Disciplinary literacy research and practice in the U.S. and in Nordic countries

Co-author 1: Sari Sulkunen, University Lecturer, University of Jyvääskylä, Finland, sari.sulkunen@jyu.fi

Disciplinary literacy is concerned with the unique languaging and communication processes within disciplinary boundaries. As calls increase for better preparation of youth for the demands of learning in the 21st century, it is essential that we consider how this approach to teaching and learning impacts on the literacy and identity of adolescents. This presentation explores theoretical, research, and curricular applications of disciplinary literacy in the United States and in Nordic contexts. The presenters identify the possibilities and challenges of disciplinary literacy, while giving special emphasis to fostering critical literacy through disciplinary practices. Evidence from the professional literature and from the presenters’ own school-based data on the attitudes of social studies teachers towards disciplinary literacy and their related instructional practices are foregrounded (Brozo, Sulkunen, & Veijola, 2018). In particular, the presenters highlight practical enactments of disciplinary literacy in social studies, link these practices to theoretical and research underpinnings, and discuss their viability for endowing youth with the necessary critical literacy tools for navigating content domains.