

# READING IN ORDER TO TEACH READING

Processive literacy as a model for overcoming difficulties

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## Abstract

This article focuses on the transition of preservice teachers from reading a novel to the stage of teaching it. The goal of this study was to map the difficulties that preservice teachers encounter in the learning stage and in the transition to teaching; based on the findings, we offer a model of processive literacy as the basis for a curriculum focused on how to overcome the challenges inherent to the reading of literary texts. The model consists of three branches under the umbrella of processive literacy: (1) generic literacy (2) disciplinary literacy (3) poetic literacy. Learning-teaching model for the genre of novel seeks to turn the learner-reader into a reading-learner.

Keywords: literature, reading habits, preservice teachers, learning and teaching, processive literacy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mark Twain declared, 'The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read.' This article focuses on the transition of preservice teachers from studying the genre of novel to the stage of teaching it as a seminal point. Preservice teachers is a term used to describe student teachers who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program which leads to teacher certification. The program includes a module of supervised, field-based teaching, which students complete with the support and mentorship of university faculty. A review of preservice teachers' portfolio and in-depth interviews reveals that preservice teachers wishing to specialize in teaching literature lack the habit of reading novels and the tools with which to prepare for teaching this genre. It seems that students specializing in literature concur with the importance attributed to reading, but they do not read much themselves, whether due to technical reasons, such as time constraints, or as a result of reading habits that have not been sufficiently nurtured (Tohar, 2004). Following an earlier pioneering study (Levin, 2016), and based on previous studies on the topic of students' and preservice teachers' reading habits (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; 2014; Danielson & Rogers, 2000; De-Malach & Poyas, 2018), the focus of the current study is on the transition from reading to teaching and the technical, cognitive, and emotional difficulties preservice teachers encounter in this process. In the second part of the article, we propose a model of processive literacy as the foundation for designing a curriculum that addresses and helps preservice teachers overcome the difficulties identified.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 *The reader, the teacher and the reading teacher*

In his article entitled 'The pedagogical value of novel reading', Wardner (1906) gives his opinion about the connection that does and should exist between the book, the education system and the child reader, where he emphasises the intellectual, emotional and voluntary forces. His treatment strengthens the sense that despite the great lapse in time, the topic is still relevant. After all, reading is not a passive activity, and the function of literature is our fraught efforts to understand the world (Iser, 1978).

Studies on reading habits have tended to distinguish between adults and children, and in general, it was found that as people grow older, they read less frequently (Eshel & Gilad, 1997; Ponimovsky & Tal, 1987). Most studies on reading processes among adults have looked at the degree of pleasure, especially in the context of the digital culture (Dillon, 1992; Jabr, 2013; Mullis, Martin, Gonzales & Kennedy, 2003; Moje, Overby, Tysvaer, & Morris, 2008; Roche, 2004). Unlike the studies on adult reading, in most studies in which the subjects were children, the researchers sought to examine the correlation between reading books and acquisition of langu-

age knowledge (Ben Zvi & Primor, 2011; Cullinan, 2000; Morrow, 1992), and reading comprehension (Aram, 2006; Bentin, 1992; MacLean & Chapman, 1989). In a study on recreational reading and television viewing, researchers found that children of elementary-school age spend little time on recreational reading and a lot of time watching television (Mullis et al., 2003). Moje (2006) found that motivation to read during secondary-school is a significant factor that affects literacy. Literacy is a set of tangible skills—particularly the cognitive skills of reading and writing—that are independent of the context in which they are acquired and the background of the person who acquires them. According to the UNESCO report (2006), literacy includes four discrete aspects: literacy as an autonomous set of skills; applied, practised and situated literacy; literacy as a learning process; and literacy in relation to the textual discourse.

Layne (2009) sought to develop and cultivate the skills of pupils who are intrinsically motivated to read books, rather than those whose motivation is extrinsic, i.e. related to the teacher's demands. The strategies he recommended are designed for readers from kindergarten level through secondary-school. The obvious question of how the reading habits of teachers influence their role in encouraging reading in their pupils has been discussed in research, which found that only a reading teacher who loves reading can encourage reading among his or her pupils (Krashen, 2004). As Danielson and Rogers stated at the beginning of their article: *'Encouraging students of all ages to read is an important part of our mission as teachers if we teach in elementary or secondary school'* (Danielson & Rogers, 2000, 35).

In the realm of reading habits, students in general and preservice teachers at academic colleges of education in particular, have scarcely been studied, relative to other populations. Scholars from different cultural realms have examined students' reading habits in reference to their attitudes towards book reading, and identified a gap between the actual and the desired state of affairs: the students agree with the importance of reading but they do not read much themselves (Tohar, 2004; Applegate & Applegate, 2004; 2014; Benevides & Peterson, 2010; Granado, 2014; Jordan, 2014). When different levels of reading skills among students were measured, no significant differences were found between high-level readers and low-level readers in terms of the amount of time they spent on academic or recreational reading (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 1994). In another study dealing with the question of the place of recreational reading, a significant positive correlation was found between academic achievements and the amount of time preservice teachers spent on reading for pleasure (Gallik, 1999). Recently study deals with the language changes due to the shift from reading a literary text for pleasure to reading it in order to teach it (De-Malach & Poyas, 2018).

It is customary to separate students' recreational reading habits and their academic-scientific reading (De-Malach & Poyas, 2018; Jacob & Shor, 2010). One of the important studies on students' reading habits relies on the significance of this distinction (Mokhtari, Reichard & Gardner, 2009). The distinction between recreational reading and academic reading and the distinction between reading and viewing was

measured in terms of time. The research findings indicated that the students enjoyed surfing the web and watching television more than they enjoyed either recreational or academic reading. Despite these findings, the researchers pointed out that 60% of the participants declared that reading is a very important activity and they considered themselves to be good readers. The unanswered question in this important study was: '*If recreational reading is so important, why don't students read a lot in their free time?*' (Ibid., 611).

Tohar (2004) also pondered this question, as she summarised the insights of facilitating an academic course on encouraging reading for pleasure in schools. Most of the preservice teachers in her course declared reading books to be important, and that there was a connection between reading habits and teaching abilities. On the other hand, they did not turn to reading in their spare time. The two aspects - motivation to read and encouraging reading—reinforce the original assumption that only if the reading teacher loves to read can he or she properly encourage book reading at school (Danielson & Rogers, 2000; Krashen, 2004).

To this condition, researchers have added the assumption that, to encourage reading, the teacher should be involved in the reading process of his or her students (Cremin, Mottram, Collins, Powell & Safford, 2014). In their book, the aforementioned researchers present a two-phase project conducted by the United Kingdom Literacy Association. In the first phase of the project, which was in the form of a survey, 1200 elementary-school teachers answered questions regarding their knowledge and use of children's literature. The focus of the second phase of the project was on 43 of these teachers, and the ways they developed knowledge and used books to develop reading communities within the school. In addition to the presentation of the status of recreational reading, the study offers several strategies for increasing reading motivation. In the pedagogy of recreational reading, the emphasis is on the interaction between the child reader and the teacher reader, while taking into account the reading tendencies, preferences, and choices, as well as engagement and sharing. The issue of the teacher's personal recreational reading habits as a key to improving students' reading was addressed in a collection of narrative essays written by teachers who participated in a seminar conducted in Georgia University titled *Readers as Teachers and Teachers as Readers* (Commeyras, Bisplinghoff & Olson, 2003). These essays underscore the importance of recreational reading and the authors offer personal perspectives which enhance our understanding of the significance of learning to read. Both in the book by Cremin et al. (2014) and in the aforementioned collection of essays there is emphasis on the link between the teacher's recreational reading habits and the optimal knowledge and skills required for teaching.

Other researchers (Ball, Thames & Phelps, 2008; Cochran-Smith, Villegas, Abrams, Chavez Moreno, Mills, & Stern, 2015; Driscoll, 2005) have examined theories of learning in the context of instruction and teaching skills. Their common denominator is the assumption that the best way for teachers to acquire pedagogical and discipline-related knowledge is by gaining extensive experience accompanying

reflective processes (De-Malach & Poyas, 2018; Kennedy, 2004). In this sense, the research which takes into account teachers' reading habits in general and their professional training in particular, serves as point of departure for the current examination of the difficulties encountered by preservice teachers as they transition from studying the genre of the novel to preparing to teach it.

### *2.2 The research goal*

The overall goal of the study was to find the source and nature of the difficulties encountered by preservice teachers studying to become literature teachers, in order to offer an improved, learner-centred curriculum. Our research question was: What kinds of difficulties emerge in preservice teachers' reading of novels as they study them, as they prepare to teach them, and in the transition between the two phases? To refine and delve deeper into the issue, we pondered how it came about that although the novel is the most commonly read genre among the public (Adoni & Nossek, 2008), and despite the fact that reading novels is known to have pedagogical value (Wardner, 1906), preservice teachers do not engage in much recreational reading during their training (Levin, 2016). This question must be addressed, given that the education system expects teachers not only to be competent in teaching the genre, but also to act as agents of culture who encourage reading.

The significance of this study is the expansion of the pool of knowledge on reading habits and the integration of theory and practice in learning and teaching processes.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### *3.1 The research context*

The research was conducted in one of the 27 academic colleges in Israel that train teachers for the education system. In Israel, as in other countries, the core curriculum and the educational focus are dictated by the Ministry of Education. The teaching of literature in elementary and secondary schools is considered one of the core programs and is based on several principles that correspond to the age of the students. In elementary-school, literature is taught as part of Hebrew language arts module, which is designed to foster linguistic skills, including the reading of literature. An hour and a half per week are devoted to reading in the classroom as part process of teaching reading skills. In this framework, beginning with the first grade, at least four books must be taught through guided reading, and students must read at least 15 books per year independently. The cultivation of students' reading skills is carried out on several levels: (1) Encouraging free and enjoyable reading; (2) Strengthening reading flow, rate, accuracy, and reading for meaning. (3) Explicit introduction of reading comprehension strategies in different types of texts (Ministry of Education, 2018). The teaching of literature in secondary-school is based on two

principles: (1) Teaching according to literary genres, and (2) Teaching according to a theme. In each of these areas, the curriculum includes works of Hebrew literature alongside works of the world literature. In the area of teaching the novel in secondary-school, there is a distinction between teaching a classical novel, which is studied intensively in the classroom, and students' independent reading of four to six novels. This distinction is not a technical one: Intensive instruction provides a deep understanding of a central literary genre and the skills involved in learning it. Extensive teaching encourages the students to make reading part of their leisure culture and enriches their emotional and cognitive world (Ministry of Education, 2015). Ostensibly, teaching elementary-school literature focuses on literacy aspects, while teaching literature in secondary-school emphasizes the literary aspect. However, despite the differences in the curriculum according to the age of the learners, teaching literature in Israel is based on the following principle: Reading leads the learner to interpretation and comprehension of the text, and hence entails a personal experience in relation to the text.

### *3.2 Research type*

The present research is an interpretive research (Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2016), suitable in cases where one tries to understand a phenomenon and reveal factors and motives that were not considered important at the outset, and which in retrospect are likely to be revealed as central from the standpoint of the participants in the research and of the researchers.

### *3.3 Participants*

The research sample included twenty-four preservice teachers who were studying to become literature teachers in elementary-school or in secondary-school. These 24 participants were randomly selected from the 200 who students enrolled in the literature department. This number of participants was meant to serve as a representative sample of the students enrolled the literature department in this college. The participants, one man and 23 women (a gender imbalance that accurately reflects the student population of the college), were either in their second year (50%) or third year of the teacher-training program. Participants' age distribution was as follows: 10 of the participants were between the ages of 20 and 30; 10 others were between the ages of 30 and 40; and four respondents were over 40-year-old professionals retraining to become teachers. Participants' distribution according to program track was as follows: 14 of them were in the elementary-school-teacher track and the remaining 10 were in secondary-school-teacher track. None of the participants had any previous experience teaching in schools.

To observe the professional rules of ethics, prevent invasion of privacy, and protect the rights of the research participants, the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation and consent, were both clarified to the participants.

Furthermore, participants were promised anonymity and confidentiality, and that their decision or reluctance to participate would have no bearing on their course grade.

### *3.4 Data collection*

Two data collection methods were used in this study: (a) a portfolio of essays submitted by the preservice teachers as part of the requirements of a pedagogy course in which they were enrolled and (b) in-depth interviews using open-ended questions (Spector-Marzel, 2011) devoted to diagnosing the skills of reading and analysing a text given examples from their work, while they are coping with preparing to teach the literature genre. The preservice teachers were doing their practical training in elementary-schools and in secondary-schools as a part of their pedagogical studies. Using two data sources, combined with the critical review of the data conducted separately by each researcher, which was followed by a joint critical discussion of the data ensured the triangulation of the information derived and the reliability of the study and its findings.

### *3.5 Data analysis*

In both of the tools—the portfolios and the interviews—the preservice teachers were asked to describe freely how they coped with the teaching of the novels. Based on their descriptions, various kinds of difficulties were identified, as presented below. The first stage of the inductive analysis consisted of reading the content of the portfolios, in an attempt to find statements relevant to the research question. At this stage, each of the researchers worked separately, reviewing the data sequentially, to provide a broad and encompassing orientation, while keeping in mind the context in which the data were embedded. The second stage of the analysis consisted of rereading the interview scripts jointly a number of times, in order to identify and focus on recurring themes (Shkedi, 2010). All of the transcript data were read in sequence, to obtain a broad and general sense of the connections between the various concepts and motifs embedded in the data. Also, during this second stage we used the strategy of continuous comparison (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). By the conclusion of this second stage, several thematic categories had been identified and significant representative statements excerpted from the data were grouped according to the different categories. Next, we counted the number of statements in each category; based on these numbers, we determined the relative importance of each category (Mansfield, Beltman, Broadley & Weatherby-Fell, 2016).

## 4. FINDINGS

#### 4.1 *The difficulties revealed in reading a novel as a reflection of the learning-teaching model*

The difficulties preservice teachers have in reading novels in the study stage in preparation for their teaching are related to two different levels: (1) reading skills related to the particular genre of the novel; and (2) integrating the tools received in the earlier preparatory phase. Analysing the difficulties is part of an assessment of the current state of affairs and is not intended as a negative critique. Rather, it is an important and necessary first step in the effort to address the problem. Hence our goal is to understand the existing patterns (in relation to the model, shown in Figure 1) and work to improve the process.

Figure 1. *The learning-teaching continuum of imparting the habit of reading novels*

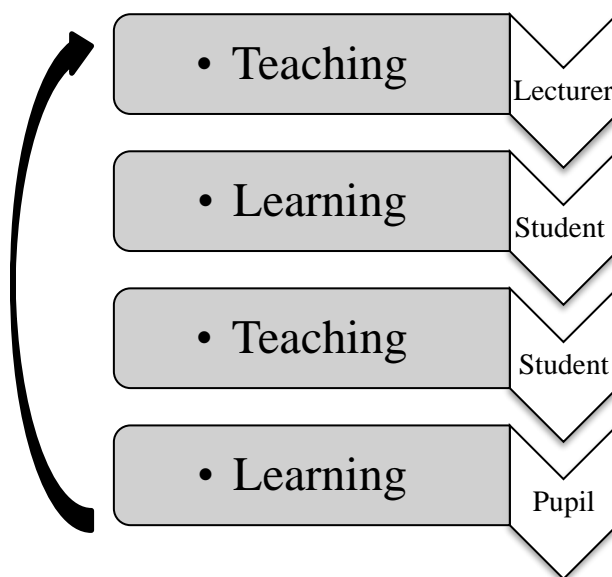


Figure 1 reflects the pattern detected by examining participants written responses. Based on this pattern, it appears that the first difficulties arise is the first study phase, as the preservice teachers struggle to move on to the next stages of the model, particularly that of teaching. Consequently, our focus is on the issues relevant to this stage and how they affect the potential ways to progress to the subsequent stages. Our underlying assumption is that each stage constitutes the foundation for the next stage, so that partial implementation of a stage inevitably impedes advancement to the next.



We should mention two trends in the teaching of literature as a professional discipline which are directly related to the difficulties that the learners encounter when reading fine literature. The first concerns the traditional approach to teaching literature and the second is related to scholarship in the field of literary criticism. According to Scholes (1985), the teaching of literature in schools and universities perpetuates the status of the teacher as the interpreter. The tradition of interpretation belongs to the teacher and not the pupil, and on the one hand, this view enhances the teacher's traditional power of interpretation, and on the other, it reinforces the learners' helplessness. Presenting the teacher as the interpreter does not give learners any tools to help them become more skilled readers, but rather deepens their silence when faced with literary texts and concepts. The second trend, which colours the entire field of literature studies, is the preoccupation with meta-text and meta-linguistic phenomena, whereas direct engagement with the text has been all but abandoned (Alter, 2001), and with it the pursuit of the experience of reading literature.

The relevant finding in our study focuses on the difficulties that are typical of the transition from studying the genre of the novel to teaching it. During the transition phase, preservice teachers are required to submit an essay demonstrating implementation of the tools they acquired, with special emphasis on the ability to analyse a novel and integrate it in their lesson plan. In the database we examined, we found that the difficulties that preservice teachers encounter as they transition from readers to teachers pertain to the following three dimensions: technical, cognitive, and emotional difficulties, as described in detail in the following sections.

#### 4.2 *Technical difficulties experienced during the transition from studying to teaching*

In the pre-reading stage, preservice teachers made claims such as: 'I don't have the time or the ability to cope with such a large number of pages'; 'In order to teach, you have to read a lot, I think, and that is not where I am'. The technical difficulties reflect the connection between the difficulty of reading and the difficulty of the conversion to writing. Five types of technical difficulties were commonly found in the transition from learning to teaching.

- i. *Lack of academic-level, foundational, genre-specific, literacy skills (87%)*: preservice teachers are not equipped with the skills to research bibliographical information about either the author or the work in question. Moreover, their search for the information was neither controlled nor methodical, and it became evident that they had difficulty synthesizing ideas and sources and conceptualization.
- ii. *An insufficient conceptual basis of the discipline studied (85%)*: A conceptual lexicon for analysing the novel was lacking, as were concepts studied in other courses, which should have been an integral part of preservice teachers writing style.

- iii. *Technical deficiencies in referencing sources (80%)*: the preservice teachers were not meticulous about compiling their reference lists. There were mismatches between the items mentioned through the work and the reference list at the end. Alternatively, a random list of references was added, the explanation given in the interview being 'we read these things and so we used them'.
- iv. *Deficiencies in outlining the essays collected in the portfolio (80%)*: The essays lacked a central argument that could guide the development of ideas. We found that preservice teachers skipped from one topic to another, without any guiding rationale. Issues were dealt with superficially: presenting claims were made without providing supporting examples from the novel (thereby creating vague statements); text segments were copied verbatim in the essay, without offering any interpretation; the essays lacked a critical perspective regarding the topic in question; and the summary provided was not informed by the earlier assumptions. Regarding the inability to integrate information from several sources, it appears that there was no presentation of any critique --either a critique of the work or a meta-critique of the literary criticism regarding said work (the three readings defined by Scholes (1985)).
- v. *Non-use of the Teacher's Guide (40%)*: The Teacher's Guide (TG) is a widely recognized source that serves a tool that for improvement of preservice teachers' professional performance (Baratz & Hauptman, 2012). The TG is a self-learning tool that offers discipline-specific and general pedagogical guidelines for teaching, which preservice teachers are expected to use according to their goals and changing needs. Neither in the interviews nor in the essay portfolio was there any mention of the use of this tool and one wonders whether this is because of carelessness, lack of knowledge, or lack of awareness.

#### 4.3 Cognitive difficulties in the transition from studying to teaching

Effective readers use the following strategies to generate information: reference to the structure and organization of the text; identifying the main idea; positing hypotheses about text content and seeking to confirm or refute them while reading; summarising the text; integrating prior knowledge with new knowledge emerging from the text; drawing conclusions while reading; and examining the use of imagery in the literary work (Ben Zvi & Primor, 2011). From the interviews, it emerged that the preservice teachers indicated the following difficulties in the stage of studying the novel and preparing to teach it:

- i. *A lack of intuition regarding thematic hints in the text (85%)*: Without being asked directly, students were unable to recognize or attribute importance to literary hints and devices. For example, 'there were details that I didn't really pay attention to while reading' and 'the lessons helped me relate to

minute details which I had overlooked and this helped me understand the characters'. Many preservice teachers spoke of crises while reading, because of a lack of understanding. One participant commented: 'It was the first novel I ever finished reading'.

- ii. *Difficulties in sorting and classifying* (85%): An examination of the portfolios that preservice teachers submitted revealed evidence of preservice teachers' difficulty in making connections between different parts of the plot, drawing analogies, and in inferring information from the implicit textual hints. They were also noticeably unable to discern what was important and what was less so, often choosing to focus on a minor point rather than on a major one. Finally, there was a lack of transfer of knowledge from the theoretical plane to the text.
- iii. *Lack of an overall perspective* (85%): Because of the above, a major weakness was the inability to gain an overall perspective of the novel. preservice teachers found it difficult to summarise the novel, theorise about the array of characters, and to identify the key issues raised in the text.
- iv. *Lack of critical reading skills* (80%): In most cases, there was copying rather than interpretation. They presented summaries or quotes from the novel, without any effort to interpret them, which would involve an element of critique.

#### 4.4 Emotional difficulties in the transition from studying to teaching

Regarding the obligation to read, preservice teachers initial attitude indicated a difficulty to connect to novel emotionally. One participant stated explicitly: 'Unfortunately, as a student of literature, reading becomes a punishment and an obligation and is not a pleasure'. Another participant explained her lack of interest in reading thus: 'I am not interested, because there are faster ways, such as television or a film version'.

- i. *The gap between the demands and the preservice teachers' world* (90%): The lack of motivation to read is affected by the obligation to read and it affects the reader's emotional connection to the text. In terms of the ability to experience the characters or draw analogies from their content world to that of the reader, the preservice teachers had obvious difficulties while reading.
- ii. *A low sense of self-efficacy about reading* (80%): Statements such as 'I feel that I was not given enough proper tools to study and teach a novel', or 'in order to teach a novel first I will have to read it' represent the sense of personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997). The speakers' assumption that their reading ability would improve depended on an external factor, which suggests a low sense of self-efficacy. Kass (2012) notes that in order for a particular behaviour to occur, the individual must believe in his or her ability to successfully perform that behaviour or set of behaviours, and this belief also affects the

ability to cope with difficulties encountered while performing that behaviour.

- iii. *Lack of tools to create an emotional connection to the text (87%)*: The preservice teachers lack knowledge about finding ways to connect the text to the learner's own lives. In this context, the preservice teachers related to the need to feel a connection with the text. One of the statements shows that the pupil's connection to reading novels and reading in general derives from the strength of the teacher's emotional connection: 'I always remember my homeroom teacher in high-school and how she taught literature with love, and that's actually how she managed to convince us to read long books'.

## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 *The transition from learning to read to reading to learn*

As a direct continuation of the findings of this study, we propose principles for constructing a teacher-education curriculum based on the preservice teachers' needs in order to become proficient teachers of the novel. A curriculum that openly addresses the difficulties identified in the current study is expected to pave the way for optimal implementation of the learning and a smooth transition to teaching. Given that same difficulties were identified among teachers of the various grade levels, we present the difficulties without distinguishing between the findings obtained from elementary- and secondary-school teachers. Consequently, the principles for constructing a teacher-education curriculum for teaching the novel are also the same regardless of the targeted grade level. These principles are based on common difficulties and offer common strategies for readers of different ages. However, it is important to note that the proposed principles constitute the basis for a curriculum and therefore will be implemented differently in each one of the grades. We believe that the teacher can take each one of the suggested strategies and implement it in teaching reading, whether in elementary-school or in secondary-school.

The study plan relies on Shulman's (1986) assumption that the knowledge and skills a teacher needs include content knowledge, general pedagogy skills, knowledge and understanding of the learners, knowledge of the learning contexts, knowledge of the teaching objectives, knowledge about values, and the philosophy and history of education.

Our proposed curriculum focuses on the principles of teaching how to study when it comes to reading novels, because this is the weak link that was revealed in our study. The focus of the proposed framework is to design a learning process that takes into account the preservice teachers' characteristics and needs, while guiding the process of competence development. The curriculum aspires to enable the future literature teacher to teach a novel based on four types of competences:

methodological, theoretical, meta-theoretical and contextual (Nygaard & Bramming, 2008).

At this point, we introduce the concepts that serve us throughout this discussion. Despite the proximity of these concepts, they are classified according to their particular purpose in the domain of reading habits, and particularly the reading of a novel.

#### *Processive literacy*

We use the concept of *Processive literacy* as an umbrella concept that conveys the reciprocal relationships among three types of literacy, which serve to instil reading habits that contribute to the ability to analyse and teach the genre of the novel, thus assisting in the transition from studying to teaching. The heart of the process lies in the desire to build a curriculum that provides the future teacher with insights and tools with which to cope with teaching novels. Data from both a previous study (Levin, 2016) and from the earlier part of this study demonstrate that there are challenges inherent to the process of reading a novel, which must be addressed in the process of teaching it to other learners. Building a curriculum that addresses the three types of literacy (described in the following paragraphs) means taking into account also the features of learning (Sabar Ben-Yehoshua, 1990): learning about knowledge acquisition, learning about adopting new thinking patterns and strategies, and learning about the self.

#### *Generic literacy*

Literacy is a 'generic skill' that is not limited to any particular field or subject, but rather helps people gain mastery and advance in all areas of life, enabling them to make decisions and handle problems effectively (Itzhaki, 2003). A literate person is one who knows how to generate his or her own answers based on the analysis of information from different sources, in contrast to the more simplistic approach that seeks to find or identify the correct answer based on a perusal of the source's content (Itzhaki, 2003). Schleicher (2010) presents the new features of current-day literacy. In her opinion, the demands of literacy have changed, and now involve reading for learning or the ability to find, understand, interpret, generate and communicate knowledge through written texts found in a variety of different situations and contexts. We can identify three main features in this definition: (a) literacy involves the use of diverse higher-order thinking skills such as locating, interpreting and generating knowledge; (b) literacy deals with texts; (c) literacy is expressed in a wide range of different situations and contexts.

#### *Discipline-specific literacy*

This type of literacy is based on several theoretical foundations and basic assumptions regarding the study of literacy and reading comprehension: comprehension

occurs at the juncture between the text, the reader, and the reader's actions (Moje, 2007). Discipline-specific literacy distinguishes between readers—not only in terms of their skills, but also—in accordance with Alexander's (2005) terms—between readers who use knowledge to understand and those who engage in intensive processing of the information by applying a series of strategies. Discipline-specific literacy means constructing profound knowledge and understanding within the discipline, by developing the conventional thinking habits that are considered suitable to the particular discipline (McConachie & Petrosky, 2010). Yet another component of discipline-specific literacy involves exploring and identifying ways to generate and transfer knowledge pertinent to a particular discipline. The advantage of this definition is the focus on thinking habits, i.e., the cognitive aspects that accompany the reading processes. However, the texts and how they are used remain beyond the purview of this definition; hence, it can be said to encompass only part of the literacy specific to the discipline. Another definition, proposed by Cynthia and Timothy Shanahan (2008), states that the concept of discipline-specific literacy refers to the skills and codes that need to be mastered in order to attain a comprehensive understanding of a given discipline. According to Moje (2007), discipline-specific literacy is always contextual and within the discipline, so that in fact it includes none of the components of generic literacy. Discipline-specific literacy is a combination of content knowledge and the ability to produce this knowledge, since knowledge cannot be transferred without the tools of language. Moreover, the power of knowledge lies in understanding how knowledge is generated and not just in the acquisition of the knowledge per se. In other words, the goal of discipline-specific literacy is to provide pupils with an approach and the ability to engage not only in deep thinking (Goldman et al., 2016) but also in the effort to create change—as part of the process of creating social justice (Moje & Speyer, 2008).

#### *Poetic literacy*

This literacy is typical of reading literary texts within a literary context. The discipline of studying literature involves 'placing centre-stage not the material one wishes to impart to the pupils, but rather the expected change in the pupils' behaviour ... training them to take an interest and choose the best literature to suit their personal taste' (Ha'efrati, 1973: 106; author's translation). In other words, emphasis should be placed on cultivating the aesthetic reader, on developing self-awareness as a reader, on the ability to understand works and explain and justify one's preferences in this field. These abilities may be termed 'literacy' which 'gives the individual the power to derive meaning from experiences, expand one's knowledge, express it articulately, and use it effectively to attain theoretical and practical goals' (Aloni, 1998: 235). Aesthetic-artistic literacy includes the sum total of the abilities that make a person a consumer of art, someone who chooses and shows interest, and who has the skills to derive meaning from these works. The curriculum presents the objectives and the ensemble of literary texts. Literature studies bring the learners in

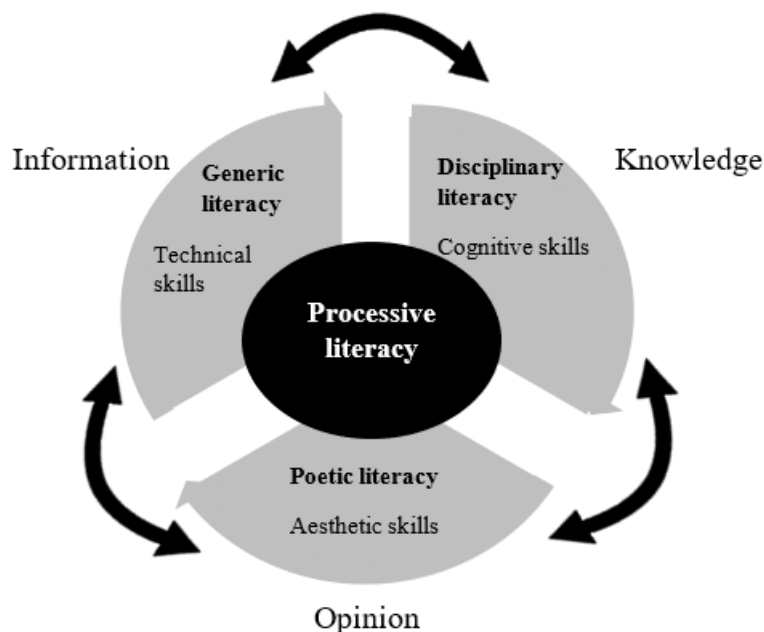
contact with the unique world of texts, which has its own conventions. Rosenblatt (1985) emphasised that reading literature is an aesthetic transaction between reader and text that involves the 'evocation' of the reader, while focusing on the aesthetic activities and internal personal processes. By comparison, non-literary texts invite an afferent transaction between reader and text, which means focusing on the text as leading to and conveying information.

We are aware that poetic literacy is means to encounter and cope with the literary text at a high level. In fact, as we explain below, teaching poetic literacy is intended to help the reader address the emotional aspects that come into play when reading literature and thus contribute to shaping the reader's experience. In addition, poetic literacy is related to the ability to express an opinion at a level that conveys highly developed educational thinking and learning skills. Therefore, we argue that poetic literacy is necessary not despite its high level but due to this level. Accordingly, poetic literacy should be integrated into elementary- and secondary-school teaching. As Peskin (2010) has shown, the teaching of poetic literacy requires a long and carefully structured process.

In the model presented in Figure 2, processive literacy encompasses the literacy paradigms described previously, as well as the types of difficulties identified in our study. Thus, we propose that generic literacy is related to technical difficulties; discipline-specific literacy is related to cognitive difficulties; and poetic literacy is related to emotional difficulties.

The conceptual basis of each of these types of literacy coincides with a different aspect in the field of education. The concepts, information, knowledge and opinion have been interpreted in various ways, and we do not intend to suggest a single definitive interpretation; rather, our purpose is to justify the distinction between these concepts and the link between each of these and the different types of literacy, as shown in the model. In line with Back (2016), we suggest that information is the gathering of details; knowledge is the gleaning of meaning from information, i.e. organizing the details in a manner that reveals the connections among them; and opinion one's general approach to a wide range of knowledge. Accordingly, the concept of information corresponds to generic literacy and the difficulties associated with it; the concept of knowledge is associated with conceptual difficulties encountered in the acquisition of discipline-specific literacy skills; and opinion requires poetic literacy skills, which are associated with emotional difficulties.

Figure 2. Processive literacy model



The basic assumption in the processive literacy model is that it is a multistage spiral process in which each literacy component informs another. As shown in Figure 2, each type of literacy can be the starting point for the entire process.

### 5.2 Principles of a curriculum to promote processive literacy

The curriculum that derives from the processive literacy model proposes inculcating learning methods connected to information, knowledge and opinions. In other words, we wish to propose learning strategies that focus on reading, understanding, and reader experience, in order to address the difficulties of reading a novel at the point of transition from studying the genre to teaching it. The principles drawn from the processive literacy model are also based on the understanding that the teachers are responsible for planning lessons that will enable their pupils to learn (Jordan, 2016).

For generic literacy, we suggest cultivating means of learning that promote reading. Two types of skills are needed here: the first refers to the ability to extract generalisations and abstractions, which serve the purpose of creating a comprehensive interpretation of accumulated information. The second type of skill serves the purpose of identifying and analysing specific aspects or literary devices, particularly in relation to a specific content and applying an appropriate strategy. Thus, the



students learn to weave connections between the world of the text and the world of the reader. The acquisition of these skills will make it easier to cope with the entry into the reading process and later on, the deciphering of the process in preparation for teaching.

- 1) *Teaching reading strategies.* It is important to engage frequently in close reading that elicits key issues from the text. Dyad reading also helps readers maintain their focus on understanding the text (Klvacek, Monroe, Wilcox, Hall-Kenyon and Morrison, 2017). It is also worthwhile choosing a passage that contains the qualities of a masterpiece. This approach applies Scholes' (1985) first principle of 'reading within the text'. From this proximity, we can bring to the surface the issue of coping with difficulties, which is another stage of constructing the coping process. Hence, we recommend openly confronting the difficulties mentioned.
- 2) *Encouraging the use of regulation processes while reading.* Similar to the regulation processes for writing (Kaplan, Lichtinger & Gorodetsky, 2009), we can help teachers or learners develop regulation processes for reading. Regulated reading involves a process of effective management of one's learning. This process has three stages: (a) setting goals; (b) making a work plan to attain the goal while applying relevant prior knowledge; and (c) Overseeing what happens during the learning. In other words, the learners examine their progress towards the goals they have set. Flexibility is important here, in order to change strategies during activities. In addition, we recommend augmenting reading regulation in the stages of feedback and evaluation, drawing conclusions and optimizing activities.
- 3) *Strengthening the connection to the reading.* Perceiving the teacher as a reader who shares the same self-perception with the pupils plays an important part in pupils' motivation to read, given that, as readers, pupils often draw their reading-related values, beliefs and behaviours from the role model that they find in their teacher (Cremin, Mottram, Collins and Powell, 2014). We are speaking of active reading, with a sense of engagement, a desire to understand the text, personal pleasure in reading and developing a sense of self-efficacy about it (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). The perception of self in reading and especially the motivation to read were found to be significant for literacy functioning (Moje et al., 2008). By changing teaching methods and stressing the content and teaching methods that are close to the pupils' daily routine, allowing autonomy and using effective strategies, it is possible to increase pupils' engagement and interest in the activity of reading (De-Malach & Poyas, 2018; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).
- 4) *Strengthening the reading-writing connection.* As a complementary step, the writing process must be enhanced, also in the stage of teaching readers to summarise as they read. As part of the discussion of the text, it is important to give the learners tools to gather material and summarise it in writing in the manner required.

For discipline-specific literacy, we suggest cultivating methods that afford in-depth analysis and interpretation of the text. To adequately meet the challenge of cultivating genre-specific reading habits, (in this case, the genre of the novel) we must map out any specific cognitive demands for literature, i.e. gauge the cognitive challenges that are apt to arise and examine how we can prepare learners to meet them, so that they will be able to cope with reading literary texts in general and novels in particular.

- 1) *Openly confronting difficulties.* It is important, for example, to have a discussion about why the students did not read the whole novel, and what difficulties they encountered while trying to understand what they read. The importance of such a discussion is that it reflects common difficulties and elicits suggestions of how to cope with them. Here the pupils' solutions are not the main point, but rather the awareness of individual and common difficulties before you offer them tools to cope with them. As Costa and Kallick (2009) put it: 'Not only are we interested in how many answers pre-service teachers know, but also in knowing how to behave when they DON'T know'.
- 2) *Relating to the reading in context.* We must relate to the different contexts in which the pupils act and understand the difficulty of moving from functioning in the immediate environment and managing familiar situations of daily life to functioning in an academic school environment. This shift obliges the pupils to cease relying on immediate contexts and begin to confront new and unfamiliar texts. Accumulated experience and knowledge enable pupils to succeed. Here it is important to identify the patterns and characteristics of the successful reader and apply various tools that will also help struggling readers cope with new and diverse texts.
- 3) *Affording reading the status of multidimensional learning.* This phase must refer to both the diachronic axis and the synchronic axis. Along the diachronic axis it is important to show the pupils where the literary work fits in terms of the timeline of the development and history of the genre, the historical backdrop of the novel's plot, details of the author's biography and any significant social events of the period. The synchronic axis will show the novel under a key theme or plot line shared with other novels.
- 4) *Dividing the reading into sections.* The cognitive load in reading is affected, among other things, by the textual mass, the reader must confront. Consequently, we recommend dividing the reading into sections taking the following into considerations: (a) create a defined structural division so that the pupils can prepare for it in advance; (b) make sure that each section of the reading ends so that it creates meaning; (c) enable the learners to continue reading independently at any stage.
- 5) *Encouraging interdisciplinary reading.* The interdisciplinary link can enhance comprehension of the novel and enables learners to make additional

connections. Alongside the performing arts, one may also connect to visual or plastic arts such as painting and sculpture, etc.

- 6) *Cultivating intertextual thinking while reading.* Teaching intertextuality as a reading strategy may strengthen the continuum between the various disciplines and highlight the contribution of the cognitive dimension to the reading process. Initially, one must cultivate the link between the text in question and other texts based on connections pertaining to genre, theme, motifs, language and so forth. For this, it is important to select a reading sample that highlights the way intertextuality functions and thus to create in learners the desire to spontaneously and frequently activate this linking ability. For the next stage, the idea is that the readers themselves reach this point of mindfulness (Langer, 2001). Here intertextual connections will be created through reading that is context-sensitive, attentive, and alert to information of different kinds that penetrates the readers' consciousness and is compared and connected to prior knowledge (Elkad-Lehman, 2007). Throughout the process, it is definitely worthwhile to encourage pupils to make their own personal connections and not just ones that are dictated from the top-down. In this manner the reading acquires significance that transcends the context of the classroom learning (Commeyras, Bisplinghoff, & Olson, 2003).

As part of the poetic literacy, we suggest cultivating means of learning that promote experience. The basic assumption is that for a literary text to be meaningful, it must portray and reflect aspects of life that the learners can associate with their own experiences. This dynamic, in which each party brings 'itself' to the encounter, turns the text into a work that has meaning for the readers, who may experience identification, rejection, empathy, embarrassment and so on. The very involvement of the readers in the reciprocal process of constructing the meaning of the text gives room for learners to bring their opinions, beliefs, traditions, and experiences into the classroom. This type of process highlights the reciprocal relationship between teacher as reader and reader as teacher (Cremin, Mottram, Collins & Powell, 2014).

- 1) *Informed selection of a novel to be studied.* The teacher must consider the difficulties pupils have and help them choose works that are close to their world. The encounter with an authentic text that is relevant to the readers' world gives them the will to read and makes the reading easier (De-Malach & Poyas, 2018).
- 2) *Having an open dialogue prior to the reading.* The dialogue is meant to address expectations from the reading, including the existence of emotional difficulties such as detachment from the world of the text. As mentioned, exposing these difficulties is a methodological tool with which to overcome them. We recommend making a note of the emotional difficulties mentioned in the pre-reading stage and checking to see how they are handled throughout the reading process.

- 3) *Cultivating the sharing of reading experiences.* In order to increase motivation to read and cope with the problem of emotional detachment while reading, we recommend allowing pupils a round of sharing their reading experiences every so often (Layne, 2009). This should be accompanied by the teacher's sharing of his or her reading experience, which serves to encourage involvement and sharing and is also intended to lead to a profound understanding of the text (Cremin, Mottram, Collins & Powell, 2014). The sharing is based on reading and interpreting the novel, while mentioning the difficulties encountered during the reading, so that they can be dealt with.
- 4) *Division into sections at climax points.* The scope of the novel also bears an emotional load. As mentioned, we recommend dividing the reading into sections in order to enhance comprehension. At the same time, the very division into sections may increase motivation to read and minimise emotional detachment while reading. In addition to the considerations presented in the previous section, here it is important to divide the text into segments in a manner that will motivate further reading. We recommend making sure that each section ends at a point that leaves the reader in suspense, wanting to know what happens next.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The curriculum for fostering processive literacy requires the formulation of a plan in which three focuses of activity come together. This is because it is only through the ensemble of generic, disciplinary and poetic literacy that a complete learning process can be achieved. As with any curriculum, processive literacy must be examined to see when the work methods are useful to how to involve the pupils in the work methods in this field (Moje, 2006). With this information, when there is, indeed a processive dimension to the transition from one literacy to another, it will be possible to cope with all the different kinds of difficulties—technical, cognitive and emotional. Presenting the difficulties is not intended to suggest helplessness, but rather to improve the existing situation now that its patterns are understood. Hence, based on the findings of the study, we have proposed a model of processive literacy composed of generic, disciplinary and poetic literacies. With this model, we have developed principles for a learner-centred curriculum intended to foster processive literacy. Beyond the development of the processive literacy model, the main contribution of this study is the understanding that only a curriculum combining all three parts of the model can enable the reader to overcome the challenges inherent to the reading of literary texts and turn the learner-reader into a reading-learner. The research also contributes to the creation of modelling in reading. This is done by focusing on the difficulties that preservice teachers encounter when teaching the novel and when transitioning from the role of a reader of novels to the role of a teacher of the genre. Thus, we propose training preservice teachers who read novels and who

can teach the genre properly and move from studying the genre to teaching it. Implementation of the processive literacy model is an important task that will also affect the school pupils these preservice teachers will one day teach.

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