



Integrating Popular Literary Forms into Academic Curriculum: Social Perspectives on Teaching Serial Fiction

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ABSTRACT

The study examines literary serials as a resource for contemporary literary education in the context of postmodernism and post-postmodern culture. The study addresses the gap between the growing popularity of serial texts among young readers and their limited representation in Kazakhstan's curricula, where the poetics of seriality is rarely analyzed. Using Liliya Kalaus's blog collection «The Hieroglyph of Life» as a case study, the study argues for the didactic potential of literary serials. The article proposes a model for integrating seriality into secondary and higher education. The methodology combines theoretical analysis of seriality and intertextuality with an anonymous survey of 172 respondents aged 18–35. The study also includes a pedagogical component in which the elective course “Poetics of Seriality in Postmodernism” was designed for undergraduate students. Structural, hermeneutic, deconstructive, and intertextual methods are applied. Survey results indicate that 50% of respondents prefer serial narratives, while 52.3% support the inclusion of literary serials in educational curricula. The pedagogical component demonstrates the applicability of Kalaus's blogs for developing skills in literary analysis, intertextual interpretation, critical thinking, and project-based learning. Key markers of serial poetics—mosaic composition, recurring characters, an open chronotope, genre contamination, intermedial references, and an interactive blog format—prove to be methodologically useful. The study concludes that literary serials can bridge mass and canonical literature and may contribute to the formation of cultural identity. Serials function as both scholarly objects and educational tools, integrating traditional and contemporary approaches. The authors advocate the systematic development of a theoretical-methodological framework to incorporate the poetics of seriality into national educational standards.

KEYWORDS

Literary serials; seriality; postmodernism; literary education; reading motivation; pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

The intensification of mass literature in the postmodern and post-postmodern cultural landscape has created a significant gap between readers' actual literary practices and the content of formal educational curricula. This gap is particularly evident in Kazakhstan, where serial fiction — despite its growing popularity among young audiences — remains largely absent from both secondary school and undergraduate programs. The study addresses this gap by examining the didactic potential of literary serials and proposing an evidence-based model for their integration into philological education.

The prominent presence of popular literature — including television serials — in postmodern and post-postmodern literary discourse reflects profound social and cultural transformations. As Chernyak (2021) notes, the study of popular literature as a cultural phenomenon is essential for understanding the evolution of 20th-century Russian literature. At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, artistic culture was marked by the blurring of boundaries between “mass” and “elitist” forms, as their narrative patterns interpenetrated. The period saw the emergence of works actively exchanging with classical texts through hoaxes, remakes, parodies, and serial forms. The main characteristic of this type of literature is its intertextuality.

The core feature of literary serials is their intertextuality, functioning as a multifaceted system of repetition. Intertextuality produces a dual-coding effect that appeals to both mainstream audiences and more sophisticated readers (Eco, 1996). Through varied intertextual forms, serials sustain attention and prompt secondary, often ironic or reflexive interpretations of the primary text. In the post-postmodern era, which fosters new modes of interaction and convergence among media, intertextuality evolves into a cultural hyperspace that brings literature, cinema, and digital platforms into a single field of context.

The genre of the literary serial (cycle, project) is in its formative stage and has not yet reached completion. If the literary process is understood as an endless paradigm change, the genre arguably has the potential to attain a dominant position and to transform into new forms (Moisi, 2017). Nevertheless, the notable popularity of such works suggests a need to study literary series and determine their place within the cultural context of the modern era and in pedagogical education.

Thus, the goal of this study is to substantiate the didactic potential of literary serials as objects of literary analysis and identify useful methodological models for integrating the poetics of seriality into higher education and, in the future, secondary education, using Liliya Kalaus's blog collection *The Hieroglyph of Life* (2019) as a case study.

Accordingly, this study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1. What are the defining genres and poetic markers that distinguish literary serials from other narrative forms in the postmodern and post-postmodern literary process?

RQ2. What are the reading preferences of young adults (aged 18–35) regarding serial and standalone narrative formats, and to what extent do they support the inclusion of literary serials in secondary and higher education curricula?

RQ3. What didactic strategies are most productive for developing students' skills in literary analysis, intertextual reading, and critical interpretation when working with serial texts?

RQ4. How can the poetics of seriality — as exemplified in Liliya Kalaus's blog collection *The Hieroglyph of Life* — be operationalized as a pedagogical model within teacher-training programs in philology?

Essential components of such teacher training include the ability to analyze works of different eras and genres and to recognize modern narrative forms within them. Among these are serial forms, which offer readers an extended, multidimensional engagement with the artistic world and foster intertextual competencies. By incorporating pretexts from national and world classics, serials introduce students to cultural heritage through indirect engagement and may foster interest in canonical literature. Contemporary literary series can serve as a bridge, leading adolescents and young people from the appealing plots of mass culture to more complex artistic texts, supporting their further intellectual and cultural growth.

Several studies on seriality in postmodern culture have shown that the literary serial is a product of a new reality characterized by cyclicity, incompleteness, and communicativeness. This format “organically fits into the structure of modern human life and corresponds to the rhythm of everyday life” (Pavlov, 2019, p. 560).

Literary serials, like television serials, create an alternative reality in which mass readers can immerse themselves and temporarily escape everyday life. Their appeal lies in the similarity between fictional worlds and the readers' dream worlds. This similarity fosters psychological involvement through empathy with dynamic characters — characters whose struggles are readily resolved and whose idealized traits encourage identification (Sabido, 2021). The serial genre thus functions as a stable and coherent narrative system that offers the recipient a sense of continuity and organic reality, producing an interactive effect (Safronova, 2006; Safronova et al., 2025). This inherent stability and engagement, combined with the genre's accessible narrative structures, make serial forms particularly productive for psychological and pedagogical work with adolescent and undergraduate audiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews scholarship in three interconnected areas: (1) theoretical conceptualizations of seriality as a literary and cultural phenomenon; (2) the role of serial fiction in the postmodern literary process; and (3) existing pedagogical approaches to serial and popular fiction in education.

Theoretical Foundations of Seriality

In recent years, many authors have increasingly turned to literary series, drawing on the multilayered structure of serial narration to sustain long-term reader engagement. Eco (1996)

notes that fully developed literary series emerged in the nineteenth century, when mass readership and the commercial appeal of fiction grew. Publishers supported sequels that quickly gained popularity, as seen in Dumas's continuations of *The Three Musketeers*, Cooper's *Pathfinder* novels, and Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* stories. Novel-feuilletons, serialized in newspapers and magazines, also flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thus, contemporary book series are not a new phenomenon; their novelty lies in the ease of production and dissemination enabled by digital technologies. Moisi (2017) argues that serials not only reflect but often anticipate social change, embodying the zeitgeist and closely aligning with current mass-cultural and media dynamics.

At present, literary scholarship offers an extensive body of research on textual seriality. Thus, the serial is defined as a mobile construct comprising relatively autonomous modules, interconnected by an observer—whether the author or the reader—thereby allowing a series of texts to be perceived as a coherent whole (Safronova, 2009). The serial is also examined through the lens of the aesthetics of postmodernism as a mechanism of repetition, which satisfies the reader through recognition; in particular, serials strengthen the bond between author and reader owing to the universal organization of the text, suitable for recipients with varying levels of knowledge of pretexts (Eco, 1996). Scholars associate the emergence of serial thinking with the increasing complexity of reality and the adaptation of texts to the perception of reality in smaller fragments (Tulchinsky, 2018). Research also addresses the interaction between serial texts and their original publishing environment (for instance, journals), since this influences reader interpretation and raises questions of textual unity and completeness (Todd, 2020). Any postmodernist text may be regarded as serial, grounded in intertextuality and repetition, thereby generating a simulation of reality through new connections between texts, devoid of clear chronology and completeness (Tyuleneva, 2004). Serials are thus considered symbols of a new culture emerging at the intersection of traditional and digital media, with an emphasis on their role in promoting cultural artifacts, experimenting with genre boundaries, and stimulating reading activity in the age of repetition (Chernyak, 2021). Safronova (2006) and Safronova et al. (2025) demonstrate that Kalaus's works engage with transitional mythopoetic characteristic of post-Soviet women's prose, further underscoring the cultural and literary significance of her serial texts as objects of scholarly analysis.

Serial Fiction in Pedagogical Practice

Serial fiction is becoming an increasingly significant focus of educational practice at both the school and university levels. Literary cycles, such as J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* or J. R. R. Tolkien's "*The Lord of the Rings*," represent not only a cultural phenomenon but also a powerful instrument for fostering sustained readership, shaping moral and ethical orientations, and cultivating readers' ability to engage with long-term narrative structures.

Pedagogical literature explores the use of serial and popular fiction in teaching. Yastremskaya and Nikitina (2021) argue that Rowling's *Harry Potter* series can motivate students to read, connect adolescents' interests with classical literature, and foster moral and

humanistic values among middle schoolers. Methodological studies also highlight the use of gamification in literature classes, in which fragments from science fiction and fantasy series aid critical analysis of characters, episodes, and textual structure (Nikitina & Semenova, 2022).

Smith (2016) emphasizes the pedagogical value of serial fiction in higher education, showing how interdisciplinary approaches link fantasy to identity, morality, and politics. Similarly, Randisi (2010) highlights the didactic potential of series books: students engage with recurring characters, narrative structures, and evolving plots, sustaining interest and emotional involvement while developing reading skills and critical thinking. More recent research also confirms the educational value of fictional narratives in higher education, showing that fiction-based learning strategies can support reading comprehension and collaborative engagement among university students (Mthimkhulu, 2024; Moloi, 2024; Moloi & Adegiori, 2023).

Seriality in Adolescent Literature and Reader Development

Contemporary scholars view serial literature as a narrative form based on continuation, repetition, and narrative complication, including multilayered and nonlinear structures (Safronova, 2009). The series creates an extended reading experience, revisiting familiar elements to deepen comprehension and broaden interpretation. Eco (1996) emphasizes that each subsequent text develops or reiterates what has already been said, ensuring both narrative and axiological continuity. Safronova (2006) similarly notes that serial structures cumulatively expand the fictional world, giving recurring characters and events new contexts.

Seriality is particularly relevant in adolescent literature, as characters often grow alongside readers, facing challenges and exploring identity. Key features of serial texts include intertextuality, complex worldbuilding, sustained emotional engagement, and cumulative interpretation. Wintersparv et al. (2019) highlight that serial works provide a “safe space of recognition” for adolescents during periods of change. Poetic strategies, such as the archetypal hero’s journey, motif repetition, and moral opposition, make series applicable for both character education and literary analysis. In teaching, serial fiction allows a vertical progression from plot comprehension to the analysis of symbolism, genre, and cultural codes, combining accessibility with academic depth.

Research Gap

The pedagogical studies reviewed above remain largely theoretical, rarely addressing the methodological challenges of teaching serial poetics in schools and universities — particularly in teacher training. The integration of this genre into curricula appears increasingly warranted, given its popularity among young readers and the emergence of works that meet established criteria of literary complexity and artistic ambition. This study aims to fill this methodological gap by moving from a theoretical description to a replicable pedagogical model, with a focus on adapting research on the poetics of seriality for use in higher education in Kazakhstan and in the training of future school teachers, equipping them with the skills to work with this new genre in the classroom.

METHODS

The study employs a corpus-based research design centered on the analysis and interpretation of literary texts and supplemented by survey data and pedagogical observations. The research is organized into three interconnected components: (1) textual and comparative analysis of seriality as a literary and cultural phenomenon; (2) analysis of survey data on young adults' reading preferences and attitudes toward literary serials; and (3) pedagogical application of the identified features of serial poetics within an undergraduate teacher-training course.

Research Design

The study adopts a corpus-based research design in which literary texts constitute the principal object of analysis. Textual analysis is used to identify and interpret the structural, compositional, intertextual, and genre-specific features of literary seriality, while comparative analysis is used to relate these features across serial forms and educational contexts. Liliya Kalas's blog collection *The Hieroglyph of Life* (2019) serves as the principal literary case within the corpus.

The literary analysis is supplemented by descriptive survey data on young adults' reading preferences and attitudes toward the curricular inclusion of literary serials, as well as by pedagogical observations obtained during the implementation of the elective course "The Poetics of Seriality in Postmodernism." These supplementary data are used to contextualize the literary analysis and to examine the educational applicability of the identified features of serial poetics.

Research Methods of Literary Analysis

The study applies the following literary-analytical methods to the analysis of serial texts:

1. Structural analysis — used to identify the composition and functions of the fundamental elements of serial poetics, including mosaic plot structure, recurring characters, and chronotopic organization (Genette, 1972/1980).
2. Hermeneutic method — applied to interpret the multiplicity of meanings generated by serial narrative, enabling a layered reading of texts across cycles (Gadamer, 1960/1989).
3. Deconstructive method — employed to analyze postmodern aesthetics, exposing the instability of meaning, genre boundaries, and authorial positions within serial texts (Derrida, 1967/1976).
4. Intertextual analysis — conducted to examine the web of references, allusions, and cultural codes embedded in serial texts, tracing their dialogue with national and world literature (Allen, 2011; Kristeva, 1986).

Together, these methods form an integrated analytical framework that enables both scholarly investigation of serial poetics and its application as a pedagogical instrument in literary education.

Study Sample (Data Sources)

The empirical component of the study draws on three data sources. The primary data source is an anonymous questionnaire survey administered via Google Forms. Participants included: senior students of Linguistic Gymnasium No. 105 (named after U. Zhandosov) in Almaty; alums

enrolled in universities in Kazakhstan, Russia, and Europe (aged 18 and above); and young people under 35 who are actively employed across various regions of Kazakhstan. A total of 172 respondents completed the survey: the majority (62.8%) were young people aged 18–25; schoolchildren comprised 27.3%; and working youth aged 25–35 accounted for 9.9% (Figure 1). The secondary data source consists of the literary text serving as the analytical case study: Liliya Kalaus's blog collection *The Hieroglyph of Life* (2019). The tertiary data source is the pedagogical experiment conducted within the elective course "The Poetics of Seriality in Postmodernism," implemented in the undergraduate teacher-training program (6B01706 — Training of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature).

Instrument

The survey instrument consisted of four questions — a combination of closed and open-ended items — designed to capture reading preferences and attitudes toward serial fiction in education:

- 1) What do you prefer: literary series (a series or cycle of works by one author in which one or more characters act out, moving from series to series) or individual works by different authors? Explain your choice by marking one of the options or provide your short answer:
 - a. A serial work is more interesting because you are engrossed in a familiar atmosphere, the characters are recognizable and predictable, and it is impactful when your expectations are satisfied.
 - b. A single work is more interesting because of its novelty; there is no expectation of continuation.
 - c. Other (write a short answer).
- 2) Do you think it is important to study literary series in schools (higher education)?
 - a. yes
 - b. no
- 3) If your answer to the previous question was yes, name the literary series that you think should be studied in school.
- 4) Overall, how would you rate a literary series on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is a negative rating and 10 is the highest positive rating?

The instrument targeted four constructs: (a) reading format preferences (serial vs. standalone works); (b) attitudes toward including literary serials in curricula; (c) recommendations for specific series; and (d) overall rating of serial literature on a 10-point scale.

Data Collection

The survey was distributed electronically via Google Forms and completed voluntarily and anonymously. No personally identifying information was collected. For the literary analysis component, data were gathered through close reading of Kalaus's *The Hieroglyph of Life* (2019) using the integrated methodological framework described in Section 3.2. For the pedagogical component, data were collected through observation of the elective course sessions and the

practical training session, as well as through structured student reflection sheets (“Target” format) completed at the end of the practical session.

Analysis of Supplementary Data

Quantitative data obtained from Questions 1, 2, and 4 were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Absolute frequencies and percentages were calculated for each response option. Responses to the open-ended Question 3 were analyzed using thematic content analysis, informed by the principles of thematic analysis described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The free-text responses were read iteratively and coded inductively according to recurring themes, including genre, national and world literary traditions, and educational relevance. The resulting categories were then grouped and ranked according to frequency of mention. Only respondents who answered the optional Question 3 ($n = 77$) were included in this qualitative analysis. For Question 4, ratings of 6 or higher on the 10-point scale were classified as above average.

RESULTS

This section presents the results of the study organized around the four research questions guiding the investigation: RQ1 (genre and poetic markers of literary serials), RQ2 (reading preferences and attitudes of young adults), RQ3 (didactic strategies for teaching serial texts), and RQ4 (operationalization of seriality poetics as a pedagogical model using Liliya Kalaus’s *The Hieroglyph of Life*).

RQ1. Defining genres and poetic markers of literary serials

The following findings, drawn from the analytical group work in the pedagogical component, directly address the question of which genre and poetic markers distinguish literary serials from other narrative forms:

The analysis conducted by the first group showed that the blogs, divided into five cycles and united by a common theme, form a single chronotope linking mosaic fragments into a spatiotemporal construction. The serial specificity of Kalaus’s blogs is manifested in the absence of a common storyline, free flow of thought, and the unexpected intrusion of memories into the composition, which unites different timeframes into a monolithic whole (Karimova, 2024).

The second group identified the transformation of images in the serial text. The plot development is achieved through the transformation and deepening of the characters’ images at each new turn of the spiral, or in the reader’s “returns” to various episodes of their lives. New loops continue to unfold in the author’s Facebook page posts (dated November 2, 2020, and February 20, 2021), confirming the seriality of the blogs even outside the collection (Karimova, 2024).

The third group demonstrated the interactivity of Kalaus’s blog series. The blogs published in the book continue beyond the book through new entries, comments, and additions to the “Worldly Nonsense” cycle, confirming that blogs, as an “open form,” function as a series (Kushnaryova, 2013). Consistent with the thesis on the interactive nature of seriality (Nardi et al., 2004), Kalaus’s blogs are presented as open spaces that branch out into additional elements.

The fourth group identified the genre uniqueness of Kalaus's blogs, focusing on nonlinear text as dispersion. The dispersion of text creates new genre-forming characteristics: communicativeness, informativeness, evaluativeness, and the inclusion of images of the author and addressee (Kalashnikova, 2010). Students comprehend how the public accessibility of blog entries is transformed in the collection format, giving rise to new interpretive fields outside the context of social networks (Safronova, 2006).

The fifth group identified intertextual features of the blog collection. Students discover literary references, allusions, and reminiscences forming an intertextual dialogue. Applying Jenkins's (2006/2019) concept of "convergence culture," students identify several intermedial inclusions referring to Malevich's "Black Square" (1915), Dalí's "The Persistence of Memory" (1931), the film "Saw" (2004), and Pavlensky's performance "Fixation," which together constitute what Eco (1996) calls the "double model reader" effect.

Taken together, the literary analysis identified a set of interconnected markers of serial poetics in Kalaus's *The Hieroglyph of Life*: mosaic composition, transformation and recurrence of artistic images, chronotopic seriality and dispersion, interactivity, genre hybridity, accumulation as a compositional principle, and intertextual and intermedial relations. These features demonstrate how the collection combines recurrent characters and motifs, temporal and spatial continuity, textual openness, heterogeneous genre forms, and cultural references within a serial structure.

Students consistently characterized *The Hieroglyph of Life* as a literary serial on both compositional and semantic grounds: the collection consists of interconnected texts by one author, is organized through chronotopic dispersion, and extends beyond the boundaries of the printed book through social media platforms.

RQ2. Reading preferences of young adults and support for curricular inclusion

Quantitative Survey Results

The quantitative analysis of the survey data revealed several patterns in respondents' attitudes toward literary serials. Figure 1 presents the distribution of respondents by age category. All participants were adults aged 18 years or older.

The anonymous survey revealed substantial interest in literary series among the respondents. As shown in Figure 2, 50% of respondents selected literary series as their preferred reading format. The remaining responses were distributed among standalone works and alternative responses, including equal or context-dependent preferences for both formats. These findings indicate that serial narratives constitute a significant reading preference among the surveyed audience (Figure 2).

As shown in Figure 3, 52.3% of respondents considered it important to study literary serials in schools and universities, while 40.1% responded negatively. The remaining 7.6% indicated uncertainty or provided no definitive response. Thus, slightly more than half of the respondents supported the inclusion of literary serials in educational contexts.

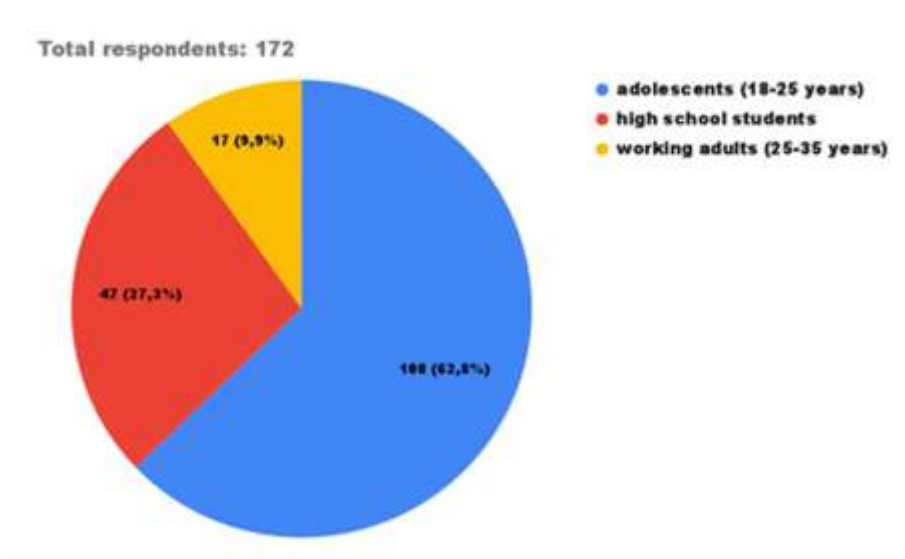
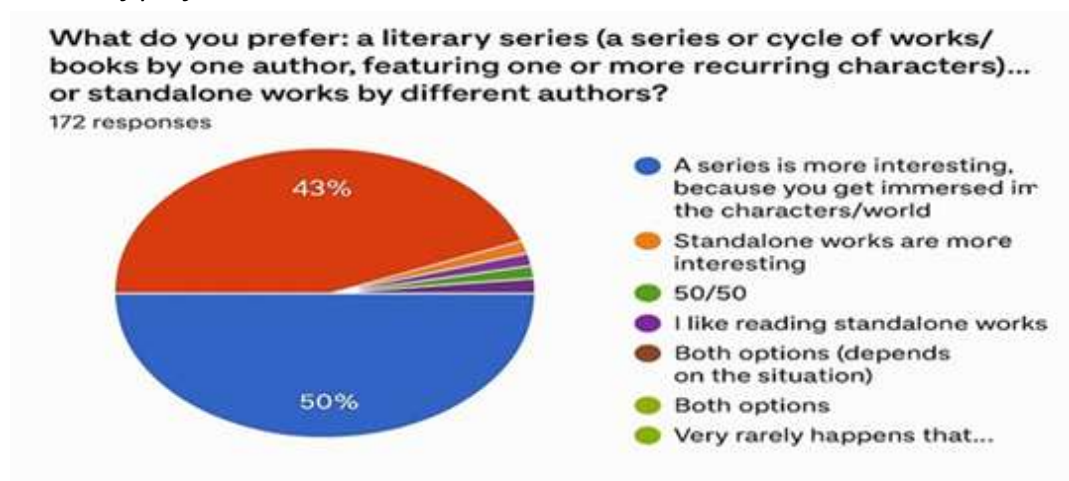
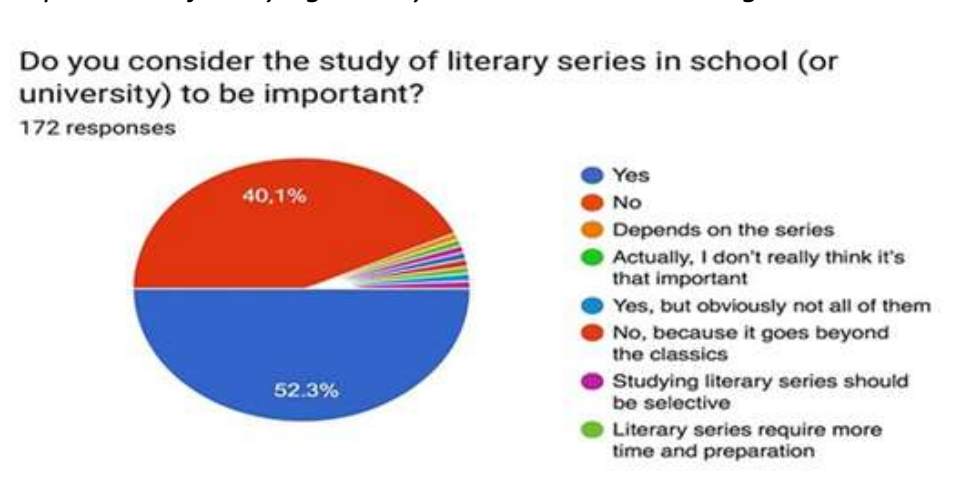
Figure 1.*Distribution of responders by age categories.***Figure 2.***Choice of preference: series or standalone work.***Figure 3.***Importance of studying literary series in schools and higher education.*

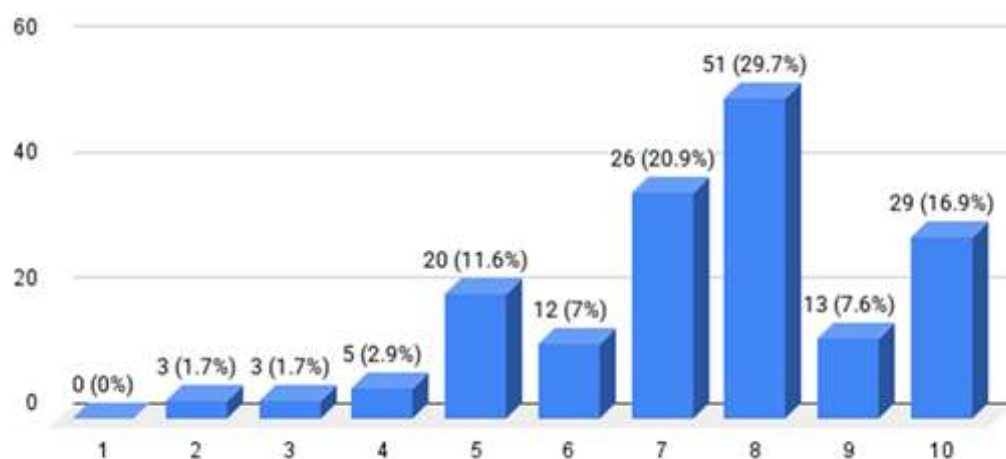
Figure 4 shows that 116 out of 172 participants (67.4%) rated literary serials at 6 or higher on the 10-point scale. This result indicates a generally positive evaluation of literary serials among the surveyed respondents.

Figure 4.

Rating literary series on a scale of 1 to 10.

Overall, how would you rate literary series on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is negative and 10 is the highest positive rating?

Total responses: 172



Qualitative Analysis of Open-Ended Responses

Responses to the open-ended Question 3 were analyzed thematically. Of the 172 respondents, 77 provided an answer to this optional question. The responses were grouped according to recurring categories, including genre, national and world literary traditions, and perceived educational relevance. Among the literary series mentioned most frequently were J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes*, Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*, J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, *The Adventures of Batu and His Friends* by Lilya Kalaus and Zira Nauryzbai, and Boris Akunin's *The Adventures of Erast Fandorin*.

RQ3. Productive didactic strategies for developing analytical and intertextual reading skills

The pedagogical component of the study consisted of the design, implementation, and evaluation of the elective course "The Poetics of Seriality in Postmodernism," developed for undergraduate students in the teacher-training program "6B01706 — Training of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature." The course provided a pedagogical setting for examining the applicability of the theoretical findings in classroom practice. The objectives of the course are: to develop in students a holistic understanding of the poetics of serial literature and literary series (cycles); to explore the patterns of the historical development of the phenomenon of seriality; to introduce the genre and compositional features of literary series (cycles) and their evolution within the literary processes of postmodernism and post-postmodernism; to cultivate skills in text analysis using core literary methods; and to prepare students for integrating the analysis of serial texts into educational practice.

Course tasks:

- 1.To study key theoretical approaches to the concept of “seriality” (literary or book cycle, narrative arc, recurring characters, etc.).
- 2.To analyze examples of serial texts of postmodernism in both world and national literature.
- 3.To identify the artistic, cultural, and pedagogical functions of seriality.
- 4.To develop students' skills in critical analysis and interpretation of literary texts — particularly literary series — and to foster their ability to articulate reasoned arguments.
- 5.To prepare and defend research projects dedicated to specific works and authorial techniques.

Teaching methods and approaches:

Lectures — introduction to the theory of seriality, analysis of examples;

Seminars — discussion of key texts, comparative analysis, interpretation;

Project work — development of research projects based on the analysis of specific works, and preparation of lesson plans using serial texts;

Interactive methods — small group work, discussions, debates;

Media-text analysis — comparison of literary serials with their screen adaptations.

The “Goal Tree” technology used in the practical session (detailed under RQ4 below) is itself a key didactic strategy tested in this study: it is a method in which a global goal is broken down into manageable tasks and steps, organized in a graphical scheme that resembles an inverted tree, with each “branch” leading to specific actions to achieve the goal (Raisberg et al., 2006). Distributing the five dimensions of serial poetics among five student groups proved productive for developing analytical and intertextual reading skills, since each group had to substantiate its findings with textual evidence before presenting to the class.

The reflection stage (“Target” format, described under RQ4) functioned as a complementary didactic strategy, allowing instructors to gauge depth of engagement and identify areas needing further instructional support.

RQ4. Operationalizing the poetics of seriality as a pedagogical model

As a core element of the pedagogical component, a practical session was developed and implemented on the topic “Techniques of Seriality in the Works of Lilya Kalaus (based on the blog collection *The Hieroglyph of Life*, 2019).” The session was structured in three stages — challenge/knowledge actualization, main analytical work (“Goal Tree” technology), and reflection — and served to operationalize the research methods listed in Section 3.2 within a classroom setting.

Stage 1 — Challenge / Knowledge Actualization. At the initial stage, students activated their prior theoretical knowledge of seriality and blogging through problem-based questions concerning the influence of media space on literary creativity, the communicative characteristics of blogs, contemporary authors’ use of social networks, and the principal theoretical markers of seriality. The stage concluded with the construction of a cluster map titled “Seriality.”

Keywords for the lesson: *blog, seriality, compositional mosaic, transformation of images, interactivity, chronotopic dispersion, genre contamination, compositional principle of accumulation.*

Stage 2 — Main Analytical Work (“Goal Tree” Technology). The goal tree is a method in which a global goal is broken down into manageable tasks and steps, organized in a graphical scheme that resembles an inverted tree, with each “branch” leading to specific actions to achieve the goal (Raisberg et al., 2006). Five student groups each addressed one dimension of serial poetics: (1) compositional mosaic; (2) transformation of artistic images; (3) interactivity; (4) genre specificity and textual dispersion; and (5) intertextuality and intermediality. (Detailed group findings are presented under RQ1 above, as they constitute the substantive answer to the genre/poetic-markers question).

Following group presentations, it is appropriate to provide a holistic interpretation of the entire blog series, since the final stage of the lesson should emphasize the interconnections among all the elements of the blog collection rather than examining them in isolation. Unlike traditional analysis, which tends to focus on specific aspects such as image transformation or composition, this method examines how various components interact to form the overarching chronotope and semantic structure of the collection as a literary series (Zhanysbekova & Safronova, 2024). Such an integrative approach allows for deeper engagement with the content and a more comprehensive assessment of its impact on the reader. This goal is achieved when students present their research findings for collective discussion and draw conclusions.

Figure 5.

Goal Tree. Note. Levels 1, 2, and 3 were completed by student groups with varying degrees of teacher support.

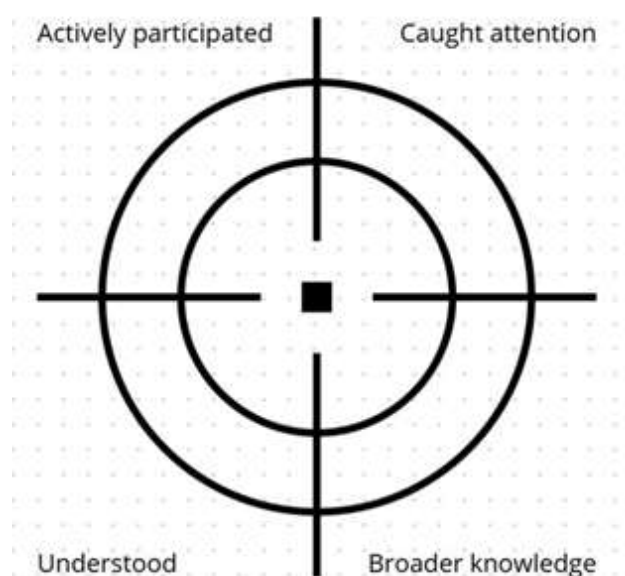


In doing so, students apply their understanding that serial literature has become a bridge between eras, attracting many readers. The American scholar Jenkins (2006/2019) introduced the term “convergence culture” to describe the interaction between various types of media content and the active participation of consumers in the search for new information. He argued that serials are oriented toward “maintaining a certain level of transformability” (Jenkins, 2006/2019, p. 384), which ensures the intertextuality and intermediality of such texts and the existence of a “double model reader,” as coined by Eco (1996, p. 65). Considering the double model reader, students identify several intermedial inclusions that refer readers to contemporary painting and installations—for instance, to Kazimir Malevich’s provocative painting “Black Square” (1915), Salvador Dalí’s surrealist work “The Persistence of Memory” (1931), the sensational film “Saw” (2004) directed by James Wan, and Pyotr Pavlensky’s performance “Fixation”. In the cycle *Everyday Follies*, the twenty-ninth folly entitled “The Rules of the Game” asserts that all of these are broken mirrors, an “invasion of art into reality” (Kalaus, 2019, p. 186). What happens in reality “continues along the same path,” yet this depends on what one understands as “similar to the same” (Goodman, 1978, p. 146).

Stage 3—Reflection (“Target” Format). Furthermore, in accordance with modern requirements for practical classes, a reflection stage is conducted. This stage is mandatory, as it allows each student to assess the depth of their engagement with the problem under consideration, conclude, analyze whether they needed additional support, and evaluate how interesting and intellectually stimulating the topic and class structure proved to be. The instructor employs the reflection format “Target” (Figure 6).

Figure 6.

Reflection “Target.”



Each student receives a printed sheet with a target drawn as concentric circles, on which they write short phrases or keywords in response to prompts about engagement, difficulty,

interest, and required support. The descending order of the most significant evaluations enables identification of successes and areas of concern for both students and instructors.

At the summarizing stage, students recognized that Kalaus's blogs reflect the central role of Internet and media spaces in contemporary convergence culture (Jenkins, 2006/2019). They identified the interaction of different cultural and artistic codes and the emergence of hybrid textual forms.

Students consistently characterized *The Hieroglyph of Life* as a literary serial on both compositional and semantic grounds: the collection consists of interconnected texts by one author, is organized through chronotopic dispersion, and extends beyond the boundaries of the printed book through social media platforms.

The practical session indicated that the analytical framework can support students in: (1) identifying genre-specific markers of seriality, including compositional mosaic, image transformation, chronotopic dispersion, genre contamination, interactivity, and accumulation; (2) conducting intertextual and intermedial analysis of serial texts; and (3) designing literary-analysis tasks applicable to secondary-school teaching.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings demonstrate that literary seriality can be approached not only as a theoretical category of contemporary literary studies but also as a productive object of literary education. The analysis of Kalaus's *The Hieroglyph of Life* shows that the defining features of serial poetics — including mosaic composition, chronotopic dispersion, genre hybridity, intertextuality, and interactive openness — can be translated into concrete analytical tasks for students. This emphasis on translating theoretical concepts into concrete classroom practices is consistent with recent curriculum research highlighting the importance of contemporary, learner-centered methods in language education (Xhemajli & Mehmeti, 2024).

The survey findings complement this pedagogical perspective. Although reading preferences were distributed across serial and standalone formats, 50% of respondents selected literary series as their preferred format, and 52.3% supported their inclusion in educational curricula. The findings therefore suggest that serial literature represents a sufficiently familiar and relevant narrative form to warrant systematic consideration in literary education.

Didactic Context of the Research

Literary and cinematographic serials are taught as an independent object of analysis in many leading universities around the world - primarily at the intersection of literary studies, film studies, and media research.

One of the most prominent courses - "Popular Culture and Narrative: Serial Storytelling" - is offered by the Department of Literature at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA). The course examines how the passage of time structures narrative across different media: ranging from Rembrandt's series of self-portraits and Dickens's novels (*The Pickwick Papers*) to

the series *The Wire* and contemporary journalism. Course materials are freely accessible through the MIT OpenCourseWare platform.

At the Interdisciplinary Center for the Study of Literatures (CIEL) of the University of Lausanne (Switzerland), a public course entitled “...en séries...” was offered on serial narratives — literary, cinematographic, and artistic. As early as 2014, a master’s-level course entirely devoted to contemporary television series was introduced there: historical, aesthetic, and theoretical issues were analyzed alongside questions of reception - through the press, blogs, and forums. In 2018, a doctoral dissertation was defended in Lausanne comparing Eugène Sue’s *The Mysteries of Paris* (1842) and *Downton Abbey* (2010–2015) from a transmedia perspective.

At the University of Warwick (United Kingdom), the course “Film Seriality and Franchising” examines various modes of cinematic seriality: film series, sequels, spin-offs, remakes, and transmedia franchises. The course forms part of the joint “Film and Literature” programme, ensuring a direct connection to the literary studies tradition.

Leiden University (the Netherlands) has introduced a course entitled “TV Series”, which covers the full generic spectrum of television serials - from the traditional soap opera, sitcom, and science fiction (*Seinfeld*, *Friends*, *Dark*) to contemporary post-network series (*Succession*, *I May Destroy You*). Particular attention is devoted to emerging new cultural practices, including binge-watching and fan fiction as forms of readerly/viewerly engagement.

At the University of Kent (United Kingdom), the course “Television Series: Narration, Engagement and Evaluation” applies narratological and film-theoretical approaches to the study of television series, exploring how the extended duration of a serial format alters viewer engagement compared to a feature film.

At the University of Hong Kong (HKU), the Department of Comparative Literature addresses seriality (repetition with variation) as a transversal principle running through literature, cinema, games, and other media within the course “Art and Politics of Narrative”. Course materials have been made publicly available on YouTube.

At the Australian National University, the School of Literature and Linguistics offers the discipline “Televisual: Investigating Narrative Television”, approached through the lens of critical theory - from *I Love Lucy* (1950s) through *Twin Peaks* to contemporary cinema influenced serial television narrative.

The German research tradition is particularly extensive, especially in the field of didactics. In the German academic context, seriality in literature and media became the subject of a dedicated two-volume publication, “Serialität in Literatur und Medien” (Anders & Staiger, 2016), which examines didactic approaches to teaching serial formats - from primary school to university level. The University of Konstanz (Universität Konstanz) possesses one of the most methodologically developed structures in the German academic space for the study of media texts: the Department of Literature, Art and Media Studies. The defining characteristic of this department is its rejection of the traditional division along national philological lines in favour of supranational and transdisciplinary research formats. By bringing together literary studies,

art history, and media studies within a single organizational structure, it creates favorable conditions for productive methodological interaction.

The Kazakhstani pedagogical experience of introducing serials as material for analysis in educational practice fits organically into a broader international trend, opening a timely interdisciplinary educational direction for Kazakhstan as well. The distinctive feature of our course lies in its reliance on rigorous theoretical grounding, on the traditions of structuralist analysis deeply rooted in Kazakhstani literary scholarship (particularly at the school level), and in its focus on didactic issues.

Accordingly, future teachers of Russian language and literature should be prepared to analyze serial-format works of fiction, having acquired the skills to identify the characteristic features of seriality through a compact series of blogs. Such knowledge provides a foundation for developing methodological competencies required for integrating serial texts into educational practice.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to demonstrate the educational potential of literary series and to develop a replicable methodological model for integrating them into secondary and higher education curricula, with a view to future implementation in secondary education. The findings address all four research questions and provide support for the educational applicability of the proposed approach.

Literary (book) serials, as part of contemporary popular culture, broaden students' horizons, develop their skills in analyzing and interpreting complex texts in line with modern requirements, and encourage conscious engagement with significant works of national and world classics through intertextual connections. These qualities are particularly pronounced in the postmodernist tradition, giving rise to numerous works of serial production.

In response to RQ1, the study identified the following defining markers of literary serials: mosaic composition, chronotopic dispersion, transformation of recurring images through "loop" and "spiral" structures, genre contamination, the compositional principle of accumulation, and interactive openness beyond the print text. These markers are fully present in Kalaus's *The Hieroglyph of Life* and proved analytically productive in the classroom setting.

In response to RQ2, the empirical survey revealed substantial interest in serial narrative formats: 50% of respondents selected literary series as their preferred reading format, while 52.3% supported the inclusion of literary serials in educational curricula. These findings indicate that serial narratives occupy a significant position in the reading practices of the surveyed young adults and that their potential educational use is viewed positively by more than half of the respondents.

In response to RQ3, the study identified the following productive didactic strategies for working with serial texts: the "Goal Tree" decomposition method, group heuristic discussion, exploratory and intertextual analysis, interpretive consolidation, and structured reflection

(“Target” format). These approaches supported students’ engagement with literary-analytical, intertextual, and critical-interpretive tasks.

In response to RQ4, the elective course “The Poetics of Seriality in Postmodernism,” implemented at the undergraduate level for future teachers of Russian language and literature, provided a practical model for operationalizing the poetics of seriality in teacher training. Its implementation demonstrated the feasibility of integrating serial texts and related analytical tasks into the undergraduate literature curriculum.

Serials also play an important role in shaping cultural identity (Moisi, 2017), as they create a fictional reality that allows readers to immerse themselves in an alternative world through recurring models that reproduce cultural patterns. Through these patterns, values, and moral orientations — respect, friendship, care, and love as key criteria of social relations — are transmitted and interpreted within a format that resonates with contemporary adolescents’ media practices.

The survey of high school students and undergraduates confirmed that literary serials are perceived favorably by young readers, primarily due to the immersion and emotional attachment to characters they afford. Serials have become an integral part of convergent cultures. They are, therefore, significant both as objects of scholarly inquiry and as educational tools that integrate traditional and modern approaches to the study of literature.

Recommendations for further development:

- A theoretical framework for the poetics of seriality — including criteria for genre identification — should be developed as a prerequisite before introducing literary serials into secondary school curricula.
- Methodological guidelines for teaching serial texts in schools should be elaborated, including criteria for selecting works, structured analytical tasks, and assessment instruments.
- The national educational standard (SCES RK) should be updated to include the poetics of seriality as a recognized aspect of the contemporary literary process, with representative works — both international (Rowling, Tolkien, Collins) and Kazakhstani (Kalaus, Nauryzbai) — studied as serial texts rather than isolated works.

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