortunate, as various social changes have increased the need for advanced literacy in America's economic, social, and civic life, and without increasing literacy attainment, many students are at risk of marginalization when they leave school (p. 56).

Modern society has created a need for more specialized readers and communicators who can engage in specific discourses at a deeper level. Disciplinary literacy meets this challenge of the modern age because it provides students with the skills they need to engage in multiple academic disciplines and discourses, further developing more well-rounded students that can shift between varying points of view.

It is important to note that disciplinary literacy is not just for the content areas

outside of English Language Arts (ELA). “Theory and research point to the fundamentally social and problem-based nature of disciplinary work with texts” (Rainey, 2017, p. 69). Literary scholars analyze texts and communicate with a specific lens and mindset, and this embodies the mindset of disciplinary literacy and discourse theory. Every academic discipline has components that make their study unique, and disciplinary literacy is how we help students unlock the natural skills that help them truly engage with each content area.

Inquiry-based Learning

In 2013, the National Council for the Social Studies developed the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework*, for many states’ social studies standards (The National Council for the Social Studies, 2013). The C3 framework outlines an inquiry arc that should be used in each of the disciplines of social studies. This arc is supposed to be applied to each discipline, as well as pull each discipline into the study of a shared compelling question. At the heart of inquiry-based learning practices, students develop a question to guide their studies, following which they analyze and use evidence, and then communicate their conclusions authentically. While inquiry-based learning practices fit into all content areas, the C3 standards have placed significant emphasis on inquiry practices in social studies classrooms. Inquiry-based social studies learning happens when all of the social studies disciplines are interwoven naturally to engage students in the process of discovering the answers to their questions.

Inquiry learning is built on specific inquiry tasks and, in many cases, forms the disciplinary literacy skills of their content areas (Goldman et al., 2016). As students search for the answers to their questions, they are forced to engage many of the skills

engrained in the disciplines. In social studies classes, students must read biased information that is sometimes contradictory, analyze the information, and then form their conclusions. These skills are some of the most complex literacy skills as traversing complex texts and contradictory information is a skill of the most competent readers.

The reading of history is always characterized by uncertainty, alternatives, different perspectives, conflicting motives, and missing and misrepresented voices. Accordingly, inquiry into the primary sources that constitute the historical record requires readers to place singular events and artifacts in a larger historical context, make comparisons to corroborate view- points and information among sources, hypothesize cause and effect relationships, investigate interactions among events and people, examine the impact of competing forces, and separate fact from fiction and opinion and perspective to evaluate the credibility and reliability of different primary sources (Goldman et al., 2016, p. 234).

Teaching students to engage with content areas through inquiry-based practices engages many of the most complex literacy skills. This demonstrates a strong connection not only to disciplinary literacy but also to core ideas of the discourse theory.

Inquiry-based learning practices are the skills that are naturally part of the learning process in each discipline. Scientists search for the answers to their questions and use evidence and resources to answer their questions. The connection to disciplinary literacy is clear as many of the skills identified as inquiry skills parallel the literacy skills of the discipline as well. The discourse theory, built on the analysis of how ideas are communicated, strongly parallels inquiry and is built on the communication of conclusions. Inquiry-based learning also forces students to engage deeper with the texts. By questioning texts and learning from them, inquiry skills force students to become responsive and responsible readers.

Inquiry-based learning serves as the best vehicle to meaningfully engage students in the process of their academic disciplines. It serves as the tool that provides

teachers with the authenticity and motivation to have students utilize the texts and other resources that naturally fit into their disciplines (Lent, 2015). Not only does inquiry learning provide a specific purpose to students, but it is a great tool to use to have the teacher participants begin their action planning and investigation using strategies that would best benefit their students in their classrooms. Inquiry-based learning allows both teachers and students to engage in the acts of the discipline in meaningful and dynamic means that provide authenticity of purpose. While inquiry can be a path to the utilization of disciplinary literacy, it is important to note that engaging in this level of thinking requires specific scaffolded skills.

Literacy Pyramid and Skill Deficit

Disciplinary literacy forms advanced and complex literacy instruction of the disciplines (Bennett, 2011; Cisco, 2020). When analyzing the reading development pyramid (Fig. 2), students must obtain basic and intermediate literacy skills before they engage with the skills that are specific to history, science, and other content areas (Cisco, 2020). For students to actively engage with the discipline, they must be properly prepared.

Disciplinary literacy involves the use of reading, investigating, analyzing, critiquing, writing, and reasoning required to learn and form complex knowledge in the history discipline. These skills are crucial for students to make sense of social studies text, to approach problems, and come up with viable solutions to the social problems of today” (Bennett, 2011, p. 52).

However, adolescent readers (11th graders) lack the skills needed to understand the depth and complexity of the complex texts that are part of disciplinary learning (Goldman et al., 2016). It is commonplace to cite inadequate preparation of youth;

however, if the youth do not progress beyond basic literacy skills, there will be a gap in their acquisition of the skills required in each content area.

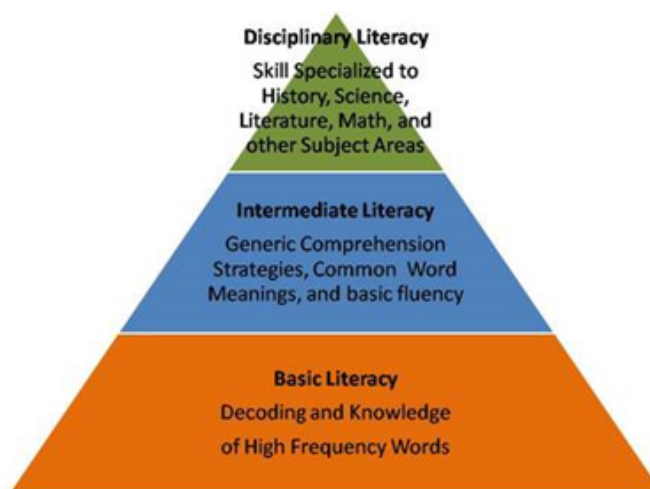


Figure 2. Literacy Pyramid (Cisco, 2020).

Layering Intermediate and Disciplinary Literacy Skills

Disciplinary literacy is a concept that highlights the disciplinary skills in each content area as important literacy skills that should be taught. These skills have been touted as the key for students to succeed in college or the workplace and are arguably the most complex level of literacy skills a student should attain (Dobbs et al., 2016). At the center of the disciplinary literacy theory is the idea that literacy skills should become more specialized over time. The data discussed in this article is a qualitative case study of a larger mixed methods study that followed several content area teachers in Boston's high schools. The researchers hoped to discover the impact of disciplinary literacy professional development training over two years. This specific study was a two-year study of five social studies teachers and their classrooms as they implemented disciplinary literacy instructional practices in their classes.

Throughout the smaller case study, the researchers searched for the answer to the question, “To help students achieve higher levels of disciplinary literacy, to what extent might secondary teachers need to balance introducing discipline-specific strategies with focusing on intermediate literacy work?” (Dobbs et al., 2016). This article has been cited 47 times and builds on the theory and foundational research of some of the leading disciplinary thinkers. The literature that is cited throughout this article is centered on the foundations of disciplinary literacy, the recent applications of disciplinary literacy, and the application of disciplinary literacy in social studies classrooms. It communicates the relevance and connection to inquiry practices and the connection to skills most closely associated with social studies instruction.

Resistance in the Content Areas

Disciplinary literacy skills seem to parallel the skills associated with each discipline, and as it is promoted more and more by policymakers and literacy and content organizations and institutions, some resistance develops in practicing classrooms. Researchers note some major challenges with the implementation of disciplinary literacy instructional practices as

... convincing middle and high school content-area teachers that they should share accountability to develop literacy in their subject areas, broadening the notion of content-area literacy to incorporate strategies for English language learners’ particular needs, and assisting young adults who previously have been successful in school, but for whom content-area literacy becomes problematic when they are faced with high-stakes testing (Topping et al., 2007, p. 157).

Many teachers view disciplinary literacy practices as extra practices that take time away from efforts required to meet the rigorous expectation set by their content standards. Teachers in the content areas do not see the value or need of including

literacy-related strategies in their toolbox of teaching practice. This mindset creates systemic roadblocks to students' literacy development. If disciplinary literacy practices are so beneficial, why have teachers been so resistant to the practice?

Answering this question can go in many different directions depending on the experiences of the teacher in question. One important concept is developing an understanding of the attitudes of teachers and how those have developed during their preparation and classroom experience. Even when content area teachers understand the value of disciplinary literacy instructional practices, many continue to resist using them in their classrooms (Alexander-Shea, 2015). Although the reason behind this resistance varies, "one reason is that they may have continuing misconceptions about content literacy. A second reason is that they may not think that they have enough time for implementation" (p. 127). This seems to center on the idea that the teacher will need to teach two separate subjects within the same period: social studies and literacy. The third reason is, "some do not believe they have enough expertise to effectively implement content literacy" (p.127). Understanding what literacy instruction looks like can be a major hindrance to the implementation of literacy instructional practices. These three misconceptions demonstrate the mindset that many content area teachers have when they approach disciplinary literacy practices in their classrooms. As these practices are continually thrust upon them, frustration develops and forces them to avoid teaching them all together.

Some literacy practices are more embedded into the nature of content area classrooms, but some teachers are not always aware that the strategies being implemented are basic literacy strategies. One such example is the teaching of

vocabulary in content area classrooms. The technical vocabulary of content areas has been continually taught in classes for years (Wood et al., 2009). Even with this infusion of literacy in the content area classrooms, teachers still are reluctant to include other practices.

For this reason, the major issues that surround the infusion of literacy instruction with content instruction also apply to vocabulary. Research investigations, however, indicate the reluctance of content area teachers to take the responsibility of supporting literacy learning, therefore resulting in minimal literacy instruction that can promote content learning. (p. 322)

Despite admitting the importance of vocabulary instruction, teachers of the content areas still teach other discipline-specific literacy techniques in their classrooms. While analyzing these different attitudes and dispositions, a few major trends have been identified. One such trend is the idea that content area pressures and other mandates overwhelm teachers into feeling that they do not have time. On the other hand, another trend identified is the idea that secondary content area teachers feel unprepared to teach discipline-specific literacy strategies to their students.

In one work using a collective case studies approach, the researchers analyzed middle-school teachers' perceptions of literacy demands within their discipline, in addition to investigating the disciplinary literacy strategies that middle-school teachers use in their classrooms (Graham et al., 2017). This study followed eight teachers, two from each discipline, and worked to answer both of their research questions throughout. Each teacher was treated as their own case, and the researchers completed a cross-case analysis to analyze their data. Throughout the article, the researchers used multiple sources of data, including pictures and the responses from their teachers, demonstrating a true case study approach. Paired with the structure of their methods to follow specific

teachers and use a cross-case analysis, it demonstrated all of the key features of what would be expected in a case study. The study found that literacy was part of the teachers' classes, but that teachers were not always aware of the distinct nature and this line of thinking, directly informs my research topic.

Teacher Preparation

When teachers experience explicit literacy or disciplinary literacy instruction in their teacher preparation programs, they seem to have more of an understanding of how their content and literacy can coexist. When aware of the basic premises of literacy instruction, teachers can effectively identify and implement the strategies in a targeted way that helps to promote literacy development in their students (Sewell, 2013). "If we are to decrease the "tension" between teaching content and employing reading strategies; our students will need to see their efficacy and relevance to their classrooms" (p.146). It is crucial that pre-service educators are engaged with the necessary practices and skills and emphatically taught the best ways to integrate literacy instruction into their future classrooms. As more and more pre-service educators are exposed to literacy instructional strategies in meaningful ways at the collegiate levels, those future teachers take their knowledge of instructional practices with them to their classrooms and use them in their future careers. This awareness created within the pre-service educators helps them to be more aware of proper pedagogical practices

The need for content literacy has been known nationally for some time; however, the attitudes of content area teachers toward the implementation of literacy in their secondary classes have been an obstacle to this goal (Warren-Kring & Warren, 2013). "Content teachers reported that they felt inadequate and uncomfortable

implementing literacy strategies” (p. 75). Being required to teach something that they are unprepared and unqualified to teach is something that many describe as tremendously frustrating. While some teachers may receive one class of training, others, like more experienced teachers, received no training in literacy strategies. Irrespectively, through the years, many of them have been forced to teach reading skills, which they were never prepared to teach. As noted earlier, disciplinary literacy skills are built on basic and intermediate literacy skills. If pre-service educators do not receive the ideas to support those developments, then they fail to properly prepare their students.

Adversely, content teachers can become frustrated with the lack of content knowledge of the literacy experts charged with presenting disciplinary literacy strategies to them. Teachers should be acquiring instructional literacy practices, but the same should be said for those who are teaching the literacy practices; they should be charged with understanding the content that they are striving to have the teachers teach through (Wilder, 2014).

To remedy the possible underdeveloped disciplinary knowledge of both teacher and [instructional] coach, secondary schools must widen the circle of collaborative inquiry and provide professional learning spaces for a larger collection of disciplinary teachers, curriculum coordinators, and local mathematics education experts to inquire into and identify disciplinary results for adolescents. (p. 175)

Teachers want to learn from someone who shares their understanding of the content and can help teach them strategies that teach their content. While disciplinary literacy does solve this problem, it has not previously been taught to students in this manner, and their level of comfort teaching the strategies that they are aware of is something that turns them away from other literacy practices.

The ideas of interdisciplinary instruction and co-teaching multiple disciplines through the use of disciplinary literacy are rooted both in theory and practicality and might seem commonplace. However, many teachers are still skeptical of the practice (Barry, 2013). In a disciplinary literacy course of pre-service educators paired with a group of experienced educators, the researcher introduced the use of literacy strategies to understand an art museum. As the group struggled with analyzing the art through multiple disciplines, many voiced their frustration and felt that the assignment could not be done. However, once it was demonstrated and modeled how to incorporate literacy through this medium, they felt more confident in their ability to combine literacy with their content instruction. The lack of understanding and experience in integrating literacy practices into their discipline, as well as expansive knowledge of the literacy techniques that can be most effective for the type of instruction that is most efficient in each type of situation, results in this gap. This scenario demonstrates plainly that unpreparedness frustrates the teachers who are asked to implement disciplinary literacy practices into their classrooms.

One study highlights how teacher candidates in secondary and middle-grades programs acquire discipline-specific knowledge and then apply it within their field placements (Kopish & Lane, 2019). This work using a collective case study approach specifically recruited professors of history and economics in addition to the teacher content and analyzed their pedagogical content knowledge based on an expert (professors) to novice (teacher candidates) frame. The researchers used card sorts, observations, classroom resources, and interviews as the sources of information for their study. Then they analyzed the data based on the experience of the participant to convey

their information. Multiple data sources and the specificity and limited nature of the participants demonstrate the true case study nature of this research project. I found this information to be very helpful for my study to understand the preparation of teachers to instruct with a disciplinary literacy background.

School Reading Programs and their Impact on Achievement

Reading and literacy development are the foundational skills that make all academic disciplines possible. For many years, reading development has received heightened scrutiny as a measure for gauging student development and school progress. Scores on reading assessments form many of the baseline figures for school accountability measures across the country and are one of the highest targeted school improvement measures. With the advent of the Common Core State Standards, more pressure is placed on schools to target reading development. “These political pressures heighten the school as the unit of analysis for reading programs. Understanding the characteristics of effective schoolwide reading programs is increasingly critical” (Guthrie et al., 2000, p. 211). When this study was conducted in 2000, the researchers reported that the literature surrounding school-wide reading programs was limited to subsets of the population or instructional objectives specific to the school. This quantitative study was conducted to investigate the impact of instructional practices on reading achievement to tailor research as a way to improve the instructional strategies that were being implemented.

The researchers discovered that there was a clear connection between reading programs and improved performance on state-wide testing, especially in the upper elementary grades. “The high impact programs had a distinctive profile. In particular,

they contained integration of curriculum and an abundance of books and resources” (Guthrie et al., 2000, p. 222). Additionally, they discovered that specific basal programs, comprehension strategies, and other reading-specific skills had a low impact on the achievement scores holistically (p. 222). This article has been cited eight times and is based on the literature and works of many of the prominent literacy researchers in the field. Discussion of literature articulates a clear need for research that analyzes together the impact of comprehensive school reading programs and their impact on the student reading achievement indicators.

Professional Development

Professional development and learning can take on many different forms based on the needs of the participants and the skills of the presenters. However, as the world changes, the skills that students need to completely engage in society after they leave education must change, too. One such model of professional development is ongoing professional learning sustained outside of a specific event. While professional learning under investigation in this study is specific to a teacher program in the summer, participants enrolled in the LAT receive professional training throughout the year. A model like this, “to improve teachers’ teaching and learning competencies in a sustaining way, should be introduced clearly the theoretical knowledge and skills” (Wolde, 2021). Effective professional learning requires a specific cross-section of theory and skills.

Similar to this study, one study on professional development also hoped to understand teachers’ change in perception of literacy instruction after the program was completed (Smith & Williams, 2020). The researchers investigated language arts

teachers in one specific middle school and the professional learning that they received in instructional literacy practices. They examined the participants' pre- and post-program survey responses to determine the professional learning session's impact. The researchers found that professional learning shifted the participants' perceptions of literacy, and the participants responded by saying that they felt more confident in their integration of literacy into their classrooms because they participated in the professional learning opportunity.

The literature around professional learning hones in on some specific components of quality professional learning, but cannot be stated better than Parrish et al. (Parrish et al., 2020) in their manuscript on content-specific professional developments. In this piece, the researchers note the following crucial components of effective professional learning opportunities:

the context or environment within which learning opportunities are presented impacts what is learned; that learning is impacted by interactions with others, and teachers can learn from one another when collaborating within a learning community; that knowledge is "stretched over," or distributed among other individuals and/or artifacts (p. 11).

This description is important to understand as the LAT program utilizes many of these components to develop a learning environment that is optimal for the participants.

Effective professional development sessions use proper context and strive to develop a learning community, following which, knowledge is disseminated.

Building on the mindset of professional development is the sustained and personalized professional learning that occurs through a coaching model. Several studies have demonstrated the impact of coaching on professional learning. One such study highlights a specific instructional coach working with a high school math teacher

to implement disciplinary literacy strategies in his classroom (Wilder, 2014). The researcher found that the high school math teacher did resist the coaching from the coach because they were disciplinary outside. During the case study, the coach had to shift their practices to gain traction with the content teacher to implement the strategies in a new way. This case study follows the relationship between two individuals and seeks to understand how disciplinary literacy can be coached by someone who may not have the same disciplinary backing. The LAT program recruits content experts from each discipline to help support the participants both during the program and throughout the year-long experience.

University Partnership for Literacy Growth (UPLG)

In 1998, the General Assembly in the Commonwealth of Kentucky passed Senate Bill 186, establishing the University Partnership for Literacy Growth: Early Childhood through Adulthood (UPLG) (Collaborative Center for Literacy Development: Early Childhood through Adulthood -- Duties -- Report., 2022). On UPLG's website, they describe themselves by saying, "UPLG is administered through the Council on Postsecondary Education and housed at the University of Kentucky College of Education. UPLG is a partnership among the eight state universities and the National Center for Families Learning" (*About*, 2022).

As part of their statutorily mandated work to help teachers improve their literacy practices, the UPLG forms a partnership with higher education institutions in Kentucky to take advantage of the state, federal, and private funds, as well as changed systems, to support adolescent literacy (Bates et al., 2009). Through their partnership with multiple regional teacher preparation programs, UPLG provides teachers with a variety of

literacy programming to help support teachers with research-proven literacy instructional strategies in hopes that the same teachers begin using those practices in their classrooms more frequently.

One such program, the LAT, specifically works with middle- and high-school teachers and works to help provide them with the strategies needed to be successful with their adolescent students. While LAT is a program of UPLG funded by the state, it is still built by the collaboration of the partnering universities. Programs such as the LAT are developed by universities and are based upon or can begin partnerships between schools and universities. School-to-university partnerships are built upon four pillars, including support for preparing the university's teacher candidates, professional learning opportunities for the school and university faculty, improved student proficiency, and lines of inquiry for investigation and research (Coler et al., 2022). School and university partnerships help to build and support both institutions' growth and development, which can have a lasting effect on the sustainability of improvement systems.

Each UPLG partnering university is empowered to design and facilitate its own LAT program that engages teachers in their servicing region. Some of the programs exhibit very specific partnerships between the schools and the program's university based on the nature of entry into LAT. If organizing the program is part of the requirements of a grant, the LAT becomes a very clear school-to-university partnership between the organizations. However, in the traditional model, applicants are accepted based on specific servicing regions and interest in the program. UPLG describes LAT in their annual report by stating,

The Literacy for Adolescent Teachers (LAT), provides intensive literacy professional development for middle and high school teachers across the state of Kentucky. It was designed to develop and integrate vital skills in teaching reading, writing, listening and speaking in content areas, and is a yearlong course that includes a summer program with follow-ups and support throughout the school year. LAT is designed to be responsive to the current needs of teachers and students by assessing areas of growth in literacy education and designing professional development sessions that address those needs. (Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, 2022, p. 10)

While each LAT site develops programs to meet their participants' needs in a targeted manner, all LAT sites meet this standard of rigorous and meaningful professional development that hopes to improve the professional practice of their participants.

Summary

The problem that I set out as the line of inquiry that led to this research study was finding a way to engage teachers who resist implementing literacy strategies in their classrooms. This review of the literature started by anchoring this project in disciplinary literacy. The work of the LAT grounds the work of the summer program in exposing the participants to disciplinary literacy and then further engaging the participants in materials that are rooted in the concept and can be taken back to their work setting and implemented directly. This chapter began by highlighting disciplinary literacy as a concept and connected it to the larger discourse theory.

After developing the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study, the review of literature started by highlighting the societal need for improving literacy and the importance of improving the implementation of literacy strategies in all classrooms. After the need was established, I explained the difference between prevailing literacy ideas in content areas, both content area literacy and disciplinary literacy, then further

established the need for a disciplinary literacy mindset in educators. Inquiry-based learning was then introduced as a way to enable disciplinary literacy.

After establishing disciplinary literacy, I shifted topics to explain and highlight what the literature notes about the hierarchy of literacy skills and the skill deficit to engage with disciplinary literacy. After explaining the lack of skills, I dove into the resistance among educators to implementing literacy in their classrooms. There are many different reasons why content area teachers resist literacy implementation in their classrooms, but one major reason is their lack of preparation to teach or their misunderstanding of literacy as a concept that is part of their discipline.

This literature review systematically walks the reader through the major ideas that lead me to begin the investigation into the LAT summer program and to understand the impact of the summer program on the perceptions and dispositions of the participants. As I stated earlier, and as this review of the literature has demonstrated, a disciplinary literacy mindset allows educators to use the literacy skills that are naturally interwoven into their discipline. Through this study, I hope to be able to understand if that idea can shift educators' beliefs as well. Chapter Three explains the methodology used to answer the research questions and highlights the impact of the LAT summer program on the participants' perceptions and dispositions toward literacy implementation.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In recent years, much of the literacy communities' focus has shifted to understanding foundational literacy and what strategies work best with students in early childhood literacy education. Undoubtedly, this is important to understand and develop best practices to teach students to decode; however, as students move into intermediate elementary, middle school, high school, and then into their post-secondary experience, best practices must be identified to support literacy development. The LAT case under investigation, led by a team of adolescent literacy experts, identified best practices based on the identified needs of the applicants and works to develop a summer program that meets these needs. This program was built around the concept of disciplinary literacy and helps teachers to develop their intentionality when utilizing literacy skills that are natural to their discipline.

Whether because of their lack of training, their pressure to cover content, or some other issue, many teachers resist implementing literacy strategies in their classes. A regional midsize university in Kentucky conducts the LAT summer program designed to help remove that resistance and help educator participants implement literacy strategies in their classrooms. This study was designed to understand the impact of the LAT summer program on the participants by collecting data before, during, and after the program in a variety of ways. Throughout the program, the participants were exposed to concepts such as disciplinary literacy supported with literacy practices that can be implemented in their specific disciplines in the hopes that participants would be

able to return to their classrooms ready to implement new strategies and a mindset to intentionally include literacy in their classrooms.

To fully understand the impact of the summer program on the participants and to best answer the research questions, I tracked each participant's answers throughout the program to understand the impact of the program on them, as well as identify the themes present in the participants' responses. The rest of this chapter describes the research methodology used in this study. The chapter outlines the research design, study sample, type of data collected, method of data analysis, and ethical considerations and limitations.

Research Questions

This study investigated the impact of the LAT summer program on the participants in the program. Two research questions helped guide this study:

- Research Question 1: How do participants of LAT perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?
- Research Question 2: How do the dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies of the participants change during the LAT program?

The first research question set a baseline for understanding the participants' perception of literacy. Further, it helps me to know the conceptual impact of the summer program on how the educator participants of the study perceive literacy before and after the program. It also eliminated any misunderstanding of literacy or any misconception that a participant may have. Additionally, this question is aimed at

highlighting the broadening or narrowing of the opinions that participants have regarding literacy in their classrooms.

The second research question focused on the dispositional attitudes of the participants and how those change during the program. In contrast to the first question which deals more with the perception of literacy among the participants, the second question hopes to highlight the attitudes of the participants before and after and how they change during the program.

Research Methodology

To answer the research questions, a case study qualitative methodology was used with a sample of the teachers who participated in the LAT program in Summer 2022 at a regional midsize university in Kentucky. Like previous relevant studies on disciplinary literacy programs (Dobbs et al., 2016), this study is grounded in understanding the impact of the LAT program on the dispositions of educators to the integration of literacy into their classroom using a disciplinary literacy approach to implement literacy instructional practices. The training team comprising content teachers, literacy professors, and instructional coaches oversees a literacy program that embeds best disciplinary literacy practices in addition to content-specific breakout sessions that investigate the application of the disciplinary literacy content within a specific discipline.

A qualitative research methodology was chosen to address both research questions because this methodology anchors the study in a theoretical framework, then allows the researcher to search for meaning around the research problem (Creswell & Báez, 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2017; Lichtman, 2013). As

stated, the problem surrounding the implementation of literacy strategies in middle and secondary classes is rampant throughout schools and has been well documented in the literature. Understanding if the LAT summer program is influential enough to cause shifts in this perception is crucial to further exploring this area and to help support educators' implementation of literacy strategies in their classrooms.

To fully understand the participants' perceptions of literacy and dispositions toward literacy, I specifically employed a case study approach to qualitative research. The LAT summer program is perfectly situated for this style of research. By studying the case as a whole and each participant as their case, the approach was intended to provide a much more comprehensive answer to the research questions, using multiple sources of data (Creswell & Báez, 2020). Additionally, case studies are traditionally used to help conduct program evaluations. A quantitative research methodology, or one of the other qualitative approaches, would not provide me with a detailed and comprehensive picture of the impact of the summer program and how the participants' dispositions or perceptions shifted during the program.

The case study methodology is used to dive deep into a case, or cases, and tells the story of the experiences of the case (Lichtman, 2013, p. 90). Case studies can be like many other qualitative research methods, but they are limited by a specific time, group, program, or problem that the researcher hopes to investigate (Crowe et al., 2011; Merriam, 1985; Snyder, 2012; Yin, 1981).

The entire culture-sharing group in ethnography may be considered a case, but the intent in ethnography is to determine how the culture works rather than to either develop and in-depth understanding of a single case or explore and issue or problem using the case as a specific illustration. (Creswell & Poth, 2017, p. 96).

The narrow focus and in-depth investigation into a specific case or cases are what characterizes a case study approach to research and what makes this approach so compatible with this research study.

Case studies can be used to answer a variety of research questions based on the researcher's philosophy and interests, irrespective of "whether they take a critical (questioning one's own and others' assumptions), interpretivist (trying to understand individual and shared social meanings) or positivist approach (orientating towards the criteria of natural sciences, such as focusing on generalizability considerations)" (Crowe et al., 2011, p. 4). By seeking to understand perceptions and dispositions, this study naturally fits into the interpretivist's case study approach. Since this program is time-specific, uses the collective cases of the participants in the LAT summer program, and focuses on the program experiences as a whole, no research methodology is deemed better.

Research Design

To comprehensively investigate both research questions, a collective case studies approach was used. Similar research around disciplinary literacy that used case study methodology has provided a richer understanding of the impact of the utility in the classroom, and this has been expanded upon in this study to understand the impact of the LAT program on the perceptions of literacy among the participants (Håland, 2017; Kok-Sing Tang, 2016; Kopish & Lane, 2019; Monte-Sano, 2011; Paul, 2018; Spires et al., 2016; Wilder, 2014). Each participant in the study was considered an individual case.

Both the research questions focused the investigation to understand participants' perceptions and dispositional attitudes toward literacy before, after, and during the program. This study was designed to collect data at three intervals throughout the program: before, during, and after the summer program. Data were collected using open-ended surveys (pre-program survey, daily surveys during the program, and a post-program survey), through the tasks completed during the program and personal action plans, and by completing a voluntary focus group interview after the program. Open-ended surveys were intended to provide specific and detailed answers to the research questions. The tasks and action plans were intended to show what the participants engage with during the program. The focus group was allowed the researcher to dig into the results of the surveys in a targeted way to understand the group's responses.

Population and Sample Selection

To participate in the LAT program, educators must apply and be selected by the leaders. Since the participants are paid a stipend for their participation in the program, applicants must apply and be selected to ensure that there is buy-in from the participants to actively participate in the program. As part of the application process, participants were asked to identify their interest in adapting their practice and past experiences and provide material that could help the leaders to develop the context of the experiences of each participant with literacy instructional practices. The leaders of the LAT group at a regional midsize university in Kentucky looked for participants with a variety of experiences and backgrounds to create a diverse cadre with varying perspectives and past experiences. Creating a cohort with a diversity of experiences helped to contribute

to the overall effectiveness of the group and the experience of the participants as they build on the prior knowledge and learned experiences of their colleagues.

After participants were selected for the LAT program, they were asked to participate in this research study. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary and had no bearing on their participation in the LAT program. They were requested to complete an informed consent agreement to participate in the research study. Since the sample of participants is entirely based on who is selected to participate in the LAT cohort, the sampling method for this study was convenience sampling. It is known that the participants of this program are practicing middle-school or high-school educators, either as classroom teachers or as a coach in a supporting role.

Sources of Data

The nature of the research questions creates the need to collect data at multiple points throughout the study. I used surveys, a focus group interview, and documentation created throughout the program to investigate the answers to the research questions. Each source of data was designed to provide insight into the research study by highlighting a specific element of the research question and providing the context of the perceptions and dispositions of the participants. Further, the intervals at which the data is collected are crucial to understanding the baseline and the shifting nature of the perceptions and dispositions at the end of the program.

Surveys

The surveys use open-ended questions to allow the participants to elaborate or explain any nuances or specifics behind their answers. Appendices A–E show all five of the survey instruments used to collect data from the participants. Appendix A was sent

to the participants before the program to establish the baseline perceptions and dispositions toward literacy. In this survey, the participants were asked. “What is literacy to you?” This same question was asked on every survey the participants completed throughout the program.

The next surveys (Appendices B–D) are daily surveys that the participants completed at the close of each day of the program. Some of the questions were designed to help understand the continuous improvement cycle of the program, while others helped to build more specifically into the research questions and find different themes of the impact of the disciplinary literacy program. These questions aimed to understand if specific content presented during the program had a direct impact on changing the thoughts of the participants undertaking the course.

The final survey (Appendix E) identifies the perceptions and dispositions of the participants after the program concluded. This survey repeats several questions from the beginning of the program, while also building on a holistic view now that the participants were involved. All of these surveys were designed to work together and build on each other to provide a succinct and clear progression of thought for the participants in the study, which could be used to understand their perceptions and shifting dispositions.

Personal Action Plans and Completed Tasks

While the focus of this study is only the summer program, as part of the full LAT program, participants devise a year-long personal action plan for which they receive coaching support from the LAT leaders, following which they present the results of their plan to the UPLG Share Fair during the spring session. This personal

action plan, which is completed during the summer program, generates unique data that highlights what the participant is taking from the program and choosing to implement and develop in their classroom or their professional practice. This data pairs well with the data collected from the focus groups to inform the shift in perceptions and dispositions. Additional data were collected by analyzing the content covered each day and the tasks that the participants completed in response. Each day produced survey data that correspond to participants' dispositions and perceptions toward literacy, and the work completed each day helps to understand those responses on the surveys.

Focus Group

A voluntary focus group of participants was conducted. Appendix F demonstrates the focus group questions asked. Some questions were designed to be broad to help to develop a general understanding of the participants' attitudes, perceptions, and feedback on the program as a whole. Some other questions were designed to utilize the responses to the survey to gather a more specific understanding of the themes identified in the responses. The focus group was intended to get a clearer understanding of what the survey responses mean, as well as more specific feedback from the participants.

Validity

All the data sources identified for this study intentionally work together to create a holistic view of the participants' perceptions of literacy, their dispositional attitudes toward literacy, and how each of those shifts throughout the program. Data were collected at each point throughout the study to ensure that the participant is being tracked across experiences. While all questions are not consistent in each of the surveys,

several questions are common, so any noticeable shift in response can be seen at each point of the data collection process. Finally, the focus group interview offers the final catch-all moment to pull the data from each survey and build on the participants' experiences and have them describe the data. Collecting data during each stage of the program creates a comprehensive system to allow me to analyze participant perceptions to understand the shifts.

The design of the study and the selection of the methodology and approach also contribute to the overall validity. In using a qualitative case study approach, establishing a system of data collection that allows me to analyze the participants' responses at each stage of the program creates a comprehensive picture of how the perceptions change. Since each participant is viewed as their case, each participant's shifting perception and disposition is notable and unique to that individual. I draw the common themes identified from answers to specific questions and observed the consistent shifts observed. Finally, the focus group interview builds in a secondary safeguard to let me ask the specific questions that emerge from the data. This multi-tiered approach creates redundant systems and safeguards for ensuring that the data collected is not isolated and is supported by other data collected using various methods.

Reliability

Understanding the reliability of this measure can be a bit complicated to fully ascertain. This is a case study that only investigates the LAT summer program of 2022. Thus, the experience is unique to the group undertaking this course. While the responses may not always remain consistent when recreated in a different format, the research study model can be replicated for different programs for outcomes that can

help to inform the shift in perception of literacy. Since this study collects data at multiple intervals and uses focus groups to safeguard the data, it is possible to utilize this research design to garner similar outcomes.

Data Collection and Management

Data were gathered for this study using a variety of methods and techniques. Figure 3 presents the timeline for data collection. All participants in the study were surveyed using Google Forms before, after, and every day of the program to gather specific holistic data on the trends representative of the entire group. This data provides insight into the shift in the dispositional attitude of the participants throughout the program and specific snapshots of each day of the program and when the mindsets began shifting. These data were used to inform the overall understanding of the LAT program and were paired with the focus group interview data to provide more context surrounding the shift in perceptions and dispositions of the participants throughout the study.

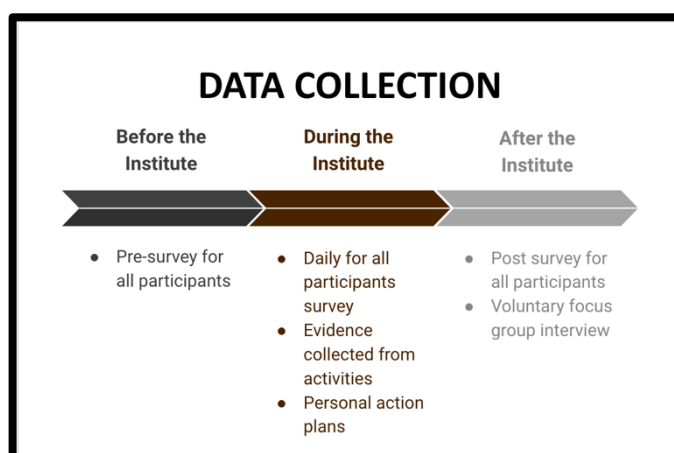


Figure 3. Data Collection Timeline

The surveys were sent to participants electronically at appropriate intervals to allow me to track the data appropriately and to understand any shifts in perceptions. The first survey (Appendix A) was sent to the participants shortly after they consented to participate in the survey. This was sent to each participant before they participated in the program, and reminders were sent to them to complete the survey before the program. Daily surveys were completed electronically on each day of throughout the course of the program. Finally, the closing survey was sent to the participants the week following the program to ensure that the data remained close to completion. The data collected from the surveys will be kept anonymous for presentation and will be stored electronically in a password-protected Google Drive folder.

The focus group interview was conducted following the completion of the post-program survey. The interview was recorded and transcribed to identify themes, and this was coded to support the overall analysis. The transcription will be kept anonymous and will be stored electronically in a password-protected Google Drive folder.

Finally, on each day of the program, I collected evidence of the work completed during the program to help gain insights to support the data. This could be agendas, work completed, and personal action plans that all participants of the LAT group are required to complete before exiting the program. This information will be stored electronically in a password-protected Google Drive folder.

Developing the overall context of the participants is crucial to informing this study. The application asked participants for their years of experience, preparation to teach literacy, teacher certification areas, school demographics, and other important questions to help understand the perspectives of the participants, as well as to provide a

clearer understanding of the participants of the LAT program while also informing the overall study impact.

Data Analysis Procedures

This study is designed to investigate each participant's shift in perceptions and dispositions toward literacy. To achieve this task, each participant is viewed as their own case in addition to the participants' aggregate responses to each specific research question. Each participant's response is analyzed for shifts from question to question. Then each question is analyzed based on all participants' responses. Additionally, the shifts identified are analyzed both individually and holistically.

To identify themes from each participant's responses, I coded the data based on similarities and then looked for those themes to interweave into the other supporting data as well. The data were coded granularly based on each participant's answer to each specific question, but also holistically based on the themes identified from the participants' responses. This method allowed me to highlight the general trends observed among the participants and across all data collected.

After the survey responses were coded and themes selected, the transcription of the focus group interview was also coded, and I identified themes from the survey data. The themes consistent between the survey data and the focus group data helped to inform the discussion and conclusion of the study.

Ethical Considerations

The nature of this qualitative case study does eliminate many of the ethical questions that could pose issues. There was no potential risk to the participants associated with this study. The data collected will be stored securely on a Google Drive

server in a password-protected folder. No data will be presented that is associated with a specific participant or with identifying information. To further eliminate any possibility of risk or discomfort during the research, all participants were given the right to refuse to answer any questions and excuse themselves from the study at any point without penalty. Participation in this research study was completely voluntary, and no participant was coerced into participating in the study.

Positionality Statement

As the leader in the LAT program, I value the validity and reliability of this study and hope it will inform the continuous improvement structures of this program at the university where the study was conducted, to ensure that it meets the needs of the participants in years to come as well. While the quality of this data matters to me as a researcher, I do have a strong desire to understand the impact of the disciplinary literacy content presented through the LAT summer program and its impact on teachers' perceptions of literacy and their attitudes toward integrating it in their classrooms.

I value this work, and I want the results to be meaningful and helpful for informing LAT's continuous improvement and best literacy practices at a macro level. I have worked to ensure that I present the data in a transparent way that conveys the participants' responses precisely and accurately.

Limitations and Delimitations

As an application-based program, it can be safely concluded that the educators undertaking the LAT course volunteered to do so. Since not all educators always want to attend professional development programs or are seeking new literacy strategies to improve their professional practice, the ability to transition this research broadly to

participants who may not be willing to engage with the research is limited.

Additionally, this study focuses only on the LAT group and not on any other initiative of the UPLG, nor can it be compared to other disciplinary literacy professional learning opportunities. This limits the comparability of this study and only reflects the ideas presented forth by specific participants that were part of one specific LAT program in a specific time frame. Each university that conducts an LAT through UPLG uses different parameters to guide their work, and while it could most definitely inform their work, it should not be used to analyze any work other than the LAT program.

As said before, I am passionate about literacy implementation throughout the disciplines and in every educational setting, but this also highlights my own bias, and this forms a limitation. As I am the individual conducting the focus group interview, it does bring into question the honesty with which the participants are willing to share information or ideas with me directly. While it could create a dynamic between my work and the participants, I feel strongly that this study not only contributes to the literature on disciplinary literacy preparation but can help LAT to improve the practices of the summer program and inform other work happening in similar fields.

Summary

To accurately investigate and report the findings surrounding the impact of the LAT summer program on the participant perceptions and dispositions toward literacy, a qualitative case study approach is the most effective to provide a comprehensive structure. By viewing each participant as their own case study, collecting open-ended survey data from each participant at multiple intervals, and using a focus group to gain clarity around the survey data and experience, a full account of the participants'

perceptions and dispositions can be tracked. This comprehensive tracking model also provides a clear progression of the participants' baseline data and can note any shifts that occur throughout the study.

Since each participant is viewed as their own case, a cross-case analysis model was used to inform the larger case study of the entire progression of the LAT summer program. By coding and identifying themes from each participant's responses to the survey questions, noting any shift in responses, and aggregating that data, I identified the themes that transcend each participant's experience in the LAT program, and it allowed me to build the structure for answering the research questions comprehensively. Then, the focus-group feedback allowed me to reengage the participants to understand the themes developed from the responses and provide a safeguard for me to check the data to ensure that my analysis supports the intentions of the participants. In Chapter Four, the data and analysis, as well as the themes that emerged, are presented.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter aims to describe the data collected and the results of the thematic analysis of the data gathered. This chapter is divided into sections on descriptive findings, data analysis procedures, findings, and summary. Each section systematically presents information to fully contextualize and support this investigation.

In the section on descriptive findings, the data is organized by the mode of collection: survey or focus group interview. In addition, this section highlights the different types of data collected to inform the investigation of the LAT case. Each part of this section first provides the descriptive demographics of the participants involved in that mode of data collection. After, the initial coded data and themes identified in each of the response categories are presented in their raw form.

In the section on data analysis procedures, I present the specific procedures used for analyzing the data. Throughout this section, I highlight the thematic and content analysis techniques used and how these procedures informed the overall investigation.

This section seeks answers to the following two research questions:

- Research Question 1: How do participants of a regional midsize university's LAT perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?
- Research Question 2: How do the dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies of the regional midsize university's LAT participants change during the LAT program?

This section of the chapter interweaves the data from each mode of collection in a targeted manner to provide a narrative that answers the questions and contextualizes the data with content from the program.

Descriptive Findings

This investigation was conducted using data gathered from 17 participants. The demographic information of the participants can be seen in Table 1. This table demonstrates the demographic breakdown of the participants in terms of sex, years of experience, grade level that the educator serves, the focus content area of the participants, and the participant's current role. Amongst the participants, there was a variety of experience levels, grade levels, content areas, and roles in the school buildings. All of the participants came from schools that can be defined as rural schools in the Appalachian region. This broad range of participant backgrounds brought a unique perspective to the study that broadened the scope of the study and provided varying experiences to the case.

Table 1***Participant Demographics***

Participant Demographics	N	Percentage
Sex		
Male	2	11.8%
Female	15	88.2%
Years of Experience		
0–4 years	7	41.2%
5–10 years	4	23.5%
11–15 years	2	11.8%
16 or more years	4	23.5%
Grade Level		
Elementary	1	5.9%
Middle school	11	64.7%
High school	5	29.4%
Identified Content Area		
Language arts	10	58.8%
Science	2	11.8%
Math	1	5.9%
Social studies	4	23.5%
Role		
Classroom teacher	15	88.2%
Coach role	2	11.8%

As identified in previous chapters, to answer this study's research questions, data were collected through surveys at specific intervals (before, after, and throughout the study) through the use of a focus group interview with voluntary participants and by investigating sources used in the program. The systematic nature of the data collection methods allowed me to gather multiple qualitative data points to contextualize the information gathered and to highlight and explore further the common threads noticed in the trend data. Table 2 highlights the different ways that were used to gather targeted data and inform the analysis of the participants' responses.

Table 2

Data Collection

Data Collection	N
Open-ended surveys (pre-, post-, and each day of the program)	5
Focus group interview	1
Literacy action plans	17
Images from program activities	36
Agenda from program	1
Content presentations from program	19
Field notes	3

In addition to the generalized data collected from the program, the participants received several resources and were exposed to a variety of instructional strategies. These resources and strategies have been cataloged within the appendices of this

document. Appendix I lists out every instructional strategy that was intentionally used in the program to involve the participants or to demonstrate research-based instructional practices. Appendix J catalogs all of the resources that were purchased for the participants and that were emphasized throughout the program in a variety of ways. These resources and strategies were interwoven into each session of the program to support the participants in their professional growth in terms of literacy.

By using the agenda and other materials presented during the program, I analyzed the content that was covered on the days when the shift occurred (Figure 10). The first day of the program discussed the following topics: orientation to LAT and disciplinary literacy, specific literacy strategies, adolescents and the science of reading, and content breakout sessions. The second day discussed content around reading philosophy presented through the text *Disrupting Thinking: Why How We Read Matters* (Beers & Probst, 2017), vocabulary, differentiated instruction, and more time for breakout sessions for their content areas.

Analyzing the content presented helped me develop the context for the content that participants were exposed to before the shifts in their perspective of literacy. The concepts presented during the first session began by discussing insider discourse (discourse theory) shifting to the skills present in each discipline. Then, a deep dive was made into the concepts of content area literacy and disciplinary literacy and the similarities and differences between the two, as well as the utility of each. The participants were able to engage with each other throughout this presentation, irrespective of their disciplines.

During the second theoretical presentation, the participants were asked to engage with the concepts surrounding the debates in the literacy community around the implementation of reading science from their point of view as educators of adolescents. The participants were asked to challenge their preconceived reading philosophies and then debate with their peers regarding the path forward in the literacy community. Then, throughout the sessions, the participants were engaged with a variety of literacy strategies and practical applications that they could take back to their class immediately. When the researcher and the critical friend reflected on the day by looking at the immediate continuous improvement data, we noted that “the participants were eager to get involved and were willing to participate in the strategies throughout the day.”

After engaging in both literacy theory and practical application strategies, the participants were then separated by their content areas and worked with a content specialist with a literacy lens to engage deeper in the disciplinary literacy work. Each content breakout session used the disciplinary literacy topics of each day to frame the discussion for what could move the participants forward. Conversations of these groups were much more specific to the participants’ content area, and they were able to discuss how the concepts of the day would fit into their professional practice. During these sessions, the participants would begin planning for how they could use the learnings from each day of the program and discuss with their colleagues’ other strategies that they were already using in their practice that accomplish the same goals as the program.

Survey Data

Since the surveys were used to indicate trends in participant responses from before the program to after the program and the shifts in the participants' perception of literacy, as well as the reasons for these shifts, it is important to highlight the completion of each survey. This participation demonstrates the validity and reliability of this data in the analysis of the case under investigation. While there was some inconsistency in participation, the nature of this study allowed me to utilize the elements that were completed to inform the broader narrative of the collective case but also utilize the participants who completed all of the survey components to highlight specific shifts in the perceptions of literacy and the participants' dispositions toward including literacy in their professional practice.

Table 3 demonstrates the number of participants who completed all the survey components of this study and the number of participants who partially completed the survey components. Additionally, Table 3 shows the completion rates of each survey to inform the reader of the validity of each survey. Finally, Table 3 also intentionally shows the number of participants who specifically completed both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey.

Table 3

Survey Completion

Survey Completion	N	Percentage
All Surveys		
Fully completed	10	58.8%
Partially completed	7	41.2%

Nothing completed	0	0%
Pre-program Survey		
Fully completed	14	82.4%
Partially completed	0	0%
Nothing completed	3	17.6%
Day 1 Survey		
Fully completed	17	100%
Partially completed	0	0%
Nothing completed	0	0%
Day 2 Survey		
Fully completed	17	100%
Partially completed	0	0%
Nothing Completed	0	0%
Day 3 Survey		
Fully completed	15	88.2%
Partially completed	0	0%
Nothing completed	2	11.8%
Post-program Survey		
Fully completed	15	88.2%
Partially completed	0	0%
Nothing completed	2	11.8%
Both Pre- and Post-program Surveys		
Fully completed	12	70.6%

Partially completed	5	29.4%
Nothing completed	0	0%

The responses to each survey were collected, coded, and then used to inform the shifts in perception and dispositions of the participants. Table 4 identifies the codes that were developed to identify the trends in the data across participants and surveys taken by the same participant. The questions were replicated across surveys to identify the shifts in individual participant responses on each specific survey and serve as specific indicators at each stage of the program to inform the investigation. Each survey asked participants, “What is literacy to you?” Table 4 denotes the trends identified in the responses to this specific question and demonstrates the shift in the nature of the participants’ responses.

I grouped participant responses by the type of response to the question, “What is literacy to you?” Participants who responded with an understanding of literacy specifically related to reading, writing, or texts were grouped within the “text-based” category. One example of a response that could be characterized by this code is, “Literacy is providing a variety of opportunities for teaching and learning reading and writing for your students.”

Participants who related their understanding of literacy to specific communications skills than just reading and writing were grouped using the code “communication skills.” One example of a participant response that was cataloged with this code would be, “Communication- Reading, writing, listening, speaking. I see now that it isn’t just text, it can be environment, people, etc., too.” Other answers in this

category also dealt with the idea of literacy instruction being built around communication skills.

Another way in which participants' understanding of literacy was categorized by the idea of making meaning and understanding the world around them. This was the broadest understanding of literacy exhibited by the participants. An example of a response that could be categorized with this code is, "A way in which to view the world. Whether that be literal reading or not. Also, a way to process what you're viewing." While this perspective was not chosen at the beginning, it became the largest category by the end of the program.

The last code used to capture a trend in participant responses, "consume information", was not used as frequently throughout the program, but it did represent at least more than one participant throughout the program. An example of a participant response categorized by this code is, "Being able to responsibly consume media." This response would not be included in other categories, but it does represent a broader understanding of literacy in comparison to a text-based approach and should be kept as a separate category.

Table 4

Personal Literacy Descriptions

Personal Literacy Descriptions	N	Percentage
Pre-program Survey Results		
Text-based	10	58.8%
Communication skills	4	23.5%

Making meaning / Understanding	0	0%
World		
Consume information	0	0%
No response	3	11.8%

Day 1 Survey Results

Text-based	4	23.5%
Communication skills	9	52.9%
Making meaning / Understanding	3	17.6%
World		
Consume information	1	5.9%
No response	0	0%

Day 2 Survey Results

Text-based	2	11.8%
Communication skills	5	29.4%
Making meaning / Understanding	8	47.1%
World		
Consume information	2	11.8%
No response	0	0%

Day 3 Survey Results

Text-based	2	11.8%
Communication skills	5	29.4%
Making meaning / Understanding	7	41.2%
World		

Consume information	0	0%
No response	2	11.8%
Post-program Survey Results		
Text-based	2	11.8%
Communication skills	6	35.3%
Making meaning / Understanding	7	41.2%
World		
Consume information	1	5.9%
No response	2	11.8%

In addition to the literacy perceptions, elements of the survey data inform the participants' integration of literacy into their classrooms. The participants were asked, "How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom?" both before and after the program. Two trends developed from the data: text-based integration and integrated into the discipline. The results of the pre- and post-program survey were in direct contradiction with each other. Before the program, all participants indicated some integration of texts and reading into their classes. However, after the program, all participants' perspectives shifted when they noted the natural way of integrating literacy that was part of their discipline. Table 5 notes the shift in data from the initial survey to the post-program survey.

Table 5

Literacy Integration into Classroom

Literacy Integration into Classroom	N	Percentage
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Pre-program Survey Results		
Text-based	14	82.3%
Integrated into discipline	0	23.5%
No response	3	17.6%
Post-program Survey Results		
Text-based	0	0%
Integrated into discipline	15	88.2%
No response	2	11.8%

To contextualize the data collected regarding literacy integration from the pre-program and post-program survey, every day of the program, the participants were asked to reflect on how that specific day “changed or confirmed [their] thinking about literacy application in [their] classroom”. The responses of participants can be viewed by the day of survey completion in Table 6. The participants’ responses can be categorized using a variety of labels. “Adopt new” indicates that the participants planned to use new literacy strategies in their classroom that they learned on that day of the program. “Expand use” indicates that the participants planned to use strategies more intentionally and broadly than previously used. “Discipline-specific use” indicates that the participants planned to use strategies more naturally as part of their discipline. “Confirmed thinking” indicates that the participant felt that the program confirmed their previous thinking about the literacy application in their professional practice. No participant indicated that they disagreed with the premise of the question.

Table 6***Shift in Thoughts on Literacy Application***

Shift in Thoughts on Literacy Application	N	Percentage
Day 1 Survey Results		
Adopt new	9	52.9%
Expand use	2	11.8%
Discipline-specific use	3	17.6%
Confirmed thinking	3	17.6%
No response	0	0%
Day 2 Survey Results		
Adopt new	7	41.2%
Expand use	5	29.4%
Discipline-specific use	1	5.9%
Confirmed thinking	4	23.5%
No response	0	0%
Day 3 Survey Results		
Adopt new	3	17.6%
Expand use	7	41.2%
Discipline-specific use	4	23.5%
Confirmed thinking	1	5.9%
No response	2	11.8%

Another indicator that further contextualizes the participant responses is their perception of the utility of LAT. The participants were asked in the post-program

survey, “Do you feel that the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers helped to prepare you to teach literacy in your classroom? Why?” The participants indicated several key reasons for how LAT helped to prepare them to integrate literacy into their classrooms, including through new understandings, practical and realistic strategies, confidence and empowerment, and a community of support. The participants’ responses could have been counted with multiple codes for this survey indicator.

Table 7

Utility of LAT

Utility of LAT	N	Percentage
Post-program Survey Results		
New understanding	4	28.6%
Practical	14	82.4%
Empowered	2	11.8%
Community	2	11.8%
No response	2	11.8%

Focus Group Data

After collecting and coding the data from the surveys, I contacted the participants and requested them to volunteer to participate in a focus group interview that would guide them through a reflection on the LAT summer program using data gathered from the surveys. Five of the participants volunteered to participate in the focus group. The focus group participants were a relatively good sample in terms of sex, years of experience, grade level, and roles. While most participants of the focus group were from Language Arts, one participant was a science teacher. Table 8 displays the

specific demographic information of the participants of the focus group interview. Table 9 displays the demographics of each individual focus group participant, including the pseudonym that will be used to represent the participant throughout the rest of this study.

Table 8

Descriptive Demographics of Focus Group Participants

Descriptive Demographics of Focus Group Participants	N	Percentage
Sex		
Male	1	20.0%
Female	4	80.0%
Years of Experience		
0–4 years	1	20.0%
5–10 years	2	40.0%
11–15 years	1	20.0%
16 or more years	1	20.0%
Grade Level		
Elementary	0	0%
Middle School	4	80.0%
High School	1	20.0%
Identified Content Area		
Language Arts	4	80.0%
Science	1	20.0%
Math	0	0%

Role	Social Studies	0	0%
	Classroom Teacher	3	60.0%
	Coach	2	40.0%

Table 9***Descriptive Demographics of Individual Focus Group Participants***

 Descriptive Demographics of Individual Focus Group Participants

 Participant 1 (Brenda)

Teacher

5-10 Years of Experience

English Language Arts

Rural Exurban School District

Middle School

Participant 2 (Christen)

Teacher

11-15 Years of Experience

English Language Arts

Rural Exurban School District

Middle School

Participant 3 (Linda)

Coach

16 or More Years of Experience

English Language Arts

Rural School District

Middle School

Participant 4 (Stacey)

Teacher

0-4 Years of Experience

Science

Rural Exurban School District

High School

Participant 5 (David)

Coach

5-10 Years of Experience

English Language Arts

Rural Exurban School District

Middle School

The focus group lasted 50 minutes and the data gathered from the focus group further contextualizes the data from the surveys to add another component to support the investigation of the research questions. Table 10 presents the themes identified from the coded data collected during the focus group interview. In this table, each question is separated, and the data is presented by the number of times a specific topic was mentioned by one of the participants during the focus group. Some participants may

have expressed multiple themes in response to Question 8. Evaluation of LAT experience does not include all five participants' responses due to a participant leaving the call early.

Table 10

Focus Group Data

A	Focus Group Data	N	Percentage
B	Question 1: Did the LAT program shift participant perception of literacy?		
	Yes	5	100.0%
	No	0	0%
	Question 1: Types of shifts		
	Text-based to a broader perspective in making meaning	4	80.0%
	Shifted to discipline-specific	2	40.0%
	Shifted from literacy as complicated	1	20.0%
	Question 2: What caused the shift in perception?		
	Engaging in a community of diverse disciplines with a common literacy focus	4	80.0%
	Program content that broadened individual perspectives toward literacy	2	40.0%
	Question 3: Shift to understanding literacy as a disciplinary practice		
	Discipline-specific breakout groups	2	40.0%

Practical application of research-based strategies presented during the program	1	20.0%
Engaging in a community of diverse disciplines with a common literacy focus	1	20.0%
Program content that broadened individual perspectives toward literacy	1	20.0%

Question 4: Response to survey data that indicated LAT helped to prepare participants to teach literacy in their classrooms.

Practical application of research-based strategies presented during the program	4	80.0%
Validation and empowerment	2	40.0%
Program content that highlighted common skills and transferability of those skills across content areas	1	20.0%
Shift to understanding literacy as a disciplinary practice	1	20.0%

Question 5: What was effective about the program?

Practical application of research-based strategies presented during the program	3	60.0%
Engaging in a community of diverse disciplines with a common literacy focus	2	40.0%

Professional resources provided to participants during the program	1	20.0%
Structure of LAT provides both research and strategies in a clear and intentional way	1	20.0%
Question 6: What should improve about the program?		
Structured writing instruction	1	20.0%
More time for content breakout groups	1	20.0%
More time for the program	4	80.0%
Variety of optional training	1	20.0%
Question 6: Key takeaways		
Practical application of research-based strategies presented during the program	1	20.0%
Discipline-specific application of literacy	1	20.0%
Shifted perception of literacy	2	40.0%
Authentic literacy	2	40.0%
Collaboration and exposure	1	20.0%
Question 7: What will change in participants' classrooms or their professional practice?		
New broadened perspective on literacy application	1	20.0%
Intentional use of resources	2	40.0%
Practical application of research-based strategies presented during the program	1	20.0%

Question 8: Evaluation of LAT experience

Positive	4	100%
No response (left call)	1	20.0%

The data presented above is not all-encompassing of the data collected during the LAT summer program.

Data Analysis Procedure

This study aimed to analyze the shift in participants' perceptions and dispositions toward literacy. To achieve this task, each participant was viewed as their own case in addition to the participants' aggregate responses to each specific research question. Each participant's response was analyzed for shifts from question to question. Then, each question was analyzed based on all participants' responses. From these responses, common themes were gathered to thematically analyze the trends in participants' responses and shifts. The shifts identified were then analyzed individually to inform a holistic perspective on the investigation. This cross-case analysis allowed me to see the granular shifts unique to each participant's perspective in addition to the shifts that occurred across all participants.

A thematic analysis (Moreau, 2014) was used to specifically indicate the themes identified from each participant's and across participants' responses to the same question. To indicate specific themes, I coded the data based on similarities, following which I looked for those themes as they are interwoven into the contextual supporting data as well. The data was coded granularly based on each participant's answer to each specific question, as well as holistically based on the themes that emerged from the

participants' responses. This method allowed me to highlight the general trends observed in the responses.

After the survey responses were coded and themes were selected, the transcription from the focus-group interview was also coded and used to contextualize the themes that were similar and different from the survey data. The themes that were consistent between the survey data and the focus-group data informed the findings, discussion, and conclusion of this study.

Findings

To fully analyze the findings of this study, it is important to return to the basis for the study and the questions at the center of it. This investigation was driven by and focused on two specific research questions:

- Research Question 1: How do participants of a regional midsize university's LAT perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?
- Research Question 2: How do the dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies, of the regional midsize university's LAT participants change during the LAT program?

While in previous sections of this chapter the data was organized by collection methods, this section of the chapter is intended to weave the data collected to specifically answer the abovementioned research questions. This section uses the data collected using different methods and organizes it in a narrative format to help illustrate the question under consideration. While the two research questions are two separate entities and represent different areas under investigation, they do work in tandem to attempt to provide a clear focus on the impact of the summer program on the participants.

Research Question 1: Perceptions of Literacy

The first research question of this study asks, “How do participants of a regional midsize university’s LAT perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?” This question is designed to look at the participants’ perception of literacy before and after their exposure to disciplinary literacy concepts taught as part of the LAT program. Every survey that the participants took asked them to describe what literacy is to them. The data from these questions were initially grouped by themes based on their responses to the surveys. The themes that were used to group participant responses to all of these survey questions were 1) text-based, 2) communication skills, 3) making meaning or understanding the world, 4) consuming information, and 5) no response was given. Tailoring this data for the first research question requires a detailed examination of the participants’ responses to the survey question “What is literacy to you?” in both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey. Figure 4 demonstrates the data collected from both surveys and the number of responses collected within each theme.

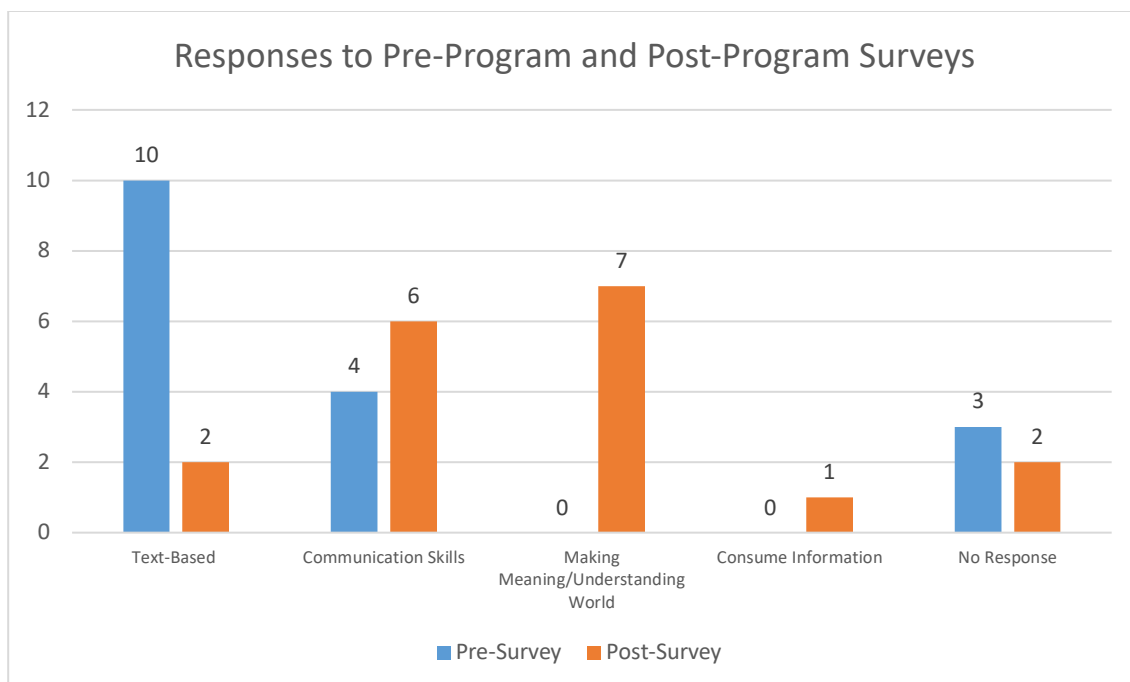
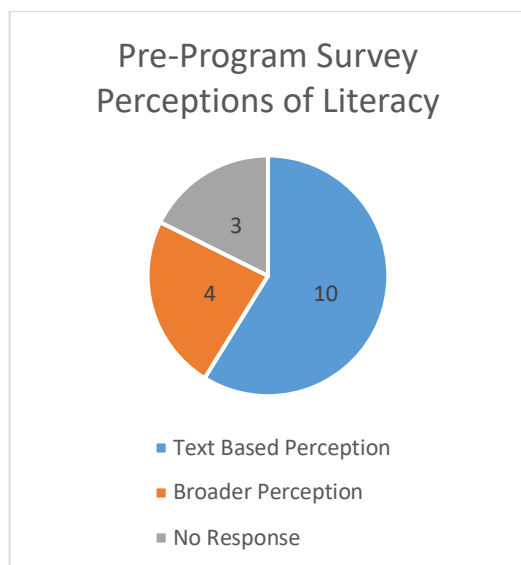
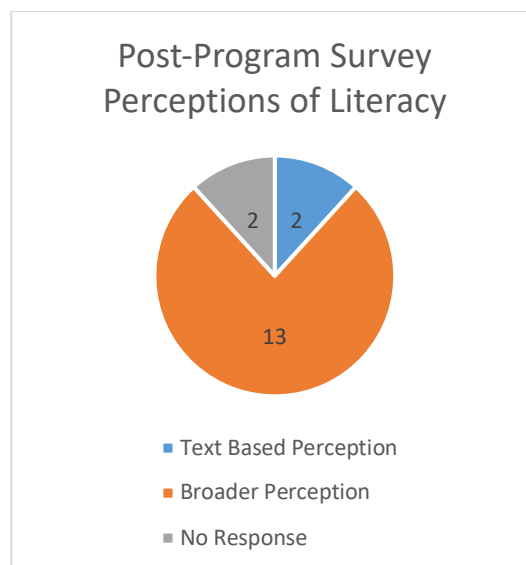


Figure 4. Responses to Pre-program and Post-program Surveys

Through analysis of these themes, two more specific themes emerged in the study of participants' responses to the question, "What is literacy to you?" The participants' responses can be characterized by a perception of literacy that is text-based, which focuses on reading and/or writing skills, or a perception that is broader and encompasses the communication and meaning-making skills that participants described in their responses. When using this frame for analysis, there appears a clear delineation in the participants' responses to these two survey questions. Both Figures 5 and 6 display the number of responses within each category when this theme is used to frame the analysis of their responses to these specific survey questions.



**Figure 5. Pre-program Survey
Perceptions of Literacy**



**Figure 6. Post-program Survey
Perceptions of Literacy**

Framing the participant responses by either a text-based perception or a broader perception of literacy demonstrates a clear change in the participants' perception of literacy before and after the program. This change in perception can be seen even more clearly by analyzing specific participant responses in conjunction with this aggregate data. Stacey's, a science teacher, initial response to the survey was, "Being able to create, analyze, dissect, evaluate, etc., written pieces." After the exposure to the disciplinary literacy program, Stacey's response to the post-program survey question was, "A way to view and understand the world. From that view or understanding being able to communicate that with others." Stacey's responses highlight the key shift in their perception of literacy before and after their exposure to the program.

For further understanding of this idea of a shifting perception of literacy, the post-program survey asked participants to contextualize any shift in their perception by asking, "How did the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers shift your perception of

literacy?” When answering this question, Stacey said, “I think it made me realize that Literacy (in the classroom) does not have to be complicated. Or at least not nearly as complicated as I’ve made it out to be. There’s plenty of things you can implement in my class that will feel natural for me and my students with a little time and modeling.” By broadening the participants’ perception of literacy, they now have more understanding of what they can do in their classroom to boost literacy skills in their discipline.

While Stacey represented a teacher with a perspective from outside English/Language Arts (ELA), Linda, someone in a coaching role comes from an ELA background. In the pre-program survey, Linda said, “Literacy is providing a variety of opportunities for teaching and learning reading and writing for your students.” This response is also characterized by a perception that is focused on texts and the skills of reading and writing. In the post-program survey, Linda’s response to this question was, “Literacy is the act of reading, writing, speaking, and listening in a way to that you comprehend the information and text that you are given.” This response from a participant post-exposure to the content of the program demonstrates a clear broadening of the perception of literacy and is reflected in other participants’ responses as well.

Research Question 1: Shifting Perceptions of Literacy

The collective case study approach used in this investigation enabled me to analyze each participant’s response to the questions in both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey, compare the answers, and then aggregate the shifts that occurred across the entire case. Of all the participants, 12 responded to both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey. All the participants’ responses show a clear impact

of the content of the program on the participants' perception of literacy. The changes were characterized as follows:

- no shift, or that the participant demonstrated a text-based perception of literacy before the program and continued to do so in the post-program survey;
- from a text-based perspective on the pre-program survey to a broader perspective on the post-program survey; or
- by a pre-existing broad perspective that existed throughout the program.

Figure 7 presents the data that was coded based on the analysis of specific participants' responses before and after the program. Of the 12 participants who completed both surveys, only two did not demonstrate any shift in their perception from a text-based mindset. Four of them demonstrated a broader perspective of literacy in the pre-program survey and continued to demonstrate a broader perspective of literacy in the post-program survey. Six of them demonstrated a shift in their perception of literacy from a text-based perception to a broader perspective of literacy.

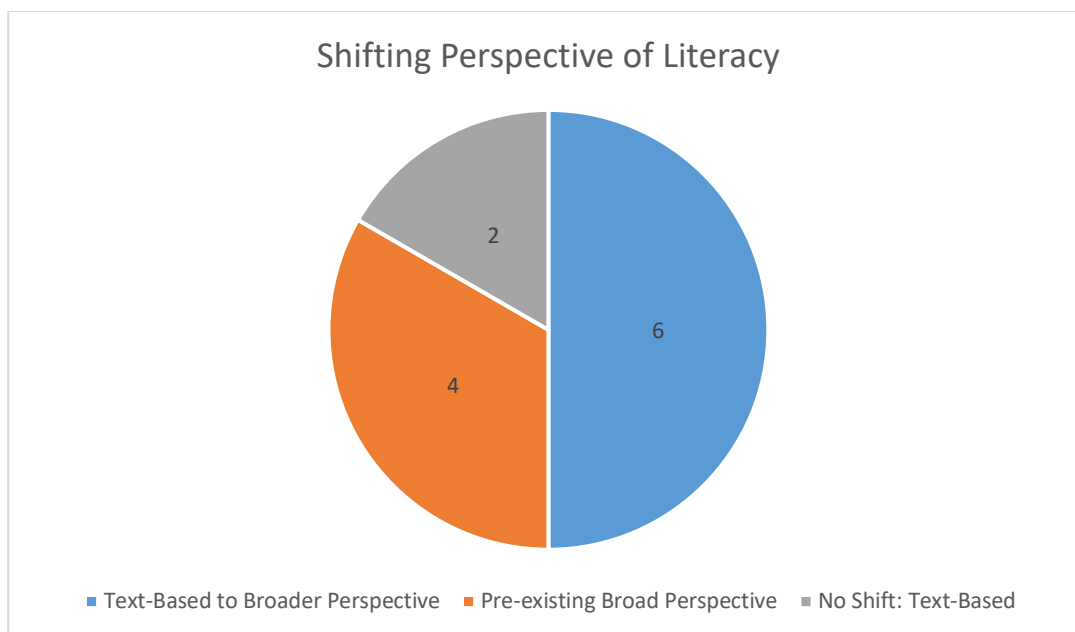


Figure 7. Shifting Perspective of Literacy

The data shows a clear impact of the content of the LAT program on the participants' perception of literacy. Of the 12 participants who responded to both the pre-program survey and post-program survey, 83.3% left the program with a broad perspective on literacy. David, who was grouped into the pre-existing broad perspective category, left with an even further broadened perspective. During the pre-program survey, David described literacy as, "a core foundation that broadly encapsulates the ways a person can both receive/comprehend and communicate/create ideas. Literacy is also highly specific and situational, with major and minor differences in varying contexts/disciplines." This perspective was already in line with the perspective of literacy that was being shaped by disciplinary literacy and would be characterized as one of the broader perspectives of literacy. When asked to describe literacy during the post-program survey, David said, "Literacy is the way we make meaning and interact with our world and the people in it." While David already had a broader perspective of

literacy, the David's response to the post-program survey reflects a broadening of this perspective as well.

Research Question 1: Types of Shifting Perceptions of Literacy

Understanding the broadening of perspective that happened during the program also requires the analysis of the shifting perspective regarding literacy on a day-to-day basis as well. At the close of each day of the program, the participants were asked to respond to the same "What is literacy to you?" question as they did on the pre-program survey and the post-program survey. This question provides contextual data that shows when the shift occurred and how. Using the same qualitative thematic coding model as has been used to describe the varying participant perceptions of literacy, Figure 8 presents data from each survey conducted during this study.

Figure 8 demonstrates a clear shift in the participants' perception of literacy from the pre-program survey to the survey following the first day of the program. While 10 of the 14 who responded on the first day provided a text-based response to this question on the pre-program survey, by the first day of the program, only four of the 17 who responded continued to describe literacy through a text-based perspective. Then, from the survey on the second of the program through the third day and post-program survey, only two participants continued to portray a perception of literacy based on the use and creation of texts.

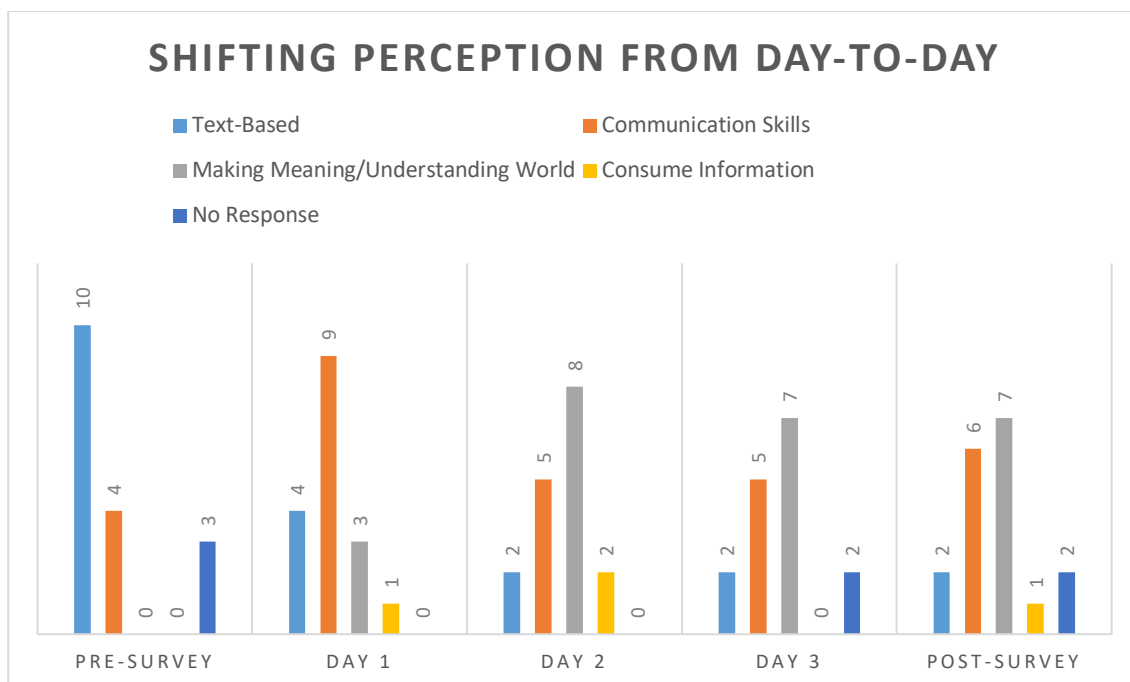


Figure 8. Shifting Perception from Day-to-Day

Not only was this shift in the participants' perception of literacy evident in the survey data, but it was confirmed when the researcher conducted a focus group interview with five of the participants. During the focus group interview, I asked, "What was your perception of literacy before and after the program, and do you think it shifted at all during the program?" When responding to this question, all five participants noted a shift in their perception of literacy. One participant said,

So, I think before attending the program, I looked at literacy as just what I do in my classroom to teach kids to read. That's really what I was focused on and what I was thinking about. And after some conversations while we were there and some different people were talking about literacy being reading everything, not just at school, not just in a classroom, but reading the whole world around you. So, I would say that my idea did definitely shift, and I started looking at literacy from that broader perspective, I guess I would say.

This response captures what much of the survey data demonstrated about the participants' reactions to the summer program. Another participant claimed that LAT confirmed their ideals but shifted their perception,

The LAT confirmed a lot of my ideas about disciplinary literacy. One big shift as I reflect on my experience in the LAT that I see is that there's an emphasis not on just the reading and writing, but discussion, specific discussion strategies to incorporate into different disciplines in the classroom. That's one area that I noted a huge shift in my thinking.

This response highlights that even though they had a foundation for the implementation of literacy across the content areas, the content of LAT still broadened their perspective of literacy.

Research Question 1: Cause of Shifting Perceptions of Literacy

When coding the data for the participants of the focus group, all participants noted a shift. The themes that were present in the participants' responses were that their perceptions ranged from being text-based to having a broader perspective, that participants shifted to a discipline-specific perspective towards literacy, or that literacy was not as complicated. Figure 9 displays the number of themes that were present in participant responses. The participant responses were coded, and any individual response could contain multiple codes based on their inclusion of specific themes. Most notably, four of the five participants described their shift in perspective as one from a text-based understanding of literacy to something broader.

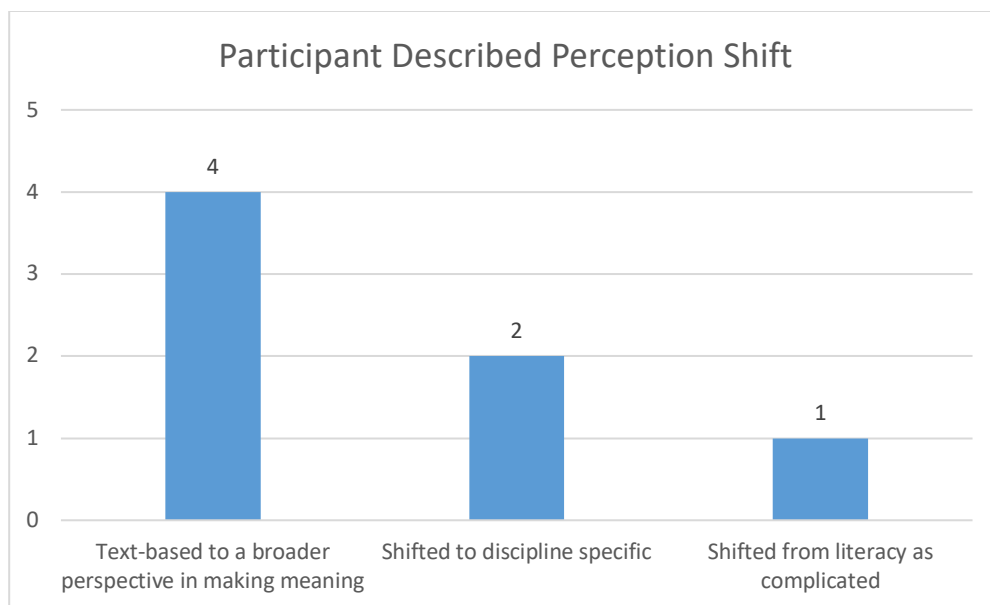


Figure 9. Participant Described Perception Shift

The data from the survey and focus group demonstrate a clear shift in participants' perception of literacy before and after the program to a broader and more encompassing perspective of literacy. By using the agenda and other materials presented during the program, I analyzed the content that was covered on the days when the shift occurred. Figure 10 is a redacted image of the content agenda that was used to guide the program.

As noted previously, the first day of the program discussed the following topics: orientation to LAT and disciplinary literacy, specific literacy strategies, adolescents and the science of reading, and content breakout sessions. The second day, which witnessed a smaller shift, discussed content around reading philosophy presented through the text *Disrupting Thinking: Why How We Read Matters* (Beers & Probst, 2017), vocabulary, differentiated instruction, and more time for breakout sessions for their content areas.

Adolescent Literacy Project Summer Institute Agenda			
	Wednesday, July 27th	Thursday, July 28th	Friday, July 29th
8:00-8:30	Registration, Light Breakfast	Registration, Light Breakfast	Registration, Light Breakfast
8:30-11:30	Orientation/Disciplinary Literacy [REDACTED] Power Writing [REDACTED] Adolescents and the Science of Reading [REDACTED]	Disrupting Thinking (text) with Book Head Heart [REDACTED] Vocab with Words Their Way and Vocabulary [REDACTED]	Academic Conversations (with Next Steps) [REDACTED] Media Literacy and Finding Reliable Sources [REDACTED]
11:30-12:15	Catered Lunch	Catered Lunch	Catered Lunch
12:15-3:30	Text Annotation [REDACTED] Found Poetry [REDACTED] Content Breakout <i>English Language Arts in Board Room; Social Studies in Conference Room A; Math/Science in Break Room</i> Personal Action Plans and Debrief	Differentiated Instruction with Small Groups [REDACTED] Content Breakout <i>English Language Arts in Board Room; Social Studies in Conference Room A; Math/Science in Break Room</i> Personal Action Plans and Debrief	Article of the Week [REDACTED] Content Breakout <i>English Language Arts in Board Room; Social Studies in Conference Room A; Math/Science in Break Room</i> Personal Action Plans and Debrief

Figure 10. Literacy for Adolescent Teachers Summer Program Agenda

Analyzing the content presented helped me develop the context for the content that participants were exposed to before the shifts in their perspective of literacy. The concepts presented during the first session began by discussing insider discourse (discourse theory) shifting to the skills present in each discipline. Then, a deep dive was made into the concepts of content area literacy and disciplinary literacy and the similarities and differences between the two, as well as the utility of each. The participants were able to engage with each other throughout this presentation, irrespective of their disciplines.

After engaging in both literacy theory and practical application strategies, the participants were then separated by their content areas and worked with a content specialist with a literacy lens to engage deeper in the disciplinary literacy work. Each

content breakout session used the disciplinary literacy topics of each day to frame the discussion for what could move the participants forward. Conversations of these groups were much more specific to the participants' content area, and they were able to discuss how the concepts of the day would fit into their professional practice. During these sessions, the participants would begin planning for how they could use the learnings from each day of the program and discuss with their colleagues' other strategies that they were already using in their practice that accomplish the same goals as the program.

The use of this same model for interweaving literacy theory with practical application and then engaging participants with like disciplines and participants outside of their discipline happened every day of the program and is what characterized the professional development model that the LAT program used to engage the participants. The participants felt that engaging with the content in this manner is what led to their shifting perspective. During the focus group interview, I compared the data pertaining to the participants' pre-program survey text-based perception of literacy with the participants' post-program survey broadened perception of literacy. Then I asked the participants, "What accounted for the shift?" One participant responded as follows:

I've always been kind of bitter because I feel like other subjects have it so easy when it comes to literacy. And I know that might not be the case, but with things like English or social studies, there's a lot to talk about. And I guess a lot to think about. You naturally read a lot, you have a lot of discussions, all of these things. And I wasn't understanding how to easily incorporate that into my classroom because a lot of science, I just thought, well these are the facts. And that's how it is. And being in, especially when we broke out into our little content groups, showed me that you can go beyond that, I guess. And I know for me personally, it's been a lot easier to even incorporate discussion, which is something I was never able to on a day-to-day basis, not even something that's like every once in a while. I feel like we start out every day like that now. So yeah.

This response to the interview question highlights the practicality of the strategies that were presented during the program and the value of discussing the literacy concepts within their content area groups. This participant feels that literacy can be more than reading and that it is not a complicated task but something more manageable. Another participant highlights that working with different content areas is what they felt caused their shift. This participant said,

For me, I think it was more of when we were all together because in those breakout groups, I was with all the other ELA people. But when we were all back together, I could hear from when we were having discussions just all together, I could hear from the math teachers and I could hear from the social studies teachers and the science teachers what literacy meant in that specific area. And I think that is kind of what helped me to see that and understand that.

This participant felt that their perception of literacy changed because of being around all of the disciplines since they could see all of the different applications that were possible. These responses are similar to the responses of all five participants to this focus group question.

When coding the data from the responses of the participants of the focus group, two main themes were identified. The first theme, engaging in a community of diverse disciplines with a common literacy focus, is characterized by responses of participants who felt that engaging with their peers from different disciplines helped to shift their perceptions of literacy. The second theme, program content that broadened individual perspectives toward literacy, is characterized by responses of the participants who pointed to specific program content or design as the reason for their shifting perception toward literacy. Figure 11 presents the themes identified present in participant responses. Most notably, four of the five participants described the cause of their

shifting perspective as engaging in a community of diverse disciplines with a common literacy focus. It should also be included that all these four participants are ELA teachers who were present during the focus group interview.

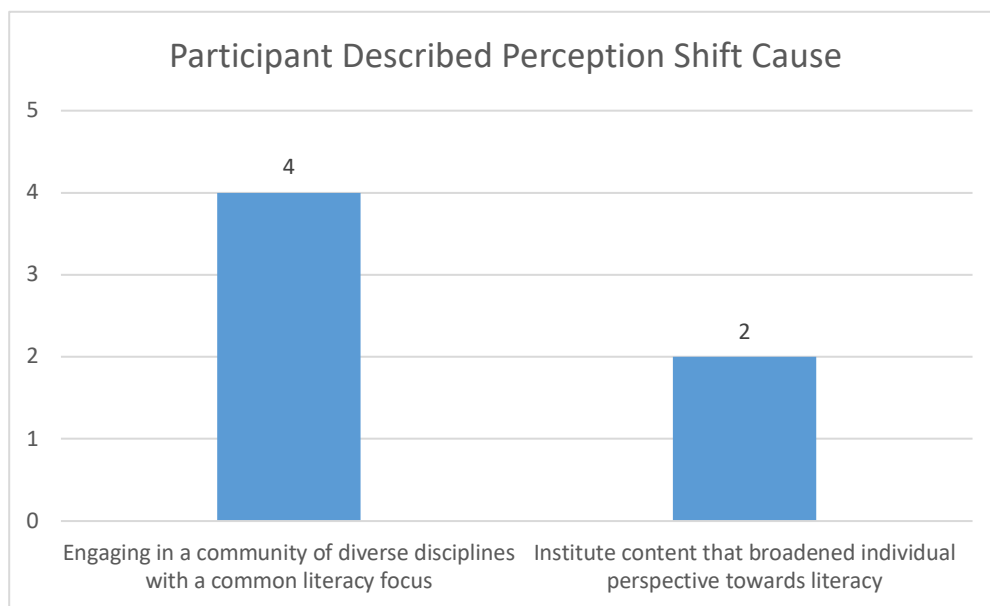


Figure 11. Participant Described Perception Shift Cause

The survey data shows a clear shift in the participants' perspective before and after the LAT program, from a text-based perspective to a broader and more encompassing perspective. The participants of the focus group interview were even able to self-identify this shift and the reason for it, such as the exposure to disciplinary literacy content, reading theory, practical application, and working with colleagues both from and outside of their disciplines.

Research Question 2: Shifting Dispositional Attitudes

The second research question of this study asks, "How do the dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies of the regional midsize university's LAT participants change during the LAT program?" While this

question is connected to, as well as builds on, the participants' shifting perception of literacy, its goal is to investigate how participation in the LAT program shifted their dispositional attitudes toward the implementation of literacy strategies in their content area. Essentially, this question asks if and how the participants' disposition attitudes around literacy change before and after the program.

Using thematic analysis of the participants' responses, I was able to isolate participants' responses to the same question in both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey to capture the participants' dispositions toward integrating literacy before and after the program. In the pre-program and post-program surveys, the participants were asked, "How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom?" Figure 12 displays the results from this question on both surveys. This chart provides a clear comparison and distinction between the pre-program and post-program survey and the shifting attitude around the integration of literacy into the participants' discipline and classrooms.

Before the program, all of the participants (100%) who took the survey indicated that integration in their discipline was based on interaction with some type of text, whether reading or writing. Jill noted that literacy in their discipline and classroom was integrated by "reading and comprehending with analyzing text." This response was supported by the remaining participants' responses, as demonstrated in Figure 12. As noted in the review of findings related to the first research question on literacy perceptions, before the program, the participants identified literacy as a concept based on interacting with text—reading or writing. Thus, their integration of literacy into their discipline was also based on how they use texts in their professional practice.

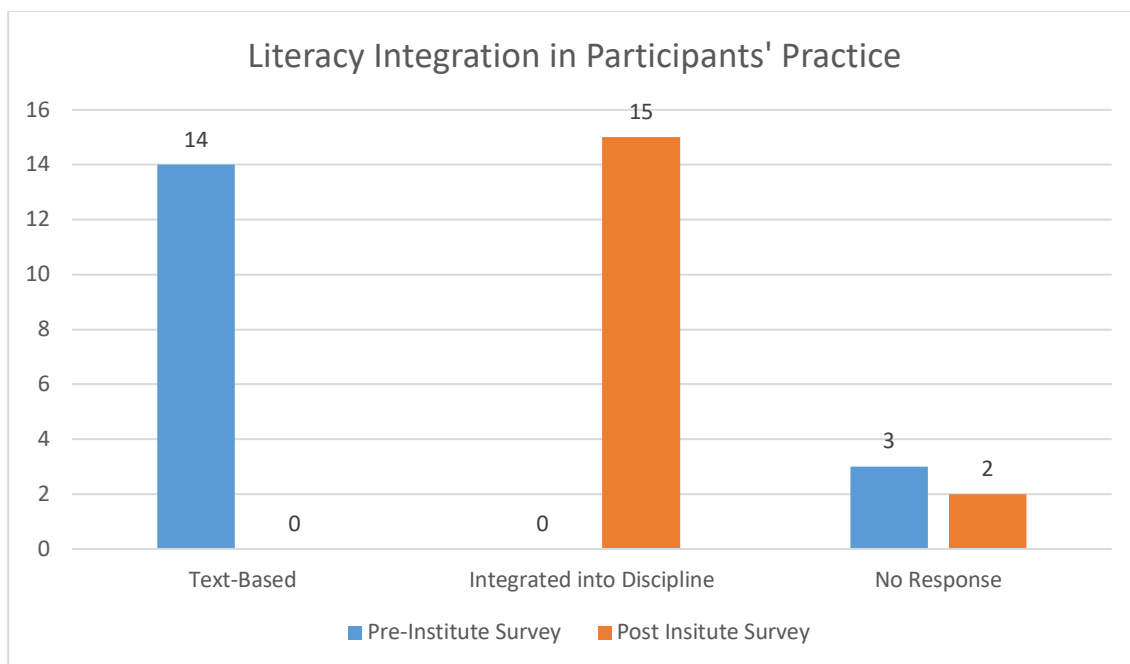


Figure 12. Literacy Integration into Participants' Practice

After the LAT program, the participants demonstrated a stark difference in their perspectives regarding the integration of literacy into their discipline and classrooms. All 15 participants (100%) who responded to the post-program survey stated that they felt literacy would be naturally integrated into their discipline. As Jill noted, “The focus of my classroom and discipline is literacy.” This statement highlights a very clear and specific shift in the participants’ responses to the content of the LAT program.

This comparison can be seen when analyzing all the participant responses, but Leslie’s responses before and after the program highlight a clear and specific shift in their dispositional attitude toward the integration of literacy into their classroom. When responding to the pre-program survey, Leslie, a math teacher, mentioned, “The only place that I can think of that I use literacy is through word problems in my class, but I

don't know that I am effective in utilizing them to their full potential." However, their perspective of literacy evolved by the end of the program.

When responding to the same question, Leslie stated, "Literacy involves being able to read and think critically about problems and equations in math. In my classroom, we focus a lot on definitions and breaking down shapes/diagrams which is a part of literacy." This comparison of responses highlights a clear shift in the Leslie's attitude toward literacy in their discipline of math. They no longer saw literacy as something that had to be done for word problems, but they could identify clear applications of different literacy content in their professional practice and that it was already a part of their discipline.

Research Question 2: Understanding Shifting Dispositional Attitudes

Understanding the changing dispositional attitudes that happened during the program also requires the analysis of the survey data each day of the program to inform how those shifts in attitudes occurred. At the close of each day of the program, participants were asked to respond to the same question, "How has today changed or confirmed your thinking about literacy application in your classroom?" Figure 13 draws the codified data from each of the days and presents the number of responses that fall within the given theme. The themes present in this series of responses are as follows: Adopt New; Expand Use; Discipline-specific Use; Confirmed Thinking; No Response. These themes, which were created based on characterizing the themes that originated from participant responses, demonstrate that the participants are coming across new strategies, thinking about literacy in new ways, and confirming their beliefs.

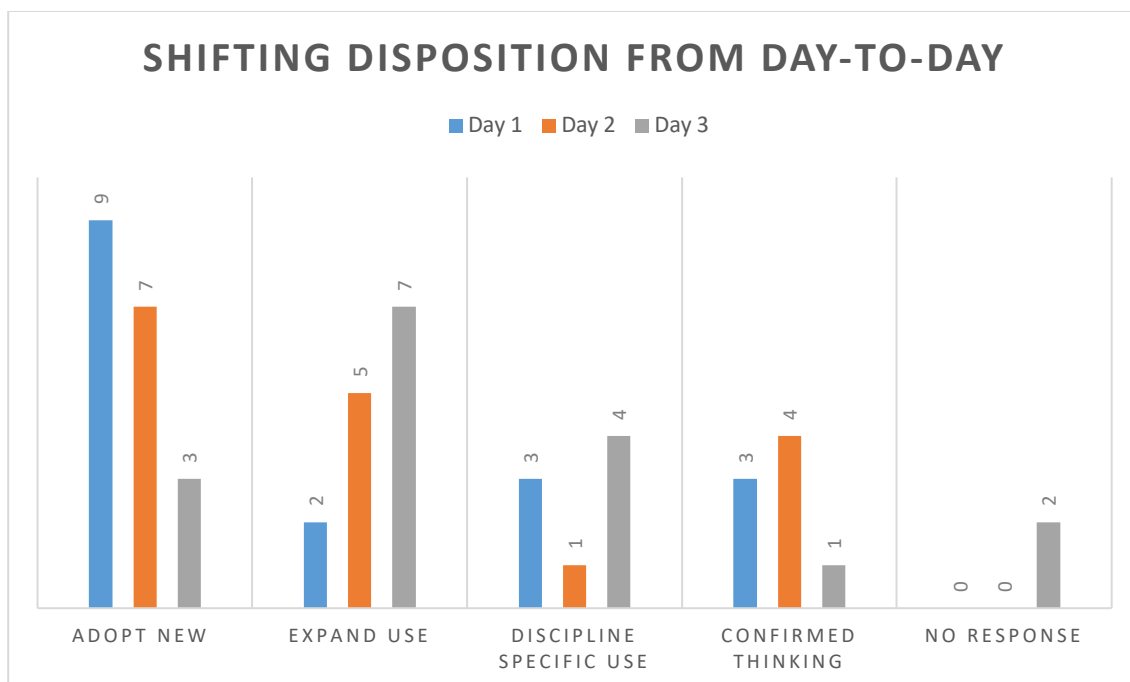


Figure 13. Day-to-day Shift in Disposition

While Figure 13 presents the aggregate data drawn from each participant's response characterized by themes for each day of the program, the shifting disposition is highlighted again when analyzing individual participants' shifting attitudes toward the integration of literacy into their professional practice. In the case of Leslie, a clear shift in disposition toward literacy was observed when this participant engaged with the content of the LAT program. Figure 14 highlights the day-to-day shift in this participant's perspective and puts in context their response to both the pre-program survey and the post-program survey.

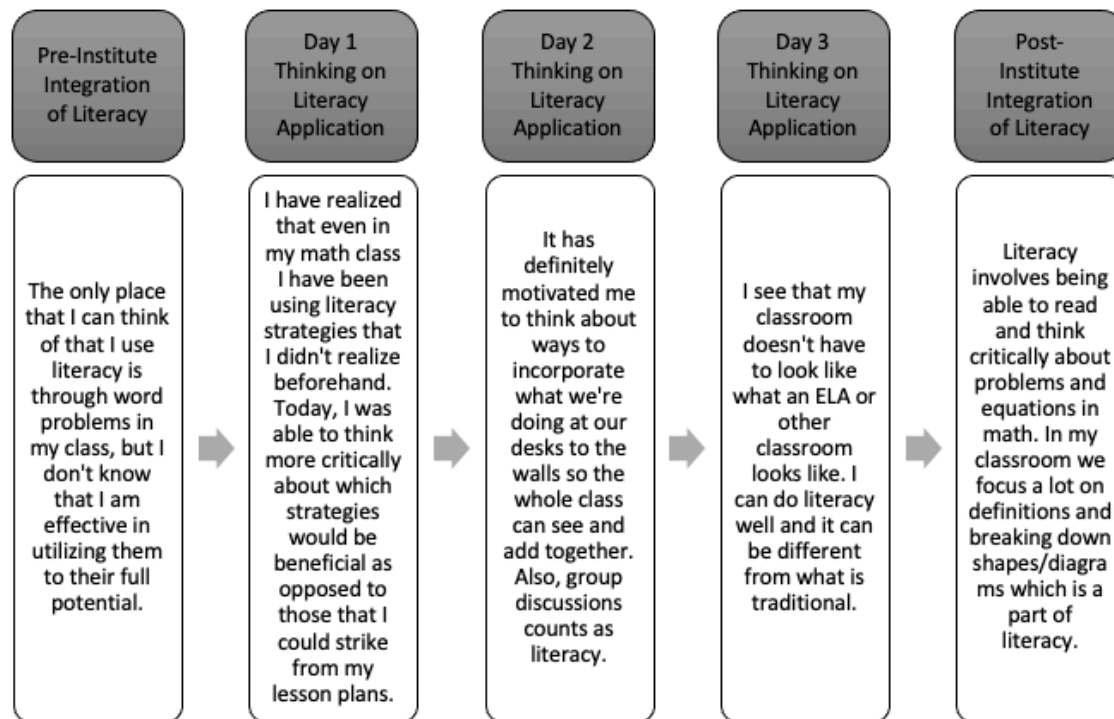


Figure 14. Leslie's Shifting Disposition

Leslie's initial responses to the survey questions demonstrated a limited application of literacy in their discipline. Nevertheless, with each passing day, the participant gained realization and confirmations that allowed them to view literacy as integrated into their discipline. On the third day of the program, the Leslie stated, "I see that my classroom doesn't have to look like what an ELA or other classroom looks like. I can do literacy well, and it can be different from what is traditional." This statement alone directly answers the second research question for this participant and confirms the aggregate data presented in Figure 12. All of the participants who responded to the post-program survey noted a shift in their intended integration of literacy.

How this shift occurred and what impacted this shift are the next questions that will serve to fully answer the second research question. The participants were asked in the post-program survey, "Do you feel that the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers helped

to prepare you to teach literacy in your classroom? Why?” The participants indicated several key reasons how LAT helped to prepare them to integrate literacy into their classrooms, including, new understandings, practical and realistic strategies, confidence and empowerment, and a community of support. The participants’ responses could have been counted with multiple codes for this survey indicator. Figure 15 presents the inclusion of themes in specific participant responses. Multiple themes could have been present in individual-specific responses, and Figure 15 demonstrates how frequently those responses were utilized throughout by all of the participants.

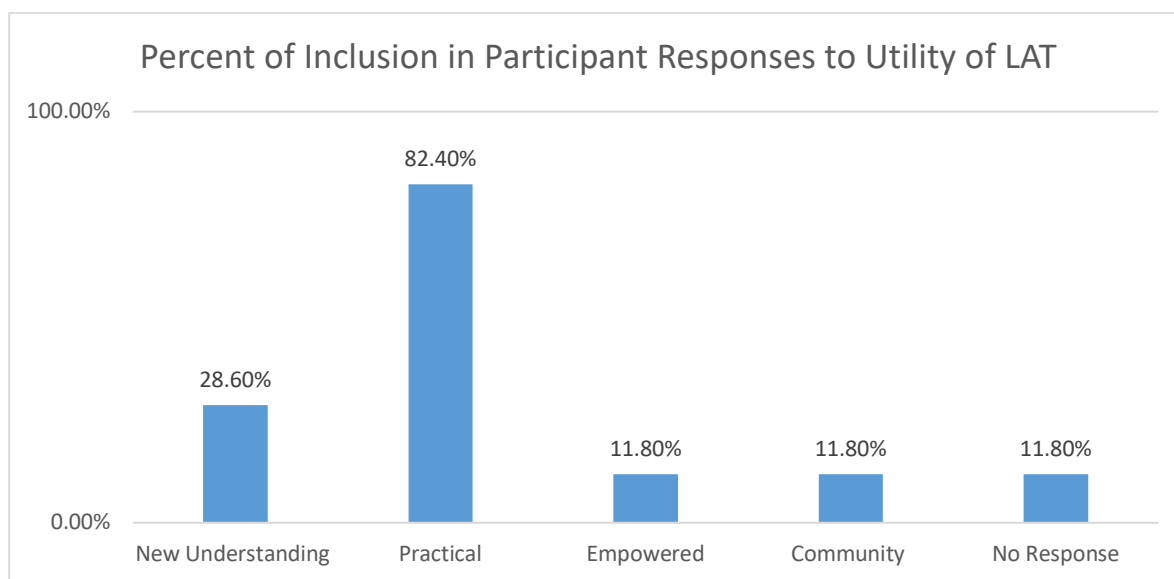


Figure 15. Percent of Inclusion in Participant Responses to Utility of LAT

Figure 15 demonstrates many of the themes that have been interwoven in the different modes of data throughout this study. One of the major themes presented in Figure 15 is the practical application of strategies presented during the LAT program. About 82.4% of the participants included this component as part of their response to this question, which highlights the practical nature of the LAT program as impacting the individual participants and their shifting dispositional attitudes toward literacy integration into their professional practice. The participants felt that they left LAT with

evidence-based instructional practices that they could implement immediately within their professional practice. This indicates that when participants have realistic applications of a theory, it has the potential to change their attitudes toward that topic.

As noted, the participants were able to provide very specific feedback on the utility of LAT. This perspective can be viewed in thematic aggregate, but also specific responses from the participants. Christina said in response to this question,

Yes, I do feel like the LAT has helped to prepare me to teach. I feel like I know where to start when it comes to implementing strategies like building vocabulary and root words with my students. It also gave me a lot of different resources to use to help me know where to start and specific activities that I can do within my classroom.

This response highlights the overwhelming focus of the rest of the participants' responses as well. The participants felt that literacy was presented to them through a new lens but with practical strategies that they could take back to their professional practice.

The focus group interview offered a unique opportunity to further contextualize this finding that was evident from the survey data. During the focus group interview, the participants were presented with the data collected regarding the utility of LAT. The participants were asked if they agreed with the characterization and why they thought that was said in the data. All five of the participants agreed with the data that was presented to them, and built onto this data by saying that they felt this was said because the program provided the following: practical application of research-based strategies; validation and empowerment; content that highlighted common skills and transferability of those skills across content areas; a shift in their understanding of literacy as a

disciplinary practice. Figure 16 presents the themes from the participants' responses to the survey. Multiple themes could be present in individual participant responses.

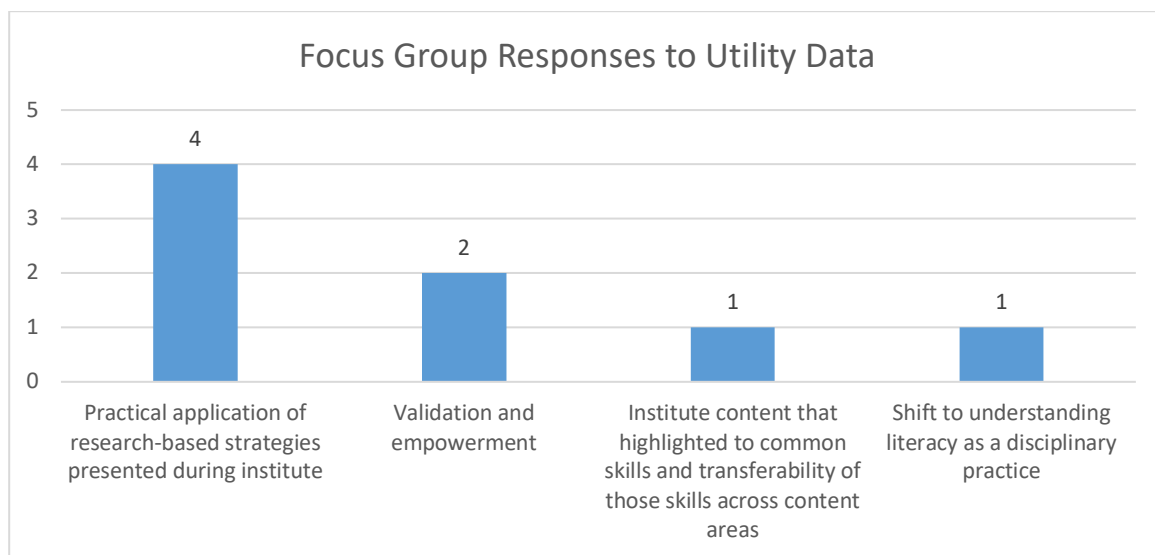


Figure 16. Focus Group Responses to Utility Data

The data in Figure 16 highlights what the survey data also demonstrated that the practical and applicable strategies presented during the program helped the participants value their experience with the LAT program, changing their dispositions toward the integration of literacy into their professional practice. Furthermore, in the focus group, the participants expanded on the practical application theme and included other perspectives on the data as well. The participants of the focus group felt that 1) the data pertaining to the LAT program validated and empowered them with their integration of literacy, 2) the program presented strategies and highlighted the transferability of strategies across the disciplines, and 3) the program helped them to shift their understanding of literacy to see its natural integration into their discipline.

These themes were identified when dissecting each individual participant's responses. When answering this question, David said,

I also think that being introduced to strategies that were maybe similar to things that I had done in the past but were different and had a very purposeful intent behind them. Things as such as an annotation, I saw at a different light, even though that's a skill I know that I had practiced with students before. So, I really appreciated the exposure to different strategies that sort of validated things that I had done in the past and also gave me ideas to keep thinking and growing in terms of finding a tool bank for literacy instruction.

This response highlights a couple of points made in the thematic analysis of the survey data. David felt that the practical application of strategies they were already using and new ones they learned not only added to the value of the LAT but also the validation for their practice is something that they felt elevated the experience of LAT in a more meaningful way.

Stacey had a different response but hit the same point around practical application:

For me was not at all about validation, but that's simply because I think I was so ignorant on the subject. I had nothing to validate. I don't mean ignorant in a bad way, but it was just very foreign to me. And like I said, I was thinking of it as something that I personally could not use. So almost everything I learned was something that was completely new to me. I guess, if anything, it didn't validate what I thought about literacy. It completely changed my overall thoughts on everything. But yeah, it opened my eyes for sure, and it gave me a toolbox of things that I just feel like I have a plethora of to choose from now.

While David felt validated, Stacey felt that they had a new understanding of the application of literacy. But similar to David, Stacey valued the "toolbox" of strategies that they garnered from the LAT experience. While both of these lenses demonstrate a different perspective on the broader content of the LAT program, both participants valued the nature of the practical application that they felt was developed during the LAT program.

Research Question 2: Shifting Dispositional Attitudes and Impact on Practice

To fully contextualize this data, the focus group participants were also asked to describe what would change in their practice in response to the LAT program. The participants that responded to this question had their overall responses grouped into specific themes. Three themes were identified across the four participants' responses to this question; they felt that 1) they had a new broadened perspective on literacy application, 2) they would intentionally use resources, and 3) the practical application of research-based strategies will improve their professional practice. Figure 17 presents the responses as coded by theme. This question received variable responses.

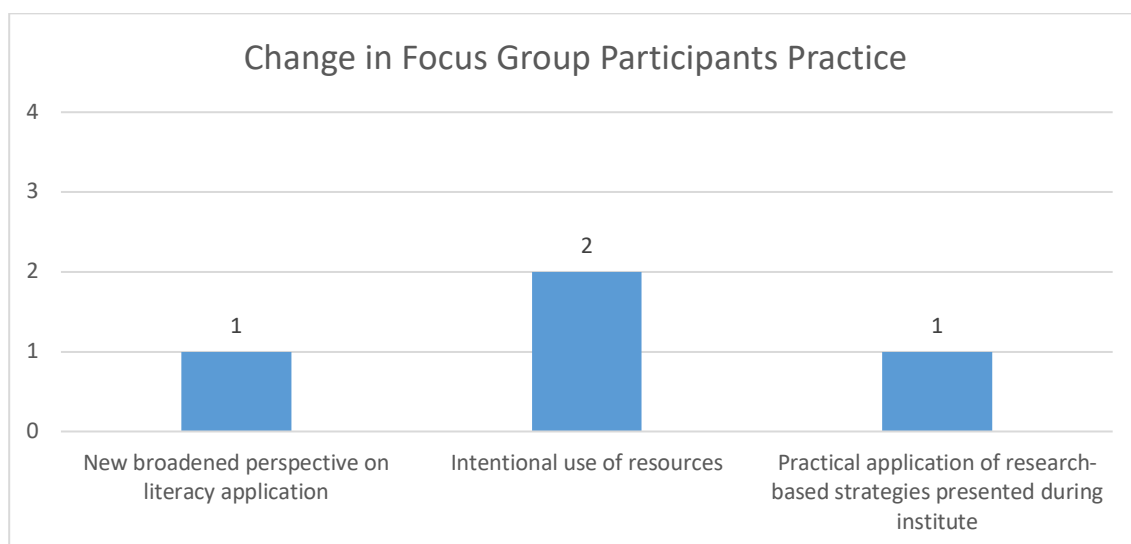


Figure 17. Change in Focus Group Participants' Practice

Brenda, whose response was characterized as a new broadened perspective, highlighted many of the themes that have been presented in the data throughout this study, but they used a very targeted viewpoint and highlighted present changes in their professional practice:

Going over and the restating my ideas of what literacy means helped me develop that the way to discuss with keep their definition of words and how that it's ever changing. And the only way I could explain this accurately is to use the example we are doing our motto and our thing this year is kindness is cool. And so, we have all these different components of kindness, but I didn't spill those out. I just had them write about kindness first. And then I introduced the vocabulary words associated with it and had them highlight words that they may have used in their own personal working, I call it working definition. And then I looked it up in Websters and showed them the dictionary and showed them how poorly done that was in comparison to that encompassing idea of what really want them to think kindness is. And I kind of was doing that kind of the way we were doing with the literacy, developing our understanding of, we started out with one certain idea and then we developed it over time. And so, I can say that was a direct takeaway of the way I modeled that same type of thinking. And that's something I've used this week so.

The participants' response highlights their new views on literacy as a reflection of the very specific changes in their professional practice in their classroom. Since this participant viewed literacy through a new lens, they now had a new attitude about the integration of different literacy strategies in their professional practice.

David's response to the question was characterized by the intentional use of resource theme and reflects the program's intentional push to organize its content around the strategies and resources delivered to participants. David said,

So, in terms of changing practice, one thing that, and it was mentioned previously about how the content was delivered in the days where it's chunked so that it wasn't overwhelming. I think that often I can provide in a consultant way, lots of resources at times when someone's coming to me and asking for help. And I feel like I can't always prioritize what they might want in the moment. And I really appreciated how we weren't necessarily overwhelmed with strategies. We were given opportunities to practice them. Already this week I've been invited to do some modeling in a classroom for a new teacher and I chose to do power writing today actually. And I was thinking in my head as I was planning a lesson out, I didn't want to incorporate way too many strategies because that teacher's not going to take away everything that they might benefit from that. So, I focused on one or two and I really appreciated how number one, it was delivered to us to be able to have time to process and think about how we would apply it to our practice. But then also the specific strategies have

already come into use in trying out power writing for instance. And in terms of my experience in the LAT, I feel like it was a very beneficial Program, helped me, we've mentioned previously to sort validate our ideas of the importance of literacy and then also of the nuances of literacy across the disciplines. But it also helps me to have that shift in thinking about the way that I ask questions about school wide literacy practices. And so, I appreciate the support that's already been shown in helping me to have those conversations at the school level.

This response reflects many of the themes that have been present in the different forms of data. The content of the LAT program is what this participant believes to be responsible for their changing perspective towards literacy integration into their professional practice. The intentional structuring of the LAT content and resources provided to the participants supported a specific change of practice in this participant.

Both the survey data and the focus group data demonstrate that by engaging with the disciplinary literacy content and resources of the LAT program, the participants experienced a shift in their dispositional attitudes regarding the integration of literacy into their professional practice. While these shifts maybe different for each participant, all participants who responded to the surveys and were involved in the focus group interviews moved away from an attitude that was locked into text-based support of literacy and broadened their dispositions to new strategies and applications of literacy in their professional practice.

Summary

This chapter aimed to describe the data collected and the results of the thematic analysis of the data gathered throughout the study. This chapter is divided into sections on descriptive findings, data analysis procedures, findings, and a summary of the chapter. Each section presents information in a systematic way as to fully contextualize all the information regarding the LAT summer program.

Regarding the first research question, “How do participants of the LAT case perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?”, participants demonstrated a rigid text-based perception of literacy before the summer program, but most shifted their perception of literacy after undertaking the LAT program. When analyzing the trends across each specific day of the summer program, the participants noted a drastic shift since the first day of the program, which is when participants were engaged with heavy theoretical disciplinary literacy and reading science content. These shifts were supported by both survey data and through the use of a focus group to reflect on the trends in the surveys.

The second research question was, “How does the dispositional attitudes, surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies, of the LAT case participants change during the LAT program?” Using both survey data and focus groups to reflect on the survey data, the participants demonstrated a changing dispositional attitude toward literacy, as seen from their responses before the program. Similar to the first research question, the participants demonstrated a rigid text-based attitude toward the integration of literacy in their discipline, which for some participants challenged their belief in their ability to include literacy in meaningful ways in their disciplines. After the program, the participants had a different attitude about how literacy could be included in their professional practice. The participants felt that there were natural ways of integrating literacy intentionally into their professional practice.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction and Summary of Study

The literature and the data collected in this study demonstrate a negative dispositional attitude of educators of adolescents toward literacy integration in their professional practice. Nevertheless, exposure to the concept of disciplinary literacy can shift educators' mindsets around the integration of literacy in their practice. Disciplinary literacy celebrates the literacy skills that are organic components of every discipline and supports teachers in using the disciplinary skills that are already part of their content area.

Scientists, historians, mathematicians, and several other disciplines have natural literacy skills that do not have to be forced to be included in their respective subject areas. The LAT program works to train teachers on how to develop these skills in each discipline and promote literacy in their classrooms while still achieving the goals of their specific discipline. This study investigated the perceptions of literacy that the teachers enrolled in a regional midsize university in Kentucky's LAT had before and after the summer program and how the dispositional attitudes shifted during the program.

Each chapter of this study provided structured and detailed insights into the topic in question. Chapter One provided an overview of the study, research questions, and the context for the study. Chapter Two, the literature review, presented the theoretical and conceptual lens that guided this study in addition to investigating and highlighting the previous studies that have explored teachers' dispositions toward literacy, implementation of disciplinary literacy and content literacy mindsets, teacher

preparation, and adolescent literacy initiatives. Chapter Three, on methodology, detailed the steps and procedures I used to conduct the study and to organize the process of collecting data from the participants of the study. Chapter Four, on analysis, detailed the steps of analyzing the findings of this study and organized the results in thematic ways that convey what is to be learned from the study. Chapter Five, on findings, is divided into a section presenting a summary of the findings and conclusions, implications of this study, and recommendations for future research. The conclusions, similar to the analysis of findings, are divided by the research questions of this study. However, there is an additional section, holistic conclusions, that weaves together the two research questions. The two research questions that guided this study are as follows:

- Research Question 1: How do participants of the LAT case perceive literacy before and after the LAT program?
- Research Question 2: How do the dispositional attitudes surrounding the integration of disciplinary literacy strategies of the LAT case participants change during the LAT program?

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

The data collected during this study provide clear outcomes for the participants. Most of the participants' perception of literacy did shift from a text-based perception of literacy to a broader perception of literacy. Additionally, all participants demonstrated a change in their dispositional attitude toward the integration of literacy in their professional practice during the LAT program. This section of the chapter is organized by each research question to provide the conclusions supported by the data related to

that question. In addition to the two research questions, a section provides a holistic summary of the study with overarching conclusions provided by the data for LAT.

Research Question 1: Perceptions of Literacy

The first research question drove the study to understand if the participants' perceptions of literacy were impacted by their participation in the LAT program. Before the program, all of the participants had described literacy as a text-based concept that was built around reading, or maybe writing. All of the participants, except for two, who responded to the post-program survey had broadened their perception of literacy. The most notable shift occurred on the first day of the program when participants were exposed to disciplinary literacy, discourse theory, and reading science content supported by a variety of research-based instructional strategies.

Not only were the shifts in the participants' perception noticeable in the survey data, but a focus group of the participants confirmed that they felt the survey data were accurate and that all five of them could describe a shift in their perception of literacy after undertaking the LAT program. During the focus group interview, participants used a variety of ideas to describe the shifts in their perception, but most could be characterized similarly to when Brenda described their shift in perception of literacy by saying,

For me, the shift came when I began to think about the different disciplines, because I'm pretty guilty of thinking of my English classroom. And so, I think recognizing the math and the science components of it and just how that writing is important in every single discipline to demonstrate the understanding in the literacy.

By engaging with different disciplines and being exposed to content that highlighted that literacy is organic in each content area, the participants left the LAT program with a broader perception of literacy.

Research Question 2: Shifting Dispositional Attitudes

The second research question focused more on participants' attitudes toward the integration of literacy in their discipline. The data gathered from the pre-program survey and post-program survey were clear regarding the impact of LAT on the dispositional attitudes toward the integration of literacy of participants. Before the program, all of the participants responded to survey questions with a rigid text-based integration of literacy in their classroom. While the connotations were not necessarily negative, all of the participants who responded to the survey felt that the LAT program did have an impact on their attitude toward the integration of literacy in their professional practice.

Through the exposure to disciplinary literacy content, working with colleagues both within and outside of their content area, and gaining practical strategies that they could take back to their practice, all participants who responded to the post-program survey felt that there was a broader ability to integrate literacy in their content area. Leslie, a math teacher, stated, "I see that my classroom doesn't have to look like what an ELA or other classroom looks like. I can do literacy well, and it can be different from what is traditional." This response highlights a clear shift in the participants' dispositional attitudes toward the integration of literacy into their math classroom. This teacher now recognizes that there is variability in what literacy looks like in each discipline.

Not only were the shifts in the participants' dispositional attitudes toward literacy noticeable in the survey data, but a focus group of participants in the case study was able to confirm that they felt the survey data was accurate and that all five of them could describe a shift in their dispositions toward the integration of literacy after undertaking the LAT program. Furthermore, the participants noted that their experience in the LAT program would positively change (or already changed) their professional practice. Christen stated,

Will something change for me? Yes, definitely after attending LAT. We've all talked about the strategies and some of the strategies I did already use and some are new. I think now instead of just throwing strategies out there, I will be more intentional about the strategies that I do use. And as I had said before, knowing that those are being used in other disciplines, because I know other people in my building in other subject areas were there.

The participants of the LAT program returned to their school year with a different disposition toward the integration of literacy. Whether it was the transferability of skills or practical application of strategies like Christen noted or a different impact on the participant perceptions, all of the participants left the LAT program with a different attitude regarding literacy integration in their practice than when they began the program.

Holistic Conclusions

While the two research questions addressed in this study were analyzed in isolation, they are naturally interwoven and support each other in the development of the ability of the LAT program to impact the participants. Shifting an individual's perception of literacy should or will also impact their dispositional attitude toward the integration of literacy in their discipline. My analysis demonstrated that, by engaging

with disciplinary content, receiving dedicated time to work with their disciplinary colleagues, and then engaging in discussions with colleagues from outside of their content area, participants broadened their perception of literacy and were willing to characterize more skills as literacy skills.

In addition to the disciplinary literacy and community of the LAT program, almost every participant mentioned the specific and intentional structure of the presenters to provide a cross-section of literacy theory with practical and applicable strategies that the participants could directly apply within their educational setting.

Stacey stated in the focus group interview,

Of course, I love the strategies and I love the books. But I'm sure if I did enough research, I could have found a lot of those things. I think just the way that it was presented, just all of those things themselves would've been very daunting for me. And I honestly steer away from books like that. Or even I have Kagan strategy books, I buy them and then I don't read them because I'm like, "oh my God, this is so much information at one time" that I'm actually overwhelmed. And I know that I could break it down piece by piece myself and it would feel less overwhelming, but I just don't have that in me. I'm not the type of person to buy those books for myself and be disciplined enough to sit down and learn about them. So having somebody kind of do that for me and chunk it into sections for me at least gave me the courage to explore it on my own afterwards because I knew where to start and what I was looking at and should be looking for.

This response is supported throughout both the survey data and other participant responses. The cross-section of research, practical strategies, and targeted resources supported the participants in their understanding of literacy and helped them to see the literacy skills that were already part of their discipline and how they could support their students in strengthening those skills.

Implications

This research is important as it helps people in the field of literacy to understand the breakdown in literacy instruction and how we can support educators in finding the literacy skills integrated into their discipline and support their students' growth using those skills. Research has demonstrated a clear need for literacy strategies to be implemented across the content areas. Not only do literacy strategies have to be implemented in each content area, but students also need support in accessing the literacy that is part of each discipline.

Teachers must first recognize that literacy is part of their discipline, and then they can find the best strategy to grow their professional practice. In addition to these goals, this research study also hopes to provide insight for educator preparation institutions to help them to understand how literacy instruction is being implemented, how their current methodology is impacting the educational community, and how adopting a disciplinary literacy approach can have an impact on educator mindset and the use of literacy practices in their classes.

While teacher training and preparation will most definitely be informed by the outcomes of this study, it will also help to inform educators of the benefit of using a disciplinary literacy mindset in their classrooms and how schools and districts can help shift to this specific mindset. The Kentucky Academic Standards integrate many of the disciplinary literacy skills throughout their standards documents. These standards, much like the Common Core and academic standards across the United States, are assessed in terms of accountability. Disciplinary literacy skills form the foundation of accountability for each content area and the basis of their specific assessment. This

study can help to inform those individuals that help to train teachers on effective means for preparing their educators to impart these specific skills into their classrooms.

As schools and districts search for ways to support their teachers in refining the literacy skills that are part of each discipline, understanding how to support those teachers is crucial. Teachers should not be exposed to generic literacy strategies that work across all disciplines. Although these can be supportive, teachers should first see the disciplinary relevance to themselves and the practical application so that they can identify the best fit for the content that their students need to be successful. Literacy is part of every academic discipline, and supporting teachers in identifying those applications is a crucial implication of this study.

Finally, as mentioned previously, LAT is a component of UPLG and is funded using public monies. With the allocation of these funds, the Commonwealth of Kentucky charges UPLG to design a program that expands teachers' capacity with literacy in their professional practice. This study demonstrated that the LAT program under investigation had an impact on the participants' perception of literacy and their dispositional attitudes toward the integration of literacy in their discipline. While only one of UPLG's participating universities was investigated in this study, this conclusion does inform the use of those allocated funds in the case under investigation and the impact of the program on the participants who were enrolled.

Recommendations

While the investigation into the LAT program generated data that answered the two specific research questions, the scope of this study was limited. This study focused only on the summer program that trains LAT participants in work and literacy concepts.

However, many different lenses could be used to view this program. This study can be further expanded upon by using a content analysis lens and focusing on the structure of LAT and the theory, strategies, and resources presented, and how they specifically support participants. This model of analysis could provide a focused perspective on quality professional development used to support educators.

While this study focused on a program of professional learning during summer, the participants' LAT experience is not limited to just a summer. LAT is a year-long experience of participants that involves follow-up experiences, targeted coaching, implementation of a literacy action plan, and participation in a share fair in which they present their work since LAT to colleagues from around the state. Thus, further studies could follow the LAT participants throughout the year and continue to track similar data on their perceptions and dispositions once they return to their professional practice and carry out implementation.

Further, analyzing the impact of the program on the participants' classroom practice and student learning would solidify any implied gains that the LAT experience makes regarding the dispositions and perceptions of literacy. Specifically, using teacher performance data and student proficiency and growth data could help provide quantitative metrics to determine the effectiveness of the LAT in a broader context and could convey differently the extrinsic value of an experience. Improvement in education is ultimately only purposeful if it supports student learning, and this level of information could inform that perspective for LAT.

Finally, this study investigated only a specific university's LAT program. Thus, a larger study of all participating universities could inform the holistic utility of this

program in the aggregate for statewide evaluation and use of public funding for the professional growth of educators in the state. Each program is designed uniquely to meet the needs of its participants, and a study like this could provide detailed information on the ability of LAT to impact Kentucky educators on a broader scale.

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Appendix A

Pre-program Survey

4/28/22, 1:26 PM

Pre-Institute Survey

Pre-Institute Survey

As part of the study, Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students, please complete this survey prior to the summer institute.

There is no risk directly associated with this survey, but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at Eastern Kentucky University will be kept in a secured university protected google drive folder. Your responses and answers collected for research purposes will be stored, but presentation of your name and other identifying descriptions will be removed for reporting purposes. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

* Required

1. First Name *

2. Last Name *

3. Why are you interested in the Adolescent Literacy Project? *

4/28/22, 1:26 PM

Pre-Institute Survey

4. What is literacy to you? *

5. How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom? *

6. Would you say you felt prepared to teach literacy in your classroom? What makes you say this? *

4/28/22, 1:26 PM

Pre-Institute Survey

7. What would you like to learn during the institute? What supports do you need to grow your implementation of literacy practices in your classroom? *

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Appendix B

Day 1 Program Survey

4/28/22, 1:29 PM

Day 1 Institute Survey

Day 1 Institute Survey

As part of the study, Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students, please complete this survey after the summer institute.

There is no risk directly associated with this survey, but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at Eastern Kentucky University will be kept in a secured university protected google drive folder. Your responses and answers collected for research purposes will be stored, but presentation of your name and other identifying descriptions will be removed for reporting purposes. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

* Required

1. First Name *

2. Last Name *

3. What is literacy to you? *

4/28/22, 1:29 PM

Day 1 Institute Survey

4. What went well today? What activities did you like? What is one thing that changed or confirmed your thinking? *

5. What needs improvement? What suggestions do you have for our next meeting? *

6. How has today changed or confirmed your thinking about literacy application in your classroom? *

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Appendix C

Day 2 Program Survey

4/28/22, 1:30 PM

Day 2 Institute Survey

Day 2 Institute Survey

As part of the study, Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students, please complete this survey after the summer institute.

There is no risk directly associated with this survey, but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at Eastern Kentucky University will be kept in a secured university protected google drive folder. Your responses and answers collected for research purposes will be stored, but presentation of your name and other identifying descriptions will be removed for reporting purposes. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

*** Required**

1. First Name *

2. Last Name *

3. What is literacy to you? *

4/28/22, 1:30 PM

Day 2 Institute Survey

4. What went well today? What activities did you like? What is one thing that changed or confirmed your thinking? *

5. What needs improvement? What suggestions do you have for our next meeting? *

6. How has today changed or confirmed your thinking about literacy application in your classroom? *

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Appendix D

Day 3 Program Survey

4/28/22, 1:30 PM

Day 3 Institute Survey

Day 3 Institute Survey

As part of the study, Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students, please complete this survey after the summer institute.

There is no risk directly associated with this survey, but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at Eastern Kentucky University will be kept in a secured university protected google drive folder. Your responses and answers collected for research purposes will be stored, but presentation of your name and other identifying descriptions will be removed for reporting purposes. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

* Required

1. First Name *

2. Last Name *

3. What is literacy to you? *

4/28/22, 1:30 PM

Day 3 Institute Survey

4. What went well today? What activities did you like? What is one thing that changed or confirmed your thinking? *

5. What needs improvement? What suggestions do you have for our next meeting? *

6. How has today changed or confirmed your thinking about literacy application in your classroom? *

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

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Appendix E

Post-program Survey

4/28/22, 1:27 PM

Post-Institute Survey

Post-Institute Survey

As part of the study, Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students, please complete this survey after the summer institute.

There is no risk directly associated with this survey, but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Your research records that are reviewed, stored, and analyzed at Eastern Kentucky University will be kept in a secured university protected google drive folder. Your responses and answers collected for research purposes will be stored, but presentation of your name and other identifying descriptions will be removed for reporting purposes. We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law.

* Required

1. First Name *

2. Last Name *

3. What is literacy to you? *

4/28/22, 1:27 PM

Post-Institute Survey

4. How did the Adolescent Literacy Project shift your perception of literacy? *

5. How would you say literacy is integrated into your discipline and your classroom? *

6. Do you feel that the Adolescent Literacy Project helped to prepare you to teach literacy in your classroom? Why? *

4/28/22, 1:27 PM

Post-Institute Survey

7. If you could change something about the teacher institute, what would it be and why? *

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Google Forms

Appendix F

Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Facilitator Guide

Begin with the following:

1. Welcome the group, and tell them the topic.
2. Tell them that since this is a focus group, the facilitator's job is to guide the discussion but speak rarely. They should address their comments not to the facilitator, but the group as a whole.
3. Tell them that they should feel free to speak their minds.
4. Ask each member to answer the first question in turn; this encourages everyone to speak right away. That question is, "What was your perception of literacy before and after the program, and did the program help to shift this perception?"
5. After they each answer that question, ask the following questions to the group as a whole, in approximately this order. Feel free to ask participants to supply additional information, or to deviate from this question list as long as their focus remains on the general perception of literacy and the impact of the [REDACTED] LAT Summer Program.

Although the question list is fairly short, you should find it more than adequate for the relatively short amount of time we have.

Opening Script for Facilitator

Thank you so much for being a part of this discussion. We are interested in students' experiences in [REDACTED] LAT group. Specifically, we are interested in educator perception of literacy and the impact of the program. So, we are interested in your individual experiences in the summer program and the things in those classes that have confirmed or changed your thinking. And we're interested in your perspective. Your decision to participate or decline to participate in this study is voluntary, and you have the right to end your participation at any time without penalty.

We've developed a series of preliminary questions that we will start with, but we'll also let the tone of the group determine where the questions will go.

Before we get started, we have a couple of basic rules that we need to follow.

1. First, there are no right and wrong answers. We are interested in understanding your different perspectives. You're also encouraged to piggyback off the responses from others.
2. Your responses are confidential. None of your responses will be shared with anyone outside of this group and the researcher. Your responses will be kept anonymous otherwise. This session will be recorded, but the recording is to ensure accuracy. We may use quotes from this session in our final report, but your identities as participants here will be fully protected.
3. You shouldn't feel that you have to agree with everyone else in the room if that's not how you really feel. We expect that people will have different views. We must learn all about all the different views here.

4. You can feel comfortable saying positive and critical things. We're not here to promote a particular way of thinking about teaching. We just want to understand how the [REDACTED] LAT impacts educators' perceptions of literacy.

5. Fourth, please speak one at a time so that we can hear everyone's views.

Focus Group Question List

6. What was your perception of literacy before and after the program, and did the program help to shift this perception?
7. Prior to the program, many participants said _____ (use pre-program survey data) _____ regarding their perception of literacy, and at the close of the program this was said, _____ (post-program survey data) _____. What would you say accounts for the differences or consistencies?
8. Earlier in the pre-program survey, it was noted that you implemented literacy into your discipline in this way: _____ (use pre-program survey data) _____. At the close of the program, participants noted that _____ (post-program survey data) _____. What would you say accounts for the differences or consistencies?
9. In the post-program survey, participants said _____ (post-program survey data) _____ in response to the question, "Do you feel that the Literacy for Adolescent Teachers helped to prepare you to teach literacy in your classroom? Why?" Do you agree with these responses, and can you explain why you think participants said this in their responses?
10. What do you think was effective about the program?

11. What do you think needs to improve about the program?
12. What were some key takeaways from the program?
13. How do you think the program will change your practice?
14. How would you evaluate your experiences in the LAT program?

Appendix G

IRB Approval and Consent Form

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students



Institutional Review Board
Protocol Number
4701

Approval Valid
6/6/22-10/29/22

Key Information

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This document includes important information you should know about the study. Before providing your consent to participate, please read this entire document and ask any questions you have.

Do I have to participate?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. If you decide to participate, you will be one of about 20 people in the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

Where is the study going to take place and how long will it last?

The research procedures will be conducted at electronically and at Madison County Schools Central Office. You will need to come to Madison County Schools 3 times during the study. Each of these visits will take about 6 hours for the completion of each institute day.

The survey components of this research study will be brief and will require less than 15 minutes of your time for each of the five surveys. If you choose to participate in the voluntary focus group follow-up, it would require an additional hour.

What will I be asked to do?

This study will compile data based on the use of electronic surveys, materials developed and completed during the institute, and through a voluntary focus group interview administered to willing participants of the Eastern Kentucky University Adolescent Literacy Project.

Participants in this study will only be asked to complete electronic surveys before, after, and each day of their participation in the Eastern Kentucky University Adolescent Literacy Project Summer Institute. Additionally, there will be a voluntary focus group at the conclusion of the institute to provide insight into the effectiveness of the summer institute. Other than these data collection techniques, participants will be asked to participate as they normally would in the professional learning experience.

Are there reasons why I should not take part in this study?

There is no risk directly associated with this survey but taking part in this study is entirely voluntary and participants can exit the study at any point with no penalty. Participants will not benefit directly through participation in this study; however, this research will help to understand the impact of a disciplinary literacy institute on teachers' perceptions of literacy and how the Adolescent Literacy Project can shift that perception.

What are the possible risks and discomforts?

To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm or discomfort than you would experience in everyday life.

You may, however, experience a previously unknown risk or side effect.

What are the benefits of taking part in this study?

You are not likely to get any personal benefit from taking part in this study. Your participation is expected to provide benefits to others by helping to understand the impact of literacy training and evaluating and improving literacy training techniques in the future.

If I don't take part in this study, are there other choices?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except to not take part in the study.

Now that you have some key information about the study, please continue reading if you are interested in participating. Other important details about the study are provided below.

Other Important Details

Who is doing the study?

The person in charge of this study is Kevin Presnell at Eastern Kentucky University. He is being guided in this research by Dr. Todd McCardle. There may be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

What will it cost me to participate?

There are no costs associated with taking part in this study.

Will I receive any payment or rewards for taking part in the study?

You will not receive any payment or reward for taking part in this study.

Who will see the information I give?

Your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. When we write up the study to share it with other researchers, we will write about this combined information. You will not be identified in these written materials.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, any identifying information will be stored in a university password protected Google Drive folder.

However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court. Also, we may be required to show information that identifies you for audit purposes.

We will make every effort to safeguard your data, but as with anything online, we cannot guarantee the security of data obtained via the Internet. Third-party applications used in this study may have terms of service and privacy policies outside of the control of the Eastern Kentucky University.

Can my taking part in the study end early?

If you decide to take part in the study, you still have the right to decide at any time that you no longer want to participate. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study.

The individuals conducting the study may need to end your participation in the study. They may do this if you are not able to follow the directions they give you, if they find that your being in the study is more risk than benefit to you, or if the University or agency funding the study decides to stop the study early for a variety of reasons.

What happens if I get hurt or sick during the study?

If you believe you are hurt or get sick because of something that is done during the study, you should call Kevin Presnell at (859) 200-5823 immediately. It is important for you to understand that Eastern Kentucky University will not pay for the cost of any care or treatment that might be necessary because you get hurt or sick while taking part in this study. Also, Eastern Kentucky University will not pay for any wages you may lose if you are harmed by this study. These costs will be your responsibility.

Usually, medical costs that result from research-related harm cannot be included as regular medical costs. Therefore, the costs related to your care and treatment because of something that is done during the study will be your responsibility. You should ask your insurer if you have any questions about your insurer's willingness to pay under these circumstances.

What else do I need to know?

You will be told if any new information is learned which may affect your condition or influence your willingness to continue taking part in this study.

We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

Consent

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Kevin Presnell at kevin.presnell@eku.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you can contact the staff in the Division of Sponsored Programs at Eastern Kentucky University at 859-622-3636.

If you would like to participate, please read the statement below, sign, and print your name.

I am at least 18 years of age, have thoroughly read this document, understand its contents, have been given an opportunity to have my questions answered, and voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person taking part in the study

Name of person providing information to subject

Appendix H

Permission to Use School Grounds



April 12, 2022

Dear Mr. Presnell,

I grant permission for you to conduct your study, **Investigating a State Funded Disciplinary Literacy Institute in Kentucky for Educators of Adolescent Students**, using survey instruments, by compiling evidence of materials developed and completed during the institute, and through a voluntary focus group interview administered to participants of Eastern Kentucky University Adolescent Literacy Project that is being conducted on Madison County Schools grounds.

You have my permission to use Madison County Schools facilities as the site for collection of your data.

Good luck with your study,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Gilliam', is written over the typed name.

David Gilliam
Superintendent
Madison County Schools

Appendix I

Strategies used by the Program

Strategies	Description
Stand up, hand up, pair up	A cooperative learning strategy where participants get up and move around the room and engage with their colleagues. The participants stop and answer questions in a structured interaction at the instruction of the presenter
Turn and talk	A structured cooperative learning strategy where participants turn to their neighbor (or table) and work with their partners to discuss a prompt or question from the presenter
Thumbs up/down	A quick formative assessment to have participants agree or disagree through a show of thumbs up/down signs that indicates their perspective
Four corners	Each space (four corners) of the classroom is labeled with a specific response (e.g., strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree). The participants move to the space that most closely aligns with their perspective.
Power writing	Used to build fluency in writing in students. Think of three words or very short phrases to use for power writing. Write the first word on the board. Set a timer for one minute. Instruct the participants to write the entire duration. When the timer stops, the participants count how many words

they wrote in that minute and record them in the margin.

Repeat these steps with the next two words. Track over time to check progress.

Take a side

One debatable prompt is given to the participants. They move to one side of the room (or at some scale in between the two sides) to voice where they stand on the specific topic and then discuss the topic and try to get their peers to join their side.

Say something

The participants read a specific brief portion of the text and then look to their partner when they are done reading.

When both partners are done, they briefly discuss the passage and then repeat the steps until the entire passage is read.

Poems for two voices

Poems for two voices are written in two columns. Two participants read the assigned poem. Each participant chooses the column they wish to read. When words are on the same line, the participants read those words together.

Found poetry

Using a piece of text from the participants' disciplines, the participants create a poem using only words, phrases, quotations, or any piece of text that has been selected and rearranged from another passage.

Text annotation

A tool used by participants to focus on certain elements of the text to be actively engaged in what they're reading.

Different forms of text annotation exist, but they are used to add a specific purpose to reading.

Book Head Heart

Book Head Heart (BHH) is a reading strategy presented through the *Disrupting Thinking* text that encourages students to practice surface-level reading of a text. Using the BHH, students read and examine what is in the book, what is in their heads, and what is in their hearts.

Round Robin

Round Robin is a brainstorming and collaborative learning strategy where participants engage in academic discussion regarding a specific topic or prompt in a structured productive interaction.

Jigsaw

Jigsaw is a cooperative learning strategy that enables each participant of a "home" group to specialize in one aspect of a topic or a specific portion of a larger passage. The participants meet with members from other groups who are assigned the same aspect and, after mastering the material, return to the "home" group and teach the material to their group members.

Gallery walk

During a gallery walk, participants explore multiple texts, images, or posters developed by their peers that are placed around the room. This strategy can be used to encourage participants to share their work with peers, examine multiple historical documents, or respond to a collection of

quotations. The participants can also engage with their peers' work as they move around the room using sticky notes or other tools to add, take away, or questions.

Concept circle

The concept circles is a strategy used to help participants to analyze the relationships between content words or other content by using a circle organizer to determine the concept of study. The participants identify and discuss vocabulary and its relationship to content and then represent their analysis in the organizer.

Foldable

Specific paper assignments that ask participants to fold the paper in a purposeful way to interact and organize content. Different shapes of paper can be used for different words to engage with content using graphic organizer techniques.

Frayer model

A graphic organizer that helps students determine or clarify the meaning of vocabulary words encountered while listening, reading, and viewing texts

Appendix J

Resources Provided by the Program

- Anderson, J., Leech, T., & Clark, M. (2021). *Patterns of power, Grades 6–8: Inviting adolescent writers into the conventions of language*. Stenhouse Publishers.
- Anderson, J., Leech, T., & Durham, H. (2022). *Patterns of power: Teaching grammar through reading and writing, Grades 9–12*. Stenhouse Publishers.
- Beers, K., & Probst, R. E. (2017). *Disrupting thinking: Why how we read matters*. Scholastic Incorporated.
- Daniels, H., & Steineke, N. (2011). *Texts and lessons for content-area reading: With more than 75 articles from The New York Times, Rolling Stone, The Washington Post, Car and Driver, Chicago Tribune, and many others* (1st ed.). Heinemann.
- Grant, M. C., Fisher, D., & Lapp, D. (2015). *Reading and writing in science: Tools to develop disciplinary literacy* (2nd ed.). Corwin.
- Grant, S. G., Swan, K., & Lee, J. (2017). *Inquiry-based practice in social studies education: Understanding the inquiry design model* (1st ed.). Routledge.
- Kelemanik, G., Lucenta, A., & Creighton, S. J. (2016). *Routines for reasoning: Fostering the mathematical practices in all students*. Heinemann.
- Lent, R. C. (2015). *This is disciplinary literacy: Reading, writing, thinking, and doing . . . Content area by content area*. Corwin Press.
- Overturf, B. J. (2015). *Vocabularians: Integrated word study in the middle grades*. Stenhouse Publishers.

Templeton, S., Bear, D., Invernizzi, M., Johnston, F., Flanigan, K., Townsend, D.,

Helman, L., & Hayes, L. (2014). *Words their way: Vocabulary for middle and secondary students* (2nd ed.). Pearson.

Zwiers, J. (2019). *Next steps with academic conversations: New ideas for improving learning through classroom talk*. Stenhouse Publishers.