

Zoltan P. Majdik

North Dakota State University
Department of Communication
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RG: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Zoltan-Majdik>

Current Position

2023-present Professor, Department of Communication, North Dakota State University

Past Positions

2014-2023 Associate Professor, North Dakota State University
2008-2014 Assistant Professor, North Dakota State University
2003-2008 Graduate Teaching/Research Assistant, University of Southern California

Areas of specialization

Computational Rhetoric • Language Modeling • Deep Learning & AI

Education

2008 Ph.D. in Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California
DISSERTATION: The Gene is out of the Bottle: The Communication of Genetic Complexity in Direct-to-Consumer Genetics
2006 M.A. in Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California
2003 B.A. in Communication and in English, University of Southern California

Publications & Talks

PEER-REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLES

2024 Yang, M. H., & Majdik, Z. P. (2024). Pathological liars: Algorithmic knowing in the rhetorical ecosystem of Wallstreetbets. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 54(3). <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2024.2343616>
2024 Majdik, Z. P., Graham, S. S., Shiva Edward, J. C., Rodriguez, S. N., Karnes, M. S., Jensen, J. T., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Sample size considerations for fine-tuning large language models for named entity recognition tasks: Methodological study. *JMIR AI*, 3, e52095. <https://doi.org/10.2196/52095>
2024 Graham, S. S., Shiva, J., Sharma, N., Barbour, J. B., Majdik, Z. P., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Conflicts of interest publication disclosures: Descriptive study. *JMIR Data*, 5(1), e57779. <https://doi.org/10.2196/57779>

2196/57779

- 2024 Graham, S. S., Harrison, K. R., Edward, J. C. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2024). Beyond bias: Aggregate approaches to conflicts of interest research and policy in biomedical research. *World Medical & Health Policy*, wmh3.608. <https://doi.org/10.1002/wmh3.608>
- 2023 Majdik, Z. P., & Wynn, J. (2023). Building better machine learning models for rhetorical analyses: The use of rhetorical feature sets for training artificial neural network models. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 32(1), 63–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2022.2077452>
- 2023 Graham, S. S., Sharma, N., Karnes, M. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2023). A content analysis of self-reported financial relationships in biomedical research. *AJOB Empirical Bioethics*, 14(2), 91–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23294515.2022.2160509>
- 2022 Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2022). Associations between aggregate NLP-extracted conflicts of interest and adverse events by drug product. *Studies in Health Technology and Informatics*, 290, 405–409. <https://doi.org/10.3233/SHTI220106>
- 2022 Graham, S. S., Karnes, M. S., Jensen, J. T., Sharma, N., Barbour, J. B., Majdik, Z. P., & Rousseau, J. F. (2022). Evidence for stratified conflicts of interest in research contexts: A methodological review. *BMJ Open*, 12, e063501. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-063501>
- 2021 Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Barbour, J. B., & Rousseau, J. F. (2021). A dashboard for exploring clinical trials sponsorship and potential virtual monopolies. *JAMIA Open*, 4(4), ooabo89. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jamiaopen/ooabo89>
- 2020 Majdik, Z. P. (2021). Five considerations for engaging with big data from a rhetorical-humanistic perspective. *Poroi*, 16(1)
- 2020 Duchsherer, A., Jason, M., Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2020). Immunized against science: Narrative community building among vaccine refusing/hesitant parents. *Public Understanding of Science*, 29(4), 419–435. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963662520921537>
- 2020 Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., Clark, D., Kessler, M. M., & Hooker, T. B. (2020). Relationships Among Commercial Practices and Author Conflicts of Interest in Biomedical Publishing. *PLoS ONE*, 15(7). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0236166>
- 2020 Graham, S. S., Majdik, Z. P., & Clark, D. (2020). Methods for Extracting Relational Data from Unstructured Texts Prior to Network Visualization in Humanities Research. *Journal of Open Humanities Data*, 6(8). <https://doi.org/10.5334/johd.21>
- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2019). A Computational Approach to Assessing Rhetorical Effectiveness: Agentic Framing of Climate Change in the Congressional Record, 1994–2016. *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 28(3), 207–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10572252.2019.1601774>
- 2012 Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2012). The Place of Religion in Habermas’s Transformed Public Sphere. *Argumentation and Advocacy*, 49(2), 138–141
- 2012 Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2012). Selling Certainty: Genetic Complexity and Moral Urgency in Myriad Genetics’ BRAC Analysis Campaign. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 42(2), 120–143
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P., & Keith, W. M. (2011). Expertise as argument: Authority, democracy, and problem-solving. *Argumentation*, 25(3), 371–384
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P., & Keith, W. M. (2011). The problem of pluralistic expertise: A Wittgensteinian approach to the rhetorical basis of expertise. *Social Epistemology*, 25(3), 275–290
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P., Platt, C. A., & Meister, M. (2011). Calculating the weather: Deductive reasoning and disciplinary telos in cleveland abbe’s rhetorical transformation of meteorology. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 97(1), 74–99
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P. (2011). On delimiting rhetorical invention in biopolitics: A rejoinder to lynch. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 14(2), 379–389
- 2009 Majdik, Z. P. (2009). Judging direct-to-consumer genetics: Negotiating expertise and agency in public biotechnological practice. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 12(4), 571–605
- 2008 Majdik, Z. P., Kephart III, J. M., & Goodnight, G. T. (2008). The Presidential Debates of 2004: Contested Moments in the Democratic Experiment. *Controversia*, 6(1)

PEER-REVIEWED CHAPTERS, ENCYCLOPEDIA ENTRIES, & PROCEEDINGS

- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2019). When expertises clash: (Topic) modeling stasis about complex issues across large discursive corpora. In *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Science* (1st ed., pp. 308–318). Routledge
- 2014 Majdik, Z. P. (2014). Biological citizenship. *Encyclopedia of Health Communication* (pp. 105–106). Sage
- 2009 Majdik, Z. P. (2009). Between morality and ethics: Risk and argument in direct-to-consumer genetics. S. Jacobs & M. Zarefsky (Eds.), *Concerning argument: Selected papers from the 15th Biennial Conference on Argumentation* (pp. 495–505). National Communication Association
- 2006 Majdik, Z. P. (2006). Quo vadis, political debate? Truth-telling through comedy in Jon Stewart’s Crossfire appearance. P. Riley & M. Zarefsky (Eds.), *Engaging Argument: Proceedings of the NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation* (pp. 394–401). National Communication Association

OTHER ACADEMIC PUBLICATION GENRES

- 2025 Graham, S. S., Grundy, Q., Sharma, N., Shiva, J., Barbour, J., Rousseau, J., Majdik, Z. P., & Bero, L. (2025). *COI policy scoping review data set* (Version 2). Texas Data Repository. <https://doi.org/10.18738/T8/PICRQT>
- 2024 Majdik, Z. P., & Graham, S. S. (2024). Rhetoric of/with AI: An introduction. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, 54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02773945.2024.2343264>
- 2016 Majdik, Z. (2016). Expertise as practice: A response to DeVasto. *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 5(11), 1–6
- 2016 Majdik, Z. P. (2016). On rhetoric between science and society [lead review essay]. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 19(1), 91–108
- 2012 Majdik, Z. (2012). Reply to Derek Ross’“Ambiguous Weighting and Nonsensical Sense”. *Social Epistemology Review and Reply Collective*, 1–5
- 2005 Majdik, Z. P. (2005). Power Without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action [book Review]. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 8(3), 532–534

PRESENTATIONS

- 2025 Colombini, C. L., & Majdik, Z. P. (2025). *Linguistic invention and the commonplaces of ‘nature’ in environmental advocacy* [Presentation]. @ Western Communication Association, Albuquerque, NM
- 2024 Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Rhetorical alignment of AI systems* [Featured talk]. @ Max Planck Institute/University of Tübingen/Rhet AI Center’s Persuasive Algorithms: The Rhetorics of Generative AI, Tübingen, Germany
- 2024 Dadzie, E. M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Fact-check or play? Rhetorical strategies for intervening in medical conspiracy theories*. @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA
- 2024 Majdik, Z. P., & Dadzie, E. M. (2024). *Inverting language models as method for rhetorical analysis* [Panel presentation]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA
- 2024 Majdik, Z. P. (2024). *Distant reading through the looking glass: Language modeling as a mode of rhetorical analysis*. @ Rhetoric Society of America, Denver, CO
- 2023 Majdik, Z. P., & Dadzie, E. (2023). *The meteoric (but maybe not metaphoric) rise of ChatGPT: An experimental approach to testing RLHF-based llms’ ability to persuade with metaphors* [Panel presentation]. @ National Communication Association, National Harbor, MD
- 2023 Majdik, Z. P. (2023). *Adaptability in rhetorical ecologies*. @ Rhetoric Society of Europe, Tübingen, Germany
- 2022 Yang, M., & Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Pathological buyers: Algorithmic knowing and sense-making in the rhetorical ecology of wallstreetbets*. @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA
- 2022 Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Panel: Re-parsing public address: Computational objects, methods, and ethics in*

- 2022 rhetorical studies [Panel discussion]. @ National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA
 Majdik, Z. P. (2022). *Rhetorical patterns of global health crises*. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD
- 2021 Majdik, Z. P. (2021). *Metaphor progression in public discourses about COVID-19*. @ National Communication Association, Seattle, WA
- 2020 Majdik, Z. P., & Wynn, J. (2020). *Machine/deep learning of complex rhetorical structures in scientific discourses: Is it doable?* @ National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD
- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Replication in the humanities. (More why than how.)* [Panel presentation]. @ Central States Communication Association, Omaha, NE
- 2019 Graham, S. S., Clark, D., & Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Transparency to visibility (TzV): Digital resistance and the medical-industrial complex* [Non-presenting author]. @ Digital Frontiers, Austin, TX
- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Computing the grotesque*. @ Rhetoric Society of Europe, Gent, Belgium
- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2019). *Computational approaches to rhetoric: What are they good for?* @ National Communication Association, Baltimore, MD
- 2017 Majdik, Z. P. (2017). *Summary remarks: On trust in science*. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Dallas, TX
- 2015 Majdik, Z. P. (2015). *Rhetorical dynamics of framing agency and choice in climate change policy discourse*. @ National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV
- 2015 Majdik, Z. P. (2015). *Distributed agency and disembedded expertise in an age of applied genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV
- 2014 Majdik, Z. P. (2014). *How to make rhetorical analyses salient to practicing scientists: A few suggestions*. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL
- 2013 Platt, C. A., & Majdik, Z. P. (2013). *Digital voices in an age of artificial intelligence: IBM's Watson and the disturbance of traditional apodictic/phronetic sources of argument* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2011). *Fight or flight: X-ray backscatter scanning and the question of expertise* [Competitive paper]. @ ARSTM Pre-Conference at National Communication Association, New Orleans, LA
- 2011 Majdik, Z. P., & Waisanen, D. (2011). *The challenge of institutional incoherence to the idea of reasoned argument: Argumentation as and in institutional contexts* [Competitive paper]. NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2010 Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2010). *Selling certainty: Genetic complexity, moral urgency, and the gendered body in Myriad Genetics' BRACAnalysis campaign* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA
- 2010 Majdik, Z. P., & Platt, C. A. (2010). *Rhizomic rhetoric in the key of Aristotle and Vico: Moral argument in the institutional domains of science and technology* [Panel presentation]. @ National Communication Association, San Francisco, CA
- 2010 Majdik, Z. P. (2010). *'Broken heart' models and Gaussian copulas: Implications of Vico's view of mathematics for rhetorical criticism* [Competitive paper]. @ Rhetoric Society of America, Minneapolis, MN
- 2010 Platt, C. A., Majdik, Z. P., & Meister, M. (2010). *Spending for a rainy day: Latent polysemy and the rhetoric of consumerism in contemporary weathercasting* [Competitive paper]. @ Rhetoric Society of America, Minneapolis, MN
- 2019 Majdik, Z. P. (2009). *The myriad problem(s) of genetic biotechnology: Problematizing 'expertise' in commercial genetic biotechnology* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2009 Majdik, Z. P. (2009). *Looking for legitimacy: Deficiencies of justification in direct-to-consumer genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL
- 2008 Majdik, Z. P. (2008). *Shaking the genetic foundation: Translating complex genetic science into everyday biotechnological practice* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San

- Diego, CA
- 2007 Majdik, Z. P. (2007). *Fortuna's threat: Machiavellian virtù vs. the recalcitrance of an external reality* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL
- 2007 Majdik, Z. P. (2007). *Between morality and ethics: Argument in direct-to-consumer genetics* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2007 Goodnight, G. T., Majdik, Z. P., & Kephart III, J. M. (2007). *Presidential debates as public argument* [Competitive paper]. NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2006 Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *The virtue of argument: Discourse ethics as an axiological foundation of informed consent for genetic services* [Competitive paper]. @ International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA), Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2006 Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *Mystification v. mystery: Burke's poetic rationalization as a rhetorical mode of ethical action* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX
- 2006 Majdik, Z. P. (2006). *From abstraction to application: On the deliberate controlling of controversy in the human genome project* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, San Antonio, TX
- 2005 Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Some serious fun: Truth-telling and comedy in Jon Stewart's 'crossfire' appearance* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Boston, MA
- 2005 Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Quo vadis, political debate? Truth-telling through comedy in Jon Stewart's Crossfire appearance* [Competitive paper]. @ NCA/AFA Alta Conference on Argumentation, Alta, UT
- 2005 Majdik, Z. P. (2005). *Powerful publics: Public discourse and direct democracy in Switzerland's 'Yes to Europe!' referendum* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Boston, MA
- 2004 Majdik, Z. P. (2004). *Cross-cultural comparison of speech communication studies in Europe and the United States* [Competitive paper]. @ National Communication Association, Chicago, IL

Grants

- 2023 **Co-PI, with Shuning Lu (PI)**
Summer Institute in Computational Social Science – NDSU
Amount awarded to grant: \$10,700
- 2022 **Co-PI, with Shuning Lu (PI)**
Summer Institute in Computational Social Science – NDSU
 Funded by SICSS (with core sponsors: Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Russell Sage Foundation, Facebook, and SSRC (Social Science Research Council))
Amount awarded to grant: \$15,000
- 2020-2024 **MPI (NDSU), with S. Scott Graham (Contact MPI, UT-Austin), Justin F. Rousseau (MPI, UT-Austin), & Joshua Barbour (MPI, UT-Austin)**
A Network Science Approach to Conflicts of Interest: Metrics, Policies, and Communication Design
 Funded by National Institute of General Medical Sciences/National Institutes of Health (NIH)
 Award No. R01 GM141476
Amount awarded to grant: \$832,304
- 2020-2022 **Senior personnel/Lead, Communication & Dissemination Group**
NDSU EPSCoR Track-1 (ND-ACES)
 National Science Foundation (NSF EPSCoR Research Infrastructure)
Amount awarded to grant: \$20,000,000
- 2016-2019 **Senior personnel/Lead, Communication & Dissemination Group**
NDSU EPSCoR Track-1 (INSPIRE-ND)
 National Science Foundation (NSF EPSCoR Research Infrastructure)

Amount awarded to grant: \$20,000,000

Consulting

- 2024-present **Consultant | Center for Public Health Research @ Temple University School of Law.**
Primary consulting responsibility: advice and implementation assistance for development of AI/LLM-driven tool in the Monqle legal research platform.
- 2018-2019 **Consultant | Contract paid from National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Grant HAA-261070-18**
Transparency to Visibility (TzV): Network Visualization in Humanities Research
PD: Scott Graham, & co-PD: Dave Clark
Primary consulting responsibility: build computational framework for automated relationship extraction from unstructured text data.
Amount awarded to grant: \$80,649

Teaching

UNDERGRADUATE COURSES:

- Rhetoric (various foci)
- Persuasion
- Public Speaking
- Data Visualization Across Communication Industries
- Communication Ethics & Law
- Argumentation & Advocacy
- Rhetoric of Ideas, Ideology, & Propaganda
- Communication Criticism

GRADUATE COURSES:

- Rhetoric (various foci)
- Communication Theory

Graduate Advising

AS ADVISOR:

- i/p Wangari Githua
- i/p Melissa Bartels
- 2023 Ian Berry
- 2022 Ezzat Haider
THESIS: The Use of Rhetorical Frames to Create Hope during Wars and Genocides: The case of the Yezidi Women
- 2020 Malcolm Jason, Ph.D.
THESIS: A Rhetorical Consideration of Christian Nationalism, Secular Society, and the Need for a Civic Religious Pluralism
- 2018 Lora Meredith, M.A.
THESIS: Pentadic Analysis of a Wyoming TV Show: The Rhetoric of Scene and Agency and Its Impact on Native American Communities.
- 2016 Benjamin Walton, M.A.

2016	Gunther-Michael Jaehnl, M.A.
2014	Keith Bistodeau, M.A. THESIS: A Historical Perspective Framed Content Analysis Investigation of Persuasive Shifts Present in Interstate Oratorical Association Final Round Speeches.
2013	Jaishikha Nautiyal, M.A. THESIS: Rhetorical Agency in the Baghavad Gita
2012	Ramya Chandrasekaran, M.A. THESIS: The Hindutva Movement: A Burkean Analysis of Violence as Retributive Justice
2009	David Chaganava, M.A. THESIS: Communication Technology and the Changing Face of Rhetorical Persuasion in Emerging Democratic Systems: The Case of Georgia.

AS COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Note: may be incomplete

i/p	Peter Lindmark
2022	Erik Gustafson, Ph.D.
2019	Curtis Sullivan, Ph.D.
2019	Robert Becker, Ph.D.
2017	Joshua Parcha, Ph.D.
2017	Bryce Tellmann, M.A.
2015	Megan Even, M.A. (English)
2014	Michael Jones, M.A.
2013	Marney Mathiasen, M.A.
2013	Kay Beckerman, M.A.
2013	Jessica Rick, M.S.
2013	Michelle Kramlich, M.S.
2012	Matthew Attansay, Ph.D.
2011	Shelly Stowman, Ph.D.
2010	Najla Ghazi Amundson, Ph.D.
2009	Jennifer Reiersen, Ph.D.

Administrative Responsibilities

2022-present	Public Speaking Course Director, NDSU Department of Communication
2017-2023	Director of Graduate Studies, NDSU Department of Communication

Service to the University

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

2024-present	AI research group, co-chair
2023-present	I.T. council, member
2018-present	Institutional Review Board, vice chair and member
2023-2024	Task force on Graduate Health Insurance, co-chair
2021-2024	Graduate Council, member
2017	Provost Ad-Hoc Committee on Academic Misconduct, member
2016	Special Grievance Committee, chair
2014-2018	Institutional Review Board, member

2013-2014	Institutional Review Board, alternate
2013-2014	Diversity Committee, member
2011, 2012	NDSU Graduate Methods Conference, co-organizer
NDSU COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES	
2023	Task force on Graduate Tuition Waivers, chair
NDSU COLLEGE OF ARTS, HUMANITIES, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES	
2019-2022	Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2016-2017	Budget Advisory Group, member
2015-2016	Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2014	Search Committee (Director for International Studies), member
2012-2013	Curriculum Committee, member
NDSU DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION	
2025	Search Committee (tenure-line), chair
2022	Search Committee, member
2017-2018	Promotion and Tenure Committee, member
2016-2017	Promotion and Tenure Committee, chair
2012-present	Graduate Committee, member and chair (since 2017)
2015	Search Committee (tenure-line), chair
2014-present	Curriculum Committee, member
2013-2014	Scholarship and Awards Committee
2011-2012	Curriculum Committee, chair
2011-2012	Search Committee (tenure-line), member
2010-2011	Assessment Committee, co-chair
2010-2011	DCE Committee, member
2009-2016	Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honors Society, advisor
2009-2010	Graduate Committee, member
2009-2010	Scholarship and Awards Committee, member
2008-2009	Search Committee (tenure-line), member

Service to the profession

EDITORIAL WORK

2025-present	Editorial board member, <i>Review of Communication</i> “
2016-2017	Editorial board member, <i>CSTAND</i>
2012-2013	Editorial consultant, <i>Communication Studies</i>
est. 2007	Editorial graduate assistant, <i>Argumentation & Advocacy</i>

REVIEWING, AD HOC

Argumentation & Advocacy
 Behavior Research Methods
 Communication Studies
 Communication Theory
 CSTAND
 European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology
 Informal Logic
 National Science Foundation (STS program)
 Social Epistemology

Rhetoric & Public Affairs
Rhetoric of Health & Medicine
Rhetoric Society Quarterly
Technical Communication Quarterly
World Medical & Health Policy
Written Communication

REVIEWING, CONFERENCES

NCA, Association for the Rhetoric of Science, Technology, and Medicine (ARSTM)
ARSTM, Preconferences at NCA, RSA

OTHER

2025-present	Steering committee, RhetAI coalition
2020-2022	NCA Doctoral Education Committee
2018	President, Association for the Rhetoric of Science, Technology, & Medicine (ARSTM)