Dalton, A., Wolff, K., & Bekker, B. (2021). Multidisciplinary research as a complex system. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20, 16094069211038400.

In their article, Dalton, Wolff, and Bekker (2021) aim to establish a foundational ontology for multidisciplinary research systems, employing principles from complexity theory. They assert that understanding multidisciplinary research as a complex system provides a novel framework for enhancing the design and development of collaborative research systems. This approach is seen as crucial for the ongoing optimization of collaborative research efforts.

The authors begin by distinguishing between multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary research, grounding their definitions in the Latin origins of these prefixes. Multidisciplinary research, derived from 'multus', involves various disciplines but is characterized by a lack of cooperative interaction among researchers, akin to a 'collection code'. This form of research is often considered the initial stage in developing collaborative research systems.

Interdisciplinary research, stemming from 'inter', signifies activities that connect multiple disciplines. This approach emphasizes cooperative and communal work among researchers from different fields, with more centralized control and active integration of diverse perspectives to address a predefined problem. The key distinction between multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research lies in the reciprocity and collaborative nature of the latter.

Finally, transdisciplinary research, from the prefix 'trans', implies a holistic approach that transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries and includes inputs from external entities such as industry, government, and community stakeholders. This form of research moves beyond academic confines to incorporate a broader range of perspectives and expertise.